



Catholic Essay Contest a Success

Students, parents and teachers from 32 different Catholic schools in the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese visited campus on Jan. 28 for an awards ceremony honoring the winners of the UST/Archdiocesan Essay Contest.

This year's essay theme, "Recognizing a Leader of Faith and Character Who Also Lights the Way," echoes the theme for the 2008 Catholic Schools Week, "Light the Way."

UST faculty members read 2,419 essays and assigned winners. Participants' essays were grouped into three divisions: grades 3-5, grades 6-8 and grades 9-12.

Students were asked to write about someone affiliated with their school who is a leader of faith and

character and who also lights the way to heaven for others.

UST scholarships were awarded to winners in the 9th-12th grade category. David Markus, a sophomore at St. Thomas High School, was awarded a first place prize of a \$1,500 for four years. Also from St. Thomas High School, freshman Ethan Miller and sophomore Peter Schoefeld both received \$1,000 for four years as second place winners.

Elizabeth Reyes from St. Francis de Sales School won first place in the 6th-8th grade division. In the 3rd-5th grade division, Amanda Barnardy of Corpus Christi Catholic School won first place. *Read the winning essays at stthom.edu/PA/features.*

Volunteer at President's Day of Service

Faculty, students, staff and alumni are invited to volunteer for the President's Day of Service, Saturday, Feb. 9. Attendees will meet at 8 a.m. in Crooker Center cafeteria for free breakfast. Buses will depart at 8:30 a.m. and return at 1 p.m. Volunteer projects include:

Open Door Mission: Prepare and serve a meal at a shelter for homeless men.

Houston Food Bank: Sort groceries from the Souper Bowl of Caring to benefit food pantries, church ministries and individuals.

Trees for Houston: Plant trees at Jackson Middle School.

Houston Arboretum: Take part in a conservation project that will include mulching and planting along the trails

Sign-up with Ellie Collier at 713-525-3801 or at ovo@stthom.edu.



Attention Students Interested in Law

Students interested in law school have a unique opportunity to ask questions concerning admissions when Alicia Cramer, assistant dean of admissions, South Texas College of Law, speaks at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12 about the application/admissions process and life as a South Texas Law student. Almost all law schools, do not grant personal interviews to applicants. All UST students are invited. RSVP by Feb. 8 to Jeremy Heallen at heallej@stthom.edu. Location to be announced.

Shannahan to Compete at State Level

UST music major and piano student Michelle Shannahan will compete in the young artist competition at the 94th Annual Texas Music Teachers Association State Convention. She won first place in the young artist category at a preliminary district competition held Jan. 19. Shannahan's winning piano performance was a 30-minute program that included works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Rachmaninoff.

"Winning first place was quite a surprise, but I am really excited about the opportunity it will



provide for my musical career," Shannahan said.

She is one of only six to eight students who will perform in the state competition held June 11-15 in Houston at the downtown Hyatt Regency hotel. She will represent Houston and UST in the event, which draws more than 5,000 students and family members from across Texas.

Paul Krystofiak, adjunct professor of piano, has been Shannahan's primary instructor at UST. He is founder and director of the Houston Piano Day Camp held during the summer at UST and is also faculty adviser to the UST Mu Phi music fraternity.

Shannahan, who performed her junior piano recital at UST in the fall of 2007, has been playing for 12 years and plans to pursue graduate and doctorate degrees in piano performance. Her career goal is to teach at the college level.

UST Increases Tuition for 2008/09 Year

The UST Board of Directors approved a 6.8 percent tuition increase for the 2008/09 academic year. Undergraduate tuition will increase from \$630 to \$673 per credit hour while graduate tuition will increase from \$705 per credit hour to \$753 per credit hour.

In addition, a technology fee of \$50 for undergraduates and \$30 for graduate students per semester was adopted to support new and continuing instructional technology initiatives. A \$25 fee per course for science laboratories will also take

effect in fall 2008.

"To partially offset our tuition increase, we will propose to the Board of Directors an adjustment in our scholarship budget of 10 percent next year to more than \$6.7 million," UST President Robert Ivany said. "We appreciate the commitment of our students and their parents to pursue a St. Thomas education. Our tuition increases in the past three years have averaged 5.3 percent. We remain dedicated to keeping tuition and fees as low as we can."

