

# HILLVIEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2022





## SAYING GOODBYE

As Texas State says goodbye to retiring President Denise M. Trauth, we look at the impact of her leadership and progress made by the university during her tenure.



### ON THE COVER

PHOTO BY  
CHANDLER PRUDE

"After almost 20 wonderful years in this position, I have decided it is time to move on to the next chapter of my life."  
— Texas State President Denise M. Trauth in an email to students, faculty, and staff

## FEATURES

**TEACHER PREPARATION**  
Innovations to education degree

P . 20

**FACULTY Q&A**  
Actress Laura Lane

P . 26

**PARENTING TOOLS**  
Try using the app

P . 28

**OPENING SOON**  
Live Oak Hall

P . 32

**GIVE A CHEER**  
Bobcat spirit

P . 36

## CONNECTIONS

**50 YEARS STRONG**  
College of Health Professions

P . 44

**DR. GREGG MARSHALL**  
Bobcat heads  
Respiratory Therapy

P . 50

**LINDSEY ESTETTER**  
Important work at the CDC

P . 52

**DR. CORY PETERSON**  
PT clinic business booming

P . 54

**COLLEEN GORMAN**  
A nurse with experience

P . 56

**ERNIE SADAU**  
Hospital system CEO

P . 57



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Texas State University

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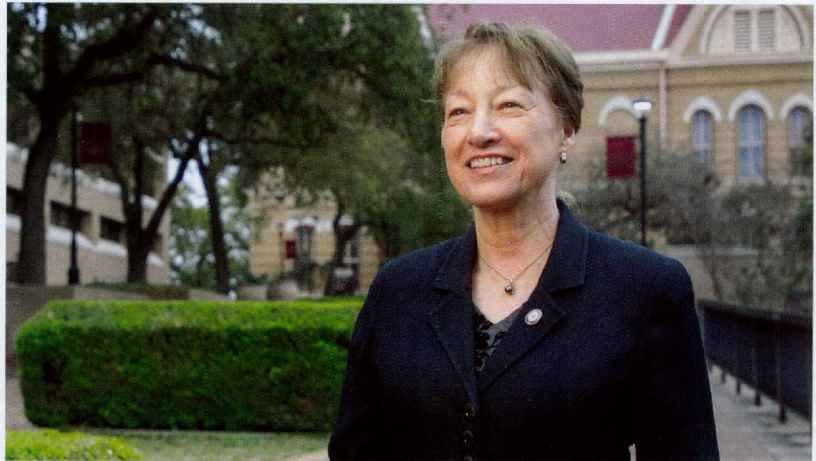
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#### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear Friends,

As I write to you, I am approaching my last day as president of Texas State University on June 30, 2022. After two decades of service, I will begin a new adventure and this great institution will welcome a new leader. I am incredibly grateful for the outpouring of support and well wishes I have received since I announced my retirement.

It is an honor that this issue of *Hillviews* includes many of the milestones the university has accomplished during my tenure as president. I hope you take great pride in all we have achieved, together. Those landmark moments were fueled in large part by the brilliance and contributions of our passionate Bobcat network: our students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, and friends.

This *Hillviews* also recounts stories of how our College of Education is helping to address a shortage of certified teachers, rooted in our university's legacy of preparing outstanding educators. Read about how research in our School of Social Work is using virtual reality technology to improve the health and stability of Texas families with young children. Meet some of the exceptional alumni of our College of Health Professions, which was established 50 years ago with 24 students and has since grown to enroll nearly 3,400 Bobcats.

I commend to Dr. Kelly Dampousse this distinctive university and the remarkable people that call Texas State home. It's a great responsibility and privilege to be entrusted to lead this community of change-makers and future leaders. Although my presidency is coming to a close, the rallying cry I've repeated countless times rings true for me personally, just as it always has for our alumni: Once a Bobcat, always a Bobcat.

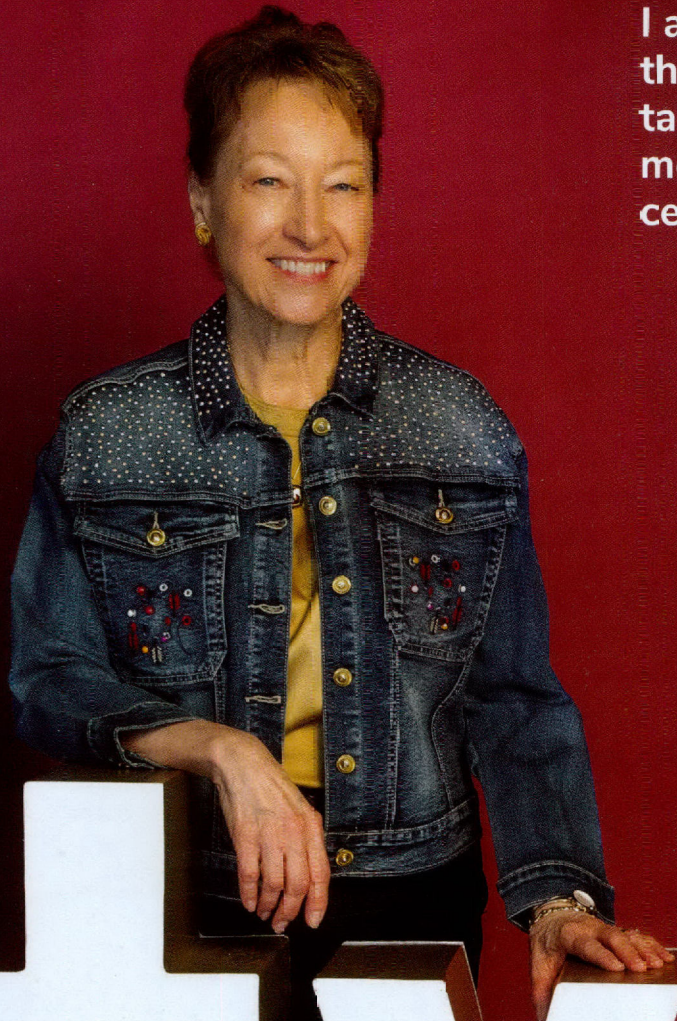
Sincerely,

Denise M. Trauth  
President





I am inspired by our students — their drive, their hard work, their talents. So of course, my favorite memories of the last 20 years center on our students.”



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# Q & A WITH DR. DENISE TRAUTH

BY YVONNE  
RHODES

On July 12, 2002, just weeks before her first day as President of Texas State University, Dr. Denise Trauth sat down for an interview with *Hillviews* magazine. She candidly shared her vision for what was then Southwest Texas State University (SWT), her philosophy about academics and athletics, and what she was most looking forward to.

What was she most looking forward to (after unpacking from her move to Texas from North Carolina)? Immersing herself in the “people and culture of the institution, learning about the hopes and dreams of the university, and building an environment in which we realize those hopes and dreams together.”

Fast forward two decades, and Texas State University has completely transformed from the institution it was that day. Those dreams, and many more, have come to fruition. As she prepared for retirement, Dr. Trauth sat down with *Hillviews* magazine for a final, retrospective interview about the past 20 years.





### WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF FROM YOUR PRESIDENCY AT TEXAS STATE?

It was a significant milestone when the university was designated a Texas Emerging Research University and was elevated in the Carnegie Classification system for research universities. We grew our research enterprise and topped historic levels in sponsored research funding.

In 2010 Texas State received its designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. This designation is a source of great pride for Texas State. More importantly, it equips us to serve our Hispanic students and the entire university community in ways that transform Texas State and make a real impact on the lives of our students.

I'm also proud that students have benefited from astounding growth in financial aid in the last two decades. We're awarding more than six times the scholarship funds we did 20 years ago, and our number of endowed scholarships has more than tripled.

Much of the growth Texas State experienced has been spurred by the launch of degree programs to meet workforce demand. We've added nearly 80 academic degree programs, including bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. As we crafted these programs, we turned to our industry partners for input. Together, we tailored degrees to teach skills that employers need in the workforce today — and skills that place them and Texas on the cutting-edge of the technologies of tomorrow.

The move for Bobcat Athletics to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) of NCAA Division I was a historic achievement. It allowed all our sports to compete on a national stage in the Sun Belt Conference, one of the 10 FBS conferences. The move not only elevated football, giving them access to bowl games and all the benefits of playing at the top level of the NCAA, but our other sports have also flourished.



**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE MEMORIES OF YOUR TIME AS PRESIDENT?**

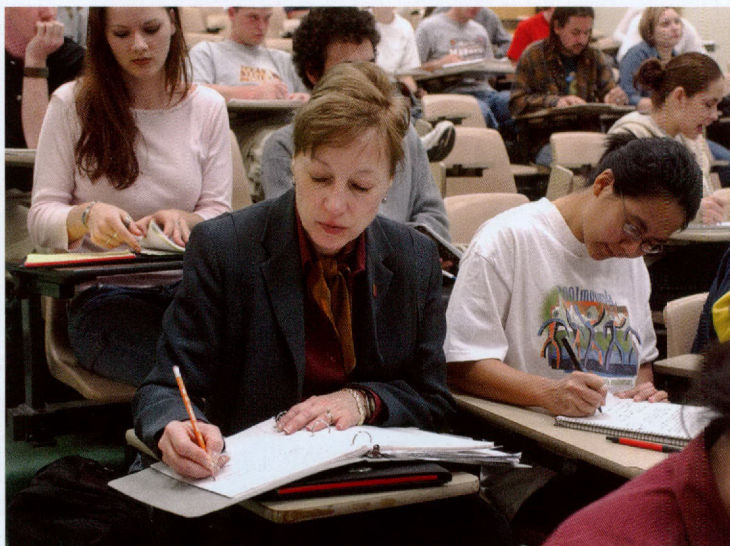
I am inspired by our students — their drive, their hard work, their talents. So of course, my favorite memories of the last 20 years center on our students.

I love that Texas State is a residential university with thousands of students who live on campus. Since my husband, John, and I live on campus in the President's House, I've had the pleasure of interacting with students constantly. As I walk across the San Marcos Campus, sometimes with our two dogs in tow, or head over to the Student Recreation Center, I enjoy chatting with students passing by or just seeing them hanging out together.

I'll always treasure a memory of a night after our annual Homecoming Talent Show. I was leaving the LBJ Student Center with a group of students and it started pouring down rain. As I drove back to the President's House, I saw countless students outside, dancing in the rain and jumping in puddles. It was a picture-perfect scene that reminded me of the levity, freedom, and fun of the college experience ... which reminds me of another memory.

In December of 2017, I was hosting a reception for faculty, and it started to snow. Of course, that was, and still is, a rare occurrence in Texas. The next day was the day before exams started. Standing on the front porch of the President's House, I could hear students all over the San Marcos Campus laughing and yelling as they enjoyed having snowball fights, building snowmen, and sliding on handmade sleds.

Over the years I've hosted multiple events to engage with our students one-on-one, such as "Talk With the President" sessions. Every semester, I hold open office hours, much like our faculty members, for any student to come in and chat. Our students are bright and inquisitive; so many of them came with specific questions and feedback. I was also struck by how many students came and said, "I just wanted to meet you." I think that reflects our sense of community. Our students care deeply about their university and want to engage with the people leading the institution they care about.







Since I arrived at Texas State, our student enrollment has nearly doubled. The demographics of our student body changed in that time, and now we closely mirror the state of Texas.”

#### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT STAND OUT MOST FROM YOUR TIME AS PRESIDENT?**

In the last 20 years, Texas State has achieved unprecedented growth, advanced its research enterprise, and transformed from a regional institution to one of statewide and national prominence. Looking back at this evolution, there are changes that stand out.

During my first legislative session in 2003, we achieved two transformative initiatives. Our name change was approved. Also, we received funding for our first building on the Round Rock Campus — allowing us to move out of high school classrooms and temporary buildings.

Since I arrived at Texas State, our student enrollment has nearly doubled. The demographics of our student body changed in that time, and now we closely mirror the state of Texas. More than half of our students identify as ethnic minorities. This gives Texas State a tremendous opportunity

and responsibility to contribute to building diverse workplaces and prepare our students for a global workforce. It inspired us to examine everything we do regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. In response, and in collaboration with our students, faculty, and staff, we launched many initiatives, services, and programs aimed at making our university community welcoming and supportive to all.

We've accomplished two 10-year master plans that guided the growth and transformation of our campuses as we constructed new buildings, renovated existing facilities, and added more green spaces. We experienced the largest construction program in the university's history, opening the Round Rock Campus and the Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park, along with numerous modern academic facilities.





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The Texas State University Development Foundation has established the Denise M. Trauth Scholarship Endowment. The student scholarships it provides will honor her legacy and help make the university a better place for generations of Bobcats.

Learn more at [ua.txstate.edu/students/scholarships](http://ua.txstate.edu/students/scholarships)

On the Round Rock Campus, we are educating the next generation of healthcare professionals. At STAR Park, we house a technology incubator for start-up companies. The companies at STAR Park are working hand in hand with our faculty to create game-changing new technologies, including thermoelectric devices, point-of-care diagnostics, and nanomaterials for solar power — prototyping, testing, and bringing new products to market.

The greatest sense of accomplishment I take with me is that we experienced the achievements, the triumphs, and the challenges together as a community. Bobcats have a resilient and innovative spirit that keeps us moving forward, supporting one another and our university. That is at the core of who we are at Texas State. I will always cherish that quality and know it will continue to propel Texas State to new heights. ★



# DR. TRAUTH'S 20 YEARS AT TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

## FALL 2002

Dr. Trauth joins Texas State as its ninth president and the first woman to hold the job. Enrollment exceeds 25,000.



## 2003

Southwest Texas State University becomes Texas State University-San Marcos Sept. 1, 2003.

Texas State celebrates 100 years of university operations (September 9).



## 2004

Emmett and Miriam McCoy pledge the largest gift in Texas State history — a \$20 million gift earmarked for the College of Business Administration.

The Student Health Center, San Jacinto Hall, and the Strahan Coliseum addition all open.

The Common Experience is introduced on campus. The first theme is Hatred, and the common text for discussion is the book *Night* by Elie Wiesel.





## 2005

The Avery Building is the first building to open on the Round Rock Campus, providing classrooms, labs, offices, and library space. The Avery family donated 101 acres of land for what is now the Round Rock Campus.



## 2006

The Princeton Review names Texas State one of the "best values" among America's colleges. *U.S. News & World Report* rates Texas State among the top 10 public master's universities in the west, the highest-ranked Texas institution in this category.



## 2007

The Southwestern Writers Collection and the Southwestern & Mexican Photography Collection formally join as The Wittliff Collections on the seventh floor of the Albert B. Alkek Library. The Lonesome Dove Collection opens as a permanent exhibition.

