# Yell Leader alumni visit TAMUG for 'Bama Yell



By Isa Chan Tack, '27, and Gail Lonngi, '24

For many Aggies, Midnight Yell is a time for people to come together as one and express their determination and cheer, sweating and screaming at the top of their lungs, to "beat the hell out of" an opposing football team. For Yell Leaders, the significance behind Yell is often much deeper. On Thursday, October 5, Sea Aggies had the opportunity to witness what Yell means to several Yell Leader alumni.

Inside the Rec Center, all of the Yell Leader alumni were dressed in their overalls. Among them were AJ English, '07, the first female Yell Leader, and Todd Burford, '95, the very first Yell Leader at TAMUG. They were joined by current TAMUG Leaders Vincent Garcia, Tre Higgenbotham, Patrick Smith, Jett Taylor, and Morgan Milburn.

The number of people at this Midnight Yell was significantly larger compared to previous Yells, with both the game against University of Alabama and a visit from Aggie alumni happening the same night.

As the Yell began, all the alumni joined the junior Yell Leaders in their pushups, with a sea of cadets joining alongside. The current senior Yell Leaders led the Aggies in their Yells, and recounted the story of Midnight Yell and of Aggie victories against opposing football teams. But the difference that made that night's Yell special compared to other Yells was that all of the alumni were lined up and participating in the Yell until the very end, affirming that the spirit of Midnight Yell lives on even in students that have graduated.

As the Yell Leaders wrapped up, they lowered themselves to the floor, beckoning the freshmen for a special final Yell. A stampede of Aggies rushed down to the court floor. Everyone got into their positions, and finally, as the Yell ended with the Wildcat, the freshmen charged the Yell Leaders.

Left to right: A.J. English, '07, and Todd Burford, '95 Photo by Sean Chavez, '24

With the Yell alumni joining in on this special Yell, the number of Yell Leaders for the freshman to carry had multiplied, giving several people in the Rec Center a chance to throw a Yell Leader into the campus pool. This was Midnight Yell multiplied tenfold, with examples of living proof that the Aggie spirit endures through the ages.

Former junior Yell Leader—and currently the only female Yell Leader to date in A&M history—AJ English remarked on the "good memories" that returning to Yell invoked, and on the impact she felt from "seeing how much more school spirit there is now and how much it's grown", adding how much she missed "being in front of everybody, talking to people, and sharing traditions" and that it was "a good blast to the past seeing how the building where Yell was hasn't changed".

Sharing some of her experience as the first and thus far only female Yell Leader, English stated, "My time as a Yell Leader was great. I didn't have pushback like I expected, or at least not to my face. As many people who were probably not happy with it, nobody was outright rude or mean... Hopefully there's another girl soon, I would love not to be the only one."

Todd Burford, the first TAMUG Yell Leader—and only Leader at the time of TAMUG's first Midnight Yell—held the title of head Yell Leader for two years in a row, and started Yell at TAMUG after transferring from CSTAT as one more student activity to get the student body more engaged with the campus. He replied to the Nautilus when asked what Yell and having been a Yell Leader means to him, "Back then, it was actually bringing the student body together. It's the camaraderie. That wasn't here when I got here, when I came down

# 2 Aggieland Saturday by the Sea

By Gail Lonngi, '24



Photo by Gail Lonngi, '24

"We are all here for you. We know you come with dreams, and we want to open up your eyes to the opportunities and everything we've got here." Thus spoke Colonel Michael E. Fossum at Aggieland Saturday on Sept. 30 to 200 prospective Sea Aggie students and their families

Aggieland Saturday by the Sea is TAMUG's semi-annual Aggieland Saturday event. It is a massive open house event that welcomes families from Galveston Island and around the world to tour across campus, engage in various activities, and learn from the TAMUG community and officials about all the university has to offer, and what it's like to be a Sea Aggie.

Activities and events at the Aggieland Saturday by the Sea program included: Learning about Aggie traditions, including learning

how to perform a Yell practice from the Yell leaders; touring the new training ship, TS Kennedy; visiting and interacting with materials in the Sea Life Facility, degree and academic program Q&A sessions, learning about TAMUG's dive program, a live demonstration by Ocean Engineering, touring residence halls, harbor tours on research vessel Trident. September's Aggieland featured a planetarium activity open to any and all attendees.

