

# The RPTS NEWSLETTER

**FALL 2014**

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## **Join Our Team of Educators!**

The quality of RPTS students' education is a result of many types of contributions. Members of our educational team include not only faculty and staff but also donors, advisory committee members, guest speakers, industry leaders, intern supervisors, employers, community partners, and others. We have added a gift catalog to our newsletter so that you may support RPTS!

A list of select department programs and initiatives to which you may contribute is listed on page 17.

Your contributions will benefit present and future Aggies! Donors, welcome to our educational team!

Please contact Gary Ellis (gellis@ag.tamu.edu ; 979-845-6018) if you want to know more about a particular program.

Gary is Department Head and will be happy to speak with you about gifts or any other matter that is of interest to you.



# Gary's Gab



On behalf of our faculty and staff, I am pleased to extend Season's greetings and best wishes for the new year to our former students, current students, industry leading partners, and friends. Our fall Semester has been particularly exciting, with a number of new developments and innovations! I am pleased to present some of the highlights to you.

**New Faculty.** We are thrilled that three full-time lecturers have joined our faculty. We welcome Drs. Angela Durko, Linda Lelo, and Jill Martz. Angela's expertise is in tourism management and marketing. Among the many innovations she is bringing to us is an exciting new class in quality customer service. In addition to her doctorate focusing on tourism, Linda holds a masters degree in hospitality management. She is providing leadership to our new transcribed hospitality management program, which is available through distance education methods. Jill's doctorate is in youth development/ecology. She is a nationally recognized leader in 4H and youth development. Prior to her appointment to our faculty, Jill served as Interim Director of Extension for the state of Montana. These new colleagues bring a wealth of talent and commitment to our department. They are an amazing addition to our teaching programs.



We are also pleased to announce that two of our continuing faculty colleagues earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor Rank. Dr. Kyle Woosnam and Dr. David Matarrita became tenured Associate Professors on September 1, 2015. Promotion and tenure at Texas A&M is an extremely rigorous undertaking, and we are thrilled to celebrate the success of our colleagues in achieving this key milestone in their respective careers.

# Gary's Gab



**New Academic Programs.** An initiative led by Dr. James Petrick, Angela Durko, and our Undergraduate Committee led to development of a new transcribed certificate program in hospitality management. The 15-credit hour program is taught via distance and is available to students campus-wide.

We also implemented an innovative and exciting new undergraduate program that will empower RPTS majors to earn transcribed certificates in one or more of the following areas of specialization: tourism management, youth development, parks and conservation, and community park and recreation administration. This certificate program underscores the common elements of our curricula and we anticipate that it will more fully empower graduates to compete successfully for positions in the expansive experience industries.



**New Resources.** We celebrate two new assets that have extraordinary potential to advance our teaching, research, and outreach missions. The grand opening of our *Schob Preserve* was held on Saturday, October 25. The *Schob Preserve* is a 12-acre property gifted to the Department of RPTS and the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning by Dr. David E. Schob. The facility provides an exciting new laboratory for teaching, research, and outreach projects. The project also supports research and teaching of a *Senior Schob Scholar*. We are very pleased to announce that Dr. Scott Shafer's appointment as *Senior Schob Scholar*. Dr. Shafer played a key role in development of the Preserve.





# Gary's Gab



We are also pleased to announce a partnership with the Henderson-Wessendorff Foundation of Richmond Texas. That partnership is an initiative of Associate Department Head for Extension Miles Phillips. The Department will manage *Long Acres Ranch* near Richmond, for the purposes of outdoor education, nature-based tourism, outreach, and research.



**Passing of a very special friend.** We were deeply saddened to learn of the unexpected passing of Mr. Royce Wisenbaker, '82. Mr. Wisenbaker deeply loved students and our department. He and his wife, Jana, contributed generously to RPTS over the course of his life. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Wisenbaker, RPTS students will carry the honor of earning scholarships in the names of both Royce and Jana, in perpetuity. Royce and Jana also endowed our RPTS Excellence Fund. The RPTS Excellence Fund provides the Department with resources to invest in initiatives that engage students in innovative learning opportunities that would not otherwise be available. We are deeply saddened by the passing of this kind, generous, and inspirational former student.

