

How far is America willing to go to lose weight?

- Read more on page 3

Identity Theft: The Silent Crime



- Read more on page 2



Learn how to win an iPod on Constitution Day

- Read more on page 10

Traffic Trouble



Emily Jaschke: The Signal Staff

The ongoing construction on Bay Area Boulevard is causing traffic congestion and frustration to the UHCL community. Construction crews are doing patchwork. The project will continue for at least another month and has been delayed by rainy weather, preventing crews from pouring concrete.

Hurricane season stirs plan into action

Stephanie Wilcox
The Signal Staff

Although the threat of Hurricane Dean has dissipated, it presented the University of Houston-Clear Lake an opportunity to execute hurricane preparedness plans; moreover, a chance to ensure that the students and staff would be spared the wide spread devastation that others endured nearly two years ago with Hurricane Rita.

“The key issue for university administrators is making the decision in a timely manner to ensure students and employees are able to make individual preparations for their own safety as well as to allow time for the various individuals who play a role in responding to these types of incidents to be able to implement their part of the plan--such as backing up and securing database information, moving outdoor furniture inside, etc.,” said Theresa Presswood, director of communications.

Due to the complexities of hurricanes and the myriad of different outcomes from hurricanes, time frames for evacuations can vary.

“Ideally, the decision to close the university is

made 72 hours before a hurricane hits the Texas coastline; however, there are many factors to take into consideration when making that decision,” Presswood said.

“There is a general UHCL emergency plan and basically it is very, very general,” said Darlene Biggers, associate vice president for student services. “It says that the president or designee is responsible for making the decision to close the university, or not, during any kind of emergency and that each department is responsible for writing up their own procedures and policies, so there are some university-wide guidelines.”

Remembering the scenes that played out with the evacuation of Hurricane Rita, Biggers became teary eyed as she remembered the procession of busses leaving the university with the international students on board. She could not help but worry that someone might have been left behind; her ultimate fear was arriving back at the university to discover the bodies of trapped students.

That fear, coupled with the lack of prepared-

HURRICANE PLAN: continues on page 12

Stockton begins position as provost at UHCL

Nicole Wheatley
The Signal Staff

The University of Houston-Clear Lake is the “best kept secret in Houston,” declared Carl A. Stockton who is now serving as the university’s senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.



STOCKTON

Stockton took his post at UHCL Aug. 1 and is currently in the information gathering processes of what his job will entail.

He comes to UHCL from the University of Texas at Brownsville, where he served as Dean and Houston Endowed Chair for Education within the School of Education.

“When I decided to apply for the position at UHCL, along with several other positions throughout the United States, I had done a lot of soul-searching,” Stockton said. “I wanted to bring my skills to a more senior level to help an institution and I was very selective about which institutions I applied to.”

After seeing the position for provost/vice president for academic affairs advertised for UHCL, Stockton started doing research on the university to find out what it had to offer its students and possibly him.

“What I found in my research I was extremely impressed with,” Stockton said. “I found the university had several accredited programs to offer its students, and when you have accredited

programs this means you have a high quality faculty and staff to support these programs. When I did my interview here at UHCL I was fortunate to get to know the people, and noticed how hard working the faculty and staff were in this university. The more I got to know UHCL the more I liked it.”

Stockton did receive offers for other interviews on different campuses throughout the United States, but he found himself comparing each of these universities to UHCL.

“When you do a job search you start to make your own assessments of how you would fit in the university, and everything came together with Clear Lake,” he said. “UHCL was supportive of me, and I felt I could contribute to the institution. This is how I came to accepting the position of provost and vice president of academic affairs of UHCL.”

Being the provost and vice president of academic affairs at UHCL will require Stockton to oversee, or be in charge of, several different areas within the university. As chief academic officer he will supervise the associate vice presidents of academic affairs, information technology and student services. The Environmental Institution of Houston, International Initiatives, and the deans of the Schools of Human Sciences and Humanities, of Education, of Business, and of Science and Computer Engineering will all answer to Stockton.

“The search committee for the new provost and vice president of academic affairs looked at several different candidates, and

PROVOST: continues on page 10

Herbst retires after 23 years of service

Richard Willis
The Signal Staff

Director of University Police Michael J. Herbst retired Aug. 31 after 23 years of service.



HERBST

Statistics show that serving 23 years in a row while holding a leadership position is not common at the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

“In total, the other seven departments have gone through 19 people,” said Michelle Dotter, vice president of administration and finance.

While serving, Herbst said his greatest accomplishment was, “getting people turned in to being safe and calling the police department.”

“He was always thinking about the safety of the campus and students,” Dotter agrees.

Sergeant Paul Jones, who was hired by Herbst in 2001, said Herbst was a stern leader, but a fair leader as well.

“When there was credit due, he gave it to the department; and when something bad happened, he took the blame for it,” Jones said.

HERBST: continues on page 10

ADEQUATE MEASURES:

Are we ready for the worst?

Living along the Texas border, we reside in an area that is prone to hurricanes. We have seen first hand how devastating hurricanes can be. We witnessed this in August 2005 when Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Louisiana.

In September 2005, it was a big wake-up call for the university when Hurricane Rita threatened the Houston/Galveston area. Thankfully, it did not affect our area as expected.

With a 24 hour notice, University of Houston-Clear Lake began evacuation procedures. That’s when the Office of Student Services discovered how ill-prepared we were for such an emergency. Many questions came up, such as, “What are we going to do with the students who do not have any form of transportation to evacuate out of the city.”

Darlene Biggers, associate vice president of student services; the staff of the Office of Intercultural & International Student Services; and the Office of Student Life stayed behind after the university closed to make sure there was transportation and a safe refuge for our international student body who needed assistance. Sameer Pande, the assistant director of international student services, and Andrew Reitberger, the assistant director of student

life, accompanied the students out of town. After Hurricane Rita, UHCL Student Services realized the university needed a revised hurricane preparedness plan to better prepare students for hurricanes and other natural disasters.

For one thing, students need to be aware of what exactly their role is and what they can do to prepare themselves in the event of a hurricane. This is one of the problems that the university needs to address. The Dean of Students, Anthony Jenkins, is trying to find a way to inform students on keeping their information up to date. It is very important that students keep their contact information current, so that the university can inform the students in a timely fashion.

Also, student services has recently added a section under the student tab on the university Web site that has the emergency hotline number and links to Web sites like Harris County Homeland Security & Emergency Management, where it gives you up-to-date information on what to watch for in the Harris County area.

IISS has taken the initiative to create an international hurricane preparedness plan that can be accessed on the university’s Web site. They have made an online

preparation kit available that will inform and prepare the international student body with all they will need to know in the case of a hurricane. This is because many have not been exposed to hurricanes; therefore, it is the university’s job to inform the students on what to expect if a hurricane does threaten us.

Hurricanes are not the only safety issue of concern for students. After what occurred at Virginia Tech, the university took the initiative to devise a way that will help notify students who are on and off campus if a shooting or other potentially hazardous situation occurs on campus.

Since we live in an area also prone to industrial accidents, notification to “Shelter in Place” would be a good thing. The university decided to take the necessary steps to implement a Public Information and Emergency Response System that will inform students of any dangers on campus.

The system will cost the university \$4,000 a year but the Student Services Division, the

UHCL Police Department and the Office of Communications agreed to fund it for the first year. After that, it will be put in the university’s budget. The PIER System is separated into three phases; phase I will, hopefully, be operational by the end of October. A final completion date has not been set.

Hurricane Rita was an awful experience for the university and the community at large. Although we were spared, it served as a drill. Rita ensured that the university will be better prepared in the future.



Kevin Kettle: The Signal Staff

COMMENTARY

The growing threat of identity theft

Kim Boswell
The Signal Staff

The term “identity theft” is a hot topic of conversation on TV, radio and the Internet. Weekly, we see reports in our local papers of someone in our community who has been victimized by this crime.

A report by the Federal Trade Commission states that in 2006 the cost of identity theft to the nation was \$56.6 billion dollars. This figure is staggering by itself, without taking into account the 62 percent of victims that did not report the crime.

Texas held the distinction of being fourth in the nation for victims of identity theft last year.

There are discussions, on shows like Oprah about Internet fraud being committed against gullible Americans. We are made offers of identity theft insurance for a fee to protect ourselves from these types of crimes. But our best insurance begins with our own behavior.

“Victims are victims because they allow themselves to be victims,” said Detective Eric Price, criminal investigator with the Friendswood Police Department.

Just as there are places we would not choose to wander alone at certain times of day, there are situations and virtual places that should raise the hair on our collective necks. We need to educate ourselves about these new dark

alleys of the 21st century.

“Look before you cross the street.” “Buckle your seat belts.” “Lock your doors when you drive.” All the rules of safety our parents taught us as children growing up are etched in our brain as surely as we breathe.

