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VOLUME 13, ISSUE 2

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FROM THE EDITOR

I've heard it said that Texas A&M was founded in 1876 and has been under construction ever since. For a school so steeped in time honored traditions, we sure do change a lot. While it seems A&M has been changing faster than ever in recent years, there are things that remain the same. Kyle Field is going through its newest evolution, and the search for a new Reveille begins, but the legacy Aggies leave on the world is an undeniable constant.

This issue of the AgriLeader is about the changing faces of both agriculture and Texas A&M. As a staff we wanted to give the new generation of Aggies in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences a sense of who we are and where we come from, with a glimpse of where we're going.

Aggie legends like Norman Borlaug have given A&M a strong academic foundation. New initiatives like One Health are giving Aggies a chance to better the world. Student athletes like Josh Lambo are bringing A&M attention on the national stage, and Texas A&M Youth Camps are impacting children in communities all over Texas. We hope to build on the legacy left to us while leaving our own mark on the future.

I was so lucky to have such a wonderful, talented staff. I want to thank them for all of their hard work and for putting out such a great magazine. I also want to thank David Walther and Dr. Tracy Rutherford for all of their guidance and help. This issue of the AgriLeader is one that we can all be proud of.



TOTZI AKETZ



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A photograph of two men, Jon Hildebrand and R.C. Slocum, sitting at a desk in an office. Jon Hildebrand is on the left, wearing a dark blue polo shirt, and R.C. Slocum is on the right, wearing a yellow polo shirt. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. An open book or document is on the desk in front of them. The background shows a typical office environment with computer monitors, a keyboard, and a framed picture on the wall.

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Producing Champions for Over a Century

By: Brittany Thomas '15

Texas A&M University's Department of Animal Science offers a variety of programs and clinics for 4-H and FFA members. Clinics range from livestock judging, meat judging and wool judging along with individual livestock projects such as cattle, swine and sheep. The clinics are available for students looking to enhance their knowledge in a particular area.

Parents, teachers and 4-H leaders can get their students involved by enrolling them in the clinics offered. Clinics are several days long, with students first meeting in seminar type setting and then applying what they have learned in a hands-on environment. The livestock judging camps help develop participants skills in selection, oral reasoning, live market evaluation and breeding animal performance data.



Photo by Katie Eslick



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M
Department of Animal Science

In the livestock camps, instructors allow students to bring their own animals so they will be comfortable with their animal. It also gives instructors the opportunity to show the students things they may need to change with their animals. Students in the Department of

Animal Science will assist the instructors during these clinics as well. They use their past experiences and education to help participants find the best way to do particular tasks.

To learn more about how to participate in these clinics visit animalscience.tamu.edu

“There is no other program in the U.S. that has an impact on the youth, like Texas A&M Animal Science Department.”

- Associate Professor Shawn Ramsey, Ph.D. and
Lead Instructor for Lamb and Sheep Clinic

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One Health Initiative at Texas A&M University

By Brooke Wilkinson '15

Photos by Merrideth Holub



Student research



Students performing a spay surgery in a Nicaragua hotel room using a smart phone for a heart monitor

As society becomes increasingly connected across global boundaries, diseases without cures are a much bigger concern than ever before. The One Health Initiative at Texas A&M University, a program that investigates how human and animal health are linked together and their environmental impact, is looking for answers that will eventually lead to novel treatments, diagnostics, and potential cures to not only the diseases that affect humans and animals now, but also those that are emerging around the world.

Many universities across the U.S., such as the University of Florida and the University of California at Davis, have programs in One Health. However, at Texas A&M University, the One Health Initiative is continuing to grow in many ways, and is quickly being recognized as a national leader in the field. Learning more about this program is the first step to getting involved.

This initiative was launched at Texas A&M two years ago by former President R. Bowen Loftin and the council of deans as one of six strategic initiatives designed to address the pressing problems faced by society today. It includes research, educational, and outreach programs for students, faculty and staff. Currently, the One Health

Initiative is housed at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (CVM).

Merrideth Holub, M.S., the One Health Program Coordinator, has been working with the program since its inception in May of 2011.

“My main objectives are educational and outreach programs,” Holub said. “I try to develop educational programs for undergraduate, graduate and professional students.”

A recent program Holub initiated includes a collaborative effort with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the University of Georgia to create an educational booklet for youth in Texas. She believes this program is just getting started and there will be more projects to come. In addition to providing this early exposure to One Health concepts to young people, the One Health Initiative team actively engages the campus community about opportunities for collaboration through meeting with different departments around the university.

While the concepts behind One Health may seem like a recent trend, Holub noted that the foundations of One Health were actually laid centuries ago. “Rudolf Virchow [German physician and pathologist] said that there is

no dividing line between human and animal health – nor should there be,” said Holub. “The idea of One Health, the concept and way of thinking has really come from the late 1800s, early 1900s.”

Advancing the knowledge in the One Health discipline has led to opportunities to collaborate in not only the classroom, but also the laboratory through interdisciplinary research projects. Four ongoing research projects recently received funding of \$50,000 each. A private donor funded the fifth project, a Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus project in dogs, for \$25,000. MRSA is also known as Staph and is an infection of the skin, which often develops in surgical wounds.

“MRSA is very prevalent in College Station in humans,” Holub said. “It is also witnessed in pets and can be transmitted between animals and humans, making this an important condition to investigate.”

The One Health Initiative is always looking for both new avenues for research, as well as funding to support the faculty and students who pursue the projects, Holub said. The Texas A&M Health Science Center’s College of Medicine and the School of Public Health have helped greatly by providing financial support, Holub said.

Holub said, “The main thing I would like people to know about One Health is that we’re here on campus and in addition to outreach and research, we do offer opportunities for students.”

One Health currently has an undergraduate course and several professional and graduate summer educational programs.

“We have an undergraduate learning community that is open to all freshmen,” Holub said. “We also have a global One Health experience in Nicaragua in the summer for professional and graduate students in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Bush School of Government.”

There are many educational programs and seminars for students and faculty interested in One Health. The learning community is offered in the spring. Every January a panel discussion brings together faculty, staff, students and community members to ask questions about One Health.

“Our office holds three seminars each semester for visiting faculty from other colleges or federal agencies,” Holub said. “We record these sessions and post them on our website, so anybody can access them.”

The first year, “4-H students, parents, faculty, staff, and students from all different colleges attended,” Holub said.

The seminar was huge success because of the large attendance and will be continued, Holub said.

There is also a student One Health Organization. Currently, students enrolled in the School of Public Health, College of Medicine and the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences make up the organization. They organization offers a seminar each semester that is open to the public.

One Health also has a governmental experience, which sends a veterinary student and a medical student to participate with the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Veterinary Medicine and the United States Department of Agriculture. As part of the program, the selected students must also complete a research

project. Holub added, there is also an on-campus summer research program, and they are adding more.

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences is very closely involved with One Health. There are a number of College of Agriculture faculty members who are working on the funded research projects, Holub said. At the local level, One Health has many groups and organizations. These groups involve the students, departments and colleges.

“Dr. Chaddock, our associate dean for One Health and Strategic Initiatives, formed an advisory committee. They help guide us in our programs and things that need to really be dispersed throughout the university,” Holub said. “The advisory council is made up of one representative from each college – and there are now 17 colleges with the Health Science center being added.”



“There are a lot of national organizations and governmental agencies that are starting to recognize One Health,” Holub said. “There are also a lot of conferences with One Health as its theme.”

The One Health team has been to Washington D.C. to visit numerous governmental organizations. These organizations include the USDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges, and Food and Drug Administration.

One Health is also exploring opportunities to collaborate on projects with the American Association of Medical Colleges and the American Veterinary Medical Association. Also, One Health recently presented to the Texas Veterinary Medical Association.

Holub believes that One Health has had significant growth and is off to a great start. In the future, One Health hopes to do more global and national outreach. Holub would also like to offer more educational programs as well as more research opportunities made available to faculty and students.

“We have big goals, but I think they can all be accomplished,” Holub said.

For students looking to get involved go to onehealth.tamu.edu for more information.

A photograph of a desert landscape with sand dunes under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

A POWERFUL CULTURAL LENS

BY LINDSAY STROUP '14

“Imagine being transported to a place that you did not think could exist in this world,” said Gary Wingenbach, Ph.D., Professor and Senior Scientist at the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture. “A place where there is so very little for as far as you can see. A place where all you hear is the sound of the wind against the sand.”

Texas A&M University and Prairie View A&M University partner with the University of Namibia in southwest Africa to offer a spectacular study abroad opportunity to all majors. The Namibia Photojournalism and Cultural Pluralism in Agriculture study abroad was established in 2012 in an effort to communicate Namibia’s agricultural issues to A&M students.

Wingenbach and Tracy Rutherford, Ph.D., Professor of Agricultural Communications and Journalism, had the idea of starting a study abroad where students could travel to Africa to learn about issues in the region. Their goal was to create a unique and educational experience for the students. As a result of their vision, a group of students have traveled every summer to the beautiful country of Namibia since 2012. With cameras in hand, students learn to interact and create beautiful photography.

Texas A&M had already established a relationship with the University of Namibia through Jack Elliot, Ph.D., Senior Scientist at the Norman Borlaug Institute for International

Agriculture and department head for Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications.

