Another academic semester at Prairie View A&M University has wrapped up. At commencement on May 11, 852 students were recognized to receive a degree, which should bring the total number of degrees awarded at Prairie View A&M University to 74,863. Overall, this academic year has been productive and rewarding.

On the student side, dozens have interned and are interning across the world, from Capitol Hill to Silicon Valley, to as far away as Switzerland. They’ve competed in national events and have brought home countless awards. The Concert Chorale performed in Germany and Poland, and members of the Marching Storm Drumline opened up the 2019 Rose Parade in California.

2019 also brought in PVAMU’s largest freshmen enrollment count to date and our largest enrollment count at PVAMU ever. Over 9,400 students called “The Hill” their academic home.

Breaking other records, The College of Nursing hosted its largest ever White Coat Ceremony with 105 students. And, during this year’s Honors Recognition Convocation, 4,873 students were recognized for achieving Dean’s Honors and Honor Roll status for the spring and fall semesters of 2018.

On the research side, PVAMU aimed for the stars and won. A payload developed by our faculty launched into space from Japan in October. Faculty members also received millions of dollars in grants from the NSF to Toyota Motor Corporation to conduct research. Many more have published books, articles, and chapters.

PVAMU launched a $1 million African American Studies Initiative housed under the Marvin D. and June Samuel Brailsford College of Arts and Sciences. Fourteen courses or course sections will be offered for the program beginning this fall. Beyond Prairie View, in Bryan, Texas, the university expanded its nursing program to The Texas A&M University System’s new REllIS campus.

We welcomed deans for the College of Agriculture and Human Sciences and Roy G. Perry College of Engineering, and new directors for Library Services, Admissions, Academic Advising, and the Honors Program.

This spring, the School of Architecture held a grand opening for its new Fabrication Design Center and the Northwest Houston Center hosted an open house to introduce several enhancements in its library.

PVAMU also hosted numerous K-12 events, with Elementary Day and Middle School Day alone bringing thousands of future Panthers to campus over two days.

There are many more accolades to highlight, so we encourage you to visit pvamu.edu/academicaffairs. You can also visit pvamu.edu/news. Both pages are continually being updated with new content. Of course, whether you are a current or former student, faculty, or staff member, we always welcome your story ideas and feedback. Write to us at academicinsights@pvamu.edu.
Prairie View A&M University’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has a new director, Lloyd Wright. Wright began his tour at PVAMU on April 2.

Wright’s new duties include managing the SBDC under PVAMU’s College of Business (COB). For nearly 15 years, the center has grown to be one of the leaders of economic development in the City of Prairie View and its surrounding areas.

“Working with the Regional SBDC office and its network, the PVAMU SBDC plays a critical role for the College of Business and the university by spearheading our engagement with local economic development and the small business community,” said Dr. Munir Quddus, dean of the COB. “We are happy to welcome Mr. Wright as the new director of the SBDC. With his background, we hope to build on our record of outreach for the overall development of Waller and Grimes Counties as our primary areas of service.”

Wright anticipates elevating the visibility of the center and the many programs and resources it offers to small business owners and entrepreneurs, which includes assisting individuals looking to start businesses with business plan development; helping existing businesses looking for creative strategies to grow and expand, including contract proposals and export planning; and supporting businesses in need of financial assistance with financial packaging and credit applications.

“It is by focusing on these key areas that we will meet our primary goals of job creation, financial advising assistance, and economic development impact,” said Wright. “It is a very exciting time to take the helm and build upon the aforementioned legacy. I look forward to making a significant contribution and huge impact in the communities the center serves.”

Prairie View A&M University’s SBDC is a business advising and training center of the Texas Gulf Coast SBDC Network. The Texas Gulf Coast SBDC Network serves 32 counties in Southeast Texas.
Alum-Turned-Professor Gives Back Through Teaching

By Marchita Shilo

“Teaching is far more than just explaining subjects in classrooms. It is about inspiring students to do more. Through that inspiration, we, as educators, can create a better tomorrow by generating an output of students that will possess the potential to drive the engine of our civilization a step forward.”

