

Excerpt: Remarks to Texan Club members – September, 2008

Thank you, Texan Club members! Over the years, your incredible financial support for Tarleton athletics has enabled our programs to grow and be successful. The friendships and connections you maintain with TSU make you valued members of the Tarleton family. And your support testifies to the community pride that makes this a wonderful place for a university.

Lisette and I have received a wonderful Texas welcome in Stephenville. We have been offered plenty to eat. . .and plenty of advice including “Never kick a cow chip on a hot day” and “Don’t squat with your spurs on.”

Athletics plays larger role in higher education than many people appreciate. As our athletic teams perform around the state and in the nation, they display Tarleton spirit and excellence to potential future students and their parents. Athletic events are the common ground where students of all ages and from all disciplines meet and celebrate Tarleton. Athletic programs teach students critical life skills like: know what you are good at and work hard to get better, manage your time, put the team first, win and lose with equal graciousness, take care of your teammates, and play fair.

This isn’t just a “curbside view” of athletics at Tarleton. I have “dug in,” and the more I learn, the most impressed I am with the athletic program’s many strengths.

Tarleton is spirit.

- We have Hall of Fame players.
- Just attend a football game and listen to the cheers (and watch Perry Elliot encouraging the team from the sideline!).
- At the Freshman Convocation in the stadium this fall, even the sky was lavender

Tarleton is tradition.

- Landmarks on campus preserve our past.
- We proudly carry the name of our founder, who was a farmer and rancher.
- We believe in his legacy of access to education.

Tarleton is on the move.

- In the fall of 2008, we enrolled our largest freshman class ever.
- We have received funding to build a new regional Dairy Center and a new, state-of-the-art Nursing education building.
- We are completing a Campus Master plan to accommodate expansion in enrollment and services through the year 2020.

Strategic Goals

1. We are committed to EXCELLENCE in teaching and scholarship.
 - Each year Dr. Ted Ford organizes one of the largest agriculture student competitive events in world

- “Texans in Tuscania,” a Tarleton film student production of a Tarleton student summer experience in Italy, was shown at the Sundance Festival

We will never forget the importance of our core mission.

2. We want to EXPAND our horizons so our students are prepared for the global economy and ever-smaller world.

Tarleton is committed to expanding the cultural competence of our students, faculty, and staff. Students and faculty bring great diversity to the campus. Golfer Shraddi Singh from India was West Regional Champion (twice) and designated both an All American and Academic All American.

3. We are ENCOURAGING leadership, service, and student success.

We know students learn a lot outside the classroom:

- Where to get the best pizza.(End Zone)
- Cheapest gas. (HEB)
- How to resolve roommate conflicts.
- How to heal a broken heart.
- How to lead and be successful.

Our goal is to create a 24/7 living/learning environment to help students learn how to learn, gain knowledge, and apply that knowledge to being successful in their lives, careers and communities.

4. At Tarleton, we are EXTENDING our reach to alumni, friends and the community.

As part of Texas A&M System, we serve the people of Texas and well beyond. In these challenging times, higher education is the drive shaft that propels the economy of the region, the state, and nation. Tarleton’s responsibility is to provide an educated workforce capable of being successful in a global economy and to constantly encourage new knowledge and innovation through partnerships with, for example, the AgriLife Research and Extension Center.

In closing, Tarleton is a university of enormous potential:

- We can be **among the few great regional research universities** that effectively integrate liberal arts, professional and agricultural programs.
- We have **momentum**.
- We have **wonderful students, a dedicated staff** and a **distinguished faculty**.
- With your **CONTINUED** help, our future is bright.

Thank you for such a warm welcome.

I am proud to be a Tarleton Texan.

