

the WEST TEXAN

A Publication of the West Texas A&M University Alumni Association // Fall 2021

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WRITE TO US // We welcome your letters. The editor reserves the right to determine the suitability of letters for publication and to edit them for accuracy and length. Letters should refer to material published in the magazine and include the writer's full name, address and telephone number. If an alum, please include degree and year of degree.

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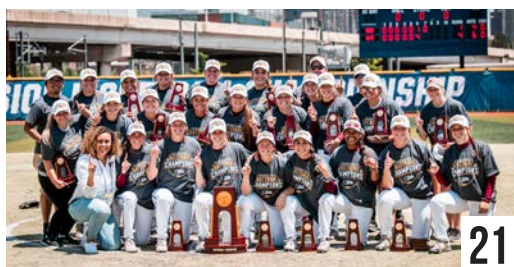
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EXECUTIVE TEAM LETTER



Ronnie Hall has had the opportunity to meet thousands of students and alumni in his 26 years of employment at West Texas A&M University. Ronnie is living his dream job of working with people who believe in the vision and mission of an incredible university. He began his career with WT in 1995, and through the years, he has been fortunate to meet faculty and staff who modeled servant leadership, creating in him a desire to do the same for students and alumni.



Brittney Lee graduated from West Texas A&M University in 2014. Immediately following graduation, she started her career with the university and has since discovered her passion for university engagement, community building and event planning. Brittney loves getting to meet and work with WT Alumni. She hopes to engage and connect alumni to keep their WT pride stronger than ever, no matter where they live now or when they graduated.

Dear Buffs,

What an exciting fall it has been! The Alumni Association has been busy with face-to-face events, including the relaunch of our Amarillo/Canyon chapter and other on-campus events. And, thankfully, Homecoming had an incredible turnout of students, alumni and community members. Thank you!

We also want to remind WT Alumni that you can play a huge role in recruiting potential WT students through the WT Alumni Scholars program. We are placing our trust in YOU, allowing our Alumni to recommend up to five potential WT students from any high school or community college. For more information about how you can be involved, visit buffalum.com.

If you haven't visited the new Alumni Association website recently, check it out! We would love to stay in contact with you, so make sure to update your information using our new form on the site. While there, you will see our upcoming alumni events and stay updated on all things WT. You also will be able to read about how to join the Alumni Association through your college and see our new membership level, Buff Family Spirit!

Go Buffs!
Ronnie & Brittney

Ronnie Hall
Brittney Lee



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WT Alumni Association

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

faculty and staff accomplishments

WT faculty and staff members have received awards, published works and been elected to serve in various capacities.

Three outstanding faculty members of West Texas A&M University's educator preparation program were honored in conjunction with the Oct. 5 World Teachers' Day. **Drs. Crystal Hughes, Mikyung Shin and Adam Weiss** were selected as the newest winners of the Liz and John Mozola Faculty Excellence Award, which recognizes the critical importance of faculty expertise and teaching effectiveness in the preparation of future educators. Currently, WT produces 75 percent of all teachers and administrators in the Panhandle area.

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Two West Texas A&M University faculty members recently were recognized as top teachers of teachers in The Texas A&M University System. **Dr. Russ Teweleit** and **Dr. Betty Coneway** were among TAMUS professors who joined the Chancellor's Academy of Teacher Educators, honoring faculty members who have had a significant impact on the preparation of teachers. Teweleit, a professor of music, was selected for the 2019-20 academy cohort. Coneway, the recently named Dr. Geneva Schaeffer Professor of Education and Social Sciences, was selected for the 2020-21 cohort.

.....

Dr. Lance Kieth, professor of agricultural education and head of the Department of Agricultural Sciences, was named 2021-22 Magister Optimus, the highest honor for a WT faculty member, and **Chance Haugen**, senior director for campus community, was honored with the Clarence E. Thompson Staff Excellence Award, the University's highest staff honor, during a convocation ceremony Aug. 16. Also honored during the ceremony were Staff Excellence Award winners **Kyler Estes**, assistant director of operations in the Office of Admissions, and **Sarah Ramey**, head strength and condition coach in WT Athletics.

.....

Workers may be more likely to fire off a fiery email if they didn't get a good night's sleep, according to research led in part by WT's **Dr. Trevor Watkins**, assistant professor of management and Foust Professor of Business. He conducted a two-week study in 2015 of 131 adult workers with his colleagues Dr. Satish Krishnan of the Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode in Kerala, India, and Dr. Christopher Barnes of the Foster School of Business at the University of Washington in Seattle. The study – which was published in June in *Sleep Health* – measures "cyber incivility," or electronic violations that violate workplace norms of mutual respect.

Thirty-three new faculty members have joined the West Texas A&M University roster for the start of the 2021-22 academic year.

New faculty members include:

Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences

Guillermo Marcillo, assistant professor of ag sciences; **Rachel Paladino**, instructor of biology; and **Maitreyee Mukherjee**, assistant professor of biology.

Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business

Nika Qiao, assistant professor of accounting; **Dallin Smith**, assistant professor of accounting; **Yiding Wang**, assistant professor of accounting; **Chen Zhao**, assistant professor of accounting; **Murray Jennex**, clinical professor of CIS; **William Biggs**, clinical assistant professor of business law; **Jae Kyun Yoo**, assistant professor of management; and **Matthew Loftin**, instructor of economics & finance.

College of Education and Social Sciences

Russell Miller, assistant professor of curriculum and instruction; **Minseok Yang**, assistant professor of research methodology; and **Sohee Kim**, assistant professor of criminal justice.

College of Engineering

Li Chou, assistant professor of computer science; **Mohammad Siddiqui**, assistant professor of computer science; **Behnam Askarian**, assistant professor of electrical engineering; **David Parker**, associate professor of water engineering; **Varatharaj Varatharaj**, instructor of engineering; **Deanna Bodkin**, instructor of math; **Swastika Bithi**, assistant professor of engineering; and **Fatemehsadat Tabei**, instructor of electrical engineering.

Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities

Anna Lemnitzer, assistant professor of art and design; **Echo Sibley**, assistant professor of theatre; **Kelsey Abele**, assistant professor of communication; **Min Wha Han**, assistant professor of communication; **George Pacheco Jr.**, associate professor of communication; and **Juan Garcia Oyervides**, assistant professor of Spanish.

College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Michelle Arnold, instructor of nursing; **Tamara Rhodes**, instructor of nursing; **Lee Doernte**, assistant professor of exercise science; **Michelle Smith**, assistant professor of nursing; and **Laura Coats**, assistant professor of nursing.

.....

Three West Texas A&M University communication faculty members and one graduate student presented their research at the National Communication Association's 107th Annual Convention in Seattle in November. **Drs. Mary Liz Brooks, Nancy Garcia** and **Min Wha Han** and graduate student Carmen Gabriel presented seven different pieces of research, including two top papers.

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Dr. Beth Garcia will serve as WT's first Sylvia Nugent Professor of Education. The professorship was established in January in Nugent's honor, recognizing her years of service in Texas politics, including political consulting, fundraising and other jobs for key political leaders, including former U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry and Texas state Rep. Four Price.

A generous donation to West Texas A&M University's Department of Nursing has established two new named professorships as the department continues to expand its footprint in the Panhandle.

Kristin Westbrook was named the Dr. Wesley L. Langham Professor of Nursing, and **Austin Wiseman** was named the Mary Wendler Professor of Nursing Practice. In addition, their colleague **Alee Friemel** was named the Northwest Texas Healthcare System/Eunice King Professor in Nursing, filling a position first established in 2011.

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A West Texas A&M University professor researching social media and artificial intelligence, including security and ethics issues surrounding both, was appointed to a professorship named for the first chair of WT's Computer Information Systems department. **Dr. Xiaolin Lin**, who joined WT's Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business in 2018, is the new Philip J. Gensler Professor of Computer Information Systems. **Dr. Jeffry Babb**, previous holder of the professorship, recently was named the Stan Sigman Professor of Business.

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The work of a pair of accomplished faculty members in West Texas A&M University's Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities has landed them esteemed new positions. **Callie Hisek**, an assistant professor of theater, is the new Royal R. Brantley Professor of Theatre, and **Jon Revett**, associate professor of art and art program director, is the new Doris Alexander Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts.

.....

