

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Eighty-Seven (87)



August 7, 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.

From the Office of the President – Texas A&M University



TEXAS A&M PRESIDENTS BRIEF - GENERAL (RET.)
UNIVERSITY MARK A. WELSH III - July 11, 2024

As recovery efforts across the state are underway from the effects of Hurricane Beryl, I hope each of you, your friends and your families are safe. I'm grateful for the role many Aggies are playing in the response and recovery efforts, and we pray for their continued safety as they help other Texans.

We're also getting ready for the fall semester. Recently, I brought the university cabinet together for a day-long strategic planning retreat, and I plan to do a similar exercise with the deans soon. I want our leadership team ready to hit the ground running this fall when our students return to our campuses. And don't forget, we are seeking your feedback by Sept. 3 on the draft Research Identity Report and Recommendations released in May. I challenged our research community to articulate what we want to be known for, and your input will help define that identity.

I'd like to update you on a few items of interest:

In Galveston, the task force to create a new College of Marine Science and Maritime Studies has completed its work and plans are in place to formally launch the new college with celebratory events in August.

The report highlights the robust student experience that exists on campus and the need to enhance and protect that experience from several major threats identified by the committee. I look forward to sharing the report with the university community over

the next few months.

The Capacity Study committee is finalizing their report, This report will also be shared with the university community for feedback in the fall.

Finally, I have assembled a small committee to conduct a quick-look assessment of the Corps of Cadets and their 100-Day Assessment strategy. The committee is co-chaired by Vice President of Planning, Assessment and Strategy Joseph P. Pettibon II and Matt Segrest '95, representing the Corps of Cadets Board of Visitors. The committee will conduct the necessary research, interviews and analysis to provide initial feedback to the Commandant and me by Sept. 30, 2024.

As you know, one of my priorities is to elevate Texas A&M's national reputation. Too many people across the country (~50% of U.S. adults from a recent study) don't know who we are or what we stand for – hard to believe, but we're going to change that. Ethan Braden, our VP and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, and his team are quickly advancing two concurrent efforts: 1) developing a new Texas A&M brand platform and national marketing campaign based on market research set to launch in early 2025 and 2) launching a "Values Campaign" that uses the core values as messaging pillars to serve as a proactive marketing and storytelling "bridge" for the next seven months. We will use the "Values Campaign" and the university's refined visual style for greater marketing consistency.

President's Cabinet

Chief Operating Officer: Following a national search that attracted many excellent candidates, Peter Lange has been named Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President. Peter has served in the interim role since March and is a respected colleague whose service at Texas A&M totals nearly 21 years.

Dean Searches:

I'm also pleased to share that Tim McLaughlin '90 has been appointed Dean of the School of Performance, Visualization and Fine Arts. He's served as the Interim Dean since its establishment in September 2022, and prior to that, served as the founding head of the Department of Visualization.

In other exciting news, the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics are fast approaching, and I'm thrilled to share that 16 Aggies have secured spots for the games, which start on July 26. Congratulations to our Aggie athletes who will compete in swimming, diving, and track and field, and to Coach Joni Taylor, who will serve as an assistant coach for the U.S. women's basketball team. I look forward to cheering on these Aggies as they represent their home countries in Paris!

Thanks and Gig 'em!

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

To read the entire report, go to:

President's Brief - June/July 2024 | Office of the President | Texas A&M University ([tamu.edu](https://www.tamu.edu))



EXPLAINING “IT”

23 July 2024

Joe Ashy '62

Recently, the Texas A&M leadership commissioned a group to review Aggie “values and brand.” It prompted me to recall a few years back my attending the Brazos County A&M Club’s huge Muster at the Bettencourt Ballroom in the Memorial Student Center. The speaker that evening was none other than John Sharp '72, our Chancellor. He led off with the expression, “you can’t understand “it” from the outside, and you can’t explain “it” from the inside!” I suppose I had heard this before but had not focused on it much. I get the metaphor, but I started thinking more about it afterwards. The second part (of these two statements) begs a lot of questions of importance to us in my opinion. How can we teach “it” to our young Aggies so they can assimilate into it? How should we understand “it” to preserve and perpetuate “it” as we serve our State and Nation in accordance with our Land Grant mandate? We have something special that is admired and coveted. So, what is “it” and why so vital?

