

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Sixty-Seven



April 11, 2023

The opinions expressed in this bulletin are those of the Board of Directors of the Sul Ross Group and do not represent the opinions of The Association of Former Students, its officers, or its Leadership.

READY TO LEAD: CAITLYNN WALSH '24 NAMED 2023-2024 CORPS COMMANDER



Figure 1 - 2023-2024 Corps Commander Caitlynn Walsh '24

As reported in a story by Amy Thompson, Corps of Cadets, on March 13, 2023, a Political Science major from Double Oak, Texas, Caitlynn Walsh has been named Corps Commander for 2023-2024. Caitlynn currently serves as the Corps' Sergeant Major for the 2022-2023 school year. As she prepares to officially step into the Corps Commander role next month at Final Review, Caitlynn took time to reflect on her unique path to Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets.

"I transferred to Texas A&M during my sophomore year from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. After reflecting on what I wanted in a university experience, I decided to make the switch to Texas A&M and joined the Corps as a transfer cadet in Company D-1. I have always wanted to serve in the military and saw the Corps as the best place to immerse myself in a community of service-driven individuals with many opportunities to further develop my leadership skills," Caitlynn said.

The release reported she has her sights set on military service and Caitlynn has chosen to pursue a Marine Corps contract through the Platoon Leaders Class, an undergraduate commissioning program. "I hope to inspire others by setting an example and showing commitment to the Corps' values of Honor, Integrity, Courage, Discipline, Respect and Selfless Service through my actions. I also aim to foster an environment

where every member feels supported, valued and encouraged to succeed and grow as a leader in this organization,” Caitlynn said, “The role of Corps Commander holds great responsibility, regardless of gender, and I see it as a tremendous opportunity to serve the university that I love.”

For over 145 years, the Corps of Cadets has served as Texas A&M’s premier leadership organization, developing leaders from all walks of life. Though Caitlynn took a non-traditional path to the Corps of Cadets, the opportunities available to her were endless. The Corps of Cadets serves as a place for every individual, regardless of their goals for the future, to develop into well rounded leaders prepared for any challenge they may face.

Corps Leadership Team – 2023 – 2024

The largest, oldest and most visible student organization at Texas A&M University — the Corps of Cadets — has selected their senior leadership for the 2023-24 school year. Four cadets were identified to fill the most senior leadership positions of corps commander, deputy corps commander, chief of staff and sergeant major:

- **Corps Commander:** Caitlynn Walsh, Double Oak, Texas.
- **Deputy Corps Commander:** Klayton House, Athens, Texas.
- **Chief of Staff:** Callie Guest, Cypress, Texas.
- **Sergeant Major:** Deandre Macri, Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Cadets complete a thorough selection process that consists of an application and an interview with a panel of peers and staff. All applicants are evaluated on academic performance, performance in the corps, success in previous leadership positions, peer/staff evaluations, and their leadership vision for the future.

To position the Corps of Cadets for continued and sustained growth over the next several years, the Corps of Cadets will realign the organizational structure beginning with the 2023-24 school year. The realignment of the corps structure provides a greater span of control across the organization while positioning the Corps for long-term, sustainable growth. Eight cadets were selected to serve as major unit commanders or sergeants major for the corps’ four major units:

- **1st Brigade Commander:** Ethan Finney, Fort Rucker, Alabama.
- **1st Brigade Sergeant Major:** Caleb Riggs, Alice, Texas.
- **1st Regiment Commander:** Graham Wolfe, Fort Worth, Texas.
- **1st Regiment Sergeant Major:** James Guandolo, Dallas, Texas.
- **1st Wing Commander:** Rebecca Collins, Cameron, Texas.
- **1st Wing Sergeant Major:** McKinsey Bosman, Glen Arbor, Michigan.
- **Aggie Band Commander:** Daniel Mackenzie, McKinney, Texas.
- **Aggie Band Sergeant Major:** Tristan Lanclos, Katy, Texas.

