



THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE

uhcl the signal

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VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 6

SPECIAL EDITION

**STUDENT CONFERENCE FOR
RESEARCH & CREATIVE ARTS**

20TH

ANNIVERSARY

online this issue

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Art consortium travels to Mexico
UHCL students travel to Mexico to exchange art and culture with students from Universidad Veracruzana.

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Prisoners earning an education
Jessica Alcocer looks at how the Ramsey Unit gives student inmates a "second chance."

BLOG ONLINE

Student Conference
for
Research
&
Creative Arts



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CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!



Best wishes as you soar into the future. Go Hawks!

William A. Staples

William A. Staples, President

University of Houston  Clear Lake

••• STUDENT LIFE • STUDENT LIFE • STUDENT LIFE • STUDENT LIFE •••

Student Government Association Summer 2014



Your new SGA executive council invites you to join us for our summer meetings on the following dates:

- **Tuesday, June 10th**
- **Tuesday, July 1st**
- **Tuesday, August 5th**

All meetings are from 11:30 am until 12:30 pm in Bayou Atrium II.

uhcl the signal

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CORRECTIONS VOLUME 42, NO. 5 – APRIL 7, 2014

An article teaser on the front page inaccurately directs students to the new Math Center in SSCB. The Math Center's new location is Bayou Building, Room 2127.

The article "New math center now available to students," incorrectly stated that the Math Center is open on Fridays. The Math Center is closed on Fridays. The photo caption attached to the article incorrectly spelled Paromita Banerjee's name.

In the article titled "READY OR NOT, HERE THEY COME," the Student Orientation and Registration (SOAR) program was incorrectly identified as the Student Orientation Academic Registration program.

SOAR was incorrectly cited as offering sessions for 30-35 students. The orientation sessions hold 30-50 students. SOAR was incorrectly identified as a freshman orientation. The program is open to first- and second-year incoming students.

The article incorrectly stated that students could not register until they had attended one mandatory orientation session. SOAR students must attend orientation in order to register. Transfer students may register for their first semester before orientation but will not be able to register for their second semester if they do not attend.

The article incorrectly implied that the Hawk Leadership Institute and the Hawk Spirit and Traditions Council were the same. They are two separate components operated by the Student Life Office.



Hundreds gather at the 20th annual Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts

LARISSA BARNES
THE SIGNAL
An estimated 600 students gathered at UHCL to attend the annual Student Conference for Research & Creative Arts (SCRCA) to present their original academic work.

The conference is designed as an affordable way for students to get professional feedback about their presentations as well as to provide a learning process on how to prepare their work for presentation.

Students who present at the conference must be sponsored by a faculty member who will review and approve the presentation prior to application. During the conference, community members from various fields and corporations critique participants' work and offer feedback.

"The goal of the conference is to focus on the students and their successes," said Pilar Goyarzu, co-director of SCRCA. "This is a learning process for students to make them comfortable in a familiar environment and to provide feedback to help them succeed in their future careers."

This year the conference marked SCRCA's 20th anniversary. Throughout the past 20 years, the conference has seen many changes and has increased in size.

SCRCA started in 1994. Former director and associate professor of psychology Kyna Shelley and current director Michael Hunt, instructor of psychology, originally led the conference with 31 students from UHCL. Not all of those first conference students wanted to participate, but their professors pushed them to join, which started the conference.

Over the years, the conference began to invite students from other colleges to present their work. Most students who participate in SCRCA are local or in state, but students from 13 different states have attended the conference, and even students from other coun-

tries such as Argentina, Canada and Mexico. SCRCA also invites students from community colleges to participate.

"It's a good way to introduce the students from the junior colleges to our campus," Hunt said. "Having the students come to UHCL to participate in the conference is a good way to help the campus grow, especially with the introduction of the freshmen and sophomores this fall."

This year an estimated 600 students attended the conference; a large increase from the 31 students who started it in 1994.

The conference itself has seen a lot of changes during the past 20 years. With changes and advances in technology, more students began to present digitalized artistic works, which have become an integral part of the conference.

Animation is one of the more recent additions to the conference, with the 3rd Annual Animation & Film Festival this year. Another change that is also in its third year is the Honors Program Students from Laredo Community College.

As the name implies, events held at the conference range from artistic to academic and scholarly research. Some of this year's events included: the Ramsey Campus presentations, which allowed inmates who have been taking UHCL courses from the Ramsey Unit to present their works via videotape; an annual mock trial, where students studying legal fields stage a trial and determine a judgment; poster presentations; the Women's Studies Seminar; and the Annual Animation & Film Festival.

