

vol. 49 no. 1 | 2018 | MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

hillviews



Making beautiful harmony

The School of Music hits all the right notes

TEXAS
STATE
UNIVERSITY

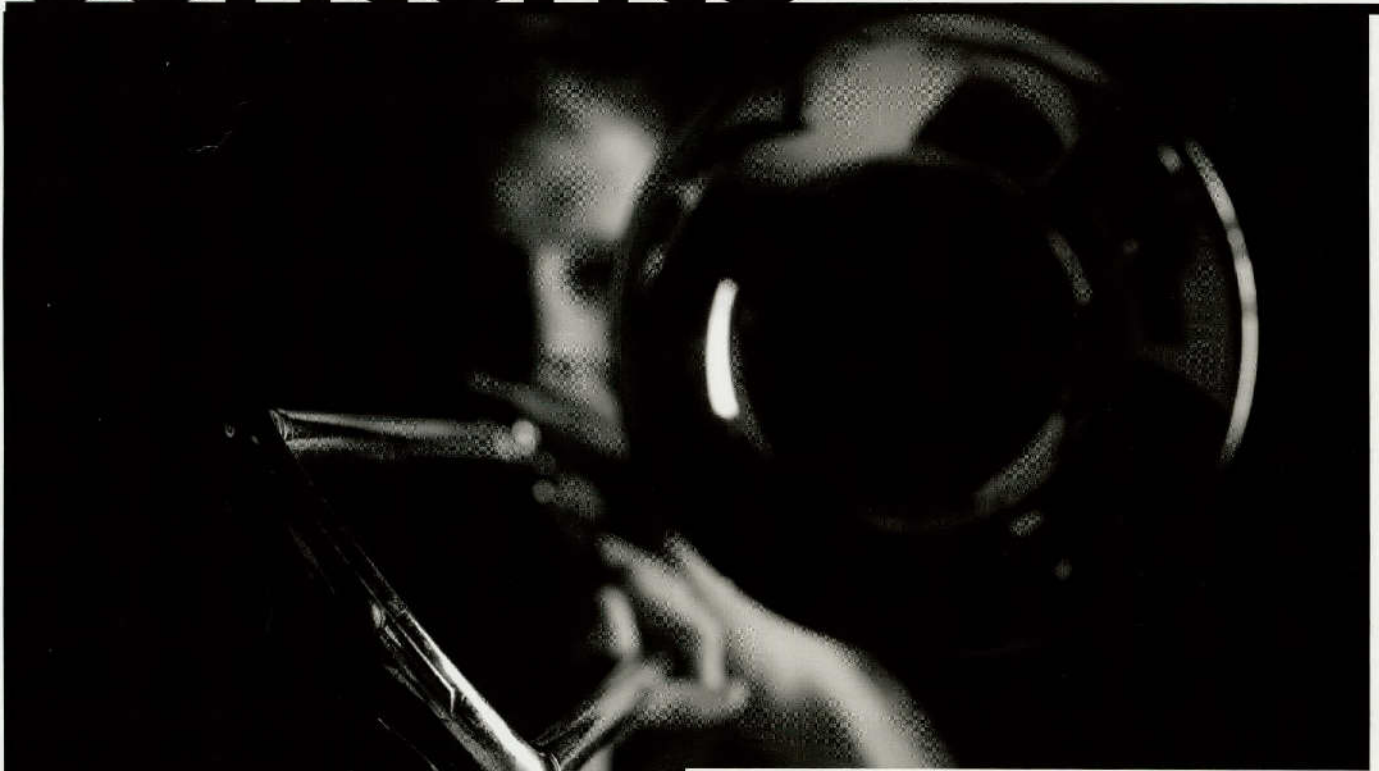
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The School of Music

Quality is built into the school that puts students on a path to success. While the university gets thousands of applications each year, music students are among those in Fine Arts who must audition for a place.

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; 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

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Texas State University

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(from the president's desk)



Dear Friends,

There are few places in the world where Bobcats from Texas State University's School of Music haven't shared their talents. The School of Music features more than 30 student ensembles and an internationally active faculty; the artistry of Texas State is heard on stages, in performance venues and recital halls, and through broadcasts around the globe. You may have attended one of the dozens of on-campus performances or music festivals the university hosts each year. More than likely, you've probably listened to a recording composed by a Bobcat alumnus or faculty member that has been featured in a film or that has won a Grammy Award.

The rigorous training and practice the School of Music demands of each of its students begins before they even join the program. All School of Music candidates are required to audition. Once they are here, they become part of a nurturing and vibrant community, led by our star faculty members. School of Music faculty themselves are exceptional performers, composers, and researchers. They win awards and are frequent contributors to scholarly journals. Just as importantly, Bobcats also share their love and knowledge of music with children through music groups and camps.

Even before I became president of Texas State in 2002, I was aware of the School of Music's outstanding reputation, and I am proud to be a part of its continued excellence. As part of our goal to increase the university's academic capacity, the University's Master Plan calls for the construction of a new music building on our San Marcos Campus. We plan to provide the school with a quality facility worthy of the high standards of those who will learn and teach there.

I invite you to read more about our outstanding School of Music in this issue, which also includes an article on Texas State's new Ph.D. program in computer science. The Ph.D. combines specialized training in entrepreneurship and commercialization to make it a one-of-a-kind program in Texas. There is also a feature on the university's \$15.4 million Archives and Research Center, which opened last fall and is housing many of our library materials to allow us to create innovative learning spaces at the Albert B. Alkek Library.

I 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



From Alkek to the ARC

New facility
welcomes
researchers
to delve into
more than
600,000 items

By Dan R. Goddard

Hundreds of thousands of books, photographs, paintings, and other items tucked away deep in the stacks of Texas State University's Albert B. Alkek Library and in off-site storage facilities are finding a new home on the 6 miles of multi-stacked, high-density shelving in the \$15.4 million Archives and Research Center (ARC), which opened this past fall at the university's Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park in San Marcos.

Designed by Harrison Kornberg Architects of Houston to protect many of the university's valuable collections in a climate-controlled environment, including a special Arts and Artifacts space for paintings and other objects from The Wittliff Collections and the University Archives, the 14,000-square-foot ARC mingles big-box retail warehouse know-how with state-of-the-art preservation technology. But unlike similar archives at some other major research universities, the ARC was designed with visitors in mind.

"We designed our building to be patron-friendly and welcoming to faculty, staff, and researchers," says Joan Heath, associate vice president and university librarian. "Some other high-density facilities are not accessible to the public, but as part of the university's research campus, it was important for us to offer a reading room and instruction space that would support on-site research." Texas State students, faculty, and visiting scholars, upon request, will utilize the ARC's Reading Room featuring the latest equipment available for viewing, digitizing, and printing research materials, though patrons are restricted to using the traditional lead pencil and paper for taking notes.

Currently, the library staff is in the process of moving more than 600,000 library items and 3,000 linear feet of archival materials to the ARC. The move isn't expected to be completed until 2019. Anything in the general collections that hadn't been checked out in 10 years became a candidate for the ARC, which can hold more than a million items.

"After close consultation with faculty, our subject librarians determined which items needed to be removed from the collection and then determined which of the remaining items should stay in the Alkek Library," Heath says. "The rest were slated to be sent to the ARC for preservation as they were less likely to be checked out."

However, items stored in the ARC can be requested online and delivered daily to the Alkek Library. Materials also are being shared with the Round Rock Campus Library.

Large windows permit natural light in the front offices of the ARC, which is primarily devoted to two windowless,



warehouse-size storage areas. Equipped with rolling dividers designed to hold framed paintings and photographs usually found in art museums, the Arts and Artifacts room has a 20-foot-high ceiling and is maintained at a constant 68 degrees with 40 percent humidity. The main high-pile unit, where books and manuscripts go, has a 40-foot ceiling and is environmentally controlled at 50 degrees with 30 percent humidity.

Kenneth Pierce, vice president for information technology, says the climate-controlled system in the ARC can extend

the life of the materials stored within the building for hundreds of years. "We also have a high-tech fire prevention and suppression system that includes an extremely sensitive Very Early Smoke Detection Apparatus that will detect particulates in the air, and a main fire suppression system that is dry with a secondary water suppression system that will activate only when smoke is actually detected," Pierce says.

But the books aren't lined up neatly by subject and in alphabetical order by

The ARC is located at 250 E. McCarty Lane in San Marcos. It is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays for individuals who want to view or check out materials.



600,000

items to be migrated from Alkek in the next 2 years

6

miles of shelving

-50°F

temperature that the quarantine freezer drops to in order to destroy pests or mold in archival materials

800

materials processed each day

14,000

square feet of space in ARC

50°F

temperature in the environmentally controlled high-pile space

400

boxes of University Archives materials brought from off-site storage

10

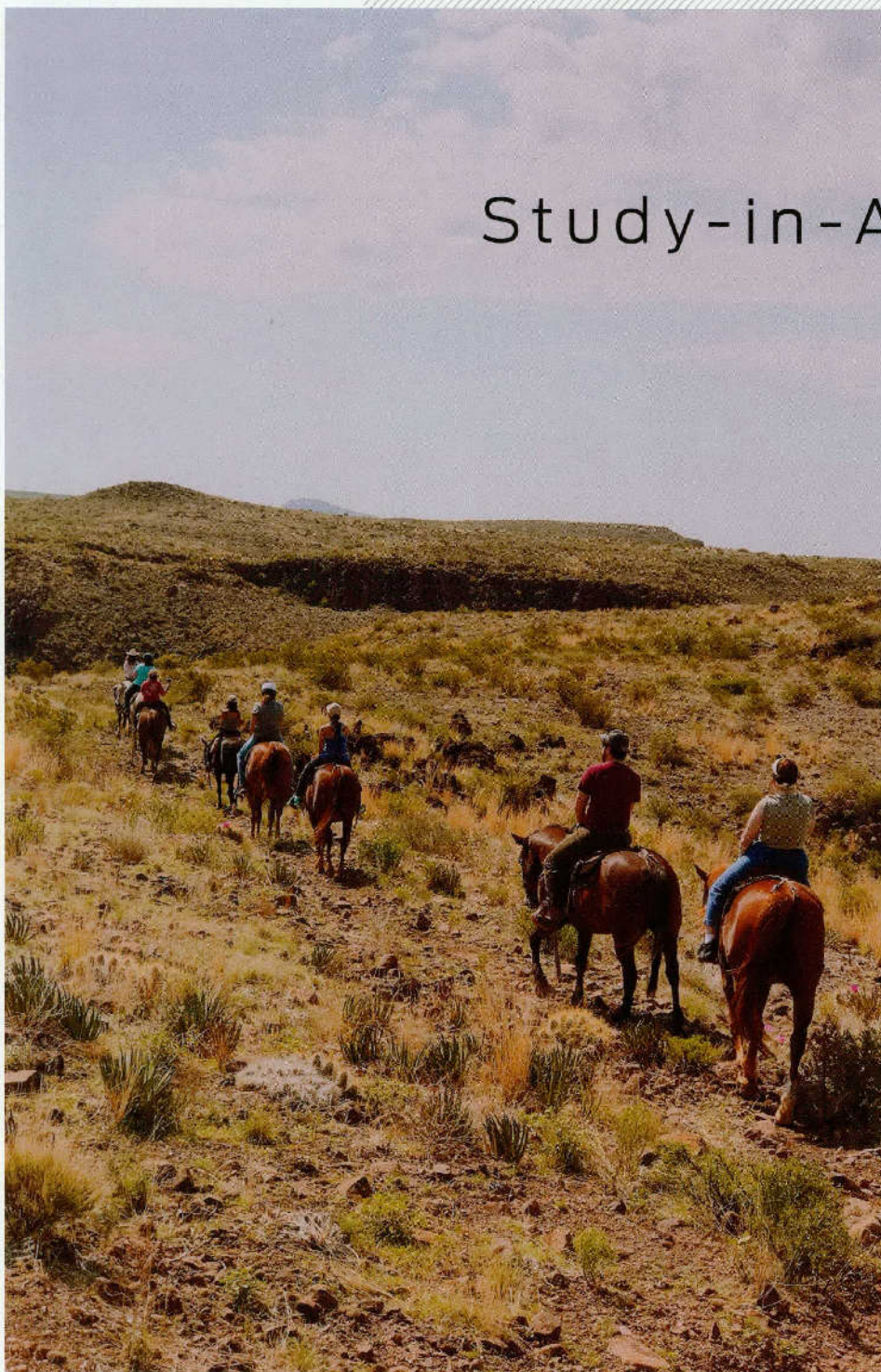
years to fill the existing ARC space

author. ARC manager Mike Ellis, who has a background in big-box retail warehousing, explained books and other materials are sorted by size, and bar codes are used in conjunction with the online catalog to indicate where the books are stored in trays that fit easily on the shelves. Workers stand on specially designed risers that can hold a library cart to access the highest shelves up to nearly three stories above the floor. "High-density means we're trying to fit the most materials we can into the smallest possible space," Ellis says.

Pierce says the university is making good use of the space being freed up by the ARC. "Having this new library facility gives us the opportunity to make room in the Alkek Library for newer library materials and to make significant upgrades to the library that will include adding new research technology and collaborative work centers for the students and faculty at Texas State," he says. "It also allows us to expand The Wittliff Collections space on the seventh floor to accommodate the increasing demand for exhibit space as our collections grow."

Planned upgrades at the Alkek Library include virtual reality and interactive learning environments, a makerspace center, 3-D technologies, video presentation studios and practice labs, model classrooms, and an expansion of the Geographic Information System data and research hub. Along with the latest in software and computer technologies and more group study and work areas, the Alkek will add a café and a commons area for graduate students.

Study-in-America



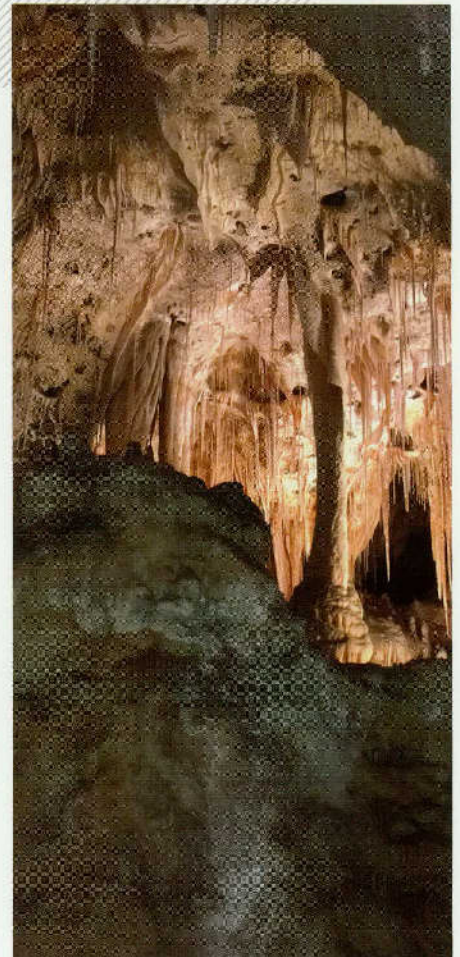
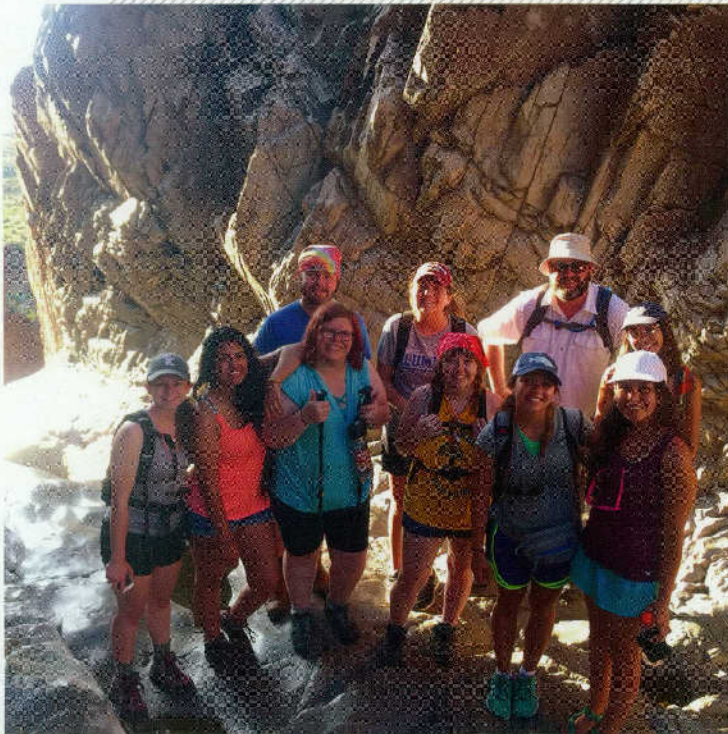
The Study-in-America participants included students Alexa Altschul, Cassandra Alvarado, Zachary Ienatsch, Nia Jaramillo, Haley Jenkins, Chelsea Karrenbrock, Dalia Moreno, Ashley Simpson, Rebecca Stone; program assistant Nicole Hengst; and faculty advisors Kym Fox and Dale Blasingame





Journalism students report from state, national parks as they create content for digital and social media outlets

By Nicole Hengst



Editor's note: Nicole Hengst earned her master's degree in mass communication in May 2017 and then hit the road as the program assistant for a group of Texas State University students taking part in this Study-in-America program.