Wingenbach said, “Elliot worked with the University of Namibia on other projects for ten years prior to the study abroad—this work provided a genesis for the Namibian study abroad.”

The Namibian study abroad was established because of this affiliation between Texas A&M University and the University of Namibia. The similarities in agricultural issues faced by Namibia and Texas make this study abroad a unique opportunity for students to work together to create solutions for problems faced in Texas.

Academic Advisor for Agricultural Communications and Journalism Tobin Redwine said, “What makes the study abroad unique is that you are not just seeing another country. You are given specific goals and tasks to achieve in addition to developing deep and rich interactions with the country and its people. It’s a powerful cultural lens and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

The Achievements

In 2012, the Gobabeb Research and Training Center asked the students to assist in preparations to become a World Heritage Site with the United Nations.

The students stayed in Gobabeb for a week creating informative posters and conducting research writing. Largely due to Texas A&M students’ hard work,

the center was later named a World Heritage Site.

In the summer of 2013 the study abroad group was commissioned to create a photo repository for the Gobabeb Research and Training Center. The following summer, students created websites to increase interest in tourism.

“As a group, we developed a whole new skill set in photography and a working knowledge of photo composition and techniques, which have already given me a leg-up on applying for jobs and internships,” said Sarah-Hope Nail ’15, 2014 study abroad participant and agricultural communications and journalism major.

Nail commented that most programs do not give a medium to effectively express the deep connections made while on a study abroad. This program allows students to showcase what they have experienced through their photography.


“The students involved are able to say their work has been used professionally in an international setting,” Redwine said.

The Scenery

The students leave the sweltering Texas heat by plane and 18 hours later arrive in the Namibian winter where temperatures hover around freezing.

Namibia is located in the southern hemisphere where the seasons are reversed.

Photo by Gary Wingenbach, Ph. D.



“We arrived in the Gobabeb desert as our first stop,” said A. Micah Mills ’15, 2013 study abroad participant and agricultural communications and journalism major. “It reminded me of Star Wars—there was nothing.”

Namibia is a large country and encompasses four different ecosystems—desert, coast, tropical and mountains.

Nail recalls that after an eight-hour bus ride from the desert, they were already at the coast, surrounded by the beautiful caramel sand and water crashing on the shore.

“When you are standing on a sand dune and see the surge and the sand and the ocean collide, it’s breathtaking,” Nail said.

The students ride in a bus for hours traveling the countryside, watching the terrain gradually change.

“When you look out the window all you see is really flat land with really long, straight, smooth roads,” Redwine said. “Then you take a little nap and wake up and you’re driving across the mountains.”

Redwine recalls the bus rides as exciting—dodging goats, giraffes and occasionally stopping to wait for elephants to clear the road so the bus could drive through.

“One of my most memorable experiences was being alone on the top of the tallest climbable sand dune in the world,” Nail said. “There was a point when I was up there standing alone trying to take everything in and I realized there was infinite sand beneath my feet. It was a humbling experience that gave me a great perspective of how small I was in this world.”

The People

Namibia has many different tribes the students visited including the Himba, Tamara and Herero.

“The most interesting tribe was the Himba, where the women rub red clay all over their body and in their hair,” Nail said.

The Tamara tribe is a “living museum” where the people act out how the real tribe members live their daily life.

“Even though it was technically a tourist stop, you could tell this was their world,” Nail said.

It was with the Tamara tribe that many of the students made a connection with the people and according to Wingenbach, even begged to spend the night there in the mud huts. Redwine and Wingenbach both agreed the students’ interactions with the tribes had a profound impact on their lives.

“It isn’t the differences that make everything so shocking, it is the similarities,” Mills said.

A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

According to Redwine, the relationship between the University of Namibia and Texas A&M University was built around agricultural needs and both universities benefit from working together for the betterment of their communities. As a result, the USDA provides funding for the students in the study abroad program.

According to Wingenbach, the USDA provided a three-year grant to support twenty student travel stipends of \$1,000 each year. The goal is to have ten students from Texas A&M and ten students from Prairie View A&M join the study abroad each year.

“We believe this is enough to develop momentum and program recognition so that in the future beyond the grant, the students will still want to go to Namibia because of the program’s outstanding and superior academic experience,” Wingenbach said.

Mills said the study abroad has a tremendous impact on a student’s life and feels it is important to experience a different environment and culture.

“From the experience I learned there are different people out there that can have a large impact on your life,” Mills said. “We had the opportunity to see such a wide cultural spectrum, something we would have not seen if we had just been on a personal vacation.”

“For those considering a study abroad, Namibia is a fantastic place because not many people experience such a unique trip where you travel all across Namibia and meet types of people you will probably never have the chance to meet again in your life,” Nail said.

How To Get There

Students from any major with a GPA of 2.0 and above have the opportunity to join this incredible study abroad. Visit studyabroad.tamu.edu by February 1, 2015 to apply for the summer of 2015 experience.



Photo by A. Micah Mills '15



Photo by Sarah-Hope Nail '15

“It isn’t the differences that make everything so shocking, it is the similarities.”



Photo by A. Micah Mills '15



Photo by Tobin Redwine

Texas A&M Offering More Equine Animal Science Classes

By Mattie Duvall '15

Texas A&M Department of Animal Science has added three new equine classes. These new classes will help broaden students' options when it comes time to pick classes for the next semester.

The new classes offered are Equine Handling and Safety, Equine Physiology and Health, and Equine Reproduction. Other classes that have been around for several years are Equine Careers, Issues in Equine Industry, Equine Disease and Epidemiology, and Equine Marketing and Development. The classes will help students interested in the equine industry have a more specialized area in their major.

"Introductory courses are more specialized and there will be capstone courses to show students the breadth of knowledge in the equine industry," Senior Lecturer Martha Vogelsang, Ph. D., said.

With more equine classes, students can look forward to a greater variety of choices to prepare for career in the equine industry.

Equine courses offered in the fall:

- ANSC 289 (Special Topics) Equine Handling and Safety
- ANSC 489 (Special Topics) Equine Reproduction
- ANSC 431 Equine Marketing and Development
- ANSC 489 (Special Topics) Equine Exercise Physiology
- ANSC 289 (Special Topics) Equine Careers

Equine courses offered in the spring:

- ANSC 423 Issues in the Equine Industry
- VLCS 422 Equine Disease and Epidemiology

For more information about equine classes talk with your adviser or visit animalscience.tamu.edu



Students watching a horse on an underwater treadmill. Photo courtesy of Texas A&M University

