



# Montague-CTE Scholar **Carly Gilson (2018-19)** College of Education and Human Development



Center for Teaching Excellence  
DEAN OF FACULTIES

I used funds from the Montague CTE-Scholar Award to create a professional learning community for undergraduate students interested in becoming special education teachers in middle school, high school, or transition (ages 18-21) settings. The community, called the Transition Teachers of Tomorrow (T3), comprised 10 undergraduate students with a major or minor in education and a passion for supporting adolescents and young adults with disabilities. We met monthly to cover relevant topics and issues in special education. The learning community divided into three focus areas selected based on student interest: advocacy for inclusion in higher education, current issues in transition, and research related to special education. Each student received a \$500 stipend for participation.

### **Advocacy for Inclusive Higher Education: Aggie ACHIEVEMates**

These students assisted with the development of Aggie ACHIEVE, a four-year, inclusive postsecondary program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Specifically, they created a partnering student organization called Aggie ACHIEVEMates to provide peer mentorship for Aggie ACHIEVE.

### **Current Issues in Transition: Texas Transition Conference**

These students attended the Texas Transition Conference in San Antonio in February 2019, hosted by the Texas A&M Center on Disability and Development. They had the opportunity to mingle with current and former special education teachers, administrators, and service providers. They learned about research and best practices in transition.

### **Research in Special Education: EMPOWER Research**

These students assisted with the design, recruitment, and analysis of a qualitative research study focusing on the perspectives of adults with disabilities regarding their work experiences and the impact of school on these experiences. They learned about narrative inquiry data collection and research methods.