

SPIRIT



Off the Quad

CADETS LAND THEIR BOOTS ON FOREIGN
SOIL DURING THE CORPS OF CADETS'
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

This Cyclical Life

I've long been fascinated with the "full circle" notion of life—the idea that stories with a beginning and end tie together in a seamless way. I was reminded of this after hearing a recent human-interest story relevant to the culture of Texas A&M University.

In 2012, former Texas A&M Foundation Trustee Mel Glasscock '59 and his wife Susie created the endowed Trustees' Outstanding Student Award. This award honors a meritorious graduating senior annually with \$2,500 to assist the student's transition into the real world. The recipient is selected by the Foundation's Board of Trustees from a competitive pool of applicants and must exhibit an exemplary record of academic achievement, leadership and service.



Minhtuan "Tuan" Nguyen '14

This year's recipient is Minhtuan "Tuan" Nguyen, a December 2014 graduate in mechanical engineering with a minor in petroleum engineering. Tuan is now an employee of Shell Oil Co., engaged in a training program and preparing for deployment somewhere in the world as a Texas A&M engineer.

So what's the "full circle" story? In 1969, after significant schooling that included Vietnamese language training by the U.S. Army, I was assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam.

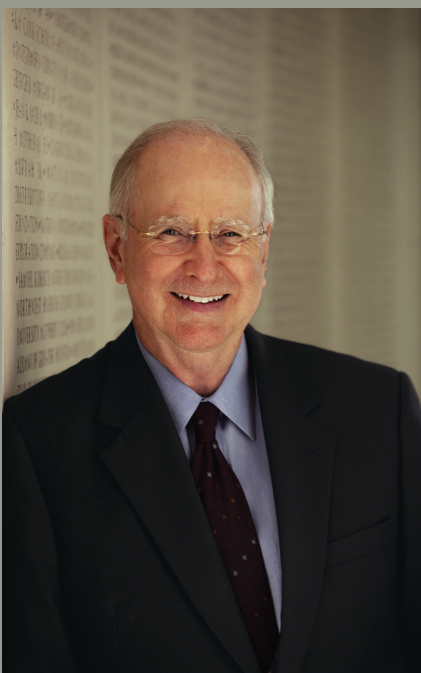
As a young lieutenant, I observed that our senior leadership intended the U.S. Army to win the war. They not so subtly considered the Army of the Republic of Vietnam incapable of succeeding against the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army. I was shocked by the American view that the Vietnamese military leadership—and more generally the Vietnamese people—were lazy, unintelligent and incapable of handling their own affairs. As it turns out, Vietnamese immigrants to the U.S. have proven that we could not have been more wrong. Take Tuan and his family, for example.

When South Vietnam collapsed in 1975, Tuan's aunt and uncle left the country by boat and ultimately made it to Houston, where there is a sizeable Vietnamese population (now including my old interpreter Nguyen Van Hiep). They later sponsored his grandparents, his mother and finally Tuan as a 10-year-old fourth grader.

Tuan's family now lives in Richmond, Texas, where his mom is a manicurist. She emotionally supported her son's journey through Texas A&M, while many scholarships supported him financially. His story is moving and also representative of the diverse student population graduating from Texas A&M today.

In his spare time, Tuan teaches first graders in his church community to speak Vietnamese, thus completing this chapter of the "full circle" of life. I hope you will read about him and the many other compelling stories in this issue of *Spirit*.

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





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As early as 1928, Professor W.D. Bliss, head
of the mechanical engineering department,
foresaw the importance of the airplane and
introduced the course ME 428 Aerodynamics
into the curriculum. In May, the Department
of Aerospace Engineering celebrated 75 years
of providing cutting-edge educational and
research opportunities. » p.6



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COVER PHOTO

Dennis Richard '14 overlooks the Andes
Mountains just outside of Santiago, Chile,
during a Corps of Cadets excursion in March
2014. Cadets who participate in the Corps'
Global Leadership Initiative gain global
competency through experiences in countries
that are strategically important to U.S.
interests.

Ken and Lynn Keefe '81 established a planned gift of retirement assets to fund multiple scholarships.

The Legacy

By Chris Scoggins '15

As a freshman during fall 1977, Lynn Keefe '81 recognized that there was no better place than Texas A&M University for a first-generation college student to gain a well-rounded experience and lasting memories.

"I didn't look at any other school," said Lynn, a zoology graduate.

During her time as a student, the Dallas native was a walk-on athlete for the Texas A&M track team and participated in Town Hall, a Memorial Student Center organization that brings live entertainment and concerts to campus. Keefe originally wanted to be a veterinarian until discovering she was allergic to dogs, cats, horses and cows during her junior year. So instead, she dabbled in research for a few years before entering medical sales at Bracco Diagnostics, a career she pursued 31 years before retiring.

Her husband Ken, a political science graduate from Kent State University in Ohio, played college football on scholarship. In 1982, the pair met through a mutual friend while Ken was employed at General Electric. They married shortly after and bought their first home in Lewisville, Texas. While not an Aggie himself, the environment and culture of Texas A&M resonate with Ken.

"I was blown away by everything about Texas A&M when I visited the first time," said Ken, executive vice

president of Hossley Lighting Associates.

Now living in Coppell, Texas, the strong correlation the Keefes saw between their college experiences and career success motivated them to create a planned gift of retirement assets to Texas A&M. These assets can be costly to inherit but simple to give. Most retirement plans carry a tax burden to beneficiaries (except spouses) when inherited. Many individuals leave less-taxed assets to their heirs and give IRAs or other tax-deferred accounts to the Texas A&M Foundation. As a charitable organization, the Foundation receives these retirement assets tax-free. With no children of their own, the Keefes give knowing the full extent of their savings will serve the universities where they began their careers.

It was in this spirit that the Keefes established gifts of scholarships supporting both of their alma maters. A significant planned gift to the Foundation will fund a Regents' Scholarship and an Endowed Opportunity Award for Aggie students.

"It was an easy decision, since our success is due to our education," said Lynn. "We wanted our retirement as-

sets directed where they could have the most impact, and scholarships seem to be the obvious answer."

Regents' Scholarships support first-generation, low-income students, while Endowed Opportunity Awards typically support deserving middle-income students who often miss out on need-based funding.

"These scholarships will pay dividends to students for many years to come," Ken said.

The couple hopes their gift inspires others to give in a similar fashion.

"I was the first in my family to attend college, and we wanted to help students who may not otherwise be able to go to school," said Lynn. "It's so important for those with the financial means to give back to the institutions that allowed them to achieve their success in the first place."

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 gpittsford@txamfoundation.com or (800) 392-3310.



Costly to Inherit but Easy to Give

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.

DUNAE CRENWELGE '15
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Senior Editor

MONIKA BLACKWELL
Assistant Editor

Spring 2015 Spirit magazine



ART THAT TOUCHES THE HEART

My wife and I donated a portion of our art collection to the Texas A&M University Stark Galleries. Working with Cathy Hastedt, curator at the Stark Galleries, we donated art valued in excess of \$25,000, including pieces by Alvar, Azoulay, Dali, Calder, Miro, Rembrandt, former President Gerald Ford and Texas artists Harvey and Yeates. I am a retired Army colonel and later retired as vice president of NTB Investments, while my wife is a retired school principal. We have been lifelong collectors of art.

While recently attending the Class of 1960 reunion and induction into the Sul Ross Group, we had the opportunity to go to the Stark Galleries and “visit” some of the art we donated. We were hosted by Cathy Hastedt, who showed us how the art is displayed and conserved. The University Art Galleries have done a great job with its outstanding collections of art, and we are happy to support the Stark Galleries!

— GAYLE AND JOHN ERSKINE '60
The Villages, Florida

ART FOR LIFE

I was thrilled to see the Stark Galleries and the Forsyth Galleries get “top billing” attention in the spring issue of *Spirit* and the Texas A&M Foundation’s e-newsletter. I am a Texas A&M University graduate from the College of Architecture. My lifelong passion has been to make art.

I entered Texas A&M having already made the decision that architecture would be the best way for me to have a career doing the thing I enjoyed. While at Texas A&M, I worked with an architecture pro-

fessor named Joe Donaldson, and one day he asked me if I was sure I wanted to pursue a career in architecture. It was one of those inadvertent discussions that goes one way then another, with no real objective in mind. But I knew from his tone of voice and the way he phrased the question that he was poking at the possibility that I might be able to contribute to the world by making art. That moment and his question are still vivid in my memory even though there certainly have been other epiphanies that contributed to the shift. Today I own my own business, Mark Stewart Watercolor, and make a living doing what I love: painting.

I know Texas A&M is large on its athletics. But I am interested in its “cultural” development as well and would like to see it focus more resources in that direction. Every major university (Princeton, Yale, Harvard, the University of Texas at Austin, etc.) has a significant museum as part of its university culture. There’s little doubt in my mind that it’s a vital part of a healthy education. I urge this shift not as someone with a myopic focus on fine arts, but as a person who was also a college athlete playing basketball under Shelby Metcalf in the early 1970s. I know the importance of athletics and the arts.

I have met and talked with Cathy Hastedt on many occasions and champion her efforts to grow the university’s art collection and impact the cultural development of Aggie students.

Please keep up this good work!

— MARK STEWART '74
Houston, Texas

Gayle and John Erskine '60 donated a portion of their art collection to the Texas A&M University Stark Galleries.

IT'S NOT THE 1960S

I read with dismay the article on Dr. Feagin in the spring 2015 issue of *Spirit*, and I can truthfully say I was not impressed. The first red flag came up when his academic background was listed and included the liberal hotbed of Harvard in the 1960s. The next came with the discovery of several pieces of standard socialist boilerplate phrases like “unjust enrichment for whites and unjust impoverishment of African-Americans . . .” What was surprising was not seeing a mention of his membership in the Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson fan clubs.

Whatever happened to endorsing the American dream: work hard and reap the benefits? The “I am a victim” mantra gets old after a while. And maybe it’s time to tell Dr. Feagin the 1960s are long past.

How I miss the time when Texas A&M University was known for producing leaders in engineering, science, agriculture and the military.

Gig 'em!

— BOB LOCKE '78
Glendale, Arizona

QUESTIONABLE CONCLUSIONS

That was certainly an interesting article on Texas A&M University’s Endowed Professorship in White Guilt in the spring issue. Perhaps Dr. Feagin will use the discretionary funds to study whether more Latinos are



Professor Joe Feagin

crossing our southern border to escape racist America or enter. Or to compare the quality of life of African-Americans relative to Africans living more free of white oppression elsewhere.

But if his conclusions are scientifically valid, it hardly makes for a compelling development initiative. Since, according to his worldview, he only achieved the pinnacle of his field and received such a plum faculty appointment due to institutionalized racism rather than scholarly merit.

Rather than continue to enjoy the largess of his position until “they carry me

Digital Dialogue

Comments from our readers online



More for the Corps

The building of two more Leadership Learning Centers on the Quad is a great addition to our Corps of Cadets, and I'd like to give a great big thank you to those generous donors that made this possible.

— Joe B. Reuss '49
Cuero, Texas

Congrats to You!

Congratulations and best wishes to Elizabeth Colmenares '14. Her story is what Texas A&M University is all about.

— Larry Martin '58
Dallas, Texas

A Vote for Performance Arts

As a senior at Texas A&M University and one of the charter members of the University Concert Band, I remember serving on the faculty senate committee to increase the presence of performing arts on campus. I'm thrilled to see this come to fruition with the building of a new Music Activities Center.

— Tara Burkholder '99
Katy, Texas

Goose Bumps on Kyle Field

I participated in Parson's Mounted Cavalry (Company D-1), and I loved sitting on my horse as the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band marched into Kyle Field to the beat of the drums. It gives me goose bumps just typing this post. Gig 'em and God Bless.

— Cullen W. Pickett '14
College Station, Texas

out in a box,” perhaps he should step aside and allow his place to be taken by a more deserving female or minority candidate. One who might not have such antipathy towards the country that provides the freedoms that academics such as he enjoy.

Of course, I jest. As it seems social science researchers achieve recognition not through institutionalized racism so much as institutionalized liberalism.

— MATT POLING '90
College Station, Texas

OnCampus

The Department of Aerospace Engineering celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. The first Texas A&M course in aerospace engineering was introduced in 1928 to prepare students for careers in modern aviation. The addition of multiple undergraduate and graduate courses led to the department's official founding in 1940.



A painting of Texas A&M University's first mascot, Reveille 1, returned to campus after a 25-year disappearance. The painting was commissioned and funded in 1943 by students and faculty in response to the mascot's failing health.



Happy 75th, Aerospace Engineering!

The Department of Aerospace Engineering at Texas A&M University celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

With approximately 500 undergraduate and 115 graduate students enrolled, the aerospace program ranks seventh among all public institutions by *U.S. News & World Report*. The program provides cutting-edge educational and research opportunities in space exploration, national defense, air transportation, communications and sus-

tainable energy. Strong connections to aerospace industry leaders, the Department of Defense and NASA further strengthen its prestige.

"Our program offers a modern curriculum, an active seminar series, advanced laboratories and state-of-the-art sponsored research," said Department Head Rodney Bowersox. "Aerospace students interact with some of the nation's top faculty and go on to high-level careers that shape the field. As

we prepare for the next 75 years, the department will increase the size of the aerospace student body and faculty, create new laboratories and strategically strengthen our acclaimed research program."

To support aerospace engineering, visit give.am/SupportAeroEngineering.

Reveille 1 Painting Rediscovered

A painting of Texas A&M University's first mascot, Reveille 1, returned to campus after a 25-year disappearance.