Among the largest events at the program, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., was a showcasing of TAMUG's departments, services, and student

teams and organizations. Prospective and incoming students and their families have the opportunity to interact with university faculty, staff, and student organization leaders to learn more about TAMUG's majors and unique programs, student organizations, and campus services

One mother of a prospective student said, "This seems like such a nice, great place. Everyone just seems so happy here."

Yell Leader and student ambassador Tre Higgenbothom said, "Aggieland Saturday to me is about showing all our campus has to offer, you know. It's a great campus, it has a lot to offer, with the organizations we have, the majors, the classes we have here. It's a great way to show prospective and incoming students what we have, what we are, who Aggies are, and show them our traditions."

Regarding the benefit for student organizations participating in Aggieland, Mateo Mosquera of TAMUG's undergraduate studentled Autonomous Underwater Vehicle Research Team said, "We can show off how great we are, to other students and to future students, to parents, show them all we can do and the communities we build here." And on encouraging more people to attend Aggieland Saturday by the Sea, Mosquera stated, "There are tons of connections to be made here, a lot of cool people to meet when you come here, and you can make a lot of memories."

Aggieland Saturday by the Sea also creates mutually beneficial openings for communication between incoming students and TAMUG faculty. Dr. Kathryn Falvo, history professor representing and informing students about the campus Honors Program at Aggieland, said to the Nautilus while explaining why students should come to Aggieland, "They're gonna learn a lot that they might not get to know from other places. When I look at a student application when they're applying it's really different for me, if I can be like "Oh yeah I talked to them...and I sort of know what's going on with them." It's not that I give priority to those applications, I don't, but it's nice to already be in touch with those students, have an eye on them, know what they're interested in. And it gives me an opportunity to help them from the get-go all the way through their senior year. If I was a student, I would wanna get to know my support team before coming to campus."

AGGIELAND on pg. 4

# **Interim President Mark A.Welsh releases** Quick-Look update, President's Brief, and next steps

By Gail Lonngi, '24

Interim President Mark A. Welsh released his most recent update on the Quick-Look assessment on Sept. 19, via email to the university. Pres. Welsh commended the team for their intense efforts and significant progress within a month's time, having conducted over 100 listening sessions between university communities and compiling their findings, feedback, and recommendations. The announcement can be found on the Office of the President website along with the first version of the Quick-Look Assessment Report.

Pres. Welsh initiated a commenting period from Sept. 19 to 26, requesting feedback from all members of the university community on the report. On Sept. 25, he also announced the creation of the monthly President's Brief as one of the first steps to mending the flow of communication throughout the university and "maintaining transparency."

Pres. Welsh announced that Texas A&M had welcomed its largest incoming freshman class ever this semester with a total 13,000 new Aggies; that multiple publications had ranked the university among the top public institutions of higher education in the U.S.

The final update announced in the brief pertained to the progress of the task force on academic freedom and faculty protection, on which a full list of status updates can be found on the Faculty Affairs website.

Pres. Welsh affirmed his commitment to a timely review and

response to received feedback, and to reaching informed decisions, many of which he disclosed at an all faculty, staff, and student meeting. The meeting was held at 8:30 a.m. on Oct. 4 (which also marked the 147th anniversary of TAMU's official opening) at the Ford Hall of Champions at Kyle Field and streamed online.

Throughout the course of the meeting, Pres. Welsh explained the guidelines of the decision-making process between himself and the task forces, points of agreement and disagreement in recommendations on the first Quick Look report, and the prioritization and implementations of numerous decisions.

Among the most immediate actions to be taken were the publication of the final Quick Look report with revised recommendations, allocate responsibilities to their appropriate offices, start arranging progress reports as tasking processes conclude, and sharing input with these offices. Prioritized projects are a space allocation survey of College Station for the space and budgeting required for the growth of campus structures, a capacity study to keep track of enrollment and the impacts of growing enrollment populations, and a student experience survey to find any necessary improvements to provide the best possible experience to students pursuing their education and A&M.

Other decisions following the recommendations included the swift restructuring of the Provost's office, centralization of advising; releasing a separate report draft for "remote locations" such as the TAMUG campus, maintaining Student Affairs' management of student organizations, and continued efforts to revive the journalism department, and create a new College of Arts and Sciences.

# **ALUMNI (CONT.)**

from College Station. Of course up there, maroon and white means a lot to everybody, everybody yells 'howdy' at everybody else and is understood. And when I got here, there wasn't that. And you know, administration was very helpful and very excited that the student body was coming together and doing anything. I was just very happy to be a part of that."

