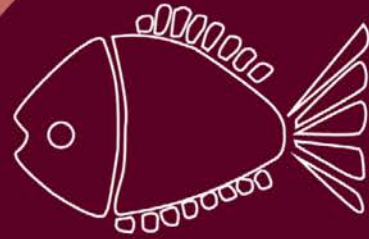


# NEW STUDENTS' GUIDE TO AGGIELAND MAROON LIFE



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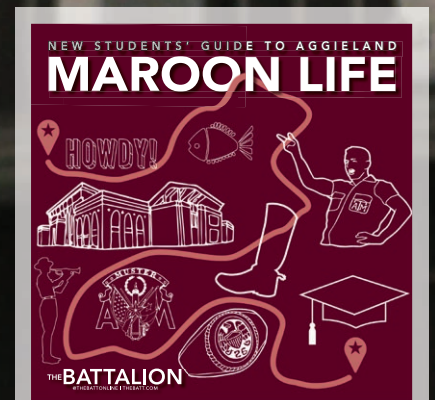
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Cover art by Haylea Keith





"Softly Call the Muster, Let comrade answer, 'Here.'" The Corps of Cadets Ross Volunteers march in honor of fallen Aggies at the campus Muster Ceremony.

FILE

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Special Sections editor Lauren Discher says A&M is full of opportunities for personal, academic growth

For those who did not grow up in the maroon bubble or were not indoctrinated into Aggie culture from a young age, Aggieland may feel foreign, full of strange lingo and traditions. Many new students' first experience of Texas A&M, apart from their New Student Conference, is Fish Camp, which is arguably more strange than the aforementioned — occasionally cult-like — practices on campus. Upon my own arrival at Fish Camp, I was greeted by screaming college students in tutus and face paint in every color with more fake tattoos and piercings than I had ever seen. My reaction was "Mom, Dad, I want to go home," but maybe that's just me. I somehow endured the craziness and absolute joy that was three days at Lakeview and returned home with a new understanding of the traditions and vo-

cabulary that set A&M apart from every other university.

But not every new student experience is like mine; not every freshman attends Fish Camp, and not every new student is a freshman. There are different ways of being new to Aggieland — there are transfer students and graduate students, who are just as anxious to understand the culture of their university. Though the culture of A&M cannot be contained or even explained in these pages — after all "There is a Spirit that can ne'er be told" — we did our best to include the bare necessities of what new students should know.

In this magazine, we cover everything from A&M's many traditions to things that are not taught at Fish Camp or other Aggie Transition Camps, like who the student body president and speaker of

the Student Senate are and what they do. We provide history, like that of the Aggie Ring, and share on-campus resources for maintaining both physical and mental health. We talk about the different avenues one might take to get involved and the catalog of resources A&M offers.

This campus is full of people to invest in, professors to learn from and chances for personal growth; I would encourage new students to take advantage of them. Use the resources available to students and dive into the campus culture, because Aggieland is such a special place. Though this will be a challenging time, it will also be some of the best years of your life, and despite the way each and every class may seem to drag on, at the end of it all you'll be wishing for more time.

As I look toward my quickly-approaching graduation, I wish for more moments that are specific to Aggie students like Midnight Yell and hearing "Howdy!" wherever you go. I will miss the canopy-like trees on Military Walk and being surrounded by members of the Aggie family.

If your time here is just beginning, count yourself lucky, and embrace the spirit by learning about and honoring the aspects of A&M that make former students long for their college days and that cause Aggie sports fans to yell louder than the other team's fanbase. Once an Aggie, always an Aggie, so welcome to the family, and welcome to a lifetime of opportunities fueled by your time here.

*Lauren Discher is an English senior and Special Sections editor for The Battalion.*



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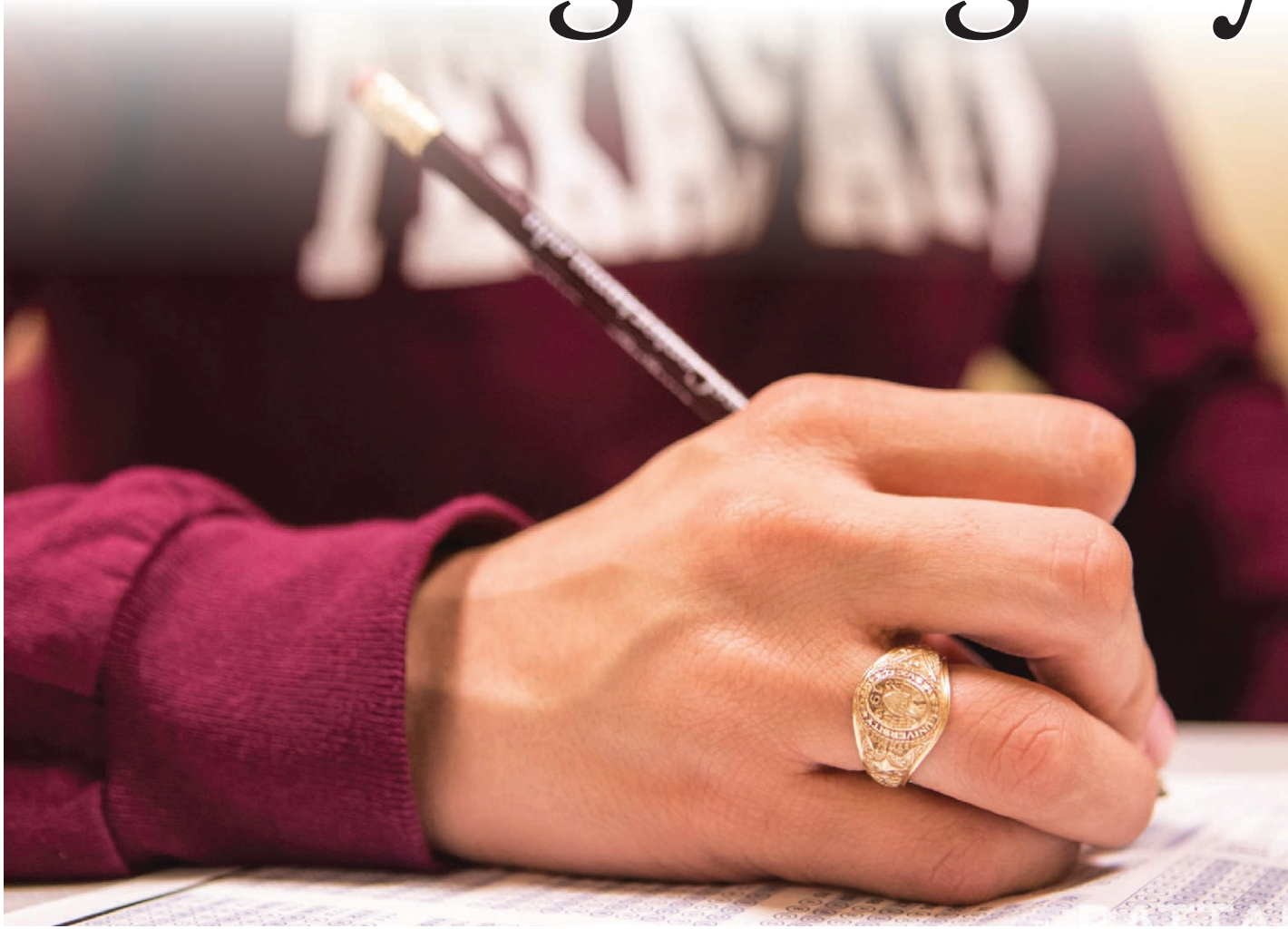
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# Starting a legacy



Texas A&M's Routh First-Generation Center provides resources and community for first-generation college students.

First-generation students make up nearly 25% of A&M undergraduates

By **Caroline Wilburn**  
@Carolinewilb

**T**he extensive size and stature of Texas A&M can bring about feelings of fear, excitement and uncertainty, especially for first-generation college students.

Under the Office for Student Success, the Routh First-Generation Center supports first-generation students throughout their time at A&M. Director Leticia Palomín, Ph.D., said it is important to have a physical space for students to come together.

"Texas A&M is a large campus, and it

can be overwhelming for many students," Palomín said. "Therefore, it's nice for them to come and get together with other students as well as staff. Many of our staff are first-generation themselves. They did not graduate from Texas A&M, but they understand the first-gen experience."

Palomín said her biggest advice for incoming first-generation students is to ask for help.

"No question is a dumb question," Palomín said. "It is much preferred that you ask the questions, simply because it would benefit you navigating the college environment your first year. Oftentimes, our first-gen students have to not only learn the expectations and the demands of being a college student and navigating that college environment, but they also then are tasked with understanding the unspoken rules of higher ed[ucation]. For all

of our freshmen students, both incoming and current, it is always best to ask questions."

Agricultural leadership and development sophomore and first-generation student Marie Yanchak said her experience at A&M was exciting, but difficult to navigate at times.

"Because it is so rich in tradition, which is an amazing part of our university culture and what brings people here, it can be kind of hard to understand that whenever you don't have parents that have been through it," Yanchak said. "When you have parents that have not necessarily been through college at all, it can be hard to navigate the waters when it comes to college, for me especially with transitioning to college during [COVID-19]."

Yanchak said she was able to find support through a web of older students and fellow freshmen in her Freshman Leadership Orga-

nization, or FLO.

"I got into a FLO, which I felt like was really beneficial for me, because [the counselors] are people that had been through what I was going through the year before and were able to really put me in the right direction, and also people that were going through what I was going through at the same time [were other] freshmen in the FLO," Yanchak said. "That was one of the really good things that I felt like I was able to do that helped me navigate my first year as well."

Freshman year can bring feelings of isolation, but Yanchak said it's important for first-generation students to find people who share common interests.

"There are many students who are second- or third- or fourth-generation Aggies. You can feel a little bit overwhelmed or out of place," Yanchak said. "In a student org, whether it be a FLO or something related to your major or a social [organization], they can be a really great support system for you in your first few years or semester at A&M."

Looking back, human resource development senior Jasmin Alvarado said her time as a first-generation student has given her a different perspective of A&M than what she originally expected.

"Now that I've been here for a while, I can now see A&M in a different light," Alvarado said. "I feel like I've gained the experience and the different perspective from people that were different from me that I had never really thought of before. Where I had originally come from, everyone was in the pool of Latino and persons of color and being first-generation. Being thrown in the mix where that is not your majority, you're essentially the minority, it really flipped everything around, but I was definitely able to learn from it and grow from it."

Alvarado said she recommends first-generation students find a support system when they come to A&M.

"I know that there were times when I felt like I couldn't reach out to the right person, or I felt like I couldn't talk to the right people," Alvarado said. "I didn't really get it in the very beginning because I was still unsure of the process on how to approach people. Now that I'm used to it, I'm able to do it on a daily basis. It made me realize that I can totally recommend having a support system, having those around you that want you to be successful, but at the same time you want them to be successful in their future endeavors."

