Ol’ Army Feature - Dr. Kyle Merten - Class of 2006

Kyle Merten ’06 grew up in Brenham and went on to three degrees from Texas A&M: A Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Science, a Master of Education in Agricultural Education, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Ag Leadership, Education & Communication. Heavily involved in all things Washington County (including as Director of Alumni Relations at Blinn College), you are likely to see him in a photo in the Brenham Banner Press or out and about with his family (Mindy ‘07 and future Aggies Barrett and Gretchen). Now for some Q&A with Dr. Merten!

Q: If you had a time machine, what would you do over again?
A: If I had a time machine and could go back to college and do something over I would have gotten involved in more extracurricular activities. I have learned since then building solid relationships with people through organizations are invaluable. Those relationships will always be there and you never know when they can help you out down the road. Aggies have such a great network of helping each other out and I think had I taken the time to plug myself in to one or more of those organizations it would have been great.

Q: What was your most embarrassing moment at Texas A&M?
A: My most embarrassing and scary moment while at Texas A&M happened while taking a test in my weight training kinesiology class.

(Continued next page)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
Annual Dues

- If you have already sent in your dues, thank you!
- $20 dues per Aggie are for the calendar year and support the club’s activities and scholarships.

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(Embarrassing/Scary moment) Since the age of nine, I have had epilepsy. Sleep and stress were always major triggers for seizures. Considering you don’t get much sleep in college and stress seems to come in waves this caused some issues for me. I had stayed up late the night before studying and I had two other tests coming up that week as well. Needless to say, I had pushed the envelope too far. I got into my test, which was in the G. Rollie White Coliseum and started on the physical part of it. This included having to do a certain number of sit-ups and push-ups during a certain time period. I had just finished each and I went into a full out Grandma Seizure. I don’t remember anything from that point until I woke up in the hospital about 2 hours later. I was taken out by stretcher next to the Student Center and transported to the Med by ambulance. When I went back to class then next week, my professor asked if I would explain what had happened because it was a great teachable moment for my fellow classmates. Only positive that came out of it was she gave me an extra 15 points on my test for coming back and explaining what had happened. Not so sure the 15 points were worth it.

Q: What was the best moment for you while at Texas A&M?
A: There were so many great moments I had while at Texas A&M. Not sure I can narrow it down to one so I’ll give you two. The first was my roommate Sam Sommer ’06 and I (during different seasons) got selected to fly with the Texas A&M Basketball team. We each got to pick a person to go with us and being great friends and roommates we took each other. The first game was at Colorado and the second game was at LSU. The Colorado game was awesome because it was one of the first road conference basketball games we had won in a long time. The LSU game was one of the most scary basketball games I have ever been to in my life. At one point I didn’t know if we were going to make it out of the gymnasium alive. The fans at LSU were some of the worst I have ever been around. Probably even worse than Texas fans. Each of these trips we flew on the private team jet, ate with the team, and stayed at the same hotel as the team. It was a memory I will never forget.
The next was meeting my future wife while in graduate school. Anyone who knows me knows family is important. Having the chance to meet my future wife while in school was better than the three diplomas I walked away with from Texas A&M.

Q: There are a lot of Aggies who attended Blinn, and the two institutions are partnering up on many things. How can local Aggies get involved?
A: There are so many connections Blinn College and Texas A&M have. Being the Director of Alumni Relations at Blinn College gives me the opportunity to share many of those connections. My testimonial to current and former students is that Blinn College created my foundation. Even though I didn’t graduate, if I wouldn’t have had the foundation I did from attending Blinn College I would have never been able to make it through Texas A&M. One of the things I hear a lot when recruiting new members for the Blinn College Alumni & Friends Association is “I didn’t graduate.” The great thing about the Alumni and Friends Association is its all-encompassing. Whether you attended and graduated from Blinn or you are parent of a former student anyone can join. There are a lot of Aggies out there that took courses at Blinn, but did not graduate. We sure would love them to be a part of our Association as well. We tell people that if you believe in the mission of Blinn and see the value it brings to its students and the communities it serves then our association is a great organization to be a part of!

