

MARCH 3, 2014

VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 3

Youth introduced to college



TIFFANY FITZPATRICK: THE SIGNAL

Randon Taylor, BSA member and project lead, and Clear Brook High School students sit in on an early childhood special education course taught by Elizabeth Beavers.

JESSICA ALCOCER THE SIGNAL

Thirty students from Clear Brook High School attended UHCL Tuesday, Feb. 25, as part of "Bring A Child to College Day," a new program introduced this semester by the Black Students Association (BSA).

Modeled after the nationally known "Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day," the goal of this program is to familiarize a group of underperforming high school students, who would typically not consider higher learning an option, with the idea of college.

"Education has a liberating affect on people," said BSA member and project lead Randon Taylor. "I believe it is our duty, as educated persons, to ensure that our fellow men and women have access to the same educational resources that those who are privileged in society enjoy. Simply put, we're opening a door for students to the idea of higher education by acting as a bridge for them from high school to college."

The Clear Brook students who participated in Bring A Child to College Day (BCTC) attended several events on campus

accompanied by their assigned mentors. The high school students also experienced a college classroom by sitting in on pre-arranged classes for an hour. The remainder of the program included breakfast and lunch, a tour of UHCL, and attending a Student Government Association (SGA) meeting. They also had the opportunity to speak with administrators and staff, as well as gain information on admissions and financial aid.

Clear Brook freshman Michael Loughman says he considered college before but

SEE YOUTH, PAGE 6

Tuition increases approved for 2014

Part 1 of a 3-part series on college tuition in Texas

ANDREA THOMAS THE SIGNAL

The UH System Board of Regents approved an increased tuition rate for UHCL at the Audit and Compliance Committee meeting Wednesday, Feb. 25.

The tuition increase will be effective in the fall 2014 semester. Undergraduate tuition will increase 4.9 percent and graduate tuition will increase 5.9 percent.

The funds generated by a tuition increase will be primarily used for: compensation increase, additional faculty for growing programs, financial support for the four-year initiative, separating Financial Aid from Student Services fees, and a nursing program.

"[The increase in] tuition and fees will fund a number of things," UHCL President William Staples said. "Tuition only partially supports our transition from an upper-level to a four-year institution; we have received gifts, money from Houston Endowment, which is a foundation to support our transition to a four-year university. We've made reallocation of funds within the university from some areas to other areas in support of the transition, so tuition and fees is funding a

SEE TUITION, PAGE 6

New texting bill fails to pass Texas Senate

FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ THE SIGNAL

The latest effort to pass a bill that would ban texting while driving in Texas did not make it into legislation.

On Nov. 12 of last year, member of the Texas House of Representatives for District 82, Tom Craddick, R-Midland, introduced House Bill 63 that, if passed, would have made texting while driving a punishable offense in the state of Texas. Although passed through the House of Representatives, the bill was killed in the Senate.

House Bill 63, also known as the Alex Brown Memorial Act, was written partially in honor of a Lubbock-area high school

senior who died in a single-vehicle accident. Alex Brown was texting while driving down a narrow back road on her way to school when she lost control of her Chevy Silverado. She was thrown from her truck and crushed by it.

Jeanne and John Brown started the Remember Alex Brown Foundation in 2010 to help spread awareness of the dangers associated with texting while driving. In 2011, the Browns went to the Texas Legislature to push for a statewide texting while driving ban. The push was vetoed by Governor Rick Perry.

"I support measures that make our roads safer for everyone, but this bill is a

government effort to micromanage the behavior of adults," Perry said in a statement released shortly after the veto.

The following year Craddick picked up the cause with the introduction of H.B. 63. Craddick's texting while driving bill would have made it a traffic violation for any Texas driver to use "a handheld wireless communication device to read, write or send a text-based communication while operating a motor vehicle unless the vehicle is stopped."

Craddick said that putting a statewide ban in place would be a tool for law enforcement officers to keep Texas roads safe.

"The goal here is to reduce crashes,

injuries and fatalities," Craddick said. "As lawmakers we have a responsibility to attend to the safety on our state's roads."

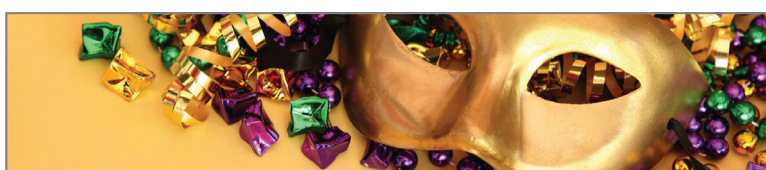
Consequences for this violation included a \$100 fine for a first-time offense. Any offense after that would have been \$200 and the possibility of license suspension.

Laws restricting texting while driving already exist statewide for minors, bus operators transporting children and in school zones. Twenty-five Texas cities also have texting-while-driving bans. The intent of H.B. 63 was to make the ban statewide for all Texas drivers.

SEE TEXTING, PAGE 6

online this issue

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GOODBYE MARDI GRAS, HELLO LENT PAGE 3

Kelsey Ciabattini explains the history and facts about Fat Tuesday



2014 OSCAR PREDICTIONS

Kris Stivers makes his Academy Award predictions



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BLOG

2014 Oscar predictions

SLIDESHOWS

Clear Brook students visit campus
PTSD awareness
Dining in Houston

VIDEO

Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival
Veterans transitioning to student life

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Student loan debt triggers a financial black hole

Managing their finances is something people have been dealing with for generations. Add in the cost of a college loan, and bills suddenly sky rocket before many recent college graduates even have a chance to start professional careers.

