



**SPORTS:**  
Equestrian team wins  
third consecutive  
collegiate title  
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A Texas A&M Tradition Since 1893

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## A&M'S ETHNICITY BREAK DOWN:

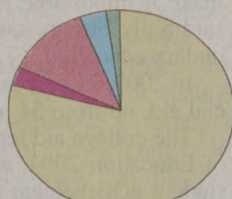
These percentages illustrate how Texas A&M compares to the rest of the country.

**2000 census: (taking into account people who claim more than 1 ethnicity)**

White: 71% Black: 11.5%  
Hispanic: 32% Asian: 2.7%

**Class of '08 enrollment figures:**

White: 80.6%  
Black: 3.1%  
Hispanic: 12.2%  
Asian: 3.9%  
Other: 0.2%



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SOURCE • 2000 CENSUS, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## 'In the right direction'

### Gates reports rise in number of minority students admitted

By Shawn Millender  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M President Robert M. Gates reported a rise in the number of minority students admitted to Texas A&M for fall 2004 to the Board of Regents in a meeting on May 27.

Gates told the Board of Regents that A&M will see a rise in the number of minority students admitted in the fall and that the graduation

rates of minority students for the latest 6-year term (1996-2002) were also the highest in the state according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Freshman admissions were up 57 percent for African-Americans, 24 percent for Hispanics and 14 percent for Asian-Americans.

Gates was unavailable for comment.

James A. Anderson, vice president and associate provost for insti-

tutional assessment and diversity said he sees the newest figures as a step in the right direction.

"I think the new numbers suggest that A&M is becoming an institution of choice," Anderson said.

Anderson said he sees the increase in attendance of minority students in the fall as a promising sign for the future.

"If A&M continues to improve the climate for all students and show a commitment to diversity then the

numbers will continue to improve," Anderson said.

Anderson said the University has put forth the effort to see these promising results.

"We are appealing to a broader array of students, and it speaks to the commitment the University has made in terms of resources and bringing in a more diverse class while still focusing on academic

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## Court says A&M is not liable in Bonfire lawsuit

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

Federal Judge Samuel B. Kent dismissed claims against Texas A&M officials on May 21 for several lawsuits arising out of the 1999 Aggie Bonfire Collapse that killed 12 students and injured 27 others.

This is one of six lawsuits concerning the Bonfire collapse that are currently before the Court.

According to the summary judgment from the Southern District Court of Texas Galveston Division and United States District Judge Kent, the plaintiffs alleged that A&M officials violated the Bonfire victims' 14th amendment right of due process by placing those victims in a "state-created danger."

According to the court's summary, the plaintiffs alleged that University officials failed to ensure Bonfire's structural integrity and allowed unqualified students to work on the Bonfire stack without proper supervision. University officials defended their case, stating that they "passively continued the status quo" by allowing students to do as they wished and they never could have known that Bonfire might collapse. Therefore, they argued, A&M cannot be held liable for the disaster. The University offi-

cialists claimed that the suits should be dismissed because they are "entitled to qualified immunity against the suit."

According to court documents, the court concluded that the "state-created danger theory of substantive due process" was not clearly established at the time of the Bonfire collapse and ruled in favor of dismissal.

Roger Abshire, a senior political science major and the chair of Bonfire Coalition for Students, said this ruling does not significantly affect the proceedings.

"All it really does is get us back to where we were a year ago," Abshire said. "It is hard to tell what its impact on the return of Bonfire will be."

Bonfire Coalition for Students believes that the ongoing litigation is the main barrier to Bonfire coming back, Abshire said.

"This is by no means a final blow to the litigations," Abshire said. "I guess it's just one more step on the road to concluding the matter."

Abshire said that Bonfire Coalition for Students can be part-

ly optimistic. "It's either one more step to getting it finished, or it can be one more thing (dragging out) the process," Abshire said.

**"This is by no means a final blow to the litigations. I guess it's just one more step on the road to concluding the matter."**

— Roger Abshire  
chair of Bonfire Coalition for Students

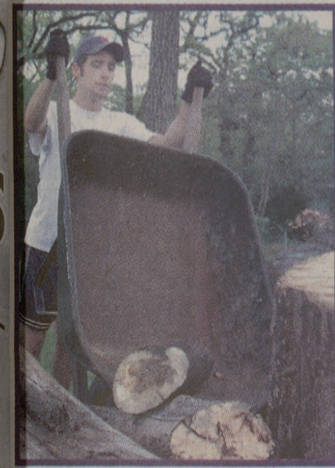
## Wax off



EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION

Sophomore biology major April Barrera and her boyfriend wash their cars at his house in Bryan Tuesday afternoon in the 92 degree weather. High temperatures are predicted to continue throughout the week.

