EAST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

CHSSA STUDENT NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026

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FROM THE DEAN

A MESSAGE FOR THE STUDENTS

Dear Students,

Welcome to the October edition of the CHSSA Student Newsletter. Whatever your major, I hope this issue reminds you that you belong to a college where curiosity leads to unexpected places.

Look at what is in these pages. Morgan Gridley carried her photography skills from East Texas A&M to an internship at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Lynzie Van Fleet spent a month in Arezzo, Italy, performing Mozart far from Commerce. Our new Legal Commons, led by Cameron Lenahan, offers a central place to explore law, whether you are planning for law school or just wondering. And the B.S. in Applied Economics has joined our Department of Social Sciences, adding another way to understand how people, businesses, and governments make decisions.

None of these students waited for a perfect plan. They said yes to an opportunity, asked for help, and kept going. You can do the same. Visit your advisor, talk with your professors, join a production or a mock trial team, and apply for the internship that feels like a stretch.

The humanities, social sciences, and arts teach you to think carefully, communicate clearly, and see the world from many angles. Those skills will serve you in every career and every community you join.

We are proud of you, and we are glad you are here.

Sincerely,

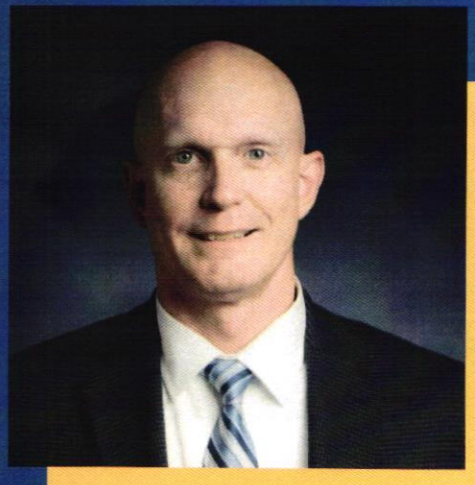
Joe Romero, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts

INTERESTED IN LAW?

EXPLORE YOUR OWN PATH

Students from any major who are interested in law have a resource right here at East Texas A&M. Headed by Cameron Lenahan, J.D., CHSSA's Legal Commons brings together advising, academic pathways and opportunities that can help students explore the legal profession.

You do not need to have your career planned before getting involved. Students considering law school can learn more about pre-law preparation and available pathways, while students interested in other areas of the legal profession can explore Paralegal Studies and other legal education opportunities.



Experience outside the classroom can also help students better understand the legal profession. Mock trial, moot court and related activities provide opportunities to develop skills while working alongside other students interested in law; the Legal Commons can also connect students with attorneys, judges, alumni and law schools.

When asked what he hopes the Legal Commons will provide for students at East Texas A&M, Lenahan said: "The Legal Commons does not replace a student's major—it connects it. Faculty and staff can send any student exploring law or legal careers to etamu.edu/legal-commons or to me, and we will help map the path from there."

FROM ETAMU
ALL THE WAY TO NASA

Morgan Gridley (pictured top right) takes her photography experience from East Texas A&M to an internship at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

A photography major, she received national recognition this summer when NASA featured her among interns making an impact at the Johnson Space Center.

Gridley's experience demonstrates how skills developed through photography can extend beyond traditional studio and commercial settings. Photography plays an important role in communicating the work of organizations in science, technology and other fields, creating opportunities for students to apply their creative and technical abilities in unexpected places.

When asked about her experience interning at the Johnson Space Center, Gridley stated:

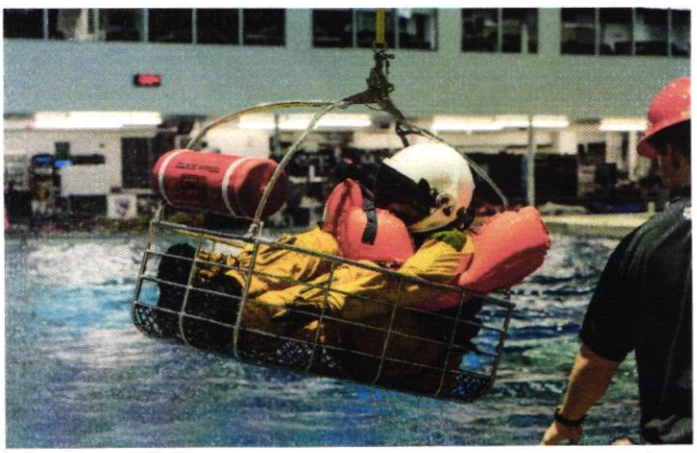
"Working alongside so many talented photographers, engineers, scientists, astronauts, and creatives has shown me how many different ways people contribute to NASA's mission."



NASA/Josh Valcarcel



NASA/Robert Markowitz



NASA/Morgan Gridley

MUSIC HAS NO BORDERS

A GLOBAL STAGE

East Texas A&M senior Music major Lynzie Van Fleet (pictured top right) spent a month in Italy this summer performing opera and developing her skills as a vocalist through Opera Seme, a young artist residency program in Arezzo, Italy.



Van Fleet performing a solo recital in Italy. / Photo Credit: Lynzie Van Fleet

The program brought together music, language and cultural study through lessons, masterclasses, workshops and performances. Van Fleet participated in masterclasses alongside approximately 40 other students and performed in five showings of Mozart's Così fan tutte. She performed the role of Dorabella, a principal role she had previously performed in East Texas A&M's production of the opera.



Van Fleet (left) performing the part of Dorabella during Opera Seme's production of "Così fan tutte." / Photo Credit: Lynzie Van Fleet

Reflecting on her performing in Italy, Van Fleet had this to say:

"It's a lot more intimidating since they know the language much better than we do. But the way they receive the work is also very different. They have a great appreciation for opera."



Photo Credit: *Visit Arezzo*

APPLIED ECONOMICS
A NEW HOME FOR STUDIES

Beginning Fall 2026, East Texas A&M's B.S. in Applied Economics joins CHSSA as part of the Department of Social Sciences. Previously housed within the College of Business, the program now sits alongside fields including political science, sociology and public policy.

Applied economics is about using economic ideas and data to understand real-world problems. Students learn how to examine trends, evaluate information and understand the decisions made by individuals, businesses and governments.



DR. LIRONG LIU
Professor of Economics



DR. ASLI OGUNC
Professor of Economics

ANALYZE DATA
Use economic information and quantitative methods to identify patterns and better understand changes in the economy.

UNDERSTAND DECISIONS
Explore how people, businesses and governments make choices and how those decisions can ultimately affect communities.

CONNECT ECONOMICS + POLICY
Study how economics intersects with public policy, political science and other areas of the social sciences.

BUILD PRACTICAL SKILLS
Develop analytical and research skills that can be applied to a range of professional and academic paths.