



Jim Livesey: The Signal

The Texas book depository building in Dallas overlooks Dealey Plaza. From the sixth floor of this building an assassin shot and killed President John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

John F. Kennedy: the real conspiracy?

Jim Livesey
The Signal Staff

Forty-five years after the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the legacy of his life is not the Peace Corp, the space race or any of the programs that he helped develop. It is the cottage industry of conspiracy that has developed around his death. Sitting in the shade a few feet from the infamous grassy knoll, Robert J. Groden, author of several books on the Kennedy assassination, talks to visitors in Dealey Plaza about his theories on what transpired

Nov. 22, 1963. The crowd grows as Groden and his assistant go over the events of the assassination. These visitors are not the first group he has talked to and they will not be the last. Using blow-ups of the Zapruder film, the two men describe, frame-by-frame, their interpretation of the evidence. They point out the splatter patterns, show the difference in head position in each frame, and they draw lines on the photos to make sure there is no question to their methodology. They make all of the evidence fit, continually pounding on the

JFK: continued on page 10

Art program offers advanced degree

Ashley Helms
The Signal Staff

Students graduating from the School of Human Sciences and Humanities Applied Design and Visual Arts program in December will be the first in UHCL's history to be awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the change from the Bachelor of Arts degree in Applied Design and Visual Art to a Bachelor of Fine Arts. "A Bachelor of Fine Arts degree is the higher level baccalaureate degree that indicates a student has taken more discipline-specific courses," said Stuart Larson, associate professor and convener of applied design and visual arts. Larson also explained that students who graduate from this program often go on to graduate programs in art history, studio art and graphic design. The

more specialty study areas include: graphic design, art education, art history, ceramic arts, crafts, drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture. The program that was in place was already on the track of becoming a higher level baccalaureate degree, so only minimal changes had to be made in terms of accreditation for this degree. "The main difference for students is an additional 24 to 30 hours," said Nick DeVries, professor of arts. Students graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts will have a distinct advantage. Larson explained that those students who will begin their professional career after graduation will be much more competitive in the workplace, particularly those with goals of working in the visual design field. The degree will also offer students stronger visual and cognitive problem-solving skills and a stronger

Degree: continued on page 10

Possible fee increase for students

Stacy Parent
The Signal Staff

Fee increases are on the horizon for students at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. School officials made presentations and addressed student concerns about the proposed increase during the Student Government Association meeting Nov. 11. President William Staples assured students he is aware of the financial pinch such an increase will incur. "Do I know tuition increases are a hardship? I do," Staples said.

The university predicts an overall increase of 5-6 percent that will go into effect fall 2009. A portion of the increased revenue is slated for student services. "The student fees will be used to fund three student support services positions: van driver, Fitness Zone coordinator and coordinator of orientation," said Anthony Jenkins, dean of students. "These fees and their use were voted on by the Student Life Council."

Darlene Biggers, associate vice president of student services, said student demand for these services necessitates the establishment of full-time rather than part-time positions. A portion of the increased revenue will also go toward

institutional advancement. "We all want our university to grow, and this requires additional funding," Jenkins said. "These fees will go toward improving the infrastructure of our campus and making sure we can recruit and retain quality students, faculty and staff. These funds will go to ensure we can keep pace with technological needs and the development of new and needed student support programs and services." Additionally, some of the money will fund mandated salary increases and cover the cost of course supplies, lab equipment and field trips.

Students voted on the proposed increases at the SGA meeting Nov. 18. Four separate votes were taken on each increase: the student services fee, UCT fee, School of Business database fee, and course fees proposed by the Schools of Business, Human Science and Humanities, and Science and Computer Engineering. The student services fee increase was the only measure approved by students. "Many of the students, including the executive council, felt the need to increase the fee by a total of \$6 mainly because these services are essential to the quality of student success," said Patrick Cardenas, SGA president. The SGA and several students

Fees: continued on page 10

Diversity Series: Asian and Pacific Islanders adjust to UHCL

Jenna Simsen
The Signal Staff

Every day different faces, young and old, fill our classrooms and halls where cultures mix into a big educational melting pot. UHCL prides itself on this. This semester, each issue of The Signal will focus on a different aspect of diversity on our campus. This fourth article in a series of five focuses on Asian and Pacific Islander students, the challenges they face and what each of their cultures brings to UHCL.

Beginning life in a new school can prove to be challenging for anyone. A large percentage of UHCL students are first-year international students of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and have never left their homeland. For these students, adjusting to a new country, new culture and new

concepts are some of the issues that have to be faced. This group of students is not easy to define; Asia covers a wide array of countries from Taiwan, China, Vietnam and Japan. They all face similar challenges at a university like UHCL. "Most of these international students leave their homeland for the first time," said Chloris Yue, reference librarian and faculty adviser to the Asian Pacific Islander student organization. Yue says even though most of the international students have been exposed to American culture through different forms of media such as movies, dramas, books, news, etc., nothing can truly safeguard students from their initial culture shock. There are many groups on campus for Asian and Pacific

Diversity: continued on page 10

Possible Tuition Relief for Students

There may be good news for college students attending public universities in the state of Texas. High priced tuition and fees may come to a standstill because of a bill filed by Senators Juan Hinojosa and Tommy Williams.

Hopefully, the bill will pass. If it does, it will freeze tuition costs and fees for at least two years. If the bill passes in 2009, not only will tuition freeze, but raises in tuition will only be approved if the student body votes for an increase. After the two-year cap expires, tuition will only increase based on the rate of inflation.

Higher education in Texas was regulated and set by the legislature until 2003, when legislators gave the authority to Texas universities’ board of regents. The transfer of authority was the state’s way to cut funds for public universities and to pass the bill on to the students to make up the difference. Since the 2003 deregulation of tuition and fees, college students have seen an average increase of 53 percent in their total tuition costs.

Many, if not all, students who attend college in the state of Texas will warmly welcome a tuition freeze. The economy is struggling and slowing, making it difficult for working and middle-class students to afford a college education.

There are grants and scholarships available, but it is especially difficult for middle-class students to qualify for one. Usually these students make too much money for a grant, but make too

little to pay for college tuition, which forces them to take out a loan and live in debt.

Should college tuition be free? No; it should be available and adequately priced, so anyone who desires a college education can afford it without living in debt. Higher education across Texas should not just be for the wealthy and elite, it should be available to anyone who wants to pursue it.

Tuition increases cover many universities’ needs such as salary for qualified educators, building expenses, technology upgrades, student services and supplies. University regents believe tuition regulations will prevent high quality education throughout the state, especially since state appropriations have decreased tremendously. Regents oppose the regulation bill without reinstating lost state funding, because it will not cover the costs needed to provide quality education.

Where is the line drawn as to how much colleges can charge a student willing to pursue a higher degree of learning? Increasing tuition each year punishes students and their pocketbooks. Most students today find it necessary to maintain part-time and full-time jobs while attending a university in order to afford school, rent, car payments, and, in some cases, children’s needs.

If this bill does not pass, tuition will become even more unaffordable for the average student and keep higher education out of the hands of the



Jeffrey Meier: The Signal

lower and middle classes. Students who attend college want to better their lives and achieve their goals through hard work to earn a degree. If tuition and fees continue to increase as they have in the past few years, this would quickly become an unrealistic goal for most.