Goyarzu and Hunt believe SCRCA would not be here today if it was not for the help of the faculty, evaluators and sponsors. Both said there are many people who put this event together every year and make sure that there will be students participating; faculty sponsorship and evaluations are keys of the UHCL conference.

"I think it is important to acknowledge the work and participation of faculty, sponsors and evaluators; without them, the student conference would not happen," Goyarzu said.

There are also students who believe that the conference is beneficial to their peers who join SCRCA.

"The students are making a difference and showing their peers what they have done," said James Elmore, a conference committee member and undergraduate psychology major. "The conference provides an opportunity for students to look into other research and to also enhance their skills."

Students who are interested in participating in SCRCA should start gathering their works to prepare a presentation in advance. As mentioned, students need a faculty member to sponsor them before they can apply to the conference. Students can visit the SCRCA website at www.uhcl.edu/ResearchArtsConference/ for more information about the conference and to view proceedings from this year and past conferences.

Clockwise:
2014 Chinese New Year horse by Thaeng Pate, one of the artistic creations represented at the Interactive Animation session. The image was created using the numerical 2014.

Presenters and attendees mingle during the poster sessions of SCRCA in Atrium II.

Undergraduate Women's Studies majors Kellie Keener and Jayme Quick and graduate student Heather Tolleson speak to students about the sex industry and sex trafficking.

Infographic by Sam Savell presented at Big Move: Infographics at Events Marketing session displays the relocation of NASA 905 from Ellington Field to Space Center Houston, where it will join a replica of the Independence shuttle.



KAILIE HYDE: THE SIGNAL



KAILIE HYDE: THE SIGNAL

THE BIG MOVE

APRIL 28-30 9PM-6AM

MISSION DETAIL:
NASA 905 is moving to a new home — Space Center Houston!

Beginning on Monday, April 28, the massive 318,000 pound Boeing 747 will make it's journey across Highway 3 and down Nasa Parkway over the span of two nights via seven large trucks, carrying disassembled parts of the aircraft, with the largest piece being the 130-foot-long fuselage in tow.

The 1000-foot-long convoy will travel the eight mile distance at the pace of a human beings walk. It will pause transportation during daytime hours along E. Commerce Road, and continue at 9 PM each night until it has arrived at Space Center Houston.

NASA 905 will be re-assembled and docked into ferry position with the Independence orbiter at Space Center Houston, where it will be crafted into a Space Shuttle exhibit, with plans to open in 2015.

OV-100 INDEPENDENCE

Constructed: November 1993
Length: 122 ft
Wingspan: 78 ft
Height of tail: 57 ft
Height of wing: 12 ft
Weight: 130,000 lbs

Independence is a full-scale high-fidelity Space Shuttle model donated by Johnson Space Center to Space Center Houston. It has been honored as Orbiter Vehicle 100, and is fully constructed using all of the same materials as it's mission-ready counterparts.

Independence will be docked on the carrier aircraft NASA 905 and open to the public at SCH in 2015.

Text "Shuttle747" to 41444 to donate to the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft exhibit.

CARRIER NASA 905

NASA 905 was the agency's first Shuttle Carrier Aircraft. It was obtained from American Airlines in 1974. NASA 905 was the only SCA used in the space shuttle program until November 1990, when NASA 911 was delivered for use as a second SCA. NASA 905 was also used as a test vehicle for crew rescue systems and turbulence flight procedures during it's service.

First flight: Oct. 15, 1970
Years in service: 42 years
Flight hours: 11,017
Takeoffs and landings: 6,334
Ferry flights: 224

Wingspan: 195'-0"
Length: 231'-10"
Height of vertical stabilizer: 63'-5"
Height of cockpit area: 32'-1"
Basic weight: 318,053 lbs
Airspeed limit: 250 knots
Fuel capacity: 47,210 gallons

DID YOU KNOW?

NASA 905 has an adjustable ballast system to keep the aircraft's center of gravity forward using approximately 1,710 pounds of pig iron and 7,000 pounds of pea gravel

ROUTE DETAIL:



The art consortium from the University of Houston-Clear Lake and Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, gather over spring break to exchange artistic influences and techniques from each other's cultures.



PICTURES COURTESY: SANDRIA HU

Mexican-influenced 2014 art consortium

MARY MILLER
THE SIGNAL

Seven University of Houston-Clear Lake students traveled to Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, during spring break to explore the work of Mexican artists and the artwork of the university's students as part of this year's art consortium between UHCL and UV.

"The consortium is about the international exchange of foreign artist and art exhibitions," said Sandria Hu, professor of art.

Hu is the professor in charge of the art consortium who came up with and implemented the exchange of the creative artistic work between cultures. The students' six-day tour to Veracruz, Mexico, included cultural immersion, with intensive classes all day with all of the professors in drawing, photography, graphics and gallery arts administration. Accommodations were provided by the office of International Foreign Students on the UV campus.

