

# hillviews

vol. 47 no. 1 | 2016 | MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

A robust honors program,  
energized students  
and engaged faculty  
push Texas State  
toward new horizons.

A robust honors program.

## ROAD — to — RESEARCH

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hillviews

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No. 1, 2016



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**ABOUT:** *Hillviews* is produced three times a year by the University Advancement division. We'd love to hear from you. Send us your comments about the articles in this issue, or send story suggestions. Email [Hillviews@txstate.edu](mailto:Hillviews@txstate.edu); fax to (512) 245-3817; or mail to *Hillviews*, Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666-4613.

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FEATURE

Road to research

The Graduate College and the Honors College are attracting the brightest students and faculty. As the university is moving along the path toward the coveted national research status called “Tier One,” these programs are vital to the research and teaching mission of the university. Texas State has embarked on a course to ramp up its research profile.



The members of aRPM at work at STAR Park.



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Dear Friends,

One mark of a great university is the ability to provide students with opportunities to pursue studies outside the common curriculum. At Texas State, those opportunities are quite robust in the Honors College and in The Graduate College.

Exceptional students find a community in the Honors College where they can examine common themes across disciplines and prepare for future research, creative endeavors, and a lifetime of learning. The Honors College encourages students to think beyond normal boundaries, which could lead to new discoveries or the development of an innovative idea. Students may be challenged in a way that prompts them to pursue a career that they might not otherwise have considered. Many students leave the Honors College with the confidence to apply to prestigious graduate programs, the experience to interview for postgraduate fellowships, and the compassion to give back to their communities, wherever they choose to live.

Our Graduate College provides deeper knowledge and gives students the tools they need to ensure that they are well prepared for professional careers. Because there has been an explosion of discovery and knowledge over time, there is a challenge in teaching everything that is essential to a particular discipline over the course of a four-year degree. In today's higher education parlance, many faculty and career placement officials characterize the master's degree as "yesterday's bachelor's degree."

That Texas State has a goal of becoming a nationally recognized research university is another reason that the Honors College and Graduate College are so integral to the university. Universities with high research output rely heavily on the brightest students and faculty, and honors and graduate programs help attract and retain both.

Recognizing the important roles these two colleges have for the overall vibrancy of the university, we've devoted this issue of *Hillviews* to highlighting some of the students and faculty who exemplify outstanding achievement at Texas State.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

Denise M. Trauth

# (wide)views



## The student-athlete

Graduation  
success rate  
is climbing

By Raúl A. Flores

It may not draw the same level of fan excitement as a timely quarterback sack, but the way Texas State student-athletes have been tackling their studies is worthy of some chest-pounding.

Classroom performance of student-athletes has been rising at Texas State, highlighting a trend of academic achievement among Sun Belt Conference schools. In the 2014-15 academic year, the six-year graduation rate for Texas State

student-athletes was 75 percent, up from 66 percent a decade earlier.

"During this time we have transitioned from FCS to FBS and from conference to conference to conference," says Dr. Daniel Brown, dean of the University College. He says it is a juggling act for the student-athlete — made up of classes, training, and competitions — which makes this result even more impressive.

MORGAN ADAMS

**Women’s Track & Field**  
2015, B.S. Radiation Therapy  
Radiation therapist in  
The Woodlands



“I’ve always had a never-ending supply of determination. However, life as a college athlete is nothing you could ever be fully prepared for. Between practice, meetings, study hall, class, tests, and traveling ... it takes a while to become your new normal. “What I cherished most was always having a resource. Whether it was an athletic academic advisor, teammate, upper classman, or a coach, someone was always there to help me along the way. I attribute my success to an army of people along with my determination to be successful. It took a lot of individual efforts for me to make it to graduation, but I wouldn’t have been able to do it alone.”

BENJAMIN IJAH

**Football**  
2015, B.S. Engineering  
Engineer at Accurex,  
Los Angeles



“Was I prepared for this endeavor? My ego and athletic side want me to stand up and say, ‘Hell yeah, I took no prisoners throughout my college experience,’ and walk off beating my chest and doing a touchdown dance. However the reality is, how can one truly be prepared (especially as a teenager) for what they have never really encountered? The only thing I was prepared to do was adapt. “I always faced each stumble with the same methodic approach, which in the long run made me infinitely stronger than when I arrived. That process always ended by adapting to a certain roadblock such that it rarely was seen twice. That I would say is how I made it through, but the short answer to, ‘Were you prepared?’ Physically, yes; but mentally, not even close.”

CHARLIE TUTTLE

**Football**  
2015, B.S. Concrete Industry  
Management  
Sales at Ingram Readymix Inc.,  
San Antonio



“I had two main expectations entering into the beginning of my student-athlete career. First, and most importantly, was to obtain a degree in Concrete Industry Management. Secondly, I longed to earn a scholarship as a walk-on of the football program. “My biggest challenge in college was the ability to balance academics with travel during season. “I attribute my work ethic to my father. He always taught me the importance of hard work and the rewards that come along with it.”

VICTORIA “TORI” HALE

**Soccer**  
2015, B.S. Psychology  
and Education  
Assistant soccer coach,  
Abilene Christian University and  
M.B.A. student at  
Hardin Simmons University



“My expectations were to go in and hopefully make an impact because I transferred from TCU (Texas Christian University) to Texas State. I wanted to be pushed and challenged as an athlete and as a student. I didn’t do as well my freshman year, but I learned how to manage my time. I learned when was the best time for studying and to (better) schedule my classes. “I knew being a student-athlete in a Division I school was going to be difficult. It was definitely not an easy route.”

“Our No. 1 priority is to make certain that we don’t just use young people as athletes. We want to help them earn their degree,” says Dr. Paul Gowens, the NCAA faculty athletics representative and a Texas State professor of economics.

Gowens works closely with Laurie Hindson, assistant athletic director for academics and assistant dean for University College, to enhance academic achievement for the university’s roughly 400 student-athletes. The two work with a staff of five who help support student-athletes from orientation to graduation.

“Our student-athletes do very well,” says Hindson, who has worked with student-athletes over the past 10 years. She and her staff can be found assisting football players during their study hall at the Athletic Academic Center, at Jowers Center, or at Bobcat Stadium.

Student-athletes spend an average of six hours per week in study hall, with freshmen athletes averaging closer to eight hours per week. The study periods involve a heavy dose of tutoring and counseling, and

GRADUATION SUCCESS RATE

The GSR begins with the federal cohort (the number of student-athlete freshmen enrolled in any given school year) and adds transfer students, midyear enrollees, and non-scholarship students (in specified cases) to the sample. Student-athletes who leave an institution while in good academic standing before exhausting athletics eligibility are removed from the cohort of their initial institution.

often incorporate workshops, computer lab assistance, and progress reports.

“It’s important that we provide the necessary tools — an academic center, counselors that map out a realistic degree plan — and that we monitor their progress,” Gowens says. “That, ultimately, is going to

assure we’re graduating more athletes and that we’re following the guidelines we’re required to by the NCAA.”

All colleges and universities are required by the NCAA and federal law to report student graduation rates. The NCAA instituted the Graduation Success Rate (GSR) program 20 years ago to track the academic outcomes of student-athletes more accurately.

Dr. Daniel Brown, who is also director of the Personalized Academic and Career Exploration (PACE) Center, says the higher academic success rate of student-athletes is tied to having a strong support structure. “Student success is just at the heart of all that we do at Texas State,” Brown says. “Our coaches live and breathe their goals for success in the competition world. But they also have a strong commitment to the success of our student-athletes in the classroom. Those two goals are not in conflict with one another here. They’re complementary.”

Within the Sun Belt Conference, Texas State’s graduation rate is on par with that of other universities, where the average

graduation rate for athletes is 76 percent. Recent figures indicate that nine of the 13 Sun Belt Conference schools showed a rise in the GSR during the last 10 years.

Scott Connors, former assistant commissioner for compliance with the Sun Belt Conference, says the graduation rate has been steadily increasing since 2003, when the NCAA embarked on a reform effort and implemented the Academic Progress Rate (APR). “Over the last 10 years, schools in our conference really started dedicating resources first and foremost to the academic success of student-athletes,” says Connors.

At Texas State, the women’s tennis and golf teams have won the NCAA’s Public Recognition Awards, which is presented to teams that post APR scores in the top 10 percent.

Conveying the importance of obtaining a degree to the student-athlete is crucial, Gowens says, because the overwhelming majority of student-athletes at any university will not go on to play professional sports. “A lot of student-athletes have

aspirations that they will make it to the next level. But you do point out the probability,” Gowens says.

According to 2012 NCAA statistics, 1.7 percent of football players, 1.2 percent of men’s basketball players, 0.9 percent of women’s basketball players, and 11.6 of men’s baseball players made the transition from college to the professional level.

Another encouraging trend among student-athletes is the increasingly diverse nature of the majors they are pursuing. In 2014, the top majors for Bobcat athletes were business, criminal justice, engineering, and interdisciplinary studies (education).

Brown notes there was a time when many college athletes nationally did not get a lot of guidance when they stepped onto a campus. “Now we’re providing that (guidance) earlier in the college career so that we can improve academic success to graduation and enhance each student-athlete’s transition to the world of work beyond Texas State.”

And, based on the results, Texas State is continuing to score.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS RATE

The APR holds institutions accountable for the academic progress of their student-athletes through a team-based metric that accounts for the eligibility and retention of each student-athlete for each academic term. The APR is calculated as follows:

- Each student-athlete receiving athletically related financial aid earns 1 point for staying in school and 1 point for being academically eligible.
- A team’s total points are divided by points possible and then multiplied by 1,000 to equal the team’s APR.
- In addition to a team’s current year APR, its rolling four-year APR is also used to determine accountability.





# Lady Bird opera premieres

Production celebrates first lady’s role in ’64 campaign

By Diane Windeler

The photograph is iconic: On November 22, 1963, two hours after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson is being sworn in as president of the United States on Air Force One. He is flanked on his left by Kennedy’s dazed young widow, Jacqueline, and on his right by his adoring wife, Lady Bird.

“This is what he has always wanted,” Lady Bird says to herself, “But not this way. Dear God, not this way. ...”

Thus begins the one-act opera *Lady Bird: First Lady of the Land* by Henry Mollicone and Sheldon Harnick, which premiered April 28th at the Performing Arts Center. The first opera commissioned for the Texas State Opera Theatre, *Lady Bird* is the third collaboration between Mollicone, the versatile composer and conductor whose most famous work is *The Face on the Barroom Floor*, and lyricist Harnick, who is best known for Broadway musicals such as *She Loves Me* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Harnick this year was awarded the Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre.



Luci Baines Johnson addresses donors before the premiere of *Lady Bird: First Lady of the Land*.

Harnick says the genesis for *Lady Bird* came about in 2014 when Dr. Samuel Mungo, Texas State University director of opera studies, was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. He asked Mollicone if he would be interested in a commission for an opera on Lady Bird Johnson, an idea that came to him while cycling through the Hill Country that spring. The composer, in turn, contacted Harnick, and the team was set. The Opera Theatre partnered with the Texas Hill Country Opera & Arts on the production.

“The more I read about her, the more I liked the woman,” Harnick explains. “The most dramatic part of her career was when she went down South to campaign for President Lyndon Johnson in 1964. While she was on the train, an FBI agent told her she should cancel the trip because they thought the train was going to be bombed. She refused.”

Harnick and Mollicone, who live on opposite ends of the country, had collaborated before. As is usually the case, the words — the libretto — came first. Harnick says that’s essential because the words convey the emotional values necessary to make the music effective. As things began to progress, Mollicone would play the music on his piano while Harnick listened via Skype.

Mollicone says there were exceptions to the “words first” rule for this opera, since a couple of musical themes came to him as he reflected on Lady Bird, and Harnick was pleased to add the words to his libretto.

Pianist Kristin Roach, a nationally known opera coach and lecturer in the School of Music, has worked with two other Mollicone operas. She calls his music “all-American and very beautiful. He likes to borrow from musical theater, jazz, opera,



and gospel. It’s very tuneful,” Roach says.

She cites the recurring musical theme, which was restated and re-orchestrated in different ways to reflect the stage action. To support the portion of the production dedicated to the train ride across the South, there was train music, too, with a whistle and clickety-clack rhythmic patterns. The finale was a huge choral anthem with several tunes performed while Lady Bird’s soprano soars high above them.

“We’ll wage a war on poverty,” they sang. “We’ll build a great society and do all we can to beautify the land!”

There were 15 characters in the opera: principals President Johnson and Lady Bird, both young and older versions; plus daughters Luci and Lynda. The remaining cast consisted of various smaller roles.

In the opening scene, as President Johnson is sworn in, Lady Bird thinks about how much her husband has always wanted to be president. It includes a flashback to Austin’s Driskill Hotel, where the young couple first dined.