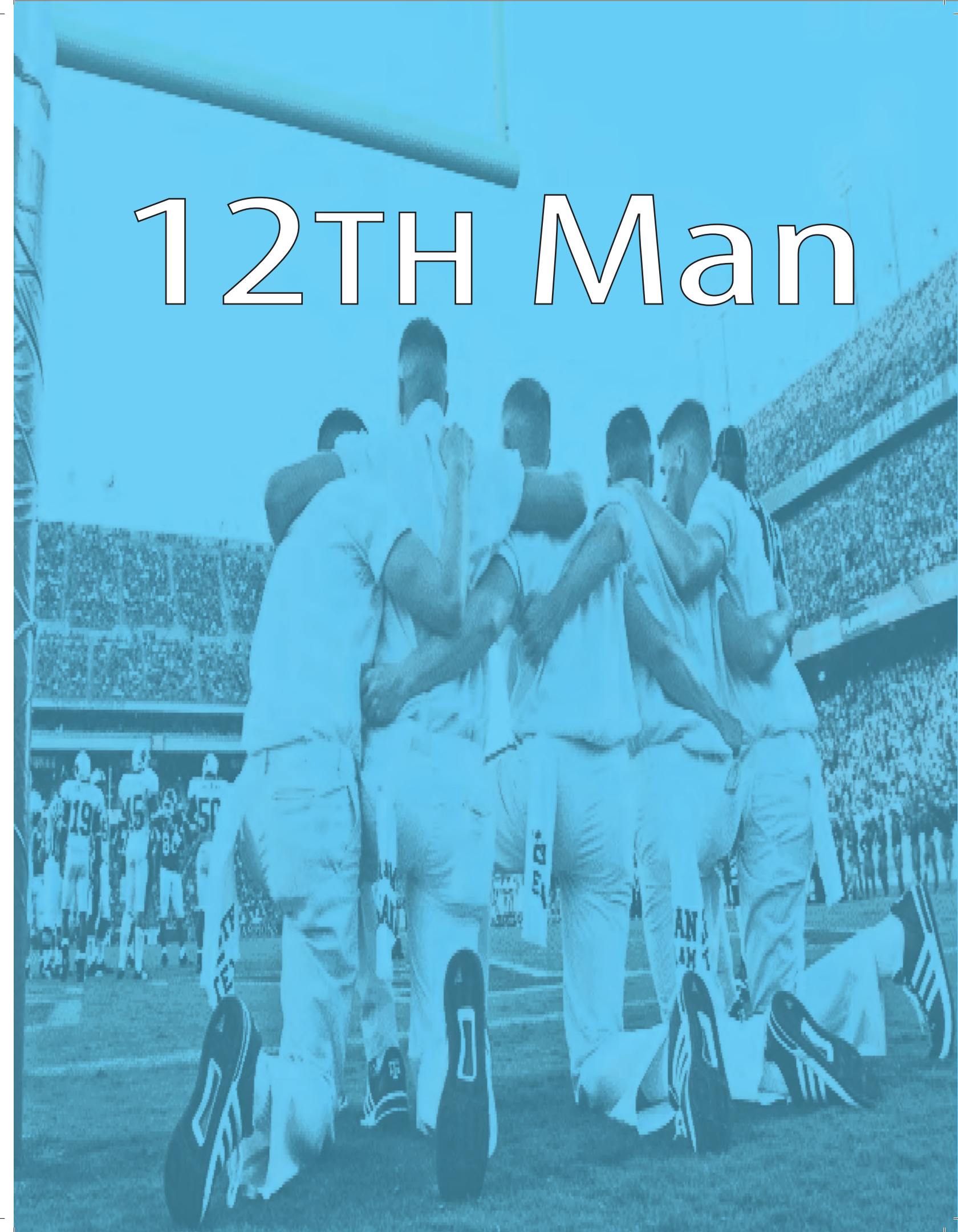


Photo by Martha Vogelsang



Photo by Martha Vogelsang

12TH Man



From Major League Stress to Aggie Success

Josh Lambo's non-traditional route to Texas A&M



Photo by Leslie Morrow

By: Conner Darland '15

Every Aggie has a story about their path to Texas A&M. Some are simple, some not so simple. Josh Lambo, the place kicker for the Texas A&M football team, has a unique story about his non-traditional route to success in Aggieland.

Lambo was a soccer player. He had played soccer all his life. He started out in a YMCA league when he was four years old and his love for the game grew with his abilities as a goalkeeper. Lambo soon found himself playing in a U17 residency program in Bradenton, Florida, where he was told he might be able to play on a professional level.

"I got recruited there through the U.S.A. youth national team systems," he said. "I got invited and I went down there and I was the starting goalkeeper for my age group for the majority of the two and a half years I was there. My coaches and other people

that had approached and talked to me said I had a good chance to play professionally."

Lambo began to appear on draft boards for the 2008 MLS draft and was told that he would be a surefire top-10 pick.

"With the MLS, you sign a contract first and then you find out which team drafts you," he said. "I really wanted to go back home to Chicago where I grew up. They had the seventh and 12th overall picks in the draft. But one guy named Patrick Nyarko was supposed to be a top five pick, was still on the board at the seventh pick so the [Chicago] Fire chose him. I was a little disappointed, but I figured I would wait a couple more picks and I would get to go home to Chicago."

That wasn't the case though because on the very next pick FC Dallas selected him.

Lambo was frustrated that he didn't get to go home and he almost thanked the Chicago Fire for drafting him during his speech.

Getting drafted eighth overall in the 2008 MLS Draft, Lambo had a very bright future as a goalkeeper for Dallas. Unfortunately, he suffered a broken jaw and had to sit out the second half of the 2008 season.

By 2010, Lambo had yet to make his professional debut. He was loaned to FC Tampa — a Division 2 expansion team — and on May 14, he made his first appearance on the field as a professional soccer player in a 2-1 victory over the Carolina RailHawks.

However, he wouldn't stay with FC Dallas. In his original contract, he was guaranteed three years with a fourth and fifth year option. Dallas picked up his contract for the fourth year, but not his fifth. After being



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M Athletics



Photo courtesy of The Battalion

waived by Dallas, he needed to see what options he had left with the MLS.

Lambo had several D2 contracts and the MLS pool goalkeeper position offered to him. If he accepted the pool goalkeeper position, he would have been stationed out of D.C. United. If another team's goalkeeper were injured, he would take his place until he was healthy and then return to D.C. United.

Lambo struggled with the decision. Soccer was his life and he had finally reached the professional level, but he ultimately decided to do what was best for him and his family.

"My wife and I had not been married a year by the time I got that contract offer," he said. "I was not going to move her to a new city on not very much money with the potential of leaving her by herself for months at a time. I prayed a lot and I finally came to peace that my soccer career was over."

With his professional soccer career in the books, Lambo decided it was time to go back to school and earn a four-year degree. He had previously earned his associates degree online while playing in the MLS.

Lambo knew that if he was going to go back to school he was going to choose one that was in need of a place kicker on its football team. He had no prior experience playing football other than winning a punt, pass and catch competition when he was 10 years old.

"A friend of my brothers' was the kicker at Wisconsin," he said. "He was two time All-BIG 10 and kicked in the NFL for a couple years for the Saints and the Vikings. So I met with him and he taught me how to kick a football. I said if I'm going to go back to school, I might as well try football and it just kind of panned out."

While in Wisconsin, Lambo recorded a highlight tape of him hitting a 70-yard field goal on a windy day. He sent it out to several schools and Texas A&M was the only school to respond.



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M Athletics

"I probably sent an email with my video and my bio to 25-30 schools all across the South," he said. "I emailed pretty much any [Division 1] school that I could drive to within 12 hours. A&M was the only one that responded and I couldn't be happier about that."

Texas A&M ended up being the answer to his prayers. The Aggie football team was in need of a solid place kicker after the 2012 season. Lambo chose to major in agricultural leadership and development, which allowed him to transfer most of his

What's the story behind your jersey number?

"They gave me the number 49 when I got here, I didn't have a choice," he said. "But I thought it was great because 4 is my favorite number, 9 is my wife's favorite number and when you add 4+9 you get 13. In numerology—which my mom is big on—you reduce numbers to one digit, so 1+3=4. When I was drafted by Dallas, they gave me the number 22, which of course is a 4. 22 was also my club soccer number. Numbers have always followed me and while they don't actually have 'powers' or anything like that, I just like to think that God knows I like numbers."

classes that he took while earning his associates' degree. Being in excellent academic standing, Lambo could have graduated with his ALED degree in May of 2014. But he had one more season of eligibility and didn't want to get involved in a masters program at the time.

"I sought out some advisors and one in the ESSM department suggested that I double major," he said. "I decided on renewable natural resources because it made sense with the credits and the classes that I already had. There wasn't going to be a whole lot more classes left to take. It's something that I am interested in and since I have been taking classes in that department, I have really grown a passion for natural resources."

Lambo hopes to have a second professional athletic career in the NFL. He also began coursework for a Masters degree at Texas A&M.

By My

By Dominic Hernandez '14

“H e’s not usually like this,” the two boys said as August, the excited golden retriever in the room, tossed his chew toy urging for it to be thrown again. Once August is done playing fetch in the tight dorm room, he stops, sits and daringly looks at the bed as his front paws seem to look restless.

“Oh heck no. Go to your bed!” Kyle said before August grumbled and walked to his bed on the other side of the room.

The ever-dependable August.

“He grumbles sometimes when I tell him to sit,” Kyle said. “If I drop something, like my phone, August will pick it up. Unless he doesn’t feel like it then I guess I just ask Irving to get it.”

“Well what if I don’t feel like it either?” Irving chimed in from across the room, which draws a laugh from everyone as August finally laid calmly in his bed.

“Well then I just find a way,” Kyle said. “It’s what I’ve always done.”

Irving struggled to find a place to get comfortable. He stood leaning in the corner with his arms folded before he finally chose to sit up against the first wall you see when you enter the room.

“I feel like only important people should ever get interviewed,” he said before he and Kyle gave a quick laugh.

Irving Hernandez is a sophomore animal science major from Matamoros, Mexico. At age 11, he moved to one of the poorest neighborhoods in one of the poorest cities in the nation, Brownsville, Texas. Growing up only a few miles from the Mexican border, Irving lived in a trailer home with his aunt and cousin, while his parents were in Mexico working.

Hernandez described his trailer home as “really compact, maybe a bit too cozy.” He chuckled when he was asked if he ever had his own room or bed. He then sat back and tossed the air in his cheeks from side to side.

“I mean, I had my own side of the floor that I slept on,” he said. “I slept on the couch whenever my cousin didn’t.”

He was with family but it never felt like home to him. Irving’s mother came to visit whenever she could, but that was only about once a month, and his dad died when he was a freshman in high school.

Despite his struggles outside of the classroom, Irving had straight A’s in high school, which was a mile and a half walk from his home.

“My goal was always education, get out of Brownsville, and go to Texas A&M,” Irving said.

Irving graduated in the top 10 percent of his class, and was guaranteed admission to the school of his dreams. Unfortunately he had to hold off on applying because he was never a legalized immigrant.

“I couldn’t even visit A&M because I couldn’t make it past the border patrol checkpoint in Sarita,” Irving said. “Actually, I had never

traveled north of the Rio Grande Valley.”

When Irving finally received documentation that allowed him to work and study in the country, he thrived at A&M.

“It honestly finally felt like home, and I never felt that back in Brownsville,” he said. “Well maybe not never, but I struggled to.”