College Station artist Marie Haines completed the painting in 1943. Cushing Memorial Library and Archives initially displayed the work of art before it moved to the Military Sciences Building, where it remained for decades. It disappeared during building renovations in the 1990s.

In December 2014, an online posting about the missing painting and its location in a storage facility elicited a call to the Sam Houston Sanders Corps of Cadets Center. Several weeks later, it was recovered and reinstated on campus at the Corps Center.

The painting was originally unveiled to the student body outside of Sbis Dining Hall after the 1943 bonfire and before the annual Thanksgiving dance.

"We are grateful that this historic painting will once again hang in Aggie-land where it belongs," said Brig. Gen. Joe Ramirez Jr. '79, Corps commandant.

The Genius Corps

Seven internationally prominent scholars were inducted in February into the third class of Faculty Fellows of the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study.

Established with a \$5 million endowment through the Texas A&M University System's Academic Enhancement Program and supported with additional private funding through the Texas A&M Foundation, the institute brings renowned scholars to Texas A&M for extended visits to collaborate with faculty and students on research.

"The positive impact on the university as a consequence of attracting these extraordinarily accomplished individuals cannot be over-emphasized," said Director John Junkins. "These exceptional scholars foster a vibrant environment for research and teaching and pay tremendous future dividends through enhanced collaborations and faculty recruitment."

The new inductees will serve as in-residence fellows for two to 12 months. By 2018, Junkins hopes the institute will attract 20 new world-class scholars annually.



Faculty fellows of the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study each receive a 10-pound bronze replica of sculptor Auguste Rodin's famous statue The Thinker.

Members of the 2014-2015 fellows and the academic areas in which they will serve include Harold Adams '61, architecture; Dr. Rakesh Agrawal, chemical engineering; Dr. Jack Dongarra, computer science; Dr. William Marras, systems engineering; Dr. Ed Moses, physics and astronomy; Dr. Yuri Oganessian, nuclear engineering; and Dr. Robert Skelton, mechanical and aerospace engineering. To learn more, visit give.am/TIASFellows.



Masters of Disasters

More than 400 students participated in the eighth annual Disaster Day, a student-run mock disaster experience that took place March 26. The College of Nursing created the event in 2008 to provide students of all medical disciplines hands-on experience in responding to mass casualty disasters. This year's disaster simulated a wildfire that caused a massive explosion, injuring unsuspecting students at a nearby high school.

A new scenario each year enables students to test their emergency management, clinical and interpersonal skills outside the classroom. The specific details are kept secret until the day of the event to provide a more realistic experience. Past drills have included hurricanes and structure collapses.

More than 500 volunteers and 300 students from across the Texas A&M Health Science Center and Blinn College organized the event. Five student committees raised funds, gathered supplies, developed case studies and recruited volunteers.

Approximately 700 volunteers from the community acted as patients for medical students. With pretend injuries ranging from fractures to head wounds, respiratory distress and child labor, each volunteer represented a real-life scenario that an emergency responder could face.

Endowment Ranks No. 7

The National Association of College and University Business Officers highlighted The Texas A&M University System and Foundations as one of the top endowment funding entities among all colleges and universities in the United States and Canada for fiscal year 2013-2014.

Texas A&M ranked seventh among 832 U.S. public and private colleges and universities. Harvard University, The University of Texas at Austin, Yale University, Stanford University, Princeton University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology topped the list.

Texas A&M posted the highest increase in endowment market value of any of the top 37 higher education institutions in the nation. The market value of that endowment was \$11.1

billion as of June 30, 2014, a 27.2 percent increase over the previous year.

"A healthy endowment lends fiscal stability to Texas A&M and provides essential resources that enable the university to support high-quality academics, attract top faculty and ensure that the brightest students have access to an Aggie education," said Texas A&M Foundation President Ed Davis '67. "Texas A&M will continue building its endowment so that it can compete among the best institutions of higher education in the nation."

The Texas A&M endowment is comprised of the Texas A&M System Endowment Fund, 16 supporting foundations (including the Texas A&M Foundation) and a one-third share of the Permanent University Fund.

Lab Work

Researchers are extracting DNA from dried brain tissue in museum specimens to better understand convergent evolution in extinct mammals. The project is a collaboration between Dr. Bill Murphy in the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences and Dr. Kris Helgen (left) from the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Mechanical Engineering Professor Jaime Grunlan may soon develop a new technology for powering sensors contained in rugby players' jerseys.



Mammalian Mania

Dr. Bill Murphy, a mammalian geneticist in the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, is extracting DNA from museum specimens to learn more about ancient and extinct mammal species.

Murphy and graduate student Victor Mason '10 teamed with mammalogist Dr. Kris Helgen, curator in charge of the Division of Mammals at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History—home to a collection of roughly 590,000 preserved mammal specimens. They are studying the ancestral relationships between groups of mammalian species, including when they originated, what factors drove them to diversify and what processes led to their distribution around the globe.

They also seek to understand how rare groups of mammals fit into the mammalian family tree and to identify the true number of mammalian species on Earth.

Due to risk of damage or contamination, it has historically been challenging to sequence large amounts of DNA from museum specimens.

“We developed a less destructive approach where we extract DNA from dried brain tissue inside the skull that has never been exposed to direct human contact,” Murphy said.

Researchers formerly believed that if species shared the same physical characteristics, they must be related. But new sequencing technologies and the process of extracting DNA from museum specimens have revealed that similar physical characteristics in related but distinct species is happening along the whole mammalian tree.

Knock Some Sensor Into 'Em

A benefactor of the Queensland Maroons—an Australian rugby team—is negotiating a project with Texas A&M University Mechanical Engineering Professor Jaime Grunlan to develop a new technology for powering sensors contained in players' jerseys.

Each player on the Maroons wears sensors to monitor hydration levels and the level of G-force experienced when taking a hit, a key component in determining if a player suffered a concussion.



“Right now the sensors are powered by a battery pack worn by each player, but this can be quite intrusive during games,” said Grunlan.

If a contract with the Maroons is signed, Grunlan and fellow Mechanical Engineering Professor Choongho Yu—who specializes in energy harvesting and cooling as well as thermoelectrics—will develop power fabric made of polymer or plastic-based thermoelectric materials that can be applied as coatings to players’ jerseys.

“When the body heats up while working out, it can drive electricity as long as there is a temperature gradient,” Grunlan said. “That electricity can power sensors coated on the jersey, which will transmit information about a player’s hydration, G-force experience and vitals to a computer. This would eliminate the need for battery packs.”

Lying Down on the Job

Researchers from the Texas A&M University Center for Translational Research in Aging and Longevity are studying how prolonged bed rest affects muscle loss in the elderly.

In the study, volunteers are charged with lying in hospital-like beds for 10 days straight. They are restricted from standing, sitting up or getting up to use the bathroom to provide researchers with an accurate idea of how quickly atrophy—the wasting away of cells that form muscles—occurs.

“Muscle strength can decrease by 25 percent after only one week of bed rest,” said Center Director Nicolaas Deutz. “If we can stop muscle loss in older adults during a hospital stay with specific nutritional supplements, they can regain their health sooner.”

Volunteers are held to a strict food menu that includes a supplement and weighed to gauge muscle loss.

The center is part of the College of Education and Human Development and conducts research on nutrition, exercise and diseases related to aging.

Aggies Lead Tourism Research

A recent study published in *Tourism Management Perspectives* ranks Texas A&M University third in the world for most contributions to tourism research in the last decade. The study also found James Petrick, professor of recreation, park and tourism sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, to be the second most published author in this subject area internationally.

Petrick studies the application of psychology and marketing principles in leisure services, particularly in the cruise industry. His research includes tourism marketing; tourist behavior and satisfaction; pricing and perceived value of tourism services; and tourist intentions to revisit.

“We’ve developed models that show how perceptions of quality and value affect tourists’ satisfaction aboard cruise liners,” Petrick said.

Research shows that there are five dimensions to cruisers’ perceptions of value—quality, behavioral price, monetary price, reputation and emotional response. Petrick assists cruise lines in understanding effective and ineffective attributes of their ships to improve customer satisfaction onboard. He also suggests pricing for cabins and services, possibilities for improved services and best-practice policies.



Memory Boost

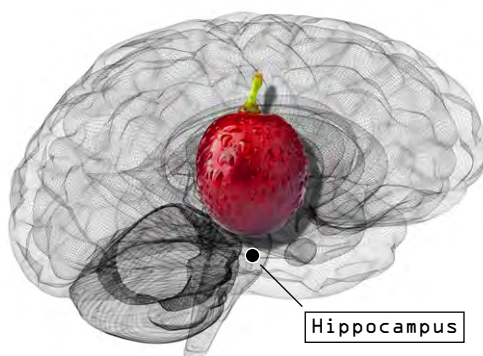
A compound found in common foods such as red grapes and peanuts might help prevent age-related decline in memory, according to research by a faculty member in the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine.

Ashok Shetty, director of neurosciences at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine, studied the benefits of resveratrol in aged rats and found that it had positive effects on the hippocampus, an area of the brain critical to functions such as memory, learning and

mood. Resveratrol, an antioxidant that is found in the skin of red grapes, as well as in red wine, peanuts and some berries, is already known for its potential to prevent heart disease.

“The results of the study were striking,” Shetty said. “They indicated that for the control rats who did not receive resveratrol, spatial learning ability was largely maintained but the ability to make new spatial memories significantly declined between 22 and 25 months. By contrast, both spatial learning and memory improved in the resveratrol-treated rats.”

Because both humans and animals show a decline in cognitive capacity after middle age, Shetty’s findings may have implications for treating memory loss in the elderly. Resveratrol may even be able to help people afflicted with severe neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease.



New Gifts

Utilizing matching funds, Eric Yong Xu '93 (left) honored his mentor, Senior Distinguished Professor Timothy C. Hall, with a \$2 million faculty chair in biology.



Innovative Investments

In 1990, Senior Distinguished Professor of Biology Timothy C. Hall took a chance on a prospective graduate student when he invited the young Eric Yong Xu '93 to join his Texas A&M University laboratory.

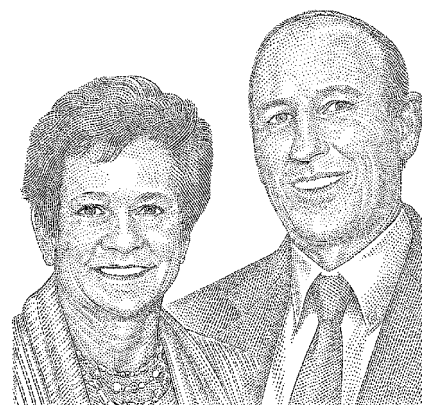
Twenty-five years later, Xu is returning the favor by investing in Texas A&M and simultaneously honoring Hall, who mentored him to his Ph.D. in biology and to a future as one of China's most influential entrepreneurs and investors.

Xu helped establish the Timothy C. Hall-Heep Foundation Distinguished Visiting Faculty Chair in Biology. His \$1 million gift will be matched with Herman F. and Minnie Bell Heep Foundation funds to create a \$2 million chair to bring distinguished faculty members to campus through the Texas A&M University Institute for Advanced Study (TIAS). The chair will defray costs associated with recruiting TIAS Faculty Fellows in biology and support an ongoing visiting faculty lecture series.

Xu is co-founder of Baidu, the world's largest Chinese search engine, and founder and chairman of YIFANG Ventures Inc., an asset management and venture capital company based in Beijing and Singapore.

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

Fiddler's Green Gets \$1 Million Boost



Dorothy and Artie McFerrin '65

Texas A&M University supporters Dorothy and Artie McFerrin '65 committed \$1 million toward the renovation and expansion of Fiddler's Green, home to the Corps of Cadets' Parsons Mounted Cavalry.

New facilities on the Green—to be completed this September—will include a leather shop, restrooms, offices and a storage space for equipment. More than 8,000 feet of fence was replaced and pipe fencing will be added around the equine training arena. The expanded facility will include an additional 16 acres of land.

The McFerrins have supported Texas A&M for more than 26 years in a diverse range of organizations, projects and academic initiatives.

In 2013, they received the Sterling C. Evans Medal from the Texas A&M Foundation in recognition of their contributions to the university.

Adams Creates Fifth Endowment

Harold L. Adams '61 recently established a \$150,000 professorship in visualization, marking his fourth professorship and fifth endowment within the College of Architecture.

Adams previously established endowed professorships within the departments of architecture, construction science and landscape architecture as well as an endowed scholarship for architecture majors.

"I'm old enough to be sitting in a rocking chair," Adams said. "But I have the opportunity to help the college continue developing into one of the country's finest. That's something I can't pass up." His gift is the first to fund a professorship in the Department of Visualization. Its faculty holder will coordinate teaching and research activities with the faculty holders of his other professorships.

"This will foster further collaboration between all four departments in the college," Adams said. "Interdisciplinary cooperation is vital to the success of the field and its students."

Adams is the retired CEO of RTKL Associates, a global architecture and design firm that he joined in 1967. By the time of his retirement in 2003, he had successfully grown the firm to include nine international offices.



Harold J. Adams '61 recently established the first professorship in visualization.

Today he maintains ties with the College of Architecture by serving on its Development Advisory Council and assisting with research, planning, lectures and student counseling as a visiting professor. He was named a distinguished alumnus of the college in 1998 and a distinguished alumnus of the university in 2011. He also serves on the President's Council and is the first Aggie fellow in Texas A&M University's Institute for Advanced Study.

\$25 Million for 25 by 25

A \$25 million gift from San Antonio-based Zachry Group will support the 25 by 25 Initiative in the Dwight Look College of Engineering.

The contribution is the largest gift to date for the 550,000-square-foot Engineering Education Complex that will function as the hub of the college's undergraduate program. The building project includes an extensive renovation and addition to the Zachry Engineering Center to be completed in spring 2018.

