

# AGRILEADER

Fall 2023



Texas A&M University  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

# PRODUCERS

*“Everything Ag Since 1943”*

*Great Agriculture Industry Workplace*

**NOW HIRING**

**TALENTED PART-TIME EMPLOYEES**

**INQUIRE TODAY**

**FOR SPRING 2024 INTERNSHIPS**

**Agronomy Services**

**Agriculture Supply**

**Feed & Nutrition**

**Lawn & Garden**

**Petroleum Services**



**1800 North Texas Avenue • Bryan, Texas 77803 • 979-778-6000**

# Contents

FALL 2023  
edition

5 First Friday: A Farmer's Fortune

6 Handing Over the Ropes

9 Leading a School of Fish

12 Secure Your Financial Future at Texas A&M

13 Parks and Tourism to Include Hospitality

14 Our Happy Place

16 Interesting Research and Researchers

18 A Personal Account of the Radio Broadcasting Course

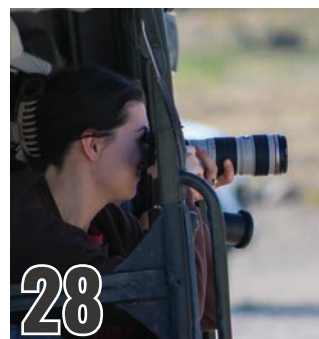
20 Climate Smart

22 Aggies Supporting Aggies

28 Study Abroad

32 A Policy of Success

34 Freshmen Questions. Senior Answers.



The Fall 2023 edition of the AGRILEADER was produced by the students in the Fall 2023 AGCJ 405 Agricultural Design and Publication in Agriculture and Life Sciences course.

**Managing Editors**  
Darci Denio &  
Grace Hoegemeyer

**Associate Editors**  
Cole Palmer &  
Jace Wilkey

**Copy Editor**  
Taylor Mobbs

**Graphic Design Editors**  
Skylar Cheek &  
Taylor McNeal

**Photo Editor**  
Madison Moore

**Advertising Manager**  
Taylor Handley

**Digital Manager**  
Cassidy Jones

**Instructor**  
Clint Saunders

Copyright 2023. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of its contents is prohibited without written permission:  
agrileadertamu@gmail.com.

## About the Cover

The windmill not only represents the strong connection to A&M's renowned agriculture and life sciences program but also symbolizes the unwavering pride associated with the university's "Gig 'Em" spirit. Situated outside the Agriculture and Life Sciences Building, the windmill serves as a visual testament to the college's dedication to agriculture and its deep-rooted traditions, making it a fitting representation of the AGRILEADER's mission and Texas A&M University's spirit. Cover photo by Madison Moore.



# LETTERS *from the* EDITORS

Texas A&M University and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has left a lasting imprint and truly shaped me into the person I am today. The traditions, community, students and faculty are second to none. As graduation nears, I am reminded of the challenges that I have faced that have pushed me out of my comfort zone and urged me to grow. Over time, I have learned skills beyond the classroom, creating a drive within me to become a successful woman in the agriculture industry. I am forever grateful for Texas A&M and will cherish the memories I have made.

Serving as co-managing editor of the Fall 2023 edition of the AGRILEADER is one of those memories. Our staff was truly outstanding, and each person got a chance to highlight their skills from differing positions. This edition has a little something for everyone, whether you are alumni, a student, a professor or a part of the Aggie network. As you look through the pages, I urge you not to just read the words printed but instead dive into the stories and experiences shared so they can impact you as they have me.

**Darci Denio '23**

As my time at Texas A&M University quickly comes to a close, I am reflecting on the many opportunities the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has given me. In only seven short semesters, I have experienced incomparable growth. The girl who stepped onto this campus in 2020 is not the woman who will be walking across the stage in December. The faculty and my peers have challenged and cultivated me into the woman I am today, and I could not be more grateful.

As co-managing editor of the Fall 2023 edition of the AGRILEADER, I was blessed to work alongside a fabulous team. Each piece of this magazine is evidence of the hard work and dedication of this AGRILEADER staff. I encourage you, as you flip through these pages, to immerse yourself into the stories we shared and reflect upon your own life and experiences, just as I have done.

**Grace Hoegemeyer '24**

**THANKS AND GIG'EM!**

Associate Editors



Jace Wilkey



Cole Palmer

Graphic Design Editors



Taylor McNeal



Skylar Cheek

Copy Editor



Taylor Mobbs

Photo Editor



Madison Moore

Digital Editor



Cassidy Jones

Advertising Manager



Taylor Handley

# MEET *the* TEAM



LOCATED IN ZAVALA  
COUNTY, TEXAS



HUNT ON OVER  
15,000 ACRES!



4800 SQFT FACILITY  
WITH 10 ROOMS  
ACCOMODATING 30+  
HUNTERS

CHEF PREPARED MEALS  
BARTENDERS  
PRIVATE SHOOTING RANGE  
TANK LOADED WITH CATFISH  
SWIMMING POOL  
FIRE PIT  
POOL AND POKER TABLES

FULLY GUIDED HUNTS  
DEER, DOVE, HOGS,  
RAMS, AND  
EXOTICS

CALL US FOR MORE INFORMATION:

SPOTS FOR 2023-2024 HUNTING SEASON ARE FILLING FAST!

ERIC ESTRADA  
Main Contact

(830)255-9320

Double\_e\_outfitter@hotmail.com



RANCH OFFICE

Monday-Friday

(830)374-2333

(830)854-7272, Owner

# FIRST FRIDAY:

by SKYLAR CHEEK '24


First Friday is an event that lures college students and catches the attention of young families. From face-painting to a farmer's market, First Friday occurs once a month, attracting hundreds of locals. For some vendors, participating is a hobby, and for others, it is a source of income. So, what about the agricultural businesses that sell their products for a living? Could this recurring event in Downtown Bryan enhance a farmer's income?

Chuck and Linda Albrecht have a cinnamon roasted nut business, and according to Chuck, First Friday has supported their retirement. The Albrechts have participated for three years, because they love doing what they do.

"Linda and I are semiretired," Chuck said. "We've been running this business since 2003 and spent 10 years as a nut vendor for Texas A&M and 15 years at Santa's Wonderland. Although we don't generate as much gross with First Friday, our travel expenses are nil, and we can sleep in our own bed every night."

Although the Albrecht's business continues to be timeless, right next to their tent, The Pickle Witch, Haley Richardson, is just getting started. She has participated in First Friday for more than a year and claims her products are the best damn pickles in Texas.

"Seventy-five percent of my income comes from First Friday in a single night," Richardson said. "From the amount of people I see to the amount of customers who rely on me to be here, I am guaranteed to sell out."

Whether you are a beginner or have years of experience, First Friday benefits agricultural businesses financially. For one day out of the month, this modern market allows small agricultural businesses to lay down their road signs and watch customers come to them. What more could a pickle witch ask for? 

## *A farmer's fortune*



photos by Skylar Cheek





# HANDING *over the* ROPES

*After nearly three decades, Texas A&M rodeo head coach set to retire*

by DARCI DENIO '23

**T**he Texas Aggie Rodeo coach, who has led the team as a volunteer for nearly three decades, is ready to hang up his hat. Texas A&M rodeo dates back to 1919, almost 30 years before the existence of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, the organization that organizes collegiate rodeo. What began as a student-run organization is now considered a competitive team by NIRA.

