

# Heritage

*The Magazine of Sam Houston State University*

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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January 10, 1901, was a pivotal day in the history of Texas. A new petroleum and industrial age began as the Lucas Well No. 1 at Spindletop near Beaumont became the greatest “gusher” the world had ever seen, spewing oil to more than 100 feet into the air. Within a year, Spindletop had 65 operational wells. The state would be forever transformed as it quickly took its place as a major economic powerhouse.

Since that day, energy and related manufacturing and service industries have been an integral part of Texas. It is our legacy and a part of our culture, and it remains a key to future prosperity.

Over the past century, new technologies have dramatically transformed oil exploration, refining, storage, and transportation. In the last 25 years, technology has become a real game changer—growing the world’s reserves and supply, improving recovery rates, reducing costs, and decreasing the environmental footprint.

Thousands of Sam Houston State University graduates have, naturally, worked for or made their careers in the energy sector and its related industries. In this issue of the Heritage magazine, we have the honor of featuring the industry’s changing landscape from the perspective of SHSU alumni who have risen to become leaders in the energy sector, as well as faculty who are at the forefront of cutting-edge technology.

Our hard-working alumni and faculty help to change history, not only for the region but for the world. Being the best at educating the next generation of professionals is not only a vision at Sam Houston State, it is a legacy that will continue to shape the future.

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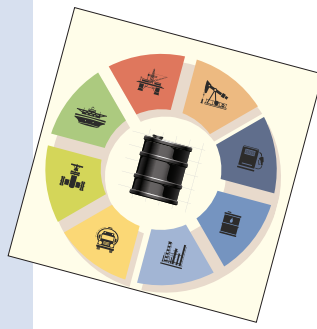
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The goal of *Heritage* is to keep you informed about Sam Houston State University. *Heritage* is published twice a year by the Office of University Advancement for alumni, donors and friends of SHSU. To contact the Office of University Advancement please call 936.294.3625 or visit [shsu.edu/giving](http://shsu.edu/giving).



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SHSU alumni who are major players in oil and gas are helping to shape the industry and its future.

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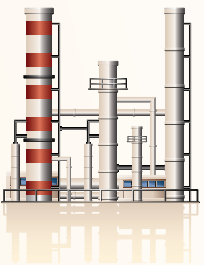




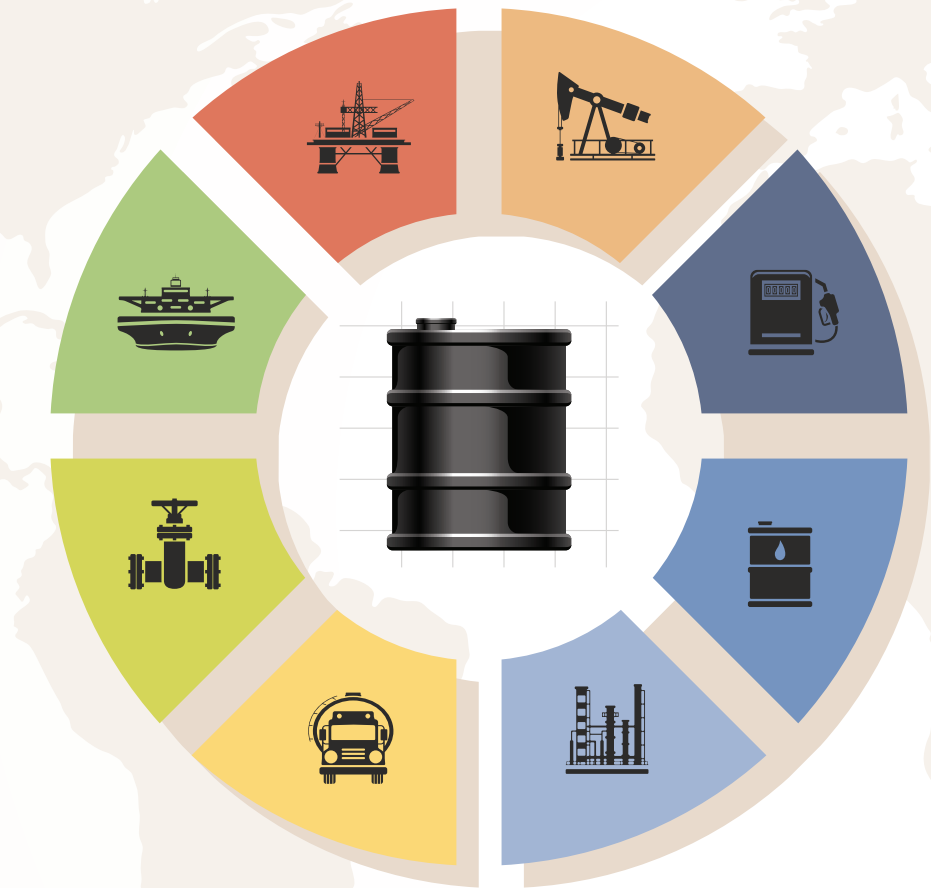
**Upstream**—exploration and production sector: exploration/extraction of petroleum crude oil and natural gas



**Midstream**—storing, marketing and transporting petroleum crude oil, natural gas, natural liquefied gas and byproduct sulfur



**Downstream**—refining of petroleum crude oil and the processing of raw





# Refining an Industry

By: Amy Barnett

SHSU alumni who are major players in oil and gas share their thoughts on the changing landscape of the industry, as well as what's to come.

One could say the landscape of the oil and gas industry in the United States has seen its share of mountaintops and valleys, extreme highs and rock bottom lows. In the past four decades, we have experienced radical changes that have left us wondering—just how long can we survive economically while being dependent on a foreign commodity?

Industry leaders will tell you—10 to 15 years ago, the future was not considered bright for the oil and gas industry in the U.S., or any other country that relied on it. And what doesn't rely on oil and gas? Without the energy industry, we couldn't heat our homes, start our cars; we wouldn't even have cars, because they can't be manufactured without an energy supply. Not much of anything could be manufactured—the pipes for the city's water system, the timber to construct buildings; even farmers rely on oil and gas to get crops from the ground to the grocery store.

The U.S. was in an economic crisis and needed more than a Band-Aid to fix the damage caused by the downward spin of the oil and gas industry. It needed an energy renaissance—a revolutionary discovery that could produce oil domestically and lead the country down the road to oil and gas independence.

In 1997, the United States saw its first sign of hope. Technological breakthroughs in unconventional oil and gas production began to once again alter the energy landscape of the U.S. Progress was slow

at first, but in the years to come, major breakthroughs in the fields of horizontal drilling; hydraulic fracturing, or fracking; and deep water production became “game changers” in the energy sector of North America.

According to the International Energy Agency, the advent of fracking—used to extract oil and gas locked in sedimentary shale rock—has put the United States on track to become the No. 1 oil producer in the world by 2017 and a net exporter by 2030.

Once the world's largest importer, it's now believed by oil enthusiasts that the U.S. is on its way to self-sufficiency. This energy revolution has also given way to economic stimulation and job creation, especially in Texas.

The IEA reports:

- From July 2009 to June 2011, Texas was responsible for 49 percent of all new jobs created in the United States, and the vast majority of those jobs were either directly or indirectly the result of the state's oil and natural gas boom, centered in plays like Eagle Ford in South Texas, the Permian Basin of West Texas and the Granite Wash in the Texas Panhandle.
- In 2006, the U.S. government's forecasts suggested the country would need to import around five billion barrels of oil in 2010. But, in fact, as a result of shale, it only imported three billion barrels.

The energy story has many angles. The

industry itself is divided into three sectors: upstream, midstream and downstream.

- The **upstream** sector, also known as major exploration and production, involves the exploration for and extraction of petroleum crude oil and natural gas. It includes the searching for potential underground or underwater oil and gas fields, drilling of exploratory wells, and, subsequently, operating the wells, and bringing the petroleum crude oil and/or raw natural gas to the surface.
- The **midstream** sector includes storing, marketing and transporting petroleum crude oil, natural gas, natural liquefied gas (mainly ethane, propane and butane), and byproduct sulfur. (Midstream operations are sometimes included in the downstream category.)
- The **downstream** sector encompasses the refining of petroleum crude oil and the processing of raw natural gas. It includes the selling and distribution of processed natural gas and the products derived from petroleum crude oil such as liquefied petroleum gas, gasoline, jet fuel, diesel oil, petroleum asphalt, and petroleum coke.

Several Sam Houston State University alumni have enjoyed lengthy careers in the oil and gas industry and have witnessed the changing landscape firsthand. They now help paint the picture of where the oil and gas industry has been in the past, where it is now, and where it is headed.



# Upstream

Russell Gordy, class of '72, began his career in the oil and gas industry as a roughneck, "throwing the chain." As a 15 year-old, he worked in the oilfields near his home in Houston; in college, he worked offshore, where he was able to make more money to finish school. After graduating from Sam Houston State College with a degree in accounting, he began his career with a small, independent company, until it was sold in 1981; that's when he decided to go into business for himself.

He started a company to explore for oil and gas with a few partners. Although successful, three years later his partners—who were a bit older than he was—wanted to retire. They sold the company in 1984 "right before everything collapsed,"

according to Gordy, who now serves as president of Gordy Oil.

He was one of a few people to have money after the downturn, so he started buying up oil fields and other property from banks at low prices.

In 1986 Gordy learned about coal bed methane and invested in what was considered the first unconventional oil and gas. Coal bed methane was "good business," but Gordy sold some of the business in 2001, and more in 2005, just in time for the revolution brought on by shale.

His new company was soon on board, quickly learning the benefits of horizontal drilling and fracking.

"Ten years ago, you'd drill exploration wells and with the advent of 3-D seismic, you were probably successful 50 to 60 percent of the time; before that, a typical wildcat was one in 10," said Gordy. "Now with the advent of horizontal drilling and fracking, which has basically been 10 years, that doesn't happen anymore; there are no dry holes; there's no lost capital cost. We used to go out and drill a well and if it cost \$5 million and there was nothing there, it was just gone. That doesn't happen anymore."

Gordy calls the efficiency of the new fracking and drilling techniques "mindboggling."

"You used to drill one well and have to move the rig somewhere else. Now they set up and drill anywhere from five to 16 wells in a single pad, and they have a rig that just slides over, so they don't have to disassemble it, put it on a truck and haul it somewhere else," he said.

When you ask Gordy and others in the industry how technology has advanced to what it is today, they will tell you one word: innovation.