Young and old, we are all children once again in this new and dangerous place that seems to creep insidiously toward us from places unknown. Victims of this crime will express the numbing shock of discovering that some faceless person who seems to know so much about them has violated them.

Protecting ourselves requires knowing how to “Just Say No.” Whenever we are approached by someone, through e-mail, phone calls, or regular mail, we should never provide any personal or financial information. Never, period, end of discussion. Delete the e-mail, hang up the phone and destroy mail requests. No reputable business or bank will solicit your social security number or bank account number through these methods.

If you have any lingering doubts about whether your bank or credit card company is trying to contact you, search out their phone number yourself from public information and call them. Do not use any form of contact given by these unsolicited requests.

Shawn Hogan, senior special agent with American Express Global Security, has this advice for the public: “Never let anything with your name, bank, credit card,

brokerage, or social security account numbers go into your trash unshredded. Tearing these things in half is not sufficient.”

Sid Kirchheimer, author of Scam-Proof Your Life, suggests one of the simplest things you can do to protect your money in the bank is to buy the right type of pen. Here’s why. In a process called “check washing” the crook uses a special process to wash off everything but your signature from a check you may have written to pay a bill. He can then fill in the amount he wants to steal and make the check out to him. You can avoid this by using a gel type pen by Uni-Ball, which can’t be removed.

There seems no end to the deviousness criminals will go to in order to steal from you. One of the scariest techniques being used is called “skimming.” Someone at a store will install a special information collecting device on the machine that processes your credit or debit card transaction. With one seemingly simple purchase, you may have entered a spiral of financial trouble that could take years to correct.

Debit and credit card usage, as well as Internet transactions, are here to stay. We must learn all there is to know about identify theft and other forms of financial fraud. With knowledge, we can protect ourselves. For more information, go to the Texas Attorney General’s Web site, www.oag.state.tx.us, and click on consumer protection.

“Victims are victims because they allow themselves to be victims.”

- Eric Price
Criminal Investigator

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Diet drug: Unpleasant side effects

How far is America willing to go to lose weight? The popular diet drug Alli has some side effects of which most people are unaware.



Lauren Taylor
Mouth of the South

Alli's label reads:
Alli works by preventing the absorption of some of the fat you eat. The fat passes out of your body, so you may

have bowel changes. You may get:

- Gas with oily spotting
- Loose stools
- More frequent stools that may be hard to control

Alli is made from the drug Orlistat, which was released in February of this year for over-the-counter use. In researching, I have found that this drug is the key factor in the unpleasant side effects of the drug Alli. Orlistat includes all of the side effects previously listed by Alli along with:

- Orange or brown colored oil in your stool
- An urgent need to go to the bathroom

The drug guide for Orlistat claims that you should not consume food with more than 30 percent of calories from fat and that you should evenly divide your daily intake of fat, carbohydrates and protein between three main meals a day. Let's look at some food that contains more than 30 percent of calories from fat.

Starting with the obvious, a hamburger and fries from a fast food joint contains far more than 30 percent. Depending on the kind of burger you get, you are looking at 60-70 percent. Of course, a meal of baked flounder, sauteed rice and fresh spinach, as noted on the Alli meal plan, is perfectly fine to eat. However, if you are anything like me, the last thing on your mind during a busy day is baking flounder. Usually I have to pick between drive-thrus on Bay Area in between classes.

Another problem that students would face with Alli is the frequent restroom breaks. In a three-hour class, it's usual to get

one 10-15 minute break at the hour and a half mark. If you decided to "cheat" and stop at one of the drive-thrus on Bay Area, you might not even get the opportunity to make it to the restroom. How mortifying! This unfortunate side effect is so prevalent that the drug has even been nicknamed the "Alli-oops."

If you visit the Alli Web site, there is a quiz you can take to decide if you are ready for the "Alli challenge." I took this quiz and was shocked to find this statement underneath a picture of a door with a unisex bathroom sign on it:

I understand that if I take Alli with a meal containing too much fat I might get treatment effects.

When you click the "tell me more" link it informs you of all the treatment effects that Alli has. I am not sure how ready I would be for these side effects. The thing about this diet is that it keeps attracting new people regardless of its unpleasant side effects. The studies show that you can lose 5-10 pounds in six months.

Richard Harris, a certified personal trainer at the Thelma Ley Anderson Family YMCA, says you can lose 5 pounds a month with a low calorie diet and an exercise program that is right for you without using any diet drug. Richard also notes that, "The side effects of Alli can be dangerous if you are not staying in the 30 percent calorie from fat zone." Diarrhea can lead to dehydration and intestinal damage.

I do not even have to imagine what a treatment effect would feel like because it actually happened to a dear friend of mine. Let's call her Katie (not her real name). Katie has tried the pill Alli, and let's just say she was not ready for the Alli challenge. Katie is a student who is often lured into the Bay Area drive-thrus herself. Well, one day in class... you guessed it. She had the sudden urge to go to the restroom. As she got up from her seat...

There is no need to continue.
Katie must not have read the label on the box.

Now, it's common for anyone to "cheat" or slip up on their diet here and there, but are you willing to go through the agony and embarrassment of letting something else slip?

Nutrition for college life: DHA increases intelligence

While not all students have the intention of attaining unhealthy eating habits, ongoing stress from demanding



Angela Bolton
Thoughts for Life

time restraints can detour even the most health-conscious student from good nutrition. It is much easier to run to the nearest

fast food chain or snack machine between classes, home and work.

Fortunately, there are nutritional choices that can meet the high demands and stressful lifestyles of college students.

We have been taught since childhood the importance of good eating habits. When we were in grade school, the food pyramid was introduced and gym teachers enforced the importance of maintaining a healthy body. Now, as adults, we have the choice to do as we please, but did we really know just how much the stress was going to take a toll on the entire body? Stress can lead to several different health problems for an individual, but it can also impair a student's ability to focus properly on all their responsibilities.

Various natural supplements like fish oil and multiple vitamins can help students keep up with the race. Although adequate amounts of fish oil can be achieved by eating large amounts of fish, taking a supplemental fish oil will bring better results. Fish oil, also widely known as essential fatty acids or omega 3s, help with memory, learning abilities, emotional stress like depression, hair, skin, nails and cardiovascular function.

The docosahexaenoic acid in fish oil is what causes the enhanced effects of memory, learning, and emotional wellness. Dr. John Moreno, nutrition specialist and owner of the American

Wellness Center in Lake Charles, La., explained to me that the brain is primarily made of nerves and fat, and DHA replenishes the brain of the good fat it needs to function optimally. He further explained that research shows DHA increases intelligence when used over a period of time. What college student couldn't use a bit more intelligence?

For sustaining energy levels, well-rounded multiple vitamins that are packed with a good B-complex are another option for students while conquering all their responsibilities. Multiples are a great way to replenish the body with all the vitamins we lack from our dietary habits. The typical Western diet lacks the sufficient amount of nutrients our body needs to function properly, and most students simply don't have the extra time to prepare a meal that will attain them either. As with any supplement, everyone should check to make sure there are no interactions with any medication they may be taking, or major health concerns they may be facing.

Students can see a significant increase in their cognitive performance, maintain healthy energy levels, and resistance to stress by adjusting their eating habits with affordable and timely snacks like fruits, vegetables and nuts. These healthy alternatives are easy to pack and go. Dr. Moreno also mentioned that the protein from nuts increases reflux time before activities, and the carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables increase memory. Even with these mindful snacks, most people can benefit from supplements while enduring high levels of stress over long periods of time.

Stressful situations are an inevitable part of being a student. With the length of time it takes to acquire a degree, why not take measures to minimize the stress?

Taking care of our bodies is just as important as meeting all of our deadlines, for a properly functioning body produces better overall results.

Welcome to campus life in my bizzaro world

As I flip over my issue of The Signal to the sports page, the headline confirms the activities surrounding me, "Blockies Prepare for Big Game during Homecoming Bonanza!" That's right fans; football mania has officially begun!

The fall semester is upon us and the collision of shoulder pads and piercing whistle blows echo across the practice gridiron to the throngs of students moving to class. Everyone is hustling from fraternity row and the dormitories toward the classroom buildings.



David Kiss
Mix Tape Master

These are college students so the prices are never more than \$15 bucks. Blockie t-shirts, stuffed football pillows, Blockies carrying footballs, and pirated "Got UHCL" items are the most popular.

These guys make some big money. The freshmen are always coming back to the SUVs grabbing more gear and

heading back into the crowds. The product is moving. Future energy consultants in plush downtown offices I'm sure. Can I change my major, again?

The homecoming game is three weeks away and the scheduling gods have done us a favor. We'll be playing those red-shirted kittens known as the University of Houston Cougars. They usually try and intimidate us with their claw hand gestures, but it won't do any good. They know who is the better team.

