

**Steve Rendon**  
**College of Business**  
**Purpose-Driven Alumnus Launches Craft Leather Company**

Steve Rendon '14 has worked wonders with his hands since he was a little boy. Growing up in Uvalde, Texas in a home without internet, video games or nearby neighbors, Rendon relied on creativity, innovation and manual labor to keep him occupied. So, it was no surprise to Rendon's family that, after earning a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Texas A&M University-San Antonio, he went back to his roots: handwork. But this time, it's for his own business—Bar SR Leather—a craft leather goods company.

As the CEO and sole operator, Rendon wakes up before 7 A.M. to work from his home-based leather shop. He starts his workday by making sales calls, followed by posting photos of new products to his social media channels. He then begins crafting custom orders using full-grain and top-grain leather.

Rendon usually works until midnight or later, taking breaks to spend time with his wife and children until they go to bed for the night. Then, he goes back to the shop for a few more productive hours of work.

What may seem like a laborious day to most people is a thrilling norm for Rendon. "Everyone who says, 'Do what you love so you never work a day in your life' is absolutely right," he says. "Finding passion for something will not only make you happy; ultimately, it will also give you purpose."

While Rendon drew inspiration for his purpose from his childhood, his experience as a student at A&M-San Antonio was another source of motivation.

Rendon knew he wanted to learn the fundamentals of business, and the University's College of Business offered the close-knit environment that suited him. "I knew that in business, you get to interact with people and you have the opportunity to help people. I wanted to do both at a campus where I could grow. That's why I chose A&M-San Antonio," says Rendon.

Most of his classes were held at the University's former Brooks City Base Campus. Rendon recalled that in the small setting, he was encouraged to come out of his shell and interact with fellow business students who are now his lifelong friends.

“Being in the College of Business helped mold me into something better than I was when I started,” Rendon says. “The classes, the faculty and the interactions were transformative.”

He recalls faculty member Douglas Carter being one of his most impactful instructors. He was able to rely on Carter as a knowledgeable instructor, a seasoned mentor and a trusted friend.

Beyond the classroom, Carter proved to be a valuable resource during the launch of Bar SR Leather. Rendon reached out to his former professor for entrepreneurial advice. Carter knew exactly what to do and connected Rendon with one of A&M-San Antonio’s MBA instructors. The instructor then created a class project in which his MBA students analyzed Rendon’s business plan and provided him with feedback. Rendon called the opportunity “invaluable,” and was honored to have fellow Jaguars help him succeed.

Rendon hopes that more A&M-San Antonio students decide to pursue entrepreneurship, but more importantly that they use their time as students to discover their purpose.

Rendon advised, “Take courses that challenge you and will help you develop. The sooner you find your purpose, the better.”