



# ¡ADELANTE!

## Promoting Hispanic Diversity

The mission of the Texas A&M Hispanic Network is to serve as an advocate and support group on Hispanic concerns and issues at the University and local communities within the larger Association of Former Students organization. The Texas A&M Hispanic Network shall dynamically work towards increasing the number of Hispanic students attending Texas A&M University (TAMU), and enhancing their experience, education, and quality of life on campus.

June 20, 2008

Texas A&M Hispanic Network (TAMHN) Newsletter

Volume VIII

## TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY:

# FALL 2008 ADMISSIONS NUMBERS LOOK PROMISING

The following article was released by Texas A&M University three days ago and I was advised about it yesterday by Alice Reinarz. Last year, the official Hispanic freshman number on the 20th day of class was 1131 out of 8094 total freshmen for 13.97%. If the 1371 and 8200 figures being reported by A&M hold true in September, this would be a percentage of 16.72%. This would make both the number and percentage of Hispanics in a freshman class the highest in the history of Texas A&M. Hoo-ah!! The previous highs were 1131 in 2007 and 14.2% in 2005. Of course, these are great numbers and percentages for our alma mater, but we cannot rest, because the numbers and percentage of Hispanics in the t.u. freshman class are expected to be around 1500 and 20.0%. Please note in the third to the last paragraph in the article that President Murano mentioned the Texas A&M Hispanic Network as one of the factors for the increase in the Hispanic numbers. We are reaping the dividends from our investment in time and effort. Thank you!!

### **A Record Number of Hispanic, African-American Students Expected This Fall**

Record numbers of Hispanic and African-American students are expected to attend Texas A&M University this fall as part of the largest freshman class in the university's 132-year history, according to projections released today by the Office of Admissions.

Confirmations for Hispanic students have increased 20 percent, or by 232 students, in comparison to this date a year ago for a total of 1,371. For African-American students, confirmations have increased 19 percent, or

by 49 students, for a total of 303.

"These numbers reflect a university-wide effort and represent significant strides that have been made in attracting underrepresented students to Texas A&M," said Dr. Elsa A. Murano, who was named the university's first Hispanic and first female president in January.

"While Texas A&M is a welcoming place for underrepresented students, we are not where we need to be from an overall enrollment standpoint. Our commitment is to expand our Hispanic and African-American student populations even further as part of our land-grant mission for the State of Texas."

Overall enrollment in the fall 2008 freshman class is expected to top 8,200 students, an increase of about 100 students in comparison to last fall. Texas A&M officials anticipate that about 25 percent of the freshman class will again be first-generation college students, while about half of the incoming freshmen will represent the top 10 percent of their respective high schools, a slight increase over a year ago.

"We believe these numbers indicate that Texas A&M continues to be affordable and accessible for students across the state and a tremendous value as a 'tier one' research institution," President Murano said. "We are ever-mindful, however, of the increasing financial burden on students and their families to attend Texas A&M, and are continually looking for ways to enhance

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### **TAMHN Website**

[www.tamhn.org](http://www.tamhn.org)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Access the **Texas A&M Scholarships and Financial Aid** website at [www.financialaid.edu/psc](http://www.financialaid.edu/psc). In addition, a list of the **Prospective Student Centers** along with their phone numbers is posted at [www.tamhn.org/downloads/pscphone.pdf](http://www.tamhn.org/downloads/pscphone.pdf)
- A full time position for **Academic Advisor II** is open in the Texas A&M **Honors Programs and Academic Scholarships** Department. For more information go to [www.tamujobs.tamu.edu](http://www.tamujobs.tamu.edu) and search under position title Academic Advisor II. The NOV number is 080969.
- *"Texas A&M University must be a leader in promoting diversity in its student body, faculty, staff, and intellectual viewpoints. Affording opportunity to all racial and ethnic groups is critical to the future of Texas. Our vision of diversity as a wellspring of academic energy goes beyond race and ethnicity to all manner of thought and action. An educated person must appreciate and interact with people of all backgrounds and engage ideas that challenge his or her views."* The entire **Texas A&M University Campus Diversity Plan**, approved August 17, 2006, may be viewed at <http://diversity.tamu.edu/plan/index.asp>
- As of June 3, **KDFW Fox 4** was looking for a meteorologist. If you are interested, please contact Bruce Smith at [Bruce.Smith@foxtv.com](mailto:Bruce.Smith@foxtv.com) or (214) 720-3338.

