

Secret of Our Success

In most cases the person behind the scenes is not given public credit for their work. More likely it is the person that has the biggest hand in the pot that is generally associated with success or the end result.

In the Department of *and* Food Science at Texas Tech University, there are a number of different people who have helped mold department into one of the most prestigious in the country, from the innovative professors to graduate students and their extensive research. However, the people who are not often associated with the department's success are the student assistants.

Student workers play a large role in the productivity of the meat and food science laboratories. The students are in charge of maintaining the lab, including keeping everything clean and organized. The students are also given many other responsibilities such as, running errands, proof reading data, and weighing and running samples for graduate students projects.

Ana Marie Luna, is the lab technician for Dr. Leslie Thompson. Luna is in charge of Thompson's student workers, she instructs students each day of their tasks and what needs to be accomplished.

"It is very important to have student workers in the lab at all times," Luna says. "It is crucial that the labs stay clean, the students are also responsible for weighing samples and recording data."

Jerrad Legako, a post-doctoral student is someone that is also in charge of the lab and other student workers. He is also very appreciative of student workers.



"It would have been impossible to do everything on my own, or to expect other grad students to help me all of the time. Without student workers it would most definitely slow down productivity in the lab", says Legako.

The students that work for Luna and Legako are trained to be very precise and thorough with everything they work on. It is important both from a time and money standpoint, for the students to get the job done right the first time. Each student is expected to work fifteen hours per week, and remain in good standing academically with the university.

Jerra McMath is an undergraduate student assistant who judged on the 2011 National Champion Meat Judging team at Texas Tech. McMath has worked in the lab since her arrival at Texas Tech in 2010.

"I enjoy helping the graduate students with their projects, I feel like I am accomplishing something, and I learn new things every day," McMath says.

The students who assist with research in the meat and food science departments play a key role in the total functionality of the lab. It is important to remember that though Texas Tech is making great strides in research, there are also people behind the scenes that should be recognized.

"I am truly grateful for the students I have working in the lab," says Luna. "They work very hard to make sure things are done properly. I cannot imagine doing my job without their help!"



Armany Boxwell - Perryton, Texas

