Fish Aides serve NOLA

Freshmen travel to New Orleans, LA to serve communities and learn about new culture

The Fish Aides headed back from winter break a week early to spend the week serving the community of New Orleans. On our way there, we stopped in Houston to spend the day educating elementary-aged students about the principles of economic success as part of the Junior Achievement program. Leading in various classrooms, the Fish Aides engaged students with optimism and enthusiasm and even taught them some Aggie traditions. Through this experience, we learned how to convey lesson material in a fun but informative manner and how to command a classroom full of children.

Once in New Orleans, we spent two more days volunteering at various ReNew schools in underprivileged districts. At these places, there was never a shortage of tasks, as the schools needed much help. Some of our work included taking inventory, weeding out gardens, and organizing storage closets. One of our larger tasks was cleaning up a school’s playground, which included moving a massive pile of mulch. In this task especially, the Fish Aides demonstrated teamwork and perseverance. Through the pouring rain, every single person worked tirelessly for several hours, taking minimum breaks. Our completion of this lengthy task exceeded the school’s expectations and the school administrators were extremely appreciative. I was impressed with but not surprised by my fellow Fish Aides’ extreme eagerness to perform any task asked of them.

The last day of the trip was my personal favorite. We visited Fairhaven Children’s Home, which serves to provide a loving home for children as well as to ship numerous containers overseas every year to fill basic needs for medicine and food. Although we were there to serve and to give to Fairhaven, I believe that Fairhaven gave far more to us. Owner Johnny Huffman’s life mission of service is truly amazing. I think I can speak for all of the Fish Aides when I say that Mr. Huffman’s example of a life committed to servant leadership-- in his home and around the world-- humbled us and inspired us to go forth and make an impact with our service.

The service projects on this trip gave us many opportunities to take initiative, to motivate those around us, and to learn to be flexible in all situations. All in all, the winter trip was a wonderful opportunity not only to grow individually as leaders, but for us as Fish Aides to grow stronger as a team.

Contributed by Emily Parrish

Race Matters

Diversity Commission hosts panel to discuss racism in present day America

The Race Symposium event strives to benefit the student body by raising the question that many of us wonder about, whether privately or publicly, if we live in a post-racial society. Race and ethnicity are confusing terms that many of us are ambiguous about, but all of us are defined by. As the Vice President of the Diversity Commission, I run on the platform of the 20/20 Vision. I believe the inclusion of all people, no matter their color, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity ability, class, ethnicity, and political affiliation, is an integral part of becoming a well recognized and praise-worthy institution. We sincerely believe that Texas A&M is not far from becoming part of the top 20 public institution by the year 2020, but there remains steps to be taken. I have studied the Campus Climate reports diligently, and have come to realize that our great campus has made tremendous strides toward a more inclusive and welcoming university. With that in mind, our commission believes that the issue of race and ethnicity is of great importance to our campus and the student body. Consequently, we believe living in a pluralistic and evolving society, the students will benefit from such dialogues and panels. Hence, I, along with my team, have come up with the idea of a race and ethnicity panel.

Contributed by Kamiar Kordi

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY
20: Senate Meeting
21-22: Elections
23-26: COSGA

MARCH
1-3: Whoopin Weekend
2: CARPOOL Gala
6: Senate Meeting
10-15: Alternative Spring Break
20: Senate Meeting
23: The BIG Event
CARPOOL preps for busy semester

Spring time is always a busy season for CARPOOL. Not only do we have our weekend operations of giving free, safe, non-judgmental rides home in the Bryan/College Station area between the hours of 10pm and 3am, Thursday-Saturday, we also have many fundraising opportunities.

Come Fly Away with us to CARPOOL GALA on March 2nd at the Veranda. This formal event is our biggest fundraising endeavor that we host each year and it helps to raise a large sum of our operating costs for the following year. If interested in attending and joining CARPOOL for a night of wonderful food and a silent and live auction please visit carpool.tamu.edu/gala, for more details and pricing.

Our annual Swing for the Rides golf tournament is this April 6th starting at 9am at the Briarcrest Country Club in Bryan. The proceeds from this tournament go to CARPOOL’s endowment fund. As a 501(c)3 organization, CARPOOL’s goal is to fill this fund with two million dollars to run operations for years to come, solely from the interest. For more information, visit carpoolendowment.tamu.edu.

CARPOOL’s fundraising team is also holding our second annual Lime Green Campaign. This is a week-long event that partners with local businesses in putting on profit shares each day. There will also be t-shirts for sale during this week to support CARPOOL operations. For more information on these events and others we will hold the rest of the semester, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/tamucarpool and follow us on twitter @tamucarpool. If you have any questions about CARPOOL please feel free to email our chair, Kaitlin Akard, at chair@carpool.tamu.edu.

Contributed by Miriam Cisneros

Replant Advisor Gives Thanks to SGA

It sounds a bit cheesy, but there is love between the SGA Committees here at A&M. The Student Government Association has been intentional about encouraging SGA Committees to work together and support one another throughout the years. As an advisor for Aggie Replant, I see this collaboration on a small scale here and there, but recently, support, energy and time were given to Aggie Replant by several individuals and organizations within SGA to help us meet our recruitment goals for our Lost Pine Recovery Campaign. The Big Event stepped up and utilized their people-power to help us spread the word. They created sheet signs for us and stood outside holding those signs for over 120 hours! Cole Burdette, Internal Vice President and John Claybrook, Student Body President, contacted a plethora of organizations and individuals to spread the word and added a personal note to each request for participation. No one HAD to do this. Folks could have easily said, “this is Replant’s thing, they’ve got it”, but others noticed the impact that could be made and identified this as an opportunity to lend a hand, to contribute to something bigger than themselves, to work together. SGA cares about the success of other organizations and the genuine spirit of Selfless Service was evident. Aggie Replant is incredibly thankful to all those organizations, individuals, faculty members and administrators who supported us. We are excited about this initiative and are so proud to be a part of SGA! Now let’s plant some trees!