Nine students, seven national and state parks in 14 days. That is what summer school looked like for a group of Texas State University students who took part in the first Study-in-America program offered by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The students traveled through West Texas and New Mexico with two professors and a program assistant to conduct interviews, shoot photos and video, and produce stories. The students earned six hours of college credit by writing travel and feature stories and producing mini-documentaries and social media content for each of the parks under the direction of faculty members Dale Blasingame and Kym Fox.

The summer program is the outgrowth of a class developed a year ago by Blasingame in partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department that is aimed at using social media to tell stories with the goal of attracting young visitors to the parks. The 2017 summer program included a feature writing class taught by Fox and added travel to national parks. The class documented the students' daily adventures with a travelogue and used the class hashtag #SJMCParks on social media.

The group traveled in three rented SUVs filled with camera gear, camping equipment, and food. Lodging varied from state park housing to tents. The class involved several weeks of study prior to the trip and a week of finishing projects when the group made it back to the university in mid-June. Students paid tuition and a program fee for the experience.

All told, the 14-day Study-in-America program covered 3,000 miles — and more than 204,000 steps by one Fitbit count.

"A class and a trip like this gets students out of their comfort zone. Students are subjected to the real-time pressure of conducting interviews in the field, producing content on deadline and doing it all while in unfamiliar territory," says Fox, an associate professor of practice.

"This is the real world where microphones sometimes fail, and no cell service means you can't post the social media content your client is expecting. Problem-solving and troubleshooting are critical skills required of virtually every profession but especially in journalism and PR," she says.

The experience, Fox explains, can also test the talents

of the faculty. "Sometimes it means teaching 1,000 feet underground in Carlsbad Caverns, helping students figure out how to shoot photos in such low light.

"One student found a group of caving volunteers cleaning the caverns' pristine pools with spoons on long poles. It's a great story, but it's also a challenge to take notes in near darkness and to remember to ask all the right questions because we aren't driving back to Carlsbad if you forgot to ask something."

There are 15 Study-in-America activities planned for 2018 and 2019. Pending final approval from The Texas State University System Board of Regents, the colleges and departments include: the College of Liberal Arts (geography, philosophy, English, history); the College of Fine Arts and Mass Communication (theatre & dance, journalism); the College of Education (health and human performance; and curriculum & instruction); the College of Science & Engineering (biology); the College of Applied Arts (social work, family and consumer sciences); and the College of Health Professions.

For the journalism and mass communication students, the trip also involved working in teams to cook and clean, often in the wilderness out of the back of a Suburban. "There were a lot of laughs," says junior electronic media major Lexi Altschul. "We became sort of like family, which was cool."

Managing all of the professional gear was another issue. The group traveled with tripods, gimbals (camera sticks), iPhone mounts, microphones, a GoPro, a 360-camera, and other equipment. Several of the devices needed to be charged nightly, which posed problems at camp grounds. The lack of cell service at many of the parks also presented a challenge. One of the goals of the class was to post high-quality photos to Instagram and share stories via Snapchat that would encourage other young people to visit the parks.

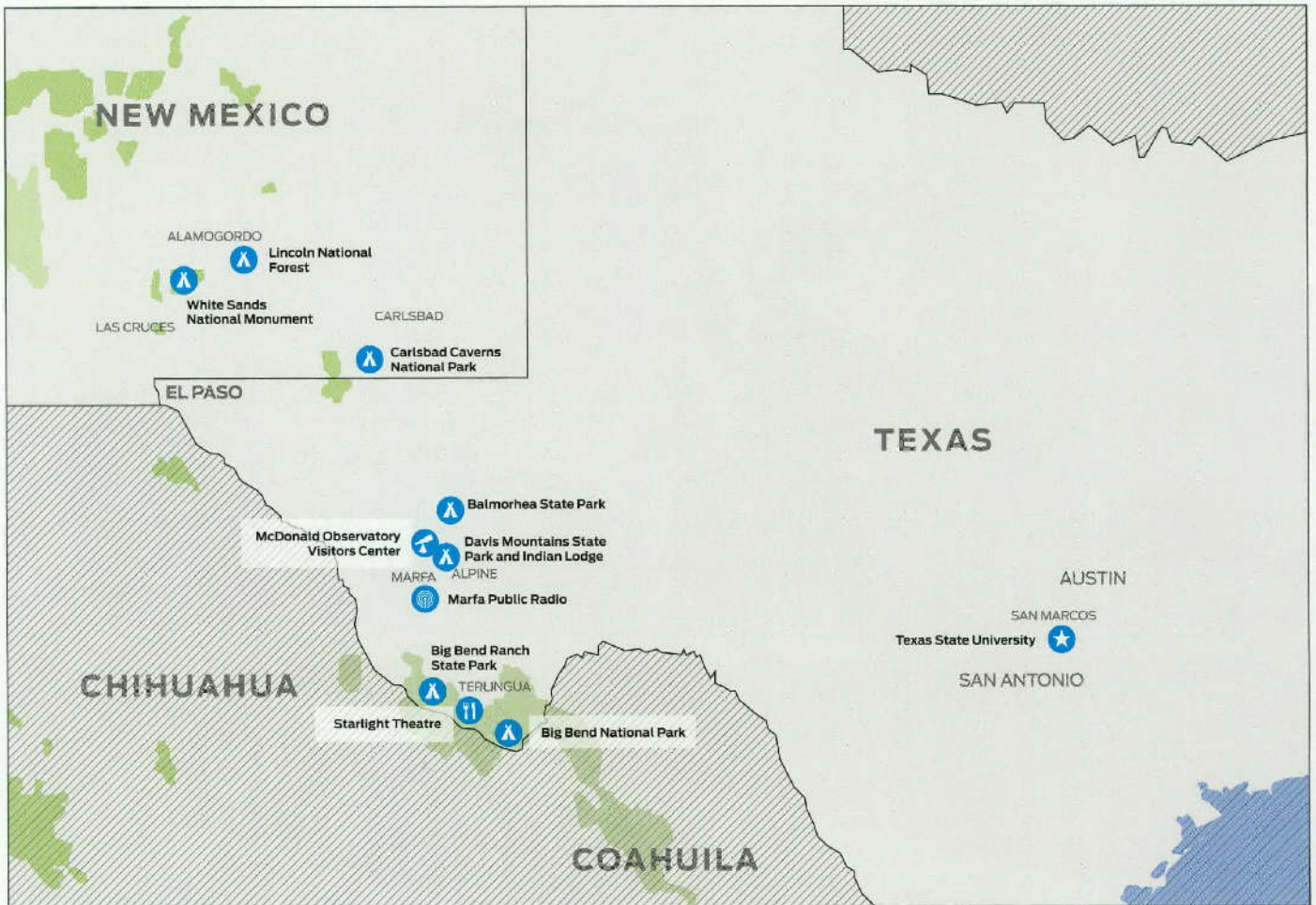
"It was beautiful and amazing, and probably one of the coolest things I've ever done," says senior journalism major Haley Jenkins.

Some of the students had never been camping and others were camping pros. "I'm not really an outdoorsy person ... and going out here really sparked something in me to want to be outdoors more, to want to explore different places and the beautiful parks and be in nature. It's wonderful," says public relations major Nia Jaramillo, a San Antonio native.

The programs are offered through the Office of Distance and Extended Learning:
extension.txstate.edu/students/study-in-america-offerings

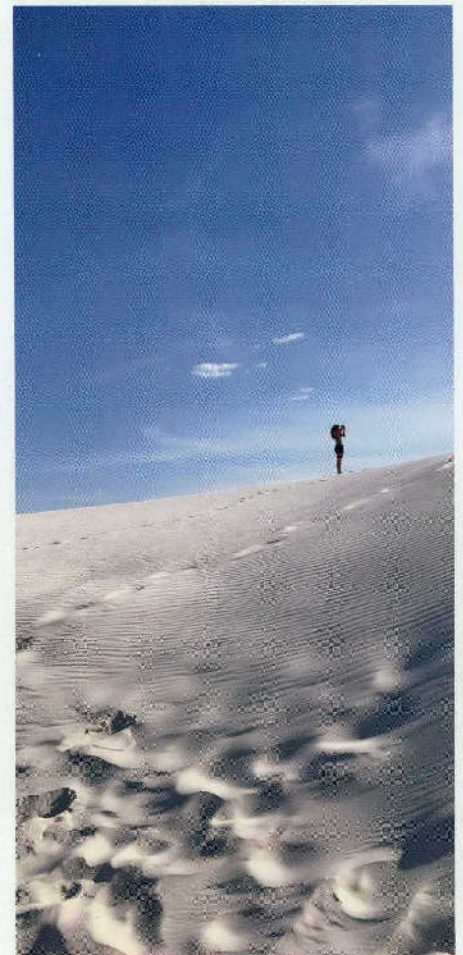
Non-Texas State students are eligible to participate with proof of prerequisites. Students are responsible for tuition and program fees, in addition to personal expenses and airfare.





BY THE NUMBERS

85 Interviews	47 Videos posted	14 Travelogue entries
945 Social media posts	10 Podcasts	12,600+ Story word count
3,276 Photographs taken		





DeAijha Hicks-Boyce


RUNNING WITH CONFIDENCE



Devina Schneider

**Track and field
Bobcats overcome
challenges, changes**

By Edmond Ortiz



Devina Schneider and DeAijha Hicks-Boyce walked — or ran, really — different paths in life before joining the Texas State women's track and field team.

Schneider, a redshirt sophomore, took up running in second grade and loved every minute of it. The Bellaire, Texas, native was named the Most Valuable Player at Episcopal High School. When it was time to look at colleges, Schneider quickly embraced the culture of Texas State athletics. "I liked the whole girls' team dynamic, how they interacted with each other, and how close they were to each other," she says.

Hicks-Boyce lettered in running all four years at Waco La Vega High School, and was an NCAA Division II All-American during her two years at Tarleton State University. After transferring, Hicks-Boyce had to adjust to life in San Marcos, at Texas State, and as a member of a track and field program that is winning championships.

Women's track and field capped Coach Jody Stewart's second year as program director by winning both the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) Indoor Track and Field Championships and the SBC Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

"Last year was a transition. I was coming to a new school, I was under a new coach," Hicks-Boyce says. "But in Coach Stewart's words, I had to trust the process. I think overall I performed pretty well."

"Pretty well" may be an understatement describing performances by such team members as Schneider and Hicks-Boyce in their 2017 season. Schneider, who redshirted as a freshman, was named Freshman and Newcomer of the Year. She set a women's program record in the 1,500-meter run with a time of 4:26.59 at the Bryan Clay Invitational in California. She won a gold medal in the mile run at the SBC Indoor Championships and a gold medal at the SBC Outdoor Championships in the 3,000-meter steeplechase.

Schneider credited an optimistic outlook for her success last season. "My freshman year was a little tough because I was injured so I wasn't able to compete as much as I would've liked," she says. "With all the coaching changes, it was hectic, but I kind of surprised myself with how I recovered so quickly."

Hicks-Boyce was part of the gold medal-winning 4X400-meter relay team at the SBC Indoor Championships. She also collected bronze in the 4X400-meter relay at the SBC Outdoor Championships. Like Schneider, Hicks-Boyce went into last season with a more confident point of view of her abilities. "I'm trying to improve my mindset. I'm

trying to stay positive and achieve the goals I set for myself," she says.

Schneider and Hicks-Boyce are among hundreds of thousands of student-athletes balancing academic and athletic demands. It's a particularly daunting challenge for Schneider, who also runs cross country in the fall. "It took me awhile to get used to it, honestly," Schneider says. "The Athletic Academic Center that we have has been helpful with study hall hours."

Schneider says that once a student-athlete lays out his or her objectives, it's vital to stay consistent with the plan: "It's a long-term investment; you have to stick with it from the beginning."

Hicks-Boyce reminds herself that every day brings her closer to completing her goals. "When I wake up every morning, I thank God for a new day and I try to make the best out of every day and take things one day at a time," she says.

When Hicks-Boyce prepares for a competition, that familiar mantra in Bobcat athletics — "trust the process" — comes into play. "I have to stay positive. If you let the mind wander, you tend to overthink what you want to do," she says. "If you go into the race knowing you've prepared yourself for the race, you're going to be fine."

Stewart is excited to see what the rest of the women's track team could accomplish this year. He has been accumulating SBC Coach of the Year awards since taking over Texas State track and field.

In May, Texas State is hosting the SBC Outdoor Track and Field Championships. "In 2017, we left a lot of points on the track, but when I look at things in perspective, we found a way to persevere," Stewart says of the 2017 track season.

"We had a few young ladies who early on had some injuries. I think the one thing we talked about was finding a way to overcome those challenges and they did that."

Computer science Ph.D.

Specialized knowledge meets entrepreneurship, commercialization in new degree

By Robyn Ross

Computer scientists can have strong technical abilities but will miss career opportunities unless they have strong interpersonal skills and business acumen.

While the majority of doctoral programs in computer science don't provide this type of expertise, Texas State's new Ph.D. in computer science does. It's the first such degree in Texas to combine rigorous academic theory with coursework in entrepreneurship and commercialization.

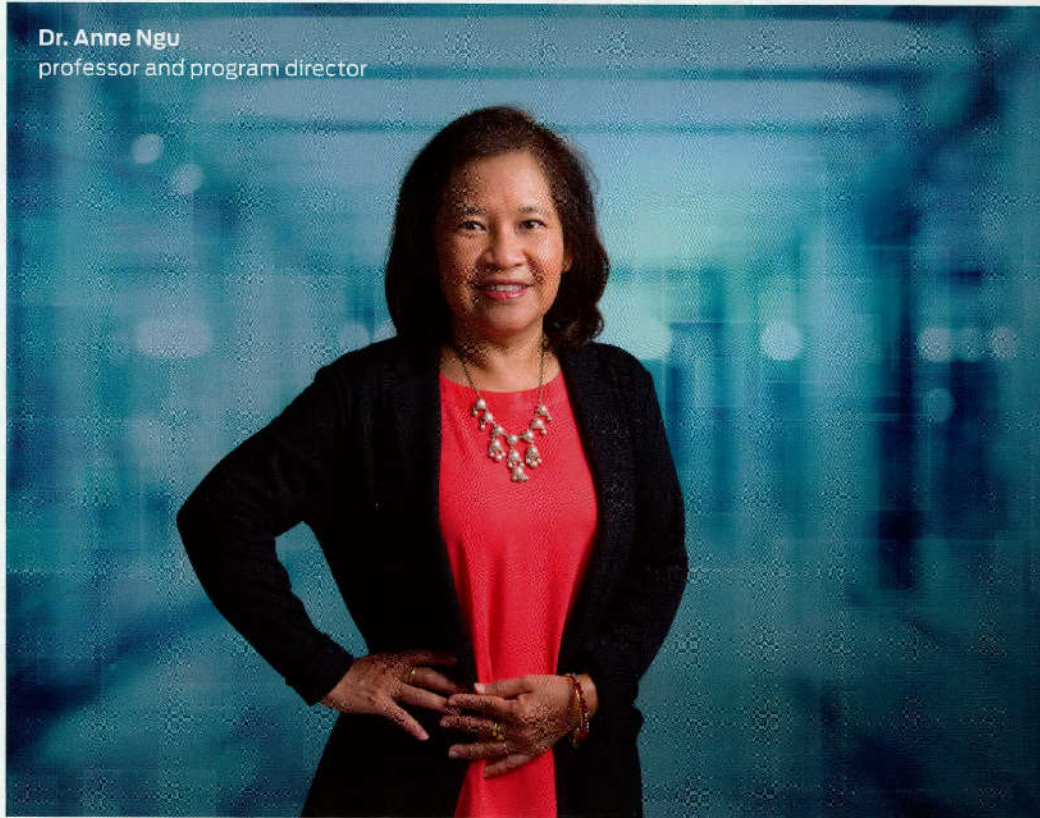
The new graduate program, a culmination of more than a decade of planning, saw its first cohort of nine students arrive in fall 2017. Graduates will have a diverse skill set that equips them for the modern career landscape, says Dr. Anne Ngu, professor and program director.

