

Sawdust

FALL 2021

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Alaskan Adventure

Alumna works to broaden students' experiences while preserving their Yup'ik culture

A large, multi-story red brick building with many windows. The name "the Fredonia Hotel" is mounted on the side in a white, stylized script font. The building is set against a cloudy sky.

the Fredonia Hotel



F

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MEETS
LUXURY.

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President's Letter

"I am happy to share that SFA is 100% open this fall.

We are back to holding classes on campus, and our residence halls, campus dining, fine arts and athletic events are in full swing."



BEFORE THE FALL semester began, I had the opportunity to travel throughout the region with staff members and spend a few days visiting with alumni and current and prospective students

during the SFA Road Show. Members of this caravan visited Houston, Dallas, Tyler and Austin to reconnect with alumni and promote the university.

It was wonderful to be out and about again after months of limited contact and conducting most meetings virtually due to COVID-19. I enjoyed speaking with past, present and future Lumberjacks at the TopGolf events in Houston and Dallas, the socials in Tyler and Austin, and showcasing our purple pride at SFA University Nights with the Houston Astros and Texas Rangers, where I threw out the ceremonial first pitch at both games. If you were in attendance, I hope you took the opportunity to display your "Axe 'em, Jacks" hand signal to show your Lumberjack pride to the thousands in attendance and those watching on television.

I am happy to share that SFA is 100% open this fall. We are back to holding classes on campus, and our residence halls, campus dining, fine arts and athletic events are in full swing.

Homecoming this year will be Saturday, Oct. 30, and I am hopeful we will see many of you at the bonfire, Homecoming Parade, Lumberjack

football game, tailgate and myriad other events taking place during Homecoming week.

If you're on campus for Homecoming, or any other activity, you'll notice some changes taking place, as renovations to the Griffith Fine Arts Building are steadily moving forward, and construction at the Loddie Naymola Basketball Performance Center is nearing completion. I am eager to once again attend fine arts and athletic events this fall, and I encourage you to purchase your tickets and join me and your fellow Lumberjacks.

What a difference we are seeing as our campus once again is vibrant, bustling and busy with students. As I celebrate my two-year anniversary as president of SFA, I am thankful we are able to share the full Lumberjack experience with them. As many of you will recall from your time at SFA, there's nothing quite like being able to walk around this beautiful campus. I'm planning to do much more of that myself this fall, and I look forward to hopefully seeing many of you as I do!

Axe 'em, Jacks!

Dr. Scott Gordon
President
Stephen F. Austin State University



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We have a
Nac
for that!

A Fall Full of Fun.

Remember the rush you felt from the first hint of fall and the start of a new semester? Come back to Nac and feel it all over again. From bonfire at Homecoming to the stunning fall foliage and the unforgettable cozy places where you made new friends for life. If you're ready to relive some old memories or make some new ones, we have a **Nac** for that. Plan your road trip today on the Visit Nac app or at VisitNac.com



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ON THE COVER:

Taking a short break from teaching school in a remote

village in Alaska, Hermelinda "Hennii" Céspedes '17 & '21 returned to Nacogdoches this past summer and brought her two children, Catalina, age 2, and Teddy, age 7, with her. Céspedes teaches sixth grade at Anthony A. Edwards School in the village of St. Michael in the Norton Sound, an inlet of the Bering Sea, located about 125 miles southeast of Nome, Alaska. She walked the SFA graduation stage in August, receiving her Master of Education in teaching and learning with an ESL/bilingual concentration.

Photo by Robin Johnson '99 & '19

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Sawdust

FALL 2021 ★ Volume 48, No. 2

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Sawdust is published three times a year by Stephen F. Austin State University and the SFA Alumni Association. Full subscriptions are included in SFA Alumni Association memberships. SFA alumni and friends receive complimentary issues twice a year.



**LUCAN
NIETMANN
WATKINS:**
1968,
Dorm 17



PURPLE AND WHITE UNITE

Nostalgia, camaraderie lead to
popularity of SFA Facebook group

STORY BY CHRISTINE BROUSSARD '10 & '20

**LARRY RAY
HYGH JR.:**

Lumberjacks
are
everywhere!
I'm on
vacation in
Montana
and bumped
in to a
Lumberjack
from
Houston on a
morning trail
ride outside
Billings!

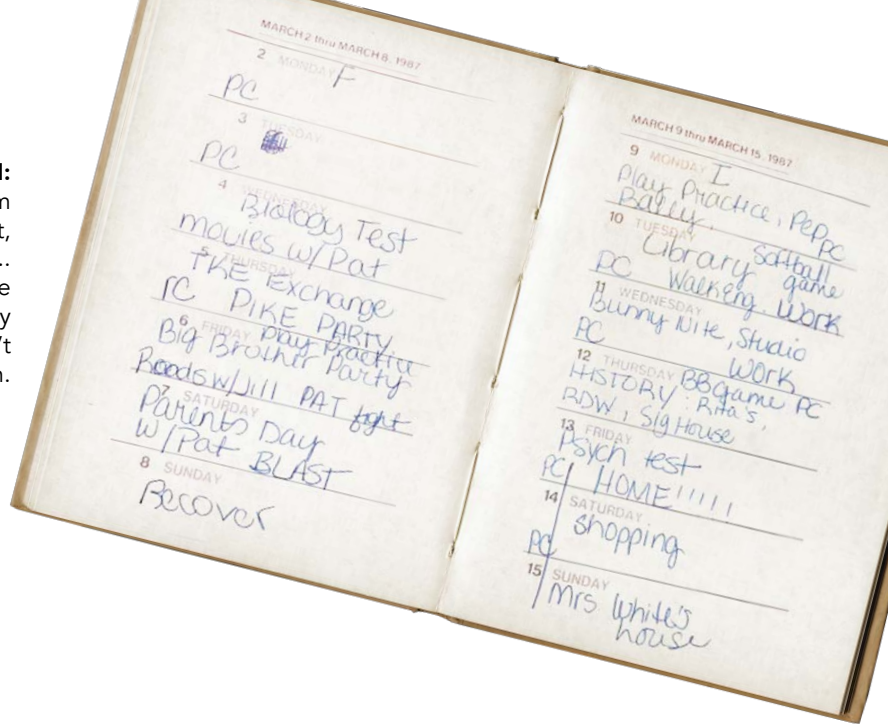


SAMANTHA TOWNSEND MCPHAIL:

YKYW2SFA when you find your old
student ID! "Removering" GREAT times
with GREAT friends!

MARCIE MOORE BRAIN:

Found agenda book from 1986-87. Huey Lewis concert, The Dishes, so many movies ... wish I could remember what the abbreviations mean. Seriously not that many days that don't have anything written.



HONEST MANGO PLAYING at

Crossroads, Nacho Mamas on Tuesday or Jitterbugs on Saturday night — if you know, you know. And if you're willing to share with the more than 19,000 members of the You Know You Went to SFA Facebook group, they can join you in reminiscing.

"The page name is intentional and beloved because truly, if you know, you know," said Stephanie Tippie '99, who is one of approximately 10 YKYW2SFA group administrators. "You can bore people to death who didn't go to SFA with your endless stories about Nac, SFA, the weather, Jitterbugs, Crossroads, Sports Shack, Steen Library, the Units, Ag Pond, zoo dorm and everything else. Or you can post your memories on YKYW2SFA and see the amazing response."

The once obscure social media group created in August 2011 has exploded in followers and page posts during the past year.

"The page is more than 10 years old but only had about 100 members until fall 2020," said group administrator Marcie (Moore) Brain '91. "The page grows every week."

Group administrators have various theories for this quick popularization, including the results of an intentional algorithmic shift by Facebook in 2016 away from news feeds and toward an

emphasis on the platform's plethora of content-specific groups.

Perhaps most influential to YKYW2SFA's explosive following, however, were the conditions that arose from the pandemic's most isolated months. Faced with the mental rigors of enforced quarantines, work-from-home requirements and rising worldwide COVID-19 case numbers, group administrators believe SFA alumni increasingly sought out the virtual connection and camaraderie YKYW2SFA provided.

"The pandemic and everything else that happened in 2020 really made people look around for something to consume other than the news of the day," said Paul Scherr '99, a group administrator. "We've heard from hundreds of members who said this page is the only reason they open Facebook anymore."

Craig Turnage, SFA executive director of alumni relations, said the organic engagement on the site is absolutely inspirational.

"Any time alumni get together to talk about SFA, it's a good thing for the university," he said. "We need our alums spreading the word about the Lumberjack experience in every way possible, especially to prospective students." ➔

I was living in the AXO sorority house, and one Thursday night, I started to hear a faint rumbling noise. I stumbled out of bed, looked outside my bedroom window and saw the entire Sigma Chi chapter on our front lawn. **THE GUYS WERE CHARGING TOWARD OUR HOUSE LIKE THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG!** They got inside and were taking chapter pictures off the walls, forking the yard, putting Oreo cookies on the windows and toilet paper everywhere! I feel like almost every single one of my SFA stories could have been in your typical college movies.”

- JESSICA RUSSELL '03, ADMIN

DAVID ANNEN:

I seriously feel like I struck gold cleaning out the garage.



Some of my unforgettable moments include the Ladyjacks hosting a regional NCAA basketball tournament at Johnson Coliseum in 1993 and making it into the Sweet 16, being talked into sliding down the 'chute' in a pond drainage system north of Nacogdoches, getting engaged to my high school and SFA girlfriend and now wife of almost 27 years, and the many nights spent at Crossroads and Jitterbugs while still managing to graduate in just four years!”

- BLAKE WESTMORELAND '94, ADMIN

YOU KNOW YOU WENT TO SFA IF YOU CAN GROW A MASSIVE FOLLOWING

Administration of YKYW2SFA has shifted hands a number of times during the past decade, handed down from generations of alumni to other purple-pride enthusiasts. With varying levels of experience in such a role, the current administrators took over and quickly learned how to capitalize on Facebook's revamped algorithms in ways that made the most sense for their vision of the group.

“The intent of the page now is to visit and see something you won't see in your regular news feed and to feel good about being an SFA Lumberjack,” said admin Lindsay Russell Marchiori '03. “We don't have ads. We also want to know what year(s) you attended SFA when you post because that's what people relate to. We like original content. We don't like forwards or reposts. It's in the rules you agree to when you ask to join the group.”

Each of the thousands of members has personal reasons for following the group's posts, but general consensus is nostalgia plays one of the more powerful roles in eliciting participation.

“The hope was to ensure we have shared bonds with other alumni while learning about their time at SFA,” said admin Cord Schuck '02. “We all shared a lot of the same buildings, but different trends and cultures happened during our time at the university. Through YKYW2SFA, we now share in others' experiences and can find common ground.”

Every day group members bond over old photos, recollections of faculty and staff, and campus events from way back when.

“What's cool is whether you graduated in 1968 or 2018, that dorm room pic from 1988 resonates with you,” Scherr said. “It takes you back and gives you a warm, fuzzy feeling from your time on campus. That's the purpose of the page and what makes it so special — connecting generations of Lumberjacks based on shared memories and experiences.”

YKYW2SFA has served to unify generations of Lumberjacks, unearth long-forgotten memorabilia and exist as a virtual respite from bleak and uncertain times.

“Friends have been reunited, love interests found, and Jacks have rekindled their love for the purple and white,” said Jessica Russell '03,

Friday afternoon happy hour at Crossroads is a big memory. LaHa, Ritas, Steps and the after parties/formals, football and basketball games, and of course **ALL THE FRIENDS WHO TURNED INTO FAMILY.**”

- MARCIE (MOORE) BRAIN '91, ADMIN

group admin. “This page was a saving grace for so many of us. Its follower base really skyrocketed in the middle of a very polarizing election, as well as one of the most bizarre years any of us has experienced. This page provided shelter from all of that and kept us coming back for more.”

YOU KNOW YOU WENT TO SFA IF YOU CAN SOLVE DECADES-OLD MYSTERIES

Never underestimate the power of social sleuthing — especially when it involves the mobilization of thousands of armchair detectives.

