

The RPTS Newsletter

Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University



Spring
2015

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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.

Join our team by supporting the RPTS Department. We have added a gift catalog which includes educational

programs and initiatives you can support (p. 14)

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

Our Department Head, Gary Ellis (gellis@ag.tamu.edu ; 979-845-6018) will be happy to speak with you about gifts or any other matter that is of interest to you.

Gary's Gab



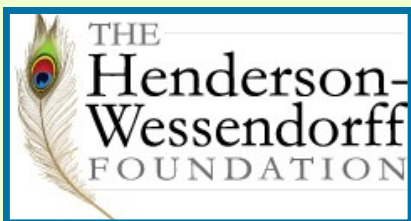
The close of the spring semester is a time of celebration and transition! This spring, we celebrated the success of 70 students who graduated with BS degrees in Recreation, Parks and Tourism and Community Development. We also celebrated graduation of six graduate students, a record number of graduates of our Community Development certificate program (6), and a record number of graduates of our Professional Event Manager Certificate program (43). We are richly blessed to have had the opportunity to work and study with these wonderfully talented students. We are excited to envision the many ways our country and world will grow and develop as a result of the leadership these wonderful former students will provide in their chosen professions and in our communities. Our former students will promote quality experiences, lives and communities.

The summer semester is a particularly exciting time due to the numerous “high impact learning” programs in which our students become engaged. This summer, our students will interact directly and on-site with industry leading managers and marketing professionals in some of Texas’ largest and most successful tourism attractions through studies in our “attractions management” class. Other of students will board a *Norwegian* cruise ship and learn about hotel operations and guest services during a week-long cruise. Youth development students will visit camps to learn about operations, maintenance, marketing, and management of businesses within the unique and expansive camp industry.



Other students will study natural resource management processes and challenges through study-abroad experiences in Australia and Fiji. Students in a section of our tourism impacts class will visit UNESCO World Heritage sites in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Finally, both graduate and undergraduate students will have a unique and memorable learning experience about natural resource management through our Amazon Field School. What an exciting summer!

Gary's Gab



Friends of RPTS will also be interested in an additional exciting transition that occurred during this academic year. Our RPTS Extension unit, under Miles Phillips' leadership, became the manager of a 750 acre nature tourism center. The Long Acres Ranch Nature Tourism Center (<http://longacresranch.tamu.edu>) is located in Richmond, Texas, a short drive from our College Station campus. The property, owned by the Henderson-Wessendorff Foundation, includes three miles of Brazos River frontage in addition to the 750 partially wooded acres. The Center will function as an "Ecotourism Experiment Station." We will promote both education and research, and will demonstrate market-based conservation through tourism.

RPTS Extension specialists will provide training for entrepreneurs who seek to develop wildlife and nature-based tourism and recreation businesses. The Center will also provide a variety of outdoor recreation activities for adults and youth. Among these are paddling, hay rides, tent camping, nature walks, wildlife viewing, birding, photo hunts, campfire events, Extension 4H natural resource programs, and our Annual Natural Heritage Event serving the Richmond community.



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Thank you for your interest in our programs and transitions! We appreciate your continuing friendship with and support of RPTS! Please contact me if you would like to know more about our programs or contribute to our mission in any way. Gig'em!

-Gary Ellis



Departmental Accomplishments



A big congratulations to RPTS major and student-athlete **Shea Groom**. Shea has been nominated as Texas A&M University's female student-athlete candidate for the H. Boyd McWhorter Scholar-Athlete Post-Graduate Scholarship. The H. Boyd McWhorter Scholar-Athlete Post-Graduate Scholarship has been presented by the Southeastern Conference since 1986 to the league's top male and female scholar-athletes. Shea Groom has also been selected Texas A&M's Female Athlete of the Year. Shea is a two-year All-American who led the Aggies to five conference championships, four NCAA tournaments and the school's first-ever College Cup appearance.



