

# TACC NEWSLETTER

## TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

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### OFFICERS

#### President

**April Graves**

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

#### Vice President

**Greg O'Brian**

Friona Wheat Growers  
Friona, Texas

#### Secretary

**Aaron Hendricks**

Floydada Co-op Gins  
Floydada, Texas

#### Immediate Past President

**Tony Morton**

PYCO Industries, Inc.  
Lubbock, Texas

### STAFF

**Tommy Engelke**

Executive Vice President

**Christy Lewis**

Director of Administration and  
Member Services

**Jessica Minter**

Administration and  
Communications Assistant



## TACC BOARD SAYS "GOODBYE" TO THE OLD, AND "HELLO" TO THE NEW

### NEW TACC DIRECTORS

- **Bret Brown**, Skyland Grain, LLC, Bushland
- **David Cron**, Skyland Grain, LLC, Cunningham, KS
- **Clint Cryer**, Capital Farm Credit, Lubbock
- **Julie Harvey**, Texas Electric Cooperatives, Austin
- **Tracie Johnson**, Thorndale Co-op Gin & Grain Co., Thorndale
- **Brian Martin**, Skyland Grain, LLC, Bushland
- **Mitch Martin**, Triangle Insurance, Tulia
- **Penny Nelson**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock
- **Jed Miller**, CHS, Inc., Sterling, KS
- **Myles Ramsey**, Petersburg Co-op Gin, Petersburg

### RETIRING TACC DIRECTORS

*(ITALICS DENOTE HONORARY DIRECTORS)*

- **Gregg Allen**, Skyland Grain, LLC, Bushland
- **Dennis Artho**, Hereford Grain Corp., Hereford
- **Kent Ballard**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Plainview
- **Jody Bell**, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Lubbock
- **Sid Brough**, EdCot Co-op Gin, Odem
- **Jay Garretson**, Winfield United, Lubbock
- **Darren Gilley**, Friona Wheat Growers, Friona
- **Trent Leverett**, Triangle Insurance, Lubbock
- **Kim Martindale**, Farmers Cooperative Society, Wellington
- **Steve Newton**, Owens Co-op Gin Co., Ralls
- **Jerry Reynolds**, Tokio Co-op Gin, Tokio
- **Ryan Riddle**, Skyland Grain, LLC, Bushland
- **Terry Sauerwein**, CHS, Inc., Newton, KS
- **Bryan Schrader**, Skyland Grain, LLC., Bushland
- **Buddy Vineyard**, Swisher Co-op Gin, Inc., Kress
- **David Wied**, New Home Co-op Gin, New Home



## 2022 TACC DIRECTORY IS COMPLETE AND COMING SOON!

Be on the lookout later this month for the 2022 TACC Directory & Handbook! This is a helpful tool which contains contact information on all ag, electric, telephone and farm credit co-ops in the state AND has the information cross-referenced three ways: by city, by managers last name, and by type of co-op. The book also has a section on "Co-op 101", history of co-ops, and state and federal agencies / trade associations that impact cooperatives. Everything you need to know about co-ops in Texas in one place!



# TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

## GOVERNANCE 2022 – 2023



President **April Graves**, United Ag, El Campo  
 Vice President **Greg O'Brian**, Friona Wheat Growers, Friona  
 Secretary **Aaron Hendricks**, Floydada Co-op Gins, Floydada  
 Imm. Past President **Tony Morton**, PYCO Industries, Lubbock  
 Exec. Vice President **Tommy Engelke**, Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council, Austin

### **COTTON DIVISION**

Chair **Guyle Roberson**, Texas Producers Cooperative, Amherst  
 Vice Chair **Cary Eubanks**, Texas Star Cooperative Gin, Slaton  
 Secretary Keith Smith, Gulf Compress, Corpus Christi  
 Imm. Past Chair **D. J. Robertson**, Yoakum County Co-op Gin, Plains

