# TODENT POBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR EARE

Volume XXXVIII, Number 5

April 5, 2010

# OF THE CENSUS

### **Brad Denison**

The Signal

The phone rings, "This is John Smith with the U.S. Census Bureau. We haven't received your 2010 census paperwork and want to do it on the phone. What's your name? Who is the head of the household? What is your social security number?"

Would you have answered that last question? If so, you just became another victim of identity theft. Scam artists are using the 2010 U.S. Census for their own gains and in the process scaring people into not taking part.

The 2010 U. S. Census determines the distribution of more than \$400 billion dollars a year to communities for services such as natural disaster recovery, roads and transportation, schools from elementary to higher education, Medicare, W.I.C. and other social programs. The census also establishes redistribution of legislative seats, giving a voice in the share and distribution of that money.

The U. S. Constitution states that everyone living in the U.S. must be counted regardless of his or her migratory status. So if you breathe Texas air, you need to be counted and your participation means that Texas will get a fair share of the cash.

"The U.S. Census Bureau wants you to take ownership of the census," said Eduardo Guity, media specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau. "Without everyone's participation each neighborhood, community and city stands to lose millions of dollars."

This year's decennial census uses the shortest form in recent history. Ten questions take ten minutes to complete yet set policies for the next ten

Basic questions include: number of residents, telephone number, gender and date of birth. There are no questions about income, employment or migration status. The U.S. Census Bureau will not ask for Social Security or driver's license numbers. The bureau does not do anything over the

Internet for the 2010 census.

"There are only three reasons to give out your Social Security Number," said Linda Foley, chairman of the board for the Identity Theft Resource Center. "One is for tax purposes, like when you apply for a job or win at the casinos. Another is when you purchase a car. And the third is when you are establishing a line of credit which includes rentals and ownership."

If you are still worried about the information given in your 2010 U.S. Census form falling into the wrong hands, you need to remember to be careful when mailing it back to the government. Treat it like a check or your IRS return and hand deliver it to your local U.S. Post Office.

The Census Bureau does need your telephone number in case they have questions or can't read your handwriting. Fill out the forms properly and clearly and they won't need to call you or send someone to your door.

So, what do you do if you receive a phone call about your census information and are not sure if it is a legitimate representative? You politely hang up and call the Dallas Regional Census Center at (214) 267-6900 and speak to a supervisor.

The Census Bureau will begin sending government employees to get information from everyone who did not submit their forms April 15. The U.S. Census Bureau will never send you an e-mail asking for any information whatsoever; everything is done via the forms mailed to your home, on the phone or in person.

Census employees who come to your home wear badges with the U.S. Census Bureau seal, their name and will not ask to come into your home. The bureau encourages people to ask for a second form of ID.

Personal information collected is protected under title 13 of the U.S. code and guarantees confidentiality for 72 years and employees take an oath of confidentiality.

# What new healthcare bill means for students

Jennifer Travis

The Signal

President Barack Obama passed the Healthcare Reform Bill March 23, which offers extended coverage for students under the age of 26 through their parents' existing coverage.

The law will take more than four years to become effective. That is if, in fact, it does go into effect. The partisan debate is far from over.

In the wake of the new legislation, students are wondering where this leaves them. The Gallup poll states that Texas has the highest percentage, at 26.9 percent of people without health insurance in the country.

At the age of 26, everyone, including students, will be required to purchase coverage either through a private company or the government, or face a penalty.

"It's going to impact the students immensely," said Susan

**Healthcare:** continued on page 6

# Mounting debt raises students' concerns

Stephanie DuBois: The Signal

Lindsey Watson

The Signal

College students are in crisis. Tuition is rising, loan interest rates are increasing and jobs are few and far between. Students are now leaving college with enormous debt.

www.uhclthesignal.com

"It is definitely a serious problem for individual students and society when students are leaving school with an average of \$23,000 in debt," said Edie Irons, communications director at the Institute for College Access and Success. "It is really troubling."

