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Bold new strategic plan

Texas A&M University-Commerce is making bold new plans for the future. These plans will position the university as a dynamic and innovative force in the area to bring higher education to a new level while providing the people of North Texas with a premier university. A university that provides relevant and innovative learning so that graduates will be able to fulfill their dreams and immediately impact the marketplace.

"I have tasked a 30-person Strategic Planning Committee to develop a realistic and workable plan that will propel this university to a position of preeminence within the next decade," President Keith McFarland says. The 30-member committee includes student, faculty, staff, alumni and civic representation.

The president is keenly aware of the need for broad-based support and has stipulated that anyone can contribute their input once the committee has submitted its first draft by the first week of March 2007.

"We invite you to share your thoughts with us when the draft of the plan is released," McFarland says, "we will hold open forums at several locations to discuss the plan. We will have an interactive web page to promote discussion as the draft evolves into a blueprint for the university's mission and goals."

There will be concerted efforts to also increase the number of area valedictorians, salutatorians and students who are committed to gaining an excellent education.

The Strategic Planning Committee is co-chaired by Bob Collins, head of engineering and industrial technology and Randy McBroom, assistant to the president for planning and institutional effectiveness. According to Collins, "This university has a really great



FRANK AND FRIENDS — Interim Provost Frank Ashley and "friends" at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Sam Rayburn Student Center on Feb. 9. The ceremony was held inside the Science Building due to the cold weather outside. See story on P4.

story to tell and we are taking steps to tell it correctly, emphatically, and to the right people. We are putting a lot of thought into this plan."

The document will realistically state what this university is about and provide guiding principles to be implemented throughout the university. The colleges and departments will be able to take this document and use it as a roadmap in making their offerings relevant to the quality of students we hope to attract.

"We still have a lot of work to do but are making good progress," McBroom says. "The key is having the entire university support this

effort and work with us on completing the final product. For a project of this magnitude, we need everyone to pitch in and get behind it once we complete the draft."

The committee is creating a plan that will secure for A&M-Commerce the reputation of being an important and sought out center for excellent, innovative learning that is relevant to the needs of the students.

The plan will also enable the university to attract, retain and reward outstanding, faculty and staff. Well-educated graduates will be able to go out into the world with highly respected and marketable degrees and talents.

Extra Credit



ENERGY
— Most people go to work every day, but Connie Kerchner goes to an adventure.

Employee of the month is the Morris Recreation Center's Connie Kerchner, assistant fitness director.

Years as a university employee: "I started in October last year. I graduated from Colorado State University in 2006 with a degree in speech communication but held several roles in the CSU recreation center as a student so I knew health and fitness is where I want to spend my life."

What she enjoys most about her job: "I love the constant exchange with our students who are so passionate and involved, and seeing them develop. This is not an 8 to 6 job where you are cut off from the world. It is very interactive and involved."

What she thinks makes her successful in the job: "I see what needs to be done and then bring the logistics to make it happen. I'll never be at a stage where I can't learn anything. Working as an undergraduate gave me so many opportunities and I am trying to mentor and empower students in the way I was helped."

Says boss Tim Willett: "Connie always has high energy and has been able to get people to hip-hop at 6:30 in the morning. That's quite a feat."

"She is enthusiastic and always on the floor working with the weight room staff to help them deliver a great service as well as teaching several classes. Connie is positive, willing to go above and beyond, is the first to volunteer for projects and has really good ideas."

Publications

Jason Lee Davis, educational leadership, "Adopting Industry Skill Standards Can Strengthen CTE," *TechDirections*, October 2006.

Also director-co-producer of video documentary "Pioneers and Frontiers of Science: A Tribute To the Hall of Sciences," 2006.

Donna Dunbar-Odom, literature and languages, a book, "Defying the Odds: Class and the Pursuit of Higher Literacy," State University of New York Press, 2007.

Donald English, **Ed Manton**, and **Jan Walker**, business administration and MIS, "Business Ethics: Have the Views of Communication Teachers Changed?," *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 2006.

