



# Kat Konnection

Sam Houston State University Alumni Association Newsletter • MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™ • alumni.shsu.edu • 800.283.7478

## SHSU TRADITIONS

SHSU traditions tell the story of the university's heritage, honor its past, and bind generations of Bearkats together in a shared experience that transcends time, culture and trends. These traditions are integral to defining and connecting to a cultural identity and help to communicate who we are, what we stand for and how things are done. The following are a few of the spring/summer traditions the SHSU Alumni Association celebrate as proud Bearkats. The Ring Ceremony is held each spring to bring together students and their families for a program celebrating their time at the university. The official SHSU ring is an emblem of academic achievement that designates the wearer as a proud Bearkat and serves as an honored reminder of his or her SHSU roots. On the eve of the ceremony, the rings are housed overnight in Gen. Sam Houston's home on the grounds of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum. The ring is reserved exclusively for graduates and students who have completed 75 credit hours.

Founders Day is held on a Saturday in April to celebrate the University's founding and to commemorate all the university's past success. The event highlights current faculty and experts on campus and offers a preview of exciting, ground-breaking developments that will create a new future in higher education at SHSU.

This summer the Class of 2020 began a new tradition to "leave their mark" here at SHSU. The students signed a class banner during orientation that will be hung during ceremonies celebrating their time at SHSU. A few of the ceremonies include: New Student Convocation, to be held on Sunday, Aug. 21; Class of 2020 commencement ceremonies; and class reunions.



▲ (Top left) SHSU held nine new student orientation sessions throughout the summer. The Class of 2020 was excited to be a part of the new class banner tradition. (Top right) President Emeritus, James F. Gaertner provides opening remarks during the 2016 Founders Day event. (Bottom) The ROTC, along with SAA members and students, escort the class rings across campus on the morning of the Ring Ceremony.

# Traveling Bearkats

Explore with us...



Double \$1,250\*

## NEW YORK ALUMNI & FRIENDS TRIP

4 Days – 3 Nights  
December 13 – 16, 2016

**Highlights:** Experience NYC during the holiday season. Includes round trip air and limo transportation, lodging at the Sheraton NY Times Square, Bearkat welcome reception on December 13 and reception and dinner at the '21' Club on December 14.

**Travel By:** SHSU Alumni Association



Double \$6,999\*

## SOUTH PACIFIC WONDERS

18 Days – 23 Meals  
March 14 – 31, 2017

**Highlights:** Dinner cruise of Sydney Harbour, visit to a Canterbury farmyard to observe a sheep shearing demonstration, scenery of the New Zealand fjords on a cruise of Milford Sound, excursion to the Great Barrier Reef, City Tour of Sydney, explore New Zealand, Mount Cook, and more.

**Travel By:** Collette Vacations



Double \$3,999\*

## THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST'S COASTAL TRESURES

9 Days – 13 Meals  
June 18 – 26, 2017

**Highlights:** Seattle, San Juan Islands, Friday Harbor, Victoria, Port Angeles, Olympic National Park, Hoh Rain Forest, Hurricane Ridge.

**Travel By:** Collette Vacations



Double \$3,299\*

## SPOTLIGHT ON BARCELONA

7 Days – 8 Meals  
October 7 – 13, 2016

**Highlights:** Barcelona, pac Guell, La Sagrada Familia, Choice of Gothic Quarter & Cathedral or La Boqueria Open-air Market and Guell Palace, Penedes Wine Region, Cooking Class, winery tour & tasting.

**Travel By:** Collette Vacations

\*Single room and triple room rates also available.

For more information visit [alumni.shsu.edu](http://alumni.shsu.edu) or call the Office of Alumni Relations at 936.294.1841



# Welcome To Our Newest Life Members

*New Life Members from March 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016*

## **60's**

Dorothy Sue Stanford 1965

## **70's**

Martha Nell Hanna 1973, 1978  
Kent Arthur McClenahan 1976  
Timothy R. O'Brien 1978

## **80's**

Brian Scott Clary 1984  
Karen Kay Crews 1985  
Richard Todd Kershner 1984  
Julie Ann Medford 1987  
Thomas Matthew Reiff 1989  
Joellen Newman Tipton 1983  
Cullen D. Tipton 1983

## **90's**

Earl Charles Austin, "Jr." 1992  
Matthew David Crews 1990  
Christopher W. Gore 1991, 1994  
William L. Humphrey 1992  
Yvonne Elizabeth Kershner 1991, 2015

