

12th Man

2023 | VOLUME 28, NO. 1

FUNDING SCHOLARSHIPS, PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES
IN SUPPORT OF CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS



**CENTENNIAL
CAMPAIGN**

THANK YOU



TO OUR DONORS,

The past few months have been significant for the 12th Man Foundation. Our loyal donors and season ticket holders continue to stand with us in support of Texas A&M Athletics, providing a level of generosity that is unmatched in college athletics.

This tremendous commitment was exemplified by the 350-plus supporters of the Centennial Campaign, including lead donors April & Jay Graham '92, Adam Sinn '00, David Coolidge '87 and Wayne Roberts '85, who enabled us to surpass our \$120 million goal less than one year following the campaign's public launch. We are deeply appreciative of their transformational investment that will impact Aggie student-athletes for generations.

Additionally, our football season ticket holders continue their unwavering dedication to Aggie Athletics with 93 percent renewing their tickets for the 2023 season and nearly 1,000 new season tickets purchased during the seat selection process this spring. We are grateful for the strong foundation of loyal donors and season ticket holders who truly make an impact on Kyle Field's unrivaled gameday atmosphere.

These accomplishments would not be possible without the steadfast commitment to our mission by the 12th Man Foundation staff. Their efforts remain adaptive and innovative while providing exceptional service to donors and season ticket holders. Our supporters and staff continue to make me incredibly proud to be a part of this organization and even more proud to be an Aggie.

Thank you for answering the call.

Gig 'em!

Travis Dabney '96
President & CEO



STAFF UPDATES

THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING STAFF ADDITIONS:



Matthew Burge '19
Account Executive of Group Ticket Sales



James Ross '08
Director of Human Resources



Efrain Ruiz '18
Manager of Campaign & Development Services



John Mark Palmer III '22
Account Executive of Ticket Sales & Development



Kiri Stanford '14
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Kate Darden '22
Manager of Events & Travel



Erica Nordberg
Executive Assistant



Annaliese Halstead '22
Account Executive of Ticket Sales & Development



Rhyann Stelljes
Account Executive of Ticket Sales & Development



Cameron Boyer
Senior Director of Business Intelligence

WELCOME JAMIE MORRISON

The 12th Man Foundation welcomes three-time Olympic medal-winning coach Jamie Morrison to the Aggie family! Texas A&M Athletics named Morrison as the volleyball program's seventh head coach in December. Morrison's coaching resume over the past 23 years includes experience at the collegiate, national and international levels. He has served on a trio of Olympic medal-winning coaching staffs, working with the U.S. Men's National Volleyball Team that won gold in 2008 and the U.S. Women's National Volleyball Team that won silver in 2012 and bronze in 2016. In March, Morrison engaged with donors at a 12th Man Foundation speaker series event to share his vision for the volleyball program.



COOLIDGE FOOTBALL PERFORMANCE CENTER



R.A. "MURRAY" FASKEN '38 INDOOR TRACK

CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY FOR MULTIPLE TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS FACILITIES

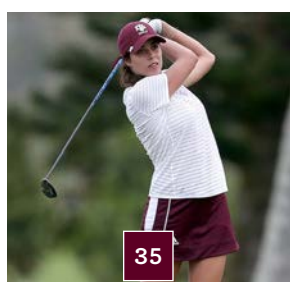
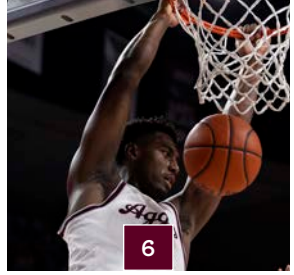
Texas A&M Athletics facility construction and renovations are rapidly taking place across campus. Just south of Kyle Field, the Coolidge Football Performance Center is coming up and is expected to be the very first Centennial Campaign project completed in the fall of 2023. On west campus, the R.A. "Murray" Fasken '38 Indoor Track construction is also slated to be completed in the fall of 2023 with Aggie Track & Field prepared to host competition in the facility next season. Construction of the 23 new Kyle Field south suites is advancing with an expected completion date before the 2023 football season. Redevelopment of the Bright-Slocum Center for Texas A&M Football and construction of the Adam C. Sinn '00 Academic & Wellness Center is in progress as well. Thank you to all donors whose generous support helps fund the construction of the nation's top facilities.



KYLE FIELD

KYLE FIELD SOUTH SUITES

12TH MAN FOUNDATION / WY ROBINSON



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HENRY

COLEMAN III '24

Aggie Men's Basketball forward makes the most of his scholarship and student-athlete opportunities

BY THOMAS DICK

ON THE SURFACE, A SCHOLARSHIP HAS AN INTRINSIC value with one being equal to the others. But the true value of a scholarship varies, with its worth wholly dependent on how much energy the recipients expend on maximizing their opportunities. Very few squeeze more worth out of their scholarship than Texas A&M basketball's Henry Coleman III.

In addition to starring on Buzz Williams' hoops squad and excelling in the classroom, Coleman has jumped at every opportunity to serve as a leader and expand the horizons of his knowledge. He has served on the Texas A&M Student-Athlete Advisory Council and the league-wide SEC Basketball Leadership Council. Coleman represented the SEC Council at the annual SEC meetings in Destin, Florida, and attended the 12th Man Foundation Summer Meeting last June in San Antonio.

"These experiences are things that can't be taken away from you," Coleman said. "If you get that into your heart, into your brain — this is something that won't be taken away from you — then you'll want to do as many of these things as you can. If you can find something within your area that you love and you get really involved, it can take you a long way."

In Destin, Coleman gained a new-found appreciation for the SEC and its leaders. He took stock in the number of people doing a job every day at a high level to help the student-athletes

throughout the league.

“Representing the SEC Council in Destin was a life-changing experience,” Coleman said. “I was able to meet a ton of coaches and people within the SEC. I had dinner with the Commissioner (Greg Sankey). The most important thing I took from the SEC meetings was how dedicated people are to improving the lives of other people.”

Coleman was blessed with a family and education structure that emphasized learning and the power of knowledge. His father, Hank, and mother, Cynthia, stressed education early on, and there are anecdotes of him being a leader in the classroom as far back as elementary school when his teacher labeled him “Second in charge.”

“My parents instilled the value of an education in me from a very young age,” Coleman remembered. “I attended Trinity Episcopal School for high school, and I think that shaped me into who I am today. Credit goes to Rob Schor, the headmaster, and all the teachers there. My parents instilled in me that an education is something that can’t be taken away from me.”

For Coleman, the opportunity to earn a scholarship is not something he ever took for granted.

“I think it’s hugely important to who we are, and I think everybody on this team is grateful,” Coleman said. “If you interviewed everybody on this team, they would be thankful for it. It allows us to go to school free of the burden and allows us to be sponges of knowledge and use this opportunity as a tool to guide us in the right direction.”

Coleman came to Aggieland through the transfer portal after his freshman campaign at Duke. He made a quick connection with Coach Williams who recruited him to play at Virginia Tech. Williams



gave a successful sales pitch to Coleman, who had never been to the Lone Star State. As with many recruits, it was the atmosphere and community that closed the deal.

“The only thing I knew about Texas A&M was that Johnny Manziel played here,” Coleman admitted. “When you get here, you see the family atmosphere, not just in basketball, but everywhere around campus, even in the community. In certain food spots I go to, the people know your name and they know your regular orders. Now we probably go there too much, but the community and the family atmosphere here is different than any other.”

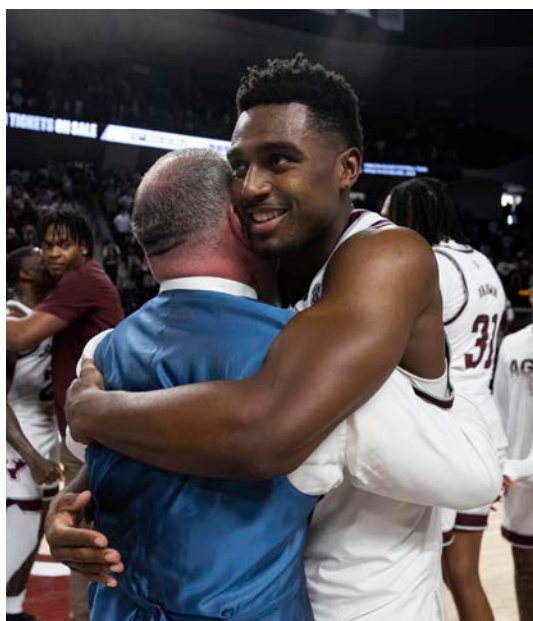
Williams is a coach tailor-made for a student-athlete like Coleman. He feeds Coleman’s appetite for knowledge and learning. The relationship has helped shape Coleman as he sees growth on a daily basis.

“I think being here and spending every day with him has changed who I am,” Coleman said. “He’s taught me a lot, not just about basketball, but about life. He has taught me how to impact someone else’s life and how to be a better person every day.”

Although he has been in the Brazos Valley just over two years, Coleman has fully immersed himself in Aggieland. He has become a favorite of the 12th Man and they have won his admiration.

“The 12th Man means a ton,” Coleman said. “It

Coleman has represented the maroon and white beyond gameday, serving on both the Texas A&M Student-Athlete Advisory Council and the league-wide SEC Basketball Leadership Council.



“

WHEN YOU GET HERE, YOU SEE THE FAMILY ATMOSPHERE, NOT JUST IN BASKETBALL, BUT EVERYWHERE AROUND CAMPUS, EVEN IN THE COMMUNITY.

— HENRY COLEMAN III '24

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“

THE 12TH MAN MEANS A TON. IT MEANS COMMITMENT. IT MEANS FAMILY. I DON'T KNOW EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THE STANDS, BUT IT FEELS LIKE I DO.

— HENRY COLEMAN III '24

means commitment. It means family. I don't know every single person in the stands, but it feels like I do. Knowing they're cheering you on and they're celebrating after you get a big dunk or you draw a charge, it's something special.”