There are three different types of loans available for students: private or alternative loans; parent or PLUS loans; and the most common, the federally insured or

the Stafford loan. Finaid.org reports that in the 2007-2008 school year, two thirds of undergraduate college students graduated from college with an average debt of \$23,186 from student loans.

Qualifying students can apply for a Pell grant, which does not have to be repaid. In the 2009-2010 school year, the maximum Pell grant any one student could receive was capped at \$5,350. That is up from \$4,731 in previous years. Some students also receive scholarships that do not need to be repaid.

In 2003, Gov. Rick Perry deregulated tuition in the state of Texas. From 2003-2009, tuition rates have increased by 86%. For the 2010 school year, University

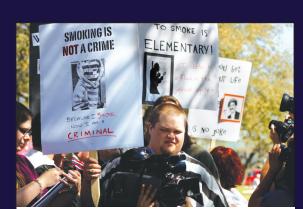
of Houston System schools are facing an increase at an average of 5.5 percent.

As of Feb. 2010, the U.S. unemployment rates have held steady at 9.7 percent. With the U.S. caught in the midst of a recession and unemployment rates remaining stagnant, recently graduated students face paying off student loans without sufficient employment.

Experts agree that everyone should be conservative when considering borrowing money for school.

"It is a good investment, but you have to be wise when taking that investment," said Billy Satterfield, associate director of financial aid at University of

Loans: continued on page 6



TIPA awards, p.8



Cultural Extravaganza, p. 4

For the Census' impact on Galveston, go to www.uhclthesignal.com

# THE SIGNAL

#### **Editor**

Corey Benson

**Assistant Editor** Lindsey Watson

## **Designer Editors**

Stephanie DuBois Kirstin McNeill

#### **Assistant Designers**

Stephanie Lee Kara Rice

#### Videographers/ **Photographers**

Ryan Eldred Jessica Jackson Pat Martin Ashley Webb

#### Reporters

Brian Bohannon Sonya Lynch Ben Nance Alicia Nguyen David Sager Jennifer Travis

## **Ad Representative**

Brad Denison

Social Media Manager Kelly Rathbun

#### Ad Manager/ **Production Assistant** Lindsay Humphrey

**Faculty Adviser** Taleen Washington

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The Signal is a public forum and will print letters to the editor subject to the following: letters must be no longer than 500 words. Where necessary, letters will be edited for grammar, spelling and style requirements. Letters must be signed and include the writer's full name, address and phone number. The editors reserve the right to refuse letters, announcements and contributed articles deemed libelous.

#### Address letters to:

The Signal **UH-Clear Lake** 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Box 456 Houston, TX 77058

#### Reach the staff:

Phone: 281-283-2570 281-283-2569 thesignal@uhcl.edu

#### Visit the Web site: www.uhclthesignal.com

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# **EDITORIAL**

# State's lack of support costs society more than an education

Higher education has become a realistic and tangible goal for more and more students in this country over the past few decades, but at what cost?

There are now more college students and college graduates than ever before in our nation's history. With a declining job market, a credit crisis and rising national debt, enrolling in college, university or technical school is becoming more and more costly.

As a result, more students and their parents are resorting to student loan programs to fund their futures and our future as a

The University of Houston-Clear Lake Web site and recruitment materials proudly advertise this institution provides, "Respected, affordable and accessible education." The credibility of this claim diminishes as education becomes less affordable and less accessible as tuition and fees increase each

In the "Land of Opportunities," opportunity is dwindling, debt is mounting, and students are suffering. Twothirds of students graduating with bachelor's degrees did so with student-loan debt, approximately \$23 thousand on average.