An Amarillo arts leader assumed the helm of the Cultural Foundation of the Texas Panhandle and two leading Panhandle institutions. **Dr. Andrew Hay**, formerly executive director of the Amarillo Symphony, joined CFTP on Sept. 1 as its first executive director. CFTP was formed this year to preserve the culture of the Texas Panhandle and beyond, focusing the efforts of both Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum and the Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation, which produces the musical "Texas." CFTP operates under the oversight of WT, as a member of The Texas A&M University System.

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Four instructors in the Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences began the 2021-22 academic year in newly established professorships. They are: **Dr. David Khan**, Paul Engler Endowed Professor of Natural Sciences; **Dr. Brock Blaser**, Vernon Harman Professor of Dryland Farming; **Dr. Craig Bednarz**, Stan & Gerry Sigman Professor of Water Resources; and **Dr. John Richeson**, Paul Engler Professor of Beef Cattle Feedlot Management.

.....

Air purifiers may be highly effective at reducing the effects of allergies on dogs, according to newly published research by **Dr. Nabarun Ghosh**. Dr. Ghosh, professor of biology in WT's Department of Life, Earth and Environmental Sciences, presented his research in June at the Hawaii University International Conference in Honolulu.

.....

A new professorship named for a legendary Amarillo coach and teacher is now filled by longtime mathematics professor **Dr. Pamela Lockwood-Cooke**. The Clair Mayes Professorship in Mathematics is the first such endowed professorship in the mathematics department, part of the University's College of Engineering.

Continued on page 31

WT dominates Panhandle Great 25

West Texas A&M University nursing instructor Dr. Angela Phillips and 15 WT alumni were recognized as some of the best nurses in the Panhandle at the fifth-annual Panhandle Great 25 Nurses recognition ceremony Nov. 4. WT alumni included **Sharon Brewer '86, '97; Brenda Chandler '93; Ronda Crow '91; Kristin De Los Santos '12; Elizabeth Favela '08; Brenda Graham '80; Cami Meason '02; Jennifer Peters '19; Mandy Richardson '99; Sandy Richardson '88; John Schnatz '97; Shelly Seth '02; and Sally Swan '96.**

WT scores high in national rankings, again

West Texas A&M University has earned high marks in several top fields in recent rankings, burnishing its reputation as the Panhandle's University. College Factual, the largest source of higher education data and analytics in the country, ranked WT in the Top 5 percent for overall value for a bachelor's degree and gave the University 335 badges in its 2022 rankings, including in programs that generally are ranked less frequently. WT's plant, soil and environmental science program is highly ranked in several categories, and WT also earned Top 5 best value rankings for graduate computer information systems and criminal justice programs and undergraduate athletic training and music programs. Among the other top rankings: Best Public Administration Bachelor's Degree in Texas and in the Southwest region for WT's emergency management administration degrees; and Best Musical Theater Bachelor's Degree, Drama and Theater Arts Bachelor's Degrees in Texas and the Southwest region. College Factual uses government data and schoolwide indicators to assess specific programs. For 2022, it surveyed 2,576 colleges around the country. In addition, Online Bachelor Degrees ranked WT No. 1 in its list of best online schools for bachelor degrees in nursing for 2021. These rankings demonstrate WT's commitment to providing high quality, economically feasible education to students across Texas and the world as the University strengthens its position as a regional research university.

Pantex, WT partner on new engineering specialization

A new program to provide highly trained fire safety engineers will launch in Spring 2022, thanks to a new partnership between Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC and WT's College of Engineering. The entities announced a collaboration on a fire protection engineering specialization within WT's mechanical engineering program in late September.

WT Intern of the Year played crucial role at Xcel Energy

Andrew Boggs, a senior electrical engineering student from Amarillo who played a crucial role in ensuring that power and heat stayed on in the Panhandle during the historic February blizzard that crippled the rest of the state, was named the University's Intern of the Year. Boggs has worked at Xcel Energy since he was a senior at Caprock High School, advancing to the level of associate engineer and working as a team leader for energy supply projects. In February, historically low temperatures, freezing rains and snow crippled Texas, but the worst effects of the storm were felt south of the Panhandle because while much of the statewide energy grid failed, Xcel Energy's power stayed on.

Continued on page 33

HAVING A ROARING GOOD TIME WT Homecoming 2021

Homecoming roared back to life in 2021.

After a year off for Covid-19 precautions, the WT Alumni Association went all out to celebrate Homecoming 2021: The Roaring '20s.

The Phoenix celebrated WT's Distinguished Alumni Class of 2020 and 2021 (see related story, Pg. 12), while the Celebrating 60 Years of Integration banquet commemorated a pivotal turning point in University history (see related story, Pg. 10).

The Homecoming Parade – on its new route down Russell Long Boulevard – was a hit, and the Buffs scored a decisive 31-15 victory over Angelo State University. Ustina Guirguis, a senior agriculture media and communications major from Daytona Beach, Fla., and Branson Cruse, a junior agriculture business and economics major from Turkey, were crowned Homecoming Queen and King.





Top Left: WT Football coaches Andre Pope, left, and Christian LeMay are cheered as they walk through tailgate festivities along 26th Street before the game.

Top Right: Audiences of all ages enjoyed the Homecoming Parade's new route.

Bottom Right: A raucous time was had by all at the annual Pigskin Revue in The Box.



Left: Fans root the Buffs on to a resounding victory over Angelo State University.

Right: Branson Cruse, second from left, and Ustina Guirguis, second from right, were crowned Homecoming King and Queen. The 2020 King and Queen, Seth Rodriguez and Ailyn Canava, welcomed the newcomers during halftime ceremonies.



The Sound of West Texas Buffalo Marching Band was a big hit at the Homecoming Parade.



Left: Ty & Amber White enjoyed cocktails and jazz during a speakeasy-themed party at Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

Right: Gold and Diamond Reunion attendees include Debbie Farnum, Gary Culp, Dr. Bob Robinson and Daryl McClendon.





⬆
Top Left: Always a hit everywhere, including tailgate parties – the famous buffalo cookies.



Top Right: Current students helped out with a new Homecoming activity – a campus-wide scavenger hunt that started at Buff Courts.



Bottom Right: Everyone had a barking good time at the Homecoming tailgate.



➔
 Among the parade entries this year was a float with members of Boy Scout Pack 31 from Canyon. Dozens of community and University organizations entered the parade this year.

Celebrating 60 years of integration

BY CHIP CHANDLER

A group of true West Texas pioneers were honored during West Texas A&M University Homecoming Week – the first Black students and, later, staff and faculty members who together integrated the school.

Black students first arrived on campus at the then-West Texas State College beginning in 1960. They paved the way for countless other students of color who have earned their degrees at WT in the decades since, as well as faculty and staff members who help WT reflect the diverse population of the region it serves.

The legacy of those brave students were honored Oct. 8 at the Celebrating 60 Years of Integration dinner.

“Our Black students and all of our students of color today owe a debt of gratitude to those who took the first steps toward integration at

Angela Allen, chief officer for diversity and inclusion, presents Roy Watson, the first Black male student to enroll at WT, with a commemorative trophy and letter.



WT,” said Angela Allen, the University’s chief diversity and inclusion officer. “Indeed, all students and the entire WT community need to hear these students’ stories. WT has a fundamental commitment to equity and dignity for all, and remembering and learning from our shared past shows us how far we’ve come and how far we have to go.”

WTSC denied applications from at least two male Black students in 1959, but when John Mathew Shipp Jr. took his case to court, U.S. District Judge Joe B. Dooley found in February 1960 that Texas’ attempt to maintain racially exclusionary colleges to be unconstitutional. That opened the doors to Betty Jo Thomas, Mae Deane Franklin and Roy Watson, who enrolled in Fall 1960. They were followed in Spring 1961 by Helen Neal,

“We continue to aspire to create a welcoming and inclusive campus that will engage in action-oriented solutions to address discrimination and support all who come to WT.”

Dr. Walter V. Wendler
President, West Texas A&M University

who attended WT to complete a college degree begun at Langston College, a historically Black college in Oklahoma.

WT's mission of creating a diverse and inclusive student-centered community of learners is now a key tenet of University's long-term plan, WT 125: From the Panhandle to the World. That plan is being fueled by the historic, \$125 million One West comprehensive fundraising campaign.

