

Duana Brashear's impact on my life transcends mere mentorship; she became the guiding light that led me to my true calling as an educator. It was through a stroke of fate that I crossed paths with Duana, an alumna of Sam Houston State University (SHSU), during my high school years. Little did I know that this encounter would shape the trajectory of my future in such profound ways.

From the moment I stepped into her sphere, I was captivated by Duana's warmth and unwavering dedication to her students. As I shadowed her as an elementary principal, I was not just observing a professional at work; I was witnessing firsthand the embodiment of SHSU's motto, "The Measure of a Life is its Service." Duana's every action, every word, radiated with a profound sense of purpose – a purpose rooted in selfless service to others.

What struck me most about Duana was her ability to seamlessly blend compassion with unwavering determination. No matter the challenges she faced, she approached each day with a steadfast commitment to ensuring that every student felt seen, heard, and valued. It was in her presence that I truly understood the profound impact a dedicated educator can have on the lives of young minds.

As an SHSU alumna, Duana carried with her the university's ethos of excellence and service, infusing every aspect of her work with a sense of purpose greater than herself. Behind the scenes, she worked tirelessly, pouring her heart and soul into preparing lessons, devising strategies to support struggling students, and advocating for those in need. Her dedication knew no bounds, and it was infectious.

But perhaps what resonated with me most deeply was Duana's ability to inspire beyond the confines of a classroom. In her, I saw not just a mentor, but a beacon of hope and possibility. Through her guidance, I discovered a passion for education that I never knew existed within me.

She ignited a fire in my soul – a burning desire to make a difference, to leave a lasting impact on the lives of others.

And so, as I embark on my own journey as an English teacher, I carry with me the lessons I learned from Duana – lessons of compassion, dedication, and the profound impact of service. I am driven by a deep-rooted desire to instill in my students the same sense of wonder and possibility that she instilled in me. For in teaching, I find not just a profession, but a calling – a calling to inspire, to empower, and to make the world a better place, one student at a time.

In Duana Brashear, I found not just a mentor, but a kindred spirit – a shining example of the transformative power of education and service. And as I set forth on this journey, I do so with her words echoing in my mind: "The measure of a life is its service."