

# the Islander

FALL 2008



## INSIDE

*PORTS Provides Ships with  
Real-Time Data for Safe Passage*

*New Construction Heralds  
University's Future Greatness*

*Break a Leg: Theatre Program  
Launches Film, Stage Careers*



# Endowed Scholarship Council



*Creating a scholarship endowment is one way to ensure your contribution will remain in perpetuity to support higher education and to help the University remain competitive in attracting the brightest students.*

*In recognition of donors making significant contributions to endowed scholarships, the University established the Endowed Scholarship Council.*

*Donors with cumulative gifts to endowed scholarship funds of \$50,000 or more are inducted into the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Endowed Scholarship Council and recognized at the annual Endowed Scholarship Banquet.*

*For more information on ways you can support scholarships or establish an endowed scholarship fund, please contact Institutional Advancement at (361) 825-2420.*



**DR. FLAVIUS KILLEBREW**  
President/CEO

## The Future: At Sea and Ashore

As the only American university located on its own island, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is fortunate to have one of the world's great natural laboratories at its doorstep, the Gulf of Mexico.

Because it is imperative that we understand and protect this vastly under-explored resource, the University established the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) in 2000 to provide international leadership in advancing and supporting the long-term sustainability of the world's ninth-largest body of water. Since its inception, the HRI, in cooperation with Mexico and Cuba, has played a leadership role in encouraging a trilateral responsibility for the Gulf's health and conservation.

In 2005 the University hosted the "State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit," an unprecedented conference that brought together world-renowned scientists with leaders of government, business and industry, conservation, and resource management to plan for the long-term environmental and economic sustainable quality of life in the Gulf. Last year, the HRI received a \$1.5 million endowment to support teaching and research fellowships for scientists from Mexico and Cuba.

Together with their colleagues from the College of Science and Technology, the HRI researchers and scientists are taking on some of the Gulf's most environmentally threatening problems. While much is known of the massive "dead zone" near the mouth of the Mississippi River, the underlying problems that have created smaller dead zones that threaten the Gulf's commercial and recreational fishing industries are just now being addressed.

This summer HRI researchers participated in an international expedition to the Saba Bank of the northern Caribbean to create a management plan that will preserve the coral reefs that have been damaged by shipping traffic. The plan will serve as a guideline for the preservation of other reefs near Gulf ports. At the same time, they identified 40 previously undiscovered species of soft corals and more than 100 species of crabs and shrimp.

The Physical Oceanographic Real Time System, or PORTS, deployed by scientists from the University's Conrad Blucher Institute, disseminates up-to-the-minute information to mariners greatly reducing the chances of accidents as large ships navigate the narrow channels connecting the Gulf Coast waters and inland ports.

The emergence of the HRI as an international institution is just one of many exciting developments at A&M-Corpus Christi. For the first time, University enrollment surpassed 9,000 in fall 2008 and, thanks to the City of Corpus Christi's generous land donation, we will be able accommodate approximately 16,000 as we grow in our outreach.

Construction is underway on a \$45 million building that will be home to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Education's Kinesiology Department. The Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center, a much-needed facility that can handle our anticipated growth, is scheduled for occupation this January. In addition, a building that will allow us to consolidate the College of Business is in the planning stages.

With faculty, students and graduates from our colleges of Business, Education, Liberal Arts, Nursing and Health Sciences, and Science and Technology earning local, state, national and even international recognition, the momentum of excellence continues to build at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Today's accomplishments are just a glimpse of our future greatness.


## the Islander

is produced in fall and spring by the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Division of Institutional Advancement. Editorial and visual content in the magazine is designed to enlighten the University's alumni and friends on A&M-Corpus Christi's people, programs and activities. Comments and editorial ideas should be sent to:

### The Islander

c/o Institutional Advancement  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5726  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5726

### ON THE COVER

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi researchers are discovering and charting the Gulf of Mexico's hidden treasures.  Fa2008

## INSIDE

### CAMPUS BRIEFS

Faculty and Administration	3
Community Support	4
Students	5

### ISLANDER ATHLETICS

Head Athletic Trainer Works with Athletes at Olympic Training Center	6
Athletic Trainer Education Program Receives CAATE Accreditation	6

### UNIVERSITY NEWS

Stage Struck	8
Embracing Expansion	10
A Soprano's Song of Success	12

### COVER STORY

Guarding the Gulf	13
-------------------	----

### FEATURES

PORTS System Helps Ship's Captains Navigate Treacherous Waters	16
Nature's Lab Prepares Young Students for Careers in Technology	17
Divers Discover Unexpected Coral Treasures on Saba Bank	18
New Graduate Program in Marine Biology is the First on U.S. Gulf Coast	18
Beware the Dead Zone	19

### ALUMNI NEWS

Beauty, Brains and the Big Screen	21
Have You Heard	21
Seizing the Day at Sunrise Ranch	23
In Memoriam	28







The campus community showed a pink wave of support during the second 'Think Pink!' photo Wednesday, Oct. 8, in the University Center. The photo, sponsored by the Women's Center and the Omega Phi Alpha service sorority, was one of several 'Paint the Island Pink' breast cancer awareness events held on campus.

## University Offers Master's Degree in Communication



Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will begin offering a Master of Arts in Communication in fall 2009. The 36-semester hour program offers a wide range of options for students interested in advancing in leadership, management, public relations, training and development, and media.

Students in the program may choose the applied research project track or thesis track. All students must take a sequence of core curriculum coursework that emphasizes major academic areas within the discipline of communication. In addition, students take specialized coursework to either prepare them for the professional application of communication principles or to conduct communication research.

**Your Investment. Our Partnership. *Their Future.***



The Achieve Partnership scholarship program creates partnerships in education with the business and professional community. Members make an annual gift used to provide scholarships to outstanding and deserving students.

Based on their level of giving, Achieve members receive an invitation to University groundbreakings, dedications, special events and recognition in University publications and other media. Join over 100 businesses and professionals supporting the Achieve Partnership scholarship program by contacting Institutional Advancement at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi at (361) 825-2420.

**achieve**  
partnership

Give online at  
[www.giving.tamucc.edu](http://www.giving.tamucc.edu)



# Faculty and Administration



Art professor Greg Reuter created the 'Year in Sand' sculpture that greets visitors to the University's Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.

## 'YEAR IN SAND' REFLECTS BEAUTY IN NATURE'S FORCES

"Year in Sand," a sculpture created by Professor of Art Greg Reuter, graces the entrance to the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. Reuter's work explores the textural variations found at Padre Island National Seashore and reflects the sublime beauty in nature left behind by natural forces including tides, wind, vegetation and wildlife.

## MCDONALD NAMED CONVENTION & VISITOR'S BUREAU MVP



DR. JOANN MCDONALD

Dr. JoAnn McDonald was honored with the MVP Award by the Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau during a May luncheon celebrating National Tourism Month. McDonald, assistant professor in the College of Education, was recognized for her work in bringing the 2012 Science Teachers Association of Texas Convention to Corpus Christi. The meeting is expected to draw 4,000 people and inject an estimated \$1.5 million into the local economy.

## JORGENSEN HONORED AS TOP PUBLIC SERVICE EDUCATOR



DR. DANIEL J. JORGENSEN

Dr. Daniel J. Jorgensen has been selected as the 2008 Public Service Educator of the Year by the Coastal Bend Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. Jorgensen is an associate professor of public administration and chair of the public administration department. The Coastal Bend Chapter is one of more than 100 American Society for Public Administration chapters nationwide and serves Aransas, Kleberg, Jim Wells, Nueces and San Patricio counties.

## THREE PROFESSORS LEAD QUALITY GRANT PROGRAMS



DR. NADINA DURAN-HUTCHINGS

Dr. Nadina Duran-Hutchings of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics has been named program director of the 2008-09 Teacher Quality Grant "Quantitative Experiences in Decision-Making" for high school teachers. The grant program, totaling \$87,000, will prepare high school teachers to teach mathematics more effectively.



DR. ELAINE YOUNG

Dr. Elaine Young of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics has been named program director of the 2008-09 Teacher Quality Grant "Problem Solving: Discrete to Continuous Mathematics" for middle school teachers. The grant program, totaling \$86,990 and written in conjunction with Robstown ISD, will prepare middle school teachers to teach mathematics more effectively.



DR. FAYE BRUUN

Dr. Faye Bruun of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction has been named program director of the 2008-09 Teacher Quality Grant "Conceptual Development of Rational Numbers" for elementary school teachers. The grant program, totaling \$87,000 and written in conjunction with Mathis ISD, will prepare elementary school teachers to teach mathematics more effectively.



JODY NELSEN

## NELSEN NAMED EXECUTIVE VP FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Jody Nelsen became the executive vice president for Finance and Administration in August 2008. Nelsen previously served as the associate vice president for Business Affairs at the University of Texas at Dallas where she held various positions including assistant director of the Physical Plant, assistant vice president for Business Affairs, associate vice president for Administration and Compliance and interim vice president for Business Affairs.

# Community Support

## UNIVERSITY RECEIVES \$5 MILLION FOR SCHOLARSHIPS



Corpus Christi Attorney Kenneth Botary and American Bank President and CEO Al Jones present a giant check for more than \$5 million to University President Flavius Killebrew.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has received \$5 million from the estate of local businessman Lawrence Atkins, the largest single private gift given toward scholarships in the history of the University.

Prior to his death in July 2006, Atkins owned and operated Atkins Advertising and Associates for more than 35 years and also raised Beefmaster cattle on his ranch. Over the next four years, his contribution will provide almost 100 additional scholarships for A&M-Corpus Christi students.

Atkins' \$5,053,339 gift creates a new level in the University's prestigious Presidential Scholarship program that supports the best and brightest students. The new level adds 15 new students a year to the program, who each will get \$3,000 a year for four years. After four years, there will be 60 students being served at this level.

In addition, funds from the Atkins' gift will create the Islander Scholars program, supporting eight new students a year who will each get \$2,500 a year for four years. This brings to 32 the number of students supported by this program after the first four years.

## COTILLION PROVIDES VISITING ARTISTS ENDOWMENT

The Corpus Christi Cotillion Club Endowment for Visiting Artists has brought in more than \$60,000 to provide the University's Art Department with a perpetual fund to bring future visiting artists from across the nation to the University to present lectures and workshops to students and the community. Each year, the Cotillion Club sponsors the La Merienda fundraiser which features the sale of artwork from current students, faculty, alumni and local artists. All monies raised benefit the endowment.

## GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES ENDOWMENT

The Greater Texas Foundation has given Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi an \$80,000 grant for a scholarship program that benefits full-time undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor's degree at the University.

In March 2007, the Bryan, Texas-based non-profit organization established the Removing Educational Barriers scholarship endowment with an initial grant of \$20,000. Both the first grant and recent \$80,000 grant have been matched by the University, bringing the total scholarship endowment to \$200,000. Recipients must have a cumulative 3.0 grade point average, be permanent Texas residents, and demonstrate financial need.



AEP Texas representatives Julio Reyes (left) and Ken Griffin (right) presented a \$25,000 check to University President Flavius Killebrew.

## AEP TEXAS PRESENTS \$25,000 GIFT TO UNIVERSITY

AEP Texas presented a \$25,000 check to President Flavius Killebrew to support the University's greatest needs. Since 1980, AEP Texas has provided funds for President's Council scholarships, and the Parents' Council, which provides numerous programs and opportunities for students. Other areas that have received funding include the Athletics/Tarpon Foundation, the State of the University luncheon and Islander Lights, as well as the South Texas Academic Rising Scholars Extravaganza, which funds scholarships in South Texas.

## PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL AWARDS ART SCHOLARSHIPS

The 2008 President's Council student art exhibit and reception was held at the Islander Art Gallery. Winners of the Council's scholarship competition were Clarita Fajutag, first place (\$1,000) for "Kai Goya-Graf;" Luis Corpus, second place (\$750) for "Pretty in Pink;" and Reuben Njaa, third place (\$500) for "Right Passo." James Murray received



President's Council art scholarship winners were (from left) Reuben Njaa, third place; Luis Corpus, second place; Clarita Fajutag, first place; and James Murray, 3-D first place.

first place (\$500) for "Threshold" in the 3-D sculpture category. The works of art were displayed in the University Center, Legacy Hall.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH DONATION FUNDS SCHOLARSHIPS

For the second consecutive year, Community Outreach has contributed \$100,000 of its expected annual project proceeds to fund scholarships for deserving undergraduate students.

Community Outreach, the public service arm of the University, began supporting scholarships for undergraduate students in 2000. Revenues are generated by Outreach events, conferences, training programs, consulting projects and other activities.

Through the program, funds from University employees who make contributions the Faculty and Staff Campaign are matched by Community Outreach.

For 2008-2009, Community Outreach has provided \$50,000 of unrestricted scholarship funds to be distributed equally among the University's five colleges. Another \$45,000 has been designated for the Community Outreach Matching Gift Program and \$5,000 will be used to fund five Honors Program scholarships.

## FINANCIAL AID PLAN HELPS TEXAS FAMILIES

### ISLANDER GUARANTEE!

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi now offers the Islander Guarantee!, a program that ensures full payment of tuition and mandatory fees for undergraduate students from lower income families. The program was created to encourage students to take more courses during the year and complete degree programs within four-years.



## Students



University fraternities and sororities teamed with the Corpus Christi Police Department in a public service project during the spring to clean up some of the city's worst graffiti.

### CAMPUS GREEKS TARGET GRAFFITI DURING CLEAN-UP

More than 100 fraternity and sorority members cleaned up some of the city's worst graffiti-tagged fences, buildings and businesses during a "Greek-Ffiti Cover Up!" last spring. The public service project coordinated with the Corpus Christi Police Department marked the beginning of Greek Week, where fraternities and sororities perform various projects to show their pride in the community.

### SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM STUDENTS TEST OSO WATER



Students from the Alice, Mathis, Odem-Edroy and West Oso school districts conducted water tests as part of the High School Summer Bridge Program.

