GRAND OPENING
TAMU-CC raises its profile across town with the public dedication of new Islanders Pavilion and Courts

NEW CAMPUS LEADERSHIP
Collaborative effort brings bold visions to life

ATHLETICS
See 20 years of growth for Islanders Athletics

TESTING DRONES WITH NASA
TAMU-CC is one of two test sites selected to test drones in urban areas
The year following my inauguration flew by quickly; I built my leadership team and we began shaping our plans for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. In this issue of The Islander magazine, we provide a glimpse of those plans along with a look back at our proud history. We welcomed our first freshman class 25 years ago and Islanders Athletics is celebrating its 20th anniversary. The Carnegie Commission for Higher Education recently named us an R2 Doctoral-High Research Activity campus for the first time, which demonstrates that our efforts are being recognized. These achievements and initiatives increase our impact in the community as well as in the lives of our students. I am so proud of this University and everyone here who strives for excellence every day, including our students, faculty, and staff. We also highlight the successes of some of our alumni in this issue along with amazing work being done by students and faculty.

I hope you enjoy catching up on our news, and I look forward to sharing more achievements with you soon. We would love to have you come back to campus to visit with us in person!

Sincerely,

Kelly M. Quintanilla
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PAGE 6: The new Tidal Hall Life Science Research building in the midst of the two-year construction.
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

NEW LEADERSHIP

Nestled on Ward Island, the institution that was originally a Baptist school has evolved into a thriving public university with approximately 12,000 students and more than 51,000 alumni. Its milestones include expanding to 88 academic programs, the addition of a beautiful Performing Arts Center, and becoming an NCAA Division I competitor.

The development and growth of several research centers added to its most recent milestone: the Carnegie Commission of Higher Education categorized it as an R2 Doctoral University for the first time in University history.

In earlier years, the institution billed itself as “The Wave of the Future.” Under the leadership of Dr. Kelly M. Quintanilla, who became its first female president in 2017, the “Next Wave” for the Island campus is underway.

Recent distinctions include research partnerships with NASA and the Federal Aviation Administration and being named among the Top 10 universities nationwide offering a degree in Unmanned Aerial Systems. Programs in nursing, kinesiology, business, elementary teacher preparation, cyber defense, and counseling also have received national distinction.

Quintanilla’s vision for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi includes an unparalleled commitment to every student’s success, closing the gaps in achievement, advancing discoveries that benefit the region and nation, and revitalizing Corpus Christi and South Texas. It is a bold vision that requires collaboration across the University and throughout the community and region.

“I am a staunch believer in partnerships that encourage new and innovative academic programs, increased internships, and enhanced research opportunities, all leading to ever-increasing student success and regional economic development,” Quintanilla said.

To help achieve this bold vision, President Quintanilla has welcomed in new division leaders with a focus on innovation and collaboration, including:

- Mrs. Jaime Nodarse Barrera, Acting Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Mrs. Cheryl Cain, Vice President for Marketing and Communications
- Dr. Ahmed Mahdy, Vice President for Research and Innovation
- Mrs. Jaclyn Mahlmann, Acting Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Mr. Jon Palumbo, Athletic Director
- Dr. Clarenda Phillips, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
To further assist student success, University College was created in summer 2018. This unique college centralizes a full range of support services to facilitate student success from entry into the University through graduation. It includes orientation, advising, the first-year experience, and career preparation, among other support programs. The Viking-Islander Program (VIP) was developed to allow students to begin their college career at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi while also taking some courses at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi to gain familiarity with the four-year campus.

In other changes, the Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach became the Division of Research and Innovation to place emphasis on efforts to innovate across campus and throughout the community. With research expenditures exceeding $28 million in the last year, the University’s efforts to expand its research are proving successful and providing valuable experience to student researchers as well as important impacts in our community.

“Our research provides solutions for regional problems with national and international significance,” Quintanilla said. “Our research serves all who live, work and play in the Gulf of Mexico. It includes cutting-edge technology in unmanned aircraft systems, autonomous systems, cybersecurity, nursing care and innovative aging. Our research improves K-12 education, mental health shortages, and provides business and policy solutions for environmental, national and cultural borders.”

As part of the initiative to partner with and impact our community, an External Relations Task Force was created to address questions and provide recommendations on how to best improve and maximize University relationships with the local and broader community.

“Together, we will continue building on the success of the past knowing that, because of our efforts, the best is yet to come,” Quintanilla said. “Students and graduates are more than just our legacy; they are the future leaders who will chart a direction for dynamic growth for generations to come.”

**Dr. Ahmed Mahdy (left) and Don Albrecht, along with President Kelly Quintanilla, volunteer to serve lunch to students at the Welcome Back Splash and Picnic in fall 2018.**
New Research Facility
TIDAL HALL

Built at the corner of Ocean Drive and Island Boulevard, the newest building on campus, Tidal Hall, is three stories high with impressive views of the bay, Naval Air Station-Corpus Christi and the Harbor Bridge.

In September 2015, the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents appropriated $60 million for construction of the building, to support research and life sciences in the College of Science and Engineering.

Tidal Hall opened its doors to students this summer and supports many of the fastest growing programs with hands-on research opportunities in biology, biomedical sciences, fisheries and mariculture, and marine biology.

"Existing university facilities were not constructed to support research—the University was primarily teaching-oriented through most of its history," said College of Science and Engineering Dean Frank Pezold. "Teaching labs were doing double duty as research labs, odd closets and loading docks were converted to research lab space. This was a major problem for us as we began hiring faculty to support Ph.D. programs—research is an integral and defining component for those programs."

Within the 111,000 square feet of panoramic glass windows, Tidal Hall houses nine instructional labs, 34 research labs, dedicated workspace for master and doctoral and postdoctoral students, and faculty offices. It also includes one of two lactation rooms on campus for new moms.

With the Island University's achievement of R2 Doctoral University – High Research Activity classification by the Carnegie Commission of Higher Education, the University continues its transition to an Emerging Research Institution.

"As a leader among doctoral-granting institutions, A&M-Corpus Christi is committed to preparing graduates for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship by offering excellence in teaching, research, creative activity and service across academic disciplines," said Associate Vice President of Operations Dr. John Dawson. "This new facility complements and further enhances that mission capability."

Tidal Hall represents the University’s largest construction project since the opening of the 18,700-square-foot Islander Dining Hall in 2014.

“This state-of-the-art research facility will be a great draw for graduate students but will also attract highly motivated undergraduate students through our strong undergraduate research program,” Pezold said. •

The Island University celebrated the grand opening of Tidal Hall on April 12.
The Science of LIFE AND DEATH

As a forensic anthropologist at the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences in Houston from 2006 to 2018, Dr. Sharon Derrick often provided families with an answer to a painful mystery: the question of fate.