L.C. Green, curriculum and instruction, "Major Demographics and Schooling Trends for English Language Learners and Their Teachers," chapter in text *Cultural and Linguistic Issues for English Language Learners*, **Phap Dam** and **Melinda Cowart**, editors, Texas Woman's University and Canh Nam Publishers.

Ted Hansen, music, music composition, "Canticle for Clarinet, Violin, and Viola," Subito Music Corporation, Verona, N.J.

The work received premiere performances at A&M-Commerce, in Dallas at the Color of Sound Chamber Music Series, and on the Clarinet Symposium last summer at The University of Oklahoma.

The performers at all three concerts were music faculty members **Mary Druhan** on clarinet, **Mark Miller** on violin, and **Ute Miller** on viola.

Tracy Henley, psychology and special education, a chapter, "Remembering William James," *The Prehistory of Cognitive Science*, editor **Andrew Brook**, 2007.

Alan Mills, music, chapter, "With Heart and Voice," *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*, GIA Publications, Chicago.

Mary Elizabeth McGlamery, from psychology and special education now at Angelo State; **Steven E. Ball** and **Tracy B. Henley**, psychology and special education; and **Megan Besozzi**, psychology doctoral student; "Theory of Mind, Attention, and Executive

Function in Kindergarten Boys," *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, March 2007.

Ann Moseley, literature and languages, "Wharton and Cather," *American Literary Scholarship*, Duke University Press, 2006. Moseley wrote the Cather portion of the essay, which is co-authored with Carol J. Singley.

Serge P. von Duvillard, human performance laboratory, "Nine Months Aerobic Fitness Induced Changes on Blood Lipids and Lipoproteins in Untrained Subjects vs. Controls," *European Journal of Applied Physiology*, 2007.

Presentations

Pat Bagley, agricultural sciences, "Reusable Learning Objects for Enhanced Information Retention by Students," and "Injecting Anhydrous Ammonia into Silages to Enhance Quality Attributes," 104th Annual Convention of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Mobile, Ala., Feb.4-6.

Green, curriculum and instruction, "Group Think: Cooperative Learning Activities To Engage ELLs in Higher Order Thinking," Regional Best Practices ELL Symposium for English Language Learner Educators, A&M-Commerce, Nov. 14.

Moseley, member of the "Passing Show Panel," Cather Foundation 51st Annual Spring Conference, Red Cloud, Neb., June 2006.

Also "Alice in 'The Troll Garden,'" Willa Cather Scholars Symposium, Red Cloud, Neb.

Career Development

Lamar Bridges, journalism, served as a research paper referee for the History and Law Divisions of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's Southeast Regional Colloquium in New Orleans this spring.

John Hanners, theatre, chaired the Scholars Debut Panel at the Texas Educational Theatre Association Annual Convention in Houston on Jan. 19. The papers were chosen from a statewide competition, coordinated by Hanners, for outstanding theatre research papers by undergraduate and graduate students.

Fast facts

International office moves

The International Student Services Office is now located in the Business Administration Building in Room 350.

The office phone and fax numbers remain the same. International Student Services had previously been located in the Memorial Student Center.

Kappa Delta raises money

Kappa Delta Sorority members raised and donated more than \$1,200 for the University Christmas Families Project. An estimated 60 children and 20 families were helped with the support of the A&M-Commerce community. Christmas Families was sponsored by the social work department.



TOP LAB, TOP STUDENT — Ryan Hoisington, senior chemistry major, and his mentor Ben Jang, chemistry professor at A&M-Commerce, outside the Center for Nanophase Materials and Sciences at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. Under the supervision of Jang, Hoisington used a \$750,000 electron microscope to see palladium particles after being reduced with carbon monoxide. "It was an odd sensation looking at small groups of 20 atoms," Hoisington says. "It was also very challenging to find the particles because at the nano level there is so much empty space." Jang, who describes Hoisington as "having the potential to do great things," was experimenting to prove that carbon monoxide supported palladium nitrate at room temperature or below.

