



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF APPLIED AND NATURAL SCIENCES

April 29, 2024

University Senate
Loyalty Award Selection Committee

Dear University Senate Loyalty Award Selection Committee:

I am overwhelmed and very humbled by my nomination for the Louisiana Tech University Loyalty Award. My heartfelt love for Louisiana Tech University runs incredibly deep. I was reared in Ruston in a wonderful family with parents who truly believed that education was the key to happiness and success. As a junior high school student, I remember attending many Louisiana Tech football games with my dad, who would always coax me into going to the game with him by saying, "Come to the game with me tonight. I promise you will witness the talent of an exceptional quarterback who is going to be famous one day!" The exceptional quarterback my father was referring to was Terry Bradshaw. I had no idea that later in life I would actually be at Louisiana Tech dinners and events with Bradshaw.

Because I grew up in a household with much focus on education, my parents instilled in me a hunger and passion for searching, researching, and learning new things. That desire continues to grow with a thirst for new ideas and knowledge. At Louisiana Tech University, I have had the opportunity as a student, alumnae, employee, and colleague to listen, observe, discuss, and experience as much as I can to fill my mind with fresh, exciting, and innovative ideas.

I feel extremely blessed that my Louisiana Tech career has allowed me to work with great educators and professionals, as well as amazing alumni whom I regard with tremendous respect and admiration. As the Director of Development for the College of Applied and Natural Sciences, I believe in this great University, and I have a compelling desire to make a

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positive difference. It is especially gratifying to work with so many older alumni. I have tremendous admiration for them and their journey through life. I can't help but think about the saying, "As you get older, you will understand more and more that it's not about what you look like or what you own; it's all about the person you've become." As I look across Tech's campus, I often think about the decades of people who have come before us, and through their hard work, experiences, and love, Louisiana Tech University has successfully soared as an exceptional research institution of higher learning that continues to care about its students, faculty, staff, and alumni—our Tech Family.

I have and continue to be very blessed through my work as a development officer for the College of Applied and Natural Sciences. I have been fortunate to meet and work with amazing alumni, as well as successful corporations and companies, who are now engaged and invested with Louisiana Tech University as industry partners. For the past several years I have had the opportunity to work with the Dean and the President on many transformational projects that will continue to move the University forward. This past year was the best year I have had as a development officer, raising more than \$3MM for projects such as the Forest Products Innovation Center. I have often been told by alumni that my enthusiasm is contagious, but I just laugh and say how can I not be excited or enthusiastic about Louisiana Tech University and the students we serve!

Several years ago, I was asked to teach a few classes in the School of Human Ecology, Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies Program. This commitment has given me the opportunity to look at Louisiana Tech University in my role as a development officer, as well as an instructor, through different lenses. As an educator I believe the word "knowledge" does much more than enhance a student's thinking skills; it ignites growth through experiences and develops a passion for learning that will build a successful life. In my additional role as faculty, I have also learned to deeply appreciate the dedication, hard work, and discipline of Tech's faculty.

Honestly, being in the classroom has made me even more passionate about advancing the University through private support. As an educator, I can actually see and feel the affect and advantages that I can make by providing support and funding.

I love Louisiana Tech University and the tremendous impact it continues to have on my life. My personality has been shaped and my life enriched through the University I proudly serve. Forever loyal be!

Much appreciation,



Penny Murray Humphries
Director of Development
College of Applied and Natural Sciences



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF APPLIED AND NATURAL SCIENCES

April 29, 2024

University Senate
Loyalty Award Selection Committee

Re: Nomination of Ms. Penny Humphries for the 2024 Loyalty Award

Dear University Senate Loyalty Award Selection Committee:

On behalf of the College of Applied and Natural Sciences, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the nomination of Ms. Penny Humphries for the 2024 University Senate Loyalty Award. Considering that this award is aimed at an unclassified employee who has demonstrated extraordinary loyalty, dedication, and service to the university, their fellow employees and/or students, Ms. Humphries is indeed an excellent candidate for this award.

Ms. Humphries's affiliation with Louisiana Tech University began in 1975, almost 50 years ago, as an incoming freshman. She graduated with a degree in Fashion Merchandising in 1979. Returning to Tech in 1994 to serve as Director of Continuing Education, she eventually moved to the Marbury Alumni Center to serve as an Annual Giving Officer and continues today as a Development Officer (DVO) for the College of Applied and Natural Sciences, as well as an instructor in the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies program. Through the funds she has raised as a DVO, her contributions to student scholarships, faculty professorships, academic program support, and special projects throughout the College of Applied and Natural Sciences are truly exceptional.