Texas State is recognized as one of 11 model universities in the country for graduating Hispanics. The university's graduation rate for Hispanics earning a bachelor's degree within six years is 16 points higher than the Texas average and 10 points higher than the national average.



## 2008

The academic year starts with almost 1,000 full-time faculty members, including 50 added in the previous year. Nearly 40% of the new tenure-track faculty hires identify as an ethnic minority.

The Ingram School of Engineering is dedicated. Bruce and Gloria Ingram provide \$5 million to establish the school.

## 2009

Bobcat baseball and softball get new stadiums in the spring. Bobcat Paul Goldschmidt, named Conference Player of the Year, would go on to play for the Arizona Diamondbacks and St. Louis Cardinals.

Bobcat Stadium gets a major facelift and renovation with new club seating, lights, and facilities. Jerry and Linda Fields donated \$1 million to support Texas State Athletics.

Cat Camp is introduced, with 215 new students participating in the summer.

## 2010

The Nursing Building opens on the Round Rock Campus, and St. David's School of Nursing admits the first class of nursing majors in the fall. St. David's Community Health Foundation donated \$6 million to start the nursing school.

The university begins offering a Ph.D. in criminal justice.

As part of the university's 10-year reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, ground is broken for the PACE Center.



## 2011

The Wittliff Collections celebrate their 25th anniversary. Founded by Bill and Sally Wittliff, The Wittliff Collections are dedicated to collecting, preserving, and sharing the creative legacy of the Southwest's literary, photographic, and musical arts.

The Pride in Action Campaign is launched. The five pillars of the campaign are: Academic Excellence, the Performing Arts Center, the Library, Athletics, and Alumni/Annual Fund.

## 2012

Texas State becomes a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

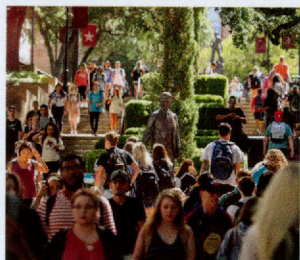
The University moves to the NCAA Division I FBS Western Athletic Conference.

Chautauqua and Gaillardia halls open for student housing.

The Texas State River Systems Institute becomes The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment after a matching gift of \$5 million from the Meadows Foundation provided a \$10 million University Endowment. More than 125,000 people visit each year.

University enrollment exceeds 34,000.

The Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park, a 58-acre site, opens. STAR One is the first building dedicated to the university's research and commercialization efforts.



## 2016

Two new 300-bed student residences open on Moore Street. They become First Five Freedom Hall and Elena Zamora O'Shea Hall.

Some 6,000 students live on campus, including nearly every first-year student.

The Texas Music Collection is established in The Wittliff Collections.

## 2017

The Archives and Research Center (ARC) opens in STAR Park. It houses 3,000 linear feet of archival materials from the Alkek Library.

The Materials Application Research Center (MARC) is established and operates under the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

The Campus Master Plan 2017–2027 is approved by regents. The plan includes a long-term vision that identifies sites for academic buildings and residence halls that can be considered beyond 2027.

## 2018

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* lists Texas State among the top 50 public institutions with the highest research and development spending in the humanities.

Willow Hall, a new health professions building, is dedicated on the Round Rock Campus.

Bruce and Gloria Ingram Hall, the university's largest academic building, opens its doors. Enrollment in engineering exceeds 1,000 students.

The Latino/a Studies minor launches.



## 2013

New master's degrees include a master of science in nursing, which is a pathway to produce more nurse practitioners, and a master of arts in psychological research.

An NCAA report shows all 16 of Texas State's athletics teams exceeded the required Academic Progress Rate. Eight of the 16 Bobcat teams score a perfect 1,000 in their Academic Progress Rate.



## 2014

The Pride in Action Campaign raises \$151 million for endowments, facilities, scholarships, and research.

The Performing Arts Center opens on the San Marcos Campus. The theatre is named to honor Dr. Patti Strickel Harrison, whose \$8 million gift is among the largest the university has received.

The online master of science in dementia and aging studies launches. The degree is the first of its kind in the nation.

## 2015

Record enrollment is 38,006, with minorities making up 49% of the student body. The College of Science and Engineering reports record-setting enrollment of 5,880 students, which is more than an 11% increase over fall 2014.

Two new degrees — a master's in engineering and a master's in health information management — are introduced.



## 2019

The civil engineering bachelor's degree program is initiated.

A second Student Health Center opens on Thorpe Lane.

The University Events Center and Strahan Arena are rededicated after a major expansion.

The African American Studies minor is introduced in the College of Liberal Arts.

## 2020

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas State transitions more than 5,200 courses to remote delivery.

The Bobcat CARES program distributes \$28.5 million in emergency grants to 23,000 students to ease the financial burden of the pandemic.

The Texas Music Gallery opens as part of a multimillion-dollar expansion at The Wittliff Collections.

Research and Development spending increases to a record-breaking \$70.7 million.

## 2021

The NEXT IS NOW capital campaign goes public in October. The goal is to raise \$250 million.

Connected Infrastructure for Education, Demonstration, and Applied Research (CIEDAR) joins STAR Park.

Freshman enrollment stands at a record 6,600 — a 13% increase over fall 2020. More than 11,000 new students — undergraduate and graduate — are enrolled. Total enrollment for San Marcos and Round Rock Campuses is 38,077.



# THE IMPACT ON WOMEN

BY YVONNE  
RHODES

As the first woman to hold the office of president at Texas State University, Dr. Denise Trauth has made a tremendous impact on women in the Bobcat community. From her active involvement on both university campuses to her commitment to elevate the university in a myriad of ways, students, faculty, staff, and alumni found in Dr. Trauth a champion and a trailblazer.

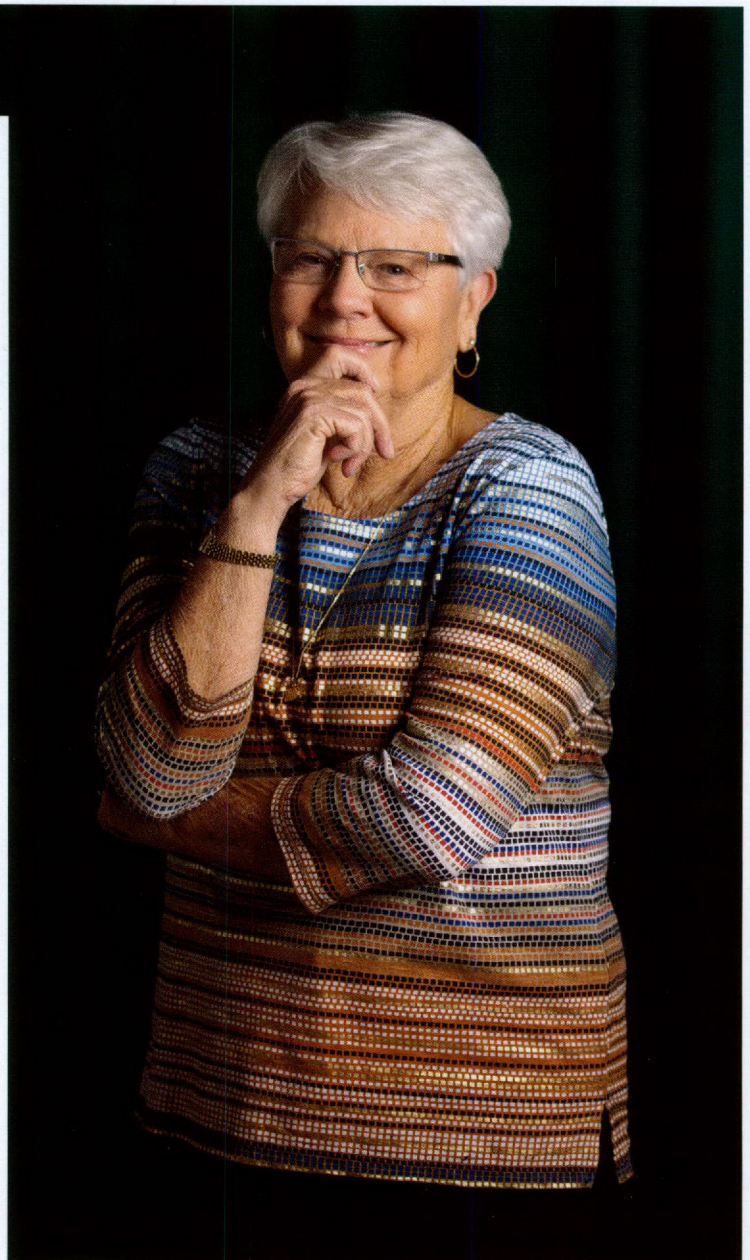
**KAREN CHISUM**  
FORMER HEAD COACH BOBCAT  
VOLLEYBALL

"In Bobcat Athletics, President Trauth has been very supportive of the funding for our renovations and building new facilities. The huge revisions for Strahan Arena at the University Events Center, new locker rooms, as well as new and more office space and weight rooms, were sorely needed by the volleyball and basketball teams. These improvements helped elevate our programs to new levels.

"In Dr. Trauth's tenure, enrollment spiked, new academic facilities were built, and several new majors were acquired. Also, academic admissions requirements were raised to attract high-performing students.

"One of my favorite memories with Dr. Trauth came back in 2014. The 'Ice Bucket Challenge' was a popular fundraiser for research into amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a neurodegenerative disease. I sent Dr. Trauth a challenge and she accepted. Of course, the media caught wind of it, and this became a 'hot event.' We met on campus, surrounded by volleyball team members and other onlookers, and I, courageously, emptied a bucket of ice-cold water over her head. She was a great sport, . . . and Mary Ann Mendoza (her executive assistant) was right there to hand her a big towel.

"My words of advice and well wishes to her as she starts this new chapter — enjoy it! Play, travel, enjoy family and friends, stay active. No stresses over meetings, deadlines, or hiring. You deserve this time for you."







**DR. JOANNE SMITH**  
FORMER VICE PRESIDENT FOR  
STUDENT AFFAIRS

"Dr. Denise Trauth has been a phenomenal leader! There are two keys to enrollment growth: retention of current students and recruitment of new students. Dr. Trauth had the foresight and leadership to prioritize retention of students as one of the keys to enrollment growth. When I became the vice president for Student Affairs, she asked me to have the Student Affairs Division facilitate retention efforts not only within the division but by working with other divisions at the university as well. She made sure, as best as possible, that resources were available to assist in this effort. As a result, the university enrollment during her tenure grew from about 25,000 to over 38,000 students.

"I am very appreciative of her mentorship, support, and trust in me to lead a large, successful division during my 15 years as a vice president at Texas State. I wish her the best as she retires and hope that she takes time to relax, travel, and have great memories of her accomplishments while president at Texas State."





**DR. JUDY OSKAM**

DIRECTOR OF AND PROFESSOR IN THE  
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND  
MASS COMMUNICATION

"Strategic, dedicated, and student-centered. President Trauth has worked tirelessly to transform a regional college into a university of national prominence. Under her leadership, and with support of the university, the College of Fine Arts and Communication has established state-of-the-art academic, creative, and performance spaces and added new, innovative academic programs.

"On behalf of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, I'm honored that Dr. Trauth has been a member of our faculty for many years. Her love of journalism in high school put her on a path to a successful career, first as a high school English and journalism teacher and then as an accomplished professor and media law scholar. Her extensive administrative experience as a department chair, dean, and provost prepared her well for serving as president of Texas State. Dr. Trauth has dedicated her career to education, and her impact on the lives of our students is significant.

"In 2011 Dr. Denise M. Trauth and Dr. John L. Huffman, professor emeritus at Bowling Green State University and UNC Charlotte, established a merit-based scholarship for journalism students. Thank you, Dr. Trauth, for building a legacy of success for Texas State graduates."





**DR. MARY BRENNAN**  
DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS

"All you have to do is look around at the university to see how it has transformed under her leadership. She transformed it physically. The push toward R1 has really meant that the university recognized and appreciated scholarship. She raised the bar for scholarship across the board. I think we always had superstars, but they were scattered, and now the sky is full of stars.

"We are a university that serves a broad base of students. We serve Texas. She understands and celebrates this.

"I really appreciate that she takes the 'whole university' approach. It's not just concentrated in 'this field is better than this field.' She is open to supporting liberal arts ventures. I've seen her at events where it is clear that the humanities means something to her. That kind of appreciation is evident in everything.

"One of the things that always has struck me was that she doesn't seem to get flustered. One of her defining characteristics is the ability to remain calm and look at the situation and then figure out what to do.

"During retirement, I hope that she relaxes and enjoys herself, gives herself time to do the things she wasn't able to do."





**DR. DENISE SMART**

FORMER DEAN OF THE MCCOY COLLEGE  
OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

"Dr. Trauth should take immense pride in all she has accomplished during her tenure, across all aspects of the university. She often says that it takes a team effort, and indeed it does. However, she provided the leadership and vision for moving the university forward. It was a pleasure to work under Dr. Trauth's leadership. Many people stayed at the university a long time, me included, because of a belief in her leadership.

"The McCoy College benefited greatly from Dr. Trauth's engagement. She took an active interest in many areas. With hardhat firmly in place, she frequently walked McCoy Hall as it was being built and helped shape its look and functionality. Dr. Trauth was enthusiastically involved with college donors and alumni.

"I remember being so impressed with Dr. Trauth's first convocation speech. Everyone was eager to hear what she was going to say and was a little nervous about the direction the university might be taking. She gave an analogy of having a container and putting the big rocks in first, then the medium and smaller ones, and finally still having room to pour sand between the spaces. This set the tone for how the university would begin to identify priorities in terms of importance and in a sequential way."



## TRACY PARKER

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

"Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." Proverbs 31:25.

"This Bible verse rings true for Dr. Trauth and her many accomplishments at Texas State. After completing my undergraduate program in 1992, I watched from afar the changing of the university's name, the increase in degree offerings, the skyrocketing of enrollment, and campus development that is truly breathtaking.

"As an African American woman, I also watched with deep admiration the celebration of trailblazing women and their 50-year milestone of desegregating the university. These and other experiences during Dr. Trauth's tenure helped remind me of the responsibility that we all bear to cultivate the seeds of success in others who follow. No doubt her own path was filled with instances wherein she honorably considered all voices; and she had the strength to make decisions even in the presence of dissent.

"Surely I am repeating what many others will say in well-deserved tribute. No matter; I will proudly add my name to the chorus. 'Thy spirit urges us to deeds of valor ...\*'"

(\*a line in the Texas State "Alma Mater")



## VANESSA CORTEZ TANNER

2013 STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
PRESIDENT AND PAST PRESIDENT  
OF THE TXST AUSTIN  
ALUMNI CHAPTER

"President Trauth has made extraordinary strides in her professional career and for the university. Texas State would not be one of the largest universities in the state if it were not for her determination and persistence to achieve excellence at all levels of the university.

