

WHAT IS A CLASS AGENT?

If you are elected, you will become part of over a 100-year tradition of Class Agents and will continue a service provided to generations of Classes. "The Alumni Association of the A&M College of Texas" was formed during the period 1886-88. The Association helped gain public support for A&M during a difficult time and helped boost student morale.

During the 1890s, under the dynamic leadership of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, A&M experienced tremendous growth and increased public recognition. As a result a new spirit swept through the student body and began to generate new interest among former students. In 1893, following the eighth Alumni Association meeting, the executive committee of The Association decided that each Class should have a ***Class Agent*** whose responsibility would be to "correspond with the members of that Class to try to induce them to return to the college for commencement." Class Agents were intended to form a personal link between former students and The Association and Texas A&M. To this day, they continue to be one of the strongest attributes of The Association of Former Students.

CLASS AGENTS & THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS

The Association of Former Students promotes, encourages, facilitates and supports the efforts of its Class Agents in fulfilling their roles. As a Class Agent, you will get to know the staff of the Former Student Programs office at The Association very well. This department provides the workforce that deals with the practical details of the communication and planning of your job. Class Agents' primary point of contact is the Class Programs Coordinator; however, the entire Former Student Programs staff will always be there to lend you a helping hand whenever you may need it, so don't hesitate to ask!

THE MISSION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS

- Strengthen The Association of Former Students;
- Promote the interests and welfare of Texas A&M University; and
- Perpetuate ties of affection and esteem formed in university or college days.
- Serve the Student Body.

CLASS AGENT DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Maintain ties with Classmates and serve as the liaison between your Class, The Association of Former Students and the University and Represent the Class
 - to The Association Leadership Council, in regular (October and February) or called meetings, as set out in the bylaws of The Association of Former Students,
 - to the Board of Directors (when necessary or to serve on special committees),
 - to the administration, faculty and staff of Texas A&M University and The Association of Former Students, whenever such Class representation is deemed appropriate by the Class membership.
2. Support the Annual Fund by participating as Active Members and by learning about the contribution programs of The Association including the Century Club, and informing your Class and encouraging your Classmates to become active members of The Association.

3. Attend the fall and winter Leadership Council Meetings and Development Sessions held in College Station, to continue to learn about your role and the resources available to you, ask questions and exchange ideas and information with your Co-Class Agents and Agents of other Classes.
4. Write Class Newsletters with support from your Co-Class Agents including Classmate, University and fund raising information with assistance from The Association staff to produce two - three newsletters a year.
5. Maintain ties with Classmates and serve as the liaison between your Class, the Leadership Council and The Association Staff.
6. Relay Classmate information to The Association: changes of address, Aggie Baby Central postings, wedding announcements, job changes, etc.
7. Plan and facilitate formal and mini Class Reunions with the assistance of The Association staff.
8. If needed, see the senior Class Gift through to completion, and lead any future gift ideas or committees.

The Annual Fund

The Association operates on funding from its membership, and does not receive funding from Texas A&M University. The Annual Fund is The Association's annual appeal to its former students for financial support. The dollars raised support many of the university's academic programs, A&M's traditions, such as Class Council, the Corps of Cadets, Miss Reveille, the Aggie Band, teaching excellence awards, faculty recognition, graduate programs scholarships, short-term student loans, student life programs, and numerous other campus programs. The Association's Annual fund also supports numerous former student programs, including newsletters, Reunions, Aggie Musters, electronic communication, and the Online Directory.

Class Agents have the responsibility to help The Association maximize their Class' percentage giving rate to the Annual Fund. **It is expected that every Class Agent participate in the Annual Fund every year**, and encourage the Class to give back to the university they love by supporting the organization that makes their newsletters and alumni activities possible in addition to the enormous campus support given yearly.

To be effective in this role, a Class Agent must learn about the Annual Fund program, e.g. the levels of Century Club membership, methods of payment, the Matching Gift program, how monies raised are distributed, and the Aggie Parent Network, etc., so that this information can be passed on to Classmates.

