

# SPIRIT

## High Stakes

*A competitive finance program in Mays Business School helps students reach their Wall Street ambitions.*

## We Asked Donors: Why Do You Give?



If I've learned anything from my tenure as president of the Texas A&M Foundation, it's that behind every gift is a donor, behind every donor is a story, and few places inspire amazing stories quite like Texas A&M University. Every year, tens of thousands of young people come to College Station to build upon this university's everlasting

spirit with their own individual passions and values.

In turn, when I speak to one hundred donors, I hear one hundred unique reasons to support the vision of Texas A&M. It is humbling and inspiring and provides our team with the passion for purposeful philanthropy at Texas A&M.

Earlier this summer, we conducted a poll asking donors who have given to the Foundation during the *Lead by Example* campaign what inspired their gifts to Texas A&M. You can read a sampling of their answers—and the stories behind these gifts—in our campaign update on page 46. Reading their answers elicited a deep sense of Aggie pride, and I hope it will have the same effect on you. Taken on their own, each donor's response tells a distinct story about Texas A&M's individual impact. Taken together, the collected responses speak to the awe-inspiring scope of lives that have been shaped, enhanced and inspired by the Aggie Spirit.

You'd think, with an average of 14,000 gifts coming through the Foundation annually, that some of the reasons individuals give would start to sound repetitive. And yet, we hear new reasons every day. Some of my favorite responses from the poll, which really give a sense of the range of answers we received, include:

I give because...

- ...Aggies help Aggies.
- ...I want to enable people through education.
- ...I know the values of the organization I'm contributing to.
- ...Texas A&M builds well-rounded citizens.
- ...money given to the university is well-managed and put to great use.

The list goes on, and every answer is as original and authentic as the next. If you're inspired by any of the responses you read in our story, you can check out the Foundation's social media channels for more "Why I Give" testimonials or watch the entire series online at [give.am/WhyIGive](http://give.am/WhyIGive). It's our hope that this series causes you to reflect on your own experiences at Texas A&M and your own reasons for giving. Remember: Your reason is as unique as you and no matter what it is, it's important to us.

Thanks for all you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyson Voelkel '96".

Tyson Voelkel '96

PRESIDENT, TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION

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Read *Spirit* online at [spirit.txamfoundation.com](http://spirit.txamfoundation.com).

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## Standout Stories

If you attended any of Texas A&M's home football games this season, I hope you'll recognize the three faces below: Dr. Leslie Ruyle, Matthew Curtis '19 and Gracie Arenas Strittmatter '04 '08. These individuals were featured in a campaign that ran this fall showcasing exceptional people who are leading by example by addressing challenging problems, innovating and giving back.

One of these folks, Dr. Leslie Ruyle, is featured in this issue's faculty feature (page 30). Dr. Ruyle is an associate research scientist who has devoted her career to tackling problems of conservation and human-wildlife coexistence. With Aggie students often in tow, she's traveled to more than 70 countries to work on projects related to protecting the natural habitats and well-being of animals, and promoting entrepreneurship and economic development in regions of conflict. Her story shows us that there is no limit to the good Aggies can do when equipped with global mindsets.

Veteran Matthew Curtis '19 decided to attend Texas A&M after a deployment to Afghanistan and two training operations in the Kingdom of Jordan. Today, using resources in the College of Engineering, he's combining his military and academic experiences to design a better tourniquet that can be applied faster and more easily than standard models. His work is still in progress, but he thinks that military personnel and civilian first responders could one day use his product to save lives. Matthew is the deserving recipient of three scholarships from Bebe and Bruce

Glasgow '73, the Knauss Family, and Lou and C.C. Burton '42. His is just one of many stories of Aggies who go above and beyond what is expected of them.

Gracie Arenas Strittmatter '04 '08 is a technical art director for BioWare, a division of Electronic Arts that specializes in creating roleplaying and story-based sci-fi video games. Her interest in gaming began while playing video games with her brother growing up, and Texas A&M's visualization department gave her the skills she needed to pursue gaming as a career. Today, Gracie and her husband Willem '02 are giving back to aspiring gamers through an endowed scholarship they created for visualization students in 2015. Through her story, we see how Aggies are dedicated to helping the next generation.

I encourage you to visit the URLs below to learn more about these individuals and watch their videos, which bring their stories to life through vivid animation. Here at the Texas A&M Foundation, we are honored to tell so many great Aggie stories—not just in Spirit, but in all our communications.

*Dunae Crenwelge*

Dunae Crenwelge '15

EDITOR, SPIRIT MAGAZINE

[leadbyexample.tamu.edu/Leslie](http://leadbyexample.tamu.edu/Leslie)



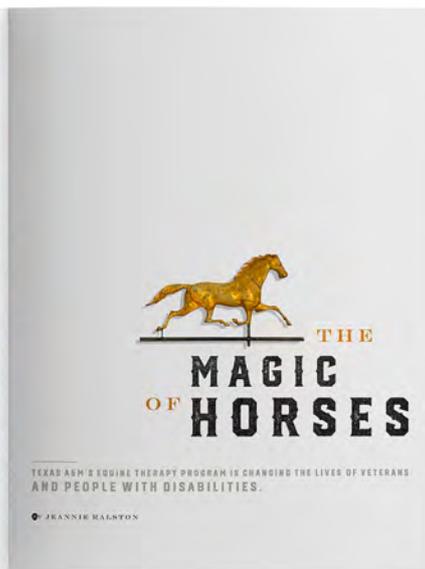
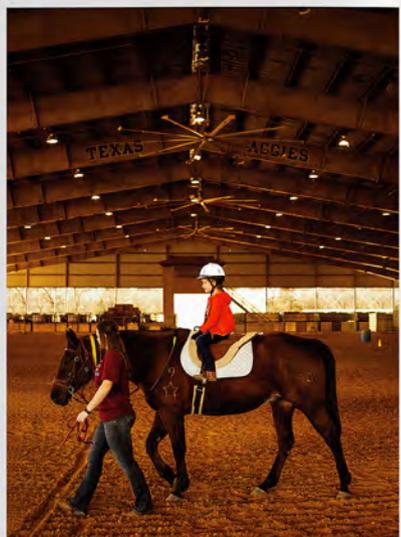
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# Letters



“The most amazing aspect of Courtney Cares is witnessing the positive effects that riding has on each participant every day.”

—AMANDA FLEMING '94

## A New Yell Begins

The summer 2018 issue of Spirit was an excellent edition, especially “The Magic of Horses” article and the stories on the faculty benefactors giving so generously! Reading the Yell Leaders article, I was reminded that the bus driver yell started sometime between 1945 and 1947.

There was little or no air travel right after World War II, so most teams traveled by bus or train. There were hardly any fans of the opponents at the basketball games, so anyone backing them stood out, especially the bus drivers. They sat at the end of the bench in their bus uniforms. When something good happened, they stood like the rest of the team and yelled.

This, of course, caught the attention of the Ags, who then started saying, “Sit Down, Bus Driver!” The driver usually just laughed and took it in good nature.

Keep up the good work!

—JIM MCGUIRE '49  
Dallas, Texas

## Crazy About Courtney Cares

Shortly after my family and I moved back to Aggieland in 2014, a friend mentioned the Courtney Cares program. I signed up for the volunteer training and the rest—as they say—is history. I enjoy every part of the program; the staff members are experts in their fields and watching as they share their expertise and talents with the participants is a blessing.

Being able to horse handle for the program adds an additional dimension of joy for me, but the most amazing aspect of Courtney Cares is witnessing the positive effects that riding has on each participant every day. It is an honor and pleasure to play a tiny role in this organization's work, and I loved seeing the program highlighted in the summer 2018 issue.

—AMANDA FLEMING '94  
Bryan, Texas

## Bringing Back the “T”

Reading the Time Capsule article in the summer 2018 issue brought back great memories for my family. My dad, William “Bill” Dorsey '57, served as Head Yell Leader in 1956. He was the driving force behind organizing the entire student body to form the Aggie “T” at halftime that year.

The famous Aggie “T” was first formed at Kyle Field during the infamous 13-0 game against The University of Texas on November 19, 1915, in College Station. But by the 1950s, the formation had not been performed at Kyle Field for several years. My dad and his fellow Yell Leaders agreed that it was an important event for the 12th Man and shouldn't be forgotten.

*The spirit of Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets was exhibited when the Block T tradition was reintroduced during a game at Kyle Field in 1956 (below).*

So, my dad approached Col. E.V. Adams '29, former director of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, to ask for his help in bringing back the tradition. He agreed, but only if the band members voted for it, as it meant the band would have to forfeit its performance during halftime. Luckily, the band completely understood the intention behind the request and voted "yes."

Col. Adams had films of previous formations of the "T" and a complete understanding of field maneuvers, so he proved crucial in helping the Yell Leaders accomplish the feat, especially with about 5,000 cadets who had never done it before, most of whom had never even seen it. He also warned the Yell Leaders that the final and

perhaps most important requirement was to gain permission from "the Bear," Texas A&M's then-Head Football Coach Paul Bryant. Coach Bryant initially shot down the idea, but my dad was persistent and visited the coach's office to plead his case until Bryant finally said: "Hell son, if it means that much to you, go ahead."

The spirit of Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets was demonstrated that day. It clearly shows what Texas A&M is all about and why, even 60-plus years later, the spirit lives on.

Gig'em, Daddy!

—JENNY DORSEY JOHNSON '82  
Grapevine, Texas



**Share Your Comments:** *We always enjoy receiving our readers' reactions to Spirit. If the magazine's content moves you to write, please email us at [info@txamfoundation.com](mailto:info@txamfoundation.com) or send a note.*

DUNAE CRENWELGE '15  
Editor

## digitaldialogue



*Texas A&M Yell Leaders in 1956*

Love our Aggies and our Yell Leaders! My husband and I have enjoyed many trips home with tears from the traditions. You can't explain it, but there is nothing like it.

—SHARON BRACKENRIDGE TITSWORTH  
Dallas, Texas

Whenever the chips are down, I just look at my Aggie ring—for me, hard won—and I remember who and what I am. Traditions are great: They inspire us to carry on, regardless of the odds. The Yell Leaders are tradition personified.

—DALE WOODY '79  
Houston, Texas

Love the Yell Leader tradition! Love Texas A&M! Gig'em.

—MARY AMYX BLANKENSHIP  
Corinth, Texas



## Autism Community Unites

This fall, the Division of Student Affairs introduced an innovative learning community to connect Aggies in and around the autism community.

The Spectrum Living Learning Community program gives students who are on the autism spectrum or who are interested in or connected to the autism community an opportunity to live together in Eppright Hall. Students in the program participate in academic programming related to study skills, time management, daily routines, career planning and internship practices. Ultimately, the program works to build the advocacy and self-determination of autistic students, and an understanding that they are not alone in Aggieland.

*The Spectrum Living Learning Community is a new program that will better connect the autism community at Texas A&M.*

“As a person with autism, I think this community will help because it is difficult for us to integrate socially in a college setting,” said Aaron Zajac ’20. “Living in an area with other autistic students will help those on the spectrum become more social and get along better with their fellow peers. If a program like Spectrum had been here when I was a freshman, I would have realized much sooner that there were more people like me on campus.”

As participants build friendships with each other, they will address distinct experiences facing students with autism and make Texas A&M a more inclusive campus.

## From Ashes to Art



Texas A&M engineering students teamed up with New York-based artist Rosemarie Fiore to create a large-scale art piece for the new Zachry Engineering Education Complex.

Fiore works with fireworks and smoke to create art. To improve her creative process, engineering students built a new smoke painting tool called Bring Your A

Frame. Made of aluminum and mounted on wheels, it is a more efficient version of an earlier design she was using. A pole is attached to the tool’s base so that Fiore can

easily maneuver it across paper; fireworks are then inserted into mounts and lit so that pigmented smoke is pushed out of the holes on the bottom of the tool. The resulting masterpieces are swirling with vibrant color and life.

*New York-based artist Rosemarie Fiore created a large-scale art piece for the new Zachry Engineering Education Complex using fireworks and smoke.*

Fiore said that art and engineering often work in tandem. “They rely on each other and create great things when applied together,” she said.



## Fundraising for Families



One week each spring, a neighborhood of shacks rises in Rudder Plaza as part of the annual Shack-a-Thon, an Aggie Habitat for Humanity fundraiser. Spaces are auctioned off to various student organizations, whose members spend hours constructing shacks from donated materials.

Throughout the week, the shacks are occupied by students 24/7 to raise poverty housing awareness among Aggies. In addition to experiencing a mock week in poverty, students also learn about the affordable housing crisis through speakers and are entertained by student groups like the Aggie Wranglers and the A&M Fencing Club.

Proceeds from the auction annually support the construction of a home for a family in the Bryan-College Station area that currently has inadequate housing. "Providing an interest-free, low-cost home is life-changing for these families," said Lauren Boehm '17, co-president of Aggie Habitat. "Parents can own a home for the first time. Children growing up in stable environments are more likely to graduate from high school and participate in their community."

Aggie Habitat fundraises \$55,000 annually to sponsor a family's home through events like Shack-a-Thon, which drew more than 200 participants in 2018.

What advice would you give to incoming freshmen?

*"Time management is key. cramming doesn't work in college, and procrastination leads to bad habits."*

Attikos Hutras '19  
BIOLOGY

*"Don't worry so much about knowing exactly what to do after graduation. Take time to find what you're passionate about."*

Morgan Knobloch '20  
COMMUNICATION

*"Get more involved than you think you should be. You have a lot of time as a freshman to join organizations. Start early!"*

Taryn Woody '19  
POLITICAL SCIENCE

*"You can have a social life, but always remember that you're here first for an education."*

Aaron Rose '19  
BIOLOGY

## Journal Celebrates 10 Years

A gift from Barbara and Ralph Cox '53 is supporting Explorations, the official undergraduate journal of Texas A&M, just in time for its 10th anniversary celebration. "We were looking for a unique way to support something that would enhance the educational experience for students," said Ralph, "and promote awareness of research happening at Texas A&M."

Explorations is an interdisciplinary publication dedicated to highlighting research and scholarly work across all fields. With a student-run editorial board and a select group of faculty advisers, Explorations accepts student manuscripts for publication. Student researchers are guided through a detailed editorial process to ensure that their quality work is featured in the best way possible.

Recent articles range from research about German war prisoners during World War II to a global agricultural analysis exploring how bacteria can be used to help feed the world.

Former Editor-In-Chief Kadden Kothmann '19 hopes that the journal will one day be widely recognized among Aggies. "Students doing research today will be leading field work tomorrow, and it's important that we help showcase that," he said.

Read the journal online at [give.am/ReadExplorations](http://give.am/ReadExplorations).

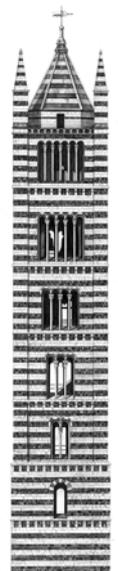
**“ Students doing research today will be leading field work tomorrow. ”**

—KADDEN KOTHMANN '19  
FORMER EXPLORATIONS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Reveille IX's new handler is philosophy major Mia Miller '21, Texas A&M's first female mascot corporal. Her selection follows last year's integration of women in E-2, the Corps of Cadets' mascot company.

What happens when a city runs out of room to expand? Build upward, not outward. To put this idea into practice, first-year environmental design students constructed mock designs of urban office spaces atop existing buildings in Siena, Italy. The goal was to envision how a city's future needs can be met without damaging historic structures already in place.



Time magazine recognized Professor Emeritus George Bass for the waves he made in nautical archeology, a field he helped establish. Dr. Bass revolutionized the science of underwater excavation after conducting the first complete excavation of a shipwreck on the seafloor in 1960. In the magazine's recent "Great Scientists" edition, Dr. Bass is ranked among the likes of Albert Einstein, Sir Isaac Newton and Stephen Hawking.

*Dr. Seth Murray, Texas A&M soil and crop sciences associate professor, is conducting research on non-GMO corn varieties in search of ideal strains to produce new flavors of whiskey.*



## Whiskey Wonders

Texas A&M researchers hope to transform the flavor palate of modern whiskey. Dr. Seth Murray, an associate professor and corn breeding specialist at Texas A&M, and Rob Arnold, a Fort Worth whiskey distiller and Ph.D. plant breeding student under Murray, are trying to develop commercially viable strains of corn with identifiable flavors. Most American distillers today make whiskey from similar types of yellow corn grown in the Midwest because of its high-yield potential and wide availability.

Their hope is that American whiskeys will one day be recognized by regions, the same way grapes from specific areas define

wines. While many bourbons obtain their flavors from aging barrels and yeasts used in fermentation rather than the corn itself, tests show that different whiskeys can be made by changing the specific corn variety or the environment where it is grown.

“Different strains of corn have different proteins, oils, antioxidants and chemicals that can lead to a variety of aromas and tastes,” Murray said. After evaluating 50 of the 7,000 corn varieties developed by Texas A&M’s corn breeding program, the pair has identified three that will undergo further farm and distillery trials in 2019.