"In my term as student body president, President Trauth always took the time to listen to student leaders and our ideas for the university. By participating in roundtables, speaking at Student Government meetings, and bringing us in for key meetings, she always made us feel that our opinions were valued and encouraged.

"Her commitment to elevating Texas State is exemplified in every facet of the university, from taking us to Division I athletics becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and pursuing Tier 1 research university status. The growth that has transpired under her leadership is truly remarkable.

"I am incredibly grateful to President Trauth for taking my alma mater to new heights. I love my university, and I love continuing to be a part of its community by serving on various boards, going to sporting events throughout the year, and being a member of the Alumni Association.

"As President Trauth moves on to this next chapter in her life, I'm thankful that Texas State was able to benefit from her experience, leadership, and commitment to excellence." ★





# A LASTING LEGACY EXTENDS BEYOND THE CAMPUS BORDERS

BY JAYME  
BLASCHKE

It's no secret that Texas State University underwent dramatic transformation over Denise M. Trauth's 20-year tenure, but her impact leaves a lasting legacy far beyond the university's borders. From San Marcos to Round Rock, regional leaders underscore how influential Dr. Trauth has proved to be in her role as president.

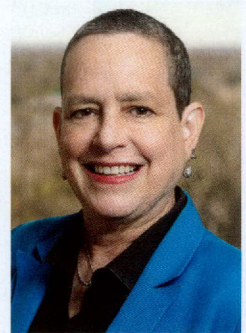


Really, the Greater San Marcos Partnership would not be in existence had it not been for her leadership in helping us launch this effort. This effort is meant to grow this region, pulling multiple communities and stakeholders together for the greater good of our community and making it a stronger place to live, work, and play. She was instrumental in that.”

**JASON GIULIETTI**  
PRESIDENT OF THE GREATER  
SAN MARCOS PARTNERSHIP



(Dr. Trauth's) leadership has made a difference for both students and education systems. I used to call her our 'rock star' college president, but after 20 years demonstrating this level of leadership, instead perhaps we should switch to 'legendary,' which she truly has been for Central Texas.”



**SUSAN DAWSON**  
PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/E3 ALLIANCE



She has a quiet authority about her, but she's got a steel spine and is very tough. She can be tough minded. I've always been delighted to work with her and impressed with everything she's done. She's an innovator.”

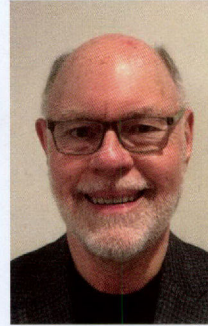
**ROSS MILLOY**  
PRESIDENT OF THE GREATER AUSTIN-SAN  
ANTONIO CORRIDOR COUNCIL





Her resonant voice reminds us about thinking, planning and acting long-term, just as she's done with Texas State. The presence of Texas State in two of the nation's fastest growing counties underscores its role as a regional catalyst for progress and opportunity, thanks to Denise Trauth."

**SANDY DOCHEN**  
CHAIR-ELECT OF AUSTIN AREA  
RESEARCH ORGANIZATION



READ THE FULL  
STORY ONLINE AT  
HILLVIEWS.  
TXSTATE.EDU



President Denise Trauth leaves an extraordinary legacy that will benefit Texas State University and its students for years to come. During her 20 years as president, she has overseen an era of unprecedented growth, expanded and improved two campuses, elevated the university's research status, and led its evolution from a regional institution to one of statewide and national prominence. Texas State University is a better place to learn, teach, and work because of her service, drive, and vision."

**BRIAN MCCALL**  
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
CHANCELLOR



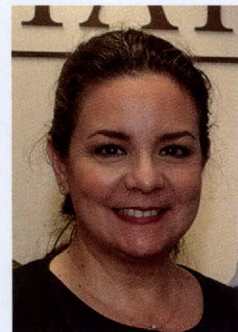
St. David's Foundation values the education and training initiatives led by President Trauth at Texas State University to lift up the lives of the healthcare workforce in our community, today and tomorrow, and positively impact our Central Texas community."

**DR. EDWARD B. BURGER**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF  
ST. DAVID'S FOUNDATION



She is an inspirational and visionary leader who helped attract transformational opportunities to the Hays and Caldwell County region— now the Texas Innovation Corridor. I am so proud to have worked side by side with her on these opportunities."

**ADRIANA CRUZ**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM,  
OFFICE OF GOV. GREG ABBOTT











# INNOVATE AND EDUCATE

The College of Education is on the cutting edge of teacher preparation

BY LESLIE ASHER BLAIR

High rates of teacher turnover and soaring numbers of those leaving the profession have been in the news a lot lately. Even before the pandemic, the national demand for teachers outstripped supply by about 100,000 teachers. Nationwide, COVID-19 prompted a number of teachers to leave the field at a time when teachers are more important than ever.

Since 2014, Texas has experienced a 14% decline of newly certified teachers. One thing is true across the country: Many students, especially English language learners, who might be better described as emergent bilinguals, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, have seen their learning negatively impacted by the pandemic and they need teachers of excellence to help them.

With its long history of preparing highly qualified teachers, Texas State University has been quick to address these issues with innovative teacher preparation and new degree plans that reduce the number of hours required for students to graduate with a teacher certification.

“Texas State’s teacher preparation is more representative and inclusive of the communities of Texas than ever before. Our commitment is to support and serve the students who come to us from many different backgrounds and to prepare all teachers to work in culturally sustaining ways for the diverse communities of Texas,” says Dr. Michael O’Malley, dean of the College of Education.

Teacher preparation experiences have involved a semester in which students take their university classes at a PK–12 school campus, using this opportunity to also observe teachers in the classroom and interact with students — perhaps assisting with reading education or leading





learning activities. After this semester of field-based learning, they are usually placed in other schools for student teaching for one additional semester. The College of Education has also been developing and implementing a new yearlong teacher residency program as part of the plan for what is next in teacher education. The program was conceived by PREP, based at Texas Tech University. PREP is now partnering with Texas State over three years so that groups of aspiring teachers will have an option to complete field-based coursework and student teaching within one integrated experience in one partner school district.

#### **PARTNERING WITH DISTRICT**

Last year the College of Education partnered with Clear Fork Elementary, a Title I campus in Lockhart ISD, where 70% of the students are considered economically disadvantaged. Thirteen student teachers finished the yearlong teacher residency, embedded in Clear Fork's classrooms. Eight of those students were hired by the district as teachers after graduation. This year Texas State has expanded the program to a second Lockhart school, Bluebonnet Elementary, and is partnering with San Marcos ISD in establishing a residency program.

The residency program also involves Texas State faculty members supervising the teacher residents during student teaching. Dr. Minda Lopez, professor of literacy in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, oversees the residency program. She says, "Faculty who teach the coursework also

supervise and give feedback to the students as they are teaching. You have a more developed relationship between the faculty member and student," Lopez says.

The results are promising. "The residents see what a full year in the classroom looks like — from the first few days and weeks with kids and setting expectations all the way to the end of the year where they see how kids developed," says Rebecca Leonard, principal at Clear Fork Elementary. She also said that the relationships formed with teachers were a big part of the residency experience. "You don't lose any time as you would when a student teacher comes in for the spring semester. We have been able to gradually raise expectations and confidence for the student teachers."

The student teachers also see how the teams of teachers evolve throughout the year. At Clear Fork, professional learning communities, which are small teams of teachers, meet weekly. "Aspiring teachers have the chance to witness firsthand how the teams work together. They see that there may be disagreements, but after struggling, they end up in a better place," Leonard says.

She also noted that veteran teachers learn from the teacher residents, just as much as these college students learn from them. "Cooperating teachers said their skills grew because they were articulating strategies and structures. The student teachers are like mirrors for us — if your resident is getting





I feel incredibly lucky to be teaching where I did my residency. It takes away the terrifying idea of starting a new career because you have such a huge head start in so many ways.”

## CHARLOTTE SCHUETZE

SECOND-GRADE TEACHER,

B.S. '21

feedback that they are asking low-level questions, then you need to ask, ‘is the teacher modeling low-level questions?’”

Sheri Holmes (B.S. '21) is a fourth-grade teacher at Clear Fork who spent last year in the residency program. “Taking the coursework at Clear Fork was interesting. I felt like I could immediately take what I was learning and then put it into practice. It made the actual learning experience feel a lot more intentional rather than learning something at school, then not using it until six months later until actually teaching.

“The program gave me a lot of space — I had two teachers watching over me who could help me by saying, ‘Oh you should try this,’” she says. Being on the school campus with a group of peers also provided Holmes with a built-in network where the student teachers had the opportunity to bond and bounce ideas off each other.

Second-grade teacher Charlotte Schuetze (B.S. '21) was also in the residency program last year. “I feel incredibly lucky to be teaching where I did my residency. It takes away the terrifying idea of starting a new career because you have such a huge head start in so many ways,” she says. “You start the year knowing the other teachers, the administration, and what is expected of you. I think one of the most underrated aspects is knowing that it is a school that you can personally fit into. There is a huge advantage to knowing that you love the school before deciding to spend your first year there, especially for a first-year teacher.”

Principal Leonard saw other advantages, too, in hiring teachers who had participated in the residency program on her campus. “When I met the residents, I told them, ‘Every day is an interview.’ I felt more confident with those two hires than a traditional hire with just a résumé and an interview,” she says. She also did not have any qualms about Holmes and Schuetze that sometimes show up when hiring first-year teachers. “Typically when I tell a parent their child has a first-year teacher, there is some apprehension on their part. I was able to reassure parents because I knew these two new teachers well.”



**Pictured:** Michael O'Malley, dean of the College of Education, Principal Rebecca Leonard (left), and Shea Culpepper, who represents the University of Houston and US PREP, at Clear Fork Elementary in Lockhart ISD.

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

All of this is not to say the residency program will fully replace the previously existing model, which is also highly effective. While the residency program is exciting, it is still in the pilot phase and not able to serve all 3,000 students who are in the student teacher pipeline in the College of Education — nor would it meet the needs of every student.

Morgan Podojil, a B.F.A. major preparing to teach in fine arts, can't wait to begin full-time teaching. Podojil did two seven-week student teaching placements in the standard student teaching program. The first was at a Title I school and the second placement, still ongoing, is at an International Baccalaureate school. This arrangement gives her student teaching experience at multiple grade levels in preparation for her certification as an all-level theatre teacher. Positive experiences at both schools have left this senior feeling confident and prepared.

“Having seven weeks at each placement has been plenty of time to prepare me to teach full-time in a classroom. I feel like I'm prepared for everything and anything. Something that helps with this is the Texas State educator program itself. I've been making and creating lesson plans, unit plans, and full-school year plans for the past few years. I've been provided all of the tools I need to succeed in my chosen career field and content area,” says Podojil.



## RAISE YOUR HAND

Faculty in the Curriculum and Instruction Department are participating in the Raising Texas Teachers project sponsored by the Raise Your Hand Texas (RYHT) Foundation. Started by Charles Butt, chairman and CEO of H-E-B Grocery Company, the project engages faculty in long-term continuous improvement work and provides funding to support that work.

Dr. Lori Czop Assaf, professor of Curriculum and Instruction, is director for the project. She explains that the foundation evaluates the teaching training programs of emerging partners such as Texas State and works with the university to establish improvement goals. The foundation offers approximately \$50,000 per school year to support the implementation of the continuous improvement plan. Texas State faculty are involved in six working

groups focused on topics such as performance-based assessment of student teachers, teaching high-leverage practices that are critical to helping students learn, and supporting students' social and emotional development. Aside from the money given to the university, the Raise Your Hand Texas Foundation pays for 10 faculty members to attend Teaching Works workshops sponsored by the University of Michigan.

Assaf says this program is unique because it focuses on faculty, and it supports teacher education — something that very few programs do. In 2022 Texas State will apply to become a full partner with Raise Your Hand Texas, which would provide \$8,000 scholarships for up to 10 aspiring teachers and additional improvement funding for the teacher education program. ★

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## SUPPORT GROWS FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

Texas State University has accelerated its efforts to expand support for student teachers, and the response has been very positive.

In response to the call for support for student teachers, Carol (B.S. '69) and Charlie Plassmann established the first scholarship created to support student teachers. The Carol Plassmann Endowed Scholarship provides needed support for student teachers and celebrates Carol's lengthy career as a teacher in Texas. Donors continue to follow the Plassmanns' lead as they are now developing additional scholarships for aspiring teachers and student teachers.

The college has also established new partnerships with Lone Star College and Austin Community College to provide high quality, equitable, and seamless transfer experiences for aspiring teachers coming to Texas State to complete their four-year degree and teacher certification.

A common thread across these initiatives is how they bring the university's expert faculty and external coalitions together to collaborate on designing innovative teacher education models to meet the current needs and opportunities in school districts. "Partnerships are the key to our success," says Dean Michael O'Malley, "and engaging with Raise Your Hand Texas and PREP has deepened the quality of our partnerships with local school districts; it's impressive to see how creative, focused, and effective our faculty, school leaders and teachers, and these state and national organizations are as we all work together to prepare exceptional new teachers for Texas."

WORKING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PARTNERS, THE COLLEGE OF  
EDUCATION HAS SECURED

**\$3 MILLION**

IN FUNDS TO PROVIDE

**\$20,000**

STIPENDS TO MORE THAN

**150**

TEACHER RESIDENTS OVER  
THE NEXT 2.5 YEARS.

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THE COLLEGE HAS SIGNED A NEW  
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH  
SAN ANTONIO ISD TO PROVIDE

**\$10,000**

RESIDENCY STIPENDS TO OUR  
STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE STUDENT  
TEACHING IN SAISD.



# THE RETURN OF THE EDUCATION DEGREE

An additional step that Texas State University has taken to improve teacher preparation is related to new degrees for undergraduates. Since 1987, the Texas Legislature has required aspiring teachers to earn a degree in a content area or interdisciplinary studies, with education coursework embedded within the degree.

To become certified, pre-service teachers had to take additional credit hours beyond the standard 120 hours needed to graduate. The result: It was taking students longer to graduate, and it meant more student debt.

Dr. Patrice Werner, recently retired associate dean in the College of Education, explained the conundrum faced by Texas State and other state institutions: “Essentially it limited the amount of time we could work with students to prepare them. It limited the number of education courses we could provide to a total of 18 credit hours, including student teaching.

“Since then, Texas has a growing population of diverse learners and the standards and requirements for teachers have changed. We struggled to meet the standards because of that limit on credit hours.”

