

SPIRIT

Take a Walk With Me

*How the legacy of professor
John J. McDermott
permeates Aggieland*

A Testament to Two Legends

There's an old saying that when you reach a certain age, everyone you see reminds you of someone you already know. I'm old enough to attest that there is a modicum of truth to the statement. Yet, the assertion that there are only so many human archetypes is soundly refuted by a couple of articles in this issue of *Spirit*.

I've been privileged to know a number of unique characters, and we highlight two of them in this issue.

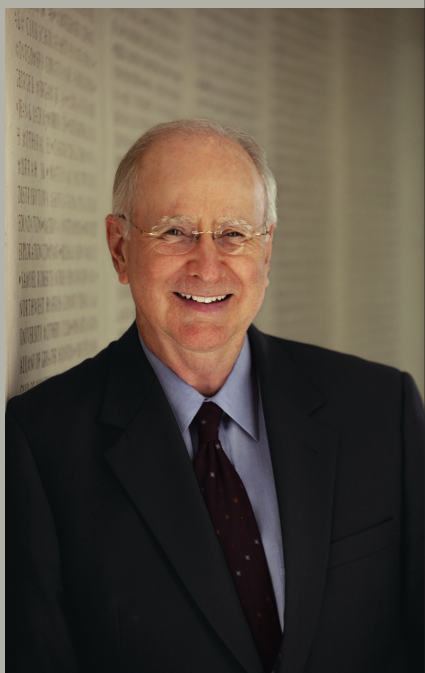
I met Dr. Thomas Hargrove '66 "on the wall" in Dorm 2 in September 1963. Tom was a sophomore in Spider D, and I was a fish in Saber C. We both came to Texas A&M from dusty West Texas cotton farms to study agricultural journalism. Tom was a mentor in many ways—some enjoyable, some not so much. He was an absolutely unique human being. He was extraordinarily bright but more important, he was a creative storyteller and adventurer. Times were spartan at Texas A&M, and Tom found many ways to enliven the experience, often fueled by his passion for a quick trip to Whiskey Bridge, where distilled spirits were for sale.

If he were still around, he would probably be embarrassed by an oft-quoted statement, but it will stimulate memories among his myriad old friends: "The most useless thing in the world is the top to a whiskey bottle." Tom harnessed those youthful forays and adventuresome activities into an extraordinary career as an international agriculturalist. His most famous adventure was unfortunately being captured by narco-guerillas in South America. The book and movie that documents his experience there only adds to the Hargrove legend.

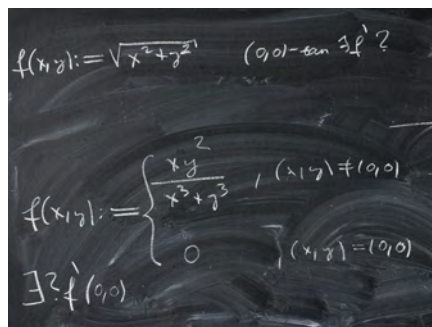
The second person highlighted who broke the mold is John McDermott, a distinguished professor of philosophy. I got to know John in the early 1980s when I returned from a three-year absence from Texas A&M. With President Frank Vandiver, he led the charge to create a Faculty Senate and was holding down the post of its first chair. Curmudgeonly, always puffing on a pipe, and somewhat unkempt with a shock of long hair and a sweat-brimmed fedora, he was the prototypical image of the crazy professor. His slightly disheveled appearance and confrontational style gets your attention, but his well-camouflaged soft side is interested in what is going on to expand a person's mind.

All it took was a few minutes time engaged in conversation with McDermott to understand his deep affection for Texas A&M, in particular his students. His leadership of the Faculty Senate was based on a belief that faculty had a legitimate role in the governance of the institution. John and I continue to have thoughtful and provocative conversations about his love for Texas A&M and his never-ending commitment to its students by protecting their interests and expanding their intellectual boundaries. He is and has been a faculty conscience for Texas A&M for almost four decades.

I heartily endorse your careful reading of the two stories highlighted here as well as the other inspirational content about Texas A&M in this issue of *Spirit*.



Eddie J. Davis
 EDDIE J. DAVIS '67
 PRESIDENT
 TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION



Texas A&M's Center for Teaching Excellence helps faculty do a better job of teaching so that they can do a better job of helping students learn. » **p.36**

FEATURES

16

CROSSING THE POND

The second story in a series on Texas A&M's global reach explores the College of Architecture's study abroad offerings.

24

Faculty Impact:

A TAPESTRY OF WOVEN TALES

Distinguished Professor John J. McDermott has built a legacy in the field of American philosophy during his 62-year career.

28

Student Impact:

PATRIOT AND PIONEER

An endowed memorial scholarship honors Dr. Thomas Hargrove '66, a Vietnam veteran who endured 11 months of Andean captivity on his journey to becoming one of the Green Revolution's finest.

32

Spirit Impact:

AT HOME WITH THE WORLD

The Aggie International Ambassadors are cultural liaisons who learn from and teach international students attending Texas A&M.

36

College Impact:

LET'S TALK TEACHING

When a Texas A&M department was struggling to meet national standards, the Center for Teaching Excellence came to the rescue.

Contents



The Aggie International Ambassadors see themselves as liaisons between cultures, sponsoring activities and events that introduce international students to American traditions. » **p.32**

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Aggie International Ambassadors (p. 35, top)

John Benson, *The Battalion* (p. 6)

The Bush School of Government & Public Service (p. 12-13)

Ana Escobar (p. 16; 17; 18 and 19, bottom)

Mark Everett (p. 8, top)

Miles Hargrove (p. 28; 29; 31)

Jason Jones (p. 10, bottom)

Robb Kendrick (p. 7, top; 11, top)

Igor Kraguljac (p. 38; 40)

Chanam Lee (p. 8, left)

Jim Lyle (p. 14-15; 25; 36-37; 44; 45, left and top; 46)

Mays Business School (p. 43)

Brian Sowell (p. 18, top left)

Texas A&M College of Architecture (p. 18, top right; p. 21, bottom right; 22, bottom left; 23)

Texas A&M College of Education and Human Development (p. 10, center)

Texas A&M College of Science (p. 10, bottom)

Texas A&M Dwight Look College of Engineering (p. 11, bottom)

Texas A&M at Galveston (p. 7, bottom)

Texas A&M Marketing and Communications (p. 9, bottom)

Zackary Chance Medlin (p. 1, left)

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DEPARTMENTS

3 THE LEGACY

In a tremendous philanthropic gesture, Ann and Charles P. Manning '82 established dean's excellence endowments to benefit four Texas A&M entities after their lifetimes.

4 LETTERS/CORRECTIONS

6 ON CAMPUS

Korean cadets visit Aggieland; Student Recreation Center undergoes renovations; Texas A&M pledges to increase study abroad participation.

8 LAB WORK

College of Architecture students design Nigerian medical facility; researchers explore the history of Alcatraz.

10 NEW GIFTS

Physician endows second-ever chair in the Department of Statistics; ConocoPhillips commits \$6 million toward new Engineering Education Complex.

12 ONE VOICE

"Go to hard places and do hard things." This call to action guides future peacemakers at The Bush School of Government and Public Service.

By Ryan C. Crocker

14 VIEWPOINT

Paint USA delivers an engaging tool to learn and teach geography with larger-than-life maps of the United States.

42 OPPORTUNITY

Texas A&M's Institute for Advanced Study facilitates pioneering research by bringing world-renowned scholars to campus.

44 @FOUNDATION

Outstanding student receives \$2,500 award; Maroon Coats welcome seventh class; Bermúdez joins trustees.

46 POSTSCRIPT

"From Aggie Jokes to Graduation"

By Dunae Crenwelge '15

47 CONTACT US

Do you know where your food comes from? Dr. Aleda Roth, a visiting scholar in the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study, believes that U.S. consumers are at a high risk of contamination from food that is imported from emerging countries. » **p. 42**



Contents

COVER

John J. McDermott is more than a professor; he's a storyteller who instills in his students the importance of self-discovery. Inspired by the layers of meaning within McDermott's lessons, College Station artist Scott McDermott (no relation) created this portrait of the philosopher.

Ann and Charles Manning '82, who documented a generous gift to Texas A&M in their estate plan, snagged a photo with Reveille VIII during a visit to campus in February.

The Legacy

Everyone who grows up in Texas knows that at some point, there comes a choice: Aggie or Longhorn.

"Half my peers went one way, half the other, and for some reason I chose Aggie," said Charles Manning '82, who came to Texas A&M University in 1978 and graduated a year early with a degree in finance.

"I remember walking around campus, seeing names on buildings and reading about former student benefactors, and I vowed to myself that I would join their ranks if circumstances allowed," he said.

Flash forward to today, where his promise is set to be fulfilled. In a tremendous philanthropic gesture, Charles and his wife Ann solidified a significant planned gift through the Texas A&M Foundation to benefit four Texas A&M entities: Mays Business School, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and the 12th Man Foundation.

Thoughtful Planning

With hefty retirement accounts and no children, the Mannings wanted to plan for the final distribution of their estate in a tax-efficient way. They worked closely with their attorney, Amy Bloomquist '83, to create a giving strategy that is now documented in their estate plan. In addition to a



A Promise Made Will Be a Promise Paid

generous bequest planned in their living trust, they have named the Texas A&M Foundation as a beneficiary of their retirement accounts after their lifetimes.

"Retirement account assets are not very tax-friendly, so a planned gift was an easy decision," said Charles. With both gifts, the Mannings will hold, manage, enjoy and continue to build their estate during their lifetimes, and Texas A&M will benefit greatly.

They designed all of their endowments to allow college deans maximum flexibility in the use of funds.

"I have no idea what the needs of each college will be in 20, 30 or 40 years, but I do trust that the deans will be good stewards of these funds," said Charles, who chose each beneficiary with care.

Banking Reaps Benefits

Retired now and living in Austin, the Mannings enjoyed productive and fruitful careers. Charles worked in banking technology, writing software used by banks nationwide. Ann received a juris doctor degree from Ohio Northern University and originally worked for a law practice.

A Spirit Worth Preserving

Mays Business School Dean Jerry Strawser says the Mannings' gift will impact students in countless ways.

"With the flexibility they are allowing, it can support student scholarships, study abroad opportunities, student travel competitions and faculty teaching and research activities," he said.

During a recent conversation, Dean Eleanor Green of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences told the Mannings that private gifts keep the spirit of Texas A&M a reality.

"She reminded us that cultures must be nurtured and that giving resources to the right people can generate a culture and spirit worth preserving," said Charles. ♪

—BY DUNAE CRENWELGE '15

To discuss how a planned gift to the Texas A&M Foundation might benefit you, your family and the university, contact Glenn Pittsford '72 in the Office of Gift Planning at g-pittsford@tamu.edu or (800) 392-3310.

Letters

Share Your Comments

We always enjoy receiving our readers' reactions to Spirit. If any of the magazine's content moves you to write, please email us at info@txamfoundation.com or send a note on the postage-paid form on the inside back cover.

SONDRA WHITE '87
Editor

MEGAN KASPERBAUER
Managing Editor

Spring 2014 Spirit magazine



TEXAS A&M'S GLOBAL IMPACT

I read with much interest the article in *Spirit* magazine about the TAMU campus in Qatar. I was one of a small group of faculty and administrators from the College Station campus who worked on the startup of the Qatar and Mexico City Center initiatives. My first trips to those countries were made with many questions and reservations. However, as I returned, I realized that these initiatives had the potential for Texas A&M University to have a global impact and to possibly change the world through relationships, as well as education. In looking back, they also fit nicely with the Vision 2020 imperative to diversify and globalize the Texas A&M community.

There were enormous challenges to overcome in order to establish an operation in a foreign country: currency and cultural differences, purchasing procedures, hiring faculty and staff, compliance with foreign laws, etc. As difficult as this was, it would have been much more challenging without the help of our former students who lived in those countries and who provided great insight into working in those environments. Aggies really do live everywhere and they were excited about a TAMU presence.

I look forward to reading the remaining series of articles about Texas A&M's global footprint in *Spirit*. The world has changed significantly since I graduated in 1966, and I was privileged to witness the changes in students and opportunities during my 36-year career at Texas A&M. I hope the recent efforts to extend study abroad opportunities to more Aggies will be successful as it will provide our gradu-

ates insight into operating in the world of the future.

Gig 'em.

— THOMAS H. TAYLOR '66
Interim Vice President for Administration (2010)
Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas

I just received the latest edition of *Spirit* and instantly had negative feelings for Texas A&M University, which had a sterling reputation as one of the few remaining conservative educational institutions in our country. I look to the State of Texas as one of the last bastions of freedom and conservatism left in our poorly led and declining country.