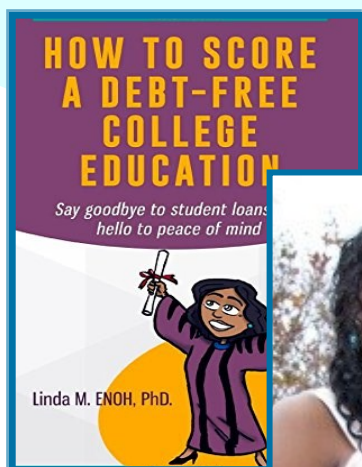
Congratulations to **Aby-Sene Harper** for publishing her first peer-reviewed journal article, entitled "**International Amenity Migration: Examining Environmental Behaviors and Influences of Amenity Migrants and Local Residents in Rural Community.**" This article will be published in the *Journal of Rural Studies* and co-authored with **Dr. Matarrita** and **Dr. Gabriela Stocks**. The study examines and compares the environmental attitudes and behaviors of local rural residents and amenity migrants from the United States who reside in Nuevo Arenal, Costa Rica. It also examines the way each group influences others in terms of environmental attitudes and behaviors.



A big congratulations to our own **Anna Pechenik Mausolf**, whose career is highlighted in the "Member Spotlight" of the most recent issue of *Parks and Recreation* (December 2014)! In the full-page article, Anna's thoughts on parks and recreation as a career, research, professional development, and her role as a quiz bowl coach are summarized.

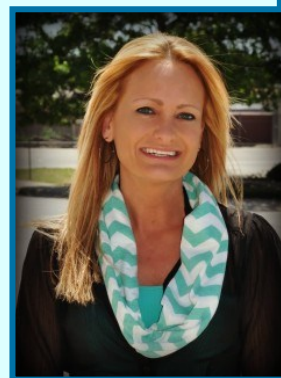
Departmental Accomplishments

Congratulations to **Dr. David Scott**, **Dr. Sunwoo Lee '12**, and **Dr. Kelli McMahon** on continued popular media attention to their research on motives of female and male bird watchers. An article summarizing their research was published in *The Times*. The title is "**Male birders are flashier than females.**"



A big congratulations to **Dr. Linda Enoch**, who published a book titled, "How to Score A Debt-Free College Education: Say goodbye to student loans and hello to peace of mind." The book is available through [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Congratulations to **Drs. Petrick and Durko**, whose article titled, "**Segmenting luxury cruise tourists based on their motivations**" is published in the most recent issue of *Tourism in Marine Environments* (Vol 10, no. 3-4).



Departmental Accomplishments



A big congratulations to **Dr. Scott Shafer** for being chosen as the recipient of the *Teaching Award of Merit* presented by North American Colleges and Teaching of Agriculture. This award is given in recognition of meritorious efforts in College Teaching.

Congratulations to former student **Hyungsuk Choo** and **Dr. Petrick**. Their article titled, "*The Importance of Travel Companionship and We-Intentions at Tourism Service Encounters*," is published in the most recent issue of *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*.



Professor Emeritus **Peter Witt** and **Dr. Joyce Nies** are recipients of the 2015 *Jefferson Award* in Bryan/College Station. The American Institute for Public Service created the Jefferson Awards in 1972, honoring those who have dedicated time to public service. Peter and Joyce have served on numerous boards of local non-profit organizations (including as board presidents), and donated to local and national organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, the Prenatal Clinic and Voices for Children.

Departmental Accomplishments



A big congratulations to our Aggie REPS, who secured a \$1,100 grant from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Council. The funding empowered our REPS to proceed with their "sticker campaign" to "...put RPTS window decals and bumper stickers in the hands of every RPTS student, faculty member, and staff member. This way, whether RPTS students are driving down the road, carrying their water bottle into the gym, or studying on their laptop in the MSC, they represent RPTS!"



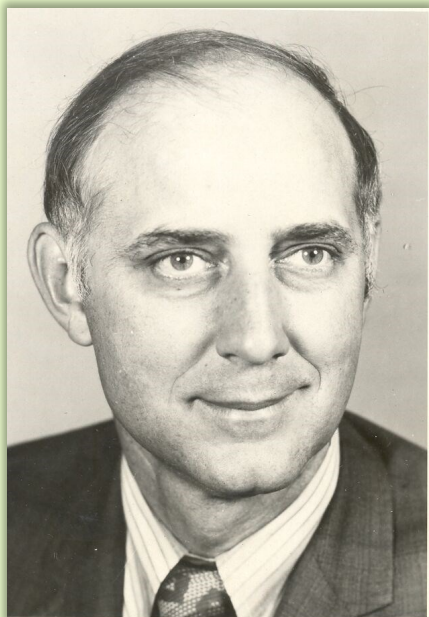
A big congratulations to Ms. Irina Shatruck, who has been selected to receive financial support to enable her to participate in our High Impact Learning program this summer! Ms. Shatruck will participate in the heritage tourism class taught by Drs. Jamal and Woosnam in Guanajuato, Mexico!



