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# Handicapped students at A&M find obstacles in facing everyday tasks

By Danny LaBry  
 Staff Writer



While such tasks as pushing elevator buttons and opening doors often are thought of as trivial, they can become major obstacles for a handicapped individual.

To bicycle riders on their way to class, sloped curve cuts are a convenience, but for the wheelchair-bound person, the curb cuts are necessary to get across the street.

A handful of Texas A&M students confront these problems every time they go to class.

A&M student Laurie Marshall has been confined to a wheelchair since she was in the eighth grade. She says the main reason she came to A&M was the friendly atmosphere, but that the geography of the campus ran a close second. After visiting several Texas colleges, she found A&M to be one of the flattest and most accessible for a handicapped person in a wheelchair.

Although Marshall says she has never let accessibility problems hinder her, when it comes to visiting friends in dorms, she usually resorts to a piggyback ride in order to get to the proper floor, which, she says, is more of an inconvenience for her friends than for her, but that they are usually happy to oblige.

A&M dormitories aren't equipped with elevators, although the first floors of some of the dorms have rooms equipped for handicapped students. Modifications in Marshall's dorm include wider doors, a bigger

bathroom, a modified shower and lower light switches.

Simple tasks can often turn into quite an amusing experience, Marshall says, and she can't help but laugh as she explains how she once tried to balance books on her lap while jumping for the elevator buttons in the Harrington Classroom Building.

Some isolated buildings on campus are problems for handicapped students, but professors usually will relocate a class if a handicapped person is having trouble getting to the class.

The Handicapped and Veterans Services office in Hart Hall reviews Marshall's class schedule, along with the schedules of other handicapped students, and sends letters to the appropriate instructors informing them that the student will be attending their classes. Any foreseeable problem is then worked out between the student, the instructor and the handicapped services office.

Taking tests is another common problem facing handicapped students, especially for those like Mar-

shall who have lost full mobility in their hands. She says it usually takes her twice as long as other students to take an all-essay test, so many of the handicapped students are allowed to take their tests in special rooms in the handicapped services office.

Overall, A&M's handicapped services seem to be up-to-date, although Marshall says a few things on campus still bother her, such as getting books on the fifth or sixth floors of the library where the racks are too close together, or sitting on the floor of G. Rollie White Coliseum during basketball games because her wheelchair won't fit in the bleachers.

"I think society is just starting to realize and accept handicapped people," Marshall says. "I think it is just going to take time, like anything else."

About 20 A&M students are bound to wheelchairs, and all of them, along with learning-disabled students, blind students and deaf students, are assisted by the handicapped services staff.

Although Dr. Charles Powell, coordinator for handicapped services, is the only professional staff member in the office, he is assisted by one full-time secretary, two student drivers for the handicapped student van service and four veterans paid by the federal government.

The office also provides special services like mobility assistance, minor wheelchair repairs, handicapped parking and an attendant locator service. It also coordinates

academic services such as special registration, lecture recordings and tutoring.

Powell hopes to double the size of the office soon, as now it consists of two cramped offices and a few small rooms. The main problem, he says, is getting the office to expand and add new staff.

"There's no limit to expansion," he says. "I need to double the size of the office."

Pointing to a stack of tapes on his desk, Powell says he needs a computer that he can use. Those are supposed to be the word processor, but there's no way I can do it. It's terrible consuming. Unfortunately, I'm a deaf student that needs that, and we just can't keep up with it. We've got to do something so this student can get his paper on paper so he can read it.

The handicapped services office receives much of its help from volunteers in the University community, such as Alpha Phi Omega, A&M service fraternity, and engineering technology and engineering departments.

Powell says A&M's accessibility and its handicapped services has contributed to handicapped student enrollment. Because of its relatively flat, he says, A&M has a advantage over other campuses. The University of Texas and west Texas State University's hilly geography makes it difficult to get around.

# Stacked boxes inside library hold archives

By Carolyn Kelby  
 Reporter

A relatively unknown cache of dusty documents, including numerous boxes full of Texas A&M history, is located on campus just behind the library.