To be fair, university regents across Texas would rather have the legislature take more responsibility in the state’s higher education system. This would lift the burden of tuition increases off the backs of the universities. The solution to this issue is to put funding for public universities back in the hands of Texas lawmakers and allow them to provide better funding for state universities so the students are not

affected financially. Texas ranks 12th in the nation for its highway system and 33rd for teacher salaries at public universities. In the state of Texas, the highway system is more of a priority than higher education. If the legislature funded higher education more than super highways and repairs, the college student would not only see relief in tuition and fees, but higher-quality education. It looks like we will have to wait and see what the state Legislature decides on in 2009. Who knows, we may even see a student-educator bailout.

by Nick Anderson



Cross Signals

The Signal staff members share their opinions regarding tuition.
Join the discussion by logging on to The Signal blog at:
www.myspace.com/signal_UHCL

If tuition increases again what would you have to give up to attend school?

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Mind your online manners

My mother’s favorite motto, which she religiously repeated for my siblings and me as we were growing up, was “Life’s not fair!” This was especially true for me it seems. As the youngest of three, I was always struggling to keep up with my older clan, but because of the four year age difference between each of us, what was appropriate for them was not always appropriate for me. Needless to say, I felt that I was unjustly left out of way too many cool outings.

Although my mother’s mantra could be (and was) used in almost any situation that made us feel unhappy or thwarted, the meaning of that message uncannily prepared us for the technologically advanced world we live in today. Unbeknownst to her, my mother’s catch all expression would be the one that would stick out in our minds first and foremost, helping to calm our angst and remind us that, oftentimes, life just isn’t fair.

For example, just recently, University of Texas football player Buck Burnette was kicked off his team – unquestionably changing the course of his life – because of something he posted on Facebook. Doesn’t he have the right to post anything he wants on his personal Web page without fear of retribution, you may ask? Some say sure, others, not really. Everyone has the right to his or her own opinion. After all, there is no law against being a racist idiot, right?

Well, it’s not that simple. Why? Because life’s not fair. It doesn’t matter that you have the right to your own opinion, or if what you’re saying or writing is on your own personal social networking page. When you text a comment in confidence to your “BFF,” an exchange made “privately” between two parties, you are taking a risk. If what you publish is even slightly off-color and goes public, or if the wrong person sees it, you could be crucified – especially if you are a public figure, or maybe just a college football player from Austin, Texas.

Basically it’s like this: you have the right to post your opinion on any subject at any time, whether anyone agrees with you or not, but you need to be aware that, likewise, others will exercise their own right to hire, fire or dismiss you based on your comments and actions.

The point is, do not be fooled into believing what you post on your personal

Web page is concealed, even if it is set to “private.” It has long been understood that when you are speaking, you must be aware of what you are saying and to whom and of who else might be listening in, especially when you are in public. Otherwise, it can easily come back to bite you in the behind. But, somehow, people forget to apply this principal to things they post in cyberspace for the entire world to see under the pretense that it is private. It is not.

Once you have published something to the Internet, it is no longer privileged. Once you type something into your phone and hit send, it is “out there.” What if it goes somewhere other than intended? What if that person shares it with someone else?

You may not think that it is right or fair; you may or may not agree. But it is what it is. You must recognize the fact that you are ultimately responsible for what you do, what you say and what you text or publish to the Internet. Corporations have begun making this clear to employees – especially prospective ones. Think about this before you apply for your next job.

Schools are obviously tuning in as well. It is no longer just your reputation in your circle of friends that you might be affecting. What you publish is available to anyone with an Internet connection. This applies to sexually explicit material as well, including nude or suggestive video and images. You can even be penalized for publishing personal photos of you out drinking and partying with your friends.

So the next time you think about going off on a rant about something potentially offensive either online or by text, stop and think about the repercussions. Just imagine what would happen if you walked around all day holding a sign that said what you are about to type. If you think it would be embarrassing or tough, potentially life-altering, or just plain immature and offensive then odds are you probably shouldn’t type it.

I know what you are thinking, and I agree. Life’s not fair. Thanks Mom.



Katherine Antes
The Signal

Family bonds through Thanksgiving traditions

Some people dread the holidays, but I personally love to spend time with my family, eat a delicious meal and, of course, watch football. Like clockwork, Thanksgiving comes and so does football. The two go hand in hand with my family.

We enjoy watching pro and college football, but college is my favorite. Various family members have been to different colleges, so there are many preferences as to which games to watch. Throughout the day, family members flip back and forth through the channels to catch the different scores. Once an important game comes on, that is not allowed to happen.

The games usually turn into a loud yelling match directed toward the television. Who can yell louder than whom? The referees are making bad calls; the coaches are choosing to run the ball instead of pass it. It seems like nothing is ever going right in the game, unless the game turns into a blowout and the rooting team slaughters the other team.

I come from a noisy family and almost everyone in it has a dominant personality. There can be five people in the room, but if someone was listening from a distance, he or she would swear there were at least 30. It is hard to talk, so we all talk at the same time. Someone might ask you a question, but before you can finish speaking, someone else is interrupting and changing the subject completely. Even though my family acts this way, we truly do love one another. We all have the same personality, which makes it difficult for outsiders looking in to appreciate the way we communicate with one another.

Now that you have a clear idea of what my family is like, you can see how watching football on Thanksgiving can get a little rowdy and rambunctious. One of my uncles went to the University of Texas and his two oldest children are attending school there presently. My uncle has always been a diehard Texas fan. When

the Texas Longhorns are playing on Thanksgiving Day against Texas A&M, it is assumed there will be shouting taking place. The living room is always full of boos and chanting. This game is called the Lone Star Showdown. I have always loved football, but I have never been to a college with a football team. Since I was a little girl I have followed in my uncle’s footsteps and have been a Longhorn fan. I

have really had no choice, because I am a native Texan.

One of my other uncles is a Louisiana State University fan and he feels his team is the best no matter how it is ranked. In the past, the LSU Tigers would play on Thanksgiving Day. Now the Tigers play the day after, which is actually a blessing for the rest

of us. Last year, both LSU and Texas lost. Afterward, everyone was acting like someone had died. I have never understood why people get so upset about a game that happens every year. My motto has always been, “we’ll get them next time.”

All day long on Thanksgiving Day there are exciting games on television including some pro teams my family never misses. The Dallas Cowboys are definitely considered one of those. The Dallas Cowboys are known for

playing at home on Thanksgiving. They have done this since the 1960s. This is considered a Thanksgiving Classic. The good thing about watching Dallas play, is it is the one team everyone in my family wants to win.