SAVE THE DATE

Financial Aid Fat FAFSA



To promote student participation in the financial aid process, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid will host the fourth annual Fat FAFSA, on Fat Tuesday at noon-2 p.m. Feb. 5, on the Academic Mall.

Resume Assistance Table



Get ready for the upcoming Texas Job Fair at the resume assistance table from noon-1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 6 in Crooker Center. Have your resume reviewed or pick up sample copies.

Play: "Traffic in Women"

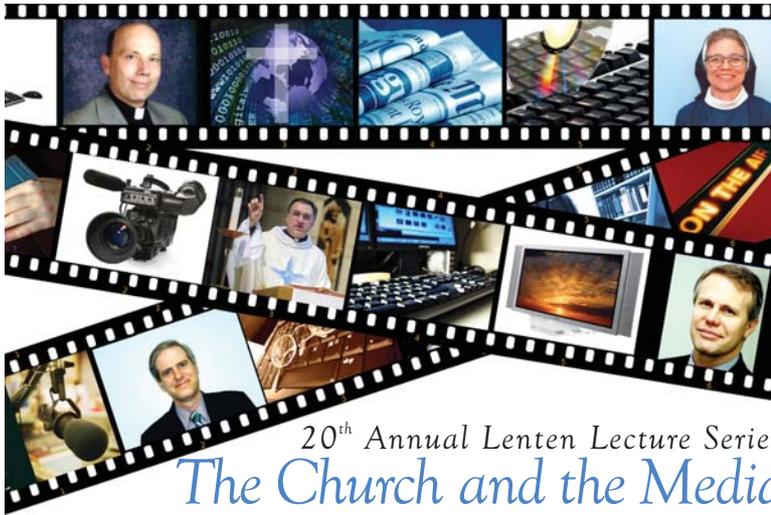


See the last play in the trilogy "Traffic in Women: A Retrial of the Danaids," at 8 p.m. on Feb. 6-9 and Feb. 11, in Jones Hall. Tickets are \$5 at the door. The trilogy of plays are written by Dr. Janet Lowery and feature Dr. Livia Bornigia.

Death Penalty Info Table



UST's Catholic Daughters of America, the UST Social Justice Committee and the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty will have an informational table at the University Seal from 12:15-2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7 with materials on capital punishment.



20th Annual Lenten Lecture Series *The Church and the Media*

This year's UST Lenten Lecture Series will explore various aspects of the complex relationship between the Catholic Church and the communications media. Modern technology has revolutionized the way people communicate, opening up possibilities for evangelization unimaginable to the apostles. It also brings considerable challenges when it influences people and culture in ways inimical to the gospel.

The first lecture will feature **Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB**, at **7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, in Cullen Hall**. He will discuss **"Words Made Flesh and Flesh Made Words: Towards a Spirituality of Communications in the Roman Catholic Church."**

Fr. Rosica was an organizer of the 2002 World Youth Day in Toronto, and is the CEO of Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation, which operates Salt and Light Television. Stationed in Canada, Salt and Light Television is a not-for-profit, charitable organization whose goal is to use modern media in its many forms as a tool to connect Catholics to their faith. One of the regular programs of Salt and Light is "Witness," an interview show that presents men and women who are making a difference in both big and small ways in their communities. On the show, Fr. Rosica conducts a series of in-depth interviews with high-level, distinguished Church, religious and civic leaders who are contributing significantly to the vibrancy of their Catholic communities. During his visit, Fr. Rosica will interview Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Dr. Robert Ivany and Fr. Robert Crooker for this program. **Students, faculty and staff are invited to be a part of a live audience for Dr. Ivany's interview at 4 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4, followed at 5 p.m. with Fr. Crooker's interview, both in Cullen Hall.**

Also while in Houston, the Salt and Light production crew will be on campus filming an episode from the TV series "Focus," called "What makes a Catholic University." Filming will take place from Feb. 5-7.

Upcoming Lecture:

Feb. 13 • Cullen Hall • 7:30 p.m.

Papyrus and Parchment: Technologies of Writing and the Bible
Dr. Paul Hahn, UST Associate Professor of Theology

Chance McMillan: A Student Athlete Profile

UST Rugby Football Club member Chance McMillan likes to stay active, mentally and physically. As a student athlete, McMillan must balance practice and games with a full schedule of courses. He also works 20 hours a week for a law firm and is participating in this year's mock trial event.