My conclusions about “cannot understand it,” and “cannot explain it” are as follows, 1. True – and I love this because one cannot understand “it” unless one experiences “it!” as a student at Aggieland. 2. Shame on us if we don’t at least try. “It” is vital to our State and Nation. And, if we are to perpetuate and preserve our distinctiveness and transcendence, then we MUST so we can teach it to our new Aggies!

“It” is our culture and spirit, the “Spirit of Aggieland.” “It” is really our collective pride in who we are, what we are and why we are. We are proud because we have something special and transcendent - a culture as Aggies which results in a whole way larger than we are as individual Texas Aggies! It’s based on two major factors: The first is our Land Grant mandate (read the “Forward” by Henry Cisneros '68 in *Breaking Away*, Texas A&M Press by Gregg“... *“In July of 1862, the Morrill Act authorized the creations of “land grant colleges” in the states, so named because the legislation awarded federal land to the states that agreed to establish public colleges dedicated to instruction and research in the practical skills needed to build the nation.....[so]...the states would establish colleges to teach food production, road building, power generation, waterway navigation, animal science, mechanics, mining, human nutrition, military instruction (a Corps of Cadets), land management, etc....”*

The second is the influence of two incredible leaders in our beginnings - Governors Coke and Ross. Here are the words which Governor Coke spoke to us Aggies on October 4, 1876, which still ring true: *“Let your watchword be duty and know*

no other talisman of success than labor. Let honor be your guiding star in your dealings with your superiors, your fellows, with all. Be true to a trust reposed as the needle to the pole, stand by the right even to the sacrifice of life itself, and learn that death is preferable to dishonor.”

Sul Ross came to Aggieland after his second term as Texas Governor and undeniably “saved” A&M College. He built the foundations of honor, service and duty and initiated many of our traditions. Importantly, he played a significant role in implementation of the Land Grant mandate saying, in effect, you can study the theory and science in college, but if something does not practically work on the ranches and in the foundries of Texas, then it requires re-examination to make it work. Thus, to this day, we “touch” and support all 254 counties in Texas daily through the Texas A&M Extension Services and the Texas A&M System and serve Texas and Texans to whom Texas A&M belongs (not to mention also the Texas Forest Service, The Transportation Institute and the Texas Disaster Response Force, etc.).

These two leaders, along with our founding Land Grant mandate, set us on an honorable path to transcendence and distinctiveness which is admired and lives on today - perpetuated and improved by some great leaders since!

So what? In my opinion, if we are to review and promulgate “values and brand,” we should begin with the understanding and context of explaining “it” to ourselves because the “thread” to Aggie values is as follows – our culture of selfless service of duty to State and Nation, resulting in a 148-year rich history in all sectors, as reflected by a resultant value system (Core Values) and Texas Aggie traditions. This is what defines us and binds us. We have something that is powerful because “it” yields a sum of all our individual Aggie contributions (“parts”) equaling a whole greater than that sum – the essence of “We are the Aggies; the Aggies are We.” So, whether orienting new Fightin’ Texas Aggies or reviewing values and “brand,” this context would be a helpful first step!

...In the spirit of, “Whom shall I send?... Here I am Lord, send me.” - Isaiah 6:8



**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEW
“ONBOARDING TRAINING” FOR THE CORPS**

Last month in our July issue of the SRG Bulletin 86, we included a 25 June memo from the Commandant, BG Patrick Michaelis about this program which will be implemented and commence on 5 August 2024. You can find the memo for review here on the Corps web site: Corps of Cadets Launches Enhanced Onboarding Experience for Cadets (tamu.edu).

