

Lee College wins Star Award

Lee College has earned the prestigious 2014 Texas Higher Education Star Award for its Gulf Coast Partners Achieving Student Success (GCPASS) program, a partnership with the Goose Creek school district to support students from their transition into college through successful completion of a degree.

Lee College was one of four Star Award recipients statewide announced this week at the Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference in Austin.

Established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2001, the highly coveted and competitive award recognizes exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals defined in the Texas higher education plan – including helping to close the gaps in student participation and success. More than 30 programs across the state were nominated for Star Award consideration this year.

“We are very excited to receive the Star Award honoring the GCPASS program, which has played an important role in our continued effort to provide students with all the guidance and encouragement they need to complete their education and pursue their dreams,” said Lee College Pres. Dr. Dennis Brown. “Our partnership with the Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District is an example of the incredible success that can be achieved when we work together as a campus and as a community.”

Funded by a grant from the Houston Endowment, GCPASS aims to provide students with wrap-around support as they prepare to enter Lee College and as they work to earn their chosen degree. The ultimate goals of the partnership are to ensure that 100 percent of the seniors in the Goose Creek school district complete the compulsory steps required for college enrollment by the time they graduate high school; to increase college readiness and student success in developmental education and gateway courses; and to create a college-going culture in the Baytown community and beyond.

There are multiple facets to the GCPASS approach:

- Members of the local community and representatives from business and industry are engaged through the “Cradle to Career Network;”
- Families are invited to visit the Lee College campus and learn more college opportunities through Parent College Workshops delivered in both English and Spanish and even held on Saturdays;
- College faculty lead students on career cluster tours and participate in professional development with their high-school counterparts, with whom they also work to align secondary and post-secondary outcomes in math, English, science and social science; and,
- College and high-school counselors, advisers and outreach specialists share in professional development and work together to ensure that students complete all necessary enrollment steps to transition into college, from applications and financial aid to testing, new student orientations and class registration.