The Committee is pleased to nominate Professor June E. O’Connor of the Department of Religious Studies as a recipient of the First Annual DISTINGUISHED CAMPUS SERVICE AWARD for the academic year 2005-2006. In the words of her nominator, Professor Lyitray, Professor O’Connor’s record of service to UC Riverside is “a stellar record of service at every level…. ” She is eminently qualified for this high honor.

Professor O’Connor has served UCR so extensively, that listing the sum of her contributions would be nearly impossible. Here, we will list a selection from her most visible service to our campus. Professor O’Connor chaired the Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) (2001/02) and Shadow CAP (2005/06), after serving on each of these very labor-intensive committees for several years. She chaired Vision 2010’s task force on the campus environment and was a member of the search committees for the Assistant Chancellor (2003), the Director for the Center for Ideas and Society (1995/96), the Director of the University Honors Program (1995/96), the Vice Chancellor for Administration (1992/93), and the Rupert Costo Chair (1987/88 and 1999/2001). She was Representative to the Assembly of the system-wide Academic Senate (1997/98), chaired Undergraduate Council (1985/86 and 1998/99), chaired the Committee on Distinguished Teaching (1995/96), was a member of the UCR Genomics Institute Steering Committee (2001), and was a principal organizer and participant in the “Days of Respect” programs following the attempted assassination of Khalid Mohammed on campus in 1994. She was instrumental in developing and delivering the University Honors Program course on ethics in college student life and continues to address student and faculty groups on such issues.

For her college, CHASS, among her many contributions are chairing the Women’s Studies Committee (1980/81) and service on the Law and Society Committee, the Executive Committee, the Humanities and Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Committee and committees on Latin American, Ethnic, and International Studies. She also has served on qualifying examinations for doctoral candidates in History, English, Anthropology and Sociology. A major triumph was her service as Chair of the search committee for a Chair in Sikh Studies (2004/05), a task that required all of her diplomatic skills and strengths to defend academic freedom in the personnel process and to calm misunderstandings among some local Sikh community members whose concept for such a Chair was initially quite different from that in academia.

Her service to the Department of Religious Studies predated the formation of the Department. It was under her leadership that the former Program was formally made a Department and she has served in essentially every conceivable position of service in the department. The Department has prospered under her leadership in many ways, including financial. In particular, she initiated and successfully funded the first endowed chair in CHASS, the Holstein Family Community Chair in Religious Studies. Her hard work and vision built upon the initial gift of the Holstein family and, with gifts large and small from the many departmental friends and supporters she had gathered, the necessary totality of funds was assembled. Professor O’Connor originated and has long edited a newsletter for the Department, palpably tying together the community and alumni with the department, with the result of a significant level of donations yearly toward educational and research missions of the department.