

THE SIGNAL

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February 4, 2008

Houston Auto Show
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Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership considers move to UHCL campus

Cryss Godoy
The Signal Staff

A proposal to build a facility for the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership on the University of Houston-Clear Lake campus is under consideration.

“UHCL representatives are currently working with BAHEP leaders to determine the feasibility of moving the organization onto the university’s campus,” UHCL President William Staples said.

A proposed structure, referred to as the Bay Area Houston Technology and Education Center in 2007 federal funding requests, would be constructed using a \$990,000 grant issued to UHCL by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2006.

In addition to grant funds allocated for its construction, the University of Houston System’s 2008 federal funding requests to the 110th U.S. Congress earmarks an additional \$4 million in the name of the center. The 5,400 square foot building would house BAHEP and be located near the

North Office Annex, near the intersection of Bayou Drive East and Middlebrook Drive.

“Representatives from UHCL, BAHEP, San Jacinto College District, NASA Johnson Space Center and other organizations envision a new center to integrate the cornerstones of a healthy region – education and economic development – through strong partnerships and community collaboration; through education, training and information sharing and dissemination; through jobs creation and retention; and through a shared vision for a vibrant quality of life,” Staples explained.

BAHEP is an economic development organization with 254 members, many of which are industry leaders in the aerospace, biotechnology and chemical engineering industries whose aim is to bring capital investment to the Bay Area. Its members include: AmegyBank of Texas, AT&T, The Boeing Company, Continental Airlines, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin Corporation, NASA Johnson Space Center, the Port of Houston Authority, and Waste Management of Texas Inc.

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Staples receives Quasar Award

Britney Samperi
The Signal Staff

William Staples, president of The University of Houston-Clear Lake, received the Quasar Award for his contributions to the economic wealth and diversity of the Bay Area Houston region.

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership presented the award to Staples Jan. 18 at South Shore Harbour Resort and Conference Center. The Quasar Award is presented annually to an elected official or business leader who, over the year, demonstrated a strong and continual effort to support business establishments.

“I am honored to receive the Quasar Award and accept it on behalf of the University of Houston-Clear Lake faculty, staff, students and our 45,000 alumni,” Staples said.

Bob Mitchell, president of BAHEP, said the Quasar Award is not given on any individual merit; however, the recipient must be active in the community to create a strong economic base for the region.

“Dr. Bill Staples believes that strategic partnerships with educational, business and government organizations help develop the foundation for new academic programs, research and training grants,” Mitchell said. “This philosophy has consistently delivered educational programs aligned with real-world needs and is why Dr. Staples is so deserving of this year’s Quasar Award.”

Some of Staple’s community affiliations include serving on the board of directors for BAHEP, serving on advisory boards for the Bay Area Transportation Partnership and Communities in Schools of Bay Area, and on the Community Leaders board of directors for BAHEP,

Quasar: continued on page 10

UHCL partners with Higher OneCard

Jenna Lewis
The Signal Staff

This semester the University of Houston-Clear Lake is now one of approximately 85 universities in the country to implement the Higher OneCard to distribute financial aid and university refunds. The card also acts as a debit card available to all students, faculty and staff.

UHCL plans to implement many other uses of the card within the next year, including phase two of the process in which the UHCL OneCard will serve as the official university identification card affixed with a photo. The card will eventually be used as a security measure for those on campus; the barcode will be used for the library, access to the fitness center, book store purchases, and even food will be available from vending machines by the swipe of the card. Everyone is being asked to activate and keep the card for these uses later on, even if they do not want to use it as another bank account.

“One of the driving forces behind the OneCard was the cost savings for the university and its students,” said Anthony Jenkins, dean of students. “We are always looking for ways to save money and how to help students obtain the money faster. With prices rising, the cost of college adds up. With the Higher One system we are able to streamline and limit errors in problematic areas to get students their financial aid and refunds in a timely manner.”

Consideration for the possibility of the card was a team effort that began late last spring by Jenkins, Associate Vice President of Finance John Cordary, financial aid staff, the student assistance center staff and cashiers, and computer technicians at the University of Houston.

During the summer and early fall of 2007, they conducted research, spoke with sister institutions about their experiences with the card, and met with students and staff to discuss the possibilities. The majority felt it was good for UHCL.

For now the card can be used to receive financial aid and refunds from the university, and as a personal debit card available for use anywhere MasterCard is accepted. Card members can write checks with online bill pay, deposit money from parents or other resources, and even get direct deposit of their paychecks. A free, 24/7 ATM is located at Café Bono in the Student Services and Classrooms Building.

“I had the card before at Sam Houston State University and the OneCard made it easier for me to get my refunds,” said Maree Salinas, an undergraduate biology major. “If I ever got in a bind I could use the refund money on my card to buy groceries.”

Though students will still have the option of transferring refunds to an existing bank account or receiving a paper check in the mail, Jenkins said the Higher OneCard is an easier and faster way of getting students their refunds.

In addition to ease of use, the OneCard is more cost efficient. The primary savings are to the university – the cost of cutting paper checks, postage, wiring fees, etc. Jenkins said the rising costs of these services would likely have been passed on

Higher One: continued on page 10



Graphic by Wendy Westmoreland: The Signal
The OneCard has become the source of debate on the UHCL campus.

Khator makes first visit to Clear Lake campus

Ericka Paetz
The Signal Staff

On the first sun-filled day Clear Lake has seen in weeks, newly appointed University of Houston System chancellor and president of the University of Houston, conveyed to faculty and students her forecast for a brighter future for the institution.

During her first visit to the Clear Lake campus, Jan. 30, Renu Khator spoke first to faculty and staff members, introducing herself and her plan to guide the UH System toward national advancement, greater student success and competence in a globally competitive world.

The University’s Garden Room appeared set to hold little more than 140 audience members, but attracted an overflowing turnout for the late morning speech, making it apparent that the Clear Lake campus’ faculty were highly interested in what the new chancellor’s vision holds in store for their community; a community that Khator said she already thinks of as her own.

“The second day itself, I felt that this was my place - this is my city. This is my state and my university,” said Khator, of her arrival to Houston and the UH System.


After serving as provost for the University of South Florida in Tampa for five years, Khator began on Jan. 15, as the thirteenth president of UH, and the third person to hold a dual position as president and chancellor of the UH System, a position that she said she would fulfill through community interaction and a continuously progressive effort.

“I was very excited to come to a metropolitan system where the living lab is right around us,” Khator said. “The problems are here, the solutions are here - creative ideas are here.”


Those solutions, for Khator, will be provided through a collaborative endeavor involving all of the stakeholders in the university’s realm of influence. Khator invited constructive and innovative advice with her “100 Days Survey.”

The online survey is posted on the university’s Web site www.uh.edu/100days, which Khator plans

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Speaker film series
See page 4



Peace rally
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OneCard brings advantages to students

Some people are all for it. Some people are up in the air. A few people are simply angry and down right confused. All of these feelings can be contributed to one very small thing: the new University of Houston-Clear Lake Higher OneCard.

Although UHCL students do not understand what exactly the card is, how it is used or even how to use it, they will soon see that it is not only to the school's advantage but their's as well and will continue to be so in the future.

