Yesterday and Today
There are not many universities focused on the needs of small communities that are widely dispersed over a large geographical area. But since opening its doors in 1910, West Texas A&M University has been committed to understanding the aspirations of the young people in these small communities and fully appreciating their view of the future. Their hopes and dreams have always been an important part of our role as a regional university, and we will continue to be responsive to their needs through academic purpose and service.

—Walter V. Wendler, WTAMU President
Among the achievements of my four years in office, I feel the greatest was the establishment of this institution in this city. In the center of the Plains stands the most attractive and the most substantial institution in the state, not excepting the great University of Texas.

—T.M. Campbell, former Texas governor who signed the bill that created West Texas State Normal College.
On a September day in 1910, Mamie Conner, daughter of Lincoln and Queenie Victoria, walked across the street from her home to that awe-inspiring administration building to be the first to register at the new school. Little did she know that she was making history and opening the door to thousands of students who would walk the halls into a second century of education for the Texas Panhandle.

Those students witnessed several name changes through the years that reflected the University’s continued growth as well as its ever-expanding role in higher education. West Texas State Normal College became West Texas State Teachers College in 1923 and West Texas State College in 1949. The name changed again in 1963 to West Texas State University before becoming West Texas A&M University in 1993. But throughout the various changes, West Texas has remained a constant part of the University’s name. It expresses pride and communicates a commitment to the founding fathers who dreamed of “the establishment, maintenance and government of a state normal school to be located in West Texas.”

The school’s original 40-acres of land donated by the Conners paved the way for today’s 176-acre main campus, and the townspeople’s donation of more than $100,000 to secure the normal school’s location in Canyon paved the way for today’s presence in Amarillo, increased enrollment and expanded degree programs. West Texas A&M University continues to stand as a symbol of generosity of people like Lincoln and Queenie Victoria Conner and their extraordinary vision of endless possibilities.
TIMELINE (1909 - 1993)

1909 House bill establishes a normal college west of the 98th meridian

1910 West Texas Normal College opens under the leadership of its first president, R.B. Cousins

1914 Administration building burns to the ground

1916 College dedicates new, fireproof, four-story administration building and Georgia O'Keeffe joins faculty

1918 J.A. Hill, second president

1920 College completes Cousins Hall, the school's first dormitory

1923 Name changes to West Texas State Teachers College

1923 Georgia O'Keeffe joins faculty

1928 James P. Cornette, third president

1931 Buffalo Courts formally opens

1932 Becomes first teachers college in Texas to offer graduate instruction

1935 Buffalo Courts formally opens

1935 Panhandle-Plains Historical Society Museum opens

1940 Buffalo Courts formally opens

1942 The basketball team, dubbed "The Tallest Team in the World," plays at Madison Square Garden

1943 Buffs make first Sun Bowl appearance and win 14-13

1948 James P. Cornette, third president

1949 Name changes to West Texas State College

1950 College dedicates J.A. Hill Chapel

1951 University receives Nance Ranch donation

1953 Installation of national sorority chapters

1958 Installation of national sorority chapters

1958 The marching band marches 20 miles, earns spot in the Guinness Book of World Records

1959 Enrollment reaches all-time high of 7,935

1962 Lloyd Watkins, fourth president

1963 Name changes to West Texas State University

1965 Installation of national sorority chapters

1967 The marching band marches 20 miles, earns spot in the Guinness Book of World Records

1969 Enrollment reaches all-time high of 7,935

1971 University receives Nance Ranch donation

1972 Gail Shannon, sixth president

1974 Max Sherman, fifth president

1977 Ed Roach, seventh president

1978 Board of Regents votes to affiliate with The Texas A&M University System

1981 Name changes to West Texas A&M University

1982 Lloyd Watkins, fourth president

1983 Max Sherman, fifth president

1984 Gail Shannon, sixth president

1988 University completes Old Main renovation

1990 Barry Thompson, eighth president

1993 Name changes to West Texas A&M University

1997 University completes Old Main renovation

1999 Board of Regents votes to affiliate with The Texas A&M University System

2001 Name changes to West Texas A&M University

2003 University completes Old Main renovation

2005 Board of Regents votes to affiliate with The Texas A&M University System

2007 Name changes to West Texas A&M University
TODAY

Since its founding in 1910, West Texas A&M University has grown from a small, one-building, teacher-training school to a 176-acre residential campus offering a multitude of exceptional degree programs designed to meet today’s ever-changing needs. Over the years, WTAMU has provided a unique experience that has touched the lives of thousands of students by forging friendships, instilling ethics and values and building skills for success, while effectively changing the physical, economic and cultural landscape of the Texas Panhandle region.