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When reading about it, while certainly appropriate and well supported by the cadet

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leadership, we thought some added specifics would be helpful to share with you. To begin with, here is an August 2024 **calendar** which is annotated with the key events and activities on this year's Onboarding program – the “what, for whom, and by whom.”

The following pieces of information are added for your edification:
In addition to a new Corps Curriculum, there is a newly published The Standard (note: not to be confused with The Cadence) which are documents of comprehensive guidance on being a Corps member and sources from which teaching and orientation will be used in the Onboarding program. We expect that access to these documents will be shared soon so that you can know exactly the “modus operandi” enabling all of us Ol’ Ags to help reduce some of the erroneous scuttlebutt “did you hear that” statements which often float about on the internet and cause all kinds of accuracy and truthfulness issues.

The “Cadre” began their training the week of 5 August and will include 60 members of the Corps leadership plus squadrons and companies’ leadership of leader seniors and juniors plus one sophomore per unit.

This newly qualified group of Cadre will then orient and train the new class of fish who arrive on 10 August. Of note, the fish Review on Simpson Field will be 17 August.

Importantly, on the 12th of August, sophomores will check into their dorm rooms and their training will start on the 13th through the 15th with certification occurring on the 16th. About 35 additional Cadre will teach the “Corporal’s Course” for all these rising sophomores entering their leadership responsibility experience at the first echelon.

After school starts on 19 August, “white belt training” will continue for two weeks for the remainder of juniors and seniors - conducted by respective Corps and unit leadership.

We inquired about additional costs associated with the “earlier than normal” arrivals of Corps members which are additive over the past “fish orientation week” program. We learned that there will be no additional charges for dorm space use, and that Duncan Dining Hall will be open for most meals with only a few exceptions.

We trust that this overview is useful to our readership and, as Ol’ Ags, we can exercise our knowledge to help in the program’s implementation – especially important to many factors vital to Corps growth and success in producing leaders and character! Importantly, the Corps of Cadets’ leadership played an incredibly significant part in helping the Commandant design this program and we salute them for their initiative and work.



CORPS OF CADETS INFORMATION

Over the years, many parents and grandparents contact members of the SRG to ask how they can get a relative or friend information about the Corps. We hope this helps.

The Corps of Cadets is a large and diverse program comprised of many units or outfits, each with unique traits and offerings. Students join an outfit based on their interests, major and ROTC choice. Note: Members of the Corps DO NOT have to join the military upon graduation. Cadets live on campus on the Quad, home to the 41 outfits in the Corps. Outfits live together in the Corps dorms and take part in many activities together. Cadets build lifelong friendships with members of their outfit and their class, as well as the upperclassmen in their outfit and across the Corps.

Outfits in the Corps have their own personalities. With 41 outfits available, there is a home for everyone. For more information on each outfit, view the outfit description below and check out their social media. If you have questions, contact Corps Recruiting for more information. Or, have the high school student experience one of the units for themselves through a Corps recruiting program like Spend The Night With The Corps!

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The popular “Spend the Night with the Corps (SNWC)” program offers academically qualified high school juniors and seniors and transfer students a unique, first-hand experience of Corps and student life at Texas A&M. Academic Requirements: Top third of your class and have a A/B Average

During the program, participants will:

- Meet current cadets and learn about their experiences in the Corps

- Stay overnight in the Corps dorms on campus

- Eat meals with cadet outfits and watch formations

- Attend a class with a cadet

- Hear from key staff about Corps experience

- Learn about advantages to joining the Corps - state of the art facilities, sports teams, special units, academics and more!

See state of the art facilities, for those interested, have the chance to visit with the Aggie Band director about the world famous Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band. Admitted seniors can audition for the band during the spring semester.

Dates and Schedule: The Spend the Night Program is offered most weeks during the fall and spring semesters. Check-in for the SNWC Program is at the Sanders Corps of Cadets Center from 4:00 pm on your scheduled date of arrival. The program concludes the following day at approximately 12:00 pm. Please do not make any other appointments during this time.

