



Qualla Jo Ketchum

Qualla Jo Ketchum is the 2021 Robert E. Stewart Engineering Humanities award recipient for her commitment to promoting Cherokee arts, culture, and history within the Cherokee Nation and beyond and her work in university outreach and leadership and to building her professional career as an engineer and educator.

Ketchum is an engineering education doctoral candidate in the biological systems engineering department at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. There, she works as a graduate teaching assistant for both Foundations of Engineering courses. Her research focus is on indigenizing engineering education. Ketchum graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma State University.

A 10-year member of ASABE, Ketchum has been active in the ASABE Young Professionals Community. Ketchum also served as the Indigenous Community Liaison and graduate student assistant for training Future Leaders to Solve Resource Challenges at the Confluence of Water and Society conference. She has served on several committee including the Centennial Anniversary committee and the Diversity Committee and Assessment committee for the Virginia Tech biological systems engineering department.

Ketchum has been a leader in her community including the Faculty Women of Color in the Academy Conference. Ketchum also served as the graduate student assistant for training Future Leaders to Solve Resource Challenges at the

Confluence of Water and Society conference. Ketchum has worked extensively as a leader in the Native@VT Student Organization and American Indian & Indigenous Alliance. She was programming assistant for the American Indian and Indigenous Community Center, co-chair and member of the Powwow Planning Committee, and East Coast Native American Student Organization Conference Planning Committee. She was the secretary of Native@VT for a term and was on the Indigenous Peoples Day Resolution Committee and the Indigenous Heritage Month Committee.

Ketchum has received several commendations for her work as a university instructor including being named the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Graduate Teaching Scholar in 2016. Ketchum was nominated by her department for the GTA Instructor of Record in 2019. She also became an associate of the Virginia Tech Graduate Academy for Teaching Excellence in 2020.