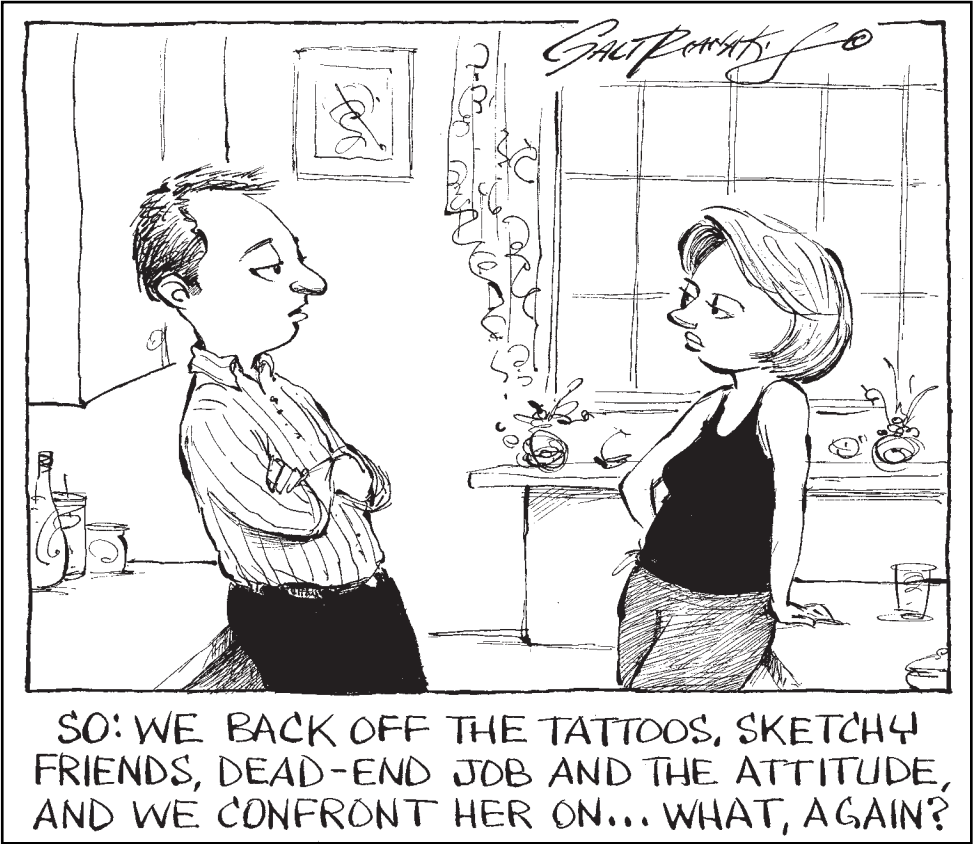
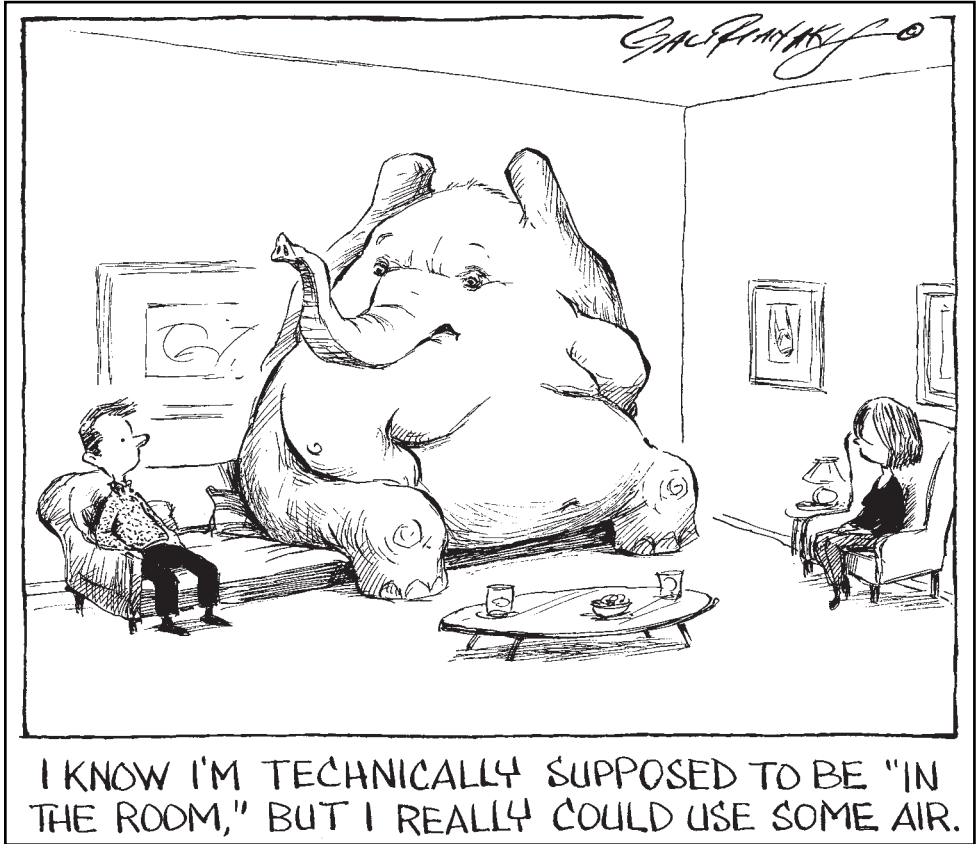
I am really excited about Thanksgiving this year. I cherish my family and the traditions we have made together. Ask yourself if you are looking forward to the Thanksgiving holidays and if you have a tradition of your own. If not, try doing something this year and keep it going for years to come. I know I will keep watching football every Thanksgiving for the rest of my life. It is a part of me and I love how it brings my family together.



Amy Carr
The Signal

“Like clockwork, Thanksgiving comes and so does football.”

- Amy Carr
The Signal Reporter



ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

Amy Garcia
The Signal Staff

Visitors to the art gallery in the Bayou Building will be transported to life along the Rio Grande in an exhibit full of vibrancy and rich colors.

Leslie Plaza Johnson and Van Edwards, both adjunct instructors of photography, in collaboration, present Along the Rio Grande: A New World Becoming. The exhibit, which runs through Jan. 5, tells a story through photographs and music of a geographical divide that has become anything but a cultural divide.

“We are tied to Mexico geographically, historically, culturally and economically, so how could you ignore it?” Edwards said. “So what’s happening along the border is this confluence of cultures. It’s amazing and it’s neither Mexico or the United States.”

Edwards and Johnson took many trips down to the border for two to three days at a time. Their trips were filled with tales, from drunk cowboys trying to

take Johnson home with them, to the quiet story of meeting a young military man and woman working in collaboration with border patrol watching a shallow part of the river. Edwards and Johnson learned the soldiers were shipping off to Iraq in a few weeks.

Edwards and Johnson plan to use the photographs to compile a multimedia presentation with poetry, stories, recipes and music highlighting the region. They hope their work will bring this region to life through multiple mediums and showcase their perspective that we as people should build bridges, not fences.

“We’re trying to defy labels because to say that you’re Mexican to people on the border, it really doesn’t mean anything but a geographical assignation,” Johnson said. “People that are of Mexican heritage live on the Texas side and feel very American and some, in fact, don’t even speak Spanish. So it becomes a moot point as to what side of the border I am standing on when I look at these photographs.”

Nick DeVries, gallery director and professor of art, likes to showcase work from UHCL connected artists in the gallery, whether it is alumni, faculty or students. After witnessing Edwards and Johnson’s work in another gallery, DeVries invited the two adjunct professors to show their work. “When I saw the exhibition at TAACCL, I was really impressed with how they work together, how they collaborate together on projects,” DeVries said. “This particular project is such a topical one. It calls attention to what goes on in that particular geographical location which becomes very blended between Mexico and the United States.”

Every photograph tells a story and Edwards and Johnson



Amy Garcia:The Signal

Leslie Plaza and Van Edwards, adjunct instructors of photography, observe their exhibition and discuss the corrections for the correction of the title.

encourage everyone to go down to the border to gain their own perspective of the region. The way of life, the colors and the culture all come alive in the exhibit.

“The first thing that strikes you is the bright colors and

vibrancy,” said Karen Fiscus, assistant gallery director. “It speaks worlds of the people who enjoy life and don’t care what other people think.”