Supersonic flight, or flight exceeding the speed of sound, was thought to be science fiction until pilot Charles “Chuck” Yeager broke the sound barrier in 1947. Today, the United States Air Force is looking to Texas A&M researchers to investigate the challenges

of flight at hypersonic speeds, or speeds exceeding Mach 5 (3,836 mph), five times the speed of sound. Air Force officials visited Texas A&M’s National Aerothermochemistry Laboratory in June, where students have constructed a wind tunnel simulating

speeds up to Mach 15 (11,127 mph) to understand what it would take to build vehicles and defense systems that can withstand speeds that melt most metals and change the chemistry of surrounding air. As competing countries develop their own hypersonic tech-

nology, this kind of research has become a pressing matter of national security. Secretary of the U.S. Air Force Heather Wilson was one of the officials present. “Texas A&M has a long history of producing talented graduates who go on to distinguished ca-

reers in the Air Force and our other military branches,” she said. “We look forward to engaging with the university on the basic and applied research that will shape the future of our Air Force.”



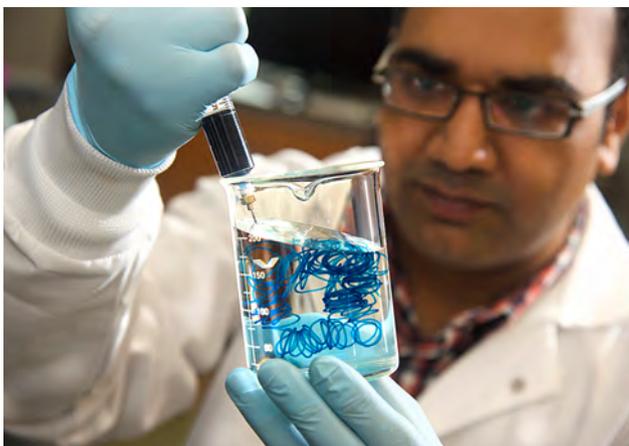
## Inside Out Bandage

Researchers at Texas A&M University have successfully fabricated an injectable hydrogel bandage that can curb internal bleeding and activate the healing process.

The science joins kappa-carrageenan, a thickening agent found in seaweed and commonly used in preparing pastries, with ceramic molecules. The combination results in hydrogels (3-D water swollen polymer networks, similar to Jell-O) that solidify after injection in the wound area to quickly promote blood clotting. Once bleeding is controlled, the hydrogel bandage works to heal the wound by releasing therapeutics and regenerating the surrounding tissue.

Applying existing bandages or pressure can slow a deadly bleed, but may cause other problems such as aggravating internal injuries acquired during trauma.

"Injectable hydrogels are ideal because they're minimally invasive," said Dr. Akhilesh Gaharwar, lead researcher and assistant professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. "We believe our formulation has great potential to save lives in critical situations."



*Natalie Johnson '06, assistant professor in the School of Public Health, is studying the effects of air pollution on pregnant women in South Texas.*

## Breathing for Two

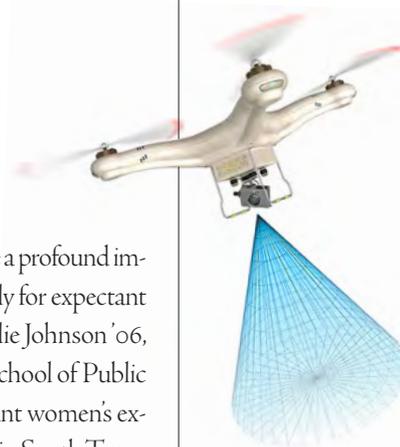
The air we breathe can have a profound impact on our health, especially for expectant mothers. That's why Natalie Johnson '06, assistant professor in the School of Public Health, is studying pregnant women's exposure to air contaminants in South Texas, where asthma rates are high.

With the help of pregnant women in McAllen, who wear backpack-style air sampling equipment for three separate 24-hour periods, Johnson is monitoring levels and types of air pollutant exposure.

"We're especially interested in small particulate matter that can penetrate the lungs deeply and cause oxidative stress," said Johnson. Oxidative stress can cause tissue damage and potentially harm fetal development. Direct exposure (when contaminants cross the placenta) and indirect damage through maternal oxidative stress have been linked with lower birth weights, premature births and an increased risk of developing asthma later in life.

In addition to her work in McAllen, Johnson is examining exposure to benzene, a risk factor for childhood leukemia, among women in Houston who delivered babies in the months following Hurricane Harvey. "Ultimately, I hope my research can influence policy or inform interventions for exposed populations," she said. "If we can protect women and their babies, we can make a huge public health impact."

*A new injectable material developed by a team of Texas A&M researchers could aid wounded soldiers by preventing blood loss from serious internal injuries.*



Texas A&M scientists are using drones enabled with advanced sensor technology to identify weeds in crop fields sooner than is possible with the naked eye. The data will produce geotagged maps, allowing coordinates to be fed to a ground vehicle or an aerial applicator to treat specific areas. The process is more economical and uses fewer chemicals, which benefits the environment.

Researchers in the College of Education and Human Development found that **not enough women incorporate strength training into their exercise routines.**

Wary of bulking up, many women focus solely on cardio. However, balancing cardio with strength training increases metabolism, allowing the body to efficiently burn calories.



**It may one day be possible to power portable, wearable electronics—such as cell phones—using your body heat,** based

on research from a team that includes mechanical engineering professor Jaime Grunlan. The group is seeking ways to harvest and convert heat generated by engines, air conditioners and even humans into consumable voltage that could power personal devices in remote locations.



## Funding for Physicianeers

Texas A&M's new engineering medicine (EnMed) program received its first endowed scholarship from Kathy '79 and Rick Spletter. As a partnership between the College of Engineering, the College of Medicine and Houston Methodist Hospital, EnMed is expected to be the largest engineering-based medical degree program in the nation. Launching in 2019, the program

will train a new type of doctor—physicianeers—who will be both practicing physicians and trained engineers. Program graduates will receive a master's in engineering and a Doctor of Medicine in four years.

"I was excited to hear about EnMed as an accredited program that blends engineering creativity and problem-solving with a medical education,"



Kathy said. "We know that quality health care is one of the most critical components of a quality life, and our current health care system needs creative solutions to reduce costs and improve care."

The couple's scholarship pays homage to

their family's engineering legacy. Kathy graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in chemical engineering, as did the couple's older son, Christopher '14. Their daughter Nicole '15 graduated with a biological and agricultural engineering degree,

while their youngest son, Andrew '21, is a current engineering student. Their scholarship also stipulates a preference for an EnMed student who served or made a commitment to serve in the U.S. military.

## Remembering Barbara Bush

*Aggies gathered in April at the Presidential Pond beside the Bush Library to honor former First Lady Barbara Bush. A scholarship has been established to commemorate her legacy.*



To commemorate former First Lady Barbara Bush's legacy, Class of 2018 graduates of the Bush School of Government and Public Service are creating a scholarship gift in her name.

"If there is one thing that's been instilled in us from President and Mrs. Bush, it's service," said Alexandra González '15 '18, a Bush School graduate. "What better way

to honor Mrs. Bush and celebrate her life than through an endowed scholarship that will enable future generations of public servants to attend the Bush School?"

Open to any student enrolled in the Bush School, this scholarship will be awarded to those who exhibit the mindset and values of a public servant as Mrs. Bush did. "We're really excited to help keep the name

and spirit of Mrs. Bush at the heart of our institution," said Kayla McGill '18, another graduate. "This scholarship will help students make a positive difference in the world."

The class raised funds through commemorative T-shirt sales and will continue to seek donations from peers to reach the \$25,000 goal.

*Kathy '79 and Rick Spletter (left) funded the first endowed scholarship for Texas A&M's new engineering medicine (EnMed) program.*

## Accessible Design

Remembering the support she received from Texas A&M during her own challenges, Ruth Hall Lusher '78 decided to endow a scholarship

who encouraged her to took one course at first due to working full-time, her design talent caught the attention of several faculty, who encouraged her to



within the College of Architecture for undergraduates who have disabilities or an interest in creating more accessible environments for those with disabilities.

"I want recipients of this scholarship to know that people care about them and want them to succeed in life," Lusher said. "I received so much support during my time at Texas A&M, and I want to give that opportunity to other students."

Disabled as a child by polio and a single mother at the time she enrolled in school, Lusher found strength from people at Texas A&M. While she only

change her major, apply for a scholarship and enroll as a full-time student.

After graduate school, Lusher supervised the drafting of the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines. "It was like architecture school," she said. "We pulled all-nighters and did whatever necessary to publish the guidelines in one year." Through her career with the Access Board and Department of Justice, and work with non-profits and other agencies, Lusher helped shape the development of accessible design in the U.S.

*A \$25,000 endowment from Lynn Hagan '77 will support various enrichment programs of the Women's Resource Center.*



needs. What is good for women is good for the university, for families and for society at large."

## Women Supporting Women

The first gift to the Women's Resource Center is equipping women across Texas A&M with the support needed to enrich their personal and professional development.

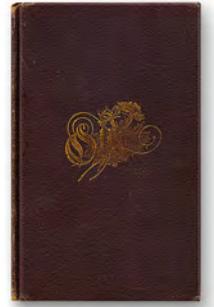
A \$25,000 endowment from Lynn Hagan '77 will support various programs of the Women's Resource Center, including Elect Her, which is dedicated to training women to run for student government positions as well as future political office. Another function is First Thursday, a monthly event with the Aggie Women Network that connects students with professionals in their field. The center also sponsors Women's History Month, the International Women's Day Conference and salary negotiation workshops.

Hagan is renowned for her social work and activism regarding women's and children's issues. Through her involvement with the American Association of University Women, she has advocated for quality education among women and girls and has worked to promote social change across the Southeastern United States.

"Specific funding for programs such as the Women's Resource Center is long overdue," Hagan said. "Women have different educational and social needs than men, and the center helps identify and meet those

# giftwrap-up

A \$50,000 endowed gift from Chris and Dr. Bob Williamson '49 will ensure a permanent source of funding for Texas A&M's Aggieland yearbook. First published in 1895, it is one of the nation's largest college yearbooks and is entirely written, edited and produced by students. The couple hopes their gift will encourage other financial support for the yearbook.



To support the No. 5 Master of Real Estate Program in the nation, Jean and Jason Signor '99 created a \$50,000 excellence endowment that will be matched by funds from Cydney Donnell '81, director of the program.

The Mays Business School program prepares students for careers in commercial real estate through a concentration in finance, real estate law, economics, market analysis and negotiations.

Thanks to a gift from the Austin Aggie Mothers' Club, Texas A&M can further support full-time student veterans through a new \$25,000 Aggie Veteran Honor Scholarship. More than 1,100 veterans currently attend Texas A&M, the nation's top university for serving those transitioning from military to civilian life.



## A Buoy for Galveston's Sea Aggies

*Jere and Jack H. Smith '64 create a testamentary unitrust to benefit oceangoing students.*

BY KARA BOUNDS SOCOL

**I**n 1962, Jack H. Smith '64 was like many college sophomores, jumping from major to major as he tried to find his place. Then serendipity intervened when The Battalion announced the opening of the Gulf Coast's first maritime academy.

Smith switched his major for the last time to marine transportation, moved back to his hometown of Galveston, and, as he put it, "went from scholastic probation to the dean's list." In 1966, he not only gradu-

ated in the Texas Maritime Academy's inaugural class, but also earned a bachelor's degree and a U.S. Merchant Marine license. "I knew I'd found where I belonged," Smith recalled.

Decades later, that feeling returned when Smith, by then a seasoned ship pilot, accepted a lecturer position at Texas A&M University at Galveston. This move put him back where he started, as the Texas A&M Maritime Academy was by then



## Giving with Peace of Mind

For those looking for a way to provide their children with income while making a gift to Texas A&M, a “give it twice” trust is a popular option. It allows you to transfer your IRA or other asset at death to fund a trust, the terms of which are included in your will or living trust. The trust will pay income to your spouse, children or other individual beneficiaries for their lifetimes or a term of 20 years. The payout amount fluctuates since the assets are revalued annually, providing the beneficiaries with a variable income and a potential hedge against inflation. After the lifetimes of all the beneficiaries, the trust terminates, and the remaining assets are transferred to the Foundation for the benefit of Texas A&M.

Benefits include:

- Continued access to your assets during your lifetime
- Lifetime payments to beneficiaries
- An estate tax deduction and savings from the charitable gift
- Support to Texas A&M

practical skills, Jack used the cruise experiences to stress the commitment intrinsic to a maritime career. “These are 24-hour jobs,” he explained. “You can’t call in sick, and you can’t call a repairman. You have to do whatever is needed.”

While the highly specialized education and training offered on these cruises is unmatched, the price tag is upwards of \$10,000—a cost the Smiths’ planned gift will also help offset for several students each cruise. “It’s a very expensive education,” Jack said. “I was the first in my family to go to college, and I couldn’t have done that without a little help. Supporting these students is important to us.”

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TO DISCUSS HOW A PLANNED GIFT CAN BENEFIT YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, CONTACT GLENN PITTSFORD ’72 AT GPITTSFORD@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM OR (800) 392-3310. TO SUPPORT TEXAS A&M GALVESTON OR THE TEXAS A&M MARITIME ACADEMY, CONTACT RICK KLINE AT RKLINE@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM OR (409) 741-4030.

incorporated into the university’s marine and maritime studies campus. “I agreed to work for Galveston for one semester and ended up staying 11-and-a-half years,” he said with a laugh.

Even though the now-retired Smith is no longer in the classroom, he and his wife, Jere Cyrus Smith, are still focused on the academic success of Galveston’s Sea Aggies.

The Smiths already endowed three scholarships for Galveston students, but they wanted to do more. After contacting the Texas A&M Foundation, they decided to create a planned gift through a testamentary unitrust, or “give it twice” trust. This is a unique method of giving that allows individuals to use an asset—an IRA account in the Smiths’ case—to fund a trust after their lifetimes. Invested by the Foundation, the Smiths’ trust will then make annual lifetime payments to the couple’s three children, plus payments to their two grandchildren for a term of 20 years. At the termination of the trust, the remaining assets will support Texas A&M Galveston. The Smiths can also add to the trust to increase its long-term value.

While the couple is fond of all Galveston students, they have a special place in their hearts for marine transportation program students—those striving to become deck officers aboard seagoing vessels. Through their planned gift, the Smiths will perpetually provide scholarships for these students long after they’re gone. Their gift will also help with the upkeep of Galveston’s vessel training simulator, which offers a moving, virtual reality experience for aspiring ship officers.

As one of only six such institutions in the nation, the Texas A&M Maritime Acad-

emy trains officers in both marine transportation and marine engineering to serve on oceangoing and inland waterways vessels. Upon passing the U.S. Coast Guard examination, academy students become licensed members of the U.S. Merchant Marine as either third mates (deck officers) or third assistant engineers.

Jere noted that despite critical roles played by mariners, “most people don’t know about them.” The Merchant Marine moves imports and exports during peacetime and serves as a naval auxiliary during wartime, transporting weaponry and troops—a duty Jack undertook during the Vietnam War. Licensed mariners are also in high demand in offshore oilfields, where they operate tugboats and pilot massive drillships. Mariners can likewise be found on naval supply ships, oceanographic vessels and even cruise ships. Jack used his marine transportation education first in the Navy and Merchant Marine, and then in a 31-year career piloting ships through congested Galveston-Texas City ports.

During the 2017–18 academic year, 579 of Galveston’s roughly 2,500 students were maritime academy participants. As such, they were members of Galveston’s Corps of Cadets and crew members on three required summer training cruises, where they learned skills in seamanship, navigation and engineering operations.

For more than 11 years, Jack lived and worked on the training cruises alongside these student crew members, teaching them everything from navigating and standing watch to maneuvering and maintaining the ship. During his last four years, he served as captain of the Texas A&M Training Ship General Rudder. Along with imparting

*Courtney Welch '01 is following in her father's footsteps and pursuing her dream of becoming a physician to serve the health care needs of rural Texas.*



**A**s a girl, I remember sitting in the stands at a softball game with my dad when we saw it: The ball flew right at a player's head and laid her out flat on the turf. She wasn't getting up. When I turned to my dad, he had already left his seat and was making his way toward her. I wasn't surprised; he was the "town doc" after all. What surprised me was how calm he was. He barely jogged toward the injured player. "Why isn't he

running?" I thought. "Doesn't he know how serious this is?"

Looking back, I now understand why. When you're a doctor responding to a crisis, your reaction drives the reactions of those around you. No doubt his mind was scrambling for details, assessing the situation. But he didn't show it, because he knew the people of Yoakum, Texas, needed him to be cool and collected. As I watched him

## County Road Caretakers

*For me, becoming a rural physician means fulfilling a family legacy.*

BY COURTNEY WELCH '01  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE GRADUATE STUDENT  
MARGOT AND ALONZO BYINGTON '58 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

attend to the player, I knew that I wanted to be just like him.

Being a small-town doctor means having a respected place in the community. My father was received with gratitude everywhere he went. If we ate at a local café, every customer wanted to shake his hand. If we attended a high school football game, those whose lives he touched in a positive way approached our family with warmth. I didn't fully appreciate these moments at the time, but in hindsight, they speak to my enduring desire to follow in his footsteps.

rural physicians. Many Texans drive an hour or more to reach their closest primary care doctor. Rural communities make Texas special, but when it comes to health care access, they're being hung out to dry.