Registration: A non-refundable \$45.00 fee per student is required to attend which includes dinner and breakfast at Duncan Dining Center for the student. Your registration is NOT complete until payment is submitted via *PayFlow*, a 3rd party payment portal used by Texas A&M University. You will be provided a payment link once you choose a program date and submit the initial registration. Also you must complete the (*DOWNLOAD*) the *CAMPS FORM* to be uploaded during the registration process.

You are responsible for your travel arrangements to and from Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, and the Sanders Corps Center.

Parents: You are encouraged to attend our Parent Meetings just after check-in. From 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm we will cover a Corps overview, Admissions, Corps Scholarships, Financial Aid, and attend Evening Formation.

Parent Accommodations: Students will be housed on campus. Parents/Guardians need to make their own hotel reservations.

For more information, contact the Corps Recruiting Office at 979-845-9232, 1-800 TAMU-AGS or aggiecorps@corps.tamu.edu.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Private Enterprise
Research Center

TEXAS A&M HAD THE HIGHEST TOTAL ENROLLMENT AND ENGINEERING ENROLLMENT AMONG OTHER UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT IN SELECT COLLEGE TOWN - July 2024

As of Fall 2022, Texas A&M University in the College Station Bryan MSA reported the highest enrollment in engineering, with 18,208 students across both undergraduate and graduate programs. Texas A&M also boasted the largest total enrollment, 74,014 students, relative to the other universities included here; almost 25% of Texas A&M's total enrollment is in engineering.

Chrome-

extension://efaidnbmnnpbpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969.1/201427/Index_07_2024.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y



AT TEXAS A&M ACCOUNTABILITY IS THE NEW OF THE GAME – SEC MEDIA DAYS

By Brent Zwerneman - Houston Chronicle - July 18, 2024

DALLAS — About six weeks removed from his ballyhooed debut as Texas A&M's coach, Mike Elko is enjoying the smooth waters of a quiet offseason — just as he prefers from January to August.

“At times when we got there (to A&M), it felt like we were on a ship taking on water, and it was very rocky,” Elko said on Thursday, the last of four SEC Media Days. “That’s not the world you want to live in. (We) stabilized that to get it a little bit quieter.

“We had to have some real honest conversations when I took over where we were as a program,” a frank Elko said. “We can’t verbalize what we are — facts tell us who we are. And we were a 12-13 football program the last two years. The only way to change that is to work. “You can’t just say you want to be different and say you want to compete; you have to do it. That has been from day one with the internal conversations we have had.”

A&M junior offensive tackle Trey Zuhn offered as an example of Elko’s no-nonsense approach an Aggie who was late for a team meeting and said he had car trouble. “Coach Elko looked at him and made him get a receipt from Triple-A coming to replace his tire,” Zuhn said. “He makes sure you’re on top of yourself.”

A&M sophomore linebacker Taurean York said it took about “two months” following Elko’s hire from Duke in late November for all his teammates to grasp the new guy’s emphasis on discipline. “He runs a tight ship and doesn’t allow any loose ends,”

York said. “He wants you to be ready and on time. Whenever you have that type of structure and discipline, it’s easy to buy in. ... It’s definitely an adjustment (though) because when you’re used to doing your own thing, it’s hard to get out of your own way sometimes. “... We know that (Elko) is not playing around. What he means, he’s going to say, whether it’s discipline or being where we’re supposed to be on time, he wants you to be on point.”

Elko said the mounting results from a renewed emphasis on accountability and work in the weight room under new strength coach Tommy Moffitt has the Aggies in solid shape entering August camp.

"You have a lot of great kids with great character who have a lot of pride in themselves," said Elko, who was 16-9 the last two seasons as Duke's head coach. "That (12-13 record) is not lost on them, either. So, it's, OK, here's a path that potentially can change the results we've had and it's, 'I'm in.'"

