

Heritage

The Magazine of Sam Houston State University



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New Head Football Coach Sets High Bar **p16**



Non-Perishable Food Items



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



More than a motto, “*The measure of a Life is its Service*” is a tradition that is engrained in our university’s special culture, which embodies the strengthening of character through community service as an important part of the journey to becoming a well-rounded and educated individual.

A primary focus at Sam Houston is to promote a stimulating learning environment through the integration of academic programs, a caring campus environment, and service to others. Institutional expenditures for community engagement activities are more than \$275,000 annually. This money is well spent, since it promotes a broad range of service initiatives at the university. This commitment has resulted in an elite designation—“Community Engaged University” from the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.

In 2010, our university established the Center for Academic Community Engagement (ACE), which oversees and promotes combining community engagement with academic instruction. This initiative has grown from 21 professors and 40 courses to 130 instructors and 204 courses over five years. Students participating in ACE courses apply the skills and knowledge learned in their classrooms for the betterment of society. In 2013, more than 500,000 service hours, which are valued at more than \$8 million, were generated through these courses.

Campus-wide engagement at the university has also resulted in the creation of the American Democracy Project, the SHSU Center for Leadership and Service, and membership in Campus Compact, a national organization for civic engagement. The Engaged Scholars Committee was created to support faculty in their efforts to connect learning objectives and community participation.

In March of this year, our largest student-directed volunteer initiative, “Barkat All Paws In,” was held for the fifth year on the main campus and the second year at SHSU-The Woodlands Center. More than 800 students, faculty and staff spent the day contributing their time for the improvement of their communities.

Additionally, our student organizations and athletics department are actively involved with non-profit organizations, agencies and businesses, contributing more than 16,000 hours of service and raising more than \$36,000 for charity. In public schools alone, our undergraduates spend more than 400,000 service hours annually, with an additional 43,000 hours in counseling services provided by graduate students. Business majors logged about 6,000 hours working with local businesses to assist in developing fundraising appeals, conducting strategic reviews and creating marketing plans.

The American higher education system has been responsible for identifying and developing solutions to many of the major problems vexing society. Through significant, intentional efforts to integrate service with academics and other initiatives, Sam Houston State will continue to “*measure up*” to long-held institutional values that are rooted in community, work to enhance the overall learning environment for our students, and produce well-educated and service-oriented citizens.

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MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

ON THE COVER



Sam Houston State University's more than 200 student organizations and athletics groups work year-round to meet community needs through service projects such as food drives.

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BEARKAT ALL PAWS IN CONNECTS STUDENTS WITH COMMUNITY



More than 800 students, faculty and staff members gathered for a day of community service as part of the fifth All Paws In on March 1.

BY FLORI MEEKS

For the last four years, a sea of students in bright orange shirts has flowed into Huntsville for a day to paint, plant, clean and fix—anything they can do to meet community needs.

This day of service, Bearkat All Paws In, is coordinated through Sam Houston State University's Student Government Association. The event is all about thanking area residents and businesses for supporting SHSU, according to Kolby Flowers, the SGAs All Paws In coordinator.

"I'm glad we have one day where we can give back to the community," said Flowers, a senior majoring in political science. "We really want to show the Huntsville community we appreciate what they do."

Participants, who begin their day with a free, 8 a.m. breakfast, carpool to their work sites and volunteer until noon.

"Each year it dramatically increases in the number of students who participate," says Dean of Students John Yarabeck, who is also the SGA adviser.

Yarabeck estimates that 350 students participated the first All Paws In, and the event saw approximately 1,200 people last year. The fifth All Paws In, which was held March 1, had well over 800 in attendance.

One of the biggest challenges the SGA faces is finding enough projects for this growing team of volunteers. The association works on this process year-round, Flowers said. Previous work sites



Among the ways SHSU students gave back to Huntsville during this year's All Paws In were working to clean up activity areas at Tomorrow's Promise Montessori School, a local non-profit educational organization, (top left and bottom right) and raking leaves outside of the Huntsville Family YMCA (bottom left).



I'm glad we have one day where we can give back to the community, we really want to show the Huntsville community. We appreciate what they do.—KOLBY FLOWERS

have included the Good Shepherd Mission, Tomorrow's Promise Montessori School, Huntsville Community Theatre, Pregnancy Care Center, Hospitality House and Huntsville Memorial Hospital, among others.

Last year the program expanded to The Woodlands to give students from the SHSU campus there a chance to participate. The Woodlands Center campus also participated this year.

"They're a part of the university, and we want to make sure they're included," Flowers said.

SGA patterned Bearkat All Paws In after Texas A&M University's one-day service project, The Big Event. The idea to bring this kind of large-scale project to SHSU came from Sarah Hanel, director of the SHSU Health Center and a Texas A&M alumna.

Mariele Kanene, former SGA university affairs chief, was first to organize the event, with the help of Hanel; Andrew Miller, executive director of SHSU's Counseling and Health Center; and Kris Kaskel-Ruiz, associate vice president for Marketing and Communications.

All Paws In clearly has resonated with SHSU's students, Yarabeck said.

"This generation of students is really attuned to helping out," he said.

Bearcats will not be serving alone during the next All Paws In. Before the last Battle of the Piney Woods, SHSU and Stephen F. Austin University made a friendly wager, with the loser of the football game agreeing to help the other university with a community service project.

"For the first time this year, we'll have purple Lumberjacks with us," Yarabeck said. "It's just another thing that will make the day special."

But the most heartwarming aspect of the day is the opportunity to see a day of service that is organized and carried out by students play out in the community.

"I just couldn't be prouder," Yarabeck said. "It's really showing the campus at its finest hour and living our motto, 'The measure of a Life is its Service.'"



(From left) Miranda Landsman, Jeremiah Bailey, Annel Gonzalez, Bianca Kyle, Melva Gomez, and Jessica Oswald worked with state legislators during the 83rd session as the first Austin Internship Program participants.

Cap^aital Experience



Six SHSU students put politics into action last year, spending five-and-a-half months working with representatives in the 83rd legislative session as participants of the inaugural Austin Internship Program.

BY LINDA GILCHRIEST

Pundits credit German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck with the statement: The two things you do not want to see be made in person are sausages and laws.

But six Sam Houston State University students were able to see laws made, some of them actually providing the wording, during their five-and-a-half-month stint with the Texas Legislature as part of the inaugural year of the Austin Internship Program.

The six—Jeremiah Bailey, Bianca Kyle, Melva Gomez, Annel Gonzalez, Miranda Landsman and Jessica Oswald—were in Austin from January to May, assigned to assist lawmakers during the 83rd Texas Legislature.

Sean Cunningham, vice chancellor for government relations for the Texas State University System, said the program is a great opportunity for students who are interested in pursuing a career in politics, either as a professional staffer or as a legislator, to get a “unique, first-hand perspective of how the state conducts its business.”

Cunningham, who was a legislative intern himself, said the internship serves another purpose as well.

“Members of the Legislature with limited budgets, oftentimes will find great, quality interns who can help with individual casework, with legislative analysis and with legislative policy. From that perspective, it is good for the members of the Legislature to get that kind of talent.”

Melva Gomez, who worked for Rep. John Otto, R-Dayton, is the kind of student intern Cunningham said the program hopes to attract. Gomez is a senior political science major from Houston who plans to go to law school and work in the government.

“Before I did the internship, I had my mind set to go to law school, but the internship allowed for so many more opportunities. It showed me so many other jobs I really wanted to do,” she said.

“Knowing about the law and how a policy works showed me I need to be well-rounded, so I now am looking at pursuing a master’s degree in either economics or finance to get more knowledge on how the budget works (before pursuing a law degree),” Gomez said. “At the end of the day, all these laws and all these policies come down to the budget.”

Senior Annel Gonzalez said working for State Sen. Charles Schwertner,

R-Georgetown, was “probably the best experience I’ve had in my college career.

“I started out doing simple desk work, answering constituents’ emails and letters and taking phone calls,” she said. “Then as the session progressed and things got busy, I was able to start taking meetings when the policy analysts’ schedules were full.

“I would meet with interest groups or constituents and take notes on what their concerns were or what legislation they were looking to support or things that they didn’t support. Then I would pass that along to our policy analysts so that they could include it in their notes and then give it to the senator. I kept getting more and more opportunities as the session went on. It was really great.”

Junior Bianca Kyle said she was the first face lobbyists or constituents saw when they entered Rep. Armando “Mando” Martinez’s office. Martinez is the Democratic representative for District 39 in South Texas.

“I would figure out who they needed to talk to and find out their subject, their idea or their cause,” Kyle said. “Obviously you wouldn’t have the chief-of-staff talk to them if you could talk to them yourself.”





Kyle, a communications studies major, learned a lot about government. She was able to build on her introductory political science courses by watching the political process up close and personal.

“I really found it interesting, the political procedures and everything. I found it cool to just watch it unfold on the floor,” she said.

Mike Yawn, the Austin Internship Program coordinator, said the program is not for the faint of heart. The interns are in Austin from the first week of January until the end of May, sometimes, at the end of the session, working 80-hour workweeks.

The program attracted inquiries from 60 students in the fall of 2012 and that field was narrowed to the six who were selected. The university sponsored an orientation on campus with officials in human resources, financial aid and career development so the students could understand a bit more about the issues they would face in the business world.

The university then hosted an orientation in Austin to familiarize the interns with “the lay of the land.” The students met with SHSU alumni who live or work in the Austin area who could share tips about services available.

I started out doing simple desk work, answering constituents’ emails and letters and taking phone calls. Then as the session progressed and things got busy, I was able to start taking meetings when the policy analysts’ schedules were full.—ANNEL GONZALEZ

This is an unpaid internship, although the students received six credit hours for their participation and a scholarship, or stipend, to help pay for housing and expenses.

The university worked hard to ensure that the right students were placed with offices in Austin, according to Yawn.

“It was a great group of students with diverse majors and ideologies. We tried to match them with the offices that worked well for them—and vice-versa,” he said. “We hoped to place good students in offices that would allow them to learn and contribute, and we think that worked out well for everyone.”

Miranda Landsman, of Onalaska, who worked for Rep. Dan Branch, R-Dallas, said the session was “an incredible eye-opener.

“The session was insane. We worked from dawn until dusk. It was very high energy and very intense. It was so educational. I learned so much in such a short amount of time because it was so jam-packed. I learned I could do things I never thought I could do.

“Seeing how the system works is an incredible eye-opener. Most everyone is willing to talk with you, to help you understand how it works,” Landsman said. “But seeing the transition (of an idea) from the people, to the lobbyists, to the representative and how he presents it on the floor and watching history take place in front of your eyes is an amazing experience.”

Much of the internship involved doing research. Gomez said in working for Otto, she conducted background research on policy issues, including contentious Second Amendment concerns.

Gonzalez assisted policy analysts on a bill that allowed for temporary licenses for dentists to do charity work who had a dental license, but not in the State of Texas. The bill also allowed for temporary licensing of dentists who had retired and wanted to get up-to-date with their license. The bill passed.