High school juniors and seniors participating in the University's High School Summer Bridge Program conducted chemistry tests in areas of Corpus Christi Bay and Oso Bay. Water samples collected from the University Beach and other areas on campus were analyzed for pH, nitrates, nitrites, ammonia, alkalinity, hardness and salinity and measured levels of fertilizer, minerals and animal waste. Participants included students from the Alice, Mathis, Odem-Edroy and West Oso school districts.

### UNIVERSITY PROJECT PLACES THIRD AT NASA CONFERENCE



The project created by early childhood education students was featured on NASA's Web site.

A project created by students from the College of Education took third place at the 11th annual NASA Pre-Service Teacher Conference in Washington, D.C.

The project "Get in Motion to Save Our Ocean: Break Free from Ocean Debris" was featured on the NASA Web site. Working with fourth-graders from the Early Childhood Development Center, pre-service teachers specializing in early childhood education analyzed data collected on a local beach then explored the Internet to learn more about the ocean gyres that act as "water highways" for debris washed onto area beaches.

### STUDENT PRESENTS PAPER AT INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Honors student Giancarlo Berrocal was one of 200 students from 60 countries who presented essays at the 38th annual St. Gallen Symposium in Switzerland.

The symposium "Global Capitalism – Local Values" brought hundreds of decision-makers to the University of St. Gallen to address the key issues of management and its relationship to business, politics and society. Berrocal, 21, presented his paper "Financial Instruments Innovation: Risk or Negligence?"



More than 150 science and education majors assisted with the 20th annual Coastal Bend Science Fair for kindergarten through eighth-grade students.

### STUDENTS VIE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AT SCIENCE FAIR

Students from kindergarten through eighth grades competed for \$1,000 scholarships at the College of Science and Technology's 20th annual Coastal Bend Science Fair. The students prepared experiments relating to engineering, physical science, Earth science or life/health science utilizing the scientific method.

More than 150 science and education majors helped with all aspects of the fair. Judging was done by scientists, engineers, faculty members, educators, college science students and community members with expertise in science.

**GIANCARLO BERROCAL**





# Head Athletic Trainer Works with Athletes at Olympic Training Center



**BELOW:** Athletic trainer Jerry Hilker gives a muscle stimulation treatment to basketball player Kevin Perkins. **LEFT:** Hilker worked with athletes during the summer at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.



Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi head athletic trainer Jerry Hilker spent two weeks at the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) training facility in Colorado Springs, Colo. last summer where he participated in the Performance Services Medical Volunteer Program.

Hilker worked primarily with the men's boxing program while assisting with various other sports. It was his second time going through the program. He traveled to the Dominican Republic with the USOC in 1997.

"It was great fun working with the boxing program," says Hilker. "I have never worked with a combative sport before. They were very appreciative of everything we did for them. I also worked with the skeleton and bobsledding teams as time allowed."

The Islander head athletic trainer went through a rigorous application process to get the chance.

"There are several requirements you have to meet to be selected," said Hilker. "They don't take just anyone into the program. It was a goal of mine to get into the program because it is part of the process of working international events and a great opportunity for professional development and to learn new techniques that I can use with our athletes."

Hilker also enjoyed the opportunity to develop relationships with the Olympic-caliber athletes.

"I appreciated the different relationships that came about," he says. "Getting to eat with the athletes and spend time in the dorms with them was great. You got to socialize with them in a way that is different than with collegiate athletics."

## Athletic Trainer Education Program Receives CAATE Accreditation

The University's Athletic Trainer Education Program has been awarded accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The national accreditation allows graduates of the program to receive a certification to work professionally in all 50 states.

The CAATE is responsible for the oversight of 357 professional programs through objective evaluation of academic requirements to ensure that entry-level students meet the required competency standards.

According to Dr. Randy Bonnette, associate professor of education and chair of the Department of Kinesiology, previous graduates of

the athletic trainer program were only eligible to receive a license to work in Texas. The national accreditation has already sparked a major increase in applications for the University's program which offers a bachelor of science with a major in athletic training.

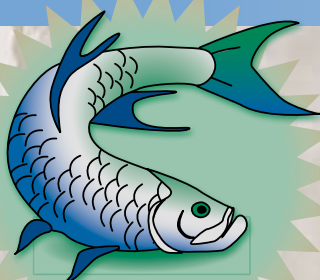
"We have been working on our accreditation for three years and, since the notification from CAATE, the number of applicants to the athletic training program has more than doubled," says Bonnette. "The admission process is now so competitive and selective that the quality of students will dramatically increase as well."



The Athletic Training Education Program prepares students for jobs in high schools, colleges, professional sports and other allied health care settings. Other possible athletic training employment opportunities include corporate health programs, health clubs, clinical and industrial health care programs, and athletic training curriculum programs.

## At Every Event, We Say Thanks...

*Your gifts help more than 200 athletes excel in the classroom and on the courts, in the fields and over the fairways. Becoming a member of the Tarpon Foundation is the ideal way to benefit from your support of Islander Intercollegiate Athletics. Members enjoy numerous benefits including priority seating and parking, newsletters, special event invitations, and opportunities to promote the Islander spirit.*





# Spring 2009 Islander Home Sports Highlights

## BASKETBALL GAMES

### Women's Basketball Conference Home Opener

Sat. 1/17 Islanders vs. Northwestern State 1 p.m.

### Women's Basketball Homecoming

Sat. 2/7 Islanders vs. Nicholls State 7 p.m.

### Men's Basketball vs. Oklahoma State

Sun. 12/14 Islanders vs. Oklahoma State 3 p.m.

### Men's Basketball Conference Home Opener

Sat. 1/10 Islanders vs. Central Arkansas 7 p.m.

## SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS

### Corpus Christi Invitational

Fri. 2/13 Islanders vs. North Texas 4 p.m.

Sat. 2/14 Islanders vs. Creighton 2 p.m.

Sat. 2/14 Islanders vs. Indiana State 4 p.m.

Sun. 2/15 Islanders vs. Detroit Mercy 4 p.m.

### Islander Classic

Fri. 2/20 Islanders vs. Minnesota 4 p.m.

Sat. 2/21 Islanders vs. Pittsburgh 2 p.m.

Sat. 2/21 Islanders vs. Dayton 4 p.m.

Sun. 2/22 Islanders vs. Loyola Chicago 3 p.m.

### Softball vs. Texas

Thurs. 3/5 Islanders vs. Texas 3 p.m.

Thurs. 3/5 Islanders vs. Texas 5 p.m.  
*Cabaniss Field*

## BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

### Whataburger College Classic

Fri. 3/6 Islanders vs. Eastern Illinois 2 p.m.

Sat. 3/7 Islanders vs. Alabama 5 p.m.

Sun. 3/8 Islanders vs. UT-Pan American 5 p.m.

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Mon. 3/23-Tues 3/24 Islander Classic  
at Corpus Christi Country Club



ELISA BEAGLE



JUSTIN REYNOLDS

Visit our Web site at [www.goislanders.com](http://www.goislanders.com)  
and click on Tarpon Foundation; or call  
(361) 825-3237 for more information.

## TARPON FOUNDATION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

# Stage Struck

## Community theatre is an undying passion for Joel Earley.

That's why more than 25 years after stepping on stage for the first time, the artistic director of Corpus Christi's Harbor Playhouse returned to the classroom last spring to pursue his bachelor of arts in theatre.

Earley first took theatre classes at A&M-Corpus Christi in 1994 when the program was in its formative stages. Today, the theatre department is a dynamic part of the University with a rapidly-growing cadre of young actors learning their craft under the critical eyes of professors steeped in thespian tradition. Even with his years of experience, Earley is impressed by the artistic talent of both students and professors.



TERRY LEWIS

"The Theatre Department is busting at the seams" says Earley, 41, who is on track to graduate in spring 2009. "The graduates being produced are talented people who are already making their marks in the professional world."

While theatre has been part of University life for many years, the department really took off in 2004 when Assistant Professor Kelly Russell and University Theatre Director Terry Lewis arrived at A&M-Corpus Christi and began working with department chair Don Luna to expand the program.



KELLY RUSSELL

"We wanted to increase the quality of our program, to make sure our students had opportunities outside Corpus Christi and increase our visibility





Joel Earley plays the role of Johnny Cantone in the student production of 'The 1940s Radio Hour.'



'Anima Mundi' cast and crew won the Directors' Choice Award for best play at the Region VI Contest of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre.



'Bloody Poetry' was selected to perform at the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Region VI Festival. The production received awards in lighting, set and acting.

outside of this area," says Russell. "We knew this would lead to the growth of our program."

In 2005, Russell launched the "Camp on the Coast" summer theatre workshop. The two-week camp attracts high school students from Texas and other states who perform in one-act plays and receive instruction from University faculty and high school theatre teachers.

"They come here not knowing what to expect and leave wanting to go to school here," Russell says. "Many of our theatre students were campers first."

Lewis, who has more than 25 years experience at the college level, upgraded the general bachelor's degree in theatre to one focusing on acting/directing, design/tech, or teacher certification. In addition, under the supervision of technical director Phil Johnson, the department has created a virtual light lab and upgraded its lighting system for its de-

sign tech program which has doubled in numbers over the last four years.

As a result of the faculty's aggressive recruitment, the number of theatre majors has nearly tripled to 97 students over the last four years. According to Lewis, 95 percent of students are from Dallas, Houston, Austin and San Antonio.

Each year, students stage four on-campus productions and direct more than 25 plays for the University's One-Act Play Festival. Since 2005, students have competed at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival competitions, producing three national winners this year. In spring 2008,

the department sent students to the New England Theatre Conference where several scored professional summer internships.

"The students get a wide academic experience enhanced by production on-stage opportunities," Lewis explains. "We're training professionals. This is a very disciplined and specialized craft."

## Graduates in the Spotlight



**Lydia Blanco**  
*Graduated: Fall 1997*

After working on indie films and commercials in Austin, Texas, Lydia moved to Los Angeles, Calif. in 2001. She had a part in the movie "The Terminal" starring Tom Hanks and has appeared on many TV shows including "Good Morning Miami," "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," "The Practice," "Strong Medicine," "Curb Your Enthusiasm," "Medium," "Prison Break" and "Weeds."



**e.E. "Eunice" Charlton-Trujillo**  
*Graduated: Fall 1998*

In 2003 Eunice received a master's degree in filmmaking from Ohio University. The Cincinnati-based filmmaker/writer penned two award-winning novels "Prizefighter en mi Casa" and "Feels Like Home" both under the umbrella of Random House. She directed the film "Vanessa Rising," and wrote, directed and edited the short film "Living under Linda's Desk." Recently, she edited the feature drama "Night Fliers."



**Josh DuBose**  
*Graduated: Fall 1997*

Josh spent two years in Chicago with Second City Comedy Tour before moving to Los Angeles, Calif. in 2002. He has appeared in national commercials for Chili's Grill & Bar, McDonald's, General Motors Corporation, Hyundai and JCPenney. He has also appeared on "MADtv," "Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip," and in Alanis Morissette's "My Humps" video. Currently, he performs improv comedy at iO West in Hollywood.



**Todd Pate**  
*Graduated: Spring 2000*

Todd has worked in theatre and film in Los Angeles, Calif. and Chicago, Ill., and in 2003 moved to New York City where he helped start the Broken Blade Theatre Company. The playwright recently had his plays "As Long a Time as a Long Time Is in Longtime Land" and "Following Annie" produced off-off Broadway. Todd is developing "Bird's Eye View," an original play that explores the consequences of offending behavior.



**John Wilson**  
*Graduated: Spring 1998*

In 2001 John began working as a stage carpenter at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, Ill. He is currently enrolled in The School at Steppenwolf Intensive Acting Program and is an ensemble member of Mary-Arrchie Theatre Co. He is also a carpenter at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater at Navy Pier, a freelance scenic designer, a technical director and teaches at-risk youth at Lifeline Theatre.



# Embracing Exp



## LAND DONATION OPENS DOORS FOR FUTURE GROWTH AND ENROLLMENT

In Spring 2008 the City of Corpus Christi donated 137 acres of city land for the future expansion of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The gifted land will allow the University to significantly increase its student population by moving many non-academic facilities off the Ward Island campus which cannot accommodate the strong growth in University enrollment.

In just the past year, University enrollment has increased from just over 8,500 to more than 9,000 students. With the newly-acquired property, the University's enrollment will be able to increase its enrollment capacity from 10,000 to 16,000 students.

Expansion is one of the centerpiece visions of our strategic plan," says University President Flavius Killebrew. "With the current student population growing rapidly, the ability to increase enrollment will allow the University to serve a greater portion of students from the South Texas region and beyond."

The land, bordered by Ennis Joslin Drive on the east, the Oso Golf Course on the north and west, and the Pharaoh Valley neighborhood on the south, includes portions of South Guth Park. Of the 137 acres donated, about 90 are suitable for construction due to flood zone restrictions, city easements and setbacks. Although the site is not directly adjacent to the main campus, it is close in proximity and visible across the Oso Bay from Ward Island.

Proposed development of 137-acre expansion.

The Campus Expansion Master Plan calls for moving the University's athletic facilities to the South Guth Park area. The site will include tennis courts, a track and field area, and baseball, softball and soccer fields as well as practice facilities, a parking garage, a boat storage area and training grounds for the Islander ROTC Battalion. Another section will be utilized for construction of affordable married and graduate student housing, facilities not currently offered by the University due to its limited space.

Future plans call for research office facilities, a convocation center for conferences and graduation ceremonies, and community-focused business development including a hotel and hospitality center.



# Expansion



Woo Sung Lee donated the property for the new alumni welcome center.

## CENTER WILL WELCOME VISITORS TO CAMPUS

A gift from a distinguished graduate and long-time benefactor will soon serve as a focal point for the University's alumni operations and provide a starting point for prospective students and other visitors to campus.

In December 2007, Woo Sung Lee, a member of the University of Corpus Christi class of 1959, donated funds to construct Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's Welcome Center which will bear his name. The Welcome Center will be built on South Alameda Street near the campus entry. When it opens, the facility will house alumni relations and some development functions.

