



Loving What You Do

With hands interlocked and legs trembling with eagerness, Amber Krause got ready to walk across the bright, lit up stage at National FFA Convention her freshman year of high school to accepted her first gold metal. Years of effort and countless hours were worth the feeling that day gave her, Amber Krause said. The following years Krause took home second and third place metals. These kinds of champions are around us in places you might not imagine.

Krause grew up in Florence, Texas, where she was heavily involved in the agriculture industry. It only seemed fitting that she pursue a degree in agriculture after finding her home away from home at Texas Tech University.

Amber is an alumna from The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural

Resources at Tech. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in agricultural communications.

After graduation, Krause set out into the working world where she had a job in sales for two years. Her typical day on the job was interrupted with a phone call giving her the opportunity to go back to school and work on her Master's degree in agricultural communications.

Krause explained that she craved to learn more about agricultural communications and that there was never an ending point for learning. When she was given the opportunity to do so, it was really a no-brainer for her. Her contract for her Master's degree required her to be a teaching assistant for an agricultural communications course. She said that this is what sparked her interest to teach.

"I wouldn't have considered teaching without that experience even though looking back, I always engaged in activities where I was teaching others - just not in the traditional classroom setting," said Krause.

With scarlet and black now in her blood and some encouragement, she decided to stay at Tech and is on her second year in the doctoral program in the College of Media and Communication.

Krause's passion for research and teaching others the importance of forming your own ideas started when she was in high school. Involved in student council, sports and honor societies, Krause still found time to be heavily involved in her high schools FFA program.

Krause explained that focus and her fear of failing were two obstacles that she had to jump over to become a champion of her science fair projects. Even if it was just a board game of monopoly, Krause wanted to win.

With bright eyes, Krause said being competitive was something that fueled her.

"I remember

getting so nervous and my first science fair at state FFA convention, the entire time I was zipping up and down my jacket through the entire interview," Krause said laughing.

Being active in FFA did not stop for her when Krause loaded up the car to head to Lubbock for the first time. Tech has been a place for Krause to continue her research on all educational levels. Krause has worked actively with FFA organizations and helping explain research terminology to the students.

"My high school experiences lead to my college experience," Krause said. "It was like a never-ending thing and it still hasn't ended."

She desired to help students have the same accomplished feeling she had when she received the awards for all the hard work she had put into her projects that made all of the nerves, effort and time worth it.

"It is important for younger students to research, because it gives them a sense of application to what they are learning," said Krause.

"I love helping people think critically and tailoring their learning experience to their own personal interest."

Darbey Havens and Lauren Akers, both Abernathy High School FFA students, had the opportunity to work with Krause. Havens said she helped enhance their knowledge on research terms for their FFA science fair project.

"When she was teaching about correlation, she used basketball as an example because she knew we could relate to," Havens said.

Havens said Krause made her feel more confident in her research and helped her to better understand some of the terms being used.

"In high school, you always think research sounds scary or wouldn't be fun, but Amber had a way of making it fun and helping us learn all at the same time," Havens said.

Krause likes extending her knowledge out to the younger students, because she believes if you get them interested and understanding the foundation and basic terms of research at that age then you will be teaching them in a few years and they will already have their experiences that they can bring to the classroom.

"Helping and explaining research to them actually helps me," Krause said. "It makes me better apply the skills I have because I am teaching it to someone else."

Currently teaching a class called Electronic Media in Society, held in the College of Media and Communication. Krause said managing her time can be difficult. Her color-coded calendar shows she is making time for a little bit of everything. Even with its challenging moments, it has made the tough trials of the doctoral program worth it. She is being reassured that teaching is what she wants to do. It involves the two things she has a passion for, research and teaching.

"I had no idea that was what I was going to do, but it just seems like every step I took lead me to this direction and I really have found a passion for teaching," Krause said. "I love helping people think critically and tailoring their learning experience to their own personal interest."

Glenn Cummins, Ph.D., associate dean for research and director of Center for Communication Research in the College of Media and communications said Krause is a part of the college's unique and broader recruits for their doctoral program.

Cummins has known Krause since she started the doctoral program. When he has taught her in class, as well as has informal advising type conversations with her. Cummins describes Krause as talented, bright, diligent and having extraordinary work ethic.

The agricultural aspect of her background makes her really unique to the college, because she's looking at different subjects, she is asking different questions,

studying different topics than I have ever had students ask before. Cummins said that uniqueness sets her apart from all her peers but its also just refreshing to just have her in the classroom.

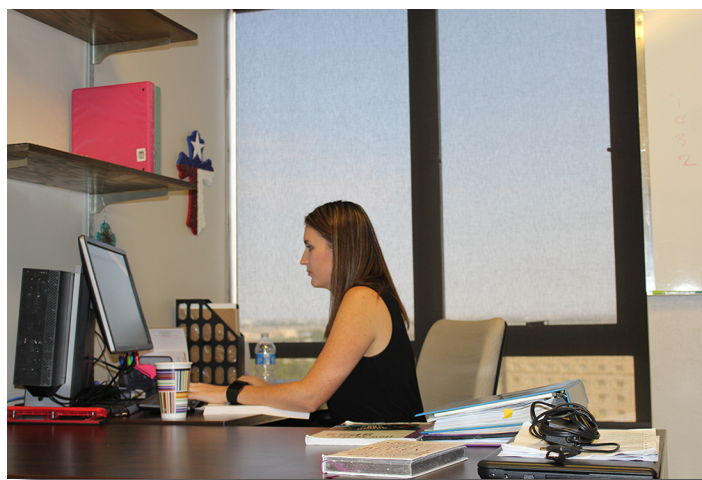
Cummins explained many qualities Krause has as a student in his classroom. Being a student that is willing to roll up her sleeves and do work that is needed to be a good student are some of the most excellent qualities Cummins believes will transfer over when Krause becomes a professor.

After completing her doctoral program in Media and Communications, she would love to teach at a university in agricultural communications. Krause said she has learned a lot to take back to an agricultural communications

program as far as research methodologies and theoretical frameworks go. Being able to teach in an agricultural communications program will bring her passion for the agricultural industry and her passion for teaching together.

A "think tank" of a classroom is how Krause describes her future classes, and a classroom where there are no wrong answers, only room for learning. Krause said she will encourage students to think beyond what they think they are capable of.

Krause said she is confident that she has made it where she is today not on her own. She had a big smile on her face as she said she made it to where she is by the people who planted a seed of encouragement in her. Krause hopes to plant that same seed into her students one day. 🌱



Krause works in her office in the College of Media and Communication Building.



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