



Veterans Day Celebration



Courtney Brodbeck: The Signal

It was a day of thanks, admiration and acknowledgment at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, honoring veterans from all branches of the military at its seventh annual Veterans Day celebration Nov. 11 at Liberty Park.

“We really want to recognize, honor and most of all thank the veterans for their service,” said William Staples, president of UHCL.

The program’s keynote speaker was Walt Cunningham, a retired U.S. Marine Corps colonel, a fighter pilot, NASA’s second civilian astronaut, physicist, entrepreneur, venture capitalist, lecturer, author of *The All-American Boys* and host of *Lift-off to Logic*, a radio talk show. [Read full story online.](#)

Zero tolerance for stalkers on campus

Chris Curry
The Signal Staff

The University of Houston-Clear Lake is in the process of updating student life policies, and dealing with stalkers on campus is one of the more pertinent issues being addressed.

The National Center for Victims of Crime reported that 13 percent of college women were stalked in 1996, but the extensiveness of stalking among adults in the United States has not been assessed on the national level since. Statistics on this issue may be difficult to gather accurately because most stalking victims do

not report incidents to the police.

Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, and Paul Willingham, chief of police at UHCL, are working together to promote stalking awareness at UHCL.

They are responsible for bringing Rape Aggression Defense classes to the campus each semester to help women develop defensive techniques to ward off attacks, introducing stalker awareness sessions during student orientation, and providing anonymous notification forms for students to privately voice their personal concerns to the proper authorities.

“I am very candid with

students that my authority stops at Bay Area Boulevard,” Jenkins said. “So we make sure to talk about how students need to be aware of their surroundings both off and on campus.”

College campuses are ideal environments for stalkers because students tend to develop routines and can be easily tracked. It can be difficult for campus officials to track down a stalker.

“On the campus, people blend in,” Jenkins said. “That’s why I always ask for a photo of the individual whom you are having some concern with and those photos are given to university police so they

Stalkers: [continued on page 6](#)

UHCL C.A.R.E.s for student safety issues

Daniel Benitez
The Signal Staff

The University of Houston-Clear Lake has created the Crisis Awareness Response Emergency Team to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to more effectively address student behavioral issues that directly or indirectly impact the university community.

The mission is to identify students at risk or those whose behaviors are disruptive or threatening. The team was created, in part, to prevent tragedies such as those that took place at Virginia Tech or Columbine.

Throughout the nation schools

are creating behavioral analysis teams, such as C.A.R.E, called Behavioral Interventional Team. At UHCL there are two teams. Team A consists of 5 members: Anthony Jenkins, dean of students (Chair), Alfred Kahn, director of career and counseling, David Rachita, assistant dean of student life, Linda Conteras Bullock, assistant dean of international and intercultural student services, and Paul Willingham, UHCL chief of police. Team B consists of faculty and other members who know something about the crisis.

C.A.R.E. was first introduced in 2008 at a conference in San Antonio.

C.A.R.E.: [continued on page 6](#)

Will students walk?



Photo courtesy of UHCL registrars office.

The spring 2009 UHCL graduation commencement.

Leslie Cokley
The Signal Staff

This fall, the University of Houston-Clear Lake commencement will be split into two ceremonies. Commencement will be held Dec. 19 at the Reliant Arena in Houston.

There will be 900 graduates this year. The commencement ceremony for the School of Human Sciences and Humanities

and the School of Science and Computer Engineering will be held at 10 a.m. Graduates need to arrive at 8 a.m. The commencement ceremony for the School of Business and the School of Education will be held at 3 p.m. Graduates need to arrive at 1 p.m.

During this year’s spring commencement, students were walking across the stage to receive their degrees and then walking out

Graduation: [continued on page 6](#)

Day of remembrance brings awareness to transgender issues

Justin Joseph
The Signal Staff

The University of Houston-Clear Lake hosted its first annual Transgender Day of Remembrance event Nov. 19 to pay respect to those in the transgender community who are proud of who they are.

Over the years members of the transgender community have had little to no rights when it came to discrimination. UHCL and other colleges and universities across the state are currently working on adding a new clause named

“gender expression and gender identity” to their current nondiscrimination policy.

Schools in Texas would like to add the “gender expression and gender identity” clause, but some are confronted with resistance in their efforts to do so, while some schools have the clause already in place. On July 23, 2009, colleges and universities met to discuss adding the policy to schools, during the first Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit.