The National Center for Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education also estimates about two in 15 parents borrowed money to fund their children's college education. Graduate and professional students borrow even more. Fortyone percent of UHCL students are pursuing a graduate degree. With the additional cumulative debt for a graduate degree typically ranging from \$30,000 to \$120,000 nationally, students with graduate or professional degrees face years

of repayment for an education that costs exponentially more than it did in the past with substantially less financial assistance to ease

With declining state support for education, operating costs for colleges and universities must come from somewhere. Since tuition deregulation in 2003 under Gov. Rick Perry's administration, Texas legislators have identified students as that revenue source. Now students are forced to the carry the burden of financing even more of the cost of higher education. While education enormously benefits the students receiving it, it benefits society far more through the contributions made by educated individuals.

the blow.

The boards of regents must reign in the costs of attending state schools. The 181 individuals entrusted with protecting our future will convene next year. During the next session of

our Texas Legislature, elected officials must address the state of higher education finance.

Last month, students, faculty and staff from across the nation protested the declining state support and rising cost of education. Our demands, however, are either not being heard or are being ignored.

Tuition and fees have increased at every university in this state. Administrators are in the unenviable position of raising tuition and fees without student support to augment waning state funding.

At UHCL fees have increased to support student services, many of which students do not even realize are available. New fees and new tuition charges have been created for the upcoming academic term. Our government must become more responsive to our need for affordable education.

Most students on this campus,

and on campuses across the state, neither know nor care about cost centers, fee allocation committees, revenue sources or the myriad classifications of tuition or fees; but what students do care about is the quality and accessibility of their education.

There is a student loan crisis in this country. Students have been told since kindergarten, "Education is the key to success." This is not told to young students as a platitude.

Sitting in classrooms across America are our future scientists, doctors, teachers, counselors, Supreme Court Justices, attorneys general, presidents, engineers, city planners and entrepreneurs. Their education is the key to our

As affordable education becomes less accessible and the cost of pursuing it becomes more expensive, our future hangs in the balance.



Brad Denison: The Signal

# COLUMN

# Grant me the courage to change what I can

Decisions, decisions. From the time the alarm goes off we begin to make decisions. Many of us find ourselves living day-in and day-out making pretty much the same decisions some without understanding why.

Years ago I realized that many of my decisions were made to please others, and I had totally abandoned thoughts for my own

I was not the only one. Sitting in conversations with other young women, I found many of them compartmentalized their lives into the experiences of others. I decided to take some time to reflect on my choices.

I saw that I had begun to surround myself with people who did a lot of things but had no quality experiences. I was not even enjoying the company I kept. The words of the Greek philosopher Epicteus, came to not by what happens to us, but our thoughts about what happens," and "Suffering arises from trying to control what is

uncontrollable, or from neglecting what is within our power."

So, I decided to make a change by viewing life realistically. I began to analyze my acquaintances. There were people in my life who took more than they gave. They were not

bad people, but there was nothing I could give them that would be enough to make them stop taking more than I actually wanted to

give. Now I had a choice to mind. He said. "We are disturbed accept them and keep them in my are the most powerful. If you're life by setting boundaries for our relationship or I could move on. I chose to move on.

I was in my twenties with a

small child, so I asked some of the experienced mothers around me how they found local events to attend. I began doing the same and met people who motivated me to reach out for that next level in my life – people who encouraged healthy behavior

and understood that "no" was not rejection, but a decision to choose something else.

Of all the decisions we make,

the ones we make for ourselves not happy with your life, change what you can. If you have someone in your life who you want to keep in your life, accept them the way they are. They're just being themselves.

If you have gained weight over a period of time, you're not going to lose it in one night or one week. Take an arm full of clothes into the changing room and find out what suits the new you. Hold your head up, correct your posture and greet the world as it is. Pass the clothes on when you lose the weight.

Change your expectations if things don't turn out the way you expect. Don't dwell on what has passed. Let people who have hurt you and memories that cause pain go. Allow yourself to heal. That is within your power.



The Signal Staff











# Celebrating cultural diversity through performance art





Alicia Nguyen
The Signal Staff

Students representing different countries came together March 27 in Bayou Theater to showcase their cultural heritages. Cultural Extravaganza is a show put on by University of Houston-Clear Lake students to share their culture with the community through singing, dancing, poetry, food and much more.