Growing up in West Texas, I learned the values that are as much a part of this region as the earth itself—work hard; let your word and your handshake be your bond; never seek or settle for second best; have passion for the work you do; and above all else, take care of people, and they’ll take care of you. I’ve always believed these are the same values of West Texas A&M University—the same traits this school has always embodied and taught its students.

—Stan Sigman ’70, Retired CEO, AT&T Mobility
West Texas A&M University is a member of the NCAA Division II Lone Star Conference and offers 15 men’s and women’s programs. WTAMU also offers a number of club sports, including bowling and rodeo that are competitive on the national level.
That small, one-building school is now a bustling University campus with more than $500 million in new construction, renovations and campus beautification over the past 15 years. Multiple construction projects have transformed the WTAMU landscape with everything from new entrance signs and residence halls to a renovated Jack B. Kelley Student Center and a soon-to-be-completed, state-of-the-art Agricultural Sciences Complex. All campus facilities, from residence halls to labs, are rich in technology, with smart classrooms, ITV video teleconferencing for distance learning, wireless access and more to provide students with the best educational opportunities possible.

WTAMU also has expanded to Amarillo. The WTAMU Amarillo Center opened in 2008 and will strengthen its presence even more with a permanent, stand-alone facility scheduled to open in fall 2018. The new facility more than doubles the size of the current WTAMU Amarillo Center and offers the people of the Panhandle unprecedented access to higher education. The facility serves as home to several upper-level academic programs while providing space for multiple University resources all under one roof.

WTAMU Amarillo Center

People interested in a productive future for Amarillo and the Panhandle recognize the importance and interdependence of Amarillo, Canyon and WT. The WTAMU Amarillo Center will allow WT to serve the people on the I-27 corridor and in the Panhandle from two locations—one in Canyon with certain programs and offerings and another in Amarillo with other programs and offerings. This enables us to expand our presence with a commitment to serve and help the top 26 counties thrive.

—Walter V. Wendler, WTAMU President
WTAMU’s campus landscape, academic programs and Amarillo facilities reflect ongoing efforts to meet the needs and challenges of the regional community. In addition to the WTAMU Amarillo Center, the University has ties to the Small Business Development Center and the WT Enterprise Center. Both of these Amarillo entities are designed to expand the economic base of the Panhandle region by helping build businesses and new job opportunities. With programs distinctive to the area and a faculty focused on the curricula and research of rural communities, WTAMU is well prepared to play a role in helping build a stronger workforce to drive the economy across the Texas Panhandle.

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

The University’s top-notch facilities provide the perfect setting for students to pursue their hopes and dreams. Just as the campus landscape has expanded with improvements, the University’s academic offerings have grown from yesterday’s domestic science and manual training classes to a master’s program in engineering, top-ranked online programs in business and a Ph.D. in agriculture. A new Doctor of Education in educational leadership is pending approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to prepare visionary and executive professionals to recognize and serve the needs and challenges of rural communities.

Serving the Panhandle

WTAMU’s campus landscape, academic programs and Amarillo facilities reflect ongoing efforts to meet the needs and challenges of the regional community. In addition to the WTAMU Amarillo Center, the University has ties to the Small Business Development Center and the WT Enterprise Center. Both of these Amarillo entities are designed to expand the economic base of the Panhandle region by helping build businesses and new job opportunities. With programs distinctive to the area and a faculty focused on the curricula and research of rural communities, WTAMU is well prepared to play a role in helping build a stronger workforce to drive the economy across the Texas Panhandle.

“The innovation, entrepreneurship and tenacity of the people of the Texas Panhandle—that’s what I want to be in the DNA of West Texas A&M University.”

—Walter V. Wendler, WTAMU President
ANTUAN BALL, AKA #48 “CLUTCH”

**Profession:** Professional basketball player and entertainer

**Organization:** Harlem Globetrotters, an exhibition team that combines athleticism, theater and comedy. The team has played in 26,000 games in more than 100 countries and territories. With 30 of the nation’s most skilled shooters, they have set nine Guinness World Records in 2016.

