

# Suzanne Keilson, Ph.D.

*Assistant Professor of Engineering*



It is with humility that I consider the question “how do you live justice at Loyola?” I am not sure that I do live justice or enact it daily. But it occurred to me that however true that may be, however much the large questions of social justice and global challenges can threaten to overwhelm us all, it is in every micro-interaction that we live justice. This is the inverse of the current conversation about micro-aggressions. In the latter, we focus on what such an aggression looks like, feels like, how it can be countered and the therapeutic work that may need to be done. In the former, we focus on creating the ripple effect of positive interactions. We often don’t see or know the positive impact we may have; it might take years to reveal itself, just as the small changes in a butterfly’s wings flapping can change the course of an entire weather system.

In teaching, this may reveal itself as the push-pull challenge of pace and content, being encouraging while holding onto a consistent standard. At some point, both teacher and student have to let go, and their relationship changes in new and unique ways towards a mutual cognitive apprenticeship.

Whenever I am asked to speak about science and engineering education outside Loyola, I am aware that I am a representative of the university. At first I found it surprising

how often I had to answer questions about the multiple Loyolas that exist in the United States, what connects them and the unique Jesuit tradition that informs their way of proceeding. Perhaps the idea that there existed a real someone at the intersection of a female scientist from a different religious tradition who loved her Jesuit school was surprising to those I met. But in that interaction that defied expectations and preconceptions lies a seed for living justice. Bringing a passion for justice to science and technical fields is just as important as the mix of knowledge, skills, and attitudes one brings to that professional community. It is not that there are applications in one's work; it is hopefully that those applications have an immediacy and urgency that provides purpose.

As I continue to grow and move forward in my career at Loyola, I am encouraged to take necessary acts to expand my multiple scholarly, teaching and communal lives in justice.