



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
**SAN ANTONIO**

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# **REFLECTIONS ON A PANDEMIC**

JANUARY 2020- AUGUST 2021

**#todosjuntos | #togetheragain**

## **TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO**

is reflective of the diverse and heritage-rich community it serves. University and community partnerships provide a strong foundation for student and academic success and support interdisciplinary teaching and experiential learning. Faculty and staff collaborate to create comprehensive, industry-responsive academic and co-curricular programs that provide a transformative experience for all students. The University's inclusive environment inspires learning and fosters social development using relevant scholarship, research and public service. A&M-San Antonio graduates leave well equipped with knowledge and marketable skills that prepare them for rewarding careers, responsible global citizenship and lifelong learning.

[www.tamusa.edu/community-safety-together](http://www.tamusa.edu/community-safety-together)

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Dear Colleagues,

The acclaimed novelist Isabel Allende wrote, “We don’t even know how strong we are until we are forced to bring that hidden strength forward. In times of tragedy, of war, of necessity—people do amazing things.

The human capacity for survival and renewal is awesome.” We certainly know now, after nearly a year and a half living in the shadow of the pandemic, the depths of that “hidden strength” to which Allende refers. And our institutional capacity to respond quickly and effectively truly was awesome—as you can see documented in this report.

As I write this, it’s clear that we haven’t fully emerged from the pandemic. Public health conditions can change quickly and our community will feel lasting effects of the massive disruption that COVID-19 has caused in nearly every facet of our lives. Despite that reality, I’m confident that A&M-San Antonio stands ready for whatever lies ahead. That confidence comes from observing our campus community in action over the last year and a half.

While this publication reflects back on a difficult time, and the many adjustments that we as an institution had to make, I hope it also inspires a sense of pride in all that we accomplished together. I am grateful for the strength you all brought forward to meet these challenges, and for the A&M-San Antonio community’s “capacity for survival and renewal.” In countless ways, you have met the challenge of a lifetime with strength, flexibility, and commitment to our mission—in short, with Jaguar spirit.

With gratitude,

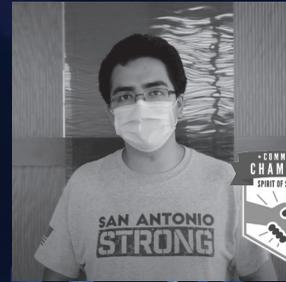


*Cynthia Teniente-Matson*

President  
Texas A&M University-San Antonio

JUAN CARLOS GONZALEZ '21

A&M-San Antonio senior Juan Carlos Gonzalez receives the United Way Community Champions Spirit of SA Award in the Safety Net Impact Category. Since March, Juan Carlos has volunteered more than 100 hours with the San Antonio Food Bank, fighting hunger and feeding hope throughout the pandemic.



# WHEN A PANDEMIC KNOCKS ON THE DOOR

## The anatomy of Texas A&M-San Antonio's strategy to tackle COVID-19

When the novel coronavirus knocked on the door of San Antonio, Texas A&M University-San Antonio and its nearly 6,800 students, faculty and staff were ready. In February and March, as the global crisis spread to communities urban and rural, the University was actively detailing plans for remote teaching environments, operational changes and safety protocols. The changes implemented were unprecedented for both the University and the community.

What mattered and continues to matter is that every decision led with the safety of the students and how the Institution would continue to support the academic mission, according to A&M-San Antonio President Cynthia Teniente-Matson. Fast-forward nearly a year, and A&M-San Antonio has continued to meet the challenge. "We've tackled COVID-19 from a perspective of opportunity," Dr. Teniente-Matson said.

A coordinated strategy has guided the faculty, staff and students in maintaining the safety and health of the campus community and supporting the faculty, according to Mike O'Brien, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

"I continue to be appreciative of the faculty and their commitment to focus on the students," Dr. O'Brien said. "In many respects, they are on the front lines of both teaching and guiding students through a very rough road. When the pandemic knocked on our door, we all stepped up, did and are doing the right things and taking care of each other while staying focused on our students."

**Community. Safety.**  
**TOGETHER.**  
[www.tamusa.edu/Community-Safety-TOGETHER](http://www.tamusa.edu/Community-Safety-TOGETHER)

# A Pandemic, National Crisis, and Snowpocalypse

A time of resilience, perseverance, and togetherness

**N**o one could have predicted a world where a pandemic, national crisis, and power grid failure dramatically changed our lives – yet, it happened. For a year and half the world, our nation and Texas A&M University-San Antonio experienced a period that has tested us at the same time, inspired us to reimagine, innovate and rethink how we learn, teach, work, and live.

The following provides an overview – a report card in some sense – of how, together, we persevered through one of the world’s most virulent diseases, the coronavirus, an unprecedented national crisis and election cycle that challenged us, a war on social

injustice and a winter storm unlike any seen in a century. The past 18 months were a time of resilience, creativity, growth and generosity for our Jaguar community. From the launch of inter-collegiate sports programs to the opening of the Classroom Hall and groundbreaking of the new building to house the College of Business and Library, we grew and found new ways to gather and celebrate the important milestones and achievements of students and our partnerships within the broader community. Through all that we experienced together as a community, we remained safe. As a campus we adapted, overcame, and forged ahead with great flexibility, vision, and hope.

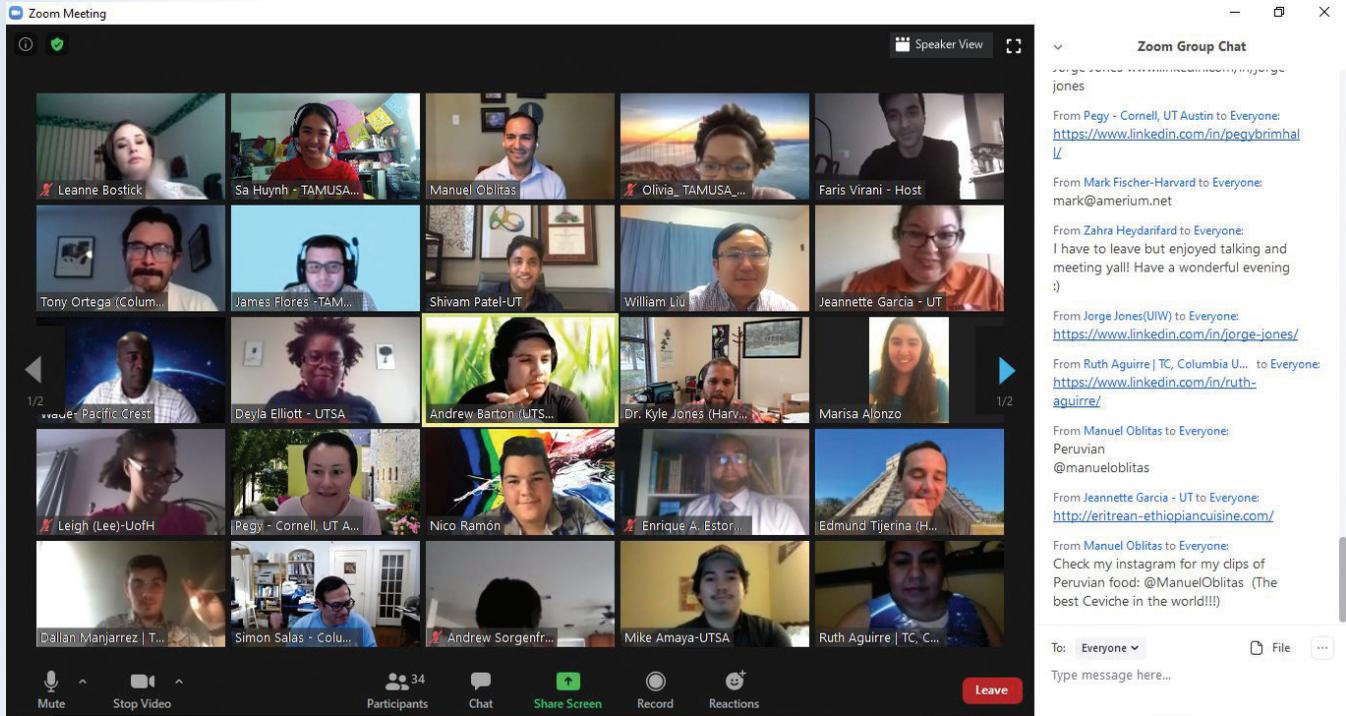
Together, as we pushed through these crises, we redefined what it means to be together, to solve problems and to create solutions that will strategically define this university for the future.