A second component of the gift creates the Zachry Leadership Program at Texas A&M, which will provide 100 engineering students scholarship support and leadership development opportunities.

The gift will also establish a professor of practice in mechanical engineering, enabling the department to place industry leaders in the classroom.

"At a time when there is a national shortage of engineers, we are excited to support the vision of the university to produce more engineers than any other institution," said John B. Zachry '84, chairman and chief executive officer of Zachry Group.

A Vote for Financial Planning

Lane Keller '80 and Phyllis Keller '80 work with businesses every day. As owners of Keller & Associates CPAs and KMH Wealth Management LLC, they recognize the value of sound financial planning.



Phyllis Keller '80 and Lane Keller '80

As a result, the Kellers dedicated \$250,000 to provide operational funding for the Financial Planning Program in the Department of Agricultural Economics.

"There is a tremendous demand for qualified graduates in financial planning," said Lane. "Students who can graduate ready to sit for the CFP® Certification Examination have a huge advantage."

Founded in 2013, the program prepares students and professionals for careers in financial planning through online and classroom coursework.

"We hope the program will not only benefit students but their future clients as well," said Phyllis.

In recognition of their gift, a conference room in the agriculture and life sciences building will be named in honor of R.L. "Bo" Keller, Lane's father.

President's Endowed Scholarship

The Texas A&M Foundation would like to thank donors who have recently contributed to Texas A&M's premier scholarship program, the President's Endowed Scholarship.

Jacqueline V. and George N. Anderson '52

B.F. and Adelene Bolton

Vicki and Brian Miller '80

Dorothy R. and John W. Persohn '42
(two scholarships)

Neva and A.E. (Buddy) White '42
Given by Daisy and John D. White '70

WFSN Women's Legacy II
Given by The Women Former Students'
Network of Texas A&M University

OneVoice

A Q&A with Dr. Roderick Dashwood

Tea Tip

Looking for a way to beat the heat this summer? Dashwood recommends chilled green tea: "Take a 12-cup coffee carafe, fill it with cold filtered water, add five green tea bags and place it in the fridge overnight. In the morning, remove the tea bags and squeeze them if you prefer a slightly more astringent beverage. Without adding sugar or artificial sweetener, it will be utterly refreshing and far better than store-bought varieties."

Dr. Roderick Dashwood has always zeroed in on why things don't work. "During biology classes when we were learning things like how the heart works," he said, "I was interested in why it stops working and what causes it to go awry."

"It wasn't a morbid curiosity, either. I wasn't interested in death for the sake of death. Understanding abnormal aspects helps you understand normal biology better."

His early interests led him to study genetic toxicology—how our environment, diet and lifestyle affect our DNA—at the undergraduate, masters and doctoral levels. Now director of the Center for Epigenetics and Disease Prevention at the Texas A&M University Health Science Center's Institute for Biosciences and Technology (IBT) in Houston, Dashwood still asks questions about abnormal biology, particularly cancer.

His research focus on epigenetics and cancer prevention is representative of the caliber of work being conducted at the IBT. The English native participated in a *Spirit* Q&A to elaborate on his research and why it matters.

How did you come to direct the Center for Epigenetics and Disease Prevention?

About two years ago, IBT Director Dr. Cheryl Walker invited me to give a seminar at the Texas Medical Center. At the time, I was naïve about Houston, with

Genes Genius

CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH
EXPLORES HOW DIET CAUSES
AND PREVENTS CANCER

visions of tumbleweeds and spittoons. But upon arriving, I was blown away by the huge concentration of medical expertise in one square mile and impressed that the science was so highly cooperative. After my seminar presentation, Dr. Walker mentioned plans for a new IBT center focused on epigenetics. That's where it all started.

What is the field of epigenetics and how did it evolve?

Epigenetics is the study of heritable changes in gene expression that are not caused by changes in DNA sequence. The medical profession historically has understood cancer development as changes in DNA sequence — either change in individual bases in the DNA or whole-scale changes that lead to chromosome rearrangement. But researchers started realizing that there were instances of tumors arising in humans and in animals that didn't have genetic changes as the main driver of cancer development.

How can dietary choices and the beneficial components of food be utilized to prevent or fight cancer?

If a cancer has epigenetically-silenced genes, the hope is that through diet and

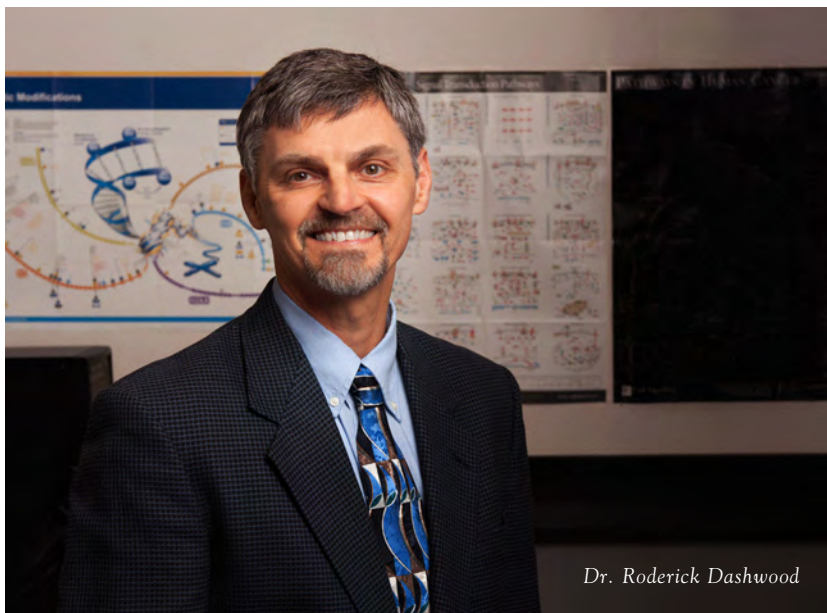
lifestyle, we can open up chromatin, turn genes back on and trigger cancer cells to die. We study scenarios in which cancers in the human population are high or low and try to correlate those rates to dietary and lifestyle practices. Going deeper, we try to pinpoint particularly beneficial or harmful components of our foods. Our goal is to understand which foods might cause or prevent cancer and what we can do to optimize preventive strategies.

the identification of so-called early biomarkers, which might be used as early predictors of cancer. Much of the historic medical focus on cancer has centered on therapy, which is certainly important. When people come into hospitals or clinics with cancer, we need immediate ways to help them — typically via surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy. However, this approach tends to categorize cancer as an event, when it is actually a process. What

objectives. However, as NIH dollars are stagnating and becoming more competitive, scientists have to think about other ways to support their research, such as through foundations or private investors.

Were you a science geek as a child?

While I loved science, I wasn't a typical geek. My parents required me to choose one artistic pursuit and one physical pursuit outside of school, so I chose judo and classical guitar. I grew up hearing great Nobel laureates speak at Cambridge University, like Watson & Crick (discoverers of the DNA double helix structure) and Max Perutz (who was influential in identifying the structure of blood transport proteins like hemoglobin). I remember Perutz saying, 'Students these days work too hard and think too little.' He meant to remind us that while we're in our labs, buried in the technicalities of our experiments, we have to keep perspective about what we're doing and its potential impact. 🐾



Dr. Roderick Dashwood

Dashwood holds joint professorships in the Department of Nutrition and Food Science and the Texas A&M University College of Medicine. He is also a professor in the Department of Clinical Cancer Prevention at MD Anderson Cancer Center.

What foods have been identified that may help prevent cancer?

One group includes cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and bok choy. Others include allium vegetables such as onions, garlic and shallots, which are high in beneficial sulfur compounds; foods like Brazil nuts that have high selenium content; and spinach, which has abundant chlorophyll. One way to optimize foods is to grow them in different types of soils and climate conditions.

causes a cancer is usually a series of biochemical or molecular processes that accumulated over time — maybe the patient smoked cigarettes, stayed out in the sun too long, ate the wrong foods, or all of the above. We need to understand the carcinogenic process and how components in our food might act at steps along the way in order to potentially prevent tumors from ever happening. That has been my No. 1 driving passion throughout my career.

How is your research funded?

I received funding via Texas A&M's Chancellor's Research Initiative, which brings high-profile scientists to the university. I also brought with me a PO1 program project grant from the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which supports long-term research programs with specific major

To support the Texas A&M University Health Science Center, contact:

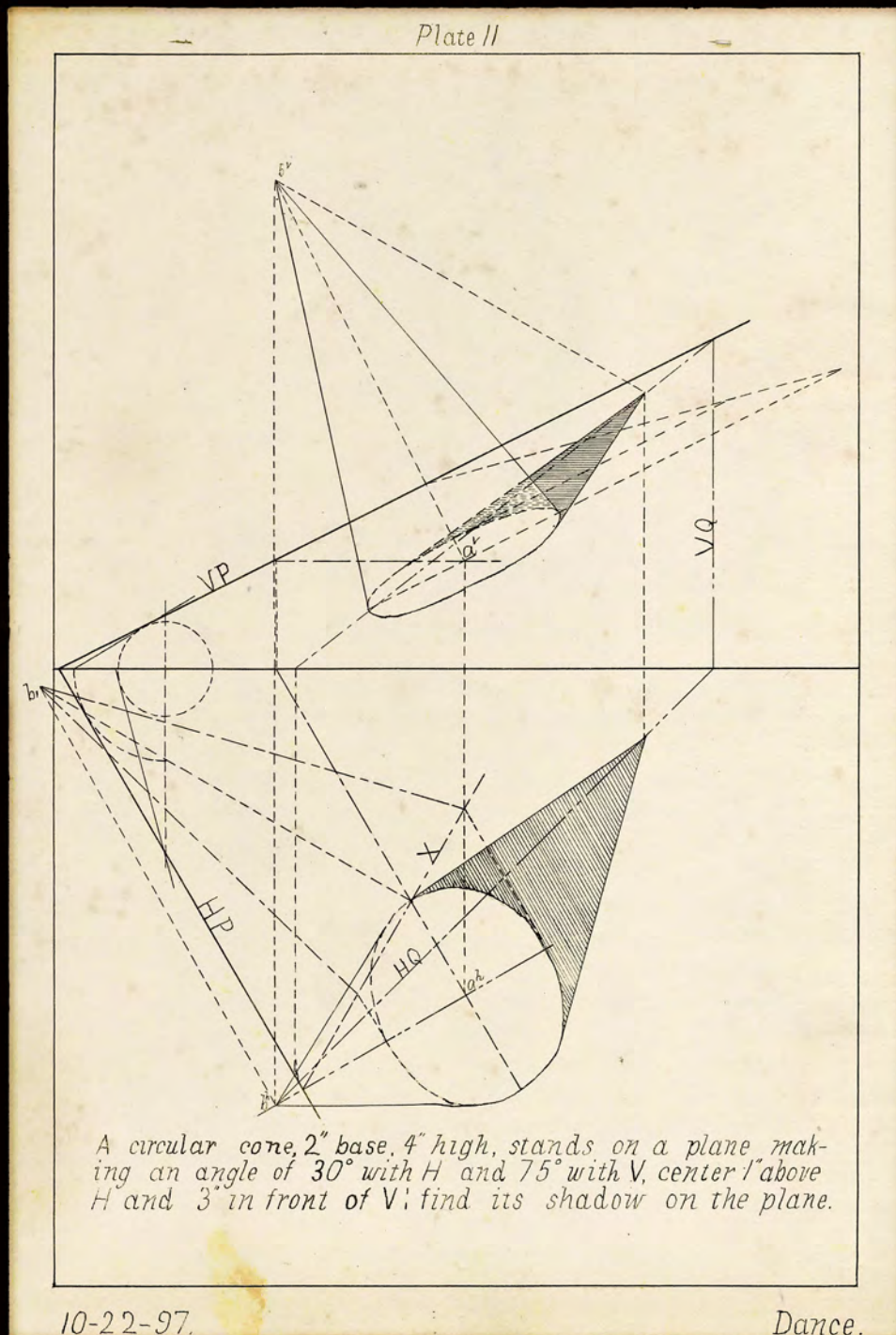
Andrew Robison '04
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What is chemoprevention?

Cancer chemoprevention refers to the use of natural, synthetic or biological chemical agents to reverse, suppress or prevent invasive cancer development. It has been studied extensively through various agents like vitamins, minerals and certain supplements or whole foods. It also includes

Viewpoint





Only the steady hand and precise mind of an engineer could have perfected this 1897 drawing of a circular cone's shadow on a plane. Sketched by Joseph Gray Dance, who attended Texas A&M University as a mechanical engineering undergraduate in 1897 and 1898, this illustration is one of many discovered in a notebook he kept for an introductory drawing class.

All engineering students at the time were required to take drawing courses, during which they received instruction in mapping, charting, lettering, free-hand drawing, geometrical construction and elementary projections.

By 1887, the engineering college housed separate departments in mechanical engineering, civil engineering and drawing. The curriculum, taught by about 25 professors prior to 1900, focused on practical training to assist students in finding industrial and vocational work.

Dance likely attended classes in the mechanical engineering shops erected in 1892 by the order of then university President Lawrence Sullivan Ross (1891-1898). The shops, destroyed by fire in 1920, stood on the site now occupied by Harrington Education Center.

These drawings, discovered by his granddaughters, will be donated to the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives.

Seeing Angela Merkel was the bonus. Last fall, Jacob Brown '16 was one of seven cadets who spent the semester at Helmut Schmidt University (HSU) in Hamburg, Germany, as part of a Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets exchange program. In November, he traveled to Berlin for the 25th anniversary of the collapse of the Berlin Wall. There he found the city transformed into an open-air museum with exhibits depicting Berlin's post-war transformation. At one display, Brown spotted German Chancellor Angela Merkel. "That made my trip an especially memorable experience," he said.

