



The Wingspan

Grand Finale

*University of Houston-Clear Lake
2017-2018*

University Ever-Changing



Table of Contents

Introduction

- 1 Table of Contents
- 2 Editor's Note
- 3 Staff Spreads

Campus Life

- 7 Hawks and Hurricane Harvey
- 9 Houston and Hurricane Harvey
- 11 Construction on Campus
- 13 Intermurals
- 15 Education Abroad
- 17 Black History Month

Events

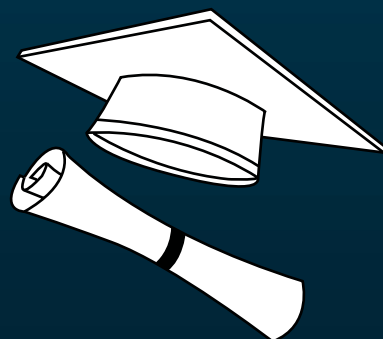
- 21 Welcome Back Bash
- 23 Constitution Day
- 25 Student Organization Expo
- 27 I Heart UHCL
- 29 Spirit Week
- 31 Day of the Dead
- 33 Cultural Extravangaza
- 35 Chili Cook-Off

Features

- 39 Hawks in Hawkins
- 41 Tibetan Monks
- 43 #MeToo
- 45 Women's March
- 47 War Toys
- 49 News in 2017-2018
- 51 Entertainment in 2017-2018

Hawks

- 55 A Farewell to Dr. Darlene Biggers
- 57 International Students
- 59 Graduation
- 61 Then and Now
- 62 Eric's Reflection



Editor's Note

Emily Nichelle Wolfe

DEAR HAWKS,

I only have a couple of things to say to everyone who reads this book, to everyone who worked on and to everyone this book is for. It's been an insanely crazy year with strange weather patterns and even the second season of stranger things. This was the year of all the Kardashian babies and other pop culture moments. And while that is a hectic year, to make it even crazier, this was the year that UHCL's first freshman class walked across the graduation stage.

To those who read this book, first let me say thank you. We worked all year on this yearbook, so that it accurately reflects life as a Hawk from August 2017 to May 2018. We hope these pages remind you of the events we hosted and attended, the pop culture we obsessed over and the campus we called home. While we get older and mature, this book will serve as a permanent reminder of who we once were.

To my amazing staffers, this book would not be done without you. I can only wish I had half the talent you guys have. As The Wingspan spreads her wings for the final time, I hope everyone of you know that this yearbook will also serve as a reminder of our time together, of laughing in the newsroom and as a way to leave your mark on this university. Thank you all so much.

And to those who we crafted this book for,



we hope you enjoy every part of it. While this yearbook was started to document the lives of the first freshman class, we tried to incorporate as much of UHCL into the book as we could. This was your year, your life and your university; we just tried to capture it for you.

After this semester ends, we will all go our own way - some of us will enter the workforce, others will further their education past the degree they earned here and some will be coming back to UHCL in the summer or fall. Personally, I am heading to Disney World to complete a program there. However, it does not really matter where we end up, for right now, we were here and every student, staff member or faculty made an impact on campus. My only hope is that you find comfort and nostalgia on the pages of this book. 🎓

Love,
Emily



Editor-in-Chief

EMILY WOLFE



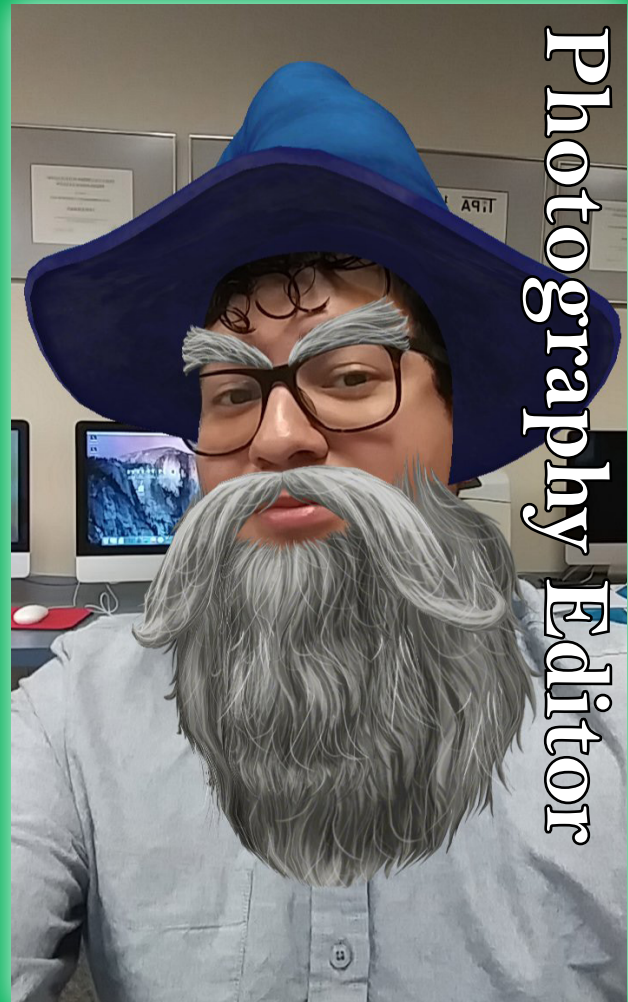
Writer

TROYLON GRIFFIN II



Design Editor

MICHELE GIBSON



Photography Editor

JONATHAN ZAPATA

Hi guys! I'm Emily Nichelle Wolfe and in addition to being the editor of this book, I am also a communications major who will be graduating with my bachelors degree in Summer 2018. Once I graduate, I will be taking my love for all things Disney and participating in my second Disney College Program; which is a great way to work for five days and then get to go to Disney World for two. During my school time, if I am not in class or working on this yearbook, I am most likely daydreaming about Disney (mainly Haunted Mansion, Flight of Passage and the American Adventure), obsessing over Harry Potter fan theories (Nagini was a woman?) or catching up on my favorite shows (I was all about "Brooklyn Nine-Nine," "The Bachelor" and "Star Trek Discovery").

Live long and prosper everyone!

Troylon Griffin II is my name. I like to think of writing as my chosen form of catharsis. To have written for both the yearbook and The Signal newspaper is an honor I cannot put into words, well I'm a writer so I probably can. I'm going to change the world one day, even if you don't see my name in pictures and magazines across the world... but you probably will honestly see me on your television screens. I like to consider myself a writer first, and a believer in the Force second. I'm a Sagittarius and my spirit animal is a mongoose.

My name is Michele Gibson and I am the design editor for The Wingspan. I'm a Communication major student and hope to work in advertising and film upon graduation. I love to cook, dance, and aspire to travel the world filming travel vlogs. My favorite thing about the yearbook is the amount of challenging work that I had to create. Also, being apart of the first freshman class, I take great joy in knowing that I was apart of the creation of a publication that will hold valuable memories of my classes' time here at UHCL.

My name is Jonathan Zapata. I love movies and spending my time developing audio/visual tech skills. You can find me making films or editing videos every night. Photography is one of my passions and I have recently started to build up my camera collection. I have a lovely wife and a chubby cat named Cinnamon.

This has been an exciting four years helping document the first freshman class at the university. It has been my pleasure to be a part of this history-making event advising the dedicated staffs each year. Embracing technology, the editors created a digital product that is a reflection of these years

Neil Leboy graduated with a bachelors degree in literature in December 2017 and took flight to a different country. Even though he only worked on the yearbook for a semester, you can find his work throughout these pages. With a fresh way of writing a story, Neil brought humor into his work and always made sure the staff was laughing with his tales from the front seat of an Uber. Currently, Neil lives in Ciudad Cortés, Puntarenas, Costa Rica and works for Hibiscus Travels

Eric Yanez is a four-year freshman blogger and writer for “The Wingspan.” Every week, Eric updated fellow Hawks with what is going on in his life and some of his favorite things at the moment. Eric graduates in May 2018 with his degree in environmental science. His blogs focused on his love for television shows like “Big Brother,” “American Horror Story” and “Scream Queens.” He also loved to point out his favorite local eateries in his blogs. While Eric was no stranger to stress, he always faced it with a smile and a joke. As part of the inaugural freshman class, Eric made sure to leave his legacy here on campus.

It has been a long, tough, fun, exciting, challenging and amazing four years. It feels like a few months ago, I was walking across the stage, holding a high school diploma in my hand, and I felt like it couldn’t get better than that. Little did I know, it would get so much better. College is difficult, and I’m surprised I survived my first semester! Can you believe that it’s been four years and I’m so close walking across another stage? As dramatic as this sounds, I don’t Think I am the same person I was when I walked across my high school stage. College has definitely helped me grow and develop into the kind of person I want to be for the rest of my life. The most exciting part? I’m not done growing. I can’t wait to see who I’ll be when I walk across yet another stage, as I graduate Veterinary School.

ROYCE WALKER



Advisor

NEIL LEBOY



Writer

ERIC YANEZ



Blogger & Social Media

NATALIA MARFIL



Blogger

Hurricane Harvey

The Student Experience

The 2017 hurricane season had a major impact on Texas. While Hurricane Harvey caused massive destruction to the Greater Houston area, many forms of aid were available to UHCL students. The faculty and student community helped those Hawks in need. From food drives to payment extensions, UHCL was on a mission to help the students.

University of Houston Clear Lake kept the doors closed from Aug. 28 through Sept. 4 to secure the safety of the students. The school constantly kept students updated on any weather changes that occurred. UHCL platforms also kept updates on the current news as well. Once classes resumed, there were a variety of resources to help out many Hawks in need.

Enrollment Management, Office of Student Financial Aid and the Dean of Students Office organized events and workshops as soon as classes resumed Sept. 5. One three-day event provided information on how to receive certain types of aid and

what students could do if impacted by the storm. The Student Government Association accepted all types of donations to distribute to the university community at this year's Welcome Back Bash. Other organizations hosted donation drives as well.

The UHCL campus offered many students extra financial aid to help with costs from the impact. The university gave more than \$7,000 in emergency Hawk loans and over 15,000 in emergency Hawk fund money. Another key component that helped many students was the extension payments/payment plans as well as all late fees being dismissed.

The Parking Department even helped by extending the permit enforcement to Sept. 25.

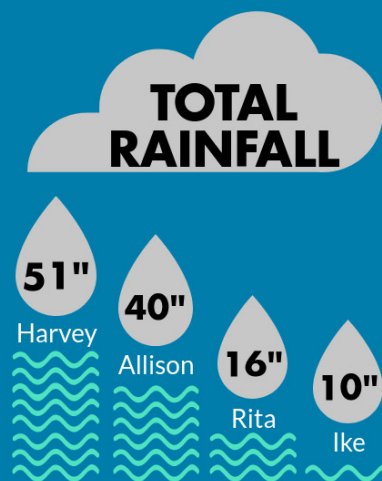
UHCL offered many resources including counseling and volunteer opportunities. The university president, Ira K. Blake, even sent out updates. Hurricane Harvey left many students and faculty in a difficult situation but support through the dark days helped shine a light on students. 🎓

By Eric Yanez

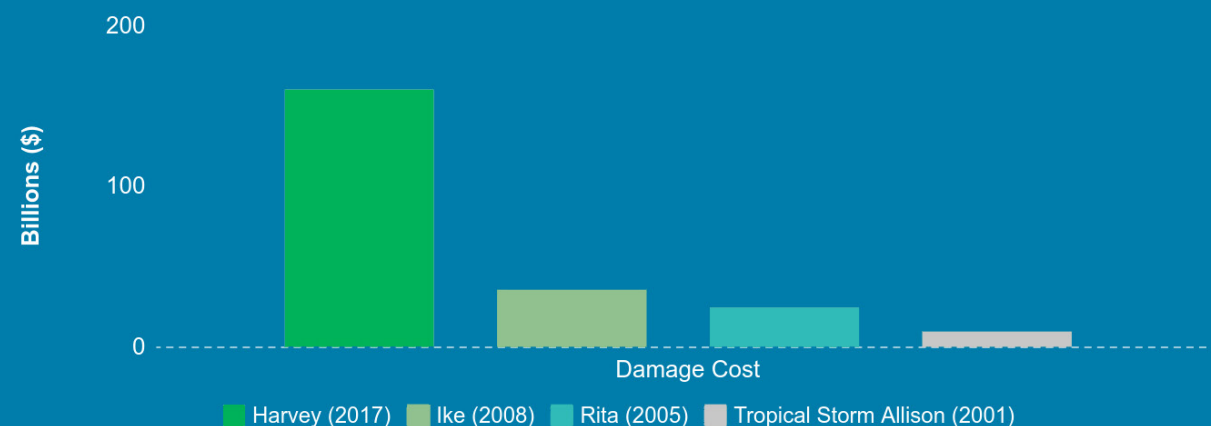


IMPACTS OF HURRICANE HARVEY

OVER
\$350 Million Dollars
RAISED IN
RELIEF EFFORTS



TOTAL DAMAGE COST



Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, fivethirtyeight.com, USA Today, New York Times and Business Insider.

