

# 12th Man

SPRING 2019  
VOLUME 24, NO. 2

FUNDING SCHOLARSHIPS, PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES  
IN SUPPORT OF CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS



**BUZZ IS BACK**

YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL TO  
BUILDING A CHAMPIONSHIP  
MEN'S BASKETBALL PROGRAM  
AT TEXAS A&M



**12TH MAN FOUNDATION**  
1922 FUND



**THE 1922 FUND PROVIDES A PERPETUAL IMPACT ON THE EDUCATION OF TEXAS A&M'S STUDENT-ATHLETES.**

Our goal is to fully endow scholarships for every student-athlete, building a sustainable model of funding where your investment can provide the opportunity for Aggie student-athletes to excel in competition and in the classroom.

**Without generous families like the Moncriefs, I wouldn't be able to be in the position I'm in at A&M. I truly appreciate their donations to the 1922 Fund and the time they invest in me.**

– COLTON PRATER '20  
Football Offensive Lineman

**1922 FUND DONOR BENEFITS**

	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$500,000+
Annual endowment report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognition on 12th Man Foundation website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
One-time recognition in 12th Man Magazine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A plaque for donor's home and recognition in 12th Man Foundation offices		✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognition on field of supported program during a game*		✓	✓	✓	✓
Champions Council membership for a five year term		✓	✓	✓	✓
Assignment of a specific student-athlete's scholarship			✓	✓	✓
A donor spotlight article in 12th Man Magazine				✓	✓
12th Man Foundation will discuss recognition opportunities					✓

\*Option exists for donor to choose their recognition at Kyle Field if desired

CONTACT THE MAJOR GIFTS STAFF AT 979-260-7595 FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE 1922 FUND

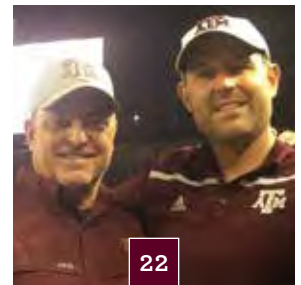


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*BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS '86*



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BUZZ WILLIAMS HAS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING AS THE  
NEW HEAD COACH OF TEXAS A&M MEN'S BASKETBALL*

# 12th Man

VOLUME 24, NO. 2  
SPRING 2019

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*Funding scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championship athletics*



**TO OUR DONORS,**

**Respect. Accuracy. Service. Excellence.** These are the tenets that our staff embraced in July of 2017 and that we have efforted to embody every day, which is highlighted by the organization's growth over the past two years. We are committed to keeping these values at the core of everything we set forth to accomplish because of the extraordinary support and resources that donors like you provide to make

Texas A&M Athletics one of the premier programs in the country.

Excitement is palpable on campus as Ross Bjork begins his tenure as A&M's Director of Athletics. On behalf of the 12th Man Foundation trustees, donors and staff, I welcome him as he steps into this important role. Our focus is to build a strong and trusting relationship with Ross and his staff to continue our mission of funding scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championship athletics at Texas A&M.

In this issue of *12th Man Magazine*, we celebrate the hire of Buzz Williams, the achievements of our talented student-athletes, the dedication of E.B. Cushing Stadium and the camaraderie of Champions Council Weekend. Our university has much to celebrate and the accomplishments of our student-athletes, coaches, administrators and donors make us all proud to be Texas Aggies.

Gig 'em!



Travis Dabney '96  
President & CEO

**STAFF UPDATES**

**THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONS TO OUR DEDICATED STAFF:**



Cody Allen  
*Director of Ticket Systems*



Kathleen Curnutt '12  
*Vice President of Finance*



Taylor Nagle '18  
*Donor Service Coordinator*

**IN OTHER STAFF NEWS**

The 12th Man Foundation is excited to announce that Amy Joyce '96 has been promoted to Vice President of Business Intelligence & Technology Services.



**ROSS BJORK INTRODUCED AS TEXAS A&M'S NEW DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS**

Ross Bjork was named Texas A&M's Director of Athletics on May 23, 2019 by University President Michael K. Young and was formally introduced during a welcome event in June inside the Ford Hall of Champions at Kyle Field. Bjork, who officially began in his new role at A&M on July 8, comes to Aggieland following seven years as the Director of Athletics at the University of Mississippi. "I am thrilled to welcome Ross Bjork to Aggieland," Young said. "His outstanding reputation as a leader will be vital to the continued trajectory of our athletics program. I also want to thank Coach R.C. Slocum, cherished by all Aggies, for stepping in during this time to lead the department. I look forward to continuing to work with him."

## CHAMPIONS COUNCIL WEEKEND



### ESTABLISH AN INTIMATE CONNECTION WITH AGGIE ATHLETICS

Join more than 400 Champions Council members with a gift of \$50,000+ (payable over a five-year period) to a current capital project or endowment, and receive unmatched benefits and access to Texas A&M Athletics.



CONTACT LAUREN HICKEY AT 979-260-7595

### E. KING GILL AWARD, STADIUM DEDICATION, STUDENT-ATHLETES AND COACHES HIGHLIGHT CHAMPIONS COUNCIL WEEKEND

The 12th Man Foundation hosted Champions Council Weekend this spring on Texas A&M's campus. Friday night's dinner featured Jimbo Fisher as the keynote speaker as well as the presentation of the 2018 E. King Gill Award to recipients Sharon and Jim Wilson. One of the evening's highlights for new members Pam and Greg Ploss was meeting A&M's defensive coordinator Mike Elko. "We visited for a long time and really hit it off," Greg said. "He's a great guy." Saturday's events began with the dedication of E.B. Cushing Stadium, the new home for Aggie track and field. "It was a great ceremony to dedicate the latest facility that the 12th Man Foundation has played the lead role in providing for A&M Athletics," Board of Trustees Chair Monty Davis said. "To see such a beautiful facility come together after all these years was fantastic." For lunch, donors dined with student-athletes representing nearly every sport inside the Ford Hall of Champions, which also included a speech by new men's basketball head coach Buzz Williams. "The highlight of the weekend for Becky and I was meeting new student-athletes and catching up with those we already knew," Monty said. "We really enjoy learning a little bit about them and getting to know what phenomenal people they are off the athletic fields." Following lunch, Champions Council members enjoyed a private viewing of spring practice, which concluded with an autograph session featuring football student-athletes. Donors Susan and Jeff Miller summarized the weekend as "awesome." "We were able to hear from everybody and see everything, up close and personal," Jeff said. "Getting reacquainted with other Champions Council members that we hadn't seen in a while was a lot of fun as well."



BRIAN DAVIS '01



“  
THE PERKS OF BEING IN CHAMPIONS COUNCIL ARE  
AN AMAZING FRINGE BENEFIT TO THE REWARDS YOU  
ARE GOING TO GET KNOWING YOU’RE MAKING AN  
INVESTMENT IN OUR TERRIFIC STUDENT-ATHLETES.

— PAM & GREG PLOSS



“  
I LOVE THIS PLACE WITH EVERY FIBER IN MY BODY. I WILL NEVER FORGET THE TIME SPENT HERE, FRIENDS I'VE MADE AND EXPERIENCES I'VE HAD.

— CONNOR LANFEAR '19  
FOOTBALL | RECREATION, PARKS & TOURISM SCIENCES



“  
COMING TO TEXAS A&M WAS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE BEST DECISION THAT I HAVE EVER MADE. I WILL FOREVER CHERISH THE MEMORIES, FRIENDSHIPS AND EXPERIENCES THAT I HAVE HAD OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS.

— KATIE CONKLIN '19  
EQUESTRIAN | SPORT MANAGEMENT



**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 64 TEXAS A&M STUDENT-ATHLETES WHO EARNED DEGREES IN MAY 2019**

A total of 120 Aggie student-athletes graduated between Aug. 2018 - May 2019.

Contact the Major Gifts office at 979-260-7595 to support student-athlete scholarships.



“  
THANK YOU A&M FOR MAKING ME INTO THE PERSON I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE. I FEEL SO READY AND EXCITED FOR THE FUTURE AHEAD AS I START MY MASTERS IN THE REAL ESTATE PROGRAM AT MAYS!

— VALARIE BRADLEY '19  
TRACK & FIELD | MARKETING



“  
NO OTHER UNIVERSITY CAN MATCH THE GROWTH AND EXPERIENCES THAT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HAS GIVEN ME. TEXAS A&M WILL ALWAYS HAVE A PLACE IN MY HEART!

— ALLY WATT '19  
SOCCER | UNIVERSITY STUDIES





## COMPLIANCE CORNER

The future is bright for Texas A&M Athletics, blessed as we are with talented student-athletes, great coaches and tremendous support from the 12th Man.

Still, we must avoid the pitfalls of NCAA violations. If you have doubt that what you propose to do complies with NCAA rules, contact a member of Texas A&M's Athletics Compliance Office.

The most frequent NCAA-related issues for fans and former students are recruiting and benefits for student-athletes, their relatives and friends.

As for recruiting, you may notify our coaches of recruits in whom you think they might have interest, but NCAA rules prohibit fans and former students from being otherwise involved in recruiting (e.g., corresponding with, calling or having in-person recruiting contact with recruits or their family members).

As for benefits for student-athletes and their family members and friends, NCAA rules allow fans and former students to provide only one benefit when approved by A&M Athletics: an occasional meal for the student-athlete (not his or her friends or family) at the fan's home or on A&M's campus. Any other benefit provided by a fan or former student to a student-athlete or his/her friends or family would likely qualify as an extra benefit that would render the student-athlete ineligible for competition and cause a violation for A&M.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping build champions by winning with integrity.

### BRAD BARNES

TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS COMPLIANCE  
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WWW.12THMAN.COM

## AGGIE ACCOLADES



### TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS NOMINATED FOR THREE ESPYS

Texas A&M earned nominations for a trio of ESPYS in June, the only SEC school nominated for the accolade in 2019. A&M's historic victory over No. 8 LSU was nominated for Best Game while Aggie track and field student-athlete Infinite Tucker was among the nominees for Best Play and Best Viral Sports Moment. The Aggies outlasted the Tigers in seven overtimes to conclude the 2018 football regular season in the highest scoring game in FBS history. Tucker's all-out effort to claim the 2019 SEC Championship in the 400-meter hurdles was one of 16 nominees for Best Play and one of four nominees for the Best Viral Sports Moment. "While we unfortunately did not come home with new hardware from the ESPYS, it was a great event and one that our coaches and student-athletes will not forget," Director of Athletics Ross Bjork said. "Without a doubt, the seven-overtime victory against LSU was the best college football game last season and one that Aggies will always remember. Infinite Tucker's dive will be shown for many years as it was an iconic finish in one of the biggest meets in collegiate track and field."

### A&M FINISHES NO. 15 IN 2018-19 DIRECTORS' CUP STANDINGS

Texas A&M placed No. 15 overall and No. 4 in the Southeastern Conference in the final 2018-19 Learfield IMG College Directors' Cup standings. A&M has now finished in the top 20 of the Directors' Cup for 13 straight seasons, joining California, Florida, North Carolina, Stanford, Texas, UCLA and USC as the only schools with at least 13 straight top 20 finishes in the prestigious ranking of overall athletics success at the collegiate level.

### TEN LEGENDS TO BE HONORED IN SEPTEMBER AT BURGESS BANQUET

Seven Hall of Famers, two Hall of Honor recipients and a Lifetime Achievement Award winner will be recognized at the 42nd-annual Burgess Banquet on Friday, Sept. 13 in the Ford Hall of Champions at Kyle Field. Football lettermen Hunter Goodwin '96 and Randy Wylie '86 (Hall of Honor) and the late James Wiley '46 (Lifetime Achievement Award) will be honored along with the Lettermen's Association's Hall of Fame Class of 2019: Alia Atkinson '10 (women's swimming), Morenike Atunrase '08 (women's basketball), Patrick Bates '92 (football), Kyle Hawthorne '79 (baseball), Joseph Jones '08 (men's basketball), Justin Oliver '09 (men's track and field) and Ty Warren '03 (football). **For information or to purchase tickets or sponsorships, visit [12thman.com/burgessbanquet](http://12thman.com/burgessbanquet) or call 979-846-3024.**

### NATHAN HITE AWARDED NCAA POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Track and field student-athlete Nathan Hite has been awarded a \$10,000 scholarship by the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship Committee. The NCAA awards up to 126 postgraduate scholarships annually to student-athletes who excel academically and athletically. A first-team Academic All-American, Hite was named the SEC H. Boyd McWhorter Scholar-Athlete of the Year, which also included a postgraduate scholarship, and he earned Texas A&M's Bill Erwin Scholar-Athlete of the Year honor for a second consecutive year. Hite, who graduated in Mechanical Engineering with a 3.97 GPA, is a two-time recipient of the NCAA Elite 90 award for having the highest grade point average during NCAA Championship competition.



