First Wave:
The Texas A&M Maritime Academy opened its doors to the midshipmen of the Corp of Cadets in winter 2015.

“The Texas A&M Maritime Academy Hall is a state-of-the-art residence hall for our Corps of Cadets. The building is specifically designed to provide beautiful appealing social, gathering and study spaces that underscore Texas A&M’s core values. The Maritime Academy Hall is and will always be a strong source of pride for our Academy and the Galveston Campus of Texas A&M University.”

— Rear Admiral Michael J. Rodriguez, USMS Superintendent, Texas A&M Maritime Academy
Second & Third Waves:
The Waterfront Pavilion & Amphitheater is located on the south side of the Oceans & Coastal Studies Building and directly overlooks the Small Boat Basin. This Amphitheater acts as a scenic outdoor gathering place for students, classes and visitors during cooler months. It can also be used as an extension space for events held in the Waterfront Pavilion. The stunning multipurpose space provided by the Waterfront Pavilion is perfect for more intimate banquets and galas and has unique indoor/outdoor capabilities due to its glass exterior that can open up onto an outdoor deck area, allowing guests to enjoy the gulf breeze and beautiful views.

Fourth & Fifth Waves:
The two-phased academic complex includes the MAIN building, which opened in August of 2017, and the Aggie Special Events Center (ASEC) building situated directly next door. ASEC opened in July 2018 and features the new campus bookstore, retail space, office and administrative support spaces, coffee bar, and more. Both contemporary structures are state-of-the-art and include administrative officing, classrooms, labs, common study areas and beautiful Galveston Bay views.
Phase 1 of the Academic Complex was dedicated December 7, 2017. It’s the first phase of a new academic complex for the campus consisting of four floors totaling 86,000-square feet that includes a visitor center, classrooms, laboratories, academic services areas and administrative offices.

Through a generous gift from the Abe & Annie Seibel Foundation, the entire second floor of Phase 1 of the Academic Building is also the new home of the Seibel Student Learning Center, comprised of the Office of Academic Enhancement, Honors Program, and the Undergraduate Research Scholars Office.

Also dedicated was the university’s new Waterfront Events Pavilion/Amphitheater. The $6 million pavilion and amphitheater includes a multipurpose room that accommodates 150 people in banquet seating and nearly 275 people in theater seating. Unique to this new building is its indoor/outdoor capability. The amphitheater extends the space of the pavilion and can be used as a separate venue for outdoor events.

“The idea was to create a modern space that would increase our capacity to educate Aggies in Galveston and more importantly create a state-of-the-art learning environment that is collaborative and healthy. This building is a place that celebrates learning, and we look forward to creating value for students and the university.”

- Dr. Patrick Louchouarn, Executive Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer, Texas A&M University at Galveston, Associate Provost (TAMU)
Six former students are at the helm of BP Shipping. With degrees ranging from MART and MARA to MARB -- all found themselves described as attractive hires due to TAMUG's well-known propensity for turning out graduates with great work experience, diverse talent, excellent work ethic and much more.

“Texas A&M Galveston opened my eyes to the world of shipping and the maritime industry...Instead of moving to College Station, I spent all four years in Galveston learning the ins and outs of the maritime industry and spent 11 years in the maritime industry because of that foundation.”
- BP Vessel Operator Michael Flannery, MARA '07

“Moving oil safely is essential to the overall world’s economy, as well as BP’s bottom line, and shipping supports both...I clearly pursued the marine transportation portion more aggressively than the marine biology part of my degree, but I have enjoyed both very much.”
- BP Vessel Operator Sara Broaderick, MARB/LO '09

“Texas A&M Galveston was really interesting because we were submerged in a sector of the maritime industry. In my work I use skills acquired from Texas A&M Galveston. The education I received really gave me a strong foundation to build on when I first entered the industry.”
- BP Vessel Operator Garrett Jones, MARA '15