It was Aug. 28 when the panicked posts on social media and shocking stories on the news flooded in as fast and as rampant as the rain fall of Hurricane Harvey onto Houston and the surrounding areas.

It all began a little over 10 days prior, on Aug. 17, when a seemingly harmless tropical storm formed on the east of the Lesser Antilles – the impact of which was to be disastrously unforeseen. The storm, named Harvey by the National Hurricane Center, passed through the Windward Islands, Barbados and Saint Vincent, and entered the Caribbean Sea. There, Harvey weakened due to wind shear on Aug. 19, but continued and redeveloped along the Bay of Campeche by Aug. 23.

The next day, Harvey was no longer a tropical storm, but a sinister hurricane, slowly building up to the fourth and penultimate category on the Saffir-Simpson Scale. At peak intensity, Harvey made landfall near Rockport, Texas.

It was not until it reached the Houston area, however, worldwide spectators witnessed through their television and cellphone screens, the full wrath of the hurricane. Waters rose rapidly through the streets of the fourth largest city in the nation and many evacuated while others remained locked indoors for, what would feel like, the longest weekend of 2017.

For those who remained, it was a waiting game — a neighborhood Russian roulette.

Houses filled with water, while others, though dry, became surrounded by overflowed bayous, lost cattle, abandoned pets and rescue boats. There was no escape, only the murky, dangerous water. There was no comfort, solace could only be found in the arms of equally restless family members. And there was no purpose, but in the vicarious living through the many valiant heroes on the news.

More than six million people witnessed over 30 inches of rain, as Harvey brought a year's worth of rainfall (19 trillion gallons of water) into the Lone Star State in the span of five days. Simultaneously, over 17,000 people sought refuge in local shelters, including schools, churches, convention centers, due to unexpected displacement by the rising waters. By the time Harvey dissipated on Sept. 1, the storm had claimed at least 70 lives.

While Houston was underwater, a deeper, stronger ocean of heartbreaking images, powerful stories and passionate people flooded not only the city, but the entire nation. For once, the spotlight was on Houston. Celebrities, politicians and hashtags were all about us. Our country, rich in donations, prayers and support, was looking towards us. In those moments, and every moment thereafter, we truly were #HoustonStrong. 🎓

By Natalia Marfil
Infographic by Jonathan Zapata

Hurricane Harvey

#HOUSTONSTRONG



Breaking Ground,

By Emily Wolfe

Hawks will open their wings to two new campus buildings – the STEM and Classroom Building and the Recreation and Wellness Center, in Fall 2018. These new additions will bring classrooms, learning opportunities and social activities.

The Recreation and Wellness Center expects to open in mid-August with the STEM and classroom building expected to open a few weeks earlier.

The Recreation and Wellness Center will focus, not on lifting weights, but about overall wellness. In fact, the Director of Campus Recreation and Wellness Brian Mills, says the building will function for every Hawk equally. This means the new building will have a lactation room, a family restroom, and the multi-purpose rooms will be able to darken its glass walls to accommodate people of religious faiths or from conservative cultures.

In the information sessions carried throughout the year, Mills says multiple times this building will be run on the three-Es Engagement, Education and Empowerment.

To provide education opportunities to Hawks, the university plans on devoting one-third of the building to classrooms and study spaces. In addition, a new research facility with high-tech "gadgets" will be available for students enrolled in certain courses.

Furthermore, the department of Campus Recreation and Wellness's mission statement includes "supporting student development through programs and opportunities that strengthen personal and professional growth."

While the building is a costly undertaking, 90 percent of the budget will come directly from the \$110 student fee that Hawks are already paying. The other 10 percent will come with memberships (for non-Hawks) and through partnerships with local businesses.

The STEM and Classroom building is de-


signed with a focus on learning and laboratory sciences. The building was approved at the same time as the Recreation and Wellness Center.

"The STEM and Classroom Building has been on the university's master plan and long-range planning for several years," Associate Vice President of Facilities Management and construction J. Ward Martindale says. "With the approval to begin accepting freshmen and sophomores in fall of 2014, the demand for additional lab space required providing short-term laboratory solutions in the Bayou Building, and the construction of a STEM building to provide needed teaching labs, research labs, classrooms and faculty offices became a top priority."

The building will include a 100-seat tiered classroom, a 48-seat active learning classroom, an open computer lab and 39 labs.

Out of the 39 labs, 15 will be used for teaching, 13 for faculty research which allow tenured faculty to complete the required research. Five will be "conversion classrooms" and the remaining six will be "shelled laboratories."

"[Conversion classrooms] are future teaching lab spaces that are not needed right now as labs, so will serve as mid-sized classrooms. The plan is when these are needed for teaching labs, they can be easily converted because they are configured in the same module as all the teaching labs," Martindale says. "[The shelled labs] were elected to not be finished at this time. When needed, the shelled space can be finished to meet the needs of the incoming faculty."

The building will also contain supporting and specialty rooms and labs, an administrative suite, a faculty suite, a lactation room and a family bathroom. 

Expanding the Nest



Photography by Jonathan Zapata
Rendered illustration from Campus Board and Recreation



Cricket

It might surprise you to know cricket has the largest sport community at UHCL. The sport itself mirrors baseball with certain subtle differences. Since cricket is a popular sport in other countries, UHCL's international students created high demand which has kept this intramural team popular. The Spirit Squad even comes out to cheer on the different teams. The students participating in the event were all friendly and having a great time. I enjoyed learning about the sport, but was afraid to participate, as the various teams all seemed experienced and competitive. Most teams even had jerseys or matching shirts. More than 100 people came to either participate in the cricket match or to simply to observe the sport.



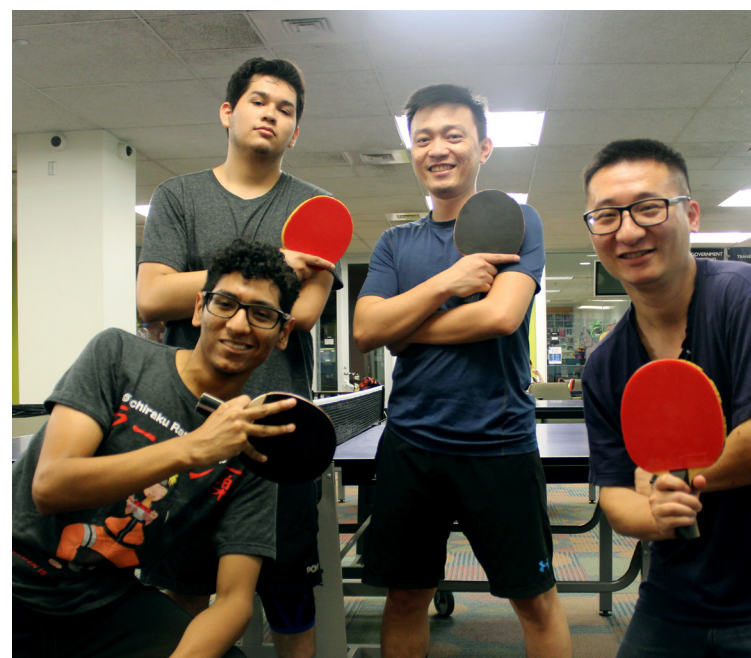
Soccer

Every week a community of students gather behind the Delta Building to partake in the most popular sport in the world - soccer. Some players were experienced and have been playing their entire lives; others including myself were simply trying to learn how to play. Anyone is welcome and encouraged to play, the soccer club was incredibly welcoming. The excitement of someone scoring a goal is remarkable, and the entire team rushes to celebrate each score. I recently spoke with a member of the team, Hector Vargas, who told me soccer was a fun way to relieve stress and have fun with old friends while also making new friends.



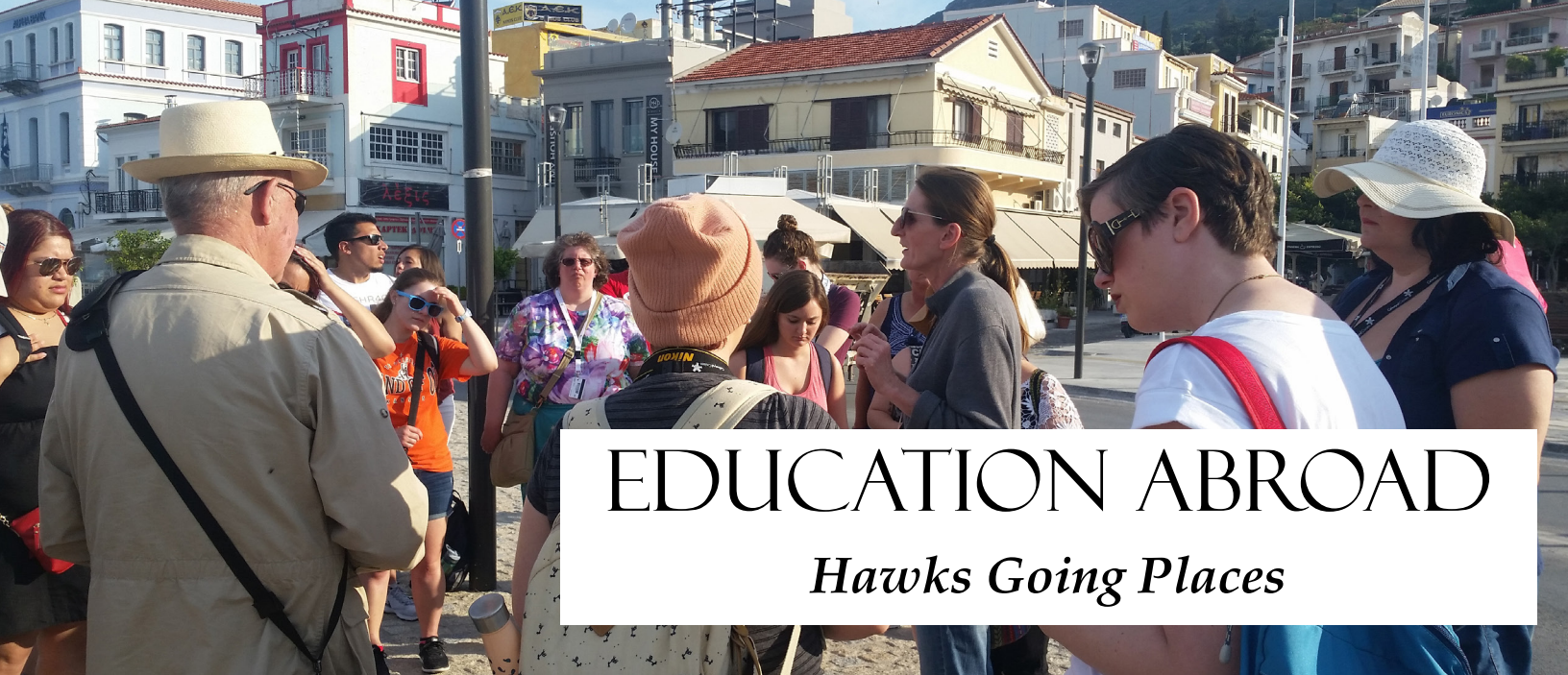
Pingpong

Last semester Ping Pong fever was running rampant through the University. Pingpong group met weekly to gauge their level of competitiveness and progression. Sadly, most of those players graduated, and new players are in high demand. If you are interested in starting a new Pingpong club or want to play, there are two tables and paddles available free to students in the student services building. Other table sports available in the student services building include table soccer and shuffleboard.