In addition to the 12th Man in the stands, Coleman has an attitude of gratitude toward the donors of the 12th Man Foundation.

“I had an opportunity to go to San Antonio for the Summer Meeting in June 2022,” Coleman said. “I met a ton of donors and people within the Aggie family. Getting to know not only the donors, but knowing their families and knowing their situation gives you a new perspective. Knowing some of those people are former student-athletes who were once in my shoes gives you a comfort level.”

After his basketball playing days are over,

Coleman has a great vision for his future. He is hoping to one day be the commissioner welcoming student-athletes at the SEC Meetings.

“I want to work somewhere in the SEC,” Coleman said. “I think being in the SEC, being in the greatest conference right now, is a great way to have an impact. I think you have a bigger impact on sports from up there, especially someone like Commissioner Sankey. He is doing it the right way. He's very interactive with the student-athletes, not just with the coaches and the people at the top. He's very in tune with the student-athletes.”



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS / CRAIG BISACRE

CONGRATULATIONS

SPRING 2023 GRADUATES

On behalf of the 12th Man Foundation, congratulations to all **79 student-athletes** who graduated during the 2023 spring commencement!



GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

Know a current student or Aggie graduate? Share the tradition of support and gift them a 12th Man Foundation membership! Recipients will receive member benefits and priority points. Visit 12th.info/gift or scan the QR code with your phone's camera to give today!





12TH MAN FOUNDATION

INNOVATIVE TICKETING

Flex Packs and the Gig 'em Pass provide unique options in the evolving collegiate athletics landscape

BY SAMANTHA ATCHLEY '17

WHILE THE GAME STAYS THE SAME, the experience of college football is continuously changing; starting with the fans themselves. At Texas A&M, the fan base is undoubtedly united through their passion for Aggie Athletics. However, the 12th Man is a sum of several individuals each with various backgrounds and preferences when it comes to the ideal experience.

Because of this, the 12th Man Foundation takes pride in providing innovative ticketing solutions to meet every Aggie fan's needs. From the local fan attending all seven home Aggie Football games to the busy former student fitting in a few trips to Aggieland, the 12th Man Foundation staff strives to remain an industry leader

in ticket strategies that keep convenience and flexibility at the forefront.

"In today's society, the commitment to attend a full season isn't always a reality for some fans," said Justin Morgan, senior director of ticket sales and development. "By providing additional options outside of the traditional season ticket, we're able to meet fans where they're at and provide something for everyone."

As a result of this approach, Aggies are able to enjoy the experience of being a season ticket holder in more ways than just one. Options such as flex packs and the Gig 'em Pass make A&M's home schedule fit into the fan's schedule as well.

"From conversations with some of our

donors, we learned that many had the desire to be season ticket holders but just could not make sense of the investment with their family schedules and lifestyle.



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS / CRAIG BISACRE (TOP) AND ETHAN MIHO (BOTTOM)

“

BY PROVIDING ADDITIONAL OPTIONS OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL SEASON TICKET, WE ARE ABLE TO MEET FANS WHERE THEY'RE AT AND PROVIDE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.

— JUSTIN MORGAN



Therefore, new options were created to provide more convenience.”

Within the last few seasons, the 12th Man Foundation has responded to consumer preferences and provided fans with ways to virtually customize their experience as season ticket holders.

“Having these types of options that mold into what the fan wants is a huge advantage and will continue to grow,” said Lacey Williams, vice president of ticket operations. “We can’t dictate game times, but we can allow fans to select games that are likely to work best for their schedule and create an experience that is more tailored to them rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.”

For example, flex packs offered for football and men’s basketball allow fans to choose a limited number of games they prefer to see in a season, ensuring the value in their investment and securing their seats for events they are sure to attend.

“The flexible ticket options combined with season tickets and students are vital to the gameday experience at Texas A&M venues,” said J.T. Payne, assistant director of development.

For those who prefer to plan their gamedays closer to game time, the Gig ’em Pass offers a level of convenience unlike ever before.

“The driving force behind the Gig ’em Pass is flexibility,” Morgan said. “This option gives you the freedom to adjust your plans up until the week of the game and truly customize your experience to accommodate your schedule.”

Created with the consumer in mind, the 12th Man Foundation staff dedicated significant time and effort into perfecting the Gig ’em Pass to alleviate the inconveniences

of planning a gameday at Kyle Field. With each Gig ’em Pass purchased, fans receive seven vouchers to be exchanged for the games of their choice in a football season; and Gig ’em Pass holders have until the Monday of each game week to exchange, making kickoff times and travel plans an easier feat for all.

In addition to various season ticket options, the recent rise of popularity in group tickets has put a creative twist on single game tickets as well.

Whether hosting colleagues, an organization or just a group of friends for a game, group tickets can provide an added element to the gameday experience at an affordable price.

By offering behind-the-scenes experiences to groups of 10 or more, fans are banding together to take advantage of the total-package gameday experience this option has to offer.

“In the 2022 football season, we accommodated over 16,000 fans within our various group promotions and themes,” Senior Account Executive of Group Ticket Sales Jax Kendrick said. “Buying group tickets gives your party a unique way to experience our athletics venues with exclusive opportunities such as in-game, sideline photos on Kyle Field.”

Altogether, each unique ticket buyer becomes part of the big picture that is Kyle Field on a Saturday; the 12th Man to the power of 100,000+. No matter how much or how fast ticketing trends change, one thing always remains the same.

“It’s the passion,” Williams says. “At A&M, there’s tradition that runs generations deep, all supporting the same school and wanting to be a part of the big

moments that happen here. We take pride in accommodating Aggies’ lifestyles and then work hard to make sure they continue to have a great experience when attending a game at Kyle Field.”

READY TO EXPLORE YOUR TICKET OPTIONS?

Contact our staff at 888-992-4443

DID YOU KNOW?



Season ticket holders earn priority points!

PRIORITY SEASON TICKET HOLDERS

Priority season tickets include seats with an annual contribution and faculty, staff and Lettermen season ticket purchases. The season ticket holder will earn 10 points per priority season ticket.

NON-PRIORITY SEASON TICKET HOLDERS

If an active donor, the season ticket holder will earn 5 points per season ticket.



POWER OF A SCHOLARSHIP

COREY PULLIG '96

Former A&M quarterback continues to lead through service to our nation

BY WILL JOHNSON '01

COREY PULLIG WAS READY TO ANSWER WHEN CALLED UPON.

It was Halloween in 1992, and the 5th-ranked Texas A&M football team was playing SMU in a Southwest Conference game at the Cotton Bowl. Early in the contest, the 8-0 Aggies were driving down the field against the Mustangs when starting quarterback Jeff Granger left the game due to a concussion.

Head coach R.C. Slocum turned to Pullig, a talented freshman from Deer Park, Texas, to fill the sophomore signal caller's shoes. Pullig stepped up and led the Aggies to a 41-7 victory over the Mustangs.

One week later, Pullig made his first career start

as A&M's quarterback in a 40-18 win over Louisville at Kyle Field. He started every game for the rest of his college career.

"Aside from the great fan base and winning tradition, the ability to compete for a starting job my freshman year was probably the biggest reason I chose A&M," Pullig said. "I knew it was not going to be easy, but I was confident in my ability. I felt that, in time, I could get on the field. It didn't really matter if it was my freshman year, or after a year or two."

"Early on, seeing Corey in the meetings and how competitive he was on the field, I knew then he was going to compete for the job," Slocum added.

The 1992 team finished 12-0 in the regular

“
**THAT YEAR PRESENTED A
STRONG ARGUMENT WHY
THE PLAYOFF SYSTEM WAS
NECESSARY.**

— COREY PULLIG '96

season, the most wins in school history and A&M's only perfect regular season since 1939. The Aggies entered the postseason ranked 3rd by the UPI poll and 4th by the AP. Miami, No. 1 in both polls, and Alabama, No. 2 in both, met in the Sugar Bowl to decide the national title, while A&M faced 5th-ranked Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl.

“That year presented a strong argument why the playoff system was necessary,” Pullig said. “The championship needed to be decided on the field.”

From 1992-95, Pullig started 40 consecutive games at quarterback for the Aggies, rewriting the program's record book along the way.

The winningest quarterback in A&M football history with a record of 33-6-1, Pullig led the team to back-to-back SWC Championships in 1992 and 1993 and an undefeated conference record from 1992-94.

The Aggies lost just one game at Kyle Field during

Pullig's tenure, and his storied career ended with a 22-20 victory over Michigan in the 1995 Alamo Bowl. The game marked the final bowl win for the Southwest Conference.

Pullig's remarkable accomplishments in maroon and white were recognized in 2016 when he was inducted into the Texas A&M Athletics Hall of Fame.

Off the field, Pullig's achievements are even more extraordinary.

After earning his degree in marketing in 1996, Pullig went on to earn his Juris Doctor from the South Texas College of Law.

Pullig then answered another call, in service of our country. He joined the United States Marine Corps and has been on active duty for nearly two decades.

Serving as a staff judge advocate for the Marine Corps, Pullig advises commanders on a variety of legal issues, much like the role of an in-house counsel for a corporation.

“My current assignment provides a unique opportunity to advise foreign partners on the law of armed conflict, mainly through exercises in South America,” Pullig said.

What he is doing now is far more than a game. However, football did arm Pullig with valuable life lessons.

“Playing collegiate athletics at an elite level is extremely stressful and places significant demands on one's time,” he said. “Law school and the Marine Corps can be stressful. At A&M, I learned to deal



with stress and learned schedule discipline. Both help me today.”

Along with his wife, Lisa, Pullig now pays it forward by assisting in the Veterans’ Coaching Program offered through the Thornton-McFerrin Coaching Academy at A&M. The one-of-a-kind program is designed to help veterans enrolled at A&M with the transition and job placement for careers in coaching.

