

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Forty-Five

28 October 2021

ACTION ITEM! A call for SRG Members and Former Students' Support (Responding to the MGT Comprehensive Review Report, TAMU, 19 October 2021)

President Banks sent the following message to us, and please note it was to former students! This is significantly appreciated because some previous administrations and Presidents did not value our cohort enough to include us in such requests. President Banks does, and she now is asking us for our views, inputs and participation.

We had the pleasure of meeting with her and staff members this week. Because of the importance of the recently released Comprehensive Review Report by MGT to the University, Dr. Banks will soon consider the recommendations for implementation. Our former student and specifically SRG member feedback is important to her before she does. She gave the SRG a “mission type order” (we proudly note that she uses this term when asking us for specific support!). Her request is in her 25 October letter found below – and that is for us to read the report and then provide comments regarding what you think about what it observes, concludes and recommends! Again, this says plenty about what President Banks thinks about the value of what we contribute as key Texas Aggie stakeholders!



M. Katherine Banks

President, Texas A&M University

25 October 2021

To Texas A&M University Former Students:

During my first weeks as president, I held listening sessions with the leadership of our colleges and schools, faculty, staff, students, former students and other key stakeholders, to hear their challenges, opportunities and ideas.

In addition to listening sessions, I also focused on learning. I reviewed many strategic plans that were developed throughout various units, university wide.

Over the past four months, one of the premier consultancies in higher education has reviewed our administrative functions and structure.

The report of the findings and recommendations has been provided to Texas A&M. The next step in our process is critically important: receiving reaction and feedback by the entire university community regarding the recommendations in the report.

The report has been posted online at feedback.tamu.edu. I invite you to review the report and provide your thoughts on the website form.

Input will be accepted on this website over the next two weeks. We are utilizing an external firm to collect and analyze the input to ensure a thorough and unbiased evaluation. This will allow me and our leadership team to review all the information in an efficient manner.

I want to underscore the importance of sharing your feedback. All perspectives are important and will be considered. The survey asks for name and connection to the university. This information will not be provided to the university in the analysis; it is intended to provide the firm with a sense of respondent representation.

After thorough review of the input, I anticipate announcing in early December which recommendations will be accepted, rejected, modified or require further study.

Next steps will include the formation of implementation committees and working groups. Forums will be held to discuss implementation.

I look forward to your participation as we move forward.

*M. Katherine Banks
President*



The picture here is of the cover page of the MGT Consulting report, entitled "Comprehensive Review Final Report" dated 19 October 2021. After you read the President's letter above, and proceed to feedback.tamu.edu, you can find the report by clicking on the block that says, "**READ THE MGT REPORT.**" Then, please access the comment form which is provided at "**...provide your thoughts on the website form.**" You will have to enter your name, "primary role" (former student), and the "UIN" block can be left blank.

Most members of the SRG Board of Directors have inputted comments on the website after we discussed the report. The remaining "window" to do so is less than two weeks, so please keep that in mind because we need your participation. We have a ton of confidence in our membership that they are highly capable of figuring this out and discern the good from bad. And as we all

comment, we please ask that we be constructive - a part of the solution and not the problem.

That said, we offer that generally, the report includes some positive and worthy recommendations toward what President Banks is clearly trying to achieve in the objectives of improved management, efficiencies, and effectiveness via the establishment of unity of purpose and collective efforts in her huge and diverse organization! Thus, speaking with one organizational voice through an improved communication system is a high priority enabler. We need to sell the TAMU brand, with ALL messengers and messaging, with unity and consistency in the messages – a process which she must lead (and plans to do so)!

The SRG Board of Directors believes the report generally responds to those objectives. There are some exceptions as you will probably discover. The asinine statement about the Texas Aggie Corps of Cadets is one of those. It almost negates any credibility the contractor possessed because of its untruth, apparent bias and ignorance of Texas Aggie history in context. Also, if they are suggesting that TAMU should become more of a liberal arts college, well that is not the Land Grant intent. And the Corps of Cadets being an all-male organization that is blocking change – well you can decide! We also do not need The Battalion back under the Department of Journalism. And the editor and student reporters need supervision and guidance about good journalism from their staff advisors.

Again, we know you all will provide your views and valuable comments which will be helpful to the President as she cogitates on her intended courses of action. Thank you in advance for your support. This is another important effort needing our attention - the SRG cast supporting a “presidential mission type order”

Final Record Enrollment Numbers Continue at Texas A&M University



As reported by TAMU Today, enrollment for fall 2021 at Texas A&M University totaled 73,284, a 3.1 percent increase from last year's figure of 71,109 students. These newly released figures are the official 20th class day numbers, which are reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In addition to the total enrollment record, graduate programs set a record with 15,894 students. This figure — which represents 21.6 percent of the student body, including 75 percent from domestic student growth — is nearly a 1,000-student increase from the previous year.

