

The Giving Godparents



Sitting in an office with walls covered in framed photos from the many memories accumulated over a lifetime, Dan Taylor sat at his desk with his wife Linda sitting directly across from him. The couple excitedly pulled out an old manila folder filled with letters and notes from students within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Texas Tech University. With gleaming smiles, they read the letters aloud to one another.

"I owe my education to you," one letter read. "Without your financial help, my educational experience would not have been as full or rewarding."

The next read, "The scholarship has allowed me to spend more time on my academic interest without having to hold a job. Thank you for believing in me and my future."

The last letter the couple read stated, "Faith in students instills morals and values that will never be forgotten."

Dan and Linda Taylor have been donors of Texas Tech's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources since 1993. The couple has funded the Dan and Linda Taylor Dean's Scholar Scholarship and co-sponsored the Government Internship Scholarship.

The Taylor's have a strong foundation in agriculture, with a deep appreciation for the industry's people, the way of agricultural life, and a commitment to a high-quality education.

Growing up on a cotton farm, Dan wanted to leave all he knew about the cotton farming industry upon attending

college and never return. After enrolling at the University of North Texas, which had no college of agriculture, he said he realized how much he missed the agricultural industry.

He quickly changed his mind, and made the move to Texas Tech University, without ever seeing the city of Lubbock, Texas. Dan said he received his degree in interdisciplinary agriculture and took a teaching position at Lubbock-Cooper High School immediately following graduation and marrying his wife, Linda.

Linda too had agricultural ties, having grown up on a small livestock farm. Profits from wool and mohair sales from her family's lambs and goats allowed her to broaden her horizons and further her educational career. When she enrolled at Texas Tech, she did not realize there was any type of agricultural degree program. So, she received a degree in business management. Linda also received her teacher certification and a minor in history. Upon graduation, she too, began teaching in the Lubbock-Cooper Independent School District.

At the time, the Taylor's did not know they would eventually give back to Texas Tech, the institution that prepared them for their future, and made it possible for them to find a career that they were passionate about.

A multitude of students would not be able to further their educational pursuits and find a career path without scholarship contributors like Dan and Linda Taylor.

Jessica Corder, a junior agricultural communications student from Lubbock, Texas and Dan and Linda Taylor Dean's Scholar Scholarship recipient, is one of those students who is extremely grateful for Dan and Linda Taylor and their investment in her education and her future. Their scholarship endowments and belief in the future of young people and agriculture, make it possible for pupils, like Corder, from small towns with big dreams to achieve goals they never thought were attainable.

"Mr. and Mrs. Taylor are the fairy godparents of many students, and I am so grateful that I can call them mine," Corder said. "I am so blessed to be one of their scholars, and I don't know if I could ever thank them enough for their dedication, their support, and their faith in me and my colleagues."

Jane Piercy, director of development and external relations within CASNR, said she believes the Taylor's continuously contribute to CASNR because they truly believe in the future of agriculture and how important it is to the world.

The Taylor's deeply understand the significance of the agriculture industry and place a lot of trust in agricultural students at Texas Tech.

"I think they see our students as the young people that are holding the future of agriculture," Piercy said, "and therefore they're worth the investment."

The Taylor's decided to contribute to CASNR because their children attended Texas Tech on scholarship, even though they never attended college on scholarship themselves. Dan said their children were recipients of some amazing scholarships at a time when it was greatly needed. He and Linda vowed then to someday, give back to the generous scholarship spoon that fed their children.

"Fortunately, we eventually got financially stable so that we could give back," Dan said. "We believe in helping others."

Linda has her own personal reasons for donating to CASNR and investing in the lives of students. She said she loves how individualized the advising and guidance

is between professors and students within CASNR. When Linda was enrolled in her undergraduate degree in business management, she did not receive the

most effective help from her professors. The CASNR professors have a deep concern for students and always have their best interests at heart, which drew Linda to the idea of becoming a scholarship donor.

"I liked the fact that they showed that they cared about their students," Linda said, "and were willing to help them. So, therefore I was willing to support CASNR whole-heartedly too."

Texas Tech's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources is especially thankful for the couple's contribution. Piercy said with an extremely grateful smile and wide eyes, she is proud to not only call the Taylors colleagues, but close family friends.

All of those thank you letters are kept in a specific drawer in a filing cabinet, in an old, torn manila folder, in an office with framed photos of memories covering the walls, as a reminder of the number of young college students' lives Dan and Linda Taylor are changing, every year.

The most exciting part of the story is the folder is only expected to grow. 📁

"They are the fairy godparents of many students,"



Bailey Hogg
BROWNFIELD, TEXAS

