



LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

May 3, 2022

Dear Committee:

First, let me say I am very honored and surprised to be nominated for the 2021-2022 Outstanding Service Award for classified staff. I do love my job and helping others perform well at theirs.

I have been married to my wonderful husband for almost 19 years now. We have two boys, ages 17 and 27. My youngest plans to attend Tech in late 2023.

I began working at Louisiana Tech in my current position in July of 2012 (Electrical Engr., Computer Science, Cyber Engr., & Cyber Security Engr. Technology). I currently coordinate with three Program Chairs, serve 31 faculty and over 800 students, as well as many other faculty and staff within the College of Engineering and Science. My responsibilities also include supervising student workers and performing administrative tasks such as processing university forms (now on Workday), prepare travel arrangements, reimbursements, quarterly course audits, textbook adoptions, help prepare for ABET, coordinate with alumni through our three programs' Advisory Boards, as well as clean/make ready offices for new faculty. Over the years, my duties expanded significantly, most notably when I inherited the duties of our building's System Analyst when he left in 2014 and that position was eliminated. Some of those duties include handling my building's Inventory as Property Custodian, managing building and room entry, changing door locks, physically moving equipment and furniture, and basic building maintenance/repair, including ongoing water-penetration issues on rainy days. For instance, I personally researched why our building kept leaking from heavy rains on the first floor, and was able to lead efforts to improve this by about 95%. In addition, in 2018 I joined the COES Safety Team, attending monthly meetings, and coordinating safety policies for Nethken Hall consistent with the needs of the college.

Over my 10 years, I have trained or help to train five other Administrative Assistants in other departments within the college. Several still reach out to me since I am one of very few who has been in this position as long as I have. I know there are opportunities for promotions all the time, but I truly love where I am and the people I work with.

Thank you so much for your consideration,

Marsha Smith
Administrative Assistant
ELEN/CSC/CYEN/CSSET

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

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COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing in support for Mrs. Marsha Smith and her nomination for the Louisiana Tech Service Award recognized through the Louisiana Tech Senate. As an Academic Director in the College of Engineering and Science and a professor in the Mathematics and Statistics Program, I have had the pleasure of knowing Marsha for the past seven years. In this time Marsha has repeatedly demonstrated her passion in supporting the academic enterprise through her many years of service to our faculty, students, staff on campus as well as many external stakeholders for the college and university. Marsha has a solid work-ethic which I believe is at the core of her desire to see that everyone she serves has every opportunity to succeed.

I have worked directly with Marsha in serving the Computer Science, Cyber Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electrical Engineering Technology as well as Mathematics & Statistics faculty and students in the College of Engineering and Science. Administrative Assistants in the College fulfill many day-to-day functions to ensure that faculty have what they need to be successful. As the Academic Director for multiple programs in the college, I relied on her servant-leadership every day. She has been in a key role for Computer Science during a time of unprecedented growth in student population (Computer Science is now the 3rd largest major, by student population, in the university). As a result, the demands required to meet the needs of faculty who serve our students has increased four-fold. Complexities have emerged which continue to require creative solutions, and Marsha does not shy away from these. For many years now, Marsha and I have discussed our mutual desire to create environments where faculty can help students succeed. Recognizing early that Marsha's responsibilities were well beyond the typical administrative assistant in the college, she immediately became core to problem-solving what I call 'environment issues' – issues that can too easily distract students from learning and faculty from being able to teach.

One of her responsibilities was due to an administrative change when the building manager moved to a different position on campus. At that point, over seven years ago, Marsha became the Building Custodian. Practically, this means that whenever there is an issue or question with the building, she is the one who facilitates discussion and coordinates changes. For example, when faculty have technology issues, she handles any work-orders, to be sure, but she is proactive in finding longer-term solutions to problems. When students or faculty have questions about using space in the building, she starts the process to determine the viability and then takes action. As I mentioned, she takes a proactive approach to preparing the best environment possible for faculty, from coming up on the weekends to clean-out and organize space to cleaning, yes physically cleaning, an office before a new faculty arrives on campus.

