

Excerpts from Opening Remarks made on Staff Development Day, May 14, 2009

Good morning and Welcome!

I am delighted to have this opportunity to kick off your Staff Development Day events.

Tarleton's staff—all of you—are the backbone of our campus community.

When I stood before you last September at the Employee of the Year Banquet, I said I was impressed by your energy and commitment to Tarleton. That was six weeks after I arrived and before I knew you as well as I do now. Over the past months, you have shown each and every day the depth and breadth of your talents and how you make a difference in the lives of students, faculty and other staff.



- You make this a home-away-from-home for our students by giving them guidance, encouragement, and leadership opportunities. You show students what “keeping it real” means. And you’ll have the opportunity to learn more about the importance of those words in a session today.
- You support the faculty so they can focus on providing outstanding classroom experiences.
- You bring pride to our campus by maintaining the facilities and grounds at a level that showcases this great university.
- You serve your communities as tirelessly as you serve Tarleton, wearing your purple and always representing Tarleton spirit and pride.

Thank you for all that you do for Tarleton.

Let’s give special thanks to the Staff Council, whose members organized today’s event. Will the members of the Staff Council who are present please stand so that we can thank you?

The Staff Council is an important link to the administration. This group of campus leaders works to address matters of general interest to all staff and serves as a means of communication between the staff and administration. I have met with your staff Council officers, and I am committed to working with them to address your issues and concerns and to provide the best possible working environment for all staff.

Today is your day to enjoy. I have looked at the schedule. There is something for everyone. You have the opportunity to get tips on how to stay fit and healthy on a budget. We know it is easier to be happy and productive when you are healthy. Take care of yourself. You are important to the Tarleton family. Use the time to attend the planetarium show. Looking at the stars can be relaxing, inspirational, and creative. Possibly it will inspire you to think about an old problem in a new way. Or even help you decide just what is lurking over the night skies of Stephenville. Take time to play ball with Stan Swam – just for the fun of it. Learn more about how to deal with complaints. We all are in the customer service business and can benefit from tips about how to deal with difficult people so they don't ruin our day.

I doubt that there is a person in this room who has not heard me talk about the 4 Es – the four strategic goals that are setting our course and direction. I have been overwhelmed by how you have embraced those goals. You have created branding irons, logos, buttons, shirts and many more ways to help us remember the importance of:

1. Excelling in scholarship, teaching, and learning.
2. Expanding our horizons.
3. Encouraging students to lead, serve and succeed.
4. Extending our reach.

For the coming year, we have identified six priorities that will help us achieve these goals. Each of our six priorities demonstrates the importance of the work of the newly formed Strategic Management Executive (SEM) Council chaired by Denise Groves. They also highlight why we have created a new Vice President for Enrollment and Information Management. These priorities talk about:

1. Developing new courses and programs to attract and retain students.
2. Implementing strategies to recruit and retain students.
3. Expanding offerings in the Metroplex and Waco to recruit students.
4. Enhancing student engagement to enhance their retention and academic success.
5. Developing a branding strategy to increase our visibility to prospective students.
6. Using our resources more effectively to so students excel academically and graduate at higher rates.

Clearly, finding ways for each of us to positively affect the recruitment, retention and success of our students will be receiving a great deal of attention in the months ahead. Denise and SEM Executive Council members welcome your input on www.tarleton.edu/semec.

Now it's time to start your day!

- ✓ Go re-energize your spirit!
- ✓ Go network with new and familiar colleagues!
- ✓ Go learn something new!

Thank you for being part of what makes the Tarleton family so special.