Just considering the raw data, the College of Applied and Natural Sciences (ANS) had been receiving around \$100,000 per year in contributions from alumni and friends of the college (\$101,049 in 2014 and \$107,052 in 2015) prior to Ms. Humphries involvement as a DVO. In 2016, Ms. Humphries first year as a DVO, contributions for ANS increased to \$142,336, a year where she was also serving as DVO for two other colleges. Beginning in 2018, Ms. Humphries became ANS's exclusive DVO, with contributions continuing to increase. In 2021, more than \$336,000 was raised; in 2022, \$3.33 million was raised; in 2023-24, \$1.4 million has been raised to date. The raw data is impressive, but the real story lies with the broad impact that these funds have had on students, faculty, staff, academic degree programs, research programs, and special projects.

Multiple undergraduate and graduate student scholarship endowments have been created through Ms. Humphries's efforts, including the Landon Hays Memorial Endowed Scholarship and the Hunt Forest Products Endowed Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences and Forestry, Dr. Tom McNeely's establishment of two endowed graduate scholarship programs honoring two retired Biology professors, as well as additional endowed scholarships in the School of Biological Sciences, Division of Nursing, School of Human Ecology and School of Agricultural Sciences and Forestry. Agricultural Sciences faculty have

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Re: Nomination of Ms. Penny Humphries, page 2 of 2

benefitted through the establishment of two endowed professorships secured by Ms. Humphries's close working relationship with Ray and Dorothy Young. Biological Sciences faculty have benefitted from annual donations secured by Ms. Humphries from a donor for the Environmental Science program.

Ms. Humphries's efforts have resulted in the renovation of the Lomax Hall Auditorium (\$75,000 project), the creation of the Justin and Jeanette Hinckley Virtual Anatomy Lab in Carson Taylor Hall (\$300,000 project), multiple gifts to the Division of Nursing to support their new RN to BSN degree program, in addition to other Nursing program enhancements. Ms. Humphries has also secured multiple gifts to the Visual Integration of Science Through Art (VISTA) program. Dr. and Mrs. Bill Turner donated \$100,000 to support the Medical Laboratory Science Program in the School of Biological Sciences, as well as two \$100,000 Endowed Scholarships in the School of Biological Sciences. Ms. Humphries was largely responsible for raising close to \$70,000 for the Louisiana Tech Forestry Program's hosting of the Forestry Conclave, a collegiate Forestry event that hosted several Forestry programs from universities throughout the southern United States.

Currently, Ms. Humphries has been active in helping raise the \$5 million private matching portion of the Forestry Innovation Center. The Center will enhance the economic impact of the Forestry industry by creating innovative and sustainable applications for wood-related products. To date, approximately \$3.5 million of the required match has been raised, largely due to Ms. Humphries's efforts.

As you can see, the impact of Penny Humphries's loyalty goes beyond a dedication to her alma mater and employer. Her efforts and loyalty have a direct benefit for the students, faculty, staff, and infrastructure of Louisiana Tech University. Given the selection criteria for the University Senate Loyalty Award, Ms. Penny Humphries is truly deserving of being selected.

Thank you so much for your time and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary A. Kennedy".

Gary A. Kennedy, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Applied and Natural Sciences



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

April 28, 2024

It is with great joy that I write this letter of support for Penny Humphries and the University Senate Loyalty Award. I am not sure that I have met anyone on this campus who has as much pride in Louisiana Tech University as Penny Humphries. Her job title would indicate that her role at the University is to build relationships and raise funds to support initiatives and scholarships on campus. As someone who has had the pleasure to not only work with Penny, but to learn from her and be inspired by her, I can tell you that she does so much more than that. Her dedication to Louisiana Tech comes from her family ties, from the time she spent at the University as a student, from the stories she listens to from our alumni, and from teaching our students in the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies program. In every aspect of her personal and professional life, Penny is focused on making Louisiana Tech University the best it can be.

I think my first real interaction with Penny was when I was working on a newsletter for the School of Biological Sciences and I wanted to connect to an alum who I could feature in the newsletter. Being shy and not from this area, I didn't know many people and was hoping to just send Dr. Johnny Armstrong an email and get a response to some questions I could type up and send out. Penny encouraged me to call Dr. Armstrong and set up a meeting for coffee. She probably doesn't know how nervous and uncomfortable I was, but I trusted her so I made the call and we met Dr. Armstrong for coffee. Well, several years later, Johnny and his wife Karen not only regularly support our Environmental Science program, they are some of my closest personal friends in Ruston. What Penny taught me through that first interaction is that people who went to Louisiana Tech loved their experience as a student, they want to have a relationship with the university, and they want to invest in making it a great place of higher education for future students. Since that first interaction Penny and I have worked together on several projects, including forming relationships that support the VISTA Center, the creation of the Justin and Jeanette Hinckely Virtual Anatomy Lab, and the establishing of the ANS Alumni Mentoring Program. Each of these initiatives has enhanced alumni relationships, supported innovative projects on campus, and most importantly, elevated the educational experience of our students.

