

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin One Hundred Fourteen (114)



August 1, 2026

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.

Howdy Ags,

Here is the Sul Ross Group's Bulletin 114. The SRG Board hopes you enjoy this bulletin and find it informative. We encourage you to distribute it to your classmates, Aggie buddies, and friends. Thank you.

Gig 'Em!

Sul Ross Group Board

TEXAS A&M 150TH CELEBRATION KICKOFF AT KYLE



[Click on image to view video](#)

Texas A&M will celebrate 150 years as a force for good in Texas, the nation and beyond. Join us for the *150th Celebration Kickoff at Kyle Field on October 2nd at 9 PM*. Events will include Yell Practice and a one-of-a-kind drone show to kick off our sesquicentennial celebration. Stay for Midnight Yell that night, and the Arkansas game the next day.

A FORCE FOR GOOD



[Click on image to view video](#)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AGENCIES LEAD RESCUE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS AMID HISTORIC CENTRAL TEXAS FLOODING

Texas A&M University System, July 7, 2026

As our state struggles to comprehend the magnitude of the loss felt by so many of our fellow Texans, and even as we all offer up our prayers for the victims and their families and the parents, friends and loved ones of those still missing – brave men and women from across the Texas A&M University System were risking their lives to save others caught in dangerous flooding across Central Texas and the Hill Country.

At least 15 counties remain under a state disaster declaration, with heavy rain continuing to create hazardous conditions. Local officials have confirmed multiple lives lost, and recovery efforts are ongoing. Officials urge the public to continue following the instructions of first responders and avoid flooded areas.

“The members of the Board of Regents at the Texas A&M System join our fellow Texans as we grieve the loss of so many innocent people who fell victim to the devastating floods in Central Texas,” Board of Regents Chairman Robert Albritton said on behalf of the Board. “My fellow regents and I pray for the families who are suffering, and we offer our most sincere appreciation for all of the emergency personnel from the Texas A&M System and other agencies who remain at the scene.”

Teams from several A&M System agencies have been deeply engaged in response operations:

- **Texas Division of Emergency Management:** deployed the State of Texas Incident Management Team to support deployed emergency response resources across the state, Incident Support Task Force and Disaster Recovery Task Force

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin

including Voluntary Agency Liaisons to support recovery efforts and regional field staff who remain tied in with local officials.

- **Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service** (Texas A&M Task Force 1 and Texas Task Force 2): deployed Swiftwater Rescue Boat Squads to assist with flood rescues and evacuations.
- **Texas A&M Forest Service**: mobilized saw crews to assist with clearing of roadways.
- **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**: mobilized Disaster Assessment and Recovery Agents as well as County Extension Agents to support agricultural and livestock needs.
- **Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Team**: staged in various locations across the affected area to provide veterinary medical support for animals impacted by flooding.
- **Texas A&M Public Works Response Team** is deployed to Kerrville to assess and assist with public works infrastructure needs.

“These floods have devastated families across Texas and our hearts are with those who have lost loved ones,” said Chancellor Glenn Hegar. “At the same time, I am profoundly grateful to the A&M System employees and emergency responders who worked tirelessly this weekend and remain heavily engaged in efforts to prevent further loss of life and help Texans in need. Your courage, skill, and selflessness embody what public service is all about.”

IT PAYS TO BE AN AGGIE

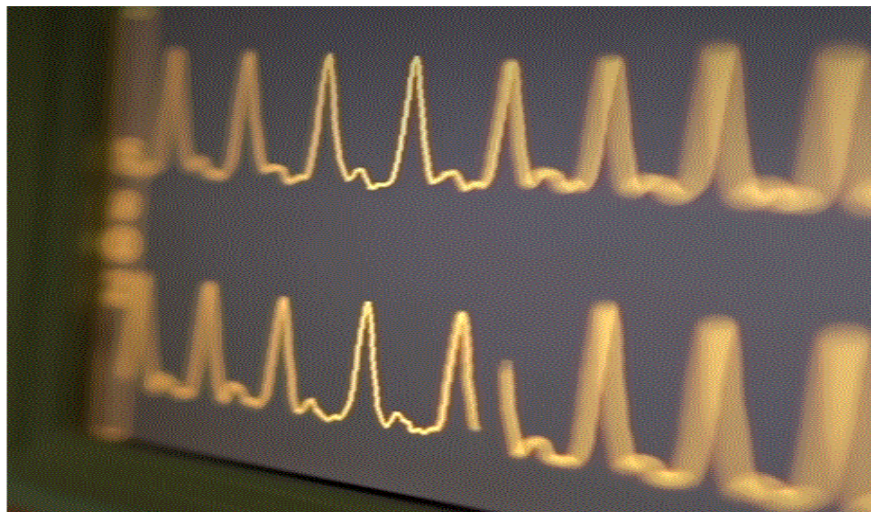


[Click on image to view video](#)