Derrick joined the Department of Life Sciences in the College of Science and Engineering in summer 2018 to strengthen the Island University’s forensic science course offerings. To that end, Derrick will open the new Forensic Anthropology Center lab in the University’s newest facility, Tidal Hall, in fall 2019. Forensic anthropology courses will be added in subsequent semesters.

A forensic anthropologist is a scientist trained in physical or biological anthropology who applies their expertise in human skeletal anatomy, bone growth and development, and bony reaction to trauma or pathological conditions to legal system casework.

An Austin native, Derrick earned a doctoral degree in physical anthropology at Texas A&M University in College Station in 2001. In 2006, she accepted a position as a physical anthropologist with the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences, which contains the Chief Medical Examiner’s Office and a crime lab. After additional training under the mentorship of a board-certified forensic anthropologist, Derrick also achieved board certification.

“Forensic anthropologists do a lot of trauma analysis in addition to estimating age, sex, stature, and ancestry to help identify human remains,” she said.

From the time she began work on a Houston mass murder case, Derrick identified the remains of seven victims, actually correcting several misidentifications, through the use of modern forensic science tools such as DNA analysis and computerized facial approximations.

Sharing her expertise with students at the Island University, Derrick is teaching a section of the Professional Skills course in the Department of Life Sciences as well as a course called Special Topics in Forensic Anthropology: Exploring Careers in the Forensic Sciences. In that course, students hear presentations from working professionals, including a forensic pathologist, an autopsy assistant, and a mass fatality planning specialist.

Derrick said she’s looking forward to adding new courses in the fall that will eventually allow students to minor in forensics.

“The goal is to generate some Islander forensic scientists out there—maybe forensic chemists, forensic toxicologists, forensic anthropologists, and especially medical examiners, who are in high demand...”
SUBMIT A STORY

HELP US TELL THE ISLANDER STORY!

Did a professor or staff member guide you down a career path, inspire you, or help you through a challenging time during your college career? Do you have a favorite memory or impactful story you’d like to share?

Submit an experience or memory of your time at the Island University. We are building a library of potential stories for future editions of this magazine and other publications and we value your input.

PLEASE SEND US AN EMAIL AT COMMUNICATIONS@TAMUCC.EDU.
College of Business Expands through

NEW RELLIS CAMPUS

From the Coastal Bend to Bryan, Texas, the College of Business educates 1,255 undergraduate and 890 graduate students, with 81 of those attending the new RELLIS campus in Bryan.

A&M-Corpus Christi's College of Business has several professors based at the campus teaching accounting, finance, management, and marketing courses—allowing students to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree.

"RELLIS is small and personal, so you get one-on-one interaction from other students, advisors, and professors."

"The launch of the RELLIS academic alliance allows A&M-Corpus Christi to extend our degree programs to the Brazos Valley," said Dr. John Gamble, College of Business Dean at A&M-Corpus Christi. "The college's focus is centered on student opportunities."

The Texas A&M University RELLIS campus, located at the former Bryan Air Force Base, was built to integrate research and implementation in an array of industries. Ten of the universities in the A&M System will offer coursework at the campus in subjects including business, nursing, criminal justice, communications and chemistry.

Raven Tilman is working toward a business degree at RELLIS and hopes to start an event-planning business after graduation.

"I am loving the experience so far," she said. "Most universities are so large and overwhelming. RELLIS is small and personal, so you get one-on-one interaction from other students, advisors, and professors. I am so excited to finally have found my niche."

All features of the business program in Corpus Christi also are available to the RELLIS campus and include internships with employers throughout Texas; study abroad programs in Europe, Latin America and Asia; and student organization engagement.

The College of Business at A&M-Corpus Christi is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International in both accounting and business, a distinction held by only 1 percent of business schools worldwide.

The extension of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's BBA degree to the RELLIS campus allows students in the Brazos Valley to also benefit from the program offered in Corpus Christi.
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, West Oso ISD

PARTNERSHIP AWARDED $220,000

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s focus on preparing teachers for Texas public schools recently earned a $220,000 grant from the Texas Education Agency. The Grow Your Own Grant supports 10 prospective teachers at the Island University to specifically work for West Oso Independent School District upon graduation and certification.

“This partnership enriches and encourages an incredibly supportive community, recruits and retains amazing and gifted teachers, and most of all, educates our exceptional students,” Conrado Garcia, Superintendent of West Oso ISD, said.

Dr. Carmen Tejeda-Delgado is the Island University’s School and University Partnerships Field Experiences Director and Principal Investigator (PI) of the Grow Your Own Grant. She is also a graduate of West Oso High School and two-time A&M-Corpus Christi alumna. Co-PIs on the grant include Dr. Faye Bruun and Dr. Robin Johnson.

“I had exceptional teachers at West Oso who I can still name to this day,” Tejeda-Delgado said. “They truly helped inspire me to be the educator I am today.”

Grow Your Own provides a $15,000 grant for 10 Island University teacher candidates, along with funding to pay for certification testing, West Oso ISD on-campus training, and textbooks. The 10 graduates will then sign a memorandum of understanding to work at West Oso ISD for at least three years.

“It’s hard to put a value on the grant, because the opportunities it provides are endless,” Tejeda-Delgado said. “This grant strengthens the pipeline from our University to districts like West Oso and encourages our students to work with diverse populations and create culturally responsive strategies and techniques that will only make them better teachers.”

West Oso ISD was chosen based on its need in critical areas including math, science, Spanish, and bilingual education. Half of the A&M-Corpus Christi participants are either Hispanic or African American to better reflect the diversity of West Oso’s student body.

“We thank Dr. Tejeda-Delgado and her team for being pioneers in creating a new academic tradition and helping us build a foundation on which the future of West Oso ISD will be built,” Garcia said.

The Grow Your Own Grant is endorsed by We Teach Texas, a Texas A&M University System-wide focus on recruiting and training the next generation of Texas classroom teachers. The 11 universities of the A&M System produce more fully-certified teachers than any other university system in Texas and have the highest number of teachers remaining in the profession for the first five years of their career.

“The Grow Your Own Grant is a seed—a seed we’ve planted that will continue to grow our wonderful partnership with West Oso ISD,” Tejeda-Delgado said. “We hope to continue providing West Oso, and all surrounding districts, with our cream of the crop teachers prepared here at our own Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.”
Oysters can seem endless in their quantity. Restaurants serve plate after plate of them on the half shell, and in marinas they cluster on bulkheads and moorings like an afterthought. Despite the appearance of abundance, this beloved Texas fishery is in a historic decline.

Dr. Joe Fox, a 40-year veteran of mariculture, thinks the state is overdue for an oyster revolution.

“We used to have hundreds of miles of shell roads and piles of oyster shells three stories high on the shores of Nueces Bay, but production has been sliding and it’s volatile,” said Fox, Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) Chair for Marine Resources Development and Professor of Mariculture, Environmental Science, Coastal & Marine System Science.