One of the biggest life lessons most of the interns said they came away with was to





ANNEL GONZALEZ WAS AN IMPORTANT AND integral member of our staff during the 83rd Legislative Session. She is intelligent, hard working, friendly, competent, and a wonderful testament to the world-class education she is receiving at Sam Houston State University. I look forward to seeing what she does in the future because I know wherever she goes, and whatever she does, she will do it with grace and class and will be an asset to those around her.—**Leah Hamilton, district director for Sen. Charles Schwertner's office**

IT WAS A PLEASURE having Bianca as a member of my staff during the 83rd Legislative Session. Bianca's initiative, professionalism and personality assisted in making our session a tremendous success. I will always be grateful to Bianca and Sam Houston State University's internship program.—**Rep. Armando "Mando" Martinez**

What They're Saying

THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AT SAM HOUSTON AFFORDED our office the opportunity to have an incredible young woman intern during the 83rd Legislative Session. Melva arrived every morning with enthusiasm and a smile.

Melva was dedicated to learning about the legislative process and proved to be an enormous asset to our office. At the end of the internship, she had developed a keen political acumen and hopefully skills to carry with her in her future endeavors. We were grateful to have her as a part of our legislative team.

Mike Yawn's tireless dedication to creating the best internship program in Texas and ensuring that the interns were well-qualified and prepared cannot go unnoticed. He deserves a lot of credit for the success of the program.—**Nikki Cobb, chief-of-staff for Rep. John Otto.**

1 (From left) Miranda Landsman, Bianca Kyle, Jeremiah Bailey, Melva Gomez, Annel Gonzalez, Jessica Oswald in the Capitol building. (Photo by Jessica Rodriguez) **2** SHSU students Bianca Kyle, Melva Gomez, Jessica Oswald used the internships as a "Segway" into their future. (Photo by Jessica Rodriguez) **3** Jeremiah Bailey is hard at work at his desk in Rep. Borris Miles's office. **4** Jessica Oswald worked in Rep. Mary Gonzalez's Office. **5** Sarah Landsman (Miranda's sister); State Rep. Dan Branch, chair of the house committee on higher education; and Miranda Landsman get into the Bearkat spirit. (Submitted by Miranda Landsman)

remain calm in the face of chaos and not to take things personally.

"Sometimes on the hill, problems don't get solved because people let them get personal, and I saw some of that," Gonzalez said. "But I also witnessed people who disagreed try to make something work, and they got it done.

"One of the biggest things I learned there was how to understand the other point of view; not necessarily changing what you think but just learning to understand where they are coming from and trying to help them as well," she said.

"It sounds kind of cheesy, but I learned that one person truly working for something they believe in makes a big difference. I got to see that there."



LEFT SHSU's Engaged Scholars Committee comprises faculty from across campus who work to support and enhance the curriculum for each college through the addition of ACE components. **TOP** Jeff Wozniak's environmental science courses send biology students out into the community, where students use their skills to help local businesses with sustainability practices.

Continuing Connections

Community engagement has become so important at SHSU that a faculty committee and center have been formed for the sole purpose of integrating involvement into departmental curriculum.

BY: FLORI MEEKS

The students in Jeff Wozniak's environmental science courses can expect more than lectures, writing assignments and tests during their time with him. Wozniak sends students into the community to help businesses and organizations build upon sustainable practices.

"The thing about environmental science is it applies to all of us," said Wozniak, an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences. "If everything students learn during the semester sticks between their ears and never is communicated to another person, to me it's a bit of a failure."

Wozniak is one of numerous Sam Houston State University faculty members who has committed to enhancing course curriculum with lessons or projects that get students involved in the community.

These faculty are participants in the university's Academic Community Engagement initiative.

ACE, spearheaded by former Provost David Payne nearly a decade ago, strives to build an awareness among students of the community beyond their university—its needs, its strengths and its challenges.

"The idea is to bring the walls of the university down so it's not a world unto itself," said Joyce McCauley, director of the university's Center for Academic Community Engagement.

The recently formed Engaged Scholars Committee, comprising ACE instructors, supports those efforts.

Many of the ideas behind ACE are found in the book "Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Moral and Civic Responsibility" by Anne Colby and Thomas Ehrlich.

"It's about the real purpose of educational institutions," McCauley explains. "Educational institutions are there to prepare citizenry for our country so we have educated people who can keep our democracy alive and running"

During the last several years, increasing numbers of SHSU professors have been developing ACE courses that show students how the academic material they cover relates to their community.

"Through this, students get a better idea of who they are and their social responsibility," McCauley said. "It helps build leadership skills as they work with teams."

These courses are mostly optional for students, and community projects can



SPOTLIGHT

be campus-based or move beyond its boundaries. They might involve language students writing bilingual pamphlets for a doctor's office or accounting students helping people prepare tax returns.

"There are so many different possibilities," McCauley said. "People don't realize all of the needs."

The students in Wozniak's environmental science course have spoken to representatives from area hotels and student housing, retail outlets and prisons.

"They ask questions to local restaurants like what's your energy consumption?" Wozniak said. "Do you recycle bottles? Do you recycle your fryer oil?"

"Students either find out the business does more than they thought it did or the business had no idea what it could do to

"Community engagement is a good fit for environmental science students."

Visiting assistant professor of English Amanda Nowlin-O'Banion has involved her students in the weekly visits she makes to the Boys & Girls Club in Huntsville in cooperation with the National Book Foundation. The BookUp program is intended to introduce junior high school students to more books and get them excited about reading.

Students in Nowlin-O'Banion's ACE English courses support that effort by showcasing books in four-minute videos, which are posted to YouTube.

"It's a resource for my BookUp kids and for junior high school teachers," Nowlin-O'Banion said.

"This is definitely the most fun part of my job—being able to show my students on

practicum which requires the students, under the supervision of faculty or board certified music therapists, to provide music therapy in hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, schools, nursing homes, group homes, and for community members who come to the campus.

Music therapy, Miller said, can strengthen clients' motor skills, cognitive function, speech and communication skills, and emotional health.

"These experiences are very closely linked to the experiences they'll have as professional music therapists," Miller said. "They're



In The Classroom



It's about the real purpose of educational institutions—to prepare citizenry for our country so we have educated people who can keep our democracy alive and running.—JOYCE MCCAULEY

operate more efficiently. They present a report that says 'here's what you're doing well, and here's what you could do to make improvements.'"

The students' recommendations could include a plan for a hotel to create green guest rooms or for schools to implement recycling programs.

"A four- or five-student team can't necessarily make a green room, but they can lay the foundation," Wozniak said. "They can pass that along to the next class, so after five or six semesters they could have a complete proposal.

campus how what they're already interested in relates to the academic world and the real world."

This spring, Nowlin-O'Banion adds, SHSU is bringing three National Book Award finalists to campus for public readings.

"To be able to bring that excitement and that kind of high quality literature to Huntsville is pretty amazing," she said.

In addition, the ACE course taught by professor and director of music therapy Karen Miller puts students' skills to work in the community during a 12-week

getting to know the different populations they'll be serving; they're designing interventions; they're learning songs and building their repertoire; and, of course, the relationships they're building with the community partners are really valuable."

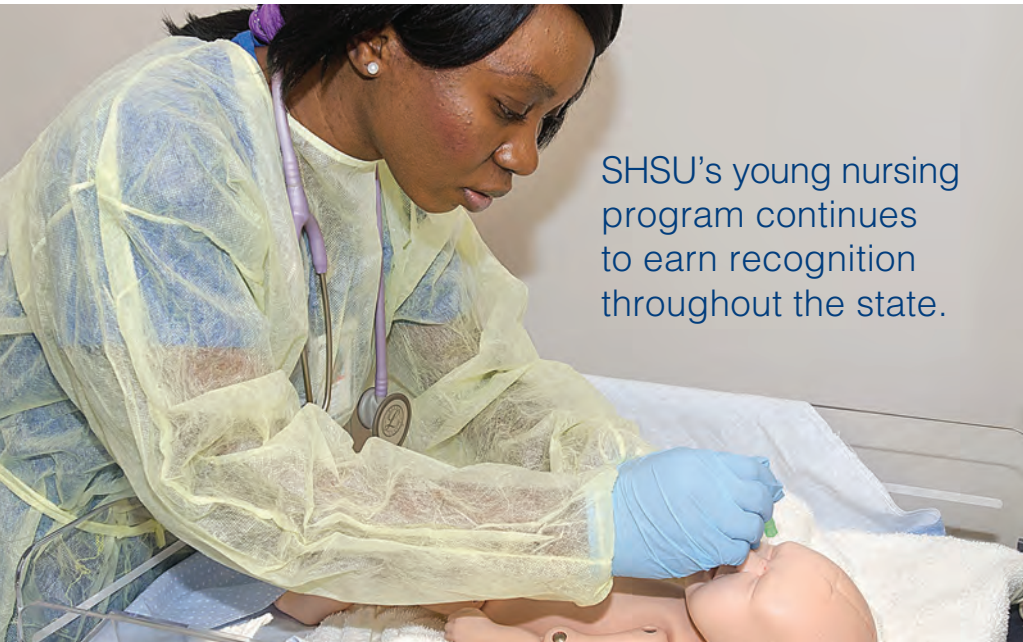
Miller said she sees great potential in the ACE initiative overall.

"We're practicing being individuals who serve other people. Regardless of the field students are going to go into, that's worthwhile. It's beneficial all around."

Not only does this ongoing commitment to community engagement enhance the educational experience students have at SHSU, it also creates long-term relationships that will benefit students and community members well into the future, McCauley said.

"This is really to bring the university and the community together. We really want to bring these walls down so the university and community are collaborative partners in making life better."

School Of Nursing Awarded \$1.1 Million



SHSU's young nursing program continues to earn recognition throughout the state.



The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is awarding \$1.1 million to Sam Houston State University's nursing program to work toward meeting the state's growing demand for nursing professionals.

"This award is significant for the School of Nursing because it will allow us to hire additional instructional staff to support student success and expand student learning opportunities in our nursing skills laboratory and simulation center," said Michael Lacourse, dean of SHSU's College of Health Sciences. "The size of the award reflects the fact that we are currently the fastest growing public School of Nursing in the state."

SHSU received \$535,907 in January and will receive another \$535,907 in September.

The coordinating board establishes several criteria for funding eligibility each year. SHSU's nursing program qualifies because it is considered a "new professional program" with the potential for graduating a high percentage of nursing students.

The Texas Legislature appropriated approximately \$7 million to the Nursing Shortage Reduction Program for the 2014 and 2015 fiscal years. SHSU received the largest award of the seven state universities and 12 community colleges that applied.

The Nursing Shortage Reduction Program began in 2009, and during its inaugural year first-year enrollment in nursing schools grew 15.8 percent, while total enrollment increased 12 percent. Graduates increased 10.8 percent.

