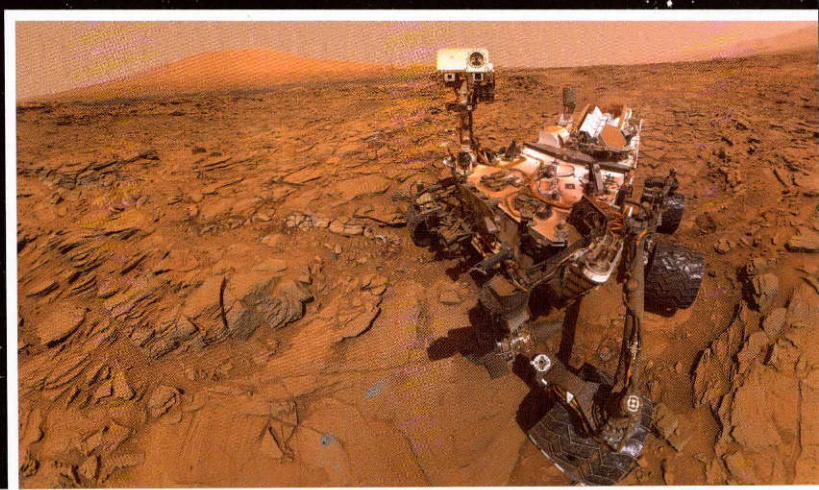
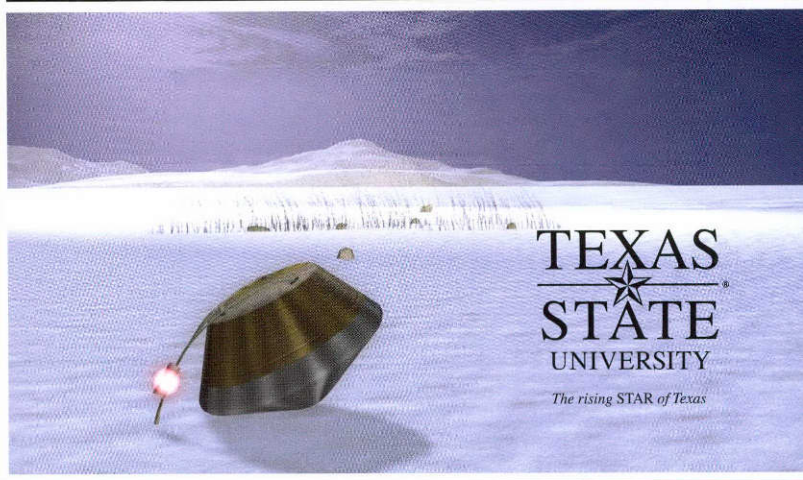
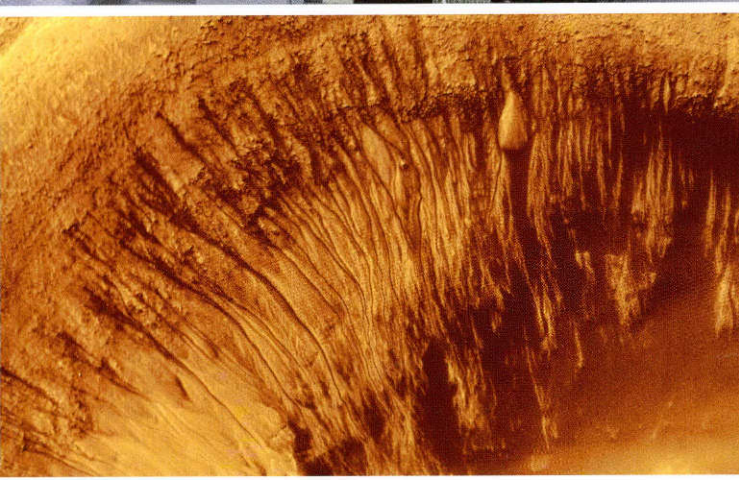


# hillviews

## DESTINATION MARS



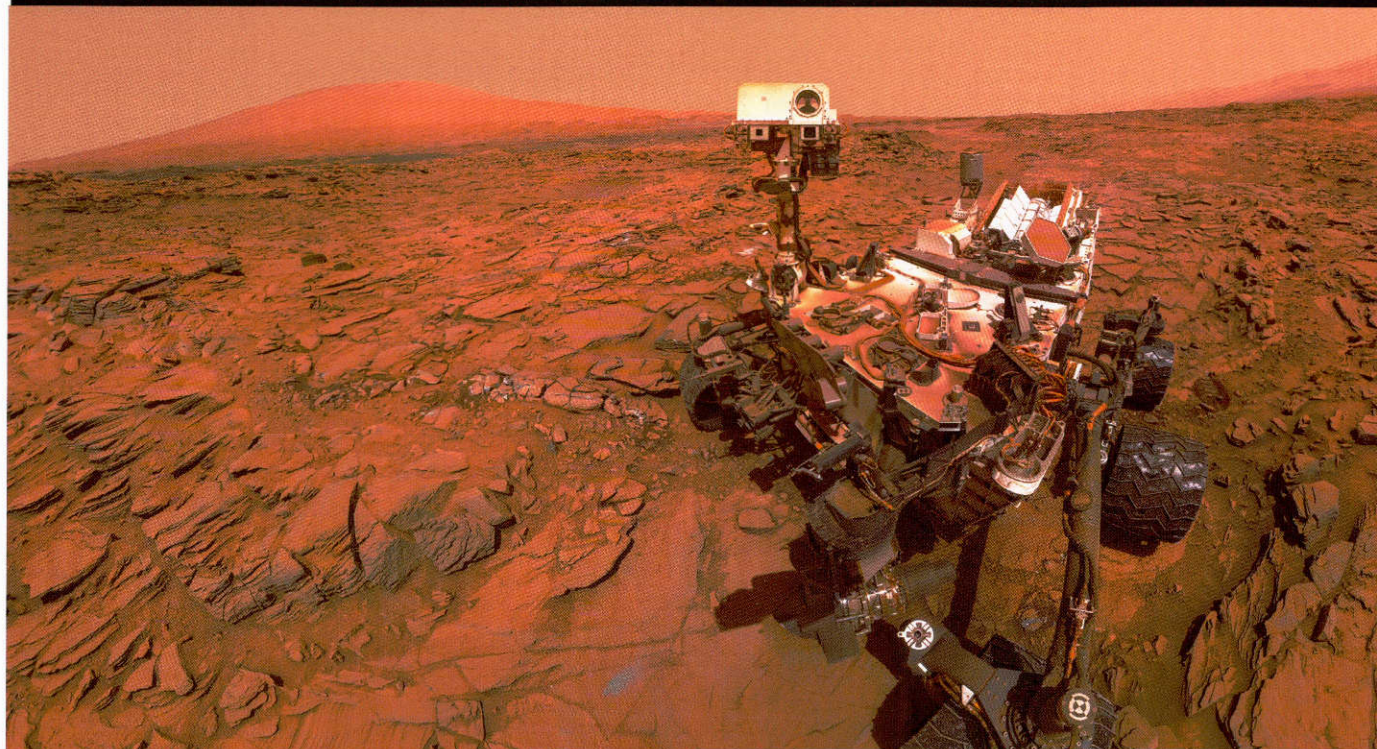
TEXAS STATE  
PLAYS A PART  
IN THE MISSION



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COVER STORY

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Professors at Texas State are working at NASA or with the agency's partners, laying the groundwork for the first manned mission to Mars, which could be as early as the 2030s.

**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. Find the latest and past issues of *Hillviews* online at [hillviews.txstate.edu](http://hillviews.txstate.edu)

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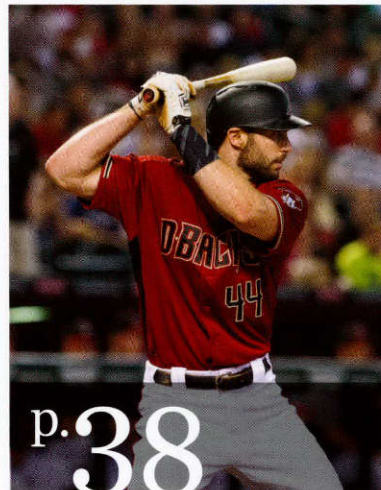
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## (from the president's desk)

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Dear Friends,

It is truly gratifying to share news about the interesting work our Bobcats are engaged in that perhaps is not so widely known. It might surprise you to learn that more than 120 Bobcats have current or past ties to NASA, firms that contract with NASA, or the agency's Mars program. For decades, Americans have had a fascination with space travel, and NASA has been studying the prospect of visiting Mars and the viability of sustaining life in celestial locations other than Earth.

Several of our faculty and alumni are involved with work related to NASA's planned mission to Mars, which experts say is still more than a decade away. There are Bobcats conducting research on biofilms, which can affect water-filtration systems that are critical to long-range space travel. One Bobcat is studying the contours of the surface of Mars and testing hypotheses that suggest the formations on the planet may have been created by rivers. Another Bobcat collects and preserves lunar rocks, cosmic dust, and asteroid samples which can provide clues as to whether a planet can support life.

The research is fascinating and offers a peek into the science of space exploration that some of us might not otherwise have thought about. It also speaks highly of our graduates and demonstrates how they make valuable contributions to scientific discovery.

It wasn't entirely by coincidence that so many Bobcats ended up working in the field of space exploration. Faculty and alumni who have worked for NASA encourage former students to pursue positions with the agency. It was classic networking that helped some Bobcats land jobs with NASA or its contractors. We know that there are Bobcat networks in science, business, performing arts, healthcare, and a number of other fields, and this issue of *Hillviews* offers a closer look at how successful these networks have been for many of our recent graduates.

Also in this issue is a report on the Texas State International Piano Festival, which brought 37 young pianists and college students from around the world to the university; a profile of alumnus Nancy May, who spent 30 years in banking before becoming president and CEO of the San Antonio Humane Society; and an article that looks at the decades-long partnership between Texas State's Department of Geography and the National Geographic Society. We hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise M. Trauth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Denise M. Trauth



# Riders up

## Paul Bulmahn's quest: A Triple Crown winner

*Story and photos by Rachel Wayne*

The Florida sun quickly dries the morning dew at GoldMark Farm, but not before a parade of thoroughbreds, accompanied by its eager entourage, approaches the training track.

T. Paul Bulmahn greets everyone with a warm smile as he studies a clipboard with dozens of quirky names such as Ghost Chaser and Elusive Lady and grooms tack up the horses. Under Bulmahn's tutelage, GoldMark Farm personnel prepare thoroughbreds for their destiny: to compete on tracks across the country.

GoldMark Farm has established itself as one of the premier training and rehabilitation centers in the country since opening its doors 10 years ago. GoldMark-trained thoroughbreds have earned 586 wins, and an impressive 220 of those winners became stakes horses, where 52 percent of the farm's starters have won graded stakes races. Approximately 30,000 thoroughbreds are born each year, and only when reaching age 3 can thoroughbreds compete in the Kentucky Derby. In 2016, three of the 20 Derby competitors trained at GoldMark.



## Living in luxury

Thoroughbreds have a reputation for being high strung, but those training at GoldMark seem pleasant and happy. Their pampering includes daily baths, premium food, a cold saltwater spa, and a whole-body massage station, after which they retreat to their stalls for post-training leg wraps and unique rubber flooring for a “mattress” of enviable comfort.

The training facility, located on 2,600 acres in Ocala, Florida, is itself a product of destiny. Bulmahn purchased the land in 2002, but his appreciation for horses began much earlier, when he read the seminal horse novel *The Black Stallion*. “I spent a lot of time in the children’s library and I read everything I could find about horses. Everything in the ‘H’ section,” he says. “When I was a kid, I climbed up a mulberry tree and a limb lowered just enough that I could swing down onto our neighbor’s horses.” Riding these horses around their paddock in Fort Wayne, Indiana, “I imagined I was riding Citation at the Derby,” he says with a laugh.

Standing in the observation deck, Bulmahn sweeps his hand to encompass the three-quarter-mile track — the motion symbolizing the expanse of his vision and evoking the big-dreaming personality seen in larger-than-life entrepreneurs both real and fictional. Unlike Walt Disney or Willy Wonka, however, Bulmahn earned a master’s in business administration from Texas State.

After his childhood appreciation for the library led him to pursue an English degree, which he credits for those entrepreneurial communications skills, he studied law at The University of Texas at Austin. Like his thoroughbreds, Bulmahn leaves no challenge

untuned. Getting his M.B.A. in 1978 “filled the void I felt about finance and accounting and answered some needs I felt I had,” he says.

Eventually, it empowered him to go into business for himself when he founded ATP Oil & Gas in Houston, which became a multibillion-dollar international oil and gas exploration and development entity. “I had always worked for someone else,” he recalls. “I felt it was time to start up a company.” He and his wife, Mary, decided to put their entire life savings into it.

In Bulmahn’s typical fashion of daring curiosity, he opted to begin offshore. Later, in the eastern Mediterranean he discovered a gas well within 18 months of incorporating in Israel. “That’s a phenomenally short turnaround for deep-water [exploration],” he explains. “I had the best people in industry — and I still do, at GoldMark.”

Some of those “best people” were recruited from among Texas State graduates. “I want Texas State to keep going straight up, as it has been,” he says. As the donor behind the T. Paul Bulmahn Research and Trading Lab, he continues to support Texas State’s McCoy College of Business Administration. He is on the board of the McCoy College of Business Foundation, and in 2000 he was honored as one of the university’s Distinguished Alumni.



Bulmahn says that he's still a "youngster" in the horse world, having only pursued the business for the past 15 years. "I had book learning without the practical experience," he explains. Yet when his eyes light up as the horses race around GoldMark's track, he's a youngster in a different way, as his inner *Black Stallion*-loving child still jumps with joy. As a pair of thoroughbreds race down a sand-based Safetrack, designed to protect horses' delicate legs, the thrill is palpable in his voice: "That's the exciting part."

Joy seems to be a daily experience at GoldMark, and indeed a general sense of contentment, wonder, and passion permeates the place. In between the statuesque Spanish mission-style facilities — designed to keep things cool for the horses, Bulmahn notes — idyllic great oaks, occupied by wild birds, create sweeping leaf patterns across the rolling acres of paddocks. Beyond, one can see sun-drenched pastures of perfect green. A host of cats prowl for pesky rodents, while other paddocks hold friendly goats and Bulmahn's prized longhorn cattle. The stables are remarkably clean and fresh — Bulmahn insists upon it — and more than 100 horses in active training enjoy luxury care. Thoroughbreds have a reputation for being high strung, but those training at

GoldMark seem pleasant and happy. Their pampering includes daily baths, premium food, a cold saltwater spa, and a whole-body massage station, after which they retreat to their stalls for post-training leg wraps and unique rubber flooring for a "mattress" of enviable comfort.

The creature comforts aren't limited to the horses. Bulmahn aims to cultivate a wondrous experience for the dozens of clients who send their horses to GoldMark. Adjacent to the training track is a two-story building equipped with cushy chairs and a panoramic view of the track, topped with a screened deck and bar and flanked by hotel-quality accommodations. The main office offers an auditorium, trophy cases, and Bulmahn's cherished collection of Triple Crown memorabilia. A compelling storyteller, Bulmahn has an encyclopedic memory and a knack for sharing Triple Crown lore, including the tales of the aptly named Whirlaway, who won despite his wayward movement, and the pacemaker-turned-champion Sir Barton. He is also working on a documentary film, *Crown*, about the jockeys who have won the Triple Crown.

At first blush, GoldMark Farm appears to be a thoroughbred training facility, but its breadth of amenities and attractions make it a home and destination as well as a business.

In fact, the 2016 premiere of the biopic *A Sunday Horse* took place at GoldMark.

Always one to embrace the unique, Bulmahn's home is adorned with an impressive collection of artifacts honoring his other favorite animal, the elephant. Rare Israeli marble is tickled by a relaxing waterfall as one enters Bulmahn's dining room, the corner of which bears an olive-tree camel sculpture also from Israel (a souvenir of his time exploring for natural resources). A home bar hosts his tribute to Maker's Mark, a Kentucky-based distillery known for its horse-themed enterprises. In fact, Bulmahn's friendship with Bill Samuels Jr., president of Maker's Mark, inspired half of the farm's name. The "gold" half refers to the Olympic gold medal, the highest achievement in sport.

Outside his house, a paddock holds a blind mare named Sunday Shopping, a tribute to his late wife Mary's favorite hobby. Sunday Shopping was blinded in a fall and is kept with a donkey companion to ward off coyotes. "I wanted to give her a chance," says Bulmahn, who offers her a treat and a song every morning. "I just love animals."