**Looking Ahead.** Almost fifty years ago, in January of 1966, Dr. Leslie M. Reed convened the first session of the first class in the new department that is now the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences. Since that time, the Department has produced former students that have changed the world through leadership in parks, recreation, tourism and many other industries. RPTS graduates are individuals of integrity and ingenuity, deeply committed to Aggie values and to their families as well as their professional roles. The quality and focus of research of our faculty and former students is held in the highest esteem internationally, and our innovative Extension programs have substantially elevated lives of people in all corners of Texas, and beyond. We have initiated planning for a major celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We look forward to an exciting and engaging event that includes former students, supporters, and friends of the Department. Please watch for details.



## Departmental Accomplishments



According to an article published in the most recent issue of *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Dr. Petrick was the most second published person in the world in the most recognized and influential tourism journals for the period 2004-2013. The journals included in this analysis are *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, and *Journal of Travel Research*.

Dr. Jim Gramann, has been named the recipient of the prestigious 2015 George Wright Society Social Science Achievement Award! This award recognizes cumulative achievements in furthering the application of social science research to the management of parks protected areas, and cultural sites.



Dr. Woosnam has been selected by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as a nominee for a University Professorships for Undergraduate Teaching Excellence (UPUTE). The University Professorships for Undergraduate Teaching Excellence (UPUTE) are conferred upon as the university's most distinguished teachers of undergraduates who exhibit uncommon excellence and devotion to the education of undergraduate students of Texas A&M University.

## Departmental Accomplishments *Continued*



Dr. Harrist and his colleagues had their article titled, "Exploring the Social Impacts of a Summer Camp for Youth with Tourette Syndrome" published in *Research in Outdoor Education*. Their paper explored social impacts of a week-long camp for youths who have Tourette Syndrome.

Angela Durko, has been honored recipient of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean's Award for teaching excellence by a graduate student!



Graduate student Ji Youn Jeong and her faculty mentor, Dr. John Crompton are receiving popular media attention for their report, "The Economic Contributions of Texas State Parks"

<http://environment.blog.statesman.com/2014/11/06/state-parks-booster-group-state-parks-add-money-to-local-economies/>



# Departmental Accomplishments *Continued*



Dr. Gerard Kyle was inducted as Fellow in the highly prestigious Academy of Leisure Sciences at the annual Academy of Leisure. The press release that was distributed by the Academy explains that Dr. Kyle is "...a prolific researcher [who has] an uncanny ability for developing theory-based papers from applied research projects. His publications have appeared in the leading journals in the leisure sciences field...as well as the broader social science arena. At the same time, his reports to sponsoring agencies have helped to guide their planning and management efforts and have led to a sustained research program in the human dimensions of natural resources."

John Jacob had his article, "Walkable Development Protects against Catastrophe" published in the Houston Chronicle.

In the article, Dr. Jacob argues that the vision of development in Houston should be a "lovable" place.



Dr. Corliss Outley along with Drs. George Cunningham and E. Lisako McKyer (HLTH) have been awarded a Tier One Program (TOP) interdisciplinary education grant for \$200,000. Their proposal, "Aggieland's community-campus partnership for health: Brazos valley youth engaged actively for health! (BV YEAH!)" is designed to reduce the incidence of health disparities among racial minority youth in the Brazos Valley by focusing on their health literacy, or the "capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions."





# Student Events

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# RPTS 311

Planning and Implementation of  
Events and Programs



For these class projects, students  
of RPTS 311 staged a program  
and showed their ability to apply  
program development  
techniques in each step of the  
program development cycle.





## NRPA's Visit A Park Day



During NRPA's visit a park day, the public is encouraged to take time to visit a local, state, regional, or national park and enjoy the many benefits of these locations.

National Visit a Park Day provides the opportunity to take advantage of recreation offerings and education within parks that can spark healthy habits, renew a sense of appreciation for nature and community, and inspire ongoing visitation of parks for lifelong enjoyment.