In 2003, Governor Rick Perry and other Texas lawmakers were trying to avoid a general increase in state taxes, due to a budget crunch, by deregulating the cap on college tuition. Perry signed into law the bill that allows public universities in Texas to set their own tuition rates and raise them at will with almost no legislative oversight.

Although removing the tuition cap may have avoided an increase in state taxes, it has caused tuition and fees amongst Texas public universities to increase tremendously. The main reason why tuition is rising is because the amount of government funding is decreasing.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board reports that tuition and fees in Texas have risen by an average of 72 percent since Perry removed the college tuition cap.

Students graduating high school have heard it over and over again that in order to make it in this world a college degree is essential. How do most students manage to pay for college when

EDITORIAL

the cost of tuition is outrageous? They take out student loans.

American Student Assistance (ASA) reports that in the United States today there are nearly 20 million people attending college, and 60 percent of them are borrowing annually. There is currently between \$902 billion to \$1 trillion in outstanding student loans in the United States.

The common misconception for people attending college is that accepting a student loan is no big deal. Students think they will be able to pay it off with no problem once they have their dream job. Sadly, that is not the case for the average person.

Six months after graduation student loan agencies will begin the repayment process. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and ASA reports that the standard repayment schedule for a student loan is 120 months, or 10 years, and during that time period two out of five student loan borrowers are delinquent at some point in the first five years.

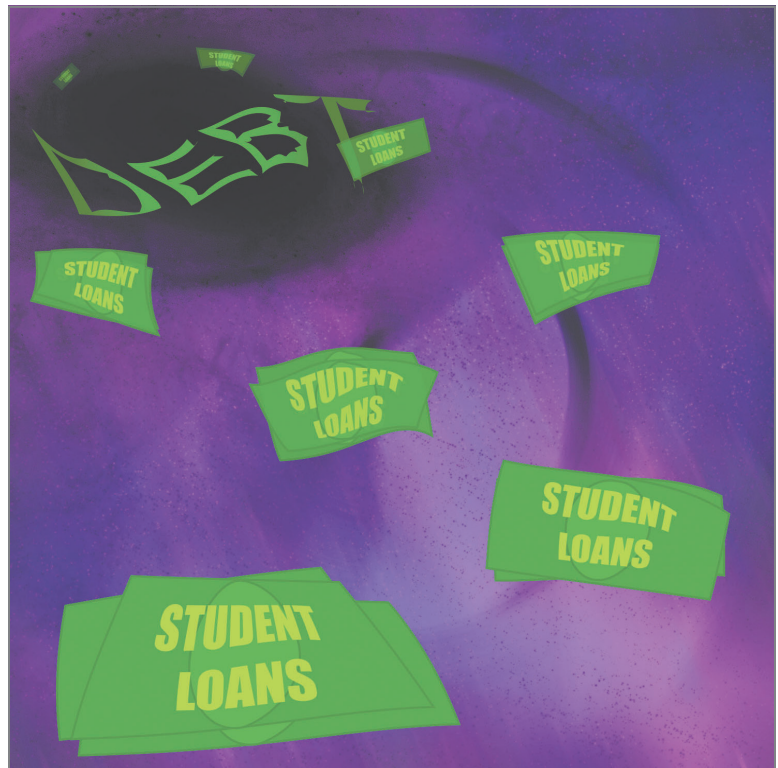
Once the borrower becomes delinquent on his or her student loan, it can get out of hand very quickly. If the borrower does not make any payments on the student loan or make arrangements with

the lender within 270 to 360 days their loan can become defaulted. The most common reasons for someone who has defaulted on his or her student loans are: delinquent payments, bankruptcy or insolvency.

There are two types of student loans, federal and private. Once the borrower defaults on his or her student loan, the loan terms can be accelerated and the lender will require the entire balance of the loan, as well as interest, to be due in one single payment. Once the borrower's payment plan has been accelerated, the lender can turn over the loan to a collections agency. The difference between a federal student loan and a private student loan is: a federal student loan's default is defined by federal law, and a private student loan's default is defined in the loan contract.

Once the student loan has been sent to a collections agency, the agency will constantly send the borrower collection letters and phone calls. They also have the power to collect from the borrower's salary, federal income tax refunds, Social Security payments, and other federal payments. The collection agencies will do whatever it takes in order to collect the money owed on the student loans.

The best way to pay off student loans is to only borrow what



KAILIE HYDE: THE SIGNAL

is necessary, and to start saving immediately. It is extremely difficult to work and attend college, but in the long run, even if it takes the student a little longer to finish school, the chances of he or she defaulting on his or her student loans will decrease.

The government needs to realize that by cutting funding for Texas public universities, it is requiring students to pay more in tuition and fees to make up

the difference. It does not take a college education to realize that when state appropriations for education decreases, universities have to increase the cost of tuition and fees to cover the budget gap. The trillion dollar amount of debt still owed in this country for student loans is evidence of the never ending black hole of debt, rising costs of tuition and fees they are creating.