Destructive fishing practices and a string of natural disasters have led to a steep decline in oyster production in Texas, with the annual harvest plummeting by 41 percent since 2010. (Continue to next page.)
A large percentage of oysters on local restaurant plates come from outside the state—about 90 percent of U.S. seafood is imported.

Other coastal states have supplemented their production with oyster mariculture to the tune of $270 million annually—Texas just approved oyster farming in the legislative session that ended in May. Fox is hoping to jump-start the industry and support Texas oyster producers, fishermen and restaurants with the launch of a major new program at HRI.

It’s not just economic—oysters are traditionally harvested from public fishing grounds by dredging, which destroys the sea bottom as it brings up its catch. Reefs can be lost, and so are the benefits they provide as habitat for popular sportfish, protection for the shoreline, and a natural filtration system for coastal waters. Oyster mariculture takes fishing pressure off these natural reefs with oysters grown in cages so that they can be easily removed and harvested. They still provide environmental benefits without the economic damage to the habitat.

Fox secured funding for three new projects: two oyster hatcheries and a demonstration project. These facilities will conduct research and grow oysters, but more importantly, they will help support and train a new Texas workforce.

The largest of these projects will be the Texas Oyster Resource and Recovery Center in Palacios. Funded by the RESTORE Act and environmental fines paid out after the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster, the center is a partnership with Texas A&M AgriLife Research. Researchers will grow oyster larvae to support reef restoration and train a local workforce in oyster cage culture. Associate Professor of Aquaculture Dr. John Scarpa is a Co-principal Investigator on the project.

HRI will also partner with AgriLife to operate a research oyster hatchery in Flour Bluff funded by the Texas A&M University System Chancellor’s Research Initiative, and build a demonstration project of about 180 mariculture cages that will grow oysters in Matagorda Bay with the help of federal fisheries disaster relief money from Hurricane Harvey.

“Texas is way behind the curve, but we have a chance to provide real coastal resilience,” Fox said. “This is an economic driver in other coastal states. There’s also an extremely large benefit to bays and estuaries. It’s a no brainer.”

Student achievement starts with support

The Achieve Partnership is an annual scholarship program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi designed to build and sustain relationships between the University and the business and professional community. Through their commitment, Achieve Partners make annual gifts used to support scholarships for Islander students. Make your investment a collaborative effort towards the success of our future and become an Achieve Partner today!
TESTING DRONES

with NASA

As more drones take to the skies—whether for business, leisure, emergency response or package delivery—safety and efficiency are two key priorities.

To ensure that safety, NASA’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management (UTM) project selected the Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence & Innovation (LSUASC) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi to test drone traffic management. The Island University is one of only two test sites selected nationwide.

“This series of tests is a critical step in enabling the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems within an urban environment,” said Mike Sanders, LSUASC Acting Executive Director. “The Lone Star team is proud to have been selected by NASA to work on such critical testing efforts.”

The Lone Star team will start testing this summer and focus on drone communication, collision avoidance, safe landing, services that support UAS operations, and safety in an urban landscape.

This year marks the fourth and final chapter in a series of drone technology tests, with each year increasing in complexity, according to NASA’s Ames Research Center in California’s Silicon Valley.

“For the commercial drone industry to really advance, they need to see the results of this testing to understand the opportunities and challenges posed by flying in an environment where communications, GPS navigation, micro weather, tall buildings, and community acceptance all present hurdles to everyday, safe operation,” said Ronald Johnson, project manager for NASA UTM.

NASA’s UTM project works closely with the Federal Aviation Administration to conduct field demonstrations of small unmanned aircraft systems to fully and safely access low-altitude airspace in support of civil and business opportunities. ◆

For more information about Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence & Innovation at A&M-Corpus Christi, visit lсуasc.tamucc.edu

Drone testing in the urban landscape of Corpus Christi.
ISLANDER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Awards Legacy Rings to Six Recipients

An Islander ring symbolizes fortitude and overcoming challenges, focus on academic achievement, and drive for a successful future. The ring tells a different story for each scholar. For some, it’s trials they have conquered, like being the first in their family to graduate from college or overcoming a health crisis. For others, it’s a reminder of friendships and a cherished campus tradition.

“The Islander ring has proudly remained unchanged since 1999,” said Russell Wagner, Executive Director of the National Islander Alumni Association. “It connects all Islanders who have ever placed the ring on their finger and stepped foot on this campus.”

Each year, the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi National Islander Alumni Association honors students who make profound contributions to the University with complimentary Legacy Rings. From tour guides and student leaders, to athletes and academic achievers, students who earn these rings have an unwavering passion for the campus community. This year, six students were honored.

“I was incredibly touched to receive this ring from the Island University,” said Pilar Harkless, biomedical sciences major. “The ring is important to me because it symbolizes my love of this University. It represents all the hard work I invested during my time here.”

When Harkless first came to A&M-Corpus Christi, she had just completed a year of cancer treatment that stole her health, home, job, and ability to walk. She battled cancer from the bed of a homeless shelter and fought bravely to learn to walk again. As a student, Harkless utilized all the resources available to her including Islander staff, advisors, and faculty to turn her dreams into reality. Harkless is also an avid volunteer who enjoys teaching others to read at the Literacy Council, judging science fairs, and making Valentine’s Day cards for senior citizens.

Joshua Warner and Jasmine Lopez, who both committed hours upon hours of service to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, were also awarded rings. Warner, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration, served as president of the Student Economics Association for two semesters and is described by his professors as hard-working, respectful, honest, and personable. Warner also served his country as a member of the U.S. military.

“A college ring tells your story before you even begin speaking,” said Warner. “One of the first questions I was asked at my new job after graduating was ‘what school did you attend?’ In that moment, I was honored to show my Islander pride thanks to the Legacy Ring.”

Lopez, an environmental science major, is a leader, mentor, and a shining example of an A&M-Corpus Christi Islander. She served the University as an Island Ambassador in the Office of Recruitment and Admissions for nearly four years, giving weekly campus tours,
hosting Island Day campus preview events, and ushering at commencement ceremonies. Lopez was recently named Orientation Leader of the Year, works as a Supplemental Instructor for science courses, and mentors with Programs for Academic Student Support (PASS).

Sofia Rodriguez, a Spanish education major, left her mark on campus through her involvement with numerous organizations and committees including the Islander Cultural Alliance, Campus Activities Board, PAC Advisory Committee, Artistic Advisory Council, and Spanish Club. She was the keynote speaker at the 2018 Hispanic Heritage Month Kickoff and hosted “Painting with Sofia” events for Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Awareness Months.

“Learning that I would receive a Legacy Ring was such an important moment in my life that I will never forget,” said Rodriguez. “I remember hugging my advisor, Susan LaTorre, and us both sobbing. Being recognized for everything I’ve done moved me to my core.”

