

Baker College Dean of Engineering Anca Sala Named HI-TEC Educator of the Year 'Significant contributions' to photonics education recognized nationally



Anca Sala, Ph.D., Dean of the College of Engineering at Baker College, has been named 2016 Educator of the Year by HI-TEC, the High Impact Technology Exchange Conference. She received the award at the 2016 conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 25-28, 2016.

Sala was recognized for her diverse and dedicated work toward building the infrastructure of photonics education. She is one of the nation's leading high-technology educators and innovators in the development of college programs in photonics, optics and photonics.

"Dr. Sala is an extraordinary educator and academician who is committed to building a national workforce of highly qualified photonics technologists," said Bart Daig, Ph.D., Baker College System president and CEO. "She is a leader at the cutting edge in this area of education. Students benefit from her commitment to offer training that meets workforce demand for photonics technicians in numerous industries, higher education and research."

The award is presented to a community or technical college faculty member who has made significant contributions to the education and training of today's advanced technological workforce. The recipient must have demonstrated impact on technology education both locally and nationally.

HI-TEC cited Sala's work in the following areas that support her selection as the 2016 Educator of the Year:

Sala is a principal investigator on a National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (NSF ATE) project grant, for which she developed and implemented an associate degree program in optics and photonics. That associate degree program was launched at Baker College's Flint campus in 2013. She is a co-principal investigator representing Baker College in the NSF ATE Midwest Photonics Education Center.

Sala is a committee chair for the OP-TEC Optics and Photonics College Network, an association of postsecondary photonics technician educators. In this role, she is responsible for creating and identifying technical webinars for faculty professional development.

Sala is working with OP-TEC and other NSF ATE centers to provide national leadership in technician development for the recently formed Integrated Photonics Manufacturing Initiative (IPMI), a \$610 million project designed to replace copper in conventional chips with lasers and optical waveguides.

She is working to develop skill standards, design curricula, adapt existing teaching materials and train employed technicians to address current and future technical workforce needs in more than 200 industries, research labs and universities participating in IPMI.

Sala is the OP-TEC author of modular teaching materials for the nation's first technician course in integrated photonics. She will introduce this course at the HI-TEC conference in July 2016.

In addition, Sala is a founding member of Mi-Light, the Michigan Photonics Cluster that supports Michigan's photonics-related businesses with the goal of growing the state's talent pool to expand the photonics industry and stimulate innovation.

She earned a doctoral degree in physics at the University of Toledo, Ohio, and a master's degree in electrical engineering at Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Romania. Sala holds eight patents related to photonics devices.

For more information about engineering and technology programs at Baker College, contact Kevin Pnacek in the admissions office at (810) 766-4000 or kevin.pnacek@baker.edu