

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Tuesday, March 9, 2004

All in a day's work

A&M students work hard for the money, gain valuable experience in the process

By Courtney Flatt
THE BATTALION

A table full of middle school-aged children asking questions might be intimidating to some, but not to Elizabeth Wall, a sophomore history major. Every Tuesday and Thursday mornings, Wall tutors five children in any subject they need help with. Usually, she teaches seventh- or eighth-graders during one of their class periods.

Many students around campus have jobs to earn extra spending money, help pay for college or gain experience for future careers.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), the program Wall works for, uses tutors to help children with their homework and answer questions they have about tests.

"I originally decided to work for AVID because I wanted to be a teacher," Wall said. "I thought this would give me experience, and help me decide if teaching is really what I want to do."

Wall has been working for AVID since January, and said tutoring pays well, but includes a lot of responsibility.

There are five students to a table, and Wall said she usually helps students with history or science problems, but it depends on what subject they need help in.

Wall said it is rewarding to help the students who want to learn, but at the same time, it is challenging trying to help those who do not.

"It is frustrating when kids don't respect me and just don't care," she said.

Wall said she enjoys interacting with the children, especially learning more about them and their personalities.

"I'm with the same group of kids," Wall said, "so I like getting to know their names and building a relationship with them."

While Wall uses her job to gain professional experience, other students have jobs to earn more money.

Sarah Motal, a sophomore agricultural development major, drives buses for Transportation Services. Motal applied to be a bus driver for the extra money, but said she also began to learn valuable lessons.

"It's been a neat experience because how often can a student become a bus driver?" Motal said. "You can interact with others, and it has helped me with my driving experience. Now I pay more attention while I am driving. It also helped me know the little things about driving."

Motal has been a bus driver since fall of 2003, and said the flexible hours bus driving provides was an incentive to apply for the job.

"They only require you to work 24 hours in a two week period," Motal said. "I try to work at least 12 hours a week."

Motal said bus drivers can have regularly-scheduled routes, but they can also drive routes for people who are unable to drive at their scheduled times. Bus drivers are able to schedule which routes they would like to drive around their class schedules throughout the day.

They are also able to drive charters, which is when any group or organization needs a bus to take them to their destination, Motal said. She said she has driven all types of charters, from driving people back

and forth from career fairs to driving a group of students to Houston for a leadership conference.

"I enjoy getting to make conversation with passengers on the bus, especially when there is only one or two people riding," Motal said. "You get to see a lot of different people throughout the day, even if it is only a two- to 10-minute conversation with them."

Motal said there are some regulars on the bus routes, but usually since there are up to three buses running at a time, she doesn't see the same people everyday.

"On my Ol' Sarge route, I like talking to the international students and finding out where they are from and what their majors are," Motal said.

At times the weather can make driving difficult, especially when it's rainy or foggy, Motal said. "It makes me nervous when the weather is bad," Motal said. "You have to be careful and pay extra attention to the roads."

Motal said it is also difficult when pedestrians walk in front of the bus or cars think that the bus can stop easily. She said bike lanes make her nervous sometimes, and she tries to stay far away from people so she can avoid hitting them.

"People think that the bus can stop in an instant," Motal said, "but they need to realize that it can hurt them before they can hurt it."

Like Motal, Lisa Schide, a sophomore nutrition major, got a job as a referee to earn more money. Schide referees intramural basketball games for the Corps of Cadets at Reed Arena for the Student Recreation Center.

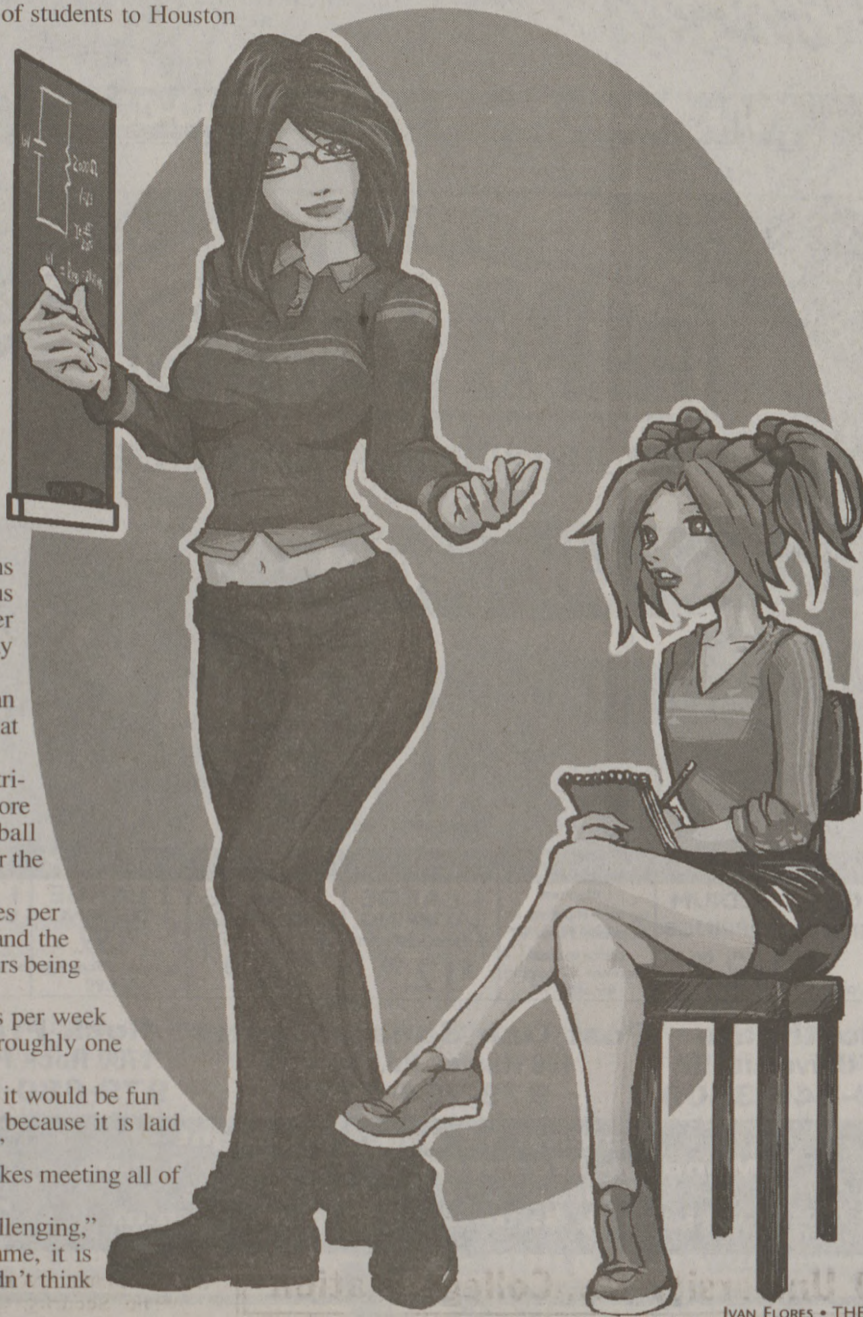
Schide said there are usually three referees per court. One of the referees is the scorekeeper and the other two judge the game. Schide says she prefers being the scorekeeper.