**“ AS A CAMPUS, WE NEVER LOST SIGHT OF OUR STRATEGIC PLAN AND WE ADAPTED, OVERCAME, AND FORGED AHEAD WITH GREAT FLEXIBILITY, VISION, AND HOPE.”**



# Gathering Remotely

In an effort to keep everyone safe, we quickly adapted to new terminology and techniques stretching our creativity and flexibility as the campus adjusted to virtual classes, meetings, and townhalls using mobile and personal devices, and hybrid experiences and remote gatherings. Among the examples: Staff Council live-streamed some of its meetings from the auditorium to ensure everyone could safely receive important updates and recognize staff member achievements no matter their location; Faculty Senate conducted much of its business via Zoom; and students and alumni found innovative ways to socialize and celebrate traditions virtually as they reimagined ways to connect and keep each other informed.



# Crisis within a Crisis Reflecting on “Snowvid”

## SNOWVID. SNOWPOCALYPSE. THE GREAT FREEZE.

The great snowstorm would have tested the resolve of any community. For San Antonio and Texas A&M University-San Antonio, the winter storm brought record cold temperatures, snow, and freezing road conditions. The resulting impact on the region's power grid combined with the extreme weather conditions closed the city for days as rolling power outages limited access and services.

“Due to continued and forecasted severe winter storm conditions and the resulting power and internet outages many are facing, effective immediately, all classes (virtual and in-person) are cancelled and university operations are suspended”. The closure would extend until the end of the week on Friday, February 19. The University, like many others in the state, was already adjusting to the impact of COVID-19 on students, faculty and staff and now had to contend with a new crisis that threatened the health and well-being of the campus community. Together, the University was resilient in supporting each other through another crisis.

Throughout the storm, the A&M-San Antonio campus maintained power with minimal disruption, providing a safe place for those students who lived on campus.

Due to power outages, concerns about food and water became prominent across the city. A&M-San Antonio responded with a lifeline of support supporting the student community providing basic needs, financial assistance and even student counseling.



“ TOGETHER, THE UNIVERSITY WAS RESILIENT IN SUPPORTING EACH OTHER THROUGH ANOTHER CRISIS.”



FEB. 20 – MARCH 6



**EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**, FUNDED BY THE CARES ACT, PROVIDED STUDENTS A ONE-TIME GRANT TO ADDRESS BASIC NEEDS.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY – SAN ANTONIO SERVED AS A **WATER DISTRIBUTION CENTER** FOR CAMPUS RESIDENTS AND THE SAN ANTONIO COMMUNITY.



THE GENERAL'S STORE EXTENDED HOURS THROUGH FEB.26 FOR STUDENTS AND OFFERED **FOOD AND H-E-B GIFT CARDS**.



STUDENT COUNSELING PROVIDED **PHONE AND VIRTUAL GUIDANCE** THROUGH THE CRISIS.

# Reflections on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

## Fostering Essential Dialogue

During a year of major events shaping the national debate – from the pandemic to the presidential election to protests across the country sparked by acts of racial injustice – supported by A&M-San Antonio, student leaders and organizations from across campus stood up against acts of discrimination and voiced their support for diversity and inclusion. A&M-San Antonio's Student Government Association and other groups also created venues to encourage constructive campus-wide conversations about the challenges and events taking place across our cultural landscape. Many other activities engaged the campus community in intentional dialogue on social justice, including those involved in developing a framework report for the President's Commission on Equity.

## Living Civic Engagement

A&M-San Antonio continued to bolster its tradition of civic engagement, as students became active participants in the highly contested 2020 election. Student organizations and Democracy Fellows registered new voters, and the campus served as a Bexar County official voting site. The University's commitment to community service was likewise on display, with the campus serving as a water distribution hub for those impacted by Winter Storm Uri and as a COVID-19 vaccination site for the public and veterans.

## Posthumous Degree Awarded

As COVID-19 hit close to home, we mourned and celebrated the lives of those lost from our campus community during the 2020-21 year. The following Jaguars received posthumous degrees in recognition of their academic achievements:

- Eduardo "Eddie" E. Bocanegra**, Major: Kinesiology
- Roberto "Bobby" Gonzalez**, Major: Marketing
- Edwin Ocasio-Lopez**, Major: History
- Robert Wagstaff**, Major: Accounting



“ Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

– JAMES BALDWIN, ACTIVIST AND NOVELIST



# Adapting Enrollment During the Pandemic

Through the pandemic, lack of in person and public gatherings – and eventually, social distancing – impacted admission experiences for every university across the nation. Texas A&M University-San Antonio tackled the challenge transitioning much of its support and services to virtual platforms and creative socially distanced experiences.

## Future Jaguar Fest

The Future Jaguar Fest transitioned to a socially distanced event outside for prospective students to safely meet with admissions staff, learn about Student Support Services, and tour the campus. Guidelines such as scheduled check-in, wellness check stations, and facemasks were enacted to ensure the safety of all while still offering the A&M-San Antonio experience of becoming a student at our university.

## Drive-through registration

Events, such as Military Transfer Night, Information Sessions on Education, Computer Science and Cyber Security and Financial Aid, were offered virtually to provide safe alternatives for prospective students to learn more and engage A&M-San Antonio.



# Academics Strengthened

**The vision for Texas A&M University – San Antonio began 20 years ago with the idea that affordable, high-quality education is possible and achievable for the population of San Antonio’s Southside.** The goal for a group of visionaries was to provide access to quality, affordable education that provided mobility, economic vitality, digital equity, and a reduction in social and economic inequities. As A&M-San Antonio entered its 12th year, it faced unprecedented challenges and the crisis of a historic winter storm. Yet, much like the journey that led to its founding, A&M-San Antonio would prevail.

No aspect of the educational mission was as significantly impacted by COVID-19 as campus-based, in-person instruction. The quick pivot by faculty members in March 2020 to move coursework online ensured students were able to keep pace with their programs.

The pandemic likewise did not dissuade Dr. Mike O’Brien, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, from pressing forward in the search for new deans for the College of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. “Our sense of urgency gave our faculty confidence that we are serious about building our future,” O’Brien said.