However, the Texas Center for Nursing Workplace Studies reports that despite the increase, the demand for full-time registered nurses in Texas exceeds the supply by about 22,000, a total that is expected to grow as currently employed nurses retire and the state's population ages and requires more acute care.

Funds awarded through the program must be used for faculty enhancement, student recruitment and the identification, development and implementation of curriculum innovations.

The size of the award reflects the fact that we are currently the fastest growing public School of Nursing in the state."—MICHAEL LACOURSE

Sam Houston State University's nursing program has already achieved a number of milestones since it began enrolling students in 2010, according to Anne Stiles, director of the School of Nursing.

The program has been fully accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing since Jan. 1, 2013, and administrators will be hearing later in the spring about possible accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

"They came to campus in October for their site visit, and we passed 100 percent of their standards," Stiles said.

The program has also recently been granted "Full Approval" status by the Texas Board of Nursing.



SHSU Selected For Prestigious Scholarship Program

Sixteen incoming freshmen have been selected as the inaugural cohort of Terry scholars at Sam Houston State University.

Selected from a group of 33 finalists were Corian Allen, of Houston; William Burson, of Garland; Edwin Cantu, of Baytown; Kirsten Cottle, of Houston; Pake Cox, of Marshall; Veronica Gonzalez, of Houston; Naomi Hall, of Spring; David Harden, of Huntsville; Brianna Jutson, of Hearne; Hayley Lubojasky, of Sugar Land; Jose Luna, of Groveton; Brackston McKnight, of Jacksonville; Jacob Sinclair, of Huntington; Corey Snodgrass, of Brownsville; Crystal Taylor, of Mesquite; and John Zellar, of Rice.

The **Terry Foundation**—the state's largest private scholarship program—announced its intentions to expand to SHSU last fall.

Terry scholarships are awarded for a student's freshman year of college and are renewable annually at the discretion of the foundation's board of directors for up to eight semesters. The award covers the cost of tuition, fees, books, on-campus room and board, as well as miscellaneous expenses, for four years, as long as the student meets the requirements set forth by the foundation. Students in any discipline may apply.

Mary Robbins, associate vice president for academic affairs, is the administrator of the program at SHSU.

The scholars were selected on the basis of GPA and their leadership qualities. Finalists were submitted to the Terry Foundation, which conducted personal interviews this spring, according to Robbins.

The students will live on campus in Lone Star Hall during their first year of college.

They will also take a class together, taught by Robbins, and will set up a student organization.

"When the Terrys established their foundation, they stressed that they wanted their scholars to be a family," Robbins said. "They wanted the students to form a tight bond with each other and to encourage each other to give back after graduating—not just to the Terry Foundation, but to their university and to their community.

"The Terrys also emphasized that they expected the scholars to use their leadership skills for the good of others," she said. "I think Sam Houston State University is perfect for helping the students achieve those goals. We have such a close, nurturing relationship with our students to begin with. It's really

... We have such a close, nurturing relationship with our students to begin with. It's really just a good fit for us to host the program on our campus."—MARY ROBBINS

just a good fit for us to host the program on our campus."

In addition to living together, the foundation requires their scholars to attend an orientation and banquet in the fall and a picnic in the spring, which provides an opportunity for all Terry scholars in the state to get together.

"The scholars will also have other requirements to fulfill relating to leadership and service outside of those specified by the foundation," Robbins said.

Howard and Nancy Terry were long-time residents of Houston, where Mr. Terry was successful in a variety of businesses, ranging from banking to oil and gas. In 1986, the Terry family decided to help young people to help themselves by setting up an educational foundation. Mr. Terry had always expressed gratitude for the financial assistance that enabled him to go to college, so the Terrys decided to dedicate their time and resources to giving future generations of young people in Texas the same opportunity.

SCENE

SHSU hosted many events during the fall semester that brought together students, faculty, staff and alumni.

at SAM



Sammy Bearkat leads the football team and cheerleaders onto the field during one of SHSU's eight home games this season at Bowers Stadium.

The annual Family Weekend allowed SHSU parents to join students for a number of activities, including a campus tour, pep rally, a catered lunch, tailgating, and the football game against Eastern Washington.



Batgirl (Madison Jo Elkins) talks with President Dana Gibson during the Fall Festival at Gibbs Ranch.



Veterans of all ages came together for a community observance of Veterans Day outside Johnson Coliseum.



Professors Mark Tuttle and Gerald Kohers cook up some hot dogs outside the College of Business Administration tent during tailgating activities.



Comedian Aziz Ansari got the fall semester started as the Kat Comedy Showcase headliner in Johnson Coliseum in August.



The annual Tree of Light ceremony has been a campus tradition for more than 90 years, kicking off the holiday season for Bearkats.



The SamJam Carnival at Holleman Field provides students with fun, games and rides during Homecoming Week.



The College of Business Administration inducted four new alumni into its Wall of Honor. Joining Dean Mitchell Muesham were (from left) inductee Bob Rod, President Dana Gibson, and inductees Kailas Rao, John Ragsale and George Yax.



Elizabeth Opara and Keenan Jones took reign as this year's Homecoming queen and king after being crowned at halftime during the football game against Lamar. SHSU won the game, 14-3.



Runner and philanthropist Gilbert Tuhabonye shares his harrowing story and explains how running became an outlet for moving past his struggles during the President's Speaker Series presentation in September.



Students returned from summer break to help clean up Lake Raven, at the Huntsville State Park, for the annual Bearkat Service Project, a Welcome Week event.



Longtime ABC13 anchor Dave Ward discusses his career and gives advice to budding journalists during Priority One's "Mingling with the Media" event in November.



President Dana Gibson, Sammy Bearkat and Brad Blackburn, resident district manager for ARAMARK, find something tasty to eat at the annual President's Culinary Challenge in September.

Alumni Answer The ‘Call’ To Remain University, Community Engaged

BY AMY BARNETT

Sam Houston State University prides itself in having alumni who not only achieve noteworthy things in their professional careers, but also credit the university for providing them with the foundation they needed to become successful.

Many of these alumni find it a privilege and a responsibility to give back to SHSU; some, in more ways than you'd expect.

While it is not uncommon for alumni to choose a college or department in which to sponsor scholarships or to join the Alumni Association, the following Bearkats have gone above and beyond the “call of duty.” Since graduating from SHSU, they have made the decision to become and remain engaged in their university and communities in numerous ways.



RISSIE OWENS

Rissie Owens, class of '80, credits SHSU for preparing her for her 34-year career in criminal justice.

Owens is currently one of the longest serving chairs of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles. She was initially appointed to the board in 1997 by then-Gov. George Bush and was named chair in 2003. Gov. Rick Perry retained Owens in the role during reappointments in 2004, 2009 and 2013.

Before her appointment to the Huntsville office of the parole board, Owens worked within the Texas Department of Criminal

Justice in a variety of positions, including as a mental health coordinator; as probation officer with Galveston County; and as a drug prevention specialist and school psychologist in public schools.

Throughout this time, Owens has remained dedicated to her profession, her community and her school through service.

She is a member of the American Correctional Association, the Texas Corrections Association, and the Association of Paroling Authorities, International, for which she currently serves as vice-president.

Since settling in Huntsville, Owens has served as a board member for the Walker County Children's Protective Services and the United Way of Walker County; as a member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; as an alumna of Leadership Texas; as an associate member of Jack and Jill of America, Inc.; and an elected member of the Huntsville Independent School District board of trustees.

At SHSU, she has served on the Alumni Association board of directors, the President's Circle, and the community advisory council for SHSU School of Nursing. She supports the Alumni Association and scholarships at SHSU in hopes that she will influence recipients to graduate and do the same thing for their alma mater by “Keeping the Spirit of Giving alive.”



RUSSELL MOLINA

Russell Molina is the definition of a “successful businessman.”

The 1989 SHSU business graduate gained work experience in real estate, marketing and business management before entering the world of finance. He spent 11 years with Woodco Fund Management, Inc., in Houston, a company that manages funds for European clients in various types of investments in the United States, ultimately becoming president of the company.

In 2002, he became owner and CEO of his own company, Custom Rubber Products, a privately held rubber mixer and manufacturer of products for the oil field service industry.

After 10 years, Molina sold the Houston-based company and retired.

While in Houston Molina served as a board member and assumed numerous leadership positions with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Houston, Fort Bend County Fair Association and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. He continues to be a board member of The Texas Ranger Association Foundation. In his many capacities with these organizations he has received many honors and awards for his outstanding and dedicated service.

Upon retirement, in 2012, and he relocated his family—including wife, Allison, and two children—to Colorado.

“Now, with my additional time, I look forward to continued community involvement in various non-profits, as well as helping out local government agencies,” Molina said.

As someone known for “walking the talk,” Molina has set out to do just that.

He is the current chair for Bravo! Vail, a member of the finance advisory council for Eagle County, a board member of Vail Valley Starting Hearts, and a member of the Vail Mountain School board of trustees. He previously served as a director of the Edwards Interfaith Chapel, board president of Stone Creek Charter School and is



CARRY THE VISION

a founding director of the Stone Creek Educational Foundation.

Molina has been and continues to be a strong supporter of SHSU. He is a Life Member of the Alumni Association and supports athletics and student services, as well as alumni events.



ALAN TINSLEY

Alan Tinsley may be the poster child for time management.

A 1971 SHSU graduate, Tinsley earned a degree in accounting and his license as a Certified Public Accountant before continuing his education at South Texas School of Law and becoming an attorney.

While the life of an attorney is often thought of as a juggling act of a non-stop workload, Tinsley has managed to find opportunities and time to volunteer in more ways than can be mentioned.

He is currently a director of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and also serves on its legal advisory and armed forces appreciation committees; he is an advisory director on alumnus Marcus Luttrell's Lone Survivor Foundation; is a founding member and current trustee for the CrossRoads Cowboy Church; and he supports youth and education by purchasing junior projects at HLSR, as well as at county fairs in Madisonville, Leon, Houston and Walker Counties.

He has also served as a director for the ESCAPE Center, The Arc, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America, the Wounded Warrior Banquet, and the Madison County Chamber of Commerce; as a director and founding member of the Madison County Arts Council; and as director and president for the Oak Ridge Country Club and the Madison County Economic Development Corporation.

Tinsley enjoys giving back to SHSU and does so in many ways. He supports Let's Talk, Bearkat Champions, alumni enrichment, SHSU baseball and football; has served as president of the Alumni Association; and is currently a member of the President's Circle and the athletic advisory board.

In addition, he devotes many hours assisting with SHSU student mentoring and the High Potential Employee Leadership Academy and provides unlimited amount of pro bono legal assistance to those who cannot afford legal representation.

A friend said of Tinsley, "His pride in his university is something we should all practice along with his humanitarian ways of making a difference in people's lives. His love for SHSU and his civic engagements has no boundaries."



JOHN E. PELTIER

Throughout his life, John E. Peltier, class of '72, has been a visible leader in many organizations that serve God and his fellow man.

