

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Seventy -One



July 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 leadership. Our intention is in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's purposes, to keep the Sul Ross Group membership informed on pertinent topics and occurrences at TAMU in a timely manner and enlist their support when required.

STATE OFFICIALS OK RECORD \$1.19 BILLION FOR TEXAS A&M SYSTEM



Figure 1- Texas Capital Building

By [tamus](#) June 19, 2023 Updated on June 19, 2023

BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Gov. Greg Abbott on Monday approved a record \$1.19 billion in new spending for The Texas A&M University System, including money to freeze undergraduate tuition and fees for Texas residents the next two years.

The new spending, which was contained in several bills, is the first time in history the Texas A&M System has eclipsed a billion dollars in new funding from the state.

The A&M System took the lead on its three priorities: keeping college affordable, keeping Texas prepared to respond to disasters and increasing a state match so Prairie View A&M University could qualify for federal funding.

In addition to tuition reform, the System also played a pivotal role as lawmakers enacted largely the Texas A&M System tenure system, plus adopted changes in the Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) legislation based on the Texas A&M University's recommendations.

"We are thankful to state officials for meeting the needs of higher education in what is a historic legislative session for higher education," said John Sharp, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System.

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"It was a team effort, but the Regents, in particular, were focused on keeping college affordable in Texas," Sharp said. "Our students and their families will reap the benefits of their efforts."

In a letter to the state leaders, Chancellor Sharp said, "As Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, I would like to say how grateful I am that Texas has such strong and visionary leaders in our state government. You have proven your dedication to the students, prospective students, and their families by ensuring that public universities in the State of Texas can offer higher education that is nothing short of affordable, outstanding, and transformative. ...

I also would like to thank you for funding a new endowment to expand our research activities and offer additional money to more public universities that are already conducting extraordinary research and undoubtedly will push the limits even further. Every legislative session seems to have a dominant theme. In my eyes, the 88th Legislature's regular session will be known as the Higher Education Session.

Thank you again for your hard work and service to the state."

<https://news.tamus.edu/state-officials-ok-record-1-19-billion-for-texas-am-system/>

https://theeagle.com/opinion/letters/chancellor-john-sharp-thanks-state-leaders/article_69bc2170-0eef-11ee-970e-e7511c3a5b12.html#tracking-source=mp-opinion

BIDEN NOMINATES AGGIE TO LEAD U.S. MARINE CORPS



Figure 2 - General Eric Smith '87, Commandant of the Marine Corps

As reported in Texas A&M Today by Luke Henkhaus, Texas A&M University Division of Marketing and Communications on May 31, 2023

General Eric Smith '87 has been tapped to serve as the branch's next commandant of the Marine Corps, overseeing roughly 200,000 active duty and reserve personnel.

Four-star Marine Corps general and Texas A&M University graduate, Gen. Eric Smith is up for a promotion in the near future, as the Biden White House moves to make him the branch's highest-ranking officer.

Smith, who was nominated to serve as Marine Corps commandant, has filled the role of assistant commandant since late 2021. His nomination must now be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. If confirmed, he would take over the top job from retiring commandant Gen. David H. Berger, overseeing a force of nearly 180,000 active-duty Marines as well as more than 30,000 in reserve.

He would also hold a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Smith graduated from Texas A&M in 1987 with a degree in political science and was a top student leader in A&M's Corps of Cadets. He served as commander of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band and a member of the Ross Volunteer Company before commissioning into the Marines.

General Smith has served extensively at home and overseas, commanding troops at every level. Back on the home front, he has served as deputy commandant for combat development and integration, and senior military assistant to former Defense Secretary Ash Carter, among other roles. Smith holds two Defense Distinguished Service Medals, two Bronze Stars, a Legion of Merit, and a Purple Heart.

"Throughout his long and distinguished career, Smith has always kept Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets close to his heart," said Texas A&M Vice President for Student Affairs Brig. Gen. Joe E. Ramirez, Jr. '79.

"Despite all the success he has achieved in the military, Eric has never forgotten his Texas A&M roots, and has always enjoyed coming back to campus to speak to students and cadets or to serve as a reviewing officer for the Corps of Cadets' march-ins," he said.

