May 27, 2021

Dear Faculty, Staff, Students and the Aggie Network:

The attached status report was submitted to Chancellor Sharp, and to The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents (BoR) via Chancellor Sharp. The briefing summarizes progress to date on BoR-approved actions on January 25, 2021 to establish a four-year plan to increase diversity of our student body, faculty, and staff, as well as to address a number of other important issues.

The Chancellor has approved release of this document with the understanding that the designs recommended for Academic Plaza and other campus sites are preliminary conceptual designs only, a starting point for final architectural designs that we anticipate will be underway in the near future.

I am excited to report that the six teams (consisting of 56 faculty, staff, students and advisors) have worked tirelessly this spring. As I complete my tenure as interim president on May 31, I am confident that the four-year project they have initiated this spring will lead to very substantial and important enhancements of this university we love so much.

Sincerely,

John L. Junkins
May 26, 2021

TO: John Sharp, Chancellor of the Texas A&M University System

SUBJECT: Executive Brief: Actions since January 25, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

As I complete my tenure as interim president on May 31, 2021 and return to my role as a member of faculty and director of the Hagler Institute for Advanced Study, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on activities to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion at Texas A&M following the January 25, 2021 approval by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents of a four-year initiative.

I met with co-leads on actions underway since the announcement, asking them to succinctly address the following questions:

1. What is their group’s challenge or problem to address associated with the charge?
2. What actions to date since the announcement this year are they taking to address?
3. How will they measure real progress?
4. What are the next steps to achieving their mission?

This executive brief to follow provides embedded slides and descriptions. Campus designs included herein are preliminary concepts only.

I am pleased with progress. My recommendation is for these status briefings to continue along the four-year initiative.

I thank the co-leads and their teams as well as the Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion whose report informed the opportunities addressed herein. I am grateful for Aggies everywhere who live our core values in welcoming and supporting each other.

Sincerely,

John L. Junkins

John L. Junkins
INTRODUCTION

On January 25, 2021, The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved recommended actions and $24.75 million investment over four years in response to needs and recommendations identified in a report by the Commission on Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

University co-leads and activities were mapped to approved actions:

Small teams (8-10 members) were recruited to work adeptly, with input from our community and subject matter expert advisors.
STATUS UPDATE: COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Co-Leads:
- Annie McGowan, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- Amy B. Smith, Senior Vice President, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Membership (in alphabetical order)
- Crystal S. Carter, Communications Specialist, Office for Diversity
- Shantera Chatman '98, former student, President PowHer Consulting
- Lindsay Gasek '99, Director, Office of the Provost, Enrollment & Academic Services
- Quentyn Seamster '96, former student, Principal at International Leadership of Texas – Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex
- Akshaya Sreenivasan, Clinical Assistant Professor of Marketing, Mays Business School
- Eric Watson '99, Associate Director for Diversity Initiatives & Inclusion, Office of Admissions

Advisors: Rodney Pennywell ’86, Ken Robinson ’93, Sherman Wright ’92, Henry Cadena and Ms. Alexis Bailey ’18.

The Challenge and Charge

While the total number of underrepresented students has grown since the beginning of the century, the percentage compared to total student population remains flat. As identified in the CDEI report, it is incumbent upon Texas A&M to reach out to, welcome and engage underrepresented students.
Actions to Date – Committee on Outreach and Engagement

The following actions were initiated to address the charge:

- Research: Collection and analysis of three years of data;
- Outreach: Immediate pilot project ahead of May 1 deadline for fall 2021; and
- Creative development.

Research

in March, the team collected and analyzed the last three years of survey results, focusing upon students who were accepted but who did not commit to or ever attend the university. Data collection and regression analysis showed which communications channels are most effective in reaching this group, with particular focus at this time on Black American (BA) students and future additional models for other underrepresented groups.

Data showed that campus visits are the number one most impactful way to attract students. Post-COVID, resources should be dedicated to campus events and provision of travel where required to help students who may not otherwise experience the campus ahead of deciding to do so. Recruitment visits to high schools should be increased, a factor which students themselves identified as significant.

Interestingly, social media was not identified as a top means for reaching students. This will need to continue to be monitored. Also, scholarships are important but were not always the deciding factor for students who did not choose to attend.
Students want to hear from faculty and regional staff as trusted sources of information and we should feature as such.

**Pilot Program Conducted – “Quest for the Ring”**

While research continues, the team wanted to act now to help influence fall 2021 matriculation of underrepresented students. The team coordinated with the Office of Admissions to derive a list of underrepresented students who had been admitted to Texas A&M for fall 2021 but who had not yet committed to attend.

The team created a pilot program, called *Quest for the Ring*, in honor of the iconic Aggie ring which represents the symbol of scholarship and achievement and is worn by thousands upon thousands of Aggies everywhere.

Working in collaboration with the Office of Admissions to avoid overlapping outreach, the team invited admitted Black American (BA) students and their families to a series of virtual outreach events each Sunday afternoon in April. The virtual event featured current and former Aggie students of color and staff to provide their experiences and expertise in an informal manner.

