

May 1, 2021

University Senate Loyalty Award Selection Committee  
Louisiana Tech University

Dear Committee Members:

During my thirty years in the International Student Office we have welcomed several thousand international students from more than 120 countries. Many of our responsibilities were officially admissions' related; processing applications, evaluating transcripts from around the world, creating immigration documents. But many were related to students arriving, being welcomed, and making Ruston and Louisiana Tech University their new home such as reassuring parents, arranging airport pick-ups and new housing, and helping them make new friends. We have helped facilitate this, but the people of Ruston and the University community have always welcomed and supported international students with open arms.

Our University and American students have benefitted greatly; increased number of graduate students and research focused students, and classmates who shared their cultures with their American friends. We always emphasized that Louisiana Tech is not a regional state college, but a world class, world recognized university that brings together great minds and new perspectives from all states and all countries.

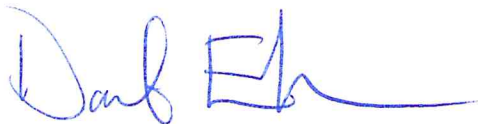
There are many ways we assist students on a daily basis; helping with social security cards, taxes, driver's licenses, embassy contacts, immigration assistance, medical situations. But the University at large has recognized us for the cultural festivals and food events we sponsor (although during these last two years I have been less involved). We have had countless yearly International Days and Scholarship Dinners, India and Nepali Festivals, Chinese New Year's Celebrations, and other festivals and food events from around the world open to the University and Ruston community.

This thirty-year career has always required a high level of immigration training and constantly changing paralegal expertise. I have tried to share that expertise in helping train staff and supporting regional colleagues. I have presented at twenty regional and state conferences and served in leadership roles in state, regional, and national organizations bringing recognition and credibility to Louisiana Tech University.

These last four years my role has changed. People don't realize that we work with students often a full year before they arrive and up to three years after they leave here. I work with graduating students assisting with jobs and internships, processing work cards, and change of status application, and assisting with the more difficult immigration cases. Our University attracts a host of highly educated international lecturers and professors along with exchange scholars and researchers. I work supporting those Tech employees by advising them and processing immigration applications of all kinds.

It has always been a privilege to work at Louisiana Tech University supporting and serving international students and faculty.

Sincerely,



Dan Erickson, Coordinator  
International Student and Scholar Services  
Louisiana Tech University

5156 Casentino Court  
Myrtle Beach, 29579  
April 28, 2021

Members of Louisiana Tech University Senate,

It gives me great pleasure to write in support of Daniel Erickson who is a nominee for the Louisiana Tech Loyalty Award- Unclassified. I have known Dan since 1991 when he was appointed to the position of Director, International Student Office (later changed to International Student and Scholar Services). Immediately upon their arrival, Dan works to find avenues for assimilation and adjustment for the international students. He knows by name each of the students who enter the University as an international student. Dan's relationship with those students begins before they arrived on campus, and he nurtures and fosters them through degree completion and beyond. He is the first responder for his student's concerns or distress, but he also gently leads students to other services when appropriate.

One of the most admirable facets of Dan's personality as it relates to his profession is that his dedication to students is consistent. Dan's commitment to his students and to international faculty often find him hosting dinners, luncheons, and other events in the community and at his home. I had the happy opportunity to attend several of the events Dan held for his students over the years. Of course, right by his side was his very devoted wife Dawn and daughter Emily. Dan is dedicated to seeing that individuals who have come to the US for an education receive the direction they need to achieve academic and professional goals but also the guidance to help them enjoy Ruston and Louisiana Tech as their home. He is deeply committed to the individuals served by the ISSS, with a reputation for taking the time to assure that individual needs are met, either through his office, which houses an extremely loyal team of staff members, or through services offered elsewhere on campus or in the community. Understanding how it is difficult to self-advocate, Dan has escorted countless students to services such as Social Security to assure a proper residency.

The students and faculty within the realm of the ISSS quickly recognize Dan Erickson's loyalty to them and the University. He is passionate about their success as well as their comfort and wellness. He leads by example in participating in campus activities. He clearly loves Louisiana Tech University, demonstrated in part by his thirty years of services. I truly do not know of another University professional who has dedicated nearly as much time to the individuals within his purview.

In my role of Dean of Student Development, I met with Dan regularly. I learned that Louisiana Tech benefits from Dan's service in ways most do not recognize. He must spend countless hours evaluating transcripts, overseeing compliance with I-20s, preparing and appropriately monitoring IAP-66, J-1, and F-1 documentation. Dan must keep current with US law pertaining to international education and seek clarification from attorneys when there is a concern.

Dan demonstrates his belief that the success of the experience for the international student includes a healthy campus life. He encourages attendance at lectures, concerts, plays, and sporting events. The latter are usually preceded by a well-attended and colorful tail gate experience. He supports activities on campus even as he encourages US faculty and students to participate in events important to the international community. Personally, highlights of the year for me included the winter International Scholarship Dinner, and the International Day festival held each spring. The latter usually saw a packed house of Tech students and faculty as well as Ruston residents, as the international students proudly shared their native dishes, dress, and customs. That event was perhaps one of the consistently best attended functions of the school year, combining individuals of different cultures eating and sharing the experience.