# National Recreation and Park Association



# Study Abroad Highlights

## RPTS 489 Special Topics: Cruise Tourism



Understand and appreciate the history, organization, complexity, and scope of the cruise industry.

Understand the role that culture and heritage plays in attracting passengers to visits ports of call.

Understand the external factors which impact the cruise tourism industry.

Understand the external and internal factors which influence an individual's decision to cruise.

Apply the principle of service marketing within a cruise tourism setting.

Understand the economics and environmental impacts of cruise tourism.



# Undergraduate Student Highlight:

## Interview with Martha Romo

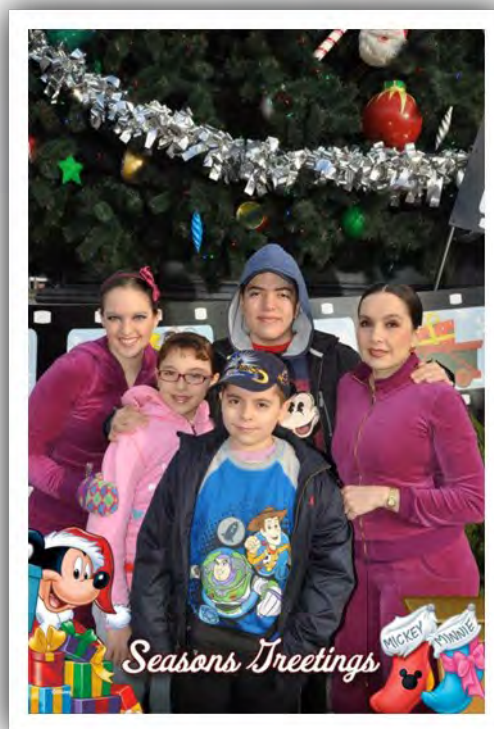


**What made you choose RPTS as your major?**

I was studying Business before transferring to Texas A&M, but I felt something was missing. When I heard about RPTS, I knew it was the perfect career path for incorporating my passions: travel, event planning and management.

**What do you want to do with your degree?**

After graduating I would like to start working in a Cruise-line and eventually be a Cruise Director; it sounds like a lot of fun! I am also very passionate about planning events and aspire to have my own event management business in the future.



**What is your favorite Aggie tradition? Why?**

I am a hopeless romantic; therefore my favorite tradition is “The Century Tree”. This majestic 100-year-old tree by itself is a statement. I find very touching to see how many love stories have started under this tree.





### **What is your favorite class at A&M?**

My favorite class has been “Administration of Recreation Resource Agencies” (RPTS 304). It is one of the classes where I have learned the most. Mr. Fox not only taught us how to be good managers but great leaders!

### **What is the best advice someone has ever given you about college life?**

I have heard a lot of good advice from my professors in this university. The one that I like the most is one from Dr. Petrick, “It is not about the grades you make but about the hands you shake.” This is so true; through our lives we get to meet amazing people from whom we learn invaluable lessons.



### **What do you like most about Bryan/College Station?**

I believe that what makes Bryan/ College Station so unique is its people. Not only we are the happiest campus in the country but our Aggie spirit is recognized everywhere. The friendliness and positive spirit that you find here can't be compared to anything.

### **What is your dream vacation?**

My dream vacation would be a cruise around the world with my family. I think that what makes a vacation special is not the destination but the people that go with you.





# Graduate Student Highlight:

## Interview with Joyce Carter



### What made you choose the RPTS Department at TAMU?

Growing up I worked with a lot of kids. I spent time with my mom in her classroom and would help when she worked summer school for the Special Education department at my school. I always enjoyed working with kids, and figured I might as well make a career out of it! When I was working for the YMCA my mom suggested I get a degree in recreation management, but I told her that wasn't what I wanted to do forever - I should have listened to her. 8 years later I graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in RPTS! I chose Texas A&M for a few reasons. 1. Ann was amazing the first time I met her. She took one look at my transcript for transferring into A&M and let me know exactly what I needed to do to get started. 2. My husband is an Aggie. His parent's are Aggies. It was bound to happen. and 3. The RPTS department at Texas A&M has the best faculty and staff in the world (seriously!). The research being done, and the things I was taught make the money paid worth it!

