In this issue of Spirit, Meatra Harrison says, “I wanted to make a difference in the basic ways people live—in whether the money ran out at the end of the month or they had some left.” Professor John Morse says, “If you’re ever going to make big advances, you’ve got to be willing to try things that are risky.”
Building a Legacy

Scottish historian and author Thomas Carlyle wrote that “the history of the world is but the biography of great men.” So also is the story of Texas A&M most clearly illustrated by the lives of its leaders and benefactors.

In this issue of Spirit, we salute men and women whose vision, talents and gifts are guiding the course of Texas A&M progress. Theirs are stories of legendary generosity and personal sacrifice.

Our lead story profiles Meatra Harrison and Florence Low, women who built their legacies through professional service and private gifts to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Although Louis and Elizabeth Scherck have been gone many years, their influence lives on in the work of Oceanography Professor John Morse. The stories of E.J. Kyle ’99 and J. R. Thompson reveal the lasting impact one man can have, and an interview with Charles Bridges ’45 highlights a bright future for veterinary education at Texas A&M.

On the cover: Meatra Harrison, former assistant director of county programs for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Photo by Sandy Wilson.
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A Woman's Place

Long before Martha Stewart showed homemakers how to cover their light switch plates and carve apples into floating candle holders—when the salient points of home management were more basic—families depended upon people like Florence Low and Meatra Harrison to help improve their quality of life.

By Molly Glentzer
Low and Harrison each devoted nearly 40 years to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, first as home demonstration agents in rural counties, then at Texas A&M University as specialists and administrators. Both have resumes full of awards and have served as presidents of national organizations for home economists. Low, assistant director of extension emerita, retired in 1974. Harrison, assistant director of county programs emeritus, retired in 1994. Yet their legacy is far from over. Inspired by their personal experiences, both established endowments that will enable future generations of extension agents to continue the good work.

Low and Harrison were career women long before it was fashionable, joining Extension in the days before female agents were allowed to marry. Low left briefly, in the early 1940s, to wed the sweetheart she’d dated for five years. (She recalls her supervisor warning her, “You’re ruining your life!”) But World War II was rumbling, and after her husband, Edwin Low, was killed in a jeep accident during military training exercises, she returned.

The women’s devotion to Extension is clearly deep; both still refer to the organization as “we” and slip into present tense when they’re discussing it.

The Texas extension program dates to 1903 and the earliest attempts to foil the cotton boll weevil. But it wasn’t until 1914, when extension services were established across the United States by the Smith-Lever bill, that resources were available to serve citizens in all of Texas’ 254 counties. Today, the program has approximately 400 home economists who are served by about 30 specialists based at Extension headquarters on the Texas A&M campus.

“Society’s changes have affected teaching methods, the recruitment of clientele and subject matter,” suggests Harrison. But the basic tenets of Extension are still the same: to share agricultural and home economics knowledge from the state’s land grant colleges in a way that is meaningful to people’s lives.

In 1934, Florence Low’s first year with Extension, two-thirds of Texas’ farm population still lived in houses described in a survey as “poor to fair.” Seven of 10 homes were without kitchen sinks. Four of five had no bathing facilities. Many rural families were poorly clothed.

“Food, clothing and shelter were the important things,” Low says. While male agents served as “agricultural agents,” women were “home demonstration agents.” Their primary duties were organizing home demonstration clubs and instructing 4-H groups at area schools. Each month’s home demonstration meeting included a lesson and a social.

One of Low’s first assignments was to supervise 13 community canning plants. Although she’d grown up on a farm and held a degree in home economics, she didn’t know how to can fruits and vegetables—much less how to teach others. She spent a week learning the skills at a mentor’s house. Then there was the time she had scheduled a chicken preparation session, and the specialist who was going to demonstrate slaughtering couldn’t make it.

“You certainly did not learn in college all the things you’d need to be a home demonstration agent,” she says. Low survived the poultry session by taking a crash course at a chicken canning facility. She can still describe the act of killing a chicken in great detail, leaving the impression she could teach a class tomorrow if need be.

Most rural family homes had bare wood floors, so Low also taught rug making. After her husband’s death, she became a specialist (first in landscape gardening, then home management), and later earned her master’s degree at Cornell University. She returned to College Station in 1957 as home economics department head. In 1961, she became assistant director for Extension, supervising the service’s specialists—who in turn help to train agents—until she retired.
Meatra Harrison

By 1960, home demonstration agents were teaching a lot more than cooking and sewing, and America’s rural lifestyle was evolving with rapid urbanization. Racial and gender integration also affected change; soon women agents, like the men, were referred to simply as ‘county agents.’

