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The Islander is produced each spring by the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Office of Marketing & Communications, part of the Division of Institutional Advancement. Content in the magazine is designed to enlighten the University’s alumni and friends on Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s people, programs and activities.

Comments and editorial ideas should be sent to:
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Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
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We Want Your Opinion

Tell us your thoughts on the Islander Magazine by taking the survey at magazinesurvey.tamucc.edu

Upon completing the survey, you will have a chance to win the Ultimate Islander Prize Pack shown here.

Contest ends August 1, 2016
Winner will be notified by phone and/or email.

IT’S YOUR ISLAND UNIVERSITY CALLING!

It’s your Island Callers on the line. Will you answer? Islander Callers are working hard to continue the tradition of giving at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

Be a part of our growth. After all, you share the experiences of being an Islander. When Island Callers reach out, take a moment to support your Islanders.

Our Island Callers thank local businesses for their generous support, including: Great American Cookies, Johnny Carino’s Italian Restaurants, James Mathis Exxon, Planet Fitness, Golden Corral, Red Lobster, Glam R Us Boutique, Longhorn Steakhouse, and Men’s Wearhouse.
My name is Erika Rivera, and I’m a junior communications major.

In April, I was given the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Flavius Killebrew, President & CEO of our wonderful University, and ask him some questions.

Q: Where do you see the future of our University five years from now, and how can we all work together to achieve that goal?

A: Momentum 2020, our strategic plan to become an emerging research university, is well underway. Our enrollment should hit about 15,000 students in five years. Faculty, staff, students, advisors and tutors are all pushing to improve student retention and overall student success.

Another way we all work together to achieve Momentum 2020 is by promoting undergraduate research. Our first-year students are encouraged to present projects at the end of the year. In addition, many capstone courses have a research component. All of this research adds to our ultimate emerging research goal.

Q: Tell me about your average day as the University president.
A: I have to gently laugh at this question because I don’t have an “average day.” I may start the day in Corpus Christi, but I may end it in College Station or Austin. My day starts at 5 a.m. and ends at midnight. The hours in between are filled with meetings and events.

Q: What is your favorite Islander tradition?
A: The Islander Ring Ceremony. It is the time when students get to celebrate a really important milestone in their track towards a degree. There is so much symbolism associated with the ring, including University spirit, and I think that’s really important.

Q: What do you admire most about Islander students?
A: I admire their perseverance through all of their individual and unique challenges. Islanders are a hardworking bunch of folks who are willing to make big sacrifices to obtain their degrees.
NEW Graphic design DEGREE

VISUAL COMMUNICATION

CREATIVITY
Combining art and technology to communicate ideas and information, a new graphic design degree program at the Island University will teach students the impact design can make in society.

“The new degree in graphic design will help students like me stand out,” said Monica Viveros, who is studying to receive a Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in graphic design. “It will let future employers know that I bring new approaches to a task and that I am knowledgeable in all aspects of graphic design.”

The new degree in graphic design will begin this fall.

“Texas A&M-Corpus Christi is proud to offer more robust graphic design classes through a graphic design program to better prepare graduates,” said Dr. Flavius Killebrew, President and CEO of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. “The University routinely assesses the job market and works to ensure that our classes provide students with the knowledge base that employers are expecting.”

Graphic design also plays a role in the advertising and marketing industry. Students will utilize diverse problem-solving methodologies, innovative investigations and creative research in all forms of visual communication.

“We have seen a boom in workforce need within graphic design and with ad agencies,” said Amanda Garcia, Associate Professor of Art. “We are placing more students in large brands – Apple or Flint Hills or Whole Foods. This degree program is a necessary step for students who are looking for these jobs right out of college.”

Garcia said graduates of the program will be competitive in the workforce, having breadth of skills, knowledge and extensive portfolios.

The existing graphic design classes have been very popular. The department has grown from one to nine classes over the last 10 years. This major will add 13 classes, allowing students to develop mastery of several specific skills that were previously covered briefly in one semester. The curriculum also encourages students to take electives in communications or art, based on their desired career goals.

The University plans to add two faculty members: one each during the third and fifth years of the program. Four new graduate assistant positions will also be added throughout the first five years to support lower-level art courses.
Dr. Sarah Scott, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and Public Administration at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, is passionate about helping students translate classroom knowledge to real-world scenarios.

In fall 2015, Scott spearheaded the formation of the Social Sciences Advisory Council, with the goal of creating networks with community stakeholders while talking about internships, jobs, developments in the field, and research opportunities for Islander students. The council is made up of A&M-Corpus Christi faculty from the criminal justice, political science, and public administration fields and interested members of the local community.

“These meetings not only benefit students and the community, they also benefit our professors, because they are able to hear instant feedback about what skills students need most to succeed in the current workforce or during internships,” said Scott.

The committee plans to meet each semester and create more opportunities for students and faculty to collaborate with leaders in the community.

Scott, who joined the University in fall 2013, currently teaches multiple classes in the undergraduate criminal justice program, as well as classes in the master’s in public administration program. She is the criminal justice internship coordinator through fall 2016.

Islanders Give Back

Island University faculty, staff and students prioritize generosity and volunteerism through organized events, casual gigs and donation drives.

More than 140 University faculty and staff logged 329 volunteer hours during #GivingTuesday, held in December as part of an international effort encouraging people to give back to the communities in which they live. Spearheaded by the Division of Student Engagement and Success, the event saw an increase of more than 200 volunteer hours from the previous year.

Volunteers assisted at the Women’s Shelter of South Texas, the Food Bank of Corpus Christi, Metro Ministries, and even donated blood for the Coastal Bend Blood Center.

The “Ward Island Wannabes,” a non-profit music collective made up of University cohorts, also generated donations for the Women’s Shelter. “The Wannabees,” founded by Dr. Jeff Dillard, Assistant Professor of Political Science, have raised more than $1,300 playing pop-up gigs in downtown Corpus Christi.

Student organizations also regularly plan drives for books, food, clothes and supplies for all causes.
A new tradition honors the military service of Dr. Hector P. Garcia with a uniformed salute.

Members of the ROTC Islander Battalion started the tradition in 2016 for uniformed members to salute the statue when they are passing by or stopping in for a break at the plaza.

