

Dr. Tara Williams-Hart, beloved Professor of Biological Sciences, at LSUS died August 25 after a brief illness. Dr. Williams-Hart served on the LSUS faculty for 17 years. She taught classes in the Department of Biological Sciences' undergraduate and graduate programs.

Williams-Hart received her Bachelor's degree in Natural Sciences with a Biology concentration in 1994 at Spelman College, in Atlanta, Georgia. She received her PhD degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from LSU Health Sciences in Shreveport, LA after receiving her M.S. from the same institution in 2000. She received her training and expertise in molecular genetics using *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (budding yeast) as a model organism and joined the LSUS faculty in the fall of 2003, immediately after the completion of her dissertation work. In that time, she has served as the principal investigator or co-investigator for university, state, National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health-funded grants and trained several undergraduate and graduate students in her research laboratory. Most of her trainees have matriculated into professional schools or into a scientific career.

She was a very strong, resolute person, whose contributions to LSUS were immense, coordinating her teaching, service and research in a professional and effective way, resulting in numerous grants, publications, and presentations. She served as a faculty and research mentor for a diverse population of future science professionals. It was her mission to help students with their lives and careers. She served as the Chairperson of the Health Science Advisory Committee (HSAC) at LSUS, and was the advisor of the Pre-medical/pre-dental students. She was the Faculty Advisor for three undergraduate student organizations (Alpha Epsilon Delta Honor Society, Minority Association of Pre-health Students and the Pre-Dental Society) and she also served as the Director of the Master of Science in Biological Sciences program in the Department of Biological Sciences. With the student in focus, she also led the Educational Familiarization Program, a MCAT prep course.

For more than a decade Dr. Williams-Hart was a member of the Omicron Delta Kappa: National Leadership Honor Society and while at LSUS received numerous awards for her dedicated work, some of them multiple times, including Outstanding Student Organization Advisor of the year (awarded by student Government Association at LSUS) and the Excellence in Teaching Award (awarded by College of Sciences and LSUS Foundation).

She was greatly admired and will be missed by all who knew her.