

# Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs

First Clubs Organized – 1922

Federation Organized – 1928

Mothers who are affiliated with the Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs are members of a unique group. Texas A&M is believed to be the only university in the nation where mothers are organized for the purpose of supporting their students and the University.

In September 1921, Harold Peoples entered Texas A&M, an all-male college with an enrollment of about 1,800 students. Strict rules forbade students to have cars at school or to drive cars belonging to someone else. The young men depended primarily on trains for transportation between campus and their homes, and if they needed to go to Bryan, they either rode the trolley or walked. For long periods of time, most students saw and communicated with no one other than professors and fellow students. Mrs. H. L. Peoples, mother of Harold, became concerned about the quality of campus life – no entertainment, no culture, and a complete lack of women's influence.

While attending a state PTA convention in San Antonio, Mrs. Peoples talked with Pat Neff, Governor of Texas at the time. She expressed her concern about the need for parental guidance to keep students from dropping out of school. She believed that student stability and success were products of strong ties with the home, and that those close ties should not be broken when students attend college.

Mrs. Peoples decided to visit her son at College Station on her way back to Dallas. When she arrived on campus, Harold was on a field trip. However, she met another student from Dallas who was impressed with her interest. He told her that parents should not wait until graduation to visit their sons, but should become familiar with Texas A&M during their students' freshman year. While on campus, Mrs. Peoples also inspected dorm rooms and talked with other students. She left College Station determined to do something for Texas A&M students.

In February 1922, 11 interested mothers met in Dallas and the first Texas A&M Mothers' Club was organized with Mrs. Ada Brooks Allen Peoples as president. The club's objective was "to contribute in every way to the comfort and welfare of the boys and to cooperate with the faculty of the college in maintaining a high standard of moral conduct and intellectual attainment." That mission of helping students and working closely with University officials to support the University remains the same today.

To determine the best steps to take, the 11 mothers decided to visit campus. Traveling in a caravan of Model Ts over dusty roads, they presented themselves and their ideas to Texas A&M officials, but were practically laughed off campus. Undaunted, they later organized a second caravan, and being wise mothers knowing the way to a man's heart, they took with them what they called "a spread." The event featuring home-cooked delicacies was such a success that it became an annual event extended to include the entire student body.

Mrs. Peoples realized that doing "motherly" things were appreciated by students, but that many other Texas boys desired a college education, but lacked the financial means. With that in mind, the first Aggie Moms' Club in Dallas established a student loan fund, the genesis of scholarship programs that today are at the center of many Aggie Moms' Club activities.

Interestingly, a man – Dr. H. B. Stout – initiated the second club, in Fort Worth. At the time, Dr. Stout, a Methodist minister, was president of Texas Women's College in Fort Worth. He had a personal interest in the project, as his son, Stephen, was a Texas A&M student. Dr. Stout placed the following ad in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* in October 1922: "All mothers of boys who are attending A&M College will meet at a luncheon Wednesday noon. The A&M Mothers' Club will be formed."

The mothers' club idea spread rapidly, and eight clubs established the Federation in 1928. The Federation Board today consists of 12 elected officers and about 12 appointed officers who serve as a coordinating board for 108 local clubs. Aggie Moms' Clubs now exist in Texas, Louisiana, Colorado, Arizona, Minnesota, and

Western Wisconsin, with a paid membership of around 6,700 women. Mothers who live out-of-state or more than 25 miles from a mothers' club may ask to become "adopted" by an existing club or apply to start a new club in their area.

From the largest Aggie Moms' Club, with a membership of more than 350 women, to the smallest, every club has the same goal – to join together for the benefit of the Texas A&M and its student body. The common experience of being the mother of an Aggie creates a bond among members that exists in few other organizations.

The contributions of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs to the University are impressive. The Aggie Band, the Corps of Cadets, the Endowment Fund for the Sterling C. Evans Library, Fish and Transfer Camps, Peer Orientation Conferences, and more than 1000 campus organizations have benefited from their support. During the 2016-2017 year, local mothers' clubs sent approximately \$550,000 to Texas A&M University, including over \$350,000 in scholarships. The Mothers' Clubs maintain a close working relationship with Texas A&M's President, as well as other administrators.

In addition to local Aggie Mom Club activities, the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs holds three membership meetings on campus each academic year.

Meetings are scheduled as follows:

Fall Meeting – the Saturday preceding the first day of Fall semester classes

Winter Meeting – the Saturday following the first day of Spring semester classes

Spring Meeting and Boutique – the Friday and Saturday of Family Weekend

The election and installation of Federation officers is held during the Spring Federation meeting during Family Weekend. It is also when Aggie Mom Boutique convenes, featuring approximately 200 tables of TAMU-themed items and collectibles. Boutique is a major fund-raising event for participating clubs.

In addition to the aforementioned meetings, the Federation holds its annual Aggie Mom Camp in College Station which is a great weekend filled with fun, games and Aggie Spirit. There are also District Meetings where clubs gather to share, learn, and have fun.

The Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs are proud organizations – proud of Texas A&M, proud of the sons and daughters they send to Texas A&M, and proud of contributing to the education of the students and to the future of Texas A&M and the State of Texas.

## **SUPPORT YOUR AGGIE STUDENT! JOIN YOUR LOCAL AGGIE MOM'S CLUB!**

For more information, contact:

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