Lee came to the United States from Korea as a foreign student in 1955 and, following graduation, went into the restaurant business. After creating a special seafood batter recipe, he turned his one fast-food establishment into a highly-successful chain of Boat-N-Net Restaurants.

This is not the first major gift Lee has given to the University. In 2001 he gave the resources for the creation of Lee Plaza, a garden spot where students study or just relax between classes. The sanctuary is a testament to Lee's memories of his University days as well as a memorial to his late son, Yongnam Lee.

In 1999 Lee established a scholarship fund at the University, and in 2004 he received the

Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of his volunteer efforts and financial contributions to A&M-Corpus Christi. He has also been honored by the President's Council and his photograph is on the Donor Wall of Honor Silver Inner Circle of Excellence for his gifts to the University's scholarship and building funds.

## DR. JACK AND SUSIE DUGAN WELLNESS CENTER

When it opens in spring 2009, the Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center will provide the campus with a much-needed health and exercise facility that will also serve as an enticement for future students considering attending the Island University.

The 67,000-square foot complex will include two regulation NCAA basketball courts, weight and cardio areas, locker rooms, including two for those with special needs, and group exercise rooms. Other support areas include laundry facilities, offices for Athletics and Recreational Sports personnel and separate public restrooms near the entrance to the building.

The facility was made possible by a \$1 million private gift from Dr. Jack Dugan and his family, who are longtime contributors to the University. The remaining construction costs will be financed by student fees.

## BUILDING WILL CONSOLIDATE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Construction is expected to begin early next year on a 176,000-square foot building that will consolidate the College of Business under one roof, providing the necessary space and technology to guarantee students the best possible education.

The \$25 million building will also be home to the Center for Business and Economic Research which will provide faculty and students with opportunities to work with community business leaders in the economic development of Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend. The environmentally-friendly building will be located adjacent to Lee Plaza and will be constructed to respect the plaza's ambience.

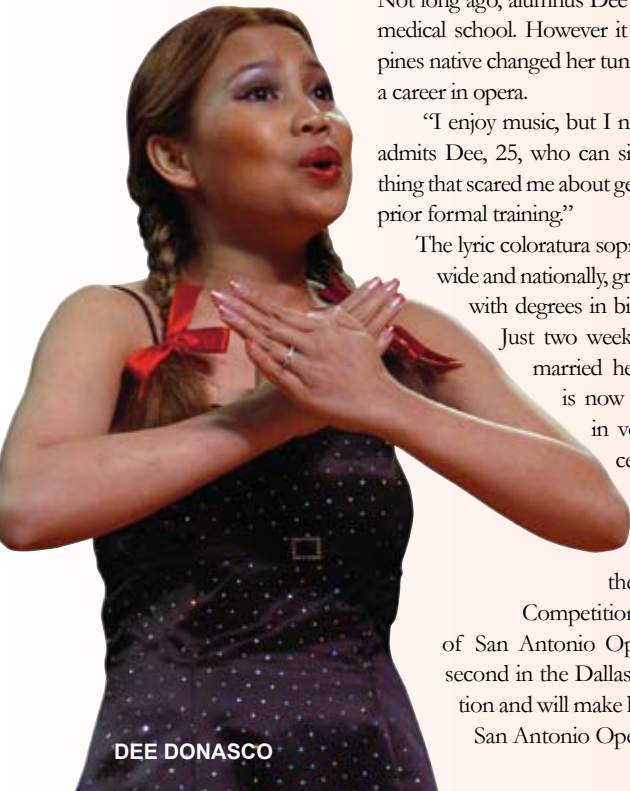


The placement of the highest beam on the Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center was celebrated with a "Topping Out" Party.

When completed in 2010, the \$45 million; 140,000-square-foot building that will be home to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Education's Kinesiology Program, will include a simulated hospital ward, patient simulator laboratories, a cardiovascular training area and specialized labs for exercise physiology, biomechanics, and motor evaluation and development.



# A Soprano's Song of Success



DEE DONASCO

Not long ago, alumnus Dee Donasco had her sights set on medical school. However it wasn't long before the Philippines native changed her tune and her degree plan to pursue a career in opera.

"I enjoy music, but I never thought of it as a career," admits Dee, 25, who can sing in six languages. "The one thing that scared me about getting started was not having the prior formal training."

The lyric coloratura soprano, who has performed state-wide and nationally, graduated cum laude in May 2008 with degrees in biology and music performance.

Just two weeks before commencement, she married her high school sweetheart and is now working on a master's degree in vocal performance with a concentration in opera at Southern Methodist University.

In the last two years, Dee has won first place in the San Antonio Opera Vocal Competition and the Tuesday Musical Club of San Antonio Opera Competition. She placed second in the Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition and will make her professional debut with the San Antonio Opera in summer 2009.

But it hasn't been easy. Due to family circumstances, Dee was living on her own and working full-time while still a student at Flour Bluff High School. After graduating in 2001, she enrolled at A&M-Corpus Christi.

"I'm surprised I'm still here today," says Dee, who also supported her younger sister, Chris, and paid for her first two years of college. "Having to go through a difficult time made me a stronger person."

In 2002, things began to change for the better when Dee met Flicka Rahn, an associate professor of music at A&M-Corpus Christi. The first time Rahn heard Dee sing, she was moved by the luminescent quality of Dee's pristine pipes. And, after training with Rahn, Dee's vocal range climbed an octave higher.

"Her sound is the highest of the roles in opera," explains Rahn. "She is bright and catches on so quickly. We kept telling her this was simply another language just like English."

Rahn describes Dee as a true vocal artist who conveys the emotion of poetry when she sings. To ensure that Dee injected the right feelings into each performance, Rahn had her learn the meaning of every word she sang. However, Dee sometimes felt out of place competing with students from The Juilliard School and other well-known music conservatories. But Rahn reassured her, "Don't worry about it and sing your heart out."

Dee embraced Rahn's advice and the world is beginning to take notice.

## A SYMBOL OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT



A graduation ring is more than just a nice piece of jewelry.

It is a sign of your experience,

A mark of your achievement,

A reflection of memories past . . .

**Wear it with pride.  
You deserve it.**

[www.IslanderNetwork.com](http://www.IslanderNetwork.com)

866/482-6822 or 361/825-5787

*Have you been thinking about ordering your Official University Ring? Make today the day! Call the Alumni Office at 1.877.482.6822 to place your order. We will inform you of how to get your bachelor's ring upgraded to reflect your master's degree free of charge.*

**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Alumni Association**



# GUARDING THE GULF

## HRI CHAMPIONS CONSERVATION OF WORLD'S NINTH LARGEST BODY OF WATER

**W**hether it's fertilizer runoff from a cornfield in faraway Minnesota or wastewater from a coastal town in Mexico, the daily routines of millions of people have an enormous impact on one of the most important bodies of water in the world, the Gulf of Mexico.

Covering an estimated 600,000 square miles, the Gulf of Mexico is the ultimate destination for 33 rivers in the United States alone. Add the runoff from cities along the eastern coast of Mexico and the island nation of Cuba and the human equation becomes the most important detriment to the world's ninth-largest body of water.

*continued page 14*

GUARDING THE GULF *continued*

"With its outstanding commercial and recreational fishing industries and an abundance of wildlife unequaled anywhere else in the subtropics, the Gulf of Mexico is truly a magical place," says Dr. Larry McKinney, executive director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. "It's amazingly resilient, but with polluted runoffs continuously pouring in, we have to ask ourselves

how much more can it take?"

Answering that critical question was just one of the motivating factors behind the creation of the HRI established in 2000 to support and ad-

vance the long-term sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico through research, public policy initiatives and public education. Among the Institute's many initiatives are projects to improve environmental management of erosion, sea level rise and storm events, and the development of environmental water flow recommendations to protect the health and productivity of bays and estuaries. With the establishment of the Ecosystem Services Research Lab, HRI is helping the public and policy makers better understand the benefits we receive from our natural environment and how to incorporate those benefits into the decision making process.

Less than a decade after philanthropist Ed Harte presented the Island University with a \$46 million endowment, the HRI is already asserting itself as a leader in the fields of marine biodiversity and conservation science, ecosystem studies and modeling, geographic information science, ocean and human health, and in the formation and implementation of coastal marine policy and law.

"Every day, millions of people affect the health of the Gulf's ecosystem in practically everything they do, from cooking to flushing the toilet and even driving the car," points out McKinney. "When amplified by the millions of us who live on the watersheds that empty into the Gulf, there is clear evidence that we are determining its future and our own."



**ABOVE:** The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) works with scientists from Mexico and Cuba to solve the environmental problems facing the Gulf of Mexico.

## HRI ENDOWMENT SUPPORTS INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

In 2007 The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies received a \$1.5 million endowment to support teaching and research fellowships for scientists from Mexico and Cuba.

The Furgason Fellowships, named in honor of retired HRI Executive Director Robert Furgason, were made possible by a pledge of \$1.5 million from the families of philanthropist Edward Harte and local attorney Jonathan Hornblower.

Drs. Jorge Brenner-Guillermo and Ivonne Cruz, post-doctoral students from Mexico, are now working with HRI researchers on programs and issues of common interest to Mexico and the United States. Through the fellowship program, other scientists from Mexico and Cuba will be selected for future Furgason Fellowships.



**DR. LARRY MCKINNEY**

## HRI DIRECTOR BRINGS BROAD RANGE OF KNOWLEDGE TO JOB

Dr. Larry D. McKinney became executive director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in July 2008.

McKinney, former director of Coastal Fisheries and senior director of Aquatic Resources for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), is an authority on the habitats of amphipod crustaceans in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea.

In his position at TPWD, McKinney was responsible for a broad range of natural resource and environmental issues including the assessment and securing of freshwater inflows to estuaries and in-stream flows for rivers and reservoirs; wetland conservation and restoration; endangered species conservation; and, other issues related to the ecological health of Texas aquatic ecosystems. He also served as the Texas representative on the Gulf of Mexico Regional Marine Research Board and the western panel of the Aquatic Species Taskforce.

In 1976, McKinney was a Smithsonian Fellow and from 1977 to 1980 he was a research associate and instructor at Texas A&M University-Galveston. Prior to joining TPWD, McKinney was director of the Texas Environmental Engineering Field Laboratory in Galveston.





For many years, McKinney says, Americans have seen their country's natural resources through the "pioneer's perspective" that once the natural resources of one area are depleted, more can be found just over the next hill. But, as the U.S. population continues to increase, the negative effect on the environment is growing exponentially, posing a direct threat to the Gulf of Mexico and the state and national economies that depend on its health.

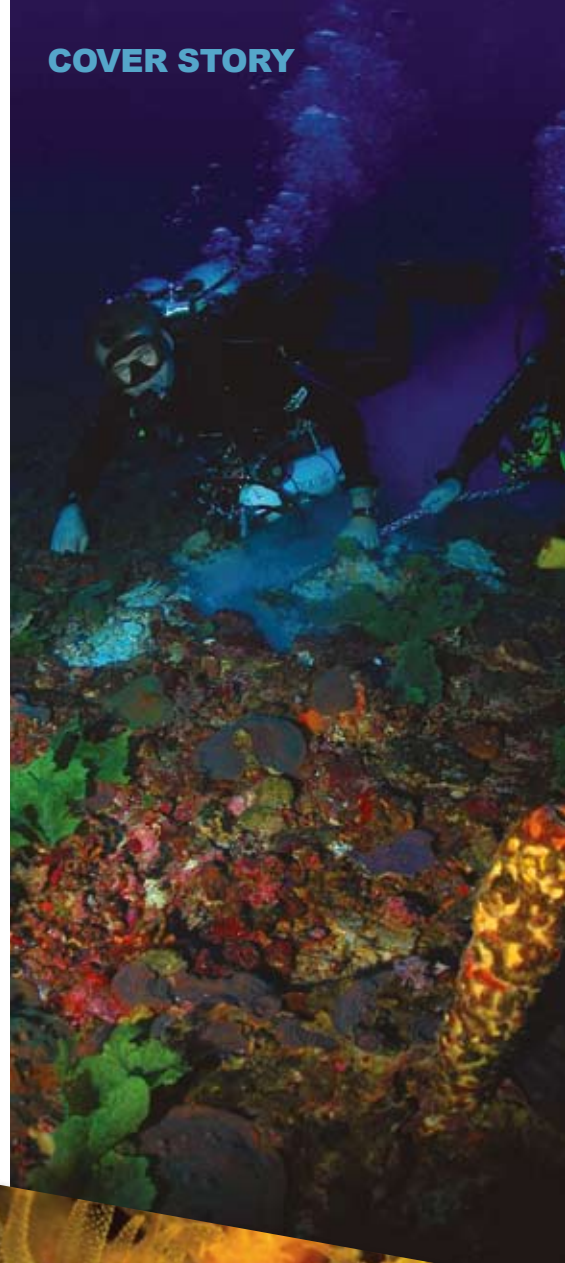
"The Gulf faces increasing challenges to its overall health because the productivity and biodiversity are inextricably linked to the vitality of its



ecosystems," says McKinney. "Oil and gas production continue to expand as do the businesses necessary to support the economic needs of the region. The resulting loss of habitat to coastal development, the diversion of freshwater inflows from estuaries to meet the demands of growth, and diminished water quality due to wastewater discharges add up to a high degree of stress for the Gulf waters."

One of the challenges facing McKinney and the other eminent HRI scientists is to document the factors that negatively affect the Gulf of Mexico and make recommendations on how to confront the problems through sound policy-making decisions. The key, he stresses, is to think globally and act locally.

"By our individual actions, together we can make a difference. The old saying that all rivers lead to the sea is true, and all that is dumped into them makes that same journey," he points out. "Rethinking how we take care of our lawns to reduce fertilizer and water use, protecting the creeks and streams that run through our neighborhoods, and recognizing that we are each part of that large marine ecosystem called the Gulf of Mexico will make all the difference."