But the most powerful part of the visit was seeing the contrasting worlds on either side of the wall. "Berlin is one of the few places you can see a stark juxtaposition between the effects of communism and capitalism," said Brown, an international studies major. He noticed that in former East Berlin, the buildings were more drab and the streets narrower. The setting depicted how constricted life for East Berliners had been. "The biggest realization I had was the constant fear that people lived under," said Brown. "The idea that citizens could not control many aspects of their lives had a profound impact on me and made me thankful for the freedoms I experience every day in the U.S."

This kind of exploration of the world, fraught with critical thinking and historical inquiry, is exactly what Brig. Gen. Joe Ramirez Jr. '79, Corps commandant, hopes his cadets will achieve through a project that is close to his heart: The Corps' Global Leadership Initiative. The commandant goes to great lengths to give cadets the chance to learn about other countries through this cross-cultural initiative, which has grown tremendously in size and significance since he took command of the Corps in 2010.

At the time, the Corps sent a few cadets abroad through programs funded by the university or the Department of Defense. "I thought to myself: 'Let's send more,'" said Gen. Ramirez, who spent seven of his last 10 years in the Army either living overseas or deployed. Before coming to College Station, he served as deputy director of policy and strategy for the U.S. European Command.

His international experience made his goals for the Corps clear. "I realized the significance of ensuring that our young people understand the global marketplace," he said. "Having traveled to countries around the world, I know the advantages to understanding a country's environment, culture and the way its people view the world."

BY JEANNIE RALSTON

OFF THE QUAD

The Brandenburg Gate is an 18th-century neoclassical triumphal arch in Berlin and one of the best-known landmarks in Germany. During the post-war partition of Germany, the gate was isolated and inaccessible immediately next to the Berlin Wall, and the area around the gate was featured most prominently in media coverage showcasing the fall of the wall in 1989.





The Corps of Cadets' Global Leadership Initiative blends history, culture and policy in a study-abroad-on-steroids experience.



TEXAS A&M'S GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

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

Gen. Ramirez and his staff built an international program tailor-made for Aggie cadets. His priorities became three all-expense-paid excursions a year, semesters abroad at military universities and an international exchange plan to bring foreign cadets to College Station. The commandant also set up the Leadership Learning Center, where cadets have free access to a library of Rosetta Stone programs to study critical languages such as Russian, Mandarin and Arabic. Since the program's inception, the number of cadets traveling overseas has jumped dramatically. In 2007, less than 1 percent of Texas A&M students who studied abroad were cadets; today cadets comprise 12 percent.

"Our hope," said Randy Kluver, Texas A&M's executive director of global partnerships and outreach, "is that every cadet gains some form of international engagement over the course of their education." Kluver helped implement the program from the beginning and is one of its most adamant endorsers.

The cornerstone of the Corps' international program is three annual excursions, normally taken at the conclusion of the spring semester. "This is study abroad on steroids," said Kluver. "The quality of the experience is unparalleled."

The excursions normally consist of 10 to 12 days in countries that are strategically important to U.S. interests—such as Egypt, Morocco, Germany, Poland, China, Taiwan, Singapore and Chile. But these are no leisurely sightseeing vacations. Accompanying the 26 cadets that travel on each excursion are three chaperones—a staff member from the commandant's office, an ROTC officer and a Texas A&M faculty member who has special knowledge of the destination country or region.

Before they travel, cadets receive detailed briefings from experts on the country's culture and government so they can hit the ground running. Days abroad are packed with meetings with key decision-makers and tours of influential institutions. Gen. Ramirez adapted the excursions—from which cadets earn an hour's worth of academic credit—after the DIME-R model he learned at the U.S. Army War College. Each trip examines the elements of national power: diplomacy, information, military, economics, religion and culture.

"When we decide which countries we're going to, we all look through our contacts to see who we know could help us," said Kluver. The commandant himself provides connections since he has worked in many of the destinations while serving in the Army. The Aggie network lends a hand as well, with many Texas A&M former students providing suggestions and contacts. "Almost every embassy employs someone from Texas A&M," said Kluver. "And because it's the Corps, someone with the military is always willing to help."

Gen. Ramirez, who speaks with each group of cadets before their departure, is specific about what they should take from their time away. "I want them to learn how we do business with that country diplomatically, how the country uses information as influence, and what the information is saying, especially about the U.S.," Gen. Ramirez explained. "What type of military relationship do we have with them? What companies are doing business there? And while religion is not always a significant factor in every country, they must be conscious of it when they go to countries like Qatar and Kuwait."

Last summer's excursion to India took place in the weeks leading up to national elections. "Cadets got the chance to understand who all of the different candidates were and how they were being discussed—not just by the media but by local people," Gen. Ramirez said. On a 2013 trip to China, Kluver was able to arrange the first cadet-to-cadet exchange between the countries, thanks to his position as director of the Texas A&M Confucius Institute, which strengthens educational ties with China. Members of the Corps spent time with cadets at Ocean University in Qingdao, one of the only universities in China with an ROTC program. "We engaged in discussions with the cadets and addressed numerous historical events and current issues between our two nations," said Sam Hodges '13, who took part in the China trip.

These excursions are set up in unique Texas A&M style. "West Point can't do an exchange like the one in China," said Kluver. "The Air Force Academy can't do this. But we can because of our select military relationships and Aggie connections."

Stories about the impact of the trips continue. Gen. Ramirez recalls that cadets on a 2012 excursion to Qatar got a tour of the Al Udeid Air Base and an unexpected briefing from Lt. Gen David Goldfein, commander of the U.S. Air Force Central Command in Southwest Asia. "It is rare for a three-star general to give three hours to a group of students," said Kluver. "In fact, it doesn't happen." One clue to his generosity: the general's two daughters are Aggies. "It was fascinating for our cadets to see how that operation came together," said Gen. Ramirez.

Clayton Sorem '13, who participated in that Qatar excursion, recalls another memorable meeting with the head of international relations at the Al Jazeera network. "The ability to ask questions about a news program that many people in the U.S. find controversial was an eye-opening experience," said Sorem, whose trip inspired him to spend a year in China

"Our hope is that every cadet gains some form of international engagement over the course of their education."

—Randy Kluver

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS &
OUTREACH, TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY



Clockwise from top: Each Corps excursion includes stops at local government buildings. 🌐 Students toured the Duetsches Historisches Museum to experience German culture, history, religion and art (left). 🌐 During a trip to Chile, cadets visited the Escuela de Militar Bernardo O'Higgins in Santiago. Chilean cadets at this military school begin their Chilean Army service as cadets in an undergraduate corps, similar to the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M.





GOING GLOBAL

Any cadet may apply for an excursion or exchange. For the 2015 excursions, 147 cadets applied for 78 slots, with selections based mainly on grades, merit and ability to work on a team.

The three excursions cost roughly \$200,000 a year. To keep the program inexpensive and accessible, cadets are asked to pay only for one meal per day.

For semester-long exchanges, the commandant's office covers airfare and application fees or visas. Tuition plus room and board are roughly comparable to the cost of attending Texas A&M for the semester.

The Division of Student Affairs funds the program along with donations from individuals and companies.

To include more destinations and cadets, the Corps created a global initiative fund to which former students and other supporters may donate. "This program is an investment in our future," said Gen. Ramirez. "A few short weeks can pay huge dividends."



Clockwise from top: Groups of South Korean ROTC students visited the College Station campus for three weeks each in 2014 and 2015. ● Cantonese opera is a traditional Chinese art form. ● Cadets explored the Great Wall of China during a 2013 excursion to China. ● Sam Hodges '13 engaged in discussions with Chinese cadets about historical events and current issues and toured numerous cultural sites such as the National Theater and Concert Hall at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, Taiwan.



after graduation. “We learned about some of our misconceptions of the Middle East. I also saw how various factors lead people to completely different conclusions about certain topics and none are necessarily wrong.”

Insights like these are commonly heard during the mandatory three-hour outbriefings that cadets give the commandant following each excursion. The students are required to be thorough in these briefings, not only to prove how much they learned but also because the commandant listens with preexisting knowledge about each country. “They need to show him that they’re thinking deeply about what it all means,” Kluver noted. “The commandant does not let them off easy.”

At these briefings, Gen. Ramirez loves to “see the light bulbs going on,” he said. “You hear things like, ‘I never knew...’ or ‘Now I understand....’ These are the students we’re preparing for companies like IBM, Dell, Goodyear, ExxonMobil or the CIA and the U.S. military. That’s why these trips are so important.”

Another key area of the program is the coordination of longer exchanges like the one the Corps of Cadets established with HSU in Germany. This is where Brown and six other cadets discovered there is no substitute for experiencing current events as well as history firsthand. “We actually talked about the reunification of Germany quite extensively in a German history class I was taking at HSU,” said Reiner Guenther ’16, an agricultural economics major. “But of course you can only get to a certain level of understanding through words, pictures and videos. Going to Berlin was extremely powerful and probably the best history lesson I’ll ever receive.”

At the same time, three HSU cadets studied in Aggie-land, immersing themselves in all of the Corps of Cadets’ activities—even marching off the Quad in their own German uniforms before a football game. Having foreign students in College Station brings a global perspective to members of the Corps who haven’t been able to travel overseas. “That’s the beauty of these exchanges,” said Gen. Ramirez. “There’s great value in having international cadets here interacting with our cadets. It’s the same kind of learning that goes on as if our cadets were in their country with them.”

Nick Mogensen ’15 served as a “buddy” to a cadet when groups of South Korean ROTC students visited for three weeks each in 2014 and 2015. He gained an appreciation for the pressure under which those cadets live, with the threat of an invasion from North Korea always looming. “It is one thing to read a CNN news blurb about tensions between North and South Korea, and another to befriend a South Korean cadet over the course of three or four weeks. One minute you are discussing your hometown and hearing

about their family, and the next you are discussing the politics and foreign relations of South Korea,” said Mogensen, whose experience traveling abroad prompted him to apply for a master’s program at The Bush School of Government and Public Service, which he completed simultaneously with his undergraduate degree in international studies.

“A cadet’s global competence is more than what they learn in-country or in a classroom. The friendships that form as a result of an international experience greatly impact a cadet,” said Meredith Simpson ’03, assistant commandant for academics and international programs. “Whether they seek a military commission or a career in the private sector, these cadets build a network they can call upon later.”

The commandant recently set up an exchange with the Australian Defence Forces Academy, sending four Aggie cadets in the spring semester, and he hopes to establish the same with schools in Chile, Taiwan and possibly Mexico. He also would like to expand the program with South Korea. The South Korean ROTC leaders want to bring cadets for a third time in 2016, and Gen. Ramirez is eyeing May 2016 as a date when some of his cadets could visit Korea.

“Now I want our cadets to come to your country to see how you operate,” Gen. Ramirez told 34 South Korean cadets in a conference room in the Sanders Corps Center, after hearing what they’d learned after three weeks of living with Aggie cadets and completing a leadership course. “That will give our cadets the chance to learn about your program, your culture and the beauty of your country.” Gen. Ramirez explained his own connection to their country; not only did he serve in Korea but his father did as well, during the Korean War. “He was shot five times and spent 33 months as a prisoner of war,” he said. The Korean cadets gasped. “I’d like our cadets to see the importance of what we have done in Korea with our Korean partners,” he added.

Then Gen. Ramirez gathered for a photo with the cadets. “I’ll show this to my father,” he promised as he stood grinning, surrounded by smiling young Koreans, all with their thumbs raised. “Gig ’em!” they said in unison. 🎵

*To support the Corps of Cadets’
Global Leadership Initiative, contact:*

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mjennings@txamfoundation.com

To give online, visit give.am/CorpsGoGlobal.



Watch a video about the program at give.am/CadetsAbroad.



Each year the Texas A&M Foundation Trustees' Outstanding Student Award gives one graduating senior a jump-start in life.

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TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION
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MULLMANN@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM

For Minhtuan “Tuan” Nguyen ’14, pursuing an education was never about taking the path of least resistance. “To some people, *education* might be a word that feels like imprisonment,” Nguyen said. “To me, it signifies freedom, future and prosperity.”

Nguyen, who grew up in a Vietnamese immigrant family, always considered attending a top-notch institution like Texas A&M University a pipedream—until the day he walked the stage in Reed Arena, where Interim President Mark Hussey ’79 handed him a hard-earned mechanical engineering degree.

Nguyen, a December 2014 graduate, funded his education through scholarships, grants and income from internships. He received the ConocoPhillips Endowed Foundation Excellence Award, a Regents’ Scholarship and the George and Mary B. Lewis Endowed Scholarship, all funded through the Texas A&M Foundation.

His impressive academic record, outstanding leadership skills and trademark dedication inspired his selection as the 2015 recipient of the Texas A&M Foundation Trustees’ Outstanding Student Award. Nguyen is the third recipient of the honor, which annually awards an exceptional graduating student with \$2,500.

HARD WORK PAYS OFF

“What sold me on Texas A&M was how dedicated everyone is to the school and its traditions,” said Nguyen, who grew up in Richmond, Texas. After his first campus visit, he was so set on Aggieland that he cancelled planned tours of all

other universities, including The University of Texas at Austin.

While at Texas A&M, Nguyen founded the Texas A&M chapter of the Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, the first professional organization for Asian Americans on campus. Nguyen was also active in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers during his undergraduate career, serving as a mentor to underclassmen and assisting recruiting efforts in the Dwight Look College of Engineering by promoting mechanical engineering to prospective students.