Alfred Wagner, Ph.D., '69, or "Al" for short, said, while there has never been a paycheck, the payoff has been watching the program grow from 12 to almost 50 members. Wagner, a former Texas Aggie Rodeo team member, began his duties in 1995 after two team members asked him to be the advisor for the rodeo team. For the last 28 seasons, Wagner has held the title of head coach.

"The kids are why I'm in it; there's no doubt about it," Wagner said.

Wagner was honored as the National Coach of the Year in 2016 for his contribution to the Texas A&M team. Current and former rodeo members gathered at the Texas A&M Rodeo in March and named Wagner the "forever coach" of Texas Aggie Rodeo.

"When you think about the Texas Aggie Rodeo Team, you can't help but think about the countless hours Dr. Al has put into the team to get it where it is today," said Laramie Wedemeyer, '23, 2022-23 rodeo team president.

Wagner's last season as head coach ended with success by sending the most rodeo members to the College



National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyoming. In April, the team made history, qualifying eight individuals and a full women's team for the CNFR. The women's team took home the Southern Region Team Championship and placed fifth in the nation.

"It's been a good ride, but I'm ready to turn it over," Wagner said.

*"The kids are why I'm in it; there's no doubt about it," Wagner said. "Rodeo kids are for the most part, top to bottom, just awesome kids."*

Wagner said he is grateful for all of the current and former rodeo team members and the support they had given him.

"A lot of our success for over 25 years is one man: Wagner," Bret Richards, president of the rodeo alumni said.

Richards said he and Wagner have been the driving force behind fundraising for the team, finding new ways each year to keep them competing.

The Aggie Rodeo Team has created a \$1 million endowment fund in Wagner's name. Wagner said about three-quarters of the goal is already raised.

"We are working to find a way to bridge from his legacy to the future of Texas A&M Rodeo," Richards said.

With Wagner's retirement nearing, there are plans to hire a new head rodeo coach at the start of the new year, and Wagner said he plans to be as involved as the new coach wants him to be.

"I'll certainly show them the ropes," he said.

Wagner is looking forward to the hiring process and knows several interested candidates, any of whom would make a great addition as the new head coach.

"Experience in rodeo events is going to be key," Wagner said.


In his retirement, Wagner plans to garden, both vegetables and roses, and travel with his wife.

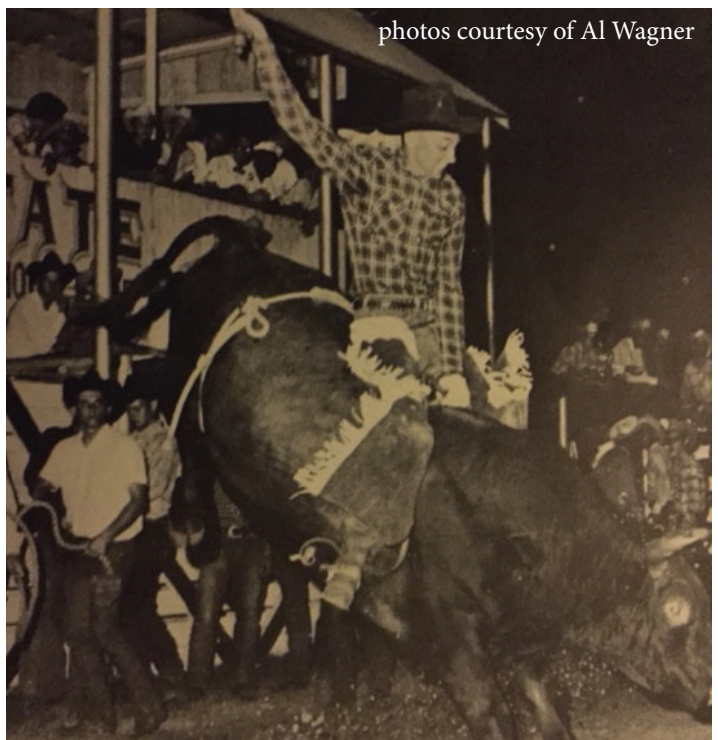


Wagner said his goal for retirement is to enjoy it and take it easy.

In 1969, Wagner received his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M in agricultural education and later returned to Aggieland twice to complete both his master's and doctorate degrees in food science and technology.

"I grew up loving the Aggies," Wagner said. "There was no doubt in where I was going to go to college."

Richards said getting a new coach is only the beginning of what the alumni association has planned for the future of Texas Aggie Rodeo. Texas A&M does not have rodeo practice facilities, so team members are dependent on private stables and arenas to prepare for competition. Richards said the alumni association hopes to assist in creating facilities for the program. 



photos courtesy of Al Wagner

# TEXAS A&M RODEO

**MARCH 8-9, 2024**

**BRAZOS COUNTY  
EXPO CENTER**

**5827 LEONARD RD.  
BRYAN, TX 77807**

## RODEO TIMES

**MARCH 8: 7:00 PM**

**MARCH 9: 5:00 PM**

## TICKETS

**\$10 General**

**\$8 Advance**

**(Sold at Cavenders)**

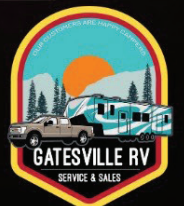
**\$7 Student**

**Kids 3 & Under FREE**

**FEATURING BACKFLIP JOHNNY DUDLEY**



**COLEMAN &  
PATTERSON**



**AGGIERODEO.COM**

# LEADING A *School Of Fish*



by GRACE HOEGEMEYER '24

As a kid, you may have been taught that fish blow bubbles and say “blub blub blub,” but here at Texas A&M University, the Fish Camp counselors teach that the fish actually say “AAAAA...” as loud as they can with their hands in the air. Traditionally held at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center, Fish Camp is a three-day, two-night camp where freshmen are immersed in the Aggie culture by learning traditions and building connections with other incoming and current students. For many, Fish Camp is their first real “taste” of the Spirit of Aggieland.

Nicole McCormick, '23, a senior agricultural communications and journalism major, represented the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 2023 serving as the head director for Fish Camp. McCormick credited her major for the variety of leadership and communication skills she used in her position.

“Being able to put the textbook theories into practice through this position was really rewarding,” McCormick said.

As the head director, she said she provided an incomparable experience for freshmen and staff alike. She was welcomed to Texas A&M with open arms as a freshman during her Fish Camp experience and was encouraged to “pass it back” by serving as a counselor for two years and a chair for Session G Blue Camp Arrexi. Through these roles, McCormick found the confidence she needed to take the next step and begin her application for head director. Her passion for the mission of the organization has been a driving force behind her willingness to serve.

At the beginning of every Fish Camp meeting, the staff recited the mission statement, “Fish Camp strives to welcome freshmen into the Aggie family by sharing the traditions and values of Texas A&M and building long-term relationships that embody the Aggie spirit.”

“They’re words that have always meant a lot to me, and it has been an honor to uphold them for the past year,” McCormick said.



photos courtesy of Nicole McCormick

McCormick said she approached Fish Camp with a vision that she believed could take the student-led organization to a higher level. Her goal was to create stability and provide transparency. Fish Camp has experienced many challenges, like COVID-19, which moved the entire program to a virtual platform. It has also had to change from four days to three days and find its footing as a University program.

“Fish Camp has always welcomed freshmen — it has just taken some different forms in the past few years, and I worked hard to make sure that we found our footing and set the stage for future years,” she said.

McCormick said she knew that transparency starts at the top of an organization; she worked hard to ensure that all Fish Camp staff knew and understood the organization’s constitution and policies.

“Most things we do have a very specific reason behind them, so making sure to always give reasoning behind even the most simple decisions helps people understand where I was coming from,” she said.

As the head director, McCormick said she faced challenges she had to overcome.