The State of Texas maintains its status for me and I have recently thought of moving there from Florida. I earned a doctorate in veterinary medicine from Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1972. I have and will always respect my classmates and the vet school for offering me a sound education in my field.

I still have hope for our country and still highly respect the State of Texas, but will no longer be donating in any way to the Texas A&M Foundation. Please take my name off your list of *Spirit* subscribers and save that money as my issues will promptly be recycled. The cover of the spring issue has placed a lasting memory in my nonpolitically correct mind.

— LINDA WENDELKEN SAMPLE '72
Tampa, Florida

THANKS FROM SALSA FUSION

On behalf of Salsa Fusion Latin Dance Company, I would like to thank you for your generous donations to our organiza-

A group of Texas A&M University faculty and administrators from the College Station campus worked closely with former students who lived abroad on the startup of the university's Qatar and Mexico City Center initiatives.

tion, which helped us to represent Texas A&M University and the Hispanic community at the Houston Salsa Congress.

Salsa Fusion was established in 2008 by a handful of friends who wanted to extend their love and appreciation for salsa and Latin culture to the student body and the community of the Bryan/College Station area. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 70 members for the spring 2014 semester.

Using donations that individuals directed to our group through the Foundation, we were able to travel to the Houston Salsa Congress to perform for a crowd of more than 400. We also learned new dances to share with the students and faculty of Texas A&M, and we networked with international dancers and students from other colleges.

Thank you again for your support, and on behalf of Salsa Fusion, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to you for your donations.

—JOSHUA RIVERA '14
Executive Director
Salsa Fusion Latin Dance Company



Donor generosity enabled Salsa Fusion to represent Texas A&M University at the 2014 Houston Salsa Congress.

ONE CLASSY LADY

Kudos to Joanna Raines '14 on a really great article that provided the history of our first lady, Reveille, in the fall 2013 issue of *Spirit* magazine. I was moved to tears by this wonderful story as it reminded me of my first day of orientation in Aggieland in 1976, when I got my first glimpse of her. Oh, to be young again and full of hope!



Reveille IV (1975–1984)

I studied zoology at Texas A&M, graduating in 1978 and continued my studies at Corpus Christi State University, which is now part of the Texas A&M University System. Little did I know that the political climate of those times would strip national funding for careers in natural sciences. But somehow this old tree-hugger ended up in Illinois in a career as a civilian federal employee with the Department of Defense and later the Department of the Army.

It can only be the environment of Texas A&M that could have led me to such a rewarding life. I am forever indebted to my Aggie brothers and sisters. With eternal thanks,

—JIM MCFARLEN '78
Rock Island, Illinois

“HOWDY MA’AM!”

Reading *Spirit* letters in the spring issue prompted me to add one more about women on campus in the 1960s. I began working part-time on a doctorate in English language studies in 1966 while teaching at Sam Houston State Teaching College in Huntsville. For five years I enjoyed the Texas A&M campus, especially the cadets who, in passing, always said, “Howdy ma’am!” This was especially notable after my student days at a big-city university where many opted for the ‘60s

look and behavior. The clean-cut, wholesome Aggies were a world apart from that. I received the first Ph.D. in English in 1971, but memories of my Aggieland experience linger still.

—ELEANOR RETTIG MITCHELL '71
Retired Professor of English
Huntsville, Texas

Editor's note: Shortly after we published the fall 2013 issue of Spirit, we received a thoughtful letter from Dr. Dean C. Corrigan, who served as dean of Texas A&M's College of Education from 1980 to 1990.

Under his leadership, the college revised its degree programs in response to the educational reform movements of the late 1980s. In his letter, Corrigan reflects on how the College of Education led the way in integrating the Texas A&M faculty.

Although we could not publish the entire letter in print, we can share this excerpt:

“In reflecting on my experience at Texas A&M, the decision that the faculty made to take the lead in seeking minority faculty and students was the action that I will always remember as the most important and most satisfying in my 50 years in the field of education,” Corrigan writes. “As we read this issue of Spirit



today and feel good about the progress regarding diversity, we need to remember the minority faculty and their colleagues who were out in front at the beginning. It was not easy. That is what makes it so rewarding. It was such a pleasure to work with people who proudly did what was the right thing to do. As each day goes by, the moments that we shared in this effort become more precious.”

To read Corrigan's letter in its entirety and other letters that would not fit in this issue, visit the “Letters” section of Spirit magazine online at txamfoundation.com/SpiritMagazine.

Cristina Palomino '14 speaks with visiting Korean cadet Nam Do Whui outside the Trigon en route to a military science class. The Corps of Cadets welcomed 35 South Korean ROTC students to Aggieland this spring as part of its Global Initiatives Program.

Korean Cadets Visit Aggieland

In January, the Corps of Cadets hosted 35 ROTC cadets from South Korea for a three-week leadership development program offered through the Corps' Global Initiatives Program.

During their stay in Aggieland, the South Korean cadets lived on the Quad with the Corps, attended classes, and participated in leadership activities and ROTC military training. They also attended Texas A&M baseball and basketball games and visited several locations across Texas, including Fort Hood near Killeen, the USS Lexington in Corpus Christi and the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

"We are honored to have hosted these cadets and to have such an exciting international program on our campus," said Brig. Gen. Joe E.

Ramirez Jr. '79, Corps commandant. "This was an amazing learning experience for all of these cadets to work together, learn from each other and develop relationships that could last a lifetime."

The program is designed to offer opportunities for cadets to be exposed to countries, cultures and perspectives from around the world. It also gives select Texas A&M cadets the opportunity to travel abroad—this year to Turkey, Chile and India.

Rec Center Grows

To accommodate its growing student body, Texas A&M's Student Recreation Center is undergoing a \$54 million renovation and expansion that will continue through 2015.

Satterfield & Pontikes Construction Inc. is leading the expansion and Marmon Mok Architecture is creating the design. The facility will remain fully operational throughout the project, which is being funded without an increase in students' recreational sports fees. (Revenue bonds supported by the existing recreational sports fees will fund the project).

The Student Recreation Center has operated at capacity since opening in 1995. The project will increase activity and support space by 25 percent, and will provide significantly more programs and services for Aggies. The expansion will add strength and conditioning space, another gymnasium,





um, new multi-purpose activity rooms, a second entrance, an outdoor plaza, an additional pool, a natatorium renovation and lighting retrofit.

More Aggies Will Go Global

Texas A&M University has pledged a 100 percent increase over a five-year period in the number of students taking advantage of study abroad opportunities—reaching a level that would exceed 4,000. Texas A&M officials say they believe their pledge represents the largest increase in Texas and among the largest nationally.

Texas A&M officials made the pledge as part of the Institute of International Education’s “Generation Study Abroad” initiative to vastly increase the number of American students who study abroad by 2020. At least 156 institutions from 41 U.S. states have made a commitment, including almost 100 public colleges and universities. Texas is among the top five states in terms of institutions that have pledged to date, and Texas A&M leads the state in sending students abroad for study opportunities.

In 2012-13, Texas A&M had more than 3,000 students studying or participating in non-credit programs in more than 90 locations around the world with virtually all of its academic units represented.

For more information about the “Generation Study Abroad” initiative and a complete list of commitment partners, visit www.iie.org.

Diving Into STEM Experiences

As a coastal center for ocean-related science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), Texas A&M University



Students from Riverwood Middle School in Kingwood, Texas, participated in team events like the rotator egg drop during the Texas Science Olympiad. The event, hosted at Texas A&M University at Galveston, is an interscholastic science and engineering competition.

The Student Recreation Center is undergoing major renovations to accommodate a growing student population. All facilities will remain open during the renovation, including the popular indoor rock wall.

at Galveston offers students of all ages a unique opportunity to dive into STEM experiences.

This year, the university hosted nearly 1,000 junior high and high school students and their teachers at major STEM events, including the Dolphin Challenge, the Galveston County Science and Engineering Fair, the Science Olympiad and the Texas Academy of Science Conference.

Sponsored by the Texas A&M Sea Grant, the Dolphin Challenge is the north Texas regional competition of the National Ocean Science Bowl. During the challenge, students demonstrate their knowledge of marine and coastal science by answering questions from biology, physics, chemistry, geology, geography, mathematics and the social sciences.

The Galveston County Science and Engineering Fair encourages students from seventh to twelfth grades to engage in STEM education through competitive exhibitions. Fourteen schools and more than 200 students participated in the fair this year.

The Science Olympiad introduces students to practicing scientists and career choices. This year’s regional Texas Science Olympiad tournament, held for the seventh year at the Galveston campus, was a rigorous academic interscholastic competition that consisted of a series of team events in both science and engineering disciplines.

Lab Work



Landscape Architecture Students Design Nigerian Medical City

In an effort to raise health care standards in Nigeria—which ranks seventh-highest in infant mortality among the world’s nations—Thompson & Grace Investments, a Nigerian oilfield services

Zhong ’13 and Wenyan Ji ’13 and led by Dr. Chanam Lee, associate professor of landscape architecture and urban planning, includes an 800-bed hospital, 200-bed children’s hospital, medical school and research institute. Student teams in the Texas A&M Architecture-For-Health studio developed dual-hospital concepts for the project. “In developing their designs, students had to consider Nigeria’s climate and culture, as well as the leading causes of illness and death in the country including malaria and HIV/AIDS,” said George J. Mann, studio director and holder of the Ronald L. Skaggs Professorship of Health Facilities Design.



Dr. Chanam Lee and three architecture graduate students traveled to Uyo, Nigeria, last summer to study the site for a proposed Nigerian medical facility. The team developed a master plan, which was adopted in February by Thompson & Grace Investments and the Dallas-based architecture firm HKS Inc. Set to open in 2018, the 100-acre medical facility will improve standards for Nigerian health services.

company, is building a world-class medical service and research city in Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria, based on a master plan created by landscape architecture graduate students at Texas A&M University.

Thompson & Grace is launching the project to address Nigeria’s severely inadequate health services, shortage of qualified health professionals and absence of a medical research infrastructure.

The master plan for the 100-acre city, developed by Xue Li ’13, Sinan

Unlocking Secrets of “The Rock”

Texas A&M University Professor Mark Everett is part of a team that recently probed below one of the country’s most infamous sites—Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. Twelve to 15 feet beneath the prison’s recreation yard, they explored the remains of a Civil War-era military fortress.

Everett, a professor of geology and geophysics, joined colleagues from the Departments of Architecture and Anthropology, California’s Chico State University and the National Parks Service to examine what lies beneath layers of soil and concrete on Alcatraz. At various times, the island has been home to the oldest operating lighthouse on the West Coast, a military fortification, a military prison and a federal prison.

Dr. Mark Everett and anthropology doctoral student Tim De Smet '11 check underground readings using ground-penetrating radar on Alcatraz Island. Everett is part of a team that discovered the remains of a Civil War military fortress beneath the former prison's recreation yard and parade ground.

Using ground-penetrating radar, which sends electromagnetic waves into the ground that then reflect off of any structures below, the team scanned the ground beneath the prison.

The team found evidence of subterranean tunnel systems, embankments and magazine buildings—since covered over for federal prison use—that were part of a military fortification during the Civil War. Because of its location away from the mainland and the cold waters surrounding it, Alcatraz was used to house Civil War prisoners as early as 1861, and by 1868 it was designated a long-term detention facility to hold military prisoners.

The most promising potential discovery lies at the south end of the island, beneath the prison's recreation yard and parade ground. The team believes a caponier—a large structure that juts out into the bay and provides defensive cover—lies below.



Feline Health Tied to Humans

A cat may have only nine lives, but it has tens of thousands of genes that determine everything from physical traits to disease susceptibility.

Expanding upon research that produced a high quality genome of a single domestic cat, Professor William Murphy and a team of Texas A&M University researchers will join others at several institutions in an initiative to sequence the 20,000 genes in various breeds of felines in hopes of finding keys to better health in cats and humans.

According to Murphy, a Texas A&M specialist in mammalian comparative genomics and feline genetics, cats and humans share several hundred disease pathologies.

“Often, mutations in the same genes in both humans and cats cause the same disease, so if we can find a gene in a cat that causes a certain disease, we may be able to find the same in humans,” Murphy said. For instance, Murphy says that cats are a good model for diabetes because they are sedentary and have risk factors similar to those of humans.

As part of the initiative, researchers will gather 99 additional cats of diverse breeds from a wide variety of geographic locations, take DNA samples and work to sequence their genomes. The hope is that better genetic tests for cats, as well as information applicable to human disease, may be developed based on the knowledge gained from the sequencing project.

Foreign Intervention May Decrease Chance of Democracy

The more foreign intervention there is in a civil war, the less likely the end result will be democratization, says Texas A&M Professor Reyko Huang. When applying her findings to the ongoing Syrian Civil War, Huang says that given the numerous outside play-

ers involved in the conflict, “post-war democratization is highly unlikely.”