That’s one of Prairie View A&M University alumnus and College of Business Assistant Professor Dr. Mohammed Hussein’s reasons for beginning his teaching career 30 years ago. For the second time, he received the COB Dean’s Excellence in Teaching Award, one of two that were handed out this year.

“Every semester, I make sure to establish a strong bond between the students and me from day one,” said Hussein. “To be more specific, my relationship with my students is not the traditional and expected teacher-student relationship, yet, it is a relationship established as a friendship bond in which I call each one of my students my friend.”

Hussein teaches the classes Business Statistics and Information and Communication in the Digital Age at PVAMU. Aside from establishing personal relationships with his students, he also uses several key tactics to keep them engaged throughout his courses.

I make sure to give students authentic learning time with peers by dividing them into groups when assessing them,” he said. “Additionally, I encourage students to work problems on the board as it helps the class view the questions differently.”

Hussein also believes participation during class is paramount to student success.

“I associate my content to things that pertain to and resonates with the students. Throughout my extensive history in the realm of education, I can confirm that students are more responsive to content that relates and interests them,” said Hussein. “Overall, I know that, through teaching, I can change my students’ lives to where they can become active and influential in society. As a Prairie View alum, I’m proud to be able to give back to the community through teaching.”
PVAMU Receives Nearly Half-Million Dollar Grant to Solve Transportation Challenges Within Waller Co.

By Marchita Shilo

Toyota Motor North America awarded Prairie View A&M University $453,757 to find ways for people to get around easier in Waller County, the county in which PVAMU is located.

Junior-level civil and environmental engineering students, under the direction of Professors Emmanuel Nzewi and Judy Perkins, are working through May 2020 on transportation solutions for individuals facing the most significant mobility challenges. These groups include the elderly, people living with disabilities, and veterans within the Prairie View A&M University community as well as throughout Waller County.

“The 18-month project is particularly important as vulnerable populations continue to increase,” said Perkins. “Furthermore, the ability of people to move from one location to another directly influences their propensity toward healthy living, sense of belonging and opportunity to contribute socially, and place in the social fabric of any community. These things are all essential to sustaining their quality of life.”

Using in-depth research and pilots, PVAMU’s Civil & Environmental Engineering Department will develop an agenda to address Toyota’s University Mobility Challenge.

“The framework utilizes existing transportation engineering courses (a two-semester sequence) in our undergraduate program as the core for developing mobility solutions for the stakeholder population groups mentioned above,” said Perkins. “The result should remove barriers to accessible transportation for our target populations.”

Currently, eight students, Devan Addison-Turner, Rodney Arrington, Maverick Beissner, Jarvis Hawkins, Precious Kalu, Ibrahim Niandou Hassane, Chika Okwor, and Aspen’Que Ridgley, are working on the project with Faculty Lead/Co-Principal Investigator and Principal Investigator Perkins and Nzewi, respectively.
Engineering Professor Invests Free Time into Mentoring Future Generations

By Marchita Shilo

Dr. A. Anil Kumar, a professor in Prairie View A&M University’s Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, recently visited KIPP Academy Middle School where he spoke with more than 100 fifth graders about being prepared for their futures.

“They were very motivated and eager to learn,” said Kumar. “They are in the process of designing and producing prototypes, so they asked multiple questions on the process as well as what drove me to do what I am doing, who my mentors were, and what I would have done differently if I had another chance. One kid even asked me if I was ever arrested,” Kumar chuckled.

The PVAMU professor of nearly 34 years makes it his mission to visit schools across the Houston area as much as possible. He helps young students with inventions and various projects, while providing his mentorship.

“I have always been interested in school education, especially in terms of the depth and rigor of the material taught,” said Kumar. “I like to see every student in elementary, middle, and high school not as a school student, but as a future college student. So, instead of waiting for them to show up at PV and then trying to provide them preparatory courses, I like to work with them while they are still in grade school, providing advice so they will be ready for college.”

And, he hopes others will do the same, too.