The bulk of the opera, almost 40 percent, involves the Lady Bird Express train campaign through the Deep South. “I’ve come to admire her very much for making that dangerous train tour,” says Mollicone. “At first, she was very shy about public speaking, but she did it for Lyndon and her confidence quickly grew.” History has shown her to be one of the strongest and most accomplished first ladies.

Luci Baines Johnson, who with husband Ian Turpin attended the premiere, was clearly moved by the production. Afterward, she spoke affectionately to cast members, thanking them for their portrayals and adding: “I was an eyewitness to the division and the scorn.”

There is talk of more performances of *Lady Bird* next year.





TAKING NOTES

Family matters

Algoe’s wife, Kim, is a licensed social worker, counselor, and child advocate. The couple met on the first day of a new job with the state of Ohio when they were in the same training class. The Algoes have three daughters: Hailey, 17; Isabel, 13; and Ella, 12.

Gone to Texas

He now owns his first cowboy hat and boots, both gifts, which he is eager to put to use. “I’ve got to figure out when it is appropriate to wear these things, so I don’t show up somewhere and make a fool of myself.”

Liberal arts

He was a mechanical engineering major before switching to sociology in his junior year. “I had a liberal arts education. I really believe that when you have that good liberal arts foundation you can go on and be anything, do anything that you want to do.”

Building boom

Algoe says the growth at the San Marcos and Round Rock Campuses is amazing and he can quickly tick off the complete list of current and future renovations and building plans. “Most exciting for me is the ability to participate in the master planning process for the next 10 years.”

Just for fun

Free time is usually spent with the family doing outdoor activities, but Algoe also says he loves to build things and tackle home improvement projects. He served as designer and general contractor on the family’s home in Ohio and did a lot of the construction work himself.

ERIC ALGOE

VICE PRESIDENT | FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

By Julie Cooper

Since he began his job in September as vice president for finance and support services, Eric Algoe has been getting a feel for Texas State by meandering through buildings on his way to business meetings. “I think there is no substitute, especially when you are in charge of facilities, to getting out there to see for yourself and hear from people,” he says. “So if you see me looking half lost, wandering around in your building, or talking to students about their impressions, don’t be surprised.”

Algoe’s journey in higher education began in Ohio and passed through Florida before touching down at Texas State. At Florida State University, where he was the associate vice president for administration, Algoe oversaw the university’s human resources, purchasing, public safety, athletics business office, the College of Medicine financials, the FSU foundation, and the university’s auxiliary services. Prior to that, he was vice president for finance and administration and treasurer of Ohio Wesleyan University. The vast majority of Algoe’s career has been spent with nonprofit and service-mission-oriented organizations. He held positions at the Ohio School for the Deaf and the Ohio School for the Blind and worked for the Ohio Office of Information Technology and the Ohio Department of Administrative Services.

As Texas State’s chief financial officer, Algoe is charged with advising the president on matters related to finance, business operations, facilities management, campus construction, and human resources. He succeeds Vice President William Nance, who retired last August after 22 years with Texas State.

A native of Ohio, Algoe earned his bachelor’s degree in sociology at Ohio State where he was also in the ROTC. Following graduation he was commissioned an officer in the Army and served 15 years combined on active duty and in the reserves. He holds a master’s degree in business administration from Franklin University in Ohio.

Algoe discussed coming to Texas State with *Hillviews*.

What attracted you to Texas State?

“My most recent boss had been a vice president at Texas Tech. Over the last couple of years working with him, I heard many stories of the way higher education works in Texas. He encouraged me to look into it and once I started, I was just fascinated with what I learned about Texas State. The growth, the student profile, the mission, serving such a diverse group of students, the focus on retention and completion. Being a first-generation college graduate myself, everything about it really resonated with me.”

What are your goals for Texas State?

“The first thing, coming in on the heels of what Mr. Nance was able to accomplish over a long and successful career, is not to upset the apple cart. There is nothing broken, there are no crises. I feel very fortunate to have come into a situation like that. My goal is not to bring any of my preconceived notions about the way things should work, or change just for the sake of change; but instead, to use my experience to help us focus on continuous improvements, toward adopting the appropriate best practices from other aspirational institutions. Figure out what they do well, and how we can do it even better.

“We are undertaking an assessment of all the planning, processes, and practices that we have in place at the university that fall under FSS. Making sure that they set the stage for our future and that they are aligned with the strategic plan of the university and the mission of the university; that they support faculty and staff, that they support students.

“It is no accident that the word ‘services’ is in the name of our division. That’s what we are here to do — to serve. We’re here to help everybody else on campus do better; to make their lives easier. Whether you are a student, faculty, or staff member, ultimately, if we’re successful in FSS, our success is in making your life easier.”





TAKING NOTES

Family matters

Pierce met his wife, Jillian, during a visit to the Cayman Islands. She is originally from South Africa. He has a son, Brennan, a senior in high school; and a stepson, Justin, who lives in Perth, Australia.

College years

“My goal was to get a degree in mechanical engineering and then continue on to get a degree in architecture. At the time I graduated (1984), architecture was probably one of the hardest jobs to find because there was no market. I wanted to be like Mike Brady [“The Brady Bunch”], but focus on energy-efficient solar homes and solar buildings.”

Ahead for Alkek

The Alkek Library, now undergoing major renovations, falls under the vice president’s office. “By the time the fall semester starts, quite a bit will have been done on library renovations. The first phase is infrastructure. Not just technology infrastructure ... but all the things you never see.”

Fun time

Pierce enjoys playing the guitar, reading, writing, and watching action films. He also likes to bike ride. When he lived in Seattle, he participated nearly every year in the Seattle to Portland bicycle classic — a day-and-a-half ride of 197 miles.

Texas two-step

The Pierces enjoy taking day trips around the area. It is a chance for the vice president to reacquaint himself with his home state and an opportunity for his wife to discover Texas.

# KEN PIERCE

VICE PRESIDENT | INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

By Julie Cooper

Before joining Texas State University in 2015 as the new vice president for information technology, Ken Pierce worked for corporations such as Boeing, Microsoft, and General Dynamics. He also worked at two universities in The University of Texas System: UT El Paso and UT San Antonio.

“I look at things not only from the academic side, but also from the business side and what we are trying to accomplish at the university. I try to blend together the right mix so we are doing what we should be doing, for the right reasons, and for the right price,” Pierce says.

Pierce was vice provost and chief information officer at UTSA for six years and held a similar position at UTEP for seven years. As vice president for information technology at Texas State, he oversees technology resources, instructional technology support, and the university library. He succeeds Dr. Van Wyatt, who retired last August after 15 years at the university.

Born in Houston, Pierce earned his bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Houston and a master’s degree in information technology from Capella University. After graduation he worked for General Dynamics on military airplanes before moving to Seattle and joining the Boeing Company, where he applied his skills to passenger airplanes. He also worked for Microsoft and in management for a California startup, CommerceRoute, as director of product development and management.

*Hillviews* interviewed Pierce to discuss his decision to join Texas State.

What attracted you to Texas State?

“Texas State has a very good reputation. As a native Texan, I’ve been here a long time and had several friends and family members who attended Texas State. It is intriguing, but no one ever says anything bad about Texas State. I would also say the success trajectory has been fantastic —

the enrollment growing, and the retention and graduation rates moving forward. In summary, I’ll say a really good trail of success. I wanted to be a part of it. That is why I wanted to come here.”

You’ve had some very interesting jobs outside of academia. How do you think that has prepared you for this new job at Texas State?

“Every job I’ve had has been a tremendous learning experience. I would say the biggest change in my life happened while I was at Boeing, and it happened shortly after I started there. I arrived with some specific skills with modern design software they desperately needed. I went into the group I was assigned to, which happened to be doors on wide-bodied airplanes, and quickly realized they were not sufficiently trained to be successful at what they were trying to accomplish. It was all new to the engineers. All the tools they were trying to do — I’d been doing it for a while. I started working with my group and said: ‘Let’s retool here, let’s look at what we’re doing and how we’re doing it so we can be successful.’

“It was noticed — and eventually I was asked to work in the training group in human resources that was responsible for training for the technical side. That was my first management position. At that point I was somewhat of an introvert — a typical engineer. It was the teaching part that actually changed me and prepared me the most for every job I had afterward because it was about communication, about teaching. I also did a lot of course development. Although it was the corporate world, I was now in education.

“I found out over time that I was actually better at computing, which really wasn’t in existence when I was going through school, than I was at actual structural design.

“So, no one job prepared me for this position, but all the pieces of different jobs have given me a very unique skill set.”





# Encarnación up from the deep

Underwater archaeologists identify 17th-century cargo ship

By John Goodspeed

A rare discovery awaited Fritz Hanselmann while searching the area where he had found six cannons believed to be from a ship that Capt. Henry Morgan lost en route to sacking Panama City — a remarkably preserved 17th-century Spanish merchant vessel and its cargo, the kind the infamous English privateer would have coveted.

“There was one little edge protruding from the sand. It looked like coral rock, but the metal detector sang out when we cruised over it,” says Hanselmann, Texas State University’s chief underwater archaeologist.

It was the lower third of a ship covered by three feet of silt in 30 feet of water on the Caribbean side of Panama at the mouth of the Chagres River, part of the route for transferring goods from the Old

World and gold from the Pacific side. The entrance to the river was guarded by Fort San Lorenzo, which Morgan destroyed in 1671 on his way to Panama City.

Morgan, though, would have missed this vessel by a decade. With help from assistant project director Dr. Chris Horrell, a Texas State alumnus, Hanselmann was able to announce the identity of the ship last May after three years of studying artifacts,



A cannon believed to be from one of the five ships Henry Morgan lost in 1671 on the Lajas Reef, near where the *Encarnación* would sink 10 years later.

archaeological records, and historical archives in Seville, Spain.

*Nuestra Señora de Encarnación*, built in Veracruz, Mexico, was one of four ships of the Tierra Firme fleet, and one of two that were the economic lifeblood of the Spanish colonies, now part of Central America. It sank in 1681 during a storm while sailing from Cartagena, Colombia, to Portobelo, Panama. While the upper part of the ship was gone, what remained was preserved by the high rate of sedimentation dumped by the Chagres River.

“You can feel the grain of the wood as if it sank yesterday,” Hanselmann says.

The ship carried goods and some intact chests for daily life in the New World. Artifacts included scissors, tacks, ceramic vessels, sword blades, and mule shoes for the pack animals carrying cargo on the overland route to the Pacific coast.

Hanselmann found the cannons in 2008, retrieved them in 2010, and returned in 2011 to look for more ships in his role as project director of the Chagres River Maritime Cultural Landscape Study in conjunction with the Panamanian government. Funding sources include Captain Morgan Rum and Ping Pong Productions for the Travel Channel.

“There are roughly 25 to 30 shipwrecks in that area,” says Hanselmann, who is also the chief underwater archaeologist/diving program director with The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University.

The Chagres River study is creating a database of archaeological sites of more than 500 years of maritime history so the government can learn the extent of the resources and manage them. Graduate students from Texas State and other universities are assisting in the project.

“The *Encarnación* is one of a very few Spanish merchant ships ever found,” Hanselmann says. “The wreck gives a peek into the daily life of colonial Spain and what merchant ships were carrying. The everyday artifacts provide a better sense of what was being done and how people were living.” The main fleet got word that the *Encarnación* was sinking and sent other ships to salvage what they could.

While the *Encarnación* was not a treasure galleon, Hanselmann says, the kind of cargo it carried was prized by pirates — and still is today by a different breed of mariner, the underwater archaeologist.

Photomosaic of the *Nuestra Señora de Encarnación*.





# The path to NATIONAL RESEARCH PROMINENCE

Why doctoral programs matter

By Matt Flores and Julie Cooper

**I**N 2012, Texas State was designated as one of eight Emerging Research Universities (ERUs) by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. That designation allows universities to access state funds to advance their research activities. On a national level, the university was reclassified this year by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a Doctoral Research University with the second-highest

research designation. It's a path to attaining a coveted research status called "Tier One," a designation that characterizes an institution as having robust research activities across numerous disciplines, as well as a critical mass of Ph.D. programs.

To help elevate the state's ERUs to National Research University status — the state's highest research designation — the Texas Legislature created the National Research University Fund, which allows eligible universities to qualify for even more enhanced funding to further escalate

When Texas State University opened its doors in 1903, its mission was to educate and train teachers. As the institution evolved from a turn-of-the-century teachers college with 303 students to a fast-growing university with escalating research activities and an enrollment of 38,000, it has redefined itself to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body and an economically thriving state.

their research activities. But there are other benefits to becoming a top research institution: It helps with attracting the best and brightest faculty and students; it increases opportunities for additional research support from federal, state, and philanthropic sources; and it provides students the opportunities to develop important skills in critical thinking and problem solving.