Immediately out of high school, 1967, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served as a medic during the Vietnam War. While in Vietnam he was involved in the Medical Civil Action Program. Several times a week he went out with a small group of doctors, interpreters and medics and pulled "sick call" on the civilians in local schools, orphanages and small towns.

After completing his service, Peltier entered SHSU on the GI bill, earning a degree in industrial arts, while also working at TDCJ as a medical officer.

In 1978, he founded Peltier Brothers Construction in Houston, of which he is currently a partner and serves as CEO. In 1988 he served as president of the Houston Contractors Association.

Throughout the years, Peltier has used his knowledge and resources in the construction industry to become a strong leader of missionary work, not only locally, but also in impoverished, developing nations. For approximately five years, Peltier worked with fellow alumnus Harry Westmoreland to fund and drill water wells in Honduras through Living Water International, a non-profit organization Westmoreland founded to help communities acquire desperately needed clean water.

Peltier's passion for improving the lives of those around the world, while spreading the "Good News" of Christ and his unconditional love for all people, has compelled Peltier to work with others in purchasing equipment and drill wells in the Republic of Mozambique, Africa, with Children's Relief International; sponsor construction projects for churches and low-cost homes for widows and children during mission trips to Mozambique; and sponsor children in Mozambique, the Dominican Republic and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Africa.

When he's not traveling the world to perform these deeds, Peltier and his wife of 40 years, Janie, use their time and talent locally to support his church and community through youth athletics, the Boy Scouts, the Future Farmers of America, the TOMAGWA Healthcare Ministry, the Texas Children's Hospital, the College of Biblical Studies, and SHSU, to name a few.

At his alma mater, Peltier supports the Bearkat Champions and Houston Area Bearkats in Business. He also officiated the on-campus memorial service for long-time friend and fellow alumnus Fred Pirkle.

His dedication to his faith and the respect he has garnered as a leader in the construction industry led a business partner to say of Peltier, "John's walk matches his talk in every aspect of his life, always using what he calls 'The Do-Right Rule.' John is the real deal."



NEW HEAD FOOTBALL COACH SETS

HIGH BAR

BY BRANDON SCOTT

K.C.

K.C. Keeler took a phone call from retired NFL coach Dick Vermeil after Sam Houston State announced its most recent coaching hire.

The congratulatory call led to a brief exchange about football in the state of

Texas, and Vermeil said that Keeler would be “living the dream” of a college coach.

During the news conference announcing Keeler’s selection, the Bearkats’ 15th head football coach admitted that life with his family had been comfortable since he last coached in 2012; yet he had accepted the lead position at Sam Houston because of how much he missed the job.

Sometime around the end of September, Keeler’s wife Janice told him it was time to get back into coaching. Janice Keeler is just



Head football coach K. C. Keeler, who has taken teams to NCAA national championship finals seven times, has set high goals for the Bearkats in spring practice.



We're here to win a national championship. We want to win one sooner than later. I've played for 10 national championships, two as a player and eight as a coach. It's a challenge. But it's something our players need to know about me. We're here to be the best." — K.C. KEELER

about as hands on with her husband's teams off the field as he is with them on it, helping coordinate gatherings and events.

They missed the relationships with the players, coaching staffs and communities.

But in order to live the dream referenced by Vermeil, who as former head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles cut Keeler in 1982, Sam Houston State has to win championships, and he had no qualms with being frank about it.

"I'm going to set the bar very high," Keeler said. "That's who I am. I'm not going to make excuses. We're here to be the best."

That was the message Keeler delivered to his new players in his first meeting with the SHSU football team.

"We're here to win a national championship. We want to win one sooner than later," Keeler said. "I've played for 10 national championships, two as a player and eight as a coach. It's a challenge. But it's something our players need to know about me. We're here to be the best."

Keeler's teams at Rowan University and Delaware made 13 NCAA tournament appearances and eight trips to national championship games.

His 2003 Delaware squad won the Football Championship Subdivision national championship in 2003. The Blue Hens reached the FCS Championship Game in

2007 and 2010. Delaware compiled an 11-3 record in NCAA playoff competition.

"The mission statement is simple and each player will have a copy of that statement on their lockers," Keeler said. "We're here to relentlessly pursue being the best football team in the country. We will measure ourselves in three ways: one is academic excellence; another is social responsibility—our guys will be involved in the community like you've never seen before; and the third is we're here to win national championships."

Senior running back Keshawn Hill said the concern since former head coach Willie Fritz left for Georgia Southern earlier this year was finding established leadership to keep things rolling.

"Basically, his whole mind-set is all about winning," Hill said. "I've never heard a coach say that all he wants to do is be the best. That's what I've always felt like in my own mind, so I feel really good about that. I'm excited."

The new coach's first priority is recruiting.

"I'm very excited to start talking to recruits," Keeler said. "Our coaches have done a great job of identifying talent. Now, we have to keep that talent. One of the things that is impressive is that a lot of these guys have stayed with Sam Houston when everyone was coming in here and trying to pilfer them. That speaks volumes about where this school is. If this university wasn't where it is academically and the players knew that,

they'd just go somewhere else. But this is where they want to go to school."

SHSU Director of Athletics Bobby Williams said the Bearkats' goal is to consistently compete at a high level, especially after three straight Football Championship Subdivision playoff appearances and FCS finals appearances in 2011 and '12.

"This is a great day to have an opportunity to move our football program in a new direction, and it's exciting for all of us," Williams said.

Keeler brings to Huntsville an overall record of 174 victories, 73 losses and one tie as a head coach. In his 11 seasons at Delaware (2002–2012), the Fightin' Blue Hens rolled up an 86-52 record.

"He was showing me his 2003 national championship ring at lunch and it was the FCS Selection Committee," Williams said. "He doesn't remember this, but I was around that team. I got to see him in practice in 2003.

"When I saw the ring and saw him kind of hoist the national championship trophy that night in Chattanooga, I was standing pretty close. I didn't know at that time, he didn't know it at that time, that we'd be here today," Williams said. "That's amazing how our profession is and how all things kind of grow in that direction."

Janice Keeler had a three-item checklist for where her husband could coach. There



He's had winning teams, built up programs, and he has confidence. — RUNNING BACK STEVEN HICKS

had to be warm weather, championship potential and good people running the administration.

Everything seemed to check out well that Friday except the weather, since it looked like Delaware in Huntsville on that particular day. The Keeler family plans on being around long enough to get a more accurate impression of the Texas climate.

"I'm here for the long haul," Keeler said. "This is a great job. I've been two places in 28 years. I'm a builder. I left Rowan because I went to my alma mater. This is a place that my wife and I are looking to settle in and make it something special. We're excited about that."

SHSU football players certainly are impressed by the new coach.

"We like him a lot," said running back Steven Hicks. "He knows what he's doing. He's had experience in championships. He's had winning teams, built up programs, and he has confidence. I really like that about him. I like how he's giving everybody a fresh start this next season. He doesn't care about our pasts."

Offensive lineman Donald Jackson III, a Southland Conference first-team selection in 2013, said he followed the coaching search every day through social media networks.

Jackson said it's Keeler's championship pedigree that deserves attention.

"Coach Keeler has a plan and knows what he wants to do. I like that," Jackson said. "He's already laid it down, what he wants to do and how he wants to do it."

Keeler has made it clear there are no preconceived notions about the SHSU players. He said he purposely had not taken time to evaluate the current Bearkat players because he is more interested in where they are going than where they've been.

One thing Keeler will be looking for out of his players is leadership. The Bearkats lost 15 seniors from the 2013 season, which claimed the most successful senior class in the school's football history.

"He talked about having that one player or that one play that can make the difference," Jackson said. "Everybody knows you have to get over that hump, but I think he's going to be able to continue the success here. We've just got to get the leadership going in the locker room."

"It's a combination of who's doing well on the field and who speaks out because you have to have a voice. You have to be able to speak. Quiet leaders are fine but only so many people are going to follow a quiet leader."



- 1 Hayden Simerly
- 2 Ryan O'Hearn
- 3 Alan Scott
- 4 Carter Burgess
- 5 Coach David Pierce exchanges lineup cards with University of Texas Coach Augie Garrido

HOUSTON COLLEGE

Classic

The Bearkat baseball team's performance at the Houston College Classic at Minute Maid Park (home of the Houston Astros) on Feb. 28 – March 2 brought national attention to Sam Houston State. The underdog Kats defeated No. 12 TCU 9-4 on Friday and No. 26 Texas Tech 10-6 on Saturday. No. 15 Texas edged SHSU 3-2 on Sunday. With the performance, the baseball team made its earliest debut in the NCAA national rankings in school history.



INCREDIBLE SENIOR CLASS LEAVES FOOTBALL LEGACY



Brian Bell and Timothy Flanders



Richard Sincere



Torrance Williams

BY PAUL RIDINGS

When SHSU's 15 football seniors walked off the field after the Kats' one-point loss in the FCS second round last December, they could hold their heads high.

This group has led SHSU to the most successful four years in the program's 97-year history, posting 39 victories as Bearkats. They helped set 51 school records. The seniors literally changed the football culture at SHSU.

Before players like running back Timothy Flanders, quarterback Brian Bell, wide receivers Richard Sincere and Torrance Williams, and defensive back Bookie Sneed stepped on campus, going to the playoffs or winning titles weren't part of the conversation.

Fast forward to the 2013 season. Now, SHSU stands as one of only three FCS programs to earn playoff berths each of the past three years. The Kats join seven other NCAA

programs that have played in the FCS National Championship Games in consecutive seasons.

SHSU has been ranked among the top 20 in the FCS national polls for 37 consecutive weeks (since Sept. 9, 2011). Bearkat football games have been televised 28 times in the past three years, including 10 national telecasts on the ESPN family of networks. The Kats own the longest current FCS home winning streak (22 games) at Bowers Stadium.

Flanders stands as the only Southland Conference running back to gain more than 5,000 yards rushing, score more than 400 points and lead the league in rushing four years in a row. He set 33 school records.

Bell ranks as SHSU's winningest quarterback (39-13). He is the Kats' career leader in passing (8,655 yards), TD passes (84) and total offense (10,184 yards).

Sincere rolled up four-figure career marks in three statistics categories—rushing

(2,274 yards), receiving (1,215) and all-purpose yards (3,887).

Williams led the Southland and ranked second nationally in punt returns, with a 16.0 average. Sneed set a record with a 92-yard interception return for a TD and stands as SHSU's seventh all-time leader in career picks (9).

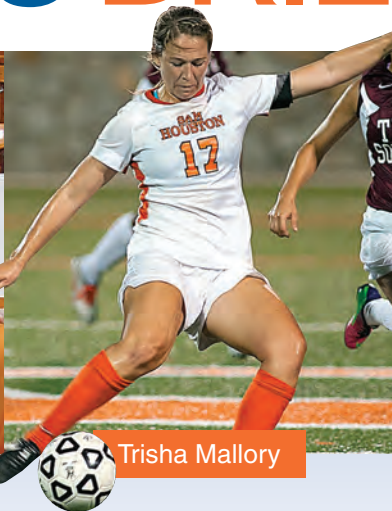
Joining these five as seniors who earned All-Southland honors as Bearkats were offensive lineman Matt Boyles, linebackers Jesse Beauchamp and Tanner Brock, defensive end Jarrett Brown, linebacker Eric Fieilo, defensive back DeAntrey Loche, and defensive lineman Andrew Weaver. Defensive linemen Forbes Baggett and running back Ryan Wilson also have been part of the past four Bearkat teams.

