

## Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Twenty-Two

30 December 2020

### Clifford B. Hunter, 1921-2020, '43 – “Here”



Cliff Hunter left our ranks on Wednesday, December the 23<sup>rd</sup>. At 99 years young, he was the oldest attendee at the 2020 Sul Ross Group Reunion and the oldest serving Class Agent. Cliff was such a kind man and a joy to work with as a Class Agent! He cared for so many as a pharmacist in the BCS area. The SRG sends our condolences to the family. We salute him and the life of selfless service he led as a Fightin' Texas Aggie.

Max Poelger '48 on the left, Cliff Hunter '43 on the right

### All SEC Teams Announced – Ags made it!

On Tuesday morning, the Southeastern Conference released the 2020 SEC Football



Awards and the All-SEC teams, as voted on by the league's coaches. As has been the case in years past, there was a noticeable lack of Maroon & White on the list.

Texas A&M had two players named to the first-team All-SEC team in running back Isaiah Spiller and defensive tackle Bobby Brown. Tight end Jalen Wydermyer, along with offensive linemen Kenyon Green, Dan Moore and Carson Green received second-team honors.

There are more Texas Aggie players to read about and you can access the site here:

[2020 SEC Football Awards, All-SEC Team Announced \(secsports.com\)](https://secsports.com)

### A Lead-in to the next Two Topics.....

You may well be wondering why the following two pieces on the USAF IG investigation and the West Point cheating episode? Good input and question!! So here is our thinking. Both are germane to what is happening here at Aggieland, and microcosms of America.

Regarding the IG investigation, it is relevant and similar to the TAMU Commission on DEI. The West Point episode is related to the classroom cheating incident in the TAMU

Mays School; reported in Bulletin 21. Therefore, perhaps we can learn something from both. And they illustrate that what is happening here is not isolated to Aggieland.

The observation from the USAF senior officer – in response to the USAF Inspector General Report, which was a similar process to the conduct of the TAMU Commission on DEI – addresses the demand for “social justice” in the past several months without much definition or constructive suggestions leading to a plan for doing something about it. On to the next two topics.....

## **USAF Releases Inspector General Report on Racial Disparity in the Department of the Air Force**

After a Department of Defense Directive was issued on December 20 on Diversity, a massive, 150-page report was also released on Dec. 21, showing wide-spread racial disparities within the Air Force, with Black Airmen reporting distrust with their chain of command and military justice, and a review of data showing Black Airmen are much more likely to face administrative and criminal punishment compared to white Airmen.

The Air Force Inspector General’s Independent Racial Disparity Review is based on more than 123,000 survey responses from Airmen, 138 in-person sessions at bases across the Department, and 27,000 pages of responses. The review was launched in June following a nationwide reckoning on race relations in the country, and even those behind the effort were surprised at the response. One can access the report here: <https://www.af.mil/Portals/1/documents/ig/IRDR.pdf>.

We asked some Air Force senior leaders for their thoughts about this. Here is what one of them (who happens to be a distinguished four-star retired General and Air Force Academy graduate) conveyed to us when asked if he believed what was reported:

*“Well, that depends on what you’re asking:*

- 1. Do I believe that minority airmen provided this honest feedback?...absolutely*
- 2. Do I believe that “systemic racism” or “white privilege” are major USAF problems?...nope*
- 3. Do I believe that we may head out on a “fix it” crusade with political and social justice perspectives leading the charge?...definitely*
- 4. Do I believe that many things will be done/changed which, in retrospect twenty years hence may reflect disappointing progress?...afraid so*
- 5. Do I believe that there are opportunities for improvement in the USAF that mirror those within society at large?...you bet*
- 6. Do I believe there’s a solution to these issues that’s achievable and lasting?...definitely*
- 7. Do I believe that the solution to racial discrimination **IS** to help a group of “disadvantaged victims” fulfill equal social standing as reflected in our Declaration of Independence and Constitution, and enjoy every opportunity inherent therein, but **IS NOT** to accuse, punish and discriminate against another group misidentified as “oppressors?...absolutely*

*Bottom line: There is a way to make good things happen, both in the USAF and in our broader American society. As Thomas Sowell has said, “Most of the social history...over the past three*

*decades, has been a history of replacing what works with what sounds good.” We can fix this, hopefully forever, but it’s going to be challenging, interesting and painful.”*

We present this to you because we believe these are sage, and wise thoughts for all of us to ponder! When we asked the General to expound on #7, this is what he said:

*“I think with #7 that it’s very much in vogue today to identify a “guilty party” - in this case, those with a perceived “racial privilege.” Currently, social activists point to white males as the culprits. Also, once one identifies that the “right answer” involves raising the qualifications and competitiveness of a racial minority to a point where they can fully enjoy the opportunities of a society that is very much a meritocracy (achievement gets you ahead), one is identified as a bigot and racist who needs to be “woke.” No matter what happens to African Americans as we strive to “fix it,” if in the process white males (and females) lose their drive and creativity, Our Nation is going to get buried based by the competing, global threats that face us.”*

This leads us back to July 2020 when the Chancellor announced that the Foundation would provide \$100M to assist disadvantaged Black and Hispanic kids to get in TAMU. The increase in Black enrolment will have to be accomplished in accordance with the changes to the Affirmative Action Federal laws, while complying with the competitive selection laws for entrance into the Flagship Universities – TAMU being the best one of the two! And a lot depends in this effort upon acceptance of responsibility, the willingness to help oneself, and working together instead of shouting demands for justice that are undefined!

