



## **2010 Iota Sigma Pi Centennial Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching**

### ***Professor Debra Dee Dolliver, Southeastern Louisiana University***

Dr. Debra Dee Dolliver is the **2010 recipient of the Iota Sigma Pi Centennial Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching**. This award is given for excellence in teaching chemistry, biochemistry, or a chemistry-related field at an undergraduate institution that does not offer a graduate program in that field.

Dr. Debra Dee Dolliver returned to school (after completing a B.A. in English in 1985) to take a couple of science classes at Texas Woman's University just to see if she liked them. There she had the opportunity to participate in meaningful chemistry research with a supportive mentor (Dr. Jim Johnson) as an undergraduate, and this totally changed her life: she decided to pursue a career in chemistry. She graduated with a B.S. in chemistry in 1994 and completed an M.S. in 1997 from TWU. She then completed a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry at the University of North Texas in 2001.

Her teaching career began modestly with a temporary instructor position at Southeastern Louisiana University (a state regional university situated between New Orleans and Baton Rouge) in 2001. Even as an instructor, Dr. Dolliver understood that providing an opportunity for undergraduates to participate in research was critical to the quality of their education in chemistry. Because of this, she acquired small internal university grants to establish an active undergraduate research group even as a non-tenure-track faculty member.

Dr. Dolliver was hired as an Assistant Professor at Southeastern in 2003 and has subsequently been promoted to Associate Professor. In this position she has actively acquired external funding both for research in small molecule synthetic method development and instrumentation. This has allowed her to mentor and support 33 undergraduate researchers--resulting in 26 student presentations at regional and national chemistry conferences, 11 undergraduate student co-authors on peer-reviewed papers, and 9 students progressing to graduate studies in chemistry at prestigious universities.

Dr. Dolliver hopes that her efforts to provide her students with valuable research experiences has had the same positive impact that her mentor's support had on her as an undergraduate.