

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Ninety (90)



October 22, 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.

Mark your calendar - Sul Ross '25 Reunion will be March 3 – 5, 2025 in College Station at the Hilton Hotel. The room block is open and ready to book room nights. Room Rate is \$149 per night plus tax. The Group Code is ROSS25 and the cut-off date to make reservations is February 9, 2025. Hilton Hotel - 801 University Dr E, College Station, TX 77840, Phone (979) 693-7500. We look forward to seeing you there. For questions, please contact the Class Programs team at 979-845-7514 or at Class@AggieNetwork.com.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT – TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



TEXAS A&M PRESIDENTS BRIEF - GENERAL (RET.) MARK A. WELSH III – September 19, 2024
UNIVERSITY

Great things continue to happen across our campuses each day! I hope you all had the chance to view our new national TV commercial, which launched during the Notre Dame game a few weeks ago. The video now has more than 9 million views on YouTube and is the most viewed video ever put out by Texas A&M University. And we're not even a month into its debut! My thanks to our Marketing and Communications team, as well as all the great folks who contributed their ideas or were captured on film for it!

I've been told that just about 12% of those 9 million views are within the state of Texas. You read that right — 12%. So, besides the symbolism, millions across the country and globe are now getting to see what this great university stands for — things like pride, patriotism, service, family, loyalty and respect.

I wholeheartedly believe that these ideals, combined with the passion and dedication of our world-class faculty, incredibly talented staff and out-of-this-world students are what make this university such a special place to live, work and learn. Just this week, Texas A&M was ranked the No. 1 university workplace in Texas, according to Newsweek's "America's Greatest Workplaces" survey.

And for some additional great news, for the second year in a row, Texas A&M has been named the best university in Texas by The Wall Street Journal, a ranking that emphasizes graduate outcomes such as salaries, years to pay off student debt and graduate impact. We were No. 11 among the nation's public institutions and No. 28 overall.

Quick-Look Implementation

While many of the assigned tasks have been completed for the main campus, Galveston and McAllen quick-look assessments, our current focus is the completion of our supplemental studies (or "science projects") and near-horizon priorities (defining our research identity and building our academic roadmap).

As I've mentioned before, once we get our arms around the supplemental studies, we will roll into Vision 2040 development. In the coming months, additional working committees will be established with a plan to begin the main effort in January 2025 and work toward issuing a report to me for university community feedback in spring 2026, with a final report by June 30, 2026.

Key Priorities For Our Future

During my State of the University address last November, I outlined five far-horizon priorities. I'm pleased to share that work is well underway on several of these items:

Become the Nation's No. 1 Veteran-Serving University – We are proud of our rich military heritage, and we're committed to serving well those who have served. The Military Admissions Office and the Don and Ellie Knauss Veteran Resource and Support Center do incredible work to support prospective and current student veterans, and thanks to their dedication, we're in a great position to take the next step. A committee will leverage existing relationships with veteran service organizations, government organizations like the Department of Defense and community groups to increase awareness of our programming and services for veterans while also identifying the needs of veterans and their future employers to improve upon our processes and academic offerings to enable even better support for veterans. The committee's work will culminate in a set of recommendations for my review next spring.

Graduate Great Citizens – We're also focused on using our values-based educational model to graduate not just great Aggies, but great citizens. That's why we're launching a new Citizenship and Service Initiative to take an even more deliberate approach to instilling citizenship skills in our students. The initiative's multi-faceted approach will prepare students from every degree program to embrace careers in public service or to engage voluntarily in their future communities as responsible, informed and engaged citizens. After retiring from the U.S. Army with 27 years of service, including tours of duty in Iraq and Somalia and three tours in Afghanistan, I'm pleased to share

that Brigadier General (Ret.) Kim Field has joined my office as Director of Strategic Initiatives to lead this effort. Kim brings a wealth of expertise and understanding to this role and will be instrumental in the strategic planning, leadership and implementation of our university's efforts to produce great Aggie citizens. I testified before the staff of the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office today on our proposed budget for the next biennium, which includes initiatives focused on balancing our growth and supporting this new citizenship initiative. I'll keep you posted on this effort in the days and weeks ahead.