"There's always somebody new who's going to think of something different that's going to work," said Gordy. "But the real way to make things better is to recover more from what we already know is there. People today are trying to figure out ways to do that with all kinds of new technology, including nanotechnology; it



might take 10 or 15 years to get there, but we will get there.”

Many oil and gas companies are also seeking unique partnerships to encourage innovation. Shell Oil, for one, is working with one of the Hollywood companies behind the “Shrek” movies in hopes that the collaboration will lead to better visualization of seismic data. Other energy companies are now collaborating with NASA to develop fiber optic sensing systems to make offshore drilling platforms safer.

That’s something Mark Burns, class of ’80, knows about all too well. With more

than 30 years of experience, the executive vice president and chief operating officer for EnSCO—one of the largest offshore drilling companies in the world—has experienced firsthand the drastic changes in offshore drilling, another facet of the upstream sector and the industry’s third “game changer.”

“From the time I started in the business in 1980 until 15 years ago, offshore drilling was pretty standard work. The U.S. was primarily drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. Now the drilling capabilities have grown tremendously,” Burns said. “Thanks to new technology, we are now drilling in more

than 8,000 feet of water in areas around the world.”

This, Burns said, would not be possible without innovative thinkers.

“We have technology like rotary steerable tools that enable us to control the depth, speed and direction of the drill bit; as long as we have a coordinate where we can drill to, we can drill within a space of one foot, six or seven miles away,” Burns said.

Burns said technological advancements are allowing EnSCO and other companies to drill in places that were considered unheralded 20 years ago.



*Mark Burns, '80, executive vice president and chief operating officer for EnSCO*





“Thanks to heavier equipment, it’s now possible to successfully and safely drill in the much deeper water of the North Sea or the Norwegian Shelf, where waves never subside, the water is always cold, and the wind is always strong,” he said.

While the oil and gas industry is now thriving, they still face numerous obstacles, according to Gordy. The biggest hurdle is environmental regulations.

Environmentalists believe chemicals that are mixed with water and sand and injected into wells at extremely high pressure during fracking pose threats to the health of communities.

According to Gordy, you can often identify land in Texas and begin drilling

within 90 days. In Colorado, where there is a heavy environmental influence, that’s not the case. In 2001, he began drilling on federal land and was shut down in the middle of production to await new permits. The project has now been halted seven years. Meanwhile, Colorado is considering legislation to ban fracking; if passed, the time and millions of dollars spent will be lost.

If the legislation doesn’t pass, Gordy expects a green light to continue production this year, but says he wouldn’t be surprised if he faces another roadblock by another environmental group.

As for Burns and others in the offshore drilling business, they’ve faced perhaps

even tougher scrutiny following the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Offshore drilling companies have worked together to create wellhead containment devices to prevent another disaster.

“Protecting the environment in the offshore drilling arena is critical. If you cannot demonstrate that you have competent personnel and the equipment necessary to react and contain an unplanned discharge of any kind, you will not remain in business,” Burns said.

“It’s simply the nature of the oil and gas business,” added Gordy.

The new success in production is also leading to big changes in the midstream and downstream sectors of the industry.

## Vic Marsico: Getting The Lay Of The Land

When Vic Marsico graduated from SHSU in 1973, he immediately began using his business degrees to work for an insurance company as a methods analyst; however, he always had his eye on the energy industry.

He soon learned the craft of being a petroleum “landman” and set out on his own. For the next 37 years, he worked directly with land owners and negotiated the lease of land and acquisition of mineral rights for the oil and gas companies he took on as clients.

“I loved it,” Marsico said. “But when shale plays came along, I realized that it was such a game changer, and I was at a point in life that I needed to do something different.”

In 2010 Marsico continued his work as a landman, but did so with Petrohawk Energy Corp., a major company drilling Eagle Ford wells in South Texas. The following year, BHP Billiton bought out Petrohawk and allowed Marsico to continue the work he loves.

“I love talking to landowners and really getting to know them and their stories. It’s amazing how shale has changed their lives,” Marsico said. “I know an elderly farmer in South Texas

who has spent his entire life on a tractor, going back and forth in his fields all day long, trying to make a living. Now he’s a multi-millionaire. I encouraged him to spend his money and enjoy life; he bought a \$300,000 air-conditioned tractor.”

Marsico enjoys seeing “good things happen to good people.”

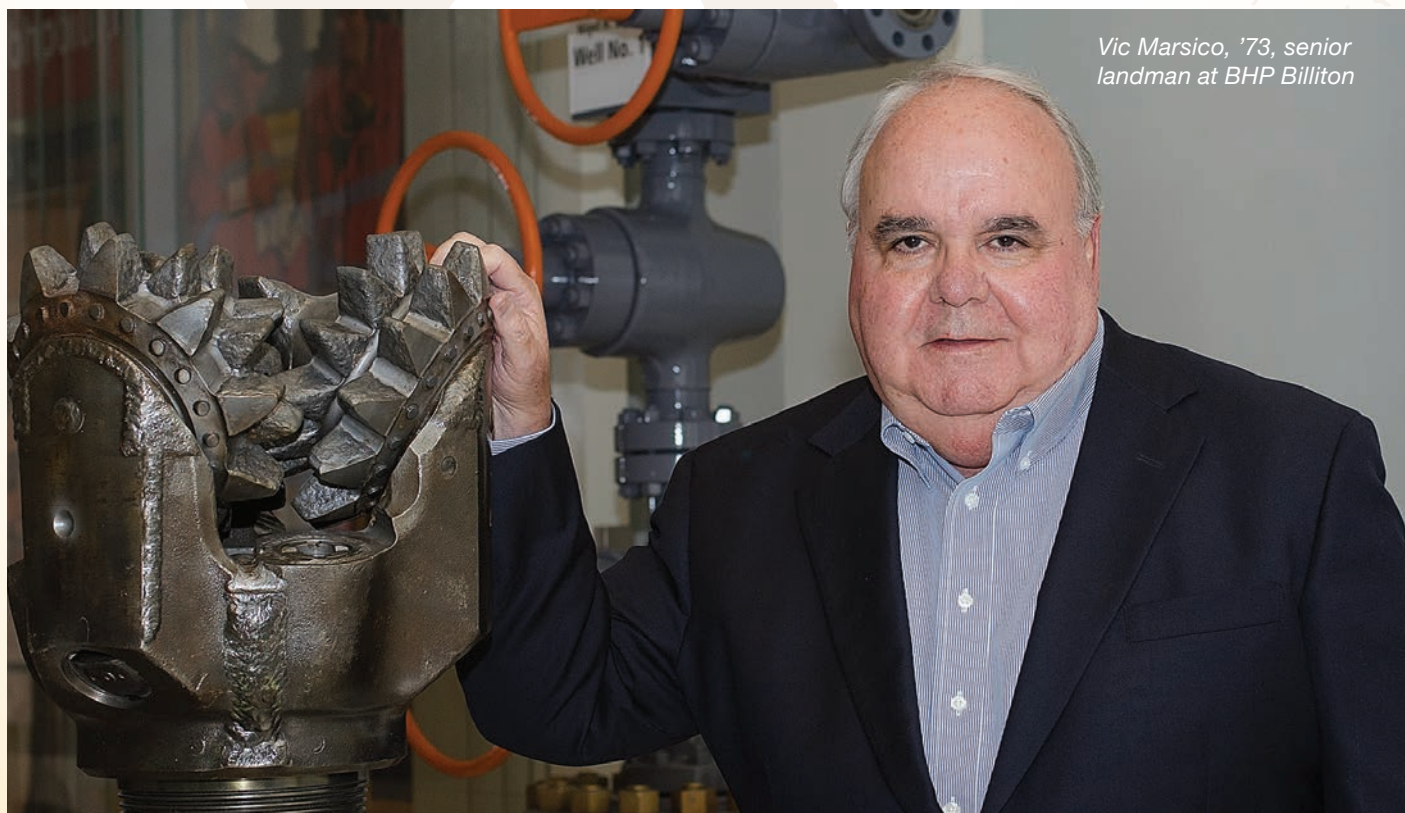
Looking back on his own career, he remembers the times he thought about leaving the oil and gas industry because times were tough.

“I thought about becoming a stockbroker, but I somehow managed to get enough oil and gas work to make it through,” he said.

“Oil and gas exploration is a very cyclical business due to supply and demand,” Marsico said. “However, at the end of the day, the oil and gas business will always be around, supplying energy and petrochemicals to the economy.”

Marsico encourages soon-to-be SHSU graduates to consider the oil and gas industry as a career option.

“The industry has changed so much; it needs people with biology degrees, finance and business degrees, and different things,” he said. “It’s all very important in what we do now.” ■



Vic Marsico, '73, senior landman at BHP Billiton





Quanta Services



# Midstream

In simple terms, midstream describes the part of the process that involves the shipping and storing of oil and gas; it's taking the oil and gas retrieved in the upstream sector and getting it to the downstream processing facilities so that it can be turned into various finished products.

The most common and preferred way to transport oil and gas is by pipeline.

Duke Austin, class of '92, is chief operating officer for Quanta Services, a company that provides oil and natural gas infrastructure services, including transportation, logistics and construction.



The discovery of shale plays domestically has no doubt created a greater need for pipeline.

“We can build 100 miles of pipeline in three to four months,” Austin said.

That is, if red tape doesn’t slow them down.

“In a regulatory environment, it can be very tough and time consuming to get permits, especially through interstate, which has definitely impacted what we do,” said Austin.

While playing the waiting game before

constructing new projects, midstream companies also must work diligently to maintain the infrastructure they already have, especially now, as they try to keep up with new production.

“Pipelines are constantly aging, especially in older cities on the East and West Coasts. You have a lot of cast iron steel that will need to be replaced, in time,” Austin said.

The labor supply also represents a constraint on midstream businesses.

These are tough jobs and a lot of people

don’t want to get out in the elements and learn a trade anymore,” Austin said. “While our skilled labor is retiring, we are not only needing to fill those spots, we need people with college educations and other skills; when it comes to finding personnel, it’s a big balance.”

Due to restrictions and time, pipeline is not always available when it comes to moving oil and gas from the upstream to downstream sector. Many companies rely on rail, barge and trucking.

Kyle Lehne, class of ’94, is vice president



*Kyle Lehne, '94, vice president of sales and director of emergency response for Sun Coast Resources*

of sales and director of emergency response for Houston-based Sun Coast Resources, Inc., a wholesale petroleum marketer that supplies a complete line of fuels, lubricants, transportation services, and specialized related programs to thousands of commercial enterprises—including oilfield service and exploration and production companies.