“Better prepared graduates will serve the community better through his or her own mentoring of the school students, they’ll be responsible taxpayers and potential employers, thus enhancing the community economic infrastructure,” said Kumar. “By volunteering, we’re contributing to the future of the community, state, nation and perhaps the world. We should all be involved in creating and sustaining such positive feedback cycles. Plus, interacting with kids is always a delight.”
COB Dean Leads Bangladesh Development Initiative

Dr. Munir Quddus, professor and dean of Prairie View A&M University’s College of Business, was born and educated in the South Asian country of Bangladesh. Since coming to the United States at the age of 22 to get his master’s and doctorate degrees, he has made it one of his life’s missions to work for the development of his home country.

“I have a special interest in Bangladesh as a trained development economist,” said Quddus.

He took that interest and invested his time and efforts into the Bangladesh Development Initiative (BDI), a professional organization composed of independent scholars and professionals. He joined the organization in the 1990s, served on the editorial board of the Journal of Bangladesh Studies, BDI’s flagship publication, and became president in 2012.

“In the past, Bangladesh has been considered a “test case” for a developing country, which was not expected to do well. The thinking was that if Bangladesh could succeed in breaking out of the ‘poverty trap’ to uplift its people, any nation, no matter how poor, could also do it. Decades later, the country is doing remarkably well, both economically and socially,” said Quddus.

This spring, some 135 participants from around the globe attended BDI’s conference at Yale University entitled Bangladesh in the Next 30 Years: Challenges and Prospects. In his welcome remarks, Quddus encouraged participants to celebrate the success of Bangladesh and, at the same time, not hesitate in asking tough questions for research topics and policymakers.

BDI founding member Dr. Ashraf Ali presented a brief history of the 30-year old organization that works as a think-tank and an advocacy group with an emphasis on the social and economic development of Bangladesh. He reminded his listeners that when BDI started in the 1990s, the per capita income in Bangladesh was at $1/day, whereas today it stands at $5/day.

According to a press release from the conference, “The plenaries, sessions, and panels shone a positive light on the uplifting story of the people of Bangladesh who are now clearly marching out of a history of poverty, conflict, and instability. There is no doubt that best is yet to come for this young nation.”

At PVAMU, Quddus has plans to teach a class on the economy of Bangladesh and take interested students to visit the country for global business experience.

In an interview with The Daily Star, he said, “The case for the future development of Bangladesh is strong. As scholars, we want to share the challenges and threats Bangladesh continues to face both internally and externally, but overall, I remain highly optimistic. The secret of success for Bangladesh and any nation is the people. The citizens of Bangladesh have demonstrated time and time again their ability to work hard and be resilient in the face of numerous threats and challenges.”

To learn more about the Bangladesh Development Initiative, visit www.bdiusa.org.

Dr. Munir Quddus presents Dr. Kauser Jahan with BDI Lifetime Achievement Award. She received the award on behalf of Jamilur Reza Choudhury.
Associate Provost Named ACE Fellow

The American Council on Education (ACE) announced Dr. James A. Wilson, Jr., Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Director of Faculty Innovation and Enhancement (FIE) at Prairie View A&M University, as an ACE Fellow for its 2019-20 program. Following nomination by the senior administration of their institutions and a rigorous application process, 39 Fellows were selected to begin work this fall.

What will take place for Fellows beginning this fall?

Each Fellow will be matched with a college/university to shadow a president and/or provost to study the history, culture, mission, goals, challenges, student recruitment, faculty development, alumni involvement, and a range of other components of the matched college/university. Each Fellow is encouraged to absorb as much as possible about different aspects of university business, that they may not have prior knowledge, to learn a range of new responsibilities among senior administrative team members. In addition, there are required meetings that all 39 Fellows will attend in Washington, D.C.

What do you hope to learn this upcoming year?

Every college and university explores a range of new objectives to achieve their goals and development plans. I am very interested in learning how leaders from other universities establish their long-term goals to enhance the quality of the educational opportunities they provide their students, faculty, staff, alumni and the overall university community. As a life-long learner, I am excited to have an opportunity to ask questions, examine systems, witness first-hand how capital funding campaigns work, listen to faculty members deliberate about the things they want to see to improve instruction and research, and learn how to become an overall effective leader like President Simmons.