In 2019 a group of universities, including Texas State, joined forces to request authorization in Texas for education degrees at the undergraduate level. Passing in both the Texas House and Senate unanimously, the revised legislation allows the conferral of education degrees and removes the cap on education credit hours. With that, Texas State developed two new education degrees: a bachelor of arts in education and a bachelor of science in education. Secondary education students may now double major in their field of study and in education with equal hours of coursework in each major. Elementary education students now earn a degree in their professional field of education, rather than interdisciplinary studies, and all education students take an integrated combination of discipline area and education courses. The design of these degrees also lowered the credit hours required of future teachers, thereby lowering both degree cost and time to degree completion.



As a result of the legislative change, Werner says, “We have been able to add coursework for English language learners and students with special needs, as well as increase the number of field experience hours.”

In May 2021, the first undergraduates since 1987 graduated with a degree in education. “In spite of [the old law], we had an incredible reputation for preparing strong teachers. We know so much more about teaching and learning now, and meeting the needs of diverse populations of learners. We have the freedom to design programs to meet these needs,” Werner says.

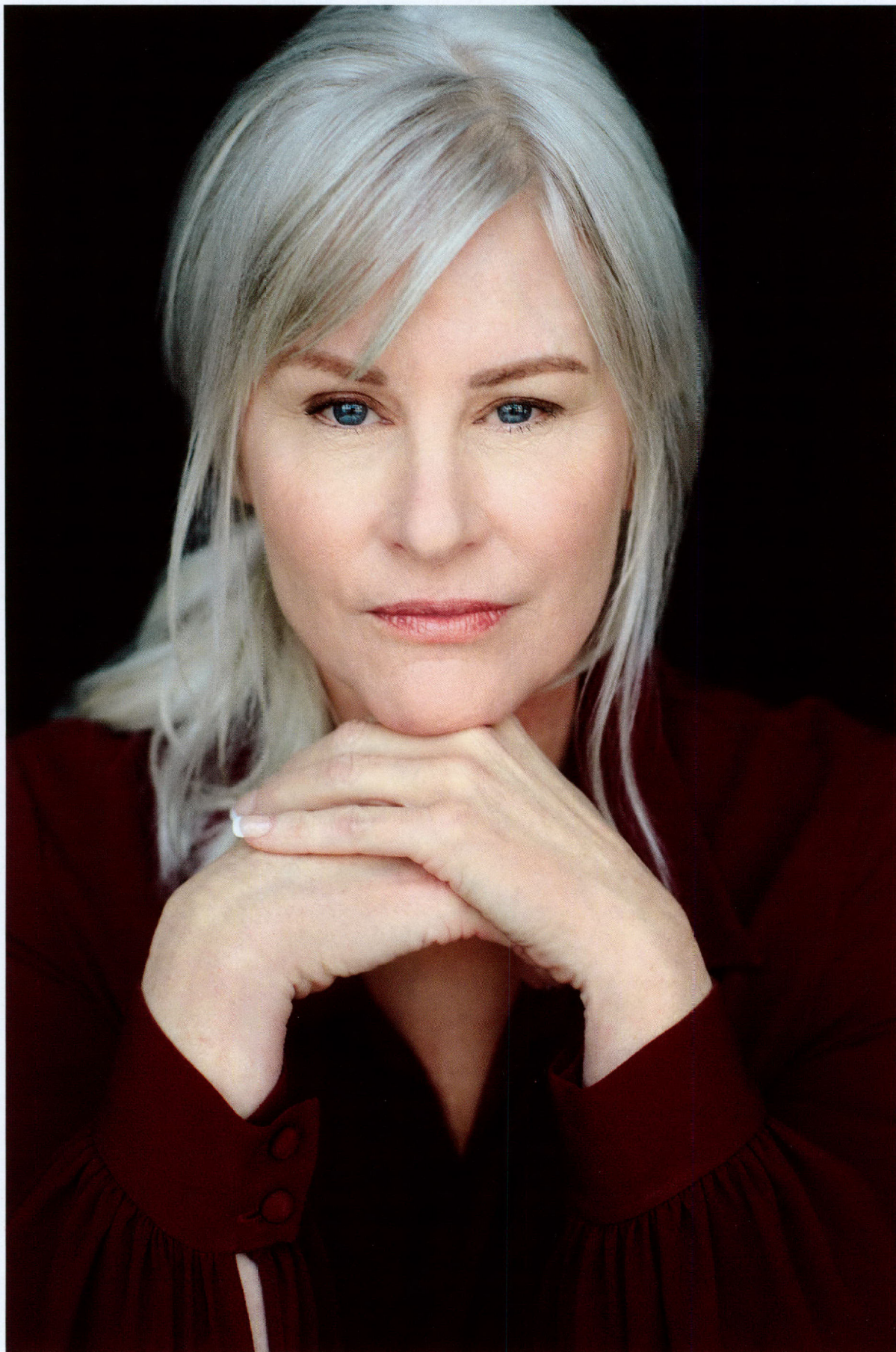
Faculty across all colleges involved in teacher education at the university collaborated in designing the return of the education degree.

With strong, updated education degree plans in place and innovative teacher preparation programs, Texas State continues to build on its reputation, and its graduates are ready and willing to improve outcomes for children and meet the educational needs of communities statewide.

– Leslie Asher Blair



FACULTY Q & A






## LAURA LANE BRINGS EXPERIENCE AS A WORKING ACTOR TO TXST STUDENTS

Laura Lane is a professor of acting in the College of Fine Arts and Communication. She joined the Texas State University Department of Theatre and Dance in 2004 and served as the head of acting for six years.

A native of Oklahoma, Lane earned a bachelor of fine arts at The University of Texas at Arlington and a master of fine arts at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. Professionally, she is known as Lauren Lane because there was already a Laura Lane listed with the Actors' Equity Association.



"I moved to Austin in 2002 with my daughter Kate, who was 4 years old at the time. I'm a single mom and wanted to relish the time with my daughter. Having worked steadily in Los Angeles for over a decade, I'd just turned 40 in a town where women over 40 rarely worked. I had just finished playing C.C. Babcock, a very recognizable comedy character on "The Nanny." I made an educated guess that it would be a good long while before producers and directors would take a chance on me. I have family in Austin who embraced my decision to relocate," says Lane.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT TEACHING?

"I loved the graduate school I attended, the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco. We were lucky to have been taught by some of the brightest, most talented and creative artists in the world of theatre. I brought that

history and knowledge to my work as a teacher and began to develop exercises, questions, and traditions that I could see excited the students interested in pursuing a professional career in acting.

"I have a unique insight because I studied extensively and am a classically trained actress who has worked at numerous regional theatres all over the country. I worked on three very successful television series ("The Nanny," "L.A. Law," and "Hunter"). I can share my experience in all aspects of the entertainment world, and I have found the students respect my experience and are willing to dive into our work together because they trust my veracity."

**MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN LATELY ABOUT FILM ROLES FOR OLDER WOMEN. ACTRESS GEENA DAVIS, 66, HAS FINANCED A STUDY THAT FOUND THERE WERE FEWER GOOD ROLES FOR WOMEN OVER 50. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH HOLLYWOOD AND ROLES FOR WOMEN?**

"She is right, and I appreciate the effort she put in to statistically quantify this reality. Anything you watch, in this decade or the last three decades, who is the least represented? Women over



I can share my experience in all aspects of the entertainment world, and I have found the students respect my experience and are willing to dive into our work together because they trust my veracity."

60. Yet one rarely hears this group mentioned by the various activists demanding more representation for historically marginalized groups. We continue to allow our cultural narrative to reflect a desire to bury women who age, as if we are an embarrassment."

**THIS YEAR, THE UNIVERSITY WILL BE OPENING UP LIVE OAK HALL, THE NEW FILM AND TELEVISION BUILDING. WHAT KIND OF IMPACT WILL THIS MAKE TO FACULTY AND STUDENTS IN THEATRE?**

"This is a thrilling opportunity for Texas State students, and credit must be given to Johnny McAllister, assistant professor and head of film production. If he isn't representing his own work at Cannes, he and Dean John Fleming, our chair Sarah Maines, former chair Deb Alley, and doubtless many others have been working diligently to help make this a reality. The film program at Texas State already works in concert with the B.F.A. acting program and with this advancement, the future is here. If new students don't flock to this university to pursue their careers as artistic entrepreneurs, well, they certainly aren't reading the rankings for top undergraduate programs and they are likely to end up with enormous debt, crippling the flexibility they need to work at the highest levels in an industry with staggering demands." ★







# FATHER KNOWS BEST — WITH A LITTLE HELP

**Dr. Mark Trahan** leads a team developing a virtual reality app to coach parents through emotional early days

BY STEVE ULFELDER

It's an understatement to say early parenthood can be stressful. Sleeplessness, depression, and financial worries beset many young parents — all as they try to handle the biggest responsibility of their lives. For vulnerable fathers, the situation can be even more difficult.

A team at Texas State University is addressing the situation, developing tools that fathers can access through the most familiar of devices: the smartphone. Dr. Mark Trahan, an associate professor in the School of Social Work, spearheads the research using virtual reality/augmented reality (VR/AR) to bolster paternal and social self-efficacy. As a researcher and the father of two, Trahan is interested in finding ways that technology can address and reduce the stress of parenthood.





Many young dads come into parenthood with very little emotional knowledge. We often see depression or frustration with work or school. This impacts their ability to ‘show up’ the way parents need to.”

DR. MARK TRAHAN |



While it's far too early to declare victory, research and case studies performed by Trahan and Texas State show great promise. That's important to the university as a whole and to the College of Applied Arts, notes Dr. T. Jaime Chahin, dean of the college and a supporter of Trahan's work. "Fathers and mothers are the foundation of the family," Chahin notes, "and their efforts have to be continuously reinforced."

#### **APPS WERE LACKING**

Trahan, who is always exploring ways to increase young fathers' confidence in their parenting skills, says his curiosity was first piqued when he and colleagues studied smartphone apps devoted to parenting. Some may be surprised at the sheer number of these apps — there are well over 100 such tools, developed by government agencies,

social-services providers, faith-based groups, and for-profit companies.

Trahan focused on assessing the quality of free and low-cost apps for fathers. "We were interested in these because when services are provided for parents, sometimes an app is used as a supportive measure," Trahan says. "We wondered whether the content in these apps applied to fathers, specifically low-income fathers, who may be experiencing many levels of stress." The powerhouse interdisciplinary team includes Dr. Vangelis Metsis, associate professor in the Department of Computer Science; Dr. Richard Morley, associate professor in the School of Social Work; Dr. Erica Nason, assistant professor in the School of Social Work; Nate Rodrigues, assistant professor in the Department of Respiratory Care; and Dr. Scott Smith, associate



professor in the School of Social Work and director of the Virtual Reality and Technology Lab.

They soon discovered that available apps left significant gaps. For starters, very few were developed specifically for fathers and regardless of gender, the apps may not address the real needs of parenting. While helpful in their way, “the apps aren’t really touching on the issues that are needed to increase a father’s self-efficacy and confidence in parenting,” Trahan says. “Many young dads come into parenthood with very little emotional knowledge. We often see depression or frustration with work or school. This impacts their ability to ‘show up’ the way parents need to.”

### PARENTING CHALLENGES

In existing parenting apps, content on research-based issues of fatherhood engagement was seldom present. “Very few dealt with the emotions fathers feel, co-parenting with a partner, parenting stress, or challenges such as mental health or substance abuse,” he adds. “We know something about what confidence looks like in the parenting realm, what that feels like — and few [apps] had any dimensions related to what we know supports increased confidence.”

Nevertheless, Trahan’s team learned that the apps had one powerful factor going for them: “Fathers like them,” he says. Younger, tech-savvy dads, for whom a smartphone app is a familiar part of life, enjoy referring to the software and using it to communicate and learn.

The quest to assist fathers would soon merge with another of Trahan’s interests: the use of virtual reality to help veterans at Texas State overcome anxiety and distress. For the past five years, Trahan and a team of faculty and students has been developing a virtual environment for providing VR exposure therapy (VRET) to treat anxiety disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder in veterans at Texas State. PTSD, often faced by previously deployed combat veterans, is of particular interest at the university, which is proud of its commitment to the military.

“We started this project because we saw a need for veterans to adjust to social situations on campus that could be highly anxiety producing,” Trahan says. “We found that developing specific scenarios and environments to assist them in overcoming their anxiety could help with becoming more comfortable on campus.” In the treatment of anxiety disorders, exposure-based exercises — in which subjects are placed in anxiety-provoking but safe situations — are widely used and highly regarded. But because such exercises aren’t always feasible, especially

in the age of COVID, Trahan’s team developed a VR-based experiment. A student veteran with social anxiety disorder and PTSD completed 12 sessions of VRET using a mobile phone simulation of a virtual grocery store, which represents the sort of environment that can intimidate those suffering from anxiety disorders.

### EXPANDING VR WORK

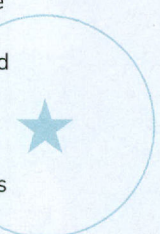
Make no mistake: The COVID-19 pandemic has affected psychological health services, just as it has affected many other aspects of our lives. The new importance of social distancing, combined with the widespread acceptance of telehealth in medicine, including clinical social work, makes a phone-based VR app timely and important. Such apps in the mental health space are considered cost-effective, Trahan notes, and they have the potential to be embraced by clients — including vulnerable fathers — who aren’t likely to seek out in-person services. The team’s initial research results appear promising.

While interrupted by COVID, an initial feasibility case study reported decreases in psychological symptoms, better sleep quality, and other positive changes. The results, published in *Clinical Social Work Journal*, suggested that VRET using a mobile app is feasible and worthy of additional research.

“The study with veterans helped guide my understanding of using very specific physiological measures to understand the stress response,” Trahan says. “Now we’ll use those methods to focus on young fathers and how we can assist them to adapt to the stress of becoming a new parent.”

With this early research pointing the way, Trahan and the university team are poised to take exciting next steps in the VR arena — both to develop a VR app for fathers and to expand on their VRET work. “We’re just starting on the fatherhood project,” Trahan says. The team will begin by collecting interviews with young fathers in their first six weeks of parenthood. “We really want to find out what things they notice — their response to a crying child, for example, their ability to pick up on emotional cues.” He notes that this is the beginning of exploring specific interventions that could assist young fathers in adapting to stress.

From there, the team hopes to develop a scenario that will allow fathers to learn in a VR environment. It’s all part of the effort to use cutting-edge technology to address one of humankind’s oldest problems: stress. ★





LIGHTS,  
CAMERAS...