He furthermore commented on the emotions and memories that returning to Yell that night had elicited, stating "It's just a lot of nostalgia for me, you know. I was doing this before most of the people here were born, a long, long time ago. But it also makes me look back at the time and the friends that I made and that I'm still friends with today. And that's a hugely important part of my life."

Burford had taken it upon himself to bring this tradition to TAMUG, and the campus's first Yell was held right outside of Captains Landing. He and his fellow Yell Leaders led the Yells not in overalls, but in jeans and maroon and white shirts. And while numbers were small at first, the tradition of Yell at TAMUG never faded, and only continued to grow from Todd's initial impact. TAMUG has now had several Yell Leaders across the years, and several more will come in the future, for as long as the Aggie Spirit burns, the tradition of Midnight Yell will never die.

To learn more about AJ, TAMUG's first female Yell Leader, check out our online exclusive reprint from *The Battalion*!



A.J. English, '07, and fellow Yell Leaders in 2005 Photo courtesy of Yell Leader archive

# **Aggie Ring Day**

By Gail Lonngi, '24

On Sept. 29, TAMUG celebrated the first Ring Day of the academic year. Ring ceremonies were held at 9, 10, and 11 a.m. in ASEC. A total of 89 Sea Aggies received their Aggie Rings. After welcoming attendees gathered before the assorted rings as the ceremony commenced, Student Affairs spoke on the importance of the Ring and its symbolism.

During each ring ceremony, University Vice President Colonel Michael E. Fossum addressed attendees and congratulated ring recipients. Col. Fossum affirmed that the Aggie Ring is the most universally recognized tradition of A&M, the mark of Aggies that is most visible to the world. He recounted a story of a chance meeting with a fellow Aggie who recognized the ring on his hand in Moscow, Russia.

Col. Fossum advised new bearers of the Aggie Ring to respect and take care of their rings wherever they went. He explained the correct way to wear an Aggie Ring, traditionally set on the ringfinger with the class year facing the student for the remainder of their time as an undergraduate at A&M until graduation, upon which graduates

turn their year to face the world. At the conclusion of the speech, Col. Fossum encouraged loved ones of Aggie Ring recipients to do the honor of putting their Aggies' rings on their fingers for the first time.

Toward the end of each ceremony, TAMUG Yell Leaders Vincent Garcia, Morgan Milburn, Tre Higgenbotham, Jett Taylor, and Patrick Smith were invited to lead all those present in a celebratory Yell practice. The Leaders congratulated all 89 Aggies receiving their rings on "beating the hell out of 90 hours," and directed the room in a celebratory Yell, concluding the ceremony and calling forth these triumphant Aggies to be given their rings.

After welcoming attendees gathered before the assorted rings, Student Affairs spoke on the importance of the Ring and its symbolism.

Dating back to 1889, Ring Day is a celebration of the successful completion of 90 credit hours. The A&M campus community, alumni, families, and friends are always welcome to attend the ceremony.

The design of the Aggie Ring was standardized in 1933. The ring is a unique indicator of achievement, hard work, and academic triumph. Each feature engraved on it is a symbol, the core difference of all Aggie rings being the class years impressed on them.

Atop the Ring, an eagle signifies adaptability, power and the capability of reaching great heights. The 13-striped shield is

> representative of the original 13 states, and the 5 stars within the shield represent the aspects of an Aggie's growth: Mind, body, spirit, emotion, and integrity. One side of the ring bears a single star representing the state of Texas, encircled by two branches of olive and oak leaves symbolizing peace and strength; the branches are bound by a ribbon, which communicates the importance of uniting these qualities under ambition. And the other side brandishes a cannon, rifle, saber, and crossed flags, symbolizing Texan patriotism and readiness to stand one's ground.



Photo by Gail Lonngi, '24

# Sand volleyball and the importance of having an outlet in college

By Sean Chavez, '24

A student's life has different interests they attend to when they are younger. As students enter in college, they metamorph into adulthood, shedding their childhood shell. When in college, the hardships of adulthood become instilled in students as they remain steadfast through the assignments laid out by their campus authorities. With the coursework being so vigorous, students can succumb to burnout. Burnout is officially defined as a syndrome that results from stress compounding from different parts of one's life.

To have resilience in the face of adversity, one must find a way to release built-up stress to save one's mind from the pain of burnout. They need an outlet. Sometimes, playing a sport is the answer for cathartically removing collected pressure and curing the soul from lethargy and frustration.