“Putting gender identity and

Remember: [continued on page 6](#)

THE SIGNAL

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EDITORIAL
Some rules are not meant to be broken

Everyone has heard the golden rule: do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Yet, not everyone has grasped the simple logic behind this statement.

It has become so common for society to quickly judge someone for his or her race, gender, religion and even sexual orientation. Unfortunately, these judgments have led to individuals being violated, harmed and even killed.

It doesn't seem as if the world has taken a step back to look at the big picture: no, we are not all going to be the exact same person. In fact, not a single person is the same; otherwise we would be robots.

For more than a century hate groups and organizations have been formed to openly discriminate against those to whom they are opposed. One of the country's leading groups, still active today, is the Ku Klux Klan. Formed in 1865, this hate group claims to protect the rights and further the interest of white Americans. What it does do is threaten the rights of non-Aryans with violence and intimidation.

In 1963 Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech demanding an end to racial segregation. Just a year later the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed racial segregation in schools, public places and places of employment. This was the start of giving all citizens the freedom America claims to protect; King was assassinated before his dream could be fully realized.

Race is not the only target for discrimination. There is also a focus toward setting homosexuals apart from everyone else. As more people

are becoming comfortable coming out and expressing who they truly are as individuals, it's given those who are "anti-gay" more reason to take action against it.

In 1998, a man named James Byrd, Jr. from Jasper, Texas, was chained to a car and dragged to death because he was African-American.

Also in 1998, a University of Wyoming student by the name of Matthew Shepard was targeted for his sexual orientation, attacked and killed. This student's murder generated national attention toward the issue legislating hate crime at state and federal levels.

On Oct. 28, there was a reception at the White House after President Obama signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. After a decade's worth of processing, the hate crimes law finally added federal protections against crimes based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability.

Citizens of this type of discrimination can't live their lives regularly because hate groups do not accept anything contrary to themselves. There is a freedom being tested when someone cannot walk down the street holding the hand of another

without hesitation or the fear of being victimized.

Is it so important for people to prove their identity that they have to hinder others from proclaiming their own?

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

A person's character cannot be judged by a person's religion, sexual orientation or gender identity either.



Matt Griesmyer: The Signal

COLUMN
Suggestions from a cynical ex-server

Grant Chesshir
The Signal Staff

Tuition is not cheap, and almost all students have had to work part-time jobs throughout their collegiate journey in order to cover costs. It is not a secret that these jobs are typically terrible. Of these terrible titles of employment, one stands out as the hardest and most under appreciated: server.

Here are a few suggestions from a retired server to ensure you are not regarded as "that customer" upon your departure from the dining establishment. You know the customer I mean, the obnoxious one no one wants back.

The first bit of advice seems to be the most obvious, but I guess if this were really so obvious then I would still be asking people what they would like to drink and whether or not they want to start with an appetizer.

But I digress, so back to the advice; don't be rude to your server. When the server approaches your table and begins his or her introduction, don't cut him off and bark out the beverage you desire. That's a deal-breaker and a guaranteed first step toward being "that customer." Allow him to finish his spiel as if he were a human being.

Interrupting the server's introduction leads me to my next tip; don't call your server any of the following: hey, waiter, yo or Jack (unless that is his name). It is also never, under any circumstance, appropriate to gain your server's attention by means of hand clapping, whistling or finger snapping.

Another seemingly obvious bit of advice is to address the server without the condescending tone. Servers are often

forced to accept this treatment or sacrifice their tip and risk being terminated. Just because servers must be polite does not mean patrons should get to be rude.

This next transgression typically occurs without patrons noticing and is commonly known as "running" your server. Running your server occurs when the patron makes a request for something that the server doesn't have on his or her person, say a refill on water, extra napkins, condiments or perhaps a fresh cocktail, and the server retrieves the requested item.