Gray wins lifetime achievement award



Oraleyda Cantu:The Signal

Actress Erin Gray and City Councilman Thomas E. Diegleman converse during the Gulf Coast Film Festival mixer Nov. 14.

Kimberly Olivarez
The Signal Staff

Erin Gray influenced a generation of adolescents during the late 1970s with her role as “Colonel Wilma Deering” in the TV series “Buck Rogers in the 25th Century.” Gray is also remembered for her

role as Kate Summers from the 1982 TV series “Silver Spoons” starring then 12-year-old Ricky Schroeder. Gray was in town Nov. 14-15 to attend the Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival. Gray’s body of work was acknowledged with the Cascade Life Time Achievement Award. “I feel very honored,” Gray said. “It’s lovely to be acknowledged for my work.”

Hal Wixon, founding director of the Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival, describes Gray as very dedicated to her profession, very attractive and funny with a good sense of humor. “Erin Gray won the award because she deserves it,” Wixon said. “She works consistently and has given a lot to modern television and film. We feel she is very deserving.”

“My men wear English Leather – or they wear nothing at all,” was a provocative slogan made famous by Gray in her early years of modeling for the cologne commercial. Gray began her modeling career when she was 15; after that she became part of many projects.

One of her favorite memories from “Buck Rogers” was that she influenced young men and women. “You are the reason I become a firefighter” and “You helped me discover my true sexuality” are comments Gray has received by her fans in the street.

While visiting her husband on the set of the TV show “Friends” Matt Leblanc (Joey) told Gray that he and his mother would get together and watch her on “Buck Rogers.” He would watch the show to see “Colonel Wilma Deering” and his mother would watch it to see “Captain William ‘Buck’ Rogers” played by Gil Gerald.

Gray said she also enjoyed her role as Kate Summers in the series “Silver Spoons.” She said the show brought families together and that every episode had a message.

“Silver Spoons gave me a chance to be a mother and an actress,” Gray said. “The perfect life — to act and being a mom.”

Gray’s latest projects include the yet-to-be released feature films “Dreams Awake” and “Hunter Pray.”

In addition to acting, Gray is also a business woman, author and Tai Chi master. Haven House is the oldest battered woman’s shelter and Gray’s favorite charity. She is a board member of the charity. Gray has her own company, Heroes for Hire, that books celebrities for TV show conventions.

Her book “Act Right” gives advice to young actors on how to relate to a scene crew, be professional on sets and much more. Gray is also a Tai Chi master and would like to do an instructional DVD on Tai Chi.

For more information on the Gulf

Coast Film and Video Festival, visit www.gulfcoastfilmfest.com. For more information on Erin Gray visit her Web site at www.eringray.com.

Gulf Coast Film Festival Winners

- **Best Documentary**
This Is Sam
- **Best Comedy**
Joey and Jerome’s Artistic Meaningful Independant Film
- **Best Student Project**
Walk With Me God
- **Best Horror**
Domain of the Damned
- **Best Drama**
Swinger
- **Best Of Festival**
The Cruiser Houston: Of Pride and Purpose

For the complete story log on to:
www.uhcl.edu/thesignal



Jessica Williams:The Signal

Doyle Rodriguez, an international student from India majoring in computer science, donned traditional clothes for this year's Global Expo.

Right: Damian Ottley, an international student from Trinidad and Tobago majoring in management information systems, sees how low he can go.



Jessica Williams:The Signal

GLOBAL EXPO

Traveling around the world, passport free

Jessica Williams
The Signal Staff

“We see each other, we go to classes with each other, but we don’t know why we behave the way we do or why we dress the way we do,” said Abigail Fabien, an international student from Dominica and graduate student in management information systems.

Global Expo is an opportunity for students and staff to visit countries and cultures from around the world without a passport.

“Traditionally, Global Expo is offered as part of the International Education Week at UHCL,” said Linda Bullock, assistant dean of student diversity. “This program is an opportunity for UHCL students to display booths celebrating their countries, cultures and traditions.”

The Office of International and Intercultural Student Services sponsors Global Expo each year; Bullock explained that it is used as an educational tool for UHCL students.

“The staff and student population, at large, can visit booths and learn interesting facts and enjoy traditions they would otherwise not have a chance to experience,” Bullock said. “This is a beneficial learning experience outside the classroom to enhance our global view and experience.”

“I’m glad I am able to express my

culture and show what we are really about and what we have to offer,” said Petra LeFleur, an international student from Trinidad and Tobago and graduate student in management information systems.

Sabiha Mahmood, student organizations and special events graduate assistant majoring in sociology, had been to global expo two times before. On Nov. 18, she was back for the third time.

“You get to meet so many different people and you find out things that you never knew, which is kind of exciting,” Mahmood said. “This is my third year attending Global Expo and it seems like I learn something new each year.”

“Every year, as our international student population increases, global expo grows in participation and displays,” Bullock said. “This year, we have over 20 displays with a diverse group of countries represented.”

A few of the countries represented were: Vietnam, India, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Jamaica, Indonesia and Taiwan. Not all booths were countries; the Office of Student Life hosted a Texas booth where they served chili.

Sameer Pande, assistant director of International and Intercultural Student Services, explained how he wished there was more participation from the United States.

“Education is a two-way process,”



Jessica Williams:The Signal

Belle Tasi, management information systems major, and Wendy Chen, business administration major, take a break from hosting the Taiwan booth to make whistles.

Pande said. “If I want domestic students to learn about other countries, I also want the international students to learn the culture and everything about Texas and the United States.”

Attendee, Perla Pena, an undergraduate student in education, said she enjoyed the opportunity to experience different countries and cultures through music, dancing, food and native clothing.

“We are culturally diverse in this university and this is a chance to learn a little bit about these different cultures,” Pena said.

Walking for a Cure

Thousands gather at Reliant Park for annual walk to raise money, awareness for JDRF

Amanda Fittge
The Signal Staff

College life comes with enough problems, but for 20-year-old Bethany Mathews of Pasadena, the trials and tribulations multiplied when she was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes at age 19.

Juvenile diabetes is also referred to as type 1 diabetes. While it normally occurs at some point during adolescence, it is also possible for adults to be diagnosed as type 1 as well. This form of diabetes causes the patient to become dependent on insulin and brings along concerns for complications. Insulin does not cure diabetes or the possible complications; insulin simply helps regulate the blood sugar levels in the body.

People with juvenile diabetes must monitor what they eat and what they drink as well as how much they exercise so they can avoid hypoglycemic, low blood sugar and hyperglycemic, high blood sugar, reactions that can cause major problems. Juvenile diabetes is a life-long battle for control of both their bodies as well as their everyday lives.

“The A&M motto explains it best; from the inside looking out you can’t explain it and from the outside looking in you can’t understand it,” said Mathews about living with juvenile diabetes.

Because the lives of patients with juvenile diabetes change so drastically, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation was established to not only find a cure for juvenile diabetes but to also educate patients so that their quality of life can be preserved. The number one concern of JDRF is the patients.

JDRF was founded by parents of children suffering from type 1 diabetes. These parents knew firsthand the need for a support system

and the means by which to find a cure for the disease. Since the foundation of JDRF in 1970, the company has raised more than \$1.3 billion for diabetes research.

JDRF’s “dedicating to finding a cure” motto helped launch their newest billion-dollar campaign called “From Research to Reality: The Campaign to Accelerate the Cure for Diabetes.” The goal of the campaign is to move research from thoughts into treatments that can impact millions of lives around the world.