A professor of international affairs at Texas A&M's Bush School of Government and Public Service, Huang conducts macro studies of civil wars across the post-1945 period, focusing on rebel group dynamics. She finds that in civil wars in which rebel groups are politically organized and less dependent on foreign aid, democratization is more likely to be the outcome.

While some rebel groups are violent toward civilians and interested in loot and profit, others are more disciplined and organized, often providing the citizenry with social services such as schools and health clinics while also creating legislatures, laws and court systems.

When Huang applies her argument to the ongoing crisis in Syria, she finds that intervention by other countries, including the U.S., will only serve to lengthen the conflict and to decrease the chance for a Syrian democracy by forestalling grassroots mobilization for change.

Texas A&M professor Reyko Huang studies the effect of foreign intervention in civil wars across the post-1945 period. Huang has found that when foreign powers intervene in a civil war or provide support for rebel groups, democracy is less likely to result—as is the



New Gifts

Gifts to the Texas A&M Foundation Inspire Spirit and Mind

Physician Creates Statistics Chair

Florida physician Stuart A. Harlin '83 created an endowed faculty chair in the Texas A&M University Department of Statistics to advance the use of statistics in medical areas.

The Jill and Stuart A. Harlin '83 Chair in Statistics, established through a combination of current and planned gifts to the Texas A&M Foundation, marks only the second faculty chair created within the department. The Harlin Chair is intended to support the teaching, research, service and professional development activities of the faculty holder, whose academic focus shall be in the field of medical and public health statistics.

Harlin, a 1983 zoology graduate, is a board-certified vascular surgeon in the Pensacola area and the founder of Harlin Consulting, a medical advis-

ing practice specializing in staff training, clinical studies work and research assistance.

"This is a way to pay things back since I attended Texas A&M on scholarships," Harlin said. "It was important to me in providing funds that the College of Science be able to direct them toward their best use, in this case the procuring of prestigious faculty within the Department of Statistics."

Good Living at Camp LIFE



Mary Ann and Gordon Gibson '55 created an endowment to support Camp LIFE, an adventure camp affiliated with the College of Education and Human Development that has served more than 600 children with disabilities throughout Texas, including their son Glenn.

In support of Texas children with disabilities, Mary Ann and Gordon Gibson '55 established the Gibson Family Camp Life Endowment to boost the Camp LIFE program in the College of Education and Human Development.

Founded by the Family Support Network within the college, Camp LIFE (Leadership, Independence and Friends

As the inaugural holder of the Jill and Stuart A. Harlin '83 Chair in Statistics, Texas A&M Distinguished Professor of Statistics Dr. Raymond J. Carroll hopes to apply his vast, pioneering expertise in many avenues of statistical research to help improve vascular care.



through Experiences) provides camping adventures twice a year in Burton, Texas, for children ages 5 to 21 with disabilities. It has the dual purpose of providing an inclusive camp experience for special needs children, while giving Texas A&M University pre-service special education students who staff the camp hands-on experiences with children who have disabilities.

The Gibsons' son, Glenn, an adult with special needs, and their daughter Sharon '86, a College of Education and Human Development graduate with a certification in special education, inspired the couple's interest in supporting Camp LIFE.

"Glenn is a Special Olympics athlete, competing in volleyball, bocce ball, soccer and swimming," Mary Ann said. "These have been wonderful activities for him, and we wanted to support similar opportunities for other children while providing invaluable experience for future special education teachers."

This endowment marks the Gibsons' fifth at Texas A&M.

ConocoPhillips Gives \$6 Million to Engineering

A \$6 million contribution by ConocoPhillips to the Dwight Look College of Engineering at Texas A&M University will support construction of a new Engineering Education Complex on Texas A&M's campus.

The new facility will be dedicated solely to undergraduate engineering education and will be built adjacent to the existing Zachry Engineering Center, which will be renovated during the project. When completed, the two centers will feature 600,000 square feet of state-of-the-art learning space.

"An educated workforce drives our global economic future, and we're proud to continue to support some of the best and



The William and Susan Ouren Preservation Librarian Endowment will aid the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives with maintenance and storage of its hundreds of thousands of rare books, manuscripts, photos and other artifacts.

Couple's Gift Enhances Library Preservation

Texas history has a special place in the hearts of Susan '74 and Bill '74 Ouren. So when the Kingwood couple had a chance to tour the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, they recognized an opportunity.

"We asked what we could do to make a difference," said Bill, "and we learned that they needed a preservation librarian position as well as funding to expand their ongoing preservation program."

To support the Cushing Library in the maintenance of its hundreds of thousands of rare materials, the Ourens created an endowment to fund a pre-eminent preservation program and a named faculty position, the William and Susan Ouren Preservation Librarian. The Ourens also included a planned gift in their estate plan that will significantly increase the value of the endowment after their lifetimes.

Under the leadership of Julie Mosbo, the inaugural beneficiary of the Ouren's gift, the preservation program is undertaking physical restoration, repair, stabilization and digitization of rare materials.

"This endowment aids our mission by providing resources to build a robust preservation unit that focuses on both physical and digital collections," Mosbo said. "The endowment will fund state-of-the-art equipment in a planned preservation facility as well as support our growing Digital Service Center."

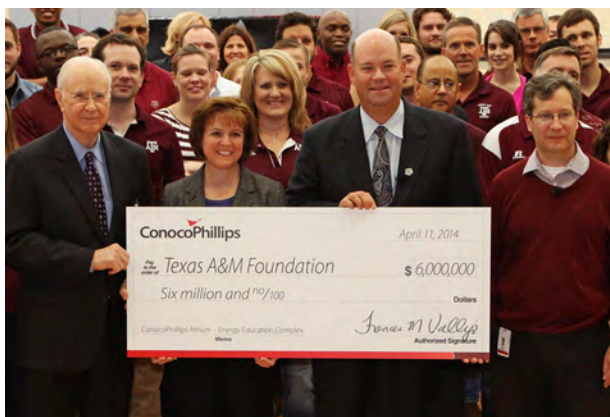
The Ourens also included gifts in their estate plan that will provide additional funding to endowed scholarships they have established in education, agriculture, engineering and accounting.

brightest minds through this donation," said Ryan Lance, chairman and CEO of ConocoPhillips. "Texas A&M consistently delivers top-tier graduates that continually make a substan-

tial impact within our company and around the world."

As an innovative learning environment, the complex will feature flexible classrooms, design and fabrication shared-use laboratories, collaborative space and tutoring services. In recognition of the company's support, the lobby will be designated as the ConocoPhillips Atrium.

During an event at the company's Houston headquarters on April 11, ConocoPhillips Chairman and CEO Ryan Lance presented a \$6 million check to Dr. M. Katherine Banks, Texas A&M vice chancellor and dean of engineering, to support construction of a new Engineering Education Complex.



Dean Ryan Crocker was appointed Ambassador to Lebanon by former President George H.W. Bush. He subsequently served as ambassador to Kuwait, Syria, Pakistan, Iraq and Afghanistan.



Preparing the Peacemakers

THE BUSH SCHOOL
OF GOVERNMENT
AND PUBLIC SERVICE

“Go to hard places and do hard things.” Students at The Bush School of Government and Public Service have heard my call to action before, and they heard it again at the school’s May commencement ceremony. As former ambassador to six Middle Eastern countries, I’m a firm believer in the power of diplomacy, whether it entails sitting around a table with Iranian diplomats discussing war and peace or talking with gang members on the streets of Los Angeles. Our graduates can do both.

Diplomacy, I’ve learned, is a whole lot cheaper in terms of blood and treasure than is the use of force.

The concept of going to hard places and doing hard things isn’t novel to any of our students; in fact, it’s the reason most choose to attend the Bush School. Students enroll with a desire to better our world, and my greatest satisfaction is that they leave here two years later fully equipped to do so.

While we are proud to bear the name of a man I tremendously admire, former President George H.W. Bush, we are a nonpartisan training ground for public servants—not for politicians. Our mission is precise, and we therefore focus on two programs alone: the Master’s Program in International Affairs (MPIA) and the Master of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) program. For MPIA graduates, going to hard places might involve diplomatic or intelligence efforts in war zones or developing countries, while hard

places for our MPSA graduates could entail working for nongovernmental organizations abroad or staying in the United States to tackle challenges in inner-city or impoverished rural areas.

During my Foreign Service career, I was privileged to be involved in a number of high-stakes diplomacy efforts. These days, though, while I’m occasionally called upon for advice, I leave negotiating to the active diplomats.

But while I take a backseat role, our students are being called upon to conduct studies and to present policy options that address real-world issues. Through capstone projects, they work in teams to identify ways to approach an issue or to find a solution, usually for a government agency or a non-profit organization. Unlike capstones at other institutions, however, ours aren’t fabricated: each one is completed for a paying client.

This year, the U.S. Department of State called upon our students to rec-



From left to right: Mauricio Cifuentes Soto '12; Melissa LaReau '11; Ryan Crocker, dean of The Bush School of Government and Public Service; and David Sutton '11.

commend a U.S. policy toward Iran. Joint efforts with other Texas A&M groups led students to travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to research health service delivery in Liberia. Internships are likewise required of our students. Such opportunities range from local nonprofit involvement to studying Arabic in Beirut.

While public service is highly valued by the American people, it is not always financially rewarding. But we must be able to draw in the most talented students, regardless of their financial circumstances. President Bush feels strongly—as do I—that any student who sacrifices financial gain to serve others should not be expected to do the nation's work under a crushing burden of debt. Each and every one of our students therefore receives some level of financial assistance. As we grow, however, the gen-

erosity of donors becomes even more crucial to funding scholarships.

Likewise, we must recruit the best faculty to teach these promising students, and to provide critical employment and internship contacts. Some of our faculty members have worked at the world's most prestigious universities, while others made their mark in the U.S. Foreign Service, the CIA or globally recognized nonprofit agencies. They are constantly recruited by other universities. With the help of donors, we provide endowed chairs, faculty fellowships and travel and research funds needed to attract and retain them at The Bush School.

In his 1991 State of the Union Address, President George H.W. Bush delivered the oft-quoted lines: "Let future generations understand the burden and the blessings of freedom. Let them say, we stood where duty required us to stand." He certainly did. I certainly tried. And our graduates—now 1,000 strong—are going forward throughout this country and this world following in his footsteps. ✍

Dean Ryan Crocker of The Bush School of Government and Public Service



—BY RYAN C. CROCKER
DEAN AND EXECUTIVE PROFESSOR
HOLDER OF THE EDWARD AND HOWARD
KRUSE ENDOWED CHAIR
THE BUSH SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Ryan C. Crocker

The Bush School of Government and Public Service:

- ♦ Dean and executive professor
- ♦ Edward and Howard Kruse Endowed Chair

Other Universities:

- ♦ University of Virginia—James Schlesinger Distinguished Visiting Professor
- ♦ Yale University—Kissinger Senior Fellow
- ♦ National War College—International affairs advisor

Career:

- ♦ Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait and Lebanon
- ♦ First director of governance for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, Iraq
- ♦ Deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs
- ♦ 37 years in Foreign Service

Other:

- ♦ Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient (nation's highest civilian award)
- ♦ Career Ambassador—the highest personal rank in the Foreign Service
- ♦ Honorary Marine—the 75th civilian so honored in the 238-year history of the corps
- ♦ The State Department's Ryan C. Crocker Award for Outstanding Achievement in Expeditionary Diplomacy established in his name



Viewpoint

Every semester, Paint USA brings together volunteers who introduce elementary school students to a wider perspective of the United States. Members from The Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M Rotaract Club and Rotary Clubs of Bryan and College Station get involved by painting 30-foot maps of the United States at local elementary schools in hopes of providing youngsters and teachers with an engaging tool to learn and teach geography.

Marlee Kingsley '07 '14, Paint USA advisor and a 2014 international affairs graduate from the Bush School, started this project in College Station last spring because she wanted to find a way to unite organizations that were committed to public service.

"This project seeks to provide students with a deeper understanding of where they are in relation to others, helping them to understand the vastness and diversity of our country," Marlee said. "It's the first step in helping children see that they are part of something that extends way beyond their hometown. They are a part of Bryan/College Station, Texas, and the United States of America."



Back (L-R): Bush School students Kevin Allshouse '14, Cait Stadler '14, Sky Barlow '14 and Breanna Irvin '15; College Station Rotarian Bob Brick; Texas A&M Rotaract Club member Alicia Frink '14; Bush School students Savannah Collins '14 and Annette Denton '14; Texas A&M Rotaract Club members Jennifer Jordan '17, Jamie Duong '17 and Richard Tran '15; and Bryan Rotarian Scott Pool '93. Front (L-R): Paint USA Advisor Marlee Kingsley '07 '14; Kemp-Carver Elementary School Principal Bren McCullar; Texas A&M Rotaract Club member Ashley Rogers '15; and College Station Rotarian Jerry Kingsley.