With everything freshman year can bring, Yanchak said incoming first-generation students should try not to get overwhelmed.

"Follow your heart with what group of people you want to put yourself with," Yanchak said. "They can help you make your experience really rewarding and really unique."



## Get to know your student body president, his goals for Aggieland

By **Aubrey Vogel**  
@aubrey\_vogel

**A**fter officially taking office on Thursday, April 21, Student Body President Case Harris has plans to welcome new students, advocate for student support and increase tradition education as he serves Texas A&M's student body during the 2022-23 academic year.

Harris, a finance junior, was elected to lead the 75th Session of the Student Government Association on March 4 after a successful campaign voicing his goals to the student body. Harris said he is looking forward to serving the student population as he follows through on campaign promises.

"What I want to focus on is just having follow-through; it's easy in a campaign to go up there and make a bunch of promises and say what voters want to hear. Follow-through is so important to actually be effective, and there's a lot that goes into follow-through," Harris said. "It's continuing to brainstorm and have good ideas, it's listening to students, it's work ethic and really just being determined and having a mission."

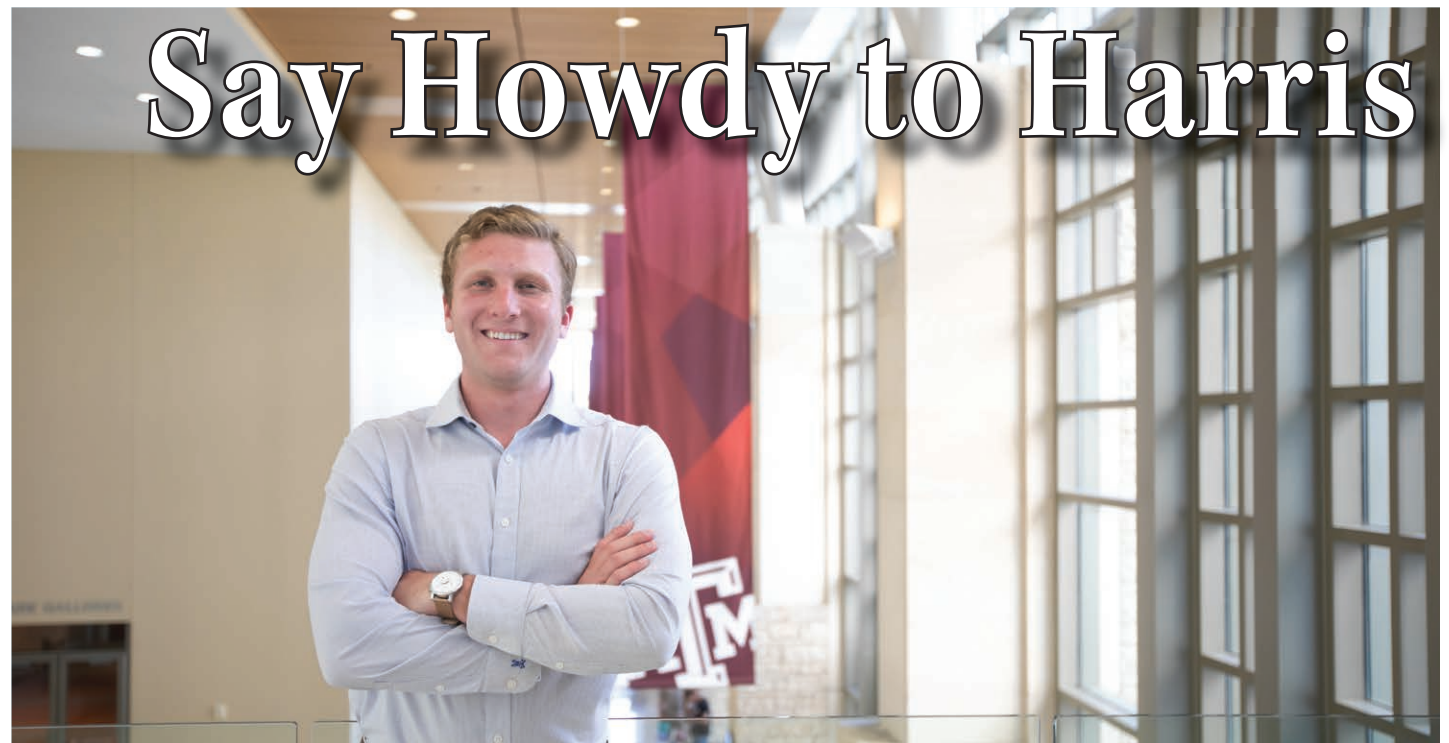
Having the long-standing goal to become student body president, Harris said he is honored to have been selected to serve the university and its students.

"It's been a goal for a long time to be able to serve [A&M] and give back to [the university] that has given me so much, just learning so many lessons and getting to know so many incredible people and find community," Harris said. "I'm so excited now to be able to turn around and help try to create that for other students, because that's one of the things that makes A&M so great is we [have] students that come in and gain and learn so much."

With many campus connections through his membership in various student organizations, Harris said he believes he has been able to hear many perspectives of what students are looking for on campus. Additionally, with his involvement in Fish Aides and the Gilbert Leadership Conference, Harris said he has been able to see the inner workings of SGA.

"I've been involved in a lot of different organizations across campus and really have gotten to see a lot of students [and] get to know a lot of different perspectives," Harris said. "The most important thing for an SBP is that they know the heartbeat of Texas A&M, of our campus, and they can understand and relate to students and represent them."

Throughout election season, Count on



Robert O'Brien — THE BATTALION

Student Body President **Case Harris** took office on April 21 and will serve the Texas A&M student body for the 2022-23 academic year.

Case campaign manager and psychology senior Annie Wagner said she saw Harris relate with those in the campus community, and believes his ability to bond with his peers will help him be a strong leader.

"Case is a relator, and that's a huge part of being the student body president is just relating, while also leading in humility," Wagner said. "He is probably one of the most humble, hardworking and relating people that I know, and I am just excited to watch him work really hard and also listen really well."

With another class of freshmen getting ready to step foot on campus this summer for their new student conferences, Harris said a huge part of his role as student body president is advocating for new students and making them feel comfortable on campus.

"That's a huge thing for me, and there's two ways to do that. One, through traditions; we have a lot of ideas with traditions, like implementing more tradition education," Harris said. "Then the other thing is A&M has so many organizations and opportunities and things to be a part of. Anything you're interested in or passionate about, there is something for you to join and get involved in here at our school. I really want to connect students to those opportunities. All the goals are to try to get students more involved and plugged in if they want to be and just make sure they're aware of all the opportunities that are out there."

In order to bridge the gap between the 74th

and 75th sessions, Harris said he hopes to continue to build on the objectives former SBP Natalie Parks worked on during the 2021-22 academic year, including mental health initiatives.

"It would be a shame if [each year we] stopped and completely went to other things and ignored all the work the last SBP did because you can only get so much done in a year," Harris said. "If we can keep building off of each other ... that could be huge, we can make a lot of progress."

From the outside looking in at Harris' campaign, Parks said she could see how hard he worked while formulating and running his campaign.

"For anybody putting themselves out there to serve in this role, you have to have a profound amount of dedication, drive and commitment to not only the students, but also whatever you're running on. You're trying to convince them that your vision is the best for the students, and I think that he did a fantastic job of that," Parks said. "I think that his passion, his determination and his dedication — toward the goals that he was running on and the goals that he has set for his vision going forward — are going to benefit the student body."

To help create a sense of open communication with the student body, Harris said he plans to have an open door policy for his office in the John J. Koldus Building and to partner with other student leaders to host town halls

where students can come to discuss and provide input on important issues on campus like parking and other student services.

"The whole purpose of a student body president is to take the students' opinions and voices and communicate that to administrators or people who are actually making decisions," Harris said. "My job is to advocate on behalf of students, and that's what I'm gonna do. I think we need [a] student body president who's willing to stand up for students and student rights, and that's something I'm so excited and more than willing to do."

As he takes on the role, Harris said he hopes to inspire students to create the A&M experience they want, as he has done for himself along the way.

"I'm so proud and excited to be an Aggie. I just love this place so much and I want to see [students] continue to thrive," Harris said. "[I am] so humbled and honored to be able to serve A&M and serve the students. I'm here for the students, that is why I'm in this role. I'm not not in it for myself. I'm in it for Texas A&M University, and then for the students that are here. I want them to always feel like they can approach me with whatever thoughts or opinions they have. I just want students to feel free to use student government and use me as the student body president to be able to communicate what they want for the university, and then we can communicate that through administration."





Robert O'Brien — THE BATTALION

Texas A&M Student Senate Speaker Pro Tempore **Tyler Smith** plans to use new position to represent students across the university.

# Speaking up for students

Tyler Smith to serve as speaker of the 75th Session of Student Senate

By **Lauren Discher**  
@laurendischer

**T**exas A&M's Student Senate is the voice of the student body, carrying on the long-standing tradition of organized student representation on campus. The responsibility of representing the Student Senate falls to the speaker of the senate, the second in command to the student body president and overseer of operations of the legislative branch of the Student Government Association, or SGA.

Elected in March of 2022, Tyler Smith is the new speaker of the 75th Session and said

he is ready to step into the leadership position after almost three full terms of participating as more of a conscious observer.

"I've gotten to see the senate do a lot of great work that has inspired me to take on a larger role," Smith said. "I'm optimistic and excited for the future of the SGA. The senate entrusted me to take on this position, and I'm just looking forward to the next year and seeing what we accomplish together for students."

The road to this new role, Smith said, was filled with a great deal of collaboration, both with students and fellow student senators.

"There was also a period of presentation where I had the opportunity for a friend to speak on my character, and likewise with my opponent," Smith said. "After that, there was a period of debate and then voting, and the

result was that I won. I was extremely happy about that, obviously."

The responsibilities of speaker mostly pertain to the legislative process, Smith said, but also includes acting as a liaison between the Student Senate and extraneous sources.

"Things of that nature include communications with The Battalion and other media outlets and things like advocating on behalf of the senate with administration and faculty, because again, only the speaker can have those types of conversations and speak for the entire senate," Smith said.

Smith will fill the shoes of former Speaker Iman Ahmed, who served as the first Muslim speaker, the first Black female speaker and also the second Black person to serve an entire term as speaker.

"While I may have been the first, I know I

won't be the last, so I hope that my term inspires more women and minority students to seek top leadership roles on campus," Ahmed said. "With that, to see all three branches of the Student Government Association all be led by women for the first time ever has also been such an honor. Leading alongside [former] Student Body President Natalie Parks and Chief Justice Karissa McIntosh has been such an empowering and uplifting experience."

Though Ahmed said her time as speaker was the experience of a lifetime, she said it had its fair share of challenges.

"During my term as speaker, we navigated very uncharted borders," Ahmed said. "From transitioning to a fully in-person school year with [COVID-19] still present, to operating under a new university administration, to sweeping changes from the MGT report, to addressing major student outcry surrounding The Battalion, Fish Camp and Draggieland, this year has been a challenge."