Meatra Harrison arrived shortly before the agency desegregated. She earned her home economics education undergraduate and master’s degrees at Prairie View A&M College in 1950 and 1951, respectively. She worked as a visiting school teacher before becoming the home demonstration agent for African Americans in rural Marlin, Texas, in 1954. There, she taught topics like health and table manners to 4-H students in the schools and organized home demonstrations on how to prepare food, sew and choose appliances.

In 1960, Harrison transferred to Beaumont. There, she began offering programs on topics such as family relationships, money management and home repairs. She later introduced leadership training to 4-H programs when she became the 4-H and youth specialist at Texas A&M in 1970. (Low, who was Harrison’s supervisor then, still refers to her as “a very smart young lady.”)

Harrison says she also provided leadership classes for adults. “They were involved with church activities and things like that, and needed ideas on how to work with people, even how to conduct meetings properly,” she says.

Like Low, Harrison passed one learning curve after another. In 1976, she became the first African American district extension director. “One of the biggest concerns I had then was hiring people who could do the job,” Harrison says. “Not that they weren’t technically qualified, but did they have what it takes to work weekends and nights and relate to people. Because that’s what Extension is about: working with people.”

When Harrison became assistant director for county programs in 1988, she found herself guiding 300 extension service agents, including men who’d never had a female boss.

Jennie Kitching, a recently retired Extension director, knows Harrison faced challenges. “It couldn’t have been easy,” Kitching comments, “but her leadership abilities made a real difference. It was just who she was. She set high standards for performance and could always remember who people’s kids were.”

A Lasting Impact

Today, Meatra Harrison counts her direct work with youngsters and clients among her most important contributions.

“The experiences of 4-H are lifelong for kids,” Harrison says. “The
same thing is true of the adult programs. A lot of the women I worked with were young and had money problems. I wanted to make a difference in the basic ways people live—in whether the money ran out at the end of the month or they had some left. I wanted young people to feel confident to do whatever needed to be done. And I wanted leadership to be developed in as many people as possible.

The Extension faculty scholarship she endowed will help ensure that. As an administrator, Harrison noticed that agents received plenty of training in specialized subjects but little help with less tangible skills. The scholarship fund is dedicated to enhancing faculty members’ leadership, teaching or interpersonal relations skills so they, in turn, can inspire others. Over several years, Harrison has given $47,000.

“You may have a lot of knowledge, but you have to know how to impart it,” she says. “Many of our agents are just out of school and starting families. They don’t have much money to spend on specialized training; $1,000 would be of considerable help.”

Harrison’s appreciation for leadership skills was partly inspired by Low’s example. “She encouraged people to expand their knowledge, and she worked with the administration to get what was needed for the home economics aspects of the program,” Harrison says of Low.

Kitching, too, counts Low among her mentors. “She was a significant influence on my career,” Kitching says. “I was an agent when I met her, but she encouraged me to go to graduate school. I didn’t have the resources. So she called someone she knew, and I was soon enrolled at the University of Tennessee.”

Low’s gift of $20,000 created an endowment to enhance programs in the Extension’s Institute for Children, Youth and Families. She says she hopes to give others financial advantages she didn’t have.

“Over all these years, Extension did so much for me—in learning, in happiness, in freedom with people, in teaching me how to live—but I remembered how hard it was for me to get my education,” she says. “When I went to school, there was no such thing as a scholarship for women, and I paid for all of my own schooling. I want to make it easier for others.”

Today’s county extension agents deal with a vastly expanded range of subjects, from obesity, elder care and parenting to indoor air quality and financial management issues. Harrison explains, “Agents develop a plan based on what the people in each county say they want to learn. One of the unique things about Extension is that you go to the people to find out what they want. You don’t just force feed them information. I think that’s why we’re successful.”

Kitching says people like Low and Harrison have influenced the entire state. “They’re representative of many women who’ve made a difference in Texas,” she says.
THE PIONEERING WORK OF PROFESSOR JOHN MORSE

“We used to get grants for high-risk science; not many of the funding agencies want to take risks today. It’s all very safe science, which in many ways is boring science,” says Dr. John Morse, holder of Texas A&M’s Scherck Chair in Oceanography. “If you’re ever going to make big advances, you’ve got to be willing to try things that are risky.”