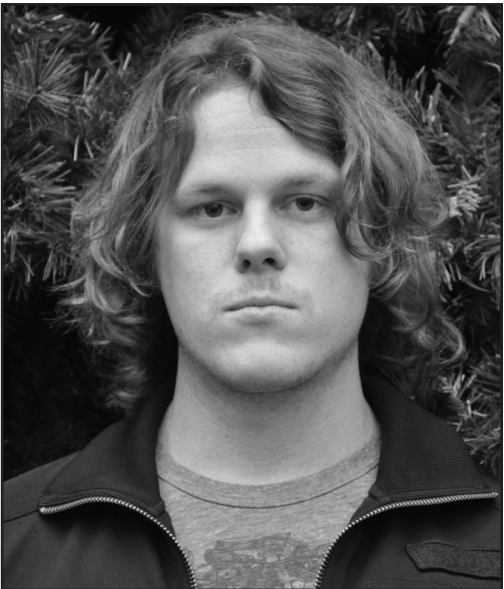
Upon the server's return to the table the patron will then request another item, and this process repeats until the server is forced to devote so much attention to the table that they have neglected their other tables. The appropriate course of action would be to request several items at one time so the server may focus on all tables equally and efficiently.

Even the best server will occasionally let a beverage dip below the half-full mark or become empty. The resulting ice-to-beverage ratio tempts many patrons to raise their drinking apparatus and shake them at the server so that everyone may see and hear the ice rattle. This drives servers crazy and should be avoided.

I will close by addressing the most important, and often most misunderstood, concept of the dining-out experience: the tip. First off, your server is making well below the minimum wage, below \$3 an hour in most cases, and living off tips. This is not to suggest that terrible service, such as extended intervals with empty beverages, a rude server or getting food dropped on you with no apology must be

rewarded, but that good service should always be rewarded. The minimum amount for decent service should be 15 to 20 percent of the total bill and should increase directly with the level of service. This is the last impression you leave on your servers and believe me, they remember you as much when you stiff them as they do when you tip them well.

So next time you are out enjoying your meal at a dine-in restaurant, not lifting a finger, being waited on hand and foot, recall this counsel and treat your server like a human being, be courteous, tip accordingly and don't ever steal their pen, no matter how smoothly it writes.



Grant Chesshir
The Signal Staff

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Experiencing cultures and customs from around the world

Cody Anderson
The Signal Staff

An abundance of good food, dancing, fun and games all have one thing in common here at the University of Houston-Clear Lake — the Intercultural and International Student Services held its annual Global Expo Nov. 16 showcasing international and cultural diversity.

As many as 28 booths specific to various cultures and countries lined Atrium II in the Bayou building. These representations included booths dedicated to specific countries and many walks of life.

“Global Expo is an opportunity for not only the UHCL community to learn about other countries, cultures, traditions and the diversity around the world, but for the world to also learn about us,” said Linda Bullock, assistant dean of student diversity. “Our mission is to educate about the global society that we live in.”

Spectators ranging from students, faculty, family and friends were encouraged to explore the event by visiting each booth to learn about all of the different cultures and diversities that are present here on campus.

Booths were decorated with colorful banners, flags, photos and artifacts representing different countries.

Whether it was by offering a sample of their native cuisine or by teaching spectators a game specific to their culture, booth participants took pride in letting people know exactly what they were all about.

Some of the participants dressed in traditional clothing and headwear. To take it a step further, several booths even had henna tattoo artists on hand offering free henna tattoos.

Passports, which included a page designated for each booth, were passed out to visitors. As each booth was visited, a stamp was placed on the appropriate page in the passport.

Once each page had been stamped, participants could fill out the included survey and return it to the IISS booth for a chance to win a prize.

Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, feels that the Global Expo has become somewhat of a “staple” for the university.

“Our students from various countries look forward to dressing up and sharing a part of their culture with the university, and our domestic students look forward to going and partaking in asking questions, and playing some of the games,” Jenkins said. “It’s always good to see the students and the university communities come together and join our diversities.”

Each year Global Expo attracts larger crowds and more participants interested in showing the UHCL community just how diverse they are.

“We have had a record of more booths than we have had in the past,” said Susana Hernandez, coordinator of the Global Expo. “For my first time coordinating it, I am glad that it has been successful.”



Cody Anderson: The Signal

View of Global Expo 2009 from the second floor of Atrium II.



Cody Anderson: The Signal

Dahirou Ndiaye, mathematical science/statistics major, presents the Mali booth wearing traditional clothing at Global Expo.



Cody Anderson: The Signal

Supriya Suryadevara, mathematical science/management information systems major, gives Anita Peter, computer information systems major, a henna tattoo at the India booth.

Get your **MAN** on at **THE GUY EXPO**

Matt Griesmyer
The Signal Staff

Houston has seen its fair share of conferences and expositions running the gamut of all interests from all walks of life: the bridal expo, home and garden show, the Nutcracker Market, etc.

