

The Aggie Moms' Club is a great way for Texas A&M parents to connect and support their students



Fort Bend AGGIE MOMS' CLUB

*Texas A&M Parents Proudly
Support Students and Each Other*

Written by Tonya Ellis

Sending her daughter, Amanda, off to college was scary, says Tina Gibson, former president of the Fort Bend Aggie Moms' Club. "She was in a dorm and on her own," she says. "How was she going to be able to take care of herself? How would I get to her if something went wrong?" The co-ed not only survived, but thrived as a student at Texas A&M University. She ended up making College Station her home after graduating in 2008. Mom, Tina, got over her empty-nest jitters with help from her friends in the Fort Bend Aggie Moms' Club.

Keeping Parents in the Know

Established in 1968, the Fort Bend Aggie Moms' Club serves as a support group for parents of students at Texas A&M University. It is a part of the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs that includes 126 groups in Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, and Georgia.

Over 48,000 students are enrolled at Texas A&M, making it the seventh largest university in the U.S. "Because it's such a large university, it's overwhelming for the kids and parents," says Gibson. The Fort Bend Aggie Moms' Club raises money to provide scholarships and care packages for students, and helps keep parents in the know about what's happening on campus.

Aggie Agenda

One hundred and thirty seven members strong, the moms' club meets the second Monday of the month at the Sugar Land Community Center. Gibson is a Texas A&M alum and knew several members when she joined. Two years after her daughter's college graduation, Gibson was finishing her second term as club president. "Amanda was wondering, 'Why are you doing this when [I've] already graduated?'" Gibson shares. "It's part of being an alumnus, too. I'm on a federation for A&M's

mothers' clubs on the state level, on the board as vice president. It will always be a part of me. You talk to any Aggie and they'll tell you the same thing."

Supporting Scholars

In addition to giving scholarships to individual students each year, the Fort Bend Aggie Moms' Club donates eight to 10 scholarships to campus organizations. "We like to ask our students what organizations they're in, and try to send money to their (particular) organizations," says Gibson.

Moms' club members give their students a little extra TLC during finals exams week, too. "We pack up food and treats and bags and bring them up to the school," Gibson explains. "Something to get them through. We give them Scantron sheets (forms to write test answers on) for their finals."

To welcome incoming freshman to Texas A&M, the moms' club holds an ice cream social. This year's social will take place at the First Colony Conference Center on July 18. The group also regularly raises money for the scholarships, care packages, and other activities through fundraisers, such as an annual country western dance, poinsettia sales during holiday time, and sales of Aggie paraphernalia at an on-campus sale called the Aggie Moms' Boutique.

In the spring, the club hosts a howdy party, awarding scholarships and honoring recent Aggie graduates. This spring, Gibson stepped down from her position as president. "It's a busy, busy job," she says. "It takes a lot of time, but it's worth it. I'm happy to pass the torch to someone else that I know will do a great job."

Leaving the Nest

Gibson's youngest daughter is a student at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. They don't have a moms' club there, but seeing how well her oldest did at Texas A&M makes having another leave the nest not as difficult. "Amazingly, they do grow up, and they're not too fragile," she says. "The first year is the hardest. After the second year, it's a breeze. You have to let go someday. It's harder on the mom than the kids." Being a member of the Aggie Moms' Club can provide a great network of support in the meantime. SLM

TONYA ELLIS enjoys feature writing and spending time with her husband and three children.



Seniors and their moms celebrate at the club's annual howdy party



The Aggie Moms' Club hosts a howdy hoedown every year, where members honor recent Texas A&M graduates and award scholarships



Aggie moms raise money for scholarships, care packages, and other activities throughout the year



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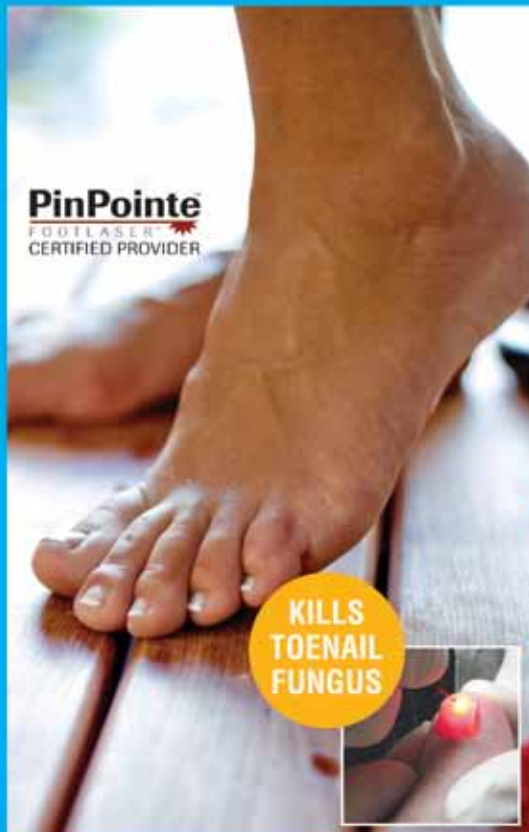
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Chapter officers oversee many different aspects of the club



Spring scholarship winners look forward to another exciting school year



Fort Bend Aggie moms show off their school pride at the club's howdy hoedown



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