

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Eighty-Four (84)



May 16, 2024

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. The SRG is a nonpartisan organization. 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.



Memorial Day – May 27

All gave some, some gave all. Least, we forget.

PRESIDENTS BRIEF - GENERAL (RET.) MARK A. WELSH III

April 19, 2024



Figure 1 - Jack Willams Administration Building

Quick-Look Implementation:

Our leaders for the College Station campus, Galveston and McAllen campuses are making great progress thanks to the collaboration and support from our faculty and staff. Below are a few highlights:

As you'll recall, one of my decisions was to allow our academic units to determine whether they want to be a "college" or a "school." I'm happy to share that we're one step closer to these units being able to utilize their preferred designation. Requests for name changes were approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, effective Aug.15, for the following units: College of Architecture; College of Dentistry; College of

Education and Human Development; College of Medicine; College of Nursing; College of Performance, Visualization and Fine Arts; Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy; and the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Please note, the units mentioned above should continue using their current naming structure until the Aug. 15 date. Rebranding plans are being developed as we speak, and next steps will be communicated directly with these impacted units.

Under the direction of Ethan Braden, our Vice President and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, 164 full-time equivalents or ~\$9 million of marketing and communications talent, were redeployed to the colleges, schools and divisions as part one of the transformation of Texas A&M's central marketing and communications team. This reorganization will allow the central team to focus efforts externally on building Texas A&M's national reputation, while empowering unit teams to perform value-added unit-level marketing and communications duties.

Research Identity and Academic Roadmap:

I outlined eight priorities for our future in my State of the University address, noting three of these priorities as “near-horizon” items we need to tackle first: 1) fix the foundation (which is being addressed through our science projects), 2) define our research identity and 3) build our academic roadmap. Below are updates on these priorities:

Dr. Jack Baldauf, Vice President for Research, is working with Ethan Braden to define our research identity, that is, what we want Texas A&M – an established research powerhouse in numerous fields and disciplines – to be known for. A committee, composed of university, System and agency representatives, has made excellent progress since their formation in February.

Dr. Tim Scott, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, is working with a team of 24 faculty, staff and students to help craft an Academic Roadmap for our undergraduate, graduate and professional students for the next five years. I've charged the group to suggest innovative and futuristic programs that address workforce needs. Plans should address interdisciplinary needs and different learning modalities. The group is also discussing badging and micro-credentialing, special populations such as veterans and first-generation students, and distance and continuing education. I would like to use the work provided by this group to guide the Vision 2040 process which I intend to kick off in fall 2024.

As we begin to wind down the spring semester, I'm reminded that this is the time of year when we recognize the accomplishments of our campus community through celebrations of faculty, staff and student excellence.

Just last week, we came together for our Staff and Student Excellence Awards ceremony. If you weren't able to attend, I encourage you to view the recording and photos. It was a good time for all with plenty of cheering (and even a few celebratory posters made by doting colleagues). And at the end of the month, the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs will host the inaugural Faculty Affairs Spring Awards ceremony to celebrate Texas A&M faculty and staff achievements.

I really mean it when I tell people that Texas A&M is blessed with incredible faculty, unbelievable staff and the best students on the planet. You make us proud. I hope you'll take time to celebrate and recognize colleagues in your colleges, schools and units for their accomplishments and dedication to our mission. And don't forget to

pat yourself on the back. You deserve it!

Please share your thoughts, questions and concerns at president@tamu.edu. To read the full story, go to: <https://president.tamu.edu/messages/presidents-brief-2024-04.html>

Thanks, and Gig 'em!

General (Ret.) Mark A. Welsh III, President



\$25 MILLION LEAD GIFT FROM MAYS FAMILY FOUNDATION WILL FUND TEXAS A&M GRADUATE BUILDING

Amber Elliott, Houston Chronicle Staff writer April 26, 2024

Professor Nate Sharp, dean of the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University,

describes late businessman Lowry Mays as the quintessential Aggie. He enrolled at A&M in the late 1950s, joined the Corps of Cadets and graduated with a degree in petroleum engineering before later earning an MBA from Harvard Business School. In 1972, the Houston native founded Clear Channel Communications in San Antonio, the city where he died in 2022 at age 87.

In the mid-1990s, Mays' \$15 million gift to A&M helped establish what was then called the College of Business. The school now bears his name. In 2017, the Mays family contributed an additional \$25 million across multiple gifts.