The show is held once a year in the spring. It is the biggest event hosted by the Office of Intercultural and International Student Services this semester.

Susana Hernandez, coordinator of educational and programming outreach, coordinated this year's Cultural Extravaganza.

More than 500 people filled the Bayou Theatre to

attend the 15th anniversary of this annual show.

"The show promotes well-rounded individuals who showed their diversity at its best," President William Staples said.

A lot of effort from the students went into this year's Cultural Extravaganza.

"The show took two months to plan and I think it went very well," Hernandez said, "I was impressed by all of the support from the community and alumni. I've had a lot of positive feedback."

This year's show included students representing India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Germany, Mexico, Nepal, China, America and many more. It was a blend of the different cultures. Students had a chance to give a brief insight of their heritage.

"This is the first time

the Nepalese Student
Association represented
Nepal," said Prashanti
Pandit, sociology graduate.
"Most people don't
know much about Nepal
and it was so much fun
representing and sharing
Nepal with them."

There were 20 performances in this year's showcase.

"This year's show,
I thought, was really
diverse," Hernandez said
"In the past we had a lot
of Vietnamese and Indian
performers, but this year
we had a couple more. We
put a lot of effort into this
year's show; I felt it was
really well organized."

After the show students provided samples of their international cuisine such as tamales, spring rolls, samosa and much more.

"It is a really good event to learn about other cultures and represent your own," said Nallely Carmona, education major. "It makes you feel really patriotic."

Students who performed for the first time look forward to performing next year as well.

"It was an excellent show and I would encourage other students to get involved next year," said Udeshika Amarasinghe, psychology major.

"This is the one time that all of our students from different backgrounds can come together and share about their culture with the university," Hernandez said. "I'm happy that our office can do that for them. I honestly could not have done it without the students and I'm looking forward to planning this event again next year."

# **FEATURES**





**Middle Left:** Jennifer Galvez performs as Jen Jen the Dancing Clown, representing the U.S. and Lebanon.

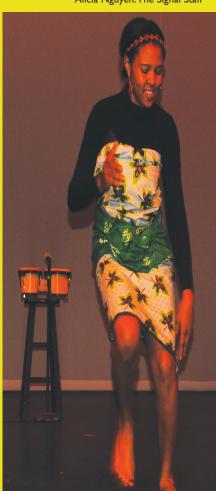
**Middle Bottom:** Chris Greenfield and Clare Leonard perform a traditional Welsh children's song named Franz O Wlad Awstria.

**Middle Right:** Lola Ogunmoyela dances the Bata dance, a cultural dance of the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria.

**Bottom**: The Vietnamese Student Association dances and sings Ghe Ben Sai Gon & Sai Gon.



Alicia Nguyen:The Signal Staff



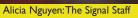
Alicia Nguyen: The Signal Staff













Houston-Clear Lake. "Consider future income when borrowing. Only take what you need."

Defaulting on student loans will do much more than simply add a negative item on a credit report. The federal government can garnish wages and take legal action against the person in default. Defaulting on student loans can also render one unable to gain future student aid or unable to buy a house. While one won't go to prison for defaulting on a student loan, financial ruin is a possibility.

Tracy Patteson, a 2009 graduate of University of Houston, found herself in this situation. As a single mother struggling to pay for college, she accumulated a \$37,000 student loan debt. Unable to find work after six months, her students loans went into default.

"It is such a heartbreaking thing, first to undergo so much hard work, put myself through school and be unable to find employment, but then to be unable to pay my loans and have them in default, destroying my credit," Patteson said. "I have failed myself and I have failed my daughter."

Sara Quintana started college in 1998. Unable to pay for school, she took out several student loans. As the cost of tuition and living rose, Quintana found herself unable to pay for school anymore. After dropping out, her lenders called to collect payment. Now, without a degree, she is scrambling to find a way to pay them off monthly.