Imagine if the entire state of Arkansas didn't have a psychiatrist. There would be news segments and legislative action. After all, people need basic mental health practitioners. But consider this: The population of Arkansas is 3 million. The combined population of the 185 Texas counties without a psychiatrist is **3.1 million**.

the stands and being fearless in front of the whole town.

I've witnessed a lifetime of service watching my father work. As I pursue my dream, I can only hope to be for my patients what he has been for an entire community. ©

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TO SUPPORT AGGIE MEDICAL STUDENTS WHO WISH TO SERVE RURAL POPULATIONS, THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE SEEKS ENDOWED DEAN'S EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIPS, WHICH CAN BE ESTABLISHED WITH A \$125,000 GIFT. TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:

DAVID BOGGAN '79  
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION  
(800) 392-3310 OR (979) 436-0811  
DBOGGAN@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM

Watch more of Courtney's story at [give.am/Courtney](http://give.am/Courtney).

**"This is where my passion lies: building trust and providing patients with the best care possible."**

—COURTNEY WELCH '01

### The Rural Gap

My journey to becoming a doctor is non-traditional. In 2004, I had bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture from Texas A&M University and was ready to apply to medical school. Life had other plans. I took my MCAT in April, married my husband in May and was putting my application packet together when I found out I was pregnant in June.

I put my dream on hold to raise my family. We moved from College Station to Shiner, Texas, where I took a job as a high school teacher. Thirteen years later, the time was right and I applied to medical schools.

What drove me back is the same reality that drives me today: Rural Texas needs doctors. Desperately. Texas has the largest rural population in the United States. One in five Texans live in rural areas, and yet Texas ranks 46th among states for number of

As much as I love Texas A&M, addressing this problem is the real reason I returned to College Station for medical school. From its inception, the Texas A&M College of Medicine has trained physicians specifically to work in the rural communities that need them most. I'm enrolled in a program called A&M Integrated Medicine, which focuses on developing enduring relationships with patients and providing personalized care.

This is where my passion lies: building trust and providing patients with the best care possible. Carrying on my father's legacy means more than putting on a white coat and going through the motions. It means going into a community and being that person who people can rely on to care for them and their loved ones. It means giving all that I can for as many as I can reach. Sometimes, it means getting up from

## Improving Rural Population Health

Earlier this year, the Texas A&M University Health Science Center announced a new educational and clinical partnership with CHI St. Joseph Health. Although the two have worked together since 1997, this new partnership creates a co-branded network of care facilities throughout nine counties in Texas, including Brazos County. The network includes 16 primary care locations housing 47 providers.

Since Texas A&M doesn't have its own teaching hospital, Aggie medical students will receive training at locations throughout the CHI St. Joseph Health system. Rural medicine will be a primary focus of the partnership, with aims to increase the number of physicians based in rural communities across the state. To better aid these communities, medical students will be deployed into settings beyond hospitals and clinics, making health care more accessible.





## Helping Heroes

As Yangming Shi '20, a Ph.D. student in construction science, navigates the underground subway in this virtual world, the crackling sound of fire surrounds him. Smoke impairs his vision. Walking in one direction initiates a massive explosion, while a burst pipe sends water flying in a different corner. The environment is chaotic.

Shi is immersed in a firefighter's world—one in which the ability to navigate through complex structures like subway stations, airports or hospitals can mean life or death. Hazardous conditions often induce cognitive overload, impeding first responders' critical sense of direction.

To help firefighters better orient themselves in stressful situations, Texas A&M assistant professor of construction science Jing "Eric" Du is collaborating with research partners at Northeastern University on a wayfinding project funded through the National Science Foundation. As firefighters from College Station and Boston navigate virtual emergency scenarios, Du's team measures their pulse, brain activity, and eye and body movements. At the end of each simulation, the data is exported to pinpoint when cognitive overload occurs.

"In the uniquely perilous world of firefighting, familiarity is difficult to acquire without exposure to real hazards," said Du. "In our simulations, firefighters can safely train to become better equipped to do their jobs. The goal is to reduce firefighter injuries and fatalities and improve their mental health over the long term."

After completing his research, Du will release his findings through an open-source information system with an online course for firefighters to improve their cognitive load limits and wayfinding capabilities. ©

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## Aggie Research Changes the World

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*How Texas A&M faculty and students are impacting the globe.*

BY MICHAEL K. YOUNG  
PRESIDENT, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Texas A&M University has developed into one of the nation's leading research institutions with annual research expenditures approaching \$1 billion. Through contributions from Aggie student and faculty researchers, we are making positive impacts for our fellow Texans, the nation and the world.

Here, I highlight just five of our extraordinary Aggie researchers and their teams to exemplify the remarkable work happening at Texas A&M and our deep commitment to bettering the world through research.

*Kissing bugs are a group of bloodsucking insects that transmit the pathogen that causes Chagas disease in humans and animals. In a new pilot study, Associate Professor Gabriel Hamer attached miniature radio transmitters to track their movements.*



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### Gabriel Hamer

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY, COLLEGE  
OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

Strapping tiny radio transmitters to bugs might seem like a questionable study, but for Associate Professor Gabriel Hamer, this innovative approach to examining the process of insect-borne disease transmission is proving effective in tracking the movements of triatomine bugs, or “kissing bugs,” which carry a disease-causing parasite.

The parasite, *Trypanosoma cruzi*, causes Chagas disease, a tropical infection endemic throughout much of Central and South America. Although most of the more than 300,000 Americans diagnosed with Chagas disease acquired the infection in a country where it is endemic, it is possible to acquire the disease locally, mostly during outdoor activities. Chagas can cause mild symptoms to severe complications in humans and animals.

In tracking the tagged bugs, researchers can note how far they travel and where their daytime hiding places occur, which is critical to know for efficient vector control. “The emergence and re-emergence of vector-borne diseases in the U.S. is a constant reminder that we need new tools to help manage and

mitigate disease,” said Hamer, whose studies span not only kissing bugs, but also mosquitoes, ticks and biting midges, all of which are common blood-feeding arthropods in Texas.

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### B. Don Russell

ENGINEERING RESEARCH CHAIR PROFESSOR  
AND DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT  
OF COMPUTER & ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING,  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING



Like many Texans, power engineer Professor B. Don Russell remembers the 2011 wildfires in Bastrop, Texas, when high winds caused trees to fall on power lines, resulting in the most damaging wildfire in the state's history.

Working to prevent catastrophic fires as well as outages, Russell and his team developed a technology to detect and predict electric faults called “Distributed Fault Anticipation” (DFA), an autonomous distributed computing system that provides electric utility operators a way of monitoring circuits, allowing for increased reliability and a reduction in outages. The innovative technology can also help utility companies locate tree branches in contact with power lines.

“A practical benefit of using DFA is the ability to detect and repair arcing and misoperating devices that often cause wildfires,” said Russell. “Whether preventing

*Professor Mark Benden studied the health benefits of using standing desks in classrooms. Today, more than 100,000 children worldwide are using his ergonomically-designed desks.*



wildfires or dangerous power lines on the ground, DFA is a new tool that improves reliability and safety.”

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### Jamilia Blake

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY,  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN  
DEVELOPMENT

Equity in education and healthy social development for schoolchildren are at the core of Professor Jamilia Blake’s studies.

Blake is nationally renowned for her research on race-based disparate treatment in school disciplinary practices, as well as bullying among diverse youth, including students with disabilities. Her findings have not only raised awareness of these issues, but have also been used by educators in the modification of bullying prevention programs.

The developmental and academic success of children as they travel the education



pipeline is critical for our nation, Blake said, adding that evidence-based research is key to developing solutions to ongoing problems of inequity in school-based practices. “Research can help ensure that all students have access to educational practices that promote their social development and aid them in fulfilling their educational potential,” she said.

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### Mark Benden

DEPARTMENT HEAD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
& DIRECTOR OF THE ERGONOMICS CENTER,  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, TEXAS A&M  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

More than 100,000 children around the world are using ergonomically-designed standing desks in their classrooms thanks to Professor Mark Benden, who won the 2018 Texas A&M Technology Commercialization Innovation Award for his work.

With a design based on ergonomic research, Benden founded Stand2Learn to produce standup classroom desks and stools. Benden’s desks are found inside schools in all 50 U.S. states and 13 other nations. “Our research found improvements in cognition, calorie expenditure, BMI trajectories and classroom management that gave this project fuel to impact child health and development through the classroom experience,” said Benden.

This year, Stand2Learn was acquired by Varidesk, a Dallas-area manufacturer of active office products. Texas A&M Technology Commercialization has licensed seven inventions Benden developed to four companies. Sales of items with his patent numbers have totaled more than \$500 million, and the expected lifetime economic impact of his designs exceeds \$2 billion.

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### Carolyn Kennedy '17

PH.D. CANDIDATE  
NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM,  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

When crews were excavating to build condos in downtown Toronto three years ago, they weren’t prepared to stumble upon a

centuries-old shipwreck buried nearly 40 feet beneath them. Last summer, a team of nautical archaeologists from Texas A&M spent four weeks in Toronto’s CityPlace neighborhood documenting the wreck to understand more about this mysterious schooner.

According to Carolyn Kennedy ’17, team leader on the project, the schooner dates to at least the 1820s, a timeframe indicated by ceramic pieces discovered in the wreckage. She added that researchers found an American penny as well as artifacts marked with the British broad arrow, leading them to question whether the vessel was built by American or British hands.

Continued examination will likely reveal more clues about the schooner’s history, and by extension, the history of the settlement of the area. ©



*Nicole Deere '21 records the stem (bow) of a ship that was found by a team of nautical archaeologists from Texas A&M led by Carolyn Kennedy '17. The researchers spent four weeks in Toronto’s CityPlace neighborhood documenting the wreck of a schooner that dates at least to the 1820s.*



▲ Aggies on Wall Street graduate Ben Benita '14 is an associate at Spire Capital, a leading middle market private equity firm in New York. He mentors current students in the program and hosts them at his company when they visit the city.

# BIGGEST 1000 STOCKS

Friday, September 22, 2018				YTD % Chg				52-Week				YTD % Chg				52-Week								
YTD % Chg	52-Week	Stock	YTD % Chg	52-Week	Stock	YTD % Chg	52-Week	YTD % Chg	52-Week	Stock	YTD % Chg	52-Week	YTD % Chg	52-Week	Stock	YTD % Chg	52-Week							
9.36	20.67	ABB	3.4	23	24.31	8.11	19.61	14.90	19.95	Cessna/Fin	CMR	4.1	10.88	-0.85	27.65	12.28	54.19	Calpanco	CLPO	4.0	114.21	1.45		
-12.82	6.95	ABT	2.5	1.57	0.05	-3.19	85.67	78.39	Comcast/Prop	CPT	13	45	9.71	1.17	19.76	75.51	20.48	Calphos	CLM	2.4	48	76.01	-0.42	
28.90	17.11	ABX	3.7	12.90	0.13	-16.75	51.07	32.63	Compass/Scup	CNS	13	47	19.19	1.27	-6.99	27.42	52.91	Camacho/Leisure	CLM	7.3	40	34.54	-0.03	
19.48	43.09	ABFC	2.3	3	88.09	3.15	81.58	88.79	Comcast/Goose	COM	41	97	1.07	-18.28	25.43	25.36	Gap	GAP	25	12	27.80	0.43		
-6.39	21.94	ABG	2.3	3	88.09	3.15	-3.20	100.03	85.47	QBC	CM	43	11	56.24	0.21	17.56	70.73	52.05	Garmin	GRMN	2.0	20	70.08	0.35
8.43	221.66	ABM	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	7.49	90.57	70.59	Can/NRiv	CNI	15	25	25.60	0.53	128.66	159.07	111.57	Genie	IT	0.1	150.45	1.50	
175.58	32.95	ABM	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	9.27	30.20	39.20	Can/NaturalRes	CNQ	13	19	34.81	0.03	0.99	330	184.23	GeneralDynamics	GD	1.3	21	209.86	1.80
23.64	190.46	ABM	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	14.01	71.44	10.50	CanPac/Riv	CP	1.0	10	289.73	3.88	30.26	25.21	11.94	Genie/Elec	GE	2.9	88	13.17	0.20
-13.12	39.80	ABT	2.5	1.57	0.05	-3.19	85.67	78.39	CardinalHealth	CAH	93	74	34.90	-0.23	25.00	70.07	11.01	Genie/Mills	GMS	4.2	12	88.46	0.09	
20.89	69.25	ABBV	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	8.97	129.47	97.05	CardinalHealth	CAH	93	74	34.90	-0.23	6.45	107.75	84.71	Genie/Parts	GSP	2.8	22	103.14	-0.37
-4.60	129.66	ABBV	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	4.59	25.90	95.45	CardinalHealth	CAH	93	74	34.90	-0.23	13.17	2.22	2.89	Genie/Parts	GSP	2.8	22	103.14	-0.37
105.37	450.93	ABBV	4.2	25	92.26	-0.42	21.89	51.67	57.05	CardMax	KMX	21	11	1.20	-0.01	14.14	89.54	64.27	Genie/Parts	GSP	2.8	22	103.14	-0.37
13.78	175.64	ACC	1.5	28	174.19	0.06	1.21	72.70	56.45	Carnival	CCL	3.0	17	88.30	0.21	20.89	149.25	92.97	GlobalPayments	GPN	0.0	37	12.17	0.04
26.80	82.03	ACTV	0.4	182	80.29	-0.36	0.15	72.70	56.45	Carnival	CCL	3.0	17	88.30	0.21	59.90	84.67	42.54	GoDaddy	GDDY	2.1	25	80.40	-1.19
-6.22	186.99	ACB	0.3	21	105.06	3.93	213.86	72.59	12.17	Carvana	CVNA	6.0	60	0.01	-0.04	-16.99	15.55	9.89	Goldman	GS	0.8	31	10.60	-0.17
-48.87	277.61	ADBE	54	260	88	-5.95	3.82	47.87	36.73	Catalent	CTLT	6.9	42	65	-0.34	-7.62	275.31	218.89	GoldmanSachs	GS	1.4	19	235.34	-2.06
158.98	32.95	ADBE	54	260	88	-5.95	-0.76	173.24	123.62	Caterpillar	CAT	2.0	30	156.30	0.38	3.83	49.69	40.19	Graco	GGG	1.1	29	46.95	-0.48
201.75	34.14	AMD	97	31	02	-0.16	8.54	119.29	95.45	Celanese	CE	1.9	14	116.22	-0.64	50.73	372.06	166.46	Grainger	GGW	1.5	26	356.09	1.07
3.17	7.48	AEG	4.9	5	6.50	0.06	-15.94	147.17	74.13	Celgene	CELG	24	87	7.2	-0.58	-7.81	25.10	10.84	Grifols	GRFS	2.3	18	21.13	-0.26
9.41	58.30	AER	4.9	5	6.50	0.06	-5.87	9.43	5.71	Cemex	CMX	18	7	0.06	-0.10	89.07	149.35	49.60	GrubHub	GRUB	9.6	135	75	-1.46
13.24	206.66	AET	1.0	19	204.27	-0.93	2.41	11.52	7.09	CenovusEnergy	CVE	1.6	68	9.35	0.15	2.30	111.60	82.19	GpoAeroportuar	PAC	3.8	23	105.12	-1.42
-28.07	217	AMG	0.8	12	147.63	1.62	41.47	148.24	83.56	Centene	CNC	24	142	71	-0.12	-11.71	212.70	152.41	GpoAeroportuar	ASR	1.6	20	203.89	-0.99
-5.60	75	AMG	0.8	12	147.63	1.62	-1.16	30.17	24.81	CenterPointEner	CNP	4.0	8	28.03	0.03	-0.80	25.13	14.20	GrubHub	GRUB	9.6	135	75	-1.46
-24.92	49.80	AEM	1.3	53	34.67	-0.43	37.53	24.20	13.16	CenturyLink	CTL	9.4	13	22.94	0.37	32.91	107.79	70.06	Guidewire	GWRE	4.0	11	7.52	-0.10
3.98	175.17	APD	2.6	25	170.61	0.19	37.53	24.20	13.16	CenturyLink	CTL	9.4	13	22.94	0.37	-11.53	9.51	7.40	GpoAvalAcc	AVL	4.1	11	7.52	-0.10
-13.01	83.08	AKAM	7.2	73	50	-0.67	-5.30	73.86	52.05	Cerner	CERN	25	63	82	-0.49	-0.80	25.13	14.20	GrubHub	GRUB	9.6	135	75	-1.46
-4.67	82.68	ALB	1.8	10	70.08	0.33	17.32	132.49	96.70	CharlesRiverLabs	CRL	4.9	128	41	-0.51	1.19	28.55	21.48	HCP	HCP	5.6	20	26.39	0.04
-17.57	144.99	ALB	1.8	10	70.08	0.33	-18.02	58.08	38.49	Chemours	CC	2.4	8	41.04	-0.51	-7.85	112.10	81.07	HDPC Bank	HDB	0.6	9	93.69	-1.21
-18.71	62.35	AA	5.9	43	79	0.86	13.64	120.81	93.76	CheckPoint	CHKP	23	117	75	-0.96	6.27	46.29	34.02	HD Supply	HDS	4.0	11	42.54	0.16
-2.90	134.37	ARE	2.9	46	126.80	0.56	24.41	69.50	43.31	CheniereEnergy	LNG	92	66	98	-1.03	12.29	26.14	19.31	HP	HPQ	2.2	9	25.83	0.14
-2.01	144.91	ALXN	4.0	121	99	-2.62	32.76	40.01	26.68	CheniereEnerPtrs	COP	5.7	33	35	-0.43	-13.01	55.89	42.46	HSBC	HSBC	4.5	18	44.92	0.13
-4.52	211.70	BABA	4.9	164	63	-1.25	-3.24	133.88	108.02	Chevron	CVX	3.7	19	121.13	1.71	-10.57	25.24	40.30	HAL	HAL	1.8	70	40.71	0.32
71.40	393.98	ALGT	1.0	1	100	1.00	-8.40	23.24	10.00	ChinaEastrn	CE	14	33	19	1.40	-10.87	56.50	39.34	HBI	HBI	3.2	195	18.70	0.67
-24.06	71.22	ALK	0.8	78	70.72	-0.41	26.11	48.24	83.56	ChinaLife	CL	2.8	12	11.43	0.16	10.87	56.50	39.34	HOG	HOG	3.3	15	45.35	-0.09
9.02	651.98	ALLE	0.7	85	2.86	-4.19	32.38	105	32.38	ChinaMobile	CHL	4.8	11	48.42	-0.33	15.98	170.54	129.86	HRS	HRS	1.7	28	164.28	1.62
13.21	91.58	ALB	1.8	10	70.08	0.33	-33.94	70	33.94	ChinaPetrol	CP	4.8	12	97.13	-1.17	54.17	126.98	156.83	HIG	HIG	2.4	25	50.92	0.16
16.95	217	AGN	1.3	53	34.67	-0.43	1.89	53	1.89	ChinaSoAirline	ZNH	2.3	8	34.23	1.56	18.23	109.60	79	HAS	HAS	2.3	66	107.46	0.45
-1.89	278.33	ADS	0.6	89	0.89	1.98	1.98	53	1.98	ChinaTelecom	CHA	3.0	12	48.41	-0.66	46.86	78.45	46.50	HELA	HELA	0.2	41	79.30	0.70
1.46	45.55	ALL	3.2	23	0.11	-10.35	15	15	15	ChinaUnicom	CHU	4.5	12	13	-0.14	51.05	94.12	55.12	HIE	HIE	0.1	50	91.21	0.58
24.08	53.55	ALSN	3.4	44	0.46	61.70	590	590	590	Chipotle	CHOP	2.7	16	7.67	0.14	-10.57	25.24	40.30	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-2.76	105.36	ALL	1.82	-0.21	-4.29	157	157	157	157	Chubb	CHUB	2.1	17	1.14	-0.14	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-5.56	31.29	ALLY	2.9	46	126.80	0.56	22.11	48.24	83.56	Church&Dwight	CHD	1.4	17	1.14	-0.14	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-25.56	153.99	ALNY	7.5	43	79	0.86	22.11	48.24	83.56	Church&Dwight	CHD	1.4	17	1.14	-0.14	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
11.27	1291.44	GOOGL	2.9	46	126.80	0.56	22.11	48.24	83.56	Church&Dwight	CHD	1.4	17	1.14	-0.14	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
11.44	1273.89	GOOGL	2.9	46	126.80	0.56	22.11	48.24	83.56	Church&Dwight	CHD	1.4	17	1.14	-0.14	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-2.75	82.45	AABA	7.9	3	-0.42	5.42	79	79	79	CimarexEnergy	C	0.1	19	1.90	1.90	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-9.75	28.45	ATUS	1.6	-0.05	35.85	217	217	217	217	CincinnatiFin	FIN	0.0	1	0.00	0.00	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-12.41	74.38	ALTR	2.5	0.29	-0.79	48	48	48	48	Cintas	C	2.5	30	0.01	0.01	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
-37.87	23.54	ACH	1.14	0.38	-0.39	80	80	80	80	CiscoSystem	CSCO	2.7	24	0.83	0.83	10.87	56.50	39.34	HIS	HIS	2.6	16	67.28	0.20
63.75	2050.50	AMZN	5.01	-29.29	-2.38	48																		