“Anything I can do is a win-win,” Pullig said. “Truth be told, my wife does all the heavy lifting.”

Pullig is a prime example of what college football, and athletics in general, should be about. He excelled on and off the field and learned valuable lessons that propelled him to success after graduation.

“I’m grateful to the university and 12th Man Foundation donors,” Pullig said. “A&M provided me an exceptional classroom education. The scholarship gave me an opportunity likely not otherwise available because of financial constraints.”

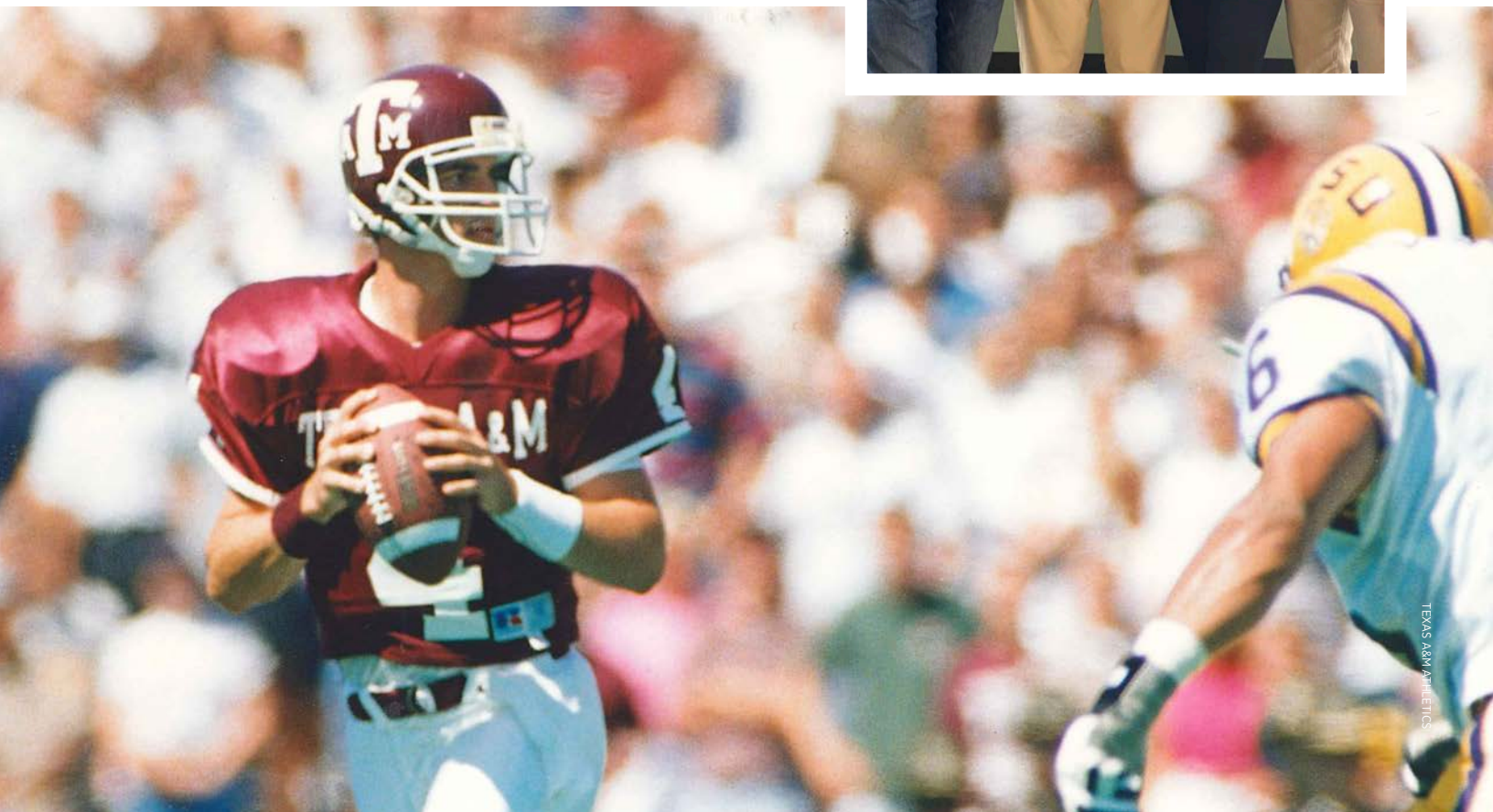
One of the greatest quarterbacks in school history, Pullig is a proud Aggie who undeniably made the most of his opportunity when called upon.

Pullig won more games as the Aggie signal caller than anyone else, going 33-6-1 as QB1. In 2016, he was inducted into the Texas A&M Athletics Hall of Fame.

“

THE SCHOLARSHIP GAVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY LIKELY NOT OTHERWISE AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS.

— COREY PULLIG '96



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS

93%

SEASON TICKET RENEWAL RATE

***THANK YOU, AGGIE FOOTBALL
SEASON TICKET HOLDERS!***

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS CREATE AN
UNRIVALED GAMEDAY ATMOSPHERE FOR
OUR FOOTBALL STUDENT-ATHLETES. WE
CAN'T WAIT TO HAVE YOU BACK FOR
THE 2023 SEASON!



MAX WRIGHT '22

Aggie Football tight end's unbreakable spirit and character fuel perseverance to success

BY WILL JOHNSON '01

ONE FINAL RIDE.

Those three words encapsulated the message Max Wright posted to his social media account on Jan. 9, 2023, to announce that he planned to return to Texas A&M for the 2023 football season.

A leader on and off the field, Wright's journey at A&M is a remarkable lesson in perseverance.

He arrived in Aggieland from Katy, Texas, in 2018 as a defensive lineman, but mainly contributed on special teams during his freshman season. A few games into the 2019 campaign, Wright suffered an injury that abruptly ended his season. Healthy again in time for the shortened 2020 season, he switched to the offensive side of the ball and earned playing time at tight end in three games.

That November, Wright hauled in his first career touchdown pass during a 48-3 win over South Carolina. In that moment, the respect his teammates have for him was clear. They had genuine joy for Wright and wanted to continually celebrate the milestone with him. They knew what he had overcome to reach the end zone for the first time in an Aggie uniform.

As a junior in 2021, Wright played in every game and was given the Unselfish Leadership Award at the team's banquet. Adversity struck Wright early



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS / AIDEN SHERTZER



In 2018, Wright began his Aggie Football career mainly as a special teams player. Overcoming an injury that cost him most of the 2019 season, Wright switched to the offensive side of the ball as tight end in 2020. That November, Wright hauled in his first career touchdown pass during a 48-3 win over South Carolina.

in the 2022 season, and he was forced to miss time with an injury yet again. James Coley knew Wright would handle it the right way.

“Here’s a guy who hurts his knee and the world could end,” said Coley, A&M’s co-offensive coordinator and tight ends coach. “He’s in the training room, and the first thing he says is, ‘I’ll be back.’”

That response did not surprise Coley one bit.

“You’re talking about a young man who has integrity,” said Coley. “He’s genuine, and he’s always trying to do things the right way.”

Wright fought his way back on to the field and

served as a team captain for the 2022 season. He was selected by his teammates as the Aggie Heart Award recipient at the team’s banquet in December – the highest honor for a senior football player.

“Max brings a great attitude every day and has played the game with a lot of passion and toughness,” head coach Jimbo Fisher said. “He has given everything he has to this program and our football team. I am proud of the young man he has become and his growth on and off the field.”

In the classroom, Wright has made the most of his scholarship to earn a world-class education from A&M. He graduated in August of 2022 with a bachelor’s degree in University Studies with a concentration in architecture.

Now Wright is pursuing a Master of Land and Property Development. He discovered an interest in real estate during an internship with a construction company in the summer of 2022.

With his final year of eligibility as a student-athlete in 2023, Wright has the opportunity to build upon his Aggie Football legacy with his play on the field and his leadership in the locker room.

“There’s definitely a torch to be passed,” said Wright. “It’s important to know we want this culture to be one of hard work, dedication and putting in the time.”

Wright cites himself and fellow veterans Fadil



“
**YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT
 A YOUNG MAN WHO HAS
 INTEGRITY. HE’S GENUINE, AND
 HE’S ALWAYS TRYING TO DO
 THINGS THE RIGHT WAY.**

— JAMES COLEY



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS / CRAIG BISAGRE (TOP), EVAN PILAT (RIGHT) AND AIDEN SHERTZER (LEFT)



Max Wright
@maxwright2k18

I am blessed to announce that I will be returning for my final season of football at Texas A&M. I will also be working on my Masters in Land and Property Development. I am blessed to have this opportunity and I cannot wait to make the best out of it.
One final ride. #GigEm



Diggs, Demani Richardson and Layden Robinson as those who can teach their younger teammates.

“It’s important for us to be able to show them through example,” he said. “Not just talking the talk but walking the walk.”

For Wright, his love and passion for A&M goes far beyond the football field. He has overcome injury and a position change to pursue his dreams and feels it is his responsibility to ensure the culture he has helped build in the football program remains long after his time on campus.

“He’s an Aggie,” said Coley. “If there’s a spectrum where there’s an Aggie to the extreme, that’s Max. He’ll do whatever it takes for this school, for the name and for the reputation.”

And now he has one final ride.

“

IF THERE’S A SPECTRUM WHERE THERE’S AN AGGIE TO THE EXTREME, THAT’S MAX. HE’LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES FOR THIS SCHOOL, FOR THE NAME AND FOR THE REPUTATION.

— JAMES COLEY

SHELLEY NEMEC '89

Saluting former 12th Man Foundation Director of Events & Travel

BY IVY ROBINSON '20



ABOUT SHELLEY

- » CLASS OF 1989
- » JOINED THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION STAFF IN 2005
- » WAS THE VERY FIRST MAJOR GIFTS SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR
- » FAVORITE EVENT TO COORDINATE WAS JACOB GREEN'S 2019 COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME INDUCTION RECEPTION IN NEW YORK CITY

IF YOU HAVE ATTENDED A 12TH MAN FOUNDATION event or joined a 12th Man Travel group in the past decade, there is a good chance you met one-of-a-kind Shelley Nemeč '89. If not, you certainly enjoyed the fruits of her hardworking labor.

