

Battalion

## Inside Looking Out

With upcoming graduation, seniors reflect on past days at Texas A&M

By ANDREA RODRIGUEZ  
The Battalion

Dear Mom and Dad,  
Life has been hard for the past four or five years, but I'm finally sending you the graduation announcements you've been anxiously awaiting.

I've been busy studying for that big test that's coming. My graduating really depends on this test grade. I'm telling my roommates to clean up after their parties, they never listen, so I don't think that visit you guys been planning is such a good idea ...

Whether it has been the best four, five or six years of their lives, graduates are leaving with an experience they will never forget. Andy Ramirez, a senior sociology major graduating in December, remembers his first day of class when the campus seemed a bit

overwhelming. "I was lost the whole day and nervous because I didn't know anyone," Ramirez said.

Students often find their niche in college by joining an organization.

Ramirez, a member of Omega Delta Phi fraternity, said joining the organization helped him adjust to college life. "I was used to being really shy, and joining the fraternity helped me socialize and meet people," Ramirez said. "And it helped me talk in front of crowds."

Meeting people can be the biggest asset of college life. Often, students meet friends who will stay with them for a lifetime.

Terri-dith Caffey, a senior biomedical science major graduating in December, said she has enjoyed college because of all of the friends she has

met. "I met my best friends here, and I know I'll have them for the rest of my life," Caffey said. "I learned a lot more about life from the people I met here than from the one's I grew up with."

SEE SENIORS ON PAGE 4A.

## Outside Looking In

Incoming freshmen ready to embrace Aggie way of life

By STEPHEN WELLS  
The Battalion

Joe Freshman Aggie enters his first days at Texas A&M with plans of working out at 6 a.m. every day, studying during the afternoon and dating beautiful women at night. In the process, he figures he can graduate with honors and a string of extra-curricular accomplishments. One-hundred-thirty credit hours, 30 more pounds and no dates later he realizes just how difficult it is to see what makes up Texas A&M from the outside.

For many college-bound high school graduates, simply making the choice to attend Texas A&M is accompanied by apprehension. Charlie Garza, a freshman computer science major, said he had to look at more than numbers to decide to become an Aggie.

"Actually, it was kind of funny because I was the guy who said he'd never come to A&M," Garza said. "In fact, I almost decided to go to UT. I looked at Texas A&M because of the good computer science department and found out that people here don't try to judge you like at, say, Rice. That decided it for me."

The challenge of college academics comes with its rewards. New found responsibility is coupled with independence.

Sam Keen, a freshman chemical engineering major, said he has been looking forward to this step in his life for years. "So far I'm really liking living away from home," Keen said.

"It's something I've been looking forward to for a long time. I've wanted my own apartment since I was 10, so living in a dorm away from home is a great step for me."

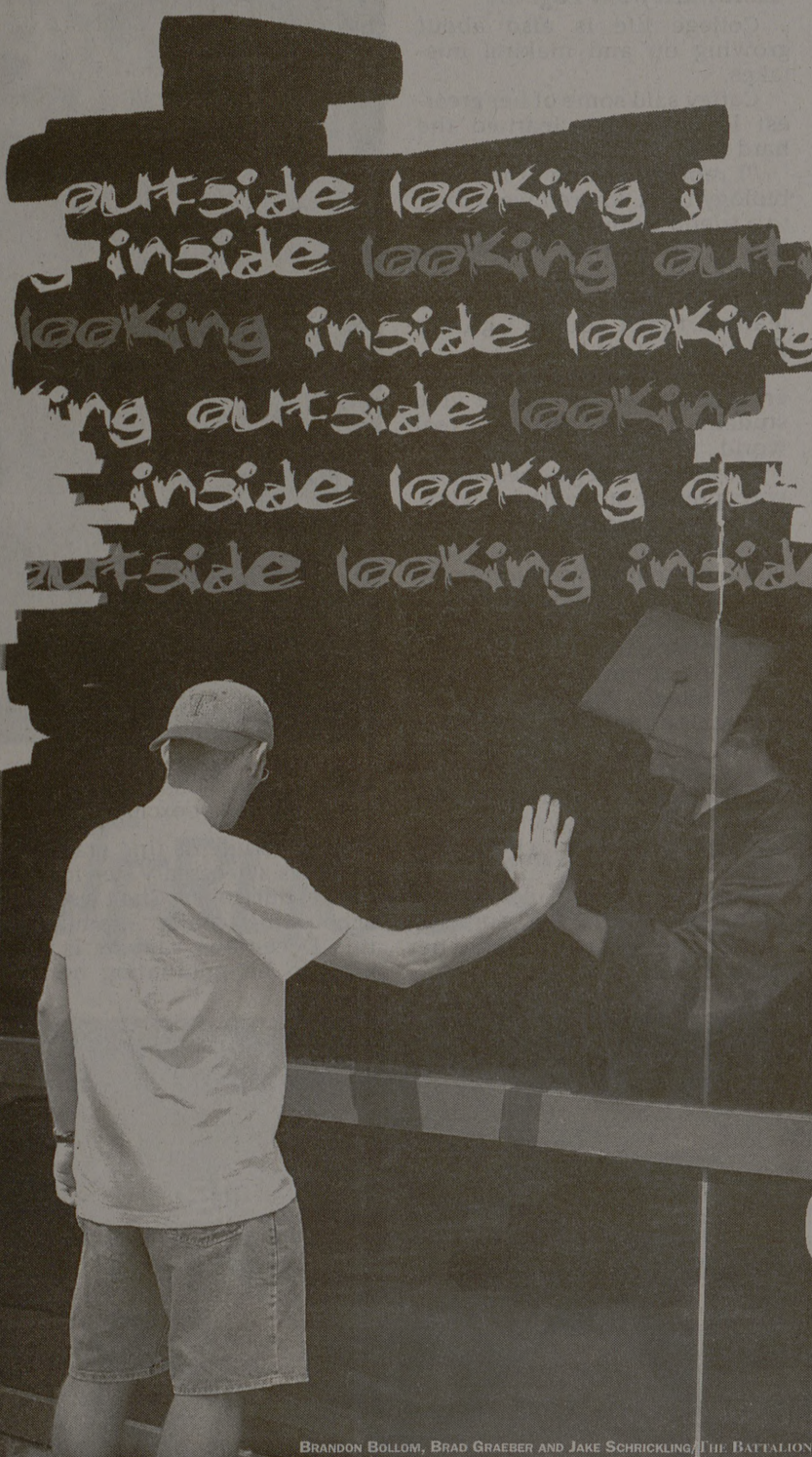
Holly Gregory, a freshman biochemistry major, said independence has its advantages, but parents are still good for some things.

"I think it's important to get away from home during your college years," Gregory said. "It makes you independent. But my mom did do my dirty clothes for me before she left town."

Jason Costella, a graduate of Texas A&M, warns about putting too much faith in self-reliance.

"Independence is great until you only have a dollar to do five loads of laundry," Costella said. "Negative check balances kind of take the shine off of independence, too."

SEE FRESHMEN ON PAGE 6A.



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