TEXAS A&M REGENERATIVE HEART PATCH RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF FAST COMPANY'S 'WORLD CHANGING IDEAS'

Texas A&M Stories

Texas A&M University earned a spot-on Fast Company's 2026 World Changing Ideas list in the Academic Excellence category for developing a novel regenerative heart patch. Out of over 1,500 global submissions, Texas A&M was selected among the top 100 projects alongside institutions like MIT and SCAD.



[Click on image to view video](#)

How the Technology Works

Developed by Dr. Ke Huang at the Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy, the patch aims to repair cardiac tissue following a heart attack through targeted drug delivery:

Microneedle Delivery: A biodegradable patch uses dissolving microneedles to penetrate the outer layer of the heart, delivering therapeutics directly to damaged cardiac muscle that is typically difficult to reach.

Immune Reprogramming: The patch releases interleukin-4 (IL-4), a molecule that prompts immune cells (macrophages) to shift from promoting harmful inflammation to driving tissue repair and reducing scar formation.

AI-Optimized Design: The team incorporates artificial intelligence to refine the material's structure, providing physical support while actively promoting cellular regeneration.

To read the complete article, visit the link below.

<https://stories.tamu.edu/stories/texas-am-regenerative-heart-patch-recognized-as-one-of-fast-companys-world-changing-ideas/>

TEXAS A&M CLIMBS TO NO. 6 WORLDWIDE IN GLOBAL UNIVERSITY VISIBILITY RANKINGS

Texas A&M University Division of Marketing and Communications, July 16, 2026

Texas A&M University has climbed to No. 6 worldwide in American Caldwell’s 2026–2027 Global University Visibility Rankings, marking a significant 15-spot rise from No. 21 in 2024. The rankings place Texas A&M among elite company, trailing only Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Purdue, and Oxford, while surpassing institutions such as Cornell, UC Berkeley, and UCLA.

Key Rankings Breakdown

- Global Rank: No. 6
- U.S. Rank (Overall): No. 5
- U.S. Public Universities: No. 2 (retained for two consecutive years)
- Texas Rank: No. 1 (retained for at least three consecutive years)

Trajectory & Drivers of Growth

Year	Global Rank	U.S. Overall Rank	U.S. Public Rank
2024	No. 21	No. 14	No. 3
2025	No. 13	No. 8	No. 2
2026–2027	No. 6	No. 5	No. 2

American Caldwell, an independent higher education market research firm, attributes Texas A&M’s growth to sharp increases in news mentions and video views.

Methodology & Context

- Data Sources: Rankings are calculated over a 12-month period using objective, third-party data rather than self-reported university figures.
- Key Metrics: Evaluates search activity, news mentions, website traffic, social media engagement, online footprint, web references, and video views.
- Primary Drivers: University leaders highlight that expanded media coverage of faculty research—spanning health, agriculture, national security, and engineering—has fueled public interest and boosted global engagement as the institution approaches its 150th anniversary

To read the complete article, visit the link below.

<https://stories.tamu.edu/news/2026/07/16/texas-am-climbs-to-no-6-worldwide-in-global-university-visibility-rankings/>

84% GRADUATION, 94% RETENTION, AND THE #1 PUBLIC ROI IN TEXAS: HOW TEXAS A&M BUILT ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST RELIABLE OUTCOMES ENGINES AT SCALE

Imed Bouchrika, PhD Co-Founder and Chief Data Scientist, Research.com, 23 June 2026

Texas A&M University—one of the largest public universities in the U.S. with over 77,000 students—achieves a rare "outcomes trifecta" in higher education: **high retention (94%)**, **high graduation rates (84%)**, and **strong career earnings (\$72,100–\$76,100 average)**, all while maintaining low average student debt (\$18,265).

These results have earned the university major recognition, including being named the top public college in Texas by *Money* magazine and placing **28th nationally and 124th globally** in the *Times Higher Education* Employability Ranking.

