

# Meet the 2021 cohort.

These 12 Aggies who graduated in the past 12 years are leading by example in business and service.

BY CAIT SHIELDS '11

The Association of Former Students' 12 Under 12 Young Alumni Spotlight was created to recognize the contributions of young alumni. Read more about each recipient, including some of their notable achievements and service, at [tx.ag/12Under12](http://tx.ag/12Under12).

## NOMINATIONS FOR 2022

Nominate someone now through Feb. 28. Profiles for anyone interested must be completed by May 9. [tx.ag/12Under12](http://tx.ag/12Under12)

 indicates a Century Club donor as of Dec. 16.



### Christopher Beavers '10

**CAREER:** Wealth management advisor and senior vice president, Merrill Lynch

**SERVICE:** American Cancer Society and Kellsie's Hope Foundation volunteer, where he raised more than \$250,000 for cancer research.

**IMPACT:** "Texas A&M University's graduates have a reputation of unparalleled success in excellence, integrity, leadership, respect and selfless service. [Christopher] is 'a breed apart,' referring to the Merrill Lynch slogan of several years ago, and he is very deserving of being included in 12 Under 12."



### Elizabeth 'Liz' Allbright '09

**CAREER:** Director of product strategy for WhyHotel

**SERVICE:** Provided pro-bono communication consulting to nonprofits, and post-prison re-entry support.

**IMPACT:** "Liz deeply believes that startups can change the world, whether through being impact-focused in their mission or simply through the power that they have to make choices that are socially-conscious in how they hire, where they invest, and how they impact their industries. She is leading a life dedicated to making an impact through entrepreneurial problem-solving."



## Ross Morel '10

**CAREER:** CEO and founder, Frogslayer

**SERVICE:** Startup Aggieland mentor and guest speaker. Texas A&M McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship 3 Day Startup mentor and judge.

**IMPACT:** "Ross has shown significant leadership in many [McFerrin Center for Entrepreneurship] student programs, routinely providing sponsorship and excellent judgment and advice to the student teams in our workshops and boot camps. This work requires not only a deep understanding of startup methodologies, but a willingness and service-minded spirit to assist in the growth and practice of young Aggie entrepreneurs with new business ideas."



## Kristen Free '11

**CAREER:** Product marketing manager of EP Therapies, Abbott

**SERVICE:** Former The Wells Project alumni mentor. Austin Stone Community Church student ministry volunteer.

**IMPACT:** "As a fellow Aggie, I believe Kristen demonstrates the character that would proudly represent Texas A&M. Her drive, passion, faithfulness and care for people is genuinely rare. While her professional accolades are remarkable and impressive, her character and care for people far exceed her accomplishments."



## Clinton 'Brooks' Herman '09

**CAREER:** Senior facilities construction project manager, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

**SERVICE:** Young Alumni Advisory Council charter member and committee chair.

**IMPACT:** "Brooks has been instrumental in leading projects on our campus that have supported cutting-edge research and furthered our education of future health care workers. He has managed over 100 projects in his tenure at UTHHealth including office and laboratory modifications, building infrastructure replacements, vivarium improvements, and even the decommissioning of a 30+ year old cyclotron."

## Lauren Cornell '09

**CAREER:** CEO and co-founder of NovoThelium; staff research biologist at U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research

**SERVICE:** STEM mentor, especially for other women, including through the Women Business Enterprise National Council. Texas Business Hall of Fame officer.

**IMPACT:** "She has excelled in managing the responsibilities of a biotech startup, a full-time fellowship at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research investigating innovative treatments for corneal diseases, full-time coursework for her Ph.D. in translational science, and mentorship of young women interested in careers within science or research."



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
**12 UNDER 12**  
*Young Alumni Spotlight*



**Kelli Koehler '08**

**CAREER:** CEO and co-founder, Wildway natural food company

**SERVICE:** Created Wildway's We Rise Initiative, which aims to protect the wild, back entrepreneurs and support organizations that fight for equal opportunities.