“At WT, we embrace the opportunity of enhancing our experiences and cultural perspectives, and we also believe in learning from the past,” WT President Walter V. Wendler said. “We continue to aspire to create a welcoming and inclusive campus that will engage in action-oriented solutions to address discrimination and support all who come to WT.”

Neal, who graduated in 1962 and was a community leader in Amarillo until her 2013 death, wanted to set a good example for her four young girls, daughter Delores Thompson said.

“She and Daddy (Nathaniel ‘Nat’ Neal) met at Langston. When they got married, she didn’t get to finish her degree,” Thompson said. “She always thought that was important, and she wanted to be a good role model for us four girls.”

In that initial group’s footsteps, other Black students began arriving, encouraged by the willingness of Coach Joe Kerbel to recruit Black athletes.

Claudia Stuart, who arrived at WT in 1967, said she felt some racial tensions during her time as a student, particularly centering on the flying of the Confederate flag at football games.

“We formed a committee to go and talk about the flag with the administration and how things could be settled down a little bit because the history of the Confederate flag was different for us than it was for (white students),” Stuart said. “It took years – years – but we stayed with it.

“I was part of the Student Senate,” Stuart continued. “We were always having discussions on how to make things better for all of the students here at WT.”

Stuart later returned to WT for her master’s degree, then taught sociology and criminal justice for 20 years. Now a professor emeritus, Stuart this year was named a Distinguished Alumna.

Judy Turner, who started classes in 1967, had a harder time adjusting.

“I remember a time when I went into a classroom and sat down kind of in the middle of the room,” Turner recalled. “I was the only black student in there – in fact, that was the way it was from the time I entered WT until the time I graduated – and no one sat beside me or in front of me, so I felt out of place.

“I carried that with me until I graduated from WT. It was so stark that it was one of those things that never went away.”

In addition to Watson, the Neal family, Stuart and Turner, the dinner also honored former students and alumni Ron King and Billy Cannon, as well as Roger Scott, who was the first Black staff member hired at WT.

There’s a burden to being one of the first, said Turner, who went on to teach English at Caprock High School.

“But you can share what you’ve learned with those who are to come,” she said. “I’ve seen changes, and I’m hoping it continues, and I believe it will because I believe the younger generation is the one that will help that become a reality.”

Clara Brown-Trimble, left, celebrates with emcee Roushell Hamilton Jr. ‘09 of KAMR.



Building a Lasting Legacy

BY KELLY CARPER POLDEN





Mike Bain, Barbara Bain, Helen Piehl, Puff Piehl Niegos, Stanley Schaeffer and David Schaeffer recently gathered to discuss their families' legacy of giving to WT.



Puff Piehl Niegos, Mike Bain and David Schaeffer continue down a philanthropic path set by their parents.



For nearly three decades – and still going strong – the Piehl, Schaeffer and Bain families have been building a lasting legacy for WT students.

In the early years, the families' generous gifts of time and resources included hosting fundraising events and donating dozens of couches for student lounge areas. Since then, their generosity and commitment to giving back to their alma mater has grown to include the Bain Athletic Center, the Helen Piehl Professor of Education, and Schaeffer Park, to name just a few major projects.

Collectively, Barbara Bain, Helen Piehl and Stanley Schaeffer said that "The University gave us so much, including the tools in life to be successful. We want to give back to WT and do what we can to make the University a better place for future generations. We also want to encourage others, through our examples, to step up and give back."

That encouragement has motivated the next generation of their own families, as Puff Piehl Niegos, David Schaeffer, Mike Bain and their siblings follow in their parents' footsteps.

"As WT graduates, we are the nurses, teachers, engineers and other great employees and entrepreneurs

throughout the region," David and Mike agreed. "It's fun to follow in our parents' footsteps and give back to benefit current and future students. It's for the economic wellbeing of the Texas Panhandle."

"Our parents' passion is contagious," Puff said. "They inspired and mentored us to help make WT a place of opportunity. With the One West campaign's focus on people, programs and places, if you have a passion there's an opportunity to make an impact."

As American entrepreneur Jim Rohn said, "All good men and women must take responsibility to create legacies that will take the next generation to a level we could only imagine." WT students, staff and faculty extend heartfelt appreciation to the continued generosity of the Bain, Piehl and Schaeffer families.



Scan this to watch a video celebrating the legacy of the Bain, Piehl and Schaeffer families.

A NIGHT *to* REMEMBER

*2020, '21 Distinguished Alumni
Celebrated at Phoenix*

BY CHIP CHANDLER

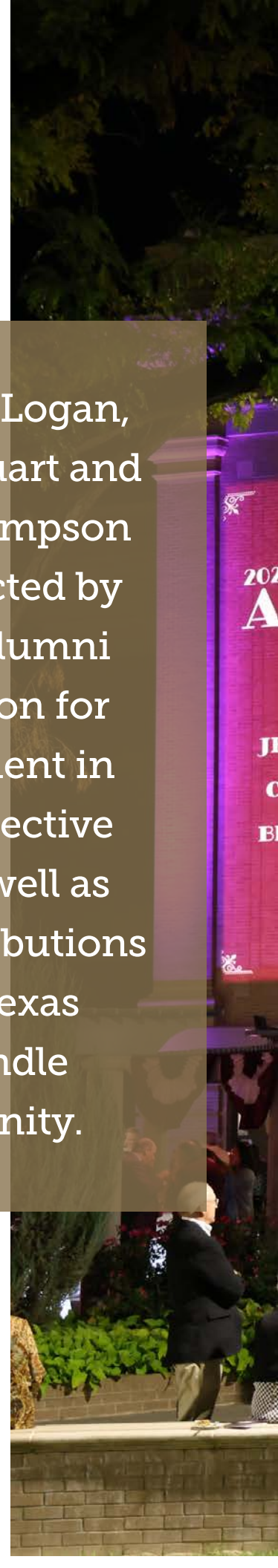
ANFL star, a poet and social justice advocate, and an award-winning environmental engineer were recognized Oct. 7 as the winners of West Texas A&M University's 2021 Distinguished Alumni Awards.

Jerry Don Logan, Claudia Stuart and Bruce Thompson were selected by the WT Alumni Association for achievement in their respective fields as well as their contributions to the Texas Panhandle community.

The trio was honored at the Phoenix event during Homecoming Week, alongside the 2020 Distinguished Alumni – Dr. Sally Carmen, Scott Doores, Rickey Harman and David Schaeffer. The 2020 event was merged with the 2021 event due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jerry Don Logan,
Claudia Stuart and
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were selected by
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fields as well as
their contributions
to the Texas
Panhandle
community.

The Distinguished Alumni classes of 2020 and 2021 were celebrated Oct. 7 at the Phoenix, which included an outdoor jazz reception on the Charles K. and Barbara Kerr Vaughn Pedestrian Mall outside Old Main.



2021 DISTINGUISHED
ALUMNI

JERRY DON LOGAN
CLAUDIA STUART
BRUCE THOMPSON

2021 DISTINGUISHED
ALUMNI

JERRY DON LOGAN
CLAUDIA STUART
BRUCE THOMPSON





JERRY DON LOGAN '64

Logan, who earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1964, is considered one of the greatest football players to compete at WT. The MVP of the 1962 team that defeated Ohio University in the Sun Bowl, Logan went on to play with the Baltimore Colts as a starting defensive back, competing in both Super Bowl III and Super Bowl V. In the latter game, Logan intercepted a pass and ended the Dallas Cowboys' last-ditch scoring effort; the Colts won 16 to 13.

Logan was selected to the Colts' silver-anniversary team in 1977 and was ranked in one poll as the 29th greatest Colt of all time.

Since retiring from football, Logan has lived in Graham, where he manages the family ranch and opened a cutting-horse training center. Logan and wife Fannie, also a WT alumna, have four children, 14 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

"Jerry Don has been a stellar representative for WTAMU, being a modest man of high ethics and character, and he is truly deserving of the Distinguished Alumni Award," wrote Dr. N. Andy Cole, 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award winner, in a nomination letter.



CLAUDIA STUART '72, '85

Stuart, who earned a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1972 and a master's degree in social science in 1985 from WT, is a WT professor emeritus of sociology and criminal justice, as well as being a licensed master social worker.

Active in church and community, she serves on many boards and commissions and as a consultant to social service and law-enforcement agencies. As a public speaker, her topics include faith, diversity, culture, social justice and creative arts. An award-winning author and artist, she has published several books of poetry and displayed her art in many venues, galleries and art exhibitions.