“He was a pillar in the community, yes, but this is in recognition of his military accomplishments,” said LTC Curtis Johnson.

Dr. Hector P. Garcia (1914-1996) was a Corpus Christi physician and champion of Mexican-American civil rights. He served in World War II and founded the American GI Forum in 1948 to organize veterans to fight for educational and medical benefits.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi proudly exhibits several of his letters and photos as part of a special collection at the Mary and Jeff Bell Library.

The Hector P. Garcia Plaza, dedicated in 1994, serves as a gathering spot and inspires students with a statue of Dr. Garcia and fountain. The University community celebrates Dr. Garcia in September, during Hispanic Heritage Month, and on the official state holiday, established in 2009.

In addition to the new ROTC salute, students also have a good-luck tradition of touching his foot for luck before tests.

The Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Foundation is in the process of raising funds to establish the Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Exhibit at the Bell Library. The foundation also supports student scholarships in Dr. Garcia’s name.

View the Hector P. Garcia site to learn more.
As an increasing number of veterans attempt to reintegrate into civilian life, many are faced with the challenge of finding jobs that match their skill sets. In fact, roughly 844,000 veterans are unemployed and looking for work, according to a White House report. In Texas, this concern is magnified due to the large number of veterans at Texas bases who will be leaving the service due to expected drawdowns.

However, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s eLine Military Program, previously recognized by the White House for filling two critical needs, a nursing shortage and civilian employment for veterans, is leading the way as a model for other nursing schools across the country. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi recently received more than $1 million from a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to boost the program that fast-tracks nursing degrees for veterans with prior medical experience.

Many veterans, particularly those who served in a medical capacity as medics or corpsmen, find their experience does not translate into the credentials needed or recognized in the civilian world. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences’ (CONHS) eLine Military Program individually evaluates military medical experience for appropriate academic credit.

“In most cases, military personnel have limited career options in the medical field when they transition into civilian life,” said Dr. Mary Jane Hamilton, Dean of the CONHS. “We have identified a solution to translate the knowledge and experience they already have into credits. This program gives individuals credit for what they already know, and keeps them from having to start the program from the beginning.”

For example, a veteran who receives credit for prior medical training and experience can complete the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in 15-18 months (or less) compared to the typical student, who would normally complete the program in 24 months. However, due to the flexibility, the length of time in the program is individualized to the student. This shortens the length of time a veteran needs to spend in school before being able to find a full-time civilian job.

The recent HRSA award issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ($349,965 each year for three years) allows for greater focus on veterans, primarily by increasing outreach and by offering veterans the opportunity to begin the program six months before separating from the military.

In addition, the eLine Military program was featured at a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board meeting in January as a Program of Excellence. Hamilton and Dr. Jason Saladiner, Clinical Assistant Professor and Director of Innovative Programs, were invited by the board to present an overview of the program because of its success.

The CONHS has received more than 1,500 inquiries from across the nation and from active duty service members stationed around the world since 2011. Currently, approximately 50 eLine Military students are enrolled in the program at A&M-Corpus Christi, with more than 150 students in the pipeline.
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has received approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for a new Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree for registered nurses who have earned graduate degrees. The new online degree is the first of its kind in South Texas, and is the highest advanced degree available for nursing practice. The two-year program will begin in fall 2016 with a group of 13 students.

A new endowed professorship in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences honors Dr. Eve Layman, who retired recently after 14 years at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. A $100,000 gift from Janet Tysinger established the Dr. Eve Layman Professor of Nursing.

“With this professorship, Dr. Layman’s legacy of leadership will continue to support faculty in the critical field of nursing research,” said Dr. Mary Jane Hamilton, Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

The recipient of the Dr. Eve Layman Professorship of Nursing will demonstrate a sustained record of health services or nursing research with continued contributions, such as publications in peer-reviewed journals, professional presentations and recognition by peers.

ISLAND UNIVERSITY RECEIVES DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE DEGREE

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has received approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for a new Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree for registered nurses who have earned graduate degrees. The new online degree is the first of its kind in South Texas, and is the highest advanced degree available for nursing practice. The two-year program will begin in fall 2016 with a group of 13 students.
The Harte Research Institute (HRI) for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is moving forward with a number of cooperative endeavors with Cuban scientists and students this year as the United States government moves to reestablish diplomatic ties with the island nation, with an eye towards environmental protection initiatives.

“As our first years working in Cuba we really focused on getting scientists together to discuss the issues and come up with small-scale projects,” HRI Executive Director Larry McKinney said. “Now, as the country opens up, that’s beginning to change and we’re really shifting our focus to look at larger-scale projects that we can begin to move forward. Our staff is not new to Cuba or the region, and our Institute’s mission is to support a more sustainable future for the entire tri-national Gulf region.”

“Our institute’s mission is to promote excellence in conservation, research and innovative public policy in the Gulf of Mexico through a tri-national relationship between scientists from the United States, Mexico and Cuba,” McKinney said. “Up until this point, we’ve had more progress in Mexico due to the official barriers in Cuba, but those barriers are dropping now and I’m really excited to see what we can accomplish as we move forward.”

Cuba is home to important Gulf resources and talented scientists, McKinney said. But due to the U.S. embargo, Cuban researchers have lacked basic access to things American scientists take for granted at home, like state-of-the-art computers, scientific equipment, the Internet and the vast library of scientific literature it can access.

This fall, HRI will participate in two initiatives in Cuba:

- A two-day workshop in Havana, aimed at advancing coastal and ocean monitoring and conservation in the nation, through research and network development and integration activities. Gathering data on environmental change in Cuba can provide the key information to understanding a wide range of marine and coastal issues.
- An international workshop on governance for the Gulf of Mexico where students from the United States, Mexico and Cuba will contribute their perspectives on the social, economic, political and environmental issues to develop better strategies for sustainable management of Gulf of Mexico resources.
Several high-priority projects are underway at the Harte Research Institute (HRI) for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi to steer long-term restoration and protection of the Gulf of Mexico.

The HRI-led Texas OneGulf Center of Excellence is working on its strategic plan as it prepares to fund scientific activities to improve Gulf health. It will also create infrastructure to provide immediate research response to study environmental, human health and economic impacts in the wake of disasters.