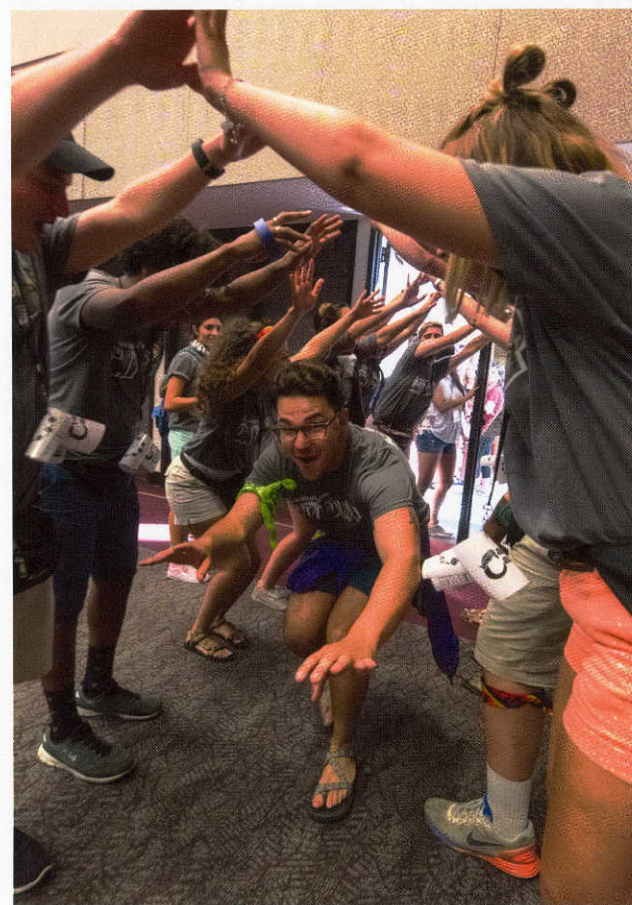


# Cat Camp

Fun, friendship, and freshmen. That's the formula that has worked at Texas State since Cat Camp was launched in 2009. In the hot summer days leading up to the start of the fall semester, campers meet for several days in June, July, or August, depending on whether they choose a New Student Orientation Camp or the traditional Cat Camp. For campers, it is a chance to bond with other new students while participating in activities on the river, at a dance, and while learning about Texas State from Student Involvement counselors and leaders.







**OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:**

*During Cat Camp, a surprise spirit rally breaks out with incoming students talking about what they are looking forward to at Texas State.*

*Counselor Aliza Sotelo, a sophomore, watches the skirts put on by new students.*

*Three-legged racers take part in the Maroon and Gold Olympics.*

**THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:**

*At T-Bar-M camp in New Braunfels, students learn the Bobcat spirit chants, led by counselors (from left) Zachary Frezquez, Jade Traslair, and Jyair Norman.*

*Boko makes a surprise appearance to meet and greet campers.*

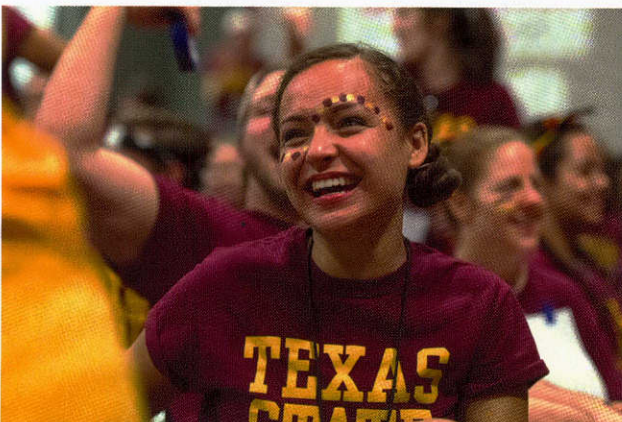
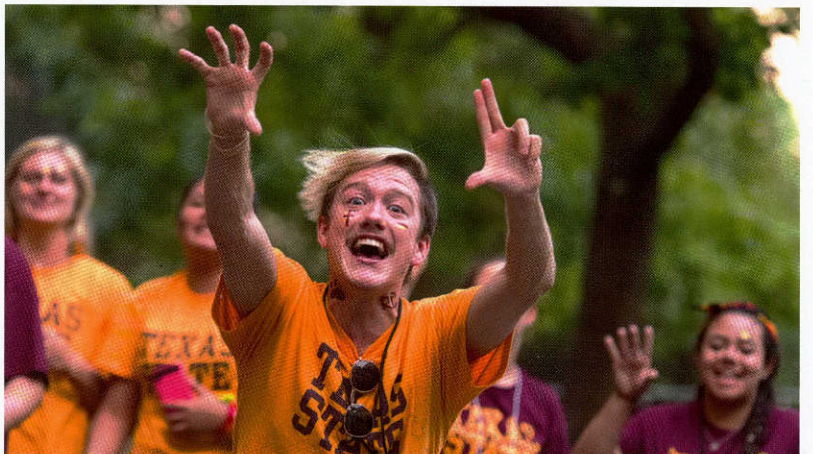
*Cat Camp leader Hunter Lewin shows how the welcome works the first day of camp.*

*Photos by Stephanie Schulz*

# Cat Camp

*continued from page 7*





**OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:**

*Camp counselor Lexi Ramirez (right) leads the way to the Maroon and Gold Olympics.*

*Dr. Joanne Smith, vice president for Student Affairs, greets Cat Campers.*

*Campers, counselors, and leaders gather for a spirit rally at the LBJSC amphitheater.*

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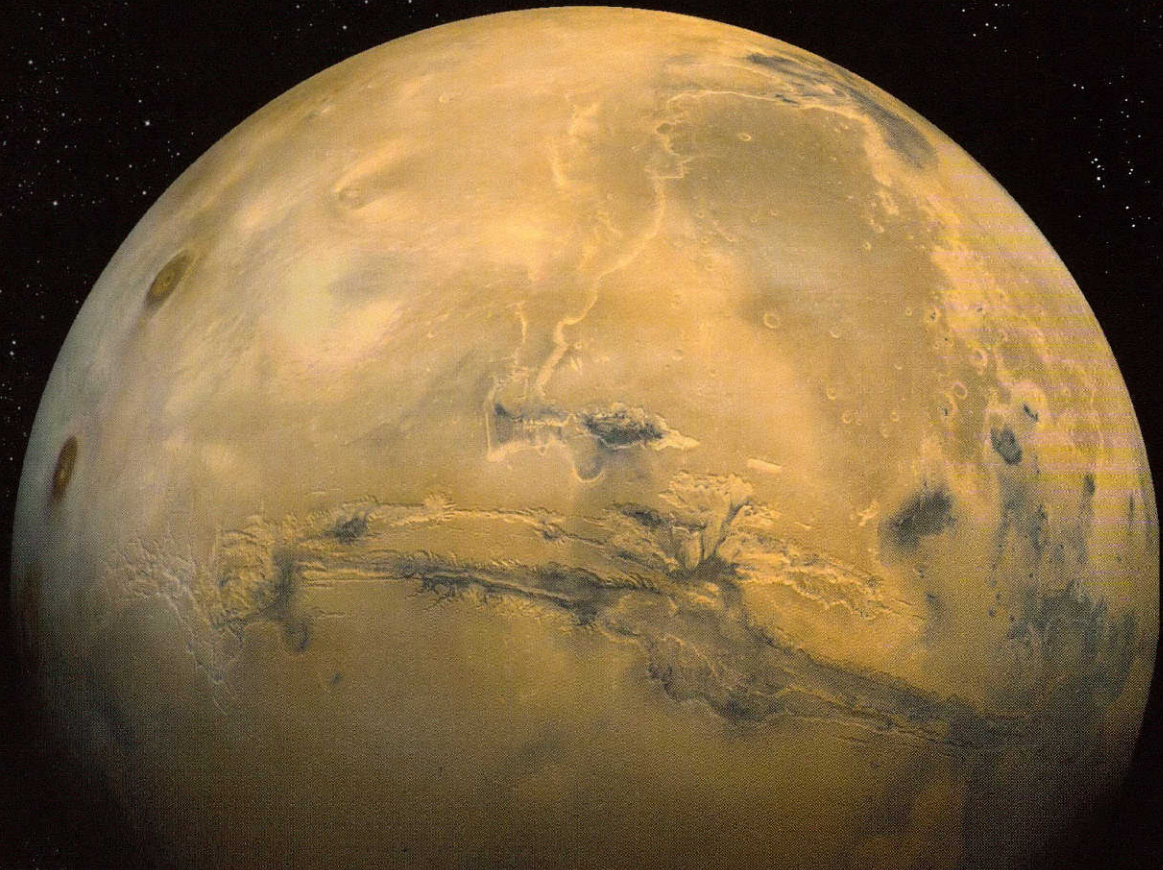
*Relay racers use hoops during the games.*

*Camp leader Mark Bell demonstrates the Heart of Texas and Eat 'Em Up, Cats signs.*

*Being in small groups for skits is a chance to make new friends.*

*Relay participants sort candy. That's really the first leg of the relay race.*

# DESTINATION



# MARS

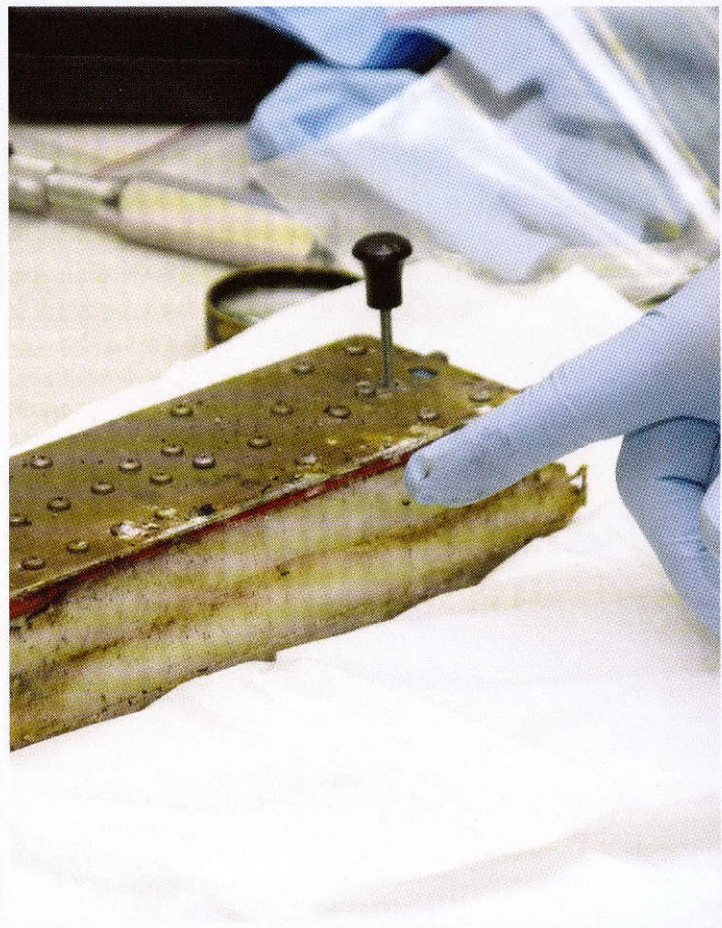


# Bobcats team with NASA for mission to the red planet

*By Robyn Ross*

Does life exist on the red planet? And what will it take for humans to survive there – on short-term missions or in a permanent colony? For decades, NASA has been studying the geography and climate of Mars, as well as the logistics of long-term human space travel. In July, researchers at the University of Edinburgh published a study in *Scientific Reports*, suggesting that Mars may be more toxic than scientists thought. And while that may be a blow to any possibility of finding life on Mars, it could also calm NASA's worries about Earth's bacteria contaminating the planet.

The first human mission to Mars could be as early as the 2030s. At Texas State and in NASA laboratories, university faculty, students, and alumni are helping lay the groundwork for that mission.



*Valerie Cassanto (left), with Instrumentation Technology Associates Inc., and Robert McLean, from Texas State University, work on an experiment involving the Growth of Bacterial Biofilm on Surfaces during Spaceflight (GOBBSS). In the second photo, a scientist indicates an area of the GOBBSS experiment that was carried on mission STS-107 as part of the Commercial ITA Biomedical Experiments payload.*

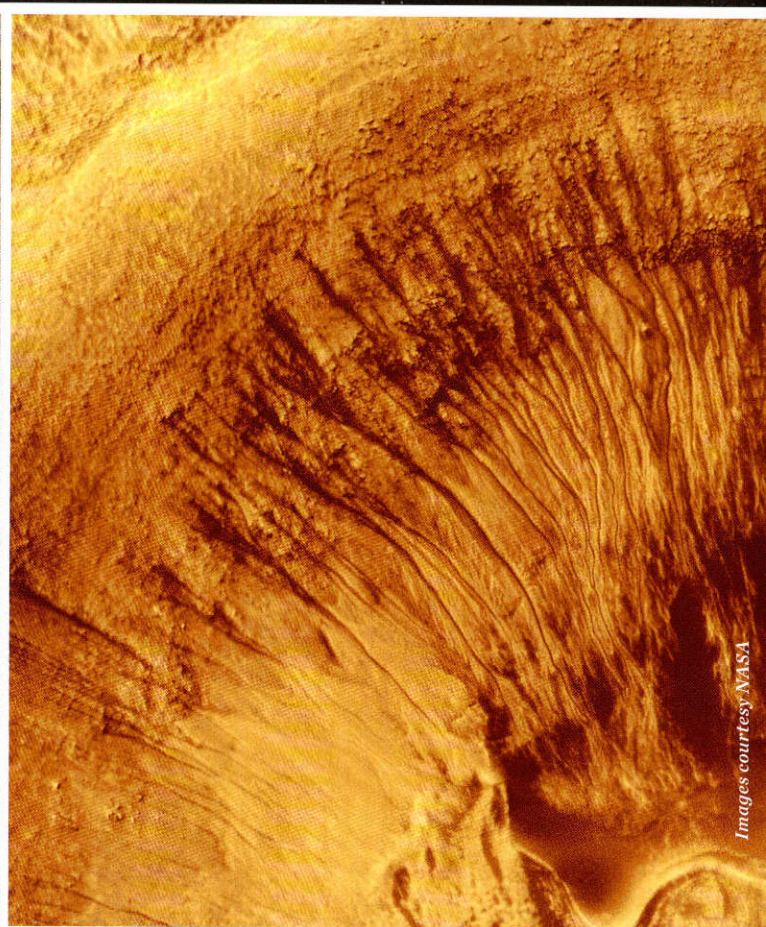
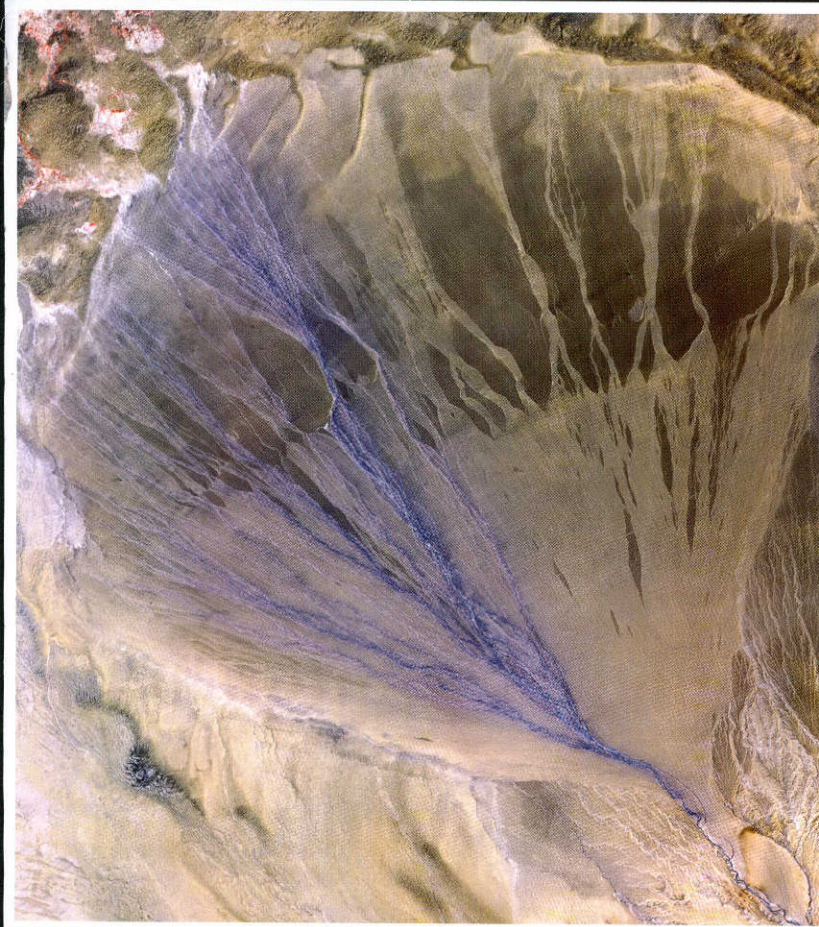
## BIOFILMS IN SPACE

The round-trip journey to Mars will take about three years. A one-way trip is about six to nine months, and a crewed mission will last around 1,100 days. To spend that much time in space, astronauts need a life-support system that effectively recovers and reuses water from urine, perspiration and the humidity in astronauts' breath. But on the International Space Station, considered a test lab for long-term space travel, a biofilm has formed in the water filtration system. Biofilms are communities of microorganisms that attach to a surface, such as the plaque that forms on teeth. The space station team is able to clear the biofilm from the water system, but the solution is expensive and only temporary.