Texas, among the country's fastest-growing states, needs more institutions with high research profiles to provide essential training for the most sought-after jobs the state must have to remain competitive and thrive. With that in mind, Texas State has embarked on a course to ramp up its research profile. The university's master plan includes goals for conducting more research, adding doctoral programs, and creating endowments to lure top-flight faculty and students to engage in research activities.

"To become a top research university, we need more Ph.D. programs. That elevates your research profile in general," says Dr. Eugene Bourgeois, Texas State's provost and vice president for academic affairs. "It means you have more Ph.D. students being trained in their particular research disciplines, along with more faculty who are engaged in that one-on-one mentoring relationship with doctoral students."

He notes that universities with growing research activities should not limit their growth to the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, generally referred to as STEM disciplines. "Really, to be a national research university, you must have Ph.D. programs across a wider range of your academic departments," Bourgeois says.

Dr. Andrea Golato, dean of The Graduate College, says graduate students

are vital to the research and teaching mission of the university. Graduate students attract good faculty members. And good, productive faculty members help with the research mission of a university and attract top students, she adds.

"In graduate education we turn consumers of knowledge into producers of knowledge," Golato says.

Another factor in attracting the brightest students and faculty, Bourgeois says, is having an honors program, which Texas State added in 1967. A former director of the program, Bourgeois says the program, which evolved into an Honors College in 2011, affords faculty members an opportunity to work with extraordinary students and gives students an interdisciplinary learning experience that includes research. "It allows the undergraduate to do a deep dive into a research area that is much more than a project they would do in a stand-alone course. It allows them to go beyond the typical class project or paper and do something that approximates the work put into a master's degree," Bourgeois says.

And for a university that seeks to attract high-achieving students across all disciplines, the Honors College is key, says Dr. Heather Galloway, Honors College dean. Of the more than 1,900 students enrolled, the largest percentage — 23 percent — are liberal arts majors, 18 percent are majoring in fine arts and communication, and 14 percent are business administration majors.

"If you want to come here and do something special, like take on your own project and write an honors thesis, we are here to help you. That is what the Honors College is here to do," Galloway says. "It also gives faculty a chance to do a lot of things that are experimental and new in their classes. Often the things that faculty try in their honors classes end up in the regular curriculum."

There is a clear, solid link that exists among undergraduates, faculty, graduate assistants, and doctoral students. And in the pages that follow, we hope you come away with a better understanding of the activities at Texas State that are geared to improving the academic experience for faculty and students alike — and for creating a leading research university that helps make Texas stronger. 🍌





# HONORS COLLEGE

## Attracting the top students

By Julie Cooper

**Last fall there were more than 1,900 students in the Honors College, says Dr. Heather Galloway, Honors College dean. But what was truly notable was the diversity of students' majors that typically are represented within the college.**

Editor's Note: Students pictured here are currently in the Honors College. Graduates who were interviewed for this story are scattered around the country.



Galloway says that the Honors College has the added appeal of encouraging new ideas. “We are open to what the student wants to do,” she says. This could mean open minds, open doors, or open paths. For faculty, it is a chance to try things that are new and experimental in their smaller classes. “Faculty need brilliant students,” Galloway says. “And we have brilliant undergrads.”

The largest percentage of students, 23 percent, are liberal arts majors; 19 percent are science and engineering majors; 18 percent are in fine arts and communication; 14 percent are business administration majors; 12 percent are education majors; 6 percent are studying applied arts; 6 percent are in health professions; and 1 percent are University College students.

“We have our first communication disorders student doing her thesis and the Honors College graduated its first nursing major this year,” says Diann McCabe, director of academic development.

The Honors College was established at Texas State in 1967 by Dr. Emmie Craddock (1915-98). A professor emeritus and chair of the history department, Craddock received the Piper Professor Award and the President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching. She was also the first woman to serve as mayor of San Marcos.

In the fall of 1966, a faculty meeting was held to gauge interest in establishing the honors program. Craddock was chief among those who wanted to challenge and engage the brightest students at the university. Honors programs in the U.S. really took off after World War II with the increased demand for higher education. When the nation’s elite private colleges could not accommodate that demand — or students could not afford those colleges — public colleges took the path to providing enriched opportunities

for the gifted and talented students.

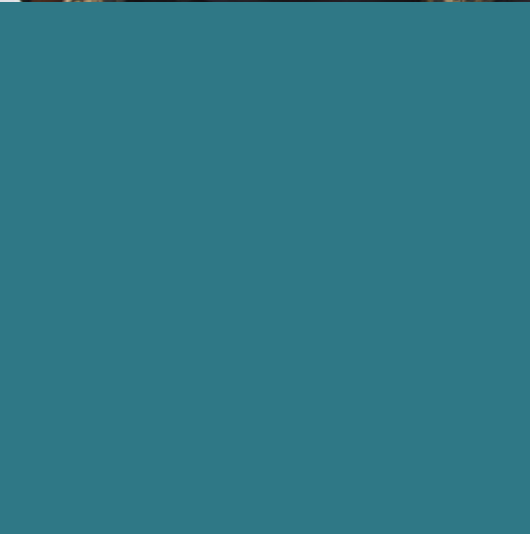
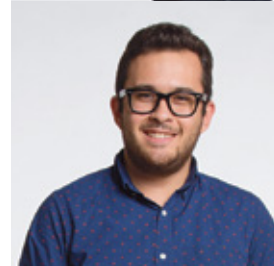
Since 2004 the Honors College has been housed in Lampasas Hall, adjacent to Old Main. In addition to classrooms and offices, the college has a student kitchen and lounge, and it hosts a regular Honors Coffee Forum.

“Many Honors students find a community in honors that nurtures their creativity in special ways,” says McCabe. “Because the classes are innovative, designed by the professors who are teaching, the professor’s motivation and passion, and interaction with other students in the class provide a transformational experience. Students choose to take the class, everybody wants to be there, and it is a completely different kind of dynamic.”

#### Eligibility

- Entering freshmen from the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class  
*or*  
Entering freshmen with a composite score of 27 on the ACT  
*or*  
Entering freshmen with a composite score of 1180 on the SAT (math and critical reading scores combined)
- Current or transfer students are encouraged to apply if they have an overall GPA of at least 3.25. Students transferring to Texas State University must have at least 12 semester hours of course work completed to qualify as transfer students.

Scholarships are available for current and transfer students. Deadline is March 1 each year. Several study-abroad programs are also affiliated with the Honors College. 🌐




## Hard to describe, easy to love


By Ashley Festa


**It’s hard to describe the Honors College experience at Texas State University, mostly because it’s different for every student. Some take the traditional Honors path; others minor in Honors Studies. Most begin as freshmen, while some transfer into the Honors College as sophomores or upperclassmen.**

**The classes are diverse and remarkable, ranging from Astronomy in Art, History, and Literature and Teaching Poetry to Children to Re-Humanizing Communication and Storytelling in Video Games. Because we can’t adequately describe the Honors College experience, we got seven graduates to tell us what it was like for them.**


### The Graduates:

 **Dr. Lindsay Bira**  
B.S. Psychology, 2008,  
Clinical research fellow,  
The University of Texas Health Science Center  
San Antonio


 **Tim Heller**  
B.F.A. Musical Theatre, 2014  
New York City, New York  
Actor, singer, dancer

 **Robert Kuykendall**  
B.S. Computer Science, 2012  
New York City  
Engineer/programmer at Thinkful.com

 **Dr. Melissa McFadden**  
B.S. Physics, 2001  
Fort Worth  
Family practice physician

 **Walter Musgrove**  
B.A. English, 2006  
Dallas  
Attorney and sports agent  
Musgrove Law Firm

 **Louie Dean Valencia-García**  
B.A.I.S. European Studies and B.A. Spanish,  
2007  
Doctoral candidate  
at Fordham University  
and Andrew W. Mellon Fellow,  
Museum of the City of New York


 **Andrea Villalobos**  
B.S. Geography, 2006  
San Marcos  
Planning technician  
for the city of San Marcos


# “Faculty need brilliant students, and we have brilliant undergrads.”


Dr. Heather Galloway,  
Honors College dean




Why did you want to join the Honors College?


 **Kuykendall:**  
I joined for the classes. Honors classes are the best there are. It’s hard not to sign up for all of them.


 **Heller:**  
I was attracted to the smaller class sizes and unique subject matter each class offered. Also, how could you pass up the [50-cent] coffee!?

 **McFadden:**  
They had a program where you could live on the same dorm floor with other Honors College students, and I liked the idea.


What was the biggest benefit you received as an Honors College student?


 **McFadden:**  
It offered me a “home base” on campus outside of my dorm room. It gave structure that helped form friendships with other academically minded students. It offered classes that felt more freethinking, and the professors were very open to discussion to explore various thought paths.


 **Bira:**  
Through taking the courses that replaced other basic requirements, I was able to learn concepts in an interesting and hands-on way, which helped them stick. For example, “Astronomy in Art, History, and Literature” replaced a basic science course. I was also exposed to students from backgrounds that were very different from mine, which helped me think outside the box and become more aware of other ways of life.

 **Kuykendall:**  
The best benefits were the students and the space. Honors students are a very self-selected group, since many people can meet the requirements but don’t apply. Those that do are something special.


How did your experience in the Honors College contribute to your current success?


 **Musgrove:**  
The challenging courses as well as the increased course load prepared me for law school. Law school was very challenging, but balancing the course load of the Honors program along with being a student-athlete helped prepare me for the rigors of law school.

 **Villalobos:**  
The Honors College fostered motivation, promoted both independence and collaboration, and encouraged students to meet their potential. The skills I learned both in class and while drafting my Honors thesis prepared me for the workforce, where goals can be set and met with hard work and dedication.


 **Valencia-García:**  
I’m a history doctoral student and will be finished this year [2015]. I wouldn’t have been able to do that without the Medieval Dark Ages class. My doctoral dissertation is based on my Honors thesis.


What was your favorite experience as part of the Honors College?

 **Bira:**  
My favorite part of each academic year was the meeting held by the Honors College where they announced all their new course offerings. It was always much more exciting to think about taking a hands-on, unique course of 12 students instead of a required, basic course with hundreds of students.

 **Heller:**  
I loved the escape from the theatre world. I’ve always loved the “theatre weird” that theatre people have, but it gave me perspective to see the “science weird,” “political weird,” and “literary weird,” among others, that everyone in the Honors College had. The “weird” in people is what comes out when they really get excited about something, and I think it is the most beautiful part of being human. The Honors College created that safe space for everyone to weird out with each other.

Favorite class?

 **Bira:**  
“Teaching Poetry to Children” with Diann McCabe stands out because it shaped my educational and professional path. It helped me understand that I had strengths in teaching and helping others grow, cognitively and emotionally. The semester after the class, I used the techniques I learned to develop and implement programming for psychiatric inpatients.  
Five years later, I did the same with a cancer population in graduate school. Throughout that time, in every interview, I talked about this experience and was able to set myself apart from other students. To have that one experience come full circle was meaningful and rewarding; it highlights the personal and professional potential of a single Honors course.

 **Kuykendall:**  
It would have to be “Elementary Number Theory” with Max Warshauer. The class was an advanced mathematics course that non-math students could understand and get excited about. It began with the most basic concepts like: What is addition? What are its properties? Can you prove them? It was an incredibly fun class and started my time at Texas State with long nights sitting with friends, thinking deeply about very simple things. The class solidified itself as my favorite almost at the very end.


We had spent the semester learning these foundational building blocks of mathematics and built our way up to powers, modular arithmetic, Chinese remainder theorem, and other tools. And then, in possibly our very last lecture, Max went to the board and used these building blocks we had spent all semester creating, understanding, and proving, to show us how public-key cryptography worked. A foundational idea of digital security, working every time you open your laptop or use your phone, using just what we had learned in the class.


As a computer-science freshman, this couldn’t have been more mind-blowing. Encryption, a pitch-black room in my brain at the time, was suddenly perfectly clear and so simple. I’ll never forget that moment.

“I used to walk from Derrick to Lampasas humming the theme song from *Cheers* to myself: ‘Where Everybody Knows Your Name.’ Absolutely nothing can match the classes I took, the people I met and the experiences I had in the Texas State Honors College.”

Robert Kuykendall

What makes the Honors College experience different from any other?

 **Valencia-García:**  
I could speak at length about how Honors has continued being a fundamental part of my life. Honors isn’t about extra work; it’s about a different type of work — working intimately with professors and doing interdisciplinary work. Honors is about classes that don’t have tests and exams; it’s more about dialogues and presentations. Classes are inspired by the professors’ own research, so they really have skin in the game.

 **Kuykendall:**  
I can’t even start to imagine what my life would have been without the Honors College. It was too much a center of my entire Texas State experience. All of the greatest classes I took were in Lampasas, and all my greatest friends have some connection to Honors. I used to walk from Derrick to Lampasas humming the theme song from *Cheers* to myself: “Where Everybody Knows Your Name.” Absolutely nothing can match the classes I took, the people I met and the experiences I had in the Texas State Honors College.