Core Pillars of Texas A&M's Success Model

Student Retention	Holistic Growth	High-ROI Employment
First-year support	1,300+ clubs	Dedicated Career Center
Hullabaloo U	Leadership & life skills development	Aggie Network (574k+)
Specialized advising	Core Values: Respect, Excellence, Leadership, Loyalty, Integrity, Selfless Service	- Strong alumni hiring

1. Robust Retention & Academic Support

- **94% First-Year Retention:** Ranks in the top 5% nationally despite massive freshman intake (~12,000 students).
- **Targeted Programs:** Transition initiatives like **Hullabaloo U** pair incoming students with peer mentors and instructors.
- **Tailored Assistance:** The Office for Student Success provides transfer programs, writing/math learning centers, and Individual Success Programs (ISP) for academically challenged students.

2. Holistic Involvement & Graduation

- **84% Graduation Rate:** Yields over 8,400 graduates in a single year, operating at a scale few institutions can match.
- **Campus Culture:** Offers access to more than 1,300 student organizations (Student Government, Greek Life, leadership groups) to foster personal development and overall student well-being.

3. Career Placement & High ROI

- **Competitive Salary Metrics:** Average graduate starting salaries reach **\$72,100–\$76,100**, significantly exceeding the national average for bachelor's degree holders (~\$66,505).
- **The Aggie Network:** Connects students to over **574,000 alumni**, including Fortune 500 CEOs who actively recruit graduates sharing the university's core values.
- **Career Center:** Employs a dual-team approach pairing career advisors with employer services to place students in internships and jobs starting freshman year.

Affordability & Debt Control

Texas A&M delivers a high return on investment (ROI) by keeping costs low and limiting student debt compared to national averages:

- **Tuition Freeze:** Tuition has been frozen at 2021 rates through 2027.
- **Expanded Financial Aid:** Beginning Fall 2026, Texas A&M is expanding its free tuition program to families earning up to \$100,000.
- **Manageable Debt:** Median graduate debt stands at **\$18,265**, well below the national public average (\$20,000–\$24,999).

Conclusion: Texas A&M provides a scalable blueprint for U.S. higher education by successfully balancing broad access, academic success, low student debt, and exceptional job placement. Earning a degree at Texas A&M yields a return on investment that rivals private and top universities.

To read the complete article, visit the link below.

<https://research.com/education/how-texas-a-and-m-built-one-of-america-s-most-reliable-outcomes-engines-at-scale>

TS LONE STAR STATE

Ryan Anderson, Texas A&M University at Galveston, July 20, 2026

Following a 21-year wait, the Texas A&M University Maritime Academy celebrated the christening of its new dedicated, state-of-the-art training vessel, the TS *Lone Star State*, on July 17 at the Hanwha Philly Shipyard in Philadelphia.

The vessel is the fourth of five National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMV) built to revitalize American shipbuilding and address a critical national shortage of licensed mariners.



Key Takeaways

- **A Two-Decade Milestone:** The academy had been without a large training ship of its own for 21 years since its previous ship was recalled, forcing cadets to train on aging, secondary platforms.
- **Massive ROI for US Workforce:** State maritime academies produce up to 90% of all new licensed officers entering the active US at-sea workforce through a taxpayer-efficient, shared-cost model.
- **Immediate Recruitment Boost:** Anticipation of the high-tech vessel has already triggered a major fall enrollment surge at Texas A&M Maritime Academy.
- **National Impact:** Beyond training future merchant mariners for decades, the ship represents a broader movement to reinvigorate domestic shipbuilding and bolster U.S. maritime security.

To read the complete article, visit the link below:

<https://stories.tamu.edu/news/2026/07/20/texas-am-maritime-academy-celebrates-christening-of-new-training-ship/>

SCIENTISTS TAME SEIZURES AND HEAL INJURED BRAINS

Zaid Elayyan, Texas A&M University Division of Marketing and Communications,
July 15, 2026

A natural therapy heals brains after traumatic injury, making seizures both harder to trigger and rarer, while pointing to a future that could cure epilepsy. A groundbreaking study led by Dr. Samba Reddy at the Texas A&M University Naresh K. Vashisht College of Medicine—and supported by the U.S. Department of War—demonstrates that sodium butyrate, a naturally occurring compound produced by gut bacteria, can interrupt the slow brain decline following a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and prevent post-traumatic epilepsy (PTE) before it takes root.