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**It's a 1,600-mile-drive from College Station to New York City,** but a chasm as wide as the Rio Grande in culture, experience and opportunities lies between the two. Bridging that gap can be a challenge for Aggies with a budding passion for finance but little experience outside of Texas.

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That's where the Aggies on Wall Street program is making a difference. The high-impact program within the Department of Finance at Mays Business School equips top students with advanced skills and access to opportunities in the competitive investment banking and private equity industries.

Now in its 23rd year, the program asks Aggies established in finance careers in New York for something far more valuable than simple monetary support: their time and their wisdom.

Aggies on Wall Street advisory board member and financial supporter Dan Sparks '89 knows the students' struggle firsthand. Recalling his own story, he said, "The biggest challenge for me was that I didn't really know about the opportunities. At the business school back then, we didn't have much exposure to careers outside of Texas. I was lucky that a few places I interviewed with in New York gave me an opportunity"

After a long and prestigious career with Goldman Sachs, Sparks is now the CEO, CIO and founder of Shelter Growth Capital Partners. His hedge fund was recently ranked seventh in the world by Barron's. Today, he's investing in the current generation of Aggie finance graduates so that they won't have to rely on luck; they'll have a powerful network of Aggies to help them achieve their Wall Street ambitions.

#### **Creating the Network**

With more than 20 years of experience in investment banking and private equity in the United States and in Europe, Philippe Hercot, executive professor of finance and director of Aggies on Wall Street, knows what it takes to have a successful career in finance. "We are constantly adapting and changing the program to meet the demands of the job market," said Hercot, who collaborates with Dr. Sorin Sorescu, longtime

head of the Department of Finance. One recent shift was moving the program up a year to maximize the recruiting cycle. Previously, students joined Aggies on Wall Street during their junior year, but Hercot and Sorescu recognized that to prepare students to be more competitive, they had to start sooner.

The program begins with an application process at the start of students' sophomore years. While some students are still settling into college and considering a major, the 16 to 20 students chosen to participate in Aggies on Wall Street each year must start thinking like professionals. Only those with strong analytical minds, a willingness to invest significant time and effort in and out of the classroom, and students who seek a fast-paced, demanding and competitive career are considered for the program.

That career is anchored by an internship that occurs the summer between their



“The biggest challenge for me was that I didn’t really know about the opportunities. Back then, we didn’t have much exposure to careers outside of Texas.”

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**Dan Sparks '89**

*FOUNDER, CEO & CIO  
SHELTER GROWTH CAPITAL PARTNERS*



New York City is the nation’s leading center for banking and finance. Anchored by Wall Street, the city is home to the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ, the world’s two largest stock exchanges by market capitalization.

▲  
 Each year, 16 to 20 top students are selected to participate in Aggies on Wall Street. These students master advanced finance curricula, complete an internship and visit New York to meet with representatives from top companies. Mason Fugger '20 went on the New York trip last spring.



ATM | **MAYS BUSINESS SCHOOL**  
 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK 3:31 PM
LONDON 8:31 PM
TOKYO 4:31 AM

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CURRENCIES

<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>1-YR T-BILL</td></tr> <tr><td>Price 2.27 Yield 2.3396 Yield Change +0.011</td></tr> </table>	1-YR T-BILL	Price 2.27 Yield 2.3396 Yield Change +0.011	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>2-YR T-NOTE</td></tr> <tr><td>Price 99.84 Yield 2.5858 Yield Change +0.008</td></tr> </table>	2-YR T-NOTE	Price 99.84 Yield 2.5858 Yield Change +0.008	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>MXN-USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Last 0.0525 %Change -0.61 Day High 0.0529 Day Low 0.0524</td></tr> </table>	MXN-USD	Last 0.0525 %Change -0.61 Day High 0.0529 Day Low 0.0524	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>RUB-USD</td></tr> <tr><td>Last 0.0160 %Change 0.98 Day High 0.0162 Day Low 0.0160</td></tr> </table>	RUB-USD	Last 0.0160 %Change 0.98 Day High 0.0162 Day Low 0.0160
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AGRICULTURE

149.45 2.40 1.58	108.55 3.40 3.04
LIVE CATTLE	CORN
Price 149.88 Change 5.27 %Change 3.49	Price 108.88 Change 2.86 %Change 2.63
SUGAR	SOYBEANS
Price 15.07 Change 0.19 %Change 1.28	Price 10.18 Change 0.18 %Change 1.79
WHEAT	COFFEE
Price 12.08 Change 0.12 %Change 1.00	Price 1.18 Change 0.02 %Change 1.70

ENERGY AND METALS

CRUDE OIL	GOLD
Price 79.82 Change 3.29 %Change 4.14	Price 1247.80 Change 5.90 %Change 0.47
COPPER	HEATING OIL
Price 3.79 Change 0.08 %Change 2.14	Price 1.18 Change 0.01 %Change 0.85
NATURAL GAS	PLATINUM
Price 2.18 Change 0.02 %Change 0.92	Price 1000.00 Change 0.00 %Change 0.00
INDIUM	SILVER
Price 100.00 Change 0.00 %Change 0.00	Price 17.00 Change 0.00 %Change 0.00

junior and senior years. If they work hard and add value to the employer, that internship should conclude with a job offer. Internship recruiting now begins as early as the spring of students' sophomore years.

The traditional finance major doesn't tackle topics like corporate finance or investment banking until their junior year. Aggies on Wall Street students take these classes as sophomores. They are also expected to keep abreast of current economic and financial news, as well as read additional books assigned by faculty. In their junior or senior year, they must master advanced financial modeling—curriculum not presented elsewhere in the business school.

The first year of the program concludes with a month-long investment banking seminar. Immediately following the class, students travel to New York, where they visit 35-plus investment banks, hedge funds, private equity firms and other financial companies. They are hosted by Aggies or their colleagues who are employed at top firms from Credit Suisse and JP Morgan to Blackstone, Goldman Sachs and KKR. They also

share meals with Aggies and friends of the program who open their homes and their contacts to students. Each personal interaction, whether in a boardroom or a living room, is an opportunity for students to learn and build professional connections.

### Hard but So Helpful

Mason Fugger '20 went on the New York trip last spring. The experience was not a relaxing field trip. "It was meetings back to back to back," he said, noting that their day began at 7:30 a.m. and ended at 10:30 p.m., at which point they went to their rooms to read case studies and prep for the following day's visit, often until past 2 a.m. "You think you're ready and you go into it knowing you're going to work hard, but you get there and it's like drinking from a firehose the whole time." Students had to research each of the companies and complete assignments before and after each visit.

A lot of preparation and high-level participation is expected by the hosts, as well as Hercot. He demands much of the students in the classroom and even more on

the trip. "He gets you accustomed to harsh, critical feedback," said Fugger. "He will tell you that you are completely wrong in front of a big group. Most people would be surprised that a professor would do that, but it's part of the environment in this industry. It's better to hear negative feedback than to not know what you're doing wrong."

"I keep them on their toes. My style is a little bit intense," Hercot agreed, noting that he has students approve in writing before the program begins that he may give them feedback in front of their peers for career preparation. "Wall Street is very competitive, and they must be up for a serious challenge. They have unrivaled access to the builders and culture creators of Wall Street in this program, and they have to make the most of it." He insists that students make a good impression while in New York, knowing that their career depends on it.

The students understand the stakes and appreciate his approach. He has a stack of thank you notes on his desk, written by students after the trip. "Your teaching style forced us to quickly learn from our mistakes,

"I love it here. New York Aggies is the largest A&M club in the country outside of Texas, and its members are eager to help newcomers navigate the city."

Catherine Flax '85

FINTECH EXECUTIVE, COMMODITIES PROFESSIONAL



Dow Jones Industrial Average (HIGHEST CLOSING POINTS PER YEAR)

1995

▲ 5,216

2018

26,951

Mays Business School's Aggies on Wall Street program launched in 1995. In November of that year, the Dow Jones Industrial Average made history when it topped the 5,000 mark for the first time. Since then, the Dow has more than quadrupled in market value.

Percentage of Global GDP

16.9%

Percentage of U.S. GDP

7.5%

The International Monetary Fund estimates that the financial services sector comprises about 16.9 percent of the global economy and 7.5 percent of the U.S. economy, as measured in GDP. Nearly every large, global financial institution has a presence in New York City.

“The program prepares us with soft skills and technical skills so we can go anywhere and be successful.”

Richa Shorey '19

INTERN AND FUTURE EMPLOYEE, WILLIAM BLAIR



think outside the box and grow at a fast rate,” said one. “Thank you for pushing us and making us believe we can compete with the best,” reads another.

### Aggies Coast to Coast

Hercot hopes to expand the program eventually to include Boston and Philadelphia, where world-class asset managers are based, as well as a West Coast tour where students could meet venture capitalists. “So much of our future depends on Silicon Valley,” he said. “It would be just as eye-opening for Texas A&M students to visit there as it is in New York City.” Though the program has Wall Street in the title, he noted that, “our students could have great careers in other places in the U.S. and internationally.”

This summer, Aggies on Wall Street senior Richa Shorey '19 spent her internship with global investment bank William Blair, within the technology group at its San Francisco branch. She worked with a team of investment bankers on sell side M&A transactions, IPOs and other valuation projects. A lifelong Texan, Shorey loved spend-

ing time in a new state and in a new area of the industry. “This program is extremely helpful for those of us who want to work in finance outside of oil and gas investment banking, which is largely what is available in Texas,” she said. “The program prepares us with soft skills and technical skills so we can go anywhere and be successful.”

Shorey was delighted to receive a full-time offer with William Blair at the end of the internship and will be joining them after her senior year at Texas A&M.

Mentorship is a big part of the program. Final-year students like Shorey mentor first and second-year students while being mentored by two professionals working in the industry. The mentoring relationships typically last until students enter the workforce. Once they are established in their careers, they become mentors to the next generation.

Aggies on Wall Street graduate Ben Benita '14 is an associate at Spire Capital, a leading middle market private equity firm in New York. He mentors current students and hosts them at his company when they

visit the city. “It makes me proud to give back to the program that helped me so much,” he said, noting that it was on his trip to New York as a student that he was first introduced to Barclays, where he eventually interned and started his investment banking career. “Aggies on Wall Street opened the door for me to build relationships with people in the industry; that was the key to getting interviews. It’s an honor to give back and help students achieve the same dream.”

### Living the Dream

Thom Krauss '89, Citi’s head of capital introductions for the Americas, and Catherine Flax '85, a Fintech executive, also host students, mentor and provide financial support for the program. Well-connected in the city, Krauss and Flax both advise students on navigating details beyond the workplace.

Krauss, a father of four and two-time Ironman finisher, said he sometimes hears from Texas A&M students that they are intimidated by Wall Street culture, unsure of

▲  
Thom Krauss '89, Citi's head of capital introductions for the Americas, has provided financial support to Aggies on Wall Street and often mentors Texas A&M students about navigating details beyond the workplace.





Aggies on Wall Street students pay \$3,000 for the two-week trip to New York, which covers part of their expenses, such as lodging and some travel. For first-generation students especially, scholarships can be a bridge to attaining these opportunities.

how they could find a work-life balance. Krauss tells them it's like how he trains for a triathlon—he must commit to working incredibly hard, but not forever. “Working in finance is like any top career,” he said. “If you want to be a doctor or a lawyer, you have to put in the work at the beginning. If you really want to catalyze momentum in your career, it's going to be a big push for the first few years.” New hires are known to work 80 to 100 hours per week initially.

Flax formerly led a firm that is developing the world's first artificial intelligence technology for financial advising. In addition to career-oriented requests, she gets a lot of lifestyle questions from young Aggies: How do you build not only a career but also a life in the city? “I love it here. It's a rich environment with so much going on,” she said. “Before I came to New York, I wondered how in the world people raise children here, and now I've raised three! I wouldn't want to do it any other way.” Flax recommends graduates get involved with the local A&M club and points out that New York Aggies is the largest A&M club in the country

outside of Texas. “It's a valuable resource, and its members are eager to help newcomers navigate the city,” she added.

Flax and Krauss have both hired Aggie interns and testify to their quality. “It's terrific to work with students who are so well-trained but who also have such great attitudes,” said Flax.

Krauss agreed, saying that Aggies' lack of entitlement and willingness to learn is a refreshing change on Wall Street. He also noted that Aggies tend to be well-rounded and have more leadership experience.

Aggies on Wall Street is not only important to student participants, but also to the university. “We can't say we are one of the top business schools and finance departments in the nation if we don't have students working on Wall Street and in other financial hubs,” said Hercot.

Many East Coast schools have a well-beaten path to New York due to proximity. Aggies on Wall Street levels the playing field so Texas A&M students can compete with grads from Ivy League schools and succeed.

