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Volume 14 • Issue 1 • Fall 2015

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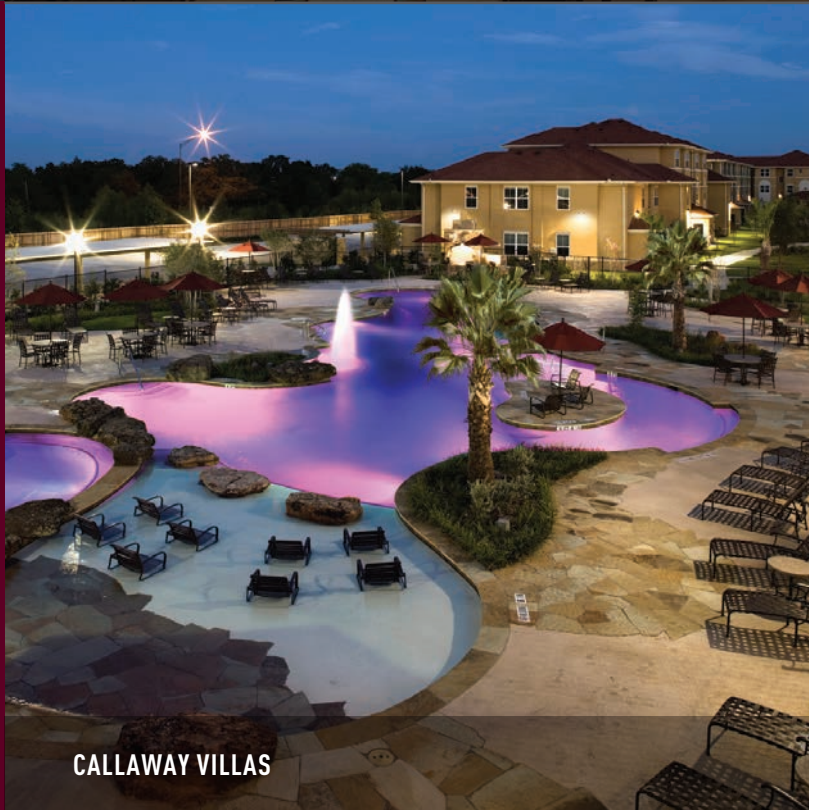
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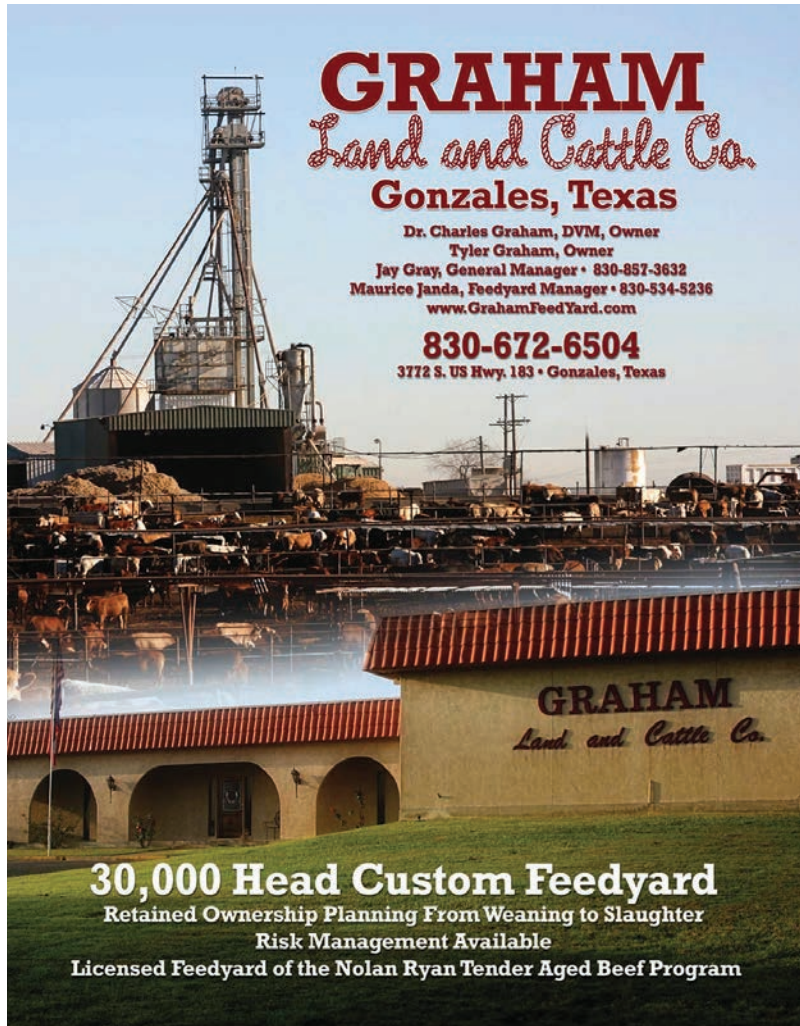


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# Table of Contents

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Man Behind the Steaks



The Texas A&M Women's Equestrian Team is one of nine women's sports offered at A&M.

## AGRICULTURE

- 06 We Want You**  
Reasons why students are encouraged to join the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.
- 20 Say HOWDY to our FARM**  
A student-run farm with a passion for sustainable agriculture.
- 28 A Flourishing Business**  
Macey Price's easy, how-to guide for making life beautiful with floral arrangements.
- 33 Healing the Burns**  
Texas A&M Forest Service's 100 years of service.

## STUDENT LIFE

- 08 Help Me, I'm Poor**  
A better way for college students to manage their money.
- 09 The Symposium Survivors**  
Agricultural economics course helps students foster their own business enterprise ideas.
- 10 Where Did You Come From?**  
Where will you go? More students with urban backgrounds are pursuing a degree in agriculture.
- 11 Get the Scoop**  
Q&A with Joe Robertson, Sales Manager at Blue Bell.
- 16 Main vs. West Campus**  
The noticeable differences between Main Campus and West Campus.

# Table of Contents

Staff page and Colophon located on pages 38 and 39

## STUDENT LIFE CONTINUED

- 26** How-to Bring the Outside, In  
Which display of plants and flowers are best for you?
- 30** A Different Breed of Leader  
How Aggie guide-dogs and service-dogs are making a difference.
- 36** Passing the Final Test  
Finding a career after graduation.

## HISTORY

- 13** Games of OUR Lifetime  
Ranking the top 12 Aggie football games of the last 20 seasons.
- 18** Steaking His Claim  
Animal science grad finds his sizzle as restaurateur.
- 24** 40 Years and Counting  
A look back at women's athletics over the years.
- 34** Making a Mark  
Behind the scenes of 12th Man Productions.

## Connection Q&A's

- 05 Paul McGrath '78
- 32 Granger Smith '02
- 40 Dr. Brad P. Abraham '01

## Spotlight Briefs

- 05 Game of Thrones comes to Cushing
- 32 COALS Council grant
- 40 Veterinary College Centennial



photo by Arielle Hess



photo courtesy of 12th Man Productions



photo by Tanner Garza  
Q&A with Joe Robertson,  
Sales Manager at Blue Bell.



photo courtesy of the Texas A&M Forest Service

connection

# Paul McGrath '78

Assistant lecturer in ag communications & journalism



### Why did you choose to go to Texas A&M?

“Initially I had been looking at other schools, but then I had a history teacher in high school that was an Aggie fan. He took me to an Aggie football game when I was a sophomore, and I just fell in love with the place. Just walking around and people saying ‘Howdy’ to you and being very friendly, it was the first

college football game I had gone to, and I immediately fell in love with Texas A&M and there was no place left for me to go.”

### What would you do differently if you came back to A&M?

“There are classes that I could have done better in and there are classes that I wish that I had taken to know some more things and better prepare me for my career. When you’re a student, you often look at things as ‘Gee, what can I do to get my degree and get out of here?’ and your goals are somewhat shortsighted. Now it’s like ‘I wish I had worked harder at this,’ and that would have made me more successful in my career.”

### How do you describe Texas A&M to others who did not attend the school?

“It’s the traditions that make it more of a family than just a school. Sure, there are plenty of academic bureaucracies that you deal with, but it’s the Aggie family that makes those things less burdensome.”

spotlight

# “Game of Thrones” Author Brings Fantasy to Cushing Library

For most students without a rural upbringing, reading books provided their first exposure to the agricultural world. Fantasy series like “Lord of the Rings” and George R.R. Martin’s “A Song of Ice and Fire” have reawakened interest in pre-industrial settings. Many students at Texas A&M University have left fantasy behind for more academic pursuits, but last year the fantasy came back.

In the spring of 2015, Martin visited A&M to present Texas A&M University Libraries with its 5 millionth volume, a first-edition of J.R.R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit.”

Martin appeared at Rudder Auditorium and gifted the book to the Texas A&M University Libraries’ Science Fiction and Fantasy Research

Collection after reading a few pages aloud. The author has a long-running relationship with the university, including several visits to AggieCon, a student-run science fiction and fantasy convention, in the ‘70s and ‘80s. Martin has donated most of his own writings since 1993, after being impressed with the library’s expansive collection.

“The Hobbit” now resides in Cushing Memorial Library, available for viewing upon request. The book is a testament to Martin’s encouragement to uphold fantastical stories, even past childhood.

“The stories that we grow up on, the stories that help shape our values and shape our lives, we still love and remember,” Martin said. “This is the stuff that should be preserved.”

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# WE WANT YOU

Students encouraged to enroll in The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (COALS)

TAI JOHN '15

Texas A&M University was founded as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. Established in 1911, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences was one of the original formally recognized colleges.

Assistant Dean for Student Success, Danielle Harris, Ph.D. takes pride in the college's connection to the community and the state.

"Our college is very connected to the community," Harris said. "We have research and extension centers across the state. These centers help citizens and local communities do the things they need to do."

**"Historically we were one of the founding units of Texas A&M because we are the 'A' in A&M."**

**Danielle Harris  
Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Student Success**

According to the college's website, the world-class research and teaching allows more students to graduate in agriculture-related fields than anywhere else in the nation. Former students are in leadership positions in industry, government, business and the nonprofit sector.

"Placement rates of our students are very high, and former students feel more connected to their careers earlier in addition to feeling like they made the right decision," Harris said. "They've had exposure to what their career is ahead of time and they've had a chance to do an internship."



Borlaug and other scientists used the techniques he developed in Mexico to grow new strains of rice and other grains for South Asia and the rest of the world—ushering in the Green Revolution.

Borlaug and other scientists used the techniques he developed in Mexico to grow new strains of rice and other grains for South Asia and the rest of the world—ushering in the Green Revolution.