Q: What’s the last movie you watched?
A: Peter Rabbit was the last movie I watched. Having kids you don’t get to watch many adult movies. To be honest, the movie was great. I did not want to go to it at first. My daughter gave me the sad eyes and I could not say no at that point. In the end, it was a great movie with an even better message. I would definitely recommend it for kids and adults.
Q: What advice would you offer an A&M freshman?
A: Build a solid foundation around you of good people. Have a strong friend base as well as identify mentors who can help you while in school. My two closest mentors I found while in college and to this day I still call them and visit about professional things as well as personal things. I think its also crucial to identify friends who have your best interest in mind. People who are similar to you. This can be done by finding organizations to get involved in. Everyone will have that time while in school they need someone to talk to or confide in. Having that support network is really important. Last thing I would say is enjoy every minute of your time there. Your time in college will fly by. Once you leave school reality sets in. Enjoy your time in school, prepare yourself for the future, and build relationships that will last a lifetime.

Q: What is your prediction for Aggie baseball this year?
A: I am pretty excited about this year’s baseball season. My cousin Addyson Schroeder was just named a Diamond Darling and I am super excited for her and all the opportunities she is going to have. Chandler Jozwiak, a Brenham boy, has already had some strong pitching outings this year. I really don’t see why this team can’t go all the way to Omaha. They have a really deep pitching staff. They have been putting up a lot of runs early on in the season despite two of their better hitters really being pretty quiet right now. I think when everything gets going on all cylinders they could be tough to beat. I hope that we peak at the right time, get a few breaks along the way, and end up in Omaha this Summer.

Q: What is the funniest story you have from your time at A&M?
A: The first couple years in college I ran around with some guys a few years older than me. To say I was the responsible one would probably be an understatement. These guys enjoyed life to the fullest on a daily basis. One of the guys partook in a few too many adult beverages one night and “fell asleep” on the patio at one of the houses we were at that night. This particular person was known for giving others a hard time every chance he could. Knowing how he was the rest of us decided to play a small prank on him. We went out to his truck which was parked on the side of the street and jacked it up just high enough that his tires were not touching the pavement. When he woke up the next morning and went out and tried driving away his truck would not move. He would give it gas and not go anywhere. It did not help that he probably had a headache from the previous night’s engagements that he could not figure out why his truck would not move. He got so frustrated that he called a tow truck to pick it up so he could get it checked out at a local dealership. When the tow truck arrived and had begun hooking it up he noticed his truck was off the ground. He pointed out to the individual the problem. Needless we all began laughing til we cried (not him of course). He on the other hand had to pay a $350 wrecker bill that he didn’t use, never heard the end of it from us, and had a really bad headache to go with it.

Q: If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would it be?
A: I have always wanted to travel to Alaska with my dad and go on a hunting and fishing trip. My dad and I have always spent a lot of time in the outdoors and it’s something we enjoy doing together. Neither of us make enough time to do it much together anymore because of life and our busy schedules. A trip like this is on both of our bucket lists and I think it would be something we would always remember.
“Softly Call the Muster ...”

Saturday, April 21st
5:00 pm—Social Hour
6:00 pm—BBQ Dinner

Washington County Fairgrounds
Events Center
1305 East Blue Bell Road
Brenham, Texas 77833

Speaker: Ryan Swope ‘13
Cost: $15 per person

RSVP to
washingtonaggieclub@gmail.com
The Washington County A&M Club is always looking for more enthusiastic Aggies to help with our club. It is a great opportunity for local Aggies to get involved without a major time commitment. We need your help! Want to get involved? Just send us an e-mail and let us know!

**Current needs:**

**Media Relations** - Responsible for this newsletter, arranging photography of events, and any other external media relations that may come up during the year.

**Scholarships** - Coordinates scholarship applications and the committee to review and select recipients.

**Aggie Moms Liaison** - An Aggie who is currently involved with the Aggie Moms club and fosters communication and coordination between the two groups.

E-mail [washingtonaggieclub@gmail.com](mailto:washingtonaggieclub@gmail.com) for the contact information on any of the above as well as any newsletter suggestions for things such as:

- Local businesses with Aggie connections
- Good bull stories
- Ol’ Army Aggie interview candidates
- Travel pictures/stories from Aggie sporting events

"May we never forget the 12th Man’s legacy of selfless service, or our duty as Aggies to answer the call as he did, selflessly serving others in their time of need."
- Chancellor John Sharp