“I have never been the most confident speaker,” she said. “I could handle a class presentation no problem, but I’ve always been nervous to speak in front of people.”

In the position, McCormick said she was immediately thrown into numerous public speaking roles. She was asked to speak and lead information meetings within the first five days of her accepting the position. She was asked to speak at a Corps of Cadets meeting without the security of a PowerPoint. These opportunities, however, prepared her so well that by the time she was jumping on stage to speak in front of 90 freshmen, she was ready.

She was also challenged to learn how to be an effective leader on a large scale, she said.

“It’s one thing to learn about leadership from a textbook and another thing entirely to actually lead,” she said.

There were several things she had to learn to be a strong leader in such a large organization. She had to learn how to best communicate with the masses, how to empower people as individuals and as a collective group, and to take ownership when mistakes are made and move forward.

It was a challenge to adapt her leadership style to be effective for so many different people, but it helped her to grow. McCormick is grateful for the opportunity to be challenged in this way.

*“Fish Camp strives to welcome freshmen into the Aggie family by sharing the traditions and values of Texas A&M and building long-term relationships that embody the Aggie spirit.”*

“Being in charge of more than 1,000 people, you’re bound to mess up at some point, and that was a pretty hard concept to get through my head for a while,” she said.

There are so many highlights that stem from accepting a challenging position. McCormick was able to directly assist Session A chairs in preparing for Fish Camp, which she said was incredibly rewarding for her to get to watch them thrive and be successful. Her priority was to see the freshmen enjoying camp, so watching the freshmen have fun and be involved was a high point of her experience.

“It’s a really special sort of pride, to know that I helped make that experience happen,” she said.

McCormick and the rest of her director staff lived at the camp for the full three-week period of the sessions, and she said spending time with some of her closest friends was truly memorable for her.

“The golf carts we got to ride around in at Lakeview were a pretty big perk, too,” she joked.

As she reflected on her time as the head director, McCormick shared her gratitude for the amazing opportunities that she has been given. “I have had the opportunity to collaborate with leaders across campus and share ideas and experiences that can make a tangible difference to people,” she said.

Her time at Lakeview and in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has provided her with skills and experiences that she will carry with her beyond graduation. 🍷





photo courtesy of the Texas A&M financial planning program

# Secure your **FINANCIAL FUTURE** at Texas A&M

by TAYLOR MOBBS '25

**A** new major within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is connected to industry professionals with a large demand for workers. The Bachelor of Science in Financial Planning, offered through the Department of Agricultural Economics, will graduate its first class in 2027.

In August 2023, the major became official at Texas A&M University and will start accepting transfer students this spring.

The concept of the new major was put into motion almost 10 years ago with the idea to bring in all courses necessary for a student to succeed in the growing financial planning industry.

The program is outcome based, meaning students are prepared to complete the Certified Financial Planner Exam and acquire a job using real world examples and expert advice.

Nathan Harness, Ph.D., director of financial planning, said the area of financial planning is one that can create a generational impact.


“We have an opportunity to create a lasting legacy for financial planning,” said Harness.

Financial planning sends out a survey to more than 90,000 certified financial planning executives to generate course curriculum to better prepare students for the workforce.

“The industry does not have enough planners, and there is a huge demand for them,” said Nick Kilmer, an instructor for the program. “Because of this, you could get a great job.”

There is currently a financial planning minor available through Texas A&M, and as a result, there is a large network of Aggie financial planners across the country.

With the financial planning program comes community, including competition trips, student embedded organizations, the opportunity for case challenges and résumé building.

“This is a major that cares and is here to empower future leaders,” Harness said. 

[tx.ag/FINPmajor](https://tx.ag/FINPmajor)

Providing Milam & Surrounding Counties With  
Top-Grade Cattle Auction Services

Milam County  
Livestock Auction, LLC.



Sale Every Friday at 11 a.m.  
Cattle Accepted Thursday & Friday at 8 a.m.

*We appreciate your business & are just a phone call away!*

Kenny Mingus Cell: 254.482.1170  
milamcountylivestockauction.com

Sale Barn: 254.697.6697

 Milam County Livestock Auction, LLC

# PARKS AND TOURISM to include HOSPITALITY

by TAYLOR McNEAL '23



photo courtesy of Texas A&M AgriLife

**B**ig changes are occurring in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with the creation of the Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism.

Brian King, Ph.D., department head, gave the inside scoop on this new addition.

“There has been a lot of enthusiasm about the prospect of Texas A&M embracing hospitality and hotel management as an additional program for quite a number of years,” King said.

**3D Appraisals LLC**  
Real Estate Appraiser  
830-857-0986  
PO Box 1541  
Converse, TX 78109

**Denise Mobbs**

yourappraisalneeds@gmail.com  
www.yourappraisalneeds.com

Development of the new department has been underway for several years now, despite King having only started his position at the beginning of 2022.


“So while that [development of the department] decision making predated my arrival, I was appointed to make it happen,” King said.

The Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism has six degree plan options, ranging from undergraduate degree programs to graduate degree programs, some of which are not what you would traditionally think of with hospitality. There are also numerous internship opportunities to gain field experience, including a mentorship program with Marriott Hotels.

“There are good roles that one might not traditionally associate with the traditional service roles in hotels,” King said.

He said a student could take several different paths in the hospitality industry, such as business or data analytics, real estate and business transformation.

Along with the new department comes new facilities. In 2025, Texas A&M will open the Aplin Center. King said this building will have many hands-on opportunities for students and will include a retail store.

“Please come speak to us,” King said. “Please learn more about what we’re doing. We love to share with prospective students.” 

**hmgt.tamu.edu**



# OUR HAPPY PLACE

by CASSIDY JONES '24

**J**ust on the outskirts of Bryan, Texas, lies a 78-acre family farm that dates back to 1938. Tara and Michael Denham strive to repair the soil, increase wildlife and plant diversity, and live a simple, natural life.

## RETURNING TO THEIR ROOTS

As a child, Tara would spend her summers making memories on the farm with her grandparents. For as long as she can remember, she was tangled up in the garden, absorbing everything her grandmother taught her. Now, as an adult, Tara spends countless hours mastering new techniques and implementing those from her past.

Michael grew up on a cattle operation in Houston before attending college at Texas A&M University. After learning that his father sold all their cattle, he decided to switch his major to history, then graduated and enlisted into the military. With an outstanding career in both the military and police force, Michael now works remotely with a goal of farming full time.

Using the family farm as a vacation home all throughout their children's childhoods, the Denhams said they realized that life was better on the farm. With both of them working remotely, there was nothing stopping these empty nesters from moving out to the countryside.

Everything fell into place in July 2021. The interior remodel was complete, and Michael and Tara moved to the old farmhouse to live out their dream life together on the farm.



## BACK TO THE BASICS

When picturing a farmer, some may envision an old man in overalls, holding a pitchfork. But Michael and Tara said they envision an environmentalist.

The driving force of Fulton Family Farms is to holistically return their land to the Post Oak Savannah that it used to be, Michael said. Starting with soil conservation, he said they have worked diligently to rejuvenate the soil and pastureland through rotational grazing. They have not only been able to provide their livestock with nutritious grazing land but also clear out all unnecessary brush without using heavy machinery.

The Denhams use this same approach for their cattle herd. Long hours of research have provided them with alternative methods of preventing livestock-associated hazards like flies and parasites. They said they do not use hormones or pesticides, and rely on essential oils, natural supplements and herbs to treat the animals as needed.