Despite this, Ahmed said it has been a rewarding experience to build strong relationships with administration, bringing in President M. Katherine Banks and Vice President for Student Affairs Gen. Joe Ramirez to Student Senate to create a dialogue surrounding the aforementioned topics.

"This opportunity was unprecedented for such high-level university administration that rarely met with the Student Senate," Ahmed said. "I'm grateful to have opened the door of communication for future Student Senate sessions to come. I've enjoyed every moment of it. Serving as speaker of the Student Senate has truly been the role of a lifetime."

In his new role, Smith said he hopes to continue the work that Ahmed started in past semesters and fight for student voices to be heard.

"I've gotten to be in the trenches and see the hard work that we've put into representing students up until this point," Smith said. "I was super excited to be a part of big things that have happened such as pursuing a pass/fail option for students several semesters ago, and then more recently, trying to protect The Battalion from an attempt to take away its autonomy."

With the increase of students voicing their concerns via social media and on-campus protests in response to recent administrative decisions, Smith said the campus climate is one of change.

"I think that we have a real opportunity to have some productive conversations with administration about the direction of the university and the way that students want to see their university run," Smith said. "I just feel extremely lucky to be in a position to help facilitate those conversations."



# Find your fellow fish with FLOs



Several Freshman Leadership Organizations are available to freshmen looking to get involved. Student organizations recruit at MSC Open House every fall and spring semester.

## A&M is home to over 20 service, social organizations for freshmen

By **Emma Lawson**  
@ELawsonAtTheBat

**F**LAKE, FLASH, FORME, FLOC, FAST and FLEX may have different meanings outside of Aggieland, but here at Texas A&M, each one stands for a unique Freshman Leadership Organization, or FLO, that provides a spot on campus for every freshman looking to connect with others on campus.

A&M has 22 official FLOs on campus. Each FLO typically has meetings, hosts programs or events and gives back to the community, according to FLAC, the Freshman Leadership Advisory Council. While most FLOs are open to all freshmen, some are major specific like Freshman in Liberal Arts Reaching Excellence, or FLARE, which focuses on freshmen from the College of Liberal Arts.

Communication sophomore Elizabeth Eckelberg is the assistant director of Memorial Student Center Freshman in Service and Hosting, or MSC FISH, and said as a FLO, it

focuses on assisting freshmen in building professional skills while creating a network.

“We really focus on professional development,” Eckelberg said. “The most [people] we’ve ever had at one of our bigger programs was about 1,500, but the big thing is you, as a freshman, are putting these on, developing your skills, going out into the community and talking to businesses.”

Joining a FLO can be intimidating, Eckelberg said, but applying for MSC FISH focuses more on a freshman’s character.

“Every FLO is going to have a different application process. Specifically for FISH, we typically have three to four essay questions where you can write as much as you want or as little as you want, as long as it’s good information,” Eckelberg said. “We try to offer every single person an interview ... but it’s very casual. It’s to get to know you as a person and your personality, more than what your answers are.”

After the interview process, MSC FISH takes anywhere between 60 to 90 freshmen, trying to keep it 50% women and 50% men, Eckelberg said.

Being a freshman in MSC FISH helped her find community and acceptance in college,

Eckelberg said.

“I was really nervous and shy in high school and wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do when I got to college,” Eckelberg said. “Being in a FLO, they loved me for who I was ... I think that’s something that’s really impactful for me and is really important. People should realize how much opportunity there is in FLOs.”

Sports management freshman James Cochran joined Freshman Leadership Establishing eXcellence, or FLEX, during his first semester and handles the programming side of his FLO.

“Among FLEX, there’s five different zones that take care of the different aspects of FLEX. I’m in social, which is in charge of planning all social events,” Cochran said. “The other zones are service, leadership development, personal relations and financial relations.”

FLEX hosts meetings on Mondays in the MSC at 8:30 p.m., Cochran said, and every zone in FLEX gets to update the FLO on their activities.

“Each zone has a slide talking about upcoming events and talking about past events,” Cochran said. “For example, we had a bake sale last week, and we raised a little under \$700. Then, we have a Freshman of the Week, who

just went above and beyond, and then we usually conclude with an activity.”

One thing Cochran said he would like to see more of in every FLO is diversity.

“I think FLEX is one of the most diverse FLOs, if not the most diverse FLO on campus,” Cochran said. “We had a retreat a while ago, and one of the freshmen said that FLEX is like a big puzzle. Not one puzzle piece is the same. All of them are different, but it all comes together to make a beautiful picture.”

FLEX looks for freshmen who are willing to try something new, Cochran said, and encourages all freshmen to apply.

“You get out what you put in, so we want people that are willing to get out of their comfort zone and show their true colors, because we don’t want carbon copies of each other,” Cochran said. “We want as many different people as possible.”

Business freshman Abby Strater is a member of Freshmen Leadership International, or FLI, and said it’s focused on the education of world culture.

“Our core values are fun, acceptance, family, diversity and to really work on cultural awareness and education on campus,” Strater said.

There are two different ways to be involved in FLI, Strater said, including a trip abroad that is not limited to FLI members.

“If you’re an incoming freshman, you can apply to be in FLI, but we also have a program that goes to Costa Rica over Spring Break,” Strater said. “You can apply as a student leader, and that’s anybody in any grade or organization.”

Before the Costa Rica trip, participants have regular meetings and work in teams to encourage each other. Finally, once the participants arrive in Costa Rica, students work with local residents to tackle projects in the area and assist at the schools, according to the FLI website.

Other than the travel abroad, FLI also hosts different programs to encourage students to learn about different cultures in a fun and engaging way, Strater said.

“We have one where we do cooking around the world, where we have chefs from different countries and do a walk-through of how to cook different specialty dishes from their home country,” Strater said. “Each spring, we have a new program. This year, it’s women in a global society. We’re having women in academia and doing a women’s panel. It’s completely free, and they’re giving their advice.”

Eckelberg said she appreciates her FLO and the connections it has provided.

“Joining a FLO is an instant community,” Eckelberg said. “These are friends that I hope to have for the rest of my life.”





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# Keepers of the spirit



Ishika Samant — THE BATTALION

Head Yell Leader **Zac Cross** speaks during Midnight Yell before the Spring 2022 Maroon & White football scrimmage.

Yell Leaders share history, importance of Midnight Yell

By **Myranda Campanella**  
@MCCampanella\_

“From the outside looking in, you can’t explain it.”

A popular saying across Aggieland, junior Yell Leader Thomas Greve used these nine words to describe one of Texas A&M’s oldest traditions: Midnight Yell.

From five guys in white overalls randomly doing push ups in the middle of Kyle Field to students yelling “Hump it, Ags!” at the top of their lungs, this tradition really is unexplainable and something every Aggie must experience for themselves to understand its magic.

Yell Practice dates back to 1913 when cadets would gather in the evenings to share their school spirit, though the first official Yell Practice wasn’t held until 1931 when Peanut Owens organized a group of fish to meet outside the YMCA Building at midnight ahead of the weekend’s game against the rival University of Texas.

Today, Midnight Yell Practice is held every Friday before a home football game in Kyle Field — and unsurprisingly, it starts at midnight. Around 25,000 current and former students, parents and friends come together to train their lungs to “Beat the hell outta” the opposing team. Leading Yell Practice are the five elected Yell Leaders, who take turns telling fables and prepping the 12th Man.

Construction science senior Zac Cross and industrial engineering senior Kipp Knecht are returning as Yell Leaders this year after having served during the 2021-22 school year, while philosophy junior Greve, communication senior Nathan Drain and construction science junior Trevor Yelton are stepping into the role for the first time this 2022-23 school year.

Cross, who serves as Head Yell Leader, said the five are the “official spirit ambassadors of A&M,” as they attend all football, basketball, volleyball and soccer games as well as other major student events such as Fish Camp and The Big Event.

Due to their presence and involvement across campus, many students consider the Yell Leaders to be Aggieland’s own celebrities; however, this is something each is quick to refute.

“We’re college students at the end of the day. We’re Aggies at the end of the day,” Greve said.

Similarly, Cross said while many Aggies may view them as “superheroes,” the position is not their only priority.

“You only get that reaction out of people whenever you are a good person and you make the position the best that it can be,” Cross said.

“And that’s by excelling in things other than being a Yell Leader; that’s excelling at being a family member, a brother, a good boyfriend, a great classmate, a great cadet. That’s a really big thing we should all try to live by.”

Due to the impression the Yell Leaders made on him when he visited Aggieland during childhood, Drain said he personally values how impactful the position can be on others.

“The thing that I’ve enjoyed the most about being a Yell Leader is possibly being the first and last impression of A&M for people,” Drain said. “I think it’s really cool that [we] might have the opportunity to change the trajectory of somebody’s life. I would love to have that opportunity to show a kid ... this is our university, and this could be your university too.”

Ultimately, the Yell Leaders’ most important role is to give back to the university, Yelton said, which starts with attending service events and leading yells to inspire the Aggie Spirit.

Unique to A&M, Cross said the yells help support each team by audibly displaying the 12th Man’s support.

“[Yells] make it fun for the crowd and for the team to hear it,” Cross said. “You’re always making noise when [the team] is on defense. And then whenever something huge happens ... the game’s pivotal moment, that’s when we do ‘Beat the hell’ because the team hears that.”

The tradition of Midnight Yell Practice itself, Cross said, is important to Aggieland because it symbolizes the tradition of giving back to the university by sacrificing a night out to support the football team.

“To me, Midnight Yell is so special because, I mean, how hard is it to get thousands of people, tens of thousands of people, to come out at midnight on a Friday night, when most people are out partying, to come together and support their school and their football team and just come together and basically embody the Aggie Spirit?” Cross said. “You won’t see that at any other school. I can’t think of any other school that has a tradition like that.”

All five of the Yell Leaders encouraged incoming freshmen and transfer students to attend as many traditions as possible in their first year, but especially Midnight Yell, where you can learn to completely embrace the spirit of Aggieland.

“If you’re here, it’s your school. You should do everything to the best of your ability and be super intentional about what you do and put the most time into what you do,” Knecht said. “Find your place, find the reason that you came here and why you love Texas A&M, and go to everything you can. A great way to start is by going to Midnight Yell.”

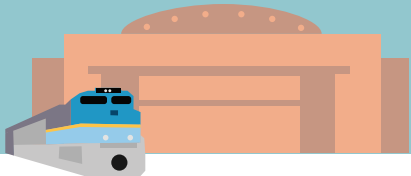
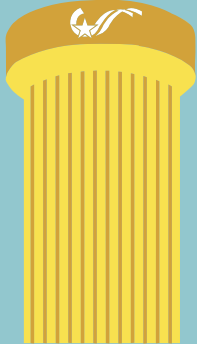




# TIPS TO THRIVE

IN

# College Station



## **AVOID CODE VIOLATIONS**



Many people don't think about city codes until they receive an unwelcome citation. Familiarize yourself with our city codes by visiting [cstx.gov/CodeEnforcement](http://cstx.gov/CodeEnforcement).