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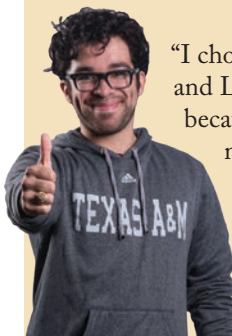
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photos by Tanner Garza

Danielle Harris, Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Student Success.

## Why Aggies Choose COALS



"I chose the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences mostly because of the AGCJ major, I enjoy it. I was a biology major and I did not like writing for science stuff. A friend recommended me to look into this major and it

still included the sciences, which I did enjoy. So it was a good mix of science and creativity that has allowed me to enjoy my time here."

**Dominic Hernandez '15  
Ag. Comm. Journalism major**

"The reason why I chose this specific college is to study tourism because I'm interested in the hospitality and tourism service industry."



**Amy Nicholas '17  
Rec. Parks and Tourism major**



"I got into genetics because I thought it was an interesting major. Knowing the history behind someone's DNA was very interesting. Especially because I knew that I could somehow relate it to someone's neurology by studying neuro genetics, which is something I really wanted to get into."

**Kenya Walker '18  
Genetics major**



# Famous Former Students

## President & Founder, Ring Wraps

Emily M. Huskinson '12

As an Ag Leadership and Development major and Agricultural Communications and Journalism minor she started the company after receiving her Aggie ring in 2011.

## Governor, Texas

Rick Perry '72

American Republican politician, served as the 47th Governor of Texas from 2000 to 2015. He was an Animal Science major during his time at A&M.

## President and CEO, Blue Bell Creameries

Edward "Ed" Kruse '49

Graduated from A&M with a Bachelor's degree in Dairy Science. He continues to serve as President as of May 2015.

## Miss Rodeo Texas 2014

Alexandria Ingram '15

Agricultural Communications and Journalism major.

## Chairman of the Board, Blue Bell Creameries

Howard Kruse '52

Graduated from A&M with a Bachelor's degree in Dairy Science.

# Fun Facts

- 1 As an extra incentive for prospective male students to the college, it's 56% females so you're sure to find a keeper.
- 2 Award winning beef jerky- if you haven't had it stop by Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center.
- 3 The blooming onions that you can get at Outback Steakhouse or Texas Roadhouse were developed in the college. They're called the 1050-A onion.
- 4 A little more than one-third of our students are 1st generation college students.
- 5 One of the United States largest colleges of agriculture and life sciences.
- 6 Our faculty has been awarded more than \$46 million in contracts and grants for funding.
- 7 Nobel Peace Prize winner and "Father of the Green Revolution," Norman Borlaug has not only left a global legacy but he also left Texas A&M with the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture.

## Need a Major? Check the Facts

**32** of **140** majors at Texas A&M are in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences *that's about* **1/3**

- agricultural economics
- agricultural leadership
- animal science
- biochemistry & biophysics
- biological & agricultural engineering
- communications
- ecosystem science & management
- education
- entomology
- horticultural sciences
- nutrition & food science
- plant pathology & microbiology
- poultry science

**14** academic departments

**2nd** largest college at A&M following the College of Engineering

There are a lot of benefits for students in the college of Agriculture and Life Sciences as an undergraduate. Selecting a major within the college is one of those benefits, largely due to the faculty within the college.

"They will go out of their way for students whether it's a letter of recommendation, connecting them with people for mentors, helping them to get placed with things, helping them find campus resources or scholarships or any number of things," Harris said. "Our faculty is very open and willing to talk with students, and that's not always the case in some colleges."



# Help me, I'm Poor

MIKALA WHITAKER '15

The average college student spends \$3,000-\$5,000 a semester on food, entertainment, clothing, gas, cell phone, activities, books, school supplies, electronics and traveling home. So what is the solution to funding your education?

Scholarships provide money that can be used for many education expenses and many of the necessities. So where are they? Everywhere! You just have to be willing to look hard and write an essay explaining why you are qualified. Even if it's for \$500, it's money that you wouldn't have had before.

Another option to consider is getting a part-time job. This way you have a monthly income and rely less on your parent's support. Try looking off-campus for restaurant or retail jobs with part-time hours, working and saving. If you work summers, make sure that you put some of that income away for use during the school year. You might as well get used to working and saving. You'll be doing it for the rest of your life.

Maintaining a budget to manage your funding is an essential component to saving your money. With a written budget, you will be able to see exactly where your money goes and how much you're saving. Some good online

resources to check out is Mint, You Need a Budget (YNAB), GnuCash, MoneyDance and BudgetSimple.

Another good resource that many recommend is Dave Ramsey with his books, audio tapes and Financial Peace University.

Be smart and responsible with your money. With a written budget you will become more organized and have better control of your finances. Avoid using credit cards. If you do use your credit card try to pay the full balance due at the end of each month.

It's also a good idea to put money in a savings account. In case of an emergency you will have back up savings funds. If you work a part-time job, try to transfer a percentage of your paycheck to a savings account each paycheck.

Other saving strategies include using grocery and restaurant coupons, cooking more often at home and riding a bike or taking the bus to campus. Make changes in your lifestyle that will have a positive impact on the funding of your education.

graphic by Jenna Rabel

# The Symposium Survivors



photocourtesy of Dr. Rister

Michael Limon was one of six students to present his business plan at the Corrigan-Goddard Foundation Entrepreneurial Dreams Symposium.

## CONNER DARLAND '15

### Agricultural economics course helps students foster their own business enterprise ideas.

It is a story that many of us have heard time and time again. A small town college student has a big city idea. That big city idea leads to a small business, which eventually expands to a large business enterprise. Many students have these multi-million dollar ideas, but do not have the know-how to start their own businesses.

Fortunately, this idea of entrepreneurship is taught through a two-semester, rural entrepreneurship class through the Department of Agricultural Economics.

Edward Rister, Ph.D., Professor and Associate Head of Agricultural Economics, begins with nearly 100 students in the fall and teaches them the analytics of starting and maintaining their own business enterprise. After many months of number crunching and working on spreadsheets, these lessons are put to the test when students have to show the

feasibility of their business in the spring.

With the spring winding down, six students are chosen to present their business plans in front of an audience of business professionals at the Corrigan-Goddard Foundation Entrepreneurial Dreams Symposium.

While only one of the six will be declared the winner, all are considered “survivors” and will have the opportunity to network with professionals to further the possibility of starting their own business.

“My project was my touring band. I’ve been doing it for a little less than two years now. Throughout the last year I worked on the project, I put together a 10-year business plan. I was able to use my real life numbers and it was just a great learning experience to see where my money was being allocated and where I can improve my business. The biggest thing I’ve learned from this class is the networking power of the Aggie family and everybody that I’ve met through Dr. Rister.”

**Austin Meade '15**  
Corrigan-Goddard  
Foundation  
Entrepreneurial  
Dreams Symposium  
2015 Winner

“Students are challenged to look into a business to see whether or not it will work on paper. It’s not the easiest class in our department and there is a reason why when they finish they are called survivors. Every year I’m humbled by their efforts. At the end of the day, if they survive, the real value will come in the years ahead. In the end, they’re all winners. This year particularly was very close in terms of who got to present and so forth. But that’s the way the real world is. As we look at this year, we probably had more students that want to start their business, actually start their business than we’ve had in the past. I think that out of this class, we may get two or three businesses started here in the next two or three years. We definitely have some supporting interest from former students on investing. We can’t teach entrepreneurship and we don’t think we can. What we try to do is kindle the spirit.”

**Dr. Edward Rister '74**  
Associate Head  
of Agricultural  
Economics and  
Professor of Rural  
Entrepreneurship

“What we have done here is try to continue the entrepreneurial spirit and these kids have continued to work really, really hard. They put in more time and call it the survivorship program simply because of the amount of time and effort it takes to do it. They start off class with 100 students and they whittle it down to 19. It’s pretty brutal and if you look at the projects, they’re taught how to analyze things 10-ways-to-Sunday. By the time they’re done, the best thing that comes out is what they learned. The fact is, whether it’s a real life project that they’re going to go forward with or it’s just a class, they’re able to determine whether it survives or not. If they can’t make it work on paper, then don’t do it.”

**Stephen Cooper '78**  
Spring 2015 Mentor  
and Mentor Expert  
Panel Member



# Where Did You Come From? Where Will You Go?

photos by Tanner Garza

University street traffic on Northgate at night.

BAILEY KIETH '16

It's easy for outsiders to make the assumption that the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is just a bunch of good 'ol boys riding horses to class and staring at tractors all day long. This generalization couldn't be further from the truth.

"I assumed it would only be people who had grown up around ag, and feared I wouldn't be fit in," said Katie Thedford, a senior recreation parks and tourism sciences major from Dallas. "But my classes weren't solely focused on agriculture, and plenty of people were in the same boat as me."

Makenzie Judah, senior agricultural leadership development major with a minor in recreation parks and tourism sciences from Dallas, has learned about agriculture in-depth since beginning at Texas A&M.

"Being from a big city didn't hinder my success as an ag major at all," Judah said. "Plus there was so much for me to learn about this industry that I had little to no prior knowledge of."

Everything in the world involves agriculture; the food we eat, the clothes we wear and the cars we drive. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences faculty took the initiative to chart its top priorities for the future. According to the college's official website, the Grand Challenges

consist of feeding our world, protecting our environment, improving our health, enriching our youth and growing our economy. Through research, teaching and selfless service, the college's students and faculty are seeking diverse perspectives to address universal problems and make the entire world a better place.

An even greater misconception is that the college's students are limited to veterinarians, farmers or ag teachers upon graduation. The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences proudly produces some of the finest vets, farmers and ag teachers in the world, but there are countless other career paths. No matter what your previous experiences have been or where you see yourself going, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has something to offer.

It may come as a surprise to some, but the "A" in Texas A&M used to stand for Agriculture. More than 26 percent of the available degrees reside within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Within the college's 14 departments, there are 30 diverse undergraduate degrees available to lead to your dream job. Do you have a knack for numbers or see yourself as an entrepreneur? A degree in agricultural economics or ag business could be just what you need. Perhaps you have a passion for party planning? A major, or even a minor, in recreation, parks and tourism sciences is an option. There's forensic and investigative sciences for mystery lovers and justice seekers. From agricultural leadership development to renewable natural resources, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences literally covers anything and everything you could possibly want to learn about.

