The Association of Departments of English

presents

the Francis Andrew March Award

to

Valerie B. Lee

for Distinguished Service to the Profession of English Studies

Rooted in the values of the liberation movements of the late twentieth century, Valerie Lee’s lifework of pathbreaking scholarship, administrative genius, and powerful teaching offers a blueprint for bringing the movements’ energy, creativity, and inclusivity into our classrooms and up to the highest levels of the university. Her long list of publications indicates both the breadth of her career—which has continued unabated in her official retirement from Ohio State University (OSU) in 2015—and also her advocacy of scholarship in a variety of forms, including two monographs, a handbook for administrating women’s studies programs, and the first comprehensive anthology of African American women’s literature ever published. At home in a variety of genres and forms, she championed the flowering of digital scholarship at OSU as chair of the English department. Her administrative service in English, women’s studies, and African American and African studies and at the vice presidential level at OSU is legendary: she made people’s lives easier and showed a determination to bring in people from underserved communities and then empower them. Lee was a member of the ADE’s Executive Committee from 2005 to 2007 and was the 2007 president of the ADE. Her tireless advocacy work for inclusion and diversity while on the ADE Executive Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of African American Faculty Members in English directly led to a Mellon-funded Summer Institute for Literary and Cultural Studies that helped create a pipeline for people of color from undergraduate to graduate study and into faculty positions. And she did all this while occupying the exhilarating but often lonely position of “first”: first African American woman tenured and promoted to full professor at Denison University; first African American woman to chair OSU’s Department of Women’s Studies; first African American and first woman to chair OSU’s Department of English. The ADE Executive Committee is thus delighted to name Valerie Lee the recipient of the twenty-seventh annual Francis Andrew March Award.

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