

Copenhaver Honored with Strong Award

Sue Reeves

03/09/2015



John Copenhaver

John Copenhaver, director of the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) at Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities, has been named the recipient of the 2015 Strong Human Services Award by the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services. He will receive the award on April 14 at the college's annual award ceremony.

The Strong Human Services Award honors a CEHS faculty member for significant and sustained leadership in human services, applying research to improve the lives of children or adults. The Award also recognizes cross-college and interdisciplinary efforts in human services, with leadership coming from a CEHS faculty member. The \$1,000 cash award is funded by an endowment.

Of the award, Copenhaver said, "It kind of came out of the blue. I have such respect for Carol Strong, who was the dean before Beth Foley. She's just a great person, a great leader. To have your name associated with her name is just a humbling experience."

In addition to serving as the director of TAESE, Copenhaver was the principal investigator for the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRRC) before that project ended last year. Copenhaver has experience in special education at the school district, state, regional, and national levels. Before joining the TAESE/MPRRRC staff in 1989, Copenhaver served as a special education resource teacher, school psychologist, and special education director.

His work at TAESE and the MPRRC has involved providing technical assistance at the school, state, regional, and national levels. Copenhaver has extensive experience in Indian education. He provides technical assistance to states regarding their State Performance Plan, Annual Performance Report, and Levels of Determination.

Copenhaver has produced numerous training materials; been called upon to assist states and school districts in most areas of special education; made numerous conference presentations; published articles on special education issues; and provided technical assistance in the areas of legal issues, special populations, developing effective Individualized Education Programs, due process/mediation, Section 504, procedural safeguards, systems change, strategic planning, CSPD, State Advisory Panels, assistive technology, extended school year, and numerous other topics.

Copenhaver holds degrees from the University of Montana and University of Utah in Philosophy, Psychology, and Special Education Administration-School Psychology. He has been presented with four major national awards, the Martha J. Fields Excellence Award (NASDSE), the Joleta Reynolds Award (LRP Publications), National Award of Excellence (Bureau of Indian Affairs), and a National Award of Excellence in Special Education (NASDSE).