After 17 years of dedicated service to the 12th Man Foundation as director of events & travel, Nemeč has moved on to a new chapter in life while leaving a strong legacy behind her. The San Marcos native's diligent spirit and can-do attitude was an influential force to the organization's culture.

Nemeč joined the 12th Man Foundation as the very first major gifts senior administrative coordinator in 2005. 12th Man Foundation President Travis Dabney '96 recalled meeting Nemeč for the first time during her interview.

"My boss at the time, Stu Starner, and I took Shelley to lunch at the old Grapevine Restaurant here in College Station," Dabney said. We visited with her, really enjoyed the conversation and thought that her experience at Reed Arena was going to be commensurate with what we were ultimately going to do here at the 12th Man Foundation."

Dabney's intuition was right. Nemeč hit the ground running day one on the job and never stopped.

"We were in the process of bringing in several new fundraisers and standing up the major gifts operation that was transitioning from a volunteer program to a staff-driven program, and Shelley was instrumental in that development of the major gifts team," Dabney said. "She was just exemplary as it relates to her commitment to the organization and to the donors."

Jacob Green '80, vice president of principal gifts, also worked closely with Nemeč since her start in 2005.

"She was a cornerstone for our major gifts team and our donors here at the 12th Man Foundation," Green said. "I guarantee you if you ask anybody about Shelley, you will find a million kind words."

In 2014, Nemeč transitioned from the major gifts department to the director of events & travel. She went on to build a successful program, coordinating 17 Summer Meeting events, 17 Champions Council

Weekends, 30 12th Man Travel trips and 60-plus Champions Council regional events to name a few.

Director of Gifts Processing Toni McDowell attended many of Nemeč's events and witnessed her selfless nature in action.

"When she put on an event, she didn't want people to notice that," McDowell said. "If everybody was enjoying themselves and not coming to her for anything, then she knew she had done her job."

While it is hard to imagine the 12th Man Foundation without her familiar face, the organization will continue to press on thanks to many of Nemeč's pivotal contributions.

"When you work with people as close as we worked together, and as good of a person as she is, it's rewarding to see her go on and do something different," Green said. "We will miss her and we certainly won't forget her."

“

SHE WAS A CORNERSTONE FOR OUR MAJOR GIFTS TEAM AND OUR DONORS HERE AT THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION.

— JACOB GREEN '80





POWER OF A SCHOLARSHIP

MARK WEAVER '94

How a scholarship led to a remarkable head coaching career

BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS '86

MARK WEAVER'S PARENTS HAVE ALBUMS FULL OF photos to remind them of the fond memories of their youngest son's tennis career. In one, Weaver is barely old enough to walk and talk but is holding a sawed-off tennis racket in his tiny hand.

"He was so cute, and he was really good, even at that age," Weaver's mother, Darlene, said.

Weaver has spent his entire life in tennis. He earned a scholarship to Texas A&M, where he made All-Southwest Conference.

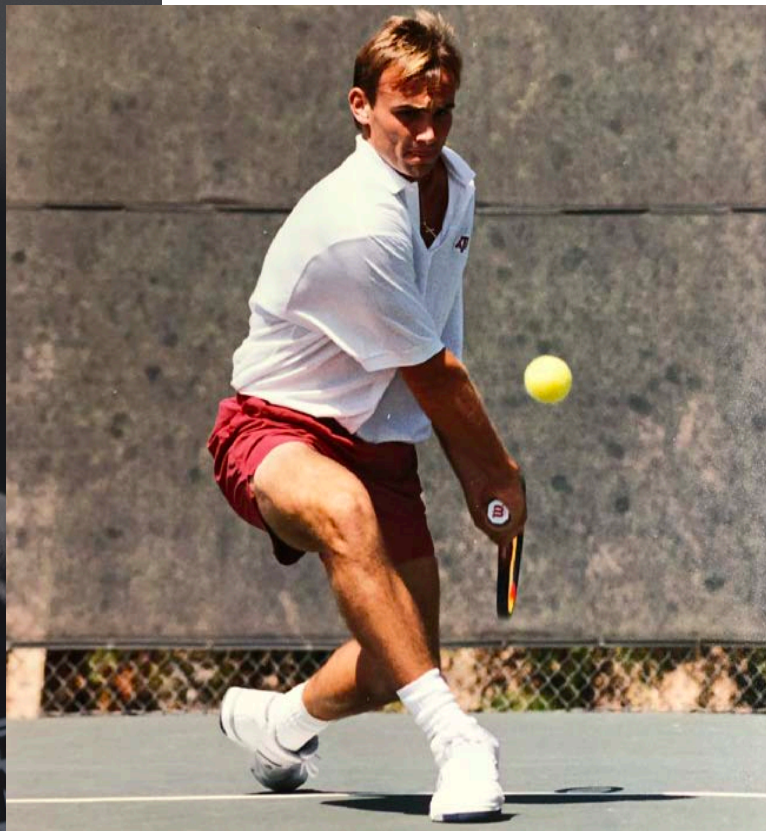
After four seasons on the pro circuit, Weaver became a tennis coach and recently completed his eighth season as the Aggie women's head coach.

Weaver, who earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from A&M in 1995, has no idea what he would be doing today if not coaching tennis.

"It's funny how your life's decisions, whether they're good or bad, pave your future," Weaver said. "Tennis has just opened up so many doors for me."

Jerry Weaver, Mark's father, picked up the sport in his late 20s at the encouragement of his wife, who was a recreational player. Mark received his first

In four seasons at Texas A&M, Weaver went 107-52 in singles and 76-29 in doubles. He claimed the No. 1 doubles crown in the conference during his senior season as the Aggies won the team title for the first time.



lesson from his father at 5 years old, and Jerry continued as his coach until Mark left for Aggieland.

Mark worked overtime practicing with his brother, J.J., in the driveway.

“We worked hard,” Jerry said. “Mark was talented, and he was smart, and he was so eager to learn. He was easy to coach because he outworked me. He loved the game that much. He wanted more than I gave him probably, but he just loved to win.”

In the Weavers’ attic at their home in Waco, all of Mark’s medals and trophies are stored in boxes.

Mark was a standout junior tennis player in Shreveport, Louisiana, where he learned to play on the gray courts with chain-link nets at Broadmoor Middle School. He graduated from Caddo Parish Magnet High School.

The Weavers learned to string tennis rackets and made a second business out of it to pay for travel expenses.

“When he was really young, and I realized how talented he was, I talked to him about maybe getting a scholarship one day, because I couldn’t afford these colleges,” Jerry said. “I guess it just kind of soaked in.”

I'M MARK WEAVER

Mark arrived in College Station by chance. Or maybe it was destiny.

A high school girlfriend invited Mark to travel with her family for college visits to A&M and the University of Texas. He knew little about either school, but then-A&M men’s coach David Kent immediately won him over.

“We just showed up at the (A&M) men’s tennis practice, and we were sitting upstairs watching,” Mark Weaver said. “I had never met coach Kent. I don’t think we’d ever even spoken. He might have sent me a questionnaire. He started talking to us during the practice. He said, ‘Hey, how are y’all doing? Where are y’all from?’ I told him, and he said, ‘There’s this really good tennis player from Shreveport.’ I said, ‘Oh, yeah, who’s that?’ And he said, ‘Mark Weaver.’ I said, ‘I’m Mark Weaver,’ and he came running into the stands. That’s how it all started.”

Weaver returned with his dad for an official visit and knew A&M was the right place for him. Kent offered Weaver a 90-percent scholarship that eventually became a full scholarship. In the fall of 1990, Kent became the first coach Weaver did not also call “dad.”

“Without that opportunity, I wouldn’t be the head coach at Texas A&M now and the first Weaver ever to graduate from a university,” Weaver said. “It’s amazing what the power of a scholarship opened up for me.”



“

WITHOUT THAT OPPORTUNITY, I WOULDN'T BE THE HEAD COACH AT TEXAS A&M NOW AND THE FIRST WEAVER EVER TO GRADUATE FROM A UNIVERSITY.

— MARK WEAVER '94



SUCCESS ON THE COURT

In four seasons competing for A&M, Weaver went 107-52 in singles and 76-29 in doubles. He won the Southwest Conference (SWC) No. 1 singles title and was named SWC co-player of the year in his junior season, while earning a spot in the Junior Davis Cup in 1993. Weaver claimed the No. 1 doubles crown in the conference during his senior season as the Aggies won the team title for the first time.

“He had a great all-around game,” said Bobby Kleinecke, A&M’s women’s tennis coach from 1986-2011. “He was as good in doubles as he was in singles. He was competitive and had a will to win.”

Weaver played four seasons on the Futures and Challengers circuits, winning 10 doubles titles. He took time off after the death of his brother and, when he returned, Weaver found his heart was not into it. Briarcrest Country Club in Bryan offered him a position in 1999, and he took the job as a senior staff manager and director of tennis.

Kleinecke enlisted Weaver as a volunteer assistant in 2000, and he continued in that unpaid role until 2007. When Majorie Terburgh left the A&M coaching staff to start a family, Weaver was hired as a full-time assistant coach.

“I don’t know how I found out he was interested in coaching, but I decided to talk to him about it,” Kleinecke said. “Having him as a volunteer coach was an easy decision. I was just lucky he was there and took him for whatever time he could spare. He was there for matches, but he could never come to practices. Then, when Majorie left, that was an easy decision for me with him right there, just with his history with A&M and the program.”

“

WE DO WANT MORE. WE WANT TO TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL. I WOULD JUST LOVE TO BRING A NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP HOME TO TEXAS A&M.