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CORRECTIONS

In Volume XLII, Number 2, dated Feb. 17, 2014, the article "Helping a little amounts to a lot" misspelled the name of CASSA's president Lisa Wilkins.

A winemaker's guide to bliss

MARY MILLER

THE SIGNAL

Ah, the joys of making your own wine.

My experience with making my first batch of homemade wine is still questionable. Questions like, what am I doing, why am I doing this, what have I gotten myself into and oh no I think I added the wrong ingredient are just a few that come to mind.

The idea to start making wine originally came from my Aunt Jenny from Oberlin, Louisiana. Aunt Jenny began making her own wine more than 10 years ago and now makes the whole process seem effortless. I am here to tell you, it is not. There is a lot that goes into the process of turning fruit into drinkable wine.

Just about any fruit can turn into alcohol once the fruit is fermented, but to actually make something worthy to drink takes a little effort, practice, patience, care and desire.

Blueberries were my fruit of choice for my first attempt at the winemaking procedure. After I blended up all 15 pounds of blueberries the recipe called for, I made the mistake of putting everything in the carboy, including the yeast and pulp, all at once. I thought I could speed up the process by adding everything together and skipping some essential steps. I was entirely wrong; it actually set me back a bit.

When fresh fruit is used to make wine as opposed to concentrate or puree, Camden tablets must be added and allowed to sit for 24 hours prior to adding the



STAFF COLUMN

wine yeast. The tablets are used to kill off any wild yeast the natural fruit produces.

Also, it is not a good idea to have the pulp freely combined with all the other ingredients; it creates a mess in the later steps to come. The pulp should be held in a mesh bag during the primary fermentation stage to avoid causing future straining problems.

The primary fermentation stage should last between 5-7 days, but when you (me) fail to follow instructions properly and add ingredients that don't go together, such as the Camden tablets and the wine yeast, it tends to set the process back a few days.

After a couple of days I noticed my would-be wine wasn't showing any signs of fermentation. Fermentation is noticeable by the release of gases. You can actually see it, but after a couple of days my concoction showed no such action; thus I did my research and discovered all I had to do was add more wine yeast. I did, and out came the bubbles. I knew I had it right at that point. After primary fermentation

takes place, all the liquids from that first carboy must be siphoned into a second carboy and left to sit for 4-6 weeks or longer depending on taste preference. The longer wine sits, the bolder the flavor... usually, if done right that is. Siphoning five gallons of pulp is a time-consuming task, which I came to find out. Finally I got everything into the other container, only to realize I still had to somehow rid my wine of the pulp.

Not sure what to do or even how I was going to do it at that point, I ran over to DeFalco's, a home-brewing supply store located in Houston. The sales people were very nice and understanding of the mistake I made. It wasn't the first time DeFalco's had dealt with such a situation, and they knew exactly what to do.

I had to purchase a five-gallon bucket and an industrial-sized strainer. If I thought the siphoning issue was a long process, the straining part took even longer.

The pulp should have been strained in the very beginning, but since it was my first time at winemaking, I didn't realize the importance of following steps in chronological order. Lesson well learned on my part – don't skip steps, follow instructions.

Only time will tell if my attempt to create wine will be successful. I am waiting out the four weeks with my fingers crossed. Taking everything I have learned from this first experience, I am already applying that knowledge toward my next attempt. For the next batch, I am going with strawberry. Cheers!

Saying goodbye to Mardi Gras and hello to Lent

KELSEY CIABATTONI
THE SIGNAL

Beads. Booze. Masks. Mardi Gras.

Each passing year always promises another round of debauchery-filled celebrations leading up to Fat Tuesday, and on March 4, the last day of Mardi Gras will arrive. Traditionally, Fat Tuesday is the last day for Catholics to indulge before Ash Wednesday begins the 40 days of abstinence and fasting that come with Lent, but we’ve come to know it as much more.

Although tomorrow officially closes this Carnival season’s shenanigans, there is no need to stop the party just yet; here are some fun facts about the historical holiday to help end the celebration with a bang:

Mardi Gras literally means “Fat Tuesday” in French.

The name stems from the French tradition of feasting upon a fattened calf and rich foods on the last day of the Carnival season. The day is also known as Pancake Tuesday in England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada from the custom of making pancakes so as not to waste any remaining fat and dairy products.

The King of Carnival

While Mardi Gras has grown



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into a culturally diverse celebration, many of its symbolic traditions can be traced to the Rex Organization, which was established in 1872 by a group of New Orleans businessmen hoping to entertain the Grand Duke Alexis Romanoff with a lavish parade. Each year, one member of the organization is chosen to be the Rex, which is regarded to be one of the highest civic honors a person can receive in New Orleans.

Rex, which is Latin for king, reigns as “The King of Carnival.” A companion for Rex is also chosen each year to be the “Queen of Carnival.” The queen is a current season debutante.

Mardi Gras “official” colors actually mean something.

The colors for Mardi Gras were chosen to honor the Grand

Duke’s house colors of purple, green and gold. Purple represented justice, green signified faith and gold symbolized power.

The holiday has an official anthem.

“If Ever I Cease to Love,” a song from the 1870s musical comedy “Blue Beard” was played for the Mardi Gras king at the very first King parade and has been played for the King and Queen when they arrive at the Grand Ball in France every year since.

