

## 2017 Distinguished Service Award Recipients

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 **Gary and Anna Burke** as the 2017 Distinguished Service Award recipients.

Gary was born in Monett, Missouri and moved to Great Bend at the age of one year old. Anna was born in Great Bend. She and Gary grew up in Great Bend, graduating from Great Bend High School. After graduation in 1966, Gary joined the Navy and served in DaNang, Vietnam during the war. He returned to Great Bend after his military service and began dating Anna, who was a friend of his youngest sister – they married in 1971. Gary and Anna have three children: Kari Lankerd of Great Bend, Amy Larm and husband Kevin of Lee Summit, Missouri; and Scott Burke and Kristin Stewart of Garland, Texas. They have two grandchildren; Tanner Ford and Tommie Lankerd of Great Bend. The Burkes lived in Ellinwood from 1976 to 1988; upon moving back to Great Bend, Anna felt the children were old enough and went to work for Portraits by Shane in Great Bend.



Gary has been involved in many businesses in Great Bend. In 1978 he opened GB Trenching and after selling that business in 1984, he was employed by Farmers Bank and Trust for four years. He became a partner in Great Bend Casing Pullers in 1988 and later became an agent for New England Financial Services. In 1997 he became a partner in Great Plains Inspection and Butterfly Supply and several years later became the sole owner of both companies. Gary sold these businesses and retired in April of 2014. Since his retirement he has devoted his time to volunteer work.

Since starting his first business in 1978 Gary has been involved in many aspects of Barton Community College. First as a student taking advantage of his G.I. benefits by attending night classes to earn in degree in 1984, to his service with the Booster Club starting 1985, serving as president in 1988. Gary joined the Barton Community College Foundation Board of Directors in 2008 serving as board chair in 2012. Always looking for a way to serve, Gary is currently a member of the Barton Community College Board of Trustees.

Gary and Anna have been life-long, involved community members, always giving back to the community they call home. In 2013 they established the Betty L. Miller Memorial Endowment in honor of Gary's mother and have designated funds for a planned gift to the Foundation.

“Over the years, before and since Gary's involvement on the Foundation Board, Gary and Anna have been generous and loyal supporters of many Foundation initiatives and the first to come on board in support of its fund raising efforts. The Barton Community College Foundation is proud and grateful for this opportunity to honor Gary and Anna Burke with the 2017 Distinguished Service Award, and

we hope they know how much they are admired and appreciated.”