Another Legacy Ring recipient, Matt Dawod, a pre-professional biomedical sciences major, excelled in the classroom while also being highly involved with several organizations around campus, including the Student Alumni Association, the Pre-Dental Society, and Alpha Epsilon Delta. Both of Dawod’s parents are Islander alumni, and Dawod’s brother, David, was also awarded a Legacy Ring five years ago.

Students can also earn a ring for their achievements in athletics. Kareem South, biomedical sciences major and Islanders Men’s Basketball team captain, made the Academic Honor Roll six times in the past two seasons, and in April 2018 was selected for the Southland Conference All-Academic First Team. Following graduation, South plans to attend physical therapy school and open his own clinic.

“The Islander Ring is special because it reminds you of all the people that came before you and brings you into the tradition of Islander pride and honor,” said South. “I was hugely surprised when I learned I would be receiving a Legacy Ring. To me, it symbolizes all the positive experiences and lifelong bonds I’ve made here at the Island University.”

Each of these six exemplary Islanders were chosen through a nomination process and were ultimately awarded Legacy Rings based on a history of leadership, commitment, and service.

“The ring recipients are students who love being Islanders and make an unbelievable impact, expecting very little in return. They are hard workers who excel in the classroom, are first to arrive and the last ones to leave,” said Wagner. “The Legacy Ring is a way for the Alumni Association to say ‘thank you’ for the selfless work students contribute to making the Island University an amazing place.”
PORTS®, or Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System, is a network of sensors installed in the vicinity of a port providing information to assist with the safe navigation of vessels in and out of the port. The Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science (CBI) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi recently completed the installation of data collection systems around Corpus Christi Bay that make up Corpus Christi PORTS®. Six systems are currently operational providing oceanographic, meteorological, and environmental data such as water level, water velocity, wind, temperature, and atmospheric pressure. The data, once validated, are made available to the Aransas-Corpus Christi Pilots Association and general public.

Since 2007, CBI has installed five of the 10 PORTS® along the northern Gulf Coast and maintains 90 additional data collection systems along the Gulf Coast. Discussions with the Port of Corpus Christi Authority and industry leaders are currently underway to expand the capabilities of Corpus Christi PORTS®.

As an emerging export leader of liquified natural gas, the fourth-largest port in the U.S. by total tonnage, and a leading exporter of domestic-produced crude oil, the Port of Corpus Christi is a key player in moving products around the nation.

“Our outstanding railroad and highway network connectivity has launched the Port of Corpus Christi as a major gateway to international and domestic maritime commerce,” said Port of Corpus Christi CEO Sean Strawbridge. “But the responsibility of being a leader in ‘Moving America’s Energy’ includes a commitment to one of the Port’s core values—safety is and will continue to be that core value, and the PORTS® agreement is another pillar of that commitment.”

In addition to supporting maritime navigation, Corpus Christi PORTS® serve as an important tool in decision making and research activities. Natural disaster preparedness and mitigation, as well as studies in the areas of sea level rise, land subsidence, and bay circulation are all
supported by Corpus Christi PORTS® stations data collection.

“CBI is also under contract to maintain all NOAA National Water Level Observation Network stations in Texas as well as Sabine-Neches PORTS®, Houston-Galveston PORTS®, Corpus Christi PORTS®, the Texas Coastal Ocean Observational Network, and many other data collection systems along the Texas Coast,” said James Rizzo, CBI Assistant Director of Operations.

This wealth of data is also used by recreational boaters and anglers, commercial fishermen, wind surfers, and the sailing community.

“The data are available to everyone living, working, or playing along the Texas Coast and support science and research,” said Rizzo. “I’m sure that anybody with regular activities on or around Corpus Christi Bay use data from one or more of the systems we maintain.”

At its core, Corpus Christi PORTS® is a decision-making tool designed to help ship pilots and barge captains make informed decisions when navigating waterways.

“I see these stations as road signs for pilots navigating the waterways of Corpus Christi Bay. They need to know the environmental conditions before they reach an area in order to make informed decisions for safe transits. Prior to PORTS®, transits were made based solely on the experience of the vessel pilots,” Rizzo said. “Given the tremendous growth at the Port of Corpus Christi, the system costs are a relatively small investment to help ensure safe and efficient navigation of our community waterways.”

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**CORPUS CHRISTI PORTS® STATIONS:**
- AP BUOY
- ARANSAS, ARANSAS PASS
- OXY OIL AND GAS CM
- PORT ARANSAS
- PORT ARANSAS, CHANNEL VIEW
- USS LEXINGTON

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JAMES RIZZO: Assistant Director of Operations at the Conrad Blucher Institute.
The Coastal Bend knows the Island University by many names: A&M-Corpus Christi, A&I, Corpus Christi State, and University of Corpus Christi, which was the original name when it opened its doors in 1947 to 312 students.

Regardless of its name, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is a staple in the Coastal Bend and continues to make an impact.

Recently installed basketball courts, named Islanders Pavilion, and sand volleyball court, called Islanders Courts, are nestled within The Water's Edge park along the downtown bayfront.

“Sand volleyball is a fun spectator sport, so it gives people along the bayfront an opportunity to walk by and watch a match,” said Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Athletic Director Jon Palumbo. “It’s community engagement and it tells our story.”

Palumbo, who joined the University last year, is invested in engaging the community through athletics by inviting community members to attend games but also by encouraging student-athletes to volunteer with causes they care about.

Last semester, student-athletes volunteered with more than 20 organizations and programs that helped elementary students, animals, the elderly, citizens with disabilities, youth sports, and the homeless. Student-athletes also participated in beach clean-ups, festivals, and building community parks.

Peyton Smith, a 19-year-old sophomore and basketball player, is a Corpus...
Christi native and grew up attending A&M-Corpus Christi basketball games with his family.

“My whole family went and it’s just something we did together,” he said. “It was a dream of mine to play basketball here and when I had the opportunity, I took it.”

When Smith is not attending business classes, studying, or practicing, he proudly volunteers his free time by playing basketball with elementary students.

“Not everyone is as blessed as we are to go to school and be an athlete,” he said. “These kids look up to us. It can really make their day and week to go hang out with them for a little bit. Whenever I’m with them I want them to have fun and that’s what it’s all about.”

Palumbo said in his short time as athletic director, he’s seen the importance of Islander Impact and what it really means.

“For our student-athletes, coaches and staff, the positive impact we can have on the local community is something we keep in mind every single day. It’s an opportunity and a responsibility that we embrace.”

Student-athletes aren’t the only ambassadors of A&M-Corpus Christi. According to TAMU-CC Career Services, more than 650 local internships have been awarded to Island University students since fall 2017.

“As our programs continue to grow, more students are attracted to the University,” said Internship Coordinator Landon Allemand. “We’re bringing people to Corpus Christi, and by building the University brand, we also build the prestige in Corpus Christi, which helps our overall economy.”

