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**Quick navigation**

[Home](#)  
[Today's Headlines](#)  
[Archives](#)

**News**

[Weather \*\*NEW\*\*](#)  
[Local](#)  
[A&M News](#)  
[Schools](#)  
[Texas & Region](#)  
[Nation](#)  
[World](#)  
[Politics](#)  
[Business](#)  
[Entertainment](#)  
[Columnists](#)  
[Opinions](#)  
[Obituaries](#)  
[Agriculture](#)  
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[National/Rec Sports](#)  
[A&M/Big 12 Sports](#)  
[High School Sports](#)

**Features**

[Lifestyles](#)  
[Health & Fitness](#)  
[Faith & Values](#)  
[Food](#)  
[Gardening](#)  
[Today in History](#)  
[Sudoku](#)  
[Contests](#)  
['07 Election Guide](#)  
[Summer Fun Guide](#)  
[Gas Price Watch](#)

**Community**

[Announcements](#)  
[Kids Corner](#)  
[Organizations](#)  
[Newspapers in Education](#)  
[Special Sections](#)  
[Worship Directory](#)

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Updated 6:23 AM on Wednesday, May 2, 2007

## 24 A&M System employees honored

By JANET PHELPS  
 Eagle Staff Writer

Twenty-four employees within the Texas A&M University System were honored Tuesday with distinguished achievement awards that came with a plaque, an engraved watch and a check for \$4,000.

The Association of Former Students Distinguished Achievement Awards put the faculty members, advisers, administrators and administrative assistants in the spotlight at the ceremony in which interim President Ed Davis said the recipients help earn A&M the reputation as a top-tier institution.

The awards honor individuals who inspire other students and staff and "demonstrate a dedication, deep appreciation, love and respect for Texas A&M University," according to officials with the Association of Former Students.

Sherry Adams, assistant to the dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, was one of two staff members honored with the award.

"Words cannot describe it," she said after receiving the award. "It was an experience I'll never forget."

Adams said her greatest achievement over a 17-year career was helping to establish a veterinary student scholarship fund, the Gentle Doctor Benefit, now in its fourth year. The benefit raises more than \$120,000 a year for veterinary medical scholarships and activities at the college.

"I've always had an undying love for Texas A&M University - the people, the traditions," she said.

The other staff honoree was Norma Pantoja, administrative coordinator for the head of the Department of Agricultural Economics. She is responsible for the coordination of all administrative processes in the department, which has about 250 employees and an annual budget of more than \$10 million. She also serves on several charity boards.

"We are blessed with exceptional people here at A&M," Davis said during the ceremony at Rudder Theatre on campus. "Your excellence is the foundation of our excellence."

The awards have been given every year since 1955 by the Association of Former Students.

Among the individuals and on-campus organizations that can nominate faculty and staff for the award are the Residence Hall Association, the Student Government Association, deans and vice presidents at the university.

From the nominees, a 65-member committee selects recipients based on their letters of nomination, resumes and letters of support from co-workers and students.

Awards are given for teaching, research, individual student relations, administration, continuing education, graduate mentoring and staff.

The other award winners are Dr. J. Amanda Adkisson, Dr. Jianer Chen, Dr.

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- Janet Phelps' e-mail address is [janet.phelps@theeagle.com](mailto:janet.phelps@theeagle.com).



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