

Tamiika Hurst-Darby, PhD



Biography

Dr. Tamiika Hurst-Darby is a proud product of the Michigan education system. Born and raised in Detroit, she attended Shrine Catholic High School, before matriculating and graduating from Wayne State University (BS), Michigan State University (MS), and the University of Michigan (PhD).

It was on her educational journey that she developed a love for chemistry and an expertise in method development. During her time in Michigan State University's Analytical Chemistry department, Tamiika pursued a concentration in the Forensic Sciences before shows like CSI, Bones and others became popular. In partnership with the Michigan State Police, she created new protocols for laboratory handling and interpretation of clothing evidence that may have been washed in attempts to remove bloodstains. At The University of Michigan, she obtained a PhD in Chemical Biology in recognition of her research where she was the first to optimize the Carbonic Anhydrase-based biosensor to probe the regulatory mechanisms of metal ions in brain cells damaged by disease or trauma.

Upon completion of her doctorate, Tamiika moved to Cincinnati to join The Procter & Gamble Company. Here she would leverage her method development expertise for the Pet Care and Beauty Care businesses. Her innovations delivered new technical measures relative to dog kibble characterization, ingredient encapsulation, and dog feed strategies. Tamiika's ability to use initiative and judgement to design experiments, identify resources, and develop methods that drive mechanistic understanding was essential to her success at P&G!

Although she is a gifted research scientist who enjoyed her time in the lab/at the bench, Dr. Hurst-Darby was unable to shake the calling to teach and inspire the next generation of scientists. Driven to create pathways of learning in STEM, Tamiika transitioned to academia to serve as an Adjunct Chemistry Professor at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (2014-2018) and then Assistant Professor at the University of Cincinnati (2016-2021). Beyond developing students to become top performers, her model of inclusion and excellence in teaching helped mitigate cultural biases inherent in the reality of being the first African American science teacher for most of her students.

Tamiika has an intrinsic commitment to education and discovery, as well as to wellness and social connectedness. In her current role in HR at Cincinnati Children's, Tamiika implements AI recruiting strategies for enhanced candidate attraction, assessment, and hiring of PhDs and Postdocs for research positions at the #1 Pediatric Hospital in the nation. Tamiika is also a dedicated student and deep practitioner of yoga. Her teaches Vinyasa style and Aerial Yoga, inspiring heal-"in" through a powerful spiritual practice. Her superpower is "to use the science of the mind and the body to make others great." She is holistic in her approach to build a diverse community of yogis seeking peace and self-mastery.

When not teaching or blogging (@Life_2a_t), Tamiika can be found enjoying coffee, engaging random chats at local coffee shops and spending time with her husband Bryan and their five children, Brooklynne (a Junior at Michigan State University), Elgin (15), Syria (14), Djoser (13), and Tazhe (9).