The academic leadership team that Dr. O’Brien assembled shares his vision for advancing the full potential of the youngest and fastest-growing institution within the Texas A&M System. Now squarely in the build-up and build-out phase of the university’s academic development, leaders are focused on aligning the institution’s programming to the needs of the region and a burgeoning student pipeline, as well as leveraging the distinct opportunities afforded by the university’s geographic location and its industry and agency partners.

Meet the academic leadership team moving the needle on the university’s teaching and research excellence.



## DR. MICHAEL J. O'BRIEN

*Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Michael O’Brien, who was born and raised in Houston, returned to his home state in 2016 with his appointment as Provost at Texas A&M-San Antonio after serving for 36 years at the University of Missouri in various roles, including as professor of anthropology and culminating as Dean of the College of Arts and Science. Best known for his work in evolutionary archaeology and biology, Dr. O’Brien has authored or edited more than two dozen books and written more than 150 scholarly articles appearing in journals such as *Science*, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *Journal of Human Evolution*, and *Journal of Theoretical Biology*.

What drew him to A&M-San Antonio was the opportunity to build a great research university by transforming the culture of the institution through great academic leadership that models a passion for scholarship and teaching excellence.

“We are putting the right people and support structures in place and securing the resources to leverage the full potential of A&M-San Antonio as it matures into a world-class research institution.”



## DR. VIJAY GOLLA

*Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies*

Vijay Golla arrived at A&M-San Antonio in August 2019. His previous academic appointments include various research and teaching roles within the College of Health and Human Services at Western Kentucky University. Significant research efforts have focused on workplace health and human and environmental health, including a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention pilot project for the CDC’s National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health looking at exposure impacts of contaminants traced to agricultural practices.

What drew him to A&M-San Antonio: “First and foremost, the opportunity to be part of the world-renowned Texas A&M University System.”

As the newest university within the system, and the only one in a large urban area, A&M-San Antonio’s location provides great opportunity and potential to grow and build a research and graduate studies program that can have wide impact. “We have lots of room to grow both in terms of physical footprint and in terms of collaboration with industry and agency partners to pursue applied research directly in our community.”

Dr. Golla is excited to help design a strong research infrastructure across the university that leverages grant funding to extend opportunities for more students to have first-hand, real-world lab and field experiences, and scholarship opportunities.



**DR. DEBRA FEAKES**

*Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences*

A chemist by training, and the newest member of A&M – San Antonio’s academic leadership team, Debra Feakes arrived at the university in September 2020, fresh from her role as Dean of the Shaheen College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Indianapolis. While she is new to the Texas A&M family, Feakes isn’t a Texas newcomer by any stretch, having served for 24 years just up the road at Texas State University in San Marcos. Among her roles there, she served as Associate Chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, where she was the first female tenure-track faculty member in that department and as interim associate director of the LBJ Institute for STEM Education and Research.

Her research interests include the synthesis of boron-containing compounds for potential use in the treatment of certain types of cancer and the impact of supplemental instruction on student success in general and organic chemistry courses.

What drew her to A&M – San Antonio: “The opportunity of working once again at a public institution to provide service to the state of Texas and its constituents.”

Throughout her appointments in public and private higher education settings and in large and small institutions, Dr. Feakes has maintained her passion for teaching. “I truly love helping students transition from high school to college and helping them mold their futures.”

She is excited to help design programs that complement and enhance the existing curriculum and leverage opportunities to meet the emerging needs of the region’s economy. Developing resources and targeted interventions to ensure student success has been, and continues to be, a priority for Feakes.



**DR. ROHAN CHRISTIE-DAVID**

*Dean of the College of Business*

Rohan Christie-David began his new role in June 2020, arriving from his post as a tenured professor of finance at the University of Colorado Denver, where he also previously served as Dean of the Business School. Prior to that, Christie-David served in various teaching and research roles at the University of Louisville. An award-winning scholar, Dr. Christie-David’s research interests include corporate restructuring, market microstructure, risk management, and the intersection of politics, economics, and managerial decision-making. He holds a Ph.D. (Business Administration: Finance) from the University of South Carolina.

What drew him to A&M – San Antonio: opportunities for program growth and expansion, especially at the graduate level.

“Our location provides great potential to work with industry and to design a research program that provides real impact and opportunity not only for local industry, the city and the state, but also for our research to have national and international influence and impact.”

Additional reasons cited by Dr. Christie-David include a diverse workforce, a growing urban area that is becoming a magnet for cutting-edge industries, and a citywide focus on developing and sustaining a strong talent pool through a network of higher learning institutions. Part of his focus will include finding ways to provide students with more interdisciplinary programming, more experiential learning, more internships, and more student team projects.



**DR. CARL SHEPERIS**

*Dean of the College of Education and Human Development*

Dr. Sheperis arrived on campus in February 2019 to serve as Dean of the College of Education and Human Development. As a proud “first-generation kid,” Dr. Sheperis was drawn to A&M – San Antonio because of its focus on equity and its “commitment to supporting a charter school district focused on serving students from surrounding lower-income neighborhoods” (Forward Momentum).

Dr. Sheperis’ focus on equity modeling and excellence is demonstrated in his work focusing on digital equity and the improvement of education access and quality of life for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Dr. Sheperis’ direct involvement and oversight of A&M – San Antonio’s charter school partnerships and educational initiatives show his commitment to uni-

versity and community togetherness. Through initiatives such as The Digital Inclusion Project, a partnership with the City of San Antonio and City Education Partners, Dr. Sheperis has a unique perspective on the digital divide and alleviating that divide. This initiative is timely in light of COVID-19 and underscores the urgent need to provide access and opportunity to A&M – San Antonio’s student population.

“A great university seeks to have real and lasting impact on its community and in the lives of its students...the real value of any higher education institution can be measured by the depth of its roots in its community and seeks to address local needs and challenges,” Sheperis said. (Forward Momentum)

# Reflections on Student Success and Engagement

**A**t the heart of Texas A&M University – San Antonio's mission is a commitment to support a diverse and heritage-rich community beginning with our students.

Never has there been a time where togetherness, resilience, and perseverance has been more prominently demonstrated than during the University's quick adaptation to supporting its students and community during the pandemic. A&M – San Antonio navigated unprecedented challenges with faculty and staff transitioning to remote learning, reimagining major events, traditions and milestones, and a remote working environment.

The Division of Student Success and Engagement took the University's mission and commitment to students to heart by ensuring that students were able to access resources and services whether residing on campus or from their homes. Nearly 30 percent of students are parents, adapted and juggled learning, working, and living in a home bubble.

## Engagement and Partnerships

The Mays Center for Experiential Learning and Community Engagement partnerships and sponsorships has traversed the uncertain terrain caused by the pandemic. This past year has seen incredible accomplishments in spite of the challenges that have presented themselves due to COVID-19. Dr. Edwin Blanton, Executive Director for the Mays Center, notes, "The center's rapid shift to a remote work operating model brought about some challenges. In this

almost exclusive virtual world, we had to find innovative ways to connect our students to opportunities and resources to help them become career-ready and community-minded." Career Advising, which previously had a virtual option for students, saw a 100 percent increase. Students and alumni were also in search for remote employment. Dr. Blanton notes that securing on-campus employment for students was challenging but the center supported supervisors in developing ways to assign remote work and to offer professional development opportunities. The Center launched Mission Future, a community-centric workforce development program created to support workers displaced during the pandemic. The Career READY Program, launched in November 2020, allows students to "earn and learn" while completing their education utilizing their Federal Work Study award to receive a market-wage for off-campus employment. The collaboration with the Mays Center, Financial Aid, Human Resources, and academic departments, assisted students in completing internships, clinical teaching, and other career-aligned employment.

