

Wactawski-Wende joins SUNY Distinguished Professor ranks

Posted on 10/17/16 at 02:02 pm

By David J. Hill

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Jean Wactawski-Wende has another title to add to her list. The dean of the University at Buffalo's School of Public Health and Health Professions, and [Buffalo Translational Consortium](#) board member, was appointed to the rank of State University of New York Distinguished Professor in November by the State University of New York Board of Trustees.

Wactawski-Wende becomes one of 359 faculty members across the State University of New York system to receive the Distinguished Professor rank, the highest standing for SUNY faculty. Since the program began in 1963, UB has had 88 faculty members achieve the rank of SUNY Distinguished Professor.



Jean Wactawski-Wende

"I am honored to be chosen. UB has provided me so many opportunities and a rich environment to explore my research over many years. I am very thankful for that," says Wactawski-Wende, a renowned epidemiologist and global leader in women's health research. "This award is not mine alone. It also recognizes the many faculty, staff, students and collaborators whom I have had the opportunity to work with over the years and who make this work possible."

Wactawski-Wende is the principal investigator on UB's Women's Health Initiative (WHI). UB is one of the original 16 "vanguard clinical centers" selected to participate in the groundbreaking initiative, and serves as the WHI Northeast Regional Center, managing data collection and scientific coordination among nine WHI-affiliated institutions.

Wactawski-Wende and UB recently received \$6.2 million in federal funding to continue WHI research projects through 2020. These include following health outcomes as the participants in the study — who numbered more than 161,000 when the WHI launched in 1993 — and an ancillary study examining the oral microbiome and its relation to oral and systemic health.

An active researcher for more than 25 years, Wactawski-Wende has been awarded more than \$40 million in grants and contracts since 2001. She was named interim dean in July 2014 and was appointed dean in March 2015 following a national search.

There are four professorships within the SUNY Distinguished Faculty Rank system: Distinguished, Distinguished Service, Distinguished Teaching and Distinguished Librarian. The nine other faculty members who received a distinguished appointment hail from Stony Brook, West Chester Community College and Binghamton University. "These professors are innovators and trailblazers in their chosen field, teaching and mentoring students while advancing groundbreaking research and discovery in New York's communities as well as world-wide," said SUNY Board Chair H. Carl McCall.

"We are proud to recognize the leadership of our distinguished faculty and the extraordinary impact they have on SUNY students and campus communities," added SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher.

Wactawski-Wende joined the UB faculty in 1989 after a five-year stint as a research scientist at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. She has a PhD in experimental pathology (epidemiology) from UB, a master's in natural sciences (epidemiology) from UB's Roswell Park Cancer Institute Division; and a bachelor's in biology from Canisius College.