Key Findings & Mechanisms

- **Shifting the Paradigm:** Current treatments wait for seizures to manifest after a TBI before managing symptoms. This therapy targets *epileptogenesis*—the biological transition period between initial brain trauma and the onset of epilepsy—to prevent the condition entirely.
- **Molecular Action:** Sodium butyrate acts as an inhibitor of histone deacetylases (HDACs)—enzymes that trigger prolonged, destructive neuroinflammation following trauma.
- **Proven Lab Results:** In controlled TBI models evaluated four months post-injury, sodium butyrate treatment resulted in:
 - Significantly lower brain inflammation and reduced dangerous neural rewiring.
 - Rare, harder-to-trigger, and lower-intensity seizures.
 - Preservation of existing brain cells alongside the growth of new ones.
 - Marked behavioral improvements in memory, spatial navigation, learning, and mood.

Broader Implications & Next Steps

- **The Gut-Brain Axis:** The study reinforces the importance of the gut-brain network, showing how gut-derived metabolites can cross the blood-brain barrier to promote neurological healing.
- **Wide Therapeutic Potential:** Because inflammation drives many conditions, early HDAC-inhibition concepts could apply to spinal cord injuries, Alzheimer's, stroke, and certain cancers.
- **Fast-Track Potential for Clinical Trials:** Though not yet FDA-approved as a drug, sodium butyrate has an established safety profile. Because other HDAC inhibitors are already FDA-approved, researchers anticipate a smoother pathway toward clinical trials for human TBI patients.

To read the complete article, visit the link below:

<https://stories.tamu.edu/news/2026/07/15/scientists-tame-seizures-and-heal-injured-brains-with-gut-chemical/>

DEVICE TO AID FIVE YEAR OLD's BREATHING

David Cook, Texas A&M University College of Engineering, July 9, 2026

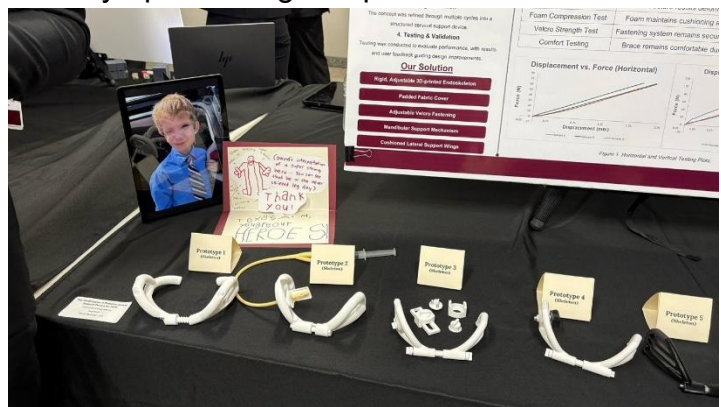
A biomedical engineering capstone team of Texas A&M University senior biomedical engineering students created "The JawDropper"—a specialized, non-invasive facial brace designed to treat severe obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) in pediatric patients with craniofacial conditions. Team members include: Preston Frazier, Vibhav Jaripatke, Caleb Lengefeld, David Hardy, Maggie Orscheln and Hattie Tramm.

The device was developed for 5-year-old David Hardy, who was born with hemifacial microsomia (HFM) and a cleft lip and palate, leaving him without the lower right portion of his jaw and causing his airway to become obstructed during sleep.



Project Development & Highlights

- **Initiation:** After being turned down by numerous other universities, David's mother reached out to Texas A&M's Department of Biomedical Engineering. Dr. Charles Patrick embraced the challenge and organized a senior capstone project for the 2025–2026 academic year, supported by funding from the Southwest-Midwest National Pediatric Device Innovation Consortium (SWPDC).
- **Engineering Challenge:** Over nine months, the student team (Hattie Tramm, Caleb Lengefeld, Maggie Orscheln, Preston Frazier, and Vibhav Jaripatke) designed and tested a custom, adjustable brace capable of comfortably holding a child's jaw in alignment to keep the airway open during sleep.
- **Recognition:** At the 2026 Engineering Project Showcase, the team presented "The JawDropper" alongside the Hardy family and won first place (the Bray International Award) in the biomedical engineering category among 35 competing teams.
- **Future Impact:** Beyond directly improving quality of life for David, the team and faculty hope to advance the prototype toward clinical validation to benefit other children suffering from similar facial microtia and airway conditions.