The UHCL Higher OneCard is a debit card that allows the school to issue financial aid money or refund UHCL students their respective amounts without having to cut paper checks, which cost the school a substantial amount of money and take much longer to reach student's accounts. With the OneCard, instead of having to wait on a check in the mail, students can have their refunds dispersed to them almost immediately.

The card is also very useful for many of UHCL's international students who have a difficult time setting up bank accounts here in the United States. It allows them, as well as every other student, to have a bank account without the hassle of dealing with the paperwork.

Not only does it serve as a debit card, it is also slated to become the official student ID on the UHCL campus.

There is really only one problem when it comes to the OneCard: the way it has

been marketed to students.

Because students have not been properly introduced to the card, many are wary of it. Some are worried that their personal information has been given out. Others are bothered by the fact that they now have another bank card, on top of their other bank and credit cards, to deal with. These worries are perfectly understandable.

Anthony Jenkins, dean of students at UHCL, admits to the lack of marketing done to inform UHCL students of the purpose of the card. He says that a small number of students have been to his office to discuss their feelings about the newly implemented system. A few students were worried about their personal information, particularly social security numbers, being shared. Jenkins says that all personal information is secured and only shared between UHCL and Higher One, no other outside entities.

The Higher OneCard has been in use since 2000. More than 83 schools of higher education in the United States use the Higher OneCard for reimbursement purposes.

The OneCard is much more advantageous to students than a normal debit card because they do not have to deal with overdraft fees. If there are insufficient funds in the account, attempted transactions will simply be rejected. Students also do not have to worry about their credit with the OneCard because Higher One cur-



rently does not offer student loans, which keeps students from starting a new line of credit.

UHCL students should know that the card will eventually become their official student ID card so keeping it is essential. Throwing away or destroying the OneCard will mean that students will have to purchase a new card in the future, which will cost them around \$15.

Students are not forced to use it as a debit card, but they will need it as a student ID and library card.

The OneCard is just one of the many coming additions to this ever-growing university. As technology changes, so must the University of Houston-Clear Lake. So, all UHCL students, keep your OneCard. Do not throw it away. You are definitely going to need it in the near future.

Cross Signals

Coming from U of H- Main, where we had the Cougar OneCard, I immediately knew what the OneCard was upon hearing about it. At the main campus we used the card for everything from getting something to eat to getting into football games. Because it is something new and something that most UHCL students are not used to, I can understand the confusion behind the addition of the card. Because of the lack of marketing for the card, I just feel like maybe the administration should set up a forum for students who are new to the idea to express their doubts about the card. By doing so, everyone unsure about its purpose can have their questions answered and see that it is there to do them a service, rather than a dis-service. I have had a great experience with the card and I can tell that it spells newer and greater things for our school. I am sure that pretty soon every student here will see it too.

-Brandon White-

I have not yet activated my OneCard. But, I did receive two e-mails telling me what it should be used for and when it was to

be mailed. My OneCard showed up at my home exactly when they said it would.

-Stanley White III-

I am waiting for my OneCard to arrive. I changed my address last spring when I moved, but the OneCard was still sent to my old address. I recently went back to E-Services and resubmitted my current information.

-Krystal Mongan-

My experience with OneCard was frustrating, yet simple. When I first received the card I opened it up and just set it aside. I get tons of credit card requests and end up shredding them. I almost did the same with the OneCard, but I happened to set it aside. I didn't want to activate it because I don't want a lot of open accounts under my name when I'm ready to purchase a home. I'm wondering if the card shows up on our credit report. I'm really uncomfortable about having to use it as a student ID in the future. On the other hand, I do like the fact that the refunds would arrive on the card faster. I found my card and registered it once I

realized we HAD to have it. It took under 5 minutes to register.

-Jorge De La Garza -

I received my OneCard in the mail, quickly scanned it, saw my personal information on a debit card and shredded it. Since I pay for school outright, I did not need it for refunds and already have my own bank card. I didn't realize it would also replace my student ID. I don't like the idea of having so much personal information on a student ID card.

-Mandy Hess-

When I received my OneCard in the mail, my curiosity propelled me to visit the website to find out what the card was all about. After learning a little more about the card, I attempted to activate it, since it seemed that it was a requirement from the university. I tried to choose to have my "refunds" transferred to my personal bank account, but found that process more trouble than I felt it was worth. Needless to say, I have not since taken my OneCard out of the drawer. I personally don't need yet another account to maintain. I have

Signal staff members chat about their experiences with the OneCard and invite students to join in the discussion by logging on to The Signal blog at www.myspace.com/signal_UHCL.

my own bank accounts and credit cards that I have chosen to use for a reason. I don't see the need to have my school records tied to a debit card/bank account, and I don't feel that I need the university to "suggest" how I will handle my finances.

-Wendy Westmoreland-

The issue I had with the OneCard was having to mail the form to authorize the transfer of funds from their account to my checking account. It would have been faster to fax or e-mail the form.

-Aubrey Harbin-

I have not received my OneCard yet. This may be due to the fact that I moved at the end of December. I have had a card similar to this when I attended the University of Houston main campus. I found that it was a very practical idea.

-Clinton Mack-

The discussion continues on The Signal blog at www.myspace.com/signal_UHCL.

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Ready, Set, Go Green

Green. . . luck, money, nature, growth, hope, youth, health and envy. Green jolly ranchers. St. Patrick's Day. Green crayons. A football field.

These are the things I used to think about when I heard the word green, but that has recently changed. Just in the past couple of weeks I have heard so much clutter about going green that I had to search the Internet to find out for myself what the buzz is all about.

Apparently, the inspiring idea behind going green is recycling and saving energy to benefit the Earth and our environment, but going green can also benefit consumers' pocket books.

Many of the green concepts provide ways to save money. Going green also influences food choices and cleaning products by encouraging consumers to purchase natural or organic products that are less harmful to the environment.

Web sites such as ivillage.com and msn.com have added green links on their home pages in conjunction with the usual topics we are accustomed to seeing such as sports, auto, health and fitness, and news.

The links provide a vast array of tips, tricks and techniques to help you become aware of the environment and save money. You can even sign up to receive a weekly iGo Green e-mail from ivillage.com.

Many people made going green their New Year's resolution. It is definitely a commitment and a lifestyle change if you commit whole heartedly. I have one friend who replaced all of the light bulbs in her house with energy-efficient light bulbs and pledged to start recycling.

As a result, I am really starting to feel guilty for throwing away all the aluminum coke cans and plastic water bottles at my house.

Believe it or not, making the decision to walk or ride a bicycle to the store instead of driving a car is a green decision.

Car manufacturers are beginning to take into consideration the effects that burning fuel is having on the environment, thus pushing for the further development

and availability of hybrid vehicles.

This past week I attended a computer software conference for work. The instructor informed us that there are grants available to cities to help pay for software that would enable them to accept digital submittals of building plans and other drawings.

The ultimate goal is to transition to paperless processes to save paper and trees. I never would have dreamed that the green topic would have come up at a conference for computer software.

UHCL offers green friendly processes, such as providing as much information on the Web site as possible. The library provides an abundance of sources online which saves fuel by allowing students to access information without having to drive to the campus.

Online publication of the class schedules each semester benefits both the students and the university. The students save fuel, and the school's expenses are reduced by not paying for printing and distributing paper schedules.