# PAT HENRY

A conversation with the head coach of Texas A&M's track and field program

BY ADAM QUISENBERRY



- » THE 2019 SEASON WAS HIS 15TH AS HEAD COACH OF THE TEXAS A&M TRACK AND FIELD PROGRAM
- » HAS LED A&M TO NINE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND 17 CONFERENCE TITLES
- » BECAME THE FIRST COACH TO LEAD A SCHOOL TO THREE CONSECUTIVE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S NCAA OUTDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS WHEN THE AGGIES ACCOMPLISHED THE FEAT DURING THE 2009-2010-2011 SEASONS
- » WITH 36 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS ON THE DIVISION I LEVEL, HAS ACHIEVED THE MOST CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TRACK AND FIELD NATIONAL TITLES
- » INDUCTED INTO THE TEXAS SPORTS HALL OF FAME IN 2017

## What makes Aggieland special to you?

Having been at another conference school for 17 years, they had some great aspects and traditions, but the whole package is what makes A&M special. First of all, the people who support us, especially the ones engaged through the 12th Man Foundation, are really unique. Their commitment to the organization exceeds the call of duty and I don't know of any other institution that has that level of support. It really shows in everything that has happened in the last 15 years – those people have stepped up and really helped us. Without their help, none of this would be possible.

## How has the opening of E.B. Cushing Stadium impacted your program?

It's a tremendous facility and is going to be a major factor for us in recruiting, no question about it. For our current team, having their own locker room is huge. They never had that before. Having a place where they can sit down and gather socially is another thing we have never had before. They have to be able to have fun off the track and that is a big part of it.

## How significant is the support of 12th Man Foundation donors, both big and small, on the success of your student-athletes?

People like Amy and Tim Leach, Dorothy and the late Artie McFerrin, Rhonda and Frosty Gillingham and so many others like them really value the relationship with young people and the impact they can make in their lives. That's really what it's all about – getting to know the student-athletes on a personal level. The more people who take the opportunity to engage with our student-athletes through the 12th Man Foundation the better because our student-athletes learn what it means to be great Aggies from the people who have come before them.

## In what ways do donations to the 12th Man Foundation have an impact on your program?

Any contribution, any involvement matters and the more the better. If you're able to give a little bit, it helps a lot. A whole lot of little bits help a lot of people. Because sports are regulated, for instance, men's track and field gets 12.6 scholarships, but we have 70 student-athletes. We have about the same number of female student-athletes for 18 scholarships. So, support doesn't always reflect in scholarships, but it does reflect in how we care for our student-athletes, facilities, travel and so many other ways we treat them when they're here. All that goes back to contributions and the way people support our programs.

## How does a scholarship change a young person's life?

My experience of going into homes – in many cases, the lack of homes – you see the impact an education can have and does have for people after their athletic career is over. It's so easy to show people that their contribution makes a huge positive change in young peoples' lives. ■

“  
**THE MORE PEOPLE WHO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES THROUGH THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION THE BETTER BECAUSE OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GREAT AGGIES FROM THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME BEFORE THEM.**

— PAT HENRY

# E.B. CUSHING STADIUM

BY BRIAN DAVIS '01



In naming the magnificent venue, lead donors Amy and Tim Leach '82 chose to honor E.B. Cushing, a legendary Aggie who saved Texas A&M from a likely consolidation with the University of Texas in the early 1900s. "As an engineer and as a soldier, he exemplified the kinds of things that made A&M special," Tim Leach said.

**WHEN TEXAS A&M OFFICIALLY DEDICATED E.B. CUSHING Stadium** this spring it not only signified the opening of a world-class track and field facility, it also marked the completion of a project that was years in the making and one that would not have been possible without the support of generous 12th Man Foundation donors.

"This incredible facility is a testament to a broad range of donors who were willing to step up for our championship track and field program," Senior Vice President of Major Gifts Brady Bullard said. "Led

by a significant gift from Amy and Tim Leach, that generous group of donors included current indoor track and field season ticket holders, new track and field season ticket holders and lettermen as well as donors who may have never been to a track meet before but wanted to support the success of Pat Henry's program."

Constructed as part of a joint project with the new home for Aggie softball, Davis Diamond, the \$39.8 million, 90,500-square-foot track and field stadium gives A&M one of the premier facilities in



E.B. Cushing Stadium features an IAAF-certified Beynon track surface which offers a specialized, high performance synthetic athletic surface designed for speed, competition and daily training. Following the formal dedication, the Aggies’ christened the new surface as hosts of The Reville on April 6 – the first outdoor meet on campus since 2004.

the nation to experience a track meet both for the fans in attendance and the student-athletes competing. The stadium includes seating for 2,200 with room to expand and features meeting rooms, training areas, locker rooms, an athlete lounge, offices, media areas and more.

Senior Associate Athletics Director for Facilities and Construction Kevin Hurley says the facility was designed with Henry’s guidance and philosophy of making track meets concise and fan-friendly.

“The greatest thing about E.B. Cushing Stadium is it finally gives the program a true home,” Hurley said. “I’ll stack it up against any in the country, and it’s one that our program and donors needed and deserved.”

More than 270 12th Man Foundation donors contributed financially to the project with the Leaches leading the way with a \$4 million gift.

Other donations ranged from \$5 to \$500,000, including 67 gifts of \$50,000 or more.

“Without the donors stepping up to support softball and track and field, this would have never gotten off the ground,” Hurley said. “This project shows that there’s a place for everyone to support facilities at A&M from the seven-figure gifts to whatever amount you’re capable of giving. More participation is what A&M has been built on. In my opinion, this project exemplified A&M, the 12th Man Foundation and its donors.”

Donations were a critical cog in a unique collaboration between A&M Athletics and the 12th Man Foundation. In total, donors contributed nearly two-thirds of the funding needed to make the softball and track and field facilities possible.

Senior Associate Athletics Director and Athletics CFO Jeff Toole says that donor support is crucial



## E.B. CUSHING STADIUM BY THE NUMBERS

**200,000**

SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE TRACK SURFACE

**150**

LOCKERS FOR TRACK & FIELD STUDENT-ATHLETES (75 FOR MEN, 75 FOR WOMEN)

**172**

SEATING CAPACITY OF THE TEAM MEETING ROOM

**2,318**

SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE ATHLETE LOUNGE

A&M track and field's championship history is highlighted in the stadium's grand lobby, which includes an empty trophy case ready for the program's next title.

to building facilities to the Texas A&M standard.

"Our donors are so generous and have helped us do so many projects, and that allows us to use our operating revenue to pay for travel and competitive salaries," Toole said. "There are a lot of projects we would have to at the very least delay if we couldn't rely on donors to help us out."

Toole likes to refer to the 12th Man Foundation and its donors as the department's secret weapon.

"They allow us to do so many things that other schools just cannot do," he said. "Not that other schools don't have generous alumni, ours are just above and beyond."

"There's nobody in the country that has raised money like the 12th Man Foundation for an outdoor track and field facility," Hurley added. "It's very much a donor-driven project and without that support, we could not have done it." ■

“

**THERE'S NOBODY IN THE COUNTRY THAT HAS RAISED MONEY LIKE THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION FOR AN OUTDOOR TRACK AND FIELD FACILITY. IT'S VERY MUCH A DONOR-DRIVEN PROJECT AND WITHOUT THAT SUPPORT, WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT.**

— KEVIN HURLEY

# RILEY SARTAIN '19

BY MATT SIMON '98

## INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF STUDENT- ATHLETES

Donors Linda & J.D. Woodward have made a lasting impact on Riley Sartain's life with their gift and pairing through the 1922 Fund.

Join the Woodwards and help support the 12th Man Foundation in its desire to endow scholarships for every Aggie student-athlete.



CONTACT LAUREN  
HICKEY AT  
979-260-7595

### FOR RILEY SARTAIN, THERE REALLY WASN'T A QUESTION

where she would go to school. Her father, Chris, was a member of the Corps of Cadets. Her mother, Lauren, also an Aggie. Her grandmother lives in College Station and Sartain was a regular at A&M's summer softball camps.

Once on the team, Sartain started 232 of a possible 236 games in her A&M career. She was named an All-American in 2017, competed in four NCAA Tournaments, advanced to two Super Regionals and reached the game's pinnacle, the Women's College World Series, as a sophomore. And finally, she became one of six Aggies to ever be drafted into the National Pro Fastpitch league.

"Not in our wildest dreams did we ever think she'd walk away with all those accomplishments and be on the walls of the stadium," Chris said. "If you'd have told me that while she was at camp as an 8, 9 or 10 year old...I'd have called you crazy."

Fast forward to this spring and Senior Day, and Lauren says watching her youngest daughter that weekend was amazing.

"We didn't realize how many people's lives she'd touched," Lauren said. "There were ushers coming up to us, thanking us, hugging us, emotional about it, saying they were going to miss her."

For head coach Jo Evans, that Senior Day was a little harder than usual. And that's because of the person Sartain is.

"I loved being around Riley," Evans said. "I love her family. They just know what it means to be an Aggie. Her parents have raised her to be a leader, to stand on principle and be a person of character. She didn't take her A&M experience for granted because her family didn't take it for granted. She showed tremendous resilience and loyalty to our program when it wasn't easy."

Sartain became the first Aggie to play her final season as a senior at Davis Diamond. It's an honor she calls a dream come true.

For Sartain and the Aggie softball team, the best part about Davis Diamond is that the stadium's namesakes – Becky '76 and Monty '77 Davis – are right there with them, feet from the dugout, riding the highs and lows of the season as if they're on the roster.

"I'm super happy that not only are their names on there, but they're in our hearts and in our lives," she said. "They're much more than a name on a stadium. They are part of our family."