Active Member

\$50

Century Club

\$100 – Bronze

\$250 – Silver

\$500 – Gold

\$1000 – Diamond

\$2000 – Double Diamond

\$5000 – Platinum

\$10000 – Double Platinum

\$25000 – Endowed Century Club

Class Correspondence

Class Newsletters

Newsletters are The Association of Former Students' and Class Agent's single most important communication tool, as this letter will reach **EVERY MEMBER** of your Class, **that we have an accurate e-mail address for**, regardless of their donor status, unlike *The Texas Aggie* magazine, which is only sent to Active Members.

You will need to have access to a computer, as newsletters are submitted on disk or by email to The Association of Former Students for processing. The Association will design the layout, print and mail out your newsletter. The Class Agents will be responsible for editing the content of the newsletter including basic grammar and spelling in addition to the verification the spelling of Classmates' names.

The following 2 facts are very important to remember when writing your newsletter:

(i) **WRITE REGULAR NEWSLETTERS.** A Class responds positively to a Class Agent who generates enthusiasm and perpetuates Class ties, and this is only possible when you keep in touch regularly. You will be expected to write a 2-3 letters a year, and encourage your Classmates to answer with news of moves, marriages, babies, new jobs and anything else of interest to the rest of the Class. Your Class will follow the Newsletter Schedule used by the Former Student Programs office.

(ii) **ORGANIZE YOUR TIME.** Class Agents must be well organized to efficiently manage the large volume of mail/email you will receive from your Classmates. The process includes compiling Classmates news, Silver Taps information, general Class updates, Annual Fund information including recognition of new members to the Century Club. Basic spelling and grammar checks should also be done before you submit the newsletter. The Association staff will add Strategic Association Messages (SAMs) and current Association news. A Classmate Information Sheet and an Annual Fund contribution card will be included in each newsletter.

Classmate Updates

It is the Class Agent's responsibility to stay in contact with The Association of Former Students and update any changes in your contact information immediately. As you receive information from your Classmates, report their news which would include: address changes, births (Aggie Baby Central), awards and honors, Aggie deaths (Silver Taps) or other pertinent information about your Class members to the Class Programs Coordinator on a regular basis, so that our records can be kept as up to date as possible. Our data is only as good as our constituents allow. Class Agents should also be on the look out for news of Classmates that may be of interest to people in other Classes and to the *Texas Aggie*.

Thank You's

Quarterly Annual Fund Giving Reports, listing Classmates who have joined the Annual Fund during the quarter, will be sent to Class Agents. Class Agents are expected to send thank you postcards to these individuals who do not wish to receive them electronically.

Sympathy Notices

As The Association of Former Students is notified of the deaths of former students, reports are generated. If a family member or Classmate does not report the occurrence, we do not get that information elsewhere, so it would be very beneficial for Classmates to submit obituaries of Aggies that

they see in the newspapers. The Association has created a standard sympathy card that Class Agents should send to the family of any Classmate who passes away.

Class Reunions

Class Reunions take on more significance as the years go by. Friendships are renewed and the time spent at Reunions is special. Your Formal Reunion will be a major planning project during your tenure, but you can also plan Mini Reunions during your five-year term to keep Classmates involved and excited. Mini Reunions do not need to be elaborate affairs but can include "tailgate" parties before a game, picnics in the park or a get-together in a restaurant after a game. Your newsletter is the perfect promotional tool for such events.

You are an important part of planning your Reunions and will work closely with the Class Programs Coordinator scheduling the event and making all of the arrangements.

Important Meetings

Council Meetings

Twice a year, in the Fall and Spring, The Association of Former Students conducts a Leadership Council Weekend in College Station. A Class Agent is a member of the Leadership Council by virtue of Class election. Council members include Class Agents, A&M Club Officers, Area Representatives and the Board of Directors. The meetings are intended to provide an opportunity for council members to acquire up-to-date information on the activities of The Association and Texas A&M University and to exchange best practices, ideas, views and suggestions.

Council Connections

The Association of Former Students staff acknowledges that often times issues arise more than twice a year and that it is a challenge to take time from your busy schedule to attend the Leadership Council Weekends. In an effort to gather with the Council members on a more frequent basis Association staff will travel to areas around the state to share the latest developments and listen to your current issues in your backyard.