

2013

W. Sam Monroe



Sam Monroe

Sam Monroe, who serves as president of Lamar State College-Port Arthur, is known not only as an experienced and trusted leader in higher education, but also as someone who has worked diligently to highlight and preserve the music and arts legacy of Southeast Texas.

Monroe majored in business administration and graduated with his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from SHSU in 1965. He then attended Lamar University, where he earned both the Master of Education degree and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

After serving on the Lamar University Board of Regents for five years, Monroe's career at the former Port Arthur College began in 1973, when he was named executive vice president. The following year, he succeeded his father, Madison Monroe, as president. His presidency has spanned 40 years, making him the longest-serving president of a higher educational institution in the state.

Under Monroe's direction, the college has experienced substantial growth and development, transitioning from a small technical school to a state college with a 50-acre campus and more than 50 programs of study. The institution was re-named Lamar State College-Port Arthur in 1999.

In recent years, the college has opened a \$5.9 million Performing Arts Center and a 7,500 square-foot Student Success Center.

Monroe has overseen the addition of a men's basketball team and women's softball team, which have enhanced the college's athletic program and created a full college experience for students. In 1975 he was named one of the "Five Outstanding Young Texans" by the Texas Jaycees. The Port Arthur News named Monroe "Citizen of the Year" in 2004, and a year later he was the first recipient of the Quota International of Southeast Texas "Man of the Year" Award. For many years, he has volunteered with such organizations as the Sabine Pilots Commission, Medical Center of Southeast Texas, Rotary Club, Port Arthur Historical Society, and the United Methodist Temple of Port Arthur.

He was also instrumental in founding the Museum of the Gulf Coast, which preserves the history of the region.

He and his wife, Linda, also a Sam Houston graduate, have two children and two grandchildren.