

Lone Star College Employee Spotlight

on **Kristina Sampson**



With the current focus on improving student success, especially in critical STEM areas, one LSC Cy-Fair faculty member leads the charge, both through exemplary teaching and also by being a positive role model for her students to follow. Kristina Sampson, with consistent student success rates in the 75-90% range, has developed a winning formula to reach out to students who have previously had bad experiences in math and create a bridge between developmental and credit math for them.

Kristina began her college career witnessing the struggles experienced by students in mathematics. That is what motivated her during her *sophomore* year in college, to change her career goals from that of becoming a Medical Doctor to becoming a Mathematics Professor. Although her pre-med professors were disappointed in losing one of their high achieving students, her mathematics mentors expressed delight in modeling for Kristina so that she could exercise her unique talent in the discipline of Mathematics. So, it has now become her mission to inspire students to believe that they can move through the developmental math sequence and succeed in “gatekeeper” courses like College Algebra, thus paving the way to college success.

Kristina began to formulate her teaching philosophy while tutoring fellow students while in college. “My goal is to reach and teach each student while increasing their comfort level with mathematics through showing applications of and step-by-step methods of working with math concepts”. She always utilizes more than one technique to get each point across, using both “high tech” and “low tech” teaching tools. She builds formative assessment into the class plans so she can gauge student progress towards increasing important learning outcomes.

One of her strengths is her ability to use technology to effectively reach her students. Professor Sampson has not only developed and taught distance learning math classes, but creates fun videos that support the concepts taught in class. She also takes the time to mentor other instructors in technology as an iStar Faculty mentor and Table PC enthusiast.

While her success rates are high, they do not tell the entire story of her empathy and respect for her students. One of her students noted, “I’ve been struggling with math my whole life but by taking her class, it’s now actually one of my favorite subjects.” Another student comments: “Professor Sampson promotes a stress-free fraternal atmosphere in the classroom that facilitates learning. She treats all students with great respect and shows genuine concern for each individual’s success. She is always available if I need help, explains it in a way I can understand and doesn’t make me feel dumb! Professor Sampson makes learning math possible”.

As a role model for our students, Kristina balances raising a family with an active professional life and still has found time to further her education-she has almost completed basic requirements for her doctorate in Leadership of Higher Education. Her on-campus activities demonstrate that she is a role model, not just academically, but in community engagement, and include involvement through the Diversity and Inclusion committee, Faculty Senate Treasurer and Finance Committee chair, and faculty mentor for students. She volunteers in the community ministry and tutoring mathematics at all levels.

As Kristina summarizes, “I am continually amazed at the number of lives I am able to touch through dedication and persistence, and the things learned from such a diverse population of students”.