That's why Craig McMahan '89 is involved with the program. “When I started my career, there were very few Aggies in New York. The Ivy League schools had a network on Wall Street and Texas A&M didn't,” he said. Today, McMahan is managing director in the investment banking department of Keefe, Bruyette & Woods. One of the original founders of Aggies on Wall Street, he recently established an excellence fund for the program. “I want to improve salaries for graduates and improve the national reputation of Texas A&M,” he said. “If we open doors to the top students, this program will pay dividends.” ☺

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SUPPORTING AGGIES ON WALL STREET, CONTACT:

BRIAN BISHOP '91  
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION  
(800) 392-3310 OR (979) 862-3615  
BBISHOP@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM

Give online at [give.am/AOWS](http://give.am/AOWS).

#### Endowed Scholarships

**\$25,000+**

*Endowed scholarships for Aggies on Wall Street students may be created with a \$25,000 gift, while excellence funds to offset student and administrative costs for the program may be established with endowed gifts of \$50,000 or more. These funds will allow the program to continue expanding while keeping costs reasonable for students.*

“When I started my career, there were very few Aggies in New York. I want to improve salaries for graduates and improve the national reputation of Texas A&M.”

**Craig McMahan '89**

MANAGING DIRECTOR—INVESTMENT BANKING  
KEEFE, BRUYETTE & WOODS



Dr. Leslie Ruyle has traveled to more than 70 countries in her career, and yet her wanderlust motivates her to see even more of the globe. Since most of her travels have been in Africa and Latin America, Ruyle likes to joke about standing out from the crowd. "I'm a 6-foot-tall blonde woman, so naturally everyone assumes I'm a foreigner!" she laughed.

Luckily, that perception hasn't held her back from making a huge impact on local populations in some of the world's most conflict-afflicted areas. As an ecologist and assistant director of the Scowcroft Institute of International Affairs, housed in the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Ruyle studies the dynamics of conservation and development in areas facing environmental dilemmas, civil war or political unrest. Her work focuses on big questions:



*"How can conservation provide benefits to both humans and wildlife?  
How can development promote conservation and better lives for people?  
And how can we support entrepreneurship and economic development  
in regions of conflict and conservation concern?"*

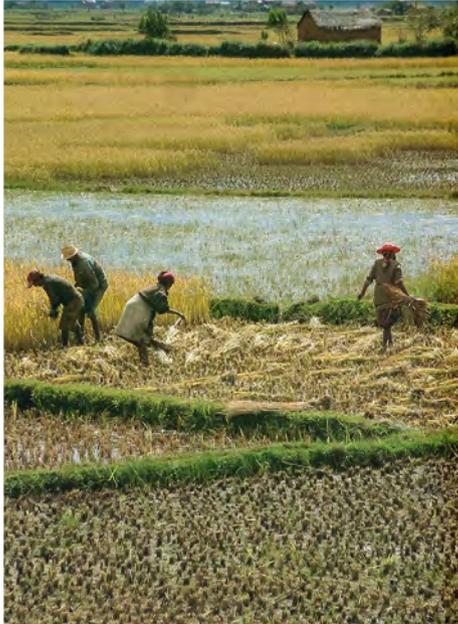
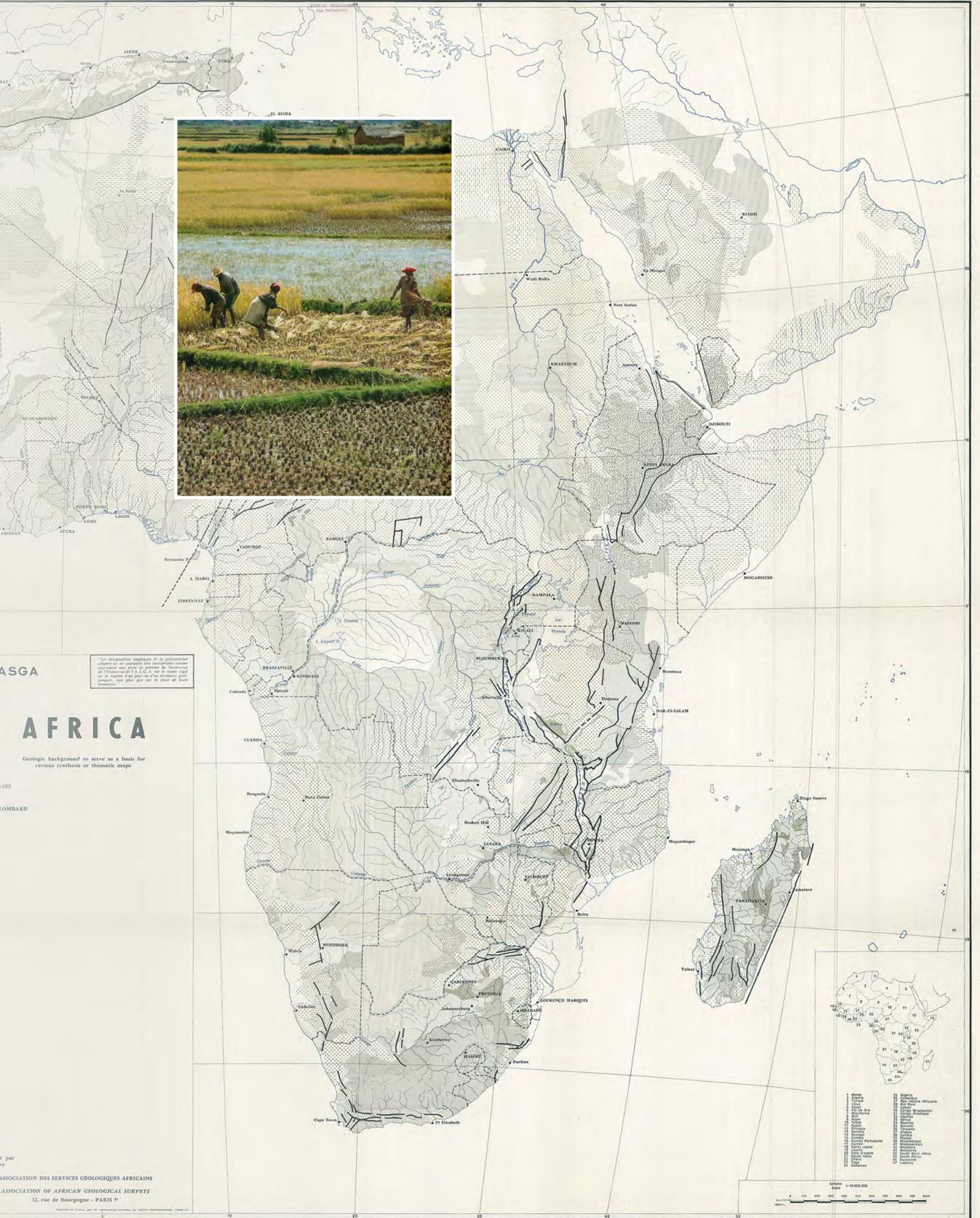
IT TAKES A

—BY MOLLY KULPA '15

# VILLAGE

ECOLOGIST DR. LESLIE RUYLE CREATES INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR CONSERVATION, CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT.





"Les observations géologiques et la reconnaissance géologique ont été réalisées dans les pays de l'Afrique au cours de l'été 1954. Elles ont été effectuées par les géologues de l'Institut de Géologie de l'Université de Paris. Elles ont été réalisées en collaboration avec les géologues des pays concernés, non plus que sur le terrain de leurs frontières."

# AFRICA

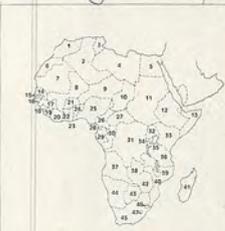
Geologic background to serve as a basis for various synthesis or thematic maps

ASGA

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LOMBARD

Association des Services Géologiques Africains  
 ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS  
 12, rue de Bourgogne - PARIS 7<sup>e</sup>



1. Sahara	16. Plateau de l'Afrique de l'Est
2. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord	17. Plateau de l'Afrique du Sud
3. Plateau de l'Afrique de l'Ouest	18. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre
4. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est	19. Plateau de l'Afrique du Sud-Est
5. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest	20. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Est
6. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Centre	21. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud
7. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est-Centre	22. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Est
8. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest-Centre	23. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Ouest
9. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est-Sud	24. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Est
10. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest-Sud	25. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Ouest
11. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est-Centre-Sud	26. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Est
12. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest-Centre-Sud	27. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Ouest
13. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est-Sud-Est	28. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Est
14. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Ouest-Sud-Est	29. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Ouest
15. Plateau de l'Afrique du Nord-Est-Centre-Sud-Est	30. Plateau de l'Afrique du Centre-Sud-Est



## FIELD NOTES

Ruyle's pursuit of answers to these questions has taken her to the far reaches of the earth. She's traveled with faculty to Nepal to study the impact of conflict on natural disaster resilience. She's taken Aggies on high-impact trips to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to focus on issues of malnutrition in women and children and to conduct evaluations of educational programs for displaced youth. She's worked with partners on human-wildlife conflict projects in Botswana, where elephants cause damage to local farmers' property and crops. And she's currently heading up an entrepreneurship hub in the Democratic Republic of the Congo designed at giving locals more economic opportunities.

### BRINGING STUDENTS INTO THE MIX

Ruyle first came to Texas A&M University as a program coordinator for the interdisciplinary Applied Biodiversity Science Program in 2010. She eventually became the assistant director of the Center on Conflict and Development housed in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, which improves the effectiveness of programs and policies for conflict-affected and fragile countries through research and education.

In August 2017, she assumed her current position at the Scowcroft Institute, an organization that fosters and disseminates policy-oriented research on international affairs. She also teaches courses at the Bush School and in the Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management, particularly those relating to the role of women in international development, environmental conflict and natural resource policy.

As much as possible, she likes to bring her real-world projects to the classroom. She's solicited the College of Engineering's

What's on your desk?

"A lot of wildlife stuff—a carved Komodo dragon, a 3-D-printed elephant, a stuffed chameleon and a papier-mâché hippo given to me by one of my students."

Where's a country you would like to go?

"Every country I haven't been to."



What quality would you like to be known for?

"Ooh, good question. 'Empowering' feels overused, but 'supportive' isn't strong enough. I strive to be a good mentor and focus on my students' strengths to help them build upon them."

What's your favorite animal and why?

"I like so many...gorillas are fascinating because when they look at you, you want to know what they're thinking about you."



Dr. Leslie Ruyle (left) challenges colleagues and students alike to think about problems in new ways. She's traveled to the far reaches of the globe to improve communities through long-term conservation solutions.

Aggies Invent program to have teams of students work on projects ranging from improving shea nut butter processes in Ghana to a project that uses drones to dart gorillas with tranquilizers to provide veterinary care. She also likes to pose policy-oriented questions to Bush School students. "I love working with students and opening up their worlds," she said. "It's great to see their brains at work solving problems."

In 2016, she took an interdisciplinary team of students to Botswana to work with Texas A&M faculty members on human-elephant conflict mitigation strategies. The group improved current elephant deterrents such as chili-bombs, dried mixtures of spicy chilis and elephant dung. The bombs are set around crop fields, lit with hot coals and left to burn for hours. The mixture gives off a pungent smell that offends elephants' sensitive trunks and drives them away from crops. Beehive fencing is another commonly used method to keep elephants away from crops.

Aggie students have also played a role in an entrepreneurship program called EC3 that Ruyle launched last summer in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The goal of EC3 is to understand how *Entrepreneurship* is different in a region of *Conflict*, limited *Connectivity* and *Conservation* concern. The test community for the program is on the border of Virunga National Park, an area where there are few paved roads and running water, electricity and internet connection is limited.

"The goal is to support entrepreneurs working under these conditions and understand the best way to create a collaborative and resilient system that supports their economic development while protecting the environment around them," Ruyle said. The first hub is known as Wakisha, which means 'ignite' in Swahili. It is based at the Christian Bilingual University of Congo. "It's basically a business incubator," Ruyle



added. "We find people to invest in Wakisha, which in turn invests in the locals' entrepreneurial ventures. The locals pitch their ideas to investors via a Shark Tank format that we call 'Leopard's Lair.'"

Aggie students contributed to the program by developing an app to help local businesspeople with their finances and bookkeeping. Ruyle's group has also built a co-working space where Wakisha participants can use computers, electricity and the internet. The program's portfolio of supported entrepreneurs has a 50:50 gender balance, with 10 percent of businesses focused on the arts, such as film, music, fashion and sports. Other companies are focused on solar power, coffee, passion fruit juice, meat and egg production, restaurants and cleaning services.

#### DEVisING PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

A final example of Ruyle's conservation efforts lies in the interest of keeping human-hippo relations civil. As she noted, you don't have to see hippos in northern Ghana to know they're around—their grunting noises from the rivers is evidence enough. That spells trouble for local farmers, who must protect their crops from these hungry night-time foragers. The solution lies in creating a larger buffer zone in between rivers and local farms by planting more shea nut trees.

Shea nut trees grow well in the wild, so increasing the forest area around the

river where hippos spend their days provides them more land to graze on and deters them from wandering onto farmers' fields. This

solution also creates value in the riverine forest area through shea nut butter production, an industry that supports many women in Ghana. The women harvest the fleshy green fruit that these trees produce, which contain the nut that shea butter comes from. Shea butter is a valuable resource that's used in many moisturizers and beauty products worldwide.

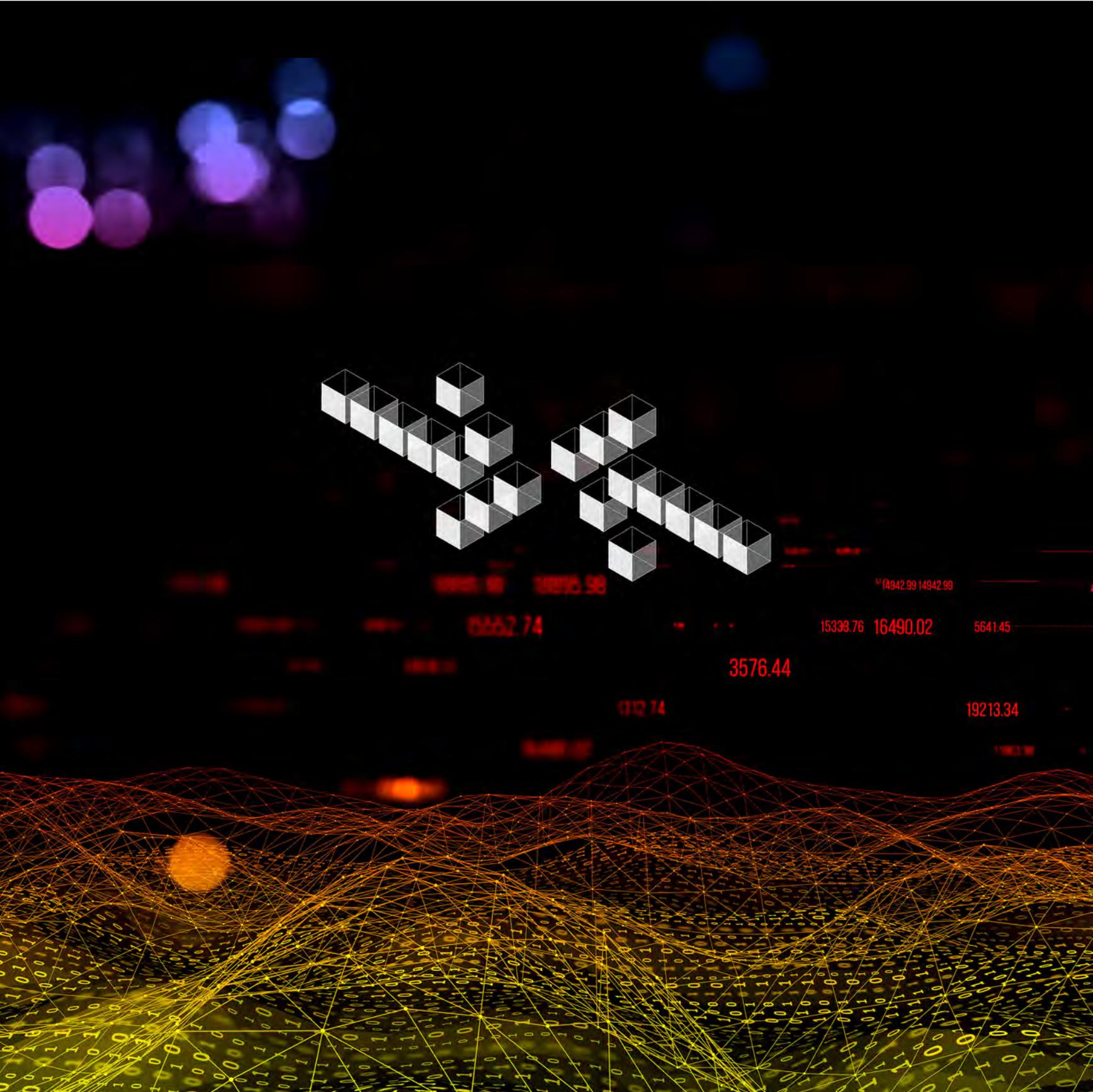
It's exactly the kind of solution Ruyle seeks to find when confronting issues of conservation: It improves the welfare of people, animals and the environment. When completing an international project, Ruyle is always concerned with ensuring that development comes from the bottom up. She believes it is imperative that local community members have a voice in the way things are done, instead of a top-down approach, which has often been the paradigm in previous efforts. In other words, she notes, "It takes a village to create meaningful solutions that inspire long-lasting changes in these communities." ©

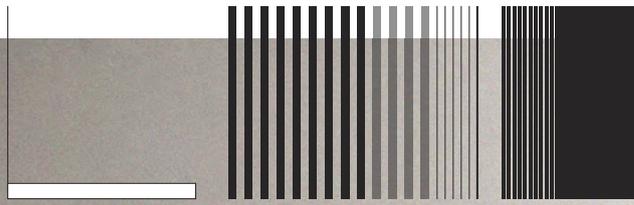
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MICHAEL BOTTIGLIERI '89  
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
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MBOTTIGLIERI@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM

Watch an animated video about Dr. Ruyle at [leadbyexample.tamu.edu/Leslie](http://leadbyexample.tamu.edu/Leslie).