I also recently had the pleasure of touring a green roof building located in Webster. Yes, there are plants growing on the roof of the building.

It is an amazing concept, and it is the only the third of its kind in Texas. Nine inches of soil and plants on the roof helps to maintain the building temperature, keeping it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

This, among many other features of the building, makes it more self sufficient, thus decreasing the impact on the environment.

So, I guess green still means money and growth and hope, but in a new light it's saving money and protecting our environment in hope that growth will continue in our environment.

Green is the word! Pass it on!



Aubrey Harbin
The Signal

Political Graffiti

By Krystal Mongan



Ron Paul's Revolution

Who is Ron Paul? Google Ron Paul. No, I'm not ordering you to run to your computer and open up a browser to "Google" Ron Paul, but rather noting the message that appears on hand-painted signs peppering road sides all around the country.

If you have "Googled" Ron Paul you already know he's one of four Republican candidates running for president.

At 72 he's also the oldest candidate running, the most conservative, and the most in favor of individual liberties. He is running on a strict constitutional platform that would take our country back 100 years in terms of monetary policy, foreign policy and freedom as a whole.

With a seemingly antiquated platform like this, why are his main supporters college students? Because freedom is popular. But wait, there's more! He voted against the Iraq War before it was the popular position. Not only does he want an immediate withdrawal of our troops from all around the world, thus making our national defense stronger, he also opposes the draft.

His views on taxes are radical; he wants to totally disband the federal income tax and the Internal Revenue Service, with no replacement. Paul doesn't believe in taxing the tips of waiters and waitresses. He even introduced the Tax Free Tips Act of 2007 to Congress to try to end what he considers unfair taxing. Under his plans, younger people could also elect out of the Social Security program.

Paul is the only Republican candidate running his campaign with \$0 in debt. Known as "the taxpayers best friend," he has never voted for an unbalanced budget, never supported a tax increase or wasteful government spending.

Paul is willing to accept the unpopularity of his so-called unconventional beliefs. Since he is known for voting "no" on all legislation that's

not expressly authorized by the Constitution he has not only earned himself the nickname "Dr. No," he has also set himself apart as offering a vision of change and hope for America in terms of drastically smaller government, lower taxes and less spending.

Young adults in America embrace anti-establishment ideas; they tend to distrust what they view as a defunct system or corrupt status quo. Maybe part of Paul's support is due to the rebellious teenager still living inside many of us.

It is said that every generation needs a new revolution. The Ron Paul Revolution is the revolution for many of today's young voters. College students love getting involved in causes, long to be a part of something huge, something substantial of which they can be proud.

Paul has given the grassroots supporters free reign to be as creative and as active in his campaign as they want. This makes it incredibly easy to want to get involved since it isn't politics as usual. His grassroots supporters are the campaign.

Supporters donated more than \$20 million dollars in 2007 to the campaign due to grassroots fundraising efforts. Ron Paul boasts the most MySpace.com friends, is the most "Googled" candidate and has more Meetup groups across the nation than any other Republican contender.

It's no wonder Paul is popular among college students. He's the Pepsi in the blindfold taste test; a surprisingly refreshing change from the same old thing.



Mandy Hess
The Signal

Opus

By Berkeley Breathed



Up Coming Events



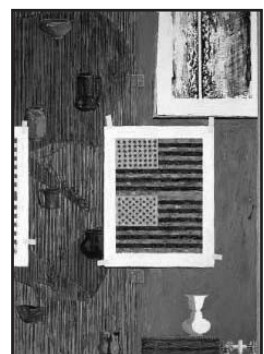
The Houston Museum of Natural Science is hosting *Lucy's Legacy: The Hidden Treasures of Ethiopia* through April 27. The exhibit follows Ethiopia over 5 million years.



Starting Feb. 1, The Houston Museum of Natural Science unveils their forensic science exhibition *CSI: The Experience*. The exhibition invites guests to solve hypothetical crimes.



The Houston Zoo holds *Sea Turtle* Saturday, Feb. 23, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Speakers educate the public on how to get involved in local sea turtle conservation.



Modern and Contemporary Masterworks from the MFAH is on display at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston until March 2. Works include *Ventriloquist* by Jasper Johns.

Vivaldi Valentine offers musical entertainment

Jorge De La Garza
The Signal Staff

As the lights dim and conversations soften into whispers, the theater curtains gracefully open to the romantic and tender sounds of stringed instruments.

Just in time for a Valentine weekend special, the University of Houston—Clear Lake Student Life Cultural Arts Series and Mercury Baroque presents A Vivaldi Valentine at the Bayou Theater Feb. 16.

Concertmaster and soloist Jonathan Godfrey will be leading Mercury Baroque's local chamber orchestra in bringing life to the vibrant sounds, movements and concertos of the "Master of Concertos" Antonio Vivaldi. A concerto involves a soloist playing along with an accompanying orchestra.

Born in Venice, Italy, Vivaldi was one of the founding contributors to the classical era of the 17th century known as Baroque. Along with Vivaldi, some of the founding musicians include Johann Sebastian Bach and Johann Pachelbel.

The Baroque Era is known for introducing passion and emotion through the form of art. In the dynamic movements and composition of *Four Seasons*, Vivaldi introduced the concept of using the sounds of instruments to evoke the senses and emotions.

"The instruments used play a key role in performing a high quality performance to our audiences," added Antoine Plante, artistic director of Mercury Baroque.

The strings and bows used are crafted with the same materials used in the 17th century. This allows each note played to reflect the sounds composers, such as Vivaldi, originally anticipated.

Featured musicians of the evening's performance will be: Kathryn Montoya, Solo Oboe and Solo Recorder; Jonathan Godfrey and Oleg Sulyga, Solo Violins; Barrett Sills and Valdine Ritchie, Solo Cellos; Antoine Plante, Conductor.

"Student Life's Cultural Arts Series was established to give students, faculty, staff and the surrounding community access to local and national artists with diverse perspectives," said Andrew Reitberger, assistant director of student life.

"It'll be a great night out," recommends Reitberger, "You'll have an opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy the experience. Live music can be very restorative."

Visit The Signal Blog to play music and video samples of music from the Baroque era. While online, enter chance to win a pair of tickets to the Feb. 16 show at http://www.myspace.com/signal_uhcl.



Courtesy: George Hixon

Mercury Baroque cellist Valdine Ritchie and members of the ensemble.

Here's looking at films, kid

Krystal Mongan
The Signal Staff

In the dim candlelight of Rick's Bar, pianists played *As Time Goes By* after the movie "Casablanca" was screened as part of the Film and Speaker Series in the Bayou Theater Jan. 26.

The winner of five Academy Awards, "Casablanca" is a story about romance, heroism and self-sacrifice during times of war.

"It's one of my favorite movies and I never got to see it on the big screen before," said Jon Allen, computer consultant with Electronic Data Systems.

"The concept of the film is self-sacrifice and putting other people's needs before their own for the greater good," said Sonia Hernandez, cultural arts assistant. "[The Film and Speaker Series] is the study of film as a primary source of social history."

Next, the Film and Speaker Series will show "Stomp the Yard" at 7 p.m., Feb. 9, in the Bayou Building. "Stomp the Yard" is about a street dancer who incorporates his dancing techniques with traditional stepping to help his fraternity stand out when they perform in a competition against other Greek fraternities.

