

Microfinance Social Entrepreneurship Program Expands to Africa



Expanding their microfinance practices across the globe, the University of St. Thomas Social Entrepreneurship Program traveled to Africa in January to identify potential projects and collaborations in Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania. A group of two UST faculty members and four students – Dr. Linda Pett-Conklin, Dr. Rogelio Garcia-Contreras, Thomas “Paul” Barnes, Lindsay Phend, Stephanie Coleman and Hiba Haroon – spent the latter part of the winter break from January 5-20 in Africa.

The trip to Tanzania, sponsored by Bruce Wilkinson, retired CEO of McDermott International and member of the UST Board of Directors, began in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. The group toured the Lieberman School, which Wilkinson helped build. They met with members of the Kipawa Parish, His Eminence Polycarp Cardinal Pengo and bank officials to discuss the possibility of starting a microfinance program to create sources of sustainable income among the parishioners. In Malawi, the students assessed projects that would grant microloans to a co-operative of HIV positive women and improve agricultural ventures to diversify current farming practices. In Mozambique, the group met with officials of the International Council of Universities of Saint Thomas Aquinas (ICUSA) including Father Joseph Mawala, President of the Universidade de Sao Tomas, Mozambique.

“It was a wonderful and enlightening experience, and we are confident we will be able to develop, establish and coordinate pilot projects with many new partners,” Garcia-Contreras said. “The opportunities are endless and the need is huge. We have the opportunity to do a great deal of good through our loans and our students’ expertise.”

Both Barnes and Haroon said this was their first time to travel in Africa, and it was an eye-opening experience. “I was struck by the contrast between the three countries we visited,” Barnes said. “Malawi had few paved roads and little infrastructure but there were these serene, beautiful vistas of fertile farmland. Tanzania was very developed, and there were cars, buildings and traffic everywhere. There seemed to be such a huge disparity of wealth, where so many of the poor could benefit from microfinance to help them reduce their dependency on foreign aid.”

Haroon, who graduated in December, said the trip helped dispel many of her preconceived notions of poverty in Africa.

“Our visits really reinforced the need to communicate effectively with loan recipients,” Haroon said. “We learned so much from the people we met. I saw a real sense of empowerment that already exists among the people. They didn’t need us to tell them how to enhance their current practices; they already know what they need. Our job is to listen and brainstorm with them about ways to get started.”

Catch Up, Get Ahead: Register for Summer Classes

Summer classes are a great way to catch up, get ahead or just get started on your degree. This summer, St. Thomas will offer a variety of courses for current students and high school students seeking dual credit.



Choose from morning, afternoon, evening, Saturday or online classes.

Students can also learn-on-the-go when they sign up for study abroad courses. Study abroad goes beyond the traditional classroom curriculum to expose students to global diversity and encourage students to contemplate their UST experience in a global context. This summer study abroad destinations include Ireland, France, Hungary, Spain and Morocco.

View a full list of undergraduate or graduate course offerings on the main campus, at Glassell School of Art or St. Mary's Seminary. Read a description of the courses offered and learn about prerequisites in the online undergraduate catalog.

Students who received a Pell grant in fall 2010 or spring 2011 may be eligible for a Pell grant for summer classes. For more information, contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at 713-525-2170. Register online today by logging on to myStThom or see your faculty advisor.

UST Welcomes Largest International Student Class



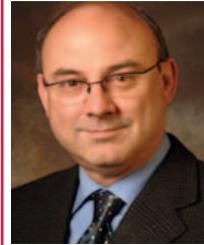
The University of St. Thomas welcomes diversity and provides a warm and supportive atmosphere for international students. UST students represent 31 states and 59 countries, making UST's student body one of the most multi-cultural in Texas and in the Southwest. In 2010, UST was home to 242 international students, becoming an increasingly popular international educational destination. This spring, UST welcomed 49 new international and exchange students from 24 countries, its largest enrollment of new international students.

The UST office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), directed by Fawziyia Alsarraj, has introduced programs to provide additional support and training for students who may need extra help navigating the requirements for study in the United States and life on an American college campus. ISSS also offers workshops that help students understand the legal requirements for employment and internships off campus and filing international student taxes.

The Tutoring Services Center now offers tutoring for students whose first language is not English and an additional international student orientation was held on **Jan. 19** to serve the record-number of new students. For more information, contact Fawziyia Alsarraj at alsarrf@stthom.edu.

Evening

What St. Be



Dr. F. Russell Graves, St. Benedict's University, will present "Ours," at 7:30 p.m. in Jones Hall. The lecture will be more informative. For more information, contact the UST Philosopher at jp2forum@gmail.com.

Anthony Graves "Fight for Freedom"

Recently exonerated death row inmate Anthony Graves will bring his extraordinary story of hope and perseverance to the University of St. Thomas St. Martin de Porres Society and History Month lecture, "Fight for Freedom," at 7 p.m., Friday, **Feb. 25** in Jones Hall. The lecture will be live-streamed on the UST home page. An overflow audience will be seated in the



Clean Energy

The Environmental and Environmental Studies (ECOS) Energy Forum, featuring experts at 8 p.m. in the Jones Room, Jerabeck Center, will be held at 5:30 p.m. For more information, contact Damien Marie S.

The Mexican Border: Turmoil

The Young Social Justice Institute and First Friday Forum will feature Bob Bly, retired Houston Police Officer and founder of Houses Across the Border. The lecture, "The Mexican Border: Turmoil and Violence," will be at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, **March 5** in the Jones Clubs Room, Crooker Center. The lecture is open to the public. For more information, contact Chris Lively at 713-525-3812.



