

FORUM

THE BATTALION

Page 10 • Thursday, March 11, 2004

Students need to find what is important

As spring sets in for the Corps of Cadets, we find ourselves beginning the process of seeking out the leadership of the future. For members of the Class of 2005 in uniform, eager anticipation to take charge will generate a new vision of how the oldest organization at Texas A&M should look next year. With the departure of the Class of 2004 on May 15, the Corps will see the end of an era in training doctrine and leadership philosophy, as well as four years of experiences that shaped the ideology of an entire class.

With this in mind, many have said that Corps morale is at an all-time low due to changes that have taken place during the last year and a half. For the most part, a feeling of alienation has been expressed by members of the junior and senior classes, who I believe simply become uncomfortable when asked to do things that they do not find familiar. A clash of culture that can be felt over the entire University between the old and the new is, for the most part, a matter of growing pains to better align A&M with American society today. For the Corps, time will heal our wounds that have caused the consternation of a generation who merely grew up under the teachings of the old regime.

Even with the turbulence of this year's sweeping changes, we as an organization have begun to see the fruits of our labor. Corps-wide retention is up 3 percent; grades are up, if only by 5 percent of a grade point; special units are thriving, as proven by our national champion Fish Drill Team, Ross Volunteers and Parsons Mounted Cavalry. All of these are steps in



WILL
MCADAMS

rebuilding and taking back the idea that the Corps is developing the men and women who will be here for A&M in coming years.

My predominant concern as a student leader is that all Aggies are seeking a direction to move toward, yet lacking a definite goal to attain. The Corps is struggling, as the rest of the student body is, to find what is important as an A&M student. As Corps commander, I do not want to lead 2,000 intellectuals with no leadership skills, experience or aptitude for command and management. Conversely, I do not want the Corps to erode into a culture of academic mediocrity. What we must, and are attempting to create, are those supermen and

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women who excel in both of these very harsh environments. These people who I speak of do not come to A&M with these qualities; it is our responsibility as an organization and the University as a whole to teach them.

That middle ground between leadership and academics is what Aggies are famous for. It is this infallible trait that has shaped the characters of

those individuals who have helped build our country into what it is. To the cadets I would say our direction is clear, and it is unaltered from that of generations of Aggies who preceded us. We must move to create and focus on making men and women into intelligent, civic-minded Americans who will work and fight for something larger than themselves. This is what we are, this is what we've always done and this is what we will, as a school, move back to.

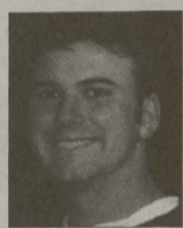
Will McAdams is
the Corps of Cadets commander.

Active hall directors will pave the way

No student leader can honestly say that he has grown during his time at Texas A&M completely on his own. In the Residence Hall Association, there are many advisers, Graduate Hall Directors (GHD) and Hall Directors (HD), each of whom advises his hall's council. Some do an outstanding job, but it seems unclear what is expected from these hall directors from the Department of Residence Life and what is expected from the hall council.

Some HDs do an incredible job of advising their hall councils, spending an exceptional amount of time with the hall's leadership. One hall president was happy to report that her hall council officers hold weekly "one-on-ones with the GHD." Some hall directors even open up their rooms in the residence halls for hall council programming and leadership discussions and training. As a result, the leaders of those halls are better prepared for leadership situations and are better able to grow as leaders. Other HDs choose to be minimally involved with their hall councils. One hall president stated, in regard to the HD giving leadership advice, that the adviser has, "never tried to tell me anything that I could do to improve on that," and that he knows "there's always room for improvement." However, some hall councils view a minimally-involved HD as a blessing in disguise. Another hall president states that the HD "trusts (him) enough to let (him) do the job (his) way, which (he) appreciates greatly."

Most hall directors are classified as part-time workers and are paid for 20 hours per week. However, they all work far more than 20 hours per week, handling resident issues, staff and other situations that arise. Many feel that it is not their job to develop leaders in their hall council and that after dealing with




CHRIS
MAHAFFEY

the hall's management, they have little time to balance studies and hall council advising. One thing organization advisers must realize is that although many do not consider themselves part of the organization they advise, their influence greatly weighs in on the perception of the organization, and they influence which students wish to become leaders in their organization. Oftentimes, this is a good thing, as an effective adviser will discourage most negative leaders from joining his organization. Other times, advisers inadvertently cause leaders to leave an organization. One hall council president remarked that the hall council "lost some people because they don't get along with" the HD.

Clearly, the solution to this problem is not simple. One solution would be to hire more full-time HDs, allowing them to devote more time to leadership development, but with budget restrictions, this seems infeasible. Another option is for residence life to aid the Hall Council members who wish to develop leadership skills by providing an opportunity for them to audit courses in leadership development, or by working to provide a course in application of leadership development for those leaders. At A&M, we pride ourselves in developing world-class leaders, and the Residence Hall Association shares the same charge. Without proper leadership development and advising within the halls, we cannot possibly develop the leaders we need on campus. But, active HDs and advisers are to be applauded, and RHA will continue to work harder than ever to empower and train the hall leaders of the future.

Chris Mahaffey is
the Residence Hall Assoc. president.



Student Health Services reminds you... **DON'T GET BURNT!**

Be safe in the sun this Spring Break:

- * Use SPF 15 sunscreen
- * Limit sun exposure between 10am and 4pm
- * Wear hats & protective clothing when possible
- * Reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours
- * Wear sunglasses with UV protection
- * Remember to protect lips and ears

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THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY STUDENT MEDIA BOARD IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR

Editor THE BATTALION

- Including radio and online editions -

Summer 2004
(The summer editor will serve May 24 through Aug. 11, 2004)

Fall 2004
(The fall editor will serve Aug. 16 through Dec. 15, 2004)

Qualifications for editor in chief of *The Battalion* are:

- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (4 if a graduate student) during the term of office (unless fewer credits are required to graduate);
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (4 if a graduate student) must have been taken for that semester;
- Have completed JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society), or equivalent;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible editorial position on *The Battalion* or comparable daily college newspaper,
 - OR -
 - Have at least one year editorial experience on a commercial newspaper,
 - OR -
 - Have completed at least 12 hours journalism, including JOUR 203 and 303 (Media Writing I and II), and JOUR 304 (Editing for the Mass Media), or equivalent.

Editor AGGIELAND

2005

Qualifications for editor in chief of the *Aggieland* yearbook are:

- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (4 if a graduate student) during the term of office (unless fewer credits are required to graduate);
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio (3.00 if a graduate student) in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester during the term of office. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (4 if a graduate student) must have been taken for that semester;
- Have completed JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society) and JOUR 302 (Graphics), or equivalent;
- Have demonstrated ability in writing through university coursework or equivalent experience;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible position on the *Aggieland* or comparable college yearbook.

Application forms should be picked up and returned to Dell Bomnskie, Student Media business coordinator, in Room 011A Reed McDonald Building. Deadline for submitting application: noon Tuesday, March 23, 2004. Applicants will be interviewed during the Student Media Board Meeting beginning at 8 a.m. Thursday, March 25, 2004, in room 221F Reed McDonald.

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