King Cake is really coffee cake.

The custom of eating King Cake began in France in the 12th century. The cake is typically made of coffee cake, baked in a wreath-like shape and topped with Mardi Gras colored icing.

In the earlier days, a coin or bean was baked inside each cake and tradition said whoever found the item would have a year of good luck. These days, a small baby figurine is baked into the cakes to represent the baby Jesus, with the recipient being declared a “king” and expected to host the next year’s King Cake party.

Fat Tuesday is a legal holiday in New Orleans.

While the holiday is celebrated all over the United States, Louisiana is the only state where

Fat Tuesday is recognized as an official holiday. In 1873, the floats were constructed entirely in New Orleans instead of France for the first time, which prompted Governor Henry C. Warmoth to sign the “Mardi Gras Act” making it a legal holiday in 1875.

Beads didn’t enter the picture until the 1880s.

The festival custom of Krewes, or private social organizations that fund Mardi Gras events, handing out treats to parade onlookers dates back to Renaissance Europe when participants would throw out ale, meat and grain to onlookers.

However, the most visible symbol associated with Mardi Gras today became embedded into its history when one of the Krewe members dressed up as Santa Claus and tossed out glass beads. Sometime over the years, glass beads were replaced by cheap plastic beads, which today often earn the thrower a “flash of flesh.” That particular tradition dates back to the 1970s.

The first Mardi Gras in America took place in Mobile, Alabama.

The first Mardi Gras in America took place March 3, 1699, when French-Canadian explorer, Jean Baptiste Le Monyne Sieur de Bienville, landed near

the Mississippi River on a spot he named “Pointe due Mardi Gras.” The celebration took place just 60 miles downriver from modern day New Orleans.

The tradition of masked balls during Mardi Gras began in the 1700s.

People would become so unhinged during the festivities that they began wearing masks to conceal their real identities in order to avoid any consequences from their night of mayhem.

At one point in the 19th century, there was so much drunk and disorderly conduct occurring that authorities made the wearing of masks illegal, hoping to curb some of the rowdiness. However, people were not discouraged by the new guidelines and the chaos continued anyway.

To get into the Fat Tuesday spirit, there will be a grand Mardi Gras parade tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. in the Galveston Strand District and historic downtown. The parade will feature marching bands, dance teams and dozens of lighted floats.

For more information on Galveston’s Mardi Gras activities, visit www.mardigrasgalveston.com.

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25TH ANNIVERSARY

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SGA Day

Come celebrate Mardi Gras during our SGA meeting!

Bring your non perishable food to me in SGA!

March 4th
11:30am - 12:30 pm Atrium II

For more information, contact us

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GULF COAST FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

Action: student filmmakers wanted

LIZ DAVIS
THE SIGNAL

Student filmmakers have the opportunity to have their independent films viewed on the silver screen at a local film festival.

The 16th Annual Gulf Coast Film and Video Festival (GCFVF) is accepting submissions until July 1. The festival's categories include narrative features and shorts, documentaries, foreign, animation and student projects.

This year GCFVF has added a new category for screenplays and music videos. Music videos must be less than 5 minutes in length.

Founding Director Hal Wixon created the GCFVF in 1998 and has continued to organize the festival every year.

"We thought the greater bay area needed something like a film festival," Wixon said. There was nothing like it at the time, so we decided to give it a shot."

The Gulf Coast Film Festival added 'Video' to their title to distinguish them from other film festivals with similar

names and also to show that they accept both film and video at their festival.

"Film is expensive, so most directors submitted in video format," Wixon said. "At the time, there were two or three other film festivals with the name Gulf Coast Film Festival, and we didn't want to be confused with them."

Wixon encourages UHCL, and other students, to submit their films to "gain recognition and perfect their chosen profession."

Many winning and nominated films from the GCFVF have gone on to be screened at Sundance Film Festival and South by Southwest (SXSW).

Peggy "Domino" Taylor, vice president and publicist of GCFVF, has been involved with the festival for 13 years. Taylor says that they "accept submissions from all over the world and the films get better and better every year."

"The GCFVF was created to showcase new and emerging artists," Taylor said. "By submitting their films, students help the film festival expand awareness of independent film

making."

In 2013, Margaret Toombs' film "Liz Un-Caged" won the GCFVF award for Best Student Project. Toombs has gone on to screen several of her movies at Spring Street Studios.

"It's an easy process to submit films to festivals," Toombs said. "It is especially exciting to see one's movie screened locally, so that friends and family can attend."

Hector Luna, producer and publisher for GCFVF as well as producer for C47Houston News and Entertainment Magazine, said that participating in film festivals is a great opportunity to have your movie judged by audience members.

"Exposure is a valuable asset to any movie maker wanting to establish a foothold in this highly competitive field," Luna said. "It doesn't hurt to show your movie to as many people, audiences and potential investors as one can."

Each year Wixon presents a Lifetime Achievement Award to a celebrity who has encouraged independent filmmakers and actors in his or her field of study. The celebrity guest star

has not been announced yet for this year's festival but many past celebrities include University of Houston alumni such as Robert Wuhl, Walter Coblenz and Brandon Smith.

The awards ceremony will be held at Houston Nassau Bay Hilton Sept. 20 at 6:30 p.m. In addition to the celebrity guest, there will be a silent auction and dinner banquet. The films will be screened Sept. 21 at Courtyard Houston NASA/Clear Lake starting at 10 a.m.

