

TACC NEWSLETTER

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

1210 San Antonio Street; Suite 101
Austin, Texas 78701
512-450-0555 - Phone
512-450-0655 - Fax
www.texas.coop

OFFICERS

President

Brian Lehrmann

Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin
Ropesville, Texas

Vice President

Tony Morton

PYCO Industries, Inc.
Lubbock, Texas

Secretary

April Graves

United Ag Co-op, Inc.
El Campo, Texas

Immediate Past President

Suzy Davis

Brownfield Farmers Co-op Station
Brownfield, Texas

STAFF

Tommy Engelke

Executive Vice President

Christy Lewis

Director of Administration and
Member Services

Jessica Minter

Administration and
Communications Assistant



NEW TACC DIRECTORS

- **Cody Anderson**, Wells Farmers Co-op Gin, O'Donnell
- **Jody Bell**, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association - Warehouse Division, Sweetwater
- **Robert Braden**, Uvalde County Farmers Co-op, Knippa
- **Tyce Foster**, Farmers Co-op Elevator Association, Levelland
- **Burt Heinrich**, PYCO Industries, Inc., Slaton
- **Matt Hennig**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
- **Preston Ingram**, Texas Farm Credit, Sulphur Springs
- **Dale Kerstetter**, Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Santa Rosa
- **Chris Martinez**, LaFeria Co-op Gin, LaFeria
- **Ryan Riddle**, Ag Producers Co-op, Bushland
- **Alan Woodard**, CoMark Equity Alliance, Enid, OK.

RETIRING TACC DIRECTORS

- **Marcello Aguilar**, AgBenefits, Lubbock
- **Larry Bartlett**, Cooperative Finance Association, LaRue
- **Larry Bates**, Gulf Compress, Corpus Christi
- **Danny Helms**, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Sweetwater
- **Gary Holcomb**, Ag Producers Co-op, Bushland
- **Ed Landry**, La Feria Co-op Gin, La Feria
- **Willis Taubert**, Cotton Center Farmers Co-op Gin, Cotton Center
- **Dr. Sanja Zivkovic**, Texas Tech University, Lubbock



COUNCIL SELECTS 2020 SUMMER CO-OP INTERNS

Ten years ago, the TACC Board of Directors issued a declaration that our industry needs to do its part to attract top talent and thus the summer co-op internship was borne. Since that time, an ingredient was added --- to build greater relations with university personnel and better expose them to the co-op business model.

After visiting multiple classes at five universities in the Fall and Spring, followed by countless webinar - type interviews, four students were selected for the 2020 summer. They are:

- **Emma Ferguson** - a junior ag economics student at West Texas A&M University from Gruver, will be placed at Hereford Grain Corporation under the direction of CEO Dennis Artho. She graduates in May 2022, was an intern at Texhoma Wheat Growers in 2019, has the American FFA degree & was on the state winning FFA Senior Chapter Conducting Team.
- **Kristina McGowen** - will graduate in August 2020 from Tarleton State University with a degree in ag business management. She calls home Brownwood and was an intern for a farm credit co-op in 2019 --- Lone Star Ag Credit. In the interviewing process, Kristina decided to forego the internship portion and was hired full-time by Cris Gwinn at Plains Cotton Cooperative Association in Corpus Christi.
- **Nicole Laskowski** - is a 4.0 ag business major at Texas A&M University that will graduate in May 2021. She grew up on a farm just south of Stockdale, worked for the San Antonio Express - News & will now work under James Deatherage, CEO of Producers Cooperative Association in Bryan.
- **Daniel Campos** - is an ag economics major at Texas Tech University from Muleshoe and will graduate in December 2020. He grew up on a dairy where his dad worked for a regional ag co-op and he will be working for Guyle Roberson, CEO of Texas Producers Co-op in Amherst / Sudan.



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE 2020 – 2021

President	Brian Lehmann , Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin, Ropesville
Vice President	Tony Morton , PYCO Industries, Lubbock
Secretary	April Graves , United Ag, El Campo
Imm. Past President	Suzy Davis , Brownfield Farmers Co-op Station, Brownfield
Exec. Vice President	Tommy Engelke , Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council, Austin

COTTON DIVISION

Chair	Paul Schwertner , Lone Star Farmers Cooperative, Mereta
Vice Chair	D. J. Robertson , Yoakum County Co-op Gin, Plains
Secretary	Guyle Roberson, Texas Producers Cooperative, Amherst
Imm. Past Chair	Mike Yeary , Midkiff Farmers Co-op, Midkiff

ALLIED & GRAIN DIVISION

Chair	Gene Felder , Driscoll Grain Co-op, Driscoll
Vice Chair	Dean Sasser , Ag Producers Co-op, Bushland
Secretary	Kreece Wiginton , Woodsboro Farmers Co-op, Woodsboro

SERVICES DIVISION

Chair	Dr. John Park , Texas A&M University, College Station
Vice Chair	Cody White , CoBank, Lubbock
Secretary	Blake Moore, Lyntegar Electric Co-op, Tahoka

<u>PRODUCER REP.</u>	Steve Moore , Central Rolling Plains Co-op, Roscoe
-----------------------------	---

<u>BUDGET & FINANCE</u>	Eric Wanjura , Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
------------------------------------	---

LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Chair	Seth Stephens , Producers Co-op Elevator, Floydada
Vice Chair	Robert Swize, Gulf Compress, Corpus Christi
Secretary	Dahlen Hancock, New Home Co-op Gin, New Home

EDUCATION & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chair	Tony Newton , Slaton Co-op Gin, Slaton
Vice Chair	Jeremy Speis, Calcot, Corpus Christi
Secretary	Mina Abbott, Wall Co-op Gin, Wall

- Names in bold are a member of the TACC Executive Committee







TACC GAINS TRACTION VIA TECHNOLOGY

The Council was the third, out of 65 ag commodity groups in Texas, to begin an **email** newsletter and that was in 2004. Then, on December 1, 2016 launched what was to be one of the first ag groups in Texas to host **Facebook** posts. It has been doing so DAILY since that time. With the coronavirus pandemic, TACC shifted its focus once again when it hosted its first - ever Joint Cooperative Meeting by **webinar** on May 5, 2020 (*in the absence of having to cancel its planned in - person meeting at The Woodlands Resort near Houston in mid-March*).

The response and reaction to that ordeal was extraordinary to the point that others hope to copy the process and example as they prepare for their forthcoming local co-op annual meetings. If anyone needs assistance hosting one by webinar, please contact **Christy Lewis** at christy@texas.coop.

TACC has also added another new technology feature --- LinkedIn. This format will be used primarily in distributing papers and educational lessons of short duration for people to access at their pleasure.

The top four Facebook posts by TACC in the last few weeks were:

-  April 28 - this post was received by well over 600 people explaining that ag represents less than 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the U. S. & this number is continuing to decline.
-  May 8 - this post had nearly 600 reaches and talked about what some co-ops are doing for kids with show animals in light of many county fair cancellations. Amazing responses!
-  April 29 - this received nearly 300 responses and dealt with **Jimmy Roppolo** at the El Campo co-op hosting a drive - in movie at his cotton gin yard one night where nearly 500 people attended.
-  May 5 - this captured a host of viewers too regarding the joint effort of CoBank's CEO and Land O'Lakes CEO to join with Microsoft CEO to jointly sign a letter sent to all 50 Governors expressing the need for rural broadband services. For those with an interest in expanding these services in Texas, please contact **Tim Akins** at Land O'Lakes directly at (972) 567-8780.

QUICK HITS ...

☀️ On May 5, TACC elected its new slate of officers: President, **Brian Lehmann** of Ropes Farmers Co-op Gin in Ropesville. Brian once worked for the Texas Farm Bureau, later was an intern for Ft. Worth, Texas based R) U. S. Congressman **Kay Granger**, and is a 2000 graduate of Rule High School and 2004 animal science graduate of Texas Tech University.

PYCO Industries CFO **Tony Morton**, of Lubbock, was elected Vice President. He is a 1978 W. T. White High School graduate in Dallas and a 1982 graduate of Texas Tech University. Controller of United Ag Co-op in El Campo, **April Graves**, was elected Secretary. She is a 1981 graduate of East Bernard High School and a 1985 Texas A&M University graduate in accounting. **Suzy Davis**, TACCs first female - elected president from Brownfield Farmers Co-op Station in Brownfield, moves to immediate past president. Suzy is a 1981 graduate of Crosbyton High School and a 1984 accounting graduate of Lubbock Christian University.

☀️ The 2001 TACC President **Bob Weatherford** passed away recently in Corpus Christi. He was 80 years old, taught in the prison ministry for 40 years, worked at Gulf Compress for 26 years - 14 years as general manager, and won the TACC Cooperator of the Year award in 2002. He and his wife Carole were married for 57 years and have two grown children. Bob also worked for the National Cotton Council for 13 years.

☀️ TACCs 2020 Directory and Handbook is rapidly coming to a close and will be distributed to member co-ops around June 15. The 155 - page refined document, will feature co-op information by city, by managers' last name, and by commodity. It will also reflect the new board of directors and executive committee. In recent years, the publication's "handbook" portion has received greater attention --- containing co-op 101 information & other educational papers.

☀️ TACC has gained two new associate members so far this year. **Marcelo Aguilar**, CEO of Aguilar Insurance Group of Lubbock, Texas, offers group health insurance, individual insurance, and life insurance. He can be reached at (806) 470-8008.

Sales Representative **Billie Bulger** and AFD Petroleum of Midland, Texas recently joined. The organization, a distributor or bulk fuel and lubricants, can be reached at (432) 254-4224.

☀️ TACCs **Tommy Engelke** was asked to judge the State FFA Public Speaking Contest years & years ago at the State FFA Convention when it was held in Houston. On that day, he & the other two judges placed a farm girl from Glen Rose, Texas - **Brooke Leslie (Rollins)** 4th in the contest. Since that time, Tommy never forgot how impressive she was. She went on to be elected State FFA First Vice President a few years later, then student body president at Texas A&M University, then later CEO of the Republican think tank in Austin, Texas known as the Texas Public Policy Foundation for 15 years. Late last week, **President Trump** named her "Acting U. S. Director of Domestic Policy" in the Trump White House. Just another example of the leadership value of the FFA experience.