Congratulations to **Chun-Chu Chen, Yueh-Hsiu Lin, Jie Gao, and Gerard Kyle** on publication of their paper titled, "**Developing a market-specific destination image scale: a nomological validation approach.**" The paper is published in the current issue (vol. 20, no. 1) of *Tourism Analysis*. Their scale is based on the position that cognitive image may be constructed as having three primary dimensions: common image, atmospheric image, and unique image. All three of these components produced significant relations with measures of affective image and travel intention.

Congratulations to **Dr. Kyle and Jinhee Jun**, whose article titled, "**An Alternate Conceptualization of the Leisure Constraints Measurement Model: Formative Structure?**" It published in the most recent issue (Vol. 47 No. 3) of *Journal of Leisure Research*!

RPTS 50th Anniversary



Dr. Leslie M. Reid

In early January of 1966, Professor and Department Head Leslie M. Reid convened the very first class offered by the department that has become the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences. Please make plans now to join us in April, 2016 to celebrate our Department's 50th Anniversary.

This memorable and historic weekend will take place April 21 – 23, 2016. We will be Keeping the Spirit, Advancing the Vision, and Living the Adventure.

Our celebration will “kick off” with Fightin’ Texas Aggie Muster on Thursday, April 21st. On Friday morning, we will host an RPTS Aggie breakfast. We will also host a lunch on Friday, and will organize afternoon activities for former and current students and faculty. On Friday evening, you can join us for our Anniversary/Scholarship banquet. Our banquet will be held at the beautiful new Thomas G. Hildebrand, DVM ’56 Equine Complex. We also hope to see you Saturday, April 23rd for additional social events and activities associated with our celebration.

Our festivities are already underway. We conducted a 50th Anniversary logo contest. Our very own Morgan Davidson, class of 2015, won that award!



1966-2016

Texas A&M Univeristy

Keeping the Spirit • Advancing the Vision • Living the Adventure



Agriculture and Life Sciences Building
Our Home Today



Francis Hall
Our Home from 1981-2011

RPTS Events

RPTS 321's KITE FESTIVAL

Dr. Jinmoo Heo's RPTS 321 class organized the 2015 Kite Festival. This class is centered on active involvement and participation in various aspects of certain events that are being conducted by local organizations: College Station Parks & Recreation, Brazos Valley Fair & Expo, and the Bryan College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau.

These organizations offer a number of events during the semester, they have agreed to partner with this class so that students can obtain valuable hands-on experience in planning and managing events.



2015 NRPA Conference:

Please join us! In honor of our former students and in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of our Department, we are reviving the tradition of an Aggie Breakfast at the NRPA Congress!

The Aggie Breakfast will be held:

Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at 7:30 a.m. at the Luxor hotel in Las Vegas, NV

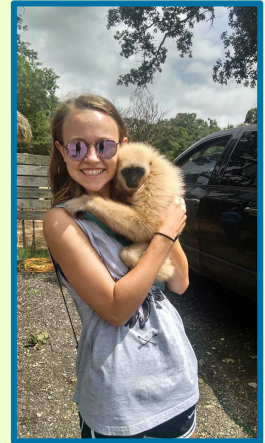
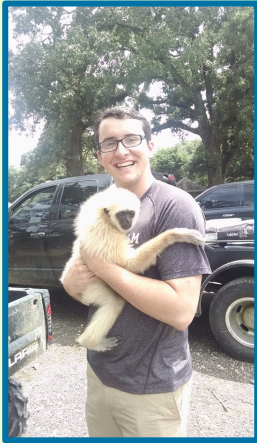
Our Aggie Breakfast is free of charge to former students and their families!

Please note that the Aggie Breakfast will be our former student service event this year.

