

FALL 2026

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SAWDUST

SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ★ STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY ★ THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM



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YEARS

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President's Letter



Dear Lumberjacks,
What a remarkable year it has been for Stephen F. Austin State University!

Across our campus, we are seeing the results of a university community moving forward with confidence, purpose and an unwavering commitment to our students. From enrollment growth and record-breaking philanthropy to bold plans for our campus and academic programs, the momentum at SFA is undeniable.

Perhaps nowhere is that momentum more evident than in our enrollment. Fall 2025 brought SFA's first overall enrollment increase since 2018 and the largest freshman class in university history. We also recorded enrollment increases during the spring and summer terms, demonstrating this progress is not limited to a single semester.

Undergraduate applications have increased by 75% since 2024, and this fall will mark the first time in more than a quarter century SFA has recorded semester credit-hour growth for three consecutive years. As we attract and retain more students, we are shaping a stronger university for generations of Lumberjacks to come.

This year, The University of Texas System Board of Regents approved SFA's new strategic plan and campus master plan. Together, these plans establish a bold, long-range vision for our academic mission, student experience and physical campus. That vision is already taking shape as work continues on the new forestry and agriculture complex, which will open this spring. Over the summer, we broke ground on the \$40 million Greg Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship, and a new \$70 million residence hall has been approved to help meet growing demand for on-campus housing.

Our academic programs continue to evolve in response to the needs of employers and our region. The establishment of our College of Health Professions brings together programs focused on addressing critical healthcare needs, particularly in rural East Texas. The college creates new opportunities for collaboration and growth while preparing graduates to serve in fields where skilled professionals are urgently needed.

Across the university, innovation is creating new opportunities for our students. SFA received federal authorization that will allow aviation sciences students to begin their professional piloting careers sooner. Our sound recording technology program became the first Dolby Atmos-certified program in Texas, and the Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship was

recognized as one of the nation's top emerging entrepreneurship programs.

Our students continued to demonstrate what it means to be a Lumberjack through outstanding accomplishments outside the classroom as well. Engineering students earned top honors in a robotics competition, while culinary students represented SFA at the 2026 Masters Tournament, gaining experience on one of the world's most prestigious sporting stages. SFA students earned All-American honors in collegiate bass fishing, and Celine Orozco captured a world powerlifting championship. The Sylvans continued their tradition of excellence in collegiate timber sports, further demonstrating the breadth of talent found across our campus.

Our student-athletes had a historic year, winning nine conference championships, while our cheer and dance teams brought home two national titles. SFA also claimed the Southland Conference Commissioner's Cup and both the Men's and Women's All-Sports trophies. Beyond the championships, these accomplishments generated tremendous national visibility for the university and inspired pride across the entire SFA community.

Our alumni and friends responded to SFA's momentum with extraordinary generosity. This past year, the university raised a record \$30 million, a 30% increase from the previous year and the largest fundraising total in SFA history. Your support is both humbling and inspiring. Every gift, regardless of size, represents a belief in SFA and the potential of our students.

Each of these achievements is worth celebrating, but what excites me most is what they represent collectively. We are building on the momentum, strengthening the value of an SFA degree, giving our alumni even more reasons to be proud and opening doors for generations of future Lumberjacks.

Kristi and I have enjoyed getting to know so many of you at events throughout the past year. We continue to be inspired by the passion, dedication and pride of our alumni. Whether you give, volunteer, mentor a student, attend an event, wear your purple proudly or simply share your SFA story, you truly make a difference.

Thank you for the many ways you support SFA. Our brightest days are ahead, and I am grateful to be on this journey with you.

Axe 'em!

Dr. Neal Weaver
President
Stephen F. Austin State University



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KORBIN PATE '12 & '22
*executive director for
university marketing communications*

Stephen F. Austin State University is a comprehensive institution in The University of Texas System dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

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On the Cover



SFA's future is taking shape. Newly approved strategic and campus master plans, plus the Lumberjack Crossing residence hall, establish a bold roadmap for student success, campus growth and the university's second century. *Rendering by Sterling Illustration*

Sawdust

UNIVERSITY MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Korbin Pate '12 & '22
executive director for
university marketing communications

Dr. Misty Wilburn '25
coordinator for operations and advertising

Robin Johnson '99 & '19
Sawdust editor and art director
assistant director for publications
and design

Sarah Kouliavtsev '09 & '21
Sawdust web developer
web services coordinator

Jason Johnstone '05
director for web services

Travis Turner '05 & '11
director for marketing and branding

Trey Cartwright '04, '06 & '12
assistant director for visual media

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Kamryn Holt '23
Meagan Rice '12

PHOTOGRAPHER

Lizeth Garcia

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Ricky Kennedy '10 & '14
James McMahan '17

WEB DEVELOPERS

Tyler Goad '13
Roni Lias
Dr. Alan Scott '25

WRITERS

Johanna Gilmore
Parastoo Nikraves '18 & '23
Nathan Wicker '19

Read past issues, watch video extras and submit class notes at sfasu.edu/sawdust.

Sawdust is published once a year by SFA and the university's Alumni Association. Alumni and friends of the university receive the issue free of charge.

News Briefs

FAA authorization puts SFA students' piloting careers on fast track

SFA aviation sciences students can begin their piloting careers sooner because the university is now one of only four higher education institutions in Texas authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration to certify students are eligible for their Restricted Airline Transport Pilot certificate.

The FAA normally requires 1,500 flight hours and a minimum age of 23 to qualify for the Air Transport Pilot certificate, a credential needed to fly for an airline. Airlines also hire pilots who have earned a RATP certificate, which requires 500 fewer hours of flight time and can be earned by age 21 as pilots complete their ATP certificate requirements.

With the new FAA Part 141 Letter of Authorization, SFA's aviation sciences students, also known as Flying Jacks, can qualify for their RATP certificate following graduation. These students have been graduating with their commercial pilot certificate and instrument and multi-engine ratings as well as their certified flight instructor certificate, depending on their training path. Now, with the addition of RATP certification, Flying Jacks can be hired by airlines and start earning salaries as soon as they graduate and reach 1,000 hours of flight time.

SFA Gardens celebrates 40 years of growth

What started as a quarter-acre plot planted by SFA students behind the Agriculture Building in 1985 has blossomed into six themed gardens encompassing 138 acres. To celebrate, SFA Gardens hosted its 40th Anniversary Celebration in October.

"SFA Gardens is more than just plants," said Dr. David Creech, director of SFA Gardens. "It's a community of people who recognize the value of a large green resource, located in the middle of town, in making a difference in the quality of lives for residents and visitors. With wonderful plant collections, miles and miles of trails, and boardwalks and bridges at every turn, this garden is recognized as a regional resource."

SFA establishes chapter of first-generation college student honor society

As the number of first-generation college students continues to rise at SFA, so do the opportunities to recognize their success. With the establishment of the Nu Xi chapter of Alpha Alpha Alpha, or Tri-Alpha, SFA's first-generation students now have an honor society of their own.

"We are so excited to celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of first-generation Lumberjacks," said Dr. Ja'Von Long, Nu Xi chapter faculty advisor and director of student development and support at SFA. "As a former first-gen college student, myself, I know how much they've overcome just to enroll in college. To qualify for an honor society on top of that shows the excellence, resilience and leadership these students have and will carry with them beyond graduation."

Nearly 50 first-generation college students were inducted into the inaugural cohort of SFA's Nu Xi chapter.



SFA established the Nu Xi chapter of Alpha Alpha Alpha, or Tri-Alpha, a national honor society for first-generation college students as well as faculty and staff who were first-gen college students. Nearly 50 students and eight faculty and staff were inducted into the inaugural cohort.

SFA launches College of Health Professions to strengthen rural health, workforce readiness

SFA launched the College of Health Professions in July, positioning the university as a regional leader in rural health workforce development and innovation.

The new college, which is part of a broader academic reorganization, reflects SFA's continued commitment to meeting the evolving needs of students, employers and the East Texas region. The changes were officially approved by The University of Texas System Board of Regents during the November regularly scheduled meeting.

"This reorganization is about positioning SFA for the future," said Dr. Jordan Barkley, provost and executive vice president for the Division of Academic Affairs. "As higher education changes, we're ensuring our students are prepared to enter a dynamic workforce. By bringing health-focused disciplines together, we're creating opportunities for collaboration that directly serve East Texas, from expanding rural health care to advancing research and innovation."

The College of Health Professions unites programs in nursing, psychology, kinesiology, athletic training, public health, dietetics and nutritional sciences, counseling, social work, speech-language pathology and family sciences, creating SFA's largest and most interdisciplinary academic unit.

News Briefs

SFA appoints Dr. Chad Thomas as associate vice president and dean of students



SFA announced the appointment of Dr. Chad Thomas as the institution's associate vice president and dean of students.

An East Texas native with ties to The University of Texas System, Thomas has more than 15 years of experience in higher education. Most recently, he served as senior associate vice president for student affairs at UT Dallas in Richardson.

In his leadership role at UT Dallas, Thomas was responsible for numerous operational areas and special initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs, including campus partnerships, strategic planning, assessment, fundraising, legislative affairs, and audit and compliance.

SFA Sylvans win eighth-straight Southern Forestry Conclave, earn highest point total ever

The SFA Sylvans timbersports team has once again claimed victory at the 67th annual Association of Southern Forestry Clubs Conclave, marking the Sylvans' 20th overall Conclave title and extending their winning streak to eight consecutive Conclaves.

Hosted this year by the University of Arkansas at Monticello Forestry Club, the event brought together 14 universities to compete in a series of rigorous technical and physical forestry-related events.

The Sylvans secured first place in both technical and physical events, earning a total of 342.75 points, which is 90.7% of the maximum possible score. This is the highest point total ever achieved at Conclave, besting the Sylvans score of 317.25 at Mississippi State University in 2015.

"No club had won eight straight conclaves. No club had scored more than 90% of the maximum possible score. No club had ever beaten Arkansas at home," said Dr. Jeremy Stovall, Sylvans coach and a professor of forestry.



Quaid, Patrick offer insights on Texas film industry at SFA lecture series event

Actor Dennis Quaid celebrated his 72nd birthday by sharing his experiences advocating for the Texas film industry and reminiscing about his movies at the fifth installment of SFA's Nelson Rusche Distinguished Lecture Series in April. Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick served as Quaid's interviewer for the event.

The series, hosted by SFA's Nelson Rusche College of Business, is designed to bring scholars and business leaders to SFA's campus to discuss timely issues and educate the next generation of business leaders while enriching the SFA and Nacogdoches communities.



Actor Dennis Quaid and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick discussed job opportunities created for the state's film industry through Senate Bill 22 at the fifth installment of SFA's Nelson Rusche Distinguished Lecture Series in April. Pictured, from left, are Peaches, Quaid's English bulldog, Patrick and Quaid.



Attention SFA Graduates!

The registrar's office is releasing diplomas previously withheld for obligations to the university.

Think you might be one of those students? Send an email to graduation@sfasu.edu. Include your name, ID number and mailing address.

News Briefs

SFA engineering students earn top honors in regional robotics competition

SFA's IEEE Robotics Team captured first place at the IEEE Region 5 Robotics Competition in March. SFA engineering students competed against 25 teams from 23 universities to earn top honors at the prestigious event sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' Southwestern U.S. region.

"This is an outstanding accomplishment for our students and a testament to their dedication, creativity and engineering skill," said Dr. Rick McDaniel, chair of SFA's Department of Physics, Engineering and Astronomy. "Winning at the IEEE Region 5 level demonstrates that our students can compete — and win — against some of the best programs in the region."

The competition brings together top engineering students from Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Wyoming and a portion of Illinois to design, build and program fully autonomous robots that can sense their environment, make decisions and execute tasks without human intervention.



Pictured, from left, are Meagan Honeycutt, first-year electrical engineering student from Humble; Ashley Brewster, mechanical engineering senior from Center; Duston Judson, electrical engineering senior from Nacogdoches; Kevin Claypool, electrical engineering senior from Liberal, Kansas; Aaron Boehm, mechanical engineering senior from Kingwood; and Dalton Cardwell, mechanical engineering senior from Arlington.

SFA instructor and alumnus receives Lifetime Achievement Award

The late Dr. Michael Munro, a clinical instructor in SFA's Department of Education Studies, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired at its annual conference in Denton.



Munro, who earned his Master of Education in special education from SFA in 2002, returned to the university five years later as a clinical instructor in the visual impairment teacher preparation program. From 2013 through 2018, he served as director of the program before moving to an assistant professor role. In 2019, Munro left for a stint as a visual impairment specialist at the Region 6 Educational Service Center in Huntsville but returned to SFA in 2023 to develop and deliver courses for graduate and undergraduate students in person and online. He passed away May 27, a month after receiving the award.

SFA culinary students gain career experience at Masters Tournament

Fifteen SFA students in the hospitality administration culinary program were recruited to staff the Masters Tournament kitchens in April at the Augusta National Golf Club in an exclusive experience to work alongside world-class experts in the culinary field.

Todd Barrios, chef and SFA professor in practice of hospitality, who was recruited as head sous chef and worked alongside his students, said they were elbow to elbow with executive chefs from all over the world.

Most of the SFA interns were stationed at Berckmans Place, the premium hospitality facility at the tournament. The exclusive 90,000-square-foot venue, located just off the fifth hole, has five high-end dining options for attendees, enabling the students to try a little of everything, from production kitchens, upscale sports bar fare and classic southern dishes to Scottish pub eats, seafood and wood-fired Neapolitan pizzas.



The hospitality administration majors selected for the internship pictured back row, from left, are Kayce Ford, Kaley Perdue, Abby Lee, Haileigh Durland, Lauren Bailey and Braxton Luna. Pictured front row, from left, are Colleen Galler, Odessa (service dog in training with Guide Dogs for the Blind), James Stephens, Michael Walker, Brandon Rodriguez, Jordan Robinson, Sharlyn Cisneros, Te'Shawn Winters and Todd Barrios, chef and SFA professor in practice of hospitality. Not pictured are Alejandro Acosta and Kolton Scarbrough.

News Briefs

Four students selected for 2026 Best of SFA Awards

SFA's Student Involvement office named Colin Anderson, special education senior from Arlington; Emma Patton, chemistry senior from Wylie; Joelle Gentry, media and communication senior from Bakersfield, California; and Ruweida Mohamed, pre-med junior from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, as recipients of the 2026 Best of SFA Award.

The awards are presented annually to honor students who excel in the areas of scholarship, participation and leadership in academic and cocurricular activities as well as service and loyalty to the university.



Pictured, from left, are Colin Anderson, special education senior from Arlington; Emma Patton, chemistry senior from Wylie; Joelle Gentry, media and communication senior from Bakersfield, California; and Ruweida Mohamed, pre-med junior from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Sylvans earn seventh consecutive Louisiana Forest Festival collegiate win



Nearly 30 SFA students helped the Sylvans earn its seventh consecutive victory and sweep all the collegiate events at the Louisiana Forest Festival held in April by scoring 54 points overall. No team has ever swept all the competition's events. Louisiana Tech University came in second with 40 points, and the University of Arkansas at Monticello placed third with 35 points. View the Sylvan's LFF videos at gosfa.com/SylvansLFF.

Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture names Distinguished Alumnus



Weldon "Buddy" Alders, a 1958 SFA graduate who earned a Bachelor of Science in agriculture, has been named the 2026 Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture Distinguished Alumnus. He is the owner and operator of Alders Companies in Dayton and Alders Farm and Ranch in Midway.

In addition to his professional success, Alders has remained an active supporter of SFA. He has opened his facilities to university administrators and students for tours, hosted a class focused on the reproductive physiology program, donated equipment to SFA's Beef Center, and is a major contributor to the Department of Agriculture, supporting initiatives such as beef genetics research.

According to Dr. Douglas Smith, chair and professor in the Department of Agriculture, "Mr. Alders represents SFA with pride, determination and integrity, and is always willing to support opportunities for our students, staff and faculty."

Reese named permanent dean of Nelson Rusche College of Business



SFA appointed Dr. Jason Reese as the permanent dean of the Nelson Rusche College of Business. This appointment follows Reese's yearlong service as interim dean after the departure of Dr. Tim Bisping, who is now dean of the College of Business at the University of Central Arkansas.

"I am incredibly honored and excited for the opportunity to lead the Nelson Rusche College of Business forward during such an exciting time at SFA," Reese said. "We have tremendous momentum across the university and within the college, and I look forward to building on that success by continuing to focus on student success, academic innovation and building meaningful community partnerships."