Madilene Adams Loosier 1996  
James Robert Willis 1992

## **00's**

Beth Anne Belovsky 2001  
Jason Shane Loosier 2002  
Donovan Ode Pitre 2003  
Christopher John Pedison 2006  
Kellie Marie Rossow 2009

## **10's**

Shelley Jo Adams 2016  
Jerry Neal Barratt 2016  
Tatianna LaShea Bailey 2016  
Kevin Michael Borey 2015  
Carissa Marlene Brown 2016  
Miranda Dalton Colley 2016  
Kevin Wayne Edney 2014  
Stephen Burke Ellwood 2016  
Bradley George Ertl 2016  
Madison Gaile Farrell 2015  
Jose Enrique Garcia 2014  
Scott Leonard Golightly 2016

Ashley Marie Gollub 2016  
Chelsea Taylor Hanly 2015  
Kirk D. Higdon 2014  
Chelsey Lynn Hirsch 2015  
Jimmie Lee Holloway III 2015  
Anthony Thomas Jones 2013  
Kyle Anthony Laqua 2014, 2016  
Reece Patrick O'Donnell 2016  
Ronald Kent Parker 2014  
Cory Joseph Pechacek 2012, 2014  
Brandon Joseph Pete 2015  
Joy Lynn Peterangelo 2014  
Wyatt Jackson Powell 2015  
Karley Belle Pursley 2016  
Karmen Ann Pursley 2014  
Benjamin Harris Sanders 2014  
Miranda Leigh Sullivan 2014  
Amber Kristy Treybig 2016  
Alexandra K. Williams 2016  
Melody Donyelle Young 2016

## **Family & Friends**

Charles H. Sullivan

Save  
the date!

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

*Life Member Celebration*



February 25, 2017

J.W. Marriott, Downtown Houston

# Alumni & Friends

The Sam Houston State University Alumni Association club network is stronger than ever and growing. For more information, or to start a club in your area, contact Justin Haynes at [justinhaynes@shsu.edu](mailto:justinhaynes@shsu.edu) or **936.294.2403**. You may also visit our website at [alumni.shsu.edu](http://alumni.shsu.edu) and click on the alumni **Chapter/Club** link to find a club in your area.

## RETIRED FACULTY & STAFF



▲ SHSU Retired Faculty & Staff attended an “up close and personal tour” of the Adickes Foundation Museum in Huntsville, Texas on June 1. Artist David Adickes lead the tour while sharing personal stories and inspirations for his work.

## STUDENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



▲ Student Alumni Association (SAA) The SAA were present during each of the summer orientations to share with students the university traditions, provide assistance to students and parents and to recruit new club members. Pictured are SAA members Yesica Jaimes, Brithany Ortiz, Asia Harrell and Justin Vallier along with Alumni Relations staff members Donna Gilbert, Assistant Director of membership and marketing and Justin Haynes, Assistant Director of regional clubs and constituent programs.

## SHSU NIGHT @ CONSTELLATION FIELD



◀ The Ft. Bend Alumni Club hosted a SHSU Night @ Constellation Field on June 22. Future Bearkats enjoyed the game and visiting with the Skeeters mascot Swatson.

**Sponsored by:** *Vanco Ring Gasket Specialty Inc./Joey and Brooke '04 Beierle, Jester & Jester Tax and Financial Services/Fred '84 and Martha '81 Jester, Ron '82 and DiAnna '87 Feemster, Wyatt Powell and Nelwyn Powell '81*

# DAY @ THE RACES

SHSU Day @ the Races was held on Saturday, May 21 at the Sam Houston Race Park in Houston.

*The event was sponsored by: SHSU Agricultural Alumni Association, Sam Jones '72 and Mary Crow, Edgar '56 and Carolyn Reeves, Jon '61 and Barbara '61 Bright, Bill Goeke '80, Sam '83 and Christi Kennedy.*

▶ Dale and Gloria Wright select which horses to bet on during SHSU Day @ The Races - Preakness Stakes at the Sam Houston Race Park



# SHSU NIGHT @ MINUTE MAID PARK

The Office of Alumni Relations gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors for their ongoing support:

## **Event Underwriters**

*SHSU Alumni Association, Sport Management Program, The Division of Student Services, The College of Health Sciences, The Department of Kinesiology, College of Education*