The consortium displayed works from the students in categories such as ceramics, photography, graphics, painting, printmaking and installations mixed media. Each participating student was allowed to create artwork from one category.

The art students who participated in this year's study abroad were Yanira Roubi, Liliana Zuniga, Amber Kaiser, Kevin Cromwell, David Moya, Sarah Melville and Ashley Bailey.

The students who attended the Veracruz trip selected a Mexican artist of their choice for inspiration and drew from that artist's influence when creating their own art-

work, which they presented at this year's art consortium. In addition to their artwork, they had to write a research paper based on their experience in Mexico and the artist they chose to influence their work.

David Moya, art education major, chose to do photographs and digital manipulation as his project for this year's show, but Moya feels he is more eclectic with regards to art. He got his inspiration from a professor who specializes in color photo paintings.

"Just because we chose to do one thing for this consortium doesn't mean that is our main focus; I just chose to do it specific to this class," Moya said.

The students were evaluated and critiqued by Carlos Torralba, director of the School of Fine Arts at Universidad Veracruzana, and Roxana Camara, professor of graphic and visual arts at UV. They were looking for the differences in techniques between the Mexican artists' works of inspiration and the artwork created by UHCL's students.

Torralba said he looked for the differences in techniques in the students' work, like the variations of techniques used to create wood blocks, imaging and etching plates.

"I have been collaborating with the art consortium since 2003 working with exchanging students' work and art," Torralba said.

Yanira Roubi, graphic design major, chose graphics as her medium. She put an Arabic twist combined with Spanglish into her artwork.

"I am Mexican-American and married to an Arab, so that is where my idea came from," Roubi said. "I have a passion for graphics; it was the only category that really came natural to me, so I am glad I got to do that for my project."

The UHCL students estimated spending around 3-4 days to create the finished Mexico-themed artwork.

"We were only there a week, but the influence it made on the students had a great impact, and I can see that through their work," Hu said. "I'm very impressed at the evolutionary change these students have made during this course."

Artwork from the consortium is on display in the Art Gallery, located in the Bayou Building through May 15.

Liliana Zuniga, art major, and Roxana Camara, professor of graphic and visual arts at Universidad Veracruzana, discuss artwork.

