



LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY®

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

April 30, 2024

Louisiana Tech University Senate Awards Committee,

I am both humbled and honored to be nominated for the 2023-2024 Outstanding Service Award by the University Senate and campus faculty and staff of Louisiana Tech University. As an Information Technology (IT) Coordinator at Louisiana Tech University for the past 22 years, I have had the privilege of participating and leading transformative initiatives that have shaped the technological landscape of our institution. I have served in many roles and on numerous IT projects that aim to enhance efficiency, foster innovation, and drive academic excellence. Some of my major IT milestones include:

- The Center for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology (CEnIT) which established an innovative entrepreneurship program along with classes, seminars, and yearly business plan competitions. The center upgraded faculty desktop PC's and networking equipment.
- The Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) delivered high speed networking to our campus (May 2007). This created many opportunities such as building out a data center in Davison Hall to host high performance research computers (BlueDawg and Painter) and a data backup facility for Louisiana state agencies and universities located in the hurricane impact zone.
- Transitioning classes to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring continuity with minimal disruption. This required training both students and faculty and deploying necessary software tools so classroom instruction could continue seamlessly.

I have inherited many projects during my career and the one I find most rewarding is managing my team of student workers at the 24-Hour print lab. Guiding these students not only keeps me grounded as a staff member but also serves as a constant reminder of our primary focus—supporting our students.

Personally, Louisiana Tech University holds a special place in my heart. As a first-generation college graduate (1992), I not only earned my undergraduate degree here but met my wife, Elizabeth (1992), during that time. Now both of our children are following in our footsteps as Louisiana Tech students. My passion for this university extends beyond IT support and academics—I am a devoted Bulldog fan and can often be seen cheering on our teams at sporting events. Louisiana Tech is not just a workplace or school to me, it's a cherished part of my family's story and a community I proudly support.

In summary, I am a loyal Bulldog and proud of my contributions to Louisiana Tech University. Pride is my favorite Tenet of Tech and one I strive to embrace every day. I am grateful to be recognized for this award. Thank you for considering my nomination.

Every Loyal,

Chris Womack

Information Technology Coordinator

Louisiana Tech University

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

P.O. BOX 3184 • RUSTON, LA 71272-0001 • TELEPHONE (318) 257-2893 • FAX (318) 257-3645

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY UNIVERSITY



**Chief Innovation Officer
Louisiana Tech University
500 Dan Reneau Drive, Suite 328
Ruston, LA 71272**



April 29, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for Chris Womack regarding his nomination for the Outstanding Service Award by the Louisiana Tech University Faculty Staff Senate. Chris and I came to Louisiana Tech at the same time in 2002, and I have known him and followed his work ever since.

He came to our university to support a new, leading edge initiative integrating technology, engineering, business, and entrepreneurship. It was a ground-breaking new collaborative effort to create the Center for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology (CEnIT) and catalyze a culture of interdisciplinary entrepreneurship and innovation across our campus. While Chris most directly played the role of Information Technology Coordinator in support of CEnIT, he was doing so as part of a diverse team working across disciplinary lines to create a new center of excellence at the university. His technical skills were essential to that team, but most important and valuable was his collegial and collaborative disposition and his innovative thinking and working style.

Those qualities and his continuous search for new knowledge and personal growth have driven him throughout his time at Tech, and as a result, he has been on the leading edge of many innovative, technology intensive efforts that have advanced our university mission from the classroom to the research lab to the engagement of external corporate partners.

While providing a broad set of campus constituents, facilities, and programs with quality IT support services during his tenure, Chris has also helped envision and lead the buildout of some of our most ground-breaking technology initiatives including the CEnIT, the Enterprise Campus, our engagement with the Cyber Innovation Center in Bossier, our campus-wide wireless network infrastructure, the buildout of the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) on campus, the North Louisiana Data Center, and Amazon Web services. He has not been content to provide only support. Throughout his career he has provided leadership and helped move the university forward and seize new opportunities in a rapidly changing and ever evolving world of technology.

Chris's recent efforts to gain his Master of Arts in Teaching are indicative of his generous mindset and in part an outgrowth of his ongoing work to develop students. He has always maintained a group of student interns and apprentices to support his wide-ranging responsibilities, but even more so to provide those students an opportunity to learn and gain valuable work experience that enhances their classroom learning and provides a pathway to

career success. He has always been a teacher for his students, and I have no doubt he will continue to positively impact young people after finishing his teaching degree.

I can't think of anyone who better exemplifies the Louisiana Tech tenets of loyalty, excellence, integrity, leadership, and commitment than Chris Womack. He is highly worthy of the Outstanding Service Award, and I urge your full consideration of his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave N. Norris".