In addition, HRI is working on a Gulf of Mexico Report Card, a comprehensive and scientifically based assessment of Gulf health that will be widely accessible and easy to understand. This will help inform restoration projects planned for the future.

“It will show how well the Gulf is or is not progressing toward our desired goal of a sustainable, healthy Gulf,” said Dr. Larry McKinney, HRI Executive Director.
The Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi was awarded a federal Fisheries Innovation Grant totaling $209,326 to study pressure-related injuries suffered by Red Snapper during catch-and-release fishing. The funding will also continue research that examines the effectiveness of devices that could help ensure a better survival rate for released fish.

It’s an exciting season for shark researchers at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) took a bite out of primetime during summer 2015, when it was featured on Discovery Channel’s “Shark Week.” Then, in October 2015, HRI partnered with OCEARCH on a two-week shark tagging expedition, the most extensive shark-tagging program ever attempted in the Gulf. In conjunction with the expedition, the Texas State Aquarium opened its new “Saving Sharks” exhibit, which includes a life-sized great white shark replica, a live shark touch exhibit and the ability to track OCEARCH-tagged sharks in real time.

See photos of Monster Mako tagged during Shark Week.
A new study from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has uncovered a problem in the estuarine waters along the Gulf Coast of Texas that could potentially threaten local economies and even lead back to your dinner plate.

Dr. Xinping Hu, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at A&M-Corpus Christi, and his colleagues examined four decades of alkalinity and pH data, which were collected and maintained by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, from 27 Texas coastal bays, and discovered a steady acidification trend in most of the bays.

For the study, Hu worked with Dr. Jennifer Pollack of the Department of Life Sciences, Dr. Paul Montagna of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, graduate student Melissa McCutcheon and former visiting student Zhangxian Ouyang.

Owners of saltwater aquariums with corals and clams understand the problem Hu is studying. The aquarium needs a steady supply of an alkaline material – literally baking soda, dissolved in water – to maintain healthy water chemistry for the corals to grow their skeletons and clams to grow their shells. The Gulf also needs an influx of alkaline material.

"Because a lot of estuarine calcifying organisms such as oysters rely on the water alkalinity to make their shells, the reduced available alkalinity level could pose a potential threat to these organisms," Hu said.

Waters off the Gulf Coast of Texas are home to countless oysters, clams, scallops and other shellfish that the seafood industry catches for your favorite meals. As acidification harms these organisms and decreases their populations, it could become harder for growers and shellfish farmers to stay in business. But, perhaps more importantly, oysters, clams, scallops and other shellfish provide benefits such as water filtration and coastal protection against storm surge.

The study by Hu, which was published in *Environmental Science and Technology*, shows drought and diverting freshwater could be the culprit, because many Texas rivers carry moderate to high levels of alkalinity and deliver it to coastal ecosystems.

The information gathered from this new study will help researchers provide useful information to resource managers and policy makers to tackle the problem. To further this study, Hu, and Dr. Michael Wetz, Associate Professor of Marine Biology, along with scientists from the University of South Florida and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, are working with Montagna for a project to examine hydrological changes on these estuaries.

In addition, Hu is leading a project funded by the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program to monitor high temporal resolution carbonate chemistry changes in the Aransas Ship Channel.
**STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM EARNs NATIONAL SERVICE AWARD**

A volunteer effort by nearly 600 Islander students in the Junior Achievement Program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has earned the University a U.S. President’s Volunteer Service Award.

The students, mostly from the College of Business, committed more than 5,000 hours during the 2014-2015 school year, first training and prepping lessons in economics and business for local elementary students, and then instructing those students during five in-classroom sessions for Corpus Christi elementary schools.

University President Dr. Flavius Killebrew accepted the award at a ceremony in New York City on March 8.

Dr. Jim Lee, Regents Professor of Economics, Dr. Ben Blanco, Adjunct Professor, and Dr. Akin Buyukeren, Professional Assistant Professor, coordinate the Junior Achievement Program at A&M-Corpus Christi.

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**Tattoos and Body Piercings in the Corporate Workplace**

As more white-collar professionals enter the workplace with tattoos and piercings, employers are faced with difficult decisions.

Dr. Brian Elzweig, Associate Professor of Business Law, co-authored an article examining the legal aspects of hiring and employment decisions based on applicants having body modifications. Elzweig has been interviewed on the topic by publications including The Washington Post, The Huffington Post, and The Houston Chronicle.

“Employees need to use discretion in the workplace,” Elzweig said. “In addition, employers need to recognize that the paradigm is shifting and that body modifications are becoming more mainstream.”
In front of a live audience and panel of local celebrity judges, three finalist groups of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi students performed a live pitch of their entrepreneurial ideas as part of the Buc Days Ideas Challenge Scholarship Luncheon.

The winning ideas, selected from more than 40 entries, focused on making lives better, reminding drivers when children are left in the back seat, helping users find a fitness trainer and offering a means to directly buy used textbooks.

The Buc Days Ideas Challenge is a business concept competition supported with Buccaneer Commission funds. Winners received a cash prize and a one-year membership to the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center Student Incubator.

The Business Innovation Center, part of the College of Business, opened in 2009 and has assisted more than 125 entrepreneurs.

**FIRST PLACE:**
The Quick Clip Reminder: The universal seat belt attachment with built-in audio recorder, allows users to record messages that will automatically play back once the seatbelt is unbuckled, so that items or children left in the back seat won’t be forgotten.

**SECOND PLACE:**
The Mobile Fitness Network: The online platform enables fitness clients to book in-home training from qualified fitness professionals at an affordable price.

**THIRD PLACE:**
Islander Book Exchange: The mobile application allows students to buy, sell and trade used textbooks directly with each other.

ISLANDER ENTREPRENEURS
Pitch Winning Business Designs in Ideas Challenge
Islanders Study Around the World

Students, staff take their skills around the globe.

**Location:** Massachusetts and New York City. Thirteen Dance, Music and Theatre major students attended classes throughout the five boroughs of NYC and traveled to Massachusetts for the Jacob’s Pillow International Dance Festival.

**Location:** Spain, University of Valladolid. Faculty and staff provided core curriculum courses: Public Speaking, Spanish II, Spanish Literature, Music, Sociology and Literature of the Western World. Thirty-six undergraduate students studied in Valladolid and attended an academic excursion to Avila, Toledo, Cordoba, Seville, Grenada and Madrid.