FALL/WINTER SPORTS BRIEFS

SH
EYE ON
KATS



Brenda and Tayler Gray



Trisha Mallory



Women's Track & Field

BY PAUL RIDINGS

Both the SHSU **volleyball and soccer teams** earned post-season Southland tournament berths again in 2013.

The **volleyball team** rolled up a 17-14 record and went 14-4 in league action to earn the No. 3 seed at the post-season event in Corpus Christi.

Brenda Gray became only the 26th NCAA Division I head coach to amass more than 600 career coaching victories. Senior setter **Tayler Gray**, Brenda's daughter, and junior outside hitter Deveney Wells-Gibson both were first-team All-Southland selections.

The Bearkat **soccer team** reached the Southland tournament for the fifth year in a row. Sam Houston reached the post-season semifinals for the fourth time with a 1-0 win over Nicholls.

Senior midfielder **Tricia Mallory** completed her career as the Bearkats' second all-time leading scorer, with 22 goals. Miriah Titus also earned All-Southland honors.

The Sam Houston **women's bowling team** brought home the Bearkats' first NCAA Division I national championship April 12. Entering double elimination tournament play the second day of the NCAA Elite Eight in Cleveland, Ohio, the Kats were the No. 8 seed. The Bearkats rolled unbeaten through the first three rounds, defeating No. 1 seed Maryland-Eastern Shore twice to reach the championship final. Going up against four-time national champion Nebraska, the Kats won 4-2 over the Cornhuskers to hoist the national championship trophy.

With 90 victories in tournament play this season, the **bowling team** was making its third NCAA championship appearance in the four-year history of the program. The championship match with Nebraska was televised nationally on ESPN.

The **men's basketball team** won its first NCAA Division I post-season victory in March. With 24 wins this season, SHSU earned a berth in the 2014 CollegelInsider.com Postseason Tournament. This represents the program's second-highest victory total at the Division I level. This year, the Kats reached the finals of the Southland Conference Tournament for the fourth time, defeating Oral Roberts and A&M-Corpus Christi in Katy.

Junior guard **Jabari Peters** was named Southland Conference "Newcomer of the Year." Peters and junior guard Kaheem Ransom both were named "All-Southland" and "All-Southland Tournament."

The Sam Houston State **women's track & field** program captured the 2014 Southland Conference Indoor Track and Field Championship, held in Birmingham, Ala. The Kats used a huge second day push to vault their way past in-state rival Stephen F. Austin by a score of 132-124.

Track and field head coach Dave Self was named Southland Conference Indoor Track & Field Coach of the Year after directing the Bearkats to the championship.

Involvement

- Alumni Association Board of Directors Executive Committee (2014 President-Elect)
- SHSU Athletic Hall of Honor
- 2003 SHSU Service Award recipient
- President's Circle Member
- Alumni Association Life Member
- Bearkat Partners
- Letterman Association Lifetime Member
- Former President and Kat Pack member



WHEN RAY BURGESS arrived on the Sam Houston State University campus in 1971, he embraced everything the university had to offer, excelling in the classroom and on the athletic field. Upon graduation, he walked across the stage to accept his diploma but never walked away from his alma mater. A Bearkat through-and-through, you can find Ray cheering his team to victory, providing leadership for the Alumni Association, and serving as an auctioneer or emcee at many university events.

He went on to build a successful law practice and has been an active community leader sharing his time and faith as a mentor in The Woodlands United Methodist Church Prison Ministries program. Ray has also participated in a number of large fundraisers supporting local organizations including Child Advocates of Montgomery County, the Christian Service Center, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School in The Woodlands, Conroe Chamber Lobster Fest and the County Senior Center. Because of his long-standing involvement with the people in his community and university, he received the 2003 SHSU Service Award.

Ray not only gives of his time, he also has given financial support to the Association, various athletic program enrichment funds, the "Share the Vision" capital campaign, Bearkat Champions and President's Circle.

His acts of service have made a significant impact on SHSU programs but it's his unwavering dedication and enthusiasm for helping others that really show Ray's "true measure."



Learn more about ways you can support Sam Houston State University, visit shsu.edu/giving or call University Advancement at 936.294.3625.



THE SHSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION:

SUCCESSFULLY
CONNECTING THE

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Three generations join Sammy Bearkat at a recent SHSU Alumni Association function. They are (from left) Barbara Bright '61, grandson and current student Joshua Hightower, and daughter Jeni Hightower '85.

BY JULIA MAY



Throughout its existence, the SHSU Alumni Association has worked to keep former students connected and to provide them with opportunities to serve the campus, its colleges, and its students, and to help guide the university into the future.

For more than 120 years, former students of Sam Houston State University have joined together for networking and supporting programs of their alma mater.

The first mention of an alumni association appears in the Sam Houston Normal Institute Annual Catalogue, 1891–92. Records show that the association had officers and the day before commencement was known as Alumni Day.

In 1893, the Alumni Association of Sam Houston Normal Institute was formally established and a constitution was drawn up and approved. The name of the organization was changed to the Ex-Students Association in 1921.

On Nov. 2, 1956, a charter for a non-profit corporation known as the "Alumni Association of Sam Houston State



2 Class of 1939

After the merger, the Alumni Association thrived and grew in membership. With new resources available, the association was able to add new activities, events and programs.

Teachers College” was formally adopted. In addition to a board of directors, the officers saw a need to have an administrative office with an association director to coordinate events and be responsible for keeping up-to-date records and collecting membership dues.

One of the longest-serving directors was Norma Dell Jones, '62 BS and '69 MED, who worked from 1977 – 1992.

“I have many long-lasting friendships from my years as director,” she said. “Some who come to mind are Gib Lewis, Tolbert Chisum, Frank Krystyniak and Jim Franklin. It was a fun time and I’m so glad I had the opportunity to get to meet and know so many great people, including my wonderful secretary Janie Spencer Joyce.”

However, not all the memories for Jones are good ones. Sadly, the alumni office was located in Old Main on Feb. 12, 1982—the night the university’s most beloved landmark burned.

“I received a call about the fire in the middle of the night, and I went straight up there,” she said. “The Military Science Department had offices located above us, and that night, they helped us get the alumni records out of the building before it burned down.”

Although the Alumni Association’s office was housed on campus, the organization itself was autonomous until the early 1990s.

“We had a huge board of directors, but we didn’t have the funds to have events to unite the group and offer the benefits that

we wanted to offer as an organization,” said William “Bill” Hall, '74 BS, who was president-elect of the Alumni Association under then-president Arliss Mallory.

The university administration suggested establishing an Office of Alumni Relations under the umbrella of the university.

“It was to be funded by the school originally, but the hope was that whether through rebates from MasterCard or Visa programs or other areas, ultimately the alumni office would be self-sufficient enough to pay the director’s salary and the office staff,” said Hall.

After Hall began the first of his two terms as president, the administration’s proposal went back-and-forth among the membership and was finally accepted. The association needed a plan of transition to merge with the university, and Hall, an attorney, crafted a document with by-laws and a constitution.

“The plan provided for not only the operation of the office and the maintenance of the board, but also for the board going forward with officers and directors.”

Hall said he is especially appreciative of the support he had from both Mallory and Henry Adair, who followed him as president of the alumni board.

“Henry is the single hardest worker I know for Sam Houston,” he said. “He was my friend and confidant throughout the process and was always available for the rendition of some Mont Belvieu advice and wisdom.”

After the merger, the Alumni Association thrived and grew in membership. With new resources available, the association was able to add new activities, events and programs. Ill feelings were resolved and a sense of good feeling about the association and its partnership with the university returned.

However, a not-so-positive rumor about an action that would not only affect Sam Houston alumni, but the university itself, began to dominate conversations at receptions, celebrations and meetings. The persistent question was, “Is Sam Houston State University’s name going to be changed?”

“The rumor had been going around for several years,” said John McManners, '62 BS, who served as president of the alumni board of directors in 2007. “Apparently, several regents had expressed an interest in changing the name of all universities in the Texas State University System to Texas State University ‘at wherever’ the school was located. For instance, we would be Texas State University-Huntsville.



- 1 Life Member plaques
- 2 Class of 1939
- 3 SHSTC Homecoming Parade, 1955
(Credit: Walker County Treasures, Springfield Collection)
- 4 John McManners
- 5 John R. Ragsdale
- 6 Charlie Vienne
- 7 The Ernie Coy Family
- 8 Sister-brother Kimberly and Keith Ahee show off their new SHSU rings.

The Life Member program is the foundation of our association. It provides for the stability and future growth of all Alumni Association pursuits and activities. We are now at 2,300 Life Members.”—CHARLIE VIENNE

“We didn’t want any changes to our name,” he said.

With the Texas Legislature in session, the Alumni Association board of directors wasted no time in organizing groups of alumni through phone calls, email and word of mouth, to let their representatives know how they felt about the name change.

“State Rep. Lois Kolkhorst and Mike Sizemore, of Victoria, did a super job of getting us scheduled before the committees that needed to hear our case in both the Senate and the House. We had a group of around 12 who went to Austin, and four of us, as well as Lois, testified before the legislative committees,” McManners said. “Afterwards, we all went to the offices of the senators and representatives who we thought could help us, and we spoke with them.”

Along with several other Sam Houston alumni serving as state representatives, Kolkhorst co-authored House Bill 1418, preventing the Texas State University System’s board of regents from ever changing SHSU’s name. The bill passed the Texas House without objection and through the Senate uncontested, becoming a law.

As if that wasn’t enough excitement during McManners’s term as president of the board, something very good happened a few months following the signing of the bill.

“John Ragsdale, an old friend and colleague of mine, and a great friend of Sam Houston State University, asked to meet with several of us about giving to the university,” McManners said.

“We had no idea about his intentions, so we were stunned, thrilled and humbled when he told us he was donating \$1.25 million to three different programs of the university to benefit former, current and prospective students,” he said.

To recognize Ragsdale’s generosity, the Visitor and Alumni Center was named in his honor.

“A lot of great people were on the board of directors that year,” McManners said. “You could call on anyone and they would get

the job done. It was a super year. I loved it and I had a great time.”

He also praised his predecessor, George Miles, for laying a strong foundation for him.

“George deserves a lot of credit for getting the Alumni Association on its feet and getting things done for Sam Houston State,” he said.

Today, the SHSU Alumni Association has more than 11,000 members, with 18 alumni clubs across the state, including five special-interest clubs.

