



Present At The Creation

Our Founders, In Their Own Words

Genie Wilson Dillon

Director, Solutions Development

Bill Priest Institute



The Texas Award for Performance Excellence was born of a collective vision that Texas needed a state program to help Texas organizations become better because of assessment and feedback, to recognize role models of world-class systems excellence, and to provide a framework or model for Texas organizations to follow that will help them out-perform those that do not seek performance excellence.

Looking back – it was 1992 when talk moved to action about a Texas award program patterned after Baldrige. A Design Team comprised of individuals representing business, government, and education organizations developed a Texas Quality Award business plan. The Design Team (later defined as Board of Overseers) met monthly to work on sub-team strategies that were critical to implementing the business plan and launch the program in 1993. So many things had to happen – and they did – as a result of the passion and commitment of so many Texas “Stars”. Sub-teams focused on Fundraising, Examiner recruitment, Examiner training, development of the Board of Trustees (later defined as Board of Directors), developing Texas program criteria, planning an Award Ceremony, gaining endorsement of the program by Governor Ann Richards, developing program processes, appointing Panel of Judges, selecting the first award program administrator, setting up the Quality Texas Foundation, and promoting/marketing to applicants. Many committed volunteers enabled the vision to be realized. Since the inaugural year (1993-1994), many of the early “Stars” are still actively involved. Each year new “Stars” join the team and Quality Texas continues to succeed in our mission.

In 1993, I was hired by the American Productivity & Quality Center to manage and administer the Texas Quality Award. The agreement between APQC and Quality Texas was that I would be the Award Program Administrator for two-three years to ensure the launch of the program, facilitate improvements for the second cycle, and transfer knowledge and processes to the Award Administrator and Executive Director in the third cycle. Since that time, I have continued service through the Board of Overseers, Panel of Judges, Training Team, Process Observer, and Examiner.

Fifteen years since I first became involved, the Texas Award for Performance Excellence (TAPE) is nationally recognized as a premier state award program. Quality Texas continues to serve Texas organizations just as it was conceived. This is not by accident – it is by the

continual dedication and service of so many people who care deeply about making a positive difference for Texas organizations. No one can do this alone – it takes all of us – to stay the course – to continue the journey – and to never give up on doing what we've proven is the right thing for Texas.