The Department of Language and Cognition takes great pleasure in recommending Professor Mildred Rabry for the First Professor Magda Vasillov Distinguished Professor of the Year Award.

Professor Rabry has been an exemplary teacher of English as a second language for more than twenty-five years. At Eugenio María de Hostos Community College, where she has taught since 1981, she has made essential contributions to the college. Such contributions have reflected not only her devotion to ESL students, as she has worked steadfastly with her colleagues to sculpt a curriculum that is responsive to their needs, but also her professional insight in regard to the challenges that all Hostos students face. Indeed, in her commitment to making excellence the term that both Hostos insiders and outsiders will readily associate with our institution, Professor Rabry is unequalled in her dedication.

This highly motivated individual, whose every step is defined by her total compassion towards others, never puts herself first. In her efforts to make Hostos a thriving and caring academic community that facilitates students’ learning of academic skills and makes them better world citizens at the same time, Professor Rabry is known by one and all. Within the department itself, she has played a pivotal role in the development and refinement of the new content-based curriculum through her course managership of the intermediate and advanced levels. She has also served as an interpreter of this new curriculum for the college community. Surely others’ understanding of this curriculum has been made possible by her inspiring and powerful presentations about it to Hostos audiences in recent years!

Moreover, thanks to her knowledge of the importance of research and the extent to which research can lead us to new frontiers within the realm of pedagogy, Professor Rabry has encouraged not only department faculty but also faculty and staff members in the whole Hostos community to apply for grants that will permit them to investigate the opportunities that further knowledge in their fields can bring to their teaching repertoire. As the Grants Committee co-chair, she has organized workshops that have made her colleagues consider major shifts in their teaching practices. Furthermore, in all these forums, most apparent have been Professor Rabry’s professionalism, tact, kindness, compassion, and general good nature – qualities that all members of the Hostos community can readily appreciate as they discuss various issues with her within the context of the Campus Ministry, the Senate, the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee, and the Committee on Committees.

Professor Mildred Rabry is truly an Hostos treasure. That she is a “distinguished professor” is in evidence not only in the classroom but also in the work that she does on committees within and beyond the scope of the department itself, work that focuses on the miracle of teaching and learning and that reaches its apogée when she “marshalls” Hostos students to victory at the commencement exercises themselves.