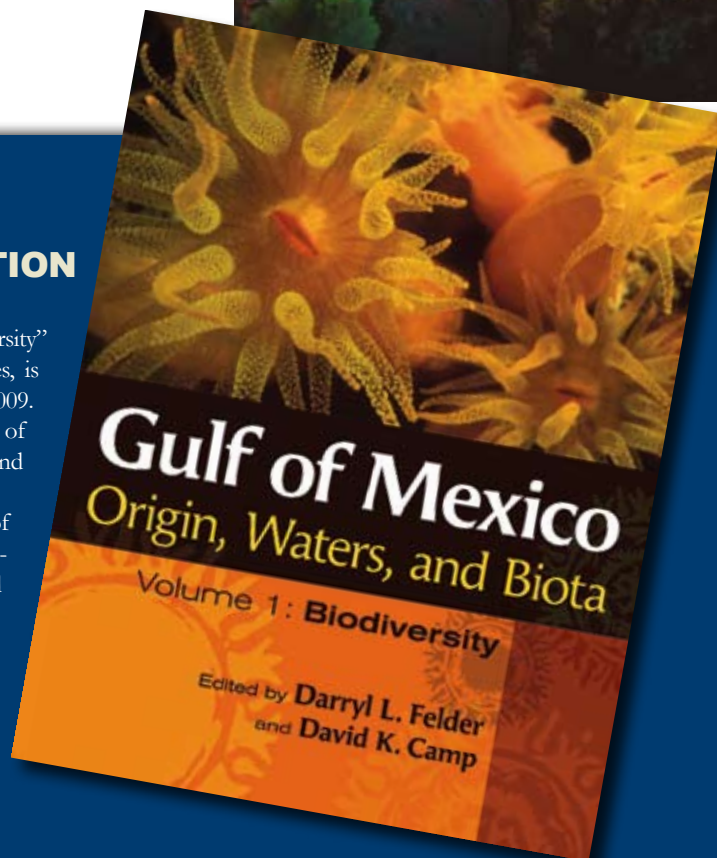


## COMPREHENSIVE INVENTORY OF GULF OF MEXICO DUE FOR PUBLICATION

The publication "Gulf of Mexico Origin, Waters, and Biota – Biodiversity" sponsored by the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, is scheduled for publication by the Texas A&M University Press in early 2009. The book is the first of seven volumes updating "Bulletin 89: The Gulf of Mexico- Its Origin, Waters, and Marine Life" published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1954.

This comprehensive inventory of plant and animal life in the Gulf of Mexico is the product of research and collaboration between 140 taxonomists from 15 countries who arranged 15,625 species into natural, related groups based on common factors such as structure, biochemistry and embryology, the study of organisms in a stage before birth or hatching, or in plants, before germination.

The volume also includes photographs of representatives of many groups as well as line drawings for each of the 79 chapters representing the different groups of organisms from the Gulf of Mexico.





# PORTS System Helps Ship's Captains Navigate Treacherous Waters

A large tanker approaches the Port of Corpus Christi, its cargo thousands of gallons of crude oil bound for one of the area's refineries. The captain and crew are on full alert. They know that this is the most dangerous part of their trip when a matter of inches can make the difference between success and disaster.

Ahead looms the Harbor Bridge, a mass of metal and concrete that spans the narrow channel connecting the bay to the mainland. Using his laptop computer, the ship's pilot accesses the PORTS information Web site and within seconds receives the real-time data necessary to guarantee a safe passage.

The Physical Oceanographic Real Time System (PORTS), developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is a network of data collection stations deployed by the Conrad Blucher Institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi that measures and disseminates up-to-the-minute measurements of water levels, currents, wind speed and direction, and other information mariners need to safely navigate the narrow channels connecting the Gulf Coast waters and inland ports.

"Navigation is a very precise occupation and, with the close tolerances that exist today, it's vital that pilots have accurate real-time information for the safe and efficient movement of cargo," says Mike Kershaw, a longtime ship's captain and pilot with the Aransas Corpus Christi Pilots Association. "About 90 percent of the cargo that moves through here is oil and the most critical stage in moving oil is from the platform to the refinery."

The PORTS system is an extension of the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network developed and monitored by Blucher Institute scientists. In addition to Corpus Christi, the PORTS system is being utilized in the Gulf ports of Houston/Galveston, Texas, Mobile Bay, Ala., and Pascagoula and Gulfport, Miss. A proposal is also under consideration to install a PORTS system at Lake Charles, La.

According to Director Gary Jeffress, the PORTS system has significantly reduced the number of collisions, groundings, and other mishaps in the monitored ports. That is especially true for the Houston Ship Channel where the \$400,000 spent to maintain the system each year has resulted in a significant drop in accidents with an annual net savings of \$15 million for the port authority.


"The pilots and captains rely heavily on this data, especially during changes in weather conditions that force waters in-and-out of the

bays," Jeffress points out. "These conditions can have an effect on a fully-loaded cargo ship, especially when there's not much distance between the bottom of the ship and the bottom of the channel. With the PORTS system they are able to make decisions using real-time data."

There are two major factors that make navigating channels increasingly risky without the latest in navigation tools, Jeffress says. Not only has the nation's maritime traffic tripled in the last 50 years but larger ships, as many as 50 percent carrying hazardous materials, are testing the depth limits and channel widths of our ports.

One spill such as the 1989 Exxon Valdez accident can cause billions of dollars in damage and destroy sensitive marine habitats crucial to coastal ecosystems. In September 2001 eight people plunged to their deaths when a string of barges hit the Queen Isabella Causeway, the only road connecting South Padre Island to the Texas mainland. In 2004 maritime accidents resulted in the release of more than 270,000 gallons of crude oil in the Delaware River near Philadelphia, Pa. And, in July 2008 a collision between a Liberian tanker and a river barge near New Orleans, La. dumped an estimated 420,000 gallons of oil into the water and shut down a 100-mile stretch of the Mississippi River.

"Increasingly, shipping companies are implementing new navigation systems like PORTS to maximize cargo loads while reducing uncertainties like under keel currents," says Jeffress. "Prevention of maritime accidents is also the best, most cost-effective measure we can take to protect our fragile coastal environments."



Ship's Captain Mike Kershaw depends on PORTS for the most accurate, up-to-date information when navigating the treacherous Gulf waters.



## Nature's Lab Prepares Young Students for Careers in Technology



The Laguna Madre Field Station provides a site and facility for field training, education, and research in coastal, environmental, and ecological studies designed to increase students' understanding of the Laguna Madre, adjacent bays, estuaries, and Gulf of Mexico ecosystems, as well as to foster ecosystem stewardship through training, education, research, and outreach.

Since the early 1970s Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi scientists and researchers have taken advantage of a natural laboratory at the University's doorstep to provide students, teachers and community groups with an optimum learning site for environmental studies.

Today, through collaboration between the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) and the Corpus Christi Independent School District, the Laguna Outreach Project is being utilized as a means of attracting middle and high school students to science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers.

Engaging students from the school district's Innovation Academy is the first step in this en-

deavor. The academy, which targets economically-disadvantaged students interested in science, technology, engineering and math careers, is Corpus Christi's first Texas Science Technology Engineering and Math (T-STEM) Program to include both middle and high school students.

"Students are in this program because they choose to be, not because it's required," points out Kenneth Rainer, coordinator of the Laguna Outreach Project. "These students are interacting with doctorate level professors who are experts in their field, giving them a huge advantage."

The Laguna Madre Field Station introduces teachers and students to the Upper Laguna Madre by providing a site and facility for field training, education, and research in coastal, environmental, and ecological studies. Four times each semester, Innovation Academy students and educators participating in the Laguna Outreach Project spend a weekend night at the field station. While there they collect research data, interact with University professors, student volunteers and HRI scientists.

Research data includes quantification of physical characteristics of plants and animals that frequent the Laguna Madre. In addition, researchers from the University conduct basic lab experiments to expose the students to research techniques.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The Gulf of Mexico measures approximately 994 miles from east to west and 600 miles from north to south, and has a surface area of 580,000 square miles.
- Recreational fishing generates nearly \$8.2 billion in economic benefits annually which accounts for almost 75 percent of the total for the United States.
- The Gulf's commercial fisheries annually yield more fish, shrimp, crabs and oysters than the entire east coast of the United States, including Chesapeake Bay.
- The Gulf includes some of the most productive and diverse habitats in the world. More than 38 percent of its bottoms are shallow and support extensive wetlands.
- The United States Army Corps of Engineers estimates that 60 percent of the Texas shore is eroding and exposing valuable dunes and wetlands to loss.
- The offshore oil and gas industry of Texas and Louisiana accounts for 25 percent of natural gas and 13 percent of domestic petroleum.

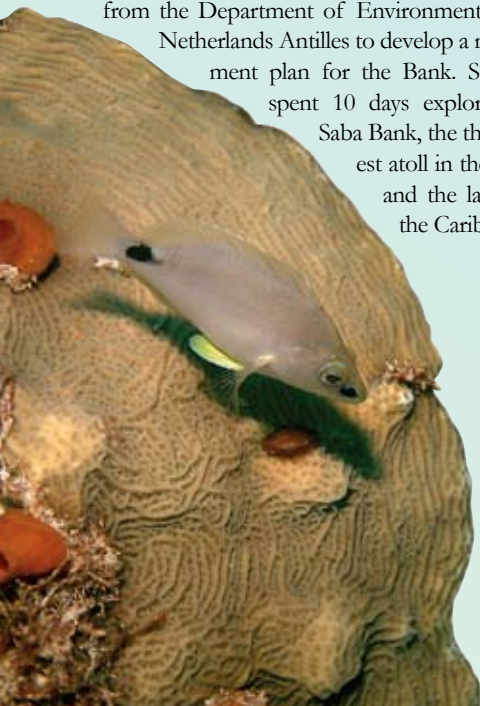




# Divers Discover Unexpected Coral Treasures on Saba Bank

Scientists from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and two other major universities discovered two new species of soft coral during a recent expedition to Saba Bank, Netherlands Antilles.

The expedition, which included marine experts from the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, and the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS) at the University of Miami, is part of an ongoing effort from the Department of Environment of the Netherlands Antilles to develop a management plan for the Bank. Scientists spent 10 days exploring the Saba Bank, the third largest atoll in the world, and the largest in the Caribbean.



They identified 40 species of soft corals (gorgonians), also known as sea fans, and more than 100 species of crabs and shrimp. Harte Research Institute Doctoral Fellow Morgan Kilgour assisted with the collection of the latter groups.

According to Dr. Wes Tunnell, associate director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI), many specimens were brought to the surface using a remote-operated vehicle capable of deep-water dives to 200 meters. One of the new species was found at a depth of 70 meters and the other was found to be common in shallow water at 20 meters.

"The new species of gorgonians are further evidence of the rich treasure trove of biodiversity present on the Saba Bank," says Tunnell. "Since the soft corals of the Caribbean are a well known group, the discovery of these new gorgonians in the shallowest parts of the Bank was unexpected."

Peter Etnoyer, an HRI doctoral fellow and gorgonian expert, added that species of soft corals can be difficult to distinguish from each other until the microscopic features of their skeletons are examined. However, he adds, this new species was fairly obvious because of its distinctive color and shape.

"Although we are still doing research to carefully verify and describe all of the diagnostic characteristics of this new gorgonian, we can already conclude that it belongs to the genus *Pterogorgia*, in which so far only three species are known,"



Etnoyer says. "The second new species found is a deep-water gorgonian from the genus *Lytria* which is currently comprised of a single species."

Dr. Thomas Shirley, the HRI's endowed chair of Marine Biodiversity and Conservation Science, predicts that the collections from this expedition will provide an important baseline on which to measure future changes.

"Tankers anchoring on the Bank introduce the risk of invasive species from fouling communities on the hull of the ships, or from ballast water carried in their tanks," he explains. "We now have a good impression of the present crustacean fauna."

## New Graduate Program in Marine Biology is the First on U.S. Gulf Coast

A new interdisciplinary program in marine biology is allowing students to earn postgraduate degrees in marine biology utilizing the resources of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University in College Station and Texas A&M University-Galveston.

The program, the first of its kind in any state adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico, offers both master's and doctoral degrees in marine biology. According to Dr. Greg Stunz, an associate professor and endowed researcher with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, the graduate program is designed to attract students interested in marine biology or any of its sub-disciplines and prepare them for careers in higher-education, government, and private industry.

"The field of marine biology has been expanding since the beginning of the environmental movement and, with the popularization of marine biology in the media, the demand for this degree is high," says Stunz. "With a highly-diverse curriculum and state-of-the-art facilities on all three campuses, this new program will provide students with the education and experience needed to succeed in this growing field of research."

Dr. Joanna Mott, professor and chair of the Department of Life Sciences, says several additional faculty and staff have been recruited in anticipation of the expanded degree offerings. The addition of the new graduate program, she points out, enhances the University's standing as a major research institution in the field of marine biology.



"This program will build on our strong tradition of marine research and the expertise of our faculty, many of whom are focused on research in the marine biology field," points out Mott. "The interdisciplinary program provides unique opportunities for students, with courses offered across all three campuses and collaborative research studies."

With two of the three participating campuses situated along the Texas Coast, students learn and work in areas where the economy is affected by coastal tourism and the presence of petrochemical facilities. In addition, the three involved entities form a geographic triangle that encompasses a high concentration of federal, state, and local governmental agencies which manage the resources and environmental quality of the Gulf of Mexico.



# Beware the DEAD ZONE

## HYPOXIC WATERS AFFECT GULF'S COMMERCIAL AND SPORT FISHING

As a recognized expert in coastal ecology, Dr. Paul Montagna has long understood the conditions that create the massive area known as “the dead zone” along the northern Texas coastline. So, 20 years ago, when his research first indicated that a similar zone existed in Corpus Christi Bay, he was surprised and puzzled.

“I thought my instruments were wrong,” recalls Montagna, who today is the Endowed Chair for Ecosystems Studies and Modeling at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. “Based on what we knew, this shouldn’t have been happening.”

