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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Carolina Sociological Association Honors Long-Time ECU Professor

GREENVILLE, N.C. (March 4, 2013) — The North Carolina Sociology Association recently honored a long-time professor from East Carolina University, Dr. Kenneth R. Wilson, professor of sociology and co-director of the department’s community research lab, was awarded the 2013 North Carolina Sociological Association’s Award for Contributions to Sociology during their annual conference held Friday, February 22.

Presentation of the award was made by George Conklin, professor emeritus North Carolina Central University and editor of the NCSA journal Sociation Today.

“Dr. Wilson’s expertise in the field of applied sociology has been nationally significant, with an emphasis on improving the quality of human life,” said Conklin, when announcing the award.

“I am proud to receive this award from an organization that has focused attention on ways to combine scholarship and teaching to serve the needs of our students and our communities,” said Wilson.

“I’m thrilled that Dr. Wilson’s long history of work on behalf of the community has been recognized with this important award,” said Dr. Marieke Van Willigen, interim chair of ECU’s Department of Sociology. “Dr. Wilson has worked with countless community organizations, city and county government offices, and faculty researchers. He has facilitated the collection, analysis and reporting of data on issues ranging from differential impacts of hurricanes to factors affecting the quality of life of breast cancer survivors, to how researchers deal with ethical dilemmas in their research. He is truly an applied sociologist in the best sense of the term.”

Wilson began his teaching career at ECU in 1974 after completing his doctoral degree from Purdue University. Over the course of his 39-year career at ECU, Wilson has focused upon a number of specific issues in which applied sociology may contribute, including procedures for basic research, emergency responses during natural disasters, access to health care and high technology premised upon the problems of unequal socio-economic status. He has received $1 million in funds to address these social issues through applied sociology, and he has published more than 32 articles and a half-dozen book chapters within his field of research.

“I enjoy doing research that makes a difference,” said Wilson. “I am particularly proud of my research on the Digital Divide in North Carolina, which has not only been published, but also helped the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center and the NC Department of Commerce document the need to extend broadband to
rural regions. I really enjoy working with a team that is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in North Carolina.”

Within the professional realm, Wilson is past-president of the North Carolina Sociological Association and past-president of the university-wide UNC Faculty Assembly. He is the founding director of the Sociology Community Survey Lab in ECU’s Department of Sociology. He also has been a member of, or involved with, the American Sociology Association, American Association of Public Opinion Research, American Statistical Association, Southern Sociological Society, Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction and Alpha Kappa Delta.

For additional information, contact Wilson at 252-328-4897 or wilsonk@ecu.edu.

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