You never know what you'll see walking around West Campus. There could be cowboy boots clicking in Kleberg, or the newest Jordan's squeaking through AGLS. While many students do come from an agricultural background, more and more ag grads are coming from urban backgrounds. It can be intimidating to jump into something you are unfamiliar with, but isn't that the point of college? Medical students are unlikely to perform surgery on their friends in high school, so they chose to learn about it in college. The same can be said for ag. You are here to learn, no one expects you to arrive as an expert. Regardless of where you come from or see yourself going, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has something for you.



The sun sets over New York City's Empire State Building as seen from the Affina hotel on the Upper East Side.

# Getting the Scoop

photo by Tanner Garza



## Q&A with Joe Robertson, Sales Manager at Blue Bell

JENNA ELIAS '15

### When Blue Bell Park at Olsen Field was established in 2011, how did Blue Bell's Brenham location change?

"The opening of Blue Bell Park generated a great deal of excitement with Texas A&M students, alumni and Blue Bell fans everywhere. I'm sure this contributed to the steady increase of visitors to Brenham, which increased to more than 215,000 last year. In addition, we have A&M fans who regularly stop by our creamery on their way to any Aggie game."

### Since Blue Bell opened in 1907, it has grown enormously and successfully. What makes a strong and successful company, all while staying humble?

"Steady growth and high quality standards alone don't really explain the success of Blue Bell. Blue Bell has never been just another company selling another product. We've remained close to our roots in rural Texas and as a result, have a special place in the hearts of the consumers who enjoy the company's products."

### Since you have a customer base of 60,000 students at Texas A&M, do you think you would ever produce a maroon-colored ice cream to distribute in Aggieland?

"We get asked this almost every year, but for now there are no plans to make a maroon-colored ice cream. We do have our popular red velvet cake in a maroon-colored carton that might work."

### What are some of the craziest flavor requests Blue Bell has ever gotten?

"Almost anything that's edible has been suggested to us to put in our ice cream, jalapenos 'n' cream, you name it. Some of the more unusual flavors we have produced include peanut butter 'n' jelly, dill pickle, licorice and jelly terror."

### One of the few commonalities Texas A&M and Blue Bell share is thinking and knowing we are the "best in the country." How does Blue Bell set apart from other ice cream brands and stand behind the quote of being "the best ice cream in the country?"

"We both have a unique combination of 'can-do-spirit,' small town values and old-fashioned optimism. We simply focus on being the best we can be."

### At Texas A&M we are big on traditions, does Blue Bell have any special traditions that have been carried on throughout the years?

"We have a commitment to quality and consistency. We purchase the freshest and finest ingredients for our products, and Blue Bell employees deliver the products to your favorite retailer in top condition. Each August we produce Birthday Cake ice cream in celebration of our anniversary, this year we will celebrate our 108 year anniversary."

### Should we make eating a half gallon of Blue Bell ice cream after final exams one of our traditions here at Texas A&M?

"If you ask me, yes. What better way to celebrate finals than with a full half gallon of Blue Bell Homemade Vanilla?"

### Do you have any advice for students at Texas A&M on being successful in and after college?

"Love what you do, work hard and stay humble."





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# 2015 Texas A&M Football Schedule

Sat, Sep 05	Arizona State	Houston, Texas (NRG Stadium)
Sat, Sep 12	Ball State	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Sep 19	Nevada	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Sep 26	Arkansas	Arlington, Texas
Sat, Oct 03	Mississippi State	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Oct 17	Alabama	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Oct 24	Ole Miss	Oxford, Miss.
Sat, Oct 31	South Carolina	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Nov 07	Auburn	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Nov 14	Western Carolina	Kyle Field (College Station)
Sat, Nov 21	Vanderbilt	Nashville, Tenn.
Sat, Nov 28	LSU	Baton Rouge, La.
Sat, Dec 05	SEC Championship	Atlanta, Ga.



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photo courtesy of Aggie Athletics

# Games of **OUR** Lifetime

## The Top 12 Aggie Football Games of the Past 20 Seasons

JUSTIN WALKER '15

You hear Old Army. You hear them talk about beating Alabama. About the Bonfire game. About John David Crow. About the 1939 national championship.

You hear them. They are talking about the games of their lifetime. The older they are, the more they've seen.

But what will we talk about when we are Old Army? What games will have meaning to us? What will be the games of *our* lifetime?

### (25) Texas, 2011



# #12

In their last year in the Big 12, the Aggies struggled when holding on to leads in the second half. Entering the final game against their arch rivals, Texas A&M had lost four games when leading at halftime, several of those being double-digit leads.

This night was no different.

The game itself is remarkable for many reasons. First, it was the final game between Texas A&M and Texas. Second, it was the last Big 12 conference game for the Aggies.

The comeback is what really made this game special, maybe not for Aggies. Texas trailed big at halftime and managed to work their way back into the game. The final blow came in the closing seconds, as Texas placekicker Justin Tucker nailed a 40-yard field goal for the two-point win.

### (3) Auburn, 2014



# #11

The 2014 season quickly took a turn for the worse after the Arkansas game. The Aggies lost three straight, including a 59-0 loss to Alabama, followed by a poor performance in a win over UL-Monroe. There was little hope that Texas A&M could turn it around against third-ranked Auburn.

"No one expected them to win the game," said agricultural communications and journalism major Mary Hannah Winstead '14. "They came out and played like I had never seen before."

The win was emotional for the players, but Winstead said it didn't end there. "Yes, I cried at the game. But I like to say they were Red Ass maroon tears."

photo courtesy of 12th Man Productions



Texas, 2011



Duke, 2013

#8

(22) Duke, 2013

48

52

A season after one of the most successful years in Aggie football history, Texas A&M limped into the Chick-fil-A Bowl against a very successful Duke squad. The Blue Devils jumped to a huge lead in the first half, taking a 38-17 lead into halftime. If Texas A&M had one thing going for them, it was Manziel.

“Duke was scoring on us a lot but the team didn’t give up and pulled it out with the help of Johnny,” said poultry science major Katherine Sexton ’15. “The atmosphere and the fans who traveled to Atlanta were also really cool and it seemed to help when we were getting down.”

#10

Mississippi State, 2000

43

41

Texas A&M headed to Shreveport to take on Mississippi State in the Independence Bowl, but it seemed that both teams were facing Mother Nature instead.

In what is now referred to as the “Snow Bowl,” the Aggies and Bulldogs fought through a snowstorm in what became an instant bowl classic.

While the snow was the big story for the rest of the nation, Aggie fans remember this as a battle of head coaches. R.C. Slocum was the play caller for A&M at the time, and former Aggie head coach Jackie Sherrill served in the same roll for Mississippi State.

In his first and only game against his former team, Sherrill was able to defeat A&M, 43-41, in overtime.

(12) Oklahoma, 2013

13

41

After an incredible first season in the SEC, Texas A&M and Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel arrived at the Cotton Bowl to face former Big 12 rival Oklahoma.

Before the game, Sooners’ head coach Bob Stoops had some choice words about the SEC and Texas A&M. After the game, his tone was a bit different.

Johnny Manziel set a record for most offensive yards by a single player (516) in a Cotton Bowl game. His Aggies also scorched the Sooners, 41-13, to cap off one of the most successful seasons in A&M history, finishing 11-2.

#9

(9) Nebraska, 2010

6

9

#7

In their final battle as conference foes, Nebraska and Texas A&M took the stage for what would turn into one of the greatest defensive matchups of all time, witnessed by one of the largest crowds in Kyle Field history.

“I remember that was a record setting night for attendance,” said Stephanie Venn ’11, an agricultural leadership and development graduate. “The crowd was electric. You could actually feel it.”

Nebraska averaged 35.4 points a game coming into the matchup, but the Aggie defense was too much.

Venn would argue that the fans had a lot to do with the Cornhuskers’ performance.

“To me, that game was one of the absolute best examples of the damage the 12th Man can do,” Venn said. “There wasn’t a single person that wasn’t yelling.”

(1) Oklahoma, 2002

26

30

#6

Oklahoma entered College Station ranked number one in the nation.

They left Aggieland with a bitter taste in their mouth.

The Aggies struggled over the course of the 2002 season, losing three straight at home. This didn’t stop freshman Reggie McNeal, who came off the bench to throw for four touchdowns and gain 280 total yards.

Aggie fans were upset with the win though. It had been a few years since A&M was a conference-title contender, and many were looking for a new head coach. Some feared that R.C. Slocum saved his job with the surprise win, but A&M parted ways with him after 14 seasons.



# #5

## (1) Alabama, 2013

49

42

The most highly anticipated game in A&M history did not disappoint. Sixth-ranked Texas A&M hosted top-ranked Alabama in a rematch of the upset win in Tuscaloosa the year before.

“We were off to such a promising start,” said senior agricultural communications and journalism major Danielle Bishop ’15.

Despite losing their big lead and falling behind before the half, the rowdy student section showed no sign of giving up. As the Aggies entered the second half, the faith and Aggie Spirit of one man inspired the heart of the 12th Man.

“I just remember everyone looking to the north end zone,” Bishop said. “There was Visor Guy leading yells! It was something I’ll never forget.”

The Aggies did make a comeback, but it was too late.

“We literally ran out of time,” Bishop said. “I know we say that a lot, but it really did happen this time.”

# #4

## Texas Tech, 2002

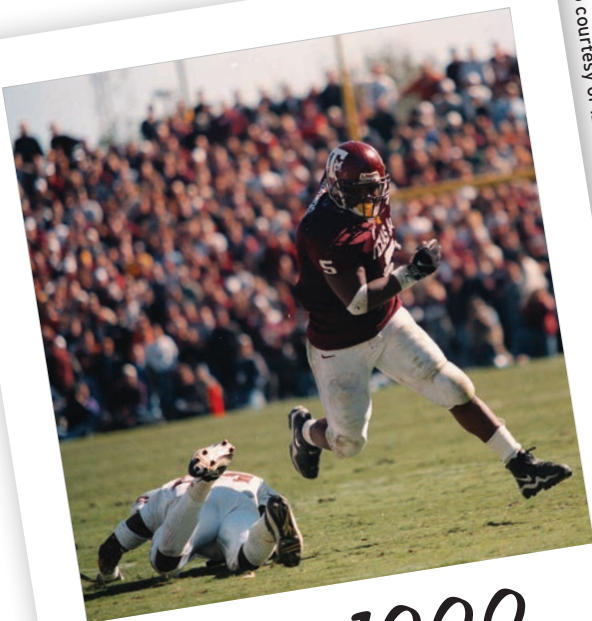
48

47

Kliff Kingsbury broke the hearts of Aggies in 2013 when he accepted the head-coaching job at Texas Tech. But back in 2002, Kingsbury led the Red Raiders to an upset win against A&M as quarterback.