Sun Coast also is heavily involved in transporting crude oil and condensate for producers from its oilfield storage facilities to a variety of destinations.

“Sun Coast has 80 trucks committed to this service,” Lehne said.

The company has been heavily involved in supplying petroleum products, fracking crews and logistical support to an array of companies involved in shale plays throughout the region.

“Because Sun Coast has 18 offices and bulk plant facilities, we have been able to provide around-the-clock service with a professional team of specialists that drilling engineers and contractors rely on to keep them up and running,” Lehne said.

Sun Coast recently opened a facility in Baton Rouge, near a newly discovered shale play.

“When production takes off in that

area, we will be able to provide the petroleum products and services oilfield companies desperately need for their drilling and production operations,” Lehne said.

*Another big player in the midstream sector is The Dow Chemical Company.*

Arnold Allemang, class of '65, has been with the company for 50 years and has been on the board of directors since 1996. If anyone has seen a change in the energy landscape, it's Allemang.

“The year I joined Dow Chemical, it had \$1 billion in sales; today we have



Photo courtesy of Dow Chemical

*Construction on Dow's on-purpose propylene PDH project in Freeport, Texas, is more than 30 percent complete. It is part of the company's multi-billion dollar investments on the U.S. Gulf Coast. (Photo: Business Wire)*





# Is Oil a Victim of its Own Success?

After reaching \$115 a barrel in June 2014, the price of oil fell to \$48 a barrel in January 2015—its lowest level in more than five years.

Experts caution that predicting oil prices is tricky business because so many factors are taken into consideration to determine the cost.

“More than anything else, the price of oil depends upon the worldwide confidence in currencies, particularly the dollar,” said Brian Domitrovic, chair of the history department at SHSU, who writes for *Forbes* magazine about how history can help illuminate the economic challenges of today.

“That influences the changing prices more than any supply-and-demand factor,” he said.

“The way the price of oil has dropped since last summer has practically destroyed our old concept of oil dependence,” he said. “We used to talk about the addiction America had to oil, especially foreign oil. However, several developments have occurred that changed that thinking.”

One, Domitrovic said, is the fracking revolution.

“We can obtain 10 times the amount of oil from shale as we can the traditional way of pumping it from the ground,” he said. “The technical costs of production are a little higher than by the conventional method, but not by much.”

Another reason for the low price can be traced to the mindset of the biggest crude oil producer in the world—Saudi Arabia.

“Saudi Arabia has never believed that America has a dependence on oil. In fact, they are concerned that the pace of scientific innovation in the United States might be so great that Silicon Valley would come up with a substitute for oil, thereby rendering Saudi Arabia’s vast asset worthless.

“That’s one of the reasons Saudi Arabia is producing so much oil now and keeping the price low—they hope to dampen the innovation so that a substitute is not developed,” Domitrovic said.

Another factor relates to the collapse of the price of oil during the current period of economic growth in the United States. In the past several decades, oil prices have

risen when economic growth stalls and gone down during an economic recovery. (The only exception being the price of oil’s fall in 2008-09.)

“When the price of oil is low, investors remove their capital from this dollar hedge and invest it into other sectors of the economy,” he said. “That’s why Texas is now able to remain stable during times when oil prices are low. Even though Texas is a major oil producer, the state’s economy is so diversified that other areas outside the industry see a substantial rise in investment.”

Domitrovic proposes that the price of oil could eventually “float back up,” depending on what action the Federal Reserve takes in the upcoming months.

“If the Fed is really being vigilant about the dollar, I think the price of oil will stay where it is,” he said. “I don’t see it going below \$40 a barrel. That would imply that everyone agrees that worldwide currencies are being managed just fine without any problems.” ■





\$60 billion in sales. We've done well on my shift," laughed Allemang, who is retiring from the board of directors this year, having reached the mandatory retirement age of 72.

He explains that Dow fits into the midstream sector of the energy industry because it takes the oil and gas and converts it into something somebody can use and then sends it to a downstream company for production.

"We buy ethane from a producer, and then we take it into an ethylene plant and we crack it into ethylene. We then move it into a polymer plant and make polyethylene and then sell it to somebody who will make packaging for all types of consumer products, kids toys or automotive applications," said Allemang.

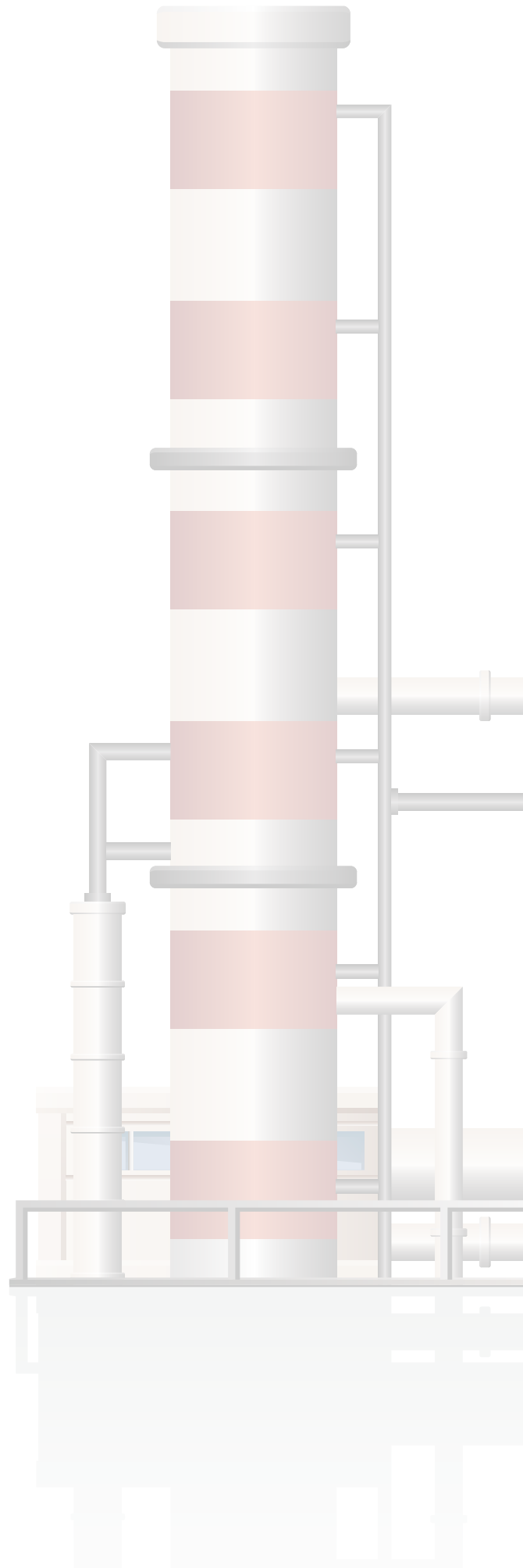
The discovery of shale gas and oil has had quite an impact on Dow Chemical, according to Allemang, who recalls numerous impacts the energy industry has made over the past 50 years.

"When I graduated from Sam Houston in the mid-'60s, energy was cheap and plentiful," he said. "Ten years later, we lived through the first oil crisis during the Carter administration. Then we all watched the oil industry prosper again in the mid-'70s when America had 20 million high-paying manufacturing jobs."

The highs and lows of the landscape continued until "shale gas showed up and changed the game," he went on to say.

"Companies like Dow immediately invested. We quickly started a mothballed-ethylene plant in Louisiana and have now announced a brand-new, world-scale ethylene plant on the Texas Gulf Coast, which will start up in 2017," said Allemang. "Shale gas has allowed us to make a product here and ship it to foreign users. It has caused a manufacturing renaissance and is allowing us to create more jobs and rebuild our middle class."

While the shale phenomenon has created manufacturing jobs based on its natural gas production, one element still unresolved in the downstream sector is refining the oil found in the shale plays.





# Downstream

Just when you think the United States is on the right track to energy independence, until this point, we've failed to mention a huge barrier; so far, the downstream sector can't keep up with the success of upstream production.

"We can use some of the oil, but most of our refineries in the U.S. can't refine it," said Gordy.

A refinery has not been built in the U.S. since 1976, and the ones we have are configured to refine the high-sulfur oil imported from the Middle East—not the sweet, light (low-sulfur) fuel being produced domestically.

According to the IEA, for the U.S. to use all of the oil it produces now, more of the domestic refineries will have to make costly investments in distillation towers, furnaces, heat exchangers, and downstream conversion units to enable them to handle lighter oil.

Many such projects are expected to take two years to secure a permit and at least that long to build.

Improvements to existing facilities have been underway. Motiva spent \$10 billion to expand its Port Arthur refinery. They started the process in 2007, and it was completed in 2012. Marathon Oil invested \$3.9 billion to expand a refinery in Garysville, Louisiana. Next on the list is Exxon Mobil Corp., which is planning to expand its Beaumont plant by 2020.

Until the downstream can keep up, the big question is what to do with the excess oil and gas?

We can't export it overseas due to the restrictions that still remain following the Arab Oil Embargo of 1973, but many fear keeping it will cause refineries to be so overwhelmed that they will discount the prices they are willing to pay.

According to Gordy, that would be tragic.

"You have to keep drilling to stay ahead. If we can't export, the price will come down and you stop the production treadmill; companies won't be able to afford to keep drilling and we'll be right back where we were before shale," he said.



“People don’t realize, because of the rapid decline with each well, for every 10 wells drilled in the Bakken or Eagle Ford, it takes seven just to keep production even.”

Right now, we are only exporting oil to Canada, and according to Gordy, Canada has accepted all it has room to store.

While the federal government determines whether to lift the oil embargo, the U.S. is expected to soon

reap the full benefits of its natural gas production. North America is now essentially independent in natural gas due to increased volumes of shale gas and is expected to become an exporter next year, bringing yet another change to the energy landscape of the U.S.

Although the U.S.’s future independence in the oil and gas industry has not yet played out, the IEA forecasts

that by the end of 2015, thanks to the revolutionary drilling techniques that have allowed access to the oil and gas trapped in shale formations, the U.S. will see a complete reversal in just five and a half years of the 40-year steady decline in domestic output.

“It’s a totally different industry than when I started,” Gordy said. “And it’s going to keep changing.” ■



## Blue Chip Talent

Kristal Jackson Dayal graduated from SHSU in 1997 with a degree in psychology. Soon after graduating, she began working as a professional recruiter, finding the right people for positions in information technology and then moved to the oil and gas industry. She found success early on and in 2008 embraced her entrepreneurial spirit to start her own recruiting company, JacksonSimon, a certified woman-owned business. She and her team now recruit talent for blue chip companies in the energy industry on a global basis. She has grown the firm to three distinct specialties: projects engineering, subsurface and supply chain.