Some programming required safe options necessary for in-person activities. The General's Store, a food pantry that offers free food for students in need, enacted a curbside-delivery model, minimizing person-to-person contact that adhered to the Centers for Disease Control's and Prevention recommendation for social distancing. The General's Store distributed over 8,822 pounds of food from March 2020-summer 2021. Utilizing the same practices and recommendations, the Mays Center facilitated voting practices as A&M-San Antonio operated as a polling location during the election season. The center's efforts led

to A&M-San Antonio's recognition among 235 schools nationally, as a Voter Friendly Campus.

Reflecting on what the new "normal" may be post-pandemic, Dr. Blanton states "Research discloses that communities that get through issues have familiar characteristics, which include mental health support, strong social networks, commitment from community leaders, and freedom to engage in positive coping and well-being activities. The Mays Center will reflect on these characteristics and more to facilitate connection and healing. The Mays Center will turn to science and continue to follow federal, state, and university guidelines as our guide for how to move forward. We will continue to offer virtual and hybrid options where possible."

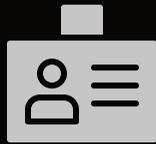
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**The year challenged us to think in new ways and be more innovative than ever before. We have engaged with our students in multiple new formats and have been able to work with more partners on several fronts. We were also able to expand our staff and launch workforce development initiatives.”**

**-DR. EDWIN L. BLANTON**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MAYS CENTER  
FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



**\$18k**  
 INTERNSHIP GRANTS  
 AWARDED



**\$183k**  
 FEDERAL WORK-STUDY  
 GRANTS AWARDED



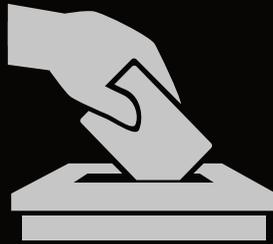
**240+**  
 VIRTUAL  
 CAREER FAIRS



**50**  
 EXPERIENTIAL AND SERVICE-  
 LEARNING COURSES



**HSI CAREER  
 COLLABORATIVE**  
 HOSTED NATIONAL  
 TWO-DAY CAREER  
 CONFERENCE



**22**  
 ON CAMPUS  
 VOTER REGISTRATION  
 DRIVES

NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED  
 AS A VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS



**8,822**  
 POUNDS OF FOOD  
 DISTRIBUTED  
 THROUGH GENERAL'S  
 FOOD PANTRY

## CREATIVITY & FLEXIBILITY: PANDEMIC BY THE #s

**1,100**  
 COURSES TRANSITIONED  
 TO REMOTE LEARNING

**460** MIFI'S AND  
**335** LAPTOPS  
 DISTRIBUTED TO  
 STUDENTS

**252,252**  
 HOURS OF  
 HELPDESK SUPPORT

**38,295\***  
 VIRTUAL MEETINGS  
 SUPPORTED

**6**  
 STUDENTS EMPLOYED  
 IN ITS SUPPORT ROLES



\*MS Teams, Webex  
 and Zoom



### DIRECT STUDENT AID



**\$76k**  
 PARKING FEES  
 REFUNDED TO  
 STUDENTS



**\$46k**  
 MEAL PLANS  
 REFUNDED

**\$291k**  
 IN HOUSING  
 ASSISTANCE

**300**  
 STUDENTS  
 EMPLOYED ON  
 CAMPUS

PAID STUDENT  
 INTERNSHIPS WITH  
 SAN ANTONIO  
 BUSINESSES &  
 ORGANIZATIONS



ENHANCED  
 PUBLIC SAFETY  
 COMMUNICATIONS

LAUNCHED  
 A&M-SA TODAY  
 (DIGITAL NEWS SITE),  
 INTEGRATED DIGITAL  
 MONITOR SYSTEM,  
 AND  
 NON-EMERGENCY  
 TEXT MESSAGING  
 SYSTEM

**6**  
 WELLNESS STATIONS

**25**  
 PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY  
 ASSISTANTS

**13**  
 BOTTLED WATER  
 DISTRIBUTION FEBRUARY  
 20, 2021 TO MARCH 6, 2021

GENERAL'S FOOD STORE  
 SERVED  
**528**  
 CUSTOMERS AND  
 THEIR FAMILIES



REIMAGINED  
 TRADITIONS,  
 MILESTONES,  
 CELEBRATIONS

**3**  
 CONCIERGE  
 COMMENCEMENTS

APPROXIMATELY  
**2,200**  
 GRADUATES

# ASPIRE

A community of collective impact – ASPIRE

**Texas A&M University-San Antonio's** commitment to community was evident in a number of initiatives launched during the pandemic through ASPIRE (A&M – San Antonio and South Bexar County ISD Partnership to Impact Regional Equity and Excellence) network. ASPIRE focuses on developing educational programs and services to support existing programs to tackle persistent teacher shortages, curriculum development challenges and gaps in services for children with special needs in San Antonio.

While the challenges of the pandemic meant a redesign of many of the services for K-12 students and teachers, the University launched a number of new programs and services to ensure that ASPIRE students and families and schools continued to be supported.

## Keeping Our Promises

A&M-San Antonio launched the Jaguar Excellence Guarantee and Achiever Promise in September 2020 for incoming students enrolling as of Fall 2021. Buoyed by the A&M University System Board of Regents \$100 million scholarship campaign shared across the 11 campuses over the next 10 years, this program offers high-achieving high school seniors the opportunity to earn free tuition for up to four years or degree completion.

Enrollment Management safely hosted pep rallies with ASPIRE partnered schools where over 500 seniors attended along with a number of students who participated virtually through live streams.

ASPIRE Classroom of the Month, launched in October 2020, recognized teachers in the ASPIRE network who champion higher education in their classroom providing students and their families an inspiring and motivating environment to explore such opportunities. Teachers also receive a \$1,000 stipend sponsored by Community First Health Plans (CFHP).

Jaguar Excellence Guarantee and Achiever Promise, launched September 22, 2020, assists qualified students with resources to help them graduate with little to no debt. The program also grants access to services, which “impact a student’s ability to graduate on time with the essential skills employers rely on.”