March for Parks

Barbara Lenington's Texas Government class and Cooper Lake officials are organizing March for Parks. Slated April 21, this event will raise money to help out at Cooper Lake. Those interested in marching, giving donations, and being sponsors need to contact Lenington at Barbara_Lenington@tamuccommerce.edu or call extension 5337.



LSC HALL OF HONOR — Sam McCord (third from left) is the latest A&M-Commerce inductee into the Lone Star Conference Hall of Honor. McCord quarterbacked the Lion football team in the late 1950s and earned two degrees from the university. With McCord, who was honored at a luncheon at A&M-Commerce on Jan. 27, are from left President Keith McFarland, retired Lion football coach Ernest Hawkins who was named to the LSC Hall of Honor in 2004, and Jesse Hawthorne, retired A&M-Commerce athletic director and head of the physical education department and 1996 Hall of Honor inductee.

Chancellor visits campus

Michael D. McKinney, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, visited campus on Feb. 21. McKinney is a family physician who had served as senior executive vice president and chief operating officer of the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston. During his campus visit, McKinney met with A&M-Commerce administrators, faculty, student leaders, city officials, members of the Alumni Board, Foundation Board, and Chancellor's Century Council members.



GREAT JOB — A&M-Commerce students Sophanit Metaferia (left), Tiffany Selvidge, and Jeremy Harr did a great job presenting their research at NASA's Johnson Space Center in January. A&M-Commerce scientists and students are working a device where fluorescence on bacteria and fungus will be detectable under light emitting diode (LED) lights, funded by a grant from NASA and Texas Engineering Experiment Station. The first step of this project is to research and develop a process for capturing, detecting, and counting bacteria and fungi on samples by using a dye which fluoresces when bound to DNA. The NASA personnel had questions and comments that will help guide the students' future work. Primary researchers are Ben Cranor, Mary Johnson and Frank Miskevich.

LEADING KETR — Bill Oliver is the new general manager at Public Radio, 88.9 KETR. Oliver, who began work on Jan. 15, is returning to KETR and Commerce. He previously served as the station's news and sports director from 1984 to 1987.



A 1981 graduate of Northwest Missouri State University with a bachelor's degree in speech education (broadcasting emphasis), Oliver said he is pleased to be back at KETR. The former broadcaster with KWBW in Hutchinson, Kan., will work to promote KETR's community ties with A&M-Commerce, as well as ties with the cities within the 70-mile radius of the station's 100,000-watt signal. "Simultaneously with serving the community, KETR is the broadcasting voice for A&M-Commerce, and we want to promote the university," he said.



VPBA FAMILY — Luke Currin and Meghan Ice are the first recipients of the Vice President of Business and Administration Family Scholarship. Employees in the Division of the Vice President of Business and Administration funded the scholarship as part of Bridge Builders. In less than two years they were able to fund the scholarship entirely with their own contributions. The scholarship was established to recognize the commitment of those employees in the division who were encouraging their children to attend A&M-Commerce. "When we founded the program, our hope was that we would be able to award a scholarship to pay for books each year," says Bob Brown, vice president of Business and Administration. "Staff proved so enthusiastic that we will be able to award two of these scholarships. Meghan and Luke are students who performed well in high school, and have shown responsibility by working to provide for the cost of their education." Says Advancement's Jan Ainsworth, "What the VPBA staff did in creating this scholarship is a perfect example of what Bridge Builders is all about."



FUN AND GAMES — Cast members in "A Flea in Her Ear" cut up at rehearsals. A French farce set in the 1960s, "A Flea in Her Ear" opened Wednesday, Feb. 21, in the Performing Arts Center. From left are graduate student Lacy Lalene Lynch as Lucille, professional actor R. Kevin Morris as Victor, senior Reagan Heine as Yvonne, senior Alex Embry as Maurice, and senior Katie Townsend as Nanette. Call the University Playhouse Box Office at extension 5900 for reservations.

