



**Lucinda Alwa for Career Impact Award
Illinois Classical Conference Annual Meeting
October 21, 2023**

The awardee of an ICC Career Impact Award this year is Lucinda Alwa of Northern Illinois University. She came to Northern Illinois University in 1989, after earning degrees from College of Wooster, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and teaching at Smith College. While she has also spent a significant part of her professional life as a Methodist pastor, this award celebrates her work at Northern Illinois.

There, she has been recognized by students and colleagues for her excellence, care, and commitment. As one nominator put it, she has been “a wonderful colleague and extraordinarily generous and effective instructor.” As another one of her nominators wrote, “She maintained a heavy teaching load that clearly bore out student interest in her topic: she educated and entertained legions of students - thousands, in fact - through her sheer passion for her topic.” As a colleague in another department noted, “Over the years I also had many students tell me how much they loved Prof. Alwa’s classical mythology course; they often brought it up in my classes, remembering some relevant myth during class discussions or applying that knowledge to an artwork or text.”

Despite any number of challenges through her multi-decade career at NIU, “she never faltered in her commitment to students. . . . In particular, those who went on to study classics spoke of the way in which she always made herself available and gave extra effort to help them get ahead.” For example, says one student, “She . . . helped me a lot outside of class. . . . I . . . did Caesar with her. And she taught me Greek one on one.”

Her conscientious, skilled efforts have reaped success for her students. As another nominator put it, “I have no doubt that several of our graduate students could never have gotten into graduate school in classical studies and gone on to succeed in the discipline, as tenure-track professors and high school teachers now, had Lucinda not been there to train them with such a high level of devotion as well as rigor.” One former student now working in the field, who started a class at NIU feeling underprepared to study the *Aeneid* with her, described her as “incredibly patient,” providing “really

digestible explanations” and abundant out-of-class help. Another, who also went on in the study of Classics, noted that “she taught Greek in a truly classicist way . . . she taught me meter and had me learn the tonal aspects of Greek. Oddly enough, the meter lessons from both Greek and Latin came in handy this summer. I participated in a month-long NEH Institute on the performance of Roman comedy and we had Tim Moore, a leading expert in Greek music, in to teach us meter. It was the first time I had done meter since grad school but I remembered some of those early lessons!” Another, who similarly went on to graduate study of Classics, recalled joining an “informal group” that Dr. Alwa organized “translating various Latin texts,” and later came to her to translate *Medea* as an independent study. The student elaborates, “I certainly would not have succeeded in my PhD program without her generous aid in strengthening my skills in Latin and Greek.” Even before this student decided to return to Classics and was working on a Master’s in Art History, she or he notes that “Dr. Alwa also sacrificed her limited free time while I was writing my master’s thesis, serving as part of my committee and providing invaluable guidance and aid.”

In turn, she has been a model for colleagues to emulate. As one wrote, “I am immensely grateful to her for all that she did while there, from inspiring students at the introductory level mythology survey to "supervising" the work of graduate students who were not even her students proper. Lucinda will always be an inspiring figure to me, and I am indebted to her.”

Dr. Lucina Alwa is a masterful teacher who has given immensely of herself throughout her career to the benefit of NIU’s students and her colleagues. She has made a considerable mark on the school and on the thousands of individual students’ lives that she has touched throughout her career. Hers has, indeed, been an impactful career, deserving of this award.

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