While YKYW2SFA has undoubtedly thrived on widespread nostalgia, its virtual connection of thousands of alumni also has led Lumberjacks to solve more than one mystery of a long-lost Lumberjack item.

“Near the beginning of 2021, someone posted on the page about finding an SFA class ring in a drawer while cleaning out a house, and the post went bananas,” said group admin Scot Krueger ’00. “The ring had an Alpha Tau Omega insignia on it. Fairly quickly, the niece of its original owner saw and identified it as her uncle’s. She gave the holder of the ring the Lufkin address, and within days, Charles Poland was reunited with his missing SFA ring. Our members are passionate, and that keeps people engaged and proud to be a Lumberjack.”

As the Facebook group steadily grows, page administrators feel confident that their own contributions and those of so many followers have curated a truly indelible virtual space.

“The possibilities of the page are very bright not only for members but also for the university community and the power of its Alumni Association and alumni base,” said admin Rocky Sanders ’96. “The YKYW2SFA page is organic and fun, and that’s the direction we’ll keep it going.”

If you’re interested in joining the YKYW2SFA Facebook group, visit facebook.com/groups/ykyw2sfa. ★



JAY ARTHUR: The party started 15+ years ago in the piney woods of East Texas. SFA turned strangers into family! From Sports Shack and Club Platinum to Medellin! Lumberjacks love to travel!



KRISTI MARISSA ALFARO: Welllllll, about that parking ...



ALAN E. SMITH: OK, need some help. I was cleaning out an old house in Nac and found this ring. I would like to reunite it with the owner or family. I have had it for over 20 years and, being part of this group, I may have found the help I need. BS 1971, initials CFP, ATO.

UPDATE: Owner has been found. We are in the process of making arrangements to return the ring. Thank you all for the help.

“Dorm life is a big memory for me — just how fun and free those years in the dorms were. Also, as a business major I heard horrific tales of the business statistics class that one day would crush all of my hopes and dreams of graduating. It was on my radar for three years, and I was determined to pass it. When I took the class, I ended up acing it. I was the kid who answered all of the test questions and all of the bonus questions correctly and blew the curve for everyone else.”

- PAUL SCHERR '99, ADMIN

“My sophomore year commenced with the 9/11 tragedy. A couple of years later, on an unsuspecting Saturday morning, breakfast with my dad at the Hot Biscuit was interrupted by the atmosphere-shattering Columbia shuttle tragedy.”

- AMANDA (FANCHER) CARROTH '04, FORMER ADMIN



HELPING OTHERS IS THE BOTTOM LINE

CPA advocates for
up-and-coming entrepreneurs

STORY BY RICHARD MASSEY

THE RAPIDLY CHANGING demographics of Austin inspire Eric Pierre '03. The metroplex's population is now at an estimated 2.3 million and counting, growing by more than half a million residents during the past decade. Famous residents like cyclist Lance Armstrong and singer/songwriter Willie Nelson are now joined by business magnates like Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, who recently moved

the electric vehicle and clean energy company's assembly plant and battery factory to the Texas capital.

Like Musk and Pierre, many of those moving to Austin are emigrating from California. And it's that demographic — young, affluent, entrepreneurial and mindful of their enviable bottom lines — to which Pierre wishes to appeal.

First and foremost, Pierre is an entrepreneur.

And it's in that role, as CEO of Pierre Accounting, that he hopes to achieve his biggest accomplishment — serving the needs of his clients while also inspiring minorities to pursue and achieve careers in accounting, finance, law and other distinguished professions.

"I believe Austin is positioned to be the next super city with all the movement from California, New York and other states with high state income taxes," Pierre said. "As the Texas capital continues its metamorphosis, we hope to fill the role of trusted advisor for those moving to Austin from out of state. Like them, some of us have relocated, so we know what it's like to be the new kid on the block."

At 6 feet, 8 inches tall, he may be among the

more imposing certified public accountants in the nation. Having endured the struggles of 2020, when his business, like so many others, suffered from COVID-19, Pierre is now fully seasoned by, and aware of, the ways of the world: pivot, be patient and good things will come your way.

Coming to SFA from Katy, Pierre had the size, and possibly the talent, to play basketball for the Lumberjacks, but fear kept him from trying out. He eventually found the courage to follow his dream, and after graduation played for the American Basketball Association for a brief period. He said not following his dream sooner is his biggest regret.

Pierre, now 41, spent more than a decade working for large companies like Deloitte, McDermott, Abbott Laboratories and Team Industrial Services. He didn't like the pace and said the politics could be toxic, so he decided to start his own business.

"I believe my purpose is to be similar to what John the Baptist did for Jesus — prepare the way for someone greater," Pierre said. "I do believe that being successful will help encourage and raise people from my community to do even bigger and better things than I have. I hope someday to be able to read, or watch on TV, someone saying, 'Eric Pierre's success inspired me to get to where I am today.'"

Pierre's inspirational mission started in 2014, when he opened his own accounting firm serving clients part time in Houston. Today, he's devoted full time to his business, which has grown to include offices in San Diego, Los Angeles and Austin, with Pierre toggling between California and Texas.

The son of Haitian immigrants, Pierre draws his inspiration from the Bible and the Haitian Revolution, a successful 13-year slave rebellion against the French empire. He has traveled the world, visiting Mexico, Iceland, Egypt, Jordan, Japan, China, Taiwan, Australia and Europe, witnessing firsthand the vast differences in cultures and economies. He quotes civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and civil rights activist Malcolm X.

He most admires his parents, Les and Rose, who came to the U.S. with nothing. "I learned my work ethic from them," Pierre said.

Les, also a CPA, and Rose, who worked odd jobs and later stayed home to raise two children, sacrificed so their children could have a better life. "They paid a heavy price for me to be where I am today," Pierre said. "It's easy to sell yourself short



“DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHERS, AND EMBRACE THE PROCESS. BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR IS GOING TO STRETCH AND CHALLENGE YOU.”

ERIC PIERRE '03

because of insecurities and wondering if someone will do business with you. I learned I needed to believe in myself and God almighty to attract clients, and if I did that, I would appeal to the right kind of people.”

Pierre Accounting is a 10-person firm specializing in, as Pierre likes to say, “the protection and growth of a client’s financial legacy by providing expert navigation, an abundance of leverage and a solution to the problem of time.”

Pierre was recently included in a list of 100 “must follow tax Twitter accounts for 2021” by Forbes.com.

Due to the pandemic, the firm utilized both the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan to help navigate the recent economic turbulence. It also pivoted to offer advisory services, a move that is paying off. Pierre said he’s in the process of partnering with Advisors Equity Group to enter into life insurance and investments.

In addition to diversifying his business, Pierre

points out that diversity among his staff members also is important to the firm’s success.

“Varied perspectives are crucial when we need to develop solutions and ideas,” Pierre said.

“By employing people from different ethnicities, genders and socioeconomic backgrounds, we’re able to serve clients around the world. A member of our team is likely to relate to you beyond the surface level.”

Relating to people is a top priority for Pierre, especially when it comes to encouraging others to seek out and live their entrepreneurial dreams.

“I’ve learned not to let anything stop me,” Pierre said. “You must accept that some failure is likely, and you won’t be an overnight success.

So, surround yourself with the right people. Don’t compare yourself to others, and embrace the process. Being an entrepreneur is going to stretch and challenge you. You will become a different person, and that’s good for you. Learn to take enjoyment in your journey.” ★



Vista Viewpoint / By Dr. Gary Wurtz



DR. GARY WURTZ
*Professor and
Interim Dean of the
College of Fine Arts*

SFA CONSTRUCTED THE Griffith Fine Arts Building in 1959 to serve the needs of theatre and music students, and in 1983 it underwent a major renovation. But, in recent years, it has become apparent that it is ill-equipped to serve the needs of our current students.

Enrollment in fine arts disciplines has grown from only a few hundred in the 1960s to almost 1,000 students in recent years. Due to the perseverance of recently retired Dean of Fine Arts Dr. A.C. “Buddy” Himes in documenting and demonstrating the shortcomings of the building, in 2018

the university pledged its support for a new structure, and ground was broken in late 2020.

Staff members from the architectural firm met for many months with SFA faculty, staff and administrators to discuss every detail of the project. Times have changed a great deal since the facility was originally constructed six decades ago, and the new building must address current needs as well as position us for the future. Supported by a \$50 million budget, two major phases were agreed upon: first, a major overhaul of the existing edifice; and second, new construction that will more than double the teaching and performing spaces. Not surprisingly, \$50 million goes quickly in this kind of endeavor, but ultimately the final plans are exhilarating.

In the “old” building, theatre and music students were required to share time in Turner Auditorium. As the programs have grown in size, the number of performance and rehearsal dates needed by each area made it difficult for either program to have adequate time in the space. When not

able to use Turner, theatre students were relegated to small, inadequate performance spaces like the Downstage Theatre, and music students performed too frequently in the Cole Concert Hall, which, though beautiful, is too intimate to effectively handle large ensemble performances.

In the new facility, theatre students will gain both a black box and flexible theatre while also retaining Turner Auditorium as an option for appropriate events. With theatre students often able to rehearse and perform in the new spaces, music students will have dozens more dates available to them in Turner.

While the new building will have plenty of classrooms, rehearsal studios, student lounges, study spaces and offices for faculty and staff, some of the more exciting additions will bring some of our most popular and fastest-growing programs into currency.

The School of Art’s filmmaking program, long led by Professor William Arscott, will be able to abandon its makeshift facility in an old house on Starr Avenue and establish its home in a beautiful new space with a modern soundstage and all of the appropriate support spaces to accompany it.

The School of Music’s sound recording technology program, led by Professor James Adams, will finally abandon space that has been improvised and fashioned out of old classrooms and closets, and it will take up residence in a state-of-the-art recording facility with two studios, isolation booths and much more. The dance program will be housed in two studios that will serve its daily teaching and rehearsing requirements as well as provide functional performance venues for smaller programs. Finally, space will be allocated to exhibit the work of art students and faculty members. Everyone in the college will share in the joy and pride of our new building.

Weather permitting, we are planning a glorious opening in spring 2023. For those interested, naming opportunities still exist, so please contact us about that. We would love to name a theatre, performance hall or entire building after you! ★

Work Space / Inside Dr. Jared Barnes' Classroom



DR. JARED BARNES
Associate Professor of
Horticulture

1. Barnes often makes his office outdoors in the Plantery, a growing operation that includes greenhouses, teaching gardens and Sprout, a microfarm food garden. This living laboratory allows students from across campus to engage in hands-on learning about plants. One of the labs SFA students enjoy most is grafting. Barnes said the students are so proud of themselves when they stick two plant parts together that then fuse to form one composite plant. The whiteboard illustrates the classes' grafting lesson.
2. Barnes said he has the privilege of advising students in the SFA Horticulture Club. His students amaze him with the passion they invest in this extracurricular activity. The club meets on a weekly basis and is always doing something fun with plants. Members also host plant sales on campus, and they use the profits to learn more about the flora around them. They have participated in day trips to Big Thicket National Preserve and hosted an on-campus workshop with Thomas Rainer, who co-authored "Planting in a Post-Wild World."
3. Inside the Plantery's glasshouse, Barnes strives to have tropicals, succulents, begonias and carnivorous plants on display near the entrance. Many of these plants provide propagation material for classes.
4. In the fall and spring, students host plant fairs to showcase their projects and plants and decorate the Plantery with colorful banners and twinkle lights. Mark your calendars for the 2021 Fall Plant Fair, which will be held Nov. 4.
5. If you see Barnes outside, chances are he has his rugged Tilley hat with him. He loves the inside pocket where he stores his earplugs for loud gardening tasks. Barnes has owned the hat since 2010, and it's traveled the world with him on trips to Singapore, Costa Rica, England, Switzerland and Italy.
6. Barnes said the growing operation would not exist without a talented team of student apprentices, who do more than just weed and water. They propagate plants, scout and treat for plant problems, host tours, garden markets and plant fairs, and use cutting-edge techniques. For example, Hanna LeFlore, a senior from Valley View, is shown sampling plant root ball growth using a pH meter.
7. Barnes enjoys showing students new tools that capitalize on simple technology. Here are some of his favorites. The auger and cordless drill allow him to quickly plant rooted seedlings. The blue King of Spades shovel features a handle welded to the spade, so it never breaks, and the Neversink Farm wire weeder allows him to swiftly sweep away weeds in the garden after they sprout.
8. After completing his plant identification class, students tease that every plant is Barnes' favorite because he seems to say that often in his descriptions. But, two of his top favorites are oakleaf hydrangeas and pitcher plants. Barnes loves oakleaf hydrangeas because of their four-season interest and giant flowers (in the vase on the table). Pitcher plants (in pot next to the table) are new to Barnes, and he said he feels like a kid again learning about these carnivorous plants. Plantery apprentice Jevon Richeson from Houston inspired Barnes to start growing them. He now has almost 20!
9. Hope Smith, a senior horticulture student and Plantery apprentice from Georgetown, built a hydroponic system to grow basil (pictured here), lettuce, cilantro and parsley. Barnes said during tours, people are always amazed to see plants growing without soil.
10. The horticulture program is best known for its Garden Market, a Friday plant and produce sale offering seasonally available harvests from Sprout and plants students have cultivated. The plants they grow span from seed to sale; therefore, students witness the complete cycle instead of just one aspect of horticulture. If you look around campus, you also will notice many of the Plantery's annuals in the color beds and containers.