# SHOP TALKS

## help students survive, thrive in graduate school

Sometimes, an added edge helps spur success. For some graduate students, it comes in the form of something called Shop Talks, the name given to a series of workshops offered by The Graduate College.

The workshops and presentations offer valuable information across three categories: research development, degree success, and career preparation. A variety of sessions are scheduled each semester, and are designed to help graduate students develop the skills and resource awareness necessary for success in graduate school.

“We’re trying to promote the idea that graduate education includes a lot of experiences outside of formal course work,” says Dr. Eric Paulson, associate dean in The Graduate College. “It is important that students understand The Graduate College is here to promote and support their efforts, not only to act as a gatekeeper.”

The first two Shop Talks, organized as panel discussions in early September, are patterned on parallel themes: “What I Wish

I Had Been Told as a New Doctoral Student” and “What I Wish I Had Been Told as a New Master’s Student.” Tanya Long, a doctoral research assistant in the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education & School Psychology, was one of four doctoral candidates on the panel. Her suggestions to graduate students included listening to scholarly texts on CD during a commute, pacing oneself to accomplish one’s work, and jumping on the assigned reading list right away.

Brendan Levy, a doctoral candidate in environmental geography, described how he had taken 12 years off after finishing his undergraduate degree. “While it’s important to get involved, I wish someone had told me it’s also OK to say ‘no’ to some things,” Levy says, explaining that doctoral students are called on by their department to do many things — and that they need to budget their time wisely.

Paulson says many of the Shop Talks have been made available online. During the sessions, he tweets news and information using the hashtag #GCShopTalks. “At any given stage in your

graduate studies you can find something useful. We talk about everything from forming your committee to common elements of the dissertation; the feedback you can expect from your committee; and of the typical experience you can expect to have in your defense, as well as the format of the final document,” Paulson says.

In addition to inviting faculty and graduate students to lead Shop Talks, The Graduate College also partners with library staff, Writing Center instructors, and staff from Research Integrity & Compliance, Career Services, Student Affairs, and other divisions and departments. Librarian Charles Allen set the tone for his Shop Talk — “Graduate Student’s Library Survival Guide” — when he greeted the assembled students with the opening line: “I’m here to make grad school fun!” By the end of his 60-minute presentation, attendees gained valuable knowledge about library resources and were familiar with various search engines and databases. 🌟

For more information, visit [gradcollege.txstate.edu/Current\\_Students/wrkshp/shop\\_talk](http://gradcollege.txstate.edu/Current_Students/wrkshp/shop_talk)

WE TALK ABOUT EVERYTHING FROM FORMING YOUR COMMITTEE TO COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE DISSERTATION; THE FEEDBACK YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR COMMITTEE; AND OF THE TYPICAL EXPERIENCE YOU CAN EXPECT TO HAVE IN YOUR DEFENSE, AS WELL AS THE FORMAT OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT.

Dr. Eric Paulson,  
associate dean in The Graduate College

VALUABLE  
INFORMATION  
ACROSS THREE  
CATEGORIES



RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT



DEGREE SUCCESS



CAREER PREPARATION

**3 GOT MINUTES?**  
**TELL US**  
**about your**  
**dissertation**

The 3MT (three-minute thesis) competition is a chance for doctoral students to show how they can communicate what their dissertation is all about and its significance. The first 3MT was held at Texas State in 2014. The university’s winner goes on to the regional contest sponsored by the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools.

“It is a communication competition. It is not a competition in the sense of who did the best research, but rather how can you communicate the research you

have done to a lay audience,” says Dr. Eric Paulson, associate dean in The Graduate College. “Students must distill down, not dumb down, research and make it interesting and comprehensible to folks who don’t have a background in the area. That’s the challenge.”

Developed by the University of Queensland, it puts doctoral students in front of a panel of judges. In Australia doctoral students refer to their research product as a thesis, while in the United States it is a dissertation. The concept is the

same. Paulson says the 3MT doesn’t take the place of a conference presentation; it is more like an elevator pitch.

Interested students can attend two Shop Talks about the 3MT. Doctoral students get one presentation slide to illustrate their project and three minutes to make a pitch. No laser pointers, dancing, music, lab equipment, or costumes are allowed.

“It speaks to their ability to discuss their research to folks who don’t know much about it. It may not be a skill that a lot of students realize is valuable,” Paulson says.

“Once they step out of their program they have to really reorient how they describe what they did. That have to make connections.”

Cash prizes are awarded to first, second and to the person who takes the people’s choice spot. Each doctoral program in the university holds a program heat and the winner moves up to the final 3MT held in the spring.

For more information, and video of the winners, visit [gradcollege.txstate.edu/3mt](http://gradcollege.txstate.edu/3mt).





Hillary Henderson :: Mari Garza

# PARALEGALS IN THE WORKFORCE

By Tony Cantú

:: Master's in legal studies serves need of law professionals

Mari Garza was a Texas State undergraduate with a double major in political science and Spanish when she discovered a track into the legal profession. Now an attorney at the Boling Law Firm in Kyle, she says the program was an ideal precursor to law school.

"It was truly a steppingstone for me before attending the SMU (Southern Methodist University) Dedman School of Law in Dallas," she says. "The legal studies program course work was rigorous, and helped hone the same set of skills I use day to day as a lawyer — including legal research and writing."

Garza found two elements of the paralegal program especially helpful in preparing for a legal career. "The mediation certificate was valuable because it was my first exposure to alternative dispute resolution, something I frequently engage in now as an attorney. The applied research project was beneficial because it was my introduction to a graduate-level, 'real' legal research and writing assignment," she says.

Since its inception in 1998, the Master of Arts in Legal Studies program — the only graduate-level course of study of its kind in Texas — has been turning out scholars well prepared to enter the burgeoning paralegal profession. More than 350 students have graduated from the Texas State program, which remains something of a well-kept secret.

"We've never had to do much in the way of marketing, but have had a successful program based on word of mouth," says Dr. Lynn Crossett, the program's director for the past eight years. "The program is designed to provide entry-level skills — to do the things that an attorney would expect — and it's highly regarded among employers."

The focus of the 36-credit program, approved by the American Bar Association, is aimed at training students in the paralegal profession as a practical alternative to law school. The mediation certificate program is also offered at the graduate level and is designed to provide entry-level skills for mediators. The State Bar of Texas has approved the recognition of paralegals as specialists in specific areas of law through an examination administered by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Paralegals are not admitted to practice law and their functions are limited.

"Once they graduate, they can work for a government agency or corporation performing compliance or human resources work," Crossett says. "We graduate 10 to 20 students each semester, and most of our graduates become paralegals working for attorneys." To that end, the non-thesis program relies heavily on research and writing, including a required applied research project — a 20- to 25-page paper centered on a student's area of interest. Each student also completes a required internship while in the program. "There is a real focus on research and writing, but in a practical sense — how to find the legal authorities, understand them, and apply them to actual scenarios and then draft specific documents," Crossett explains.

The Department of Political Science program provides a strategic launching point into the legal profession for those seeking career stability, given the demand for paralegals. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a 22 percent growth rate in the paralegal profession — roughly double the rate of growth for attorneys.

Deborah Woltersdorf was among the first class of graduate students in the program. Today, she works for the Texas Attorney

"There is a real focus on research and writing, but in a practical sense — how to find the legal authorities, understand them, and apply them to actual scenarios and then draft specific documents."

Dr. Lynn Crossett,  
director and associate professor,  
legal studies program

General's office where she has served for the past 15 years, helping prepare complex legal documents on civil litigation for state employee clients. Woltersdorf enrolled in the program while interning in the Consumer Protection Division of the AG's office. The training she received helped her pursue a permanent position at the state agency.

"When I was interning, I was able to use what I had learned in class to draft legal documents for the attorneys I was working with for their review," she says. "The program does offer the skills and the actual preparation of documents to work in an agency or firm."

Two years ago, program graduate Hillary Henderson landed at Five Star Tax Advisors in north Austin where she advises small-business owners and keeps them in regulatory compliance. She finds the work fulfilling, both personally and professionally. "Essentially, I act as a coach for small-business owners, and I make sure they're compliant with laws that are constantly changing," she says.

Having attended Baylor and Nashville's Belmont University as an undergraduate, Henderson says Texas State felt like home when she enrolled in the master's program. She offers particular praise for Dr. Walter Wright, whom she considers her professional advisor. She also got a thrill seeing her name in print when her applied research project paper on the evolution of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act was published in the quarterly journal of the American Intellectual Property Law Association.

"That helped me get the job," she says. "I was very worried about going to a large university, but the level of attention and encouragement was amazing — unmatched by any institution I ever attended."

Anna Duke, who is about to complete the graduate program, says she is well poised to ease into her chosen profession. Already, she has a leg up on many of her contemporaries by working part-time for a large firm as a case clerk supporting the legal staff.

"I have had numerous opportunities to apply for awesome paralegal jobs," Duke says. "Even my job as a case clerk is a great job, and I have no doubt that when I am ready, this program will have prepared and supported me to find the perfect job."

At the core of each success story is the program's insistence on research and writing, ensuring each student is conversant in the legal nomenclature by graduation time, Crossett notes. And given its status as something of a passport into a career path, it's a paper worth writing. 📄



# M.S. IN DEMENTIA AND AGING



## Program seeks to transform care for the elderly

*By Tony Cantú*

It could be that graduates of a recently launched Texas State University graduate degree program on aging studies change the way the elderly in our society are viewed — and cared for.

Offered through The Graduate College and the Department of Sociology, the online Master of Science in Dementia and Aging Studies program is among the first of its kind in the nation, and it stresses a more holistic approach to treating elderly patients.

Program creator Dr. Chris Johnson says the new program follows a European model of dementia and elderly care. He discovered this different perspective on treatment while in Scotland, where he joined his wife who was completing her Ph.D. in Dementia Studies at the University of Stirling. He also taught in the graduate program at Stirling and worked for the Dementia Services Centre.

Aside from being struck by the common sight of young people walking arm-in-arm with their grandparents on city streets, Johnson also was impressed with sweeping legislation in Scotland specifically aimed at protecting the elderly. The Mental Capacity Act of 2007 seeks to protect adults unable to safeguard themselves, their property, and their rights from being harmed.

“We’re being sold a bill of goods by our culture that makes people dread growing old,” Johnson says. Once back in Texas, the clinical professor of sociology proposed the idea for the program at Texas State, developed the curriculum, and helped propose it to administrators. He also led a series of continuing education workshops on dementia and aging at different locations in Texas.

Launched in fall 2014, the degree program offers three separate career tracks: a pathway preparing students to become administrators in long-term care settings; another grooming students to become aging services directors in government, nonprofits, or associations; and a third pathway centered on research. A six-month internship is required to complete the program for the long-term care track, and a thesis for the research track.

Dr. Susan Day, who chaired the Department of Sociology for 18 years, says the new course of study will not just expand students’ minds from an academic standpoint, but prepare them to effect positive change in society. Such real-world impact is outlined in a series of goals for the new degree plan that she helped formulate.

“That’s our goal: to create a new culture of caring, a new approach to people with dementia. The changing of the culture in care facilities is our goal,” Day adds.

In its fully developed form, the new master’s degree is a unique offering that could emerge as a national model, says Johnson. “I want to educate America from San Marcos. I don’t want to put the cart before the horse — we need to have a successful major before that — but I envision the creation of a dementia education center for the country. That’s my vision.”

The program enrolled 28 students in its first year, with its

first graduates crossing the stage this spring.

Marcus Mercer, who previously earned a recreational administration degree from Texas State in 2008, was the first student enrolled in the program. Living in Buda just south of Austin, Mercer eagerly signed up for the new degree plan to augment his work with elderly clients.

“It’s an opportunity to bring a lot of light on the stigma and disparagement of the aging that folks have,” says Mercer, who secured a job with an assisted living facilities firm after earning his undergraduate degree. “There definitely has to be a paradigm shift, especially at the ground level among individuals with affected family members working hands-on with them. They can’t do it by themselves.”

His approach to dementia and elder care, based more on the social model of care rather than one overly dependent on administering medication, has been validated. A recent National Public Radio investigation found that Texas leads much of the nation in dispensing antipsychotic drugs to people with dementia and elders — more than a quarter of nursing home residents in the state are prescribed such drugs. A 2014 study by the AARP ranked Texas nursing homes No. 49 in quality of care.

“I’ve never been a person that wants to jump to medication, and it shouldn’t be your first resort,” Mercer says. “There are non-medical interventions we can use that a lot of us don’t recognize, but some people don’t have time and so they go for the medication.” He says the university’s course work supports the non-medical approach while bringing fresh insights to elder care.

