

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Rudder Association Responds to Concerns Over "Outside Influence" at Texas A&M

Group Strongly Advocates for Stakeholder Influence in Higher Education

COLLEGE STATION, Texas, July 15, 2023 - The Rudder Association (TRA), a group of dedicated Aggies committed to preserving and perpetuating the core values and unique spirit of Texas A&M, today responded to recent comments by Dr. Tracy Hammond and the faculty senate regarding "outside influence" on the Texas A&M campus.

TRA holds Dr. Hammond, the faculty senate, and the faculty's scholarship, research, and teaching in high regard. But it respectfully disagrees with the characterization of taxpayers, tuition payers, and donors as "outside influence." These groups are integral to the Aggie family, whose contributions make the university's excellence possible. All citizens of Texas are stakeholders in our public institutions and have not just a right, but a responsibility to engage on issues of such importance to our state and society.

TRA also believes that regents and elected officials should not be viewed as "outside influence." These leaders and representatives are charged with ensuring that the strategic decisions of our state institutions align with the expectations and future needs of all Texans.

TRA acknowledges the national interest in Texas A&M's journalism department and the emerging narrative reflected in the statement from the faculty senators. However, it emphasizes that all stakeholders share a common goal: to produce journalists who uphold the highest standards of integrity, thereby restoring public trust in the profession for the benefit of society.

"We all have a stake in the success of this initiative," said Matt Poling, President of The Rudder Association. "Our collective aim should be to foster a journalism department that prepares its students to uphold the principles of journalistic integrity and contribute positively to their profession and our society."

About The Rudder Association

The Rudder Association, Inc. was established in the summer of 2020 by a group of dedicated Aggies with a mission to preserve, defend, and perpetuate the core values and unique culture of Texas A&M University. The Association aims to develop well-educated leaders of character who embody the values of Honor, Courage, Integrity, Discipline, and Selfless Service. As an independent entity, The Rudder Association, Inc. maintains the objectivity to observe and document when the core values and culture of Texas A&M are ignored or threatened. The Association is committed to steering a better course for education in Texas and ensuring that the traditions that make Texas A&M unique and special continue to produce patriotic leaders of character for our society. To

learn more, participate, and support the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of the Texas Aggie Culture in the spirit of Aggieland and its core values and traditions, visit [The Rudder Association](#).