"Twenty years ago, when somebody got a computer science Ph.D., they most likely would take a faculty position and work in that job for life," Ngu says. "But with the globalization of technology, people change jobs frequently. We want to prepare students for multiple career paths, and we believe that provides a more transformative graduate education in computer science."

The program will fill a growing gap between the number of jobs requiring a Ph.D. in computer science and the number of doctorates earned nationwide, says Dr. Hongchi Shi, professor and department chair. An increasing number of career positions in Central Texas, which include data scientist, software architect, and network security technologist, will require a Ph.D. Companies such as Google, Facebook, and Amazon want prospective employees with an advanced degree for their research and development departments. And in return, the increasing demand for computer science degrees at the undergraduate level translates to a need for more doctorate degrees in teaching positions.

Texas State's program also capitalizes on the faculty's reputation for producing outstanding research. But it departs from traditional Ph.D. programs, which have a more theoretical focus, by pairing

Dr. Anne Ngu
professor and program director



technical coursework with expertise in leadership, communication skills, and commercialization. It also can accommodate nontraditional, part-time students, such as people who work in the Central Texas tech industry and want to earn a degree without leaving their job.

To that end, the program will partner with the university's Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park, a research park anchored by a technology business incubator. Companies that use STAR Park to accelerate product development and commercialization also provide benefits to the university. In the past four years, companies at STAR Park have hired 14 Texas State graduates and provided the university \$1.5 million of funded research. The 2016 expansion of the STAR One building included infrastructure supporting future industry partnerships with the Department of Computer Science, such as 10-gigabit dual fiber connectivity between the park and the supercomputing center on the main campus.

The Ph.D. in computer science draws on the successful model of the Materials Science, Engineering, and Commercialization (MSEC) doctoral degree, which also combines STEM research and entrepreneurship education. Like MSEC students, computer science students will complete two entrepreneurship boot camps designed to teach them how to create a business plan. They also can draw on the resources of STAR Park — workspace, mentors, funding sources — to launch their own companies, separate from the university.

"The greatest issue with technology- and innovation-based companies is they tend to be in love with technology, rather than understanding the business proposition," says Stephen Frayser, STAR Park's executive director. "We'll prepare students in this program to ask the questions that are important for a business approach: What are the applications of this research, is there a market for it, and how do I get it launched?"

Randi Turner

Bobcat reaches out to serve Texans with disabilities

By Brian Hudgins

By starting over, Randi Turner has taken steps forward to help many Texas residents spread their wings.

Turner's new beginning happened in May 2016, when she became the accessibility and disability rights coordinator for the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. For the San Antonio native who graduated in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in applied arts and sciences, the broad scope of her daily duties is quite different from a few years ago. "It's like I started all over," Turner says. "I love learning, and it's exciting to work with different populations. I had developed tons of resources, and I see myself as a connector."

Turner's previous job within the Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services provided a foundation for her to transition into a larger role throughout the state. "My job for 19 years was focusing on helping people who are deaf or hard of hearing," Turner says. "Now that has opened up to all people with disabilities."

Turner's skill as a connector includes her fluency in American Sign Language. She is certified by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and still interprets part time for Video Relay Services. Questions regarding individual access to parking spaces, businesses, and residences are frequently posed to Turner, who explains how the Americans with Disabilities Act applies to individuals or groups in various cases. That line of communication also includes Turner conducting disability rights training sessions for businesses. "What has been really cool is that at the Office of the Governor, we take comments from the community about challenges they face," Turner says. "Then we take them to a 12-person committee, which sends recommendations to the state legislature or governor."

Following Hurricane Harvey's impact on Texas, the need to assist residents in



"I LOVE LEARNING, AND IT'S EXCITING TO WORK WITH DIFFERENT POPULATIONS. I HAD DEVELOPED TONS OF RESOURCES, AND I SEE MYSELF AS A CONNECTOR."

rural areas who lack transportation options is a main consideration for the disabled.

"In those rural areas, there are often fewer resources," Turner says. "A visually impaired person who can't drive – how are you going to be mobile?"

At a special education forum in Lubbock, Turner learned firsthand that a lack of public transportation there made it difficult for local students to reach a school. Another common issue is the lack of American Sign Language interpreters in rural communities. "For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, there are many interpreters in Austin because of the number of state agencies employing people with disabilities," Turner

says. "The School for the Deaf is here (in Austin), so people often move here and stay. For people in Laredo or counties in West Texas who have smaller deaf communities, there may be no interpreter."

In 2004, Turner's occupational excellence resulted in her receiving the LBJ Award as part of the Deaf Celebration Expo. The award is presented annually to a hearing Texan for contributions toward equal opportunities for deaf people. The award is given in the spirit of President Lyndon Johnson, who signed the law establishing the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

Turner credited an intensive writing course at Texas State for helping her function as an advocate and trainer. "I have had to share information in a persuasive way," Turner says. "You are giving people information that they need to make decisions."

That learning process led to Turner being nominated as a potential commencement speaker through the College of Applied Arts, which she called "an honor."

"I was 46 years old when I finished at Texas State," Turner says. "One of the other students said she was on a one-year plan. I joked that I was on a 27-year plan!"

Making beautiful harmony

Singers, composers, honored faculty add
to national reputation of the School of Music

The School of Music has a lot to sing about. Grammy-winning faculty, award-winning opera productions and musical performances, a stellar placement record for music teachers, the International Piano Festival, and the Bobcat Marching Band are just a few things that have helped Texas State build a national reputation for students seeking music degrees.

BY JULIE COOPER

Jack Wilds

composer and
Texas State lecturer



Dr. Lynn F. Ledbetter

Professor of violin



These days at Texas State's School of Music, undergraduates can major in general music, classical, jazz performance, and sound recording. There are more than 30 student ensembles: choirs, wind bands, a symphony orchestra, mariachi and salsa ensembles, jazz bands and combos, and ensembles for opera, modern music, and percussion.

One could say that excellence is built into the program: An audition is required of every School of Music applicant. "We probably accept no more than two-thirds of the students who audition," says Dr. Thomas Clark, the school's director. "Sometimes, it is about a 50 percent acceptance rate," Clark adds. In the case of the Sound Recording Technology program, only 15 freshmen are accepted each year, but four times that number apply to it. The program is housed in the former San Marcos Fire Station.

The school's reputation for putting students on a path to success in music — whether it is teaching, performing, or composing — is an example of the best learning from the best and brightest. "We are developing the future leaders in the choral world," says Dr. Joey Martin. "And we can point to how that is happening."

Words that are repeated over and over in interviews with both faculty and graduates are "passion," "caring," and "support."

Texas State's School of Music has more than 600 music majors. That number puts the school easily in the top five in the state, says Dr. John Fleming, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

"There is a general notion that this is a little regional music department," Clark says. "It is important to recognize we are a major School of Music." In terms of size, the University of North Texas has the largest music school in Texas. But size isn't what's important.

"We have grown our faculty in the nine years I have been here. We have 90 specialists from full-time to adjuncts, all of whom need space to teach, offices, and, in some cases, teaching studios, which are bigger offices with soundproofing."

Faculty grows

Among the 90 faculty members are 50 internationally active performing, conducting, or composing artists. The group includes 10 Grammy Award winners, who share another 13 Grammy nominations. These instructors have performed with artists ranging from Frank Sinatra to the Dixie Chicks, and from Ella Fitzgerald to the Eagles.

Craig Hella Johnson, with eight Grammy nominations and one win to his name, became an artist-in-residence in 2012. This year, he is a professor of practice. An internationally recognized choral conductor, composer, and arranger, Johnson is the founder and artistic director of the Austin-based choral group *Conspirare*. In 2013, Johnson was named Texas Musician of the Year. In 2016 the choral group recorded his concert-length choral piece, "Considering Matthew Shepard," which garnered a Grammy nomination.

Since Dr. Carolyn Watson joined the university three years ago, the orchestra program has expanded dramatically. She led the 35-member Chamber Orchestra in May 2017 on a tour of European capitals, where the concert in Prague was a sellout. When she joined the university as director of orchestral studies, Watson says she was struck by the enthusiasm of the students — and their potential.

The University Orchestra, which was established in 2016, includes non-majors, alumni, faculty, and staff. The Chamber Orchestra is made up of the elite players, and Watson says she expects it to be more competitive in the future. She says a national student composition competition launched in fall 2017 will culminate in the spring with the Texas State Symphony Orchestra recording the winning piece. "There is a great deal of support from the music faculty. They really want this to be a leading orchestra program on a national scale," Watson says.

Dr. Joey Martin

Director of Choral Activities
and associate dean,
College of Fine Arts and Communication



“Most college music programs don’t have salsa or Afro-Caribbean ensembles at all. Even in Texas, most don’t have a college-level mariachi ensemble. We have been doing that at a prize-winning level since John Lopez began the Latin ensemble programs.”

— Dr. Thomas Clark, director, School of Music

For composer Jack Wilds, the deciding factor in choosing Texas State was the chance to study with Michael Ippolito, the coordinator of music composition. “The music faculty here is really good. They care deeply about their students,” says Wilds.

Wilds, who received his master’s in May 2017, composes music for secondary school bands and professional musicians. He has more than 30 publications for band and choir, and trombone and trumpet. He is the composer-in-residence for the Austin Children’s Choir and the co-director for music at a San Marcos church. In the fall, he began teaching two university courses — music theory and aural skills.

Latin music

While growing up in San Antonio, John Lopez was exposed to some of the best Latin music around. His father, Arturo Lopez, was the founder and director of Mariachi Chapultepec; his mother, Beatriz Llamas, also known as La Paloma del Norte, was a renowned mariachi and conjunto singer. Lopez earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Texas State before joining the faculty and overseeing the marching band percussion.

Clark considers Texas State’s Latin Music program unrivaled. “Most college music programs don’t have salsa or Afro-Caribbean ensembles at all. Even in Texas, most don’t have a college-level mariachi ensemble,” Clark notes. “We have been doing that at a prize-winning level since John Lopez began the Latin ensemble programs.”

In 1995, Salsa Del Rio became a class, and two years later Lopez formed the mariachi ensemble, Mariachi Nueva Generación. Each year since 1999, the ensemble has taken first or second place at the Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza. In December, the group took first place in the San Antonio event with vocalist Alondra Morales placing second in the University Solo Vocal Competition.

Salsa del Rio is a three-time winner of Premios a la Música Latina and the 2007 winner of the 30th annual Downbeat Student Music Awards. By 2003, the program had grown enough to be called Latin Music Studies and Lopez became a tenured associate professor.

Vocal performance

Dr. Joey Martin, director of choral activities, has led four of the six university choirs since joining Texas State 19 years ago. Choirs under his direction have appeared at the Southwest Division of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the International Kodály Festival, the Texas Music Educators Association Convention, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Conference of ACDA. Martin directed the Texas State Chorale in concerts at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and throughout South Africa. He believes that music students are picking Texas State over other schools because of its reputation, scholarships, and faculty. “The fact that our ensembles are so recognized through the country and the world — it’s a draw for students,” Martin says.

Growing up in the Rio Grande Valley, Maj. Leonel Péna (B.A. ’02) sampled the School of Music when he attended a high school summer camp. “It exposed me to the music program and the quality of the faculty. I liked everything I saw,” says Péna, who now is the conductor of the U.S. Army Chorus and director of the U.S. Army Voices. Péna majored in music and minored in military science, something he said his parents didn’t even know was possible. Today, he leads choral groups for the president, Congress, heads of state, and other VIPs.

In 2016, Texas State Opera Theatre commissioned a new opera, *Lady Bird: First Lady of the Land*, which put the spotlight on LBJ’s 1964 campaign and the first lady’s work on his behalf in the South. The opera was nominated for several awards and took third place as the National Opera Association’s Production of the Year. Texas State students have been recognized by the Metropolitan Opera, National Association of Teachers of Singing, and competitions such as Lois Alba, MacAllister, and Vargas.

Sarah Tucker (B.A. ’09) is a rising young opera soprano who chose the university because of its reputation for music education, her original degree plan. “I ended up switching to a degree in performance, but that foundation of academics has served me well throughout my career.

John Lopez

Director of Latin Music Studies



Faculty facts from the School of Music

Dr. Lynn Ledbetter received the 2016 Phyllis Young Outstanding Studio Teacher of the Year Award from the Texas Chapter of the American String Teachers Association.

Dr. Todd Oxford has earned three nominations (2015-2017) for the Grammy Foundation Music Educator Award.

Youna Jang Hartgraves has participated in and won awards from the Annapolis Opera Competition, Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition, and the Hariclea Darclée Competition.

Dr. Martin McCain won two 2015 Billboard Global Music Awards Silver Medals.

Dr. Craig Hella Johnson was selected by the Texas Commission on the Arts as the 2013 State of Texas Music Artist of the Year.

Hank Hehmsoth performed on national and international tours with Christopher Cross, Fleetwood Mac (*Tusk* album tour), the Eagles (*The Long Run* album tour), and Bonnie Raitt.

“The opera program gave me performing opportunities and necessary experience to begin auditioning in apprentice and professional capacities, and the excellent theory and history classes more than prepared me for what I would encounter at graduate school. In fact, I’d say in those departments Texas State School of Music is on par with or superior to the major conservatories and larger music programs in the United States.”

Last fall, Tucker appeared in main stage productions with Opera Philadelphia and Opera Connecticut. “I would tell a potential music student that the knowledge and passion of the faculty go far beyond the minimum curriculum requirements, so if you’re interested in learning more and challenging yourself, your professors are excited and happy to help you,” she says.

Music studies

Associate Director Lynn Brinckmeyer, coordinator for music education, explains that students who wish to become music teachers must be accepted to the College of Education only after completing requirements in the School of Music. Clearly, the high standards pay off. “Our students have 100 percent placement,” Brinckmeyer says. “We get calls all the time from schools that want our graduates.”

Christian and Audrey de la Cruz, both of whom graduated from Texas State in 2010, direct choirs at San Antonio secondary schools. The couple has remained active with the university’s choir camps and an alumni committee that awards music scholarships.

Audrey de la Cruz, now choir director at Barbara Bush Middle School in San Antonio, discovered Texas State as a high school junior in choral competitions. Today, she has 300 sixth-,

seventh-, and eighth-grade students who look to her for direction, while her husband directs the choral program at nearby Reagan High School. “There is a real passion for helping students find their voice. It is really empowering, especially for the middle school where I teach,” she says.

These days at Texas State’s School of Music, undergraduates can major in general music, classical, jazz performance, and sound recording. There are more than 30 student ensembles: choirs, wind bands, a symphony orchestra, mariachi and salsa ensembles, jazz bands and combos, and ensembles for opera, modern music, and percussion.

What the School of Music lacks is space. Programs are currently scattered across six buildings. The Music Building, formerly Strahan Gym, was built in 1956 and renovated for music students in 1982. Other music facilities include Evans Auditorium, Nueces, Lampasas, Colorado, and the Recital Hall in the Performing Arts Center. “We’re delighted to have the Performing Arts Center,” Clark says of the building that opened in 2014. “It’s inspired everybody including our guest artists who come in to perform in the new recital hall. They say, ‘this is the greatest place I’ve ever played in.’ As a learning laboratory, it makes us all hungry for having that quality in all of our facilities.”

In August 2017, the Texas State University System Board of Regents approved a new 10-year University Master Plan that includes a new music building and an expansion of the Performing Arts Center, which will accommodate a third performance venue plus teaching and practice space. The university hopes that over the next 10 years alumni and donors will recognize the importance of having these new facilities and contribute support.

“We need facilities that match the quality of the faculty, the students, and the ensembles,” Fleming says. 🌟

Dr. Cynthia Gonzales, as a vocalist and soprano section leader with the professional choral ensemble *Conspirare*, sang on the Grammy-nominated albums *A Company of Voices* (2009), *Threshold of Night* (2008), and *Requiem* (2006).