To read further, go to link below:

<https://corps.tamu.edu/23-24-corps-leadership/>

**GOVERNOR ABBOTT APPOINTS THREE
TO TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS**

Chancellor John Sharp reported in a press release on March 14, 2023, that Governor Greg Abbott has appointed David Baggett, John Bellinger, and Sam Torn to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents for terms set to expire on February 1, 2029.



Figure 2 - David Baggett

David Baggett of Houston is founder and managing partner of Opportune LLP, a global business advisory firm. He has over 40 years of professional experience, over 35 of which have been spent in the energy industry in various capacities. He is chair of the Independent Petroleum Association of America Capital Markets Committee and a member of the Houston Producer's Forum and the Turnaround Management Association. He is a board member of the Greater Houston Partnership and the Harris County Sheriff's Office Foundation and a former board member of the Houston Methodist Academic Institute. Baggett has served on various advisory boards for Texas A&M University, including the Accounting Department Advisory Council and the Mays Business School Dean's Development Council. Baggett received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from

Texas A&M University.



Figure 3 - John Bellinger

John Bellinger of San Antonio is the co-founder, with his wife Gina, and the former CEO of Food Safety Net Services (FSNS). He is the CEO of Agri-West International food exporter as well as Bellinger Development. He is the former chairman of the U.S. Meat Export Federation and the Southwest Meat Association. He is also a member of the Texas A&M University College of Agriculture Development Council, as well as an adviser to the Animal Science Department. He is the recipient of the 2007 Outstanding Alumnus for Texas A&M University College of Agriculture and the Outstanding Alumnus of Texas A&M University Animal Science Department in 2014. He has also been inducted into the U.S. Meat Industry Hall of Fame in 2022. Bellinger

received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and a Master of Science in Animal Science from Texas A&M University.



Figure 4 - Sam Torn

Sam Torn of Houston is the owner and operator of Camp Ozark and Camp OTX, as well as the co-founder of Camp War Eagle. He is a member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and an emeritus member of the State Bar of Texas. He is chairman of the Camp Ozark Foundation, founding chairman of Ozone Ministries, former member of the GAP Ministries Board of Directors, and former chairman of the Texas A&M University 12th Man Foundation. Torn received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from Texas A&M University, a Master of Business Administration from The University of Texas at Austin, and a Juris Doctor degree from South Texas College of Law.

These appointments are subject to Senate confirmation.

Mr. Torn also was an instrumental part of the redevelopment of Kyle Field. He helped prepare the financial and fund-raising plan that enabled the \$500 million project to go forward.

To read more, go to this link:

<https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-appoints-three-texas-am-university-system-board-of-regents>

WHO OWNS THE UNIVERSITY?



Figure 5 – Texas A&M President Lawrence Sullivan Ross.

A Wall Street Journal piece on March 16, 2023, by Richard Veder, an emeritus professor of economics at Ohio University asks the question: To whom does a school belong? Mr. Veder says that in the competitive private marketplace, ownership is clear. Elon Musk owns Twitter and can hire and fire as he wishes. However, while practices vary greatly in the thousands of American colleges and universities, many groups claim at least partial ownership and control. Mr. Veder lists these groups below:

- “• *The board.* Most schools, public or private, are overseen by a legally constituted governing board.

- *The politicians.* At public institutions, the state government usually is the legal “owner” of the school.

- *The administrators.* A school’s president and senior bureaucrats are vested with executive responsibility, which resembles ownership.

- *The faculty.* The professors who administer academic offerings and conduct grant-inducing research often feel the school belongs to them.

- *The students.* They are a primary reason for the school’s existence and their families pay substantial tuition and fees.

- *The alumni.* Graduates constitute the donor base at most private schools and some public ones as well.

- *The accrediting agencies.* The federal Education Department charges these bodies with certifying an institution’s right to confer degrees.”

