



## Protest brewing in state capital



Christopher Curry: The Signal

Pastor Bill Lockwood addresses protesters at the Labor Day weekend Tea Party held in Austin.

## Free money for students

**Vivian Volirakis**  
The Signal Staff

Some financial relief for college students and their parents is finally here. Students can earn up to \$2,500 per year and, maybe, even get a computer.

The Internal Revenue Service has issued a new tax relief for college students under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that was signed into law earlier this year. The ARRA has made some beneficial amendments and expanded the former Hope tax credit for college level students. The modified version of the credit is called the American Opportunity Tax Credit.

Not only is the act geared toward previously qualifying students and families, it also stretches a financial hand out to a wider variety of people to distribute to a broader range of incomes.

“We encourage tax payers to look into this tax credit; it will really benefit them,” said Lea Crusberg, Houston IRS Spokesperson.

Students can now claim up to \$2,500 of the cost of qualified tuition and related expenses such as books and supplies on their 2009 and 2010 tax returns. This is a \$700 increase from the previous amount available per student through the original Hope credit.

Another improvement made to the bill is to expand the tax credit to students enrolled in their first four years of post-secondary school as opposed to the original Hope credit which was only available to students enrolled in their first two years of post-secondary education.

All students enrolled in their first four years of a post-secondary school who have an adjusted gross income of less than \$80,000, or \$160,000 for married couples filing a joint return, are eligible.

**Free Money:** continued on page 6

**Christopher Curry**  
The Signal Staff

During Labor Day weekend, more than 4,000 conservatives from Texas gathered outside the steps of the capitol building in Austin to protest the status quo of the federal government.

Many political and social issues are part of these protests, but the protesters are united behind three core values: fiscal responsibility, limited government and free markets. The Bush and, currently, the Obama administrations have been

perceived by the protesters as going against these core values.

Since late 2008 this grassroots movement, known popularly as the Tea Party protests, has continued to gain civilian and government supporters. One major testament to the influence this movement has had on government officials is House Resolution 1207: Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2009 and Senate Resolution 604: Federal Reserve Sunshine Act of 2009. If passed, these resolutions would force the Federal Reserve to be subject to auditing. To date, 282

congressmen and congresswomen and 23 senators support the bills as co-sponsors.

Although the protesters are united under similar values, individually they protest for a diverse range of personal reasons. Many interesting and outspoken individuals were in attendance at the Tea Party protest in Austin.

Bert Hernandez, the general manager of Bird-Kultgen Ford in Waco, is still waiting to be reimbursed by the “Cash for Clunkers” program for some of the vehicles his customers traded for discounts to buy new vehicles

**Protest:** continued on page 6

## New Texas laws hit home

**Ruth Garay**  
The Signal Staff

Drivers beware. The 81st Texas legislature passed new cell laws and enhanced previous seat belt laws that will change our driving habits. The new laws went into effect Sept. 1. Now, motorists who violate cell phone and seat belt laws could receive hefty fines.

**Cell phones**

While driving in a school zone, cell phones can no longer be used unless they are equipped with a hands-free device or when the car is parked. Bus drivers cannot use a cell phone while transporting minors. Offenders can receive a maximum fine of \$200.

In order to enforce the law, a sign must be posted at the beginning of each school zone. Signs have been posted in Sugarland and some Pasadena school zones.

Another law passed affects teens under the age of 18. Teens who receive a driver’s license after Sept. 1 are prohibited from texting or talking on a cell phone while driving.

Both laws were passed to address an increase of accidents caused by cell phone distractions. A study conducted in 2006 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Virginia Tech Transportation Institute reported almost 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involve some form of driver distraction, and cell phone use is one of the most common.

**New Laws:** continued on page 6



Alison Schwamkrug: The Signal

William Staples, president of University of Houston-Clear Lake, listens along with faculty and staff at a seminar that focuses on helping first-generation college students.

## Symposium targets students’ success

**Alison Schwamkrug**  
The Signal Staff

In an effort to inform faculty about how to help students succeed academically, financially and emotionally, Anthony Jenkins, dean of students, has asked that University of Houston-Clear Lake faculty participate in a series of discussions.

Seminars are being held this year in accordance to the Student Services Symposium at UHCL. Jenkins is one of many speakers of the Symposium. He spoke to the faculty and staff members about the topic of first-generation students Sept. 10.

“I am the first in my family to go to college and that is why this is such an interest to me,” Jenkins said. “I had to go through these challenges, but my school had an amazing support system. If not for this support system I personally feel I wouldn’t have finished.”

Jenkins’ goal is to help first-generation students by discussing ways to encourage the students’ academic efforts with faculty and staff. Because UHCL is an upper-level school, some students may not have attended school in many years.