A better understanding of how biofilms form in space will help NASA design systems that aren't vulnerable to biofilm-related clogs or contamination. Regents' Professor of Biology Robert McLean, Aquatic Resources doctoral student Starla Thornhill, and graduate biology student Quentin DiPasquale are working on a NASA grant-funded study of biofilms on the space station. This project is a partnership with colleagues from Arizona State University and the

Johnson Space Center. McLean has been studying biofilms since the late 1990s, when he organized an experiment that flew on the space shuttle *Discovery* and was the first to show that bacteria could colonize on a surface in the absence of gravity. The Texas State team is learning how a mixture of common bacteria functions in a low-gravity environment by using a bioreactor system to simulate the near-weightlessness of space. Eventually, the same bacteria will be sent to the space station for study.

Thornhill and McLean are also using the bioreactor system to study how bacteria grow in a microgravity environment on stainless steel, which is used in the pipes and tanks of the water filtration system on the space station. In the process, they'll learn if biofilms corrode the stainless steel, which could be harmful to the filtration system, and whether the biofilms can be treated with silver-based disinfectant. "We need to understand how bacteria grow in that kind of gravitational environment," Thornhill says. "We can't send people to Mars and have their water filtration system fail."



Images courtesy NASA

Images of Mars show features that to Dr. Justin Wilkinson suggest megafans formed long ago by sediment laid down by rivers. In the photo at left is a 60-km-long megafan across the desolate landscape between the Kunlun and Altun mountain ranges that form the southern border of the Taklamakan Desert in Xinjiang, China. And right, evidence of recent water on Mars indicates channelled aprons in a small crater within Newton Crater.

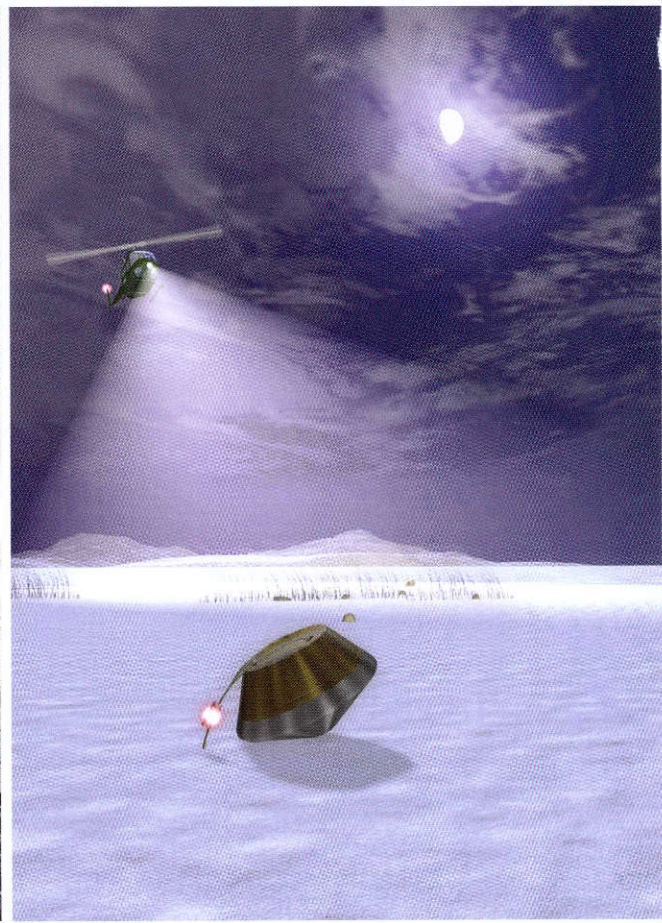
## WATER ON MARS

Has Mars ever supported life? Because water is essential to life as we know it, researchers are focusing their search on places on Mars where water once flowed. River sediments are likely places for microbial life to survive or to have existed in the past. Professor of Practice Justin Wilkinson is finding such sediments by comparing landforms that were created by water on earth to features with a similar appearance on Mars.

Wilkinson, a physical geographer, has for the past three decades studied megafans, a landform that, from above, has the appearance of a delta but lies far from any coastline. On Earth, megafans are formed by rivers changing course multiple times over thousands of years, in the process depositing sediments across a wide, fan-shaped cone of land. To identify megafans on Earth, Wilkinson studies photos taken from the space station, planes, and satellites, and

contour lines based on radar from the space shuttle. In some cases, drilling at the site of a suspected megafan confirms his hypothesis; in northern Namibia, the government discovered two much-needed aquifers after drilling in a megafan identified exclusively from remote sensing imagery.

Images of Mars show features that to Wilkinson suggest megafans formed long ago by sediment laid down by rivers. In a proposed NASA project, he plans to test his hypothesis using computer recognition and deep learning to compare images and maps of known megafans on Earth to suspected megafans on Mars. If the match is confirmed, NASA will be step closer to finding sediments that might hold evidence of life forms on Mars. “The research flows from understanding new ideas about how rivers operate,” Wilkinson says.



*Dr. Christopher Snead, who joined the university in December, analyzes samples in a clean room. The Johnson Space Center, where Snead works is home to an extensive collection of astromaterials. At right, an artist's rendering of the Stardust spacecraft, which will bring back samples of interstellar dust, including recently discovered dust streaming into our solar system.*

## ASTROMATERIALS CURATION

Before humans embark on a mission to Mars, rovers and robotic spacecraft will collect samples of the planet's rocks, soil, and atmosphere. Such samples provide valuable clues about the planet's history and whether it has supported life in the past. Once the specimens are brought to Earth, they'll require special care to preserve their scientific integrity: They'll need to be kept free of contamination and prevented from reacting with Earth's atmosphere. In addition, because the temperature and pressure on Mars are much lower than on Earth, specimens from Mars will need to be stored in facilities that replicate those conditions.

Assistant Professor of Practice Christopher Snead works in astromaterials curation, which is the collection and preservation of such samples. The Johnson Space Center, where Snead works, is already home to an extensive

collection of astromaterials: the lunar rocks collected by Apollo astronauts, cosmic dust, and asteroid samples. Snead specializes in advanced curation, the development of new technologies to handle astromaterials from future missions, including those to Mars.

Snead, who joined the university in December through its relationship with Jacobs Engineering, worked over the summer with a Texas State intern who programmed robots to handle astromaterials samples. Such internships are one benefit of the contract between the university and Jacobs, now in its third year. "The collaboration gives the students access to cutting-edge research and the potential for working here one day," Snead says. "It's a great thing to put on one's résumé that you worked at NASA developing robotic technology to be used on lunar and Mars samples." 🌌



## BOBCATS WITH NASA TIES

More than 120 Bobcats have past or current employment connections to NASA, the Mars program, or firms that contract with NASA. That's a lot of Bobcats who are connected to the universe beyond Earth. Here are two who worked on Mars-related NASA projects:



**Frank Delgado, (B.S. '91, M.S. '95)** leads NASA's Hybrid Reality lab at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. He and his team developed immersive technology that combines virtual reality environments with 3-D printed tools that mimic the look and feel of tools used in space. Astronauts, engineers, or scientists can even don a VR headset and tools while using an apparatus that simulates Martian or lunar gravity. The resulting "hybrid reality" can be used to train in an environment that realistically simulates the visual, tactile, and gravitational environment of space missions.



**Karen Thompson (B.S. '85)** recently retired as chief technologist at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center in Florida. During her 28-year career at NASA she led development of a host of technologies to help astronauts on Mars "live off the land": methods for growing plants without soil; making bricks from the Martian regolith (or soil); and using the planet's carbon dioxide atmosphere to produce water, breathing air, and propellant for return to Earth. She also helped develop self-repairing materials and robots for use on the surface of Mars and won awards for developing coatings for corrosion prevention.

# From scientist to entrepreneur

Rhodium Scientific  
founder helps  
create pathways for  
business, research



By Ashley Festa

**O**livia Gamez Holzhaus never thought her love of microbiology would one day lead her to collaborate with scientists in microgravity.

“In microgravity, things change in strange ways, which piqued my interest,” says Holzhaus (B.S. ’06), a small-business owner who connects her clients with research at the International Space Station. “Pathogens become more or less deadly. Bones lose density. And the purpose of the space station is to provide discoveries that benefit humankind, so it’s better if more scientists have access to it. Rhodium Scientific is creating those pathways.”

In 2014, Holzhaus founded Rhodium Scientific in San Antonio to support scientists in a variety of ways, including getting their experiments launched in space. Her company helps pave the way for commercial scientists to do research at the International Space Station. Previously, many researchers did not adhere to industry standards before and after going to space, Holzhaus says. Now, thanks to Rhodium and her collaborators, industry-quality data can be collected in microgravity to improve or create commercial products.

Besides facilitating research-sharing, Holzhaus provides her clients with a host of services to ensure scientific data is usable for commercial purposes. For example, experiments must follow industry regulations and quality-control procedures. Rhodium helps scientists and their laboratories meet those expectations.

Scientists doing research in microgravity also need a place to house experiments aboard the space station. To assist, Holzhaus collaborates with Space Technology and Advanced Research Systems (STaARS), a company that builds space hardware.

That equipment is usually a box about the size of a suitcase that becomes a mini lab where astronauts can change out experiments as needed. Holzhaus is qualified to work on scientific hardware because of her engineering background.

Holzhaus is a scientist-turned-engineer-turned-entrepreneur. Her studies at Texas State provided the foundation for what she does today. She found her place in the Department of Biology because she was fascinated with trace evidence forensics “even before all the TV shows came out.” As a student, she interned at the Bexar County Crime Lab and at a consulting firm doing

crime scene investigations.

After graduation, Holzhaus started her career at Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), a prestigious applied research and development nonprofit organization in San Antonio. At SwRI, she conducted micro-scale analyses, examining unknown substances sent from labs less equipped to handle the tests needed to identify the sample. The equipment Holzhaus used could analyze food, water, soil, metals, chemicals, and more — even chemical warfare samples.

After more than four years at SwRI, Holzhaus accepted a job with PerkinElmer Health Sciences, a manufacturer and distributor of analytical and molecular diagnostic equipment. While the transition from microbiologist to engineer might seem like a leap, the move made sense, even if it did come with a steep learning curve. Because she had extensive experience with the lab equipment at SwRI, PerkinElmer offered her a position as a senior service engineer. In that role, Holzhaus maintained labs all over the country, fixing equipment and training scientists.

Two years later, Holzhaus seized an opportunity for greater innovation and flexibility and established her own small company. That job ended up being a two-year contract with a construction firm relocating equipment worth more than \$18 million during a U.S. Army laboratory renovation project. She was the on-site technical project manager in charge of more than a dozen equipment-manufacturing subcontractors. “They said I saved them over \$100,000 because I’m experienced with labs and technical knowledge,” Holzhaus says.

In addition to project management and linking clients to the International Space

Station, Rhodium Scientific also supports scientists in other ways, through training and streamlining. Rhodium Scientific has been recognized as an emerging force within the life science industry.

It wasn’t easy to take the leap and form her own company. “When you’re leaving behind your company car, credit card, expense account, and salary, I needed to be 100 percent in,” says Holzhaus, who named her business after her favorite trace metal element. “I would never have been here if I hadn’t been curious.”

Her curiosity spurred her career and Rhodium Scientific to success, but it didn’t come without its challenges, especially those she faced as a woman in the STEM field.

“I’ve had a few professional experiences that weren’t favorable,” says Holzhaus, who was the only scientist and the only woman hired to the engineering team at PerkinElmer.

Because she understands that difficulty, Holzhaus now advocates for women in STEM. In April, she was a panelist at the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Conference held at Texas State. She and other panelists answered questions from female students about life as a woman in science and business.

“It was creative, positive and enlightening for me to be able to guide these young women,” says Holzhaus. “I went in for a job interview once, and they assumed I was there for a secretary role. It’s not anything you did — it’s just a stereotype of what you can’t do, and it’s usually unintentional. But both genders bring good things to the table. More and more women and minorities are stepping into STEM and will set a new tone for future generations.” 🌟

# The Bobcat Network



MAROON AND GOLD CONNECTION CAN MAKE A  
BIG DIFFERENCE WHEN IT COMES TO CAREERS

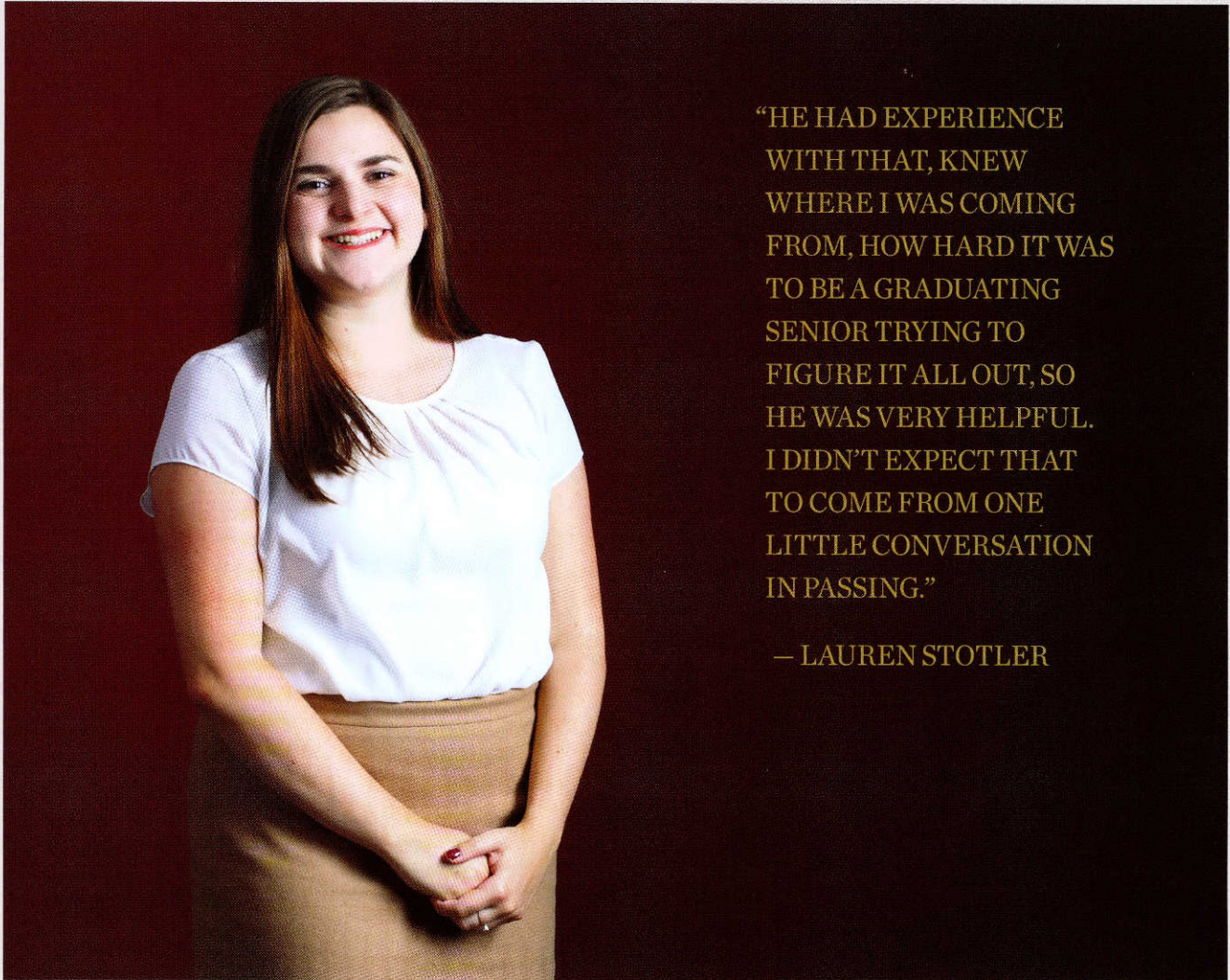
*By Mark Wangrin*

**O**ppportunity doesn't always announce itself. Sometimes it sneaks by. Sometimes it lurks. Sometimes it just shows up, cloaked in maroon and gold, at the right place and right time.

Lauren Stotler was the 2015-2016 Student Government president at Texas State. One Saturday morning she was sitting at the front desk in the LBJ Student Center, working on her homework when the door opened. Brett Baker was a former student body president who stopped by to see how the office had changed in the years since his 2009 graduation.