The Island University recently teamed up with the City of Corpus Christi and the Texas Department of Transportation to show Islander Pride by painting the Ennis Joslin Road underpass columns a vibrant and eye-catching blue and green. The underpass serves as a corridor for students, faculty, staff, residents, and visitors traveling to campus.

In January, Islander students and staff kicked off Homecoming through a proclamation during a city council meeting and encouraged community participation in various events including Blue day Tuesday, a show of Islander Pride that invites community members to wear blue on Tuesdays.

“The underpass project and proclamation bring pride and awareness to the University and that’s one of the most important things for our community,” said Paulette Guajardo, At-Large City Council member and Islander alumna. “There’s a difference when you have that kind of pride because it’s the school that had so much to do with who you became as an adult.”

Guajardo plans to continue her work as a councilwoman by improving the city with more job and housing opportunities so students who come to A&M-Corpus Christi embrace the city’s offerings and choose to raise their families in the Coastal Bend.

“Those are the people who are going to lead this city and continue our vibrant work,” she said.

\[COMMUNITY PRIDE: Every Tuesday is now Blue day! Throw on your favorite Islander T-shirt and show your TAMU-CC Pride!\]

\[ISLANDERS PAVILION: The courts had their grand opening April 24.\]

\[VOLLEYBALL: The Islanders brand can be seen throughout downtown Corpus Christi. New sand volleyball courts have been added to McGee Beach on Shoreline Boulevard.\]
Join us as we look back at a few of the top stories that connected our TAMU-CC community throughout this past year.

ICYMI: Sisters Jenna Bush Hager and Barbara Bush shared their personal stories and universal revelations with guests attending today’s Sisters First Luncheon held on the TAMU-CC campus. Thank you to the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women’s Health for bringing this event to our campus and the Corpus Christi community!

Your University may have a football team, but my University is on Shark Week so I think we are pretty much even 😂😂

ICYMI: @IslandersBSB pitcher Aaron Hernandez has been drafted by the Los Angeles @Angels, becoming the highest MLB draft pick in #TAMUCC History! Full story here: ow.ly/iMTv30km5KK

Breaking news: For the first time in its history, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi has achieved an “R2 Doctoral University – High Research Activity” classification by Carnegie Commission of Higher Education!
I-Create MakerSpace
BRINGS IDEAS TO LIFE

It’s physical technology, natural technology, low tech, and high tech—it runs the whole gamut. The new I-Create MakerSpace gives Islanders and the community access to limitless potential for innovation and imagination. Located on the second floor of the Mary and Jeff Bell Library, I-Create offers a wide variety of machines and technology in one space to encourage hands-on creativity and exploration.

“The I-Create lab lets users play and explore and realize some things they might not even know are possibilities,” said Dr. Cate Rudowsky, Dean of Libraries. “It takes people out of their comfort zone, in a good way. For students, it extends organic academic learning and provides engagement extending beyond the traditional classroom setting.”

Makerspaces are an increasing trend across the United States. Based on collaborative creation, these spaces provide access to various tools to pursue any passion or curiosity. The Island University’s makerspace, in planning stages for over a year, brings those possibilities to the Coastal Bend.

I-Create visitors can create a sculpture with a 3D printer, sew and embroider fabric, cut and engrave material using a laser cutter, explore digital worlds with a virtual reality headset, and much more. The space houses more than $100,000 in professional-grade machinery and devices.

“This space, and the technology within, is available to all students regardless of what they’re studying. This is an interdisciplinary space where different majors can bring ideas to life,” said Sylvia Sanchez, I-Create MakerSpace Coordinator.

Along with the Corpus Christi community, local nonprofits and businesses are also invited to take advantage of I-Create’s offerings. Visitors are encouraged to think of the space not as a quiet place, as libraries are often categorized, but instead use it as a place to explore ideas and engage with others.

“Technology changes so quickly that unless you’re actively learning new things all the time you fall behind,” said Louis Katz, Professor of Ceramics, who is sharing his glaze mixing machine with the I-Create lab. “This space gives people the opportunity to learn how to use some of the latest equipment on the market. There’s no telling what people could do with the facilities here—it’s unlimited.”

Sanchez and Rudowsky are looking forward to expanding the offerings of the I-Create MakerSpace, with new pieces of equipment already identified for purchase. The lab is free to use, though there is a nominal charge for supplies, or users are welcome to bring their own materials.
This summer, a cohort of 33 postbaccalaureate students have begun classes in a new accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program that—in a first for U.S. nursing schools—integrates the Arts disciplines across the curriculum.

The collaboration between the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CONHS) and the Department of Art & Design in the College of Liberal Arts is funded by a $2.5 million Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) four-year grant. The new postbaccalaureate curriculum focuses on interprofessional community-based primary care, with an emphasis on chronic disease prevention and management, including behavioral health, according to CONHS Dean Julie Hoff.

“We’re all aware as consumers that health care delivery models are changing. Acute care—such as hospitalization, for example—is very expensive, so care is moving to the community with a strong focus on primary care, which includes health maintenance, health promotion, and disease prevention,” Hoff said. “We need to educate nurses to have primary care competencies so they can participate on teams practicing to the full scope of their nursing license.”

The BSN is a four-semester program that includes nine semester hours of graduate course work—dual credit to BSN students—and seeks to be paperless: students are provided an iPad to access texts and apps to complete course assignments. To support the new BSN program, CONHS and Department of Art & Design faculty, along with the Art Museum of South Texas, have created the Islander Center for Nursing.

Art Professor Rich Gere, Chair of the Department of Art and Design and Co-principal Investigator on the HRSA grant, said this approach to health care incorporates the arts in order to improve nursing skills through observation, communication, aesthetic knowing, teamwork, empathy, cultural competencies, active listening, sensory perception, ethics and process-based problem-solving.

Like nursing, the creation and appreciation of art is an extremely detailed and subtle process. The project goal is to enhance connectivity between nurses and clients. By helping nursing students refine their observation of details, they will gain heightened insights into the individual needs of their patients, according to Gere.

“Students will take a drawing class, but we’re not teaching drawing, we’re teaching observation,” he said. “In visual assessment methods, we have empirical knowing, which is a factual and aligned knowing with quantitative explanations, and then we have ethical knowing, which draws on one’s moral values. Aesthetic knowing reflects the nurse’s perception of the patient’s needs. And so again we’re looking to enhance skills and sensitivity, empathy, and detailed observation through this art class.”

The admissions committee narrowed the list of 160 applicants to 33 for the inaugural class. To prepare for the students, nine interdisciplinary faculty collaboratively built the new 22-course curriculum. Drs. Katelijine Acker and Heather DeGrande led the team in the curricular design, creating new courses, and building iPad knowledge and skills.