As Ramirez notes, Smith's extensive experience and clear record of selfless service make him an excellent candidate to lead this elite branch of the military.

"He is an exceptionally accomplished leader who will no doubt serve this nation extremely well as the commandant of the Marine Corps," Ramirez said. "But he remains a humble, respectful, and proud Texas Aggie who embodies our core values in all that he does. All Texas Aggies should take great pride in one of our very best being selected to the highest position in the United States Marine Corps."

<https://today.tamu.edu/2023/05/31/biden-nominates-aggie-to-lead-u-s-marine-corps/>

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM STARTS "ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE REVIEW" OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION EFFORTS AHEAD OF BAN



Figure 3 - Texas A&M University System Seal

BY KATE MCGEE JUNE 26, 2023

Credit: *Shelby Knowles for The Texas Tribune*

The Texas A&M University System is starting to take stock of all university activities, programs or groups that try to foster a diverse and inclusive campus environment as it prepares for a new law to go into effect next year. That law, signed by Gov. Greg Abbott on June 14, bans diversity, equity and inclusion offices, trainings, and programs at all state's public colleges and universities.

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SB 17 says universities cannot create diversity offices, hire employees to conduct DEI work or require any DEI training as a condition for being hired by or admitted to the university. All hiring practices must be “color-blind and sex-neutral.”

The bill would also prohibit universities from asking job candidates to provide written answers about how they consider diversity in their work or sharing how they would work with diverse populations, commonly known as diversity statements. Critics have equated diversity statements with ideological oaths, while supporters say they help ensure job candidates are prepared to support students from all backgrounds.

According to a June 13 memo obtained by The Texas Tribune, A&M System leaders have launched a “Systemwide Ethics and Compliance Program Review” to ensure its universities are following state and federal equal employment opportunity laws and the new bill that bans DEI offices, Senate Bill 17. They directed presidents at the system’s 11 public universities to provide copies of all campus work related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

In the letter, system leaders cast a wide net in their request for information, instructing university presidents to provide “documents and information” about all diversity programs, trainings and initiatives that are provided by the university’s DEI office or by a specific college or academic department. University leaders must provide details on all programs that “promote different treatment of, or provide special benefits to, persons due to their race, color or ethnicity, if any.”

The memo also asks for a list of faculty organizations that support faculty of a particular gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation as well as any employee and student handbooks, mission statements or media communications that focus on DEI efforts.

The memo asks that universities provide details on the source of funding for each program, initiative, training, or campus organization. Universities must provide the information to the system by June 30.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2023/06/26/texas-am-dei-compliance-review/>

DoD HONORS TEXAS A&M SYSTEM FOR NATIONAL SECURITY LEADERSHIP, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE EXCELLENCE

By tamus June 7, 2023 Updated on June 7, 2023



Figure 4 - Seal of The Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency

News Release, The Texas A&M University System, Office of Marketing and Communications

BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION, Texas — The Texas A&M University System received more recognition for being a national leader in counterintelligence and protecting sensitive information. The Defense of Counterintelligence and Security Agency of the U.S. Department of Defense awarded The Texas A&M University System both the James S. Cogswell Award for Outstanding Industrial Security, the most prestigious honor it can bestow, as well as the DCSA Jack Donnelly Award for Excellence in Counterintelligence.

.The Texas A&M System is the only higher education institution from Texas to receive the James S. Cogswell Award, among other prominent industrial security specialists such as Lockheed Martin.

“The Texas A&M System takes security very seriously, and we appreciate the recognition,” John Sharp, chancellor of the Texas A&M System, said. “We will continue our diligent work to stay ahead of the malicious governments and rogue organizations who seek to access the sensitive work we have been trusted to do.”

The DCSA officials chose the Texas A&M System from over 10,000 facilities that have been cleared to do classified work for the federal government. The agency considered factors that included establishing and maintaining a security program that far exceeds the basic National Industrial Security Program requirements and providing leadership to other facilities with security clearance by helping them establish best practices for maintaining the highest standards for security.

“This award is a testament to the collective strength and expertise of our entire security team,” said Ryan Mills, the System’s facility security officer. “Together, we uphold the highest standards of security and remain vigilant guardians of our organization’s mission and values.”