Dr. Kyong Hee Chee says the M.S. program is the culmination of a lifelong dream for her, given the influence of her grandmother in her formative years. An associate professor of sociology who also conducts research on aging and dementia, Chee has revived Generation Connections, a student organization staging events on campus and in communities geared to the elderly and caregivers.

“I was so thrilled,” Chee says of her reaction to the approval of the new degree. “I cannot overestimate the influence of just one program, but we aspire to be leaders in the field of elder care and dementia service. I envision graduates of this program to be leaders in advocacy, research, and service.”

Day says the approach of medicating patients first and seeking alternative treatment second has become commonplace in society. “If you look at the media, you see articles about the latest pill or diagnostic intervention for dementia,” she says. “It’s the medical model we’re attached to, the way we think of disease in the United States. We think in terms of dominating and controlling; we don’t live with nature but control it. It’s the Western way. People want to cure it, but don’t want to invest in living with it.”

The new degree will focus on alternative approaches. “We’re trying to get the message out to give people whole and complete lives,” Day says. 🧠



# MAP of the WORLD

By Amanda Beck

“

*We work in so many different fields with different monikers: analysts, planners, division leaders. You don't know who geographers are until you ask about their jobs.*

*Dawna Cerney '06*

”



# GEOGRAPHY PASSES THE 100 MARK IN PH.D.'S

Most people know little about geography beyond what they learned in high school.

Dr. David Butler, who is a Texas State University System Regents’ Professor, admits it can be frustrating when fellow field researchers ask if he studies capitals. “Geography as a discipline is not a memorization of facts,” he says. “It’s about understanding the distribution of things on the landscape.”

In 1996 Texas State established its first doctoral program: geography. Today, more than 100 geography students have received their doctorates. Students select one of three areas of focus: geographic education, geographic information science, and geography, which replaced environmental geography in spring 2014 to offer a greater breadth of study. Geographic studies span multiple disciplines but are usually organized into two categories: physical geography and human geography. The former focuses on landscapes, mapping, and the environment while the latter includes urban and historical studies and public policy.

Throughout its 20-year history, the program has become well-known for its experts in environmental geography, attracting faculty from well-known research institutions such as the University of California, Berkeley. As the university moves toward national research university status, diverse programs such as the Ph.D. in geography will attract both new faculty and additional students.

Dr. Alberto Giordano is the chair of the largest geography department in the nation. Housed in the College of Liberal Arts, the department is home to 760 students, 52 of whom are enrolled at the doctoral level. The department’s 36 full-time faculty members represent a wide range of disciplines within the field.

Giordano was just 7 when he decided to become a geographer. After finishing a primary school project on the rivers of Russia, he fell in love with maps and would spend hours looking at the shapes and names of places around the world. He wanted to explore. So he determined that of his three favorite interests as a child in Italy — soccer, reading, and looking at maps — the latter would be his career.

“What all geographers have in common,” Giordano says, “is that they study place.” But not just what a place looks like. Geographers ask questions such as: Why are things there? How did they get there, and why?

If you stop to think about it, there are myriad topics in the news that relate to geography. How landforms affect weather and natural disasters such as hurricanes and wildfires are issues environmental geographers might study. City zoning, gentrification, and migrant

travel are issues that would interest human geographers. During election years like this one, politicians are using geographic data to communicate with voters. Experts in geographic information science work with software engineers to improve the GPS in smartphones.

“Geography runs in the background,” says Dawna Cerney, Ph.D. ’06, associate professor and chair at Youngstown (Ohio) State University. “We work in so many different fields with different monikers: analysts, planners, division leaders. You don’t know who geographers are until you ask about their jobs.”

About three-quarters of graduates from the doctoral program become college professors or join college faculties. Cerney notes that some of her students’ families have a hard time understanding exactly what kind of career can result from a degree in geography.

For Todd Votteler, Ph.D. ’00, it was a career path that led him to research and an opportunity to effect local change. As executive manager of science, intergovernmental relations, and policy at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, he handles scientific research projects and works with local governments to establish public policy. The geography of Central Texas makes water a major issue for environmentalists, politicians, and business owners. Because the authority’s reach spans 10 counties from San Marcos down to the Rio Grande Valley, Votteler does quite a bit of traveling for work.

Alumnus Jon Kedrowski, Ph.D. ’10, takes traveling for work to the extreme. He is an accomplished mountaineer who has scaled (and camped out on) mountains around the world, from Colorado to Nepal. In 2011, he camped out on every 14,000-foot high peak in Colorado and wrote *Sleeping on the Summits* (Westcliffe, 2012), about his experience. Kedrowski’s adventures don’t come without danger. The year he climbed Mount Everest in 2012 was one of the deadliest, and he witnessed firsthand the devastation of the earthquake in 2014.

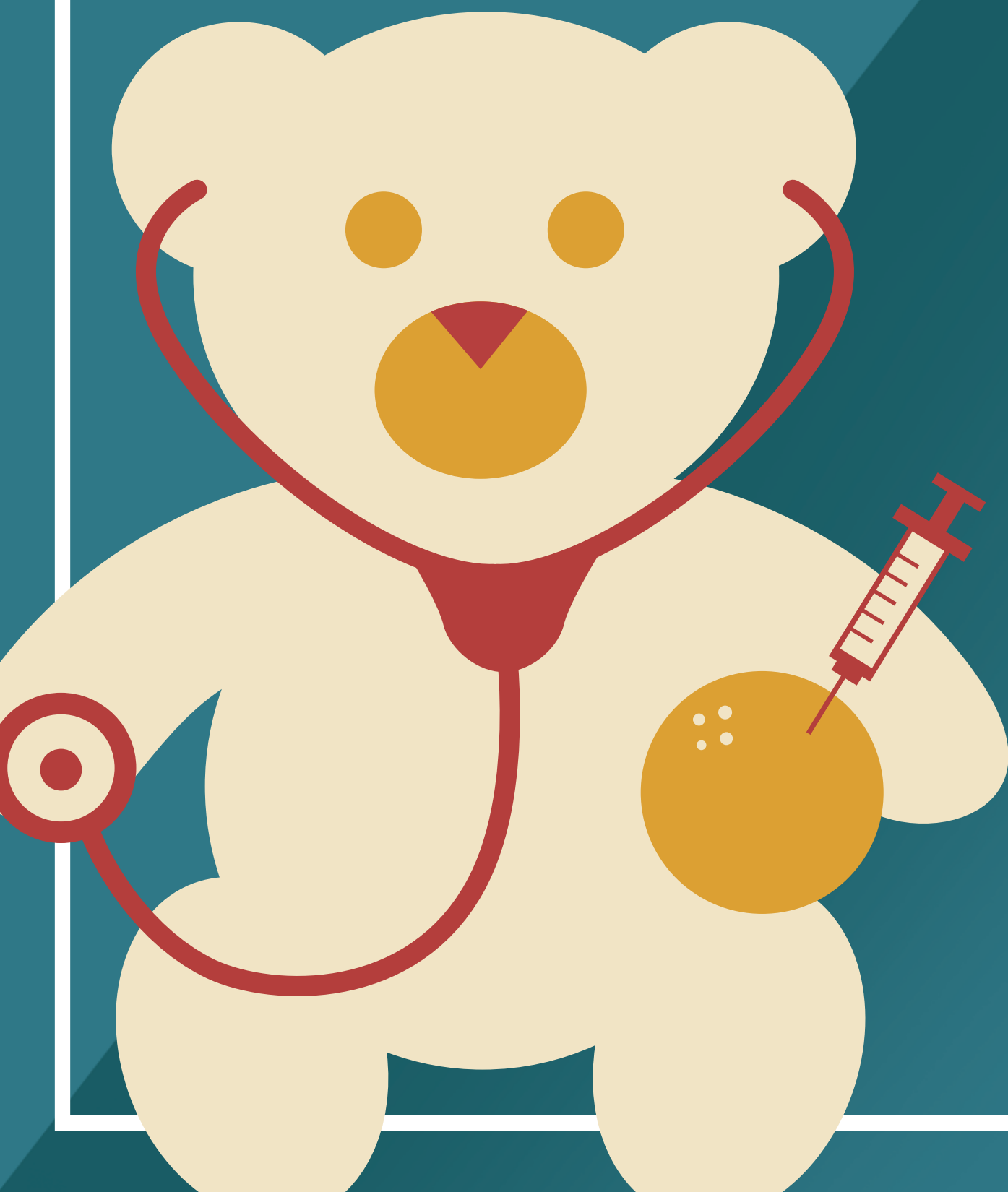
Kedrowski based his business on his experience in geography. He applies his knowledge of mountain environments to developing new products, training other mountain enthusiasts, delivering life-inspiring speeches, writing books, and teaching the next generation of geographers.

If the study of place is the common thread that runs through all geographic research, passion is what drives all geographers. From Giordano’s childhood research project to Kedrowski’s desire to explore the world, geographers study the discipline because they love it. 🌟

## MEET the BOBCAT GEOGRAPHERS

	Todd Votteler ’00	Dawna Cerney ’06	Jon Kedrowski ’10
	Executive Manager of Science, Intergovernmental Relations and Policy Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority	Associate Professor and Chair Youngstown State University	President, N.O.D. Enterprises Assistant Professor, Colorado Mountain College
What was your dissertation research?	Management of Edwards Aquifer	Alpine environments: comparing 1914 photos with newer photos to see changes over time	Climate change and the climbing community of Mount Rainier
Describe the program in three words.	<b>Impact:</b> I see so many of the program’s graduates in a range of positions <b>Close-knit:</b> Faculty members are like family <b>Groundbreaking:</b> The program tries a lot of new things and takes chances that often pay off	<b>Innovative Cutting-edge Caring</b>	<b>Outstanding Reputable:</b> A lot of people in geography know about the program <b>Rich experience:</b> Many faculty lead by example. Dr. Butler opened my eyes to things I could do with my career
You have an hour in a bookstore; where can we find you?	Children’s section; kids are known to wander	Natural history, science, science history	Sports and outdoors, photography





Program  
focuses on  
children,  
families in  
healthcare  
settings

# child life specialization

*By Tammy Valentine*

Twelve years ago a determined Vickie Squires approached Texas State University about offering a class aimed at helping children in need. Since then, that class has grown into a master of science in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and is acknowledged as one of the most comprehensive and successful in the country.

Squires, a child life specialist with Children's Hospital in San Antonio, says the motivation behind her efforts was quite clear: She needed help serving children. "I felt this tension because I couldn't get people to come all the way to South Texas to be child life specialists," she says. Squires chose three universities to approach about creating a child life program. "The first one turned me down. The idea for an intro class was welcomed at Texas State. I never made it to the third school."



The undergraduate class Introduction to Child Life, which was also open to graduate students, has been offered every year since, according to Dr. Melissa Delgado, Family and Child Development advisor and graduate coordinator. In 2008 additional classes were added, and in 2012 the introductory class was split into graduate and undergraduate levels.

Child life specialists focus on patient and family care in a variety of settings, but primarily hospitals, Squires says. Across the country, child life specialist positions are being created at special-needs camps, in the court system, and at grief centers. These specialists employ child development skills to communicate with children on their level about such things as medical procedures, a dying parent, a chronically ill sibling, and more.

“We have research to show that when children have their emotional and mental needs met they do better coping with stress and long-term anxiety,” says Dr. Elizabeth Morgan Russell, former advisor for the Family and Child Studies graduate program. “Coping with stress has real implications for children with chronic

illnesses. If they have a positive hospital experience they are more cooperative.” Russell, who retired in August, spent 12 years at Texas State — six of them working with students in the child life specialization.

Duties of a child life specialist are many — they include preparing children for procedures by giving them a tour of the surgery unit, teaching them about injections by allowing them to give shots to oranges and dolls, and providing activities so they can express their feelings. “They also provide support during the procedure, including distracting the child or using guided imagery to keep them calm,” Russell says. Other responsibilities include giving children the opportunity to play, either in a playroom or with a bedside activity. Overall, the job of the child life specialist is to help children and their families understand and manage the healthcare experience. Parents are also the focus. “Sometimes the child life specialist provides a listening ear or guides them about how to talk to children about difficult issues,” Russell adds.

**Students** say they feel like they have an advantage in a very competitive field because of Texas State’s comprehensive program. **Kayla Ware**, who completed her course work in May 2015, says the education she received helped her land an internship that led to her job at Driscoll Children’s Hospital in Corpus Christi.

**“Getting good internships helps you get a good job. I got lots of opportunities to build up my résumé at Texas State.”**

Ware interned at Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA in Los Angeles.

**Andrea Zuniga**, who graduated from the program in May 2015, says her training led to multiple job offers.

**“I had three offers, two in Texas, one in Oklahoma, and two alternate potential offers, with one of those being St. Jude. I also got an offer from my dream hospital, Children’s Medical Center Dallas.”**

Zuniga currently works there as the nephrology inpatient child life specialist.

