

# Music Professor Is L&C's Emerson Award Recipient for 2023

by Laura Inlow  
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**GODFREY** – Longtime Music Professor Louis Michael is Lewis and Clark Community College's Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award recipient for 2023.

The award was announced internally during faculty in-service week in August, then again publicly during the September meeting of the L&C Board of Trustees this week.

“It was a big surprise,” Michael said. “I’ve been here for so long and have seen other people get it, but I didn’t imagine myself getting the award. It’s really nice to be recognized.”

Right out of high school, Michael got into the music business and made his living for 18 years playing live music full time. He played for a number of bands over the years, but started one under his own name in 1985. For more than a decade, he and the band traveled, played clubs, colleges and even opened for well-known national touring bands.

At the age of 37, he found himself needing to go in a new direction. He had studied for two semesters at the Berkeley College of Music in Boston when he was younger, but decided to enroll at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where he earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in Jazz Piano Performance.

Upon finishing his master’s degree, during which he taught at SIUE for two semesters as a grad teaching assistant, he began teaching at Lewis and Clark as an adjunct faculty member in 2002 and was hired as a full-time assistant professor in 2004. In 2008, he was promoted to associate professor and he became the Music program coordinator in 2010. He was promoted to full professor in 2014.

Post grad, Michael also trained to become a Berkeley College of Music Certified Pro-Tools Specialist, a title he continues to hold today.

Among his proudest accomplishments include the creation of L&C’s Music Production program, which Michael started as a single class and built into a full program in 2017. The program now offers an Associate in Applied Science degree, a Certificate of Proficiency and a Certificate of Completion.

He also said he takes pride in the ongoing success of the Student Rock Ensembles on campus. This semester, there are two. Music Production students participate in the ensembles as part of their curriculum.

“It’s something that’s not really offered at other colleges,” Michael said. “The ensembles have been really popular because students can work on the projects they’re really interested in.”

Each year, the Emerson Electric Excellence in Teaching Awards recognize more than 100 educators in the St. Louis metropolitan area – from kindergarten teachers to college

professors – who are examples of excellence in their field. This is the 30th year Lewis and Clark has participated in the recognition program.

Not only is he a great teacher, but Assistant Professor of Music Juliet Jackson said Michael is also great to work with.

“He is always very supportive and encouraging of my many ideas for concerts and classes,” she said. “I find our department to be very open and collaborative and I credit Louis for creating a supportive work environment where we are always encouraged to be creative in our teaching practices.”

For more information on L&C’s Music programs, visit [www.lc.edu](http://www.lc.edu):

- **Music Production** – <https://www.lc.edu/academic-programs/degrees-certificates/music-production.html>
- **Music Performance** – <https://www.lc.edu/academic-programs/transfer-degrees/music-performance.html>.