*Q: What were the main objectives for your company?*

*A:* I wanted to found a company based on the values and philosophies I believe in and foster a company that is truly motivated by camaraderie and sincerity, dedicated to helping people make the best career decisions. Our successes are used to make a direct financial impact on our community in supporting orphanages around the world.

*Q: What type of talent are you looking for?*

*A:* We find, engage and secure the most difficult-to-find people in the oilfield industry, including petroleum engineers and geophysicists and supply chain and projects engineering. We qualify our candidates from a skill set perspective, as well as assess cultural fit.

*Q: What challenges do you face when looking for talent?*

*A:* Our main challenge is competing offers and counter offers. In 2014, we experienced candidates who received \$50k and \$100k sign-on bonus to join a company. Additionally, companies are doing whatever they can to keep their top performers by implementing lucrative retention plans. My firm has worked diligently to develop a reputation and trusted relationship with our clients and candidates so that when people start exploring the marketplace, their first call is to us.

*Q: How has the industry changed in the past 10 years?*

*A:* There are a couple key trends occurring during this decade. First, companies are looking to recruit fresh graduates in order to mold and groom them upward. Each company is striving to put a comprehensive, targeted graduate recruitment program in place to better attract the top talent from schools. Second, leading-edge oil and gas companies are targeting diversity hires and leaders to foster a more diverse culture. Furthermore, oil and gas companies are targeting professional services talent outside of the industry

to bring in fresh perspectives and new ideas to get better bottom-line results. Finally, the ultimate crisis is a gap in the middle-level talent, the talent who are in their prime and have the necessary experience to hit the ground running and make up for the knowledge that the baby boomer generation is taking with them as they retire.

*Q: How have you set yourself apart from other recruiting companies?*

*A:* A lot of recruiting companies are solely driven by money, because it's like a sales position to them. But when you are dealing with someone's career, it is most important to really listen to them and understand their motivations in order to help them determine the next best move for their professional and personal objectives. Sometimes, even when someone has the perfect skill set, I have to tell them, "I don't think this is the right opportunity for you." While most recruiters would just push them through, I can't do that. That brings me back to my core values of establishing rapport and relationships with the people I recruit. We are impacting a person's life; a person's career is their livelihood. As a result, what I do is extremely rewarding and gratifying. Each person is different; each day brings a new challenge, a new triumph, a new story, and a new friend. ■



*Kristal Jackson Dayal, '97, founder and CEO of JacksonSimon*



# SHSU Prepares GIS Students For Work In Oil, Gas

In response to demand for employees who are skilled in the use of geographic information system programs, particularly in the oil and gas industry, Sam Houston State University has enhanced its GIS courses and faculty members over the past 17 years.

The GIS program was introduced to SHSU in 1996 when Mark Leipnik was hired by the university to teach GIS in the Department of Geography and Geology and work on Department of Defense-funded projects for the Texas Research Institute for Environmental Studies.

Leipnik is a graduate of the University of California at Santa Barbara's Geography program. In 1988 UC-Santa Barbara (along with University of Maine and SUNY Buffalo) received a \$10 million grant from the National Science Foundation to establish the National Center for Geographic Information Analysis. It was the first GIS research center in the United States.

As a Ph.D. student in the program, Leipnik worked on a project involving GIS use to study groundwater contamination on Vandenberg Air Force Base.

"I helped organize the research project and obtained funding from several sources, including grants from the federal government and Intergraph Corporation," he said. He later worked for the federal government as a GIS specialist.

The program at SHSU began with Leipnik teaching two GIS classes a year. Now, the program offers eight to 10 classes each semester, and the number of professors with GIS backgrounds has increased to four.

"The oil and gas industry has wanted GIS-skilled people from the outset," said Leipnik. "In fact, we had students who



*Mark Leipnik, professor of geography and geology*

were graduating with majors in geography and geology without any formal GIS training and were hired as ‘GIS analysts,’ then got on-the-job training from their companies.”

One of the reasons that jobs are in such demand today is because the work is very specialized.

“If you look at oil and gas firms, most of them have their own GIS server, and data is going out to employees in the field,” said Leipnik. “The companies want the data to be secure and to be customized. That customization requires programming, and that is now a routine part of the curriculum.”

The GIS program at SHSU includes undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in Internet GIS (web mapping), remote sensing technology, global positioning systems (GPS), and programming.

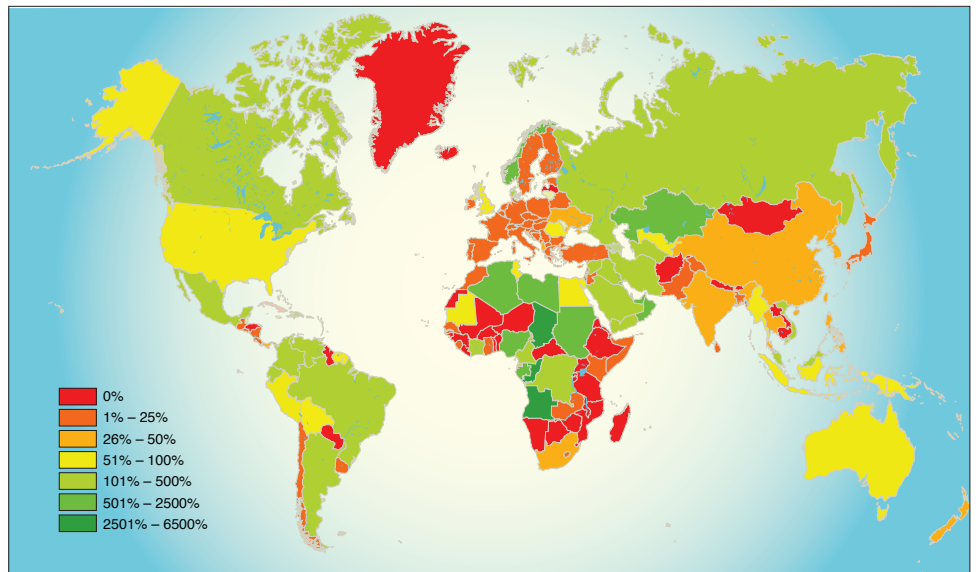
The program is within a joint geology/geography department, which Leipnik feels is an asset.

“We have a number of students who major in one area and minor in the other

**A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a computer system for capturing, storing, querying, analyzing, and displaying geographically referenced data. Since its beginning, GIS has been used widely in fields such as land use planning, forest management, wildlife habitat analysis, and natural hazard assessment. In more recent years the range of GIS applications has broadened to many other fields including law enforcement, oil and gas industry, market analysis, facilities management, and transportation planning, etc.**

and then get a GIS master’s degree,” he said. “Or they will major in geography and take several geology courses, such as petrology.

“We started a graduate program seven years ago and it has grown from seven students to between 30 and 50 now,”



*Percentage of Oil Production vs. Consumption*

Leipnik said. “Those students earn a master’s degree in applied GIS, and 90 percent of them go into the oil and gas field, broadly defined.”

A little more than half of the students already have some work experience, with the majority in the oil and gas business, according to Leipnik.

“For the undergraduates, around 45 percent might have done an internship with an oil or gas company as undergraduates,” he said. “Those students are looking for a master’s degree to add to their bachelor’s degree.”

Many of the graduate students are already professionals in established corporations. Some work in smaller businesses or consulting firms.

In addition to the classes on the main campus in Huntsville, SHSU also offers GIS courses at SHSU-The Woodlands Center. The university’s proximity to Houston is mutually beneficial to both SHSU and companies in the oil and gas industry.

“Then there are companies that build what we call the land base,” he said. “The land base is essentially the computerized map and database of oil and gas leasing information linked to land ownership. It’s a parcel map of land ownership, but it has

to have the oil and gas leasing information identified. That can be very complicated when directional drilling and several different properties are involved.

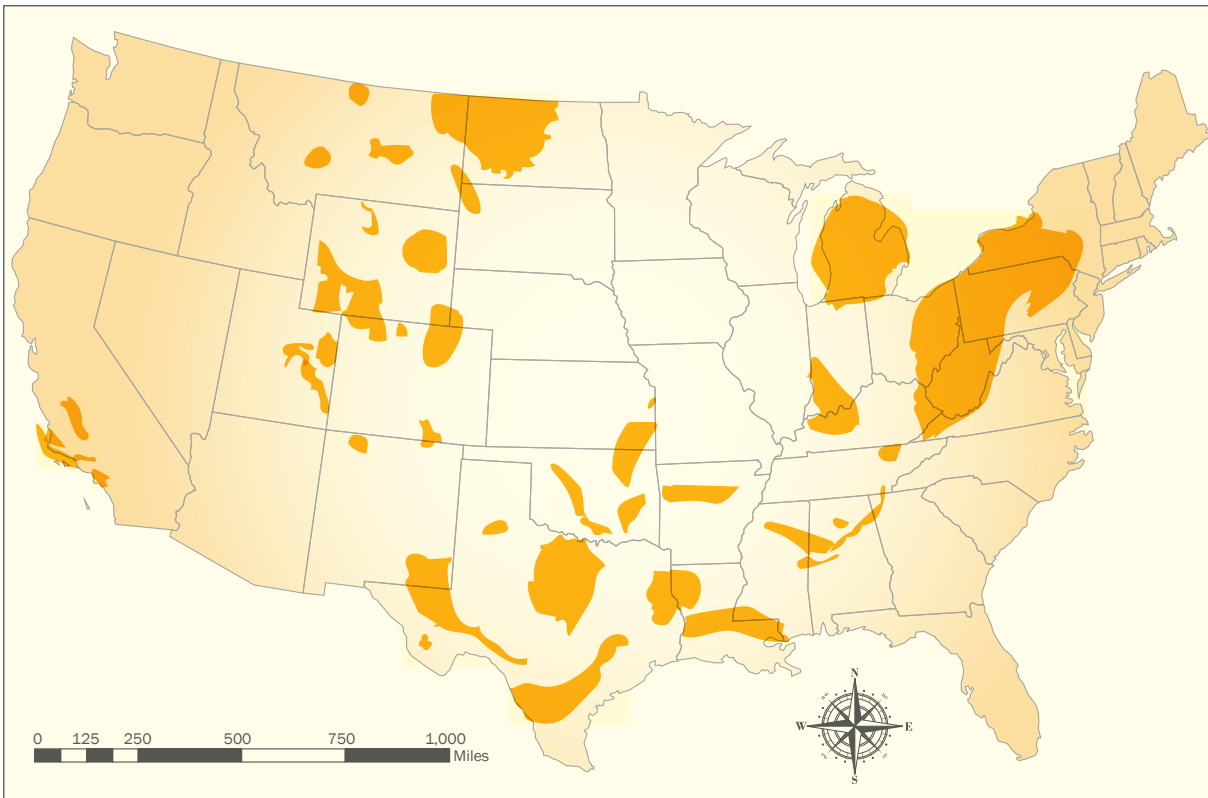
“To complicate it further, there may be different ownership percentages with different depths, which require specialized database capabilities,” he said. “Quite a few of our students are involved with building land bases for companies, and they are getting valuable experience.”