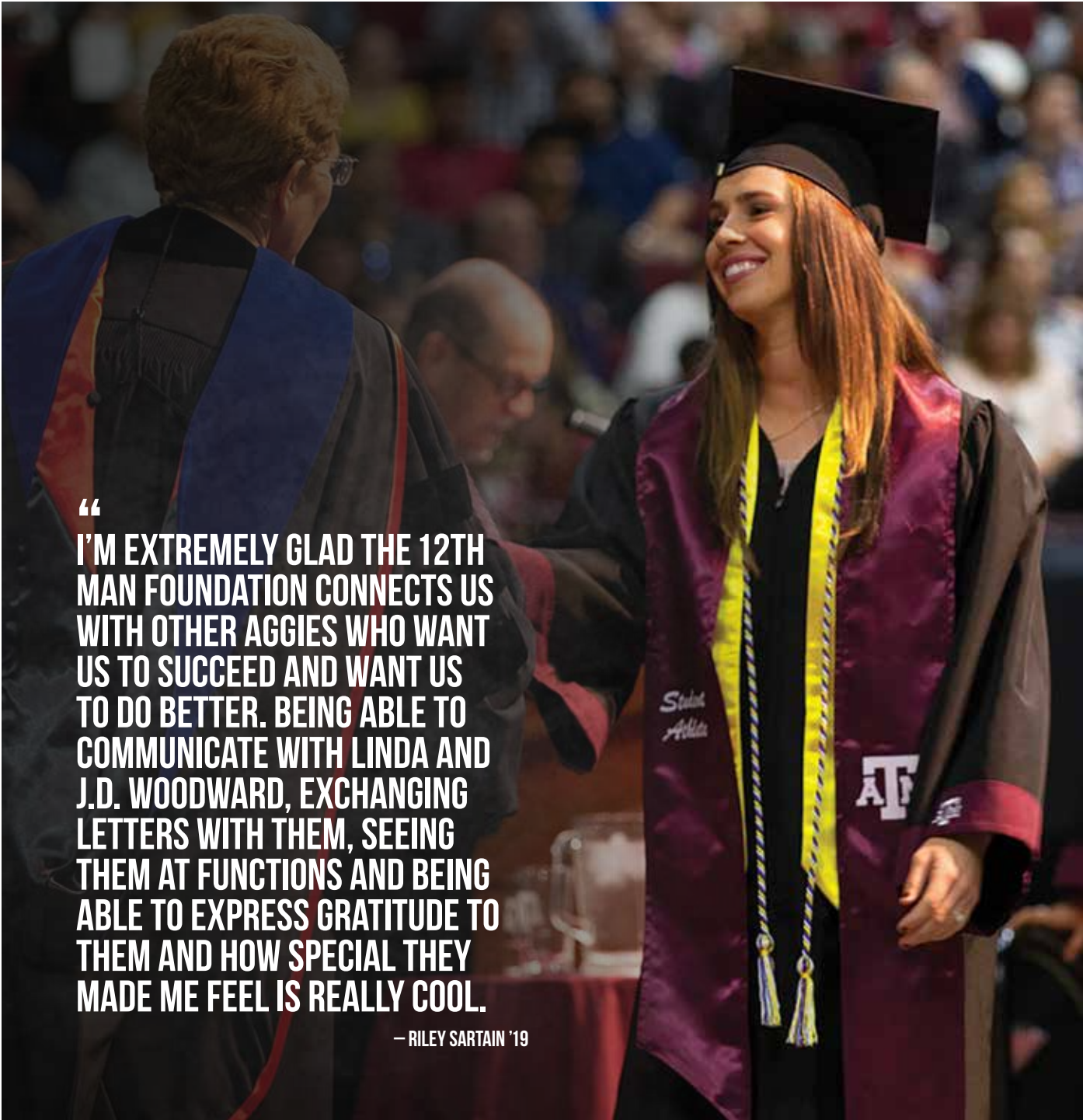
In May, Sartain received her degree in sports conditioning, while earning a double minor in business and coaching. She was a Cum Laude graduate and was named distinguished honor graduate of the College of Education and Human Development, the department's most prestigious award.

Sartain is competing this summer with the Scrap Yard Dawgs, a team based in Conroe. She'll travel the country and play against Team USA. All the while adding more to a pretty incredible softball experience.

In addition, she'll get married this fall. As far as life after softball? Exploring that passion, Sartain has built a fiercely loyal following on Instagram posting videos that teach technique and analysis to younger players. Her channel (@rileysartain) has roughly 45,000 followers.

And with that following comes an opportunity. If the business side works out, she plans to start an app and website centered around player development and creating the "wholesome athlete," which she describes as focusing on softball, nutrition, conditioning and most importantly faith.

"I never would have expected to have the opportunities I did while playing softball for A&M," Sartain said. "Dreaming about being an All-American and playing in the World Series is one thing. But to actually do it? I'm lucky to have it happen. I put a lot of time into my priorities and what I wanted to get out of my experience. It paid me back tenfold." ♥

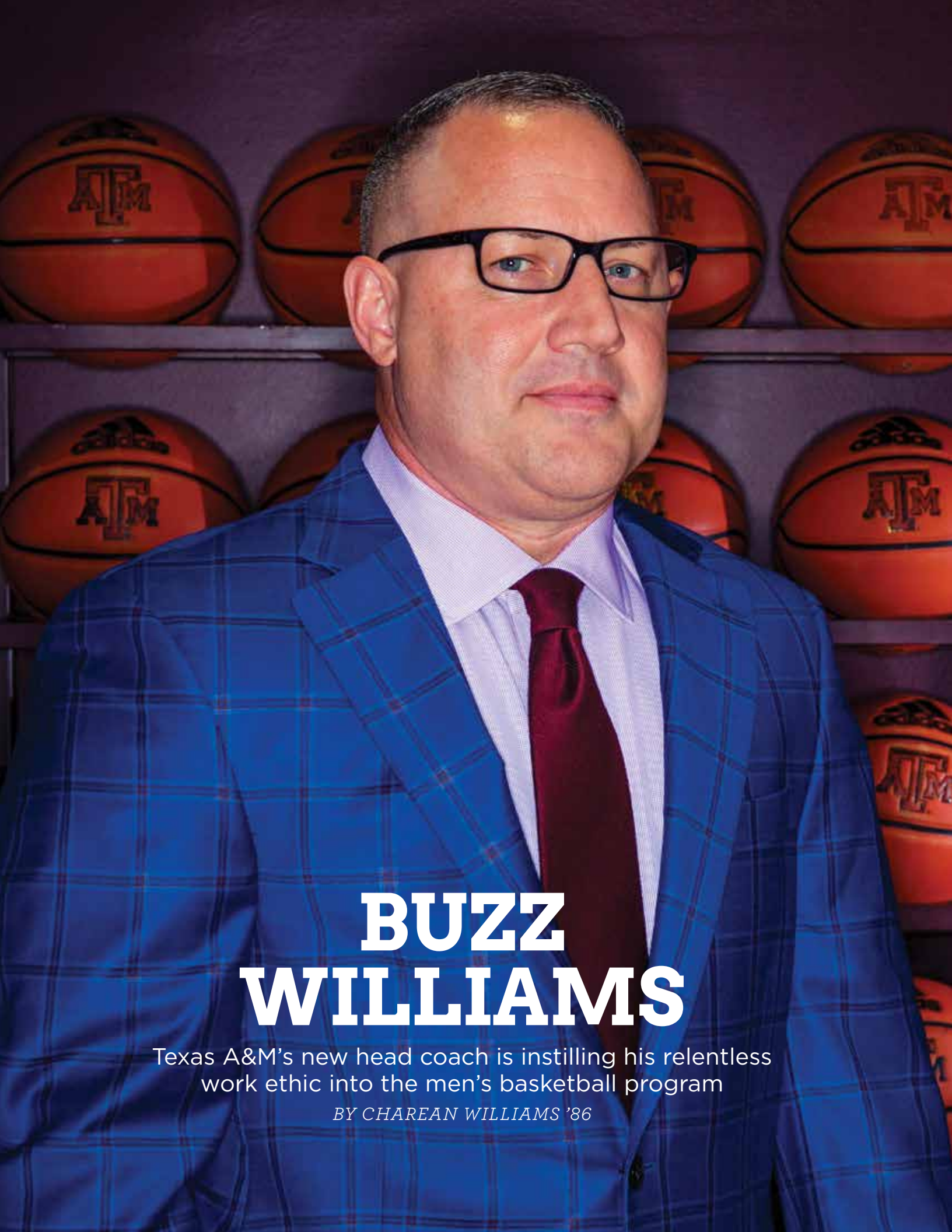


“ I'M EXTREMELY GLAD THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION CONNECTS US WITH OTHER AGGIES WHO WANT US TO SUCCEED AND WANT US TO DO BETTER. BEING ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH LINDA AND J.D. WOODWARD, EXCHANGING LETTERS WITH THEM, SEEING THEM AT FUNCTIONS AND BEING ABLE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO THEM AND HOW SPECIAL THEY MADE ME FEEL IS REALLY COOL.

— RILEY SARTAIN '19

MICHAEL KELLETT '91 (GRADUATION); SAM CRAFT (SOFTBALL)





# BUZZ WILLIAMS

Texas A&M's new head coach is instilling his relentless work ethic into the men's basketball program

*BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS '86*



“

THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION DONORS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF WHAT WE'RE DOING. THERE'S NO WAY THAT WE CAN GO WHERE WE WANT TO GO WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT, AND NOT ONLY THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT, BUT THEIR SUPPORT IN HAVING OWNERSHIP IN WHAT WE'RE DOING. I THINK THAT'S A BIG PART OF WHAT TEXAS A&M IS — THE 12TH MAN. IT KIND OF RESONATES THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE UNIVERSITY AND FOR SURE IT WILL HAVE TO BE A CRITICAL PIECE, A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF WHAT WE'RE DOING.

— BUZZ WILLIAMS

**BUZZ WILLIAMS — THEN KNOWN BY HIS GIVEN NAME,** Brent — learned one of the most important lessons of his life when he was but a teenager: There are no cutting corners in basketball or in life.

Williams was an 18-year-old student and wannabe basketball coach when he showed up to watch a Navarro College practice. Coach Lewis Orr told Williams his practices were closed, so if Williams wanted to stay, he would have to sweep the floor.

Orr has told the story too many times to remember.

“He got through, and he said, ‘What else?’” said Orr, who coached at Navarro for 32 years. “I said, ‘Well, you didn’t sweep the corners.’ If you don’t get the dust off the floor, it’s going to sift back out on the floor, and we might have some good player slip down and be out for the year. We just wanted a clean place to work. Sort of like when you eat on a plate, you want it clean. I said, ‘Let’s do it again.’ He said, ‘OK.’ He went out there, and this time, he swept the corners. I said, ‘You might have some talent. You might be able to make it here.’”

Williams, who decided while attending Van Alstyne High School what he wanted to do after college, went from Navarro College to Oklahoma City University to Texas-Arlington to Texas A&M-Kingsville to Northwestern State to Colorado State to Texas A&M to New Orleans to Marquette to Virginia Tech and now back to A&M. The road more traveled has brought Williams home to the state’s largest university as one of the highest-paid basketball coaches in the nation.

Nothing about Williams, though, says he has made it or has it made. He considers himself an overachiever, proud of his junior college roots and

his blue-collar work ethic. The job title and the pay check haven't changed him, with his hardscrabble background keeping him true to who he is.

He is a gym rat by definition, getting to Reed Arena around 5 a.m. and leaving around 10 p.m.

"I only work real hard, because I'm not real talented," Williams said. "If I had some talent, maybe I wouldn't have to work as hard. I don't know that there's any substitute for work. I do think that those players over the last 12 years in our programs who have had the most success are the ones who believed that work is the answer, and the daily work required is kind of the price of admission for what they're trying to do. I also think in their sphere of influence, whether that's their parents or their coaches, we want to make sure that we're not just developing their skill as a basketball player, but that we're developing their skill for the husband that they become and the father that they become.

"The older I have gotten, the more important that has become to me as a coach: That I'm responsible in every part of their life and every category of their life. I think that requires waking up really early and doing it every day. Maybe there's a way to shortcut or take a magic pill and you don't have to work this hard. I just haven't figured out what that is."

The work has only begun at A&M. Williams' hiring has energized the program, but the initial "buzz" lasts only so long.

“

**BUZZ HAS A PEDIGREE OF SUCCESS. HE'S WON EVERYWHERE HE'S BEEN. HE'S A RELENTLESS RECRUITER. YOU'RE GOING TO SEE SOME HIGH-QUALITY BASKETBALL AT REED ARENA, AND WE HAVE SHOWN THAT IT CAN GET LOUD AND BE A DIFFICULT PLACE TO PLAY. IF YOU WANT GOOD SEATS, YOU BETTER GET THEM NOW.**

— MATT FLANAGAN '90  
LONGTIME SEASON TICKET HOLDER

“

**I THINK BUZZ IS A PERFECT FIT. IT'S GREAT THAT HE WAS HERE BEFORE AND WANTED TO COME BACK. HE'S HAD SUCCESS IN A REALLY TOUGH CONFERENCE COMPETING AGAINST SOME HALL OF FAME COACHES. AND I THINK HIS COACHING STYLE CAN LEAD TO SOME DEEP TOURNAMENT RUNS WHICH IS ALL YOU CAN ASK FOR IN COLLEGE BASKETBALL.**

— JOSH DAVIS '94  
LONGTIME SEASON TICKET HOLDER

Since taking the job April 3 – even before winning his first game at A&M – Williams has tried to win over donors, fans, recruits, high school coaches, media and anyone who can help get the men's basketball team where Williams was hired to take it.

Having spent the 2004-06 seasons in Aggieland working under Billy Gillispie, Williams knew exactly what he was getting into by returning, and A&M knew exactly what it was getting in Williams. It was a win-win.