Dr. Steve Widner '80

PARADISE FOUND

Oral surgeon finds career choice at SFA

STORY BY
JOANNA ARMSTRONG '17

SITTING IN AN unassuming yet stylish office in the heart of the Austin medical center, Dr. Steve Widner '80 flips through a photo album containing before and after pictures of the patients whose lives he's helped to change.

At Widner Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, he performs delicate dental surgeries, like extracting wisdom teeth, placing dental implants, repairing facial trauma, and performing complex reconstructive jaw and facial surgery. Listening to him talk about the positive impact the surgeries have made on his patients, it's hard to imagine he was meant to do anything else. But when Steve came to SFA in 1976, he wasn't sure what to study or how the rest of his life would unfold.

As part of a family of Lumberjack alumni, SFA was a natural choice. His grandmother graduated from SFA with both bachelor's and master's degrees. Later, his father graduated from SFA. A native of Orange, Steve's family moved to Lufkin when he was a child, where he later met his future wife, Kim '80, and together they decided to attend the university because of its proximity to home.

Kim enrolled as an elementary education major, but Steve was still undecided on what academic area to pursue. Suddenly, one day as he walked across campus near the end of his freshman year, his life's path hit him with a sudden clarity.

"I remember the day — it was bright sunshine, and you could see the pines and a blue sky," Steve said. "I decided I would go to medical school, to dental school — through the sciences route." →



*Dr. Steve Widner '80 with
his wife, Kim '80*

“THE GOOD THING ABOUT SFA IS YOU GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO ALL OF THOSE THINGS,” STEVE SAID. “YOU DON’T HAVE TO ISOLATE YOURSELF. YOU CAN BE WELL ROUNDED AND HAVE A LOT OF DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND PARTICIPATE IN MANY DIFFERENT THINGS.”

- DR. STEVE WIDNER '80

The next year, Steve became involved in Greek life, pledging Theta Chi, while Kim pledged Chi Omega, both making lifelong friendships. Though busy with the fraternity, Steve also was involved with the Student Union, working to bring different speakers and concerts to campus, and he served on a committee under then-SFA President William R. Johnson to develop new policies for the Student Union.

“The good thing about SFA is you get the opportunity to do all of those things,” Steve said. “You don’t have to isolate yourself. You can be well rounded and have a lot of different experiences and participate in many different things.”

Split between his academic and social life, Steve still devoted himself to the rigorous courses required for a future career in the medical field.

“I still remember so many of the professors at SFA,” Steve said. “I was getting a hands-on education, and I look back on it now and think I was very fortunate. I got a really good education with good experiences for a good value. I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

However, it wasn’t all long and late nights of studying. One morning around 2 while prepping for an organic chemistry exam, Steve and two friends discussed how they wished they had done something adventurous. Inspired by road trip movies of the time, they decided to make a change. Steve asked Kim to meet him that weekend so he could share some news.

“He had some documents rolled up in his hand, and as he unrolled them, he said, ‘Here are my withdrawal papers,’” Kim said.

Officially withdrawn from classes, four days later Steve and his friends were on Waikiki Beach “with a duffle bag, about \$30 among us and no way home,” he said. “My parents were horrified, and so was everyone else.”



Dr. Steve Widner '80 sits next to a Stephen F. Austin statue inside the lobby of his Austin office.

The group spent a semester in Hawaii, working odd jobs to get by and relaxing on the beach.

"It was totally irresponsible and wrong academically, but it was such an adventure," Steve said.

A few months later, they had earned enough money working as pedicab drivers to make their way back home, and Steve once again ended up on Kim's doorstep, his blond hair now long and his skin significantly tanned. Though he'd never do something like that again, the experience made a profound impact.

"It's been a hallmark that's followed me, certainly with all my friends and the fraternity brothers," he said. "They still talk about it to this day."

After Steve and Kim received their SFA degrees, they married. Kim later received a master's degree from SFA. While Steve attended dental school in the Dallas area and then residency in New Orleans, Kim supported their growing family by teaching math, seeing him every few days when he came home from his residency.

When his residency was finished, they knew it was time to come home to Texas and apply for jobs. Steve interviewed for positions all across the state, but nothing felt like a fit until he received a call back from a practice in Austin.

"I would tell people, 'I got this interview in Austin, and it's kind of appealing,' and they would say, 'Oh Austin, that's where you want to be,'" Steve said.

Steve recalls Austin was just starting its technological heyday, so he accepted the position and hasn't looked back. Working at an office that was both a research facility and a private practice, Steve got plenty of experience participating in both until the owner retired, and Steve took over and expanded it. It's the same office he's in today.

After retiring from teaching to raise three children, Kim went to work at Widner OMS serving in a multitude of roles, though she's primarily in charge of keeping the books.

"It's a perfect fit for her because she's extremely detail oriented, so everything has to add up and be right," Steve said. "Every accountant we've ever had just absolutely loves her because everything is perfect."

Between consultations and surgeries, Steve and Kim make time to promote the university that put them on the path they're on today. A 2-foot-tall statue of Stephen F. Austin sits on a table in the lobby welcoming visitors, and if you're a college-age patient sitting in Steve's exam chair, he's likely to ask you where you plan to attend college.

"To this day, I'm a big believer in SFA, and I love to be able to talk to them about it," Steve said. "I tell them a couple of the things I learned at SFA. I tell them that this is the adventure of your life, so go enjoy and be a part of it." ★

Advising 101

BY DR. CHRISTOPHER IVANCIC
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND
GRADUATE PROGRAM COORDINATOR



OUR LIVES ARE reliant upon computers. Throughout COVID-19, we have used them as never before for education and work purposes.

From laptops to desktops and smartphones, we also depend on these machines to help manage our finances, map our routes, share photos with friends and family, and connect via social media.

Here are a few tips you can use to help reduce the risks of damage and security threats to your computers.

- **Use strong passwords.**
Choose a password with at least 12 characters. Use uppercase and lowercase letters, and incorporate numbers and symbols. Avoid using a word that can be found in the dictionary or the name of a person, character, product or organization. Do not reuse a password. If you have trouble remembering passwords or creating strong ones, consider using a password manager, like Google's password manager, to help you organize, generate and recall your passwords.
- **Use antivirus software and firewalls.**
Antivirus software from a trusted provider can help prevent viruses from harming your computer. They can isolate malware, ransomware, viruses, adware and other threats, and some can remove them altogether. A firewall typically establishes a barrier between a trusted network and an untrusted network, such as the internet. Most modern systems come preinstalled with antivirus software and firewalls.
- **Update your software.**
Software updates are important to your digital safety and cybersecurity. They can patch security holes, remove outdated and enhance existing features, and add new features. It's a good idea to let your computer software update automatically. You can set the updates to occur when you're sleeping to reduce downtime.
- **Back up your data.**
Consider using an external drive to back up your computer's data. In the event of theft, hard drive failure, virus infection, computer crashes and other issues, you will still have access to your information.

A little vigilance now can go a long way in helping to keep your computer safe. ★

JACK TALK

Facebook - @SFASU
Instagram - @SFASU

Twitter - @SFASU
Pinterest - SFALUMBERJACKS

Use #AxeEm or tag SFA on social media.



Maya learning how to axe 'em with Uncle Sampson.

KIMBERLY IKPO / FACEBOOK

Look what I found while cleaning out the attic — an @SFASU band 45 record!!

N_BABBLE / TWITTER



Sunday Funday with my SFA brothers. #AxeEm #Lumberjacks #HappyBirthdaySed

PJY_EQUILIBERTY / INSTAGRAM



Take it from our alumni — nothing beats the feeling of absolutely loving your job. Master of Science in resource communications alumna Anna Mateljak is on science communicator detail for the Rocky Mountain National Park's resource management division-research learning center branch.

SFA_ATCOFA / INSTAGRAM



Congratulations, Jess and Jordan! These two Gen Jacks counselors are engaged, and we couldn't be more excited for them!!

SFA_GENJACKS / INSTAGRAM

I finally got mine! Woo!

KELLY VAUGHN / FACEBOOK



My daughter's wedding pictures came back. I LOVE this one!

CINDY WHITE LOWERY / FACEBOOK

Jacks of All Trades / With Karina Erickson '14

RED, WHITE AND PURPLE:

Political science major
rising star in Austin,
District of Columbia

STORY BY DONNA PARISH '99 & '07



PURPLE IS KARINA Erickson's '14 favorite color.

As a child, she traveled the world with her parents, who were both heavily involved in scuba diving. That's when she became interested in political science.

Purple Heart

"My father was a World War II veteran. He was wounded during the Battle of the Bulge and awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star Medal," Erickson said. "After the war, he cofounded the Professional Association of Diving Instructors. He met my mom when she signed up to take her PADI course."

Erickson recalls spending her formative years in exotic locations — tiny islands across Indonesia, Central America and Europe. She saw her parents work to comply with strict scuba diving governmental policies. She also grew up hearing battle stories from her father's days of fighting for liberty and against oppression.

"Collectively, those experiences inspired me to pursue a career in public service and politics," Erickson said. "I quickly realized if you want to make a difference and implement change, doing it yourself is the best way."

And that is precisely what Erickson is working to accomplish. In just seven short years since her SFA graduation, she has compiled a very impressive résumé:

- student intern during the 82nd Texas Legislative Session
- campaign manager for Texas Rep. Travis Clardy while still an SFA student
- Facebook campaigns and politics team member
- communications director for former U.S. Rep. Ted Poe
- master's degree from George Washington University in political management, named Outstanding Young Alumni
- communications director for the General Land Office, assisting Commissioner George P. Bush
- and communications director for Bush's current campaign for Texas attorney general.

Purple Pride

Erickson found her way to SFA after a campus visit. She had been accepted to several schools, including Texas A&M University, but after a meeting with Dr. Lee Payne, SFA professor of government, she chose SFA.

"Dr. Payne told me there wasn't a thing he could say that would discourage me from attending A&M," Erickson said. "However, if I did decide to come to SFA, he promised I wouldn't be just another student. I

would develop long-lasting relationships with my professors and have the opportunity to learn from individuals who had dedicated their careers to teaching students. I wanted to be somewhere I could build relationships. His promise was the deciding factor."

At SFA, Erickson's involvement in several clubs and organizations helped launch her career. She was vice president of the Pre-Law and World Politics clubs, a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, president of the SFA Diving Jacks, and chapter chairman of Young Conservatives of Texas, to name a few.

As a freshman, Erickson expressed an interest in applying for an internship with the Texas Legislature.

"I recall walking into Dr. Payne's office and asking him if he thought I was good enough to apply for the university's Legislative Internship Program," Erickson said. "I remember him jokingly saying if I didn't apply, he would kick me out of his office. My time in the legislature solidified my desire to work in politics and government."