## **KEEP THE NOISE DOWN**

That includes barking dogs. It's unlawful for anyone to willfully make or allow continued loud noise, especially from 10 p.m.-6 a.m. If you can hear the noise at the end of your property line, then it's too loud, and everyone on your lease risks a citation.

## **NEVER MISS A COLLECTION DAY**



Download our free College Station Curbside app to always know your recycling, trash, brush, and bulky collection days. You'll also get notified of collection changes and can set reminders, report issues, and more.



## **NO MORE THAN FOUR**

Are you living off-campus? The city doesn't allow more than four unrelated individuals to occupy a dwelling unit. For example, four friends living in a home are complying. Likewise, four siblings living together are complying, but it's a code violation if an unrelated friend joins the household.

## **MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS**



Introduce yourself and exchange contact information in case of emergencies or other problems. After all, if an issue arises, would you rather they call you or the police?



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# Access to success



FILE

Every semester the Career Center puts on career fairs for current students to connect with employers.

## Campus resources help students achieve academic, career success

By **Aubrey Vogel**  
@aubrey\_vogel

**T**exas A&M offers an abundance of academic resources to ensure student success in classes while also preparing them for future employment opportunities.

These resources include the University Libraries, Career Center and Office of Professional School Advising, the Academic Success Center and the University Writing Center.

### Universities Libraries

The University Libraries system offers five on-campus libraries for students of all majors and degrees.

Associate Dean for User Services Susie Goodwin said students' NetID serves as their library card to check out physical materials as

well as access to free online services offered at [www.library.tamu.edu](http://www.library.tamu.edu). Each library has various study spaces available for students who are looking for either quiet or collaborative spaces, Goodwin said, and the AskUs service offers online and in-person opportunities to ask questions and receive research assistance.

"We want students to be successful in their studies and hope you find the libraries a welcoming place to come and study and get help," Goodwin said to The Battalion in an email. "We believe that adding the libraries to your daily routine for successful study and lifelong learning is the equivalent to an apple a day for good health. Whatever you need, our librarians have you covered. We are here to help you."

The libraries also house subject librarians who are able to help students with research in their areas of expertise.

"For in-depth research assistance or a more personalized orientation to the library for your major, students can also book an appointment

with their specific subject librarian who is familiar with questions and research assignments in your major," Goodwin said. "If you are not sure who your subject librarian is, you can look them up via our Find My Librarian tool available on our Services page."

The Evans Annex and Business Library & Collaborative Commons have 24-hour access every Sunday through Thursday for use as a student space.

### Career Center & Office of Professional School Advising

The Career Center offers services to prepare students for future employment and helps to provide career-related information, programs and experience. The center offers appointments for career readiness advising, including resume and cover letter help, interview preparation and career options for students who are not sure where they want to go after they receive their degrees.

Executive Director Samantha Wilson said the center hosts various workshops and career

exploration days to help students steer their paths toward the career they may want to pursue. Additionally, the Career Center helps to connect Aggies with future career opportunities with their job platform HireAggies in conjunction with the Association of Former Students.

"It is important that students register with HireAggies as early as their first semester on campus to have access to all campus recruiting activity at Texas A&M University," Wilson said in an email to The Battalion. "Through the portal, students have access to thousands of opportunities and thousands of employers specifically seeking Texas A&M students."

Wilson said she encourages students to begin using the Career Center as soon as they arrive at A&M.

"Start now. We recommend that students visit the Career Center as early as their first semester on campus and continue meeting with their career adviser. We have multiple advisers who work specifically with first- and second-year students, assisting them with the career exploration process," Wilson said. "Many employers are looking for candidates with multiple internships or co-ops, so the earlier students engage with the Career Center, the better. To be a quality candidate in the future, students must begin thinking about their futures now."

Additionally, through the Career Center, the Office of Professional School Advising offers guidance for students who are wishing to pursue professional schooling after completing their bachelor's degree. The center helps to prepare students for applying and attending professional programs in health and law.

"Professional School Advising staff assist students applying to a variety of programs through one-on-one advising, virtual and in-person workshops, panel programs, online tools, assistance in gaining experience, preparation for the application process, personal statement reviews and evaluation letter collection," Wilson said.

The Career Center also works with former students to provide opportunities to Aggies at all points in their career journeys.

"Former Student Career Services hosts monthly webinars to provide an overview of resources designed to help Aggies explore career options, research opportunities, find industry connections and grow their professional network to compete in the evolving job markets," Wilson said.

### Academic Success Center

With a variety of options available to use, including tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, or SI, academic coaching and online resources, the Academic Success Center works to help students improve academic performances and push them to reach their goals.



Communications manager Anna Transue said the staff at the center has helped to change students' perspectives regarding their study habits and capabilities.

"We have helped students overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles," Transue said in an email to The Battalion. "It is not uncommon for students who work with our academic coaches to experience a complete transformation in their attitude and approach to college that results in increased grades, confidence and opportunities."

The Academic Success Center has drop-in style tutoring for a variety of subjects. Transue said students can attend group sessions during the allotted time with no sign-up necessary.

"Most commonly, we offer help in highly requested, core curriculum courses like 100- and 200-level math, chemistry and biology," Transue said. "The availability of subjects and tutoring times changes each semester, so we recommend students check the searchable tutoring table on our website for up-to-date information, including a full list of subjects."

Students who have a need for some guidance can look into the academic coaching program where academic coaches help students overcome the obstacles of feeling overwhelmed, performing poorly in a class or even

just making a schedule to keep up with all their academic commitments.

"An academic coach will work with a student to identify roadblocks and set realistic, attainable and personally fulfilling academic goals," Transue said. "Working with an academic coach helps students stay accountable and steer them on the path they want to travel."

Students can also take part in SI, which is offered for certain classes across campus. Selected classes will receive a student SI leader who will lead weekly study sessions and reviews to help students learn concepts.

"During an SI session, an SI leader will initiate collaborative learning activities that help students practice and review important or difficult course concepts," Transue said. "The goal is to help students understand and apply course material so that they can become more independent learners and do better on projects and tests."

The center also offers online resources for students who may not have time to come in for an appointment, including time management tools, online class tips and study plans.

Transue said she encourages students to get help early by coming in before they are struggling.

"Don't wait until you're in jeopardy of failing a class before seeking help," Transue said. "Whether you're having trouble attending class consistently or you didn't do well on your first assignment, know your options for getting academic help before you think you'll need it."

#### University Writing Center

The University Writing Center, or UWC, helps students to improve their writing and speaking skills. Assistant director Florence Davies said the center hires students with experience in writing and speaking areas to help develop students' skills and go over work students may want another set of eyes on.

"The majority of our writing consultants are undergrad[uate] and graduate students. We hire our consultants from a variety of disciplines, we don't just hire folks from the English department," Davies said. "In fact, because we see so many students from a variety of disciplines, we hire consultants from a variety of disciplines as well. You may meet with an English major one day, and then a mechanical engineer the next day, or a graduate student who is in the business school the next day."

The center also offers resources for English learners and provides a staff to help specific-

ly with second language writing and public speaking.

"We do have a variety of resources for folks who are English language learners, you can actually talk about whatever you're concerned about, if you want to learn more about the United States or about A&M traditions or current events," Florence said. "A lot of folks like to work on pronunciation, practicing interview skills, even practicing lectures, because a number of our folks who use the Writing Center are actually grad students who are teaching."

Davies said the UWC strives to be a place where students can come if they have questions and to avoid panicking if they feel they may need help in the writing process.

"One-on-one communication is really important. The only way that you can develop is by practicing those skills. If students can just think of the Writing Center as a place to practice, that's low stakes," Davies said. "We're here to make you feel comfortable about writing and speaking, because it's so important. If you don't have your words, if you don't have a voice, we really want to empower students to feel confident about their writing and speaking skills."

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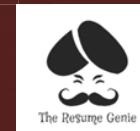
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# 'It's about the Spirit of Aggieland'



Melanie McBride — THE BATTALION

To remember the fallen 12, Texas A&M built the Bonfire Memorial located across from the Jack K. Williams Administration Building. The memorial displays the names of the 12 students who died and a halo of lights that illuminate the night.

## 22 years later, Aggies still annually honor 12 victims of Bonfire collapse

By Kathryn Miller  
@KathrynMiller0

As the years go by, Aggies will always remember the fallen 12.

Nov. 18, 1999, forever changed Texas A&M and the Aggie community. Even though most current students weren't alive when Bonfire collapsed nearly a generation ago, they are still impacted by the accident and grieve the lives lost. Every Nov. 12 at 2:42 a.m., Aggies honor the 12 in a remembrance ceremony held at the Bonfire Memorial, which is located at the site of the collapse. Visualization sophomore Cameron Close said Bonfire Remembrance helps the Aggie community remember what those who died stood for.

"They died doing what they loved, seeing as they were dedicated enough to do it at almost [3 a.m.]," Close said. "That's the heart and dedication they put into it. Remembering them is more than just remembering their death and their enrollment at A&M. It's about the Spirit of Aggieland."

Industrial distribution senior Harley Avery said Bonfire Remembrance portrays how the Aggie Spirit is ever continuing and undying; it is a way Aggies young and old can come together and remember our history.

"It's a memorial to the way the community came together and the way that the campus came together," Avery said. "And it's a living memorial for the students that passed, it's a way that we can make sure that we never forget them. They were out there because of their undying love for A&M and its traditions. They were out there doing what they loved. It's so important for us as a student body to remember that they were Aggies just like us. They were just students — students who had a passion for the university and students who had a passion for the traditions. That's something that we as Aggies should embody, that love for our university, that love for our traditions, but mostly that love for other Aggies."

Bonfire Remembrance is a way for students to remember why the Aggie Spirit is important, and how it continues to be important even as university traditions evolve, Avery said.

"As our school evolves and grows, [Bonfire] is a way to remember that it really is from 'Howdy' to 'Here,'" Avery said. "It doesn't just stop at 'Here' — we will always remember our Aggies because they're always going to be a member of our family. The second you step foot on this campus, you're one of us. 'Us' is the Aggie community and the Aggie Spirit. We're all in it together no matter what and no matter what our differences."

As a member of outfit C-2 in the Corps of Cadets, Close said the Corps has a lot of specific traditions they partake in to honor Bonfire and the 12.

"We have dorm logs that are the biggest logs that we cut down toward the end of the season," Close said. "Each [Bonfire] crew gets one, and we carve Nathan Scott West's initials, NSW, into it because he was the cadet from C-2 who died. A lot of people carve his initials into their axe handles, which they use during Bonfire, and it symbolizes that even though something tragic happened, we proudly stand to continue their legacy and continue what they loved doing."