On Friday, A&M announced another \$25 million from the Mays Family Foundation, which serves as the lead gift toward constructing a third building within what is now the Mays Business Education Complex. Upon its completion, slated for December 2028, the Lowry Mays Class of '57 Building will be dedicated for graduate programs.

"I would characterize Lowry Mays as a man who was generous throughout his life. He embodied the Aggie core values," Sharp told the Chronicle. "Whether you're talking about his personal life, family life, professional life, or relationship with Texas A&M University, he is someone I unequivocally point to and tell our students, 'This is the type of person you should strive to become and emulate, and what it means to be an Aggie.'"

The latest donation from the Mays Family Foundation is the single largest gift given to Mays Business School and one of the most significant gifts awarded to any academic college or school at A&M.

The Lowry Mays Class of '57 Building eventually will house both existing and forthcoming graduate programs, which will allow A&M to remain competitive against comparable business schools across the country.

"(Lowry) told me more than once that one of the reasons he was so successful in his career was because of what he learned at Texas A&M," said David Green, managing director of the Mays Family Foundation. Kathy Mays Johnson, daughter of Lowry and Peggy Mays, currently serves as chair of the Mays Family Foundation.

To read more, go to: <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/article/25-million-mays-business-school-a-m-19420399.php>



SECRETARY OF AIR FORCE VISITS RELLIS

April 19, 2024

A top Pentagon decisionmaker came Thursday to Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M-RELLIS Campus to see firsthand the many ways we are advancing technologies for national security. "I am impressed," Frank Kendall, Secretary of the Air Force, told me and other officials during a briefing at RELLIS. "There is a lot more going on here than I was aware of."

Kendall is the civilian Defense Department leader of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force. His time in Bryan-College Station follows a visit late last year by the highest-ranking military officer in the Space Force, Gen. B. Chance Saltzman.

Kendall toured labs near Easterwood Airport and at the George H.W. Bush Combat Development Complex at RELLIS, and he was briefed by the Texas A&M System's dream team of experts on hypersonic systems, laser technologies, space exploration, and space defense. Kendall had breakfast with Texas A&M President Mark A. Welsh III, a retired four-star general who served as Chief of Staff of the Air Force from 2012 to 2016.

The set of briefings was led by BCDC Director Tim Green, a retired major general and former director of Civil Engineering in the Air Force. Throughout the day, Kendall talked with PhD students and graduate research engineers as well as undergraduates, including members of the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets.

John Sharp told Secretary Kendall that the Texas A&M System and the State of Texas are always ready to support the nation's defense needs. "There isn't anything you can ask of us that the answer is not yes," I told him. "We will find the money. We will find a way."

As always, thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Sharp", written in a cursive style.



Figure 2 - Veterinary Emergency Team - April 2024

TEXAS A&M VETERINARY EMERGENCY TEAM (VET)

The Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team (VET) has received an award for its valiant effort to treat hundreds of animals as the historic Smokehouse Creek Fire burned its way across the Texas Panhandle.

The Smokehouse Creek Fire raged for weeks and killed two people, destroyed hundreds of structures and killed countless animals while it burned more than 1 million acres, becoming the largest wildfire in Texas

state history.

While the eyes of the world were watching the historic fire burn across the Texas Panhandle, the heroic efforts of the Texas A&M teams captured the attention of the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC). Gene O'Neill, NAVC CEO, said that's when he heard about the Texas A&M VET response and knew it would be the perfect recipient for the NAVC Gives award. "We're trying to recognize and support those that have made a profound difference in their clinic, in their community or in their profession at large," he said. "And we realized that the Texas A&M team really captured the spirit and intent of what our NAVC Gives program is really all about." And that award came with a \$10,000 contribution in recognition of the team's work.

For veterinary students in the Texas A&M program, the response to the Smokehouse Creek Fire was a different perspective for them. And their experience is likely to remain with them as they embark on their veterinary journey. "We have them with our team members," Dr. Deb Zoran, Texas A&M VET Director, said. "We're very careful about where we put them, but it's a really good experience for them as future veterinarians to be able to help communities on their worst day, to be able to take care of animals with maybe not all their normal things, like they would have in their practice, and to be able to be there when really horrible things happen to people and their animals. To help start the recovery process."

Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team receives award for valiant response to historic Smokehouse Creek Fire (yahoo.com) – April 23, 2024

TREV ALBERTS BEGINS MAKING CUTS IN ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

By Brent Zwerneman – Houston Chronicle April 23, 2024 - Courtesy of Evan Pilat/Texas A&M Athletics.