Red, White and Blue = Purple (and White)

After the internship, Clardy's chief of staff asked Erickson to be the campaign manager for his re-election. So, at 20 years old, she was thrilled for the opportunity.

Fast forward after her SFA graduation, and Erickson worked for Facebook on its campaigns and politics team. That opportunity led to her three-year employment in the U.S. Capitol working for Poe while pursuing her master's degree.

During the past three years, Erickson has served as the communications director for the GLO, working for Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, a member of the famous Bush political family. Bush is currently running for attorney general of Texas, and during the summer, Bush asked Erickson to head his campaign. She left her position at the GLO in June to assist.

"We kicked off the campaign June 2, and the general election will be held in November 2022," Erickson said. "If we win, I plan to join his staff and continue working for the people of Texas."

Purple Mountain Majesties

While many vicenarians are still trying to figure out where their career will lead, Erickson is certain of her path.

"My dad used to tell me, 'The world is yours. All you have to do is reach out and take it.' People call it naive, but I'm out to change the world," Erickson said. "I love this country, and I'm dedicated to seeing it continue to thrive for generations." ★



Photo by Robin Johnson '99 & '19

ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Alumna works to broaden
students' experiences
while preserving
their Yup'ik culture

STORY BY JO GILMORE

PHOTOS BY HERMELINDA CÉSPEDES '17 & '21



IN AUGUST 2020, Hermelinda “Hennii” Céspedes ’17 & ’21 and her two children, Teddy and Catalina, ages 7 and 2, boarded a flight to Anchorage, Alaska, from Houston for the teaching opportunity of a lifetime.

“I always felt a calling to Alaska,” Céspedes said.

Gerald Anthon, a fellow teacher in Nacogdoches, worked for the Bering Strait School District and recommended it to Céspedes. He’s now a teacher at Nacogdoches High School.

“He encouraged me to pursue teaching in a remote village, and that really brought my dream to life,” she said.



Céspedes accepted a sixth-grade teaching position with the district.

After attending new teacher orientation in Anchorage, retrieving the two months’ worth

of supplies she mailed herself from Nacogdoches and buying a new cellphone from the only provider that services her destination, Céspedes flew with her children to the village of St. Michael.

GETTING HER BEARINGS ON THE BERING SEA

The village is on the east coast of St. Michael Island in the Norton Sound, an inlet of the Bering Sea. It is 125 miles southeast of Nome in the Central Yup’ik region of Alaska.

The shortest day of the year offers about four hours of daylight. During December and January, Céspedes and Teddy had to wear headlamps to light the way to and from school. The longest day in June provides a little more than 20 hours of daylight. The temperature varies on average from 1 F to 61 F and is rarely below minus 23 F or above 69 F, though the “wind chill easily drops into the minus 20s F,” Céspedes said.

To prepare for winter, which began Sept. 25, 2020, with the first snow, the Céspedes family purchased snow bibs; mukluks, the traditional Yup’ik waterproof boot made from rabbit; and kuspuks, a piece of Yup’ik clothing considered to be the original hoodie.

During ice and snow season, the principal at Anthony A. Andrews School transported teachers and some students to and from school in a van that occasionally got stuck in the snow.

“I’ve had to swim through snow up to my waist to get to school before,” Céspedes said. ➔





Sometimes during her swim to school, Céspedes' braided ponytail froze. So did the tears from her eyes watering in the cold. She often had to tightly hold on to Teddy to keep him from blowing away.

On the worst weather days, the village closed down, so students and teachers didn't have to navigate the big snow

hills that blocked the streets or dodge the debris kicked up by the strong winds on the way to school. When temperatures started rising in April, the local bears awoke from hibernation, and the school's assistant principal sent notices like this: "I was told there are four bears roaming the island. The most likely place they might end up is the dump, so please visually scan your surroundings."

During their first year in the village, the Céspedes family adapted to power outages, low water pressure, limited resources and high prices (see Sticker Shock).

"I pay \$80 for 7 gigabytes of data a month for Wi-Fi internet," Céspedes said. "This means no streaming videos. We have invested in a lot of DVDs."

Despite these challenges, Céspedes completed her online Master of Education in teaching and learning with an ESL/bilingual concentration from SFA in August 2021.

So far, her biggest personal success is "maintaining a 4.0 in my graduate classes with a small amount of internet data to attend class and complete assignments. This is all while being a full-time teacher and a single parent in a remote Alaskan Native village with no Netflix."

NOT TEACHING IN TEXAS ANYMORE



math levels, but by the end of the year, six out of 10 showed growth and met their end-of-year goals."

Céspedes also celebrated teaching successes during her first year in the village.

"I helped get one student to sixth-grade reading level," she said. "At the beginning of the year, all my students tested at second- and third-grade reading and

These achievements required the knowledge she gained as an undergraduate at SFA earning her Bachelor of Science in human sciences with a concentration in human development and family studies and a minor in music.

"I learned a lot of patience, love and understanding from many of my music instructors, including Debbie Berry, Dr. Scott LaGraff and Dr. Tod Fish," Céspedes said. "These three were not only amazing professors but also amazing mentors filled with good life advice and God's grace. I want to make an impact on my students' lives like these professors did on mine."

This outlook served her well as she grew accustomed to the students in her new school.

"Some had bottled-up anger, and they would yell; hit walls, desks and themselves; and throw things across the room," Céspedes said. "In Texas, the student gets suspended, or police get involved, but here, we are trained to deal with students who have experienced trauma. I learned my students' triggers and almost completely eliminated these outbursts through patience, love and consistency."

The COVID-19 pandemic also complicated her first year as a teacher in St. Michael. When cases were reported in the vicinity, the school temporarily closed so a COVID testing team could fly in to assess the villagers.

Attendance and parent involvement were challenges, too. On some days, only one or two students came to class, Céspedes said. Four out of 11 parents attended her parent-teacher conferences.

But the year presented some lighter moments, like when Teddy arrived at school in his underwear after forgetting to put on his jeans under his snow bib. And during Teacher Appreciation Week, the school principal ordered Subway sandwiches delivered all the way from Nome to show his thanks.

Céspedes also got to witness and hear about several of her students' "firsts" — visiting a restaurant ("The kids said, 'There's this store where you can sit down and order whatever you want, and then they bring you what you ordered. The best part is it's cooked and hot!')"; eating grapefruit (Her students bit into them thinking they would taste like oranges,

and their faces scrunched at the sour fruit. "They were mad," Céspedes said); and earning awards at the end of the school year.

"One of the things I looked forward to when I was a

student in elementary school was the awards ceremony, so I got them some medals and certificates and boosted their self-esteem a little bit," Céspedes said.



From left to right, Dmitri Lockwood, Wesley Kobuk, Trevor Long, Paulianne Elachik, Amare Lockwood and Angel Lockwood received honors for showing growth and meeting their end-of-year goals in Céspedes' sixth-grade class during the 2020-21 school year.

PRESERVING YUP'IK CULTURE

Céspedes said she was able to connect with her students during the school year a lot more than she originally anticipated. She's part of the first generation of her family born in the U.S. Her family is originally from Reynosa, Mexico, and her native language is Spanish.

"My students' culture is very rich, and, with me being Hispanic, mine is, too. We got to learn about each other's culture, and we made it fun."

More than 30 years before the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867, the Russian-American Company established a fortified trading post called Redoubt St. Michael to trade with the Yup'ik people of western and southwestern Alaska. In 1897, the U.S. military built Fort St. Michael to address the con artists drawn to the area during the gold rush. Some reports state that 10,000 people lived in the village at that time because it provided a pathway to the Yukon River and a chance to strike it rich. Today, the population is slightly more than 400 people, mostly of Yup'ik and Russian descent.

Due to western colonization, the Yup'ik language was almost lost in St. Michael because villagers were physically punished if they spoke it, Céspedes said.

"Currently, only the elders speak it. They didn't teach it to their children for fear they'd be punished in schools," she said. "My new goal is to become proficient in Yup'ik so I can help the mayor, Bobbi Andrews, revive the language in the village."

Yup'ik is still the primary language in some of the region's other villages. The University of Alaska Fairbanks has tapped into this knowledge to offer Yup'ik classes so people like Céspedes can learn it and help preserve the region's culture.

In the meantime, students at the school honor their culture with the annual Alaska Native dance performance for the community in late April. Called Eskimo dancing, this was a form of prayer before Christians brought their religion to the region and forbade villagers from performing their dance.



Parents of children who are participating in their first Alaska Native dance performance give small gifts to the elders as a wish for good health and well-being. For Teddy's first performance, Céspedes made the elders gift bags with touch gloves and cookies.

"The Christians equated it with devil worship," Céspedes said. "So only a handful of elders still know these dances, and only one is willing to teach our students a part of the old culture," she said.

Céspedes wants to stay in St. Michael at least six years before possibly returning to Texas to be near her mom in Mission. This means Teddy and Catalina will have plenty of time to practice the dance, and Céspedes can perfect her Yup'ik.

"I told my sixth graders that I want to stay to see them graduate," said Céspedes, who is the first person in her family to graduate from a university. "Maybe that will encourage them to keep studying and stay in school." ★



STICKER SHOCK

Goods and services aren't readily available in St. Michael, a remote Alaska village on an island in the Bering Sea. Prices like those below led Hermelinda Céspedes '17 & '21 to "stop drinking bottled water and start drinking tap water. I order Gatorade and Propel from Amazon."

Wi-Fi internet service (7 gigabytes of data a month)	\$80.00
Tide Pods (57 pods)	\$33.99
13-gallon kitchen trash bags (200)	\$32.99
Folgers coffee (30.5 ounces)	\$18.49
3-pound bag Clementines	\$13.99
Cranberry juice (6.4 ounces)	\$11.69
Purified drinking water (gallon)	\$8.59
Quaker instant oatmeal	\$7.99
Lucky Charms cereal	\$7.79
Eggs (dozen)	\$4.99



EVERYTHING IS GREENER IN TEXAS

Urban forester dedicates 30 years to the City of Houston

STORY BY SARAH FULLER '08 & '13
PHOTOS BY ROBIN JOHNSON '99 & '19



With more than 900,000 trees planted during his 30-year career as Houston's city forester, Victor Cordova left a green legacy across Texas' largest city. Pictured, Cordova stands outside of the Houston Parks and Recreation Department building with the designated urban forestry Jeep used to manage urban forests and green spaces across an area totaling 600 square miles.

WHEN THINKING OF Texas' largest city, home to roughly 2.3 million people and booming aerospace, biotechnology, energy and manufacturing industries, it is unlikely that images of forests and lush green spaces immediately come to mind. However, thanks to Victor Cordova's '88 three decades of service as urban forester for the City of Houston, the sprawling metropolis is greener than ever.

"We had a city Christmas tree every year in front of city hall," Cordova said. "One year, the tree was delivered from Michigan, and the first thing the delivery guy said when he arrived was, 'Wow! Y'all have a lot of trees — I was expecting nothing but pavement.'"

Currently, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department comprises 380 developed parks and more than 167 greenspaces totaling more than 39,501 acres. Cordova and his team of employees were one component of the city's larger Greenspace Management Division.

Reflecting on his career, Cordova eschews discussing achievements that led Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner to formally proclaim Dec. 31, 2020, as Victor Cordova Day. Nor does he boast of the countless hours he worked that earned a plaque located at the Houston Parks and Recreation building honoring his service to the field of urban forestry. Instead, Cordova focuses on the employees who made his achievements possible.

"Luckily, I had a lot of strong and talented help," Cordova said.

Given the geographic range of Cordova's responsibilities alone, it makes sense he valued his core team of dependable people. As Houston's city forester, Cordova was responsible for trees located across an area totaling 600 square miles.

As if the sheer number of trees and size of the city weren't enough to challenge him, Mother Nature delivered several unforgiving blows to Houstonians and their trees during Cordova's career.

Houston's urban forests were pummeled by the 2011 Texas drought — one of the hottest, driest one-year periods in modern Texas history.