We are lead by star quarterback Vince Yeung. Who knew Vince Young had a cousin who grew up in Hong Kong and whose dad is Chinese! The guy is a great player; the recruiting coup from four years ago.

Thanks to the donation of the Crazy Egret Booster's Club, who gather at Sherlock's after every game, UHCL coach Bum Phillips IV was able to travel to see Vince play. It's a fun group, but there is some serious arm-chair quarterbacking going on. With the way the Texans have been playing, this is one first overall pick that won't get away.

Former Miss Texas USA 2004 Stephanie Guerrero, graduating class of 2004, will preside over the coin toss at the center of the field while the Blockette cheerleaders will rally the massive crowd. They are coached by UHCL graduate and former Texans cheerleader Shannon Anders. It's nice to see Blockies returning to their alma mater and getting involved.

It's going to be a great time at Tom DeLay Memorial

Stadium. Who says redistricting doesn't work! Having Mr. DeLay represent this area brought the respect of the business community.

Some people snickered at the stadium being built, but when Hurricane Rita came along 70,000 of us got to stay inside the domed stadium instead of sweltering in the I-45 parking lot. I'm sure there were many quietly thanking "The Hammer."

Speaking of infrastructure and public bond votes; I heard there used to be huge parking lots where the light rail now stops on campus. The rail didn't take up too much acreage when they connected it from downtown so now those lots are covered with grass fields and dormitories.

Back in the day people depended on their cars to get to UHCL. Unbelievable! People would drive to campus, go to class, and then head back to suburbia and their families. There weren't a lot of people who stayed for extracurricular activities. Things have really changed.

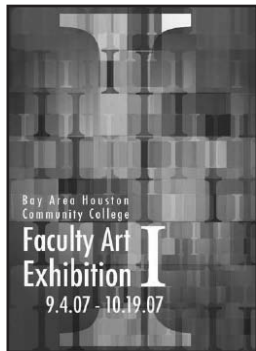
I'll finish the paper later. I need to get moving to class. Later today is the rally and the free ZZ Top concert. I want to be right in front. Those guys can still rock!

This is my UHCL ... Go Blockies! "Burnt Orange" and "the 12th man" you've got nothing on us.

It's a great time to be at UHCL. I look forward to the fall foliage changing color as the season rolls on. We might as well enjoy it before the snow and freezing winter.

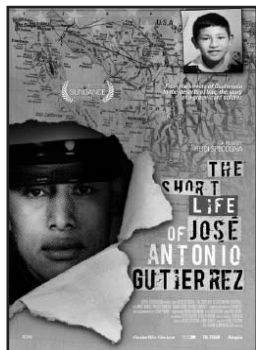


2007 Gulf Coast
Job Fair -
September 19
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Bayou Building,
Atrium II
Sponsored by UHCL
Career Services.



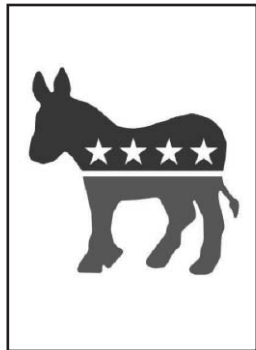
Courtesy

Bay Area Houston
Community College
Faculty Art Exhibition
Sept. 4 to Oct. 19
Art Gallery, Atrium I,
Bayou Building
Monday - Thursday
9 a.m.-6 p.m. and
Friday 9 a.m.-noon



Courtesy

Film and Speaker
Series -
September 12
7 p.m.
SSCB Lecture Hall
Guest Speaker:
Beatrice Edwards



The College
Democrats - Forum
on separation of
church and state
September 21
7 p.m.
SSCB Lecture Hall

Recreational sports coming to UHCL

Heather Frame
The Signal Staff

The Office of Student Life plans to offer recreational sports through their fitness program for students beginning in spring/summer of 2008. Proposed selections of sports for consideration include soccer, basketball, softball, tennis and rugby.

David Rachita, assistant dean of student life, is playing a key role in getting the program off the ground and running.

Rachita hopes that bringing recreational sports to the university will improve the educational and social experiences of students.

"In order for students to fully develop on a variety of levels (cognitively, socially and emotionally) they need to be engaged in a variety of activities both in and outside of the classroom that allow them to do so," Rachita said.

"Recreational sports is just one way to help students develop their potential and to create a campus culture that's enjoyable to be part of."

The Fitness Zone staff are also supportive of a recreational sports program on campus because it helps students keep in shape and engage in a healthy exercise weekly.

"By having recreational sports available along with the Fitness Zone, students have more of an opportunity to be active and live healthier lifestyles," Rachita said.

Denise Cazes, Fitness Zone manager, is more than thrilled to have other healthy outlets for students to turn toward on campus. Cazes points out that the nature of this campus is very busy and stressful to students, having a recreational sport to turn to will not only help relieve the stress of school, but also enhance a social hour for students.

"Any opportunity for a student to participate

in an extracurricular activity outside of the classroom, and that involves exercise, is a good thing," Cazes said.

Student interest and participation is going to be an important factor in keeping recreational sports going.

The University of Houston-Clear Lake used to have an intramural sports program, but it was cancelled due to a lack of student participation and problems with non-student members starting fights on the field. Activity fees for intramural sports became an expense not benefiting students, therefore, the intramural sports program was dropped.

Intramural sports require league play in which a referee is present with set rules regulations, and is student based.

Recreational sports have a more relaxed atmosphere and are more informal than intramural sports.

"Recreational sports are much more relaxed than intramural sports because it's less competitive and more of a fun, social outlet for students," Rachita said.

For more information about the recreational

Student Life Fair



Melissa Bird: The Signal Staff

Andrew Reitberger, assistant director of student life, serves up fresh popcorn at the Student Life Fair held at the beginning of every semester.

Read the full story in the online edition of this week's The Signal at www.uhcl.edu/thesignal.

sports program, contact David Rachita in the Student Life Office, room SSCB 1.204.

Paul McGrath: a whopping good adjunct

Alana Pennington
The Signal Staff

A wise man once said, "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

Those who have had Paul McGrath as a professor understand that this statement fits with what he thrives to accomplish each class day. McGrath, a Houston Chronicle editor, is an adjunct professor at University of Houston-Clear Lake, teaching Writing for the Media and Editing for the Communication program.

McGrath, born and raised in Clute, Texas, attended Brazoswood High School where he worked on the high school newspaper for three years. While on staff, McGrath served as sports editor and won awards for headline writing and story writing. During his senior year, McGrath took his headline writing all the way to regionals.

"The person who deserves the most blame for me being involved in newspapers for nearly 40 years is Deason Hunt," McGrath notes. "He was my high school journalism adviser and managed to inject newspaper ink into my system. Years after graduating from college, I called him one day to thank him for all he did to cure my case of senioritis and set me on the right path."

After graduating from Texas A&M in December of 1977 with a degree in journalism, McGrath became a reporter for the Conroe Courier of Conroe, Texas. While there, McGrath wrote his favorite and most memorable story in a series of articles that involved a couple who were phony homebuilders. The couple

was swindling homebuyers on Lake Conroe.

During his investigation, McGrath discovered the couple had committed the same type of fraud in Lake Livingston, Texas, upstate New York, and PA. Once the articles were published, the District Attorney's office initiated its own investigation that ended in indictments for the phony homebuilders.

A few jobs later, McGrath landed a position with the Houston Chronicle. While there, he has succeeded in a series of promotions. Most recently, he was promoted to Section A editor, both national and international pages.

The toughest story McGrath says he has worked on to date happened on his very first day as a professional journalist — where he saw a dead body. The death resulted from a car accident where the victim was thrown through the windshield of his van.

"Fortunately, the victim was covered by the time I got there, but that was a tough day to begin a career on, McGrath reminisces.

Since working for the Houston Chronicle," McGrath has won various awards such as the "Jesse Award" for copy editor of the year and the annual Hearst Corp. headline writing contest in 2002.

"We all think highly of him," exclaims Kim Tabor, wire editor of the Houston Chronicle. "There is nothing he can't do. He's our 'go-to' guy."

Helen Olin, news editor for the Houston Chronicle, recalls that at an event in 2005 he talked so much about the Houston Chronicle, Olin decided to apply for a position there. McGrath helped her with the application process and ultimately helped her get hired.

"The reason I'm at the Houston Chronicle is because of Paul McGrath," Olin says. "He speaks with so much passion about his job."

As part of his class lectures, McGrath always mentions costly errors that professional journalists constantly make. One error that McGrath made was when he decided to enhance a head-

line for a lead story in the Houston Chronicle by changing the word "huge" to "whopping."

"At least I thought I did," McGrath comments.

The headline came out as "wopping" in 60-point letters. McGrath received a phone call from his boss the next day, which also happened to be McGrath's first day of vacation. When McGrath got back to the Houston Chronicle, his boss had a long talk with him and a letter was placed in his personnel file.