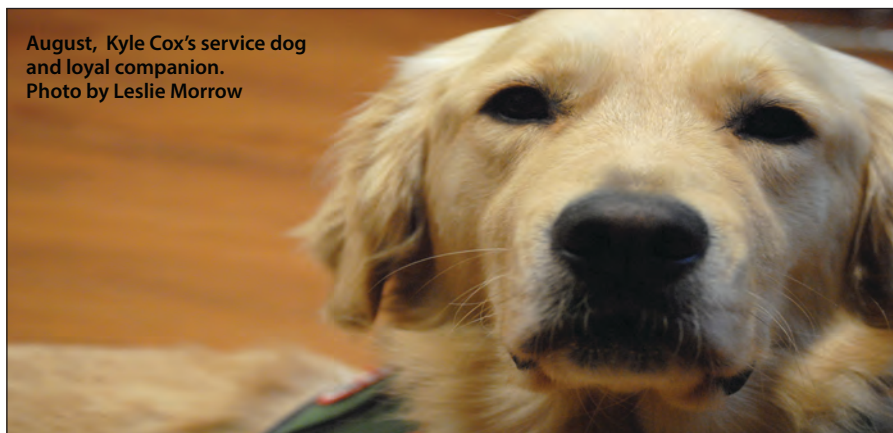
Hernandez was enjoying being a college freshman. He was living on campus, going to basketball games, passing all of his classes, and making friends. His scholarship money began to run dry and he found that he had some grant money that he didn’t know about to get him through his spring semester.

“That was definitely a huge relief, but I realized that next semester I wasn’t going to have the same luck,” Irving said.

When his financial aid statement for the fall semester came through, it was substantially less than his last semester’s, and even that wasn’t enough to get him through the semester. He began to worry about how he was going to pay for school.

“Oh yeah I got depressed thinking about it,” he said. “I had a few sleepless nights wondering if I could even do it.”

August, Kyle Cox’s service dog and loyal companion.
Photo by Leslie Morrow



Side

It got to the point where he seriously considered dropping out, and finishing his degree back home at the University of Texas at Brownsville. At the time, he called that his “absolute last resort”, but now, he jokingly calls it his “worst nightmare.”

In the meantime, he was going to complete his paid internship over the summer, where he worked as a ranch hand helping raise baby deer.

It was on that ranch where he got the phone call that gave him just the opportunity he had been wishing for.

Kyle Cox is from El Paso, Texas. Back in high school he was first chair in band, did very well in school, and had an avid passion for Texas A&M Football and the Dallas Cowboys. He had the constant love of his family, the strong support of his friends, and the loyalty of his golden retriever, Bethany. You’d never know it from just listening to him speak, but Kyle has battled the leading fatal genetic disease among boys his whole life.

He was diagnosed with Duchene’s Muscular Dystrophy at age seven. His beloved golden retriever was his service dog.

“I don’t really think about Duchene’s,” Kyle said. “There’s nothing really to think about. If I think about the negatives of my life whenever I wake up, well then what’s the point?”

Despite his positive attitude, he does have a different daily life than most people his age. Kyle maneuvers by his motorized wheelchair. He has the majority use of his arms although he cannot lift very heavy objects. Kyle also uses a hearing aid that



Photo by Leslie Morrow

Irving Hernandez and Kyle Cox give August some attention

he has needed because of complications when he was born.

Kyle never let his disability get in the way of his lifelong dream of going to Texas A&M. Boys with DMD rarely go to college, and almost none go far from home. He would need an attendant on campus to help him with certain needs. Kyle’s mother, Kristen Cox, had sent numerous emails that allowed Kyle’s future attendant to have living arrangements, travel expenses, and extra pay.

Thanks to the vast Aggie Network, Irving found the opportunity, and immediately reached out to the Cox family.

“Irving slows me down sometimes so I just tell him to hop on,” Kyle said. “And when he’s on the back sometimes I do donuts.”

Irving chuckled and shook his head at the memory of being tossed off of Kyle’s wheelchair.

Irving’s days start at 5:30 every morning as he wakes up to feed August. He then goes back to sleep for about an hour, and then wakes up again to brush August’s fur and clean his teeth. When Kyle has to start preparing for the day, Irving is there standing ready to help him every step of the way.

“I don’t see this really as a job,” Irving said. “I mean it is a job technically, but this has to be done, and I’m happy to do it.”

“I find it personally fulfilling to be able to help a friend in need,” Irving said. “I know I can count on him too when I need him.”

Irving and Kyle have both traveled difficult roads that have led them to Texas A&M, but now that they are here, how will they handle the workload at hand?

They’ll find a way. It’s what they’ve always done.

“I know I can count on him when I need him”

“This was what I had hoped for,” Irving said. “I needed this badly.”

The job has its extra perks too. Irving and Kyle sat in end zone seating at the Aggies victory over South Carolina in Columbia. And when Kyle and Irving are heading in the same direction through campus, Irving hops on the back of Kyle’s wheelchair as they zoom through campus with August on a quick trot alongside.

“Reach for a Star”

The Inspiring Advocate, Dr. Norman E. Borlaug

By: Robyn G. Lemon '15



Photo Courtesy of Junior Master Gardener

Dr. Norman E. Borlaug was the ultimate sports fan, a lover of big-band music, a listener, a believer and an advocate for revolution. His countless achievements during his lifetime will never outnumber the lives he touched. He was a scientist. He was a teacher, and the thing he believed in most was people.

The Man Behind the Nobel

Even though Borlaug could be intimidating, he was admired by many.

“I never met a person who didn’t like him,” said friend and colleague, Harry Cralle, Ph.D. “You may have disagreed with him, but you could never dislike him.”

Borlaug was a jack-of-all-trades and he had a special talent for working with people. Respect and kindness radiated through his character.

“He treated everyone the same,” Cralle said. “No arrogance towards anybody. He had tremendous respect for people regardless of their age, gender or nationality. He would talk to a student just the same as he would talk to the president of the university.”

Julie Borlaug, granddaughter and associate director for external relations for the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture, said, “He was a challenging person. He would ask what are you going to do? How are you going to do it? He didn’t accept mediocrity.”

Borlaug loved sports and it was his competitive nature that contributed to personal successes like the perfection of a dwarf wheat variety. Long hours spent in the laboratory were no different than the long hours practicing on a baseball diamond or on a wrestling mat.

“He loved sports,” Julie said. “His first love was baseball and he loved wrestling. He was a part of the Wrestling Collegiate Hall of Fame. It was that drive from sports that gave him such a work ethic. Face every challenge.”

David Baltensperger, Ph.D., Department Head of Soil and Crop Sciences, said, “He never missed a Cowboys Game. I don’t know if he rooted for them or against them, but he liked sports in general.”

Cralle revealed that Borlaug also had a comedic side.

“He was very funny,” Cralle said. “And he was interested in everything. He would often say, ‘The man could sell bread in a famine.’ We both had the same interest in music — big band, marching bands, very lively stuff.”

Ask anyone and they will tell you, Borlaug was a workaholic. But it was his passion for feeding the world that was his greatest gift to society.

A Teacher Beyond Measure

People didn't have to know Borlaug to be inspired. Hearing his story could ignite ambitions to see the world in a different light.

"He not only had a passion to not see a child go hungry, but he also had a belief in younger people," Julie said. "His projects were successful because he trained so many farmers. He instilled the importance of mentoring; giving young people a platform in the fight against hunger."

Borlaug's belief in ordinary people surpassed ordinary expectations.

"He would never give up on people," Cralle said. "He would always listen no matter who you were."

Borlaug saw it as his duty to raise students up to succeed and make a difference. To fail wasn't to lose, but rather to win with the courage to try again.

"He became an advocate for getting training to people in poor countries— to break the poverty cycle," Baltensperger said. "He taught me about allowing yourself to be utilized for a cause instead of being a cause."

He was a secret weapon for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, but a blessing to Texas A&M.

When asked why Borlaug chose Texas A&M, Cralle said, "It was the Aggie Spirit and the friendliness of students that made him choose A&M over Minnesota. Minnesota, where he graduated, wanted him as faculty too."

Texas A&M is now the home for the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture.



Dr. Norman Borlaug with his granddaughter, Julie Borlaug Larson when he received the Congressional Gold Medal. Larson is the Associate Director for External Relations at the Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture. Photo courtesy of the Borlaug Institute

Borlaug – an Adjective All its Own.

There may have never been a moment when Borlaug realized all of his accomplishments. He lived his life knowing there was always more work to be done — more lives to change.

“He had his own word, ‘Borlaug.’ It was what he stood for, what he meant and how he functioned. His name has become synonymous in defining his work. It’s the reasons we have Borlaug this and that. That name has come to take on a meaning of its own.”

David Baltensperger, Ph.D.

"He never acknowledged what he had done," Cralle said. "He focused on the future. He would never say he achieved something. It was alien to him. He had no arrogance what-so-ever. He would say, 'Harry, I can't go in the classroom and talk about winning the Nobel Peace Prize. You go do it!'"

Borlaug would have celebrated his 100th birthday in 2014. We remember his name, his science and his teaching. But more importantly, we remember his character, his humor, his seriousness and his lively spirit.

"He had his own word, Borlaug," Baltensperger said. "It was what he stood for, what he meant and how he functioned. His name has become synonymous in defining his work. It's the reasons we have Borlaug this and that. That name has come to take on a meaning of its own."

He fed the world, but he also inspired it.

"He was a different kind of human-being. He had a personal goodness," Cralle said. "He taught me that people are always better than you would think they would be."