For the first time ever, guys will have a place to go and do what they do best: be guys.

The Guy Expo came to the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston Nov. 6 – Nov. 9. So what all does a “Guy Expo” involve?

“There is a lot of excitement and a lot of fun at the George R. Brown center,” said Sara Vanderbilt, director of operations for the Guy Expo. “We have cars galore, women galore, definitely beer and the college sports are having games being played.”

Booths at the expo included multiple beer taps, with several varieties from Houston’s own St. Arnold brewery. Also included were booths from the U. S. Army, the Houston Aeros, laser tag and robot fighting simulators (a simulator that puts users virtually in the cockpit of a 10-story tall robot and pits them against fellow pilots in a virtual battlefield).

Along with beer, sports, and various explosion and combat simulations, the Guy Expo would not be complete without the addition of food, and there was plenty to go around.

Vendors from local restaurants and purveyors of salty, sweet and spicy foods were aplenty at the convention center.

Trevi Biles, big daddy of Big Daddy’s Hot Sauce was selling his wares for the weekend at the convention.

“We have been making hot sauce for four years and St. Arnold beer is in all of our sauces, so [the conference] contacted us and let us in the hot sauce area and we wanted to be a part of it,” Biles said. “It has been a great time — we have been having guys come around and try our sauces, and it has been great checking out the various booths. We needed something for us — something about drinking beer and eating food and just being generally lazy.”

There would be no exposition of testosterone complete without having contests to test manly mettle. Contests included were the “eat more heat” competition, a competition to see how long contestants could stand to have the world’s hottest lollipop (made with ghost chili extract, the hottest pepper in the world) in their mouth; a Hooters wing eating contest (contestants had to dress in Elvis Presley-esque jumpsuits with gold aviator glasses); the almost Darwin awards (contestants had to compare

near-death experiences); a beer can stacking contest (no explanation needed) and the Miss Guy Expo 2009 contest.

One of the taglines on The Guy Expo’s Web page explained the event in the best way: “What a way to enjoy the weekend. No other event has this much stuff for guys.”

Should the event come through Houston again next year, join mankind, raise a tall, frosty pint of your favorite barley and hopped beverage, eat great food and spend some time being all that is man.



Matt Griesmyer: The Signal

Trevi Biles, big daddy of Big Daddy’s Hot Sauce, showcases his wares at Guy Expo.

The Nutcracker Market: Shopper’s paradise, seller’s delight

Frank Lemus
The Signal Staff

Dogs are a man’s best friend, and this year’s Nutcracker Market used that very theme to welcome the coming holiday season. Every year, for the past 29 years, the Houston Ballet has put on the Nutcracker Market to raise funds for their endeavors.

Gaylon Gullquist, market chairman of the 2009 Nutcracker Market, originated the idea for this year’s dog theme, calling it “Puttin’ on the Dog,” and was inspired when she discovered the artistry of Jim Tweedy, a Louisiana-based artist.

More than 300 national and international merchants participated in the four-day event, which last year alone brought in more than \$2.5 million and 74,000 shoppers. This is truly a shopper’s paradise, as vendors offer a whole array of different items ranging from kid’s tents to frogs with slotted backs that make realistic frog noises when a stick is rubbed against them.

It was easy to fall into the holiday spirit with this event given the fact that so many gift-bound items were placed inside the Reliant Center building from Nov. 12 to Nov. 15. Gullquist said this was a good “kick-off to the holidays.”

“Oh, it’s wonderful,” said Judy Fanning, a market shopper. “[It] kicks off Christmas.”

She bought a lot of jewelry from the many jewelry vendors on site.

“I spent \$150 on three shirts and \$80 in food,” said Misty Howell, another shopper.

Proceeds from ticket sales and a portion of all vendor sales go to the Houston Ballet. There is also a market raffle that gives away four gifts to raffle winners.

Mercedes Meier, owner of Mommy Made It For Me, created a miniature dog play tent built to scale from the regular child play tents she makes, and donated it to the market raffle. Meier said that during low economic times the fine arts suffer financially and, therefore, she vfound donating her tents rewarding.

“This is my area of talent, creating play tents for children,” Meier said. “Anything we can do to help preserve a national ballet company, we’re more than happy to do.”