"That wasn't a good day," McGrath reminisces, "Now I avoid either the word 'whopping' or double check it. For years I cringed whenever I drove by a Burger King."

McGrath began teaching in 1990 at the University of Houston when one of his friends decided to stop teaching. UH needed a replacement and McGrath wanted "some extra ski money," so he agreed to teach the class.

"What started out as more or less a fluke has become an integral part of my life," McGrath says.

McGrath has been teaching ever since that first semester in 1990. In 2000, he left UH to teach at Texas A&M for four years as an adjunct professor.

In the spring of 2005, McGrath moved on to the University of Houston-Clear Lake, to teach Writing for the Media. He added Editing in the fall 2006 semester.

"McGrath has probably been the most enthusiastic and approachable professor I have had at UHCL," said Wendy Westmoreland, a communication major. "He takes a genuine interest in his students and is always willing to offer help."

"I hope my students never stop growing, never stop learning," McGrath declares, "If you don't, you start to stagnate and you might as well have both feet in the grave."

*Student Life * Student Life * Student Life*



The National Society of Leadership and Success

in partnership with the
UHCL Student Leadership Institute
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Tom Krieglestein

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“The Secrets Behind Facebook and MySpace to Multiply the Power to Your Success”

Highlights Include:

- Discover the Power of Your Social Network
- Find Out Where CEOs Hang Out Online
- Using the Internet to Positively Influence Your Future

Date: Tuesday, April 10, 2007
Time: 6 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Location: Bayou 2512

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SGA Welcomes All New Students to UHCL!



Your Student Government Association wishes to share a special greeting of welcome to all new students to the UHCL campus and extend an invitation to join us and attend the weekly SGA meetings.

As each of you begins the next steps in your academic career at UHCL, SGA wishes to invite you to take part in the decisions and activities happening on campus. We welcome you to express your ideas and concerns about your new campus and to participate with us to experience a well-rounded learning opportunity, both inside and outside of the classroom. We also encourage you to join one of the more than sixty (60) student organizations on campus and to get involved with the Student Leadership Institute and all the other services offered by the Student Life Office.

For more information, simply attend the SGA meetings on Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Student Services and Classroom Building (SSCB) Lecture Hall. We promise that you will have a good time and will be enlightened about events on campus. No RSVP required!

*For more information,
contact the SGA Executive Council:*

Joyce Delores Taylor, *President*
Michael Phillips, *VP – Committee Coordinator*
Nida Ajaz, *VP – Student Outreach & Communications*
Patrick Cardenas, *VP – Administration*



SGA@uhcl.edu | 281.283.2556 | www.uhcl/sga



Student Assistance Center

Dean of Students Office

The Student Assistance Center (SAC) is an extension of the Dean of Students Office and provides assistance relating to registration, student financials, admissions and financial aid status, E-Services, and help with resolving academic and administrative difficulties. SAC also provides support and general information to students, faculty, staff, and UHCL constituency.

WHAT SERVICES CAN I GET AT SAC?

- Registration Assistance
- E-Services Assistance
- Transcripts
- Student ID Card Validation
- Admissions Status Assistance
- Student Financial Account Assistance
- FAFSA & Loans By Web Assistance
- Graduation Information
- Personal Information Changes (name, address, etc.)
- Academic Records Forms
- Help Resolving Registration/Administrative Issues
- General Information and Important Dates
- And Much More...

Student Assistance Center

SSCB 1102
(281) 283-2722

E-mail: uhclsac@uhcl.edu
www.uhcl.edu/deanofstudents

Reg. Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 8 am – 7 pm
Friday 8 am – 5 pm

Film and Speaker Series presents enlightened entertainment

Ashley R. Marie
The Signal Staff

The Film and Speaker Series opened its fall series Aug. 24 with a showing of the 2006 Academy Award winning German film "The Lives of Others" followed by speaker, Oktavia Carstarphen.

Set in the 1980s in East Berlin, the film features a high-profile couple who are being bugged by the Stasi's state police. Not only are the lives of the couple changed, police's lives are changed as well.

Carstarphen, who was born in Berlin, was a prisoner of the Stasi after her whole family was arrested Jan. 15, 1953. She spent her 14th and 15th birthday, and a total of 18 months, in prison.

"I did not handle being in prison very well," Carstarphen told the audience. "It took me a long time to get over it, and I don't think I ever quite did. I am now a criminal defense attorney and the first time I visited one of my clients in jail, the door slammed shut and I almost freaked out."

Carstarphen was separated from her family, often not knowing where they were kept. She was placed near an interrogation room where she could hear other people being interrogated.



CARSTARPHEN

"At first, I knew where my older brother was, and they would let us be together during the day, and then later on they would separate us," Carstarphen said. "I didn't know how long I would be there, and I eventually started having nightmares."

Carstarphen explained that the movie closely resembled what truly happened between West and East Germany, and the constant fear of losing everything to the Stasis was very real.

The series began in the fall of 2003 as a project of the Film and History Club. The series was so popular that the Office of Student Life has adopted it as part of its programming, hiring the club's graduating president Sonia Hernandez as a part-time employee to continue the series.

"We try to choose films that will develop an awareness of viewing film as art and as a primary source of social history," said Hernandez, now a cultural arts assistant.

The Film and Speaker Series charges an attendance fee, but tries to keep the prices low. General admission tickets are \$3 and season passes are \$20.

"It is a great deal in terms of money," Hernandez said. "For folks on a budget, the Film and Speaker Series is great. We try and team up with student groups around UCHL to help pay the funds of the films' copyrights."

The Film and Speaker Series runs Aug. 24 - Nov. 3 with the next film, "The Short Life of Jose Antonio Gutierrez," scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 12 at 7

p.m. in the SSCB. The film is a documentary about the life of the first American soldier killed in Iraq.

For more information about upcoming movies and guest speakers, go to the Film and Speaker Series Web site at www.uhcl.edu/culturalarts. Tickets for the events can be purchased at the door before any show, at the Office of Student Life or by sending a request to historyandfilm-club@hotmail.com.



Courtesy of Sony Pictures Classic
Movie poster from the 2006 Academy Award-winning movie "The Lives of Others." The movie was shown on campus Aug. 24 as part of this semester's Film and Speaker Series.

Classic courtroom drama takes center stage at San Jac Central

Josh Conwell
The Signal Staff

A new dinner theater production of one of the most stirring and controversial plays of all time is being performed at San Jacinto College Central.

The play, "Inherit the Wind," is a courtroom drama set in the 1920s about a battle between two high-power attorneys who are arguing for and against a science teacher who has been accused of teaching evolution.

Directed by Richard Turner, associate director of the theatre, it's a stirring portrait of one man's, Bertram T. Cates,

struggle to fight for what he believes in and, at the same time, to keep the love of his life, the preacher's daughter, Rachel Brown. Their relationship is condemned by Rachel's father, who strongly opposes the belief of evolution.

The play is an inspirational struggle of a man's hope to prove that people should learn to think for themselves and have the right to believe in whatever religion they wish without the fear of censorship.

Jerry Ivins, department chair of theatre and film, says that out of all the plays he has seen, this is one of his favorites. He calls it "intriguing" and a "classic piece of literature."

The basis of the groundbreaking fictional play, by writers Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, came from an actual 1925 trial commonly called the Scopes Monkey Trial that took place in Dayton, Tenn. John T. Scopes, a science teacher, was brought to court for presenting the theories of evolution to his students. This broke the law of the state that barred the teaching of Darwinism.

As controversial as the play was when it premiered, modern audiences will most likely view the storyline as relevant in today's society.

Turner describes the play as "timeless due to the fact

that the issues are still being debated to this day."

Although "Inherit the Wind" is a fictional play, there are many similarities between the play and the Scopes Monkey Trial, especially quotes from the actors in the play, which were taken from the actual court trial transcript.

Most of the actors in the play are from San Jacinto College Central, but a few actors are from the local community, including the two leading characters, Bill Krause and Mike Fabian, who play the two attorneys engaged in a courtroom power struggle.

Mike Fabian is from the Friendswood area and has enjoyed acting for more than 10 years. He plays prosecuting attorney Matthew Harrison Brady, a Bible-thumping religious fanatic who tries to disprove evolution.

Bill Krause, who is from the Clear Lake area and has been acting for more than eight years, plays defending attorney Henry Drummond. Thanks to the play and his role in it, Krause says that now he has "gotten a more detailed history of this event" and the issues raised by creation and evolution.

The play not only brings up important religious issues says Krause, but issues of "our freedom to choose which one we want to believe."

The play is being shown at the Powell Arena Theatre at San Jacinto College Central. Tickets are \$10 for the play and \$15 if you attend the dinner theater. Play-only performances are Sept. 7 and 8 at 7:30 p.m., as well as a special school performance at 10 a.m. on Sept. 14. A matinee will be held Sept. 9 at 2:30 p.m. Dinner theater attendees meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Slocomb Auditorium for dinner; the show starts at 7:30 p.m. in the Powell Arena Theatre on Sept. 14 and 15. A dinner theater matinee will be held Sept. 16 at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are available by calling (281) 476-1828.



