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A Letter From the President

Casen Swadley, F’15

Greetings Alumni,

Welcome to another edition of the Ribbon! As the semester officially comes to an end, we can look back at another job well done. The spring has always been much less chaotic than the fall, but Chamber finds ways to keep itself busy. The semester was kicked off with the Spring 2018 New Member Education process, followed closely by the Bear Centennial, and was wrapped up with another creative and successful Diadeloso. Throughout all of this, Chambermen continued to care for Lady and Joy and maintain their title as the “keepers of the spirit.”

This year marked an incredible milestone in both the university’s and Chamber’s history. On February 9th we celebrated 100 years of having our beloved mascots on campus by hosting a gala for Chamber alumni and Baylor administration. The gala presented the opportunity to reflect on the experiences of former bear trainers and to speak about the aspirations of the bear program moving forward. Next spring will mark the 100th anniversary of Chamber, another historic milestone for this organization. Plans for that are underway and more news will follow as it gets closer.

If you are wondering what Chamber is like today, you should know that it is filled with the most dedicated, witty, tough and hard-working students that Baylor has to offer. Our members strive to maintain the standard of excellence that they hold for themselves while serving the Baylor community. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve alongside the men and women in this organization. As a graduating senior, I leave here knowing that Chamber is in capable hands.

If you are ever in Waco, please feel free to stop by our office in the basement of the Student Union Building and say hello! Our door is always open!

Anything for Baylor,
Casen Swadley

The club at SP’18’s initiation
Dear fellow cpots,

I have vivid memories from childhood sitting on my granddad’s lap in the living room listening to stories of one of the most influential people in his entire life. Nearly 15 years before I ever even knew anything about what the Chamber was, I knew all about Robert L. Reid.

When Chamber was putting together this edition of the Ribbon, they asked me if I’d offer a short note updating our alumni on the newly created position that bears the namesake of this remarkable man and one of Chamber’s dearest friends and strongest influencers.

A few years ago, the university began dialogue around how to more strongly and avidly support the Chamber’s ever-increasing responsibilities and prominence on campus. After much discussion, the university made a strong vote of confidence in the Chamber’s work and nearly 100 year-long history, aligning additional resources to support the Chamber’s growing leadership and scope. This new advancement came into fruition this year, as I was selected to serve as the inaugural Associate Director of Student Activities and Robert L. Reid Director of the Baylor Chamber of Commerce this past August.

“So, what do you do then?” my pledge brothers, among others, ask when learning about this position. First, I invite you to take a moment and imagine what your day would consist of if a large portion of your job was to support and keep tabs on a group that is as wild, mischievous, driven, passionate, determined, hard-headed, caring, and dedicated as the Chamber…. exactly… there are no words, but I can tell you it is a gift. Much of my time is spent listening, advocating, challenging, and supporting our Chamber- and then marveling at how its’ path is unfolding. I can undoubtedly report that Chamber remains stronger than ever and I feel tremendous gratitude for the opportunity to serve alongside incredibly gifted, dedicated, and passionate students at this time in the club’s history. Our former sponsors, Dr. Matt Burchett, Mr. Clint Patterson, Mr. Keane Tarbell, and Mrs. Betsy Willis remain closely involved with the happenings of the Chamber and are helping us now to form an Alumni & Advocate Board. They are deep, close friends of the Chamber and I am personally thankful for their continued service.

Some quick context on my own story. I’ve loved Baylor for most of my life. As a 7th generation Texan and as the 17th in my family to attend Baylor, I remember from a young age standing awestruck, neck craned back, peering upward at the Homecoming bonfire billowing against a vast, dark and starry Texas night sky. The moments experienced here were without a doubt some of my most formative. To oversimplify: I pledged the Chamber (Fall ’08), met my future wife, cultivated some of my life’s greatest friendships, and learned significant lessons. Upon graduation, (B.B.A. ’11) I left Texas soil to the Blue Ridge Mountains to do my graduate work at Virginia Tech in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies where my wife, Shannon, and I worked for the last 7 years. We have 2 kids: a 2 ½ year-old girl named Huxlee Reid and a 6 month-old boy named Ryko Win. They are a riot.

As the Chamber Centennial approaches, I’m looking forward to re-connecting and getting to know old and new Chambermen. If I can ever be of any assistance, please don’t hesitate to reach out. My cell phone number is listed below.

