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THE SIGNAL

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JADE WISE: THE SIGNAL

Confederate pride takes a political ride

Darby Staup
The Signal

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles will be revoting in November on a proposed specialty license plate that features the Confederate battle flag.

A previous vote was held in April, which tied at 4-4 with board member Marvin Rush absent from the meeting. A second vote in June was cancelled due to the unexpected death of board member Ramsay Gillman, who had voted in favor of the plates.

The vote was postponed until Gov. Rick Perry could appoint another board member. New board member Raymond Palacios Jr. was selected to replace Gillman.

The Sons of Confederate

Veterans (SCV) Texas division is working with the commissioner of the Texas General Land Office, Jerry Patterson, to have the plates approved.

Texas Division Commander of the SCV Granvel Block said that the money earned from the plates will go to the Land Office to help restore Texas maps and documents. In addition, the Texas SCV will be able to use the money to place Confederate battlefield markers and repair damaged Civil War grave markers and memorials.

"This is a great PR item," said Block about why the Texas SCV decided to have specialty plates. "We were established in 1896, but a lot of people don't really know about us and we

don't have the money to advertise, so this will really promote our membership."

The Texas SCV has approximately 2,500 members and is a non-profit heritage organization of descendants of soldiers who served in the Confederate Army or Navy.

However other groups, like the Texas NAACP, feel that the license plate will promote more than memberships. In a statement released on their website Oct. 28, the Texas NAACP spoke out against the proposed license plates.

"While we intend no disrespect to any citizen who wants to individually celebrate their ancestor's history, it is nonetheless clear to us that any objective

person should understand that the Confederate battle flag represents repression and is a badge of slavery."

UHCL student and Sociology major Ashton Tucker spoke out on the historical impact that the Confederate battle flag has had throughout history.

"Regardless of the historical meaning of the 'Confederate flag' the Sons of Confederate Veterans should acknowledge that over time the meaning has changed," Tucker said. "The widespread use of the Confederate flag by white supremacist groups has transformed it into a symbol of hate. Personally, I feel that any use of the flag is dis-

SEE PLATES, PAGE 6

Formula-fed funding for universities

Rose Pulido
The Signal

Citing efforts to assist Texas in "Closing the Gaps" by 2015, an initiative created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to increase the number of degrees, certificates and other student successes, the THECB made a recommendation to the legislative that would change state appropriated formula funding for higher education.

Currently, state funding for universities is based 100 percent on the number of students enrolled as of the 12th day of class, the state census date of enrollment. The recommendation from THECB is for 90 percent of state funding to continue to be based on enrollment but to reserve 10 percent and base it on student outcomes in terms of: degrees awarded; degrees awarded in critical fields such as science, technology, engineering and math; and for at-risk students.

Dominic Chavez, director of external relations for THECB, said the legislative decided that this was not the right time to execute the 90/10 split, but what they decided to do was to pass House Bill 9.

"House Bill 9 basically sets up a pretty clear mission statement that our funding system for higher education should be aligned with the goals we set forth in our higher education master plan," Chavez said. "The legislation directs the coordinating board as part of our current statutory authority to develop formula recommendations each biennium before we go into session terms of how much we should fund higher education and what should be

SEE FUNDING, PAGE 6

T-shirts raise awareness, eyebrows

Araina Edwards
The Signal

Numerous organizations like the Keep a Breast Foundation and the Testicular Cancer Society are increasingly using creative, yet controversial, messages to reach and educate young men and women about cancer.

Such cancer awareness slogans aimed at youth education and prevention are stirring up controversy as some question the age-appropriateness of some of the messages. Some schools have

even prevented students from wearing such apparel that contain seemingly "inappropriate" messages.

Terri Cook, La Porte Independent School District's public information officer and director of public relations, explained that the district had encountered issues with some of the breast cancer awareness wristbands. Schools received reports from students that some of the wristband slogans were offensive. In response to such reports, school

administrators have requested that students turn their wristbands inside out.

"Parents and students have been supportive and don't want to offend anyone," Cook said. "I would suggest using an alternative option to demonstrate support for the cause."

Another local school district, Pasadena ISD, has a standardized dress code that prevents shirts with any type of logo but

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JESSICA CASAREZ: THE SIGNAL

"Save the Ta-Tas" is one of the slogans aimed at young adults that has stirred up controversy over age appropriateness apparel.

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Use your smartphone to scan the QR code to check out what's new on The Signal Online this week.

Thumbs up or up yours, open to interpretation

Symbols retain different meanings to different people, cultures, religions

It is very easy to fall prey to one's individual ethnocentric point of view. Whether you are traveling, starting a business in another country or even meeting your next door neighbor, it is very important to understand how different symbols and gestures are perceived by different people.

One of the most powerful ancient symbols, the swastika, invokes different emotions for different cultures across the globe including China, Japan, India and Southern Europe.

The word swastika comes from the Sanskrit language, which means to be good. The swastika is revered as a symbol of life, the sun, power and good luck in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

Since the 20th century, the atrocities carried out by Nazi Germany during World War II have caused the same symbol to signify death and hate. These completely different meanings of the swastika cause problems in today's world. The Nazis were so effective with their use of the symbol that many people do not

EDITORIAL

even know the other meaning of that symbol.