"There were about 40,000 trees lost on city properties," Cordova said while shaking his head. "Not to mention Hurricanes Ike and Harvey. It took us two good years to clean up all of the debris after Harvey."

Despite these devastating events, Cordova, like a healthy forest, is resilient.

"One of the career highs I hang my hat on is when our team and 2,000 volunteers planted 20,000 trees on Will Clayton Parkway for Arbor Day in 2009," Cordova said.

Prior to the planting, the approximately 40-acre lot was simply a grassy median that required constant mowing.

"We took those 40 acres, narrowed it down to 12, and everything else is trees," Cordova said.

When planning these plantings, Cordova took great care to ensure species diversity, which benefits urban wildlife and aesthetics and strengthens against forest disease and tree mortality.

"In everything we planted, we fought against having a monoculture," Cordova said. "I took the opportunity to diversify the tree species planted on city properties."

This effort paid off at Memorial Park, Houston's largest urban-center park.

Following a planting at Memorial, Cordova said around 10,000 trees died. However, thanks to the diversity of species that thrived, park aesthetics were not negatively affected.

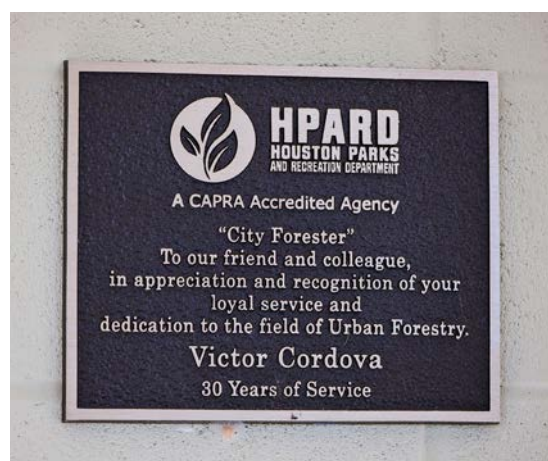
Cordova also dedicated five years toward passing a city ordinance to help protect Houston's trees.

In 1995, a homeowner was recorded on video cutting down eight oak trees located on city property without permission. Despite having video evidence of the event, Cordova was devastated to learn no law existed to punish such action.

Now, thanks to the Tree Protection Ordinance, trees located on city property are safeguarded from indiscriminate removal.

"I didn't do it alone, but passing that ordinance was a big deal for me," Cordova said.

Growing up in rural South Texas, Cordova's first



A plaque honoring Cordova's decades of service to the city adorns the Houston Parks and Recreation Department building. In addition to this permanent marker, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner formally proclaimed Dec. 31, 2020, Victor Cordova Day.

exposure to towering trees took place when he visited the SFA campus with a friend.

"Where I grew up, there is nothing but mesquite," Cordova said. "I saw the pine trees along State Highway 7 coming into Nacogdoches and was like, 'Wow!'"

Cordova took that newfound love of trees and directed it toward earning a Bachelor of Science in Forestry at SFA.

He also ran for SFA's track and cross-country teams throughout his undergraduate career and met his wife, Julie '87. The couple later had three children, Samuel, Caroline and Catherine.

Now retired, Cordova has his sights set on enjoying time with his family, completing home renovation projects and possibly adding to his impressive tree count.

"I planted 902,071 trees during my career — almost a million," Cordova said without hesitation. "I kept track." ★

Two students practice takeoff in SFA's state-of-the-art Redbird flight simulator. As SFA's new aviation sciences initiative director, Jim Williams, left, instructs the students in piloting basics. Graduates will receive not only a bachelor's degree, but also will become private pilots with multiple flight certifications.



PREPARING FOR TAKEOFF

SFA's new aviation sciences initiative takes flight

STORY BY CHRISTINE BROUSSARD '10 & '20 / PHOTO BY ROBIN JOHNSON '99 & '19

AS AN INSTITUTION intent on evolving academic offerings alongside industry demands, SFA's tradition of achieving greater heights continues with the addition of its aviation sciences initiative.

Offered through the James I. Perkins College of Education's School of Human Sciences, the initiative kicked off with a distinct set of aviation courses this fall.

"Our students will fly in state-of-the-art planes that boast some of the most advanced equipment, all from a new hangar built at the A.L. Mangham Jr. Regional Airport in Nacogdoches," said Dr. Judy Abbott, dean of SFA's Perkins College of Education.

Just last year, the SFA Board of Regents approved a partnership with HCH Aviation, a specialized aviation training school co-owned by SFA alumna Kristen Conklin '09, Jon Hughes and John Hasbun. The company is assisting SFA officials in developing and implementing the initiative based on industry standards and workforce needs.

"Both Kristen and her husband, Shannon, grew up in Nacogdoches and love the community and university, so helping build a program that could improve the lives of so many young people was a no brainer," said Hughes, co-owner and principal of HCH Aviation. "They believe we all have an obligation to help young people succeed, and this opportunity would give them the tools to be successful in a professional and rewarding career."

Unlike aviation programs offered elsewhere, SFA's stands apart in distinct ways — particularly in its promise that students will fly inside advanced aircraft during their freshman year. By the end of their first semester, they should have accumulated approximately 45 flight hours.

"SFA will be a gold-standard program aimed at not only graduating pilots, but also graduating pilots with the specific skills and knowledge that directly translate to the airline industry's unique cockpit environment," Hughes said. "SFA will be known throughout the industry for the quality of pilot it produces and, one day soon, it will be recognized on the world stage for its first-class professional pilot training program."

Lumberjacks also will receive focused mentorship from SFA faculty members.

"Currently, colleges and universities that offer aviation are experiencing student loads they cannot handle," Abbott added. "This is pushing flying two to three years further down their degree paths. Some other institutions are even closing their doors to new admissions. It's truly a perfect time for SFA to become involved in this coursework and degree plan."

While aviation courses are already being offered this fall, aviation sciences as a major should begin being offered in fall 2022, pending approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

As a result, program graduates will not only hold bachelor's degrees, but they also will become private pilots; be qualified to become commercial

pilots; and receive their instrument, certified flight instruction, and multi-engine ratings.

"We are training professional aviators, and there are many avenues in which the certificates and skills can be used," Hughes said. "They will be licensed to fly for airlines, corporate flight departments, aerial photography, law enforcement, sightseeing and more."

A baccalaureate-level degree also qualifies graduates for management positions with airlines, airports and private companies, and average compensation for qualified pilots and instructors is an even more enticing draw.

"The average salary for professional pilots is more than \$140,000 annually," Hughes added, "making it a wonderful career opportunity for young people to consider."

Creation of the program did not happen overnight. Discussions surrounding the need for an aviation program at SFA began years ago, and that need was further exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic.

"Post-COVID-19 press releases from airline CEOs have been very specific about the need for new pilots," said Dr. Chay Runnels, professor and interim director of the School of Human Sciences. "Boeing released a study in 2020 that projected 763,000 new civil aviation

pilots will be needed globally in the next 20 years. In this country alone, almost half of the current airline pilots will be retiring in the next 10 years."

Outreach to East Texas middle and high school students also will be an integral part of the program.

"Kristen and Shannon have a deep-seated commitment to give back to the kids, so part of the aviation program will be to bring students from surrounding school districts to SFA, let them fly the simulators and present them with their first logbooks," Hughes said. "They won't all become aviation professionals, but each will have their eyes opened to unknown potential."

With the partnership firmly established, SFA's human sciences faculty members are eager to begin assisting HCH Aviation in seeking their passion for pairing education and flight.

"This unique private/public partnership has the potential to reach many students who dream of an aviation career," Abbott said. "We are committed to creating a superior program that will be first class in the state and nation."

To read more about SFA's newest program, visit sfasu.edu/aviation. ★

"We are training professional aviators, and there are many avenues in which the certificates and skills can be used. They will be licensed to fly for airlines, corporate flight departments, aerial photography, law enforcement, sightseeing and more."

- Jon Hughes, co-owner and principal of HCH Aviation

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
STATE UNIVERSITY
WALK OF RECOGNITION

"HAPPY MEM'RIES
WE'LL HOLD"

BUY A BRICK. LEAVE A LUMBERJACK LEGACY.



AS YEARS UNFOLD, HAPPY
MEM'RIES WE'LL HOLD,
ALL HAIL TO SFA.

LONE BERRYHILL
CLASS OF 2019

R. BLACKWELL
CLASS OF 1976

KIM BERTRODD
BS 2019



WE BEAT #1 DUKE
85 - 83
NOV. 26, 2019



IN HONOR OF
HELENA BUSHE
BS 1999



JOHN H. HANBURY
BA '96 MS '98 APR 2016
U.S. NAVY

Visit SFAAlumni.com Today!

From the Association

"If you want to know more about becoming an ambassador, contact the Alumni Association office. You also can request an application to join us."



Greetings, Lumberjacks!

WE ARE BACK to business as usual, and Lumberjack pride can be seen and felt all around campus. What an exciting time for Lumberjacks!

Events are in full swing, and fall classes are back to being held in person.

A lot has happened during the past few months, and so much more is planned to create opportunities for Lumberjacks to connect, get involved and return to campus. We are excited to welcome back football, tailgating at Alumni Corner during home games, Homecoming and Battle of the Piney Woods. This year, Homecoming will include the Alumni Association Annual Membership Meeting, Back in Nac Social, Torchlight Parade, Flap "Jack" Breakfast, Homecoming Parade, Coffee with Bob Sitton and Betty Ford, and the Homecoming Auction. (Check the Homecoming events schedule in this issue of Sawdust).

I'm excited to share that social monitoring platform CrowdTangle has listed the SFA Alumni Association No. 3 in Texas among other Alumni Associations for social media interactions. From February to April, we were No. 1 in growth. Our engagement was up on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Kudos to Travis Turner, Alumni Association coordinator of communications and sponsorships, for keeping us active on these platforms. In addition to social media engagement, we have 81,376 active email contacts. If you are not receiving our emails and want to be added to the list, text LUMBERJACKPRIDE to 22828.

During the summer, your Alumni Association team hit the road to engage with Lumberjacks during SFA Summer "Par-Tees" in conjunction with the SFA Road Show and hosted SFA University Nights at the Texas Rangers and Houston Astros baseball games, along with summer socials in East and Central Texas.

Another exciting announcement — our ambassadors group is growing. Charged with making alumni connections in their respective regions, they are primed to spread the word about upcoming SFA events. We had our first quarterly Zoom meeting in July. Alumni Association staff members Amie Ford and Samantha Mora led the meeting and highlighted the opportunities for Lumberjacks to connect. If you want to know more about becoming an ambassador, contact the Alumni Association office. You also can request an application to join us.

I'm happy to announce we were able to hold our spring Big Dip ceremony in Johnson Coliseum, which allowed for social distancing and parent attendance. It was a fabulous event with 434 soon-to-be graduates participating. Our next Big Dip is scheduled for Dec. 3. If the Big Dip tradition started after you graduated, or if you did not take part in the opportunity, this is your chance to come back to SFA and participate. My husband and I "dipped" in 2018, and it was an awesome experience. Contact the Alumni Association for details.

None of our activities would be possible without the support of our wonderful Alumni Association staff members led by Craig Turnage. He, along with Samantha, Amie, Travis, Derek Snyder, Amber Lindsay and Alicia Chatman, work together to produce the awesome opportunities to connect and elevate your Lumberjack experience. I am fortunate to have SFA Alumni Association officers Bob Francis, past president and Erika Tolar, president-elect, by my side, along with an outstanding, engaged board of directors.

It is a great time to be a Lumberjack.

As always, Axe 'em, Jacks!