Figure 3 - Trev Alberts - April 2024

New athletic director Trev Alberts has begun cutting personnel in Texas A&M's athletic department as he makes changes to the administrative structure.

Alberts has parted ways with senior associate athletic director Justin Moore, a former A&M pitcher, deputy athletic director Chris Park and associate athletic director Tyler Pigg, among multiple others in a cost-cutting move.

"We are on the cusp of unprecedented change in the world of intercollegiate athletics," Alberts said in a statement Tuesday. "As a

department, we have to adapt and become more efficient and effective so that we are best positioned for the changes to come. However, what will not change is this: Student-athletes are our priority and making sure their experience at Texas A&M is second to none is our goal."

Alberts added: "This morning, we met with several individuals to inform them that, in light of the upcoming changes to our administrative structure, they will not be employees of the athletics department in the future. These changes are difficult and let me state emphatically, these people have done nothing wrong.

"These are good, hard-working members of the Aggie family and their service is greatly appreciated. I can assure you, this was not personal, it was a business decision, and a very difficult one at that."

A&M is paying former coach Jimbo Fisher, who was fired in November for failing to win enough games, about \$77 million to not coach the Aggies as part of his record buyout.

Others who were let go were longtime equipment manager Matt Watson, deputy athletic director Kristen Brown, longtime football video coordinator James Duncan and assistant athletic director for NIL Jamie Wood, according to multiple insiders.

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/texas-sports-nation/college/article/texas-aggies-athletic-department-cuts-trev-alberts-19419187.php>

WADE TAYLOR RECEIVES BUCK WEIRUS SPIRIT AWARD

April 16, 2024 – Sean Burnett – News release from Texas A&M Athletics



Figure 4 - Wade Taylor = Weirus Award Winner

Texas A&M standout basketball player Wade Taylor IV received the coveted Buck Weirus Spirit Award for demonstrating high involvement, creating positive experiences throughout the Aggie community, impacting student life at Texas A&M and enhancing the Aggie Spirit.

In addition to being two-time All-SEC selection on the hardwood, Taylor is an involved and collaborative student-athlete off the court and in the community. Taylor, a junior communication major from Dallas, is the first men's basketball player to receive the Buck Weirus Spirit Award.

Taylor has served as the Chief Business Officer for B.L.U.E.Print where he has developed and implemented the overall

business strategy for the organization while making sure it is aligned with its mission and goals. A student-athlete led organization, B.L.U.E is an acronym for Black Leaders who Undertake Excellence. He has served in a leadership role as a member of Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and sought to articulate the perspectives and needs of student-athletes in discussions and decision-making related to Texas A&M Athletics.

He was one of three student-athletes representing Texas A&M at the NIL Summit Conference last summer where he advocated for inclusivity and equal access to NIL opportunities among all student-athletes. He volunteers his time with several endeavors including the Boys and Girls Club Backpack Drive, Buzz's Bunch and REVved Up to Read.

The Buck Weirus Spirit Award, named for Richard "Buck" Weirus '42, recognizes students for their outstanding contributions to student life programs at Texas A&M University. Weirus served as executive director of The Association of Former Students from 1964 to 1980. Because of his unique leadership, vision, and support of student involvement, this award was established by The Association's Board of Directors in 1982 in his honor.

<https://wtaw.com/texas-am-basketballs-wade-taylor-receives-buck-weirus-spirit-award/>



CADETS SAY GOODBYE AND LOOK AHEAD AT FINAL REVIEW

Story by Robin Nelson '22 – April 27, 2024

First referenced in an 1897 edition of The Battalion, Final Review was originally referred to as “graduating dress parade” and was held immediately following the university’s graduation ceremony. During this parade, the junior class would present the departing seniors with a gift, and those who were not

graduating would formally assume their new positions in the Corps for the upcoming year.

Today, Final Review still serves as the last Corps event for graduating seniors, but is held before the university’s commencement ceremonies. This transitional event features two passes in review, with the first pass symbolizing the success of the current year’s Corps of Cadets, and the second representing the upcoming year, with each rising cadet marching in their respective new uniforms and ranks.

During the second pass, outgoing seniors traditionally line the O.R. Simpson Drill Field to cheer on the rising Corps. Second pass is also the only time that the Corps of Cadets will assemble and pass in review without a freshman class, as the new freshmen will not arrive until Fall Orientation Week in August.

“Throughout the year, I have developed more as a person than I could have ever imagined. I have gained confidence in my ability to lead and formed friendships that will last for the rest of my life. I am excited to officially become a sophomore at Final Review and have the chance to teach the incoming fish what it means to be a member of the Corps. I hope to lead by being the best I can be and pushing them to do the same, ” Madison Cronin.