“I was in the Corps of Cadets, so my fondest memories were from my sophomore training cruise which was the last voyage of the Texas Clipper and my senior training cruise was on the first voyage of the Texas Clipper II. Of course the classes in my major helped but I find that some of the electives I took at Texas A&M Galveston were almost equally important. For instance, I took technical writing and it is amazing how much I draw from that experience. I have to communicate daily with ship captains, brokers and agents all over the world whose first language may or may not be English. Being able to effectively communicate is a huge part of this job.”
- BP Vessel Operator Daniel Lee Justus, MART '97

“In March 2018, Regional-Voyage Operations Support for the Americas Jenny Long (MART/MARA ’06), Ship Operator Garrett Steel-Jones (MARA ’15), Vessel Operator Michael Flannery (MARA ’07), Ship Operator Sara Broadrick (MARB/LO ’09), and Ship Operator Daniel Lee Justus (MART, ’97) led the Texas A&M Foundation’s Assistant Vice President for Development Rick Kline and Director of Counseling & Career Services Ken Bailey on a tour of the facilities and during a reception discussed how their education at TAMUG helped them in their careers at BP.

“Ship Operator Stewart Andrews (MART ’10) was not in attendance for the visit - he was home welcoming a new baby to the Andrews family. Congratulations!”
Do you really want to save the world? Then you had better be ready to effectively communicate about how you plan to do so. Such is TAMUG’s Dr. Victor Viser’s macro perspective on the new Tourism & Coastal Community Development undergraduate degree program he helped form in collaboration with Department of Liberal Studies Head Dr. JoAnn DiGeorgio-Lutz.

Dr. Viser, who is the assistant department head, believes this new major will allow students to combine the concepts of communication, conservation and a civic-minded attitude in order to better understand global business dynamics from a community-beneficial standpoint.

One of Dr. Viser’s main goals for this program is for students to realize how communication is a vehicle tied into all kinds of business regulation and policy - especially in regard to the maritime industry. Whether they work in logistics at the Port of Houston, do grant writing for a marine conservation organization, or work in the political sphere for NOAA; students will gain a better understanding of how effective communication can shape both their careers and their roles as members of a coastal community like Galveston.

“The degree has very applicable implications and ensures our students who want to work in maritime policy and communication will absolutely know how to communicate about regulation and policy. The ability to affect change is inextricably tied to communication,” Dr. Viser explained.

Dr. Viser truly believes the concept of communication with a global awareness is at the heart of the liberal arts.

“We live in a global society and I encourage my students to have a global mindset, which the study of liberal arts inherently encourages,” he said. “With that in mind, communication is part and parcel of everything we do even on this campus, too - grant writing, research studies, making yourself known in the public domain - it’s all couched in communication. I’m probably most excited about this program because it services the community, state and nation by producing a skill set of communication in our students they wouldn’t otherwise have.”

In this program and his other courses, Dr. Viser teaches about how certain types of communication in different sectors can affect public policy and change. Within the political
He recalls teaching a communications course at TAMUG for a friend and was soon a dyed in the maroon Sea Aggie professor.

“I truly feel that the students here are completely different than any others I’ve encountered in my teaching career. There is such a passion on this campus, a willingness and eagerness to want to learn more. I just fell in love with the campus, the students, and what’s more is that TAMUG is also part of my community,” said Dr. Viser.

Community - that’s what it all comes back to. With a great number of Dr. Viser’s students being eco-minded and focused on marine conservation, he hopes he is able to impart the sense that those who are plugged in are those who “sea” change.

“We have to be cognizant of our effect on the natural world, and we should all be socially conscious about our impacts and functions,” said Dr. Viser.

“Community - that's what it all comes back to. With a great number of Dr. Viser’s students being eco-minded and focused on marine conservation, he hopes he is able to impart the sense that those who are plugged in are those who “sea” change.