The two completely different interpretations of the same symbol can lead to hard feelings.

For instance, the recent Hindu festival of Diwali uses the symbolism of light and the swastika symbol to celebrate light and goodness. However, the use of this symbol can be misunderstood in the western world and bring back memories of hate and painful loss.

Apart from religious symbols, political symbols can also lead to a flare-up in feeling. One recent issue that has been stirring a lot of controversy here in the United States is the creation of a speciality plate, featuring the Confederate battle flag.

The flag means different things to different people. For some people, the Confederate battle flag represents regional pride or a refusal to conform and defiance of authority. For others, it is a bitter reminder of racism, slavery and hardships faced by

their forefathers.

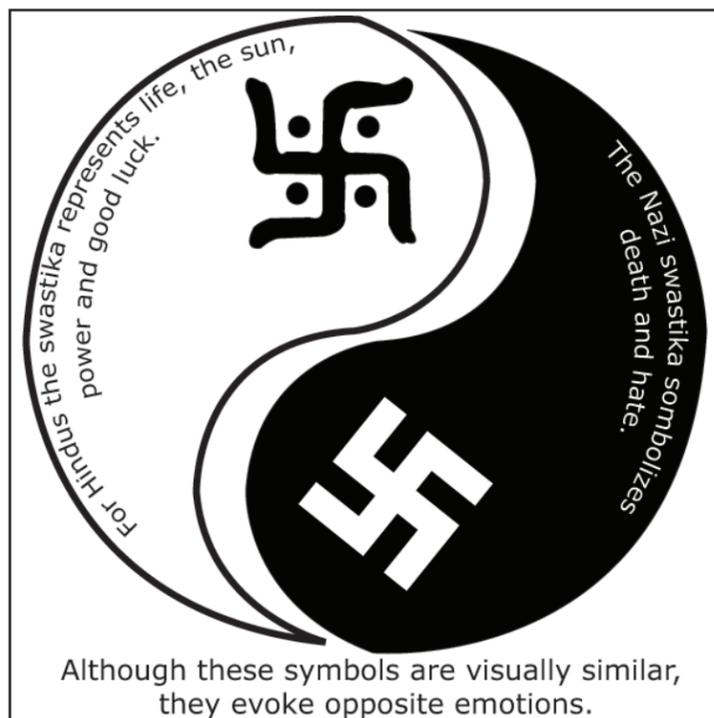
Then there are symbolic gestures that define an action. These gestures are not ancient symbols; they take the place of verbal communication and are used commonly. Gestures should be used carefully as they might have completely different meanings in other cultures.

For instance, the thumbs up gesture in America means good job, while in South Asia it symbolizes failure. This same hand gesture equates to the middle finger for Greeks. So if you are in a Greek restaurant and love the food, do not give the chef a thumbs up.

The OK sign gesture in America indicates something is good, but the same gesture symbolizes worthless or zero in Tunisia, France and Belgium. In Japan this gesture simply means money.

Holding up two fingers in the air could mean victory, peace or just the number two, but in New Zealand, Australia and Britain, this gesture is equivalent to the middle finger in America.

Symbols and gestures,



VALERIE RUSSELL:THE SIGNAL

religious or political, are seen and interpreted through personal experiences. They have the power to evoke raw and powerful emotions in people.

As the world becomes a global village with increasing interaction across cultures,

it is important to be aware of emotional undercurrents and learn how people perceive different symbols and gestures. In a world where interacting with other cultures and countries is just a click away, such understanding will help us live in harmony.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Ryan Hart

The Signal

The Houston Texans and Dallas Cowboys are a disgrace to the NFL and an embarrassment to the state of Texas.

Whether you just laughed, felt a twinge of anger, wanted to argue – it doesn't matter; what matters is that I just sparked an emotion with one short, simple, uneducated, biased sentence.

And that's fine. That's why we watch sports and root or don't root for certain teams.

What's not fine, however, is when people take this emotion and turn it into physical or verbal violence.

There are two things I fully understand about violence: it's a normal human emotion and it draws attention. Why do you think gladiators, boxers and mixed martial artists have been so popular since the near beginning of mankind?

The concept I'm having trouble grasping is the degree to which people are taking violence for such petty reasons.

Take a glance at Brian Stow, who was beaten into a coma and now suffers brain damage for wearing the "wrong" jersey; or look into the case of Cowboy fan Leroy McKelvey, who had to use a Taser for protection against hostile Jets fans; or think back to the recent Vancouver riots after their NHL team, Canucks, lost game seven in the Stanley Cup Finals.

The list can easily continue, but the disturbing trend has to stop.

Though rivalries and friendly trash-talking make the game that much more interesting, when



STAFF COLUMN

harm is inflicted, it's time to re-evaluate the importance of what's at stake.

In its rawest form, it is literally a person bouncing a ball and throwing it into a hoop, a person hitting a ball or puck with a stick, and/or a person throwing a ball to his teammate who is hoping to walk away from the inevitable punishment that he's about to be dealt.

