



### Helen Kwalwasser Receives 2008 Great Teacher Award

Several string instruments of different shapes, sizes and colors decorate a small ledge in violin professor Helen Kwalwasser's office. Her collection, which includes pieces from Asia, Africa and Europe, represents a 60-year musical career of national and international acclaim. Kwalwasser is the recipient of Temple's 2008 Great Teacher Award.

Each year the University selects five outstanding faculty members to be honored as Great Teachers and presented with a commemorative sculpture by Professor Stanley Lechtzin of the Tyler School of Art, a stipend of \$15,000 and their name engraved in Founder's Garden wall. Awardees will be honored at a luncheon on April 29 in Mitten Hall starting at noon.

"This was one of the first instruments I collected," Kwalwasser said, while pointing to a mahogany gadulka, given to her in 1947 during the World Youth Festival in Czechoslovakia where she performed as a young delegate from Juilliard. "I've been to several different countries and performed in venues all over the world, but I'm equally at home in the classroom. I've learned so much from my students over the years. I'm constantly growing because of the lessons my students teach me," said Kwalwasser.

"My goal is to help my students learn to become their own teachers and practice in a way that will help them grow as musicians," she continued. Kwalwasser's dedication to her students doesn't end in the classroom as she offers private instruction and hosts special dinner parties for student musicians before jury competitions.

"Kwalwasser seems to know her students on every level," said Timothy Schwarz, string department chair at Lehigh University. "She often remembers minute details for years. Because of this I often sought her advice and consultation"

Her students have gone on to play in major orchestras throughout the country, to teaching in universities and conservatories, and to conducting. She hears regularly from many of them and takes pride in their career accomplishments.

At the Boyer College, Kwalwasser has witnessed, and been part of, decades of change, teaching chamber music and, since 1985, serving as artistic adviser for string instruction.

“Helen could have retired from Temple and continued to teach privately outside of our University. But she remained committed to Temple and our students. She defines the word dedicated when it comes to teaching,” said Arthur D. Chodoroff, professor of Instrumental Music.

In addition to spending nearly 40 years as a faculty member at the Boyer College of Music and Dance she has performed as a soloist chamber musician and her music has been recorded for Odyssey, Vanguard, Westminster and Delos Records.

Her own accomplishments have already been recognized at Temple with both the Creative Achievement Award (1984) and the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching (1998) and the Inspiration Award from Temple Music Prep (2006).

In 2006, she was honored with a prestigious National Artist –Teacher Award from the American Sting Teacher Association.