By Neil Leboy

INTRAMURALS



EDUCATION ABROAD

Hawks Going Places

Studying abroad is not an uncommon occurrence for the students at UHCL because a good portion of the student body are international students who are doing just that. UHCL has a growing department dedicated to expanding the physical reach of education for its students by offering them a chance to extend their education beyond the states in places like Germany, Greece, England, Oman and more through various companies and staff lead programs created for the students.

UHCL funded Sarah Costello's World Art History class to travel to Greece and take what students learned in the spring semester and applied it to the real sites of modern day Greece.

"It was wonderful to bring my students to some of the places we studied in class," Costello says. "Seeing things firsthand is powerful, memorable and special. I think the students also learned a lot about the people in the countries we visited, as well as about the customs, food traditions and modern history."

A seasoned traveler herself, Costello is no stranger to the tips and tricks of traveling, but her students had to learn a lot.

"A good new trick I learned is to pack snacks in



your suitcase. I didn't do this, but my friend did, and it was genius. Especially when you are traveling by bus from place to place for a long period of time and have not stopped for food yet. It is very helpful and smart," Marielle Gomez says.

What stands out to students and staff about the study abroad experience is the real-world lessons they learn. Many found a broadened world view on matters such as money, safety precautions and food.

"Getting to learn how other countries work, with money, driving and just day-to-day lives, is helpful," Gomez says. "It gives people aspects of knowing how the world works. This ultimately became my favorite thing about traveling."

Moreover, a former study abroad participant, Jonathan Zapata says research can add great value to the experience as well and students in study abroad programs should plan on doing research on the destination and the sites.

"A good tip is to familiarize yourself with the area that you will be studying in. This allows for an adventure when there is downtime," Zapata says. "I felt like the trip was better because it had an academic component. The students in the course were expected to actually study material and write essays on topics relevant."

The value of studying abroad is different for every person because the destination is different and the reason to travel differs. Whether the program is focused on fun or school, it only adds to the variety of experiences offered.

The opportunity to immerse yourself in the original and untampered home of the culture or destination of interests is an opportunity that students should take. The years of self and world discovery are supported through the education system. 🎓

By Michele Gibson



Photography by Michele Gibson and Tasha Fay Dewar | Above Michele Gibson

MY TRAVEL STORY

By Michele Gibson

I traveled to Greece in 2017 as a part of my professor's initiative to immerse her students taking World Art History I into the actual history. Along with 18 other students and faculty from UHCL, I spent two weeks touring the mainland and surrounding islands of Greece. We visited Greece's capital, Athens, Santorini and a top contender for my favorite place, Mykonos.

Athens is a bustling town filled with mopeds cluttering the roadways alongside cars and various tour buses. The hottest place for tourists to visit was the Placa, a widespread mall and market, although, the main attraction of Athens is the Acropolis, a plateau in the center of the city home to the Greek's four ancient temples the Parthenon, the Propylaia, the Erechtheion and the Temple of Athena Nike. Santorini and Mykonos are some of the most famous islands in the Aegean Sea because they provide a nestled country side feel paired with tiny shops, restaurants and amazing beaches.

Greece was an amazing experience because we had the best tour guides and trip planners. I would definitely recommend for all students to experience a new culture by traveling abroad, because there are no limits to what you can learn or experience when you take the time to engage respectfully in another's culture. I may have known the historical facts about Greece beforehand, but I experienced the true beauty of the people and their lives by going there and that made Greece feel like a home away from home. 🎓



Black History Month

By Troylon Griffin II

UHCL acknowledged Black History Month in a variety of ways as January began to come to an end. The university's celebration of Black History Month officially started on Jan. 27, with a screening of "Marshall" in the Student Services Center Building lecture hall. Student Life and the Common Reader Program sponsored the event.

Shortly afterwards, the Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement hosted the first in their Social Justice Dinner Dialogue Series. The series was created to "provide a space for students, staff and faculty to engage in critical conversations around intersections of identity, leadership and local, national and global social justice issues." This event, "Slacktivism vs. Activism Is Social Media Enough," explored the negative and positive aspects of social media activism and whether social media can bring about "true social change."

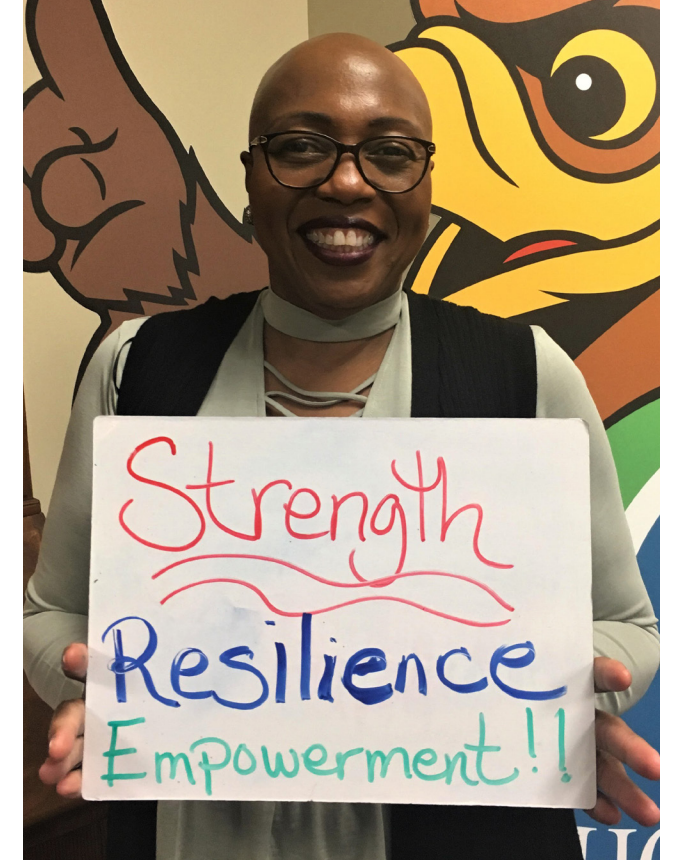
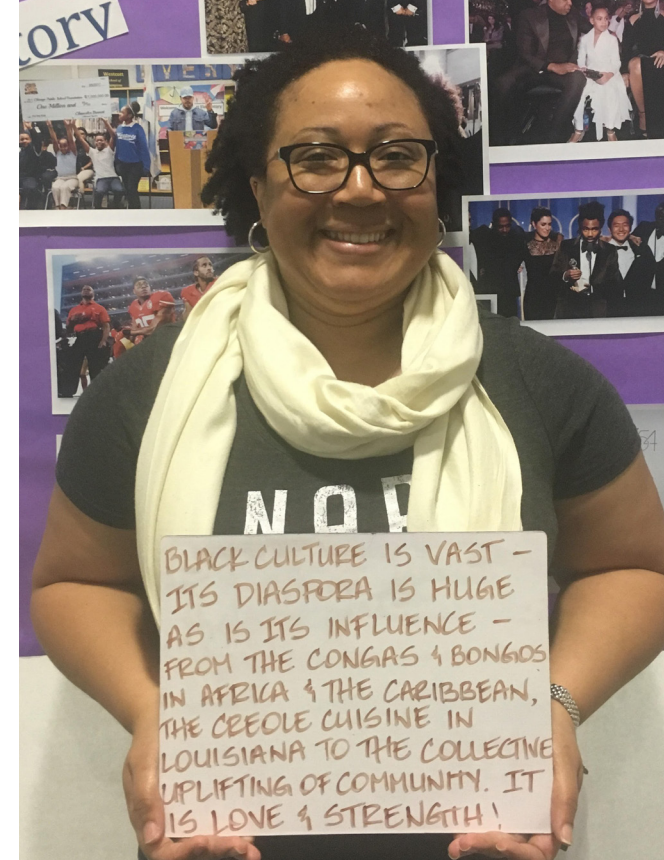
Another celebration was a screening of the documentary "13th", on Feb. 13. The film explores the issues of race and incarceration in the United States and was acclaimed by critics upon release. A post-film discussion followed after the film, facilitated by Comeka Anderson Diaz.

A similar discussion happened two days later at the event, "A Conversation on the Black Experience." The event was hosted in the Garden Room and communications professor Andrea Baldwin facilitated a dialogue. The event was sponsored by the Office of Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Baldwin had previously hosted two other events for the office that were done in a similar format. Baldwin welcomed the opportunity upon being approached to facilitate another event.

"I believe in education through dialogue," Baldwin says. "Rather, I think that we learn our most impactful lessons about culture when we discuss them. I welcome any chance to assist students and anyone who wants to learn in engaging in this process."

The event talked about an array of topics regarding the culture and mindset of black Americans, and proved beneficial and even eye opening for both black and non-blacks who attended. The event's facilitator Andrea Baldwin felt the event turned out with very positive results.

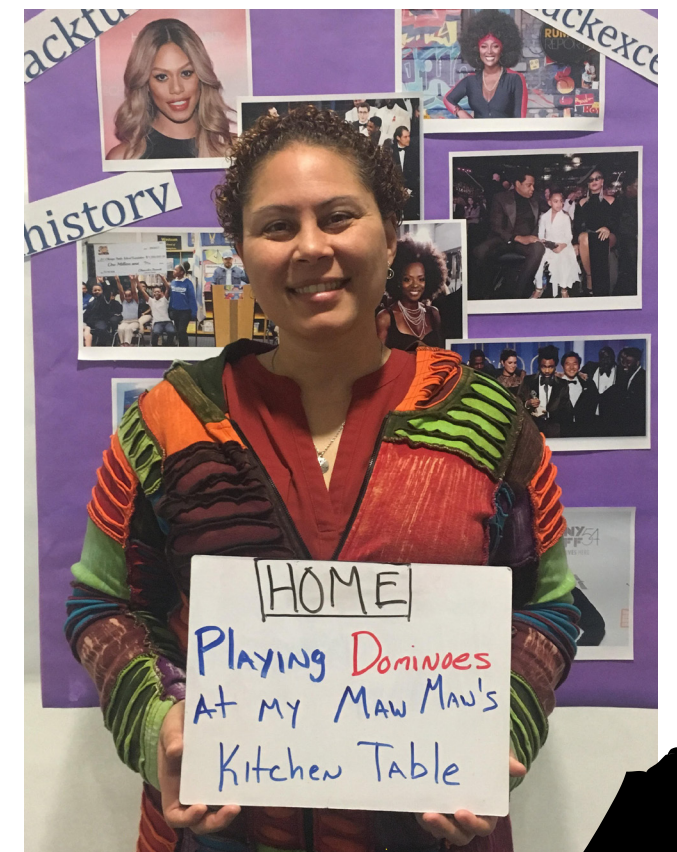
"I felt it went well, we appeared to have a lively discussion," Baldwin says. "I always remind myself that the goal of the discussion is not to solve something, but rather to get the ball rolling for others to continue the search



for knowledge for themselves."

