Community Heroes: Community Foundation Tribute Luncheon

By Molly McIntire
Photos by Igor Kraguljac, Igor Kraguljac Photography

A Legacy for Good, Forever
The Community Foundation began as an initiative to assist individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations in the Brazos Valley by establishing and managing permanent endowment funds that will continuously benefit local charities, organizations and churches, and create scholarship opportunities. According to the Community Foundation website, there are several types of funds available:

A Donor Advised Fund allows a donor or business to be actively involved in the grant process. The Foundation ensures the charitable status of beneficiaries and provides additional grant making and administrative support.
• Donor Designated Funds enable a donor to choose one specific organization that will benefit from annual grants.

• A Scholarship Fund gives deserving young people the opportunity to continue their education by focusing the funding on students or educational programs.

• With a Field of Interest Fund, instead of choosing an organization, donors choose issues that matter to them, and then the staff will connect with nonprofits that address those specific issues.

• Unrestricted Funds offer the broadest options for charitable giving by allowing the staff to independently identify the most crucial needs of the community and target the funding where it will be most effective through competitive grants.

• An Agency Endowment Fund provides organizations and their supporters with an opportunity to establish sustaining and permanent funds to support the organizations needs of a charity or program.

The Community Foundation Tribute Luncheon
On April 24, hundreds of Brazos Valley residents will gather in the College Station Hilton to recognize three individuals for their generosity and service to the community. The 2017 Tribute Luncheon, hosted by the Community Foundation, will honor Gary Blair, Celia Goode-Haddock, and Larry Hodges for their ongoing gifts of time, talent, and financial resources in support of a better community.

This year, the Community Foundation will achieve the $1 million mark in distributing grants, gifts, and scholarships to local nonprofits and students. The Community Foundation, which was established in 2003 by the late Sam Sharp, originally was set-up without a lead endowment gift to create the foundation. Since then, the foundation has grown and currently manages a $3.4 million endowment that consists of more than 72 different funds.

More than 17 different non profits are associated with the Community Foundation, including Aggieland Humane Society, Brazos Valley Food Bank, the Theatre Company, Boys and Girls Club of the Brazos Valley, Hospice Brazos Valley and more. The foundation currently serves the seven county area of the Brazos Valley.

"In a simple way, we advance community giving by connecting those who care with causes that matter," says Patricia Gerling, president of The Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley.

Endowments are protected and managed by professional investment organizations so that the funds are continuously producing grants that are distributed back into the community. The foundation also serves as a means to keep donations and funding local, rather than being dispersed away from the region.

"We live here, we play here, we work here, and we want all of our giving to stay [in the Brazos Valley] and benefit important causes and quality of life needs," says Gerling.

Donations of any amount may be made through any gift of cash, stocks, IRA distributions, retirement funds, or real estate, says Gerling. Homeowners may even sign their homes over to the foundation for future use while still living in it, or include the Community Foundation in planned giving through their wills. Currently, there are more than 40 funds with the Community Foundation that are established in someone's name or in memoriam.

Davis Watson, chairman of the Board of Trustees, presides over the board meetings for the Community Foundation, where business affairs related to the foundation are discussed and handled as a team. Each member of the (Luncheon continued from Page 6) board may undertake different roles or be part of a subcommittee, such as the investment committee or grant committee. Board Members also assist in matching donors with nonprofits and organizations, as well as reviewing scholarship and grant applications.

"[The Community Foundation] is really a collaboration of the various board members and the roles that they have undertaken. If there are any decisions that need to be made, we make them as a board together," says Davis Watson.

The Community Foundation hosts an annual celebration of philanthropy — the Tribute Luncheon, to celebrate the three individuals for their service to the community, but also will invite guests to the foundation and see where donations have been put to use in the community. The luncheon means to fund annual operating expenses for the foundation.
“Any donations that go to the foundation can go straight to the community,” says Tribute Luncheon Chair Molly Watson. However, the luncheon serves as an important fundraiser for the foundation.

Lunch reservations are $50 for individuals, and must be made by April 14. Reserved sponsored tables are available if purchased in advance.

Guests will enjoy lunch prepared by the Hilton, receive updates about the efforts of the Community Foundation, and watch videos of friends and family of Gary Blair, Celia Goode-Haddock, and Larry Hodges talking about the honorees’ accomplishments.

“I like to joke that it’s like a rehearsal dinner, and you get to hear all the wonderful things about people that the community loves. It’s just a lot of fun, and very uplifting,” says Molly Watson.

This year’s Tribute Luncheon will take place on Monday, April 24, at 11:30am in the College Station Hilton and will end around 1pm.

For more information about the Community Foundation, visit cfbv.org.

To receive a formal luncheon invitation or for more information regarding the Tribute Luncheon, contact Patricia Gerling at president@cfbv.org or (979) 589-4305.

Meet the Honorees

Biographies Courtesy of The Community Foundation
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Celia Goode-Haddock

Celia Goode-Haddock is a servant leader who values business, community, and family. Her commitment to excellence and exceptional service in all things is one of the many reasons why Celia is a 2017 Tribute Luncheon honoree.

A native of Bryan College Station, Goode-Haddock graduated from Texas A&M University in 1972 and is the founder and senior advisor of University Title Company where she has worked since its inception in 1973. That year, her father formed University Title Company as an aid to his law practice. Goode-Haddock grew the company from a staff of two to 66.

University Title has been honored as one of the best companies to work for in Texas.

