

LESLIE BRISTER

ADMISSIONS SPECIALIST - ENGINEERING & SCIENCE

About Me

Hey there Student Outreach Award Committee! I am Leslie. I have been working at the university for approximately eight years and am a 2015 biology alumna. In 2020, I completed my Masters in Higher Education & Student Affairs. Over the past eight years, I have served many roles—admissions recruiter, student recruiter advisor, summer programs co-coordinator, lead admissions recruiter, and now the admissions specialist for COES. I have developed a deep love for this field, particularly at LA Tech. Instead of bleeding red & blue, I believe I actually bleed Tech emblems (or at least that is what my boss tells me).

In my personal life, I love being on-the-go. Many people and passions have made me who I am. However, I have listed some of my favorites below.

Artist- Doing artistic things puts me at ease. Calligraphy, painting, baking, party planning, and interior design are my favorites. I have never been formally trained in any of these areas. It is something I just have an eye for. This has gotten me into some interesting situations. Most recently, some of our COES orgs have asked for my assistance in leading Painting with a Twist nights. Trying to teach engineers & scientist to open up to their artistic side is comical to say the least.

Disney Fan- That is right! I love all things supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. One of my favorite summer vacations was when my best friend and I went to the happiest place on earth. We got to watch the firework show next to Raven Symone. I know all you 90's girl hearts just skipped a beat. Mine did too!!! Go against me in Disney trivia, and I will give you a run for your money.

Dog Mom- I have a toy poodle named Theodore. We love jeep rides, trail walks, and swim days. He is a ferocious ten pounds of spunk.

Family- I like to go hunting with my parents. Turkey hunting with dad, and bargain hunting with mom. I have a younger brother who moved to Houston, after graduating from Louisiana Tech. We are both Bulldogs through and through. I recently road tripped to see him and got to attend the Houston Rodeo!

Night Owl- Catch me before 10am, and you'd think I was a zombie. I have never been a morning person. I would actually prefer to work until 9pm if it meant I would not have to be at work until noon. My most recent night owl escapades have had me binge watching a new Netflix series.

Southern Belle- Totally self-proclaimed, but I love being from/living in the South. I am not too sure I could survive anywhere else. We southern belles grow up learning the fundamentals of the Southern way--yes sir, no ma'am, no white clothes until Easter, and being just the right amount of stubborn.

Sports Enthusiast- I am counting down the days to kick off. Football is my favorite sport. I think it is my favorite because my high school did not have a football team. I have to make up for all my deprived years. Good gravy—even my 16th birthday party was a LA Tech Football tailgate. However, I love supporting all Bulldogs sports teams. The Love Shack is my second favorite sporting venue behind The Joe.

Student Outreach

Oh, Louisiana Tech I love thee! As a freshman student entering the university I had long-wished to attend, I had no idea what the words would come to mean to me today. Louisiana Tech University holds such a special place in my heart. As an undergrad student, I studied biology, worked in admissions, and was eagerly involved in many student organizations. Over those four years I connected with many campus leaders who made a huge impact in my college career—one of the most influential being Dean Liberatos. He encouraged me to look outside of my medical field dreams and consider a career in higher education. Dr. Liberatos saw my skills, my passions, and me as an individual and made a radical difference in my life. Since that moment, I have strived to do the same for students I encounter.

I started working for admissions in Fall of 2013 as a student worker, and then full-time upon my graduation in July 2015. I love my role in recruiting students. It allows me to share my passion for all things bulldog with high schoolers and their families. I take great joy in sharing with them why LA Tech is the place to be. It's sometimes hard to pour into so many people who may not be Loyal Blue at the end of the year. Nonetheless, I continue to give them my very best. One of my coworkers constantly remarks that my email responses are too long—that I put beyond what the student/family needs to know in response to their questions. I feel that their impression of me reflects on their impression of the entire Tech community. So I will continue to "overdo it".

I am not okay with mediocre, and I make that known to those I work with. I share thoughts and ideas about programs I coordinate to constantly improve them. FrEP is a COES summer program that I have fallen in love with. When I started as COES Admissions Specialist, there were about 40 students each summer who participated. Through improved outreach/marketing initiatives and program suggestions, we now consistently have over 120 applicants each year and have doubled program enrollment. Another event I oversee is Commitment Day. This event is a blast! It is a huge welcome to our incoming class. Each year I ask how I can better welcome our new class and connect them with enrolled students and faculty. After this year's event my bosses said, "That was a little over the top, but we liked it." I may have overdone it with the balloon drop & confetti cannons. I like to think that my extraness in hospitality makes students feel at home and excited to join the Tech Family.

Although my main work priority is future Tech students, I am constantly connecting with current students. At this point, I have been recruiting COES students for 4 years. Almost every enrolled COES student has come through me to get to where they are today. Once I recruit them, I do not drop them. That is just the beginning of our relationship. Because of that, I have students in and out of my office all day sharing their highs and lows with me. Pie in the Face fundraiser—I'm there. Judging a male beauty contest—I'm there. Facilitating a paint night for engineers & scientist—I'm there. Just in the last two weeks, I have connected seniors with sister institutions for graduate school, given life advice on job decisions, and cried with students. None of which I thought I would do as the Admissions Specialist for the College of Engineering & Science. My job title says I recruit freshmen, but my personal philosophy says to care for the most students possible in meaningful and encouraging ways. My predecessor told me to speak to everyone I come across in COES, because their stories

will make all the difference in recruiting future students. What he did not tell me is that speaking to them would turn into long conversations, conversations would turn into further caring for these students, and that caring would turn into constantly having a fridge covered in graduation & wedding announcements. The fact that students want me to celebrate in their most precious moments means the world to me!!