Everyday Penny goes above and beyond in support of Louisiana Tech. I have seen how much time she dedicates to her relationships with industry partners, alumni, current and prospective students. She takes the extra step to engage our students not just in her classes, but from

across disciplines in activities like the upcoming Runway show, making their time here that much more meaningful. She drives all over the state to drop off Poinsettia during the holidays so that people know Louisiana Tech appreciates them. She takes on the extra load to teach classes that encourage students to challenge themselves in areas of creativity and design. She engages the community and next generation of Louisiana Tech students by participating in recruiting events and inviting high school students to participate in campus activities.

Penny is loyal in the most true sense of the word and that loyalty is firmly rooted in a connection and passion for Louisiana Tech. What impresses me most about Penny's loyalty is not that it is unwavering, but that it is honest. She does not deny the tough times and doesn't shy away from challenges, always looking for better ways to achieve our goals. Her dedication always seems to return to a clear sense of what Louisiana Tech was for her, what it represents for our alumni and community, and what it was and will be for so many to come. She encourages us all to be proud of where we are and what we do at the University. She sees the role that each of us has here, recognizes that everywhere we go we represent Louisiana Tech, and has demonstrated to me what it means to be a part of the Louisiana Tech community, representing the University both on and off campus. For Penny all of this comes naturally. Her humility and ease with which she shares her passion is infectious. It would be hard to visit with Penny and not see her true love for Louisiana Tech University. She has taught me what it means to be a graduate of this university and to be part of this community. It is an honor to work with Penny, a privilege to have her as our college Development Officer, and a great joy to have her as a friend. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award and hope that you will strongly consider her for this tremendous recognition for her genuine loyalty to this university and her dedication to past, current, and future generations of the Louisiana Tech community.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jamie Newman, PhD

Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies, College of Applied and Natural Sciences

Professor, School of Biological Sciences

Scott Weathersby Endowed Professor in Zoology/Premedicine

Louisiana Tech University

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LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

School of Human Ecology

April 28, 2024

Dear University Senate,

It is my privilege to support the nomination of Penny Humphries for the 2024 Louisiana Tech University Senate Loyalty Award. In reviewing the criteria for the award, it is evident that Penny meets and exceeds each and every one of the standards.

Penny has been employed at Louisiana Tech for over 30 years. She began as the Director of Continuing Education in 1993 and, within two years, was quickly reassigned by Dr. Reneau to his university advancement team, as he recognized her talent for engaging in the community and inspiring connections to Tech. For decades, she has worked tirelessly to raise funds for the University, its colleges, units, programs, and strategic initiatives initially as the Director of Annual Giving and most recently as the Director of Development for the College of Applied and Natural Sciences. She has also served the College of Education and the College of Liberal Arts.

In addition to her duties as the ANS Director of Development, Penny serves as an adjunct instructor for the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies (FMRS) program. Penny **goes above and beyond to ensure** that each of her students receives educational experiences that will translate to professional success. Presently, Penny is teaching our Fashion Runway class, and the students are learning how to plan, market, and execute a high-quality runway show. By attending the Fashion Runway show, one can see that Penny provides not only her student but also the Tech and Ruston communities with a high-quality fashion production experience.

Penny wants to ensure that every project in which she is involved **exudes excellence and demonstrates loyalty** to the university. Her most notable current project is fundraising for the Forest Product Innovation Center. She has educated herself on the field of forestry and forest product innovations. She meets with industry executives within the state and region, across the country, and internationally. She has secured over 3 million dollars of support towards making this project a reality and towards **meeting the needs of the Louisiana Tech students, faculty, and staff.**

For more than 30 years and in various roles, Penny has **collaborated with multiple departments, faculty, staff, colleges, units, and community partners to enhance the Tech experience for the Tech and Ruston communities.** There is rarely an event she organizes or a project she coordinates that doesn't involve two or more collaborative partners within the university and/or between the university and the Ruston community.

Lastly, I can think of few individuals as **committed and loyal to Louisiana Tech** as Penny Humphries. Ruston has been her home since her childhood; she received her undergraduate degree from Tech; and she has been a staunch supporter of all three university presidents she has served. She is proud of her alma mater, and she exudes that pride not just on Loyal Blue Fridays.

It is without reservation that I am pleased to support the nomination of Penny Humphries for the University Senate Loyalty Award.

Sincerely,

Interim Director, School of Human Ecology
Sue Woodard Huckaby Endowed Professor

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