According to Montagna, the so-called dead zones are really hypoxic zones that, while not dangerous to fish, cannot support bottom-dwelling life such as clams, crabs and shrimp. Because fish avoid these areas, commercial shrimp boats and recreational fishermen must go further out into open water in pursuit of their quarry.

At first, Montagna, who at the time of his discovery worked for the University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas, believed it could be a one-time phenomenon. But the more he examined the area, the more evidence he uncovered that the dead zone is real and growing at an alarming rate.

“It went against everything we thought we knew,” Montagna recalls. “Corpus Christi Bay is shallow and the turnover from winds usually keeps the oxygen levels high. Then I realized that what we have in the Bay is a ‘perfect storm’ that creates the ideal conditions for a dead zone which is really an area of water that is low on oxygen.”

Dead zones are caused by excess nutrients that create conditions favorable to the growth of algae and other organic matter that sinks to the bottom where it decomposes and consumes most of the oxygen in the water. While nutrient runoff is the main culprit, hypersalinity exacerbates the problem.

The dead zone of Corpus Christi Bay comes from the shallow waters of Oso Bay and the Laguna Madre which, due to evaporation, is extremely high in salt content. Although hypoxic waters appear normal on the surface, on the bottom they are covered with dead animal life, and in extreme cases, sulfur-oxidizing bacteria. The conditions lead to disruption in the food chain, loss of important animal species, and high mortality of marine life.

Compared to the dead zone that starts near the mouth of the Mississippi River during the spring and summer and covers an estimated 7,000 miles along the Louisiana and Texas coasts, the one in Corpus Christi Bay is just a blip on the radar. Montagna’s “Corpus Christi Triangle” between the Packery Channel, Shamrock Island and Ward Island covers approximately a 25-square-mile area and is growing every year. If left unchecked, it could become an annual fixture if the conditions that make it possible are not eliminated.

“At first, we thought the dead zone was just a few miles wide but we now know that it is much larger,” says Montagna. “And, it’s not just during the hottest time of year that it occurs. It’s just as likely to



DR. PAUL MONTAGNA

be there in May and October as it is during the heat of summer.”

A dead zone forms when nutrient rich waters form a layer of fresh water above the existing salt water. In the case of Corpus Christi Bay, the primary culprit may be the three water reclamation sites along Oso Bay that release large amounts of nitrogen into the ecosystem. Stratification of fresh and saline waters prevents oxygen replenishment by the mixing of oxygen-rich surface water with oxygen-depleted bottom water. As a result, fish leave the area and bottom dwelling organisms that can’t move out of the hypoxic zone suffer stress and even death.

“I’ve been working on this issue since 1988 and it’s getting worse,” warns Montagna. “However, through continued monitoring and calculation of the nitrogen being transferred from Oso Bay, we’ll be able to recommend actions to solve the problem of the dead zone in Corpus Christi Bay.”



# IslanderNetwork.com

## The Place to Be for Alumni!



The Alumni Web site is the place for news about fellow alumni, the University, job opportunities and more. Go to [IslanderNetwork.com](http://IslanderNetwork.com) and:

- ◆ Register and gain entry to the "Alumni Access" section
- ◆ Take the Alumni Attitude Survey, online in December
- ◆ Tell us what you think by taking our ongoing opinion poll
- ◆ View photos of alumni events and learn about the activities of local alumni chapters
- ◆ Learn what your fellow alumni are up to in the Class Notes section
- ◆ Re-establish old friendships by e-mailing classmates directly from the Web site

We are continually updating our Internet presence. Soon, our Alumni Web site will link to Facebook, LinkedIn and MySpace to allow you to bridge your personal page with the Web site. Soon there will be a college graduate career service presence to assist you with your career path. Make the Alumni Web site your home page or bookmark it as a favorite and visit often.



# Brains, Beauty and the Big Screen

Underneath her glowing beauty and ardor to make it to the big screen, alumnus Cassandra Jean exudes intelligence and ambition.

At age 20, the former beauty pageant queen, known as Cassandra Jean Whitehead to her A&M-Corpus Christi classmates, graduated magna cum laude with a marketing degree in 2006.

Before Cassandra Jean finished school, she scored her first national television appearance three years ago as a contestant on "America's Next Top Model (Cycle 5)."

Appearances followed on major network shows, including Disney Channel's "Hannah Montana," ABC's "Pushing Daisies," "CSI: Miami" and "CSI: Las Vegas." However, it was her brainpower that paid off big when she won \$500,000 as a contestant on "1 vs. 100," the NBC trivia show that tests competitors' knowledge of pop culture.

"I invested the money for the most part," says Cassandra Jean. "Even before I won the money, I was working often enough to be able to take care of my financial expenses as well as have fun."

During her final semester at A&M-Corpus Christi, the former Miss Corpus Christi USA and

Miss Houston Teen USA spent many weekends commuting to Los Angeles, Calif. for modeling and hosting jobs. After moving to the West Coast, she worked as a tutor when she wasn't modeling, and during the writer's strike, even took a turn dealing poker in Las Vegas, Nev.

Many of the roles she is offered cast Cassandra Jean as a pretty, sorority girl-type.

In "The Fast and the Furious 4," scheduled for release in June 2009, Cassandra Jean shares a scene with veteran actor Paul Walker where she distracts his character with her knockout good looks. However, the beauty-over-brains culture of Hollywood is just a stepping-stone for larger ambitions.

"I'm being offered a lot of those types of roles, but I don't mind," says Cassandra Jean. "Many times they'll help you branch out to bigger and better things."

For her, bigger and better things could mean a career in the court room, and not in fictional shows like "Law and Order." Although she's not made a decision, Cassandra Jean is considering law school. And she has the pedigree to go far, no matter which career path she takes. Her mother,



**Alumnus Cassandra Jean Whitehead won \$500,000 as a contestant on the NBC trivia show '1 vs. 100.'**

Valrie Chambers, is a professor in the University's College of Business and her father is also a multi-degreed professional.

"Both my parents have four degrees," she says. "They are into that kind of stuff. I'm not against it, but most people my age are still in college. I'm just having fun right now."

## HAVE YOU HEARD

### COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

**Jack Ballou '65 BBA Business Administration** and his wife, **Lynda Stewart Ballou '65**, enjoy trips to Colorado to see their five grandchildren. Jack is a self-employed CPA. He and Lynda "always welcome visits or communication from UCCers!"

**Lynda Stewart Ballou '65** and her husband, Jack, enjoy trips to Colorado to visit their five grandchildren. Lynda is retired from teaching and very involved in church and community activities.

**Leonard Schlueter '68 BS Business Administration** worked for the IRS for 38 years, starting in accounting before moving to computer services. When he retired in January 2007, he was working as a management analyst for the IRS. He currently lives in the 100-year-old-home where his grandparents lived.

**Dick Runyan '74 BBA Management** works for AMF Bowling Worldwide, marketing for AMF Saratoga Lanes, Corpus Christi, as well as three AMF Centers in San Antonio, Texas. Single for 62 years, Dick met his wife at a Corpus Christi Hooks game, July 4, 2005. They were married Dec. 2, 2006.

**Donald Deis, Ph.D., CPA, '75 BA Business** became the chair of the Department of Accounting and Business Law at A&M-Corpus Christi in spring 2008. Donald and his wife, **Kathy '78 BSN, '90 MSN Nursing Administration**, recently became grandparents. Their first grandchild, Blake, was born on Feb. 5, 2007.

**John de la Garza '76 BBA Business Administration** is the principal at Stony Creek Elementary School for the Jefferson County Public Schools in Colorado.

**Patricia Harris '78 BBA Management**, mother of four children, is campaigning for an at-large trustee position on the Corpus

Christi school board. Patricia has been a certified Texas Mid-Management Administrator for 20 years. She became a grandmother in July.

**David Spencer '80 BBA Banking and Financing** directs the "one-person internal audit shop" at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas. He and his wife have a granddaughter who just turned 2 years old. They love to travel.

**Susan Mazzanti '88 MBA Management** is retired and living in Arkansas.

**Robert Saldana '88 BBA Finance** lives in the Houston, Texas, area where he has worked for Aramark Uniform Service for 10 years. He started as plant manager, and was promoted to assistant general manager within the first year. He and his wife, Maricela, have been married eight years and have a 6-year-old son, Robert Jr.

**Karen Work '88 BBA Accounting** was diagnosed with cancer eight years ago. She recently celebrated her life by walking the survivor's lap at the Relay for Life at Whataburger Field. She continues to work and play softball.

**Laura Rosales '89 BBA** worked for A&M-Corpus Christi from 1993-2000 in Fiscal Affairs and University Services. She returned to the University in 2001 and currently works in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research as senior grants and contract administrator.

**William Vauter '90 BBA Marketing** is a sales engineer for Schlumberger Drilling & Measurements in Houston, Texas. He and his wife, Wendy, have one 5-month-old daughter, Erica Janell Vauter, and are expecting another baby in March 2009.

**Michael Winnie '90 BBA Marketing** attended Texas A&M College of Medicine and completed his residency at Scott & White Hospital. Currently, Michael is a local family practitioner working in a private medical practice. He is married and has three children.

**Gustavo Barrera '94 BBA Accounting** has been employed with IBC for 13 years and is senior vice president and corporate sales manager at the main branch in Corpus Christi where he is responsible for the development, direction, and administration of the sales and service strategies. He is a member of the Kiwanis Corpus Christi Bay Club and the Bishop's Guild.



**Alumni enjoy networking at a shrimp boil prior to an Islander basketball game in San Antonio, March 1.**

*continued page 22*

## HAVE YOU HEARD *continued*

**Ismael Garcia '95 BBA Accounting** is certified as a public funds investment officer and works with the City of San Marcos, Texas, as an accounting manager. He is a member of the American Society for Public Administration, the Government Finance Officers Association of Texas, and the American Payroll Association.

**Jay A. Nesbit, R. Ph, '95 MBA Management** is director of pharmacy services at Connections Health Wellness Advocacy in Beachwood, Ohio.

**John Valls '95 MBA Management** is marketing manager of the Port of Corpus Christi. He was named Leadership Alumni of the Year by the Leadership Corpus Christi Alumni Association in recognition of his dedication to Leadership Corpus Christi over the past seven years.

**Chad Goetz '96 BBA Marketing** is sales manager for the Los Angeles-based disposable brokerage firm of Teasley & Associates. His wife, **Giovanna Carrera '97 BS Criminal Justice**, recently accepted the position of associate director of alumni relations for the Annenberg School at the University of Southern California. They reside in Pasadena, Calif.



(From left) Kelly Addison, Amanda Matlock, President Flavius Killebrew, State Rep. Solomon Ortiz Jr. and Lee White, president of the Corpus Christi Area Alumni Club, mingle at the 'Summer Taste of Texas' club mixer.

**Tammy Pfeffer '98 BBA Accounting** celebrated her seventh anniversary in June with her husband, Sonny. They have a 3-year-old son, Scott, and baby boy, Ryan, born July 11, 2008. Tammy and her family live in Corpus Christi.

**Brigitte Willott '98 BBA Accounting** is the CFO for Affiliated Therapy Group Practice, Inc. She joined the practice in February 2007 before the birth of her second child in August 2007.

**Christina "Christy" Losoya '00 BBA Accounting** is married to **Joseph Losoya '00 BS Biology**. Christy is an independent consultant for The Pampered Chef. She and her husband have two children. Their daughter, Alex, is 13 years old and their son, Adrian, is 5 years old. Christy welcomed daughter, Autumn, who arrived in late October.

**Kathy Villanueva '00 BBA Management Information Systems** is a proud first-time grandmother. Her granddaughter, Lilee-Ana Renee Villanueva, was born on Aug. 6, 2008. Kathy is the vendor master analyst for NuStar Energy L.P. in San Antonio, Texas.

**James Saunders '02 BBA General Business** and his wife, **Tiffany Saunders '02 BA Communications**, recently had a son, Jackson Kai.

**Sherry Bowers '03 BBA Business Administration** is the director of development for South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind. Sherry serves on the board of directors for the Association of Fundraising Professionals – Coastal Bend Chapter. In July she completed her Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE)

certification. Sherry is also a graduate of Leadership Corpus Christi Class of XXXIV. She has been married for 21 years and has two children.

**Patrick Richardson '03 BBA Management Information Systems** graduated with an MBA in Management from Our Lady of the Lake University. He is an analyst for Constellation NewEnergy in Houston, Texas.

**Michael Nowak '04 BBA Marketing** is an investment advisor representative for New England Financial. He and his wife, Mary, live in Houston, Texas.

**Curtis Rock '04 BBA Management Information Systems** married **Jennifer Nesmith '05 BA Communications** Aug. 16, 2008, at the Corpus Christi Cathedral. Curtis is the business development manager for his family's business, Rock Engineering and Testing Laboratory, Inc. He is vice president of the Corpus Christi Area Alumni Club.

**James Smith '04 BBA Marketing** returned to Corpus Christi after working in New Orleans, La., and Laredo, Texas, managing the business side of civil construction projects. Currently, James is a project business manager for Kiewit Texas Construction. He and his wife, Adrian, have a daughter, Chloe, and celebrated the arrival of a son, Preston, in October.

**Matt Werkhoven '04 BBA Management** is sales manager at Corpus Christi Cycle Plaza. He is engaged to **Natalie Farmer '07 BBA Marketing**. Matt and Natalie are getting married this fall.

**Michelle Hroch White '04 BBA Marketing** was married Nov. 4, 2006, to John Lee White of Chapman Ranch. Michelle is the director of operations for RSI & Associates, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in business valuations.

**Alex Gilmore '05 BBA Marketing** is marketing manager for Leisure Pools in San Antonio, Texas. He handles Texas, North America, and international internet marketing strategies.

**Robyn Rabe '05 BBA Economics** married Nicholas Muylie on June 28, 2008. Robyn and Nicholas live in the Denver, Colo., area where Robyn works as a financial analyst and teaches college economics part-time.