The Nutcracker Market was founded by Houston Ballet supporter, Preston Frazier, 29 years ago. This holiday market was modeled after the European street markets. It has gained a lot of popularity over the years and now has people from all around the country attending.

Vendors carefully select which items they would like to bring including: home décor, apparel, accessories, jewelry, children’s toys and gourmet food. For the past 28 years, the Nutcracker Market has secured more than \$26 million through ticket and product sales.

Fine arts are a part of humanity that truly separate mankind from other species; the Nutcracker Market is one fund raiser that has found common ground between keeping the arts alive and holiday shopping by providing entertainment with a friendly atmosphere.



Frank Lemus: The Signal

Thousands of shoppers were walking and purchasing items from the more than 300 vendors on site.



Frank Lemus: The Signal

Indian statues made of wood from the Rocking Horse Depot vendor.

Stalkers: continued from page 1

know who they are dealing with.” Jennifer McNally, an undergraduate psychology major, experienced stalking first hand at another college campus. Her stalker, a wheelchair-user, was verbally threatening toward her on a daily basis, but authorities did not take his threats seriously because of his disability. McNally was even viewed as the aggressor when she filed complaint reports with campus police.

“In my case, I looked like the bad guy because ‘here is this poor guy in a wheelchair and she’s calling the police on him,’” McNally said. “I feel stalking is very much underreported. It really feels more like a ‘he said, she said’ thing, from what I went through, because there was no physical damage.”

Rachael Gunter, an undergraduate history major, was also stalked on another college campus. She was treated similarly to McNally. She was called in by the dean who told her all the things she could not do as a result of being stalked as opposed to telling her how she could be helped.

“Now I’m thinking to myself, ‘I’m not stalking him!’” Gunter said. “You know, I’m not harassing him. [The dean] told me what happens

on campus, but I asked her what happens when I’m confronted off campus? Her exact words were ‘that is not my jurisdiction.’ I was a freshman undergrad, he was a 26-year-old grad student in geology and he had gotten his undergrad there. I’m not sure what role that played in it, but there was really no support from the campus.”

Both McNally and Gunter say UHCL is a much safer campus. McNally reported the negative experiences she had

with the stalker on her old campus and received a positive response.

“Dr. Jenkins sent a letter to him saying that he would be banned from UHCL if I reported that he was harassing me,” McNally said. “This did end up happening and Dr. Jenkins banned him from campus until I am done here as a student. Since then I have never had a run in with him on campus.”

The student life policy does not currently include guidelines for handling stalkers on campus, which Jenkins hopes to revise. Jenkins also plans to include cyber stalking prevention and awareness, which most universities do not have in their policy.

“I was very jaded when I got to UHCL because of my experience at my prior school,” Gunter said. “I was pleasantly surprised to meet Jennifer and learn that we shared similar experiences. The action taken by Dr. Jenkins and the campus police to ban her stalker before even having an incident was just amazing to me.”

January is National Stalking Awareness Month. Women’s services, with the Intercultural and International Student Services Office, will be hosting events throughout January in support of building awareness for this issue.

“Call it what it is early and the next step is to report it, because the earlier you report a stalker the better off you are going to be,” Gunter said. “Women should know that stalking is very dangerous, that it does progress quickly, that their best option is to report it early and that UHCL will take it very seriously.”

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expression on the policy does not prevent discrimination,” said Josephine Tittsworth former co-chair of the Houston Transgender Unity Committee. “But it puts it out there that the university will not tolerate it.”

Julie Smith, coordinator of women’s and LGBT services, hosted the event in the Garden Room in the Bayou Building. There were three keynote speakers: Lily Roddy, Lou Weaver, and Andrea.

Lily is a transwoman who serves as board president for the Transgender Foundation of America, secretary for Houston Transgender Unity Committee, and board member of the Community Advisory Board for the Trangender Center while promoting awareness politically and socially. During her time at the podium, she expressed the struggles of coming out to the world.

“When I told my family, that was the last time I saw them,” Lily said.

Lou is a transman who began his transition two years ago; he

is currently the president of the Community Advisory Board. Lou feels his change has benefited him but says, “Everyday I face a little bit of prejudice, judgment and acceptance.”

Andrea is a transwoman who spoke about the difficulties she would face at work if she were to openly come out and share with her employers how she really wants to be addressed. She has to portray an image at work as a guy because she fears the repercussion of losing her job or being demoted from her high-ranking position. To help protect her identity, she keeps her last name a secret.

