

VP DeDe Griffith awarded Aspen Presidential Fellowship

Griffith is one of only 40 nationwide selected for community college leadership program

BAYTOWN, TX — DeDe Griffith, interim Vice President of Learning at Lee College, has been awarded the prestigious Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence and will participate in a highly selective leadership program aimed at developing a new cadre of outstanding leaders capable of transforming student success at community colleges across the United States.

The Aspen Institute, an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, announced today that Griffith joins the 2017-18 class of Aspen Presidential Fellows, a diverse group of 40 extraordinary administrators from around the country who will embark on a year-long fellowship in July. Delivered in collaboration with the Stanford Educational Leadership Initiative and top community college leaders, the program focuses on a new vision of leadership and aims to guide new and aspiring community college presidents to dramatically change student outcomes in four areas: learning; completion while in community college and of bachelor's degrees after transfer; employment and earnings after graduation; and equitable access and success for underrepresented minority and low-income students.

“As an administrator and faculty member at Lee College for the past two decades, DeDe has been instrumental in developing and implementing innovative strategies and programs that enhance student success,” said Pres. Dr. Dennis Brown. “Her selection as an Aspen Presidential Fellow is a testament to the effectiveness of her student-centered philosophy and her commitment to strengthening community college education to ensure future generations of students are able to achieve their dreams.”

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), 365 presidents left their posts over the last year. This staggering rate of turnover is happening at the same time that increasing numbers of students — including growing numbers of minority, low-income and first-generation college students — are flocking to community colleges to earn degrees that lead to good jobs and careers.

The 2017-18 Aspen Presidential Fellows hail from 24 states and 38 community colleges of varying sizes. Griffith was selected through a rigorous process that considered her abilities to take strategic risks, lead strong teams and cultivate partnerships and focus on results-oriented improvements in student success and access. A past recipient of the Lee College Faculty Excellence Award and the John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Award, Griffith also shared in institutional recognition through the AACC Award of Excellence of Student Success and coordinates and oversees many initiatives to provide greater access and completion support to all students. She is currently completing a Doctorate of Education in Professional Leadership in Education.

The Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, College Futures Foundation, ECMC Foundation, Greater Texas Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation.