



BATTER UP!! The crowd pours in onto the freshly cut field prepped for what is to be a night full of fun. The excitement mounts as the time arrives; over 300 guests warmly greet each other, get a drink and get settled into their seats. The clock chimes on the hour...only there is no game to play.

On this special evening in September 2019, the guests were present – not to see a game, but to ensure the success of the newly founded Angelina College Foundation and the inception of the Angelina College Alumni and Friends Network. Those in attendance purchased more than 30 Lifetime Alumni memberships and 13 Annual Alumni memberships (both of which came with special giveaways and other perks).

The night began with entertainment provided by Hayden Baker, a former Angelina College baseball player and rising music star. Hayden was accompanied by the talented Raquel Ray, also a former student and performer for the AC Singers. Their familiar songs set the tone for an evening not to be forgotten.

Instead of the smell of popcorn and peanuts, the aroma of made-from-scratch-mouth-watering food provided by Texas Custom Catering filled the air. Guests dined on only

the best and rounded second base with decadent peach cobbler and ice cream!

No baseball game could ever be complete without fierce competition, and this event didn't disappoint. Guests competed against themselves and others to see who would reign supreme and hold the title of Fastest Throw, Closest to the Pin, and of course, winner of Heads or Tails.

Things grew lively as the evening rounded third base with the Live Auction. With items for the taking such as a John Hardy bracelet; a getaway to Crystal Beach; an exotic game hunt; a fish, shrimp and oyster fry; and a fabulous fishing trip to Lake Calcasieu, increasing bids were coming from all directions and many left on cloud nine, proud of their winnings.

Sliding into home, the night wrapped up with a hat's off to those who sponsored the event and made it possible for students in need of a helping hand to receive more than \$13,000 in assistance needed to stay in school and complete their education at Angelina College. The very first Dinner at the Diamond was a grand slam, and everyone involved walked off with a win.

The 2021 Dinner at the Diamond has been scheduled for Saturday, September 25. Look for exciting details to come.



GRADUATION ON THE GO!

Angelina College Graduation 2020 was quite different for all graduates due to Pomp and Pandemic Circumstances. To ensure safety for all graduates, family, friends, faculty, and staff, a difficult decision was made to cancel commencement ceremonies. The new normal forced college administrators to get creative for the Class of 2020. AC employees wanted to celebrate this exciting milestone with their graduates and chose to send a commemorative box to each student – even those living in other countries.

The box was filled with graduation goodies including a cap and tassel, an AC T-shirt, a diploma and a diploma folder, an AC Alumni and Friends sticker, a letter from AC President Dr. Michael J. Simon, and a commencement program. Upon receiving their boxes, students were asked to take a photo wearing their graduation caps and T-shirts while proudly displaying their well-earned diplomas. Students then sent those photos to AC for inclusion in a video and to be posted on AC's social media sites.



Congratulations 2020 Graduates!



ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

CHAIR: Cathy Busbee

VICE-CHAIR: Will Alvis

SECRETARY: Rocky Thigpen

TREASURER: Karen Watson

ALUMNI CO-CHAIRS: Velincia Dobrec and Ray Ann Baker

DEVELOPMENT CHAIR: Becca Chance

EVENTS CO-CHAIRS: Michael Dorman and Mary King

MARKETING CHAIR: Kyle King

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dana Smithhart

For information on the Roadrunner Mobile Market initiative, please email jlacaille@angelina.edu

FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS:

Dr. Cynthia Casparis, President

Mrs. Hilary Haglund Walker

Mrs. Lynne Haney

Dr. Michael Simon

Mr. Chris Sullivan

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Will Alvis, Nickie Ashby, Ray Ann Baker, Michelle Briley,

Cathy Busbee, Dr. Cynthia Casparis, Becca Chance,

Dorothy Lou Davis, Tyane Dietz, Velincia Dobrec,

Michael Dorman, Maci Dover, Lisa Haglund, Jay Jelinek,

Emily Jordan, Mary King, Kyle King, Taylor Kovar,

Elizabeth Lopez, Amy Ross, Rocky Thigpen,

Vince Treadwell, Karen Watson, Crystal Williams

3500 S. First St. • Lufkin, TX 75901 • 936-633-3213 • foundation@angelina.edu



ROADRUNNER REVIEW

2021 ALUMNI & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Greetings and Welcome

"Greetings", because we've missed you. We've missed your company and your input, especially in a year such as 2020, when it seems as if the entire world found ways to create distance.

But we'd also like to send a big "Welcome" as it pertains to our plans for the future. For years, AC distributed an "Alumni and Friends" newsletter. The focus of each issue included the following:

- To keep all our alumni and friends updated as to all the current events happening at Angelina College
- To highlight some of our prestigious alumni and their work since leaving the AC campus
- To spotlight current students so our alumni can see how AC's mission has remained steadfast over the years
- To acknowledge our generous donors by featuring students who are building a path to success in large part because of the scholarships and endowments our former students continue to contribute

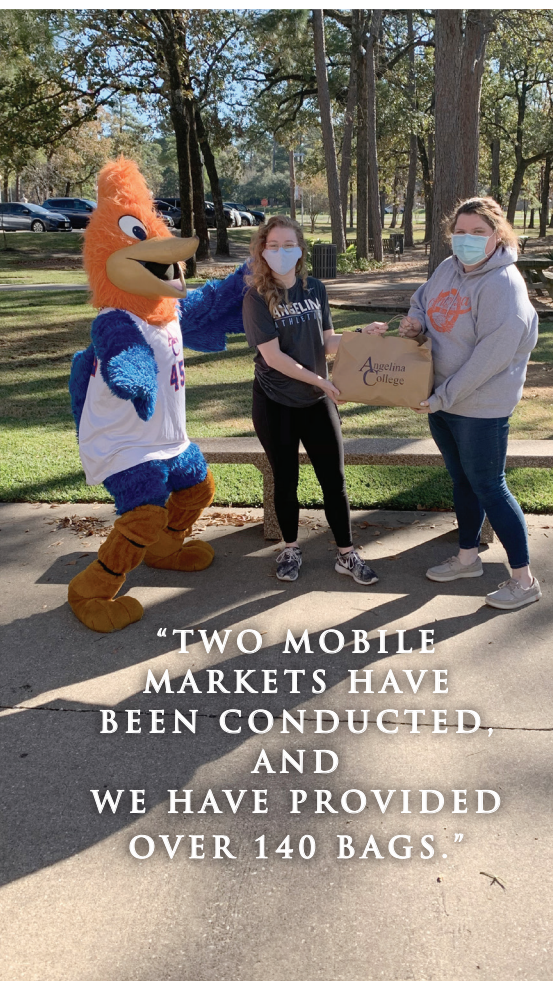
Now, with the Angelina College Foundation behind its efforts, the Alumni Newsletter is making its return. Again, its focus will be on all the great things Angelina College offers for both current and former students.

We hope you're as happy about this as we are, and we hope to see you involved as AC continues its mission as an institution based on creating, instilling, and producing excellence. I look forward to hearing from you.

Velincia Dobrec
Alumni Co-Chairman

ANGELINA COLLEGE ALUMNI & FRIENDS

3500 S. First St. • Lufkin, TX 75901 • 936.633.3213 • alumni@angelina.edu



Roadrunner Mobile Market

The idea for the Roadrunner Mobile Market came to fruition during the rise of the COVID-19 crisis. Because we knew students were encountering food insecurities created during the pandemic – many were facing job losses or reduced working hours – we knew we had to act quickly. Thus, the Roadrunner Mobile Market was born.

Approximately 20% of our student population live below the poverty line according to federal guidelines. After the pandemic, this rate increased dramatically, and many of our students' most basic needs were left unmet.

Prior to the creation of the Roadrunner Mobile Market, the Angelina College Student Food Pantry was established by our Student Government Association in January 2018. We already had experience meeting the needs of students facing food insecurity. However, Covid-19 would change the way we were accustomed to meeting that need.

