

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Amarillo College has been presented with the 2021  
2 Rising Star award from the Aspen Institute; and

3           WHEREAS, The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program  
4 advances higher education practices and policies that  
5 significantly improve student learning, completion, and employment  
6 after college; the program biennially honors an institution with  
7 the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, and 2021 marks  
8 the first year that Amarillo College has been named a semifinalist  
9 for the prize; the school ultimately placed in the top five  
10 finalists and received the Rising Star award in recognition of its  
11 rapidly improving student outcomes; and

12           WHEREAS, Serving some 13,000 students, Amarillo College has  
13 received praise for its robust social services division, which  
14 helps break down barriers to academic success by offering aid to  
15 individuals in need; upon enrollment at the college, students  
16 answer questions to assess various risk factors, and those that  
17 face the greatest challenges receive regular contact from social  
18 workers to ensure that they stay on track to graduate; this program  
19 was expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic, with every staff member  
20 contributing to the outreach efforts; and

21           WHEREAS, Among its many other initiatives, the social  
22 services division employs three full-time social workers, offers 10  
23 free sessions of mental health counseling, and provides emergency  
24 funds that can be accessed within 24 hours; in addition, the college

1 established an affordable day care center; under the able  
2 leadership of AC president Russell Lowery-Hart, these efforts have  
3 produced outstanding results, and the college's graduation rate  
4 increased 18 percentage points over the course of five years; and

5 WHEREAS, Amarillo College plays a vital role in providing  
6 students with the knowledge and skills necessary to build  
7 productive and fulfilling careers, and its well-deserved  
8 designation as one of the nation's premier community colleges is a  
9 testament to the dedication and perseverance of its administrators,  
10 faculty, and students; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas  
12 Legislature hereby congratulate Amarillo College on its receipt of  
13 a Rising Star award from the Aspen Institute and extend to all those  
14 associated with the college sincere best wishes for continued  
15 success; and, be it further

16 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
17 prepared for the college as an expression of high regard by the  
18 Texas House of Representatives.

Price

H.R. No. 1683

---

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1683 was adopted by the House on May 29, 2021, by a non-record vote.

---

Chief Clerk of the House