“Going paperless represents an opportunity for students to focus on the content and not necessarily writing notes in the classroom or fumbling through a textbook,” said Acker. “Together with the art component, this makes for an innovative program.”
“Athletics is a rallying point for students,” Island University President Dr. Kelly Quintanilla said. “Athletics is also a huge component in the outreach of an institution, because many people’s first exposure to a university is due to them seeing or reading about an athletic event.”

The current athletics program started with director Dan Viola, who was hired in May 1997. Viola rebuilt Islanders Athletics starting with a one-man staff, an office and a desk, without a telephone. However, he did have a goal: to catapult the Islanders to becoming a NCAA Division I school.

Five years later, the Island University was accepted for NCAA Division I status and currently competes in 16 men’s and women’s intercollegiate sport programs. Since joining the Southland Conference in 2005, the Islanders have captured 36 regular season and tournament championships.

Two of the most memorable athletic moments this past year occurred in basketball and baseball.

Most people in the Coastal Bend recognize the name Joseph Kilgore because 2018 was a big year for him. In March 2018, Kilgore recorded a perfect score and took home the title of Slam Dunk Champion at the State Farm College Slam Dunk Contest Championship, putting the City of Corpus Christi and the Island University on the national stage. The contest was part of the NCAA Final Four festivities and aired live on ESPN 2 for millions to see. His performance earned him the number 5 spot on ESPN’s Top 10 that evening. The City of Corpus Christi also recognized April 25 as “Joseph Kilgore Day,” and he finished the year being drafted by the Windy City Bulls in the 12th pick overall.

Another Islanders athlete who also found himself in the national spotlight in 2018 was Aaron Hernandez. Hernandez, a sophomore and pitcher for Islanders Baseball, started in 14 games. He also struck out 102 batters in 83.0 innings, becoming only the seventh Islander to reach 100 strikeouts in a single season. In June, his winning performance on the field caught the attention of the Los Angeles Angels and he was selected to play Major League Baseball in the third round of the 2018 draft.

Steven King, Director of Broadcasting and Development for Islanders Athletics, has been part of the program since its resurrection in 1997. He recalled several milestones that are indicative of the department’s growth.

In 2007, long distance runner Shadrack Songok trained at Cabaniss Field, located near Corpus Christi’s westside, because the University didn’t have a track for him to run on, King recalled.

It may have been an inconvenience, but Songok persevered and became a three-time NCAA champion, winning the 10,000-meter run twice and the 5,000 once. Songok was the school’s first NCAA Champion.

Another milestone was when the Islanders moved their basketball games from Memorial Coliseum to the new American Bank Center in downtown Corpus Christi.

“It gave the program immediate credibility as having one of the best home arenas in Texas,” King said. “This gave the team a tremendous amount of pride and perspective that not only the University, but the community was giving their support and commitment.”

The 2006-07 Islanders men’s basketball team soared to the athletic program’s first NCAA Tournament appearance. Under head coach Ronnie Arrow, the Islanders took the Southland Conference with a program record 26 wins. The season remains the benchmark for wins while also holding another five records to this day and put Islanders Athletics in the limelight.

“In the first year, we had no games, we had two players and we went out recruiting,” Arrow said. “We went from no program at all to seven years later being in the NCAA tournament.”

During the past decade, several athletics buildings were constructed that many Islander student-athletes now call their second homes. These facilities helped shape the department’s image and appeal to future Islanders. They include the Dugan Wellness Center in 2009,
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi revives its intercollegiate athletics program. Islanders men’s basketball defeats the Texas Tech Red Raiders in Lubbock.

2005
Islanders Athletics is invited to Southland Conference.

2001
Islanders baseball upsets Texas A&M on the Aggies’ home field.

2003
The Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center becomes the campus home for Islanders volleyball and select men’s and women’s basketball games.

2005-2018
Women’s volleyball wins back-to-back Southland championships and appears in two straight NCAA tournaments, going undefeated in Southland play during that span.

2015-2016
Men’s tennis wins 10 regular season Southland Conference titles and seven Southland Conference tournament championships.

2009
Women’s tennis wins three straight Southland Conference regular season titles, two Southland Conference tournament championships and has two NCAA tournament appearances.

2016-2018
Women’s volleyball wins back-to-back Southland championships and appears in two straight NCAA tournaments, going undefeated in Southland play during that span.

2002
Athletic Department is accepted for NCAA Division I status.

2018
Jon Palumbo joins A&M-Corpus Christi as the new athletic director.

“Thomas J. Henry Tennis Center in 2011, Dr. Jack Dugan and Family Track and Soccer Stadium in 2013, and the sand volleyball courts at Momentum Village in 2015.

“It was important for me to invest in our student-athletes and create a space that would assist our coaches and staff in winning championships,” said Dr. Jack Dugan. “Supporting our home town team is something that I feel strongly benefits the Corpus community.”

Many individuals, including administrators, coaches and student-athletes helped lay the foundation for success. Now, 20 years later, current Director of Athletics Jon Palumbo said he is focused on the future and continuing the momentum.

“We have a dedicated staff, experienced coaches and talented student-athletes,” Palumbo said. “Our department is poised to help shape the trajectory of a university that recently received a Tier 2 Carnegie classification, has seen almost $350 million in construction over the past decade, and boosted undergraduate enrollment 29 percent since 2012.”

Palumbo joined the Islanders in October 2018. The department that once housed a one-man staff now has more than 75 employees and a budget of nearly $12 million supporting 245 student-athletes from around the world.

A former La Salle University baseball player, Palumbo spent the past six years as the Deputy Director of Athletics at Virginia Commonwealth University, where he was instrumental in developing and implementing a culture of fostering and sustaining success, growing a brand and generating revenue—all of which he plans to accomplish at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi as well.

His five-year strategic plan focuses on becoming a prominent and successful Division I program and building a strong relationship with the community to further enhance Islander engagement.

“With the support of University leadership and the student body, the hard work and dedication of our coaches and student-athletes, and the investment of our alumni and local community, the sky is the limit for Islanders Athletics,” Palumbo said. ◆
President’s Circle at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is our most prestigious private giving society, directly supporting the top priorities and vision of Dr. Kelly M. Quintanilla and the faculty and staff. With the contributions made by members of President’s Circle, the University is able to uphold its unparalleled commitment to every student’s success by providing funding for the initiatives that have been identified as crucial to the success of Islander students. Funding is additionally used for numerous annual activities and programming implemented throughout the year by the President’s Office, further building upon community engagement.

MEMBER BENEFITS
Membership in the President’s Circle places you among individuals who continually focus their efforts on the vitality of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. You are both an advisor and a friend to the University. Throughout the year, we have many events and activities exclusively for President’s Circle members. We greatly appreciate the support of this devoted group.

memberscircle.tamucc.edu

MEMBER LEVELS
Gold Circle: $5,000 | Silver Circle: $2,500 | Bronze Circle: $1,000

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 or endowed scholarships, the University established the Endowed Scholarship Council.

