

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Seventy-Two



July 22, 2023 (DRAFT)

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.

TEXAS A&M PRESIDENT KATHY BANKS TO RETIRE IMMEDIATELY

By [tamugroup.org](https://www.tamugroup.org) July 21, 2023 Updated on July 21, 2023



News Release

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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Dean Mark Welsh Named Acting President in Wake of Hiring Controversy



BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Chancellor John Sharp today announced Dean Mark A. Welsh III as acting President after Texas A&M University President M. Katherine Banks submitted a letter late Thursday announcing she would retire immediately.

The announcement comes after the Faculty Senate passed a resolution Wednesday to create a fact-finding committee into the mishandling of the hiring of Dr. Kathleen McElroy, a University of Texas professor, former *New York Times* journalist and graduate of Texas A&M University, class of 1981.

In June, the university announced the hiring of McElroy to revive the school's journalism program, but that fell apart as the details of the job offer changed from a position with the possibility of tenure to a one-year professor of practice appointment, with the option to renew.

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At the Faculty Senate meeting Wednesday, President Banks denied knowing about the changes in the job offer but took responsibility for a flawed hiring process after a wave of national publicity suggesting McElroy, who has done research on diversity and inclusion, was a victim of “anti-woke” hysteria and outside interference in the faculty hiring process.

Public universities in Texas are in the middle of eliminating offices of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to comply with recent state legislation.

In her resignation letter to Chancellor Sharp, President Banks wrote, “The recent challenges regarding Dr. McElroy have made it clear to me that I must retire immediately. The negative press is a distraction from the wonderful work being done here.”

Two years ago, Dr. Banks became the 26th President of Texas A&M University after a decade of excellence as Vice Chancellor and Dean of Engineering at the university. She led efforts for the Texas A&M System to become the only university in Texas to help manage a national weapons lab, the Los Alamos National Laboratory; created EnMed, a program training engineers to become medical doctors; and oversaw dramatic enrollment growth at the nation’s largest engineering school.

Chancellor Sharp thanked Dr. Banks for her years of service and named Welsh as acting president until the Board of Regents can meet to name an Interim President. Chancellor Sharp is recommending Welsh continue as Interim President until a national search can find Dr. Banks’ successor.

Welsh, a retired Air Force general, is the Dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service.

President Kathy Banks’ Resignation Letter

Chancellor,

First, thank you for the opportunity to serve at this wonderful university. It has been an honor of a lifetime.

The recent challenges regarding Dr. McElroy have made it clear to me that I must retire immediately. The negative press is a distraction from the wonderful work being done here.

I wish Texas A&M nothing but the best. It has been a privilege to serve under you.

Kathy

<https://news.tamug.edu/texas-am-president-kathy-banks-to-retire-immediately/>

GENERAL (RET.) MARK A. WELSH III TO SERVE AS **INTERIM** TAMU PRESIDENT



Figure 2 - GENERAL (RET.) MARK A. WELSH III

General (Ret.) Mark A. Welsh III became Dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service on August 15, 2016, after retiring from the U.S. Air Force. Welsh, who was born in San Antonio, earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy and a Master of Science degree in computer resource management from Webster University, and graduated from the Army Command and General Staff College, the Air War College and the National War College. He was a fellow of Seminar XXI at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a fellow of the National Security Studies Program of Syracuse University and Johns Hopkins University, a fellow of Ukrainian Security Studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a fellow of the Pinnacle Course of the National Defense University and a graduate of the General Manager Program at the Harvard Business School. During his long military career, he received numerous awards and decorations, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster and Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster.

Welsh became the 20th Chief of Staff of the Air Force in August 2012, serving as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 664,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he and other service chiefs functioned as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and President. His most recent post was Commander of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Commander of NATO's Air Command at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. He also served as Associate Director of Military Affairs at the Central Intelligence Agency and as Commandant of the United States Air Force Academy.

<https://bush.tamu.edu/about/deanscorner/>

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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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