ACT





ARTIST RENDERING

# ION

Opening this fall, **Live Oak Hall** will serve media and film students

BY JULIE COOPER

For Tim England, associate professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, the newest building at Texas State University is a “longtime dream finally coming true.”





Groundbreaking of Live Oak Hall on August 16, 2021.

From left: John Fleming, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication; Sarah Maines, chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance; President Denise Trauth; Judy Oskam, director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication; and Gene Bourgeois, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs.

Set to open this fall, Live Oak Hall is a \$10 million facility that will serve about 600 students and faculty of the College of Fine Arts and Communication. The building will provide a home for mass communication students and meet the needs of the growing film program in the Department of Theatre and Dance. It will feature a film soundstage, TV studio, recording mix classroom, editing lab, Foley room for sound effects, and offices.

The highlight of Live Oak Hall is its dedicated television studio. For 30 years, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication has rented studio space at the Atek Library to teach video production and television news courses. The facilities in Live Oak Hall, including a control room and media flex rooms for editing, will help ensure that Texas State maintains its stature as a professionally accredited program. The new television studio will also serve as the home of "Bobcat Update," an award-winning and campus-oriented newscast produced by students majoring in electronic media. Sports and interview programs will also be produced in the new studio. "We have all along hoped to have our own studio," says England, who has been part of the Texas State faculty since 1993.

#### NEW FACULTY ON BOARD

Dr. Judy Oskam, director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, says that most programs of similar size at other universities have TV studios. "I'm

excited that our students and faculty will finally have the state-of-the-art facilities that they deserve." To provide additional coursework and studio programming, new faculty — Dr. Youjeong Kim and Dr. Ali Forbes — joined the university last fall. Kim was on the faculty at the New York Institute of Technology, and Forbes is a graduate of the Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University.

Since its inception, graduates of the Texas State program have been recruited for top jobs in media markets around the country such as "Good Day LA" and "Good Morning Dallas." The list of working alumni is long and includes such names as Polo Sandoval (B.A. '07), CNN News; Rita Garcia (E.A. '03), KTRK-Houston; Malik Mingo (E.S. '17), WWL-TV New Orleans; Isamar Terrazas (B.A. '14), assignments manager at Telemundo 40/NBC Universal; Mike Kickirillo (B.A. '88), director/broadcasting San Antonio Spurs; and former WFAA-Dallas anchorwoman Gloria Campos (B.A. '76).

England explains that smaller TV markets, which Texas has plenty of, are eager to hire multimedia journalists. "They shoot, write, edit, and do the whole thing," he says, adding that more than 27,000 people are employed in the nation's TV news industry. "Students coming out of our university are as qualified as anyone — and they often land at stations in Austin or San Antonio within three to five years," he says.



“Those who have ambition and talent, they’re going to make it.”

For many graduates, the work goes beyond daily news reports because jobs are plentiful with businesses that have a strong social media and online presence. “Everybody wants video,” England says. “Our students can take a story and enhance it with video.”

## FILM PRODUCTION

The students and faculty in the B.F.A. Theatre, Film Production degree will also get the maximum use of Live Oak Hall. The program accepts students based on their GPA and a film portfolio that they create. The department received more than 50 applications for fall 2021, says Johnny McAllister, assistant professor and head of the film concentration. “I had planned to accept 15 of those but the quality was so strong and I’m anticipating us being able to move into this building,” he says, explaining why 37 applicants were accepted. Four new part-time instructors have joined the faculty: Monique Walton, Kenya Gillespie, Vanessa Uhlig, and Ben Bays. “What I’m most proud of in this program is the quality of our faculty. They all have flourishing film careers,” McAllister says.

McAllister is himself an award-winning filmmaker and screenwriter. In 2019 he wrote and executive produced “Bull” with his wife, Annie Silverstein, and Walton as creative producer. It premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, won the top three awards at the Deauville American Film Festival, and was scheduled to make its U.S. premiere at the SXSW Film Festival in March 2020 — just when movie houses closed because of COVID.

“We are going to be in a state-of-the-art building, and if we really want to compete regionally or nationally our students need to be using the



ARTIST RENDERING

There are several ways for Bobcats and film/TV lovers to support this project, including naming opportunities. For more information contact Dr. Dan Perry in the Office of Development, [dperry@txstate.edu](mailto:dperry@txstate.edu) or (512) 245-4055.

latest equipment,” McAllister says. This includes lighting and cameras. “We need to stay on that sort of cutting edge and that takes a significant investment. In addition to having a great facility, we need students familiar with that equipment when they step in the real world,” he adds.

The Texas State Film Club, which has recently seen a rise in its membership, gets high praise from McAllister. “It’s not just film appreciation — they are vital to everything we do in the film program. They help set up guest speaker screenings, run workshops, and welcome freshmen into our community. They even help each other get jobs after graduation,” he says.

Miranda Watchler, a junior in the film program, is a member of the film club, which that includes about 55 students. The New Mexico native says she started out as a digital media major, before learning about the

film concentration. Watchler hopes one day to open her own production company. “I’ve had the opportunity to look at the plans (for Live Oak Hall) and saw all that it will have. I am very much looking forward to having a film room. I can’t wait to see what opportunities it will bring,” she says.

McAllister says graduates of the program will have the skills to produce a feature film or a pilot of a TV show. “We’re teaching what I call the complete filmmaker,” he says. Another strength that McAllister sees in the program is the proximity to theatre. “I think film is its own thing, but the fact that we have all of these shared skill sets and that we’re situated within the theatre department is special and unique. We have access to all these wonderful actors, technicians, costumers, and designers. We have a department full of creative artists at play.” ★



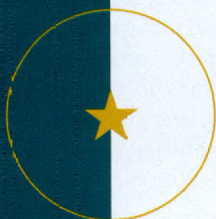




# BOBCAT SPIRIT

CHEERLEADING AT TEXAS STATE  
IS ABOUT BONDING, DISCIPLINE,  
MOTIVATION, AND LEADERSHIP

BY SUSIE PHILLIPS  
GONZALEZ







Jocelyn Stephens, coordinator of Texas State's Spirit Program and head cheerleading coach, is in Jowers Center marking off counts during the cheer squad's practice for an upcoming Bobcat football game.

As she returns to the sideline to turn on the performance music, she shouts, "Let's make it count." At random intervals, team members follow with chants of, "Go Bobcats!" and "Eat 'em up!" There are smiles and waves at an imaginary crowd. An arm thrusts skyward with a fist in the shape of a claw. Next come a few standing back tucks. Then more smiles and more waves. "Enjoy yourselves," Stephens intones as the squad begins an intricate routine with pyramids, stunts, and basket tosses.

The 2021–2022 cheer team is 39 members strong. Some of them, like senior Brittainy Carrell of Spring, have been on the team

since freshman year. "Cheering here has made me a better leader," says Carrell, an education major who plans to teach middle school science. "It helps me set aside time for my schoolwork so I can be ready at practice. These are skills that will help me in the future, especially when it comes to teaching."

Devan Duran agrees, saying he strives to stay focused and motivated. "We hold ourselves to a higher standard. School or cheer, no matter if I'm doing something one time or 100 times, every time you give it your all," says the junior business management major who has been on the squad for three years.





It's what I love about this program. Even on your worst days, you have 20+ humans that will go the extra mile to lift you up."

**TYNISHA JACKSON**  
B.A. '19

To make the team, applicants must provide a skills video showing tumbling and stunt abilities, perform chants and band dances, and demonstrate through an on-campus interview a level of comfort and poise that will enable them to interact with students, administration, alumni, donors, and children. Members must maintain a 2.0 GPA, and about two-thirds of the squad make the dean's list each semester.

At the start of the academic year, Stephens asks incoming cheerleaders to sign a commitment letter much like one that student-athletes sign before arriving on campus. Practices are held three days a week, with two sessions beginning at 7:30 a.m. in Jowers, and workouts are scheduled twice a week. The cheer squad also appears at campus events including New Student Orientation, Bobcat Build, and the Bobcat Giving Tree, a holiday event sponsored by the University Police Department.

"The team is together a lot, and we all have to have goals that align," Stephens says. Her goal is to add a level of professionalism and excellence to the program.

Carrell says she has seen an evolution in the abilities of incoming cheerleaders. "We are getting people who show the talent we want," she says. As a flyer, Carrell is lifted or thrown into the air by her teammates.

Traditions such as the school fight song, the "Deep in the Heart of Texas STATE" chant, and running down the field are still staples of the cheer package, says Duran. "These are things that cheerleaders did five, 10 years ago and even longer. I think that's supercool, and alumni love to see us maintaining these traditions." He adds that they often join the chants and cheers while sitting in the stands.

Tynisha Jackson (B.A. '19) was on the cheer team for five years, graduating with a degree in electronic





media programming. She is now a reporter, anchor, and producer at WTOK-TV in Meridian, Mississippi. She credits coaches and teammates with pushing her out of her comfort zone and into a place of confidence that has helped her both personally and professionally. "I could not have asked for a better way to spend my college years," Jackson says. Knowing that she had to keep her grades up to participate in cheer activities was a plus, coupled with a program that was fun, crazy, adventurous, and dedicated to being great. "It's what I love about this program," Jackson adds. "Even on your worst days, you have 20+ humans that will go the extra mile to lift you up."

Kayce Gambill Brown (B.S. '16), who cheered for four years, said she would have been lost without the program and the team bonding. "It gave me something bigger than myself to be a part of," Brown says, noting that the program taught her how to live as an adult. Graduating with a degree in interdisciplinary studies and now a first-grade teacher, Brown says she and her cheer friends were in one another's weddings and are "now embarking on motherhood together. It has been the best sisterhood, and I am so blessed to be a part of it."

The history of the university's cheerleaders goes back almost to the start of Texas State. You might say that yell leaders were the first cheerleaders. As early as 1904 male "yell leaders" were singled out in the *Pedagog*, the university yearbook. By the 1940s women started to earn spots on the smaller cheer squads, although it would be many years before the women would outnumber the men.

Back in Jowers, the squad practices in front of three Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) banners for national awards won in 2000, 2003, and 2006. Stephens went to UCA College Nationals as a member of the Morehead State University, Kentucky, cheer squad, winning national titles three of those four years. She was part of the USA National Cheer Team in 2015 and 2016, winning gold at the International Cheer Union Championship.

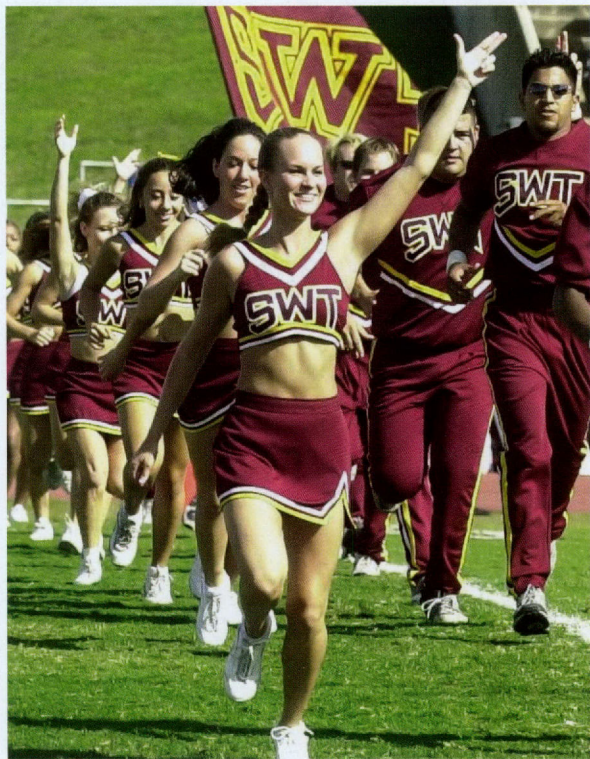
Starting her fifth year at Texas State, Stephens hopes that the accountability, leadership skills, and confidence mastered through cheerleading will help students land their dream jobs or make them stronger applicants for graduate programs.

"My main goal is to create an environment for growth, experience, and opportunity," Stephens says. "I strive to lead my athletes to discover the best version of themselves. For them to not only 'win' in cheerleading but in life." ★



## FOR THESE BOBCATS THERE WAS SOMETHING TO CHEER ABOUT

For many decades, cheerleaders have boosted Bobcat spirit while having the time of their lives. We reached out to ask some alumni to share their best memories of being a Bobcat cheerleader.



### CHARLI ALSBURY **HARBIN**

**B.A. '04**

Harbin cheered as a member of the coed squad from fall 1999 to spring 2002, graduating in May 2004 with a degree in mass communication. The first in her family to attend college, Harbin says the cheer program helped her to bond with the university and make friends who remain in touch. "The spirit program gave me confidence to be in front of large groups of people," she says. In addition, she learned how to stay healthy and fit.

Her favorite memories are the homecoming pep rallies in the Quad, cheering at away games, running into the end zones after touchdowns to count out the score, and competing at UCA College Nationals. Now an algebra teacher in the Conroe ISD, Harbin is married and the mother of two boys.



### EVY BRIGGS

**B.S. '75**

Briggs was a Strutter for two years before she auditioned and won a slot on the cheerleading squad. She says as a student at Lubbock High School, she had tried out but always came in second. Briggs says making the university squad was a major boost to her self-confidence.

"I went on to become a middle school math teacher and coached the cheerleading squad the first two years that our district allowed anyone to join without a tryout. I had 60 eighth grade girls in those years. It was crazy, but I was so glad so many girls were given the opportunity to have the experience I had been denied."

Among her favorite memories are making friends with cheerleaders from other Texas universities during cheer camps and traveling to away games. "I loved serving as an ambassador and supporting our teams. Another great memory was when we cheered a basketball game with some Playboy Bunnies to make money for charity."





## **RANDY DAY**

**B.S. '68**

Day was a cheerleader from 1964 to 65. "I got to know many students," he says, adding that his cheer life highlighted his fraternity, Phi Sigma Chi, and later, Pi Kappa Alpha. "My best memories were traveling to different campuses with our group. I had a great time," Day recalls. He went on to become a high school athletic trainer at Austin Reagan in 1968 and at Brazoswood High from 1969 to 2003, where he was "very much involved with motivating the athletes." Day also was a clown with the El Mina Shriners.

---

## **TAMMIE GUTHRIE**

**B.S. '89**

A cheerleader from 1985 to 1987, Guthrie was a dance major who graduated in 1989. She was a cheer coach and assistant dance team director at Westlake High School in Austin from 1993 to 1998. Her two daughters, Wensley and Shelby, are also Bobcats. The family, including husband David (B.B.A. '87), moved to Steiner Ranch where Guthrie is an elementary school PE coach.

