

# **TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY: AN OVERVIEW**

## **THE TARLETON HERITAGE**

Since its creation, Tarleton State University, a public coeducational institution, has provided a broad-based education. Established by a \$100,000 bequest from John Tarleton, an Erath County pioneer, John Tarleton College opened in 1899 as a private preparatory school and college for the youth of the surrounding rural region. During the next decade, students could earn a baccalaureate degree. In 1908, declining enrollment and inadequate funding caused college officials to reorganize the institution to a two-year degree program. This revised curriculum emphasized a liberal arts education, while retaining the two-year preparatory division. Again in 1916, Tarleton experienced financial difficulties; consequently, the Texas Legislature in 1917 approved the college as a branch of Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College, which would later become The Texas A&M University System. John Tarleton Agricultural College, as renamed by the Legislature, retained the two-year degree as well as the preparatory program and specialized curricula in agriculture, home economics, and military science.

To meet the needs of a changing constituency, Tarleton has adjusted and enriched its curriculum since the 1920s. Accredited as a junior college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1926, Tarleton gradually redeveloped a liberal arts education. Then in 1949, the Legislature changed the name of the school to Tarleton State College, and in 1953 the preparatory division was discontinued, reflecting the increased access to public schools throughout the state. By a 1959 act of the Legislature, Tarleton once again became a four-year degree-granting institution, with the first class graduating in 1963. Accredited as a senior college in 1966, Tarleton initiated many new programs, including graduate courses in 1970. Because Tarleton offered a broad liberal arts education within undergraduate and graduate degrees, the Texas Legislature recognized the institution as a university in 1973, and changed the name officially to Tarleton State University. In 2003, a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership was initiated.

Over the past century, Tarleton has grown from a small private college into a thriving state university with over 9,500 students. In 1999, Tarleton established the first university system center in Texas, providing public, upper-level academic programs for the citizens of central Texas. This entity was called the Tarleton University System Center – Central Texas and it is located in Killeen. On September 1, 2009, the system center became an independent university – Texas A&M University – Central Texas. Degree programs are also offered in Waco at the MCC University Center and at several locations within the Southwest Metroplex. In addition, the University offers programs at the Terrell School of Clinical Laboratory Sciences and the Hickman Properties/Camp Bowie Boulevard site in Fort Worth. Additional sites include the Dora Lee Langdon Cultural and Educational Center in Granbury, and the W. K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas, Museum and Gallery in Thurber. These locations have enabled Tarleton to meet diverse educational demands from across the state. Throughout its first one hundred years, Tarleton has never lost the commitment to excellence that was the vision of its founder, John Tarleton.

## **STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE**

### **MISSION**

Tarleton State University exists to provide an academically challenging educational experience through effective teaching, scholarship, research, and service enabling students to pursue truth and acquire the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary for establishing successful careers and becoming responsible citizens and leaders.

### **PURPOSE AND ROLE**

As a comprehensive, public university, Tarleton State University is the educational, scientific, and cultural center for the rapidly growing greater north central Texas area and provides educational programs that feature teaching excellence, faculty and student research, and student services. The university's current Carnegie Classification is categorized as Master's Colleges and Universities (Larger Programs).

Tarleton is sensitive and responsive to both society's and students' needs. Its culture of excellence fosters learning and encourages the pursuit of truth while enabling students to acquire the knowledge, achieve the understanding, and engage the skills and cultural experiences necessary in educated, civil individuals. Tarleton offers selected associate degrees, a wide variety of professional and pre-professional programs leading to degrees at the baccalaureate and master's levels, and a doctoral program in education.

Tarleton's faculty excels in teaching, advising, scholarship, research, and student service. The university attracts excellent faculty and provides development programs to enrich faculty skills. The university staff provides a variety of student services and professional expertise focused on enhancement of the college experience for students.

The university serves the public by enhancing the intellectual, cultural, and economic life of the region with an array of programs, sponsored events, professional assistance, and facilities.

Tarleton's commitment to applied and basic research continues to develop. The number and dollar amounts of sponsored research grants at Tarleton have increased significantly. The university has a well-known state institute, the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER), pursuing a national leadership role in environmental research, and a nationally known Center for Agribusiness Excellence (CAE) receiving significant federal grants for research and development of data warehousing, data mining systems.