“We need to better understand the students,” Jenkins said. “First-generation students may

**Symposium:** continued on page 6



THE SIGNAL

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COMMENTARY

Don't dial and drive  
Police crack down on seat belt and cell phone uses

**Jeffry Tupa**  
The Signal Staff

Major legal changes and additions have been made to traffic and criminal laws as of Sept. 1. Ignorance of the new laws will not save drivers from getting a ticket either.

University of Houston-Clear Lake students should pay particular attention to the new laws involving cell phones and seat belts.

Drivers who talk on a cell phone while driving, heads up; tickets will be issued for talking on cell phones while in a school zone. Children between 5 and 8 years old no longer used to riding in a booster seat may now be required to do so depending on the child's height. The new law requires that children 8 years and under use a booster seat if they do not meet a 4 feet, 9 inch height requirement.

Picture this, a mother is trying to get her 7-year-old child to school on time and she answers her phone while driving. Two blocks away from the school, a cop pulls her over for violating two new laws: 1) talking on her cell phone in a school zone; and 2) not having the

child in a booster seat. On top of that, the child was late for school.

Good news, parents! If the seven-year-old child is about the size of his or her mother in height, the child doesn't have to use a booster seat. But for all the other parents, the Texas Department of Public Safety will wait until June 1, 2010, before cracking down on this new law.

Children are not the only ones who need to buckle up. Adult passengers in the back seat of a vehicle must also be buckled.

From now on students will have to be extremely careful about how many friends they can offer a ride. If a car has five seatbelts, it can only carry five passengers, including the driver.

The days of students packing 10 people into a six-passenger car are no more. It would be like driving around in a clown car, but not as funny. Violators can be fined \$25 for the first person not buckled and then a \$250 dollar fine for each person not buckled in the car after that.

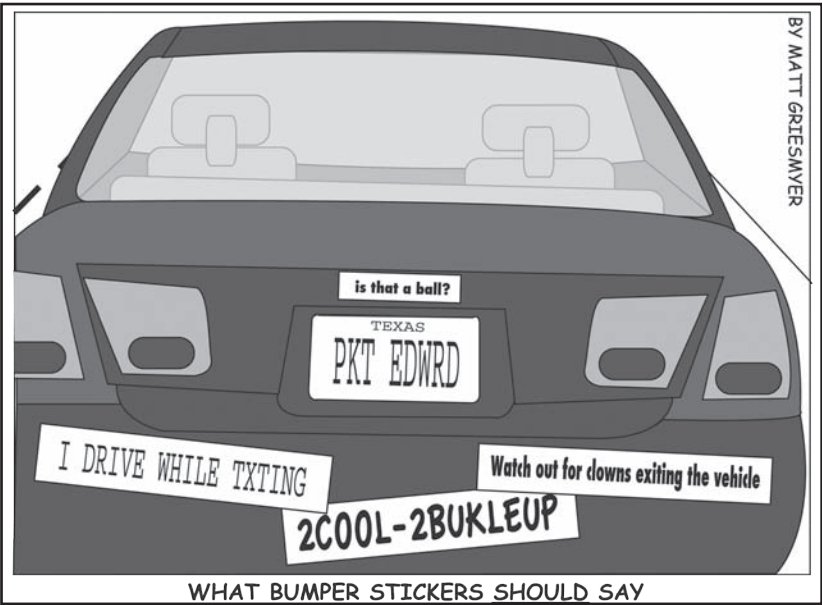
UHCL students with teenage children will want to pay attention to new laws HB 2730 and HB 339, which restrict all drivers under the age of 18 from using a wireless communication device at all.

The new laws involving cell phones and texting for teenagers may very well be expanded eventually to include all Texas. For now the state of Texas has targeted teenage drivers because of their inexperience. Of any group, teens should

pay more attention to their driving, not less.

In other states, this law has already included adult drivers. In Utah, people who text and drive can face up to 15 years in prison.

For more information on new laws recently passed in the state of Texas, involving cell phones, seat belts, driving while intoxicated, firearms and dogfighting, go to www.txdps.state.tx.us.



Matt Griesmyer:The Signal

COLUMN

Point, click, love

"Let's go out on a date," I said in a questioning manner.

With the thrill that can only be delivered through the anonymity of circuits and wires, I waited for her response.

The trumpet fanfare that announced a message sounded through my computer speakers.

"Sure," she replied. She added a cute ":-)" to show that she was happy.

Yes, I met my girlfriend online.

People tend to have a certain stigma when it comes to online dating. People still have an improper image of online people: everyone is a 40-year-old stalker who has a creepy glare and lives in his mother's basement.