— MARK WEAVER '94

THE ULTIMATE GOAL

The Aggies hired Howard Joffe to succeed Kleinecke for the 2011-12 academic year. The new Aggie head coach kept Weaver on staff and made him associate head coach a year after A&M reached the national championship match for the first time in program history.

When Joffe left for the University of Texas in the summer of 2015, it was clear that Weaver had the support of the returning players to take the reins. Soon after, the Aggies named Weaver the sixth head coach in program history.

“That was the ultimate goal, and I knew I didn’t want to coach anywhere else but A&M,” Weaver said. “I think about just the many relationships that I’ve formed over all the years. Half my life I’ve been coaching here, and then you add on the four years I was playing here. I’ve spent more than half of my life here. It’s amazing.”

In eight seasons, Weaver has a 173-60 record as a head coach, including an incredible 63-5 over the past two years. The Aggies won back-to-back SEC regular season championships in 2022 and 2023 with Weaver earning back-to-back conference coach of the year honors. A&M finished a perfect 13-0 in conference play both seasons, and won the program’s first SEC Tournament Championship in 2022. With its second consecutive trip to the NCAA Tournament Elite Eight in 2023, A&M has cemented its status as one of the nation’s premier programs.

Weaver and his assistants, led by former A&M men’s tennis player Jordan Szabo, have had three of their past five recruiting classes rated in the top three nationally. In his three most recent signing classes, Weaver has signed seven blue-chip recruits, according to TennisRecruiting.net.

The future indeed is bright.

“We do want more,” Weaver said. “We want to take it to the next level. I would just love to bring a national championship home to Texas A&M. It would mean so much to me to be able to do that for a school that has done so much for me.”



12TH MAN FOUNDATION

BRENDA & ELI CROW '01

First-generation Aggies with deep passion for academics and athletics find opportunity to make an impact through 12th Man Foundation

BY SAMANTHA ATCHLEY '17

WHILE FEW CAN SAY THEY WERE MARRIED WITH THE authentic sound of the 12th Man roaring in the background, that is just one of the many unique moments in Brenda and Eli Crow's Aggie story.

Both first-generation Aggies, Brenda and Eli each saw something special in Aggieland from the start. The sense of belonging and the second-nature connection felt on campus not only led the couple to each other, but also laid a foundation of affinity for the university and its values for years to come.

"I had three campus tours lined up," Brenda said. "We went to Baylor, and I was on my way to Texas... but when I visited the A&M campus I was sold. There was no need to go anywhere else."

Starting their freshman year in Cain and Clements Hall, mutual friends made their worlds collide when Eli's suite mate helped introduce him to Brenda; and the rest was history. A year later,

Brenda and Eli were married and after graduating, they began growing their family with the addition of their two children, Madelynn '22 and Samuel '24.

"We were actually married on campus at Research Park during an Aggie Football game," Brenda said.

"You could hear the 12th Man in the background," Eli added. "It was like they were cheering us on."

After graduating from A&M in 2001, Eli began his multi-faceted career in education. Initially starting as a math teacher and a coach, Eli went on to accomplish an impressive 15-year stint in which he acquired two Master's degrees from UT Tyler, a PhD from The University of Nebraska and held multiple positions in the industry ranging from a campus administrator, central office administrator, school superintendent and university faculty member.

“
WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THERE IS THAT CONSTANT EFFORT TO DEVELOP THE WHOLE ATHLETE AND MAKE SURE THE ACADEMIC SIDE IS TAKEN CARE OF AS WELL.

— ELI CROW '01

It was this well-rounded experience and knowledge in education that led to the establishment of the family’s now nationally recognized software company, Education Advanced. After getting roped into a project to help streamline standardized testing, Eli seized an opportunity to not only provide a solution but create a tool that could make a lasting impact in the field of education.

“If you’re not from the business you’re sort of like “what’s the big deal, you stand at the door and hand the booklets to the kids,” Eli explained. “But it turns out, it’s very complicated for schools, and I built a piece of software to assist with that. I gave it away for a number of years, but people kept asking me to do training on it, so I finally decided we may have something here — and we launched the business.”

Now employing over 120 people worldwide, their fully-remote business has been a huge success, making the Inc. 5000 list (the 5,000 fastest growing companies in the United States) three years in a row, being named in *Inc. Magazine’s* list of Best Workplaces and making the Aggie 100 for the second time in 2022.

Today, Education Advanced serves over 7.2 million students in 43 states (including almost 80% of students in Texas), Australia and Canada with their operational products assisting in areas such as master scheduling, staffing analysis, personnel evaluation, professional development and more.

“Our goal is to try to help make things more efficient on the operations side so that staff can get back to doing the real job of educating kids,” Eli added.

Given their deep-rooted passion for education, the Crows later found a natural fit within the 12th

Man Foundation where their affinity for Texas A&M Athletics and mission to advocate for academic opportunity collided. After years of support as season ticket holders for Aggie Football, Brenda and Eli felt called to continue their impact through a transformational gift to the Centennial Campaign; one that will make a generational difference in the lives of Aggie student-athletes.

“I think we feel pretty strongly that athletics is a huge teaching tool for kids in terms of learning together, learning to overcome adversity and learning to develop leadership qualities; those things are super important,” Eli and Brenda agreed.

The Crows’ support is an investment in the education of all Aggie student-athletes, ensuring they have an opportunity to be successful during their time on campus and beyond.

“Being coaches, that’s always been something that’s near and dear to us, but that’s not enough, right? You have to have the academic pieces that go with it,” Eli said. “There are a lot of resources at A&M in terms of facilities and the quality coaching

After years of supporting Aggie Football as season ticket holders, the Crows felt called to continue their impact through a transformational gift to the Centennial Campaign.



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING COURTESY OF POPULOUS AND MANHATTAN CONSTRUCTION | PHOTO COURTESY OF BRENDA CROW

Thanks to generous donors like the Crows, the Adam C. Sinn '00 Academic & Wellness Center will be at the heart of Aggie student-athletes' daily lives, offering vital support including academic, nutritional and sport psychology services.

staff, but for us, we wanted to make sure there is that constant effort to develop the whole athlete and make sure the academic side is taken care of as well."

A state-of-the-art facility, the Adam C. Sinn '00 Academic & Wellness Center will be at the heart of Aggie student-athletes' daily lives by offering vital support including academic, nutritional and sport psychology services. Expanded resources will include computer labs, tutoring spaces, an AMPLIFY studio for student-athlete content creation and brand development and a dining and nutrition center featuring a teaching kitchen.

"One thing that I really love about the new facilities is the whole nutrition program," Brenda added. "I feel like that is critical for athletes to have that education of how to take care of yourself and primarily with nutrition. It's not that you just have a nice place to eat, but they also teach you how to take care of yourself and will likely live happier and healthier lives because of it."

Thanks in part to dedicated, visionary and generous donors such as Brenda and Eli, the future

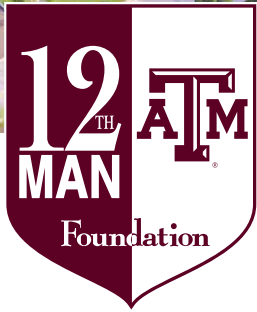
continues to become brighter for Texas A&M Athletics and every student-athlete who chooses to represent the maroon and white. For the Crows, it is the opportunity that lies beyond competition that inspires them the most.

"Seeing them be successful and knowing that, as they leave and get plugged in to the Aggie network, the likelihood that will translate into their lives is pretty high, and it feels good to know that's going to change some people's lives," Eli said. "There's a lot of really cool opportunities to be involved and stay connected, so I like how the 12th Man Foundation is always making efforts to keep fans and alumni connected to what we're trying to do in terms of funding championship athletics."

“
I LIKE HOW THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION IS ALWAYS MAKING EFFORTS TO KEEP FANS AND ALUMNI CONNECTED TO WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO IN TERMS OF FUNDING CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS.

— ELI CROW '01





CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN

12TH MAN FOUNDATION

Unmatched generosity of Aggies leads to successful completion of ambitious campaign

BY ADAM QUISENBERRY

AN ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE BACK TO AGGIELAND highlights the calendars of many former students as the maroon-clad faithful descend to celebrate another season on the gridiron. This past fall, however, a different view greeted the familiar approach to Kyle Field along Wellborn Road as construction had begun south of the stadium as part of the Centennial Campaign.

The ambitious capital campaign was designed to support the athletic and academic journeys of all Texas A&M student-athletes and rejuvenate the home base of the Aggie Football program.

“When we recruit student-athletes to Texas

A&M, our goal is to develop them academically, athletically and in their personal lives,” Texas A&M Director of Athletics Ross Bjork said. “We are in the most transformational time in the history of college athletics, but at Texas A&M we are always going to hold ourselves to a standard of excellence. The Centennial Campaign is a commitment to that standard and an investment in our student-athletes.”

Initial conversations regarding a significant capital campaign began in 2019 leading to an exploratory phase that solicited feedback on a wide variety of capital projects that were under consideration.

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING COURTESY OF POPULOUS AND MANHATTAN CONSTRUCTION

The information gathered ultimately allowed Texas A&M Athletics, along with external partners Populous and Manhattan Construction, to define the initial scope of the projects to be undertaken. This set the stage for the 12th Man Foundation to develop a fundraising plan which would come to be known as the Centennial Campaign in recognition of the 100-year anniversary of Texas A&M's iconic 12th Man tradition.

On April 25, 2022, during Champions Council Weekend in College Station, the campaign publicly launched with an ambitious \$120 million goal that represented the largest philanthropic fundraising effort in the history of the 12th Man Foundation outside of the historic redevelopment of Kyle Field.

LEAD DONORS STEP FORWARD

The Centennial Campaign's launch made headlines as it once again served notice of Texas A&M's mission to provide first in class resources for Aggie student-athletes. That commitment was underscored as the 12th Man Foundation announced it had secured over \$80 million of initial funding, with much of the total coming from a quartet of lead donors who championed the cause.

