

2009–2010 STANLEY J. DRAZEK TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

PILAR PULIDO

Pilar Pulido has a unique understanding of adult students gained through personal experience: while earning her first degree, she worked full time, was a single parent, and attended an American university even though her native language is Spanish. She has been teaching undergraduate and graduate computer and language courses with UMUC in Italy since 2002.

“Today, I sit on the other side of the desk and see a reflection of myself in many students. As a teacher working in an adult educational environment, I have come to further appreciate the diversity and wealth of experience students bring,” Ms. Pulido explained “They are the people who make up a great nation – soldiers willing to serve their country on foreign lands.”

Inspired to give back to the community and help students achieve their goals, Ms. Pulido became a UMUC collegiate associate professor. This was a natural fit considering her long connection to the university. She started as a UMUC student, later became a field representative, and then served as a computer technician. She said, “UMUC provides a real opportunity for the overseas military community to have a chance at an education, just as I did, and I want to be a part of that.”

Although her main goal is for students to learn in her courses, she also feels responsible for encouraging students to continue with their education. “This is only possible if students feel challenged throughout my course and fulfilled when they complete it.”

Ms. Pulido is actively engaged not only in teaching, but in learning new information to share with her students. Particularly interested in digital technology and multimedia, she integrates this knowledge for an enriched classroom experience. Viewing the world as an “open textbook” that helps individuals learn and grow, Ms. Pulido takes a personal, fun, and respectful approach to teaching.

“I know something about each of my students and I challenge them in a personalized way. I love what I do. My passion for students to learn is real, and they can feel that. I want to thank each of them for giving me the chance to be their teacher.”

Ms. Pulido enjoys reading, writing poetry, and the simple pleasure of spending time with family and friends. She holds a BA in English, an MS in Information Technology, and graduate certificates in information assurance and homeland security management from UMUC.