I am not quite 40 years old, Mother lives downstairs, thank you very much, and she says my glare is only slightly creepy.

When it comes to online dating, much less any kind of dating, there is the "truth" and then there is the truth.

Do I go to bars that often? Not at all. I just go to the pub around the corner and drink like a fish. You know the old adage "where everybody knows your name?" They know my name and more of my history than the IRS.

Am I into the drug scene? Not at all. Never mind the smoke billowing from my bedroom window that evokes memories of Cheech and Chong movies. Anyways, the only smoke that I even inhaled was legal, and I gave that up. Am I the only one who has a serious craving for pizza and ice cream?

Getting to know someone through the silicon-lined passages of cyberspace can be a daunting challenge and a dangerous task for anyone, but no more so than meeting someone in a bar.

When you get on any Web site geared toward meeting new people – I believe the term now is social networking – it prompts you to fill out a questionnaire. Sample questions include a physical description, questions about what you are looking for, religious views (the most comedic of these included pastafarian – the religion of the flying spaghetti monster) and other basic questions.

After these annoyingly repetitive set of questions, essays are filled out that correspond to archetypical conversation among bar patrons.

*Tell us about yourself.  
What are you looking for?  
What is your ideal first date?*

The essays presented are all responses to questions that end up being thrown around much like small talk over a tall frosty or short and potent glass of liquid courage – save for the inevitable embarrassment of throwing a pickup line at an uninterested person and getting a fake phone number with six digits.

By the way blonde girl from that club downtown, I think you gave me a wrong phone number.

In the end, online dating is actually a more long-term solution to meeting people in the so-called real world.

When you go to a bar, you get a picture of a person with a dash of the truth they want to share with you.

When you go to a dating Web page, you get a snapshot of people (rarely does someone not post a picture), along with a description of their views.

Can these responses and snapshots of

people be modified into not being completely accurate?

Absolutely, but no more than common barstool distortion of the truth.

Guys, sucking in the gut and getting your sister to make up your hair and your outfit will not hide the fact that sometimes you can be focused on only one thing.

Girls, put your push-up bras and low-cut whatsits away. A guy is going to like you for who you are not what you are. Well, most guys anyway.

The key to any scenario involving a future Mrs.. or Mr. Right, or any romantic scenario, is the truth presented. The quality of the relationship depends on the honesty given in the first place.

What can you do to keep yourself safe in a blind-dating scenario, whether online or otherwise?

A big tip that, unfortunately, many do not follow is to keep the first few dates public. There are people out there who can be a bit dodgy, but by arranging the date location for somewhere public, it prevents the possibilities of unsavory individuals who can take advantage of the situation.

For those who ridicule or tell frightening tales of blind dates and creepy e-stalkers who just cannot leave you alone, realize that while it is paramount to remain safe around unfamiliar people, the Internet is not as it once was. Online dating can be a wonderful tool to those who are shy or just do not have the time to sit and pitch themselves to strangers in a strange place.

For those who use online dating sites now, be not ashamed for the sources you utilize to find a date. Stand up and be proud. Raise your mice and keyboards into the air and shout at the top of your lungs "I AM AN E-DATER AND I AM PROUD OF IT!"

The simple fact of the matter is that in all aspects of relationships, romantic or otherwise, the outcome always reflects the effort and honesty invested from the beginning.



**Matt Griesmyer**  
The Signal Staff




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# REMEMBERING IKE

## Surviving the storm: An islander's experience

**Courtney Brodbeck**  
The Signal Staff

The power had gone out and the sounds outside were like the sound track to a bad disaster film. My mother and I, along with three others, hadn't evacuated very far from our home on the west end of Galveston Island; we were in Santa Fe and about to use every ounce of strength our bodies possessed. We were all downstairs in our friend's home when the water started seeping in through the cracks of the French doors. The wind was beating ferociously at the house and it was only a matter of minutes before the doors

would blow open, letting the chaos outside rush into the haven we made inside. We all scurried to find anything to barricade the doors. First was the couch, then the chairs, and finally, as a last resort, we flung our bodies across the furniture to make sure the doors were secure. It was man versus nature, and for a second it seemed nature would win. All my mother and I could think about was our little beach hut we called home. "Please let it be standing, let our neighbors be OK and let our island still be home," we prayed. When we were finally able to get back on the island, my

mom and I slowly turned the corner to our street. Though severely beaten by the storm, we still had a house. I know others were not as fortunate, so I'm thankful that the stilts stood strong and held up our beloved home. After assessing the damage of our home, the next step was locating my car. Since we didn't want to take the chance of being separated, we left my car behind. A couple of days later a friend found it four miles from my house. I don't think it would have passed a Carfax report; it would have

