



LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

May 1, 2024

Dear University Senate Committee:

I am honored to be nominated for the 2023-2024 Loyalty Award for classified staff. Just knowing that my hard work doesn't go unnoticed means a lot. I am passionate about the role I serve and strive to show my dedication to my faculty and coworkers.

I've been in my current position as an Administrative Assistant 3 since July of 2012. I currently coordinate with four Program Chairs for Computer Science, Cyber Engineering, Cyber Security Engr. Technology, and Electrical Engineering. I serve 21 faculty and over 800 students, as well as many other faculty and staff within the College of Engineering and Science. Besides the usual office administration tasks, some of my other duties include Building Manager, managing CWID access and keys, room reservations, changing door locks, physically moving equipment and furniture, and basic building maintenance/repair, including ongoing water-penetration issues on stormy days. Recently, I was asked why I mop up water instead of creating work orders for the custodians. In my mind, I am just doing what needs to get done in a timely manner. Why cause more work for someone else when I am capable?

In addition to my usual 4 programs, I offered to be a "temporary Admin" for the Mathematics, Statistics, CAM programs from March 2022 - October 2023, as well as Mechanical Engr, Civil Engr, & Construction Engr. from June - August 2023. After their Academic Directors hired new Admins, I took the initiative to train/teach them.

As Inventory/Property Custodian for my building, I go room to room scanning tags on our inventory. It may seem boring to some, but I find it different and fun. After several years of doing this, I've learned all the little hiding spots where things should be.

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

P.O. BOX 10348 · RUSTON, LA 71272-0046 · FAX: (318) 257-2562 · www.latech.edu/tech/engr

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY UNIVERSITY

I joined the COES Safety Team in 2018, attending monthly meetings and coordinating safety policies for Nethken Hall. I report any safety issues that need to be addressed for my building, inside or outside.

My responsibilities also include supervising a few student workers. I especially enjoy Student Worker Appreciation week. (They seem to love it too.) I spoil my workers with little gifts each day of the week. Everyone loves to know they're appreciated. It's bittersweet when those students graduate and leave.

Over my 12 years here, I have trained or help to train seven Administrative Assistants in other departments within the College of Engineering and Science. I enjoy helping others perform well at their jobs. I've been blessed to have worked with three wonderful bosses. Having a kind and understanding supervisor really makes the workplace enjoyable. I truly work with a fantastic team of faculty and staff, and plan to continue working at Louisiana Tech until retirement.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Marsha Smith
Administrative Assistant
CSC/CYEN/CSET/ELEN



04/25/2024

Dear Louisiana Tech University Senate,

I am honored to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Marsha Smith for the Louisiana Tech University Senate 2023-2024 Loyalty Award. I highly recommend Marsha for this outstanding award. I have enjoyed the pleasure of working with Marsha at the University for many years as have so many others on this campus. Marsha's role in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science includes her serving as the property custodian for these areas which allows me to see how loyal she is to her fellow employees and to this entire University. Marsha and I work together with many things including surplus, inventory, and tagging new assets. Therefore, we communicate often. Marsha is very thorough with her work procedures and is very pleasant to work with. Her loyal dedication to her departmental faculty is unwavering. She is committed to assisting with the needs of not only her entire department but all students, staff and faculty. She works determinedly with pride in clearing out surplus her area no longer has a use for. At Property we are so thankful for Marsha and her loyal working diligence. Marsha truly shows excellence in service and loyalty to this University.

When I think of a Louisiana Tech employee that carries out their daily duties and goes beyond expectations with dedication, quality service and extraordinary loyalty, Marsha Smith comes to mind. Marsha is compassionate, caring and productive. Her actions certainly go above and beyond what is expected. She favorably represents the University by truly caring and taking time with each and every task, letting University employees and students know she is there for them. Marsha genuinely shows her loyal commitment to fulfilling the needs of all faculty, staff and the students at Louisiana Tech University.

I highly recommend Marsha Smith to be selected as the recipient of the 2023-2024 University Senate Classified Staff Loyalty Award. Marsha is very deserving of this award.

Sincerely,

Ann White

Louisiana Tech University

Property Control Manager



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

May 2, 2024

University Senate
Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana 71272

Re: 2023-2024 University Senate Loyalty Award

To the Selection Committee:

I'm writing this letter to recommend and support Marsha Smith for the 2023-2034 University Senate Loyalty Award.