Because of the evolution of the smartphone, companies are seeing that they can use the mobile device to gather data, provide tracking of their employees, and route logistics.

“There are some issues, of course,” said Leipnik. “The smartphone that you’ve got is only capable of determining their location plus-or-minus about 30 feet. A handheld GPS might be plus-or-minus 6 feet. For pipeline mapping, it’s clear that this is not adequate. However, there is a whole range of other mobile geo-location devices that can cost from \$1,000 to \$50,000, depending on the needs. Those are the ones being used in the field professionally to map wells, receive and send data, track movements, and communicate.

“In our field studies class, we give every





*Shale Basins in the conterminous USA*

one of our students a Trimble Juno color screen GPS unit so that they can have access to a pretty good device," he said. "That's not a survey-grade GPS, which costs about \$60,000 each. But the units we have are good to about 3 to 6 feet here in Huntsville."

Oil and gas companies also are using GIS in ways other than exploration and mapping. One of Leipnik's specialties is law enforcement GIS, and he recalled a recent criminal case involving an oil field service company.

"The company had a lot of vehicles wandering around the Eagle Ford Shale area in South Texas," he said. "Some of them were being stolen from the job sites and ending up in Mexico, so the company installed vehicle-tracking systems in all their equipment."

"They now have the ability to monitor the location of their equipment from their headquarters in Houston," he said. "They can see where all of their assets are, in

real time, from all those tracking devices. Historically, if the equipment ends up in Mexico, it's very difficult to retrieve. But now it's much easier to recover stolen equipment before it gets across the border."

Leipnik says that for a while, professionals were entering the GIS program at SHSU because they had lost their jobs in the recession and were looking to change careers. However, more traditional students are coming to SHSU with GIS already on their minds.

"We're trying to identify and interest those students earlier, because if we can get them as freshmen, sophomores and juniors, they have the chance to do internships and get work experience and take the full range of our 10 to 12 undergraduate GIS classes that are relevant," he said.

"The requirements to get those desirable entry-level jobs are getting tougher," he said. "You really have to be an expert in

many complicated areas, like coordinate systems and mobile applications programming."

"Even after a student has graduated with a bachelor's degree and gotten a job with a major company, they will then decide that they need an advanced degree to learn some new skills, because the field is changing very rapidly, especially mobile and Internet applications, and they will then come back for a master's degree," he said.

"Energy is a cyclic business and recent drops in oil and gas

prices are putting pressure on firms to curtail hiring and streamline processes," Leipnik said.

"GIS specialists are more secure than many other professionals, but a premium will be placed on those with the most current skills. Traditionally the energy sector has paid better than other application areas, and professionals have migrated from public utility, surveying, property tax appraisal and retail site selection areas to oil and gas," he said. "A prolonged down-turn might reverse this trend. In any case, overall demand for skilled GIS professionals remains high."

"We try to work flexibly with those students to broaden their understanding of what they already know by using their skills and work experience as a foundation and relating the new information to what they are doing in their company," Leipnik said.

"It's a fascinating field, and we are very proud of the success of our graduates." ■

## Houston Area

## BEARKATS IN BUSINESS



Above: SHSU alumni Cindy and Donnie Marion, with President Dana Hoyt and University Advancement Vice President Frank Holmes.

Below: Athletic director Bobby Williams; hosts Michelle '93, Gay '65, and Bob '65 Rod; President Dana Hoyt; hosts Cheryl '77 and Steven Benton; and special guests former NFL quarterback Dan Pastorini, Pro Football Hall of Famer Elvin Bethea, and senior adviser of baseball operations for the Los Angeles Dodgers Gerry Hunsicker, with Sammy Bearkat.

For three years, Houston-area business professionals and fellow alumni have come together to celebrate and support the university's championship athletic program at the Bearkats in Business event held at the exclusive restaurant Tony Mandola's.

Michelle, Gay, and Bob Rod—with Cheryl Gaydosik Peschke Benton and her husband, Steven Benton—hosted more than 180 guests which raised more than \$230,000 through Bearkats in Business sponsorships.

Sports legends Elvin Bethea, Dan Pastorini, and Gerry Hunsicker inspired and energized the crowd with their reflections on sports and the importance of fans and supporters.

For more information about Bearkats in Business or to learn more about ways to support the SHSU athletic program, contact University Advancement at 936.294.3625. ★

# Young Alumni Carry The Vision Full-Circle

By Tammy Parrett

One of the most important messages that Bearkats learn during their time at Sam Houston State University is “The measure of a Life is its Service.” That is something that Bob Wallace and Steve Bub have demonstrated through both their determination to succeed in business and their generosity to SHSU.

Wallace knew when he graduated with his Bachelor of Business Administration degree in general business in 1990 that he would never truly leave SHSU. When Bub, his Sigma Chi brother, graduated with his Bachelor of Business Administration degree in marketing in 1992, they soon found themselves working in National Account Sales for large food-service manufacturers. They quickly found that the convenience store industry was not sufficiently represented and decided that their time spent at SHSU had prepared them to do a better job on their own.

Wallace and Bub currently serve as managing partners for Total Convenience Marketing, which operates in eight territories across the United States. But don't think that they've allowed their success to make them anything other than humble.

This has allowed them to become very active in the Alumni Association and contribute to a large number of programs at SHSU.

Wallace and his wife Ami, '93, are Joint Life Members of the Alumni Association. They contribute to a variety of programs at SHSU, including Bearkats in Business, the Bearkat Champion Fund and enrichment programming benefiting football, the College of Education, the College of Business Administration and the Alumni

Association. They live in Houston with their sons Carson, Ian and Mitchell.

“I really believe Sam Houston is a special place,” Wallace said. “I am proud to be a Bearkat, and I believe we all have an obligation to give back. I will put

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“I really believe Sam Houston is a special place. I am proud to be a Bearkat, and I believe we all have an obligation to give back. I will put my Sam Houston peers against anyone out there.”—Wallace

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“That success was based on the education we earned at SHSU and through the connections and relationships made while at Sam. I feel fortunate and blessed that I am able to give back to the university that provided me the opportunity to be in the position that I am in today.”—Bub

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my Sam Houston peers against anyone out there.”

Wallace and Bub are firm believers in SHSU and those who are fortunate enough to call themselves Bearkats. In fact, they currently have five alumni in various roles at TCM, because “Sam Houston graduates aren't afraid to work for success.”

These young alumni understand that without alumni contributions, many things that students and alumni take for granted would go unfunded.

“When I hear fellow alumni discuss the shortcomings of the football stadium, I make it a point to ask if they have donated to the university,” Bub said. “We know many fraternity brothers and alumni who are successful in business. That success was based on the education we earned at SHSU and through the connections and relationships made while at Sam. I feel fortunate and blessed that I am able to give back to the university that provided me the opportunity to be in the position that I am in today.”

Bub and his wife Jeannie, '92, live in Houston with their daughter Annalise and son Tanner. They are also Joint Life Members of the Alumni Association and have supported programs like the Bearkat Champions General Fund, Bearkats in Business, Management and Marketing Department Development Scholarship, the Alumni Association, and the Alumni Association Legacy Endowment.

“I am very proud that my Sam Houston experience academically and socially developed my skills to allow me to be in the position where I am able to give back. It is important that our alumni give back,” Wallace said. ★





# CARRY THE VISION



*Bob and Ami Wallace, with  
Jeannie and Steve Bub*



# Orange is the New Black

The hottest trend in sports apparel is Bearkat orange.

Vast expansion of sales through regional retailers such as Academy Sports, Macy's, Walmart, Walgreens and Target have helped Sam Houston State University's licensing revenues to more than double since 2009-10.

"The Bearkats' presence in area retailers now is as strong as the University of Texas at Austin or Texas A&M," said SHSU Athletic Director Bobby Williams. "The new Academy store in Huntsville opened in September with 40 percent of their athletic apparel (being) Bearkat merchandise."

It's no accident that many more people on campus, at the mall or on the street are wearing Bearkat gear.

Success on the playing field—with consecutive Commissioner's Cup championships, national ESPN television exposure and NCAA playoff appearances—has played a part. But a concerted effort to increase SHSU licensed apparel and merchandise sales has resulted in more than 170 licensed vendors and counting for Bearkat gear.

"The athletics department has been very systematic in our approach to increasing income from licensing," said David Paitson, SHSU associate athletic director for external operations, who serves as the point person for the university's licensing program. "Hard work and a cooperative effort

behind the scenes has been just as important as winning championships."

The licensing program's success has been a four-year effort that began with a partnership with Strategic Marketing Affiliates, which was

**"They have worked with the university to improve quality and control. There is value in the Sam Houston brand."**

acquired by Learfield Sports in December 2014.

"SMA is a more licensee- and fan-friendly agency," Paitson said. "They have worked with the university to improve quality and control. There is value in the Sam Houston brand. We've been more aggressive about enforcing our licensing policies and standards."

Consulting with key campus decision makers, the university reviewed brand guides, updated trademarks and logo sheets, and met with local vendors and campus buyers to educate them on the process.

"There are regular reviews of retail outlets to ensure folks are staying compliant," Paitson said. "Up next is the rollout of a 'look for the label' campaign to educate consumers as well."

Headquartered in Indianapolis, SMA handles licensing for 340 clients

nationwide, including more than 45 clients based in Texas.

"As a client-centered company, we take great pride our relationship with the Bearkats," said Bob Bernard, SMA president and chief executive officer. "With both its continuing enrollment growth and athletic success, Sam Houston is a significant player in the region. We've worked together with a forward-thinking attitude to keep our approach fresh, energetic and effective."

Quality control is one of the most important aspects of the Bearkat licensing program.

