

Warford named Student Success Person of the Year

Award honors Warford's diligent work to help students overcome financial barriers

BAYTOWN, TX — Lee College has awarded Pam Warford, executive director of the Lee College Foundation and director of Foundation and Donor Development, the honor of Student Success Person of the Year for her tireless work and continuous efforts to help students overcome financial barriers that might otherwise prevent them from pursuing higher education.

DeDe Griffith, director of Student Success, presented Warford with the award plaque in May during a special presentation at the regular meeting of the Lee College Board of Regents.

“Her heartfelt desire to see students succeed and her diligent work at meeting their financial needs has fostered a culture of caring for students who may not have even attended college had it not been for scholarships,” Griffith said of Warford. “She provides the college with great communication with our external constituents, serves as a legislative liaison for the college, builds relationships and provides a spirit of camaraderie.”

In the nearly two decades she has spent at Lee College, Warford has been instrumental in helping secure funding for scholarships and other forms of support that help students reach their educational goals. With her leadership, the Lee College Foundation Gala raised a record \$175,000 in 2016 – dwarfing the \$9,800 raised at the gala when Warford arrived at the college in 1999. In addition, the fund balance of the Lee College Foundation increased from \$4.7 million to more than \$10 million during the same time period. Under the guidance of its Board of Directors, the foundation will award approximately \$600,000 to students in the 2017-18 academic year.

When Hurricane Ike struck the Texas Gulf Coast in 2008, Warford created the Student Success Fund to help those facing extraordinary circumstances pay for college-related expenses. She helped implement the first online scholarship application and expanded the types of support and availability of scholarships to ensure all students are eligible for assistance – whether enrolled full-time, part-time, in dual-credit classes for high school students to earn college credits, in non-credit classes offered by the Center for Workforce and Community Development, or in the Lee College Huntsville Center for students incarcerated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Warford also supported the creation of the Britt/Hodgin Second Chance Scholarship benefiting students in the offender education program, and even found funds to purchase uniforms for the Model United Nations student organization to wear in a national competition earlier this year.

Though pleased by how much the college's resources have grown over the course of her career, Warford gets the most joy from connecting with students and hearing how they were able to pursue their education and achieve their dreams with the support of the foundation and its donors. Receiving the Student Success Person of the Year honor for her work is incredibly humbling, she said.

“Seeing students get excited about their futures is the ultimate gratification,” Warford said. “Their success makes everything we do worthwhile.”