They chatted, and he told her about his career at SWBC Insurance Services. He gave her a business card. She lost it. But later she was talking to her career advisor, who mentioned Baker's name. That's when she remembered it, and their meeting. And when she contacted Baker, he remembered her, too. A connection was made and, ultimately, a job was landed.

Clayton Bynum was shooting the breeze with a teammate on the Bobcat track and field team one day when the talk turned to majors. Bynum, a freshman hurdler, didn't have one yet but mentioned his interest in computers and technology. The teammate suggested he might want to look into computer information systems. Bynum did. The teammate also mentioned he had an internship at USAA, and his father worked there. Connections were made; a job landed.



“HE HAD EXPERIENCE WITH THAT, KNEW WHERE I WAS COMING FROM, HOW HARD IT WAS TO BE A GRADUATING SENIOR TRYING TO FIGURE IT ALL OUT, SO HE WAS VERY HELPFUL. I DIDN’T EXPECT THAT TO COME FROM ONE LITTLE CONVERSATION IN PASSING.”

— LAUREN STOTLER

It is called the Bobcat network, that connection between job-seeking Texas State students and alumni — often loosely organized but with the tight bonds that sharing the same college experiences and degrees can provide. Mostly informal, often by chance, it’s that innate bond that surfaces when a Bobcat crosses paths with another Bobcat and makes a connection that leads to a job opportunity — or even to a career.

Stotler believes there was an unspoken understanding between her and Baker. “He understood why I wanted to join (SWBC) because he was in the same place I was,” she says. “He had experience with that, knew where I was coming from, how hard it was to

be a graduating senior trying to figure it all out, so he was very helpful. I didn’t expect that to come from one little conversation in passing.”

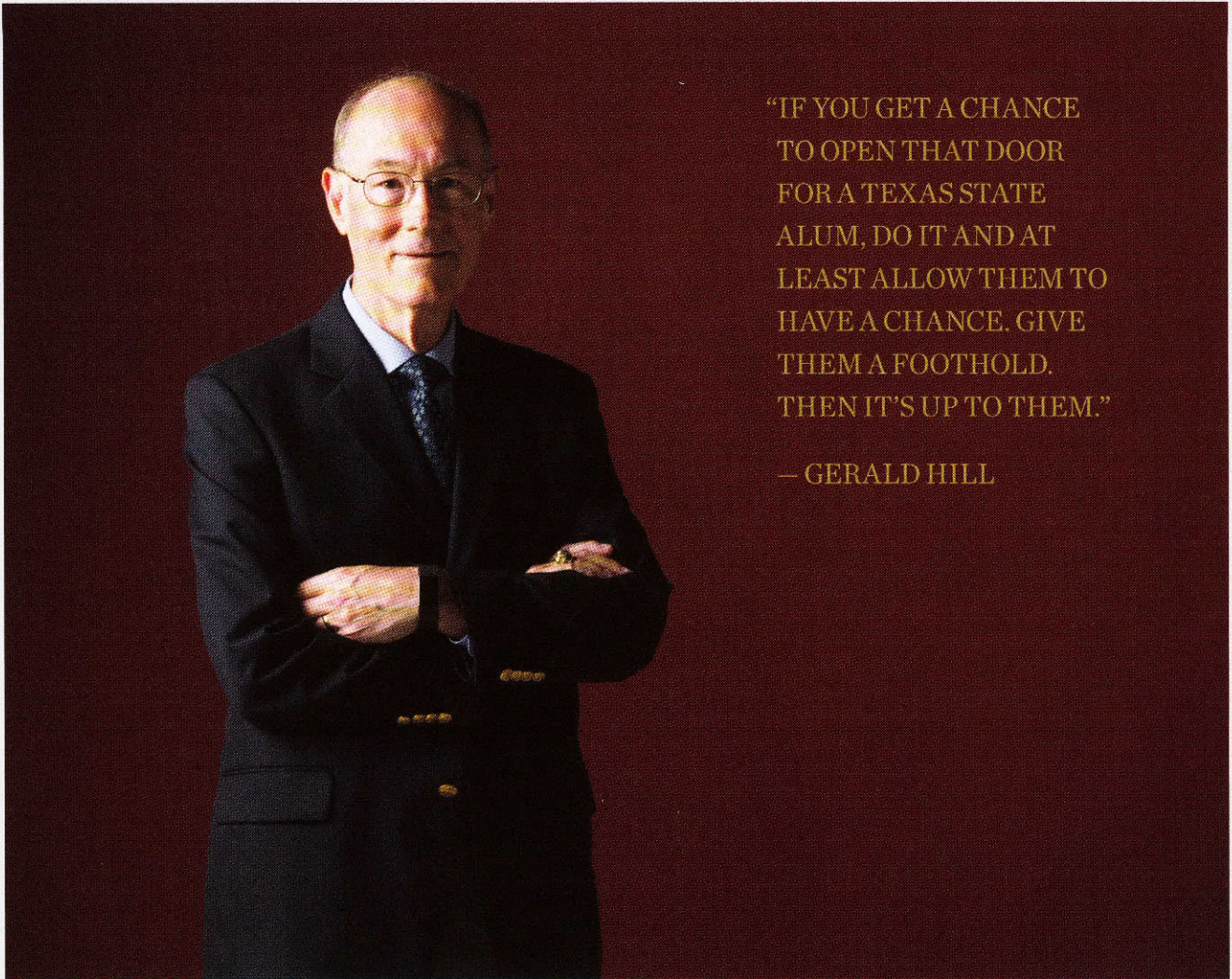
Networking is something that Bobcat students learn early. Career Services at Texas State starts with outreach to first-year students to entice them to use the array of resources at the PACE (Personalized Academic and Career Exploration) Center, named a 2016 Outstanding Institutional Advising Program by the National Academic Advising Association.

Started in 2012, the PACE program provides one-on-one resume critiques, mock job interviews, internship opportunities, social media engagement, virtual job searches, advice on how to

work a room, and career counseling. Career Services hosts about 25 job fairs a year. Students can even borrow a suit and tie, or a nice dress, to look sharp for interviews. Employers are encouraged to send alums to the job fair. The alums are given special Texas State Alumni badges to encourage networking.

All this just scratches the surface of what Career Services does, but the bottom line is this: Career Services gets students prepared and sends them out with some sage advice.

“If you go to any of our events, don’t hang out in the corner talking to your friends,” says Norma Guerra Gaier, director of Career Services. “Go out and meet somebody and always, always be ready to tell them what it is you’re looking



for, what are your interests professionally. It's as simple as that. Have your 30-second 'elevator pitch' ready to go. Who you are, what your major is, what you're interested in pursuing. Most always that person will say, 'I know someone you should meet.' Very rarely will that professional just say, 'Oh, that's nice. Good luck.'

Katie Bauersfeld is a May 2017 graduate who utilized alumni connections to get a position as an international adoption counselor with Children of All Nations, a nonprofit based in Austin. She used Career Services and paid it forward by mentoring fellow students in the PACE program.

"I think what Texas State offers is invaluable," Bauersfeld says. "That's one thing I absolutely loved about Texas State. It's not about numbers. They genuinely

take the time to make sure every student has their resume read over, or their cover letter edited. I wish more people would take advantage of it."

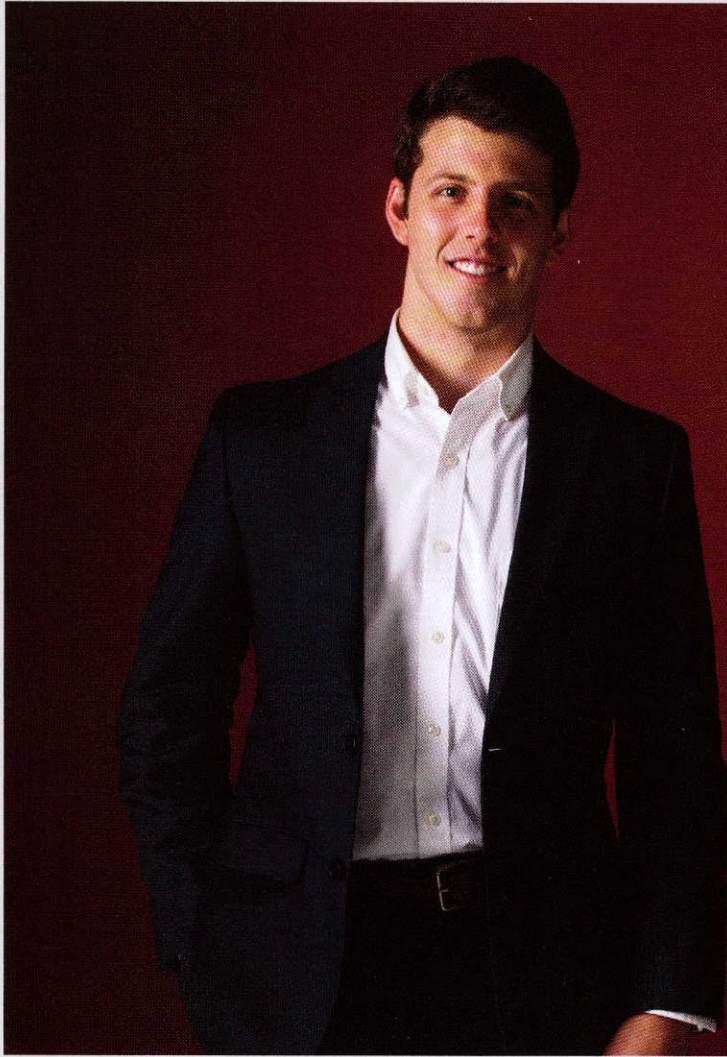
Gerald Hill, a former state legislator and a former vice president for university advancement, says internships are another vital tool in networking. Hill says the internships he's nurtured at his various career stops, most recently with the Seton Family of Hospitals, ends with a directive — don't forget those coming up behind you. "If you get a chance to open that door for a Texas State alum, do it and at least allow them to have a chance. Give them a foothold. Then it's up to them."

Many employers say the changing culture at Texas State has turned a once sleepy, double-directional commuter

school into a place with a reputation for producing bright and earnest employees who don't come wrapped in entitlement.

Hill earned his bachelor's degree in education in 1970 and was named a Distinguished Alumni in 1987. He says many Bobcats are first-generation college students and often have to work during the school year to support themselves. Coupled with a steady increase in academic requirements, Texas State molds job candidates who are smart and hardworking and more connected to their fellow alumni.

"Maybe that's why students feel more engaged and dedicated to the school when they leave," Hill says. "In many cases, it was a struggle, and they feel an obligation and a dedication to helping make that next generation successful."



“IT’S REALLY NEAT TO SEE THE STEPS THEY HAVE TAKEN TO ENSURE STUDENTS’ ALL-AROUND SUCCESS. NOT JUST GETTING YOU THOSE CONTACTS, BUT MAKING SURE YOU’RE PREPARED HOLISTICALLY FOR THAT INTERVIEW OR WHATEVER JOB YOU APPLY FOR.”

— GAGE SEARS

Gage Sears, who as a PACE mentor worked with as many as 60 students in a semester, sees that the university’s emphasis on getting students interested in each other’s success has led to a growth of pride.

“I think there’s really a Texas State tradition starting to spread, from getting your class ring to jumping in the river when you get your degree,” he says. “Texas State is really big on inclusion. When the university takes that stance, the students do too.”

“It’s really neat to see the steps they have taken to ensure students’ all-around success. Not just getting you those contacts, but making sure you’re prepared holistically for that interview or whatever job you apply for.”

Building those networks isn’t just asking a former classmate if they can help. Vanessa Cortez Tanner, president of the Austin Alumni Chapter, says the chapter holds events where students mingle with alumni and don’t stop at small talk. They insist the attendees don’t sit with their friends and engage in exercises that promote commonality. One activity has attendees pair up and talk until they come up with a unique common experience. Another activity has alumni sitting in a circle and listing three things to define themselves.

“That’s a lot different than just, ‘What’s your major?’” Cortez Tanner says.

At San Antonio-based USAA, the company culture encourages bonding among college hires with the Nexus

program, which includes regular meetings, work and social events and guest speakers. Bynum, an IT technical manager who earned bachelor’s (’07) and master’s degrees (’09) from Texas State, recruits part-time with a team made up entirely of Bobcats. He says the program is invaluable for networking at a company that recruits heavily from Texas State and UT-San Antonio.

“They stay in a group, kind of a club if you will, for a year,” Bynum says. “Within that club, there’s the Texas State pocket, the UTSA pocket — all the schools have their own little pocket. I’ve seen a lot of good networking and relationships built. We try to keep them feeding off each other because those relationships pay off. We all have that common bond of the school we love.”





“I’VE HAD GREAT EXPERIENCES WITH STUDENTS TALKING ABOUT OUR INTERNSHIPS, FORMER STUDENTS TALKING WITH SOMEONE STILL IN SCHOOL ABOUT WHAT WE’RE DOING. IN EIGHT YEARS I’VE BEEN RECRUITING I’VE HIRED 55 PEOPLE — PROBABLY 45 OF THEM FROM TEXAS STATE.”

— KATIE FORE

Once that network is established, it flourishes.

Katie Fore, tops in sales with clothing direct retailer Tom James Co., also has a role in recruiting new employees. The 2007 Texas State graduate’s territory also includes Baylor and UT-Dallas.

While Baylor and UT-Dallas has been a challenge, Fore says Texas State is a breeze. “At Texas State, it’s word of mouth,” she says. “It spreads like wildfire. I’ve had great experiences with students talking about our internships, former students talking with someone still in school about what we’re doing. In eight years I’ve been recruiting I’ve hired 55 people — probably 45 of them from Texas State.”

De’Quad Binder ran track for the Bobcats, and says he was much more nervous walking into an on-campus job fair than he was running the 800 in the NCAA Championships — but he felt just as prepared. What he learned from Career Services paid off when he got the interview that landed him a sales analyst job at J.C. Penney. And it probably didn’t hurt that Binder wore a Bobcat pin on his lapel that he’d earned for his academic and athletic achievement. It was a good conversation starter.

Binder has only been working at the retailer’s Plano headquarters since his December 2016 graduation, so he’s still establishing himself in his job, but his long-term goals include working in human resources, particularly recruiting.

And he won’t forget where he comes from.

“Helping in the Bobcat network would be something I’d be excited to do because one thing I’ve learned working in the corporate field now is that networks are everything, school networks are the biggest thing, on who has the influence in the company,” he says.

“It would be my goal to have the same effect for Texas State and someday have a lot of Bobcats in the company. Looking out for each other and giving each other opportunities is just something Bobcats do.” 🐾

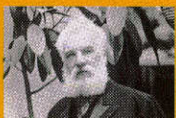
# GOING THE DISTANCE



Each year, one Texas State doctoral student is selected to spend a year at the NGS headquarters in Washington, D.C. The 2016/2017 scholar was Graciela Sandoval, whose academic work focuses on human geography, geography education, and medical/health geography.

**January 7, 1898**

Alexander Graham Bell assumes National Geographic Society's presidency.



**February 1903**

Gilbert H. Grosvenor becomes editor of *National Geographic*.



**1965**

The Texas State Department of Geography is established and becomes, in 1996, the first department to offer a Ph.D.

**1970**

Gilbert M. Grosvenor becomes editor of *National Geographic*.

1900

1950

1970

## Texas State celebrates its unique partnership with the National Geographic Society

By Michael Agresta

The National Geographic Society (NGS) may be best known for sharing images of distant lands and people through its famous magazine and television channel, but some of the NGS's most important work over the past several decades has taken place at Texas State University.

For over 30 years, the Texas State Department of Geography has served as the NGS's premier academic partner for furthering its mission of "increasing and diffusing geographic knowledge" in classrooms, field laboratories, and high-tech businesses in the United States and beyond.

Earlier this year, in Washington, D.C., this special partnership was celebrated with a Texas State Hero Luncheon honoring the National Geographic Society. It brought together key players in forming this unique alliance in the 1980s and nurturing and expanding it today. On hand for the occasion was Gilbert M. Grosvenor, who served as editor of *National Geographic* magazine from 1970 to 1980 and retired as chairman in 2010 after 23 years. Grosvenor represents the fifth generation of his family to serve as NGS president. His great-grandfather, Alexander Graham Bell, was the society's second president.

"In my 60 years at the Geographic, I can't think of any more successful co-partnering experience than with Texas State

University," says Grosvenor, a Presidential Medal of Freedom honoree. "For geography education, clearly, Texas State has the best track record of any educational institution in the United States."

In 1985, Grosvenor created the Texas Alliance for Geographical Education at Texas State. His partner at Texas State was Dr. Richard G. Boehm, who led the university's geography department from 1977 to 1994. At the time, Texas State was one of eight colleges and universities to be selected as a flagship partner in the National Geographic network of alliances for geographic education. "We had a long-standing tradition of research and teaching excellence here at Texas State, which put us in a position to be selected," Boehm recalls.