For more information or to submit a film or screenplay, visit www.GulfCoastFilmFest.com. Instructions about how to submit a film or screenplay are under the "entries" tab.

The GCFVF will accept submissions until July 31 but to save money students can submit by April 30. Banquet tickets are \$55 and film-screening tickets are \$20 for an all day pass.

"Not only does submitting to the GCFVF look good on a resume, it is a great opportunity for people to use their talents to be recognized and progress in the film industry," Wixon said.



COURTESY: WIREDIN.CC

Vice President Peggy Domino Taylor, left, with Founder and Director Hal Wixon, right.



COURTESY: WIREDIN.CC

Vice President Peggy Domino Taylor holds movie award.



COURTESY: WIREDIN.CC

Audience members exit theater after viewing a film.

Houston dining scene: Uncharted & unreserved

ERIKA THOMAS
THE SIGNAL

As the fourth-largest city in the nation, Houston has lots of bragging rights: basketball, rodeo, football (we are still working on that), and we can now add best culinary experiences to this ever-growing list.

The dining experience in Houston has become more eclectic and innovative as we move to become a city of true culinary diversity. Food & Wine pronounced Houston “America’s newest capital of great food” in May. Southern Living, in August, named Houston “the most interesting, far-ranging, delightful food city in the South — strike that, in America — right now.”

The following short list of compiled, and tried, restaurants in the Houston area have been open for five years or less, and have already made a mark on the culinary scene in the “Bayou City.”

Jus’ Mac, \$
106 Westheimer
www.jusmac.com

Although its Height’s location has become a Houston staple, the Montrose location is only six months old. Jus’ Mac is the first and only restaurant in Houston that exclusively cooks and serves macaroni and cheese dishes.

Upon walking into this small establishment diners are greeted with a menu that houses a plethora of macaroni and cheese options that can make your head spin. The friendly staff will help answer any questions, as they know the menu front and back.

This casual restaurant is a perfect spot to go to grab one of America’s favorite comfort foods and does not break the bank. The mac and cheese is served with two size options: personal, which is four ounces of cheesy goodness versus the regular portion, which boasts six ounces of whatever the heart desires.

“The three most ordered mac and cheese dishes are the Buffalo Chicken, Popeye and Hangover,” said Chris Alvarez manager of the Montrose location.

Buffalo Chicken houses chicken, bacon, Frank’s Red-Hot Hot Sauce and is topped with blue cheese. Popeye is loaded with fresh spinach, onions, mushrooms and topped with mozzarella and parmesan cheeses. Hangover is served with a bottom layer of hash browns, pasta topped with a fried egg, and pico de gallo

REVIEW

and habanero for that little bit of kick.

Green Seed Vegan, \$
4320 Alameda Rd.
www.greenseedvegan.com

In the Museum District is a small, quaint and casual restaurant located on the corner of Alameda and Wheeler. Beautifully designed on the inside, this new hot spot for vegans is almost easily missed.

The husband and wife duo first started out as a food truck in 2011, and within the year they were rated number nine in the U.S. as the best vegan restaurant by Food & Wine. Three years later, now as a restaurant, they are still getting great business as they try and promote a healthier lifestyle.

Once inside, the menu is a vegan’s delight ranging from fresh-pressed raw juices to paninis, and even vegan burgers and tacos.

“A must try for the novice juicer is the Pine Verde juice, that has pineapple, wheatgrass, apple and mint,” said Debra Edwards, the juice chef. “Cauliflower Nuggets is one to not miss, or the Sweet Porta Panini with grilled portabella mushrooms [sweet potatoes, spinach with sunflower pesto spread].”

St. Genevieve, \$\$
2800 Kirby Dr. A206
www.saintgen.com

Located in Upper Kirby, St. Genevieve is a sleek and upscale alternative to casual dining. St. Genevieve is three years old and has already established itself with its popular Sunday brunch. Reservations are required, and dressed to impress is strongly encouraged.

Upon entering, patrons are greeted with a massive bar that fills more than half the restaurant, and yet it is still a very intimate setting; the cozy color palette of whites, grays and dark woods makes the place inviting.

Dining here on a Sunday requires a reservation as it fills very quickly, especially with their specials on carafes of Mimosas priced at \$11, or \$10 for a glass half-filled with vodka to take up to the bar to create one’s own Bloody Mary. If not interested in drinking their tasty libations, try one of their most requested entrees.

“Popular Sunday brunch dishes are the Crabcake Egg Benedict, Brioche French

Toast, and the Handcrafted Beer Burger,” said Tiffany, hostess; the restaurant did not want to release her last name.

The in-house DJ makes it very hard to leave, especially when Whitney Houston’s “I’m Every Woman” is playing and all the beautiful people filling the restaurant are singing along.

Cook & Collins, \$\$\$
2416 Brazos Ste. C
www.cookandcollins.com

Cook & Collins has been open for one month and already has the promise of making its mark in the ever-so-happening area of Midtown. Chef/partner Jared Estes got the idea for the name of his restaurant in part to pay respect to his grandparents, whose last name was Cook, and in part from his favorite drink, the Tom Collins.