“Tuan is one of those rare students who truly embodies a well-rounded approach and manner,” said Harry Hogan, associate professor of mechanical engineering. “The Society of Asian Scientists

and Engineers promotes professional development and collegiality among students, and is now a thriving organization with approximately 75 members due to Tuan’s leadership and personal efforts.”

Nguyen also completed several internships during his undergraduate career. He interned as a freshman for the Primary Sourcing Corp. in Houston and later secured two separate internships

with Shell Oil Co. Following his internships, Shell offered Nguyen a job: He is now employed as an associate pressure equipment engineer at the company’s branch in Deer Park, Texas.

“I want to help improve our nation’s energy dissipation,” said Nguyen, who dreams of becoming a subject matter expert in his field.

“We had many exceptional applicants for this award, but Tuan’s determination and enthusiasm stood out to us as we made our final decision,” said Van Taylor ’71, former chairman of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees. “He is an excellent example of the kind of student for whom this award was created.”

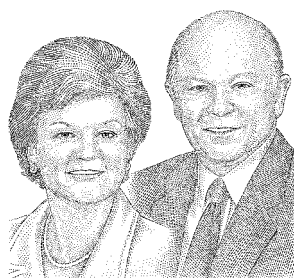
Nguyen plans to use the money he received to offset his cost of living while

A PARTING GIFT

working in Houston, and he hopes to eventually fund a scholarship supporting students of immigrant families.

“I will never forget my family’s Vietnamese roots, nor will I forget my Texas A&M experience, regardless of my career success,” he said. “I am grateful to the Foundation for this award.”

—BY CHRIS SCOGGINS ’15



Susanne and Melbern Glasscock ’59

Post-Graduation Boost

Created in 2012 by former Foundation Trustee Melbern Glasscock ’59 and his wife Susanne of Houston, the Trustees’ Outstanding Student Award recognizes an exceptional graduating student each year.

“It is my intention that this award will give these students a boost as

they move into the next stages of their lives after graduation,” Melbern said. “Susie and I believe strongly that investing in education and giving a young person a kick-start in life pays multiple dividends to society.”

Recipients of the award must have a minimum GPR of 3.0, demonstrate financial challenges, embody the university’s core values and have

served as a leader of one or more student organizations or service groups. To be eligible, applicants also must be a current or past recipient of a Foundation-supported scholarship.

Previous winners of the award are Shahrum Iqbal ’12 and Mollie Lastovica ’14.

A close-up, artistic photograph of a US dollar bill, focusing on the intricate patterns and textures of the paper. The image is slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth and focus on the fine details of the currency. The colors are muted, with shades of green, brown, and cream.

Professor James Kolarik spearheaded an innovative commercial banking program in Mays Business School that helps students cash in on success.

"Bankers are the nuts and bolts of American finance," said Alexandra Washington '13, a commercial real estate analyst at Bank of Texas in Dallas. "If banks aren't making loans, small businesses can't start or grow. That's what I like about my job—we are enhancing communities."

Washington is a recent graduate of the Commercial Banking Program at Texas A&M University's Mays Business School. The Department of Finance program prepares students for the demands

of a complex career through specialized coursework, hands-on experience and collaboration with industry sponsors.

Now in its fourth year, the Commercial Banking Program is the largest program of its kind in the state. "It's the right time to be focused on banking," said Program Director James Kolari, JP Morgan Chase Professor of Finance. "The population in Texas is expanding, and it's important to the future of our state that our financial sector be strong."

With a blossoming economy comes increasing demand for talent from the banking sector. That's why the program is essential. "Training these young bankers is important," Kolari said. "We are helping local businesses grow and increasing the standard of living. That benefits everybody."

"Strong banks create a stronger financial system in Texas," he added. "Banking is the bedrock of every community."

By CRYSTAL HOUSTON

BUILDING BETTER BANKERS



"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."

Benjamin Franklin

Success that speaks for itself

Having taught finance at Texas A&M for 35 years, Kolari's teaching philosophy is that students need a balance of technical skills and hands-on practical training to apply those skills. Previously a bank policy expert at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, he came to Texas A&M to conduct independent bank research and teach banking and financial markets classes. His main research interests are banking, financial analysis, statistical modeling and securities markets.

"Dr. Kolari is one of the few professors I've kept in contact with after graduation," Washington said. "What sets him apart is his passion to make sure his students secure jobs. He constantly reminds alumni to consider Aggie students when making hiring decisions."

Washington described Kolari as approachable, well-informed and always on the lookout for opportunities to enhance his students' experience.

"Don't let his easy demeanor fool you, though," she said. "He's knowledgeable about financial markets and the banking industry, and passionate about making a great program for the state of Texas and for his students."

Kolari's concern for students led him to start the Commercial Banking Program in 2009 in cooperation with finance department head Dr. Sorin Sorescu and Robert Messer '79, executive vice president and CFO at American National Bank of Texas. After the U.S. financial collapse and economic downturn, Kolari witnessed students struggling to find internships and jobs. The program solves that problem by creating a pipeline for banking students to industry partners. Sponsoring banks create the program's curriculum to ensure well-trained students are an asset to their employers immediately after graduating.

The program has grown exponentially. In just a few short years, it has mushroomed from 10 banks and 16 students to 31 banks and 72 students. It boasts a 100 percent placement rate for

students seeking employment in the banking sector.

"Our vision is for this to be the premier banking program in Texas and one of the top programs in the United States," Kolari said. "However, we don't want to grow too big too fast. We want to maintain the highest quality for our students and for the banks."

Vickers '00 (Comerica Bank) and Steve York '82 (Broadway Bank). These bankers play an integral role in support and regularly invite banks across the state to become corporate sponsors. Membership fees from sponsors cover administrative costs. As Kolari noted, "There are many Aggies in significant banking positions that have answered the call."



More than Deposits and Withdrawals

From the onset, the Commercial Banking Program has been a partnership between Texas A&M former students and the banking community. For example, the program's recruiting committee chair is Dwight Garey '67 (Amegy Bank), while the advisory board includes Pat Brockett '88 (Bank of Texas), Chris Cowan '95 (Texas Capital Bank), David LePori '81 (Frost Bank), Bobby Morgan '05 (JP Morgan Chase), Jarred



Leadership is provided by various advisory board members that work together to develop and build the program. They meet twice a year to discuss admission, curriculum, internships, men-



Professor James Kolari (left), director of the Commercial Banking Program at Texas A&M, is training young bankers to address the needs of a growing financial system in the state. Geoff Greenwade '83 (top) is president and CEO of Green Bank in Houston, a partner of the Mays program. Kolari and Assistant Program Director Sally Guyton (bottom left) are preparing students like Gregg Shoope '15, Katherine Hepler '15 and Ryan Yeager '15 to meet the demands of a complex banking career through specialized coursework.

toring and other program details. In the spring semester, executives from member banks lecture on campus. The professionals give presentations on a range of real-world scenarios involving loans, treasury cash management, regulation, community banking and other topics.

"Banking is much more than deposits and withdrawals," Kolari said. "We train students in many areas so that they are competitive when they graduate, and we give them a better understanding of where they want to direct their careers.

"When students are better informed about the banking industry, those who are not a good fit self-select out of the recruitment process. This streamlining is of enormous value to our partners," Kolari continued. "Through the Commercial Banking Program, banks have access to top talent with less screening required."

It's a two-way Street

Advisory board members praise the program and the talented employees it generates.

Geoff Greenwade '83 is president and CEO of Green Bank in Houston. Prior to working with the Commercial Banking Program at Texas A&M, Greenwade's bank never considered hiring students right out of college. Today, it does.

Commercial Banking Program interns work on financial statements, assist in underwriting loans, shadow commercial lenders on customer calls and attend credit meetings. "We treat them like a new hire," Greenwade said. "We give them real tasks and training, even though we only have them for 10 weeks. We prepare them to enter the workforce immediately after graduation."

In addition to the immediate benefit of new hires for a bank, the program impacts the future of banking in the state. "Ultimately we want to be judged on placement and how many of our graduates are leaders in the industry in 10 to 15 years," Greenwade said. "We are creating future leaders for Texas banking, one day at a time."

Messer, who chairs the advisory board for the Commercial Banking Program, agrees with Greenwade. "Of all the changes and challenges facing the banking industry, the No. 1 challenge is the acquisition of top talent," he said. "There are fewer people entering this industry today. As we think long term about the health of the industry, we recognize that building a talent base is essential. This program helps us do that."

What's on the Horizon?

"We've enjoyed a lot of success, but we are not standing still," Kolari said. "We are improving our program in every dimension. Banks work with us hand-in-hand to create and meet future goals for our program."

Kolari plans to open the program to other departments in the business school. "Banks need all kinds of talent. Their hiring needs are diverse," he said.

Private support would expand the program and enhance educational excellence. With this in mind, Cindy '82 and Russell Marshall '81 established an endowed scholarship in 2014 to support students majoring in finance who participate in the Commercial Banking Program. The first scholarship will be awarded in 2016, and a planned gift of life insurance will grow the Marshall endowment following their lifetimes.

Kolari believes the program is well-situated for continued growth. "This is a new model for business education, and it's challenging because bankers have high expectations," Kolari said. "But so do we."

For Kolari, success isn't measured in numbers. "I love to see the faces of students when they are offered an internship or a job. It is incredibly rewarding to see that their education matters to them and that they are happy about where it's taking them in life.

"I want my students to be successful in many ways, not just in their job. I want them to have the total package," he said. ☞

To learn more about supporting the Commercial Banking Program in Mays Business School, contact:

Brian Bishop '91
Senior Director of Development
Texas A&M Foundation
(800) 392-3310 or (979) 862-3615
bbishop@txamfoundation.com

Visit give.am/SupportCommercialBanking to give online.

Texas A&M University chemist

James Pennington looks forward to summer as much as any school kid, to the extent that he plans his calendar a year in advance. After all, it's for the children.

For the past seven years, Pennington has coordinated one of Texas A&M's most popular educational outreach programs, the Chemistry Road Show. A free public service funded by the Department of Chemistry and the College of Science in partnership with The Dow Chemical Co. and Shell Oil Co., the Road Show sparks public interest in exploring the wonders of science, regardless of age or experience level.

Each summer and on occasional days during the school year, Pennington treks across Texas in a 2011 Chevy Express cargo model van donated by Dow and custom-outfitted to meet the program's transportation and safety needs. With Pennington in the driver's seat, the Road Show has expanded from about 30 performances seen by roughly 6,000 students in the Brazos Valley in 2008 to 83 shows reaching more than 22,000 students statewide in 2014. He logged 7,000 miles last summer alone, spreading scientific goodwill to supplement summer enrichment programs, library reading programs and scout camps. He also appeared at museums and outreach programs held on the Texas A&M campus.

Pennington, an instructional assistant professor of chemistry and 2015 recipient of The Association of Former Students' Distinguished Achievement Award in Teaching, said he's constantly thinking of new ways to use the inherent properties of science to engage and inspire the next generation of leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), whether he's teaching organic chemistry to non-chemistry majors or expanding the Road Show.

"One of the things I always tell people is that in terms of science, the road show is not the most valuable program within the Department of Chemistry," Pennington said. "The research and science that is underway here has a much more positive effect on the state of Texas

and its people, but sometimes it's harder to relate to complex research and scientific concepts."

Every bit as colorful as the trademark tie-dyed lab coat he dons for each show, Pennington took rein of the Road Show in 2008 following the death of its founder, Texas A&M chemist John L. Hogg. In the mid-1980s, Hogg envision-

chemical wonders turn ordinary objects into exciting learning experiences. Pennington has more than a few tricks up his sleeve, including showing iron burning as brightly as the sun; producing a genie from a bottle; and solidifying a cup of water by adding a pinch of dry powder—all reminders that science is stimulating.



Inspiration and education react during the Chemistry Road Show.

ed the show's pioneering concept of enabling the public to experience science in basic and entertaining ways within the comfortable confines of a familiar educational environment.

During each show, audience members are dazzled by colorful reactions and polymers growing before their eyes as

Miles and Miles to Go

Although Pennington is licensed to present the Road Show anywhere in Texas, there are notable absences he'd like to correct in West and South Texas.

"Rural and socioeconomically challenged schools and districts don't always have the money for the curriculum and

By Shana Hutchins '93



Science in motion

Each summer Professor James Pennington treks across Texas in a custom-fitted cargo van to spread scientific goodwill and supplement summer enrichment programs at area schools.

safety training the show offers,” Pennington said. “Beyond whetting appetites, we could give teachers additional resources as well as points of contact for potential supplements and possible supplies.”

Pennington is also identifying targets beyond Texas through a distance-learning-driven collaboration involving

the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum and its educational outreach program within the Annenberg Presidential Conference Center. In 2014, the Road Show reached an estimated 4,500 students from 13 states via live-streaming and videoconferencing services provided by the library.

In addition to campus partners and donors like Dow and Shell, Pennington credits about two dozen Texas A&M undergraduate students who volunteer annually to ensure the show’s future. Most volunteer at three or more events, from setting up and repacking to working with Pennington during the show. In the future, Pennington would like to expand available opportunities for students by providing a service-learning option, possibly via a flexible, non-credit certificate program. He would also like to explore the potential of an endowment to ensure that the Road Show would be funded and self-sufficient in perpetuity.

“We greatly appreciate the annual generosity of our corporate partners, but our hope is to inspire an endowed fund that we can rely on for future programs, versus cobbling a budget together each year,” Pennington said. “It would be an investment in the future of the program and the future of Texas A&M’s vital role in science education and outreach.”

The program presents Pennington with an opportunity to transform from teacher to performer.