“I want people to learn this is a problem for all of us,” said Julie Smith, coordinator of women’s and LGBT services. “Our hope is to educate people.”

Currently UHCL and the University of Houston are taking steps to implement the “gender expression and gender identity” clause on campus, and will have their next board meeting February 2010 with the chancellor and the university Board of Trustees.

C.A.R.E.: continued from page 1

When a problem is identified, the student is referred to the dean of students for initial review and possibly to the C.A.R.E. Team, who then assess each case to determine whether the student is of “interest,” “concern” or a “threat,” and monitor each case.

“The C.A.R.E team not only would react to student concerns, mental illness or shootings, but also crisis or catastrophes such as the bon fire in Texas A&M.” Rachita said.

C.A.R.E. is intended to serve as a means to enhance both campus-wide communication and effective proactive intervention. The C.A.R.E. team will formulate written protocol for relations with campus-wide and community resources, train a variety of responders on critical intervention techniques and strategies, and develop awareness of student distress.

The C.A.R.E. team will operate in a transparent manner to promote critical thinking, creativity and collaborative relationships in response to genuine concern for all students’ behavior and safety; and create communication mechanism allowing for succinct and confidential repository of concerns regarding student behavior both in and beyond the classroom.

Since 2008 the UHCL C.A.R.E. team has handled five concerns or crisis. Jenkins has helped with all five students. There have only been two concerns or crises that have gone through both teams A and B.



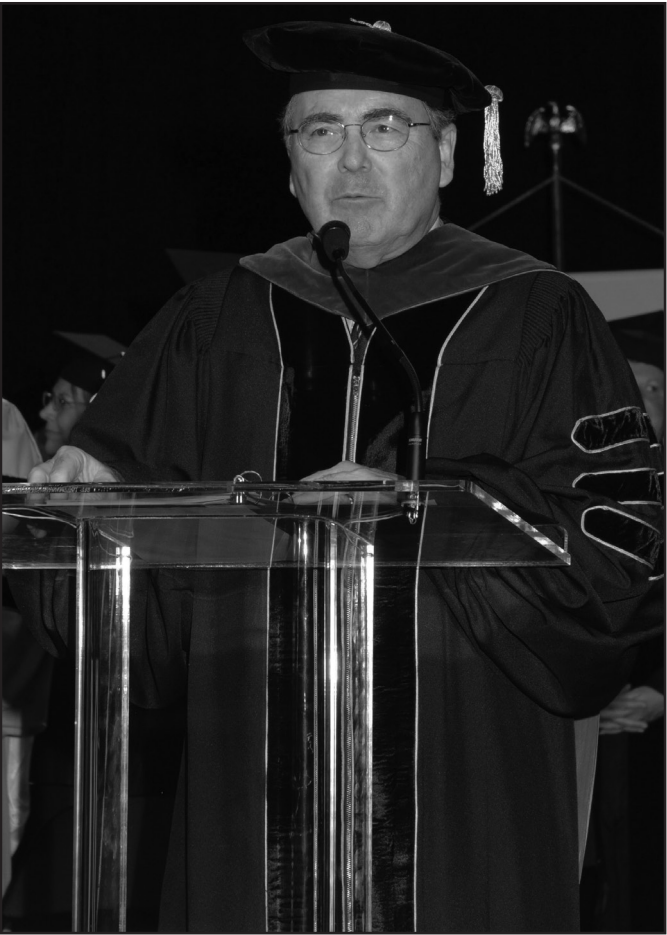
Courtesy: Office of the Dean of Students

C.A.R.E. team members David Rachita, assistant dean of student life, Al Kahn, director of career and counseling, Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, and Paul Willingham, UHCL chief of police.

“They are a student of concern, student of interest or a student who is believed to be a threat,” Jenkins said. “Each one of those categories, depending on how they are rated, will have an impact on who we bring in from that C.A.R.E. team and then what to do to support the student. In some cases we have to separate the student from the University for a certain length of time. We will work with that student to help them get back in to the university.”

Anyone can report disruptive and/or concerning behavior whether they are a student, faculty, staff or community member by calling 281-283-CARE or by submitting a C.A.R.E. incident report form available at www.uhcl.edu/deanofstudents.

Graduation: continued from page 1



Courtesy: Registrar's Office

William Staples, president of UHCL, speaks at the spring 2009 graduation commencement.

the door. Graduates’ family and friends left before the end of the ceremony as well.