Stuart and husband Harold have two children and five grandchildren.

"(Claudia) is an exemplary woman whose values are above reproach, mirrored by her actions," community leader Lilia Escajeda wrote in a nomination letter. "No shrinking violet, Claudia is known for her grace and candidness. She is an active participant in those organizations she belongs to and takes nothing for granted."



BRUCE THOMPSON '65

Thompson, who earned his bachelor's in industrial arts in 1965, invented Sand X, an environmentally friendly process that separates oil from sand during fracking, which reduces danger for oilfield workers and saves companies millions of dollars while removing hydrocarbons and chlorides from sand.

Thompson also invented the Super Loop, which reduces virtually all emissions of hazardous gases on well sites, and the Sand L, which evenly and safely dispenses of Sand X-filtered sand.

His Sand L team won the 2017 World Oil Award for Best Health, Safety, Environment/ Sustainable Development – Onshore, and other inventions also have been recognized by the industry.

Thompson and wife Verena live in Granbury and have four children and six grandchildren.

"With his engineering mind and an appreciation for humanity, Bruce has attained prominence through his efforts in commerce, industry, technology and agriculture, which form a record of accomplishment impressive to the citizens of West Texas, Texas and the nation," wrote Dr. Emily Hunt, dean of WT's College of Engineering, in a nomination letter.

Accomplished alumni such as these help WT reach the goals of the University's long-term plan, WT 125: From the Panhandle to the World.



Top photo: The Distinguished Alumni classes of 2020 and 2021: Dr. Rickey Harman, from left, David Schaeffer, Dr. Sally Carmen, Scott Doores, Jerry Don Logan, Claudia Stuart and Bruce Thompson.

Bottom photo: Ronnie Hall, executive director of the WT Alumni Association, welcomes the audience to the Phoenix.

Left photos: WT President Walter V. Wendler and Travis Hager, WT Alumni Association president, presented awards to each of the Distinguished Alumni.

Thank you to our table sponsors:

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ONE VISION. ONE SPIRIT. ONE TEXAS.

WT MAKES HISTORY, LAUNCHES \$125 MILLION CAMPAIGN

BY CHIP CHANDLER

W

ith a dazzling display of fireworks and in front of hundreds of faithful supporters, faculty, staff and students, West Texas A&M University made history Sept. 23 with the official launch of the One West campaign.

One West is a comprehensive fundraising effort that will raise a record-smashing \$125 million for the University, benefitting every single aspect of WT in one way or another.

"WT's values are reflective of, and responsive to, the people we serve. And WT makes this region better every day," WT President Walter V. Wendler said. "The One West comprehensive campaign will ensure WT's future not only for this area we call home, but also for the world as we grow our influence as a regional research university."

At the Sept. 23 launch party in Buffalo Stadium on WT's campus in Canyon, campaign leaders announced the overall goal and priorities of the campaign, which will run through 2025.



Each of WT's six Colleges and the Graduate School offered hands-on demonstrations of cutting-edge research, technology and more.

And, crucially, the leaders announced that the University already had raised \$80 million – 64 percent of the total goal.

“The One West campaign represents the largest and most ambitious fundraising effort across the Texas Panhandle,” said Terry Rogers, One West Campaign Leadership Committee co-chair with husband Dyke.

The leadership team also includes Jim J. Brewer and Leah McLain, Cheryl and Alex Fairly, and Sherry and David Schaeffer.

The campaign dwarfs WT’s landmark 2012 fundraising campaign, which raised \$53 million, 76 percent more than its announced goal of \$30 million.

“The One West comprehensive campaign will ensure WT’s future not only for this area we call home, but also for the world as we grow our influence as a regional research university.”

The scope of the One West campaign is different, too.

“The One West campaign is comprehensive, which means that a gift to anything at WT counts in the campaign,” Dyke Rogers said.

The campaign’s three priorities: people, through scholarships and professorships; programs, enhancing academic offerings and research; and places, improving existing buildings and constructing new spaces.



Dr. Joshua Partheepan, assistant professor of systems engineering, helps Terry Rogers, One West campaign co-chair, make a T-shirt during the One West launch party.

“One West is a transformational campaign for WT and the Panhandle Region. It will have an enormous impact for the next half century and beyond,” said Dr. Todd Rasberry, vice president for philanthropy and external relations. “Every aspect of the University – from our Colleges and Graduate School to student services to athletics to the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum – will benefit from the generosity of our donors during this momentous campaign.”

Among the giving opportunities: Endowed scholarships for students; named professorships and chairs for faculty members; endowed programs and research funds; and naming rights for three of the University’s Colleges and its Graduate School, as well as various campus buildings, classrooms and other spaces.

The WTAMU Foundation will work with donors to set up multi-year commitments, gifts from donor-advised funds, gifts of asset-generating property, or estate bequests through wills or living trusts, among other options.

“All types of gifts are welcome and appreciated as WT secures its position as the Panhandle’s only research university,” Rasberry said.

The Sept. 23 launch featured interactive displays from each of WT’s six Colleges and the Graduate School, demonstrating to donors the cutting-edge research and innovations currently underway



at the University, and how their investments are shaping the educational experiences of students.

A 41-member volunteer steering committee is working alongside the core leadership.

Members include Debbie Farnum, representing the Alumni Association; Chris Lyons, representing Athletics; Joseph Peterson, representing Diversity and Inclusion; Will Miller, representing the Cultural Foundation of the Texas Panhandle; Ross Wilson, representing the Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences; J. Pat Richmond, representing the Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business; Lanna Hatton, representing the College of Education and Social Sciences; Travis Brown, representing the College of Engineering; Janet Townsend,



Top: Attendees enjoyed virtual reality demonstrations, among other activities provided by the College of Engineering.

Bottom: Harry Heuston, retired WT faculty member, takes a swing at a golf simulator provided by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

representing the Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities; Randy Sharp, representing the College of Nursing and Health Sciences; and David Prescott, representing Graduate School.

Also on the steering committee are WTAMU Foundation board members Bruce Barrett, Scott Doores, Ed Dowdy, Lilia Escajeda, Paul Evans, John Frantz, Brett Hall, Bob Hatton, J.T. Haynes, David Hudson, Taylor Kelley, Barbara Bain, Stanley Schaeffer, Brent McClure, Andrew Mitchell, Helen Piehl, Richard Saucedo, Mike Wartes, Jo Tyler Engler, Paul Engler, Trevor Caviness, William Ware, Shawn Morrison, Jerry Don Thompson and Paul Matney. At-large members are Mike Bain, Lizzie Ware Williams, Kolton Wilder, Alan Rhodes and Jeff Nunn.

The committee also includes University representatives from across WT.



BY HALEY BELL

West Texas A&M University is often referred to as the heart and soul of the Texas Panhandle. That heart is comprised of our dedicated faculty, staff and retirees, some of whom have been connected to the University for many decades.

Dr. James K. Owens graduated from the then-West Texas State College in 1963, earned his master's from WT in 1965, then attended Harvard Business School, where he earned his doctorate in 1971. After spending five years teaching abroad, he returned home to Canyon to teach at his alma mater.

"This is my school; I belong here," said Owens, now WT's professor of finance and the Hodges Professor of Corporate Governance.

Of the many reasons Dr. Owens loves Canyon and chose to make it his home, his children were his primary focus, both of whom were adopted from Iran.

"One of the wonderful things about Canyon is that (my children) were only interesting until the next storm rolled through, then they were just part of the framework," Owens said.

Dr. Owens - or "Jim" to those who know him well - has been teaching at WT for more than 43 years and has been giving back to WT for the majority of those years.

"It's something you simply do. You don't take from an organization without giving back," he said.

"It's a cowboy ethic that goes back many years," Owens continued. "People would work on ranches for 'food and found,' which was about \$30 per week, plus a place to live. In

exchange you would 'Ride for the Brand.' That means whatever they needed, you just did it, and if you weren't happy, you were welcome to move on and find a new brand."

Owens has been giving back to the University longer than any other donor in WT's history. Though most of his time and focus are understandably with the Paul Engler College of Business, Owens' support has been felt all over WT.

"I've given to the Alumni Association, the library, President's Circle, and athletics," Owens said.

Remembering a donation to the women's golf team, Owens said, "I learned a valuable lesson: Don't play with those girls. They will absolutely humiliate you with their talent."