Dr. Norman E. Borlaug's life was devoted to revolutionizing the fight against world hunger. But the gift he shared with the world was himself. He was good. He was driven. He was simply Borlaug.

Happy 100th Birthday, Dr. Borlaug.

Ruff Tough, Real Stuff

Q&A with Reveille VIII

By: Ashlen Smolik '15

Reveille VIII became the eighth official mascot on August 11, 2008. During Reveille VIII's time as the First Lady of Texas A&M, she has had many great experiences. From watching the university begin competing in the SEC to becoming a celebrity starring in SEC commercials, Reveille VIII has seen it all.

During the fall 2014 semester, the Texas A&M student body found out about Reveille VIII's retirement plans. To keep the record straight, Miss Reveille decided to share her own story.

Q. Miss Reveille, what has been the best day of your life until now?

A. I have to say August 11, 2008, when I was formally recognized as the mascot of Texas A&M. Although I didn't know it at the time, that was probably the best day ever. I received so many kind words and so much love (and head scratches) it was unbelievable. I really felt the abounding love of the Aggie family for the first time.

Q. Where did you call home before Texas A&M?

A. I lived in Topeka, Kansas. I was actually a little nervous to be leaving my household until Julie Hinrichsen and Russell Dyke, my breeders, assured me that I was going to a great new home where I would be loved and cared for by thousands of people. After that, I became anxious to arrive at my new home in College Station.

Q. You moved to a new city with a new family, did you get a lot of new nicknames?

A. My birth name is Kelly. Once I became the mascot, I was more than happy to have the privilege of being called Reveille VIII, Rev, and Miss Rev. Just like any other girl, I definitely don't mind being called beautiful or sweetheart, occasionally. Many of my fellow cadets call me "Momma."

"She's the only girl in my life right now. I don't think I'd have time for anyone else."

-Parker Smith '16, former Mascot Corporal

Q. Speaking of cadets, tell me about your most recent handler.

A. Good ole' Ryan Kreider. We've had a great time together and we still have so much more ahead of us. I really do owe him, though. At this year's SMU game, he blocked a football player twice his own size in order to make sure I wouldn't get tackled. I knew there was a reason I kept him around.



Photo by Daylon Koster, Company E-2

Q. Is the transition from one Mascot Corporal to the next something that is difficult for you?

A. Yes, it's tough to leave for the both of us. They're my best friends. Even though the coming of summer means I have to part ways from my former handler for a while, it is also a happy time. This is when I get to meet the man who will become my new best friend. We will spend the entire summer hanging out together before we go back to school. I also love meeting their moms because they always feed me very well.

Q. You've attended class since 2008. How many times have you changed majors?

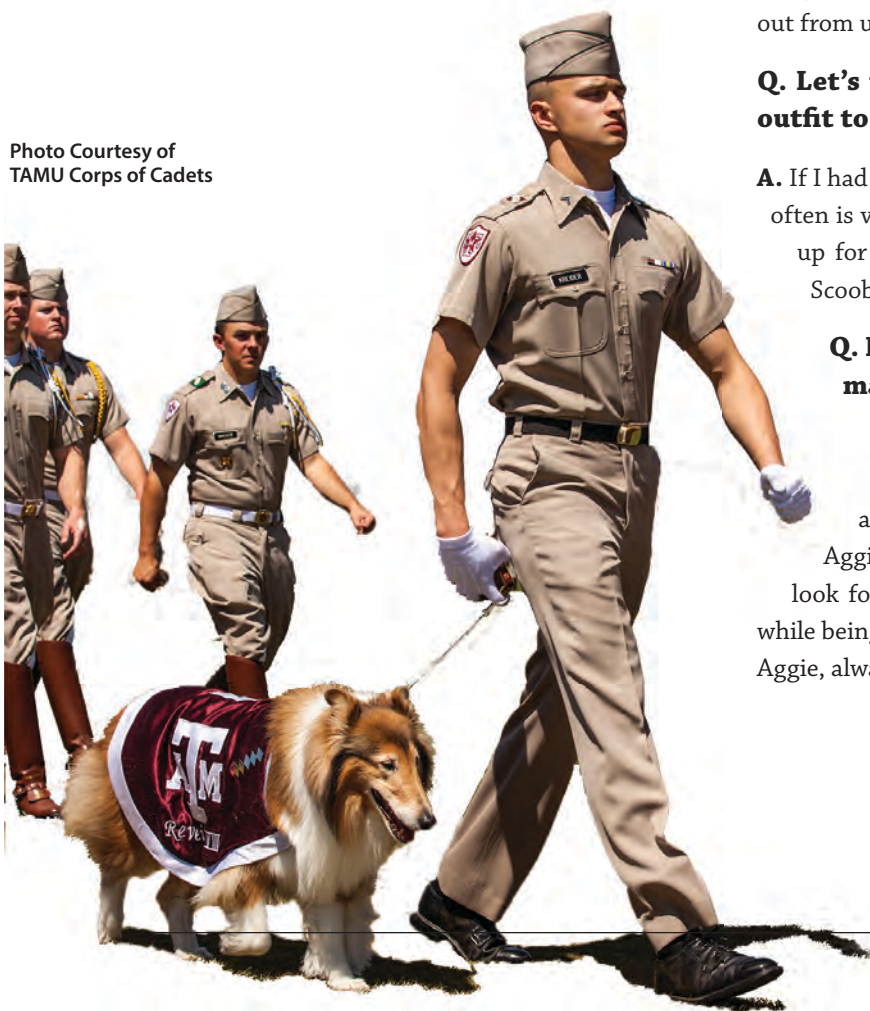
A. I have taken many different classes, but my major has stayed the same. I am majoring in fightin' Texas Aggie mascot.

A. Business Math 142. Calculus doubles as a great lullaby for me, so I can always plan on getting a good nap.

Q. Outside of class, what do you like to do to relax and unwind?

A. Have you seen those friendly campus squirrels? I absolutely love chasing them around when Ryan takes off my leash.

Photo Courtesy of TAMU Corps of Cadets



Reville VIII staying fit and fabulous at the campus rec center.

Photo by Daylon Koster, Company E-2

Q. That sounds like a good time, and also a little funny. Do you have any funny habits or pet peeves?

A. I am a lady that loves her food, and I want to enjoy every bite of it. Once the food hits my bowl, I always hold my head over it and peer over my nose to make sure no one is going to try to eat it out from under me. Once the coast is clear, I go ahead and dig in.

Q. Let's talk fashion. What is your absolute favorite outfit to wear?

A. If I had a choice, I would just go all-natural. The blanket I wear often is very elegant, and my gym outfit is sporty, but dressing up for Halloween is really fun. This past year, I dressed as Scooby-Doo! It was definitely a crowd pleaser.

Q. Do you have any plans after retiring from the mascot position?

A. I will be moving to the Stevenson Companion Animal Life-Care Center. I am sad to be stepping down as mascot, but I know that I will always be a part of the Aggie family. Since I will be staying in College Station, I look forward to still being close with the Aggie community while being able to relax with Texas A&M Veterinarians. Once an Aggie, always an Aggie.

Connections



Frank "Skip" Landis, Ph.D. '82
Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
Director, Vet Med Administration

Q. What advice do you have for students?

A. Do what you like to do. It makes your grades better because you enjoy what you study.

Q. What do you hope to see in the future for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences?

A. I would like for it to continue to be the student-centered college that it is. The faculty is great about working with the students until they know the material. They are a good foundational college for the university. They are steady and stable. As everybody else changes, they stay solid.

William "Bill" Boyett, '71
Agricultural Economics
Vice President, On-line Real Estate Services, Inc.

Q. What was your favorite tradition?

A. My favorite tradition would have to be Silver Taps. My family has been here since the 1800's, I think we've seven or eight generations of Aggies. I had a niece that died her junior year in a car accident. Having all our family and the Aggie family attend Silver Taps left such an impression on us. Being on the other side of the ceremony truly meant so much more than one realized. It is hard to explain even on the inside.

Q. What do you remember about getting your ring?

A. When I got my Aggie ring I felt accomplished. It is a pride that never goes away. No matter where you go, you will run into Aggies. I once ran into an Aggie on a boat in Alaska. Another time I ran into an Aggie we knew in New York City. What are the chances of that?