With a campaign of this magnitude comes the need for funding; JDRF offers many opportunities for people to contribute to a cause that is changing lives daily. But for JDRF, it is not just about getting the hard-earned dollar of the community; it is about spreading the word so that patients do not suffer in silence.

On Nov. 8, JDRF held the annual “Walk for a Cure” at Reliant Park. While the walk raises millions of dollars for research every year, it also brings together hundreds of thousands of those with juvenile diabetes. No one truly understands the impact the disease has on the lives of the sufferer better than someone dealing with it themselves.

“Our family and friends are awesome but they don’t always get it,” said Melissa Carter, one of the participants in the walk, who was recently diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. “Sometimes we need to be reminded we aren’t the only one dealing with this.”

While there is still no cure for juvenile diabetes, JDRF offers help with learning how to deal with the disease now and the hope for a future free of juvenile diabetes. To learn more about juvenile diabetes and how you can help, visit JDRF’s Web site at www.jdrf.org.



Megan Woynt: Courtesy



Megan Woynt: Courtesy

Left: Walkers gather at the starting line to kick off the JDRF “Walk for a Cure.” Below: Brooke and Macy Patrick approach the finish line hand-in-hand.

Texas Renaissance Festival

Banner photo courtesy of www.fotosearch.com

Celebrating a 34th year

Hanonymus Bosch celebrates his victory after beating his opponent in a friendly competition involving mud during "The Mud Show."



The King's Court greets festival-goers during the opening ceremony.



Ben Sanchez Jr. tries his hand at archery during his first visit to the Texas Renaissance Festival.



Cayla Lazrine gets antsy as the finishing touches are placed on her fresh face painting.



Dead Bob and his faithful assistant SMUJ playfully torture the audience during the "Dead Bob" Show.



Photos, story and design by Jackie Hernandez

On an amazingly bright yet cold day, an immense man with an authoritative expression gently saunters down an unpaved road. His massive body is cloaked in a black leather coat, hiding a pair of black leather cuffs with silver spikes escaping through the surface. His legs are covered by a pair of custom-made, cavalier-style boots that reach up the leg and rest on the knees. His waist is decorated with a wide leather belt, ornamented with an entourage of menacing medieval weaponry.

Around Clear Lake, such a site would draw attention in the most negative of ways and this man would be the victim of unwelcome stares and questioning eyes. The local authorities might even be called in to investigate.

In Plantersville, Texas, however, this man is the envy of all eyes. Men want to look like him, women want to be with him and children want to grow up to be like him!

There is, of course, only one place where such an occurrence can happen: the Texas

Renaissance Festival. This year, the festival is celebrating its 34th year of medieval fun. With 16th century entertainment scattered throughout the course of eight weekends, festival go-ers, both new and experienced, can expect entertainment with enough variety to satisfy all types of patrons.

It is widely known, and often bragged about, that the TRF is the largest of its kind in the country. Not only do the participants hail from the local area of greater Houston, but from around the entire United States.

Patrick and Marlene Spencer, self-proclaimed nerds from South Texas, enjoyed their first TRF in 2000. Since then, the couple has become members of the Everquest online gaming community. Each year, a group of almost 20 members travels from places like Chicago, Ohio and California to Texas to enjoy the festival.

"Every year, we choose a weekend and we make arrangements to meet up here," Patrick Spencer said.

In recent years, the festival has been experiencing subtle changes, not necessarily with how things are run, but with the festival participants and how they like to experience the event.

In previous years, the fair had a strict set of dress standards for acceptable costumes. Participants stuck strictly to the theme of the 16th century. In recent years, the participants like to take the renaissance theme as more of a guide than a rule. The Storm Trooper, for example, (a character from Star Wars) likes to show up in head-to-toe combat gear but decorates the ensemble with a kilt to keep in Renaissance theme.

Matt Jones, half of the juggling duo "The Other Brothers," has been performing at the TRF for 17 years.

"If you ever get bored and find yourself with nothing to do here at the TRF, all you have to do is take a seat and watch all the people," Jones said.

His personal favorite is the Storm Trooper, but there are countless others that rank high on the list of most extreme costumes.

Another popular character this year was the Gargoyle clothed in dark silver wardrobe and fitted with a pair of massive wings and disturbing mask. Of course, the lovely lady wearing the chain linked bikini set – and nothing else – was constantly bombarded with onlookers wanting to take pictures.

Ben Sanchez, first-time participant from San Antonio, brought his son to experience the intense event.

"I've heard stories and I've done a little research so I thought I knew what to expect, but ..." Sanchez' words trailed off as he smiled and took a few more looks around. "This is just crazy!"

Sanchez' son, Ben Jr., was having problems focusing on any one aspect in particular. His eyes were darting around from the intricate centaur costume, to the cart with long, wooden swords and daggers, and then to the assortment of sugar-coated desserts on a stick.

"Do they put all the food on a stick here?" he asked with an amusing sincerity.

Each year, the organization introduces something new: an act, a menu or even a contest.

Sanchez and his son were able to leave with a few costume starters and a head full of ideas for next year's costumes.

"Now that we've seen the costumes and done some pricing, we know what we have to work with till next year," Sanchez said.

The 34th annual Texas Renaissance Festival will carry on through Nov. 30. Tickets are \$21 for adults and \$11 for children and can be purchased at HEB, Randalls or Woodforest National Bank. Tickets can also be purchased at the gate or online. Visit www.texrenfest.com for more information.

WE ARE DESPERATE FOR YOUR ATTENTION



Comic book creator Zac Freundt is desperate for your attention.

Jim Livesey
The Signal Staff

It would be easy to look in on a comic book convention such as Wizard World Texas and see it as yet another example of the great American pastime, shopping. But that generalization would not be fair. Yes, vendor booths that sell collectibles to comic book fans economically support it. The real draw, however, is the inescapable human interaction.

An odd dynamic develops at a comic book convention. People attend to be part of a social event. Fans want to be noticed by the creators they admire; lesser-known artists want to be noticed by the fans. Somewhere in the middle are the individuals who choose to come in costume. Together they form an odd dynamic that supports a community.

Will Hughes, an artist out of the Woodlands, is quickly becoming a name in the comics industry. A filmmaker by trade, Hughes is now publishing his own comics under the Great Big Comics imprint. “The Voyages of the SheBuccaneer,” his signature title, is an adventure serial set in the world of pirates. Hughes’ choice to publish comics is a creative and financial decision.

“The financial requirements of making a film and getting it distributed will eat you alive,” Hughes said. “With a comic book, you get to tell the story and not worry about everything else.”

Hughes’ booth was located on the front row with great visibility. Many of the artists who ended up sitting in what is termed “artist alley” found it more difficult to attract attention. Sandwiched between the superstar artists drawing long lines that stretched down the aisles, some artists resorted to their own forms of coercion to get attendees to talk with them.

Zac Freundt ended up sitting hidden by the throng of people in line to meet Billy Tucci, a popular writer and artist known for his work on “Shi” and “Sgt Rock.” Freundt resorted to wearing a sign that read “We are desperate for your attention.”

“Conventions like this are one of the few ways we can get fans to see our work,” Freundt said. “Being next to a big name is great, but it is making it hard to get noticed; we are still having fun talking to people.”