He once had a student in one of his classes who was part of the rodeo team, so they received Owens' support as well.

It wasn't until 2008 that West Texas A&M University launched its official faculty, staff, and retiree giving campaign, I Am WT. Faculty and staff participation in the I Am WT campaign makes a tremendous impact on the University's commitment to excellence, while also playing a vital role in influencing gifts from corporations and foundations.

Owens served as the 2021 I Am WT Campaign spokesperson where he graciously allowed the Annual Giving team to challenge all faculty, staff, and retirees to "#Be Like Jim!". All donors who pledged a minimum of \$20 for the year received a pair of One West-branded socks designed Tanner Mahan, a WT graphic design student.

"We can't change the world overnight, but we can change the place where we are," Owens said. "It's not just because it's home. For me it's a strong obligation to leave this place better than I've found it."





Home of Champions

BY BRENT SEALS

①

Lady Buff Softball capped off a historic run thru the NCAA Division II College World Series with a 4-1 win over Biola on June 1 to claim the program's second National Championship.

Scan the QR code below to watch the winning home run against Biola.



West Texas A&M University is home to one of the most successful athletic programs in all of NCAA Division II, and the 2020-21 campaign proved that in the face of uncertain times involving a global pandemic. WT implemented strict but effective protocols that allowed the Buffs and Lady Buffs to succeed on the field as well as in the classroom.

The 2020-21 season saw WT claim seven Lone Star Conference regular season championships, three LSC tournament titles, three regional championships, four Top 3 track & field finishes, a men's basketball national title game appearance, and the 2021 NCAA Division II Softball National Championship.



The 2021 Lady Buff softball squad capped off a magical run through the NCAA College World Series on June 1 as they defeated Biola 4-1 at the Regency Athletic Complex in Denver to claim the program's second Division II National Championship. Head Coach Michael Mook and the Lady Buffs finished the season 43-12 overall as they became just the fourth active Division II institution to win multiple national titles on the softball diamond.

WT's Shanna McBroom was named the National Fastpitch Coaches Association DII National Player of the Year and National Catcher of the Year. The Sachse native finished her five-year career in the program's Top 10 in hits, triples, home runs, at-bats, runs and games played after hitting .429 with 13 doubles, eight triples, seven home runs and 37 RBIs as a senior.

Canyon can also add "Home of an Olympian" to its bragging points as track star Benjamin Azamati represented Ghana at the 2020

Olympics in Tokyo, held in 2021 because of Covid-19, where he ran the second leg on the 4x100-meter relay that qualified for the final ahead of the U.S. team. He also competed in the 100-meter dash running 10.13, just 0.1 seconds away from qualifying for the semifinal.

Azamati, the 2021 recipient of the EMY African Man of the Year award, registered one of the best seasons of any NCAA Division II sprinter in history as he broke the 100-meter and 200-meter records along with winning three individual national titles. He won the 100-meter and 200-meter titles along with anchoring the 4x100-meter relay to a runner-up finish at the NCAA DII Outdoor Championships as the Buffs finished a program-best second. He also was named the Lone Star Conference Athlete of the Year after sweeping both sprint titles in record fashion.

The WT baseball team made history in 2021 as they claimed the program's third Lone Star





Conference Regular Season Championship on their way to their first appearance in the South Central Regional Finals. Matt Vanderburg and the Buffs went 34-9 overall for their seventh consecutive trip to the NCAA Postseason as they claimed the LSC title with a mark of 28-4.

Men's track & field put the finishing touches on the best season in program history on May 29 with a second-place finish at the 2021 NCAA Division II Men's Outdoor Track & Field Championships in Allendale, Michigan. The Buffs finished on the podium for the first time outdoors finishing with 55 points with nine All-Americans and three National Champions on the final day of competition.

WT's Zada Swoopes broke the meet record in the shot put as the Lady Buffs finished on the podium for the fourth time in program history at the 2021 NCAA Division II Outdoor Track & Field Championships. The Whitewright native has now won four national titles during her career with three of those coming in the shot put as she was named the USTFCCCA National Women's Field Athlete of the Year.



Left: Eric Ortiz hit .322 and drove in 25 RBI as the Buffs won the Lone Star Conference Regular Season Championship on their way to the program's seventh consecutive NCAA Postseason

Center: Shanna McBroom was named the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Division II National Player of the Year as the senior catcher hit .426 on the season with seven homeruns and 37 RBI

Right: Zada Swoopes continued to re-write the Division II Track & Field record book as the junior set a new meet record on her way to her second Division II Shot Put National Title



Left: Benjamin Azamati finished off his first full collegiate season in style as he was named the USTFCCCA National Track Athlete of the Year

Right: Taylor Nelloms added her name to a long list of Lady Buff All-Americans as the freshman won the Division II National Championship in the Triple Jump.



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STUDENT ALUMNI *Network*

“I am grateful to the Student Alumni Network for providing opportunities to learn from WT alumni, as well as make connections on campus.”

Alexandra Wall
Student Alumni Network Vice President

Current West Texas A&M University students can already begin taking advantage of the perks of being a Buff alumnus thanks to a newly formed organization.

The WT Alumni Association recently launched the Student Alumni Network with a 26-member initial cohort from all across the University.

“The Student Alumni Network has been a great additional membership option for the WT Alumni Association. We love getting to work with students and help them foster pride in the university and also connect with them while they are here at WT. The group has students ranging from all different ages, majors and each has a unique set of skills.”

Brittney Lee
Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and University Engagement

“We want to empower WT students to expand their Buff family through connection, leadership development and pride in the University,” said Ronnie Hall, Alumni Association executive director. “Being part of SAN provides opportunities for students to gain knowledge about WT’s rich history and traditions, while also creating traditions of their own.”

“We love getting to work with students and help them foster pride in the university,” said Brittney Lee, assistant director. “The group has students ranging from all different ages, majors and each has a unique set of skills.”

The group meets monthly for lunch, giving students the opportunity to network, hear from a variety of speakers, and learn about upcoming Alumni Association events.

“I am grateful to the Student Alumni Network for providing opportunities to learn from WT alumni, as well as make connections on campus,” said Alexandra Wall, a senior general business major from Amarillo. “It benefits students by amplifying their WT education, and I look forward to watching this network expand and progress.”

Inaugural members also include Adam Jiwa, senior broadcast journalism from Canyon; Alexander Davis, sophomore biochemistry major from Wheeler; Berek Bentley, senior computer information systems major from Amarillo; Blake Usleton, freshman undeclared major from Canyon; Brandy Callahan, senior athletic training major from Borger; Britten Hull, sophomore animal science major from Lubbock; Bryan Garcia, junior health care administration major from Childress; Chris Morgan, business graduate student from Amarillo; Cynthia Perez, junior environmental science major from Round Rock; Erik Vega, junior general business major from Yukon, Okla.; James Castle, senior civil engineering major from Hale Center; Justin Bell, junior emergency management administration major from Amarillo; Kayla Arnold, senior theatre design and technology major from Killeen; Lauren Kuehler, senior biochemistry major from Groom; Makenzie Norden, sophomore animal science/pre-vet major from Sugar Land; McKinley Begert, junior agriculture education major from Allison; Melinda Rivera, senior social work major from Amarillo; Michelle Howington, junior general business major from Amarillo; Payton Brookshire, senior psychology major from Amarillo; Robert Bell, senior sociology major from Stinnett; Roy Thomason, sophomore biochemistry major from Childress; Sadie Bow, senior ag media and communications major from Happy; Shelby Simpson, sophomore animal science major from Amarillo; Tammy Bjork, senior nursing major from Amarillo; and Yulissa Sandoval, senior graphic design major from Amarillo.

To learn more about the Student Alumni network, visit buffalum.com

CAMPUS UPDATES

The revitalization of both of West Texas A&M University's campuses continued throughout 2021 with the completion of a major project in Amarillo and the beginnings of big changes on the main campus in Canyon.

As the One West campaign continues, expect to see more transformations across WT.

HARRINGTON ACADEMIC HALL WTAMU AMARILLO CENTER:

The Baptist Community Services Nursing Education Floor opened for classes Aug. 23 at its location on the center's second floor. The \$7 million project now houses 250 undergraduate bachelor of nursing students and about 20 nursing faculty and staff. In its 25,000 square feet, the BCS Nursing Education Floor includes state-of-the-art simulation labs and other innovative educational spaces. A renovated parking lot also was underway.