PICTURE BY LOREE COUCH: THE SIGNAL

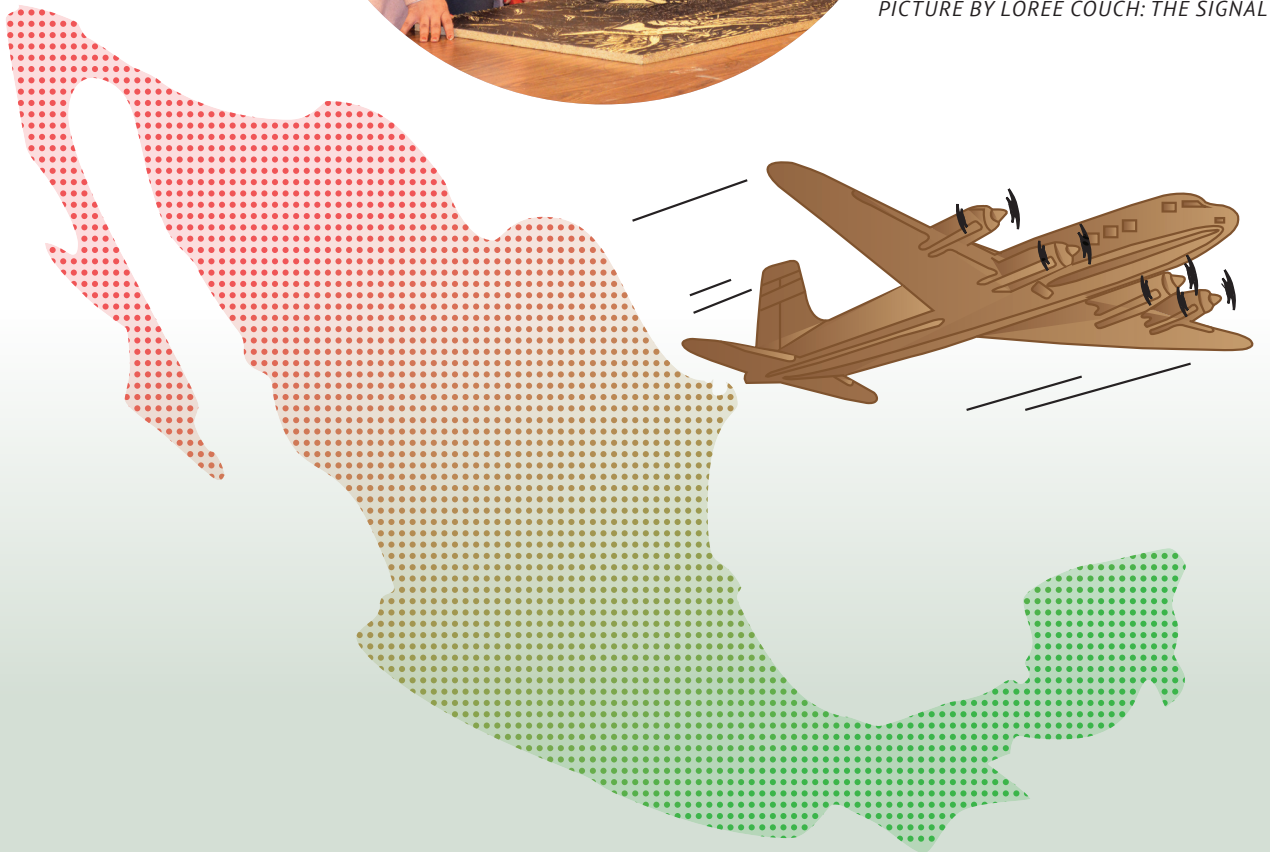


BFA

ART exhibition 2014

GO ONLINE

to view a slideshow by Liz Davis covering the opening of the BFA art exhibition.



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY SEXTON: THE SIGNAL



Presenters at the 20th annual Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts for the healthcare administration: study abroad to India session. FROM LEFT: Ashish Chandra, professor of healthcare administration; Randall Garcia, MBA/MHA major; John Gonzalez, MHA major; Erica Jones, MHA major; Angela Miller, MHA major; Melissa Phillips, MBA major.

Study abroad: India

Students observe health and safety practices

ERIKA THOMAS
THE SIGNAL

Five cities in nine days; eight UHCL graduate students traveled to India in January to receive a broader education in the healthcare industry. The journey and experience allowed the students an opportunity to immerse themselves in a new culture, education system and history.

The School of Business: Masters of Healthcare Administration (MHA) graduate students presented the learning experiences gained from their nine-day trek across India at the 20th annual Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts (SCRCA).

The students who went on this educational journey to India were Randall Garcia, John Gonzalez, Neera Gupta, John Hritcko, Zuzie Huynh, Erica Jones, Angela Miller and Melissa Phillips.

“Study abroad trips give an opportunity for students to get out of their comfort zone and learn from real life situations in a foreign nation and culture,” said Ashish Chandra, professor of healthcare administration, who led the study abroad trip.

The UHCL graduate students visited Bangalore, Delhi, Neemrana, Jaipur and Agra. While there, they had the opportunity to interact with students and faculty at three different universities under the guidance of Chandra.

“I can tell you that I feel like I got more out of the trip than I had expected,” said Gonzalez, MHA major.

Using a PowerPoint presentation that included photographs from their trip, students recounted the highlights of their faculty-led study abroad experience to SCRCA attendees.

In Bangalore, students presented at the Institute of Finance and International Management Business School (IFIM) for the 2014 Convergence Conference. The conference had delegates from 10 countries, giving it a strong global flavor.

A convergence between industry and academia, the event had several prominent speakers. The theme of the conference was “Ethical Leadership: The Indian Way.”

The attending graduate students learned about leadership ethics from different perspectives. The IFIM conference spoke on topics of spirituality and leadership, sustainability, and ethics and media.

“Their session was well attended by faculty, students and industry leaders from several countries, and they all praised the professionalism and high quality of research that the students had done,” Chandra said. “They made me proud and made UHCL look very good in an international arena. The conference organizers were so delighted with the participation of our students that they even created an impromptu ceremony to present certificate of participation to our students.”

After presenting at the IFIM conference, the

students traveled by bus to their first hospital visit at the Narayana Health Medical Center, which sits on 26 acres and is a multi-specialty hospital with a large cardiac and cancer unit housed in separate buildings. Forty cardiac surgeries are performed there on a daily basis.

Their experiences during the site tours were included as part of the students’ SCRCA session. The healthcare administration students said they witnessed everything from a hospital that provides state-of-the-art services and equipment, to hospitals where open-air vents and pigeons flying around is normal.

“The opportunity to see the world from a completely different point of view, seeing the world in this light, has allowed me to know how truly blessed I am,” said Melissa Phillips, MBA/MHA major. “I complain a lot less, waste a lot less and give a lot more.”

While the main focus was on hospitals, students also had the opportunity to visit factories where they did a study on safety and health concerns.