For more information about the Endowed Scholarship Council or other giving opportunities, contact 361.825.2639.
TOP NEWS

BUILDING NAMED FOR FURGASON

In December, more than 200 Islander faculty, staff, students, and local dignitaries celebrated the dedication of the Dr. Robert R. Furgason Engineering Building, formerly known as the Engineering Building. President Emeritus Furgason joined the University in 1990 as its ninth president, serving the institution for 14 years.

During his presidency, Furgason ushered in a wave of growth that included not only increased enrollment and new academic programs, but new classroom space, labs, offices, operations, and buildings—including the building that now bears his name. It was an era that saw the University join the Texas A&M System and downwardly expand from a two-year institution into a comprehensive four-year institution.

Dr. Furgason (right) at the reception to celebrate his namesake building.

PEACE POLE BROUGHT TO CAMPUS

Students from 51 nations and 48 states comprise the Islander student body, and this spirit of diversity and unity was celebrated during a Peace Pole dedication in February.

Gifted by South Texas Rotary District 5930, the Peace Pole features the phrase “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in eight different languages, plus Braille. The languages were selected based on the native languages of the most populous groups on campus and include Arabic, English, German, Hindi, Mandarin, Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese. The Peace Pole is centrally located near the University Center between East Lawn and Anchor Plaza.

Dr. Marilyn Spencer, retired professor and Department Chair of Economics, and past district governor for Rotary District 5930, led the effort to bring the Peace Pole to campus.

MAKING LASTING IMPACTS IN BROOKS COUNTY

Imagine living in a community where your family and friends don’t have access to reliable health care, many of your neighbors live in poverty, and teen pregnancy rates are the highest in the state. This is reality in Brooks County, but Islanders are looking for solutions.

Dr. Stephen Lenz, Associate Professor of Counseling Education, along with the Behavioral and Health Outreach Leadership Development (BHOLD) project, received $410,000 from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health to support a citizen-driven healthier community initiative in Brooks County—which ranks 242 out of 243 counties in Texas for quality of life. BHOLD was created in partnership with Community Action Corporation of South Texas (CACOST).

Lenz and his doctoral students are promoting better mental health services, and after a three-year period of data gathering, the group will formulate solutions to make the biggest impact possible.
NEW DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi announced a new name for The Division of Research, Commercialization and Outreach. The division is now called Research and Innovation (R&I) and is led by Dr. Ahmed Mahdy, Vice President for Research and Innovation. The name change better aligns the division with the University’s vision for a culture of innovation and an unparalleled commitment to every student’s success.

REGENTS PROFESSOR ROBERT L. SMITH

For his exemplary teaching, research, scholarship, and service-oriented professionalism, Dr. Robert L. Smith has been named a 2018-2019 Texas A&M University System Regents Professor. Smith has been a distinguished professor at the Island University for nearly 20 years. For 15 of those years, he served as the department chair in counseling and educational psychology, as well as director of the doctoral program, which he played a significant role in bringing to the Island University.

Regents Professor is the highest award bestowed upon faculty by the A&M System.

VIKING TO ISLANDER PROGRAM, A CO-ENROLLMENT PARTNERSHIP

The new Viking Islander Program (VIP) is a co-enrollment partnership between Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Del Mar College that provides a guarantee of full admission to the Island University for students successfully completing program requirements. In addition, VIP allows students to use A&M-Corpus Christi course credits toward the completion of an Associate Degree at Del Mar College. Academic advisors, faculty, and staff at both institutions facilitate VIP student success. VIP students enjoy the university experience afforded by A&M-Corpus Christi student services and activities, residence hall life, and sporting events.
The Emmys and Grammy's Recognize

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

We are proud to share the stories of two nationally recognized alumni. Ben Philipp is part of an Emmy Award-winning comedy series, and Matt Treviño was nominated for a Grammy for his work with elementary students.

BEN PHILIPP

Theatre alum in production crew of “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”

Islander alumnus Ben Philipp ’04 was a studio art major when Professor Don Luna approached the Sugar Land native about the possibility of utilizing his art skills in theatre production.

He contributes his artistic eye and understanding of color, proportions, and texture to support the Emmy Award-winning comedy series, “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel.”

Philipp credits his rise in the heady world of film and television production to his time at the Island University. At A&M-Corpus Christi, he worked on “The Little Shop of Horrors” and “The Who’s Tommy” rock musical, as well as traditional productions like “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

For “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” Philipp primarily utilizes his network to locate and coordinate vintage rentals and purchases from across the country.

“I coordinate with costume rental houses to get pieces of clothing into our office to use as stock or for a specific scene,” he said. “I generally do a 10- to 12-hour day. Working in TV and film means long hours, so we work nonstop at full steam for the run of shooting. And then once we’re done, you’re essentially unemployed until you start up again on whatever the next project is.”

Philipp moved to New York City in 2008 and soon found himself driving a minivan around Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens doing costume pickups and drop-offs for the ABC comedy series “Ugly Betty.”

“Understanding the value of professional relationships, Philipp went on to work on other high-profile TV shows, such as “Pan Am,” “White Collar,” “Boardwalk Empire,” “The Michael J. Fox Show” and “Happyish.”

“I really cherish the time that I spent at the Island University,” he said. “There’s something magical about learning who you want to be and what you want to do, and that happened for me at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.”

MATT TREVIÑO

Nominated for Grammy Music Educator Award

Islander alumnus Matthew Treviño ’08 is only a decade removed from his days at the Island University. However, in 2018, his passion and commitment to his career earned him one of the greatest accolades in his field, a nomination for a Grammy Music Educator Award.

From an initial pool of 2,800 nationwide nominations, the San Antonio-based elementary school music instructor advanced to the semifinal round, which whittles the field to the final 10 nominations.

Although it was such an honor to have been so close to winning,” Treviño said, “the real winners are the children I work with every day.”

The benefits of a musical education are well-documented. The article “Associations between music education, intelligence, and spelling ability in elementary school” in the March 2011 Advances in Cognitive Psychology shows third grade students who participate in high-quality music programs score higher on reading and spelling tests, regardless of socio-economic status or school district.

“I was pretty lucky in elementary school; I had two courses of music every day,” Treviño said. The Corpus Christi native attended the now-shuttered Chula Vista Academy of Fine Arts and Wynn Seale Academy of Fine Arts before graduating from Carroll High School in 2002.

At Del Mar College, Treviño became a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and served as the music fraternity’s chapter president. At A&M-Corpus Christi, he played an integral role in founding a Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia fraternity chapter and served as its first president.

Today, Treviño feels honored and proud to be in his fourth year as a music specialist at Roan Forest Elementary School in North East ISD.

“The community here was hungry for music, and the parents are very vocal in their support,” he said.