What Close said is personally memorable for him is that despite interfering beliefs among the Corps about continuing Student Bonfire, C-2 still makes sure to honor and know the name of the cadet who was lost without allowing individual opinions to get in the way of remembering West.

Biology sophomore Sophia Polisetty said even though she's from an Aggie family, she never understood the magnitude and significance of Bonfire Remembrance until she came to A&M.

"It truly gave me this realization that remembering somebody is an action — it's not just a thought," Polisetty said. "Those people who pulled their peers out of the stack, those that were building it in the first place, those who tried to save as many Aggies as they could and those that we couldn't save — we should still be taking actions to try and save their memories."

Polisetty said Bonfire Remembrance means a lot to her because she can honor the memory of those affected by the tragedy and continue

to take action to preserve their stories. You can always remember something, but one must make a decision to take action for remembrance, Polisetty said.

"[The] collapse was a tragedy. It had so many opportunities to pull us apart and make this institution feel weak, or that we weren't able to grow," Polisetty said. "But I think instead of bouncing back and pretending like it didn't happen, A&M was able to grow so much as an Aggie family, and we realized how much stronger we truly are together. Even just the stories of the football team coming in and offering their practices to come and pull logs out of stack — truly every part of campus came together — and that's something that we can always look to as inspiration."

Animal science and agriculture leadership junior Dylan Sione is currently chair of Bonfire Remembrance and said the event is the ultimate example of the Aggie family.

"As an institution, I think Bonfire Remembrance is the way that we live out the Spirit of Aggieland," Sione said. "[Bonfire] is the way that we live out the beliefs that we espouse, respect, loyalty and integrity of what we believe. When we sing 'The Spirit of Aggieland' and we sing the chorus, 'We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we,' I think that Bonfire Remembrance is a physical embodiment of that because it's the way that we remember these students, both as individuals and as a collective part of A&M."



# AN AGGIE'S JOURNEY & THE TRADITIONS ALONG THE WAY



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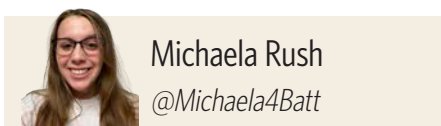
# TAMU 101: How to be an Aggie

Say Howdy to events, sayings, traditions which define Aggieland



Photos by Abbey Santoro & Logan Mohr — THE BATTALION

The Aggie Ring, standing at football games and “horns down” are traditions unique to Texas A&M.



Michaela Rush  
@Michaela4Batt

**T**he maroon bubble, full of strange terminology and sacred campus sites, can be difficult to navigate for new students. As a kid who grew up bleeding maroon, bouncing around the east coast, explaining these traditions has

become second nature, so much so that I get paid to walk around campus and introduce prospective students to all that the Aggie subculture has to offer. Here’s a list of the biggest traditions in Aggieland and what you need to know about each one:

### 12th Man

Who is the 12th Man? It’s me, and you, and your roommate and that random person you see every Tuesday, because the 12th Man is every Aggie.

The original 12th Man, who you can vis-

it in statue form next to Kyle Field, was E. King Gill. On Jan. 2, 1922, Texas A&M was playing in the Dixie Classic against Centre College, and had so many players injured that the Aggies were almost forced to forfeit the game. Our coach at the time, Dana X. Bible, refused to surrender, and called down Gill — a former football player who had left to focus on his basketball career — from the press box and asked him to suit up in an injured player’s uniform.

Gill agreed, and suited up to stand on the

sidelines. He waited, and waited, and waited, but never went into the game. In an upset, the Aggies came back to win the game 22-14 over Centre College. Since this day, the title of “12th Man” has been passed to the student section and all Aggies to show that we are always willing to step in and suit up for our peers.

### Aggie Ring

While many schools have a class ring tradition, none are as widespread as the Aggie



Ring. Since the beginning of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, there has been a class ring of some form, commonly referred to as “Aggie Gold.”

Since this time, all students who have completed 90 hours of coursework, achieving “senior status,” may order their ring to commemorate their time at A&M. Each ring has the university seal, the recipient’s class year and their name inscribed inside the band.

While all Aggies celebrate differently, the day you pick up your ring is known as “Ring Day,” and often coincides with Family Weekend. Some Aggies choose to baptize their ring through the “Ring Dunk,” dropping their ring to the bottom of a pitcher of beer and chugging it as fast as possible. Though the dunk is not an official Aggie tradition, it is still widely practiced since its advent at Dixie Chicken in the 1970s.

### Aggie War Hymn

Other schools have a fight song, but here in Aggieland, we proudly sing the War Hymn during all our major campus events. The song’s original lyrics were written in 1918 on the back of a letter J.V. “Pinky” Wilson sent home to family, while abroad during World War I.

The song highlights two important hallmarks of Aggie tradition, our historic rivalry with the University of Texas and our love for the maroon and white.

### The Big Event

This service event is the largest student-run, single-day service event in the country. Since its conception in 1982, thousands of Aggies participate in The Big Event each year, volunteering a Saturday morning at the end of March to give back to the Bryan-College Station community through service projects.

### Bonfire & Bonfire Remembrance

Bonfire was a Texas A&M tradition that took place from 1907-1999 to represent our “burning desire” to beat Texas in our annual matchup. These forts of flame ranged from 55-109 feet tall and were a semester-long project for interested students.

On Nov. 18, 1999, students were working on the stack and at 2:42 a.m., the structure fell, injuring 27 Aggies and killing 12. This was a devastating loss to the Aggie family, as a beautiful tradition was marked with the loss of these students. Since then, Aggies have gathered at the site of the stack on the date and time it fell to honor those who passed and show how much every single Aggie means to our community.

### Century Tree

If you walk to the Academic Building in the heart of campus, off to the left you’ll see a massive live oak tree, with branches that swoop down to the ground and back up to

the sky, creating a stunning archway with its own sidewalk.

It is said that if a couple walks under the tree together, they’ll get married, and if they get engaged under the tree, their marriage will last forever. With this in mind, plan your route to class accordingly, so you don’t end up forever bound to a complete stranger.

### Corps of Cadets and The Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band

This group of students, consisting of over 2,000 members, is considered the university’s oldest student organization. This doesn’t quite encapsulate the scope of the Corps, but it’s a reminder of our school’s roots as a military academy.

Cadets, members of the Corps, are required to wear uniform in all academic buildings, as well as in the Memorial Student Center. These uniforms can be “Alphas,” the most formal version, “Bravos,” the khakis most used for class days, or “Charlies,” camouflage outfits.

Around 400 of these members are also a part of the nationally famous Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band. They perform a traditional military style band drill, but to such perfection that you can’t help but be impressed. Though Aggies take a short sitting break at the end of the second quarter, students are expected to stand back up for the band, because really, they’re that good.

### Fish Camp

An Aggie’s first tradition, Fish Camp is for freshmen the summer before their first semester. Spending three days at the Lakeview Methodist Conference Center in Palestine, upperclassmen counselors introduce freshmen to the traditions of A&M and help them make their first friends through their “DG,” or “discussion group.”

### Gig ‘em

In layman’s terms, this is a “thumbs up,” but in Aggieland it is referred to as “gig ‘em,” “gigging it” or “gigs.” This tradition started as a game slogan in games played against the Horned Frogs of TCU, where players were encouraged to “gig the frogs.” Since then, it has become the symbol of Aggie-hood, and is a great way to show off the Aggie Ring.

### Memorial Student Center

The center of campus life, commonly known as the MSC and the current home of The Battalion student newspaper. If you need anything non-academic on campus, this is the place to be. There are couches for napping, tables for eating and studying, lots of food options, places to meet with your student organizations and several resources like the Veteran Resource and Support Center as well as the Department of Multicultural Services.

What sets this building apart from other

student unions or central buildings across the country is that it is intended to honor the Aggies who have given their lives in service of their country. Throughout the building you’ll find memorials for specific students or conflicts, and to show respect, we remove our hats as we walk into the MSC, and we don’t step on the grass directly outside the building, as it is part of the living memorial.

### Midnight Yell

What time is Midnight Yell?

Yes, people do actually ask this. Midnight Yell takes place at midnight before each home game. Aggies enter Kyle Field to sing the War Hymn, practice their yells and hear stories from the Yell Leaders about how badly we’re going to beat our opponents.

Who you go to Midnight Yell with though, is crucial. At one point, the lights will go out and you are expected to “mug-down” your date. (Mugdown refers to kissing them, not writing for the satirical campus paper.)

### Muster

Held on April 21 of each year, Muster is the most solemn of Aggie traditions. Our school has a long legacy to celebrate, and one way we do this is by annually remembering the current and former students, as well as campus community members, through this ceremony.

Aggies gather in Reed Arena, and around the world, to read a list of names for those who have passed, called “Roll Call for the Absent.” After each name is read, a candle is lit and those at the ceremony will say “Here.” Although these Aggies are no longer with us physically, they will always be with us in the Aggie Spirit.

### Reveille

The first lady, the queen of Aggieland, a five diamond general and your fluffiest peer, Reveille is an American rough collie and our school’s official mascot. Though the Aggies are not dogs, she is the embodiment of the school spirit we all hold dear. Also known as “Rev,” this pup lives with a sophomore member of the E-2 Company, or Mascot Company, of the Corps of Cadets. Going into the 2022-23 school year, we are led by Reveille X, whose predecessor, Reveille IX, is in retirement at the Stevenson Companion Animal Life-Care Center.

### Silver Taps

Similar to Muster, Silver Taps is a ceremony to honor current students who have died. When one or more students dies, a ceremony is held in their honor on the first Tuesday of the following month. Leading up to the ceremony, boxes are placed in the middle of campus to allow for letter writing to families. At 10:30 p.m., students silently gather in Academic Plaza to hear the names of each

honoree read, and buglers atop the Academic Building play “Silver Taps,” a special rendition of the traditional Taps bugle call.

### ‘t.u.’

That school down in Austin. Attendees are referred to as “t-sips,” and Aggies call the school either “t.u.” or Texas University, rather than the official school name. Aggies will often throw “horns down,” made by extending the index and pinky finger, while facing them to the ground.

### Wildcats and Whoop!

A critical part to finish up an Aggie yell is the wildcat, a class-specific sound and motion that lets everyone know what classification you are. Classification is dictated by your class year, not the year when you actually graduate, so if you started in the fall of 2019, like myself, you’ll always be the Class of 2023 (A-A-A-Whoop). Here’s each class’s wildcat:

**Freshman:** Hands up by your head, yelling “AAAA,” which sounds like “ayyyyy,” but long.

**Sophomore:** Make two finger guns, and while pointing them at the ground say “A-A-A-A-A,” shaking the aforementioned finger guns upon each “A.”

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The word “Whoop” mentioned below is ONLY for use by juniors or seniors, unless they explicitly bestow privileges to their younger peers. This word is not so much said as it is yelled deeply. “Whoop” is the correct response to any good event, such as scoring a touchdown, getting an A on an exam or scoring a hot date to the next game.