This game had more substance than just the Kingsbury connection. Tech made an amazing comeback to force overtime. Even though our Aggies lost, it was one of the greatest games in Aggie history.

photo courtesy of 12th Man Productions



# Texas, 1999

## (2) Kansas State, 1998

33

36

# #3

Texas A&M closed out the '98 regular season with an upset loss to Texas, but still clinched the South division title and a berth in the Big 12 Championship. There, they faced their toughest test yet, top ranked Kansas State.

The game is special for multiple reasons. 1998 was the last season the Aggies won or appeared in a conference championship in football.

The comeback also made this game special. A&M trailed by 15 points in the final quarter, and still managed to send the game to overtime, eventually winning by three.

But most importantly, had it not been for the game, the greatest 12-word phrase would have never been uttered.

“HE GOT A TOUCHDOWN! HE GOT A TOUCHDOWN! HE GOT A TOUCHDOWN!”

## (1) Alabama, 2012

24

29

# #2

In their inaugural season of the SEC, Texas A&M had looked decent through nine games. Losses to Florida and LSU weren't bad, but coupled with no quality wins, the Aggies would enter the Alabama game as heavy underdogs.

The rest is history.

There were many plays in this game that made it special. The fumble/recovery/pass/touchdown by Manziel; the unbelievable catches by Ryan Swope; the offside penalty that won the game for us.

But the biggest play from that game was the interception at the goal line by Deshaun Everett. This play had every Aggie in the world 12 feet in the air.

## (5) Texas, 1999

16

20

# #1

This had nothing to do with football. This had everything to do with healing.

“It was kind of a surreal experience,” said William Lazenby '76. “You just felt like that night, we needed to win to heal. Winning right at the end just felt like God knew we needed that.”

While the game was great, and the win was helpful for many reasons, the halftime show is considered by some to be the highlight of the game.

“The Texas band performance was very touching,” Lazenby said. “Lowering their own pendants while the A&M pendants were left aloft was an emotional moment. Haven't felt the same about the t-sips since.”

November 18, 1999 serves as a very dark day in the history of Texas A&M, and if this game was able to help Aggies recover from devastation in any way, it deserves to go down as the greatest Aggie football game of all time.



photo by Tanner Garza

# Which Side of the Tracks are You From?

AMY WINN '15

As a result of Main and West Campus being separated by railroad tracks, each campus has its own unique atmosphere and personality that, together, makes Aggieland stand out as a whole.

## Main Campus

Main Campus houses the majority of colleges and majors at Texas A&M University, such as aerospace engineering, geology, sociology, Hispanic studies and many others. With two campuses come two different, yet similar, atmospheres. While most of the buildings and dorms are on Main campus and close

together, Drew Becquet '12, graduate of agricultural leadership and development agrees that Main campus provides more of a “college life” feel compared to West Campus.

“Main Campus is historic, full of charm and tradition,” Becquet said. “It’s the heartbeat of the university. Students would be hanging out throwing Frisbees and enjoying campus life between classes.”

As an outsider looking in, one may wonder if each campus has its own personality

“There is definitely a different feel to Main Campus compared to West Campus,” said Courtney DiPasquale, a senior sociology major. “People have much more distinct characteristics on Main

campus. I always see students with stereo systems connected to their backpacks riding their bikes.”

Main Campus can also appear to be more culturally diverse compared to West campus. Since Main campus is older than West campus there are more statues, landmarks and Aggie-related “themes” on Main Campus. Devin Sisk '12, graduate of agricultural leadership and development, describes Main Campus as a mix of culture.

“There was a lot more diversity among students on Main campus; a melting pot of cultures which made for great conversations,” Sisk said.

## The Menu

What is something that drives every college student? Food! According to the Dine On Campus website, there are 15 different dining locations on Main Campus, with the main hot spots being

**“Main Campus often felt busier, like a big city, and West Campus felt more like a suburb.”**

**Devin Sisk '12**  
**Ag. Leadership & Development**

the Memorial Student Center (MSC) Food Court and Sbis Dining Center. The MSC has an endless amount of food options. Students can eat almost anything including Italian, Chinese, barbecue and frozen yogurt. As for Sbis, the popular pig-outs include Chick-Fil-A, Papa Johns and many others.

Compared to Main Campus, West Campus has fewer dining locations, four to be exact. Ag Café is the largest and most popular amongst the others, and it is located in the Biology/Biochemistry Building. It has the most options food-wise: homemade pastas and pizzas from 2Mato, chicken-related products from Chick-Fil-A and deli sandwiches from



photo courtesy of Cushing Library

Aerial view of Main Campus and the early stages of West Campus development in the 1970s.



**Which Wich.**

“I was happy eating at both campuses as long as there was a Chick-Fil-A near by,” Becquet said.

**West Campus**

According to the My Aggie Nation website, the very first building constructed on the west side of the tracks was the Veterinary Medical Sciences Building in 1953. Although this was the first building on West Campus, it wasn't until 1977 that the university began to develop West Campus, with the building of the Soil and Crop Sciences and Entomology (Minnie Belle and Herman Heep) buildings. This building began the revolution of West Campus and helped it develop into what it is today.

Unlike Main Campus, West Campus consists of three colleges: the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Mays Business School and the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.

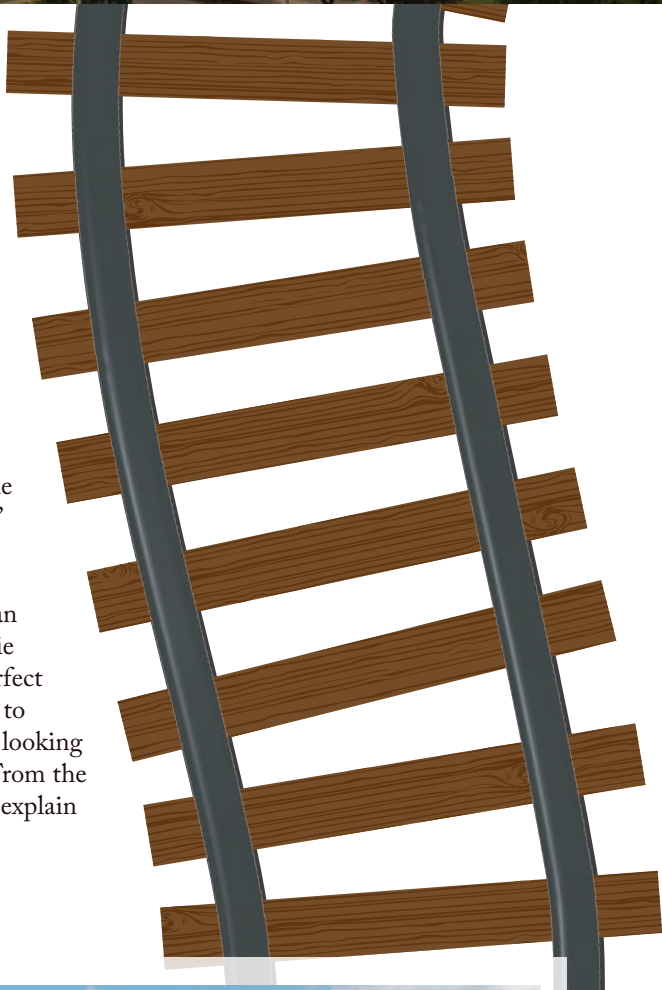
“The atmosphere on Main Campus often felt busier, like a big city, and West Campus felt more like a suburb,” Sisk said.

**We Are One**

Since Texas A&M University is split right down the middle by the railroad tracks, outsiders may think that the students feel separated from one another.

“Even though I felt more at home on West campus, I never felt as if Main and West Campus were two different schools,” Sisk said. “I could feel the strong Aggie presence on both campuses.”

Trying to explain and understand Texas A&M's traditions and campus life can be challenging. The old Aggie proverb couldn't be more perfect for explaining the university to someone, “From the outside looking in, you don't understand it. From the inside looking out, you can't explain it.”



On either side of Albritton Bell Tower, underpasses connect Texas A&M campus.

photo by Tanner Garza

# Steaking His Claim



Animal science grad Cody Whitten '83 discovers success as restaurateur

photos by Tanner Garza

LORIAN HOPCUS '16

Animal science graduate and self-proclaimed country boy, Cody Whitten never dreamed he would land at the fork end of farm-to-fork. Calling Aggieland its home, J. Cody's Steaks and Barbeque is Whitten's sizzling fork.

Whitten works long hours to ensure that Aggies enjoy his food for years to come. Hard work and dedication have made his restaurant a success, although it was not always in his plan.

"I didn't have any big plans after graduation," he said. "I never thought I would end up in the restaurant business, never wanted to."

Whitten began his business after working at Joe Allen's Steakhouse in Abilene, Texas. When franchising plans fell through, Whitten returned to College Station to start J. Cody's.

"My concepts mimic some of Joe Allen's," Whitten said.

Whitten loves his job, but describes it as very challenging with new surprises to overcome each day.

"Days are never typical," Whitten said. "It's the 10,000 little things that get you in trouble."

Routinely working 60 hours a week, he makes sure that enough beef is ordered, the staff is trained, the refrigerators are set at safe temperatures, the trash is taken out and payroll paperwork is done, while still making the rounds in the dining room to chat with customers.

"To stay in business, customers' perception is reality," Whitten said. "That's my goal, to make sure everyone's expectations are met."

J. Cody's has been working to meet those expectations for years. Whitten believes that his recipe for success is the way his food is prepared.

"We cook our steaks on mesquite," he said. "Others don't. They cook on gas and season it. I think the mesquite makes it."

Long-time customer, Marie Loria enjoys okra and the jalapeno cornbread.

"I can't find anywhere in town that has okra and jalapeno cornbread as good as J. Cody's," Loria said.

Whitten is partial to the ribeye and corn.

"I brought the corn recipe from Joe Allen's," Whitten explained. "It's similar to my grandma's with a little twist to it. It's become what everybody talks about and some call it 'Cody Corn.' I never expected that to be my calling card."

Whitten's journey to becoming a restaurant owner was not a typical one. He grew up working

in the family crop dusting business and participating in the Brazos County 4-H program and Texas A&M Collegiate FFA.

He carried his passion for agriculture to Texas A&M where he earned a bachelor's degree in animal science. After graduation, he planned to pursue a master's degree in animal reproduction. Instead, he helped his family.

"I went down to the Valley to help my dad and his partners," Whitten said. "We put in a peach orchard."

After a couple of years, Whitten returned to Aggieland to earn a master's in land economics and real estate.

"I appraised real estate in the area for a while," Whitten said. "But I didn't like it. I



A piece of centerpole from Bonfire '93. Whitten helped by snapshotting memories.

missed agriculture too much.”