**\$750,000** GRANT FROM USAA TO ADDRESS DIGITAL INCLUSION (DECEMBER 14, 2020)

**\$2.1M** DEPT. OF EDUCATION GRANT (OCTOBER 15, 2020)



**2021 GOLD CASE\* DISTRICT IV ACCOLADES AWARD**  
FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES  
\*COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION

# Military Embracing

**In the tradition of service, the Office of Military Affairs adapted to the challenges of the pandemic and developed unique ways to serve military-connected students, student veterans, and their families.**

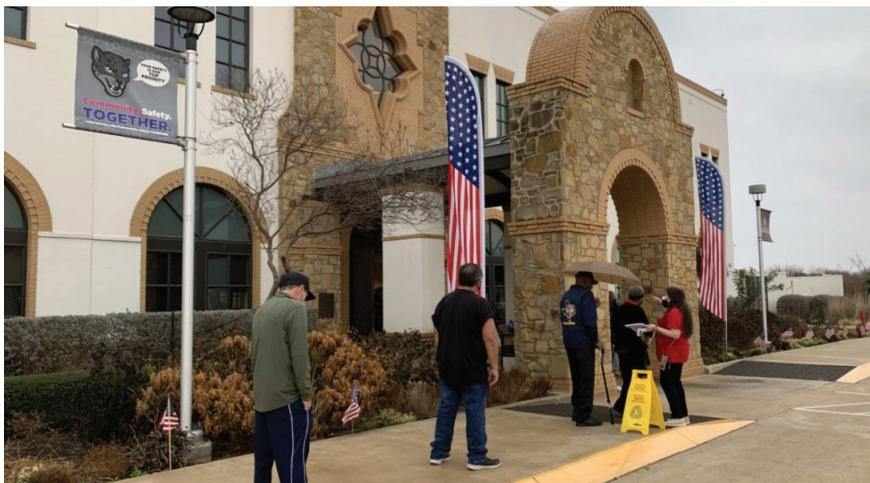
Among a number of initiatives, Military Affairs collaborated with Information Technology Services streamlining the certification process for benefits and services, which previously took place in person. Students were also able to login and track the progress of their certification. A series of “pop-up certification” events encouraged students to submit

their paperwork before the deadline. Students who took advantage of this program had their benefits processed within 24 hours compared to the typical multi-day process timeline.

The use of virtual meeting platforms such as Webex and Zoom also helped OMA communicate with students and provided opportunities for virtual events. Programs such as the JIRA digital document is one that the office intends to use post-pandemic as it removed barriers for students who commute to campus or work unusual hours. The challenges faced during the pandemic were seen as

an opportunity to grow closer as a team and to think outside of the box to better serve students. “With additional resources, we have been able to better prepare for what may come our way. We stand ready to serve those who have served,” said Valeria Delarna, administrative associate for the Office of Military Affairs.

A&M-San Antonio collaborated with the South Texas Veterans Health Care System to host several COVID-19 vaccination clinics this spring. Nearly 500 Veterans who resided in south San Antonio were vaccinated.



**RANKED ONE OF THE TOP 25 IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION BY BEST FOR VETS IN THE MILITARY TIMES (2021)**



**NEARLY 900 MILITARY AND/OR VETERAN STUDENTS SERVED DURING THE PANDEMIC**



# Reimagining Student Life

A mandatory training module was developed and launched by the Office of the Dean of Students. The proactive training continues to provide important health and safety information to all students and specifically students in their on-campus interactions. The module contained best practices and expectations for students' health and safety as it pertained to COVID-19. Completion requirement dates were set based on their residence and the modality of their courses.

## Commencement

Every student imagines walking across the stage and celebrating with family and friends. A&M-San Antonio had only weeks to redesign this milestone for its Class of 2020 graduates and again in December 2020 and May 2021. A university-wide effort came together to deliver several unique experiences that would become a model for the city and other universities and high schools.

On May 15, 2020, hundreds of graduates along with their families, arrived on campus during "Operation Graduation," including a series of virtual commencement greetings from the Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp, A&M-San Antonio academic leaders and others. A special issue in the *San Antonio Express-News* recognized the Class of 2020, who represented the first graduating class of the comprehensive expansion that welcomed the first time first-year students who would have attended the university for four years. A drive-thru version of a traditional commencement included photos with President Matson and the University mascot, General the Jaguar, while following strict social distancing protocols. A two-day event Dec. 14 and 15, 2020 again brought hundreds of graduates to campus for a similar three-day version held for graduating seniors culminating in a virtual commencement ceremony Dec. 15.

In May 2021, as cases of COVID-19 dramatically decreased, the University produced a three-day commencement May 13-15, 2021 providing students an "a la carte" menu of experiences with stations set up and the opportunity to walk the stage in the auditorium and pose for photos with President Matson after having their names read by University Provost, Dr. Mike O'Brien.



**Esperanza Hall** staff faced the challenges of emerging COVID-19 with rigorous health and safety protocols and innovations like the "Drive-thru Move-In" event, which allowed prospective residents to tour the hall while adhering to social distancing directives. Careful consideration and planning supported efficient and safe move-in experiences and living arrangements. During Spring and Summer 2020, additional virtual and safety protocol friendly programming was developed to help provide the safest and most resourceful living conditions for residents including COVID Ca\$h, which promoted safe living practices that benefitted both the individual and all hall residents.

# Alumni Benefitted From Reimagined Services and Support

Texas A&M-San Antonio's 14,500 alumni continued to be a priority during the pandemic. As other universities across the nation grappled with cancelling traditions, A&M-San Antonio addressed the challenge by expanding its support to alumni and continuing, albeit reimagined, alumni recognition. Such was the case as during the University's 2020 Alumni Awards Ceremony held Oct. 17.

The three alumni recognized—while dramatically different career pathways—share two things: a personal passion that propelled them to learn more and a desire to share their expertise with others.



## GET FIT

**Tim Ingram '13**  
**Distinguished Alumni**

When Tim Ingram, Class of 2013, and his business partner and wife, Michelle, opened Heavy Metal Fitness in 2014, it was the first real strength-focused gym in San Antonio,

according to Ingram. His clientele includes athletes, competitive powerlifters, and “anyone who wants to get stronger and is willing to put in the work.”

It's a dream come true for Ingram, who became obsessed with his own fitness around the age of 20. While individual training and coaching remain core components of this niche gym, Heavy Metal does have a substantial “strongman community” membership base of hardcore lifters, says Ingram. He does his best to reduce the intimidation factor for newcomers. In fact, rule No. 1 of the facility is this: “Heavy Metal is a family of lifters. Do your part to make everyone feel welcome.”

Like many local business owners, Ingram had to close his doors during the onset of the pandemic. “That was rough, and a bit terrifying not knowing when we could resume operations,” he said.

When Heavy Metal reopened two months later, Ingram was thankful to serve a crowd of fitness-goers more motivated than most.

Helping others set personal strength goals and build confidence in reaching those goals is what motivates Ingram most. “The benefits are tangible. If you can bench press 300 pounds and then work up to 320, that is objective progress,” says Ingram. “This isn't rocket science. Set a goal. Do the work. Accomplish your goal. Set another goal.”

Yet, the science is equally important, notes Ingram. It wasn't until his late 20s when Ingram says he finally felt ready to apply himself in school. He enrolled in the kinesiology program at A&M-San Antonio's College of Education and Human Development, from which he graduated in 2013. Learning about human anatomy and physiology and proper body mechanics provided the know-how to Ingram's can-do training philosophy.

“Now that I work professionally in this field, I know my education separates me from the average personal trainer who loves to work out,” he said.

Ingram's professional advice is simple: Follow your passion, but back it up with knowledge.



## GET INVOLVED

**Irma Iris Duran de Rodriguez '14**  
**Spirit of the Jaguar**

In her role as senior housing policy coordinator for the City of San Antonio, Irma Iris Duran de Rodriguez, Class of 2014, had worked largely on the back

end of ensuring passage of fair housing regulations. When COVID-19 hit, “it was all hands on deck,” said Duran. “The pandemic shifted everything to an emergency services focus,” with everyone from her department directly assisting individuals.