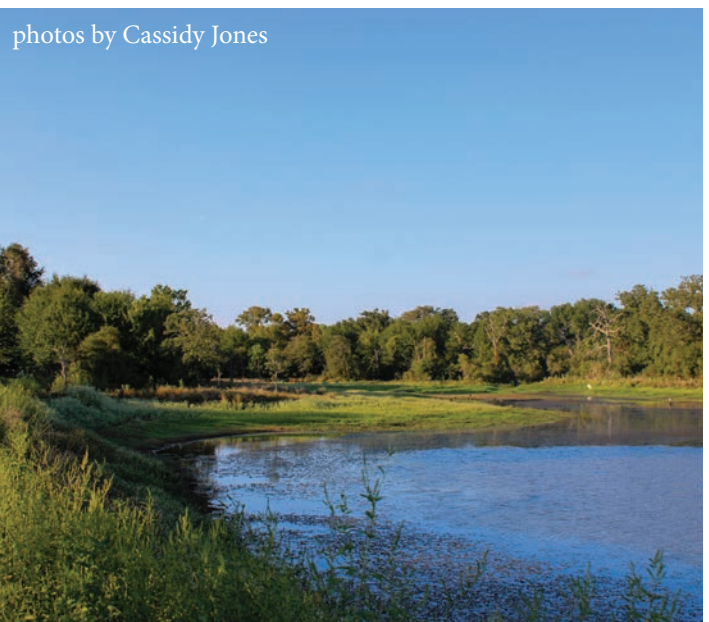
Their goal is to live life naturally, Michael said. Wanting their land and livestock to grow as naturally as possible is nonnegotiable for Fulton Family Farms, and treating their animals well and continuously learning is what keeps them going every day.

“We want our animals to live the way they would naturally — the good, bad and the ugly,” Tara said.

“It may not always be easy, but bringing our land back to its roots in a safe and environmentally friendly way not only helps us, but also those around us,” Michael added.

As times change, so must people. If people are not changing for the better, what is the point? Michael and Tara said they have learned to embrace change while also implementing skills and knowledge learned from generations back.

Although Fulton Farms may not be a full-time job for the Denhams, it is a way of life. With the hopes of retiring in the near future, they plan to grow their operation and provide hormone- and pesticide-free products for the public, holistically advancing their operation every chance they get. 🌱



photos by Cassidy Jones

# INTERESTING RESEARCH & *Researchers in Agriculture*

by COLE PALMER '23

**T**here is no doubt that Texas A&M University is a culturally rich campus. The student body is rich in unique identities and also in research areas. In fact, Texas A&M is one of the largest research universities in the country with expenditures of more than \$1.153 billion in 2022. Texas A&M is also one of 66 in the Association of American Universities, an association of leading public and private research universities in the United States and Canada. A great deal of that important research is happening right now in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

## STUDENTS' MINDSETS

Gary Wingenbach, Ph.D., has taught at Texas A&M for 22 years. He specializes in international agricultural development and has published more than 150 academic articles. His current research shows a frightening Eurocentric attitude amongst agricultural students.

“The preliminary data is quite surprising that students hold a Eurocentric mindset toward agriculture,” Wingenbach said. “Undergraduates, especially, have the most restrictive view about the contributions of the entire world to agriculture production and ways of living off the land.”



Wingenbach said, we need the staff and graduate students to help the people we interact with on a daily basis become more global-minded in terms of where our food comes from in the agriculture and natural resource world, who are the primary contributors and why is it good to have these perspectives that go beyond the most common and traditional North American attitudes.

Wingenbach said that North America is not where tea, bananas, coffee nor chocolate is produced. He said many commodities are very valuable in the global market system, yet as a populace, we don't have a good understanding of how all these things interact.

## BETTER IRRIGATION

Matt Stellbauer is the associate program director for the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture and Development and the acting director of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Small Scale Irrigation.



“I worked with a team of scientists, and we ran the USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Small Scale Irrigation,” Stellbauer said. “It was a 10-year research initiative. Our lab was one of 21 USAID research hubs throughout the country. Feed the Future was the United States government's global hunger initiative.”

For five years, they tested irrigation technologies and practices in three African countries: Ghana, Tanzania and Ethiopia. In addition to testing those practices, the lab conducted hydrologic modeling that allowed donors and investors to understand where in those countries irrigation is best suited.

photo courtesy of Norman Borlaug Institute

“Those models told us about agronomic practices and the social impact of putting irrigation into certain areas,” he said. “We called it the Integrated Decision Support System. Over the years, we have continued working on our modeling system, but we also began to look at ways to environmentally scale up our irrigation.”

They looked at business models and worked with the private sector to get irrigation into the hands of people who wanted them and needed them.

## COFFEE AROUND THE WORLD


Eric Brenner, or the “Coffee Man,” is the assistant director for the Center for Coffee Research and Education in the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture and Development. While growing up in Costa Rica, he hated coffee. Now he is trying to ensure that coffee farmers around the world are efficient in making the best coffee possible.

“We currently have seven coffee research projects going on, which is the most out of any university,” Brenner said. “One that we’re currently working on is a Coffee Academy in Honduras.”

There they teach coffee farmers about different components of the value chain. Brenner said many coffee farmers might be growing the best coffee in the world but don’t know it.

“We teach them to improve production with better agricultural techniques that are environmentally friendly,” he said.

The team introduced the coffee farmers to hybrids resistant to diseases and climate change. Climate is changing with the disruption in rainfall and temperature, Brenner said. From a development perspective, they have to look to see if hybrids are resistant to those fluctuations in temperature and if other crops can be integrated into farmers’ production practices.

“Whenever coffee production or price is low, we want farmers to still be able to use other crops to supplement their income,” he said. 



[tamu.edu/research](https://tamu.edu/research)

# A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE *Radio Broadcasting Course*

by MADISON MOORE '23

*This article is a personal account of Madison Moore's experience while enrolled in the Texas A&M University AGCJ 366 Radio Broadcasting course.*

I can confidently say that the AGCJ 366 Radio Broadcasting course at Texas A&M University was top-tier quality, with one of the greatest professors I have ever encountered.

Sitting in class during syllabus week, I was not entirely sure what I had gotten myself into. “We are hosting and producing our own personal podcast?” “We have to record how many interviews?” “How many hours of footage are we expected to cut down?” Little did I know how impactful, profound and amazing it would be as a learning opportunity, unveiling the world of

storytelling and communication in ways I had never even imagined.

The Radio Broadcasting course helps students navigate the fascinating world of audio storytelling, learn the art of crafting engaging narratives and hone communication skills. The hands-on experience provides them with practical knowledge in scriptwriting along with sound editing and hosting, equipping them with the tools to create content that resonates with diverse audiences and prepares them for careers in the field of media and broadcasting.

Outside the classroom, students can expect to put in at least 10 hours of work per week reading and listening to podcasts and broadcasts and developing, editing and producing content. Preparation outside of the classroom is a crucial component for effectively producing one's own podcast episodes.

Podcast topics ranged anywhere from cooking techniques to college tips and tricks, pop-culture references, hunting experiences and even personal testimonies. That is what made this class amazing to me. Ideas can stem from anywhere with this new media form that has its own rules, audiences and delivery mechanisms. The sky is the limit.

Along with all the skills and experiences I obtained from crafting and hosting a podcast, I will never be able to put to words the impactful moments I gained by taking this course.

John Chivvis is a teacher and a mentor. Chivvis has the ability to make each and every one of his students feel special and heard. He is one of the most intentional, personal and caring teachers I have ever had the privilege of meeting at Texas A&M. AGCJ 366 was not just another course he taught. These episodes were not just another grade to log in his gradebook. These students were not just kids who sat in his classroom



for four months out of the year. He instructed. He counseled. He made those hour-long lectures enjoyable. He gave students something to look forward to each week. He cared.