Dr. Ian Davidson and **Faith DeBow** were performers on *Conspirare*’s Grammy-nominated album *A Company of Voices* (2009).

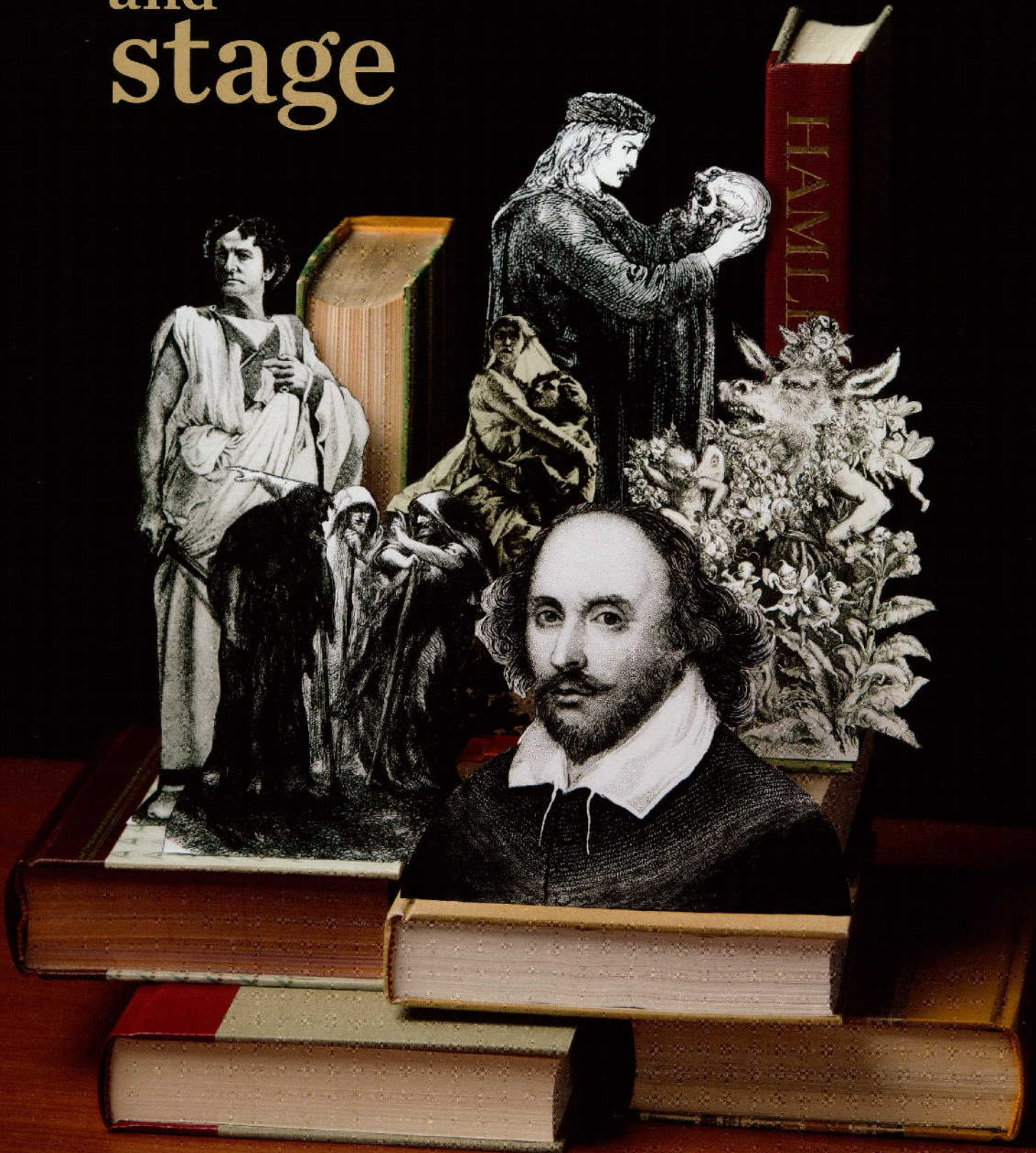
David Dawson, while playing with *Asleep at the Wheel*, won a Grammy for their song *Sugarfoot Rag* (1988).

Butch Miles was the drummer for the *Count Basie Orchestra* from 1975 to 1979 and from 1997 to 2007. He has performed with artists such as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Lena Horne, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett, and Itzhak Perlman.

Dr. Nico Schüler has served as president of the American Musicological Society Southwest Chapter since 2016.

Between page and stage

Dr. Joe Falocco's NEH
project to prepare instructors
to teach Shakespeare



By Anastasia Cisneros-Lunsford

To

read, or not to read the works of William Shakespeare? That is a question a Texas State University English professor will answer this summer when his “Shakespeare Without Fear: Teaching the Plays” project premieres.

It is funded by a \$63,000 research grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and awarded through the Summer Seminars and Institutes for College and University Teachers. It supports professional development programs in the humanities for high school teachers and college and university faculty.

The one-week Shakespeare program, devised by Dr. Joe Falocco, an associate professor in the Department of English, will help ease the anxieties of contingent faculty or community college and non-tenure-track/adjunct faculty who are called upon suddenly to teach Shakespeare in English and theatre courses. Sometimes they must prepare lessons on short notice and with little preparation time before a semester begins, Falocco explains. “One of the silliest things that happened in the American academy is the division of the study of Shakespeare between English and theatre,” Falocco says. “It’s like the division of kingdoms in *King Lear*. You can’t reasonably understand the plays as performance if you don’t understand the text, and you can’t really understand the text unless you understand the performance context. I don’t think of it as two different things. I think of it as one thing that overlaps the two disciplines.”

Falocco has 40 years of experience performing Shakespeare, as well as 17 years teaching about the Bard of Avon, including seven years at Texas State where he teaches Shakespeare electives for English majors. He also teaches a general education course, *British Literature to 1785*, which includes the epic poem *Beowulf* and readings by satirist and essayist Jonathan Swift.

A formative experience for Falocco came early in his career when he spent a year on tour with the Shenandoah Shakespeare Express, the forerunner of today’s American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, Virginia. The company was founded by his mentor, Ralph Alan Cohen, who has run similar NEH seminars for both high school and college lecturers. “His whole premise was this intersectionality, this overlapping of what we think of as English studies and what we think of as theatre studies,” Falocco says. “That has been my inspiration ever since.”

On the first day of his Shakespeare class, Falocco shares a lesson that is difficult for English majors and graduate students to understand. “Shakespeare’s plays are NOT literature,” he says. “By which I mean only this — they were not written to be read. They were written to be performed.”

Falocco’s formula to take away the intimidation of teaching Shakespeare requires participating scholars to work hands-on. A resident company of actors — including Texas State acting students — will perform scenes for the seminar participants at the Curtain Theatre in Austin. The reconstructed early-modern playhouse inspired by the Globe Theatre in London includes many of the architectural features of Shakespeare’s original stage.

Seminar participants will understand how the stage worked, giving them a connection with how Shakespeare’s plays were performed during the Elizabethan period.

“(Seminar) alumni will be able to bridge the gap between page and stage when teaching Shakespeare,” Falocco says, adding that after the seminar, these speedy Shakespeareans will be prepared to guide their students as they read the plays and stage scenes in their classrooms for public consumption.

So, do we read or not read Shakespeare?

“Shakespeare is not the thing on the page. Shakespeare is the thing on the stage,” Falocco explains. “And the way to read the plays profitably is to be able to envisage their performance in your mind.” ☺

“YOU CAN’T REASONABLY UNDERSTAND THE PLAYS AS PERFORMANCE IF YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND THE TEXT, AND YOU CAN’T REALLY UNDERSTAND THE TEXT UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND THE PERFORMANCE CONTEXT.”

– DR. JOE FALOCCO



THE HEART OF A CHAMPION

Scholarships for student-athletes help in many ways

By Tracy Hobson Lehmann

Sometimes, on the steep climb up the hill to the University Academic Center, cross-country runner José Angel Gonzalez feels college pressures will send him rolling like a barrel to the bottom. Determination, though, picks him up, ushers him to the top, and stands with him to face stronger storms on the horizon.

The construction science and management major from Mission, Texas, painted that picture of perseverance in a poem, “Battle Born,” written as part of his 2017 application for the Heart of

a Champion Endowment scholarship. Gonzalez is among 17 students to earn the scholarship since it was established in 2011.

That grit to persevere is what Kristi and Leo Seitz IV had in mind when they established the university’s Leo Seitz V Heart of a Champion Endowment in memory of their first son, who died October 11, 2010, eight days before his first birthday.

“Many people think a champion is named by titles and awards. Truly, it is how one approaches each day,” says Kristi, reciting a portion of the description she and

her husband laid out when they launched the endowment in 2011. “That’s exactly how I always look at it.”

The Seitzes, both athletes and coaches, are steeped in the push-forward creed. Leo, a Texas State strength and conditioning coach, played middle linebacker for the Bobcats from 1998 to 2000. Kristi (B.A.’02) was a pole vaulter and a member of the university’s championship All-Girl National Champion cheerleader squad in 2000. She majored in public relations and mass communication and minored in exercise and sports science. She is currently the coordinator of membership and business development at Resolute Wellness Center in New Braunfels.

Recognizing student-athletes through the endowment continues to help the Seitzes move through their grief after Little Leo’s death. “You just want to do whatever you can do to start the healing process,” Leo says. “I wished so badly I could hit a fast-forward button and be on day 1,000.”

From the beginning, they saw Little Leo



2017
HEART OF A CHAMPION
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



EASY ANYAMA
Football



JOSÉ ANGEL GONZALEZ
Cross Country



KAYLEE KRENEK
Track & Field



JAMES SHERMAN
Football



TAYLOR WEBB
Softball

as a champion. On his birth announcement, the newborn has a fake “Champion” tattoo on his upper right arm, a miniature version of the one his dad and grandfather had gotten a dozen years earlier.

“Everything about him was so easy and so much fun,” says Kristi, smiling as she remembers her firstborn, who came into the world “roaring like a lion,” all 8 pounds, 15 ounces of him. “He did so much in his little life, and basically that was stripped from us in the blink of an eye.”

Their world shattered with a phone call that Little Leo had been injured in an accident at the in-home daycare he loved. “When that happened, through the grace of God, we wanted to give back. You don’t know what to do; you just know you have to keep moving forward,” she says.

By January 2011, they had raised the \$25,000 to establish the endowment. Proceeds from two 5K runs and silent auctions bolstered the fund in 2015. The scholarships allow athletes to continue training over the summer.

Amber Calhoun Moore, a 2012 graduate and member of the volleyball team, was one of the first two Heart of a Champion recipients in 2011. The money allowed her to train over the summer as she recovered from ankle surgery.

Not only did the award ease financial pressure for her, it had a deeper meaning because Leo Seitz was one of her coaches when his son died. “I pray that when kids receive the scholarship they realize what it represents in honoring the Little Leo legacy,” says Moore.

Besides Gonzalez, the 2017 Heart of a Champion scholarship recipients are Easy Anyama, Kaylee Krenek, James Sherman, and Taylor Webb.

The money covered most of Gonzalez’s summer tuition, easing stress and helping him to stay on track to graduate in December 2018. “I was very blessed,” he says.

Though the Seitzes do not select scholarship recipients, they want students to know about Little Leo. The baby’s blue eyes shine in a plaque bearing the names of

students who have benefited from the Leo Seitz V Heart of a Champion Endowment.

“For me as a father, I always had a vision of what I wanted him to be,” Leo says. Each of the recipients epitomizes a champion, capturing the image of who Little Leo’s parents dreamed he would become.

For Little Leo and his three siblings, the Seitzes keep climbing up the steep hills.

“We want to make Little Leo proud of us,” Kristi says. “We want anyone who comes across this story to be better because of it, too.” 🍀

For more information

To donate to the Leo Seitz V Heart of a Champion Endowment, go to <http://bit.ly/2xDzxNB>

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GABE SCHRADE

makes community service a goal

By Mark Wangrin

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It was almost Valentine's Day 2016 and Gabe Schrade felt lonely. He saw others buying flowers, candy, and cards for their sweethearts, but it was just him in his car that cool February night unless you count his self-pity riding shotgun.

Then he passed the San Marcos Rehabilitation Center and that sadness gave way to shame.

“

If you want to change the world, if you change one person, do one good thing, you've changed part of the world right there.

”



"It hit me — the best way to feel better is to do something good for someone else," the Bobcat football team's senior tight end says. "So I thought, you dance on Valentine's Day. And I'm sure there are people in this rehabilitation center who have not only loved but lost the people that they do love."

So Schrade called on several of his teammates to join him in dressing up, bringing roses, and dancing with the residents of the Rehabilitation Center to a soundtrack of songs dating back to the 1950s, including "The Twist."

"There were women who hadn't lost a step," Schrade says. "There were some tears too. It was a blast."

And that's how this student from Deland, Florida, veered onto the road toward community service, which culminated last fall with his nomination to the American Football Coaches Association 2017 Allstate AFCA Good Works Team. The honor recognizes student-athletes who embody the true spirit of teamwork and selflessness by donating their limited free time to helping and serving others.

Head Football Coach Everett Withers came to Texas State in January 2016 vowing to change the culture of the

program, building a team that was made up of good, hardworking citizens, on and off the field. One such person was Schrade, who was then entering his junior season.

"Gabe's a guy who wanted to have success, a guy who wanted to be in a program that taught how to do things the right way," Withers says. "He's a big ambassador on campus for Texas State. He's done a lot of good things. He's what you want in a student-athlete."

Schrade's community service at Texas State goes beyond organizing dances for seniors. His efforts include:

- Cleaning the grounds of Goodnight Elementary School.
- Organizing a group of Fellowship of Christian Athletes members to take over the duties for a janitor at Strahan Coliseum so the man could have a night off to spend with his family.
- Helping create and push legislation to address on-campus robberies and sexual assaults while serving as a Texas State student senator.
- Planting native foliage on the banks of the San Marcos River near Sewell Park to replace what washed away by flooding in late May 2015.

The project connected the Bobcat football team with Serve San Marcos, a community service volunteer program led by First United Methodist Church of San Marcos. The Rev. Todd Salmi, now pastor of the United Campus Ministry of Texas State, helmed the project as pastor at First United.

"The river bank restoration was the beginning of my work with the football

team, but I've seen Gabe at many places working throughout the community," Salmi says. "Working at the food bank, at local elementary schools, with local housing authority. Gabe is such a good student leader, both in his encouragement and the work he exemplifies."