Why is this program important for colleges and universities?

The ACE Fellows program is essential because it has a stellar track record of preparing leaders to take the helm of colleges and universities across the United States. The process of becoming a fellow is rigorous, and it is designed to identify potential leaders who have been acknowledged for their diligent efforts to make constructive contributions to improve the quality of higher education in the United States as the world continues to become more interconnected globally than ever before. Colleges and universities must be open to the richness of diverse leadership, and the ACE Fellows program creates a network of talented scholars and leaders who will be responsible for the ever-present transformations that will require ethical, responsible, creative, well-informed, and principled leaders.

How will PVAMU benefit from your participation?

The ACE Fellows program requires that all of the participants return to their college or university to share the knowledge gained as part of the objective of the program. Therefore, the specific strategic plans, programs, faculty development, alumni partnerships, undergraduate curricular changes, as well as all the challenges and resolutions -- these are the types of open exchanges that a Fellow brings back to the home institution to offer new opportunities to try best practices employed by other institutions of higher education. Moreover, I will have the opportunity to present some of the ideas as part of the ongoing strategic planning of the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Faculty Innovation and Enhancement, as well as any aspect of the university willing to engage in a plan to foster sound, transformational change to continue the legacy that PVAMU Produces Productive People.

About the ACE Fellows Program

Established in 1965, the ACE Fellows Program is designed to strengthen institutions and leadership in American higher education by identifying and preparing faculty and staff for senior positions in college and university administration through its distinctive and intensive nominator-driven, cohort-based mentorship model. More than 2,000 higher education leaders have participated in the ACE Fellows Program over the past five decades, with more than 80 percent of Fellows having gone on to serve as senior leaders of colleges and universities.

For more information about the ACE Fellows Program, visit acenet.edu/leadership/programs/Pages/ACE-Fellows-Program.aspx.
Dr. Fred A. Bonner, II, Professor and Endowed Chair in Prairie View A&M University’s Whitlowe R. Green College of Education, will speak at Akita International University in Japan. The provost of the university invited him to campus to deliver a series of lectures May 18-21 to faculty and students.

“One lecture will focus on a research methods course. The others will cover diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice,” said Bonner. “Another lecture will highlight my book “Diverse Millennial Students in College” and will talk about the generational impact on teaching and learning in college classrooms. Although the book is set in a U.S. context, I will make critical connections to the higher education setting in Japan.”

Bonner, who spends much of his time traveling and talking to college groups, says this will be his first time speaking in Japan.

“It is important for the audience to hear about the critical importance of understanding the world through a diverse set of lenses,” said Bonner. “The students at Akita International University represent a rich tapestry of different countries and cultures, so it will be essential for me to show them how our diversity can serve as an asset as opposed to a deficit. I hope they will learn how to hone and refine their research skills as well as how to live harmoniously across their diverse identities.”

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board appointed Michelle Hill, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services at Prairie View A&M University, as a member of the ApplyTexas Advisory Committee (ATAC). Her term runs through May 2020.

The ATAC provides the Board with advice and recommendations regarding common admission applications and the ApplyTexas System, the state’s primary method for applying for admission to Texas public institutions of higher education. For additional information about ATAC, visit www.thecb.state.tx.us/applytexas.
Faculty, Staff and Student STANDOUTS

Associate Professor Publishes Third Book

Patricia Hoffman-Miller, associate professor of educational leadership in the Whittlowe R. Green College of Education, published her third book, “African American Suburbanization and the Consequential Loss of Identity.” Dr. Douglas Hermond, professor of educational leadership at PVAMU, and Dr. Marlon James, a professor at Texas A&M University, served as editors.

According to the book’s description, “African American Suburbanization and the Consequential Loss of Identity” is a critical scholarly resource that examines the experiences of African Americans and the development of African American identities. It represents an important opportunity for an examination of the implications of this 21st century exodus, giving voice to all aspects of African American-lived experiences in suburban communities. Featuring a wide range of topics such as higher education, criminal justice, and social media, this book is ideal for professionals, educators, social scientists, political leaders, law enforcement, students, and researchers.

