

THE BUSINESS OF STUDENT SUCCESS



Texarkana College Duo Opens Doors of Opportunity

Texarkana College is in the business of creating opportunity, and Katie Andrus and Mary Ellen Young play a large role in setting students up for success. As the executive director of the TC Foundation, Andrus spends her time securing donations that fund TC's scholarship program. And once they're at TC, Young—TC's Dean of Liberal & Performing Arts, Honors College Director and Phi Theta Kappa advisor—helps them stay on the path to college completion.

Andrus knows that a scholarship can make the difference when a student is deciding where—and sometimes whether—to attend college.

"Some of our students have worked really hard in school, but they've faced odds that might make college seem out of reach for them," Andrus said. "That's why the TC Foundation's scholarship programs exist."

Since Andrus joined the TC team in 2013, the TC Foundation has raised \$8.8 million in private donations, to fund scholarships.

"I can't take the credit—I'm really just a middle man," Andrus said. "We have generous donors in our community who want to encourage and reward hard-working students, and I'm just here to help them connect with those students."

Once students are at TC, faculty and staff like Young are here to encourage them every step of the way. Young wears many hats at TC, but her most important role is making strong connections with students.

"Working with people who are earning an education in order to better their lives is so incredibly meaningful to me," Young said. "I come from a large family where



the importance of a college education was stressed to us from a very young age. Many of our students don't have that kind of support and encouragement, and it's our job to provide it and prove to them that they can succeed."

Young said student organizations like Phi Theta Kappa and the Honors College (which includes all Presidential Scholars) are excellent opportunities for high-achieving students to learn and grow together as scholars during their first two years of college.

"Leading these organizations is truly a privilege," Young said. "I get to walk alongside these students as they learn how to speak in front of people, take on community service projects, travel to state and national leadership conferences, and begin to shape their goals and aspirations."

Andrus said that watching students learn and grow is one of the best parts of her job.

"Seeing how they change during their two years here—that's something I love about working with students," Andrus said. "From the moment they accept the Presidential Scholarship to the day they walk across the stage in their cap and gown, they're coming into their own and finding their place in the world. For our donors, watching these students succeed is the ultimate reward."

No matter how long the days are, Young said, they're worth it.

"That's the thing about working in higher education," Young said. "You have tough days, just like anywhere else, but ultimately you go home feeling like you've made a difference in someone's life. And that's the best feeling in the world." 📌

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For more information about the TC Foundation or to make a donation, please contact Katie Andrus at (903) 823-3059.

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