It’s unlikely that anyone would label John Morse’s science as boring. After all, what better to capture the imagination than offering support for the theory that Martian oceans could have supported life?

Although Morse, who holds master’s and doctoral degrees in geology from Yale University, admits that the existence of life on the red planet remains a matter of “pure speculation,” his calculations helped conclude that life-sustaining conditions once existed on Mars.
work of graduate students like Dwight K. Gladhill (left) and Karen S. Sell (right).
For years, he explains, key questions in the debate about life on Mars centered on whether liquid water could have existed in that planet’s extremely cold environment and whether the water’s chemistry could support life.

Using NASA data gathered by the Mars Global Surveyor satellite, the Mars Rover and the Viking I, Morse analyzed the planet’s surface’s chemical composition—in particular, levels of carbon—in order to answer those questions.

"I think it’s pretty clear now that there was liquid water on Mars," he says. "The question was whether there ever had been anything like oceans. From what we now know, there is no reason to say there shouldn’t have been. The debate now is ‘How much water was there and for how long?’"

Just as his analyses of Mars lent weight to the idea of life on our neighboring planet, Morse’s earthbound projects seek not only a better understanding of life on this planet, but a better quality of life.

Morse describes his research objective simply—"to apply physical and inorganic chemistry to address problems"—yet there is nothing simple about the questions he strives to answer.

For example, could carbon dioxide be removed from the atmosphere, liquefied and pumped into nearly-depleted natural gas wells to counter the greenhouse effect while extending the wells’ operating lives?

If his current Department of Energy project yields favorable results, Morse says, “It may be possible for us not only to get rid of the carbon dioxide, but also pump the remaining gas out in sufficient quantities to pay for the process.”

When Morse applied for the $1 million Louis and Elizabeth Scherck Chair in Oceanography, he employed a similarly innovative new approach to solving a longstanding problem among researchers: limited funding for graduate students’ research.
Louis Scherck was a graduate of Brown University who came to Texas in 1935 to enter the oil and gas business. Through both his business activities and as a major in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, he met many Aggies and came to hold Texas A&M in high regard.

As an oilman, Scherck also understood the importance of oceanographic research to his industry. Less than a year before his 1994 death, he wrote in a letter to the College of Geosciences' development officer that it was his "conviction that the oceans of the world represent the frontier of the future, and will play a very important role in both the political and economic status that my great-grandchildren and beyond may expect to encounter."

Scherck backed up his conviction with a $1.47 million bequest to Texas A&M to support oceanographic teaching and research.

Morse, in turn, opted to devote the chair’s stipend to bolstering his students’ research capabilities. "I’m using the funds primarily to support three graduate students and develop scientific infrastructure—to buy lab equipment and develop computer-modeling capabilities," he says.

"In order to support graduate students, we normally have to rely on research grants," Morse adds. "That limits students to the projects that their advisers can get the money for, rather than allowing them to pursue their dreams."

Thanks to the Schercks’ generosity and Morse’s approach, undergraduate students are also supported by funds from the chair. "Typically three to four undergraduates work as technical and lab assistants each semester," says Morse. "For many it is their first chance to take what they have learned in courses and apply it to actual problems. It is a real chance for classical apprenticeship."

Morse’s use of the chair funds is exactly what Dr. David Prior, dean of the College of Geosciences, had hoped would occur. "We’re trying to find ways to support graduate students at every turn," says Prior. "I’m delighted that John is using this position to bring in graduate students."

In his first year as chair holder, Morse already is seeing results on a scale previously unattainable. He invested a portion of the money in microelectrode probes, which can detect the chemical difference between layers of sediment no farther apart than the width of a human hair.

"We hope to take core samples, insert the electrode and be able to tell what kind of creatures are living there and see what the relationship is between the community and the chemistry of the sediment," Morse explains.

In other words, he says, observing those minute differences in chemistry may help us understand if and how life can survive in a given area. "Being able to see chemical interactions on that scale is just a whole new world for us."
IN ITS 1999 ANNUAL REPORT, THE TEXAS A&M FOUNDATION SALUTED SEVEN MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE VISIONS, TALENTS AND RESOURCES GUIDED THE COURSE OF TEXAS A&M HISTORY. THEIRS ARE STORIES OF LEGENDARY GENEROSITY AND PERSONAL SACRIFICE. THE FOLLOWING EXCERPTS PROFILE TWO OF THOSE WHO LEFT ENDURING LEGACIES AT TEXAS A&M.