### **ALLIED & GRAIN DIVISION**

Chair **Kreece Wiginton**, Woodsboro Farmers Co-op, Woodsboro  
 Vice Chair **Jason Lee**, Planter's Grain Cooperative, Odem  
 Secretary **Heather Parker**, Miller-Bowie Supply Company, Texarkana

### **SERVICES DIVISION**

Chair **Blake Moore**, Lamb County Electric Co-op, Littlefield  
 Vice Chair **Chris Looney**, CoBank, ACB, Lubbock  
 Secretary Dr. John Park, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, College Station

**PRODUCER REP.** **Steve Moore**, Central Rolling Plains Co-op, Roscoe

**BUDGET & FINANCE** **Eric Wanjura**, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock

### **LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Chair **Seth Stephens**, Producers Co-op Elevator, Floydada  
 Vice Chair Suzy Davis, Brownfield Farmers Co-op Station, Brownfield  
 Secretary Daniel Luehrs, EdCot Co-op Gin, Odem

### **EDUCATION & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Chair **Jeremy Spies**, Calcot, Ltd., Corpus Christi  
 Vice Chair Dr. Donna McCallister, Texas Tech University, Lubbock  
 Secretary Lance Bradford, Winter Garden Co-op Gin, Batesville

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





## TACC ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTED AT JOINT COOPERATIVE MEETING IN FRISCO



TACC's 2021 Cooperator of the Year is **Jim Massey** with the Valley Co-op Oil Mill (VALCO) in Harlingen, Texas. This award is reserved for those that have provided exceptional service and leadership, leaving a lasting impact on their local and statewide cooperative community. Born and raised in Mercedes, Texas, Jim began his cooperative involvement in high school & college where he worked for Valley Growers Cooperative in nearby Weslaco. He served as General Manager of Gulf Coast Cooperative for 25 years, then joined VALCO as a Sales Manager before being named President & CEO in 2013. The idea guy behind the TACC South Texas Co-op Leadership Conference, Jim has served on numerous boards representing the national interests of the cotton industry, and is often praised for his motivation abilities & commitment to the co-op industry.

The TACC Cooperative Ginner of the Year is **Mike Yeary** of Midkiff Farmers Co-op in Midkiff, Texas for his exemplary performance in and focus on customer service, efficiency, and profitability. His co-op career started in 1995 when he accepted the General Manager position at Progreso Co-op Gin and Farm Supply Store, before moving over to Batesville, Texas to manage Winter Garden Co-op where he tripled the average number of bales ginned and improved the farm supply store. Mike has been the manager at Midkiff since 2013 and has continued his legacy of improving production numbers at a minimal cost and is regularly involved with regional and statewide co-op matters. Many say "everything Mike touches turns to gold," a testament of his dedication & service to his co-op and the industry as a whole.



TACC's Distinguished Service Award is presented to an industry leader devoted heavily to our kind of work, and this year's winner is **Tony Williams**, the recently retired Executive Vice President of Texas Cotton Ginners' Association in Round Rock, Texas. After working a couple years as a sales & then field representative, Tony was named Executive Vice President of the Ginners' Association in 1988. He has since worked diligently with the legislature and governmental agencies to provide the cotton ginner's "point of view," and serve as the organization's representative on state and national industry committees & at meetings throughout the year. He has been instrumental in the legislative efforts of the Texas cotton industry and has been recognized by other groups & institutions for his dedicated public service.





## MANAGERS CONFERENCE HEADS BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS



Plans are being finalized for the July 13-15, 2022, Co-op Manager's Conference to be held at the Inn of the Mountain Gods in Ruidoso, NM. While plenty of familiar faces will be speaking to the group, TACC looks to expand the scope of topics to include: a training model used to develop electric linemen and how this could be employed in ag co-ops, what your rights are in the context of "constitutional carry" and how businesses fit into the conversation, automation to solve labor issues, and the realities of the carbon market as the climate conversation continues.

Room reservations are open now and can be made by calling (575) 464-7777 and referencing the group name, Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council Managers Conference, by Monday, June 13, 2022. The registration form has been made available on TACC's website—the Manager's Conference tab can be found under the Meetings dropdown menu. Please submit registration forms by Friday, July 8th! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at (512) 450-0555 or [jessica@texas.coop](mailto:jessica@texas.coop).