Reese brings more than a decade of academic and administrative leadership experience to the role. He began his higher education career at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in 2011 and joined the SFA faculty in 2014. Since arriving at SFA, Reese has served as assistant professor, associate professor and professor. He also has held several key leadership positions, including assistant department chair for the Department of Management and Marketing, director of the Master of Business Administration program and associate dean, before being named interim dean in March 2025. ➔

News Briefs

Dr. Elisabeth Ploran named inaugural dean of SFA's College of Health Professions



Following a nationwide search, SFA appointed Dr. Elisabeth Ploran as the inaugural dean of the College of Health Professions. Ploran comes to Nacogdoches from Hofstra University, a private university in Nassau County, New York, where she served as professor and associate dean of student success and belonging.

Announced in December, SFA's College of Health Professions will unite programs in nursing, psychology, kinesiology, athletic training, public health, dietetics and nutritional sciences, counseling, social work, speech-language pathology and family sciences to create SFA's largest and most interdisciplinary academic unit. The new college reflects SFA's continued commitment to meeting the evolving needs of students, employers and the East Texas region.

"It is not often that a university reinvents its academic structure so dramatically — but it is clear that President Weaver and Provost Barkley have a common goal in elevating SFA to even greater heights than it already holds," Ploran said.

SFA Earns 2025-26 SLC Commissioner's Cup, both All-Sports trophies

It's official. SFA Athletics Department is the Southland Conference's best following the conclusion of the 2025-26 athletic year. The league awarded the Lumberjacks the Commissioner's Cup, the SLC Women's All-Sports Trophy and the Men's All-Sports Trophy.

This is SFA's first commissioner's cup since 2020-21, but it sets a conference record with seven earned in all. SFA also is the only SLC institution to sweep all three trophies multiple times.



FOOTBALL: REGULAR SEASON CHAMPIONS



VOLLEYBALL: REGULAR SEASON AND SLC TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS



MEN'S BASKETBALL: REGULAR SEASON CHAMPIONS



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: SLC TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS



News Briefs

CROSS-COUNTRY: MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SLC TITLES



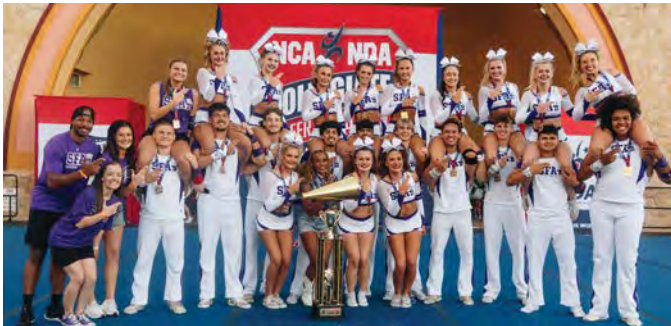
MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD: INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SLC TITLES



TENNIS: SLC TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS



CHEER: NCA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE LARGE COED DIVISION I



DANCE TEAM:

NDA DIVISION I JAZZ NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



College of Sciences and Mathematics makerspace named for Gandy family

SFA faculty, staff and students along with members of the Gandy family and the Nacogdoches community celebrated the unveiling of the Dr. Bill and Barbara Gandy Makerspace within SFA's College of Sciences and Mathematics at the Cole STEM Building July 16.

Bill, a 1968 SFA graduate and retired dentist, and Barbara also have invested in the university through donations to athletics, fine arts, SFA Gardens and scholarship programs.

One of several makerspaces on campus open to all SFA students, the Dr. Bill and Barbara Gandy Makerspace offers students a gathering point, cutting-edge technology and mentor help to apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics concepts to construction, electronics, robotics, woodworking, metalworking, laser cutting and programming projects. An upcoming expansion of the facility and additional equipment will help it serve more students who are working on projects ranging from coursework to entries for national competitions.



The unveiling of the Dr. Bill and Barbara Gandy Makerspace within SFA's College of Sciences and Mathematics at the Cole STEM Building. Members of the Gandy family joined Dr. Neal Weaver, SFA president, far left, and Dr. Kimberly Childs, dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics, far right, in honoring Barbara's (fourth from right) and Bill's (third from right) ongoing support of SFA students.



NEW RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

*Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship
introduces two new programs*

STORY BY PARASTOO NIKRAVESH '18 & '23

SFA One Hundred celebrates fastest-growing alumni businesses

Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship has debuted SFA One Hundred, a new program designed to identify and celebrate the 100 fastest-growing Lumberjack-led businesses in the world. Nominations and applications for the 2027 rankings are currently open and will be accepted through Nov. 1.

The SFA One Hundred recognizes the success, innovation and contributions of the top 100 alumni-owned businesses that embody the legacy, values and entrepreneurial spirit of SFA and ACE.

"The program is a transformative milestone for the Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship and our entire university community," said Dr. Todd Brown, associate vice president for academic affairs. "We are incredibly excited to shine a spotlight on the visionary alumni successful entrepreneurial ventures. We are not only honoring their hard work but also inspiring the next generation of SFA students. It is a privilege to finally recognize these leaders and showcase the profound economic impact our graduates are making across the world."

ACE established the SFA One Hundred in 2025 in collaboration with Greg Price '80, chief financial officer of Decisio Health in Houston and an angel investor and former judge of SFA's Lumberjack Entrepreneurship Competition.



Leaders from SFA and The University of Texas System as well as state and local dignitaries attended the Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship building groundbreaking ceremony June 22. Pictured, from left, are Julia Rathgeber, UT System deputy chancellor and senior policy advisor; Jonathan Pruitt, UT System executive vice chancellor and chief operating officer; Dr. Archie Holmes, UT System executive vice chancellor for academic affairs; Dr. Neal Weaver, SFA president; Ashley Arnold; Greg Arnold '87; State Sen. Bryan Hughes; State Rep. Trent Ashby; State Rep. Joanne Shofner; and Dr. Todd Brown, SFA associate vice president for academic affairs. Photo by Lizeth Garcia

"In my early conversations with Trey Turner [SFA development] and Todd Brown about the possibility of the initiative, we recognized a powerful truth: For over 100 years, this university has been a catalyst for entrepreneurial success," Price said. "The time has come to honor that legacy. The achievements of our alumni — innovators who have built companies, created jobs and made their mark across Texas and beyond — deserve meaningful recognition. The program is our way of celebrating that impact and carrying it forward into the next century."

For this inaugural ranking of companies, each nominee or applicant must have been in continuous operation for at least three years as of Dec. 31, 2025, and have generated revenues of at least \$200,000 every fiscal year since Jan. 1, 2023. Then the rankings will be calculated based on each applicant's compound annual growth rate in sales or revenue over a three-year period spanning 2023, 2024 and 2025.

To be eligible for the program, companies must meet specific longevity, revenue and leadership criteria.

Furthermore, the business must be Lumberjack-founded, owned or led. Eligible leaders must hold a C-suite title, such as CEO, chair or managing partner, or own a majority stake of 50% or more. Former students who attended SFA but did not formally complete their degrees remain eligible to apply.

The honored companies will be announced publicly at an SFA awards ceremony, increasing businesses' visibility by sharing company names, logos, Lumberjack leadership names, contact information, locations and other self-reported information.

"This initiative is more than just a ranking. By fostering these partnerships, we are creating a powerful network of Lumberjack entrepreneurs and innovation."

– Dr. Hollie Smith, ACE executive director of community partnerships

While waiting to hear back on the SFA One Hundred, alumni are encouraged to add their businesses to the Lumberjack Alumni-owned Business Directory, which can be found online at sfasu.edu/ace/business-directory.

The inaugural SFA One Hundred list will be unveiled during a special awards celebration in April 2027. Honored business leaders will participate in a luncheon revealing the rankings, deliver keynote speeches, engage in class presentations and network with college deans and SFA leadership.

To ensure the utmost integrity and financial privacy, all baseline financial data is submitted directly to an independent accounting firm, Carr, Riggs & Ingram. The financial data is kept strictly confidential; neither SFA nor The University of Texas System will have access to the raw numbers, and they will receive only the final, verified rankings for the awards. ★

SFA
ONE HUNDRED

APPLICATIONS CLOSE NOV. 1.

- To fill out an application for your business, visit gosfa.com/SFA100-application.
- To nominate a business, visit gosfa.com/SFA100-nomination.
- To learn more about the initiative, visit sfasu.edu/ace/sfa100, or contact Dr. Hollie Smith at hsmith@sfasu.edu or (936) 468-2988.



3D rendering of the
LED volume production studio

Giving Hollywood a run for its money: SFA to build multipurpose LED volume production studio

Lumberjacks won't have to travel to Hollywood or New York City much longer to create high-quality film and TV productions.

SFA students soon will have access to a state-of-the-art LED volume production studio planned for the future Arnold Center for Entrepreneurship building, giving them the ability to produce realistic and immersive virtual environments in real time.

Following last year's approval by The University of Texas System Board of Regents, SFA is using \$40 million to build the two-story, 39,170-square-foot building next to the home of SFA's \$85 million Forestry and Agriculture Building and Agricultural Engineering and Technology Building on Raguet Street between Hayter and East College streets. Substantial completion is anticipated by mid-2027.

ACE's facility will offer immersive and flexible spaces tailored to modern entrepreneurial education, including simulated learning environments and the LED volume production studio.

The multipurpose studio will be available for collaborative projects and entrepreneurial ventures across SFA's areas of study and disciplines.

With the approval of the design development plans and funding allocation, SFA moves one step closer to creating a dynamic hub for future business leaders, visiting entrepreneurs and students eager to bring their ideas to life.

The volume production studio's approval follows the passage of Senate Bill 22, which increases funding for the Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program, allocating \$300 million every two years to attract major film and television productions to the Lone Star State. The bill also provides incentives to projects that partner with higher education institutions.

For more information on ACE, visit sfasu.edu/ace. ★

Purple Spikes helps East Texas businesses plan for the future

East Texas businesses now have a free community resource designed to preserve the vitality of their companies through a business succession program called Purple Spikes, a new initiative from ACE.

As part of ACE's broader initiative of launching new entrepreneurial ventures, Purple Spikes aims to keep current East Texas businesses operating by connecting business owners through a business succession network. The program helps connect those who might be ready to retire or exit the business for another pursuit by connecting them with qualified buyers. This program keeps businesses open in the Lumberjack family and retains jobs in the region.

"Just within the region, nearly 200 businesses representing over 2,000 jobs are at risk of disappearing without a succession plan," said Dr. Todd Brown, associate vice president for academic affairs. "This would be a major blow to the local economy in millions of lost revenues. ACE hopes to ensure job preservation and long-term economic growth by connecting possible graduating students, alumni or qualified entrepreneurs with these business acquisition opportunities."

The succession network on the Purple Spikes webpage is organized into two groups: businesses looking to sell and qualified buyers. SFA's network of buyers includes experienced individuals and Lumberjack alumni interested in growing roots in the area as well as high-achieving recent graduates motivated and financially prepared to take over operations.

ACE's first business listing actively seeking a successor is Larry Bruce Gardens of Kennard, a hospitality getaway with guest house rentals, a restaurant and an event center.

"It was truly an honor to be the first business to participate in the Purple Spikes program at SFA," Bruce said. "Our belief is that someone will not only be able to take over Larry Bruce Gardens but actually take it to the levels that will produce amazing results, thanks to SFA and ACE."

There are no fees for participating, and contributions are welcome from those who wish to support the program's continued success.

"ACE works closely with business owners to support their goals and the long-term interests for their venture by connecting them with a potential successor," said Dr. Raymond Jones, entrepreneurship program director. "For those interested in selling a business, the idea of entrepreneurship through acquisition and succession hopes to provide an opportunity for keeping the business' legacy alive while ensuring that the continued success of the business gives back the community."

If you are interested in selling or owning a business, visit gosfa.com/purplespikes to complete a profile. Within seven days of reviewing the submitted form, ACE will reach out to discuss your goals and next steps.

Accepted businesses will be featured on Purple Spikes' website, and ACE will assist in promoting their opportunity to potential buyers. ACE will also help interested owners connect with businesses that align with their goals and qualifications, and ensure they are prepared for the undertaking of a business acquisition.

For more information, contact Dr. Hollie Smith, ACE executive director of community partnerships, at hsmith@sfasu.edu or (936) 468-2988. ★

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SFA school named for dance pioneer and alumnus

STORY BY TRISHA WHEELER '22
AND JOHANNA GILMORE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF
PRISCILLA "PRISSY" ABSHIER SLIVA '59
AND MATTHEW LANDRY

The excitement in the stadium is building. A sharp cadence suddenly cuts through the night. The crowd cheers as the drill team takes command of the field.

The dancers' high kicks, jump splits and precision steps mesmerize audience members. They have the late Denard Haden '29, a beloved SFA alumnus and faculty member, to thank for that.

His legacy lives on not only through the students he taught and inspired but also through the new names of SFA's Denard Haden School of Theatre and Dance, the Denard Haden Performance Hall and the Denard Haden Dance Studio in the Griffith Fine Arts Building.

"My uncle's influence can still be seen and felt today — not just within our family, but across this area and beyond," said Haden's niece and distinguished alumna Priscilla "Prissy" Abshier Sliva '59, who made the generous commitment to

enhance programmatic efforts and commemorate the legacy of her uncle. "To see his name recognized in a way that honors his legacy at SFA means so much to me."

Dr. Gary Wurtz, dean of the Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts at SFA, said he is grateful to Sliva for her generosity and vision.

"Her gift not only supports the continued excellence of our theatre and dance programs but also honors a legacy that helped shape the foundation of dance education in East Texas."

HADEN'S FIRST DANCE

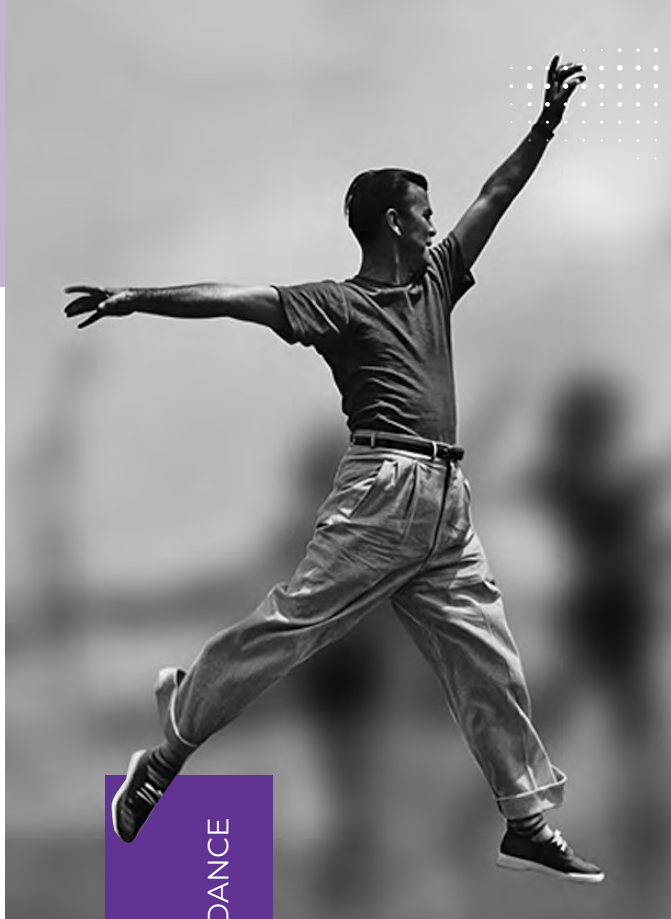
Haden established SFA's dance program and was widely known for his creative vision and innovative choreography. He taught dance classes, choreographed musicals and introduced groundbreaking

techniques that continue to influence dance and drill teams to this day.

"His gift for staging and movement left a lasting impression on generations of performers and students," said Heather Samuelson, associate professor of dance at SFA.

But before he was a faculty member, Haden first stepped on campus in 1927 as a transfer student from Rice Institute, now Rice University, majoring in English. While at Rice in Houston, he took his first dance lesson. Haden mastered the steps so quickly he soon was asked to help as the instructor's assistant. When his family relocated to Nacogdoches, he opened a dance studio and continued his studies at SFA until he earned his English degree in 1929.