CAHS Students Win First Place in 2019 National MANRRS Quiz Bowl

Prairie View A&M University Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) brought home the first-place trophy in the National MANRRS Quiz Bowl Competition. The Panthers defeated the University of Maryland in the competition, which took place during the National MANRRS Career Fair and Training Conference in Overland Park, Kansas on April 6.

PVAMU’s team consisted of four student members, Kira Christian, Edwin Crittendon II, Houston Johnson, and Alexander Robinson, all from the College of Agriculture and Human Sciences. The team was dubbed The Golden Panthers.

“This national victory shows how talented and competitive our students are, and it demonstrates the power that comes from having a diverse team,” said Co-Advisor for PVAMU MANRRS Dr. Wash A. Jones, a CAHS associate professor.

The MANRRS Quiz Bowl allows participants to showcase their knowledge of MANRRS’ history and various aspects of agriculture and related sciences, including agribusiness, food science, animal science and plant and soil sciences. In addition to the Quiz Bowl, students competed in other competitions including Research Discussion, Public Speaking, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Business Pitch.
Race to Zero Team Wins Another Design Award for "The Fly Flat"

It was announced on Earth Day (April 22) that the Prairie View A&M University School of Architecture Race to Zero team won the prestigious American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment (COTE) Top Ten for Students Competition for their project, The Fly Flat.

The 2018-2019 COTE Top Ten for Students Competition Innovation 2030 recognized ten design proposals that best-combined design excellence and environmental performance. PVAMU’s student team included Kennia Lopez, Cynthia Suarez-Harris, and Ledell Thomas, working with Faculty Lead and Assistant Professor Shelly Pottorf. Additional team members for previous project development included students Kristen Clark, Aaron Farray, Shannen Martin, Noah Perkins, Shelby Skinner, Kaylah Wesley as well as Shannon Bryant, woodshop supervisor and design-build specialist and April Ward, assistant professor.

The Fly Flat is a net zero infill housing vision that aims to achieve economic, social, and environmental resilience in Houston’s low-income and minority neighborhoods. This project previously garnered international, state, and local recognition by winning the Grand Award in the U.S. Department of Energy’s Race to Zero Competition, the Texas Society of Architects Studio Design Award, and the AIA Houston/City of Houston Complete the Community Housing Award. In addition, the project was presented by the student team and their faculty lead at the North American Passive House Conference, the ASHRAE Annual Conference, the International Forum on Urbanism, and the Living Future unConference.
Students Perform at HBCU National Band Director’s Consortium

A group of students from Prairie View A&M University performed at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities National Band Directors Consortium. The conference was held March 27 to 31, at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. All students attending had to audition for the convention for music faculty and the consortium’s judges.

Students participating from PVAMU included Andres Cuadros (tuba), Christopher Quiroz (alto saxophone), Nina Frink (flute), Jarrod Henry (tenor saxophone), Merrande Johnson (trumpet), Kandaka Polk (clarinet), Jacob Nelson (trombone), Shawn Smith (alto saxophone), Sharif Stalworth (bass guitar), and Elijah Waters (percussion). Dr. Mark W. Phillips, professor and head of the department of music and theater, served as a chaperone and conference participant.

PVAMU Director of Bands Dr. Timmey Zachery presented a conference workshop entitled Emerging Band Technology. The workshop delved into band technology for the 21st Century focusing on attendance, music, and drill writing techniques using innovations.

According to the conference’s website, the purpose of the consortium is to provide an opportunity for band directors and students to collaborate and develop strategic plans for success in instrumental music programs. In addition, the annual convention offers opportunities for individual products to be evaluated through performances. There are also onsite workshops and clinics, which provide educational value for band directors and students aspiring to become band directors.
Prairie View A&M University’s Texas Juvenile Crime Prevention Center, in collaboration with the President’s Office, hosted the Annual Royce West Forum and Lecture Series. The keynote speaker was Harvard Historian Dr. Khalil Gibran Mohammad who discussed *Building Youth Capacity: Reversing the Condemnation of Blackness and Brown-ness*. Moderated by Endowed Professor of Political Science Dr. Melanye Price, the event also featured panelists Emmet Campos of University of Texas-Austin’s Project MALES and Abdul Haleem Muhammad (Robert S. Muhammed) of NTE Planning Consultants and Mosque 45 in Houston. Each speaker referenced the importance of knowing history as the state prepares for an inevitably more diverse future.