While in the fraternity, the young man learns the importance of community and brotherhood.

Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, will be speaking at the end of the film about the

advantages and disadvantages of having Greek organizations on campus.

He will also discuss the historical context of Greek life.

"Greek life can be a very powerful and useful tool," Jenkins said.

Jenkins wants to give students a better sense of

Greek life and explain why the Greek organizations are still thriving.

The Black Students Association has also scheduled dance-step routines from several local Greek sororities and fraternities to perform after the film.

Also included in the Film and Speaker Series is three time Academy Award winner, "To Kill a Mockingbird" scheduled for 7 p.m., Feb. 29, in the Bayou Theater. The film takes place in Alabama in the 1930s, where Atticus Finch, a white lawyer, agrees to defend Tom Robinson, a young black man wrongfully charged of raping a white woman.

After the film, there will be a speaker, to be announced, who will discuss civil rights issues and there will be a raffle of an African American painting.

Joyce Delores Taylor, president of BSA, said the painting that will be raffled, entitled "Caress," is valued at more than \$200. Raffle tickets will be \$3 for one and \$5 for two tickets.

"The proceeds will be used to fund scholarships," Taylor said.

Other movies the Film and Speaker Series have scheduled for this spring include: "Antonia's Line," 7 p.m., March 7; "Atonement," 7 p.m., March 29; and "Charlie Wilson's War," 7 p.m., April 12.

"The public is always invited to attend," Hernandez said. "All of the films discuss an issue relevant in today's society."

For information about purchasing individual or season tickets, students and the public can pay at the door, call the Office of Student Life at 281-283-2560, or send an e-mail to movies@uhcl.edu. General admission is \$3.50 and season tickets are \$20.



Courtesy: Warner Bros Pictures



Krystal Mongan: The Signal Staff

Martina Letitia Kusniadi, graduate environmental management major, began the evening playing *As Time Goes By* before the film "Casablanca" as part of the Film and Speaker series.

** Student Life ** Student Life ** Student Life **

The National Society of Leadership and Success

www.societyofsuccess.com



Lou Holtz: Game Plan for Success

(Legendary Football Coach and Analyst, ESPN)

LIVE VIDEOCONFERENCE

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2008
Time: 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Location: SSCB Lecture Hall 1.100.03

in partnership with the
 UHCL Student Leadership Institute
 and the UHCL American Marketing Association

OPEN TO EVERYONE! NO CHARGE!

www.uhcl.edu/studentleadershipinstitute



University
of Houston
Clear Lake



SGA Wishes YOU a Happy and Prosperous 2008!

The Student Government Association would like to welcome back the returning students and greet the new students. Looking to get involved? Make SGA your next STOP. We have weekly meetings every Tuesday, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. All students are invited to attend!

SPRING 2008 Parking Raffle!

Buy a raffle ticket for a \$1.

Buy 6 raffle tickets for \$5.

Try your chances for winning the reserved parking spot
 FOR THE WHOLE SEMESTER!!



Support the good cause of funding a student Hugh Lea Scholarship and supporting the FMC Luncheon.

Tickets available in the SGA office, SSCB 1.205.

CONTACT THE SGA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

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Apply now for Spring Graduation!



Deadline for applications is FEBRUARY 15

For an application to graduate packet visit the Student Assistance Center or download it from www.uhcl.edu/records.



PEACE RALLY

Julie Bray
The Signal Staff

Peace is a word commonly used in casual conversation. On any high school campus, one can hear the phrase "peace out" and at some churches, people shake hands and say, "Peace be with you." But what does peace really mean?

The students, faculty and staff of the University of Houston–Clear Lake are speaking out about what peace is to them by hosting a Peace Rally Feb. 5, 12-1 p.m., in Atrium II. The rally will be held to raise awareness of violence around the globe. Issues such as war, domestic violence, social injustice, racism and religious discrimination will be addressed.

Stephen "Arch" Erich, associate professor of social work, organized the rally.

"I had a personal need to express my desire for peace," Erich said. "And then there was a group of nine of us, some of which were faculty, some of which were staff, and some of which were students, that all sat down and as a group made this happen."

Sharon Hall, associate professor of psychology, is enthusiastic about the rally as well.

"I'm hoping to stimulate our students' interest in global events," Hall said. "If they are aware of global issues they can more critically evaluate what they hear and see in the media." Hall will also be singing at the rally to express her desire for peace around the globe.

Students are getting involved as well. Jeannie Vargas, undergraduate social work major, is passionate about peace for future generations.

"I hurt knowing our children have to wake up in a world full of violence,"

Vargas said. "I hope one day their children won't have to.

Our children, and even the future of humanity, rest on whether we, as human beings, are able to coexist."

The rally will feature guest speakers, poetry readings and live musical performances. There will also be a moment of silence to remember those who have lost their lives in war. Those attending will have an opportunity to make and send cards to Iraqi children.

Erich hopes to make peace and social justice issues personal to students, staff and members of the community.

"It's OK to have some emotions about peace," Erich said. "So I'm really hoping this rally will have some emotion to it. Some of the content is emotional and it's OK.

Emotions tell us what's important to us."

Hall agrees that the issue of peace should strike a chord in everyone's heart by making it a personal issue.

"Reminding our students that the political is personal, that what we do locally is tied to our global actions, and that everyone's voice should be heard is very important to me," Hall said.

The Peace Rally is open to all who want to express their opinions regarding peace. Members of the community, staff, faculty and students are all welcome to participate. For more information about the rally, contact Erich at 281-283-7600.

Peace:
a state of
mutual harmony
between people
or groups,
especially in
personal
relationships



Expo Promotes Involvement

Jennifer Ferguson
The Signal Staff

Get involved! The common sentiment at the Student Organization Expo, held at the University of Houston–Clear Lake is to get involved and reap the benefits.

On Jan. 23, the Office of Student Life, together with the Student Government Association and more than 40 UHCL student organizations, produced the spring 2008 Student Organization Expo.

With more than 550 students in attendance, Michelle Kaltenbach, coordinator of student life, student organizations, and special events, said she was pleased with the expo.

"The Student Organization Expo is an event that happens once each semester to help recruit new students to join organizations on campus," Kaltenbach said.

Representatives at the expo pointed out that the benefits of being involved in student organizations

stretch beyond socialization on campus. The world awaiting graduates pursuing post college careers is looking for extracurricular involvement and leadership skills on perspective resumes.

"Employers are looking for good communication skills," Kaltenbach said. "They are looking for students who really take the lead, who take initiative, who understand how to facilitate meetings and presentations and who really organize and plan ahead of time. Those are direct skills you get by being involved in an organization."

Liz-Ann Howe, a graduate MBA student and SGA representative for the American Marketing Association, said that one of the main objectives of the association is to provide networking opportunities with businesses. The organization brings in speakers from different professions and gives students the chance to build up their portfolios.

The Management Association was among the many organizations represented at the expo. Participating in the operations of the association gives members the opportunity to develop and strengthen leadership and management skills.

"Personally, I was an involved student, so first hand I know the benefits," Kaltenbach said. "I had the opportunity to apply what I was learning and transfer those skills into volunteer opportunities, organizing events, meetings and things like that."