**Jennifer (Nesmith) Rock '05 BA Communications** married **Curtis Rock '04 BBA Management Information Systems** Aug. 16, 2008, at the Corpus Christi Cathedral. Jennifer is an accountant for Skrobarczyk & Partridge, CPAs. Curtis and Jennifer met when they were students at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Tally Tripp '05 BBA Accounting** is a broadcast accountant for Clear Channel Worldwide in San Antonio, Texas.

**Rob Harbolovic '06 BBA Accounting** is an accountant with STG Architects in Austin, Texas. He is pursuing his CPA by attending night classes at the University of Texas.

**Mateo Hoyer '06 BBA Finance** is a financial manager overlooking two multi-million dollar projects. He is in the process of obtaining his private pilot's license and has completed writing a book. He hopes to "start collecting rejection letters from publishers very soon."

**Ismael Leal '06 BBA Management** is a human resources generalist for Christus Spohn at the Shoreline campus. He plans to enter graduate school at the University of The Incarnate Word in fall 2008.

**Jennifer Cole '07 BBA Accounting** entered the graduate program of accountancy at A&M-Corpus Christi in May 2008. She recently accepted a position as a staff accountant at Flusche, Van Beveren, & Kilgore P.C., in Corpus Christi.

**Kathryn Grubaugh '07 BBA Accounting** participated in an auditing internship with Ernst & Young LLP in San Antonio, Texas, and, after the internship, she accepted a full-time position as auditor. Kathryn is working on her master's degree in accounting at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Stacey Rivere '07 BBA Accounting** is the senior buyer for Sherwin Alumina in Gregory, Texas. Stacey says one of the main reasons she was chosen over other candidates is because she is working on her master's in business administration at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Jennifer Schott '07 BBA Accounting** joined McGladrey & Pullen, LLP and is studying for the CPA exam. Jennifer and her boyfriend just bought their first house and enjoy living in the Dallas, Texas, area.

**Jeremy Tomscha '07 BBA Accounting** works as an inventory cost analyst at McTurbine, Inc. His wife, also an A&M-Corpus Christi alumnus, teaches second grade in the Flour Bluff ISD and is pregnant with their second child.

**Catherine Warner '07 BBA Accounting** is a business manager with Kiewit Offshore Services in Ingleside, Texas, working with a team of engineers and oil company clients. She oversees offshore oil rig construction projects.

**Mayra Franco '08 BBA Accounting** is a financial accountant with Stripes, LLC. She plans to return to graduate school for her master's degree in accounting. Her ultimate goal is to pass the CPA exam.

**Katy Mathis '08 BBA Finance** is a real estate appraiser with the Nueces County Appraisal District. She is married to Kyle Mathis and has a 2-year-old daughter, Caydence.

**Sarah Smith '08 BBA Accounting** is pursuing her master's degree in accounting at A&M-Corpus Christi. She plans to graduate in spring 2009.

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

**Elma Holden '65 BS Elementary Education** retired in 1989 and is a 19-year breast cancer survivor. Her second husband passed away in 2003. Elma is a substitute teacher for her Sunday school class at Covenant Baptist Church. She occasionally fills in for the leader of the Thursday afternoon small group and teaches literacy students through the Corpus Christi Literacy Council.

**Bill Guthrie '70 BS Health, Physical Education, or Recreation** retired from Amoco Corp. in 1990 and lives in the Lake Livingston, Texas, area. He and his wife, Suzanne, enjoy traveling, golf, fishing, boating, and doing anything that involves their six children and 10 grandchildren.

**Sydna Klingaman Arnold '77 BS Secondary Education** received the National Board Certification in AYA English Language Arts in November 2007. Sydna was one of 36 teachers in the United States selected to participate in the July 2008 Holocaust and Jewish Resistance Seminar in Poland and Israel. Sydna teaches art history and English at Carroll High School in Corpus Christi.

**Elsa Meza-Zaragosa '86 MS Curriculum and Instruction Education** has been teaching with the Corpus Christi school district for 27 years, the last 12 at the Early Childhood Development Center at A&M-Corpus Christi. She received her Ed.D. in Bilingual Education from A&M-Kingsville in 1998. She and husband, John, also an educator and A&M-Corpus Christi alumnus, have a son, Benjamin, and a daughter, Gabriella.

**Josefina Alvarez '89 MS Educational Administration** is the principal at Mireles Elementary in Corpus Christi. In spring '08 she was selected as a semi-finalist for the H.E.B. Award in Excellence in Education.

*continued page 24*



# Seizing the Day at Sunrise Ranch

## YOUTH CAMP TEACHES PROFESSIONAL, SOCIAL SKILLS

Since he was a boy, John T. Baker has risen early every morning to seize the day. The University alumnus distinctly remembers rising before 6 a.m. one summer morning in 1952 and riding into town on his bicycle in search of his first job. He was 10 when he was hired to stock groceries in Devine, Texas.

"I was always an hour early," recalls Baker. "From that day forward, I bought my own jeans, socks and shoes, not because I had to, but because I wanted to."

Baker has never settled for mediocrity. He attended the University of Corpus Christi on a full football scholarship, graduated with a business degree in 1964, enlisted in the Navy, completed advanced flight training and flew as a naval aviator for five years.

While he was in the Navy, Baker and his wife, Betty, bought a 400-acre ranch in Liberty Hill, Texas, and named it Sunrise Ranch, a reflection of his lifelong work ethic. After leaving the military, he moved to Austin, Texas, and bought a Piper Aircraft dealership.

Sunrise Ranch, located 30 miles northwest of Austin, is home to University of Texas mascot



Bevo XIV, who is in fourth year of service to the University of Texas. The Bakers also owned Bevo XIII, the longest-tenured Longhorn mascot until its death in 2006.

Baker, a past president of the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America, has been a successful cattle showman for 25 years.

When friends suggested he share his expertise with

youngsters, he and Betty started the Sunrise Showmanship Camp. The summer camp, which they have operated for 14 years, attracts children ages 7 to 17 from across the United States and Canada.

"We teach kids how to select and present cattle professionally," Baker says. "The camp also strengthens the kids' leadership and social skills to promote better self-esteem."

The Bakers expanded the ranch barn to accommodate more camp-

ers and added a cozy bed and breakfast with an upscale rustic décor selected by Betty. One room features a tin ceiling and both rooms have headboards made from cedar logs. Through the back window, guests can get a close-up look at a variety of Texas longhorns. Outside, deer, turkey and other animals mingle in their natural environment.

"You can sit on the porch, watch the animals and enjoy the peace and quiet of Sunrise Ranch," Baker says. "There's no television. If you want to watch TV, you can go to the Holiday Inn."



John T. Baker (right) with his wife, Betty, and son, John T. Baker II.

Baker attended the University of Corpus Christi on a football scholarship.



## HAVE YOU HEARD *continued*

**Ann Fister '92 MS Curriculum and Instruction Reading** retired from Corpus Christi ISD in 2000. In 2001, she began working at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church as the CCD coordinator. Ann also volunteers at John Paul II High School and tutors elementary students in English.

**Lynda De Leon '93 BSIS Mathematics 4-8** is in her fifth year as principal at Club Estates Elementary school in the Corpus Christi ISD. She received Superintendent Certification in December 2005 followed by her Ed.D from A&M-Corpus Christi in December 2006.

**Eusebio Torres '95 MS Educational Administration** has been the principal at Banquete Junior High since 2001.

**Justin Moore '96 BS Kinesiology** was granted Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Mentored Public Health Research Scientist Development awards to research the factors that promote and discourage physical activity in middle school children.

**Diane Hanus '94 MS Curriculum and Instruction Kindergarten** is a kindergarten teacher with the Comal ISD in New Braunfels, Texas.

**Pamela Neven '97 BS Kinesiology** is an instructional technologist at Dawson Middle School in Southlake, Texas. She resides in Keller, Texas, with her husband and two boys.

**Kelli Butler-Floyd '98 BSIS Early Childhood Education** married **Tony Floyd '98** in 2002 and has one child, Cooper. Kelli is a kindergarten teacher for the Flour Bluff ISD. She resides on Padre Island.

**Bridgette Hardin '02 MS Occupational Training and Development** was recognized in the 2006-2007 edition of "Who's Who of American Women." Bridgette received the "Lamp of Knowledge" award in 2007 from the National Chancellor's Association for scholastic achievement in doctoral studies. She graduated from A&M-Corpus Christi in 2007 with a doctorate in educational leadership and is the associate director for the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Charles Perez '91 BS Kinesiology** is an administrator/teacher with the Robstown, Texas, ISD. He and his wife, **Lisa Perez '94**, have two children, Xavier and Amarilisa Mia.

**Jami Spacek '02 BSIS Early Childhood Education** worked as a teacher for five years. In 2007 after completing her masters in educational technology, she began working as a campus

instructional technologist for the Judson ISD in San Antonio, Texas. In June 2008 Jami was hired by the North East ISD in San Antonio as an instructional technology specialist.

**Carl Garmon '03 BS Occupational Training and Development** was a delegate to the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. At the same conference, Rev. Garmon was elected to serve on the General Board of the A.M.E. Church for the next four years.

**D'Nese Hinojosa '05 BS ED Kinesiology** is married and pregnant with her first child due Jan. 2, 2009. She works for the City of Corpus Christi in the city's secretary's office.

**Jessica Reyna '05 BSIS Interdisciplinary Study** is a bilingual pre-K teacher at the Faulk Early Childhood Center in Aransas Pass, Texas. She is approaching her third year with the district.

**Linda Villarreal '05 BS Occupational Training and Development** earned a master's degree in Occupational Training and Development from A&M-Corpus Christi in August 2007. Linda is working on an elementary bilingual education doctorate.

**Kenneth Anthony '06 MS Secondary Education** is a history teacher at Mathis, Texas, High School for International Studies. Anthony taught one dual-credit class at Mathis last year as an adjunct professor. He recently attended a week-long Asia Society Forum for educators and education policy-makers in Washington, D.C.

**Johnny Flores '06 BS Kinesiology** is an assistant coach with the Corpus Christi Sharks Arena 2 football team. He travels all over the nation for games, scouting, recruiting and tryout combines, and coaching conventions. He is working on a graduate degree in kinesiology at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Yvette Lindial '06 BSIS Interdisciplinary Study** is the proud mother of a baby girl born in February 2008. Aside from her job as a mother of three children, she co-owns and runs Texas Docks and Decks. Along with her husband, she is awaiting the completion of their first, new home.

**Jennifer Schratwieser '06 BSIS Interdisciplinary Study** teaches kindergarten in Copperas Cove, Texas.

**Christy Tober '06 BSIS Interdisciplinary Study** was married in June 2007. She is a second grade teacher for the Tuloso Midway, Texas ISD. Christy truly enjoys teaching and making a difference in children's lives.

**Sarah Harper '07 BSIS Interdisciplinary Study** is happy to announce the birth of a boy born on Feb. 12, 2008. She also accepted a position as a kindergarten teacher at DeLeon Elementary in Victoria, Texas.

**Kathryn Thomas '07 EDD Educational Leadership** moved to the Goliad, Texas, area after graduating from A&M-Corpus Christi in May of 2007. Last summer, Kathryn completed her first sprint triathlon.

**Linda Fernandez '08 BSIS Generalist EC-4** is a kindergarten teacher at the Early Childhood Center in Eagle Pass, Texas, and is seeking a master's degree in bilingual education. On July 4, Linda became engaged to high school sweetheart and fellow alumnus, **Juan Cabanas**.

**Jesus A. Garcia '08 BS Kinesiology** is an elementary physical education and health teacher with the Orange Grove, Texas ISD.

**Joseph J. Martinez '08 BS Kinesiology** is a physical education teacher and boys' basketball coach at Sydney Lanier High School in San Antonio, Texas.

**Jared Prezas '08 BSIS Special Education** married Crystal Orta on July 5, 2008.

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

**Joyce Williams Blackman '51** celebrated her 83rd birthday on Aug. 16. She and her husband are not very active these days due to health problems. They attend church as often as possible and are still in the home they have lived in for 20 years. Joyce reads Christian fiction and works on her family history via computer.

**Bob Gammage '63 BS Sociology** taught from 2006-2008 in the Political Science Department of Texas State University where his youngest son, Sam, graduated on Aug. 8, 2008. He also taught a course in negotiations this past summer at St. Edward's University. He continues in private law practice as he has done since he retired from the Supreme Court of Texas in 1995.

**Roy E. De Brand '65 BA Religion** has retired from Campbell University Divinity School where he was professor of homiletics for six years. Roy is the author of six books and numerous articles published in professional and theological journals. He is married to Carolyn Hayes of Corpus Christi and they have two children and one grandchild. Roy lives in Angier, N.C., and is active in ministry and travel.

## ALUMNI CHAPTER CONTACTS

**National Alumni Association**  
O.B. Garcia '54  
ob.garcia@tamucc.edu  
(361) 852-0386

**Anchor Alumni Club**  
Gloria A. Valdez '00  
gloria.valdez@tamucc.edu  
(361) 825-5828

**Austin Club**  
Jessica Peneda '00  
jessica\_peneda@dell.com  
(512) 725-3074

**Corpus Christi Club**  
Lee White '05  
lwhite01@stx.rr.com  
(361) 548-3141

**Dallas/Ft. Worth Area**  
Diana Jo Barton '65 – '67  
dianajobarton@sbcglobal.net  
(972) 381-0606

**Houston Club**  
Cyndee Crenshaw '01  
eednyc@yahoo.com  
(713) 478-9560

## ALUMNI CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Alumni Shrimp Boil**  
Austin, Texas  
Thursday, November 20, 5:30 p.m.  
A&M-CC Women's Basketball vs. Texas  
University of Texas Campus

**Alumni Shrimp Boil**  
Houston, Texas  
Tuesday, January 6, 5:30 p.m.  
A&M-CC Men's Basketball vs. Houston  
University of Houston Campus

**Alumni Awards Breakfast**  
A&M-Corpus Christi Campus  
Saturday, February 7, 9 a.m.  
University Center

**Alumni Annual Meeting**  
A&M-Corpus Christi Campus  
Saturday, February 7, 10:30 a.m.  
University Center

**Alumni Shrimp Boil**  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
Saturday, February 7, 5 p.m.  
A&M-CC Women's Basketball vs. Nicholl's St.  
American Bank Center

For more information about these and other events visit us online at:

# www.islandernetwork.com





Derek and Amber Martin were among the A&M-Corpus Christi alumni who attended a shrimp boil in San Antonio.