These simple, physical actions are not the reason we parents enroll our children into these sports.

We put them in sports to learn the only real meanings sports have – the meanings and lessons learned on the field that coincide with life off the field. i.e., good sportsmanship, teamwork and respect.

Parents should focus their understanding on this and enforce these lessons, not turn their kids into their own personal gladiators to "do whatever it takes" to win every bout they face.

Now, it's expected that most parents will begin to live vicariously through their kids in time; you just can't let the vicariousness consume and take over your logic and sensibility.

My increased resentment toward sports-related violence is

sparked solely on one incident: a recent T-ball game I unfortunately witnessed.

Before we delve into this, let's be clear that most T-ball leagues now accept 3-year-old children. T-h-r-e-e.

This is the age when kids are usually going to T-ball games to watch their older siblings play and to break the ice for what's to come. Shoot, this is the age where it's not uncommon to have some children still potty training.

This is absolutely not the age where they should be witnessing "F-bombs" being dropped and fists flying wildly because of a simple rule that didn't matter.

To make matters a bit worse, the rule was not allowing a child who arrived late to be put in the lineup; however, the coach wanted him in the lineup so he could at least have an at-bat. He wasn't trying to sneak him in; he wanted the child to get to play.

Allowing a child to play is what irked the opposing team's coach and started the whole debacle.

Take a second to let that soak in. These children had to watch two grown men get separated by their fathers and police because of a technicality in the rules that benefited the children.

That is precisely what I saw that day, and that day will live with me forever in both principle and fact. Whether the kids will remember, who knows?

Relax. Chill. Breathe.

That is all I can ask. Before lashing out at the children, other parents, opposing fans or umpires, take a step back and remember what it's all for.

You owe that to them.

THE SIGNAL

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RENFEST RECREATES YE OLD WORLD

Paul Lopez
The Signal

Hear ye, hear ye, lords and ladies. The nation's largest Renaissance festival, with more than 50 acres of 16th century-style shops, attractions and games is just a short road trip away.

Located in Plantersville, the Texas Renaissance Festival runs for eight weekends this year. From Oct. 8 to Nov. 27, visitors can escape the nine-to-five for a weekend or two.

The moment visitors arrive they are immersed in a world that existed 500 years ago. People in renaissance outfits parade the festival grounds. Shops look as if they

were constructed by the hands of the merchants selling goods from inside them and live Celtic music resonates from the voices, drums and lutes of seasoned performers.

The staff goes to great measures to ensure that everything about the festival is authentic, from the costumes to the entertainers, to the food and even the accents.

"Our performers have a two-month rehearsal leading up to the festival," said Mandy Love, marketing and relations manager for the Texas Renaissance Festival.

Some acts include perennial favorites such as: "Christophe the Insulter," a one-man show where visitors pay a fee to have their friends and relatives "professionally" insulted; "Birds of Prey," a show featuring several trained birds flying about the audience; and "Ded Bob," a womanizing skeleton brought to life by a man whose face and body are concealed, so he appears as an executioner.

"One of the defining moments in finding Bob's character was when a very young, probably jail-bait Lolita came through the gate dressed like a hooker," said Clark Orwick, the man who brings "Ded Bob" to life. "Bob said 'Where have you been all my death?' ... Her reaction, and the others in the group was a beautiful thing."

Other shows and shops feature skills and stunts one can only find at a renaissance-like festival. There is juggling, firebreathing, armormaking, glassblowing, candlemaking, weaving, coinminting and more.

Of course there is some authentic jousting too, where visitors can root for knights from four different countries — Spain, Germany, England or France.

Similar to the jousting divisions, the festival is divided into country-themed areas.

In the Greek, or Agora, section visitors can find one-of-a-kind baklava, gyros and the Gypsy Dance Theatre.

Teeming with leiderhosen-clad men and women is the German area where visitors can indulge in weiner schnitzel and bratwurst.

Visitors craving the taste of fried alligator can find it in the French section.

Other countries represented are Spain, Italy, Wales and Poland.

New this year are Family Day Sundays and The Tower Stage. On Family Day Sundays, tickets are discounted when bought as a four-pack, which includes two adult and two children tickets for \$50.

The Tower Stage was constructed in the German area and features a new act, The Steele Sisters, who combine comedy with sisterly love to produce a show that includes horses, flowers and weapons.

The festival grounds nearly became a victim of the wildfires that plagued central Texas over the summer. The fires raged within a half-mile of the area and the damage can be seen on the drive to the festival — charred trees, barren areas that used to be wooded and a few crumbling buildings.

Because of the burn ban still in effect, the traditional fireworks show that concludes each day has been replaced with a laser light show.