**Junior:** Make one finger gun using both hands, left over right. Pointing hands at the ground, say “A-A-A-Whoop.”

**Senior:** Make one finger gun, with fingers interlocked. Point your hands at the ground for one “A,” then, while raising your left foot, raise your arms above your head to the right, saying “Whoop.”

### Yells and Yell Leaders

At Texas A&M, we yell instead of cheer. During time at New Student Conferences, Fish Camp, T-Camp or other orientation events, Aggies will learn yells, which are made up of four steps: the passback, the hump it, the yell and finally, the wildcat.

Yell Leaders are a five-person team, two juniors and three seniors, who are elected by the student body to lead the entire student section in Aggie yells. You’ll often see these folks clad in overalls or all white, janitorial style outfits, depending on the occasion, and any student is eligible to run for Yell Leader.

*Michaela Rush is an English junior and news editor for The Battalion.*





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Cameron Johnson — THE BATTALION

Texas A&M Student Health Services, located at A.P. Beutel Health Center on Houston Street, provides healthcare options for Aggies.

# Keep your health up to code

Student Health Services offers comprehensive, specialized care

By **Aubrey Vogel**  
@aubrey\_vogel

From headaches to broken bones, Texas A&M Student Health Services, or SHS, serves to help the campus community through any illnesses or injuries they encounter while attending the university. SHS director Dr. Martha Dannenbaum said the organization strives to serve students in any medical need and can provide referrals to those who may need more specialized care.

“We are a comprehensive, ambulatory or outpatient healthcare facility, and what that means is we have physicians [and] primary care physicians. We have some specialist physicians, particularly in gynecology and sports medicine,” Dannenbaum said. “We have a

full complement of nursing staff that support our clinicians in the delivery of care and we have many other services such as lab, pharmacy, radiology, everything that’s needed to provide the majority of the care that the college-age population will need. If we can’t provide it here, we have a well established referral process for getting students to the care that they need in the community.”

Through serving only the college population, Dannenbaum said healthcare professionals are able to focus on a specific age group, which may have different needs than the general population.

“The unique thing is the fact that we are part of the campus, and that is our specialty population,” Dannenbaum said. “It’s that unique relationship with the campus that allows us to focus on the mission of student success. The care is really about the whole person and what are their needs in relation to their job of being a student, and that’s very differ-

ent than the traditional mission of healthcare outside of a university setting.”

After working with college students for some time now, Dannenbaum said SHS staff has figured out that students need flexible scheduling to be able to see the doctors, so they offer online appointment scheduling.

“The key is that they can find those appointments at times that work for them,” Dannenbaum said. “We make sure that we have a whole variety of appointment times available, even same day and next day appointments that we specifically are scheduled so that those become available to students about 16 hours before the appointment time, so they can go online in the middle of the night and find an appointment for the next day.”

In addition to appointments where students visit the facility, SHS also offers a 24-hour nurse line, where students can get their questions answered online.

“If they have a health question where

they’re not sure what they should do, is it something they should go to an ER for or should they wait until the office is open the next day, they can call that number and that will connect them with a registered nurse who can give them information based on what’s going on with them,” Dannenbaum said. “This is an option for them, where they can call and get some reliable health information that is non-judgmental, and it just gives them what they need to make a healthcare decision.”

To ease the minds of nervous parents, Dannenbaum said the university has the Critical Response Team in place to help notify and keep parents updated if a student were to be severely injured or not able to make medical decisions for themselves.

“We work together to ensure that hospitals are made aware of emergency contact information that parents or families are supported if their student has a serious car accident or some other incident, where the student can’t call them to tell them what’s going on,” Dannenbaum said. “That’s the unique thing about university healthcare systems — we recognize that we have this young adult population that still has a strong connection to parents and family, so when a student cannot advocate for themselves, we have a mechanism to get parents informed as quickly as possible.”

In addition to physical health needs, Counseling and Psychological Services, or CAPS, serves as a resource for students who may need guidance regarding mental health. CAPS provides counseling in a variety of ways including individual sessions, group sessions or other programming throughout the semester.

For 24/7 service, CAPS is offering a new app to the university called My SSP, which offers virtual counseling, short-term telehealth appointments and on-demand content regarding mental health and well-being concerns.

Before heading to campus, Dannenbaum said she encourages new students to look at the SHS website to find out information about the facility as well as get other information regarding medical notes and insurance questions.

As students embark on their college journey, Dannenbaum said it is important for them to develop healthy habits by managing their self care, which includes diet, exercise and sleep habits.

“It’s really important for students to develop healthy sleep habits [and] rest habits before they get there, but definitely when they get here before all the stress of the projects and the midterms,” Dannenbaum said. “Their sleep, their physical activity, their exercise, [must be] priorities and that will help them with their physical health and their mental health.”





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Hannah Shaffer — THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's transfer students reflect on the adjustment to Aggie life and culture and offer advice to incoming transfer students.

# Taking the transfer path

Transfer students give insight on transition, acclimating to campus

By Morgan Gentry  
@thebattmorgan

**T**he transition into any university can be both an exciting and terrifying experience, even if it is not one's first time doing so.

For Texas A&M incoming freshmen, there are many available resources and social activities that can make the transition easier; although, not everyone who enrolls at A&M is a freshman. Many students transfer to A&M after previously attending college elsewhere, and at times, being a transfer student can be a struggle. Despite difficulties faced, students have discovered ways to overcome these challenges.

Makenzie Griffin, Class of 2021, said she attended Texas State her freshman year and later transferred to A&M in the fall of 2019 because it was always her dream school.

"I didn't apply right after high school because I wanted to give myself that shot of going to [A&M]," Griffin said. "I made sure to do really good at [Texas] State so I could have the grades to get into A&M."

While individuals like Griffin take the route of not rushing to A&M, some individuals may decide to jump straight into the application process and sometimes be greeted with the Program for System Admission, or PSA, which allied health junior Kenzie Baucum said she experienced.

"I applied to A&M and was given the PSA program, which is where you are given the choice of attending one of the 13 system schools that A&M has," Baucum said. "After you spend two semesters there and fulfill all the requirements, you are then accepted for your next semester at A&M."

Baucum said that upon arrival at A&M, one of the biggest challenges was getting connected to the university, especially since she transferred during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"My first semester here, almost everything was online, [and] almost no one was here," Baucum said. "I really didn't get the experience I had been hoping for because of the circumstances, so it was difficult to feel like I got in."

Despite struggling to feel connected with the university, Baucum said she was able to overcome her challenge with positive self-reminders.

"I basically just had to keep reminding my-

self [the] things I had wanted would come back. I just had to get through the two semesters where you didn't really get to do anything," Baucum said. "I tried to keep myself busy and just [do] everything I could to get through that hard time."

While individuals like Baucum had their experience halted due to the pandemic, those like Griffin who were lucky enough to avoid isolation still felt they lacked connection compared to most freshmen.

"Your freshman year is when you get the feel of college — how professors are, how the school is [and how] you make friends there. It's kind of weird going into a new college not having that," Griffin said.

Griffin said she faced challenges in her academic progress while transferring.

"It was difficult to figure out what classes I needed to take, what counted [and] what didn't, because there's a whole different system with A&M compared to [Texas] State," Griffin said.

Similar to Baucum, Griffin also said she overcame her challenges through dedication to academics and involvement with university activities and student organizations.

"I used the resources on campus for academics to help me maintain my grades, I talked to advisers to make sure that I stayed on

track and I joined an org[anization] to kind of help me in [the] friend aspect," Griffin said.

Urban and regional planning junior Kristina Hansen was also a transfer student during the pandemic, and said one of the best pieces of advice she could give to other transfer students is to get connected quickly.

"Apply to a bunch of different orgs, put yourself out there, [and] go to all of the events, like the football games [and] traditions [because] that's how you're going to feel most connected with A&M," Hansen said.

Hansen said she was able to overcome her challenges through involvement and is now fully enjoying the culture A&M has to offer.

"I love the camaraderie of A&M and the people here. The traditions are my favorite, and I grew up at this campus," Hansen said. "Pretty much my whole family went here, so it's nice, and it's like one big family."

Baucum said she believes involvement is one of the biggest factors in creating the best experience as a transfer student.

"It doesn't matter what you get involved in; there is something for everyone, especially at a school this big," Baucum said. "It might be scary at first, but doing things that scare you is really important, and it might end up being the best decision you made."



# A rainbow of resources



Cameron Johnson — THE BATTALION

LGBTQ+ Aggies find a community of support at Texas A&M through the Pride Center and affirming student organizations.

A&M is home to resources, spaces to welcome students of all identities

By **Michaela Rush**  
@Michaela4Batt

**A**t Texas A&M, there's no shortage of assistance for students with any type of need. There is Helpline, the Math Learning Center, the Writing Center and much more. What many students don't know is that in the heart of campus there is a rainbow-clad

room, guarded by Gay-zilla, that serves the LGBTQ+ community in Aggieland.

Found in the Student Services Building, the LGBTQ+ Pride Center serves as an office for full-time staff, as well as a quiet study area and library of resources to improve the experience of queer Aggies. Pride Center coordinator Frances Jackson said the center offers a wide range of services from physical tools to educational programs.

"[The] Pride Center provides a space, programming and support resources to help Texas A&M students grow and thrive, based on sexual identity and gender identity," Jackson said.

"We've got all your LGBTQ+ swag, stickers, brochures, and what's really cool is our library that has both fun and academic resources. If you're on campus, we recommend coming and checking out our space."

In addition to everyday support, the center also hosts programs throughout the year, ranging from educational to emotional to social, in order to bring queer Aggies together in a supportive environment, Jackson said.

"Education outreach we do through our presentations, so folks can request that, and it's typically LGBTQ 101 or Trans 101, but we also do programs for specific groups,"

Jackson said. "We provide programming like our Lavender Graduation, celebrating and bringing wide-spread awareness to the queer experience, but also through our small-scale events like our Pride Late Night, which is an after hours program with social events."

In addition to these events which foster community, the center also offers resources for personal use and individualized services, Jackson said.

"We provide resources like our safe sex kits and our library," Jackson said. "You can also meet one-on-one with the professional staff members at the center, myself or Heather Wheeler, and talk about a variety of queer issues: getting support, thinking through a coming out plan or other things students want to talk about."

The Pride Center has several student employees, providing an opportunity to connect with peers. Ben Gettleman said his favorite part of working at the center is the space within the Student Services Building.

"We have an amazing study space, it overlooks Simpson Drill Field and it's sunny and bright," Gettleman said. "We have board games, we have arts and crafts, we have books you can check out and there's plenty of plugs, so you can come, study, chill. We're all super friendly and it's a great place to hang out. It's really one of my favorite places on campus."

Gettleman is also a founding member of FLAKE, or Freshmen Leading in Acceptance, Kindness and Equality, which is a Freshman Leadership Organization dedicated to queer students and allies. Though this is a separate student organization, Gettleman said the group often partners with the center.