The Texas State Department of Geography was established in 1965 and became, in 1996, the first department to offer a Ph.D. The department now has 36 faculty serving over 750 undergraduate majors, 59 master's students, and 52 doctoral students. In 1998, Texas State honored Grosvenor's impact on the university by creating the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education. The Grosvenor Center, with Boehm as director, partners with both the NGS and the National Science Foundation to provide unparalleled opportunities to student researchers. Through the Grosvenor Center, Texas State currently serves as one of two headquarters of the National Center for Research in Geography Education, a nationwide research consortium that includes dozens of schools. "We are the leading center for research in geographical education in the world," Boehm says. "There's no one else that can compete with us in that regard."

### 1985

Grosvenor creates the Texas Alliance for Geographical Education at Texas State.

### 1998

Texas State honors Grosvenor's impact on the university by creating the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education.



### June 2004

Grosvenor celebrates his 50th anniversary at National Geographic and is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

### 2010

Grosvenor retires as chairman after 23 years.

1980

2000

2010



Left, Alex Trebek, host of *Jeopardy* and the *National Geographic Bee*, delivered the Grosvenor Center Distinguished Lecture in 2010. Right, Gilbert M. Grosvenor (left) chairman emeritus for the National Geographic Society; Graciela Sandoval, Grosvenor Scholar; and Dr. Richard Boehm attended the Texas State Hero Luncheon on February 23 in Washington, D.C.

“ In my 60 years at the Geographic, I can't think of any more successful co-partnering experience than with Texas State University.”

— Gilbert M. Grosvenor

Current Texas State post-graduate geography students can participate in the Grosvenor Scholar program, which is co-funded by Texas State and the NGS. Each year, one Texas State doctoral student is selected to spend a year at the NGS headquarters in Washington, D.C. The 2016-2017 scholar was Graciela Sandoval, whose academic work focuses on human geography, geography education, and medical/health geography. She worked in Washington, D.C., on programs and policies to meet growing needs around climate change issues and educational attainment.

The Grosvenor Center also hosts an annual Grosvenor Distinguished Lecture Series, which has in the past brought such luminaries as U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and *Jeopardy* host Alex Trebek to speak in San Marcos. In 2016, the Grosvenor Lecture was delivered by

Dr. Douglas Richardson, executive director of the American Association of Geographers.

The Texas State-NGS relationship remains strong today. Dr. Alberto Giordano, chair of the Department of Geography, sees Texas State and NGS continuing to lead the way in determining geography education models and best practices for the next 30 years. “The world changes, people change,” Giordano says. “We need to continue to push the boundaries of geography education research. What should we teach? How should we teach it? What works, what is most effective in geographic education?”

Gary Knell, president and CEO of the NGS, seems determined to continue to build on the partnership as well. At the luncheon in February, Knell gave a speech focused on NGS's efforts to spread knowledge of geography around the world over the past century, and he described Texas State as a “meaningful partner” in that effort. Knell

will give the Grosvenor Lecture at 7 p.m. November 29, in the Reed Parr Room, 11th floor of the J.C. Kellam Building.

Meanwhile, at Texas State, the wheels of progress in geography education continue turning. Boehm is involved in an effort to create a comprehensive K-12 geography textbook for the Chinese market. He has partnered the Grosvenor Center at Texas State with East China Normal University in Shanghai to build what he calls “an international bridge between the Chinese and us in the world of geography education,” in the form of a 1,000-page Chinese-language textbook.

“Nobody else in the world is doing something like that in geography,” Boehm says. “It's unique. I think it demonstrates the importance of what we have here, not just for Texas, not just for the United States, but for the world.” ☺

# ‘I EDUCATE EVERY DAY’

By Edmond Ortiz

## Nancy May puts skills to the test as San Antonio Humane Society president

Graduating with an education degree from Texas State University in 1975, Nancy May looked forward to teaching. But she soon came to realize that a career in education was not in the cards for her — not in the traditional sense, anyway.

“It was third, fourth, and fifth grades, open classrooms, 153 kids, four teachers, and no breaks. I decided this isn’t what I wanted to do with the rest of my life,” she recalls of her first teaching assignment.

The career where May would find her calling was banking, and it was there that she could utilize her math skills. A temp agency referred May to an administrative job in wealth management (or the trust department) at Bexar County National Bank in San Antonio. “I had no idea what a trust department was or anything,” says May, who quickly fell in love with the work. She would eventually move to Broadway National Bank, where she would become a senior vice president. “The math, the finance — you’re educating people on different aspects about their wealth, circumstances, a legal document you’re looking at. You’re always teaching,” she says.

She worked there more than 20 years, retiring in 2009. But about six months into retirement, May wanted to return to work at least part time. Because of her connections with local philanthropic foundations and nonprofits, May got a chance to handle donor relations for the San Antonio Humane Society (SAHS). “As my friends say, I’ve gone to the dogs,” she quips.

In 2011, when the organization’s president/CEO departed, the SAHS board of directors pitched the top job to May. She saw herself being only an interim president/CEO, but enjoyed serving in a

new outlet through which she could educate the community about animal welfare and empower colleagues. “I’ve always believed nonprofits need business people because we’re a business — a not-for-profit business, but a business.”

SAHS has more than 70 employees and thousands of volunteers. Annually, the organization places more than 5,000 animals, and spays or neuters more than 8,000 animals. May expressed pride in guiding the SAHS as part of San Antonio’s overriding goal of becoming a no-kill community. “I really felt a need,” she says. Her own household includes two dogs adopted from the shelter.

On the whole, May sees herself as educating people throughout her otherwise unexpected career moves. “The neat part about education is that I feel that I educate every day. The things I’ve learned, no matter what your degree is in, will take you a long way,” she says.

The San Antonio native graduated from Texas State in three years while also working as a teaching assistant in the math department. “It was such a great experience, like doing pottery classes on Old Main and archery classes at Aquarena Springs while you watch the boats go by,” she adds.

May supports several nonprofits, including Texas State. In the spring, she co-hosted a Bobcat Women’s luncheon in San Antonio. One of her two daughters, Christina Heise, is also an alumna of Texas State, earning a bachelor’s degree in marketing and a master’s degree in education.

“When I go up (to San Marcos), it’s unbelievable, the growth,” May says. “It’s such a high level of quality of students. It’s great to say, ‘hey, that’s my university.’” 🌟

“THE NEAT PART ABOUT EDUCATION IS THAT I FEEL THAT I EDUCATE EVERY DAY. THE THINGS I’VE LEARNED, NO MATTER WHAT YOUR DEGREE IS IN, WILL TAKE YOU A LONG WAY.”





HITTING

ALL THE

GIFTED MUSICIANS VIE FOR PRIZES  
AT INTERNATIONAL PIANO FESTIVAL

RIGHT

NOTES

*By Dan R. Goddard*

**B**eethoven and barbecue go together like, well, beer and barbecue at the Texas State International Piano Festival presented in June by the Texas State University piano faculty in the Performing Arts Center. The eighth annual festival featured 37 young pianists and college students from around the world selected through auditions to participate in a week of master classes, lessons, recitals, and presentations— and a chance to build professional relationships and have some fun in San Marcos.

Ranging from 14-year-old Perren-Luc Thiessen, who arrived late to the festival because he had a recital at New York City's Carnegie Hall, to veteran competition winner Kyunghoon Kim — six concerto competition winners performed with the Round Rock Symphony conducted by Wesley Schultz for the festival's grand finale concert.

"We like to end the festival with a bang," says Dr. Jason Kwak, coordinator of the keyboard area and director of the festival. "For some of the concerto winners, it's the first time they've had the opportunity to perform with a symphony orchestra. We have exciting recitals, but there's nothing like performing with a full orchestra. This isn't like a music camp. We bring in world-class teachers and pianists and try to create the entire atmosphere of a world-class festival."

The participants vie for three major prizes, plus 12 finalists compete at the feature competition of the festival. The Patrick W. Price Piano Competition provided one pianist a chance to go on a five-city tour, performing at three universities and two national concert series. Alvin Zhu, a Young Steinway Artist and doctoral candidate at the Julliard School, took first place. Xiaoya Liu, a graduate at Eastman School of Music, was named first alternate, and HyeYeon Kim, graduate student at New England Conservatory, took second alternate.

Patrick W. Price (B.S. '69) not only sponsored this year's competition but also provided a sponsorship for an additional award. He is an active supporter of the Friends of Fine Arts & Communication in addition to being a supporter of the International Piano Festival. HyeYeon Kim won the Price award, which is tuition to the 2018 Texas State International Piano Festival.

Judges included Sophia Gilmsen of the UT-Austin Butler School of Music, Soyeon Kate Lee of the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and Brian Marks of Baylor University.

"The competition is a very exciting event because we are discovering a new generation of talents," says Gilmsen. "We heard a lot of excellent playing. And of course, all the recitals at the festival are of the highest artistic level. Bringing great art, international level artists, and deeply dedicated participants is an inspiration to everyone at Texas State regardless of whether they are fans of classical music or not. And many of them have a great chance to become such fans because of the festival. High quality is always attractive whether you are an expert or not. You just feel it."

The Betty Dickinson Award provides the winner the opportunity to perform a recital for the Celebration of Arts and Music in Tilden, Texas. Dickinson has taught piano for 33 years in South Texas, and she and her supporters established an endowment to provide the youth of Live Oak and McMullen counties the opportunity to hear great music. Fifteen-year-old Ishan Loomba, who currently studies piano with Carol Leone at Southern Methodist University, won the award.

"Betty Dickinson is a big fan of the festival even though she didn't attend Texas State," says Kwak. "But we have a loyal group of followers. Our recitals attract piano music lovers from Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. San Marcos is so beautiful and the Performing Arts Center is such a fantastic facility that we want everyone to know this is a top-tier festival. One of our major goals is to spread the word about the quality of our performances."

Dubbed the "Bloomington Brute" by Kwak, Korean-born Kyunghoon Kim, a doctoral candidate at the University of Indiana's Jacobs School of Music, won

## More information

### Ninth annual Texas State International Piano Festival

June 2-10, 2018

tsipf.com

the Ben I. Gomez Award, which enables the winner to perform as a soloist with the Round Rock Symphony. “We have a lot of students from Korea, but not because I’m Korean,” Kwak says. “Korea and China have outstanding programs in classical music and we get a lot of participants from both countries. Our festival has been represented by 31 countries and (people from) five continents – truly an international festival.”

Faculty recitals, featuring some of the best pianists in the world, are among the festival’s highlights. For the 2017 festival, Anton Nel, head of the Division of Keyboard Studies at UT-Austin, performed works by Debussy, Schumann, and Beethoven.

“I look forward to the festival every year,” Nel says. “All the organizers of the festival do an absolutely superb job and I love working with the students and playing to appreciative audiences. For the students, it’s wonderful for them to be with fellow ‘pianophiles,’ and there are great opportunities for them to study with top teachers, as well as perform in public. The festival is a wonderful showcase for the excellent piano faculty and facilities at Texas State University.” 🌟

# THE BIRTH OF AN ENDOWMENT



(Pictured, from left) Betty Dickinson, TSIPF Program Director Cindy Hessong, and Martin Kesuma, winner of the 2016 Dickinson Piano Competition.

**April 2015** – Gaby Poler, director of development, meets with Dr. Jason Kwak, incoming director of the Texas State International Piano Festival (TSIPF). They brainstorm about big gifts and the importance of endowing the TSIPF so the festival is not starting from scratch each year. Kwak suggests a meeting with Cindy Hessong, program director of the TSIPF. Originally from Three Rivers, Cindy Hessong was a student of Kwak’s when he taught at Texas A&M University – Kingsville.

**October 2015** – Hessong secures a \$10,000 gift from the Three Rivers-based Celebration of Arts and Music Committee to name, for one year, the Betty Dickinson Competition to honor Dickinson, a piano teacher in Tilden, Texas. Dickinson taught piano to South Texas children for more than 30 years, including Hessong.

**June 8, 2016** – The 7th Texas State International Piano Festival is held. Martin Kesuma (B.A. ’16) is the winner of the 2016 Betty Dickinson Piano Competition.

**December 2016** – An article is published in *The Progress*, a South Texas regional newspaper, about the Betty Dickinson Competition and the TSIPF. Fort Worth lawyer Anne Swenson reads the article online, and contacts Kwak and Hessong about a donation. As a child, Swenson spent summers with her grandparents, Judge James Clifton and Nora Wheeler, in Tilden, where Dickinson played for services at the Tilden Baptist Church. (Judge Wheeler received a teaching certificate from Texas State.)

**January 20, 2017** – Swenson makes a \$6,000 donation and tells Hessong that she wants to help establish an endowment to honor Dickinson.

**March 2017** – The Betty Dickinson quasi endowment memorandum of understanding (MOU) is finalized and a check arrives from Swenson for \$160,000.

**March 25, 2017** – Kesuma performs a piano recital in Tilden for Dickinson, her friends and colleagues. Leighton Donnell, Dickinson’s duo piano partner, also attends the recital. Hessong announces the creation of the endowment at the event with the goal to fully fund it at \$250,000 before June 2017. Also in attendance, the Celebration of Arts and Music Committee who pledge another \$20,000

**April 17, 2017** – Donnell pledges \$100,000 to fully fund the endowment.

**April 24, 2017** – A check for \$100,000 arrives at Texas State for the endowment.

**June 2017** – The 8th Texas State International Piano Festival is held.



# She's got drive

Coach Lisa Strom strives for wins, balance for women's golf team

By Mark Wangrin



Carl Strom was the original golf rangefinder. If there was a flag stuck in a patch of freshly rolled bentgrass anywhere near the family car on a long vacation trip, he knew about it.

"My dad could smell out a golf course from 30 miles away," recalls Lisa Strom, the second-year Texas State University women's golf coach, of those trips when she was a young girl. "He'd be like, 'Hey, there's one around here,' and sure enough we'd pile out of the car, get our clubs down off the roof rack, and play a round of golf."

They'd drive from their home in Aberdeen, South Dakota, to some resort town in Arkansas where Carl and wife Hanora would sit through a morning spiel on a time-share condo just so they'd score afternoon rounds on the resort's course. They'd drive to Memphis so Hanora, a huge Elvis fan, could visit Graceland — she didn't name her daughter Lisa Marie, same as the King did, just by chance — and find courses along the way.

The good thing was that young Lisa loved golf. How much, though, she had to decide. One day she sat down with her dad, who passed away shortly before she took the Texas State job. Carl told her, "If you want to get better, I can't force you to do it. It's got to come from you."

The light went on. Strom practiced, played, and practiced some more as her family resettled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She earned a scholarship to Ohio State University, where she was twice All-Big Ten, helped lead the Buckeyes to the 1999 Big Ten title and won individual honors at the 2000 NCAA East Regional.

She played professionally for 10 years on the LPGA and Futures tours before returning to Ohio State as an assistant coach, where she learned from coaching legend Therese Hession and earned a reputation as a crackerjack recruiter.

In summer 2016, she came to Texas State as head women's golf coach, arriving with a foot in two worlds. On one hand, she grew up playing hardscrabble courses, often in dicey weather, and is quick to say, "I was far from a country club kid."

Strom carefully strives for a balance. She's embraced what Texas State's 2-year-old indoor facility, the Jim and Carol West Golf Facility, means to enticing recruits and yet is old school enough to spend the first three weeks of fall practice working only on green reading and "other simple stuff."

She's adopted a large, lively presence on social media, knowing that it's important to humanize herself and the program, and that a simple "like" of a Twitter post can hit home with a recruit. "Kids watch. Kids care. Kids are checking how many likes they get," Strom says.

And, at Texas State, how many A's. The four-time academic All-Big Ten pick stresses schoolwork. This year two players, senior Millie Saroha and freshman Sasikarn Somboonsup, the Sun Belt Conference individual champion, were named Division I All-American Scholars by the Women's Golf Coaches Association. For Saroha, who has since graduated, it was the fourth time for the title.

"Athletics, academics, and social life — you can probably be good at two of them," Strom says. "One is going to have to go to the back burner. For our kids, if you want to be good in a lot of things, your social life can't be the No. 1 or 2 priority on the list."

After a third-place tie in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament, and not earning an invitation to the NCAA Regional Tournament, the Bobcats are hungry to have a better 2018 season.

Travis Comer, the associate athletics director who oversees golf, says Strom has the right mix of skills to take the program to new heights. "When we hired Lisa, we talked about it was great to win conference championships; great that we went to NCAA regionals. But we want to get to the (NCAA) national tournament, be one of the top 24 teams. She believes that. It's not easy, but why not shoot for the stars?"