“By splitting the ceremony we hope to encourage graduates and their families to stay for the full event,” said Yvette Bendeck, associate vice president for enrollment management. “We would like the dignity of the ceremony to be preserved with all candidates celebrating with one another and their accomplishments.”

“Clearly this was not ideal or something we wanted to see,” said Anthony Jenkins, dean of students. “In an effort to be more respectful of everyone’s time and to accommodate our growing graduation population, as well as their families, we felt it would be better to divide the ceremonies. To have students walk out after receiving their degree, indicates the lack of respect for others and their uni-

versity. We will curtail that this year.”

The distinguished speaker for the 10 a.m. commencement will be Dilhar De Silva, co-founder and chief technology officer of AtLink Communications, Inc. De Silva graduated from UHCL in 1991 with a bachelor of science in computer science, and in 1994 with a master of science in computer science. In 2008 the UHCL Alumni Association honored him as a distinguished alumnus. De Silva was the recipient of a United States “O” visa, which is awarded to individuals with extraordinary abilities as demonstrated by sustained national or international acclaim. As a pioneer in software modeling, De Silva was a member of the core team of eight industry experts that eventually standardized Unified Modeling Language, a visual language used to design, analyze and construct software and is supported by major software companies including IBM, Oracle, HP and Unisys.

The distinguished speaker for the 3 p.m. commencement will be Tina L. Farrell, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction for Clear Creek Independent School District. She has served the district for more than 28 years. Farrell earned a bachelor of fine arts and graduated with honors from the University of Texas in Austin. In 1985 she earned her Master of Arts in humanities from UHCL. In 1998 the UHCL Alumni Association honored her as a distinguished alumna. In 1988 she was the driving force in founding the Texas Art Educators Association’s prestigious Visual Art Scholastic Event, the largest high school art competition in Texas. Farrell has been recognized by numerous professional and community organizations including: the Getty Foundation’s 1988 National Award of Excellence for community programs; “The House that Art Built” and from 1989 to 1994 was a principal investigator for CCISD on a \$1 million National Endowment for the Arts Challenge Grant, partnering with Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The Texas Art Education Association honored her as 1994 Art Supervisor of the Year and 1997 Art Educator of the Year. In 2000 she was named CCISD Educators Association’s Administrator of the Year, and in 2003 she received the Houston Symphony’s School Bell Award.

UHCL faculty receive marks of excellence

Mary Ann Wangler
The Signal Staff

Five University of Houston-Clear Lake faculty members received awards recognizing distinguished services and outstanding teaching.

“University of Houston-Clear Lake has always had outstanding faculty members who are dedicated to providing a quality education to our students, supporting community initiatives and conducting scholarship in their respective disciplines,” said President William Staples. “I’m never surprised to hear that they are being honored for their hard work and dedication, and I am always proud to be surrounded by such talented professionals.”

Innovative teaching techniques

Daniel Silvermintz, assistant professor of humanities, was awarded the Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award for Outstanding Teaching in General and Liberal Studies.

“The Gaff award is a national award offered by the Association for General and Liberal studies, which is looking at interdisciplinary curriculum and first year programs like the basic texts sequence,” Silvermintz said. “I think they were particularly excited about some of the innovated exercises that I do in that class.”

The Humanities program nominated Silvermintz because of his innovative mock trial of Socrates during his Basic Texts in the Western Tradition class. Silvermintz has his students assume rolls and “try” Socrates on the same charges from 399 B.C.

“Every year that I have been teaching basic text [the trial] is a highlight of the semester,” Silvermintz said. “It is a way to synthesize everything we have done up to that point in the class. I’m always looking for ways to make students active participants

in the class. The more active someone can become in the learning process, the more they are going to get out of the class.”

Silvermintz received his award in October at the 49th annual Association for General and Liberal Studies, which was held in St. Louis.

A distinguished alumna gives back

The Barrios Technology Faculty Fellowship Endowment in the School of Science and Computer Engineering was awarded to Jack Lu, professor of chemistry and department chair, and Lei Wu, professor of software engineering.

“We are trying to make something new that can be used in long duration space flight and in low temperature storage, and can be used to detect low bio-markers,” Lu said.

Lu’s research is in aerospace application and he plans to use the fellowship to support that research.

“Basically, for research education related to aerospace research, like research presentations,” Lu said. “Go to a conference, buy some research supplies.”