After graduation, Haden taught English and served as principal at



A LEGACY IN MOTION
DENARD HADEN SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE



DENARD HADEN 1908-1983

Bachelor's degree in English, SFA in 1929

Master's degree in education, George Peabody College for Teachers



Introduced and pioneered dance in East Texas in the early 1930s, laying the foundation for generations to come



Established the first dance schools in East Texas, with locations in Nacogdoches, Henderson, Kilgore, Marshall and Lufkin



First choreographer of the Kilgore College Rangerettes. His terminology and technique became the blueprint for drill teams worldwide.



Denard Haden '29, 1980

TOP LEFT: Guided by Denard Haden, these dancers, including his niece, Donna Haden Abshier Houston, captured the lyrical movement and refined artistry that became hallmarks of his choreography.

BOTTOM LEFT: Denard Haden, Drama Club president, dressed with and without grad regalia in the 1929 Stone Fort yearbook

Corrigan High School during the week and gave dance lessons on the weekends. Determined to master his craft, he spent his summers studying with renowned instructors in California and New York, including Mary Wigman, Sergei Lifar, Alicia Alonso and Eduardo Cansino, Rita Hayworth's father.

After five years, Haden realized dance was his true passion and began pursuing the craft full time. In addition to his Nacogdoches classes, he started teaching in Henderson in 1934. Demand led him to expand his classes to Kilgore. There, he met Gussie Nell Davis, one of his students who would go on to found the historically celebrated Kilgore College Rangerettes. In September 1940, the Rangerettes became the first drill team (dance team) to perform on a college football field.

ENTERING THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Kilgore College presented Davis with a tough challenge: creating a show that would keep football fans in the stands during halftime. She had previously led a bugle drum corps that did not involve dancing. From the beginning, Haden taught her the routines, and Davis then taught them to the Rangerettes.

Haden was later drafted into the U.S. Army as a medic, serving in Europe during World War II. Upon his return, Davis asked Haden to join the Rangerettes as their first official choreographer, and he began teaching the line members directly. Haden's signature number, known as the "Kilgore Rangerette Production Number," is still the big finale of every "Rangerette Revels" spring show. The high kicks and intricate

formations featured in the number continue to be integral to drill team performances.

Working closely with Davis, Haden helped shape a new standard for halftime entertainment, one that quickly spread from East Texas to high school and college stadiums across the country. During Haden's more than 30 years with the Rangerettes, they were featured in the movie "Seven Wonders of the World" and made appearances on the "Ed Sullivan Show" and Dave Garroway's "Wide Wide World." They also performed at Madison Square Garden and continue to perform at the Cotton Bowl every New Year's Day.

During his Kilgore College tenure, Haden also enjoyed the personal honor of working with his niece, Sliva, a former Rangerette captain →

"To see his name recognized in a way that honors his legacy at SFA means so much to me."

- Haden's niece and distinguished alumna Priscilla "Prissy" Abshier Sliva '59, who made the generous commitment to enhance the program and commemorate the legacy of her uncle



In 1950, he established the first dance and drill team camp, Roads End Farm, located on Caddo Lake near Marshall.



Vice president of Dance Masters of America, where he taught and mentored dance educators across the country



Created drill team clinics and camps for high schools, colleges and universities nationwide



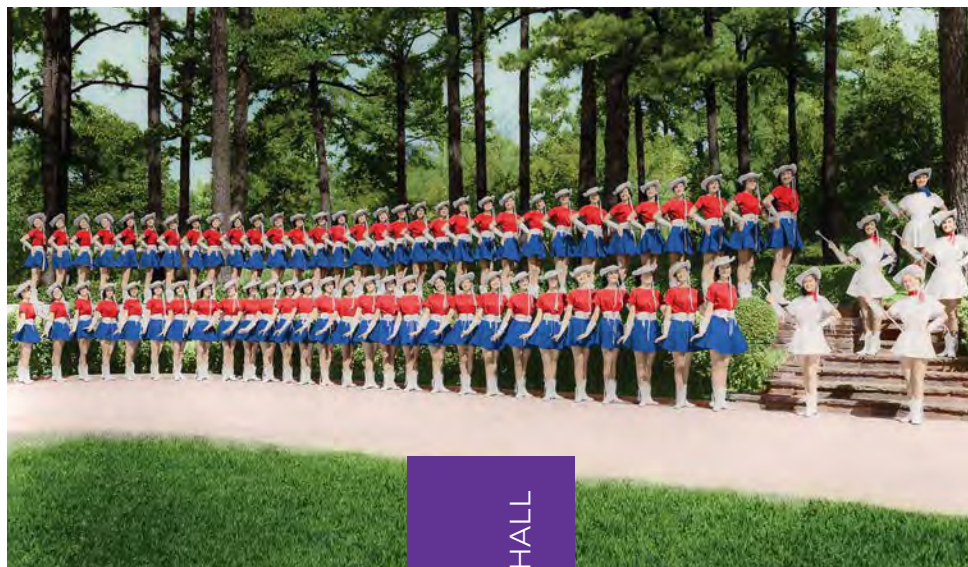
Established the dance program at his alma mater, SFA, and worked with area high schools on spring productions



Inspired a love of dance through his dance courses, which were integral to some of SFA's most loved musicals in the 60s and 70s

"I feel that I have been a part of something truly great and I've helped to bring into focus a unique art form that is a true piece of Americana."

- Denard Haden '29, who taught acrobatics, adagio, ballroom, ballet, jazz, modern and tap dance



ABOVE: Denard Haden '29 and his niece, Priscilla "Prissy" Abshier Sliva '59, celebrating his retirement as the Rangerettes' first choreographer.

who danced under his direction. Sliva's daughter and Haden's grand-niece, Julie, would later serve as a Rangerette captain as well.

They are the only mother-daughter captains in the organization's 85-plus-year history.

In 1950, Haden founded the Road's End Farm Dance/Drill Team Camp at Caddo Lake, the first of its kind dedicated to drill team and dance instruction. It quickly grew into a national destination, drawing students from 18 states and featuring some of the top choreographers in the nation. Renowned instructors who taught at the camp included Louis DaPron, "The Perry Como Show" choreographer; George Zorith, a Russian-born ballet dancer and member of Ballet Russe; and Patsy Swayze, choreographer for "Urban Cowboy" and "Hope Floats" and instructor to future stars including Debbie Allen, Tommy Tune and her sons Patrick and Don.

Through camps and clinics, Haden helped standardize drill team techniques, which quickly spread across Texas and the U.S., as well as raised the bar for performance excellence. His contributions were recognized by organizations such as Dance Masters of America and the Texas Association Teachers of Dancing, where he was honored with a lifetime achievement award. Despite the national recognition, Haden remained

A PIONEER OF DANCE IN EAST TEXAS

DENARD HADEN DANCE STUDIO & DENARD HADEN PERFORMANCE HALL

ABOVE: 1956-57 Rangerettes. Choreographer: Denard Haden
Captain: Priscilla "Prissy" Abshier Sliva '59, Haden's niece

in East Texas. "It's my home and I like it here," he said in a February 1964 article in *The Pine Log*.

LESSONS FOR LUMBERJACKS

In 1960, Haden returned to his alma mater to join the faculty at SFA, where he would spend more than a decade teaching modern dance and choreographing musicals such as "Camelot," "Sound of Music," "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," "My Fair Lady" and "Annie Get Your Gun." At a time when formal dance education was still developing, Haden served as a dance pioneer at SFA, helping establish its emerging formal dance program. He approached every performance with artistry, discipline and a passion for storytelling.

"I never had the privilege of knowing Mr. Haden personally, but through his remarkable niece, Prissy, his legacy continues to inspire," said Cleo House-Keller, director of the Denard Haden School of Theatre and Dance. "It's my understanding that he shone brightly on stage, in the studio and under the stadium lights — and now, through this incredible gift, his influence will be felt for generations to come, especially by our theatre and dance students."

Outside the classroom, he was a beloved member of the Nacogdoches community. Haden volunteered to help area high schools with their spring shows and offered free lessons to students who couldn't afford them to ensure access to the arts for all. He also operated private studios in towns across East Texas, nurturing talent in Nacogdoches, Lufkin, Kilgore, Marshall and beyond.

During the height of his career, Haden worked with more than 1,000 students a year. His three requirements of each student were a desire to dance, a sense of rhythm and cooperation, according to the February 1964 *Pine Log* article.

Haden, who passed away in 1983, said he knew his place in history: "I feel that I have been a part of something truly great and I've helped to bring into focus a unique art form that is a true piece of Americana."

The naming of the Denard Haden School of Theatre and Dance ensures future generations of SFA students will know Haden's place in history, as well. For more information on how you can support SFA's Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts, visit sfasu.edu/giving or call (936) 468-5406. ★

Where are they now?



▲ Retired SFA associate professor emeritus Dr. Al Greule, center, was awarded Broadcast Educator of the Year by the Texas Association of Broadcasters at its annual convention in Round Rock. The award is given to individuals who have significantly contributed to the success of the broadcast industry in Texas and whose personal and professional conduct sets a standard of excellence to be emulated.



▲ More than three decades after meeting as roommates at SFA, Nancy (Haeussler) Hendel, Tracy (Stogsdill) Johnson and Diane (Studt) Burke continue to put their SFA degrees to work while celebrating the lifelong friendship they built on campus. Today, Hendel is a registered nurse in post-anesthesia care at ThedaCare Hospital in Appleton, Wisconsin; Johnson serves as an adjunct professor in the College of Education at Dallas Baptist University; and Burke is the literacy and language coordinator for Region 4 Education Service Center in Houston.

The trio reunites each year for a cruise, proudly wearing matching purple SFA shirts that spark conversations with fellow Lumberjacks and future students alike.

▼ Yep, that was us! From Nacogdoches to Busch Stadium, the St. Louis Cardinals and SFA's club baseball team captured the attention of the sports world. What started as a group of Lumberjacks cheering on the Cardinals during their trip to Illinois for the Club Baseball World Series turned into a viral moment seen across the country, with fans, players and national media embracing the energy and spirit of SFA. #TarpsOff



LUMBERJACKS MAKE GREAT NASA CINEMATOPHAGERS!

▼ And that's a wrap, Lumberjacks! Three SFA cinematography alumni helped tell the story of NASA's Artemis II mission, working alongside

NASA astronauts and scientists to capture the excitement behind humanity's next journey into deep space.



▲ Sarah Volkman '15
NASA Senior Producer



▲ Justin Herring '12 & '16
NASA Video Producer



▲ John Hughes '15
NASA Film and Video Librarian



THE NEXT 100 YEARS

SFA's strategic and campus master plans will ensure alignment among the university's academic vision, operational priorities and future physical environment

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF STERLING ILLUSTRATION



The blueprint for SFA's next decade is now in place. In February, The University of Texas System Board of Regents approved SFA's strategic plan and campus master plan and in May a future Lumberjack Crossing residence hall.

"Together, these actions represent a significant milestone in SFA's continued integration into the UT System and establish a unified roadmap guiding the university's academic priorities, student experience and long-term campus development," said Dr. Neal Weaver, SFA president.

Created in partnership with Freese and Nichols, an engineering, planning and consulting firm based in Fort Worth, the main master plan guides physical development across campus over the next 10 years. It includes utility, technology, campus recreation and intercollegiate athletics master plans as well as landscape guidelines, condition assessments and campus space utilization strategy updates.

Collectively, the approved strategic and master plans establish a framework to:

- support student success and the full Lumberjack experience



Welcome Center With Auditorium, left

The proposed 32,500-square-foot Welcome Center will create a welcoming front door to SFA, offering prospective students, visitors and the campus community a place to connect, explore and celebrate SFA. Plans include exhibit space showcasing the university's rich history, meeting areas for Jackwalkers leading campus tours, a spirit shop and an 1,800-seat auditorium designed primarily as a concert venue with exceptional acoustics for the School of Music. Outdoor gathering spaces surrounding the two-story facility will provide inviting areas for students and visitors to relax and connect.

- prioritize modern learning, research and engagement spaces
- strengthen infrastructure, mobility and campus connectivity
- and guide long-term decision-making as projects and resources advance.

The design and \$70 million budget was approved in May for SFA to construct the 100,000-square-foot Lumberjack Crossing residence hall directly east of the Lumberjack Landing residence hall and south of Pinewoods Dining Hall.

The four-story building will provide housing and support amenities for up to 335 students and include double-

occupancy rooms with suite-style bathrooms, accessible accommodations, lounge and study spaces, staff offices, and student collaboration environments. The project also will expand campus cooling capacity with a new chiller and supporting infrastructure planned for SFA's central plant. Construction is anticipated to begin this year with substantial completion targeted for 2028.

According to Weaver, this milestone reflects the shared vision and dedication of the entire SFA community as the university moves confidently into its second century. ★



Track and Field Facility, left

The proposed 22,900-square-foot track and field complex will provide SFA student-athletes with a premier competition and training venue. The facility will feature a full 400-meter, eight-lane track, dedicated areas for all field events, sports lighting, a scoreboard, a sound system and a 155,000-square-foot central field. Athlete support spaces, including locker rooms, lounges and team operations, will be housed in the adjacent fieldhouse building or indoor practice facility.

Tennis Venue, right

The proposed 6,350-square-foot tennis complex will enhance SFA's tennis facilities with 12 lighted courts, seating for 205 spectators, accessible viewing areas and a central scoreboard. Connected to the south operations building, the complex will provide expanded locker rooms and student-athlete spaces while creating a unified hub for competition, practice and tournaments.





Student Housing B

Norton HPE Complex
Renovation and Addition

Student Recreation Center
Renovation and Addition

Softball Venue

Tennis Venue

Baseball Venue

Lanana Creek

Ag Pond



On-Campus Baseball and Softball Venues, above
The proposed on-campus baseball and softball stadiums will provide the Lumberjacks with a dedicated home venue designed for competition and student-athlete development. Both facilities will feature synthetic turf, concessions, and a sound system along with seating for 2,285 baseball fans and 1,370 softball fans, which includes premium viewing areas.

Football Stadium Transformation, left
The proposed football stadium will create a modern game-day experience for Lumberjack fans while providing student-athletes with a premier home field. Encompassing approximately 122,700 square feet of interior and exterior space, the venue will feature a 10,440-seat bowl, premium club, suite and loge seating, a synthetic turf field, state-of-the-art video and sound technology, and direct access to the adjacent fieldhouse building for team operations. ADA-accessible amenities, multiple entry plazas and a nearby parking area with ADA and VIP spaces will enhance accessibility and the overall fan experience.

Lumberjack Crossing Residence Hall, right
 The University of Texas System Board of Regents approved \$70 million for SFA to construct the 100,000-square-foot Lumberjack Crossing residence hall directly east of the Lumberjack Landing residence hall and south of Pineywoods Dining Hall. Construction is anticipated to begin this year with substantial completion targeted for 2028.

The four-story building will provide housing and support amenities for up to 335 students. It will include double-occupancy rooms with suite-style bathrooms, accessible accommodations, lounge and study spaces, staff offices and student collaboration environments. The project also will expand campus cooling capacity with a new chiller and supporting infrastructure planned for the university's central plant.





Student Housing C

East College Mall



East College Mall

Steen Hall Courtyards

Student Housing C

North Wilson Drive Extension

East College Mall, above

The transformation of East College Street between Raguet Street and Wilson Drive will create a pedestrian-friendly campus mall, improving safety while enhancing one of SFA's busiest corridors. The redesigned space will feature brick paver accents, shaded seating areas, pedestrian lighting and expanded landscaping, creating an inviting place for students, faculty and visitors to gather and connect.

Steen Hall Courtyards, left

Steen Hall is currently surrounded by parking areas. This project reimagines two of the three parking lots as courtyard spaces with shade structures, tables with umbrellas, shade trees and open green spaces for flexible use.

Red Brick Pavers, left and above

Red brick walkways, plazas and courtyards throughout campus pay tribute to one of Nacogdoches' most enduring landmarks. In 1917, as part of the effort to bring SFA to the city, the citizens of Nacogdoches pledged to donate 208 acres of land and pave eight miles of city streets with red brick. More than a century later, those historic streets remain a defining symbol of the community, and the future use of red brick across campus honors the university's deep roots and lasting partnership with the city that helped make SFA possible.



To view more of SFA's master plan, scan the code or visit sfasu.edu/masterplan.