**Career:** Ball graduated from WT in 2015 and was invited to a dunk contest sponsored by ESPN in Chicago. He won the national dunk contest in 2015 and the three-point championship inside the historic Hinkle Fieldhouse during Final Four weekend in Indianapolis. Shortly after, he tried out for the Harlem Globetrotters and joined the team on Christmas Day.

Ball played for the WT Buffs for two seasons from 2012-2015. He started 55 games, totaled 14 double-doubles, shot a career .583 from the field, totaled 472 rebounds, 287 beginning on the defensive end, 66 assists, 64 blocks and had 26 steals while averaging 11.2 points per game. He was a two-time LSC All-Defensive team selection and three-time LSC Defensive Player of the Week.

**Graduated:** 2015, Bachelor of Science, Sports and Exercise Sciences

SHANNA PEEPLES

**Profession:** Educator and curriculum specialist

**Career:** Peebles was a reporter at the Amarillo Globe-News for five years before becoming an English teacher and department chair for the Amarillo Independent School District in 2002. She taught at Palo Duro High School for 14 years and served as an instructional coach to her colleagues for four years. In 2015, she was named National Teacher of the Year and toured the country speaking on education for the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, D.C. She is currently a doctoral student at Harvard University.

**Achievements:** 2015 National Teacher of the Year for the Council of Chief State School Officers, the most prestigious national honors program focused on promoting excellence in teaching.

**Graduated:** 1997, Bachelor of Arts, English

CAROLYN DORIN-BALLARD

**Profession:** Professional bowler and director of coaching

**Organization:** Professional Women’s Bowlers Association (PWBA)

**Career:** Dorin-Ballard bowled her first ball at age six and became one of the top female 10-pin bowlers in the world. She has won 22 professional titles and was the first-ever female to bowl a 300 game in Professional Bowlers Association (PBA) competition. She was named the Female Bowler of the Decade for the 2000s by the Bowlers Journal and inducted into the United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Hall of Fame in 2008. Currently, she is the pro staff manager for Turbo 2-N-1 Grips and director of coaching for USBC.

**Achievements:** 20 Career PWBA National titles, three-time major champion, three Career PBA Women’s Series Titles, five-time member of Team USA, five Career USBC Women’s Open Championship Titles, 10-time Bowlers Journal All-American, two-time International Bowling Media Association Female Bowler of the Year, two-time PWBA Player of the Year, three-time National Collegiate Bowling Coaches Association (NCBCA) First-Team All-American with WT, two-time NCBCA All-Tournament Team, two career XBowling Intercollegiate Team Championship titles with WT, 1987 - Linden, N.J. Sportswoman of the Year.

**Graduated:** 1989, Bachelor of Arts, Mass Communications

RUSSELL D. “RED” STEAGALL

**Profession:** Award-winning songwriter, cowboy poet and entertainer

**Career:** Steagall has a 45-year career in cowboy entertainment that spans the globe. He worked in the agricultural industry before becoming a music industry executive, recording artist, songwriter, author and entertainer. He has received many awards, including a Grammy, for his 24 albums, 200 recorded compositions, 26 charted singles and four books. Since 1994, he has hosted a radio program, “Red Steagall’s Cowboy Corner,” and television show “Somewhere West of Wall Street.” He also hosts the annual Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering near Fort Worth.

**Achievements:** 2018 National Golden Spur Award from the Ranching Heritage Association, 2016 Man of the Year by Western Swing, 2015 W.A. “Bill” King Award for Excellence in Agriculture, 2012 Boss of the Plains Award from the National Ranching Heritage Center, 2011 Charles M. Russell Heritage Award, 2006 Texas Poet Laureate, 2006 Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame and the Western Music Hall of Fame, 2006 Charles Goodnight Award, 2005 Grammy Award, 2004 Inductee of the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame and the Hall of Great Westerners, 1999 Spirit of Texas Award and inductee of the Texas Trail of Fame, 1991 Official Cowboy Poet of Texas, eight Wrangler Awards for Best Original Music and Best Traditional Music.

**Graduated:** 1960, Bachelor of Science, Animal Science and Agronomy
To collect, preserve, conserve, exhibit and interpret the historical, ethnological, cultural and scientific heritage of the Panhandle-Plains region of Texas and related areas of the Southwest; to operate and maintain the PPHM in accordance with the rules and regulations of The Texas A&M University Board of Regents; to enlist interest and support in achieving this mission; and to undertake other related activities.