EDWIN J. KYLE '99
MR. TEXAS A&M

Perhaps no surname is more widely associated with Texas A&M than that of Edwin Jackson Kyle, for whom the football stadium is named. Yet surprisingly few Aggies know much about the eclectic Kyle, a member of the class of 1899.

A man of many and diverse achievements, E.J. Kyle was perhaps the first and last person to be widely known as "Mr. Texas A&M." It is hard to imagine anyone wearing the moniker better.

From the beginning, Kyle distinguished himself at A&M. As a senior, he was class president, valedictorian and top-ranking cadet. When war and illness robbed the college of two consecutive Corps commandants, Cadet Kyle had the unique honor of holding that position for one month. After graduation, he left Texas for New
York, where he earned two degrees at Cornell before returning to A&M as a faculty member in 1902.

The origins of Kyle's best-known accomplishment can be traced to 1904, when the young horticulture professor was selected as president of the college's General Athletic Association, precursor of today's Athletic Council.

At the time, the Aggies played football and other sports on the drill field, with spectators standing or seated in carriages. Believing that athletes needed a dedicated area for their contests, Kyle took matters into his own hands. He resolved the question of the stadium's location by giving up a portion of his horticultural farm. He dipped into his own finances to build fencing and bleachers, and in 1905 Kyle's vegetable patch became the college's first stadium. A few years later, he purchased a covered grandstand from the Bryan fairgrounds, expanding stadium seating from 600 to 1,000.

Kyle was an agent of change in the academic realm as well as the athletic arena. Within three years of joining the faculty, he was elevated to head of the horticulture department. When A&M established its School of Agriculture in the summer of 1911, Kyle was chosen as its first dean.

Using promotional programs, county agents and the media, Kyle steadily boosted the School of Agriculture's quality, size and prominence. Personal scientific achievements—Kyle co-authored the first complete text on pecan culture and encouraged an engrafting innovation that helped launch the state's pecan industry—added still more luster.

In the final measure, a handful of numbers tell a remarkable story. When Kyle became dean of the five departments comprising the School of Agriculture, A&M ranked 15th nationally in the enrollment of agriculture students. Upon his retirement in 1944, the same school had 15 departments, and the Dallas Morning News reported it to be the largest agricultural school in the world.

After Kyle's election as dean emeritus in 1944, he focused on improving U.S. relations with Latin America. His success in this
cause led President Franklin Roosevelt to appoint him as U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala. Predictably, Kyle focused his energies on developing Guatemalan agriculture. In gratitude for his service, that country bestowed on Kyle its most coveted honor, "The Order of the Quetzal."

Kyle resigned his diplomatic post in 1948 to return to his beloved Aggieland and, in his words, "take things easy." There, at age 87, he succumbed to a long illness on the day after Christmas, 1963.

Testimonies to his influence on a university, a state and a nation arrived quickly. Students, alumni and friends came from far and wide to visit the oil portrait of Kyle that still hangs in the Agriculture dean's offices. After spanning and shaping the formative years of Texas A&M, one extraordinary life had ended.

Newspapers across the state headlined the story: Dean Kyle, "Mr. Texas A&M," was gone.
Despite the rigor of his career, Thompson found time for a variety of altruistic commitments, most of which centered on the needs of young people. He served on the State Board of Directors for Distributive Education and the board for Shriners Hospitals for Children in Houston. For decades, however, he showed special affection for Texas A&M.

Thompson’s first formal visit to campus came in 1956. As a representative of the Houston Industrial Distributors Association, he conveyed to university officials the industry’s need for engineers with an academic grounding in marketing. The visit led ultimately to the creation of Texas A&M’s Industrial Distribution Department. Thereafter, Thompson labored tirelessly for more than 30 years to ensure that the department became the nation’s finest.

With his wife, Mary Claude, Thompson endowed professorships, graduate fellowships and undergraduate scholarships. He also gave seed money for the renovation of Ferrier Hall, where the industrial distribution program was housed. In 1979, Thompson estimated that more than an hour of every workday was spent advancing some facet of the university. His efforts were nothing short of evangelistic.