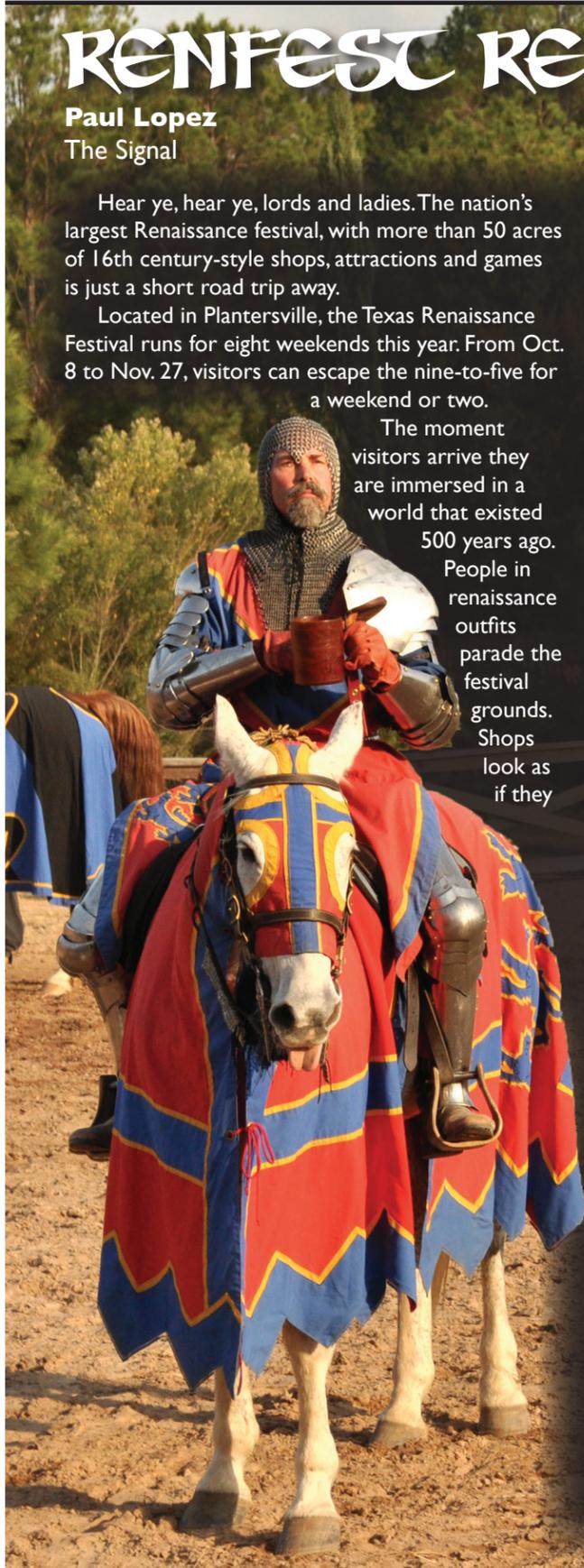
"In the tradition of London's Royal Fireworks above the Thames, the New Market Village will present a special Royal Finale in honor of the King and Queen," Love said. "Marking the close of the day, the Royal Finale: Queen Titania's Magical Light Show will take place at dark above the Arena."

The festival lasts two months, which gives the staff a long offseason to prepare for the 50,000 people who attend each weekend. This time is spent repairing the shops, maintaining the grounds and setting up promotional events. Many of the performers travel in a circuit from festival to festival.

"Most people think October arrives and we just flip on a switch and it's all here, but that's hardly the case," Love said. "We have a lot to prepare and maintain throughout the year from the physical grounds of the festival all the way up to our actual cast members."

There are only three weekends left this year to experience a place where you can eat steak on a stick, participate in a Barbarian battle-crying contest, and feel fashionable wearing outrageously outdated garb.

The festival gates are open only Saturdays, Sundays and the Friday after Thanksgiving from 9 a.m. to dusk. Adult tickets at the gate are \$25 and child tickets are \$12. Visit www.texrenfest.com for more information, a festival map, and a list of show times.



ALL PHOTOS BY PAUL LOPEZ: THE SIGNAL

Clockwise from top left: Entertainers at the festival included a Gypsy dancer, executioners, a barbarian warrior, a warlock and a bird of prey trainer.



A VOICE OF HOPE



Native American artist draws on heritage, tribulation through music

Debra Machemehl

The Signal

Radmilla Cody, a Native American award-winning singer, one of National Public Radio's Great 50 Voices and an anti-domestic violence activist, will share her story of how she has experienced and overcome racism, domestic violence and personal struggles in her life.

As part of the Native American Heritage Month celebration on campus, the Anthropology department and Office of Intercultural and International Student Services are hosting "An evening with Radmilla Cody" Nov. 10 at 7 p.m. in the Forest Room, located in the Bayou Building.

"The Houston Endowment of the Arts has made it possible for the University of Houston-Clear Lake to bring a stunning artist, who has an amazing story of hope, for our faculty, staff and students to hear," said Charlotte Haney, anthropology professor.

Cody connects her personal life and Navajo culture through a performance of songs and dialogue as a biracial woman to communicate a positive message for her audience.

"I think attending this event is a wonderful way for our students to get in touch with Native American performing culture, meet the passionate outspoken artist and explore issues of domestic abuse and bicultural identity," said Eva Jane Terekhova, anthropology program research assistant.