More than 90 percent of students who attended *Quest for the Ring* committed to attend Texas A&M in advance of the May 1 deadline. Undoubtedly some were on their way to doing so, and some changed their minds to do so. A portion of a commitment email is included here.

**Results to date:**

We set a conversion goal to exceed Fall 2020 (289 students) and to match Fall 2019 (328 students) pre-COVID commitments.

Progress at the time of this briefing is 324 students.
While research continues (see next steps) to hone messaging and outreach, we must not delay ongoing focus to welcome more students of color. The division of Marketing Communications is producing videos in alignment with the charge.

Key Performance Indicators

Throughout the four-year initiative, we will continually measure progress through benchmark and tracking research on perceptions among students about A&M, coupled with actual numbers year-to-year in the pipeline, including commitment and matriculation.

Next Steps

First, the Quest for the Ring pilot proved successful and will continue. The team will focus on outreach to boost fall matriculation and continue efforts for fall 2022.

Second, primary research fielded this summer will help us understand more about priorities for students who choose to attend A&M as well as “exit” surveys for those who do not and why. This can be annual informative input to help us be more effective throughout the four-year initiative and beyond.
Third, a communications campaign with support from experts in outreach to underrepresented groups will support A&M efforts on a campaign to reach prospective students.

**STATUS UPDATE: STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECRUITMENT**

Co-Leads:
- **Joe Pettibon ’93**, Vice President for Enrollment and Academic Services
- **Lisa Blazer**, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services

Membership (in alphabetical order)
- **Delisa Falks**, Assistant VP, Scholarships & Financial Aid
- **Peter Luong ’21**, President of Regents Scholars Organization, Student Rep
- **Monica Menzel ’94**, Hispanic Network, Former Student Rep & CDEI Rep
- **Kasandra Phillips ’92**, Associate Director of Recruitment
- **Tim Scott ’89, ’96**, Associate Provost, Faculty Rep
- **Patrick Williams ’92** Texas A&M Foundation

**The Challenge and Charge**

As Texas A&M University continues to focus on increasing underrepresented students on campus, this team was charged with assisting the university to increase the number of underrepresented prospective students applying and enrolling each year through the enhancement of two targeted scholarships programs, removing potential financial barriers and recognizing academic achievements of our incoming class.
Actions to Date – Committee on Scholarship and Recruitment

The following actions were initiated to address this charge:

- Increased new freshmen Regents Scholars to 1000.
- Increased National Recognition Scholars by 150 new freshmen.
- Collaboration Across Committees – enhancing programming, connections and relationships across committees and the university community
- Communication and Outreach – developing new avenues for celebrating scholars
- Student Success – collaborating with partners to create programming

Increased Scholarships

The committee reviewed historical information, current recruitment efforts and scholarship awards for the Regents Scholars and the National Scholars program. For Fall 2021, we have awarded more than 2300 students the Regents Scholarship with an expected yield of 1000.

Texas A&M has awarded the National Hispanic Scholarship for several years. With the expansion of the College Board’s national recognition program to include three new groups of underrepresented students (National African American, National Indigenous, National Small Town/Rural), we have confirmed an additional 201 new scholars from these three new categories for the 2021-22 academic year.
Collaboration Across Committees and Taskforces

As we continue to build out initiatives, we have an opportunity to coordinate across committees and task forces to strengthen our efforts in increasing the number of underrepresented prospects and applicants. This will include incorporating scholarship awarding and communication efforts into the Strategic Enrollment Plan (currently in development), leveraging all of our existing financial aid programs, collaborating with CDEI committees and university taskforces to enhance Enrollment Marketing and Communication, building connections for prospective students to student organizations and campus-wide events (ex. Aggie Impact Gala), utilizing recruitment materials to highlight success of former students, expanding and coordinating peer recruiters, Aggie Recruitment Committee, Howdy Crew and other student organizations and mentors, and connecting parent and family engagement activities.

Communication and Outreach

The committee conversation focused on celebrating and sharing our story through our scholarship recipients. As we look to differentiate ourselves through multiple communication channels and develop stories on our current scholars, we can utilize our current and former students for outreach beyond what the admissions team is able to provide. Ideas include visits to homes with swag and big checks, celebration ceremonies we publicize and highlight, working with our former students to help underwrite and support so future students will see us as an opportunity, utilizing social media boards and creating bi-lingual messaging for parents. Further, we will work to ensure that every student receiving one of these scholarships has an opportunity to visit campus and is directly contacted by our recruiters at their high school.

Student Success

In addition to increasing underrepresented student prospects and applicants, the committee proposed programming to ensure students are retained once they are enrolled at Texas A&M. Initiatives include developing extended orientation programming for scholars, creating small summer programs as part of their scholarship and incorporating programming into proposed strategic enrollment initiatives (in development).
Key Performance Indicators – Scholarships & Recruitment

Throughout the four-year initiative, we will measure our progress of increasing the number of underrepresented prospective students and applicants through increased scholarship awards, enhanced marketing and communication, celebration events and scholars programming. Success is ultimately measured through increased numbers of Black/African American students who enroll, are retained, succeed, and thrive at Texas A&M University and ultimately encourage others to do so as well due to their experience here.