Although the trip to India was categorized as more work than play, the students said they did still have the opportunity to learn about India’s rich culture and history while paying quick visits to major landmarks such as the Taj Mahal, Red Fort, Lotus Temple and the Raj Ghat. Students also participated in eating a traditional Indian meal with their hands, and many experienced for the first time riding both an elephant and a camel.

“Be open, be flexible and considerate,” said Jones, MHA major, to students who are interested in traveling abroad. “It is really not about you; it is about the people and the community.”

Once the students made it back to the states, they were asked to provide feedback in the form of consultative reports to a university, an Indian hospital and a university with a teaching hospital. They then put together three different reports that were each a comprehensive 50-page evaluation of suggestions, findings and tips for potentially making their organization or institution better.

“I believe that these trips not only help make UHCL a true international institution but the students also serve as true ambassadors of the university and promote the university,” Chandra said.

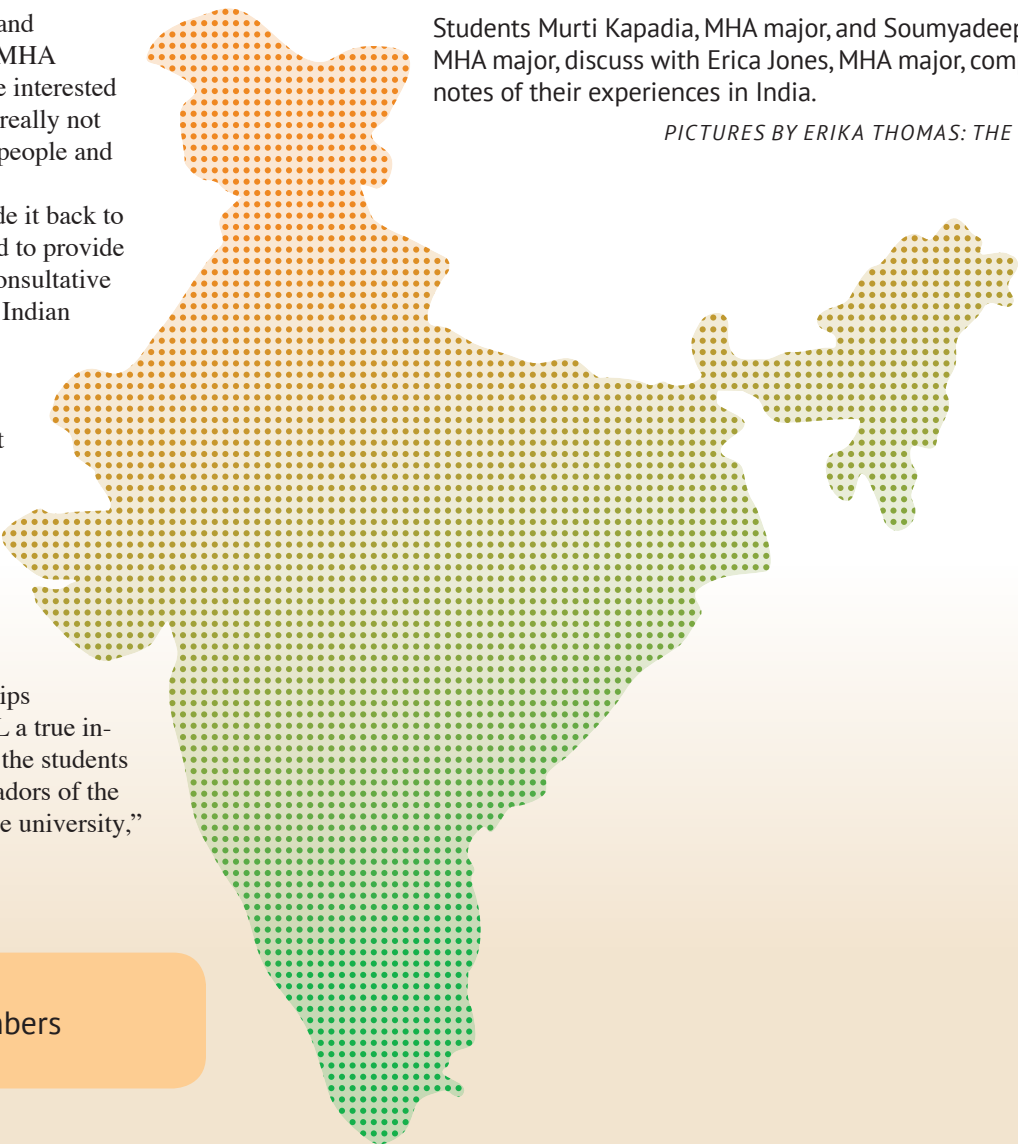


Angela Miller, MBA major, speaks with Jovita Ndukwu, MBA/MHA major, about her experience abroad.



