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Campus building boom brings music, student center



BOLD NEW BUILDING — *The northwest perspective of the new Sam Rayburn Student Center. The wireless building will be open from 7 a.m. to midnight and will be a community destination.*

Students at A&M-Commerce will enjoy their new \$23 million student center, expected to open in fall 2008 on Neal Street – diagonally opposite the \$28 million Science Building and planetarium.

The 100,000-square-foot Sam Rayburn Student Center will be the destination for hanging out, shopping, dining, clubbing, and studying, too.

“It’s a great joy to bring something to students that they don’t have,” says Rick Miller, the student center director. “It will be a wireless meeting, work and play space where things are constantly evolving. People will want to go there.”

The structure will be situated on the crossroads between student housing and nearby recreation facilities, and the academic core of the campus.

Construction is scheduled to start this fall. The current student center, built in the early 1960s, will be demolished.

The new center will contain an ATM, the University Book Store, the Sodexo food court, and other vendors.

A&M-Commerce students passed a referendum by 73.5 percent in October 2004 for an increase in student center fees to fund the new building.

And in further developments, a new Music Building for the university has been authorized by the Texas Legislature.

Taking up capital improvements for state colleges and universities during the recent special session on public school finance, lawmakers approved 70 of 154 projects requested, according to President Keith McFarland.

The university was authorized \$21.7 million for the new Music Building, which has an estimated price tag of \$29 million. A&M-Commerce will pay about \$7 million of the cost of the project.

“The State Legislature has given us an I.O.U. and barring a major downturn in the

economy, I expect that Texas A&M University-Commerce will receive the funding authorized,” McFarland said.

The site for a new Music Building has not been determined. A possible location is the site of the current Sam Rayburn Memorial Student Center.

Administrators are currently waiting for direction from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Texas A&M University System Board of Regents to determine how much planning the university can do on the project prior to the funds being made available.

The current Music Building, built in 1956, is outdated and overcrowded with recital and concert halls that can no longer comfortably accommodate the audiences.

Experience in the Texas A&M University System suggests that it takes about five to six years from the conceptualization to the completion of a building.

It's now summer and time to beat the Texas heat by cooling off in water. Splish splash and keep your family safe by following these simple, sensible water safety tips provided by the Morris Recreation Center's Assistant Aquatics Director, Edgar Reed.

1. Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. The Morris Recreation Center has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To enroll in a swim course, contact the Aquatics Department at extension 3184.
2. Swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard.
3. Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.
4. Read and obey all rules and posted signs.
5. Children or inexperienced swimmers should take precautions, such as wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) when around the water.
6. Maintain constant supervision. Watch children around any water environment (pool, stream, lake, tub, toilet, bucket of water), no matter what skills your child has acquired and no matter how shallow the water.
7. Watch out for the dangerous "too's" - too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.
8. Set water safety rules for the whole family based on swimming abilities (for example, inexperienced swimmers should stay in water less than chest deep).
9. Be knowledgeable of the water environment you are in and its potential hazards, such as deep and shallow areas, currents, depth changes, obstructions and where the entry and exit points are located. The more informed you are, the more aware you will be of hazards and safe practices.
10. Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.
11. Use a feet-first entry when entering the water.
12. Enter headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.
13. Do not mix alcohol with swimming, diving or boating. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body's ability to stay warm.
14. Know how to prevent, recognize, and respond to emergencies.

Publications

Lamar Bridges, journalism, co-editor, "Newspaper Competition in the Millennium." Also co-authoring articles were Janet A. Bridges, Sam Houston State University, and Barry R. Litman, Michigan State University, as well as six media scholars.

S.K. Kimbrough, health and human performance, "Pregnant and Pedaling," *Triathlete*, May.

Serge P. von Duvillard, health and human performance, co-authored full length manuscripts and accepted for publication, "Plasma Ghrelin Response To Acute Sculling Exercises in Elite Male Rowers," *European Journal of Applied Physiology*; "Early Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Training in Older Patients After Heart Surgery," *European Journal of Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation*; "Impact of Physical Activity and Physical Fitness on Plasma Adiponectin Levels in Adults," *European Journal of Applied Physiology*; and "Oral Mg Therapy, Exercise HR, Exercise Tolerance, and Myocardial Function in CAD Patients," *British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

Presentations

David L. Brown, elementary education, "ADALANTE Project: College Credit for Head Start Teachers," Association for Childhood Education International, April 12-15, San Antonio.

Also **Brown** and **Lin Moore**, Texas Woman's University, "Classroom Quality and Student Outcomes: Are They Related?" Bill Martin Jr. Symposium, April 22, A&M-Commerce.

Don English, **Ed Manton**, and **Jan Walker**, business administration and MIS, "Communication Competencies: Views of Business Communication Students," International Allied Academies Conference, New Orleans, April.

Kimberly Gay, library, "Genealogy and Diversity: Let History Be Your Guide," a presentation on ethnic genealogy resources, Texas Library Association Conference, Houston, April 24-28.

