



Students Build Community with Habitat for Humanity

Working outside in sweltering summer heat with sawdust stinging your eyes is not a recipe for a fun time. Senior chemistry major and pre-med student Yussr Ibrahim says otherwise. Ibrahim, along with nearly 20 other University of St. Thomas students, helped construct a home with Habitat for Humanity in northwest Houston on July 27 and had fun while doing it.

This was the first build for UST's Habitat for Humanity club since its inception by Ibrahim, the club president.

"I wanted to start a club on campus that was focused on volunteering," Ibrahim said. "I saw a lot of clubs on campus, and I am part of several clubs that are designed for one major, so I thought, why not start a club for anyone who is passionate about volunteering and help them give back to the community?"

On the day of the build, students installed roof trusses and hurricane clips. They worked as a team, some on ladders hammering, others holding those ladders in place and still some transporting equip-

ment. Though this was a new experience for many of the students, their sense of accomplishment quickly eclipsed their initial concerns that they did not have construction experience.

The club has plans to grow in the coming year. They hope to raise \$5,000 by October to partially sponsor a house, but their long term goal is to raise \$60,000 to sponsor an entire home.

The Habitat Humanity club is scheduled for a second build on **Sept. 28**. They

welcome anyone who is interested in volunteer opportunities and encourage students to give back to the community. To get involved sign up during club fair on **Aug. 22** or visit Facebook.com/ust.hfh.

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—Yussr Ibrahim

University of St. Thomas Website is a New Way to Tell Our Story

The University of St. Thomas launched the new stthom.edu website on July 9, featuring streamlined navigation, more vibrant images and engaging content to appeal to prospective students, their families and donors.

Vickie Alleman, the vice president for Marketing Communications and Enrollment Management, said the project began almost two years ago with a survey of faculty, staff and students, led by MarCom’s assistant vice president.

“Sandra Soliz spearheaded this effort, which involved thousands of hours, daily decisions and coordination of messaging, technology and site navigation processes,” Alleman said. “I am confident that our new site will communicate the St. Thomas message effectively to our constituents.”

The new website showcases the University’s mission of a Catholic liberal arts education that educates leaders of faith and character. Success and feature stories highlight student leaders, faculty achievements and successful graduates. The new website is also more accessible on mobile devices and tablets.

The website demonstrates what sets St. Thomas apart from other universities: personal attention, academic excellence, affordable and accessible, a nurturing campus life and career connections.

The Office of Marketing Communications developed the new stthom.edu in cooperation with marketing consultant Tulaa Solutions. MarCom streamlined the content from more than 10,000 pages to about 450 pages, with strategic content for target audiences. All other information that is intended for faculty and staff only is now on the UST Portal.



New Coach Recruits for Women’s Soccer



UST Athletics is beginning a new program: women’s soccer. To help recruit and train a championship-caliber team, UST looks to Nikola Barjaktarevic, the former head women’s soccer coach for University of Texas at Brownville.

Barjaktarevic is not new to building a program from the ground up. While at UTB, he successfully built the women’s soccer program, a process that culminated in the team’s advancement to the Elite 8 round of the NAIA National Tournament this season, a current national rank of No. 9 by the

NAIA and an impressive career record of 79-27-7.

“I want to have a successful program,” Barjaktarevic said. “When I say successful, I mean not only winning on the field, but winning off the field by doing things the right way and graduating and sending these young ladies off into the world. We teach them a lot both on and off the field. It is not totally about soccer; it is about life.”

Upcoming Home Games

Games are played in Jerabeck Gym. Admission is \$3 and free for children 12 and under.

Aug. 23:

Men’s soccer vs. Southwestern Assemblies of God University
7-9 p.m.
Houston Amateur Sports Park
12131 Kirby Drive

Aug. 30:

Women’s volleyball
Labor Day Tournament
11 a.m.
Jerabeck Athletic Center

University of St. Thomas Student Travel for Summer Courses

Summer is a time of rest, relaxation and yes, traveling. Adventurous University of St. Thomas students chose to postpone the first two and combine their traveling with their schooling. This summer more than 100 students participated in study abroad excursions to Jerusalem, China, Greece, Hungary, Czech Republic, Northern Ireland and Ireland. Check out more photos of the UST students' experiences in their respective Summer Study Abroad photography gallery at www.stthom.edu/facebook.



