

# VP DeDe Griffith awarded Aspen Presidential Fellowship

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

BAYTOWN, TX — DeDe Griffith, the temporary Vice President of Learning at Lee College, has been chosen for the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence. This is a big honor. She will join a special leadership program that helps train new leaders to improve student success at community colleges across the country.

The Aspen Institute, a group in Washington, D.C. that studies education and policies, shared the news today. Griffith will be part of the 2017–18 group of Aspen Presidential Fellows. This group includes 40 amazing college leaders from around the United States. The program begins in July and lasts one year. It is run with help from Stanford University and top community college leaders.

The program teaches a new way of leading colleges. It helps future college presidents learn how to improve student learning, help more students finish college, find good jobs after graduation, and support students from all backgrounds — especially those who are minorities, have low income, or are the first in their family to go to college.

“DeDe has worked at Lee College for 20 years. She has helped create new ideas and programs to help students do well,” said Dr. Dennis Brown, President of Lee College. “Being chosen as an Aspen Fellow shows how much she cares about students and her strong work to improve community college education.”

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) says that 365 college presidents left their jobs last year. This is happening while more and more students — especially minority, low-income, and first-generation students — are going to community colleges to earn degrees that can help them find good jobs.

The 2017–18 group of Aspen Fellows comes from 24 states and 38 different colleges. Griffith was picked through a tough selection process. She was chosen because she is willing to take smart risks, build strong teams, work with others, and focus on making things better for students.

Griffith has won awards for her work, including the Lee College Faculty Excellence Award and the John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Award. She also helps lead many projects that give more support to students. Right now, she is finishing her Doctorate in Education.

The Aspen Presidential Fellowship is supported by several groups, including 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.