Schrade's current project is a partnership with Swipe Out Hunger, a national group that started in 2009 at UCLA, to take unused meal card swipes — hence the name — and translate them to money to feed the hungry in San Marcos. The effort partners with School Fuel, a nonprofit that sends students home with food for the weekend. In the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District, some 48 percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

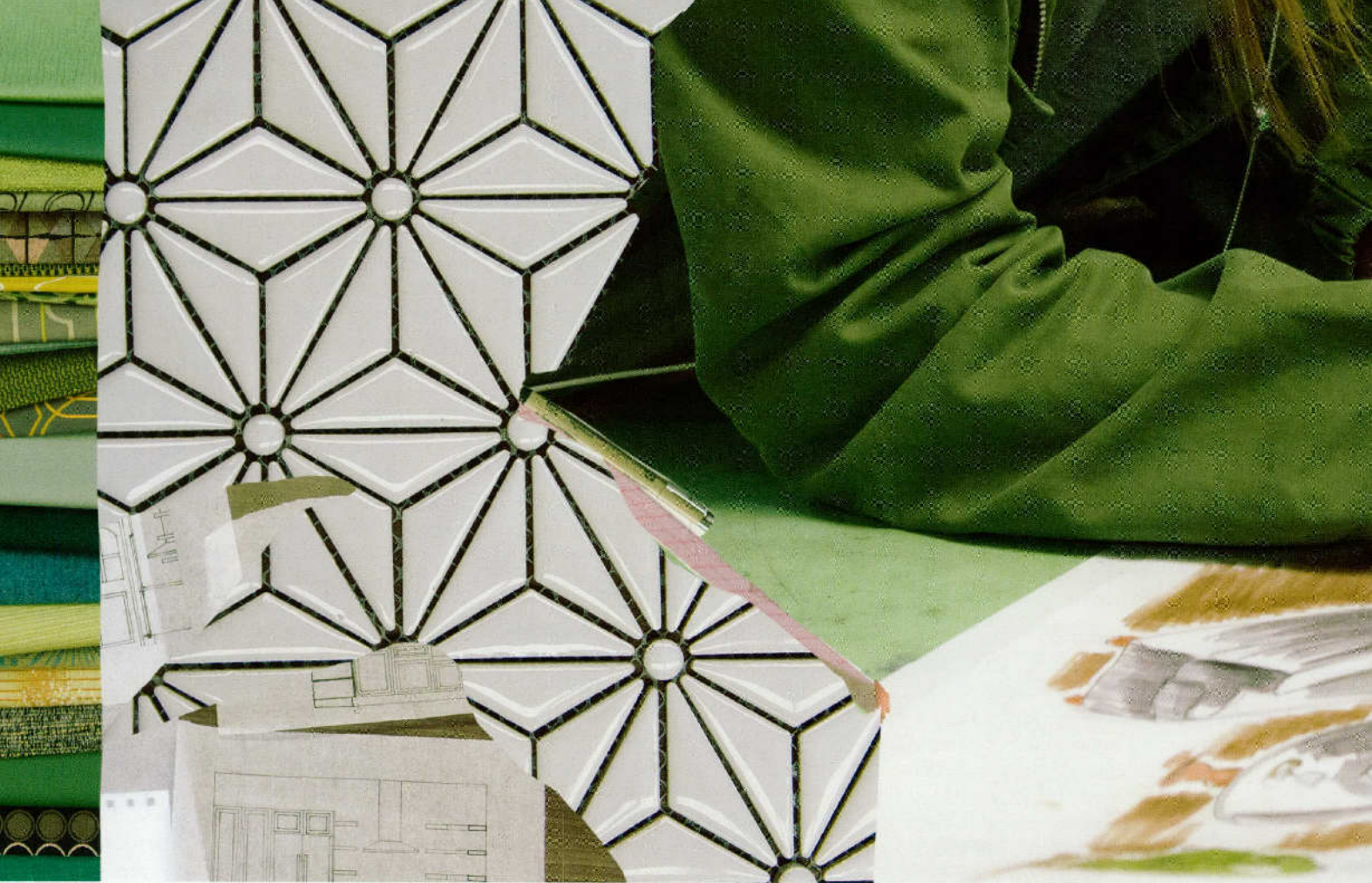
The son of two church pastors, Schrade credits his upbringing with shaping his social consciousness. "I've seen how much good they've been able to do," Schrade says of his parents, Mark and Delta. "If you want to change the world, if you change one person, do one good thing, you've changed part of the world right there. I think that I learned that from them."

Schrade's mantra — learn, grow, give — comes from his own reverse-engineered approach to community service. The end result is giving, he decided, but one has to learn how and what to give and then grow the process before the giving. "You get that organic material and you cultivate it, and grow something that is of value to others," he says. "That's where that comes from, and I try to filter everything I do through those three." 🌱

X O X O X O X O

"Gabe's a guy who wanted to have success, a guy who wanted to be in a program that taught how to do things the right way. He's a big ambassador on campus for Texas State. He's done a lot of good things. He's what you want in a student-athlete."

— Coach Everett Withers



Spotlight shines on interior design

Texas State students take top national prizes

By Alex Dominguez

Separated by one academic year, a dancer and an artist have brought the spotlight to the Interior Design program in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences by bringing home two prestigious national awards.

Lindzey Duval (B.S. '17) was named the 2017 National Student of the Year by the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) after having served as president of the Texas State chapter. In 2017, Senior Morgan Lebsack was one of 13 students nationwide to be awarded the Angelo Donghia Foundation \$30,000 scholarship.

The Interior Design program joined the School of Family and Consumer Sciences in 1972. In 2016, 77 percent of students had secured jobs in the design field before graduation day.

“For my first semester, I was actually an education major,” says Duval, a competitive dancer through high school. “Halfway through the semester, I decided to change my major to interior design. So although I chose Texas State because of the education program, I was lucky to find that the interior design program was, and is still, one of the top programs.”

Lebsack, an artist since her elementary school days, was initially torn between interior design and fashion merchandising. “Moving through the program and the growth and development I have seen in myself and the mentorship I have received

The Interior Design program joined the School of Family and Consumer Sciences in 1972.

In 2016, 77 percent of students had secured jobs in the design field before graduation day.



from my professors, I understand that this work is my passion,” she says. “In high school, I was a cross-country runner and I always had that one coach I looked to for guidance. Moving out of high school and into college, I was looking for that (mentor) and ever since my first class with Associate Professor Anjali Bhalodia, she took on that role for me. Because of that mentorship, I know wherever I end up I will be able to make the biggest difference.”

Duval strongly feels that it was the opportunities provided to her by the university that have allowed her to begin working in her field of study. “I still remember getting the phone call that I had been selected and feeling overwhelmed with emotions,” Duval says.

“This award has opened many doors for me, provided more connections in the industry, and allowed for direct connections with the wonderful people at IIDA, which allows me to experience more and get involved on a higher level. I have already seen the impact this award has made on my personal and professional life. I know even more exciting things are happening in the near future.”

Since graduating in May 2017, Duval has

been working in a full-time interior design position with HDR in Chicago. The Student of the Year Award recognizes student members whose involvement and leadership has significantly impacted their school’s interior design program.

“The interior design faculty are extremely proud that Lindzey’s hard work and dedication to the student IIDA chapter was recognized by such a prestigious, national award. She and her fellow IIDA officers worked diligently to bring a wide range of professionally enriching opportunities to the ID students last year and it’s nice to see that effort rewarded,” says Associate Professor Caroline Hill, one of Duval’s professors.

Lebsack’s award was only the second time Texas State has submitted an entry into the Angelo Donghia scholarship competition, which is open to interior design students entering their senior year. Her mentor is understandably proud of Lebsack’s achievement. “Morgan is creative, hardworking, and highly respected by her fellow students. She is also engaged in many organizations on campus, including the IIDA student chapter. The ID program looks forward to seeing Morgan’s bright future

as a design professional in the industry,” Bhalodia says.

For the competition, Lebsack designed a space for a community. “When I think of interiors I think of the space that is designed. If it’s commercial every element should be purposeful; they aren’t just random spaces. Interiors are really special,” she says. “My project was The Social Station — a space in downtown Dallas that allows for individual companies to co-exist in the same space. You come into the office and rent it for however long you need to help your company grow. At nighttime The Social Station turned into a pop-up shop market,” she says.

Duval and Lebsack found their need for creativity, first spawned by dance and art and encouraged by their chosen field of study, and then cultivated through various opportunities.

The starting point for each was slightly different, but the passion for the work that they found along the way could not have been possible had it not been for the academic support they received. 🌟

By the numbers

Texas State University has been recognized as one of the **Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics** in the United States by *Hispanic Outlook* magazine.

The rankings were compiled using data from the U.S. Department of Education and published in the August 2017 issue of *Hispanic Outlook*.

Texas State was ranked in five categories:

4th

for public relations, advertising, and communication degrees for Hispanics

6th

for visual and performing arts degrees for Hispanics

13th

for bachelor's degrees granted to Hispanics

30th

for master's degrees granted to Hispanics

31st

in total Hispanic enrollment.

Source: *Hispanic Outlook*

COMMON EXPERIENCE SPEAKERS 2017-2018



'Just Mercy' author Stevenson delivers LBJ lecture

Bryan Stevenson, the executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, and a professor of law at New York University School of Law, gave the LBJ Distinguished Lecture Feb. 5 at Evans Auditorium as part of the 2017-2018 Texas State Common Experience.

The author of *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* (Spiegel & Grau, 2015), this year's Common Reading selection, Stevenson has won relief for dozens of condemned prisoners, argued five times before the U.S. Supreme Court, and won national acclaim for his work challenging bias against the poor and people of color. He has received numerous awards, including the MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Grant. Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the criminal justice system.

The Common Experience theme, "The Search for Justice: Our Response to Crime in the 21st Century," is a yearlong conversation that fosters a sense of community on campus and beyond.

Former death row inmate shares his story

Anthony Graves, former Texas death row inmate, addressed a packed audience in Evans Auditorium on Oct. 10 as part of Texas State University's Common Experience, "The Search for Justice: Our Response to Crime in the 21st Century."

Graves spent more than 18 years in prison — 12 of those on Texas death row — following a wrongful conviction for murder. In 2006, his conviction and sentencing were overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals. He was finally freed in 2010, following the state's reinvestigation.

In recent years, Graves started his namesake foundation that promotes fairness and reform in the criminal justice system. He has also written a book, *Infinite Hope: How Wrongful Conviction, Solitary*



Confinement and 12 Years on Death Row Failed to Kill My Soul (Beacon Press, 2018).

— Sarah Juenke

Hero's second million-dollar gift to support student-athlete scholarships



*El Paso businessman and Texas State University Distinguished Alumnus **Richard Castro** (left) recently donated \$1 million to the university to support scholarships for student-athletes. Castro (B.A. '70) is a Texas State University Hero, a title given to individuals and organizations that give \$1 million or more to the university. In 2014, he made a \$1 million gift to the university to support student scholarships. The Richard A. Castro Undergraduate Admission Center was subsequently named in his honor.*

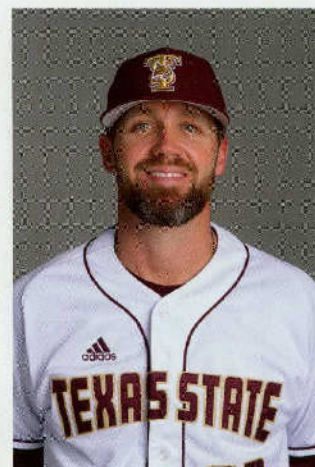
KUDOS

Sriraman makes list of '20 professors in engineering to know'

Texas State Professor Vedaraman Sriraman has been named to a list of "20 Professors in Engineering Technology to Know," compiled by the website OnlineEngineeringPrograms.com.

"Texas State University has many, many outstanding professors and it is a privilege to be recognized as a member of this community," says Sriraman, the associate vice president for academic affairs and a University Distinguished Professor of Engineering Technology. "National recognition of any member of our faculty community is also a reflection of the outstanding quality of Texas State University and in this instance its engineering and technology programs."

The list chose professors who are actively teaching, have been widely published, received grants and patents, have professional affiliation and, industry experience, and are committed to diversity.



Massengale rejoins Bobcats as pitching coach

Chad Massengale, a former member of the Bobcat baseball team, is the team's new pitching coach.

He most recently served as the pitching coach and recruiting coordinator for the Weatherford College Coyotes. He helped lead that college to the nation's No. 1 ranking in 2015, and the team made two trips to the NJCAA Region V Championship (2015, 2017).

Massengale played at Texas State during Coach Ty Harrington's first two seasons at the helm. The right-handed pitcher helped lead the Bobcats to a Southland Conference Championship and set the school record with 32 appearances in 2000.

In 2002, he earned a bachelor's degree in exercise and sports science with a minor in criminal justice. Following graduation, he competed professionally in the Central Baseball League for the Shreveport Sports (2002-2003) and the Alexandria Aces (2003).

**THIS
BOBCAT
TRAINS**



GLADIATORS


Exercise boot camp born out of reality TV gig now a multimillion-dollar family business

By Mark Wangrin



Photography by
Dennis Burnett





Ally Kelly faced a dilemma. At least it would be a dilemma for most people. Should she join a couple of thousand other wannabe *American Gladiators* at the 2008 Austin tryouts for the reality TV show? Or should she, you know, get married?

If you have to ask what she chose, you don't know Ally Kelly, a 2006 Texas State graduate with a bachelor's degree in health and human performance. She chose both. Tryouts in the morning. Wedding in the afternoon. Simple.

Wearing a bridal veil and garter with her workout clothes, and with her maid of honor and bridesmaids in tow, she sold the show's producers on the novelty of the runaway bride turned gladiator. They bought it and let her cut in front of more than a thousand people. She dazzled with the athletic skills she showcased playing basketball for Texas State, and dashed to the church in time to towel off the sweat, put on her makeup, and say her vows.

Seconds before she was introduced as Mrs. Ally Davidson at her reception, she turned to husband Jeff and said sweetly, "Hey, babe, guess what I did today?"

That's a question that Ally can ask almost every day, and the answer would never be brief.

You might expect that from a woman who, with her husband, created this marriage mission statement: "To share the joy of Christ by loving, laughing, and living adventurously." Says Ally, "That kind of became our marriage and life motto. In everything we do, we do it adventurously."

And *American Gladiator* was the start of their greatest adventure. The producers invited both newlyweds on the show. Jeff made the men's semifinals. Ally won the women's competition and the accompanying \$100,000 prize and new car.

Because Ally was unsatisfied with her advertising sales job, she and Jeff decided to use the money — and the publicity of her victory — to create a boot camp-style workout program for people of all physical abilities to take on in parks, parking lots, or wherever they could. Playing off her championship, they called it Camp Gladiator (CG).

"When we got back, she kept saying, 'There's got to be something more we can do from this,'" says Jeff, a financial advisor who recently became full-time CEO for CG.

They had 40 people sign up for the first round of camps. Then 60 the next round. Then 80. Now they have 750 trainers and almost 50,000 campers. They hope to double that this year. In 2015, the Austin-based company reported revenue of \$16 million.

It's a simple concept. The campers bring a yoga mat and dumbbells to classes and do a variety of exercises. Each session features a different combination, so no two workouts are alike.

"Really a lot of it came from my background of playing team sports, so it feels like a combination of basketball, soccer, or football practice," says Ally, who gave birth to her second child in September 2017. "It's team-oriented. We run a lot of drills, and it's also geared to all fitness levels, so you go at your own pace."

Along the way, another former Texas State athlete joined the family, and then the business. Allison "Alli" Crain (B.B.A. '03), who graduated as the Bobcats' all-time leading women's soccer scorer, heard about the camps from one of her former soccer teammates. Ally's cousin, Brandon Brickley, was her trainer. Soon he became more than that. They started dating.

"Ally threatened him that it would be really bad if he ruined it," says Allison. "Because then she would lose a camper and a friend if it didn't work out."

He didn't. They married in 2012. The soon-to-be Allison Brickley went to a kickboxing class the morning of her wedding. "It's not *American Gladiator*," she concedes with a smile. Still, she knew she had married into a family that was into reality TV. Before *American Gladiator*, Ally tried out for *Amazing Race* and *Survivor*, almost making the cut for the former, and

appeared with her family on *Family Feud*.

So it was probably inevitable that Allison would find herself on a reality show as well. In summer 2017, Allison, Brandon, and Joey Kelly, Ally's brother, competed as Team Heart of Texas on the NBC reality show *Spartan: Ultimate Team Challenge*, an obstacle course race. The team finished second.