University S

The University of St. Basil will present a concert at 7:30 p.m., March 5. The concert will feature special guests. The concert is free. For more information, contact the UST Philosopher at 713-525-3159.

nts

Benedict Taught the Dark Ages

Dr. John Hittinger will speak about, "What Benedict Taught the Dark Ages – His and His Legacy," on Thursday, **Feb. 24**, in Jones Hall. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Dr. John Hittinger, chair of the Philosophy Department, at 713-525-2155, jhitting@stthom.edu or visit www.jp2forum.org.

"Freedom"

Dr. Anthony Comstock will give a message of "The Message of St. Ignace," at the annual Black History Month event, "The Message of St. Ignace," at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 24, in Jones Hall.

**Ignace Forum**

The Environmental Science and Studies Department and the Environmentally Concerned Organization of the University of St. Thomas will host "Focus the Nation Clean Water: A panel discussion of environmental issues," on Monday, **Feb. 28** in the Scanlan Center, Athletic Center. A reception will be held at 6:00 p.m. For more information, contact Sister Mary Savino, FSE, at 713-525-3894.

Ignace, Violence

Dr. Maryknoll and Dr. Decker, will give a message of "The Message of St. Ignace," at the annual Black History Month event, "The Message of St. Ignace," at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 24, in Jones Hall.

**Singers Concert**

The Ignace Singers will perform a concert at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, **March 7**, in the Chapel of St. Ignace. The group is directed by Dr. Brady Knapp and conductor Courtney Daniell-Knapp. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Monique Dupleich Stuart at mdupleich@stthom.edu.

Brock McGuire Band Gives Traditional Irish Concert

The William J. Flynn Center for Irish Studies at the University of St. Thomas will host a concert of traditional music from the West of Ireland by the Brock McGuire Band at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, **March 2**, in Cullen Hall.



The Brock McGuire Band is an award-winning Irish traditional band from County Clare, Ireland. Master musicians Paul Brock, Enda Scahill, Manus McGuire and Denis Carey evoke the atmosphere and artistry of the Irish dance hall era in dazzling fashion with their music featuring the melodeon, tenor banjo, fiddle and acoustic piano.

The event is open to the public. Adult admission is \$10 at the door; children and students are free. For advance tickets, contact Lori Gallagher by e-mail or telephone and mail a check payable to the University of St. Thomas to Lori Gallagher at the University of St. Thomas, Center for Irish Studies, 3800 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006 by Monday, Feb. 28.

For more information, contact Lori Gallagher at 713-525-3592 or irishstudies@stthom.edu.

Mosaics of Faith Conference Explores Turkish Culture

The University of St. Thomas Center for International Studies will host Mosaics of Faith: The Turkish Experience, a two-day event exploring the rich culture of Turkey. The conference will be held Tuesday-Wednesday, **March 1-2** on the UST campus.



Mosaics of Faith is an annual conference geared towards stimulating active interest in the vast universe of social, anthropological and political manifestations resulting from the intertwined relationship between culture and faith. The conference is meant to explore connections and divisions between the U.S. and other parts of the world by considering the spiritual journey of different cultures and their long-lasting struggles to live according to their faith and conscience.

The conference will feature a video showcasing the natural and historical sites of Turkey, Turkish food, beverages, art crafts and the chance to have your name printed by a calligrapher. Each evening will feature a lecture at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.stthom.edu/calendar for the full schedule. The conference is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Diana Garcia at 713-525-3530 or garciaid@stthom.edu.

Lenten Lecture Series

The 22nd Annual Lenten Lecture Series will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays during Lent, **March 9 – April 13**, on the University of St. Thomas campus.

The series has covered a wide range of topics important to Catholic life. This year's theme, "Americans on the Road to Sainthood," follows a discussion of the canonization process with examinations of several Americans whose causes of sanctification are now being promoted.

- **March 9, Cullen Hall**
Sr. Madeleine Grace, CVI
"What Does It Take? The Canonization Process in the Catholic Church"
- **March 16, Cullen Hall**
Mark and Louise Zwick
"Foundress of the Catholic Worker Movement: Dorothy Day"
- **March 23, Scanlan Room**
Dr. Louis and Mrs. Alice Varela
"Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen"
- **March 30, Cullen Hall**
Fr. Jack Whitley, CSB
"Founder of the Knight of Columbus: Fr. Michael McGivney"
- **April 6, Cullen Hall**
Fr. Anthony Borrow, SJ and Pepe Ruiz, SJ
"Missionaries of the New World: Eusebio Kino and Miguel Pro"
- **April 13, Scanlan Room**
Carlos Esparza, SJ, and Dr. Paul Hahn
"Missionary of the Wider World: Fr. Walter Ciszek, SJ"

It is hoped that members of the community will be inspired by these heroes of the faith and experience personal growth in the Lord's Kingdom. These events are free and open to the public. For more information, call 713-525-3582.

President's Day of Service



On Saturday, Feb. 12, members of the UST campus community joined Dr. Robert Ivany for the seventh annual President's Day of Service. Service projects included making fleece blankets and pillows for children in area hospitals, refurbishing the wooden benches on campus, and indoor painting.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week is **Feb. 20 – 26**.

In recognition of this important mental and physical health issue, the UST Counseling and Disability Services Department encourages everyone to reflect on their overall health and body image during this week. Cultural norms that value "thinness" and place emphasis on physical qualities rather than inner qualities can exacerbate tendencies for self-criticism and low-self esteem, which contribute to the development of eating disorders.

If you feel your self-perception or eating habits may have become unhealthy, Counseling and Disability Services encourages people to seek help from our office or another mental health professional. For additional information, contact Counseling and Disability Services at 713-525-2169 or visit the National Eating Disorders Awareness webpage at www.nationaleatingdisorders.org.

NationalEatingDisorders.org