**IMPACT:** "In the midst of the unprecedented times with COVID-19, Kelli stepped up and put together an online campaign to support the San Antonio Food Bank with much-needed donations [and] just recently she and her team came together to ride 150+ miles across Texas for the Bike MS: Texas MS 150 to help find a cure for multiple sclerosis just as she has done for the past several years."

**Maximilian Leutermann '12** 🌐

**CAREER:** Nuclear submarine officer and lieutenant, U.S. Navy; assistant professor of naval science at Texas A&M University

**SERVICE:** Knights of Columbus member. Search and rescue diver and public safety dive team trainer.

**IMPACT:** "Since graduation, he has demonstrated his Aggie Spirit and these core values as a Naval officer, as a businessman, as a volunteer and, now, as a teacher and mentor to our students."



"Young former students are making a tremendous impact in the business world and their local communities after leaving campus, and are carrying the Aggie core values throughout the world. This honor allows The Association to spotlight the successes that Aggies of all ages and stages of life have achieved."

— Marty Holmes '87, Association Vice President of Programs



**John 'Trey' Yates III '17** 🌐

**CAREER:** Director, Abo Empire; board member, Helios Water Technologies and Eden Radioisotopes; owner and operator, 1Eleven Cattle Co.

**SERVICE:** Helped establish, fund and is vice president of the Illinois #3 Foundation, which supports projects that conserve land and water resources through sustainable practices.

**IMPACT:** "Trey was diagnosed with a very rare heart condition his senior year [at Texas A&M] and underwent open heart surgery. Despite this, he only missed three weeks' worth of classes, completed all missed assignments, and finished the semester without dropping any classes. This is just one of many examples that shows his ability to succeed in the face of adversity."

“This year’s 12 Under 12 recipients represent a group diverse in professional calling, yet each epitomizing Texas A&M’s core values of excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty, respect and selfless service. Their early achievements are a true inspiration!”

— Porter S. Garner III '79, Association President and CEO



## Sean Murphy '08

**CAREER:** Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University assistant director of leadership and civic engagement; U.S. Navy officer

**SERVICE:** Organized multiple community service projects at Embry-Riddle, including campus-wide days of service.

**IMPACT:** “In my 30-plus years on active duty serving with various global militaries, I can confidently say that I have met few leaders like Sean. He stands solid in his integrity, and despite operational setbacks, he never takes shortcuts. He is bold, daring, and willing to reach out to others to foster genuine connections.”



## Alden Warr '16

**CAREER:** Co-founder and vice president of finance and strategic partnerships, VoCo Technologies

**SERVICE:** Started and scaled the “Share Your Stimulus” movement to help aid families and businesses hit hardest by the COVID-19 crisis.

**IMPACT:** “What Alden has accomplished in a few short years reaches past what many imagine for a lifetime; how he has reached those achievements speaks to a set of deeply held convictions to which only a few commit their lives. Alden represents the best of the Aggie Spirit, and he personally represents the depth of the collective Aggie impact.”



## Jayci R. Giaccone '08

**CAREER:** Director of development, Essilor Vision Foundation

**SERVICE:** Board member for RAICES, which promotes justice for under-served immigrant children, families and refugees.

**IMPACT:** “There are few people, and really only a few, who when you cross paths with them on any given day make your day a little brighter. Jayci is one of them. The most remarkable thing is that she is able to combine an effervescent personality with a keen sense of business and a tireless pursuit of success that has resulted in unprecedented achievements for the Essilor Vision Foundation.”

## MORE UP-AND-COMING AGGIES

The 12 Under 12 Young Alumni Spotlight honors only a dozen former students, but many more young Aggies are making their marks. Here are five more impressive young Aggies who ranked just outside the top 12:

- James Darrek Ferrell '09
- Martin Hooper '09
- Ilissa Nolan '11
- John Claybrook '13
- Hunter Dansby '15