“I’m a ham,” Pennington said. “I enjoy getting in front of a crowd, and I enjoy seeing the enthusiasm and the excitement. I hope it’s educational but also motivational. I just want to remind kids that science lets them do some pretty cool stuff.”

To support the Chemistry Road Show or other College of Science educational outreach programs, contact:

Michael Morelius '98
Director of Development
Texas A&M Foundation
(800) 392-3310 or (979) 847-9218
mmorelius@txamfoundation.com

Give online at
give.am/SupportChemRoadShow.



Watch a video about the Chemistry Road Show
at give.am/ChemRoadShowVideo.

Vital to the preservation of the Aggie spirit, the development of the student body and the unity of the Aggie family worldwide, the Memorial Student Center (MSC) embodies an immortal banner of everything “Aggie.”

In 2009, the Texas A&M Foundation began the *Our MSC* capital campaign—an endeavor to raise \$20 million in private funding for a renovation that expanded the MSC to accommodate an ever-growing student body and updated its facilities to comply with American with Disabilities Act regulations.

Six years after its initiation, the campaign reached its goal in February 2015 through a \$2 million gift from Kaye and Steve Horn ’79 to name the flag room.

The room contains flags representing Texas, the U.S., the ROTC and the Corps of Cadets; serves as a gathering place for camaraderie; and functions as

ship, service and communication skills, he immediately got involved with MSC student organizations.

As a senior, Steve served as chairman of the MSC Great Issues Committee, a group that presented programs on social and economic issues of local, state, national and international importance to the Texas A&M community. He was also on the MSC Council. “I spent a lot of time in the MSC student programs of-fice. It seemed like I lived there,” said Steve, a petroleum engineering graduate.

During his time at Texas A&M, Steve was mentored by the legendary Wayne Stark ’39, who played an integral role not only in overseeing the construction of the original MSC but also in the development and implementation of student programs such as the Opera and Performing Arts Society and the Student Conference on National Affairs. Both of these organizations continue to bring

~ Aggies and Beyond

The MSC impacts the lives of Aggies and non-Aggies alike, as testified by Steve’s wife Kaye, who was introduced to Texas A&M after marrying Steve in 1992.

“We’ve always enjoyed spending time in the MSC and in particular, the flag room,” Kaye said. “I admire the premise that the MSC stands for in honoring soldiers that sacrificed their lives for our freedoms. Steve and I are both big history fans, and we recognize that it was those individuals that provided our liberties and our strong country.”

The Horns’ gift to the MSC Renovation and Expansion Project is not their first contribution to Texas A&M. They are longtime supporters of the Dwight Look College of Engineering and the Department of Petroleum Engineering. Since Steve was a President’s Endowed Scholar, the couple established two President’s Endowed Scholarships through

the Cherry

A HOUSTON COUPLE’S \$2 MILLION GIFT COMPLETES THE MEMORIAL STUDENT CENTER FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN.

By Sarah Skinner ’15

a campus living room. With regal furniture, elegant lighting, high ceilings and the sounds of soothing music emanating from its grand piano, it’s no surprise that the room is an MSC hallmark and a preferred choice for meetings, napping and studying among students.

~ More than a Building

Steve Horn first stepped foot on the Texas A&M University campus in 1975. Ambitious and determined, he understood that his future success would necessitate an education inside and outside of the classroom. To develop his leader-

ship, service and communication skills, he immediately got involved with MSC student organizations.

“Considering I was an engineering major, I greatly benefitted from my involvement in MSC programs and my relationship with Wayne Stark. I developed other interests and acquired leadership skills,” said Steve. “Wayne and the MSC experience were responsible for my attending Harvard’s MBA program, once I realized that managerial leadership was more interesting to me long term than being a practicing engineer.”

the Texas A&M Foundation. They also support the Stevenson Companion Animal Life-Care Center at the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences and The Association of Former Students.

“Texas A&M has a student body full of well-mannered and hard-working students,” said Kaye. “Steve and I attended school with scholarships and assistance, so we are paying it back while also paying it forward. This is our way of expressing gratitude for our education and taking to heart the MSC’s slogan—‘be part of something.’” ~

IN ADDITION TO KAYE AND STEVE HORN '79, THE TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF THE DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE *OUR MSC* CAMPAIGN. FOR A COMPLETE LIST, VISIT GIVE.AM/MSCDONORS.



Kaye and Steve Horn '79 gave a \$2 million gift to name the flag room and close the *Our MSC* campaign.



on Top



NAMING OPPORTUNITIES ARE STILL AVAILABLE IN THE RENOVATED MSC. TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:

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REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF MAJOR GIFTS
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1 This is the first article in our new feature series "Trailblazers." It's not an exaggeration: Aggies are everywhere. And some use their education and experience to generate an awe-inspiring maroon ripple effect. These stories are about people whose impact extends beyond Texas A&M University. With courage as a compass, the paths they have forged multiply into the distance. And the limits of their determination are yet to be seen.

These are the trailblazers.



Between the first launch on April 12, 1981, and the final landing on July 21, 2011, NASA's space shuttle fleet—Columbia, Challenger, Discovery, Atlantis and Endeavour—pushed the bounds of discovery and set high marks of achievement and endurance through 30 years of missions.

As June Scobee '83 sat on the ivory sofa in the living room of her Chattanooga town-home, she draped a gold chain across her neck.

"I just returned from the gym," she apologized. "I had time to shower and dress, but I still need to put on my necklace."

Apart from her diploma and a large pine bookcase she purchased in Spring, Texas, Scobee's home bears little indication of her Lone Star State connection. She's not situated on acres of ranchland nor does she festoon her walls with Texas stars or A&M pennants. But the petite 73-year-old has a rich Texas history, one that took her from San Antonio to the Johnson Space Center to Aggieland.

Although she was born in Alabama, if you ask where she is from, her response is adamant: "I'm from Texas. Period."

"Everyone who works with my bio always wants to put that I'm from Alabama, but I only spent two years of my life there," she added.

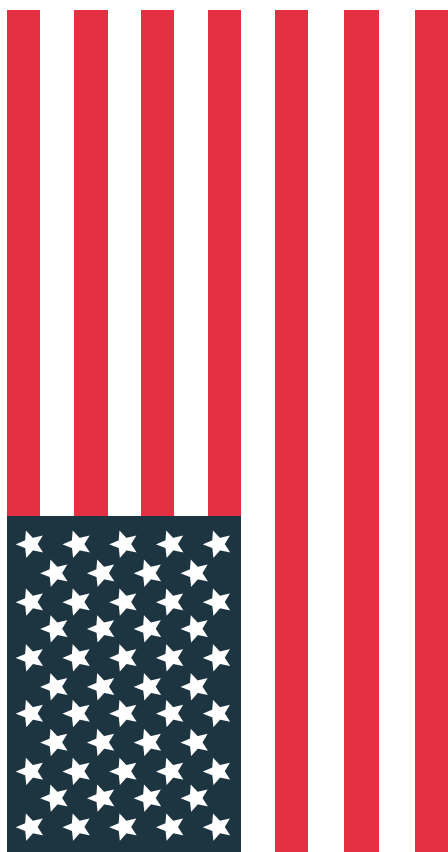
Much like the subject of her home state, many other aspects of Scobee's life are composed of blurred boundaries. Her time of destitution bled into her success. Her commitment to faith comingles with her passion for science. Her private life abuts her very public persona. And one of her life's greatest tragedies—the loss of her first husband—dovetails with some of her most significant accomplishments.

She is the widow of Dick Scobee, commander of the Space Shuttle Challenger, which exploded 73 seconds after takeoff on Jan. 28, 1986.

Stars in Her Eyes

As a child, Scobee (then June Kent) would gaze into the night sky and name the constellations. She'd often wish on stars, praying to God as she marveled at the vastness of the universe.

Her family life was tumultuous—her parents struggled financially, and their marriage ultimately failed as a result of her mother's ongoing battle with schizophrenia. The eldest of four children, Scobee was thrust into the role of caregiver for her siblings, adapting to a frequently changing environment while striving to be a rock for her family.



By Monika Blackwell

Permission to

The courageous ascent of June Scobee

Launch

These experiences no doubt shaped her into the woman she is today—tender and affectionate, but also feisty and resilient.

Guided by two books—the Bible and Norman Vincent Peale’s “The Power of Positive Thinking”—as a child, Scobee created her own version of the ABCs as a device to get through her tough periods. A stood for *attitude*, B for *belief* and C for *courage*. “I lived by those words,” she said. “And as I lived them, positive things started happening for me.”

Perhaps the start of those “positive things” was her introduction to Dick Scobee, a high school boy with a letterman jacket and sky-high aspirations. The pair met in San Antonio when she was 16 and married shortly thereafter. “We saved each other,” she said.

Their family expanded as the Scobees welcomed first a daughter, Kathie, and then a son, Rich. The couple worked to earn their college degrees and while Dick pursued becoming a pilot, his wife’s teaching career took off.

“I wasn’t going to be a great scientist or an attorney,” said Scobee, “but I knew I could touch the future with these youngsters, that I could inspire them to go into these fields and be the best they could be.” She would go on to teach all grade levels and nearly all subject areas.

When Dick Scobee was selected as an astronaut for NASA, the family moved from California—where he attended the Aerospace Research Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base—to Houston’s Johnson Space Center. The relocation gave Scobee the opportunity to start graduate school. Each week, she made the 120-mile journey to College Station to earn a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University’s College of Education and Human Development.

“That was a tough time,” she said, reminiscing on the early ’80s when she was attempting to bolster her own career while still supporting a family. “I

was ready to quit, when my teenage son and daughter gave me this little plaque that said ‘Dr. June Scobee’ and said, ‘You’re going to disappoint us if you don’t finish your degree.’”

Her family’s “permission to finish” was a game-changer. Many years later, she realized that this time apart from her children allowed them to spend precious time with their father.

While at Texas A&M, Scobee would teach school and attend classes in the same semester, and she found great support in her faculty advisers, particularly William Nash, now a professor emeritus in the Department of Educational Psychology. With Nash’s guidance, she helped develop a space science program through the Texas A&M Gifted and Talented Institute. The institute gave gifted teenagers a glimpse at career possibilities through hands-on experiences. Scobee remained active in the program even after she completed her studies.

“June wanted to create every opportunity she could for young people to learn about space science,” said Nash. “She has a strong sense of curiosity and courage in her convictions.”

Scobee views this snapshot of her life from a larger perspective. Her graduate school experience, she believes, “gave me the confidence to talk about turning the tragedy of the Challenger disaster into something positive.”

“June wanted to create every opportunity she could for young people to learn about space science.”

—William Nash, professor emeritus, Department of Educational Psychology

In 1983, Scobee graduated just one year before her husband flew in space for the first time. Following the successful mission, NASA selected Dick Scobee as commander of the Challenger flight, later dubbed the Teacher in Space Project. June Scobee would spend the following months getting to know the crew members and their families, and her

passion for education inspired a close alliance with Christa McAuliffe, the New Hampshire teacher chosen to conduct lessons from zero gravity.

“From her arrival in Houston, June took Christa under her wing, making sure she came for home-cooked meals, and they’d just hang around and talk,”





June Scobee '83 enjoys hearing from students who pursued a STEM profession because they were inspired by an experience at the Challenger Center.

O-rings that sealed the joints of the shuttle's solid rocket boosters failed, causing the shuttle to burst into a ball of smoke and plummet into the sea.

A Eureka Moment

The loss of her husband and the six other crewmembers left Scobee reeling. But, "I felt responsible for the families, and continued to be the mother hen of the group," she said, remembering her ABCs to find the courage to help others while mourning her own deep loss. "We wanted the world to remember not how they died, but how they lived and what they were passionate about."

Recalling the space science program she directed through Texas A&M, Scobee worked with the families to set up the Challenger Center for Space Science Education to continue the crew's educational mission. She confided in then Vice President George H.W. Bush

about the project. Bush encouraged Scobee to expand the Challenger Center's board of directors to include national representation, advising her to treat the experience as a day in front of class.

Today, the organization operates nearly 50 Challenger Learning Centers in the U.S., Canada, South Korea and the U.K. The program reaches more than 500,000 students annually.

Scobee speaks to groups around the country about the importance of STEM education and taking risks in the name of discovery. She remains on the board of the Challenger Center, serving as its founding chairman. In 2011, she was named an outstanding alumnus by Texas A&M. She also wrote the book, "Silver Linings: My Life Before and After Challenger 7."

Dick Scobee and the Space Shuttle Challenger will always be an inalienable part of her identity, but Scobee has built

a new life for herself. She has been remarried to retired Army Lt. Gen. Don Rodgers for more than 25 years (she now goes by June Scobee Rodgers). Together the couple has nine grandchildren.

"He's the sweetest man," Scobee said of Rodgers as she touched two intertwined hearts on her necklace.

"It was a golden anniversary present to celebrate 50 years of marriage—25-plus years to Dick and 25 years to Don," she said with a smile. "It stands for both my loves."

It's the perfect symbol for the many intersections of Scobee's life: All of the links fitting together in their own way, all playing a part of the woman she is today. 🌸

To support the College of Education and Human Development, contact:

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(800) 392-3310 or (979) 847-8655
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To give to the Francis R. "Dick" Scobee Memorial Scholarship fund, visit give.am/SupportScobee. To locate a Challenger Center near you, visit give.am/ChallengerCenters.



Listen to a related podcast at give.am/ScobeePodcast.

The Mission Continues

The year of his death, friends of Dick Scobee set up a memorial scholarship in his honor in the College of Education and Human Development. Scobee had been a member of the college's development council, and on his first mission in space, he carried a medallion from the college. Scobee provided encouragement to Texas A&M students, even arranging a special tour of the Johnson Space Center. The Francis R. "Dick" Scobee Memorial Scholarship, created through the Texas A&M Foundation, supports students committed to teaching math or science. The college is actively seeking to grow the endowment and support more students who aspire to teach in STEM fields. This effort coincides with the 30th anniversary of the Challenger accident.

