



Barbara C. Steidle
Senior Consultant to the Provost, Michigan State University
3rd Annual Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award (2003)

In presenting the 2003 Award, ACE Network State Coordinator Martha Tack had these words: "What does one say about the rock of Gibraltar?"

- She is a woman who has spent 36 very productive years in Michigan higher education.
- She now serves as Senior Consultant to the Provost at Michigan State University (MSU) and through 2007 will work with the colleges of education, arts and letters, natural science and social science as Project Manager of a \$5 million grant for Teachers for a New Era.
- She served as Assistant Provost at MSU from 1989-2002 (13 years). Her responsibilities at MSU included enrollment services, academic integrity review board, university committee on academic policy, all-university undergraduate research and creative arts forum, university curriculum and catalog office and commencement and ceremonial events. She served as chairperson of the assessment/accreditation network of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, as a consultant-evaluator for the North Central Association Accreditation Review Council and served as an institutional representative to the College Board and American Association of Colleges and Universities.
- She served as Dean of the prestigious James Madison College at MSU for nine years.
 - Taught constitutional history at the institution
 - Was concerned that the class was composed of only 4 women out of 80 students
 - Provided quiet support for women as their numbers increased in her classes (e.g., she sponsored independent study classes, wrote letters of reference, served as their adviser.)
- She earned a B.S. from Penn State in history as well as an M.A. and Ph.D. degree in history from Rutgers University and has also held faculty positions at Rutgers and Central Michigan."

"Barbara is committed to advancing the university's mission," MSU President Peter McPherson concurred, in his nomination of Steidle. "Her continuing leadership and dedication as a teacher, faculty member, and administrator to MSU and to higher education make her very worthy of this award."

According to Provost and Interim President of MSU Lou Anna K. Simon, "In her 36-year career in Michigan higher education, she has been a pioneer, opening doors for many women in the academic community, often working "below the radar" and behind the scenes to make things happen for her protégés."

Steidle said that mentoring was not a prominent concept when she was growing up. "I was always conscious that a succession of people took uncommon interest in me and actively sought to enlarge my sphere of interests," she said. "Much of this support provided me with the ability to choose new options, but it always had the effect of encouraging and challenging me...and had a lasting impact that shaped my approach to nurturing leadership skills and potential in others."

One of Barbara Steidle's most powerful statements in the essay accompanying her nomination was (despite her heavy administrative schedule), "The realization that the visibility of women in positions of power was *per se* important in shaping students' perceptions of the possible led me to continue teaching at least once every year."