“This year’s forum was the center’s official start of an initiative at the university to address the negative trajectories of too many African American and Latino boys in Texas, in terms of outcomes,” said Dr. Susan Frazier-Kouassi, director of the Texas Juvenile Crime Prevention Center. “The speakers charged the audience to examine the policies that contribute to these dynamics while exposing youth to possibilities through mentorship.”

Texas Senator Royce West, who joined the group electronically, also encouraged careful monitoring of outcomes toward effective change.
14th Annual Research Symposium
April 11, 2019

The College of Juvenile Justice and Psychology hosted its 14th Annual Research Symposium during the Office of Research, Innovation, and Sponsored Programs’ inaugural Research Week. Students submitted a total of 112 posters and 40 oral/panel presentations. In addition to the symposium, Research Week featured a showcase of faculty research and an awards ceremony for both faculty and student researchers.
AG Day on “The Hill”
April 26-27, 2019

The College of Agriculture and Human Sciences hosted its annual AG Day on “The Hill” event. Throughout the two-day event, attendees participated in activities at various CAHS entities including the Cooperative Extension Program/Carden-Waller Building, Cooperative Agricultural Research Center, Agriculture-Business Multipurpose Building, and Gov. Bill and Vara Daniel Farm. With Friday being geared toward youth, over 500 students from area school districts took part in hands-on workshops, tours, technology demos, food making processes and labs, yoga sessions, and calf-roping demonstrations. Local farmers and producers attended various seminars on Saturday to help better equip them to use their farms sufficiently for their communities and businesses.
May 1  | Final exams begin
May 9  | Final grades due for graduation candidates
May 11 | Spring Commencement
May 14 | Final grades due for all other students
May 20 | Deadline to submit Financial Aid Verification Documents; Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Deadline
May 27 | Memorial Day (university closed)
May 28 | Registration for all students begins
Jun 3-11 | Attendance Reporting Period (Students who do not attend class during this period will have their courses removed and financial aid reduced or cancelled)
Jun 3  | First day of class; Late registration fee begins; Tuition and fees payment due
Jun 4  | Last day to add a class for credit (Summer 2019 1st 5-week session)
Jun 6  | Last day to drop/withdraw from course(s) without academic record (Summer 2019 1st 5-week session)
Jun 7  | Last day to add a class for credit (Summer 2019)
Jun 18 | Last day to drop/withdraw from course(s) without academic record (Summer 2019)
Jun 26 | Last day to apply for Summer 2019 Graduation (ceremony participation)
Jun 27 | Application period begins for degree conferral only for Summer 2019 graduation (no ceremony participation or listing in the program)
Jul 4  | Independence Day (university closed)
Jul 5  | Final exams; Last day of class (Summer 2019 1st 5-week session)
Jul 8  | Final grades due (Summer 2019 1st 5-week session); First day of class (Summer 2019 2nd 5-week session)
Jul 9  | Last day to add a class for credit (Summer 2019 2nd 5-week session)
Jul 11 | Last day to drop/withdraw from course(s) without academic record (Summer 2019 2nd 5-week session)

pvamu.edu/registrar/academic-calendars

ACADEMIC INSIGHTS
Submit story ideas or feedback!

OFFICE FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
academicinsights@pvamu.edu
Attention: Marchita Shilo, Communications Specialist

James M. Palmer, Ph.D., Interim Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

APRIL 16  JUNE 20
MAY 30  JUNE 27
JUNE 6  JULY 25*
JUNE 13*

*Transfer Orientation Dates

pvamu.edu/orientation

SUMMER BRIDGE CAMPS & PROGRAMS
JUNE – AUGUST
pvamu.edu/summer

OFFICIAL HURRICANE RELIEF FUND
pvamu.edu/sa/hurricane-harvey-relief

Commencement Convocation
AUGUST 10, 2019