"The whole experience has left me bitter and disappointed, almost like I've been tricked," Quintana said. "We put ourselves through some of the toughest times in our lives hoping to make a better life, and all we got out of it was stress and debt that will trail us for the next 25 plus years."

## Healthcare: continued from page I

Leitner Prihoda, director of health and disability services and family nurse practitioner at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. "More than half of our students do not have health insurance. They can't afford it. They have pre-existing conditions. They are too old to be on their parents' [insurance]. It will only help them."

Prihoda said there will be no change in the foreseeable future for the current student health insurance plan. The current plan is already signed and will be in effect through 2011.

"This bill is excellent for students because they will be able to remain on their parents' insurance until 26 or can get insurance at a reduced rate," said Joseph Madden, a representative for state Rep. Garnet F. Coleman. "College students with children will especially benefit. Overall this bill will take America a whole lot further then where we are."

Texas Republican leaders are debating the effectiveness of the bill, describing parts of it as unconstitutional. Thirteen attorney generals from various states have filed lawsuits against the federal government, including Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott.

Abbott filed suit challenging the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

"The federal health care legislation signed today violates the United States Constitution and unconstitutionally infringes upon Texans' individual liberties," Abbott said in a March 23 press release=. "No public policy goal – no matter how important or well-intentioned – can be allowed to trample the protections and rights guaranteed by our Constitution.

"To protect all Texans' constitutional rights, preserve the constitutional

framework intended by our nation's founders, and defend our state from further infringement by the federal government, the State of Texas and other states have filed a legal challenge seeking judgment from the courts that the federal health care take over is unconstitutional."

In response to Abbott's suit, several Texas democratic leaders sent a letter disagreeing with his actions.

"A thorough reading of case law does not support your assertion," the letter reads. "Federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, have time and again given Congress broad authority under the Commerce Clause to regulate interstate commerce and impose taxes."

The letter is signed by Democratic Representatives Garnet F. Coleman, Martinez Fischer, Jessica Farrar and Sylvester Turner and Senators Eliot Shapleigh, Rodney Ellis and Leticia Van De Putte.

Madden said that the Republican plan to postpone this bill is "clearly a political objective and waste of tax payers' money."

"While we are disappointed with the outcome of the vote on Sunday night, are determined to continue to take our case against this government takeover of health care to the American people," said U.S. Congressman Mike Pence, Chairman of the House Republican Conference, at a House GOP leadership press conference. "The American people oppose a government takeover of health care. They oppose the job-killing tax increases, individual mandates, public funding of abortion and the creation of incentives in system that will result in millions of Americans losing the health insurance that they have."

The plan, designed to help millions of Americans gain affordable health

coverage, includes several controversial issues including abortion, coverage extending to illegal immigrants, possible penalty for non-insured citizens and the ability to keep one's own doctor.

"They will see that if Americans like their doctor, they will keep their doctor," Obama said, in a speech given at the University of Iowa. "If you like your plan, you will keep your plan. No one will be able to take that away from you."

# Controversial Issues

- **Abortion** Bill does not allow federal funds to pay for elective abortions covered by private insurance.
- Personal Physician Patients can keep their own doctors with PPO plans.
- Penalty for non-insured citizens There is an exemption for low-income citizens. The penalty will take effect in 2014.
- Coverage for Illegal Immigrants - The bill does not block immigrants from coverage, but does not guarantee it either.

National Survey
of Student Engagement
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# Houston hosts international film festival



Courtesy: World Fest

"Film is one of the three universal languages, the other two: mathematics and music."

Frank Capra Legendary Film Maker

#### **Ben Nance**

The Signal Staff

With more than 40 North American film premieres, 55 award-winning indie films on display and more than 450 filmmakers from around the world attending, the 2010 Houston International Film Fest, aka WorldFest, has a little slice of cinematic magic for everyone.

WorldFest 2010 will take over the Flagship AMC Studio 30 Theatre on Dunvale, April 9-18.