Students Murti Kapadia, MHA major, and Soumyadeep Dey, MHA major, discuss with Erica Jones, MHA major, comparing notes of their experiences in India.

PICTURES BY ERIKA THOMAS: THE SIGNAL



GO ONLINE
to view a video by Loree Couch meeting the members of the UHCL International Art Consortium.

36th annual awards presentation recognizes faculty, staff



TARYN BURNETT: UHCL OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

The 36th annual Faculty & Staff Awards Presentation took place April 9 in the Bayou Building Atrium II to honor UHCL faculty and staff members for their service to the university. Staff awards include The Hugh P.Avery Prize - President's Distinguished Staff Service Award and Merit Awards in the categories of Service and Crafts, Clerical and Technical, Professional, and Administrative. Faculty awards include Distinguished Teaching Award, Distinguished Research Award, Distinguished Service Award, Outstanding Lecturer Award and Outstanding Adjunct Award. At this year's presentation 26 retirees were also recognized.

RETIREES in attendance included: Roxanne Hoffman, senior business coordinator in the Office of the Provost; Margaret Lampton, director, security and project administration, University Computing and Telecommunications; Rose Fotorny, library associate, Alfred R. Neumann Library; Dion McInnis, associate vice president, University Advancement; John Gorman, professor of literature; Carlos Price, clinical associate professor of educational leadership; Richard Smith, clinical associate professor of instructional design and technology; Nick de Vries, professor of fine arts; Katherine Justice, executive director of human resources and affirmative action; and Jorge Valdez, carpenter in the building maintenance division of Facilities Management and Construction.



TARYN BURNETT: UHCL OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

FACULTY AWARDS: President William Staples; Kevin Wooten, President's Distinguished Research Award recipient and professor of management information systems; Vernon Bryant, Outstanding Lecturer Award recipient and lecturer in computer engineering; Peter Wuenschel, Outstanding Adjunct Award recipient and adjunct in social work; Stephen Cherry, President's Distinguished Teaching Award recipient and assistant professor of sociology; Sharon Hall, President's Distinguished Service Award and professor of psychology; and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Carl Stockton.



TARYN BURNETT: UHCL OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

STAFF AWARDS: Vice President for Administration and Finance Michelle Dotter; Merit Award recipient and associate vice president of finance Usha Mathew; Jerry Jones, Hugh P.Avery Prize – The President's Distinguished Staff Service Award recipient and director of Technical Services; Leticia Sanchez-Retamozo, Merit Award recipient and senior academic adviser; Laura Velie, Merit Award recipient and administrative secretary in the Office of Career and Counseling Services; and President William Staples.

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Program unites youth and law enforcement

KELSEY CIABATTONI
THE SIGNAL

Knowledge is indeed power. At least that’s the message that Professor of Criminology Everett Penn and the Teen and Police Service Academy (TAPS) is trying to convey to the city of Houston’s at-risk youth as they work to bridge the social gap between teens and law enforcement by addressing the issues that directly impact the youth and the communities in which they live.

TAPS, established in fall 2011, is an 11-week program co-founded by Penn and Brian Lumpkin, a UHCL alumnus and now retired assistant police chief for the Houston Police Department. The program was funded from a Department of Justice office grant that was given to the most creative response stemming from a challenge by Houston Police Department Chief Charles McClelland, Jr., who asked his staff to find ways to reach the most at-risk youth.

Lieutenant Anthony Turner, who is currently in his second year with TAPS, was a previous student of Penn’s and was present to see the beginning stages of the program. Turner said witnessing the program in its infancy contributed to his decision to get involved with the program, but he primarily wanted to show the kids that he could identify with them on a more personal level than another officer might.

“I wanted to be able to tell the kids that just because I wear this uniform, I’m still the same as you,” Turner said. “I listen to the same music, and I grew up in the same social and economic background. If they can make the right decisions now, they can change their future.”

The program works with students who have repeatedly been suspended or expelled for reasons such as truancy or discipline infractions. It provides a way for HPD officers to help TAPS students see authority differently and to help them gain valuable insight about each other and the issues they face on a daily basis.

“I believe the relationship between theory and practice should be strong and a learning experience for students,” Penn said.

The program is also serving to help HPD better understand the students and their actions. This objective is being accomplished through learning about topics such as gang membership, anger management, bullying and dating violence. It provides interaction and discussion between the students and the law enforcement personnel who serve their communities.

Meetings are primarily held at Beechnut Academy, which is a part of the Houston Independent School District, but the local program has branched out to include Youth Village in Seabrook and Burnett-Bayland Rehabilitation Center (BBRC) in Houston.