What numerous students often do at TAMUG is play sand volleyball. Playing sand volleyball explicitly allows the unification of students to be a therapeutic release of stress and frustration. When people play a team sport like sand volleyball, a student body divided by pressure unites through communication skills that apply across different spheres of life, from sports to life skills, social skills, and self-care.

Playing a sport at TAMUG encourages cleansing the soul from pressure brought on by different aspects of a student's life to help further prepare them for the world of adulthood.

## AGGIELAND (CONT.)

Summing up the importance of Aggieland Saturday by the Sea, Professor Carl Aronson of the Foundational Sciences department stated, "It is a chance to truly exemplify what we're all about, it's a chance for people to see the breadth and depth to which we're able to go, also a chance for us in the sciences to show our new major. To me, it's the exciting chance to meet new parents and students... Get them to understand how we're a little different from College Station and how we're trying to be the best possible for our students here. I think it's the best event for seeing the whole of Texas A&M--Galveston, everyone is on display and open to talking. It's the best way to see everything that's available to prospective students."

In accordance with what Vice President Colonel Fossum said, Aggieland Saturday by the Sea is a place where aspiring future students can begin to plant their dreams. This weekend event is among the best and biggest opportunities to learn about what makes TAMUG stand out among other universities and other A&M campuses, about everything it has to offer through both its academics and its community, to show how A&M doesn't stop by the water's edge, and what it is to be an Aggie by the sea.



# Student workers balancing academics, career, and personal growth

By Madison Ealey, '24

Across campus, a unique group of individuals often remains unnoticed: student workers. Student employment and work-study can be a practical solution to alleviating some of the financial strains that come with college and attaining more financial stability during students' college careers, but it can also allow students to gain work experience, develop good habits and work ethic, build a stronger resume, professionalism, and more. Often marked by a pursuit of experience and personal growth, these students embark on educational journeys that go beyond the classroom.

The Nautilus interviewed several TAMUG student workers to shed light on their roles, motivations, challenges, and the impacts their jobs have had on their lives. Electing to remain anonymous, these students work in IT (Mr. White), Career and Counseling services (Ms. Blue), and the library Studio and Career and Counseling services (Ms. Pink).

#### Information Technology

The interview with Mr. White offers much perspective on roles and functions within the IT department. Having served in the position for almost a year, his initial motivation was a career in technology as well as great benefits and a positive work environment.

"The problem-solving, whether it be solving a problem for a classroom, a student, or a staff member," said Mr. White, "I am always satisfied once I find the solution. It's really rewarding when a student or teacher thanks you because you helped them get ack on track. This also allows me to learn how to solve my own problems or gain familiarity with other systems."

Challenges

like handling

independently or

unfamiliar issues

navigating social interactions as an introvert are inevitable aspects of personal and professional growth. Addressing the need for work-life balance, Mr. White affirmed the financial benefits of the role but also recognized the need to manage their packed schedule.

"This does result in my schedule being packed, which occasionally affects my academic performance. When I notice myself slipping up," he continued, "I try to take a few hours off work a week, ... The great thing about my job is that they are extremely flexible and understanding ... Overall, it's been manageable."

As Mr. White's journeys through college, his future is certain to be supported by his professional development, experience, ability to step outside his comfort zone and interact well with others, appreciation for learning new skills, and time management.

#### Career and Counseling Services and The Studio

Ms. Blue was driven primarily by her goals to gain experience, collaborate with the CARE team, and do something she loves at the Studio, teaching graphic design. "Events like career fair, events at the studio and just helping out others," said Ms. Blue, were what brought her the most enjoyment and fulfillment.

Every job has its own challenges, however. "One challenge is working with students in distress. The best way to deal with this," Ms. Blue continued, "is to take a step back and try to recover, to ensure you solve the problem the best way possible."

"Another challenge," said Ms. Blue, "is helping and teaching others about Studio equipment when they have no background in it. The best way to deal with this is taking it slow and finding new ways to teach them in a simpler stance."

Addressing how to effectively balance work and study requires time management strategies. Ms. Blue said, "I always put my work in between classes so I still have time to study. My job lets me study while at the desk so I can still catch up on studying while waiting for students. As far as personal life, that's a different story."

When asked if they would recommend their student worker position to a friend, Ms. Blue emphasized the advantages of early employment exposure and networking opportunities in the community, along with convenient access to products that can help with projects, particularly at the Studio.