Strong support for new Student Center

“It’s going to be like a student center from any of the big name universities but it will be in our own backyard instead,” says Joey Dean, editor of student newspaper *The East Texan* and a senior journalism major.

He is one of the many students excited that the new Sam Rayburn Student Center is becoming a reality.

Despite gray skies, spirits were high on campus as people gathered for the Feb. 9 groundbreaking of the center. Due to the cold weather, the ceremony was held inside the new \$28 million state-of-the-art Science Building and planetarium across the street from where the student center will be located.

The \$25.4 million student center, expected to open in fall 2008, “will be a building used by students, faculty and the community,” says Niki Williams, a senior political science major and vice president of the student body.

The 92,000-square-foot Sam Rayburn Student Center will be the destination for hanging out, shopping, dining, clubbing, and studying, too.

Williams described Student Center Director Rick Miller as “a strong advocate for what students actually need.”

Miller says the student center is going to be a laboratory for the education that students get out of class. “It will be a place to discuss ideas,

learn to win and learn by failure. It is through our students’ ideas and their inspiration that the hole in the ground we see today is going to become a laboratory for their thoughts and ideas,” he says.

Miller told the audience that while many may be students today, they will be alumni tomorrow, and he thanked students and alumni for their support. Four former student center directors were present for the ceremony. Miller thanked Ron Robinson, Jim Stahl, Bill King, and Brian Nichols for their presence.

The process for the new building has been led by students with the approval given in the student referendum. “Dr. McFarland is proud this has been a student project,” Interim Provost Frank Ashley said.

Other speakers were U.S. Congressman Ralph Hall of Rockwall, State Representative Dan Flynn of Van, and junior industrial engineering major Scott Palomino of El Paso.

Hall said he was pleased to be on campus for the ceremony. “It’s great to be here on a day when we have a building named after a great man who is connected to this school, the history of Fannin County, and the United States.”

Rayburn of Bonham was a graduate of East Texas Normal College and served as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

February

- 21 The Language of Painting Exhibition, University Gallery, Main Art Building. Continues through March 13. Gallery hours 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and by appointment.
Women’s basketball, at Cameron, in Lawton, 6 p.m.
Men’s basketball, Cameron, 8 p.m.
Play “A Flea in Her Ear,” Performing Arts Center, 8 p.m. Also Feb. 22-24, 8 p.m., and Feb. 25, 3 p.m.
- 22 Battle of the Bands, East Circle of student center, 6 p.m. Rain location Lion’s Lair. At least one member of the band must be an A&M-Commerce student or employee.
- 23 Air Force Bass Quintet concert, Concert Hall, 1:30 p.m.
- 24 Track and Field, Trinity Invitational, San Antonio.
Women’s basketball, at Southwestern Oklahoma, in Commerce, 2 p.m.
Men’s basketball, Southwestern Oklahoma, 4 p.m.
- 25 Women’s golf, Rattler Spring Invitational, Pecan Valley Golf Club, St. Mary’s University, San Antonio. Also Feb. 26-27.
- 27 Academic advising begins for May Mini, Summer I and II, August Mini, and Fall 2007.

March

- 1 Women’s History Month kickoff with poet Bridget Gray, Founder’s Lounge, 7 p.m. Other events March 6, 8, 14, and 27.
- 2 Conductor’s Symposium, Music Building, 7:30 p.m.
- 3 University Day on campus.
- 5 Symphonic Band Concert, Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- 9 Guest artist David Etheridge, Concert Hall, 1:30 p.m.
- 10 Clarinet Day, Concert Hall, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- 16 Residence halls close, 5 p.m. for Spring Break.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *A&M-Commerce Today* is Wednesday, March 7. Copy deadline for the issue is Wednesday, Feb. 28. Please send your news to mary_hazal@tamuc.edu or by fax to 5522.

A&M-Commerce, an equal opportunity university, complies with all federal requirements prohibiting discriminatory activities.