Her 2014 master's degree in Business Administration from A&M-San Antonio, with a concentration in project management, has served Duran especially well at this time. “In shifting to crisis management mode, we've all had to get creative with how to work from home and still serve the community,” she said.

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Her hours have increased, but Duran also feels more informed. "I can now attend more virtual meetings with different community organizations I otherwise could not if physically commuting to in-person events," she said.

She's also been able to volunteer more. Among her many roles, Duran is serving as a Fiesta commissioner until 2023 and was recently appointed to sit on the Texas A&M-San Antonio Regional Center Plan for which she advocates for sustainable housing and farmland preservation. Giving back to kids holds a special place in her heart. As a lifetime Girl Scout member, Duran is active in her daughters' troop. She not only mentors scout members but also encourages parents to empower their children to pursue their interests and dreams.

Her own career took a different turn than she first envisioned, with ideas of one day working in Europe. Before that could happen, Duran landed a mentorship assisting a small business consultant she found cold-calling members of the city's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Learning she was good at creating financial and marketing plans for business owners made her realize she had a skillset others needed.

She applied for a position with San Antonio's Economic Development Division that has since led to other opportunities within city government and a serendipitous decision to pursue her MBA. A chance encounter with a A&M-San Antonio recruitment representative when she took a different path to a meeting ended with a discussion about program requirements and the university's flexibility to attend evening classes.

Duran's career advice: Be proactive in planning your future but open to exploring a different path.



## GET CURIOUS

**Christopher A. Castro '17**  
**Recent Graduate**

"You get to know yourself better when you have to rely on others to figure things out," says Christopher Castro, a 2017 finance graduate of A&M-San Antonio's College of Business.

Christopher A. Castro, Class of 2017, honed his group problem-solving skills while on a month-long European Innovation Academy study abroad program during his senior year. Not understanding how to navigate the train system in Rome, and trying to exchange American dollars with the locals so he could do his laundry, underscored for him the importance of working with others across differences in language and culture.

Castro applies that experience to his current role as IT Business Analyst for Zachry Group, where he helps translate the needs of end-users to the tech-savvy programmers building the automated business systems used by client firms worldwide in the engineering, construction, and fabrication services sectors. Castro's studies at A&M-San Antonio included an internship with the South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

"That gave me a much better understanding of the business and financial needs of the community and a greater appreciation of the improvements I see taking place on the Southside," said Castro.

He is personally invested in the area as a "house hacker," renting the other half of the Southside duplex he owns to help pay his mortgage. Castro's entrepreneurial interests are nothing new. Even before attending Business Careers High School on the West Side, the bug to translate dollars earned into long-term savings came at an early age, through "mowing lawns, selling candy at school, and reading anything by Dave Ramsey."

What really energizes Castro is "helping the next person." In addition to serving as a United Way campaign ambassador for Zachry Group, he mentors A&M-San Antonio students considering an international study opportunity. Knowing the value of that life-changing experience for himself, Castro even donated back to the university the travel scholarship funding he received. Learning to take risks and get out of his comfort zone is one of the lasting lessons from his education and study abroad experience.

Castro's free investment advice: Invest in yourself and go to school. Doors open when you have a degree.

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**IN 2020 THE UNIVERSITY HELD VIRTUAL REUNIONS CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2016 AND CLASS OF 2011 FOR THEIR FIVE- AND 10-YEAR REUNIONS, RESPECTIVELY.**

**Alumni participated in career- and industry-specific events, benefitted from the lifetime access to career services and the university's alumni networking community, continued use of university email and on-campus library services, participation in a virtual book club and other enrichment and family-friendly activities on and off campus, as well as discounted tickets and services with various university vendors. Alumni continued to serve through volunteer opportunities continued with helping recruit and mentor students, serving on university boards and committees, and assisting with service learning projects.**

# Campus Expansion Continues

## Perseverance by Facilities

In May of 2019, Texas A&M University – San Antonio broke ground on a \$30 million classroom and studio building, extending the University footprint and providing more than 60,000 square feet of learning space. The groundbreaking, which coincided during the University's ten-year anniversary, heralded in the continued commitment by the University to provide state-of-the-art facilities to foster the development of student learning. The building opened in August of 2020 providing adequate space for social distancing for the limited amount of classes that were held in-person during Fall 2020.

“This new building [COB] will help us foster a culture of innovation that will benefit our students, make our research more impactful and allow us to be of even greater service to our community.”

– DR. ROHAN CHRISTIE-DAVID  
DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

The University also broke ground on the new College of Business (COB) and Library building. The \$53 million project slated for completion in 2022. The building will house 15 instructional spaces and include faculty and administrative offices.



**\$253M**  
INVESTED IN FACILITIES  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
SINCE 2009



Site of the upcoming College of Business and Library Building, Texas A&M University – San Antonio, March 11, 2021.

Photo by Maegan Mendoza (The Mesquite)



“This building is a visible representation of A&M – San Antonio’s growth and the impact of a growing enrollment. As we look around the corner, we know the expansion of University facilities infused with the latest technologies encourages collaboration and speaks to a learning environment that supports research and public service – all leading to expansion of our regional economy.”

– PRESIDENT CYNTHIA TENIENTE-MATSON

## A Season of Firsts

Texas A&M University – San Antonio's first year of intercollegiate athletics faced the pandemic like a fierce competitor along with its mascot, the Jaguar.

Under the direction of Darnell Smith, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreational Sports, the startup program saw aggressive growth and a season of competitive women's softball, men's golf, men and women's soccer and e-sport.

The program reached another milestone when student athletes, coaches, alumni and the community celebrated the opening of practice fields August 2021.

For the first time, the Jaguar community and South Bexar residents joined for a pep rally in June 2021 with cheers celebrating student athletes.

Earlier in the year e-sports, student athletes and their coach Travis Yang joined the Division of University Advancement in raising funds to assist students and their families impacted by the pandemic. More than \$51,000 was raised to date.

This June, the men's golf team and Coach Christy Cano joined with the A&M-San Antonio Foundation to raise funds for scholarships at Silverhorn Golf Club.



“ Building a sports program from scratch is all the more challenging during a health pandemic, but we are moving forward with great anticipation.”

– DARNELL SMITH, DIRECTOR OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AND RECREATIONAL SPORTS



LAUNCHED  
**WOMEN'S SOFTBALL,  
MEN'S GOLF, AND MEN  
AND WOMEN'S  
SOCCER PROGRAMS**

**82 STUDENT ATHLETES** WERE SIGNED

MEMBER OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE E-SPORTS–  
COLLEGIATE STARGAME, TESPA LEAGUES

STATE-OF-THE-ART RECREATION CENTER SLATED FOR COMPLETION IN 2023

# Planning for the Future Amid the Pandemic



In January 2021, while embarking on the final year in the life of the then current strategic plan, *Build. Impact. Transform.*, Texas A&M University-San Antonio kicked off a strategic plan renewal process to develop our next five-year strategic plan.