The Office of Alumni Relations is now a component of the Division of University Advancement and reports to Vice President for University Advancement Frank Holmes. The office hosts numerous events both on campus and away. One of the most popular events for alumni is the Battle of the Piney Woods football game at Reliant Stadium in Houston.



Today, the SHSU Alumni Association has more than 11,000 members with 18 alumni clubs across the state

“This game puts Sam Houston State University in front of our largest group of alumni,” said Charlie Vienne, director of Alumni Relations.

In addition to the tailgating events before football games and club receptions around the state, the Office of Alumni Relations has moved forward with an alumni travel program.

“We have a reception in New York City each year, and we now have additional trips for our alumni,” Vienne said. “The first one will be in San Francisco this spring. Next year, we are planning a trip to Ireland and to the Canadian Rockies.”

One Alumni Association program that has been especially popular among SHSU students and their parents is the annual tuition drawing.

“The tuition drawing program was created in 2006 by Trisha Pollard, who was on the board of directors at the time,” Vienne said. “During the first seven years of the program, we’ve disbursed more than \$150,000 in scholarships.”

Another program that encourages student involvement is the Student Alumni Association.

The group has grown from approximately 50 students to more than 500. In addition to assisting with events such as the annual Ring Ceremony and Legacy Golf tournament, they conduct canned food drives and participate in community service projects.

“The Life Member program is the foundation of our association,” Vienne said. “It provides for the stability and future growth of all Alumni Association

pursuits and activities. We are now at 2,300 Life Members.

“All Life Member dues go into a permanent endowment fund, which is approaching \$2 million. The earnings from the endowment are used to support our activities and programs throughout the year,” he said.

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(Clockwise, from bottom left) Trisha Pollard, Damian Mandola, Sam Monroe, Wilfred Dietrich, and Jenna Jackson.

Five Alumni Honored For Contributions, Service

Sam Houston State University honored five alumni who have brought pride to the university through their achievements, examples of good citizenship, and their contributions to society at the Distinguished Alumni Gala on Oct. 11, 2013, as part of homecoming activities.

The honorees included Distinguished Alumni Damian Mandola, W. Sam Monroe and Trisha Pollard; the Outstanding Young Alumna Jenna Jackson; and the Distinguished Service Award recipient Wilfred O. Dietrich.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

DAMIAN MANDOLA

A 1977 graduate with a major in radio and television, Mandola was a catcher on the Bearkat baseball team and worked as a DJ for the campus radio station while attending SHSU. Acting on his passion for cooking, he opened Damian's Fine Italian Food in Huntsville his senior year.

After graduating from SHSU, he enhanced his culinary talents and went on to many successful ventures such as D'Amico's Ristorante Italiano, with partner Nash D'Amico; Damian's Cucina Italiana; the nationally acclaimed Carrabba's Italian Grill, with nephew Johnny Carraba; and his current undertakings of Trattoria Lisina and Mandola's Italian Market.



Trisha Pollard was a special guest in the Homecoming Parade.

Mandola has served as the co-host of PBS-TV's popular cooking shows "Cucina Amore!" and "Cucina Sicilia!" with nephew Johnny Carrabba. He is also the author of three cookbooks—"Ciao Tuscany," "Ciao Sicily" and "Ciao Y'all."

W. SAM MONROE

Sam Monroe, who serves as president of Lamar State College-Port Arthur, is known not only as an experienced and trusted leader in higher education, but also as someone who has worked diligently to highlight and preserve the music and arts legacy of Southeast Texas.

Monroe graduated with his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from SHSU in 1965. He then attended Lamar University, where he earned both the Master of Education degree and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

After serving on the Lamar University Board of Regents for five years, Monroe's career at the former Port Arthur College began in 1973, when he was named executive vice president. The following year, he succeeded his father, Madison Monroe, as president. His presidency has spanned 40 years, making him the longest-serving president of a higher educational institution in the state.

TRISHA S. POLLARD

A former regent of the Texas State University System, Trisha Pollard earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a major in business education from SHSU in 1974, followed by a Juris Doctorate from South Texas College of Law in 1980.

Pollard's professional career spans almost 30 years in the oil and gas industry, during

which she served a term as the chair of the Houston Bar Association Oil and Gas Section. In 2003, Gov. Rick Perry appointed her to the Texas One-Call Board for which she served as chairman of the board's compliance oversight committee.

She was appointed to the Texas State University System Board of Regents in 2007 and served as vice chairman of the board. She has served five terms as the Harris County Grand Jury foreman and has been active in her adopted hometown of Bellaire in numerous capacities.

As a member of the SHSU Alumni Association Board of Directors, Pollard proposed and initiated the Tuition Drawing Program, which has raised more than \$150,000 in scholarships for first-generation students. She has also served on the development and scholarship committees for the association and rewrote the Alumni Association by-laws.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNA

JENNA JACKSON

Legendary journalist Dan Rather describes Jenna Jackson as "a professional who is an exceptional investigative reporter and overall superb television news producer—plus she is one of the best writers of her generation of American journalists."

Jackson graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from SHSU in 1997 with a double major in journalism and political science. While attending SHSU, she served as editor of *The Houstonian* student newspaper and worked as a criminal justice reporter for *The Huntsville Item*.

Following her graduation, she worked briefly as a newspaper reporter in Texas before heading to New York City, where she was employed in an entry-level position at CBS News. She quickly moved up and was named a producer for CBS's hit program "48 Hours." During her 14 years with CBS, she received several prestigious media awards, including an Emmy in 2012.

Jackson returned to Texas and in 2011 founded P&R Productions, a company that specializes in producing documentaries, films and commercials.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

WILFRED O. DIETRICH

Known throughout the Brenham area for his commitment to education, historical preservation and service, Wilfred Dietrich has long been dedicated to helping his community equip future generations with the work ethic and compassion he models in his life.

Dietrich earned an Associate of Arts degree in 1943 from Blinn College; a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1946 and a Master of Arts degree in 1948, both in history and English, from Sam Houston State; and a Ph.D. in English and curriculum instruction in 1978 from East Texas State University, now Texas A&M-Commerce.

He spent 42 years as a professor and department chair at Blinn and was recognized for his accomplishments by being named to Blinn's Hall of Honor in 2004. He is president of the Washington County Arts Council. Since 1997, Dietrich has served as a volunteer every Wednesday morning and Sunday afternoon at the George Bush Presidential Library in College Station. He is a significant financial sponsor of the Brenham Children's Chorus. He also contributed more than 25 years to scouting.

In 1997, he and his late wife, Bobbie M. Dietrich, established an endowed scholarship at SHSU for students majoring in history, theatre and speech.

Where Are They Now?

Alumni have been doing interesting things since leaving SHSU. Look to future issues for people you may have sat next to in biology, business or English. We may even feature you!

“From there, I was able to grow and move to consulting, which led me to owning a company,” she said. “I remember Carol Lee Sangster’s many accounting classes. What a memorable teacher!”

Petrosky also remembers the fun times she had as a student, including the time an ice storm hit SHSU, when she and her friends used metal trays to slide down the hills on campus.

One of her fondest memories is of dating her boyfriend—now husband—Dennis.

“We married after graduation, and we now have two sons: Reed, 19, and Sean, 13,” she said.

She obtained her CPA license in 1993. In 1989, Rhonda and Dennis became certified scuba divers and she has more than 150 dives.

A cancer survivor, Rhonda is involved in the Relay for Life in Colorado County to raise money for the American Cancer Society.



RHONDA MARTIN PETROSKY, '86 BBA IN ACCOUNTING

Rhonda Petrosky, co-founder of NB Consulting, LLC, in Columbus, Texas, felt that SHSU’s great reputation for its business degrees would be a perfect fit for her as an accounting major.

It was a good fit, and she is grateful for the way her education prepared her for her first job in accounting with Pennzoil.

Rhonda Petrosky, co-founder of NB Consulting, LLC, in Columbus, felt that SHSU’s great reputation for its business degrees would be a perfect fit for her as an accounting major.

In 2006 she co-founded, with two partners, a consulting company providing management consulting services and SAP consulting services.

She has also traveled to six of the seven continents, visiting about 35 countries. Some of the memorable sights she has seen include the Great Wall of China, the Pyramids of Giza, and the Sydney Opera House.



JUSTIN BURNETT, '02 BBA IN BUSINESS

The allure of the prestigious criminal justice program and the “comfortable feel” of the campus are the things that attracted Justin Burnett to Sam Houston State University when he was seeking out colleges as a high school senior in Pleasanton.

Once he got to SHSU, he became more interested in the financial world and the idea of running a business, so he changed his major and completed his Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 2002.

As a student, he was particularly impressed with the open-door policy of his professors.

“I always had access to professors to discuss class curriculum or general class questions,” he said. “I believe that when you go to Sam Houston, you feel like you have a place at the university. The smaller size of the university allowed me to have different leadership opportunities and experiences that I may not have had at a much larger school.

“To me, Sam Houston was the right size of university to allow me to learn direct classroom knowledge and gain outside leadership experiences through school-sponsored clubs and organizations.”

One of those organizations was the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity.

“The brothers and alumni of the chapter probably provided most of the memories and experiences I cherish today,” he said. “We did what most typical college kids do—we went to class, met for lunch, went to work or decided how to best kill the rest of the day playing golf or lounging around the Sig Ep house.”

After graduation, Burnett was employed by a consulting firm in The Woodlands that works with supply chain management.

“The CFO of the company was a Sam Houston graduate and Sig Ep alum whom I had met while I was in school, and he gave me a job right after graduation,” he said.

A few years later, Burnett married his wife Ann Porter, also a Sam Houston grad, and started working in the oil and gas industry.

“I decided to go back to school and got my MBA from Arizona State University in supply chain management,” he said. “My wife and I then had the opportunity to live and work abroad. We moved to Maracaibo, Venezuela, for two years, and we had our first child.”

The family then relocated to Balikpapan, Indonesia, and Baku, Azerbaijan, where they lived for several years.

“We had our second child during that time, and we are now back in Katy,” he said.

“Living and working overseas was great for our family,” Burnett said. “We got to travel and see a lot of the world at a young age that most people won’t see in their lifetime. We gained a large amount of experience and met many wonderful people along the way.”

Burnett joined HESS Corporation at the beginning of 2014 as the senior manager/head of supply chain for the Bakken Shale asset. He has comprehensive responsibility for the supply chain in the Bakken, from sourcing and contracting to procurement, materials management and logistics. He is a member of the asset vice president’s senior leadership team and manages more than 50 professionals.

He was recently appointed to the board of directors for the SHSU Alumni Association and is a Endowed Life Member.



MARK BURNS, '80 BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Mark Burns is living the life he always wanted as executive vice president and chief operating officer for Ensco, an offshore oil and gas drilling company.

He said his dream growing up was to work internationally and travel with his family, and he feels fortunate to be in a career that allows him to do that.

“Although my degree from SHSU was in political science and did not increase my knowledge of the oil and gas industry, it did give me job opportunities that I would not have received had it not been for my education,” Burns said. “It is a very competitive world, and I encourage all young people to pursue a college degree in order to prepare them for the future.”

