

## The Philip Knutson Award for Creativity or Risk Taking Lutheran Campus Ministry

### Background

The Knutson Award for Creativity and Risk-Taking is named for the Reverend Philip N. Knutson (1937-1994), a tremendous supporter, contributor, and influence in the Lutheran Campus Ministry world. He served in a variety of roles related to LCM, from Campus Pastor (Metropolitan Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin – Madison, and Valparaiso) to assistant director for campus ministry in the ELCA to full-time adviser to the Lutheran Student Movement. During his tenure in campus ministry, Phil came to be known for a number of things, among them his creativity and his willingness to take risks.

In January of 1994, Phil began to publically share his story of being a gay man in the church and living with AIDS. He devoted the rest of his career to speaking about his experiences, as well as advocating on behalf of LGBT persons. When his quality of life diminished significantly, Phil ended his life on Good Shepherd Sunday of the same year. By the end of his life, he had become known for his courage and his willingness to speak and live openly, a tremendous accomplishment for the time.



Prior to such risk-taking, however, Phil Knutson was known for his stunning creativity. He had a deep appreciation for the arts, including music, theater, and literature, and was known for lifting up the creative and artistic side of others. A favorite memory of Phil is one in which he actually coordinated his outfits to match the flower displays at LCM Conferences. Phil is remembered for his spunky engagement with others, his acerbic wit, his tremendous spark, his gregarious nature, and the sheer sense of fun that seemed to follow him. More than his own creativity, he loved and cherished the creative spirit of others.

Shortly after his death, St Olaf College, Phil's alma mater, established the Philip N. Knutson Endowment in Lutheran Campus Ministry to "provide special funding for programs, exhibits, and conferences that address timely life issues and concerns facing Christians in higher education, including the subject of human sexuality and the Church." The Endowment has since supported a large number of creative conferences, events, and initiatives across the church related to human sexuality (<http://knutsonendowment.com>)

### Spirit of the Award

The Philip N. Knutson Award for Creativity or Risk-Taking lifts up either creativity or risk-taking in campus ministry. Campus Pastors and Ministers who demonstrate a love of the arts, an ability to incorporate the arts into ministry, and/or an ability to name and affirm the creative gifts of others match the spirit of this award. Alternately, Campus Pastors or Ministers who have demonstrated the ability to take risks in ministry, to speak publically on controversial issues of importance, and/or challenge the church through advocacy for the marginalized also match the spirit of this award.

## Recipients

1994	Philip N. Knutson (posthumously)
1995	Gustav Schultz, University of California-Berkeley
1996	Kim Williams, Northern Colorado University
1997	<i>(no award given)</i>
1998	Alexander Jacobs, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
1999	Jean Larson Hurd, University of Montana
2000	Luther Kriefall, Columbia University
2001	Chris Heavner, Clemson University
2002	Chris Berry, Western Washington University
2003	Kirsten Springmeyer, University of Cincinnati
2004	Jim Norlie and Donna King, Oregon State University
2005	Lou Flessner, Texas State University
2006	Gail Riina, Syracuse University
2007	Bill King and Joanna Stallings, Virginia Tech
2008	John Lund, University of Montana
2009	Joanne Engquist, Harvard University
2010	Brad Fuerst, Rice University/Houston Colleges and Universities
2011	Scott Postlewait, University of Washington
2012	Paul Collinson-Streng, University of Texas
2013	Greg Schaefer, Stanford University
2014	Kate Reuer Welton, University of Minnesota
2015	Mindy Roll, Texas A & M
2016	John Tirro, University of Tennessee
2017	Rebecca Boardman, St. Louis University & Washington University in St. Louis