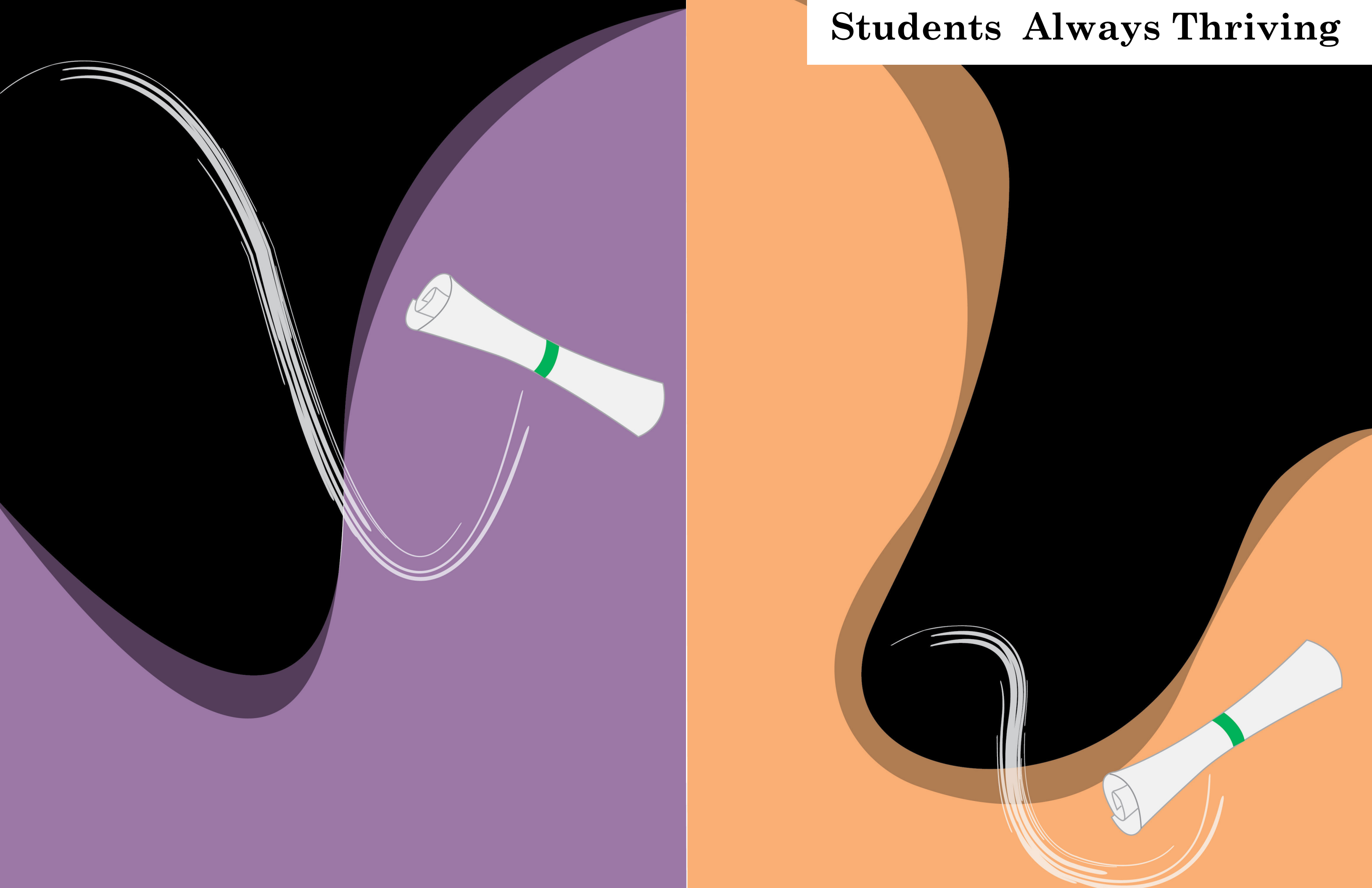
SDEI continued to celebrate and acknowledge Black History Month by hosting the Black Culture Trivia event on February 20. The event invited all students, staff and faculty to answer questions about major figures and aspects of black American culture. Throughout the month, SDEI also sought out those of African-American descent and had them write down on a sheet of paper their own answer to the question, "What is Black Culture?" After answering and submitting their answers, those who participated had their picture taken, and the office posted all the pictures on a large platform at the entrance of the campus.

Overall, UHCL's celebration and acknowledgment resulted in an array of events that showcased Hawk spirit while sparking conversations on the black history and culture in America. 🎓



Photography by Annette Collins
Top left Berenice Webster
Top right Comeka C. Anderson Diaz
Bottom right Christal Seahorn

Students Always Thriving



Welcome Back BASH

The University of Houston-Clear Lake's Welcome Back Bash was a welcoming event to open to the academic school year. This event serves as an introduction to new students as well as a "welcome back" to the students who were already here. This year, the event was important to the students because of the effects of Hurricane Harvey.

Diveanne Martinez, president of Campus Activities Board, explains, "This is just kind of an event to welcome students back to campus, especially after the rough times some of them have faced for Harvey. It's just a fun way to get everyone together."

Moreover, the Department of Student Life, which launched a donation center earlier that week, accepted donations at the event, along with other departments who participated in Harvey Relief services. The university displayed strong support to the student and professors who were affected by the storm. Many people could be seen with the #UHCLSTRONG buttons Student Life distributed. President Ira Blake attended the event, met with students and stopped by organization tables.

Psychological Services Center Peer Mentors member Denise Saravia says the university was

supporting new students. "I'm coming from San Jac. This is a whole new school. It's kind of hard being here and not knowing that many people and not knowing where to go. Here, I can get more information and meet new people." The Bayou Building was home to Molly and the Ringwalds, the cover band who played throughout the night. Most of the selections were from the 80's. The band played through the event as students gathered around and danced.

Organizations distributed informative handouts, e-mail sign-up sheets and even offered games and activities. Among the games provided were UNO, Memory, bean toss and Mega-Jenga, a life-sized game of Jenga. One of the activities set up for both adults and children was the UHCL Spirit Squad's face-painting booth.

Marianna Hammel says the activities showcased the university's interest in their students. One of the activities involved a remote controlled car and a handcrafted paper airplane. Many people who stop by were confused by the poor control of the remote controlled car. The point of the car was to confuse the student with the poor control; as a student presses the buttons on the functional remote, the toy car reacts in the opposite manner. President of the



Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Andrea Crosser says the goal is to try to make it once around the makeshift track.

"The purpose of this is to understand the importance of controls and how different controls can affect the user's expectations," Crosser says. This is the second year that HFES has attended Welcome Back Bash. Crosser says, the bash is a great opportunity to attract more members to organization. "We are looking for more members, and we do a lot of social activities," she mentions. Although it was delayed, the Welcome Back Bash was attended by many students to come together and celebrate the beginning of the school year.

This event was a perfect display of the support that the university has for its students and how the students are motivated to make a difference. 🎓

By Jonathan Zapata



Top Amir Timani
Middle Student of UHCL and Hunter the Hawk
Bottom Molly and The Ringwalds
Photography by Jonathan Zapata

On Sept. 17,

in order to form a more perfect union, UHCL celebrated the 230th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The festivity turned Atrium I into a red, white and blue wonderland where students could participate in games, pick up their own Constitution and register to vote. Activities ranged from Legos to photo booths and included areas where students and faculty could learn about the importance of the document.

One activity involved trivia about the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and what these documents mean for America.

"I like that the event was dedicated to informing people of what the Constitution really contains and that it had so many fun activities to do at the same time geared towards it," senior Sandy Samaan says. "I particularly liked the trivia, because I learned quite a bit from it too."

The university hosted the event to inform the students about the importance of the Constitution. However, the Dean of Students David Rachita says the university did not expect the turnout they received.

"I am always surprised at the excitement going on," Rachita says. "There's games to play, we're giving out little dinky prizes, but they are excited about it and I didn't know people would get excited about a Constitution Day program."

Meanwhile, students, like Tanner Cream,



booth. This activity offered props with a backdrop of the Constitution.

However, one of the most important aspects of the event was the voter registration table where unregistered voters could easily sign up.

Even though Cream's already registered to vote and participated in every election he could vote in, he says it was nice of the university to provide that tool to students.

"I think that adds meat to the event, because not only do we want people to learn about the Constitution but also to be active participants and by registering to vote," Rachita says. "That's one real simple way you can make that happen and be an active participant."

While some of the students attended the event because it was on their way to their next class, Cream says he went to the event because of the email sent to students.

Even though the federal government requires the university to host the event, UHCL made sure its students had a fun and informative time. This is in agreement with Byrd's Law, enacted in 2004, which memorializes the

Constitution and American citizens.

While the celebration was a light-hearted and fun event for students and faculty, the importance of the Constitution was evident throughout all activities.

"I think it's important that people understand what the laws are that govern the nation," Cream says. "That we keep in mind how we started."

Junior Saketh Kambhampati says that all Hawks could benefit by attending the event and learning what the Constitution means for the nation.

"It promoted American pride and it reinstated the founding principles of the country," Kambhampati says. "I learned about the Bill of Rights and the other amendments. Even the international students can learn more about America."

While the event was from 12 30 p.m. - 2 30 p.m., and the university gave free T-shirts to the students who got to the event first, some students wished the event to be longer.

"I would like the event to be longer, so every students between classes can participate and learn about their country," Kambhampati says. 🎓

By Emily Wolfe



Top right Tanner Cream

Top left Student taking a Constitution quiz.

Above Students enjoying free desserts.

Photography by Jonathan Zapata and Michele Gibson



Constitution Day

Student Org • Expo

By Neil LeBoy

In mid-September I walked through the atrium visiting booths setup for the Student Life Expo, an event offering students a chance to find information and involve themselves in school organizations and communities. Hundreds of students walked around the atrium in the Bayou Building visiting the different booths. While some students only stopped in for the free popcorn or games and refreshments provided by the Student Life Organization, others found great interest in the variety of campus activities available.

While the campus may be small, the number of activities available to students is constantly growing. There is a ping pong club, a soccer club, a cricket club, gaming booths for both video games and card games, clubs for future teachers, clubs for math, clubs for everything. UHCL even has a Spirit Squad that supports our school organizations. The number of student organizations grows every year, and the number of students in clubs grows as well.

Paulina Ortega, a biology major in her junior year at UHCL, started here as a freshman and joined the Student Life Organization. She was helping run a game of Plinko, where a student drops a wooden circle down notches to win a prize including T-shirts and sunglasses. Students can only play if they visit at least three booths to encourage student participation.

Ortego discussed what Student Life offered her when she was a freshman. It helped her



break from her bubble and meet new friends. Now, she gets to help other students.

"Being quiet, Student Life offered me a way to meet people and get involved with the University," Ortega says.

Shortly after, I encountered two more students, Kassandra Malden-Ado and Matthew Monab, enjoying popcorn and refreshments by the elevator. When asked what brought them to the expo, they both laughed and raised their bags of popcorn. Even if students did not wish to visit the booths at the exhibition, it was still nice to see various groups of students interacting with each other in a friendly atmosphere.

Next, I talked to some friendly graduate students from the Management Information Systems program. They had heard about the event, surprisingly through Instagram. I was happy to hear people were using social media to promote school events. They wanted to see what new activities the campus was offering this year. They agreed they liked the gaming booths the best. And to the gaming booths I went...

There are not one, but two gaming com-

munities on campus, and their booths were by far the most crowded throughout the event. I was not aware of just how popular gaming has become, and how many students on campus involve themselves in the community. While gaming and enjoyment go hand-in-hand, it was easy to tell these groups took gaming seriously.

Elysse Blankenship, a junior physics major, was friendly and inviting when I asked to learn about the Gamers Guild. Blankenship's comment was similar to Ortega's, "The Gamer Guild is a great way to meet new people."

Every Friday at 6 p.m., the Guild meets to play their favorite card games. Members are free to come and go as they please. Another fun aspect of the Guild is they play a new game each meeting.

Jake Pepe, a freshman in 2016, helped with the other gaming booth, UHCL E-Sports. Pepe studies information technology, and I often see him participating in various student activities like ping pong, gaming and study groups.

Pepe described E-Sports and the Gamers Guild as "a community for video game players to develop and grow in their gaming interests." They play bi-weekly on Friday nights in the Student Services Building in the Student Lounge. Many players often go there throughout the school week as well to hang out with friends or simply blow off stress. While the games are friendly, they can also be competitive.

The next booth I visited was the Texas State Teacher's Association. At the TSTA booth, I met Mikayla Reyes, a junior in the education program. She talked about the resources TSTA offers new students. Reyes described how she loved volunteering at TSTA events including monthly meetings with raffle giveaways and volunteer events. Her favorite event, "Reading Across America," happens later in the semester and volunteers from multiple schools gather together to read stories to elementary students.

