The Outstanding Community Engagement Award – Dr. May Hongmei Gao (School of Communication and Media and Department of Interdisciplinary Studies)

The Outstanding Community Engagement Award serves as recognition for engagement with local, regional, national, or international communities. The award honors a faculty member who has demonstrated a commitment to and leadership in advancing KSU’s commitment to community engagement.

Dr. May Hongmei Gao has devoted much of her career to building stronger global connections that have earned the praise of both the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) and Asian American Heritage Foundation. She founded the Symposium on ASIA-USA Partnership Opportunities (SAUPO), which has become the largest Asia Business Conference in the United States. SAUPO serves as a global platform for information exchange, network building, branding and visibility, cross border investment, and source of internship/jobs for KSU students. SAUPO boasts a five-way dialogue among educators, business professionals, federal and Southern states government officials, non-profit activists, and diplomats.

As the Asian Studies Coordinator from 2008-2016 and as the SAUPO Chair since 2011, Dr. Gao has led both programs and was named as one of the "25 Most Influential Asian Americans in Georgia” in both 2013 and 2016.