ONE GOVER

It all started when visually impaired student Kaitlyn Kellermeyer '17 spoke to her longtime friend and student senator Joseph Hood '17 about the difficulties of navigating campus.

Not long after, Hood realized he could devise a solution—he could write a bill.

He and Kellermeyer worked with administrators, building proctors and the visually impaired community to understand the most difficult areas to navigate and coauthored a bill that will result in placing wind chimes at 10 campus locations—both near door entrances and in open plazas—to assist visually impaired students.

“Achievements like this are a great illustration of the political process,” said Amy Loyd, assistant director of the Student Government Association (SGA) at Texas A&M University. “The most effective student government is one that tackles day-to-day issues affecting the student body.”

POLITICS IN ACTION

Much of the hustle and bustle that happens in Room 126 of the John J. Koldus Student Services Building—SGA headquarters—is the result of the political process in action. In this urgency-tinged environment, where every day holds new possibilities for student-led action on a wide variety of issues, SGA members brainstorm and write bills, review legislation and respond to student body concerns.

Any questions they might have—such as how to correctly file a bill, submit an appeal or determine an election violation—are directed to Loyd, who can usually be found sitting amidst the backdrop of her office’s floor-to-ceiling Hello Kitty memorabilia.

“The fact is I don’t remember not liking her,” Loyd said in reference to the Hello Kitty-



NMENT INDIVISIBLE

ROUGHLY 1,800 PARTICIPANTS IN TEXAS A&M'S STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION TACKLE ISSUES LARGE AND SMALL TO DRIVE STUDENT-LED CHANGE.

By Dunae Crenwelge '15



Joseph Benigno '16 (second from right) reacts to winning student body president for the 2015-2016 year. Election results for new Student Government Association officers are announced each February in front of the Sul Ross statue.

Measurable Moments

SGA'S RECENT HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ In 2011, the College Station City Council introduced Proposition 1, which proposed changing its voting cycle from November to May—when significantly less students reside in College Station. An SGA campaign educated students that were registered to vote in College Station about the potential effects the proposition could have on their ability to voice opinions to the city council. Proposition 1 later failed and the City of College Station continues to hold its elections in November.
- ◆ When mandatory meal plans became required for on-campus students in 2013, SGA ensured that a variety of meal plan choices and fair prices remained.
- ◆ In 2013-2014, the Student Senate passed a bill requesting that the plaques displayed on O.R. Simpson Drill Field honoring Aggies who passed away in World War I be replaced. Many of the plaques were broken or damaged by weather. New plaques were ordered and installed in fall 2014.
- ◆ In 2014, SGA requested that professors refrain from having tests or assignments due on the day of Bonfire Remembrance so that students could attend the early morning ceremony without fear of missing out on valuable sleep or study time.

themed coffee cups, pens, toys and even a microwave and fridge that illuminate her office in a pinkish light. “I have Hello Kitty artifacts from five continents. Most were given to me by students when they were trying to butter me up for something!”

As adviser to the Texas A&M student body president, his or her cabinet, four executive commissioners and a staff that manages about 1,800 Aggies involved in student government, Loyd provides guidance for the organization.

“But make no mistakes, I’m not the one making decisions,” Loyd said. “I love what student-led means at Texas A&M. Our members decide their agendas, set forth their priorities and strive to create an environment that both stimulates and enacts change.”

THREE UNITED BRANCHES

Founded in 1947 and modeled after the United States government, the SGA is composed of executive, legislative and judicial branches that share a constitution.

The student body president, elected each February, comprises the executive branch. As the face of SGA and the student body, the president is involved in speaking engagements across the state and Texas A&M administrative actions relating to the student body.

“I came into office with three goals,” said 2014-2015 Student Body President Kyle Kelly ’14, whose tenure ended in April. “I wanted to improve the tradition, spirit and core values at Texas A&M; raise the integrity of SGA; and enhance the Aggie experience.”

Under Kelly’s administration, the number of Silver Taps letters written for families by students more than doubled. At the suggestion of Texas A&M administrators, he also helped create a task force to raise awareness about sexual assault and prevention on campus.

“Our administration makes great decisions on behalf of students every day,” Kelly said. “But to have student representation and a voice on campus is critical. We keep abreast of large and small issues affecting the student pop-

ulation, and many of those are addressed in our senate.”

The Texas A&M Student Senate makes up the legislative branch. Eighty senators representing the student body convene every other Wednesday during the academic year to hear student and faculty opinion, debate legislation and vote for bills and resolutions concerning a broad spectrum of campus issues, such as dining, transportation, parking and student housing.

SGA’s judicial branch decides questions regarding interpretation, legislation and elections to ensure balance in SGA operations. Through involvement in any of the three branches, students develop leadership skills such as time and people management, communication, problem solving and budgeting.

“SGA offers opportunities for students to practice these skills with their peers, university and system administrators, community leaders and state politi-

cians,” said Rusty Thompson ’85, director of student activities.

IMPACTING CAMPUS AND BEYOND

In addition to the three branches, students can participate in SGA through one of 14 committees, including Aggie Muster, CARPOOL, Replant, Fish Aides, Alternative Spring Break, The Big Event and Traditions Council, among others.

“SGA committees coordinate programs and events like community-wide service projects, leadership conferences and traditions like Silver Taps and Muster that reinforce and ensure the continuity of Aggie values,” said Thompson.

Another option for involvement beyond the Texas A&M campus exists in SEC in DC, an annual student lobbying conference for all 14 SEC schools. Student representatives spend a week in Washington, D.C., lobbying for higher education issues to members of Congress and other state and federal officials.



"Opportunities like this give members experience in a wider process of government and public service," said Loyd.

ENSURING SGA VITALITY

To fund its activities, programs and operations, SGA conducts a number of fundraisers annually under the direction of its development commission.

One such initiative, the Path to Success Brick Endowment Campaign, was the brainchild of former Student Body President Nic Taunton '07. Launched in 2006, the campaign is one fundraiser of many that jointly seek to create a \$1 million endowment for SGA at the Texas A&M Foundation, which will provide sustainable funding for its operations and decrease its reliance on student fees.

The campaign gives students, former students, families, organizations and friends of Texas A&M the opportunity to purchase a customized inscribed brick in the plaza outside of the Koldus building. Since the campaign's launch, the SGA has sold all 430 8-by-8-inch white bricks and 750 4-by-8-inch maroon bricks. About 545 maroon bricks remain for sale at \$150 each.

Aggies typically purchase bricks as gifts for graduation, birthdays and holidays or to commemorate achievements and legacies. Duplicates may be purchased for \$50 and companies may

match donations made by employees. Multiple bricks purchased together are given adjacent placement on the plaza.

"These bricks allow Aggies to leave a lasting legacy at Texas A&M, while also supporting an organization that strives to make Texas A&M a better place for all current and future Aggies," said Gracie Wood '15, development commissioner.

To supplement money raised from the brick campaign, the development commission constantly evaluates other fundraising ideas with a low start-up cost. A new talent show and silent auction held this spring, Aggies Got Talent, raised more than \$3,000 for the SGA endowment. When the endowment reaches its \$1 million goal (its current value is approximately \$205,000), interest from the endowment will be used to support SGA programs and branches, thereby eliminating some student fees.

Currently, every Texas A&M student pays \$1 annually in fees to the SGA operating budget. This roughly \$50,000 is then appropriated by the student senate to SGA committees and branches. The SGA receives additional funding from the University Advancement Fee.

"If we could raise \$1 million for our endowment, we would forgo the \$50,000 that we take from student fees, and that money could be redirected to other student programs," said Wood.

NO CONTRIBUTION TOO SMALL

In everything it does, SGA strives to be a model government. Loyd takes seriously the fact that these students are, in many cases, the world's future public servants.

"One thing I impart to our members is that government and public service are what you make of them," Loyd said. "It doesn't have to be what is on TV, with conflict, negativity or the type of mudslinging that makes headlines. It's important that our students understand that public service is about getting down to your roots and helping those closest to you—your community—first. No contribution is too small."

Wood, who is entering law school this fall to pursue a career focusing on family and child advocacy, firmly believes that SGA provides fulfilling experiences for students. "I learned how to work with people who have different opinions and views than me, as well as how to collaborate on a team and delegate tasks," she said. "Everyone in SGA wants to leave Texas A&M a better place than when they arrived, and I think we do accomplish that each year."

For years to come, the sounds of wind chimes will echo that fact, serving as a gentle reminder that one conversation can spur change. ♪

To learn more about supporting the Student Government Association and its committees, contact:

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Regional Director of Major Gifts
Texas A&M Foundation
(800) 392-3310 or (979) 845-7558
cmunson@txamfoundation.com

The next brick order deadline for the December 2015 installation is in October. Visit brick.tamu.edu for order information and directions.

To give to the SGA endowment online, visit give.am/SupportSGA.

"I LEARNED HOW TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIFFERENT OPINIONS THAN ME."

—Gracie Wood '15, Student Government Association development commissioner

Clockwise from top left: Development Commissioner Gracie Wood '15 learned leadership and service skills through her SGA involvement. Amy Loyd, assistant director of the SGA, provides guidance for roughly 1,800 Aggies involved in student government. Student Body President Kyle Kelly '14, whose tenure ended in April, helped create a task force to raise awareness about sexual assault and prevention on campus during his term.

While the organization receives many small donations and substantial commitments from Aggie moms' clubs, the SGA has yet to receive an endowment-level gift of \$25,000 or more to fund its operations.

Spirit READER SURVEY

During fall 2014, our editorial staff submitted questions to *you*, our readers, to gain insight into how *Spirit* is perceived and to use as input for continuous improvement. We appreciate your feedback. Here are some highlights:

1,234

RESPONSES (received via email)

“It is important to me to see Texas A&M University prosper and gain more respect academically and athletically. The Texas A&M Foundation is a tremendous tool to achieve the acceptance of its programs and students nationally. I respect and admire the leadership of the Foundation and believe it is a key cog in national recognition for Texas A&M’s programs and research.”

— MELVIN MALTZ ’47

“*Spirit* helps me stay connected since I live out of state.”

— KIMBERLY WEITKAMP ’93

We listened.

We will continue producing Spirit in print three times per year, but have plans for an enhanced digital option and a redesigned look with some new content.

We will keep telling great Aggie stories and recognizing the generosity of our donors and the impact of their gifts.

We are always interested in hearing your ideas for stories in Spirit. If you have a compelling Aggie story—or if you have interest in writing a guest column with an Aggie angle—please contact us at info@txamfoundation.com.

PERCENTAGE of respondents from class years
1960s, 1970s and 1980s

70%

PERCENTAGE of readers who say they are interested in guest columns written by Aggie former students, current students, faculty and donors

92%



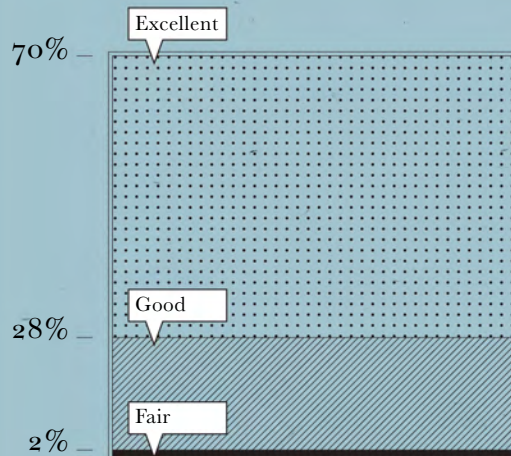
“Well, it’s the name *Spirit*... that’s the unique and thriving tradition that this university gives and hopefully will always radiate.”

—JAMES MORTENSEN '48

More than half of readers say: “The primary purpose of my donations to Texas A&M is to advance Texas A&M toward the future,” while 45 percent of readers say that “The primary purpose of my donations is to preserve its traditions.”

98 percent of readers rate the overall quality of *Spirit* as excellent/good.

OVERALL PUBLICATION QUALITY (reader rating)



Opportunity

By Dr. Darrell Dromgoole

Wendy Bishop is the first AgriLife Extension Service county agent to hold an endowed position. She was hired in January as the 4-H program assistant for DeWitt County, where she is in charge of implementing educational programs for youth.



Getting Down to Your Roots

HOW ONE FAMILY IS INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF THEIR COMMUNITY

Yoakum, Texas, is a town of fewer than 6,000 residents, but this number was even smaller when I was a kid. Growing up in a tight-knit community, you learn which people you can count on, and you find special people who make a lifelong impression on you — people like the Mudds.

I've known the Mudds since I was a little boy. J.E. Mudd's family competed with mine in the cattle marketing business, but despite their professional rivalry, my dad and J.E. were good friends. J.E. has always been as honest as the day is long. As my granddaddy used to say, "If J.E. says the chicken dips snuff, look for the can under its wing."

J.E. and his wife of 71 years, Tillie, raised five children—Jimmy '69, Janice '72, Phyllis, Eunice '91 and Dennis '85. They focused on teaching their children the importance of hard work and putting them through college. Providing for their children in the 1960s and 1970s meant living off of the land as much as possible. For food to reach the table, the Mudds taught their children about tilling soil, planting seeds, gathering eggs and cooking from scratch.

J.E. graduated from Texas A&M University in 1943 with a degree in agricultural economics, and four of the five Mudd children continued his Aggie legacy (as well as a large num-

ber of grandchildren). Dennis, who graduated with a civil engineering degree, was a good friend of mine during my studies at Texas A&M. Like his dad, Dennis has an incredible work ethic. He is also one of the most kind-hearted people I've ever known, someone who gives generously of himself to help others.