Lindsay Garrett-Allen '12
Agricultural Communications and Journalism
Subcontract Administrator, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

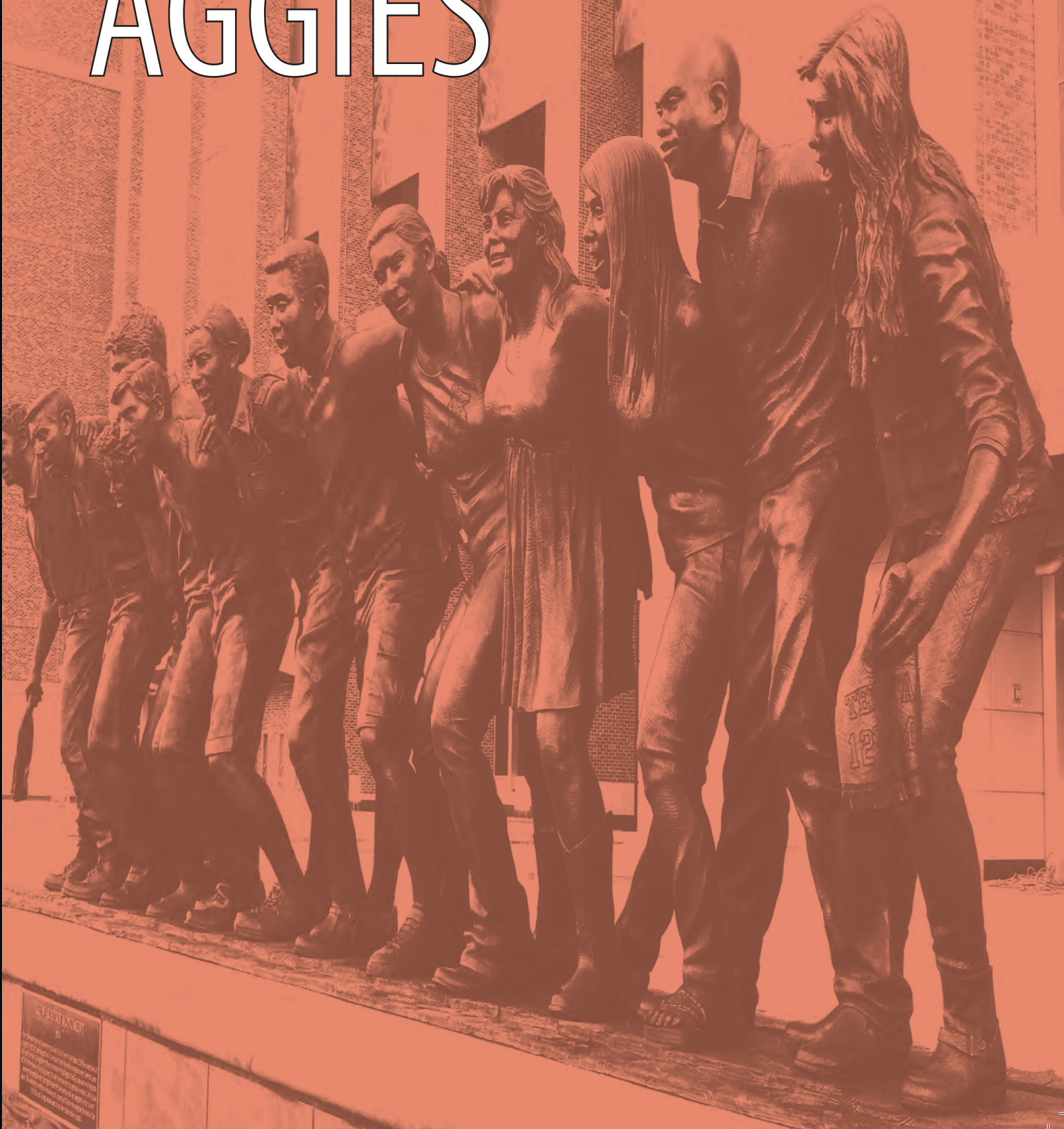
Q. What would you do differently if you came back to A&M?

A. I would be more flexible. Now is the time when it's OK to not know and not have all the answers. It's OK to explore many different career fields and pick a major and then change it.

Q. Who was your favorite professor?

A. How do I pick just one? Dr. Harry Cralle in soil and crop sciences was the most entertaining professor. He kept you on your toes by having class in the dark, racing students up the stairs, eating plants, and blaring the War Hymn before every test.

AGGIES



AGGIES
1957

Aggie Ring Day: Then and Now

Story By: Sarah Caffey '14



Photo by Sarah Caffey

As an Aggie, receiving your ring is one of the most exciting and memorable days of your college career. After all the hours of hard work and dedication, you are finally rewarded with something you will wear for the rest of your life. Because the Aggie Ring is the most visible symbol of your educational accomplishments, you will be connected with fellow Aggies around the world from the moment you place it on your finger.

Today, receiving your ring is celebrated in numerous ways with parties, special family outings and the infamous “Ring Dunks,” but have you ever thought of how Ring Day was celebrated in the past?

History Lesson

The first Aggie Ring was made in 1889 and was solid gold showing off the letters “AMC” for Agricultural and Mechanical College. Back then, any student regardless of academic classification, could order an Aggie Ring for as little as \$10.50. Five years later, E.C. Jonas created the basic design for the rings that we use today.

The design of the Aggie Ring has gone through many changes. The state seal and crossed weapons changed sides twice, and the name of the college was changed four times before legislature officially changed the name of the school to Texas A&M University. At least eight different companies have supplied Aggie Rings to students. The 1970s gave students more options

for type of gold. Choices ranged from rose gold, white gold with an antique finish and of course, yellow gold with an antique finish.

Ring Day: Then

For those who have recently received their Aggie Rings, it’s hard to believe that Ring Day wasn’t always as big of a celebration as it is today. Back then, when marrying and starting a family at a young age was a common trend, many students delayed ordering their rings so that they could better provide for their families. Many male students were sent off to war before their graduation dates, so having an Aggie Ring was a symbol of their education.

For other students back then, receiving their Aggie Rings was like any other day. David Walther, a 1975 journalism graduate and current agricultural communications and journalism Ph.D. student, said that his Ring Day was almost like any other day.

“My Ring Day was very different than Ring Days today,” Walther said. “I just went and picked up my box that had my ring in it and went back to work.”

He said that even though Ring Days in the past weren’t as ceremonial as they are today, it’s still a day you remember.

“Receiving your Aggie Ring is a symbol that you’ve made it through, and it just makes you feel good,” Walther said. “The best part of my Ring Day, other than actually receiving my ring,



1889



1898



1900



1975

Photos courtesy of the Cushing Memorial Library

Photo by Sarah Caffey

was looking down at my hand and being able to see my ring on my finger after all that hard work.”

Ring Days from even just a few years ago are still quite different than Ring Days today. Students didn't skip all their classes to get ready for the big day, full-time jobs still had to be worked and parents of students weren't present.

For Mandy Chambers, a 2007 agricultural communications and journalism graduate, having the support from her family and friends made receiving her ring one of the proudest moments of her college career.

“My family lives eight and a half hours away so they couldn't make it, but all of my best friends came and supported me,” Chambers said. “I am a first generation Aggie, so I felt really accomplished and proud of myself for making it at a larger university.”

She said, in her opinion, that Ring Days from the past and the present share all the same emotions. “The same excitement is still there and I'm hoping that the sense of pride is still there as well,” Chambers said. “You have to work really hard to get that little gold ring, it isn't just handed to you.”

Ring Day: Now

In Aggeland today, there's no mistaking when Ring Day rolls around. The town is populated with hundreds of proud parents and family members. Restaurants become more crowded and the smiles of the newly “ringed” can be seen from a mile away.

Ring Days have changed in many ways since the first ring was presented, but one thing seems to have always remained the same: support from family and friends. Gerardo Monarres, a senior wildlife and fisheries science major, received his ring in April 2014 and said that without the help of his supporters, it would have been easy to just give up on his educational journey.

“The greatest memory from my Ring Day was being able to celebrate the accomplishment with family and friends,” he said. “Without family or friends there would be nobody to push you when times get tough.”

Ring Days will continue to be one of the most significant events in an Aggie's life. Walther, Chambers, Monarres and all students who have received their rings can agree that the Aggie Ring is not only a symbol of educational accomplishments, but also a symbol of the core values that represent what it means to be a part of the Aggie family.

Ring Day Tips

“Get an early time slot if possible,”
Gerardo Monarres, WFSC, '15

“There is a bus that runs from West
Campus garage to the Alumni Center
and back!”
Michelle Derry, ANSC, '15

“Make food at your house. Go to the
store to buy food and drinks the week
before!”
Amber Langhoff, AGECE, '14

“Take pictures a day or two after
rather than waiting in the long lines,”
Amelia Amyett, ANSC, '15

“Take it all in. It happens fast and you
should enjoy every second of it. Don't
get overwhelmed with the crowd
because it can be very intense if not
prepared. Have fun and congrats!”
Clay Wagner, AGECE, '14

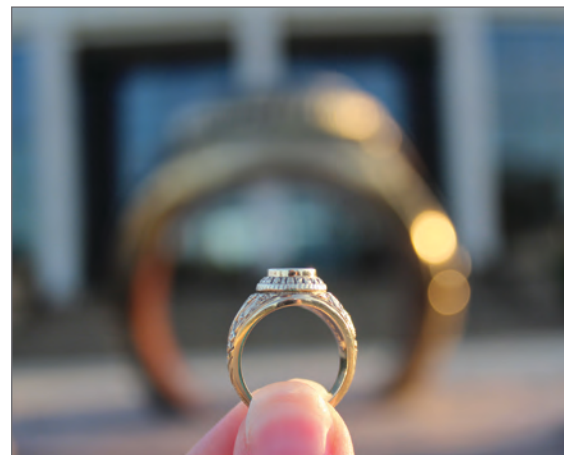


Photo by Sarah Caffey

Ring Day is April 17, 2015!
Congrats to all students
receiving their rings!



From Dream to Reality

Gardens & Greenway

Photos and story by: Casey Lilley '14

Texas A&M University prides itself on being a world-class institution, and rightfully so. Texas A&M has decided to raise the bar and build a legacy that will last for many generations of Aggies to come.