Wu’s research is in Robotic and Intelligent Remote Security with the overall goal to make a “self-maintained, autonomous and interactive home security model.”

“It will strengthen my professional development in creating a combination of software engineering and embedded system engineering, thus to further develop the capability of securing external funding from national academic funds agencies, and it will enrich the software engineering program by introducing real-life applied research projects into the program, and further enhance the program curriculum development,” Wu said.

This is the first year for the Barrios Technology Fellowship, which was established by Sandra

G. Johnson, president of Barrios Technology. Johnson is a distinguished alumna of UHCL.

The fellowship provides funding for one year.

A Fulbrighter

Sandria Hu, professor of art, is a five-time Fulbright recipient. Her latest award allowed her to go to Belgrade, Serbia, for two weeks in September/October to teach her chine colle printmaking technique.

The Fulbright is designed to “increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.”

Participants are chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential.

Funding for the Fulbright Program primarily comes from an annual appropriation made by the Congress to the Department of State.

Hu’s first Senior Fulbright Scholar Fellowship was for a one-year stay in Czechoslovakia and her second was to Slovakia for six months. The Fulbright Scholar Fellowship requires a long-term stay of six months to one year. Her third Fulbright Scholar Fellowship was to Mexico.

“You’re only allowed to have two full Fulbrights long-term, ever, but they gave me three, because the people in Mexico really needed me for six months.

Hu then qualified as a Senior Fulbright Specialist, which gives her the opportunity to teach in another country for two weeks. Her fourth Fulbright was to Mexico again.

Hu, and UHCL, is part of an art consortium that includes several other universities from around the country and world. Hu takes artwork from these other universities with her on the Fulbright trips to display while she is teaching.

Hu travels all over the world teaching her printmaking technique, bringing students and instructors back to the states, and taking students and instructors with her to promote art.

“Because of the Fulbright I had with Mexico, I am going back to Mexico again in March; not with the Fulbright, but because of

my connections with Mexico through the Fulbright,” Hu said. “If it wasn’t for the Fulbright I wouldn’t have had that long-term exposure and connections and collaboration.”

“The whole goal for everything I’ve done, if it is involving international – whether going abroad or bringing people back here – is international dialogue and collaboration,” Hu said.

Distinguished service

Mary E. Stafford, associate professor of psychology, was awarded the International School Psychology Association 2009 Award for Distinguished Services.

ISPA serves members within the school psychology profession. It brings together people from all over the world and helps developing nations with establishing and maintaining school psychology programs in kindergarten through 12th grade schools.

“It meant a lot to me to get this award,” Stafford said.

Stafford has been an active and dedicated member of ISPA since 1991. She was asked to chair the Ethics Committee for ISPA in the late ‘90s and held the position for several years.

“[The Ethics Committee’s] goal is to provide standards for which school psychologists around the world can aspire to,” Stafford said.

“I tried to get people to think about times when they felt very uncomfortable. That’s when there is an ethical dilemma,” Stafford said. “Then let’s talk about those things and how we can resolve those things.”

In 2007 Stafford took over as editor of the ISPA newsletter and made it more dynamic by reaching out to other members in various countries to get them to provide material over what they are experiencing in their home countries.

“I will solicit articles about what is going on in school psychology around the world,” Stafford stated.

“Mary Stafford is a person who can always be relied on,” said Helen Bakker, ISPA president, at Stafford’s award presentation. “Her example and involvement is a model to us all in ensuring that ISPA remains a relevant and active organization for its members.”

Campus Calendar

Nov. 9-Dec. 2
Wish Tree Program
For more information, call 281-283-2575 or e-mail IISS@uhcl.edu SSCB 1.203

Nov. 13 - Jan. 15
Spring 2010 Open Registration

Nov. 16 – Jan. 2
Faculty Art Exhibition II
Showcasing the art faculty from Houston Community College Northwest and Southeast.

Nov. 23
World AIDS Day Art Contest
The theme of the contest is “Universal Access and Human Rights.” Art is due in the IISS by Nov. 23

Nov. 25-28
Thanksgiving Holidays

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Counterclockwise from top right: Lei Wu, professor of software engineering; Jack Lu (right), professor of chemistry; Daniel Silvermintz, assistant professor of humanities; Mary Stafford, associate professor of psychology; Sondria Hu, professor of art.