Charlotte G. Ashcraft

Charlotte Ashcraft '80 – Nacogdoches President, SFA Alumni Association

SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Charlotte Ashcraft '80, Nacogdoches president

Erika Tolar '02, Nacogdoches president-elect

Bob Francis '78, Bullard past president

Mike Harbordt '63, Nacogdoches director emeritus

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD

Matt Adkins '06, McKinney

Tony Both '98, Katy

Larry Brooks '01, Houston

Reuben Brown '07, Grand Prairie

Pamm Coleman '80, Houston

Brian Dawson '03, Conroe

James Drennan '73, Pittsburg

Mark Friedman '91, Allen

Sam Khoury '97, Longview

Steve McCarty '65 & '70, Alto

Jaclyn Partin '08 & '14, Tyler

Larissa Philpot '03, Nacogdoches

Alex Ranc '11 & '13, Nacogdoches

Ted Smith '07, Nacogdoches

Bob Williams '70, Dallas

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION STAFF

Craig Turnage '00 & '05 executive director of alumni relations

Amber Lindsay assistant to the executive director

Derek Snyder '01 director of alumni relations

Samantha Mora '08 director of events and engagement

Alicia Roland Chatman '16 gifts and records coordinator

Amie Ford '09 & '11 coordinator of events and engagement

Travis Turner '05 & '11 coordinator of communications and sponsorships

Bob Sitton '60 director emeritus

CONTACT

Sawdust

SFA Box 6096

Nacogdoches, TX 75962

(936) 468-3407

alumni@sfasu.edu ★ sfaalumni.com

THE SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

is a nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging SFA students, alumni and friends to create an attitude of continued loyalty and support.

SAVE THE DATES

SFAAlumni.com/Events



SEPT. 4
VS TARLETON
STATE
UNIVERSITY



SEPT. 18
VS MISSISSIPPI
VALLEY STATE
UNIVERSITY



SEPT. 25
VS LINCOLN
UNIVERSITY



OCT. 30
VS ABILENE
CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY



NOV. 6
VS EASTERN
KENTUCKY
UNIVERSITY



Alumni Awards

Cocktail Reception: 6 p.m.

Dinner: 7 p.m.

Sept. 17

The Fredonia Hotel

After Party to follow

Battle of the Piney Woods

Pregame Party: Oct. 1

Game: Oct. 2

Visit SFAAlumni.com/BOTPW for details.



TKE Nu Xi 50th Anniversary

Oct. 8 through 10

Nacogdoches

SFAAlumni.com/TKE

SFA Pine Log & Stone Fort Reunion

Oct. 29 through 30

Nacogdoches

SFAAlumni.com/StudentPub



ZTA Alumni Reunion

Feb. 25 through 27

Nacogdoches

SFAAlumni.com/ZTA

Beta Xi Chapter of Delta Delta Delta 50-Year Reunion

April 22 through 24, 2022

Nacogdoches

SFAAlumni.com/TriDelta



TRI DELTA



ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

For questions, please contact the SFA Alumni Association at (936) 468-3407.

MR & MISS SFA



Larrian Meniffee
Stan McKewen Mr. SFA
Award recipient



Kallie Menard
Arnodean Covin Miss SFA
Award recipient

Mr. and Miss SFA named

THE SFA DIVISION of Student Affairs announced Larrian Meniffee of Galveston and Kallie Menard of Arlington have been selected as the 2021 Mr. and Miss SFA.

The Mr. SFA title was established in honor of the late Stan McKewen, a 1934 SFA graduate. The Miss SFA title was established in honor of Arnodean Covin, who was named Miss SFA in 1940, 1941 and 1942.

Meniffee, who received the Stan McKewen Mr. SFA Award, graduated from the university in May with a bachelor's degree in music education. He is the son of Mona Benson.

Meniffee served in many leadership roles on campus, including Orientation student coordinator, Jack Camp student director, Jack Walker campus tour guide and SFAS 1101 teaching assistant. He also served as the special events coordinator and president of the Student Activities Association, a member of the SFA men's choir, and he was named the 2019 Homecoming King.

He is the founder of the Lumberjack Men's Volleyball Club and a member

of Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity. Meniffee completed student teaching in League City and is teaching choir full time at Ball High School.

"Larrian is the type of leader everyone wants on their team," said Rhylie Gachot, assistant director of Orientation and Transition Programs at SFA. "He is high energy, inclusive of others, a hard worker, and his personality lights up the room."

Menard, who received the Arnodean Covin Miss SFA Award, is a senior family and consumer sciences major. A 2018 graduate of James Martin High School, she is the daughter of Kirk and Teresa Menard '86.

Menard is the lead Jack Walker and an Orientation leader. She serves as the vice president for Omicron Delta Kappa, a national leadership honor society, and she was recently named National Circle Leader Member of the Year. In 2018, she was selected as Miss Greek. Menard is an executive member of Chi Omega Sorority, which benefits the Make-a-Wish Foundation. She is a member of the Family Consumer Sciences Organization and a Jack Camp counselor.

When she's not in class as a student, Menard works as an SFAS 1101 teaching assistant and is a substitute teacher for the Nacogdoches Independent School District. She plans to remain at SFA after graduation and pursue a master's degree in student affairs.

"Kallie embodies everything a Miss SFA should be," said Dr. Hollie Smith, executive director of student affairs. "She is involved in numerous student organizations, serving as an officer in most of them. She loves SFA and bleeds purple. Kallie strives for personal excellence in everything she does. She has an infectious personality and does not meet a stranger."

The Mr. and Miss SFA titles are annually presented by the SFA Division of Student Affairs to exemplary students who well represent the university. Recipients are selected based on their scholarship, participation and leadership in academic and co-curricular activities, and service and loyalty to the university. Selections are made by a committee of faculty, staff community leaders and alumni. ★

HOMECOMING EVENTS SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, OCT. 19 THROUGH MONDAY, NOV. 1

HOMECOMING ONLINE AUCTION

Begins 6 p.m. Oct. 19, ends 9 p.m. Nov. 1

Visit SFAAlumni.com/Auction to bid on your favorite items and help raise money for alumni programming. The auction includes travel packages, custom SFA items, VIP experiences and more.

THURSDAY, OCT. 28

HOMECOMING 5K

Begins 5:45 p.m.

Race starts and ends on the SFA campus near the Baker Pattillo Student Center Plaza

Cost: Student \$15, Faculty/Staff/Alumni \$25, Community Member \$35, Virtual \$25

Above participants receive a T-shirt. Virtual participants' T-shirts will be mailed.

1-Miler \$5, no T-shirt

FRIDAY, OCT. 29

BOB SITTON CLASSIC

Registration: 9:30 a.m.

Starts: 11 a.m.

Piney Woods Country Club

3001 U.S. Highway 59 South

Cost: \$150 per person, \$600 team, \$1,200 corporate team

Four-player scramble. Players may enter as single or recruit their own team. Entry fee includes tournament play, golf cart, refreshments and post-tournament hors d'oeuvres. Tee gifts to all contestants. Great prizes for all gross and net winners. Closest-to-the-hole also will be awarded. A few holes will have live music, food, wine and beer. A mobile cigar lounge golfers can enjoy will be available.

"BACK IN NAC" SOCIAL

4 to 7 p.m.

*Nine Flags Bar and Grill, The Fredonia Hotel
200 N. Fredonia St.*

Kick off the weekend by joining fellow alumni for the happiest of all happy hours at the "Back in Nac" Social. Enjoy purple margaritas and beer (for purchase), awesome appetizer specials, live music, circus performers, a photo booth and more! Be sure to stop by after the bonfire festivities for late-night specials, too.

SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP MEETING

4:30 to 5 p.m.

Hall of Honor, Pearman Alumni Center, 300 Vista Drive

HOMECOMING JACK TRACK BUS SHUTTLE

6:30 p.m. to midnight

Free shuttle service to the bonfire and The Fredonia Hotel.

TORCHLIGHT PARADE AND BONFIRE

Torchlight Parade: 9 p.m. at the SFA Ag Pond

Bonfire: 9:30 p.m. at the Intramural Fields

Show your school spirit as SFA alumni, students and members of the Nacogdoches community gather to cheer on the SFA football team, cheerleaders, dance team and band. Fireworks and a special performance will conclude the night's festivities.



VISIT [SFAALUMNI.COM/HOMECOMING](https://sfaalumni.com/homecoming) FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE LIST OF EVENTS.

SATURDAY, OCT. 30

HOMECOMING FLAP “JACK” BREAKFAST

7:30 to 10 a.m.

The Fredonia Hotel, 200 N. Fredonia St.

\$10 per person

Free for life members (and one guest)

Enjoy breakfast like a Lumberjack with flap “jacks.” Decorate your meal with purple goodies, participate in our coloring corner, take photos in our circus-themed photo booth and listen to live music by Shay Domann (former member of Honest Mango).

HOMECOMING PARADE

10 a.m.

Downtown Nacogdoches

Celebrate SFA and enjoy circus-themed floats, music and pageantry. The parade is free for all to attend.

COFFEE WITH BOB SITTON AND BETTY FORD

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pearman Alumni Center, 300 Vista Drive

Stop by and reminisce about the good ol’ days with Alumni Relations Director Emeritus Bob Sitton and former Assistant to the Director Betty Ford. All attendees will receive a commemorative campfire mug and purple doughnuts. Check out the online auction items while you are there.

ALUMNI CORNER TAILGATE

Noon at the corner of Raguet and Hayter streets

Join the Alumni Association for delicious circus-themed tailgate food, the Suddenlink viewing lounge and Wi-Fi powered by Altice, SFA swag, tailgate games, a cash bar and live music by Shay Domann. Alumni Corner is free for Alumni Association members, \$15 for non-members, \$5 for children ages 6–10 (with adult), and free for children younger than 5 (with adult).

ALUMNI FALL FEST

Noon at the corner of Raguet and Hayter streets

Enjoy the family-friendly fall fest with a petting zoo, bounce houses, Kona premium tropical shaved ice, purple cotton candy, a photo booth, circus performers, balloon animals, games, candy and prizes. The event is free and fun for children of all ages. The first 100 children receive a free “Future Alumni” T-shirt.

HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME

3 p.m.

Homer Bryce Stadium

Cheer on the Lumberjacks as they face Abilene Christian University. Visit sfajacks.com to purchase tickets or call (936) 468-JACK (5225).

OKTOBERFEST @ FREDONIA BREWERY

Noon to 10 p.m.

Fredonia Brewery

138 N. Mound St.

Head to Fredonia Brewery for pre-game fun or post-game celebrations in the biergarten. Experience live entertainment throughout the day. Eat A Bite food truck will be serving German food, the Rebellion Pizza Kitchen will be open, and plenty of German beer will be available.

SUNDAY, OCT. 31

HOMECOMING BRUNCH AT THE FREDONIA HOTEL

1st City Café

200 N. Fredonia St.

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Enjoy a festive ending to Homecoming with a circus-themed brunch. Bring your family, friends and former classmates to connect and share SFA memories.



Class Notes

1960s

Dr. Robert Hughes '63 & '94 of Center announced the closing of his business, Hughes Veterinary Clinic, in March. The closing marked almost 50 years of Hughes' practice as a veterinarian. He received a Bachelor and Master of Science in biology.

Larry Hill '68 of Lufkin retired from San Jacinto College as chair of the management, development, real estate and nursing home administration department. Hill holds a Bachelor of Science in English.

Richard Norsworthy '68 of Lancaster received the Distinguished Service Award during the National Association of Corrosion Engineers International's annual convention. Norsworthy received a Bachelor of Science in mathematics.

1970s

Charles Mullenax '71 of Winter Haven, Florida, was inducted into the Polk County Public Schools' Hall of Fame. Mullenax received a Bachelor of Science in history.

Kathy Gregory '73 of College Station retired in July as president and CEO of Bryan-based Anco Insurance. She will remain as a member of the company's board of directors. Gregory received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in music.

Richard Greer '78 of Friendswood had his book, "Finding a Better Version of You Through Franchising," published both in paperback and as an e-book. Greer received a Bachelor of Science in computer science.

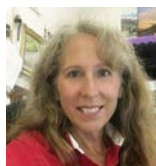
1980s

Michael M. Calbert '84 of Woodside, California, was named board director for the National Association of Investors, also known as BetterInvesting. Calbert received a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting.

Jimmy Mize '84 was sworn in as mayor of Nacogdoches in May. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance.



Bryan Shaw '84 of Sugar Land and **Mary Richards '85** of Missouri City married in January. The couple met at SFA in 1980. Shaw received a Bachelor of Science in computer science, and Richards received a Bachelor of Science in biology.



