



## Accepting the Challenge

# Childers draws on diverse experiences to serve as SBP



Dave House, THE BATTALION

**Curtis Childers**, student body president, served as the national president for Future Farmers of America.

By ERICA ROY  
THE BATTALION

People in Curtis Childers' hometown of Glen Rose, Texas, never doubted he would win the student body president election, because the citizens of this small community near Fort Worth knew he was destined for a successful future.

Jud Moore, Childers' best friend since preschool and a senior environmental design major, said his mother was one of Childers' grade-school teachers and she always said, "There's something special about Curtis." Moore said, since he has known the new student body president, he has always been involved in a variety of activities.

"He (Childers) has seen so many things," Moore said, "so he always has a story or a different point of view."

Childers' involvement in leadership positions is one of the reasons Moore said he will be an incredible student body president. "One thing that Curtis has is so much

experience, not that he's a politician," Moore said, "but he's been involved in so many organizations."

Ann Leslie, Childers' girlfriend and a sophomore agricultural development major, grew up with Childers in Glen Rose. She said the groups he has been involved with strive to help people, and his dedicated work ethic also will help him serve the Texas A&M student body.

"His love for people is something I've never seen in anybody else," Leslie said. "He has a way of seeing what people need and getting that for them. That, above all, will make him a very memorable student body president."

Childers served as the national president for Future Farmers of America in 1992, when he traveled throughout the

United States visiting high schools and universities. As a representative of 500,000 FFA members, he worked with the Department of Education to get education policies enacted.

Childers said the work he experienced in this position will help him during his term as student body president.

As FFA president, Childers worked with a variety of people across the United States.

This experience helped him see the different values and beliefs people have based on where they grew up and the situations in which

"Universities are where people come together, especially A&M," Childers said. "This is a place where people get their minds opened."

Childers said a lack of diversity is one of A&M's negative points. He wants to start a grassroots panel to focus on increasing diversity at the University.

Through his work with FFA in high school, the president-elect came to A&M as a sophomore to visit. He said the administrators in the College of Agriculture remembered his name every time he returned. Their attitude was the main reason he chose to attend A&M.

"The administration was very hands-on," he said. "When you have that kind of attention, you already feel at home."

Childers said he wants to encourage more adviser and college involvement in the students, because that is what drew him to A&M.

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Curtis Childers  
Student body president

they have lived. He said students have the opportunity to meet different types of people when they attend college.

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## Under Pressure

# Bill would withdraw state funds for 'career students'

By BENJAMIN CHENG  
THE BATTALION

So-called career students may end up paying more for their education if a bill in the Texas Legislature passes.

The bill would eliminate state funding for college students with 170 or more credit hours who have not obtained a degree. The bill would allow universities to charge out-of-state tuition to make up the difference.

According to a 1996 study conducted by the comptroller's office, 18 percent of Texas college seniors had 170 or more credit hours. The study also said the bill would save the state \$4.5 million.

Rep. David Swinford authored the bill, which is currently in the House calendar committee. If passed, the bill would go into effect Sept. 1, 1997.

Swinford said college students in Texas graduate with an average of 143 credit hours.

He said allowing an additional 30 credit hours provides students with enough flexibility to pursue their studies.

"We expect students to go through it (college) and not become a professional student," Swinford said. "It's a fair bill that rewards people [who] use the system as designed and it punishes people that

lounge around."

The bill provides a number of exemptions for students with double majors, students who have credits earned at private or out-of-state institutions, and students in health professional degree programs.

Ron Douglas, executive vice president and provost, said a substantial number of students at Texas A&M have more than 170 credit hours.

"It would provide decreased flexibility for students to broaden their studies," Douglas said.

Mary Conoley, dean of the College of Education, said the purpose of going to college is more than just to get a job. She said the bill would have a negative impact because it prevents students from expanding their intellectual horizons.

"I don't see the University as a factory where we push people in and out," Conoley said.

Don Powell, chair of the Board of Regents, said the bill has enough flexibility for students to merit support.

"Students need to be serious about pursuing a degree plan," Powell said.

Regent Guadalupe Rangel said A&M needs to differentiate between students who are not serious about pursuing a degree and students who are taking longer

to get one. She said A&M should look at individual cases.

"It would be a mammoth task," she said.

Rangel said the bill unfairly would hurt students who change majors after their first two years of study.

"I don't think all the kinks have been worked out of the bill," she said.