**Location:** Cancun and Riviera Maya, Dolphinaris. Two faculty members and 13 students from the Department of Life Sciences studied Dolphin Husbandry, Care and Research, while taking part in experiential practicums at the Dolphinaris facility.
Location: Scotland-Dalkeith House, near Edinburgh. Faculty and staff provided core curriculum and geology courses: Introduction to GIS, Public Speaking and Geology. Twenty-three students studied in Edinburgh and attended an academic excursion to Aberdeen, the Isle of Skye, Inverness and geological sites near Edinburgh.

Location: South Korea-Dongguk University of Seoul. Students Samantha Leinweber and Casandra Lorentson attended courses in Korean, Japanese and Chinese Culture, Comparative Asian Cultures, Film Studies, as well as International Business.

Location: Germany. Five arts students studied at the Molzberger Academy of Fine Arts. Eight College of Business students attended Hochschule Worms-University of Applied Sciences for the Fall Semester 2015, taking upper division courses in Marketing, International Finance, Entrepreneurship and International Business.

Location: New Zealand. Student Brandon Canete attended the Summer Research Program with Dr. Richard Coffin, Chair, Department of Life Sciences, in expedition aboard the RV Tangaroa to study methane flux.

Location: South Korea-Taskesti, Turkey. Student Nargiz Dadashova attended a Geology Field Camp.
Our world may not look like the Jetsons just yet, but robots and machines already are improving our lives. In our homes, we have Roombas vacuuming and dishwashers washing. On the streets, Google self-driving cars are getting tested, and driver-assist technology shows where we back up and warns us if we drift lanes. In the sky and underwater, we have drones and gliders that help scientists gather data quicker and cheaper. And everywhere we go, we have cell phones, keeping us connected with news, music, weather, updates from friends, maps and more.

Each of these products had an engineer or a computer scientist – or likely a team of them – toiling away to solve a problem, to ease a task, to improve our lives.

And each of those engineers and computer scientists first had professors and teachers who guided them into the field of
autonomous systems, a field that covers machines that operate on their own, or autonomously, in the air, land and sea.

It was 19 minutes into his first class at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi with Dr. Hao Xu, Assistant Professor of Engineering, that Jared Stowell, a mechanical engineering student from Marble Falls, Texas, knew he was in the right place to feed his drive for robotics.

Xu starts his control systems and foundation of engineering classes with the big picture. “We have drones for disaster and rescue, package delivery, every day uses, with Amazon, NASA, the military,” he said. “It’s the exciting and fancy technology of unmanned aerial vehicles. I tell them we have the same thing in our labs. We spend the class connecting the lab work to the real world. And we learn step by step the fundamental knowledge of each piece.”

Xu, whose background is in cyber physics and robotics, is working on swarm technology, coordinating many UAVs to work together for more accurate data gathering.

The key to robots or any autonomous system is the programming. More than simply performing a task, these machines control themselves based on their own data that they are programmed to collect.

“They don’t have brains, so we have to bring in some of their own intelligence,” Xu said. “We add in some kind of smarts so robots can handle the real world.”

Xu explains this idea of smart computing. The smarts come in the form of algorithms, stored in the machine like our knowledge is stored in our brains. The brain of the machine is the microprocessor and the camera acts like eyes.

It’s a concept that is multidisciplinary, said Dr. Ahmed Mahdy, Associate Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach.

“The brain of the robot, how they respond and react, is computer science,” he said. “How they walk and move is engineering.”

Add in the data processing made possible with geographic information systems and geospatial computing and the full multidisciplinary approach is complete.

“The tremendous opportunity is here to dive right in to the realm of smart computing... computers that can again change the way we live our lives.”

Dr. L.D. Chen
Associate Dean of the College of Science and Engineering
This arena of smart computing and autonomous systems is the next opportunity for Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, said Dr. L.D. Chen, Associate Dean of the College of Science and Engineering.

“This is another frontier of science that builds on what we already have expertise in — geospatial computing, computer science, geographic information systems and engineering,” he said. “The tremendous opportunity is here to dive right in to the realm of smart computing, of computers that help with decision making, computers that analyze and decipher data in improved ways, computers that can again change the way we live our lives.”

While the University’s Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence and Innovation, one of only six FAA-designated test sites in the nation, works with companies to integrate UAS into their businesses, in the labs, student researchers are testing what drones can do and are improving on those tasks.

But smart computing and autonomous systems cover more than drones.

They include a lawnmower that mows on its own, a robot that traverses and digs on a field designed to mimic the lunar surface, and an underwater glider that can gather and transmit data from the depths of the ocean floor.

The glider is under the direction of Dr. Dugan Um, Associate Professor of Engineering. In a multi-semester project, a team of students is refining and testing the glider’s wings. The wings propel it through the water, up and down, a motion that makes it more energy efficient than gliders currently available.

“It seems like a simple cylinder, but it has computers and motors and sensors and everything in it,” he said.

The energy-efficient up-and-down propulsion system allows the glider to surface regularly. That means real-time monitoring, as data can be transmitted back to the scientist in the lab — even routing through a UAV if the sampling location is far from land.

“You can see it all: red tide alerts, salinity levels… It’s all right at your fingertips,” he said.

Um teaches mechanical design, electrical circuits and microcontroller programming. He shares this passion for underwater robots with high school students each summer during a camp where they design and compete with their own robots in the University pool.

He is preparing students for the robotics revolution, the shift in jobs that will come with advances in this technology.

Um foresees a world where the dishwasher is a robot that not only washes dishes but picks them up from the table and puts them away, too. And the students who design that may be right here at the Island University.

“We train them to establish the right logical thought process in their minds so that after graduation, once they are in society, they can see the problem and see the solution,” Um said.

“Come at it with creativity and knowledge and make something that adds value to our society — all through thinking logically with engineering and science.”

Engineering student Clarissa Torres, a senior from Corpus Christi, wants to put her talents to work with Cirque du Soleil, the acrobatic entertainment group.

“They want to fly with hydraulics or rockets on their feet,” she said. “I want to build them a system.”
UNIVERSITY MOVES FORWARD WITH NEW LIFE SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING COMPLEX, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING DEGREE

The College of Science and Engineering recently made two exciting announcements:

A groundbreaking is planned for fall 2016 for a new $60 million Life Sciences and Engineering Complex. The first phase of the complex will be built between the Early Childhood Education Center and the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, and is scheduled to take about two years for construction.