## Admissions

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efficiencies and decrease costs on our campus."

Murano noted that the lowest tuition and fee increase at Texas A&M since 1999 was approved by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents in March. In addition to expanding the university's scholarships, Murano plans to work with members of the Texas Legislature to increase the state's investment in higher education and research in preparation for the upcoming session in January.

"Attracting top students to Texas A&M has become extremely competitive, particularly for underrepresented students," Murano said. "There is a small number of Hispanic and African-American high school students in our state who actually take the college entrance exams, and an even smaller number - only about 6,000 - who score at or above the criterion established by the Texas Education Agency."

Murano attributes the increases in the number of underrepresented students applying for and being admitted to Texas A&M to several factors, including more aggressive and personal attention in the recruiting process both on-campus and through the university's eight Prospective Student Centers, additional financial aid and the work of Texas A&M's Hispanic Network and Black Former Student Network.

"The results to date are very encouraging," Murano said. "We can't be overly confident, however, until the students attend our freshmen orientation sessions this summer and actually start classes this fall."

Enrollment figures for the fall semester will not become official until after the 20th class day.

### Domestic Freshman CONFIRMS

Black

**2008-** All 302, First Generation 140

**2007-** All 286, First Generation 143

Hispanic

**2008-** All 1382, First Generation 741

**2007-** All 1199, First Generation 634

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND GIFT CARDS AWARDED

The San Antonio Region (SAR) of Texas A&M Hispanic Network (TAMHN) is supporting the local Texas A&M University Perspective Student Center (PSC) by providing 30 scholarships of "Fish" Camp and 70 Wal-Mart gift cards to Hispanic students who will be enrolling as freshmen at Texas A&M in August. Each scholarship is for \$155.00 and each gift card is for \$50.00.

Jose Ventura, the Chair for the SAR, explained this is the second year in a row this type of financial support is being provided. The difference is that only 15 scholarships and 50 gift cards were provided last year.

SAR was able to raise the necessary \$8,150.00 to support both projects by soliciting donations from its membership to purchase tickets to the AT&T Charitable Golf Tournament in October 2007. This may seem as a highly unusual way to raise funds, but the beauty of this tournament is that AT&T donates much of the proceeds to charitable organizations who help them with their ticket sales.

In 2006, SAR received an amount equal to their ticket sales from AT&T plus a matching amount of \$2100 for a total of \$4,200. SAR intensified its efforts in 2007 in order to win a larger "reward" amount. In addition to receiving back the \$4,025 it sold in tickets, SAR also received an additional "reward" amount of \$5,000 because SAR sold the second highest number of tickets. SAR plans to continue to work hard with the AT&T golf tournament in October 2008 to again be competitive for a "reward" amount of money.

As a result, every dollar donated has been doubled through participation with the AT&T golf tournament. Every dollar raised has been used to provide financial assistance to Hispanic freshmen.

SAR also plans to co-sponsor a send-off reception with the PCS for students and their parents sometime between 6 and 15 August.

**Robert Gonzalez**

# DR. MURANO'S PRESENTATION AT THE HSC IN AUSTIN

Just wanted to pass along the notes that I took at Dr. Murano's speech last week at the Hispanic Scholarship Consortium in Austin.

The Hispanic Network had a table just off to the side of the main stage, and had a great showing with our fair share of Whoops!!! during the luncheon. Dr. Murano was introduced by our very own TAMHN President, Mr. Henry Ortega.

Dr. Murano specifically addressed and focused on Hispanic admissions, enrollment, and obstacles in her presentation.

## On a personal level:

She talked about when she first came to the United States at the age of 14, and that, when she went to register at school, they put her in an Honors English class -- even though she didn't know a single word of English! She said it was "sink or swim" and, much to our blessing, she "swam". She mentioned that she was raised by her mother - who worked three (3) jobs to support them, and always pressed Dr. Murano and her brother towards education. At one point, her mom even worked as a security guard and would be in FULL uniform - gun and holster - when boys would come around.

One of the key points she made about her mother's influence was that, every time that she or her brother would see someone famous or successful, her mother told them not to wish or wonder what that life would be like, but, rather she told them "Why can't that be YOU?" Dr. Murano said that her mother "brainwashed" them into believing that they COULD be successful, and, eventually, the 'brainwashing' worked and she went to college and became a success after many years of hard work.