In addition to the more than 100 short films on display, WorldFest 2010 will feature

TRUTH BE TOLLED

281 SPECIAL EDITION

six film-industry seminars that include advice on what critics look for in indie films, tips for attracting investors and a WorldFest 2010 Indie Filmmakers Forum. This event gives amateur filmmakers direct access to award-winning film directors who share their secrets on how to complete and market a film.

"This year we expect to have a lot of diverse movies from countries all around the world," said Michael Delamada, HR manager of AMC 30 Dunvale. "We've never had a movie from Slovakia, so we're pretty excited to have our first one this year."

The 43rd annual "oldest independent film festival in the world" will also represent the local filmmaking scene. Five feature films with directorial Texas roots will be on display

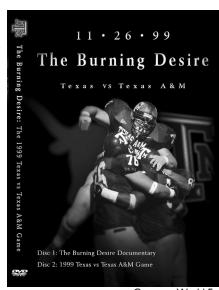
this year. Three of which, "For the Sake of the Song," "The Story of Anderson Fair" and "Burning Desire," are mesmeric documentaries that tell a wide variety of stories from tollway tribulation in Texas to the backstory of a local Houston music venue.

"This year's WorldFest will undoubtedly be the biggest in our 43 year history," said Kathleen Haney, program director of WorldFest. "With so many directors attending, there is a little something for everyone to enjoy."

Founded in 1961, WorldFest is the third oldest international film festival in the U.S. and has exponentially grown into one of the most well-respected film fests around. The competitive vibe has turned this annual event into a celebration that showcases

the rising directorial and film stars of tomorrow.

WorldFest 2010 kicks off 7 p.m. April 9 with the Demi Moore and David Duchovny flick called "The Joneses." The AMC Studio 30 Theatre is located at 2949 Dunvale (two miles west of The Galleria). Tickets start at \$7 a person for a matinee showing or \$10 per single evening admission. For more information about WorldFest, its annual competition and past winners, visit www. worldfest.org.



Above: "Point of Death" director Corey Seymour investigates the fine line between life and death.

Right: "Truth be Tolled" is the story about the intricacies of Texas legislature and the controversial conversion of Texas freeways into revenuegenerating toll roads.

Far Right: "The Burning Desire" is another labor of love. sweat and tears as different cameramen from the ranks of the Texas A & M 12th Man Production team collaborate to document the heart-wrenching story of the 1999 bonfire tragedy.



# \*\* Student Life \*\* Student Life \*\* Student Life \*\*

# Hill Cook-Off: The Comeback

Saturday, April 10th Delta Field ♦ 12 p.m. - 4 p.m. Chili tasting kits ♦\$3 with UHCL ID ♦ \$4 without UHCL ID

Chili ♦ Beverages ♦ DJ & Karaoke FREE Moonwalk, Rockwall & **Obstacle Course** Sand Volleyball & Other Games

Contact Allison Scahill for more information at 281-283-2560 or Scahill@uhcl.edu.



Any person needing an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this program should contact Allison Scahill in the Student Life Office at Scahill@uhcl.edu or ext. 2560 at least one week prior to the event to arrange for the accommodation.

# Student Government Association

# Congratulations

to the newly elected **Executive Council** 2010-2011



From left to right: Chris Greenfield, President; Rebecca Smith, VP Committee Coordinator; Amanda Schoolcraft, VP Outreach and Communication: Clare Leonard, VP Administratio

The new executive council members will be sworn in at the Student Leadership Banquet on April 23, 2010.

**Attend the Student Government Association** meetings every Tuesday at 11.30am at SSCB Lecture Hall 1.100.03.



For Details Contact The SGA Executive Council:

Patrick Cardenas - President Steve Steiner - VP Committee Coordinator Amanda Schoolcraft - VP Outreach & Communications Chris Greenfield - VP Administration

SSCB Rm.1.205 \* 281-283-2556 \* SGA@uhcl.edu \* www.uhcl.edu/SGA





 ${\sf Tina\ Phan:} {\sf The\ University\ Star, Texas\ State\ University-San\ Marcos}$ 

Grant Chesshir, former Signal assistant designer, dressed as Groucho Marx and pretended to smoke a cigar for the protest at the staged press conference.