“Texas A&M is a land grant university,” Doug Welsh, the Gardens and Greenway program coordinator, said. “We should have the best looking landscape around.”

The Texas A&M Gardens and Greenway project is well underway behind the AgriLife complex on West Campus; stretching approximately 45 acres to the Bush Library. Graduate students from the Department of Landscape Architecture developed a master plan for the project., which includes features like The Grove amphitheater, teaching gardens, a rose garden, a coffee station, wildflower meadows and much more.

“We want to create a wonderful space that students want to be in,” Welsh said. “It’s more than just agriculture.”

Students and visitors who encounter agriculture gain a better understanding of its historical significance to Texas and Texas A&M, as well as its value in today’s urban environment. This initiative is designed to give back to the community and the environment. The Gardens and Greenway Project is a project based purely on donations and it will be built as the dollars come in.

“The good news right now is that we’re going from dream to reality,” Welsh said.

Starting fall 2015, construction on the teaching garden complex will begin. This teaching garden will be a \$2 million, three acre project, one of the bigger phases of the Gardens and Greenway. This phase is expected to be finished by fall 2017. Project Coordinator, Welsh planned for the project to have a long term endowment that will cover the maintenance costs.

“Those who are still going to be here a while can certainly get engaged and watch what’s happening,” Welsh said. “It’s an exciting project, its positive, everyone on this campus is positive about it.” The Texas A&M Gardens and Greenway campaign

reiterates that the Texas A&M campus is home to the Aggie family, every family needs a home and every home needs a backyard. It will truly be a backyard like no other.

As a student, faculty or staff member, you might be wondering how you can contribute to something amazing and long lasting as this. It’s easy! Primary funding and long-term management for the Gardens and Greenway will be secured through donations, foundations and corporate sponsors. No donation is too little, even \$10 would benefit this project.



Head to www.agrilife.org/texas-am-gardens-and-greenway-project to leave your legacy.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY'S | HIDDEN GEMS |

Story and Photos by Patricia Ward '15

Every year tens of thousands of students and visitors step onto the Texas A&M campus. Most visit places like Kyle Field, the Memorial Student Center, Olsen Field and Sully. However, very few have experienced some of Texas A&M's hidden gems.



1 GEORGE BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

A cool stop on campus located just off George Bush Drive, is the presidential library of the 41st President, George H.W. Bush. It is, unfortunately, a place that many students do not take the time to visit.

According to its website, the library promotes civic literacy and increased historical understanding of the nation's experience, and fosters a community of public service and volunteerism.

The library is set up as a timeline of Bush's life. It begins with his childhood then moves to his love story with Barbara, then on to his presidency. The library even has a replica of the oval office for visitors to see.

The library is also a great place for families. Numerous activities are available for children to experience.

Visiting the library is free to all students with a current Texas A&M identification card.



2 BARBARA BUSH ROSE GARDEN

Just outside of the presidential library is a beautiful garden. This is a great place for a senior photo shoot session or even just a relaxing walk. In the spring it also features picture-perfect bluebonnets.

In the garden there is a pond where one can go fishing. It is catch and release only, yet it still provides a unique feature to the garden.

Recently the library unveiled a statue of President Bush in the garden. The statue stands eight feet tall and was built to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his presidency.

At the back of the garden is a bridge that leads to the burial place of Bush's daughter, Robin. This peaceful setting will be the future resting place of President Bush and his wife.



3 CUSHING MEMORIAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

Students pass by the Cushing Memorial Library everyday as they rush to classes and study group sessions. Many do not look twice at the building because they have no idea what is inside.

Cushing Memorial Library contains some of the most in-depth literary collections in Texas. They include the Science Fiction and Fantasy Research collection and the Mexican Colonial collection.

One of the more interesting collections is the Texas A&M University archive. Established in 1950, the archives includes records of meetings, student publications, newspapers, photographs and even course catalogs from the past.

The library's collections are well worth a visit. Students and visitors may find themselves spending hours absorbing all that the library has to offer.



4 CYNTHIA WOODS MITCHELL GARDEN

Tucked away on the third floor of the George P. Mitchell Physics Building is the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Rooftop Garden, Texas A&M's first and only rooftop garden.

The garden was created as part of an endowment given by George P. Mitchell. The rooftop garden promotes sustainability in today's world.

Visitors in the garden are surrounded by many butterflies and flowers. It is a great place for students to escape and find a quiet place to study outdoors.

Senior animal science major, Kelli McCosham, had not visited the rooftop garden until her senior year.

"A lot of people don't realize that the rooftop garden is actually there," McCosham said. "It is very peaceful up there considering it is by Northgate and University Drive."



5 THE UNIVERSITY CLUB

Dining on campus is available everywhere, from Ag Café and local food trucks on west campus to Sbisa and the MSC on main campus. However, there are some locations that may be unfamiliar to many students.

One in particular is the University Club in Rudder Tower. Only open for three hours a day, Monday through Friday, the restaurant provides a unique view located on the eleventh floor of the building.

Senior biomedical science and psychology major, Shivani Gaitonde, visited the University Club for the first time this year.

"I can't believe it took me four years to finally come here," Gaitonde said. "The restaurant had a classy, hotel-like vibe, and the food was so delicious. Especially the pumpkin cheesecake – my mouth is watering just thinking about it. I can't wait to try happy hour next time I go."

● GEORGE BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

Monday - Saturday
9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday
12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

● BARBARA BUSH ROSE GARDEN

Access behind the George Bush Presidential Library & Museum

● CUSHING MEMORIAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Sunday
CLOSED

● CYNTHIA WOODS MITCHELL GARDEN

Access on third floor of George P. Mitchell Physics Building

● THE UNIVERSITY CLUB

Monday - Friday
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



How To BTHO SENIORITIS

By Christa Bryce '14

Photos courtesy of the Texas A&M University photo repository

Laziness, lack of studying, apathy toward grades, and an unusually high number of absences are all signs of a crippling virus. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, it is likely that you may be suffering from senioritis.

Merriam-Webster defines senioritis as, "An ebbing of motivation and effort by school seniors."

Basically, every speck of your motivation dissolves into a messy puddle of indifference. Before you know it, midterm exams roll around and you suddenly realize that you've worn sweats every day for the last three weeks even though your only exercise has been laughing at cat videos.

Scholastic Performance Specialist Reb Stahr from the Academic Success Center said, "Senioritis is a real thing, but you don't have to be a senior to get it."

Senioritis is real, and it can seriously damage your academic career. So whether you're an incoming freshman, or are about to graduate, here are some handy tips to build up your immunity from senioritis.

PRACTICE GOOD HABITS

A study published in the American Journal of Health Promotion concluded that, "College students who adhere to public health recommendations for lifestyle behaviors have modestly higher grade averages."

So, be good to yourself. Keep the stress levels down by eating nutritious meals, burning some calories and getting enough sleep.

Other good habits that minimize stress include budgeting your money, taking notes in class, and using a planner to track due dates and manage your time.

"EVERY SPECK OF YOUR MOTIVATION DISSOLVES INTO A MESSY PUDDLE OF INDIFFERENCE."

RISE AND SHINE

Stahr said she would encourage students to establish a regular sleep routine.

"If you wake up early, you have time to get more done," Stahr said.

Start getting up in time to see a few famous Texas sunrises. Pretty soon you'll discover those dreaded mornings

are actually the best place for some one-on-one time with your possibilities.

BONUS:
Waking up early is also a great way to prepare for working in the real world.



DITCH THE SWEATS

As someone very wise once said, "Dress for success!"

Dressing professionally at least once a week will impress instructors and potential employers. Not only that, you will also start to feel at ease and comfortable with yourself in business attire. During job interviews you'll be confident and convincing in your role as the starry-eyed upcoming professional.

BONUS:
Gradually adding to your professional wardrobe throughout college means you won't have to break the bank for your first interviews.

"BECOMING OVERWHELMED OR BURNT OUT CAN ALSO FUEL SENIORITIS."



STAY INSPIRED

Becoming overwhelmed or burnt out can also fuel senioritis. Clustering core classes or taking too many intensive classes at once can be draining and leave you feeling uninspired.

"Most students, especially transfers, run into this problem a lot," Anne Alexander, undergraduate advisor for the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Sciences, said. "It makes it hard when you have them all together in one semester with nothing to keep things light."

On campus there are classes for baking, wine, event planning, recreation, floral design and even barbeque. If you can't manage any extra hours into your degree plan, there are still plenty of options that won't clutter your transcript.

Fuel your inner go-getter and master something you've always wanted to do. Remember, you don't have to go crazy, just do something for you. It can be as simple as taking a spin class at the rec or as complex as something from your DIY Pinterest board.

PASS IT BACK

"Selfless service is an integral part of being an Aggie," Stahr said. "So I would always recommend giving back if and when you can."

Becoming a mentor is a great way to give back. Take a freshman under your wing and pass along your hard earned knowledge.

Start being someone's personal Yell Leader today. You'll help out a friend in need and get an empowering sense of hope.



MAKE IT MATTER

Part of senioritis is fearing the future and suddenly realizing that the college lifestyle is actually perfect for you. That's why it's important to start doing things that matter.

