



# THE NAUTILUS

Serving Texas A&M University at Galveston since 1972

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## McKenna, '25, and Bothwell, '25, run for reelection

By Gail Lonngi, '24

Running uncontested for reelection are current Student Body President Lauren Bothwell '25 and current Student Body Vice President Abigail McKenna '25. The two have held their positions since March '23.

Lauren is an Oceans and One Health major from Keller, TX, and is double minoring in Chemistry in Maritime Studies. She works at the Galveston UTMB emergency room, which has encouraged her to continue pursuing post-undergraduate studies and a career in healthcare. She is an organic chemistry tutor and conducts research on jellyfish. She is the Founder of HER Campus, and has been involved in Galveston Freshman Leaders Association (GLFO), Big Event as Assistant Director, Maroon Delegates Class IX, and in Student Government Association—aside from being Student Body President—as Freshman Rep. and External Affairs.

Abigail is a Maritime Studies major from New Jersey, with a double minor in Marine Environmental Law and Policy, and Maritime Cyber Security. She works in TAMUG's Liberal Studies office and is a part of A&M's summer 2024 PPIP program with plans to intern with and continue working for the U.S. Navy. She has worked as a student ambassador for Student Enrollment Services, Vice President of the Maritime Studies club, and a member of the Sisterhood of University Leaders. Outside of being Student Body Vice President in SGA, she has been their Rep. at Large and Associate Justice.

During the time of their student body leadership, Lauren and Abigail have accomplished significantly uplifting TAMUG's reputation and strengthening connections between the campus and the Galveston community at large.

Lauren stated the duo's primary goals as "Focusing on building inner organizational strength alongside growing the impact and involvement TAMUG has in its community."

After representing TAMUG at the Council for Opportunity in Education and collaborating with College Station campus leadership

at the Chancellor's Student Advisory Council, the two established the Legislative and Political Action Committee (LPAC)--led by Alex Mapula--here at TAMUG. This committee is responsible for representing SGA at the Galveston Island International Festival, encouraging voter registration, and getting TAMUG involved with the Chamber of Commerce. The pair have also grown the SGA to the largest it has been in years (45 people total) and cultivated positive relationships with campus senators.

"This position has molded me into someone I feel I can genuinely be proud of," said Lauren. "It has ignited a new passion in me and makes me have a deep appreciation for the school and the people I surround myself with. I have absolutely fallen in love with it, and I am so inspired by the other leaders I get to work with in SGA. It definitely has not been without mistakes, however, I feel that Abby and I have turned every situation into a way to learn and be productive."

"Although I am extremely proud of what Abby and I have done thus far, I do not believe we are done just yet," said Lauren.

The two are currently overseeing the development of multiple projects, including a city summer internship program for TAMUG students, and a CSAC student exchange program focusing on senators, among others. Lauren said, "We want to continue to hold the SGA standards high, and one more term will allow us to do just that. The two presidents that came before me did a fantastic job at bringing back SGA from the dead post-Covid, and we want to continue to improve it as much as possible."

"If you want someone down to earth who's going to put their money where their mouth is, then I'm your girl," said Lauren. "My goal is simple: To represent and secure the resources necessary for every student to feel the same support and affection I've experienced. Together, let's ensure every student enjoys a fulfilling Aggie by the Sea journey."

Election dates will take place Feb. 27-29.

## Meet your Yell candidates

By Gail Lonngi, '24

Another election that much of the TAMUG community has been anticipating this month has been that of the new junior and senior TAMUG Yell Leaders. Elections for the next Yell Leaders are held every spring in preparation for the new academic year.

TAMUG Midnight Yells are held every Thursday night preceding College Station's Midnight Yells on Friday nights, both of which take place before a game in TAMU's Kyle Field. Aggies follow the appointed

Yell leaders in traditional chants, singing fight songs, cheering for their football team, declaring their opposing team's defeat.

Midnight Yell is among A&M's most beloved and famed traditions and has been an established piece of Aggie culture since 1931. Yell practices are also performed at special events on TAMUG such as Aggie Rings Days, and Aggieland by the Sea, among others.

This semester, multiple candidates running for Yell Leader shared their background and reasons they are running with the Nautilus:

### Junior Yell Leader Candidates

Joshua Swasey, '26 is a Marine Biology major from Houston, TX.