Renee Austin, undergraduate social work major, and Christine Schneider, undergraduate social work major and secretary of the Social Work Student Organization, said their members will have ample opportunities to volunteer within the community. Community service projects this semester will include cooking and feeding families at the Ronald McDonald House and providing toiletries for the Turning Point Center, a facility serving Houston's homeless and elderly.

The Unity Club participates in community projects as well, including the AIDS Walk and a clothing drive

for the AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. The Unity Club, comprised of about 20 members, has been on campus for 13 years and, as member and undergraduate psychology major Tony Aucoin points out, "strives to promote equality."

The National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Outlook 2008 survey reports that the top personal qualities employers are looking for in college

graduates include verbal and written communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. Qualities such as these can be cultivated in the classroom and improved upon with involvement in student organizations.

"The Student Organization Expo is a wonderful opportunity not just for students, but also for faculty and staff to come and meet with students," Kaltenbach said. "This a wonderful opportunity to really connect and meet with the future leaders on campus and in society."

For more information about student organizations on the UHCL campus, visit the Student Life Office located in the Student Services and Classroom Building or go to http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/SLO/Student_Organizations



Letitia Kusniadi, environmental management major and Julie Tucker, marketing major were on hand at the Student Organization Expo to provide information to prospective members of the Management Association.



Rene Austin, Social Work Student Organization member, and Michael Phillips, SGA vice president, enjoy the festivities at the Student Organization Expo.

Houston Tango festival

In Pursuit of Argentine Tango

Tracy Moody
The Signal Staff

Tango is not a pursuit to be taken lightly," explained instructor and tango dancer Laura Pellegrino at the first Houston Tango Festival held Jan. 25-27 at the Rice University Student Center.

The festival will be a yearly occurrence in Houston with plans to promote social dances, known as milongas, and further unite the diverse tango community. All weekend, recognized leading performers and instructors taught classes to the tango community of Houston.

Christina Levin, part of the Houston Tango Festival team, recommends the Web site, <http://www.tangohous.com/iWeb/tangohous/home.html>, as "a great resource for milongas and classes in the city."

"The idea of the festival was to place our city on a tango world map, unite dancers within Houston, and help our community grow by inviting world-class instructors

and networking with more experienced dancers across the country and overseas," Levin said.

Tango radiates a tangible, focused, fluid energy. It is the jazz of the dance world; it is complete improvisation, like witnessing a room of artists paint a composition.

The dancers' constant sacrifice, both mental and physical, is intriguing and inspiring. Tango is a passion they are perpetually perfecting. It is a subtle, sensual language they are learning to speak with greater artistry.

Pellegrino, a lover of foreign languages and travel, completely changed her life's direction after viewing the foreign film "The Tango Lesson." She sold her house, quit her job and moved to Argentina for two years where she lived and practiced "in pursuit of tango." Pellegrino said the move to Argentina "was prompted by not liking the alternative, living a life of quiet desperation. I wanted the dance."

Jennifer Olson and Damian Lobato, tango partners and instructors, also dedicate their lives to the dance. They live out of suitcases, traveling around the world to perform at festivals and devoting themselves to teaching students tango techniques at festivals like the Houston Tango Festival.

Olson began tango about four and a half years ago and she immediately focused all of her energy on tango, learning technique and teaching skills from Alex Krebs, "the best teacher in the United States." Her dedication has paid off. She is recognized as an excellent dancer and spirited teacher.

"I find self actualization in tango, tangasm as I call it," Olson said. "I will definitely be doing it for the rest of my life."

Damian Lobato, who has been dancing for more than 15 years, also left his job and home in Argentina to devote his life to tango. The Houston Tango Festival was his first trip to the United States. Lobato, like Pellegrino, also had an urge to travel.

"I needed to travel a lot and I could not bear to work 11 and a half months of the year to have 14 days off; it was not acceptable for me," Lobato said.

Lobato is candid about the difficulties of constantly traveling, missing things and being unsettled.

"For example, when you move to a place, after some days, weeks, you start knowing people; they start becoming friends," Lobato said. "Later, you have to leave them behind but you wished to spend more time with them. It is hard, because sometimes you just need friends around you."

Careen Flanagan, a dancer at the festival, started tango as a means of self-discovery. Flanagan, a former ballet dancer, is studying with her Houston instructor, Andrew Dugas, and finds the dance helpful in balancing her life.

"It helps me listen better, observe more and not anticipate," Flanagan said. "You have to bring your focus into the moment and you don't know what is coming next," Flanagan said.

The Houston Tango Festival teaches that tango is the fulfilling practice of living passionately with focused intention. It is difficult, like life. It is the practice of being in a moment fully — mind, body and soul — with no anticipation of what is ahead and no worry about what is behind.

"Tango added another dimension to my life and allowed me to be expressive, creative, and completely fulfilled on many levels," Pellegrino said. "If you are thinking about learning tango, it requires intention, time and a certain amount of dedication to get good at it. Tango is an awesome, enriching, expressive dance that requires attention in order to reach expertise."



Left: Tango instructors and performers Damian Lobato and Jennifer Olson demonstrate elegant footwork.



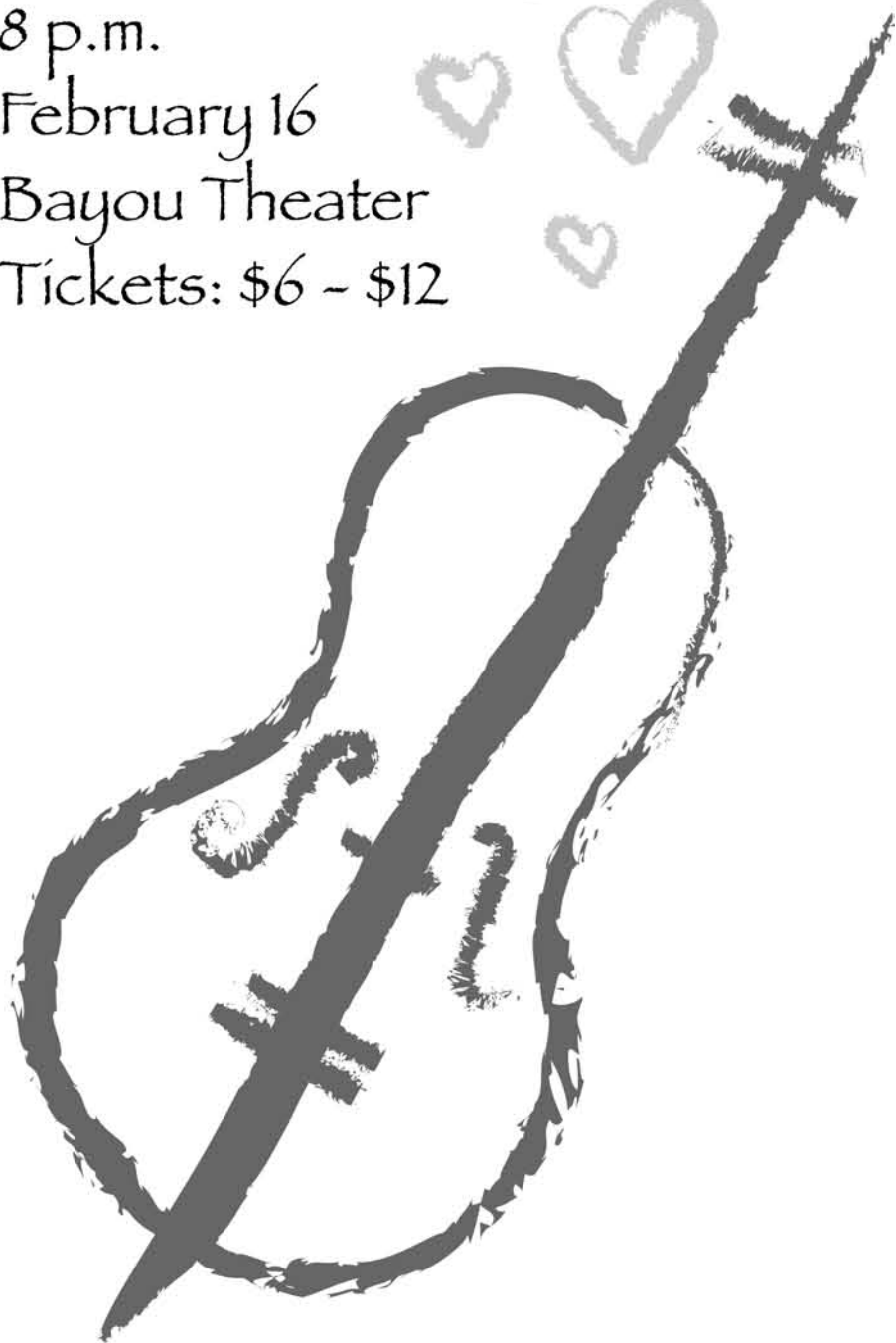
Right: Dance partners Damian Lobato and Jennifer Olson focus on the moment as they tango.