UHCL alumnus Lieutenant Jason Giuffre has been part of TAPS since its second class and represents Youth Village in Seabrook and BBRC. He says that one of his principal goals of the program is to see the students through the 18-24 year-old age gap, where the city of Houston sees the most problems.

“There’s a little bit of hope that we try to instill that it’s not all lost yet,” Giuffre said. “The goal is to take them from this ‘at-risk kid’ to a ‘with promise teen’ and really just to race them through this time period that is really tough to turn back from.”

Sergeant Tracey Richardson, who represents the North Patrol division, said her biggest goal was to try to teach the kids that “a little crime leads to a big crime, which leads to jail.”

“The biggest issue was to get them to understand that right now you’re just smoking a cigarette, and you’re not even old enough to smoke a cigarette,” she said. “In three years, you’ll be smoking marijuana, and you’ll never be old enough to smoke that because it’s not legal in Texas. So when we talk to them one-on-one we have to explain to them why we’re worried about this little crime right now and then remind them that one day they’re going to be the adult in a position to be a positive example for other children.”

Penn, who also serves as UHCL department chair of social and cultural studies, brought 19 TAPS students to participate in the university’s 20th annual Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts Tuesday, April 15. At the conference, the TAPS students presented how their views of law enforcement have changed since the beginning of the program.

One TAPS student (TAPS students’ names are being withheld because they are minors) said he has a better understanding of what law enforcement does on a daily basis, and most of the time they actually are just trying to help.

“For me personally, I realize now that the problems really do start out small,” another TAPS student said. “I started off being late to school, then I would skip one class, then I would skip the whole day.”

The foundation behind TAPS has not gone unnoticed and has already expanded to five cities, including Puerto Rico, Miami, Tampa, British Columbia and Columbus.



Lt. Jason Giuffre speaks to the audience about the TAPS program.



Win Weber, adjunct faculty, criminal trial lawyer and reserve municipal judge, acts as judge during the mock trial at the SCRCA.

The tale of two stories

JAUMARRO CUFFEE
THE SIGNAL

It was the best of opportunities under the worst of circumstances. Jeffrey Potter stood to gain more than \$2 million. His late wife Katherine Potter was struck down by a pickup truck driven by Charles Shrackle. Five days later, she died from her injuries.

This one incident led to two different stories. What were the circumstances? Who was at fault? Should Potter receive \$2.5 million compensation? How would each side prove its case?

The answers to these and other questions unfolded at the 20th annual Student Conference for Research and Creative Arts (SCRCA) in “Mock Trial: The Case of Potter v. Shrackle; Who Caused Mrs. Potter’s Death?”

The Making of a Mock Trial

UHCL School of Business has presented a mock trial at the annual SCRCA during the past four years. Trials can be a civil case, criminal case, murder trial or even personal injury. Scheduling the mock trial during the SCRCA provides a broader audience since observers are in the courtroom and can watch from another site on campus where the trial is streamed real-time.

Lawyers and witnesses participating in the mock trial are students in Associate Professor of Legal Studies James Benson’s Mock Trial class. Students complete the American System of Trial by Jury class before they can enroll in the Mock Trial class. A requirement of the Mock Trial class is for students to complete a full mock trial.

Completing the prerequisite and accompanying course work is only the beginning. Counsel for the plaintiff and defense, along with their respective witnesses, spend several months preparing.

“We had over a hundred hours of prep work and 36 hours of practice just this week,” said Amanda Stephens, legal studies major and one of the mock trial lawyers representing defendant Charles Shrackle.

“In this setting [students] experience what it is like to, and the work that goes into, preparing a case for trial from voir dire, the examination of a jury panel, all the way to closing argument,” Benson said.

The only participant in the mock trial who was not a student was the presiding judge. This year, Win Weber was the presiding judge. Weber is adjunct faculty for criminal law and procedure. She is also a criminal trial lawyer with 25 years of experience and a reserve municipal judge in Nassau Bay, Texas.

“It’s joyful work,” Weber said. “I get a personal satisfaction because it’s constructive. I feel like I’m helping build their education.”

Potter v. Shrackle is a learning tool published by the National Institute of Trial Advocacy.

“This is a problem used to train lawyers but these students are so darn smart they can wrap their arms around it, as you’ll see, and do a very good job,” Benson said.

The Plot Thickens

Based on their replies during voir dire, 8 of the 12 potential jurors were dismissed after both sides submitted their strikes to the judge to eliminate jurors. Four jurors, instead of the intended six, were selected.

Counsel for the plaintiff, Heather Scott, Dennis Tague and Jennifer Gerhard, and counsel for the defense, Bryan Johnson, Amanda Stephens and

Christina Zuniga, set out prove their case.

Instead of performing scripted lines, each side devised a strategy. Witnesses learned the facts for their character. Those facts are revealed and exploited through direct examination, cross-examination, re-direct and re-cross.