"I do feel like I understand Texas A&M, and I understand Buzz very, very well, I think," said Gillispie, who went 70-26 with two NCAA tournament berths in his three seasons in Aggieland before leaving for Kentucky. "To me, A&M is a blue-collar place that appreciates blue-collar people. Buzz can be fancy, but at the root of his whole being, he's hard-working, blue-collar and honorable, and I think that's what Aggies love. And the best Aggie teams I've ever seen in any sport were not soft or entitled. They wear their hard hat to work. They're honorable. They're my kind of people, and they're Buzz's kind of people. I just think it's a perfect fit, and I know he's going to do really well."

Virginia Tech, arguably a bigger rebuilding job than A&M, went only 11-22 in Williams' first year in Blacksburg. But in Williams' third season, the Hokies were 22-11 and in the NCAA Tournament,





“  
**BUZZ IS THE RIGHT COACH, AT THE RIGHT TIME, TO HELP TAKE US TO OUR RIGHTFUL PLACE AMONGST THE NATION'S BASKETBALL ELITE. HIS BRAND OF BASKETBALL — TOUGH, HARD-NOSED AND TENACIOUS — WILL RESONATE WITH AGGIES. THE FUTURE OF AGGIE BASKETBALL HAS NEVER LOOKED BETTER.**

— WAYNE ROBERTS '85  
LONGTIME SEASON TICKET HOLDER

the first of three consecutive postseason trips including an incredible Sweet 16 run in 2019.

The Aggies failed to win a Big 12 game in guard Acie Law IV's freshman season before Gillispie and Williams arrived. In Law's junior season, A&M earned its first NCAA Tournament berth since 1987.

That's why in Williams, Law trusts.

“I've seen first-hand his work ethic, his attention to detail, his passion for the game, his love for his players,” Law said. “I think all of those things equate to winning. I trust him to get out and recruit and bring talent in. I trust him to be prepared for games. I trust him to engage in the community, to build excitement for the program. And I trust him to bring it back and build it up.”

Williams has come “full circle” with his job as head coach at Texas A&M bigger than any dream he ever had. Aggies believe Williams has found his destination job, and they have their destination coach.

But, as Williams learned long ago from the mentor who nicknamed him Buzz, shortcuts don't exist. The corners still need sweeping, and that's going

to take time.

“I’m probably not as politically correct as I should be,” Williams said. “I’m not as maybe polished as someone in my chair should be. I think kind of, sort of, sometimes people understand that. I appreciate the excitement, and at times, I’m really excited. And, at times, I’m overwhelmed. I want to do such a good job that sometimes I don’t know where to start. There’s so much work – so, so much work ahead of us in every way – in our roster, in our upgrades of the practice facility and in our recruiting. We’re behind, and we were behind when I arrived. We’re trying to plug the holes in the boat. When there’s a hole in the boat, you want to fix that hole so there’s never a hole again. But as you’re fixing that hole, another one springs up. You end up having water going everywhere. I’m not complaining. That’s me being vulnerable and telling the truth. I think to an extent, that’s what people understand. They understand when you speak the truth.

“This is beyond anything I would have thought, but that doesn’t take away from the fact that I want to make sure I do a good job. And I want to make sure that I represent not only the Athletics Department, but our institution, and not only the institution, but all the former students. I want to do right.”

“

**I AM EXTREMELY EXCITED TO HAVE BUZZ BACK IN COLLEGE STATION AND LEADING OUR TEAM. HE IS A GREAT COACH AND A BETTER PERSON. OUR FAN BASE SHOULD BE EXCITED. AS AGGIES, WE SHOULD BE ALL IN ON GETTING BEHIND BUZZ AND SUPPORTING OUR BASKETBALL TEAM.**

— **TODD OVERBERGEN '88**  
LONGTIME SEASON TICKET HOLDER



One of Buzz Williams' first stops after arriving on the A&M campus was visiting the 12th Man Foundation office and meeting staff members including the Ticket Sales & Development team.

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# MARK WELSH III & MARK WELSH IV '01

BY SAMANTHA ATCHLEY '17

**THE MOMENT MARK A. WELSH JR. '46 STEPPED** foot on campus in 1942, a long line of Aggies were destined to fall into place. A man whose pride ran deep in Aggie tradition and selfless service, Welsh enlisted alongside many of his classmates and served in World War II before returning to Texas A&M to complete his degree and begin his honorable career as a military officer. Since that time, dozens of his family members have followed in his footsteps.

Much like A&M, the Welsh family is rich in history and tradition. Comprised of several Aggie graduates, veterans and athletes, generations of Welshes have found their passion within service, athletics and A&M. Eager to give back and honor their family legacy, Mark Welsh III and Mark Welsh IV '01 found their fit with the 1922 Fund – a program that allows the father-son duo to support student-athletes who share the same values that their family fiercely admires.

## GENERAL MARK A. WELSH III

Mark III fell in love with A&M at the young age of six years old. Learning from “the proudest Aggie he ever met,” Mark III remembers his frequent visits to Aggieland with his father to attend everything on campus from baseball games to Bonfire.

“My love for College Station started very young,” he said. “I’ve been a huge fan forever.”

Mark III was an even bigger fan of his late father. Wanting to follow in his same path, Mark III decided to attend the Air Force Academy where he played both golf and baseball before beginning his 40-year career in the military.

Holding multiple exemplary roles, Mark III gained incredible experiences including being a fighter pilot, serving as Commander of NATO’s Air Command and eventually becoming the 20th Chief of Staff in the United States Air Force – all of which he said “was a thrill and a privilege.”

Upon retirement from his extensive military career, Mark III had no intention of working full

time again. However, when a particularly fitting opportunity revealed itself, Mark III couldn’t pass up the chance to return to the place he held so dear. In August of 2016, Mark III became the Dean of the Bush School of Government and Public Service.

“The opportunity to come to A&M and a school that bears the name of somebody I respected tremendously, President George H.W. Bush, and the opportunity to work with men and women who want to go into public service was just too much to step past,” he said.

Inspired by the opportunity, Mark III reflected on his own connection to the university and to the 41st president.

“President Bush wrote me a letter once back in the 90s after I’d given a speech that was printed in the *Wall Street Journal* where he read it,” Mark III said as he recalled being blown away at receiving one of Bush’s famous letters. “I framed it and kept it in my office forever.”

Mark III’s return to Aggieland has been inspiring to say the least and the connection he feels to A&M brings more to him than just pride.

“I feel closer to my dad here than I have since he died,” Mark III said. “I can feel him here. It makes coming to work really fun.”

## MARK WELSH IV

Following family tradition, Mark IV made the decision to attend A&M while finishing his high school career in Georgia near the military base where his family was stationed.

“I just knew that a lot of my relatives had attended A&M and liked it,” he said, “and with my parents moving to a different spot in the world every 24 months as part of their military lifestyle, I wanted to go to college somewhere near our extended family in Texas.”

Still unsure if a military career was in his future, Mark IV was drawn to A&M for its unique offerings.

“I wanted to experience the military discipline

## INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Through their generous 1922 Fund gift, the Welsh family is making a lasting impact on Aggie student-athletes while honoring former A&M women’s golf great Monica Welsh.

Join the Welshes as 1922 Fund donors and help support scholarships for student-athletes.



CONTACT LAUREN HICKEY AT 979-260-7595

and training afforded by a cadet lifestyle,” he said, “so I was attracted to the Corps of Cadets as something that A&M offered but many other schools didn’t.”

After the first fall semester as an Aggie, he was hooked. Sitting in the Corps block during football games and marching to Kyle Field was an experience he called “second-to-none.”

“There are very few organizations in the world that compare to the Corps,” Mark IV said. “It is one of the best leadership laboratories on the planet, in my opinion, and there are less than a handful of places in the entire U.S. that offer anything similar.”

Mark IV majored in Finance while at A&M through the Mays Business School. He also met his wife, Ashley ’01, and the two have now started an Aggie family of their own including three sons, Jacob, Noah and Wyatt.

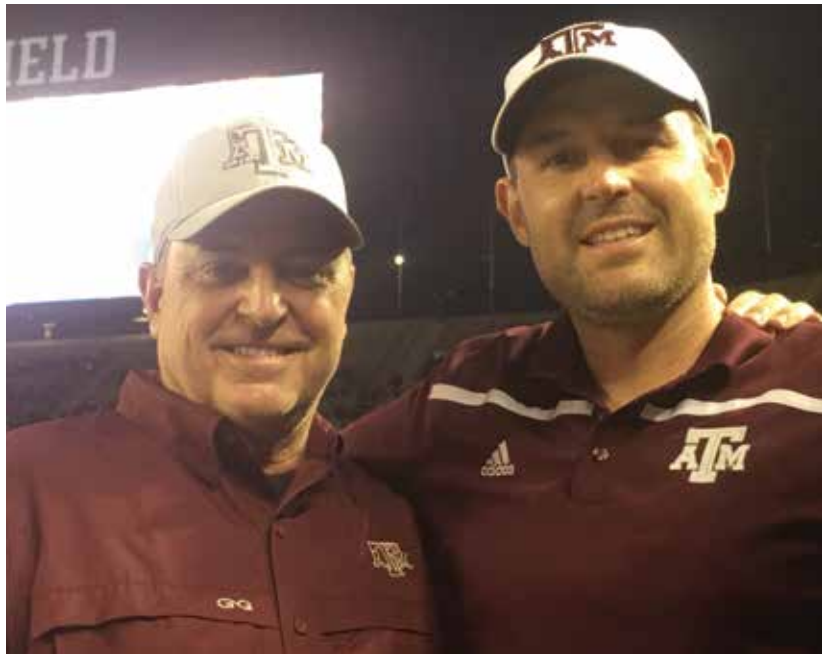
Since graduation, Mark IV has worked within the private equity and venture capital industry while staying connected to A&M through organizations such as the Mays Fellows Program and the Corps Board of Visitors.

Mark IV and Ashley have been giving back to A&M since 2013 when they first endowed the Col. Mark A. Welsh Jr. ’46 Memorial Corps Scholarship in honor of his late grandfather. Since then, the couple has made a tremendous impact on several students’ academic opportunities and continue to pave a promising path for Aggies to come.

### FINDING THE 1922 FUND

Given their background, Mark IV and his father, Mark III, recently began looking for an opportunity to come together and find a charitable program at A&M that gave them the ability to honor the things they both value – service, education, athletics and family. Through the 1922 Fund, the Welshes were able to find a unique partnership that checked all their boxes.

“The impetus for our family to donate to Texas



A&M Athletics was to honor my late aunt, Monica Welsh,” Mark IV said. “Monica was an amazing person for a lot of reasons, including that she could really play the game of golf. She was a two-time all-state selection in high school and a four-year letter winner for A&M from 1978-82.”

Monica was one of the many proud Aggies within the Welsh family that made her mark on A&M. As a senior, she led the Aggies to the Southwest Conference Championship, earned all-conference honors and was named A&M’s Most Valuable Player in both 1981 and 1982.

“Monica was a remarkable young woman,” her brother, Mark III, said. “She loved the competition,

Multiple generations of Welshes have supported Texas A&M with a shared vision and passion for service, education, athletics and family.

Along with his wife, Ashley, and sons, Jacob, Noah and Wyatt, Mark Welsh IV has continued the family tradition of giving back to A&M. Mark IV believes the educational aspect of the student-athlete experience plays a critical role in ensuring bright futures within and outside of sports.



and she loved the hard work that went into getting better at it. She was really a special human being first and then she was a pretty darn good golfer on top of that.”

Tragically, Monica was killed in a car accident in 1992 near the Hills of Lakeway golf course in Austin where she worked as an assistant pro and held the women’s course record for a period of time. Inspired by her attitude, work ethic and love for golf, the Welshes decided to endow a scholarship for Aggie women’s golf through the 1922 Fund in her honor. Family and friends have generously donated to the 12th Man Foundation to honor Monica in the past, and this gift will significantly expand that scholarship.