**Shay Rocco**, who also graduated from the program in May 2015, applied to Texas State after earning her bachelor’s degree at Michigan State University. She says the comprehensive program as well as the low tuition were contributing factors for choosing Texas State.

**“I got into a few programs, but the comprehensive classes attracted me. The tuition was lower too. I didn’t have to take out student loans.”**

Rocco, who also received multiple job offers after graduation, is a child life specialist in the emergency department at Children’s Hospital in San Antonio.

The Texas State program is the only graduate-level child life specialization in the state, and one of a handful offered at public universities in the United States. People from all over the country are drawn because of its reputation, Delgado says. “It’s a sizable graduate program, but it’s the perfect size to offer a quality program,” she adds. Students nationwide are choosing to pursue a master’s degree in child development with the track in child life at Texas State because it offers comprehensive classes, in addition to placement and internships at some of the nation’s top children’s hospitals.

Delgado believes the graduates are very competitive on a national level. “We’ve had notable success with students passing the certification exam the first time. Our students have success achieving internship placements and employment.” She cites several internships at hospitals in cities such as Baltimore, New York, Dallas, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Miami, among others.

In 1965 a group of professional women formed an organization they called the Association for the Well Being of Hospitalized Children and Their Families. By 1982, the Child Life Council (CLC) was established and a method of professional certification was adopted. The CLC, which

administers the certification examination for child life specialists, is changing educational standard requirements from the current bachelor’s degree to a master’s degrees in 2022.

Students who choose child life as a career are typically child and family focused, Russell says. They tend to be compassionate, positive, and personable. Most students in the program are women in their 20s, but it also attracts some men and older students who want to change careers.

The child life profession is hungry for research, Kayla Ware says, and the master’s-level child life program at Texas State has prepared her for this. A primary reason that the CLC is requiring a master’s degree for certification beginning in 2022 is so students have opportunities to learn how to conduct research in the field, Squires says.

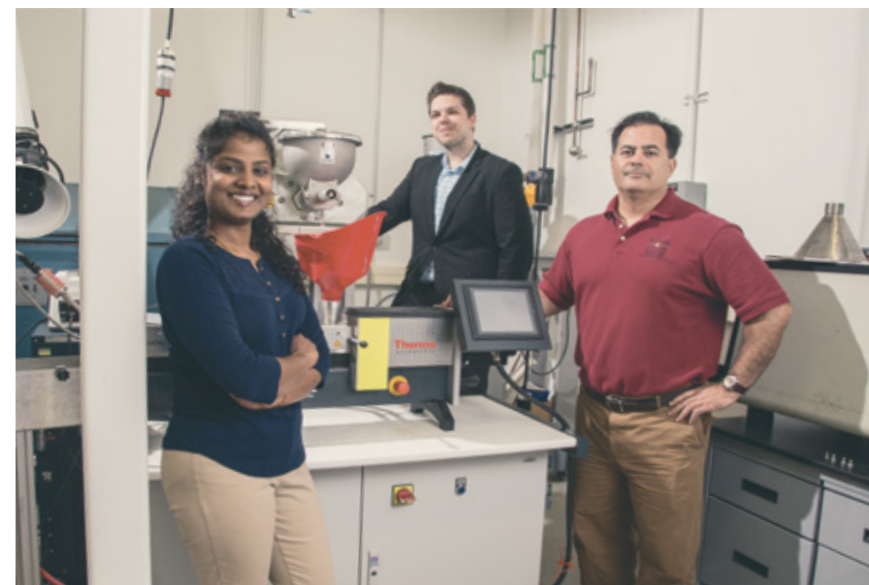
The child life field continues to evolve and one of the goals for Texas State is to provide an education that gives students the tools to adapt, Squires says. This philosophy keeps the university at the forefront.

“Our program is already at a master’s level and we keep a close eye on the Child Life Council’s strategic plan,” Delgado says. “We are well-positioned to address any of their upcoming changes to remain a top program in the country.” ✨



# GRADUATE STUDENTS GET REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE

By Julie Cooper



## TX<sub>2</sub>O

**Archana Gujjari**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Zachary Turner**

*M.F.A. student*

**Chris Manspeaker**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

## aRPM

**Edith DeLeon**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Sayantan Das**

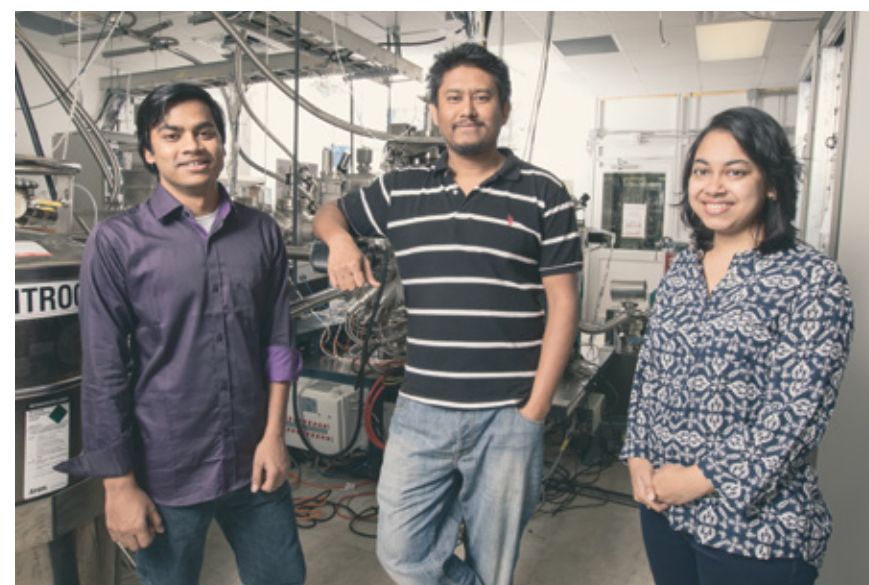
*joint Ph.D. student, MSEC and M.B.A.*

**Javad Gatabi**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Matthew Himes\***

*M.F.A. student*



## packsi

**Anwar Siddique**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Shafiqur Rahman**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Susmita Ghose**

*Ph.D. student, MSEC*

**Olivia Lukomski\***

*M.B.A. student*

*\*not pictured*



## Enterprises born out of STAR SEEK project



Students never fail to amaze Dr. Gary Beall, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Texas State. One example of his advisory work with students at STAR Park illustrates that best.

It involves a four-person team called aRPM, which is developing a sensitive sensor that detects the alignment and speed of a rotating shaft. It potentially could have many safety applications for virtually anything that uses a motor — from motorcycles to jet engines. “The technical term is ‘run out,’ ” he says, referring to detecting misalignment. “For very large equipment, misalignment can be a killer.”

Beall explains that, initially, the group had developed a handheld device with an LED display. “I said that is just too old school; we ought to be able to pull it up on our iPhone or iPad,” he says. “The next week they had that done. I couldn’t believe it.”

The other two pilot teams are: TX<sub>2</sub>O, which is creating a water treatment method for use in the oil industry; and packs, which is making a new food packaging system. All three were born out of the Materials Science, Engineering, and Commercialization (MSEC) Entrepreneurs Boot Camp.

The graduate and professional studies students are the latest group to make their mark at STAR Park. It’s all part of the evolution of the 58-acre Science, Technology and Advanced Research Park, where three multidisciplinary teams are were selected to participate in the first STARSEEK (Student Entrepreneurship, Enterprise, and Knowledge). For one academic year, the teams each receive office and laboratory space,

mentoring, and a startup funding package.

Going forward, a university-wide competition was held in the spring semester to pick three teams for 2016-17. Teams, which consists of three to five students, are multidisciplinary, and will develop a business plan.

Beall says the initiative represents a natural evolution of activities within MSEC, where he also serves as associate director. And STAR SEEK may help define the way Texas State’s multidisciplinary commercialization efforts are viewed.

The development of the program was spurred by SioTeX, a team of graduate students from Texas State that won the Texas Halo Fund Investment prize in April 2014 during the 14th annual Rice Business Plan Competition. SioTeX, which has since increased its equity funding to \$500,000, was made up of three MSEC doctoral students, one M.F.A. student, and an M.B.A. student.

Dr. Bill Chittenden, associate dean of the McCoy College of Business Administration, says the formula for the program is effective because faculty advisors from different colleges have demonstrated an enthusiasm for interacting with students and other professors among various disciplines. “We are willing to work together at Texas State. We see ourselves as a university community,” he says. For the M.B.A. students, it is also getting the

real-world training that is needed to succeed in business. “If you are starting a new business, it is important to have people familiar with business,” Chittenden says. Many students choose the McCoy School because of the emphasis of entrepreneurship, he says.

The Graduate College also is a key player in the program. “The involvement of The Graduate College in this project reflects our view that graduate education is more than just a credential, that at Texas State students can gain real-world momentum toward their career while completing their degree,” says Dr. Eric Paulson, associate dean of The Graduate College. “An important part of this project is that it is truly multidisciplinary — students must come from at least two colleges, and there is a variety of student roles needed on each team. We see this as a way to emphasize the real-world problem-solving potential that multidisciplinary teams bring to the table. This project provides these graduate students with structured support as they move from the classroom to the boardroom and beyond.”

The M.F.A. in communication design students bring the team’s invention to life by creating an identity for it, says Claudia Roeschmann, graduate advisor with the School of Art and Design. “They work with team members to name the company and its product, and design all marketing materials to bring the product to market and to pitch to potential investors. The entrepreneurship program helps the M.F.A. students to strengthen their skills in working with other disciplines,” she says.

The purpose of STAR SEEK is to create an immersive opportunity for students to explore entrepreneurship as a career option. Students participate in a yearlong living laboratory experience that explores the potential to launch a student-led commercial enterprise. Those who complete the startup experience are eligible for admission to the STAR One incubator program. That’s good news for STAR Park, which is opening 16,000 square feet of working space in September with an eye to increasing the number of startup firms from the current five to 15 or 20. 🌟

## STAR PARK



STAR Park’s most recent expansion added 16,000 square feet.

Since its dedication in 2012, STAR Park has grown to accommodate clients, student interns, the offices of the Texas State Small Business Development Center, the Advanced Polymers and Nanomaterials Lab, and now the student entrepreneurship initiative. “In the future we will have a broader mix. The original building was dedicated to supporting materials science based enterprises. New facilities will include space for life science companies, advanced manufacturing, and software platform development,” says executive director Stephen Frayser. “We are a place where you can take promising ideas and convert them into commercial products.

“A research park is not so much a physical location, as it is a very public commitment on the part of the university to using its resources to commercialize products that are of benefit to society,” says Frayser. “We become that vehicle for taking the best of what the university and the private sector have to offer and through collaboration creating new and exciting opportunities. The new student-led efforts will only add to an already healthy environment for innovation and entrepreneurship.” 🌟



Newest residence halls opening in fall 2016

The Moore Street Housing project is a 190,947-square-foot, 598-bed project that will consist of two residence halls and a connecting community building.

The Moore Street Housing project required the removal of San Saba Hall, Canyon Hall, and the West Maintenance buildings.

2 residence halls

6 stories tall

598 student beds

190,947 square feet

\$58,834,337 total cost to build

ACCOLADES


Three receive Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award

The Graduate College’s Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award competition honored three students in April. Each received \$500 and were entered into the Southern Conference of Graduate Schools’ competition for best master’s theses.




**Dr. Floyd “Butch” Weckerly**, a professor in the Department of Biology, is the recipient of The Graduate College Outstanding Mentor Award.


Student awards



**Koreena Villarreal**, who earned her master’s degree in health education, won The Graduate College’s Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award in the Social Sciences, Business, and Education. Her thesis, *Attitudes About Partner Communication Regarding Contraceptive Use Among Hispanic Male College Students*, was directed by Dr. David Wiley, professor of health education.



**Andrew MacLaren**, who earned his master’s degree in biology, has won The Graduate College’s Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award in the Life Sciences. His thesis, *Automated Detection of Rare and Endangered Anurans Using Robust and Reliable Detection Software*, was directed by Dr. Michael Forstner, professor of biology. He went on to win the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools’ Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award.



**Sergio Carvajal**, who earned his master’s degree in mass communication, won The Graduate College’s Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award in Digital Scholarship. His thesis, *The Texan Italian Stories Documentary Series: Fostering Social Connections Among Members of a Geo-Ethnic Community through the Process of Media Creation*, was directed by Dr. Sandy Rao.

Loftus named first Endowed Chair in Water Conservation

**Tim Loftus** has joined The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment as the first Meadows Endowed Chair in Water Conservation.

Loftus is also a professor of practice in the Department of Geography at Texas State University.

“My goal is to help explore, research, and otherwise help solve Texas water challenges,” Loftus said. “There is pretty strong potential, with the population growth expected, that our demand for water will outgrow our supplies.”