Strom's excited about that trip, too. "Like I tell recruits, it's an exciting time to be part of women's golf at Texas State," she says. "We haven't even hit the tip of the iceberg of what we can do. That comes from knowing we are good enough." 🌟



## On stage at Texas State

The following theatre productions will be on stage in spring 2018. Tickets are available through Texas State Presents, [txstatepresents.universitytickets.com](http://txstatepresents.universitytickets.com); or by calling the box office at (512) 245-6500.

### **Speech and Debate**

By Stephen Karam,  
Directed by Tom Delbello

**February 1-4**

PSH Foundation Studio Theatre

### **The Rivals**

By Richard Brinsley Sheridan,  
Directed by Chuck Ney

**February 13-18**

Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre

### **Instruction for Dancing**

By Andrew Heinrich,  
Directed by Bruce Turk

**February 22-25**

PSH Foundation Studio Theatre

### **A Wrinkle in Time**

By Madeleine L'Engle, Adapted  
by Tracy Young, Directed by Neil  
Patrick Stewart

**April 10-15**

Theatre Center Mainstage

### **Ragtime**

Music by Stephen Flaherty and  
Lynn Ahrens, Book by Terrance  
McNally, Directed by Michael Rau

**April 17-22**

Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre

## Young Alumni Council launched

This year the Texas State Alumni Association launched the Young Alumni Council. The council serves to encourage young alumni engagement with the university as members of the Alumni Association, keeps the association relevant and enticing to young alumni, and advocates for the needs and interests of young alumni to the association's board of directors as the voice of the young alumni population. Texas State defines "young alumni" as Bobcat graduates under the age of 40.

Applications and nominations will reopen in 2018 for vacancies. For more information, contact (512) 245-2371, or email Kathryn Arnold, [kathrynarnold@txstate.edu](mailto:kathrynarnold@txstate.edu).



The Texas State Young Alumni Council held its inaugural meeting on Saturday, April 29. Pictured (top row): Phil Fountain, Ryan Clay, Trevlyn Trevino, Rodolfo Jimenez Jr., Saidat Ilo, Marty Lenard, Randi Berkovsky, Jennifer Garcia, Jordan Becker, Natalie Berko. Bottom Row: Rocelyn Dunston, Lauren Stotler, Jay Horn, Priscilla Delgado, Valeria Carrillo, Melanie Tawil, Leland Smith, Rebecca Saathoff. Not pictured: Nicolas Costilla.

## By the numbers: Financial Aid

in award year 2016,  
financial aid disbursed over

**\$349**  
MILLION

**\$12.3** MILLION

in academic scholarships

**\$4.1** MILLION  
in athletic scholarships

**\$221.3**  
million

in non-scholarship and non-  
grant aid (employment, loans)

**\$106.3**  
million

in grants awarded

**\$21.5**  
million

in scholarships awarded

Source: Texas State University Office of Financial Aid, End-of-Year Report

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## KUDOS

# Events reaching alumni in places off beaten path

In an effort aimed at better connecting Bobcats with their alma mater — and with one another — Texas State University in 2017 launched a series of events in cities across Texas. Additionally, the university established its inaugural international alumni chapter in Mexico City.

The events, which began in the spring, included a women's business networking luncheon in San Antonio, alumni receptions in Cuero and McAllen and a series of meetings in Mexico City and Cuenca, Spain, to establish partnerships with academic and cultural institutions and to launch the first alumni chapter outside of the United States.

For some Bobcats, the events marked the first time they were able to take part in an alumni activity in or near their own hometowns.

"I had no idea there were so many Bobcats in the Rio Grande Valley," recalls Rita Flores (B.S. '03, healthcare administration) of Edinburg. She was surprised to learn that more than 2,250 Bobcat alumni live in the four-county region in deep South Texas and that more than 3 percent of the university's enrollment is from the Rio Grande Valley. "It's great reminiscing with other alumni and knowing that you have your own network down here so you can help out fellow Bobcats."

Additional events in 2017 were held in Galveston, Laredo, and Kerrville.

—Matt Flores



## The new TXST Athletics logo

The TXST Athletics logo has arrived at Texas State. This logo is an additional way to represent the university and our athletic programs boldly and proudly. Widespread use of Texas State's official abbreviation, TXST, spurred the creation of the new design. The new logo was created by the Office of University Marketing in collaboration with Texas State Athletics, inspired by classic designs from the university's past and rooted in our existing brand.

## Texas State honors endowment donors

Texas State celebrated the philanthropic leadership of its endowment donors on September 22, 2017, with a special reception at the Performing Arts Center.

Heroes, Pillar Society, and Guardian Society members and other honored guests enjoyed a cocktail reception and special program featuring President Denise M. Trauth, as well as an insider's look at the Department of Theatre and Dance's fall production of *A Chorus Line*.

Directed and choreographed by Cassie Abate, head of the university's Musical Theatre Dance area, *A Chorus Line* was staged in the Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre. Thanks to the show's sponsor, Legacy Mutual Mortgage, all ticket proceeds for the show's official run will go toward student scholarships.

The event also officially launched the Visionary Society, the university's newest level of donor recognition for donors with lifetime endowment giving of \$25,000 to \$99,999. The support of Visionary Society members — and all of Texas State's endowment donors — is particularly important to the university's continued excellence.

For more information on membership in our giving societies, please call (512) 245-2396 or visit [ua.txstate.edu](http://ua.txstate.edu).



# DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

2017

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Texas State honored five new Distinguished Alumni during Homecoming Week. With these newest honorees, the Alumni Association and the university have now presented the most prestigious award to 203 graduates since the first was given to then-U.S. Sen Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1959.

The Young Alumni Rising Star Award was created in 2015 and presented the following year to recognize young alumni under age 40 for their exceptional achievements and outstanding accomplishment in their profession, affiliations, and service. The two recipients of this award have demonstrated a level of excellence that positively represents the university and serves to inspire current students and other recent graduates to excel in their work and recognize the important impact of their experience as a student at Texas State.



# KENNETH R. HUEWITT

## CLASS OF 1985



As vice president of finance and administration/CFO for Texas Southern University, Ken Huewitt has more than 25 years of experience in the audit and finance industries. He began his career as an auditor with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Inspector General. His career path has included serving as senior audit specialist for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., senior associate for Coopers & Lybrand, and regional director of finance for ServiceMaster. At the Houston Independent School District – the largest school district in Texas, supporting 215,000 students on 283 campuses – Huewitt rose from controller to deputy superintendent and CFO and served as interim superintendent for six months. For his excellent stewardship and student-focused

initiatives, such as the one-to-one laptop initiative, and dual-language and global education programs, the Council of the Great City Schools named him Chief Financial Officer of the Year in 2015.

Huewitt is the former chairman of the board of the Texas State Development Foundation, member of the "T" Association Board, past president of the Texas State Alumni Association, and a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.

On his way to earning his B.B.A. in accounting from Texas State, he was also a member of the back-to-back national championship Bobcat football teams in 1981 and 1982. For his football prowess, Huewitt was also inducted into the "T" Association's Hall of Honor in 2007.

# DEBORAH J. KISSIRE

## CLASS OF 1979



A dynamic leader in her field, Deborah Kissire serves on the boards of directors of three public companies. She chairs the Audit Committee at Cable One Inc. and serves on the Audit Committee of Omnicom Group Inc. With Axalta Coating Systems, she chairs the Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee and serves on the Compensation Committee.

In 2015, she retired as vice chair and regional managing partner of global professional services firm EY, which had revenue of \$28 billion in 2015. She also served as a member of EY's Americas Executive Board and Global Practice Group.

Since earning her B.B.A. in accounting from Texas State, Kissire rose to become an international business leader. In 2014, Kissire was inducted into the Washington Business Hall of Fame. Her previous honors include being named one

of the *Washingtonian's* 150 Most Powerful People in Washington, D.C., being listed among the 100 Most Powerful Women in Washington, D.C., and being included on the *Washington Business Journal's* list of Women Who Mean Business.

A leader in both the boardroom and in community service, Kissire previously served on the boards of Goodwill Industries of Greater Washington, Junior Achievement USA, The Economic Club of Washington, and the Greater Washington Board of Trade. In 2007, she began EY Connect Day in her region, a high-impact day of community service for EY personnel throughout the region with sponsored events in each local community, a model now implemented by EY throughout the Americas.



## MICHAEL P. MCGAUGH

### CLASS OF 1995

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Texas State chemistry graduate Michael McGaugh is executive vice president and chief operating officer of BMC Stock Holdings, a \$3.2 billion publicly traded company based in Atlanta, Georgia. He has full profit and loss responsibility for all BMC field operations and leads the company's safety, supply chain, operations support, and purchasing departments.

Prior to joining the company, McGaugh spent over 20 years at The Dow Chemical Co., serving in a number of management and operational roles. Most recently, he served as global director and leader of the Integration Management Office for Dow's proposed merger with industry giant E.I. du

Pont de Nemours, one of the largest corporate mergers in industry history.

From 2012 to 2013, McGaugh served as global general manager of Dow Building Solutions, after successful terms as vice president and general manager of Dow Building Solutions for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa region. From 2008 to 2011, McGaugh served as vice president and general manager of Dow Building Solutions, North America region. Previously, he served as director and special advisor to the chairman and CEO of Dow.

After Texas State, McGaugh went on to earn his master's of business administration from Harvard University in 2002.



## MICHAEL RAIFORD

### CLASS OF 1990

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Michael Raiford is the corporate vice president of the FAB Factory Engineering Division at Samsung Austin Semiconductor, Samsung's only semiconductor production facility outside of South Korea.

The SAS facility employs more than 3,000 people at a \$17 billion computer system large scale integration fabrication plant in northeast Austin.

Raiford leads overall factory operations, including the equipment management of productivity and yield improvements. He is currently leading a companywide transformation from being an IDM manufacturer to a pure-play foundry model. Raiford also serves on the Cost Champion Team and the Great Workplace Committee. As an instructor for leadership classes and host of open employee

development forums, Raiford enjoys sharing his experience and insights on engaged, effective leadership with new generations of professionals.

A computer information systems graduate of Texas State, Raiford joined SAS in 1996 and led a team that designed and implemented the IT infrastructure in both the original FAB built in 1997 and the new 300mm FAB built in 2007. During his career with SAS, he has held a variety of roles including in system engineering, manufacturing, and innovation.

His charitable work in the Austin community includes serving on the Legacy of Giving Steering Committee and Austin Rodeo Ambassador Committee and chairing the Austin Heart Walk 2017. He is also a member of the Texas State CIS Advisory Board.

# BRIG. GEN. (RET.) DANA SIMMONS CLASS OF 1977



A decorated U.S. Air Force veteran, Dana Simmons now serves as the executive vice president and the chief of staff to USAA's CEO. Simmons leads the prioritization and coordination of key activities associated with the USAA board of directors, CEO, executive council, and enterprise partners. He also leads the Enterprise Security Group and Corporate Services teams.

Simmons joined USAA in April 2010 and has held the positions of EVP of Enterprise Operations Support, EVP and Chief Administrative Officer, EVP of Human Resources, SVP of USAA Corporate Services, and SVP of Staff Operations for USAA Property and Casualty Insurance Group.

After earning his B.S. in criminal justice at Texas State, Simmons served for 33 years in the Air Force, retiring as a brigadier general and commander of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI).

His distinguished career in uniform included serving as the AFOSI vice commander at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, the home base for Air Force One.

He served two tours in command of AFOSI detachments and earned the MAJCOM-level award for "Outstanding Large Detachment of the Year."

He earned numerous awards and medals, including the National Intelligence Superior Service Medal, Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with six oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award, and 2009 Outstanding Advocate for Women in Federal Law Enforcement Award. He earned his M.A. from Webster University.

## YOUNG ALUMNI RISING STAR AWARD

### CHRIS ELLEY CLASS OF 2000



As an innovation and brand leader, Chris Elley identifies and executes opportunities to grow the value of companies through increased collaboration, cutting-edge technology, and an emphasis on overall customer experience. Elley co-created two primetime television documentary series for NBC's Esquire and USA networks. He has multiple Emmys and nominations for his work at both the national and regional levels. Elley earned a master's in mass communication from Texas State.

### RANDY ROGERS CLASS OF 2001



A native of Cleburne, Randy Rogers initially pursued a degree in accounting and business while spending his free time entertaining fellow students with songs on the steps of Falls Hall. In 2000, he formed the Randy Rogers Band. In 2016, the band released *Nothing Shines Like Neon* and broke the 1 million mark in total album sales. Rogers has appeared at the Grand Old Opry and performs an average of 200 days out of the year. Rogers earned his B.A. in public relations and mass communication.

# MLB's Goldschmidt an All-Star in the community, too

By Tom Kertscher

Paul Goldschmidt, who has played more games in Major League Baseball than any other Bobcat, knew when he first stepped onto the Texas State University campus 12 years ago that it was the right choice for him.

Another right choice was joining the Arizona Diamondbacks and making his home in Phoenix. It's no secret that the people of Phoenix have embraced "Goldy" and his wife. Goldschmidt met the former Amy Glazier in study hall while they were both freshmen at Texas State. A former member of the women's golf team, Amy Goldschmidt graduated with a business degree in 2010. Paul Goldschmidt completed his bachelor of science in management in 2013 from the University of Phoenix.

"The maturation process you go through as an 18- to 22-year-old kid — we went through that together, so all those memories and just growing up together, it's pretty special," Goldschmidt says. The couple, who have a young son, Jake, have made helping Children's Hospital in Phoenix a regular part of their lives. Their charity that benefits the hospital is called Goldy's Fund 4 Kids.

"You're given this amazing platform being on TV every day and we walk into a room for two minutes and make someone's day — and they will talk about it for a week or month, so it's pretty awesome and we try to take advantage of that," he says.

"We just wanted to get involved with something in Phoenix. I thought, what better place to help kids and families who are going through an extremely tough time."

The first baseman is quick to credit Amy for her hard work that enables their generous giving. The pair recently helped raise money to help build a new cancer center. A native of Delaware, Goldschmidt grew up in The Woodlands, just outside of Houston. He recalls being struck by the university's surroundings on his first visit to Texas State. "I just remember leaving after my visit and thinking, man, that really felt right, I really want to go there."

As a Texas State player from 2007 to 2009, Goldschmidt became the school's career leader in home runs (36) and RBIs (179) — feats that made him the first Bobcat baseball player to have his jersey retired. With the Arizona Diamondbacks, he is a five-time National League All-Star (2013-2017). In 2013, he won the National League Hank Aaron Award, which honors the best hitter in the league.

On April 4, 2017, the suburb of Goodyear, Arizona, dedicated Paul Goldschmidt Field on what was once a rundown field. The youth baseball field was a joint effort of Arizona Public Service (APS), the Diamondbacks Foundation, private contractors,



Paul, Amy and Jake Goldschmidt at the 2017 opening of Paul Goldschmidt Field in Goodyear, Arizona.

and Goldschmidt himself. Paul Goldschmidt Field is the 39th field since 2000 in the "Diamonds Back" Youth Field Building Program, presented by APS.

"It's extra special because it's got Paul's name on it," D-backs President and CEO Derrick Hall told MLB.com. "Somebody who has made such an impact not only on but off the field. I couldn't be more proud."

## On the Web

[arizona.diamondbacks.mlb.com/ari/community/goldys\\_fund.jsp](http://arizona.diamondbacks.mlb.com/ari/community/goldys_fund.jsp)



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# Dr. Diego E. Vacaflares

McCoy professor studies economics, migration, remittances in new book

By Julie Cooper

Sending money home may have been a part of our nation's history since pilgrims disembarked from the Mayflower. In the centuries that ensued, a growing body of immigrants has moved to the United States, and the amount of money they have transferred to their former countries — called remittances — has been profound.

These monetary transfers usually facilitate better consumption, education, and healthcare access for immigrants' families back in their developing countries. In some cases, those remittances can account for nearly one-fifth of a country's gross domestic product.

Texas State economics professor Dr. Diego E. Vacaflares has spent the last several years researching remittances in his new book, *Economic Growth and Development of Latin America*, which is due out this December. "It is hard to uncouple migration with remittances," Vacaflares says. "Every time I talk about remittances I have to talk about migration. It can be a touchy issue for many societies that are facing increased migration." A recent CNN Money report put the total amount of remittances flowing to Mexico at \$27 billion, almost all of it from the United States.

A native of Bolivia, Vacaflares has lived in the United States for 20 years and has been a faculty member of the McCoy College of Business Administration since 2007. His book will be published in English and Spanish, providing specific views of the economic performance of the region to both audiences.

In 2015 Vacaflares received a McCoy Faculty Development Grant to conduct research in Central and South America. Within the last seven years, he has published multiple articles, organized an economic research conference in Bolivia, received several awards including the Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarship/Creative Activities, accompanied graduate students to Chile for a study abroad program, and earned university tenure.

"All countries have concerns about migration. If you go to Central America,



Costa Rica has a lot of immigrants from Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. At the same time, all countries would like to attract the more educated, highly qualified workers into their countries. But usually the people who actually move from one country to another are the people who are having difficulties in their standard of living. A lot of poor people decide to take the risk to make that trip all the way to the U.S. to improve their standard of living," Vacaflares says.

