

## **UNIVERSITY HISTORY**

The island campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has been a setting for higher education since 1947. That year, Ward Island became the home of the University of Corpus Christi (UCC), an institution affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The UCC campus was developed on land previously used by the U.S. Navy as a radar training facility.

In 1970, Hurricane Celia severely damaged the college campus. The following year, UCC and the Baptist General Convention took steps to end their affiliation. Concerned about higher education in Corpus Christi, a coalition of civic leaders sought local support as well as state legislation to convert the campus of UCC to a state-supported institution with an expanded curriculum.

In 1971, the 62nd session of the Texas Legislature authorized the creation of a state-supported institution of higher education in Corpus Christi. The Board of Directors of the Texas A&I University System was authorized to establish an upper-level university and to prescribe courses for the new institution at the junior, senior, and graduate levels leading to both bachelors and masters degrees.

Funding was approved by the legislature to initiate planning for the university. The citizens of Corpus Christi approved a bond issue to purchase the campus of the University of Corpus Christi on Ward Island. Subsequently, the campus was given to the State of Texas as a site for the new state-supported university. Civic leaders in Corpus Christi also launched a successful public fund raising campaign to provide local financial support for the fledgling university. On September 4, 1973, several months after UCC completed its final classes, Texas A&I University at Corpus Christi opened its doors with an initial enrollment of 969 students.

In 1977, the legislature changed the name of the institution to Corpus Christi State University. The name of the university system, which also included Laredo State University and Texas A&I University, was changed the same year to the University System of South Texas (USST).

In 1989, the Texas Legislature abolished the University System of South Texas and merged Corpus Christi State University and the other two USST universities into The Texas A&M University System. In the same year, the legislature approved the expansion of Corpus Christi State University to a four-year comprehensive university, with enrollment of freshmen and sophomores to begin in fall 1994. In 1992, the role of the institution was expanded further when the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board authorized the University to offer its first doctoral degree program. Another milestone occurred in 1993 when The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents renamed the institution Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The arrival of freshman and sophomore students in 1994 marked the transformation of the institution to a four-year university.

The University continues to expand in terms of student enrollment and program

offerings. In 2002, student enrollment grew to approximately 7600. Program offerings in the four academic colleges now include 61 degree programs, including 34 undergraduate programs and 27 graduate programs. Additional degree programs are planned and will be offered following state approval.