He left real estate to work in the agricultural sales business. Through customer contacts, that position landed him a management role at Joe Allen’s Steakhouse and eventually led him back to Aggieland.

Whitten fondly recalled his time on campus. He was present at the football game when Bo Jackson was stopped on the goal line at the 1986 Cotton Bowl.

“This was our first appearance in the Cotton Bowl since I became an Aggie,” Whitten said.

As a hobby photographer, he has captured memories in the making during Bonfires ’92, ’93 and ’94. A section of the center pole from Bonfire ’93 is displayed in the restaurant today.

“I donated some of my pictures from Bonfire to Traditions Council,” Whitten said. “I was really surprised to see two of my pictures in a book by [former Aggie football coach] Jackie Sherrill.”

Whitten enjoys reminiscing about football, Bonfire and time spent at the Dixie Chicken. His most cherished memories of college are those spent with the

12th Man.

“My favorite tradition was standing at all the games,” Whitten said. “It’s really neat to see that many people come together to support fellow students.”

Aside from avidly supporting Texas A&M, Whitten enjoys hunting, dancing and spending time with his family. He and his wife live in Brazos County, where he coaches in the local 4-H shooting sports program. That volunteer work gives Whitten opportunities to give back to the community and help others learn from his experiences.

Whitten encourages students to explore possible career paths and to build a strong base for a future career.

“If you don’t know what you want to do, try to get exposed to as much as you can,” Whitten advised. “Be prepared to put in the work. Don’t be scared of it. There is still time to party and have a good time, but work hard in college and make something of it.”



Whitten’s passion for Texas A&M can be seen through the many Aggie memories displayed in the restaurant.



J. Cody’s restaurant is filled with various Aggie and agriculture decor.

# J. Cody's Steaks and Barbeque + Catering

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photo by Tanner Garza





# Say **HOWDY** to our **FARM**

photo by Jenna Rabel

SIDNEY HOLLAND '15

A student-run farm is weeding out the old and planting the new. The Howdy Farm hopes to teach others how to grow food the way our ancestors have grown it for centuries.

“Hands are historic tractors,” said Jeremy McAfee, Howdy Farm assistant manager.

Through sustainable methods, the Howdy Farm plans to get hands dirty and bring farming back to the basics.

The Howdy Farm was created in 2009 when professor Steve King and student

Brady Grimes decided to plant a vegetable garden outside of the Texas A&M University horticulture building. The farm started out as a hobby, but Grimes was determined to develop this project into something more.

A few months later, the Howdy Farm was the center of a newly registered



photo by Tanner Garza

student organization called Sustainable Agriculture Student Association (SASA). The Howdy Farm is now a fully-functioning, student-powered garden where students and the Bryan/College Station community can buy produce and learn sustainable gardening methods.

Corey Wahl, a Washington State

graduate with a degree in horticulture, currently oversees the Howdy Farm. After King retired, Wahl took his place in supervising the students, managing the farm and acting as the SASA adviser. Wahl says that working on the farm with passionate students and community members seems more like a gift rather than a job. He and the SASA members work with volunteers to grow food using sustainable methods. They then sell the food to local restaurants, at farmer's markets or at the farm during their shop hours.

Volunteers are always welcome at the Howdy Farm. Open volunteering hours are held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1-5 p.m., during which anyone on campus or in the community can assist with everyday duties at the farm. Potential tasks include planting, harvesting, getting ready for market, pulling weeds and working on construction projects. The Howdy Farm strives to make

the farm accessible to everyone.

"We want people to feel comfortable, hang out and do whatever they want," Wahl said. "If you want to come out here, sit on the porch and watch the butterflies, that's cool. If you want to grow a certain type of plant, you can bring it up here and plant it. We just want people to come out, grow food and have fun."

The Howdy Farm logs roughly 300 volunteer hours from students in 25 different majors each semester. Erik King, a junior ecology major and SASA member, feels that volunteering at the Howdy Farm allows him to bring a little piece of his hometown back to College Station with him.

"Back home I did a lot of gardening," King said. "When I came to College Station, I felt like I didn't have that place anymore, but then one day I looked around the horticulture building and saw the farm. Now it's been nice having somewhere to do that again."

The Howdy Farm prides itself in practicing sustainable farming methods. The farm tries to get the most efficient use of everything it can.

"We believe in giving back to the Earth rather than just taking all the time," Wahl said.



photo by Tanner Garza

Junior Claire Adkison is the public relations officer for Howdy Farm.



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photo by Tanner Garza

Members and volunteers compost all the waste that comes out of the farm and put it right back into the soil. In December of 2014, the Howdy Farm started working collaboratively with Northgate Juice Joint to further practice their sustainability methods. Northgate Juice Joint buys its produce from the Howdy Farm, and then gives all of the pulp left over from juicing back to the farm where it is then used for compost.

Juice Joint provides the farm with 200-250 pounds of pulp per week. You can see other sustainable features at the Howdy Farm including a solar powered building, reclaimed barn wood and two 1,000-gallon tanks of harvested rainwater used for watering the garden.

Along with the farm's sustainability methods comes its organic produce. The Howdy Farm is not certified organic, but they do go above and beyond to be as environmentally responsible as possible.

“I want to grow something the way I know I'd be happy to eat it right there, straight from the garden,” King said. “It's funny that organic farming is considered

‘the new way’ and conventional farming is considered ‘the old way,’ because all we're doing here is growing food the way people have been growing it for centuries.”

Despite the fact that the Howdy Farm grows organic produce, it does not label itself as an organic farm. Instead, they use the term ‘sustainable agriculture.’

“You can take a farm and put organic pesticides on it, and it would still be considered organic. We only use sprays

in emergency situations,” McAfee said. “For the most part, we just let the Earth take over. We are only here to facilitate.”

In order to reach out further into the community and teach sustainable farming

**“If you want to come out here, sit on the porch and watch the butterflies, that's cool. We just want people to come out, grow food and have fun.”**

**Corey Wahl**  
Head Field Manager and Advisor

methods, the Howdy Farm has begun hosting workshops on the weekends. In the spring of 2015, the farm taught community members how to grow keyhole gardens and plans to have many more workshops in the near future.

“We like to show people that farming isn't a big, scary thing,” Wahl said. “We want to make it easy and show people that they can do this at home. All we're doing is bringing it back to the basics.”



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**#40Strong**

1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015

photos courtesy of Texas A&M Athletics unless otherwise noted

# 40 Years and Counting

LAURA SUMRALL '15

As an Aggie, we are taught from the beginning about the traditions at this university. While “Gig’Em” and the Aggie Yell Leaders are staples heard around campus, what about the girls walking next to you? Women were not always a part of this great school, but now women and women’s athletics have contributed great things and new traditions to this university.

Texas A&M University may have begun

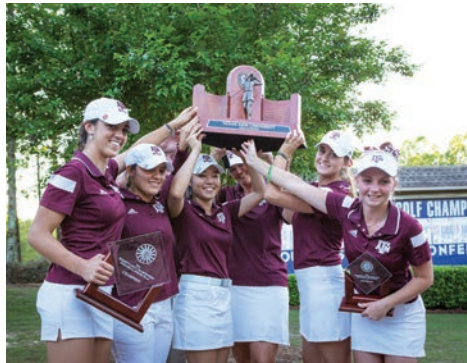
in 1876, but women were not officially admitted until 1963. Even then, the ladies were few and far between. As the years passed on, women became more and more prevalent. Like the men on campus, women began creating club sports teams for entertainment and good, old-fashioned exercise. Thus women’s athletics began to take form.

In 1972, Congress passed Title IX, which prohibited gender discrimination and allowed for schools to begin officially adding women’s sports.



Allie Sawatzky '14, Women's Volleyball

photo courtesy of Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum



Texas A&M began participating in women’s sports as early as 1971 with club teams, but they made the official decision to completely add women’s athletics on June 15, 1975.

1975

The Aggie softball team set the bar for women, as they were one of the original club teams to join the official division in 1975. The Ags brought it home with two Big 12 championships, the national runner-up in 2008 and three national championship titles, while also pitching 21 no-hitters since 1998 under coach Jo Evans.

1982

As one of the original women’s sports in Aggieland, the women’s golf team began in 1975 and went on to reach success as conference champions in the 1984-1985 season, with four more conference championships in years to come.

1985

The women’s tennis team joined the ranks in the 1979-1980 season. They brought home a conference championship during the 1985-1986 season that was later followed by more conference championships in 2003 and 2004.

1986

Volleyball has been a part of it all. They have made appearances in the regional semifinals five times, as well as making it to the quarterfinals in 1999 and 2001.

1999

# 2001

The equestrian team began as a club team in 1999, but made the transition over to the NCAA as an emerging sport in the early 2000's. The team as a whole holds 11 national championship titles and one conference championship.



photo courtesy of Maleigh Canon

# 2007

Swimming and Diving gained their first conference championship in 2007 and took on three more in 2008, 2010 and 2012.

# 2009

The women's indoor track and field team has six Big 12 championships, one SEC championship and four National Championship titles in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2014.



# 2011

Also, as original members of women's athletics, the Aggie basketball team went on to be conference champions in 2006-2007, and took the NCAA National Championship title in 2010-2011, and have appeared in 10 straight NCAA Tournaments.

# 2014

Beginning a little later in 1993, the soccer team hit the ground running with 20 consecutive post-season appearances from 1995-2014. With 10 conference championships, soccer had their most successful season yet, obtaining a spot in the 2014 final four.



As we recognize the accomplishments of all these women's sports, we also recognize the university as a whole.

"It just confirms that our women's sports at A&M are just as strong and successful as our men's sports," said Taylor Stolt, a junior track and field athlete. "All of the athletic staff at A&M are dedicated to ensuring all sports of both genders are the best that they can be and give them the

tools they need to succeed on the court, field and track."

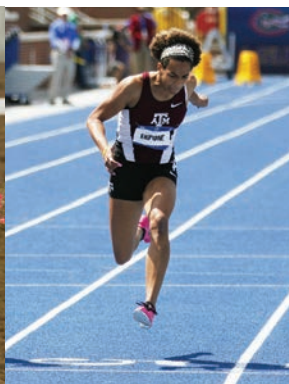
Without women's sports, Texas A&M would have 19 fewer national titles, 44 fewer conference championships, and four fewer Olympic medals to celebrate. Needless to say, women's athletics have made their mark upon this campus.

"Women are athletes too," said Marlena Parker, a junior equestrian team member

majoring in agricultural communications and journalism. "The traditions and the passion Aggies hold don't stop after the football season. Texas A&M truly gives its all when it comes to sports, and that doesn't exclude women's sports."