Gala 2026

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Jill Still, vice president for university advancement; Gerald "Jerry" W. Schlieff, SFASU Foundation Board chairman; Jeff Badders; Jackie Badders and Dr. Neal Weaver, university president

Jeff and Jackie Badders *Century Society Inductees*

Jeff and Jackie Badders share deep roots in Nacogdoches and SFA. Jeff graduated from Nacogdoches High School in 1974 before earning his Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting from SFA in 1978. He went on to graduate from Baylor Law School in 1981 and immediately returned home to practice law alongside his father, Bill Badders. Jackie graduated from high school in Arlington and earned her degree in liberal arts from SFA in 1984, majoring in psychology with a minor in sociology.

Married in 1985, Jeff and Jackie recently celebrated 40 years together. In 1991, they founded Badders Law Firm, P.C., building a practice dedicated to serving severely injured individuals and their families. The firm has since grown to multiple offices across Texas and now includes their son, Heath Badders, and daughter-in-law, Mariko. Together, Jeff and Jackie are the proud parents of eight children and grandparents to 14.

Their commitment to SFA and the Nacogdoches community is reflected through decades of service and philanthropy. They have supported SFA fine arts, nursing, ROTC and athletics, and have established multiple scholarships benefiting SFA students, with continued plans to expand that support.

Most recently, they purchased the historic Etoile school property, where, in collaboration with SFA, the nonprofit Aventus Academy will operate a tuition-free daycare and school for disadvantaged children. Through faith, generosity and service, the Badders family has made a lasting impact on East Texas and SFA. ★

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PRISCILLA “PRISSY” ABSHIER SLIVA *Stephen F. Austin Society Inductee*

Priscilla “Prissy” Abshier Sliva’s life has been defined by creativity, leadership and an enduring commitment to service. Born in Kilgore and raised in Nacogdoches, she was immersed early in performance and storytelling, influenced by her uncle, Denard Haden, the original choreographer of the Kilgore College Rangerettes and founding figure behind SFA’s dance program.

Prissy attended Kilgore College from 1955 to 1957, where she rose to prominence as a Rangerette lieutenant and captain, gaining recognition in competitions, pageants and national performances. She continued her education at SFA, where she was honored as an SFA Beauty and Homecoming Duchess. A proud graduate of Kilgore College and SFA, Prissy is a testament to what it means to serve and lead by example.

Prissy, a natural teacher and innovator, was Haden’s assistant as they traveled the U.S. to teach and mentor young performers at some of the earliest drill team camps. Haden, her teacher and mentor, along with Gussie Nell Davis and the Rangerettes, inspired her to start her own business with her husband, Bobby, providing specialized supplies for drill teams and performers worldwide.

Prissy’s philanthropic legacy reflects deep personal meaning. In honor of her uncle, she made a transformational gift to SFA, resulting in the naming of the Denard Haden School of Theatre and Dance, as well as the Denard Haden Performance Hall and the Denard Haden Dance Studio. She also honored her late son, Jeff, by establishing the Jeff Sliva K9 Waiting Room at Texas A&M University’s multimillion-dollar small animal hospital. Prissy’s gifts to SFA, A&M and Kilgore College are among the many areas she has supported. Her life’s work is a testament to passion paired with purpose — a legacy that continues to inspire and endure. ★



Gerald “Jerry” W. Schlieff, SFASU Foundation Board chairman; Jill Still, vice president for university advancement; Priscilla “Prissy” Abshier Sliva and Dr. Neal Weaver, university president

Alan and Kim Jones *Rusk Society Inductees*

Alan and Kim Jones’ connection to SFA began as students and continued throughout their lives. Alan earned his bachelor’s degree in forestry from SFA in 1976, launching a career spanning more than 40 years in the forest products industry.

His work with Champion International, Temple-Inland and Georgia-Pacific took the couple across the South before he retired in 2018.

Kim earned her bachelor’s degree from SFA in 1979 and began a career in education. She returned to SFA in 1989 to earn her master’s degree in mathematics. Kim taught in multiple school systems across Texas and Georgia, including Diboll ISD, Waycross Junior College and Angelina College, before retiring.

SFA has remained a meaningful part of the Jones family across generations. Their son earned a degree in music composition from SFA, and their daughter earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the university.

Alan and Kim have supported numerous SFA athletic programs, including tennis, volleyball and soccer, and have established scholarships benefiting the dance program and the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture.

In retirement, they enjoy traveling and spending time together but are most often found cheering on the Ladyjacks and Lumberjacks or attending fine arts events. Through loyalty, generosity and continued engagement, the Jones family has made a lasting impact on SFA and the students it serves. ★



Jill Still, vice president for university advancement; Gerald “Jerry” W. Schlieff, SFASU Foundation Board chairman; Kim Jones; Alan Jones and Dr. Neal Weaver, university president



Brittany Scott earned a Bachelor of Science in communication sciences and disorders in 2017 and a Master of Science in speech-language pathology in 2022 from SFA. Today, Scott is the lead speech-language pathologist at Parkinson Voice Project in Richardson.

FINDING THEIR VOICE

Alumna helps people with Parkinson's disease through speech therapy services fully funded by past patients and their families

STORY BY JOHANNA GILMORE
PHOTOS BY ROBIN JOHNSON '99 & '19

The signs are subtle at first. A slight tremor in a finger. Handwriting getting smaller. The smell of pickles isn't as strong as it used to be. Trouble sleeping.

As dopamine-producing neurons decrease in the brain, Parkinson's disease can progress and impair movement. This can lead to speech and voice changes, including soft, slow, rapid or unclear speech and facial masking that affects emotional expression, according to the Parkinson's Foundation.

Dr. Michael Fountain '70 & '72, retired Laurence C. Walker Distinguished Professor and former SFA associate dean of forestry, was experiencing those changes when he sought help from SFA's Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders. Before he died in 2024, his encouragement inspired Brittany Scott '17 & '22 to pursue working with people with Parkinson's after completing her Master of Science in speech-language pathology.

"Before him, I didn't think I had the skills to work with adults as I had only ever worked with children," Scott said. "He helped me envision a future I would not have believed in myself enough to see. And SFA's faculty and hands-on training got me where I am today."

Today, Scott is the lead speech-language pathologist at Parkinson Voice Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Richardson that provides no-charge speech therapy services to help people with Parkinson's regain and retain their speech and swallowing. Parkinson Voice Project, founded by Samantha Elandary, recently celebrated its 20th anniversary.

PINPOINTING HER PASSION

While growing up in the small East Texas town of Diana, Scott said she knew nothing about speech therapy.

"I did not know anyone with Parkinson's disease other than Michael J. Fox," she said. "I initially wanted to be a teacher, but I was not passionate about it. One day, my mom mentioned I should become a speech therapist. As a 17-year-old who really didn't know what I wanted, I said, 'Sure!'"

Scott was initially drawn to SFA while participating in junior high and high school band competitions at the university and becoming more familiar with campus while her older brother attended. She knew she wanted to be a Twirl-O-Jack, and she was a member on the line all four years while earning her Bachelor of Science in communication sciences and disorders.

"I was part of the group that performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade," she said. "I absolutely loved my time as a TOJ, and I frequently return for events as an alumna." (See "The Boldest Sound From the Oldest Town," Page 30)

After starting college and taking the "Intro to Communication Sciences and Disorders" course, Scott said she was hooked.

"It was so interesting to learn how humans make sounds, understand how the parts of our brain control language, and see how speech therapy can help people in many different settings and at all ages," she said. "While I was taking my intro courses, I had two relatives born with disabilities. It was impactful to learn specific things in class and then see them in real life with my relatives. All in all, my mom was right!"

About 15 years before Scott arrived at SFA, Elandary was launching her career in Richardson. While treating her patients with Parkinson's, she saw they responded well to speech therapy and vocal exercise. However, they struggled to maintain the improvements they made in therapy. If they stopped their home speech exercises, their speech would decline and their swallowing would become compromised. This could lead to feeding tubes and even life-threatening aspiration pneumonia.

Elandary knew people with Parkinson's needed a lifetime of speech therapy and daily home practice to battle the disease progression of Parkinson's, so she created a program to motivate her patients and help them "stay the course."

In 2005, Elandary founded the nonprofit Texas Voice Project for Parkinson Disease. Five years later, her clinical team developed the SPEAK OUT!® Therapy Program based on the renowned speech-language pathologist Dr. Daniel R. Boone's teachings of "speaking with INTENT." In 2011, the organization changed its name to Parkinson

Voice Project and, in 2012, began replicating its program to help people with Parkinson's beyond Texas. In 2021, a major gift from ➔

"He helped me envision a future I would not have believed in myself enough to see."

- Brittany Scott '17 & '22 about the late Dr. Michael Fountain '70 & '72, pictured right



a grateful family endowed the nonprofit's 10,000-square-foot speech therapy clinic, which is where Scott works today.

REFINING HER SKILLS

In 2018, SFA was one of the first recipients of Parkinson Voice Project's clinical education grant, which allows graduate clinics to treat people with Parkinson's at no cost using the SPEAK OUT! Therapy Program.

Deena Petersen, who retired in 2025 from her role as clinic director of SFA's Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders, applied for the grant.

"I knew the Stanley Center was a strong candidate for this grant because the need for SPEAK OUT! Therapy in East Texas is so significant," she said. "Sometimes referred to as the Parkinson's Belt, East Texas has a notably high prevalence of Parkinson's disease. Health professionals attribute this in part to increased exposure to environmental risk factors, including agricultural chemicals and other neurotoxins."

In an April 2025 KLTV interview, Dr. George Plotkin, a neurologist in Tyler, discussed the research behind the East Texas portion of the Parkinson's Belt, which also extends through the Rust Belt, or areas of the Midwest and Northeast where factories are old and closed. When listing what East Texans should know about Parkinson's, Plotkin said, "You're living in one of the hottest zones for Parkinson's in the world."

No matter where they live in Texas, patients at Parkinson Voice Project in Richardson never receive a bill for SPEAK OUT! Therapy, and the organization does not work with insurance. No patient has ever been denied services.

"Since 2008, we have been fully funded by grateful patients, their families and generous community donors," Scott said.

SPEAK OUT! Therapy helps patients transform speech from an automatic action into a voluntary, intentional act.

"Speaking is an automatic function — meaning, we don't have to put in conscious effort," Scott said. "Parkinson's makes automatic functions small and uncoordinated. So, when patients use their automatic voice it can be soft and gravelly. When they activate their intentional system by speaking with effort and deliberation, their voice becomes stronger and clearer, helping build the muscles back up."

In the 1950s, Boone first saw the benefits of speaking with INTENT while working with a neurologist at Highland View Hospital in Cleveland. When asked to count forward, people with Parkinson's mumbled. When asked to count backward from 10, these patients continued to mumble, but when asked to count backward from 20, they spoke louder and more clearly because they had to concentrate more.

Because of SFA's grant, Scott was able to take the SPEAK OUT! Therapy student course at no cost during her graduate studies in 2020 and work directly with patients who had Parkinson's disease.

"My career would not have been possible without the tenacity and ambition of Deena Petersen getting that grant for SFA," Scott said. "I had never worked with this population before, and I soon fell in love with how life-changing the treatment was for these patients."

Scott relies on her passion and empathy to successfully connect with her patients.

"It brings me joy to help patients achieve their goals," she said. "Making connections with my patients is very important to me. Relating to patients and earning their trust is powerful. If they trust that I have their best interests at heart, this journey through SPEAK OUT! Therapy becomes even more impactful."

Her memories of working with Fountain also continue to guide her work.

"The exposure to this program at SFA, combined with my former patient's encouragement, has helped me reach

Scott greets Parkinson Voice Project patients for their singing therapy session.



"I had never worked with this population before, and I soon fell in love with how life-changing the treatment was for these patients."

- Brittany Scott '17 & '22





On Wednesdays, Scott leads the warm up for the Intentional Singers, a group of around 50 patients who sing with INTENT at the clinic every week. During this session, the group practiced patriotic songs, including “America the Beautiful,” for their June concert.

where I am today,” Scott said. “Dr. Fountain has now passed, but our photo together is in my office, where it continues to encourage me daily.”

PLANNING FOR THE GROWING NEED

Parkinson’s is the second-most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer’s disease. The number of people living with Parkinson’s disease in the U.S. is expected to rise to approximately 1.2 million by 2030, according to the Parkinson’s Foundation. Prevalence rates of the disease increased substantially in Texas from 2012 to 2022, especially among those ages 65 and older and Hispanics, according to a journal article published in the 2025 issue of *Clinical Parkinsonism & Related Disorders*.

“The need for SFA’s communication sciences and disorders undergraduate program, speech-language pathology graduate program and Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders is only going to increase,” said Dr. Lydia Richardson ’02, ’04, ’21 and ’26 associate professor and coordinator of the SLP graduate program at the university.

The programs’ and clinic’s recent moves from the James I. Perkins College of Education to SFA’s new College of Health Professions will ultimately lead to more resources not only

for students in these programs but also for East Texans with Parkinson’s disease, Richardson said.

“The new college unites SFA’s essential mental, physical and rehabilitative health programs so we can collaborate more effectively and care for East Texans as whole individuals, which is critical in a rural area,” she said. “This alignment also helps our students by expanding their pathways into high-demand health professions.”

The Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders continues to offer SPEAK OUT! Therapy at no cost for people in Nacogdoches and surrounding communities who have Parkinson’s disease. And, in retirement, Petersen continues to advocate for the Nacogdoches Parkinson’s Support Group.

“Like Brittany, I am constantly inspired by these patients,” she said. “They work hard to maintain their voice, mobility and independence, and SFA’s programs help them do that while training future healthcare providers.”

For more information on SFA’s Stanley Center for Speech and Language Disorders, visit sfasu.edu/stanleycenter or email speechandhearing@sfasu.edu. For more information on the Parkinson Voice Project, visit parkinsonvoiceproject.org. ★



2012

2017

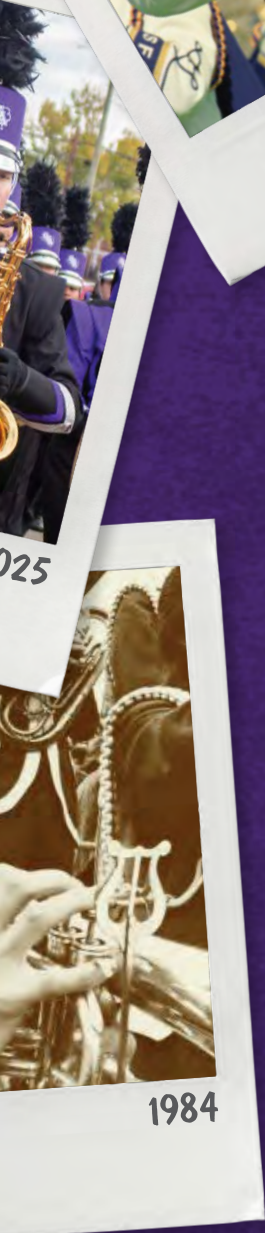
20

1928

1977

2022

MACY'S
THANKSGIVING DAY
PARADE



THE BOLDEST SOUND FROM THE OLDEST TOWN

A century of tradition inside SFA's most vibrant program

STORY BY NATHAN WICKER '19

To tell the story of Stephen F. Austin State University, one must also tell the story of the Lumberjack Marching Band.

For 100 years, the band has been woven into the fabric of the university's treasured tradition and spirit. Whether bringing a stadium to life with the timeless tune of "Wabash Cannonball" or representing the university on the grandest stages, LMB has served as the anthem and symbol of Lumberjack pride.

"I have seen the last 34 years of LMB, so I have long seen how they have upheld traditions and, in many cases, even initiated things that have become tradition," said Dr. Gary Wurtz, dean of the Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts. "Year in and year out, they have been the strongest voices in the stadium, and their presence and the quality of their music is undeniable. They have earned the respect and admiration of the fans. Everywhere I go, people comment on the quality and spirit of the band, and they express their appreciation for their commitment to the team and the institution."

Evolution of LMB

By its third year, Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College had grown far beyond its modest beginnings. Under the leadership of Dr. Alton W. Birdwell, SFA's first president, the Austin Building rose on campus, the

campus community chose the formidable Lumberjack as the university's mascot, Bob Shelton launched the football program, and new courses and electives expanded opportunities for students.

The university had its identity. What it lacked was a soundtrack.