The bill also would prohibit universities from requiring students to complete more than 120 credit hours to receive a degree. A university would have to justify a degree plan that requires more than 120 hours before the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Swinford said this prevents universities from increasing the number of hours in a degree program and causing students to have to stay in school longer.

Douglas said this provision would cost A&M time and energy to justify degree programs that require more than 120 hours.

"In some programs, it would be hard to meet what one needs to do in 120 hours," Douglas said.

The bill also would give students who are Texas residents a \$1,000 rebate if they graduate within six hours of their degree plan, if the student has paid more than \$1,000 in tuition.

# Club offers amenities to all members

## Reception hall provides convenient atmosphere for luncheons

By LAURA OLIVEIRA  
THE BATTALION

The Faculty Club provides a reception-style eating hall, available for anything from luncheons to wedding receptions for anyone affiliated with the University.

The club, which currently consists of 800 members, was established specifically for faculty in 1988.

Since then, it has grown and become available to Faculty Club alumni, former students, non-classified and classified staff and corporations or non-profit organizations associated with the University. There are 110 Faculty Clubs worldwide and members have access to all of them.

Pennette Green, administrative secretary for industrial distribution, said the department used the club Tuesday for a luncheon for recruiters from Summit Electric. She said the Faculty Club's on-campus location was convenient.

"We have a lot of professional development conferences on campus," she said. "So they can walk from the seminars and eat lunch and then just walk right back."

Green said the buffet setup makes the luncheons quick and makes the food four-star quality.

"I love the dessert," she said. "They have a brownie kind of cheese cake that is really good."

Reeta Maddox, assistant to the director of the Faculty Club, said the view from the club in Rudder Tower provides a pleasant atmosphere.

"When they (members of the club) are showing off the campus, because we are located on the 11th floor, it makes it easy to see everything. We have a panoramic view all the way around," she said.

The club also provides an etiquette class on eating.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

The Faculty Club, located on the 11th floor of Rudder Tower, has a panoramic view. It is available to Faculty Club alumni and former students or anyone affiliated with the University.

Dr. Howard Hesby, a professor of animal science, said it is admirable that the Faculty Club has expanded the use of the facilities for educational purposes. He said the department of animal science has benefited from the etiquette class.

"We do it to make them society-ready graduates," he said.

"They take 120 hours of technical preparation, but they may not know how to market themselves."

The course costs \$26 per person and includes the class, as well as a seven-course meal served in European or Continental style.

During the year, the club also provides a graduation reception open to all students and their families.

Graduates may invite an unlimited number of guests, provided they have reservations.

Maddox said the graduation reception makes the day convenient for graduates and their families because many come from out of town and have trouble making party plans.

"We are here because of the students," she said, "and if we cannot open it up for them as a thank you, what is the point of us being here?"



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

**Birdbath** | Sara Perry, a sophomore elementary education major, takes part in the OPAS fund-raising event at Rudder Fountain Tuesday.

# Music hits the slopes with Mt. Aggie concert

By REBECCA TORRELLAS  
THE BATTALION

Music will be back on the slopes today, as MSC Town Hall hosts the second concert of the semester at Mt. Aggie from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Rob Lewicki, chair of MSC Town Hall and a senior psychology and English major, said he is expecting more people at this concert than attended the concert on March 4.

"It rained the first time and not as many people went," Lewicki said. "But the people who went had big fun."

Tonight's events include music and free skiing and equipment.

Lewicki said students are also encouraged to bring sleds.

Members of the A&M Ski Club will be

on hand to assist beginning skiers, and an emergency medical technician staff will be present in case anyone is injured.

Sheila Dierschle, a Town Hall member and a senior accounting major, said members from the bands Lewis and J.T. Stewart will perform acoustic sets, and bands Grubworm and Blue Earth will play full sets.

"It's a fun thing with music," Dierschle said. Town Hall held the first concert to encourage students to support rebuilding Mt. Aggie, after hearing of plans for its destruction.

Lewicki said, unlike the first concert, this concert is just for fun.

"We're not having this for any political reason," Lewicki said.

Plans to rebuild Mt. Aggie on West Campus are still being discussed.

## THE BATTALION INSIDETODAY

**MONTANA MAN:** Freshman pitcher Courtney Weller was drawn to Texas A&M and the state of Texas by A&M Pitching Coach Jim Lawler.

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