“The most ordered dish is the Wild Rose Buffalo Meatloaf,” said manager Jim Bridges. “Oyster Rockefeller Fondue is a must try appetizer with a Jimmy Collins or even the Ginger Beery Collins.”

Even with the hustle and bustle of this restaurant there is still a sense of intimacy, and it is also a great place to people watch.

Zelko Bistro, \$\$
705 E 11th St.
www.zelkobistro.com

Located in the Heights, Zelko Bistro has the perfect setting for a romantic dinner for two or even just a private dinner between friends.

This old rustic house in the Heights houses some of the freshest culinary delights around. Zelko Bistro uses only local ingredients and even cultivates its own honey. The Heights Honey Bee Project obtains wild bees that would normally be exterminated and relocates them into hives so they might naturally flourish.

Chef Jamie Zelko has won countless awards including Best Chefs of America in 2013 and the Cadillac Culinary Master that same year.

“Popular dishes here are the ZB meatloaf, Captain’s Chicken, or St. Arnold short ribs,” said maître d’ Carlos Covarrubias.

\$ = \$14 and under

\$\$ = \$18 and under

\$\$\$ = \$35 and under



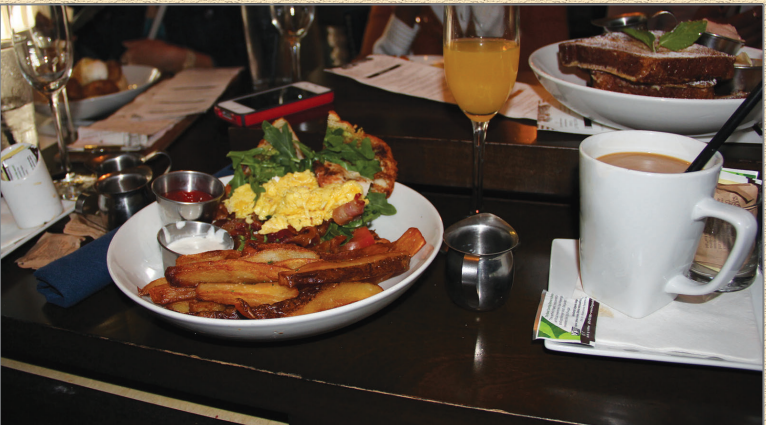
Lobby bar of **Zelko Bistro**.

ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL



The street view of **Cook & Collins** in Midtown.

ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL



Croissant BLT made with avocado mayo and served with house fries at **St. Genevieve**.

ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL



The ordering counter at **Green Seed Vegan**.

ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL



Regular size portion of Bacon Bliss topped with mozzarella cheese, one of the many macaroni and cheese selections offered at **Jus’ Mac**.

ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL

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TIFFANY FITZPATRICK: THE SIGNAL
Brittany Cuba, BSA mentor, and Kayla Taylor, 9th grade Clear Brook student, in the Student Lounge.



TIFFANY FITZPATRICK: THE SIGNAL
Clear Brook High School students and UHCL mentors mingle in the Student Lounge during a 15-minute break.

was not entirely positive about attending. “I thought about it, but I was never really sure if I could, what I would want to major in, or what I would want to study,” Loughman said. “I’m thinking about music or psychology.”

Nancy Gwinn, psychology major, was one of the assigned mentors who escorted the high school students around campus. “I think it is invaluable; it gives them a taste of what being in a college classroom is like,” Gwinn said. “It gives them an idea of encouragement and gives them a chance to ask questions that they might have about

going to college before they actually have to start planning that whole idea out.”

The Clear Brook students were also encouraged to write about their experiences at UHCL as a grade-enhancing assignment. “We are hoping that once they have this exposure to our beautiful campus and student leaders, faculty, administrators and staff that they might not only consider attending college, but that UHCL will be their college of choice since we will be expanding in Fall 2014 to include freshmen,” said Joyce Delores Taylor, Alumni Association executive council chair. “If the

students can leave our campus with a new idea of and attitude toward college and attending, and what the benefits are, then we will have achieved our goal.”

Clear Brook Principal Michele Staley said the students’ reactions from the event were positive. “They loved it, some of them are thinking of college seriously for the first time,” Staley said. “They went yesterday and now they are not so scared, have help, and think that college is within their grasp. We are ever so grateful!”

TUITION:
continued from page 1

“I have a good feeling that students are still OK with [the increase] because of the addition of adjunct compensation as well as funding for a brand new bachelor of science degree in nursing.”

— CARLA BRADLEY
SGA PRESIDENT

number of things.”

Staples said that Student Services fees will not be going up, and students will no longer have to pay a Student ID fee or a Writing Center fee because of the funds freed up by separating Financial Aid from Student Services. Student Services fees will now cover costs for IDs and the Writing Center.

In 2013, an undergraduate resident student taking 12 hours paid, on average, \$2,728 per semester. The increased percentage will result in about \$18 more per semester starting in the fall, which is about \$1.50 more per credit hour.

As of fall 2013, Staples said tuition rates at UHCL ranks No. 26 out of 38 public universities in Texas, one being the most expensive and 38 being the least expensive.

“We still think we are a very good cost for the education our students are getting,” Staples said.

The 4.9 percent undergraduate increase is 1 percent higher than approved by last year’s Student Government Association (SGA). Nov. 19, 2013, students who attended the SGA meeting voted in favor of a 3.9 percent undergraduate tuition increase.