Cody was abandoned by her Navajo mother and African-American father and raised by her Navajo grandmother, Dorothy. She taught Cody aspects of the Navajo culture like weaving and sheep herding. Cody credits her success to her grandmother's presence in her life. Cody says that at 96 years

of age, Dorothy is a strong, spiritual woman.

"She is the rock and salvation of my life," Cody said. "I am very grateful to have her in my life. She is an amazing woman to be around and I just learned so much from her."

Dorothy can only speak and understand Navajo – the only form of communication between the two women. Her grandmother reminds Cody that Navajo is her first language and Cody is very mindful of this when she makes public appearances.

Cody's music merges her Navajo and African-American cultures with her grandmother's teachings.

"My songs

are really my strength, and these songs are part of my foundation spiritually," Cody said. "It is what gets me through my everyday. Music has a lot of power."

As a child, Cody not only dealt with racism and bullying from children at school, but also faced racism from family members. Cody persevered with the support and guidance of her grandmother.

After being crowned the first biracial Miss Navajo in 1997 at the age of 21, Cody's life took a downward turn. She was in an abusive relationship with a man who was involved in drug trafficking. The volatile relationship resulted in charges filed against her and a sentence of 21 months in a federal correctional facility in 2002.

When she was released, Cody had to heal from her experience and involvement in a violent

relationship. She did by returning to her Navajo heritage through music and talking about her experiences. She now travels around the world sharing her story and striving to give hope to everyone who listens.

A friend encouraged Cody to go back to school and she graduated last semester with a bachelor's degree in Public Relations. She is currently taking classes and working on applying to graduate school. Completing her higher education is a personal goal for Cody, but she also wants to be an example for women who are survivors or victims of domestic abuse to see that if she can do it, then so can they.

"It is very important to let other women see the strength that comes from being able to move forward," Cody said. "Nobody can ever take away your education, no one."

Cody worked with producer and director Angela Webb on the documentary "Hearing Radmilla," which examines the difficulties in Cody's life. The film takes a look at racism and violence toward women while focusing on the Navajo culture and its traditions.

Cody's message is simple: anyone can make serious mistakes and recover from them, and it is OK to be different. It is a matter of embracing and being proud of whom you are.

"When you can respect other people's culture and people can respect your culture, it makes life greater and more beautiful," Cody said.

For more information about this event, contact Professor Charlotte Haney at HaneyC@uhcl.edu.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN RUNNING

Funding: continued from page 1

the relative weights for various majors and programs.”

The amount of state appropriations was a topic recently discussed at a town hall meeting with University of Houston-Clear Lake President William Staples.

“We’re continuing to see a decline percentage wise in state appropriations to higher education, and that decline is being made up to a certain extent to increases in tuition,” Staples said. “It used to be that UH-Clear Lake and other universities, for the most part, got something in excess of 50 percent of their budget from the state. Now, it’s less than 50 percent, and it’s continuing to go down.”

Although state appropriations for Texas state universities continue to decline, if the legislature approves the 90/10 split in the next session, which Chavez says THECB will continue to recommend, Chavez said these universities will have an opportunity to gain more points for degrees awarded and degrees awarded in critical fields.

A challenge UHCL currently faces with a 90/10 split is that as a higher level institution, its students have passed the remedial stage of the college career, which will automatically put it at a disadvantage for earning that extra incentive for at-risk students.

At-risk students are defined by H.B. 9 as “an undergraduate student of an institution of higher education who has been awarded a grant under the federal Pell Grant program or who on the date the student initially enrolled in the institution was 20 years of age or older; had a score on the Scholastic Assessment Test or the American College Test that was less than the national mean score for students taking that test; was enrolled as a part-time student; had not received a high school diploma but had received a high school equivalency certificate within the last six years.”

“I don’t mind losing out on that [point],” said Rick Short, dean of the School of Human Sciences and Humanities. “We’d have to have a whole structure to

“ONE CURRENT CONCERN IS THAT STUDENTS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO REMAIN IN COURSES THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO COMPLETE WITH A PASSING GRADE RATHER THAN DROPPING AND TRYING AGAIN WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES ARE BETTER IN TERMS OF THEIR ATTENTION TO THE WORK.”

—William D. Norwood
UHCL Faculty Senate President

deal with developmental and remedial education. It’s needed for some students. Because we admit students who have already been successful for two years, we can pretty much predict that they’re going to be successful anyway.”

This is not the first time THECB has attempted to introduce the idea of formula funding based on a completion rate. In 2007, THECB also recommended a formula funding plan based on percent enrollment vs. outcomes.

“An Overview of the THECB’s Formula Funding Recommendations for the 2010-2011 Biennium” emphasizes a shift to formula funding. The overview lists a change in base funding in which an attempted semester credit hours vs. completed semester credit hours shift in funding would take place over the next four years, going from basing 100 percent of the state’s funding on attempted semester credit hours to 75/25 for the first year, 50/50 for the second year, 25/75 for the third year, and finally zero funding based on attempted semester credit hour to 100 percent funding for completed semester credit hours by the fourth year. This proposal was recommended only if a minimum of \$200 million was added to state universities’ current base instruction and operations funding.