During Aggie football games, Dennis and his wife Jamie often come to stay with my wife and me in College Station. Outspoken about the importance of teaching today's youth to work with their hands, Dennis has said, "You have to get outside and work and ask questions. It's not about looking at a computer screen. It's about getting out and actually doing it."

In November 2013 on the weekend of the Mississippi State game, Dennis and I were sitting at my dining room table talking about the 20x20 Initiative, the goal of which is to fund 20 endowed positions for agents within Texas A&M AgriLife Extension by 2020. Knowing his passion for sharing



Tillie and J.E. Mudd '43 taught their children the importance of hard work and the value of education. To honor their parents, the Mudds' children endowed a gift to support a county agent position.

like the DeWitt County Agent AgriLife Extension Endowment will allow us to expand our program, giving us financial flexibility and security. Programs like 20x20 will touch the lives of many young people and improve the communities they live in. It is not an exaggeration to say that they will have a resounding impact on the future of our great state. I'm grateful that people like the Mudds believe that as well, and I hope that others will also see the potential and join us in our mission. 🌱

"YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO TAKE WHAT YOU HAVE WITH YOU IN LIFE AFTER YOU LEAVE THIS EARTH, SO IF YOU CAN, TRY TO DO SOME GOOD WITH IT. IT'S ABOUT SHARING WHAT YOU HAVE." —J.E. MUDD '43

the value of a hands-on, "do-it-yourself" education with young people, I knew this program would resonate with Dennis.

Extension agents are extremely valuable to the communities they serve. They support the three C's that are crucial in the development of young people: college, career and citizenship. Because J.E. and Tillie Mudd have spent their lives dedicated to instilling these values in their own children and grandchildren, I suggested that Dennis talk to his brother and sisters about endowing a gift to support a county agent position in honor of their parents. As J.E. had told me during one of my recent visits,

"You're not going to be able to take what you have with you in life after you leave this earth, so if you can, try to do some good with it. It's about sharing what you have."

The idea took root. By July 2013, just a few months after Dennis and I talked about the gift, the first-ever endowed position for a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service county agent was born. The DeWitt County Agent AgriLife Extension Endowment in honor of J.E. and Tillie Mudd allowed AgriLife Extension to add a new position, a 4-H program assistant, to impact youth in DeWitt County.

As the population in Texas continues to multiply, funding for gifts

Dromgoole is the associate department head of extension partnerships for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the engagement program director in the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications at Texas A&M University.

To support the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, contact:

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Denny Joins Board of Trustees

Otway Denny Jr. '71, a Texas A&M University graduate and a partner at Norton Rose Fulbright LLP, joined the Texas A&M Foundation Board of Trustees on July 1.

Denny, a Louisiana native who lives in Bryan, Texas, holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the College of Liberal Arts and a Juris Doctor from Baylor Law School. His career with Norton Rose Fulbright LLP spans more than 40 years. Denny has represented the firm's Houston office since 1973, first as an associate before transitioning to partner in 1981.

"I've always admired the Foundation and the work it does to improve Texas A&M through private funding,

especially as the state continues to be challenged to adequately fund Texas universities," Denny said.

Denny and his wife Bonnie endowed Corps of Cadets' Sul Ross and General Rudder scholarships as well as a scholarship in the College of Liberal Arts designated for students who study abroad, complete an internship or participate in a faculty-directed re-



Otway Denny Jr. '71

ed the Memorial Student Center (MSC) Renovation and Expansion Project, the 12th Man Foundation, The Association of Former Students and

Gifts from Within

This is the third in a series of articles on Texas A&M Foundation employees who are committed to giving back to Texas A&M University.

Few Aggies exemplify the core values of Texas A&M University quite like former Texas A&M Foundation Director of Development Jerome Rektorik '65.

Rektorik, a 13-year Foundation employee and development officer for the Corps of Cadets before his retirement earlier this year, was an economics major and a member of the Corps when Texas A&M administrators decided to admit women and African Americans to the university in 1963.



Jerome Rektorik '65

Rektorik was commissioned in the U.S. Army after gradu-

ation and served two tours in Vietnam. He was stationed in Fort Benning, Georgia, where he met his wife Diane '75. While in the service, Rektorik returned to Texas A&M in 1972 to earn an MBA in management and remained as an ROTC instructor before resigning from the Army. He then worked in several national and international positions before joining the Foundation in 2002 as a development officer for The Bush School of Government and Public Service, where he served until his 2013 transition to the Corps.

Rektorik credits Wayne Stark '39 with inspiring his involvement in Memorial Student Center (MSC) programs like the Student Conference on National Affairs and Town Hall, in which he developed leadership skills and made an impact on campus. The Rektoriks' financial contributions to MSC organizations and to the Corps reflect a belief that both programs transform students into future leaders.

The couple contributed \$25,000 to the MSC Renovation and Expansion Project and an additional \$25,000 to establish an endowment to fund operations of the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society. In addition to supporting the 12th Man Foundation and The Association of Former Students, they also created the Neil L. Kelter '65 Memorial Corps Scholarship through the Foundation with three other contributors. In 2014, they committed a planned gift that after their lifetimes will fund scholarships for deserving students in the Corps and graduate students in The Bush School, as well as support MSC programs.

"Texas A&M has been one of the most influential experiences in my life," Rektorik said. "We all need to give back every way we can; that's what this university is all about."



Will Fusselman '95, senior gift planning officer, and Shannon Zwernemann '03, donor relations specialist, received the 2014 Texas A&M Foundation Trustees' Awards. The \$500 cash award annually recognizes employees who exemplify the Foundation's spirit and who work to promote its mission.

the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society.

As a Texas A&M student, Denny was a member of the Ross Volunteers and served on the Corps staff. He also participated in MSC organizations and directed Fish Camp as a senior.

"I grew up in Louisiana, so naturally I was an LSU fan," he said. "I didn't know anything about Texas A&M other than that my dad and uncle attended. During my junior year of high school, we moved to Houston and my father revisited the Texas A&M campus for the first time since 1939. We walked through the MSC, and he cried when he read the names of countless men he knew who had died in service to our country. I thought, 'there must be something about this place.' In that moment, I chose Texas A&M, and I have no regrets."

Denny serves on the Liberal Arts Development Council and the President's Council, and he formerly served on The Association of Former Students' Board of Directors, acting as chairman in 2012. He and his wife are members of the A&M Legacy Society and The Association of Former Students' Endowed Century Club. Denny was inducted into the Corps of Cadets Hall of Honor in 2012 and was a Fish Camp namesake in 2008.

Seven trustees are appointed for a seven-year period to govern the Foundation. Denny replaces departing trustee Richard Kardys '67 of San Antonio, whose term ended June 30.

Foundation Inducts New Maroon Coats

This spring, the Texas A&M Foundation welcomed 20 new members into the eighth class of its student ambassadors organization, the Maroon Coats. The group consists of Texas A&M student leaders who enhance the impact of the Foundation through stewardship and service. Each member volunteers a minimum of 20 hours per semester and receives a signature maroon blazer during induction ceremonies.

New members of the 2015-2016 Maroon Coats are (back row, left to right) Blake Barnes '16, Jacob Cook '15, Kyle Cook '16, Scott Bradshaw '16, Connor Adams '16, Brian Skulski '16, Vielka Fajardo '17, Walker Ryan '16, Joseph Benigno '16, Cameron Cardwell '16, Joshua Sutton '17 and Thomas Burrets '15; and (front row, left to right) Nakul Moolji '16, Marisa Howat '16, Arianne Couch '17, Linda D'Arezzo '16, Bethany Joseph '16, Amy Gray '16, Lauren Friend '16 and Jeff Algra '15.



Jennifer Burnett '05

New Staff and Realignments

Jennifer Burnett '05 joins the Foundation as director of development for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She previously worked as a sales manager at Guardian Healthcare.



Josh Burgan

Josh Burgan joined the Foundation in May as director of investments, where he will collaborate on overall portfolio management and



Cara Milligan '08

strategy. He formerly worked at the Indiana University Foundation as an investment associate.

After five years with the Texas A&M Foundation as director of development for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cara Milligan '08 assumed the position of senior director of development for the College of Geosciences in March.

The exhibit "From Texas to Bastogne: Texas Aggies Go to War" commemorates the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. The people of Belgium created the exhibit to celebrate the solidarity between the Wallonia region of Belgium and Texas A&M University.

Postscript

By Andrew Nelson '92

A few months ago, I was a small part of a special week that made me prouder than ever to be an Aggie, a Texan and an American. Situated amidst quiet woods, gentle meadows and small valleys, Bastogne might have been just another beautiful town in Belgium had history not intervened so dramatically in the winter of 1944.

My family and I visited Bastogne in December to participate in activities planned around the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, culminating in the opening of Bastogne's newest exhibit, "From Texas to Bastogne: Texas Aggies Go to War." The people of Belgium created the exhibit to celebrate this historic anniversary and to salute the solidarity between the Wallonia region of Belgium and Texas A&M University.

Before taking the trip, I was well aware of this special relationship. In a 2010 joint venture with Lisam Systems of Belgium and The Texas A&M University System, I started a company in Bryan called Lisam America Inc., which sells environmental health and safety compliance software and services. Lisam is headquartered in Wallonia, the same French-speaking region as Bastogne. As my company has grown, I've regularly visited Belgium and hosted Belgian interns, exchange students, employees and entrepreneurs. Young or old, the Belgian peo-



Counting Blessings at Bastogne

ple remember the significance of what happened there 70 years ago.

We arrived in Bastogne on a cold and windy December night and were excited to see heavy snow falling as it had during the battle. The atmosphere was especially poignant to my wife Shelley, whose grandfather Fred Fontaine was hit by shrapnel during the battle and laid in the snow for 30 hours before his rescue.

The old stone building housing the 5,000-square-foot exhibit was the former command headquarters of U.S. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe and his 101st Airborne Division, which was instructed to hold Bastogne at all costs. When the Germans demanded he surrender, McAuliffe famously responded, "NUTS!" and became a legend.

The exhibit tells the story of five Texas A&M soldiers—Maj. James Hollingsworth '40, Lt. Turney Leonard '42, Lt. William Pena '42, Capt. Joe Routt '37 and Lt. Col. James Earl Rudder '32. These heroes embodied dedication, sacrifice and the best of the Aggie and American spirit.

In addition to highlighting the legacy of these five men, the museum features displays that trace the journeys of Aggie soldiers who fought in this

region during World War II, including their childhood; experiences as cadets on campus; and lives during and after the war. Content for the displays was culled from individuals, museums, the Sam Houston Sanders Corps of Cadets Center and Cushing memorial Library and Archives. The display also honors the 953 Aggies who died in combat during World War II.

One display is a replica of the Cushing Library Reading Room, complete with the ornate ceiling stencil work and a faux view of campus from the library's windows as it would have appeared during the World War II era.

I left my tour of the exhibit feeling proud of the service Aggies gave in this special place, proud of our great university and proud to be an American. I was inspired to make the world a little bit better each day; to honor those who gave their lives so we could enjoy ours; and to give back to Aggies, Americans and the world—much as these men did. 🌹

The exhibit will remain in Bastogne through August 31, 2016, before moving to the Bryan-College Station community. To view photos from the exhibit, visit give.am/WarExhibit.

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The George Bush Presidential Library Foundation raises funds to sponsor scholarships and programs to develop a new generation of dedicated public servants.



AggieNetwork.com

The Association raises the university's Annual Fund, which supports both alumni and student activities, academics and traditions.



txamfoundation.com

The Texas A&M Foundation solicits major endowed gifts from donors who decide the specific areas at the university they want to fund.

High-Impact Learning

A new Memorial Student Center (MSC) organization founded as part of a \$2 million gift from Debbie '76 and John Bethancourt '74 offers a range of personal and professional development activities to prepare students for life after college through exposure to global perspectives, critical thinking challenges and professional insights.

MSC Bethancourt Associates have the opportunity to interact with experts of various backgrounds, including distinguished faculty, business professionals, politicians and other leaders through events, discussions, lectures and visits.

Membership in the group is open to high-achieving sophomores, juniors and seniors who hold a 3.0 GPR or higher. The organization's first year saw a competitive application process and the selection of 25 associates.

The group will host a major program open to the student body once per semester. During the spring semester, the group hosted former First Lady Laura Bush and Afghan-American humanitarian Razia Jan, who improves the lives of Afghan women and children through community-based education. The women discussed international educational progress and challenges in a campus symposium.

"The programs these students develop and host are more than simply events for the campus to enjoy," said John Bethancourt. "They provide these students a hands-on project in which they can apply critical thinking and soft skills. Our hope is that this gift will further enhance the intellectual culture of Texas A&M University and inspire students to consequently impact society in their future endeavors."



A new Memorial Student Center organization founded by Debbie '76 and John Bethancourt '74 offers members personal and professional development activities, including the opportunity to host prominent speakers like former First Lady Laura Bush.



Reveille IX Earns Her Rank

The reign of a new First Lady of Aggieland began May 9 as Reveille IX assumed the role of Texas A&M University mascot following the Corps of Cadets' Final Review on the O.R. Simpson Drill Field.

Formerly known as Twix, Reveille IX was donated by Overland Collies in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Her selection followed a seven-month nationwide search by a 12-member committee of students, faculty and staff chaired by Tom Reber, interim vice president for student affairs. In a pool of four collie finalists, she was selected as the top choice due to her positive attitude and outgoing personality.

Reveille VIII, who served as mascot since 2008, will remain in Aggieland at the Stevenson Companion Animal Life-Care Center operated by Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.

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