Contributed by Kathryn Sturtevant
Meet Your Advisor

**Name:**
Tyler Alyse Archer

**Organizations you Advise:**
Alternative Spring Break

**How long have you been at TAMU?:**
5 months

**Favorite Aggie Tradition:**
Howdy!

**Favorite part of your job:**
Every day I get to help students, so at the end of the day I always feel very satisfied that I was able to do something.

**Favorite Local Restaurant:**
Blue Baker

**Where are you from?:**
San Antonio, TX

**Favorite vacation spot:**
Anywhere in the beautiful Texas Hill Country on the Guadalupe River

**Something we wouldn’t know about you by looking at you:**
I am a karaoke fanatic!

**Favorite quote:**
“When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be” – Lao Tzu

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Student Spotlights

**Name:**
Hunter Dansby

**Organizations you are in:**
Fish Aides, Abbott Family Leadership Conference, and Brotherhood of Christian Aggies

**What has being in an SGA organization meant to you/done for you:**
Fish Aides has given me the gift of belief. One of our speakers this year coined that term, and it fits perfectly for my story. Fish Aides has not only given me the gift of belief in myself, but in others, and in the understanding that Texas A&M is much bigger than myself.

**Favorite Aggie Tradition:**
Tie between the 12th Man and Muster

**Favorite part of your SGA organization:**
The closeness and intimacy of the people—it’s a community like none other.

**Best Leadership Moment:**
Hosting International Flag Night, World Religion and Spirituality Symposium, and “Do We Live in a Post-Racial America?” If it wasn’t for my team, none of these events would have been executed at the level and quality they were.

**One thing you are proud of accomplishing while at TAMU:**
Starting Texas A&M Amnesty International local chapter. Part of the largest human rights organization in the world. A very important organization that our campus needed, and continues to benefit from.

**Favorite Local Restaurant:**
NEWKS

**Where are you from?:**
Denton, TX

**Favorite quote:**
“Those who believe most passionately in the life to come, make the most impact in the life now.”—C.S. Lewis

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**Name:**
Kamiar (CA-ME-YAR) Kordi

**Organizations you are in:**
Project for Equity, Governance, and Representation (PERG), National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH)

**What has being in an SGA organization meant to you/done for you:**
SGA has broadened my understanding of it truly means to serve the students and Texas A&M. Without my involvement in SGA Diversity, I don’t think I would have had such an opportunity to interact with students and hear about their needs and ideas.

**Favorite Aggie Tradition:**
Being part of the 12th Man tradition!

**Favorite part of your SGA organization:**
Our mission and our determination to make a difference in our campus. Real, concrete, and effective difference.

**Best Leadership Moment:**
Hosting International Flag Night, World Religion and Spirituality Symposium, and “Do We Live in a Post-Racial America?” If it wasn’t for my team, none of these events would have been executed at the level and quality they were.

**One thing you are proud of accomplishing while at TAMU:**
Starting Texas A&M Amnesty International local chapter. Part of the largest human rights organization in the world. A very important organization that our campus needed, and continues to benefit from.

**Favorite Local Restaurant:**
Shiraz

**Where are you from?:**
Wylie, Texas. 30 minutes north of Dallas

**Something we wouldn’t know about you by looking at you:**
Pessimism

**Favorite quote:**
“The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of a martyr”
The Development Commission exists to serve you! This commission strives to build our SGA endowment in order use the collected funds to appropriate to the committees, thus relieving us of our dependency on student fees. The Commission currently is working on two main projects:

**PATH TO SUCCESS BRICK CAMPAIGN:** This campaign was initiated to ensure the longevity of organizations by providing additional finances for current programs, traditions, and new initiatives. The bricks, ranging in size from 4x8 to 8x8, make excellent gifts for graduation, birthdays, holidays, or even as a way to commemorate achievements and legacies! The Path to Success is prominently located on the plaza in front of the Koldus Student Services Building next to Kyle Field. To purchase a brick with your own customized inscription, please visit bricks.tamu.edu.

**TEE UP WITH SGA GOLF TOURNAMENT:** This will be SGA’s third golf tournament! We are inviting old Ags and current students and staff to come play a round of golf and learn about what makes SGA special. To sign up for the tournament or for more information, please visit: http://sgadevelopment.tamu.edu/golftournament.

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**Win a prize!**

Weekly Twitter and Facebook competitions to win amazing SGA goodies! Add us on Twitter and Facebook and answer the trivia question to win a prize!

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**Stay Connected:**

Facebook: TAMU Student Government Association

Twitter: tamu_SGA

http://sga.tamu.edu

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**SGA In Action**

Content Written and Collected by: Michelle Gardner

Design and Layout by: Michelle Gardner

If you would like to contribute photos or content to “SGA In Action” please contact Michelle Gardner (mgardner@stuact.tamu.edu). This newsletter will be distributed monthly to SGA committees, commissions, branches and advisors.

Please submit comments or questions to Michelle Gardner (mgardner@stuact.tamu.edu).