Courtesy of Rob Vanya
From left, Jenny Parks, Mike Fabian and Bill Krause re-enact a scene from the controversial play "Inherit the Wind," now showing at San Jacinto Central College.

REVIEW: THE “NOSE KNOWS” WHAT IS GOOD

Emily Jaschke
The Signal Staff

The lights go out; the spot light feverishly attempts to find its subject with no avail. Mysterious voices proclaim that the leading lady, Jen E. Star has been kidnapped!

It's not a typical Friday night in Kemah. The wildly original, “The Nose Knows,” written and hosted by owner Wes Adair, is off to a mystifying start at the Murder by Chocolate Dinner Theater.

Who will take her place in the show? The first to be asked is Lotta Mouth. She's loud and has no patience for questioning, thus rudely declaring she would like to see the host's “big nose full of nickels.”

Claire Voyant would gladly take the lead, especially from Ova Actor. She “hates her just as much as she hates broccoli.” Her feather boa and sex appeal might fool you, but her dramatic disdain creates suspicion.

Where is the talented and famous Ova Actor? The host approaches her table, she lies motionless. She's dead! The audience gasps in horror. Who dunnit? This nose, knows nothing.

My nose did smell something good coming from the kitchen, but it wasn't my dressing-drenched Caesar salad. I would have to wait because the plot was thickening and important clues were being divulged.

Our host transformed himself into the black trench coat, felt derby clad-Paul Liesman. He is the French

inspector who leads the investigation and interrogations.

While the entree was served by a friendly and adequate staff, my eyes surveyed the theater. The ambiance reflects the early 1900s with random insertions of modern junk. Eclectic knickknacks, such as a life size butler with wondering eyes, give theater goers a chill, thus setting the mood for murder and transgression.

The actual dining experience was just as enjoyable as the play. Patrons are seated at one of the eight large tables. If you come as a pair, you get the opportunity to meet six or more new friends.

Returning patron Richard Stiles (Moe Hetoe the bartender) said he “enjoys the theater but doesn't like to drive to Houston.” This would be he and his wife's third visit to Murder by Chocolate.

The baked Tilapia crusted with pecans was fresh and succulent. The green beans al dente and herbed brown rice with cranberries were delectable. I washed it all down with cold “Rusty Water” (iced tea).

After the dinner plates were cleared, we listened intently as Kim Mist, the chemist, and Dr. Lucy D. Patient revealed lab findings. Rocker Molly Child incriminated his sister though a non sequitur rant about being an orphan, while Moe Hetoe muddled mint for his signature drink.

I was still clueless when dessert arrived. I had the signature “Murder by Chocolate,” a huge brownie a la mode, topped with whipped cream and chocolate sauce. My heart grew faint, it was to die for.

“Who-do-ew-zink-zah-murrderrrr iz?” the inspector

asked. “The golfer!” I proclaim loudly with an overly dramatic accusatory finger point. “Uh-no,” he retorts in disgust.

Other diners make an effort until one solves the kidnapping mystery and the murderer is apprehended. I would tell you who the murderer is, but then I would have to kill you.

Participating diners sported amusingly silly costumes to reflect their roles and were equipped with well-written scripts. With only one real actor, the audience proves to be the all-stars of the performance.

How did Kemah get so lucky? Adair, former president of a multi-million dollar manufacturing company, once hosted a mystery dinner for his church. When his company sold, wife DiAnna suggested they go at it full time. Every other weekend they did so at a local Italian restaurant. With no promotional signs permitted, Adair had to stand outside holding a sign to entice participants.

Once during a rainstorm someone threw something and yelled, “Get a real job!” Completely humbled, it encouraged him to open his own place. Five years later, and no tomatoes thrown, the theater continues to thrive.

The mystery dinners are \$40 per person, including tax and tip. Reservations are booked in advance and a credit card is required. Every show is rated “G,” so they are perfect for anyone and all families alike.

For more information, please visit the Web site at <http://www.murderbychocolate.net>.



Emily Jaschke: The Signal Staff
Left: Vicki Allison, Roy Allison and Wes Adair listen intently for clues at the Murder by Chocolate Dinner Theater.
Right: Dressed in blood red, the butler's eyes follow all who pass.



IT'S “A DIFFERENT WORLD” FOR JASMINE GUY

Monica Buchanan
The Signal Staff

Jasmine Guy will be this year's celebrity guest at the annual Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival. She will be receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award during the three-day festival, which will be held Sept. 14-16.

While Guy is recognized mostly for her portrayal of Whitley Gilbert on the hit show, “A Different World,” she has earned respect on Broadway acting in such plays as “Grease,” “The Wiz” and “Chicago.” She has also been involved in several films and television appearances including “Living Single,” “NYPD Blue,” “Anne Rice's Feast of all Saints” and “Eddie Murphy's Harlem Night.”

Domino Taylor, who has worked with this festival for five years and now serves as the events' publicist, expressed how exciting it will be to see Guy receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.

“We've had so many great artists receive this award,” Taylor said. “Guy has had such an incredible career as a woman of film, television and Broadway. It will be a thrill to see where her career will take her next.”

The film festival has developed into an outreach for local talent, encouraging the independent artist as well as spreading knowledge about independent films. Those involved with the festival have a deep love for the art of film and wish to share this love with the Clear Lake community.

“We see a vast range of filmmakers,” Taylor states. “You can attend the festival and see films made by anyone from college age to their mid-50s, but they all have a love for the



Courtesy of Domino Taylor
Jasmine Guy, known for her role as Whitley on the show “A Different World” is receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival held Sept. 14-16.

independent film.”

The Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival is in its eighth year and Hal Wixon, executive director and founder, has watched the festival grow from a small organization to a nationally recognized film festival.

“The first year, 75 tickets were sold; but due to bad weather, we only had 35 attendees,” Wixon said. “Last year, over the course of the three-day weekend, we had around 2,000 attendees.”

The growing support of the film festival has become so large that Wixon foresees the name of the festival changing to accommodate the word “international.”

During the three-day event, guests will not only be able to partake in viewing the submitted films, but there will be several mixers and ceremonies to

attend. Friday night, Sept. 14, there will be a buffet mixer from 7-9 p.m. at the Villa Capri Restaurant, located at 3713 NASA Road One in Seabrook. An awards ceremony will be held at a banquet on Saturday night in the Admiral Room at the Endeavor Marina, 3101 NASA Road One, from 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Screenings of the films will be held Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 15-16 in the Flickering Fine Arts Building at San Jacinto College South, located at 13735 Beamer Road. As in years past, there will be a wide range of films shown, including short films, standard-length films, and feature-length films. While every genre of film is usually represented, Wixon states that each year keeps him and the attendees guessing.

“Every year we see a vast spectrum of entrees,” Wixon said. “Last year we had an abundance of animated films, this year we've seen more documentaries and every year the student project grows more and more.”

There are several price packages available for the screenings ranging from all inclusive to individual viewings. For prices and additional information, visit the Gulf Coast Film and Video Web site at www.gulfcoastfilmfest.com. Student discounts are available with a current student ID card.

Welcome

University of Houston-Clear Lake welcomes Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Carl A. Stockton.

He joined UH-Clear Lake after serving three years as dean and Houston Endowed Chair for Education in the University of Texas at Brownsville's School of Education.

Dr. Stockton holds a Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts in Health Education from the University of Florida and a Doctor of Philosophy in Health Education from the University of Tennessee.

University of Houston  Clear Lake



Carl A. Stockton
Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost

As UH-Clear Lake's senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, Dr. Stockton oversees the academic component of the university including the Schools of Business, Education, Human Sciences and Humanities, and Science and Computer Engineering as well as the library, sponsored programs, admissions and academic records, distance education, student services, international initiatives and the Environmental Institute of Houston.

University Forest Apartments

University Forest Apartments is UHCL's on-campus housing community. Among the finest campus housing facilities in the nation, University Forest offers the best of both worlds:

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CAMPUS CALENDAR

September 10
African American Town Meeting,
5:30-6:45 p.m., Garden Room,
1st floor Bayou Building

September 11
CareerWeek Presentation:
Successful Interviewing,
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 3302

September 12
CareerWeek Presentation:
How to Work a Job Fair,
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 3302

Film: The Short Life of
Jose Antonio Gutierrez, 7 p.m.,
SSCB 1st floor

September 13
CareerWeek Presentation:
Writing Effective Resumes,
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 3302

September 14
Workshop: The Stress Factor,
1-3 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07

September 19
Hispanic Heritage Month,
noon-2 p.m., Bayou Theater

2007 Gulf Coast Job Fair begins,
11 a.m.-4 p.m., Bayou Atrium II

September 20
Workshop: What is Your
Leadership Style? (Myers-Briggs),
11 a.m.-1 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07

September 21
**LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR
FALL 2007 GRADUATION**

Workshop: Moral Courage
Under Fire – Taking Action When
Your Values are Put to the Test,
noon-4 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07

DID YOU KNOW? UHCL’S BEST KEPT SECRETS

Cassandra Spencer
The Signal Staff

Many students attend the University of Houston-Clear Lake without realizing what they are actually getting with their tuition and fees. Did you know there are many services offered by the different UHCL departments that are either free or are included in your tuition?

