

A&M graduate may be youngest to receive M.D.

By KAREN BLOCH
Staff Writer

A woman believed to be the youngest to receive an M.D. degree in the United States this year graduated with honors from Texas A&M's College of Medicine Saturday.

Lani Kay Douglas, 22, says she applied to medical school while she was a second-year premed major at A&M because, "Life is short and you need to accomplish as much as you can in a short time."

Douglas, who now is serving a three-year residency in family medicine, says she felt she was ready to start medical school after two years at A&M.

"I just knew I was ready," she says. "I would have enjoyed spending another year being involved in extracurricular activities as an undergraduate, but I wanted to go to medical school more than anything."

"I don't think going to med school early is for everyone. You should only go if you think you're ready. No one should be pushed into med school before he feels ready."



Lani Kay Douglas

"Because of summer school and credits by exam, I had junior hours when I applied (to medical school). A&M was the only medical school I could apply to because when I went through the application process I didn't have enough hours to apply to any other schools."

Douglas says she was excited about her acceptance in to medical school.

"I thought I had a decent chance (to be accepted), with my grades and my interview," she says, "but everyone told me they were real strict about who was admitted."

"I had the attitude that I wanted to get in, but if I didn't I'd have another chance."

After she began medical school, Douglas says being younger than the other students didn't bother her.

"The other students were only about a year and a half older than me," she says. "They made baby jokes, since I was the youngest in the class, but it was all in fun and it didn't bother me."

Douglas said she doesn't think the increase in medical school tuition — to \$1,219 per semester will affect enrollment.

"Everyone who graduated had pretty substantial debts to pay off anyway," she says. "The increase probably won't make or break anyone. I'd be more concerned with the cut in financial aid."

"Even with the increase, I think medical students in Texas will still get a better deal than most students in other states."

A&M grounds maintenance working behind shrubbery

By AMY BOWMAN
Reporter

People driving to the Texas A&M campus and admiring its grounds may never realize how much work is required to keep its 1,100 acres in tip-top condition.

About 120 people work every day of the year to maintain the campus grounds and roads.

"This is not an easy task," says Eugene Ray, director of grounds maintenance for A&M.

The grounds maintenance department is in charge of all the landscaping on campus, the roads and pavements on campus, campus irrigation and plant production. It also works with golf course maintenance and does work for other departments.

One of the most innovative programs implemented by the grounds maintenance department is a radio-controlled irrigation system for the campus. More than 500 acres of the campus are irrigated by sprinklers activated by a computer in the grounds maintenance office.

A computer records the starting and stopping times of different sprinkler systems all over the campus. A lighted master panel shows where water has been turned on and shut off.

This year, A&M has received only \$1.5 million in state funds for maintaining the grounds. Each state university in Texas receives state funds based on factors such as number of students, acreage of the campus, linear perimeter of the campus and the

amount of foliage around campus buildings.

Much of the funding A&M receives for grounds maintenance pays for employee salaries. Landscape maintenance, which employs around 60 people, is the largest division of the department, Ray says.

For the fifth year in a row, the grounds maintenance department has gone without any staff additions, despite continued growth of the campus. In the past four years 14 new buildings and building areas have been added to the campus.

Several of the employees in the department are professional landscape architects, but most aren't.

"Some of the department's best people are those without degrees," Ray says.

Barbara Bush in Houston

'Illiteracy still a problem'

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Barbara Bush, the vice president's wife, said Monday that illiteracy remains a threat to the American way of life and more and more Americans are realizing how extensive and devastating the problem is.

"The tide is turning," Bush told the General Federation of Women's Clubs meeting in Houston.

"Libraries, churches, colleges and volunteer groups have started tutoring programs. Some corporations are starting in-house school systems, while others are expanding literacy programs and promoting awareness of the problem."

State and local governments also

are reviewing their basic adult education programs and examining their education programs in an effort to "try to keep more young people from slipping through the cracks," she said.

Bush, who serves as honorary chairwoman of the organization's literacy project, said about one of every five adult Americans is functionally illiterate.

They cannot read, write or reason well enough to solve problems or make decisions, she said. They suffer the frustration of constant helplessness and the fear of being "found out" and humiliated because of their problem, Bush said.

"But most distressing is the effect

on the children," she said. "They (parents) cannot help them with schoolwork or be an example of the value of an education."

The costs the nation must bear also are enormous, Bush said.

Forty percent of adults with annual incomes under \$5,000 are functionally illiterate, and yearly costs for welfare programs and unemployment compensation are estimated at more than \$56 million, she said.

Almost 85 percent of the juveniles who go to court are illiterate, and an estimated \$6.6 billion is spent every year on 700,000 inmates, she said.

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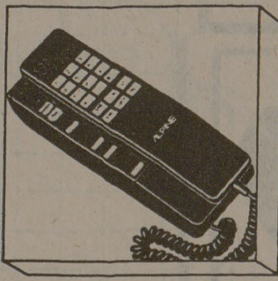
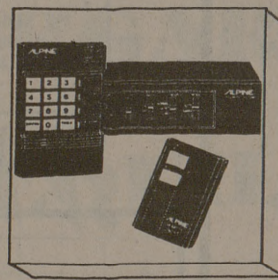
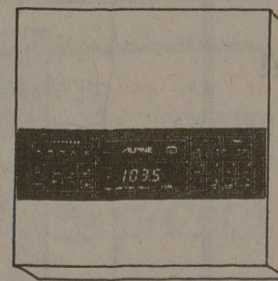
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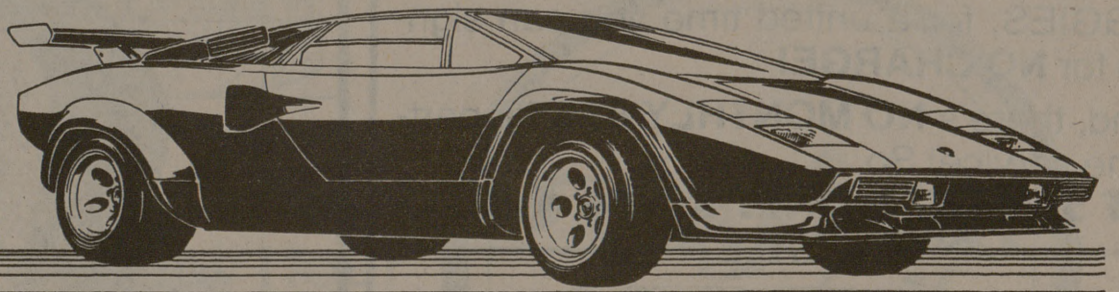
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