Corporate partnership and licensing coordinator Kimberly Spino manages the day-to-day review of artwork for apparel and merchandise, seeking to ensure that designs are consistent with the goals and image of the university.

SMA has introduced labels and hang tags to help protect client institutions. All licensed products that feature the marks of SMA clients must







contain a hangtag or sticker with the SMA OLP label and information identifying the manufacturer and their contact information.

Two years ago, SHSU athletics and SMA began meeting with campus buyers and local vendors to educate them on the specifics of the licensing program.

“Sam Houston is a prime example of a campus and community taking an ‘education-first’ approach with their licensing program,” said Kasey Moore, SMA university services representative. “They have done an exemplary job in educating the campus, the licensees and the community about how the program benefits everyone involved.

“The university views

the licensing program as a partnership. This outlook has created a sense of community for all involved. This approach has been extremely successful with significant increases in product placement in the local retail marketplace.”

In January 2014, a special “Trunk Show” at the Lowman Student Center introduced local licensees to campus buyers.

“This program has become a model that has successfully been duplicated by other SMA clients around the country,” Bernard said. “Sam Houston’s commitment to showcasing and carrying its brand to the fan base has brought significant exposure to the university.”

SHSU orange apparel is available on the web, as well through SHSU’s official online store, at [BearkatGear.com](http://BearkatGear.com), with links on [gobearkats.com](http://gobearkats.com), the athletics website.

One thing is for certain. Thanks to the licensing program, those fans won’t have any problems finding SHSU gear to wear to a game.





# Bearkat Teams Enjoy Success

There was never a better time to be a Bearkat than the fall of 2014. The success of Sam Houston State University sports teams across the board has fans excited about every program.

Athletic highlights from August to December include SHSU's third Southland Conference football

championship in the past four seasons and fourth consecutive FCS post-season appearance; the soccer program's best year yet; the volleyball team's extension of its string of Southland tournament berths to eight in a row; and major accomplishments by the SHSU bowling, tennis and golf squads.

"The performances of the student-athletes who represented Sam Houston this fall definitely have been something to make all alumni and fans proud to be Bearkats," said

SHSU Director of Athletics Bobby Williams.

Each sport seemed

to produce an individual who stepped into the spotlight with outstanding accomplishments and helped lead his or her team to success during the fall semester.

For the championship Bearkat football team, defensive end P. J. Hall earned Southland Conference "Freshman of the Year" honors and was named as a finalist for the Jerry Rice Award, presented by The Sports Network to the top FCS freshman. Hall was a three-time Southland "Defensive Player-of-the-Week" honoree, a first-team all-Southland selection, and was the top freshman in the national in tackles for losses.

Allie Johnson, Ashley Alonzo

and Shelby McDaniel all earned first team all-league honors after leading the women's soccer team to its highest conference finish and most Southland victories and goals in program history. Three first-team selections also are a Bearkat soccer best.

In volleyball, Deveney Wells-Gibson became only the second Bearkat in SHSU's 28 years in the Southland to earn first-team all-conference honors three seasons in a row. The senior outside hitter led the league in kills and was the runner-up in the voting for Southland "Player of the Year."

The men's golf team showed it is ready to defend its Southland Conference championship this spring after winning two tournament titles. Led by last spring's individual league champion Zach Cabra, the Bearkats defeated several Big 10 squads to claim one of their trophies in September.

The women's golf team also earned a tournament title at the Oral Roberts Classic. Paige Nelson took individual honors as the Kats placed second at the Louisiana-Monroe event.

Freshman Fabienne Gettwart became the first Bearkat tennis player to reach the Round of 16 at the annual NCAA/ITA women's regional championships this fall. The competition pitted SHSU against all 21 Division I programs in Texas.

Ana Moreno became only the third Bearkat woman to earn All-Southland honors in cross country with a top 10



Zach Cabra





Deveney Wells-Gibson

finish at the 2014 conference meet. The Kats placed third in the team standings.

Finally, SHSU's national champion bowling team won one tournament championship and finished either second or

third in three of their other four fall events. The Bearkats enter the spring season ranked No. 5 nationally.



P. J. Hall



Ashley Alonzo

Allie Johnson



# Mark Your Calendars Bearkat Invitational to Benefit All Sports



*Sterling Country Club*

**D**uring the past two-and-a-half sports seasons, Sam Houston State University has won two Southland Conference Commissioner's Cups, both a men's and women's Southland All-Sports Cup, and 11 league titles.

To continue this amazing success, the Bearkats need the

financial help of SHSU alumni, fans and friends.

The second annual Bearkat Invitational Golf Tournament fundraiser on June 5 in Houston will give SHSU supporters the opportunity to contribute and have some fun.

Sterling Country Club at Houston National's award-

winning golf course will be the site of the event again.

Entry fees for the tournament are \$300 for individuals, \$1,200 for foursomes, \$500 for hole sponsors, and \$1,500 for a foursome and hole sponsorship.

The Bearkat Invitational is the sole golf outing hosted by

the SHSU Athletic Department and supports all 17 sports. Money raised from the event is utilized to cover expenses associated with seasonal needs—including travel and equipment—for each team.

Call the SHSU Athletic Department at 936.294.2362 for information. ★



**ALUMNI  
LOOK**

# MANUFACTURING INTEGRITY

By: Jennifer Gauntt



*Karl Oswald, Global Fabrication Services*



A plaque in Sam Houston State University alumnus Karl Oswald's office says "Some Men Dream, Others Do;" it was a gift from his employees.

The plaque represents a philosophy that has shaped Oswald's life—while some men dream, Oswald does.

That philosophy has not only been instrumental in establishing his success in the field but carries over into his personal life.

A self-described "simple" man, who values integrity above all else, Oswald is proud to be known as a man of his word.

Oswald was born in Maryland but moved to Katy when he was in high school, when his family relocated for his father's job with Exxon.

"I didn't know much about Texas; our family came at the end of the oil boom," he said. "Katy was a small country farm town, at the time, extremely small."

After graduating from high school, Oswald was accepted to SHSU and pursued a marketing degree.

While earning his degree "took me longer than anticipated," Oswald flourished in the social scene, becoming a part of a group of students who would help establish lacrosse at SHSU and would eventually help shape his career path.

"When I went to Sam, I met a broad group of people rather than just a narrow group of people. Sam Houston is what I consider an American culture; it's a broad base of races, cultures, industries, characters and personalities," he said. "I think being around those types of people who are well rounded helped me to understand how to deal with everyone I've met so far in my business. Sam Houston is a university of people."

While in school, Oswald was introduced to the manufacturing industry when he accepted his first job framing houses and apartments to supplement his tuition.

After graduation in 1983, Oswald was able to secure a job at U.S. Steel in Baytown—through the father of a friend from the lacrosse team—beginning what



**"I saw there was a need for more integrity in our industry. In my business, if I say I'm going to do it, I will do it, even if it costs me money, I have a reputation and I want that reputation to precede me. A lot of people look at business as business, not business as your word."**

would be a 40-plus-year career in the steel industry.

In 1993, he decided to take a financial risk and opened his own company—Global Fabrication Services—a full-service, state-of-the-art steel and flamecutting facility in The Woodlands that produces steel products for the oil and gas, industrial and commercial industries.

"I saw there was a need for more integrity in our industry. In my business,

if I say I'm going to do it, I will do it, even if it costs me money," Oswald said. "I have a reputation and I want that reputation to precede me. A lot of people look at business as business, not business as your word.

"When I say I'm going to do this job for you, I'm going to do this job for you," he said. "You don't do it with the intent to lose money, but my word is my word. I tend to try and find other businesses to do business with that have the same integrity, as much as possible."

Since then, he has established many other businesses that manufacture components and provide services for oil and gas, both in the industrial and commercial industries.

His seven current active businesses are all located in Montgomery or Harris counties, something Oswald considers a point of pride.

He also has sales offices in Houston, Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai, and Vietnam, with exports serving as 80 percent of his business; 20 percent is domestic.

"My philosophy is that I would rather have my manufacturing plants in the U.S., but it's a struggle. For so many people, it's simply a matter of price. That's the challenge—how to sell something at a low cost with a high quality standard while you're competing with a low cost, low quality competitor," Oswald said.

"I prefer the quality control and the ease of doing business in the U.S., but we find the market is international; we can't just depend on domestic sales alone."

Consequently, Oswald and his partners are in the process of acquiring a facility in Dubai.

With more than 200 employees in his active businesses, Oswald recognizes the challenges of keeping a quality workforce, especially as he finds the expectations of college graduates increasingly rising.

He works to secure employee loyalty through hands-on training and rewarding his employees for their integrity and commitment.

"I try to run my business where people

are the core of your business, who are loyal to the business, loyal to the growth of the business,” he said. “They get rewarded as the business does well.

“When my employees learn that I’m true to that value, they become core employees,” he said. “Sometimes it takes many years for that to happen. You may hire 10 and you may only keep one that goes on to be one of your core employees.”

In securing his next generation of “core” employees, Oswald offers to help them advance their education in exchange for their commitment to the company. He sees this as an investment in the future of his business.

“One of my employees was going to school and working for me, struggling. He wanted to go to college but didn’t have the resources,” Oswald said. “After three years of working for me, he went to college. I agreed to pay his college if he would work for me after college.

“He got his degree and now he is head of the welding department. He has 10 years of experience working for me and he’s four to five years out of college,” he said. “He’s one of the core guys.”

While Oswald believes he’s still at least 20 years away from retirement, he also sees his business continuing to grow well beyond his lifetime, with the values he has worked to instill both in his dealings and his employees firmly intact.

“I hope that what I’ve started continues on with the philosophy that I have and my partners have,” he said. “The integrity is what I want to continue; that’s my legacy.”

In the meantime, he plans to continue working as long as he’s capable of doing so, knowing that he’s doing what he loves.

“It’s a matter of finding out what your niche is in life and being happy in doing what you are doing, finding the chair you are comfortable in,” Oswald said. “I found my chair and I’m very comfortable in it. If I can live out the rest of my life in this chair, I will.

“There’re challenges up and down, but in the end, I’m always comfortable and safe back in my chair.” ★



*Global Fabrication Services*



**W**illie Nelson, Matthew McConaughey, Billy Joe Shaver ... these are well-known names in the entertainment industry, particularly to those from Texas. And other than being Texans themselves, they have something else in common—when they need an attorney in the Lone Star State, they call Austin defense lawyer Joe Turner, who is a Sam Houston State University graduate.