Leadership Updates

Commandant, Corps of Cadets: The search advisory committee, led by Chief of Staff Susan Ballabina, has already made great progress. Just this week, the committee finalized the position description and is now actively seeking candidates to fill this important leadership role for one of our university's most cherished and recognizable organizations.

College of Architecture, College of Pharmacy, College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and School of Engineering Medicine: The Provost has launched searches for Deans of the Colleges of Architecture, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. And soon, the Provost will launch the search for the permanent Dean of the School of Engineering Medicine.

As you can see, there are a lot of exciting things happening at Texas A&M this fall. And for those of you joining me at Kyle Field for football games and other Aggie athletic events this year, I invite you to show our opponents and fans everywhere that Texas A&M stands for pride and patriotism. You have blown me away with your enthusiastic singing of the national anthem at Kyle Field this season — thank you! Let's keep it up and honor our country — and all those who built and defended it — by standing together to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" ... loudly!

Thanks, and Gig 'em!

r/mark

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

President's Brief - September 2024 | Office of the President | Texas A&M University (tamu.edu)



Figure 1 - Aggie Rings over the years

ABOUT TEXAS AGGIE CITIZENSHIP

In President Welsh's September 2024 update, he wrote: "*A key priority is to graduate great citizens. We're also focused on using our values-based educational model to graduate not just great Aggies, but great citizens. That's why we're launching a new Citizenship and Service Initiative to take an even more deliberate*

approach to instilling citizenship skills in our students. The initiative's multi-faceted approach will prepare students from every degree program to embrace careers in public service or to engage voluntarily in their future communities as responsible, informed and engaged citizens." We the SRG Board support General Welsh's initiative.

Since America, sadly, has backed away from teaching civics in our schools in recent years, a few additional and supportive thoughts may be in order.

It very well may be that AMC and now TAMU, for 148 years, has continually set an incredible example of "citizenship" in the spirit of the great Roman General Cincinnatus who in the 400's BC was a patrician, statesman, farmer and military leader in the Roman Republic. He set the example of "civic virtue" (citizenship) as a citizen soldier. When called by the Roman Senate to "defend Rome," he selflessly laid his plowshare aside, accepting his call (back) to duty, took up his sword (Spada) and did just that – returning to his farm afterwards and took up his plowshare when his mission was completed. He was a model for the Fightin' Texas Aggies!

Citizenship is defined by Wester as "*A legal status and relation between an individual and a state that entails specific legal rights and duties.*" And we add to that responsibility if we believe (which we certainly do) that Governors Coke and Ross set us on the path at our founding toward transcendence, very forcefully telling us to follow this as our guidance. And, the Land Grant Act of 1862, in its mandate, codified their challenges to serve with honor the State and Texas and the United States in all sectors of endeavor.

We Americans enjoy the privilege of living as citizens in a Constitutional Republic where we can practice pluralism (democracy) where different interests, convictions, and lifestyles can coexist peacefully within a political body. It also means, as Ben Franklin reminded us, that we citizens shoulder responsibilities from the bottom up to be "in charge" by participating, being informed and possessing a keen sense of right from wrong. This is the essence of "being free" rather than being in an "unfree" autocracy where a few at the top hold absolute power over the masses and decide everything. The "rule of law" is enabled by our Constitution and resultant laws which are enacted by our representatives for whom we are responsible to hold accountable. So, we freely live as "we the people" citizens – and individually must responsibly work hard every day to preserve our Republic. As Franklin also said to us, "*If you can keep it!*"

We firmly believe that Texas A&M University has produced graduates and leaders of character who have practiced great citizenship from our beginning! This is clearly reflected in our CULTURE, our history of answering the State and Nation's calls-to-duty - selflessly. Again, we salute the president's initiative.



Figure 2 - TAMU Campus

A&M ONLY UNIVERSITY IN TEXAS AMONG “AMERICA’S GREATEST WORKPLACES”

By Lesley Henton, Texas A&M University Division of Marketing and Communications September 17, 2024

Texas A&M University is one of the best places to work in America, according to *Newsweek*, and the only university in Texas on its list of “America’s Greatest Workplaces.” The elite ranking, which included just 14 universities out of 1,000 workplaces, surveyed more than 250,000 workers nationwide throughout 2022 and 2023 on job satisfaction. The final ranking represents the top companies whose employees “find it easy to stay engaged,” say *Newsweek* editors. The survey covered topics including compensation and benefits, training and career progression, work-life balance and company culture.