“Witnesses have just as important [a] role as the attorneys,” Benson said. “They need to know their parts cold. There are no notes up here.”

No time limit was mentioned for lawyers to complete their examination. However, each side took an opportunity to object to additional re-cross on the grounds of an agreed upon time limit for cross-examination.

From the recognition of exhibits without disclosing the contents before they were entered into evidence, through series of questions to assign blame and contradicting expert witnesses, each assigning a monetary value to Potter’s loss, participants carried spectators through the drama of a courtroom trial.

“When the students leave this courtroom today, they will go through every phase of a jury trial; critical thinking is a huge part of this,” Benson said.

The Verdict

In the end, the mock trial presented itself as both dramatic and educational.

Witnesses dressed for their roles and performed according to the strategy laid out by their team. A safety vest worn by the crossing guard, the teddy bear carried by a 10-year-old witness and the uniform of the officer on the scene contributed to creating characters called to testify.

Questions and promptings from the presiding judge guided lawyers in adhering to courtroom procedure when the court was in the presence of the jury.

In addition to sharpening students’ thinking skills and helping students to better understand cases they read or hear about, Weber says participating in a mock trial helps them to make a decision.

“It really gives you a taste of, ‘Is this a calling for me or is it time to get off this train,’” Weber said. “It’s a very large project, but it gives practical value in a subject in a way that many projects are not able to do.”

Another benefit Benson identifies for students participating in a mock trial is increased participation in jury duty. With increased understanding and awareness, he says students can enjoy jury duty as well as critique the lawyers in the courtroom.

In this case of Potter v. Shrackle, the jury returned a decision in which both Katherine Potter and Charles Shrackle equally shared the fault in her accident and eventual death. Potter received nothing.

Beyond the Mock Trial

Both Benson and Weber encourage everyone to attend both mock and real trials so they can become more familiar with the legal process and become informed participants.

“I would invite people to watch mock trials if they have an opportunity,” Weber said. “And to watch real trials as well.”

“Go down and sit in a courtroom and watch a trial,” Benson said. “All our courtrooms are open to the public. ... There’s a whole lot of men and women who died in order that we have trial by jury today. That’s why it’s so sacred. It’s very sacred to me that students understand it and go and participate. That’s what’s important.”

Victor Araiza reports a mock fire for the Texas Intercollegiate Press Association

Student publications won 22 awards so far for work produced during the 2013 school year: 20 state and 2 national. The national awards for pre-published work will not be announced until fall. For a complete list of winners, scan the QR code below.



Graduation caps embellish 2014 commencement

Students participating in UHCL commencement ceremonies are now allowed to embellish the mortarboard on their graduation caps. There are guidelines in place describing what is and is not allowed for mortarboard decorations. Read below for the formal rules in place for grad-wear.

Here are the formal details:

- You can only wear the usual academic regalia on the cap and gown. Honor cords are an acceptable addition, but other items like ribbons and shawls are not.
- Women wear their academic caps throughout the ceremony. Men remove their caps for the Invocation and Benediction.
- Master's degree students wear a master's hood during the ceremony.
- Master's candidates wear their tassels on the left side of the cap.
- Bachelor's candidates start out with the tassel on the right side of their caps and move them to the left side after degrees are conferred by the President.
- Any excessive decorations on caps and gowns are distracting and therefore inappropriate. The university reserves the right to require you to remove any embellishment deemed inappropriate by authorized university officials before you are permitted to participate in the ceremony.

Examples of inappropriate embellishment include, but are not limited to:

- Mortarboards with vulgar language, inappropriate verbiage or photos/graphic images
- Mortarboards with lights, balloons and other items that could pose a safety hazard
- Decorations that obstruct the view of people seated behind the graduate
- Designs with vertical structures or décor; elements used in the design must lay as flat to the mortar board as possible

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM UHCL COMMENCEMENT WEBSITE AT
[HTTP://PRTL.UHCL.EDU/PORTAL/PAGE/PORTAL/AR/COMMENCEMENT/CAP%20AND%20GOWN](http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/ar/commencement/cap%20and%20gown)

2014 CHILI COOK-OFF WINNERS



The Totally Rad Amigos, representing the Transfer Advising Office, win the judges' pick for best chili at the 25th annual UHCL Chili Cook-Off. The team consists of (L to R) Ruby Villegas, Guillermo Rodriguez and Freda Yeh.



Alumni Arcade, representing alumni and community engagement members, wowed the judges to win best spirit at the 25th annual UHCL Chili Cook-Off. FROM LEFT: Reh Longoria, Veronica Kreuder-Longoria, Tiphaine Justice, Kevin McKinley and Marilyn Sims.