She usually works an average of six games per week and works two days per week. Each game is roughly one hour each.

"I decided to be a referee because I thought it would be fun and challenging," Schide said. "I really like it because it is laid back and you get to be part of the competition."

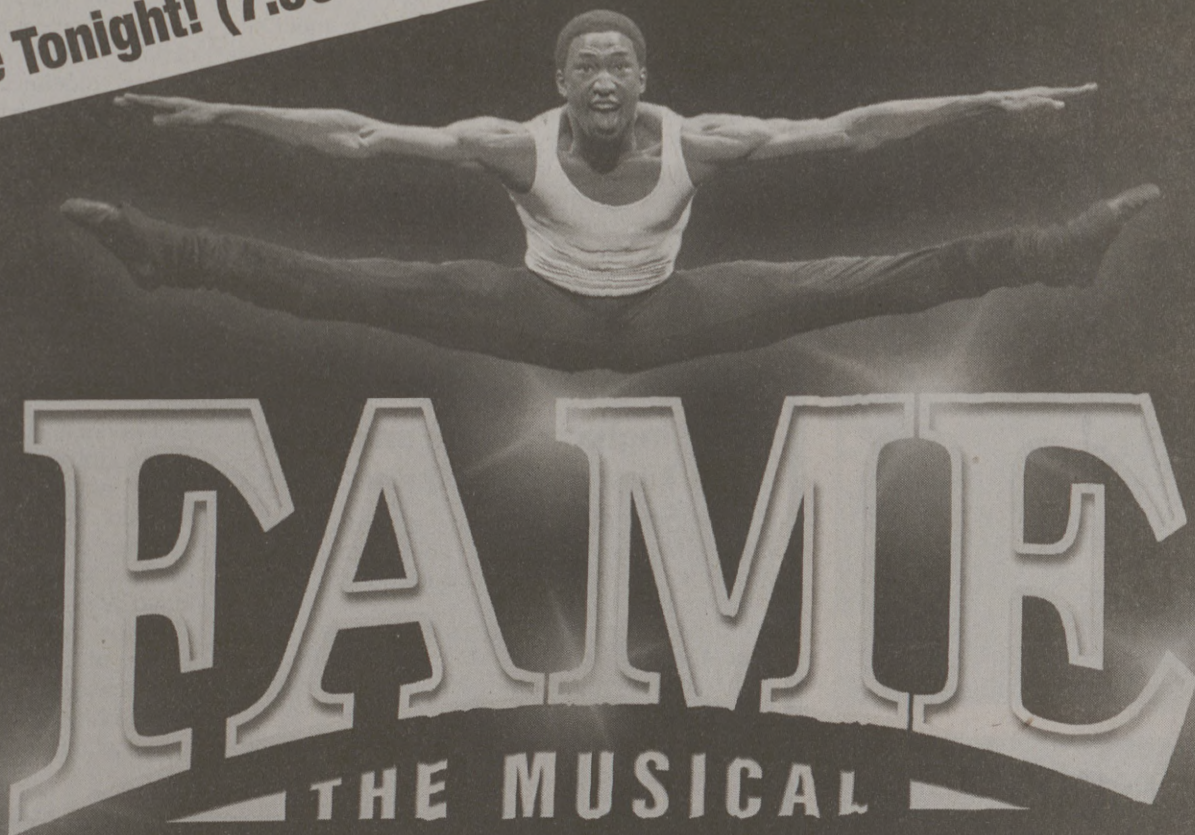
Schide said her job is intimidating, but she likes meeting all of the interesting people.

"It is a rewarding job because it is challenging," Schide said. "When you're through with a game, it is worthwhile because you did something you didn't think you could."



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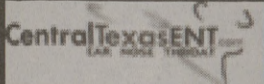
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