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

May 7, 2022

Dear Award Committee,

It is my honor to recommend Leslie Brister for the Student Outreach Award. I have known Leslie since she was in junior high, and I had the pleasure of getting to not only watch her as she has progressed in her career, but even more I have been able to truly get to know her as a friend and colleague. After graduation, Leslie started working in Admissions as a recruiter. Her love for Tech is unwavering and unmatched. I have always thought that I was the most Loyal Blue person here, but Leslie has shown me that she truly has given me a run for my money. When you meet Leslie, it is very obvious that she is someone that you will not forget. For anyone that has met her, you know exactly what I mean. She has an energy and passion that is truly special.

About 4 years ago, I had the opportunity to get to know Leslie even more. She came to the College of Engineering and Science as our Admissions Specialist. I knew that she would be a great addition to our college. She has a way of being able to communicate with recruits and their families that seems to break down any barriers or concerns that they have. I have seen her on many occasions be able to get a student to "break out of their shell" and feel comfortable. This has allowed them to open up and start to ask questions. She is able to determine what the student really needs to hear or who they need to meet with. Leslie has great connections throughout the university, so she is able to make a call or send an email and quickly get the student whatever help they need. Her enthusiasm is what makes Leslie even more noticeable. In my role, I have the opportunity to meet with many students. I have seen and heard from them about how they have loved their interaction with her. She is one of those people that make your trip memorable, and this plays a major factor in them deciding to come to Tech. During orientation when I introduce our staff it is not uncommon that she receives a full crowd cheer nearly every time. Students love her! and parents do too!

One additional thing that Leslie does that is truly unmatched is she invests in these students not only to recruit them, but she does it in their daily lives while they are here. She is one of the first to step up and be a part of anything that we have going on. She will be here helping student late into the night and weekends. She has an impact that is far beyond just recruiting them.

Leslie brings energy to everything she does. She is focused on all students that come to our campus because she truly cares about them, and she does everything that she can to make sure that each one of them become a part and fully invest into the bulldog family. When it comes to student outreach, she is definitely out front. I believe she would be a great choice for this award, and will say that it would be a mistake to not select her. If you have any further questions with regard to his background or qualifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Heath Tims, PhD
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies, COES
Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering

May 9, 2022

Louisiana Tech University
University Senate Staff Committee

To the Members of the University Senate Staff Committee:

It is my sincere honor to speak on behalf of Ms. Leslie Brister regarding her nomination for the 2022 Student Outreach Award. I have worked closely with Leslie since she was an undergrad student at Louisiana Tech and her passion, loyalty and love for this institution has not wavered since day one and this is why I believe she is the best candidate for this award.

In all the years that I have known Leslie she has been Louisiana Tech's biggest cheerleader. She has been recruiting students to the place she holds so deeply to her heart starting when she was a Student Recruiter. Leslie was always ready with her big Tech smile to take a prospective student on a tour and show them why they should come to her school! It never failed they would finish the tour and fell in love. Leslie's passion and love for this institution is reason to believe why she is amazing at her job!

Over the last seven years Leslie has worked in Admissions from being on the road recruiting, overseeing campus visits and the Student Recruiters to currently being the Admission Specialist for the College of Engineering and Sciences and teaches FYE. With each of these jobs she has built lasting relationships with parents and students that last through a student's college career. Her bubbly personality and her dedication to Tech is what makes students fall in love. With her lasting relationships she is able to help guide students through their college experience.

When you see Leslie on campus she always has on her Tech smile and bleeding Tech Blue! With all her spare time (which isn't much) you can always find her helping host events in the College of Engineering and Science or attending athletic events. When you talk to students on campus that have worked with Leslie you can tell the impact she has made on them. I have no doubt in my mind that Ms. Leslie Brister is your right choice for the Student Outreach Award.

When I think of Leslie I think Louisiana Tech!

If you have any further questions or if I can clarify anything for you, please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

Sincerely,

Megan C. Fair
Senior Associate Director of Admissions
Louisiana Tech University
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Melanie Tircuit

Student Worker

9 May 2022

Melanie Tircuit

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To whomever it may concern,

I am overjoyed to have the opportunity to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ms. Leslie Brister. I started working for Leslie as a student worker in the College of Engineering and Science in March of 2021 and have continued to work with her to help recruit the greatest student to our college.

In the year of working with Leslie, I have witnessed her constant effort to ensure that students feel wanted, welcome, and included at all times by being intentional in every detail of a student's interaction with the university and COES. These traits are exemplified in the welcoming decor displayed in IESB for student visits, the equipping and leading of a team of student ambassadors, or working with various department heads of COES so that students can make relevant connections to their prospective programs. Outside of these qualities, she is always brainstorming for new and effective ways to welcome students to our college.

Obviously, Ms. Brister is fabulous at her job, but she also puts in time into the college and the betterment of current students that is so greatly appreciated. For example, this quarter, the Society of Women Engineers hosted a "Painting with a Twist" night where we asked Leslie to be our instructor to which she willingly agreed and spent her Friday night teaching a room of engineers how to paint, which is not an easy task. The dedication of her personal time to provide that service for us, the night before a Saturday visit, is one of the many ways that Leslie goes above and beyond. This is only one example of Leslie's involvement with COES activities, not to mention the numerous times that she has volunteered to be pie'd in the face in order to help raise money for our organizations.

Working for Leslie Brister this past year has been so beneficial to my college experience, and I am lucky to be able to work alongside her. I cannot think of anyone more deserving to receive the Student Outreach Award.

Sincerely,



Melanie Tircuit