"The campaign wouldn't have been successful without the lead donors," said 12th Man Foundation Senior Vice President of Major Giving Programs Brady Bullard '95. "When you look at the campaign goal of \$120 million, they account for over half of it."

April & Jay Graham '92 paved the way by making a historic \$25 million lead gift, the single largest capital commitment ever made in support of Texas A&M Athletics. The Graham Athletic Complex will encompass the athletics spaces just south of Kyle Field, including three cornerstone facilities

featured in the campaign.

"We started having real conversations with Jay and April in the summer of 2021," Bullard added. "They stepped up in a huge way to get this campaign off the ground. Their gift is a game-changer for Texas A&M Athletics."

The Graham Athletic Complex will include the Adam C. Sinn '00 Academic & Wellness Center, a dedicated facility supporting the education and well-being for over 600 student-athletes, following Sinn's generous donation of \$15 million toward the project.

Former 12th Man Kickoff Team member David Coolidge '87 continued his longstanding support of the Aggie Football program by committing a \$15 million pledge. His gift will make possible the construction of the new Coolidge Football Performance Center — the first of the new facilities to enter use in the fall of 2023.

Wayne Roberts '85 committed a lead gift, which was earmarked for the renovation of the Bright Football Complex. Roberts honored others by asking for the home of Aggie Football to be renamed the Bright-Slocum Center for Texas A&M Football, adding recognition for legendary football coach R.C. Slocum along with his close friend and the facility's original namesake, Harvey R. "Bum" Bright '43.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

Construction crews are making steady progress, most evident on the west side of the train tracks where the new R.A. "Murray" Fasken '38 Indoor

April & Jay Graham '92 paved the way by making a historic \$25 million lead gift, the single largest capital commitment ever made in support of Texas A&M Athletics.





The new R.A. "Murray" Fasken '38 Indoor Track construction is slated to be completed in the fall of 2023 with Aggie Track & Field prepared to host indoor competition in the facility next season.

Track stadium is taking shape adjacent to E.B. Cushing Stadium.

Construction is slated to be completed in the fall of 2023 with Aggie Track & Field prepared to host indoor competition in the facility next season.

To the south of Kyle Field, the Gilliam Indoor Track Stadium and neighboring indoor football practice facility no longer loom over Wellborn Road. In their place, the new Coolidge Football Performance Center is installing steel support structures and is slated to be ready for use prior to the 2023 football season.

Renovations on the Bright-Slocum Center for Texas A&M Football have begun with work on the building's second floor. Later aspects of the renovation will take place in the future with a goal of being complete prior to the 2024 season.

The Adam C. Sinn '00 Academic & Wellness Center is currently installing underground utility pipelines and is projected to start construction above ground later this summer.

“**WE HAVE UNBELIEVABLE DONORS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE GIVEN TO MULTIPLE PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS, BUT ONE OF THE BRIGHT SPOTS HAS BEEN HOW MANY NEW DONORS STEPPED FORWARD TO SUPPORT THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION AND THIS CAMPAIGN.**”

— BRADY BULLARD '95

A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

The extraordinary support from the lead donors provided a pathway for the Centennial Campaign's successful launch, but Bullard notes that support came from a great variety of people and at many different levels.

“We have unbelievable donors, many of whom have given to multiple projects throughout the years, but one of the bright spots has been how many new donors stepped forward to support the 12th Man Foundation and this campaign,” Bullard said.

In total, more than 350 supporters joined the lead gift donors to help reach the \$120 million Centennial Campaign goal in just under one year from its public launch.

“The success of the Centennial Campaign is a testament to the unrivaled commitment of the Aggies who, in the spirit of E. King Gill, continue to step up when called upon to support Texas A&M Athletics,” 12th Man Foundation President Travis Dabney '96 said. “They are leaving their own legacy with their generous investment in this campaign.”

INCREASE YOUR IMPACT ON TEXAS A&M STUDENT-ATHLETES

Donor support is vital to our mission of funding scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championship athletics at Texas A&M.

Benefits of making a philanthropic gift to the 12th Man Foundation:

- ✔ DIRECT IMPACT ON THE SUCCESS OF AGGIE STUDENT-ATHLETES
- ✔ GAIN ADDITIONAL PRIORITY POINTS
- ✔ TAX DEDUCTIBLE*
- ✔ MAY BE DOUBLED WITH A MATCHING GIFT^

*Contributions which are not tied to a ticket purchase may be tax deductible. Consult your tax advisor to determine the deductibility of your gift. ^Many employers will match tax deductible gifts to the 12th Man Foundation. Ask your employer if they offer a matching gift program.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION AND TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS!

**AVERAGE
ANNUAL COST
OF AN IN-STATE
STUDENT-ATHLETE
SCHOLARSHIP**

\$49,956

\$2,735

EQUIPMENT, GEAR
AND UNIFORMS (6%)

\$3,107

SPORTS MEDICINE (6%)

\$3,898

ACADEMIC SUPPORT &
DEVELOPMENT (8%)

\$8,190

ATHLETIC
PERFORMANCE &
NUTRITION (16%)

\$32,026

IN-STATE TUITION,
ROOM, BOARD,
FEES AND COST OF
ATTENDANCE (64%)

FOUR EASY WAYS TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION



BY MAIL
Send your gift
to PO Box
2800, College
Station, TX
77841



BY PHONE
Call us at
888-992-4443
Mon. - Fri.,
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



BY TEXT
Text
Donate to
888-992-4443



ONLINE
Donate online by
scanning the QR
Code with your
phone's camera



CENTENNIAL
CAMPAIGN

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The 12th Man Foundation salutes Centennial Campaign donors for their generosity that will significantly impact the success and prosperity of Texas A&M Athletics.

GIVING OF \$5M AND UP

APRIL & JAY GRAHAM '92

ADAM C. SINN '00

DAVID COOLIDGE '87

WAYNE ROBERTS '85

CRYSTAL M. & DAVID R. WATTS

LINDA & DENNIS H. CLARK '68

AMY '84 & TIM LEACH '82

GIVING OF \$500K - \$4.9M

Earl C. "Duke" Austin, Jr.
Susan & Randy Brooks '86
Virginia & Gilbert Burciaga '75
Brenda & Dr. Jeremiah E. "Eli" Crow '01
Stephanie '94 & Joshua Davis '94
Kay & Mark Dierlam '61
Anne & David Dunlap '83
Linda & Charlie Elder '76
Tito's Handmade Vodka
Foss Family Foundation
Yanting & Steven Hollingsworth '99

Kathy '00 & Zachary D. "Zach" Lee '00
Pam '75 & Larry Little '73
Robert '85 & Ralph P. Mayer '48
Vicki & Brian Miller '80
Jennifer '00 & Joel Moore '99
Leigh Sansone '97
Carmen '85 & James L. Sheffield '85
Pam & William P. "Bill" Sims '89
Nancy C. Lancaster Smith '76 & Ted H. Smith, Jr. '75
Kalynn & Reagan Swinbank '03

Cathy & Clifton L. Thomas, Jr. '72
Dan Tinker '96 & Audrey Tinker '96
Allison '96 & Don R. Whitaker '96
Jill '83 & Edwin "Joe" Wright '82
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Mary Pat Bolner & Mike Bolner '73
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Natalie '88 & Gary Brinkley '86
Sherry & Millard Brooking '79
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Leslie '05 & Dean Graziadei '06
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Lori '87 & David Wilkinson '87
Julie '95 & Keith Williams '78
Pam '79 & Hearne Williford '77
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THE SUCCESS OF THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN IS A TESTAMENT TO THE UNRIVALED COMMITMENT OF THE AGGIES WHO, IN THE SPIRIT OF E. KING GILL, CONTINUE TO STEP UP WHEN CALLED UPON TO SUPPORT TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS.

— TRAVIS DABNEY '96

TRAYVEON WILLIAMS '20

Aggie running back legend hands off an athlete's perspective to Texas A&M University School of Law NIL course

BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS '86

TRAYVEON WILLIAMS ANSWERS TO "NUNIE," A FAMILY nickname, but it seems like his teammates should start calling him "The Professor." The former Texas A&M running back, who now plays for the Cincinnati Bengals, began co-teaching at A&M's School of Law in Fort Worth this spring.

Williams began serving as an adjunct professor, teaching alongside sports attorney Alex Sinatra.

"This is something I never even thought about doing until the opportunity presented itself," Williams said. "Now, I'm excited about it. It's weird how life works. Sometimes you never know the thing that you want to do until it's put in front of you. It's just one of those things that just came about. Let's see where it goes."

Williams' new offseason job began as a joke. *Above The Law*, a legal magazine, published an article in 2022 that included Williams as a metaphor for A&M's law school "run up" the rankings, writing, "You might think Trayveon Williams was doing the rushing here." The dean of the university's law

 Trayveon Williams @TrayveonW - Apr 5, 2022
Am I missing something? 🤔

 Bobby Ahdieh @Ahdieology - Apr 5, 2022
With thanks to @atblog for their outside-the-box thinking (abovethelaw.com/2022/03/6-deep...), excited to announce @TAMULawSchool's next faculty recruit.
@TrayveonW
#ComingHomeToTAMU



“

STUDENT-ATHLETES NEED AN ATTORNEY WHO CAN SHOW THEM HOW TO MAXIMIZE THEIR NAME, IMAGE AND LIKENESS. I HOPE I CAN HELP THEM BETTER UNDERSTAND STUDENT-ATHLETES' NEEDS AND WHAT IT'S LIKE BEING AN ATHLETE.

— TRAYVEON WILLIAMS '20

school, Bobby Ahdieh, joked on Twitter that Williams was joining the law school as a next faculty recruit, and Williams saw the tweet.

“I’m like, ‘What’s going on?’” Williams said. “I quoted the tweet and said, ‘Am I missing something?’ and then it kind of blew up.”