However, Chavez said that plan was still based on a 90/10 split with the 25 percent shifts over four years only affecting the 10 percent allocated for completed courses. He said it was never proposed to go to 100 percent completion.

“That proposal was when we were looking at basing [formula funding] on course completion,” Chavez said. “In 2007 we were recommending that; again, it was still going to be 90 percent/10

percent enrollments vs. outcomes. What we were going to measure outcomes by was how many students completed a course, but that proposal is long dead gone.”

Although the proposal to base funding on 100 percent course completion is not the one currently

being recommended to Texas legislators, a plan phasing to 100 percent course completion over the next four years in 25 percent increments was presented to UHCL faculty last month as a possible proposal; hypothetical repercussions remain a concern.

“One current concern is that students will be encouraged to remain in courses that they are unable to complete with a passing grade rather than dropping and trying again when circumstances are better in terms of their attention to the work,” said William D. Norwood, president of the UHCL faculty senate. “And, of course, we fear that further budget cuts will make it even harder to provide the services students want and deserve.”

Staples points out that course completion is a worthy goal, but there are other considerations that should be taken into account for university funding.

“It’s not just course completion; it’s degree completion,” Staples said. “If you have pay on course completion or degree completion and x number of students drop for whatever reason, you still have the cost of delivering that course.”

Chavez said he expects during the next legislative session to revisit the 90/10 split, again, with 10 percent of the total formula being based on outcomes.

“One of our plans was, and I suspect we’ll still make that recommendation, to phase that transition in,” Chavez said. “In other words, over four years, not just automatically go to a 90/10 split, but to phase that 10 percent in over time so maybe the first year would still be at 100 percent, the next year would be at 95 and 5, and then the next year would be 90/10.”

organization, ‘check your balls’ is going to be more appealing to young men than saying ‘self-examine your testicles’ and since testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men 15-35 years of age, we need to appeal to that audience,” Craycraft said.

However, Craycraft does warn that some people might be hooked to a favorite saying or brand, and not necessarily the message. His sentiments are also shared with Gary Whitman, professor of radiology and director of the mobile mammography program at MD Anderson Cancer Center, who is also concerned that some awareness messages might get lost in translation.

“Encourage awareness with a good message that people will

Plates: continued from page 1

respectful to minority groups, particularly Black Americans, and all Southerners who disapprove of lingering systems of oppression.”

Several politicians have also spoken out against the plates, including Gov. Rick Perry and State Sen. Rodney Ellis. In a statement released Oct. 26, Sen. Ellis expressed support for Gov. Perry’s stance on the license plates.

“I understand groups wanting to honor their forebears who fought in the Civil War, but the plain truth is that the battle flag represents the tyranny of segregation and Klan violence to millions of Texans,” Ellis said. “Symbols matter. The Nazis adopted an ancient Hindu symbol as their emblem, and their actions forever tarnished it in the eyes of millions around the world. In my view, the battle flag is a similarly tainted symbol of racism and hatred, and too divisive to too many Texans to receive an official state seal of approval.”

However, leaders of the SCV believe that this issue is political and not racial.

“Some of these groups and people are misleading, and I believe are using this as a political leverage point, especially against Gov. Perry,” Block said. “He has been a supporter of us in the past...I feel that a lot of this is politically motivated and that people are just scraping old wounds.”

Non-profit organizations have the ability to apply for a specialty license plate through the TxDMV. The TxDMV website states that when an application is submitted, the organization must also deposit \$8,000 to cover the cost of production. The money is refunded after 1,900 sets of the organization’s plates are sold. Until the minimum requirement is met, the deposit remains in the State Highway Fund.

Once the minimum number has been reached, the state agency sponsor, in this case the Texas General Land Office, will receive \$22 of the \$30 fee drivers must pay for the specialty plate; the two organizations then work together to determine where the proceeds will be spent. The TxDMV

board makes the final approval for specialty plates based on compliance with state laws, if the plate can accommodate the International Symbol of Access, whether or not it competes with an existing plate, if the plate has low projected sales or if the board has any additional concerns.

However, this whole process requires the TxDMV board’s approval. If the TxDMV board does not approve the plates, the Texas SCV is prepared to file a lawsuit. Block already has approval from the Texas SCV council to take further action, and the SCV has previously filed and won lawsuits under similar circumstances in Maryland, North Carolina, Florida and Virginia.

“Each time we prevail in court of law because it is a freedom of speech issue,” said Michael Givens, commander in chief of the SCV. “And it is very difficult for a state to give one group rights and then deny another.”

Ashley Packard, professor of communication and digital media studies, points out that the First Amendment becomes more complicated when government is involved.

“The question is really whether citizens can force their expression on government,” Packard said. “The government’s refusal to print particular messages on license plates is not, in my opinion, a violation of the First Amendment. The government is obligated not to interfere with our speech rights. It is not obligated to carry speech out for us. These people are not prevented from exercising their right to expression. They can print up a bumper sticker or put a sign in the car window.”

People interested in voicing their opinions to the TxDMV board can contact the TxDMV at 1-888-368-4689. The TxDMV can also be contacted by visiting <http://www.txdmv.gov> and clicking on the “Contact Us” link or by using a smartphone to scan the QR code below.



