

## Pace Professor Honored By ArtsWestchester



L to R: Pace Professor Maria Luskay with Pace University President Marvin Krislov.

A Pace University professor who has traveled the world creating award-winning documentary films with her students has been honored by ArtsWestchester for her work teaching filmmaking in a unique, hands-on program at Pace.

Maria Luskay, Ed.D., professor and program director, master of arts in media and communication arts, was presented with the Sophia Abeles Education Award at the annual Arts Awards Luncheon on April 11 at the Westchester Hilton in Rye Brook. She was one of seven artists honored at the event.

“What makes Pace University special is that we make sure our students get real-world experience alongside academic instruction,” said Pace president Marvin Krislov. “Dr. Luskay’s ‘Producing the Documentary’ class is a fantastic example of that. Her students spend a semester as professional filmmakers producing world-class documentaries. It’s been a transformative experience for so many aspiring filmmakers, and both her students and I are deeply grateful to Dr. Luskay for her vision and dedication.”

“Mahalo,” said Luskay as she accepted the award. “I say ‘Mahalo’ because I just got back from spending a week with 20 of my students in Hawaii, telling the story of the people of the big island and the Kilauea eruption. I truly know what I am thankful for. Thank you to Arts Westchester for this honor.

“I remember my father who worked for the

city of Yonkers for over 25 years telling me that I should love what I do,” she continued. “If I did, it wouldn’t be considered work at all. I am truly humbled by this honor bestowed upon me and I am grateful for each day that I spend with these rising filmmakers. Thank you to Marvin Krislov, president of Pace University, my students and my husband who are with me today.”

Each year, students in Pace University’s Media, Communications and Visual Arts department’s “Producing the Documentary” class choose an environmentally and culturally relevant subject and travel to various parts of the world to create a documentary film. Students, conduct interviews, and film, edit and produce the documentaries under Luskay’s guidance. Her class recently returned from Hilo, Hawaii, where 20 students and two staff members chronicled the effects the Kilauea volcano eruption and how the volcano has shaped the lives of the Island’s people for generations.

The latest documentary will premiere at the Jacob Burns Film Center on May 7.

The class has produced award-winning documentaries in locations across the world, including Cuba, Brazil, Costa Rica, Portugal, the Netherlands and Curacao. Last year, they documented the effects of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico. These films have been recognized and featured on WABC, as well as various newspaper and television news outlets. Luskay, is an alumna of Pace and has been teaching at the university for more than 25 years.