TEXAS A&M'S GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of features on Texas A&M University's global footprint.

The Gothic Quarter is the center of the old city of Barcelona. Many of the buildings date from Medieval times, some from as far back as the Roman settlement of Barcelona. This neogothic-style bridge at Carrer del Bisbe (Bishop's Street) was designed by architect Joan Rubió and built in 1928. The tiny covered space links the Palau de la Generalitat (Catalan Government seat) with the Casa dels Canonges (residence of the president).



The College of Architecture's Semester Abroad

CROSSING THE POND

Christopher Chomer '13 will always have Barcelona. It's there in his mind, a spot to return to again and again for inspiration — as he did earlier this school year while working on a design project for a landscape architecture studio class. When considering how he wanted a pedestrian area near a waterfront to look, his thoughts went to La Rambla, the famous, mostly-pedestrian boulevard that winds through the center of Barcelona. He recalled how the placement of trees and vendors directed people through the area, how the linking of small areas with open ones created inviting spaces to congregate. With these memories, he added similar concepts to his own project.

"I wouldn't have created a design like that if I hadn't been to Barcelona and moved around in that space," said Chomer, who visited the Spanish city while spending his fall semester in Bonn, Germany, as part of the College of Architecture's study abroad program. "I think it was key that I had real world experience to draw on. I wasn't just going on Pinterest and looking up 'landscape architecture.'"



Clockwise: Brian Sowell '14 studied in Barcelona because the program emphasized modern architecture. 🌐 Amy Brodeur '14 (right) an environmental design major, and Gabrielle Fernandez '16, a communication major, help remove rocks from an area students later turned into a community garden. 🌐 The Basílica de la Sagrada Família is a large Roman Catholic church designed by Antoni Gaudí (1852–1926). 🌐 CaixaForum Barcelona is an art gallery that was originally completed in 1911 as a textile factory.



SPAIN

BARCELONA, CATALONIA

Barcelona is the capital city of the autonomous community of Catalonia in Spain and the country's second largest city, with a population of 1.6 million.





Because architecture is a profoundly three-dimensional discipline, it is best understood that way. This is the idea that 15 years ago prompted Thomas Regan, then dean of the College of Architecture, to mandate that his students spend a semester away from Texas A&M University—either in an internship or studying abroad. In the majority of departments in the College of Architecture, students prefer the study abroad option if they can afford it. Because the architecture courses overseas match up with those on campus and are taught by Texas A&M professors or adjunct faculty, students can stay on track with their degree plan while experiencing a far different environment. With this requisite, the College of Architecture has a higher percentage of students studying abroad than any other college at Texas A&M.

“Tom believed it shook students up, that it magnified their level of learning,” said Elton Abbott, assistant dean for international programs at the College of Architecture. “It’s one thing to study slides and quite another to walk around buildings, to touch them and talk about them. Learning is much more effective in the 3-D world. The experience turns ‘C’ students into superstars.”

The College of Architecture has four main international options for its students to extend Texas A&M’s global reach. In Italy, the Tuscan town of Castiglion Fiorentino (population 12,000) has been the gorgeous setting for the college’s oldest study abroad program for 25 years. The stone buildings in this walled hilltop enclave, which dates back to the seventh century, have red tile roofs and are rich in character. One of them is a 17th century former convent that has been converted into the Santa Chiara Study Center, where students live and take classes in design, Italian arts and civilization.

“Our joke over the semester was that we felt like we were living at Hogwarts,” said Abbe Emerson ’15, a senior environmental design major who spent the 2013 fall semester with about 35 other College of Architecture students at Santa Chiara. (Texas A&M students from other majors are allowed in the program, but architecture students dominate.)

The fantasy element extends beyond housing. Students make regular visits to nearby cities like Florence—an hour away by train—and longer field trips to study the classical architecture in Rome and Venice. “In addition to studying architecture and landscapes,” Emerson said, “I grew as a student, a person and a worldly citizen.”

Brian Sowell ’14 chose to study in Barcelona during the spring 2013 semester rather than Italy because he wanted an urban experience. The Barcelona program emphasizes modern architecture, which is fitting since this city of 1.6



million is known for its innovative designs (including those by renowned architect Antoni Gaudi). Students in the Barcelona Architecture Center program live in apartments separate from the study area. After Sowell's classes and his midday siesta, he regularly wandered through the city, observing not just eaves and entryways but how people interacted with each other and the architecture. Over time he began to rethink his design philosophy.

"If a building is private in the United States, you often think only about what's happening within the property line," said Sowell, who graduated this spring. In Barcelona, he saw how buildings related to other structures and encouraged social discourse and interaction. "No one wants to hang out at a strip mall," he commented. "I want to figure out how to elevate design so people are encouraged to interact and connect. It's a concept of giving back to a city."

His time in Europe—including a field trip to the Netherlands, a country also known for its modern architecture—had a direct impact on the next step in his career. On graduate school applications, he was able to discuss architecture principles in more detail. "I don't think I had the maturity before," he explained. "Barcelona really refined my idea of what I wanted to do in my career."

Many of the students taking their semester in the third location option—Bonn, Germany—are studying landscape architecture or visualization.

Germany excels at integrating environmental aspects into building designs and city planning. Students in this program, operated by the Academy for International Education, live with host families to experience deeper cultural enrichment.

"In Bonn, we focused a lot on conservation, like re-using rainwater," said Chris Chomer. "My host family harvested rainwater and grew their own fruit. I had homemade plum cake about a million times."

Construction Science majors have the option of combining an internship with a study abroad experience in London. The semester there, called Wingtips, Work Boots & Wigs, focuses primarily on legal and risk management in the U.S. and other countries. An international bonus for all architecture students is a popular course on innovation and creativity taught every winter break by Dean Jorge Vanegas at the Soltis Center for Research and Education in Costa Rica. (More on the Soltis Center in the next issue of *Spirit*.)



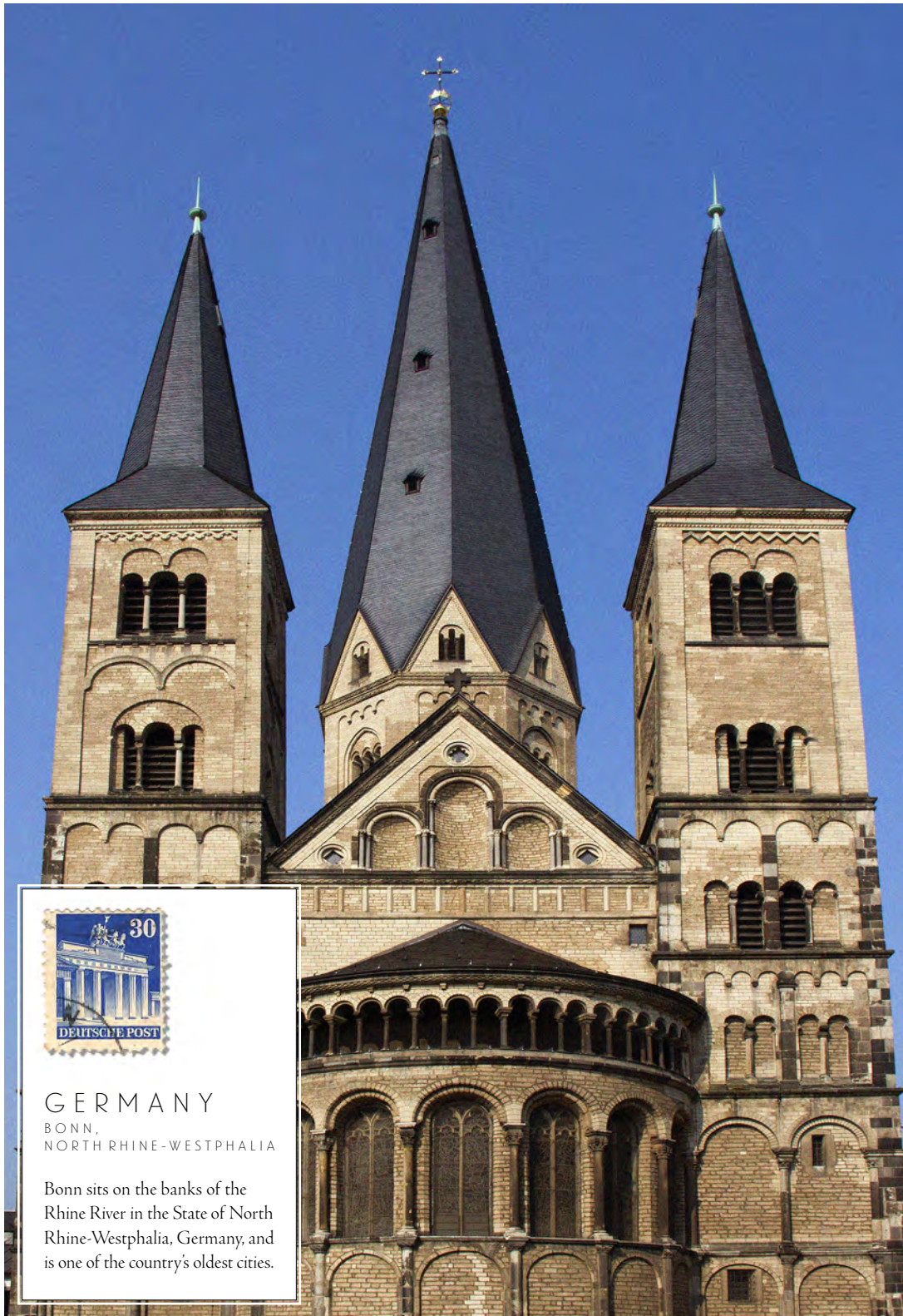
About 30 percent of architecture students do not study abroad, choosing instead a one-semester domestic internship (usually paid), said Abbott. The hindering factor for these students is often financial: the cost for a semester overseas is about double that of a semester in College Station. Sowell estimated that he spent a total of \$20,000 for his semester in Barcelona—an amount he patched together through a summer job, a loan and several scholarships.

Students who can't afford to study overseas can apply for partial scholarships—up to \$3,000 from the College of Architecture—or for study abroad scholarships administered by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the Study Abroad Programs Office. But often it's not enough to get students over the financial hurdle. "I had a student here the other week who really wanted to go to Italy, but it was just going to be too hard on her family to do it," Abbott said. "It breaks my heart." He stressed, however, that no one is looked down upon or penalized for not going to Europe.

"I wish we had enough money to cover the difference between a semester at College Station and a semester abroad for everyone," Abbott said. And there are many people who share this wish, including Mikeual '69 and Laura Perritt '72, both retired architects living in Alexandria, Virginia. The couple made an estate gift to the College of Architecture to provide scholarships to students who want to explore environmental design in Bonn (or in China, if the college ever establishes a program there). "One of the things that has helped us most in our careers is exposure to other cultures," said Mikeual. "In Germany, you get to see how they take care of public transportation and how they're developing solar and wind energy and sustainable building practices. They're significantly ahead of most countries."

The Perritts applaud the College of Architecture's semester-away policy, but realize they couldn't have afforded to study abroad if it was in place while they were at Texas A&M. Their desire that no student miss out is part of the motivation for their gift. "There are enough former students doing well," said Mikeual. "If they could just donate something, it would make studying overseas so much easier for students."

But it's not just the Texas A&M students who benefit from these study abroad programs; the host cities gain something as well. Last spring, students at three study centers went global with the Big Event, Texas A&M's annual day of service to give back to the community. In Bonn, Aggies cleaned up green spaces at Beethoven Haus, a chamber music hall, and planted a garden at a retirement home. Aggies in Barcelona joined Architects Without Borders to plant vegetables and build a fence in one of the city's neighborhoods. In Cas-



Clockwise: The Bonn Minster, a Roman Catholic church noted for its Romanesque architecture, is one of Germany's oldest churches. ● A large bronze statue of Ludwig van Beethoven stands on the Münsterplatz in Bonn, Beethoven's birthplace. ● Ricardo Montes '15 (right) a visualization major, and Branden Nettles '15, a biosciences major, helped plan and build a garden at a retirement home. ● Bonn excels at integrating environmental aspects into building designs and city planning.



GERMANY

BONN,
NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA

Bonn sits on the banks of the Rhine River in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, and is one of the country's oldest cities.





ITALY

CASTIGLIONE FIORENTINO

Castiglione Fiorentino is a small, walled city in eastern Tuscany, Italy, in the province of Arezzo, between the cities of Arezzo and Cortona.





tiglion Fiorentino, students helped clean ceramic fragments dating back to the Roman Empire and painted a mural in a middle school classroom. “It was a great way to show our Aggie spirit to our global partners,” said Abbott.

