

William "Buster" & Frances R. Gilbreth

Future Educator Scholarship

William "Buster" and Frances Ruth Gilbreth were both fifth generation Texans. Buster was born in 1930 in Smiley, Texas, to chicken farmers, while Frances was born in 1936 in Port Arthur, Texas, amongst the bustle of oil refineries. While their upbringings could not have been more different, they both developed a passion for education at an early age. Many educators inspired them along the way, including a superintendent who doubled as a football coach, a principal who taught piano lessons, counselors who made home visits, and teachers who saw their talents and nurtured them to fruition.

Buster enrolled in Southwest Texas Teachers College (Texas State University) in San Marcos where he was set up on a blind date with another student, Frances Ruth Wilson, upon his return from the Korean War. The two bonded instantly and were married in November of 1956. Together, they forged a life of love, friendship, adventure, football, family, and, most importantly, faith. Both graduated with a B.S. in Education in 1956 and an M.S. in Education in 1959. They believed that education could open the world for them, and indeed it did!

Buster and Frances began their teaching and coaching assignments in Freer, Texas, in 1956, and had stops in Poteet, Cotulla, and San Antonio Kennedy before fate dealt them a fine hand in the summer of 1969 by offering Buster the position of head coach and athletic director at Cuero High School and Frances a position as a fifth-grade teacher at Cuero's Hunt Elementary. They quickly settled into their home raising their three daughters, Debbie, Diane, and Donna, and embracing the whole Cuero Gobbler community. They would go on to say those were some of the best years of their lives.

The Gilbreth's left Cuero in 1980 with stops in Galena Park North Shore, Pasadena Dobie, and Fort Bend Clements before retiring in 1990. Their passion for teaching and sincere commitment to their students was undeniable. Wanting to enjoy all they had read and taught, they traveled to 16 countries and visited all 50 states during their golden years.

In 1996, Buster was inducted into the Texas High School Football Hall of Fame, and he was the first inductee into the Gobbler Hall of Fame in 2004. He continues to be the winningest coach in Cuero High School football history with a record of 107-22-4 with 50 shutouts, four State 3A Finals appearances (1970, 1973, 1974 and 1975), and two back-to-back Championships (1973 and 1974).

Frances passed away in November of 2016 and Buster in August of 2020, but the impact they had on their family, friends, former students, and football will be felt for generations. As memorial gifts began to come in, the magnitude of the impact the Gilbreth's had in Cuero was a humbling honor for the Gilbreth's daughters. The monies donated to the Cuero ISD Education Foundation both in honor of and in memory of Buster and Frances led to the establishment of the William "Buster" and Frances R. Gilbreth Future Educator Scholarship fund from which a scholarship will be awarded annually to a Cuero ISD teacher who has already obtained a Bachelor's degree and is pursuing a Master's Degree in education and who exhibits qualities characteristic of Buster and Frances, namely a strong work ethic and dedication to school and community. The Gilbreth family's hope is that this scholarship will help equip and inspire all Cuero teachers to become legendary educators who impact a generation of students just as Buster and Frances did.

"Teaching might even be the greatest of the arts since the medium is the human mind and spirit."

—John Steinbeck