T-shirts: continued from page 1

has allowed wristbands thus far. In fact, many of the schools in the district are familiar with the “save the ta-tas” brand of wristbands.

“Bracelets – ‘ta-tas’ brand- are generally allowed as long as they do not cause a distraction,” said Candace Ahlfinger, associate superintendent of communications and community relations.

The Keep a Breast Foundation aims to educate youth about the hereditary and environmental factors that could lead to cancer and uses the phrase “I love boobies” to reach young adults. The foundation’s PR and marketing manager Kimmy McAtee explains that the organization’s “I love boobies” slogan is a conversation starter, even if some

believe it is inappropriate.

“‘I love boobies’ opens up a conversation for young people and we are excited about that opportunity,” McAtee said. “Pink ribbons were not starting the conversation anymore and we needed to talk to young people in a way that resonated with them.”

Mike Craycraft, cancer survivor and founder of the Testicular Cancer Society, explains that his organization seeks to educate youth, especially young men, about the importance of awareness and prevention regarding testicular cancer. Craycraft believes that the organization’s phrase “check your balls” has been effective in its campaign to reach young men.

“For our particular

respond to and act upon,” Whitman said, “but companies need to be careful because messages may not reach intended audience.”

In fact, Chelsea DeHoyos, a 14-year-old high school freshman who owns both “I love boobies” and “I love balls” bracelets, admits that she did not necessarily buy the bracelet to support testicular cancer awareness.

“I bought the ‘I love boobies’ bracelet because I was actually thinking about it [the cause], but I bought ‘I love balls’ just because I thought it was funny,” DeHoyos said.

Another high school student, 15-year-old sophomore Sumedha Rao, does not own any cancer awareness apparel but notices

that some of her classmates are wearing awareness bracelets. Rao believes that the focus should be on supporting the cause, not the catchphrase.

“The slogan should not be the main focus,” Rao said. “If the slogan has to be there, it should be in a place where it is not the center of attention.”

Craycraft believes that while TCS’s “check your balls” campaign has been effective, there are other ways to raise cancer awareness without the use of controversial slogans.

For more information about the Keep a Breast Foundation, visit www.keep-a-breast.org. To find out more about the Testicular Cancer Society, visit www.testicularcancersociety.org.

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Students must be available during the following time frames:

- **Wed., Jan. 11, from 4 - 7 p.m.**
- **Fri., Jan. 13, from 1 - 4 p.m.**
- **Sat., Jan. 14, from 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

For questions or additional information contact Erika Ofodirinwa at Ofodirinwa@uhcl.edu or 281-283-2560.



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COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

At last year's Veterans Day event, William Staples, UHCL president, honored Col. Kenneth W. Wisian, Commander, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas Air National Guard, Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base.

UHCL ceremony honors American veterans

this is not a memorial," Rohde said. "It is to celebrate the lives of those who served. At UHCL we have a lot of veterans in the aerospace community and the community at Ellington Field. We are very fortunate to host this as a community event."

Cpl. Ralph Barkin, U.S. Marine Corps, who served during World War II and the Korean War, will be a speaker, highlighting the role of a nation at home that supports soldiers at war from the years past to the present. Retired Cpl. Donny Daughenbaugh, who served in the Marine Corps during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2, will talk about the uniqueness of a soldier's call to serve in his address.

"The focus of my speech will be the people on the homefront – the sacrifices they made to support the men at war," Barkin said. "Without their help, the war efforts would not have succeeded."

Barkin said technology has saved more lives in the current wars and pointed out that as more veterans survive, coming back home carries its own challenges. Barkin emphasizes that as Veterans Day approaches, the important thing is to remember.

"The most important thing is to keep the care going for these brave soldiers, to not forget to support the wounded," Barkin said.

Daughenbaugh, who became the youngest "Marine of the Year" just after 9/11, said that his years of ROTC training in

high school and volunteer work inspired his call to serve in a Marine uniform.

"In America, less than one percent of our population protects and serves the other 99 percent," Daughenbaugh said. "Our military is all voluntary. There are 18-year-olds signing up now, knowing that they could be put in harm's way in a few months. But, they are still doing it. And so, that one percent really sticks out as something to be extremely proud of. When the community and universities like UHCL show their support, what they do makes it feel like being a veteran means so much more."

The UHCL chapter of SVA caters to the needs of student veterans, helping them ease into civilian life and an educational career. Randy Seawright, SVA president, estimates that student veterans constitute more than 8 percent of the UHCL student population.

"Our goal is to establish a permanent veterans office on campus," Seawright said. "Student organizations ebb and flow, and while we can provide great liaison to our student veterans, we believe that having an actual office will accomplish all of our goals and more for years to come. I would also like to add how supportive the upper administration at UHCL has been in moving forward with this office."

"Our goal as UHCL's SVA is to make sure that each veteran is well informed of their rights, benefits and entitlements,"

explained Heather Kulhanek, vice-president of UHCL's SVA. "We are here to make sure each veteran knows that they are welcomed home. The students that are involved with the SVA are from all walks of life. We are not bonded by similar interests, lifestyles or cultures."