# 6

# **Book Review:** A Thousand Heartbeats

By Liam Bradley, '24

Kiera Cass's newest novel, released July of 2022, revives the beautiful romance she is capable of writing, which had become somewhat tired and simple with *The Betrothed* and *The Betrayed*. After the last series, I was worried for the future of her books, but I can safely say I am not disappointed after reading this one, and will be happy to add it to my collection.

A *Thousand Heartbeats* takes place in the heroine's point of view —in this case, Annika—as seen in all of Cass's other novels, but it takes on a new perspective as well, that of Lennox, the unwilling sword of Dahrain and love interest.

The male lead's perspective has not been used since *Happily Ever After: Companion to the Selection Series*, with her character Maxon. This shift in perspective adds a wonderful complexity to the characters and story, especially for Annika and Lennox, as their two stories are diametrically opposed, not two sides of the same coin, but rather one side split and at war for supremacy, whether they like it or not.

I was immediately hooked after reading just a few chapters, each swapping between perspectives. Lennox fights for recognition from Kawan, the new leader after his father's death. And Annika fights for her freedom, a feat made infinitely more difficult after her mother's disappearance and the dark cloud that it has brought over her father, creating only anger and weakness in him.

The complexity of the world and its history feels incredibly natural. Each group of characters faces the consequences of war.

The mystery leading up to Anikka and Lennox's meeting is tantalizing, causing the reader to wonder how intertwined their two countries really are, and what might come from their forgotten histories and the division it has caused. Both countries have realistic traditions, beliefs, and desires that leave a reader wanting to learn more about their people and their customs as more information is seeded out.

Another thing I've noted before in Cass's books is that her character and region names are often quite awkward. Despite that, the stories are beautiful. This isn't the case with *A Thousand Heartbeats*. All of the people and country names seem natural, and all of them convey meaning and personality through their sound—such as Dahrain, the war-mongering, vengeance-seeking country, or Kadier, the peaceful, prosperous land named after the woman who united them all.

As for characters, there is Annika, graceful with an edge; Lennox, an imposing, powerful figure with strong walls keeping him from opening up; Blythe, a powerful, hardy warrior, but with a softness for those she cares for and for her past; Nickolas, the stiff, spineless, and manipulative man with

a tiny inkling of humanity buried deep within him; and Escalus, the loving brother, who would make a wonderful, caring king.

All the names have that nice Kiera Cass flare, but they feel far more grounded and real, making it easier to feel for these characters as though they were people you could tangibly meet.

If you haven't given Kiera Cass's work a try before, and you love a complex romance, I highly recommend reading this book.

The Selection Series is a great place to start with Cass, but unlike The Betrothed, I can happily say A Thousand Heartbeats can stand on its own, feeling perfectly natural, and not like a half-hearted attempt to recreate the magic that existed with America and Maxon, as it seemed with the previous two books. Kiera Cass has still got it, and I can assure you that you'll enjoy every second of it.

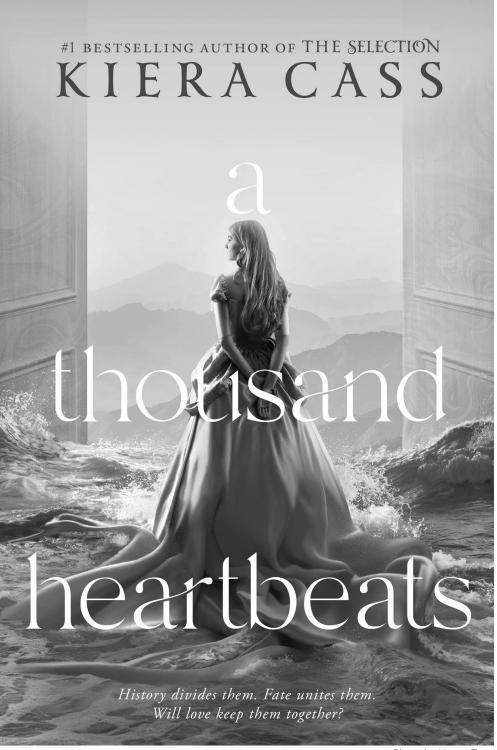


Photo by HarperTeen



#### Surviving Galveston mosquito season

Dear Aggie, Galveston mosquitoes are eating me alive! What do I do? Sincerely, Exsanguinated

Dear Exsanguinated, ouch! It's true, warm autumns and mild winters make for an awful mosquito season on Galveston Island, which seems to get more brutal every year. And the

county's abundance of marshes, humidity, and standing water heavily contribute to mosquito population growth.