"We're here to provide a community for incoming LGBTQ+ freshmen and ally freshmen," Gettleman said. "I founded this as a freshman, and after I found a community, I wanted to make sure others had that community, especially people like me who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community. We really are one big family."

In addition to FLAKE, there are nine other student-run organizations focused on supporting LGBTQ+ students, which can be found through the Pride Center website at [studentlife.tamu.edu/lgbtq/](http://studentlife.tamu.edu/lgbtq/). Jackson said getting involved, whether it be within the queer community or in other campus groups, is crucial.

"To any student, I would say 'get involved,'" Jackson said. "There is so much





Cameron Johnson — THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M LGBTQ+ Pride Center is located on the second floor of the Student Services Building. Students can utilize study and social spaces in a supportive environment.

out-of-classroom learning that students experience in their university, so definitely get involved and find a passion area ... to find support and community.”

Another support organization is Out in STEM, known as oSTEM, which advocates for queer students by building community, assisting in professional networking and offering scholarships. President Zanab Toppa said oSTEM was originally founded to help queer students succeed as they enter the workforce.

“National oSTEM was created because LGBT students had one of the lowest retention rates of all demographics, so they wanted to improve those statistics,” Toppa said. “Our founders of the A&M chapter started oSTEM in the spring of 2017; we were one of the first professional societies at A&M specifically for LGBTQ students, so one of our main focuses

is connecting students with LGBTQ friendly companies.”

In addition to inviting professionals who have advocated for LGBTQ+ resources at their own companies to speak to students, Toppa said oSTEM also provides social events and community, with plans to expand moving forward.

“We also have a variety of other events, such as guided discussions ... queer book club, so even though we’re a professional society, we do focus on LGBTQ advocacy,” Toppa said. “That’s something we’d like to expand on next school year. We have the professional side, but also the social side.”

The best way to get to know these resources, as well as affirming organizations that may have other focuses, is through the annual Rainbow Resource Fair. Gettleman said the

fair in 2021 was his passion project, and he greatly enjoys the experience each year.

“[2021] was one of the biggest turnouts we’ve had for the fair,” Gettleman said. “It has so many different booths and you can see how much support the community has here, and hopefully it will make incoming students feel less isolated.”

Toppa said, for incoming students, it’s important to know there are people on campus who share the same experiences, identities and values.

“I’d want students to know the queer community at A&M is much bigger than it initially looks,” Toppa said. “We have a ton of resources to provide and we can connect them to resources, and even oSTEM has a lot of resources that aren’t utilized, so I’d encourage people to get connected to those.”

Overall, Gettleman said incoming students, regardless of sexual or gender identity, should be confident in themselves, despite the challenges of being new to campus.

“Don’t be scared. I was scared to be here because of the reputation [A&M] has, but also I was just scared to go out and meet new people, it’s daunting,” Gettleman said. “Put yourself out there, go talk to new people, because you will find that community that makes you feel at home.”

“Find your community, people you’re legitimately comfortable being yourself around. If you don’t think you can come out to them, find new friends who make you feel celebrated for who you are.”



# Disability Resources aids student experiences



Pilar Ibarra — THE BATTALION

University studies junior **Sydney Fulton** works at Disability Resources, located on the first floor of the Student Services Building.

## Accommodations help students with disabilities succeed at A&M

By **Hannah Shaffer**  
@hannahsban

**B**eing successful in college is often a difficult task for most students. For students with disabilities, having accessible options is crucial during their time at Texas A&M.

The Department of Disability Resources provides services and accommodations to ensure all Aggies meet their full potential during their time at A&M. Providing opportunities from braille textbooks to peer note-taking, Disability Resources helps students overcome obstacles they may face in a college environment.

Disability Resources director Kristie Orr, Ph.D., said the goal of Disability Resources is to level the playing field so all students can be successful in their academic career.

“If a student who needs an accommodation is not getting it, they are disadvantaging themselves,” Orr said.

To register with Disability Services, students must submit an application on the Disability Resources website along with any applicable documentation to support their request. An access coordinator will be assigned to work with the student to discuss which ac-

commodations would be appropriate, according to the website.

Access coordinators ensure that students’ needs are met with the accommodations that fit best for them. Each access coordinator works with specific colleges and provides educational outreach to their assigned colleges to help advisers or faculty members better understand the importance of accessibility, Orr said. Each acts as a liaison between the student and their professors to ensure the student’s needs are met within the classroom.

The Disability Resources Testing Center, located in the Student Services Building, provides students with a place outside of the classroom to take exams and quizzes. For political science junior James Lifton, the testing center is a quiet space that allows him to focus on the assignment at hand rather than the distractions a normal classroom might have.

“If I didn’t have accommodations, I probably wouldn’t be in school,” Lifton said. “Having accommodations has helped me realize that yeah, I might need a little bit more help, but I’m still completing my work in my own space.”

Students who utilize the testing center are able to take their quizzes or exams in a quiet room by themselves with the option of extra time to complete their assignments. According to Disability Resources, some other exam accommodations provided are large print, adaptive hardware and software, braille versions of the exam and an exam reader.

Program coordinator for Assistive Technology Services Justin Romack helps to provide technology-related accommodations for students. Assistive technology includes features such as audio or electronic versions of texts, voice recognition software and braille writers. The use of assistive technology can be an essential tool in helping students read and comprehend information more efficiently, Romack said.

“I think it’s really critical to remember that disabled students are qualified students,” Romack said. “When I think about accommodations, when I think about technology, I ultimately think about equipping our students with tools to facilitate equity.”

Romack also does presentations to student organizations and courses about the availability of disability accommodations on campus. His presentations discuss reframing the disabled identity and disability as an aspect of diversity, Romack said.

“I, as a disabled person, have a unique identity because of my experiences,” Romack said. “But when it comes to diversity, we’re learning a lot about how people navigate the world differently. Instead of being afraid of it or not taking the time to understand it, we’ve got to have a conversation together.”

When the Student Services Building was being designed, Orr said Disability Resources had a hand in planning the accessibility features of the building. The two main entrances on the main floor are automatic glass doors,

meaning there is no need to push a button to open the doors manually. Additionally, there are no ramps or stairs leading to the building, but rather a level surface that provides access to the doorways.

“Everybody comes through the building the same exact way,” Orr said. “Whether somebody wheels or walks, the whole idea is that you don’t have to go a different way to get into the building.”

Another unique feature about the building is the two light fixtures outside the main entrances, Orr said. The lights were designed with wind chimes integrated into them so when the wind is blowing, the location of the door can be heard and not just seen.

“It’s not something that necessarily impacts everyone, but for those who are blind or have low vision, it’s another way to help them reach the doors,” Orr said. “I think the thing with accessibility is just being proactive and thinking about things ahead of time.”

No matter the difficulties a student may face in an academic environment, Disability Resources provides the opportunity for success. Accommodations help to level the playing field for those whose path to success may look different than others.

“The university’s goal is for students to learn the material and go out and be successful,” Orr said. “Some people just have to have that done in a different way. And by providing that, then that means we just have more people who are successful.”





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- Mo Adesanmi

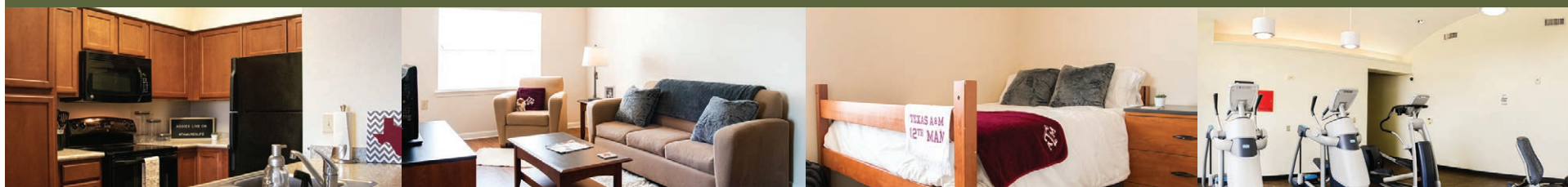


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# Softly Call the Muster



Robert O'Brien — THE BATTALION

(Left) Former Student Body President **Natalie Parks** spoke at the Campus Muster ceremony on April 21, 2022, in Reed Arena. (Right) Candles were lit for each of the 116 honorees whose name was called during the Roll Call for the Absent.

## Finding meaning in A&M's most solemn tradition of remembrance

By **Aubrey Vogel & Michaela Rush**  
@aubrey\_vogel & @Michaela4Batt

**H**eld each year on April 21, Muster celebrates and remembers the lives of Aggies who died over the previous year leading up to the ceremony. Campus Muster welcomes current students, staff and faculty members to honor loved ones, as well as the 50-year reunion class.

The first Aggie Muster was hosted in 1883 by former students and eventually turned into a campus event in 1924. In addition to the ceremony in Reed Arena, former students around the world hosted 258 local versions of the remembrance in 2022.

During Aggie Muster, “Roll Call for the Absent” is read, and a candle is lit for each honoree. Following each name, attendees will say “Here” to symbolize that even those who are no longer physically present will always be a part of the A&M community. In 2022, 116

absent Aggies were called for, from the Class of 2025 to the Class of 1946.

This event is run entirely by students on the Muster Committee, which works year-round to connect with families who have lost loved ones, as well as the returning class celebrating its 50th reunion.

Biomedical engineering senior Rachel Greve, 2021-22 awareness executive for the Muster Committee, said the event has something for everyone, regardless of their Aggie status, and can provide great comfort.

“The most important parts of Muster to me are the comfort and compassion you feel going into it. Muster is one thing where we welcome in a diverse group of individuals, both Aggies and non-Aggies. Muster is for everyone,” Greve said.

During the 2022 Muster Ceremony, now-former Student Body President Natalie Parks said even as Aggies are honored, ending their physical presence with ‘Here,’ these loved ones will always share our school spirit.

“The people we are honoring today started their Aggie experience with a ‘Howdy’ and they’re completing it with a ‘Here,’” Parks said. “But quite honestly, I’ve come to realize that there’s never truly an end point to your

time as an Aggie, and this is a big piece of what Muster is about, because even after a loved one’s physical presence has departed this earth, their memories, their names, their impacts in the many positive ways that they made people feel are going to be memorialized in our hearts and our minds forever.”

Despite the long-standing nature of Muster, political science junior Marcus Peña, 2021-22 programs executive on Muster Committee, said it still manages to be a different experience each year, which is why it’s important for students to continue to attend.

“Not everyone is there to celebrate, but not everyone is there to grieve as well,” Peña said. “People are there for different reasons, and it’ll be different every year. I think it has people wanting to come back next year. That unity that comes out of it will provide emotions students haven’t felt as Aggies yet.”

With Muster celebrated in Reed Arena and at churches, community centers and homes across the world, biology senior Addison Blakemore, external relations coordinator for Muster Committee, said April 21 brings together the over 500,000 former students worldwide, and anyone else who calls Aggieland home.