Texas A&M finds itself in top company as the other universities on the list are some of the nation’s most prestigious, including Harvard, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins and Vanderbilt. A total of 134 companies headquartered in Texas are on the list, including Texas Instruments, USAA, James Avery Craftsman, Memorial Hermann Healthcare System, Methodist Health System, NRG Energy and Schlumberger.

“What makes Texas A&M special is our people; they are the foundation of this university’s success. From our world-class faculty to our exceptionally talented staff, our employees are passionate about this university and what it stands for – things like pride, patriotism, service, family, loyalty and respect,” said General (Ret.) Mark A. Welsh III, president of Texas A&M. “These ideals are embraced by the Aggie Family and contribute to the supportive and dynamic environment that makes me and thousands of others proud to call Aggieland home.”

A&M employs more than 26,000 workers, including faculty, staff, graduate assistants, student workers and temporary employees. Its employees work at the flagship campus in College Station, as well as Bryan and other locations across Texas, Washington, D.C., and internationally.

Texas A&M Only University In Texas Among *Newsweek*’s ‘America’s Greatest Workplaces’ - Texas A&M Today (tamu.edu)



Figure 3 - Archway in the Quad

A&M NO. 1 PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN THE NATION FOR NUMBER OF FORTUNE 500 CEOS

By Lesley Henton, Texas A&M University Division of Marketing and Communications October 2, 2024

A remarkable number of Texas A&M University graduates are leaders in America’s biggest companies, according to new findings showing a preeminence of Aggie CEOs in the

Fortune 500. The Fortune 500 is an annual list compiled by Fortune magazine of the 500 largest corporations in the U.S. based on their total revenue from the previous fiscal year. The list includes both public and private companies.

This year, investment analysts at Strategas Research Partners examined where the CEOs of Fortune 500 companies went to college. They found that Texas A&M is the nation's No. 1 public university, No. 5 overall, and the only Texas university in the top 10, with seven CEOs on the list.

Texas A&M is tied in the rankings for the first public position with Purdue University and University of Michigan. Private universities in the top 10 include Cornell, Princeton and Harvard.

Aggie CEOs In The Fortune 500

Bruce D. Broussard '84, Mays Business School, Humana

David M. Cordani '88, Mays Business School, The Cigna Group

Kimberly A. Dang '92, Mays Business School, Kinder Morgan

Robert E. Jordan '85, '86, College of Engineering, Mays Business School, Southwest Airlines,

Travis D. Stice '84, College of Engineering, Diamondback Energy

Noel R. Wallace '87, Mays Business School, Colgate-Palmolive

Darren W. Woods '87, College of Engineering, Exxon Mobil

Additional notable rankings for Texas A&M this year include being named the No. 1 university in Texas by the Wall Street Journal and one of "America's Greatest Workplaces" by Newsweek.

Texas A&M No. 1 Public University In The Nation For Number Of Fortune 500 CEOs - Texas A&M Today (tamu.edu)



Figure 4 - Butch Ireland Photography

HAGLER INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES LARGEST CLASS OF FELLOWS

By Texas A&M University Research Communications
and Public Relations September 24, 2024

The Hagler Institute for Advanced Study at Texas A&M University announced its largest class of Hagler Fellows during a reception Monday at the Memorial Student Center.

The 2024-25 class includes 20 internationally renowned scholars — 19 Hagler Fellows and one Distinguished Lecturer — making it the largest class in the institute's 14-year history.

"These scholars are at the forefront of their disciplines and will make a profound impact at Texas A&M," said John L. Junkins, founding director of the Hagler Institute. "Their contributions will drive innovation, mentorship and academic collaboration,

elevating our university's research environment and enhancing the student experience.”