The Student Organization Expo provided an outlet for new students and returning students a chance to participate in the various organizations. Whether or not students came to promote their organizations or simply to eat popcorn, everyone was having a fun. It was quite amazing to see the rich community that has evolved from our university. Every student can become involved in on campus, whether they join the Spirit Squad or possibly just play some video games and meet new friends, the expo was a success in my eyes. 🎓

Above Vickie Lopez, Denise Saravia and Janet Cerros
At right Celeste Wood, Angelia Muniz and Denise Saravia
Photography by Jonathan Zapata





In the middle of October, the chilly weather finally made an appearance, school spirit blanketed the university and Hawks celebrated I Heart UHCL week. As for me, I battled with school, work and illness, but I still managed to attend some really great events this week and show off my Hawk pride. My first event was the Bingo and Breakfast event. Members of the Student Organization & New Student Programs provided students with food, fun and prizes. The breakfast consisted of scrambled eggs, a variety of fruits and sizzling bacon - which drew in a large crowd of hungry students.

Among the hundred students who gathered for the event, I met two freshmen, Katia Ivanov and Douglas Gordon. They both enjoy the smaller sized classes at UHCL, and it was clear they loved the school spirit and activities present. They also says the smaller class sizes that enable more face-to-face time with their professors. A lot of Gordon's excitement was for next day's I Heart UHCL Day. With such a large number of students attending the event, socialization and competition, bingo turned out to be a great success.

The next event I attended was the I Heart UHCL Day and, in my opinion, it was an absolute blast. Students decked in blue and green

flood the halls. Everyone seemed to be smiling and greeting each other warmly. Decorated in blue and green, the atrium came alive with school spirit. Different organizations set up booths to showcase their activities during a carnival type event. We filmed videos of students trying our trivia game, and we even recorded the Spirit Squad and others as we asked them to give them the best Hawk yell possible.

At the end of the event, the Student Life Organization announced awards for classrooms and organizations that decorated their windows, walls and offices all in the name of School Spirit. The decorations, booths, games, giveaways and different organizations made I Heart UHCL entertaining. The smiles on the student and staff's faces that never left throughout the day made I Heart UHCL Day something to love.

While Spirit Week happens once a year, school spirit happens every day. There are countless activities going on daily where students and teachers engage with each other and the community. Every Wednesday, I and others wear school colors to showcase school spirit. Hosting events like this promises Hawks will be saying I Heart UHCL for years to come.



By Neil Leboy

Top left Payal Rajpurohit, Rachel Liao and Ameer Naqvi

Top right Prasanth, Sandeepraj and Pratik

Middle left to right Jonathan Zapata and Neil Leboy, Troylon Griffin 2nd and Hunter the Hawk

Bottom left Samar Farooqui, Megan Bhakta and Kavita Ramnath

Bottom right Alieesa Groves and Kelleyanne Kelly

Photography by Jonathan Zapata and Michele Gibson

I HEART
UHCL DAY!

Spirit Week

I HEART UHCL

IHeart UHCL Spirit Week is the pinnacle of excitement and entertainment on campus throughout the year. School spirit runs rampant throughout campus as students and faculty alike wear the blue and green school to display their school pride. Hunter the Hawk flies around the school in full mascot attire getting students pumped up for Spirit Week. Each day of Spirit Week, a different event to encourage school spirit and student involvement.

On Monday, Campus Recreation hosted a Campus Recess to inform students of the types of recreation offered on campus.


For Tuesday, Student Life hosted a bingo and breakfast event in support of Orientation

and New Student Programs.

The week's main event, I Heart UHCL Day, on Wednesday showcased Student Life and school spirit here on campus.

UHCL Cares Day Community Service Fair, which encouraged student leadership and community engagement, was hosted on Thursday.

The Campus Activities Board hosted a Fright Night Dance on Friday, where things got spooky. Finally, on Saturday, Student Life closed out the week with two showcases of "Spiderman Homecoming".

Needless to say, I was a little excited for the week to begin and lifted my spirits high. 
By Neil Leboy



Visit here for more - <https://youtu.be/TkgfclLH8TY>



Left to right Yasmeen Elrasheedy, Stephanie Knight and Isabela Cutie, Makayla Ellis, UHCL Spirit Squad and Neil Leboy, Madison Mondich, and Madi Leo Coates, Hunter Hawk and Tyler Hall

Photography by Jonathan Zapata and Michele Gibson

DIÁ DE LOS MUERTOS

Day of the dead By Jonathan Zapata

Día de los Muertos at UHCL was a fun and eventful way to start November. The university hung colorful banners of black, orange, magenta and green throughout the atrium. The UHCL Dance Fusion Team presented a Hispanic dance mix routine that displayed their understanding of cultural moves. Fun things to do included face painting for all, bead making (bracelets and necklaces), mask making and a DJ.

Traditionally there are three celebration days for Dia de los Muertos. The traditions have been passed down and mixed with other cultures over the years to become what it has become today.

The main focus of the celebration is to re-

member loved ones that have passed and gather in their honor. During this time families and friends visit burial sites and cemeteries to clean and decorate in honor of the dead. Decorated altars spring up where you can make offerings. Food is made and shared, including the famous "bread of the dead," a type of Mexican sweet roll that was prepared for the celebration.

The campus event offered many of the most recognizable traditions, including a stunning alter and the "bread of the dead." Hispanics Advancing Culture, Education and Rights President Alexia Flores, one of the leading figures in setting up this event, made sure that it was true to tradition and a good representation of Hispanic culture. 🎓



Graphics by Mara Clements
Photography by Jonathan Zapata
Top left Maricela Ramos and Katie Hart
Above Fusion Dance
Bottom right Raj Vadhi



By Michele Gibson

Cultural

One of the most time-honored events at UHCL is the Cultural Extravaganza. Every year, the Student Diversity Equity and Inclusion Office hosts the event. This annual tradition for students to show-off talents through dance, song, stand-up comedy, etc, has become a tradition held in the hearts of students, faculty and staff on campus.

As a seasoned performer in this event, I always loved the passion and commitment that goes into the event. Nhee Vang, the assistant director for the SDEIO office, heads the show from the front and behind the scenes. He always sees the event as for the students and in-part by the students.

My freshman year, I performed with the group, Las Ladies, and we performed a four song dance of hip-hop, Latin, Egyptian and Indian style mash-up. In the subsequent years I have performed three more times with Fusion Dance, a student organization.

At UHCL, we have the best and most supportive crowd for our performers. No matter who was performing, there was a great cheer and

round of applause that made every performer feel their best. For me, I felt like no matter how bad I may have been or if my team messed up, we would have wonderful memories to share filled with applause and laughter.

At the end of the Cultural Extravaganza, there is the cultural walk. This walk shows the diversity of the school through the students volunteering to hold the flag of their family's country of origin or countries that interest them while a recording plays a speech that summarizes something interesting or noteworthy about that country. The audience was respectful to all representations and definitely showed their love for the Texas and U.S. flag. Of course, Texas is not a country, but all the students both native and international have a lot of love and joy for it.

Cultural Extravaganza will always hold a special place on campus for students and faculty. It's one of the only events that publicly displays the love and respect this school has for its students of diverse cultures, backgrounds and talents. ✍️



Photography by Sonia Valdovinos and Ping Hsun Tsai



Above Sandra Unorji and Adebisi Kudirat Adenike Bashorun

Extravaganza



Top Parade of Flags | Middle left Christine Marie Sapp | Middle right Shenette Collins, Erika Garcia, and Annette Collins | Bottom left UHCL Spirit Squad | Bottom right Dharmik Nanavati, Parvez, Chahat Singh and Ravi Trivedi



On April 7, the area between the Student Services and Classroom Building and the Bayou Building was home to UHCL's 29th annual Chili Cook-Off. While the cook-off is the university's oldest tradition on campus, the event is about something more than just food. With a DJ, bouncy houses and a rock climbing wall, the event serves as a celebration of the semester.

Campus organizations who want to participate in the event must have their information and teams approved before they are issued a tent. The tents are then transformed by the organization into decorated booths that aim to grab attention from guests and judges.

Once the guest purchases a tasting kit, they can start tasting the chili from various tents. Even though the judges were already chosen, attendees could vote for their favorite chili and booth with the most spirit.

The Hawk Academic Advising Council's Harry Potter themed booth, HAACwarts School of Advisory and Wisdom took home three wins

including Spirit – Popular Vote, Best Chili Popular Vote and first place in the Judged Chili category. Legal Studies Association and Business Oriented Students Society drew on the Houston Astros' World Series Win and their booth, World Series Champs, won the SGA Award and the second place spot in the Judged Chili category.

Coming in third in Judged Chili category is the Model Arab League Student Organization's MENA Chefs. Orientation & New Student Programs' It Takes Two to Mango won Judged Spirit and the Cook's Choice – Popular Vote went to the Hawk Leadership Institute.

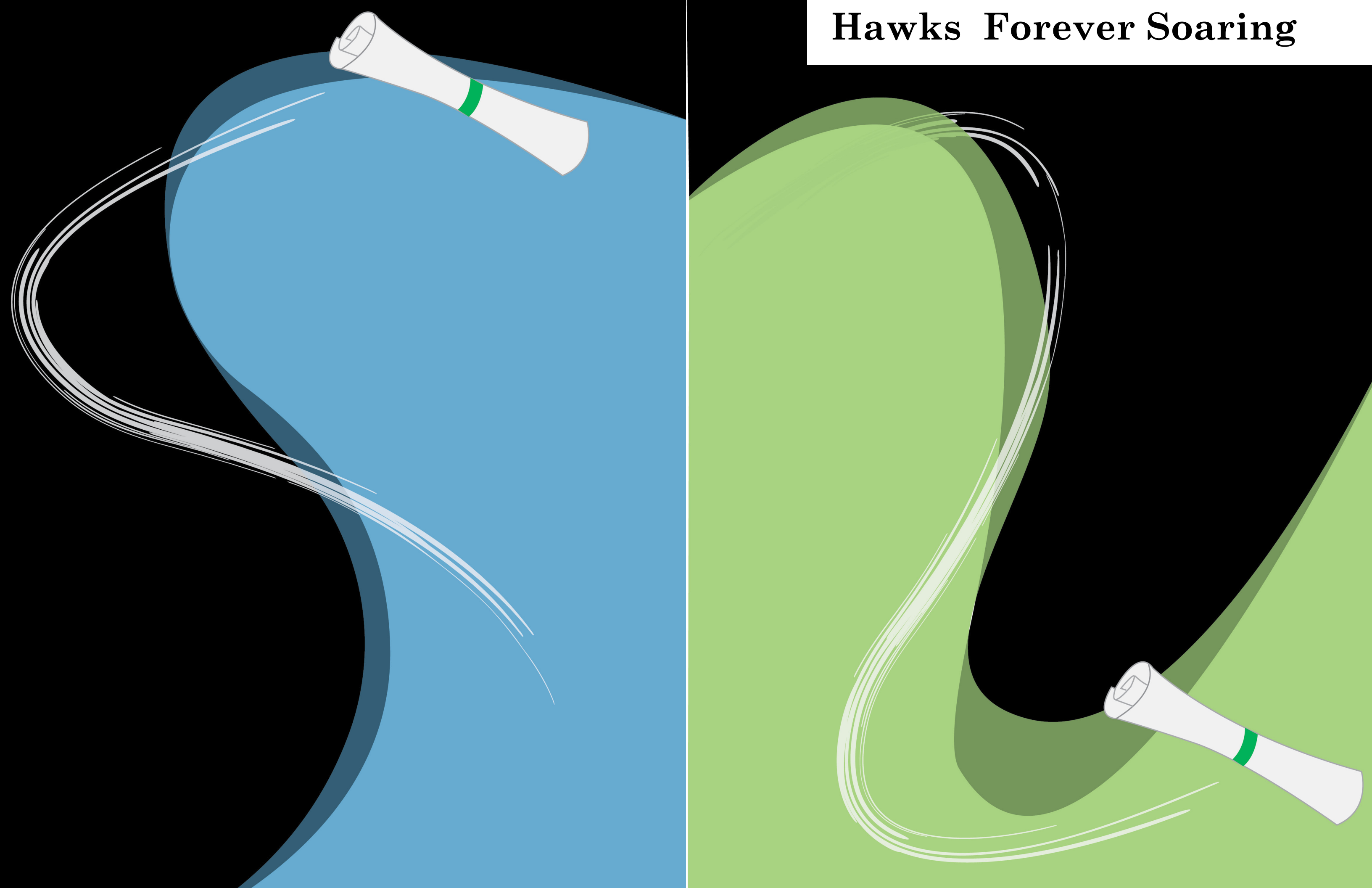
The event also served a dual role and helped act as a celebration for Hunter the Hawk's fifth birthday. The DJ had the crowd dancing along with enduring popular dance songs like "Cha-Cha Slide" and "Cupid Shuffle" which were led by Hunter and the UHCL Spirit Squad.