“**PEOPLE ALWAYS LOOK AT GOLF AS AN INDIVIDUAL SPORT, BUT MONICA NEVER DID — IT WAS ALWAYS ABOUT THE TEAM. SO, I BELIEVE THE ABILITY TO GET TO KNOW A STUDENT-ATHLETE WHO HAS MADE THAT SAME COMMITMENT AND HAS THOSE SAME HOPES AND DREAMS AS SHE DID IS JUST REALLY EXCITING FOR US.**

— MARK WELSH III

“People always look at golf as an individual sport, but Monica never did – it was always about the team,” Mark III recalled. “So, I believe the ability to get to know a student-athlete who has made that same commitment and has those same hopes and dreams as she did is just really exciting for us.”

Seeing how Monica benefited from Aggie Athletics, the Welshes became passionate about supporting student-athletes. As Mark IV said, “Monica took a lot pride in being a part of A&M Athletics, and we want to help people out who are like her.” According to Mark III, the family is excited to share the enthusiasm and make a difference.

“My wife, Betty, and I both really want to try and make even a small difference for a student-athlete who’s trying to get through school while playing sports,” he said. “The idea that I can introduce my sister Monica, who can’t introduce herself anymore, to someone in the next generation of student-athletes who may benefit a little bit from her memory just really fires me up.”

With their generous support to the 1922 Fund, the Welshes have made a direct investment in A&M Athletics and received an incredibly unique partnership in return.

“One of the great things about something like this is when we identify with a particular student-athlete, they don’t just get Mark and I – they get all of us,” Mark III said of his family. “The whole gang is coming on board to support them, and I think they might even enjoy that because it’s a pretty cool gang!”



# THE 2018-19 DISTINGUISHED LETTERMEN

BY DOUGLAS PILS '92

**COLLEGE STUDENTS' BUSY SCHEDULES** automatically come packed with classes, projects, tests and being on their own for the first time in their lives. That gets multiplied greatly for Texas A&M's student-athletes when practices, workouts and games get piled on the daily to-do list.

Those who excel in adding involvement in student groups, service projects and leadership roles in those areas are truly gifted at time management.

At the Building Champions Awards gala on April 15, Ilo Izu from Houston Strake Jesuit and Maddy

Stulce from Katy Seven Lakes, two members of the Aggies' track and field team, were honored for being such student-athletes with the Distinguished Letterman Award. It is the highest honor that can be presented to an A&M student-athlete because it recognizes their all-around performance in athletics, scholarship, leadership and service.

The fact that both came from coach Pat Henry's track and field team was not lost on either of them.

"It definitely shows what Coach Henry has instilled in us in the time since we started here,"



Maddy Stulce (right)  
Distinguished Letterman Award

Ilo Izu (left)  
Distinguished Letterman Award



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Annual donations above and beyond those tied to season tickets are crucial to providing the resources necessary for distinguished student-athletes like Maddy Stulce and Ilo Izu to be successful at Texas A&M.



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said Stulce, a graduate who recently competed in her fourth straight NCAA Championships in the javelin.

“It’s a testimony to who we are as people and who we are as a team, especially since both of us are from the same team,” added Izu, a senior who recently completed his college career at the NCAA Championships after helping the men’s 4x400 relay qualify at the NCAA West Preliminary in late May.

Henry wasn’t surprised at all to hear that two of his seniors had won the Athletics Department’s highest award for student-athletes.

“They’re good human beings,” Henry said. “They’re kind young people. They’re always the ones that if I see an older person come into our building, they seem to be the ones showing them around. They take ownership and they’re proud to be Aggies and they will be great Aggies of the future because of the things they are learning right now about what it means to be an Aggie.”

What that meant to Izu and Stulce was being involved in as much as their schedules would allow.

Learning how to manage their time as undergrads helped set the stage for them to rise up through their organizations and add more to their plate. It wasn’t easy says Izu, who was involved with

Maroon Coats on campus and volunteered with the Houston Food Bank and a camp for children with muscular dystrophy.

“I think for me it was very difficult to manage everything all at once, especially at the beginning of this semester after I had already been in my organization for a year,” said Izu, who plans to graduate with his degree in allied health in December and

“**THEY TAKE OWNERSHIP AND THEY’RE PROUD TO BE AGGIES AND THEY WILL BE GREAT AGGIES OF THE FUTURE BECAUSE OF THE THINGS THEY ARE LEARNING RIGHT NOW ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AGGIE.**

— PAT HENRY

then prepare to earn his physician's assistant degree where he wants to work in orthopedic surgery. "It's definitely taught me that there's more than just track and more than just school work. It's helped me put my focus in other areas where I can help others and meet new people."

Stulce, whose parents, Steven and Marcy, are both A&M grads, and her brother Kyle is coming next year to throw the shot for the Aggies, graduated for a second time in May. She obtained her master's in finance after receiving her undergraduate degree in supply chain management in 2018. Stulce spent this past school year as president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and of her finance program. She had been president of the A&M Consulting Club in her final year as an undergrad.

While adding all of the extra work away from academics and athletics was daunting, both student-athletes said a big reason for doing so was to build their base of friends and colleagues as they prepare to enter the real world.

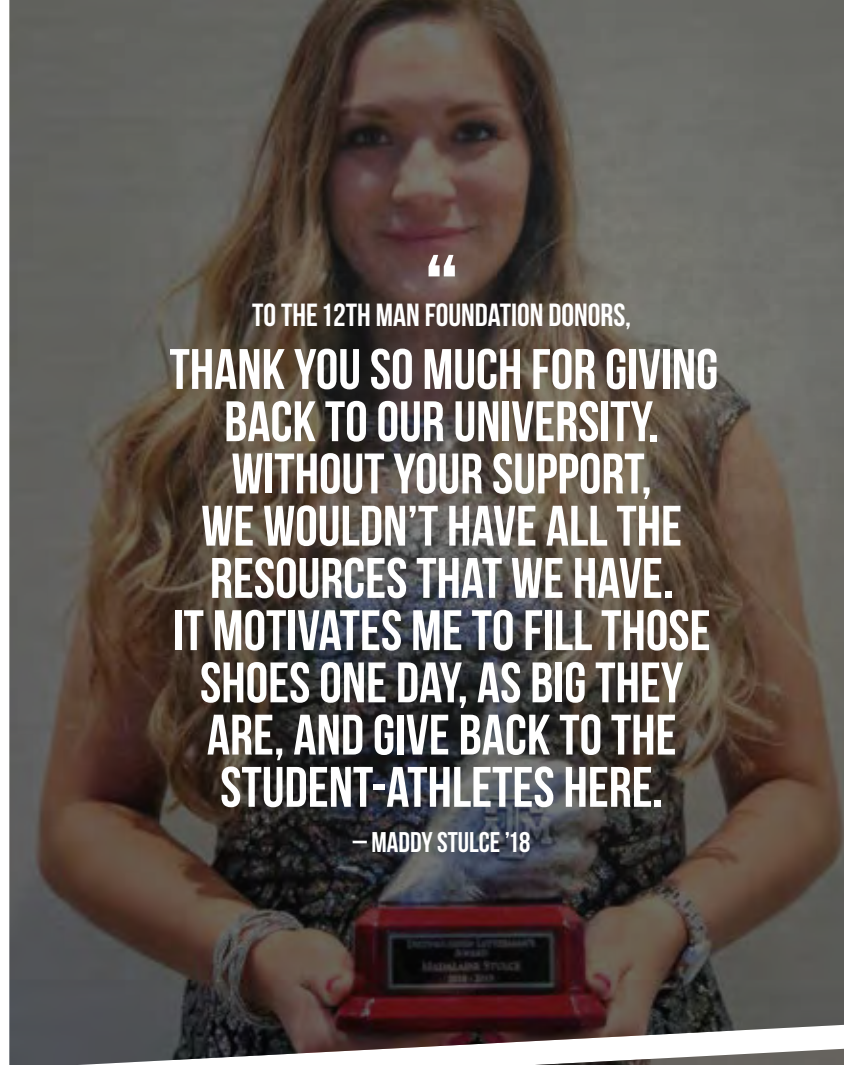
"The network that we build here not only carries us in the time that we're here at A&M, but those are the people we're going to be working with in the future, the people we'll hire as clients and we'll have as business partners in the future," said Stulce, who will start working with PricewaterhouseCoopers this summer as a financial consultant. "It goes beyond just being students here and having friends here to hang out with. It means a whole bunch more when we're a part of the Aggie network."

However, beyond building relationships with fellow students across campus and outside of athletics, both Izu and Stulce were involved in so many things because of a need to give back. They both felt obligated to show younger student-athletes how to help others and pay forward the opportunities they have had as student-athletes at A&M.

"I think it's a tribute to what we've done as athletes here, but not only as athletes, also as students giving back to our university," Stulce said.

Izu echoed that sentiment.

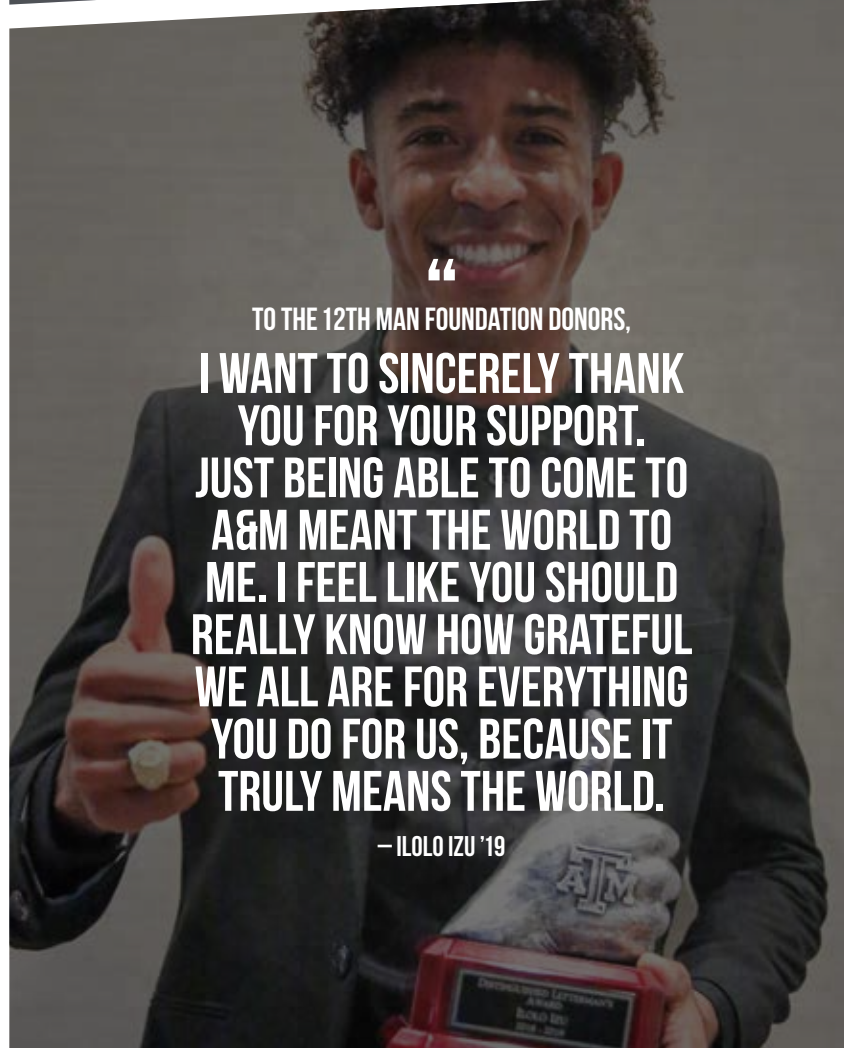
"It's always important to know where you came from and this school has done so much for us," Izu said. "I feel like we have a sense of duty to give back in some way. There's always more you can do." ♥



“

TO THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION DONORS,  
**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR GIVING  
BACK TO OUR UNIVERSITY.  
WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT,  
WE WOULDN'T HAVE ALL THE  
RESOURCES THAT WE HAVE.  
IT MOTIVATES ME TO FILL THOSE  
SHOES ONE DAY, AS BIG THEY  
ARE, AND GIVE BACK TO THE  
STUDENT-ATHLETES HERE.**

— MADDY STULCE '18



“

TO THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION DONORS,  
**I WANT TO SINCERELY THANK  
YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.  
JUST BEING ABLE TO COME TO  
A&M MEANT THE WORLD TO  
ME. I FEEL LIKE YOU SHOULD  
REALLY KNOW HOW GRATEFUL  
WE ALL ARE FOR EVERYTHING  
YOU DO FOR US, BECAUSE IT  
TRULY MEANS THE WORLD.**

— ILOLO IZU '19



Ethan Gogulski (pictured with Carolyn Lohman) and Jonathan Ducoff (not pictured)  
*Lohman Inspirational Award*



Sydney Pickrem and Chennedy Carter  
*Female Athletes of the Year*



Katya Townsend and Jace Sternberger (not pictured)  
*Newcomers of the Year*



Nathan Hite (right)  
*Bill Erwin Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year*

In addition to Maddy Stulce and Ilo Izu receiving the Distinguished Letterman Award, 12 student-athletes were honored at the sixth annual Building Champions Awards Gala in April for their outstanding athletic performance, leadership, academics and service to the community. Award winners included: Bill Erwin Scholar-Athletes of the Year Raena Eldridge and Nathan Hite; Newcomers of the Year Katya Townsend and Jace Sternberger; Nye Academic Center Award recipient Savion Flagg; Lohman Inspirational Award recipients Jonathan Ducoff and Ethan Gogulski; Selfless Service Award recipient Ann Elizabeth Tebow; Female Athletes of the Year Sydney Pickrem and Chennedy Carter; and Male Athletes of the Year Chandler Phillips and Trayveon Williams.