Dan strives to encourage interaction of international students with the greater Tech body through reaching out to Tech and Ruston to encourage participation in ISSS programs. To this end, Dan and his students began a Friday afternoon coffee hour, encouraging a shared coffee and a conversation. Likewise, Dan is a loyal bulldog, as demonstrated by his regular participation in events such as Convocation, sporting events, and, of course, graduation. His pride in the students he has assisted is clear in the many photos students and family insist upon.

He is an example of a professional with no concern about status or position. The students and faculty within the realm of the ISSS quickly recognize Dan Erickson's loyalty to them and the University. He is passionate about their success as well as their comfort and wellness. He leads by example in participating in campus activities. Dan Erickson clearly loves Louisiana Tech University, and he contributes to the quality of life of every international student.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Linda D. Griffin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Linda D. Griffin, Ed.D.

Dean Emerita, Student Services

Ghislain Nono Gueye, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Economics and Finance  
Louisiana Tech University  
College of Business  
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April 30, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my honor and pleasure to write a support letter for Mr. Daniel Erickson, one of the greatest employees at Louisiana Tech in my eyes. I personally call him "*the face of Tech*" because he serves as the interface between Tech and the rest of the world. In this letter, I would like to share a few unrelated anecdotes, which will illustrate why I think that Mr. Daniel Erickson deserves the Loyalty Award.

As an international scholar, working for a public institution in the USA means constantly going through various procedures involving a significant amount of paperwork. This process can be a "rough ride"; however, with Mr. Erickson holding my hand (our hands) through it, it becomes very smooth and painless. The experience he has acquired over nearly 3 decades of service at Louisiana Tech makes him an invaluable asset for the school with respect to its international community and he knows how to gracefully put this experience at our disposal. Speaking of his time of service at Louisiana Tech, is there anything that spells loyalty better than "three decades"?

Mr. Erickson is truly a gem. I joined the Tech family in the 2017-2018 academic year. During that year, Mr Erickson and I exchanged many emails, but we only met a few times. My family visited in the summer of that year and I was surprised to receive a dinner invitation from him who specifically mentioned that he would love for my family to come too. Till this day, I am not sure

how he got to know that my family was visiting from overseas, especially because we were not even close friends at that time.

Before the pandemic, he would organize dinner parties for international faculty at his house. Those were great occasions as they allowed us to get to know each other, share our experiences, get some tips from senior faculty in other fields, and even connect for probable future collaborations.

As a professor, my professional relationship with Mr. Erickson has only allowed me to see and experience how awesome he is when it comes to working with international faculty. Even though I can't say anything personal about his relationship with international students, the fact remains that I have always heard good things about him from the international student community (I am close to many African students at Tech). For example, he has often picked up students from the Monroe airport with his personal car and has even gone out of his way to pick students from airports much farther than Monroe.

Many tertiary institutions in the USA pride themselves in a large international student community. Some of these institutions have their respective locations going for them for attracting foreigners (e.g. New York City, Miami, New York City). However, even though Louisiana Tech is located in the small beautiful city of Ruston, which has less infrastructure than the aforementioned cities, a person like Mr. Daniel Erickson (*"the face of Tech"*) gives an extremely high quality image of the school to the outside world, and provides them with a great experience once they join the family. This partially explains why our international students retention rates is this good.

I would like to reiterate that Mr. Daniel Erickson fully deserves the Loyalty Award and I, as well as many others, are living testimonies of the fact.

Sincerely yours,

Ghislain Nono Gueye, Ph. D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics and Finance

College of Business

Louisiana Tech University

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021

To whom it may concern,

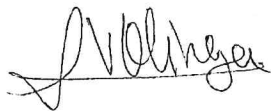
It is my pleasure to offer my unreserved recommendation and support for Daniel Erickson (Mr. Dan) for the Loyalty Award.

I have known Mr. Dan for over nine years during my time at Louisiana Tech University as an international student, and as a student worker at the International Student Office. Throughout my journey on campus, Mr. Dan has helped in helping me to establish myself in a foreign country, learn and practice the language, maintain good standings with immigration and the school all the while feeling welcome. He has made my integration in the US smooth and easier.

Mr. Dan has put in tremendous efforts in helping foreign students years after years, going above and beyond to ensure that each and every student is cared for with love, kindness and efficiency. He has gone from picking up students from the airport when they were stranded to helping them with grocery and basic need shopping, to assisting them throughout their educational season at Louisiana Tech with counsel, advices, and direction. Working with him has helped me gained the experience, work ethic and understanding of the country and workplace which allow me to perform efficiently daily. I am extremely grateful to have the honor to know him and to benefit from his wisdom and guidance. Through him and his deeds, I have seen and felt the atmosphere of family that is such a part of Louisiana Tech University.

In short, I recommend Daniel Erickson for the Loyalty Award; a recognition he is wholly deserving of.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Olinga', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Victoire Christiane Ngono Olinga

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