Attendees of conventions have found their own way of getting noticed by dressing up in costumes. For some it is a simple way to make the day more of an event, for others it has become the event. Faythe Cary came dressed as the Marvel Comics character Emma Frost. Cary goes to many conventions and she makes the most of each opportunity to dress in costume by becoming a different character each day.

“All day I get stopped; people take my picture and tell me how great I look,” Cary said. “That just doesn’t happen anywhere else.”

“I think she does it just to annoy me,” said John Ansley, Cary’s fiancé.

The down side, however, is what happens when the attention is not given. Scott Hintze found himself accosting individuals to explain his costume. He was dressed as Speed Racer, one could tell by the ‘G’ on his shirt. Hintze would then strike a pose until his picture was taken, if one delayed he would contort himself into a more heroic stature. Hintze made sure his picture was taken by everyone he spotted carrying a camera.

“I’m speed racer. See I have the ‘G’ on my shirt and the red ascot.” Hintze blurted as he struck a pose.

This behavior is somehow acceptable, perhaps even endearing, in the world the convention provides. It has become a safe haven for fans to act out a little and dressing up at the convention creates an opportunity for them to engage others.

Wizard World is not the only creative outlet Hintze has found. Like many others dressed in costume, he attends a lot of conventions. Anime, Star Wars, Comic Book and Science Fiction groups all have conventions and many of these fans take advantage of them. It has become their way of expressing themselves. It is their way of being special.

“I go to at least 10 different conventions a year and I have been doing that for at least four years,” Jesse Thaxton said.

Wizard World Texas may be larger than some comic book conventions and it may host a few more celebrities. Yet it still comes down to being part of a community. Artists need fans and fans need artists. Some just need a place where they belong and feel special, even if it is just for the weekend.



Above: Fans young and old dig through long boxes in search of comics they need for thier collections. Left: Matt Wagner, creator of the “Mage” and “Grendel” series, works on a sketch. Below: Will Hughes, from the Woodlands, talks to a fan about his comic book, “The Voyages of the She-Buccaneer.”



Jim Livesey:The Signal



Mike Bartosh, as Dr. Who, stands ready for action with his sonic screwdriver.

Lana Marie, as the DC Comic's character Catwoman, feels a connection to the character.

Chris Knight, Destro, and Chad Manion, Cobra Commander, give their best diabolical pose.

Phil Hughes, aka Tex*Shield, stands as Marvel Comics character Thor.

Faythe Cary, dressed as the Marvel Comics character Emma Frost, likes the attention her costume brings.

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CAMPUS CALENDAR

November 26 – 29
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

December 5

Career Exploration Workshop #3,
8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
\$25 for UHCL students.
Requires intake appointment.
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

December 6

Last Class Day of Fall 2008

December 8 – 13

Fall 2008 Final Exam Period

December 12

Career Exploration Workshop #3,
8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
\$25 for UHCL students.
Requires intake appointment.
Call 281-283-2590 for information.

December 18

Commencement Kick-Off,
5:30-7 p.m., Bayou Atrium I
Tickets available in
Student Life Office, SSCB 1.204.
Call 281-283-2041 for information.

December 19

Fall 2008 Grades Available over
UHCL Telephone Registration
System and E-Services

Fall 2008 Commencement,
7 p.m., Reliant Arena

January 16

Ree Payment Deadline for Spring
2009 Early & Open Registration

January 17 – 27

Spring 2009 Late Registration

January 20

First Class Day of Spring 2009

January 28

Fee Payment Deadline for Spring
2009 Late Registration

Ongoing through January 5

"Along the Rio Grande:
A New World Becoming,"
Monday – Thursday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.,
Friday: 8 a.m.-noon,
Bayou Art Gallery
Call 281-283-2480 for information.

Ongoing through January 16

Spring 2009 Open Registration &
Open Enrollment
Applications for admission must be
received by January 14.
Call 281-283-2500 for information.



Shay Davis
Fitness Zone

Performance enhancers in sports are a big debate in the news today. The controversy that has occurred for years is starting to take heed as more and more athletes are being tested for performance enhancer drugs.

Some reports focus on professional athletes; however, some reports state that middle and high school students are taking enhancement drugs. Some high school football players have experienced teammates using performance enhancement drugs, while others have not.

However, some programs at big schools may have a higher chance of athletes experimenting with enhancement drugs due to the competitiveness and the desire to be on a team at all cost.

In the past, working on various college campuses, I have experienced the effects of students being "juiced" up. I have worked in fitness centers

on those campuses and students who appeared to be "juiced" were those who were trying to gain weight and/or become more muscular. None of those students I've observed were involved in any sports. Therefore, not all performance enhancers are only used for sports, but for other reasons.

I believe that in the years to come, performance enhancers will be used more for other reasons than for sports benefits. None of these observations were on the campus of the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

I am very happy that issues of enhancement drugs have been recognized and that the professional leagues are taking precautions for future monitoring of the drugs.

With the media coverage, hopefully students and future professional athletes will recognize that taking these drugs will only hinder them from pursuing a career in sports. I would like to see future studies

"Students who appeared to be 'juiced' were those who were trying to gain weight and/or become muscular."

- Shay Davis
Fitness Zone Coordinator



on how the performance enhancer drugs affect other schools such as middle schools, high schools and big universities.

Since UHCL does not have organized intercollegiate sport teams, I have not seen nor heard of the use of enhancement drugs on campus. Although I am fairly new to the campus and Fitness Zone, I have not observed any obvious side effects of a student using any performance enhancement drugs. These effects can include aggressive behaviors, rage, or violence.

In the past, these are the behaviors that I had experienced with a college student who was on

steroids. Luckily, that student is no longer using that performance enhancement drug and his attitude is calmer than before.

The Fitness Zone has a posting of the Steroid Law Notice. This is a notice that all gymnasiums located on a college campus must post. It simply states (in part): "anabolic steroids and growth hormones are for medical use only. State law prohibits the possession, dispensing, delivery, or administering of an anabolic steroid or growth hormone in any manner not allowed by state law..."

International Education Awards Given at Luncheon



Kyrstin Hewitt: The Signal

Turkish Consulate Ali Findik (standing left) and Turkish Ambassador Atila Uzer (standing right) were recognized at the Jerry Rhodeback International Education Awards luncheon, held on campus Nov. 18 as part of International Education Week. During the luncheon, awards were presented to various faculty and community members for their efforts to further international education. Award winners included Erhan Uskup, Turkish community member; Joseph Giarratano, associate professor of computer science; Maria Curtis, assistant professor of anthropology and cross-cultural studies; Michele Kahn, assistant professor of studies in language and culture; and Ingeborg Hayes Van Zanten, international and cultural program director for the Office of International Initiatives. Keynote speaker Alvaro Romo de la Rosa later discussed the challenges with low percentage rates for incoming study abroad students to Latin America from North America.



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UHCL opens doors for advance placement students

Srishti Saini
The Signal Staff

Clear Lake High School students who wish to experience college, explore careers and earn college credit can register for classes at San Jacinto College and attend classes on the University of Houston-Clear Lake campus. Honors, Pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement courses are available in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades to help high school students get ready for college. Students who score high enough on the AP exams can receive advanced placement in college courses to earn dual credit for high school and college.

Several concerns have been raised by UHCL students about sharing our university campus with high school students. These concerns include: parking, utilities and conduct. UHCL executive counsel raised a question as to whether these high school students pay for parking on the campus.

“These students who are currently taking courses on our campus do pay for their parking at the Arbor Building,” said Kay Brown, staff assistant in the dean of students office.

