



2022-2023
NEAT Grant Program Report

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Project Purpose

As part of the mission of the Texas Tech Alumni Association (TTAA) to *support our university, build relationships and foster growth*, the organization continues to explore ways to engage and connect with alumni, students and future Red Raiders. This last group, that consists of children, grandchildren and relatives of alumni, is one of the most difficult to connect with. However, through collaboration with other alumni associations and the creation of engaging programs, the TTAA has established a plan to connect with these Red Raiders in training.

One such initiative was the reimagining of the TTAA Legacy Club, a membership-based organization designed to instill a love for Texas Tech and its unique traditions among children of loyal TTAA members. These “Legacies” range from birth to age 18.

Although the Legacy Club has been a successful program, the TTAA continued to look for more opportunities to engage this younger audience. After online research, visiting university campuses and observing the established programs of other alumni associations, the TTAA made the decision to establish Legacy University (Legacy U), a three-day summer camp to engage grandparents and grandchildren ages 7-13 on the Texas Tech campus.

During the camp, grandparents and their aspiring Red Raider grandchildren participate in hands-on academic activities, while celebrating the traditions that make Texas Tech unique. Legacies and their grandparents get a taste for college life by staying in the residence halls and attending classes together in a chosen major. After completing the program, Legacies “graduate” with a certificate in their chosen field. Along with activities in the classroom, Legacy U participants get a chance to meet Texas Tech mascots Raider Red and the Masked Rider at an exclusive spirit rally, among other fun activities during their stay.

The primary purpose of Legacy University is to establish and grow the TTAA Legacy U camp experience for grandparents and future Red Raiders while supporting the mission of the TTAA. Through the assistance of the NEAT Grant, the TTAA was able to successfully continue Legacy U into 2022 and 2023, growing the number of participants and engagement opportunities.

Scope of the Project

Legacy U is a TTAA member benefit; only registered Legacies are invited and allowed to attend. A Legacy is a child who is registered in the TTAA Legacy Club under an active member of the Texas Tech Alumni Association. Prior to launching Legacy U, TTAA engagement staff reached out to other peer institutions who host similar grandparent/grandchild camps to gain a general understanding of their camp activities, logistics, policies, marketing, scheduling, etc. We were invited to attend and observe Oklahoma State University’s Grandparent University, a program that was in its 17th year. This visit gave TTAA staff the opportunity to see and experience the camp first-hand and to ask real-time questions. The TTAA hosted a day-long information session with TTAA staff as well as current and former TTAA National Board members and potential campus partners to share about the OSU program and brainstorm ideas for a TTAA grandparent/grandchild camp. Next, the staff began the budgeting, marketing, planning of the camp activities, and recruitment for instructors and volunteers. As with any inaugural program or event, there were many learning opportunities and unknowns that needed to be tackled.

Legacy U has two primary target audiences, and several secondary audiences. The first primary audience is the 7–13-year-old Legacy Club members. Most of our camp activities are designed with them in mind. We want to reinforce their knowledge of Texas Tech traditions and inspire them to consider applying to Texas Tech University when that time comes. The other primary audience are the parents and grandparents who enrolled their grandchildren in the Legacy Club, and who are TTU alumni and TTAA members.

Texas Tech alumni with children ages birth to 13 are a secondary audience. Anyone who is a current member of TTAA — not just grandparents — can enroll their child/children in the Legacy Club, with the benefit of attending Legacy U. While parents are not permitted to attend Legacy U, they can enroll Legacies and their children will be eligible to attend Legacy U with their grandparents. A final secondary audience is our current and former board members. Legacy U is an opportunity to engage our TTAA National Board members and former board members as camp attendees or volunteers. It offers them a hands-on way to share their passion for TTU and the mission of TTAA.

Initially, the purpose of Legacy U was to offer another member benefit to Legacy Club and TTAA members, and to create another avenue of engagement for these groups. But as the program unfolded, we realized our purpose went deeper. We wanted to create a unique experience for grandparents and grandkids to spend time together and make memories around the traditions of Texas Tech and the emotional aspects of being a Red Raider. We wanted to help create lasting memories between generations of Red Raiders — an opportunity for grandparents to share their memories and their love for Texas Tech in a way that they might not have had the opportunity to share before. We specifically wanted there to be a generational gap between our attendees to create this unique sharing experience. The “why-fulness” of Legacy U was apparent in the conversations and emotional exchanges between grandparents and grandkids at the spirit rally, in the classroom and at graduation.

Another long-term rationale for Legacy U was eventual recruitment of Legacies to Texas Tech University. It gave the children a chance to experience what it was like to be in a college classroom and interact with college faculty, in addition to spending time with our mascots and spirit squads to learn the TTU Fight Song and Matador Song. Legacy U also broadened the scope of what majors or areas of study are available at Texas Tech University. Our initial goal was to host the inaugural Legacy U in the summer of 2020, with four academic majors and 80 campers. However, we were forced to push the launch of the program to 2021, which gave us extra time to increase our academic major offerings to eight and expand our potential campers to 160. The following year, the number grew even more.

Our goal for academic major offerings was to recruit instructors from various colleges across campus, who were adept at providing classroom curriculum and activities to children ages 7-13. Among our 10 majors offered in 2022 we had five university colleges represented — College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources (three majors), Whitacre College of Engineering (three majors), College of Arts & Sciences (two majors), College of Media and Communication (two majors), and Rawls College of Business (one major). Eleven instructors and over a dozen teaching assistants provided the classroom instruction and activities.

A third goal was to involve current and former TTAA National Board members and Student Alumni Board Members (SAB) and TTAA staff as classroom ambassadors and volunteers. Two current members and one former board member participated in Legacy U in 2022 as well as dozens of SAB and staff. We also had several current and former board members attend Legacy U as grandparent campers. Our 2022 volunteers generated much excitement and anticipation for board member participation in 2023.