As one of the Corps’ most anticipated events, Final Review serves as a farewell to the outgoing senior class and the first chapter of the upcoming year.

Across all class years, Final Review symbolizes a period of transition, a celebration of growth and the first mark for what the next year in the Corps of Cadets holds. As the organization continues on the march to 3,000, the Corps of Cadets will remain dedicated to the future.

To read more, go to: <https://corps.tamu.edu/cadets-say-goodbye-and-look-ahead-at-final-review/>

FROM THE PAST ...



SULLY'S VISIT TO A. & M. College – 1888

While the records do not indicate when Sul Ross first visited the A. & M College of Texas, he did make an official visit to the 1888 commencement ceremonies. A legend in life, known to all statewide as “Sully,” he had won a sweeping gubernatorial election with over 75 percent of the popular vote. The governor arrived by train to a somewhat bleak campus of just over a dozen buildings astride of the railroad depot of the Houston and Central Texas Railroad. The cadet corps numbered its peak enrollment in over a decade of some 214 cadets. The annual commencement exercises was the closest A&M ever had to any vestige of a ‘homecoming.’ None of the rich traditions we are known for worldwide were evident in the late 1880s: there was no football, no corps

trips, no yell leaders, no Aggie ring, no maroon and white, no War Hymn, or formal Musters. Ross expressed surprise the college had no band, and ‘rented’ the US Army band from Fort Sam Houston to play at the graduation.

In honor of the governor’s visit the Scott Guards, organized in the fall of 1887 and forerunner of the RV Company, made their first formal public appearance. Named for college business manager Thomas M. Scott, who served as both sponsor and adviser, the unit was no drill team, but instead a ceremonial company of a couple of dozen upperclassmen selected by Scott and the commandant, Lt. Guy Carleton, to provide a brief afternoon drill prior to the meeting of the Ex-Cadets Association. It is unknown who selected the dress of white duck uniforms and pith helmets with spikes on the crown, yet all were impressed. Sixteen cadets received degrees that day and Sul Ross’s first campus contact with the A&M and the Corps of Cadets would not be his last.

Dr. John A. Adams, Jr. ‘73



Reveille X - April 2021 - Texas A&M Today - Jesse Everett – Texas A&M Marketing & Communication

**Mark your calendar - Sul Ross '25 Reunion will be March 3 – 5, 2025 in College Station at the Hilton Hotel - 801 University Dr E, College Station, TX 77840
Phone (979) 693-7500**

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

To provide our thoughts and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to communicate directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents who will then share 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.

Note: All the Bulletins from Bulletin #1 to the current Bulletin are available to be viewed on the SRG Website at www.ferrata.net/srg/portal.aspx. Click on 'Uploaded Files.'

Suggest you use “Google Chrome”, “Foxfire”, or “Microsoft Edge” as a browser.

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.

If you wish to comment to those who decide:

Chancellor John Sharp: **chancellor@tamus.edu**

The Board of Regents: **vickie@tamus.edu** or **jbelle@tamus.edu**

President Mark Welsh: **president@tamu.edu**

Provost Alan Sams: **asams@tamu.edu**

Athletic Director Trev Alberts: **Ichamberlin@athletics.tamu.edu**

VP/SA Joe Ramirez: **jramirez@vpsa.tamu.edu**

Commandant Patrick Michaelis: **pmichaelis@corps.tamu.edu**

SRG Board of Directors’ Resolutions for: 2024 - 2025

- To keep the Sul Ross Group (SRG) membership informed of pertinent topics and activities on campus through periodic SRG Bulletins.
- As investors of A&M, to continue to meet with and to offer our support and assistance to the leadership of TAMUS, TAMU, the Association of Former Students, A&M Foundation, the Commandant, the Corps Commander, and student government leaders.
- To support A&M’s Core Values and traditions and share these with all we meet, especially students, stressing unity of purpose and effort within the A&M community.
- To continue the ongoing review, execution and improvement of new student integration and assimilation into TAMU, working with and assisting the V.P. of Student Affairs, if invited, by periodically observing new student orientation – avoiding “not too much nor too little” oversight of student run organizations.
- Be it resolved that the SRG support their strategic goal of preserving what sets TAMU apart as distinctive and transcendent, as elder statesmen, and in accordance with the SRG’s four established Constitutional objectives while serving TAMU, the Association, and our membership.