The town of Castiglion Fiorentino got a bonus from the Texas A&M students there last fall: a novel plan for a new community center. As part of a design competition, Abbe Emerson '15 and two other Aggies created demonstration kitchens on top of a much-needed parking garage as a way to help the town promote tourism. Their kitchen concept won first place in the competition against architectural students from other big U.S. universities at the Santa Chiara Study Center. The team's idea was for locals and tourists to take cooking classes led by chefs who combine the flavors of Tuscany with American and other world cuisines.

A

ll of the Aggies who study abroad acknowledge the importance and rewards of bringing cultures together. Through his experiences in Spain and Germany, Chris Chomer said his mind was liberated. “I now think about the environment a lot more when I am designing,” said Chomer, who after his graduation this spring began working at Edminster, Hinshaw, Russ & Associates, a Houston engineering firm. “Since my study abroad, I feel so much more creative, and not nearly as limited. It was truly a life-changing adventure that future Aggies should explore.”

— BY JEANNIE RALSTON

To help students in the College of Architecture add an international dimension to their education, contact:

Larry Zuber

Assistant Vice President for Development

Texas A&M Foundation

(800) 392-3310 or (979) 845-0939

l-zuber@tamu.edu

To donate online to study abroad scholarships in the College of Architecture, visit give.am/SupportArchAbroad.

To donate online to a scholarship in memory of Paolo Barucchieri, the late and beloved director of the Santa Chiara Study Center, visit give.am/SupportPaolo.

Clockwise: Castiglion Fiorentino is the setting for the college's oldest study abroad program. ● Students in the spring 2014 semester helped clean ceramic fragments dating back to the Roman Empire at an Etruscan archaeological site. ● The Santa Chiara Study Center is housed in a 17th century former convent that has been converted. ● Rachel Griffith '15, an environmental design major, harvested grapes during her semester abroad. ● Many of the stone buildings in this hilltop enclave date back to the seventh century.



A Tapestry of Woven TALES

The Legacy of John J. McDermott

On a Tuesday this April, John J. McDermott greets me from his seat on a bench outside of Nagle Hall. He is six weeks into his convalescence after a quadruple spinal laminectomy. And yet, McDermott, who holds the Melbern G. Glasscock Chair in the Humanities and has held the George T. and Gladys H. Abell Professorship in Liberal Arts, is surprisingly not prone; he is already walking around campus with his plain leather satchel (an antique physician's bag that was a gift from students) and signature fedora. In fact, the 82-year-old University Distinguished Professor of philosophy has returned to teaching much ahead of schedule and despite his doctor's wishes. This bench is a temporary resting spot, like several others along the way to the Academic Building, where he teaches American Philosophy.

As we enter the Academic Building, the centerpiece of main campus, McDermott laments that he lost a battle with university administrators to preserve the building's original palladium doors and windows during a renovation in the early 1980s. When he started teaching at Texas A&M at age 45, he recalls that he would take the stairs "two up, four down." Now, with nearly four decades of surplus wisdom, he chooses to take the elevator.

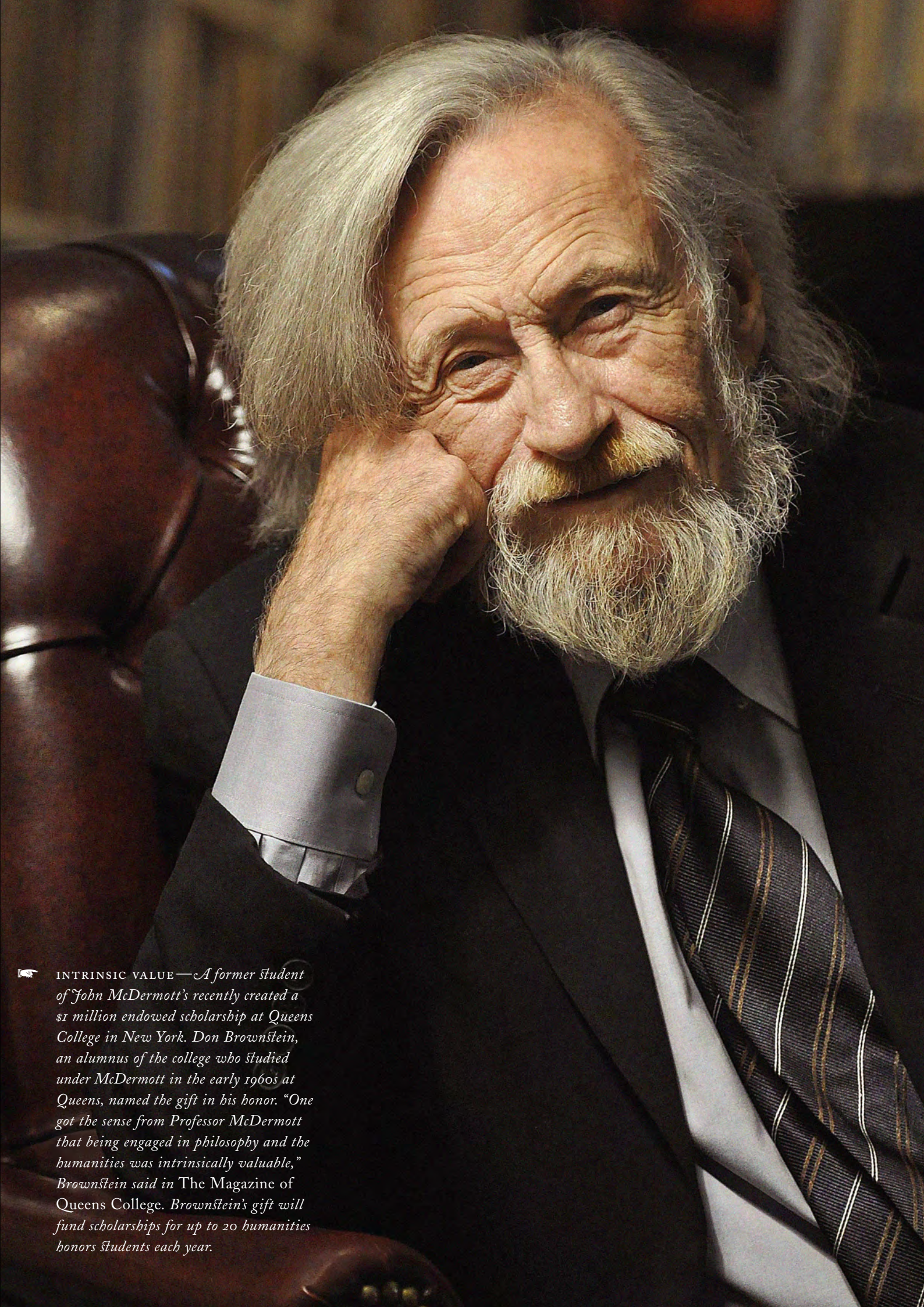
In the classroom, students hush upon McDermott's entrance. Unlike many other college students, his are not distracted by laptops or cellphones. Pens poised over paper, they are focused, eager to hear what stories he will share today. It would seem anachronistic with any other professor, but with McDermott at the helm, it is fitting. Then, just as they expect, he calls roll to check atten-


dance, his voice low and gravelly, a New York accent still prominent.

McDermott's class is a tapestry woven of various tales. For the next 90 minutes, he regales the group with stories about his children, personal details about American philosophers William James and John Dewey and advice on traversing through the journey of life. His lesson is interspersed with sage one-liners—"education is supposed to be a feast, not an obstacle course"—and punctuated by his occasional chalkboard scribbles.

The Nectar is in the Journey

McDermott grew up in Depression-era New York City, the oldest of eight children in a lower middle-class Irish Catholic family. They had no books, but they were, as McDermott describes, "rich in stories and experiences."



 **INTRINSIC VALUE**—*A former student of John McDermott's recently created a \$1 million endowed scholarship at Queens College in New York. Don Brownstein, an alumnus of the college who studied under McDermott in the early 1960s at Queens, named the gift in his honor. "One got the sense from Professor McDermott that being engaged in philosophy and the humanities was intrinsically valuable," Brownstein said in The Magazine of Queens College. Brownstein's gift will fund scholarships for up to 20 humanities honors students each year.*

For 62 years, the professor has been at the front of a classroom. He has taught preschool children, high schoolers, disabled students, prisoners, and, of course, college students. In that time, his beard and wild shock of hair have grayed, but his teaching philosophy has remained mostly unchanged.

"I believe that everybody's educable," McDermott said of his calling. "I live the life that I teach, and I teach the life that I live."

Evidence of this mantra can be found in nearly all of McDermott's writings. The stories he tells are like onions—peel back one layer and another stratum of meaning is revealed.

In one of his tales, McDermott recalls his time as a 16-year-old volunteer for the Catholic Worker Movement in New York City at a triage ward at the Bellevue Hospital. A quadruple amputee requested two Puerto Rican cigars; no other cigars would suffice. After a frenzied search, McDermott produced the cigars. Many years later, he wrote that he finally understood the meaning of this experience: "I was teaching the philosophy of Albert Camus, and the theme was personal authenticity. In a flashback, my Puerto Rican patient taught me of authenticity, the aesthetic moment, and the difference between the literal and the symbolic."

McDermott instills in his students his belief that one can grow from every experience; and he does so not only through words, but also through deeds. His post-surgery trek across campus is evidence that he practices what he preaches: By continuing to do what he loves most, undeterred by all obstacles, he is encouraging students to savor their every experience, despite discomfort or challenge.

"I live a service life," he added. "We're here to serve the state, nation and the world at large by teaching, research and service. Because we are a land grant university, this is especially so."

"I want my students to come alive to themselves and buy into the importance of their own experiences. With the saturation of modern technology, I find my students to be increasingly dis-

connected from their own experiences. The affective is being squashed. These experiences have to be cradled, reconnoitered and reconstructed."

In a course on the philosophy of aesthetics, which McDermott has taught for 50 years, he requests that students create, perform or build something they have never done before and write about the experience. Students have worked with clay, painted, written poetry, danced the tango and even given up certain personal comforts for the duration of the project. This opportunity, McDermott believes, allows them to reflect on their experiences in a deeply personal way.

Alex Haitos, McDermott's research assistant and a third-year doctoral student in the Department of Philosophy, believes that this authenticity and unique

worked for five years as his research assistant, said McDermott's influence on others extends far past his students. "The number of people he helps is amazing," said Carlson. "For him, it's a way of life. The guy who fixes his boots, the dry cleaners, and the people who bag his groceries all know him by name and as someone who cares about them."

Still, after teaching tens of thousands of students, McDermott claims he is the one who has gained the most. "From my students, I can say that I have learned far more than I have taught. And what did I learn? Life is difficult."

Reflection is Native and Constant
McDermott doesn't practice meditation—at least, he doesn't attempt to free his mind of thought. "You should always



teaching style resonates with McDermott's students. "He doesn't simply exposit the text," said Haitos. "He wants you to understand ideas by connecting them to your own life and experiences."

On a weekly basis, McDermott receives correspondence from former students thanking him for the contributions he made to their lives. You don't need to know him long to recognize his inspiring dedication and selflessness.

Charles Carlson, who received his doctorate in philosophy last year and

be reflecting," he explained. "Following John Dewey, reflection is native and constant."

His constant search for truth and progress is apparent in his 37-year tenure at Texas A&M. He is contemplative about his professional journey and the way the university has changed over time: "A&M has a pockmarked and splendid history," he said. Furthermore, in his tireless efforts to give voice to faculty opinions, McDermott is a catalyst for reflection for the university as a whole.

In 1983, he called the first faculty meeting in the history of Texas A&M. That meeting, held in Rudder Theater, was the seed that grew into the Faculty Senate. For McDermott, this was “a revolution in consciousness” for the university.

That same year, he became the charter speaker of the Faculty Senate and continued in that role for three years. Today, the senate is one of the university’s primary governing bodies, responsible for reviewing all policies related to curricula and instruction, admission, scholarships and faculty hiring.

McDermott’s contributions to Texas A&M continue. In an effort to reconnect retired faculty with the university, he became the founding director of the Community of Faculty Retirees in 2012.

“I’m ecstatic about the wonderful response from retirees and the cooperation from the university,” said McDermott about the events, which typically draw 50 to 100 faculty retirees. “There are smiles upon smiles at every gathering.”

Another marker of McDermott’s foothold at Texas A&M is being the third person to receive the title of University Distinguished Professor in 1982 (there are now more than 120). The honor is reserved for pre-eminent faculty members who have generated a sea change in their field. For McDermott, this was giving new life to a “mocked and dismissed area of philosophy.” His work on the 19-volume Harvard critical edition of *The Works of William James* is one way we “brought American philosophy to the center of the stage.” Following the completion of that project, McDermott took on the role of editor, project director and principal investigator for the 12-volume edition of *The Correspondence of William James*. He worked on the collection for more than a decade; the final volume was published in 2004.