The health and safety precautions during the pandemic made it necessary for this to be a largely virtual process but many opportunities for input and engagement were offered to the campus community in Spring 2021, including employee feedback surveys; a series of focus groups for faculty, staff, and students; and several open workshops and events, including:

## February 2021

### Envisioning the Future: Trends in Higher Education workshop

This workshop highlighted emerging trends, best practices, and future changes shaping the higher education environment and impacting the work of faculty and staff at A&M-San Antonio. Participants developed a clearer understanding of the key issues and opportunities to which we needed to be responsive as we engaged in our institutional strategic planning renewal process.

### Envisioning the Future: Defining the Student Experience workshop

During this interactive workshop, students, faculty, and staff worked in small groups to develop and document a unifying vision of the desired student experience at A&M-San Antonio. The workshop yielded a Student Experience Statement that served as a foundational document for our planning process.

## March 2021

### Defining the Employee Experience workshop

During this interactive workshop, faculty and staff worked in small groups to describe their vision of the desired employee experience at A&M-San Antonio. Participants also reviewed A&M-San Antonio's institutional values and discussed ways in which they can fulfill this vision and foster a working environment in which all employees thrive and engage productively to advance the University's mission and strategic plan goals.

## A&M-San Antonio Future Summit

The Future Summit was a half-day signature event bringing together faculty, staff, and students along with leaders and supporters from the local community. In a large conference-type session, participants heard four "Ed Talks" on topics of importance to A&M-San Antonio as we look toward the future:

### Dr. Mildred García, President, American Association of State Colleges and Universities:

"Critical Transformations for Serving the New Majority"

### Dr. Harrison Keller, Commissioner of Higher Education for the State of Texas:

"The Future of Higher Education in Texas"

### Mr. Michael True, President, INTUITION:

"Changing Our Educational DNA: The Importance of Experiential Learning"

### Dr. Ángel Cabrera, President, Georgia Institute of Technology:

"Building the Public Research University of the Future"

Participants then worked in small groups to apply the insights from the "Ed Talks" to planning for A&M-San Antonio's future.

The valuable input gathered at these events informed the key elements of the new strategic plan: mission, vision, values, and goals. Starting in April 2021, the steering committee and task force members engaged in series of workshops and met frequently to develop objectives for each of the five strategic plan goals.

The result of these many months of collaboration and planning is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's strategic plan for 2022-2026, *Transforming Tomorrow Together*, which establishes and documents the institutional goals that will determine our priorities, focus our efforts, and guide the allocation of resources for the next five years.



**Strategic Plan Steering Committee**

**JESSICA LOUDERMILK**

Chief of Staff & Associate  
Vice President for Strategic Initiatives  
Chair, Strategic Plan Steering Committee

**DR. MIKE O'BRIEN**

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Chair, Academic Excellence task force

**DR. MARI FUENTES-MARTIN**

Vice President of Student Success and Engagement  
Co-chair, Student Experience task force

**BRANDY MCLELLAND**

Vice President of Enrollment Management  
Co-chair, Access & Affordability task force

**DR. JEANETTE DEDIEMAR**

Vice President of University Relations  
Chair, Impact & Engagement task force

**KATHRYN FUNK-BAXTER**

Vice President of Business  
Affairs/CFO  
Chair, Culture of Excellence task force

**TIM GRITTEN**

Executive Director, University Library  
Representative for President's Commission on Equity

**DR. LEONARD LOVE**

Associate Professor, Department  
of Management and Marketing  
Faculty Senate Vice President (president-elect)

**JARRICK BROWN**

Student Activities Coordinator,  
Office of Student Involvement  
Staff Council Vice President (president-elect)

**ALLYSSA ATKINSON**

Student Government Association President

**President's Cabinet**

**DR. CYNTHIA TENIENTE-MATSON**

President

**DR. MICHAEL O'BRIEN**

Vice President, Academic Affairs  
Provost

**DR. JEANETTE DEDIEMAR**

Vice President, University Advancement  
& External Relations

**DR. MARI FUENTES-MARTIN**

Vice President, Student Success & Engagement

**KATHRYN FUNK-BAXTER**

Vice President, Business Affairs

**JESSICA LOUDERMILK**

Chief of Staff & Associate Vice President for  
Strategic Initiatives  
Chair, Strategic Plan Steering Committee

**BRANDY MCLELLAND**

Vice President, Enrollment Management

**DARNELL SMITH**

Director, Intercollegiate Athletics  
& Recreational Sports



**Communications is a critical in every relationship – and during the pandemic, a factor in the University’s ability to continue its mission and maintain a healthy environment.**

Community.Safety.Together, a comprehensive, institution-wide strategy launched in April 2020, continued to provide information throughout the pandemic. The communication strategy, which quickly became known across campus as “CST,” was the guiding star for a centralized effort to keep the campus community informed with accurate, timely and consistent information, resources and tools, according to Dr. Jeanette DeDiemar, Vice President for the Division of University Relations.

Integrated into A&M-San Antonio’s Risk Management Group, representatives from across the University worked together to inform students, employees, alumni, families, contractors and the media through an integrated communications strategy from signage to weekly pandemic updates, town halls, manager training, informational videos and a dedicated microsite that housed FAQs, updates, self-reporting portal, testing and later, vaccination resources.

The team was, and continues to be, at the forefront of providing the University and external audiences with both emergency and routine updates. The pandemic required support outside of the typical workday as was the case during the February winter storm requiring an almost 24/7 series of communications support.

**“The communication strategy, which quickly became known across campus as CST, became the guiding star for a centralized effort to keep the campus community informed with accurate, timely and consistent information, resources and tools.”**

**– DR. JEANETTE DEDIEMAR**  
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

As the University prepared for Fall 2020 students, faculty, and staff learned another new language from self-reporting to the COVID-19 Monitoring Committee who provided a weekly status regarding the number of cases of COVID-19 impacting A&M-San Antonio and operational status. This group would continue to recommend campus operational status until May, when the A&M University System no longer required the report.

## PUBLIC HEALTH AT THE FOREFRONT

Risk Management’s operational strategy was integral to slowing the spread of COVID-19 on campus while ensuring the institution was prepared to address the impacts of pandemic. As one of the essential departments that remained physically on campus to work, the group managed some of the frontline responses including overseeing Wellness Checkpoint Stations including 77 Public Health and Safety Assistants/Leads. In late October 2020 through January 2021, Public Health and Safety Coordinators were hired to assist with COVID-19 Case Management.

A priority of Risk Management is to provide safety resources, support and information to assist University employees and students. A major initiative created in response to COVID-19 was A&M-San Antonio’s Community.Safety.Together (CST) plan that provided resources on testing, guidelines, and safety information for the University community. Weekly updates were and continue to be provided on testing and confirmed cases. A&M-San Antonio was a leader in providing free COVID-19 testing resources on campus – and with the help of Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM), provided Rapid Testing cards. Information on off campus free testing resources campus was also provided. Vaccines were administered to many employees and the campus community. Through the implementation of the CST plan and in combination with the implementation of Rapid and PCR Testing, University employees were cleared to return to campus mitigating potential exposures. A&M-San Antonio will continue to provide pop-up testing sites and vaccination opportunities.

### ON CAMPUS COVID-19 PCR TESTING WAS IMPLEMENTED AUGUST 12, 2020.\*



\* Indicators reflect August 12, 2020 through August 5, 2021.