Raena Eldridge (right)  
*Bill Erwin Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year*



Ann Elizabeth Tebow  
*Selfless Service Award*



Savion Flagg (pictured with Erle Nye '59)  
*Nye Academic Center Award*



Chandler Phillips and Trayveon Williams (not pictured)  
*Male Athletes of the Year*

# SHANNON '18 & DAVID RIGGS '99

BY BRIAN DAVIS '01

**SHANNON AND DAVID RIGGS ALWAYS ENVISIONED** establishing a scholarship to support a student's college education even before they thought they would have children of their own. With the 12th Man Foundation, the couple found the perfect avenue to focus their philanthropy, setting their sights on supporting student-athlete education through the 1922 Fund.

"We set a lifetime giving goal to fully endow a scholarship for a student-athlete," Shannon said. "That's a gift that's going to endure and be a legacy, potentially for generations."

More specifically, Shannon and David want to fund scholarships for student-athletes who aspire to work with children with special needs, something that has been especially near and dear to their hearts since they first met.

"To be able to follow a student-athlete, provide mentorship and be able to say their entire academic career is taken care of is far more meaningful to us than where we sit on Saturday," David said. "We feel fortunate that we can provide an opportunity like this, especially knowing that college would likely be out of reach for some student-athletes if it weren't for the 1922 Fund."

## AGGIE CONNECTION

For David, coming to Texas A&M was always a "no brainer." Born and raised in Boerne, Texas, David only applied to A&M, arrived on campus as a freshman in 1995 and graduated in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in Journalism. He bought season football tickets in 2001 and has been a season ticket holder ever since.

Originally from Michigan, Shannon grew up in a military family, graduated from high school in Killeen, Texas, and earned a bachelor's and master's degree from Baylor.

Her first connection to A&M occurred after college when she began dating an Aggie who brought her to a football game at Kyle Field. Shannon



recalled the experience was a bit uncomfortable at first and is thankful to this day that another Aggie jumped in to explain everything that was happening in the stands and on the field. She's still friends with many Aggies she met that day and credits them with her love of the university.

"The boyfriend didn't work out, but by the end of the season I was pretty ingrained in Aggie football and the culture," she said. "The following fall, I bought season football tickets with the same Aggie who took me under his wing at my first football game."

A few years later, Aggie Athletics helped bring Shannon and David together and has been an important part of their relationship since the day they first met. In fact, the couple's first date was at an A&M women's basketball game in 2012.

"We were talking so much that an older couple next to us left at halftime," David admitted. "Our friends sitting nearby confirmed we were a little too chatty, but that's what you're supposed to do on a first date."

Shannon and David Riggs generously support Texas A&M Athletics as Champions Council members and as 1922 Fund donors, and are season ticket holders for football and men's basketball.



Shannon and David were not expecting to have children until they were blessed with the opportunity to adopt their now 3-year-old son, Issac. The couple received another gift around Christmas 2017 with their now 20-month-old daughter, Olivia.

Not long after the two began dating, they discovered their season football tickets were within 10 rows of each other in the same section on the west side third deck of Kyle Field.

Shannon and David were married in 2013 and made College Station their home.

### UNEXPECTED GIFTS

Living in Aggieland, Shannon made the decision that she wanted to officially become an Aggie. So, in 2014, she began pursuing a PhD at the Texas A&M School of Public Health.

She finished the program in 2018, earning her PhD in Health Services Research with a specialization in healthcare economics. Along the way, David helped ensure she experienced all the traditions of a typical Aggie undergrad, including putting a penny on Sully and dunking her ring.

“She was an Aggie already in spirit,” David said. “Now, no one can say she’s not an Aggie.”

Shannon’s journey towards finishing her PhD included a pair of unforeseen blessings along the way. First was the couple’s now 3-year-old son, Isaac, and then came their now 20-month-old daughter, Olivia.

“The opportunity to adopt Issac took us by surprise,” David said.

“We got a call in the fall of my second year (in the PhD program) about a woman who was pregnant

and looking for a family to adopt her baby,” Shannon added. “She had two criteria. She wanted a family that wasn’t able to have kids and she didn’t want to know the family, but wanted to have a friend who knew the family.”

David’s cousin was a close friend to the birth mother.

“He arrived in April – six weeks before finals,” Shannon recalled. “I was pretty adamant I was going to quit after making it through that semester, but David convinced me to keep going.”

Then, during the fourth year of Shannon’s PhD program, the couple began working with the state of Texas to adopt a child with special needs.

“As I was writing my dissertation, we got a call about a 3-month-old little girl who had been severely physically abused,” Shannon said. “She was not expected to survive when she was admitted to the hospital as a 2-month-old, but she fought and battled for almost a month before eventually being ready for discharge. It was two weeks before Christmas and there was no chance that she was going home unless a family stepped in to say yes.”

Shannon kept having a vision of a baby girl in a hospital bed during Christmas with no family.

“I thought, we can do better than this,” she said. “So, after asking lots of questions and meeting with her doctors, we brought home a baby girl who was expected to have significant special needs.”

## YOU CAN MAKE AN INDELIBLE IMPACT

Shannon and David Riggs have set a lifetime giving goal to fully endow a scholarship for a student-athlete through the 1922 Fund.

Join Shannon and David and make a direct investment in the long-term viability and success of Texas A&M Athletics.



CONTACT LAUREN HICKEY AT 979-260-7595

David recalled that Olivia's injury list was 18 bullet points long and included multiple skull fractures, significant brain damage, rib injuries and a permanently damaged stomach.

"They thought she was going to be blind in one eye and would never walk or talk," Shannon added.

A year and a half later, Shannon and David are in the final stages of adopting Olivia. She's walking. She has vision in both eyes. She's starting to say a few words. While she will likely have developmental delays for life, she's doing remarkably well compared to what her doctors predicted.

"Although Olivia hasn't been adopted yet, we have had two completely different adoption experiences," David said. "Isaac fell into our laps from birth. We were at the hospital with the mom's family and our family. Olivia's has been more complicated. Both are blessings, but in different ways."

### PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY

Since graduating, David has enjoyed a successful career working at A&M as the IT Admin for the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering.

Shannon has built a career working with children with special needs as a speech pathologist, which included starting her own speech pathology business. That path led to her current role in a leadership position with UnitedHealthcare in which she is able to work from home.

"The opportunity to continue to work and be a mom in a flexible at-home work environment and still do something related to what I built my career doing was way too good to say no to," she said. "I saw it as an opportunity to make a bigger impact. I'd been an advocate for patients for years and the position with United gave me the opportunity to work directly with an insurer to find the right mix of services for individuals with complex health needs. I

get to work on projects to improve the quality of care and clinical outcomes for more than 6 million people in 26 states."

United originally hired Shannon to run its therapy services program for their Medicaid and CHIP division. However, she has quickly leveraged the skills gained in her PhD program and now works on a variety of projects for them.

"I love getting to work with teams of physicians who are committed to patient care as well as improving the healthcare system," she said. "And getting to be home to have breakfast and lunch with my kids is a bonus!"

### SUPPORTING STUDENT-ATHLETES

Throughout their professional and personal journeys, Shannon and David have continuously supported Aggie Athletics.

They are football and men's basketball season ticket holders and have especially enjoyed introducing their new family to their football and basketball families at Aggie games and tailgates.

The couple is also making a considerable impact as Champions Council members, which included an initial gift towards the Bright Complex renovations.

While they enjoy the perks of being in Champions Council, the pair is currently focused on combining three of their primary passions – Aggie Athletics, education and helping children with special needs. And that has remained a priority now that they have children of their own.

"Our goal is to still fund a student-athlete scholarship," David said. "I can't wait until it's actually endowed and established. It's very nice to know you're having a direct impact on a student's education."

Through their generosity, Shannon and David are helping provide the resources for student-athletes to be successful now and in the future.

"Sometimes giving is hard but it makes such a huge impact," Shannon said. "Even if you can only give small, incremental dollars, it adds up over time and is just as meaningful as a significant one-time gift. That small gift you're giving combined with thousands of other gifts gets a kid to college who otherwise would not be there."

"It completely alters their life," David added. "When you have that degree, there are Aggies everywhere who will take care of you. It doesn't matter where you are in the world, they'll find you. To give student-athletes that opportunity is immeasurable." ■

“

**WE FEEL FORTUNATE THAT WE CAN PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS, ESPECIALLY KNOWING THAT COLLEGE WOULD LIKELY BE OUT OF REACH FOR SOME STUDENT-ATHLETES IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE 1922 FUND.**

— DAVID RIGGS

# ANDREW MONACO

A conversation with the “Voice of the Aggies”

BY ADAM QUISENBERRY



» WAS HIRED IN JUNE 2018 TO ASSUME PLAY-BY-PLAY DUTIES FOR AGGIE FOOTBALL AND MEN'S BASKETBALL FOLLOWING THE RETIREMENT OF THE LEGENDARY DAVE SOUTH

» 30-YEAR CAREER IN BROADCASTING INCLUDES 11 SEASONS AS A PART OF THE SAN ANTONIO SPURS BROADCAST TEAM

» GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND IN 1986 WITH A B.S. IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM

» WITH WIFE, LAURA, HAS TWO CHILDREN: ANDREW (A 2018 GRADUATE OF TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY) AND GINA (A JUNIOR AT TRINITY UNIVERSITY IN SAN ANTONIO)

**After your first year on the job, what does it mean to be the “Voice of the Aggies”?**

It’s an absolute honor. I’ll be honest, I still pinch myself because I know it’s the best job I’ve had. Aggies are so loyal and really are the best fans I’ve been around, so to be the “Voice of the Aggies” is truly an absolute honor for me. To see what Kyle Field, Reed Arena and all our athletic venues are like on a game day, what our student-athletes are like and really what the entire student body is about, continues to impress me.

**What was the experience like calling an all-time classic during the Aggies’ seven-overtime win over LSU?**

What an amazing night. At some point during the broadcast you could tell this was moving beyond a rivalry game to a really historic contest. During that game, I’m opening Twitter and seeing how the game has really captivated everybody with the range of emotions involved going from, “If they lose it’s still a really good season,” to big play after big play in the clutch. Not just one person, everybody stepping up. It was a signature win for Jimbo Fisher in year one that I think we’ll look back on and see how important it was

in helping establish the culture of Texas A&M football.

**Is there a signature call from that game that you’re particularly proud of?**

It’s probably the game-winning two-point conversion. Everything was laid out – we had to score the touchdown and then get the conversion to win. It had all the emotional aspects, but for me as a broadcaster, there is also the technical side of it where you have to weave all of that into the play. It’ll probably be the most famous call, but it’s funny going back and listening to the broadcast of that game. I had forgotten an awful lot because there were so many twists and turns. The great part for me about that night is that I really felt like we were on. Going back to when I started, there was a way I wanted our broadcasts to sound and I truly believe we hit that from week one. Three people have to get along and work together. Dave Elmendorf is outstanding and Will Johnson is so great on the sidelines. That’s another aspect of that LSU game that I’m so proud of – that throughout that game we never lost sight of that technical part of the broadcast.

