DSU Alumna Becomes Psychology Chair

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Dr. Gwendolyn N. Scott-Jones counts the ability to return to one's alma mater and give back as evidence of professional success.

Such success has not only brought her back to serve as a faculty member at the University from which she graduated twice, but also to lead the Department of Psychology from which she earned her 1996 bachelor of science degree.

The 36-year-old native Delawarean has been tapped to chair the department after serving only one year as an assistant professor of psychology. She brings a wealth of field and life experiences to her new leadership post — and an abundance of enthusiasm — that she believes will benefit the faculty and students in her department.

After earning a 1999 Master of Social Work at DSU, Dr. Scott-Jones proceeded to fill her professional resume with a number of career-building experiences. She served in several mental health clinician positions for the Delaware Department of Correction, as a psychology assistant with the St. Jones Center for Behavior Health and the Delaware Psychiatric Center, as well as a psychiatric social worker at the State of Delaware Crisis Prevention Service.

Dr. Gwendolyn Scott-Jones

While working those jobs, she continued with her advanced studies at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, where she earned a master's degree and a doctoral degree both in clinical psychology. Her Psy.D includes a sub-specialty in forensic psychology.

Dr. Scott-Jones said that she has been interested in psychology since her Lake Forest High School days in Kent County, Del. "Knowing that there is hair-thin line between saneness and insanity is fascinating," she said. "I have always been interested in forensic psychology and in abnormalities from a psychological perspective."

The new psychology chair provides DSU with a well-connected member of the professional mental health community. She was selected to be the keynote speaker at the 2008 People of Color Mental Health Conference in Wilmington. Through her work in state agencies throughout the First State, Dr. Scott-Jones has mental health professional connections throughout Delaware and beyond. She has also developed a Chisum Youth Basketball Program based in the Lake Forest School District in which DSU psychology and athletics students are gaining valuable community service skills while working with middle school-age children.

Dr. Scott-Jones said her experiences with challenges and adversities have taught her that “the occasion (of something adverse) does not have to lead to the conclusion.”

She is willing to pass this lesson on to any student or mental health client that she works with.

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