PRESIDENT’S MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARDS
Monday, April 22, 2019 | MSC, Bethancourt Ballroom

Welcome to Texas A&M University’s 32nd annual presentation of the President’s Meritorious Service Awards. Today, President Michael K. Young recognizes 25 individual staff members, two supervisors, and two staff teams with this prestigious award.

This award program began in 1986 and has recognized hundreds of exceptional staff employees over the years. Thank you for helping to honor these remarkable employees.

Welcome and Introductions
Jeff Risinger ‘02
Vice President, Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness

University Staff Council Message
Casey Ricketts ‘03
Chair, University Staff Council

Address to Honorees and Guests
Michael K. Young
President, Texas A&M University

Awards Presentation
President Young
& Marty Holmes ‘87
Vice President,
The Association of Former Students

Closing Remarks
Jeff Risinger

Following the ceremony please stay for a reception as we begin Staff Appreciation Week!
INDIVIDUAL AWARDS
ZEPHANIAH BARTIE

Program Coordinator
Office of Student Services,
College of Architecture
5 years of service

Zephaniah is a program coordinator in the Office of Student Services within the College of Architecture Dean's Office. His primary responsibilities include recruiting students, serving as director for Camp-ARCH, which gives high school students a chance to experience professions within architecture, and developing the Student Ambassador Program. His work is completed with the utmost quality, efficiency, and integrity.
Blake is a lead audio/visual technician for Rudder Theater Complex at University Center & Special Events. He works closely with system offices, university departments and student organizations to meet their needs for events and special occasions. His unwavering integrity to do the best job is why clients often say they never worry when he is at one of their events, he is always there to take care of everything.
Melissa is the assistant director in Scholarships and Financial Aid. In addition to advising students, she and her team are responsible for multiple complex reports and financial aid processes that are imperative for compliance and the expedition of aid to students. She has held several roles in the office and has succeeded at each one of them. She is, “instrumental in making the office a success.”
TONYA COCHRAN
Coordinator of Nursing Services
Student Health Services
8 years of service

Tonya is the nursing coordinator in Student Health Services. She manages 30 nursing staff, as well as selects, trains, and oversees approximately 25 student workers. Tonya is one of key people that gets and keeps the clinic running on a daily basis. She demonstrates selfless service through arriving early and anticipating the needs of all medical and nursing staff each day. She is insightful, willing to learn, and always pitching in to help the team.
Sherry is a business administrator III in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics. She started her work in the accounting office as a student worker more than 20 years ago. Her management and responsibilities regarding budget, payroll, requisitions, and some human resource issues have become increasingly complex and extremely important. She always carries out her work on time in a highly professional manner.
M. Rane Cunningham
Executive Assistant II
Bush School of Public Service
20 years of service

Rane is an executive assistant II in the Bush School of Government and Public Service. She selflessly stands ready to assist all faculty, staff, and students whether it is under her assigned duties or not. Next month, Rane will celebrate her 20th anniversary working at Texas A&M. She is the go-to person for all academic issues in the Bush School and the rock that holds the academic side of the Dean’s office together.
Megan is the assistant director of the Bryan campus of the Clinical Learning Resource Center, which sees over 5600 nursing and medical students per year for clinical simulation educational activities. She maintains a firm focus on the quality of services, but not at the expense of the staff. Megan has a unique ability to understand when others are in need. She is conscious of everyone around her and makes a continuous effort to lend a helping hand.
DEYANIRA ELY
Assistant to the Vice President
and Associate Provost for Diversity
Office for Diversity
15 years of service

Deyanira is a senior administrative coordinator in the Office for Diversity. She provides direct support for the Vice President and the office staff. Deyanira is determined, dependable, trustworthy, friendly, respectful, and willing to listen to what others have to say. She constantly devotes herself, and takes initiative, to serving others. She is a role model for being encouraging and supportive of everyone with whom she interacts.
Valerie is an assistant director in Facilities and Dining Administration. She is responsible for the oversight of facilities and dining arrangements with SSC and Chartwells. Valerie is an open-minded leader with tremendous vision and presence that is always aligned with the Texas A&M traditions and principles. Her ability to communicate in a manner that is sincere and honorable is always evident.
Beth Haferkamp
Business Coordinator III
Offices of the Dean of Student Life
23 years of service