Her favorite cheer memory is being a part of the first Texas State squad selected to go to UCA College Nationals in San Diego. She recalls practicing twice a day after the Christmas holidays to prepare, making the team feel like a family. "And of course, going to competition was a blast. We got third in our division, which wasn't bad for our first time."

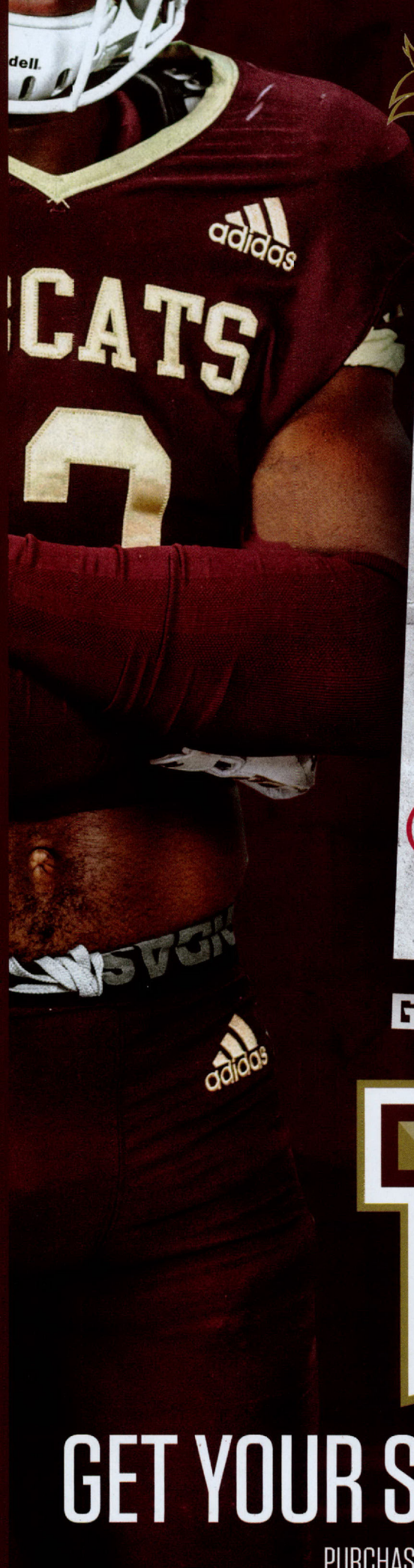


TAMMIE GUTHRIE (CENTER OF PHOTO)





# TEXAS STATE FOOTBALL



## 2022 SCHEDULE



NEVADA  
SEP 3



FIU  
SEP 9



BAYLOR  
SEP 17



HOUSTON  
BAPTIST  
SEP 24



JMU  
OCT 1



APP  
STATE  
OCT 8



TROY  
OCT 15



SOUTHERN  
MISS  
OCT 22



ULM  
NOV 5



SOUTH  
ALABAMA  
NOV 12



ARKANSAS  
STATE  
NOV 19



LOUISIANA  
NOV 26TH

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**50<sup>TH</sup>**  
ANNIVERSARY

**THOUSANDS HAVE TRAINED** FOR CAREERS  
IN DEMAND NOW MORE THAN EVER

BY BRIAN HUDGINS







# F

Fifty years ago, the Texas State University College of Health Professions started with three staff members, an annual budget of \$30,000, and an enrollment of 24 students.

Since 1972, the college has provided foundational knowledge for thousands of Bobcats who have earned degrees in clinical laboratory science, communication disorders, health administration, health information management, nursing, physical therapy, radiation therapy, and respiratory care.

Texas State began offering classes in Williamson County starting in 1996. In 2003 the Avery family donated 101 acres in northeast Round Rock and the Avery Building opened in 2005. In 2010 St. David's School of Nursing admitted the first class of junior nursing majors.



With the opening of Willow Hall in 2018, three more programs — Communication Disorders, Physical Therapy, and Respiratory Care — found a new home. Radiation Therapy and Health Information Management moved to campus in time for fall semester 2021.

In the last six years, enrollment in the College of Health Professions has increased by 7.4% in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Enrollment in these accreditation-based programs is strictly regulated to meet specific student-faculty ratios, limiting the speed of growth. Currently, there are 17 degrees — both undergraduate and graduate — offered through the College of Health Professions.

As the specific degrees and credentials for a career in healthcare have evolved, the college has strived to mirror professional expectations. “One case in point is physical therapy,” says Dr. Ruth B. Welborn, dean of the college. “That went from a bachelor’s program. Then to be credentialed you needed a master’s degree. Now you need a doctor of physical therapy degree (DPT). That is the evolving nature of healthcare.”

The umbrella of degrees offered provides healthcare to the increasing population of Texas and beyond. It is no surprise that jobs in healthcare are booming. The U.S. Labor Department projects that employment in healthcare will grow 15% — including roughly 2.4 million new jobs by 2029. Since 2019, hiring for healthcare positions has increased more than 34%.

“With medical (clinical) laboratory science, students rarely hear about our college major or profession as much in

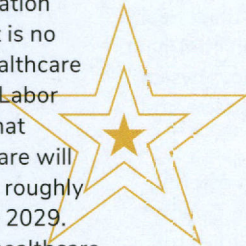


The Department of Physical Therapy relocated to the Found Rock Campus in 2018. To practice as a physical therapist in the U.S., you must now earn a doctor of physical therapy (DPT) degree.

junior high and high schools,” says Dr. Rodney E. Rohde, Regents’ Professor and Chair, Clinical Laboratory Science (CLS). “Two-thirds of all medical decisions are based on those tests, and we conduct approximately 13 billion laboratory tests annually.” Enrollment in CLS grew steadily from 2010 to 2020, going from a combined 25 undergrads to 40 students in 2019. CLS typically provides 20 new medical laboratory professionals each year directly to the needs of the U.S. healthcare system.

### MANAGING COMPLEX SCHEDULES

The School of Health Administration offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees that prepare graduates for entry-level and mid-career positions. Whatever the job goal, Texas State helps graduates transition from the education culture to the professional







In terms of outcomes, we have very strong graduates and well-represented programs.”

**DR. MARLA ERBIN-ROESEMANN**

PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR,  
ST. DAVID'S SCHOOL OF NURSING

healthcare administrator level by connecting with professionals through organizations such as the American College of Healthcare Executives.

The bachelor of science in health sciences (B.S.H.S.) degree functions as both a generalist degree in healthcare and preparation for students moving to health science-based graduate programs. “The B.S.H.S. offers great excitement,” says Dr. C. Scott Kruse, professor and program director. “It has only existed since fall 2019, but since then it has experienced exponential growth. We expect it to plateau in the next two years, graduating around 375 students per year thereafter.” The university also offers a graduate-level certificate in long-term care administration for students who want to become nursing facility administrators.

Begun in 1972, the Department of Respiratory Care now boasts the largest bachelor's degree program in the country. That growth can easily be charted by Dr. Gregg Marshall, chair and program director of the bachelor of science in respiratory care and director of Ascension Seton Williamson Sleep Center at the Round Rock Campus. Out of the nine faculty members in the program, all but one graduated from Texas State.

**NEW MASTER'S IN NURSING**

As Health Professions begins its next decade, St. David's School of Nursing — which had its first graduates in 2012 — has moved forward with three master's programs: family nurse practitioner (2013), nursing leadership and administration (2017), and psychiatric and mental health nurse practitioner (2019).

The next goal is establishing a doctorate of nursing practice program (DNP). “The push is getting stronger for a DNP program and that is something we have always planned on doing,” says Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, professor and director, St. David's School of Nursing.

Recently, graduates in the bachelor of science in nursing have posted a 100% pass rate on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensure Exam (NCLEX-RN®), according to Texas Board of Nursing statistics from 2016 to 2020. “In terms of outcomes, we have very strong graduates and well-represented programs,” Erbin-Roesemann says.

IN THE LAST SIX YEARS, ENROLLMENT IN THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS HAS INCREASED BY

**7.4%**

IN BOTH UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS.

THE U.S. LABOR DEPARTMENT PROJECTS THAT EMPLOYMENT IN HEALTHCARE WILL GROW 15% — INCLUDING ROUGHLY

**2.4 MILLION**

NEW JOBS BY 2029.

SINCE 2019, HIRING FOR HEALTHCARE POSITIONS HAS INCREASED MORE THAN

**34%**



The Department of Communication Disorders has evolved from its original mission of training speech-language pathologists for schools to providing personnel for hospitals, rehab clinics, and many other facilities. Today the department operates speech-language-hearing clinics at the San Marcos and Round Rock Campuses. The clinics provide therapy for patients from infants to adults.

The university's Radiation Therapy Program is the only baccalaureate degree program in the state that offers a complete curriculum guiding the student's education from freshman year to graduation.

Students learn using the virtual environment for radiation therapy (VERT) program in addition to getting hands-on instruction at local clinics. Lauren Stevenson (B.S. '20) is a registered radiation therapist at Oncology Consultants in Houston. She credits the VERT technology for successfully linking her clinical experience and textbook knowledge. "Every scenario is different. The technology helped me a lot with troubleshooting," Stevenson says. "I couldn't ask for a better transition after college."

The Department of Physical Therapy continues to grow and benefit the community. The Physical Therapy Clinic includes faculty expertise and resources devoted to manual therapy, neurology, care for older adults, orthopedics, sports medicine, and wound care. Students have also started a pro bono clinic. That combination of faculty instruction and self-motivation has helped propel graduates to a 98% first-time pass rate on the licensure exam.



### IMPROVED PATIENT OUTCOMES

The Department of Health Information Management (HIM) strives to improve healthcare delivery and patient outcomes by acquiring, protecting, analyzing, and delivering medical information required for quality care of patients and populations. HIM draws on skills from computer science, business, information systems, and healthcare to prepare students with the knowledge and skills necessary to transform digital healthcare data into meaningful information vital for clinicians, researchers, and administrators.

"Graduates from our HIM programs improve healthcare every day by helping providers make informed clinical decisions and improving patient outcomes through the use of information and technology," says Dr. David Gibbs, associate professor and HIM chair. Established in 1976, HIM has expanded in recent years with undergraduate and graduate programs that are completely online with courses and concentrations in data analytics, health informatics, and healthcare information security.

Within all areas of the College of Health Professions, Welborn says maintaining both the on- and off-campus clinic resources for students is challenging, especially during the pandemic. "We maintain 1,500 affiliate agreements with hospitals and clinics," she says. "We've had some challenges as we had some facilities close for clinicals. It was a huge undertaking by clinical educators and faculty members to secure clinical and internship experiences to meet accreditation standards."

The College of Health Professions is responding to the increased need to prepare healthcare professionals to provide healthcare to populations in Texas and beyond. ★

The Department of Communication Disorders moved from the College of Education in 1985. It has evolved from its original mission of training speech-language pathologists for schools to providing personnel for hospitals, rehab clinics, and other facilities.



# PHILIP RAMIREZ

Promoting a culture centering around responsiveness, integrity, care in health insurance industry

BY DANIEL  
P. SMITH

Philip Ramirez (B.S. '05, M.H.A. '08) fondly recalls the energy of Dr. Oren Renick's health law class in the School of Health Administration. He says Renick's class at Texas State University carried an intellectual intensity unlike any other he had ever encountered.

The weekly mock trials and lively class debates forced Ramirez to evaluate multiple sides of an argument, to search for perspective, and to unpack nuance, context, and facts. Ramirez not only gained a deep appreciation for legal issues but also found himself increasingly drawn to ethics, compliance theory, and "finding the best way to do the right thing."

"It was a foundational experience for me," Ramirez says. "Dr. Renick challenged me to be at my very best."

Today, Ramirez puts that experience to work as the chief compliance officer (CCO) at Prominence Health Plan, a Reno, Nevada-based enterprise that operates health insurance programs and seven accountable care organizations across three states. Leveraging the lessons and tools he gained from Renick and other master's in health administration courses, Ramirez consistently aims to ensure responsible, streamlined care by removing complexity from the often-befuddling healthcare landscape.

"In graduate school, I cultivated this ability to distill

complex things into a simple form and communicate them in a way that makes sense to people," Ramirez says. "Now, I use that skill every day to see we're delivering for the individuals who rely on us."

Ramirez, of course, has long been interested in helping others. After completing two years at Austin Community College, the San Antonio native chose Texas State to pursue a career in speech pathology. "I had a stutter as a boy and went through speech therapy myself," Ramirez says. "I thought I could make a difference as a clinician."

Following graduation with a degree in communication disorders, Ramirez practiced as a speech pathologist for two years, supporting schoolchildren as well as other youngsters in early intervention programs. When he began working at a residential center for individuals who had experienced traumatic brain injuries, however, Ramirez began a supervisory role for the first time. "I'm not one who likes sitting back and observing things around me I feel could be done better," Ramirez says.

That recognition spurred Ramirez to return to Texas State for a graduate degree that would propel him into a healthcare leadership position where he might blend his clinical experience and newfound skills with his deep-seated desire to foster improved outcomes. "I wanted to drive change and help



I'm not one who likes sitting back and observing things around me I feel could be done better."

things operate at a higher level," Ramirez says.

He joined Prominence Health Plan in July 2018 as its director of compliance. Six months later, he was named CCO, an executive position that enables Ramirez to promote a company-wide culture centered around responsiveness, integrity, and, ultimately, care. When a Prominence health plan covering some 5,000 members of the Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce needed to comply with new laws, Ramirez and his team hustled to ensure that local small-business owners and employees didn't lose their health insurance. Within a year, Prominence unveiled a revised health plan with competitive rates and rich coverage options now utilized by more than 6,000 individuals.

"That required collaboration and diving deep into the details to find the right solutions," Ramirez says of an earnest effort he thinks would make Renick proud. "We didn't leave these folks high and dry but rather created a plan that works for them and gives them the healthcare coverage they deserve." ★



# DR. GREGG MARSHALL

Respiratory care professor found his calling early, continues his life's work with students

BY JULIE COOPER

Dr. Gregg Marshall (A.A. '78, M.S. '83) had about 75% of his bachelor's degree in biology completed at Baylor University when he decided to be a respiratory therapist.

Marshall had long known he wanted a career in healthcare — he was 15 when he talked a hospital staffer in his hometown of Port Lavaca into hiring him as an orderly. That way he could get a close-up look at the medical profession.

After graduating from Baylor, Marshall would earn an associate degree in respiratory care as a member of the fourth class accepted into the Texas State program. Later he received a master's in healthcare administration and a doctorate in curriculum and instruction.

"When I came to respiratory school in the fall of '76, I had just gotten married. We were all excited about what this life was going to be, and I remember sitting in class the first day and the professor said, 'How many of you have experience in respiratory care already?' Through OJT (on-the-job training) every one of those people raised their hand except me and one other guy.

"I turned to him, and I said, 'We're cooked.' That made me work very hard. I was just always ready. What I found was that as an educator, motivation is a huge factor in your success,

and just because the other people had experience holding a piece of equipment didn't mean they knew how it worked."

Today, Marshall is the chair and program director of the bachelor of science in respiratory care and director of Ascension Seton Williamson Sleep Center at the Round Rock Campus. In 2021 he was reappointed to the Texas Board of Respiratory Care.

The Department of Respiratory Care, which began in 1972, is one of the oldest in the country. Each semester the program accepts 44 students.

With the onset of COVID-19, trained respiratory therapists and ventilators were desperately needed. Texas State loaned 14 ventilators to area hospitals. Gov. Greg Abbott gave special permission for new graduates who had not yet taken their board exams to begin practicing. Marshall adds that the passing rate for the entry-level exam is regularly 100% for Bobcats.

Marshall explains how the polio epidemic in the 1950s brought respiratory therapy into focus with the use of the iron lung. "Before respiratory therapists, nurses were doing all the nursing responsibilities, plus oxygen therapy and taking care of the iron lungs," he says.

As a hospital respiratory therapist, Marshall interacted with patients. Now he does so



If you had told me when I was 21 this is going to be my life, I would have laughed and said, there's just no way. I'll tell you, if I had to do it all over again I would do it exactly the same."

with his students in tow. "I will always tell my students, 'Here's this procedure; is anyone ready to do this?' They would all be pretty nervous, and I would say, 'OK, I'm going to do it. I would always do the procedure first and then they would realize that they have the confidence to step up and do it. They knew everything they needed,'" he says.

Marshall says he resisted the push into administration because he loved patient care.





One night in 1980 he was monitoring a high-risk newborn waiting to be transported by helicopter to a larger hospital when Cade Harkins, then chair of the university's Respiratory Therapy Program, called to offer him a job at Texas State. "I thought about being able to teach, being able to still go in the hospital and take care of patients, being able to build in excellence as a therapist ...," Marshall says.

Two weeks later he started teaching at Texas State. "If you had told me when I was 21 this is going to be my life, I would have laughed and said, there's just no way. I'll tell you, if I had to do it all over again I would do it exactly the same."

Marshall, chair since 2004, says he has been courted by other universities. "But I work at the best, the biggest, and we have an incredible national reputation. We've always had

tremendous support from the dean's office. They really encouraged our creativity to add new programs, to add new emphasis. They've been incredibly supportive and when you have that, why would you ever want to leave?" ★



## LINDSEY ESTETTER

Tracking deadly diseases and viruses at the CDC all in a day's work

BY NATALIE  
CHANDLER

From her laboratory workspace, microbiologist Lindsey Estetter examines specimens to detect deadly diseases, track outbreaks, and identify unknown causes of death. Since 2014, the Texas State University graduate has worked as a contractor for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Infectious Diseases Pathology Branch.

In the lab, the tissues that she examines are often sent from state health departments or by physicians seeking confirmation that a patient has COVID-19. Estetter has also analyzed samples for mycobacterium, vector-borne pathogens, and emerging diseases such as the Zika virus.

While the job can be grim, Estetter and her team are able to verify what happened and provide the information to the patient's family. In cases where the patient is alive, that knowledge is useful in recovery.

"You just do it," she says. "What we do is really important. I know that what I'm doing is making some kind of difference. I enjoy being by myself in a lab and I love that I can combine that with doing something that's beneficial to public health. It's rewarding, so it makes what I'm doing worth it."

In high school, Estetter considered a career in cosmetology, but a sharp career turn followed. "I couldn't even part hair," she says. "But I did really well in the book portion of the class that talked about what kinds of diseases you could get in a salon, so I went into microbiology." In 2010 she earned a bachelor of science degree in microbiology; she completed a master of science in biology in 2012 with a focus on microbiology; and in 2014 Estetter graduated with a bachelor of science degree in

clinical laboratory science (CLS).

In 2021 Estetter was named to The Power List by the Pathologist website, [www.thepathologist.com](http://www.thepathologist.com). The Power List represents "some of the most inspirational pathologists and laboratory medicine professionals in six different categories."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Estetter has received autopsy specimens and helped identify cellular targets of the virus and where it replicates in the lungs and airways of patients. Her team demonstrated a direct infection that indicated patients die from the COVID-19 virus rather than from the underlying symptoms. "Towards the beginning of the outbreak, we didn't know whether the virus was directly causing the inflammation and injury seen in the lungs," she says. "Our group showed that the virus is actively replicating in the cells of the infected person and causing the histopathological changes in the respiratory tissue."

As more microbiologists retire, the field is thinning. Estetter believes the CLS program at Texas State gives students the skills needed for what happens behind the scenes in healthcare facilities, laboratories, and other settings. "It teaches you the quality side of the clinical lab, which is not something you get in a typical biology degree," she says.

"It also gives you the experience to work with the instruments in hospitals and the understanding that the samples you're handling are from patients. I think the program really makes you understand the importance of what you are doing." ★





# ABEL GUEVARA

Health information management program designed for working professionals, tailored to healthcare industry

BY BRYAN  
KIRK

Abel Guevara (M.S. '19) has always been driven to do good and to serve the community. It's that level of empathy and his desire to do things for others that has fired up a relentless pursuit made during a 20-year career in the healthcare industry — while also attending college.

Guevara earned his master's degree in health information management from Texas State University in 2019. Today he serves as the director of reimbursement and patient advocacy and privacy officer for Minneapolis-based Abilitech Medical. He is also vice chairman of the board of directors for the Board of Certification/Accreditation (BOC) that provides accreditation for facilities supplying patients with medical equipment such as orthotic and prosthetic products.

He earned a B.A.A.S. degree ('17) from Texas State and a bachelor's in microbiology from The University of Texas at Austin. This year he will complete a doctor of health administration degree at the Medical University of South Carolina.

"When I researched master's programs, Texas State had one that was designed for working professionals," he says. "It was a hybrid program that was tailored to healthcare professionals passionate about healthcare compliance, health information management, medical billing, healthcare

administration, privacy and security, and healthcare finance." The program offered on-campus classes, virtual learning, and online services — and it is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education.

Guevara says he was hooked. "There are some programs out there that have been in existence for a while, and they haven't changed," he says. "The faculty at Texas State are all healthcare professionals that were well versed in healthcare billing and healthcare administration. I wanted to be taught by people who understood the industry."

While Guevara says that much of what was taught early in the program was common knowledge to those already in the industry, there was also a lot he didn't know, specifically the information related to privacy and security of medical information.

Prior to joining Abilitech, Guevara held leadership roles at other companies that supply durable medical equipment, prosthetics, and orthotics. He also worked in the pharmaceutical industry. During those early years, Guevara says his desire to succeed was driven by a passion to help others that was fostered by many along the way.

"This value was instilled in me by the healthcare professionals



The faculty at Texas State are all healthcare professionals that were well versed in healthcare billing and healthcare administration. I wanted to be taught by people who understood the industry."

that mentored me in my early years as a pharmacy technician and medical billing professional," he says. "Working in a pharmacy allowed me the opportunity to value healthcare compliance and allowed me to understand the need to provide our patients with medical equipment and supplies."

The Texas State professors were not only fantastic instructors, Guevara says, but they were keenly aware of the challenges that come with attending graduate school.

"I highly recommend Texas State for any healthcare administration or health information management program — whether it's at a bachelor's or master's level. The degree is well respected by many employers, and I continue to surpass the expectations of my employers with my knowledge gained at Texas State," he says. ★



# CORY PETERSON

Physical therapist didn't plan to be the boss, but businesses have grown

BY JULIE COOPER

When Dr. Cory Peterson (D.P.T. '14) joined the Marines right out of high school, he anticipated it would be a long commitment. When that path derailed after an injury and a medical discharge, his life became college and a career in healthcare.





Peterson, who grew up in Boerne, earned his doctor of physical therapy degree at Texas State, operates Austin-based Outcomes Therapy. It offers physical, occupational, and speech pathology therapies in settings such as outpatient, on-site, assisted living, and wellness centers.

“A lot of people ask — was it the rehab and therapy that I got afterward that made me want to go into physical therapy? No. All the physical therapist did for me was hand me crutches, gave me a home exercise program, said, ‘Can you walk on these? Good luck.’”

Peterson says he chose physical therapy because it seemed to combine his interests in fitness and the human body. “I wanted to be in the medical profession. Physical therapy spoke to me because it covered pretty much each one of those categories,” he says.

After graduating from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Peterson worked in outpatient orthopedics as a technician. He also volunteered with Kinetic Kids, a San Antonio-based program that fosters fitness and recreation for families and children with special needs.

When it came time to get an advanced degree, Peterson looked to Texas State — one of the first universities in the state to offer the DPT, which replaced the bachelor’s and master’s programs. Graduates who earn the DPT from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education can practice after passing the state licensure exam.

Peterson says initially he didn’t land an interview with the College of Health Professions.

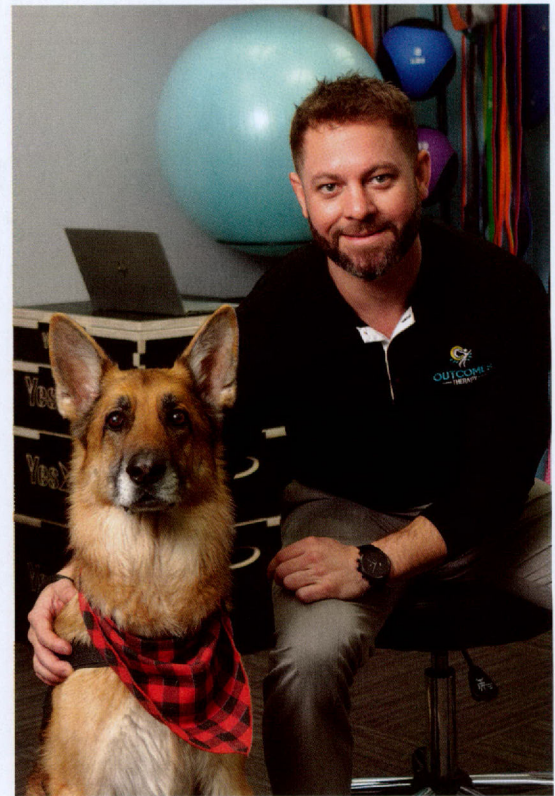
That’s when he phoned the university asking for information about what would make him a more appealing applicant the next time. He spoke with Dr. Barbara Sanders, then director of the Department of Physical Therapy. “I’m so grateful that she took the time to help me with the entire process. In the conversation she mentioned that I was right there on the cusp.” When another applicant backed out, Peterson got the interview and was ultimately accepted.

“The leadership from the faculty is outstanding and they really did set a great example for people to be encouraged to take part in their professional organizations, which I did. I think that resonated with me — just being involved, making sure that you take professional accountability for the direction our industry is going,” he says.

He never intended to start his own business, but in 2015 he did just that. “At the beginning it was me seeing the patients, doing the client relationship management system, putting together the website, and finding the clinic space. Our first outpatient clinic was attached to a gym. Whenever I wasn’t seeing patients in the clinic, I’d go see patients for home health to keep that going.”

The business has grown to include about 90 employees, and Peterson credits his team, along with co-owner Laurie Prater, for their success. Prater is an occupational therapist with administration skills, clinical experience in geriatrics, and an interest in Parkinson’s disease.

Outcomes Therapy offers a mobile outpatient component and home health therapists. “We also started seeing patients in our



first standalone clinic where we offer speech therapy and physical therapy. We are treating a variety of orthopedic and neurological conditions,” Peterson says.

There are also the assisted living clinics and a clinic inside a San Antonio wellness center for veterans. Peterson is looking into partnering on a cardiac rehab facility and possibly a women’s health facility. Currently, the team sees about 400 patients a week. Peterson says he hopes to connect with Dr. Steven Spivey, clinical associate professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, about Texas State interns working in his clinics.

When he isn’t working, Peterson says he enjoys being with friends, making music with the “patio” band he plays in, or enjoying Austin’s outdoor activities with his dog, Mason.

“I feel like having a sense of purpose is very, very important for anybody,” he says, then adds: “Your contribution to the workforce and, of course, the way we can change so many people’s lives through the services we provide” is of equal importance. ★



## COLLEEN GORMAN

For experienced nurse, this graduate program elevated her work and helped her develop critical-thinking skills

BY BRYAN  
KIRK

Role models tend to shape each one of us when we are very young. Sometimes, these role models play a vital role in our career choices.

This is true for Colleen Gorman (MSN-FNP '16), who followed in her mother's footsteps. "I thought that I wanted to be a physical therapist, but my path took me to nursing. I am definitely

following my calling," she says. "My mom was a nurse when I was young, so I think this was embedded in me."

Gorman, a native of Massachusetts, earned her undergraduate degree in nursing in 1997 and worked at various hospitals including Massachusetts General Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, and Boston Children's Hospital.

She moved to Round Rock with her family, taking a job as an emergency room nurse at Dell Seton Medical Center. That's where she also learned about the MSN Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program offered at Texas State University's St. David's School of Nursing.

Among the first group to enroll in the MSN-FNP program at the College of Health Professions, Gorman loved the beauty of the campus, a short walk from her home. "I had 15 years of nursing experience going into the program, so there was a lot of overlapping — but not in a bad way," Gorman says. "I found the program to be a perfect blend of classroom and clinical. The content was relevant, well rounded, and there were many opportunities to collaborate with fellow students. This set the stage for lifelong friendships."