Former Rackspace CEO and Chairman **Graham Weston '86** has his sights set on transforming downtown San Antonio into a prominent tech hub.





BY JEANNIE RALSTON

Graham Weston '86 has faced many hurdles and hardships on his way to stunning entrepreneurial success as the founding CEO of tech giant Rackspace. But nothing compares to the one he faced at one of his first startups: A loaded gun pointed at his head. By his business partner.

Weston was a junior in agricultural economics at Texas A&M University and had already launched a few small businesses when he thought of opening an ice cream and cookie store on Northgate. The drinking age had just been raised to 21, and he thought college students under 21 would need a new place to hang out. His enterprise, Crumby's, was set for the building next to the famed Dixie Chicken, but the day before opening, his business partner wanted to change the terms of their agreement.

## The Weston Way



“When I didn’t agree, he drew his six-shooter on me—right in my face,” Weston recalled. If there was ever a sign that the relationship was doomed, that was it. “I ran from that business,” he said.

Crumby’s, which the business partner operated for several years, is now replaced by the Dry Bean Saloon. But the impact of that early fiasco stays with Weston to this day, since most anyone with a long career knows you can gain as much from failure as from success. “I learned it really matters who you’re in business with, whether it’s your employees or your partners,” he said.

The notion that people matter has been one of Weston’s guiding forces—and later the basis for a management philosophy—as he has gone on to open a string of booming businesses and to become the de facto face of downtown economic revitalization for the city of San Antonio.

## On the Hunt

Of course, there have been many other factors in Weston’s success, starting with pure love—a love of the challenge and excitement of finding a business that clicks. “I always felt I was going to be an entrepreneur, working for myself in some way, because I didn’t feel I would thrive in a large organization,” he said. “Even in school, I was contemplating my first business.”

Growing up on his family’s Santa Clara ranch in Marion, close to New Braunfels, Texas, as the son of a rancher and entrepreneur, Weston was a member of 4-H and FFA and raised steers in high school.

One of his first forays into business was selling pigs, for which he took out a newspaper ad that read, “Go Hog Wild.” He had started taking photos of participants and their show animals at stock shows. At age 16, he convinced a local stock show to require that every participant have their picture taken. “That was really my win,” he said, referring to his effective deal making.

When it came time to choose a college, he only considered Texas A&M University. “Until the end of my junior year in college, I expected to come back and work on the ranch,” he said. But ironically, his time in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences prepared him for another path. “I think

of my agribusiness degree as a small business degree,” he said. “It trained me to be on my own, doing my own business. I think it was perfect for me.”

The agriculture school also taught him how to build a culture that encourages everyone to do their best. “I found the college was tremendously personal,” he said. “Professors there really cared about me and that meant something.”

Personal relationships were one of the reasons he stayed in the college even after his junior year, when he launched what would become his first major business success. “It began in my dorm room in Puryear Hall,” Weston explained. “I saw through my studies at Texas A&M that there was an opportunity based on comparative data to change the basis of how property tax rates were assessed.” Using available and reliable real-life data, Weston’s company could effectively dispute arbitrary tax assessments that were then the order of the day. His company, by then named Assessment Technologies, saved substantial amounts of money for commercial clients like Walgreen’s, Trammell Crow and Melvin Simon, the huge shopping mall company.

Weston remembers that his most important course in college was a sales class. “It made me realize how important sales people are to business,” he said, again reaffirming his commitment to working with good people. This would become important later at Rackspace, when he made sales people critical members of the team, while many tech companies looked down on sales staff.

After graduating, Weston set his entrepreneurial sights in a new direction. “Because it was the middle of the financial crisis in the late ‘80s, I saw that many of my tax clients were being foreclosed,” he said. “There were a lot of distressed properties for sale, and that’s when I stepped out of my property tax business to focus on buying distressed real estate.”

## The Big One

But in the kind of scattershot, one-thing-leads-to-another trajectory of entrepreneurial success, his real estate investing led in an indirect way to his home run—Rackspace, which was basically conceived on a San Antonio highway in the late ‘90s.

By then, Weston had bought what he calls his “trophy property”: the tallest office building in the city (now called Weston Centre). The internet was just becoming a real force in business. His office building was equipped with a T1 line, the fastest internet connection at the time, because it was digital rather than dial-up.

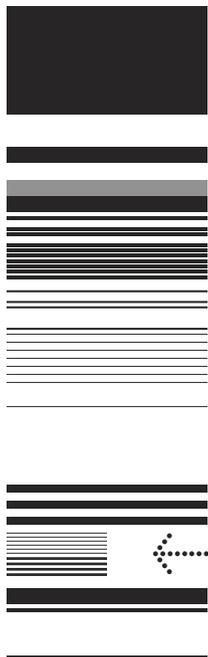
“One weekend, I drove from my apartment to my office downtown to use the high-speed internet system,” he remembered. “The line was very expensive: \$2,000 per month. So, I thought to myself, ‘I should buy one of these for my big office building and just have all the tenants share it.’”

By his own admission, Weston is not a technical person. The father of three, he offered this joke as proof: “I used to think a hard drive was taking my kids to West Texas.” At the same time, he had a friend sharing the office space who was out daily exploring business opportunities they might pursue together. When Weston mentioned his internet idea, his friend suggested they talk to the young people who had installed the high-speed internet in his building. “That was really the trigger,” said Weston.

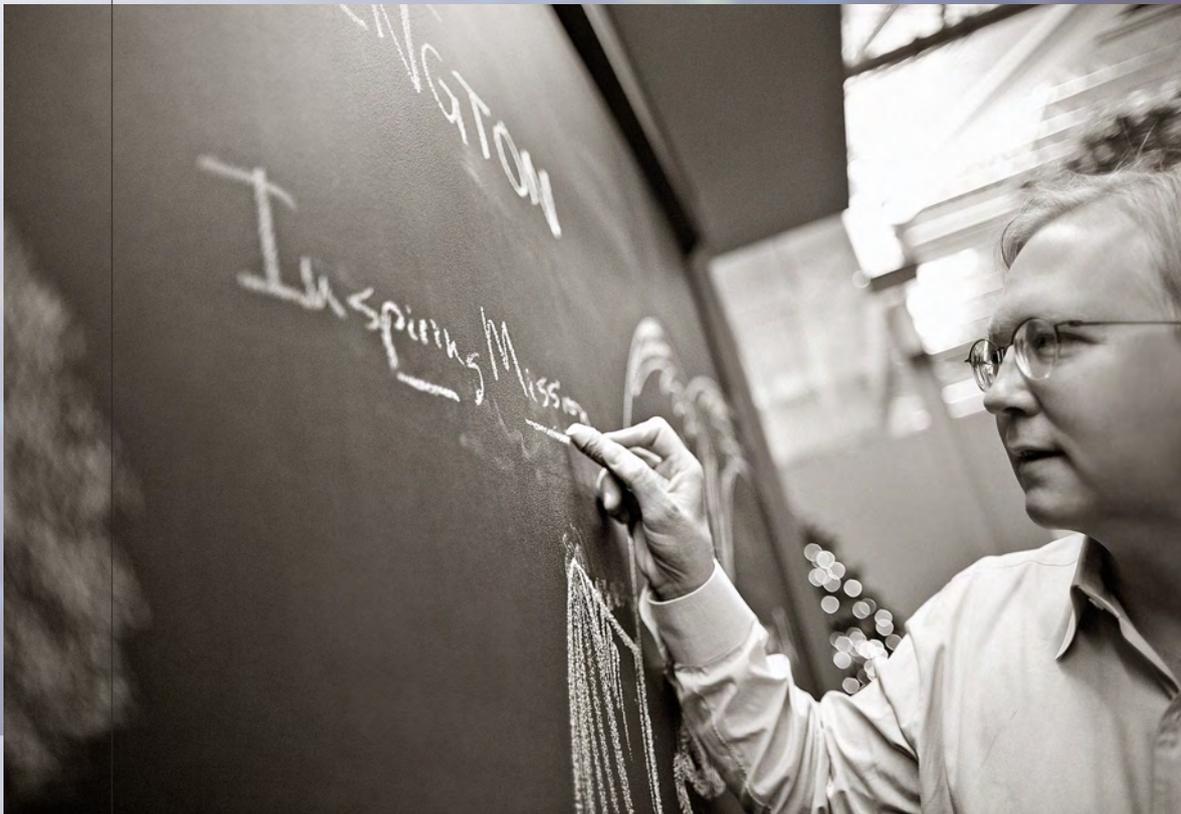
Weston and his partner sat down with three young techies—original founders Richard Yoo, Dirk Elmendorf and Patrick Condon—at Chester’s Hamburgers on Nacogdoches Road for a six-hour conversation that resulted in the formal creation of Rackspace, with Weston in the role of ‘angel investor’ and business counsel for the nascent company.

“Our idea was that we would make having a web server simple. In my very simplistic real estate brain, I thought about it like renting an apartment when you’re a student. When you don’t want the apartment anymore, you can give it back,” Weston explained. “We thought renting servers to people would be just like renting an apartment. We knew the bigger the internet got, the more people would need servers to run websites.”

Rackspace officially launched in January 1999, at the same time as Google. The prescient idea took off immediately. Within eight weeks, Rackspace had installed 100 servers and revenue was \$200,000 per month. Within six months, Weston and his partner—who had only been devoting a



**The internet brought a need for speed.** Getting onto the information superhighway required little in the way of horsepower during the 1990s, when typical dial-up modem speeds were in the 33 to 64 kilobytes per second (kbit/s) range. By 1999, Digital Subscriber Lines provided speeds up to 256 kbit/s, while fiber optic lines offered the fastest connection possible, but at a huge monthly expense.



Graham Weston '86 is drawn to transformative ideas. His plan to equip a vacant San Antonio office building with servers to handle the faster web-browsing needs of businesses became [Rackspace](#)—a company sold to a private equity firm in 2016 for \$4.3 billion.

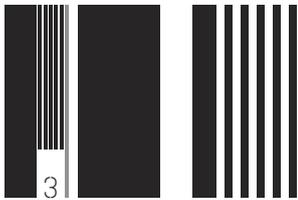




**Ecosystems create entrepreneurs.** Weston is committed to attracting and retaining San Antonio's tech talent through historic redevelopment and new construction at the city's center. At nearly 50,000 square feet, Geekdom (above) is home to more than 200 startups housed in the River City's historic Rand Building. In 2019, Frost Tower (below) will add 460,000 square feet of high-end office space to the San Antonio footprint.



460,000 sq ft



### Fostering Aggie Entrepreneurship

Weston is supporting entrepreneurship at Texas A&M through the Weston AgriFood Sales Program in the Department of Agricultural Economics, which offers the only sales minor at Texas A&M. Its mission is to develop emotionally intelligent sales professionals who can enter reputable firms upon graduation. In April 2018, Weston's generosity also extended to Mays Business School in the form of a \$1.5 million gift to the McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship. Its programs are designed to help enterprising students, faculty and alumni who want to explore and launch new businesses.

Geekdom's reputation as an economic driver is backed by its companies' achievements. Since 2011, Geekdom-based companies have raised more than \$79 million in venture capital with a combined projected revenue of \$52.4 million.



small percentage of their time to the company—became full-time, with Weston as CEO.

Rackspace came to life at the right place at the right time, which is certainly essential to entrepreneurial success. But there Weston discovered a corollary to this maxim. “Whenever you’re at the right place at the right time, other people are too,” he said. “There were at least 150 other companies there at the same time, and we could see that it was going to be a very competitive business.” It took a visit with the preeminent marketing strategy guru of the ‘80s and ‘90s, the late Jack Trout, for Weston to make the decision that propelled Rackspace to success. Trout, who became a mentor for Weston, told him, “If you’re not different, you better have a lower price.”

That advice set Rackspace on a journey to determine how the company was going to stand out. “After looking at multiple options, the idea of dedicated support came to us, and that’s what Rackspace became famous for,” he said. “At the time, the support most technical companies offered was terrible. Our goal was to be the most trusted company on the internet.”

Because of his focus on working with good people on every level, Weston wanted to ensure that both customers and employees felt appreciated. “We created a management culture that tried to bring out the best in people,” he said. Weston and his team wanted their employees to feel like “valued members of a winning team with an inspiring mission.”

Their approach paid off. While Weston was CEO from 1999 through 2006, the company grew from 12 people to 1,200. It grew by 50 percent per year, on average. YouTube and WordPress, among many tech companies, got their start on Rackspace-hosted servers. In 2006, Weston stepped down as CEO (but remained chairman) and in August 2008, Rackspace went public. “The last IPO before the financial crisis,” Weston noted. By 2015, Rackspace was the largest managed hosting company in the country, with offices across the world. In 2016, when Rackspace had 6,000 employees and \$2 billion in annual revenue, the company was sold to a private equity firm for \$4.3 billion.

### Operation San Antonio

The next phase of Weston’s career began in 2011 with an email. Rackspace had bought a smaller company and part of the deal was that the seller would relocate to San Antonio. “He declined,” Weston reported. In an email, he told Weston that San Antonio didn’t have the software developer community, the startup network or the urban amenities he was looking for; he wanted a place where he could step out the door, walk his dog and go to a coffee shop. “It is not a city well suited for young people,” the email stated. Weston was bothered by the email, and sent it to Julian Castro, then mayor of San Antonio. “I said, ‘This is the city we must build.’”

At the time, Weston had no desire to get involved again with San Antonio real estate. “I had just sold some stock. I was feeling flush. I was really enjoying having money and not spending it,” he said. But over the next year, as he worked with Castro on city planning, a realization set in: Someone needed to do for San Antonio what Michael Dell had done for Austin, which was spearhead the city’s transformation into a tech center. “Over time,” he said, “I became persuaded that if anyone understood this problem and had the ability to address it, it was me.”

It wasn’t the first time Weston had risen to the occasion to help San Antonio. Former mayor Phil Hardberger recalled that when thousands of refugees arrived in the city after the twin disasters of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Weston offered the use of an empty shopping mall he had recently bought (which would eventually become Rackspace’s home). “It was a multimillion-dollar gift,” Hardberger said. “He has great vision; he can look into the future and then position himself so that the future fits his dream.”

Since devoting himself to this new mission, Weston (through his company Weston Urban) has bought 15 acres downtown, now designated as a tech district. It will be the future home of a new headquarters for Frost Bank, among other tenants. “What we’re trying to do is transform downtown from being just a place for lawyers and accountants into a place for the tech startup community,”

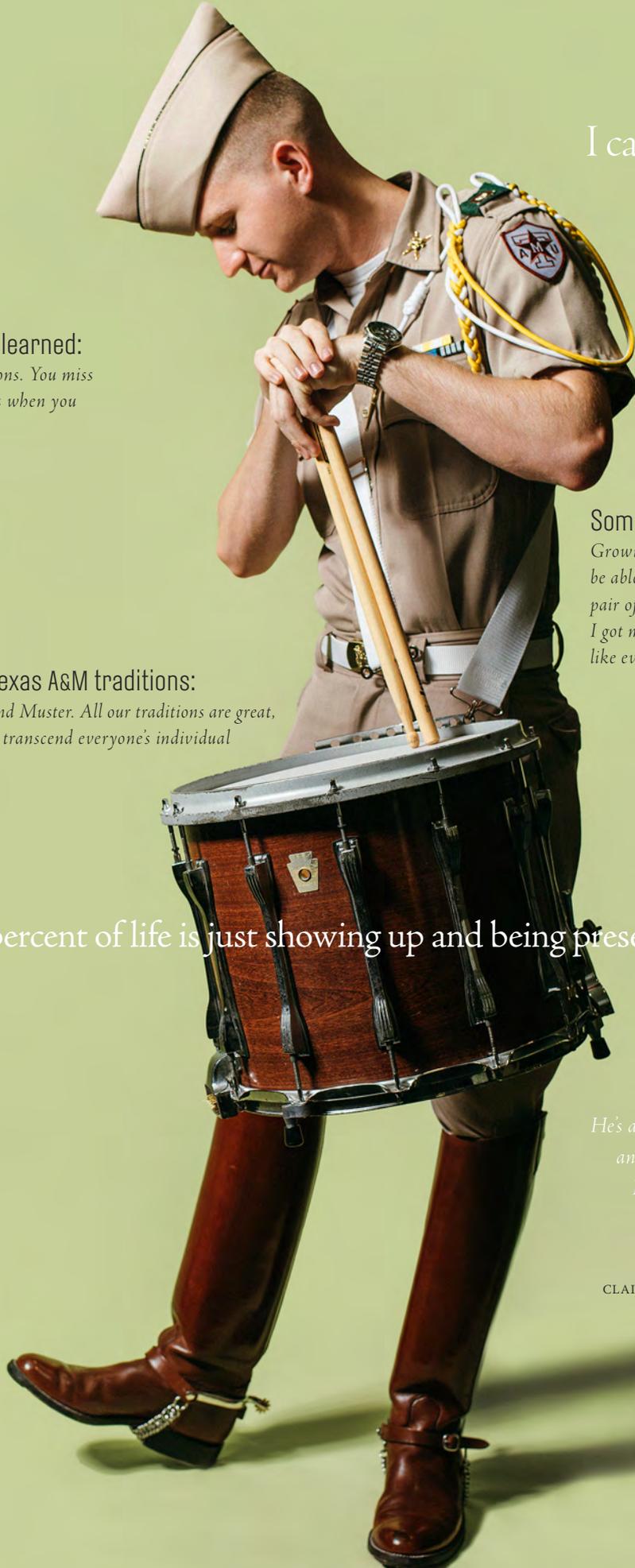
he said. To that end, Weston has launched a 50,000-square-foot co-working space called Geekdom.