## **West Point Cheating Episode**

As reported in the Washington Examiner by Haley Smith in her 21 December Article, The United States Military Academy at West Point is facing its worst cheating scandal since 1976, with more than 70 students accused of cheating on a calculus exam.

Seventy-two first-year cadets and one second-year cadet were accused of cheating on a calculus exam in May, *USA Today* reported on Monday. Instructors noticed the cheating after the students made the same mistake on the test.

Two of the cases were dismissed for lack of evidence, and four were dropped when the cadets resigned. Fifty-five of the remaining 67 cadets were admitted to the Willful Admission Program on Dec. 9. One official told the *New York Times* that the program is a sort of boot camp where students will be paired with a mentor and asked to write about their experiences. Those who complete it will be on probation for the rest of their time at the school. Three other cadets admitted to cheating but were not eligible for the program. One can access the entire article here: [More than 70 cadets accused in worst cheating scandal at West Point since 1970s \(washingtonexaminer.com\)](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/more-than-70-cadets-accused-in-worst-cheating-scandal-at-west-point-since-1970s)

## **New Maritime Vessel Authorized by Congress for TAMU Maritime Galveston!**

*The U.S. Congress has approved \$390 million to fund construction of a fourth National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV), which will be assigned to the Texas A&M Maritime Academy at Texas A&M University at Galveston. The state-of-the-art ship will serve as a training platform for*

future merchant mariners and offer a critical disaster resource in the Gulf Coast. The ship is expected to be delivered to campus in 2025.

*“Investment in the Gulf Coast’s only state maritime academy is essential to strengthening Texas’ maritime industry, which provides billions in economic support to the state and ensures rapid response capabilities in the most hurricane-prone region of the United States,” said John Sharp, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System. “We are grateful to the Texas congressional delegation, state elected officials, former students and industry leaders for their support in securing this resource.”*

The NSMV series is a new class of purpose-built ships to replace the aging and outdated fleet



*of training vessels used by state maritime academies to provide required at-sea training and secondarily serve as disaster response and relief vessels. The 525-foot ship is outfitted with eight classrooms, a full training bridge, lab spaces, an auditorium, space available for hospital facilities, roll-on/roll-off ramps, cargo crane and berths for 600 cadets, and up to 1,000 humanitarian workers.*

*“This ship will not only provide student cadets with next-generation maritime training, but will also support humanitarian relief missions,” said Texas A&M President Michael K. Young. “Selfless service is a core value of Texas A&M, and we look forward to the honor of serving others for many years to come.”*

One can access the whole story written by Rebecca Watts in her 21 December 2020 article by going to: <https://today.tamu.edu/2020/12/22/texas-am-at-galveston-awarded-new-state-of-the-art-vessel-by-federal-government/>.

### **Some Data about Foreign “International” TAMU Faculty**

One of our SRG members was told by a junior Aero Engineering Aggie (about to begin his 6<sup>th</sup> semester) that “a majority of his professors to date have been foreign.” We realize this is anecdotal. But it was worth checking into the data posted on the TAMU web site.

If you care to dive a bit deeper into the Faculty Profile data, please go to: <https://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Faculty-Demographics>. You will find that there were 1154 foreign (referred to as “International Faculty”) professors, tenured or on track to be tenured, with a total of 4988 faculty as the data is presented.

Some additional foreign professors are in the “ethnic” data as the notes suggest – so about a quarter are foreign as we conclude. And you shall learn that the total grew over the past few years: 830 International Faculty in 2015; 866 in 2016; 880 in 2017; 911 in 2018; and 1154 in 2019’

We did some more digging and found out that It is typical for engineering/science to have a high percentage of international faculty, here as well as in other universities. This is a reflection of the demographics of students pursuing PhDs in these fields. US nationals more commonly prefer employment over graduate school following their BS engineering/science degree. More to come on this topic in the future.

### **Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Assessment and Warning About the China Threat**

Director Radcliffe spelled out clearly, in his December 2020 Assessment, the threat China poses globally and their strategic objective of dominating the US and the World. As we begin the Spring semester here at Aggieland, we should remember that at last count (reference our previous Bulletins about this), we had over 1700 Chinese students, paid for and sponsored by the Chinese Government, attending TAMU. As we welcome our newly appointed Provost, Dr. Weichold. We trust that he shall review the oversight and protocols regarding this cohort. Dr. Weichold is an Aggie and earned all three engineering degrees from TAMU. His previous experience includes being President of TAMU at Qatar and serving before on the Provost's staff. We believe he will be on top of this. We also strongly believe that he would be a superb permanent TAMU Provost (vice interim) in June 2021. One can read about the DNI's assessment here: [China hits back at US spy chief's 'greatest threat to freedom' claim | China | The Guardian](#).

### **“Short Bursts”**

- I January 2021 is the start date for Dr. Junkins as our interim President, and for Dr. Weichold as our interim Provost. Welcome!! We, the SRG, look forward to working with and supporting you two gentlemen.
- We found this to be a helpful AND UNDERSTANDABLE short video about being inoculated with the COVID vaccines – [VIDEO-2020-12-13-21-17-21.MP4 \(11.7MB\)](#)
- President Young's end of term messages – revealing. One can draw their own conclusions: <https://president.tamu.edu/messages/index.html>

**We wish our SRG members and all Texas Aggies and their families the very best in the New year for good health and happiness!**

You can reach us at: [SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com](mailto:SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com)

**Opt-In Reminder:** Anyone (Ags and non Ags, SRG Ags and all other Ags too) can “opt in” by going to <https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/sulrossgroup.aspx> and simply putting in your name and email address, and then clicking on “submit.” You will then automatically receive all the SRG Bulletins.

**If you wish comment to Those who decide:**  
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