Jerusalem

In the Holy Land students studied archaeology, history and politics while discussing what theology and scripture said about Israel under the

direction of Sister Paula Jean Miller, FSE, former director of Catholic Studies.



China

Throughout the trip with Dr. Joe Ueng, professor and Cullen Foundation Chair of Finance, students gained an in-depth understanding of the globalization of

business management in China and were introduced to several types of business models.



Greece

Dr. Janet Lowery, professor of English, led 10 students on a two-week travel writing course through Greece and Turkey. Students toured

several landmarks with professional guides and were given a crash course in Greek cuisine and dining, with an olive oil and wine tasting among the highlights.

Czech Republic and Hungary

Dr. Pierre Canac, associate professor of economics, and Dr. Rogelio Garcia-Contreras, associate professor of

international studies, led 22 students through a three-week trip between Prague, Czech Republic, and Budapest, Hungary, to study the different cultures and attitudes of Eastern Europe.



Northern Ireland and Ireland

Students studied different approaches to peace building and reconciliation in light of Northern Ireland's history of conflict in the course led by Lori Gallagher, director of the Center for Irish Studies.



Ireland

The class, led by Dr. Robert LeBlanc, Dean of the School of Education, sought to compare key issues in Irish and American school systems – especially supporting student cultural diversity and issues of separation of church and state in schools.



Learn More About Study Abroad

Attend the study abroad information meeting at 6 p.m. on Sept. 20 in Anderson Hall to learn more about locations and pricing for 2014 study abroad trips.

Events

SAB presents Club Fair

Student Activities Board will host Orientation Club Fair on at 11:30 a.m. **Aug. 22** in Jerabeck. Come explore the many clubs available at UST.



Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration

St. Martin de Porres Society presents Memorial Mass and Reception Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington from 5-8 p.m. on Wednesday, **Aug. 28** at the Chapel of St. Basil and Ahern Room, Crooker Center. The suggested donation is \$10 with all proceeds benefitting the St. Martin de Porres Society Scholarship Fund. Limited seating is available. RSVP to stmartin@stthom.edu.



UST Faculty Recital

Dawson White, viola, will perform works by J.S. Bach, Henri Vieuxtemps and Rebecca Clarke at 3 p.m. Sunday, **Aug. 25** in Cullen Hall.



Campus Ministry Welcome Week

Campus Ministry invites students to sign up for Campus Ministry events at the Welcome Week table on Crooker Patio from **Aug. 26-30**.



Labor Day

All University offices will be closed on Monday, **Sept. 2**. Classes and business will resume on Tuesday, **Sept. 3**.



Students Receive Top Honors in HOSA

University of St. Thomas students and advisor Dr. Elmer Ledesma, assistant professor of chemistry, traveled to Nashville, Tenn., in June to compete in Health Occupation Students of America's 36th annual National Leadership Conference. St. Thomas students came away with top honors.



Brandon Marcella placed first in Extemporaneous Speaking; Marianne Tran and Jennifer Hoang placed second in Career Health Display; Brandon Rollins and Devi Hari placed second in Health Education, and Sydnee Spruiel placed third in Clinical Specialty.

The road to compete nationally was hard fought. Students had to qualify in both regional and statewide competitions before they could advance to the national conference.

"Coming into this competition really taught me how to present and how to speak to different people," sophomore biology major Marianne Tran said. "HOSA provides an opportunity to present yourself and meet other people who are trying to go into the same field."

Vigil Named New Director of Student Evangelization



If Lee Vigil, the new director of student evangelization with Campus Ministry, seems like a familiar face, that is because he is. As a member of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, he served as an on-campus missionary for four years before joining St. Thomas as a full-time staff member.

Vigil is looking to implement a number of programs to garner student involvement and inspire students to grow in their spirituality.

Campus Ministry will host an open house every weeknight of Welcome Week where students will be served free dinner and encouraged to explore the recently renovated Campus Ministry house.

UST Offers New Programs This Fall

The University of St. Thomas is continually striving to grow and offer new and relevant areas of study to students. UST is proud to announce new programs open for students to major in this fall.

UST is now offering majors in economics, computer science, applied math, as well as a joint environmental studies and international studies major.

Star View is published by the Office of Marketing Communications to inform the UST community about University and campus news. Call 713-525-3116 with questions and/or comments.

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