“It’s really an incubator, a catalyst at the center of the startup ecosystem,” he explained. “It’s where you can meet and share ideas with your team or with others who are looking to be entrepreneurs or join startups.” Geekdom hosts hundreds of programs each year, from helping budding entrepreneurs find mentors to conducting workshops on how to get publicity. It also has a fund that invests in worthy startups. Close to 1,000 jobs have been created via Geekdom since its inception in 2011. “It’s about community building,” Weston said.

In addition, Weston has a philanthropic arm called the 80120 Foundation, which gives to nonprofits that are aligned with his goal of improving the economic and technological prospects for the city. A focus of the foundation is tech education. “A strong talent pipeline between educational institutions and high-skilled jobs stimulates entrepreneurship and attracts top companies,” he said.

Castro is grateful that Weston stepped up to the challenge of revitalizing the city’s downtown. “Of everyone in the local business community, nobody has a better understanding than Graham about the investments San Antonio has needed to make in terms of livability, economic development and brain power,” Castro said. “His private sector leadership has been indispensable. He’s really put his money where his mouth is and helped the city move forward much faster than it could have otherwise.”

Weston said he’ll know his efforts have succeeded when his own children decide to make their homes in San Antonio. And it seems the possibilities are good, based on a recent outing with his teenage son, Grant. Two former Rackspace employees opened Bakery Lorraine, a coffee shop in the vibrant Pearl District—an airy space with a hip, industrial vibe, complete with smooth concrete walls and exposed rafters. “My son looked around and said, ‘I never thought I could move back to San Antonio, but this is kind of cool.’” For Weston, this would be success on a completely different level. ©

A young man in a Texas A&M Aggie Bandsman uniform is shown in profile, playing a snare drum. He is wearing a tan uniform with a peaked cap, a watch, and a shoulder patch. He is holding two wooden drumsticks and has a large snare drum slung over his shoulder. The background is a solid light green color.

Secret talent:  
I can move my ears.

Most valuable lesson learned:  
*Don't be afraid to ask questions. You miss out on so many opportunities when you don't ask questions.*

Favorite Texas A&M traditions:  
*Silver Taps and Muster. All our traditions are great, but these two transcend everyone's individual differences.*

Something you've overcome:  
*Growing up, I was told that I wouldn't be able to drive, but thanks to a special pair of glasses that make it legal for me, I got my license when I turned 16, just like everyone else.*

Life motto:  
Show up. I think 90 percent of life is just showing up and being present where you are.

*He's an Aggie Bandsman, Ross Volunteer and the recipient of the David M. Britt '51 Sul Ross Scholarship.*

MAJOR: COMMUNICATION

HOMETOWN: SAN ANTONIO

CLAIM TO FAME: MEMBER OF THE FIGHTIN'  
TEXAS AGGIE BAND

# Howdy

Sumner Johnson '19

## What sparked your interest in music?

In 2007, I saw the Aggie Band play at the Alamo Bowl and knew immediately that I wanted to be a member. I was learning piano, but I ended up joining band and playing the drums all through high school, which continued into college with me playing the snare drum for the Aggie Band and the drum set in the Aggeland Orchestra. I've had the chance to play at some amazing venues, and marching on Kyle Field is incredible. My favorite thing every year is completing the four-way cross. Your heart beats so fast, and the roar of the crowd drowns out your playing!

## Tell me about your favorite Aggie experience.

One of the most incredible opportunities I've had was a short-term study abroad trip I took through the Corps of Cadets' International Excursions Program. During 12 days in Brazil, I had the chance to visit the American Embassy, consulate and military base there along with 26 other cadets. We spent my favorite day at the embassy learning the specifics of everyone's jobs and hearing about the economic and political problems Brazil faces today. We also got to interact with U.S. marines stationed there. As we traveled, I learned how to navigate across cultures at an international level. It challenged me to think more critically about the world in a larger context.

## How has being visually impaired impacted your college experience?

Learning how to do things, like how to march in the band, has been tough. As a freshman in the Corps, speaking up for myself was also challeng-

## Scholarship Program Turns 40



Initiated by former students and named after Lawrence Sullivan Ross (above), former Texas Gov. and president of Texas A&M, the Sul Ross Scholarship Program eases the financial burdens of cadets as they journey toward becoming tomorrow's leaders. Since the program's birth in 1978, more than 1,000 Sul Ross Scholarships have become available to cadets. A Sul Ross Scholarship reduces tuition and expenses by up to \$4,800 over four years for recipients.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CREATING A SUL ROSS SCHOLARSHIP OR OTHER FORMS OF CADET SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT, CONTACT:

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 TOMPOOL@TXAMFOUNDATION.COM

ing. Learning how to advocate for myself, however, put me on a trajectory of success. I was born with ocular albinism, meaning the retinas of my eyes are albino. I have 20/200 vision, so I can only see from 20 feet away what the average person can see from 200 feet away. But my eyesight hasn't slowed me down. I'm the public relations sergeant for the Ross Volunteers, and within the band, I'm a drum section officer and chaplain. I'm also the platoon leader for my outfit. Everyone has their own issues to deal with; this is just mine.

## What has receiving a Sul Ross Scholarship meant to you?

It relieved some of the stress that comes with financing my education, and it especially helped with the additional dues of joining the Corps, Aggie Band and Ross Volunteers. I can focus on my studies instead of spreading myself thin attempting to cover expenses. I've been blessed to receive the extra support.

## Where will your future take you?

The civilian sector, hopefully in marketing or sales. I want to reach a place where I can financially support people who do mission work full-time. I've experienced mission trips with Aggie Cru, a campus organization that equips students for missions both locally and abroad. Last summer, I went on an incredible trip to Asia, and the summer before, I went to Ozark Lakes in Branson, Missouri. I know funding these trips can be difficult, so I want to support those who are called to them. Just for this year, though, I'm enjoying finally wearing my senior boots around campus! ☺



*During the Great Depression, families struggled to send their sons to Texas A&M. The idea of cooperative housing emerged as a way for students to reduce costs by pooling their living expenses. In 1937, the college's Board of Directors approved the construction of 14 two-story, wood-framed houses to provide additional student housing after enrollment numbers began to rebound (below). By 1939, the Texas branch of the American Legion approached the college's Board about constructing a project house funded by the American Legion that could accommodate up to 89 young men (right).*



## The Project Houses

*Texas A&M's response to a student housing shortage in the 1930s.*

BY GREG BAILEY  
Texas A&M University Archivist  
and Clements Curator  
Cushing Memorial Library and Archives

On the morning of Oct. 24, 1929, the New York Stock Exchange opened its day with an 11 percent loss of value, sending panic around the country. After a slight rebound, the market took another firm hit on Oct. 28, which saw a 13 percent loss followed by an additional 12 percent drop the next day.

While slight upticks and dips occurred during the next several months, by April 1931 the market began a steady decline that lasted until July 1932. The Great Depression and its accompanying economic devastation on jobs and savings had hit the United States.

As tough economic times spread across Texas and families struggled to send their sons to Texas A&M, enrollment declined. Texas A&M had seen steady enrollment growth following World War I, but the fall 1930 enrollment declined from 2,620 students to 2,433. By the beginning of the 1932 class session, there were only 2,001 enrolled students.

This issue was accompanied by other hardships: By 1932, the state of Texas was also in a dire financial situation, with the legislature reducing total appropriations for higher education by nearly 33.3 percent and ordering a 25 percent pay cut to all state employees. Consequently, the college's Board of Directors started a retrenchment plan to reduce capital expenditures by eliminating classes with an enrollment of five or less students, merging duplicative departments, initiating an early retirement program, and reducing the faculty and staff. The Board also attempted to lower the cost of tuition to retain students and went as far as to reverse a 1930 decision to increase

room rent from \$30 to \$40 per semester and instead lowered rent to \$15 per semester.

It was in this setting that the idea of Texas A&M's project houses emerged. After the spring 1932 semester, several cadets from Moody, Texas, approached Dr. Dan Russell, professor of rural sociology, about the many expenses associated with continuing their education. He formed the idea of a cooperative house and obtained special permission for 12 students from Moody to live together off-campus during the 1932–33 school year. The premise was that the students would pool their financial resources, and Dr. Russell would provide

# timecapsule



guidance and negotiate deals with local businesses for additional food supplies.

When "Russell Hall" was deemed a success, nine more cooperative houses began operations off-campus the following year. The 1934–35 school year saw an increase to 22 project houses, and by 1936, there were 42 project houses operating in the Bryan-College Station area. Organized by county of residence, each of these dwellings housed 12 to 20 students and a house mom, who assisted with cooking and other domestic duties.

In April 1937, Dr. Russell approached the college's Board of Directors about constructing project houses on campus, stem-

ming from the need for additional student housing after enrollment numbers began to rebound in 1933. Because the project houses were cheaper to build than campus dorms, the Board approved the construction of 14 two-story, wood-framed houses and dictated that these dwellings would follow the same rules that governed campus dormitories. They were located roughly in the area between today's Bright Football Complex and the Texas A&M Foundation's Jon L. Hagler Center. Not unique to Texas A&M, the idea of cooperative living was widespread during the Depression, but the success of the college's cooperative housing system at-

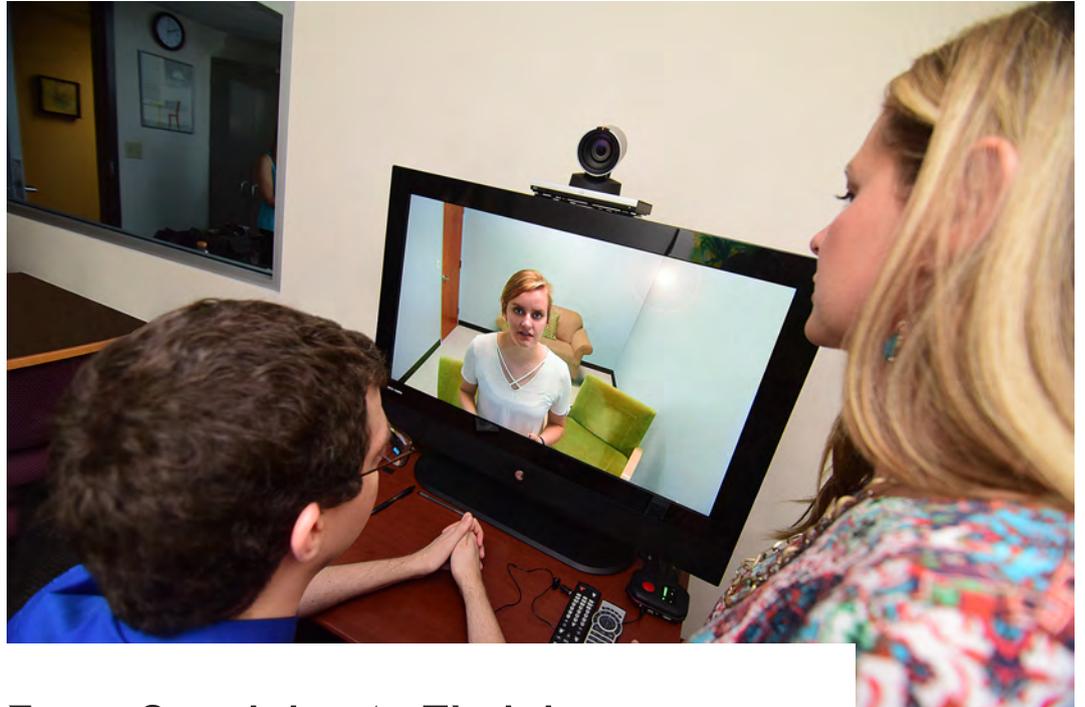
tracted national attention. A story ran in Reader's Digest, while officials from Purdue University visited Texas A&M to gain insight into the program's operation.

In November 1939, the Texas branch of the American Legion approached the college's Board about constructing a project house funded by the American Legion that could accommodate up to 89 young men, all of whom were sons of World War I veterans. The Board accepted the gift and the house was constructed just north of the project houses, making it the largest one.

It is estimated that approximately 5,000 students resided in project houses during the Depression, and the campus project

houses operated until World War II. Post-war, these units became Married Student Housing and were razed in 1988. The American Legion Project House, after later being bought by the university, became the University Police Department in 1972 before being razed in 1997 to make room for the Jon L. Hagler Center. ©

*Cushing Memorial Library and Archives is hosting an exhibit titled "A Time of Resolve: Texas A&M During the Great Depression" until Feb. 22, 2019. The exhibit covers the campus construction boom of the early 1930s, student life, college hardships, athletics and the 1939 championship football season.*



## From Surviving to Thriving

*Combining university expertise with local community capacity, the Telehealth Counseling Clinic provides quality mental health services to Brazos Valley residents and valuable training opportunities for students.*

BY MOLLY KULPA '15

**W**hen Towanda Webber's husband passed away unexpectedly six years ago, she found solace in a group therapy session focused on managing grief. "The grief group was incredibly healing," she shared. "Just having that support and knowing that others were going through similar experiences was exceedingly comforting."

The session was offered free of charge by Texas A&M's Telehealth Counseling

Clinic (TCC), a collaboration between the College of Education and Human Development and the School of Public Health that began providing free counseling services to rural Texas residents in 2009. The concept was born after researchers in the School of Public Health discovered that communities across the state were concerned about a lack of mental health care services. Currently, the TCC operates in five Brazos Valley counties, all of which are designated as mental health provider shortage areas: Brazos County, Grimes County, Leon County, Madison County and Washington County.

As a Madisonville resident, Webber attended grief sessions at the Madisonville

Health Resources Center, where a licensed psychologist counseled the group through a secure, HIPAA-compliant video connection. In rural places like Madisonville, where the nearest mental health care provider may be hours away, telehealth services are offering a new way to increase access to care.

### **The Wave of the Future: Telepsychology**

The reality is that more than 80 percent of Texas counties don't have enough mental health professionals to provide care. This creates a burden that falls to city and county governments, which face increased costs for emergency care and law enforcement assistance. The problem is compounded by the various challenges people experience when mental health issues are untreated.

Through its outreach, the TCC hopes to address the mental health care provider disparity facing rural Texas. Doctoral students from the College of Education and Human Development's educational psychology program work out of clinic offices on the Texas A&M campus and provide telepsychology counseling sessions in English, Spanish and Mandarin to clients using secure video connections. While these students are advanced in their clinical training, they work with patients under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. Texas A&M public health students contribute to the cause through research, data management, marketing and outreach.

"We call this a hub and spoke model," said Dr. Carly McCord '13, director of clinical services for the TCC. Clients typically drive to a site near their home, usually a building with donated, private office space that includes a phone and television monitor with a high-definition videoconference

unit. In these safe environments, clients talk with assigned counselors via video conference call.

"We record levels of distress and any recent problems during sessions," explained Dr. Timothy Elliott, executive director of the TCC and university distinguished professor in the Department of Educational Psychology. "We also have routine intervals in which we go back and perform assessments on the patient's mental health and quality of life." Concerns addressed in the counseling sessions include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, alcohol and substance abuse, anger management, and grief and family dysfunction. The TCC also offers couples counseling, family counseling, a meditation group and a smoking cessation class.

In a typical day, students will review their taped sessions, meet with supervisors and take notes. But they also facilitate extra support for patients, such as calling case workers at the mental health authority to give updates on their clients, requesting welfare checks or consulting physicians about a client's medications. "We're part social worker, part psychologist," McCord said.

### **By the Numbers**

Since 2009, the clinic has provided more than 9,000 counseling hours and served more than 900 clients ages 13 and up who may not have otherwise received treatment, as 65 percent of TCC clients are uninsured. More than \$1 million in services have been rendered free of charge, while the TCC has also contributed to the training of more than 50 doctoral students.

"We help our clients troubleshoot and problem-solve whatever they're facing by

developing effective coping skills, setting boundaries and mastering self-regulation," said Elliott. "You don't so much teach as much as you walk shoulder-to-shoulder with them. There is something so therapeutic about knowing that you have someone safe to talk to."

