

By: Price

H.R. No. 1683

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.