

AGGIELIFE

Like father, like son

Dr. Tahir Masood and son Bilal Tahir share graduation

BY BETH FOCHT
The Battalion

After four, five or even six long years of classes, football games, friends, and fun, many leave Aggieland with special memories held close to their hearts, and a diploma in their hand and continue on the road.

Graduation is a bridge into an uncharted land where friends and family cheer these new graduates.

For one Aggie family, this semester's graduation is a family affair.

Dr. Tahir Masood and his son, Bilal Tahir, will graduate together in the Friday night graduation ceremony at 7:30 p.m. in Reed Arena, when the degree candidates of Colleges of Architecture, Business and Veterinary Medicine will receive their diplomas.

Masood will be receiving his second Ph.D. Tahir, a senior, will receive his undergraduate degree in biomedical science. Tahir said that he and his father graduating in the same semester and at the same ceremony is coincidental.

"This really just happened by chance that Dad and I are graduating together," he said. "Dad started his second Ph.D. 10 years ago when I was in middle school, and at that time, I had no clue I would be at A&M.

"Dad had a 90 percent chance of graduating last spring, but for one small technicality, he is graduating this spring," Tahir said.

Masood said he had not planned on graduating this spring.

"I had planned on completing much earlier, but it turned out not to be so," he said.

"Now, I feel that God wanted my son and I to graduate together, and I am happy that that we are graduating from a great institution that houses some of the best human beings, teachers and students."

Even though graduation can be an exciting time, it brings tension and stress to the lives of many students.

From finding a job and passing all of their classes to paying those two-year-old parking tickets and sending out graduation announcements, the demands on soon-to-be graduates can seem overwhelming.

Tahir said he has gone through a variety of pains and thinks most graduating seniors go through similar situations their last semester at Texas A&M.

"I think it is so stressful your final semester because of the stress you have to encounter from getting in touch with family, friends, getting your gown and tickets and then trying to make the most out of all of the opportunities you do not want to miss out on with friends, religion and with activities," he said. "These sound like small things, but they all add up and you are trying to do everything you can before you leave."

Even with all of these added stresses, most Aggies are ready to leave and join the ranks of the former students.

Most emotions tend to be mixed as this is a time of remembering the years spent in Aggieland.

Tahir said his emotions are mixed between looking forward and looking back

when it comes to graduating.

"I am sad because I will not have as much free time after graduation when I am in medical school, but at the same time I am happy because I am getting closer to my goals and getting closer to doing something meaningful," he said.

"I think if someone paid me to be a student, though, I think I would be one for life."

Masood said his emotions about graduating are like any other graduating student.

"Last time I wore a black gown as a professor and now I am going to wear it as a student with my wife, friends, my daughters and teachers all clapping for me," Masood said.

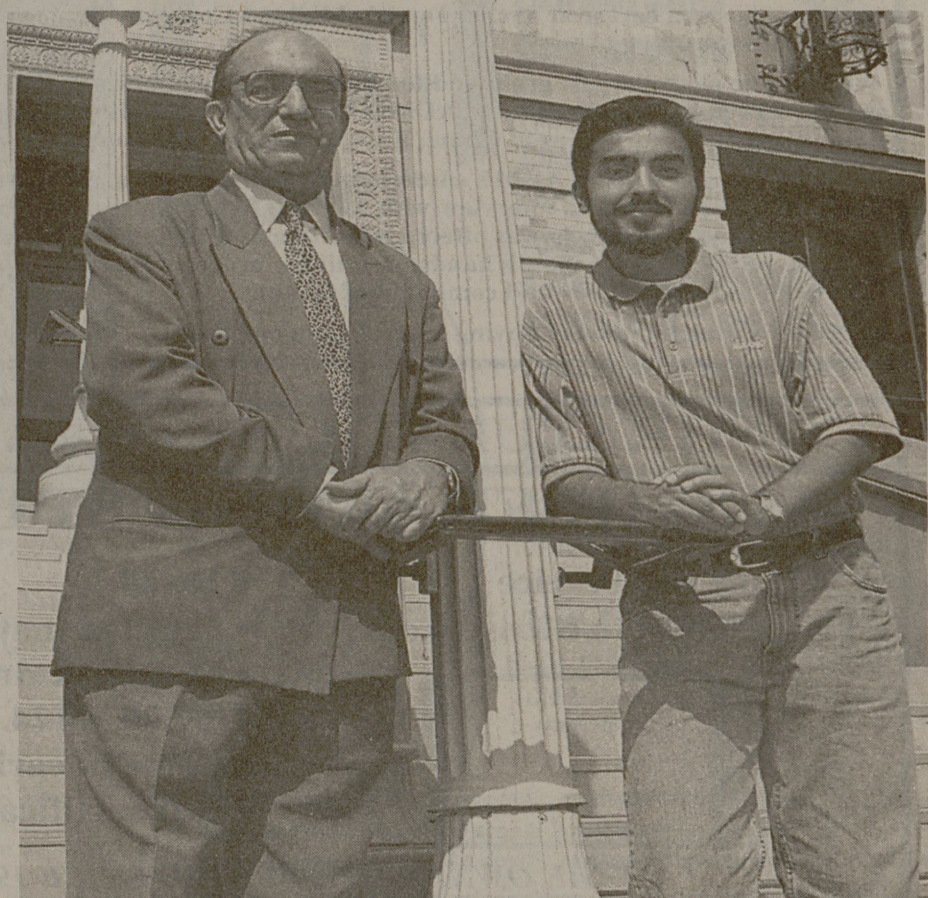
Along with the mixed emotions, graduating seniors remember the traditions, the special and favorite times at A&M.

Tahir said his favorite memory of being an Aggie was the chance to meet so many friendly people.

"I think the atmosphere at the University was wonderful [with everyone's] encouragement and willingness to help," he said. "I just think spending four years interacting with friendly, down-to-earth people who are supportive of each other was one of the greatest experiences I had as an Aggie."

Masood said he has some final words for the graduates.

"I am proud to be an Aggie and a proud father of two Aggies," he said. "I pray for the smiling faces of the students on this great campus, and may God bless every one and they each get what they want in life."



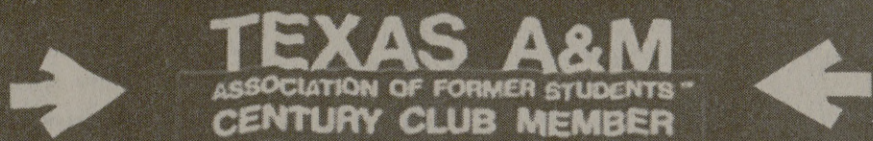
SALLIE TURNER/THE BATTALION
Dr. Masood Tahir, who will be receiving his second Ph.D., and his son Bilal Tahir, who will be receiving and undergraduate degree in biomedical science, will graduate during the same Friday night ceremony.

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