

Laura Dotson Named USU Eastern-Price Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year | CEHS

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Utah State University Eastern-Price (USU Eastern-Price) named Laura Dotson the Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year. Dotson, a professional practice assistant professor and the nursing program coordinator, began working at USU Eastern-Price in 2011. Dotson was nominated by a committee, received a plaque and her name will be added to the commemorative list on campus.

"Laura has done a wonderful job helping our nursing program not only grow in size, but also help the students get a quality education that translates into passing the state licensure exam," said Carole Grady, USU nursing programs director. "She is easy to work with and someone we can always depend on to accomplish difficult projects."

Dotson's history with USU Eastern-Price goes back further than her recent time there as a faculty member. In 1993, when the university was the College of Eastern Utah, she earned her Licensed Practical Nursing training, and later in 1995 her associate's in nursing. "I have deep roots in Carbon County," said Dotson. "It helps drive my heart and passion for serving the community as both a nurse and nurse educator."

Outside of the university, Dotson is an active volunteer. She often works with Carbon School District, including being one of the science fair judges every year. She also volunteers in various capacities in her church, working mostly with youth.

Recently, Dotson was chosen to go with the USU study abroad program to Honduras to assess if it would be

something the nursing program could benefit from. "It was an impactful experience and one I believe every college student would benefit and grow from," said Dotson. "This will help give our nursing students a firsthand experience with another culture, broadening their understanding of humans and healthcare in locally and abroad."

When asked what has been a major challenge throughout her professional career, Dotson explained it can be difficult staying "up-to-date on all the changes and medical advances in health care." It's hard to teach content that is continually expanding at a rapid rate, but Dotson has found resolve by maintaining focus. "I have learned to accept that I can't teach the students everything. The majority of their learning will come from working in the field and their experiences as a nurse. My job is to make sure they have a good foundation to build on."

It is this "foundation" that has allowed USU Eastern-Price's nursing program to flourish. More and more students are now entering this field, and they leave with a strong foundation that helps them find success in their own careers after graduating.