**What would you say to someone who has never experienced Kyle Field or perhaps someone considering season tickets?**

You really have to experience it. I’ve always felt that when you walk into a stadium or an arena, you feel that connection. If you have season tickets, you have another connection because you really do have that sense of family with people around you. There is obviously the connection with the student-athletes competing and the school, but there is also that connection with the people who surround you every game day. If you’ve never been, you have to try it because there is nothing quite like it and when you’ve been, you really want to be a part of it every weekend because no game is ever the same.

“  
TO SEE WHAT KYLE FIELD, REED ARENA AND ALL OUR ATHLETIC VENUES ARE LIKE ON A GAME DAY, WHAT OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE LIKE AND REALLY WHAT THE ENTIRE STUDENT BODY IS ABOUT, CONTINUES TO IMPRESS ME.

— ANDREW MONACO





**Changing sports, can you feel the energy surrounding the men’s basketball program following the Buzz Williams hire?**

From the day he was introduced, you certainly can. It really is “welcome home” for a guy who gets A&M. In some ways he reminds me of Jimbo Fisher because every basketball lesson is really a life lesson. You see the connections he has built with his players going back to his Acie Law IV days as an assistant under Billy Gillispie. That has continued with players throughout his career. It feels a little bit like what Coach Fisher is building. We joke about the Buzz being back, but you really can feel it and he has hit the ground running.

**Can you talk about your interactions with 12th Man Foundation donors?**

I am thankful and overwhelmed by the welcome. I truly feel like I was welcomed to the family and it’s never stopped. It really felt like, “You’re one of us now,” so to see donors at games or on

the road and watch them interact with our student-athletes knowing they’ve made an impact in their lives really is special.

**What is your advice for fans who want to support A&M Athletics, but are not members of the 12th Man Foundation?**

Take away the intimidation of getting involved or the feeling that you have to give back at a certain level to make an impact. Every little bit truly does make a difference and opens up a world of benefits to fans who want to deepen their connection with Aggie Athletics and our student-athletes. There are so many reasons to get involved, but it gives people a way to help our programs become even more successful. We talk about the A&M brand and joining the 12th Man Foundation is a great way to make our brand even more successful. The investment people make to help our student-athletes succeed is a direct result of taking that step to get involved. ■

Will Johnson '01, Andrew Monaco and Dave Elmendorf '71 enjoyed an unforgettable first season together as the radio broadcast team for Texas A&M football.



# MAXIMIZE YOUR IMPACT WITH A MATCHING GIFT

Many employers will match tax deductible gifts to the 12th Man Foundation, which can double your contribution in support of Texas A&M Athletics

While each company has its own procedure, typically the process includes these easy steps:

**1**

You request a matching gift form from your company's website or HR office

**2**

You complete the form and send it to the 12th Man Foundation with your gift

**3**

The 12th Man Foundation verifies the gift information and returns it to your employer

**4**

Your employer issues a matching gift contribution to the 12th Man Foundation

**Ask your employer if they offer a matching gift program to maximize your impact on Texas A&M student-athletes**

While annual seat contributions are no longer tax deductible, donations to the Annual Fund may be tax deductible since they are not tied to a ticket purchase

Consult your tax advisor to determine the deductibility of your gift



For more information about making a matching gift to the 12th Man Foundation, call Toni McDowell at 979-260-7577.

# TARA '87 & BOB '87 CAHILL



“  
**IT'S REALLY SPECIAL TO GET TO KNOW THE STUDENT-ATHLETES AND SEE HOW HARD THESE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WORK ALL THE TIME. WE'RE PROUD OF HOW THEY REPRESENT A&M THE RIGHT WAY. WHEN YOU SEE HOW MUCH THEY APPRECIATE WHAT YOU DO TO SUPPORT THEM, IT MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE.**

— TARA '87 & BOB '87 CAHILL

## **What does it mean to you to be involved with the 12th Man Foundation?**

It's very rewarding for us. We are proud to be members of the 12th Man Foundation and are always encouraging others to join or increase their impact. There's a lot of pride with us – A&M is a part of our identity. We both wear maroon as often as we can. Everyone knows we are die-hard Aggies. We feel like we are doing our part to help build champions, and we keep trying to up our game, do a little more and more the older we get.

## **Why do you go above and beyond in your support?**

It's a part of selfless service. We learned a lot about that at A&M as one of our core values. We know that you're supposed to give somehow. Whether it's money or not, you should be passionate about what you give to. For us, we are all in on Aggie Athletics. It definitely feels like we're ascending as an athletics program and it feels like we're ascending as donors right along with it.

## **What are some of the benefits you enjoy as MVP level donors?**

We really enjoy interacting with student-athletes at events like the Summer Meeting. We were able to spend some time last year visiting with Jace Sternberger before anyone knew who he was. It's really special to get to know the student-athletes and see how hard these young men and women work all the time. We're proud of how they represent A&M the right way. When you see how much they appreciate what you do to support them, it makes you feel like you have made a difference.

Another perk is getting to peek behind the curtain a little bit and see what you're impacting. And we have met so many great, like-minded people. They have the same hobbies and passions as we do and are just as wrapped up in Aggie Athletics. We instantly have a connection. ■

With an MVP (\$750+) or MVP Gold (\$2,500+) annual gift, you can make a significant impact on Texas A&M student-athletes while enjoying some great additional donor benefits.

**CONTACT CALLIE BOENIGK AT 979-260-2394**

# DONOR SERVICES

Providing exceptional experiences to all who interact with the 12th Man Foundation

BY SAMANTHA ATCHLEY '17

## DONOR SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

**5,643**

PHONE CALLS ANSWERED DURING FOOTBALL SEAT SELECTION

**60**

SECONDS AT MOST BEFORE CALLERS REACHED A STAFF MEMBER DURING SEAT SELECTION

**7**

STAFF MEMBERS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING DONORS WITH EXCELLENT SERVICE

### JUST AS ATHLETICS IS SAID TO BE THE FRONT PORCH

of a university, the Donor Services department is in many ways the front porch of the 12th Man Foundation.

Stewarding fans and donors through each and every process, question or concern, the voices behind the phone are dedicated members of the 12th Man Foundation staff who are consistently striving to make every experience one to remember.

“The Donor Services department is the front line of our organization,” Senior Vice President of Annual Fund & Donor Services Michael Solomon said. “For many of our donors and ticket buyers, they’re the one person they interact with. They have a tremendous impact because that conversation goes such a long way towards determining how people feel about us as an organization.”

Certainly setting the tone, the Donor Services team is often responsible for the first impression that donors, ticket buyers and fans have of the 12th Man Foundation – a responsibility that Donor Service Coordinator Aubrey Rotello says the team “does not take lightly.”

“There is a huge sense of personal accountability and a strong work ethic throughout this organization, but it definitely rings true within Donor Services,” Rotello said. “We are determined to own every challenge and work diligently across the organization to locate solutions. We take great pride in what we do and anything short of perfection is something we take very personally.”

Their personal touch is indeed another thankless characteristic that the department diligently provides in every interaction they have.

“It’s important that we always act with integrity

and never miss an opportunity to extend a friendly ‘Howdy,’ Donor Service Coordinator Lindsey Aguilar added.

Cognizant of Texas A&M’s rich tradition of excellence, respect and service, the Donor Services team believes these qualities should radiate through every phone call and office visit.

“Our donors are not just attending games,” Rotello noted, “they are making memories with their lifelong friends, children and grandchildren. These memories will last a lifetime and we are all very proud to be a part of that.”

The team isn’t just assisting with game day operations either. The Donor Services department is a collective of vast knowledge that has a large part in several important yearly processes such as season ticket renewals, single game ticket purchases, seat selections, charitable giving options and special events. From answering questions about where to park, to guiding a new student through purchasing their first sports pass, the Donor Services team is an extremely valuable storehouse of information.

“Our department is always there to assist donors in any way we can,” Aguilar said. “Our largest responsibility, however, is to provide information for any situation. We’re constantly expanding our collective knowledge to best answer the questions posed to us, and learn beyond the confines of our own foundation so that we can better assist in matters that extend to other divisions of A&M.”

Because their work encompasses such a wide variety of subjects throughout each day, the Donor Services department is also a very valuable tool to the organization internally.

“We are in a unique position to field

information as it comes through and distinguish when patterns are forming that would be pertinent to bring to the attention of our staff,” Aguilar said. “This can help solve problems, spearhead supplemental information on an event or clarify trends in interest, among other things.”

Exceptionally, the Donor Services team is able to handle every unique situation and manages to do it with a smile.

“It’s important to be able to provide the assistance and information our donors need,” Aguilar said, “but I believe it to be as equally important to take every opportunity to ask how someone’s day has been or share a story.”

Aguilar’s goal at the end of every conversation is to feel confident that she has given 100 percent of her effort and attention.

“Hopefully I leave the call having shared a little sunshine in a donor’s day,” she added. “Our entire department is special in that we’re given the opportunity to get to know so many of our donors, and I’m thankful to each and every one who takes a moment of their day to speak with me.”

The Donor Services department is undoubtedly comprised of hardworking, genuine staff members focused on providing exceptional

“

**OUR ENTIRE DEPARTMENT IS SPECIAL IN THAT WE’RE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW SO MANY OF OUR DONORS, AND I’M THANKFUL TO EACH AND EVERY ONE WHO TAKES A MOMENT OF THEIR DAY TO SPEAK WITH ME.**

— LINDSEY AGUILAR ’16

experiences to all who interact with the 12th Man Foundation.

“My position in Donor Services is unlike any position I’ve held at any other company,” Rotello said. “Helping people is in the job description, but the pleasure really is all mine. Many of our Aggies have lived fascinating lives and are great storytellers. My hope is that when a donor hangs up the phone, all questions have been answered and that they enjoyed our conversation as much as I did.”



**ESTHER MATTHAEI '06**  
MANAGER OF DONOR SERVICES



**LINDSEY AGUILAR '16**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR



**MELISSA CHAVARRIA**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR



**AMBER MORGAN**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR



**TAYLOR NAGLE '18**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR



**AUBREY ROTELLO**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR



**MAGGIE SMITH**  
DONOR SERVICE COORDINATOR

# Make an Enduring Impact on Texas A&M Athletics with a Charitable Bequest

A charitable bequest is a gift left to charity when someone passes away. It is one of the easiest ways to leave a legacy and support Texas A&M Athletics.

**You can leave a bequest to support Texas A&M Athletics and the 12th Man Foundation by making a promise in your will, living trust or codicil.**

Certain assets, such as an insurance policy, retirement account or bank account, can be left to charity by way of a beneficiary designation.

With a bequest, or beneficiary gift, the asset is transferred to charity after lifetime.

## BENEFITS OF A CHARITABLE BEQUEST

### Bequests are Flexible

You can leave a bequest of a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate or even a specific asset, such as a retirement account.

### Bequests are Empowering

With a bequest, you retain full ownership and control of your assets during life — you can use your assets as you see fit and can even sell the asset if you need to.

### Bequests can be Strategic

Bequests can help you establish priorities. You could name a loved one as a primary beneficiary, but if that person is no longer living, your estate plan could leave the asset to the 12th Man Foundation as a contingent beneficiary.

### Bequests may Save on Taxes

If your estate will be subject to estate taxes, a charitable bequest may reduce the amount of tax by generating a charitable estate tax deduction.

## PLEASE ALLOW US TO RECOGNIZE YOUR LEGACY

If you have included the 12th Man Foundation in your estate plans, let us know and join the John David Crow Legacy Society.