As reported on the first day of fall classes, the entering freshman cohort was also a record-high 12,459 students representing 44 states and 192 Texas counties. One can read more at: <https://today.tamu.edu/2021/10/20/record-enrollment-numbers-continue-at-texas-am/>

Texas Aggie Pitchers in the World Series

As reported by The Eagle staff on October 25, 2021, former Texas A&M pitchers A.J. Minter and Brooks Raley will be making their first World Series appearances. Atlanta's Minter did not allow a run in 7 1/3 postseason innings in five games, striking out 11. Houston's Raley has pitched 3 1/3 innings in four postseason games with a 10.80 earned run average.

Other Aggies to play in the World Series were Ross Stripling, Tyler Naquin, Michael Wacha, Chuck Knoblauch, Mark Thurmond, Doug Rau, Davey Johnson, Wally Moon and Rip Collins. Three Aggies have won a combined nine World Series titles - Knoblauch (four), Johnson (three) and Moon (two). One can access the article here: [Two former Texas A&M pitchers in the 2021 World Series | Baseball | theeagle.com](https://www.theeagle.com/story/sports/baseball/2021/10/25/texas-am-pitchers-world-series/8251117002/)

The 17 Best Stadium Atmospheres in College Football, Kyle Field Number One



According to Fans | Fanbuzz, and reported by staff writer Patrick Pinak on 21 October 2021, *"Compiling the best stadium atmospheres in college football is an incredibly tough task. There's just so many to choose from. That's why we polled our FanBuzz readers on Facebook to find out which stadium really deserves the No. 1 spot and which ones are overrated. We tallied up comments and reactions to determine our list, and the results may or may not surprise you."*

*"Game days in College Station are the best game days. Texas A&M has more traditions than they know what to do with, and every fan in the stadium knows every word to every chant. They don't call this place the 12th Man for nothing. That's why historic Kyle Field comes in at **No. 1**.* Of note, Darrell K Royal - Texas Memorial Stadium (Texas Longhorns) falls in ranking category of "honorable mention!" One can access the entire article with all the rankings listed at: <https://fanbuzz.com/college-football/best-college-football-stadiums/>

Texas A&M women's basketball coach Gary Blair to retire after this season



As reported by Thad Norvel of TexAgs on 28 October 2021, Texas A&M women's basketball coach Gary Blair plans to retire following the 2021-2022 season, TexAgs has learned from sources with knowledge of the situation. The Eagle's Robert Cessna first reported the story Wednesday night, and Blair is expected to officially discuss his plans at a news conference Thursday afternoon.

Blair, 76, has amassed a 430-170 record with Texas A&M after taking over a program in 2003 that was at the bottom of the Big 12. Blair's Aggies won the national championship in 2011, and he has led Texas A&M to 15 straight NCAA Tournaments and eight Sweet Sixteen appearances. Texas A&M had been to the NCAA Tournament only twice in

program history before Blair arrived from Arkansas. One can read the entire article at: texags.com

Very, Very, Very Good Bull!!

A credit goes to The Rudder Association because they shared this from their portal. It is a shoutout to the Brazos County Aggie Moms and Cindy DeWitt (who granted permission for us to disclose her name).

“My freshman daughter has been battling a migraine since Monday. It finally got bad enough that she went to the [doctor] at 1:30. They said they couldn’t treat here (WTH) and referred her to urgent care. By this time, she couldn’t drive and barely could stand. My wife contacted the Brazos Valley Moms and asked for help. Cindy DeWitt dropped everything, picked her up, and drove her to urgent care. Then she waited in her car for about three hours and drove her back to her dorm.

I really don’t know what to say at this point, other that I’m beyond grateful to her for taking care of my kid. I don’t think there is another place in this world where this would have happened.

From the outside looking in, you can never understand it. From the inside looking out, you can never explain it [this seems to be an incredible “explanation” of its evidence!]. This is the Aggie Spirit, and I am thankful to all Aggie Moms looking out for our kids!

And if anyone has contact info on Cindy DeWitt [since has been provided], please send it. I would like to do something nice for her, like buy her a yacht, or a bouquet of flowers.”

NOTES

REMINDER - SRG March '22 Reunion Information!!

March 2-4, 2022

College Station, TX

<https://www.aggienetwork.com/events/2022/sulross.aspx>.

SRG Bulletin Sign-Up Reminder: Anyone (Ags and non Ags, SRG Ags and all other Ags too) can “opt in” and sign up by going to: <https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/sulrossgroup.aspx> and simply putting in your name and email address, and then clicking on “submit.” You will then automatically receive all the SRG Bulletins.

If you wish comment to those who decide:

Chancellor Sharp: chancellor@tamus.edu

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

President Banks: president@tamu.edu

Interim Provost Scott: t-scott@tamu.edu

Athletic Director Bjork: rrabun@athletics.tamu.edu

You can reach us at: SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com. The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are responsible for producing and editing these SRG Bulletins, with transparency to and advice from The Association of Former Students, under whose auspices we operate. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution’s Purposes, which is keeping our represented SRG Membership informed in a timely manner. To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution, please refer to our new “**SRG Tab**” (Under “Programs”) on The Association’s website, at: aggienetwork.com. One can access information about us, including the current 2021-2022 SRG Board of Directors, The SRG’s Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG’s history and what we’re about.