

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Forty-Seven

18 November 2021

Thank You From President Banks On Veterans Day

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

11 November 2021



"On this eleventh day of the eleventh month, I'd like to take a few moments to reflect on the service of those who have worn our nation's uniform in war and peace. For more than 100 years, Veterans Day has been designated to thank veterans for their sacrifices.

It's a particularly significant day at Texas A&M because of our university's rich military history. During the past century, our students have proudly answered our nation's call.

Texas A&M opened as a military academy in 1876, and to this day, the Corps of Cadets remains the keeper of Aggie Spirit on campus.

Today, there are 2,100 cadets in the Corps, and although A&M started as an all-male academy, 17 percent of the cadets are now women. The Corps consistently commissions more officers into our nation's military than any other school in the country other than the three service academies. While Corps membership today carries no military obligation, many cadets still go on to serve.

To support those cadets who plan to lead our military ranks in the future, I am pleased to announce the new Patriot Scholarship program, a \$5 million annual investment for our Army, Navy/Marine and Air Force/Space Force ROTC cadets. The Patriot Scholarship will supplement federally funded ROTC tuition scholarships and will provide funding for room and board for these students to achieve a "full ride" scholarship. These scholarships will help increase membership in the Corps of Cadets and reward these outstanding students for their leadership, selfless service and dedication to the security of our nation.

Our university is proud to serve as a home for learning and personal growth for many veterans. Texas A&M provides veterans' educational benefits to more than 3,800 students.

On this Veterans Day, I'm proud to say that Texas A&M's commitment to the military remains as strong as ever.

Please join me in recognizing our veterans on this important day of remembrance. Let us take a moment to reflect on the sacrifices they have made for our nation."

M. Katherine Banks
President

Texas A&M Commits \$50 Million to “Full Ride” for ROTC Scholarship Recipients

“The new 'Patriot scholarship' will cover room and board for students whose ROTC Scholarships already cover all tuition and fees, providing a full ride for more than 700 cadets.”

By Texas A&M University Division of Marketing & Communications and Corps of Cadets Communications, 11 November 2021



Aggies taking the Uniformed Services Oath at a Texas A&M commissioning ceremony.

Texas A&M Division of Marketing & Communications

“Texas A&M University announced today it will award \$5 million in scholarships annually for 10 years to cover room and board for members of the Corps of Cadets who are ROTC scholarship recipients, which currently is more than 700 students.

ROTC scholarships cover all tuition and fees, but not room and board, so Texas A&M's funding will close the gap, providing full ride scholarships.

This new funding, known as “Texas A&M University Patriot Scholarships,” will go into effect immediately, retroactively covering room and board for the fall 2021 semester. The scholarships will continue to cover room and board for all ROTC scholarship recipients for every subsequent semester. All cadets on any ROTC scholarship are eligible to receive the additional scholarship dollars.

“Not that there was ever any doubt, but the Patriot scholarship proves that Texas A&M is the most military-friendly university in the country,” said Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp. “The Texas A&M community always will do whatever it can to support our troops and those preparing to serve our country in the armed forces. Also today, Dr. Banks showed us her strong commitment to the Corps of Cadets.”

Texas A&M President M. Katherine Banks shared the announcement on Veterans Day.

“Throughout history, Aggies have answered the call to serve and protect our country,” she said. “The Patriot scholarships will help us continue to fulfill our core values of leadership and selfless service by investing in young men and women who truly embody what it means to be an Aggie.”

ROTC scholarships are awarded nationally to students who are a part of the Army, Navy/Marine and Air Force/Space Force ROTC programs at Texas A&M. The school is a designated Senior Military College and provides cadets the opportunity to commission into one of the nation’s five military branches.

“Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets have a long, proud history of military service,” said BG Joe E. Ramirez, Jr., Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, who previously served as Texas A&M’s Commandant of Cadets for more than a decade. “Texas A&M’s commitment of these scholarships is a testament to their strong support of that legacy, and the young men and women in our Corps of Cadets and ROTC programs today who will one day become the next generation of military leaders.”

Texas A&M produces more officers for the U.S. armed forces than any other school in the nation outside of the service academies.

The Patriot scholarships will support university and Corps efforts to grow the number of cadets to 3,000; this fall there are about 2,100 cadets enrolled.

Interim Corps Commandant Col. Byron Stebbins said the additional funding will also position Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets to attract some of the best students in the nation, with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of first-generation students, underrepresented minority populations and out-of-state students.

“The university’s commitment of additional scholarship dollars significantly enhances the Corps’ ability to attract high-quality students who have an interest in serving their country,” Stebbins said. “This support will allow our ROTC programs to do what Texas A&M and the Corps of Cadets have done for 145 years, and that’s produce leaders prepared to serve our communities, state and nation.”

Ramirez added, “These scholarships are truly a ‘game changer’ for Texas A&M, the Corps of Cadets and the ROTC programs.”