Dr. Dave N. Norris
Chief Innovation Officer
Louisiana Tech University

April 25, 2024

To: University Senate and Campus Faculty and Staff

RE: Letter of Support
Nomination of Chris Womack for 2023-2024 Outstanding Service Award

I have been asked to write a letter of recommendation for Chris Womack in support of his nomination for the Outstanding Service Award. I am most happy to do so.

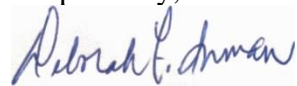
I worked with Chris at Louisiana Tech for twenty years. He is an extremely talented Information Technology (IT) professional. Chris takes time to answer IT questions and deliver helpful solutions during program development for classes and events. His communication skills are excellent and his explanations for complicated IT issues are always on point and easy to understand. He enjoys helping others learn IT concepts and is also a great mentor to student workers he supervises.

Chris's talents contribute greatly to the working IT infrastructure of Louisiana Tech. His face is not one we typically see in the classroom, yet each time employees and students use the virtual desktop computing environment, Zoom, the 40-GB fiber network and super computing resources, video conferencing, research high performance computing clusters and numerous other IT resources, we benefit from his skills and knowledge as he supervises these projects. He also manages the 24-hour computer, 3D printer and print lab for students and supervises 10-15 student workers in the lab.

Chris represents this University by serving on numerous IT projects in our region. He is the data center manager for the North Louisiana Data Center located on LONI's northern loop at Louisiana Tech and he serves clients using this service. He managed the build-out of the Cyber Innovation Network Lab Center in Bossier City and was the project manager for the Data Replication Center for State of Louisiana agencies.

Chris truly has a servant's heart. He understands how to connect with individuals to solve problems which, at one time or another, we all experience with IT. His calm demeanor fosters cooperation among peers which leads to the most creative and effective solutions. He is one of those individuals who rise to the top by demonstrating integrity and commitment to the betterment of Louisiana Tech through using his experience, leadership abilities, and talents. If you have questions or want to talk to me personally about Chris, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,



Deborah F. Inman
Retired Director, Center for Entrepreneurship, Information, and Technology
Louisiana Tech University



LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

25 April 2024

To Louisiana Tech University Senate Awards Committee:

It is with pleasure I write this letter supporting Mr. Chris Womack for the Outstanding Service Award, for he exemplifies the kind of individual this award was meant to recognize.

I have collaborated with Mr. Womack on a variety of projects over the years – from coordinating online speakers to planning major regional events. Through his actions during each of these events, Mr. Womack continually embodied the spirit of service – to give freely, to lead effortlessly, and to innovate continually. A bit of context: I first collaborated with Mr. Womack to plan a series of online talks for the LA Tech and Ruston communities. I have since worked with Mr. Womack to coordinate a variety of events – from scheduling two different hybrid visiting speaker series to organizing a major conference on the Tech campus. His actions and attitude during these undertakings was nothing short of inspirational; in fact, they often inspired others working with him to become exemplars of true, selfless service as well.

Throughout the various projects, Mr. Womack and I worked on over the years, he never said “No” or “I can’t do that.” Not once; not ever – no matter how challenging the task. Rather, his attitude was always one of “I will find a way!” And every time, he did. No matter what the challenge involved, Mr. Womack gave 110% to make sure things happened. On several occasions, he stepped in to address a major technology issue that occurred in the middle of a visiting speaker’s talk, and during these high-pressure and time-sensitive instances, he remained calm and collected, put the speaker and the audience at ease, and quickly and effectively diagnosed and addressed the problem. In another situation, Mr. Womack coordinated all of the technology needed to effectively create a hybrid version of a major state conference – which included quickly and effectively addressing different technical, logistical, and other situations as they arose.

What makes such feats truly remarkable is the attitude Mr. Womack maintained throughout every project and task, no matter how onerous it was. In every interaction he has with others – be they a visiting scholar, a student, or anyone else – Mr. Womack patiently and sincerely listens. He will fully listen to visitor complaints and concerns and immediately enact a solution – no matter how difficult the request. (Example: He came up with a last-minute solution to allow for the Zoom broadcasting of a keynote address only moments after learning the location of the address had been moved!)

Through his dedication to helping his fellow persons, his continual optimistic cheer, and his focus on true actions over hollow words, Mr. Womack represents what all of us should try to achieve through serving others in all we do. He is an incredible member of the LA Tech community, and we are all better due to Mr. Womack being a part of our campus. In truth, he is the ideal person whose work should be acknowledged with the Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

Kirk St. Amant

Kirk St. Amant

Professor and Eunice C. Williamson Endowed Chair in Technical Communication

Director, LA Tech Center for Health and Medical Communication

A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

POST OFFICE BOX 3162 • RUSTON, LA 71272-0001 • TELEPHONE (318) 257-2718 • FAX (318) 257-4376

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY UNIVERSITY