AFB,
Dakota Farquhar-Caddell
254-715-0202
MEET SPRING ‘18

Eduardo Cavazos
Classification: Freshman
Major: Health Science Studies, Pre-Physical Therapy
Hometown: Allen, Texas
Fun Fact: I enjoy bouldering

Brayden Dyson
Classification: Freshman
Major: Biology, Pre-Med
Hometown: Pampa, Texas
Fun Fact: I once got hit in the neck with a boomerang by a sheep rancher

True Head
Classification: Freshman
Majors: History and Religion
Hometown: Athens, Texas
Fun Fact: I’m a big history buff

Jada Holliday
Classification: Freshman
Major: Medical Humanities, Pre-Med
Hometown: Broken Arrow, Oklahoma
Fun Fact: I have seven brothers and I am the only girl
MEET SPRING ‘18, CONTINUED

Kelsi Kilgore
Classification: Freshman
Major: International Studies
Hometown: Lindale, Texas
Fun Fact: I’m a certified gymnastics coach

Margaret Land
Classification: Freshman
Major: Business
Hometown: Sugar Land, Texas
Fun Fact: I am a fifth generation Baylor bear!

Caleb “Brisket” O’Donnell
Classification: Freshman
Majors: History and Political Science, Pre-Law
Hometown: Blue Springs, Missouri
Fun Fact: I make a mean brisket

Corban Sorrells
Classification: Freshman
Major: Finance, Pre-Law
Hometown: Lindale, Texas
Fun Fact: I love camping

Ben Whisman
Classification: Freshman
Majors: Psychology and Political Science Pre-Law
Hometown: Frisco, Texas
Fun Fact: I have lived on a charter bus
This year’s Noche Del Oso and Dia Del Oso festivities were for the books! We decided to bring back old traditions and shake up existing ones.

Starting things off, we had a great Noche Del Oso at McLane Stadium, featuring over 10 student organizations participating in our Student Organization Activity Carnival (traditionally held on Dia), a flag football tournament, a crawfish boil sponsored by IFC, a free throw contest with Baylor’s first couple, Linda and Brad Livingstone, and, to top the night off, a screening of Star Wars: The Last Jedi in McLane Stadium.

Following a night of fun and beautiful weather, Dia Del Oso began with a Fun Run and Goat Yoga led by Chamberman, Atalie Wu. Throughout the day, we brought new attractions to campus like mini golf, free caricatures, a baby sloth, a dunk tank, a car show put on by Baylor’s Driving Club, and a giraffe. We also had traditional Dia Del Oso attractions like archery tag, Noon Meal, inflatables, and much more.

In the afternoon we brought back fun tournaments like tug-of-war and Super Smash Brothers, and we added Bubble Soccer. To reign in the night, we offered free dinner from local food trucks and free ice-cream sandwiches from Waco’s favorite dessert truck, Pokey-O’s. We closed the fun-filled day with a Baylor version of the popular trivia game “HQ”. We offered three themed rounds, consisting of Baylor trivia, Texas trivia, and general trivia. Dia Del Oso was a great day filled with smiles and enthusiasm from all who attended.

We look forward to what 2019 holds and all of the incredible opportunities to make the event bigger and better!
BEAR PROGRAM

Lead Team: Audrey Hermes, SP’16, Nick Lee, SP’15, Cassidy McCoy, SP’15, and John Naya, F’16

We continue to focus on providing excellent care to our wonderful girls. Joy and Lady both celebrated birthdays this semester, turning 17 and 16 years old, respectively. As the bears grow older, we are working with their veterinarian and our professional bear consultant to think of new ways to keep their bodies and minds sharp.

In February of this year, Chamber hosted a gala to celebrate 100 years of bears on campus. Past trainers provided perspective on how the Bear Program has changed throughout the years, and Lead Team shared its vision for the program moving forward. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of those that attended.

Based on a recommendation from Lady and Joy’s veterinarian, we initiated a diet change in September 2017. We have standardized Lady and Joy’s daily caloric intake and have focused on encouraging physical activity, especially vertical movement, through their morning enrichment. We have seen wonderful results, which we shared at URSA Scholars Week this March.

Our professional bear consultant visited in March and May of this year. During his visits, we were able to begin box/clicker training at the Habitat, which will allow us to expand our educational program by enabling us to have more engaging outdoor presentations.

The Bear Program is always seeking to continue our educational focus, and we have several exciting ideas that we will be working on this summer.

We are also in the beginning phases of developing a mobile display habitat, which would open up more travel possibilities that might include Baylor athletic events, school districts in central Texas, and other destinations across the state.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or interesting bear stories, we would love to hear from you! Feel free to reach out to us at BearProgram@baylor.edu.
LOOKING AHEAD: FALL EVENTS

Traditions Rally | August 31
John Naya, F’16

I am super excited to be the chair of Traditions Rally 2018! I, along with True Head, the general assistant, look to be innovate and creative this year at Traditions Rally. We hope to expand our kid zone to have more families drawn in and create some new things in our stage and technical area.

I love this event because it’s a chance for Chamber to rub elbows with Athletics in a way we typically don’t on game days. It is also a great event for Chamber to push itself.

True and I are super excited to be leading this event and look forward to the coming semester. Traditions Rally will be held on Friday, August 31, at the plaza at McLane Stadium. We would love for you to come out and join us!

Baylor Line | Fall 2018
Camille Koehler, SP’16

The Baylor Football season is just around the corner, which means welcoming the Class of 2022 to the Baylor Line!