Elko first came to A&M six years ago from Notre Dame, where he was then-Fighting Irish coach Brian Kelly's defensive coordinator for a lone season in 2017. Kelly is in his third season at LSU. "He's a smart football coach, he understands the game and he's going to play to his strengths on offense, defense and special teams," Kelly said of Elko. "What makes Mike a really good head coach is he's not just going to be a defensive head coach. He's going to make sure he oversees all the units, because he knows it goes to winning. "That's why Mike is going to do very, very well at A&M."

To read the full story, go to: [Texas A&M football: Mike Elko's focus is accountability](#)
([houstonchronicle.com](#))



BRADEN MONTGOMERY SELECTED 12TH OVERALL BY BOSTON RED SOCKS

Richard Zane – TexAgs – July 14, 2024

On Sunday night, Texas A&M's Braden Montgomery became the 14th Aggie to become a first-round selection in the MLB Draft when the Boston Red Sox took the

phenom with the 12th overall pick. He becomes the highest-drafted position player in Texas A&M history, surpassing the previous high watermark set by Billy Hodge when the Braves took the catcher 13th overall in 1970.

An elite outfielder who also spent some time on the mound, Montgomery enjoyed one of the best seasons in A&M history in 2024. In 61 games, the Madison, MS, products slashed .322/.733/.454 with 27 home runs and 85 RBIs. One of those home runs came in his first at-bat as an Aggie.

When all the selections were in, the Aggies had a total of seven student-athletes taken in the 2024 MLB Draft. This marks the second straight season the Maroon &

White have had seven players drafted. Texas A&M is the only program in the nation to have three or more players picked in every MLB Draft since 2001.

2024 Texas A&M Draft Selections

Braden Montgomery – Round 1, Pick 12 - Boston Red Sox

Chris Cortez – Round 2, Pick 45 – LA Angles

Ryan Prager – Round 3, Pick 81 – LA Angles

Tanner Jones – Round 6, Pick 167 – Kansas City Royals

Jackson Appel – Round 6, Pick 169 - Chicago White Sox

Ali Camarillo – Round 12, Pick 346 – Oakland Athletics

Evan Aschenbeck – Round 13, Pick 392 - Chicago Cubs

To read the full account, go to:

History! Red Sox select Braden Montgomery with 12th overall pick | TexAgs:

[https://12thman.com/news/2024/7/14/baseball-cortez-drafted-by-los-angeles-angels-in-second-round:](https://12thman.com/news/2024/7/14/baseball-cortez-drafted-by-los-angeles-angels-in-second-round)

[https://www.si.com/college/tamu/news/texas-a-m-star-pitcher-ryan-prager-picked-no-81-overall-by-l-a-angeles-in-mlb-draft-01j2vtn30c11:](https://www.si.com/college/tamu/news/texas-a-m-star-pitcher-ryan-prager-picked-no-81-overall-by-l-a-angeles-in-mlb-draft-01j2vtn30c11)

Trio of Aggies Selected on Day Two of MLB Draft - Texas A&M Athletics - 12thMan.com:

Pair of Aggies Selected on Final Day of MLB Draft - Texas A&M Athletics - 12thMan.com



21 A&M ATHLETICS, COACHES AT 2024 PARIS OLYMPICS

Jul 26, 2024 - Athletics Communications

PARIS – Texas A&M Athletics will be represented by 21 current or former student-athletes and coaches at the 2024 Summer Olympic Games, which will be contested in Paris and other cities throughout France, as well as Tahiti, French Polynesia.

Countries represented by Aggies in Paris include the United States (9), Australia (2), Jamaica (2), Algeria, Canada, France, Grenada, Israel, Lebanon, Peru and Singapore.

The Aggies will compete in a variety of sports, including track & field (10), swimming (6), diving (2), tennis (2) and women's basketball, with Joni Taylor as assistant coach. .

Texas A&M Athletics Represented by 21 Athletes, Coaches at 2024 Olympics - Texas A&M Athletics - 12thMan.com



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”, “Firefox”, 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 **jbell@tamus.edu**

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

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

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

VPSA 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.