NATURAL SCIENCE BUILDING:

A three-phase, \$3.8 million renovation project is resulting in updated laboratories and classroom spaces, transforming the building in to a modern, versatile research and classroom location.



VIRGIL HENSON ACTIVITY CENTER:

The pool got a major facelift with a \$1.8 million project that included new flooring, painting and air-handling equipment upgrades.



CONNER HALL:

New flooring was installed in the residence hall, and electrical and window air-conditioning units were upgraded.

23RD STREET:

The main entry point to campus was enhanced with extended brick pilasters with stone caps and wrought-iron fencing, matching existing fencing along the street. New WT logos were included in the fencing.



VERO: The Veterinarian Education, Research and Outreach building, which was completed in September 2020, now has four new clinical skills labs, as well.



26TH STREET:

The new home to WT tailgating events, 26th Street now has a newly engineered storm-water system to create better drainage. Unsafe walkways were demolished and new sidewalks were built. New microsealing also was applied to the street, which is primarily used for pedestrian traffic.



J.A. HILL MEMORIAL CHAPEL:

The historic chapel's roof was replaced with a new one comprised of synthetic slate.



GUENTHER HALL:

New flooring was added in all common areas, restrooms and resident rooms.

FIELDHOUSE:

The building known by all as "The Box" was given a new roof, and the court was officially named the BritKare Court.



AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES COMPLEX:

New exits for patron use in the arena were added to allow for better crowd attendance.

PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM:

A renovated lab space and classroom construction was completed for a new STEAM lab facility.



NANCE RANCH:

Two new swine care units were installed for agriculture animal production.



MARY MOODY NORTEN HALL:

The hall's elevator was modernized.

OLD MAIN: The east elevator was modernized.



Passing the Baton

BY CHIP CHANDLER



Dr. B.J. Brooks, second from left, the new director of the WT Marching Band, is welcomed by his three living predecessors: Dr. Gary Garner, left, Dr. Russ Teweleit, second from right, and Dr. Don Lefevre.

In its 104-year history, the West Texas A&M University Marching Band has led by only eight directors – and four of them, thankfully, are still with us. Three, in fact, still teach classes at WT.

That's a remarkable legacy, one that was celebrated this fall during a special lunch in the Fairly Group Club at Buffalo Stadium with Dr. Gary Garner, Dr. Don Lefevre, Dr. Russ Teweleit and Dr. B.J. Brooks shortly after Brooks took the baton as WT's newest marching band director.

Their conversation, edited for length and clarity, follows.

Chip Chandler: Okay, well, let me just start with Dr. Garner and tell me what was the marching band like when you arrived. Let's start from your arrival at WT.

Garner: My first year, the talent range was pretty wide. There were some extraordinary players, but the band primarily was made up of non-music majors. And some of them were considerably less than extraordinary. But they were all very committed to the organization and what they were doing.

Chandler: What brought you here?

Garner: The opportunity to come back to Texas. I'd been the marching band director at University of Southern California for four years.

Chandler: Why go from USC to WT?

Garner: It wasn't in Texas, but you know that already. The marching band scene in California at that time was not remotely what it was in Texas. And I missed that greatly.

Chandler (to Lefevre, Teweleit and Brooks): Tell me about your earliest memories of Dr. Garner?

Lefevre: I started coming to the WT band camp

in the, I guess, early '70s. And Dr. Garner was always the conductor of the honors band at that time. Then I came to WT as a student in 1975 from Fort Stockton. And surprisingly enough, there were a ton of students that were attended WT from Fort Stockton because our high school band director was such a big believer in Dr. Garner.

Garner: And I might interject, if I may, that the band camp then and now and every year in between has been probably the single biggest factor that has brought a lot of extraordinarily talented band members to this campus.

Lefevre: I have to say, my friends and I talk about the '70s. And the '70s were an amazing time and WT in the Department of Music. Oh my goodness, the talent level was extraordinary. And the marching band was unreal. I'll never forget the way it sounded.

Garner: If I could relive one decade of my life, it would be the '70s.

Lefevre: I mean, we're going to recapture that again, I hope, but I think the '70s were probably the highlight of things in the School of Music in terms of just the quality of students.

Chandler: Russ, when do you hear that the '70s were the best decade, how does that make an '80s child feel?

Teweleit: I'm okay with that. It didn't hurt that they had the Vietnam War, sending them all to college. College became very attractive at that point. But yeah, I came to camp just for no reason other than my friend needed a roommate. I didn't know anything about WT until then, but I feel like I came to camp and never left. I came here as a music major in the fall of '86. I graduated, moved two blocks and taught in Canyon for eight years, and then came back to WT and have been here since 1989.

Chandler: What was the reputation of this band?

Lefevre: I think we all felt like Dr. Garner was the very best in the country at what he did. And he had no equal. Really, when you when you listen to those performances, and all of us do, the band played at a higher level than any other university band in the country.

Garner: Do you see how his nose is growing?

Lefevre: No, it really did. And, I mean, we could tell you stories.

Brooks: I can tell you a little bit about how reputation works. I think was my first year here (in the master's program) in 2002. I took conducting from Lefevre. And first thing that we did in class, I remember that, we watched a video of Dr. Garner conducting 'Lincolnshire Posey,' and Don said, 'Now watch this, watch this,' talking about all of the subtle variation of the baton that could invoke a really musical response from the students and not doing more than is necessary, not doing anything showy, but doing what the music demands. (I thought) this Dr. Garner must be somebody, you know, to be able to pass these words of wisdom to people that I admire and respect. That meant something. That, to me, is what reputation is. It's not the firsthand thing, it's the second- and then thirdhand comments from people.

Garner: Even though he is highly prone to exaggeration, this guy is a certifiable genius, let me tell you.

Lefevre: So Garner was the fifth band director at WT. BJ is the eighth since 1917.

Chandler: Is that unusual? It seems it to me.

Lefevre: Oh, yeah. A lot of it is (Garner's) long tenure. He was the marching band director for 30 years – 1963 to 1993. Yeah, that's a long haul.

Chandler: In 30 years as the marching band director, how many lives do you think he touched? What's his legacy?

Lefevre: Well, this next year, we're having a Garner tribute – June 10 through 12 in the Amarillo Civic Center. It's going to be a neat event. Seven decades and, I don't know, maybe 8,000 students during that time probably that went through the School of Music. Here's the thing about Gary. He retired in 2002, but he's still involved. He's still working at the band camp.

Garner: You've never seen the floors any cleaner, let me tell you. (All laugh.)

“It's so uniquely American to have a marching band, certainly the way that we do it. And I'm not sure what it is particular, but the idea of putting a visual on top of the music. The visual, but also athletic performance, on top of the music.”

Lefevre: He's still a part of what we do. He hasn't ever not been. That's the great thing about him being local and healthy, you know? All he charges is the price of a Diet Dr. Pepper.

Chandler: BJ, what's it like to step into the footprints left by these men?

Brooks: Well, you know, it was a big decision. You look at the longevity of these directors and the commitment of these directors, it's certainly no small task. I talked to my wife about it and said you know, I don't want to do it for a year or five years, you know. It's bigger than that.

Chandler: Y'all know I love marching bands, too. What makes marching band so special? What makes it such a valuable experience for students who don't even go on in music?

Brooks: I've got this one. It's so uniquely American to have a marching band, certainly the way that we do it. And I'm not sure what it is particular, but the idea of putting a visual on top of the music. The visual, but also athletic performance, on top of the music.

Garner: Without any concussions.

Brooks: Rare concussions, very rare. (Laughter) It's a bonding experience. You can have similar experiences in ensembles, but, I don't know, when you sweat together, you start to become very close.

Lefevre: It creates an esprit de corps that you don't get in any other musical activity to that degree.

Brooks: If ever there was a team activity, it would be band. Everybody marches. And everybody has to do it together. And if you see somebody who's slightly slower, it's not like we're going to bench them. They're going to learn it. And they're going to be better for it.

Lefevre: I was talking to one of our alumni and we were visiting about the whole WT experience and what makes our alumni so close and so tightknit. We think it's the marching band, this experience that we've all shared.