Despite the many dangers of the disease, we also knew the importance of making sure our students had food; this was paramount to us. We then got creative and organized a safe, drive-through food bank, which we will continue to hold throughout this academic year. To protect our staff, team members are required to wear masks and gloves, and students drive up and receive a bag filled with nonperishable items. These bags are filled with everything from pasta and sauce for family meals to snacks and soups for something quick and easy. Students are incredibly grateful for the Mobile Market, and we are proud to have continued our efforts to reduce barriers to their academic success, even in the midst of a pandemic. In reality, some students experience anxiety about food security, and the Mobile Market helps reduce this anxiety. We are committed to continuing this beneficial program to help students.

"TWO MOBILE MARKETS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED, AND WE HAVE PROVIDED OVER 140 BAGS."

Dear Alumni and Friends of Angelina College:

The Institutional Advancement office asked me to provide you with an update on the college, especially focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic response. I am pleased to report that the state of the college is healthy and resilient but also fragile. My use of the word "fragile" to describe the college may be unconventional; the intent is to communicate that in these challenging times we cannot presume the health of the college will remain stable just because it has been so in the past. We must take every opportunity to safeguard and strengthen the institution wherever and whenever possible.

The resiliency of the Angelina College team and students is critical to the ongoing health of the institution. In response to COVID-19, instructors and academic administrators transitioned over 70 percent of all courses to an online delivery format. In just a few days in March 2020, nearly every full-time and adjunct instructor engaged in training, converted course materials, and adopted best practices for ensuring students achieve learning outcomes in an online environment. Moreover, in the subsequent weeks, thousands of AC students demonstrated the grit and flexibility to stay focused on their educational goals during a time of uncertainty and change. The Academic Affairs division will continue to deliver most courses online during the 2021 spring semester; however, we will make every effort to transition to more in-person courses by the fall semester of 2021.

I would also like to mention a few highlights from this fall. The Institutional Advancement and Student

Affairs division has distributed food to students in need on several occasions, and the team has helped nearly 50 students experiencing unanticipated financial difficulty through the Student Emergency Aid Fund. The Workforce and Continuing Education division welcomed Ms. Dianne Amerine as the new director of the Small Business Development Center, and the division is actively engaging with partners and clients to support economic and business development throughout the service area. The Marketing and Strategic Enrollment division outperformed internal enrollment projections for the fall semester 2020, and launched a new website to better serve prospective and current students.

The Business Affairs division has leveraged CARES Act funds to improve the information technology infrastructure, to support online teaching and learning, as well as to install air filtration systems in all campus buildings to help reduce the risk of operating inside while also reducing operating costs. Although we are experiencing one of the most challenging times in the history of higher education, Angelina College is choosing to frame these challenges as opportunities to innovate and strengthen our service to students and communities. As always, thank you for your continuing support of Angelina College.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael J. Simen
President, Angelina College

AC ALUMNI & FRIENDS

Scholarships

Attending and completing college at any level can become a financial burden for any student. The entire East Texas community has experienced its share of economic changes over the past few years. Many of the industries on which our citizens relied for years have closed their doors or moved out of the area, leaving our population in need of the kind of boosts geared toward professional development.

As a result, many of our area residents have realized the need for further education and training. Many have discovered that Angelina College is exactly what they need to create better opportunities for competing academically and in the workforce.

For more than 50 years, AC has proven itself capable of emphasizing the "community" in a community college. The college has adapted to every change, whether it's teaming up with local industries to enhance employee training or creating brand-new programs for

future workers. Students arrive at AC with doubts and leave with plans.

A large number of those students struggle to meet the financial aspect of obtaining college degrees or certifications. An estimated 80 percent of all community college students must work while tackling their course loads, with nearly 50 percent of those needing to work full-time jobs (Research. CollegeBoard.com). Nearly 70 percent of community college students are raising families at the same time, thus increasing their burdens of responsibility.

