

THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Prairie View employees file lawsuit

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION



HINES

Six current and former employees of Prairie View A&M University filed a discrimination lawsuit against the school and the Texas A&M University System Wednesday, alleging they were punished for criticizing embattled Prairie View President Dr. Charles Hines.

The suit, filed less than a month after the System settled another lawsuit against Hines, adds to the growing public criticism of the Prairie View president, with many in the university community demanding his removal.

The plaintiffs, all black, claim they have been the victims of race discrimination by the mostly white Board of Regents acting through Hines, who is also black. Hines, at the behest of the regents, works to undermine the predominantly black university, the suit claims. The suit also alleges Hines violated the employees' free speech rights in his zeal to punish those who criticize him.

Anne Kellet, a System spokesperson, declined to comment.

The suit alleges Hines fired the gospel music announcer at the campus radio station when the station played a hit gospel song Hines thought was inappropriate. This upset local churches and prompted a group of Waller County ministers in November to demonstrate on campus and collect hundreds of signatures asking for Hines' resignation.

"[Hines] doesn't understand that the First Amendment applies to his employees, and he has exhibited an inability to deal with criticisms of his

mismanagement," said Gaines West, a College Station lawyer representing the plaintiffs.

Hines could not be reached for comment.

The suit also includes two physics professors at Prairie View who allege they were punished for voicing criticism of Hines' management of the University. Many faculty members have accused Hines, a retired Army major general, of running the institution like a military operation, meddling in the affairs of academic departments and not tolerating dissenting views.

The suit alleges Dr. Cleo Bentley

was removed as head of the physics department after denouncing Hines' ill-fated plan to merge the physics and chemistry departments. Plaintiffs also include the director of alumni affairs at Prairie View and the director of the physical plant at the university, who claim they have been denied pay raises for publicly speaking out against Hines.

The lawsuit comes on the heels of a highly-publicized lawsuit filed by Dr. Dennis Judd, a physics professor at Prairie View, who claimed Hines tried

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Scientists look to keep drilling ship

By Sarah Darr
THE BATTALION

Even with 1,620 holes drilled on the ocean floor since 1968, scientists have just begun to read the archives resulting from sediment taken from the ocean floor, and Texas A&M is supporting the effort through the Ocean Drilling Program.

Dr. Paul J. Fox, professor of oceanography, geology and geophysics and director of the Science Operations Ocean Drilling Program, gave the fourth and final lecture Wednesday of the Distinguished Lecture Series held by A&M each year.

Many countries are involved with the Ocean Drilling Project, which began in 1984. Each country gets an annual budget of \$3 million for a project total of \$46 million. The United States gets a portion of this because it has been involved with the drilling for the past 33 years.

The Ocean Drilling Project is a global operation whose main goal in studying the oceans is to find what has triggered the change in climate on Earth, Fox said. The research initiatives of the Ocean Drilling Project are intended to record not only drilling's effect on climate, but also the samples of the oceanic crustal column, the microbiology, earthquake processes and long-term geochemical monitoring, he said.

The Ocean Drilling Project has been most successful in uncovering the global climate over the last 70 million years, Fox said.

Fox emphasized the importance of ocean drilling to learn more about the earth.

"Rapid change is a way of life, and change in climate could have a major effect on planet

See **Drilling** on page 2A

Draping the sea



JOHN LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Distinguished lecturer **Jim Johnson** hangs fabric from the ceiling in preparation for the student floral design

exhibit hosted in the J. Wayne Stark Gallery. The exhibition titled "Under the Sea" will open Thursday at 7 p.m.

TxTF-1 trains for disasters

By Marianne Hudson
THE BATTALION

Members of Texas Task Force-1's white team will step into "Disaster City" near the grounds of Easterwood Airport Thursday for a practice drill similar to what most of its members faced seven months ago at ground zero.

In Disaster City, 72 members of the 216-strong task force will brave 52 acres of collapsible structures and a 10,000-square-foot pile of rubble to rescue 30 mock victims from a collapsed three-story building. The drill, intended to exercise the team members' experience with weapons of mass destruction,

will also include the release of a pretend chemical nerve agent.