Tarleton provides a campus culture of acceptance and friendliness, welcoming individuals into the university community without regard to race, gender, conditions of disability, or national origin. Having once focused on a predominately regional student body, the university now serves a growing population of state-wide, national, and international students. Dedicated to equality and fairness, the Tarleton community continues to meet the educational needs of the rapidly growing north central Texas region, the State of Texas, and a changing global society.

### **STRATEGIC GOALS**

#### **Excel in Scholarship, Teaching, and Learning**

Foster an environment that encourages innovation, develops programs of national prominence, engages students in research and learning while maximizing and leveraging resources for the greatest efficiency.

### **Expand Our Horizons**

Continue enrollment growth, expand the faculty and staff, and enrich the student experience by increasing access and participation, expanding cultural competence and global awareness through the curriculum, and fostering a learning environment that values diversity.

### **Encourage Leadership, Service and Student Success**

Create opportunities beyond the classroom that foster a continuous learning environment, assure student success and prepare students for leadership and service as alumni in their communities, careers and the world.

### **Extend our Reach**

Develop and maintain relationships and partnerships that will extend the reach, services, reputation, and impact of the university on its alumni, families, and the people of Texas and beyond in an open and accountable environment.

## **ENROLLMENT AND FACULTY**

Over 9,500 students attend Tarleton State University. Students from approximately 225 Texas counties, 36 states, and 19 foreign countries comprise the student body. More than 340 full-time faculty members are devoted to academic excellence and the personal development of each student. The student-faculty ratio is 19:1.

## **THE CAMPUS**

One of the most striking features of Tarleton State University is the spacious 125-acre campus located in the heart of Stephenville, a city of 15,000 people only 65 miles southwest of Fort Worth. Featuring malls, open space, and beautifully-landscaped grounds, the campus is dominated by majestic oak and pecan trees, which create a warm atmosphere for living and learning. The architectural integrity of aged red brick buildings is maintained campus wide. Tarleton is proud of its spacious classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, extensive library collections, and physical education complex. Other facilities include a multimedia foreign language laboratory, a modern Fine Arts Center, and updated agricultural facilities.

An ongoing construction and modernization program ensures that Tarleton keeps abreast of new developments. The Barry B. Thompson Student Center, a 90,000-square-foot facility, is the hub for campus activity and is an integral part of the University's educational environment. The Center offers a food court, bookstore, post office, game room, weight room, conference and meeting facilities, study areas, and commuter lounge. During Spring 2001, Tarleton completed construction of a new science building. Featuring a planetarium, this facility also provides state-of-the-art laboratory and classroom space for students to engage in study and research. In fall 2001, a student apartment complex was completed providing housing for 400 students. In fall 2004, a residence hall and an addition to the student apartment complex were completed, providing housing for 300 students. The newest buildings on campus are the university dining hall and the sports recreational facility featuring an indoor walking track, climbing wall, and state of the art exercise equipment.

**THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

Academic institutions under the direction of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System include:

- Prairie View A&M University
- Tarleton State University
- Texas A&M International University
- Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University - Central Texas
- Texas A&M University - Commerce
- Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
- Texas A&M University - Kingsville
- Texas A&M University - Texarkana
- West Texas A&M University

Other agencies and programs in The Texas A&M University System are:

- Texas A&M Health Science Center
- Texas AgriLife Research
- Texas AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas Engineering Experiment Station
- Texas Engineering Extension Service
- Texas Forest Service
- Texas Transportation Institute
- Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory

**BOARD OF REGENTS**

- Mr. Bill Jones, Chairman ..... Austin
- Mr. John D. White, Vice Chairman.....The Woodlands
- Dr. Richard Box ..... Austin
- Mr. Morris Foster ..... Belton
- Mr. Lupe Fraga ..... Houston
- Mr. Erle Nye ..... Dallas
- Mr. Gene Stallings ..... Powderly
- Mrs. Ida Clement Steen..... San Antonio
- Mr. James P. Wilson ..... Sugar Land

**CHANCELLOR**

Dr. Michael D. McKinney  
Chancellor  
The Texas A&M University System  
A&M System Building, Suite 2043  
200 Technology Way  
College Station, Texas 77845-3424  
Phone: (979) 458-6000  
FAX: (979) 458-6044