

NC State Scientist Earns Global Service Award

By Administrator
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The UNC Staff Assembly has presented the 2020 Erskine B. Bowles Staff Service Award to Dr. Veronia Cateté, a research scientist at NC State University.

Since becoming a research scientist in 2018, Cateté has continued to go above and beyond in service to NC State and the global community. She serves as the co-advisor for the STARS student organization, a service club that provides weekly workshops in computer science for K-12 students. She has mentored 50 high school, 10 undergraduate, and five graduate researchers, and an incredible number of protégés. In addition, Cateté's groundbreaking research has led the way in establishing evaluation support for novice K-12 teachers new to computer science.

"Dr. Cateté invests the time to know each student individually, understanding what motivates them, what aspects of research they are successful at, and how they can collaborate with other students in the lab to create studies and projects that maximize their potential," said UNC Staff Assembly Chair Garrett Killian, who made the announcement at the May 2021 meeting of the UNC Board of Governors.

As the second Latina Ph.D. graduate from NC State's Department of Computer Science, Cateté has made it her personal mission to help foster a sense of belonging and curiosity toward computing in young women and minorities to help give them the knowledge and opportunities to make informed decisions on career pathways.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Cateté took steps to help students adjust. She shifted her office hours to meet regularly with students in other time zones. In addition, Cateté sponsored virtual game time and social activities for students to feel connected with their peers.

"Her character makes our culture better and her actions and initiatives make our department better," said Tiffany Barnes, professor at NC State. "I am confident that she helps NC State grow relationships while providing additional cultural, professional and educational exposure for our students."

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The award was established in 2010 by the UNC Staff Assembly to recognize employees whose accomplishments are consistent with the goals of the University and the University's public service mission. Recipients must exemplify excellence in their professional interactions and customer service within their university employment; provide extraordinary service to their campus and the UNC system outside their job description; and provide exemplary service to their surrounding community.