

SHAWNEE BREITENSTEIN

Director of Engineering Engagement, School of Engineering



It is rare to encounter an individual with intelligence, drive, creativity, a powerful work ethic, and an intuitive understanding of business needs. Match those qualities with compassion, enthusiasm and leadership, and you still may not have found someone as deserving as Shawnee Breitenstein.

We all know the struggles our community faces when student enrollment is low. When we struggle to bring students to our campus, to enroll them in UD courses, it affects us. It was during one such time that Shawnee came to the Diversity in Engineering Program as a new staff member. She immediately set about addressing that chief concern: low enrollment.

To address it she developed a creative “Passport” program to engage prospective students and their families while promoting UD’s prestigious Engineering program. She not only immersed them in the Passport experience; she collected valuable data in order to boost the School of Engineering’s recruiting efforts. Shawnee also built up the Engineering Ambassadors, a group of UD students who are committed to outreach and to scheduling visits for an ever-growing class of future engineers. She developed training modules and is currently developing a procedures manual for the Ambassadors, as well. Furthermore, Shawnee has boosted recruiting and outreach efforts to attract more females and underrepresented minority students to UD. And her efforts have paid off: UD has seen the most diverse and gender-balanced engineering class in the history of the school, and domestic enrollment numbers are rising.

As if that weren’t enough, Shawnee is a caring individual. She cares deeply not only about the quality of her work, but she also cares deeply for the students, faculty and staff with whom she works. She is an asset to this community, and actively builds it. Students, faculty and staff can’t seem to say enough about Shawnee Breitenstein’s accomplishments. It is for these reasons and many more that Shawnee Breitenstein is deserving of the 2019 Presidential Staff Achievement Award.