Beth is a business coordinator III in the Office of the Dean of Student Life. For over 20 years, she has worked for four different leaders and gone from being an office of one to an office of four, all while handling financial and business support as the department grew. Beth is called upon daily to present options and solutions to employees who come to her with questions or problems. She has proven to be an insightful and contributing member of the department.
Jennifer is the chief of staff to the College of Science Dean’s Office. She has the unenviable task of functioning as the intermediary between the dean and college staff, department heads, and distinguished professors. Maintaining a courteous and professional demeanor in her communications with these constituencies, as well as her contacts outside of the college, has been a key to both her success and the success of the college.
Chad is a Lieutenant with the University Police Department. He oversees the Special Operations Division which coordinates security services for campus special events, which has included high profile occurrences such as the One America Appeal Concert for Hurricane Relief and the interments of both Barbara and President George H.W. Bush. Chad’s leadership, organizational skills, and interpersonal skills are vital to the success of these efforts.
Cheryl is a library associate II at the College of Dentistry. She has served the institution for over 37 years! Cheryl provides expert support, customer service, and guidance for programs and projects. She has a heartfelt respect for all people, who they are as individuals and – specifically to our students – what she can do to assist them through the rigors of professional school. She is the face of the library and receives the highest recognition and appreciation from staff and students.
Curtis is a facilities coordinator III in the Department of Chemistry. His responsibilities extend from supervision of night time security to disposal of chemical waste to maintaining the facilities. During his 35 years, he has been promoted into positions of increasing responsibility and challenging job duties. Curtis has faith in individuals, a keen sense of fairness, an exemplary character, a fine sense of duty, dedication, and above all, his good humor.
ANALICIA LEIVA

Academic Advisor III
Engineering Academic and Student Affairs
7 years of service

Analicia is an academic advisor III in Engineering Academic and Student Affairs. Her primary goal is to guide students in their academic journey, but she consistently makes time to support students across the university. In addition to her coordination of Aggieland Saturday and Prospective Student events, she serves as an Alternative Spring Break advisor and volunteers as Fish Camp support staff.
Rebekah is a business administrator in the Department of Anthropology. She consistently provides selfless support to faculty, staff, and students in more areas than just business and financial support. She works hard to keep the student, staff, and faculty morale high through her positive personality and arrangement of special events. She is a problem solver and her work is of the highest quality. Rebekah is a rare and gifted individual.
PAUL A. PAUSKY
Associate Director
Former Student Career Services
15 years of service

Paul is an associate director in the Former Student Career Center. He provides career education and advising for those students who have graduated from Texas A&M University and who are still in need of career direction and assistance. Paul strives to give them job leads, networking contacts, and, most importantly, encouragement that they will succeed. He works to not only further the mission of the Career Center, but of Texas A&M.
HEATHER L. PRESTRIDGE
Curator
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
18 years of service

Heather is a curator in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. Heather is directly involved in the daily management of over 1 million natural history artifacts and specimens at the Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections; yet she consistently goes above and beyond to take on additional tasks voluntarily, particularly in the areas of mentoring and research. Heather has exhibited a long and selfless 18 years of service to the Collections.
Mary is an administrative coordinator II in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture. In addition to many responsibilities, Mary coordinates events, serves on multiple committees, and manages web pages and social media. To say that her service is excellent is simply insufficient. Mary goes the extra mile building relationships with staff, faculty and community partners through her courtesy, respect and appreciation for others.
Rubi is a business coordinator II for the Department of Communication. She manages business transactions, payments, and purchases and also provides support to 34 faculty, 42 in-resident graduate student employees and 7 full-time staff on navigating the Concur system for travel. Rubi combines kindness and patience with a commitment to excellence in her job. She is THAT staff member who is always available and willing to help out in any situation.
ELIZABETH (LIZ) M. SMITH
Senior Administrative Coordinator
Department of Construction Science
19 years of service

Liz is a senior administrative coordinator in the Department of Construction Science. She works under direction of the Graduate Program Coordinator providing leadership and administrative support for the Department. Liz is a wonderful listener, encouraging dialogue from her teammates and customers by asking thoughtful and targeted questions designed to draw out clarity of purpose and objectives for success.
Tim is a senior IT professional II in Transportation Services. He provides support, service, and leadership to maintain and create data feeds into the data warehouse, as well as applications for data flow. As one of the department’s treasured staff, the work he produces is invaluable to operations. Tim is never satisfied with status quo, and has continued to seek ways to improve systems that ultimately help our customers.
Heather is a senior administrative coordinator II in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. She has been the primary administrative coordinator in academic and personnel functions for 14 years. She is described as the backbone of the department and as someone who will go above and beyond her job duties to help solve your problem. Additionally, today is her 23rd anniversary with Texas A&M.
Kim Widdison
Graduate Student Specialist IV
Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
20 years of service