Thompson invited and paid for professional colleagues to visit the campus and see the industrial distribution program first-hand. He traveled thousands of miles, talked to hundreds of people and sent countless personal letters to distributors and manufacturers across the nation. He also hosted field trips and helped secure summer employment for Texas A&M students. Not surprisingly, his campaigning inspired numerous corporate and individual gifts.

Few academic programs at Texas A&M have had a more effective spokesman than industrial distribution found in Dick Thompson. In 1980, the board of regents formally recognized Thompson’s many contributions by naming the university’s mechanical engineering shops J.R. Thompson Hall.

Nor does his legacy end there. His daughter, Cheryl Thompson-Draper, CEO and president of Warren Electric Group, is herself now an active member of the external advisory and development council of the College of Engineering. With her husband, John Draper, she also serves on the College of Veterinary Medicine development council.

Ordinarily, one might be surprised that a man with a 10th-grade education would create a legacy that included an international business, a prominent academic program and a collection of endowments. But then Thompson was no ordinary man. He understood that opportunities are not found; they are made. He created opportunities for himself and then used his position to help others. Because of his kindness, generations of Aggies will enjoy educational advantages he never had. —story by Steve Burnhill

To learn about other A&M “legacy builders,” request a copy of the foundation’s annual report via the Publications Request at www.tamu.edu/foundation, or by calling 800-392-9310.
A real estate gift from Charles H. Bridges ’45 DVM will help carry teaching excellence to future generations of veterinary medicine students.

A desire to foster learning led Bridges and his wife, Mildred Kruse Bridges, to commit to funding a faculty chair that will promote teaching excellence in the College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Bridges cites the importance of educators in his life as the inspiration for establishing the chair.

“I have had mentors, some of whom were only around for a fleeting moment, who influenced my life, helped me make decisions and provided direction,” he says. Bridges remembers one mentor, a high school math teacher, as particularly inspirational. “He instilled a desire to learn,” Bridges recalls.

Charles Bridges brought that desire to learn to Texas A&M in 1941. He later entered Texas A&M’s professional veterinary program, receiving both his master’s and doctoral degrees in veterinary pathology. In 1988, he retired from the veterinary pathology department after a 34-year career that included 17 years as department head.

Mildred Bridges recalls her husband’s work at the college. “I remember that he was busy all of the time teaching and working on research projects,” she says. “I have always been proud of everything he has done and the contributions he has made to his field.”

Together, the Bridges family will give $500,000 to fund their half of the endowment. To complete the $1 million chair, the university will provide another $500,000 from the Vision 2020 Chair Matching Program.

“It turned out that the horses were gnawing on those pretty white fences in Kentucky and ingesting zinc, which prevented copper absorption in their diets,” he says. “This was causing the horses to lose cartilage in their joints. That’s why, today, you don’t see many white fences. Instead, you’ll see fences painted black.”

The Bridges, who live in College Station, kept close ties to Texas A&M after Charles retired. When they heard about a new matching program to fund faculty chairs, they decided to give the Texas A&M Foundation some real estate. Proceeds from the sale of the land are providing the seed of their chair endowment.

“We also plan to supplement our land gift with some cash,” says Dr. Bridges, “and we have several family members who have...
pledged cash gifts to the chair also. They thought this was a great idea and volunteered to contribute."

Together, the Bridges family will give $500,000 to fund their half of the endowment. To complete the $1 million chair, the university will provide another $500,000 from the Vision 2020 Chair Matching Program. The new program is made possible by a Texas constitutional amendment that helped increase investment returns from the public fund that benefits the Texas A&M and University of Texas systems.

The Bridges Chair, with its focus on teaching excellence, is the first of its kind in the nation. "Intersection between faculty and students is so important to the learning process," Bridges says. "It's something we must preserve."
Investing in the Spirit #3: Estate Planning Can Benefit Your Family And Your University

The Texas A&M Foundation offers you many options for supporting the university. Everyone can find one well suited to his or her financial and charitable goals. This series examines popular ways for making gifts to support education, research and service programs at Texas A&M.

Hold onto your assets and you could cost your family a bundle of money. That's right. Unless you put estate-planning strategies to work, your net worth is at risk of being reduced by more than half by estate taxes. The Internal Revenue Service, not your heirs, could become your estate's greatest beneficiary.

On the other hand, with proper planning your estate taxes could be zero. In addition, you can pass along everything you want to your heirs while making a gift to Texas A&M.

Estate Planning Is The Secret

Whatever the value of your estate, planning is a sensible undertaking. Then again, chances are good that your estate is worth considerably more than you think.

Your home, investments, pension benefits, personal property, trusts, insurance proceeds and any other property you and your spouse own are included in your estate. Do a few simple calculations, and your net value may surprise you.

Upon the death of the longer-living spouse, federal estate taxes on these assets start at 37 percent for estates valued at more than $675,000 and can climb as high as 55 percent. So planning for the disposition of your estate is worth plenty.

The Texas A&M Foundation assists former students and friends of Texas A&M in planning charitable gifts to achieve several important financial objectives:

- contributing to the future excellence of Texas A&M;
- maintaining an appropriate standard of living after retirement;
- providing surviving spouses with control over estate assets;
- "zero-ing out" estate taxes; and
- protecting children's inheritance.

Using gift planning techniques such as charitable trusts, bequests and life insurance, A&M supporters may be able to meet their goals for charitable giv-
ing without interfering with their families' security. Many can make gifts to the university merely by redirecting monies that would otherwise default to the IRS.

For more information, please call Glenn Pittsford '72, planned giving director, Texas A&M Foundation, 979-845-8161, 800-392-3310, or g-pittsford@tamu.edu. Or, visit our Web site at www.tamu.edu/foundation.

Tax and legal information is for educational purposes only and should be examined by independent legal counsel due to differences in local laws and individual needs, as well as possible changes in national estate tax laws.
LOWRY MAYS JOINS FOUNDATION BOARD

Lowry Mays ’57 is the newest appointee to the Texas A&M Foundation board of trustees. Mays is CEO of Clear Channel Communications Inc, in San Antonio, Texas. He founded Clear Channel in 1972 with the purchase of a financially troubled radio station. Today, the company is a global leader in the out-of-home advertising industry with radio and television stations and outdoor displays in 37 countries worldwide.

Mays served on the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents from 1985 to 1991. In 1996, the board recognized his generous support of Texas A&M’s business college by naming it the Lowry Mays College & Graduate School of Business. Mays has served on Texas A&M development councils and committees supporting the Bush Presidential Library, engineering, visual arts and the Memorial Student Center.

MATCHING PROGRAM OFFERS “HALF-PRICE” CHAIRS

The university’s new Vision 2020 Chair matching program has already triggered more than 10 new commitments. Endowed chairs, the most prestigious faculty award, allow Texas A&M to recruit and retain outstanding professors. University President Ray Bowen ’58 initiated the matching program last spring using a portion of new public funds made available by a 1999 change to the Texas Constitution. Bowen says the university will use the new public funds to match private gifts of $500,000 to $1 million, creating chair endowments of $1 million to $2 million.

VISION 2020
CURRENT CAMPAIGNS MAKE PROGRESS

Texas A&M has made significant progress toward reaching goals in several ongoing campaigns. The Bush School campaign has met its phase-one goal of $20 million and has initiated a second-phase campaign to raise another $20 million.

The can-do attitude that makes Aggie engineers famous has created strong response to several departmental campaigns. Petroleum Engineering’s “The Leader Today/The Leader Tomorrow” Campaign has garnered $17.5 million in commitments toward its $20 million goal. Chemical Engineering’s $30 million campaign, titled “Higher...Greater...Bolder,” has received commitments of $11 million for student and faculty support and a new building. Mechanical Engineering recently launched a campaign, “Today’s Dreams, Tomorrow’s Reality,” and has commitments of $2.5 million.

The Department of Geology & Geophysics began its “Expanding Excellence” Campaign last fall. To date, the effort has raised $9.1 million toward an $11 million goal.

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS RETIRE; FOUNDATION HIRES NEW STAFF

The Texas A&M Foundation recently bid farewell to three retirees: Roy I. Smith Jr., director of corporate relations; Ronald W. Kent, planned giving officer; and Richard M. Biondi ‘60, director of development-student affairs.

In September, Jim Keller ’63 assumed the role of director of corporate & foundation relations. Keller worked previously as the foundation’s development director—education. Glenn Pittsford joined the foundation to fill the gap in planned giving (see related story, pg. 20). In November, Brig. Gen. Edmond Solomosy ’60 will join Kathryn Hughes ’86 in directing fund raising for the Office of Student Affairs.