read, "New upholstery, freshly painted, and recent work down to the exterior." Although one good thing did come from my car being demolished; I could pay my loan off from the bank. Oh well, at least we were home. We were not supposed to stay on the island. Residents were being allowed in to the city on a "look and leave" basis, but we couldn't bear the thought of leaving our home again. Besides, there was no place else to go. There wasn't a hotel room empty for a 300-mile radius, so we decided to rough it the best we could. The routine we had was simple: drive into town to pick up our ice and army meals, fill our containers with gasoline so we could power the generator and, of course, get lots of water. Since the power hadn't been turned back on yet and we could only plug necessary items into the generator, we had to become energy savvy. Running the electric water heater wasn't a necessity so every morning we set out jugs of water on the deck so the sun would heat them up and, once heated, we took our infamous "jug baths."

At night we looked outside our window and waited for just one tiny glimpse of a light to come on in the neighbors' homes, giving us hope that our community was beginning to be restored. We loathed the sound of the generator turning off, when the fan would stop

and the mosquitoes would hone in and attack. Gasoline was precious and we allowed ourselves only one tank per night. However, as time passed, seeing a friendly face and unbelievable kindness from others brought hope. A disaster can bring out the best and the worst in people, but witnessing the selfless acts of compassion after Hurricane Ike showed me the true nature of

**"Please let it be standing, let our neighbors be OK and let our island still be home."**

- Courtney Brodbeck  
The Signal Staff



Courtney Brodbeck: The Signal

Though the home has seen better days, it still stands after Hurricane Ike.



Courtney Brodbeck: The Signal

Debris scatters the yard in the storm's aftermath.

## Tree art restores hope to recovering community

**Christine Crump**  
The Signal Staff

Hurricane Ike tore through Galveston Sept. 13, 2008, with a storm surge of 15 feet covering the island with petroleum laced salt water. Ultimately, the salt water from the storm's surge left thousands of trees dead, including the 100-year-old live oaks that lined Broadway Boulevard. On the city of Galveston's Web site, there has been an estimated 11,000 trees that have died as a result of Ike. Of those trees, 3,400 have already been removed from public right of ways.

The Galveston Island Tree Conservancy started a committee because they did not want to see the dead trees end up in a landfill. Instead, they are using the wood to recycle, reuse and create works of art.

Two dead oak trees in front of Galveston's City Hall were selected to create a work of public art, instead of cutting them down and sending them to the landfill. The Galveston Island Tree Conservancy chose James "Jimmy" Phillips to create a dalmatian and fire hydrant sculpture out of the trees.

"At first I was hesitant to agree to the sculptures," said City Manager Steve LeBlanc. "But, the members of the Tree Committee and the community at large convinced me it was a worthwhile endeavor. I agreed to support the carvings and I really think they are spectacular. Mr. Phillips is quite an artist."



Christine Crump: The Signal

James Phillips saws away as he sculpts a fire hydrant out of an oak tree that died after Ike. This sculpture is located next to City Hall in Galveston.

Phillips is a hobbyist carver who started carving trees four years ago, after cutting down a tree in his front yard. "I was doodling with a chainsaw and someone liked what I did," Phillips said.

Donna Leibbert, a member of the Galveston Island Tree Conservancy, got a call from Phillips saying he would donate his time to do the sculptures. "He came down with a little clay statuette of a dalmatian," Leibbert said, "and I

went 'Bingo, you're my guy!'" Leibbert said a donor offered to cover all of Phillips' expenses. "The dalmatian and the fire hydrant were requested by Donna and the tree committee," Phillips said. "It was a tribute to the fire department and their inability to have a dalmatian on site." Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Smith said that there cannot be a dalmatian on site because "It's more for the safety of the puppy and

the liability." Ike was a devastating storm that left many people overwhelmed with everything that was lost. The city of Galveston needed something to lift the spirits of everyone on the island.

"The storm's surge really devastated our island," LeBlanc said, "We were cautiously optimistic that our trees would survive, but so many of our live oaks eventually succumbed to the salt and stress. Having an artist create something positive from our dead trees helps our community heal."

Giving hope to a community that lost over 80 percent of its trees from Ike is an essential. "It's just, can we save the trees, can we have something to smile at, can we bring some joy to somebody, can we keep them just a little while longer rather than grind them up in a landfill?" Leibbert said.

Phillips has a few more tree sculpting projects coming up, including three private commissions in Galveston and one in Houston.

LeBlanc said four more trees have been identified to be carved by Phillips in Galveston. There will be one tree at Adoue Park, Wright-Cuney Recreation Center grounds, Jones Park, and Schreiber Park carved into sculptures.