Barbara Hammack and **Josh Thompson**, elementary education, "Backpacks to Family Nights: Engaging Families in Quality Activities To Support Student Success," Association for Childhood Education International Conference, San Antonio, April.

Scott Lancaster and **David Rankin**, library, "Igniting the Passion for Informa-

tion Literacy: A Retention Study Program and Study," 2006 Texas Library Association Annual Conference, April 2006.

Brian Mills and **Edgar Reed**, rec center, "My First Year as a Professional: The Things I Wish I Knew," National Intramural Recreational Sports Association National Conference, Louisville, Ky.

Derek Royal, literature and languages, "There Goes the Neighborhood: Recycling Ethnic Tensions in Will Eisner's Drop-sie Avenue," 20th Annual Conference of the Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States, MELUS, April 27-30, Boca Raton, Fla.

Also **Royal** chaired panel, "Skin, Nipples, Penises, and Stumps: The Body as Bearer of the Margins of Class, Morality, Identity, and Race in the Novels of Philip Roth."

Four literature and languages grad students made presentations and organized panels at MELUS. **Iris Johnson**, "Guarding the Gates: Philip Roth on the Classification Struggle;" **Josu Diaz**, "Caressing the Nipple: The Cruelty of Sabbath's Theater;" **Kent Ross**, "The Stump and the Stamps: American Jewish Trauma in Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*;" and **Terry Peterman**, "The Puzzled Penis: Confession, Repression, and Identity Politics in Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*."

Thompson, elementary education, "Capturing Talk: Looking at Language That Promotes Pragmatic Competence," American Educational Research Association National Conference, San Francisco, April.

Kudos

Jocelyn Goranson, music, is a semifinalist for the National Flute Association Young Artist Competition. This competition set in August in Pittsburgh, Pa., will feature only six semifinalists who will perform.

Mary Lou Hazal, media relations, and **Tori Woods**, student worker in media relations and May 2006 graduate, won two first place awards for news release writing in the Press Women of Texas Communications Contest.

The awards are for a feature release on residence life's E. Thayne King and the Travelin' Texans and multiple releases on aviation pioneer Jeana Yeager's speech on campus last fall.

Both entries will advance to the National Federation of Press Women's Communications Contest.

Fast facts



LASTING IMPRESSIONS — Each year A&M-Commerce takes the opportunity to thank their donors for the support and the impact they make on the lives of future generations. About 250 people gathered at the annual Donor Appreciation Banquet held recently at the university to honor donors inducted into the Founder's Circle, Heritage Society and Rayburn Society and, for the first time, the Cornerstone Society. Inducting sponsors into the newly established Cornerstone Society for cumulative donations of \$500,000 to \$999,999 are (left) President Keith McFarland, with Kay Norman and Jim Gleaves – the niece and nephew representing the estate of H.M. "Jim" and Rachel Lafferty – and Al Watson, A&M-Commerce Foundation Board chair.

PJC agreement is forged

A&M-Commerce and Paris Junior College have joined to educate teachers and help alleviate the teacher shortage.

The colleges recently signed an agreement that will assist PJC teacher education graduates in transferring to A&M-Commerce to complete their bachelor's degrees.

PJC students in the associate of arts in teaching (A.A.T.) degree program will know in advance that their coursework will transfer to A&M-Commerce bachelor of arts or science teacher certification degree programs and that they will not lose credits.

Enjoy summer at rec center

Four new, all-weather tennis hard courts are now open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis. Players do not need to be a member of the Morris Recreation Center to enjoy the tennis courts, and there is no charge.

The \$400,000 courts, located adjacent to the rec center, open at 6 a.m. to midnight when the lights will turn off automatically.

The rec center will also be offering American Red Cross swimming and water safety courses geared for parents and children ages 6 months and up, as well as Tae Kwon Do. For information, call extension 3170.



UNSELFISH SERVICE — May 20 was Children's Safety Day by proclamation in Commerce. Police, fire personnel, scouts and the other community leaders gathered to commemorate the announcement of the event. From (left) are Lisa Ferrell, scout troop leader; Deanna Hayes, assistant principal at A.C. Williams Elementary; Lieutenant Robby Speight of Commerce Fire Department; scout Sydney Chapman; Chief Tommy Eaton, Commerce Fire Department; scouts Allie Stauffer and Jessica Jobe; Sheryl Zelhart, Commerce Mayor; Keith McFarland, A&M-Commerce president; scouts Caitlin Ferrell and Ansley Bruton; Jason Bone, the University Police Department's information officer; Heather Murdock, Commerce Police dispatcher; scout Rebecca Dickerson; Captain Joe Pretre, Commerce Fire Department, and Hayley Jobe, scout troop leader who also works for A&M-Commerce's residence life. The scout troop organized the Children's Safety Fair with help from the University Police Department.



POTTERING AROUND — Alumnus, musician and artist David Zvanut has won first place in the three dimensional category in the Plano National Juried Exhibition which received about 400 entries. He returned to campus this semester to participate in the pottery class, and says ceramics art professor Barbara Frey's teaching has been "phenomenal." Zvanut has served as adjunct sculpture instructor.