Turner grew up in a military family and was 13 years old when his dad was transferred to Austin. Even at an early age, he knew what he wanted to do in life.

“I wanted to be a criminal defense attorney,” he said. “I used to skip classes in high school to go watch trials at the Travis County Courthouse.”

After graduating from Reagan High School, Turner enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin, majoring in government and focusing on being a criminal lawyer.

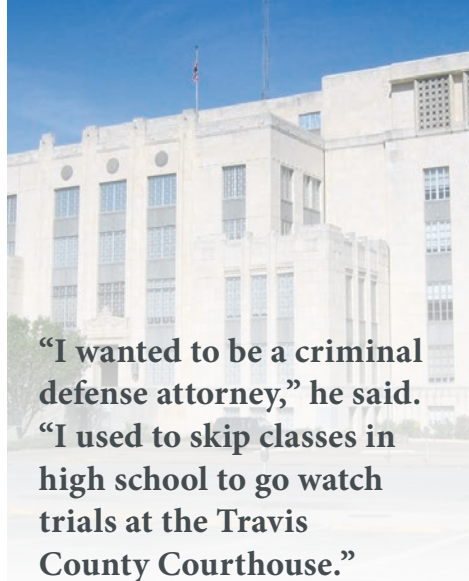
“I didn’t know anything about criminology, but one night I was watching the Dick Cavett show on TV and one of his guests was a criminologist,” he said. “I liked UT, but it didn’t have a criminology department. I started looking around and found out that the best criminology program was located not far away in Huntsville, at Sam Houston State University.”

It was a good move for Turner, who fell in love with the school’s beautiful campus, the town and the piney woods of East Texas. He also fell in love with the criminology program.

“I was very interested in what I was studying, so it was easy to work hard,” he said. “It may sound crazy, but I was excited every day about my course work and going to class. I loved my fellow students and my professors.”

He particularly remembers his professors Don Wiesenhorn, Jerry Dowling and Erwin Ernst, a renowned prosecutor from Houston.

Turner’s first job at SHSU was working at the Lowman Student Center as a projectionist and operating the recreation



**“I wanted to be a criminal defense attorney,” he said. “I used to skip classes in high school to go watch trials at the Travis County Courthouse.”**

room. His favorite building was Old Main, which housed his debate team. He took 20 hours a semester to speed up his journey through college. He graduated *summa cum laude* in 1975 with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice.

“I was excited about practicing criminal law, and I wanted to get there as soon as possible,” he said. “Also, I was paying my own way through college, driving a beat up old Volkswagen and being very frugal.”

“In other words, I was poor and I didn’t like being poor,” he said with a laugh.

One of his jobs while attending SHSU was working as a corrections officer at the Ferguson Unit.

“It was an eye-opening experience for me, and it has helped me both as a prosecutor and a defense lawyer,” he said. “Working at the prison gave me a unique view. I talked to the inmates, and I learned an awful lot just by asking.”

When Turner graduated from SHSU, he moved back to Austin and was admitted to the University of Texas School of Law.

“When I was in law school, I came back to Huntsville briefly to work in the prison as a staff counsel for inmates,” he said. “During that time, I took some graduate classes in corrections from Dr. George Beto, which transferred back to UT as credit for law school. Dr. Beto is a legend and it was wonderful to listen to and learn from him.”

After graduating from law school at the age of 22, Turner went to work for the Travis County Attorney’s Office, prosecuting misdemeanor cases.

“Even though my career goal was to be a criminal defense attorney, I started out as a prosecutor because you can try more cases that way,” he said. “I wanted to get

the experience of being a trial lawyer.”

He was hired to work for the district attorney’s office and then went to work as a federal prosecutor.

“I did the whole gamut from traffic tickets to federal conspiracies,” he said. “I volunteered to take as many trial cases as I could. My first three years as a prosecutor, I probably tried 75 jury trials. Some lawyers have never tried that many cases in all their lives.”

He worked as a prosecutor for five years and then opened his own office and started trying cases as defense attorney. Because of his reputation as a trial lawyer, he had clients “right off the bat.” Not only did he have people sending him their acquaintances as clients, he had other defense attorneys sending him their own cases that they didn’t want to try.

“Everybody has a story, and a lot of what I do is tell my client’s story,” he said. “People have a tendency to look at the act that took place, and rarely does that explain the entire situation. Just because it appears that a person is guilty doesn’t mean that they always are. And even if they are, a good lawyer is there to explain to the prosecutor or the jury why that person may merit probation or a lesser sentence.”

“I do have a feel for my clients, and I get to know them really well,” Turner said. “If I have a natural talent, it’s being able to size people up. That is absolutely necessary if you’re going to practice criminal law.”

Turner doesn’t shy away from the challenges of taking on difficult cases such as those involving murder, but he will draw the line. The father of four says he’s not likely to defend a child molester.

“A lot of my decision on whether or not to take a case depends on if I like the person,” he said. “Criminal law is ‘people law’ and you have to understand human nature. You have to be able to sell your client to 12 strangers and make them like your client. If you don’t like your client, you’re not going to convince others to like them either.”

Today, Turner spends a lot of his time on federal cases.

“There are many more federal prosecutors now and many more cases involving drugs, fraud and national security,” he said. “You don’t hear a lot about terrorist cases being tried. But I can assure you that the FBI is very busy watching what is going on with the Internet and listening to conversations throughout the country and all over the world.”

Even with his busy schedule, Turner finds time to enjoy another one of his passions—his ranch and his exotic animals.

“I once raised Longhorns, and I also had a vineyard and winery,” he said. “I enjoyed all of that. But it was very time consuming, and when the kids came along I just didn’t have the time for it.

“My wife grew up on a ranch in Central Texas and her father raised exotic animals,” he said. “So that’s what I moved on to.”

The Turner ranch, just outside of Austin, is home to buffalo, camels, scimitar, zebras, and wildebeests, among other animals. Turner goes to seminars where he learns how to care for the animals, and he’s even had to bottle feed some of them, as well as doctor the injuries they’ve received from predators.

“A lot of love goes into it,” he said.

Whether it’s his family, his animals, or his job, Turner readily admits that his life is driven by passion and hard work.

“Whatever you choose in life, you’ve got to be passionate about it,” he said. “I plan to work until I can’t work anymore. Why would I retire from a job that I enjoy so much? I get to have fun and I get paid lots of money for doing what I love to do. How many people can say that?” ★

# TURNER’S PASSION, PURPOSE LEADS TO SUCCESS

By: Julia May



*Austin defense lawyer Joe Turner*



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# ALUMNI LOOK

## CLASS NOTES

**Pam Edgerley, '73**, and other SHSU Chi Omegas from 1973-1977 meet every June at Lake LBJ for a reunion.



SHSU Chi Omegas

**Walter Fitzgerald, '79**, recently retired after 13 years of service with CenterPoint Energy, where he was senior vice president and chief accounting officer.

**Michael Thomas, '80**, retired from the Dallas County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (adult probation) after 28 years of service. He began a second career as a cruise consultant/travel agent at Ahoy Cruises in Dallas.

**Bill Ward, '81**, was honored in October as the recipient of the 2014 Midcontinent Industry Leader award. Ward also was recently promoted to senior vice president of Gas Supply, Marketing and Business Development for Superior Pipeline Company.

**Congratulations to Rebecca Orozco, '82**, on her retirement after 28 years as an adult probation officer in Bastrop County.

**Marsha Skidmore, '83**, retired from Crockett ISD in August after 30 years of teaching high school art and yearbook.

**Lisa Clute, '87**, has joined Emerson Process Management in Austin as the company's associate general counsel.



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# CLASS NOTES

## **Kim A. Duchane,**

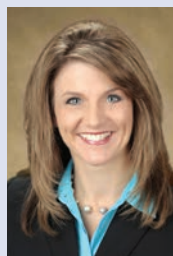
**'87**, was named president-elect of the Society of Health and Physical Educators' Midwest District, for which he will promote quality physical education, physical activity and sport programs within the six-state district. An established leader, Duchane has served in a variety of positions at the state and national levels and has received several prestigious awards. He has published more than 25 journal articles and has given more than 60 presentations to state and national audiences. Duchane has taught for more than 20 years in Manchester (Indiana) University's Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences. After completing his master's degree in physical education and special



education from SHSU, he went on to earn a doctorate in adapted physical education from Texas Woman's University.

## **Denise Bradley, '92,**

has been promoted to vice president of communication and community affairs for St. David's HealthCare in Austin. She previously served as the organization's corporate director of communications. She is active in numerous community organizations including serving on the board of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and Hyde Park Schools. She is also a member of the executive leadership team for the American Heart Association Go Red for Women campaign, and she co-chaired the marketing and public relations committee for the American Cancer



Society's 2013 Cattle Baron's Ball. In 2012, she was honored with the Austin Business Journal's Profiles in Power award.

**Eric Pedersen, '96,** was recently presented with the Award of Merit by the Washington State Bar Association for his service as staff judge advocate to SEAL Team TEN in Afghanistan. This award is the WSBA's highest honor and is given for a recent, singular achievement. It is awarded to individuals only.

**Justin Burnett, '02,** was recently appointed as vice president of PSCM Materials Management and Warehousing with BP.

**James Keith, '03,** recently left his position as the assistant news director at KABB-San Antonio to start his new position as chief communications officer at the Bexar County Sheriff's Office in San Antonio.

## **LONGTIME PROFESSORS BILHARTZ, CARTER PASS AWAY**

Sam Houston State University said goodbye to two long-time faculty members in December with the passing of history professor Terry Bilhartz and retired political science professor James Carter.

Bilhartz, who taught and mentored more than 18,000 students during his time at SHSU, died on Dec. 12 at the age of 64.

Bilhartz joined the SHSU faculty in 1979 after earning degrees from Dallas Baptist College, Emory University, and George Washington University. He also completed post-doctoral studies in history and religion at Vanderbilt University, Stanford University, the University of Connecticut, the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, and the Australian National University.

During his career, he co-authored four books and authored more than 50 articles and book chapters in the fields of history, religion, philosophy, psychology, and



*Terry Bilhartz*

medicine. He also served as associate dean for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In the last year of his life, he founded Green Publishing

House, a company dedicated to the production and global distribution of scholarly, peer-reviewed books in both digital and print format.

Bilhartz was considered an inspiration to his friends, family, colleagues, the students he taught, the youth with whom he worked, the players he coached, and the animals he loved.

Family and friends are establishing an endowment in Bilhartz's memory to support SHSU history students, and the department's conference room will be named in his honor. Contributions may be made online at [shsu.edu/giving](http://shsu.edu/giving).