And yes, Dr. Viser does the walk the talk - he sits on the Galveston Island Park Board of Trustees, volunteers with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Houston - Johnny Mitchell Branch, is a member of the Galveston Sustainable Communities Alliance, shoots hoops with students, and lives on-island in a historic home he and his wife are lovingly renovating.

Hired at TAMUG part time in 2013, he was brought on full-time the following year. Dr. Viser has an extensive professional background in communication, PR, marketing, film and digital advertising across non-profit, political, higher ed and various other platforms. Dr. Viser lived in Galveston during part of his childhood and was always in awe of the city and the sea.

“I believe I bring a civic-mindedness to this program - this idea that decisions are made by those who show up,” impassioned Dr. Viser.
The Abe and Peggy J. Levy Foundation has established a giving legacy at Texas A&M University at Galveston that allows students like Michelle Nguyen ’18 to pursue their passions.

By Laura Simmons ’19

Originally published April 2018

Texas A&M Galveston marine biology graduate Michelle Nguyen ’18 always knew what career she wanted to pursue. When she was eight years old, her family went on a vacation to Mexico. One morning, her dad took her to a mini scuba lesson with a dive instructor. "The entire world opened up to me underwater," she said. "To think that there is so much more to life than what we can see on land—it was awe-inspiring. I didn’t have a word for it, but I knew immediately that it was what I wanted to spend my life doing.”

Nguyen’s journey to Texas A&M Galveston was a long one. Originally from Dallas, she explored universities for marine biology across the nation. As a first-generation college student and a first-generation Vietnamese American, she knew that she would face difficulties when it came to financing her education. “My parents are an amazing support system,” she said. “They didn’t want me to worry about money, but I understood that I would likely need to find a job as a student.”

It wasn’t until Nguyen was offered the Abe and Peggy J. Levy Foundation Scholarship—a four-year, $10,000 award per year—that she decided to tour Texas A&M Galveston. Almost immediately, she fell in love.

The Abe and Peggy J. Levy Foundation was established in 1994 to provide economic assistance to incoming freshmen at Texas A&M Galveston. The foundation was the brainchild of Dr. Abe Levy ’38, a veterinarian who directed the Animal Care Center at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston for many years. Known throughout the community as "Uncle Abe" and "Doc," he was a man of unique charm with a generous soul.

“Uncle Abe didn’t have children, but he wanted to create something to benefit students,” said Marilyn McFatridge, Abe Levy’s niece who serves as a chairperson of the Levy Foundation. “When Abe passed, we saw that his concerns were more closely aligned with Texas A&M Galveston, and the need for financial support was there, too.”

Since its conception, the Levy Foundation has given $1,576,250 to Texas A&M Galveston, with its giving during the Lead by Example campaign totaling $840,000. This academic year, the organization will award 14 scholarships to Texas A&M Galveston students with hopes that the support will alleviate
financial burdens and allow students to focus on their studies.

Nguyen’s story proves just how impactful the Levy Foundation has been. Nguyen was a member of at least five student organizations, including the Texas A&M Galveston Honors program, SALT Camp (Galveston’s version of FISH Camp), the Big Event and Living Learning Communities. She also served as vice president of the Maroon Delegates, which she helped establish during her time on campus to allow students to give back to the donors who support them. The group is modeled after the Texas A&M Foundation’s Maroon Coats in College Station.

As a family organization, the Abe and Peggy J. Levy Foundation works to foster familial relationships with its scholarship recipients by staying involved in their lives. In addition to an annual Levy Foundation reception, it’s not uncommon to see students and board members having lunch together. “We’re basically like their grandchildren,” laughed Nguyen. “It’s another family that I belong to outside of the Aggie family.”

As it continues to grow, the Levy Foundation holds long-term goals for the future that would allow it to better serve more students. “One of our goals is to create a community of current and former scholarship recipients,” explained McFatridge. “We’d love to have alumni come back to work with us and to help us grow a network of support.”

