

Professor of the Year
Ms. Kelli Herd

Ms. Kelli Herd is a proud SMU alum who graduated with her B.B.A. in 1983. She is currently a lecturer in the Division of Cinema-Television and teaches courses on screenwriting, directing the screen actor and filmmaking. She is an independent filmmaker and the writer/director/producer of the award-winning feature film "It's in the Water." In addition to teaching, Ms. Herd is a professional script coach and screenwriter who continues to produce independent projects in the Dallas area.

Several Residence Life Student Staff members have had Ms. Herd as a professor and one student writes, "Kelli Herd is the best professor I have been fortunate to have. She has truly been an inspiration to me and to all of her students. The wonderful thing about Professor Herd is that she doesn't mechanically teach or lecture from textbooks or notes; instead, she brings her classes to life. She has an amazing ability to instill valuable knowledge into her student's minds.

One way in which students reached out to show how excellent Professor Herd is occurred last Spring. Professor Herd was approaching her seventh year at SMU and due to budget constraints was not slated to return to the University. At this point, many students stepped up and set up meetings with the Department Chair to advocate for Professor Herd's return to the Department. Because of the extraordinary impact Professor Herd had on her students and their ability to share that with others, Professor Herd has been able to continue as a Professor her at SMU.

In addition to time spent at SMU, Ms. Herd is an executive member of Women In Film/Dallas, and belongs to the American Screenwriters Association, the Independent Feature Project West, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, and the Society for Theatrical Artists' Guidance & Enhancement. She has been an executive board member of the USA Film Festival and served as the KidFilm Chairman. She continues to work on the craft of screenwriting proudly as a Lecturer in the Division of Cinema/TV at her alma mater Southern Methodist University where she was named a recipient of the 2002 Rotunda Outstanding Professor Award. On top of all that, Ms. Herd is a devoted mom to her 18-year-old son Michael who she says is the true inspiration for her place on this planet

In closing, a RLSH student staff member wrote, "Professors like Kelli Herd are truly one in a million and she deserves recognition for all her hard work and the impact she has made on so many students throughout her time her at SMU."

It is my honor to present Ms. Kelli Herd the HOPE Professor of the Year Award. (CLAP)