## The Ruthe Jackson Youth Leadership Award



Presented every year, the Ruthe Jackson Youth Leadership Award recognizes outstanding efforts by young people to achieve "environmental excellence."

### The award advocates:

- commitment to litter prevention
- illegal dumping enforcement
- the education and publicity of environmental issues
- community beautification

GRAPHIC BY RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

PHOTO BY EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION  
SOURCE • CECELE CARSON, KTB COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

## The Big Event receives leadership award

By Natalie Younts  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's "The Big Event" will receive the first-place college award for its work in litter prevention, beautification and recycling, said Stacy Cantu, Keep Texas Beautiful executive director.

Keep Texas Beautiful is a non-profit community improvement environmental organization that awards the Ruthe Jackson Youth Leadership college award to schools for work in achieving "environmental excellence" once a year, said Cecile Carson, communications coordinator for KTB.

The Big Event will receive \$100 and a cer-

tificate for winning the 2003-2004 Ruthe Jackson Youth Leadership college award June 16 at the annual KTB conference in Austin, said Laura Tankersley-Glenn, executive director of Keep Brazos Beautiful.

The event is one day per year when thousands of A&M students perform various tasks, such as painting and yard work, for people who live in the Bryan-College Station community.

Some people who request work are physically incapable of doing it themselves, while some simply don't have time, said Richard Kamprath, a senior electrical engineering major who has been involved with The Big Event since his freshman year.

"Big Event is our way, as college students at

Texas A&M, to say 'thank you' to the community for putting up with us the entire year," Kamprath said.

Keep Brazos Beautiful, a local community improvement organization, nominated The Big Event for the state award, Glenn said.

"We're just so impressed with what A&M students are able to come together and accomplish each year," she said.

This year more than 8,000 students worked on more than 2,000 projects around the community, she said.

"It's an outstanding program," she said. "They've started Big Event activities all over the United States, and now they're trying to go

See Award on page 2

## 'Fear premium' pushes oil, gasoline prices higher

By Josef Hebert  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — A "fear premium" is driving up gasoline prices well past \$2 a gallon.

Motorists may be paying as much as 36 cents a gallon more at the pump because of the petroleum industry's anxiety that terrorists might disrupt oil supplies, a fear that increased with two murderous rampages by al-Qaida-linked gunmen at oil compounds in the heart of Saudi Arabia.

Estimates vary, but some energy economists said as much as \$10 to \$15 is being added to the cost of every barrel of crude oil because of fear that a terror in Saudi Arabia, violence in Iraq or unrest elsewhere could disrupt future oil supplies.

The fear factor went up a notch over the long holiday weekend with the attack in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, that killed 22 people, mostly foreign oil workers. It was the second attack in a month against oil workers in the Islamic kingdom.

Oil prices surged more than \$2 a barrel Tuesday, the first trading day since the Khobar attack. The price of gasoline jumped 6 cents a gallon on

See Gasoline on page 2

## More families bank on loans to pay for college, study finds

By Ben Feller  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — More full-time students from higher-income families are taking on debt to pay for college, reflecting rising costs and greater loan options.

The share of full-time college students who borrowed to pay for college expenses rose from 30 percent in 1990 to 45 percent in 2000, a federal study released Tuesday shows.

College grants — which, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid — also increased over the decade. But the grants were not enough to cover jumps in tuition and fees, which outpaced rises in inflation and family income during the period.

So, to make up the difference, more people relied on loans.

"Students are left with a lot of undergraduate debt, which is the price that's being

paid," said Susan Choy of MPR Associates, who wrote the financial aid analysis for the National Center for Education Statistics.

The average loan in 2000 ranged from \$5,200 for low-income students to \$7,400 for high-income students, covering a range of public and private colleges and universities.

At four-year public schools, the average loan was \$5,300, up from \$3,300 in 1990.

The study focused only on full-time students considered financially dependent on their parents. Full-time students account for about half of four-year public school enrollment.

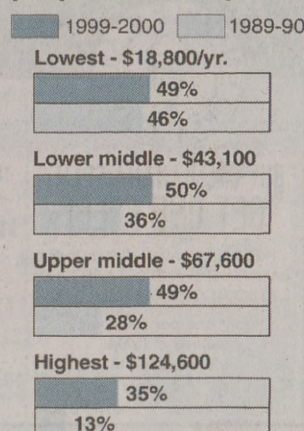
The greater reliance on loans is tied in part to changes in federal law that raised loan limits and opened unsubsidized federal loans to all students, regardless of financial need.

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## More families opt for school loans

Recent statistics show that regardless of income, more dependent undergraduates and their families are taking on school loans to pay for college.

**Percentage of full-time dependent undergraduates who received loans, by average yearly income of family**



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics

AP