Patricia Alonso '85 of Proctor, Vermont, retired from Rutland City Public Schools after 36 years of service in education. Alonso received a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish.

Dan Saur '85 of Dallas had his financial firm, D.R. Saur Financial, acquired by Beacon Pointe Advisors. Saur received a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences with concentrations in aviation technology and communication.

Diane Hale Smith '85 of Forney earned a master's degree in school counseling from Amberton University in February 2020. Smith received a Bachelor of Business Administration in marketing from SFA.

Michael Waters '86 of Diboll and **Daniel "Red" Fuller '93** of Whitehouse were inducted into the East Texas Athletic Trainers

Association's inaugural Hall of Honor. Waters received a Bachelor of Science in physical education, and Fuller received a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology.

Georgina Key '87 & '89 of Houston published her debut novel, "Shiny Bits In Between," in June 2020. Key received a Bachelor and Master of Arts in English.



Mark Ellis '88 of Katy was named operations and maintenance facilities design director at HDR Inc. Ellis received a Bachelor of Science in geography.



Kevin McDaniel '88 of Oakwood, Georgia, was named chief operating officer of Wayne Farms. McDaniel received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

Leon Aldridge '89 of Center was named editor and publisher of The Light and Champion newspaper. Aldridge received a Master of Arts in communication.

Greg Freeman '89 of Soledad, California, was named winemaker for Monterey County's historical first winery, Chalone Vineyard. Freeman received a Bachelor of Science in biology.

1990s

Linda Gail Jacobs '90 & '98 of Nacogdoches was named superintendent of Tenaha Independent School District. Jacobs received a Bachelor of Science in education and a Master of Education in secondary education.

Class Notes



John Austin '91 of San Antonio was elected chairman of the Bexar County Republican Party. Austin received a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance.

Angie Wetz Duke '91 of Hooks owns Rock Bar Meatworks and FTF Deer Processors. Duke received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

David Plunk '91 & '04 of Atlanta was hired as Atlanta High School's athletic director and football team head coach. Plunk received a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology and a Master of Education in educational leadership.

Elizabeth Watson '91 & '93 of Madison, Wisconsin, was named dean of students at the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater. Watson received a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and a Master of Education in counseling.

Tim Filesi '92 worked with Populous Architects to help design detailed and impactful lighting for the interior and exterior of SEA's new Loddie Naymola Basketball Performance Center. Filesi received a Bachelor of Business Administration in management.



Ron Holmgreen '92 was named superintendent of schools for Brock Independent School District. Holmgreen received a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice law enforcement.



Ben Norton '93 and wife, Kelli, of Lake Charles, Louisiana, announced the December 2019 birth of their son and Lumberjack legacy, Henry Cain. Norton received a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology.

Autumn Kraus '94 of Dallas was named the 2020 Sam Winstead Volunteer of the Year for the T. Boone Pickens YMCA. Kraus received a Master of Business Administration in general business.

Carla Dupree '95 was named assistant superintendent of schools for Pleasant Grove Independent School District. Dupree received a Bachelor of Arts in English.



Kimberley James '96 was named deputy superintendent of curriculum and instruction for Corpus Christi Independent School District.

James received a Master of Education in secondary education.



Dr. Angela Pool-Funai '96 of Enoch, Utah, was named dean of the graduate school at Fort Hays State University. Pool-Funai received a

Bachelor of Arts in journalism.

Gene F. Thompson III '96 of Katy was named CEO of InterLinc Mortgage Services, where he previously served as president since 2010. Thompson received a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting.

Richele Langley '97 was named superintendent for Marshall Independent School District. Langley received a Master of Education in secondary education.



Wiley Quarles '98 of Burke was promoted to mill manager for Angelina Forest Products. Quarles received a Bachelor of Science in Forestry with an emphasis in forest management.

Regina Brown '99 of Tyler and **Kimberly Benton '06** of Wells were recognized by the Cherokee County Women with Purpose group as 2020 Lasting Legacy honorees. Brown received a Bachelor of Social Work, and Benton received a Master of Science in Agriculture.



Emilio Sanchez '99 was named director of community and economic development for the town of Argyle. Sanchez received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.



Patrick Sanders '99 & '10 of Nacogdoches was hired by Child Care Associates to serve as deputy director for the group's Head Start program.

Sanders received a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master of Public Administration.

2000s

Travis Young '00 of Humble was named assistant superintendent of student services for the Dayton Independent School District. Young received a Bachelor of Arts in radio/television.

Shweta Dhar '01 of Pearland was named to the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics Board of Directors. Dhar received a Master of Science in biotechnology.



Cathy May '01 & '15 of Savannah was named the 2021 Elementary Teacher of the Year for the Frisco Independent School District. May received a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and a Master of Education in early childhood education.

Class Notes



Jennifer Laver Clark '02 of Richmond, Missouri, was awarded Teacher of the Year by the Richmond R-XVI School District. Clark received a Bachelor of Arts in history.



Edward Burnham '04 of Sacramento, California, was hired as director of finance and internal operations for Valley Clean Energy. Burnham received a Bachelor of Business Administration in international business.

Benjamin McNally '04 & '06 of Quincy, California, was hired as a U.S. Department of Agriculture district conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service's local partnership office. McNally received a Bachelor and Master of Science in environmental science.

Brad Stewart '04 was named superintendent of Jacksonville Independent School District. Stewart received a Master of Education in educational leadership.

Misti Buard '05 of Houston was granted \$10,000 from singer Beyoncé in support of Buard's food truck and event planning business. The funds are part of BeyGOOD's partnership with the NAACP to expand economic opportunities for businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Buard received a Bachelor of Science in radio/television.

Dr. Demetrus Liggins '05 of Lexington, Kentucky, was named superintendent by the Fayette County Board of Education. Liggins received a Master of Education in educational leadership.



Dr. Andrea Smith '05 of Houston opened The Art of Healing Chiropractic Clinic. Smith received a Bachelor of Science in biology.



Dr. Nakia Welch '05 of Dickinson received the 2020 Suzanne Osborn Community College Outstanding Educator Award for his contribution to San Jacinto College's communications studies program. He received a Master of Arts in communication.

Dr. Robert Wilson '05 of Silsbee was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to the Texas School Safety Center Board for a term to expire in February 2023. Wilson received a Master of Education in educational leadership.



Deldrick Burley '06 was named a 2020-21 Teacher of the Year for Cedar Hill Independent School District. Burley received a Bachelor of Business Administration in general business.

Dr. Katie Chretien '07 of Frisco was appointed Lower School principal at Prestonwood Christian Academy School System's Plano campus. Chretien received a Doctor of Education in educational leadership.



Jennice Hyde '07 was named senior director of talent at Hebrew Public Charter Schools in New York City. She received a Bachelor of Science in health science.

Vance received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with an emphasis in agriculture development production.

Jessica D. Williams '10 of Dallas-Fort Worth was promoted to associate vice president of people and culture at TimelyMD, a telehealth provider specializing in higher education. Williams received a Bachelor of Science in psychology.

Amy Hahn '11 of Cedar Park is a nurse practitioner at Baylor Scott and White in Cedar Park. Hahn received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.



Tony '12 & '15 and Crystal Holmes '13 of Houston welcomed their first son, Logan Dean, in May. Tony received a Bachelor of Arts in communication studies and a Master of Public Administration, and Crystal received a Bachelor of Science in radio/television.



Jeremy Priest '12 & '15 was recognized as Creative Employee of the Year by the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department. Priest received a Bachelor and Master of Science in Forestry.

Jennifer Swords '12 of Fort Worth was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners. Swords received a Bachelor of Social Work.

Brenda W. Lee '13 of Brownwood was appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to the governing board of the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Lee received a Master of Education in special education.

2010s

Melanie Hill '10 of Hempstead was promoted to operations manager of onshore operations at Danos. Hill received a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting and a Master of Professional Accountancy.

Amy Vance '10 was named the director of career and technical education at Montgomery Independent School District.

Class Notes

Dr. Ángel Rivera '15 was named deputy superintendent for Mesquite Independent School District. Rivera received a Doctor of Education in educational leadership.

Katie McAninch '17 of Hockley was named head cheer and dance coach at the University of St. Thomas. McAninch received a Bachelor of Science in dance.

Guitarist and composer **Scott Stobbe '17** of New Orleans released his debut album "In Transition" in March. To accompany the album, Stobbe released the book "Sketches and Scores," which features life drawings by his father alongside sheet music of Stobbe's compositions. He received a Master of Music.



Maggie Wright '17 & '19 of Flower Mound married Jason Sumrall in February. Wright received a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice and a Master of Public Administration.

Natalie Haddad '18 of Houston began at the ABC affiliate station KRDO-TV as its newest traffic anchor and news reporter. Haddad received a Bachelor of Arts in mass communication.



Chandler Wall '18 married **Jacob Putman '19**, both of Southlake. Wall received a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies, and Putnam received a Bachelor of Science in marketing.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

As part of our continuous effort to improve Sawdust, we are conducting an online survey to gain information about reader preferences.

sfasu.edu/sawdust/survey

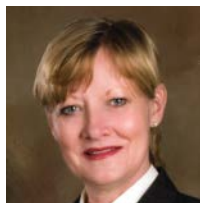
Life Members

The SFA Alumni Association thanks the following alumni who recently became life members:

- 8413. Emmeline C. Sullivan '21, Waxahachie
- 8414. Robert D. Sweidel '04, North Richland Hills
- 8415. Richard W. Ball '05, Houston
- 8416. Sarah Ball, Friend of SFA, Houston
- 8417. Fawn R. Dennis '05, Magnolia
- 8418. Douglas R. Harper '90, Colleyville
- 8419. Chelsea M. Hudson '19, Whitehouse
- 8420. Jordan R. LaCaille '13 & '15, Nacogdoches
- 8421. Katy E. Rendon '82, Pearland
- 8422. Virginia L. Holtkamp '20, Nacogdoches
- 8424. Lisa M. McBride '05, Terrell
- 8426. Amanda Fancher Carruth '04, Lewisville
- 8427. Morgan E. Johnson '21, Nacogdoches
- 8428. Michelle N. Galvan '20, Austin
- 8429. Kasey A. Cox '05 & '10, Arlington
- 8430. Leticia M. Wright '98, League City
- 8431. Christopher F. Wright '97, League City
- 8432. Kay F. Lamb '73 & '74, Mineola
- 8433. Ariana C. Clark '20, Temple
- 8434. Sara K. Brown '20, Frisco
- 8435. William C. Stokes IV '91, Old Hickory, Tennessee
- 8436. Carla Stokes, Friend of SFA, Old Hickory, Tennessee
- 8437. Matthew S. Fulkerson '18, New Braunfels
- 8438. Chris C. Hazelip '91 & '94, Tyler
- 8439. Jonathan Blake Westmoreland '94, Nacogdoches
- 8440. LaDarius Thomas '19, DeSoto
- 8441. Julie M. Westmoreland '94, Nacogdoches
- 8443. Carol J. Hordge '95, Forney
- 8444. Eric D. Nelson '97, Keller
- 8445. Rebekah R. Nelson '98, Keller
- 8446. Veronica Macias '02 & '07, Nacogdoches
- 8447. William B. Thomas '04, Greenville

In Memoriam

DR. VIOLET ROGERS GOODALL

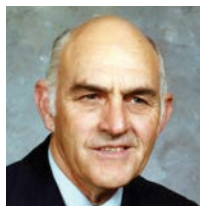


Former dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business, Dr. Violet Rogers Goodall passed away March 12 in Nacogdoches.

Goodall graduated from Cushing High School

in 1975 as salutatorian of her class. She received two degrees from SFA — a bachelor's degree in 1978 and master's degree in 1986. She later obtained her doctoral degree in accounting from North Texas State University and then returned to SFA to teach in the accounting department, eventually being named chair of the department and later dean of the college. She retired from the university in 2015.