Her proactive approach has been noticed by others across campus. Most recently, Jim Palmer expressed his thankfulness for her service beyond what he routinely would expect. He wrote:

“In the past couple of years, she [Marsha] has been one of (if not the) first persons done with inventory in our College. She does this herself without grad assistants or student workers. . . the rate and professionalism that she accomplishes this task is impressive. Because she jumps on this task so quickly, she is often the one that helps me identify and fix any issues that might be occurring that year (which helps everyone else). She's been a great asset on this, is a self-starter, and requires no oversight from me to complete her tasks (it is a pleasure to work with her).”

To this same end, I have known her to arrange for trailers and trucks to be available for moving larger items to the South Campus ‘Property’ and then working with student-workers to physically move items to-and-from Nethken Hall (working right along-side her students).

To illustrate her servant-heart further, Nethken Hall had serious water-penetration issues during storms from before I moved to the building (prior to 2014). Almost every time it rained, water would be in the main hallways and in numerous classrooms. She was the one who was mopping the floors and attempting to take care of the facility each time. When a storm would come through over a weekend, she would come by and check on the water issues. All of this would go completely unnoticed to others on campus, yet she was guaranteeing the safety of the building each time – especially since Nethken houses the Power Lab – where Electrical Engineering students learn how high voltage works through laboratory experiences. Her calm efforts to guaranteeing a safe working environment is a testament to her service to the university. Of course, I should mention that her problem-solving didn’t stop there. While I complained to upper-administration about the water issues with the building, requesting an assessment from our own facilities personnel – even having additional engineers to look at why the leaks were occurring – Marsha eventually found the main problem with the building. Discovering that the ‘weep holes’ where the brick wall meets the foundation could be blocked by simple debris that would typically occur over time, she and her student-workers ‘drilled out’ the debris in every ‘weep hole’ around the entire building, and the water penetration during storms almost ceased. Since she initiated these steps, the building has had fewer issues with water. Of course, from her point of view this all happened as part of her ‘regular’ responsibilities, because Marsha sees her position at Tech as part of her life and not just a job. If we wanted to, we could easily give accounts of many – students, faculty and alumni who have been impacted by the efforts of Marsha Smith – many who have positive memories of our college because Marsha will go the extra mile every time. This award will recognize and give honor to her active engagement in meeting the needs of students and faculty.

Marsha’s quiet approach to helping others achieve is something that she would not want anyone to recognize publically. However, this is long-overdue. Through her solutions to real problems and challenges that impact our faculty and students, I have observed her passion for meeting needs and challenges in the lives of others. I have been able to observe this activity both within our programs and within the college and university. By being present at numerous events, students recognize a familiar face and can engage in conversation outside of the work-environment. Whether it is serving at Gumbo Fest, helping at Spring Release, or one of our numerous athletic events, Marsha’s presence goes a long way to showing students how much she admires their efforts and the university as a whole. Through her numerous activities, she has established a network of close colleagues across campus through which she is able to serve others.

I believe that Marsha is one of the most service-oriented members of the university community. From solving problems for students, to answering questions of faculty; from building relationships with other staff members to going the extra mile with students whose lives are falling apart; Marsha demonstrates every day how much she cares about Louisiana Tech and all that it represents. She is realistic yet visionary – serving others beyond what anyone would expect and garnering trust for the college and university at a time when we have most needed it.

Please consider that Marsha has my highest recommendation, and I will be glad to answer any questions directly should you consider that necessary.

Sincerely,



Galen E. Turner III, Ph.D.

Maxfield Professor of Mathematics & Statistics
Academic Director for Mathematics & Statistics
and Computational Analysis & Modeling
Louisiana Tech University



LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Matthew Hartmann, Ph.D.
Program Chair & Lecturer
Electrical Engineering Department
College of Engineering & Science
Louisiana Tech University

May 8, 2022

Marsha Smith's Outstanding Service Award Nomination:

Dear Award Committee Members:

I am honored to have been asked to contribute a letter of support for Marsha Smith's nomination for a University Senate Outstanding Service Award. In all of my interactions with Marsha, I have observed a person with whom I am sincerely impressed with at all levels—she is a dedicated assistant for not only my program but also CSC, CYEN and CSET, displaying courtesy, kindness, and empathy while carrying out her job responsibilities. In my opinion, Marsha exemplifies the criteria of an Outstanding Service Award recipient: she fulfills her job duties with integrity and excellence and consistently exceeds the expectations of the faculty and students her role supports.