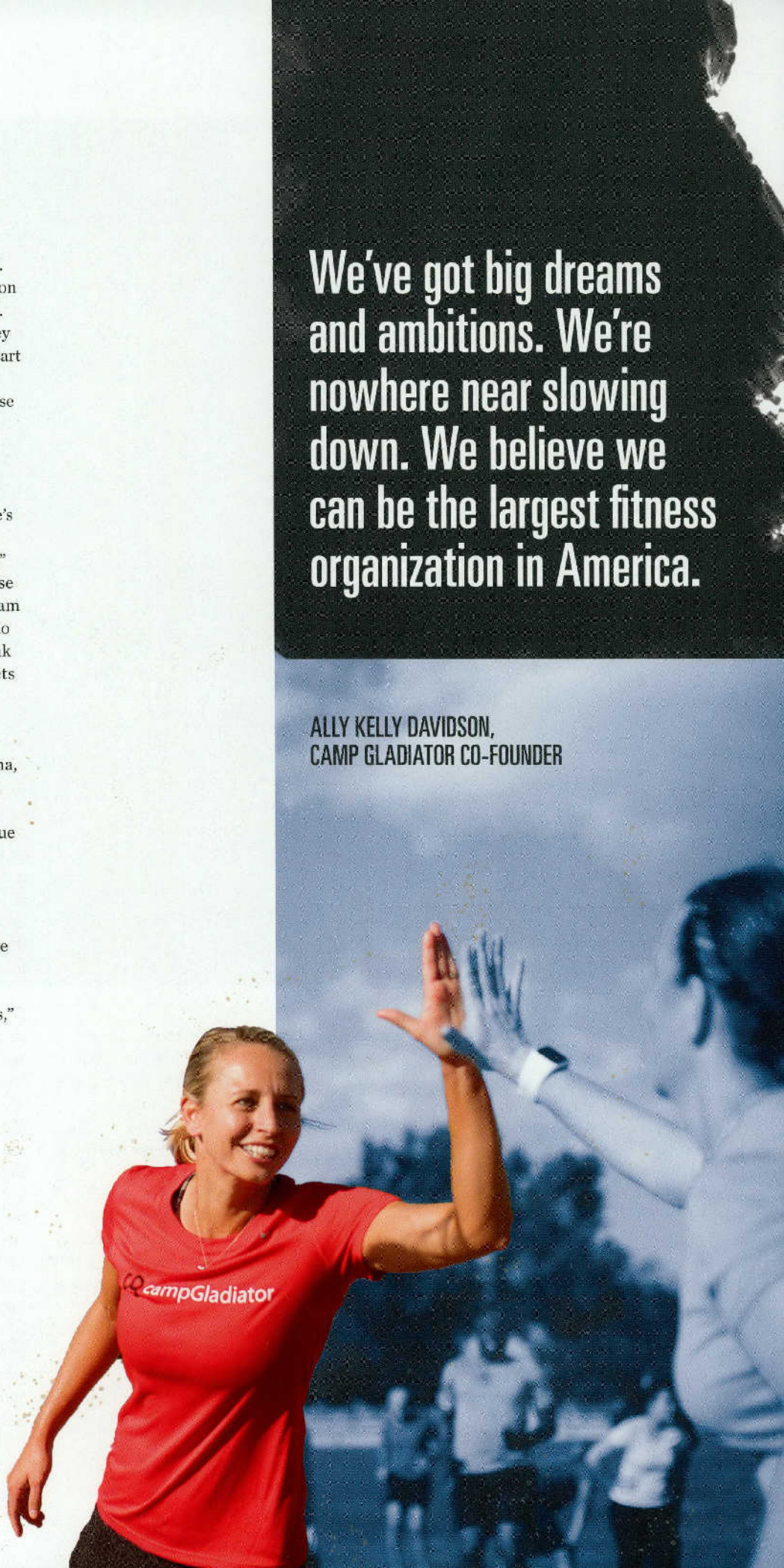
In 2015, Allison gave up her hotel marketing job and joined the business, where she recruits trainers. And it's not hard to figure out what kind of people she's looking for.

"God made Ally for this, 100 percent," Allison says. "I can't think of anything else that she would shine at as much. When I am trying to bring on a trainer, I think how do they compare to her, what would she think of them, because the standard that she sets is so high."

Plans are for CG to keep growing its boot camps beyond the 11 metropolitan areas it serves in Texas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Colorado. This year, CG will open camps in Corpus Christi, Nashville, and Lubbock; they will continue growing CG Victory, the faith-based nonprofit youth adventure camp.

"When Ally started it, she talked about changing 100 people's lives, and that seemed like a big deal. And now we're changing over 50,000 people's lives in a year," says Allison.

"We've got big dreams and ambitions," Ally says. "We're nowhere near slowing down. We believe we can be the largest fitness organization in America."



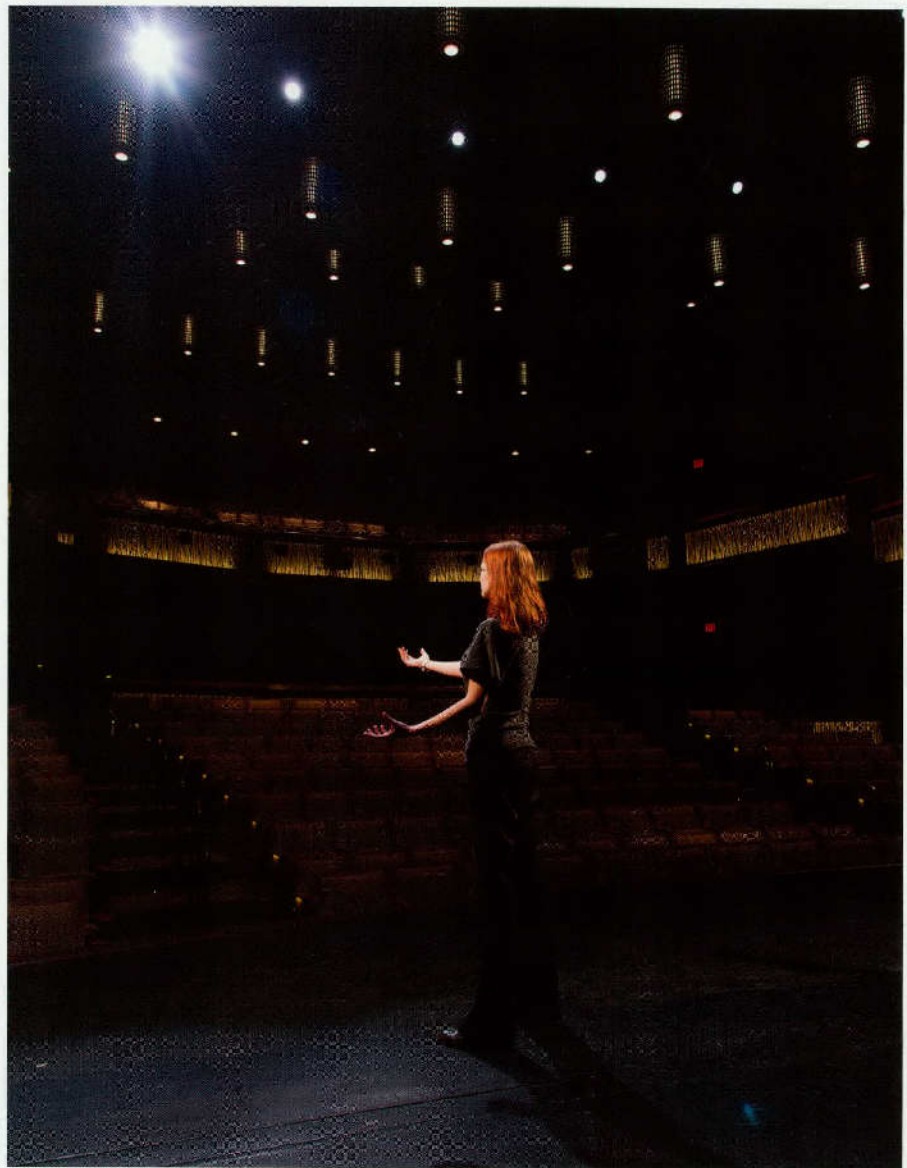
We've got big dreams and ambitions. We're nowhere near slowing down. We believe we can be the largest fitness organization in America.

ALLY KELLY DAVIDSON,
CAMP GLADIATOR CO-FOUNDER

Talent agent Michael Rodriguez

Big Apple dream becomes Bobcat's reality

By *Jacque Crouse*



Even as a youngster in tiny Woodsboro, Texas, Michael Rodriguez felt the lure of the Big Apple. In the journey from his early life in Refugio County to building a successful career in New York City, Rodriguez found Texas State University, a place he credits with changing his life.

Today, Rodriguez (B.F.A. '90) manages his 84 clients — including nine Texas State graduates — at The Roster Agency, a Manhattan talent agency he founded. What began as a childhood dream was nurtured when he was introduced to Texas State just before his sophomore year in high school.

"There was a theatre camp at Texas State, and a high school counselor said it would be a good thing for me, to open my horizons and get beyond Woodsboro," Rodriguez recalls. "I fell in love with San Marcos."

The theatre camp for high school

students has been a university fixture for more than 60 years. While attending the camp for three summers, Rodriguez says he met other teens from Houston and Dallas who were "like me" in their world views. Some 20 camp buddies are still his good friends. "The experience at camp opened my eyes to the world," he says. He recognizes the value of growing up in a small town where he was class president, competed in University Interscholastic League finals, and was the lead in the senior play.

Despite his ambition, there were many among his friends and family who told him he would never get to New York City, never make it in the musical theatre business, and never leave South Texas. "It was a long road, but I guess I proved them wrong," Rodriguez says. His mother, Alice, a feisty

single mom who now lives in San Antonio, told him she always knew he would end up in New York and would do well because even as a small child he saw the Big Apple on television, he said he was going to live there. "She said it made her heart sink a little because she knew I would be gone there someday," Rodriguez says. "But she has attended events with me, seen and met celebrities, and that makes her happy."

Rodriguez majored in musical theatre and wanted to be an actor. After graduation, he got a job teaching at an exclusive theatre summer camp for high school students in Pennsylvania. At the end of the summer, he took his earnings and headed for New York. "I had \$800 and thought I was rich. But that didn't last long in New York," he recalls.

At a temp agency he failed the typing and letter-writing tests, but his polite Texas

manners had made such a good impression that an agency representative offered him a two-week job answering phones at Atlantic Records. Later, down to the last of his cash and wondering where he would go when he vacated his friend's apartment, he wandered into a bar. The bartender asked if he was Michael Rodriguez and if he went to Texas State.

"It was Larry Birdsong, who was a senior when I was a freshman at Texas State." The fellow Bobcat was moving in with a girlfriend and offered to sublet his apartment to Rodriguez. It felt like a miraculous turn of events, and Rodriguez took the offer and was able to stay in New York.

Not too long ago, Rodriguez was on the subway when he saw a group of college students laughing and talking excitedly about a show they had just attended. Never having lost his penchant for talking to strangers, he asked what they saw and where they were from. "They were from Texas State — the connection has always kept popping up in my life," Rodriguez notes. "I reconnected and came back to the university to do workshops here. Now I make it a point to go to every Showcase Texas State brings to New York. I'm very partial to Texas State grads."

The temp job Rodriguez took at Atlantic Records became a nine-year stint and he eventually became the firm's product manager. He continued with radio promotion and worked with celebrities including Mick Jagger, Bette Midler, Hootie & the Blowfish, Tori Amos, Phil Collins, Snoop Dogg, Nine Inch Nails, and Lil John.

Rodriguez met his husband, Scott, a casting director, while he was contemplating a career change. Scott and others suggested he would be a good talent agent, and he sought a job with a major agency. Today, he has his own firm with clients on Broadway and London's West End stages. Others appear on television and in films.

Though he says he did not achieve his original dream of being the next Brad Pitt or Tom Cruise, he has been as close as he can get without walking onto the stage.

"I have lived the life I wanted," he says. "And I can't wait to see what comes next."

Bobcats make the Roster

Michael Rodriguez goes to every showcase that Texas State brings to New York, and often he goes a step further, taking on alumni at his talent agency.

His Manhattan-based firm, The Roster Agency, currently includes nine Bobcats. No surprise then that Rodriguez says he always feels a little more responsible for those clients. "If they are not with family, I will take care of them," he says. "I know what it is like to come here from Texas to this big, scary place." Rodriguez has even hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for his clients who don't have family in New York. "I cook, they all come over, and we celebrate as family," he says. "My Texas State grads are special to me, and I want them to know it."

Theatre alumni with The Roster Agency are:



Oscar Cabrera
B.F.A. '12



Jessica de Jong
B.F.A. '14



Andrew Griffin
B.F.A. '17



Tim Heller
B.F.A. '14



Benjamin Manno
B.F.A. '13



Chase Naylor
B.F.A. '17



Jackson Perrin
2010 to 2014



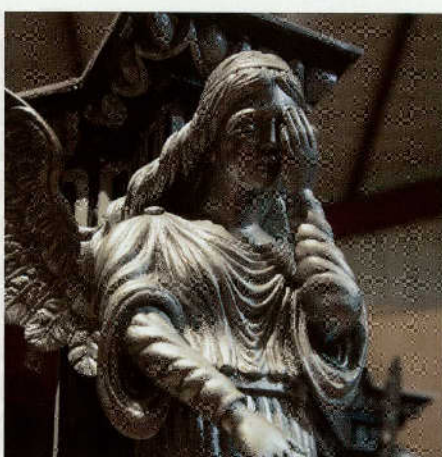
Ian Saunders
B.F.A. '14



Ty Taylor
B.F.A. '17

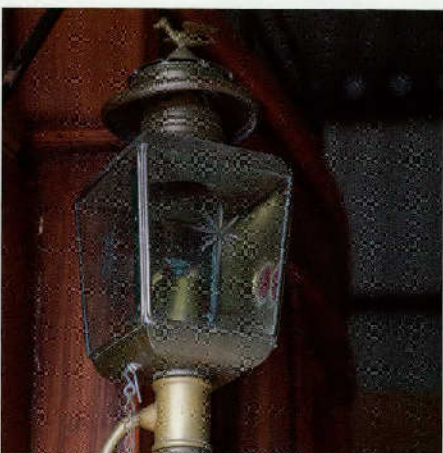
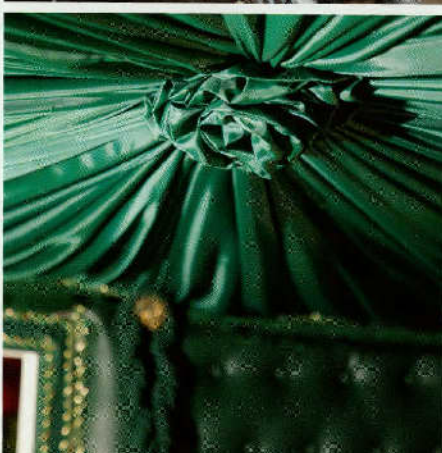
Coming Up

The 2018 New York Showcase will be May 18 at New York's Pearl Studios.



BLANCO'S BUGGYMAN

Dennis Moore loves antique buggies from the Old West so much he created a museum and filmmakers came calling



By John Goodspeed

Dennis Moore's motto is: "Have carriage, will travel."

His only problem is choosing from among his 150-plus antique vehicles, one of the largest private collections in the nation. "I've always liked old stuff. I always joked that I ought to open a museum and charge people to come look at my junk," Moore says.

He did just that and more with millions of people viewing part of his collection in such films as *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, and the recent remakes of *True Grit* and *The Magnificent Seven*. His collection also can be seen at Moore's Buggy Barn Museum, which includes such famous ones as an elegant carriage that was featured in *Gone With the Wind*, a wagon used in *Lonesome Dove* that is undergoing restoration, a beautiful hand-carved Dutch royalty wagon, and one of his favorites — an elaborate German hearse from the 1860s.

Moore earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture in 1977 at Texas State University and followed it two years later with a master's degree in agricultural education while commuting to San Marcos and running his road construction company. All the while this fifth-generation Blanco resident nurtured a fascination with the Old West and collected memorabilia. About 20 years ago, he bought a carriage to drive his son and daughter to high school dances and to use in photos alongside the Old Blanco County Courthouse.

That's when the buggy bug bit. "What started as a hobby now is an obsession," he says. Moore sought to buy every type of carriage he did not have on trips to the far corners of Texas, California, Washington, Montana, Indiana, Michigan, and Georgia. They overflowed from the barn on his home property about the same time a building he leased to a business became vacant. So he moved his buggies to that location just north of downtown Blanco on U.S. Highway 281.

Even before the move was complete, the filmmakers came knocking. The first film to feature one of his buggies was *There Will Be Blood* (2007), starring Daniel Day-Lewis. Moore added more buildings at the museum and built a replica of an Old West town he named Pine-Moore as a film set. Moore established the museum in 2011 as a nonprofit for the preservation of horse-drawn transportation and commerce.

Helping Moore and his wife, Kelly, operate the museum is their daughter, Amanda Smith (B.S. '10). Like her father, Smith also has appeared as an extra or has had brief speaking parts in



films. In August, she was the location manager and an extra in *Judgement*, directed by Bentley Mitchum, grandson of actor Robert Mitchum. "We got to throw a woman out of a window," Smith says, of her scene in the film. "It was awesome."

Smith has two children, daughter Avery, 8, and son Trent, 12, who has also appeared in films. Even the family's German shepherd, Kira, gets in on the act. She played a mean dog in the HBO series "The Leftovers."

"I love this place so much. To have my own Western town in the back is really cool. I tell people that once you come here, you're not going to want to leave," Smith says.

Moore has had a hand in some 25 film productions providing wagons, horses, and props. He also works as a wrangler and has supplied wagons and carriages for the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo Western Heritage Parade, weddings, and various events across the state. The Buggy Barn Museum hosts a fundraiser the first weekend of November with hands-on activities for children and demonstrations of life in the late 1800s.

