

Amarillo City Manager Gives Credit to OPI

Few career choices provide individuals with opportunities to be involved in issues as diverse as human resources, public safety, parks and recreation, economic development and water conservation, but those issues consume much of Amarillo City Manager Jarrett Atkinson's time.

Jarrett graduated from Amarillo High School in 1986 and completed coursework, primarily in law enforcement, at Amarillo College before attending Sam Houston State University to complete his undergraduate studies. The decision to attend SHSU was based upon the recommendation of his criminal justice teacher at AC. Throughout his undergraduate and graduate careers, Jarrett borrowed funds from OPI's Campbell Family Memorial Fund.

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“My initial thought was to be a game warden for the State of Texas, and SHSU has a highly rated criminal justice program,” Jarrett said.

During his undergraduate studies, Jarrett decided to continue his educational development and recognized that graduate work would provide greater opportunity for him in the future. As a result, he began pursuing a Master's of Public Administration degree from Texas Tech University which he completed in 1995.

“It would have been possible for me to complete my bachelor's degree without borrowing money from OPI but it would have extended the time necessary to complete the degree requirements; I likely would have never pursued a graduate degree if I had done that,” Jarrett said. “Borrowing from OPI was one of the best decisions I have made, and I cannot overstate the importance and benefit of such a program for local students.”

Jarrett was named Amarillo City Manager in 2010 and has been faced with a variety of challenges and opportunities since assuming that position. He credits OPI for helping him achieve the success he has attained.

“The donors and staff at OPI were instrumental in helping me complete both degrees. I know they have helped countless others as well and I have been truly blessed by the opportunity and generosity,” Jarrett said.

For further information about Jarrett's role with the City of Amarillo, take a look at a Q&A session under the “News” section on the OPI homepage.