Classes for a new Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering degree began in fall 2015. Knowledge students receive will transfer directly to the oil and gas workforce.

IT STARTS WITH A GIFT...

Just as Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to the well-being of its greater community, many businesses and professionals see the University as an investment toward the growth of a quality, global-minded workforce. The Achieve Partnership program provides the opportunity for many to support students firsthand through scholarships which help defray the costs of tuition and fees.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS
Lone Star UAS Center Partitions Key to Future

Partnerships are key to the success and future of the Lone Star Unmanned Aircraft Systems Center (LSUASC) of Excellence and Innovation at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Officials with the LSUASC are working with other federally designated test sites including the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, NASA and Texas Parks and Wildlife, to safely integrate unmanned aircraft systems into the national airspace.

NASA Demonstration

Crews with the Lone Star UAS Center flew four unmanned aircraft simultaneously from the range in Port Mansfield during an April flight demonstration coordinated by NASA.

The flights were tracked with a special traffic management research platform that is a crucial step in bringing these aircraft in great numbers to the skies safely. The five other FAA-approved test sites also participated in the demo.

Watch video from the flight.

UAS Credentialing Program

Lone Star UAS Center has developed a voluntary credentialing program in partnership with Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

The program is for civilian operators of small unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) with approval from the Federal Aviation Administration and allows them to fly in the national airspace. The first two companies to receive the credentials were announced at the Texas UAS Summit and Expo in March in Austin.

The credentialing program promotes safe and legal commercial UAS operations, as well as provides third party vetting of operators and vendors with UAS under 55 pounds, said Steve Williams, Program Director with the Engineering Extension Service.
Seagrass Survey

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is working with University researchers to determine if drone-collected imagery is effective as a method to survey seagrasses scarred by boat propellers. Seagrass is a nursery ground for fish, shrimp and crabs, and the habitat is essential to a productive and healthy bay system. If the drone surveying is determined to be effective, the group may use drones for other habitat surveys, department officials have said.

Endowed Scholarship Council

Creating a scholarship endowment is one way to ensure your contribution will remain in perpetuity to support higher education and to help the University remain competitive in attracting the brightest students.

In recognition of donors making significant contributions to endowed scholarships, the University established the Endowed Scholarship Council.

For more information about the Endowed Scholarship Council or other giving opportunities, contact Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi - 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5741 Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5741 • 361.825.3320
A mapping application that allows first responders to rapidly and effortlessly view an emergency situation through a digital command center is now available on the commercial market.

Developed by Dr. Richard Smith, Assistant Professor of Geographic Information Science and Geospatial Surveying Engineering at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, the app, called SituMap, is currently targeting emergency management and first responders, but there is room to expand to hospitals, municipal planning offices, oil and gas companies and any other industries requiring mapping capabilities.

CartoFusion Technologies released version 1.0 of SituMap in late January and is selling it through its online site CartoFusionTech.com. SituMap is the introductory product for CartoFusion Technologies, a recently developed geospatial technology company spin-off from Smith’s research. CartoFusion Technologies has an office in the University’s Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center.

“SituMap makes mapping accessible to everyone,” said Smith. “Previously, you had to have hours of training to make and share a map. SituMap breaks down the learning barriers by making mapping easy.”

SituMap acts as a tablet-like digital command center that shows users maps of crisis areas. With the touch of a finger, the table-size display can be zoomed, rotated, and drawn on. SituMap is easy-to-learn, multi-user, multi-touch and designed for everyday use, collaboration and rapid decision making. Similar to Google Maps, officers can search for locations and measure distances, but with SituMap, customization is possible — a pin can be created in the application that could represent a person, police car or groups of people. The pin can be strategically positioned around the area and directions can then be relayed to officers at the emergency location.

“The goal is to make the world a safer place,” Smith said.

Smith says that there is nothing else like SituMap on the market.

“That’s one of our biggest challenges; to find a competitor to compare ourselves,” he said. “We’ve
found our niche, but we’re going into unchartered territories.”

SituMap allows for direct importation of real-time information on traffic congestion and weather, UAV imagery, floorplans and other Web maps.

The company has partnered with multiple businesses to enhance CartoFusion’s product offerings. CartoFusion has partnered with the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service for first responder training using SituMap, Digital Touch Systems for touch screen hardware sales and Microsoft for distribution of digital map data.

In addition, Smith is collaborating with Dr. Michelle Maresh-Fuehrer, Associate Professor of Communication at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, to extend the use of the mapping applications to enhance communication and identify where people should be before, during and after a crisis.

PhotoSorter, an app developed to work in tandem with SituMap, allows emergency responders, crisis planners and community members to share pictures or video of the crisis. The photos and videos can be uploaded into SituMap to help in important decision-making situations.

“A crisis event is typically a time of high stress and increased uncertainty for organizations and responders,” said Maresh-Fuehrer, who studies crisis communication. “The applications have several features that allow for more informed and efficient crisis response.”

“‘The goal is to make the world a safer place.’”

Dr. Richard Smith, Assistant Professor of Geographic Information Science and Geospatial Surveying Engineering
COUNSELING AND TRAINING CLINIC OFFERS FREE PROGRAMS TO COMMUNITY

The Counseling and Training Clinic at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi offers a valuable resource to the Coastal Bend community in the form of two free counseling programs.

The Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral-Therapy Program (TF-CBT) and the Personal Skills Group seek to help participants overcome obstacles in their personal lives and enhance their self-image. The programs can help individuals who are struggling with issues ranging from trauma and negative self-perceptions to difficulty coping with emotions such as fear and sadness.

TF-CBT, which is funded through a grant from the Texas Research Development Fund, educates and helps teenagers who have experienced traumatic life events such as separation, violence or abuse. The program aims to provide stress management training, helps to support expression and management of feelings and assists teens in coping with self-deprecating thoughts. The Personal Skills Group helps participants cope with difficult emotions, including anger and anxiety, while helping participants improve personal relationships. The group is based on a treatment approach that emphasizes building on strengths to foster positive behavior.