If you start doing brave things now it's likely to become a habit, or at least comfortable, by the time you settle in to your post-grad life.

This isn't about networking. This is about connecting. Invest in your friendships. Have important conversations and make some memories. Have fun and knock a few things off your bucket list.

So finish strong, live life large and remember, no one ever said you had to be boring. ●

Millennials Moving up & MOVING IN

Photos and Story by: Caitlin Curbello '14

You rush out of the door, going over the checklist of things you needed to complete and bring with you. You are both nervous and excited for your first day with a new job. How could anything go wrong? You've had a nice breakfast and a fresh cup of coffee to start the day off right. You are dressed professionally and didn't forget to brush your teeth. You feel prepared and focused on succeeding within this new professional community.

However, what will your new colleagues think of you and your performance? What is expected of you? How well will you adapt to the standards of your workplace? More importantly, what are the stereotypes you must break through to prove your worth? These are all questions that you may ask yourself, but do not have a clearly defined answer. How are millennials perceived by others in the professional realm?

Let's begin with the background of a millennial. According to Nielsen, a leading global information and measurement company, millennials are young adults born between 1977 and 1995. Millennials are 77 million strong and make up as much of the U.S. population (24%) as baby boomers and generation Z (those born after 1995).

Deanna Bosse, a millennial graduate student in Texas A&M University's Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, is currently conducting research about the perceptions and stereotypes of millennials, specifically from ag-related backgrounds.

"In ag, millennials will be the largest working population by 2025. By 2075, they will make up the majority of our population," Bosse said. "There have never been any studies [centered] around agriculture and millennials. This is important because we are going to need to know how to cater to them – they are going to be our customers."

Bosse began exploring the perception of millennials in the Spring semester of 2014 through interviews and extensive reading from literature. She collected survey data during the summer of 2014 in several states including Colorado, California and Texas.

"It's exploring the stereotypes and perspectives of millennials; that which they have of themselves, and what the older generation thinks of millennials," Bosse said. "So, [I'm] comparing



those two perspectives, seeing where we overlap and where there are differences."

One thing that can't be argued is that millennials are overwhelmingly tech-savvy. Many millennials have grown up in a time of heavy technological changes. This led to whoever learned something the fastest and "got it" first was the expert. This has carried over into their adult lives, Bosse said.

"A lot of the older generation think that millennials blow things off," Bosse said. "When in reality, millennials are probably the most driven and ambitious generation, because they have to be."

Kristin Johnson, a Senior Accountant and AP manager, has been in the corporate world for 32 years. She has witnessed the growth of millennials in the workplace from the beginning.

"I think they're privileged, but I guess what I really see now is they rely on a degree," Johnson said. "They want to be in the supervisor position and they don't want to work. Back in my day, most of us didn't really go to college. We worked our way up ... a title didn't really mean anything, and now it's degree and title, not quality of work."

What is it then, that leads other generations to view millennials this way? What will bridge that gap between generation then, and generation now? One perspective is that millennials are a driven, educated generation who work "smarter, not harder." Another is that millennials want the top position, but don't want to put in quality work.

"I think it's the pressure put on me socially, you know. 'Go to college. Learn this stuff,'" said Valerie Smith, a 25-year-old purchasing agent for an oilfield company out of Houston. "I think there is a lot of social pressure put on by families, friends and society. We're supposed to go to college and be structured



– you’re supposed to know a lot more.”

Some see millennials as entitled due to the technological advances and comforts that have become second-nature to them. These comforts include previous generation’s hard work which created these opportunities for millennials.

April Orcutt, a College Station resident and retail manager for 15 years interacts with millennials in and out of the workplace daily.

“What I’ve learned is that they think jobs are interchangeable, they aren’t in it for the long haul necessarily,” Orcutt said. “They’ll just go somewhere else, find something better. They’ll always think something is better.”

Orcutt began her retail career at Kohl’s, moving up the management ladder through training programs. She found out just how important college degrees are to companies now.

“I was in a management training program up until I didn’t get my degree,” Orcutt said. “When I said I wasn’t going to finish my degree, they said they didn’t need me.”

Millennials introduction into the professional workplace has brought changes to both hiring standards and processes. For instance, today we see more employees with tattoos, piercings and other noticeably unique characteristics. These may seem like relatively small things, but in comparison to the past it is an entirely different world.

Millennials are statistically the most educated generation to date, with 23 percent having a Bachelor’s degree or higher. However, does this mean anything to your colleagues?

“Now companies are wanting degrees, and the millennials have the degrees so they get snapped up,” Johnson said. “But they don’t have the work experience.”

Millennials are moving up in the world, and fast. They are

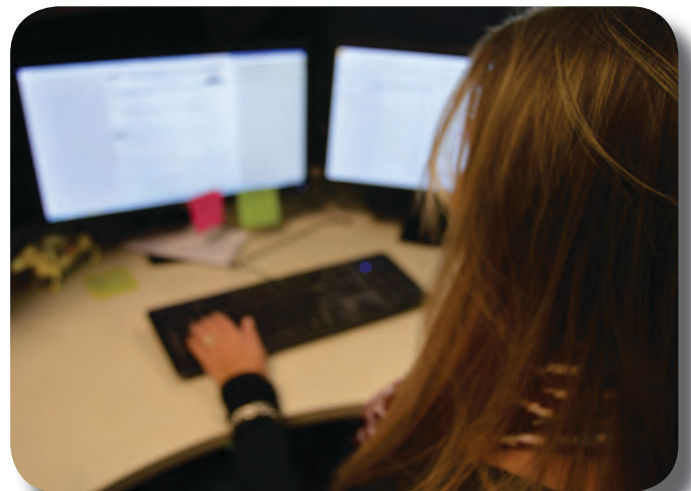
edging into higher positions because of their college degrees and making bigger decisions within companies. This not only affects themselves, but also past generations and the future workplace. Are millennials up to the challenge?

“I don’t think that college experience is equal to real life experience,” Orcutt said. “I think [millennials] need to look at things in a practical way.”

“When I left my job, they had to hire several people for the same position and they all quit after a year,” Johnson said. “Now [the company] is hurting financially. Not because I left, but I think millennials are going to steer companies toward non-productivity.”

This highly-educated generation seems to have something to prove to their colleagues and peers. They must prove that their diploma is more than just an alma mater to talk about around the water cooler. They must prove that lack of experience will be made up for by drive and innovation. Millennials have several generations waiting to see what they do with their fortunate opportunities.

“[The older generations] don’t think we work very hard, we work ‘smarter not harder’,” Bosse said. “Efficiency is a big thing for us as millennials. It’s about bridging that gap in between the older generation and us, to show them we are still producing the same results, just going about it a different way.”



SPOTLIGHTS

Long Acres Ranch Nature Center

Agriculture Communications and Journalism students had a unique opportunity for hands on learning during the fall 2014 semester. Acting as a public relations firm, students developed and launched an extensive public relations campaign for Long Acres Ranch Nature Tourism Center.

Managed by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Nature Tourism Program, Long Acres Ranch is a unique outdoor recreation and education facility located on 750 acres in Richmond, Texas. Whereas the typical nature center might have indoor tours and exhibits with an outdoor feature, Long Acres Ranch aims to introduce visitors to nature itself

The general public will view us a great resource to have some fun and connect with nature,” said Miles Phillips, director of Long Acres Ranch. “We will also host scouts and groups. And we will house guide services and provide them with proper training.”

The ranch offers guided nature experiences such as paddling, hiking, hayrides, tent camping, photo hunts, and much more. To find out more about Long Acres Ranch and how to get involved, check out their website at longacresranch.tamu.edu.



The Peace Corps International Master's Program



With political unrest on nearly every continent, it takes a different breed of students to study abroad. However this isn't a standard study abroad program; and Aggies aren't the standard breed of students.

The Peace Corps International Master's Program sends Agriculture and Life Sciences masters students to designated countries for two years. The students provide aid in the agricultural sector of their village, as well as provide community outreach and development services.

"The emotional connection these students have to their village is profound," said Cathryn Clement, Coordinator for International Academic Programs. "These students are focused and motivated to accomplish these goals, and if they decide to leave their village, they are determined to leave it a better place." Most students even ask for their stay to be extended another year.

When asked if the Aggie Network was experienced across the world, Clement recounted her first meeting with the head of Tunisia's extension service who recognized her affiliation with Texas A&M and gave her a "Gig 'Em."

Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy Internship

The Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy internship all started when a congressman and former student in Washington D.C. needed an intern who knew about agriculture. The Agriculture and Food Policy Center sent an agricultural economics student up to Washington, D.C. to serve as the agriculture expert in the office of that congressman. He was so impressed with the intern's knowledge that he decided to consistently increase the number of Aggie interns each year.

The ANRP program received a new director in 2013. Stephanie McMillen '07 graduated with a double major in animal science and agricultural communications and journalism.

"I always try to tell students who are hesitant about the program that we are not looking for the 4.0 student," McMillen said. "We are really looking for students who want to just learn about policy and any other experiences they can gain."

Your future in agricultural policy is within reach. Simply start by going to agintern.tamu.edu and complete the application. Internship opportunities are offered every semester. The newest internship opportunity with ANRP is located in Rome, Italy.





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