I will never forget Chivvis and his compelling words of concern when I expressed wanting my podcast to be the powerful testimony that it is. I wanted to speak on behalf of those who may not be brave enough. I wanted to let people know they are not alone. I wanted to be that safe space for others who may have been struggling with similar experiences. As we walked near the Gardens of Texas A&M, he explained to me how my mental health was most important to him. While my idea was good and could reach audiences, increasing site engagement, it was not worth sacrificing my comfort or state of mind. I told him this was something I wanted to do. Chivvis agreed to let me continue as long as I continued to check in and did not let my thoughts go to dark places, and he did just that. To this day, I get emails and updates from ole' John Chivvis, just checking in.

Justin Benton, '23, also took the AGCJ 366 course. Benton said he was not the most tech-savvy individual. He was intimidated at first by the expectations that came with the enrollment of a broadcasting course, but he continued to stick it out.

“Never would I have imagined myself ever producing a podcast,” Benton said. “The software to create and upload these episodes looked intense. It was intense. John did a great job at educating and guiding us through that process. It was a cool experience, I’m glad I stuck it out. He’s a cool guy.”



photos by Madison Moore

A cool guy, teaching a cool course. A perfect match, you might say. So, if you are interested in the idea of creating, producing and publishing your own podcast, enroll.

I cannot speak highly enough about the radio broadcasting course. To me, this course was amazing and an experience I will never forget. It might sound challenging at first, but trust me, it is worth every moment. Chivvis is not only present but also extremely helpful, making every bit of the coursework feel like a breeze. And the best part? You get to create your very own podcast! If you are curious about what it entails, you can check out former students' personal podcasts at [agcj366.tamu.edu](http://agcj366.tamu.edu). Their work is a testament to the incredible stories and skills you develop in this course. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to dive into the world of radio broadcasting and podcasting. 🎙️





photo courtesy of USDA-NRCS

# PAVING A *Climate-Smart* PATH FOR TEXAS AGRICULTURE

by JACE WILKEY '24

**W**ith the increasing impacts of climate change, farmers and ranchers are encouraged to adopt climate-smart practices. Barriers, however, often prevent producers from implementing these practices.

In 2023, Texas A&M AgriLife Research received a five-year, \$65 million grant from the USDA-NRCS Partnerships for the Climate-Smart Commodities Project. This project aims to incentivize farmers and ranchers to adopt climate-smart practices, quantify benefits and develop revenue streams for climate-smart commodities.

Texas A&M AgriLife kicked off the Texas Climate-Smart Initiative in July 2023, targeting commodities in Texas, including forestry; orchards and other perennial shrubs and trees; perennial forage, pastures and rangeland; annual crops; and concentrated animal feeding operations, according to the project website.

The TCSI project is led by two professors in the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences: Julie Howe, Ph.D. and Nithya Rajan, Ph.D. The initiative enlists contributions from all College of Agriculture and Life Sciences departments, Texas A&M AgriLife and Forest Service, plus six partner organizations, including the Texas Soil & Water Conservation Board, Prairie View A&M University, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Tarleton State University, BCarbon and Nori.

“We’re going to incentivize the adoption of these practices,” Howe said. “But we are also going to collect data to see which practices are most effective and develop markets to help pay for those practices.”

TCSI ultimately encompasses four main aspects: the practices and producers, the assessment of benefits, the revenue stream and future sustainability.

“The goal is not just spending billions of dollars to give to producers,” Rajan said. “The federal government is trying to see if a climate-smart market will work.”

Howe and Rajan are responsible for managing more than 50 principal investigators within Texas A&M AgriLife and partner organizations across the initiative. TCSI has expertise in agricultural communications, extension, economics and Spanish to ensure that all target audiences have access to information.

Agriculture can be unpredictable with shifting weather cycles. With countless failed practices, many producers know that once they find a practice that works, it is difficult to implement new ones.

Additionally, many farmers face financial barriers that prevent them from implementing climate-smart practices. Through TCSI, farmers will be provided monetary incentives that will help cover expenses for equipment and crop insurance costs during the four

years of testing these practices.

Although there are numerous climate-smart practices available to farmers and ranchers, implementing new ones can be overwhelming and their purposes may be unclear. Many of these practices are complex and require new equipment or an adjustment period for producers to adapt.

“Trying to adapt to climate-smart practices is a learning curve,” Howe said. “That’s one of the problems with these practices, and one of the initiative’s goals is to iron that out for producers.”

Even if the practices are effective, it is not guaranteed that farmers will implement them.

“We have to think about whether or not it is easy for farmers to implement,” Rajan said. “I can research all sorts of practices, but if a farmer cannot implement it, it’s not transferable.”

To this end, TCSI will help support farmers who are unable to afford the adoption costs.

“In the case of producers who want to try a no-till operation but don’t have the equipment,” Howe said, “we have pieces of equipment that we can provide for them to use. If it’s something that they think could be profitable, it is something they can rent or buy later on.”

To develop new revenue streams for climate-smart commodities, TCSI will observe the relationship

between producers, products and consumers. Marco Palma, Ph.D., professor and director of the Human Behavior Laboratory at Texas A&M, serves as a principal investigator for TCSI.

Palma said, motivations are central to understanding farmers’ and ranchers’ willingness to adopt practices. Despite their motivations, financial gain is an ever-present factor.

“At the end of the day, the economics have to work for them to adopt climate-smart practices,” Palma said.

Although TCSI addresses questions about costs to the producer, consumer costs remain unclear. Palma’s role throughout the five-year initiative is to observe producers’ adoption and the consumers’ willingness to buy climate-smart commodities, even if it means spending more at the counter.

“Everything we have seen in research shows that consumers want environmentally friendly products,” Palma said. “Whether they are willing to pay more for these products is still an open question.”

Another project responsibility for Palma involves the long-term retention of these practices for producers. It is still unclear whether Texas producers will fully adopt and integrate climate-smart practices once the initiative is completed in 2027.

“The question is what happens after the funding ends,” Palma said. “Do we see those farmers still engage with those practices? Can we replicate and scale these benefits throughout the state? Understanding how the assignment of these funds changes practice adoption, environmental benefits and consumer engagement is key to this project and the future of agriculture.”


Once the initiative is completed in 2027, principal investigators will assess the adoption of practices and consumer engagement with products to determine if a climate-smart revenue chain is viable. Another aspect to consider is what farmers will ultimately gain from their participation in such practices. 



photo courtesy of Sam Craft/Texas A&M AgriLife Marketing and Communications

Rajan and a graduate student work in the field.



photo courtesy of the Fuchs family

# AGGIES *Supporting* AGGIES

by GRACE HOEGEMEYER '24

**A**s students leave the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Texas A&M, they enter the “real world” with knowledge from their classes and a network of Aggies always willing to extend a helping hand. Many of these students had the unique opportunity to establish themselves as small business owners while in college. These students enter the workforce with a successful “college side gig” that many have expanded to a full-time career. From photography to land services and everything in between, these former and current students have worked hard to develop their businesses. Aggies pride themselves on their willingness to support those within the community. By shopping local and utilizing the services provided by these entrepreneurial Ags, Aggies can embrace the true meaning of “Aggies supporting Aggies.”