Sinatra received her BBA in marketing from A&M in 2011 and her JD from A&M’s School of Law in 2014. In the spring of 2022, she began working with Mays Business School and Aggie Athletics on AmplifyU, a name, image and likeness (NIL) program designed to help student-athletes maximize their brand and platform.

Sinatra has taught a bootcamp course for student-athletes centered around NIL law and contract negotiations/reviews. She was in discussion with A&M’s law school about possibly teaching an NIL class before Williams and Ahdieh’s interaction on Twitter.

“After I saw Trayveon responded to Dean Ahdieh, I said, ‘I should just reach out to him,’” Sinatra said of Ahdieh. “I asked Dean Ahdieh: ‘If I could get a co-teacher like Trayveon or another professional athlete who was an Aggie to teach with me, would that be feasible, something that would be allowed?’ He said, ‘Definitely, if you can get someone.’ I said, ‘I don’t think it’ll be a problem, actually, because Aggies stick together. If it’s not Trayveon, I’m sure I could find another athlete. But let’s go to Trayveon first, because he seems interested.’”

Sinatra sent Williams a direct message, and two days later, he responded. Without hesitation, or even much discussion, Williams accepted the offer, saying, “Sign me up.”

“It’s funny: Trayveon and I didn’t know each other before this. This was just a blind reach out,” Sinatra said.

This spring, they began teaching a class on NIL law and athlete advocacy with the course curriculum including handling negotiations, drafting and reviewing contracts and understanding FTC regulations.

“The focus of the class is to help these future athlete advocates understand that athletes are humans first and in order to be the best advocate you can be for your client, you must have empathy and understanding,” Sinatra said. “Whether you



ultimately decide to pursue a career in sports, the skills you will learn in the class will help you be not only a zealous advocate for your client but also empathetic.”

Williams brings an athlete’s perspective to the class.

“Obviously, NIL is black and white,” Williams said. “The whole purpose of me being in the class is to bridge that gray area. Student-athletes need an attorney who can show them how to maximize their name, image and likeness. I hope I can help them better understand student-athletes’ needs and what it’s like being an athlete.”

Williams is one of the most popular student-athletes in A&M’s recent history, but it took a change of heart in November of 2015 to change the course of his life. The four-star running back from C.E. King High School in Houston was verbally committed to TCU until he visited College Station.

“We went on an official visit with him, and ah, man, the Aggies, the Aggie network, the school, the community — it was just amazing to see,” Williams’ mother, Joyce Davis, said fondly. “In an instant, he said, ‘I belong at A&M.’ That was the best choice he could have made, absolutely. It’s opened doors for him and opened up a new world for us. Aggies are everywhere. My husband had a stroke, and the doctor in the emergency room had an A&M pin on. I asked him, ‘Did you graduate from A&M?’ He said he did, and I said, ‘Well, Gig ‘em!’ He said, ‘Oh, Gig ‘em! Are you from A&M?’ I told him my son was Trayveon, and he said, ‘I love that kid.’

Williams was verbally committed to TCU until he visited College Station in 2015. Experiencing Aggieland prompted a change of heart for the four-star running back from Houston, Texas.



Everywhere you go, you see somebody's license plate or a bumper sticker. You pass somebody wearing an Aggie shirt and it's like, 'Gig 'em!' 'Gig 'em!' 'Howdy!' 'Howdy!' It's amazing. I know he made the right choice. We're an Aggie family, and we're always going to be an Aggie family. It's our family."

Williams spent three seasons in College Station. He had two 1,000-yard rushing seasons and finished with 4,176 yards from scrimmage and 35 total touchdowns in his career. Williams' 1,760 rushing yards in 2018 set a single-season school record.

The one thing he did not accomplish at A&M was finishing his degree, choosing instead to enter the NFL draft as an underclassman. Williams remains nine hours short of a bachelor's degree.

He was scheduled to finish in the spring of 2020 when COVID changed his plans. Williams said he will return to College Station soon to complete the three classes, a goal of his and his mother's.

"I really wanted him to stay and get it, but I understood at the time what he needed to do," Davis said. "But we did have that talk, and he made a promise to me that he will go back. It's very important."

The Bengals made Williams a sixth-round selection in the 2019 NFL Draft, and he has played in 34 games in four seasons.

He has also continued to consider his future. Williams already runs three businesses: He has a production company, a credit repair company and an exotic rental car company.

Now, Williams has an opportunity to see if he wants to consider teaching as a post-football career.

"My scholarship gave me a chance to maximize my life," Williams said. "Every single day I thank Texas A&M for giving me that opportunity. I thank the 12th Man for embracing me and loving me and

“

MY SCHOLARSHIP GAVE ME A CHANCE TO MAXIMIZE MY LIFE. EVERY SINGLE DAY I THANK TEXAS A&M FOR GIVING ME THAT OPPORTUNITY.

— TRAYVEON WILLIAMS '20

allowing me to be an ambassador for the university. I want to represent the university in every way possible. I love it to death.

"That Aggie network is real. This is a great example, getting a chance to teach this class. I am so blessed and so thankful that I was able to get the scholarship from Texas A&M. It absolutely changed my life. I'm an Aggie for life. For real."

At A&M, Williams had two 1,000-yard rushing seasons and finished with 4,176 yards from scrimmage and 35 total touchdowns in his career. Williams' 1,760 rushing yards in 2018 set a single-season school record.



TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS / BAILEY ORR (TOP) AND SAM CRAFT (BOTTOM)



POWER OF A SCHOLARSHIP

BEGOÑA ARANGUREN '18

Former Texas A&M golfer credits scholarship for career path in nuclear engineering

BY OLIN BUCHANAN

TWO TRIPS — ONE ABROAD AND ONE NEAR HOME — shaped the future of Begoña Aranguren '18, a former Texas A&M golf student-athlete.

The first trip took her across the Atlantic from Madrid, Spain to Texas A&M where she attended on a golf scholarship from 2015-17.

The scholarship changed her life and, someday, it may help change how the world meets its energy demands.

Aranguren was a good golfer, but she was a great student. Her drives on the course were impressive, but not as much as her drive in the classroom.

"Of course, the scholarship helped me get to the U.S., but it has done so much more than just get me here," Aranguren said recently from her home in Washington, D.C. "The fact A&M gave me that opportunity really meant everything. It changed everything."

Ten years ago, Aranguren was a hard-working, driven teenager, but uncertain about her career path.

She ultimately decided to follow the lead of her older brother, Andres, who was studying engineering at Texas A&M-International in Laredo. He eventually earned a master's degree in mechanical

engineering at Texas A&M.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do at all," she said. "Of course, I thought my brother was the coolest person in the world, so if he did engineering maybe I should try that too."

"I worked really hard in high school to be better at physics and math. So, when I applied for college I applied for pre-engineering. But I didn't pick what kind of engineering I wanted to do."

At one point she was strongly considering biomedical engineering.

That's when the second trip — a different kind of trip — changed her course.

While on summer vacation in the South of Spain, she was riding scooters with her grandfather. He fell and sustained a bloody gash. The cut exposed his tibia.

Aranguren was repulsed.

"There was some blood and I was like, 'I cannot study the human body. I don't want to touch the human body or do anything that is related to that,'" she said. "Somehow, I remembered my teachers in high school explaining fission. I was very interested by it. A&M has one of the biggest nuclear engineering programs in the nation. The facilities for nuclear

engineering at A&M — you can't really compare them to anything I've ever seen. I thought it was just a perfect match. So, I did that for my undergrad."

Suddenly switching from biomedical engineering to nuclear engineering might seem like an arduous undertaking.

Those who know Aranguren best suggest that, for her, it is as simple as executing a U-turn.

Ben Crancer, a former A&M golf teammate, recognized Aranguren's academic prowess when studying with her at the A&M golf facility.

"She pulled out all of her work. It looked like a foreign language," Crancer recalled. "She's going through it and explaining it to me. I was listening to her talk about those things which, for her, were probably simple things. I was thinking this is so far over my head and out of my realm. She's just incredibly smart."

"She's incredibly driven, too," he added. "She always has been."

Of similar opinion is the other Aranguren, the one who inspired the golfer's move to Texas A&M.

"My sister is very passionate, and she pours herself and everything she has into what she does," said Andres, who is a mechanical engineer in San Antonio. "She definitely took all the good genes in the family.

"She's someone who puts her mind to something, sets a goal and then pursues it. So far, she's managed to achieve every goal she set for herself."

Upon earning her degree, she set a new goal. She aimed for a doctorate.

"When I was about to graduate in 2018, I talked to one of my professors, Dr. (Pavel) Tsvetkov, about going to grad school because I was kind of confused as to what to do after undergrad," Aranguren said.

“**SHE'S SOMEONE WHO PUTS HER MIND TO SOMETHING, SETS A GOAL AND THEN PURSUES IT. SO FAR, SHE'S MANAGED TO ACHIEVE EVERY GOAL SHE SET FOR HERSELF.**

— ANDRES ARANGUREN '18

"He suggested that I pursue a PhD in nuclear engineering. I found no reasons not to do it. I really enjoyed my time at A&M. I was happy to stay for a few more years and so I did that."

When she was finishing her PhD last fall, Aranguren was encouraged by professors Dr. Sunil Chirayath and Dr. Craig Marianno to apply for a year-long fellowship with the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) in the Department of Energy.

She was awarded that fellowship and is now working in the International Nuclear Safeguards Office.

"My work supports nuclear safeguards implementation and technology development," she said.

When the fellowship ends this summer, Aranguren plans to continue pursuing a career in nuclear

After encouragement from her professors, Dr. Sunil Chirayath and Dr. Craig Marianno, Aranguren applied for a year-long fellowship with the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) in the Department of Energy. Upon completing that fellowship this summer, Aranguren plans to continue a career in nuclear engineering.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEGOÑA ARANGUREN

“

I REALLY THINK MY DECISION TO STUDY AND PURSUE NUCLEAR ENGINEERING CAME FROM A&M. IF I HAD GONE SOMEWHERE ELSE, I THINK I WOULD BE DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT. I THINK MY LIFE WOULD BE SO MUCH DIFFERENT.