The event included free admission and the tasting kit cost \$4 with an UHCL ID or \$5 without.

By Emily Wolfe



Hawks Forever Soaring



The setting is 1984. Take four 13-year-old boys, a sheriff with a bad attitude, a mother who passed crazy a couple of breakdowns ago and super powered little girl and throw them into a small town in 1984. Does this sound like it would be a successful show? Well, stranger things have happened.

Personally, I am a huge fan of the series and despite being a little late to the Stranger Things fandom, I am here now and that is what matters.

About two weeks before the streaming giant released the second season, my sister forced me to enter Hawkins, Indiana. I knew the premise of the show. A pre-teen goes missing and his friends look for him. Also, there is a sheriff that people are obsessed with, a little girl with a creepy obsession with Eggos and Winona Ryder is playing with lights. The concept did not thrill me. However, by the second episode, I was obsessed.

I am grateful I did not watch this earlier because as soon as I finished the last episode of season one, I needed the second season as soon as humanly possible.

When I left work that Friday, I parked my-

self in front of my television and watched the first three episodes in a single sitting. The series then shocked me by doing something I did not expect; three episodes in and it already outperformed the first season. By Monday, I already watched the whole season twice.

The new additions to the show did not detract from the show's greatness. Eighties icon Sean Astin, as superhero Bob Newby absolutely stole the show and my heart. This season brought in a sense of humor and action.

I had to stop the show multiple times because I could not breathe; I was that invested in these characters. However, I could have done without the weird seventh episode. It was, well, strange.

A month later, and Netflix has finally confirmed a season three that will air in late 2018 or 2019.

Instead of trending (spoiler alert) #JusticeForBob or #JusticeForMews, we should be trending #JusticeForUs because I am not sure I can last a whole year without a new trip to Hawkins. I can admit that my hesitation for the show was wrong. It deserves all of the critical and commercial success in the world

By Emily Wolfe 

HAWKS IN HAWKINS

STRANGER THINGS

S2 Fact Sheet

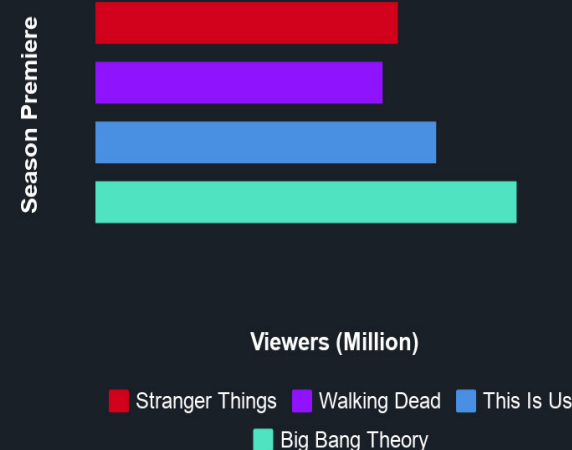
S2 had a budget of
\$8 Million



per episode!

15.8 Million viewers watched the season premiere.

How did it measure up to other season premieres?



RATINGS

How do people rate the series?

IMDB 9/10

Rotten Tomatoes 94%

TV.COM 8.6/10

Binge  Watching

361,000 people watched all of S2 in one day.

4.6 Million finished S2 in first three days.

Sources: Variety Magazine, IMDB, Rotten Tomatoes, TV.com, New York

Infographic by Jonathan Zapata



Tibetan Monks

Art at Work

By Neil Leboy



During the week of Nov. 6, monks from the Norlon Monastery in Mungod, India, came to UHCL to display their cultural views. The monks also provided two seminars on climate change and a day in the life of a monk. The dedication and selflessness displayed by the monks was truly remarkable. Did you know a monk only has a few possessions including two robes and a bowl for food with simplistic eating utensils?

Throughout the week, the monks set up a display of items for sale including Indian jewelry, as well as artwork and symbols from the monastery. The main attraction was a sand mandala, which was created by the monks throughout the week. The monks scraped grains of colored sand off a simple metal scraper to eventually form a piece of art. The amount of detail and precision displayed by the monks creating the sand mandala was incredible to witness. Monk Lobsong Chodup greeted every student with a warm smile and hug. Despite not knowing English, he was easily one of the friendliest man I have met.

The lecture I attended pertained to the monks view perspective on global warming. While I expected charts of global pollution, and pictures of falling ice caps, the monk's perspective ended up being entirely new and refreshing. Lobsang Wangchuk, who helps the monks on their American tour, describes it best, "The problem is inside, not outside."


The Geshe, or lead monk, went on to explain the monk's viewpoints. People are the cause of global warming and harm to the Earth, and are responsible for fixing the problems they created. The main issue being a person's inner-self. The monks believe a person's body is nothing more than organic parts, and people spend too much time grasping at self. People in today's age might

live to be over 100, so what gives them reason to live this long? The monks would answer love and compassion for others gives reason to a long life.

Diving deeper into self, the monks explained how the six delusions, specifically pride, lead to problems of global warming and hatred. Humans who only care about themselves will never learn to care about others. People can only start healing the world once they learn to live outside the six delusions. Pride and anger were the two center points towards the end of the lecture. Pride is dangerous. Prideful people will never listen to teachers or others, and only view things in their own way. Without the concept of self, there can be no anger or pride.

People, including myself, often say, "I want, I need, I everything." The harder you look for yourself, the more you will find an empty and meaningless body of parts. The monks told us to ask ourselves, how necessary are the things we desire? If everyone lived in a selfless manner similar to the monks the world would naturally begin to heal itself and problems of global warming would fade away.

Following the interview, the monks allowed members of the audience to ask them questions. One of the first questions asked was how we can individually help with climate change? The monks suggested to simplify our lives. Instead of driving every day, try biking or carpooling to school two days a week.

The life of a monk is simple, devoted, patient, kind and selfless. It was inspiring and humbling to see a group of people devoted to helping everyone else before themselves. It is difficult not to indulge on the luxuries of an American lifestyle. That being says, I would also like future generations to be able to enjoy the luxuries I do. It is important to take care of the world we inhabit, and I will do my best to use less. 

#METOO

Actress Alyssa Milano's "#MeToo" tweet began the global collaboration of sexual assault survivors from more than 85 different countries by the use of one, seven-character hashtag, "#MeToo." The tweet brought a campaign to the world and to UHCL.

Tarana Burke, created a campaign in 2006 called, "Me Too." Originally, the movement was created to help young women of color find healing through the idea of "empowerment through empathy." More than 10 years later the "Me Too" movement has amplified and united more than 1.7 million victimized survivors across the world.

Emily Fessler, assistant professor of family therapy, says the #MeToo movement is both remarkable and powerful.

"My understanding of the intended message is that it is two-fold—on one hand, the participants that share #MeToo are making a bold—and public—statement that they are a survivor, that they are not ashamed to share, and reaching out to others to not feel so alone," Fessler says.

Social media, especially Twitter, has proven to be an effective communication outlet, as survivors continue to utilize the "Me Too" phrase. Some survivors are coming forward decades after their abuse.

Fessler says women fear they will receive feedback which will make them appear as though they put themselves in the position to be assaulted.

"Regardless of the sex of the survivor, it is clear that there are many barriers that would keep someone quiet after experiencing a sexual assault," Fessler says. "This #MeToo campaign is creating space for people to speak out, to offer support, and find community and hopefully healing."

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network states on its website that 1 in 6 American women and 1 in 33 American men will be survivors of an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime.

"My understanding of the current statistics is that somewhere between 1 and 3 or 1 and 4 people are victims of sexual harassment or assault during their lifetime," Fessler says. "Think about it if there are 24 people in your class, that means that, according to the statistics, 6-8 of them have been assaulted, or will be at some point in their lives."

On the other hand, statistics show women are at greater risk for sexual abuse in the workplace because power is predominantly held by men in the work industry.

"In the '30s and '40s and '50s, generally, my mother's generation, you just sucked it up and moved on, because it's just what men did," says Angela Howard, professor of U.S. and women's history.

"That included going all the way to sexual assault as well, but it's not something you could make a complaint about because, 'boys will be boys.'"

Though social media is exploding with

survivor's stories, there are factors hindering countless survivors from coming forward through the "Me Too" movement. For some survivors, the campaign brought back painful memories.

"Despite wanting to show support, others expressed fears that sharing these stories would put them in a position to have to explain themselves to employers, family, and friends," says Diana Bowen, assistant professor of communication and affiliate faculty member of the women's studies program.

As survivors are communicating with those who can truly share solidarity and understanding, Burke's goal for survivors is effective now more than ever.

"As long as you're quiet, you're ashamed, and as long as you're ashamed, you're diminished," Howard says.

Howard says passive bystanders who may feel intervening is not their place because it is none of their business. Howard expressed that regardless if it is your business or not, if you

know someone who is vulnerable to sexual abuse, you need to protect them.

"You can't be a bystander," Howard says. "You have to do right and fear not. If you see something, you say something. If it works for national defense, it also works for an individual." Corey Benson, Title IX coordinator at UHCL, points out that those who witness sexual misconduct can often prevent or reduce harm by intervening, if safe for them to do so.

"If you observe a dangerous situation that may put another person at risk, you can call the UHCL Police Department to report the incident, so that they can respond and make sure all involved are safe," Benson says.

Sexual assault reaches everyone, even here at UHCL. In an effort to bring campus attention to the issue of sexual harassment, assault, and/or abuse, The Signal coordinated a #MeToo series by collecting statistical data, personal experience stories and/or messages of support.

By Codie MacCauley



WOMEN'S MARCH

By Emily Wolfe

In order to celebrate the anniversary of the 2017 Women's March, Jan. 20, America took to the streets yet again.

While the original Women's March was a direct protest of the incoming presidential administration, this year's march centered around testimonials and supported a different cause. Coming off a very emotional and powerful #MeToo campaign, the event shined a light on the daily sexual harassment women endure.

In addition to honoring the #MeToo campaign, the 2018 march also focused on increasing voter participation and encouraging more women to run for offices. With over a hundred marches across the country and hundreds of thousands of people participating, the Women's March is a definite phenomenon.

Houston's 2018 Women's March took 20,000 people to City Hall to protest women's rights, immigration and gun control. Mayor Sylvester Turner, former Mayor Annise Parker, Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Cohen, Judge Phyllis Frye and District Attorney Kim Ogg all participated in the event. With Houston's political forces join-



ing in on the march, the city is standing by women in their fight for equality.

During his speech, Turner promised to continue to stand with the Women's March "until all our voices are heard." He then says Houston and the rest of Harris County needs to be aware of the Women's March's ideals. His words warranted thunderous applause from the crowds.

"The causes are just, and it is time to stand. I hope this fire will continue to burn," he says. "We need to maintain this fire and elect a whole lot of women."

Turner concluded his speech by mentioning Houston as the most diverse city in the country, but "the most diverse doesn't mean anything if we are not inclusive."

