

EDITORIAL

BUSH SCHOOL GROWTH POSITIVE

No longer do Texas A&M students have to leave campus for nationally recognized graduate programs. The George Bush School of Government and Public Service has been raising the bar. Such programs are necessary to fulfill Vision 2020 and continue to lift Texas A&M's academic reputation. These are welcome initiatives that are being made to improve the quality of education and enhance the experiences and opportunities available to all students.

The Bush School has come a long way since it opened in 1995 on the eighth floor of the Harrington Education Center. The school has been positive for A&M and the Brazos Valley community, and it deserves the consideration of students who want to continue their education but are not ready to leave Aggieland. It also provides an example of what other academic disciplines on campus should strive for.

As greater emphasis is placed on graduate programs, the Bush School is a model of success. Community-based activities and speaking engagements are an integral part of its expansion in the last seven years. Former President Bush, members of his cabinet and major media figures are regular faces on campus since the library and graduate school opened. No other academic discipline has brought the quality of speakers and conferences to the students and surrounding community. As the Bush School continues to expand, Aggies should give applying some thought. It provides unique educational opportunities, right in Texas A&M's backyard.

THE BATTALION

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MAIL CALL

Conservative columnist blasted

response to Matthew Maddox's April 4 column:

Maddox managed to characterize homosexuality as unacceptable, intolerable and a choice. He also likened the "changers" of homosexuality to smoking, drinking and racism. The Texas A&M community is becoming this hopelessly intolerant and ignorant? His assertions against alternative lifestyles are an attack against everyone who has worked hard to prevent violence and bigotry towards these groups. The ideas in "Intolerance is a virtue" bring separation and hate to Texas A&M. Maybe Maddox and others like him need to step out of the young conservatives meeting for just a moment and evaluate the damage their hateful views have had on Texas A&M.

Brian Prehn
Class of 2003

In his article, Maddox says, "The truth is that education, not acceptance, is the answer." We believe that truth is individual and personal, not simply universal, as his article implies.

The truth is that people do not choose to be lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, gay, or transgendered. The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality may have numerous studies about homosexuality, but their website says, "We do not wish to diminish the rights of homosexually oriented people in our society."

As co-chairs of ALLIES, an independent organization on campus that supports gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students, staff, and faculty on this campus, we encourage individuals to

attend an Advance. An Advance is a three hour workshop designed to educate individuals about the issues faced by GLBT persons on this campus and in the community. By attending an Advance, people can educate themselves and make an individual choice about truth and acceptance.

The next Advances are April 9 and April 28. For more information, see our Website at allies.tamu.edu.

Kate McCarth
Class of 2002
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Class of 1997

Sul Ross was not a traitor

In his mail call, Ali Enrique Razavi asserts that "like [John Walker] Lindh, [Lawrence Sullivan] Ross also betrayed his country by taking up arms against it."

There is an important differentiation to be made between Lindh and Ross. Lindh conspired with an outside party, the Taliban, to subvert the United States. However, Ross was forced to take up arms in the defense of his rights against a government drunk with power.

Lindh sought to undermine the United States government with an aggressive action, but Ross, along with millions of other Southerners, sought to obtain independence from the United States government in a peaceful manner.

When Abraham Lincoln refused to recognize the right of states to withdraw from the Union, Southerners like Ross were forced to fight for their due independence.

Razavi should use the term "betrayal" more carefully. Lindh is a traitor. Ross was not.

Miles O. Foltermann
Class of 2002

Mess at Umass

Resident advisers' new union divides campus



DIANA SUAREZ - THE BATTALION

The atmosphere at the University of Massachusetts (Umass) in Amherst has changed in the past month from one of light-heartedness to one of tension.

This month, more than 360 resident advisers formed the first undergraduate student union in United States history. According to Time magazine, the formation occurred after the university lost a ruling before the Massachusetts Labor Commission and has created tension between the university and the resident advisers. The reasoning behind the union — mainly better pay — is understandable, but the formation of a union is not the best means of achieving the demands. The advisers at Umass have been heard, but they are about to find out they are playing with fire. And a university that preaches community and education is not a place to start a fight.

The purpose of this union, as stated in *The Campus Chronicle*, the Umass newspaper, was for resident advisers to gain recognition and equal power with their supervisors. Recognition has been gained, but equal power is impossible. The whole concept behind a supervisor/employee relationship is one having power over the other. Employees will never be able to have more power than their supervisors, unless they move up in status.