A senior philosophy major, McMillan transferred to UST in 2006 from Alvin Community College, where he was a member of the baseball team. He has participated in UST's rugby club since his first semester and has also played baseball at the University. Sports, he said, provide an escape from the stress of school, work and other commitments.

"I take on so many projects and I'm taking 18 hours this semester, so rugby is a way to for me to get away," McMillan said.

The UST Rugby Football Club is the oldest sports club on campus. The team competes in the Texas Rugby Union Collegiate Division II, facing schools all over the state. The club's most celebrated victories were its wins over Rice University and the University of Texas at Austin.



Harris Brings Hush of Nature Inside the City

Situated inside a nest of freeways and the swirl of Urban life, a network of trails that parallels the canopied banks of Buffalo Bayou offers up the hushed quiet of wilderness and the slow pace of nature – right in the middle of the city limits.

Walking along the almost quarter-mile of trails, anyone can stop for a minute and forget they're in the heart of the fourth-largest city in the country.

Thanks to a partnership between UST's Environmental Studies Department and the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, St. Thomas students, faculty and numerous volunteers have developed the trails that bring nature closer to Houstonians. They represent just part of the ambitious plans that Dr. Maury Harris, associate professor and department chair, and his students and corps of volunteers have for the meandering bayou and the banks that hug it. In return, students and faculty use the property as an outdoor laboratory for environmental studies research.

"It's been the basis of a number of senior research projects," said Harris, who is designing the Buffalo Bend Nature Park to prevent floods, restore wetland area and increase water quality by filtering and cleansing storm water.

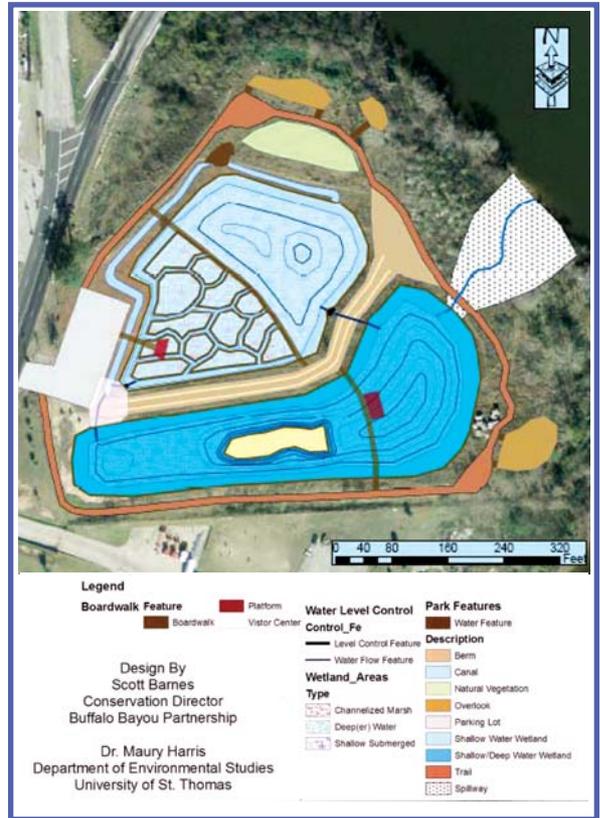
He is developing the park along Garcia Street, south of Buffalo Bayou, to serve as an outlet into the bayou's waterfront. The land has also provided faculty with opportunities for research and professional development, he said.

"We wanted to make this land ecologically functional as well as educational and still have recreational value," Harris said.

Preparing the trails involved hauling away trash, clearing the non-indigenous plant life that kills trees and plants growing naturally there, and planting indigenous trees that will encourage the growth of wildlife that once flourished there.

Harris' work on the park's design began in early 2004. Even in the planning stage, Harris used the park in his classroom, making it the subject of the computer mapping course he teaches by sketching the park layout using the computer mapping program ArcView.

Harris and representatives from the Buffalo



Bayou Partnership have submitted the design proposals for four wetland areas and a series of ponds to a landscape architect. It will be up to Harris County, Precinct 2 to file for permits, because the land belongs to them.

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