

**Stephen F. Austin State University**  
***Nacogdoches, Texas***

**Institution Contact Information:**

**First Name:** Carrie                      **Last Name:** Baker  
**Title:** Educator Preparation Program Manager  
**Email:** cabaker@sfasu.edu

---

**TEACH Grant Recipient**

**First Name:** Abbagayle              **Last Name:** Kirk

**Student Profile:**

I became passionate about teaching when I realized I could help and encourage young people to build a strong future for themselves. I want to become an educator so I can advocate for students and help them find their voice and confidence--especially those students whose voices have gone unheard and feel as though they been pushed away. The TEACH grant helps me reduce my student loan debt and reduces the number of hours I need to work each month. With that free time I can meet with my mentor to learn more about being an effective educator and gaining experience in the classroom. I love having the time to work with students at different grade levels. It helps me see all that is possible as a teacher and I know I would not be able to do this without financial assistance. The TEACH grant has reduced my financial stress and allowed me to focus on what is most important as I prepare to become a teacher.