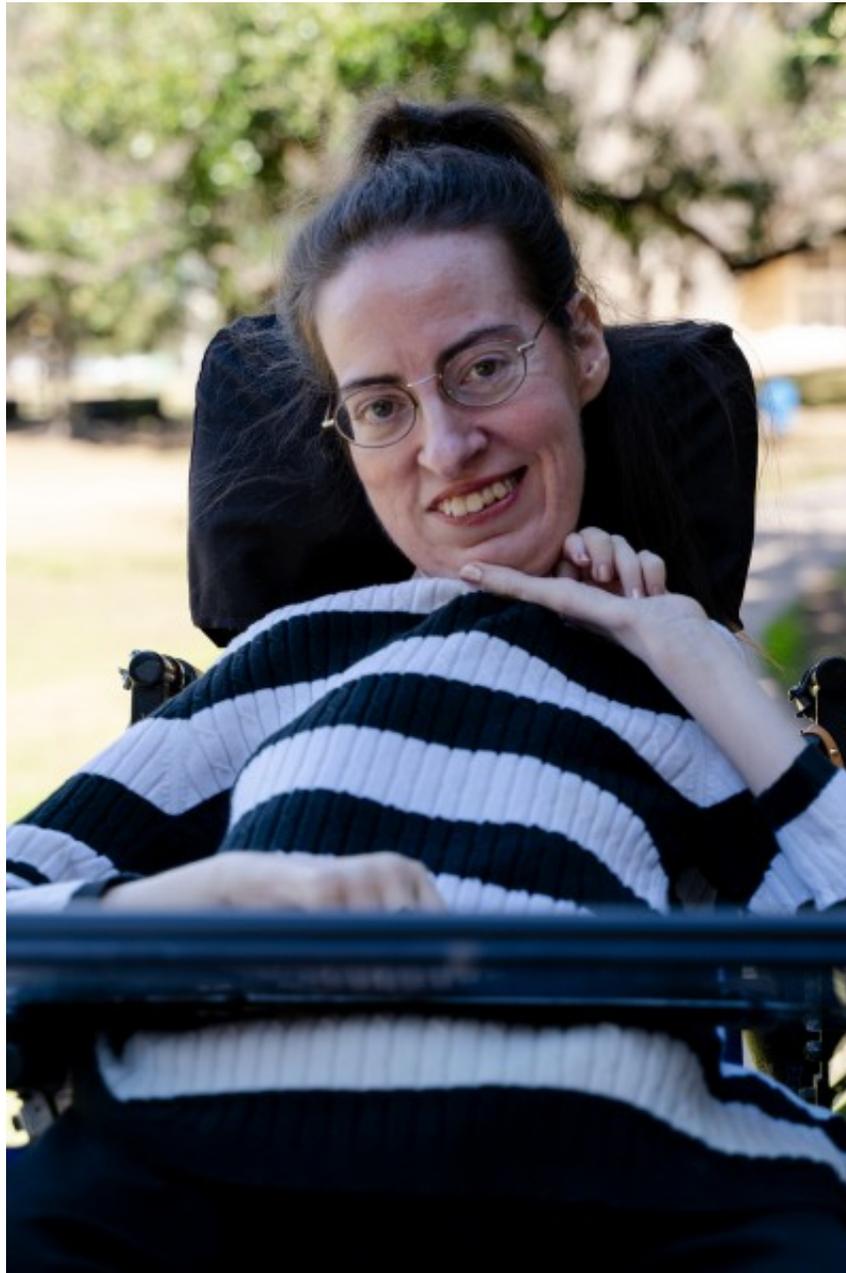


Allison Dickson '02

Distinguished Southwestern Service



Allison Dickson '02 When Allison Dickson '02 was 15 months old, she was diagnosed with Werdnig–Hoffmann disease, the most severe form of spinal muscular atrophy, and given a year to live. Twenty-seven years later, she graduated first in her class from Baylor Law School. If her story ended there, it would be impressive enough. But it doesn't. Today, Dickson is a respected philanthropist well-known throughout her community and across the state

for her positivity, faith, and determination.

“Allison continually inspires students and those around her to work hard, maintain strength through adversity, and give back,” says Purna Bajekal '17. “She is extremely passionate about helping others, specifically in their pursuit of education.” Most notably, Dickson has created and fully endowed three scholarships in Central Texas: the Allison Dickson Delta Delta Delta Scholarship at Southwestern University, the Allison Dickson Baylor Law Scholarship, and the Allison Dickson Temple Proud Scholarship at Temple High School.

Dickson’s enthusiasm for Southwestern began as an undergraduate. She served in a number of volunteer roles, including vice chair of Student Foundation and vice president of finance and philanthropy cochair for Delta Delta Delta. After graduating *summa cum laude*, she became a class giving officer, a role she continues to hold, and served on the 2010 Strategic Planning Committee. She also is on the class committee for the class of 2002 and is a strong advocate for Southwestern on her social-media channels, serving as a social media ambassador. “Allison’s loyalty to Southwestern University is unwavering, as evidenced by her network of Southwestern friends from a slew of classes beyond her own,” Jen Peters Crichton '02 says. “She is an inspiration to everyone she meets and hands down one of the most amazing human beings to cruise the halls of Southwestern University.”

Dickson’s philanthropic efforts do not stop with her support of Southwestern, however. She volunteers with the Junior League of Bell County and served on its board for several years. She is president of the Temple/Belton Tri Delta Alumnae Chapter and serves on the Graduate Scholarship Committee of the Tri Delta Foundation. She hosts a toy drive for children at Baylor Scott & White McLane Children’s Medical Center each Christmas. She raises clothes, toiletries, and books for homeless and at-risk students and their families in Temple Independent School District.

Her efforts have not gone unrecognized. In 2017, she was named the Baylor Young Lawyer of the Year. That same year, State Representative Hugh Shine had a resolution drawn up in the Texas Legislature acknowledging her accomplishments and commending her for her academic achievements and contributions to the Temple community. Perhaps most important, those who know her are grateful for the opportunity.

"The greatest lesson I learned while at Southwestern wasn't taught in a lecture hall. While attending Southwestern, I learned that those who appear weakest among us are often the strongest," says Callie McCormack Hollenshead '99. "I saw a girl from Temple, Texas, defeat great odds, win friends, influence people, and make better grades than me while doing it. She knew secrets that none of the rest of us knew at the time: Life is precious. Tomorrow is not promised. Make the most of every moment. Leave the world better than you found it."

Dickson works as a legal research assistant for Baylor Law and is writing a book tentatively titled *I Just Need Possible: 90 Days of Inspiration, Motivation, and Encouragement*. She hopes to one day establish a foundation that will support the causes she is passionate about for decades to come.

"They say a cat has nine lives. I believe I have just one to live and love and learn with all that I have for as long as I have," Dickson wrote on her blog. "I want to use this one precious life to make a fundamental difference in the lives of others. That's my goal, and I hope one day it will be said, 'She did it!'"

For her infectious spirit and enduring support of Southwestern University, the Southwestern University Alumni Association is proud to honor Allison Dickson with the Distinguished Southwestern Service Award.