

## **STEM mentor Isaiah Warner of LSU to close Black Family Conference**

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*By Timia Whitsey*

Hampton University's 39th annual Black Family Conference is set to end on Friday, March 17, but not without a bang. The conference aims to celebrate the many achievements of black families and explore the developments that have propelled the families' progression in society.

At 9 a.m., the final day of activities will consist of a student research symposium poster session led by the School of Engineering and Technology, a talent show and a luncheon featuring closing keynote speaker, **Isaiah Warner, Ph.D.**

Warner is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute professor dedicated to engaging undergraduate students in science. He currently serves as a professor at Louisiana State University and was recently named the 2016 Southeastern Conference Professor of the Year. Warner's determination to help students reach their full potential just as others did for him during his childhood drove him to not only teach, but also pioneer a mentoring program for first-year science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) students.

"At points in my life when I've been in a quandary, there have been people showing me the way, and without them I wouldn't be where I am today," said Warner.

To continue the legacy of mentorship that essentially birthed Isaiah Warner's career and love for science, he designed his program to ensure that it comes full circle. After STEM students receive assistance in their studies, they are expected to guide other students in need.

Warner's impact reaches more than just his own students. His devotion to the youth makes him fit to share his teachings with aspiring scientists across the country.

In fact, some of Hampton U.'s own STEM majors anticipate Warner's appearance at Friday's luncheon and appreciate the time that he set aside to impose his wisdom on students.

"It's great that Isaiah Warner is coming to speak at the Black Family Conference," said Brian Hicks of New Orleans, who is in 5th year of the 6-year pharmacy program. "It means a lot to me that he cares enough about our future enough to come talk to us."

Through workshops, dialogue and entertainment, the Black Family Conference intends to help individuals gain life-changing knowledge that will improve the community.

Friday's series of events and closing speaker serve as the cherry on top of an inspiring and informative 3-day event.

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