All Hagler Fellows are recognized for outstanding achievements in their fields. Each is a member of the National Academies or equivalent organizations. The fellows will work closely with Texas A&M faculty and students during their appointments, which generally last up to one year.

Since its inception, the Hagler Institute has invited 146 world-class researchers to the Texas A&M campus: 135 Hagler Fellows and 11 Distinguished Lecturers. Of these, 16 have joined Texas A&M's permanent faculty.

The institute will induct its Hagler Fellows for 2024-25 during its annual gala in February.

Hagler Institute Announces Largest Class Of Fellows - Texas A&M Today ([tamu.edu](https://www.tamu.edu))

A&M GROWTH SPARKS MAJOR CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS



Figure 5 - Campus Overview

College Station, Texas (KBTX) – Donnie Tuggle - August 29, 2024

Texas A&M University is preparing for a future shaped by rapid growth, as two new studies call for significant changes to the campus infrastructure to meet the needs of its expanding student body. With enrollment now at 71,000 and expectations to increase, the university is looking to add more student housing, dining facilities, classrooms, and transportation options.

The two reports recommend a 5-year pause on undergraduate growth and propose significant investments in infrastructure; including additional on-campus housing, expanded dining and classroom spaces, and improved transportation options.

The studies recommend substantial infrastructure improvements, including adding 2,500 on-campus beds, expanding dining space by 28,000 square feet, and constructing a new \$130 million classroom building on the west campus. Plans also include adding up to 10 new buses to the fleet and developing a comprehensive plan for the west campus to accommodate more housing, dining, recreational spaces, parking, and classrooms.

With transportation being a focus area, the university is considering building an underground, all-electric transit system that would link major areas of the campus and nearby residential communities. The proposed system, known as “The Aggie Loop,” could cost between \$250 and \$350 million.

According to the report, Texas A&M could begin implementing these improvements as early as next year, with major projects like new housing, dining expansions, and classroom facilities expected to be completed over the next five to 10 years. The proposed “Aggie Loop” transit system could take around three years to finish

once construction begins. University leaders plan to monitor feedback and adjust timelines as needed to ensure infrastructure aligns with future growth.

Copyright 2024 KBTX. All rights reserved.- Texas A&M growth sparks plans for major campus improvements (kbtx.com)



PREPARING OUR NEXT GENERATION OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

John B. Sherman '92, is the new Dean of The Bush School of Government and Public Service.

He said, "Being able to serve in this role is truly a dream job for me, and I come here after a 30-year career in intelligence and national security. Like any good Aggie, I married up, and my bride of 32 years is Liz, Class of '91. Liz followed me to the CIA where she's worked for over 25 years and traveled the world Iraq, Colombia, Africa, Haiti, Afghanistan, Bosnia and many other locations.

I'm honored to be writing to you all in the Sul Ross Group. I know that A&M would not have continued to evolve into the world-class institution we've become without your steadfast support and vision. I continue to feel this way as Dean of The Bush School, especially as I've watched our great university do even more since I marched final review in May 1992. At least to me, foremost among these developments was the establishment of The Bush School in 1997.

The world is not getting any less complicated, and we need public servants of character and competence now more than ever. Whether it's our ability to provide accurate intelligence and policy options for national security challenges, respond to disasters at the state and local level, deliver services to our fellow citizens or better understand complex political systems, the world is hungry for public servants who can confront and overcome these challenges. The Bush School is the place where we prepare public servants for just these sorts of duties. I saw many of the school's graduates in places like the CIA and the Department of Defense, and they all displayed qualities of sharpness, deep expertise and—perhaps most importantly—Aggie core values. It is these values that set The Bush School apart. You all know them because you help set the standard. Also, our school's namesake, President George H.W. Bush clearly exemplified these qualities, and he did it all as a humble leader who never made it about himself.

So much has evolved at the Bush School since its 1997 founding. Within the last several years, we've added the political science department and the international studies major—bringing nearly 1,400 undergraduates and over 40 Ph.D. students—to complement our existing and well-honed graduate programs in public service and administration and international affairs. We have also launched a new international affairs major and are launching an undergraduate major in public service and administration. Additionally, the Bush School DC site continues to flourish, it now boasts

110 students who are pursuing master's degrees in international policy as well as national security and intelligence. Finally, The Bush School in College Station hosts several institutes and centers that facilitate research and outreach in a variety of areas.