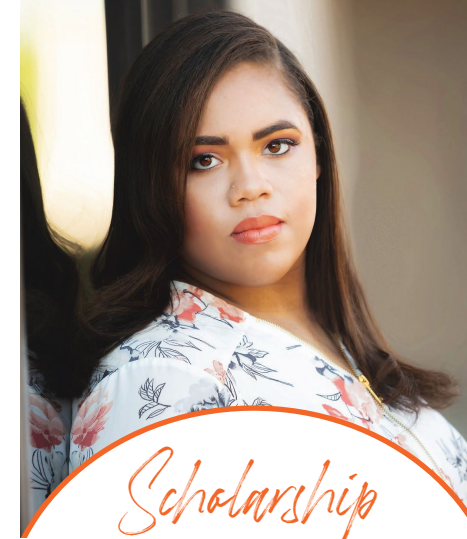
This is where the generosity of our donors comes into play. For as long as Angelina College has been in existence, there have been those alumni and friends who helped ensure numerous opportunities for students who might not have been able to attend college otherwise. The donors provide a lifeline of support in helping students realize potential that may have gone

undiscovered. Scholarships such as the **AC Alumni & Friends Scholarship**, pave the way for deserving people who are trying to carry on the AC tradition of creating success stories.

Without the necessary funding, some of those students would have seen college as nothing more than an unreachable dream. The thoughtful friends of Angelina College continue to support the dreams of AC students through generous contributions to assist with institutional expenses.

Such generosity isn't lost with the students. One recipient stated, "I want to make whoever those people are proud of me. I want them to know they're not wasting their money." Every little bit helps, and there's no way to know just how much such financial assistance can change a life.

At least not until Graduation Day. Those smiles and tears underneath those graduation caps are more than enough evidence of a newly changed life.



Scholarship SPOTLIGHT

My name is Nya Goodwin.

I am graduating with a degree

in General Studies. I am moving

on to SFA to pursue a Bachelor

degree in Criminal Justice. The

AC Alumni Scholarship was a

blessing for me. This scholarship

allowed me to attend school

stress free. I didn't have to worry

about any financial hardship

being placed on my mom. For

that, I will be forever grateful.

STUDENT EMERGENCY AID FUND

The concept and preparation for the Angelina College Emergency Aid Fund (SEAF) began in the Spring of 2019. The Office of Institutional Advancement and the Office of Access & Inclusion spent many hours researching potential funding sources, best practices, effective procedures, and emergency aid programs on other college campuses. On June 6, 2020, the Angelina College SEAF submitted its first emergency aid disbursement. Additionally, a number of food drives held generated more than 275 bags of nonperishable food items distributed.

The SEAF is especially critical this year. The program was launched in the midst of the initial rise of COVID-19 in our country, so not only were students struggling with adapting to online learning, but many of our students were also losing their primary sources of income due to reduced hours or business closures. More than ever, students are experiencing financial crisis. Many of our students are suddenly at risk of becoming homeless, being unable to pay bills or worrying about food insecurities.

We not only heard stories of struggle and heartbreak, but also stories that showcased tremendous strength, resolve, and hope-filled dreams. Something as small as helping a student with their internet bill could determine whether or not that student successfully completes the semester.

The Student Emergency Aid Fund provides a vital resource to help students reach their goals and the realization of their dreams. Our many generous donors are a part of this success story. We appreciate their belief in our mission and support of this important program.

If you are interested in joining forces, please contact us at foundation@angelina.edu.

TOGETHER, WE ARE CHANGING LIVES.

**IN ITS FIRST
EIGHT MONTHS,
THE STUDENT EMERGENCY
AID FUND AWARDED
EMERGENCY AID TO
71 STUDENTS
AND DISBURSED
\$29,143.30**

JUNE 2020 - FEBRUARY 2021



Ronnie King has maintained his connections with Angelina College, serving as a member of the Roadrunner Foundation and participating in numerous events throughout the years.