**William Eckert '71 BA History** is the legal clinics director and human resources director of the Houston, Texas, Volunteer Lawyers Program. He will complete his LL.M degree at Thomas M. Cooley School of Law in December.

**William M. Barron '71 BA Communications** retired in 2001 after 30 years with the Boy Scouts of America, and is now the CEO of the Texarkana, Texas, Area Chapter of the American Red Cross.

**Frances Garza '73 BA History** is a public information officer for the Texas Department of Transportation.

**Lucille Cervantes-Poludniak '79 BA Art** is the Rio Grande/South Texas Educational Outreach Coordinator for Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D), a national non-profit organization that records audio textbooks and novels. She will complete her master's degree in library science this fall.

**Traci Wickett '79 BA Communications** is board chair of the United Way of Texas for 2008-2009. Traci serves as the president and CEO of United Way of Southern Cameron County in Brownsville, Texas. She has served as chairman of the Brownsville, Texas, Chamber of Commerce, the Texas Southmost College Foundation, and the United Way of Texas Professional Council.

**Dr. Jaye A. Mandt '82 BA English** is living in San Antonio, Texas, after retiring as a public school teacher and administrator from Corpus Christi ISD at the end of 2003. She has embarked on a new career as a custom state program test designer for Pearson, Inc.

**Ollie Barrier '83 BA Psychology** is a holistic life coach with Successful Abundant Living, LLC in St. Petersburg, Fla. Holistic life coaching "values integration of body, mind, spirit, and sees integration wholeness as an essential expression of personal health."

**Wendy Smith '83 BA Psychology** is a quality management RN for a health plan in Phoenix, Ariz. She received a master's in public administration in 2004.

**Carla Daws '86 BA Communications, '99 MBA Business Administration** is director of communications and records management with the Texas Water Development Board. She continues her interest in acting and has performed in more than 20 short films and 20-plus stage plays. Her recent film, "The Funeral Singer," was previewed at the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin, Texas.

**Bruce Varley '86 BA Psychology** works for TOTAL S.A., a large French oil company, as an internal consultant on quality and environmental management. After 18 years with TOTAL, he is looking forward to retirement and new adventures with his "lovely spouse" in about four years.

**Linda J. Hotcaveg '91 BA Communications** is a single parent of two children. Her son, Eli, is 11 and her daughter, Alexis, is 8. She has been teaching English with the Brownsville, Texas, ISD for 18 years.

**George Flores '92 BA History** is married to Marsha Flores and has two children, Joseph, 7, and McKayla, 2. George and Marsha live in Bastrop, Texas, where George is a warehouse foreman with the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

**Dr. Eva A. Muñoz '92 BA English** is an associate professor of English at Del Mar College.

**Charles Smith '92 BS Criminal Justice** served 15 years in the Army as a counterintelligence officer and counter-terrorism agent. He married Peggy at a "Proxy Wedding" at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. In 1998 he became a pharmaceutical company representative. Charles enjoys mentoring the children of deployed soldiers, and is athletic director for a junior high and high school football team.

**Alan Eladio Gómez '94 BA English** returned to the Southwest from Upstate New York where he was an assistant professor of Latina/o Studies at Ithaca College and a visiting lecturer in the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University. In fall 2008 he joined the faculty at Arizona State University as an assistant professor in the School of Justice and Social Inquiry.

**Janet M. Holmstrom '94 BA Sociology** is a foster care supervisor for the Ingham County Office of the Department of Human Services in Lansing, Mich. She earned her master's degree in social work from Michigan State University in 2003 and became a licensed social worker in both macro and clinical practice in 2006. Her husband, Ron Miesbauer, is employed by Synagro, a company based in Houston, Texas.

**Daniel Owen '94 BA Psychology** is employed with the University of Texas Medical Branch Correctional Managed Care. He earned a master's degree in clinical psychology from A&M-Corpus Christi and is working toward a doctorate in the same field. Dan lives in Nacogdoches, Texas. His children are grown and he has one grandson, 19 months old.

**Rosalind W. Sobosle '95 BA Communications** has been a pharmaceutical sales representative with Eli Lilly and Company Pharmaceuticals for 10 years. She is married to Mark Sobosle, who retired after 20 years in the Navy and is an air traffic controller at Hobby Airport in Houston, Texas. Rosalind and Mark have an 11-year-old daughter and a 7-year old-son. The family resides in The Woodlands, Texas.

**María B. Gala '96 BA Psychology** works for the federal government. Her daughters Olivia, Amanda, and Christina "are all Islanders!"

**Giovanna Carrera '97 BS Criminal Justice** is associate director of Alumni Relations for the Annenberg School at the University of Southern California. Her husband, **Chad Goetz '96 BBA Marketing**, is sales manager for the Los Angeles-based disposable brokerage firm of Teasley & Associates. Giovanna and Chad reside in Pasadena, Calif.

**Roberta Hatch '97 BA Sociology** is a pre-K teacher in Peachtree City, Ga. She and her husband have two children, Holly, 7, and George, 5. Her husband is a Delta pilot. She enjoys running marathons and plans to run in the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. She also volunteers for the Children's Restoration Network which assists children who do not have homes.

**Sara Melendez '97 BA Communications** is a community relations officer with the U.S. Border Patrol in Laredo, Texas. She had her first baby, "a very energetic baby boy," who turned 1 on July 19.

**Trish Reynolds '97 BA Sociology** is a behavior specialist for the Katy, Texas, ISD. She is a member of the Houston area ESC-Reg4 Behavior and Discipline Committee as well as other organizations that provide assistance to children with mental and physical challenges. She stays very busy with four grandchildren.

**Armando Valdez '97 BA History** is an active duty Army officer stationed at Camp Mabry, Texas. He returned last year from a one-year tour in Afghanistan and was recently promoted to the rank of major.

**Kristina Zambrano '97 BS Criminal Justice** was named Teacher of the Year by the Taft, Texas, ISD. Kristina teaches second grade at Petty Elementary. She completed her second master's degree in education while she worked for the SSRC as a programs manager.

**Marisa Gonzalez '99 BS Criminal Justice** graduated from John Marshall Law School in Atlanta, Ga., in May 2008. She works at The Effron Law Firm in Atlanta, Ga., practicing business and family-based immigration law.

**Kristin Lawson '99 BA History** graduated with a Ph.D. in history from the University of Missouri in May 2008 and teaches at Westminster College in Fulton, Mo.

**Rich Rodriguez '00 BS Criminal Justice** completed seven years of service as a special agent with the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Service in Fort Hood, Texas, and is a special agent with the Federal Investigative Services, U.S. Office of Personnel Management in Houston, Texas. He and his wife have an 8-year-old daughter and a 7-year-old son.

**Dolores Summers '00 BA Communications** has been a high school teacher for eight years and is certified in speech communication and dance. She is director of the Ballet Folklórico de Galena Park High School, the assistant director of the high school dance team, and a school board member of the Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School.

**Ted Aguilar, Jr. '01 BA Psychology and Criminal Justice** works for Child Protective Services in San Antonio, Texas, as a legal caseworker. He is in a relationship for five years and about to be engaged.

**Veronica Ramirez '01 BA Music** teaches music at her high school alma mater, St. Augustine High School in Laredo, Texas. She enjoys taking her students to annual competitions where they have ranked and placed high in their divisions with All-State Choir, UIL, and TAPPS. She also had opportunities to sing in Mexico during the summer.

**Tara M. Hall '02 BA Communications** graduated with a master of arts in communication with an emphasis in rhetorical studies from Texas State University. In addition to her full-time employment as an academic advisor at Austin Community College, she teaches fundamentals of human communication at Texas State University.

**Amber Prince '02 BA Communications** is pregnant with her second son. Her first son, Cooper Prince II, turned 2 on Oct. 24.

**Frances Johnson '02 BA English** teaches at A&M-Corpus Christi in the First Year Writing Program. She completed her master's degree in educational technology and instructional design from A&M-Corpus Christi in August 2008. She plans to look for a doctoral program in rhetoric and composition.

*continued page 26*

## HAVE YOU HEARD *continued*

**Rodney Ratliff '02 BA History** is a third grade math and science teacher in the Sheldon ISD in Houston, Texas, where he was named the 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year. He spent his first two years teaching in the Coldspring Oakhurst ISD near Houston, Texas, and was named Teacher of the Year his second year.

**Adam T. Sandler '02 BS Kinesiology** had an internship with the Houston Astros in 2002, coached at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2003-2004 and then went on to coach baseball at Wheaton College in Illinois.

**Tiffany Saunders '02 BA Communications** and her husband, **James Saunders '02 BBA General Business**, recently had a little boy, Jackson Kai.

**Mike Bratten '03 BA Communications** got married last December to Shaunna Gramm, formerly of Chicago, Ill. Mrs. Bratten is a registered nurse. She and Mike reside in San Antonio, Texas.

**Ryann Royer-Gvist '03 BA English** is a teacher and color guard instructor at the high school where she teaches. She will be getting married in December.

**Leonardo L. Olivarez '03 BS Criminal Justice** is a supervisory agent for the Border Patrol at the Hebbronville Border Patrol Station in Hebbronville, Texas. He spent three years working as a Border Patrol agent at the Fort Hancock Border Patrol Station in El Paso, Texas.

**Joan S. Alvarez '04 BA English** is assistant principal at Progreso High School in Progreso, Texas. She was named Optimist of the Year through the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund and will speak to Congress on educational issues.

**Vanessa Ballmer '04 BA English** recently moved to Lansing, Mich., and will be married in March 2009.

**Brandon Spenrath '04 BA Communications** resides in Austin, Texas, where he is the associate director of the League of Women Voters of Texas. Brandon has the pleasure of working with many Corpus Christi residents in conjunction with the local League of Women Voters.

**Gregory Diehlman '05 BS Criminal Justice** is back at home in Indiana where he is enrolled in his second year of graduate school at Kaplan University.

**Roxanne Gayle '05 BA English** is the proud mother of a baby boy born February 23, 2007. She is an intern in an alternative teacher certification program and is preparing to begin her first year teaching middle school in Calhoun County, Texas.

**Janice Hale '05 BA Theatre** resides in San Antonio, Texas, where she is the assistant property manager for an apartment community in the Stone Oak area.

**Viet T. Nguyen '05 BA Communications** is market promotions manager for Bass Pro Shops in Dallas, Texas.

**Patricia Owen '05 BA Political Science** is the proud mother of an 11-month-old baby boy, Wesley Owen.

**Erin Patton '05 BS Criminal Justice** has been employed with Prehn & McBath, P.C. as an office administrator and paralegal for the last five years. In December 2007 she gave birth to her first child, a daughter, Kendahl Ashtyn.

**Jason Pruett '05 BA Communications** is promotions director for KXXV-TV in Waco, Texas. He produces and supervises promotion for KXXV News Channel 25 in Waco-Temple-Killeen, KRHD ABC 40 in Bryan-College Station, Telemundo Digital 26.2, First Alert 25 Weather Now, KXXV.com, and ABC40.com.

**Thomas Shumate '05 BA History** is employed with Halliburton Energy services. He married Candace in April of 2006.

**Megan Crump '06 BA Theatre** is enjoying her job teaching theatre at Clear Lake High School in Houston, Texas. She also sings year-round with the prestigious Houston Symphony Chorus.



Alumni from the A&M-Corpus Christi Greater Houston Chapter met Feb. 9 at Palazzo's Trattoria River Oaks Restaurant to elect new officers. Pictured are: (left) Curtis Jones, former president and Charlie Klutts, treasurer; (top) Melanie Trevino, secretary, and Karina Reyna; (bottom) Dianne Duperier, former president, and Cyndee Crenshaw, president.

**Elias Flores '06 BA History** lives in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area where he works at www.superpages.com. He is proud to represent his school amongst other University alums from across the nation.

**Sarah Grover '06 BA Psychology** resides in the San Antonio, Texas, area.

**Yvonne Luna-Valadez '06 BS Criminal Justice** is a certified community supervision officer with the Nueces County Community Supervision and Corrections Department for the 28th District Court and County Court at Law #2.

**Anna Burke '07 BA History** is pursuing a master's degree in public history at the University of Houston. She is engaged to **Andrew Herrera**, a fellow A&M-Corpus Christi music alumnus. The wedding is planned for June '09 in Houston, Texas.

**Maricela Hernandez '07 BA Communications** is a fourth grade bilingual education teacher with the Corpus Christi ISD. She is proud to be an A&M-Corpus Christi alumnus.

**Michael Maldonado '07 BA History** married Yvette Bazan in May 2008. Michael teaches social studies and computer applications at Bishop Garriga Middle Preparatory School. He also coaches the boys and girls soccer teams, and the girls' softball team.

**James Owens '07 BA Communications** is a salesman at Hertz Equipment Rentals in Lubbock, Texas.

**Sean Roberts '07 BA History** is a teacher at Ray High School in the Corpus Christi ISD. He and his fiancée, Rebecca Schneider, plan to wed this fall.

**Selena Armendarez '08 BA Communications** is an official spokesperson for Oscar Mayer and has driven the company's Wienermobile across the United States. Selena was 1 of 14 spokespersons chosen out of 1,200 applicants.

**Brandon Bourg '08 BA History** is a coach and social studies teacher at Richard King High School in the Corpus Christi ISD.

**Juan Cabanas '08 BS Criminal Justice** works with the U.S. Border Patrol where he is ranked as a GL7. On July 4, he became engaged to fellow alumnus, **Linda Fernandez**.

**Nicole Cruz '08 BA Psychology** is the service coordinator for Nueces County MHMR. She is very glad to have found a job in the field that has always interested her.

**Edith Delgado '08 BA English** is pursuing a master's degree in English at A&M-Corpus Christi. She is the seminar leader for fall '08 and spring '09 semester.