Other examples of Phillips' work is on display at the Rene Wiley Studio and Gallery on Postoffice Street in Galveston. The sculptures of the dalmatian and the fire hydrant are located next to City Hall at 823 Rosenberg in Galveston, Texas.

## Artists create beauty from hurricane wreckage

**Mary Ann Wangler**  
The Signal Staff

The Art Alliance Center at Clear Lake, located at 2000 NASA Parkway, is currently hosting "Flotsam & Jetsam: Artists Respond to Hurricane Ike."

"To encourage creative interpretation of the theme and to diversify the art and the materials used to make it, we have tilted our August exhibition about Hurricane Ike, Flotsam & Jetsam," said curator Debra Kendrick.

Flotsam is debris found floating or that has washed ashore, and jetsam is cargo cast overboard to lighten the load. Artists had the choice to use the hurricane as the theme or subject of their work, or they could use the "flotsam churned up by

the storm or the jetsam cast off by its victims to create something fresh form all the devastation," Kendrick stated. "The invitational aspect of the show will include both; as well as works by Galveston artists and other coastal area artists who suffered particularly at the hands of Ike."

Kendrick also said that several of the works on display are by current and former University of Houston-Clear Lake students.

The "Flotsam & Jetsam" exhibit will be on display through Oct. 8, 2009. The gallery is open to the public Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and accepts donations.



Mary Ann Wangler: The Signal

Shelter, by Bethany Quillin (steel, wood). "I chose this piece because, to me, it is a dynamic representation of what it felt like to be in a house during the storm," said curator Debra Kendrick. The artist is a UHCL student.



Courtesy: The Art Alliance Center

Special Delivery by George Gonzales (oil paint on canvas).



Mary Ann Wangler: The Signal

Looking Up by Che-Hwa Wang (dry plum leaves). The artist is a UHCL student.



Free Money: continued from page 1

If one has an AGI between \$80,000 and \$90,000 (\$160,000 and \$180,000 for those filing a joint return) the credit is gradually reduced depending on the amount of one’s AGI.

Even students who are unemployed or do not normally file a tax return with the IRS are encouraged to file anyway; they may still be eligible for a refund up to \$1,000.

“This will be very helpful financially for college students, especially to pay for Taco Bell, entertainment and other extras you need in college,” said Eric Martin, business major at University of Houston-Clear Lake. “I could also use the extra money to pay back my student loan.”

The credit can be claimed using Form 8863 and attaching it to either Form 1040 or 1040A at the same time one would normally file his or her annual tax returns.

Students who are beneficiaries of a Qualified Tuition Savings Plan also referred to as a Section 529 College Savings Plan, during 2009 or 2010 may now use their funds to purchase a computer, Internet service or any technology related device for their coursework. Each state has its own set of 529 College Savings Plans unique to each individual state.

“For us, being in the Financial Aid business, anything that will help students is most definitely something we strongly support and urge students to take part in,” said Billy Satterfield, associate director of financial aid at UHCL.

For more information and a video on The American Opportunity Tax Credit, visit [www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=211309,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=211309,00.html) and [www.youtube.com/irsvideos](http://www.youtube.com/irsvideos). Information is also available by visiting the audio site at iTunes to listen to IRS podcasts about the AARA tax credits.

To find out about the 529 College Savings Plans offered in Texas, please visit [www.dart-creations.com/article-tree/texas\\_529\\_plan.html](http://www.dart-creations.com/article-tree/texas_529_plan.html).

New Laws: continued from page 1

Cell phone related car accidents have occurred at the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

“We have had accidents on and around campus where we were fairly sure a driver using a cell phone was inattentive,” said Paul Willingham, chief of police at UHCL. “In fact, last spring, we had a SUV flip over on its roof and slide across the Bayou on campus because the student was on the cell phone. The car faded off the road and flipped over the curb. Fortunately, no one was hurt.”

Prior to the new laws passing through legislation, wireless communication companies and the American Civil Liberties Union fought hard to keep the bills from passing.

“Bad driving is already against the law and subject to arrest,” said Public Education Director Dottie Griffith of the Texas ACLU. “Legislators should pass laws to get more done — cell phone laws will be difficult to enforce.”

“If we save one life, the law is worth passing,” counters Representative Dan Branch, R-Dallas, author of the no cell phone in the school zone bill. “Protecting children in the school zones is important.”

**“If we save one life, the law is worth passing. Protecting children in school zones is important.”**

**- Dan Branch**  
Texas Representative

**Seat Belts Laws**

Two laws were enhanced to address seat belt safety.

After several years of seeing crash scenes where seat belts made a difference between life and death, Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo was inspired to lobby for seat belt laws to include back seat passengers. He requested that state Sen. Kirk Watson, D-Austin, file a bill on the measure.