Project Timeline

2022

February

- Legacy U mailer & postcard sent
- Legacy U application reminder email sent
- Applications open
- Applications close
- Staff places participants in majors

March

- Admission email sent
- Enrollment opens
- Enrollment closes

April

- Enrollment closes/waitlist contacted
- Campus partners contacted — Athletics, Provost, Spirit Squads, Mascot
- Waitlist enrollment closes

May

- Assign family group rooms in Talkington Hall, residence hall
- Order swag — grandparent bags, grandkid bags & water bottles

June

- Cancellation deadline for full refund
- Send email to former board about volunteers
- LU email checklist sent to participants
- Volunteer commitment due back
- 50% cancellation deadline
- Order T-shirts for campers, staff & volunteers
- Create post-evaluation survey for grandparents and grandkids/parents
- Meet with instructors to finalize major details — rooms, technology, supplies
- Invite deans of colleges with instructors/majors to graduation
- Order all catering
- Final email sent to participants

July

- Print nametags, door signs, welcome handbooks
- Assemble family group and grandkids bags
- GO TIME

Methodology

For this project, quantitative and qualitative research was conducted through a survey to participants, parents and professors through Survey Monkey. Also, data analysis was conducted on participation numbers and majors.

Project Budget

Total cost of project: \$42,376

Total amount of grant: \$5,000

Budget outline for project:

- \$1,000.00 printing and mailing
- \$10,080.00 Lodging in Talkington
- \$7,871.00 Food/meals
- \$475.00 Insurance
- \$1,000.00 Snacks/water
- \$7,200.00 Transportation
- \$4,000.00 T-shirts (attendees, volunteers, staff)
- \$2,000.00 Swag
- \$300.00 Nametags
- \$2,800.00 Faculty stipend
- \$1,200.00 Faculty supplies
- \$2,625.00 Painting — fees, supplies
- \$425.00 Parking
- \$500.00 Printing — Schedule & info booklet, graduation programs
- \$600.00 Supplies — backpacks, coolers
- \$300.00 Decorations

Summary of Findings and Alumni Impact

In the first year of Legacy U, TTAA hosted 128 participants — 65 grandchildren and 63 grandparents. 134 campers were enrolled but had several unable to attend at the last minute. Our maximum number of participants was 160 (approximately 20 participants in each of eight majors), so we reached 84% of our enrollment goal. In 2022 the program hosted 167 participants — 86 grandchildren and 81 grandparents. Our maximum number of participants was 180 (approximately 18 in each of 10 majors), so we reached 90% of our enrollment goal.

We increased our major offerings from 8 in 2021 to 10 in 2022, increasing the maximum number of participants.

We emailed a follow-up evaluation to grandparents and parents of grandchild participants. We received 59 responses — 50 from grandparents (could be grandparent couples completing together) and 9 from parents/grandkid participants.

Below are the main indicators of success that came from the survey.

How would you describe your ambassador? 5.0 average rating (out of 5, 5 being highest)

How was your instructor? 5.0 average rating

Would you recommend this major to other Legacy U attendees? 100% YES responses

Would you recommend Legacy U to other Legacies or grandparents? 100% YES responses

Would you like to attend Legacy U again in the future? 65 yes, 3 no

Below is a comment from a former National Board chairwoman about her experience at Legacy U.

“It was amazing and worked on so many levels from reconnecting the grandparents with their fond memories, to drawing grandparents and grandkids more closely together, to creating excitement for kids to want to attend TTU, to understanding the higher purpose of TTAA and more. I loved it all, but one thing really stands out. On Thursday night, I wasn't sure how much my grandkids really cared about learning the cheers, Fight Song and The Matador Song, but on Friday, at the end of graduation, I looked down and saw them holding their "Guns Up!" and singing The Matador Song. I broke into tears. It was such an emotional moment for me. We all hugged, and they told me how much they loved me. That moment proved how worth it the whole experience had been.” Renee Underwood, TTAA National Board Chairwoman, 2014.

Below are testimonies/quotes we received from 2021 Legacy U instructors that were used in our recruitment materials for 2022 instructors.

“I have participated in many summer camp experiences, but Legacy U is by far my favorite. Seeing generations learning and growing together was priceless. I was honored to be part of an experience that created such precious memories for these families. Legacy U will always be special to me, and I hope I can participate again this year and for years to come.”

De'Lila Holder, Director, College Connect & TTU UIL

“Working with the grandparents and grandchildren in our Legacy U course was a breath of fresh air and aptly named. Facilitating cross-generational dialogue was especially meaningful — I had a front-row seat to family legacies in progress. Grandchildren got a taste of college life and grandparents reminisced about their time spent here. The program was well-staffed and organized to a “t.” All I had to do was show up and teach!”

Lisa Du Bois Low, MBA, APR, Associate Professor of Practice, Public Relations

“This was one of the most rewarding and satisfying events that I have been a part of in years. The excitement in both the young people and their grandparents when we brought the live animals out was palpable. It is so special to have people that have never touched a snake want to hold it and carry it around the room, showing everybody else. It really gave me pause and made me realize how fortunate I have been to have a job that is as rewarding as being a professor at Texas Tech has been.”

Lou Densmore, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Biological Sciences Associate Program Director for Research, Center for the Integration of STEM Education and Research

Overall, the TTAA is pleased with the success of Legacy University and is excited to continue to grow and develop the program each year to better engage our alumni, students and future Red Raiders. With the assistance of the NEAT Grant, this program will continue to help the TTAA further its mission to support TTU and build relationships. We hope this project serves as an inspiration to other organizations to benefit not only your alumni association, but also your university and alumni community.