Over the years, Goode-Haddock has been recognized for her professional achievements and heart for service. She was honored as the Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 2004. In 2005, she received the Rotary International Centennial Service Award for Professional Excellence. In addition, she was honored as the Outstanding Alumna of Texas A&M University’s College of Education and Human Development. Goode-Haddock was presented with the B/CS Habitat for Humanity Bubba Moore Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2012 Texas Land Title Association Title Person of the Year.

While leading University Title Company, Goode-Haddock sponsored and participated in countless community activities. She has instilled high standards in her employees by placing high value on being community-minded citizens, dedicated to making a difference.

Leadership is natural for Goode-Haddock. She has served as chair of the B/CS Chamber of Commerce, the Real Estate Research Center Advisory Board, and the Research Valley Partnership Board. She currently serves as a board member and officer of the B/CS Habitat for Humanity, secretary of Research Valley Innovation Center, Inc., and board member emeritus of the Texas A&M University Private Enterprise Research Center.

Celia and her husband, Dr. Bill Haddock, have been married for 23 years. They have four children and eight grandchildren and live in College Station.
that makes Hodges a perfect fit as a Tribute Luncheon Honoree.

While in college in 1988, Hodges, along with Nick Bregenzer
and Dennis Averitt, started Copy Corner. Hodges graduated
from Texas A&M University in 1989, and chose to stay in the
Bryan College Station community to grow his business and
later to raise a family. With two locations, Copy Corner has
employed more than 450 students, in addition to a full-time
team, many of whom he has worked with for more than 20
years. As Hodges’ business grew, so has its generosity and
devotion to the community and student population. From campus organizations to the arts, Copy Corner supports
community events that benefit local charities and civic organizations.

In anticipation of Copy Corner’s 5th and 10th anniversary years, the company celebrated by giving scholarships to
students. For the 15th year, Copy Corner gave the lead gift to Habitat for Humanity’s corporate challenge. For the
25th anniversary year, the business established a $25,000 endowment at the Texas A&M Mays Business School
for a Freshman Excellence Fund. Hodges continues to provide tuition reimbursement for good grades to his
current student employees. By example, he continues to encourage his business team to give back.

In 1998, the founder of DoubleDave’s was looking for someone to improve the playing field in the College Station
area. Hodges put together a group to buy the local restaurants and after altering DoubleDave’s presence by
installing a commitment to quality and service, their team doubled annual sales. After years of expanding the
brand into the Houston market, they recently sold the last out-of-town unit and will refocus on improving and
growing locally in the Brazos Valley.

Hodges’ passion for excellence in business has earned Copy Corner the Torch Award for marketplace ethics by
the Better Business Bureau, Vendor of the Year by the Arts Council of Brazos Valley, and the 2015 Bryan Rotary
Club ANCO Insurance Award for Lifetime Business Achievement, among many other awards.

Hodges has always been a “people person.” From friendship to family to employees, he believes in and
encourages people. He always gives credit and honor to the quality of people he works alongside and to the
quality of people in our community. Larry has served on numerous boards, including the B/CS Chamber of
Commerce, College Station Education Foundation, B/CS Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, Research Valley
Partnership, and the Community Foundation.

Hodges lives in College Station and has two children—Hank, a senior at College Station High School and Lauren, a
recent University of Texas graduate now working in Washington, D.C.

Gary Blair

Gary Blair is a champion. His professional coaching career transformed the Texas A&M University women’s
basketball program into a national power, but his dedication to transforming the lives of young people has given
triumph to the Bryan College Station community. This dedication is what makes Coach Blair a community leader
and a Tribute Luncheon Honoree.

Blair has coached for 30 years. He coached the girls at South Oak Cliff High School in Dallas to three state titles,
was an assistant at Louisiana Tech during two national championships, and built nationally ranked programs at
Stephen F. Austin University and the University of Arkansas.

Since 2003, he has called B/CS his home—and at that time was named head coach of the Texas A&M University
women’s basketball program. He led the Aggies to their first national title in the NCAA Women’s Final Four and
closed out the 2010-2011 season with a 33-5 record, the most victories in program history. With Coach Blair, the
Aggies have made five appearances in the Sweet Sixteen and reached the Elite Eight in 2008, 2011 and 2014.

As one of the most active and involved coaches in the B/CS community, Coach Blair is a frequent speaker at the
local Rotary Club, as well as many other civic and student groups. A marketing and public relations guru, Coach
had awareness about his program and boosted both attendance and season ticket sales at Reed
an 300 percent due to his one-on-one approach to communication engagement through service
Coach Blair is a two-time finalist for the Naismith Coach of the Year Award, has guided Texas A&M to 12 straight NCAA Tournament appearances, four conference championships, including the 2013 SEC Tournament Championship, and is a Woman's Basketball Hall of Fame member.

In 1992, Coach Blair began his love and work with Special Olympics. He has consistently played a key role in award ceremonies as well as opening and closing ceremonies and contributed in other ways to help Special Olympians across Texas. Coach Blair's annual Gary Blair Celebrity Golf Classic has raised more than $1 million to benefit Special Olympics. He gives his time, talent, and resources for the good of this beloved cause.

Coach Blair lives in Bryan and has two children, Paige and Matt. The combination of success on the court, along with focus and dedication to many nonprofits in the community, is why the Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley pays tribute to Gary Blair. He is a true philanthropist, with the heart of a champion, and an inspiration to us all.

*Editor’s Note: INSITE’s review of Coach Blair’s new book, “A Coaching Life,” can be found here.*

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