ABCs — David L. Brown, a professor of early childhood education, has recently returned from New York City where he is a national educational adviser to the international children's television program, "Sesame Street." At his suggestion the program has introduced concepts of math and science to its programs in addition to its traditional focus on literacy development.



VERY WELL DONE — The brightest and best display the coveted awards they received at the Faculty Awards Luncheon. From left are Stuart Anderson, math department, named a Piper Professor in the statewide competition; John Scott, history, representing Judy Ford, history, winner of a Paul W. Barrus Distinguished Faculty Award for Teaching; Richard Lampe, counseling, winner of the Neill Humfeld Distinguished Service Award; Gerald Duchovnay, literature and languages, winner of a Barrus Award; Derek Royal, literature and languages, winner of the H.M. Lafferty Distinguished Faculty Award; and Mildred Golden Pryor, winner of a Barrus Award.

Researching AI design

Derek Harter, computer science department, has been awarded an Advanced Research Program grant of \$100,000 from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to advance our understanding of intentional behavior in biological systems, and applying this knowledge in designing intelligent artificial systems.

“Perception and motor skills have been thought of as easy functions and not related directly to intelligence, but there is increasing evidence that intelligence is really grounded in the perceptual, or motor, parts of the brain.”

Applying research in complex systems to

understanding intelligence in brains is an idea with great promise, Harter believes. “It could potentially revolutionize our abilities to create intelligent systems and to understanding how humans behave and act intelligently, and how we can build systems to replicate some of these abilities.”

Psychology’s Shulan Lu, and Steven Tseng from computer science will be key researchers with Harter. They seek to develop an interdisciplinary group of computer scientists, psychologists, cognitive scientists, and biologists among others, along with their students, to explore this approach.



REAPING BENEFITS — Cereal Crops Research Inc., a nonprofit corporation of northeast Texas producers based at the university, has donated a John Deere field sprayer to the crop practicum program. From left are Jim Swart, Texas Cooperative Extension entomologist based at A&M-Commerce; John Loehr of Greenville, CCRI board member; President Keith McFarland; Maynard Cheek of Farmersville, CCRI board president; and Don Reid, A&M-Commerce agricultural sciences faculty.

Producing quality teachers

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Charles Dana Center, at the University of Texas-Austin, has awarded A&M-Commerce several Teacher Quality Grants for a cumulative total of more than \$500,000.

These grants allowed competition from all universities in Texas to create professional development programs for in-service teachers.

Recipients include Vanessa Evans Huse at A&M-Commerce in Corsicana, while Eileen Faulkenberry, Glenda Love Bell and Gil Naizer are located in Commerce.

The Navarro campus mathematics department will run a program whereby Corsicana area schools will send fourth through eighth grade teachers to the campus for mathematics training. This grant will train teachers to implement technology in teaching mathematics in the middle school classroom.

Meanwhile, at A&M-Commerce Love Bell and Naizer will be working with about

30 Pre-K through eighth grade science teachers from the region – including Commerce, Greenville, Dallas, Garland, Terrell, and Paris among others – focusing on training teachers on how to teach the content of science, specifically astronomy and earth science, through active learning.

The professors will also be making use of the university’s new, state-of-the-art planetarium as part of their workshop program. Kent Montgomery, planetarium director, will collaborate with them as an instructor.

Faulkenberry will host 25 fourth through twelfth grade teachers in a three-week summer mathematics workshop. The participants will be from school districts in Hunt County and its surrounding area.

A&M-Commerce has a tradition, spanning 116 years, of quality teacher education.

The university is also a state leader in producing superintendents, principals and school counselors.

June

- 8 — Schedules removed for non-payment of tuition and fees for Summer I, 7 p.m.
Last day to drop a class and receive a refund if remaining enrolled.
Morris Recreation Center program of activities continues. Call extension 3170 for swimming lessons, Tae Kwon Do, massage and personal trainer.
- 13 — No refunds for a withdrawal from all classes after this date.
- 15 — Junior Level Essay administered, Testing Center, Business Administration Building, 1:30 p.m.
- 17 — Junior Level Essay administered, Testing Center, 8:30 a.m.
- 26 — ACT Residual administered, Testing Center, 8 a.m.
Last day to drop class or withdraw from Summer I.
Registration and drop/add continues for Summer II, August Mini, and Fall 2006.
- 29 — Deadline for August graduation applications.

July

- 2 — Deadline for undergraduate admission applications for Summer II.
- 4 — University closed for July 4th.
- 5 — New international student orientation by appointment, Room 212, student center.
Final submission date for comprehensive examination report.
Final submission date for theses and dissertations.
Last class day and final exams for Summer I.
- 6 — Payment deadline for Summer II.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *A&M-Commerce Today* is Wednesday, July 5. Copy deadline for the issue is Wednesday, June 31. Please send your news to maryl_hazal@tamuc.edu or by fax to 5522.

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