CYCLE CLUB DONATES BIKES TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Elementary students at the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi now have 10 new bikes for physical education class.

The bicycles are part of a recent donation of $15,000 raised by the Corpus Christi Cycle Club to implement the CYCLE Kids program that encourages lifelong healthy activity while combating habits of inactivity and poor nutrition. The program includes curriculum, textbooks and staff training.

Ken Ham, Corpus Christi Cycle Club Past President, said the group is concerned with the rising level of diabetes and believes healthy lifestyles begin at this young age.

“We are trying to change a pattern,” he said.

The ECDC is operated jointly by the Corpus Christi Independent School District and A&M-Corpus Christi’s College of Education and Human Development.
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi proudly hosted LTG Larry Wyche, a three-star General and the highest ranking Islander alumnus, for a campus tour and keynote speech this fall.

Wyche was commissioned into the U.S. Army in 1982 after graduating from A&M-Corpus Christi with a Bachelor of Business Administration. During his time here, he was a member of the ROTC program, which is a part of the College of Education and Human Development.

During Wyche’s speech on leadership, he shared the story of his many accomplishments. “Excellence is not by accident,” Wyche said to the students in the crowd. “True leaders never take lightly their contribution to the success of others.”

Wyche currently serves as the Deputy Commanding General of the U.S. Army Materiel Command and Senior Commander at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. Wyche has held many other key assignments including numerous staff positions at the Pentagon and service in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. His awards and decorations are many, and include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal.
The Islanders Beach Volleyball team is ready for some fun in the sun as they begin their inaugural season. The NCAA recently announced beach volleyball would be the 90th sport to have an NCAA Championship, and the Islanders are eager to hit the sand courts.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi announced the addition of the Beach Volleyball program in May 2015. The season kicked off its first match April 1 at the Beach Volleyball Courts located at the Dr. Jack Dugan Family Soccer & Track Stadium.

Players, including Brianna Brink, couldn’t wait to get started as a member of the Islanders Beach Volleyball team.

“It’s very exciting to be a part of a brand new program,” she said. “Beach volleyball is a totally different sport than indoor volleyball. You have to take into account the wind, the sun, and there are only two people playing (instead of four).”

Brink was the first player in program history to earn American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) honorable mention at the All-American accolades. As a senior in 2014, she earned First Team All-Southern Conference, Southland All-Academic, and the AVCA All-Region honors. Brink joined the Islanders coaching staff as an assistant for the 2015 season. However, as she works on a master’s degree, she returned as a player for beach volleyball.

Leading the charge is new Head Coach Steve Greene, who was introduced in February as the fourth head coach in the program’s history. Greene comes to the Islanders from Texas A&M University – College Station.

“We are just waiting to explode with our beach volleyball program here.”

Steve Greene, Volleyball Head Coach

Watch video of the Beach Volleyball home opener.
Station where he was an assistant coach for six seasons. He has beach volleyball coaching experience and has been a head coach at the high school level.

“We are just waiting to explode with our beach volleyball program here,” he said. “The talent at A&M-Corpus Christi was absolutely apparent to me. They had tremendous success this year, and I think we can continue that and do even better on the national stage.”

Greene has every right to be confident in his team when he has players such as Brink and Brittany Gilpin. Gilpin was a member of the Islanders’ indoor volleyball team that won the program’s first Southland Conference Championship in 2015 that earned their first NCAA tournament berth. She was named to the 2015 Southland Conference All-Academic Team and earned First Team All-Southland Conference honors as a sophomore in 2015.

“I’m excited to play with all of the girls together on the beach,” Gilpin said. “I’m a little nervous because I don’t have a lot of experience playing in the sand, but I’m excited to see how much it can help me improve my game.”

Greene is excited for the fans to witness the team build on its success in the coming years.

“It’s an emerging sport with this year being the first year of a national championship for the NCAA,” he said. “I’d love it if everyone would come out when our tournament gets started. We’ve got a great team, and they’re ready to get started.”

Stay up with Beach Volleyball games and news at goislanders.rts/beachvball.

Islanders Men’s Basketball
FINISH STRONG YEAR

What a season! The Islanders men’s basketball team completed their second most successful season in program history after finishing 25-8, including a 15-3 record in Southland Conference play, a program record for most conference wins in a season.

The team, with eight seniors, the second most of any Division I team in the nation, brought in a record number of season wins for Coach Willis Wilson.

The Islanders’ strong play and leadership earned them a third-straight post-season berth, another program record. The Islanders rode their momentum, advancing to the Southland Conference Championship game for the first time since 2007 and second time ever.
1950s
Hugh Delle Broadway, ’51, February 15, 2016
James M. Summers, ’52, April 9, 2015
Edward W. Bennett, ’53, March 1, 2015
John C. Hancock, ’54, September 19, 2015
Elia L. Buckingham, ’55, August 29, 2015
Eddie L. Cathey, ’57, October 14, 2015

1960s
James W. Lively, ’60, March 8, 2016
Cipriana M. Gonzalez, ’61, ’85, November 13, 2015
Richard S. Ortyl, ’62, June 6, 2015
Jane A. Norrell, ’63, January 30, 2016
Robert N. Dennis, ’65, October 14, 2015
Willie A. Larza, ’68, April 5, 2015

1970s
Samuel W. Fuentes, ’71, July 16, 2015
Daniel E. Banda, ’72, May 25, 2015
Kathaleen M. Rodman, ’72, September 19, 2015
Ramon A. Longoria, ’73, March 11, 2016
Linda R. Alberts, ’74, August 17, 2015
Joe L. Armstrong, ’75, January 6, 2016
Kathryn M. Ashford, ’75, September 1, 2015
Barbara G. Blanton, ’76, July 11, 2015
Dale C. Gillum, ’76, ’82, January 24, 2016

1980s
Douglas R. Gwyther, ’80, November 16, 2015
Louis W. Hennings, ’80, December 11, 2015
Thomas S. Hujar, ’80, November 30, 2015
Loretta A. Skrobarczyk Ctvrtlik, ’80, August 27, 2015
Georgia L. Davis, ’82, July 22, 2015
Terry L. Esse, ’82, August 3, 2015
Veronica C. Kleffner, ’83, February 13, 2015
Conrado C. Contreras, ’84, ’86, July 5, 2015
John A. Burkhart, ’85, March 21, 2015
Eldagene N. Hametner, ’86, March 3, 2015
Dane B. Parish, ’86, March 5, 2015
Jane V. Bullock, ’87, January 7, 2016