## **Grand Slam**

*Carolyn Chipman Faulk '70, Jack '80 and Tina LeFevre, College of Fine Arts and Mass Communication, College of Sciences, SHSU Diamond Kats, Sigma Phi Epsilon- Texas Eta Chapter/ Joe Amato '72 and Sam Kennedy '83*

## **Home Run**

*Chance '00 and Katherine Brown, Clint '74 and Becky '75 Fancher, Annabelle '64 and Michael Hay, Edgar '56 and Carolyn Reeves, Dave Smith '00 and Wendy Rutledge '98, T J Burdett & Sons Inc.*

## **Double Play**

*Bill Goeke '80, Hernandez Family, Stella '71 and Robert Koryciak, Noah '99 and Tamara '99, '01 Spiegel, Troy '87 and Kelly '85 Thompson, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Key Truck Sales- Baytown - Glenn Terry '79, Mickal Terry '09, Joseph Terry '07, Chris Fechner '14 and Logan Fechner, Malone Media Group - Amanda Malone, Tyco General Ranch and Feed Supply - Ken '94 and Debbie '95 Dickens, Protowise Labs, LLC - David Collins '98, '03, '05*

▶ Dr. Mary Williams and Sammy pose for a quick picture during the SHSU Night @ Minute Maid Park VIP Reception

▶ Brent Estes and Dr. Ryan Zapalac present Reid Ryan, President of the Houston Astros, with 2016 SHSU Sport Management Industry Impact Award



# SHSU HONORS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Sam Houston State University alumni whose career achievements span the energy, entertainment and news industries and whose service to SHSU and their communities go above and beyond in epitomizing the university's motto will be recognized with the SHSU Distinguished Alumni and Service awards, respectively

Those who will be honored during the 44th annual Distinguished Alumni Gala on Oct. 14 include Distinguished Alumni Duke Austin and James Lopez, Distinguished Young Alumna Mia Gradney, and Service Award recipients Jerry Streater and Dr. Nan McRaven.

## **Duke Austin, Distinguished Alumni**

As CEO and COO of Quanta Services, Earl "Duke" Austin manages his business in the same way he manages every aspect of his life—with integrity, humility and grace.

A 1992 recipient of a Bachelor of Business Administration in management degree, Austin served as president of North Houston Pole Line until it was acquired by Quanta Services in 2001.

He was named chief operating officer and president of Quanta's Electric Power and Natural Gas and Pipeline divisions because of his strong leadership abilities. In 2016, he was promoted to chief executive officer.

Austin has remained an avid supporter of Sam Houston State University by contributing to numerous projects and programs and as a Life Member of the

Alumni Association.

"For more than 25 years, Duke Austin has been an exemplary representative of Sam Houston State. He has typified SHSU's tradition of excellence and brought credit to the university by his personal accomplishments, professional achievements and selfless support," a nominator said.

He was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2000 and continued his battle with cancer for five years. Keeping faith, family and friends as the pillars in his life helped him conquer his battle, and he has been cancer free for more than 10 years.

In addition to his contributions to SHSU, Austin is actively involved in fundraising for projects at the John Cooper School in The Woodlands, is a member of the Young Presidents Organization, serves on the calf scramble committee for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and is a board member of The Junior Achievement.

"Duke prefers to fly under the radar. He has contributed to numerous schools, charities and organizations, but rarely desires recognition," a nominator said. "He has risen to the pinnacle of the public corporate world and has done so with intelligence and integrity."

Austin has four children and lives in Houston with his wife, Sanette.

## **James Lopez, Distinguished Alumni**

Although he hasn't played football since his days as a wide receiver for the

Bearkats, James Lopez has been scoring touchdowns in the entertainment industry for more than 20 years.

He graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1991 as a first-generation American to Peruvian parents. He landed his first job at Madonna's record label, Maverick Records, where he was able to enhance his skills. This opportunity led him to Atlantic Records, where he worked as senior director of marketing before being promoted to senior vice president of marketing.

He has played an instrumental role in developing and overseeing the marketing campaigns for many platinum artists, including T.I., Bruno Mars, Flo Rida, Sean Paul, and B.o.B.

"In my opinion, James has distinguished himself through personal and professional achievements and has brought honor and distinction to our university," a nominator said.

Lopez transitioned from music to film and joined Screen Gems, a division of Sony Pictures Entertainment, in 2010. In this position, he oversaw some of the company's highest-grossing projects, such as "Think Like a Man," "Think Like A Man Too," and "The Wedding Ringer."