Hattie Anderson, a history professor at West Texas State Normal College, envisioned a plan to collect oral histories from local pioneers.

The Texas Legislature provided $25,000, which was matched by the PPHS, and museum construction began.

The Panhandle-Plains Historical Society Museum opened its doors to the public.

James D. Hamlin gifted his collection of fine and decorative arts, making the museum a major force among Texas public art collections.

The Smith Memorial Library was established in the museum with books related to Texas, the Panhandle and the Southwest.

Comanche Chief Quanah Parker's warbonnet and lance were donated by Topay Parker, one of the chief's wives.

PPHM doubled in size, adding a research center, art galleries and Pioneer Town to the museum.

West Texas State University donated its former library for storage space.

Attendance peaked at 156,987 with the opening of the Harrington Petroleum Wing and the Texas Centennial Celebration.
PPHM AT A GLANCE
More than two million artifacts in the collection, including:

- **Frank Reaugh Collection**
  Paintings, photographs and archives belonging to the Dean of Texas Artists

- **Original PPHM building**
  Southwestern Deco structure with New Deal murals

- **Cable tool drilling rig**
  Part of The Panhandle Petroleum Story exhibit

- **Charles Goodnight Collection**
  Saddle, Texas Ranger rifle, personal effects and archives belonging to the founder of the first ranch in the Texas Panhandle

- **XIT Ranch papers**
  Records from the business dealings of what was once the largest ranch in the world at more than 3,000,000 acres

- **Ethnology Collection**
  Extensive collection of Southern Plains material culture, predominantly Comanche and Kiowa, including a Spanish/Comanche hybrid shield

- **Firearms**
  Largest public collection in the state of Texas

- **Bugbee Family Collection**
  Artifacts and archives related to the pioneer ranching family and H.D. Bugbee, artist and illustrator of the American West and first art curator at PPHM

- **Georgia O’Keeffe**
  First museum in the nation to provide three-dimensional art for sight-impaired visitors with spring debut of Georgia O’Keeffe Red Landscape

- **Historic Texas Art**
  Largest, oldest and most comprehensive collection in the state

PPHM RECOGNITION

It is a landmark institution in innumerable ways... acclaimed and internationally recognized art collections, the deeply layered archaeological record of human activity in the Panhandle, including early man in North America, irreplaceable archives, and a historical collection that documents and rivals any other in its scope and coverage for the Southern Plains and the western experience. It is a state treasure.

P. Lynn Denton, Ph.D., Director, Public History Program & Center for Texas Public History, Texas State University and Founding Director, Bob Bullock Texas History Museum

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- Best Pioneer History Collection
  —True West Magazine
- Best Western Art Collection
  —True West Magazine
- No. 2 of Top Ten Western Museums
  —True West Magazine
- Certificate of Excellence
  —Trip Advisor
- Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums

HIGHLIGHTS

Art from PPHM is loaned to U.S. embassies worldwide—most recently to Brussels for the office of Kay Bailey Hutchison, Permanent U.S. Representative to NATO.

Michael R. Grauer, PPHM Curator of Art and Western Heritage, is a nationally recognized speaker and expert on Western Heritage, artist Frank Reaugh and historic Texas Art.

Archaeologists and paleontologists from across the United States, Canada and Europe come to PPHM to do research.

The PPHM Research Center is a source of special collections and archives that draw authors, historians and graduate students from across the country, in addition to serving students and faculty at WTAMU.

The PPHM is my single favorite museum and a huge source of inspiration to me as a historian. Touring it is an amazing learning experience.

S.C. Gwynne
Author of New York Times bestseller and Pulitzer Prize nominee Empire of the Summer Moon
In many areas, we have been successful. We educate the Panhandle, producing three of four public school teachers and leaders in the top 26 counties. Our agricultural roots are present everywhere in this region of our great state. Excellent faculty in the arts, the humanities and performance disciplines create and celebrate the cultural record of the Panhandle. Our nurses and those in related health care professions provide expert care for our people. Engineering builds the Panhandle, and business leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators create economic opportunities. All this presents a challenge for our future. In order to continue to serve, we must grow and develop to meet the changing environment of the coming decades. The mission that will evolve—WT125: From the Panhandle to the World—requires all of us to exhibit the West Texas determination that has marked WT for more than a century. This gift of tenacity will not change, but will guide us toward an even brighter future. This is our job, and it is WT.

Walter V. Wendler