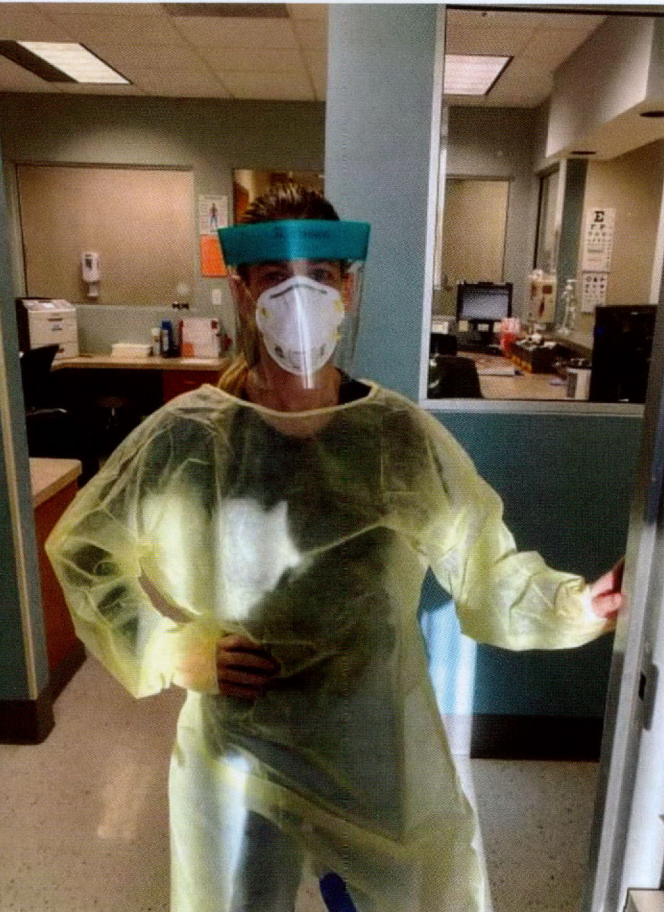
Gorman says the program not only fit perfectly around



the existing foundation of her career but tremendously elevated her work and helped her develop critical-thinking and decision-making skills to enable her to practice evidence-based medicine. "It was like I had a blueprint of nursing. It was a great curriculum" — which built upon the 15 years she had in a nursing career.

She received the Outstanding Academic Student Award from St. David's School of Nursing and the Outstanding Graduate Student Award from the College of Health Professions. After graduation she taught a practicum course as a per-course lecturer. In 2018 she returned to her native Boston as the lead provider at an urgent care clinic. She would go on to become regional advanced practitioner medical director, where she oversees five of Convenient MD Urgent Care's 42 locations in New England. This semester Gorman is teaching an online course for Texas State.

"She is well suited for the course, given her experience and the populations she has served," says Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, professor and director, St. David's School of Nursing, and associate dean, College of Health Professions. "Colleen will fly to Texas a few times during the semester to work with the students and faculty in the simulation lab." ★





# ERNIE SADAU

Health system president/CEO  
embraces challenges and opportunities

BY JULIE  
COOPER

In a normal year, Ernie W. Sadau (M.S. '85) would have his hands full at his job as the CEO and president of Texas-based CHRISTUS Health, a Catholic, faith-based, not-for-profit health system with \$9 billion in total assets and \$7 billion-plus in net revenue. It has more than 600 facilities and 45,000 associates.

Sadau could never have imagined that healthcare workers would be leading a battle against COVID-19 in 2020 or that the ensuing pandemic would make him even more committed to his chosen career path.

A Texas State Distinguished Alumnus, Sadau earned a master's degree in healthcare administration. In 2006 he joined CHRISTUS as senior vice president of patient and resident care and got the CEO spot in 2011. "There are so many opportunities in healthcare," he says. "Especially with some of the things we are going through today with COVID-19. It will open even more avenues that we can't even imagine in healthcare from telemedicine — how that gets expanded and in what ways — to the technology side. Things are going to evolve over the next few years. It will be challenging and exciting."

Those are the themes that Sadau comes back to — the challenges, the passion, the blessings, and the opportunities. "I have never looked back. I have never said

to myself, 'I wish I had checked out another career.'"

Sadau was in high school when he first considered his future career. Originally, the Texas native wanted to be a doctor. His grandfather, a rancher, wanted him to be a doctor. His parents simply wanted him to go to college.

While a high school junior, Sadau was hospitalized. "I was lying in bed and was thinking — who is running this place? When they brought my meal tray on the last day, there was a card asking about my care. I filled it out and wrote a note saying I would like to have a meeting with the administrator." A few weeks later he got an invitation to have lunch and take a tour with the hospital administrator. He would later meet with two other hospital CEOs.

CHRISTUS Health operates in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Georgia, and New Mexico; and also serves Mexico, Chile, and Colombia. It includes 65 hospitals, along with ambulatory centers, physicians' groups, and health plans. Newest among the CHRISTUS hospitals is Central Texas Medical Center in San Marcos, which was acquired in 2020.

His advice for those considering a career in healthcare: "They have to do what they feel they have a love and a passion for. Not just do it because it is potentially the hottest job on the market or

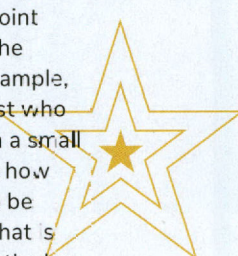


We have always worked from the standpoint of how can we provide the appropriate care?"

just the pay." To address the shortage of qualified people in the healthcare industry, Sadau says that CHRISTUS Health is working with universities — including Texas State — to build relationships and oversee the pipeline for residencies.

Sadau says that the CHRISTUS health system primarily has hospitals in midsize and rural markets in the U.S. "We have always worked from the standpoint of how can we provide the appropriate care? For example, a consult with a specialist who is in Tyler for a patient in a small rural community. That is how you provide access — to be more intentional about that is important. That's one of the key areas — having access doesn't mean you necessarily have to have a hospital," he says. "There will be more avenues of technology; those healthcare needs can be taken care of and monitored."

The keyword, Sadau says is flexibility. "Be agile and move quickly in one direction or the next." ★







1. KAREN HAMES

**Bob R. Covey '69**  
Cypress, was elected first vice president of the Texas Association of School Boards.

**1. Karen Hames '72**  
Lewisville, has been elected 2021-2022 president by the Association of Texas Professional Educators. Hames is currently an eighth grade English language arts and reading teacher at Griffin Middle School with the Lewisville ISD.



2. LT. GEN. RICKY RUPP

**Gil Dominguez '74, '00**  
San Antonio, has published his third book, *This Used to Be San Antonio* (Reedy Press). The book consists of some 200 vignettes and photos of historic structures and sites that made San Antonio what it is today. He previously wrote *They Answered the Call: Latinos in the Vietnam War* and *It Happened in San Antonio*.

**Mary T. Barton '78**  
Chesterfield, Missouri, retired as St. Louis County, Missouri, police chief after 43 years as a commissioned police officer.

**Dr. Marsha Wills-Karp '80, '82**

Baltimore, Maryland, has been appointed a Bloomberg Centennial Professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She is the Anna M. Baetjer Professor of Environmental Health Sciences and the chair of the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering at the Whiting School of Engineering.

**Manuel Garza Jr. '84**  
Baytown, retired after a 37-year career teaching music. He was the director for the Horace Mann Junior School band in Goose Creek CISD.

**2. Lt. Gen. Ricky Rupp '88**  
Yokota Air Base, Japan, assumed command of the U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force following his nomination to lieutenant general by President Joe Biden. He was previously commander of the Air Force District of Washington, D.C., and director of operations at the U.S. Transportation Command.

**Dr. Deena Bishop '90**  
Anchorage, Alaska, is retiring as superintendent of schools in Anchorage at the end of the school year after serving the district for five years. She moved to Alaska at age 20 after graduating from Texas State.

**Darin Kasper '90**  
Midlothian, is the new deputy superintendent of Midlothian ISD. He was previously the principal at San Antonio's Frances R. Scobee Middle School for 10 years.

**Debbie Gillespie '91**  
Frisco, is the new president-elect of the Texas Association of School Boards. She has served on the Frisco ISD board since 2011.

**Cheryl Keene '92**  
San Marcos, has been named director of accounting by McCoy's Building Supply.

**James Valenzuela '93**  
Durham, North Carolina, has joined Tergus Pharma as chief operations officer. He was previously a vice president with Jubilant Pharmaceutical.

**Tim Lowke '94**  
Round Rock, has been named director of fine arts-visual arts for Round Rock ISD. Lowke has served as the assistant director of visual performing arts

since 2015 and was named Texas Educator of the Year in 2018 by the National Art Education Association.

**Benjy Green '96**  
Prosper, has been named Texas market president of AmeriHealth Caritas, a leader in healthcare solutions.

**Col. Danford Bryant II '98**  
Frederick, Maryland, has been named commander of the Fort Detrick U.S. Army Garrison. A graduate of Texas State's ROTC program, Bryant attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

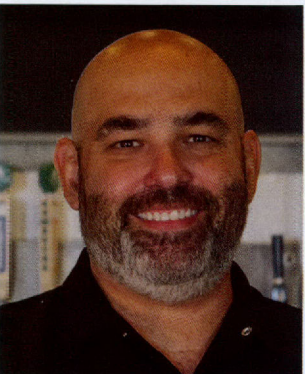
**Wendy Rodriguez '99**  
Austin, has been appointed deputy commissioner of the Texas Department of Banking. She was previously the agency's chief operating officer. Rodriguez is a member of the Finance & Economics Advisory board at the McCoy College of Business Administration.

**Rodney Clark '00**  
Grand Forks, North Dakota, is the associate vice president for public safety and chief of police at the University of North Dakota. He previously served as chief of police at Wichita State University.

**3. Heather H. Jobe '00**  
Dallas, has been named to the 2022 Best Lawyers in America list. She is a senior counselor with Bell Nunnally, Attorneys & Counselors and earned her juris doctor degree from the Texas Tech University School of Law.



3. HEATHER H. JOBE



4. SCOTT METZGER



**Dr. Travis Mutscher '00, '07, '18**

Round Rock, is the area superintendent of the Stony Point Learning Community.

**4. Scott Metzger '01**

Maui, Hawaii, has joined Maui Brewing Company as its chief operating officer. He was the founder and CEO of San Antonio-based Fretail Brewing Company.

**Heath Walz '01**

Round Rock, was named principal of Ridgeview Middle School. He was previously associate principal of Cedar Ridge High School.

**Dr. Erin Clair '02**

Russellville, Arkansas, is the 2021 recipient of the Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award in the emerging campus leader category at Arkansas Tech University. She is an associate professor of English and the director of college operations for the College of Arts and Humanities.

**Courtney Wheeler '02**

Lebanon, Tennessee, has been named vice president for advancement at Cumberland University.

**Rita Garcia '06**

Houston, joined ABC13/KTRK-TV Houston as the morning news anchor. She was previously a host of "Good Day LA" on FOX-11 in Los Angeles.

**Erika A. Aguilar '07**

Los Angeles, California, has been named executive producer for "Morning Edition" and "Up First" on NPR.

**Calynn Perkins '10**

Conroe, was named assistant principal at Bear Branch Intermediate in Magnolia ISD.

**Dr. Gaylon Davenport '11**

Houston, is the principal of Roosevelt Elementary School in Houston ISD. He was previously dean of instruction at Foerster Elementary.

**Alanna Sarabia '11**

San Antonio, has joined KENS-5 television. She previously worked for WFAA in Dallas.

**Lauren Surley '12**

San Marcos, was named the director of communications and intergovernmental relations for the city of San Marcos.

**Anysa Bohanan '13**

Fort Myers, Florida, is anchoring the weekend news for Waterman Broadcasting, ABC7. She previously worked in TV news in Bend, Oregon.

**Gabe Cazares '15**

Houston, was appointed by President Joe Biden to head the U.S. AbilityOne Commission. Cazares is director of the Office for People with Disabilities for the city of Houston.

**Daniel Anderson '16**

San Angelo, has been appointed director of University Theatre at Angelo State University where he has been a faculty member since 2018.

**Michael Comer '16**

Victoria, is the offensive coordinator for Warriors football at Victoria West High School.

**5. Lyra Foster '17**

Atlanta, has joined Hawkins Parnell & Young, a national litigation firm. She provides pro bono legal services focusing on criminal justice, LGBTQ issues, and human rights.

**Rocky Hopson '17**

Wichita Falls, is teaching directing, play analysis, and theatre appreciation at Midwestern State University.

**Annalise Caudle '18**

Oxford, Mississippi, is the instructional assistant professor of lighting design at the University of Mississippi.

**Carlos Swonke '18**

Austin, has joined HNTB Corporation as a national practice consultant. Swonke is the former director of environmental affairs for the Texas Department of Transportation.

**6. Anna Uzele '18**

New York, is co-starring in the hit Broadway musical *Six* — about King Henry VIII's wives.

**Jacob Burns '19**

New York, is touring the western United States in a production of *Hamilton*.

**Chris Clark '19**

Plano, has returned to his role in the national touring company of Jimmy Buffett's *Escape to Margaritaville*.

**Vince Fitzpatrick '19**

Bastrop, is head coach for girls' varsity soccer at Cedar Creek High School. He was previously assistant coach of the tennis and freshman football teams.

**Alexandra Hildebrandt '19**

Austin, has been named vice president of information services for Campus Advantage (CA), an industry leader in student housing property management. She joined CA in 2007.



5. LYRA FOSTER



6. ANNA UZELE

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## IN REMEMBRANCE

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**Ryan Lee Arredondo**

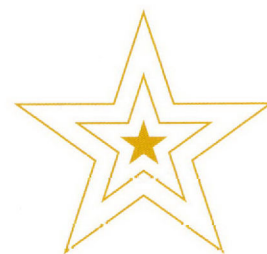
**(B.A.A.S. '11)**, who used his Texas State degree in a career as an information technology specialist in Austin, died on July 27, 2020. His family established an endowed graduate scholarship with the McCoy Foundation in his honor to support nontraditional students, like Ryan, in achieving their educational goals. Survivors include his parents Jesse and Belinda Arredondo, and his brother and sister-in-law, Daniel and Elizabeth Arredondo.



LAST VIEW







## TOURING TEXAS STATE

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PHOTOGRAPH BY  
STEPHANIE  
SCHULZ - DOWN

On Bobcat Day, potential students and their families can tour the campus with a student guide. Held twice each semester, Bobcat Day is an opportunity to learn about academic majors, programs, and services in addition to visiting residence halls, academic buildings, and centers. February's Bobcat Day drew 1,550 prospective students to campus. It was the largest February attendance in five years. Campus walking tours are offered daily, Monday through Friday, from the Alumni and Future Student Welcome Center. Contact [welcomecenter@txstate.edu](mailto:welcomecenter@txstate.edu)



## AT THE WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS



HERMAN WALTER BY MARCO ANTONIO CRUZ

NOW OPEN

### Inhabiting Darkness / Habitar la Oscuridad: The Photographs of Marco Antonio Cruz

The Wittliff celebrates Marco Antonio Cruz (1957–2021), one of the great documentary photographers of Mexico. Cruz dedicated 16 years to documenting blind and visually impaired people of Mexico in his series *Habitar la Oscuridad (Inhabiting Darkness)*. By revealing the dignity of people living without sight, Cruz's images demonstrate his concern for humanity and serve as testimony for social transformation.

These photographs of the daily life of those who are blind — negotiating public spaces, making a living, going to school, receiving medical care — allow us to reflect upon our common bonds of compassion, friendship and loneliness.

Please check our website for hours and availability.

[THEWITTLIFFCOLLECTIONS.TXSTATE.EDU](http://THEWITTLIFFCOLLECTIONS.TXSTATE.EDU)