

The Distinguished Service Award was created in 1981 by the Barton Community College Foundation to recognize individuals who have shown genuine regard for, and have performed outstanding service to Barton Community College. The Barton Foundation Board of Directors selects the recipient from nominations received. The Foundation is pleased to announce **Loren and Gayle Unruh** as the 2016 Distinguished Service Award recipients.



Loren Unruh was born and raised in Great Bend on his grandfather's homestead and graduated from Great Bend High School in 1961. He started a custom combine crew in 1963 and during his travels across the U.S. developed an interest in the restaurant business. In 1970 he launched the 100 room Black Angus Steak Ranch soon expanding into a second dining room and banquet facilities for more than 200.

In 1977, he opened the 48-room Best Western Angus Inn that has grown to 90 units including an indoor pool and large courtyard area. From 1992-1998, Loren served on the Best Western National Board of Directors, serving as Chairman in 1994.

Loren's first wife, Connie, passed away in 1987. His current wife, Gayle, is a native of North Dakota moving here from Phoenix. They have 3 children, Rick, Shawnda, and Krista, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Loren is an active community advocate, always willing to help on committees and initiatives. He continues to serve faithfully on his church board and has served 36 years on the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Loren's relationship with Barton Community College began with the purchase of basketball season tickets from the first season they were available to the present. He was a founding member of the Cougar Booster Club, serving as Vice President in 1982-1983 and President in 1983-1984. He donates time and space for meetings, sponsors tournaments and most recently donated to the new scoreboard in the Barton gymnasium.

In 2001 a tragic accident claimed the life of their grandson, Landon. To honor Landon's passion and talent for baseball, Loren established the Landon Unruh Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to a baseball player in pursuit of his dreams, just as they had dreamed of seeing Landon pursue his.

Loren and Gayle later created the Loren and Gayle Unruh Endowment in 2007 to benefit another student athlete and have continued to increase the endowment fund each year.

Loren has always felt it is important to invest back into the youth and the future of his community.

Because of their years of support and involvement with both athletics and academics, the Barton Community College Foundation is proud and grateful for this opportunity to honor Loren and Gayle Unruh with the 2016 Distinguished Service Award.