Brown said that SJC is limited in space and that is why the classes are being offered at UHCL. Moreover, CLHS is just across the street which makes it easier for the students to attend classes on our campus.

“The AP classes are being offered by SJC’s professors at UHCL,” Brown said.

The other concern raised was the extended use of electricity by the high school students, because the buildings must stay open for extended hours to accommodate these classes.

“How would you calculate the percentage of electricity they are using,” said Anthony Jenkins, dean of students. “And why should they be required to pay for additional use when other students do not. Our partnership with

the high school serves several purposes: it enhances the university’s outreach efforts into the community; it exposes the university to a set of stakeholders who otherwise may not have been exposed to our campus; and it also serves as an advertising/marketing opportunity,” Jenkins said.

“Therefore, when trying to develop these relationships we, the university, agree to incur certain costs.”

“In our partnership with the local high school we have used their facilities for different functions and programs, and they did not charge fees for using their electricity or parking spaces,” Jenkins said. “We also have San Jacinto College students taking courses on our campus as well. There are no similar concerns that have been raised regarding these students.”

Steven Steiner, student government association vice president - committee coordinator, agreed that CLHS is limited in space.

The biggest concern voiced involved the misconduct of high school students that has been witnessed on campus.

Steiner reported to have seen a few high school students skateboarding in the SSCB and had to personally tell one of the students not to do so. Some high school students are also heard making harmful racial and cultural comments about UHCL students.

“If any UHCL student overhears our high school guests making hurtful, racial and/or cultural comments, they should immediately address the issue and engage our guests in an educational conversation about their comments and how they fall below the standards of our community philosophy on diversity,” Jenkins said. “It is important to note that if our students fail to address these issues, they are no better than the students making

the inappropriate statement. Our students have to play a significant role in developing, implementing and maintaining community standards for our university – yes the faculty, administration and staff must do their part as well.”

Jenkins said, “UHCL is a public university and we, as students, have a purpose to strengthen our community and create a sense of inclusion.”

“The university’s relationship with the high school is not a burden on any student,” Jenkins said. “Since their arrival, no UHCL student has been forced out of a parking space. No UHCL student has been kicked out of a classroom. No UHCL student has had their education disrupted.”

“It would be nice to see our student leaders working to build relationships with the local high schools. To collaborate with them on civic engagement activities, develop programs that invite them onto campus and expose them to college life,” Jenkins said. “These are the issues college students should be focusing on, not electricity bills.”

Moreover, high school students engage in civic activities and developmental programs that invite them onto campus and expose them to college life.

“The issues of campus safety have been addressed with the students directly,” Steiner said. “Issues concerning funding and racial comments have been passed along to the appropriate administrator at UHCL. SGA was assured that both concerns would be addressed to the principal at CLHS. SGA will be following up on this issue Nov. 20.”

Anyone who witnesses inappropriate actions by any student, high school or college, is encouraged to report the inappropriate behavior to the Dean of Students Office.

“**Since their arrival, no UHCL student has been forced out of a parking space.”**

- Anthony Jenkins
Dean of Students

Diversity: continued from page 1

Islander students to join, including APISA. More specifically, there are Taiwanese, Chinese and Vietnamese student organizations. Although these groups are focused on a particular race of students, they are open to students of all races to learn more about other cultures.

Groups like these are meant to ease the transition from their homeland culture to American culture. The organizations encourage members to become more active, and get more involved in the university experience.

“Making the initiative to get involved with activities other than their academic studies and reaching out to people not in their immediate circle is what seems to be the hardest thing for students to overcome,” Yue said.

Another thing that seems to be a change from Asian culture is the emphasis on self-advancement and self-success. In the United States, students are encouraged to do what it takes to build a life for

themselves, by themselves. In many Asian countries, this is not the case.

“The emphasis in America is ‘you’ and what ‘you’ can do - what ‘you’ have contributed to a team or project,” said Eva Prabhakar, communication officer to APISA. “It takes some practice moving from cultures where you’re used to saying ‘we did this’ instead of quantifying your own contribution.”

Prabhaker believes that UHCL does a great job of easing students into the shift of taking ownership of a task through the many writing and public speaking requirements of courses as well as student activities.

On Nov. 21, UHCL held its second annual Minority Speakers Day. This event consisted of former UHCL graduates whose purpose was to speak about the successes in their careers through education and to encourage current students. This year Asian and Pacific Islander speakers represented the event.

Fees: continued from page 1

voted to approve the course based fee increase. However, the majority did not support the increase.

“Many students were torn against this fee proposal,” Cardenas said. “Students felt that we should have voted on each school separately and not as a combined proposal. Many students, including the executive council, felt it was necessary to support the course based fees to ensure institutional effectiveness. It is important to develop competitive schools at this university so we will be in top ranking with other top universities.”

Tina Stokes, Planning and Budgeting Committee student representative, voiced concerns about the generality of the justifications for the fee increases. Stokes said students did not understand the purpose of the increases and would have benefited from specific explanations.

Stokes also said the vote was not representative of the student body as a whole because many students attend night classes. The meetings and vote were held at 11:30 a.m.

Students who were not able to attend the meetings can visit <http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/SLO/SGA> and click on the SGA audio icon to listen to the fee proposals.

The student vote will go to the PBC , which will in turn make recommendations to the University

Council. The final decision rests with Staples.

The rising cost of education is a result of the Texas Legislature’s decision to deregulate tuition in 2003. Since then, students have seen sharp increases in tuition rates as the state has withdrawn the majority of appropriations and left students footing the bill.

“There is more demand for services, but there are less resources coming into the university,” Biggers said. “With the deregulation of tuition a couple of years ago, what the state was really saying was, ‘We’re going to give you less money. Get what you need from the students.’”

Texas lawmakers recently filed a number of bills in an attempt to rectify this conundrum. Solutions suggested include a two-year tuition freeze and a return to state-regulated tuition rates.

“Students, faculty, administrators and the community can e-mail or send a letter regarding their concerns with the lack of funding in our education system,” Stokes said. “The more pressure we have on legislators, the greater the impact.”

Visit <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/Reports/General.aspx> and click on “Filed House Bills” and “Filed Senate Bills” to view all tuition-related bills.

Degree: continued from page 1

portfolio.

“For students going on to graduate school, a Bachelor of Fine Arts will give them an advantage on their transcripts,” Larson said. “The Bachelor of Fine Arts degree is a tangible benefit for both our current and future applied design and visual arts students.”

For more information on the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, visit the Applied Design and Visual Arts link on the Human Sciences and Humanities programs Web site.

JFK: continued from page 1

square peg to ensure it fits into the round hole.

Groden is widely known as an expert on the Kennedy assassination and an expert in the field of photography. In 1975, he was the man who first showed the Zapruder film on national television. Then in 1976, he was a photographic consultant to the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

In 1996, Groden acted as an expert witness on photo alteration during the O.J. Simpson trial. During his testimony, Groden admitted that he had no formal education in photography, that he did not belong to any groups that are dedicated to authenticating photographs, and that he did not know the names of any groups that authenticate photos.

Groden further testified that photos in which Simpson was wearing a pair of Bruno Magli shoes were fraudulent. Later, 30 additional photos from differing photographers surfaced showing Simpson wearing the same shoes. Groden’s response was that while the additional photos were real, the one he studied was a fake.