Matthew Treviño teaches music at Roan Forest Elementary School.
TOP: While working in New York, Ben Philipp adjusts a piece on one of his many costume designs.
SECOND ROW: Costumes designed by Ben Philipp during his time at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.
Art Professor Greg Reuter Looks Back on
40 YEARS OF TEACHING

When Art Professor Greg Reuter arrived from California to teach ceramics and sculpture at Corpus Christi State University in 1978, the University stationery still had the name Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. In the ensuing 40 years, Reuter has taught thousands of students, lectured in Mexico, Germany, and Japan as well as in the United States, and shown his artwork across the globe. Reuter’s work also appeared in the 1988 film, “D.O.A.,” which starred Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan. Reuter retired in December 2018.

What was the University like in those days?
It was a small campus with lots of committed people who had been working together on growing our potential. The energy was great and we all knew we were on the cusp of something bigger. My first office was in an old military barracks that has now been torn down, and the Center for Arts was still under construction.

Over a 40-year career, technology has evolved and yet some of the classes are still very traditional. How has technology changed the way you teach?
I’ve always tried to keep up with the latest materials and tools to create work. We used to just use plaster molds but now silicon rubber is cleaner and more efficient. The one thing about being a teacher is you evolve and grow your techniques just as much as your students, but you always stay one step ahead. There’s value in understanding history and the way we used to do things, but sometimes the concept and how it relates to who we are today is more important than the process. To realize your vision today, you might need a computer, a piece of paper, or you just might need a piece of clay to dive right in.

You started the Oso Bay Biennial, a long-running creative conference that attracts artists from all over the U.S. What does that mean to you?
I've got 20 Oso Bay Biennials under my belt. We've had shows in the gallery with work from French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). We have brought famous artists from all over the world. The Bell Library’s History Harvest project has agreed to house my box of Oso Bay material. Those records are a real testament to what our department has done, who we brought to campus, and how we impacted the local and national arts scene.

How has the student population in the art department changed through the years?
When I first came, we were a small commuter campus. However, we began growing right away. We were drawing students from San Antonio, Houston, and the Valley, but now with the new graduate program, we're enrolling students from all over. Our major focus is to get students either a teaching credential or into graduate school; 90 percent of our Bachelor of Fine Arts majors continued on to graduate school and are now teaching.

What’s ahead for you?
I’m an artist, so it’s time for me to develop that part of my life. I recently created an art history book called “Reuter: A Survey, 1967 to 2002” with pages 7 feet tall and 3 feet wide that was on display at K Space Contemporary in March 2019. I also have a one-person show scheduled to open in September 2019 at the Rockport Art Center.

REUTER’S PUBLIC WORKS IN CORPUS CHRISTI
• “Return” tile floor mural, Corpus Christi City Hall Atrium, 1987 (collaborated with William Wilhelmi)
• “Melville’s Moby Dick” ceramic tile mural, Greenwood Library, 1992
• “Trace Remains” bronze castings, Janet F. Harte Library, 2006
• “Traces of Corpus Christi” bronze castings, Corpus Christi Art Center, 2009 (collaborated with Jack Gron)
• “A Year in Sand” bronze sculpture, Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
• Floor tile mural, University Center, 1999 (collaborated with William Wilhelmi)
Alumni Association Announces

NEW ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The value of giving back is one of the cornerstone lessons students learn at the Island University. It is a lesson many alumni take to heart and put their money behind. Thanks to involved alumni, the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi National Alumni Association announced its new Islander Forever Endowed Scholarship for full-time undergraduate students. Beginning in fall 2019, the Islander Forever Endowed Scholarship will begin impacting qualified students with scholarships of $2,500 each.

The new endowment was started with a gift from the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Alumni Association and its many members. Although there are currently two scholarships awarded annually, the group expects the number of awards to increase as more of the 51,000 alumni continue contributing to the growth of the endowment.

“In the last few years, the National Alumni Association has carved out what we think will be a keystone to giving for the Association,” said Cynthia Turner ’89, Alumni Board President. “We really wanted to make an impact in the lives of students, so we groomed our focus as a networking group to include a broader scope and mission of giving back.”

The Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Alumni Association fosters a lifelong relationship between the University and its growing number of Islander alumni. The organization seeks to connect alumni of all ages and encourage continued involvement in the growth of their alma mater.

An official announcement of the new scholarship was made at the 2019 Homecoming Honors Banquet in February.

“The Islander Forever Endowed Scholarship will enhance our mission, as well as inspire other alumni to give back to the University and impact future Islanders,” Turner said.

If you would like to help a student, consider contributing to the endowment by visiting giving.tamucc.edu and selecting “Islander Forever Scholarship” from the dropdown menu.
February 4-9, 2019

ISLANDER HOMECOMING

Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members came together to celebrate Islander spirit for Homecoming 2019. Relive the best moments of the weeklong festivities through these photos. Also, be sure to check out our YouTube channel to see videos featuring our outstanding alumni honorees. We hope you will make plans to join us for Homecoming 2020. Stay tuned for dates and activities!

HOMECOMING HONORS BANQUET HONOREES

TOP ROW (FROM LEFT):
Wayne Fellers, '94, '96 (College Achievement Honoree-College of Education & Human Development);
Patrick Ayarzagoitia, '92, '11 (College Achievement Honoree-College of Nursing & Health Sciences);
Daniel J. Wagner, '98 (College Achievement Honoree-College of Science & Engineering);
Ronnie Arrow, former coach (Athletic Hall of Honor Honoree)

BOTTOM ROW (FROM LEFT):
Anita Reed, '84, '01 (College Achievement Honoree-College of Business); Caitlin Bailey, '12 (Young Alumnus Award);
Linda R. Benavides, '88, '92 (Distinguished Alumnus Award); Katie Evans-Sanchez, '04 (Athletic Hall of Honor Honoree);
Alisa Hope Wagner, '99 (College Achievement Honoree-College of Liberal Arts); Dr. Frances Ulkes, '15 (Outstanding Alumnus Award)
MARK YOUR CALENDAR TO JOIN US

JULY 10
TEXAS OYSTER AQUACULTURE SUMMIT
University Center (UC)

JULY 10-SEPTEMBER 15
ISLANDER CELL PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW
Mary & Jeff Bell Library (LIB)

JULY 13
LONESTAR UAS COMMUNITY MEETING
University Center (UC)

JULY 18
ALUMNI NIGHT AT THE CORPUS CHRISTI HOOKS
Whataburger Field

AUGUST 8
COLLEGE 101: FUTURE ISLANDER CONFERENCE
University Center (UC)

AUGUST 10
SUMMER COMMENCEMENT
American Bank Center

OCTOBER 2
STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY
University Center (UC)

OCTOBER 19
ISLAND DAY CAMPUS PREVIEW EVENT

NOVEMBER 16
ISLAND DAY CAMPUS PREVIEW EVENT

Visit tamucc.edu/events to learn more about our upcoming events.