Next Steps

Both the Regents and the National Recognition Scholarships have been awarded for the Fall 2021 semester. Over the summer months, the committee will work with Admissions to ensure the students who have accepted the offer of admissions and these scholarships actually enroll for the fall semester (avoiding what is called summer melt) through outreach and personalized communication.

The committee with work with Enrollment Marketing and Communication to develop unique current and former student scholar stories. These stories will be used in digital advertising, outreach to students and in celebration events throughout the next academic year as we look to bring in the Fall 2022 class.

Prior to the start of the next recruitment cycle, which begins in August 2021 for students that will enroll in Fall 2022, an action plan will be developed to create new celebration events and increased media opportunities to highlight scholars. In
addition, further research is being conducted on our admitted students to identify additional targeted efforts to recruit and enroll students receiving scholarship funding.

**STATUS UPDATE: PATHWAYS-TO-DOCTORATE FELLOWSHIPS**

Co-Leads:
- **Karen Butler-Purry**, Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate and Professional School
- **Mark Barteau**, Vice President for Research, Professor, Chemical Engineering

Membership (in alphabetical order):
- **Sandra Acosta**, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, Faculty Rep
- **Chante Anderson** ‘20, PhD student, Communications, Student Rep
- **Benika Dixon** ‘20, former student, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Texas A&M Health Science Center
- **Felipe Hinojosa**, Associate Professor, History, Faculty Rep
- **Michelle Meyer**, Associate Professor, Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, Faculty Rep
- **Karen Wooley**, Distinguished Professor, Chemistry, Faculty Rep

**The Challenge and Charge**

As noted in the CDEI report findings, Hispanic and Latinx graduate student enrollment and Black and African American graduate student enrollment percentages are underrepresented when compared to the state’s demographics. To address this, more purposeful effort is needed to identify and build sustainable pathways to increase the enrollment of students from underrepresented populations in TAMU graduate programs.

**Actions to Date – Committee on Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships**
The following actions were taken to address the charge:

- Analyzed the last 12 years of TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate fellowship data.
- Collected best practices on successful pathway partnerships.
- Generated ideas for implementation of the Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships

In Spring 2021, the Pathways-to-Doctorate committee analyzed the last 12 years of TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate focusing on details of funding packages, bachelor’s institutions (pathways) of fellows, student outcomes (attrition and graduation rates), and programmatic activities. Further the committee collected best practices and models of successful pathway partnerships from peer institutions. The TAMU Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowship data showed that graduation rates improved when funding packages were shifted to multi-year commitments and recruitment was conducted by department or interdisciplinary (cross department) faculty teams, and that generally no ongoing pathways/pipelines existed and minimal programmatic efforts were in place to support retention and graduation. Further the best practices show that sustainable pathways result from mutually beneficial educational partnerships between faculty and staff across universities and that systemic changes in inequitable institutional practices are needed to improve retention.

As a result, the committee conceived a four-year Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowship package which includes a combination of one-year funding from the TAMUS funds and three years of collaborative funding from academic units, the Graduate and Professional School, and the Division of Research to support assistantship salary and tuition and fees. Further the committee proposes the addition of collaborative grants to incentivize and support innovative TAMU faculty and staff approaches for initiating and expanding educational pathway partnerships.
Key Performance Indicators – Pathways-to-Doctorate Fellowships

During the four years of the initiative, we will annually measure the progress to degree completion and identify barriers to success of the Pathways-to-Doctorate fellows.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPI and Description</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve KPI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add at least 20 new mutually beneficial graduate pathways with partner institutions. Seed new faculty collaborations across partner institutions.</td>
<td>• PTD collaboration grants that focus on activities that expand the number and reach of pathways to institutions serving our target populations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate each fellow within 5.5 years from initial to graduating semester</td>
<td>• Fund 32 PTD fellows through recruitment of students participating in programs funded by PTD collaboration grants, national undergraduate programs which aim to increase diversity of bachelor’s graduates (e.g. Dept of Ed McNair Scholars Program, NSF LSAMP Program, NIH Initiative for Minority Student Development, etc.), and bachelor’s degree recipients from TAMUS or Minority Serving institutions. Provide programmatic efforts for PTD fellows which build community and support timely graduation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase the number of applications and enrollment of graduate students from underrepresented populations from the partner institutions</td>
<td>• Collaboration grants and PTD fellowships</td>
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Next Steps

First, materials and an application process will be developed in early Fall 2021 to allow promotion and selection of the Pathways-to-Doctorate fellowships during the 2021-2022 recruiting cycle.

Second, the first group of TAMU faculty and staff will be identified to initiate new or expand upon existing pathway partnerships.

