



LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY.

College of Education

Dear Committee Members :

I would like to express my gratitude to the committee for recognizing the work that classified staff does for the University and our individual colleges. I would also like to thank those who submitted nominations and the other nominees for their commitment to this work.

I took on my current position in early 2019 and just prior to COVID forcing us to find alternate ways of achieving goals and completing tasks. Also, I was asked to try and replace a long time College of Education family member, Tammy Nelson-Johnston. Much of the success my office has had is built on the decades of service from Tammy.

As Undergraduate Support Specialist for the College of Education, my roles and responsibilities vary widely and evolve as the needs of our undergraduates, faculty, staff, and administration are evaluated and addressed. Our college, like all of the 5 colleges, has specific needs that require consideration as we develop processes and responsibilities. With that in mind, I think of my role as having a few different categorical distinctions that would be difficult to rank in order of importance and overlap at several points.

First, I am tasked with creating and maintaining all student records for the College of Education's roughly 1000 active students in the Kinesiology, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, and Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership departments. Unlike many of the other department's on campus, the College of Education uses a centralized record keeping model and therefore every record pertaining to our undergraduates is initiated by or flows through my office. The volume of data and the value of accurate, accessible information prompted me to design and implement a system of digital curriculum sheets and student records. Being able to provide these digital resources to our students and advisors has been a priority from the early, pre-COVID days of my tenure and I am proud of the product that we delivered. Since all of these programmatic and department specific workflows depend on my office, being an expert in a range of disciplines, curriculums, policies, regulatory bodies, and inter-intuitional communication is essential.

The knowledge base required to perform some of the duties mentioned above segues well into the next silo of my office's responsibilities, offering academic and administrative support to our undergraduate students and faculty. I am the point of contact for most undergraduate inquiries that might be addressed by individual departments in a different college. This type of interaction can range from broad, campus or college resource inquiries to granular academic



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advising or program-specific needs. Without boring the committee with itemized lists of agencies and departments, I will say that my office serves as a conduit to many of the state, federal, and private entities that our departments interact with frequently. Some examples would be providing data to our state regulators yearly and communicating with high school districts and counselors to discuss dual enrollment scheduling for our programs.

Another distinct responsibility and maybe the most fulfilling duty of my office is to design and implement our freshman and transfer orientation initiatives. Working with the New Student Orientation Programs department to provide incoming students the best experience and ensure that our more tangible goals are met has been a challenging and exciting job under the changing landscape of the past 3-4 years. I have used the feedback from students, faculty advisors, and colleagues across campus to inform our strategies for providing an excellent experience for students while adding efficiencies to our communication of important information and course scheduling and registration. I am proud of the systems put in place to improve this experience.

Leadership in COE, especially Dean Schillinger and Associate Dean Jacob, has provided a wonderful environment in which to work and offered opportunities to communicate ideas that have been earnestly considered. I would not be in a position to accept this nomination without their stellar leadership and the help of the team's that have been put together. For this I am grateful.

I appreciate your consideration,

Michael Gilmore
Administrative Assistant/Undergraduate Support Specialist
College of Education



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

2023 Outstanding Service Award Committee:

Thank you for providing an opportunity to recognize the outstanding service classified members of Louisiana Tech University. While we are fortunate to have numerous people in the College of Education and across the campus who deserve this award, I am honored to support a very deserving nominee, Michael Gilmore. In addition to demonstrating excellence in fulfilling his duties as the Undergraduate Student Support Specialist in the College of Education, Michael is known for his dedication to the students and faculty he advises and guides. No matter the tasks, Michael consistently demonstrates a willingness to assist and care for our College of Education family members far beyond his formal role. Additionally, Michael takes a proactive approach to creating solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative processes.

One of many examples of this characteristic is his leadership in designing and implementing a digital advising system that our faculty and students have readily and rapidly embraced. Michael also serves as our chief horticulturist, attending to the flowers and plants in our administrative and student support offices and the shared outdoor patio area. In addition, he demonstrates a robust growth mindset, continuously attending to learning opportunities and engaging in conversations and actions that lead to advancing our strategic initiatives and enriching our workplace culture. Michael performs all these functions with a smile, the always-ready encouraging word, enthusiasm, and a solid desire to improve and enhance the lives of the people he serves. I am very grateful to know him as a colleague, co-laborer, and co-creator.

Sincerely,

Don Schillinger, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education
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LOUISIANA TECH
U N I V E R S I T Y

College of Education

Dear University Senate Committee member,


I am writing to recommend Mr. Michael Gilmore for the 2022-2023 Outstanding Service Award. While I have had the pleasure of working with Michael for the past 3 years as a faculty member, I really got to know him when I began my current role in September 2022, as part of the Academic Affairs team in the College of Education. During that time, I have been consistently impressed by his problem-solving mentality, sincerity, and creativity.