Houston's diversity makes UHCL one of the most unique campuses in the country. With the different cultures and backgrounds of male, female and non-binary students, faculty and staff, UHCL is inclusion personified. 🎓



Photography by Glynda Gallagher Allison
Above Panda DeJohn, Glynda Gallagher Allison and friend



War Toys

By Troylon Griffin II



UHCL's art gallery kicked off its 2018 spring semester by bringing the War Toys exhibit to its campus.

The exhibit consists of a series of photographs by photographer Brian McCarty, who has spent nearly seven years traveling the Middle East to meet children who have been affected by the wars that have plagued their country. The photos portray recreations of drawings done by the children McCarty met, through the use of toys and models. The exhibit remained at UHCL's art gallery from January 29 to March 15.

The exhibit was brought to UHCL by Jim Bowen, the director of UHCL's art gallery.

"I plan the exhibitions out years in advance," Bowen says. "I came across the exhibit a number of years ago at a conference. I looked into the artist behind the work and felt it would be a great fit for the university. My goal is to bring artists and artworks that inspire and challenge, and this is definitely a challenging exhibition."

"I like the idea that every exhibition has a deeper meaning," Bowen says. "We've had many different exhibitions and I thought, why not be the first to bring this to Houston? This is the first time this event has come to Texas."

The photographer behind the exhibit, Brian McCarty, came to UHCL shortly before the exhibit left the campus on March 8. The event

consisted of a closing reception and artist's talk. At the event, Bowen noted how engaged students and the community as a whole were with the event.

"You know people are engaged when they're asking questions, and the community at large has been engaged," Bowen says.

McCarty expressed only positive feelings about being able to come to the campus and speak on his work, as well as have the work at the exhibited in general. McCarty described his feelings as "excited, thrilled, flattered and honored."

"Being at a university venue to me is the best," McCarty says. "The whole purpose of the project is to invoke a conversation and different ways of thinking. To be in an academic environment or anyone open to conversation is key. To talk about the exhibit and explain the dimension behind it, is very important."

Both the artist's talk and exhibition were very positively received, with Bowen noting that many came to both him and exhibitions coordinator Karen Fiscus saying that the work is the best exhibition yet.

"I find this exhibition to be very moving and giving a new perspective on what war does to those living there," Fiscus says. "We never think about the children, and it has definitely changed my perspective. I think it's been a wonderful reception and has definitely got

people thinking. I definitely have appreciated people's reaction and the exhibit painting a new perspective on what war is."

McCarty especially expressed excitement and only appreciation at the opportunity to have his work come to Houston and speak to a community of students about the exhibit.

"I know the children I've worked with would be ecstatic to know that an audience like this is looking at their experiences and actually considering what they've been through from a first person perspective," McCarty says. "I'm absolutely flattered and grateful for such an opportunity." 🎓



Photography by Michele Gibson



For a non-election year, the White House managed to stay in the headlines, even though Houston had some of the weirdest weather on record. Additionally, this year had two of the most unforgettable mass shootings that forced the country to discuss gun control and the Second Amendment.

The school year started off to a rocky start due to Hurricane Harvey shutting down the school for the first week. Harvey dropped over 50 inches of rain onto Houston and the surrounding areas by overstaying its welcome and hovering over the city for days. Shortly after, Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria took aim at Florida and Puerto Rico. J.J. Watt's donation site, Mattress Mack's generosity and Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez' Hand in Hand Telethon raised millions for those impacted.

The school year was bookended by mass shootings. The Las Vegas shooting on Oct. 1 left 58 people dead and 851 injured and became the deadliest mass shooting in United States history. On Feb. 14, the Parkland High School shooting left 17 dead and 14 injured. The survivors of the attack went to the Florida Capitol Building and the White House to demand gun control laws. Their momentum led to a nationwide protest, the March for Our Lives movement.

Another movement that impacted the country was #MeToo. After actress Alyssa Milano tweeted out the hashtag, people around the world started sharing their stories of sexual abuse and harassment. Many celebrities followed suit and in the second annual Women's March, the phrase became a rallying point.

In the political realm, the White House kept losing staff members, including the secretary

of state, the president's financial advisor and Omarosa Manigault-Newman. The president also engaged in social media against the NFL, Lin-Manuel Miranda and Hillary Clinton. He also confused everyone about his relationship with Russia and almost waged war with North Korea.

On April 17, former First Lady Barbara Bush passed away at the age of 92. She was one of two people to be both a first lady and the mother of the president. Known for her passion of literacy, both Republican and Democrat politicians issued their condolences. Her funeral was attended by former President George H.W. Bush, former First Lady Laura Bush, former President Bill Clinton, Secretary Hillary Clinton, former President Barack Obama, former First Lady Michelle Obama and First Lady Melania Trump. The president was at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida.

While the news is constantly changing, the news this school year proved to be unforgettable. 🎓

By Emily Wolfe



Photos from Twitter and Wikipedia Commons

NEWS TRENDS



**Donald J. Trump** 
@realDonaldTrump 

The Mayor of San Juan, who was very complimentary only a few days ago, has now been told by the Democrats that you must be nasty to Trump.

6:19 AM - 30 Sep 2017

20,853 Retweets 67,847 Likes 

 50K  21K  68K 

**Lin-Manuel Miranda** 
@Lin_Manuel 

You're going straight to hell, [@realDonaldTrump](#). No long lines for you. Someone will say, "Right this way, sir." They'll clear a path. [twitter.com/realdonaldtrum...](#)

7:21 AM - 30 Sep 2017

111,722 Retweets 341,611 Likes 

 5.9K  112K  342K 

Entertainment in 2017-2018 provided a little bit of everything. Television worshipped a relatively new actor, superheroes still proved popular, Taylor Swift debuted a new album, Houston took home a major win and "Animal Crossing Pocket Camp" was everywhere for a few weeks in October.

This was the year for television reboots, streaming originals and Sterling K. Brown. With award seasons showering shows from Netflix, Hulu and HBO with praise, "This Is Us" was network television's last stand. Television was applauded by critics and entertainment news sites for giving LGBTQ+ friendly shows, like "The Bold Type," "One Day at a Time" and "Brooklyn Nine-Nine," more airtime.

In the world of movies, films like "It" and continuations in Star Wars, Marvel and DC franchises like "Star Wars Ep. VIII The Last Jedi," "Justice League" and "Black Panther" dominated the box office and social media this year. Animated films stumbled with "CoCo" as the only animated film to make a sizable impact in the box office. "Shape of Water" took home Best Picture at the Academy Awards and despite acting in numerous films and television, Gary Oldman and Allison Janney both won their first Oscar this year.

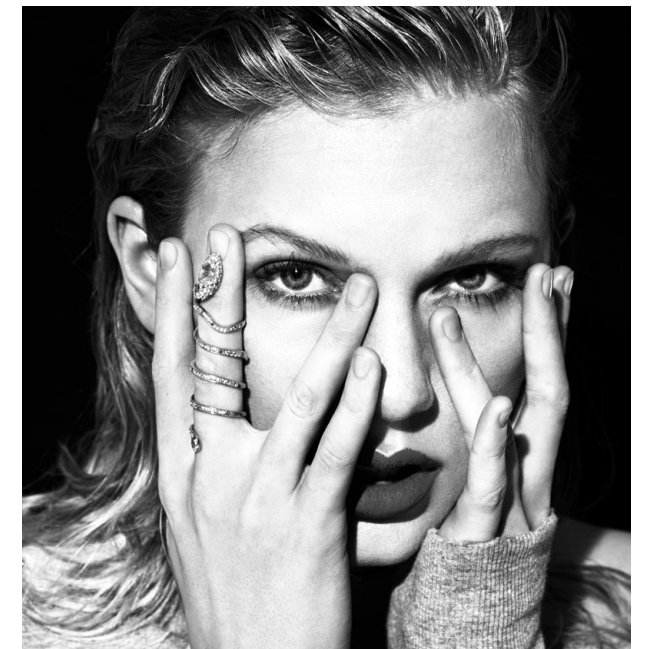
While Ed Sheeran continued to be at the top of the music charts, Taylor Swift's "Reputation" was the best-selling album and became her fourth album to gross a million dollars in one week. "The Greatest Showman" cast album also proved to be successful as did Chris Stapleton and Kendrick Lamar. Lamar's album, "DAMN" became the first non-classical, non-jazz album to win the Pulitzer Prize for music. Cardi B became the first solo female

rapper to reach the top of the Billboard Hot 100.

The Houston Astros won their first World Series in 2017. Additionally, the Philadelphia Eagles upset the New England Patriots to win their first Superbowl. In the Winter Olympics, USA took home 27 medals and made Chloe Kim, Adam Rippon and Mirai Nagasu household names for a couple of weeks.

What a crazy couple of months. 🎓

By Emily Wolfe



Photos from Flickr and Wikimedia Commons

ENTERTAINMENT TRENDS

Graduates Taking Flight



Dr. Biggers Takes Flight

By Emily Wolfe

This year, UHCL will say good-bye to the Associate Vice President of Student Services Darlene F. Biggers. She joined the university in 1994 after working 19 years at traditional college campuses. In 2008, she joined a small committee that began preparations for the downward expansion of adding freshmen and sophomores to the university.

"When we had the opportunity to develop a proposal to add freshmen and sophomores to the university, I definitely wanted to be a part of it because I was one of the few administrators who had worked with freshmen and sophomores at other universities," Biggers says. "I knew it would be a game changer for the university, and I really wanted to be a part of that."

As Associate Vice President of Student Services, Biggers' is responsible for the offices of the Dean of Students, Career and Counseling Services, Health and Disability Services, Intercultural and International Student Services, Student Life, Student Publications, the Writing Center and the Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts.

This means she is in charge of developing programs for students that promote inclusivity, increase engagement and support learning. So when it was time to expand the university, Biggers had to decide on what kind of programs a four-year university needed.

"My committee did a lot of research on best practices and other universities who had re-

ally been acknowledged as being excellent [for freshman students]," Biggers says. "We knew we couldn't start everything at once, so we tried to start with what was most important. We also tried to identify that our students would be more serious about their studies, for the most part, they would be commuting and living at home or off-campus. We did create a living and learning community at our University Forest Apartment called Hawk's Landing."

As part of creating and overlooking many new programs for all students at the university, Biggers was able to see new traditions started and discover her own passion project.

"I wasn't in charge of it, but I was on the committee that decided on our mascot, Hunter," Biggers says. "That was so much fun and as we've seen Hunter interact with everyone from small children to the elderly, it's been quite a hit."

"The one thing I was apart of creating in Student Services is our leadership program, and what we've designed for freshmen was the Hawk Leadership Institute," Biggers says. "Every year they invite me to their last program where they talk about what they've learned, and I've just been so impressed and brought to tears by their stories."


With the first freshman class graduating this May, Biggers decided she wanted to see them walk across the stage for graduation before she spread her wings and retired from the university.

"I was very dedicated to making sure, not



only that our transition to a four-year campus happened, but that it was successful and I felt like I needed to see that first class go through all four years to really see what the experience was like and see if it was successful for them," Biggers says.

"That was a part of it, but over Christmas I had this epiphany that this summer I was going to be 72 and I thought to myself that I love what I do, but I need to start the next phase of my life. I guess [my plan to retire] is because a lot of things hit me at once."