I first met Marsha Smith while I was a graduate teaching assistant for the Electrical Engineering Department here at Louisiana Tech University. At the beginning of my teaching career, Marsha regularly went out of her way to help me with scheduling courses, finding the right classroom to accommodate student needs and my teaching style, and generally helped me to become successful as a lecturer by ensuring that student needs were consistently met.

Upon becoming a full-time faculty member of the Electrical Engineering Department, my interactions with Marsha increased significantly and she is someone I have come to rely on for her expertise and knowledge of university protocols and how to accomplish goals within the constraints of university policy. She helps me with my random CICS questions that arise when I'm working on curriculum check sheets to ensure that my seniors are going to graduate on time. She helps me with hiring student workers to assist me with my research projects, even going so

far as to develop a written set of instructions specific to my needs to help with the transition to Workday this academic year. She helps me to resolve payroll issues for student workers and graduate assistants. She helps me to schedule classes and exams for my program, ensuring that all courses are covered and scheduled without conflicts. She aids me in planning our bi-annual Industrial Advisory Board meetings. In short, Marsha Smith is an asset without which I could not be successful in my role as Program Chair for the Electrical Engineering Department.

When she isn't busy helping myself and the other faculty members of the ELEN, CSC, CYEN, and CSET departments, Marsha also works with student organizations to help make their events successful. Over the last several years, Marsha has worked with Eta Kappa Nu to ensure that space is reserved for their circuits tutoring sessions. She assists in scheduling IEEE guest speakers, makes sure that the Aerospace club has a place to meet, and this Spring helped with the Pi-day Pi-Your-Professor event to fundraise.

In summary, Marsha Smith consistently goes well beyond her job title of "Administrative Assistant" in service to myself, other ELEN/CSC/CYEN/CSET faculty, and students of these programs. I cannot think of another person more deserving of recognition for an Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Hartmann', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matthew Hartmann, Ph.D.
Program Chair & Lecturer
Electrical Engineering Department
Louisiana Tech University



The University Of
T A M P A

May 4, 2022

University Senate, Louisiana Tech University

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to provide this letter in support of Marsha Smith for the 2021-22 Outstanding Service Award. I am a Professor of Computer Science and the Chair of the Computer Science Department at the University of Tampa. Prior to my tenure here, I was an Assistant Professor of Computer Science and Cyber Engineering at Louisiana Tech University. I was also the Chair of the Computer Science Program from 2013 through 2020.

While I was there, I spent many hours working with Marsha on a variety of things related to my roles as faculty member and program chair, and this allowed me the opportunity to observe her effectiveness as she filled various roles. I firmly believe that she excels as both an administrative assistant and a property custodian. She is very organized which helps her manage her time efficiently. She truly helps faculty members weave through the often convoluted processes involved with certain things that we often have to deal with. In fact, she was the person to turn to when we often couldn't remember how to complete university-related tasks. I also vividly recall how tremendous she was at helping me personally navigate the tedious process of program accreditation. I am sure that other program chairs would say the same thing.

I miss Marsha's enthusiasm. She is very motivated and creative. I also have nothing but respect and admiration in how she interacted with colleagues while I was there. I truly enjoyed working with her, and the programs at Louisiana Tech University that she participates in are significantly better because she is a part of them. She brings her expertise, excitement, experience, and personality to the table – all of which contribute to helping make these programs better. Marsha is an outstanding individual with a strong character, and I believe that she clearly demonstrates qualities commensurate with outstanding service – and is therefore quite deserving of the 2021-22 Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

Jean Gourd, Ph.D.
Professor of Computer Science
Chair of the Computer Science Department
The University of Tampa