The System was also selected for its Excellence in Counterintelligence Award over 12,500 corporate and academic entities. The accomplishment recognizes the System as having one of the nation’s leading counterintelligence programs.

This occasion marks the third time the Texas A&M System has won the James S. Cogswell Award and the Award for Excellence in Counterintelligence. Further, the System is the only academic institution to have received this honor an unprecedented three times.

Dr. Kevin Gamache, chief research security officer, leads the Research Security Office of the Texas A&M System and works hard to protect critical defense information, products, and research.

Dr. Gamache and his team remain on the front lines to protect the Texas A&M System, which conducts approximately \$1.2 billion in research expenditures annually.

To read more go to the link below:

<https://www.tamus.edu/dod-honors-texas-am-system-for-national-security-leadership-counterintelligence-excellence/>

COACH TERRY PRICE PASSES AWAY AT AGE 55

Travis L. Brown – The Eagle – June 26, 2023



Figure 7 - Terry Price – 1968 - 2023

It's been more than three decades since former Texas A&M head football coach R.C. Slocum first met a 17-year-old defensive lineman from Plano named Terry Price, but he didn't skip a beat retelling the story in his trademark Texas drawl.

Price's former college coach was one of many who spent time remembering the life of the former Aggie defensive lineman and A&M defensive ends coach.

"He was one of those special guys who was in coaching for the right reasons," Slocum told The Eagle. "He cared about his players and was trying to make them better, and his players really cared [for him]. I was around them enough to see. He cooked out for them on a regular basis and would

have them over to his house and cook, not only his position but other players would come over. He was one of the favorites on the team."

For as unique as Price's recruitment turned out to be, Slocum had little chance of forgetting it. Price's father and high school coach made it known to all interested colleges that he would not allow any recruiting contact during his son's senior season. Any violation of that rule would disqualify a program from signing Price, said Slocum, who then served as A&M's defensive coordinator under Jackie Sherrill.

"I didn't call," Slocum said with a laugh. "It was kind of an unusual deal for recruiting, but we went along with it."

When Price's senior season at Plano ended, A&M was one of the schools invited to make a recruiting pitch to the Price family. The Aggies' selling points proved successful. Price selected College Station as one of the destinations for his five official recruiting trips.

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From 1986-89, Price lined up on the front line of A&M's famous "Wrecking Crew" defense, helping the Aggies claim Southwest Conference titles in 1986 and '87. A&M went 34-14 overall, including a perfect 4-0 record against Texas, and lost only three games at Kyle Field during Price's career. He led the A&M defensive line in tackles as a junior and a senior and was named to the All-SWC team and an honorable mention All-American by The Sporting News after his senior year.

And from early on, Slocum said he could see a future coach in the making with Price. After Price spent two seasons in the NFL playing for the Chicago Bears and Miami Dolphins, he gave Slocum a call asking for advice on how to get into the coaching game. Now the Aggies' head coach, Slocum said he was eager to bring Price back to Aggieland as a graduate assistant in 1994.

"He just loved the game and loved to play and was such a high-character kind of guy, and I wasn't surprised at all," Slocum said of Price's call.

"Terry Price was one of the best line coaches of our time," now Senator Tommy Tuberville said in a statement sent to The Eagle. "I was proud to work alongside him for more than a decade, and with his leadership we accomplished amazing things at three different college football programs. Much more importantly he was a close friend for nearly three decades. I join millions of football fans in mourning his loss, and I want to offer my condolences to Kenya, Alexander, and Devin, who were the center of his universe."

Former A&M head coach Kevin Sumlin brought Price back home to A&M in 2012 to run the defensive line, and Price remained on staff through two different coaching regimes until his death Friday. He developed high-level talent including No. 1 overall draft pick Myles Garrett. But he also made human connections with even more players who never played a down of football in the NFL. It was a quality that made Price a decorated recruiter and something that stuck out to Slocum when he watched a veteran Price manage his position group.

In recent years, Slocum hosted Price and his two sons at his ranch, spending time riding around the land and making memories. That's why Slocum said he was grateful he was granted the opportunity to visit Price in a Houston hospital Monday to say his goodbyes. Slocum said though Price was unable to communicate and was hooked up to a multitude of devices, Price knew he was there

"His opened up and looked at me, and I could tell that he was talking to me through his eyes," Slocum said. "I got some things said that needed to be said, and I was so thankful that I got to see him one last time." Price died of cancer on June 23rd.