This unique tradition continues to be a highlight for freshmen and transfer students in their first year at Baylor. The Baylor Line is an experience that connects our new students, alumni, athletes, and fans to the Baylor spirit. We, the Chamber, are dedicated to creating special moments for our new students and honored to uphold this tradition.

This year we are currently working on redesigning our tailgate space with the hope of creating a more inclusive and inviting opportunity for students. We look to continue utilizing stands within the bleachers so that Chambermen can lead students in synchronized chants and cheers. Additionally, we continue to make safety for the Baylor Line our number one priority. We have partnered with administration to create a strategy that minimizes potential falls and injuries.

We look forward to another great football season led by that Good Ole Baylor Line!

Family Weekend | September 28-29
Dora Xu, SP’17

As a member of Chamber, I have the unique opportunity of having a big family here at Baylor. Such a sense of belonging has made my transition into college, even into living in a foreign country, so much easier and rewarding. I am thrilled to be serving as Family Weekend chairman this year because I believe the best possible way for me to give back to the community is to help incoming freshmen and their family enjoy a weekend where they can explore Baylor and have a good time together.
I am reminded every semester during Rush and New Member Education the importance of honoring our history. When I joined Chamber, I knew I wanted to be involved with Homecoming because it is a celebration of those who came before us, those who are around us, and those who will follow after us. As Chambermen, we understand the importance of family and brotherhood. It is an honor to get to share that feeling of unity among the Baylor community.

This year, I want to focus on highlighting Baylor’s History. The Homecoming Committee is working hard to find ways to make an enjoyable experience for both students and families. One of the ways we seek to do this is by enhancing Friday Night Flashback to include more displays and present the university’s history in an engaging manner. We are also working to better connect people and engage them before the Pep Rally kicks off and the lighting of the Bonfire. Like always, we are seeking a way to bring Chamber Alumni together during Homecoming. Whether that is through the Chamber Alumni tent during parade or something in another form, we would love to host a gathering for you. We are still in the planning stages, so if you have suggestions or anything you would particularly want to do, I would love to hear your input (Emma_Ingram@baylor.edu)! We look forward to the upcoming year and all the adventures that will accompany it!

Homecoming | November 1-3
Emma Ingram, SP’17

I am reminded every semester during Rush and New Member Education the importance of honoring our history. When I joined Chamber, I knew I wanted to be involved with Homecoming because it is a celebration of those who came before us, those who are around us, and those who will follow after us. As Chambermen, we understand the importance of family and brotherhood. It is an honor to get to share that feeling of unity among the Baylor community.

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Parade | November 3
Lydia Strand, SP’17

This year, I have the opportunity to serve as the Parade chairman. When I first went out for Parade Committee, I loved the people aspect that surrounded the event. Little did I know, there is a lot more to the Parade than I could have ever imagined. The Homecoming Parade is set in the perfect position to break out of the "Baylor bubble" and bridge the gaps between the university and the surrounding communities. In the moments where entries are getting to their respective spots and the audience set up their chairs for the perfect view, the walls between people are broken. Each individual gets to display a portion of their identity, something that makes them who they are, even if it's just for a few hours. In those moments before the Parade begins, during the route, and after they reach the end, everyone gets the chance to showcase a part of their lives that makes them proudest. There are no comparisons between people, and differences are celebrated. From the moment that the Parade begins, kids have the opportunity to dream about what their future would look like, parents experience nostalgia and peace, and the participants are sharing an important fragment of their narrative. I believe this is what Jesus talked about when he discussed "loving your neighbor." The Parade continues to create an atmosphere of love and acceptance, and foster an environment where we can love those who are different than us.

My hope for the Parade this year is not some innovative idea that will be remembered by the Chambermen of the future, but rather that I be a catalyst for the type of community and love the Parade naturally brings. That the memories created and shared among everyone at the event is what lasts and is what's remembered. My hope is that this year's Homecoming Parade continues to inspire people to love our neighbor, even the ones we don't understand.
The Chamber Centennial is right around the corner, and we are already working on planning a celebration for March 1-2, 2019! Please make sure your contact information is up to date with Baylor (email: UD_Records@baylor.edu) so that you get all of our communication regarding the Centennial Celebration. Also, be sure to join the Baylor Chamber of Commerce Alumni Group on Facebook.

As part of our Centennial Celebration, we are hoping to display pieces of Chamber’s history throughout the weekend. If you have any artifacts you would be willing to loan us, please let us know!

If you have any questions, reach out to Audrey Hermes, our Alumni Relations Coordinator.

Feel free to contact us!

Baylor Chamber of Commerce
One Bear Place #85588
Waco, TX 76798
Phone: (254) 710-3322
Email: baylorchamber@baylor.edu
Office Location: Bill Daniel Student Union Basement
Alumni Relations Coordinator: Audrey Hermes