Burns fondly remembers taking speech at Old Main during his sophomore year, and he’ll never forget the sadness he felt when he learned that the building had burned down just five years later.

“I remember the pride and personal satisfaction of walking across campus knowing I was a college student,” he said. “Although I was not certain what I wanted to do with my life, I felt committed to the task and wanted to complete my education.”

After graduation, Burns went into the oil business and loved it, finding the field to be exciting and challenging.

He said he often felt a sense of accomplishment drilling oil or gas wells in some of the most difficult environments on earth.

In the professional world, he said he has learned that success depends on being patient, fitting in, being optimistic and collaborative. His family instilled the core values and his managers and co-workers showed him how to be effective and successful.

“Finally,” he said, “my undergraduate degree has served me well over the years,” adding that having the education and connections have given him many opportunities.

Burns currently calls Houston home, returning there with his family whenever an overseas project is finished.

“Houston is the oil and gas capital of the world and has been my home base since graduation from SHSU in 1980,” he said. “Although I have had several international assignments, my family and I have always returned to Houston. It is culturally and ethnically diverse, has many wonderful museums and parks and a great place to call home.

“I am an example of how hard work and dedication can help you attain your goals, be it corporate success, a good parent or any aspiration you strive for,” he continued. “There is no greater achievement than being a good example and mentor and having the respect of your friends, peers and fellow employees.”



JAMES LOPEZ, '91 BBA

In 1986, other schools tried to recruit James Lopez to play football for them, but, fortunately, Lopez was already familiar with coaches Ron Randleman and Bob Riley, so he chose Sam Houston State University.

Lopez went on to play for SHSU as wide receiver while majoring in general business. He graduated in 1991 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

Searching for a job, he answered an ad in the paper for an administrative assistant for an independent record label. After that, a contact, who would later become a mentor, interviewed him, with pop star Madonna, and he got a job with Maverick Records.

This helped launch his career in marketing and producing. From there, he worked his way up at Atlantic Records as senior director of marketing, then vice president of marketing.

He has worked with T.I., B.o.B, Fat Joe, Public Enemy, Craig David, Sean Paul, Juvenile, Nappy Roots and several other chart-topping artists.

He was nominated for a Grammy Award for the music video for “The World According to Nappy” and has traveled with artists, attended awards shows and gone on tour.

Lopez has also directed commercials for music albums, and the first music video he directed, for rapper T.I., was nominated for an MTV Video Music Award.

In 2010 he made the jump to the movie industry. At Screen Gems-Sony Pictures, he is senior vice president of production, where his experience with urban youth culture has translated into success with his role in the production of the 2012 movie “Think Like a Man,” which debuted at No. 1 and grossed \$93 million.

He also has led the soundtrack marketing for movies such as “Hustle and Flow,” “Step Up 2—The Streets,” “Why Did I Get Married,” and “AVATAR.”

Lopez also has led the soundtrack marketing for movies such as “Hustle and Flow,” “Step Up 2—The Streets,” “Why Did I Get Married,” and “AVATAR.”

His most recent movie projects include “About Last Night,” starring Michael Ealy, Kevin Hart, Regina Hall and Joy Bryant, which was released on Feb. 14. The sequel to “Think Like A Man” will be released on June 20.

Lopez remains a huge football fan, paying particular attention to the Houston Texans and Bearkats. He attended the SHSU national championship football game in Frisco last year, and happily followed all of SHSU’s wins. He remembers coach Willie Fritz as a graduate assistant and athletic director Bobby Williams as a coach from his own football days.

He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Andrea Matchette and their daughters Hannah and Victoria.



BOB CUMMINS, '77 BBA IN GENERAL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

As a chief executive officer and the mayor of The City of Kemah, Bob Cummins said that his SHSU education is a constant influence.

“Math, along with finance, is something I have used every day since graduation and the more you know of history and civics the better you can serve the community,” Cummins said.

Cummins attended SHSU from 1973–1977 because he liked the size of the campus and had friends who also were attending. Despite

a busy work and study schedule, Cummins became fundraising chairman for the Social Society of Independents and a “Big Brother” to the Delta Zeta Sorority.

Those skills have helped Cummins in his current position as CEO of Fast Trac Transportation, Inc. Fast Trac is one of the largest owner-operated fleets in Houston, providing air cartage, industrial flatbed, heavy haul, full truck-load, and brokerage and home delivery services in 120 cities.

He was elected mayor of Kemah in 2011 and 2013.

“I saw a real need for change and could not find anyone else that would give so much of their time for the community,” he said.

“I wanted to lead our city into the future by making every decision fair, level and legal.”

“Everyone should serve in some capacity just to learn how government works or doesn’t work. When someone has been so fortunate, they should want to give back to their community, both in themselves and their resources.” —BOB CUMMINS

Cummins is proud of the work he has done for Kemah, from recruiting a new police chief, city administrator, city secretary, and building inspector, to changes in code enforcement at city council, which he feels will “keep the door open to all residents and be beneficial for years to come.”

What started at SHSU has led Cummins to embody the SHSU principle of leading a life of service.

“Everyone should serve in some capacity just to learn how government works or doesn’t work,” Cummins said. “When someone has been so fortunate, they should want to give back to their community, both in themselves and their resources.”

CLASS NOTES



Cecil Windsor, '35, celebrated his 100th birthday on Feb. 13 and was recently honored by the mayor of Yoakum, who declared it “Cecil Windsor Day.” Hundreds of friends celebrated at a party held in his honor. He worked as a teacher, high school principal, CFO for an oil and gas exploration corporation, and, after 17 years, he retired as a district auditor for TxDOT. He taught meteorology to Air Force pilots and navigators during World War II. He served on the Yoakum ISD school board, helped build the first little league field, was chair of the local Cub Scout pack, and currently works in his church. He also recently received the Yoakum Chamber of Commerce “Lifetime Community Service Award.” Windsor’s wife Bernice attended Sam Houston State Teachers College from 1939 – 1941. They have two sons, Stephen and Cecil Jr.

William Self, '50, is retired from Union Carbide Corp after working in the accounting field for 33 years. He now resides in the Bermuda Village Retirement Community in North Carolina.

Robert Walston, '57, retired from Superior Graphics Arts, Inc., a company he owned with his parents, Frances and Jerry Walston, in Freeport. He also did photo engraving. He has fond memories of his professor Dr. Madison Wolfe and says he is proud to always be a Bearkat.

Diane (Buchanan) Payne, '63 and '92, has completed her decade-long volunteer duties with the *Baptist Standard Publishing* Board of Directors. Payne was elected the president of the board of directors last year, becoming

the first female chairman in the publication’s 125-year history.

George Lantrip, '65, received a 50-year Grand Lodge Service Award on Aug. 27, 2013, by the Right Worshipful Jimmy Pomroy, district deputy grand master of Masonic District 35-B.

Treece Granvil, '70, retired last summer with 36 years in Texas Teacher’s Retirement System. Twenty-eight of her teaching years were with the Texas A&M Sea Grant College Program in College Station.

Wayne Scott, '73, was awarded the “Louie L. Wainwright Award” in 2013 by the Association of State Correctional Administrators. The annual award recognizes a former director who best exemplifies the professional standards that Wainwright espoused.



Paula Lenz, '74, executive director of the North Houston Association, was selected as a session speaker for the 2013 WTS Texas Leadership Conference in Houston. WTS is an organization dedicated to expanding opportunities for women in the global transportation industry. In her role as executive director, she recently accepted from Houston Mayor Annise Parker a City of Houston Proclamation (above), which lauded North Houston Association’s economic development leadership in the region. The proclamation declared the date as “North Houston Association Day” in the City of Houston. **Pictured, from the left**, are Houston City Council member Melissa Noriega; NHA staff member Melissa Robey;

Lenz; Parker; NHA staff member Ann Cates; NHA board members Jerry Lowry, from the Greenspoint District, and Marty Stein, from United Airlines.

Paul Brown, '76, who serves as the executive director of the Montgomery County, Ala., Community Corrections department, recently received a number of awards, appointments and recognitions. In August, the state chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness presented Brown with a “Special Recognition Award” for his consistent and unyielding support and advocacy for the mentally ill and mentally challenged caught-up in the criminal justice system.

Daniel Conley, '78, resides in Northern California with his wife Karol and owns a small electronics company in Rancho Cordova. One of the products, the Shortwave Daddy AM/FM/Shortwave radio, made the cover of the June issue of *Popular Communications* magazine.

Gregory Shipp, '83 and '90, was selected as the 2013 “Career and Technical Education Administrator of the Year” at the annual Career and Technology Association of Texas awards luncheon on July 16. Shipp will advance to represent Texas in the Region IV ACTE awards program in 2014.

Donna (McKeithen) Cloud, '85, recently retired from her position as assistant director with the Montgomery County Adult Probation Department after 28 years of service. Cloud is looking forward to enjoying her well-deserved time relaxing and living her life to the fullest.

Renee Foegelle-Mitchell, '89, established the first counseling program at O.H. Middle School in Van Vleck ISD. She stayed there for 12 years before taking a job in Sweeny ISD as the junior high counselor. She has been in public education for 23 years.

Jeffery Williams, '90, earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Texas Christian University this past year and

accepted a position as faculty in the nursing program at Texas Woman's University at the Dallas campus.

Christy (Woodward) Kaupert, '93 and '96, has been promoted to full professor in the San Antonio College political science department.

Heather (Nyman) Pedersen, '96, was named by the North Kitsap Herald as one of the top three teachers in Kitsap County for the second year in a row. She and husband **Eric Pederson, '96**, reside in the Seattle area. They have two children. In her spare time, she is also an avid CrossFitter who occasionally competes in CrossFit competitions throughout western Washington.

Tiffany Thomas, '03, was elected to a four-year term as trustee, for position seven at Alief ISD, on Nov. 5. Thomas is the first black Alief alumna elected to the board of trustees and the youngest school board member in the Houston area. She currently is the chief development officer for Bread of Life, Inc., and Temenos Community Development Corporation, Inc.

Mark Gilbert, '06, wife Lindsey, and daughter Kennedy have welcomed a new addition to their family. Trace Robert Gilbert was born on Sept. 20, 2013, in Austin. **John, '78**, and **Donna, '82 and '90, Gilbert**, along with **Linda, '75**, and **Ron, '77, Goerdel** and **Cutty Gilbert, '96 and '03**, are proud Bearkat grandparents.

Margaret "Maggie" Drabing, '08, teaches third grade in Houston ISD, after teaching English in South Korea for about two years and living in India for almost a year. She was married on Dec. 22. While at SHSU, Maggie was highly involved with the international programs and took several mission trips with Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship to Japan, Mexico and Spain.

Christopher Whitaker, '08, was recently recognized by the White House as part of the Champions of Change program. He was invited to speak on a panel at the White House

about civic hacking and how we can use technology to solve civic problems. Whitaker is a project consultant with the Smart Chicago Collaborative, which helps bring civic web developers, designers and data scientists together with civic organizations to solve problems in our neighborhoods.