Izzy Norton '17  
Equestrian



Olivia Ekponé '15  
Women's Track



Breeja Larson '14  
Women's Swimming



Nazari Urbina '13  
Women's tennis

# Bring the Beautiful Outside, In

OLIVIA EKPONÉ '15

You have finally moved into your dorm room, apartment or house. As you decorate your space with pictures of your family and friends, wall décor, and furniture to make yourself feel at home, you start to realize that you are missing a key element to your success this semester.

In a light bulb moment, you rush to the local market and purchase a few flowers and plants to display throughout your home for everyone to enjoy. You purchase a few bright colored flowers and cannot resist picking up cacti to have on the patio, but why plants and flowers?

Chelsea Miller '15, agriculture communications and journalism major, enjoys decorating her home with plants and flowers that she puts together in her floral design class at Texas A&M University.

“Having plants and flowers inside my home allows me to add some ‘pop of color’ to my space,” Miller said. “Decorating with plants and flowers allows me to bring the outside, in. I feel happier that way.”

Taylor Paine, Ph.D. student in horticultural sciences, conducts research in the field of people-plant



Experiment with a variety of different plants, flowers and containers to add a splash of personality and color into your home.

interactions at Texas A&M. She has learned that flowers and plants not only benefit humans by filtering the air, but they also provide mental health benefits. Students who display flowers and plants in their study rooms, living and dining room spaces, and in the kitchen window notice a difference on how they live life.

So where do you start? All plants are created equal, but which display of plants and flowers are best for you?

## Flowers: Fake vs. Real



Am I fake or am I a real flower? There are some fake flowers that look real and can go anywhere in your home.

If you have a busy schedule, displaying fake flowers may be the right option for you. They do not require any water, light or care, so they can be placed anywhere in your home. These flowers can be displayed nicely in the bathroom because you will not have to worry about excess condensation wilting your plant. Surprisingly, some fake flowers look real and they can still look nice in a beautiful container; however, real flowers provide a healthier lifestyle for you.

“Fake flowers just collect dust,” Paine said. “Having a fake plant is like having a knick-knack on the shelf. They do not to give you something to look forward to. It does not respond to how you interact with it or give you instant gratification.”

Real flowers provide photosynthesis

and oxygen for us to breathe. With real flowers, it is essential to interact with it by making sure it has plenty of water, sunlight and care or else it will decay. Most places are suitable for real flowers to be displayed, but having them in studies and living rooms are the best.

“Plants improve the quality of life,” Paine said. “They improve our moods and productivity, and help us reach a rested state of mind that allows concentration to improve. It can also lower stress levels and makes you a more effective and a relaxed individual.”

Instead of purchasing air fresheners and scented candles, real flowers can provide natural and attractive aromas without breaking your budget.

## Displaying Flowers: Pots vs. Vases

Potted plants and flowers are a fun and exciting option to have in your home. They can easily synthesize and interact with the environment, so it is essential to make sure they are well cared for. As these plants grow, it is important that they are carefully moved to another pot to ensure that their roots can continue growing. This can give you another chance to experiment on the different styles or colors of pots that you like and what look nice in your home.

"If students live in a place where there is a lot of sunlight, or even a place where there are a couple of windows, they can have any number of potted plants," Paine said. "There are many plants that are well adapted to indoor light."

If you have some free time on a weekend, try making a pebble mosaic pot by hot gluing different color stones onto a pot in different designs. Another fun arrangement is to make a cactus and succulent terrarium. Terrariums can be small and require little care.

Vase flowers or plants make a great selection if you do not want to use soil or want to take care of it for a long time. Vase flowers live for about a week when the water is changed every other day. They can add a nice splash of color to your dining room table, if you want the opportunity to see the flowers for a short period of time. An exceptional plant that just grows in water and is easy to take care of is bamboo. A well-known bamboo species in the College Station/Bryan area is Lucky Bamboo. All it needs is plenty of direct sunlight and the water to be changed every 7-10 days. These types of plants look nice by a lamp on an end table or on a desk.



Owning a bamboo plant requires little to no maintenance. Place them in your study or in the kitchen and watch them grow.

## Decorating Patios and Landscape:

Jayne Zajicek, Ph.D., retired professor of 20 years horticultural sciences, encourages students to decorate their patios with their own creativity.

"Having a patio garden and containers with plants and flowers in them are a great start for beginners to eat healthy and also decorate their patio at the same time," Zajicek said.

It is important to keep in mind the amount of sunlight that reaches your patio. Focusing on sunlight will help you decide what type of flower or plant to purchase. Patios provide an opportunity to display potted plants, and even cacti, to neighbors and guests. You may also consider adding



When you have a free weekend, try creating your own cacti and succulent terrarium. They add a nice touch to your patio or an end table in the living room.

some hanging plants if you would like some variety.

If you own or rent a house, it is beneficial to add flowers and plants in the front of your home.

Landscaping increases property values, minimizes pollution, and surprisingly provides you with some exercise. Decorating your front or backyard presents creative opportunities with mixing different types of flowers and plants. Try displaying different colored flowers to add some variety to your space. Make it eye catching and become the best landscaper on the block.



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a single peach-colored rose. The hand is positioned at the bottom left, with the thumb and index finger gripping the stem. A gold ring with a large, ornate, oval-shaped stone is visible on the ring finger. The rose is in full bloom, with many layers of soft, ruffled petals. The background is a warm, out-of-focus interior space with soft lighting and blurred lights, suggesting a cozy, intimate setting.

A  
**Flourishing**  
*Business*

Macey Price's easy guide to making life beautiful

Many people do not know what their future will be until after college. For Macey Price '15, her career dreams came true during her junior year at Texas A&M University while studying horticultural sciences.

Price has a blossoming business doing what she loves— floral design. Price and a few family members run Flourish Floral Design based out of Dallas, Texas. Despite

having a small operation, her business is blooming.

“Flourish’s signature bouquets come with lots of greenery to give the arrangement a natural look, while making colorful flowers pop,” Price said. “With loose plants, the flowers look put together while maintaining their beautiful, wild tendencies.”

Price’s bouquets have attracted clients needing flowers for all sorts of events, but her most common ventures are weddings.

Autumn is right around the corner with its beautiful, sunny days and wedding season is upon us. Homemade floral bouquets and flower crowns make brides look spectacular. With Price’s quick bouquet and flower crown tutorials, anyone can create their own floral arrangements at home.

### The Bouquet

To begin creating a bridal bouquet, first decide which flowers you are going to use (Figure 1). Price suggests choosing a mix of large, medium and small flowers (known as “filler” flowers).

Take three to five large flowers (you risk overwhelming the bouquet with any more) and, one at a time, add the medium-sized flowers (Figure 2) until you’re satisfied with the general look and size of your bouquet.

Next, add your filler flowers (Figure 3). It is important that the small flowers compliment the rest of the bouquet so that you can make those large, beautiful flowers pop.

To finish off your bouquet and add a personal touch, wrap the stems tightly with a ribbon of your choice. Finally, snip the ends of the stems with some scissors so that the bouquet is able to rest upright on a tabletop.

Viola! You’ve made a gorgeous bouquet of flowers (Figure 4) and it took less than 15 minutes.



photos by Arielle Hess

### The Flower Crown

Flower crowns are a beautiful way to spruce up a simple wedding dress or add some flair to an outdoor photoshoot. Creating a crown takes a bit of time, but the end result is breathtaking.

First, pick the flowers you would like to use. In this demonstration, Price used a few large flowers as the focus and several smaller flowers to balance out the crown.

Next, take floral wire (Figure 5) and make two loops at the ends (you will tie on some ribbon for easy adjusting later). Determine where you would like to place your flowers and start attaching them using green floral tape (Figures 6 and 7). If the flowers are too heavy for the tape, pushing wire through the larger flowers’ stems will work better to hold them.

When you have placed flowers around the crown, tie the ribbon of your choice to the loops you created at the ends of the crown.

Next, place the crown on your head, tie the ribbon together so that it is snug and admire your creation (Figure 8).

# A Different BREED of Leader



photos by Tanner Garza

McKinsey Landers with her puppy, Embry, train for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

AUDREY BRATTON '15

At Texas A&M University, students may have noticed dogs in bright blue jackets getting on buses or maybe even sitting in their classes. These are not ordinary dogs. They are most likely part of a student organization called Aggie Guide-Dogs and Service-Dogs. These are puppies training to become guide dogs for people with various disabilities.

## What Is AGS?

Aggie Guide-Dogs and Service-Dogs is a student-run organization that promotes education, fundraising and training of guide dogs and service dogs. The organization began in 1997 and is solely run from funds raised by organization members and community donations. With 130 registered members last spring, AGS is growing in popularity on campus. The organization is open to all majors and does not require that you have any dog training experience to join. AGS also accepts members from the community who do not go to college, but you must be a student to raise a puppy.

All of the puppies trained by AGS members are donated for the first part of their training. Most of the puppies will become mobility assistance dogs,

guide dogs or PTSD dogs. AGS President Desiree Davidson '15 raised a golden doodle named Dallas last year. Dallas learned basic obedience commands and other commands that are specific to the job they will have.

"We teach the puppies commands that can be built on such as 'take it,' which can be used in a lot of situations," Davidson said.

Once the puppies have completed 12 to 14 months of training with AGS, they will be placed in other programs to continue with their specialty.

## Raising A Fur-Baby

Preparing to raise a guide dog is an extensive process. The students are responsible for Phase I of the dogs' training. This phase encompasses basic obedience training.

"We teach you everything you need to know to train our dogs," Davidson said. "We are all a team and will help each other out if someone is struggling with their dog."

Students start by completing eight, once-a-week classes to teach them about training service dogs followed by eight hours of clicker training at a local shelter. Clicker training is a reward-based training technique where a click indicates that

the dog performed a correct behavior. The connection between a click and the correct behavior is then reinforced with a treat following the click. As a part of the clicker training, students must practice the training techniques with different types of puppies.

"We never know how many or what type of puppies we are going to get each semester," Davidson said. "It's important that the trainers are able to work with a variety of puppies because they never know what breed, gender or personality their puppy might have."

After the clicker training, the students must pass a clicker test in which an AGS supervisor comes out to the shelter and selects two different dogs for the student to exhibit their clicker skills. Once they have passed the clicker test, students attend outings to local businesses with dogs in training to practice training drills. The final step includes a written test over service dog rules including clicker training and kenneling.

Students then have "jacket privileges," meaning they can handle a guide dog or service dog working in public while wearing their blue service dog jacket, and the wait begins to see if they will be matched with a puppy.