“The most rewarding thing is seeing how big a network can come together,” Blakemore said. “What scared me coming to A&M was how big it was, how many people there were here, and it was a scary change. There’s a lot of people connected to A&M as a student or faculty member or family of someone who goes to A&M. You are a part of that Aggie family, that Aggie Spirit and you get that sense of community.”

Dean of the Bush School for Government and Public Service and retired Gen. Mark A. Welsh III served as Muster Speaker at the 2022 campus ceremony and said even though he didn’t personally attend A&M, this unique tradition helps set the school apart and shows the world what Aggies value.

“For this outsider, Muster is a remarkable window into the Spirit of Aggieland. It’s also a wonderful time to reflect on why Texas A&M matters, why Aggies matter and what this ceremony tonight is really all about,” Welsh said. “Good universities make an impact on their students, on their cities, on their states, even on their country, but great universities stand for something — and this is a great university.”

# It's more than an old ring.

All its polish and ornate details may be gone, leaving only an amorphous wad of gold, but its owner sees it differently. For him, this old ring represents a special place and time where he learned who he was and what he could become. Neither he nor this ring looks the same as they did then, but they both still shine, nevertheless.

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Melanie McBride — THE BATTALION

Sbisa, Duncan and The Commons dining halls feature an array of food options like omelet stations, pizza and homestyle meals for on-campus students.

# Food for thought: On-campus dining options

A&M offers many dining locations, food across campus for students

By **Ruben Hernandez**  
@battandmuse

**A**s incoming students begin their college careers and become independent in their new homes, some will find that the time for cooking meals won't always fit on their timely agenda. To aid with time, resources and the unlikely chance that the meal will come out good on the first try, Texas A&M provides three on-campus dining halls and an assortment of well-known food chains.

The dining halls provide large seating areas and multiple cafeteria options to choose from. Dining halls include a schedule of breakfast, lunch and dinner, with each dining hall opening and closing at different time intervals.

One of these is The Commons Dining Hall, located on Southside, with food stations such as Asian inspired "Bok Choy," Latin and Southern fusion in "The Kitchen" and the classical "Pasta and Co."

The second dining hall is Duncan Dining Hall, located at the end of The Quad, which has options including a salad bar, deli and

"Homestyle" kitchen.

The third dining hall is Sbisa Dining Hall, located on Northside, which offers an omelet bar, pizza station called "500 Degrees," Italian inspired "Rooted" and sandwich shop "Carved and Crafted." Most menus change daily, so be sure to check which option fits your appetite as you enter the building.

Engineering freshmen Elizabeth Daeley and Hanna Ngai said on-campus dining has various benefits.

"One benefit of dining on campus is how you can simply walk; it's such easy access," Daeley said.

"Plus, the meal plans are really good, especially when your parents pay for it," Ngai said.

Even with such benefits, both freshmen said they see room for improvement with dining.

"The portions aren't worth the price," Daeley said.

Campus also provides a variety of well-known food chains, the most prominent ones being Chick-fil-A, found both in the Memorial Student Center cafeteria and the Sbisa Underground Food Court, and Panda Express, located at the MSC basement and the Polo Road Rec Center. Others include Papa John's Pizza, Houston Street Subs, Smash-burger, Smoothie King, Jason's Deli and a taqueria food truck located outside the Inno-

vative Learning Classroom Building on Lamar Street.

West Campus is no longer exempt from a dining hall, as a new hall was opened in January. The food hall includes a selection of Houston Street Subs, Chick-fil-A and Copperhead Jack's, broadening the access to food service for students with classes on West Campus. And for students located near White Creek Apartments and the A&M Public Health Building, Creekside Market is right around the corner, with options including Creekside Pizza, Pasta and Deli.

Apart from dining services, A&M also provides students with meal plans, which come with meal swipes — also known as dining slides or retail swipes — and dining dollars. Meal plans last for a semester, each coming with varying amounts of meal swipes, ranging from 45 to 240 swipes, and dining dollars, ranging from 300 to 500.

Incoming freshmen will auto-enroll into the Block 125 meal plan, which consists of 125 meal swipes and a choice of either 300, 400 or 500 dining dollars. Both meal swipes and dining dollars can be accessed through your student ID, effectively making them your personalized campus credit card.

Meal swipes can have two uses, either for entering a dining hall or for a retail discount

at food courts. For dining halls, you swipe in at the entrance and have access to the buffet. When used as retail swipes in places such as Chick-fil-A or Panda Express, the swipe will give you a \$7.50 discount from the total purchase price. When a purchase exceeds the \$7.50 discount, that's where the dining dollars come in.

Dining dollars are the \$1 to \$1 currency in the dining service and can be used at any dining location, except for the MSC Barnes & Noble Café. These dining dollars can be used to round off the retail swipes and can be used when you've run out of swipes as well. They can also be used at Aggie Express convenience stores across campus. Most dining plans add bonus dining dollars with the purchase of meal plans, so picking the one with the best discount will come in handy.

Students can also join the dining service and work as a receptionist or cook. Biological and agricultural engineering graduate Audrey Anderson, who has worked at Smoothie King for four years, said her experience as a student employee has been mostly positive.

"They're very good with hours," Anderson said. "And overall, it's not bad, there are easy days and there are bad days, but it's easier than any other food service job."





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# The Aggie Ring: A history



Melanie McBride — THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students show off their Aggie Rings they received after completing 90 credit hours.

One of A&M's oldest traditions hasn't always looked the same

By Kyle McClenagan  
@KMcclenagan

Since 1889, the Aggie Ring has served as an iconic symbol of Texas A&M's rich appreciation for the school's traditions and values.

The Aggie Ring has been around for 133 years and faced several challenges and multiple iterations to become the ring that Aggies around the world recognize and wear today. Currently, the ring is available in four different styles: antique, natural, polara and white gold. Each ring also comes in both a large and small size with the standard 10K gold or the optional 14K purity. Students also have the choice of adding a diamond, ranging from 10-point to 30-point, for an additional cost.

In 1899, the ring that began the lineage of the modern day design was created by the Linz Brothers Jewelry Company of Dallas and was accepted by the 1899 Class Ring Committee, chaired by then-business manager of The Battalion R.J. Poulter. This design was also adopted by the classes of 1900, 1901 and 1902, and cost students \$10.50 — \$350.47 today. Over the next two decades, the ring would see little change except for the state seal and crossed weapon charges changing sides in 1912, before returning to their original orientation in 1926, according to the Association of Former Students' website.

Scott Walker, Class of 1990 and vice president of the Association, said the ring hasn't always had a strict style.

"I don't want to say it was a free for all, but in the early days it was kind of a free for all," Walker said. "Every class did their own thing, [and] the designs might be the same for one year, or the next day they might go in a wildly

different direction."

The ring did not begin to become officially standardized until the 1930s, Walker said.

"By the turn of the century, we started seeing elements that we would recognize today," Walker said. "In the early 1930s to the mid-1930s is when it really started to get standardized, and it's really only had small changes since then, the most significant one being when the college became a university and the lettering changed."

Walker said standardizing the design was important so Aggies from different class years could still identify each other.

"Part of the value of a class ring is that it's recognizable," Walker said. "If mine looks radically different from yours, then we would not have the ability to recognize each other across the airport the way Aggies do now."

Students had a hand in finalizing the standardization in 1933 when an official senior ring committee was created by then-universi-

ty President Thomas O. Walton, Walker said.

"As things are often done at Texas A&M, [President Walton] said, 'We're going to let the students sort this out,'" Walker said. "He appointed a committee of students and charged them with cleaning up all of the chaos, so they brought together a unified design and unified requirements to earn the ring and unified manufacturing standards."

Walker said establishing manufacturing standards was important since the university had been cheated before by companies, placing lead in the rings rather than solid gold.

"That was part of the impetus for President Walton bringing that committee together," Walker said. "The students were being taken advantage of by, in some cases, unscrupulous businessmen."

In 1963, when the university began to diversify and allow women and non-Corps of Cadets members to attend, the student body decided the ring should be open to all students.

"There were a lot of other things involved in diversifying the student body and who would be allowed certain privileges," Walker said. "Ultimately, I think they made the right decision for all of these things, which is that an Aggie is an Aggie, and if you earn an Aggie Ring, you get an Aggie Ring."

Kelly Hutchinson, the Association's director of campus programs, said the antique finish of today was actually the original and only option available to students.

"It wasn't until the '70s that the rose gold ring was offered, which is the equivalent to today's natural finish," Hutchinson said. "The '70s had some significant changes to the product offerings for the Aggie Ring."

The rose gold ring was not the only new addition during the '70s, Hutchinson said.

"The white gold was introduced in 1972," Hutchinson said. "There is also another silver colored ring that is available, and that is the polara finish, [which] is a ring that contains no precious metals and was first introduced in 1976."

While other schools also offer class rings, the Aggie Ring still stands alone in its value to the student population, Walker said.

"For 94% of the students who earn it to actually buy it, it's frankly unheard of, and it's really a testament to the power of the ring and the power of the tradition and the power of the Aggie Network," Walker said.

Hutchinson said she is glad the Association is able to continue the Aggie Ring's legacy.

"I am just so incredibly proud of the time and the focus that our team puts on maintaining the integrity of the ring, and part of the reason it is known worldwide is because of that intentionality," Hutchinson said.





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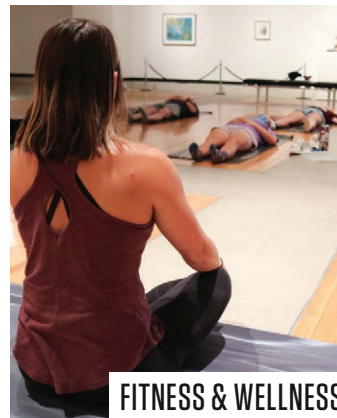
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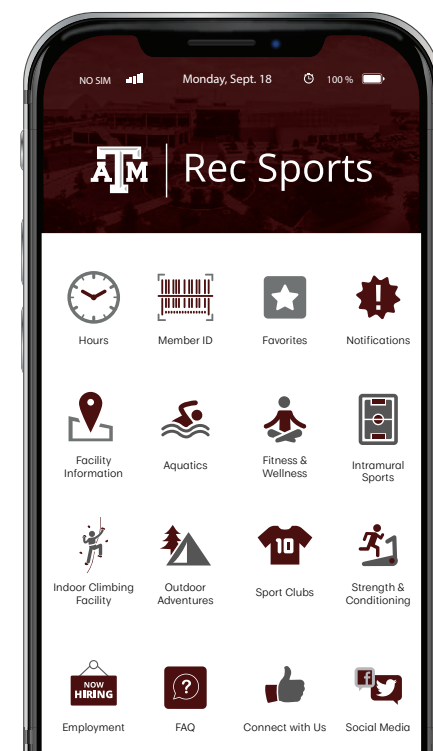


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