Brooks: You had asked a while ago, you know, stepping in and doing this, how does that feel? Once Russ had announced he was stepping down, seeing the flood of posts, saying, you did this for me, this changed my life, I'll always remember this. Just student after student after student after student. It's a big deal.

Chandler: Russ, what was it like to make that decision to step down this year?

Teweleit: Oh, it was really hard. BJ and I talked about it two years ago, and that gave me all the comfort knowing that it would be in good hands. I decided 30 years of marching band was enough. I thought this would allow me to put a little more focus into the music education area, which is what I do. The time seemed right for that.

Lefevre: It's a full-time job just by itself. Just that one thing. You could do marching band and if that could be your entire job for the whole fall semester, you'd still be one of the busiest people at the School of Music, at the university. It's a hard job.

Garner: But a very rewarding one.

Teweleit: The connection and impact you have on them is so incredible.

Chandler: Anything else? That was kind of a perfect ending.

Garner: Next time, could you find us a better parking place?

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WT Sybil B. Harrington
College of Fine Arts and Humanities
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

SCAN FOR DETAILS OF THE 2022 SCHEDULE

JANUARY

10 TO 2/26
28, 30

Anna Lemnitzer faculty exhibition
"The Magic Flute"

FEBRUARY

9 TO 13
18
19
25
27

"As You Like It"
Harrington String Quartet
WT Symphony
Grace Hamilton Piano Festival
Choir pre-tour concert

MARCH

3 TO APRIL 26
8
9
31 TO APRIL 3
31 TO APRIL 23

Rob Weingart faculty exhibition
Showcase of Chamber Ensembles
Sarah Rushing piano recital
"Portraits of Dance" performances
Ann Callen master of fine arts exhibition

APRIL

9
14 TO 24
21
25, 26
26
27
28 TO MAY 14
29
TBA
TBA

Russian Music Festival
"The SpongeBob Musical"
Spring choir concert
Student Showcase Recital
School of Music Honors Recital
Concert and Symphonic Band concerts
Spring bachelor of fine arts exhibition
Harrington String Quartet
"Gallantry: A Soap Opera Opera"
Spring jazz concert



Dec. 31 4 p.m.
Jan. 2 4 p.m.
Jan. 6 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 8 4 p.m.
Jan. 13 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 15 4 p.m.
Jan. 20 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 22 4 p.m.
Jan. 27 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 29 2 p.m.
Feb. 3 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 12 4 p.m.
Feb. 15 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17 8:30 p.m. CT
Feb. 24 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 26 4 p.m.

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Oklahoma Christian
Texas A&M-Commerce
UT Tyler
St. Edward's
St. Mary's
Angelo State
UT Permian Basin
Midwestern State
DBU
Cameron
Lubbock Christian
Eastern New Mexico
Cameron
Western New Mexico
Texas A&M-Kingsville
Texas A&M International

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Oklahoma City, Okla.
Canyon, Texas
Canyon, Texas
Austin, Texas
San Antonio, Texas
Canyon, Texas
Canyon, Texas
Wichita Falls, Texas
Dallas, Texas
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Canyon, Texas
Canyon, Texas
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Silver City, N.M.
Canyon, Texas
Canyon, Texas

2021-22 MEN'S BASKETBALL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2021-22 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Dec. 31 2 p.m.
Jan. 2 2 p.m.
Jan. 6 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 8 2 p.m.
Jan. 13 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 15 2 p.m.
Jan. 20 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 22 2 p.m.
Jan. 27 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 29 2 p.m.
Feb. 3 5:30 p.m.
Feb. 10 5:30 p.m.
Feb. 12 2 p.m.
Feb. 15 5:30 p.m.
Feb. 17 6:30 p.m. CT
Feb. 24 5:30 p.m.
Feb. 26 2 p.m.

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UT Tyler
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St. Mary's
Angelo State
UT Permian Basin
Midwestern State
Texas Women's
Cameron
Lubbock Christian
Eastern New Mexico
Cameron
Western New Mexico
Texas A&M-Kingsville
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Canyon, Texas
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WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

faculty and staff accomplishments

WT faculty and staff members have received awards, published works and been elected to serve in various capacities. *Continued from page 2.*

An environmental engineering professor who studies water woes in the Panhandle and in developing communities around the globe is West Texas A&M University's new Bell Helicopter Professor of Engineering. **Dr. Nathan Howell** recently was named to the position, which was established in 2012 to retain and recruit faculty members who will advance engineering at WT.

.....

As the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences' Veterinary Education, Research, & Outreach program's newest assistant professor of microbial ecology and infectious disease, **Dr. Matthew Scott** is on a mission to prevent infectious disease in cattle living in high-risk settings, such as feedlot facilities. He investigates host/infectious disease relationships regarding clinical bovine respiratory disease with bioinformatic (a field including biology, computer science, information engineering, and mathematics) and molecular approaches. BRD, the leading disease complex in cattle, can cause pneumonia in calves, which is often fatal.

.....

A longtime early childhood education professor at West Texas A&M University has been newly appointed to an endowed professorship. **Dr. Betty Coneway**, who joined WT in 2007 as a part-time instructor following a career as a classroom instructor and administrator in Hereford, is the new Dr. Geneva Schaeffer Professor of Education and Social Sciences.

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Courtney Crowley recently returned from an immersive tour of Israel as part of a competitive faculty fellowship that attracted professors around the world. Crowley, an instructor of history, and 12 other professors spent about two weeks at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass., before a 10-day trip to Israel for the Summer Institute for Israel Studies, part of Brandeis' Schusterman Center for Israel Studies.

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A WT physics major recently published research into newly discovered materials that may revolutionize personal electronics. **Duncan Miertschin**, a senior from Amarillo, and faculty adviser **Dr. Keshav Shrestha**, assistant professor of physics, authored a study on topological crystalline insulators that appeared in the June 28 issue of the Journal of Physics: Condensed Matter.

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An IT specialist with an uncanny ability to anticipate the needs of her fellow employees was named Employee of the Year for 2020-21. **Lora Haasl**, an 18-year WT veteran, won a cash prize, free parking for a year and more during WT's All-Staff Service Awards, held in June. Haasl was voted Employee of the Year by faculty and her fellow staffers amid a field of 11 other employees of the month.

Dr. Vinu Unnikrishnan was recently awarded his third and fourth patents on an artificial material that can revolutionize the development of prostheses, traumatic brain injury studies and more. Unnikrishnan was awarded patents in February and March for simulated tissue that acts in the same way as human tissues but is made from silicone.

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Outstanding faculty and staff members of West Texas A&M University were recognized in April. University faculty award winners include:

Instructional Responsibilities Excellence Award – **Dr. Mary Liz Brooks**;

Intellectual Contributions Excellence Award: **Dr. Vinu Unnikrishnan**;

Professional Service Excellence Award: **Dr. Gene Farren**; and Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award: **Dr. Leigh Green**.

Additional college faculty award winners for instructional responsibilities include:

Paul Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Science: **Dr. Ray Matlack**

Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business: **Dr. Trevor Watkins**

College of Engineering: **Preston Tirey**

College of Nursing and Health Sciences: **Laura Reyher**

Additional college faculty award winners for intellectual contributions include:

Engler College of Agriculture and Natural Science: **Dr. Keshav Shrestha**

Engler College of Business: **Dr. Xiaolin Lin**

College of Education and Social Sciences: **Dr. Adam Weiss**

Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities: **Dr. Andrew Reynolds**

College of Nursing and Health Sciences: **Zeth Collom**

Additional college faculty award winners for professional service include:

College of Agriculture and Natural Science: **Dr. Nate Wolf**

Engler College of Business: **Dr. Anne Macy**

College of Engineering: **Dr. Vinitha Subburaj**

College of Education and Social Sciences: **Dr. Kenneth Denton**

Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities: **Steven Dolezal** and **Dr. B.J. Brooks**

Staff excellence award winners include:

Rebekah Bachman, assistant dean of the Engler College of Agriculture & Natural Sciences;

Lisa Mitchell, senior coordinator for graduate business programs for the Engler College of Business; and **Alyson Ries**, director of advising services.

