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Unsung Hero of the Tanner - Tina Ashby

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As I walked into Tina’s office for the first time, my eyes were immediately drawn to the wall filled with smiling faces and the shelves containing various awards and pictures. When I asked her about what the wall of student’s pictures meant to her, I couldn’t help but notice how her face lit up as she talked about her students. After she explained how she organizes the pictures of all the Finance students according to their internship or job status and year in the program, I could tell that she knew each one individually, cared for them deeply, and wanted the best for them.

When I asked Tina what the most rewarding part of her job was, she responded that it’s “when students have been able to fulfill the start of their dreams.” Helping students get on the right path to reaching their goals is a part of Tina’s day-to-day life. As the Director of Finance Career Management and Employer Relations, she teaches a class, works with over 100 companies to place students, takes students on networking trips, leads mock interviews, and advises various clubs on campus.

Nevertheless, her passion to help students fulfill their dreams does not stop with the students in the Finance Department.

Along with advising clubs such as Women in Finance and Corporate Finance, she currently acts as an advisor to the Women in Business Club. Six years ago, the club started with 20 members and has grown to over 500. Tina couldn’t be more thrilled because she loves helping women see the value in gaining business skills. However, she’s not just an advisor, she’s a friend to many. Tina strives to attend as many wedding receptions as she can, and loves going out to dessert with those who she mentors and has befriended. Although she confesses that she hasn’t accepted the invitation to do karaoke yet, she’s definitely contemplating it.

When Tina isn’t working with students or faculty across campus, she’s striving to find and maintain...
balance in her life. She does so by setting apart time to be with her family, serving the youth in her church, and pursuing her own dreams and hobbies. Now that her daughters are all grown, they’ve begun to support her in fulfilling her own ambitions.

“I possess tremendous power to make life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration, I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis is escalated or de-escalated, and a person is humanized or de-humanized. If we treat people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat people as they ought to be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming.”

Before I left Tina’s office, after I had already closed my laptop and stopped taking notes, she gave me and a fellow peer some great advice. She told us that we needed to look at ourselves and realize how great we were and then began to recite to us one of her favorite quotes by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

“I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather.”

Tina Ashby’s passion for helping students reach their potential and positive attitude has affected the lives of many and will continue to do so for the years to come.

*Photos courtesy of Tina Ashby*