## LAUREN PROVOST PHOTOGRAPHY

by DARCI DENIO '23

Lauren Provost, '22, is an alumna of the Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications Department. She is a full-time entrepreneur, committed to growing Lauren Provost Photography, her business specializing in wedding and portrait photography. A day in her life consists of communicating with clients and marketing herself via social media. Outside of photography, Provost builds on what she learned in the classroom, utilizing graphic design skills to create various guides.

**Instagram: @laurenprovostphoto**

**TikTok: @laurenashleighprovost**



photo courtesy of Provost

## S&G RANCH MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTING

by DARCI DENIO '23



photo courtesy of Fuqua

Stephen Fuqua, '22, and Gage Edwards, '22, are co-owners of S&G Ranch Management and Consulting based out of Hondo, Texas. Fuqua is an alumnus of the Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management Department and Edwards is an alumnus of the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department. S&G services include developing livestock and wildlife management plans, prescribed burns, pond construction, wildlife surveys, road construction and brush clearing.

**713.397.9283**

**sgranchmanagement@gmail.com**

## ARTISTRY BY KELLI

by TAYLOR MOBBS '25

Kelli Soefje, '25, is an agricultural communications and journalism major and owner and operator of her makeup artist business, Artistry By Kelli. Her goal is to take natural beauty and enhance it to make all of her clients feel beautiful in their own skin. Services currently offered include personalized weddings, proms, graduations and event makeup sessions. Soefje uses her major to market her business to future clients. "Social media is my main form of marketing, therefore, learning how to properly manage a business account could expand my clientele," Soefje said.

**Facebook and Instagram: @artistry.by.kelli**



photo courtesy of Soefje

## AGAVE EVENTS

by DARCI DENIO '23



photo courtesy of Jeffrey

Carli Jeffrey, '21, graduated with a degree in recreation, park and tourism science with a minor in agricultural communications and journalism. Jeffrey is the founder of Agave Events, a wedding and event planning company. In addition to planning events, Jeffrey also offers floral services. While at Texas A&M, Jeffrey received her professional event management certificate, which has equipped her with the knowledge she needs to help Agave Events thrive.

**Instagram and TikTok: @agave.events**

**Facebook: Agave Events**  
**theagaveevents.com**

## K DENIO CONSTRUCTION

by DARCI DENIO '23

Keaton Denio, '18, is an alumnus of the Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications Department. Denio is the owner of K Denio Construction, based in Cameron, Texas, and servicing the Central Texas area. K Denio Construction offers land services, including concrete, dirt work and fence building. He specializes in high fences, entryways and metal buildings. Denio said his education equipped him with the skills to lead crews and manage projects effectively and efficiently. He aligns his business values alongside the core values that Texas A&M taught him.

**254.482.1603**  
**kdenioco@yahoo.com**



photo courtesy of Keaton Denio

## ANGUS ALLEY, LLC

by CASSIDY JONES '24



photo courtesy of Schroeder

Cy Schroeder, '20, is an alumna of the Animal Science Department. Schroeder grew up on a cow-calf operation in North Texas, which inspired her business name, Angus Alley, LLC. As an advocate for both the cattle industry and Western fashion, Schroeder's "Wear What's On Your Mind" motto inspires herself and others to continue to shine a light on the importance of agriculture through unique, everyday-wear trucker hats.

**Instagram: angusalley**  
**shopangusalley.square.site**

## BIRDDOG BONDS

by TAYLOR HANDLEY '23



photo courtesy of McNeill

Kate McNeill, '24, is a current senior in the Animal Science Department. Eager to refine her hand skills and motivated by an itch to create, McNeill started a permanent jewelry company, Birddog Bonds. She works with dainty gold-filled chains, where she welds open links shut with a spot-welding machine. McNeill said her clients can work out, swim and shower in the jewelry. Building her brand through honesty, customer service and quality products has allowed her to connect with women across Texas.

**Instagram: @BirddogBonds**

## LONE STAR ANTLER CHEWS

by DARCI DENIO '23

Dustin McBee, '18, is an alumnus of the Agricultural Economics Department. He is the owner of Lone Star Antler Chews. With real deer antler sheds, he makes long lasting, safe and all-natural dog chews. These chews are durable in comparison to synthetic chews and do not contain chemicals, additives or preservatives. The lessons McBee learned in the classroom have extended into his business and assisted him with accounting, supply chain, branding and other business principles.

**Facebook and Instagram: @lonestarantlerchews  
lonestarantlerchews.com**



photo courtesy of McBee



photo courtesy of Wright

## TARYN WRIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

by TAYLOR MOBBS '25

Taryn Wright, '25, is a current student in the Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications Department and the Soil and Crop Sciences Department. She has owned and operated Taryn Wright Photography since 2021. Wright focuses on portrait photography, including senior pictures, family photos, couples, livestock photos, headshots, Ring Day photos, graduation photos and weddings. She believes that her course of study allows her to market her business, communicate efficiently and photograph captivating images.

**Facebook and Instagram: @tarynwrightphotography  
tarynwrightphotography.mypixieset.com**

# Supporting **AGRICULTURE & COMMUNITY** since 1969





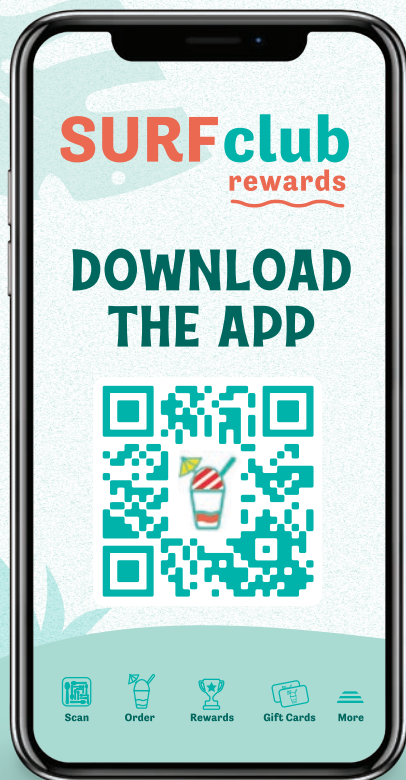
HOME AND RANCH  
**H&R**  
REAL ESTATE

“Leave the gate  
like ya found it”

We live by simple life lessons  
We work by the same



Specializing in rural properties · [www.HomeAndRanchRealEstate.com](http://www.HomeAndRanchRealEstate.com) · (979) 272-1759



**FREE SNO<sup>®</sup>**  
AFTER YOUR FIRST VISIT!



Free Small Signature Sno after your first visit  
with Surf Club Rewards of \$3.50 or more.

201 Holleman Dr. E  
College Station, TX

901 William D Fitch Parkway  
College Station, TX



# Study Abroad:

## WHERE LEARNING KNOWS NO BORDERS

by MADISON MOORE '23



**I**n an era defined by globalization, the pursuit of education has transcended borders. More than ever before, students are seeking transformative experiences that not only enrich their academic knowledge but also broaden their horizons.

At the forefront of the educational revolution stands Texas A&M University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, offering a rich tapestry of study abroad programs. These programs are more than just a journey; they are a transformation of the mind and spirit, capturing the essence of global education.

The benefits of studying abroad are limitless, and the College recognizes the invaluable impact of international experiences. Studying abroad offers students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in different cultures. It is a window into the world, a chance to engage with people from diverse backgrounds and a platform for exchanging ideas and viewpoints. The College's study abroad programs facilitate cultural interactions, enabling students to interact with three to five Indigenous groups in Namibia, experience Brazilian hospitality and explore the rich diversity of people and cultures in Costa Rica.