## UNIVERSITY STUDENTS PRACTICE THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS



Policy has a direct impact on how business is conducted and is becoming an increasingly important area as the world & issues grow more complex. Universities & agriculture colleges have taken note and created opportunities for students to gain experience with and insight into the policy that shapes agricultural production at the state & federal level. The Agribusiness Department at Texas A&M University-Kingsville offers one such opportunity – an entire course over agricultural & food policy – investigating historical contexts, modern policy issues, and the structure & relationships between the industry, government, and commodity associations. Successful completion of this course requires students to determine a topic they find important in agriculture and craft their own legislation to address these issues. From circumventing homeowner association rules on backyard chickens and citizenship incentives for agricultural workers, to eliminating property taxes and expanding hunting on public & private lands, students were able to find an area they were passionate about.

To gain more insight into their respective topic, the process of developing policy, and practice their communication skills with real-life policymakers, twelve students along with **Dr. Diane Friend**, made a day trip to Austin to meet with association, legislative & regulatory representatives. TACC's **Jessica Minter** coordinated the event for the group. Students met first with the legislative team at the Texas Farm Bureau who explained the role of associations in policy creation & decision making, what happens in the off season, and shared insight on the students' topics. Next was a walk through the State Capitol, where students had scheduled their own meetings with representatives' offices & agencies that work directly with their chosen topic to delve more into possible challenges to mitigate and ideas to expand on. Lastly, was a meeting with the number two person at Texas Department of Agriculture where students got a first-hand account of how agency work & the programs they offer & support touch not only policy & decision makers at the state & national level, but also Texans in everyday life. TACC is blessed to be in an industry that values the professional development of young people in agriculture, and in a position where we can make these unique experiences possible for a wide range of students!



## TACC'S ONLINE COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO MAKE WAVES



Like the Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council on Facebook to catch the latest updates on meetings, the Council's efforts in Austin, stories you may have missed, and important dates & reminders. Active daily since 2016, this page has grown to reach more than 1,000 daily users and we want you to be a part of the community! Here's one recent post that really got people stirred up:

*"Climate remains an impending topic, and now the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) is jumping on the bandwagon with newly a proposed rule that would require publicly traded businesses (e.g. John Deere, ADM, Cargill) to report data on their entire supply chain, and what efforts the company is taking to address their impact on the climate. This 510-page proposed rule contains 1,058 technical footnotes and over 700 direct questions, however, interestingly enough, the SEC felt 39 days was sufficient time for the industry to review & comment on a ruling that could potentially affect the entire agriculture supply chain. As the American Farm Bureau Federation noted, "nearly every farmer's and rancher's products eventually touch a publicly traded company, meaning that farmers and ranchers could be forced to report personal information and business-related data," without the team of compliance officers corporations employ for such matters. Nearly 120 agricultural interest groups have banded together to ask for an extension of 180 days for industry groups, businesses & individuals to provide input." (4 Likes, 12 Shares, and reached 1,703 people)*

For more information on TACC's legislative work, or to find educational articles & documents from TACC trainings & conferences follow us on LinkedIn!





## 2022 TACC SUMMER CO-OP INTERNS ARE CHOSEN



Thirteen 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 Program was borne. After visiting several classes at six ag universities in the Fall and Spring, TACC staff along with several co-op general managers, past TACC interns that are now co-op employees, and university faculty members, interviewed 22 students! While some final deliberations are still being made, TACC can officially announce the placement of six interns for this summer's cohort:

- **M'Lane Cunningham** – an agribusiness student from Texas A&M University – Commerce, will be working under GM **Chris Breedlove** at Willacy Co-op in Raymondville this summer. Originally from Montgomery, she comes to the co-op with a good amount of sales experience and is looking to grow her knowledge of the ag co-op industry.
- **Juan Gonzalez** – is a May 2022 graduate of Tarleton State University with a degree in environmental science, with a concentration in soil science & a minor in crop science! He calls Cedar Hill his hometown but will be spending the summer using his agronomy skills with **Shawn Hughes** of Perryton Equity Exchange in Perryton.
- **Joseph Hanson** – is a senior agribusiness student at Texas Tech University, originally from the outskirts of San Antonio. He will be interning this summer for **Daniel Luhers** who manages EdCot Co-op Gin in Odem.
- **Ryan Mudd** – from Hallettsville is studying ag economics at Texas A&M University in College Station and plans to graduate in 2024. This summer he will be helping **Jimmy Roppolo** at United Agricultural Cooperative, Inc. in El Campo.
- **Mason Shipp** – will graduate this December from Texas Tech University with a degree in agricultural & applied economics. He has leveraged his interests in grain marketing to earn an intern position at Perryton Equity Exchange in Perryton, managed by **Shawn Hughes**.
- **Bo Thompson** – is a well-rounded freshman from Tarleton State University where he has begun his academic career in agricultural services and development. Originally from Hawley, his location will be split into two parts – with **Jack Shepard** at Farmers Co-op Gin in Anson, and also with **Larry Black** at Central Rolling Plains Co-op in Roscoe.

### OUT AND ABOUT (SINCE MARCH 9, 2021):

- With TACC – PAC contributions, participated in seven May 24th Primary Election RUNOFF races.
- Attended at State Senator Pete Flores fundraiser at the State Capitol on May 3.
- Participated in three finalist interviews for the Dean of the Texas A&M College of Agriculture in early May --- Dr. David Baltensperger, Dr. Elsa Marano, & Dr. Jeff Savell.
- Prepared numerous papers for the May 12 TACC Executive Committee Meeting in Fredericksburg.
- Attended the Texas Cotton Ginners Association Gin Show in Lubbock March 31 – April 1.
- Attended a May 19 Texas Ag Council lobby meeting of all ag commodity groups in Austin.
- Assisted a co-op board of directors in the management selection process.
- Attended the Triangle Insurance Annual Meeting in Enid, OK. on April 27 – 28.
- Attended a CoBank Customer Meeting in Bastrop on March 28-29.

### WILL BE:

- Studying TACCs long term headquarters office needs.
- Speaking to the Central Texas Grain & Feed Association meeting in Taylor on May 24.
- Hosting associate member Ag Workers Insurance summer interns to the State Capitol & ag commodity group offices on May 23 – 24.
- Finalizing plans for the July 13 – 15 Co-op Managers Conference in Ruidoso, NM.
- Attending a Texas A&M Cotton Engineering & Mechanization Chair Advisory Board meeting in College Station on May 25.
- Attending the Plains Cotton Cooperative Association South Texas Gin School in San Antonio on June 9 & in Granbury on July 17 – 19.
- Attending the Texas Cotton Ginners Association Summer Meeting at Horseshoe Bay on June 26 – 28.
- Assisting in hosting “Legislative Ag Day” for State Capitol staffers to the Luling Foundation Farm on June 9.
- Attending the Texas Cotton Producers Board of Directors meeting on July 20 in Austin.



## Calendar of Events

### May

- 24 Statewide Primary Runoff Elections
- 24-25 Texas A&M Gin Engineering & Mechanization Chair Advisory Council Meeting, College Station
- 30 Memorial Day Holiday

### June

- 9-10 Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn. Gin Workshop, San Antonio
- 26-28 Texas Cotton Ginners Association Summer Meeting, Horseshoe Bay

### July

- 4 Independence Day
- 11-13 State FFA Convention, Ft. Worth
- 13-15 TACC Cooperative Managers' Conference, Ruidoso, NM
- 17-19 Plains Cotton Cooperative Association Gin Workshop, Granbury
- 20 Texas Cotton Producers Board of Directors Meeting, Austin

### September

- 5 Labor Day Holiday
- 7-8 TACC Board Meeting, Lubbock

### November

- 8 General (Midterm) Election Day
- 9-10 TACC South Texas Cooperative Leadership Conference, Corpus Christi