Eat Your Experiences

In his book *The Drama of Possibility*, McDermott wrote, “The most perilous threat to human life is secondhandedness, living out the bequest of our parents, siblings, relatives, teachers, and other dispensers of already programmed possibilities.” This idea of “secondhandedness” fuels McDermott’s personal motto: “Eat your experiences.”

McDermott’s teachings transcend the boundary of the classroom. His lifelong quest is to teach people to be trailblazers, freethinkers and explorers of their passions. As Carlson puts it, “He’s not necessarily preparing philosophers, he’s helping people become confident in what they’re doing to develop and nurture their interests.”

This out-of-the-classroom experience culminates each year with a reception at his home. McDermott and his wife Patricia host all of his students for a celebratory gathering at which McDermott learns more about his students and gives them the opportunity to explore his impressive library.

Indeed, McDermott has taken his own advice on savoring experiences. Sharing and passion are his way of life. He was the first in his family to go to college. He left his home state of New York to create new roots in Texas. He was a founding member of the American Montessori Society and a charter member of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Four academic conferences have been held in his honor. His 50-plus-page curriculum vitae lists published work, awards and achievements. He has been married to Patricia for 24 years, and he has five children (all, as he describes them, in a “helping profession”) and six grandchildren.

Cherished Apples

As I tried to encapsulate the depth and breadth of McDermott’s experiences into a mere 2,000 words, the poem “After Apple-Picking” by Robert Frost came to mind. During our interviews, McDermott would share poems that inspired him. Knowing his love for the written word, I sent him a stanza that reminded me of the legacy he has created: “There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch, Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.”

McDermott responded with two sentences: “I am my stories, their happening, their telling and retelling, their adumbrations and their messaging. Along with Robert Frost and his ‘fallen apples,’ I believe that the nectar is in the journey and there alone.”

With tobacco still lingering in his pipe, McDermott’s journey is far from complete. There are far too many more apples to pick before he sleeps. 🍷

—BY MONIKA BLACKWELL

To learn how you can support faculty and students in the College of Liberal Arts, contact:

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“I want my students
TO COME ALIVE
to themselves and
buy into the
importance of their
own experiences.”

—JOHN J. McDERMOTT—

McDERMOTT INSTILLS IN HIS STUDENTS
HIS BELIEF THAT ONE CAN GROW FROM
EVERY EXPERIENCE.

“In the old Webster’s dictionary—the 19th century one that I can’t pick up anymore—you look up ‘retirement,’ and one of the meanings is ‘forgotten, abandoned,’” McDermott explained. The Community of Faculty Retirees is his preemptive strike to prevent faculty from fading away.

The group hosts speakers of all backgrounds, including a recent presentation by Celia Sandys, the granddaughter of Winston Churchill, and guest lectures by former faculty.

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● The clock reads 7:30 a.m. on Sept. 23, 1994. Dr. Thomas Hargrove '66 is running late for work at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Cali, Colombia. He approaches an intersection, where he must decide which of two routes to take. One involves a nerve-wracking drive through the heavy traffic of urban Cali; the other is longer, but winds through the scenic sugar cane fields of the Colombian countryside. He remembers one of the rules for a better life that Ameri-

can author Robert Fulghum used: "Always take the scenic route." It was the last decision he would make for a long time.

Everything Before Then

Hargrove grew up on a red-dirt, dry-land cotton farm in Rotan, Texas. He began attending Texas A&M University in 1962 and graduated in 1966 with degrees in agricultural science and journalism along with a commission as a second lieutenant in the United States



In 1969 Dr. Thomas Hargrove '66 served as an agricultural advisor in Vietnam who was responsible for introducing IR8, a newly developed, high-yield rice, to farmers in the region.

A Memorial Scholarship Honors One of the Green Revolution's Finest

Army. While at Texas A&M, he was a class officer, a member of Company D-1 (Spider D) in the Corps of Cadets and editor of *The Agriculturalist*, a magazine published by the College of Agriculture.

A deferment allowed Hargrove to earn a master's degree and Ph.D. in agricultural science from Iowa State University and to marry the daughter of a pioneer Rotan family, Susan Sheldon, before going to Vietnam in 1969 as an agricultural advisor to Advisory

Team 73, Military Assistance Command in Chuong Thien province. Located at the southern tip of Vietnam's Mekong Delta, it was one of the country's most war-torn areas.

Traveling mostly by sampan on canals and rivers, Hargrove was charged with introducing IR8, a newly developed, high-yield rice variety, to farmers in the region. Nick-named "the miracle rice" by international media, the strain revolutionized rice production and contributed to the Green Rev -

Patriot and Pioneer

“Tom dedicated his life to agriculture, communications and helping feed people all over the world.”

—Leroy Shafer '67

Hargrove kept a diary recorded on the backs of checkbook blanks during his captivity by Colombian terrorists. He hid these scraps of paper documenting his experience in a money belt along with a small collection of antibiotic pills he had secreted, in case he got a severe infection.



olution. (IR8 was developed by Henry Beachell, who helped form the Texas Rice Improvement Association to sustain rice research at Texas A&M and whose endowed professorship and scholarships support the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences.) It also sparked Hargrove's fascination with rice and its role in the fight against starvation around the world.

Years later, on a return trip to Vietnam, Hargrove met a former Viet Cong officer who remembered him from the war years. The officer told Hargrove he could have killed him at any time during the war. When Hargrove asked why he hadn't, the officer replied, "Because you had the rice seeds."

Three years after an honorable discharge from the army, Hargrove became a journalist in 1973 with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Manila, Philippines. Friends jokingly called him a "rice bore," but his work translating complex crop science into plain language helped farmers in developing countries increase their yields. One of his publications through IRRI, *A Farmer's Primer on Growing Rice*, was written and distributed in 44 countries in 29 different languages.

Hargrove relocated to CIAT in 1992 as head of its communication program, in charge of publicizing how CIAT improved varieties and technology for beans, cassava and tropical pastures in Latin America and the Caribbean. Two

years into his work with the center, he confronted the day that would alter his life for the next 11 months.

Life in Limbo

Having decided on the scenic route, Hargrove's picturesque drive to work ended when he approached a roadblock manned by Colombian narco-guerrillas of the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC), a U.S.-classified terrorist organization. In a matter of minutes, his briefcase and \$400 were confiscated and he was taken hostage—presumably because he was a foreigner.

His captors took him to a remote location in the Andes Mountains, where he lived as a prisoner during the next 11 months in harsh conditions, spending most of his time in a plastic-covered shed or—for a two-month period—tethered day and night to his bunk bed with a 15-foot chain.

"During those 11 months, we had no contact with Tom whatsoever, except for a proof-of-life video and one photograph. In the video, he was speaking Spanish, asking for help, for his life. In the photograph, he looked so sick I thought he had lost his mind, and wondered what we would find if he ever was released," said Rafe Hargrove '70, Tom's brother.

Colombia is notorious for kidnapping incidents, and FARC is a leading culprit. Most abductees are held until a ransom is negotiated, a task that Tom's wife Susan and his sons, Miles and Geddie, had to master.

"Susan and the boys were in sporadic contact with the FARC, using two-way radios and a Spanish-speaking interpreter. They would hang on to every word, and then the FARC messenger would abruptly cut off communication for another period of days or weeks," Rafe said.

Negotiations were slow-going and stressful, but culminated in the payment of two ransom demands and ultimately Hargrove's release on Aug. 11, 1995.

"I met him in Houston a couple days later. We embraced, and I remember feeling a bag of bones in my arms. He pulled off a money belt and showed



Tom Hargrove '66 was kidnapped in Colombia by narco-guerrillas and held for ransom at a remote location in the Andes Mountains for 11 months. He was released from captivity on Aug. 11, 1995.

me where he had hidden two things: a small collection of antibiotic pills he had secreted, in case he got a severe infection, and little scraps of paper, documenting his captivity," Raford said.

When the captors took Hargrove's briefcase and money, they returned to him two checkbooks. On the backs of First National Bank of Rotan check blanks, he kept a diary that was published in 1997 as a book, *Long March to Freedom: Tom Hargrove's Own Story of His Kidnapping by Colombian Narco-Guerrillas*. His captivity also inspired the 2000 movie, "Proof of Life," which starred Meg Ryan and Russell Crowe.

Return to Reality

Upon his release and return to the U.S., Tom worked as a kidnapping and anti-terrorism consultant, conducting training courses at the U.S. Joint Special Operations University and United States Air Force Special Operations School, where he was adjunct professor of dynamics of international terrorism.

He later became involved with the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, serving nearly a decade as a pressroom editor, where he oversaw and mentored Texas A&M agricultural student interns. His last full-time job was as an employee of the International Fertilizer Development Center in Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

Hargrove died of heart failure on Jan. 23, 2011, at age 66. He was buried on the family's farm, where Aggies from all over came to sing "The Spirit of Aggie-land" one last time at his grave. His life is captured by a simple list on his tombstone that reads: "Farmer, Aggie, Soldier, Scientist, Writer, Survivor, and Master of the Green Revolution."

An Innovator and Inspiration

"When he passed away, the first thing I thought was, 'I do not want Tom's tracks to be forgotten,'" said Rev. Jim Lanning '64, a lifelong friend. "Tom was a friend to the world, and I cannot think of a better way to leave one's legacy than to address the issue of hunger. He greatly inspired me by showing no fear in the face of danger and by seeking out adventure. His desire to serve his fellow man was mixed with his desire to explore new places."

Lanning helped spearhead the effort to establish through the Texas A&M Foundation the Dr. Thomas R. Hargrove '66 Endowed Memorial Scholarship, funded by friends and family of Hargrove. The scholarship is designated for students majoring in agricultural communications and journalism within the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications at Texas A&M, in keeping with Hargrove's passions and life mission. It gives preference to students with an interest in international agriculture, public relations for an agricultural entity, or those pursuing advanced degrees in an agricultural discipline.

"When we learned about the plans for this scholarship, we knew we wanted to be a part of it," said Leroy Shafer '67. "Tom dedicated his life to agriculture, communications and helping feed people all over the world. He accomplished his mission through research, communication, implementation by example, and by genuinely caring for the people he assisted."

Shafer and his wife Nancy are the lead donors for the scholarship. Shafer is vice president and chief operations officer for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™, but he knew Hargrove as

more than a professional colleague; the two have a dated history. Growing up in West Texas, their family farms were about 20 miles apart; both majored in agricultural journalism and were members of Company D-1 at Texas A&M; and both served in Vietnam.

"This scholarship will benefit future students in the field of agricultural communications while keeping alive the legacy of a tremendous man, humanitarian, educator and communicator," Shafer said. "If future students who receive Tom Hargrove scholarships carry on the mission that he started, then Tom's legacy will live on and the world will be a far greater place."

The first recipient of the scholarship, awarded April 11, is Rachel Wales '15, an agricultural communications and journalism major involved in St. Mary's Catholic Church Women's Chorus, Relay for Life and Big Event.

"The support of former students through this scholarship demonstrates to me the vitality of the Aggie family and proves that Aggies want to help each other succeed," said Wales, who also holds an on-campus job at The Association of Former Students and is self-funding her degree.

"We hope that Aggies will be inspired to know that it is just as important, if not more important, to spread the word of agricultural research accomplishments as it is to make those accomplishments yourself—because if no one knows about them, they don't do any one any good. Tom understood that," Raford said. 🌿

— BY DUNAE CRENWELGE '15

To learn how you can support the Dr. Thomas R. Hargrove '66 Endowed Memorial Scholarship, contact:

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To contribute online, visit
give.am/HargroveMemorialScholarship.



< ONE OF THE AGGIE INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADORS' FAVORITE EVENTS IS HOLI, AN ANCIENT HINDU RELIGIOUS CELEBRATION KNOWN AS "THE FESTIVAL OF COLORS," IN WHICH PEOPLE PLAYFULLY THROW COLORED POWDER ON EACH OTHER TO MARK THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING.

Total percentage of Texas A&M international students
(enrolled at all Texas A&M University campuses)

9.2%

47.6%

Percentage of doctoral degree candidates who are international students

32%

Percentage of master's degree candidates who are international students

2.6%

Percentage of undergraduates who are international students

International Student Enrollment Profile

SPIRIT IMPACT:

At Home With the World. For international students who are new to Texas A&M University, there is much to learn and discover about the Aggie and American way of life—namely new customs, traditions, manners and norms. Omid Kazemi '15 has a few questions and luckily he's in the right place for answers on a breezy April afternoon: an end-of-the-year picnic at Texas A&M University's Spence Park sponsored by the Aggie International Ambassadors.



“How do you rent a car?” asks the 22-year-old Iran native who is earning his master’s degree in construction management. He needs to travel to Houston for a summer internship interview. The other students at the picnic table offer advice ranging from explaining the requirements of car rental companies to suggesting carpool sharing as alternative transportation.