Living and studying in a foreign country exposes students to new languages and enhances their

communication skills. It is about becoming proficient in understanding and adapting to different communication styles. The College's programs offer students the opportunity to communicate with locals and gain a deeper understanding of global issues.

Students are able to navigate life in a foreign country while fostering independence and adaptability, challenging students to step out of their comfort zones. These experiences equip them with invaluable life skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Experiences gained from studying abroad go far beyond academic knowledge. They leave a lasting impact on students' personal and professional lives. The College's study abroad programs encourage students to explore their identities while navigating new environments.

Meikah Dado, a Ph.D. student at Texas A&M who studied abroad in Namibia, said one of the biggest takeaways she noticed was something so simplistic.

After experiencing flight difficulties, students were left to problem solve. From the beginning of the trip, students were already learning to be more independent, gaining a stronger confidence in international traveling.

Engaging with different cultures deepens students' understanding of global issues. It broadens their perspectives, enabling them to approach global challenges with empathy and informed insights.

Study abroad experiences may often lead to lifelong friendships and international professional contacts. These networks can be instrumental in students' future careers, opening doors to global opportunities.

The College's programs place a strong emphasis on enhancing digital storytelling and communication skills. Students are encouraged to share experiences through online and print mediums, fostering their ability to tell stories.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the job market is evolving to value international experience. Graduates with study abroad backgrounds are seen as having a unique skill set, characterized by strong intercultural competence. They are well-

equipped to thrive in a globalized workforce, making them sought-after candidates.

Individuals who have studied abroad tend to contribute to a more interconnected and empathetic world. They bring diverse perspectives to the table, fostering innovative solutions to global challenges.



photos courtesy of Meikah Dado

The College's study abroad programs offer a diverse range of destinations catering to various interests and academic disciplines. Each location presents unique opportunities for students to immerse themselves in the local culture and gain insights into agriculture and life sciences.

The international development program in Namibia takes students on a journey through the complexities of Sub-Saharan Africa's agriculture and environmental issues. They engage in cultural interactions with



Indigenous groups, explore Etosha National Park, experience the beauty of the Namib Desert's dunes and develop career-based competencies, including improved multicultural understanding and marketable photojournalism skills.

In Brazil, students learn about agricultural and conservation systems by visiting large farms and research sites. They gain knowledge of corn, cotton, soybean, forage and beef cattle production. Through comparisons between Brazilian and U.S. agriculture, students broaden their global perspectives while experiencing Brazilian culture.

The College's programs in Costa Rica focus on the diversity of people and cultures as they relate to international agriculture. Students develop communication approaches for solving technical and social problems in a global, pluralistic society. The program is highly affordable, with numerous scholarship and financial aid opportunities.

The program in Central Mexico offers an immersive two-week intensive study of integrated broiler production. Students gain insights into rearing, nutrition, processing and more, both in the U.S. and Mexico. They also explore Mexican culture, history and cuisine while visiting cities like San Miguel de Allende and Queretaro.

Beginning on New Zealand's South Island, students explore sustainable development and natural resources through educational travel, field trips, lectures and seminars. Then, in South Queensland, the focus turns to marine environments.


The unique Caribbean Cruise program allows students to study cruise management and tourism from the perspective of cruise passengers. They experience various on-board positions while gaining insights into the impacts of tourism on host communities within the Caribbean region.

The College offers a program in South Africa for students interested in conservation and vertebrate natural history. It provides first-hand experiences in ecological, economic and social factors affecting nature-based tourism as a conservation tool.

The study abroad program in Toulouse, France, immerses students in sustainable farming practices, agricultural traditions and cultural exploration. With a special focus on viticulture and oenology, students delve into grape varieties, wine production and traditional cheese production.

"This is the time to do it. There is no experience that can replace studying abroad," Dado said.

She said that these experiences further a better understanding of international destinations than if you were just a tourist. Participants gain international development, networking and transformational growth.

Study abroad programs in The College offer students an unparalleled opportunity to embark on transformative journeys of personal and academic growth. These programs provide a platform to embrace diverse cultures, enhance language and communication skills and develop independence and adaptability. The takeaways from these experiences extend beyond the classroom, equipping students with a global perspective, lifelong friendships and valuable skills for the future. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, studying abroad is not just an option, it's a pathway to becoming a global citizen and a future leader in a diverse and interconnected world. 







# about the **AGRI LEADER**

The AGRILEADER is a student-produced magazine published twice a year that reaches an audience of more than 2,000 people. This publication is accessible campus wide with a digital version accessible for all. The AGRILEADER informs College of Agriculture and Life Sciences students, faculty and alumni about topics surrounding the college.

Agricultural communications and journalism students are responsible for all aspects of the magazine, including planning, writing, layout and design, advertising and distribution.



**TEXAS FARM BUREAU®**

## Texas Farm Bureau Communications

Bringing the Voice of Texas Agriculture to social media, print publications, digital spaces, radio, and TV!

Our talented team of 15 individuals brings a creative approach to all that we do.

Follow us on social!



Listen to the podcast



Read our publications



Watch us on RFD-TV and YouTube





# A Policy of Success:

## SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

by JACE WILKEY '24

**T**he course to a successful life is often fraught with countless doors, unclear paths and sacrificed dreams. This sentiment rings true with Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Program Director Stephanie Webb.

Long before finding her stride as the ANRP director, Webb was a student majoring in animal science at Texas A&M University, where she began to wonder where her talents best fit.

“After about a year, I started feeling that it wasn’t the right fit for me,” Webb said. “I enjoyed science, but I felt that I wasn’t really good at it.”

Webb decided to pursue a double major in animal science and agricultural communications and journalism. During this time, she learned about the ANRP program, an internship program within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

ANRP offers a one-semester public policy experience to undergraduate students. In its 33-year history, the program has sent more than 1,200 interns to the U.S. Capitol, the Texas State Capitol and the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome. Many interns go on to work in policy positions at the private, agency and congressional levels.

Webb soon found herself applying for an ANRP internship in 2006 on the advice of one of her professors. That summer, she served under Texas Representative Rubén Hinojosa, an experience that she cites as life changing.

“I had never been to Washington, D.C., before in my life or had a professional office job,” Webb said. “That summer was transformational. From that experience, I gained a lot of confidence and I felt like [public policy] was a path that I could take.”

Webb participated in ANRP for two additional semesters and graduated in 2007. Her career path, however, remained unclear.

“I was not sure what to do next,” Webb said. “So I applied to the Bush School [of Government and Public Service] to further my studies in public service and public policy.”

After the Bush School, Webb’s personal path took her to Orlando, Florida, where she worked at a community college in organizational development. There, she helped develop faculty programs and launched a new division, organizational communication.

After three years, Webb returned to Texas and was offered a coordinator position with ANRP. Despite taking the position, she ultimately wanted to return to the realm of public policy, she said.

“I remember thinking I wanted to go back to Austin and D.C., but I will take the job in the meantime,” Webb said. “This wasn’t exactly where I wanted to be, but I believe in the mission of ANRP, and I seized the opportunity to grow the program.”

In 2013, Webb was promoted to ANRP program director. Despite her initial feelings about her place in the program, she said she found a new purpose in her role after working with interns and applicants.

“I saw that I helped students find their passions and their careers,” Webb said. “So I let go of any dreams to work in public policy directly. This is my way of contributing to public policy in a truly meaningful way at a school that changed my life with a program that changed my life.

“Every door that opened for me, I walked through to see what would happen. Professionally, each of those doors helped me.”



Webb at Rep. Rubén Hinojosa’s desk in 2006.