The effects of the TCC services are staggering: Individuals have re-entered the workforce, stopped inappropriately using emergency services, repaired broken relationships, improved self-esteem, stayed out of the prison system and gone on to make positive impacts in their communities. County mental health and emergency service budgets are also positively impacted by the provision of this prevention service.

"The difference between a person coming in for their first counseling session compared to a few weeks later is like night and day," said Webber, who also works at the Madisonville center as an office manager. "I've seen clients visit the center looking severely depressed, and then after a month of services, look entirely different: It seems like they're smiling more and have a kind word to say. It's like they can finally see a light at the end of the tunnel. They have hope." ©

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*You can support the Telehealth Counseling Clinic with a gift of \$25 or more online at [give.am/TCC](http://give.am/TCC). To make an endowed gift of \$25,000 or more, payable over a five-year period, that will support the clinic's efforts in perpetuity, please contact either Jody Ford '99 with the College of Education and Human Development at (979) 847-8655 or [jford@txamfoundation.com](mailto:jford@txamfoundation.com) or Karen Slater '88 with the School of Public Health at (979) 436-9108 or [kslater@txamfoundation.com](mailto:kslater@txamfoundation.com).*

*Watch a video about the TCC at [give.am/Telehealth](http://give.am/Telehealth).*

“I believe in enabling people through education.”

—Jose Corleto Mena '81

FOUNDATION EXCELLENCE AWARD DONOR



We asked donors what inspires their gifts to Texas A&M.

# WHY I GIVE

With the public launch of the *Lead by Example* campaign

in 2015, Texas A&M University's four fundraising institutions pledged to meet an unprecedented goal of raising \$4 billion by 2020 to further establish Texas A&M as a world-class institution boldly committed to the betterment of the state, nation and world. Today, donors have given more than \$3.24 billion toward this goal, affirming their commitment to Texas A&M and its values.

For this special campaign update, we asked donors who have given to the Texas A&M Foundation during the campaign why they've given and—in some cases—continue to give to Texas A&M. The number of powerful responses we received is astounding. Taken on their own, each donor's submission tells a distinct story about Texas A&M's individual impact. Taken together, the collected responses speak to the awe-inspiring scope of lives that have been shaped, enhanced and inspired by the Aggie Spirit.

Here are a few of their stories.

“Contributing to Texas A&M gives me special satisfaction, because I know I'm helping some young person gain the education and personal development that I experienced as a member of the Corps of Cadets.”

—Michael Hunn '59

JO AND MIKE HUNN '59 SCHOLARSHIP FOR  
MECHANICAL OR CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS  
IN THE CORPS

“Texas A&M reflects our feelings and love of the United States of America.”

—Angela and Bob Knauss

ANGELA AND BOB KNAUSS ENDOWMENT TO ENHANCE RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES



“We want to help young men and women experience the life-changing education of Texas A&M.”

—Susan '74 and Jackie Binks '74

Unsure of what to expect from Texas A&M upon accepting its offer to play baseball, Jackie Binks '74 never dreamed of how the university would impact him. “I fell in love with Texas A&M,” Binks said. “My blood turned from red to maroon, and my experience at the university had a profound effect on the rest of my life.”

In addition to opening personal and professional doors for him, Texas A&M has provided a place for the entire Binks family to flourish. His wife Susan '74 and the couple's two daughters are also Aggie graduates. “I firmly believe the opportunity Texas A&M extended to me opened the door for my family to become Aggies,” he said.

Noting the significant role Texas A&M played in their lives, the couple established a \$100,000 President's Endowed Scholarship to afford students in the College of Education and Human Development the same opportunity to experience Texas A&M. Because their daughter, Dr. Emily Cantrell '02, serves as a faculty leader for freshmen in the college's Lohman Learning Community, the Binks host events for these students in their home.

“The future of our country depends upon good educators, and we want to provide the tools for them to be successful,” Binks said.

## “Texas A&M embodies the honor and sacrifices that our veterans make.”

—Elizabeth and Jon-Marc Baird '86

Jon-Marc “Jon” Baird '86 grew up in a military family. His dad, Gary Baird Sr., served in the United States Navy for 21 years before achieving the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer. “My dad has an intense devotion to the U.S. Navy and to Texas A&M University,” said Jon. “While I was a student, my dad developed a strong admiration for Texas A&M’s rich military tradition and a deep connection with the Aggie family.”

It was this devotion that inspired Jon and his wife Elizabeth to establish an Aggie Veteran Scholarship in honor of his father. “We felt it was important that his legacy as a devoted Navy man and a member of the Aggie faithful live on in this scholarship,” Jon said.

Even with the assistance of the GI Bill and Hazelwood benefits, many veteran students struggle financially with basic living expenses. An Aggie Veteran Scholarship allows the Bairds to support veteran students while honoring Gary’s service to his country. “We hope that this scholarship eases some of the financial burden for veterans pursuing their education at Texas A&M,” said Jon.



T. J., a border collie with a family tree full of Great Britain sheep herding champions, was the smartest dog Patricia Gilmore-Hunter had ever known. For 13 years, T. J. was loved and cared for by Gilmore-Hunter before passing away unexpectedly.

“T. J. suddenly developed enlarged lymph nodes and stopped eating,” she said. Veterinarians conducted a needle biopsy that came back inconclusive and before T.J. could receive an open biopsy, she passed away from cancer.

Devastated by the loss, Gilmore-Hunter established the T. J. Hunter Oncology Endowment at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences to promote canine cancer research. While she never attended Texas A&M, she chose to give because of its exceptional veterinary school.

## “I wanted to make a difference and give my beloved border collie's life a purpose.”

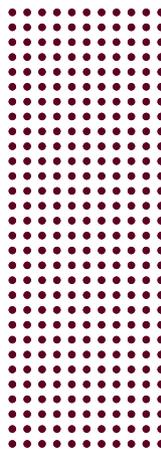
—Patricia Gilmore-Hunter

“My gifts to Texas A&M are inspired by my love of the school, its purpose to develop leaders of character and its adherence to a strict set of core values.

I know, without a doubt, that my gifts to Texas A&M make a tangible difference in someone's life.”

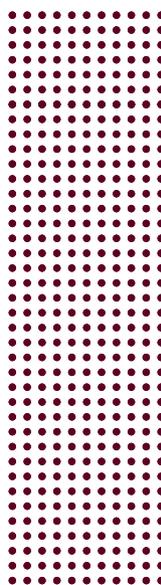
—William E. Deupree '83

PETROLEUM ENGINEERING DONOR



## “I feel Texas A&M is true to its core values.”

—Dr. Andrew Reichert '90



On a night he would never forget, Dr. Andrew Reichert '90 walked into Texas A&M’s band hall and saw 12 silver bugles resting on a table. He was a member of the Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band, and the new silver bugle rank members were being announced.

“One by one, each new drum major picked up a bugle and began talking about its new owner without naming the person,” Reichert said. “As it became evident that one of the drum majors was talking about me, heads turned my way. And then he called my name.”

Reichert, now a practicing psychologist in Port Aransas, Texas, embraces the influential role Texas A&M has played in his life. He’s given two Sul Ross Corps Scholarships for Aggie Band members and supported Texas A&M’s GLBT Resource Center.

“One of my Sul Ross scholars told me that my scholarship was the only financial aid any university offered him and was the deciding reason he chose Texas A&M and the Aggie Band,” Reichert said. Interestingly, that student recipient followed in Reichert’s footsteps: He was also elected to the band’s bugle rank.

Check out the Texas A&M Foundation’s social media channels for more “Why I Give” stories or watch the entire series online at [give.am/WhyIGive](http://give.am/WhyIGive).





## "I can help make graduate education more affordable for students with severe physical disabilities."

—Dr. Deshae E. Lott '94 '99

Dr. Deshae E. Lott '94 '99 remembers first visiting Texas A&M University while considering graduate school programs and immediately feeling at home. She credits the accessible campus, talented student body and inviting English department leadership as the main draws to Aggieland. "I wanted to be an Aggie immediately after my in-

person introduction to Texas A&M," Lott said, "and I have been unwaveringly happy to be part of the Aggie family ever since."

Lott earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in English from Texas A&M and pursued an academic life. Having lived with a form of muscular dystrophy from a young age, Lott works to better the lives of other people with

disabilities. Between her teaching, writing and research endeavors, she raises funds to give quality-of-life grants and scholarships to persons with disabilities. In 2017, Lott established the Lott-Sadow-Cleveland Scholarship with her husband to support students registered with disability services pursuing a graduate or professional degree at Texas A&M.

"Graduate students with severe physical disabilities have few merit scholarship options," she said. "A scholarship for such students can help make graduate education more affordable and their quality of life more comfortable."

## "My experience at Texas A&M has been one of the touchstones of my life. Being a part of the Aggie family, I know the values of the organization that I am contributing to."

—Maj. Al White USAF (Retired) '86

JUDITH DIETZ AND AL WHITE '86 SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

## "Texas A&M is clearly the best option for educating the bold leaders our country needs now and for all our tomorrows."

—Bee and Terrence Gossett '62

BEE AND TERRY GOSSETT '62 SUL ROSS AND CORPS 21 SCHOLARSHIPS



## "Texas A&M is a special place, and I want to ensure that those in need have the ability to gain a great education."

—Eric Wylie '93

ERIC R. WYLIE '93 STUDENT COUNCIL LEADERSHIP ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP AND GENERAL RUDDER CORPS SCHOLARSHIP

## "Attending Texas A&M was life-changing. I learned a lot about engineering and more about life. I wanted to give something back. Money given to the university is well-managed and put to great use."

—Henry Alan Johnson '75

REGENTS' SCHOLARS AWARDS FOR ENGINEERING MAJORS

## "Because Aggies help Aggies."

—Elise and Vance Fairchild '89



As a first-generation Aggie, Vance Fairchild '89 knew next to nothing about Texas A&M University before attending Fish Camp in 1985. He'd only heard what his math teacher told him: that Texas A&M had a good engineering school and he should apply. "After attending Fish Camp, I was hooked," he said.

In 1989, Vance graduated with honors from the College of Engineering. After solidifying his education with experience in an established energy company, he went on to build and sell three separate professional engineering and risk management startup companies. He attributes much of his success to the Aggie Network. "So many Aggies helped me along the way," he said. In recognition, he and Elise hope to show their gratitude through support to other Aggies.

Since 2015, the couple has contributed three gifts to the Texas A&M Foundation in support of Texas A&M. In addition to current endowed scholarships for Aggie engineers, they also designated that a significant portion of their estate be used to fund additional scholarships to further expand the Fairchild Scholars Program and support the 12th Man Foundation. The Fairchild Scholars Program scholarships will be awarded to engineering students who graduated from Brazoria, Fort Bend or Matagorda counties. Their third and most recent donation was a gift toward the new Zachry Engineering Education Complex. "We're trying to leave the world, including Texas A&M, a better place than we found it," said Elise.

Campaign Gifts and Commitments:

# \$3.24 BILLION

81% of our \$4 Billion Goal AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2018



22,660

Corporate and  
Foundation Donors



676,059

Gifts Contributed



173,836

Individual Donors



316

Donors Contributing  
\$1 Million or More

During the campaign, donors have established the following types of endowments:

97

Faculty Chairs, Professorships and Fellowships

386

Other Endowments

1,918

Scholarships and Graduate Fellowships



The Texas A&M Foundation builds a brighter future for Texas A&M University, one relationship at a time, by uniting generosity and vision to raise and manage endowed gifts.

[TXAMFOUNDATION.COM](http://TXAMFOUNDATION.COM)

T E X A S  
A & M  
FOUNDATION

The George H.W. Bush Presidential Library Foundation is dedicated to preserving the historic legacy of President George H.W. Bush by supporting education and scholarship programs.

[BUSH41.ORG](http://BUSH41.ORG)

FOUR WAYS TO  
**LEAD**  
*by* EXAMPLE

[LEADBYEXAMPLE.TAMU.EDU](http://LEADBYEXAMPLE.TAMU.EDU)



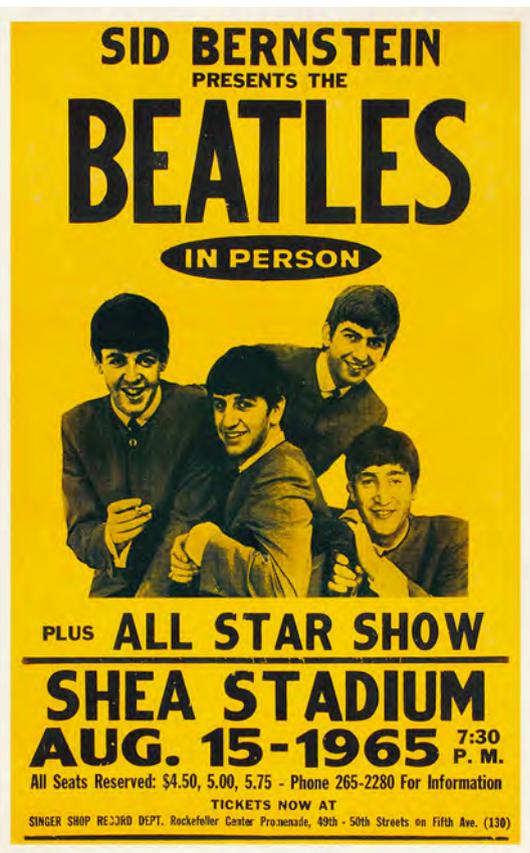
The 12th Man Foundation funds scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championship athletics.

[12THMANFOUNDATION.COM](http://12THMANFOUNDATION.COM)



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

[AGGIENETWORK.COM](http://AGGIENETWORK.COM)



*Music*

## History of Rock

WITH PROFESSOR MATTHEW DELCIAMPO

Look no further for a course that will end on a high note. History of Rock provides an evolution of rock music from the birth of American popular music to the rise of iconic celebrities such as Prince, Michael Jackson and Nirvana. Students discover how some of their favorite artists reflect culture and ideology throughout history. "I want this course to produce critical and productive thinkers, as well as open-minded, thoughtful and engaged citizens," said DelCiampo. "We examine how pop and rock musical histories coincide with aspects of race, gender, class and politics."

*Science*

## Great Diseases of the World

WITH PROFESSOR IAN TIZARD

History is dotted with pandemics that have had enormous effects on the development of modern civilization. Great Diseases of the World offers an introduction to the study of the world's most interesting ailments, including plague, tuberculosis and malaria. Students can also expect to discuss the science behind epidemics and the role of climate change. "This course integrates the most fascinating aspects of medical science, history and current events in a captivating and accessible manner," said Tizard.



*Sports*

## Olympic Studies

WITH PROFESSOR PAUL KEIPER

In Olympic Studies, students discover the world through the lens of today's most global sporting event. The study begins with the first Olympic Games in 776 B.C. and continues to the present. Students examine the relationship between the Olympics, culture and society, and explore hot topics surrounding the games such as social issues, ethics, amateurism, commercialization and the Paralympics. "As a sport management professor, I hope to make the world better through the understanding of sports," said Keiper.



## Best Lecture:

5 CLASSES WE WANT TO TAKE

By Laura Simmons '19

*Creative Thinking*

## Design Process

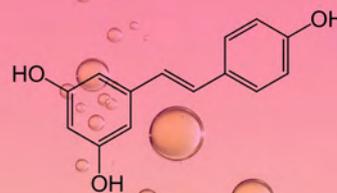
WITH PROFESSOR RODNEY HILL

This class goes beyond entrepreneurship: It teaches students how to be 21st-century freethinkers, from cultivating their own creative process to learning the ins and outs of innovation and the ever-changing world of business. For their final project, student groups research an existing business, service or product and then design a competing company that would render the original obsolete. "My goal is that students become knowledge creators with a global transdisciplinary creative ability," said Hill. "I hope they become the independent entrepreneurs of the future."

*Food & Drink*

## Enology

WITH PROFESSOR ANDREEA BOTEZATU



This unique science course helps students refine their palates and their brain cells as they evaluate wines from around the world. Students learn about the chemistry of wine and champagne and explore the hands-on winemaking process from grapevine to glass. By the end of the semester, they gain a better understanding of wine quality and the complexity of human taste and aroma perception. "It demystifies wine," said Botezatu. "The wine industry in Texas is booming and in need of trained specialists. Who knows...this course could open up an unexpected career path for someone!"

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## finalreview

The *Fearless Girl* statue, which has stood opposite the Manhattan financial district's famous *Charging Bull* for more than a year in Bowling Green Park, is a bronze sculpture by Kristen Visbal. It was originally installed in 2017 in honor of International Women's Day to draw attention to the need for more female representation on the boards of publicly traded companies. By the end of this year, it

will move to a spot in front of the New York Stock Exchange.

Seeing the statue was a pit stop for the 2018 cohort of students in Mays Business School's Aggies on Wall Street Program, which has enrolled 33 women since 2009. As a bridge to Wall Street and other career opportunities, the program needs additional funding to continue

expanding while keeping costs reasonable for students. Endowed scholarships may be created with a \$25,000 gift, while excellence funds to offset student and administrative costs for the program may be established with endowed gifts of \$50,000 or more.

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