Established in 1950 in connection with the 75th anniversary of Texas A&M, the University Archives, also known as the Cushing Library, is a division of Sterling C. Evans Library responsible for collecting and preserving official records.

Organized on three floors, there are boxes stacked to the ceiling with documents dating back to 1871. These assist University administrators, faculty members, students and the general public in research and information gathering, University Archivist Charles Schultz says.

The material is stored in its original form and on microfilm, Schultz says. The files of original material, if placed in a single row, would stretch

for 1.7 miles. Original records stored on microfilm would stretch out 300 to 400 feet, he says.

Schultz says 65 percent of the material used is from clippings files. Clips from *The Battalion*, the *Eagle* and the *Houston Post* are filed by subject for students to use in their research. When the files get too full they are stored in boxes, Schultz says.

"There are 50 boxes of clippings in the back," Schultz says. "Anything you can come up with in the past 50 years, we have clippings for."

The history of A&M is the largest category of information stored in the Archives. Minutes from meetings of the Texas A&M Board of Regents from 1887 to the present and papers from presidents and chancellors are the most important kinds of information, Schultz says.

Another category of information is the historical manuscripts collection. This section contains papers of individuals and records of organizations that include the late Texas Congressman

Olan "Tiger" Teague and former speaker of the Texas House of Representatives Billy Gray.

The Oral Historical collection consists of interviews and interviews from a variety of including A&M graduates who are on an active reserve U.S. military duty who have rank of general, modern oceanographic and marine historians associated with A&M and other documents and articles from former students and faculty, Schultz says.

The fourth category of information is regional historical resource depository. This small collection of deeds, marriage and courthouse material, Schultz says, interest genealogists.

"Like the University as a whole," he says, "the archives teaches, encourages and provides service." Trained professionals on duty to help surface material from the past and present needed for academic and professional development, the report says.

# SCONA prepares for talks on Soviet Union, foreign relations

By Greg Sellers  
 Reporter

Although it doesn't take place until the spring semester, those involved with the Texas A&M Student Conference on National Affairs are busy preparing for their yearly presentation that will focus on the Soviet Union and its foreign relations.

SCONA is an entirely student-run organization that hosts a conference each spring on various topics dealing with world relations.

Scott Wonderly, SCONA planning chairman, says five speeches are tentatively scheduled for this year's conference, which will take place Feb. 10-13. They will be: "Glasnost," which refers to internal changes within the Soviet Union; "New Soviet Foreign Policy," which will be a panel discussion of several



Student Conference on National Affairs

NATO members; "Life in the U.S.S.R.;" "Ever-changing Soviet Relations;" and "Soviet Union — the Dynamic Static Future."

Speakers for the spring program have yet to be chosen.

Aside from having no financial support from the University, Wonderly says bringing in prominent persons can be a problem.

"We have to practically ask the people to donate their time, because we just don't have the budget to pay them," Wonderly says.

Two SCONA representatives

travel to Washington D.C. and New York City each year to talk to people helpful in the area of guest speakers. Recommendations are taken, lists are compiled and invitations are sent out. Local congressmen and senators friendly to SCONA help out by writing letters of endorsement to potential speakers.

Past conference speakers have included Lyndon B. Johnson, Lou Cioffi of ABC, U.N. Undersecretary Sjaiimi DePinies and Bill Stewart of Time magazine.

Most speakers volunteer their time, although some are paid.

For funding, SCONA members solicit individuals, corporations and foundations through grant proposals. Kurt Moore, SCONA chairman says. They also receive endowments from organizations in Washington, D.C., where SCONA has gained the

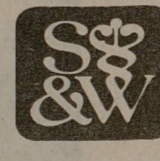
reputation of being a top organization.

And this summer, a Dallas relations firm, Ogilvy and Mather, accepted SCONA on a special projects account, Moore says.

Each year, SCONA sends invitations signed by A&M students to Frank E. Vandiver to participate in delegations worldwide, asking delegates from each to be chosen to attend the conference.

Although they must pay transportation costs plus \$100 in expenses, some 200 delegates attend with 25 of those from A&M.

SCONA consists of 100 members and 27 executive members, all of whom are students. They are responsible for committee positions open to all students and fund raising, speakers, publicity and search or student development.



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