FOUNDATION PASSES MONETARY MILESTONES

The Texas A&M Foundation passed two monetary milestones during its fiscal year 2000, which ended August 31, 2000. First, foundation assets passed the half-billion mark, increasing from $486 million to $558 million during fiscal year 2000. Secondly, foundation disbursements to or for the university passed the quarter-billion mark.
reaching a cumulative total of $267 million from 1953 to 2000. Disbursements consist of a portion of investment income on endowments, as well as non-endowed gifts. The foundation disburses all funds according to the purposes donors have designated.

**New Scholarship Garners Broad Support**

More than 250 undergraduates are now benefiting from a new Texas A&M scholarship program, the Foundation Excellence Award (FEA). The Texas A&M Foundation established the FEA two years ago to help increase diversity within the Texas A&M student body. The awards are available to outstanding students from underrepresented groups, including minorities and students from economically disadvantaged areas and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds.


For more information, contact Jim Keller ’63, director of corporate & foundation relations, at 800-392-3310 or 979-845-8161, or via email at <jimkeller@tamu.edu>.

**Pittsford Named Planned Giving Director**

Glenn R. Pittsford ’72 joined the Texas A&M Foundation in February as director of planned giving.

Pittsford has an extensive background in financial institution and non-profit foundation management. Most recently, he served eight years as executive director of the Lutheran Foundation of Texas in Austin. He holds a bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics from Texas A&M, is a member of the Forsyth Heritage Society, and is a past president of both the Capital City and Georgetown A&M clubs.
Frequently Asked Question

Is the Texas A&M Foundation a public or private institution?

The Texas A&M Foundation is a private, nonprofit corporation with its own board of trustees and president. This organization is common among public universities and results in greater effectiveness and benefits for both the university and its donors. For instance, donors are assured that their gifts will be protected from reallocation by the state and that their personal giving and financial records will remain private.

Find it on the Internet

Learn more about stories in this issue of Spirit by visiting these Web sites. While some sites are maintained by Texas A&M, others are not. In the latter case, we try to refer you to quality sites, but we cannot ensure the accuracy or appropriateness of all content.

Texas Ag Extension Service
http://ageextension.tamu.edu

Ag Extension’s Family & Consumer Sciences unit
http://fcs.tamu.edu

Oceanography Prof. John Morse
www-ocean.tamu.edu/~morse/welcome.html

Morse on Mars’ Oceans
www-ocean.tamu.edu/Quarterdeck/1999/01/morse.html

College of Veterinary Medicine
www.cvm.tamu.edu

Estate Tax Calculator
www.tamu.edu/foundation/MethodsOfGiving/plannedgifts/estatetaxcalc.htm

Current Campaigns
www.tamu.edu/foundation/GivingOpportunities

Vision 2020
www.tamu.edu/newvision

Vision 2020 Chair Matching Program
http://rev.tamu.edu/stories/00/051100-8.htm
Requests & Comments

_Spirit_ is published to keep you informed about Texas A&M fund-raising efforts. If you have a comment or question, take a moment to fill out this form and mail it postage-free. Thank you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST NAME</th>
<th>LAST NAME</th>
<th>CLASS YEAR</th>
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<th>STREET ADDRESS</th>
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<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>ZIP CODE</th>
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<th>HOME PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER</th>
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<th>E-MAIL ADDRESS</th>
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Check here if:  □ New home address  
□ New business address

I have a comment/question:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

□ Please contact me about making a gift to Texas A&M.  
□ I’d like to know more about making an estate gift (trusts, life insurance, bequests).

I’d like to know more about supporting the following area(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGES</th>
<th>PROGRAMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Programs</td>
<td>Association of Former Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Bush School of Gov’t.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Corps of Cadets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Faculty Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geosciences</td>
<td>International Programs</td>
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<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
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<td>Medicine</td>
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<td>Science</td>
<td>Student Life</td>
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<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
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</tbody>
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OTHER: __________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

You can contact the Texas A&M Foundation at the following:

postal:  401 George Bush Drive  
         College Station, Texas 77840-2811

voice:  979-845-8161 or 1-800-392-3310

e-mail:  r-mcfadden@tamu.edu

Internet:  www.tamu.edu/foundation