McKinsey Landers, junior AGS member and puppy trainer, was lucky to get matched with Embry, her current puppy-in-training, in November 2014. Embry is a female, yellow Labrador retriever donated by Guide Dogs for the Blind and will return to them for her formal training after completing her training with AGS.

"The biggest challenge is the time commitment," Landers said. "Embry is constantly in training, even walking to class I work on her placement, making sure she stays by my side."



Socializations allow the service dogs to take a break from training.





AGS President, Desiree Davidson's former puppy, Dallas, graduated from the program fall 2014.

photo courtesy of Desiree Davidson

**What Else Can You Do?**

If training a puppy isn't for you, there are other ways students can get involved with AGS.

Meetings are held every other Wednesday, where speakers talk to members about topics relating to service dog training. Members may also participate in Monday night socializations behind the Liberal Arts and Arts & Humanities building on Main Campus. A short training session begins at 5:15 p.m. and then the dogs are let off leash to play.

Socializations are open to any friendly, vaccinated dogs and students do not have to be AGS members to attend.

"Socializations are a great opportunity to meet some new people and find out more information about raising a service-dog," Landers said.

Davidson said members have the opportunity to participate in education events where they speak at other organizations' meetings, in elementary school classes, booths at disability fairs and at the College of Veterinary Medicine open house.

AGS also hosts fundraising events such as profit shares, car washes and on-campus educational events about service dogs.

**Making A Difference**

Aggie Guide-Dogs and Service-Dogs offer so many opportunities to make a difference in a person's life. Whether choosing to raise a puppy or speak at community events, AGS has an opportunity for everyone.

"My favorite part about [AGS] is that it has given me the opportunity to raise and train a dog that will go on to change someone's life," Landers said.

*How Can You Help?*

**Join AGS**

They hold biweekly meetings, weekly socializations, monthly socials and monthly fundraising events. You can participate through therapy, puppy raising, puppy sitting or other fun activities.

**Sponsor a Puppy**

For \$25 or more, you can sponsor a puppy for one full year. You receive monthly progress reports and photos. Your money goes directly toward supplies and vet care for the puppy in training.

**Buy Your Own T-shirt**

Support AGS by wearing their t-shirts. Available in S, M, L, and XL.

**Donate a Puppy**

AGS evaluates all puppies, mixed or pure bred, between the ages of eight weeks to sixteen weeks.

**Make a Donation**

AGS is in need of money, bowls, wire crates, toys, vet services, leashes, collars, towels, arts and crafts supplies, and computer paper.

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connection

# Granger Smith '02

### How did Texas A&M impact your career?

"Playing shows there with the support of all my college friends in the crowd gave me the confidence I needed on stage. I signed my first Nashville publishing deal after a show on north gate when guys flew down."



### What is your favorite Aggie tradition and why?

"The 12th Man. I've seen almost every major college football atmosphere in the country. Nothing beats Kyle Field."

### How would you describe Texas A&M to others?

"Huge school with a small town vibe. Great people, great tradition; the best university in the nation."



photo courtesy of grangersmith.com media page

spotlight

## COALS Council Contributes Grant

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Council is awarding student organizations with grants to promote student involvement.

"The council voted in the fall of 2013 to award extra funds we had to other groups within the college that could use the help financially," said Rachel Bedinger '15, COALS Council president.

In the spring of 2014, COALS Council awarded the first round of grants to four organizations within the college. These organizations used the funds to better serve the students in agriculture and life science majors.

"We awarded four organizations with grants," Bedinger said. "They included Freshman Leadership Experience, ALEC Aggie Reps, NAEP and Wildlife Society."

While faculty opinion is included in the process, students make the ultimate decision.

"Grant applications are reviewed by a faculty committee who makes recommendations to the council, then selected by

students on COALS Council," Bedinger said. "The council finance committee then decides the amount of each grant given to the selected organizations."

Grants are awarded each fall and spring semester. Recipients of the fall 2014 grants received a total of \$6,000. The recipients were National Agri-Marketing Association, Society for Conservation Biology and TAMU American Fisheries Society.

To be considered for funding, organizations within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences must submit an application that includes their history and mission, how the funds will be used and an itemized budget.

Grant funding can be used for various projects such as membership growth, volunteer service, student recruitment, membership trainings or event promotion. While previous grant recipients are eligible to apply again, the new application must be intended for a different purpose. Organizations are limited to applying once per academic year.



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# Healing the Burns:

## A Century of Texas Forest Restoration

SARAH ZUMMO '15

Imagine a Texas that is dry, barren and lifeless. A world that is far from what we can fathom, but could easily become reality without the Texas A&M Forest Service.

Established in 1915, the Texas Forest Service was named part of the Texas A&M University system by the state legislature. According to their mission statement, the forest service has a responsibility to, “provide statewide leadership to assure the state’s trees, forests and related natural resources are protected and sustained for the benefit of all.” The forest service has grown from a small organization to a necessity for our state.

When hearing the name, it is easy to assume that TFS is an organization dedicated to preventing forest fires. While this is partially true, TFS has expanded to protecting all natural resources in Texas.

“Think of all the common, everyday products that come from trees once they

are harvested for our use,” said Jessica Jackson, TFS communication specialist for TFS. “Without these products life would not be impossible, but more difficult.”

While protecting Texas forests is a high priority for TFS, so is protecting the citizens. This includes anything from wildfire prevention to water conservation. In recent years, environmentalists, scientists and doctors have become increasingly concerned with the issue of where our world’s water supply is coming from and if it is sufficient for the future. TFS has conducted research showing that improper tree harvesting causes a release of pollutants that negatively affect surrounding water sources. An issue that directly affects not only Texas A&M students, but all humans alike.

In response to this issue, TFS has created safe land practice manuals for landowners and the public to use.

One of TFS’ most recognized operations was their involvement in the Bastrop, Texas, wildfire that destroyed more than 32,000 acres in September and October in 2011. Due to the fire’s intensity, it was named the most destructive forest fire in Texas history.

Even four years after the disaster, TFS is still working to salvage operations. Since 90 percent of the Bastrop forests were burned down, TFS has made vast improvements in replanting trees and helping victims resume their lives.

As a service agency, one of TFS’s goals



photo courtesy of the Texas A&M Forest Service  
Exhibit “History in the Making: Texas A&M Forest Service” displays 100 years of service at the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum through November 8, 2015.

is to support the Texas economy.

“TFS works with state and local economic development professionals, forest product industries and landowners to deliver information and in-depth analyses of the state’s forest resources in support of forest-based economic development in Texas,” Jackson said.

Recently, TFS created a website for anyone interested in learning more about trees and the impacts the forestry industry has on the economic success of Texas..

TFS has conducted a century of meaningful and essential work for the state. In the spring of 2015, TFS celebrated its 100-year anniversary by opening an exhibit at the Texas A&M University George Bush Library and Museum. The exhibit will be on display from March 16, 2015, to November 8, 2015.

In order to continue supporting other Texas forestry services, TFS has also hosted 100 “free tree” giveaways to local communities.

“The work we do makes a difference in people’s lives every day,” Jackson said. “Across the state and nation, our agency is well known for offering programs that help Texans and helping them learn to help themselves.”

## Ways to Prevent Forest Fires:

1. Keep LBG tanks far from home
2. Store gas in safety approved can
3. All combustibles should be kept away from home
4. Clear roof & gutters frequently
5. Remove high branches from trees
6. Have fire tools handy
7. Place hose close to house
8. Assure family knows exits

### TFS FACTS:

- Founded in 1915
- Name was changed in 2012 to Texas A&M Forest Service
- TFS employs more 375 employees statewide



photo courtesy of 12th Man Productions

The new \$12 million 12th Man Productions Studio where broadcasts can be hosted. Photo courtesy of JHD Group.

LAUREN HOWES '16

Regarded as one of the nation's most intimidating road venues, Texas A&M University's Kyle Field has been the home of Aggie football since 1905. Kyle Field recently underwent an evolutionary phase that included the installation of a new, state-of-the-art video broadcast center.

Prior to 12th Man Productions, the video production branch of Texas A&M Athletics was known as the "Video Lab". The Video Lab was created post film days in the late 1980s when the NFL and colleges were transitioning from game film development to videotape technology. Prior to 1993, the Video Lab's sole purpose was recording and distributing game and practice highlights in preparation for the upcoming game.

"When I first laid eyes on Kyle Field during my campus visit I knew this was the university for me," said Cara McCloud, a 12th Man Productions student worker. "I love football and not only

did I find the university with the best football field, I also found a university that made me realize what I wanted to do with my life. I found a job on campus at 12th Man Productions and have found my passion in broadcasting."

In 1993, Andy Richardson was hired to produce television content for distribution to coaches, TV shows, media interests

**"Everyone works collectively as a team and strives to put out a successful product. Overall, it's a great and positive place to work."**

**Jake Kobersky '16  
Ag. Communications and Journalism**



photo courtesy of Sarah Lane

Laura Chapman directs a broadcast behind the scenes.



photo courtesy of Haley Mahzac

12th Man productions Studio.



photo courtesy of 12th Man Productions

and highlight videos. In 1996, Kyle Field added a video-board to the stadium infrastructure and the Video Lab's role expanded to assist with content for home Aggie

football games. In 2003, the coaches' video and the production aspects formally separated. In 2005, the department was officially rebranded as 12th Man Productions.

The scope has broadened from producing coach's shows and Kyle Field video-board, to encompassing the video content for video-boards at baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, men's and women's basketball and track and field. In April 2012, it was announced that Texas A&M University and the 12th Man Foundation engaged Populous to lead the design study phase for the renovation and redevelopment of Kyle Field, recognized as the nation's top college football game day experience and the "Home of the 12th Man." On May 1, 2013, the Texas A&M Board of Regents approved a \$450 million renovation of the famed stadium. The first phase was completed prior to the start of the 2014 season and the second phase was finished prior to the 2015 campaign.

"In 2014, 12th Man Productions moved into a new \$12 million facility in the south end-zone of Kyle Field, complete with four control rooms, two studios, six edit bays and a video theatre," Richardson said. "This facility also now supports ESPN programming for nearly 100 live home athletics events per season as part of the SEC Network. There are approximately 80 student workers on the production staff who assist the 10 full time employees in messaging and branding Texas A&M Athletics to the nation."

"The full time staff is awesome and the fellow student employees are equally great," said Jake Kobersky, a 12th Man Productions student worker. "Everyone works collectively as a team and strives to put out a successful product."

12th Man Productions is now on the same level of production as ESPN and Warner Bros. Productions. Texas A&M sporting events are broadcast live on the SEC Network Channel, due to the work of employees at 12th Man Productions.



photo courtesy of Cara McCloud

(Right to left) Tate Brightwell, Sam Sternfeld and Cara McCloud "gig'em" before a home football game.