"One of my favorite things is working on movies with Amanda and Trent," Moore says. "I'm blessed to do what I do. It's a hobby that's fulfilling my dreams and a lot of other people's dreams with the Westerns and re-enactments."

Top, Dennis Moore and his daughter, Amanda Smith — both alumni of Texas State University — stand by a German hearse from the 1860s that is one of Moore's favorite in his collection of more than 150 horse-drawn vehicles at his Buggy Barn Museum in Blanco.

Photo by John Goodspeed.

Scott Emerson is good at many things, from marathons to mountain climbing.

Businessman found his niche in modernizing old favorite consumer brands.

By Natalie Chandler

If anyone had predicted that Scott Emerson would create a multibillion-dollar marketing business in the years since he left Texas State University, they were probably aware of his many achievements as a student-athlete and beyond.

Emerson (B.B.A. '75), who received a scholarship to run track, was an All-American pole vaulter and sprinter, head cheerleader, president of his fraternity, and selected by the university's leadership to escort Lady Bird Johnson around campus. He's since climbed 32 mountains and completed 11 marathons, triathlons, and bicycle races.

"Texas State was one of the most defining time frames to get me where I am today," he says. "What I learned there was that you can accomplish anything you want if you work at it. When I left, I worried that I was leaving the best time of my life. But it's turned out to give me something to build on."

Emerson is based in Philadelphia, where he is the founder, chairman, and CEO of The Emerson Group, a sales management company that has grown to include subsidiaries Emerson Healthcare and Emerson Marketing. The company takes health and beauty brands that have been in the marketplace for decades — think Carmex, Luden's, Alberto VO5 — and works with private equity firms to acquire and modernize the brands before reselling them.

It's on a slightly larger scale than his early ventures growing up in Oklahoma, where he earned money by mowing lawns, shoveling snow, and "selling whatever door-to-door." He was tops in sales with Junior Achievement and active in Boy Scouting.

"I probably was entrepreneurial — but did not know it — my whole life," he says. "Business was just an interest and a natural thought, and a natural progression."

After earning a bachelor's degree in accounting and business management, Emerson landed a job selling pickles and ketchup for Heinz

in South Texas. It wasn't long before Johnson & Johnson started pursuing him, and he sold the company's products in five cities around the country, eventually ending up as western regional manager in San Francisco.

"Along the way, we were building sales forces in regions in the country, and that became something I was good at," he says. Positions with Unilever and Novartis Consumer Health followed and took Emerson to other regions before he settled in Philadelphia. He created The Emerson Group in 1995.

In doing so, he found a niche in the consumer products industry. The firm has since expanded to include partners in Europe, Asia, and South America, connecting suppliers and retailers of health and beauty products around the world and managing \$4.5 billion in retail brand volume every year. The handful of employees that he began with has grown to nearly 150 who work in 10 regional offices.

"Business today for me is just a big playground," he says. "I meet in boardrooms all around the world, in France, Mexico, and Japan. We've never had a year where we haven't grown."

In the fall of 2016, Emerson was recognized as a Texas State Distinguished Alumnus. He has shared his insights with students at the McCoy College of Business Administration, where he jokes that he "barely got into Texas State and barely got out." He advises his audiences to get experience and good grades early on, then find a mentor by the time they turn 30. The years after 40 should be reserved for doing "all the things you're good at," and by the time your 50s roll around, be ready to work for people younger than you. Past 60 years old, "spend time on yourself," he says in his presentation.

To simplify success, Emerson suggests some old-fashioned wisdom. "My motto is, work hard and be nice. If you do that, you will win everywhere," he says.

Texas State was one of the most defining time frames to get me where I am today. What I learned there was that you can accomplish anything you want if you work at it.

Scott Emerson
B.B.A. '75



Players in the community

Lauren Pesqueda, San Antonio Spurs team up with community for good works

By Benjamin Gleisser

Lauren Pesqueda, associate manager of player engagement for the San Antonio Spurs, wants to generate the same acts of kindness in Texas that she helped create when she worked in a similar position with the Chicago White Sox.

Pesqueda (B.B.A. '08) especially remembers the smile on the face of the 7-year-old pediatric cancer patient when she arranged for the youngster to visit White Sox's stadium, and meet his favorite player, pitcher Chris Sale.

"Chris let the boy hang out with him on the field, then took him into the clubhouse and introduced him to the other players as 'my friend,'" Pesqueda recalls. "That afternoon had such a great impact on the little boy. Later, Chris asked me how the boy was doing and asked if he could come back. I believe they still keep in touch."

Here she pauses for a moment, then adds, "Seeing that young boy so happy — it's the reason I do this job. I love having the opportunity to play even a small role in those kinds of experiences."

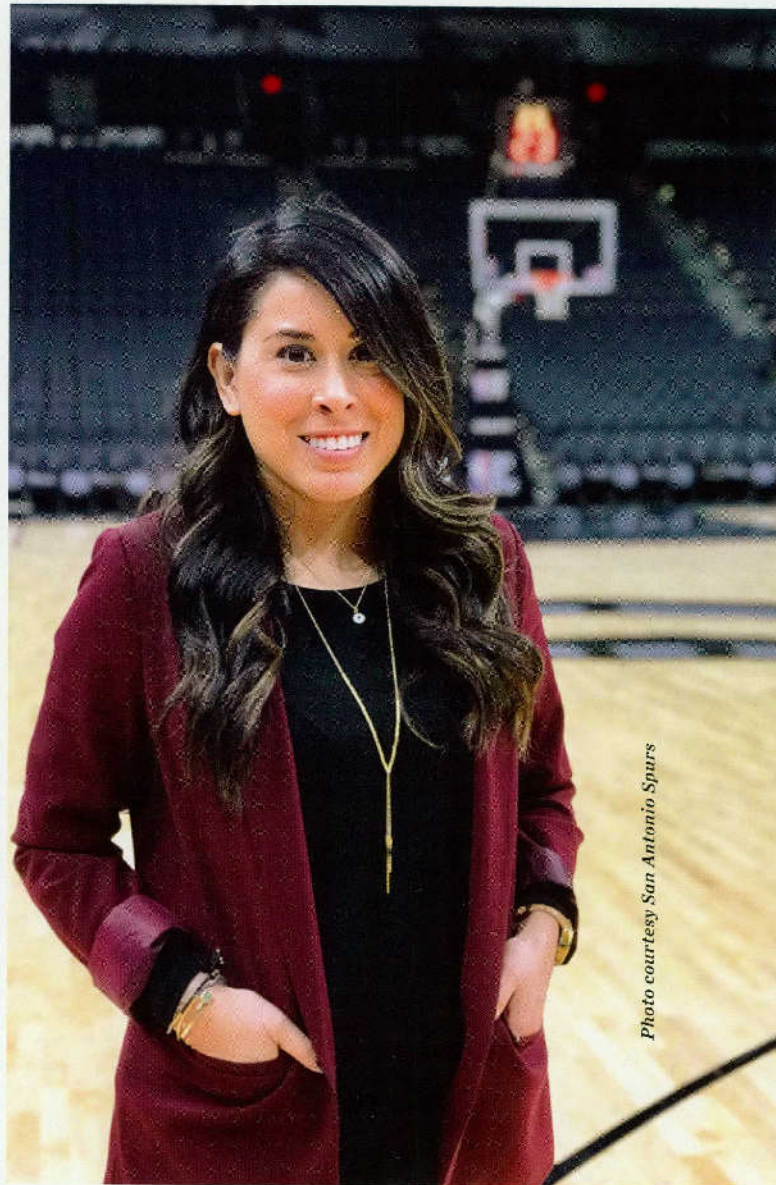
In December 2016, Sale was traded to the Boston Red Sox. Coincidentally, Pesqueda has a new team, too. In November 2017, she rejoined the Spurs, an organization she had interned with while attending Texas State. In her new position, she works with the senior director of player engagement as the liaison between team management, Spurs players, and the community.

She also talks to players about which charities they would like to support. "Some guys are passionate about working with kids with cancer, and others want to work with at-risk youth, the military, or veterans organizations," she says. "I match them with groups that make hospital visits, or work with the Wounded Warriors Project, or the Make-A-Wish Foundation."

Pesqueda credits Dr. James Bell, a retired Texas State University professor of management and entrepreneurship, with igniting her desire to succeed in business. "Dr. Bell seemed so excited and thrilled to be teaching us. His classes had such great energy, and he brought in great guest speakers," she says. "And I had great academic advisors that ensured I was able to work and stay on course for graduation."

Pesqueda says her mother, Martha, instilled in her the passion to succeed. "She was a single parent who had me relatively young, and she worked days and nights to provide for her young family," Pesqueda says. "She told me she had to work because I needed to go to school and be able to choose a career because, as she said, 'I didn't have that luxury.' Now, I want to make her proud."

Growing up in Selma, just north of San Antonio, Pesqueda was a die-hard Spurs and Dallas Cowboys fan. During her sophomore year at Texas State, she interned in the Spurs' Community Relations Department, where she helped arrange player



appearances and worked with the Tim Duncan Foundation. For a Spurs fan, the job was a dream come true.

After graduation, Pesqueda joined the Texas Rangers as assistant director of community outreach, where her responsibilities included managing the Texas Rangers Foundation, which raised money for scholarships, among other things. She also worked closely with Matthew McConaughey's just keep livin Foundation, which promotes educational opportunities and healthy lifestyle choices for at-risk youth. In 2014, she joined the White Sox; today, she is "happy to be back in Texas," she says.

And her goal? To continue doing what she loves.

"I always knew I didn't want a punch-in, punch-out 9-to-5 job," she says. "I'm proud to do something that creates a lasting impact on my community and helps those who deserve it. And I get to create meaningful relationships with people."

Brassy, sassy Bobcat

Sunny Sweeney goes from
PR degree to country performer

By John Goodspeed



A public relations degree was Sunny Sweeney's only goal at Texas State University, but a chance encounter there helped set the stage for becoming a country music star.

On one of the first days of school she was sitting with some other female students when a guy slid in beside them. "He said his name was Randy Rogers and that he had a gig that night. He asked us to come," Sweeney recalls. "We were like, eww, no!

"But of course we went. We've been friends ever since."

Rogers, who like Sweeney graduated in 2001, went on to be one of the hottest stars on the Texas Music scene. Recently honored by the university as a Young Alumni Rising Star, Rogers tours coast to coast with his brand of rocking country. Sweeney eventually opened for Rogers' gigs, and he introduced her not only to his audiences, but also to other popular artists such as Kevin Fowler.

"I never had a clue while at Texas State that I would go into music," says Sweeney, whose PR studies still enhance her career today. "But I did know I did not want to get a desk job because I'm too free-spirited."

A week after graduation, she began as an artist liaison at Lone Star Music, an online retailer, and began going to gigs as part of her duties. "Before that, I didn't understand that you could do music for a living. Then it dawned on me — that guy on stage is getting paid to do this," Sweeney says. "I thought, I can totally do that. I challenged myself to do it and never looked back."

During her middle school years in Longview, Sweeney's father offered to teach her how to play guitar. She declined, thinking it was boring. After graduating from Texas State, she surprised her father by taking him up on the lessons. She learned three chords and embarked on a career that began in small clubs around Austin, evolved into tours on the Texas Music circuit and beyond, and led to her a debut album in 2007 with Nashville's Big Machine Records, *Heartbreaker's Hall of Fame*. Her brassy, sassy, no-holds-barred approach to her songs garnered a nomination that year for new and emerging artist at the Americana Music Awards.

Sweeney's second album in 2011, Republic Nashville's *Concrete*, featured the song "From a Table Away," which hit No. 10 on Billboard's country chart. The Academy of Country Music nominated her for top female artist in 2013.

Provoked, on the independent label Thirty Tigers, followed in 2014 along with the single "Bad Girl Phase," which made Sweeney the first female artist in a decade to score a No. 1 on the Texas Music Chart. Her next single, "My Bed," also topped the chart.

Last spring she released *Trophy*, the first album where she tells her story in 10 songs that straddle hard country and Americana with lyrics that reveal whiskey-drenched, unapologetic honesty with a tender vulnerability. *Trophy* made a number of lists for best albums of 2017.

"This record is focusing on the song more than my others, kind of telling the story of where I am in life," she says. "Divorced and happily remarried, I don't have anything to complain about. So what do I write about if I'm happy?"

"I found quirky things that people can relate to."

Sweeney took an indirect route before finding Texas State. After a year at The University of Texas at Austin and a stint in New York doing improv, she wanted to attend a smaller school. She picked Texas State because of its mass communication, journalism, and public relations program.

"I definitely used things I learned in college the first five or six years in the music business," Sweeney says. "I did my own PR and press releases, my own booking, and everything."

"Now I have a booking agent and publicist, and I work closely with my publicist on ideas to make sure we cover all the bases."

She also encourages potential students to check out Texas State and even talked one of her cousins into attending. "I loved going to school there because it has such a nice, family atmosphere. I was so sad when I graduated and had to leave," Sweeney says. "But I still use what I learned getting my PR degree at Texas State."

"I publicly relate to people every night at my shows."

BOBCATS GIVE BACK

A slight detour put Bob Strauss on the road to success

By Anastasia Cisneros-Lunsford

Robert “Bob” Strauss and his wife, Tina, were on their way home from Austin in the mid-1970s. They had just put down deposits for his university admission and their married student housing when they took the detour of a lifetime to San Marcos.

That change in direction led the couple to a longtime relationship as devoted Bobcats.

The couple decided to visit some high school friends who were already attending Texas State University. Bob Strauss (B.B.A. '78), who had just completed two years at a junior college in Corpus Christi, was planning to transfer to The University of Texas at Austin.

That side trip changed everything.

“We thought we would just look around the campus,” he says. “About four or five hours later, we realized that we had just spent the whole day there. So we went home and called to put a stop on things in Austin. We then started the paperwork process here at Texas State. Keep in mind that this was before the digital age and things were done via telephone, snail mail, and stamps.”

The Strausses lived in Kyle while he attended Texas State. “Bob went one way and I went the other,” Tina says, remembering the duplex they lived in. In the mornings, Bob went south to Texas State where he majored in business, and Tina headed north to her job in

Austin with the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy.

“We were paying our own way so it was mostly just school and work for me,” Bob says. “I worked at the Wuest’s grocery store. I worked there at night and on weekends. I also mowed lawns, umpired Little League Baseball, and worked for a civil engineering firm for a while.”

The Strausses had fun at Sewell Park, one of their favorite hangouts, because it didn’t cost anything. “A big night was half a chicken and a six-pack of Old Milwaukee. Life was pretty simple,” he recalls.

After graduation, Bob worked in retail for a couple of years before beginning his career in the construction and industrial equipment rental industry. He spent 30 years at RSC Equipment Rental, where he started as an outside sales representative and progressed through the positions of district sales manager, district manager, divisional director, and eventually regional vice president for operations in Texas,



Oklahoma, and Louisiana.

“One of the crescendos of my career included being on the platform of the New York Stock Exchange when our company had its initial public stock offering,” Bob says. He believes that his degree helped to open doors but ultimately, success means having to do the work yourself. “The degree is your admission ticket and what you do with it is up to you.”

When the Strausses committed to making estate gifts to Texas State University, they did so with two significant wishes in mind — to spur entrepreneurship and ensure the successful training of teachers in special education. Their bequests will provide endowed scholarships to qualified students in the College of Education and the McCoy College of Business Administration.

“We have worked hard all our lives and we wanted to do something that would make a difference and mean something to us,” Bob says. “Planned giving had an

appeal to us. A gift in perpetuity is a good vehicle in which you can let your nest egg continue to work for you, and when you reach that point, then that money can work for others and do things that are important to you.”

Teachers who educate children with special needs are very important to the Strausses. Their grandson Reid, 7, has a rare genetic disease called Creatine Transporter Deficiency, which affects muscle and brain development. Tina says her grandson is nonverbal, but he lights up a room when he walks in. “It is night and day between when someone who is trained and works with him over someone who is not,” she notes. “His teacher has helped him reach his highest capacity.” She says their bequest will ensure teachers receive the proper training to work with students like Reid.

Bob says he hopes the bequest to the McCoy College will stimulate growth in entrepreneurship and the private sector. “I’m old-fashioned and I believe our free

market society built the greatest economy in the world.”