Now, all passengers in a vehicle, no matter what age, must be restrained by a seat belt. Previously, only the driver, front passenger(s) and minors had to be restrained.

“The main goal was to keep human beings from becoming projectiles and either causing death or serious trauma,” Willingham said.

Another law was amended to require a child safety seat for minors under 8 years old who are not at least 4 feet, 9 inches tall. The law previously applied to children under the age of 5, who were shorter than 36 inches. First offenders receive a fine of \$25 and violators for the second offense pay \$250. Conviction of an offense under this section creates a new court cost that is collected and used to buy safety seats for low-income families.

For more information on these and other new state laws, visit <http://www.drivinglaws.org>.

Protest: continued from page 1

despite assurances that he would be reimbursed within ten days of each trade-in. His main reason to protest is the proposed employer mandate, HR 3200.

“With the mandate an employer has two choices,” Hernandez said. “They can provide employee insurance, which most companies already do, or they can pay 8 percent surtax on their payroll. The problem is that the government determines what plans qualify, and if they do not meet their standards then the company has to pay the surtax on top of the insurance, which will force employers to cut salaries.”

One man stood out from the rest of the crowd. Dressed up as a founding father from his vintage knickerbockers to his tri-corn hat, Bill Lockwood chose to speak out because he feels the Constitution is being undermined by our representatives.

“The genius of the Constitution was not that it enabled government,” Lockwood said. “The genius of the Constitution was that it restrained government. That is the founding concept.”

Healthcare reform was a great issue of debate at the Tea Party protest in Austin; however, no specific plan has been implemented.

Susan Prihoda, R.N. and director of student health and disability services at the University

of Houston-Clear Lake, says she is committed to informing students that they can be covered under affordable student healthcare by the university.

“No specific plan being proposed is related to student health insurance,” Prihoda said. “The current student health plan is already lean and very rational. It is not rationed service. I do not want Senators telling me how to practice. I am very willing to self-moderate my practice in terms of rational care, not rationed.”

UHCL student healthcare is priced to be affordable because the deductibles and co-pay amounts are set to benefit low-income individuals. Prihoda encourages all uninsured students to sign up for student health insurance.

Joe Wurzelbacher, who is more commonly recognized as “Joe the Plumber,” attended the Austin Tea Party by popular demand and was asked to speak before the crowd. The protest ended with his final statement.

“I do not serve the Republicans,” Wurzelbacher said. “I serve America because my job is to serve America. It is your job to serve America and it is our job to make sure the politicians are doing exactly that job, and that is serving America.”



Christopher Curry:The Signal

Joe Wurzelbacher, aka “Joe the Plumber,” speaks to a crowd of captivated tea partiers in Austin.

Symposium: continued from page 1

lack college survival skills such as organization and time management. Many may also have a reservation about how to ask the right question and if they do ask a question, they feel they are not qualified to be in college.”

As part of the discussion, Jenkins asked faculty to help boost first-generation students’ self-esteem and to make them feel like a valued member of the university’s community. It is not uncommon for a first-generation student to lack this support from family. Other factors also play into this lack of support, such as students’ cultural and economic background.

“Another level of challenge is when a family is not supportive,” Jenkins said. “It causes a rift in the family when the student tries to reach for a higher knowledge. The student is then left in a difficult crossroad and statistics show the student normally will quit.”

Jenkins mentioned in some cases, first-generation students may have to still work, bring in income for the family, and take classes on their own time. Without support from the family, these students are at risk of dropping out.

“Students may hesitate to enter into college because they don’t want to burden the family with debt,” Jenkins said. “Most often, first-generation students will work for years after high school then enter college at a much later age. That is a very daunting task.”

Darlene Biggers, vice president of students services, feels there is an assumption that a student who has gone into college straight after high school knows everything about the process. The transition from a two-year college to a university can be very challenging.

“Since we are a junior, senior level university the image is that the student has it all together,” Biggers said. “Most of the time this is not true. I was a first-generation student who was dropped off at the campus door to figure it out on my own. Our goal is to have a social network of support throughout the faculty. We want to put in more academic support services, more mentoring programs, more formulized peer training and more general awareness for faculty and staff.”

Many men and women will also be coming back from the military as first-generation students.

“We know an influx of 100,000 men and women want to get out of the army, use their G.I. money and become first-generation students,” Jenkins said. “Many of these men and women left high school to go into the armed services and now they want to use their G.I bill to further their education. Are we prepared to address their issues? No. We have to have this vision to think long term and we are getting ready.”