1990s
Dorothy J. Blakeney, ’90, June 2, 2015
Jeanette M. Keeney, ’90, ’09, August 29, 2015
Kathi A. Lewis, ’90, September 14, 2015
Sally L. Myers, ’90, March 25, 2016

2000s
Alice C. Garcia, ’01, November 24, 2015
Edna M. Jackson, ’01, November 30, 2015
Melak Saghar, ’02, June 12, 2015
Travis W. Suggs, ’03, July 22, 2015
Angel R. Tiongson, ’04, February 23, 2015
Rosa C. Gallinal, ’06, July 29, 2015
Sita M. Swann, ’06, ’09, May 8, 2015
John P. Corkill, ’07, June 1, 2015
Miguel A. Pena, ’07, January 16, 2016

2010s

Faculty & Staff

Current Students
Jeremy Baker
Garrett McDonald
Harold Gay, Jr.
Sandra Lynch
Denise Delgado

College of Business
College of Science & Engineering
College of Science & Engineering
College of Liberal Arts
College of Liberal Arts

Gerald M. Quinn, ’90, November 18, 2015
Juan E. Villalpando, ’90, January 26, 2016
Susan J. Stone Honer, ’91, December 14, 2015
Marylou L. Flores, ’92, January 14, 2016
Anthony J. Slowik, ’92, March 30, 2016
Claudio P. Wells, ’92 January 5, 2016
John H. Willoughby, ’92, May 14, 2015
Elizabeth W. Clark, ’93, ’95, August 19, 2015
Maria H. Garcia, ’93, July 18, 2015
Vera L. Plummer, ’93, April 25, 2015
Michael W. Torres, ’93, ’99, May 1, 2015
Jess H. Woodard, ’93, March 5, 2015
Elizabeth R. Ochoa, ’94, April 12, 2015
Delores S. King, ’95, ’99, April 2, 2015
Michael T. Casey, ’96, March 17, 2016
Thomas R. Mowing, ’96, March 22, 2015
Paula A. See, ’96, July 16, 2015
Mary L. Smith, ’96, December 15, 2015

Faculty & Staff
Della H. Gonzales (2000–2014)
Louis W. Hennings (2001–2010)
Archie E. James (1973–1989)
David A. Miller (1990–2015)
Dr. Graham C. Hickman, a Professor of Biology at A&M-Corpus Christi for 23 years, from 1991-2014, passed away Feb. 28, 2016, at his home in Austin. Hickman was an authority of fossorial mammals, traveling to South Africa, Kenya, Israel and Chile to study them. He had more than 50 publications and supervised more than 30 projects with graduate and Ph.D. students. Born in Wales in 1944, Hickman was the first in his family to achieve a college education and received a Ph.D. in 1972 from Texas Tech University.

Community philanthropist and University supporter William “Dusty” Durrill passed away on April 8, 2016 at the age of 82. Dusty was a long-time personal friend of the University and will be greatly missed.

Through his generosity, Dusty forever changed the face of our University. The Momentum entryway sculpture and the 12 gazebo-like Palapas around campus are just a few of his contributions. “I felt that the University needed a campus entrance that people could identify with and remember,” Durrill said in 2009.

The sculpture off Ocean Drive now announces Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and inspired the logo currently in use today.

Dedicated in 2010, the main Palapa site, “Sam’s Place, A Place for Memories” with a fountain and bronze statue, is an area that was dedicated to the memory of Shirley “Sam” Durrill, his wife who died in 2008. Through these gifts, he provided private places, where students, faculty and staff are able to go to reflect and where many memorable moments have taken place.

The Durrills’ contributions to the University through the Devary Durrill Foundation also include funding for the establishment of the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center and an internship program at Hurricane Alley waterpark, which is owned by the Durrill Family and has a Momentum slide featuring the A&M-Corpus Christi logo and colors.

He was inducted in 2010 as a member of the University’s Platinum Inner Circle Society.
Roy Ford ‘71
Men’s Basketball 1969-1971

Islanders Women’s Basketball Team
2004-2005 Season

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<td>Kristee Wallace</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
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DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Young Alumni Award: Sara Helmy ’12

Outstanding Alumni Award: Dr. Richard Smith ’03 ’06

Distinguished Alumni Award: Patrick O’Boyle ’86

COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENT HONOREES

College of Business:
Juan Sebastian Garzon ’12 ’13

College of Education & Human Development:
Vinay Dulip ’88 ’95

College of Liberal Arts:
John Marez ’00 ’02

College of Nursing & Health Science:
Heather DeGrande ’06 ’08

See photos from the Homecoming Honors Banquet
As a graduate from the Island University in 1981, it’s my pleasure to serve as National Islander Alumni Board President for the next two years. Born and raised in Corpus Christi, I can recall coming to Ward Island as a child with my godfather when he attended the University of Corpus Christi.

Although our University has gone by several names and has seen many changes over the years, the one constant is the enjoyment we had during our time here on Ward Island. And as a fellow Islander, I urge you to stay connected with your University. Stay connected with your classmates and all other Islanders so that your Alumni Association, almost 45,000 strong, can share in your success. Let’s use our powerful Islander network to continue to help one another make a positive difference in each and every community where an Islander lives.

Your entire alumni board and full-time staff work tirelessly every day to create an Alumni Association that you can be proud of. We hosted one of our most successful Homecoming weekends ever this past February. Nearly 300 Islander alumni and fans attended the official tailgate party held prior to the men’s basketball game and countless more were nearby celebrating with the student section. We look forward to seeing even more friendly Islander faces at next year’s festivities.

We also launched a new Alumni Association Chapter in the city of San Antonio last October. This is the first chapter that we’ve added in nearly two decades. The leadership in the Alamo City has already made great strides in a very short amount of time.

With your help, San Antonio is just the beginning of our expansion. With a chapter already successful in Houston, we have our eyes on geographic areas of Austin, the Rio Grande Valley and Dallas/Fort Worth. Your involvement in these locations will help us decide which city to launch next. Your Alumni Association is always looking for passionate leaders. Contact us at 361.825.2352 today if you want to help get these groups off the ground or send an email to the Executive Director at russell.wagner@tamucc.edu.