To read the complete article, visit the link below:

<https://news.engineering.tamu.edu/news/2026/06/01/capstone-team-aids-patient-breathing-with-transformative-design/>

CYCLOTRON INSTITUTE EXPANSION PROJECT

Texas A&M Semiconductor Institute, February 5, 2026

The Board voted to add funding and move the Cyclotron Institute Expansion Project to the current year on the A&M System Capital Plan. The total funding package for this expansion is \$28.1 million, with funding from sources including \$13 million from the Texas Semiconductor Innovation Fund.

The expansion will add square footage to the existing Luedecke Building and significantly increase the Institute's capacity to conduct radiation effects testing for space, defense, and commercial electronics. **The Texas A&M Cyclotron Institute is the nation's leading provider of beamtime for testing radiation resilience in space and defense systems.**

"This expansion strengthens Texas A&M's role in national defense, space exploration, and advanced electronics," Hegar said. "It also creates more opportunities for students to engage directly in high-impact research tied to real-world missions."

TEXAGS INTERVIEW OF GREG SANKEY, SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER

Billy Liucci, TexAgs, July 22, 2026

Synopsis

1. Federal Legislation & Congressional Advocacy

- Legislative Landscape: The SEC leadership is actively engaging with Congress regarding college sports legislation, specifically comparing the House's "SCORE Act" (which grants rulemaking authority) and the "Protect College Sports Act" (which dictates rules directly).
- Urgency & Strategy: Because Congress rarely revisits settled issues quickly due to competing national priorities (e.g., taxes, economy, foreign affairs), the conference emphasizes getting the legislation right from the start.
- SEC Response: While initially excluded from drafting the "Protect College Sports Act," the SEC submitted detailed redlines and a simplified "common sense" guide advocating for media rights, independent decision-making, and a uniform set of rules across college athletics.

2. Conference Administration & Relationships

- Proactive Strategy: Hiring a D.C. government relations firm back in 2015 has proven essential, even if navigating outside political influences remains frustrating.
- Campus & Coach Engagement: Leadership focuses on building strong, direct relationships with member campuses, athletic directors, and new head coaches to align short- and long-term visions.

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin

- Institutional Milestone: Acknowledges Texas A&M's long-term success and integration, noting they have almost been in the SEC longer than they were in the Big 12.
3. Scheduling & The 9-Game Conference Model
- The 9-Game Schedule: Affirmed as the correct move to preserve traditional, high-passion annual rivalries without resorting to awkward, gerrymandered schedules or playing rivals every other year.
 - Independent Decision-Making: Reinforces the conference's intent to control its own destiny rather than being forced into external molds.
4. College Football Playoff (CFP) & Evaluation Metrics
- Strength of Schedule Concerns: Moving to a 9-game SEC schedule means more intra-conference losses compared to teams playing mid-level FBS opponents.
 - Flawed Metrics: SEC leadership argues the CFP Selection Committee and analytics advisors still do not fully appreciate the level of football, depth, and athletic rigor in the SEC compared to Vegas odds or NFL scout evaluations.
 - Commitment to Quality: Despite short-term scheduling risks, the conference remains confident its depth and schedule strength will earn multiple playoff berths.
5. CFP Expansion & Calendar Logistics
- Playoff Expansion Caution: The SEC is cautious about moving to formats like a 24-team playoff due to unknown media values, scheduling interactions, and lack of complete information.
 - Calendar Collisions: Expanding or shifting the postseason creates severe logistical domino effects, including conflicts with mid-December Saturday NFL games, traditional bowl dates (Jan. 1), and historic events like the Army-Navy game. Proposals to end the season as early as Jan. 8 without proper consultation are viewed as unworkable.

To read the complete article, visit the link below:

<https://TexAgs.com>

TWO TEXAS A&M VIRTUAL CAMPUS TOURS



Click on images to view videos



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 Glen Hegar: **chancellor@tamus.edu**

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

President: Dr. Susan Ballabina: **president@tamu.edu**

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

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

VPSA Dr. Bill Kibler: **vpsa@tamu.edu**

Commandant LTG J.W. Bierman: **commandant@corps.tamu.edu**

SRG Board of Directors' Resolutions for: 2024 – 2026

- 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.