Along with the speeches, the honoring roll call and a Presentation of Colors by Clear Lake High School Junior ROTC, the celebration will include an open forum inviting audience participation and a display of vintage military vehicles by the Bluebonnet Military Motor Pool of Texas. The free public event will move to Atrium II of the Bayou building in case of inclement weather.

"There are many combat veterans here and in our communities that carry an unimaginable burden with them every day," Kulhanek said. "These veterans will not be the ones to stand up and tell their story. They will not ask for help. They will not see themselves as the heroes that they are. I only hope that we as a community can show them that they really are heroes and Veterans Day is for them as well as the WWII and Vietnam veterans."

To volunteer to read names for the Roll Call, contact Rohde by calling 281-283-2024. For more information about the event, visit <http://www.uhcl.edu/veteransday>.

Padmashree Rao The Signal

UHCL plans a day of celebration and respect Nov. 11 when students, veterans and the community will honor heroic American veterans, both living and dead, and salute their selfless service.

The ninth annual Veterans Day celebration, to be hosted at the university's Liberty Park, has the theme "The Call to Serve" and will feature the voices of wars from the World War II era to now. UHCL will also mark the tenth anniversary of 9/11 when it joins more than 145 colleges and universities nationwide for the "Remembrance Day National Roll Call," a reading out of the names of 6,200 fallen heroes of

Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom on the 11-11-11 Veterans Day event.

"It is a great honor," said Cheryl Rohde, executive secretary of university advancement, Veterans Day event coordinator and adviser to the Student Veterans Association (SVA). "These people [veterans] have given more, as far as their sacrifices. They have given us everything. Many volunteered to serve, which takes great courage. And we appreciate what they did for our country to preserve our freedoms."

Rohde pointed out that Veterans Day is a day of pride and gratitude and not a memorial.

"Even though the names on the roll call are of the deceased,

Inferfaith Dialogue promotes respect for all faiths

Ashley Smith The Signal

The sound of laughter and interlacing conversations drifted through Atrium I as students, faculty and community members sat at roundtables scattered throughout the open area. The subject of religion, which can sometimes be an intense and touchy subject, was the topic of discussion at the Interfaith Dialogue, held on campus Oct. 27.

Hosted by the Cross-Cultural, Anthropology, Sociology Student Association (CASSA), and the Muslim Student Association (MSA), the event brought students, faculty and community members from all faiths, as well as those curious about other faiths, together to create an environment of open discussion.

"We were inspired to do this through other organizations, like the Institute of Interfaith Dialogue," said Tonya Tipton, president of CASSA.

Anyone who wished to participate could easily join a discussion already in progress or start a new one. To help jumpstart conversation, a list of questions was provided, asking how people saw their faiths as well as how they perceived other faiths.

"I went to a Russian Orthodox private school, so I got more into theology and I could discern many things that regular churchgoers couldn't," said Eva Jane Terekhova, anthropology major. "As I grew up, I realized that my belief was actually starting to limit my scope and that I'm not connecting to other people."

One of the questions asked how each person's faith helps that person connect in the world.

"I'm a Muslim, and I know in the media and everything you see, we are like these people running around with guns and stuff like that; but for me, my religion teaches me to be connected with other people, to be a part of a whole society," said Shahd Nimeriy, psychology major. "Society is so strongly stated in our beliefs. I don't want to be that person who's looked at differently. I don't want to be excluded from things, I want to integrate myself into society and get to know people and the more I get to know people and their faiths it helps me connect with them."

Other roundtable discussions dove into the importance of rules and obligation in faith.

"Even though the Quran is specific, it says there is no com-

pulsion in religion," said Mustafa Carroll, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). "It does say you are obliged. If you believe in something, you are not compelled to do it, you're obliged to do it, and that obligation comes from something you have personally."

On the subject of the importance of ritual in religion, associate professor in sociology Mike McMullen took the sociological approach.

"All religions have rituals," McMullen said. "You're supposed to do something, get down on your knees, head to the floor, face a direction, wash your hands, all of that is to put you in a different mind frame because in the everyday life, we're caught up in life, and all of that is sociological to say that 'okay, now I am in a different frame of mind.' If you could get into that frame of mind all the time, then you wouldn't need those rituals."

This is the second year the Interfaith Dialogue event has taken place, and Tipton saw it as a great opportunity to gain respect for other religions and for each other.

"A lot of times, people say



ASHLEY SMITH:THE SIGNAL

Cross-cultural graduate students Tina Phillip and Jana Shanks; Melissa Akin, behavioral science graduate student; Mustafa Carroll, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations; and Mike McMullen, associate professor of sociology, gather together at one of the roundtables during the Interfaith Dialogue.

'Oh, we should have religious tolerance' and I don't like that word, tolerance; I don't think that's a very positive word," Tipton said. "I think we should have religious respect, and the only way we can respect each other is to get to know each other."

For more information about CASSA, MSA or future dialogues, visit the Student Life tab at www.uhcl.edu.

Scan the QR code to watch a video about the Interfaith Dialogue event.