Carter, who joined the SHSU faculty

in the political science department in 1977, died on Dec. 22 at the age of 66.

Known for his strong sense of justice, his dedication to scholarship and teaching, and his devotion to service, he taught political philosophy, environmental policy, and American government at SHSU.

Carter's long history of service included participation in the faculty senate, nine years on the Huntsville City Council, including three years as Mayor Pro Tem, and 10 years holding a post on the Texas Democratic Party executive committee.

He also was a runner, cyclist and golfer and an accomplished photographer.

Carter earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Alabama and a doctorate from the University of North Texas.

He also served as a military policeman in the U.S. Army from 1970-1972, including service in Germany.

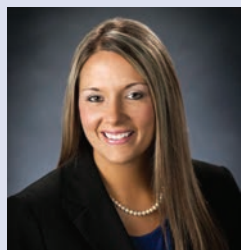


# ALUMNI LOOK

**Congratulations to Carissa Costello, '04,** and her husband on the birth of their daughter, Gwendolyn Ann, in March 2014. Costello was also recently promoted to the associate director of reunion giving at Trinity University.

**Christopher Fisher's, '05,** "A History of Stone and Steel" debut novel was recently honored with a Gold Medal in the 2014 Independent Publisher Book Awards. "A History of Stone and Steel" also was honored in numerous other competitions this past spring. Fisher is currently a freelance editor and book designer living in Scottsville, Virginia, with his wife and four children.

**Jess Koy, '05,** has started a new position as the vice president at First National Bank of Bellville. In August, he also started the EMBA Banking program through SHSU.



**Christina Burt Womack, '06,** has been named the new president and chief executive officer of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

**Pedro Fernandez, '10,** has secured a percussion position with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the fifth oldest symphony orchestra in the U.S. and the oldest orchestra in Ohio. Fernandez has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician, and in orchestral settings across Latin America, the United States, Spain, and China. He has performed with the Houston, Miami, and



Palm Beach Symphonies; Florida Grand Opera; Symphony of the Americas; The Henry Mancini Institute; and the Houston Ballet Orchestra, among others. He also has appeared as a marimba soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Panama.

**Jason Payne, '11,** is a true example of Bearcats in service to others. He donated a kidney to his AT&T coworker in a kidney exchange match in San Antonio. AT&T has nominated him for the Vail Award, the company's highest honor for those who exemplify humanity and a strong sense of community.

**Kelsey (Brann) Messer, '12,** and **John Messer, '12,** were married Nov. 23, 2013, in Sugar Land. Both are graduates of the College of Criminal Justice. John is a Texas state trooper and Kelsey is employed with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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Jessamine (Daniels) Slataper '35  
Faytine (Eakin) Allen '38  
Maye McKinney (Barclay) Killion '39  
Vernon Marie (Cleveland) Schuder '39  
Jessica Louise (Borel) James '40  
Ina Claire (Allen) Kelley '42  
Madene La Verne Reeves '42  
Mary Ruth (Pettigrew) Cox '44  
Ruth Evelyn (Archer) Blalock '45  
Margie Ross (Tarpley) Jones '46  
Robert Ray Smith '46  
Robert Alvin Moore '47, '52  
Melvin Elton Cowart '48  
Willie Lynn Mitchell '48  
George E. Jaehne '49  
Ruth Evelyn (Denman) Sollock '49  
Thomas Richard Mann '50, '57  
Margaret Louise (Pipkin) Coyle '51, '58  
John Frank Brimberry '53, '57  
Carl Webber Ferguson '54  
Ray Franklin Voelkel '54  
Georgia (Boudreaux) Hughes '55  
Rex G. White '55, '57  
Jack Brandon Dyson '56  
Robert J. Klein '56  
Claude Bretherick Tate '56  
Herschel Voyde Powell '57  
Jack Latrell Skidmore '57  
Helen Moses (Sadler) Griffin '58

Jackie (Cannon) Day '59, '73  
Howard L. Eitel '60  
Eleanor Kay (Bryan) Woodard '60  
John L. Blanchard '61  
Jerry Cole Dyer '61  
Gene Bennett Erwin '61  
Kenneth Hall Keeling '61  
Bill Dale Muns '61  
Donnette (Reese) Hall '62  
Roswell Gregory Wardlaw '62  
Paul Wayne Knox '62, '64  
Gene Addis Bristo '63  
J. Kay (Harter) Evans '63  
Margaret Ann (Chapman) Pearson '63  
George Moody Shanks '63  
William Frank Robert '63, '68  
Oliver Parks Denyer '64  
Harris Cecil Durrett '64  
Luther Clyde Gullede '64  
Joe Michael Loring '64  
Richard Wayne Moreland '64  
Jesse Hughes Harris '65  
Alan H. Shumate '65  
Patricia Anne (Kuhlmann) Calfee '66  
Ivan J. Ward '67  
Harlan W. Baldrige '68  
Philip Dean Bingham '68  
Eunice (Myers) Evans '68  
Alan Eugene Jennings '69  
Lloyd Dean Pruitt '69  
David M. Gray '69, '70  
Kenneth Fielding Browder '70

Sylvia Mae (Akers) Landry '70  
John Madison Lawson '71  
Charles Milo Lucas '71  
David Richard Alford '72  
Sunny Lou (Myers) Clouser '72  
Billy Ray Harper '72  
Elvis Tyrone Richard '72  
Charles William Tackett '72  
Paula Annette (Engle) Backen '72, '75  
Alvis Franklin Bolton '73  
Hershel Eugene Phillips '73  
Brenda (Thomas) Cunningham '73, '78  
Robert K. Kooken '74  
Lousie A. Compis '75  
Adolph C. Alonzo '76  
Sally Price Shaw '77  
Mary Kyle (Underwood) Ritchey '78, '78  
Arthur A. Miller '81  
Susan Kay (Saenz) Protz '81  
Donald Wayne Harman '83  
Phillip Thomas Raddin '84  
Joanna L. (Justus) Hines '84, '89  
Mary Anne (Scanlan) Grasso '89  
Margaret (Vincent) Barker '92  
Linda Williams Bradham '92  
Patrick Bruce Nelson '99  
Kenneth Casey Hall '00  
George David Largent '06  
David Robert Collins '11  
Nelson Reed Clark '13  
Kelvin Charles McGowan '14

## MAXIE GROCE TEMPLETON

A woman whose ancestral roots reached back to Texas's beginnings, and, also, touched Sam Houston State University passed away on Dec. 7 at her home in San Antonio, at the age of 97.

Maxie Groce Templeton was born on April 9, 1917, to Leonard Courtney and Maximina Groce, and was raised in League City.

A fifth-generation Texan and a direct descendant of Jared Ellison Groce—who was one of Stephen F Austin's "Old Three Hundred" Texas settlers in 1821—Maxie

married former SHSU president Arleigh Templeton in 1938.

They were married for 68 years and together adopted a son, Wayne.

SHSU's former first lady was considered a devoted homemaker, a constant and wonderful asset to Arleigh's career in education. Among her many talents were that she was an accomplished gardener, seamstress, and cook, who painted beautiful ceramics.

Maxie was laid to rest during a ceremony and burial on Dec. 12 in Webster.

# Generosity



"I am so incredibly thankful for the scholarship I received from Mr. Balcom. Thanks to his generosity, I have been able to spend more time studying and participating in campus organizations, and less time worrying about tuition payments. Rarely will one experience the kindness and care of a stranger, but Mr. Balcom's scholarship really showed me that those qualities still exist today. He inspires me to give back to my community in every way possible, just as he gave to me. Thank you again Mr. Balcom for contributing to my education and success."

—Jaelan Jackson, Junior Renewable and Clean Energy Association (RCEA) President, Orange Keys Student Ambassador

M.A. Balcom  
 Legendary pipeliner and world traveler

Saudi Arabia, circa 1980

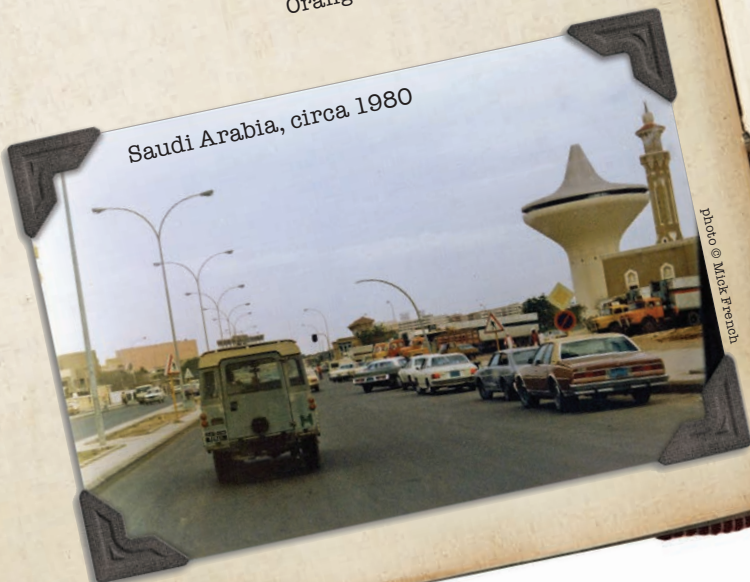


If Myron Balcom were to look back and determine how his long professional career with Mobil Oil Company began, he would point to his mother, Edith Taylor. As a school teacher who attended Sam Houston in the 1920's, she impressed upon young Myron the importance of an education and shared stories of her time at the university.

Enrolling at Sam was the beginning of a journey that would take Myron across the United States and even to the sand dunes of Saudi Arabia. In 1955, he graduated with a degree in Industrial Arts that helped land a job working at Mobil Oil. For the next thirty-five years, Myron applied his education and training until retiring as a mechanical supervisor.

Across the country or living in an entirely different continent, he never forgot his roots and alma mater. In 2006, Myron established an industrial technology endowment fund at SHSU to provide scholarships for undergraduate students majoring in industrial technology and who maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.

His generosity has helped new generations take those first, crucial steps in determining their own journey.



Saudi Arabia, circa 1980

Photo © Mick French



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Across the campus, a high level of energy and excitement is palpable as our university embraces innovation and improvements resulting in numerous achievements and national recognition for our academic programs, research, and athletics. This enthusiasm increases every day and has brought tremendous support to the **SHSU Alumni Association** through membership.



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Our Alumni Association membership is at an all-time high exceeding 11,000 active members, including more than 2,500 Life Members.