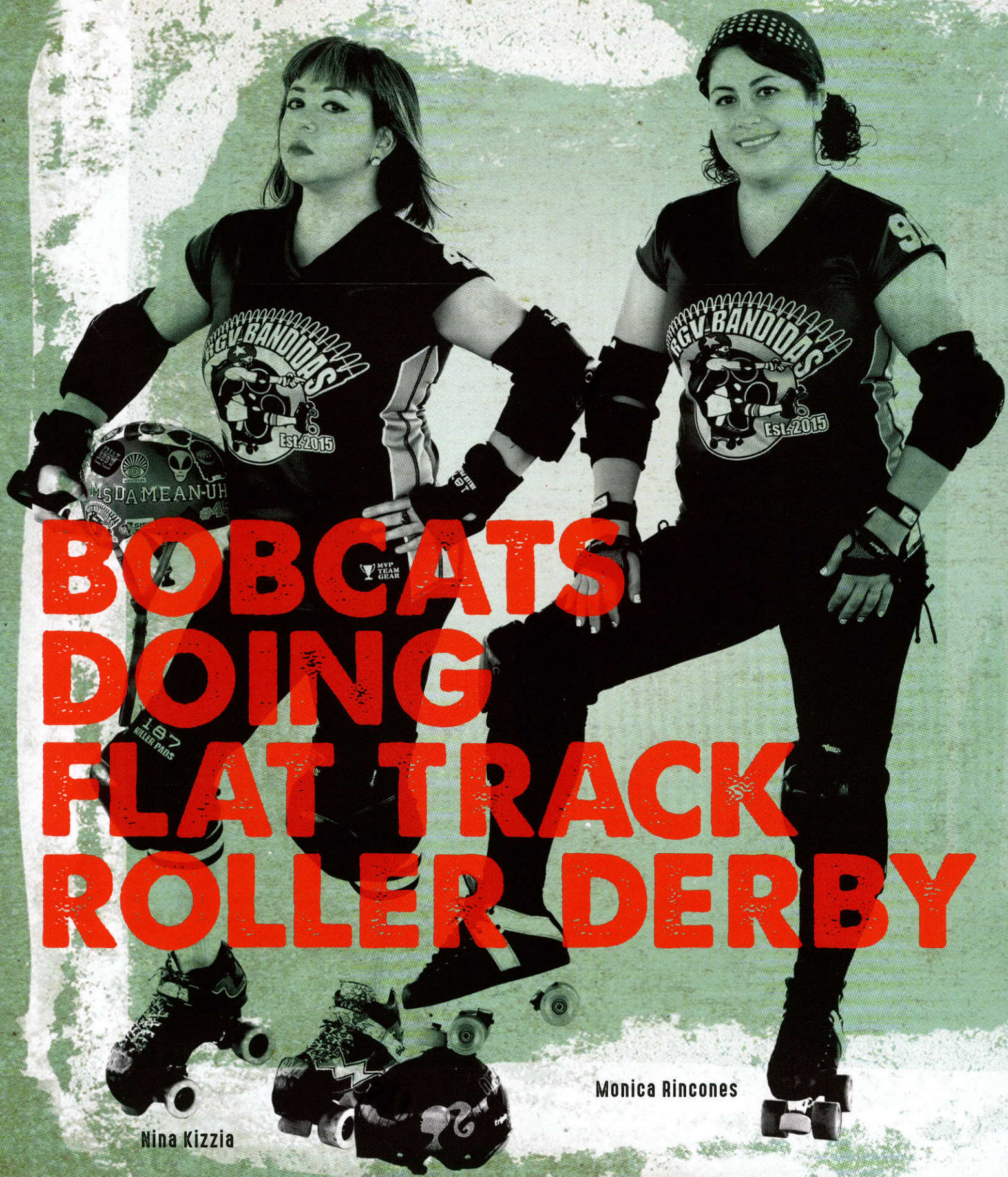
Vacaflares says remittances flowing into Mexico make up less than 2 percent of the GDP, but for Honduras, the remittances are almost 19 percent of the GDP, or nearly one-fifth of the economy. El Salvador's remittances make up 17 percent of that country's GDP.

While the United States is considering proposals to tax remittances to curb the flow of money to other countries and pay for domestic projects — at a rate as high as 7 percent — Vacaflares says that such action could prompt other countries to

respond in kind by taxing profits from our multinational companies.

"What will happen if the U.S. government starts to tax at 7 percent? Well, a lot of that money is going to revert back to unofficial channels," he says. "These remittances that are being sent to Mexico and are improving their standard of living are reducing the incentive for more people to come (to the United States). If you are really concerned about this flow of people, then remittances are actually helping achieve that end."

In his graduate classes, Vacaflares addresses remittances, migration, and the economic impact. "We don't want too many undocumented immigrants coming into the country, but how can we reduce incentives for these people not to come? One way is to improve economic conditions in their home country. If Mexicans are doing better, because of the positive effects of remittances on the receiving country, they have less incentive to come here."



# BOBCATS DOING FLAT TRACK ROLLER DERBY

Nina Kizzia

Monica Rincones

# Slamming. Jamming. Blocking.

## Knocking opponents to the floor with the force of a football player is fun.

BY TJ Garcia

**W**elcome to flat track roller derby and say hello to some Bobcats who are spearheading Texas' newest team. Whipping, hip-checking, and tripping, Texas State University alumnae Nina Kizzia, Monica Rincones, and Nicole Garcia are fronting the rough-and-tumble RGV Bandidas.

These women are about as different as they come, but they all agree that roller derby gives them creative and physical outlets. The game allows them to immerse themselves and get lost in a world so completely different from their standard professional careers.

"It (roller derby) is very exhilarating," says Kizzia, an Edinburg HEB manager and a 2011 communication studies graduate. "It makes me feel like the strongest person in the world when I get onto the track. It teaches you that you can fall and get right back up."

Otherwise strangers, these Bobcats were brought together by roller derby. The fast-paced, contact sport is played with two teams of five players each circling a flat floor on quad skates. Each team designates a jammer, who then must break through the opponents' four blockers to score points.

Blockers are typically bigger and stronger, and a jammer is fast and athletic. Blockers attempt to stop the opponents' jammer while trying to set their own jammer free through the line. There are several roller derby teams in Texas whose rosters include professional women such as Kizzia, Gonzalez, and Garcia. The RGV Bandidas practice in Harlingen but include players from McAllen, Edinburg, Brownsville, and other cities.

On the track, the action is fast and furious. The expletives and elbows fly as fast as the jammers. When on the floor, these women are focused and serious even though this is a hobby. Roller derby is something they do a few nights a week with "bouts," or matches, a couple of weekends a month.

Rincones, the RGV Bandidas' team manager, says camaraderie is strong. She was recruited by a friend of a friend who knew she was a good skater. She decided to join because roller derby was unexpected, yet familiar.

"It was something different to do and it kind of incorporated a pasttime — I used to skate when I was younger — and so it was a fun thing to do to get back on skates," Rincones says. "It's really nice to come together with a group of women from a lot of different backgrounds and just come out and skate and forget about the day." Rincones, who graduated in 2011 with a degree in clinical laboratory science, works for United Plasma Services in McAllen. She has been skating in roller derby for seven years.

Garcia says she moved back to the Valley soon after graduating from Texas State in 2013 with a degree in psychology. After moving to Edinburg, she says she was looking for something to do to break out of a rut. As she makes plans to attend graduate school, Garcia is working as a caregiver and personal assistant.

"Literally, the first time I went to an — and I'm getting chills just talking about this — information session, I was literally sucked in. After that I was in. I'm in," recalls Garcia, who is considered a novice while she works to become a full-fledged player.

Garcia adds that she first heard of the Bandidas (established in 2015 when two Valley derby teams joined up to become one) when she saw a Facebook ad and then acted on it because she had always wanted to try roller derby.

Upon joining the team, Garcia was introduced to Kizzia and Rincones. But she didn't know the two were Texas State alumnae until Kizzia sent out a message asking for any Texas State grads on the team to speak up. Garcia and Kizzia say they love being on a roller derby team, but having Bobcats to bond with is icing on the cake.

**On the Web:**  
[facebook.com/rgvbandidas/](https://www.facebook.com/rgvbandidas/)  
**Twitter:** @RgvBandidas

# From burger flipper to CEO

Abt learned restaurant ropes as he pursued degree *By Daniel P. Smith*

As a 15-year-old flipping burgers at Charlie's Hamburgers, a Houston-area eatery that lived by the irreverent slogan "Over 2 Dozen Sold," Michael Abt gained an early fascination with the restaurant game.

"The action of the restaurant just energized me," Abt says.

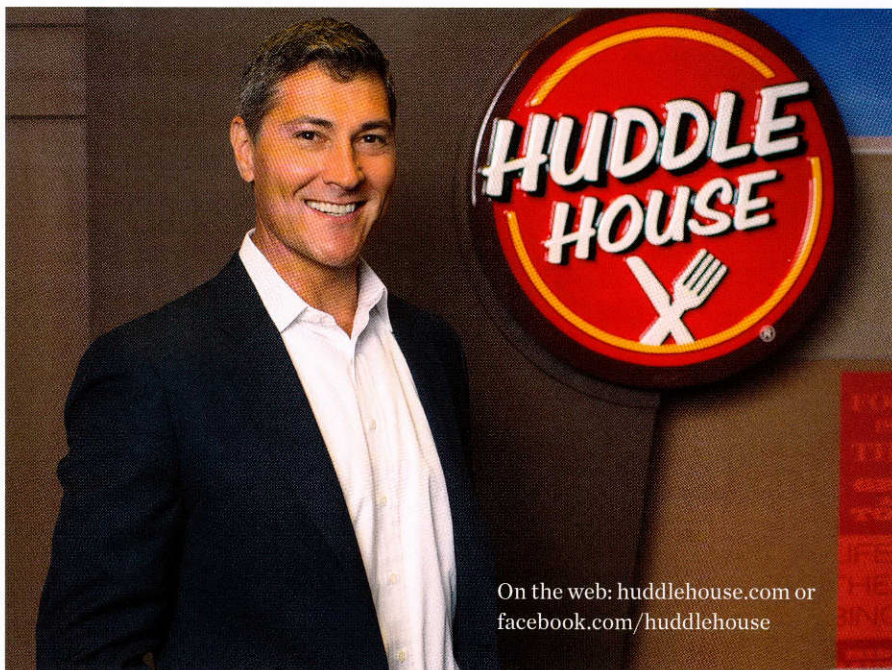
It wasn't until the Houston native arrived in San Marcos, however, that a career in the restaurant industry emerged as a serious option. While pursuing his finance degree at Texas State University, Abt spent more than three years as the assistant manager at Palmer's, the thriving upscale restaurant located several blocks from campus.

Under the charge of ambitious brothers Rick Travis and Rob Haug, Abt studied the entrepreneurs' attention to detail and the guest experience, their savvy commitment to marketing, menu, and management. The real-world experience Abt gained at Palmer's served as a fitting complement to the finance skills he was picking up in the classroom, a combination that only solidified his ties to the restaurant industry.

"My work at Palmer's really set my career in motion," says Abt, who was also a member of the university's competitive water ski team and Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1987.

Three decades later, Abt remains rooted in the restaurant game — and in a way he never could have envisioned during his undergraduate years. He is the CEO of Atlanta-based Huddle House, the 24/7 restaurant chain known for its Southern-style comfort food and "Any Meal, Any Time" mantra. Abt oversees 366 restaurants across 23 states, including 16 in Texas, and an enterprise with annual sales of \$250 million.

When Abt, then a senior vice president of operations for Arby's, joined Huddle House in 2012, he was charged with revitalizing what had been a languishing brand. Staggering from the heavy blows of the economic downward spiral of the previous four years, Huddle House was struggling. Sales were still on the decline with its units failing and its franchise partners, who accounted for about 90 percent of all Huddle House



units, growing increasingly frustrated at the leadership's inaction.

Eager to understand the brand's strengths as well as its deficiencies, Abt spent his first 30 days as Huddle House CEO on a restaurant barnstorming tour. He connected with the company's franchise partners and its front-line staff, observed operations, interviewed vendors, and began crafting a new strategic direction for the company.

Founded in 1964, Huddle House's positioning in smaller communities across the United States is one of the things that Abt particularly loves. Typically located in towns with populations under 20,000 and run by local owner-operators, the 80- to 90-seat Huddle House restaurants serve as warm gathering spots for locals. "We're the kind of place where owners and servers know people by name, so our restaurants feel far more like a local mom-and-pop restaurant than a large chain," he says.

But Abt also saw obvious weaknesses and quickly defined his top priorities: to rebuild trust with franchisees by delivering enhanced marketing and operational support, to refresh outdated restaurants, and to modernize the menu. He also began assembling a corporate team capable of executing his strategy, bringing in new executives to oversee marketing,

operations, development, legal issues, and culinary matters.

"Getting the right people in place is critical in a major turnaround situation like we were in," he recalls. The last several years have been packed with action as the Abt-led Huddle House team has improved the guest experience by unveiling hearty new items for guests such as biscuit platters and "Wafflewiches" and remodeling more than half of its units. Most importantly, Huddle House's franchise partners — so critical to the success and sustainability of the brand — share heightened optimism for the brand and its future.

"Twice a month, I spend three to four days at a time in restaurants and I see folks excited about what they're doing and where we're headed, and that's invigorating," Abt says.

"I like results and being able to make things happen by helping a business and people grow. It's not about what I do every day, but what I can do to motivate others so we're all moving in unison," he says. "It's the world I love and I honestly can't see myself doing anything else."

The once-sinking chain is now rising under Abt's leadership. Huddle House is opening new stores and scoring impressive sales gains.



## Monique Mounce is a woman of science who established a STEM scholarship

By Ashley Festa

“SHE’S ALWAYS BEEN FOR THE UNDERDOG, AND THAT’S WHY WE WANTED TO GIVE THIS SCHOLARSHIP TO WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE AND SCIENCE IN GENERAL.”

– DR. MONIQUE MOUNCE, TALKING ABOUT HER MOTHER, WENDY GRIGGS.

**D**r. Monique Mounce takes after her mother, always rooting for the underdog, especially when it comes to women working in the medical field.

That philosophy has most recently revealed itself in the relationship that the two women have with students at Texas State University. Mounce and her mother, Wendy Griggs, created the Griggs/Mounce Strong Women in Science Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship, established last fall, will go to sophomore or junior female students pursuing pre-pharmacy, pre-med, or pre-dental studies.

“Women are disproportionately underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields,” says Mounce, who graduated in 2009 from Texas State with a dual bachelor of science degree in chemistry and biochemistry. “There is just not as much interest from women in those areas, and we need to encourage it.”

Mounce believes creating the scholarship honors her mother, who started her own company in 1987 working with respiratory patients. Griggs later opened Texas Medical Diagnostic and also opened Sleep and Wellness Centers across the United States.

“She’s always been for the underdog, and that’s why we wanted to give this

scholarship to women in healthcare and science in general,” Mounce says. “She was always believing in people when others wouldn’t. She’s the CEO and hires people right out of college because you never know what they’ll be able to do in their life.”

Coming from a family working in healthcare, Mounce had always been interested in medical fields. She would eventually settle on pharmacy, with a focus on patient care and counseling rather than dispensing medicines. After earning her doctorate at the prestigious University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, she went on to complete two post-graduate residencies at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. She earned board certification in pharmacotherapy, and now she’s an assistant professor at the Notre Dame of Maryland University School of Pharmacy, where she teaches pharmacotherapy in autoimmune diseases. She also teaches an introduction to interprofessional education class in partnership with the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Nursing.

On the practice side, Mounce works directly with patients, helping them to understand their medications and improving communication with their physicians. Doctors refer patients to her, many of whom are uninsured or elderly and

often with poor health literacy.

“We talk about their healthcare beliefs and behaviors,” Mounce says. “If patients don’t want to do something, I can encourage them or try to scare them, but it’s ultimately their decision. If you can empower your patient, that’s more powerful than me telling them what to do.”

Much of her role is as a patient advocate. Elderly people often have multiple physicians and medications, which can cause duplications and adverse drug interactions. When the person is not taking the medications as directed, health conditions may not be controlled, leading to additional prescriptions.

“Compliance is an issue,” Mounce says. “I develop trust with the patient, and then report back to other healthcare providers. I contact the physician, and we find a place where the patient is happy and in a good place medically.”

Mounce and her mother hope that their scholarship can help its recipients be in a good place financially as they pursue their degree in health care.

“The university helped my daughter get where she is today,” Griggs says. “It helped her to get into another four-year school and then residency. The undergrad schools need to be congratulated, so that’s why I wanted to give my money to Texas State.