The Library offers services such as free one-on-one research consultations and 500 pages of high quality laser printouts per semester. The Math Center offers free tutoring for all math classes taken here on the campus as well as help preparing for the math portions of the TEXES, THEA and GRE tests.

The Writing Center offers tutoring and help with essay preparations for scholarships, resumes and any other written works in which a student may need help. They also aid communication majors with the GSP test. The Writing Center offers online tutoring for distance education courses. Additionally, Maradee Kern, assistant director and ESL Specialist is available to speak with non-native speakers to

address any second language issues.

The UCT Support Center offers free Wi-Fi connection as well as laptop checkouts equipped with the Internet. In the Delta building, Technology Specialist, David Webb helps arrange for the purchase of discounted software for students through vendors.

In the Office of Career and Counseling, students are offered outreach programs and group counseling on a range of topics from “Academic Success” to “Stress and Anxiety.” Career services offers one-on-one counseling and advising as well as career assessments.

Disability Services offers accommodations for those with disabilities. They also provide temporary handicap parking for short-term mobility impaired and at-risk pregnant women. The Health Center provides: free nursing assessments; first aid for illness and injury; health counseling and education; blood pressure screenings; student health insurance information; unit dose medications, which are free, single-dose, over-the-counter medications if needed.

The Fitness Center offers students a free workout facility equipped with cardio and fitness assessments, nutrition information and a Beginner’s Workout Program.

The Office of Student Life is the hub for all campus life. This is where a student can receive information about the different student organizations on campus. At the Student Life center a student can rent a locker, take advantage of free drop-off services, free student leadership retreats twice a year and receive information about free leadership speaker series.

“The vast majority do not know what they are getting for their service fees,” said David Rachita, the assistant dean of student life, “This is more than just a building of classrooms.”

The Office of Student Life is also where every student needs to go to get their student IDs. None of these free services are available without a valid student ID.

The Office of Financial Aid guides students applying for financial aid. They provide step-by-step instructions to accept and receive financial aid, grants or scholarships to help students pay

for school. The Student Assistance Center aids students with using E-Services, transcript requests and submitting/requesting information for the Office of Academic Records. It also helps students with registration, admissions, financial aid and payment plans.

The Office of the Dean of Students is where students can go with any academic issue while here at UHCL. Students can also go to the Dean of Students Office to get a copy of the student handbook.

The Office of Intercultural and International Student Services offers services that are available to all students. The Women’s Services program is geared to aid all women on campus. Strictly Speaking is a program that helps bridge communication and understanding of different cultures through conversation.

“Students are paying the money, utilize it,” advises Sameer Pande, assistant director of intercultural and international student services. “My suggestion to students is to walk into an office and just ask what they do.”

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
is the last day to apply for Fall 2007 Graduation
For more information visit
www.uhcl.edu/records

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LUNA ARGENTINA
Friday, September 28
8 p.m., Bayou Theater

Susana Tango Productions will join The Crisalis Music Project to present an evening of Argentine song and dance with Luna Argentina. A story that begins in the Argentine outback and follows to the streets of Buenos Aires, displaying the passions stirred by the rhythmic sounds of the malambo and the elegant and seductive dance that is the soul of Argentina, the Tango.

Following the concert there will be a special reception featuring salsa music and dance instruction.

General Admission:
\$8 presale/\$10 at the door

Admission with UHCL I.D.:
\$5 presale/\$7 at the door

2007 UHCL Constitution Day
September 17th, 2 p.m.
Garden Room in the Bayou Building

The U.S. Constitution and the Issues of Race and Gender
keynote address presented by Professor of History
Angela Howard, Ph.D.

Think you know your Constitution history?
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**For more information contact the
Dean of Students Office at (281) 283-2616.**

**If any additional service or accommodation is required, please
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Sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Students, Division of Student Services

PROVOST: continued from page 1

brought only five to the campus for interviews,” said William Staples, president of UHCL. “Of those five, they narrowed it down to two and after I assessed different opinions, Dr. Stockton was the clear preference.”

The provost search committee was made up of faculty, staff and students -- a wide mix of people, because the provost position works with so many different aspects of the university.

“It was really important to find someone who really could communicate and work with all those different aspects,” said Michelle Dotter, co-chair of the provost search committee and vice president of administration and finance. “Dr. Stockton rose to the top as someone who had good responses with everyone. Everyone who had contact with him had the same responses, so the consistency was very important.”

From Staples’s point of view, Stockton met certain criteria he expected to fill the position of provost and vice president of academic affairs. Which is: he had relevant administration experience; he was very involved in increasing enrollment in the School of Education at UT-Brownsville by doubling the numbers from 2,300 students to 4,800 students in two years; he helped to implement UT-Brownsville’s first doctoral program, which went into effect right before he left; he developed university and community partnerships; he was extremely involved in sponsored programs (research); he knows a lot about technology and is technologically savvy; finally, he has an understanding of budgets.

“Since there are only two vice presidents at UHCL, vice president of academic affairs, Stockton, and vice president of finance, Michelle Dotter, the relationship between these two individuals is very important for the university,” Staples said. “If you look over all of the attributes, he has what it was we were looking for to fill this position.”

Stockton not only has all of the attributes the university was looking for to fill the position, Staples also found him to be very personable.

“He is the kind of person you can really talk to whether you are faculty, staff or a student of UHCL,” Staples said.

One of the Provost’s first assignments will be to look at and work on improving enrollment at UHCL.

“I really asked him to take a fresh look, with a fresh pair of eyes, at all aspects of enrollment here at UHCL,” Staples said.

The aspects of UHCL’s enrollment being: student recruitment, student retainment, graduates, how UHCL advises its students and making the Web site for students and alumni more user-friendly. Staples also wants Stockton to look into attracting more grants and contracts for research, which will increase UHCL’s sponsored programs.

Also, UHCL is more involved than ever in delivering education off campus, whether it be on one of the off-campus education centers or offering online courses for UHCL students.

“I am going to have Stockton look at how we can deliver those programs online better, and how do we decide to offer certain programs in our off-site education centers,” Staples said. “I also want Stockton to continue Dr. Edward Hayes’s efforts to diversify UHCL through its students, faculty and staff. I am really looking to Dr. Stockton to be the chief academic officer of UHCL, because that is what his role is. His job will be challenging and demanding, but I think Dr. Stockton is up for the challenge.”

Stockton has several people under his direct supervision including three associate vice presidents: Yvette Bendeck of Academic Affairs, Glen Houston for Information Resources, and Darlene Biggers of Student Affairs.

All of the associate vice presidents share the same opinion of Stockton as a very personable man with excellent experience and the credentials to bring new ideas to UHCL.

“In my perspective, he will continue moving forward in the path that had been laid a couple years ago in the terms of enrollment management, which is one of UHCL’s primary focuses in the near future, along with retention,” Bendeck said. “Dr. Stockton is a very approachable individual and people-oriented and in that respect he can associate and deal with the different constituents in the university very well, and bring them together to work towards a common goal.”

“Stockton has good leadership skills and will work well with the Academic Affairs faculty and administrators (deans and AVPs) as well as, with President Staples and Vice President Dotter,” Houston said. “He is also very technology oriented, hence I anticipate he will help improve our Web presence.” “I find Provost Stockton to be a first rate gentlemen and I look forward to working with him in his new role.”

“The main goals of the university right now are to enhance the recruitment and retention of all students,” Biggers said. “While he was dean at UT-Brownsville he was very active in enhancing the recruitment and retention of students in the School of Education. We are hoping Stockton will have some new different ideas in helping UHCL work toward these goals.”

In addition to the associate vice presidents, the four deans of UHCL also report to Stockton: Bruce Palmer in the School of Human Sciences and Humanities, Theodore (Ted) Cummings in the School of Business, Dennis Spuck in the School of Education, Sadegh Davari in the School of Science and Computer Engineering. All of the deans basically share the same consensus in what they expect from Stockton.

“We are looking forward to working with Stockton and hopefully getting advice from him on several areas that he was very successful in his previous job,” Davari said.

Some of those areas pertain to their schools individually. For example, SCE recently started a cooperative doctoral program in Physics, at UHCL and Stockton had a similar program in Education at the UT-Brownsville that was very successful.