While Nguyen—who graduated with a bachelor’s degree in marine biology while double-minoring in diving and oceanography—has dreams of obtaining her Ph.D. in biological oceanography, she would like to stay involved with the Levy Foundation. “Once I’m financially stable, I’ll be giving back in any way I can,” she said. “Really, everything that I do is connected to this scholarship. Because of it, I could focus more on my research studies and lab work on campus, which ultimately enabled me to land an amazing internship with Horn Point Laboratory and attend the Ocean Sciences Meeting conference in Portland, Oregon.”

Last summer, Nguyen also spent 12 weeks as a National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates fellow at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science program, based at the Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge, Maryland. Nguyen’s focus at Horn Point was investigating the effects of hatchery conditions on the success of oyster larvae, along with recording any changes to the oysters’ durability.

Though her background was with phytoplankton, Nguyen felt lucky. “I was fortunate to work with talented faculty from Cornell University,” she said. "We were learning something new every day, working 12-hour days, and we were totally exhausted at the end of each day.”

The program was immersive and extensive, from writing proposals and forming research hypotheses to working in a graduate-level lab environment and managing data collection. In a 12-week period, Nguyen certainly learned a lot of valuable information, but what she discovered about herself was equally important. “I learned about the importance of enthusiasm and energy and that I love research and science communication. Group morale is everything,” she added.

While the Abe and Peggy J. Levy Foundation works to sustain the legacy of Abe Levy by awarding scholarships to students like himself—those with a love for people, animals and the world—it is simultaneously manifesting its own legacy at Texas A&M Galveston—a legacy of love, philanthropy and fellowship.

“My campus involvement is only possible because of my Levy Foundation scholarship,” she said. “It’s not just about the money either; this scholarship has allowed me to write my own Aggie story. Because of it, I reach out for more opportunities, and I’m always looking to better myself.”
EVENTS

Endowed Scholarship Reception November 2017

Abe & Peggy J. Levy Luncheon Reception November 2017

TAMUG Class of ‘71 gathers in front of the General Rudder November 2017

Ring Days: September 2017 & April 2018
2018 TAMUG Port Call Receptions:
- NOLA, June 20
- Corpus Christi, June 30
- Tampa, July 12
Past Maroon Delegate President Gregory Grimm and Maroon Delegate Andres Barboza welcome Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada Catherine McKenna to TAMUG.

Please help us welcome new Maroon Delegates: Connor Lowe ’20, Elizabeth Schneider ’20, Sydney Carbajal ’19, Robyn Battles ’20 and Reagen Micheli ’19.
(Grant Lincecum ’19 and Tory Templin ’21 are not pictured.)

Join us:
- September 21, 2018 from 4 - 5:30 p.m. in the brand new Aggie Special Events Center for our Maroon Coating Ceremony.
- November 10, 2018 for our annual Maroon Delegate Tailgate in College Station when A&M will BTHO out of Ole Miss! As always, we’ll be located at Simpson Drill Field. There will be plenty of food, fun, and football!
In March, Superintendent of the Maritime Academy RADM Mike Rodriguez, Marine Engineering Technology Interim Department Head Dr. Matthew Kane, Director of Counseling and Career Services Ken Bailey, and the Texas A&M Foundation’s Assistant Vice President for Development Rick Kline visited Bouchard Transportation Co., Inc’s headquarters in Melville, NY to present Bouchard Transportation’s President and Chief Executive Officer Morton S. Bouchard III and Director of Communications Danielle Bouchard with a lovely plaque to recognize and thank them and their company for establishing the Morton S. Bouchard, Jr. Memorial Scholarship at TAMUG.

TAMUG hosted its third annual Endowed Scholarship Reception Wednesday, November 1, 2017. The Texas A&M Foundation’s Assistant Vice President for Development Rick Kline welcomed 150+ faculty, staff, BOV, donors and students to the event, which focused on the importance of providing scholarships and the impact their involvement has on current and future TAMUG students. The reception honored the donors of 56 TAMUG Endowed Scholarships, representing near $5.2 million in investments of student’s higher education on campus.