# Baby Steps

Social work graduates provide comfort, guidance to parents of premature infants.

| *By Brian Hudgins* |

**W**hen parents of newborn babies are battling against harsh reality, a pair of Texas State University graduates are there to give them a hand to hold.

Jennifer Beatty and Claire Brown oversee a variety of programs at Hand to Hold, an Austin-based nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that provides resources for parents of infants with special healthcare needs who are transferred to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). “When a baby is admitted to a NICU, I work to connect with the parents quickly,” says Brown, a family support navigator who works with NICU families at St. David’s Women’s Center of Texas and St. David’s Medical Center. “It may be a complete shock to the parents, who may have had a full-term baby who has respiratory distress or blood sugar issues.”

Parents who expect to follow a typical scenario before heading home are instead seeing their child being whisked away for further evaluation and treatment. It is a scenario that Beatty, Hand to Hold’s program director, has twice experienced with her husband Michael Beatty, also a Texas State graduate. Their son, Ty, was delivered at 36 weeks and required an overnight stay in the NICU for blood sugar issues. The couple’s second son, Liam, weighed 2 pounds, 9 ounces after an emergency delivery at 30 weeks. Forty-five days later, Liam was able to head home from the hospital. Beatty knows the ups and downs that happen along the way.

A licensed master social worker, Beatty has worked as an adoption caseworker and in hospice. Brown previously worked for Child Protective Services serving foster children, their biological parents, and foster parents. “Milestones are so important in the NICU,” Beatty says. “You don’t get to just walk in as a parent and hold your baby. You have to ask permission to change a diaper and be a parent to your baby. We had to find ways to remind parents that this is their baby.”

Those reminders happen through tangible items that parents have close to their hearts. Hand to Hold gives NICU parents beaded necklaces designed to mark various milestones. Changing the first diaper leads to a diaper pin bead, a first bath for a baby means a duck bead, and the first time an infant is dressed in a special outfit is represented by a clothing-theme bead. “Your journey may look different (from other parents’), but it is your journey,” Beatty says. “The milestones look different.”

As babies progress beyond respiratory difficulty, feeding issues, or other concerns, a new set of questions awaits when a major milestone happens: A family gets the green light to go home. Although there is the excitement of being out of the hospital, the daily support system that has been provided by doctors, nurses, and other personnel is also removed. “It presents challenges,” says Brown, who earned her master’s degree in 2015. “Parents can feel isolated because they don’t want to overexpose the baby to other people and germs. So we have a peer mentor matching group. The

mentors have gone through training and they have been at the NICU, too.”

Brown’s early training to bridge the gap between families and solutions happened within her social work curriculum at the university. “My education helped prepare me to work with the NICU population by always meeting the parents where they are, rather than making presumptions about how they should feel or handle their current circumstances,” Brown says.

Through email, phone calls and social media tools, new parents who have recently returned home can interact with other NICU families and ask questions. The goal is to help parents with the challenging moments that happen at home. “The parent is now the primary caregiver,” Brown says. “It can hit hard. Parents can be in survival mode at the hospital. Then they might feel some anxiety at home.”

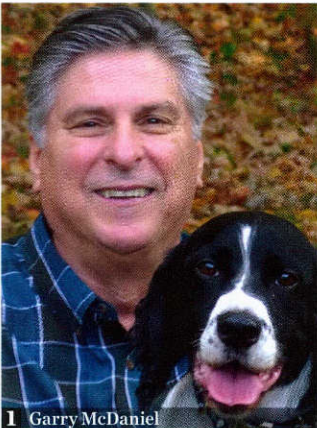
The growth of these support networks has been a welcome development for Beatty, who joined Hand to Hold as an intern before moving to a family support navigator position and then program director. She describes the programs as being driven by patient needs — considering that almost all of the staff members have been in the NICU as a parent or have had family members in the NICU. “Even eight years ago when I was in the NICU, I didn’t have that social network,” says Beatty. “There are so many different communities online. Once they leave the NICU, some families are far away and not next door. It’s great for them to be able to keep in touch through podcasts and social media and be able to ask: Is this normal?”

Before she had to address those questions as a parent or as a program director at Hand to Hold, Beatty bolstered her ability at Texas State. “My experiences and exposures to the diverse cultures and student population as well as my friendships with my social work cohorts broadened my horizons and helped prepare me to work with families from many backgrounds.”



Jennifer Beatty (left) and Claire Brown.

The community connection extends to social events for NICU families, too. On October 20, Hand to Hold’s fourth annual Baby Shower Luncheon was held to celebrate local NICU families. Country singer Randy Rogers, a Texas State alumnus and a Rising Star recipient, performed at the event at the JW Marriott in Austin.



1 Garry McDaniel



2 Kathy Morgan



3 Ameka Hunt



4 Jesse Cabrera

**1 Garry McDaniel '76, '78** Columbus, Ohio, had his book, *The Dog's Guide to Your Happiness: Seven Secrets for a Better Life from Man's Best Friend* (Lumina Media, 2017), selected as one of the top 10 books to read in 2017 by *Live Happy* magazine. He is a professor of human resource management at Franklin University (Columbus, Ohio) where he was selected as top faculty 2016-2017.

**Gary 'Pete' Fredenburg '70, '78** Belton, head football coach at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, is a nominee for the 2018 Texas Sports Hall of Fame. Fredenburg guided the team to its first NCAA Division III National Championship in 2016 and has led UMHB to a 196-38 overall record. In 2006 he was inducted into the Texas State Hall of Honor.

**Roger Cox '80** Amarillo, has authored a new publication, *Cox's Texas Creditors' Rights Laws Annotated* (Thomson Reuters, 2017). A lawyer with the Underwood law firm, Cox is board certified in business bankruptcy, commercial real estate, and farm and ranch real estate law.

**Howard Hudiburg '87** Seguin, had his composition *Variations Along the Chisholm Trail* performed by the Kansas City Symphony. The concert commemorated the 150th anniversary of the famed cattle drive. Hudiburg previously

served as director of orchestral activities and conductor for the Texas State Orchestra.

**2 Kathy Morgan '88** Austin, was honored with the Phyllis Richards Austin Icon for Children Award by the Austin Child Guidance Center. Morgan works with Austin ISD, training teachers.

**Wayne Sneed '90** Austin, has been appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to the Texas Juvenile Justice Advisory Board. Sneed is a senior police officer and a crisis intervention mental health supervisor for Austin ISD. He has served in law enforcement for more than 30 years, including as a Special Texas Ranger with the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

**Doug Killian '91** Pflugerville, has been named superintendent for Pflugerville ISD. He previously served as superintendent with Hutto ISD. Killian received his doctorate in educational administration from Texas A&M University and his master's degree in educational administration from Texas A&M International University.

**Alice L. Jones '92** Richmond, Kentucky, has edited a new book, *Water in Kentucky: Natural History, Communities, and Conservation* (University of Kentucky Press, 2017). She is a professor of geography and geology at Eastern Kentucky University.

**Lucinda Smith '93** Temple, was named Region 12 Outstanding Middle School Principal by the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals. Smith has been the principal of Rogers Middle School since 2012. Her other awards include Phantom Support from the 13th Sustainment Expeditionary Command at Fort Hood and the Golden Apple Award from the *Temple Daily Telegram*.

**Jacque Gore '95** Odessa, has been named to the board of directors for the American Red Cross Serving the Permian Basin. She is currently vice president of communications and marketing at Medical Center Health System. Gore also serves on the boards of the Odessa Chamber of Commerce, Pink the Basin, Ector County ISD Education Foundation Advisory Board, Crystal Ball Foundation, and Odessa Symphony Guild.

**3 Ameka Hunt '96** Pflugerville, was named principal of Pflugerville High School for the 2017-2018 academic year. She previously served as the school's associate principal and taught Spanish at James Bowie High School in Austin ISD from 1997 to 2003.

**Stacie Anaya '96, '98** Lewisville, has been named director of parks and recreation for the city of Lewisville. She is the president-elect of the Texas

Recreation and Parks Society, and previously served as assistant director of parks and recreation for the city of Corpus Christi.

**Claude Mathis '98** Marshall, has been named head football coach for the high school and athletic director for Marshall ISD. He was previously a running backs coach at Southern Methodist University and spent seven years coaching football and track at DeSoto High School. As a student-athlete at Texas State he set an all-time Southland Conference rushing record in football.

**Jeff Caldwell '00** San Marcos, was named director of Neighborhood Services for the city of San Marcos. As director he will oversee Animal Services, Environmental Health, Code Compliance, and the Park Ranger program. He was previously a sergeant with the San Marcos Police Department and chief of police for the city of Martindale.

**4 Jesse Cabrera '03** Austin, was promoted to business development manager in the Energy and Environmental Market of Stanley Consultants. His focus will be higher education, local, state, and federal institutions, power generation and distribution, and industrial-based private clients. Stanley Consultants is a consulting engineering firm that provides engineering, environmental, and construction services worldwide.



## IN REMEMBRANCE

**Gregory K. Davis, ('77-'81)**, a director-at-large of the Texas State Alumni Association board of directors, died September 14. He was born June 23, 1953, to W.J. and Faye Davis. He was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha. Davis, who owned 3-D Welding & Industrial Supply in San Marcos with his brother, Mike, was an avid supporter of Texas State Athletics. In addition to his mother and brother, he is survived by his sister, Lisa Davis-White, and her husband, James; three daughters, Lindsey Zotz, and her husband Clay; Catherine Davis, and Heather Davis; a grandson; and several nieces.

**Andrew Marks (B.S. '89, M.S. '97)**, a School of Social Work faculty member who once served as executive director of the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners, died September 16. He was born December 1, 1963, to Mary Jane and Joseph Marks in Austin. Marks was active in the Boy Scouts of America, the University Catholic Center, and the LBJ/LASA Jaguar Band. He is survived by his wife, Sondra Porter Marks; children, Hannah and AJ; mother; brothers, Michael Marks and Christopher Marks; sister, Mary Marks; and many nieces and nephews.

**Dr. Celestino Avila (B.S. '64)**, a family practice doctor in the Rio Grande Valley and a beloved figure in high school and college football, died July 31. He was born December 3, 1941, in Donna, Texas. A three-year letterman at Texas State, he earned consecutive all-conference accolades and All-American selections in football. In 1963 he was a member of the undefeated Bobcat team to be named Lone Star Conference champion. He was named

to the Rio Grande Valley All-Millennium team in 1999 before being inducted into the Rio Grande Valley Sports Hall of Fame and National Hispanic Sports Hall of Fame. In 1978, three years after earning his medical school degree in Monterrey, Mexico, Avila returned to Donna High School as the team physician. He is survived by his wife Aurora and five children: Veronica, Erica, Marco, Julio, and Celestino Jr.

**Dr. Joe 'Doc' Moore**, of Canyon Lake, died May 15 in New Braunfels. He joined Texas State in 1968 and served as director of secondary student teaching and field experiences, supervising student teachers throughout Central Texas. Upon his retirement in 1998, he was honored as an associate professor emeritus of curriculum and instruction. Born March 13, 1939, to Dee and Mary Moore, he was raised in Graham. From 1976 to 1996 he co-owned New Canaan Farms in Dripping Springs, which produced jam, jelly, and salsa products sold in 42 states. The author of several books, he was a former president of the Tejas Storytelling Association. He is survived by his partner of 35 years, Tim Tingle, and his son, Jacob Tingle.

**Dr. Donald Thomas Matlock**, a retired Texas State professor and chair of the Department of Sociology, died March 7 in New Braunfels. Born in 1943 in Shreveport, Louisiana, Matlock was a member of the university faculty from 1968 until his retirement in 2000. He is survived by his wife, Kathy; son, Dale Matlock; daughters, June Hood, Heather Springs, and Shannon Springs; brother, Eddy Smith; five grandchildren; and a great-grandson. Donations can be made to the Newsom/

Matlock Sociology Endowed Scholarship at Texas State; or follow the link at [donate.txstate.edu](http://donate.txstate.edu).

**Lee Meredith Phelps (B.A. '48)**, who helped design and implement the first computer "pointer" died April 26 in Lake Belton. Born March 2, 1927, Phelps served four years in the Navy, studied engineering at The University of Texas at Austin, and worked in Information Technology at Texas State until his retirement in 1988. He was married to Bobbie Phelps for 67 years until her death in 2016. He is survived by his daughter, Casie, and two grandsons.

**Dr. Jean Amelia Smith**, who was the chair and taught physical education at Texas State for 36 years, died June 1 in Columbus, Indiana. She was born November 17, 1921, in Charleston, South Carolina. She also assisted in training Peace Corp volunteers. Smith was instrumental in establishing the first Texas Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. She retired from the university in 1987. Survivors include her sister, Mary Ellen Boll of Lynnwood, Washington; and many nieces and nephews.

**Darrell Hortness (B.S. '52, M.S. '56)**, of San Marcos, a former Bobcat football player (1948-52) died December 1, at age 86. Hortness served in the Marines from 1952-1954. He taught and coached at San Marcos High and Edna High School, built custom homes for 44 years, was inducted into the Bobcat Hall of Honor in 1986, and was employed at Chuck Nash Auto Group. He is survived by four daughters, three sisters, two brothers, and 14 grandchildren.

### Wayne Baker '06

Gonzales, the pit master at Baker Boys BBQ, which made the *Texas Monthly* (June 2017) list of the "Top 50 barbecue joints in Texas." Baker and his father, Phil, opened the barbecue restaurant about two years ago.

### Derek Cain '09

Magnolia, was named head coach at Magnolia High School. He

spent seven seasons as an assistant for the Bulldogs and also taught history.

### Micah Grau '09

Buda, has joined the city of Buda as the assistant city manager. He previously served as assistant city manager and interim city manager of Hutto. Grau is a member of the Texas City Managers Association (TCMA),

the International City Managers Association, and serves as vice president of TCMA Region 7.

### Cassandra Querques Mullinex '09

Oneonta, New York, is now a career counselor at State University of New York. She previously served as an adjunct professor and transfer admissions counselor.

### Stacie Kelly '10

San Antonio, has joined Southwest Business Corp. (SWBC) as an anti-money laundering compliance manager for the company's financial institutions division.

**Send your Class Notes contributions to:**  
[hillviews@txstate.edu](mailto:hillviews@txstate.edu)

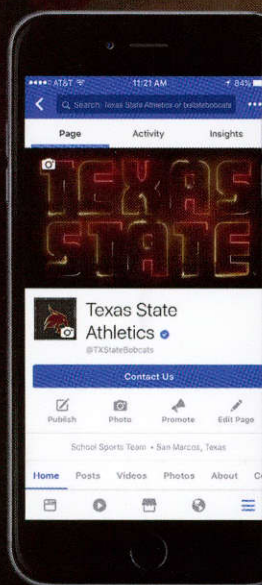
# The (last) view



*The art installation Vessels, located outside the Angelina and San Gabriel Residence Hall Complex, evokes both leaves and canoes. It was created by Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee with Metalab. Photo by Stephanie Schulz*



# TEXAS STATE ATHLETICS



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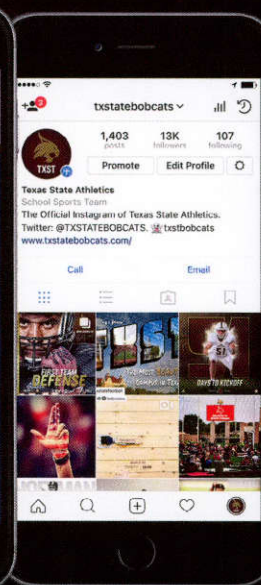
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## from the collections



*A major exhibit on Jerry Jeff Walker and his music is coming to The Wittliff this spring.*

## AT THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS

### JERRY JEFF WALKER ARCHIVE: TREASURES FROM THE "GYPSY SONGMAN" COME TO THE WITTLIFF

COMING SPRING 2018

Part poet. Part troubadour. All Texas. Jerry Jeff Walker has traveled the world with songs that paint a picture as vivid as any painter and tell stories as well as any novelist. Now this Texas music legend has donated his archive to The Wittliff Collections. A major acquisition for the newly formed Texas Music Collection, the archive comprises more than 100 boxes of materials spanning Jerry Jeff's entire career, featuring master tapes, photographs, hand-written lyrics and artifacts.

Arriving in Austin in the early 1970s with the likes of Willie Nelson, Doug Sahm, and Asleep at the Wheel, Walker quickly became one of the key figures in the ever-growing legend of Austin music. As a songwriter, his music has climbed the charts. As an artist, he helped spark a Texas music movement and has inspired a generation of musicians.

The Jerry Jeff Walker archive at The Wittliff will provide a valuable resource to students of music and culture from all backgrounds, and it will historically preserve a piece of our culture to be enjoyed, studied and interpreted for decades to come. Select items are on display now at The Wittliff, and a major exhibition is planned for spring 2018.

To learn more, visit [www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu](http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu) or call (512) 245-7431.