Jenkins strongly encourages faculty and staff to participate this year in the following Student Services Symposium seminars:

- Oct. - Writing Center
- Nov. - Career & Counseling Services
- Feb. - Intercultural & International Student Services

The Signal is holding a poll to determine how many first-generation students are enrolled at UHCL.. Visit [www.uhclthesignal.com](http://www.uhclthesignal.com) to participate.




# 2009 UHCL Constitution Day



September 17, 2009  
1-2 p.m.  
Garden Room  
Guest Speaker: Leo Vasquez  
Tax Assessor-Collector & Voter Registrar of Harris County  
Topic: Voter Fraud & the Constitution

Mr. Vasquez serves as the Tax Assessor-Collector & Voter Registrar of Harris County, Texas, the nation's third-most populous county comprising approximately 4 million people. Mr. Vasquez possesses more than 20 years of private sector professional experience in the areas of corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, strategic planning, analysis, and hands-on business operations. Two of Mr. Vasquez's highest recognitions include an appointment in 1999 by then-Governor George W. Bush as a Commissioner of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, where he later served as the Commission Chairman, and by Texas Governor Rick Perry to the Board of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in 2005.




If any additional services or accommodations are needed, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 281-283-2626.

Sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Students, Division of Student Services  
281-283-2567 deanofstudents@uhcl.edu

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

### Student Government Association

#### Congratulations Newly Elected Project Leaders 2009-2010



**External Affairs Director – Gopi Bidari**  
**Internal Affairs Director – Shevonne Dyer**  
**Treasury Director – Rebecca Smith**  
**Public Relations Director – Jenolyn Alexander**  
**Technology Director – Corey Benson**  
**Special Events Director – Clare Leonard**

Attend the Student Government Association meetings every Tuesday at 11:30am at SSCB Lecture Hall 1.100.03.

For Details Contact The SGA Executive Council:

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

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

University of Houston  Clear Lake

## CULTURALarts

www.uhcl.edu/culturalarts

### SEASON 11



photo by George Hixson

## Mercury Baroque Ensemble

### Royal Fireworks Thursday, Oct. 8/8 p.m./Bayou Theater

Handel's famed Royal Fireworks music headlines this concert which includes an Orchestral Suite by Bach, a Telemann Recorder Concerto and the Texas premiere of a Sinfonia by Fasch.

Use your UHCL I.D. to purchase discounted tickets in the Student Life Office (SSB 1.204.01)!

### The Tournées Festival

New French Films on Campus

a program of FACE

University of Houston  Clear Lake

#### Film & Speaker SERIES

www.uhcl.edu/movies

University of Houston  Clear Lake

#### CULTURALarts

www.uhcl.edu/culturalarts

Admission is \$3.75 unless noted. Festival pass is \$15.

More information is available at [www.uhcl.edu/movies/tourneesfestival](http://www.uhcl.edu/movies/tourneesfestival) or 281-283-2560.



Friday, Oct. 23/Bayou Theater/8 p.m.  
**NE LE DIS A PERSONNE/Tell No One**  
FREE w/UHCL ID

"Kick-off" the festival with our "Café Cinéma" opening reception, scheduled for 6:30-8pm in UHCL's Atrium prior to the Friday, October 23 showing. Café Cinéma will recreate a French bistro setting complete with French music, a coffee bar, pastries and more!

**ALL FILMS ARE IN FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



Sunday, Oct. 25/SSB Lecture Hall/3 p.m.  
**ROMAN DE GARE**



Sunday, Nov. 8/SSB Lecture Hall/3 p.m.  
**UN SECRET/A Secret**



Saturday, Nov. 14/SSB Lecture Hall/7 p.m.  
**LE FILS DE L'ÉPICIER/The Grocer's Son**



Saturday, Nov. 21/SSB Lecture Hall/7 p.m.  
**ENTRE LES MURS/The Class**

The program is made possible with the generous support of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Centre National de la Cinématographie, the Grand Marnier Foundation, the Florence Gould Foundation, highbrow entertainment and the Franco-American Cultural Fund (Directors Guild of America, Motion Picture Association, SACEM & Writers Guild of America). Any person needing an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this program should contact the Student Life Office (281-283-2560) at least one week prior to the event to arrange accommodation.



## UHCL loses distinguished professor

**Courtney Brodbeck**  
The Signal Staff

Hilary Jo Karp, chairwoman of the University of Houston-Clear Lake's psychology and fitness and human performance division, associate professor of psychology and revered faculty member, will be remembered for her profound impact on the lives of her students, colleagues and friends.

Karp passed away July 30, 2009, at Clear Lake Regional Medical Center in Webster. She and her husband had just returned from the United Kingdom where they celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

"Dr. Karp was able to have one last big adventure doing something she loved, traveling, with the person she loved so dearly, her husband," said David Malin, professor of psychology and neuroscience.