### What projects are you currently working on?

Currently I am working on a needs assessment of youth serving agencies in the state of Texas. It is a pretty huge endeavor, but in the end will be worth it. I will be able to take the information collected and hopefully put it into a national perspective. Most youth serving agencies throughout the nation all have the same needs, and this assessment could help youth development researchers know what research still needs to be done in our field. I am also working on planning the 6th Annual Sequor YDI Conference that will be held in San Marcos from April 15 - 17, 2015.

### Could you talk a little about your recent experience planning the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Sequor YDI Conference?

Planning the 5th Annual Sequor YDI Conference was a new experience. I had never planned a conference before, and was already behind when I was hired as the Graduate Assistant for YDI. I learned it's not always best to stick with what was done in the past - new things are OK too. I learned that finding someone to do CEUs is a lot harder than I thought it would be (Texas A&M has someone in the Provost office as of April of this year - just FYI!). I learned I can do hard things. Working on figuring out the schedule, and who all was presenting was fun. I enjoyed meeting people who are working in the field now, and more about the research being done for youth programs.



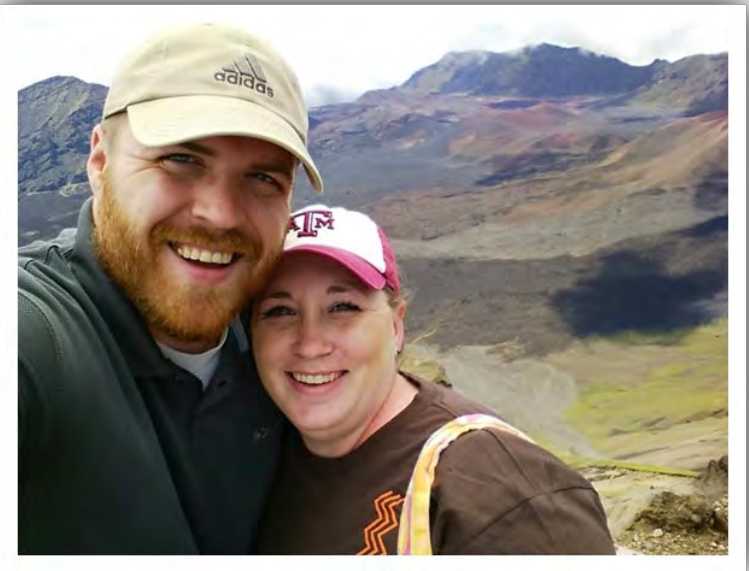


**What is your favorite destination? And why?**

I think my favorite destination is Big Island, Hawaii. My husband and I had the chance to spend time in Hawaii this summer, and out of the islands we went to this one was my favorite. I loved the beaches, and the hiking. We didn't get to see the volcanoes, but we plan to see them someday! If I'm picking a little more practical and closer to home, I'd have to say Austin. I come from a big family, and this is where home base is for me. While my parents aren't there right now, I have three siblings there, and we love to get together. My husband's family is from there also so we get to see everyone when we go home.

**What is your favorite Aggie tradition?**

I love Howdy for the easy greeting, but I love the Aggie Ring. Anywhere I go, I know when a fellow Aggie is around. I know when I see an Aggie ring I can have something in common with someone, and an instant friend. Even in Hawaii my husband and I were recognized by fellow Aggies because of our rings!



*Joyce and her husband, Rusty, in Hawaii*



*Joyce in Canada*

**What do you like the best about Bryan/College Station?**

I love that Bryan/College Station still feels like a small town. It's not anymore, but I've enjoyed learning more about this area in the 3 years I've lived here. There are so many parks to go to that I haven't hit them all. My dog loves the dog parks. The people. People here are just nicer. I've had family and friends visit who make the same comment. People just like to help one another out here typically, so it makes it a great place to live.