We will not have a booth in the Exhibit Hall



Special Highlight: RPTS 300 Attractions and Destination Management MAYMESTER 2015



Instructor: Dr. Angela Durko - TA: Sharon Zhou, MS

These students:

- Met Managers, Staff & Interns of Texas Attractions
- Learned the importance and purpose of destinations attractions
- Held small class meetings on campus in between travel days
- Received internship and career advice from those who hire in our field
- Enhanced public speaking & resume building skills
- Took behind the scenes tours
- Took overnight trips to San Antonio & Galveston with stops in Austin & Houston
- Traveled locally to Bryan and College Station attractions



Undergraduate Student Highlight:

Interview with Morgan Davidson



Why did you choose RPTS as your major?

I chose RPTS originally because of my love for the outdoors and camping. Growing up I attended Sky Ranch Christian Camps, after spending many of my summers pouring into kids through outdoor leisure and recreation I knew it was what I wanted to do with my life. Also, a plus is I can work on my chaco tan being in parks and recreation!

What do you want to do with your degree?

The simple answer is make every person's quality of life better through recreation and leisure, but hopefully after my time here at A&M I will return to Grapevine and pursue a position with the City of Grapevine's Park and Recreation Department.



What is your favorite Aggie tradition? Why?

My favorite Aggie tradition is Aggie Muster. Not only is Muster a time honored tradition, but it is a tradition that truly represents all Aggies, their love for their school, and their love to one another. Remembering those who were our friends, and those who have gone before us.

What is your favorite class at A&M?

Dr. Scott Shafer's RPTS 402 class, Park Planning and Design. One of the BEST!

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

Whatever your challenges remember one thing. Do everything to the best of your ability and do so to Glorify the Lord.



What do you like most about Bryan/ College Station?

The people, my friends, and those I spend my time with while I'm here! But if I picked a physical place, Lick Creek Park is my favorite place to get away, hammock, and explore.

What is your dream vacation?

Simple, flying to Orlando, Florida and spending my time at Disney World hopping all the parks, riding all the attractions, watching every firework show, performance of Fantasmic, eating as many pineapple dole whips as I can, and staying at the top of Cinderella's Castle in the Cinderella Castle Suite! Sounds perfectly magical doesn't it?!



Graduate Student Highlight:

Interview with Clint Lum

Why did you choose the RPTS Department at TAMU?

First off, I love A&M; I did my undergraduate degree here in the Political Science Department and really enjoyed that. I also considered doing graduate work in the Political Science Department, but when it came down to it I was much more passionate about RPTS. I was first introduced to RPTS in my last year of undergrad and I really enjoyed the course (RPTS 301) that I took. 301 was the RPTS 'bug' that first bit me.



What projects are you currently working on?

Currently, I am writing a paper with a good friend of mine who is a graduate student at Clemson University and also with my advisor, Dr. David Scott. We are looking at long-distance hikers along the Pacific Crest Trail, a 2,650 mile trail beginning at the US-Mexican border in California and ending at the US-Canadian border in Washington. This paper (and hopefully another) is based on the data set I collected for my thesis, which required me to hike the PCT for about 50 days and collect data over the 400 or so miles I hiked (rough job huh?).



Could you talk a little about your experience collecting data in National Parks last summer?

Sure! As I mentioned above, I spent about 50 days in the field hiking along the PCT and collecting data. This was a great experience and much harder than I anticipated it would be. Very much a "baptism by fire" way to go about learning how to be a researcher.



What is your favorite destination and why?

Ugh, this is a difficult question and I suppose my answer depends on the mood I am in honestly. Sometimes I would be inclined to say on a boat fishing with my Dad (doesn't really matter where), but I also have a passion for mountain landscapes. I often tell people my family is in Texas and my heart is in Colorado (not to imply that I don't love my family, you get the point). There is a bowl in the Rio Grande National Forest that is at about 11,500 ft. called Rincon la Osa and a few days hike from the nearest dirt road (which is 30 days from a paved road) has is a special place to me. I have shared several campfires and good conversation up there with close friends.



What is your favorite Aggie tradition?

If having traditions constitutes an Aggie tradition then that is what I would say. I really do like all of them. They act as a collage, each one playing its part in the social fabric associated with A&M. Also, it is so great that Ol' Ags and young ones all share them in common. Things have definitely changed, even since I was an underclassman, but all Aggies, young and old, understand and share the essence of bein' Ags.



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, Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, at 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](#)
- [Marguerite Van Dyke Graduate Scholarship](#)
- [Korean RPTS Alumni and Marguerite 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 a 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 the 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)...5,000 to sponsor an RPTS student intern for a semester



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.