Photographs by
Tracy Moody
Background photo
by Laura Burlton

Mercury Baroque Ensemble
presents

A Vivaldi Valentine

8 p.m.
February 16
Bayou Theater
Tickets: \$6 - \$12



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CAMPUS
CALENDAR

February 5
Speaker: Lou Holtz’
Game Plan for Success,
6-7:30 p.m.,
SSCB Lecture Hall I.100.03

February 8
Workshop: Team &
Organizational Effectiveness:
Being a ‘Cut’ Above the Rest,
1-3 p.m., SSCB I.202.07

February 9
Workshop: Moral Courage Under
Fire: Taking Action When Your
Values are Put to the Test,
noon-1 p.m., SSCB I.202.07

Film: Stomp the Yard,
7 p.m., Bayou Theater
Speaker and reception to follow
the movie screening.
Admission: \$3.50

February 12
Texas Job Fair,
10 a.m.-3 p.m., University of
St. Thomas Jerabek Center
Limited transportation from UHCL
requires \$10 deposit and in-person
signup at Career Services.

February 15
Film: To Kill a Mockingbird,
7 p.m., Bayou Theater
Admission: \$3.50

February 15-16
Community Outreach Day
Registration required.
More info available in Student
Life Office, SSCB I.204

February 16
Cultural Arts: Mercury Baroque
Ensemble’s A Vivaldi Valentine,
8 p.m., Bayou Theater
Admission: \$6-\$12

Make life changes instead of resolutions

Amy Parnell
The Fitness Zone

I have never been one for making resolutions, perhaps because I acknowledge a chronic behavioral pattern in my life: I am a half-way finisher.

Of course, that isn’t a real term, but it describes the numerous situations in which I just half-way finish a commitment that doesn’t seem to have any monetary or scholastic benefit.

I am the person who cannot seem to finish the 10-day Crest Whitener kit. I am taking the vitamins from the same 30 day Liver Detox kit for the last 6 months, and I am no longer ashamed; it’s just a quirk that makes me tick.

However, I DO believe in Life Changes. What’s the difference? In my experience it is the difference between my 5 half-used Crest Strips boxes under the sink and my commitment to Yoga (going on a decade, so I think we can safely call it a lifestyle, not a trend, in my life).

New Year’s Resolutions tend

to have almost impossible to obtain goals with a 365-day deadline, while Life Changes reflect small steps leading to a large leap for a lifetime.

The top ten resolutions in America include: spending more time with loved ones, working out, losing weight, quitting smoking, getting out of debt, helping others, learning something, getting organized, and enjoying life more.

That is a pretty tall order; imagine the amount of energy required to take and quit and enhance every aspect of your life? Just typing this list caused me a little anxiety. So, how can these resolutions become life changes?

Concrete goals:
Truly commit to an achievable concrete goal, such as “I will



PARNELL

begin to devote two days a month to one charity organization this year.” Be honest with yourself in the beginning – how many days

a month can you feasibly devote to a charity? If two days seems a small commitment, remember that the volunteer whose attendance is constant is more valuable than someone who promises weekly and repeatedly calls with excuses.

Small Steps:
Create a plan to implement your concrete goal, such as “In January I will choose three charity organizations to call for information on their needs for community outreach. In February I will begin to commit two days a month to the charity organization of my choice.”

You may decide in June to update your commitment level or change charity organizations. However, you will find that once you begin to devote time to charity that it is a part of your life – a change has happened.

Notice the word choices for your Life Changes; try not to judge yourself harshly. For example, if you want to give up smoking, say to yourself “This year I want to begin to quit smoking because I am ready to invest in my health.”

That is quite a bit more positive than what I hear a great number of people saying, “This year I am quitting smoking because I was so young and stupid when I began and now look at me.”

Through careful planning, realistic goal setting, and practicing compassion toward yourself, at the end of the year you will happily discover the changes in your life and accept the quirks that keep us all ticking along.

Peace,
Amy

Do you long to see your words in print?
Marrow needs you!

We are excited to announce the 2008 edition of Marrow, the anthology of student prose, poetry and critical essays. The UHCL Writing Center, in conjunction with Sigma Tau Delta and the Literature Club, will be producing this year’s publication.

Each edition includes prose, poetry and critical essays written by UHCL students, including those who attend through satellite campuses and the prison program. The journal will also accept submissions from potential UHCL students who are currently attending area junior and community colleges.

Deadline for submissions: March 1, 2008

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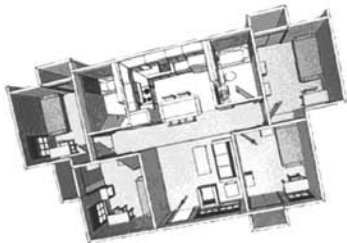
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Quasar: continued from page 1



Tom Murray: United Space Alliance

University of Houston-Clear Lake President William A. Staples was honored with the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership’s prestigious 2008 Quasar Award for economic development excellence. From left to right: Bob Mitchell, president of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership, Congressman Nick Lampson, Quasar Award honoree William A. Staples and Dr. Bernard A. Milstein, 2008 chairman of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership.

Leaders Council of the United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast.

Richard Allen Jr., chairman of BAHEP, was honored in 2007 with the prestigious Quasar Award for economic development and said he was mostly impressed with Staples’ leadership, which will help future individuals follow in the same footsteps that transformed the Clear Lake experience beyond the classroom and into the community.

Some of Staples’ career highlights include receiving the 2003 NASA Public Service Medal for exceptional contributions to the mission of NASA, serving as the chairman of the board for BAHEP in 2003 and 2004, receiving the Texas Art Education Association’s 2004 Governmental Award for Meritorious Service in the

Arts, and being selected as the 2005 E. A. Smith YMCA Community of Stars Gala honoree.

The award has been presented annually for 15 years and the Quasar Award committee nominates the individual who is then approved by BAHEP board of directors and executive committee.

BAHEP strives to find the optimal balance among business development and expanding companies. Planning is critical, but even more important is member involvement and a shared vision for the region. The organization is dedicated to providing leadership, advocacy and a broad long-term perspective for the good of the region.

“While I may be the recipient, I consider this an award to UHCL,” Staples said.

Higher One: continued from page 1

to the students. By partnering with Higher One, these costs have been reduced.

Jenkins’ job now is to get support and feedback from students. Out of the 3,000 cards delivered, there have only been about 10 to 15 serious complaints about which Jenkins has spoken with students directly. Some were from students not wanting the card because they already have other bank accounts or from students worried about personal identity theft.

“The only information given out to Higher One is directory record information, which is any information that allows us to identify you, including name, address, date of birth, etc.,” Jenkins said.

Personal information such as social security numbers and other sensitive information is needed, just as in any other bank account, and is secured between UHCL and Higher One; it is not shared with any other outside entities. More information is provided on UHCLOneCard.higheroneaccount.com about how to be protected against identity theft, but necessary precautions should be taken as with any other bank account.

Students are also encouraged to swipe and sign when using the card for purchases because the signature option takes days for the transaction to process, whereas entering a pin number takes the money out instantly. If the card is lost, it is FDIC approved and guaranteed up to \$100,000.

While some students have been happy with the change, others are still unsure.

“I have talked with other students in class and they think the card is deceptive, in that not that much information has been provided about it and that worries people,” said Ashley Schuler, a graduate psychology major.

“I am not going to hide anything from students; we knew there were going to be some problems,” Jenkins said. “UHCL is getting in line with other universities coming into the new millennium. There was never going to be a good time to bring in the OneCard and we must move through the problems of transitioning from one system to another. By next semester we hope to get all of the glitches out of the system.”

Jenkins is also challenging students to come up with a name for the UHCL card and a mascot. Soon a contest will be set up through a blog site program to get students to submit name ideas. Students will vote, and the most popular name will be chosen. UH calls their OneCard the CougarCard and the Downtown campus uses the GatorCard. UHCL has an unofficial mascot named Blockie but has never had an official mascot to represent the campus.

“People will agree to disagree, but the card is here to stay,” Jenkins said. “I want students to have fun with it. Sorry, but Blockie will not be accepted!”

BAHEP: continued from page 1

Exactly what facilities are to be housed in the proposed center, and whether or not the students would incur any of the financial burden for maintaining the structure are two of the many concerns expressed regarding its construction.

“The use of the building itself, whether it [would] be designed to host classrooms or labs, eateries, offices or even studios,” are all concerns Richard Willis, an undergraduate communication major and Student Government Association representative, feels the UHCL student body should have addressed.

“[The students] should also be made aware of any cost directly affecting them, i.e., a student fee to help pay for the new building,” Willis added.

When asked about these and other elements of the center’s development and construction, Staples pointed out that plans for the center are only in preliminary discussions.

“Final decisions have not been made regarding the center as well as the possible move of BAHEP to UHCL,” Staples said. “As we continue to explore the possibilities, the best interests of the university community and our service region will remain at the forefront of the decision-making process.”

Staples’ reassurances are echoed by those of Jim Reinhartsen, BAHEP’s vice president.

“We had a partnership with the University of Houston-Clear Lake, before it was called the University of Houston-Clear Lake,” Reinhartsen said.

BAHEP’s mission, as stated on their Web site, is to “broker responsible economic development.”

“Our primary objective is to recruit, retain, expand and develop primary jobs,” Reinhartsen clarified.

He defined a primary job as a job that brings in revenue to the Bay Area economy.

“That’s money in a plane coming in from somewhere else to be spent in our community,” Reinhartsen said. “We focus on retaining the jobs we have and recruiting new industry with high performing jobs.”

Khator: continued from page 1

to assess after the first 100 days of her presidency to determine where the primary concerns rest within the universities’ communities.

Khator welcomed feedback from the audience and some faculty members expressed concerns for issues such as the relationship between the individual institutions which comprise the UH System and the emphasis Khator has placed upon the rising status of UH Central as a research-based, “flagship” university.

“I would like to know how you see that mission effecting the other three campuses?” an audience member asked, “What will happen to us [at UHCL].”

Khator answered by saying that she planned to incorporate a “completely synergistic relationship,” into the future operations of the four-school system, and added that the success of one, would be beneficial to all.

“When the water rises,” she said, “all boats rise.”

Following the speech, the audience flowed into Atrium I, where the chancellor greeted staff and faculty personally, but the question of the System’s future spilled into the reception, where Anthony Jenkins, dean of students expressed his concerns regarding equal funding for all campuses and continued access for students.

“I hope that she follows through with her commitment to student services,” Jenkins said, but added that Khator shared his vision for student success.

Khator’s commitment to the students within the UH System was seemingly confirmed when the chancellor spoke later to members of the student body in the casual, couch-filled Student Lounge so that she could “feel the pulse” of UHCL.

“The life of any campus,” Khator told them, “is the students.”

Khator admitted to the audience that a university’s success is dependent upon the success of its students, which entails specifically, equipping them with the skills needed to

The importance of economic development to the UHCL community is foremost on the list of concerns for Staples.

“Essentially, a university’s fiscal strength and academic quality reflect the state of the region it serves so it is vital for us to support the economic well-being of our communities,” Staples stressed. “Just as we need a well-educated workforce, our students need a robust job market when they graduate.”

Reinhartsen illustrates these concerns with a real world example.

“If I’m attending UHCL, or any university, I want to support economic development,” Reinhartsen said. “The reason for that is I want a new company to come here that would want to hire me. In fact, I would like 20 new companies to come here that want to hire me, and if there are only two of me looking for the same job, then I’m really in the catbird seat of what I can do with my career.”

When members of the UH-System Board of Regents were sought for comment regarding the center and the proposal to move BAHEP to UHCL, Eric Gerber, director of university communication for UH, deferred comment to UHCL’s administration.

When pressed for more specific details regarding the BAHEP project, Staples reiterated that the plans for the proposed center are still in the preliminary stage, but that the UHCL community will be kept abreast of any developments.

“Should these early discussions become more definitive, information will be shared as it becomes available,” Staples said.

The Fall 2007 issue of UHCL’s Egret magazine reports that the BAHEP project, along with a 34,000 square foot addition and remodel for the Arbor Building, is currently in the programming and architect selection phase. Both projects are anticipated to be complete in 2009. Other campus upgrade projects, as reported by Egret magazine, include repairs and improvements to the Delta and Bayou Buildings and Parking Lots A and B.



Erica Paetz: The Signal

Renu Khator, new UH System Chancellor and University of Houston president.

compete at a global level.

“I would not be happy if you just simply survive in the global economy,” Khator told students. “You need to be the leaders - you need to be innovators ... creators.”