(Gary Stallard photo)

STILL CONNECTED

By Gary Stallard - Contributing writer

Ronnie King admits he didn't get a lot of attention at first when it came to his baseball skills. He'd been a solid high school player, but he wasn't necessarily on the radar of the big-time college program scouts.

"To be perfectly honest, Angelina College was the only offer I got coming out of high school," King laughs.

King then went on to help prove AC's reputation as a "launching pad" for both athletic and academic talent. In his two years (1980-82) as a Roadrunner, King set the program's all-time record for career batting average at .410 and was the first 'Runner Baseball All-American. His performance led to his signing with Baylor University for another two years. In 1984, the Texas Rangers selected King in Major League Baseball draft, and he would spend the next few years playing professionally.

It was those years at AC, however, that stand out to King. The '82 Roadrunners came within a game of earning a berth to the NJCAA World Series in Grand Junction, Colorado; the team lost to eventual champion McLennan College in a hotly contested three-game series.

"My sophomore year, our team was good," King says. "I played two years at Baylor and a few years of professional ball, and quite frankly that '82 Roadrunner team was the best team I ever played on. We were stacked, and for us not to have won the World Series is still mind-boggling to me."

That 'Runner team, with Bill Berry as head coach, featured several Division I signees and future major leaguers, including King's roommate at AC, Dennis Cook. Cook would go on to play at the University of Texas before embarking on a long professional career, and he and King would face each other in Southwest Conference competition.

While trying to work his way through MLB's minor league system, King put together some solid years. He batted .370 for the A-level Tri-City Triplets, and he even made a couple of mound appearances – even though he wasn't a pitcher.

"Yeah, we were getting blown out in a couple of those games, so I got to go in and throw some," King laughs. He recorded three strikeouts, "but I think I probably walked more than that."

Despite getting a taste of baseball on a bigger stage and earning some great memories, King says

AC ALUMNUS KING MAINTAINS STRONG TIES TO COLLEGE, ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

none of those top his years as a Roadrunner.

"Both years [at AC] the camaraderie we had among teammates was incredible," King says. "Man, we got along great. We were a team – on the field and off the field. I'm from Lufkin, but I actually lived in the dorm on the AC campus. We got to know each other not only while playing baseball, but in what we did around the games. It was a lot of fun."

When it finally came time to hang up his cleats, King returned to East Texas and began building his life and his business. He and his wife Mary are active in the community, and their children Kendall and Kyle are writing their own success stories.

Throughout the years, King has maintained close ties with Angelina College. He's a member of the Roadrunner Foundation, the organization supporting all AC athletics programs. King has participated in every event of the annual Guy Davis Golf Tournament, and he's frequently seen at AC sports events.

"The college certainly means a lot to me," King says. "Quite frankly, I was lucky that no one else recruited me for baseball. AC is here where I live, but it also relates to me as a person. It fits my lifestyle. It's laid-back, and it's a perfect small college."

"And I got a great education from AC. I have lasting memories from there, not just from baseball but from all the programs. Even now, I want to see all our programs experience success. I root for all of them. AC made me successful, and I love seeing others have the same type of success I've been able to enjoy."

Each year, current AC baseball coach Jeff Livin schedules games against perennial powerhouse McLennan College – King's old nemesis. King tries to make those games, and he tries even harder to keep his feelings inside.

"I try not to boo anybody," King laughs.

"Let's just say when I go to those games, I'll sure be rooting for the Roadrunners."



Ronnie King, shown here in a 1982 photo, spent two years playing for the Roadrunner baseball team before signing with Baylor University. King was selected in the 1984 Major League Baseball draft by the Texas Rangers.
(Contributed photo)

Ronnie King has participated in every one of the annual Guy Davis Golf Tournament, which raises funds in support of all Angelina College athletics programs.
(Gary Stallard photo)



Ronnie King (front row, center) called the 1982 Angelina College Roadrunners "the best team I ever played on." King played for Baylor University and the Texas Rangers organization. (Contributed photo)