We were proud to present Mr. Victor Pierson, president and CEO of Moody National Bank, the Unsung Hero award in a January 2018 BOV meeting.

We appreciate his unwavering commitment, support and service of Texas A&M faculty, staff and students who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey.
The GPMS is comprised of individuals and organizations committed to the well-being of our oceans by supporting marine and maritime research, education, training, and more at the Gulf Coast’s maritime university, Texas A&M University at Galveston.

Established in honor of George Phydias Mitchell, fighting Aggie class of 1940; the spirit of the GPMS is to enhance the growth of the Galveston campus at Texas A&M University.

Funds are to be designated for student scholarships, maritime research, excellent faculty and student recruitment, campus beautification, and for discretionary purposes as designated by the COO. For more information or to join, please click here.

Membership to the society is an annual donation spanning the current fiscal year. Membership levels are described below:

- General Membership: $1,000 minimum (Membership consists of GPMS specific gift or gift(s) of $1,000 or more to TAMUG.)
- Faculty/Staff Membership: $500*
- Student Membership: $50*
- Corporate Membership: $5,000 minimum* (The donor may name three individuals to GPMS membership, but only the corporate name will be published in membership rolls.)

*All funds at these levels must be directly dedicated toward GPMS membership.

JOIN TODAY!
Peruse these pics of our MAIN & ASEC buildings, then...

...Come experience them in person!
Dedication Day for Phase 2 is: October 19, 2018
A message from your TAMUG Development Office:

Howdy!

The Texas A&M University at Galveston Development Office is pleased to provide you with this newsletter. You can read about a few highlights of the exciting things here at TAMUG. Since our last issue of the TAMUG Development Newsletter was published, there have been plenty of inspiring changes happening within our community.

In this issue, please enjoy reading about:
1) Our new facilities (MAIN, Waterfront Pavilion & Amphitheater, and our newest building – Phase 2 Academic Building / ASEC)
2) Many of our generous donors
3) A spotlight on one of our faculty members, Dr. Victor Viser
4) Highlights on a few of our Former Students
5) Summer Port Receptions and tours of the Texas A&M Maritime Academy’s T/S Kennedy

We’re excited to introduce you to two new members of the TAMUG Development Office. New team members are:

Andréa Bolt
Andréa joined the Development Office in March 2018 as our Development Communications Coordinator. She earned a bachelors degree in Journalism from TCU, has extensive experience as a newspaper reporter, and has worked in both zoos and aquariums. Her love of the marine ecosystem makes her an outstanding fit for her role here at TAMUG.

Jason Tieman
Jason joined the Development Team in the role of Director of Development for the Texas A&M Foundation in April 2018. Jason is a 1997 TAMUG graduate with a degree in Marine Transportation. With active duty and reserve duty roles in the United States Coast Guard, he is coming to us after spending the last 11 years at Oceaneering. Jason’s wealth of knowledge in the maritime industry and his deep devotion to this campus is a perfect match for his new role.

Both Andréa and Jason are welcome additions to the Development Team. Next time you stop by campus, please be sure to say hello to both.

As always, please contact the Development Office (www.tamug.edu/develop) to explore ways that you can impact our current and future students. To learn more about our campus or if you’re interested in visiting, please contact any of us on the Development Team.

Sincerely,

Rick Kline
Assistant Vice President for Development
Texas A&M Foundation

For newsletter inquiries, please contact Andréa Bolt, development communications coordinator, at: a_bolt@tamug.edu.

The mission of the Sea Aggie Former Student Network is to strengthen the unity of our Texas A&M University at Galveston graduates and students by promoting the involvement in industry professional events, networking and career enhancement opportunities. The network will serve as a conduit of industry perception and provide conscientious assistance to the maritime & marine student. We will always endeavor to nurture, support and integrate a versatile mix of professionals into the oceans of tomorrow.

To join or learn more, click here.