**2** Joshua stated he is running for Junior Yell Leader “because he wants future Aggies to feel as welcome as he did when he came to TAMUG”, exemplifying the spirit of community that Sea Aggie Yell Leaders encourage their campus to foster.

Jordan Passanisi, '26 is a Marine Biology major from Ravenna, TX, and asserts she “most importantly is the loudest and the proudest member of the fighting Texas Aggie class of 2026”. She explained that she is running for Junior Yell Leader because she loves being loud and showing off the pride she has for being an Aggie, but also because she “genuinely love this school and hope to be one of the five that have the honor to lead Galveston campus in showing off the Redass Spirit!” Jordan would be TAMU's second female Yell Leader should she achieve her goal.

#### Senior Yell Leader Candidates

Kolbe Hatz, '25 is a Marine Transportation major from Pearland, TX. He states, “I want to be a Yell Leader because I would love to contribute to one of the most unique college traditions that is known around the country, sharing the spirit that can ne'er be told. As well as tradition, I would be honored to represent the university in this position while being able to meet new people and fellow Aggies.”

Midnight Yell is indeed a one of a kind college tradition, and is Aggies' unique way of displaying their passionate school spirit in place of normal school cheers.

Patrick Smith, '25 is a Maritime Business Administration major from League City, TX. He expressed, “I want to be a Yell Leader to be able to teach the next generation of Aggies all of the traditions that A&M Galveston has to offer, as well as be one of the first people to welcome them into the Aggie Family!” The value of tradition is essential to the Aggie culture, and it is through one of their most celebrated practices that Yell Leaders are doubtless among the members of the A&M community that leave the greatest impressions on prospective and incoming students.

Jett Taylor, '25 is an Ocean Engineering major from Friendswood, TX. He imparted, “I had the privilege of serving as one of the two junior Yell Leaders this year and I fell in love with leading the campus in yell practices. I'm running for Yell so that I can continue to lead that awesome tradition and be a passionate leader on campus.” The strength of the Sea Aggie spirit is widely perceived and experienced as magnetic in nature. And it is attested by TAMUG's passionate leaders stepping up time and time again to serve, represent, and lead their communities.

## TAMUG Corps marches in Mardi Gras parade



Photo by Sean Chavez, '24

By Gail Lonngi, '24, and Sean Chavez, '24

On February 10, during the second weekend of Galveston's 113<sup>th</sup> Mardi Gras celebration, the Corps of Cadets marched in the traditionally held parade. Throughout the march, they were given Mardi Gras beads of various colors and waved to families and children. One company embellished their company flag with the collected beads.

In recent years, the concept of what it means to be a military has been experiencing a change of greater emphasis being placed on community involvement. Stewarding in new generations of potential Merchant, Navy, and Coast Guard members, TAMUG demonstrates how a corps can bridge the gap between civilian life and military life by participating and becoming involved in their community events and annual celebrations like Galveston's Mardi Gras. These events also present great opportunities to the corps for local recruitment, and to encourage prospective Aggie students and cadets and the growth of the Corps.

“I think it's important to show ourselves out around the island,” said Company Commander Logan Dodge '24. “The whole time I've gone to school here, if I ever meet somebody like on the island, I'll be like yeah I go to college here on the island. They always kind of assume I'm talking about Galveston Community first, which I think is kind of funny because I think that Texas A&M should have a bigger presence than anybody else here. I think probably part of the reason is because we're over on Pelican Island and there's really no reason to come over here unless you're going all the way to the museum. So I just think it's cool to let people know that we're here, and it's also probably one of our biggest recruiting opportunities, as far as the residents that actually live here.”

Dodge also explained the significance of the Corps breaking formation to meet and wave to observing families, “I think it's a unique kind of opportunity because when we go off to College Station to march, we're very serious. It's very, like, militaristic. Mardi Gras is kind of a different purpose.” He clarified, “I think it's to give a little bit of a morale boost to the cadets themselves. To do something fun. Like yeah, we gotta go out there and march and we're kind of dedicating some time to that, but might as well have fun with it. And Mardi Gras in general is just sort of like everybody comes together and has a good time.”

The TAMUG Corps' march is an example of the characteristic Aggie value of community. While the Sea Aggie cadets' college careers are centered on building up reliability and leadership skills, and the qualities required for seafaring or military-oriented work, they also place importance on fellowship, engaging with their community in and outside of campus where opportunities present themselves.