Marsha has been employed by Louisiana Tech as an Administrative Assistant III since July 2012 (well over a decade at this point). Marsha is located in Nethken Hall and serves faculty for a number of programs: Computer Science, Cyber Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Math, and Cyber Security Engineering Technology (CSET). In addition, she supports the Academic Director for Computer Science, Cyber Engineering, and Electrical Engineering. Over the past decade plus she has supported three academic directors: Sumeet Dua, Galen Turner, and now over the last three years me, Mike O'Neal.

Marsha is exceedingly loyal to the University – to its faculty, its students, and its other staff members. She is also one of the most pro-active employees I've ever had the pleasure to work with. If something needs doing, Marsha does it, without needing to be asked.

Nethken is an old building with lots of infrastructure issues, but Marsha goes out of her way to make it our second home – as safe and attractive as possible. In every season, she adds small touches, like seasonally appropriate wreaths on her office door. During the annual holiday season she sets up, decorates, and afterwards takes down two separate Christmas trees – one for each floor of the building – and adds wonderful touches like banners of handmade “snowflakes”. She creates and posts attractive and informative signs throughout the building, and worked to secure a bike rack for the students so that they don't have to chain their bikes to the guard rails on the stairs or bring them into the building. When we have a storm, the building leaks – but far less than it did previously, as Marsha has located and fixed many of the leaks herself. After a big rainstorm, Marsha will go through the classes and labs inspecting for water damage and mitigating that damage as best she can. Recently there was a large storm, and the University issued a closure. Rather than stay home, Marsha put in a full day, working tirelessly to prep the building for the resumption of classes the following day.

As AD, whenever I have a question, Marsha seems to have the answer. And if she doesn't know the answer, she knows who to go for the answer – and she gets it for me. With many of the recurring administrative tasks, such as placing the textbook orders, I don't even see the task as Marsha just takes care of it for me. Marsha keeps meticulous up-to-date notes on the various workday processes and when I, or another faculty member, have a question, she's almost always able to tell us how to navigate the issue.

Marsha takes pride in her work. She carries out her duties admirably, though I am at a loss as to how one person can manage so many people and tasks so effectively. Marsha often works with newly hired admins in the COES, showing them the ropes, and getting them quickly up to speed – providing them with a resource when they have questions. The programs she supports simply couldn't function without her, and I'd truly be lost without her.

Marsha embodies the spirit of “Ever Loyal Be”. Please give utmost consideration to her application for the 2023-2024 University Senate Loyalty Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike O'Neal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "O'Neal" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Mike O'Neal
Larson Professor of Computer Science
Interim Director Computer Science, Cyber Engineering, and Electrical Engineering



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing in support for Mrs. Marsha Smith and her nomination for the Louisiana Tech Loyalty 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 nine years. In this time she has repeatedly demonstrated her passion in supporting the academic enterprise through her many years of loyal service to our faculty, students, and staff on campus. 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, Cyber Security 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 leadership every day. Complexities have emerged which continue to require creative solutions, and Marsha does not shy away from these. Recognizing early that her 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 nine years ago, Marsha became the Building Manager. 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, she handles any work-orders for things she cannot address herself. 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. Jim Palmer expressed his thankfulness for her loyalty to a task that nobody like where she went 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 loyalty to our campus, 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 her efforts to guaranteeing a safe environment is a testament to her loyalty to the university – to our faculty and students. Of course, I should mention that her problem-solving didn't stop there. Marsha searched the internet, eventually finding the main problem with the building. Discovering that the 'weep holes' could be blocked by simple debris that could shift over time. She and her student-workers 'drilled out' the debris in every 'weep hole' around the entire building. 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.

Marsha's quiet approach to helping others achieve is something that she would not want anyone to recognize publicly. However, this recognition 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 helping at Gumbo Fest, Spring Release, or one of our numerous other events, Marsha's presence goes a long way to showing students how much she admires their efforts and the university as a whole.

I believe that Marsha is one of the most loyal 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 such loyalty. If anyone among our staff embodies what is in the hearts of our alumni – Ever Loyal Be – for Marsha, it is not just a euphemism to be sung, but the heart of a life given to the people she cares for every day.

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