## On a President of Texas A&M Level:

There is no doubt that she is an Aggie through and through. What was interesting in her presentation is how "Aggie" it was. Rather than addressing "Hispanic" education in general (which she did), she was still VERY specific to Texas A&M and her vision of what Texas A&M can be, will be, and

MUST be.

She also said that, while, when introduced she always hears "the First Hispanic President of Texas A&M" or the "First Female President of Texas A&M", she would like to hear them say, "The youngest President of Texas A&M".

She specifically said that she could get up there and rattle off a bunch of statistics on the gains that Texas A&M has made in recent years in the areas of minority/Hispanic enrollment, and she is proud of those gains, but that it is still not where they "WANT" to be.

She then identified four (4) obstacles that she sees as hurdles that either discourage or may intimidate Hispanics from coming to Texas A&M:

1) The Application Process - the application packet itself can be daunting and overwhelming, however with the PSCs there to help, Hispanics need to be encouraged to ask for help and get started on the process.

2) Family Ties - based on the closeness of many Hispanic families, kids may be discouraged by their parents from going "so far" away from home for college when local or community colleges would allow them to stay home

3) Values - Hispanic culture and families have strong ideas about the values they wish their children to experience and be exposed to beyond high school. Many families are worried about the fact that "values" are likely to not exist at most colleges. However, at Texas A&M, those values that we cherish are the same family values that Hispanic families cherish, and we must make Hispanic families aware of that.

4) Income/Financial Resources - Hispanics need to be made aware of the financial aid and resources available to them

She specifically asked "How do we get them to WANT to come to Texas A&M?" And

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS (cont)

• The **Fox Networks Group** is looking for an Account Executive to report to the Local Sales Manager at FSN Southwest located in Irving, TX. For more information, go to [www.foxcareers.com](http://www.foxcareers.com) and type in FNG11979 in the Requisition # search box.

• **Robert Martinez** is the **TAMHN Regional Chair of East Texas**. He may be contacted at O: (903) 579-0819 or C: (903) 530-0941.

## **Presentation**

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proceeded with, "if I could speak to these children and families I would tell them..."

That Texas A&M respects family and understands family, and that Texas A&M will nurture those values that they hold dear if they "entrust us with their children". Additionally, she said she would tell these families about the Six (6) Core Values of Texas A&M, and proceeded to list them in Spanish:

- 1) Fidelidad (Loyalty)
- 2) Integridad (Integrity)
- 3) Excelencia (Excellence)
- 4) Liderazgo (Leadership)
- 5) Servicio (Service)
- 6) Respeto (Respect)

She also mentioned taking risks, that every successful person MUST, at some point, take a risk.

She also emphasized that Texas A&M is THE Land Grant University established for the State of Texas, and that the enrollment of Texas A&M must "reflect the population" of the State of Texas.

She then proceeded to discuss the Two (2) Front Dilemma facing Texas A&M in getting more Hispanics enrolled:

- 1) A limited pool of qualified Hispanic Applicants. For the entire State of Texas, only 5,800 Hispanics meet the admission requirements to Texas A&M. Thus, Texas A&M is competing for a very small pool of Hispanics that are

being courted by other Universities as well.

Additionally, Texas A&M and other Universities need to work with the public school system in order to improve Hispanic education across the board - from K-12.

2) Percent Yield - Of the Hispanic Students that are given an acceptance letter, only 43% actually enroll. For Anglo students the percentage is 63%, thus, Texas A&M must court and heavily recruit these Hispanics that are qualified and have been offered letters of acceptance to actually enroll.

She also thanked the HSC for working with partners in raising awareness of the need for financial assistance for Hispanics, and finding those students that need it.

She concluded by stating that, if it were up to her, the entire WORLD would be Aggie. And, while that might not be possible, "all you need is ONE (1) Aggie in the family" and the rest will follow.

Her presentation was followed by a brief speech by a current student and Hispanic Aggie who is a junior (I apologize for not writing his name down), majoring in, I believe, Engineering. He stated that he was grateful to the HSC for the financial assistance that made his time at Texas A&M possible.

Obviously, these are just "notes" and not her full presentation, but she did take the time to get a picture with the TAMHN members that were there and was very gracious to everyone. It was an excellent presentation, and I believe everyone looks forward to working with her in any way that we can.

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*Newsletter volunteers welcome*