**Ashlee Garrett '08 BA Communications** is the audience development specialist for the Lexington Herald Leader in Lexington, Ky. She develops and executes marketing initiatives for the circulation division.

## COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

**Maria M. Rojas '00 BS Nursing** married Michael Arias on March 17, 2008. Maria is a clinical nurse supervisor at Baptist Hospital of Miami.

**Mayra L. Esquivel '08 BS Health Sciences** is in the application process for the masters program in Occupational Therapy at TWU, UTMB, and UTHSCSA. She hopes to hear of an acceptance in December.

**Kelly Nicole West '08 BS Nursing** is a critical care registered nurse in San Antonio, Texas.

## COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Bob Proctor '63 BS Mathematics** worked for Sierra Pacific Power Company in Reno, Nev., for 26 years before retiring as plant manager. He has been a high school football official, a certified tennis umpire, a Red Cross and Heart Association instructor trainer, chairman of the City of Sparks Planning Commission, and the Civil Service Commission. Recently, he cut back on his activities to be a full-time caregiver for his wife.

**Mary Ramirez '77 BS** and her husband plan on babysitting their new granddaughter, Carmandy, and traveling in their spare time.

**Lisa Perez '94 BS Kinesiology** is director of the University Center and Student Activities at A&M-Corpus Christi. She plans to enroll in the doctoral program at A&M-CC. Lisa has two children, Xavier and Amarilisa Mia. She is married to her



wonderful husband and fellow Islander alumnus **Charles E. Perez '91, '02**.

**Amanda (Dougherty) Millhouse '94 BS Mathematics** is director of secondary instruction of Robstown, Texas, ISD. She previously served two years as district mathematics specialist and spent more than 15 years as a high school math teacher in the Beeville, Calallen and Tuloso-Midway school districts.

**Tonya Khan '98 BS Biology** lives in Dallas, Texas, and works as a physician assistant in allergy and immunology. She enjoys being part of ground-breaking research trials.

**Lisa Vitale '98 MS Biology** is a senior marine biologist for PBS&J where she has worked since 1999.

**Maria Lammers '99 BS Environmental Science** is an environmental Specialist II (inspector) for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, division of Solid and Infectious Waste Management, in Dayton, Ohio.

**Carolyn Wells '01 BS Geology** is a Marine Corps officer stationed in Pensacola, Fla. Before joining the military, she taught in private outdoor schools for about two years and in Texas public schools for three years.

**Rachael Cayce '02 BS Biology** is in her preliminary year in internal medicine and a future resident in dermatology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. Rachael, who recently received the school's Award for Excellence in Dermatology, has been involved in research on morphea skin disorder and has presented findings in Kyoto, Japan, and at the University of Pennsylvania.

**Cara Williams '03 BS Geographic Information Sciences** is a surveyor associate for the GIS, Surveying and Mapping Department at the Lower Colorado River Authority in Austin, Texas. She plans to take the Registered Professional Land Surveyor exam.

**Binesh Prabhakar '04 Environmental Science** is a partner at Cignus Solutions LLC (cignussolutions.com) a consulting firm providing IT solutions. He recently married Kiruba Murugaiah, a professor at Bunker Hill Community College, Boston, Mass.

**Chelsea Price M.S. '04 BS Biology** is in medical school at the University of North Texas Health Science Center – Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine.

**Robyn Ball '05 BS Mathematics, '08 MS Mathematics** is a student in the doctoral program in Statistics at Texas A&M University.

**Mark McNamara '93 BS Biology** is in the educational leadership doctoral degree program at A&M-Corpus Christi specializing in science education. He is an instructor at A&M-Corpus Christi and serves as a GEAR Up / STAR Faculty Fellow Mentor helping middle school students achieve success in science.

**Ramya Chakinarapu '06 MS Computer Science** works for Avenir Associates, Inc., as a software consultant at the client location Giant Eagle, Inc., in Pittsburgh, Pa.

**Krista Coons '06 BS Environmental Science** lives in Virginia Beach, Va., where she works for Team Enterprises as a promotional specialist.

**Hannah Henzen '06 BS Environmental Science** lives in New Braunfels, Texas, where she is a contingency planning analyst for Tesoro Refining and Marketing. Her job has taken her to Hawaii, Washington and Alaska. In her free time on these business trips, she enjoys exploring the city and went scuba diving in Hawaii.

**Mark Locke '06 BS Biology** works in the oilfield as a drilling fluids engineer for Halliburton on drilling rigs all over South Texas. He recently bought a new house in Portland, Texas, and has been living there since March.

**Joshua Machicek '06** is the senior leadership consultant for Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. His job responsibilities include serving as an ambassador of the Fraternity in the Northeast United States and in Ontario, Canada.

**Stephanie R. Salinas '06 BS Biology** will graduate with a master's degree in counseling from A&M-Corpus Christi in December. She is getting married April 18 and plans to pursue a doctorate in counselor education at A&M-Corpus Christi.

**Andi Baskin '07 BS Mathematics** works for the Texas Department of Agriculture in the Texas Agriculture Statistics Service as a statistician in Austin, Texas.

**Brandon Castle '07 BS Mechanical Engineering Technology** is an offshore dive tender in the diving and marine contractors division of Global Industries in Carlyss, La. In the fall/winter he will move from diving to field engineering at the same company.

**Oscar Esparza '07 BS Mathematics** is working on his master's degree in elementary education at A&M-Corpus Christi. He teaches sixth grade mathematics at Incarnate Word Academy middle level and trains students to compete in the Private Schools Interscholastic Association. He is married to Laura Esparza and has two children: Teresa Ann Esparza, 5, and Oscar Antonio Esparza, 3.

**John Lockman III '07 BS Computer Science** is a high performance computing specialist with the Texas Advance Computer Center at the University of Texas. He recently became engaged to his girlfriend of five years, Kristen.

**Laura Garza '08 BS Biology** is volunteering for one year with the Good Shepherd Volunteer at McMahon Services Adolescent Unit in the Bronx, N.Y., a foster boarding home for youth ages 13-21.

**Sarah Gold '08 BS Biomedical Sciences** spent a month studying Spanish abroad in San Jose, Costa Rica. In July, she began medical school at University of North Texas Health Science Center-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. She also accepted a position as a first year representative for the Texas Medical Association.

**Nicholas Huffeldt '08 BS Biology** is pursuing a master's of science in biology with a concentration in ecology and conservation at Uppsala University in Sweden.

**To submit your Have You Heard for an upcoming Islander issue, email alumni@tamucc.edu or go to the alumni Web site at [www.islandernetwork.com](http://www.islandernetwork.com).**



## Young Alumna Finds Unique Connection with Donor

After graduating in December 2006, Hannah Henzen wanted to show her appreciation to the University that had made her college education possible. As a four-year recipient of the Jeannette Holloway Scholarship, Henzen decided to honor her benefactor with a donation to the scholarship fund.

But, when she contacted Institutional Advancement, Henzen learned that Holloway, who graduated from the University in 1954, was recently deceased and the University was trying to secure funding to continue the scholarship. Henzen took it from there, writing a letter to the Estill Foundation which, thanks to Holloway's efforts while serving as the foundation's president, provided 20 scholarships each year to University students. She asked the Foundation to honor Holloway's memory by providing the necessary funds to continue the scholarship program.

"I consider myself a very fortunate woman to have received the Jeanette Holloway scholarship," says Henzen. "The scholarship made a huge impact on my education, and Jeanette made an even bigger impact on my life. That's why I want to help ensure that her legacy of generosity lives on through future scholarships for young women at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi."

**For information on how you can help fund scholarships like the Jeannette Holloway Scholarship, please contact (361) 825-2420.**

# IN MEMORIAM



**Ruth Bakke**

*June 28, 1938 - March 27, 2008*

Dr. Ruth Bakke served as dean of the College of Science and Technology for 15 years and was instrumental in creating several undergraduate and graduate math and science programs and establishing the University's nursing program.

Bakke, a native of Colorado, became a registered nurse in 1956. She later attended Carroll College in Helena, Mont., and received a bachelor of science in nursing before earning her master's degree at the University of Colorado. She became an assistant professor at the University of Colorado and, in 1974, moved to Corpus Christi State University, later named Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. She retired in 1994 and was named Dean Emeritus of the University. That same year, the University faculty established the Dr. Ruth Bakke Scholarship Fund in recognition of her many accomplishments and contributions to A&M-Corpus Christi.

Following her retirement, Ruth resided in Las Vegas, Nev., for 14 years. She is survived by her brother, Sam Bakke, and his family.



**John Buckley**

*July 25, 1955 - April 8, 2008*

John Buckley earned his master's degree from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and was an adjunct professor in the College of Business before forming the accounting firm of Buckley and Associates. A certified public accountant for more than 25 years, he remained a dedicated supporter of the University and alumni, giving generously of his time and resources.

As president of the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Foundation from 2003 to 2005, Buckley saw significant growth in scholarship endowments, faculty chairs and support to outstanding faculty. He served on the board of advisors for the College of Business and, in 2007, was named the G. Russell Kirkland Distinguished Visitor's Chair in Business Administration in recognition of his service to the growth of the University and the development he fostered throughout the South Texas community.

Shortly before his death, he established the John J. Buckley Foundation to support programs and services throughout the community, including A&M-Corpus Christi. He is survived by his wife, Julie, five children, and a granddaughter.



**John Chapman**

*July 8, 1925 - April 25, 2008*

John O. Chapman became a University supporter in 1976 and in 2002 was the fifth person to receive an honorary doctorate of letters from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

In 2000, Chapman chaired the highly-successful "Wave of the Future" capital campaign that raised more than \$22 million for the University. He was a major contributor to the University-affiliated Art Museum of South Texas and played an instrumental role in the fund-raising campaign that made the Legorreta addition possible. Chapman's annual contributions provided student scholarships and helped facilitate expansion of the Mathematics and Science Teacher Resource Center. A life-long baseball fan, Chapman's generous donation made possible the renovation and expansion of Islander Ballpark which was renamed Chapman Field in his honor.

Chapman owned and operated Chapman Ranch, the renowned cotton production operation created from land his father purchased from the King Ranch in 1919. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Louise; sister, Jane Chapman Owen; and numerous other relatives and friends.



**Shirley (Sam) Durrill**

*Jan. 17, 1936 - June 13, 2008*

Shirley Durrill, known to her many friends and family as "Sam," was an enthusiastic and generous supporter of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

"Sam" was a native of Houston. While a student at the University of Texas she met her future husband William "Dusty" Durrill, then a student at Texas A&M University. They were married on Sept. 7, 1957. Following graduation "Dusty" joined the Navy and was stationed at Naval Air Station-Corpus Christi. After his discharge from the military in 1963, the Durrills made Corpus Christi their permanent home.

The "Momentum" sculpture that greets visitors to the Island University is just one of several Corpus Christi landmarks made possible by a gift from the Durrills who also provided funds for the Selena Memorial and the friendship monument "Captain Blas Maria de la Garza Falcon," both on Shoreline Boulevard.

"Sam" is survived by her husband; daughters Michelle, Ginger, and Melissa; and son, William Jr. She was preceded in death by her first daughter, Devary.



**Harry Marks**

*Aug. 27, 1935-March 3, 2008*

Harry Marks was a former chairman of the board and president of the Morris L. Lichtenstein Jr. Medical Research Foundation and a generous and active supporter of many charitable causes in the community.

Marks, a native of Corpus Christi, attended W.B. Ray High School. He graduated from Columbia College and New York University School of Law. He practiced law for 47 years with his partners at the local firm of Gary, Thomasson, Hall and Marks.

In his role as president of the Lichtenstein Foundation, Marks was instrumental in creating the Lichtenstein String Quartet Scholarship which each year provides funds for four University music students who, as a quartet, perform concerts in the community and give free music lessons to children at a local community center. Under Marks, the foundation also contributed scholarship money for the University's College of Business.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Marcia; son, Gregory; daughter, Melissa; and two grandsons, Brandon and Ryan Marks.



# What You Think Matters!

The Alumni Attitude Survey will be available on [IslanderNetwork.com](http://IslanderNetwork.com) in December. Go online and let us know how we can better serve you. Or send your e-mail address to [alumni@tamucc.edu](mailto:alumni@tamucc.edu) and we'll send the survey to you. Once we have implemented the best ideas, we'll ask for your opinion on these improvements.



**Help Shape the Future of Your Alumni Association.  
Take the Alumni Attitude Survey.**

## **YOUR NAME IS ON THE DIPLOMA... NOW LEAVE YOUR MARK ON THE ISLAND.**

A paver in the Walk of Recognition is the perfect way to commemorate your time spent at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Proceeds of a Paver on the Walk of Recognition directly support scholarships for students who are active on their high school campuses or in their communities.

The Student Foundation Association is a select group of 35 student volunteers who are responsible for the *Walk of Recognition*, *Tuition Chance* and *Islander Revue*.

All fundraising efforts go toward the Student Foundation's scholarship fund.



For information about Student Foundation activities or Walk of Recognition bricks, please call Institutional Advancement at (361) 825-2420 or email [student.foundation@tamucc.edu](mailto:student.foundation@tamucc.edu).



## Life is Large. Always Think Big.

There should be no limit to how great a student's future can become after graduation. Your support of the annual Islander Fund puts essential dollars into numerous initiatives throughout Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi which shape student experiences. Funds provide the needed support to place students into national academic competition, engage conference participation among their brightest peers, and undertake groundbreaking research.

The Islander Fund helps you directly impact student success. Contact us today to learn how your gift to the Islander Fund can make a student's life . . . big.



Institutional Advancement  
Texas A&M University  
Corpus Christi  
361.825.2420  
[giving.tamucc.edu](http://giving.tamucc.edu)

*Our Islander Callers say "Thanks" to area supporters Glamour Shots, Cracker Barrel, Olive Garden, Chili's, La Playa, and Longhorn Steak & Ale.*

**the Islander**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5726  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5726

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit XXX  
San Antonio, TX