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**Concordia College Professor Wins National Education Award:  
*Alec Dickson Servant Leader Award***

ST. PAUL, Minn. (Jan. 22, 2018) — The National Youth Leadership Council, in partnership with UPS, is excited to announce that the recipient of 2018 Alec Dickson Servant Leader Award is education professor [Barb Witteman, of Concordia College](#) in Moorhead, Minn.

The award honors exemplary leaders who, by example, have inspired the service-learning field, had a positive impact on the lives of young people, and motivated others to take up the banner of service. It is named for British humanitarian Alec Dickson (1914-94), whose vision, innovation, and commitment has inspired many to lead lives dedicated to service.

Witteman's work exemplifies these traits. As she says, "Education can make a difference and help create change. If we don't teach young people to be active citizens, where will we be as a society?" Her 40-year career reflects this commitment to young people, split between teaching in K-12 systems and at the college level, from Montana and North Dakota schools to an Aboriginal school in Australia.

Always careful to support her pre-service teaching students in assessing community needs before designing a service-learning project, Witteman's students' projects often grow beyond any scale imagined. For example, a study of food insecurity grew to involve college pre-service teachers working with elementary students to teach literacy and numeracy skills rooted in packaging and delivering dried beans to a food pantry. A former student — turned farmer — grows, delivers, and donates 1,500+ pounds of beans, and has started a branch project in Crookston, where his children attend school. Meanwhile, Witteman has developed a freshman seminar that pairs college students with fourth-graders to present on hunger issues at schools, grocery stores, and city commission meetings. Another need emerged out of this study: birthday bags for families that include handmade cards, cake mix, and frosting. More than 8,000 children were eligible to receive a birthday bag last year. All of these projects, and their offshoots, are tied to academic standards.

Says fourth grade teacher Melissa Krueger, "She teaches with a sense of realism that is truly needed . . . She is passionate about contributions that make us more of a just and equitable community, and is a champion of student-centered learning experiences."

As Witteman says, "Change can begin with one person."

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Dickson Servant Leader Award  
Page 2

NYLC CEO Amy Meuers echoes this sentiment: “For students to grow into civically informed and engaged citizens they must have the opportunity to work outside the classroom. Service-learning connects communities and classrooms, inspiring students to make positive contributions to the world.”

To participate in NYLC's national awards ceremony, and learn more about service-learning, [register](#) for the 2018 National Service-Learning Conference to be held in St. Paul, Minn. March 11-13.

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For 35 years, the [National Youth Leadership Council](#) has been leading the field of service-learning from its St. Paul, Minn. base, supporting teachers, students, administrators, state-level, and college systems in making civic engagement central to academic instruction.