“We can use his advice on making our cooperative doctoral program successful,” Davari stated.

On the whole, there were several areas in which Stockton was successful in his previous position at UT-Brownsville for which the deans are looking to him for direction. Those areas included enrollment, retention of students, faculty and staff, and how to get more dollars for sponsored programs (research).

Qualities of Stockton, all of the deans agreed, that were very appealing when he interviewed for the position were: he was very well educated about UHCL, he already has been a successful administrator in the State of Texas and understands the rules and regulations of the state, and he has very strong people skills.

Stockton holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Health Education from the University of Tennessee and a Master of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Health Education from the University of Florida. Nutrition, health sciences and public health education are his educational interests.

Other positions held by Stockton include serving as department chair for the Department of Health and Applied Human Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Awards and honors include receiving the National Health Education Professional Administrator of the Year Award, the Honorary Fellows Award from the American Association for Health Education for distinguished services to the health education profession and a graduate from the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education, Institute for Management and Leadership in Education.

“A couple of things I was looking for in the new provost was someone very innovative. Stockton really brings some good ideas from his background to UHCL, which makes him very collaborative,” Dotter said. “He is a very good problem solver. He listens and tries to understand the dynamics of the situation, and just does not want to change everything at once. He wants to understand why we have been doing things the way we have, and what has been successful. Then he wants to know what he can bring to the table. He is exactly what I thought he would be.”

Dotter expressed she wanted someone in this position that would make her a little bit nervous.

“We are just a very good university, but I think we are just sitting on the edge of so many neat things,” Dotter said. “I think Stockton is the person to pull the team together and take us to that next step.”

Know your constitution, win an iPod

Kevin Kettle
The Signal Staff

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”



HOWARD

For those of you who do not know, the first paragraph is the preamble to the U.S. Constitution. This September marks the 220th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. Not to be confused with the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution was signed on Sept. 17, 1787, in Philadelphia, Pa. For ten years, our country has been celebrating Constitution Day. This will be the third year that the University of Houston-Clear Lake will celebrate this day.

UHCL will be holding its own celebration of Constitution Day on Sept. 17, 2007, in the Garden Room of the Bayou Building at 2 p.m. Angela Howard, professor of history, will be the guest speaker for this occasion. Howard’s keynote address is titled “The U.S. Constitution and the Issues of Race and Gender.” All students are encouraged to attend this event to increase their knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the U.S. Constitution.

There are rights guaranteed in the Constitution, and this event will teach students about those rights.

Our freedom is guaranteed because of this document. We the people have control over our own government, but we can’t utilize this power if we don’t know what the Constitution entails.

“It’s not a lack of interest in the Constitution from the students; it’s a matter of the schools not focusing on educating the students about the Constitution,” explains Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, on why he thinks so many Americans know so little about the Constitution.

“I want them to know that this is what it’s for, and this is how it works,” Howard said about what she was expecting students to learn from this event. The difficulty in understanding the Constitution is just that, understanding.

“It even has misspellings in it,” Jenkins pointed out while he discussed the difficulty in understanding the Constitution.

Every university that is federally funded is required to recognize Constitution Day.

“I want students to walk away with a better knowledge of the Constitution, because it is arguably the most important document in American history,” Jenkins said.

For all of those who attend the celebration, light refreshments will be served and a Constitution trivia game held after Howard’s speech. The winner will be awarded an Apple iPod Shuffle.

The Constitution was derived from our founding fathers’ experiences.

“They adapted it to our needs,” Howard said. “It is a masterful piece of writing.”

HERBST: continued from page 1

On a personal level, Jones said that Herbst looked out for him and the other officers.

“Herbst always cared about me and my family and helped me through some tough times,” Jones said. “Without that I probably would not have been able to advance my career.”

Herbst was also a teacher at the Alvin Police Academy, which is where he first met Sergeant Debra Hoffman.

“He was my penal code instructor,” Hoffman said.

Hoffman graduated from the Alvin Police Academy in 1990 and in 1991 was hired by Herbst to be on the university’s police force. A few years later when Hoffman applied for a job at a municipal police department, Herbst helped her acquire it by writing her a letter of recommendation. When she decided to come back to continue her education, Herbst hired her back.

“I look at it as he opened the door for me to start my career, then opened the door to advance my career, and then opened the door again for me to continue my education,” Hoffman said.

Hoffman also said Herbst never really took a break.

“Whether he was off or not, he always had his pager or cell phone with him and everything was brought to his attention so that he was aware of everything that was happening before being confronted with it ... he was always prepared,” Hoffman said.

Over the years, Herbst volunteered for a number of nonprofit organizations including the American Diabetes Association’s Step Out to Fight Diabetes Walk, the March of Dimes, and the Special Olympics.

“He was very active with Special Olympics,” Hoffman said. “That was truly in his heart, working with the children.”

Now that Herbst is retired he said he is going to go on a five-week road trip with his wife. He said he plans to visit the Pocono Mountains, New York City, Boston and do some whale watching in Maine.

The new Director of University Police Paul Willingham started Aug. 26 working along side Herbst his first week in office. Willingham comes to UHCL with 16 years of experience from the University of Texas at Houston Police Department.

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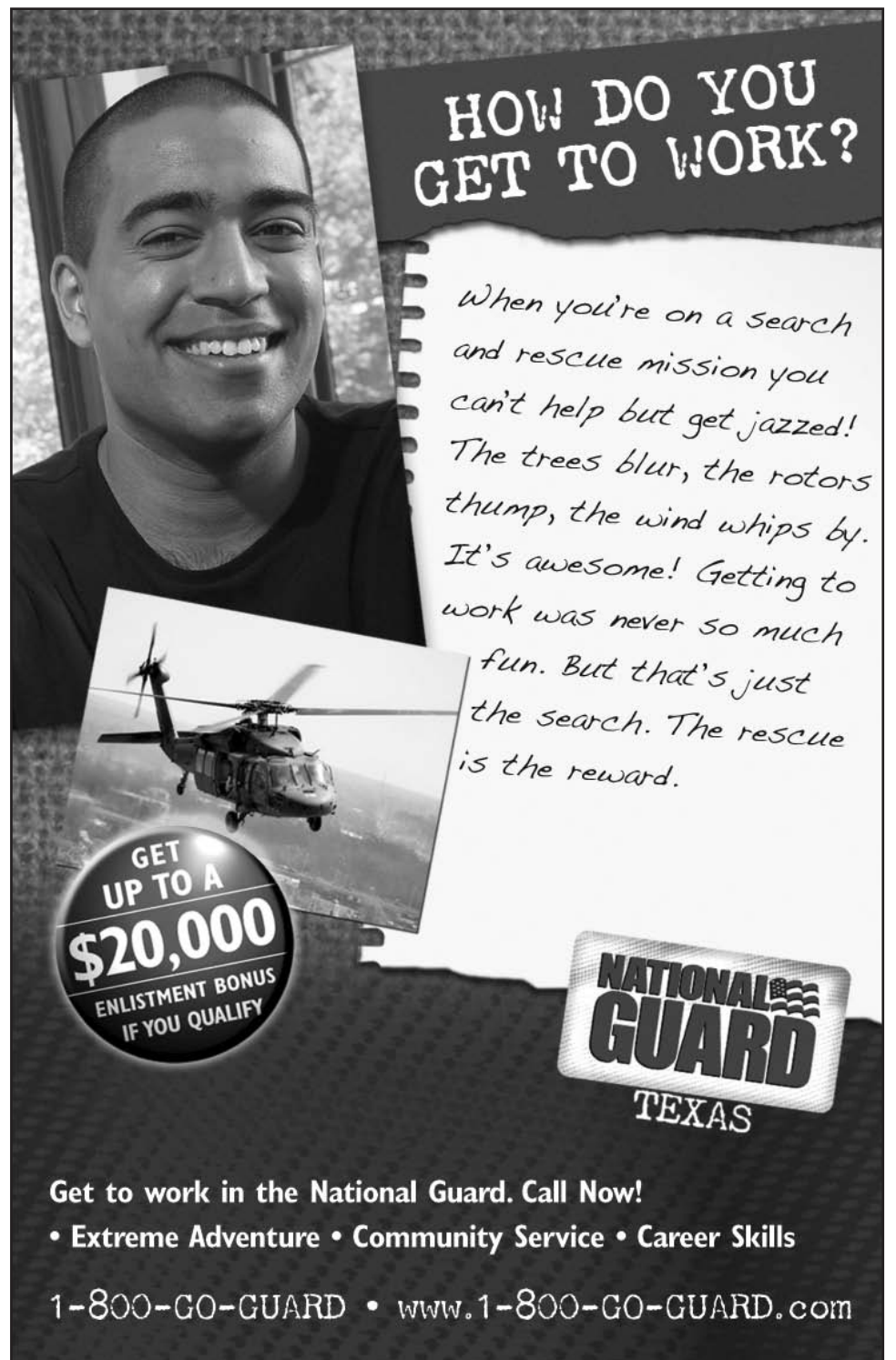
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Congressman campaigns for cutting college costs

Melissa Bird
The Signal Staff

Representative Nick Lampson, of the 22nd district, held a town meeting on campus Aug. 30 to discuss new legislation that will help cut college costs.

