

2012 Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Academic Advising

Marsha Rolle

Professor Marsha Rolle has truly embodied what it means to be an outstanding academic advisor. When reading the multiple nominations that were submitted on her behalf, it was clear that she is caring, dedicated, and passionate about both her field and her students. This balance is what makes a truly exceptional advisor.

In all of the nominations from Professor Rolle's advisees, words like "passion", "caring", "friend" and "mentor" were repeated. Each one described a time when they felt personally supported by her, and often credited her for their successes. Many of them wrote that they would not be where they are today, both academically and professionally, if it were not for Professor Rolle.

It is clear that Professor Rolle takes her role as Academic Advisor seriously, and her advisees commented on her ability to make them feel supported and challenged. One student wrote, "to say that Professor Rolle was merely a great advisor would be an immense understatement. She did not simply teach and mentor me about the field of vascular tissue engineering, but challenged me to become an independent researcher. Her motivation was to create engineers who can think critically and design creative solutions to any biomedical engineering problems."

Advisees also commented on the time she takes to help them, even in spite of her own busy teaching and research workload. One student wrote, "I have noticed how dedicated she is to helping her students succeed. No matter how busy, Professor Rolle always makes time to help me." Other students commented on how timely she is in her responses to their emails and phone messages, often replying to them long after business hours have ended.

Professor Rolle puts her students first, which is what an exceptional Academic Advisor should do. Not only does she advise students academically, she also serves as the Faculty Advisor for Alpha Eta Mu Beta, the BME honor society. This comment from an advisee and the President of the BME honor society sums up the impact Professor Rolle has had on the students at WPI: "Professor Rolle is a wonderful and enthusiastic professor, whose passion and dedication advances the academic success of her students. Her guidance and positive attitude has encouraged me to work extremely hard throughout my time at WPI. She will always remain one of my greatest role models."

For all of the reasons described above, Professor Rolle is most deserving of this award.

It is with great honor that we present this year's Trustee's Award for Outstanding Advising Award to Professor Marsha Rolle.