You can stay connected with fellow alumni via the IslanderAlumni.org website and social media including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Don’t miss out on the next fun memory... Follow these pages to stay up to date with everything going on in the Islander Alumni Nation.

We look forward to seeing you at our next event very soon... until then, Go Islanders!

Ed Cantu ’81
Alumni Board President
Islander Alumni Association
Launches First-Ever San Antonio Chapter

Nearly two decades was a long enough wait, as the National Alumni Association added its second chapter in nearly 20 years on Oct. 29, 2015. The Chapter teamed up with the Alumni Association and Islander Athletics to officially kick-off the new Alumni Chapter for San Antonio and surrounding areas.

“As our Islander family continues to grow in size, strength and influence, we are very pleased to welcome San Antonio as the newest Islander Alumni chapter,” said Ray De Los Santos, Past President of the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi National Alumni Association Board. “Today we recognize San Antonio as the newest chapter and we look forward to opening new chapters in 2016.”

De Los Santos and more than 50 guests were in attendance, in addition to A&M-Corpus Christi staff to welcome the new chapter.

“We had a great turnout for this event that served as proof that a chapter can be successful here,” said San Antonio Chapter President, Al Arreola Jr. “We already have big plans for the Islanders in this city and can’t wait to get some of our ideas off of the ground.”

The San Antonio Chapter was also presented with their own miniature anchor, a symbol connecting them back to the Island University. The event was complete with free food, cash bar and great company. In addition, Islanders Head Basketball Coaches Willis Wilson and Royce Chadwick spoke about the upcoming season.

“Everyone I have spoken to has shared the same excitement and enthusiasm as the rest of our chapter team,” said Arreola. “The University has a huge San Antonio representation and opening a chapter here only made sense to reach the rest of the Islander community.”

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP
Islander Alumni Board
The Association Board members help guide the vision and execution of the Islander Alumni Association by providing staff with input on programs, events, and services to help benefit more than 44,500 living alumni of the Island University.

2015 Board Members:

President Ed Cantu ’81
Past President Raynaldo De Los Santos ’04
President Elect Cynthia Turner ’89
Vice President Gus Barrera ’94
Treasurer Haysam Dawod ’85
Secretary Suzelle Tinnell ’89
Director Kimberly DeVisser ’07
Director Ben Blanco ’98 ’11
Director Mark McNamara ’93 ’05 ’12
Director Damla Eytemiz ’08 ’11
Director Leanne Mulholland ’08 ’11
Director Melva Perez ’09
Director Chelsea Childress ’10 ’12
Director Doreen Harrell, ’03
Director Stephanie Box ’98 ’02
Director Katie Hoover ’06
Director Melissa Espitia ’07
Director Eloisa Silvas ’04
Director Jenesis Shaw ’06 ’08
Director Jackie Hannebaum ’73
Director Denny Meyer ’05
Director Amy Griffin ’05
Director Martin Donley ’11
Director Stephanie Garcia ’12
Director Elizabeth Parker
Director Roy Ford ’71
Director Al Arreola Jr. ’04
Director Student Foundation
Director Association
Director Greater Houston Chapter
Director President
Director San Antonio Chapter
Director President
ALUMNI COME FROM NEAR & FAR FOR HOMECOMING WEEKEND FESTIVITIES

Each year, the National Islander Alumni Association holds a full weekend of Homecoming festivities for Alumni living both near and far. This year was no different, and may have been one of the most successful weekends to date.

“Our hope is that they make a weekend of it,” said Russell Wagner, the Executive Director of the Alumni Association. “We want alumni from all over to visit Corpus Christi, connect with classmates, take advantage of the events we offer, and really just enjoy their return home.”

In addition to hosting their annual Honors Banquet with Islander Athletics, alumni could also take part in the parade down Shoreline Boulevard, enjoy both the men’s and women’s basketball games, and enjoy a three-hour tailgate party, complete with barbeque and live music from Zane Williams.

Board President Ed Cantu was excited about the attendance. “This is easily one of the best alumni crowds we’ve had at Homecoming ever. Everyone is having a great time, the weather has been perfect, and we’re really excited about seeing some new faces.”

The tailgate crowd of over 300 was a pleasant surprise, and at just $5 per ticket, it was a great deal. “From very early in our planning, our Homecoming Committee really wanted to do a tailgate that was affordable and family friendly,” said Wagner. “There’s no reason why we won’t make this a staple event for years to come.”

Stacey Icke, class of 2007, drove from San Antonio for the weekend. “This is the first time I’ve been to the University in years and it’s amazing to see the changes up close,” said Icke. “I don’t think alumni realize how much there is to do this weekend. My best friend and I have had a great time and we’ll definitely make this an annual tradition.”

Homecoming dates for 2017 will be released in the coming months. Stay tuned to IslanderAlumni.org/Homecoming for more information.

See more photos from the Alumni Homecoming Tailgate.
Russell Wagner was named the new Executive Director of the Alumni Association in the summer of 2015. From Shiner, Texas, Wagner arrived at the Island University in 2004, graduating in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. Directly after graduation, he worked as an Admissions Counselor for the University. In October 2012, he originated the role of Alumni Development Officer for the College of Liberal Arts. “I’m thankful and honored to enter the role of Executive Director,” said Wagner. “The Alumni Association has shown great growth over the past few years. I’m excited to continue this and spread our chapters into other areas of Texas, host more events, and involve more alumni from all generations than we ever have before.”
GIVING THROUGH A GIFT ANNUITY

What is a Charitable Gift Annuity?
A charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a way to make a gift to support student scholarships at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. You make a gift of cash or appreciated assets to us. In return, we will make payments for life to you, you and a loved one, or another person. Each payment will be fixed and the amount of each payment will depend on the age of the person who receives the payments. After all payments have been made, the remaining value of your gift will go to the University to support students, faculty and programs.

Calculate Your Benefits
Would you like to see the benefits of creating a CGA? You can use the Gift Annuity calculator on our website at www.tamuccgift.com to estimate payment projections or tax deductions based on your gift of cash or appreciated assets.

For more information, contact 361.825.3320 or visit www.tamuccgift.com