Chad Cryer, '09 and '12, was awarded "Firefighter of the Year" at the Prairie View Volunteer Fire fighting Association's seventh annual Red and White Ball on Aug. 24, 2013. He has been a structural firefighter with Prairie View Volunteer Fire Department since September 2009.

Karina Valenzuela, '10, was accepted to the United States Peace Corps in 2011 and was sent to Burkina Faso, West Africa, to serve as an education volunteer. After completing her service in 2013, she stayed in Burkina Faso to work as a humanitarian with a Houston-based non-governmental organization called IEDA Relief. Valenzuela works with the NGO to provide aid to the Malian refugees in Burkina Faso.



Monica Brown, '10, and Ryan Pulis '09, were married Nov. 30 in Plano. Monica and Ryan met at Sam Houston in 2007 through a mutual friend and currently reside in Lewisville, where Monica is a third-grade teacher at a charter school and Ryan is a purchasing analyst at woot.com.

Casey Hartnett, '12, and Kimberly Kelley, '12, were married on June 16, 2012.

Aaron Yzquierdo, '13, joined the U.S. Marine Corp after graduation to serve his

country and help others. Following infantry training, he is stationed in Houston with his reserve unit.



While deployed to Afghanistan, three members of the Special Operations Task Force–Southeast discovered that they had something in common—they were all Bearkats! They called themselves the "Southern Afghanistan Alumni Chapter of SHSU" and had their picture taken with the SHSU flag. **Pictured from left to right are:** Lt. Cmdr. **Eric M. Pedersen, '96**, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy; Lt. **Morgan Luttrell, '00**, U.S. Navy and the recipient of the SHSU 2012 Outstanding Young Alumnus Award; and Lt. Col. **Dan Monsivais '87**, U.S. Army.

Send us updates on work, relocations, marriages, family, degrees, accomplishments—and a photo, too.

Let Bearkats know what you've been up to by completing the online form or sending us an email. Class Notes are shared in the Heritage magazine.

Email: alumni@shsu.edu

or fill out the form at shsu.edu/~alu_kat/services/classnotes

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IN MEMORIAM

- Louis Marie (Bruner) Vick-Geelan '35, '42
 Lloyd Samuel Hooks '40
 Alta Maurine (Hewitt) Boutwell '41
 George R. Vick '41, '42
 Carolyn Dorothy (Wright) Werner '43
 James Elliott Wester '46
 Storey Hamilton '49
 Arley Walters '49
 Lillard Fred Belcher '50
 James B. Collins '50
 Frank John Danek Sr. '50
 Thomas Daniel Hamrick '50
 Mack Edison McLeod '50, '52
 Carl Lane Smith '50
 Ida Frances (Fraser) Strother '50
 Mable Lee (Cook) Cavers '53
 William Richard Wood '53, '60
 Charlie Alva Whatley '54
 Charles Alfred Hallmark '55
 James Wever Lanier Jr. '55, '74
 Cynthia Ann (Gaida) Jackson, '56
 Carrol J. Kelly '56
 Charles Allen Munday Jr. '56
 Emafred C. (Schoppe) Pengelly '56
 Barbara Ann (Cox) Thornton '56
 Kenneth R. Wren '56, '58
 Patrick E. Courtin Jr. '57
 Elmer L. King Jr. '57
 Jimmy Newton McKee '57
 Kenneth Wayne Daw '58, '66
 Lonnie Lee Richards '58, '68
 Billy Eugene Turner '58
 Carol D. (Davis) Haines '59
 John Lee Hall '59, '66
 Alton Downs Moore '59
 Wilburn Garnett Roesler '59, '63
 Freddie Mae Dannhaus '60
 Nancy Betts (Davis) Harwood '60
 Robert Berry Morgan Jr. '60
 Harry Allan Neville '60
 Riley Lee Snider '60, '65
 Freddie Lee Elliott '61
 Jane Carol (Baker) Hurst '61, '71
 Melvin Quentin Thorne Jr. '61
 Daniel E. Whitehead '61
 Paul Wesley Beathard '62
 Elna Ruth (Porter) Dana '62, '69
 Janice Darelene (Gentry) House '62
 Phil Luke Scamardo '62
 Edward Nathan Smith '63
 Joseph Doyle White Jr. '63
 Mary Joyce (Baldwin) Boettcher '64, '68
 Wayne C. Buss '64
 Margaret Louise (Frisby) McAdams '64
 Laura Kay (Edwards) Pinkham '64
 Betty Jean (Callender) Ramsey '64
 Madeline Ann (Gentry) Schraeder '64
 Archie C. Standley Jr. '64
 Julien B. Adoue III '65
 Chester White Flippo Jr. '65
 Thomas Kirkland Harrison '65
 Jo Anne (Glossbrenner) Jones '65
 Martha Ann (Page) Merrell '65
 Harvey J. Rogers '65
 Lana Kay (Reeves) Short '65
 Hiram Glynn Turner '65
 William Alpheus Waters '65
 Leroy Willie Ashorn Jr. '66, '67
 Georgia Lynn (Rodgers) Bates '66, '71
 Donald Gene Bates '66, '70
 Jeanne K. (Clancy) Brelsford '67, '74
 Eunice Myrlene Kennedy '67
 Elizabeth (Goolsby) Neyland '67
 Hazel (McLaughlin) Robeson '67
 Robert M. Trant Jr. '67, '75
 Theodore Denoon Gittinger '68, '72
 Steed Arthur Smith '68, '72
 Thomas R. Zimmermann '68, '76
 Xavier Carmona '69
 Charles Lynden Davis '69
 Mildred Frances Henk '69
 Michael Duncan Parish '69
 Leah Ruth Seale '69
 Kenneth Anderson '70
 Charles V. Butcher '70, '75
 Patrick Ishmael Chapman '70
 Mary Beth (Todd) Monroe '70, '73
 Michael F. Reynolds '70
 Crystal Jean (Harbin) Miller '71
 Ann (Clark) Sweeney '71
 Russ Parker Harvell '72, '74
 Jerry Lon Horn '72
 Ruth Marilyn (Hinkle) Kicklighter '72
 Sylvia (Taylor) Sada '72
 Lindsey Smith Clark Jr. '73
 Dwight E. Larson '73
 Virginia Leone (Beck) Perryman '73
 Stephen R. Barth '74
 Ronald F. Hollas '74
 Walter J. Phillips Jr. '74
 Harold Beasley '75
 Gary Bruce Henry '75
 Patricia Ann (Monroe) Harper '76
 Paul W. Mitchell '76
 Phonso Neill Rayford '76
 Lawrence Edward Dobraski '77
 Shawn Margaret Freeburg '77
 Johnny Mack Barrett '78
 Randy C. Childers '78
 Margaret Terry (Gingrich) McGrew '78
 Charles W. Sheffield '78
 Paul Kevin Sluka '78
 James Michael Farris '80
 Stephen Clay Nowlin '80
 Gayla Jean (McIver) Hornell Sellers '80
 David William Smith '80
 Daniel Ray Stryker '80, '02
 Jeffrey E. Bickham '81
 Shanta Faye Crawford '81
 Ethelyn (Gay) Hendrickson '81
 Agnes V. (Wingate) Frizzell '82
 Linda (Easley) Lambert '82
 Margaret (Craig) Webb '82
 David Rick Musgrove '83
 Catherine Ann (Ryan) Randazzo '83
 Patricia L. Kolaski '84
 Trina Mae (Hebert) Rigby '84
 Leonard Paul Barras '85
 Leslie Alan Bassham '88
 Bobby Breen Cayton '89
 Richard Powell Kennedy '90
 Stephen Hal Jeffries '92
 James Wendell Holmes '93
 Gregory Michael Hawkins '94
 Michelle (Schmidt) Kenny '95
 Catherine Lynn Torrence '95
 Anne Opal Perrin '97
 Judith Diana (Solis) Van Berg '97
 Shannon Thomas Seaton '01
 Wallace E. "Wally" Ernst '02
 Mark Allan Sheffler '06
 Charles Bryan Chandler '07
 Tammy Lynne Watson St. Clair '07
 Carmen Lynn (Beaumont) Hale '09
 Calvin Brooks Jr. '10
 Briana Sloan (Myrick) Nagy '12

BEARKATS-IN-BUSINESS

Host All-Star Line Up Score Record-Breaking Support

For a second year in a row, over 175 Houston-area business professionals and fellow alumni came together to celebrate and support the university's championship athletic program at the *Bearkats-in-Business* event held at the exclusive restaurant, Tony Mandola's.

Fellow alumnus Randy Roden, owner of Houston's Listo Drywall, Inc., hosted the reception with his "downhome southern Texas" hospitality. Guests were welcomed by university coaching staff and the effervescent Sammy the Bearkat mascot.

Special guests—Elvin Bethea, Don Trull, Larry Dierker and Gerald Irons, inspired and energized the crowd of Bearkats with their reflections on sports and the importance of fans and supporters.

Enthusiastic applause greeted Dr. Dana Gibson, SHSU president, Bobby Williams, university athletic director, and K.C. Keeler, new head football coach as they spoke of Sam Houston's success both on the field and in the classroom.

With over fifty *Bearkats-in-Business* sponsors for the all-star reception, Randy scored a home-run raising a record-breaking \$260,000 to benefit the university's athletic program.

For more information about *Bearkats-in-Business* or to learn more about ways to support the SHSU athletic program, contact University Advancement at 936.294.2402.



Don Sanders '58 with Sammy Bearkat.



Don Hendrix, Jr. '78 and Jackie Hendrix '79 (sponsors), President, Dr. Dana Gibson, Arlene Seltzer and Steve Seltzer '77.



Athletic Director Bobby Williams, Don Trull (retired professional football player), Larry Dierker (retired professional baseball player), Gerald Irons (retired professional football player), Randy Roden (host), Elvin Bethea (retired professional football player) and President, Dr. Dana Gibson.



SHSU Alumni mix and mingle, enjoying the atmosphere of Tony Mandola's one-of-a-kind restaurant.

shsu.edu/giving

Across the campus, you can feel a high level of energy and excitement. Innovation and improvements are paying off in numerous achievements and national recognition for our academic programs, research, and athletics. This enthusiasm increases every day and has brought our Alumni Association membership to an all-time high exceeding 11,000 active members, including more than 2,200 Life Members.



Enrollment has increased **43%** over ten years, ranking SHSU as the **11th** largest university in Texas.

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A Sam Houston State education remains accessible and below the average costs for public Texas institutions.



Since 2003, administrative costs as a percentage of total operating budget were reduced by half.



SHSU ranks **4th** out of **38** public Texas universities for students obtaining employment within **12** months of graduation.

Did you know... membership provides:

- Unique networking opportunities
- Invitations to alumni programs
- Publications & news
- Discounts to alumni events
- Savings benefits

A complete list of membership privileges is available at alumni.shsu.edu, where you can also join online.