After 10 years as ANRP director, Webb plans to continue serving the program she loves, helping students secure the dream she once had.

“As long as you have the interest and the right attitude, we will help you get there,” Webb said.

When asked about the advice she would offer potential applicants to the program, she repeated her life-defining mantra: **“Seize the opportunity you have.”** 📌

*ANRP was established in 1990 by Ron Knutson, Ph.D., after he was contacted by Congressman Greg Laughlin requesting an intern with agricultural and natural resource knowledge. The program quickly gained popularity on Capitol Hill, allowing it to expand to Austin, Texas, and Rome, Italy. Today, ANRP stands as one of the premier leadership opportunities in the college, with more than 1,200 alumni.*

[anrp.tamu.edu](http://anrp.tamu.edu)



# Freshman QUESTIONS. Senior ANSWERS.

by TAYLOR McNEAL '23



photo courtesy of Lindsey Henderson

**B**eing a freshman can be a challenging time for some people. It is a new stage of life, with new-found freedom and little information on how to navigate the new life.

To help ease the transition for current or incoming freshmen, AGRILEADER sent a survey to see what they were struggling with, and seniors are here to answer those questions. These questions ranged from how to adapt to life, how to pick the right major, how to make friends on campus and everything in-between.

*What should I do if I don't know exactly what I want to do with my career?*

Because you are a freshman, not knowing exactly what you want to be is not only OK, but also more normal than you think. If you are truly worried about it, a good place to start is your advisor. Your advisor is there to help you with not only your schedule and degree plan, but also your career plan. Advisors have resources that can help you decide what career path interests you.

*How much should I study?*

The rule of thumb for studying is three hours for every one hour of class time; however, it really just depends on the class. Some classes are more intense or strenuous than others, which may require more than three hours. Other classes may be an easy subject or one you are already familiar with, so the study time could be significantly less than another class. The best way to determine the right amount of study is to determine how well you know the material to begin with and then adjust your study time accordingly.

## *What is the best way to meet other students in my major?*

It may seem cliché, but talking to students in your major-specific courses is a great starting point. They are all likely in the same major as you, so forming relationships can help you make friends, form study groups and find the people you can work with for the rest of your college career. If you do not have any major-specific classes this early, find organizations within your college.

## *How many hours per semester do you recommend?*

Similar to studying, it really depends on the classes. The workload will determine how many you can manage. A semester with 12 hours of nothing but core science classes will be much different than one with 12 hours of electives. It also depends when you want to graduate: on time, early or a little late. A good rule of thumb is to stick between 12 and 18 hours, depending on the courses and your own preferences.

## *Would you do anything different from your freshman year?*

Many wish they had done one thing or another differently during their freshman year, but looking back, the one that sticks out is making stronger and more connections. It is important to find your people; otherwise, it will be a lonely four years. Do not stick with the first people you find unless you are sure those are the people who will support you as much as you support them. Friends are your family away from home in college, so finding the right ones is ideal.



## *What is your favorite Aggie Tradition?*

Nothing beats the classic tradition of being able to “whoop” when you become a junior. Aside from Ring Day, which is one of the days all Aggies look forward to and one that deserves to have its very own day dedicated to the tradition.

Being an Aggie is one of the most exciting parts of an Aggie’s life. Few stronger connections exist than that of the Aggie Network, and there will always be someone there to show you the way or have the answer. 🎓

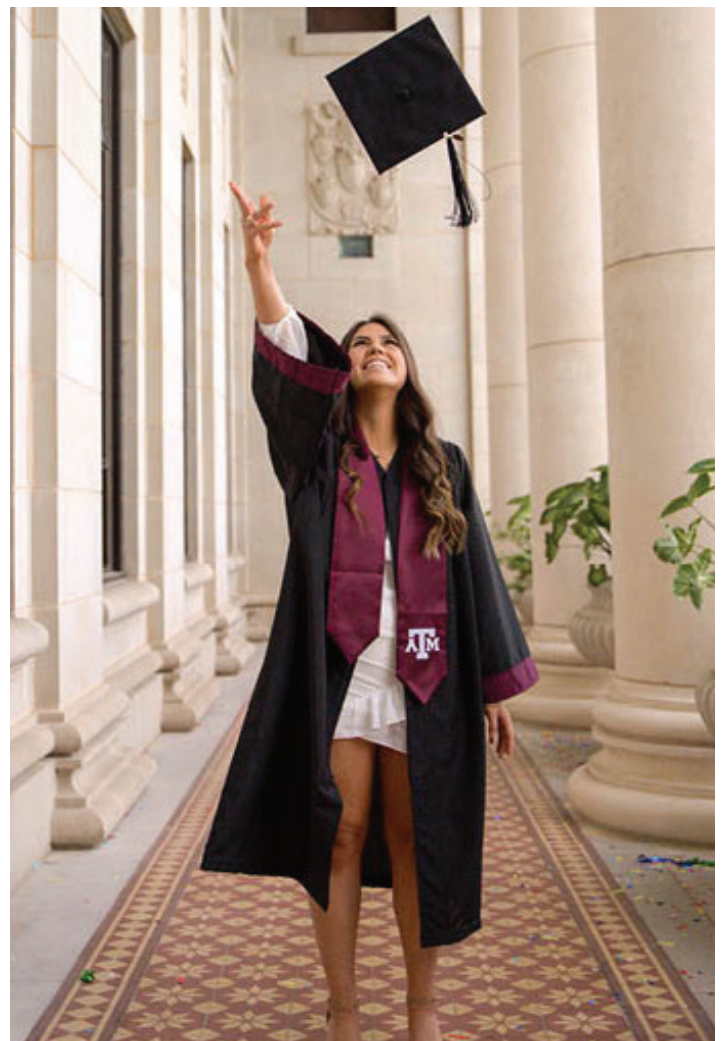


photo courtesy of Angelique Velasquez



# SIGMA ALPHA

CULTIVATING PROFESSIONAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Sigma Alpha was established in 1978 to develop its members' social and professional skills. Sigma Alpha was founded on four pillars: scholarship, leadership, service, and fellowship.



**SCHOLARSHIP**



**LEADERSHIP**



**SERVICE**



**FELLOWSHIP**

For more information:  
Follow @aggiesigmaalpha on instagram



# VAPROX

TECH, LLC

**LET US  
SERVICE  
YOUR FLARES  
AND KEEP  
THEM  
LIT**

## **SERVICES**

**Preventative Maintenance**

**Wash Maintenance**

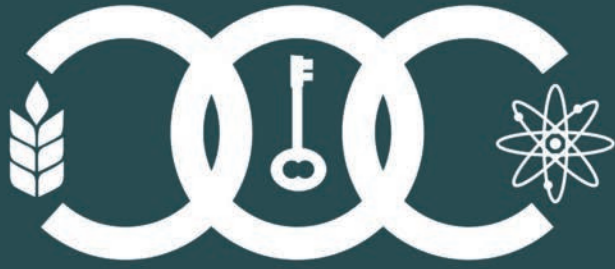
**Repair**

**Installation**

**Inspection**

**254-226-4982**

**[FlareRepairs@vaporprocess.com](mailto:FlareRepairs@vaporprocess.com)**



C.O.A.L.S.  
C O U N C I L  
— TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY —



The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Council is a professional organization that serves as the liaison between students and the Dean in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. We represent the nearly 8,000 students within the college through service activities, networking opportunities, and professional development.



## Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow



**DIGITAL MEDIA**



**NETWORKING**



**SCHOLARSHIP**



The only student-led, agricultural communications organization at Texas A&M University!