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**What advices would you give to undergrads?**

The advice I would give undergrads is to get a lot of experience. Don't work the same job every summer - take that time to figure out what you want to do. I worked for 10 years before I finished my bachelor's degree. In that time I worked for youth programs, healthcare, insurance, and business. The jobs I had the most fun doing were in youth programs. If you can, get more than one internship. I worked for Amtrak and the National Parks one summer, then a small towns parks and rec. department the next. Don't be afraid to find what you love. Also, go talk to your professors! You never know what experience you can get from them. They know people who work in what you want to do - they could help you out someday if they know you're good! Sit at the front of class, and turn off anything that could distract you.

# Gift Catalog



***We invite to you to learn more about giving to the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences. This webpage can link you to specific student enrichment projects that need your support. Wherever you chose to direct your gift, it will have a lasting impact on our students' lives.***

***Through your gifts, you can be a fellow “educator”, helping us to maintain and enhance the outstanding quality of the RPTS Department’s faculty, students and programs.***

The quality of RPTS students’ education is a result of many types of contributions. Members of our educational team include not only faculty and staff but also donors, advisory committee members, guest speakers, industry leaders, intern supervisors, employers, community partners, and others.

Please contact Gary Ellis, Department Head of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, at [gellis@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:gellis@ag.tamu.edu) or 979.845.6018 if you would like more information on a particular program. Gary will be happy to speak with you about gifts or any other matter that is of interest to you.

Gary Ellis, PhD, Department Head  
Department of RPTS  
2261 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-2261

The Texas A&M Foundation  
401 George Bush Drive  
College Station, TX 77840





# Sponsor a “Legend!”

[Legends in the Texas Travel Industry Speaker Series](#) .....\$1,000 per “Legend”

The “Legends in the Texas Travel Industry Speaker Series” brings travel industry leaders to the Texas A&M campus.

Over a two day period, the speaker makes presentations to classes and interacts with students through meals, receptions, and other events. Students gain unique insight into the joys and challenges of managing major travel and experience industry attractions.

Mr. Paul Serff, President-Emeritus of the Texas Travel Industry Association, RPTS Tourism Management Advisory Committee member, and part-time Lecturer created this exciting program for us. Your gift of \$1,000 will establish you as a sponsor of a visit by a “Legend!”



# Support a student's success!



Generous donors have endowed the following scholarships, and we always welcome additional contributions to those **in any amount!**

Contributions to endowments, of course, grow the principal and result in increased awards to students. If you are interested in establishing an endowed scholarship a minimum donation of \$25,000 is required.

- [COADC Jana Wisenbaker Scholarship in Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences](#)
- [Leslie M. Reid Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [Lon and Inger Garrison Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [COADC Joyce Nies and Peter Witt Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [John L. Crompton Scholarship](#)
- [Elizabeth B. Crompton Scholarship](#)
- [COADC Heidemann Wuest Foundation Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [Sue Wittens '72 Memorial Scholarship](#)
- [Elizabeth Lee Moore '00 Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [Louis Hodges Scholarship in Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences](#)
- [Marquerite Van Dyke Graduate Scholarship](#)
- [Korean RPTS Alumni and Marquerite Van Dyke Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [Thomas G. Viilo Endowed Memorial Scholarship](#)
- [TAES Jake Hershey Fellowship in Natural Resources Conservation](#)
- [Bradberry Chair for Youth Development](#)
- [Robert B. Ditton Endowed Scholarship](#)
- [Peter Witt and Joyce Nies Youth Development Excellence Endowment](#)



## Help RPTS sustain and grow excellence!



### [RPTS Endowed Fund for Excellence](#)...Gifts in any amount welcome

The RPTS Excellence fund provides support for special unanticipated opportunities for our students that arise during the course of many academic years.

Your gift to our excellence fund will grow the endowment and provide us even better opportunity to pursue opportunities and continue to grow quality experiences for our students.

Mr. Royce Wisenbaker and his wife Jana Wisenbaker endowed this excellence fund for RPTS, and your contribution can help us continue to grow that endowment.

## Sponsor an RPTS Quiz Bowl Student!

### [RPTS Quiz Bowl](#)...\$1,000 for sponsorship of a team member or a coach

RPTS students compete with top students from other universities in national Quiz Bowl competition each year.

Teams are comprised of four students and a coach.