SFA purchased its first brass and percussion instruments and hired John T. Cox as the university's first director of bands in 1925. Cox's inaugural band in fall 1926 was humble — 15 members, including Cox himself filling in on cornet — but the group performed anywhere it could, from athletic events and chapel services to watermelon feasts and other local events. By 1930, the growing ensemble staged its first halftime show, forming letters, presumably "SFA," on the football field.

Over the decades, the band evolved alongside the university, weathering the challenges of World War II and embracing new traditions under successive directors. From Jimmie Hudgins, who introduced the band's military-style marching identity and expanded student traditions, to Mel B. Montgomery, who adapted to corps-style drills while later adding the military-style pregame show. Today, SFA remains one of the few universities in the country to perform both styles during football games. This reflects the program's goal to balance innovation with tradition over the last century. ➔



Dr. Tamey Angley, current director of bands and LMB director, 2018-21, directs the band in front of Westminster Abbey during the 2013 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival.



Dr. David Campo, SFA director of bands, 2018-21, and LMB director, 2004-17, directs the band during the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

"One of the most unique things about LMB is that we honor our East Texas military roots by continuing to include military marching in our pregame show," said Dr. Dan Haddad, associate director of bands and LMB director. "Beyond that, the level of performance and quality of playing put LMB alongside some of the best college bands in the country."

Marching in the spotlight

Throughout the years, LMB established itself as one of the premier programs in Texas and gradually gained traction as one of the best in the country. What followed propelled the program into the international spotlight.

Under the direction of Dr. David Campo, SFA director of bands, 2018-21, and LMB director, 2004-17, and Dr. Tamey Angley, current director of bands and LMB director, 2018-21, LMB performed in the 2013 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival, watched by more than 600,000 spectators and televised to 280 million people worldwide.

Two years later, the band earned the sought-after invitation to perform in the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, bringing the spirit of SFA to one of the country's most iconic events and a televised audience of approximately 22.3 million viewers.

Fred J. Allen, SFA's director of bands, 1994-2018, marched alongside the band during the Thanksgiving tradition and still remembers the magnitude of the moment.

"It really hit me later when I saw some of the drone photos showing the

massive crowds lining the avenues and even hanging out of windows," Allen said. "Finally, the whole world was seeing what we already knew in the piney woods: SFA has a great marching band."

LMB returned abroad in 2017 to perform in the world-famous St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin, Ireland, joining performers from around the globe for Ireland's largest annual celebration.

Following its centennial year, LMB will once again perform on the streets of London for the 2027 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival.

"Our first international trip in 2013 really changed the trajectory of the Lumberjack Marching Band," Angley said on the effect of the performances. "It's really incredible to think about the impact this band has had on thousands of students, and the experiences we were able to give them that changed their lives."

The calm before the cadence

LMB mellophone player Keziah Knight's preshow routine has always been the same:

Find her first dot — check.

Map out the opening sets — check.

Whisper a prayer — check.

It's how she quiets the noise, if only for a moment. Once she steps onto the field, there's no quiet at all, only the rush of adrenaline and the excitement of performing a drill that has captivated an audience for a century.

"Stepping onto the field before a show is one of the most rewarding experiences because you get the opportunity to share something you love with so many people," Knight said.

In the program's centennial year, Knight will channel that energy into a new role as drum major, leading the band she loves from the home sideline to London's 2027 New Year's Day Parade and Festival. ➔

1925

J.T. Cox was hired as the first director of the Lumberjack Band. The Pine Log reported the college's purchase of new brass and percussion instruments.

1928

Women were allowed to join the group, and the members were no longer referred to as the "Band Boys."

1954

Jimmie Hudgins was hired as the third director of bands. He immediately changed the band to a military-style marching band. Hudgins began the first band camp.

1957

The Gamma Phi chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi and the Beta Zeta chapter of Tau Beta Sigma were installed to serve the band and all its needs.

1923

Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College opened its doors and the Lumberjack was chosen as the school's mascot.

1926

The band debuted and played at watermelon parties and chapel exercises. When the fall semester began, it grew to 19 members and played at football games and area public school events.

1952

Robert G. Smith became the second Lumberjack Band director.

1955

The first twirling camp was held.



S.F.A. Band, 1926-1927

FIRST ROW

1. Alvin Wiley
2. Thad Sittin
3. I. D. Powers
4. L.D. "Bill" Todd
5. Curtis Wallace
6. Melvin Burrows
7. R.L. Turner
8. O.C. Netherly
9. Jacob Long

SECOND ROW

1. Ovid Heaton
2. Cecil White
3. Arthur Brazil
4. John B. Richards
5. Hubbard McCarter
6. Paul Koonce
7. Charles Lee Hill
8. Norris Langford

THIRD ROW

1. Milledge Jackson
2. E.W. Wedgeworth
3. H.L. Heaton
4. Claude Lakey
5. John Robert Stewart

FOURTH ROW

1. Earl Lowery
2. L.H. Buckner
3. Oma Campbell
4. Curtis Smith

J.T. Cox, Director

SFA's first band, directed by J.T. Cox. Beginning with 15 members, including Cox filling in on cornet, the ensemble grew steadily to more than 20 musicians during its first year.

Rehearsals were often held beneath the pine trees before the band eventually found a home in the Austin Building's third-floor auditorium.

1968

Mel Montgomery was named fifth director of bands.

1973

The Lumberjack Marching Band added the all-female flag line, known as the "Flagettes."

1983

The position of associate director was created to manage LMB in the fall and the second concert band in the spring. Dan Spalding was the first person hired for this position followed by Dr. Stephen Peterson.

1988

Barry Bernhardt was hired as associate director and LMB director.

1963

Kenneth Green was named fourth director of bands.

1971

J.T. Cox formed the first alumni band, which marched in the Homecoming Parade and performed during the game.

1977

LMB adapted to corps-style marching, replacing the more precise military-style marching.

1987

John L. Whitwell was hired as the sixth director of bands. When he arrived, LMB had about 150 members. After serving as interim director of bands, Peterson resumed his role as associate director and LMB director.



2023



1977

In the days leading up to the 2025 FCS game against Montana State, members of the LMB joined the football team's morning practices and played as loud as they could to get the football players accustomed to the deafening atmosphere they would find at Bobcat Stadium. SFA didn't have a single false start penalty in the game.

"I am incredibly grateful to be able to be a part of this monumental season — not only to represent our program as it is right now but to honor the Lumberjack Marching Band through its 100-year past and leave a legacy for what is to come," Knight said.

The sound of Saturdays

SFA Football Head Coach Colby Carthel had never been so emotional before a game.

It wasn't just the momentum of an 11-win 2025 season or the weight of facing Montana State University — the pinnacle of the Football Championship Subdivision and eventual national champion. It was what waited for him when the hotel doors opened.

Nearly 1,600 miles from Nacogdoches, 120 LMB members stood in formation. Then the fight song cut through the frigid air, declaring the Lumberjacks' arrival.

"We're walking out of our hotel in Bozeman, Montana, in the middle of December, and there LMB is," Carthel said. "That doesn't happen many places at all in college football. It was incredible."

Moments like that aren't the exception but the reflection.

For decades, whether on the field at halftime or in the stands, LMB has shaped the game day experience in ways that go beyond music by serving, as Campo aptly puts it, a rallying point for school spirit.

They are a constant presence, steps from the Purple Haze student section, where axe handles slam in rhythm and the noise builds with every snap. The band knows when to swell and when to hold back, when to spark the crowd and when to let the moment breathe.

For the Jacks, it's energy. For the fans, it's tradition. For the opponent, it's a relentless noise that never disappears.

For Carthel, LMB is a "football coach's dream."

"I'm very fortunate to lead a football program that is supported by such an outstanding band," Carthel said. "LMB is top of their class and big in numbers, and big in what they tackle and take on as a unit and as a program."

A family in formation

Overlooking the blistering, sunbaked commuter parking lot where LMB and the Twirl-O-Jacks pour countless hours into perfecting their performance hangs a sign that says it all: "LMB — Not just a band, a family."

While audiences see polished drills and hear pristine sound on the field, band members know a different reality

1990

Dr. Stephen Grugin was hired as associate director and LMB director.

1994

Fred J. Allen was hired as seventh director of bands.

2000

Dr. Christopher Anderson was hired as associate director and LMB director.

2013

LMB performed in the 2013 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival, watched by more than 600,000 spectators and televised to 280 million people worldwide.

1991

Dr. Kevin Sedatole was hired as associate director and LMB director, and later served as interim director of bands during the 1993-94 school year. Dr. Robert Carnochan was interim associate director during the same period.

1996

Brian Britt was hired as associate director and LMB director.

2004

Dr. David Campo was hired as associate director and LMB director.

2015

LMB performed in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, bringing the spirit of SFA to one of the country's most iconic events and a televised audience of approximately 22.3 million viewers.

built in the early mornings, long rehearsals and shared moments that slowly turn strangers into family. For many students — music majors or not — it becomes a deep sense of belonging that endures long after their time at SFA.

“There are so many students who met their future spouses in the band, so many music education students who have graduated and gone on to illustrious careers as band directors. And, most telling to me, a great number of students who still stay in touch with us and each other,” Campo said. “My hope is that as we evolve, we don’t lose sight of the importance of human connection, and that’s what LMB has always been about.”

For Doice Grant ’82, LMB represents a shared legacy that spans generations and connects parents and children through the same traditions and values.

“I am very proud that both my parents and my children were in LMB and very proud of the standard the early bands set for musical quality and social comradery,” Grant said.

Regardless of when they graduated or what halftime show they performed, LMB members share the same constant.

They all bleed purple.

“What stands out to me are the thousands and thousands of people who have been impacted by this program and have this amazing ensemble in common,” Angley said. “It doesn’t matter what year you graduated or which director you were under, we all bleed purple and still have the SFA alma mater memorized.”

For 100 years more

They aren’t hard to find. Follow the sound and you will find LMB, and, in turn, you will find SFA.

J.T. Cox didn’t just create a band; he established a lasting beacon of tradition, pride and spirit, one that summons generations of Lumberjacks home and has been sustained by the stewardship of the devoted directors who followed.

For this century and the next, LMB will remain the soundtrack of SFA’s enduring tradition and spirit.

“Know your job. Do your job.” ★

70 years of twirling

The story of the Lumberjack Marching Band isn’t complete without the Twirl-O-Jacks.

The precise and mesmerizing twirling line has been a staple of LMB and SFA tradition for decades, adding grace, poise and style to football games, parades and performances.

Originally dubbed the “Jack-ettes” before then-director of bands Jimmie Hudgins renamed them the “Twirl-O-Jacks” in 1956, the group’s signature style — shaped by former head twirler Pat (Griffin) Bridges — helped define LMB’s visual identity for generations of fans.

Among the many standout performers to don the purple and white, Paige Pattillo-Brown ’00 said being a feature twirler at SFA was a dream come true. A seven-time national champion during her time twirling at the university, she also placed second at the 1999 International World Trials for a three-baton performance.

“It was a dream come true every time I performed,” said Pattillo-Brown, daughter of the late Dr. Baker Pattillo, who

served as university president from 2006 through 2018. “Looking at the audience dressed all in purple clapping to ‘Wabash Cannonball’ or the ‘SFA Fight Song’ will take your breath away. There were so many times during performances I would think, ‘I wish everyone could have this feeling.’ Now that I am a mother, I can say the feeling is pretty close to having a child. The endorphin rush is phenomenal, the power of the moment is so intense and, in those moments, you know there is a God.”

Candice (Pelzl) Curbow ’04, former head twirler and current TOJ coordinator, hopes the twirling line will continue to embody the elegance, discipline and spirit that became synonymous with the LMB experience.

“I hope people remember the twirlers as classy and talented entertainers and appreciate the skill it takes to be a baton twirler,” Curbow said. “I also hope they remember the twirlers as adding a little extra sparkle to the halftime show.” ★



Feature twirler Shelby Elder '16 performs during the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Photo by Hardy Meredith



1960s



Paige Pattillo-Brown '00 performs as SFA's feature twirler. Stone Fort yearbook, 1998

2017

LMB performed in the world-famous St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin, Ireland, joining performers from around the globe for Ireland's largest annual celebration.

2021

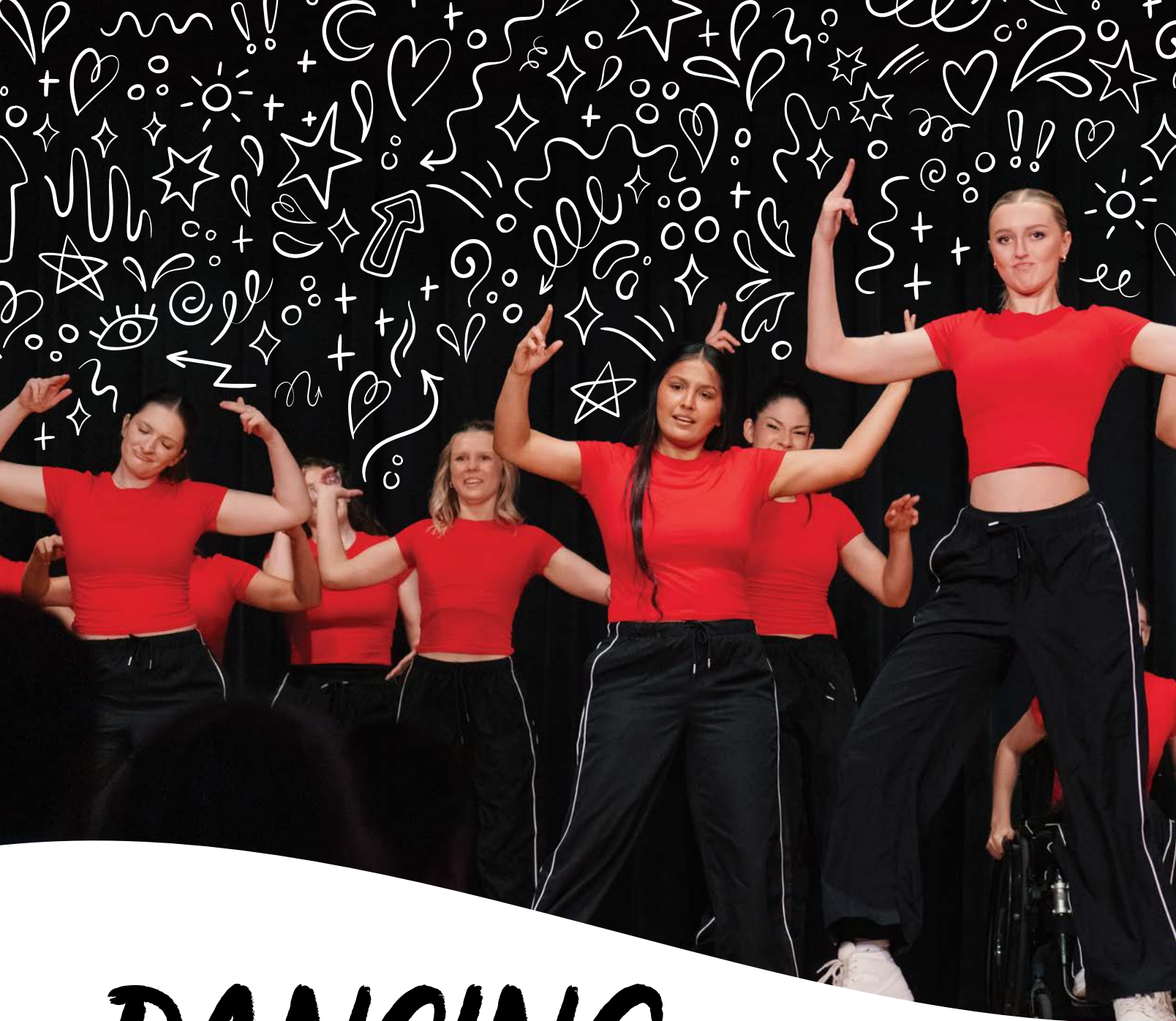
Angley was promoted to director of bands. Dr. Dan Haddad was hired as associate director and LMB director.

2018

Campo was promoted to director of bands. Dr. Tamey Angley, who served as associate director from 2011 to 2018, was promoted to LMB director.

2027

LMB will once again perform on the streets of London for the 2027 London New Year's Day Parade and Festival.



DANCING FOR A CURE

Student
group raises
money
for cancer
patients and
research



STORY BY ROBIN JOHNSON '99 & '19
PHOTOS BY LIZETH GARCIA

A student-led charity organization at Stephen F. Austin State University has raised more than \$334,000 since 2011 for the fight against cancer.

Dancers Against Cancer provides monetary assistance to cancer patients and contributes funds toward cancer research by collecting donations at dance recitals and weekly fundraisers all while raising cancer awareness.

"Being part of DAC has been such a meaningful experience to me," DAC member Emily Sims said. "It's given me a chance to express my love for dance while supporting a cause that truly matters. The friendships I've made within DAC feel like a second family, and hearing the stories of our recipients has changed the way I see the world."

Each fall and spring semester, DAC holds two benefit dance recitals. Using their passion for dance, the nearly 100 members raise money to further cancer research in hopes of finding a cure. As a nonprofit organization, the group donates all its proceeds to cancer-related organizations and to recipients currently battling cancer, who are voted on by the DAC team members.

Members usually nominate family members or someone they know, and the money raised throughout the semester is split between the individual with cancer and the East Texas Alliance of Hope, a group in Lufkin dedicated to assisting families who are going through a cancer diagnosis. ➔



"DAC means so much to me because I've personally seen the impact it has on people's lives," said Sydney Truman '26, former president and four-year member of DAC. She also was crowned SFA's 2025 Homecoming queen. "My grandma was a recipient, and witnessing the financial support and relief it provided our family opened my eyes to what many families go through during times like that."

Last fall semester, the organization's cancer patient recipient was Kai Marley De Leon, a 5-year-old boy battling a rare and aggressive tumor of the central nervous system. And this past spring semester, Danny Knowles, husband and father of three from Fort Worth, received monetary support to continue his fight with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

"I have had many family members who have battled cancer, and I love that we get to create an amazing dance show to benefit the people who mean the most to us but are going through hard times as well," DAC member Avery Whitaker said.

When they are not practicing, members typically hold weekly profit-share fundraisers with local businesses like Raising Cane's or Dillas Quesadillas and sell shirts at SFA's Baker Pattillo Student Center each weekday. But most of the money raised comes from the two semester-ending performances each fall and spring.

"A dance recital or dance spring show is kind of the best way to describe it,"

said Ellee Marsh, the organization's fundraising coordinator. "We have one in the morning and one in the afternoon."

Some dances are performed solo or with a group, with the shows featuring numbers by senior members and the organization's leaders. "And then, about halfway through, we do an auction, and that's how we raise a good chunk of our money," Marsh said.

RIGHT: Dancers Against Cancer members use a hand sign that represents the two ends of an awareness ribbon. The ribbon symbolizes all forms of cancer and honors those whose lives have been touched by the disease.





RIGHT: Dancers Against Cancer members celebrate after their organization was honored as Outstanding Organization of the Year at the 2026 Lumberjack Achievement Awards, recognizing their commitment to serving others through fundraising and campus involvement.



Items donated from the community are combined in baskets by DAC members to be auctioned off to the audience.

DAC's fundraising efforts have not gone unnoticed. At the end of the spring semester, the organization was awarded the Outstanding Organization of the Year at the 2026 Lumberjack Achievement Awards, an annual SFA awards ceremony recognizing organizations and individuals in both student engagement and academics. The organization also won the same award in 2023 and 2024.

"It was such a surreal and rewarding feeling," Truman said remembering hearing DAC's

name called. "Seeing DAC become a home away from home for so many students has been incredibly rewarding. As a completely student-led organization with a 10-member leadership team, there is so much work that goes into every semester. Being able to give back to our community and support individuals actively fighting against cancer makes all the hard work worth it."

To learn more and find out how to donate to DAC, visit gosfa.com/dac. ★

Nate Jackson, former staff writer for The Daily Sentinel, contributed to this story.

"BEING ABLE TO GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS ACTIVELY FIGHTING AGAINST CANCER MAKES ALL THE HARD WORK WORTH IT."

Sydney Truman '26



Q

&

A

with

JULIA
WHITEHEADALSO KNOWN AS
'MS. PENCILS AWAY'
ON SOCIAL MEDIA
PLATFORMS SINCE 2024

PHOTOS BY ROBIN JOHNSON '99 & '19



WHILE AT SFA

Bachelor of Science in
Interdisciplinary
Studies EC-6, 2020

*

Master of Science
in Education, 2022

*

Volleyball
Student-Athlete
2016-18Volleyball
Student Assistant
2019-20Volleyball
Graduate Assistant
2020-22

*

Teaching at the same elementary school she attended as a child, fifth grade teacher Julia Whitehead ends her morning and afternoon classes with jokes for the day and posts the videos on social platforms for others' enjoyment.

Q: *You're a two-time SFA graduate and former student-athlete — how did your time at SFA shape the teacher you are today?*

A: My time at SFA was such a special time. Whether I was learning on the court, the classroom or through friends I met along the way, it was an incredibly meaningful time. I felt like my professors genuinely wanted what was best for me. Each class I took I made friends who shared the same passion as me and I still carry those friendships with me to this day.

Q: *Was teaching always the plan, or did that passion develop over time?*

A: My first semester I was a kinesiology major mostly because I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do. After volunteering and then getting a summer job at the Boys & Girls Club, I was sold. I changed my major to elementary education and never looked back. The impact you have on being a part in someone's childhood was something I couldn't pass up.

Q: *What lessons from volleyball show up in your classroom?*

A: Although I had a lot of playing time in high school, I actually sat the bench most of my college career. At first I had a very

selfish approach to not getting playing time (like any college freshman), but then I learned my role on the team. I realized how important my position was whether I was playing or not. I learned more lessons about myself being a bench warmer than I would have if I was out on the court.

I can translate that over to the classroom all the time when talking about overcoming adversity. Finding the beauty in things not originally going as planned has been a common theme we talk about in my classroom. My students are 10 turning 11, and this seems to be a year where they are learning a lot about their friendships and how important it is to surround yourself with people who build you up.

Q: *What's your philosophy on connecting with elementary students in today's world?*

A: We live in a world that struggles to communicate. As we have leaned on technology more and more, I feel like we are slowly losing that passion for real conversations. I love sharing and having meaningful conversations with my students. More times than not, my students truly share with one another. Whether it's about school, friends or home life.



Julia Whitehead '20 & '22 reviews her fifth grade students' research projects on U.S. states at the same elementary school she once attended as a student.

Q: *You've built a platform around humor in the classroom. Why is laughter so important in learning?*

A: I have always had so much joy in making others laugh. I am not someone who takes life super seriously, and I love to bring a smile to those around me. During my first year teaching, I realized how important that mantra was to my students. I noticed the more I made them laugh and enjoy being with me, the more I earned their respect.

I truly believe teaching with humor and joy creates a classroom culture that is positive and effective. I always thought to myself, "If my boss was mean to me and yelling at me all day, would I want to work hard for them?" No, of course not. I want my students to feel loved, and bringing laughter into the classroom provides that safe space.

Q: *Your content has resonated with thousands. What made you start sharing your classroom moments online?*

A: I never would have thought my social media would have taken off the way it has. I remember when I reached 1 million views for the first time. I was in pure shock at the positive feedback I received from something I thought was such a simple video. Originally, I was just posting on

my personal Instagram story for my first two years of teaching. TikTok began to be a very popular platform, and I remember someone just randomly told me I should give it a go. I posted a "Joke of the Day" video and the third one immediately took off. I continued to post each day, and it seemed as if people were waiting for the next one.

Q: *Did you expect your "goofy fifth grade teacher" persona to take off the way it has?*

A: Not at all. This was just a part of our daily dismissal routine I had captured and decided to share. I never thought it would turn into a separate little career.

Q: *How do you decide what moments are worth sharing and what stays just for your students?*

A: I only share our interactions during the Joke of the Day. If I post other things in the classroom, it's just me sharing teacher tools, outfits of the day or sharing funny moments of teaching.

My jokes have gotten the best feedback, so that is the only moment of our day I will share with the internet that includes them. →

"I truly believe teaching with humor and joy creates a classroom culture that is positive and effective."

JULIA WHITEHEAD '20 & '22

Q: *What's been the most surprising response you've received from your students and also your social media audience?*

A: I love when my students share that they go home and watch the jokes on the TV at home. I have had parents tell me that they will tell jokes at the table or before bed, and it warms my heart that the joy and laughter doesn't end in my classroom. Another surprising response I have received are people who have run into me in public. I have had a few encounters of, "Wait, are you the Joke of the Day lady?" That always makes me laugh because I don't realize how many people my videos reach.

Q: *Where do you find the jokes?*

A: At the beginning of the year, I would just Google "Jokes for Kids" and use whatever popped up. For a little while, I used a couple different joke books. The second half of the school year's jokes were supplied by my students. They will submit jokes to my "mailbox" and earn rewards for doing so. Some students will make up their own, or they will go home and find some off the internet. I love doing it this way because they truly look forward to it.

Q: *What do you hope your students remember most about being in your classroom years from now?*

A: I hope they remember how I made them feel. My oldest students right now are only in seventh grade, so I haven't had that moment where it's been years and they come back to visit me. When they do, I hope they've felt heard, seen and loved. I am blessed to have a job that is incredibly impactful, and I pray I see that impact in my students' successes later in life.

Q: *How has your platform impacted you personally or professionally?*

A: My platform has truly made me fall in love with teaching more than I ever thought I could. Being able to share my joy in the classroom to millions of people is something that is an unreal feeling.

Q: *What message do you hope other educators take from your approach?*

A: I hope other educators take a step back and realize how important building positive relationships in the classroom is. That is more important than any test score. Our words and actions are impactful on these students, so it is important to choose kindness.

Q: *Anything else you'd like to add?*

A: My partner teacher, Mrs. Melissa Hambleton, was my fifth grade teacher when I went to elementary school. I have the privilege now of teaching alongside her in the very classroom I was taught in. Not many people get to say they are teaching with someone who once taught them. I am so grateful for her guidance and care — not only when I was 10 but especially now. She is the perfect example of what an impactful teacher looks like. I am blessed to call her a former teacher but also a lifelong friend. ★



Follow her on these platforms: @ms_pencilsaway

LEFT: Whitehead addresses graduates during the James I. Perkins College of Education commencement ceremony in May.

Photo by Lizeth Garcia

RIGHT: Whitehead and her teaching partner, Melissa Hambleton, who was her fifth grade teacher when she attended elementary school. Today, Whitehead has the unique privilege of teaching alongside her former teacher in the very classroom where she once sat as a student.



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STATE UNIVERSITY
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From the Association



Fellow Lumberjacks,

This is the last letter I'll write to you as your alumni board president, and I've started it half a dozen times. There's no good way to sum up

over a decade on this board or to say goodbye to a group that has shaped so much of who I am.

But I'll try.

I joined the alumni board because I wanted to stay close to a school that gave me more than a degree — it gave me lifelong friends, mentors I still call today and a purple pride I've never been able to shake. I had no idea, walking in, how much that small commitment would come to mean. Ten years, two of them as your board president, and I can honestly say SFA has given me far more than I've ever given back.

I've had the privilege of watching this university grow in ways that still take my breath away. I stood on campus this past year as students walked into our new dining hall — the first one built at SFA since the 1960s — and felt something close to awe. That building is more than brick and steel; it's proof of what's possible when a university believes in its future. Since SFA's affiliation with the UT System, we've seen tens of millions of dollars flow back into this campus — new facilities, expanded scholarships through the Purple Promise program and a level of investment that previous generations of Lumberjacks could only have dreamed of. Enrollment is climbing. Cranes are high in the air above construction sites. SFA is not just surviving — she is becoming even more extraordinary, and I have had a front-row seat.

None of that happened by accident, and none of it happened because of me. It happened because of you — the alumni who never stopped giving, never stopped showing up, never stopped believing this place was worth fighting for. It happened because of the board members I've had the honor to serve alongside, who gave their time and their hearts to this university long after they ever had to. It happened because of the administration, faculty and staff who do the quiet, yeoman's work every single day to make SFA better. And it happened because Stephen F. Austin State University has always attracted people who love fiercely and serve quietly. I have been lucky enough to call many of you friends.

So as I step down, I don't feel a sense of ending. I feel gratitude — for the work we did together, for the friendships I'll carry for the rest of my life and for the chance to watch this university step into a future brighter than any of us could have built alone. SFA gave me purpose for 10 years. I hope, in some small way, I helped give a little of that back.

To those who pick up this work next: It is a gift, even on the hard days. Take care of it.

To every Lumberjack reading this: Thank you for your loyalty, your generosity and your love for this place. Axe 'em always.

With deep gratitude and purple pride,

Brian Dawson '03
Conroe

President, SFA Alumni Association

SFA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Brian Dawson '03, Conroe
president

Larissa Philpot-Brown '03 & '06
Nacogdoches
president-elect

Erika Tolar '02, Nacogdoches
past president

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD

Matt Adkins '06, McKinney

Charlotte Ashcraft '80, Nacogdoches

Wendy Buchanan '85, Nacogdoches

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Bob Francis '78, Bullard

Devin Greer '07, Spring

Patrick Jackson '94, Mesquite

Jim W. Morgan '98, Georgetown

Ted Smith '07, Nacogdoches

Mike Harbordt '63, Nacogdoches
director emeritus

Steve McCarty '65 & '70, Alto
director emeritus

Ex-Officio Members
Craig Turnage '00 & '05
executive director of alumni relations

Alicia Roland Chatman '16
recording secretary

ALUMNI RELATIONS STAFF

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

Alicia Roland Chatman '16
assistant to the executive director

Derek Snyder '01
director of alumni relations

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.

Lumberjack

20
25



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Gerald W. "Jerry" Schlieff '70

*President, CEO and Founder
Auterra Energy
Chair, SFASU Foundation*



OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Major Laterrious "Tony" Starks, EdD '10

*White House Social Aide Program Manager
United States Army*



LUMBERJACK PRIDE AWARD

Ashley Morgan '98

*Attorney and Lobbyist
Owner of McKinney Morgan House, Nacogdoches*



LUMBERJACK PRIDE AWARD

Jim Morgan '98

*Director of Sales
Owner of McKinney Morgan House, Nacogdoches*



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Robert Hill '87

*Director of SFA Intercollegiate Athletics
Retired*



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Frednisha "Freddie" Marshall Jackson '10

*Former Indoor and Outdoor
Track and Field Student-Athlete
Lifetime Educator*

Legacies

ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS &
ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Emily A. Parker '70

*Consulting Counsel to the Law Firm of
Holland & Knight LLP
Retired Senior Partner in the Law Firm of
Thompson & Knight LLP, now Holland & Knight LLP*



OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Zachary Taylor '11

Principal and Senior Vice President, Colliers

20
26



LUMBERJACK PRIDE AWARD

Tish Wright '98

Physical Therapist



LUMBERJACK PRIDE AWARD

Blake Westmoreland '94

*General Manager
Hajoca Corp., DBA Moore Supply Co.*



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Sandy Miller

*Head Athletic Trainer
Retired*



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Ashley Monteau '08

*Former Cross-Country and Indoor and
Outdoor Track and Field Student-Athlete*





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2026 HOME FOOTBALL TAILGATING SCHEDULE

CHECK SFAALUMNI.COM/EVENTS FOR UP-TO-DATE GAME TIMES.



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VS. EAST TEXAS A&M



SEPT. 26
VS. NORTHEASTERN STATE



OCT. 3
VS. INCARNATE WORD



OCT. 24 (HOMECOMING)
VS. SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA



OCT. 31
VS. HOUSTON CHRISTIAN



NOV. 19
VS. NORTHWESTERN STATE

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NEYWOODS DINING HALL

Alumni Corner starts 3 hours
prior to game time.



SFAALUMNI.COM/EVENTS



Class Notes

1960s

Bobby Jo (Shepherd) Clawson '65 and her husband, John Clawson, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary Aug. 13, 2025. Bobby Jo earned a Bachelor of Science in elementary education.

1970s



Doris (Felderhoff) Dennard '77 & '78 and **Denise (Smith) Yankie '77 & '78** won the basketball national championship age 70-74 division at the National Senior Games National Championships in Des Moines, Iowa. Dennard earned a Bachelor of Science and Master of Education in health and physical education and Yankie earned a Bachelor of Science and Master of Education in physical education.

1980s



Dr. Richard "Craig" Bullis '82 was named professor emeritus upon his retirement after 23 years as professor of management at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Bullis earned a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice.



Ted Thompson '84 & '88 was awarded the 2025 Forestry Outreach and Education Award from the Texas Forestry Association. Thompson earned a Bachelor of Science in agriculture education and a Master of Education in secondary education.

Mike Karns '86 and his company, Local Favorite Restaurants, acquired Cotton Patch Cafe, a Texas-born brand. Founded in Nacogdoches in 1989, Cotton Patch has grown from its East Texas beginnings into a beloved comfort food brand with 46 locations across

A meaningful gift supporting a mission that matters



Members of the Delta Pi chapter of **Delta Sigma Phi fraternity**, formerly the Sawyers, recently presented a donation to Driving Jacks, helping continue the organization's work to promote safe and sober driving across campus and the community.

The \$10,000 donation carries special meaning for alumnus Jimmy Shields and his wife, Mary, whose daughter, Amy Shields, inspired the creation of Driving Jacks after she was tragically killed by a drunk driver in 2004. Through education, awareness and advocacy, Driving Jacks continues to honor Amy's memory while encouraging students to make safe choices behind the wheel.

Texas and New Mexico. Now, its next chapter brings the company back to local Texas ownership under a restaurant group founded by a Lumberjack. Karns earned a Bachelor of Business Administration.



Terry Waldrep '86 & '89 retired as superintendent of Pittsburg Independent School District. Waldrep earned a Bachelor of Science in physical education and a Master of Education in secondary education.



Kristie Patton Foster '88 was named executive director of the Dallas Black Dance Theatre, the largest and oldest professional dance company in Dallas and one of the nation's 10 largest contemporary modern dance companies. Foster earned a Bachelor of Arts in radio/television.

Tom Spedale's '88 business, Spedale's Florist and Wholesale, was selected to represent Louisiana in the 2025 Google Economic Impact Report. Spedale earned a Master of Business Administration in general business.

1990s

Kent Hutchison '92 was promoted to senior specialist, leadership and professional development, at Cameron LNG. Hutchison earned a Bachelor of Arts in journalism.



Diane (Wismann) Wilson '94 & '95 was named principal of Vista Ridge Middle School in Keller Independent School District. Wilson earned a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology and a Master of Education in physical education.

Lisa Longacre '96 retired as a special education teacher after 29 years from Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District in 2025. Longacre earned a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology.



John Landis '98 was promoted to captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve Dental Corps. Landis earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing.

2000s



Matthew Derek Diaz '04 received The University of Texas 2026 President's Outstanding Supervisor Award. Diaz earned a Bachelor of Arts in English. →

Class Notes



Justin Crawford '04 led Lakeside High School to its second Georgia High School Association Golf State title in three years. Crawford earned a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology.

Carissa (Camarillo) Imrecke '07 was named vice president of quality at Wells Pharma. Imrecke earned a Bachelor of Science in biology.



Nathan Hague '09 authored and published a fiction book titled, "Fourth Down and 20 Years," "a story about choices, second chances, and the tension between the life we want and the one we're meant to live." Hague earned a Bachelor of Arts in journalism.



Christine (Richardson) Riley '09 was promoted and named partner of Melton & Melton LLP. Riley earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in professional accountancy and a Master of Professional Accountancy.



Estrella (Munoz) Tovar '09 was named Cooperative Teacher of the Year for Lake Dallas Independent School District by the University of North Texas. Tovar earned a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies.

2010s



Dr. Tony Holmes '12 & '15 graduated from the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education with a doctorate in organizational change and leadership. Holmes earned a Bachelor of Arts in communication and sociology and a Master of Public Administration.



Mallory Kingham '12 and husband, Ellis, announced the birth of their daughter, Hazel Monroe Kingham, Dec. 4. Kingham earned a Bachelor of Science in fashion merchandising.



Tim Largent '14 was hired as vice president, people and culture, at Rinnai America Corporation, a leading manufacturer of innovative, energy-efficient water heating and home comfort solutions. Largent earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in general business.

Ana (Villarreal) Rodriquez '14 was named "CPD 40 Under 40" at the 50th annual Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions conference. Rodriquez earned a Bachelor of Science in multidisciplinary studies.



Kubs Sabrsula-Mendoza '17 began working at Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law in its marketing department. Sabrsula-Mendoza earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in art.

Holly '18 and Nicholas Shorter '19 announced the birth of their daughter, Spencer Shorter, July 10, 2025. Holly earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in marketing, and Nicholas earned a Bachelor of Arts in information technology.

Sarah (Robinson) Songco '18 & '24 and her husband, Kevin, announced the birth of their daughter, Norah Jo Songco, Dec. 9, 2025. Songco earned a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and a Master of Education in educational leadership.



Chase '18 and Harlee James '20 & '23 announced the birth of their daughters, Genevieve and Josephine James, May 13. Chase earned a Bachelor of Arts in information technology,

and Harlee earned a Bachelor of Science in human sciences and a Master of Arts in professional counseling.

Olivia (Buford) '19 and Braden Foster '17 announced the birth of their daughter, Presaley Yvonne Foster, July 2, 2025. Olivia earned a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies, and Braden earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance.

2020s



Christie Coltharp '20 married JB Potts June 27. Coltharp earned a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies.

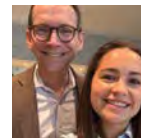


Monica Loa '20 has been named director of global exports and strategic initiatives for Animal Science Products. Loa earned a Bachelor of Science in sociology.



Annemarie Price '20 worked with a marketing company that helped run AeroSummit 2026, an annual national flight training summit. Speaking at the event was

Jack Gainer, chief pilot instructor in SFA's aviation sciences program. Price earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in marketing.



Reagan (Fitch) Hollomon '22 received the Texas Education Agency's Teacher Leadership Fellowship. Hollomon earned a Master of Arts in teaching.



Kaitlin Jowers '22 graduated with a Master of Science in professional counseling from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Jowers earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology.

Kathryn "Katie" Willsey '23 was named super technician at a Texas Physical Therapy Specialists location in Austin. Willsey earned a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology.



Jackson '24 and Mackenzi (Williams) Hiltbold '24 married Aug. 9, 2025. Jackson earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Mackenzi earned a Bachelor of Science in chemistry.

Nick Orlowski '24 earned the Certified Financial Planner designation. Orlowski earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance.

Nicholas Knirk '25 released a digital recording of his work, "Gypsy Spirit Suite." The recording is a direct result of his SFA graduate research work. Knirk earned a Master of Music in music composition. ★

Alumni Association Life Members

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| 8759. Crystal J. Patterson '25, Nacogdoches | 8788. Tavier T. Parks '92, Spring |
| 8761. Callie D. Collins '13, Nacogdoches | 8789. Stephanie M. Williams '92, Nacogdoches |
| 8762. Christopher P. Collins '20, Nacogdoches | 8790. Gregory T. Williams, friend, Nacogdoches |
| 8763. Kara A. Predmore '18, Nacogdoches | 8791. Daniel C. Kruger '76, Richardson |
| 8764. Dr. Laura L. Rectenwald '01, Longview | 8792. Elizabeth Crownover '94, Cypress |
| 8765. Dr. Misty B. Wilburn '25, Center | 8793. Joseph C. Crownover '95, Cypress |
| 8766. Tyler W. Goad '13, Nacogdoches | 8794. Jeffrey M. Thompson, friend, Glen Allen, Virginia |
| 8767. Brittney M. Goad '13, Nacogdoches | 8795. Pamela E. Thompson '78, Glen Allen, Virginia |
| 8768. Karen A. McWilliams '99, Allen | 8796. Jason W. Stewart '09, League City |
| 8769. Reagan Fitch Hollomon '22, Nacogdoches | 8797. Bastian K. York '17, Austin |
| 8770. Bryce Hollomon, friend, Nacogdoches | 8798. Andrew Mason Smith Johnson '26, Nacogdoches |
| 8771. David L. Cook '92, Mansfield | 8799. Leanne J. Burck '07, Baltimore, Maryland |
| 8772. Tonya Cook, friend, Mansfield | 8800. Clayce R. Dow '26, Shawnee, Kansas |
| 8774. George S. Barham IV, friend, Nacogdoches | 8801. Morgan Blackstock, friend, Katy |
| 8775. Amanda Barham, friend, Nacogdoches | 8802. Stuart A. Rowland '99, Boerne |
| 8776. Tina M. Packard '24, Nacogdoches | 8803. Jason D. Madden '26, Kilgore |
| 8777. Jason L. Padgett '00, Gunter | 8804. Dennis R. Burrell '75, Nacogdoches |
| 8778. Samuel M. Vidlak, student, Nacogdoches | 8805. Edith Burrell '78, Nacogdoches |
| 8780. Robert G. Gilliland '95, Spring | 8806. Jon M. McDonald '65, Spring |
| 8781. Allison R. Gilliland '92, Spring | 8807. Rose M. McDonald, friend, Spring |
| 8782. Sandra F. Riley '76, Austin | 8808. Monica M. Pina '01, Houston |
| 8783. Christine R. Turner '02, Nacogdoches | 8809. Armando E. Cruz '00, Houston |
| 8784. Erick W. Russell '09, Nacogdoches | 8810. Leo Grey Smith '26, McKinney |
| 8785. Justin Sumrall '25, Nacogdoches | 8811. Dr. Christina Willis Frasier '99, San Antonio |
| 8786. Dr. Keilea Sumrall '12, Nacogdoches | 8812. Otis LaMont Bennett '00, Killeen |
| 8787. Trent G. Cook '13 & '13, Lufkin | 8813. Jessica Joseph-Bennett '02, Killeen |

CLASS NOTE SUBMISSIONS

We want to celebrate the successes and major life events of our alumni!

Tell us about significant events in your life, including births, marriages, job changes, promotions, book publications, honors, awards and other accomplishments.



Scan the code to submit a class note today or visit gosfa.com/classnotes.

SAWDUST SURVEY

As part of our continuous effort to improve Sawdust, we are always seeking feedback to understand reader preferences.



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In Memoriam

DR. JOHN W. ANDERSON, former assistant professor, passed away Feb. 12. In addition to teaching in SFA's Department of Computer Science, he launched his own business as an IT and systems consultant. Anderson graduated from Harmony High School in Upshur County before earning his bachelor's degree and two master's degrees from East Texas State University, now East Texas A&M University, and a doctorate from North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas.



FARRAR BENTLEY, friend of SFA, passed away Nov. 21, 2025, three days after he marked his 64th wedding anniversary with wife, MaryAnn, a former SFA faculty member. A graduate of The University of Texas at Austin, he moved to Nacogdoches in 1974 to run the Social Security Administration office.



Bentley was a longtime member and past president of the Rotary Club of Nacogdoches. He also was a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America for 75 years and served on the Eagle Scout Board of Review. Bentley was active in the Nacogdoches County Republican Party and served on the county hospital district board. He also was a longtime pastor at Redland United Methodist Church and Chireno United Methodist Church.

EDWARD HUTCHINSON BURR '94, former staff member, passed away Nov. 18, 2025. After earning degrees in education and marketing from SFA, he taught in public schools. Burr then returned to his alma mater to work as an IT specialist for the DeWitt School of Nursing until his retirement in July 2025. He also served in the church media ministry, taught Bible studies and led the Lifeline New Discipleship Class at his local church.



MAX HERMAN CAMMACK, friend of SFA, passed away March 1. After serving in the U.S. Army, rising to the rank of corporal, he attended both SFA and Lamar University. At SFA, he met his wife, Bobbie, before moving to Houston to begin his career in accounting. Cammack also opened several rental equipment business in Texas, Louisiana and Florida. A longtime member of Golden Acres Baptist Church, now New Day Church, in Pasadena, he served in the children's ministries and as a deacon.



DR. RONALD G. CLAUNCH, former political science department chair and professor, passed away May 7. After earning his doctorate at the University of Missouri, Claunch taught political science at SFA his entire career, serving as chair of the department his last few years before retirement.



During his 52 years in Nacogdoches, he taught married couples Bible study with his wife, Betty; served as a deacon and elder; volunteered with the Kids Club; and sang with the choir at Oak Grove Baptist Church. He also guided Oak

Grove's merger with Mosaic Church and traveled on mission trips to five different continents.

DR. TIMOTHY WAYNE CLIPSON, former professor emeritus of executive communication and executive leadership in the Master of Business Administration program, passed away Jan. 24. He received his bachelor's degree from Southern Nazarene University, master's degree from the University of North Texas and doctorate from Oklahoma State University. After teaching in Texas secondary schools and serving as a graduate assistant at OSU, Clipson joined the SFA faculty in 1981 as a professor in the Department of Business Communication and Legal Studies. He founded and developed the Nelson Rusche College of Business Advisory Council and created the SFA 101 course, now known as the "New-Lumberjack Experience" course, in 1998 to strengthen student success.



In 1986, Clipson co-founded a professional leadership consulting firm called Leadership Is For Everyone! and served as its president. He was a training consultant for Special Olympics International, Mattress Firm and various hospitals. LIFE! Inc.'s Weekend of a Lifetime! leadership retreats served more than 30,000 Kiwanis-sponsored youth. A distinguished Kiwanian, Clipson also served for many years in leadership roles within the Texas-Oklahoma District, including as district administrator for Circle K International. He provided leadership training at both district and international levels for Kiwanis International, Circle K International and Key Club.

Clipson also supported the SFA chapter of Alpha Tau Omega, serving as a member and chair of the board from 1995 to 2015. He served as national vice president and president of the ATO board from 2012 to 2018.

LINDA ANDERSON CLAYBAR '72, educator, wife and mother, passed away Oct. 30.



A 1968 graduate of Lufkin High School, Claybar earned her degree from SFA in 1972. It was at SFA she met her husband of 53 years, William Brown Claybar, and together they built a life centered on family, education and service. All four members of the Claybar family are SFA graduates, and Claybar remained an active alumna and devoted supporter of the university throughout her life.

A lifelong advocate for education, Claybar taught school for several years before dedicating countless hours to volunteering in classrooms, supporting teachers, participating in the PTA and encouraging generations of students. She and Brown were also recognized as ambassadors for All Saints Episcopal School, an honor they deeply treasured.

Claybar served as a board member of Claybar Funeral Home, where she also managed operations and the flower shop, and was a steadfast partner in Brown's many years of community leadership, including his service as mayor of Orange and president of the local school board. An active member of First United Methodist Church of Orange, she served as a Methodist Youth Fellowship counselor, participated in mission trips and contributed to numerous church committees. The Claybar Family Scholarship at SFA was established in her memory.

In Memoriam

DAVID W. CRISP '78, longtime newspaper man and educator in Texas and Montana, passed away May 16. Before earning his bachelor's degree in the humanities from SFA, he volunteered for the Army Security Agency, serving as a German linguist and radio intercept operator.



After earning his degree, he worked in the Texas State Capitol before taking his first reporting job at the Palestine Herald-Press. He then served as editor for both the Palestine Herald-Press and Bryan-College Station Eagle. Crisp received a Lechner Fellowship to attend Texas A&M University, where he earned a master's degree in English and a Distinguished Graduate Student Award. He then taught at Texas A&M and Blinn College before moving to Montana, where he wrote for the Billings Gazette and other newspapers. He also taught journalism and composition at Rocky Mountain College and German at Montana State University.

Crisp won more than a dozen statewide and corporate writing awards and one national award, the 1980 American Association for the Advancement of Science Writing Award for smaller newspapers.

PAULA GENE YOUNG CUNDIFF, former staff member, passed away Sept. 25, 2025. A graduate of the University of North Texas, Cundiff spent 16 years as the administrative assistant for the Schief School of Accountancy, retiring in 2005. She was a longtime member of Westminster Presbyterian Church and a lifelong friend to animals. Cundiff moved with her family to San Francisco in 2017 and to Lehi, Utah, in 2021.



VICKI A. GIBBS, former staff member, passed away Sept. 5, 2025. After co-owning Gibbs Air Conditioning with her husband, Mack, she joined SFA as a procurement coordinator. She retired in 2008 after 18 years of service. Gibbs was a member of North Street Church of Christ.



CRAIG M. GIGGLEMAN '85, naturalist and public servant, passed away April 14. After serving in the U.S. Army, Giggleman worked as a senior environmental contaminants specialist from 1997 to 2017 and as an emergency response on-scene coordinator from 2017 to 2022. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in history from SFA as well as a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science from the University of North Texas.



DR. RAYMOND "RAY" LONDELL HALL '68, former educator, passed away Nov. 12, 2025. After earning his Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Wiley College, now Wiley University, Hall was drafted into the U.S. military, serving from 1962 to 1964 in Illesheim, Germany. He then worked as a principal and an English teacher in Nigeria at a technology school founded by one of his Wiley faculty mentors.



After Hall left Nigeria, he enrolled at SFA and was the second Black man to earn a graduate degree, a Master of Arts in sociology,

from the university. He then earned his doctorate at Syracuse University and served as a faculty member at Bishop College in Dallas from 1968 to 1971 before joining the sociology faculty at Dartmouth College. During his 35 years there, he served as a professor of sociology, a tenured department chair and the Orvil E. Dryfoos Professor of Public Affairs. He also received an honorary Master of Arts from Dartmouth.

In addition, Hall served as director of the Dartmouth-Boston Urban Studies Program, a member of the board of directors for the Forum for United States-Soviet Dialogue and a special consultant for the National Institutes of Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. He sat on the Wiley University Board of Trustees, serving as chair of the Academy Programs Committee.

LT. COL. JOHNNIE G. JOHNSON '75, U.S. Air Force (ret.), passed away Oct. 10, 2025. While he was attending SFA, Johnson received his U.S. military draft notice. He served as a navigator and pilot during his more than 20 years as a career officer. After retiring from the U.S. Air Force in 1973, Johnson moved his family to Nacogdoches, where he completed his Bachelor of Business Administration in management at SFA and launched a banking career. He retired from Fredonia State Bank in 1998.



Johnson served as a member of many SFA alumni boards and booster clubs. He was also a member of the Chancel Choir at First United Methodist Church and a founding member of the Heart-to-Heart Chorus. In addition, Johnson served as the announcer for the Nacogdoches High School football team and band. As a member of the Rotary Club of Nacogdoches, he was named a Paul Harris fellow twice. He was also a past president of the Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce.

JOHN L. LEVRA '71, former football coach and educator, passed away Jan. 7. After earning education degrees from Pittsburg State University, he began coaching high school football in Kansas before moving up in the college ranks.



At New Mexico Highlands University, Levra earned two Rookie of the Year honors. He then moved to SFA, where he earned a degree and served as both head coach and athletic director from 1971 to 1974. He led the Lumberjacks to back-to-back nine-win seasons and a Bowl Championship title. Levra then helped the University of Kansas Jayhawks set several rushing records before he joined the Canadian Football League as a coach for the BC Lions.

Next, O.A. "Bum" Phillips Jr. hired Levra to join the New Orleans Saints for his first National Football League job. He would go on to hold coaching positions with the Chicago Bears, Denver Broncos, Minnesota Vikings and Buffalo Bills. His football coaching career concluded with an assistant role at La Canada High School in La Canada, California, where he coached his grandson, Chase. ➔

In Memoriam

MARTHA LILLY, friend of SFA, passed away April 22, 2025. After attending SFA, Lilly married her husband, Murray in 1949.



They moved to several East Texas towns before her family settled in Conroe in 1966. Lilly attended First Methodist Church Conroe, where she was a member of the Beacon Sunday school class, women's society and church board. She also was a lifetime member of the Beta Sigma Phi chapter in Conroe. Lilly served as president of the Conroe Service League and the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County and as a member of the Quilting Club and Cattle Baron Ball of Conroe.

GILBERT I. "BUDDY" LOW '54, lawyer and 1994 SFA Hall of Fame inductee, passed away July 14. A native of San Augustine, Low



earned his bachelor's degree in education from SFA, working as a campus janitor during the school year and as a welder's helper each summer to pay his way through college. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Army in Germany before teaching at his alma mater, San Augustine High School.

He later earned his law degree with highest honors from The University of Texas School of Law, where he was a member of the Texas Law Review, appointed quizmaster to Dean John Sutton, inducted into Phi Alpha Delta and graduated with the prestigious Order of the Coif.

Low spent more than six decades with Orgain Bell and Tucker LLP, becoming one of Texas' most respected attorneys. He served on the Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee for nearly 50 years, including as vice chairman, and chaired the Texas Supreme Court Professional Ethics Committee for 20 years. His peers elected him president of the Jefferson County Bar Association and honored him with the Blackstone Award.

A lifelong supporter of education and public service, Low helped establish the Beaumont Foundation of America and championed scholarships and educational initiatives across Southeast Texas. His many honors included being named one of Texas' Top 100 Super Lawyers and receiving the Outstanding Alumnus Award from UT Law.

ROBERT "BOB" TAYLOR MCKNIGHT '66,

financial advisor, insurance agent and commercial real estate



investor, passed away July 25, 2025. After earning a Bachelor of Business Administration at SFA, McKnight built his company from the ground up. He was a member of the Rotary Club of Nacogdoches, Cycleland and the Texas Leaders Round Table. The Bob and Janice McKnight SFA

Scholarship was established in honor of McKnight and his wife.

SIMON LYNN MONTES '60, accountant and former SFA regent, passed away May 10. He joined Axley & Rode in 1960 after



earning his Bachelor of Business Administration from SFA and his Certified Public Accountant designation. After retiring from the firm as a partner in 1993, Montes worked as a part-time internal auditor and financial analyst for the Memorial Health System of Texas, now CHI St. Luke's Health

Memorial, until his second retirement at age 82.

In May 1993, Montes was appointed by Gov. Ann Richards to serve on SFA's Board of Regents; he completed his service in 1999. He also served as a member of the 49th Armored Division of the Texas Army National Guard for six years. A devoted Catholic, Montes was a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church in Lufkin.

ANTHONY SCOTT MUCKELROY '90, educator and U.S. Olympian, passed away Jan. 13. A scholarship athlete on SFA's track



team, Muckelroy earned Division 1 All-American honors while earning his Bachelor of Science in biology. His athleticism led to his selection for the U.S. Bobsled Team. During his 10 years on the team, he competed in the 1992 and 1994 Olympic Games.

After 10 years as a teacher and coach at Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Muckelroy joined the faculty of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School in Houston, where he worked until 2025.

DR. MICHAEL PATRICK MUNRO '02, former clinical instructor, passed away May 27. Dedicated to opening up



the world for children with visual impairments, Munro earned his Master of Education in special education from SFA and joined the faculty as a clinical instructor in the visual impairment teacher preparation program in 2007. From 2013 through 2018, he served as director of the program before moving to an assistant professor role. In 2019, Munro left for a stint as a visual impairment specialist at the Region 6 Educational Service Center in Huntsville. He returned to SFA in 2023 to develop and deliver courses for graduate and undergraduate students in person and online. For much of this time, he worked alongside his wife, Heather '04 & '00, an assistant professor in the visual impairment teacher preparation program.

During his 30-year career, Munro actively participated in Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Personnel Preparation Advisory Group and Texas Focus training initiative, the Texas University Professors in Visual Impairment, and the Alliance of and for Visually Impaired Texans. Munro also served as president, a board member and a longtime volunteer for the Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired. As part of the presentation of his Lifetime Achievement Award, that association released the following statement about Munro: "His legacy lives in every classroom entered, every student served and every life touched."

DR. MILTON ROBERT PAYNE, former professor, passed away Sept. 6, 2025. After earning his doctorate in education at the



University of North Texas, he joined the SFA faculty as an elementary education professor in 1967.

During his 30-year career, Payne conducted nearly 400 local, state, regional and national consultations and workshops in science, critical thinking and outdoor education for elementary science teachers. He earned many teaching excellence awards and won \$700,000 in grant monies to support SFA's science teacher education programs.

In Memoriam

HERBERT NEAL QUILLIN '65 & '68, former football coach, passed away Feb. 14. While attending SFA, Quillin played defensive tackle for the Lumberjacks. From 1965 to 1978, he served as an assistant coach at Nacogdoches, Jacksonville, Irving, DeRidder, Bonham, Pine Tree and Dulles high schools. In 1979, Quillin was hired for his first head coaching position at Willowridge High School, part of the Fort Bend Independent School District in Houston. While there, his teams earned three district championships and a state championship.



Quillin also served as head coach at Langham Creek, Aldine Nimitz and Humble high schools. Overall, his teams won or shared 11 district championships and made 15 state playoff appearances. Quillin earned nine District Coach of the Year awards, five Houston Touchdown Club Coach of the Year nominations (won in 1995) and the Tom Landry Award. He was inducted into the Greater Houston Coaches Association Hall of Honor, the SFA Jacks of Honor and the Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor. Quillin also served as a member of the THSCA Board of Directors and as assistant athletic director for Humble ISD.

DR. MICHAEL N. ROACH, former professor, passed away March 1. After serving in the U.S. Army, Roach earned a Bachelor of Science in art education and a Master of Science in secondary school administration from North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas. While working on his doctorate, he was recruited by the U.S. government to serve as a civilian advisor in Vietnam for a year.



In 1967, Roach joined the SFA faculty and, in 1970, he completed his Doctor of Education in college art. In 1997, he won a grant for the art department to establish its first computer art lab. He retired from SFA in 1999.

JACQUELYN "JACKIE" EILEEN VOSE '89, former staff member, passed away Aug. 7, 2025. Vose earned her Bachelor of Science in computer science from SFA and would later join the university as a computer programmer. She retired from SFA in 2020.



Vose volunteered for the Lamp-Lite Theatre in Nacogdoches. In addition to serving as stage manager, box office manager, seamstress and costumer, and board member – treasurer, she acted in numerous productions including "On Golden Pond" and "Nunsense." She enjoyed traveling, including 15 cruises to Alaska, Hawaii, the Caribbean, Iceland, the British Isles and other destinations.

Casey L. Acker '06, June 17, 2025

Eloise C. Adams '56 & '61, Sept. 5, 2025

Glenn Bozy R. Adams '59, July 3, 2025

Jill N. Adams '70 & '76, Dec. 19

Carol C. Adcock '71, March 24

Gene P. Allen '60, June 24, 2025

Mary Ann Allen '61 & '67, Dec. 1

Sandra L. Allen '73 & '82, Jan. 3

Marian Ellen Beavers Anderson '64 & '69, Aug. 17, 2025

Ever L. Andresen '68, Sept. 18

Matt D. Andrews '00, Feb. 22

Suzanne Berry Antley '78, Feb. 11

Nelda J. Arnold '81, Dec. 21

Kenneth G. Baker '62, March 16

Susan C. Baggett '83, April 29

Dr. William H. Barnes '64, May 3

Lori D. Barron '77, March 23

Darrell G. Belt '85, July 16, 2025

James M. Birdwell '72, Aug. 18, 2025

Mark E. Birkelbach '98, April 16

Shanna L. Bonvillian '91, Dec. 14

Charles O. Brightwell '59, Feb. 23

Julie R. Brotzen '95, June 22, 2025

James H. Brown '71, Dec. 16

Lewis A. Brown '58, March 20

David W. Butler '76, Nov. 12

John Harvey Butts '60, Nov. 24

Sally D. Cain '81, Sept. 21

William R. Campbell '94, Jan. 2

Marc W. Carter '96, July 17, 2025

Kathleen L. Castleberry '76, May 23, 2025

Wanda M. Clamon '94, Feb. 20

Carey Michael Craddock '95, Feb. 24

Erwin M. Dabbs '60, April 10, 2025

Ashley Marie Davenport '25, Dec. 30

Irving Neilson Davis '75, Dec. 11

Joseph Jed Edward Day III '81, July 16, 2025

Mitchell D. Dickey '93, Sept. 10, 2025

James Jed Edward Dillingham '75, Nov. 2

Douglas J. Duke '76 & '77, Sept. 8, 2025

Deborah J. Finch '86, Jan. 4

Karon E. Fleniken '66, April 18

Kay Evelyn Ford '71, Sep. 10, 2025

Suzan W. Francis '81 & '87, May 11

Robert L. Free '67, Nov. 16

Patricia C. Fox '72, April 4

Janet D. Fry '72, Oct. 6

Sharon A. Garrett '77, July 17, 2025

Donald G. Gibbs '60, July 11, 2025

Frankie M. Gilbert '03, June 10, 2025

John W. Gillis '03, Oct. 14

James Edward Gray Jr. '84, Sept. 7, 2025

In Memoriam

Mary Virginia Ginger Griffin '70 & '72, Feb. 6
Ronald E. Gulley '65, April 13
Pilar A. Gwinn '03, April 8
Constance H. Hall '71 & '75, May 11
James O. Hayes III '66, Dec. 11
William R. Hertenberg '90, March 28
Shannon M. Hickman '90, March 28
Hal Kent Hill '62, April 28
Shirlene K. Hill '70, Oct. 20
Ronald D. Hollyfield '77, March 3
J.D. Holt Jr. '96, April 28
Reba N. Howard '62, July 11, 2025
Bebe Joyce Hubbard '51, Aug. 19, 2025
Charles I. Hudson '87 & '89, May 14
Ronald Taylor Husband '76, Dec. 4
Dr. Charlotte Hyams '68, May 13
Elizabeth Alice Johnson '57 & '70, May 13
Deidra A. Jones '98, Dec. 9
Glen L. Keel '86, Sept. 17
Jane A. Kendrick '56 & '75, June 1
James L. Kennedy Jr. '73, June 4
Russell Patrick Kennedy '80, Oct. 22
James J. Keresztesy '71, July 26, 2025
Margie A. Kilpatrick '46, March 11
Virginia Ginger A. Knight '75, Aug. 2, 2025
Mark Allen Kenneth Kopp '84, Sept. 14
Prudence Prue McCullough Laird '57, July 22, 2025
Regina S. Lathem '72 & '76, April 12
Don Truman Lewis '67, May 28
Phillip R. Lybrand '86, March 4
Jeffrey C. Lynn '73, April 21
Kasandra R. Malone '94, Jan. 4
Stephen L. Mannion '85, June 27, 2025
Lyndia C. Marek '61, July 25, 2025
Rayburn D. Marshall Jr. '75 & '80, April 17
Bryan E. McCracken '94, April 27
Ela Ruth McCullough '66 & '71, Feb. 16
Ronald "Ronny" Lewis McElroy '72, Jan. 14, 2025
Mary F. McHaney '62, Feb. 13
Kay O. McMillan '81 & '83, July 31, 2025
Carolyn D. Menoskey '97, Jan. 25
Hugh W. Mixon '63 & '66, Feb. 7
Laura Y. Moore '88, Jan. 17
Shannon A. Moore '93 & '06, March 3

George E. Myers '70, Aug. 21, 2025
Allen L. Norton '71 & '73, Jan. 23
Donald Ray Overton '67, Feb. 10
Michael Scott Page '88, April 26
Terry Coleman Parker '77, April 1
John Grant Parrish '08, Jan. 25
Vimal Victor Patel '91, May 11
Susie M. Pierce '53, Sept. 13
Charles G. Pollard '69, May 12
Dr. Henry D. Pope '59, March 14
John D. Poulsen '81, July 27, 2025
James H. Powell '54, March 17
Betty J. Powledge '81, Aug. 28, 2025
Michael D. Rachel '66, Jan. 14
Lynda A. Radisi '74, Sept. 16
Dorothy L. Redard '87, Jan. 11
Bradley A. Rhodes '91, June 5
Charles H. Roberson '52, Nov. 17
Simone D. Roque '16, Sept. 8, 2025
Kenneth J. Rosenberger '60, Feb. 15
James B. Ross '62, Jan. 16
Elizabeth I. Russell '81, Nov. 13
James V. Schoenrock '60, Dec. 21
Megan L. Scogin-Causey '23, Nov. 26
Barbara A. Seelhorst '53, Oct. 4
Tommy J. Shofner '56 & '63, May 28
Bobbie E. Smiley '56 & '60, July 21, 2025
Harold C. Stephens '60 & '63, Jan. 30
Kay M. Stringfellow '70, March 30
Jo N. Strong '69, June 4
Robert M. Stuteville '60, April 10, 2025
Frieda D. Suggs '70, April 28
James Brent Taylor '72, Jan. 8
Peggy S. Taylor '52, May 11
Belinda B. Teer '84, March 8
Helen C. Tomlin '62 & '75, Nov. 30
Tracey A. Tuggle '94, Oct. 14
Laura B. Waesche '85, Jan. 12
Bobby Ray Ward Jr. '99, May 25
Brody Clay Wedgeworth '14 & '19, Nov. 26
Alan K. Whitten '77, Feb. 6
Patricia H. Wilson '63 & '68, Feb. 14
Morgan M. Wright '15, Sep. 29
Brian T. Yates '07, Aug. 10, 2025



SFA students

Michael V. Goldman, June 18
Guadalupe "Lupita" Moreira, July 4



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