Photo courtesy of STX Entertainment

*The Free State of Jones*, a summer movie starring Oscar-winner Matthew McConaughey, has a Bobcat connection. **Vikki Bynum**, distinguished professor emeritus of history, wrote the book on which the film is based and serves as a consultant on the film. Director Gary Ross (*Seabiscuit*, *The Hunger Games*) also wrote the screenplay. Bynum appears as a nurse, and her husband, **Gregg Andrews**, retired history professor, has a cameo as a Confederate officer.

KUDOS TO... Lone Star EMMY winners

Several Texas State-electronic media sequence alumni earned recognition November 7 at the Lone Star Emmys in Austin for excellence in television news reporting.

**Ashley Lowell Doussard**, producer for KXAS-TV in Dallas-Fort Worth, was part of the crew that won for Best Newscast – Major Market.

**Excelsha Thomas** won for news producing at KEYE-TV Austin.

**Isamar Terrazas**, assignment editor for Telemundo 40 in McAllen/Weslaco/Brownsville, was part of the team effort that won for Overall Station Excellence.

**Cary Zayas**, news anchor at KRGV-TV McAllen/Weslaco/Brownsville, was part of the crew that won for Best Newscast – Small Market.

**Robert Fisher** is part of the San Antonio Spurs’ creative team that won for public service, graphics, audio and editing.







1 Joe Henry Morin

### Jim Yeonopolus '68

Killeen, has been named the chancellor of Central Texas College (CTC). Yeonopolus has been with CTC for more than 40 years and has held several executive positions, including dean of the Navy Campus and assistant deputy chancellor of the Continental and International campuses.

### Kathleen Fite '69

San Marcos, has been recognized with the Communities in Schools, South Central Texas, Lifetime Achievement Award for changing the lives of countless students through the Bobcat Buddy Partnership. Fite initiated the program 25 years ago, when she was supervising student teachers in New Braunfels. An estimated 3,500 at-risk students and an equal number of emerging educators from Texas State University have benefitted from the partnership.

### Richard Castro '70

El Paso, was honored as the 2015 El Pasoan of the Year. Castro owns 25 McDonald's restaurants in the El Paso region and employs more than 1,300 people. He also founded and chairs the Council on Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development. This year the nonprofit pledged \$1 million to fund programs in area school districts for college-ready students. Castro was honored in 1997 as a Texas State Distinguished Alumnus.



2 Guadalupe Morin

### 1 Joe Henry Morin '74 and

### 2 Guadalupe Morin '73

Austin, were honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at Celebrando Austin 2015. Joe Morin is manager-business development, Office of the Governor. Lupe Morin is the executive director of the Hispanic Women's Network of Texas.

### Tim Kelly '83

Austin, has been appointed to the board of directors of the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, which provides grant funding for civil legal aid in Texas. Kelly is president of Auto Financial Group and a founding partner of FI-Mobile and has more than 20 years of experience delivering services to financial institutions.

### George Harrison '83

Bay City, is executive vice president and chief financial officer for STP Nuclear Operating Co., which operates the South Texas Project nuclear power facility. He currently serves as a commissioner on the Port of Bay City Authority, treasurer of Matagorda County Economic Development Corp., president of the Matagorda County Cattlemen Association Board of Directors, and a sponsorship chair for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life.



3 Kenneth Huewitt

### Peter Bennis '84

Keene, was honored at a reception for his 30-year career with Pinnacle Bank. After graduating from Texas State, Bennis joined what was then First State Bancorp as an internal auditor. He became president of the bank in 1989. He was also a founding member and first president of the Keene Chamber of Commerce.

### 3 Kenneth Huewitt '85

Houston, was named interim superintendent of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) effective March 1. Huewitt, who joined HISD in 2001, was named deputy superintendent and chief financial officer in July. In 2015 he was honored by the Council of Great City Schools with the Bill Wise Award for distinguished service to urban education. Prior to joining HISD, Huewitt served as an auditor for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Inspector General, a senior audit specialist for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., a senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand, and a regional director of finance for The ServiceMaster Corp.

### Myron Galchutt '87

Ladera Ranch, California, was recently featured in *Connect*, the alumni magazine of Big-4 professional services firm Ernst & Young LLP. He currently serves as senior managing director of Newmark, a global real estate firm.



4 Anna Tallent

### Robert N. Hancock Jr. '91

Houston, was recently included in the 2015 Texas Super Lawyers list. He is a construction litigator with the Coats Rose Law Firm.

### David L. Bohmfalk '96

Hondo, has released his first novel, *The Crossbow and the Beret*. The time travel book is set in Texas 1988 and during the days of King Arthur and Camelot.

### 4 Anna Tallent '01

San Antonio, was promoted to partner at Ernst & Young. She was previously a senior manager at the firm and has 14 years of experience in public accounting and an extensive audit and SEC reporting background.

### Paige Morse '03

Dallas, was a finalist in HGTV's Fresh Faces of Design contest. The owner and director of Paige Morse Creative, Morse is an interior decorator, photo stylist, and entrepreneur.

### Justin Fletcher '04

San Antonio, is now a GIS analyst for San Antonio Water System, a public utility owned by the city of San Antonio.

### John Macpherson '05

Austin, was honored with the 52nd RecognizeGood Legend award for his volunteer work with Imagine Art, a 2,000-square-foot community garden in Austin.

Send your Class Notes contributions to:  
hillviews@txstate.edu

## Forward motion

### Jenna Quinn builds career, breaks through barriers in the NFL

By Michael Agresta

Jenna Quinn goes to work every day for the Houston Texans. But for Quinn, the NFL isn't just her professional community — like so many Americans, football is part of her family.

Some of Quinn's earliest memories involve the Green Bay Packers, the nearest NFL franchise to her hometown of Milwaukee. "In our household, Sunday was always a huge sports day," Quinn says. "When you're born in Wisconsin, you really have no choice but to become a cheesehead by association."

Quinn's behind-the-scenes job with the Texans involves building new partnership opportunities with brands and hammering out the details of corporate sponsorships. For example, when she worked with the Chicago Bulls, she oversaw a new partnership with Advocate Health Care, which included the naming rights of the new Bulls' practice facility. The new job is making the Texas State graduate very happy these days. "You're selling football in Texas," Quinn says of her job. "There's not a better place to do that I can imagine."

Quinn, who knew from an early age that she wanted to work in sports, recalls going to a Bulls game at age 12 and telling her father that she'd work for the team someday. As she grew older and joined her high school student newspaper, she began to dream of becoming a sports journalist. Quinn looked at ESPN anchor Linda Cohn as proof that there was room for women in the male-dominated world of sports broadcasting.

When a close high school friend moved to Houston and went on to attend Texas State, Quinn followed, majoring in journalism and mass communication. She was an anchor for Bobcat Update, the student-run newscast, and found an internship at the Fox affiliate in Austin, covering sports. "The mass communication school at Texas State served me so well,"

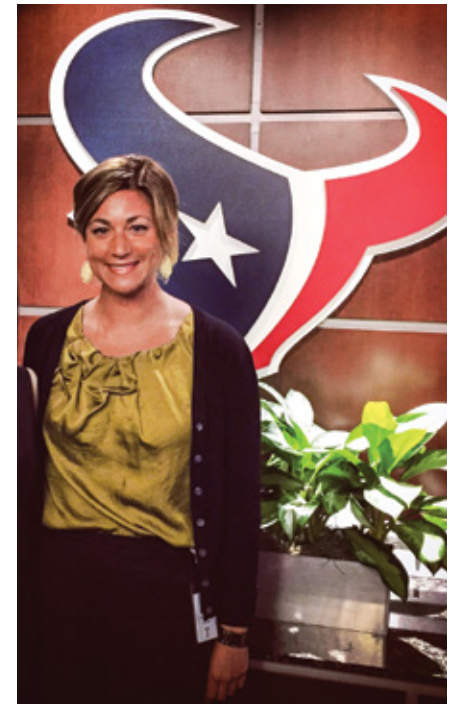
Quinn says. "I would not be where I am right now without my education there. I have no regrets going that far for school, and being that far from my family." Quinn singles out Larry Carlson, Dr. Ray Niekamp, and Dr. Tim England as professional mentors with whom she still keeps in touch.

Upon graduation in 2007, Quinn found herself facing the dilemma of choosing between two exciting offers. One path would take her to New York City, to intern for CNN and begin a broadcast journalism career. The other would bring her to Chicago, to join the Bulls organization as she'd promised her father a decade earlier. Quinn chose the Bulls.

Quinn's first role with the Bulls, in the 2007-2008 season, was as an inside sales intern selling season packages and premium tickets. She competed against 13 other interns for one permanent ticketing executive position. She won the job and spent the next seven years with the team, eventually moving over to corporate partnerships. After being contacted by a recruiter for the Texans, Quinn made the leap from the Midwest to Texas once again, taking a position as corporate development manager.

In Houston, as in Chicago, Quinn is the only woman in her department. "As a female, I grew thick skin at an early age," Quinn says. Though she has nothing but praise for her current employer, she adds, "You can't wear your heart on your sleeve. As a woman, you're not held at the same level generally in sports. It's important to be really professional, be strong, and work hard. Trying to break that glass ceiling and become a female director in the NFL is one of my goals."

As she plans her rise, Quinn takes inspiration from the elite athletes she comes into contact with through her work, from NBA legend Michael Jordan to NFL All-Pro J.J. Watt, and their attitude of never-ending, jocular competitiveness. "I'm from the town right next to J.J. in Wisconsin," Quinn says. "When I first met him, we were talking about our high schools. I had him sign an autograph for my brother for Christmas. He wrote 'Go Pirates' on the ball, which is our rival high school. It was pretty funny."



“IT’S IMPORTANT TO BE REALLY PROFESSIONAL, BE STRONG, AND WORK HARD. TRYING TO BREAK THAT GLASS CEILING AND BECOME A FEMALE DIRECTOR IN THE NFL IS ONE OF MY GOALS.”

—JENNA QUINN



# Randy Rogers

Country singer/songwriter found his voice in San Marcos



Photo Credit: Chris McCoy

By John Goodspeed

Texas country star Randy Rogers knew he wanted to work in the music industry after college, but thought it would be on the back end of the business.

“I wanted to be a songwriter, not necessarily the front guy,” Rogers says. That changed, though, when he started singing at open mike nights at Cheatham Street Warehouse, the venerable hangout for students where another Texas State alumnus got his start — country superstar George Strait.

The son of a Baptist preacher, Rogers graduated from Cleburne High School in 1996. He initially pursued a degree in accounting and business while entertaining throngs of students with impromptu solos many evenings on the steps of Falls Hall, the residence hall that since has been replaced by the Performing Arts Center.

Little did he know that attending Texas State would be the catalyst to turn someone with a dream of doing something — anything — in music into an acclaimed singer/songwriter who performs at sold-out

venues across the state and has a flourishing fan base nationwide. Besides hitting the books to learn how businesses work, Rogers saw business firsthand as a waiter at the Lone Star Café, as a booking agent for bands, and while working at a public relations firm for artists.

“In the San Marcos area there are a lot of musicians, promoters, and agents so it was easy to be involved as much as you wanted to be,” he says. Rogers, who graduated in 2001, decided to change his major to journalism and public relations, figuring the degree would better suit his desire to land a job in music, which he fell in love with at an early age.

On his first visit to San Marcos, Rogers says it was the campus scenery that got his attention. “I saw all the girls in bikinis lying around at Sewell Park,” he says with a laugh.

In the first semester of his senior year, Rogers persuaded some fellow students who were musicians to join him — steel guitarist Eddie Foster, drummer Hector Del Poro, bassist Taylor Meese, and guitarist Brett Noake. In the early days, the quintet sometimes outnumbered the audience at Cheatham Street. So Rogers posted fliers on campus, which he got in trouble for, and used a trick he learned from Kent Finlay, owner of Cheatham Street and himself a singer/songwriter known for nurturing young artists. “I told my friends to park their cars at Cheatham Street,” Rogers recalls. “It looked like we had a crowd. Worked like a charm. We still didn’t make any money, but there was a ton of people.”

Rogers received more than just advice on packing bars from Finlay, who died in 2015; he earned the bar owner’s praise. “Kent encouraged me to start a band,” Rogers says. “He told me that once I did, I could have Tuesday nights. I wanted that gig.”

Rogers’ first CD was *Live at Cheatham Street*, which he used to pitch the band to other venues. His first studio record, *Like It Used To Be*, was released in 2002, about the same time the band gelled with its current lineup — Brady Black on fiddle and background vocals; Les Lawless on drums; fellow Texas State alumnus Geoffrey Hill on lead guitar and background vocals; and Jon Richardson on bass.