Third, programmatic activities will be developed to transition the first group of Pathways-to-Doctorate fellows.
STATUS UPDATE: FACULTY AND STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RECOGNITION

Co-Leads:
- **Blanca Lupiani**, Dean of Faculties and Associate Provost
- **Annie McGowan**, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- **Jeff Risinger ’02**, Vice President, Human Resources and Organizational Development

Membership (in alphabetical order):
- **Kristina Ballard**, University Staff Council
- **Scott Bauer ’85, ’87**, Director of Talent Management
- **Dale Rice**, Faculty Senate, Speaker Elect
- **Christine Stanley ’85, ’90**, Professor of Higher Education
- **Cynthia Werner**, Director of ADVANCE

Challenge and Charge

Based upon the Board approved actions and the President's charge, the Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition Team took a holistic approach to the faculty and staff employment lifecycle. Recruitment alone may be perceived by some as the initial process of beginning work at Texas A&M. However, when applying the philosophy of being recruited for a career and not just a job, the focus of this charge becomes more significant and is a longer-term commitment. One of the early challenges revealed by the data that this team explored was the fact that because a holistic approach has not historically been taken, much of the progress that is made in traditional recruiting has to be repeated over and over due to a lack of retention. As will be reported, this team has built action plans designed...
to both significantly improve the initial recruitment of under-represented faculty and staff and to bring them into an environment of growth, trust, and respect so that their contributions may be felt for years to come.

**Actions to Date: Committee on Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition**

The Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition Team spent a significant amount of time in discovery, searching for the underlying drivers inhibiting growth in the careers of under-represented faculty and staff. Growing the ACES program was a given as a result of the Board of Regents financial commitment to this program. However, it was discovered that a number of policy changes are necessary to ensure these new investments offer sustaining value for Texas A&M University. These changes include improving practices for faculty recruitment and modernizing the HR infrastructure to more effectively advance our staff via a professional Talent Acquisition organization. The Talent Acquisition organization would be charged with working directly with hiring managers to actively recruit, screen, and present top candidates to hiring managers to ensure diversity of the applicant pools. Our university and community would be further served through an integrated infrastructure that emphasizes a culture of development. As such, the committee proposes the development and implementation of a university-wide mentoring program with supporting information system technology to promote a climate of respect and inclusivity. Finally, there is an opportunity to move beyond the traditional reward structures to recognize faculty and staff contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion through application of Aggie Core Values. We recommend the creation of a faculty/staff grant program in addition to a university-wide awards program that recognizes measurable climate-enhancing contributions.
Key Performance Indicators – Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition

Throughout the four-year plan, we will assess progress on perceptions among faculty and staff about Texas A&M, and the corresponding impact on faculty and staff recruitment and retention. Indicators of success will include change in the compositional diversity of faculty and staff to more closely align with the state of Texas and our student body.

We will assess how units, at all levels, recognize faculty and staff contributions to diversity equity and inclusion by investing in their ideas and contributing to the achievement of university goals related to faculty and staff recruitment and retention and student success.

Next Steps

Engage with faculty and department and college leadership in the implementation of policy changes and creation of a mechanism for building diversity accountability
practices into the hiring and evaluation processes to reach our goals of diversifying the faculty.

Expand the ACES Fellows Program to include the College of Medicine, the College of Dentistry and the School of Law (Up to 20 Fellows).

Set up a professional talent acquisition organization and day 1 ready onboarding to ensure that we have a professional and consistent approach to searching for and attracting the very best talent to Texas A&M University.

Develop and implement a university-wide mentoring program with supporting information technology systems to ensure that the vast knowledge that exists within our faculty and staff can be shared through mentoring and developmental programs available to everyone.

Continue building a strategic HR infrastructure to support the growth and advancement of underrepresented staff. This infrastructure will include clearly defined career paths that are competency based so that employees can chart their careers and receive the learning and development opportunities that will lead to career success. This infrastructure will also include intentional succession planning for all university leadership positions to ensure that we are building the leadership talent we need and that reflects the society that we serve.

Develop and invest in programs that increase institutional awareness of the application of Aggie Core Values as well as university-wide awards and grants to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion across campus.

We are confident that these actions will dramatically improve our diversity, equity, and inclusion performance for faculty and staff and will lead to Texas A&M being more widely recognized as a great place to work!
STATUS UPDATE: CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Co-Leads:
- **Eric Mendoza** ’21, Student Body President
- **Annie McGowan**, Interim Vice President and Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Gina and William Flores Endowed Professor in Business
- **Danny Pugh**, Vice President for Student Affairs

Membership (in alphabetical order):
- **Chante Anderson** ’20, Ph.D. Candidate, Graduate School
- **Risa Bierman**, Campus Ministry Association
- **Kristie Orr** ’91, ’03, Director, Disability Resources
- **Jennifer Reyes** ’10, Office for Diversity
- **Stephen Ruth** ’92, Former Student Body President/Cadet
- **Sharif Yosufzai** ’74, Former Student

Advisors: Student leaders representing the Student Leader Communication Group.

