

Joe Baust, left, receives the 2007 Walter E. Jeske Award from his friend, 2006 Jeske recipient Terry Wilson.



Joe Baust inspires and motivates his peers and his students by blending interests in the environment and the arts.

Dr. Baust (Ed.D., University of Tennessee in 1978) became a math teacher, but found his calling as an EE leader and has been Director of the Center for EE at Murray State University in Kentucky for more than 15 years. Within the College of Education, the center offers pre-service and in-service teachers ways to integrate the environment throughout their curriculum, via residential workshops, certification in national environmental education (EE) curricula, and other professional development opportunities.

Baust's accomplishments at Murray State include:

- * Outstanding Teacher Award for 1994-95 from the MSU student government association
- * the board of regents Outstanding Teaching Award for 1993
- * institutionalizing required preservice EE for MSU teacher candidates, even though not required by the state of Kentucky
- * creating an expanded emphasis on EE for graduate level students (current classroom teachers)
- * establishing a graduate level course for *teachers* through the Kentucky Institute for International Studies, taught each summer in Austria, Switzerland, and Germany, *focused on teaching about sustainability*.

Baust has been a leader in EE in Kentucky, bringing new ideas and collaborations to enhance the EE profession.

His accomplishments in Kentucky include:

- * leading a delegation of state policymakers to study sustainability with officials from Austria, Switzerland and Germany
- * helping lead the state in developing an EE endorsement process for teacher education programs
- * securing funding to establish centers for EE at *all* state universities *in the Commonwealth*.
- * creating and currently chairing a Kentucky University Partnership for

Environmental Education, a statewide network of higher education EE providers

- * president of the Kentucky Association for EE
- * co-creating the Kentucky EE certification program for nonformal educators and serving as a faculty member for the certification training

Baust has tirelessly volunteered for NAAEE. Under his leadership, NAAEE joined the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in 2002 so all teachers will be more environmentally literate. Baust served as NAAEE President in 2005, during which the organization reached its greatest percentage of diverse representation and strengthened its relationship with the Affiliate Network.

As Past President, Baust has blended his passions for arts and the environment to inspire and energize us at the 2006 conference, arranging a videotaped greeting from Pete Seeger and a live performance by Peter Yarrow and his daughter, Bethany. In 2007, Joe has been "instrumental" (pun intended) in getting more performers and other artists together for an arts and music symposium. These include John McCutcheon and Yarrow again, along with musicians who regularly do workshops with Baust at his Murray State "day job."

Through his leadership, we added a photo contest and film festival this year. Baust visited Virginia school officials in March to promote the 2007 conference, developed many teacher-specific sessions, and has been a constant fundraiser for NAAEE, as well as advocate in Kentucky and nationally for our profession. No role is too large or too small for Baust's enthusiastic participation.