Contact Clint Dempsey at 979-260-7584 or [clint@12thmanfoundation.com](mailto:clint@12thmanfoundation.com) or visit [12thmangift.org](http://12thmangift.org) to learn more about charitable bequests



# THANK YOU!

## THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION SALUTES ALL EPPRIGHT DISTINGUISHED DONORS FOR THEIR LASTING COMMITMENT TO TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS

THE EPPRIGHT DISTINGUISHED DONORS PROGRAM RECOGNIZES THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED \$100,000 OR MORE IN SUPPORT OF TEXAS A&M'S ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Jennifer '97 & Todd Abbott '95  
Amber & James Abell '99  
Linda '70 & Doug Abshire  
Dee Dee and Jon Acklam '69  
In Memory of Jerry D. Adair  
Donna & Donald Adam '57  
Kelli '91 & Daniel Adam  
Joan & S. Wayne Adamik '58  
Betty & C. Lee Adams '63  
Milton '45, Gary '68 & Danny '77 Adams  
Sonja & Neal Adams '68  
Ruth & Phil Louis Adams '68  
Phil Adams '70  
Ann & James P. "Beau" Adams '07  
Vic & Linda Adoue  
Paula '77 & Steven E. Aeschbach '78  
Natalie & Brett Agee  
Margaret & Ben D. Agnor '58  
Texas A&M AgriLife  
Robert & Ely Akin  
Wayne Alani, MD PA '79  
Elizabeth & Charles B. Albright '79  
Robert L. Albritton '71  
Catherine & Ford D. Albritton III '69  
Ford D. Albritton, Jr. '43  
Mike & Pat Aldredge  
Sharon & Lovell Aldrich '65  
BJ, MJ, Michael and Davin Alexander  
Kay & David Alexander '71  
Mark T. Alfieri '83  
Robert H. Allen '50 & Judy Ley Allen  
Allen Honda  
A. James Allison '59  
Douglas and Tina Almond Class of '84  
Connie & George Y. Alsop, M.D. '73  
William K. & Doris Altman '65  
Francis X. Amsler  
ANCO Insurance  
ANCO Insurance Managers  
Gay and John D. Anderson '71  
Anita & Gabe Anderson, Jr. '41  
Tricia & William C. Anderson '74  
Tracy '92 & C. Jarrett Anderson '93  
Anonymous  
S. Paul & Shel Anderson  
Melba & Lavon Anderson '57  
Lorelei and Rus Anthony '60  
Kamal Ariss '84  
Thomas & Lynn Arthur '84  
Renee & Steve Ash '87  
Michael '88 & Carol '85 Barrett Ashfield  
Christie '77 & Rick Ashley '76  
Anonymous  
Billy & Donnelle Atkinson '72  
Josephine & John H. Atterbury, Jr. '45  
John H. Atterbury III '70  
Stacy '91 & Daren Austin '92  
Sabrena & Daryl W. Austin '94  
Barbara & Dionel E. Aviles '53  
Baber Family  
Brian Bachik '86 & Jennifer Bachik '87  
Jo & W. Mike Baggett '68  
Denise & David C. Baggett '81  
ZoeAnn '94 & Judson E. Bailey '95

Doug '67 and Dr. Susan Rudd '78 '81 Bailey  
Tommy & Becky Bain '71  
R. Brant & Paige P. Baird  
Jean & David Bairrington '78  
Barbara & Charles E. Baker '55  
Karen '80 & Forrest "Glenn" Baker '79  
Michael Baker & Lauren Murphy  
Baker Hughes  
Dawn Marie (Zak) Baletka '84  
Nick and Rayniel Bamert '81  
Kimberly & Tim Bancroft '89  
Kenneth Banks '76  
Charles & Lelia Bankston  
Carolyn & Harwell Barber '47  
Sandy & Ron Barclay '68  
Mark D. & Rhonda E. Barhorst Family  
Lisa & Warren Barhorst  
Leonard B. Barker '60  
David G. Barker '66  
Doug & Sally Barkley  
Don & LaGrace Barkman '57  
Barbara & Bill Barnes '76  
Barbara C. Barnett  
Joy & Hall Barret '51  
Anonymous  
Bruce Barret '79  
Glenn and Trisha Barret  
Ray R. Barrett Jr. '55  
Rosey & Ron Bartee  
Bob W. Bass '72  
Peter A. Bassett '80  
Gary Bateman '61  
Matt & Dayna Bathe  
Melanie & Richard L. Bauer '75  
Lisa & David Beaird '81  
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 Modesta & Clayton Williams, Jr. '54  
 Patricia & Conley R. Williams '62  
 Sue & David Williams '79  
 Julie '95 & Keith Williams '78  
 Jane & R. Ken Williams '45  
 Linda & Gary W. "Buddy" Williams '65  
 Judy '87 & Lucian Williams '88  
 Mollie & Richard A. Williford '55  
 Pam '79 & Hearne Williford '77  
 Allen, Williford & Seale, Inc.  
 Carl D. '84 & Sophia C. '85 Williford II  
 Tracey '79 & Connie W. Williford '79  
 Shirleen & Cecil Willis '65  
 Sheena & Jack Wiloughby '72  
 Billie Jo & James M. Bralley '51  
 Jan & Bud Wilson '53  
 Sharon '81 & Jim Wilson '81  
 Kathy & Ron I. Wilson '72  
 Leah & Bonsall S. Wilton '72  
 Carolyn M. & Robert E. Winckler '55  
 Pat & Jerry Windham '63  
 Robert S. Winter '45  
 Sara & David Winters '64  
 Patricia & Charles R. Wiseman '57  
 C. Vince Wiseman '82  
 Clorinda & Royce E. Wisenbaker '39  
 Jana & Royce E. Wisenbaker, Jr. '82  
 Angela '91 and John W. Wisenbaker, Jr. '90  
 Richard R. Wistrand '73  
 Melba & Cliff Wolf '62  
 Harriet & David B. Wolf '52  
 Netta & M.E. "Babe" Wolfe '43  
 Mark W. Wolff '84  
 Anonymous  
 Wilma J. & Brad C. Wolters '81  
 James G. Wood '82  
 Shirley & William A. Wood '59  
 William Wood '81  
 Anonymous  
 Linda & J.D. Woodward III '70  
 Beverly & Lynn Woolley '60  
 Chrissie '92 & Chad Wootton '96  
 Eunice & Dr. J. Max Word '52  
 Shannon '90 & Chris Work '90  
 Darolyn & G.W. "Bill" Worth '61  
 Michele & John Wray  
 Jill '83 & Edwin "Joe" Wright '82  
 Jimmy & Millie Wright '58  
 Frances Wright-Leiper  
 Bruce Yanta '90  
 John M. Yantis '53  
 Yantis Company  
 Anonymous  
 Dee '91 & Tom H. Yates '55  
 S. Shariq Yosufzai '74  
 Carol '76 & Kenneth Young  
 Two Ags from Waco '77 & '79  
 Glenda & Collin H. Young '98  
 Amber '02 & Preston Young '02  
 Amy '86 & Thomas Youngblood '86  
 Anonymous  
 Laura & John B. Zachry '84  
 Zachry Group  
 Victor E. Zouzalik '52



# SHELLEY NEMEC '89

Director of Events & Travel

BY SAMANTHA ATCHLEY '17



#### ABOUT SHELLEY

- » BORN AND RAISED IN SAN MARCOS, TEXAS
- » HAS TRAVELED OVER 17,700 MILES TO 16 CITIES IN NINE STATES WITH 12TH MAN TRAVEL TO PROVIDE DONORS WITH AN UNFORGETTABLE AGGIE FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE
- » FAMILY WAS ACTIVE WITH THE BRAZOS COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM FOR MANY YEARS
- » WITH HUSBAND, BUBBA, HAS DAUGHTER ELLEN MARTINEZ, SON AARON, SON-IN-LAW MICHAEL MARTINEZ AND GRANDCHILDREN AARON AND ADELYN
- » CURRENTLY RESTORING A ONE-OWNER '67 MUSTANG

Shelley became a grandmother in 2014 when her grandson, Aaron, was born, and then welcomed her granddaughter, Adelyn, in April of this year.

**SHELLEY NEMEC HAS SET THE BAR HIGH** as the 12th Man Foundation's Director of Events & Travel. Her attention to detail, exceptional work ethic and genuine desire to provide the most memorable Aggie experiences has made an incredible impact on donors and fellow staff members. Shelley's positive attitude, Aggie spirit and selfless service is reflective of her outstanding character as a person, employee and friend.

A San Marcos native, Shelley took a leap of faith in February 2005 when she transitioned following 14 years in administrative and special events roles at Texas A&M University to be an Administrative Assistant for the 12th Man Foundation's Major Gifts team. While Shelley admits being weary of leaving that position, she was intrigued by the new challenge.

"I played a small part in helping bring Shelley to the 12th Man Foundation and I am so proud of that and appreciate her friendship," President and CEO Travis Dabney said. "I have worked with her for 15 years and she is as dedicated today as she was when she started."

After nine years with Major Gifts, Shelley's expertise in organizing donor events led her to the Events & Travel position in May 2014. As the leader of the team responsible for organizing all donor events, trips and tailgates, Shelley has been

known to put her heart and unmatched effort into every project she's involved in. From big picture planning to the minute details, Shelley takes a unique approach that rarely goes unnoticed.

"The thoughtfulness to each individual she services makes her stand out in her position," Senior Director of Premium Services Britton Douglass said. "She not only thinks of groups as a whole, but each donor and their specific needs, likes and dislikes."

Chris Carson, Manager of Ticket Events & Internal Sales, says Shelley is a vital part of what the 12th Man Foundation stands for.

"She loves this university, and it shows most when she is working an event and interacting with our donors," Carson said.

Through every curve thrown her way, Shelley is always willing and ready to take on new challenges.

"Things that others might view as obstacles, Shelley views as opportunities and makes the best out of every situation," Douglass said.

Director of Human Resources Lauren Pearce credits Shelley's exceptional ability of thinking ahead and being graceful with her flexibility.

"I'm always fascinated by her ability to create memorable donor experiences," Pearce said. "It is apparent that our donors appreciate her contributions just as much as our staff."

Shelley's goal is to create a great Aggie experience for donors, whether at an event or during road game travel.

"I often joke that I can't control the weather or the score, but I hope they still have a great time regardless," Shelley said.

And according to Shelley, it's indeed the people she's had the pleasure to work with over the years that make her efforts worthwhile.

"The 12th Man Foundation has kept me enjoying what I do and allowed me to work with great people, donors and staff," Shelley said. "It really makes a difference when you work with a great, respectful group of people who make your office a truly enjoyable place to be." ■





P.O. Box 2800  
College Station, TX 77841-2800  
979-260-7584  
[www.12thmangift.org](http://www.12thmangift.org)



# YOUR SAVINGS, YOUR LEGACY.

## Benefits of Making an IRA Charitable Rollover Gift



Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to support student-athletes.



Satisfy some or all of your required minimum distribution for the year.



Reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions.



Make a gift that is not subject to the 50% deduction limits on charitable gifts.



Use your rollover to make payments on an existing pledge to us.

There is a way to take your required minimum distribution, skip the tax and make a meaningful gift to support student-athletes this year – the IRA Charitable Rollover.

### It's Easy To Do!

Instruct your retirement account custodian to send any amount (up to \$100,000) to us this year. Because the 12th Man Foundation is tax exempt, there is no tax paid on the transfer. All or a part of your required minimum distribution will be met and the money goes straight to work toward Building Champions.

## Create Your Legacy With An IRA Charitable Rollover Gift

If you are 70½ or older, you can use your individual retirement account (IRA) to support student-athletes at Texas A&M. Making an IRA charitable rollover gift to us will lower the income and taxes from your IRA required minimum distribution this year.

Please call **979-260-7584** or visit our website **12thmangift.org** to learn about how you can create your legacy by making an IRA charitable rollover gift this year.

**IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER**

**70½  
OR OLDER**

**DIRECT UP TO  
\$100,000**

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

Under federal rules your benefits may be different from this example. Please contact us for your specific benefits.

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**The mission of the 12th Man Foundation is to fund scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championship athletics and our donors are the lifeblood of that mission.**

If you know someone who might be interested in making an impact for Texas A&M student-athletes by joining the 12th Man Foundation, we'd love to hear about them!

[WWW.12THMANFOUNDATION.COM/REFER](http://WWW.12THMANFOUNDATION.COM/REFER)