A long time member of the UHCL faculty, Karp proved to be an invaluable asset to the university. She inspired and excited generations of students with her intellect and individuality.

Hilary Jo Karp was born in Los Angeles to Sylvia and Bernie Karp. She received a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California-Los Angeles in 1967, a master's degree in experimental psychology from Brandeis University in 1970, and a doctoral degree in clinical psychology from the University of Chicago in 1975.

"Hilary was so passionate about teaching; she loved her

students and they loved her," said Dorothea Lerman, professor of psychology at UHCL. "She was absolutely devoted. If she was ill and couldn't find someone to teach her course, she would refuse to cancel the lecture and insist on coming anyway. She cared that much about her students."

Karp was not only a teacher but also an explorer, administrator and musician. She co-founded the Clear Lake Symphony Orchestra in 1976, was a founding member of the Women's Studies Program, and published numerous articles on behavior analysis. She was also a prize doctoral student of world-renowned University of California psychologist, Israel Goldiamond.

"Hilary was a builder," Malin said. "She helped develop General Psychology as one of the largest and most successful programs in the university."

Well known for her wit, intelligence and sense of humor, Karp would, instead of ranting about those who opposed feminism, amusingly impersonate and parody them as one of those "Ladies against Women," adds

Malin.

Karp also found joy in traveling the world with her husband, Charles E. South. Her adventures took her to London, Spain, Israel, Turkey, Norway and Italy, where she immersed herself into the unique cultures and made lifelong friends. In the 1980s, Karp spent the summer with a family in Turkey and dedicated herself to understanding the culture.

One lifelong friend Karp made was Frances Fernandes, who is the principal editor and senior writer for the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States.

The two met when they were undergraduates studying for a year in Madrid, Spain, and became roommates. Karp is also the godmother to Fernandes' daughter. Their friendship grew after Fernandes moved to Los Angeles, where Karp and her parents lived.

"We just became family," Fernandes said. "Her parents became my daughter's grandparents."

Fernandes remembers walking into her home and finding presents stacked in the corner of the living room. Karp and



Courtesy: UHCL

Hilary Jo Karp, chairman of UHCL's psychology and fitness and human performance division, and associate professor of psychology.

her family had decided to throw Fernandes a baby shower since she didn't have anything yet for her child.

"That was really typical of Hilary, to see that there was a need, to think it through, make a plan and follow through with it," Fernandes said.

Karp's compassionate nature also overflowed into her work, encouraging others to live up to their full potential, recalls Leslye Mize, director of UHCL's family therapy program and a graduate student of Karp's.

"I will always remember how fair and kind she was as a teacher and administrator; she always looked for the best in everyone," Mize said.

A memorial was held Sept. 2 at UHCL for Karp, where colleagues, friends and family gathered to remember and share stories of how she had impacted their lives.

"Hilary's death diminished the world that I lived in, especially how much she was able to add to that world and she added a good deal to my world," said Bruce Palmer, dean of the school of Human Sciences and Humanities.

Though she will be missed by those who had the privilege of knowing her, Hilary Karp will live on through her many accomplishments and in the hearts of those whose lives she touched.

**Charter faculty member Robert McGlasham retires. Read the full article on [www.uhclthesignal.com](http://www.uhclthesignal.com).**

## Campus Calendar

**Sept. 14**  
Folkloric Dancers  
4-4:45 p.m., Alumni Plaza

**Sept. 15**  
Workshop: Leadership Training Day Program  
9 a.m.- noon, SSCB 1.202.07

Career Week presentations: Resumes and Online Applications  
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 2306

**Sept. 16**  
Workshop: Leadership Training Day Program  
1-4:00 p.m., SSCB 1.202.07

Career Week Presentation: Interviewing Tips  
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 3310

Mexico's Independence Day

**Sept. 17**  
Career Week Presentation: How to Work a Job Fair  
5:30-6:30 p.m., SSCB 3310

**Sept. 23**  
2009 Gulf Coast Job Fair  
10 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Bayou Atrium II



Justin Joseph: The Signal Staff

Clockwise from left: Sonia Henandez, cultural arts assistant, dons a Mr. Spock face to promote The Film and Speakers Series viewing of Star Trek. TOP RIGHT: Sabiha Mehmood, graduate sociology major; Andrew Robinson (playing the guitar), social work major; and Ashley Powell, president of The Management Association, man a booth at the Student Organization Expo. BOTTOM RIGHT: Rebecca Threatt tries her hand at darts at the Friday night Blast Off. For more information and photos, visit [www.uhclthesignal.com](http://www.uhclthesignal.com).



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