Even though the university will say goodbye to Biggers in August, her legacy lives on in the programs she has created, the students she has inspired and the care she took in helping to expand the university to include freshmen and sophomores 



Photographs from UHCL Archives
Dr. Darlene Biggers

At a glance:

International students by the numbers

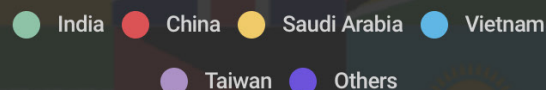
GRADUATE STUDENTS: 1,047



By the numbers:

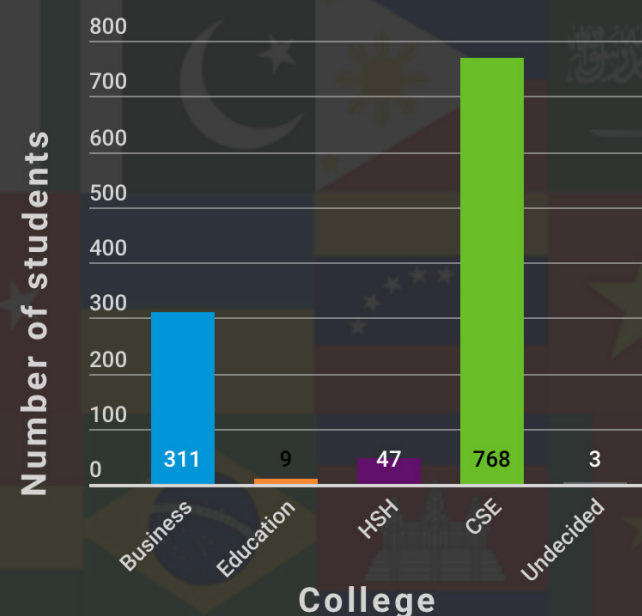
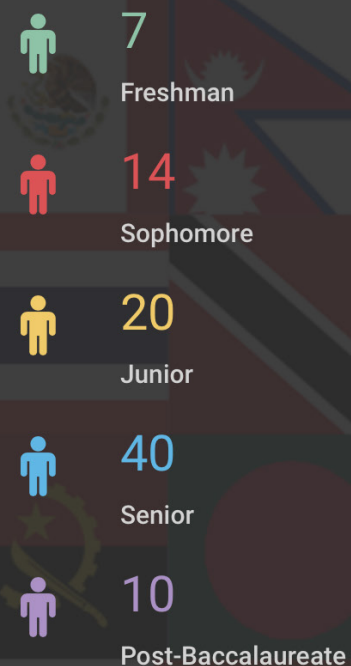
Other nations represented include: Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Dominica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Guyana, Honduras, Hong Kong, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Venezuela.

Students



UNDERGRADS:

WHO STUDIES WHAT?



Source: UHCL.edu

Infographic by Emily Wolfe

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

By Emily Wolfe

One of UHCL's traditions is the inclusion of international students to the student body. With over 40 countries represented at the university and over 200 students graduating this year, international students have shaped the campus with their culture, passion and diversity.

International students who come to UHCL, enroll here for various reasons beyond the academic course offerings. The fact the university is nestled in a metropolitan area with mild climate help add to the appeal.

"Generally, they like our location," Associate Director of International Admissions and Advising Janel Dumbre says. "We have a similar climate and Houston is the fourth largest city in the country, and its very diverse."

With numerous on-campus organizations dedicated to international students, student life on campus is diverse in the offerings. Dumbre says that student life is very important to international students because it helps ease the transition and allows support to bond with students who are also feeling the culture shock.

"International students are limited in where they are allowed to work; they cannot work off campus," Dumbre says. "They participate in student life, and they depend on each other."

Usually when students come from the Middle East, South America and Asia, among other places, they are impacted by culture shock

almost immediately. In order to help ease this, the office of International Admissions and Programs has in place a variety of programs.

"We reach out and provide information via collaborative chats, and we pick them up at the airport," Dumbre says. "We try to have social activities before the start of the semester. It's definitely a team effort."

While current policies and practices in America is making it more difficult for international students, the office of International Admissions and Programs is available to clarify the situation.

"The perception is in a student's mind when they are traveling; they are legal, but travel is hard," Dumbre says.

The confusion surrounding the travel ban is impacting international admissions. Dumbre says with universities across the country reporting a drop in applications, the travel ban is impacting UHCL as well, because people are less excited.

"The perception of the current administration is not welcoming and many schools have seen a decline in applications and its impacting us," Dumbre says. "We have one student who is going to graduate and he wants to have his family to come, but they can't [because of the travel ban]."

The international students who choose to live, study and socialize alongside domestic students help to create the welcoming nature and diversity of UHCL. 🎓

Graduates Take Flight

As the spring semester of 2018 comes to a close, UHCL's first four-year class has reached its time to graduate.

UHCL welcomed its first freshmen and sophomore students to its campus in the fall 2014. Four years later, the first freshman class will walk across the stage to receive their diplomas.

The downward expansion of UHCL into a four-year university began in 2008.

Darlene Biggers, the associate vice president for student services, says the university began drawing up a request to add freshmen and sophomores and that request had to go to the board of regents and the state legislature.

The university's approval for expansion was given in 2010. Biggers says she was quite excited at the university transitioning into a four-year university, having been one of the few administrators at UHCL to have worked at a four-university before.

"We worked [for a] hard two years planning for it, and I think our ideas for what the stu-

dents would need were quite on target," Biggers says.

Upon bringing in the first freshmen and sophomores to UHCL, staff and faculty noted the change in the school's atmosphere.

"I think it was such a joy," Biggers says. "Our freshmen and sophomores brought so much energy to the university. There was a real feeling of community spirit. It really was a joy."

One such student who is part of the graduating class, Ashley Johnson, a biology major, is proud to soon be a graduate of UHCL and reflected on her four years at the university and the legacy her class will leave behind.

"When I started at UHCL, it was exciting and nerve wrecking to be the first freshman," she says. "Reflecting on the past four years, I can definitely see that our class has positively impacted the school through SGA and various organizations. I can't wait to see how much more UHCL will evolve and improve with each upcoming class."

Johnson also gave her own advice to her fellow graduating classmates, congratulating them advising them to dream big.

"We live in a day and age where anyone can be successful, all you need is passion and some hard work," Johnson says. "Dream big and fight for what you believe in."

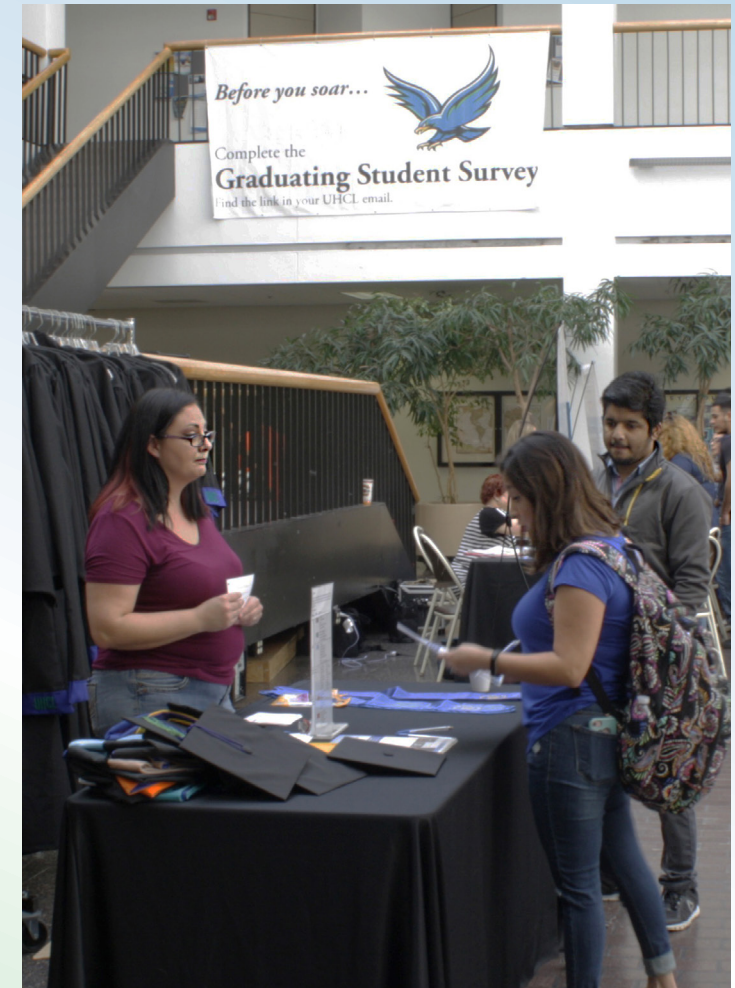
Johnson also says that all underclassmen should take their time with their education and college experience.

"Everyone's college experience is different and your own success is different than others. It's okay if your time at college is longer than everyone else's," Johnson says.

Biggers also addressed that the class of 2018's journey has just begun and that their learning will never cease.

"I want them to know that they need to believe in yourself and to continue to grow and learn and contribute to your community, wherever that community is, be it your home, your workplace or your city," Biggers says. "Learning doesn't stop with graduation." 🎓

By Troylon Griffin II



Photography by Emily Wolfe and Jonathan Zapata

THEN and NOW

Four years ago, Sandy Samaan began her studies at UHCL. Featured in the first edition of The Wingspan, Samaan's goal to continue her education is being fulfilled.

Throughout every semester she has dedicated countless hours to her studies and leadership roles. She received the Emerging Leader of the Year award in April 2015.

"I was a full time student, very involved on campus with leadership roles, and had a job, so it was stressful and difficult at times to balance everything – and to even find time sleep!"

Samaan was involved in numerous organizations and co-founded Running, Outdoors, Walking Adventures. Samaan volunteered outside of her normal full time

student routine and leadership positions, and earned the Platinum Award in Servant Leader Scholar April 2017 for her accumulation of 768 hours of service as a volunteer in her community.

"UHCL was a hidden gem. Everything was amazing. I met friends who became family, had the best professors who are now dear mentors, had so many opportunities to expand and develop my leadership skills through organizations and the Hawk Leadership Institute, and obviously received the education I needed to move on to the next chapter of my life, which is medical school."

She is currently preparing for medical school, applying for scholarships and buying books for her new flight. 🎓

By Jonathan Zapata



Photography by Greg Austin

Final Reflection

Eric Yanez

When in grad school the thought of graduation seems easily obtainable.. When in grade school. When I was in kindergarten, I pictured everything in life would be handed to me. As it turns out, life simply does not work that way. In order for things to be "handed" to you, you have to earn it. When going up against the beast called college, you should be prepared to get knocked back a few times.

The path of college is about self-discovery. I am not the same naïve kid I was my first year of college. Everything seemed so simple back then. Every decision I made in my college path has molded me into the man I am today, and it only took three mental breakdowns, eight failing grades and an uppercut to the chin from chemistry.

I would also like to point out that "time" in college is non-existent. Sometimes a deadline of a week feels like hours. If you have ever wanted to know how fast the speed of light is, just wait to do an assignment at the last minute. However, this is not the same for lectures as they seem to slow down time.

A lot of feelings go through the mind of a senior. The fear and excitement start settling in and the thought of having to "officially" go into the workforce is scary. Looking back to my freshman mindset, I honestly never could have imagined reaching graduation. I was sim-



ply taking it day by day.

The college experience has been a blessing especially here at UHCL. I have done just about everything on campus. I have been a school mascot, an orientation leader and a blogger, and I managed to make life-long friendships along the way.

I am about to walk across the stage and receive my diploma. I swear I feel as if I am going to see all of my college experiences flash before my eyes! It is a bittersweet feeling but with everything I have been able to achieve at UHCL, I know I am going to change the world for the better.

My name is Eric Yanez, and I know I will be doing great things once I leave my nest/home that is UHCL, Go Hawks! 🎓

2018 Graduating Class

These Hawks are part of the first Freshmen class at UHCL in 2014

Hussain Alabduhmuhsin

Christian Baker

Lennon Beavers

Jose Berlanga

Sierra Bower

Sarah Cao

Gabrielle Casper

Victoria Cassell

Christie Castillo

Bani Coello

Makayla Ellis

Lisset Escobar

Natalie Garcia

Hannah Gibbs

Minh Ha

Elisha Hehir

Elizabeth Hehir

Anna Herzik

Ashley Johnson

Neida Juarez

Krista Kamp

Micaela Kinsey

Jonathan Kocian

Rachael Leach

Itzel Lucio

Makenzee Meaux

Emily Myers

Sarah Pierce

Ericka Piercy

Andrea Pina

Victoria Rosas

Gabriela Ruiz

Rachael Sanders

Rachel Sibayan

Makenzie Spell

Bailey Strother

Madison Stults

Nereida Tanori Gonzalez

Tammy Tran

David Wallack

Eric Yanez