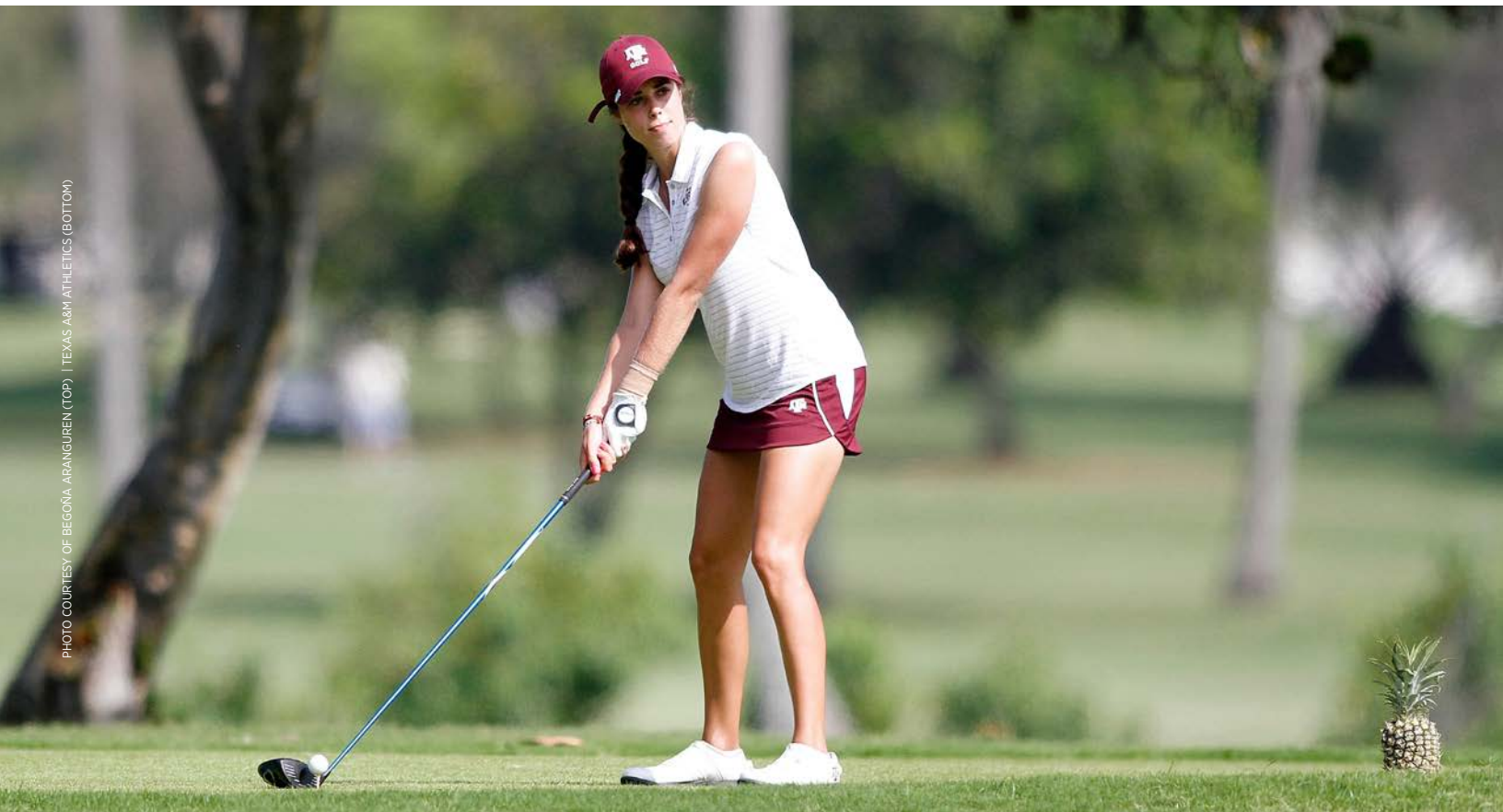
— BEGOÑA ARANGUREN '18

engineering. She hopes to help change how nuclear energy is perceived worldwide.

“It’s not a secret that nuclear energy doesn’t have the best reputation,” she said. “It’s something that makes me very upset. I’m very passionate about doing work that will allow nuclear technology to move forward and for the world to benefit from this technology.”

Someday the world might thank her. In doing so, the world could thank Texas A&M for offering Aranguren that golf scholarship.

“I really think my decision to study and pursue nuclear engineering came from A&M,” Aranguren said. “If I had gone somewhere else, I think I would be doing something different. I think my life would be so much different. If it wasn’t for the golf scholarship, I maybe would not have gone there. It really changed my career.”





12TH MAN FOUNDATION

CHAMPIONS COUNCIL

A new generation is emerging within the exclusive membership group

BY CAMRYN GARNER '21

IN 2004, THE 12TH MAN FOUNDATION'S LEADERSHIP had a vision to create an exclusive membership program that would offer unprecedented access to Texas A&M Athletics' most dedicated supporters. The idea, sparked by Board of Trustees member Willie Langston '81, helped transform the organization's major gift fundraising efforts.

Today, this program has grown into a thriving community of over 1,000 members (565 accounts) who share a passion for Aggie Athletics and a commitment to excellence. Membership is offered to supporters of Texas A&M Athletics who have committed a gift of \$50,000 or more to a current capital project or a philanthropic academic or program endowment.

The generosity of these supporters is critical to the 12th Man Foundation's ability to fund championship athletics at Texas A&M. In recent years, Champions Council has experienced a steady

increase within a new generation of donors at the 12th Man Foundation.

Since its launch in April 2022, the Centennial Campaign has opened the door for an emerging group of supporters to make a significant investment in Texas A&M Athletics. These donors were then able to share their network with the 12th Man Foundation Major Gifts team to establish new connections and reach prospective donors.

Of the 142 donors who have joined Champions Council over the past 18 months, more than 37 percent fall within the age range of 20-49 years old. Additionally, recent figures on new Champions Council members who have joined since July 2022 reveal that an impressive 43 percent represent an age range between 30-49 years old. These figures exemplify the desire that a new generation of Texas A&M supporters have to create a lasting impact on the lives of Aggie student-athletes.

“
I THINK WE ARE AT A TURNING POINT WHERE A YOUNGER GROUP OF FORMER STUDENTS WILL TRANSITION INTO THE MAJORITY OF THE DONOR BASE AT BOTH AN ATHLETIC AND UNIVERSITY LEVEL.

— TROY SMITH '12

Christopher Bowman '05 has been a faithful supporter of the 12th Man Foundation for the past 17 years. After receiving a phone call to see if he would consider increasing his impact on Texas A&M Athletics at a Champions Council level, Bowman knew that it was an opportunity he could not pass up.

“Aggies agree that we want Texas A&M to be top notch when it comes to athletics, scholarships and everything in between,” Bowman said. “If everybody wants Texas A&M Athletics to be top tier, it is going to take all of us to pitch in and be a part of it.”

Joining Champions Council in 2022, Bowman has not wasted a moment to make the most of his experience.

“I always love being around Aggies, but I love being around Aggies who are more involved than I am because there is such an opportunity to learn,” he said. “When I decided to join Champions Council, I found myself around some really impactful people. As an Aggie who wants to continue to build and do better things for the university, the opportunity to learn from people who have already made a big impact on Texas A&M is really meaningful.”

A former walk on for the Texas A&M football team in 2008, Troy Smith '12 had been attending Champions Council events for years with his father before deciding to make the commitment himself.

“What I enjoy most about Champions Council is the exclusive access it gives me,” Smith said. “It has provided opportunities for incredible experiences like being up close to Buzz Williams and the men’s

Of members who have joined Champions Council in the past 18 months, more than 37 percent fall within the age range of 20-49 years old. Additionally, those who have joined since July 2022 reveal that 43 percent represent an age range between 30-49 years old.



basketball team or meeting Jimbo Fisher. The overall access and ability to talk with people involved in Aggie athletic programs is such a neat experience for me.”

In recent years, Smith came to realize he was no longer the youngest person in the room at Champions Council events.

“As Texas A&M has grown from being a small military school into the university it is today, I think we are at a turning point where a younger group of former students will transition into the majority of the donor base at both an athletic and university level,” said Smith.

With the Centennial Campaign fundraising complete, this next wave of supporters will undoubtedly help drive the 12th Man Foundation forward during the coming initiatives.

“We have expanded our solicitation methods beyond our traditional fundraising model and are thrilled to be working with this new group of donors,” said Brady Bullard, senior vice president of major giving programs. If we look at the significant growth of Champions Council as we have called on a new generation of donors, we have been blessed that so many see the value in the mission of the 12th Man Foundation and the window it gives them into Texas A&M Athletics.”

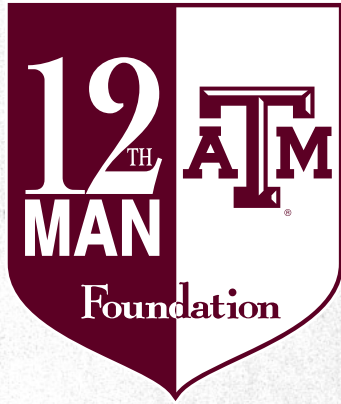
The 12th Man Foundation will continue to embrace this emerging population of donors to create a lasting legacy of impact on Aggie Athletics. With their support, the Foundation can thrive in its mission of funding scholarships, programs and facilities in support of championships athletics for years to come.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT CHAMPIONS COUNCIL?

Contact our Major Gifts team at 979-260-7963.



12TH MAN FOUNDATION / BRIAN DAVIS (LEFT) | PHOTO COURTESY OF TROY SMITH (RIGHT)



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