Throughout The Bush School, one of our key advantages comes from our mix of faculty. In addition to tenure/tenure-track professors, who are experts in their fields of scholarship, we also have what we call "professors of practice." These instructors have led storied careers in places like the CIA, FBI, State Department, USAID, NSA and the United States military, as well as in roles such as city managers and nonprofit leaders. This combination of experiences and backgrounds in our faculty prepares our students like no other institution. This instruction, coupled with Aggies' natural desire to serve, might help explain why over 80 percent of our graduate students go into public service—which is higher than any other school of public service/administration.

I know that many of you reading this article have already contributed time and treasure to The Bush School, and I first and foremost wanted to express my heartfelt thanks. We couldn't do what we do without your unwavering support. providing scholarships and fellowships, capstone travel and internships, and enabling us to recruit and retain top-notch faculty, to include professors of practice.

Your moral support remains imperative as well. Please keep spreading the word about the Bush School. Help us recruit new students. Attend our events and see some impressive speakers as well as our top-flight faculty and students. And just keep leaning in and helping us as you've always done. It means the world to us.

Thank you, and Gig 'Em!
John B. Sherman '92



Figure 6 - Lone Star Showdown

CONTEXT AND PERSPECTIVE – FIGHTIN' TEXAS AGGIES VS. sips

With the renewal of the rivalry now in motion, the current total record between the two teams stands at 76-37-5 in favor of the sips. In the last game played, the sips kicked a field goal to win in the final seconds at Kyle Field. The Aggies won the previous year in Austin by a score of 24-17.

Since we are about to crank up this blood feud again, there needs to be a smidge of perspective and context spread around to bring our young (and perhaps older) Ags up to speed:

****Exactly zero of the first 21 games vs sips were played in College Station – quite a sip home field advantage.**

****AMC was an all-male school until the mid-1960s – say no more.**

**Regarding scholarship limits, the sips were famous for signing football players to scholarships, not because they needed to but to keep them from signing with other schools.

**For an extended period of time, referees were allowed to call games of their alma mater, and many of those in the SWC graduated from – wait for it – sip land.

We told the sips to stuff it with their charge (and arrogance) to follow their misguided idea and them to join the Pacific Coast Conference. We had the power to split off and join the Southeastern Conference (SEC). Now they have weaseled their way into the SEC and we are where we are and plan to “saw ‘em off” and BTHO of them.

For context, it should be observed that our beloved Institution is:

**The oldest public university in Texas.

**We are now the largest university in America.

**We are an AAU top tier academic university

**We are first in research in Texas.

**We have the largest (and best) football stadium in the state of Texas and were recently rated the best game day atmosphere in in football.

**We are notably, from our beginnings, Texas’ Land Grant University and proudly serve the State of Texas every day, in every county via the Land Grant Act Mandate through agriculture and engineering Extension Service agents, and importantly, this is the basis for our CULTURE (service to the State and Nation, which we have done for 148 years - selflessly).

So, we shall see, now in a new era, on 30 November 2024 at Kyle Field how this unfolds. And it should be understood that in a most important (and relevant) head-to-head comparison in a new era that from 1974 to now (50 years), the record - you ask, is 19-19! Not exactly one sided. Gig ‘em!

Today in Aggie History



Figure 7 - The Corps in front of Old Main, circa 1880-1885 – Courtesy of Cushing Memorial Library

Oct. 4: The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas opened for classes in 1876

Oct. 4, 1876: The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas opened for classes. Gov. Richard Coke gave a speech during the formal inauguration. He said:

“In time, these halls will become classic and the strong men of Texas, the men who will

control the destinies of the State and direct her government, and her material development; men from the farm, the shop, the counter, the bench, the senate and the forum, who have been prepared for life's great struggle here, will, after we have been gathered to our fathers, meet in these halls and with grateful hearts amid the scenes and struggles of their youth, in poetry and song, an in silvery eloquence, chant the praises of their Alma Mater."



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

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 Chip Utterback: **lutterback@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.