2019 Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student Teaching Award in Statistics

In 2003 H. Joseph Newton, together with his wife Linda, wanted to do something to "give back" to Texas A&M. They created the Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student Teaching Award in Statistics to recognize that the hard work of graduate assistants was crucial to the teaching programs of the department. The award was named in honor of Joe's parents who had played such an important role in encouraging him to accomplish his goals. Recipients of the Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student Teaching Award in Statistics shall be a full-time student in good standing pursuing a graduate degree in Statistics from the College of Science at Texas A&M. Recipients will receive a $1000 cash award and certificate.

Kristyn Pantoja, a Ph.D. student in the department, is the 2019 recipient of the Ruth J. and Howard F. Newton Memorial Graduate Student Teaching Award in Statistics. Kristyn was selected to receive the Newton Teaching Award based on her excellent teaching of STAT 201. The course, STAT 201 is an introductory course in statistics at a very basic level. This course is very challenging to teach due to the fact that the vast majority of the students have an extremely negative attitude towards any quantitative course. Kristyn was able to overcome the students' negative attitude towards statistics by emphasizing concepts through examples they could relate to without all the equations that most statistics instructors rely on to define and explain statistical methodology. Kristyn received excellent student rankings in the end of the semester evaluations. The students also conveyed highly complimentary remarks concerning Kristyn's teaching.

A few of the comments from her students follow (without editing):

- "Kristyn was awesome. She is very helpful and kind."

- "Kristyn is kind and passionate about STATs for sure, whenever you ask a question she makes sure you understand her answer. ."

- "Kristyn displayed enormous patents, even when I ask dumb questions."

- "Kristyn is kind and passionate about STATs for sure, whenever you ask a question she makes sure you understand her answer. "

There are numerous other extremely positive comments from Kristyn's students concerning her instruction.

During two unannounced visits to her classroom, I observed Kristyn to be a highly effective lecturer.