The Galveston County Health District and Mosquito Control continue to urge residents to take precautions against mosquito breeding to prevent the spread of the recently confirmed presence of West Nile Virus, which can be transmitted via bites from infected mosquitoes. Though this presence is minor(those infected usually don't exhibit symptoms), there is about a 1 in 5 chance of becoming ill (see links below for more info and advice).

Viral or not, mosquitoes are annoying, plain and simple. Their bites, especially if you've amassed a collection of them, are beyond irritating. Many who reside in or move into Galveston County, especially the island, quickly learn that mosquito swarms here are much more severe.

That being said, there are many preventive measures you can take to avoid being devoured by Galveston's ravenous mosquito population and how to relieve some of that horrible itchiness.

#### **Preventing Mosquito Encounters**

For starters, it's not a bad idea to wear long sleeves and pants if you're planning to spend time outside, even if it's still warm out. This will create more of a barrier between your skin and any hungry mosquitoes searching for an easy meal.

It's also best to avoid staying outdoors between evening and sunrise if possible, especially twilight hours. Mild weather, high humidity, and low lighting make these very attractive hunting times for mosquitoes.

A good repellent can also prove a useful defense against these persistent pests. Mosquito Control and the Health District recommend adults use repellents with DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and ingredients or products that contain lemon eucalyptus oil and/or para-menthanediol. These repellents should be applied as instructed.

You can also call the Galveston County Mosquito Control Office and request a neighborhood spray. When applying repellent, avoid areas under clothing. Instead, apply on top of clothing and on any exposed skin.

Perhaps most importantly, try taking measures to prevent mosquitoes from multiplying in the first place. Mosquitos most often lay eggs in stagnant water, so try to empty out and/or dry spaces or containers with still water, especially during the twilight and nighttime hours. This will help keep mosquitoes from finding more places to lay and hatch their eggs.

#### **Treating Bites**

First and foremost: Don't scratch! Scratching a mosquito bite can increase the likelihood of a bitten area swelling and becoming infected as a result of broken skin. Instead, try washing your bites with soap and water, then apply an ice pack (or something cold) to reduce swelling and relieve burning.

After that, pressing a couple drops of hydrogen peroxide or rubbing alcohol against the afflicted sites can help guard against infection. Rubbing alcohol will sting a lot but it will help more to decrease that infuriating itchiness.

Or, if you really need it, applying an over-the-counter antihistamine cream like Benadryl or Chiggerex may help. Just make sure you aren't allergic to the medication(s)!

One more strategy that people don't seem to use very frequently for their bug bites is applying small dollops of toothpaste on the bitten areas, mint toothpaste specifically. It sounds strange, but the ingredients and cooling sensation of minty toothpastes can help quickly alleviate irritation, burning, itching, and swelling of bites. And sometimes toothpaste is more readily accessible than antihistamines.

If by any chance you are experiencing very severe swelling around a bite, fever, hives, or trouble breathing following a mosquito bite, you may be having an allergic reaction to mosquito saliva and should seek medical assistance as soon as possible in such a case.

Health District West Nile Virus Health Alert: https://www.gchd.org/Home/Components/News/ News/4874/65#:~:text=The%20Galveston%20County%20Health%20 District,the%20patient%20will%20be%20provided.

Galveston Mosquito Control: https://www.galvestontx.gov/952/Mosquito-Control.

### STUDENT WORKERS (CONT.)

While not facing significant challenges thus far, she emphasized a growing ability to remain calm and composed in various situations. Her job has provided valuable networking opportunities.

Ms. Pink's job also provides ample opportunity to work on homework and studies, in turn freeing up their personal time. She also noted that feedback and recognition in this work environment also boosts motivation and job satisfaction, and that her personal and professional growth is evinced by their improved time management

Experiences described by these student workers shed light on valuable benefits to be gained and used from student working positions. Over the course of even one semester, students reportedly find their campus job to be a means of enhancing time management skills and managing academic commitments, thus contributing to preparation for balancing a work-life schedule, social interactions of the working world, as well as strengthening adaptability and collecting references. While they face challenges inherent with the world of the workforce, the experiences of multiple TAMUG student workers reflect the positive impacts of student employment.

## Correction

In the September issue, the caption for the photo for "One Freshman's First Midnight Yell" should read "Left to right: Jett Taylor, '25, Tre Higgenbothom, '24, Morgan Milburn, '24, and Patrick Smith, '25."

# GOHOME BY: JACA







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