JAMES D. JOHNSTON



A member of the SFA Basketball Hall of Fame and named an All-American, James D. Johnston of Nacogdoches passed away April 23. Johnston graduated from SFA in 1951 and 1953. He spent his career in the U.S. Marines

during World War II and later served as a basketball coach, teacher, principal and superintendent before his retirement from Central Heights School District.

BILL TRUMAN TEAGUE



Donor and friend of SFA Bill Truman Teague passed away Dec. 25 in Nacogdoches.

Teague grew up in Abilene and graduated from Hardin Simmons University with

a bachelor's degree in medical technology. In 1960, he was commissioned into the U.S. Army. Upon completion of his military obligation, Teague moved to Galveston, where he enrolled in the Blood Bank Specialty course at the University of Texas Medical Branch. He joined Ortho Diagnostics in New Jersey, where he worked with a team of medical professionals to develop RhoGam, a drug for Rh negative mothers that helps protect their unborn babies.

In 1975, he was hired by the Harris County Medical Society as the founding CEO of Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center in Houston, a position he held until his retirement in 2006 and then was named president emeritus of the blood center. Teague was one of the few non-physicians to serve as president of the American Association of Blood Banks.

After his family's move to Nacogdoches during his retirement, he was named to the SFASU Foundation Board of Trustees.

In Memoriam

Buford T. Abeldt '92 of McKinney, Jan. 17
David Duane Adams '54 of Nacogdoches, May 8
Georgene J. Albert '76 of Longview, Jan. 23
Glynn E. Aldredge '75 of McKinney, June 14
Dr. Lina L. Allen '51 of Fort Worth, Feb. 14
Ralph W. Allen Jr. '01 of Gladewater, Jan. 23
Martha H. Anderson '79 & '81 of Carthage, April 27
Dr. Barbara A. Bailey '58 & '63 of Austin, Jan. 23
April W. Barnes '00 of Nacogdoches, Jan. 1
Walter H. Baty Sr. '60 & '62 of Shelbyville, Jan. 16
Virginia F. Becknell '79 of Beavertown, Ohio, June 17, 2019
Dorothy M. Benoy '67 of Nacogdoches, May 26
Judy Maryland Bird '61 of McKinney, Jan. 7
Ret. Col. Daryl W. Blohm '82 of Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Feb. 18
Daniel W. Brent '78 of Lufkin, May 24
Dorothy Brock '56 & '60 of Lufkin, May 25
Shari S. Brown '72 of Tyler, Jan. 13
Betty J. Bruce '58 & '62 of Pollok, May 9
Gaylyn Buchtler '76 of College Station, Feb. 18
Ashley Schaeffer Burks '01 of Nacogdoches, June 8
Douglas R. Butler '63 of Hemphill, March 23
Donna M. Butts '81, '97, '02 & '04 of Nacogdoches, Jan. 8
Frances J. Buzzell '68 of Caddo Mills, Feb. 4
Jim N. Cadenhead '66 of Henderson, Feb. 14
Carroll W. Campbell '65 of Humble, Jan. 5
Lindalyn E. Campbell '70 & '71 of Texarkana, Feb. 6
Ann M. Carpenedo '78 of Green Bay, Wisconsin, June 9
Hazel D. Carroll '62 of Henderson, Feb. 5
Marshall R. Carswell '67 of Lufkin, April 13
Paul W. Carter '72 of Nacogdoches, Feb. 10
Jerry Cessna '69 of Nacogdoches, March 11
John Kelly Childers '84 of Longview, April 26
Nina C. Clary '87 of Houston, April 1
James E. Collins '72 of Gilmer, March 15

Rebecca Ann Collins '18 of Jasper, Nov. 6
Fonta B. Conway '72 of Henderson, May 29
Susan P. Cook '72 of Dallas, May 4
Billy Jack Cospers Jr. '91 of Denton, Jan. 30
Jud H. David '67 of Moscow, Feb. 10
Catherine A. Davis '85 of Shreveport, Louisiana, April 23
Eli J. Davis '57 & '70 of Lindale, April 24
Ronald F. Davis '75 & '79 of Longview, May 1
Wilson M. Dickson '43 of Kilgore, Feb. 7
Sheryl L. Diedenhofen '87 of New Ulm, Minnesota, April 19
Johnnie R. Ener '89 of Spring, Feb. 27
Cecil S. Ford '53 of Humble, Feb. 3
Cherie L. Friedel '78 of Dallas, April 21
Evelyn Bernice Galbreath '84 of Tatum, March 4
DeLane M. Gil '81 of Webster, Jan. 4
Brenda J. Gober '72 of Tyler, April 19
Kathleen A. Gore '78 of San Antonio, May 19
John A. Green '94 of Fort Worth, March 6
Mallery N. Griffin '98 of Texarkana, Feb. 19
Nevis E. Hagler '65 & '67 of Pearland, April 6
Kenneth D. Hairgrove '60 & '65 of San Antonio, April 21
Howard R. Hall '58 of Plano, Dec. 15
Phyllis Adona Harnsongkram '65 & '66 of Jayess, Mississippi, June 21, 2020
David R. Harris '57 of DeBerry, May 7
Dustin C. Harrison '18 of Richardson, March 17
William Harvey '60 of Azle, Dec. 14
Sarah F. Helpinstill '37 of San Antonio, Jan. 31
David Hirmon '80 of Alvord, May 1
Dr. Harry B. Hunt '66 of Longview, Jan. 19
Amelia J. Johnson of Nacogdoches, former staff member, Feb. 13
Ann L. Johnson '91 of Carthage, Jan. 2
Rachel M. Joines '13 of Longview, Dec. 30
Ellen Y. Jones '72 of Elkhart, Feb. 9
Joe L. Jones '51 of Center, May 10

In Memoriam

Betty P. Keith '60 of Tyler, May 31

Dixie L. Kellerhals '84 & '85 of New Braunfels, Feb. 7

Kenneth Kennamer of Nacogdoches, former staff member, May 8, 2020

Michael Craig King of Nacogdoches, friend of SFA, Dec. 28

Theresa Anne King '73 of Canton, Feb. 20

Mary Ann Kirkland '53 of Lufkin, Aug. 29, 2020

Michael Koerth '70 of Port Neches, Jan. 12

Kassel J. Lambert Jr. '56 of Seguin, Feb. 20

Dr. Kaywin J. Lanoue '57 of Beaumont, April 2

Andrew L. Leath '91 of Tyler, Jan. 9

James R. Little '70 of Whitehouse, March 13

Michael Lorehn '74 of Houston, June 10

Bruce Maines '79 of Carthage, Feb. 11

Marilyn A. Marshall '73 of Longview, Dec. 25

Bobbie Dee Mason '52 of Lufkin, Sept. 29

Erica D. McCoy '12 of Henderson, Jan. 7

Jeff D. McGregor '65 of Waxahachie, April 8

Tommie L. Melton '79 of San Augustine, Jan. 30

Jennifer L. Mixon '93 of Woodville, March 12

Abel Mojica '73 of Royse City, Jan. 26

Nelda M. Morrison '81 of Lufkin, March 6

James S. Neck '85 of Brownsville, Jan. 26

Alton Derell Nicklas '68 of Fort Worth, Sept. 23

Gary R. Outenreath '70 of Orange, Jan. 17

Ethan T. Palmer '19 of Spring, Jan. 20

Margaret H. Parker '71 of Longview, June 5

Mary Diane Pendley '72 of Chester, June 26, 2020

Harold Pool Jr. '49 & '68 of Kerens, Dec. 25

Michael R. Preston '74 of Cypress, April 10

Linda E. Ray '69 of Tyler, April 29

Richard A. Reich '69 of Plano, Feb. 18

Robert B. Reid '09 of Schertz, Jan. 11

Avery A. Rhodes '96 of Lufkin, May 11

Wanda S. Robinson '61 of Pasadena, April 8

Carole N. Rogers '84 of Center, Dec. 31

Cheryl L. Rogers of Nacogdoches, former staff member, May 15

Joe D. Ruby '54 of Lufkin, March 31

Billie G. Ryan '51 of Lufkin, April 9

Gus W. Salbador Jr. '54 of Mount Vernon, Washington, Nov. 28

Kendall De Shaun' Sammons '10 of Los Angeles, California, May 4

John S. Secrest '77 of Burleson, May 10

Stephanie B. Sholar '96 of Fort Worth, March 5

Christopher C. Siegley '04 of Dallas, May 26

James Roy Sitton '56 of Pasadena, Jan. 6

Pollyanne B. Smith '79 of Center, March 9

Johnnie R. Spradley '57 of Henderson, Jan. 15

Vernis J. Stanaland '68 of Tyler, Jan. 1

Mary A. Standley '95 of Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 2

Tom Stephens '79 of Dallas, Feb. 17

Gladys T. Stokely '50 & '72 of Kilgore, April 19

Danny P. Strickland '73 of Longview, Jan. 19

Janet G. Summers '74 of Spring, May 7

Lelia A. Thompson '19 of Henderson, Feb. 1

Amelia Todd '81 of Phoenix, Arizona, May 16

Madonna Turner '59 of Waco, Jan. 11

Rose J. Uherek '77 of Waller, June 3

George A. Verner '70 of Houston, March 6

Norman Glynn Wells '89 & '05 of Nacogdoches, Feb. 3

Sam J. Whitley '70 & '74 of Houston, May 15

Shirley S. Williams '63 & '72 of Longview, Dec. 29

David L. Willmon '73 & '97 of Grand Junction, Colorado, May 29

Todd Banks Wilson '97 of Houston, July 5

Davene P. Woods '70 & '71 of Nacogdoches, March 22

Kenneth E. Yarbrough '61 of Livingston, Dec. 28



SFA student

Lacy Reynolds of Colmesneil, March 23



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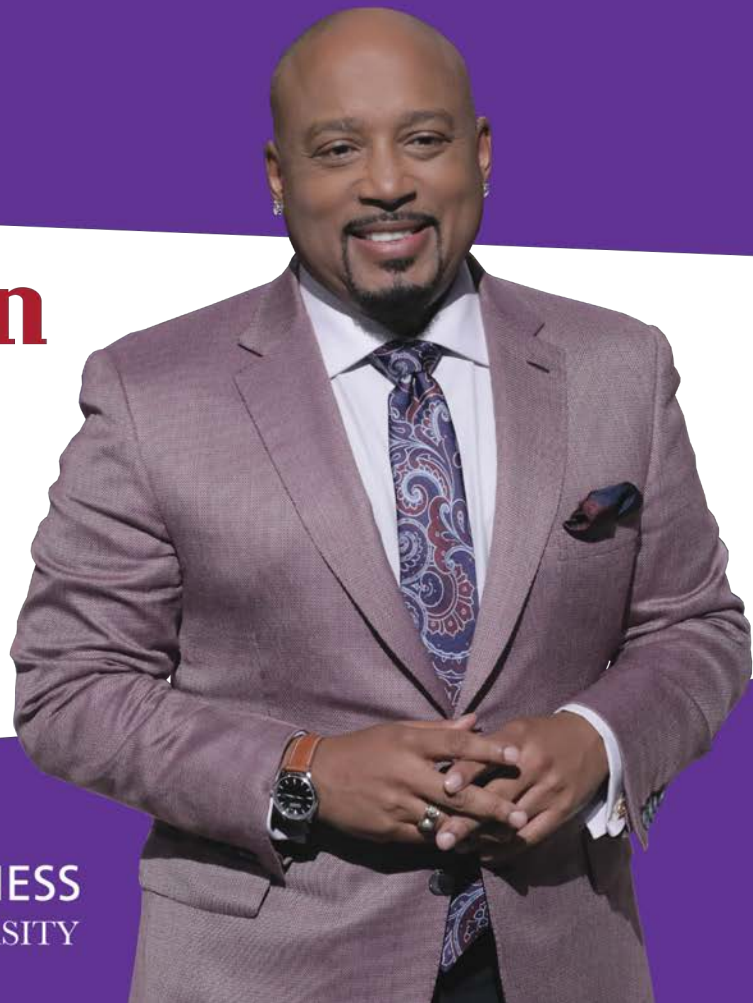
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