While new technology such

In addition to the new degree, the School of Human Sciences and Humanities and the School of Education are working together to offer a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Applied Design and Visual Arts with EC-12 Art certificate. This all-level certificate will provide students with the opportunity to become a certified art teacher. To get more information on this program, contact an adviser at the School of Education office, B1231, or an adviser at the School of Human Sciences and Humanities office, B1539.

as 3D animation and modern forensics indicate that President Kennedy was likely killed by a bullet shot from the sixth floor of the Texas book depository building, conspiracy theorists such as Groden hold firm to their convictions that the whole story is still untold.

New evidence beyond that provided by technology still comes to light as well. Dr. Robert Grossman, one of the neurosurgeons who examined Kennedy in 1963, wrote an article for the magazine “Neurosurgery” in 2003. In this article, Grossman confirmed that the official version of the assassination fit the wounds suffered by Kennedy. In 2007, an 8mm film that shows the Kennedy motorcade approximately 90 seconds before the assassination was donated to the Sixth Floor Museum by George Jefferies.

Conspiracy theorists like Groden have paved the way for people to come forward with more information about the assassination of Kennedy and, by doing so, it is possible that they will eventually provide the evidence that proves them wrong.

** Student Life ** Student Life **

The Student Government Association

Would like to thank all the students who attended the 'Fee Increase' meeting last Tuesday. Your vote and voice will definitely make a difference! A special thanks to the Administration who presented the proposals and clarified queries regarding the fee increase.

Thank You

The Winter break is almost around the corner. But we still need assistance to keep the University and community a happening place! Do render your services to your school and your community!

Be a Volunteer! Be a Hero!

Keep safe and enjoy the vacation.
And once again ... we value your support throughout the semester.

For more information contact the SGA Executive Council:

Patrick Cardenas – President
Steven Steiner – VP Committee Coordinator
Jessica Williams – VP Outreach & Communications
Connie LaFayette – VP Administration

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UHCL student appointed to Texas Workforce Investment Council



Joyce Delores Taylor: Courtesy

Joyce Delores Taylor (right) signed her oath for the Texas Workforce Investment Council at the University of Houston-Clear Lake Nov. 11. Next to Taylor is Nancy Weise, assistant director for human resources.

Oraleyda Cantu
The Signal Staff

Joyce Delores Taylor signed her oath for the Texas Workforce Investment Council in President William Staples' office Nov. 11. Paul Willingham, chief of police, administered the oath in full uniform. Joyce's oath of office was witnessed by members of the president's office, professors and SGA representatives. Taylor expressed her gratitude

toward everyone who was part of the signing of the oath and thanked Staples for taking time off his busy schedule to be a part of the signing. "Joyce was an outstanding student leader at UHCL, so it comes as no surprise that she would continue her leadership at a state level," Staples said. "She represents the kind of alumna of which UHCL is extremely proud. We wish her all the best in this new position."



Joyce Delores Taylor: Courtesy

Paul Willingham, chief of police, administered Joyce Delores Taylor's oath on Nov. 11 at President Staples' office.

To continue her strive for success, Taylor is hoping to begin her doctoral program next fall at Texas A&M. Although Taylor has faced obstacles as a single mother struggling financially to support her youngest daughter and herself through college, her mother's memory has kept her going. "My mother always encouraged me to strive for the highest education possible," Taylor said. As part of the Texas Workforce Investment Council, Taylor will be working closely with other representatives "to promote the linkage of education, workforce and

economic development in order to leverage resources, increase collaboration among state and local partners, and build the pipeline of skilled workers in Texas." Taylor learned that she was appointed to the council when she received a call from Mary Fraiser. Taylor initially applied for the appointments manager position. It was during that time when she met Teresa Spears, deputy appointments director for the Texas governor. Spears remembered Taylor from the previous interview and gave her a great recommendation. Taylor then interviewed with Cheryl Fuller, director of the Texas Workforce Investment Council.

Taylor went to Austin Nov. 17 to attend a Governor's training seminar. During the seminar, the appointees were given the opportunity to ask a panel of top officers questions. Joyce found it interesting that many of the top officers were graduates of Texas A&M. While in Austin, she learned some of the issues she and other affiliates will come across as members of the council and how to deal with them in a respectful, ethical manner. The new appointees also met Texas Governor Rick Perry. "It meant a lot for the state governor and his wife to take time out of their busy schedules to meet with us," Taylor said. "The Governor even made time after the seminar to mingle with us and take pictures." Taylor was introduced to a new perspective of what really goes on at the capital and around the state. "We take for granted how much he does for us," said Taylor about Governor Perry. "My biggest thing is to find out exactly what all the council handles," Taylor said. "My biggest goal is to offer my talents however they can use them and to listen to what the issues are."

Leadership conference motivates students to make a difference

Amy Parsons
The Signal Staff

The 12th annual UHCL Student Leadership Conference, "GlobaliZING Leadership: Unleash the Hero Within You," emphasized self-empowerment and the ability to focus on others. The conference, held Nov. 7-8, was attended by 242 students, volunteers and presenters from 11 colleges and universities, including UHCL. For the first time, UHCL students were able to attend the leadership conference for free. "It was definitely a success," said Jennifer Clark, coordinator of student life. Clark said the topics discussed at the conference were not only thought-provoking and relevant, but lit a fire for students to get more involved in leadership activities on campus. In his opening remarks, UHCL President William Staples delivered a message that offered attendees a glimpse of what to expect from the conference. "There is always going to be a shortage of good leaders," Staples said. "If you can be one, you'll be in high demand ... be responsible, be yourself." Participants had the opportunity to attend lectures from keynote speaker Nancy Hunter Denney, as well as more than 20 educational and leadership breakout sessions. Denney, an author and educator, is nationally recognized for her leadership

training and motivational books "Life by Design" and "Zing! Your Life and Leadership." "Nancy has always been one of my favorite speakers," Clark said. "She inspired me so much and got me motivated in student services." Denney's session, "Zing! Your Life and Leadership," motivated students to be leaders and to be "in the present 100 percent." Her message was about students' abilities to make a difference. "Change the world by changing yourself," Denney said. "Life is about the time and how you spend it." "I thought Nancy was extremely inspirational," said Cindy Castillo, conference attendee. "I'm buying three of her books. I hope to see her 10 years down the line and tell her 'you actually did something for me.'" Following Denney's session Friday evening, participants were invited to enjoy a variety of activities including: karaoke, Wii bowling, a "So You Think You Can Dance" competition, and a community service project where attendees helped make blankets that were donated to Project Linus, an organization that has distributed more than 2 million blankets to children in need. "The conference was inspirational and now I have

chosen to do the Linus project with my students," said Spring Flacke, an undergraduate public service leadership and psychology major. Denney had one message she wanted students to take with them from the conference. "Take advantage of the opportunity you have to get smarter," Denney said. "We need smart people in this world. More than we need college graduates who don't think, appreciate or put their talent towards serving all mankind." The 2009 Leadership Conference is scheduled for Nov. 6-7. For students

who missed this year's conference or want to learn more about opportunities to get involved, the Office of Student Life is offering a leadership retreat during spring break 2009. For more information on student life activities and volunteer opportunities, visit www.uhcl.edu/sli or stop by the Student Life office, Student Services Classroom Building, Room 1.204.



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Spring Flacke, an undergraduate public service leadership and psychology major, works on blankets that will be donated to Project Linus.



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Nancy Hunter Denney, keynote speaker at the Leadership Conference, signs copies of her books for conference attendees.