Dodge replied when asked how the Corps most often celebrates Mardi Gras, “I think it's the parade. I know that a lot of people get together on campus, and it's probably a good way for people in the Corps and people on the other side of campus to come together and mingle a little more. And it's not just you know the campus, but it's also everybody in general. I know that people celebrate Mardi Gras kind of all across the country, so this thing is one of those unique opportunities for everybody to kind of do something together.”

## Qatar campus to close

By Gail Lonngi, '24

On February 8, the Board of Regents of Texas A&M University voted 7 to 1 to begin the 4-year process of ceasing operations and shutting down the A&M Qatar campus, situated in Doha, Qatar. President Welsh announced on Feb. 9 that the campus is set to shut down entirely by 2028.

The decision came about suddenly, and details on its motivation are sparse. A transition plan for faculty, staff, and students who were to be enrolled at Qatar or planning to pursue their graduate studies at the campus, is currently being constructed and a transition team at the campus has been established.

The campus opened in 2003, with the goal of advancing and strengthening A&M's engineering education in an oil-rich region. In fall '23, the university conducted a reassessment of the state of the Qatar campus, motivated by "heightened instability in the Middle East." TAMUQ currently enrolls 730 students and has graduated over 1,500 students. It has been A&M's only remote campus outside of the U.S. and is one of multiple U. S. educational institutions in Qatar. There is reportedly concern similar action will be taken on other campuses.

Following the vote, Regent Chairman Bill Mahomes stated, "The

Board has decided that the core mission of Texas A&M should be advanced primarily within Texas and the United States. By the middle of the 21st century, the university will not necessarily need a campus infrastructure 8,000 miles away to support education and research collaborations."

It was speculated, notably by the Qatar Foundation, that the Board's decision was influenced by a report from the reputed disinformation campaign, the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, criticizing the research of the Qatar campus and implicatively accusing it of supporting and arming the Palestinian militia group, Hamas.

The Board and President Welsh, however, have vehemently denied influence from this report and invalidated its conclusions. It is maintained that the ultimate decision was motivated by "regional instability and changing institutional priorities," as spokesperson Mike Reilly stated. The shock and uncertainty of the decision, nonetheless, along with its current lack of answers and details for the future, have left many in the Qatar campus community skeptical and confused.

The campus is to not enroll any further incoming classes in future semesters. Aside from this, most operations have not been immediately impacted. President Welsh has expressed the outcome of this decision does not mean A&M will shift away from international research or study abroad opportunities and collaborations.



### Ended Situationship

*Dear Aggie, I just got out of a situationship, after the both of us realized it was hurting us emotionally. Not only that, but my best friend (also my roommate) expressed disdain for the guy, for hurting me and annoying her. Even though it's all over and decided, my heart still finds the voids of his absence - the lack of laughter, warmth, and company is so vivid. She*

*and the guy were really my only friends on campus, and now that he's gone, and she's outward about how tired she is of him, I'm a bit stuck. How do I get over someone so kind, yet so detrimental to me? How do I make it up to her? And maybe for an easier question, how do I make friends again? Thank you, The Seasick Lover*

Dear Seasick Lover, I'm sorry to hear about your position. Thank you for trusting us with your questions. Ending a relationship, regardless of its status, that brought you feelings like the ones you described is painful, and feeling divided from your friends because of your hardship is frustrating. But you've taken a great step forward already in reaching out for help.

When listening to situations like yours, people might tell you that time heals all hurts. But the truth is that while you start to get used to the change, it'll probably feel like it's going to hurt forever. Time is only one of the things needed in a healing process. In a lot of ways, healing from the loss of a relationship or person in your life can feel like taking care of an injury. But here are some things that hopefully can help you get on a start to feeling better and trying to fix things.

Firstly, it's important to remember to be kind to yourself.

Acknowledge your own pain and that it is okay and understandable for you to feel this way and normal for you to feel lonely right now, even if not everybody understands it. You're allowed to let yourself hurt for a loss. But during your recovery, remember you did this for the improvement of your own emotional health in the long run, and use that to gradually build your confidence back up. While it may feel fragile right now, remember you shouldn't let this situation damage your sense of self-worth. Take care of your emotions, and maintain enough distance between yourself and your former situationship for your heart to feel safe.

It's important to keep in mind that while you're not alone in your type of situation, every individual's situation is unique. Don't get mad at yourself if you don't feel better in a handful of days or weeks. Remember not everyone's strategies and habits for healing and self-care work the same. You'll very likely know what your heart needs better than others.