Then comes a more pressing question: How do you throw a football? “I could kick it with my foot,” says Kazemi, wearing a red Budweiser T-shirt with headphones wrapped around his neck. “But throw it...I don’t know.”

“Don’t worry,” says Kelsey Ffrench ’15, a sophomore international studies major from Houston and the new president of the International Ambassadors. “It’s not that hard. I’ll teach you.”

Cultural Liaison on Campus

This kind of teaching is part of the mission of the Aggie International Ambassadors. Formed in 2002 to bring more global awareness to the Texas A&M campus, the group is made up of 20 to 30 American and international students. Its members are often service-minded individuals who are interested in learning more about other cultures; foreign-born students usually join to learn how to better integrate into their new setting. The ambassadors say the blend of American and international members benefits both groups.

“In other organizations on campus, the international students will be mostly with other international students,” said Elani Duzich ’14, a Corpus Christi native who graduated in the spring and studied for a year in France. “A lot of people studying abroad tend to stick to people they’re comfortable with. We get them out of their comfort zone if they’re willing to be part of our group. The campus is becoming more global, and this is our way of encouraging that shift.”

The ambassadors see themselves as liaisons between cultures, sponsoring activities and events that introduce international students to American traditions—such as a tailgating party during football season, where students get

their faces painted with Texas A&M emblems and learn the inimitable ways of Aggie football. “It’s good [for Texas A&M students] to have our own identity and to have our own crazy things to do,” said Kazemi, over the clanking and grinding of construction on nearby Kyle Field. “It brings people together.”

Also popular is a fall pumpkin-carving event. “I had to Google, ‘pumpkin carving’ beforehand to find out what was going to happen,” laughed Johnu George ’14, from Kerala, India, who completed his master’s degree in computer science in May and now works at Cisco in Silicon



< AGGIE INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADORS MEMBERS LIKE (L-R) RASHA AL-AZZAWI '14, CHRISTINE NGUYEN '14, NINA EWING '13, NORAIR VARTANIAN '12 AND HASSAN ALMOMIN '15 ARE REGULAR VOLUNTEERS AT BRAZOS VALLEY WORLDVEST, A BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION FESTIVAL THAT CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL DIVERSITY AND PROMOTES INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS BY OFFERING CULTURAL DISPLAYS, DEMONSTRATIONS, INTERNATIONAL CUISINE, PERFORMANCES, EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIONS, CHILDREN'S CRAFTS AND MANY OTHER ACTIVITIES.

fun events.” The ambassadors point out that they celebrate New Year’s three times a year, and one of their favorite events is Holi, an ancient Hindu religious celebration known as “the festival of colors,” in which people playfully throw colored powder on each other to mark the arrival of spring.

Study Abroad Supplement

“I didn’t have friends who were interested in international events, so I joined this group,” said Ffrench. “Now if there’s something going on—like a prayer vigil for protesters in Venezuela—we can go as a group and it’s not intimidating.”

Ffrench and other ambassadors have studied abroad, and they consider their involvement with the group a supplement to that experience. It could even be an alternative. “People spend a lot of money to study overseas and that’s really valuable. You learn that the world is different than you think,” she said. “But not everyone can travel and there are chances to broaden your thinking right here on campus.”

Later on at the picnic, Kamezi gets instruction on football passing and plays a pick-up game with other students. Afterward he comes back under the gazebo, sweaty but smiling. “It was Internationals versus Americans. Guess who won?” he asks as he grabs a wedge of watermelon. “But it was fun!” 🍉

— BY JEANNIE RALSTON

For more information about how you can support the Aggie International Ambassadors, contact:

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Valley. George said the group helped him find friends beyond his classes and major and gave him a whole new way to enjoy college—like a native.

Other elements of the ambassadors’ work include symposiums via Skype with counterparts at other universities (such as a discussion with students at the University of Kurdistan on whether the Americanization of the world is a good thing) and celebrating the rich traditions of other cultures. “In the U.S. you have your usual holidays,” said Alexis Silvestre '17, a sophomore from Brownsville. “But if you’re tied into, say, 10 cultures, there are many more

College Impact:

let's talk
Teaching*

The Department of Ecosystem Science and Management (ESSM) had a problem: its curriculum had not been updated in a number of years. As the College of Agriculture and Life Science's leadership emphasized an increased focus on curriculum outcomes, administrators recognized an opportunity to hone the program and to develop innovative new methods to prepare work-ready graduates. The solution involved Texas A&M University's Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE).

*The Center for Teaching Excellence stepped in to help the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management overcome a formidable challenge.



*Dr. M. Mort Kothmann '61 '68
is a professor in the Depart-
ment of Ecosystem Science
and Management at Texas
A&M University.*

One ecosystem science professor and former CTE client was well-poised to take the lead on this curriculum-redesign process. Dr. M. Mort Kothmann '61 '68 had attended a CTE-sponsored workshop on syllabus development, and was so impressed by what he learned that he registered for the seminar every time he was assigned to teach a new course.

"CTE-sponsored events are a great place to get ideas," Kothmann said. "They are focused on helping faculty do a better job of teaching so that we can do a better job of helping students learn."

As national and state governing bodies began to put pressure on universities to more accurately assess student learning, the administrators and faculty of ESSM knew the time was ripe to implement change in their department. The process involved thoughtful analysis, candid discussions and programmatic reorganization, with a goal to design a better educational experience for the department's 230 undergraduate students and 100 graduate students.

Initially, the redesign efforts involved a faculty committee to determine exactly what students needed to learn—and how to best teach them—so that they could secure good jobs upon graduation. Kothmann worked closely with CTE Associate Director Dr. Debra Fowler '03 to facilitate the multi-year project.

The group collected and analyzed data from a variety of sources, including employers, former students and graduating seniors. They also studied the requirements of accreditation bod-



Before instructing students, teaching assistants participate in CTE-designed training. The CTE also presents workshops on topics such as course design, assessment, large classes, classroom response systems, syllabus construction and creation of a teaching portfolio.

ies and peer universities to discover educational and societal trends. After identifying the qualities of an ideal graduate, the faculty agreed upon relevant content and learning outcomes—knowledge, skills and attitudes—for effective graduates.

The faculty then analyzed the ESSM curriculum to identify gaps and to determine the best sequence of courses to build on concepts that were taught in lower-level classes. During the multi-year process, the college had combined two departments (rangeland ecology management and forest sciences) into one (ecosystem science and management), which added an additional challenge.

The final steps of the curriculum redesign | CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

"It changes the way you think, the way you act, the way you build and assess your
courses."

— Dr. M. Mort Kothmann '61 '68

Giving for *Student Success*

Financial support from several generous Texas A&M former students is making an enduring impact on teaching excellence and improved student learning.

Current operations and future development of the CTE are supported by a \$25,000 endowment from Dr. Dale G. Konicek '90 that honors the center's first director, Dr. Glenn Ross Johnson. Johnson was the director of the CTE from its opening in 1983 until 1990. During that time, he also maintained a professorship in the College of Education and Human Development, where he served as a graduate advisor to Konicek while he was completing a Ph.D. in educational curriculum and instruction.

Johnson's passion for the center and for teaching influenced Konicek to become an advocate for faculty development activities.

"Providing funding to the CTE is essential to the continuation of this resource to develop faculty and graduate assistants across all departments at Texas A&M, which benefits students but also has a lasting impact on those who further their careers elsewhere with the knowledge gained from the CTE," said Konicek, who designated the funds from his endowment to be used to benefit the CTE in areas that need it most.

Gifts from Carlos '73 and Carolyn '73 Cotton are also enhancing faculty development. The couple made a \$15,000 gift in 2012 to fund CTE faculty teaching workshops for three years. A second \$15,000 gift in 2013 was used in part to help fund a three-day summer institute for new faculty from all disciplines, while remaining funds will continue to support faculty workshops.

As an adjunct professor for the civil engineering department at Texas A&M, Carlos teaches a two-week course on surveying between the spring and summer semesters.

"I think teaching is the primary responsibility of the university, so anything that can improve a professor's ability

to impart knowledge is important to support," Carlos Cotton said. "If we want to produce well-educated students, we need exceptional teaching. The more we help teachers with resources like the CTE, the more everyone wins."

The center has also enjoyed more than 20 years of support from the Montague family. In 1991 Judy and Kenneth Montague '37 funded the Montague-CTE Scholars Awards, given annually to a tenure-track faculty member from each college based on their early ability and interest in teaching. Awardees receive a \$6,500 grant to encourage further development of undergraduate teaching excellence, and today there are more than 150 Montague-CTE Scholars on the Texas A&M campus.

Their son James Montague '69 and his wife Vicki have continued to financially support the CTE and the Montague-CTE Scholars Program. Most recently, they made a \$10,000 donation to directly benefit the curriculum redesign program.

"Our family's interest in the center is all about enhancing the student learning process at Texas A&M, and curriculum design touches multiple aspects of teaching that influence student learning," James Montague said. "Texas A&M must constantly review, redesign and update its curriculums to better serve the changing needs and expectations of employers that hire our graduates. The university's willingness to listen to employers and apply suggested changes to curricula makes us a great learning institution."

Konicek, the Montagues and the Cottons are all members of the CTE Advancement Council, which seeks to promote the CTE as a valuable resource for the improvement of teaching and learning throughout the university.

From left: Dr. Dale G. Konicek '90, Carolyn '73 and Carlos '73 Cotton, and Vicki and James Montague '69.



involved developing an assessment plan, and identifying professional development and additional resources that faculty would need to accomplish the redesign.

“This process helped faculty members understand that you can’t cover a topic just once in class,” said Dr. Georgianne Moore, ESSM associate professor. “It needs to show up in an early class so students get that exposure right away and know what it is. We can then reinforce the topic in a later class and ask students to apply what they have learned.”

The CTE actively supported the ESSM faculty as they worked through each step of the process. “CTE was crucial in the success of this effort by helping plan and facilitate the workshops,” Kothmann said. “They also recorded the proceedings and produced documents that we could take back to work with faculty.”

Curriculum redesign is just one of many professional development tools

*“This process helped faculty members understand that you can’t cover a topic just once
in class.”*

—Dr. Georgianne Moore

The CTE provides a comfortable setting in which participants can gain new perspectives and strategies. The process encourages and supports open conversations about what works and what doesn’t work, both inside and outside the classroom.

offered through the CTE, which is part of the Office of the Dean of Faculties and Associate Provost at Texas A&M. The center also hosts workshops and other enrichment opportunities for faculty members on topics such as course design,

engaging students with technologies, and working with students who have disabilities. In addition, the center offers special programs that support new faculty and graduate students.

Kothmann says the process led to a major shift in faculty thinking in his department. “It changes the way you think, the way you act, the way you build and assess your courses,” he said. “I know it has significantly changed my teaching for the better.”

—BY DORIAN MARTIN

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To learn more about the CTE, visit cte.tamu.edu.

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Opportunity



“THE SHEER SCALE OF FOOD IMPORTS COMBINED WITH THE OPAQUENESS OF GLOBAL FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS HAS EXPONENTIALLY INCREASED THE RISKS OF SUPPLIER OPPORTUNISM AND FOOD CONTAMINATION.”

—DR. ALEDA ROTH

Your Food Supply: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Do you know where your food comes from? If not, you are not alone. Dr. Aleda Roth, who has been investigating food safety for years, says that U.S. consumers are at a high risk of contamination and ill health from food that is imported from emerging countries that charge less but often have lower standards of hygiene, environmental standards and quality control processes.

Roth is a Burlington Industries Distinguished Professor at Clemson University and a member of the first class of visiting scholars in the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS). Her research on the origins of our nation's food supply are chronicled in a forthcoming book, “Saving Baby Dylan.”

Few food companies report the origins of ingredients in products they produce, so there is no way for consumers to know the source. In fact, many of these companies do not know the origins of ingredients that they use in their own foods. Before ending up in the hands of American distributors or retailers, most food travels through many channels—raw ingredients to farms, farms to storage, and then onward for processing, marketing and distribution. These channels are rarely documented or investigated.

“There is no easy way for a consumer to know about ingredient sourcing,” said Roth. “When I queried hundreds of branded food companies, few would reveal the source of their ingredients. And when I traced data from the U.S. Commerce Department, I discovered that most large compa-

nies were exempt from public scrutiny about their imported foods.”

Serious contamination of pet food spurred U.S. regulators to enforce labeling of fresh meat, fish, fruits and vegetables with country sources. But country-of-origin labeling is not available for processed food, including baby foods. Because of exceptions granted by the U.S. Department of Commerce, many companies selling branded food items do not reveal the source of the ingredients, and instances of misleading labeling are not hard to find.