Challenge and Charge: Campus Experience

In response to the approved actions by the Board of Regents, the Campus Experience Team was charged with looking across all of the eight (8) action items. In responding to the charge to “foster and sustain an outstanding campus climate,” the team focused on the critical importance of the Aggie Core Values as the unifying feature of an Aggie experience for students, faculty, and staff. To that end, we primarily focused on learning outcomes and marketable skills. In particular the team embraced a focus on the undergraduate student learning outcome of “social, cultural, and global competency” and the development of Aggie Core Values aligned attributes. While our purpose centered on a “more inclusive and equitable campus experience,” we envisioned similar Aggie Core Values.
attributes could be developed in association with the remaining six undergraduate student learning outcomes as well as other outcomes and skills at the university, college, division, and department levels of the institution and independent student organizations.

While the breadth of the charge presented an expansive landscape from which to focus, the Campus Experience Team embraced the challenges associated with accountability and transparency to existing policies, processes, and initiatives. In particular, we were attentive to the existing criticisms of current practices and policies associated with reporting through the Stop Hate portal.

Additionally, the Campus Experience Team embraced the purpose and charge associated with integration of Aggie Core Values in all facets of life within the institution. As we researched existing practices and current efforts, we were excited to learn about an SGA initiative, Traditions Enrichment, that appears to have the best chance to educate and extrapolate Aggie Traditions while working with numerous student and campus partners, including SGA, Traditions Council, Association of Former Students, and Division of Student Affairs to name a select few.

**Actions to Date: Campus Experience**

Using the Division of Human Resources model as a foundation, the members of the Campus Experience Team were instrumental in developing attributes of a culturally competent leader through the lens of each Aggie Core Value. Each attribute reflects a “marketable skill” that, when developed, would allow for professional advancement and organizational impact. Recognizing that each student enters Texas A&M with varying competencies and will progress through their undergraduate experience at a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>We treat all with courtesy and value them as individuals - those in the Aggie Network and those within the broader community. We foster an environment where all feel welcomed, included, and engaged. We are role models for actions and behaviors that reflect positively on Texas A&amp;M as a place that promotes openness, inclusion, and dialogue where all perspectives are listened to for understanding.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>We are dedicated to performing at the highest level in all we do. We are passionate about upholding the Core Values of respect, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service. We recognize that excellence and diversity are interdependent and provide better outcomes both for the individual and the institution.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Leaders create an inclusive vision and accessible mission for both internal and external constituencies. These leaders understand the organizational importance of cultural exploration and competency development, engage in ethical and authentic hiring practices, and understand cross-cultural communication and conflict resolution.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>We are all Aggies united by our love for Texas A&amp;M. We are driven by our commitment to the mission and values of Texas A&amp;M and strive to devote our time, talent, and treasure to its growth and prosperity. We trust, respect, and support each other and our perspectives above all else. We are stronger and better because we stand together and nurture and support each other's success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>We operate with the highest professional and ethical behaviors. We honor and follow through on our personal and institutional commitments and expectations, holding ourselves and others accountable for our actions, behaviors, and outcomes. We bring our best to each other and the communities that we serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>We are part of a global community and purpose that is bigger than ourselves. We work with and help others to have a positive impact and promote the greater good. Selfless service is larger than just one person and built on the commitment to go a little further and endure a little longer for the benefit of others.</td>
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difference pace, we established a four-year model with the following associated themes:

- **Year 1** – Self, Improving One's Self
- **Year 2** – Others, Improving Others
- **Year 3** – Leadership, Developing Your Leadership
- **Year 4** – Leadership, Developing Others to Lead

Members of the Campus Engagement Team were also able to lead a focus group of student leaders who provided feedback on the proposed culturally competent attributes associated with the Aggie Core Values. Two major takeaways were evident. First, the student leaders found tremendous value in the attribute/skill linkage between the Aggie Core Values and cultural competence. Second, the student leaders found the four-year developmental model to be highly adaptable to their organizational learning/leadership models.

Deemed a “green light” policy by The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) in January of 2019, Texas A&M University's Stop Hate reporting portal is a best-practice example of a model hate and bias reporting process that is aligned with the Texas A&M University System Policy 08.01 for “Civil Rights Protections and Compliance.” TAMU defines a bias complaint as, “any report of a threat or act of harassment or intimidation which is directed against or targets a person or groups of persons of the Texas A&M community because of that person's age, color, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran
status, or medical or genetic information.” These categories are expressly drawn from TAMUS Policy 08.01 and are content neutral in that all classifications within these categories are equally protected.

While the Stop Hate portal is readily available and routinely communicated as a reporting site, there is room for enhanced accountability and transparency. As a result, despite a robust process of case intake, triage, investigation and resolution, there exists a lack of confidence in the process which negatively impacts the reputation of the portal and associated processes. The Campus Experience Team embraced these constituent calls for accountability and transparency, including those found in the CDEI Report Stronger Together. To that end, members of the team sought similar examples of means by which reporting portal information was appropriately shared with the constituent community. Unfortunately, we could locate no means by which the responding agency could showcase the transparency of reporting as well as organizational accountability in response to the reports. However, the Campus Experience Team was able to identify a similar process by which a campus police agency shared arrest information with the community to which they were sworn to protect and serve.

The Campus Experience Team is proposing the adoption of an accountability and transparency reporting process associated with the Stop Hate reporting portal by which the following protocols are adopted:

1. Continue to educate and promote the Stop Hate reporting portal to all members of the campus community. Education and promotion should continue during NSC Summer 2021 and fall 2021 training programs.
2. Embed clear protocols on the Stop Hate website that will be used in reviewing each case. The protocols should begin fall semester 2021.
3. Clearly outline on the Stop Hate website provisions by which cases may be referred for formal action by the university. The outline should be posted by fall 2021.
4. Implement a tracking process by which all cases are categorized relative to TAMUS Policy 08.01. The process should begin fall semester 2021.
5. Cases will be categorized and counted. Cases data will be shared (see proposed pie chart slide) on the Stop Hate website on a semester basis no later than 60 days into the following semester. The first posting would be in March 2022.
6. The Stop Hate committee is responsible for tracking and posting.

Members of the Campus Experience Team identified tradition enrichment and promulgation across campus and different student groups as a tool to foster an improved campus climate and experience, including promulgating new or lesser known activities important to members of our campus community. The Campus Experience Team also noted the exceptional work currently underway by SGA with regards to Traditions Enrichment. We believe greater attention and campus investment should be made with respect to this effort. Already having a strong collaboration between student government, former students, and student affairs, there is tremendous potential to expand these affiliates in support of the goals currently under consideration by the project managers.
STATUS UPDATE: TASK FORCE ON CAMPUS HISTORICAL DISPLAYS (TFCHD)

The Task Force

Co-Leads:

- **Jorge Vanegas** – Dean of the *College of Architecture* (COA)
- **Lilia Gonzales ‘94** – University Architect at *Texas A&M University* (TAMU)

Membership (in alphabetical order):

- **Kristina Ballard** – Chairperson, *University Staff Council* (USC), Staff Representative
- **David Chapman ’67** – Retired Staff, Archivist TAMU Libraries; CDEI Representative
- **Adrian Cornelius ’93** – TAMU *Black Former Student Network* (BFSN); *Association of Former Students* (AFS) and CDEI Representative
- **Shelley Holliday ’99** – Senator from the COA, TAMU Faculty Senate; Faculty Representative
- **Nidhi Nagireddy ’23** – Current Student, Company E-2, Corps of Cadets and Vice President of University Committees; Corps of Cadets and Student Representative
- **Erica Pauls ’21** – President, *Matthew Gaines Society* (MGS), replaced by **Aketch Osamba ’21**, Outreach Chair MGS; MGS and Student Representative
- **Jason Penry**, Assistant Vice President, *Texas A&M Foundation* (TAMF); Ad Hoc Special Advisor for Development
- **Jim Singleton ’66** – Former Student COA, Athlete, and Member of the *Sul Ross Group* (SRG); Former Student Representative

The Challenge and Charge

In response to the CDEI Report, the *Board of Regents* (BOR), recommended to:

“Establish an action-oriented task force to accurately and fully tell the story of Texas A&M’s history through displays and iconography,” with a target investment of $1 Million.
Subsequently, Interim President Junkins issued the specific charge to the TFCHD and three specific guiding parameters. The charge and guiding parameters posed two challenges, both significant in terms of their scope, magnitude, and complexity: (1) determining the full story of TAMU since it was founded is a significant task; and (2) using the complete campus as the canvas to tell the story of TAMU accurately through the University's Heritage Assets.

To address these challenges, the Co-Leads of the TFCHD decided to use their experience and knowledge in the update to the Campus Master Plan (CMP) for TAMU released in 2017, which they also co-chaired. The update was the culmination of many months of work by many people, who represented many disciplines and a wide range of diversity of thought, and who were brought together to guide and shape the CMP around six broad and far-reaching focus elements: Campus Development Plan; Mobility & Safety; Sustainability & Wellness; Campus Guidelines; Wayfinding & Signage; and Heritage Conservation. As a roadmap, rather than just a checklist, the CMP allows TAMU to utilize its current valuable campus assets and resources to their fullest extent, while allowing for future developments to the campus. From the beginning, two aspirational goals guided the CMP: (1) increase the connectivity of the campus through the built environment, green spaces, and pedestrian oriented paths; and (2) identify heritage buildings, green spaces, and vistas for conservation as a key part of the campus environment. The CMP provides the overall physical context of the campus as TAMU moves to the future, and also, the point of departure for the TFCHD response to the President’s charge.

**Data Captures**

Before any strategy was developed or recommended, the Co-Leads of the TFCHD made a significant effort to reach all the voices of various constituencies at TAMU through a formal survey that was based initially on seven questions to the members of the Task Force. The questions were: (1) *What is working well at TAMU* within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? (2) *What is not working well at TAMU* within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? (3) *What
[might/could/should/must] TAMU start doing that it currently is not doing within the context and scope of the charge to the Task Force? (4) What is the story of TAMU that is not being told by TAMU’s current Heritage Assets (HAs) that might/could/should/must be told? (5) What [might/could/should/must] this story tell? (6) How [might/could/should/must] this story be told, e.g., what type of media would you use to tell the story? (7) Where on campus [might/could/should/must] this story be told?

Rationale for Proposed Conceptual Design for Plaza 1 & Plaza

(1) Campus Character Zones & (2) Campus Open Space Network

The TFCHD recommendations are aligned and integrated with the foundation set forth in the CMP, specifically the Character Zones and the Open Space Network. This network and these zones work in union with campus
guidelines to support the creation of a campus environment that is accommodating of institutional needs and reflective of the identity and values of TAMU.

Based on analysis of data captures by the TFCHD, recommendations for development of strategies to respond to the charge included:

1. Using the entire Campus as a canvas (Outdoors and Indoors);
2. Focusing on Storytelling and Context;
3. Making use of Traffic Patterns and View Corridors;
4. Investigating wide range of Media to identify most effective Medium for Storytelling; and
5. Proceeding with Phased Implementation.

The CMP identifies key linkages and connections across campus in the east-west and north-south direction. These linkages and connections are highlighted at their intersections and influence siting of buildings, lines of sight, and access to plazas, amenities, and displays.

The TFCHD proposed recommendation highlights the main east-west campus linkage to create a main storytelling axis, comprised of three main plazas:

- **Plaza 1** (Academic Plaza – Phase I);
- **Plaza 2** (Area between Academic Building and Cushing Library – Phase II); and
- **Plaza 3** (West Campus - Phase III).

The terminology of "Plaza" denotes changes to the spatial anatomy of the space. (i.e., configuration of sidewalks, lawn space, landscape, open gathering space, etc.)

Storytelling content within plazas focuses on events and milestones (less on individuals) that have impacted the growth and development of the university. As the story is still unfolding, space is left to add content.

This storytelling axis builds on existing north-south axis of Military Walk, and complements other spaces such as Simpson Drill Field and Spirit Plaza (tradition focused).
(3) Campus Plazas for Program Specific Stories

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for the creation of a main university-wide storytelling axis serves as the foundation for further expanding storytelling into program specific areas.

These stories can be highlighted within the interior spaces of buildings.

The goal would be to highlight specific achievements and accomplishments for colleges, specific programs, and department through exhibits (permanent or temporary), displays, art pieces, etc.

There is overlap and synergy with the other Board of Regents Approved Actions such as Communications Outreach and Engagement (Actions 1, 8), Campus Experience (across all actions), and Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Recognition (Actions 5, 6) that should be considered for storytelling content.

(4) Campus Exterior Public Art Pieces

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for the creation of a main university-wide storytelling axis serves as the foundation for further expanding storytelling into the overall comprehensive campus landscape.

There may be situations where stories merit separate spaces. In these instances, the location of the pieces must support the future recommendations as noted within the CMP:

“Diversifying the type of art placed on campus will better align the University with its commitment to diversity. The subject matter of the existing collection is extremely limited - with
about 30% of the collection being bronze statues of historical figures. To better position Texas A&M as a global leader in higher education, there is opportunity for the University to select pieces and commission artists from diverse backgrounds to celebrate and acknowledge differing identities, values and ideas.”

**Existing Conditions for Plaza 1 & Plaza 2**

The TFCHD proposed recommendation for Plaza 1 and Plaza 2 is to focus the storytelling content within the plazas on events and milestones that have impacted the growth and development of the university. In order to succeed, there must be transparency in the selection of events and art pieces / displays.

**Proposed Conceptual Design for Plaza 1 & Plaza 2**

Preliminary Concept Only
Initial thoughts / recommendations for Storytelling are to focus on the development of the university and milestone achievements associated with four Epochs of the TAMU Story, as described below.

**Epoch No. 1 – The Early Years** (1870 • 1900 • 1925)
In Design Space 4, the focus would be on:
- Enabling State legislation (Senators Matthew Gaines and George T. Ruby)
- State financial support decisions
- Lobbying success of Lawrence Sullivan Ross and Edward Lavoisier Blackshear in securing financial investment from the State
- Early building and growth under Ross, prior to 1900
- Overcoming financial difficulties during early 1900s
- WWI and its aftermath

**Epoch No. 2 – Growth and Transformation** (1925 • 1950 • 1975)
In Design Space 1, the focus would be on:
- WWII and its aftermath
- Rudder Presidency:
  - Transforming the University from a small land-grant college to a renowned university
  - Making membership in the Corps of Cadets optional
  - Admittance of women to attend the University
  - Leading efforts to integrate the campus
- First major research contributions in agriculture and life science with the Nobel Peace Prize (1970) to Norman Borlaug for enabling the “green revolution”

**Epoch No. 3 – Explosive Growth and Quality Advancement** (1975 • 2000 • 2025)
In Design Space 2, the focus would be on:
- Adding the Sea Grant and Space Grant designations to TAMU’s Land Grant designation
- Development of the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan for TAMU
- TAMU’s induction in 2001 to the American Association of Universities (AAU) as a Tier 1 Research Institution
- Multiple nationally ranked Departments and Colleges
- Expansion to other locations beyond College Station (e.g., TAMU at Galveston; TAMU at Qatar; College of Dentistry in Dallas; TAMU School of Law in Fort Worth; Texas A&M College of Pharmacy in Kingsville; Soltis Research and Education
Center in *San Isidro de Peñas Blancas, Costa Rica*; TAMU Higher Education Center at *McAllen*; and at the *RELLIS Campus*.

- A story still being written...

**Epoch No. 4 – Further Growth and Quality Advancement** (2025 • 2050 • 2075)

In **Design Space 3**, the focus would be on:

- The Future of the University, a story still to be written...

In addition, for **Plaza 2 Storytelling**, the TFCHD's initial thoughts / recommendations are to focus on the milestone achievements associated with:

1. Specific significant *TAMU Accomplishments and Impacts* within its designation as a *Land, Sea, and Space Grant Institution*;
2. Specific significant *TAMU Academic, Research and Scholarship, and Engagement Achievements*; and
3. The *Global Impact of Aggies*.

In both Plazas, the selected *medium / media for storytelling* needs to complement the story being told and should explore methods other than *statues and busts*. Additional *displays / markers* should be added to provide *history and context*. Open plazas and gathering spaces should incorporate *shading* and *seating spaces* to reinforce the space as a *destination*, while accounting for *major access ways* and *pedestrian traffic patterns*.

The developments associated with each epoch should be retrospective with recognitions of any individual's contributions done posthumously.

**Proposed General Concept for Plaza 3**

The general concept for **Plaza 3 Storytelling** is to focus on additional significant, and more contemporary, milestone accomplishments, impacts, and achievements:

1. Additional significant *Accomplishments and Impacts* within TAMU's designation as a *Land, Sea, and Space Grant Institution*;
2. Additional significant *TAMU Academic, Research and Scholarship, and Engagement Achievements*; and
3. *Physical Development of West Campus*. 
Key Performance Indicators

The TFCHD identified four Key Performance Indicators (KPI), along with their corresponding actions to achieve each KPI. These include the solicitation for:

(1) **Professional Services for Architect and/or Landscape Architect** for the development of proposed Concepts and Scenarios;

(2) **Juried Competition** for the development of Art Pieces and/or New Displays;

(3) **A Historian** to research and develop Storytelling Content (Note: TAMU faculty and Cushing Library may also be possible resources).

The above three actions need to occur prior to providing a detailed phased plan with budgetary estimates for the development of budgetary numbers and refinement of phased implementation.
NOTE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT JUNKINS ON TRANSITION

On June 1, 2021, our 26th president, M. Katherine Banks, will be in office. My intent on providing this briefing is to mark the very real work conducted to date, and to provide a smooth handoff to President Banks. This briefing is not a final report by any means but represents a fantastic start as the first phase of a four-year initiative.

What this briefing has included:

- The *Quest for the Ring* pilot program successfully led to the commitment of more students of color to Texas A&M. Much more work remains to build out this exciting program;
- More than 1000 Regents Scholars have been confirmed to date, including an increase of 150 new freshmen;
- Actionable work that ensures that the BoR-approved investment in student pathways-to-doctorate programs, faculty ACES fellows, and other recruitment and recognition initiatives for faculty and staff expands;
- Research that hones in on the gaps identified in the Stronger Together: Report of the Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion;
- Fidelity around the leadership behaviors that embody our core values and reinforce a campus experience where Aggies always contribute to the success of each other, build each other up during their time at A&M and throughout their careers and lives;
- Campus conceptual designs that build upon the 2017 Campus Master Plan for more green space and areas of focus to recognize excellence that captures historical context and a blueprint for additional spaces to honor contributions for years to come.

What this briefing could NOT include:

- The briefing update does not demonstrate all continuing activities that will be necessary over the remaining 3.65 years in this four-year initiative.
- Each year will require updates to build upon the previous year’s KPIs in order to best utilize every penny of investment to the greatest effect possible.
- Campus designs are preliminary concepts only, not approved nor final.

I believe that we are in an exciting time and indeed a new era for our campus, hastened by an emergence from this year-plus global pandemic and calls for
improving diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the nation and here at Texas A&M.

I encourage these teams and all Aggies to keep up the good work of listening, researching and acting with measurable results to enhance our outreach and engagement of all. I am deeply grateful to them for their work as we welcome the 26th President to preside over their continued actions.

This journey is a never-ending quest to better live up to our core values and obligations as a land grant university. In the process, we will further advance this great American university.

John L. Junkins