## Behind the Scenes

While the fans have a choice of standing as the 12th man at the home football games, workers at 12th Man Productions cannot call in sick the day of a home football game. Everyone looks up and watches the jumbotron during a sporting event, but no one thinks twice about how that footage of the game got there and what had to be done to get the footage on the screen. That is where 12th Man Productions steps in.

"Before working with 12th Man Productions, I did not realize the amount of work that needed to be done in order to have a functioning show on the new HD jumbotrons in Kyle field," McCloud said. "We would arrive to Kyle field six hours before game time. One time I arrived into work at 5:45 a.m., while most the time we would leave around 2 a.m. Sunday morning. During this time we would make sure all of our cameras are working properly, and fix any issues that would come up before the game started. My most treasured memories working football games were getting to be in the tunnel when the football players rushed onto the field. You can't help but smile when you see Coach Kevin Sumlin give his last pep talk to his players."



photo courtesy of Sarah Lane

Danielle Van De Walle operates a camera for the baseball game.

# Passing the Final Test

ALLYSON HEIL '15

**Four years has passed. Tests and papers are turned in, sporting events have been attended and caps and gowns are ordered. All that's left in any senior's college career is to answer that final question—what are you going to do after you graduate?**

Job searching can be a fun and/or intimidating endeavor. Many students earn jobs through their internships, while others have to start from scratch. Some choose to follow their major's industry while others end up in a career completely unrelated to their degree.

These situations work in the changing job market. The days of stereotypical agricultural career fairs dominated by cattle ranches and farm equipment are gone. More non-agricultural based companies are discovering the value of a degree from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and are recruiting and hiring graduates. These changes affect the job search as well.

Expectations are high for any student entering Texas A&M University, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is working to answer a global need for communicative and informed leaders.

In spring 2010, Coca-Cola, Mattress Firm and Dallas County Juvenile Department requested information about graduating seniors and in 2014, Google, American Airlines and Sewell Automotive made inquiries as well. Job positions vary and include flight attendants, police officers and salespersons—careers where interpersonal skills are just as important as the actual degree.

“Traditionally, ag students are hard workers, and our classes make them have or develop a wide range of skills,” said Jennifer Ann Smith, Senior Career Coordinator at Texas A&M's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. “A lot of it is learned through group projects and forced communication.”

Graduates are finding jobs outside their major's typical scope.

**“Do your research. A company may be closely tied to agriculture in ways you had no idea existed.”**

**Jennifer Ann Smith '11**



photo by Tanner Garza

**In May 2015, 1,065 undergraduate students graduated from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.**

A degree is not a life sentence, it's a foundation for graduates to build upon and grow. The key is to utilize the skills and opportunities offered by agricultural majors.

“Let your employer know, if they are not familiar with an ag background, why it's not just ag based,” said Lauren Rouse, editor at Bryan Broadcasting Publications. “It's really a hands-on major that teaches you all these different skills. You just may be applying them to ag products for your classes, but they can really be used anywhere.”

One reason for these broadening career paths is that employers are beginning to utilize on-site training for their employees for the specifics of their job. When assessing applicants, employers want to see that the student can commit to a major and succeed.

“In college you go through a series of hoops, including classes, exams, organizations and projects,” Smith said. “When you apply to a job, employers want to see that you have successfully done that.”

Why are employers actively seeking A&M students? Texas A&M's culture of hard work and leadership is making a

# Tips from a Hiring Manager

Lauren Rouse '06  
Editor at Bryan Broadcasting Publications

## Cover Letters and Résumés

“Be sure to edit your résumé and cover letter. Don’t send me a generic cover letter. If you can, try to find out the specific jobs and if you can find the head of that specific job, use that. I want applicants to do a little research first and not rehash what is on your résumé. Tell me about an experience that shaped you.”

## Involvement

“Be part of student groups if you are too busy to work outside of school times. Take a leadership position in those; take on that responsibility if you want to do that. If you could work somewhere on-campus or anyplace around town that can let you use your major in a practical sense, that’s great too.”

## Interviews

“Come in with questions about how the job works and specific job duties. The more I can explain to you, the better. I want an idea about what you plan to do and how you plan to build on your experience here and benefit the company and department.”

## Internships

“Look for internships as early as possible. They don’t have to be paid but even job shadowing is something you can put on your résumé because you learned the skills from that. My big thing is putting yourself out there early, and getting that recommendation and direction from people you trust and look up to because I think that will benefit you better in the long run job-wise.”

## Social Media

“Be careful of social media. Yes, I know you are going to have fun but we all research you. Block as much as you can on Facebook. If you are job searching it may be better to not allow people to post to your wall. Use it in a way that might help you in your job. If you are really good at WordPress, show me your blog. Be careful.”

## Finding a Job

“It is not easy and it is going to be a lot of hard work. You are probably going to apply to more than 50 different jobs and maybe get two or three interviews back. Don’t be afraid to use your connections.”

difference. Aggies pride themselves on their honor and values, and employers take notice.

“Our students work hard and time and time again have been successful employees,” Smith said. “They aren’t afraid of challenges and they tend to take on leadership roles. When they come here, we make them better prepared for their careers.”

Students improve through organizational involvement, classes and outside activities that put their skills on display. Passion is the key to any endeavor.

“Do something you are passionate about because you are going to put forth the effort and it will turn out a good product,” Rouse said.

Careers based on passion, as with all job searches, begin with research. The Texas A&M Career Center has guides to start research on their website and advisors are great sources of information. Other resources, including HireAggies.com and Career Shift, list job postings from employers. For networking purposes, the Association of Former Students is a great way to connect with Aggie employers.

“Do your research,” Smith said. “A company may be closely linked to agriculture in ways you had no idea existed.”

As the world diversifies, employers seek to diversify as well. Agricultural graduates have skill sets that are applicable to many situations.

When starting the job search, stay open and look at all possibilities and availabilities. That dream job may be achieved through a non-traditional route.

“Be open-minded,” Smith said. “You never know what opportunities will come your way.”

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From Left: Allyson Heil, Justin Walker,  
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## Staff Photo:

**Back Row** (from left): Tracy Rutherford, Laura Sumrall, Lauren Howes, Bailey Keith, Justin Walker, Jenna Rabel, Conner Darland, Olivia Ekponé, Caleb Sierra, Allyson Heil, Katie Allen, Tanner Garza, Audrey Bratton

**Front Row** (from left): Kate Bernhard, Arielle Hess, Sidney Holland, Tai John, Lorian Hopcus, Mikala Whitaker, Jenna Elias, Amy Winn



## Letter From the Editor



---

**"First and foremost, I would like to thank my incredible staff for allowing me to take credit for all their hard work!"**

---

Looking back now, this semester has been quite a wild ride. It seemed like there was adversity lurking behind every corner, even as we are nearing graduation day. I suppose adversity tends to be a commonality with being a college student though. In my time spent at Texas A&M, I learned that every student goes through varying trials and struggles, but there is one constant that doesn't change no matter who you are. That constant is the Aggie Spirit. When I first I arrived here at Texas A&M, I quickly learned that I wasn't just part of a student body, I was part of a family. As a family, we lean on one another for strength during tough times, we never let ourselves give in or give up and we experience everything this amazing college has to offer together.

The staff and I took the same values and ideals that we experienced together throughout our college careers and created this magazine. This edition of the *AgriLeader* reflects what an Aggie might be exposed to from the beginning of their freshman year, all the way to the end of their senior year. We started with why the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences might be the right choice for you and ended with helpful tips to find a job after graduation. In between, one might relive one of the top Aggie football games of the past 20 years or learn about several of the student organizations on campus.

First and foremost, I would like to thank

my incredible staff for allowing me to take credit for all their hard work! These were some of the most professional, yet down-to-Earth people I've met and I am immensely appreciative for the opportunity to work with each person on the staff. It's astounding to see such a talented group of writers and artists put together a magazine with such creativity and care. They devoted so much time and effort into their stories and it is evident in every inch of this magazine.

I would also like to recognize all the advertisers who are featured in this semester's issue. We would not be able to do what we do best without your continued support.

Finally, I would like to thank David Walther and Dr. Tracy Rutherford for guiding me to be the best editor and person I can be, not just once, but twice. I am forever grateful for having two opportunities to work on the *AgriLeader* and the experience I have attained throughout the process.

**Conner Darland '15**  
Agricultural Communications  
and Journalism



## connection

# Dr. Brad P. Abraham

Undergraduate degree in Animal Science '01  
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in '07

### What professor impacted you as a role model? Why?

"Howard Hesby was a great man. The Animal Science department lost a treasure when he passed. His love for students and A&M was second to none. He convinced me to switch majors to animal science from biomedical science. He also put me in touch with a vet that I worked for, for many years prior to enrolling in vet school."

### What significant event happened while you were a student?

"On November 18, 1999, the Bonfire collapsed killing several of my friends and injuring others. Bonfire was probably my favorite tradition. Sweating in the mud and filth next to your fellow man really let's you know what you and others are made of. I still have mixed feelings on whether or not it should return. I wish the future generations could experience it, but I wouldn't want anyone to have to go through what we did when it collapsed. It has been 15 years, and I was



only emotionally able to sit and watch the off-campus bonfire (via internet stream) for the first time in 2014."

### What advice would you give an incoming student?

"To paraphrase Twain, 'Never let your schooling interfere with your education.' Of course, it's important to focus on your studies and handle your business academically, but make sure you don't miss out on the other education. There are many things A&M can teach you outside of the classroom."

## spotlight

# Veterinary College Centennial Celebration

For almost 100 years, the College of Veterinary Medicine has been a staple in research and collaboration in Texas for expanding knowledge about human and animal health. The college will be hosting a Centennial Celebration in 2016 to celebrate faculty and student accomplishments over the past century.

The exact date has not been set for each of the events, but the planning has already begun. The college's alumni relations and events manager, Eliana Mijangos, confirmed a series of small events hosted in major cities in Texas throughout the year to help promote the new "One Health" campaign and engage alumni and prospective students. The focus of these events will be remembering the past 100 years and the development of the college since.

In addition, a large reception will be held in 2016 in College Station that will celebrate the centennial and also the grand opening of the new Veterinary and Biomedical Education Complex building.

"We originally planned for the big celebration to be in April, but then decided it would be exciting to have the celebration in our new building as a grand opening for the new building," Mijangos said.

The focus of the centennial year will be to encourage continued growth of the college and in research, and the global impact of the college for the next 100 years. Be on the lookout for more details on the Centennial Celebration events.

# Stephanie Tull

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