He was named one of 2013's the Imagen Foundation's Most Powerful and Influential Latinos in Entertainment for 2012, 2013 and 2014 and spoke as a featured guest at the Hollywood Black Film Festival. He also was featured in Ebony Magazine's Power 100 issue in 2014.

Lopez recently was named head of motion pictures for Will Packer Productions, where he is responsible for developing and overseeing production on all film projects through the company's first look deal with Universal Pictures.

He currently lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Andrea, and children Hannah and Victoria.

## **Mia D. Gradney**

### *Outstanding Young Alumna Award*

Whether she's reporting on hurricanes or Hollywood stars or suiting up local women for job interviews, Mia Gradney has dedicated her life to serving the city of Houston.

The three-time Emmy award winning anchor/host, reporter, and producer graduated from Sam Houston State

## Upcoming Events/Activities

Sept. 15	Bay Area Alumni Club meeting – Lakewood Yacht Club (Seabrook)
Sept. 17	Pre-game Reception – Luke's Icehouse (Beaumont)
Sept. 20	Ft. Worth Alumni Club – Razzo's (Ft. Worth)
Sept. 21	Dallas Alumni Club – Razzo's (Plano)
Sept. 22	Young Alumni Club meeting – TBD (Houston)
Oct. 1	Battle of the Piney Woods – NRG Stadium (Houston)
Oct. 8	Pre-game reception – Tomatillo's (San Antonio)
Oct. 13	Homecoming Parade (Huntsville)
Oct. 14	44th Distinguished Alumni Gala LSC Ballroom (SHSU campus)
Oct. 15	Alumni Coffee – John R. Ragsdale Visitor and Alumni Center (SHSU campus)
Oct. 15	Homecoming Game – Bowers Stadium
Oct. 15	Black Alumni & Friends pre-game reception (SHSU campus)
Nov. 2	BCS Alumni Club – Christopher's World Grill – (Bryan/College Station)
Nov. 10	Bay Area Club Presidential Dinner – Lakewood Yacht Club (Seabrook)
Nov. 15	Hobby Center – Jersey Boys (Houston, TX)
Dec. 9	SHSU Commencement (Johnson Coliseum)
Dec. 10	SHSU Commencement (Johnson Coliseum)
Dec. 13-16	Traveling Bearkats Alumni Dinner travel (New York, NY)

\*For a complete listing of club meetings and networking activities visit [alumni.shsu.edu/alumni/chapters/clubs](http://alumni.shsu.edu/alumni/chapters/clubs)

University in 1998 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communication and a concentration in radio and film and began her career as a writer and production assistant for the Debra Duncan Show at Houston's KTRK Channel 13 news station.

She spent 10 years as a lead anchor at KIAH in Houston, where she filed reports from Reliant Park in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina evacuees first arrived at the Astrodome. Weeks later, she documented the evacuations across Texas in response to Hurricane Rita.

Today, she is a news reporter with KHOU, where she keeps Houston informed about the city. In her spare time, she is a volunteer with Dress for Success, an organization dedicated to providing low-income women with professional interview attire.

In 2003, she teamed up with a fellow volunteer to co-found Women of Wardrobe, the young professionals group designed to support Dress for Success.

In addition to her volunteer work, Gradney hosts a monthly movie night at Studio City Movie Grill in Houston's City Centre.

#### **Jerry Streater, Service Award**

Being a public servant is much more than just a job to Jerry Streater—it is the essence of his being.

He graduated from SHSU in 1961 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and, in 1972, began selling cars, kick starting what would become a very successful career in the automobile business. He is now part owner of Streater-Smith Nissan and Honda in Conroe.

Streater was elected to serve on the

Conroe City Council for eight years, during which he served as chairman of the city's finance and personnel committees. He also served as vice-president of the Montgomery County Performing Arts Society and chairman of the board of the Lake Conroe Chamber of Commerce.

"Throughout his life, Jerry has demonstrated a sincere interest in and commitment to public service," a nominator said. "He has provided strong leadership as a business owner, in working with civic organizations, as an elected member of city government, and through philanthropic activities."

Prior to enrolling at SHSU, Streater played baseball and football at Navarro College on a scholarship. When he moved to Huntsville, he gave up his favorite sport in order to work to pay for college.

Because of their love of Bearkat baseball, Streater and his wife, Sandra, established an endowment fund to provide scholarships for Bearkat baseball players.

"Jerry and his wife, Sandra, have been generous supporters of the university, including previous Capital Campaign efforts," one nominator said. "They are members of Saint James Episcopal Church, where he served as a member of the vestry, and he currently serves on the finance committee and the long-range planning committee."