While religious schools and elite private schools fit different models, state or government -owned schools rely at least somewhat on public funding. Mr. Veder says that as many universities have become increasingly dominated by left-leading faculties, doctrines on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) have become imbedded in hiring, admissions, and curricula.

State legislature and government organizations have begun to push back in North Carolina, Florida, and Texas. The University of North Carolina board of governors voted 12-0 to create a new school committed to free expression in

higher education. Veder's piece stated that "a Texas state senator has introduced a bill to turn the free-market minded Civitas Institute at the University of Texas, Austin, into a formal college. The Free Market Institute—which "advances research and teaching related to the free enterprise system and the institutional environment necessary for it to function well"—flourishes at Texas Tech. Several bills are pending in the Texas legislature to ban public funding for DEI and CRT at public colleges and universities. Florida has funded the creation of a new Hamilton Center for the University of Florida.

So, the discussion of "to whom does the university belong" continues and perhaps paradoxically can be decided by a free and open exchange of ideas in the true spirit of what a university should be.

Who Owns the University? - WSJ

DEI AT LAW SCHOOLS COULD BRING DOWN AMERICA

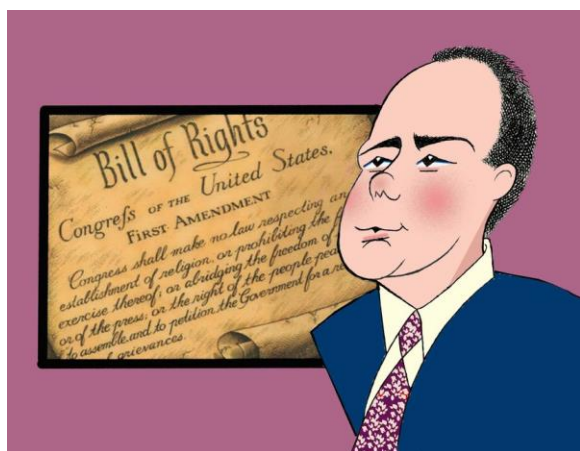


Figure 6 - Illustration by Kevin Fallin, Falls Church, VA.

Culture, history, institutions, and shared values are the foundation, glue, and cohesion that build and hold a society and nation together. In America freedom, property rights, equal justice under the law, religion, the opportunity to rise above one's origin and upbringing with hard work, and equality of all citizens form that belief system. That is why people from every nation in the world continue to immigrate legally and illegally to our shores. As a settler nation we have welcomed every ethnicity so long as they come to share our belief system. In recent decades many of those foundational beliefs

have come under attack by some groups within our nation.

In a piece written by Tunku Varadarjian on March 28, 2023, in the Wall Street Journal, he explains the alarm many feel about what is being taught and tolerated at America's elite law schools. He quotes Ilya Shapiro, director of constitutional studies at the Manhattan Institute. Mr. Shapiro says, "The professional ideologues who wield administrative authority on American college campuses want nothing less than to 'change the American constitutional system,'. They pose a grave long-term threat to 'the rule of law and inalienable rights, and even concepts like equal treatment under the law.'"

Varadarjian says, "If Mr. Shapiro were an English professor, one might put this down as a workplace dispute of marginal importance. But he has a point when he says law schools are different. They train "future lawyers and politicians and judges, and the gatekeepers to our institutions, to the rules of the game." That game has the highest of stakes: "the rule of law, upon which American prosperity and liberty and equality sit."

Varadarjiam continues, “a prime example was in the news as we spoke. Stanford’s Federalist Society chapter had invited Judge Kyle Duncan of the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to speak on campus. Confronted by a vicious leftist student mob, he asked administrators to intervene. Tirien Steinbach, the law school’s associate dean for DEI, arose to deliver prepared remarks, which concluded: “I look out and I don’t ask, ‘What’s going on here?’ I look out and I say, ‘I’m glad this is going on here.’” Ms. Steinbach has since been suspended by the Law School Dean.