"He was just such a good guy," Slocum said. "It came across loud and clear when you talked to him. ... He was one of those kinds of guys you couldn't help but like."

https://theeagle.com/sports/college/aggiesports/football/rc-slocum-tommy-tuberville-reflect-on-life-of-texas-a-m-defensive-ends-coach-terry/article_06721ffa-12c5-11ee-b39f-63322653bd05.html

The 88th Texas Legislature wrapped up its regular session on May 29th with over 4,500 bills passed. These include the following three that affect Texas A&M University:

TENURE OUTCOME BENEFITS TEXAS A&M



Figure 5 – John Sharp - THE EAGLE FILE PHOTO

ALEX MILLER - The Eagle - June 24, 2023

A&M Chancellor John Sharp said earlier this week that A&M officials approached the state legislature's tenure discussion with the way A&M runs theirs, which he noted is different from other universities. Sharp said he always figured there was a good chance the House would not pass the Senate's version of the tenure bill. He also thought both sides were interested in passing a tenure bill that works.

The final version of the tenure bill isn't a big change from A&M's current format, Sharp noted.

"If we abolish tenure, we would run into some difficulties to try and recruit folks here when everyone else was giving it," Sharp said. "Right or wrong, if everybody else is giving it and you're not, you're at a disadvantage. So, we tried to reach a happy medium between the House and the Senate. We presented that bill and pretty much with some strengthening, that's what wound up happening. But we started working on that with members of the Legislature at the very beginning of the session."

"Without tenure, if it had gone the other way, we would no longer have two amazing universities because assistant professors would stop coming here, which would then drive out lots of other faculty who could find other jobs."

https://theeagle.com/news/a_m/faculty-senate-head-pleased-with-tenure-bill/article_3ec4cc08-113b-11ee-b6d2-278266ef0909.html

TEXAS AEROSPACE RESEARCH & SPACE ECONOMY CONSORTIUM

HB 3447 creates a new consortium of Texas higher education institutions to identify research opportunities to promote commercial space activities. This consortium will plan and implement educational opportunities across the state, advance the state's space-related economic development and provide grants to eligible institutions — such as Texas A&M — from the Space Exploration and Aeronautics Research Fund.

<https://www.aggienetwork.com/advocacy/#getinformed>

NAME, IMAGE, AND LIKENESS (NIL)



Figure 6 Texas A&M University Athletic Director Ross Bjork testified before the House Committee on Higher Education on March 27.

HB 2804 clarifies Texas' laws on name, image, and likeness (NIL) for student athletes. It also updates allowable activities for university employees to assist student athletes with the identification of NIL opportunities, provided the employee receives no financial gain from the student athlete's opportunity.

While allowing student athletes to enter into contracts for the use of their name, image, or likeness, it also continues the conditions under which this is allowed. Most importantly, this updated legislation allows Texas institutions to remain competitive in its recruitment and retention of

student athletes.

While not yet signed by Gov. Greg Abbott, he expressed his support for the bill on social media on May 23, writing that *"Texas is poised to have the biggest and boldest NIL law for our college athletes. Everything is bigger in Texas!"*

<https://www.aggienetwork.com/advocacy/#getinformed>



Reveille X

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

In order to maintain independence of thought and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to communicate directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents and then shared with those in their Classes. Anyone is free to pass these bulletins to any Aggie, friends of Aggies, or just friends. The Board plans to maintain our policy of complete transparency and that is the reason we have inserted the disclaimer on the front page of this bulletin. **You can contact us at: SRGbulletin@gmail.com**

The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are solely responsible for producing the SRG Bulletins. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's purposes, which is to ensure our represented SRG Membership is kept informed on pertinent topics in a timely manner.

To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG's history and what we are about, please refer to our new "**SRG Tab**" (Under "**Programs**") on The Association's website, at: **aggienetwork.com**.

Mark your calendar - Sul Ross '24 Reunion will be March 5 – 7, 2024 in College Station

If you wish to comment to those who decide:

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