Students are quizzed on park, recreation and tourism management, marketing, foundational knowledge, and planning and staging of experiences.

You have the opportunity to sponsor one or more members of our team or even our coach (your choice).





## ***Become a partner in advancing our high-impact learning programs!***

[High-Impact Learning Courses](#)...*Monetary gifts in any amount are welcomed*

The Department offers a variety of “high impact learning” classes.

These classes engage students in direct experiences with managers and marketing professionals.

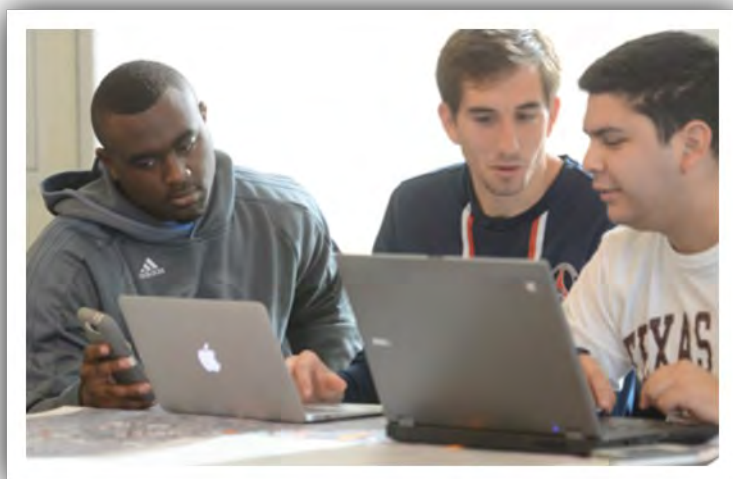
Students study in major attractions, state and national parks and forests, in cities and towns, and even aboard cruise ships!

Students must bear the cost of special fees for such courses, to cover transportation, lodging, and related expenses. Your support will provide access to students unable to pay those fees.



## ***Connect RPTS students with industry through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service!***

**Connected Learning for Industry Professionals and Students (E!CLIPS)**



E!CLIPS is a Texas A&M/ RPTS AgriLife Extension Program that supports real-world training and action research by connecting professionals in recreation, park and tourism businesses and agencies around the world with students and professional learning programs from RPTS Extension.

Opportunities are available in nature tourism, youth development, customer service, event planning, park and trail planning, and public input programs.





*Quality experiences, lives, and communities.*

## Mission

We enhance individual and social well-being and environmental and economic sustainability by generating and disseminating knowledge about the management and development of recreation, park, community, and tourism resources.

## Vision

We endeavor to conduct an effective mix of theoretical and applied research, and liberal and professional education that prepares society-ready graduates and provides responsive service and outreach that meets the needs of our constituents. Our mission is achieved through undergraduate and graduate education, outreach, and research that integrate social science and natural resource management disciplines. We strive to understand and respond to the global and local implications of recreation, parks, tourism, and natural resource dimensions of diverse and changing societies.

## Core Values

We believe that our education, scientific research, and outreach programs contribute to the expansion of knowledge and to the enhancement of the quality of life. We believe that our primary responsibility is to the people of Texas; we believe that our contributions to the State of Texas will be enhanced by scholarly activities at the national and international levels. We value the contributions that parks, recreation, community development, and tourism can make to the health of communities. We believe in preparing society-ready graduates, with a solid educational foundation that includes experiential and liberal education, and development of skills for career employment and lifelong learning. We believe that the process of education is a collaborative learning experience, and students, faculty, practitioners, and professionals from other fields are participants in this process. We recognize the growing demographic and geographic diversity of Texas and the United States; the value of diversity in thoughts and ideas among the faculty, staff, and students; and the opportunities presented by an international border. We recognize the value of human diversity and interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching, research, and extension, and affirm the individual strengths that people bring to the Department. We are committed to the contributions of recreation, parks, community development and tourism make to the sustainability and stewardship of cultural, historical, and natural resources. We are committed to the concepts of social and environmental justice. We value scholarship that is validated by peers and external audiences; and we believe that scholarship can be expressed through teaching, research, and extension.