**EMPLOYEES: 47**  
**STUDENTS: 243**

\*Cumulative positive cases reported January 1, 2020 through July 31, 2021 (Statistical information provided by A&M-San Antonio Risk Management)

**RISK MANAGEMENT COVID-19****CO LEADERS**

Jeanette De Diemar, *Strategy / Crisis Communications*

Jessica Loudermilk, *Operations / Risk Strategy*

**GROUP MEMBERS 2020**

Rita Arredondo, *Risk Management*

Jo Anna Benavides-Franke, *Student Affairs*

Mari Fuentes-Martin, *Student Success & Engagement*

Martha González, *Human Resources*

Trevor Liddle, *Business Continuity / Resources*

John Lo Curto, *Compliance / Policies / Risk*

Roger Stearns, *University Police / Safety*

**FALL 2020 BLUEPRINT**

Mike O'Brien, *Academic Competitiveness*

Brandy McLelland, *Student Pipeline*

Kathy Funk-Baxter, *Business Continuity*

Mari Fuentes-Martin, *Student Success and Engagement*

**FALL 2020 COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS CHAMPIONS**

Jeanette De Diemar, *Lead*

Adriana Contreras, *Marketing and Communications*

Erin O'Brien, *Marketing and Communications*

Mary Kay Cooper, *Advancement and Alumni*

Erica Costenbader, *Marketing and Communications*

Fernando Estrada, *Marketing and Communications*

Francy Leal, *Human Resources*

Martha Gonzalez, *Human Resources*

Tom Milligan, *Marketing and Communications*

Trevor Liddle, *Business Affairs*

Mariela Lopez, *Office of the President*

Jim Meyer, *Academic Affairs*

Anna Romskog, *Advancement*

Vanessa Torres, *Enrollment Management*

Reed Vessey, *Student Success and Engagement*

**FALL 2021 BLUEPRINT AREAS OF FOCUS AND TASK FORCES**

Kathy Funk-Baxter, *Task Forces Lead*

**WORKFORCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Martha González, *Lead*

Karen Ivy

Miriam Magdaleno

Phillip Rodgers

**STUDENT & UNIVERSITY EVENTS**

Abigail Montañez-Rodríguez, *Lead*

Joe Pickering

Reba Fuggs

Vanessa Quiroga

Mary Walker

**FALL 2021 BLUEPRINT AREAS OF FOCUS AND TASK FORCES (CONT'D.)****FACILITIES**

David McKenna, *Lead*

Todd Mocabee

Johnny Guevara

Bill Griffenberg

Dawn Weatherford

**CAMPUS HOUSING**

Jo Anna Benavides-Franke, *Lead*

David Cunha

Roger Stearns

**ATHLETICS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Stephen Sherman - *Lead*

Blair Wyatt

Art Olague

Richard Delgado (ROTC)

Dr. Ray Wooten

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Sarah Ramseur, *Lead*

Deirdre McDonald

Doug Daigle

Ho Huynh

Douglas Carter

Michelle Anguiano

Nancy Larson

**HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

Kathy Funk-Baxter, *Lead*

Rita Arredondo

Victor Pantusa

Brianna Blackman

Megan Wise de Valdez

**SUPPORTING F2F INSTRUCTION**

Ed Westermann (COAS)

Gilbert Barrera (COB)

Scott Peters (COEHD)

**FALL 2021 COVID-19 COMMUNICATION CHAMPIONS**

Jeanette DeDiemar, *Lead*

Jenny Collier, *Strategic Communications*

Mary Kay Cooper, *Alumni*

Erica Costenbader, *Marketing and Communications*

Richard Delgado, *Student Success and Engagement*

Fernando Estrada, *Marketing and Communications*

Martha González, *Human Resources*

Trevor Liddle, *Business Affairs*

Mariela Lopez, *Office of the President*

Jim Meyer, *Academic Affairs*

Anna Romskog, *Advancement*

Vanessa Torres, *Enrollment Management*

Reed Vessey, *Student Success and Engagement*

# COVID-19 CENTRAL\*

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN SLOWING THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS AND ITS VARIANTS. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN CONTINUE TO KEEP OUR JAGUAR COMMUNITY, YOUR FAMILY, AND YOUR FRIENDS SAFE:**



**Safety:** Wear a mask when the situation warrants or if you remain unvaccinated. Wash your hands frequently and practice social distancing when possible.



**Self-Monitoring:** Take time each day before coming to campus to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and use the Reporting Portal online should you test positive.



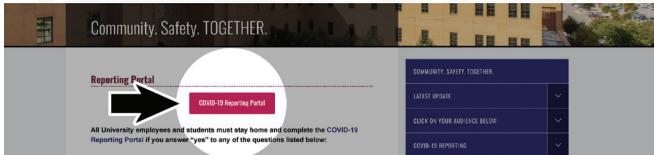
**Vaccinations:** Students and employees will continue to be informed about community vaccination resources and on-campus opportunities as they occur.

**\*NOTE: Safety protocols will continue to be updated according to Texas A&M University System and official public health guidance.**

## COVID-19 Case Management Process Students/Employees

**1. Self-reporting tool:** Employees and students report via the COVID-19 Reporting Portal, either as 1) the individual affected and/or 2) a supervisor or faculty member of an affected individual:

- Individual as a laboratory confirmed case for COVID-19
- Individual was exposed to COVID-19
- Individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms



**2. Reporting and documentation:** The information is submitted via Maxient, a secure online database, which supports case management documents and high level case tracking.

**NOTE:** If the report is submitted by a supervisor or faculty member, an email is also sent to the individual to begin the case management process.

**3. Tracking and Outreach:** Outreach calls are placed to the individual to verify information submitted in the Self-Reporting Portal, the contact tracing is initiated, a timeline is identified to determine isolation or quarantine period, and close contacts are identified. Close contacts are also entered into the COVID-19 Self-Reporting Portal to refine case management.

**NOTE:** Student residents in Esperanza Hall, who need to isolate/be quarantined, are relocated to predetermined rooms designated for isolation and/or quarantine. These individuals will also receive support including meals (coordinated through Food Services). (If on campus accommodations are not available, individuals are relocated to a local hotel, which is predetermined through a standing agreement.)

**4. Isolation/quarantine criteria:** A formal letter is emailed to the individual with details for the isolation/quarantine period and additional resources available to support the individual. A separate letter is also emailed to faculty and supervisor (as applicable) with criteria for the individual's safe return to campus and information on how to accommodate class schedules and work.

**5. Notification:** Near the end of the isolation/quarantine schedule, the Case Manager contacts the individual to determine if they met the criteria for return to campus. If the criteria was met, a formal notification to necessary parties will occur. If the criteria was not met, formal notification of next steps will occur.

Follow up by the Case Manager continues for those individuals with extended isolation/quarantine timelines.

**6. Case completion:** The Case Manager closes the case following the completion of isolation and/or quarantine period.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** [tamusa.edu/community-safety-together/campus-conditions-safety-indicators/self-reporting-tool](https://tamusa.edu/community-safety-together/campus-conditions-safety-indicators/self-reporting-tool)



**Texas A&M University-San Antonio**  
One University Way  
San Antonio, TX 78224

(210) 784-1000  
[tamusa.edu](https://tamusa.edu) |     @tamusa



**Community. Safety.  
TOGETHER.**