The legislation, the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007, was first introduced in June of this year and will be “the largest investment in higher education since the GI Bill in 1944.” It was passed by the House of Representatives on July 11, 2007 in a 273-149 majority vote. This large margin was not surprising considering that since January of this year the House has been putting legislation in place to advocate for higher education.

The Senate received the bill and passed an edited version of it on July 20, 2007. The next step for all members of Congress is to meet in conference and discuss the changes made to the bill, then send it on to the president for approval.

“College is the best investment that our nation can make in its future,” Lampson said.

Outlined in the bill are the changes to the Pell Grant, which will increase by \$500 over the next five years. Since the 2003 deregulation of tuition in Texas, the cost for an average student has gone up 41 percent and an extra \$500 could mean a lot to students who are just making ends meet.

“That \$500 could mean the difference between someone being full time or part time and allow that student to get through an educational program in a reasonable amount of time,” said Maureen Murphy, president of San Jacinto College South Campus.

One interesting section regarding student loans is a forgiveness clause for service workers and first responders in low income communities. This means graduates who go into various fields of study, such as childhood education, nursing, law enforcement, prosecution, and medicine would have up to \$1,000 forgiven yearly for five years on the repayment of their student loans.

“Particularly, we need teachers and people in special



Michael Phillips, SGA vice president-committee coordinator; Joyce Dolores Taylor, SGA president; Congressman Nick Lampson; and Patrick Cardenas, SGA vice president-administration, pose after a town meeting on cutting college costs Aug. 30.

“Particularly, we need teachers and people in special areas that the College Cost Reduction Act addresses.”

-Nick Lampson
Congressman

areas that the College Cost Reduction Act addresses,” Lampson said. “Jobs that we don’t easily get people to go into.”

The legislation will cut percentage rates on student loans in half. Currently the standard interest rate is 6.8 percent, but by July of 2012, the rate will be reduced to 3.4 percent. To give some perspective of the significance of this, Lynda McKendree, the executive director for the office of stu-

dent financial aid at UHCL, was also asked to speak at the town meeting.

McKendree presented a hypothetical independent undergraduate student who borrowed the maximum amount on a Stafford loan and calculated the difference between what he would owe under the current rate and under the College Cost Reduction Act. She found that a student who borrowed \$21,000 total would pay \$29,000 back including interest at 6.8 percent and only \$24,800 including interest at 3.4 percent.

Lampson, a former high school science teacher, also stressed the need for more emphasis on early development

of an interest in education, especially in the areas of math and science.

“I think we are doing a great deal of harm to our nation by not encouraging our students to study in math and science and technological-related areas of education and when we are doing things that can make it easier to gain access, I think we are doing good,” Lampson said.

Some communities have already started to help students “gain access” to education. Galveston Community College has a program called Universal Access, in which a student who qualifies for financial need and attends at least two classes in the spring or fall and one class in the summer will have their tuition paid. This is just one example of community effort to make education more accessible to more people, which is just what many educators would like to see in the future.

“I think we are doing a great deal of harm to our nation by not encouraging our students to study in math and science and technological-related areas of education.”

-Nick Lampson
Congressman

“When I graduated from college you could make a family living wage with a high school degree and there were many opportunities out there, but now in our high technological based economy, secondary education is no longer optional, but necessary for the economic success of all of us,” Murphy said.

Students and faculty, as well as visitors from other schools, attended the meeting and many asked the congressman questions directly. One of those people was professor of management Joyce Supina who said that she felt very gratified to know that people are willing to gather to speak about important issues.

“It’s all about raising awareness,” Lampson said. “To let people know what Congress is doing to entice students to stay in college to get as much education as they possibly can.”

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HURRICANE PLAN: continued from page 1

ness, prompted the initiative to create evacuation plans for international students. During the past couple of years Biggers has actively engaged her division in the process of writing procedures and policies for hurricane preparedness.

Students’ role in preparedness

All students are advised to make individual hurricane preparedness plans; the campus police Web site offers links to guide students through the process.

“Ultimately, each of us have to be responsible for ourselves and our family and so students for the most part do need to be responsible for themselves and to develop their own hurricane or other crisis response plans in their family,” Biggers said.

“It is possible that with the e-mails, Web site, the phone calls, the PIER system [Public Information and Emergency Response System] and the text messaging, we are still going to miss someone ... it is imperative that students make sure that their information is up-to-date in PeopleSoft,” said Anthony Jenkins, dean of Student Services.

“PIER System is a communication management Web application that allows you access information on an external server hosted outside of the university’s firewall,” said Dan Timmins, southeast regional vice president for PIER System.

Jenkins recommends that students continually update their contact information because the university’s communication system is only as good as the information provided by the students.

Announcements regarding UHCL’s status during inclement weather are posted on the university’s homepage, www.uhcl.edu, and hotline, (281) 283-2221.

IISS preparedness

Not wanting to be caught off guard again, the department of Intercultural and International Students Services worked with Biggers to devise a plan for future evacuations.

“To my understanding, the university did not have evacuation plans for students before Hurricane Rita,” said Sameer Pande, assistant director for Intercultural and International Student Services.

“I think we have a system now and [Hurricane Dean] was a good test run because last time it was chaotic ... this time it was a lot smoother,” Pande said.

In fact, Linda Contreras Bullock, assistant dean for student diversity, said that they had less than 24 hours to evacuate for Hurricane Rita.

Now all international students are given an information packet at the beginning of the semester advising them on how to prepare in the event a hurricane enters the Gulf of Mexico.

The information in the 11-page packet ranges from hurricane definitions to what to bring when you evacuate.

Pande said nearly 200 students signed up for evacuation transportation with almost all the students residing in the University Forest Apartments or international students without transportation.

International students are currently notified of hurricane conditions as soon as they become available through flyers placed around campus, word-of-mouth and through the university’s e-mail system.

Overall Pande felt that his department was prepared and moving in the right direction.

“Yes, there are some kinks that need to be worked out,” Pande said. “I think that there are some improvements we need to

do, but that’s like that with any other process.”

Surprisingly, the evacuation of international students for Hurricane Rita was carried out by a handful of UHCL’s faculty. After the school closed the only remaining faculty left with the daunting task and personal responsibility were Pande, Bullock, Biggers and Andrew Reitberger, assistant director of student life.

After the busses departed the campus, Pande followed behind the bus in his car with his family including his wife, sister-in-law and her two children, and their dog. But before he could arrive at his destination he had to rescue a couple of students who were stranded on the side of the I-45.

“I just didn’t feel I could leave with the feeling that hey listen, I just left two students on the side of the highway,” Pande said.

As flashbacks of Hurricane Rita’s evacuation filled Pande’s mind he said, “Personally though, I hope to never have to evacuate again.”

Communication in a time of crisis

In the event of a crisis, students are advised to call the information hotline or the campus police department, to receive updates on university closings; however, what happens if the phone lines are down?

During a weather-related crisis, servers that have all the student’s information can crash and, since time is of the essence, that is where the PIER System picks up.

With the implementation of the PIER System on campus students can be notified by text messaging.

“The University of Houston-Central Campus has been using the PIER System for over a year now,” Timmons said.

The system can be leased monthly or bought by licenses. Currently UH has pur-

chased five licenses.

Timmons said, UH has agreed to let UHCL utilize one of those licenses.

Because of this agreement, UHCL will avoid paying the going rate of \$10,000 a year for a single-site contract and will pay less than \$4,000 a year, says Presswood.

The cost for the PIER system will be shared by the department of communications, police department and student services, according to Jean Carr, executive director, budget.

Since the cost is relatively low in comparison to university enrollment, Biggers anticipates that students will not see a rise in tuition cost.

Presswood confirmed that UHCL has made the commitment to use the PIER system; phase I out of III has a projected date of completion set for the beginning of October; phase II and III dates of completion have yet to be determined.

“Phase I goals include setting up the initial structure to provide a mechanism for emergency communication with students, faculty and staff as well as an off-campus Web site for crisis team communication; coordinating the initial introduction and training for the UHCL Crisis Team; and developing a communication plan targeted to faculty, staff and students to promote awareness and use of UHCL’s PIER Center as a resource for emergency information,” Presswood said. “Although various systems were considered, Audience Central’s PIER System offered the most integrated solution with the additional benefit of not only providing a mechanism to communicate with key audiences in a variety of formats, but also providing an online command center for the university’s crisis team to address issues.