About a quarter of all food in America is imported, and much of it, including seafood, vitamins, pharmaceuticals, and frozen fruits and vegetables, now comes from China. It is well-documented that China is a pollution haven. Toxic fertilizers and pesticides banned in the U.S. are commonly used in China, and industrial and human waste is not treated as it is in the U.S. Yet, only 2 percent of food imports are tested, and those that are examined are screened only for biological contaminants.

“The sheer scale of food imports combined with the opaqueness of global food supply chains has exponentially

increased the risks of supplier opportunism and food contamination,” Roth said. “But perhaps more insidious is that there is no routine testing for heavy metals or nonorganic toxins from imported foods, and the long-term effects of cumulative amounts of minute levels of such contaminants remain unknown. I am concerned about their effects on our most vulnerable populations—pregnant women, infants, children and the elderly.”

As a TIAS faculty fellow, Roth is conducting further research into the consequences of outsourcing our food supply. She is collaborating with Texas A&M professors in the Mays Business School and two graduate students on TIAS fellowships to model security risks in food supply chains in regulated industries. The team is estimating the impact of environmental pollution on the hidden costs of our food and on our well-being, as well as investigating the extent to which firms’ ac-

tions match their public statements of corporate responsibility. The ultimate objective is to assess how the food supply can be returned to local, sustainable, agricultural sources.

New Heights of Academic Leadership

Roth’s work is only one example of the important research being conducted at Texas A&M in conjunction with TIAS Faculty Fellows. TIAS brings some of the world’s top scholars to College Station for up to 12 months to collaborate on research with Texas A&M faculty and students. Its goal is to bring to Texas A&M 20 world-renowned scholars per year.

This advanced study institute is unique to Texas A&M in that it includes all 11 colleges and the Health Science Center. The first two TIAS classes are collaborating with Texas A&M researchers on pioneering projects in engineering, energy, quantum physics, lasers, genomic analysis, genetics and geosciences.

“Faculty and students at the world’s greatest universities must have access to the finest minds that are engaged in the groundbreaking research,”

Dr. Aleda Roth is the Burlington Industries Distinguished Professor at Clemson University and a member of the first class of visiting scholars in the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS).



Join Our Endeavor

Texas A&M faculty and administrators have embraced the Institute for Advanced Study with startup funding of more than \$10 million during the first five years, through 2018. The Texas A&M Foundation is seeking additional funds for endowments to support TIAS faculty and graduate fellowships, as well as sponsors for its annual gala. A substantial gift from a signature donor would endow and permanently name the institute.

Thanks to these faculty members, who have contributed estate gifts for the TIAS endowment:

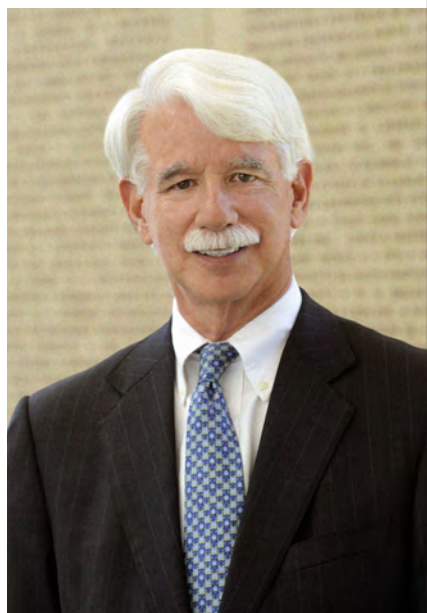
- ♦ Janet Bluemel, Department of Chemistry
- ♦ John Gladysz, Department of Chemistry
- ♦ John Junkins (with Elouise Junkins), Department of Aerospace Engineering and TIAS founding director
- ♦ Ozden Ochoa, Department of Mechanical Engineering

For information on how you can support TIAS, contact Don Birkelbach '70 at d-birkelbach@tamu.edu or (800) 392-3310.

said John Junkins, TIAS director and distinguished professor of aerospace engineering. “In just two years TIAS has significantly advanced the quality and reputation of our academic programs. It is a key element intended to set Texas A&M on a course to realize goals set out in Vision 2020 and to elevate Texas A&M’s status as a world academic leader.”

—BY DR. CLIFFORD FRY
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
FOR ADVANCED STUDY

To watch a video about food safety featuring Dr. Aleda Roth, visit give.am/AledaRoth.



Jorge Bermúdez '73, former chief risk officer for Citigroup Inc., joined the Texas A&M Foundation Board of Trustees on July 1.

Bermúdez Joins Board of Trustees

Jorge Bermúdez, a 1973 Texas A&M University graduate and former chief risk officer for Citigroup Inc., joined the Texas A&M Foundation Board of Trustees on July 1.

Bermúdez, a Cuban native who lives in College Station, holds bachelor's and master's degrees in agricultural economics. His career with Citigroup spanned 34 years and equipped him with extensive financial expertise and business management experience. Following his 2008 retirement, he founded Byebrook Group, a small College Station firm dedicated to research and advisory work in the financial services industry.

"I came to Texas A&M on a one-way ticket from Bogotá, Colombia, where my family was living at the time," Bermúdez said. "I knew nothing about Texas, but the first Texans I met were Aggies. Even though I wasn't Texan or American, Texas A&M gave me an education that allowed me to compete in the business world, and I have always felt that I have the obligation to give back financially and with my time."

Bermúdez is a generous benefactor to Texas A&M, with a recent \$250,000 gift to the Mays Business School to support scholarships for undergraduate business honors students. The Bermúdez Conference Room in the Clayton W. Williams Jr. Alumni Center is named in honor of his 2009 gift

to The Association of Former Students, and a wall outside the center features a quote from him about integrity.

In 2007 he established through The Association of Former Students the Jorge A. Bermúdez '73 Family Endowed Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships to the dependent child or spouse of a veteran killed or disabled in a conflict, or to the dependent child or spouse of a veteran who served in a conflict.

Bermúdez is a member of Texas A&M's International Advisory Board, the development councils for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Mays Business School, and a former chairman of the board of The Association of Former Students.

He received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the College of Agriculture in 2009 and was added in 2006 to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry, which recognizes outstanding former students within the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M.

He replaces Texas A&M Foundation Trustee John Bethancourt '74.

Texas A&M Foundation Trustees Award \$2,500 to Outstanding Student

The Texas A&M Foundation Board of Trustees awarded Mollie Lastovica '14 with its second Trustees' Outstanding Student Award. The award was created in 2012 through an endowed gift from Susanne and Melbern Glasscock '59

of Houston to honor one exceptional student per year with \$2,500.

Lastovica is a political science and agricultural communications and journalism graduate from Fredericksburg, Texas.

In 2012, as president of the College of Agriculture and Life Science's Student Council, Lastovica led the council to endow a \$25,000 scholarship to support students in the college who have demonstrated leadership abilities, involvement in extracurricular activities and service to the community.

Lastovica has also served as a caucus leader in student senate and received the Southerland Aggie Leader Scholarship, the Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges Award, the Buck Weirus Spirit Award, the Gathright Scholar Award and the Phi Kappa Phi University-Wide Outstanding Junior Award.

"The trustees selected Lastovica because of her inspirational story, dedication to academics and drive to suc-



The Texas A&M Foundation Board of Trustees awarded Mollie Lastovica '14 with its second Trustees' Outstanding Student Award.

ceed," said Board of Trustees Chairman Charles Gregory '64. "It is a privilege to honor someone who has truly demonstrated the Aggie core values in her everyday life."

During her time at Texas A&M University, Lastovica worked several part-time jobs and completed five internships, including one with Houston-based FleishmanHillard Global Communications Agency, which in May hired her as an assistant account executive for its food, beverage and agribusiness sector clients.



Texas A&M Foundation Welcomes New Maroon Coats

The Texas A&M Foundation on April 4 welcomed 17 new members into the seventh class of its student ambassadors organization, the Maroon Coats. Maroon Coats enhance the impact of the Foundation through stewardship and service. The group consists of Texas A&M student leaders who are pursuing various educational disciplines. Each member volunteers a minimum of 20 hours per semester and receives a signature maroon blazer during induction ceremonies.

New members of the 2014-2015 Maroon Coats are (back row, left to right) Drew Williams '15, DJ Cieply '15, Daylon Koster '15, Zach Rozinsky '15, Shep Klinke '14, David Trigg '15, Cameron Blizzard '16, Michael Powell '14, Will Nereson '14, Tyler Moffett '15 and Patrick McGinty '15; and (front row, left to right) Uli Robles '15, Chet Champion '15, Kelsey Hammond '15, Layeeeka Ismail '16, Morgan Cochran '15 and Will Tindol '15.

"The award money will help me offset the cost of living in Houston while pursuing my passion in the communications field," Lastovica said. "Hopefully it can be the foundation to allow me to establish savings so that I can one day endow a scholarship through the Texas A&M Foundation to benefit students as I have benefited from scholarship donors."

Foundation Staff Changes

Lydia Godfrey '90 began work as the Foundation's director of development for Mays Business School in April after working the past 18 years as a senior sales manager with the Hilton College Station and Conference Center.



Andrew Robison '04 joined the Foundation in April as director of

development for the College of Medicine in the Texas A&M Health Science Center following its merger with the Texas A&M University System. He joined the Health Science Center in 2011 after serving six years in other development positions in Ohio and College Station.



Andrew Robison '04

Jody Ford '99 joins the College of Education as its director of development after nine years in various positions at the Foundation, most recently as regional director of major gifts for the central United States.



Jody Ford '99

Postscript

The first time I came to College Station—I was maybe six years old—the driving lanes left an impression. Having come from Fredericksburg, Texas, where there are still no double-lane turn lanes, I noticed that the intersection of Texas Avenue and University Drive had dotted lines to guide turning drivers.

I had been introduced to Aggie jokes around the same time, because my sister had accepted her admission to Texas A&M University and some Longhorn relative gave her the book “The Best of 606 Aggie Jokes.” So from the backseat of my parents’ minivan, having noticed those white dashes, I asked my family if “Aggies were too dumb to know how to turn and that’s why they needed lines to show them?”

You can bet that story has been retold a time or two.

Neither of my parents went to college. My mom Susan worked more than 30 years for the U.S. Postal Service as a highway contract carrier, while my father Atlee is a rancher. I have three older sisters, Colleen '02, Laura '04 and Janiece '07. We all finished top of our class in high school—a favorite fake argument of my parents is to debate from which side of the family we got our brains—and we all ended up in Aggieland.

One of my favorite Texas A&M memories is from June 2011. The Texas 4-H Youth Development Foundation



From Aggie Jokes to Graduation

awarded its annual scholarships that summer in Rudder Tower. Halfway through the ceremony, I was called for one of three \$16,000 scholarships from the Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo (Rodeo Austin). If you’ve ever stood up too quickly and felt the blood rush to your head, then you know how I felt at that moment. I do not wear heels as a general safety rule, so the only thought I had walking onstage was *please don’t fall*. It was only a little later that I processed the full magnitude of what I had been given.

I applied for more than 40 scholarships my senior year of high school, and I received 22. Combined with scholarships I later received in college, I generated a total of nearly \$75,000. The Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo scholarship was the largest, and it helped me singlehandedly pay for my entire college education.

I’ve been working in the marketing department at the Texas A&M Foundation for more than two years, and I learned quickly that there are a thousand stories like mine. There are thousands of Aggies who get a tremendous boost from private scholarships fund-

ed by former students, corporations and other friends of Texas A&M.

The Aggie record of philanthropy is a strong draw for prospective students. I applied to only one other college, the University of Texas at Austin, but I received virtually no offers of financial support, despite being valedictorian and an involved student; that was a major deterrent. At Texas A&M, not only did I have financial support, but I’ve had many out-of-classroom experiences because of it: studying abroad in Nicosia, Cyprus, interning at a public affairs firm in Washington, D.C., working at the Foundation, working as an undergraduate assistant and serving on staff for the MSC Leland T. and Jessie W. Jordan Institute for International Awareness.

Something else I’ve learned at the Foundation is that \$75,000 is almost pocket change to the many millions that donors give annually. But to me, it was no joke. 🐾

—BY DUNAE CRENWELGE '15

Editor’s Note: Congratulations to Dunae, who received the 2014 Texas A&M On Campus Student Employee of the Year Award!

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Ryan Trantham '15, Kirsten Fowler '15, Katie Kuch '15 and Clayton Cromer '15 are all benefitting from the generosity of PES donors.

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The Howdy Farm is a student-run sustainable farming project that provides the Brazos Valley community with fresh produce and education about the health benefits and economic merits of local agriculture.

Started in 2009 on Texas A&M University's West Campus, the Howdy Farm's current operations consist of two gardens and a planting field. The farm grows a variety of vegetables, greens and herbs for sale at local farmer's markets and experiments with sustainable crop techniques.

Texas A&M student farmers are working to raise \$45,000 for additional demonstration gardens and to build a new center for classes and workshops.

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