Tina Phan:The Univeristy Star, Texas State Univeristy-San Marcos

UHCL and Midland Community College students carried protest signs and dressed up as famous characters for the staged protest.

Visit our Web site for the



# TIPA the hat to UHCL student publications for competition wins

Kirstin McNeill

The Signal Staff

Student publications at the University of Houston-Clear Lake received 24 awards at the annual Texas Intercollegiate Press Association convention March 25-27 in Kerrville.

Seven UHCL communication students competed in various on-site competitions at the 101st annual conference.

Communication majors Corey Benson, Stephanie DuBois, Kirstin McNeill, Anthony Nguyen, Grant Chesshir, William Humbird and Chris Curry competed against students from other Texas colleges and universities at the convention. All students are either current or former members of The Signal and/or Bayousphere editorial staff. UHCL communication alumni Matt Griesmyer and Lindsay Humphrey, and Taleen Washington, director of student publications, and Royce Ann Walker, adjunct instructor of communication, attended the convention as advisers.

"Every year I am impressed at how well our students fare in these competitions," Washington said. "Thanks to the collaborative efforts of all the faculty who teach in the Communication program, our students won 24 awards at state. Yet they only have one semester of newspaper and maybe one semester of magazine under their belts."

TIPA was formed in 1909 by nine Baylor students to help raise awareness of journalism in Texas universities.

"TIPA is a prestigious organization because it is not only the largest and oldest state collegiate press association in the nation, but also because of the caliber and quality of individuals representing TIPA institutions who have become leaders in their chosen fields," said Fred Stewart, executive director of TIPA and faculty adviser of the Texas A&M University-Commerce newspaper, The East Texan. "These individuals have achieved excellence in the areas of all mass media in addition to education and the political arena. In addition to the quality individuals, TIPA presents a solid experience for students through the spring convention when students have an opportunity to learn from the industry's best and then display their own skills and talents in on-site competitions. All of this contributes to the excellence of TIPA."

On-site competitions take place the first day of

the TIPA convention and contestants are allotted a specific amount of time to demonstrate skill sets in journalism, design, broadcasting and photography.

"UHCL is very lucky to have had a student place in one of the on-site competitions," said Corey Benson, Signal editor. "Kirstin McNeill received honorable mention for yearbook design. This is a testament to the creativity and talent of the UHCL Communication program's students. I was pleasantly surprised when I was announcing the awards in that category and was able to read one of our students' names."

While the on-site competition and a majority of the awards were targeted to the print media, UHCL had a newly found online presence.

"Last year Lindsay Humphrey, production assistant for student publications who was a communication major at the time – she's since graduated – redesigned The Signal Web site to reflect this new age of converging media," Washington said. "Thanks in large part to her efforts, The Signal staff won their very first awards in the online competitions."

Another first for UHCL was staging a live event for on-site competition – a press conference over Kerrville's public smoking ban. Participants from UHCL and Midland Community College portrayed protesters, wearing costumes, carrying signs and attempting to interrupt the staged press conference.

"Seeing the event go through planning and helping to prepare for it and having it come to fruition was a great experience," said Matt Griesmyer, former Signal editor. "Usually on-site competitions are just a typed situation on a piece of paper, but this was so much more like real life. All the participants and contestants truly benefited from the experience."

Student officers were elected for TIPA and Benson was elected vice president.

"For the very first time in my memory, we have a UHCL student serving as a student council member for TIPA," Washington said.

The Signal also won two national awards from Columbia Scholastic Press Association for its online presence. The deadline for the pre-published material has been moved until June, so the winners in the print categories for newspaper and magazine will not be announced until later in the year.

For a complete list of awards, visit www. uhclthesignal.com.