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Battle of the BANDS

MSC Town Hall's annual Battle of the Bands competition will feature the four groups seen below. The finalists will perform at 6 p.m. Feb. 12 in Rudder Plaza.



LUCA
College Station, TX
Genre: Indie Rock

LUCA takes it back to the 90s, providing a sound similar to that of Death Cab for Cutie or Ben Folds. The indie band builds its own instruments and records everything itself, trying to be what guitarist and lead vocalist Josh Willis describes as "self-reliant as possible."



two
College Station, TX
Genre: Singer Songwriter

Communication junior Graham Thompson and business sophomore Tara Schickedanz sat next to each other in class one day and later became an acoustic duo. The couple already has a song called "kinda love you" on iTunes. Thompson said what sets the duo apart from other bands is the story, and how they communicate with each other on stage with their music. Using only one acoustic guitar and vocals, "two" will provide a mellow sound with a sentimental feel.



King and Nation
College Station, TX
Genre: Indie Rock

Self described as "indie groove rock," King and Nation likes to push the limits when writing new songs and have distinctive energy when performing. The band relies heavily on electric guitar and experimentation with new songs to try something new every time. King and Nation just released a song on Spotify earlier this month titled "Leave You Behind," which accompanies a five-song album released last year.



The Ottoman Turks are a band with members of all musical backgrounds from indie-pop to classic country to form a sound that is described by bassist Will Latham as, "Waylon Jennings with Jack White as his guitarist." The Ottoman Turks will probably be the most southern sounding of all the bands in the competition and have claimed to be the noisiest.

Ottoman Turks
Dallas, TX
Genres: Neo-outlaw
Country, Blues,
Garage Rock

By Jack Riewe

Open forum recalibrates Vision 2020 strategy

Plan aims to make Texas A&M students more marketable

By Wade Feielin

The Office of the Provost held the first of four open forums Tuesday aimed at developing a strategic plan for Texas A&M's next five years as part of Vision 2020.

The forum, which took place in Rudder Tower, was open to all faculty and staff. Provost Karan Watson said this open nature is essential to developing an all-inclusive strategy.

"One of the most important things

about a strategic plan is the planning," Watson said. "When you get everybody involved you usually come out with better ideas of what you should do, and more people are ready to push on the plan when you do that. It is important to get their inputs and generate involvement so we can really surge forward."

Nine strategic objectives were laid out for discussion at the forum, focused namely on improving student outcomes during their time at A&M and beyond as well as building a diverse student body.

Watson said Texas A&M graduates are highly sought after, and a large part of that is dependent on the experiences

they have.

"[Students] already have a lot of service learning but we need to make sure they have the research learning," Watson said. "We need to keep and grow the service learning, and we need to have international learning. The reason our students will be highly sought after and placed well is because we do highly impactful things, and not all of those are in the classroom."

Watson said activities such as The Big Event and other A&M traditions aren't benchmarked against other universities, but help to give Aggie graduates a strong, well-rounded education.

VISION 2020 ON PG. 2



Senior Jordan Green dunks in transition against Vanderbilt.

Cody Franklin — THE BATTALION

ROCK REED

Georgia first up on three-game men's basketball homestand

By Lawrence Smelser

In their last home game, the Aggies played in front of the most crowded Reed Arena since 2011. Against Georgia on Wednesday, they're ready for an encore.

Just more than halfway through the SEC schedule, the Aggies sit tied for second place. They'll have a three-game homestand to secure their standing.

Georgia (15-7, 6-4 SEC) is tied for third in the SEC, one game back of Texas A&M. The team comes into College Station after a win at home against Tennessee. On Jan. 31, Georgia had a five game winning streak

snapped by South Carolina, while A&M has won seven of its last eight.

A&M head coach Billy Kennedy said being physical is an important factor against Georgia.

"They're a balanced scoring team, they've got five guys averaging double figures, they're a veteran team, they have two senior post guys that present a lot of problems, they can shoot the ball and they can score around the basket, so it will be a really physical game and we'll have to set the tone with how physical we want to play," Kennedy said.

Georgia is led in scoring and rebounding by senior

GEORGIA ON PG. 2

Outcome of Obama tuition proposal on Blinn uncertain

By Gracie Mock

When President Barack Obama proposed offering two-year community college free of tuition to responsible students, Blinn students were left wondering how this could affect Blinn college and Texas A&M in the future.

The proposal pertains to students who maintain at least a 2.5 GPA, are enrolled at least half-time and

are steadily working towards their degrees.

"Put simply, what I'd like to see is the first two years of community college free for everybody who is willing to work for it," Obama said in the State of the Union address earlier this year. "That's right, free for anyone willing to work for it. That's something we can accomplish and it's something that will train our workforce so we can com-

pete with anybody in the world."

Richard Bray, Blinn College marketing and communications associate director, said it will be interesting to see how far the proposal goes.

"Obviously when you're dealing with both federal and state funding, that means there's going to be a lot of hoops to jump through," Bray said. "But, from Blinn College's perspective, we're just excited. We

COLLEGE ON PG. 2



Sarah Lane — THE BATTALION

University Provost Karan Watson leads the Vision 2020 forum Tuesday. The discussion centered on nine objectives that would improve student outcomes.

TEXAS A&M
MEN'S BASKETBALL
vs GEORGIA BULLDOGS

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