The vote from students came after Staples attended the Nov. 5 SGA meeting and presented the reasons why UHCL administrators felt an increase in tuition was needed.

The change from the originally proposed tuition fee is due to an adjustment made in the compensation section. The 3.9 percent increase did not allow for additional compensation for adjunct instructors.

“You want to recruit and retain faculty and staff, both full-time and part-time faculty, and part of that is reflected in compensation,” Staples said.

Many adjunct instructors will be required to come to campus more frequently with the arrival of freshman and sophomore classes, which are offered multiple days a week, and will require more travel time and expense.

“Now that the original tuition and fee increase has been inflated slightly, I have a good feeling that students are still OK with it because of the addition of adjunct compensation as well as funding for a brand new bachelor of science degree in nursing,” said SGA President Carla Bradley. “To have a quality education, you need the best faculty and staff.”

During the 2013 Legislature session, UHCL was denied start-up funding for its four-year initiative from the state. Staples said the “plan is to go back in the January 2015 Legislature session to request funding.”

UH-Victoria experienced the same thing when it transitioned to a four-year university. It was denied start-up funding initially, but once the transition was set in place, the university’s second request was granted.

TWEET TO US Use #TuitionRising and tell us how you feel about the increase in tuition and fees.

TEXTING: *continued from page 1*

Deputy Marc Davis of the Pearland Police Department said statistics gathered by research groups across the country show just how dangerous texting while driving can be.

“Based upon the texting while driving accident statistics, I don’t see why a bill like this hasn’t already made it all the way into law,” Davis said.

Davis has worked with the Pearland Police Department for 19 years and at-tests to the extent of danger texting while driving causes, comparing a driver who is texting while driving to a blind person.

“Twenty-five percent of all accidents can be attributed to texting while driving,” Davis said. “You have to ask yourself: would you rather have a blind person

drive you home or a drunk person drive you home? There is no doubt that if a texting while driving bill does go into effect our roads and the roads across Texas will be much safer for everyone.”

Davis said although this is the second time the texting bill did not make it, he definitely feels it will be written into law by 2015.

“Perhaps if more associations, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, stood up for this cause, we would be able to pass this type of bill,” Davis said.

MADD has been asked many times to help in the struggle, but has repeatedly refused any discussion on this issue.

Jeanne and John Brown of the Remember Alex Brown Foundation call

for all people to unite for this cause and keep the conversation going. Believing in the power of knowledge, they encourage everyone to take the pledge to not text and drive.

“This generation needs to realize just how much power they have to change the course of history,” Brown said in a video posted on the Remember Alex Brown Foundation website.

Craddick said he plans to introduce a similar texting-while-driving bill in the next Texas Legislature session.

“Legislation to ban texting while driving statewide is a function of safety and saving people’s lives,” Craddick said. “If this law saves one life, it is worth it.”

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Wounded Warrior workshop scheduled on UHCL campus

JAUMARRO CUFFEE
THE SIGNAL

There are an estimated 22 million U.S. military veterans. Veterans who have been exposed to combat during their service carry with them scars both seen and unseen. Their fight continues.

Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) is one of many efforts organized to help veterans with their fight to transition into what is often described as a “new norm.”

WWP is a nonprofit organization founded in 2003 by U.S. Marine veteran John Melia. Melia, himself a wounded warrior, sustained injuries in a helicopter crash off the coast of Somalia.

Because of his experience, he noticed there were areas where assistance to wounded military members could be improved. When he saw injured troops returning during operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, he set out to begin addressing the needs of this new generation of warriors while they were still being treated instead of after their release from the military.

Melia invited his father John F. Melia, brother Jim Melia, U.S. Marine veteran Al Giordano and lawyer Steven Nardizzi who worked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veteran Claims and is now the executive director for WWP, to join him in an endeavor to serve injured military members.

They began by distributing backpacks containing toiletries, socks, T-shirts, playing cards, and other comfort and recreational items. Today, WWP provides a wide range of recovery services for post 9/11 veterans and their families.

John Roberts, executive vice president of Wounded Warrior relations, describes the nearly 20 WWP programs as taking a holistic approach to

helping veterans succeed. The programs take a four-prong approach to overcoming the effects of combat. Activity categories include Engagement, Mind, Body and Economic Empowerment.

“Programs available revolve around mental health, physical health, economic empowerment – jobs and education and engagement – getting them around other wounded warriors,” Roberts said.

Combat Stress, Family Support, Peer Mentoring and Physical Health & Wellness are programs WWP designed for physical and psychological injuries. Additionally, WWP has economic empowerment programs to focus on veterans’ successful transition into the workforce and academic environments, and programs to keep veterans connected and informed.

Some veterans are able to participate in the 12-month, in-residence, immersive TRACK program. In this program, veterans participate in academic instruction, performance training and externships.

Not all veterans are able to relocate to Jacksonville, Florida, or San Antonio, Texas, for the TRACK program. WWP’s Campus Services is available to assist student veterans by partnering with vocational programs, colleges and universities nationwide to address combat stress, accessibility and other obstacles veterans may encounter in a campus setting.

“Our goal here is to see that they are successful in their educational endeavors,” Roberts said.