Mr. Shapiro says the DEI ideas are more fashionable at the at the top-rated elite schools, but Lower rated schools such as **Texas A&M**, the University of Kansas, and UC Hastings have also had questions raised. He takes heart that “people who are not culture warriors on the left or right are starting to notice this stuff and don’t like what they see”.

To read the entire article, go to the following link:

[DEI at Law Schools Could Bring Down America - WSJ](#)

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THE COST OF COLLEGE FOOTBALL RECRUITING



Figure 7 - Texas A&M Head Football coach Jimbo Fisher.

As reported in a piece on April 5, 2023, by Brad Crawford of 247 Sports, “recruiting at an elite level in college football breeds success. Piling up top-end signing classes leads to national championships and spending the most money on acquiring talent often correlates to wins.”

The USA Today Network compiled a list of the top ten budgets in college football recruiting, which does not include the additional costs of Name, Image, And Likeness (NIL) which along with the Transfer Portal have transformed college football.

The costs of football recruiting include the cost of assistant coaches travelling across the country to secure elite players and the costs of on-campus housing, meals and entertainment for players and their families. According to the Austin American Statesman, t.u. spent \$280,000 recruiting Arch Manning along with his family. The following are the budgets of the top ten spending programs in the NCAA In the 2023 cycle.

10. FLORIDA GATORS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$1.6 million

9. OREGON DUCKS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$1.8 million

8. MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$2.2 million

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7. ALABAMA CRIMSON TIDE

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$2.3 million

6. TEXAS LONGHORNS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$2.4 million

5. OKLAHOMA SOONERS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$2.6 million

4. TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$2.9 million

3. TEXAS A&M AGGIES

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$3 million

2. CLEMSON TIGERS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$3.2 million

1. GEORGIA BULLDOGS

Spending on 2023 recruiting: \$4.5 million

As further reinforcement for the article's key point, in 2021, Texas A&M signed the overall No. 1 class of all time, and Georgia has won back-to-back national championships.

To read more, go to the following link:

[College football recruiting: Georgia, Clemson lead 2023 cycles 10 biggest spenders \(247sports.com\)](https://247sports.com)



WHO, WHY, AND HOW TO RECEIVE THE SRG BULLETINS?

It was previously The Association of Former Students' policy that anyone could "opt in" (register and grant permission) to receive the 56 SRG produced Bulletins which began in 2020. In mid-April 2022, the policy guidance was changed so that only SRG members

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can now receive them. The “opt in” system was rescinded by The Association so that now, non-SRG persons no longer can be recipients. That rescission and change in policy also included three conditions: (1) that SRG can no longer express opinions or include “opinion-based” material in the bulletins, (2) that the SRG can only issue one bulletin each month, and (3) that our “bulletins” be simply typical SRG newsletters. Accordingly, in order to maintain our independence of thought and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to abandon the email service of The Association, known as “List Serve”, and to communicate with you directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents. The Board intends to maintain our policy of complete transparency and that is the reason we have inserted the disclaimer on the front page of this bulletin. To communicate with the SRG address your emails to SRGPresident@gmail.com.

If you wish comment to those who decide:

Chancellor Sharp: chancellor@tamus.edu

The Board of Regents: vickie@tamus.edu or jbell@tamus.edu

President Banks: president@tamu.edu

Interim Provost Alan Sams: asams@tamu.edu

Athletic Director Bjork: rrabun@athletics.tamu.edu

You can reach us at: SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com. The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are responsible for producing and editing these SRG Bulletins, with transparency to and advice from The Association of Former Students, under whose auspices we operate. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution’s Purposes, which is keeping our represented SRG Membership informed in a timely manner. To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution, please refer to our new “**SRG Tab**” (Under “**Programs**”) on The Association’s website, at: aggienetwork.com. One can access information about us, including the current 2021-2022 SRG Board of Directors, The SRG’s Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG’s history and what we are about.