Khator invited concerns and suggestions from the student audience, which ranged from online education and the PeopleSoft system, to a rise in tuition costs and international student affairs such as difficulty in obtaining internships.

“I am going to take the little rocks and separate them from the big rocks,” she said, noting their concerns.

Leaders of the Student Government Association and representatives of various student organizations presented Khator with roses and other gifts in an enthusiastic show of appreciation for her visit to the UHCL campus.

Her visit seemed well-received by both faculty and students, and Khator promised to visit the Clear Lake campus again in the near future.

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6 to 7 pm

noon to 1pm

noon to 1pm

6 to 7 pm

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HOUSTON AUTO SHOW

Car Manufacturers Gear-up for the New Year

Stanley White III
The Signal

The Houston Auto Show had something for everyone this year. It seems today’s car companies are actually concerned with the customer’s needs as opposed to the company’s own idealism. No, really!

Does anyone remember when you could buy a car without radio, air conditioning, or anti-lock brakes? Well those days are no more. As a matter of fact, every year cars are being filled with more and more features. Close competition between car companies now benefits the car buyers.

For instance, Saturn is now more customer-friendly than ever. Saturn is now offering accommodations for customers including 24/7 assistance available online. That means, any time day or night, you will be able to contact a Saturn employee via live chat to assist you with any Saturn-related questions. If you think they’re not bending over backwards far enough, Saturn is now offering delivery test drives. Make an appointment online and Saturn will deliver a car to your home or work for you to test drive at your leisure.

Dodge is also paying close attention to their customers. Dodge is no longer relying solely on group studies to determine which vehicles need certain changes. Dodge is conducting one-on-one research with truck owners while riding around in the vehicle with them for two straight days. That way, Dodge gets an enormous amount of data to help them find out what customers need.

When car companies utilize good market research, their vehicles become more desirable. Ford’s 2009 King Ranch F-150 is so full of new features that it’s six inches longer than usual.



The Cadillac XLR is power and speed with prestige and luxury.

The King Ranch F-150 is a “true contender, not a pretender,” says David Mondragon, general manager of Ford Lincoln Mercury.

This truck is equipped with: SIRIUS Travel Link, next-generation navigation system by Xanavi, Sync, 700-watt Sony sound system, retractable side bed step, a rear tailgate step, and a capless fuel inlet. The SIRIUS Travel Link will not only provide satellite radio, it will also have real-time news,

weather, traffic and up-to-date movie times in your area. The next-generation navigation system will be voice activated. And Sync is a program made with Microsoft that allows you to hook up your iPod to your truck.

Also, Infiniti has a vehicle so full of options you will be reading the owners manual like a suspense novel. The Infiniti EX Crossover SUV is a unique vehicle. It is the only vehicle on the market with scratch shield protection over the paint. It utilizes a self-healing clear coat, which uses the heat of the sun to make scratches disappear.

The EX is equipped with Around View Monitor; this technology gives you a bird’s eye view so you can see parking lines and curbs. If you don’t like carrying your CDs everywhere, the EX has a 9.3 GB hard drive so you can store and play almost 3,000 songs.

The EX also has extensive safety features such as Lane Departure Prevention. LDP is for those drivers who unintentionally drift out of their



The Mustang GT-R is Ford’s vision for the future of racing.

lane; this technology will give a visual and audible warning to the driver and/or activate one side of the brake system to pull the vehicle back into the lane. There are plenty of people in and around Houston who need LDP. While on the subject of safety, if the airbags in the EX were to deploy all at once, the whole interior would look like a big bag of marshmallows.

Speaking of cars with loads of options and features, Scion and all their marketing glory was in attendance this year. In case you didn’t know, Scion is an urban trendsetter. If you buy a Scion, you can get anything you want on it, such as: supercharger, rims, body kit, paint, LEDs, racing pedals, etc. The list goes on and on. Scion is basically the Mr. Potato Head of automobiles.

Loads of new features are great, but apparently bells and whistles won’t help save the environment. General Motors wanted to show everyone how green they could be. Chevrolet brought in a dynamometer to demonstrate to the public how their engines use less gas. While cruising at a constant speed, Chevrolet’s engines will turn off unnecessary cylinders; and if you need to speed up, the cylinders will be reactivated. Less gas means less pollution.

Also, Saturn is now offering an affordable hybrid so you can “go green without going broke,” said Stuart Pierce, director of brand and product development.

But, enough about saving the environment; let’s talk about the really cool stuff, shall we?

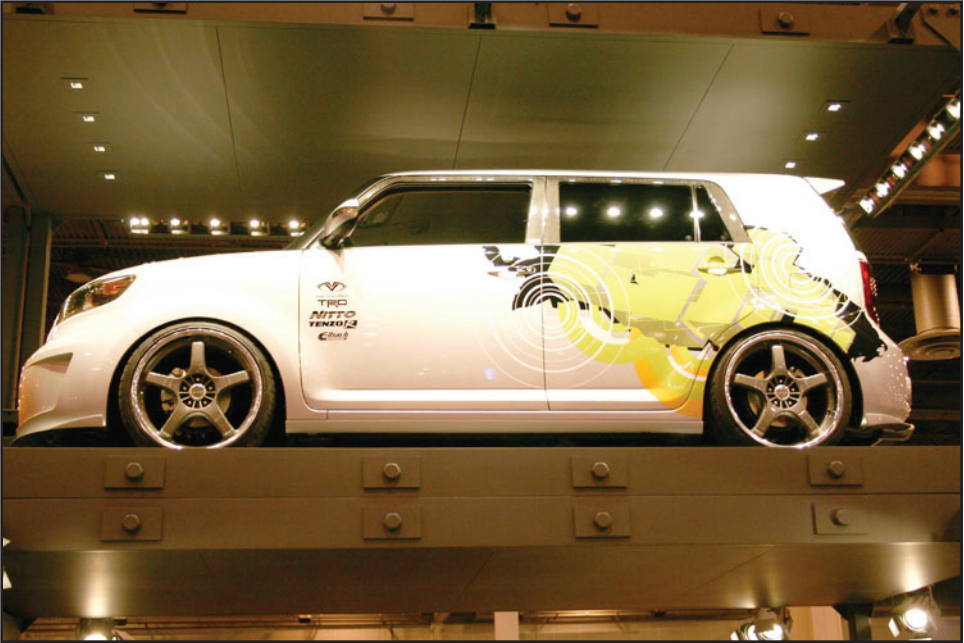
Gear heads, start your saliva glands. The Nissan Skyline GT-R is back and better than ever. In case you are not familiar with foreign power-house vehicles, the GT-R is a six-speed, twin turbocharged, all-wheel drive beast (which also does 0-60 mph in 3.5 seconds). I’ll leave the rest to your imagination.

Also at this year’s event, Mitsubishi showcased a teenager’s dream car called the Loudlander. The Loudlander is a Mitsubishi Outlander with a 2,700-watt Rockford Fosgate sound system (that means it is REALLY loud). Unfortunately, this is just a concept vehicle; so if you want to rupture your ear drums, you will have to buy the sound equipment separately.

It would be difficult to keep coming up with new innovative designs year after year without help, but the wants of the American drivers will fuel creative automobile design for many years to come.



Photos by Stanley White III



The urban trendsetter Scion showcased their fresh new xB