Special Academic Affairs Appreciation Recognition was awarded to **Dr. Jeffery Babb** and **Dr. Anne Medlock** for leading the Faculty Senate through challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic; and **Richard Smith**, assistant vice president for risk management and director of academic and research environmental health and safety, for supporting University efforts related to Covid-19 testing, contact tracing and reporting.

class notes

WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM

'50s

Commander Alton Doyle

Quisenberry '53 taught school in Amarillo for four years before joining the Navy. He served in the Navy and retired after 22 years in Virginia Beach at the rank of Navy Commander. Quisenberry was named the Volunteer Veteran of the Year in the Tidewater area of Virginia in 2011.

Betty Norman Wood '55 is retired and lives in Austin now. She taught in the Austin ISD, being named the Outstanding Teacher in Anderson



High School, and taught for the Department of Defense for 10 years in France, Germany, Japan, Philippine Islands,

and Ethiopia. Betty has traveled to over 70 countries and all 50 states, and has been a global volunteer for the last 20 years.

'70s

Scott McGarraugh '70 has retired from the Texas Wheat Producers



board and was recognized for his many years of service. Scott and his wife, Lindy, reside in Perryton.

Cindy Hendrix Schlatter '76 has been living in Oregon and Washington for the past 38 years. She was a school nurse in Portland but is now retired.

Dr. Linda Caswell McMurry '78 and her staff were presented with a commendation letter from U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington (TX-19) for her hard work. McMurry is the executive director for the Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center and is a highly respected in Lubbock Regional Healthcare.

'80s

Shea Woodard-Hall '88 recently retired from the United States Senate after 30 years of service as the West Texas Regional



Outreach Director for Sens. Ted Cruz and Kay Bailey Hutchison. She now lives in Abilene where she is involved in numerous charitable and civic organizations

and was honored as a "Woman of Power and Purpose" by the Regional Victim Crisis Center.

Dr. Valerie Kiper '83,

'86 received the Legacy Award at the Panhandle Great 25 Nurses recognition ceremony.

Valerie has many years of healthcare management experience in the acute care setting and she previously held the position of President of the Texas Organization of Nurse Executives. WT's Department of Nursing and College of Nursing and Health Sciences provides about 70 percent of nurses employed throughout the Texas Panhandle. Other Buff alums were named to this year's Panhandle Great 25 Nurses list, as well: Sharon Brewer '86 '97, Brenda Chandler '93, Ronda Crow '91, Kristin De Los Santos '12, Elizabeth Favela '08, Brenda Graham '80, Cami Meason '02, Jennifer Peters '19, Mandy Richardson '99, Sandy Richardson '88, John Schnatz '97, Shelly Seth '02 and Sally Swan '96.



'90s

Dara Ware '91 has been promoted to principal of Floydada Collegiate High School. Ware has been teaching and in administration at Floydada ISD for 31 years.

John Osborne '94 is currently the president and CEO of Lubbock Economic Development Alliance. John was presented the 2021 Tall in Texas Award, given by the Texas Travel Alliance. John's



comprehensive approach to economic development, incorporating tourism as a key component for regional growth.

Jennifer Herber '94 was named public information and marketing program manager for Austin Energy earlier this year. Austin Energy is the third-largest city-owned electric utility in the



country and serves more than 1 million residents in Greater Austin. Jennifer oversees media relations, social media, internal and

external communications and public information requests.

Brad Duggan '96 has been named the new executive director of the Coffee Memorial Blood Center for the Amarillo area. Brad serves as an active board member of multiple faith-based organizations and the WTAMU Buffalo Club, in addition to civic boards for Canyon.

'00s

Erin Holloway '02 has been appointed by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott to the Neches River Authority Board of Directors. She is a financial advisor and owner at The Holloway Partnership.

Dr. Katherine Starkweather '05, former WT volleyball player, currently serves as an assistant professor of biological anthropology at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

'10s

Emma Love '15 completed the Boston Marathon in 3:19. This was her second marathon to date. When she's not training, Emma spends her days teaching physical education and health to middle school students.

Susan Dorris '16, '20 has been designated to the Texas Violent Gang Task Force by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. Susan is a patrolman in the Amarillo Police Department and has 25 years of experience in law enforcement.

Rellie Kaputin '18, a former WT track and field standout, represented her



home country of Papua, New Guinea, at the 2020 Olympics in the long jump. Rellie finished 19th at the Olympics.

Miceala Grenier '19 is now living in Odessa and is starting a theatre program at Bowie Middle School. She also is making her directing debut at the Permian Playhouse.

WT NOTES

WT students, faculty benefit from working ranch gift

WT's land holdings expanded with the addition of a new working ranch to be used in training students. As part of the rollout of the historic One West comprehensive fundraising campaign, WT officials announced the planned gift of the Gerdson Family Centennial Ranch to the WTAMU Foundation. The 1,772-acre ranch is located near the WTAMU Nance Ranch, approximately seven miles east of Canyon, expanding WT's footprint in that area to more than 4,000 acres. The bequest is being coordinated through the Foundation and its Land Legacy Program.

WT President Wendler launched Tour 2.0

President Walter V. Wendler was on the road again, going places he's already been. In 2017, Wendler embarked on the "Your Community, Your University" tour, visiting virtually every public and private high school in the top 26 counties of Texas and speaking with students about their aspirations for the future. This fall, Wendler kicked off his second Region 16 "Your Community, Your University" Tour 2.0 with stops at 66 schools throughout the Texas Panhandle.

WT students, community benefit from new PDSG scholarship

A new WT scholarship will support students who are committed to working with people with special needs in the Panhandle. The Panhandle Down Syndrome Guild endowed a scholarship for students in speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and education who plan to remain in the area and work with residents with intellectual disabilities, such as students in WT's Where the Learning Continues program. A minimum of \$1,000 will be awarded annually to one or more qualified students.

WT Theatre wins major awards for special filmed production

The musical "Theory of Relativity," a filmed production that streamed in October, won eight awards through the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. It was filmed in various locations around campus and even in students' own homes. The music was recorded in WT facilities in Mary Moody Northern Hall, and footage and songs were edited together like a movie musical, rather than a staged production. The national awards were chosen by a committee whose members saw about 40 qualifying productions in eight regions around the country. Awards were presented in a virtual ceremony in May. Bradley Behrmann was awarded special achievement in directing and in musical direction for his work. The show won a special achievement award for overall production, and the entire cast was awarded special achievement in ensemble collaboration. Actors Abbi Roe, a Spring 2021 graduate from Roswell, N.M., and Michael Olinger, a senior musical theatre major from Pearland, were awarded special achievement in performance. Caitlynn Sandoval, a senior theatre major from Tyler, was awarded special achievement in stage management.

WT's launches Stan Sigman Leadership and Innovation series

An influential business executive who rose through the ranks to become one of the top leaders of AT&T was the inaugural speaker in a new series from the Paul and Virginia Engler College of Business. Ralph de la Vega, who emigrated from Cuba to the United States as a child before becoming one of the most powerful leaders in American telecommunications, opened the new Stan Sigman Leadership and Innovation Series, named for a late alumnus and supporter of WT. The series was made possible through gifts from Sigman's former AT&T colleagues that also established the Stan Sigman Scholarship Endowment and the Stan Sigman Endowed Professorship in Business, held by Dr. Jeffry Babb.

FIRSTGEN Alumni Network forming

FIRSTGEN is beginning outreach to WT graduates to found a FIRSTGEN Alumni Network. "We want to increase student support by connecting with our alumni and working to build scholarship endowments," said Jonathan Cordova, FIRSTGEN adviser and program coordinator for Study Abroad and Nationally Competitive Scholarships. "This network will bring awareness of the value of first-generation students to our campus culture and to the community and promote a positive, supportive environment for them." Currently, approximately 49 percent of WT's student population is first generation.

Become a contributing member and
continue the Legacy

The Alumni Association is the common thread that pulls us together and strengthens the ties between generations of WT alumni. Help us preserve the legacy that is as proud as the buffalo and as big as West Texas.

General membership keeps you connected. Contributing membership helps us connect with you. Your annual gift helps to grow your Alumni Association, provide scholarships to students, host activities for alumni around the country, support University initiatives and more!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS LEVELS

Monthly bank drafts are available for memberships of \$120 annually and above.

BUFFALO PRIDE

\$50

MAROON SPIRIT

\$100

PHOENIX CLUB

\$200

BUFF FAMILY SPIRIT

\$300

WHITE BUFFALO SOCIETY

\$600

WEST TEXAS LEGACY

\$1,000

WEST TEXAS LEGACY ENDOWED

\$5,000 over three years to the Endowment