Streater and his wife have four children, nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

#### **Dr. Nan McRaven, Service Award**

Each student who graduates from Sam Houston State University is ingrained with the school's motto, "The measure of a Life is its Service."

Dr. Nan McRaven is no exception, as she has worked tirelessly throughout her life to better the lives of others.

From her 13 years on the Austin Community College's Board of Trustees to her work uniting the breast cancer community in Austin, the 1973 graduate has exemplified the values taught at SHSU.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in government, McRaven earned a Master of Public Affairs degree from the University of Texas at Austin and began her career in government service. She has worked for more than 25 years in media and public relations, government relations, strategic issues management, public policy development and advocacy, and fundraising.

"Nan has been a trustee at Austin Community College for more than 13 years," one nominator said. "She has helped lead the college through many changes and helped to make it one of the premier colleges in Texas."

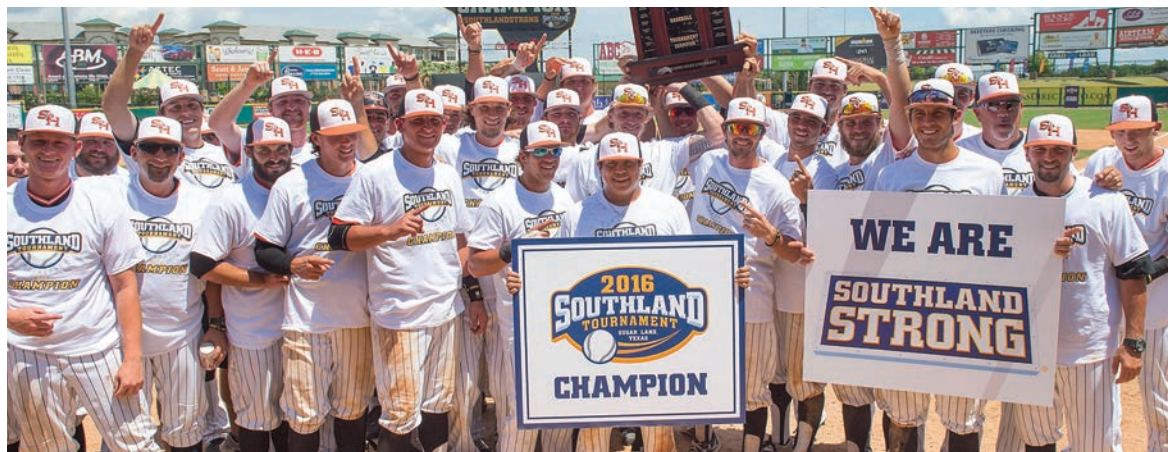
She also worked with the Breast Cancer Project and the Breast Cancer Resource Center to bring representatives together to share information and best practices. Because of her hard work and dedication, she was appointed to the BCRC board, where for three years she helped to raise the group's visibility in the community.

She received her doctorate from the University of Texas in 2015.

"Nan was the president of our chapter of Alpha Chi Omega in the early 1970s," one nominator said. "She was a leader then and she continues to be a leader in many different organizations and causes. She is obviously an outstanding alumna of SHSU and has always represented the university in a positive manner."

## BEARKAT CHAMPIONS!

► The 2016 Bearkats defeated Southeastern Louisiana, 7-4, to win the Southland Conference Tournament title and the league's automatic bid to the regional, becoming the first team in school history to win both the Southland regular season and postseason championship. Eat 'Em Up Kats!



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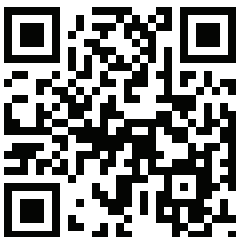


▲ The Greater Houston Young Alumni & Friends Club met at the Raven Tower for their monthly happy Hour on July 21st. Join their Facebook group ([facebook.com/SHSUYoungAlumni/](https://facebook.com/SHSUYoungAlumni/)) to learn about future events!



## We want to hear from you!

Send us updates on work, relocations, marriage, family, degrees, accomplishments—and a photo, too. Let other Bearkats know what you've been up to by completing the online form or emailing us your updates. Class Notes are shared in the **Heritage** magazine.  
Email: [alumni@shsu.edu](mailto:alumni@shsu.edu) or fill out the form at [shsu.edu/~alu\\_kat/services/classnotes](https://shsu.edu/~alu_kat/services/classnotes)



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