One can access the announcement here: [Texas A&M Commits \\$50 Million To Full Rides For ROTC Scholarship Recipients - Texas A&M Today \(tamu.edu\)](#)

Some Added Thoughts and Commentary about The Texas Aggie Corps of Cadets “Patriot Scholarship” Program

The establishment of the 'Patriot Scholarship' in the 11 September announcement above is certainly welcomed with rationale well stated! We thank the Chancellor, President, VP Student Affairs and the Commandant. We have received some questions from SRG members about some of the "particulars". We spoke to the Commandant, Colonel Byron Stebbins '78, to get some clarifying information, and he graciously enlightened us.

As most of you well know, TAMU is not a Service Academy, but TAMU is one of the Nation's designated "Senior Military Colleges" [and much, much more] as the announcement states - producing more officers than any other university in America outside the military academies. Therefore, all Services have their respective ROTC leader-representatives assigned here at the Trigon. They report to their respective Service Chiefs as they execute their respective ROTC programs, but as they "work for" their chiefs, they also "work with and for" the Texas A&M Commandant as they integrate their programs into the Texas Aggie Corps of Cadets operations. As this announcement says, the "ROTC Scholarships are awarded nationally," which means the Services and the heads of their ROTC programs at Aggieland make those selections for the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Space Force. The basic "ROTC scholarship" covers tuition and fees.

The announcement mentioned a "full ride," which means that "room and board" would then be added and covered. Let's say it costs \$30K for a student to attend TAMU per year (Corps or non-Corps). About 40% of the total is for tuition and fees. This new Patriot Scholarship program will now cover, for students "on an ROTC Scholarship," the remaining 60% costs (room and board). There is a very important added benefit here that is not mentioned in the announcement, and that is that the Patriot Scholarships will qualify out of state recipients for in-state tuition, and also make TAMU significantly more competitive with other ROTC universities during the recruiting cycles. This will save "out of state families" about \$25K per year. This is, in major part, what the "game changer" comment made by the VPSA was about.

Currently, about 60% of the Juniors and Seniors are those who are not seeking an ROTC Commission and in the Hollingsworth Leadership Program. They are understandably important to TAMU's Corps of Cadets. The Patriot Scholarship program will result in an increase in the percentage of members in the commissioning program. The Patriot Scholarships will also free up funds for added scholarships to those who are not on commissioning paths. To grow the Corps to 3,000, we need a capital campaign for both additional scholarships and also for the enabling recruiting program. The Commandant, the VPSA and the President, Texas A&M Foundation have all three indicated to us that they support a campaign and are considering options and details for its roll out. We, the SRG Board, as we explained in SRG Bulletin 44, certainly support them in this endeavor! We will keep you informed as we move forward on that initiative!

Oh, Ye of Little Faith...

This from Coach Fisher's press conference on 15 November 2021 when asked again about the rumors of his leaving Texas A&M for Isu:



“I’ve told everybody I’m staying here, and I plan to be the coach at Texas A&M. Everyone thinks coaches lie. We’re going to recruit maybe as good a [recruiting] class in the country. I read the reports. I don’t want to hear it. I’m not interested. We may report the best class in the country, so if I leave, I might be the dumbest human being on earth to Texas A&M and then go across to Baton Rouge to coach against them. If I were that dumb, you wouldn’t want me to be here. I love A&M. I plan on being here. We have a lot of good stuff coming here in the future [referring to the recruiting class he’s about to sign]!”

Coach Slocum Update



We checked in with Coach to see how he was doing. He said that he’s a week away from his last treatment! Although he’s lost weight and strength as expected, the prognosis is good for remission – great news. He plans to come back strong and wished everyone well!

TAMUS Board of Regents Meeting will Consider Athletic Facilities Projects

*As announced on the System website: “MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM November 18, 2021, College Station, Texas REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS - **A&M System 3.2** - Approval to Amend the FY 2022-FY 2026 Texas A&M University System Capital Plan to Add the Bright Area Development Project for Texas A&M University with a FY 2022 Start Date, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas (Project No. 02-3343), A&M System.”*



As reported by Rusty Surette of [KBTX](#) on Nov. 17, 2021, here is a [breakdown](#) of some of the plans and the costs:

- An indoor track facility would be budgeted at \$55 million.
- Redevelopment of the Bright Complex includes a new indoor football practice facility.
- A new academic support center for student-athletes.
- Renovations to the first and second floors.
- Relocation of the Slocum Nutrition Center, estimated at \$125 million.
- Thirty-one new suites are being proposed for the south end of Kyle Field with an estimated price tag of \$25 million.

There would be an associated fundraising effort by the 12th Man Foundation, and, if successful (half the costs upfront) and the proposal is approved, it would be added the System’s 2022-26 Capital Plan. Additionally, a [new contract](#) for Athletic Director Ross Bjork and two assistant baseball coaches are also on the agenda. One can read the

entire article here: [Millions in enhancements proposed for A&M athletic facilities \(kbtx.com\)](https://www.kbtx.com/story/news/education/2021/03/02/millions-in-enhancements-proposed-for-am-athletic-facilities/7048144002/)

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.