There are a few other good habits you may find helpful to build as you adjust. Similarly to how you reached out, for example, writing about what's troubling your mind, even for just a few minutes, can be extraordinarily helpful. I recommend getting a journal for this purpose. Not letting yourself dwell on the pain for too long is essential. Make a point to get some extra movement into your day and step out for fresh air for at least a few moments daily. The more you take care of your physical health, the more your emotional health will thank you.

Lastly, make sure to do something nice for yourself on occasion. Remind yourself of the little things you enjoy and that make you happy, even if you're alone.

As for the situation with your friend, remember that a supportive friend—even if they were upset by the person who hurt you—will understand that you are hurting and care about consoling you. If your friend is averse to your feelings or to communication surrounding your ended situationship, their company might not be the best thing for you right now. If you are invested in attempting to mend your relationship with your friend, I'd recommend giving her space for a period of time while you yourself recover, and then slowly try to engage in small interactions as things stabilize, and stay open to her approaching you as long as you feel okay with it.

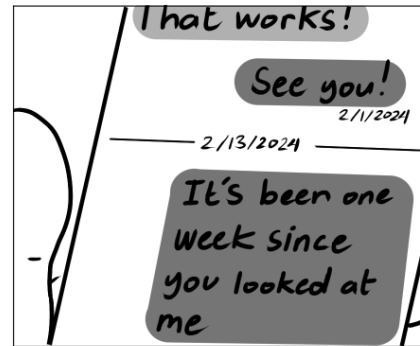
And so far as making new friends, as you start to feel better and more adjusted to this significant change, friends will follow. Try and take opportunities to meet and get to know new people where you can. Don't be afraid to try and strike up conversation now and then out in public. Becoming a regular at a couple of local businesses can also be helpful, and I suggest getting involved in your community, e.g. through volunteering or through participating in a school organization, as a way of forming new connections and potential friendships.

I hope this helps and that things start looking up soon.

**The Dear Aggie column will answer questions on all matters of interest to students at TAMUG. Submit a query by emailing [tamugnautilus@gmail.com](mailto:tamugnautilus@gmail.com). Names will be kept confidential.**



## GB. GO HOME! By JACA



## Review: *Madame Web*

By Caleb Castro, '27

Sony has had a lackluster track record lately producing Marvel movies, as witnessed with 2022's *Morbius*, so I had low expectations going into it. But by the conclusion of the film, I didn't think it's nearly as bad as many claim it to be. This is not to disregard that it still had plenty of issues with its abuse of automated dialogue replacement (ADR) and redundancy of certain plot elements. But despite its technical flaws, the story and its corny writing were still enjoyable.

At the core of the plot, the film is about a woman who has been given the task of protecting three teenage girls from a threat unlike anything she's ever encountered. She knows that they will die without her guidance but questions her ability to succeed in this mission. It's a plotline not normally seen in a superhero movie up to this point, and it

was executed well, considering.

I'd heard people complaining that the writing and acting was unsatisfactory, but it's clear that Marvel wasn't aiming to win Oscars for this movie. The marketing for this movie didn't take itself too seriously, so viewers shouldn't either. Analogically, seriously criticizing the details of *Madame Web* is like walking into a fast food chain restaurant and expecting a well-balanced meal. If you'd rather consume a healthy and mind-blowing diet, that's perfectly fine, but there's nothing wrong with indulging in junk food from time to time.

This will likely be a film that many viewers disagree on, which may cause it to garner a lot of mixed reception. Once again, depending on different audiences' tastes and critical habits, some crowds may simply be overly critical of certain media—particularly that which shouldn't be taken too seriously—and I recommend just walking into movies with an open mind. For what it's worth, it was a fun movie and viewing experience, and I'm willing to give it a generous 7/10.

## Your opinion here

By You!

Got an opinion on something relevant to campus but don't want to join the paper as a regular contributor?

Submit a 500-word guest commentary to [tamugnautilus@gmail.com](mailto:tamugnautilus@gmail.com).

## Corrections for Feb. Issue 1

Sean Chavez co-authored "Galveston celebrates 113th Mardi Gras." The piece was originally credited to Gail Lonngi only. Lisa Webb contributed the photo for "Food Recovery Network chapter's first recovery a success." Photo credit was originally attributed to Sean Chavez.



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Contact [tamugnautilus@gmail.com](mailto:tamugnautilus@gmail.com) if you're interested.

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