The Strausses, who are members of the Bobcat Club, can often be found at football, basketball, and baseball games. “The Bobcat Club has become almost like a family with relationships that we have established,” Tina says.

“Sports is the window to the university,” Bob says. “Texas State is just as great academically as some of the bigger-name schools in the country but people don’t realize that.”

Bob says he has always known what a great university Texas State is. He often shares Texas State’s accolades in academic excellence and research with other alumni he knows who may not be actively engaged with their alma mater. “I remind them, ‘You’re missing from Texas State,’” he says.



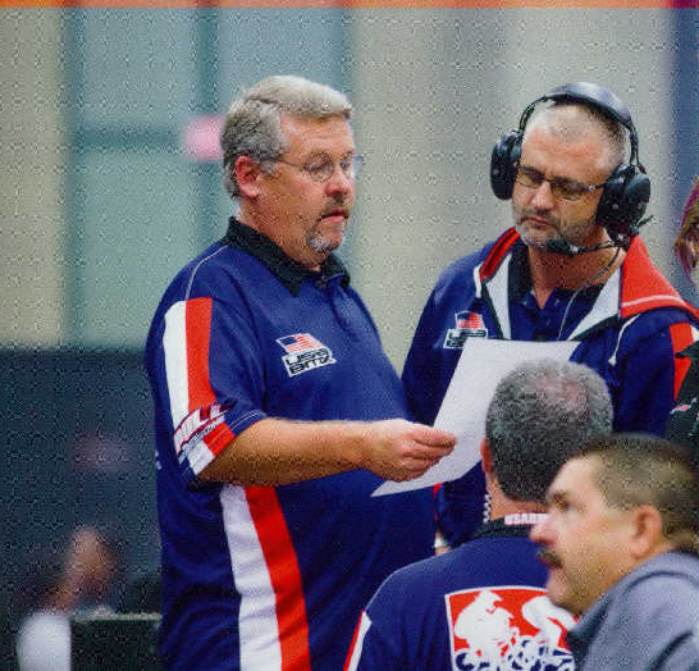
A sport created by kids in the early 1970s, BMX is now recognized as part of the Olympic Games. Riders “get air” when they jump the berms set up on the race course.

“

What I learned about business and creating a marketing plan I carry with me today.

Bernard Anderson
B.B.A. '93

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The business of BMX

Bernard Anderson is riding high with 70,000+ members of the bicycle racing organization

By Benjamin Gleisser

Bernard Anderson spent 11 days last summer in Rock Hill, South Carolina, watching the world's best bicycle motocross (BMX) riders race over hilly tracks at speeds that make cheetahs look like they're running backward. While these racers were competing for trophies, you can bet many of them were dreaming about winning Olympic gold.

Anderson (B.B.A. '93) is chief executive officer of USA BMX and serves as the BMX committee representative on the Team USA Cycling board of directors. Though he won't be selecting who goes to Tokyo to compete in the 2020 Summer Olympics, his Arizona-based organization provides the facilities on which American cycling athletes train.

USA BMX — formerly known as the American Bicycle Association — has more than 70,000 members and oversees 380 race tracks in North America. In 2003, BMX racing became a sanctioned Olympic sport. BMX racing has evolved over the years, especially at the track level. Previously, the 1,100-foot track had three turns, no berms, and one major jump hill. Today, the track has berms, steep turns, and can contain 45 to 50 smaller jumps.

Anderson has been racing since he was 6 years old. "When I was a kid, I told my dad I wanted a motorcycle. He said, 'No way am I buying you a motorcycle,'" Anderson says with a laugh. "In 1975, I was watching a kids program and saw BMX, and said, 'Hey, Dad, I want to race BMX.' He handed me the Yellow Pages and said, 'Figure out where you can race.'"

A local Schwinn bicycle store sponsored yearly races, and Anderson began riding his bicycle over dirt hills in a nearby field. The feel of sending his two-wheeler into the air was exhilarating. "Racing was in my blood," he says. "Both my parents were drag racers in San Antonio. My father, Bernie, was an entrepreneur and in 1978, he opened Lone Star BMX track. He later owned six tracks in the area."

The American Bicycle Association was founded in 1977 in Chandler, Arizona. Bernie Anderson bought the organization in 1985 and intimated to his son that the teenager might someday head the group — but there was one stipulation. "He thought I needed a

college degree," Anderson says. "So I enrolled at Texas State, and what I learned about business and creating a marketing plan I carry with me today. I learned how to launch a brand, and I carried that information directly into my business."

Texas State also provided him with a great bicycling partner — his wife, Amy (B.A. '93), who majored in psychology. The couple has two children, sons Gavin and Shane. Another Bobcat in the family is Anderson's sister Debbie Baldwin, who graduated in 1977 with a bachelor's in education.

Following graduation, Anderson moved to Arizona and began working in the business. "I started at the bottom of the company and worked up through the ranks," he says.

In addition to his duties at USA BMX, Anderson serves as chairman of the board for the USA BMX Foundation, which manages the National BMX Hall of Fame, the USA BMX Race for Life, and the Bob Warnicke Memorial Scholarship. The Race for Life donates more than \$250,000 a year to the Leukemia Lymphoma Society of America. The Race for Life was started in 1979 by the son of a BMX track operator in Michigan.

"He was a 10-year-old kid who told his father he wanted to do a fundraiser for other kids like him who had leukemia," Anderson says. "The BMX sanctioning body took the fundraiser nationwide." The Warnicke Memorial Scholarship was named for a former USA BMX marketing manager who died from leukemia at the age of 48. In 2016, the scholarship program awarded \$47,500 to 78 students with BMX backgrounds.

Though Anderson doesn't race as often as he did when he was a child, he tries to make USA BMX as kid-friendly as possible. "I never forget how infatuated and excited I was the first time I went to the American Bicycle Association office as a young racer," he says. "I try to instill that same feeling in the office today. There are lots of memorabilia on the walls.

"And I love watching young parents experiencing that with their kids. It never gets old — giving a 5-year-old a trophy."

(class)notes



1 David C. Olson



2 Jason Smith



3 Denise Monzingo



4 Karen Zuniga

Homer Bludau '69

Newport Beach, California, was selected as the city's 2017-18 Citizen of the Year. Bludau, who was Newport Beach's city manager from 1999 to 2009, has been active in numerous community nonprofits.

Beth Zarate '80

Wheeling, West Virginia, has been named chief executive officer of Catholic Charities West Virginia. She recently served as an administrator within Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Bert Lumbreras '82

San Marcos, has been named city manager for San Marcos. He was previously assistant city manager for community services in Austin and assistant city manager for Waco.

David C. Olson '85

Houston, has been appointed vice president at Wipro Limited to lead the company's global strategy, transformation, and alliances. He has more than 30 years of experience in professional services management consulting primarily in the chemicals and petroleum industries. He also chairs the CISQM advisory board to the McCoy School of Business Administration.

Javier Garza '87, '89

Stephenville, has been named vice president of the Division of Enrollment Management at Tarleton State University. Garza was previously assistant vice president of the Office of Enrollment Management. In addition to enrollment, the new division will include student success and multicultural initiatives as well as off-site programs in Fort Worth, Waco, and Midlothian.

Shelton Goode '90

Atlanta, is the executive director of diversity and inclusion for the Metropolitan Rapid Transit Authority. He previously served as director of diversity and inclusion at Oshkosh Corp. In 2016, he was named one of the Top 50 Most Influential African Americans in Wisconsin by Madison 365.

Gregory Drummond '90

Houston, has joined Lakeview Health as the executive director of its new facility in The Woodlands. He most recently served as the executive director of behavioral health for St. Joseph Medical Center in Houston.

Leslie Haas '91

Storm Lake, Iowa, has joined the education faculty of Buena Vista University. Haas received a master's degree and an Ed.D. from Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Cleofas Rodriguez Jr. '91

Corpus Christi, is the new president and CEO of the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce. Named a Texas State Distinguished Alumnus in 2013, he previously served 25 years as the director of the National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association in Washington, D.C.

Judi Whitis '93

Decatur, was named superintendent of schools for Decatur ISD. She was previously superintendent at Valley Mills ISD in Central Texas.

Gregory Rodriguez '95, '13

Carlsbad, New Mexico, was appointed superintendent of schools by the Carlsbad Municipal School Board. Most recently, Rodriguez was deputy superintendent at Huntsville ISD. He previously worked at San Marcos CISD as director of curriculum, instruction, and accountability.

Chris Hosek '98

Austin, has been appointed to the board of trustees of the American Council for Young Political Leaders. Hosek, a principal of Texas Star Alliance, is also an urban transportation commissioner for the city of Austin.

Adam Rawls '98, '00

Palestine, was named head coach for girls' soccer at Westwood High School. He spent 17 years coaching soccer and cross country at Manor High School.

Stella Garcia '99

San Antonio, is the senior director of operations for the Alamo Area Council of Governments. She previously served as provost for Texas State Technical College in Harlingen.

John McDonald '00

Pearland, was appointed director of community development for the city of Pearland. He previously served as the director of development services for the city of Bellaire.

Jason Smith '00

Pflugerville, was appointed assistant chief at the Pflugerville Police Department. He previously served as chief of police for Pflugerville ISD.

Denise Monzingo '01

Rockdale, has been selected Superintendent of the Year for Education Service Center Region 6. She has 28 years of experience in education and became superintendent of Rockdale ISD in 2014.

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

4 Karen Zuniga '02, '03
San Marcos, was named the principal of Science Hall Elementary School in the Hays CISD. She was previously assistant principal at Chapa Middle School and served in 2017 as the principal for Hays CISD Summer School.

Louetta "Lou" Driver '03
Schulenburg, has joined Colonial Care Center as the nursing and rehabilitation facility's administrator.

Julie Fulgham '04
Victoria, has been promoted to director of development services for the city of Victoria.

Fulgham will work with groups such as the Planning Commission and Building Standards Commission.

Paige Collier '05
Leander, is the principal for Reed Elementary School in Leander ISD. Prior to joining Leander, she was an elementary principal at Hays CISD and teacher of the year for the district. Collier is working toward her doctoral degree at Texas State.

Skylar Nichols '05
San Angelo, is the morning anchor for "Wake Up West Texas," on Fox 15 television. Nichols was

previously an evening anchor for KIDY and KXVA, and weathercaster/reporter for KSAN-TV.

Steven Albright '06
Austin, has been named by Gov. Greg Abbott to serve as senior advisor for state operations. He previously served as the governor's budget director.

Rebecca Saathoff '13
Austin, was commissioned a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force and now has a position in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. In 2016, she earned her law degree from The University of Texas School of Law.

Taylor Alanis '14
Corpus Christi, has joined the staff of KIII-TV South Texas. She previously worked for KXXV in Killeen.

Elaine Zavala '14
Buda, has been appointed to a one-year term on the State Employee Charitable Advisory Policy Committee. She is the communications coordinator for the Fund for Veterans' Assistance with the Texas Veterans Commission and is also vice president for the American Society of Public Administration.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Joshua E. Searle (B.B.A. '11), whose love of tennis led to a career as a professional player and instructor, died Oct. 17, 2017. Born May 18, 1984, in Austin, Searle attended Hays High School and played percussion in the marching band. As a professional tennis instructor he taught at tennis clubs and schools in Texas and around the world. He is survived by his father and stepmother, Deane E. and Debra Searle; mother, Kathy Ferris; grandmother, Shizuko Searle; and his girlfriend, Samantha Cruz.

Marvin "Dan" Love (M.A. '96), who earned his master's degree at the age of 68 and went on to teach speech at Texas State, died Oct. 13, 2017, at the age of 88. He was a newscaster for KTBC (Fox 7 Austin), and served as general manager of KHFI-TV (now KXAN). He also served on the Austin City Council in the 1970s and hosted a TV show with Coach Darrell Royal. He is survived by his wife, Joyce.

Adolph Thomas Sr. (B.S. '79) of San Antonio, who had a distinguished 27-year career with the Department of Public Safety and was the state's first black trooper, died Sept. 24, 2017, in Schulenburg. Born Dec. 8, 1940, Thomas retired as the chief of staff to the director for the DPS. He is survived by his wife, Shirley; daughters, Crystal Simms and Dawn Charles; and sons, Adolph Thomas Jr. and Claude Jackson.

Caitlin Louise Duvall-Hammer (B.S. '17) of Blanco, who was trained as a chef at the Cordon Bleu in France, died July 25, 2017, in Kyle. Born July 31, 1990, Caitlin worked at the Austin Spa, the Leander ISD food program, and Querencia Barton Creek. She is survived by her mother and stepfather, Laura Duvall and Timothy McBride; father, Gerald Hammer; and sisters Bevin Bearss, Andrea Kilpper, and Jennifer Kocken.

Charles Callihan (B.S. '70) of San Antonio, who won numerous awards and set university records in track and field, died May 13, 2017. He was dubbed "Speedy" Callihan in the 1970 *Pedagog*. He had a 40-year teaching and coaching career with San Antonio ISD. He is survived by his wife, Sharon; and children, Charles Callihan Jr. and Chandra McDonald.

Norman D. Elder (B.A. '61), formerly of Del Rio, who served on the Board of Regents for the Texas State University System (1987-1993), died Feb. 21, 2017, in San Antonio. Elder was a 45-year board member for Westex Bancorp and The Bank & Trust in Del Rio, and a board member for Anco Insurance in Bryan-College Station. He is survived by his wife, Leticia R. Elder; children, Joe Elder, Dana Moore, Marcos Valdes, and Elisa Jankly; and a brother, Robert Elder.

Ray Akins (B.S. '50), who was ranked as one of the winningest coaches in Texas high school football when he retired in 1988, died Dec. 26, 2017. Born May 13, 1925, in McCullough County, Akins was a Marine who served in the Pacific during World War II. He coached the Gregory-Portland Wildcats from 1965 until his retirement. He led the Wildcats to a state-record 12 consecutive district titles and a trip to the state finals in 1971. The team's home field was renamed Ray Akins Wildcat Stadium in 2009. Akins was inducted into the Texas High School Football Hall of Fame, Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor, Texas Coastal Bend Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and the Texas State University Hall of Honor. In 2005, he received the President Gerald R. Ford All-American High School Coaches Award, honoring him as one of the all-time best high school coaches in America. Akins is the grandfather of New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees, who has often credited him with being a strong influence on his game. He is also survived by his wife Dorothy; daughter, Laura Riahi; son, Marty Akins; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and his sister, Loretta Smith.



The (last) view

In December, mist glides across the water one day after a few inches of snow settled on San Marcos and the surrounding area. Spring Lake at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment is home to eight threatened and endangered species and is one of the world's largest aquifer-driven spring systems.

Photo by Stephanie Schulz



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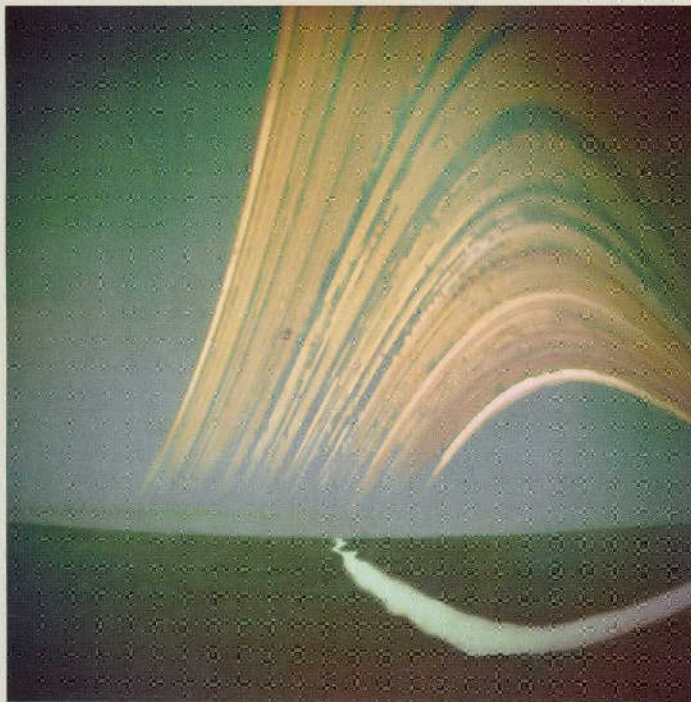
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*Photo credit: The Gulf of Mexico from South Padre Island,
Fall 2014, by Bill Wittliff*

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To learn more, visit www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu or call (512) 245-7431.