Kim is a graduate student specialist IV with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. She provides support for students, faculty, and staff, and guides them through the graduation process. Kim exhibits respect for the graduate student population by collaborating with campus units to provide the best customer service. She works to improve processes, helps teammates advance their goals, and lends her depth of knowledge where needed.
Haley is a business administrator II in the Department of Neuroscience and Experimental Therapeutics. She is responsible for a wide range of business and administrative duties. She is very solutions-oriented and is always willing to do what it takes to find answers and solve problems. Haley provides institutional knowledge to employees at all levels (from faculty to students and staff) to advance the educational and research mission of the College of Medicine.
Rick Margo

Director
Division of Academic Affairs, Undergraduate Studies, Higher Education Center at McAllen
16.5 years of service

Rick administers budget, oversees fiscal operations, and manages day-to-day operations at the McAllen campus. During the process of bringing Texas A&M to the Rio Grande Valley, Rick worked with construction company representatives, contractors, and A&M leadership to ensure the building would open its doors in time for the fall 2018 semester. He recruited and hired very competent and dedicated staff, and engaged our faculty who were joining this new venture. Rick makes everyone feel valued and respected.
CHRISTINA E. ROBERTSON

Director
Department of Environmental Health & Safety
25 years of service

Christina is responsible for providing university-wide programs that ensure a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. She is a hands-on leader who takes on projects instead of delegating them to others. She treats her staff members as partners and not as subordinates. Christina really listens to her employees’ concerns and helps them resolve those concerns. She is also a strong supporter of her staff engaging in university initiatives and events. She is a caring leader who “walks the talk” daily.
TEAM AWARDS
This team is made up of nine individuals, who have a combined total of 36 years of oncology service and nearly 79 years of Small Animal Hospital service. Everyone on the team, regardless of title, is fully invested, takes a leadership role, has common goals, invests in personal development, and holds each other accountable. They see up to 30 cases daily, and every client leaves the building feeling like they were never rushed, they were heard, and they were the only patient for the day. It is very impressive to stand back and observe them in action; providing patient care from the moment they enter the building to assisting the client to their car.

Docia Charanza, Customer Service Associate II, 3 years
Jaclyn Christensen, BS, LVT, Oncology Supervisor, 10 years
Scottie Flores, Customer Service Associate III, 16 years
Jill Jarvis, BS, Clinical Trials Medical Oncology Technician, 5 years
Linda Rojas Knight, BS, LVT, Veterinary Radiotherapist, 20 years
Rachel Emma Ortego, Oncology Client Liaison, 3 years
Julio M. Peraza, Veterinary Radiotherapist Technician, 10 months
Paula Plummer, LVT, VTS (ECC, SAIM), Surgical Oncology Technician, 14 years
Liz Wood, LVT, Oncology Technician, 6 years
This team is made up of five individuals who are responsible for the recruitment and matriculation of students from the Rio Grande Valley to Texas A&M University and The Higher Education Center at McAllen. In many cases, the team has put aside their own personal time to meet with students, counselors, and families in the evenings and weekends, in their homes and local libraries and at the Center long after others have gone home for the day. They do what it takes to serve their community and ensure that all students from deep South Texas have the same opportunity as others around the state – to become Aggies.

Oscar L. Lopez, Senior Regional Advisor, 16 years
Rozina Muñoz, Administrative Associate IV, 4 years
Luis M. Salinas, Regional Advisor I, 1 year
Joel H. Solis, Senior Regional Advisor, 18 years
Vanessa Soto, Regional Advisor II, 4 years
Texas A&M University has gained an international reputation for academic excellence. In the process, we have enhanced our commitment to that which truly sets us apart: excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty, respect, and selfless service.

We are fortunate to have staff members who demonstrate that commitment to academic excellence and these Aggie values every day, often behind the scenes and without significant recognition. For more than 32 years, the President’s Meritorious Service Awards Program has existed as a way for us to honor our outstanding staff members.

On behalf of the entire Texas A&M community, I extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our staff members for their numerous and significant contributions to our shared success, and congratulate this year’s nominees and recipients on this well-deserved recognition.

These awards are funded by The Association of Former Students, sponsored by the Office of the President and coordinated by the Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness.