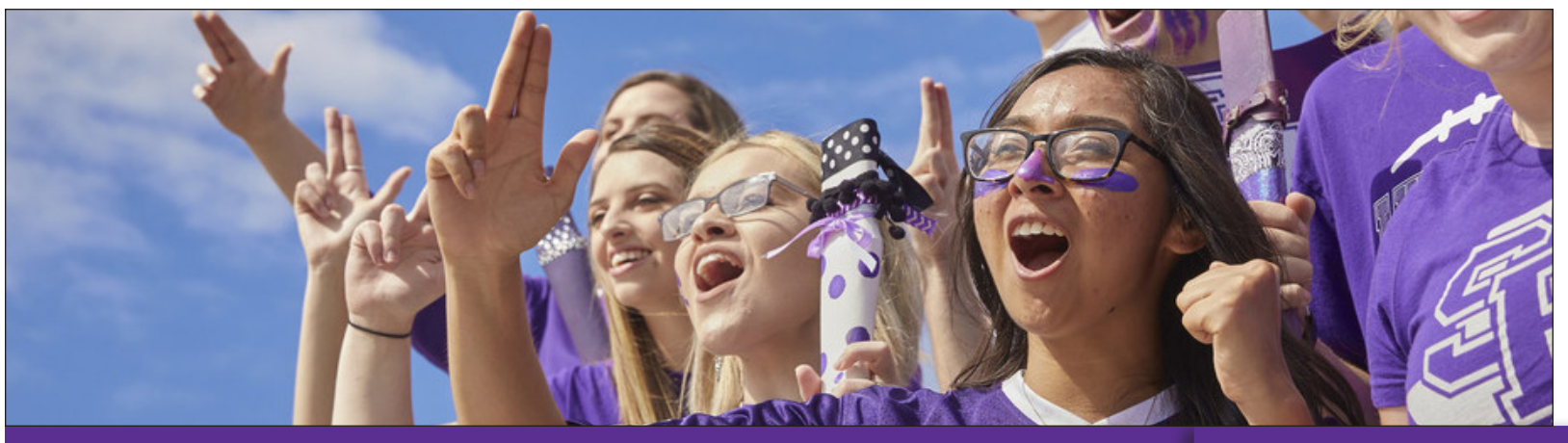

THE PINE LOG welcomes the ***Class of 2026*** and incoming transfer students

WELCOME EDITION 2022

the PINE LOG

The Independent Voice of Stephen F. Austin State University

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Griffith expansion ongoing

Photo courtesy of the Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts

Construction continues at the Griffith Fine Arts Building on the SFA campus with an estimated move-in phase planned for summer 2023 and classes underway in fall 2023.

Progress continues on the much-anticipated renovation and expansion of the Griffith Fine Arts Building on the SFA campus with an estimated mid-2023 completion date just under a year away.

University and construction officials remain optimistic that current deadlines can be met, and that the building will be ready for occupancy prior to the start of the 2023-24 academic year, as planned.

As the project moves forward, spaces within the outwardly visible exterior walls are becoming more defined as the state-of-the-art classrooms, laboratories, offices, studios and theatres designers and fine arts faculty and staff had envisioned, according to Dr. Gary Wurtz, dean of the Micky Elliott College of Fine Arts.

"Not that long ago, I would look out my window at the deep, muddy pool that had been placed between the Griffith Fine Arts Building and College Street, and all I could think was 'what a mess,'" Wurtz said. "Now, I walk through the building, and the progress is stunning. Most of the spaces are framed out, and you get a true perspective of the scope of the project, and you realize that SFA is fully committed to supporting the fine arts and fine arts education. That is a spectacular feeling."

The Fine Arts Expansion Initiative is extending the Griffith building along North Street. The project includes renovations to W.M. Turner Auditorium, and the state-of-the-art building will also feature two dance studios, two new theatres, recording studio, sound stage, audio and video editing rooms, an

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Asking for help, engaging faculty lead to success

Andrew Dies
Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs / Dean of Students

Greetings, Lumberjacks!

The summer is almost over, which means fall is almost upon us. We are excited for you to come (or return) to campus. Fall is an incredible time at SFA, with so many opportunities to connect, reconnect and get involved. Your first few weeks will be jam packed with tons of activities as part of our Weeks of Welcome. This fall is particularly special in that we are officially launching the Lumberjack Wellness Network! This is an initiative you will start to learn more about as the semester begins.

Speaking of beginnings, the start of the school year is a chance for you to start fresh. Perhaps you are a first-year student or maybe you are returning for another amazing year at SFA. Regardless of where you are coming from, now is the chance to step forward with an optimistic outlook into this new year. It is a chance to develop some new academic skills, let go of some bad habits, and create new connections and relationships. Below are some tips I wish someone had told me when I first went to school.

"Making connections is quite possibly one of the most important contributors to your success, not only personally but also academically."

Get connected. Making connections is quite possibly one of the most important contributors to your success, not only personally but also academically. The great thing is that your connection is specific to you! This could be joining one of the 200-plus student organizations we have on campus. Or maybe it's partnering with a faculty member to do research on something. Or maybe it's getting a job on campus and forming new friendships. Or how about going to support the Lumberjacks and Ladyjacks at one of our athletic events? There are so many different ways you can connect and build that school spirit. This connection will help sustain you and help you be more successful.

Engage with your faculty. We have some of the best faculty in the country here at SFA. They are here to not only help you better yourself academically but also personally and professionally. All of our faculty members are dedicated to your success and want to do what they can to help. Now your grades and academic progression are on you, but faculty members are amazing guides to help you along your journey. Get to know them, and get to know their path and how they got here. This will make your experience much more enriching.

Have an open mind. Part of coming to college is to learn and grow. Much of this learning will occur outside of the classroom. It will occur in your student organization, with your roommate or with another student in class. Sometimes it will occur through conflict. I encourage you to keep an open mind and listen to all perspectives. More importantly, I encourage you to listen to hear rather than listen to respond. It's OK to disagree, but we can still be respectful of each other as fellow human beings. Conflict is bound to happen, but it's how we respond to that conflict that is important.

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Lumberjack Wellness Network created to link students with myriad resources

By Corrie Martz
News Editor

Beginning this fall, SFA students will have access to several resources to help their mental and physical well-being through the Lumberjack Wellness Network.

Managed by the Dean of Students Office, LWN includes a system of 20 to 30 on-campus iCare ambassadors, as well as a website that includes resources for most any student need.

"With the Counseling Services on a huge backlog and roughly 20 to 40% of our students coming into our campus with hardships, there is a high likelihood of many students dropping out or moving schools if not given the help they need," Andrew Dies, assistant vice president of student affairs and dean of students, said.

"The goal of the Lumberjack Wellness Network is to minimize that from happening by providing students with a community that cares."

The iCare ambassadors are SFA faculty and staff members who have completed extensive training so they could be fully equipped to handle any student concerns through either engaging in a conversation or leading them to the right resources.

Students can go to these ambassadors for concerns about any of their several dimensions of wellness. These include: career and financial wellness, emotional wellness, environmental wellness, intellectual wellness, physical wellness, socio-cultural wellness and spiritual wellness.

"The Lumberjack Wellness Network equips tons of people on campus to be able to not only handle students currently in a crisis but to also get students more connected with the University so hopefully they don't ever reach the crisis point," Director of Campus Recreation Ken Morton said.

LUMBERJACK WELLNESS NETWORK

The Lumberjack Wellness Network website lists numerous resources for issued that could potentially arise with a college student. These could include concerns about anxiety, body image, food insecurity, financial problems, bad grades, how to find internships, hazing, LGBTQIA+ support and much more.

According to the website, The Lumberjack Wellness Network equips students with "tools, resources, and appropriate recommendations and referrals, connecting you to the help you need. "

For more information about the Lumberjack Wellness Network and the seven dimensions of wellness, visit sfasu.edu/lwn.

Start planning now for your official SFA class ring and The Big Dip

File photo

The Big Dip is a beloved Lumberjack tradition. Students dip their hands in purple dye and receive their official SFA rings.

The SFA Alumni Association offers an exciting program to help undergraduate students save for their official SFA class ring now. Students who have completed 60 or more credit hours are eligible to purchase their SFA ring and participate in the Big Dip, which is one of the first steps to graduation and one of the best-loved Lumberjack traditions. Students can sign up for the ring-savings program beginning their freshman year to save up for their ring early and not have to pay for the cost of their ring in one large amount.

To sign up for the program a student should log into their mySFA account and select a savings amount of either $75 or $150 to be applied to their bill each fall and spring semester. By visiting www.sfaring.com students and parents can get an idea of the type of ring their student might like and the estimated cost of the ring. Accounts will be billed each semester and saved for the student until their either complete 60 semester credit hours or is ready to purchase his/her ring. If you have Federal Aid, you must approve this charge with the Business Office.

In 2002, the SFA Alumni Association began a tradition called the Big Dip where students who had purchased rings dipped one hand in a large bowl of purple, grape-scented dye before receiving their rings. The students' hands remained purple for several days — showcasing their Lumberjack pride and achievement. This unique tradition has grown tremendously with an average of more than 350 participants each semester and now three ceremonies throughout each Big Dip day.

"During the past several years, the cost of rings has escalated, and purchasing a ring is becoming harder for students and their parents to do in one lump sum," said Craig Turnage, executive director of the SFA Alumni Association. The Alumni Association recognized there was a need to help remedy this situation and began working with several SFA departments and Balfour, the official SFA ring partner, to create an online program to help students start saving for their rings.

Visit www.sfaring.com to view class ring prices, sizes, estimated prices and styles. The Alumni Association also has samples of each ring available for students to see in person. Students can visit the Alumni Association's office from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in the Tracie D. Pearman Alumni Center, located on the SFA campus. Call (936) 468-3407 if you have questions, or students may visit their mySFA account to view a list of frequently asked questions concerning the ring-savings program.

To learn about other traditions, events and ways students and their parents can get involved at SFA and with the Alumni Association, visit www.sfaalumni.com.

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