Mr. Gilmore embodies the qualities of a truly exceptional Student Support Specialist. He consistently demonstrates thoughtfulness and compassion in every interaction, whether it is with students, faculty, or staff. In addition to being an active listener, he empathizes with others, making them feel heard and valued. His thoughtful and analytical approach has helped countless students navigate challenges and overcome obstacles to ensure academic success. He possesses a deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by students and has consistently implemented innovative strategies to support their academic journey. Mr. Gilmore goes above and beyond to create a supportive environment, fostering a sense of belonging and instilling confidence in those he works with.

His ability to think critically and empathetically allows him to understand the needs and perspectives of others, recently leading to the design and execution of a new advising system within our college; this helped our advisors immensely in their advising sessions, ultimately improving the students' experience of successful progression in their curricula. Similarly, I am pleased to be working with Mr. Gilmore on several initiatives, because he anticipates potential issues, proactively addresses them, and finds innovative solutions, making a positive impact on every undergraduate student within the College of Education.

Michael Gilmore is a highly sincere individual. He is always willing to go the extra mile to help others, often well beyond his role of Undergraduate Student Support Specialist in our college. He is a hard worker, a team player, and a creative thinker. His natural ability to connect with others on a personal level not only contributes to a harmonious work atmosphere but also enhances his ability to understand and address diverse perspectives. I cannot think of even one Tenet of Tech that he does not exemplify across everything he does. I highly recommend him for the 2022-2023 Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,



Jane Jacob



Department of Curriculum,
Instruction, and Leadership

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for Mr. Michael Gilmore as the recipient of the 2022-2023 Outstanding Service Award. The award itself is “intended to recognize and reward a classified employee who exhibits exemplary performance, seeks growth as a professional, and carries out the duties of their job with integrity and dedication” and I can think of no one more suited to be honored for their efforts in these areas than Michael. In my years of being involved in the Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership (CIL) program and the College of Education (COE), Michael has been a tremendous support to me personally as a new faculty member and has shown to be an invaluable asset to our team as we seek to improve our programs. Whether he is working to design an engaging and positive experience for incoming freshmen during orientation, working to ensure student success as undergraduates, or helping students across the “finish line” of graduation, he exudes excellence in his work.

A criterion for the award suggests that the awardee must “exhibit superior leadership skills, planning, and organization”. As a part of the COE, Michael has worked tirelessly to increase effectiveness and efficiency in programs across the college. As a systems thinker, he has worked to incorporate new technologies and procedures into student record keeping, advising, and monitoring programmatic student progress. As a leader, he has been quick to listen to the feedback of faculty and has worked to incorporate that feedback into designing new student records systems. He has worked with and trained our faculty on new technology and processes that increase efficiency across the college. Because of his efforts, accessing and understanding where a student is in the trajectory of our program has become efficient and accessible. This ensures that faculty and department heads are aware of student issues and able to retain students by intervening earlier when they experience issues. Further, his work in this area has improved advising so that all students and faculty are aware of student progress and can easily access student records. This provides the opportunity for advisors to actually perform the role of “advising” future professionals rather than record keeping. Michael exhibits a dedication to planning and organization that is integral to the success of our programs.

Criteria for the award also suggests that an awardee also be committed to “meeting the needs of students, faculty, and staff” as well as “favorably represent their office, administrative unit, and the university.” In these areas, Michael works diligently to support everyone he comes in contact with. He is always willing to answer questions, troubleshoot problems, and provide feedback. In his role, Michael must be knowledgeable about three very diverse programs within



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Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership

the COE. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences; Kinesiology; and Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership all have vastly different requirements and programs and Michael is incredibly knowledgeable and helpful due to his dedication to the success of our programs and students. He is always willing to answer questions or do what he can to improve our programs within our building or externally across our campus. Michael is dedicated to supporting students, faculty and staff and always goes above and beyond to meet the needs of those he encounters.

The Louisiana Tech Tenets are principles that we hope our students will possess upon graduating from our institution. As an educator, it is my belief that students will not be able to learn these without encountering role models who exemplify them along the way. As a student progresses through the COE and interacts with Michael, they will see an incredible example of the tenets of commitment, respect, leadership, loyalty, caring, and above all excellence. As a faculty member, I am grateful to have him representing our department and college. I wholeheartedly support his nomination and believe that he is worthy of this award and should be recognized for his dedication.

If you have any further questions, or if I can provide any additional information about my work with Mr. Gilmore, please do not hesitate to reach out to me by email (whitlock@latech.edu) or by phone (318-257-2374).

Dustin Whitlock, Ed.D.
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