Trisha Ruiz, coordinator for the Office of Veterans Services at UHCL and an Army veteran, recognizes the challenges veterans face when coming into a university environment. Ruiz helps others understand that a veteran’s background differs greatly from the backgrounds of his or her college peers.

Ruiz also explains how an academic community may not understand some of the learned habits that have served veterans in active duty when veterans employ those habits to remain alert and focused in a classroom setting.

A Working With Wounded Warriors Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, March 26.

The workshop is designed to help UHCL faculty and staff better understand the breadth of challenges faced by student veterans.

“Wounded Warrior Project participated in UHCL’s First Annual Veterans Resource Fair,” Ruiz said. “Not only did they attend, they generously

purchased lunch for everyone in attendance.”

Roberts acknowledges that most veterans hear about WWP through word of mouth or by seeing one of their commercials.

“If they are struggling it is OK to ask for help,” Roberts said. “It takes a very strong person to ask for help.”

Any veteran who served on or after Sept. 11, 2001, and whose illness or injury resulted from his or her service can go to www.woundedwarriorproject.org to register as part of WWP Alumni Program.

Alumni Program members are eligible to participate in WWP programs and events, receive various discounts, and become part of the WWP online community. Family members can also register for the Family Support Program.

Roberts says that when veterans register they will receive a monthly email about events in the Houston area. One new event coming to Houston in May is the Soldier Ride.

The Soldier Ride is described as a cycling event uniting veterans who ride together during a three-day event. A combination of standard and adaptive bicycles is used to accommodate various levels of ability. Soldier Ride, like other WWP programs, is free of charge to the participating veterans.

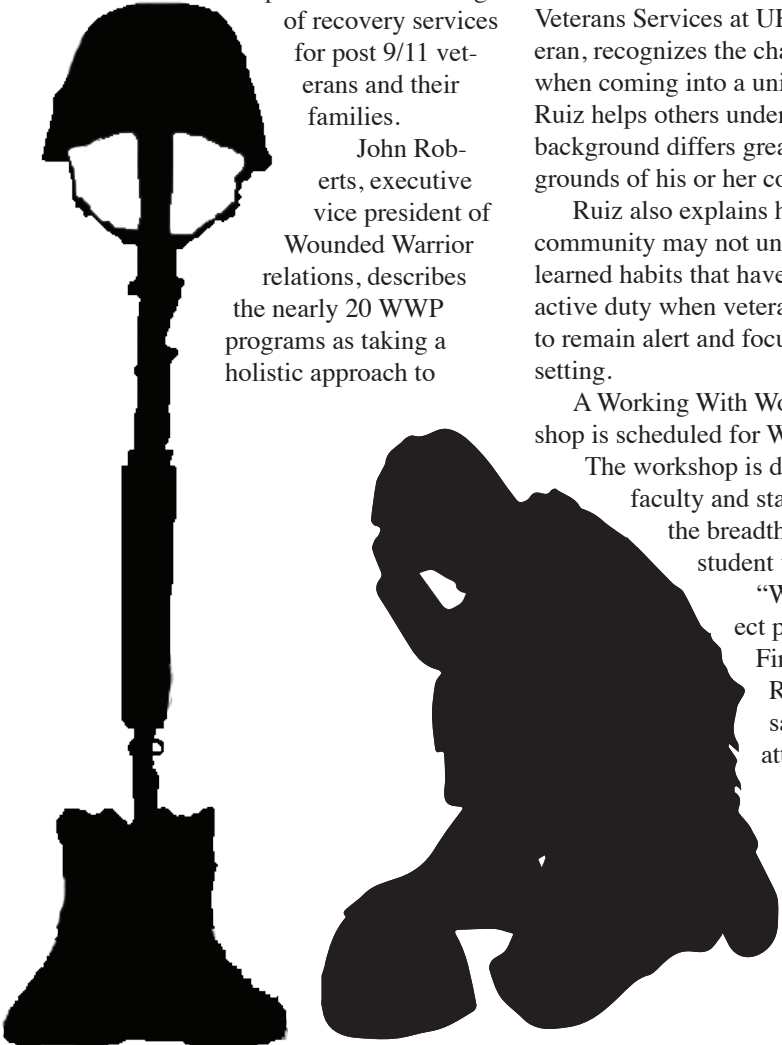
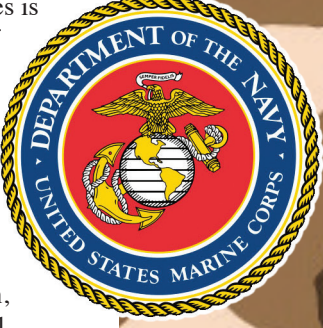
“Anything they do with warriors is free,” Roberts said.

WWP is largely funded by contributions and fundraisers. The organization makes financial information, including IRS Form 990, publicly available on its website. The UHCL community can help WWP and UHCL veterans by contributing, organizing fundraisers or volunteering.

“Volunteer with local organizations to show that UHCL supports all veterans in the community,” Ruiz said. “Support our UHCL SVA chapter.”

Ruiz speaks passionately about helping UHCL veteran students achieve their goals. Roberts echoes the same sentiment for WWP.

For more information on Wounded Warrior Project, call the Houston office at 832-536-3098, visit the office at 2200 Space Park Dr., Suite 100, or contact the UHCL Office of Veteran Services.



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