*Like It Used To Be* drew acclaim and spawned hit singles on Texas radio with the title track and *Lost and Found*. That put the Randy Rogers Band on an upward trajectory, and they’ve been playing more than 200 shows a year ever since. In 2008, the band made its debut at Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry.

The band then signed a major-label deal with Mercury Nashville, opened for the



Photo Credit: Chris McCoy

likes of the Eagles, Willie Nelson, and Gary Allan, and was named one of *Rolling Stone* magazine’s Top Ten Must-See Artists in 2007. While Rogers writes rocking country songs and heartfelt ballads for the stage instead of the radio, the band scored minor *Billboard* hits with *Kiss Me in the Dark* and *One More Goodbye*. In January, the band released its seventh studio album, *Nothing Shines Like Neon*, which incorporates a more classic country sound and themes.

Things Rogers learned at Texas State help him every day. “I talk with the press and radio people doing interviews every week, and I learned about all that going to school,” he says. “I learned a lot about writing — even writing songs — from the journalism classes I took.”

He plans to return to Cheatham Street this spring for acoustic shows, playing several songs and bringing out new artists. “It’s fun to soak in your roots,” he says. Rogers also may work in a visit to his alma mater — and check out Sewell Park.

RANDY ROGERS RECEIVED MORE THAN JUST ADVICE ON PACKING BARS FROM KENT FINLAY, WHO DIED IN 2015; HE EARNED THE BAR OWNER’S PRAISE. “KENT ENCOURAGED ME TO START A BAND. HE TOLD ME THAT ONCE I DID, I COULD HAVE TUESDAY NIGHTS. I WANTED THAT GIG.”



# Catching up with... Rita Garcia

News anchor happy to be back home in Texas



She was born in Austin and raised in the Rio Grande Valley, and when Bobcat alum Rita Garcia finished her first stint at a TV station in the familiar trappings of Brownsville, she headed west for a broadcast news job at a major network affiliate in Los Angeles. But two years later, Garcia returned to her native Texas, this time to the bustling city of Houston. Less than two years later, she was tapped as the morning anchor for KRIV/FOX 26.

Coming from a family of Bobcats, it was an easy decision for Garcia to return to her roots. *Hillviews* spoke with Garcia, who talks about her time at Texas State, her passion for journalism, and a penchant for new cuisine.

## Why did you choose Texas State?

My parents were alumni; so is my older sister. I knew Texas State had an awesome radio station and TV program. What I really liked about Texas State, I felt like it was so small that we really got one-on-one with our professors. I fit right in when I started at KTSW 89.9.

## What can you point to at Texas State that helped you in your career?

The TV news program and professors, Dr. Raymond Niekamp and Dr. Tim England. The program prepared me well to be in front of the camera by allowing students to get a hands-on experience. There was also an organization on campus, NBS (the National Broadcasting Society), I was encouraged to join. I'm so glad I did because I was able to start networking, plus I connected with the NAHJ (National Association of Hispanic Journalists).

## How did your career jump from Brownsville to Los Angeles?

The executive producer (of KCBS) called. He liked my stories on all the border issues. He gave me 90 days to prove myself, so I packed my bags and took a leap of faith. My parents gave me their blessing and told me, "Go give it your all!"

As soon as I moved to LA, one of the biggest wildfires broke, Michael Jackson died, and the Los Angeles Lakers won the NBA Championship. Needless to say, I hit the ground running and the station kept me busy for the next three years.

## What brought you back to Texas?

I really wanted to challenge myself and become an anchor. When the opportunity in a top 10 market presented itself — along

with being back in my home state — I took the job and started as a weekend anchor at Fox 26. After a year and a half, I filled in for a vacant morning anchor position.

## What is your day like?

My alarm goes off at 2 in the morning while most people are still asleep. I anchor from 4 to 7, then put together reports for the 8 and 9 a.m. news where we focus on "trending topics" on social media. Also at Fox 26 we like to end the week on a positive note so I have a segment called Feel Good Friday. I'll put a report together focusing on someone either paying it forward or highlight a non-profit organization. I'm also the host of two public affairs segments, Hola Houston and Asian Connections.

## What would you see yourself doing in five years?

I think the business is changing and evolving. I embrace it. I think it is fascinating. From the second I wake up I am tweeting and Facebooking. We tweet during the show. If someone has an opinion on things, we are able to get it on the air. When there is breaking news, like a fire, I will tweet: "Is there anyone in the area?" It's a great tool to keep the conversation going and actually have our viewers contribute to the newscast.

As for the future, I hope to continue doing what I am doing. I enjoy the morning show, and believe it or not, there is something about being awake before everyone in the city. I love it!

## What would you tell your 20-year-old self?

Relax, everything is going to be OK. Just enjoy the ride. I learned that from my first job.



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# Clown finds rodeo is serious business

Swingler's job combines comedy, athletic prowess

By Laura Heinauer

Sometimes the sound system breaks down. Other times the horses don't want to cooperate. And there's always the chance of getting kicked in the ribs.

Now in his 28th year as a professional rodeo clown, Mark Swingler, 49, never knows what might happen in the ring but is always prepared to lighten the mood. "Apparently all I got to do is put some horns on my head," Swingler quips to the announcer at a recent rodeo in Dripping Springs during a string of failed cow-roping attempts. "That way all them cowboys'll never catch me either!"

Swingler's comedic timing, not to mention his original acts and willingness to share the ring with 1,600 pounds of flailing beef, has made the 1991 Texas State University graduate one of the most respected and sought-after rodeo clowns in the country.

"We're a combination of entertainment and athletic events and there are so many moving parts," says bullfighter Andy Burelle, a friend and colleague who often performs with Swingler. "He's got the most original acts out there and is definitely one of the best at knowing when to insert something or when to jump in and help if needed."

The job keeps Swingler, who lives in Leander, on the road about 220 days a year. In addition to developing, writing, and performing an eight-minute act during each show, it's Swingler's job as a barrelman to protect the bullfighters and fill in the dead spots between and during events. He has performed at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, and has been nominated for the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association's clown of the year.

"You've got to be able to predict when those guys are ready to go ... they're not going to wait on you," Swingler says. "We're like the mortar in between the brick that keeps everything together. I guess you can call it an insurance policy. When something goes down you've got to keep everyone entertained."

Swingler grew up roping calves and raising horses in Missouri City, outside of Houston. He started riding bulls in high school. He began college at Sam Houston State University, but transferred to Texas State, drawn mostly by the university's business school and its marketing program.

Swingler joined the rodeo club soon



after arriving on campus. The club mainly performed on the weekends, allowing him to attend classes during the week. At the time, rodeo clowns were also bullfighters or cowboy protectors, meaning that it was their job to distract the bulls and protect the cowboys when they fell off their mounts.

After college, those weekend performances ended up being what Swingler pursued for his professional career. He has also worked in real estate. As the sport of rodeo evolved, separating the jobs of clowns and bullfighters, so did Swingler, who eventually began focusing more on the entertainment side of the job.

"That was the scariest part. I could fight bulls — no big deal. But telling jokes, acting? That was different. That was a learned trait kind of thing," he says.

It was a trait, however, that he quickly became well known and respected for. "It's knowing when to step in and when not to. We have guys that get in there and they don't shut up," Swingler says. He spends a lot of time coming up with new material but only about 10 percent makes it to the rodeo arena. "I like to focus on the art of what we do," he says. "I try to teach the young guys that just because you're not doing anything doesn't mean you're not doing anything. Sometimes less is more."

Of course, the job isn't all just fun and games. As a barrelman, it's his job to step in when the cowboys are in trouble. Burelle says Swingler's experience in the barrel came in handy while at an event in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Burelle had been thrown about 15 feet in the air after jumping in to protect a cowboy. He says the bull was coming toward him a second time when Swingler stepped in with his barrel and took the hit instead.

Jessica Swingler, 24, says having a rodeo clown for a dad gave her a chance to see the country during the summers and meant that she had a stay-at-home dad during the winters. "It was just a great bonding experience," she says. "Those eight summers were the best times of my life."

Swingler's latest act involves an antique fire truck and some slapstick involving fire hoses and pyrotechnics. "I got the fire truck and that put a little spark back in it," he says, pun intended.

He doesn't plan on putting his act on the back burner anytime in the near future. "I'll keep going 'til it's not fun anymore," he says.

## More information

ON THE WEB: [www.markswingler.com](http://www.markswingler.com)





## From X's and O's to fine art

Tal Milan is key figure in Fort Worth art scene



*Tal Milan at his gallery in Sundance Square in Fort Worth. A 1986 graduate of Texas State, Milan was a Bobcat linebacker when the team won a NCAA Division II national championship in 1982.*

Photos by Jerry McClure

By Matt Flores

To the casual observer, Talon Milan probably doesn't look like an art gallery director.

The barrel-chested, 6-foot-tall, 250-pound-plus Milan looks more suited to a football field than to the fragile world of Jacarte glass sculptures and acrylic paintings. But it is in the showroom of the Milan Gallery in Fort Worth's trendy Sundance Square entertainment district where you will likely find the art enthusiast on any given day of the week.

In fact, Milan was a football player. He played strong-side linebacker on the Texas State Bobcat team that won a national championship in 1982. The husband and father of two daughters proudly wears that championship ring.

To be certain, football was an inevitability for Milan. The product of football powerhouse Euless Trinity High School in suburban Fort Worth was blessed with size and strength. "I was always kind of the bigger guy, so football was for me," Milan says.

Although he wasn't very familiar with Texas State, he was drawn to the campus in equal parts for its new stadium, its charming setting along the San Marcos River, and for its animated, highly engaging

head football coach, Jim Wacker.

"He didn't stand still on the field. He always had his head moving like a bobblehead. He had more mannerisms than Johnny Carson. He was truly unbelievable," Milan says of Wacker. So how does a former linebacker — known for punishing quarterbacks and receivers — transition from a life of blackboard X's and O's to one of delicate sculptures and impressionist paintings?

Chalk it up to family — and the Olympics. Milan inherited his mother's love of art.

An accomplished painter for more than 50 years, Henrietta Milan's works appear in studios and art spaces around the world.

"Art was always in my blood," Milan says, adding: "From the time I could walk, my mom was doing shows, and I was helping. Even when I was playing football in college, in between games, I was helping her set up shows."

A 1986 business administration graduate, Milan initially had designs on doing something other than art. After college, he was recruited to work in sales covering South Texas and the Hill Country for a pharmaceutical company. The job was going fine, he recalls, until he approached his boss one day with a special request.

From the time he was 10 years old, Milan and his family had traveled all over the world every four years to watch the Olympics, regardless of where they were held. Once, he and his brother even participated in the centuries-old torch run as part of the opening ceremony in Rome.

But the time he wanted off from his job to attend the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, was more than his boss would allow. "So I quit," Milan says, unapologetically. "It was after those Olympics that I fell back into the art world."

Milan poured himself into it, too, working seven days a week at times, learning more about art and refining his tastes. "In 1990, I became director, and since then, we moved from being a small business to a bigger space. We are now the oldest business in Sundance Square," he says.

Despite the fact that he is almost always surrounded by art, Milan seems perfectly content to remain on the business side of things, rather than be the artist. "I tell people I am the only non-artist in the world that manages an art gallery."

### More information

**ON THE WEB:** [milangallery.com](http://milangallery.com)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=rI9vi7E52cQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rI9vi7E52cQ)



# The (last) view

A peaceful setting and a chilly morning greets nature lovers on the first day of spring 2016. Spring Lake gives life to the San Marcos River, to San Marcos, and to The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment. The lake is also home to eight threatened and endangered species, one of which — Texas wild rice — is found nowhere else on Earth. Spring Lake is a vibrant center and beloved resource for the community. Photo by Stephanie Schulz.



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## from the collections



*Ansel Adams exhibit now on display in the lobby of the Wittliff.*

## AT THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS

### *Ansel Adams: A Southwest Legacy*

#### NOW ON DISPLAY

*Ansel Adams: A Southwest Legacy* highlights 21 photographs Ansel Adams made in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The exhibition includes dramatic vistas of Big Bend National Park, intimate close-ups of nature in New Mexico, and a variety of portraits of Georgia O'Keeffe and others. Also included are several well-known masterpieces such as *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico* and *White House Ruin, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona*.

Ansel Adams made these prints as part of a "legacy" collection for The Friends of Photography, one of several organizations Adams helped create to promote photography as a fine art. They are now in the collection of Lynn and Tom Meredith of Austin, who have generously helped make this exhibition possible.

Adams is famous for creating unforgettable photographs of unspoiled nature. He is also lauded for his mastery of black-and-white printing techniques. Adams was, however, most interested in the expressive power of a photograph. "You don't make a photograph just with a camera," he said, "you bring to the act of photography all the pictures you have seen, the books you have read, the music you have heard, the people you have loved." To learn more, visit [thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/](http://thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/).