The resident advisers at Umass are college students without degrees or experience.



KATHERINE TUCKER

Their supervisors, being older, are more knowledgeable about the consequences a union can present. The advisers have made headlines, but they are about to find out that a university that has existed for many years has far more power than they could ever aspire to. The resident advisers have taken a step that will leave them burned.

Part of being a student is working less glamorous jobs to earn money and make ends meet. If you want a job with better benefits, better pay or a better contract, a student worker job, such as a resident adviser position, is not ideal. These jobs have great benefits: living on campus, being near classes, flexible hours, working with people your age and not too many demanding tasks. Umass resident advisers are seeking higher wages, a clearer contract, better benefits and more job security, according to the *Boston Globe*. The demands are understandable, but lofty hopes and their means for achieving these goals are ridiculous.

In a university setting, communication is essential. At Texas A&M, there is a resident hall staff council that hears and voices all concerns of its resident advisers so that compromises can be made. The relationship between the workers and the University is respectful and efficient. At Umass, it is apparent that the relationship between the advisers and the university is not one of mutual respect. It is the duty of the advisers to voice their opin-

ions responsibly. The formation of a committee, such as the Residence Hall Association at A&M, or a forum to voice concerns would be a more respectable means to achieving a compromise.

However, now that the resident advisers at Umass have joined a union, the administration feels under attack, and an undesirable response is eminent. A fear of job cutbacks and increased dorm fees is circulating. A union cannot protect against these kinds of responses. The university can become less lenient on the details of their contracts and not let simple mistakes slide as easily. The more the advisers frustrate the university, the more the university is going to fight back.

The resident advisers' hope to make history was achieved, but it will not be long before they fade back into the background, as Umass snuffs out their squeals with an unyielding fist. It seems the real problem is a lack of respect and communication on their campus, not a job dispute. The University of Massachusetts needs to focus on the real problem at hand: the lack of respect through lack of communication. Then, the resident adviser situation will not be one of stress and tension, but one of discussion and respect.

Katherine Tucker is a sophomore general studies major.

One strike policy swings and misses

In an attempt to attack what Congress calls a "reign of terror," the Supreme Court approved eviction from public housing of all drug users on Tuesday.

According to Yahoo! News, the "One strike" policy is where an entire household can be evicted from public housing if any member is caught using drugs in the housing area. But one strike is a meager attempt to solve the drug problem that plagues government housing, and Congress should not be allowed to evict public housing tenants because of drug use.

In California, four public housing residents face eviction for drug use. According to Yahoo! News, none of the four tenants were aware of drug use going on in their apartments by family members. The four cases evoked interest in the Supreme Court, who ruled that entire households could be evicted even if some did not know about the drug use.

One strike is misleading in its promise to eradicate drug use. The new policy is just an old idea recycled in an attempt to solve the drug problem. Shuffling around

drug users does not solve the drug problem. Instead, it relocates the problem. Drug use may decrease in one area, but it will certainly rise in another. Public housing residents are low-income

families and individuals who do not have other choices for housing. Evicted residents end up homeless living on the streets or in shelters.

Most public housing residents are senior citizens over the age of 61. According to *The Dallas Morning News*, more than 1.7 million families in subsidized housing are headed by a senior citizen. The elderly are among the most likely to be punished by the new eviction policy because, according to *USA Today*, they have little power over people in their households.

In all four of the pending California housing cases, the residents are senior citizens. Many elderly residents in public housing suffer from disabilities that limit activity in their home. One of the four residents fighting eviction charges is Herman Walker, a disabled man whose caregiver was caught with cocaine in his

apartment. Although Walker had no involvement in drug activity, he risks being evicted for behavior by those taking care of him.

Public housing is a breeding ground for crime, gangs and drugs. There should be punishment for perpetrators, however one strike is not an adequate way of controlling drug use. It affects innocent people and is merely a slap on the wrist for perpetrators. Education and prevention-based programs are a better way to treat the source of the drug problem. The removal of drug users, instead of the entire household, is more effective by punishing the perpetrators, who are the real threat. The new drug policy makes everyone the victim.

One strike only attacks what the public sees, not the true issues behind drug use. It is foolish to believe that giving Congress the ability to force someone out of their home will solve our nation's drug problems.

Andi Baca is a senior journalism major.



ANDI BACA