Task Force-1 will be the first task force team in the United States to participate in a training exercise involving a weapon of mass destruction.

The white team spent 10 days at the World Trade Center site in September, searching through voids in the rubble and scaling metal out-croppings in mentally and physically exhausting 12-hour shifts. Before Sept. 11, members dealt with destruction

caused by floods, fires and tornadoes, but had not faced full-scale urban disasters.

"The rules have changed," said Tim Gallagher, Task Force-1 team commander. "We have to be proactive because it is still our job to get everybody home safely."

In the 40-hour drill that begins Thursday, team members will operate a full-scale mission on similar 12-hour rotations, said Marilyn Martell, director of public information for the A&M

System's Texas Engineering Extension Services (TEEX).

Team members from across Texas will be paged and must report for duty in "Disaster City" within four hours.

Upon arrival, they will be briefed on the

incident and given the necessary equipment for responding to a disaster involving a weapon of mass destruction.

Gallagher, who responded to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, said, "I learned that anything is possible, and we must be trained and fully equipped for the worst."

Task Force-1 operates under the TEEX, whose headquarters are in College Station. Should a disaster occur, TEEX packages

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"The rules have changed. We have to be proactive because it is still our job to get everybody home safely."

— Tim Gallagher
TxTF-1 Commander

Aggie Band director candidates announced

By Marianne Hudson
THE BATTALION

Three candidates were named in the search for a new Director of Bands who will lead the Aggie Band on Kyle Field and in stadiums across the nation next Fall.

Maj. Otis French of the U.S. Army and Col. Jay Brewer and Capt. Tim Rhea, both current associate directors of the band, were chosen this week from a list of 10 applicants.

"These candidates all seem to have the package," said Dr. Bill Kibler, chair of the search advisory committee and associate vice president for student affairs. "They rise above the other applicants because of their leadership experience in training and conducting bands."

The search committee began inter-

viewing its three final candidates Thursday, April 11. After interviewing ends, the committee will make a recommendation for the next director of bands in the Corps of Cadets.

French, current commander of the U.S. Army Ground Forces Band, has been with the Army band since 1978. He received a master's degree in music from Indiana University and is currently working on his doctoral dissertation from Maryland.

"He doesn't have the experience working with college-level bands, but he does have experience working with military bands," Kibler said. "The Ground Forces Band is a major band in the Army."

Col. Chip Wenmohs, combined band commander and a senior finance major, said French's lack of experience with college bands should not be an issue in the

decision. He said Col. Ray Toler, the current director of the bands set to retire at the end of the semester, came from the Air Force with no college band experience.

"When Toler came, everyone thought he would change the band into a stage band or something," Wenmohs said. "But everyone soon got over their fears and realized that wasn't his intention. He has kept the Aggie Band traditions in place."

Brewer and Rhea are candidates from A&M, Kibler said.

"Brewer and Rhea already know a lot about A&M and the traditions," Wenmohs said. "They are already past the acclamation stage."

Brewer, associate director of the bands since 1988, has been with the Aggie Band

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3 CANDIDATES FOR DIRECTOR OF BANDS	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maj. Otis French Commander, U.S. Army Ground Forces Band
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Col. Jay Brewer Associate director since 1988, Fightin' Texas Aggie Band
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Capt. Tim Rhea Associate director since 1992, Fightin' Texas Aggie Band

CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

FAC asks for student body input

By Melissa Sullivan
THE BATTALION

In the absence of Bonfire, the Fall Activities Council (FAC) formed by Student Body President Schuyler Houser, is asking for student body input for an activity to take place in the fall to unify the campus.

About 20 different ideas were submitted to FAC chair Trevor Voelkel and a committee composed of 20 students and several advisers.

The committee narrowed them down to the top 10 ideas and put them in survey form.

"The council is looking to get the campus involved in the fall, and we are excited and pumped to do stuff," said John Casares, Resident Hall

Association (RHA) president and a junior management major.

In an open forum in the Sbsa Dining Hall Quiet room and Duncan Dining Hall Wednesday, students were given the opportunity to give the council preliminary feedback by filling out a survey.

Students will get the opportunity

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For a list of fall activities see page