



UST Student Recognized by Best Buddies

UST junior Misbah Mohammed has been recognized by Best Buddies Texas for her exemplary friendship with buddy Candis Newton. The organization, which strives to improve the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities by providing them with opportunities for companionship and employment, launched a recognition program to honor friendships throughout the state. Mohammed and Newton's relationship is the first to be recognized.

Now president of the Best Buddies chapter at UST, Mohammed has been involved with the organization since her freshman year. Through her position, she has helped increase the University chapter's involvement, initiating more social activities with students and their buddies and utilizing UST's shuttle service to visit the group center twice a week. She has also encouraged friends and fellow students to get involved, recruiting individuals who she said have turned out to be devoted members.

After spending the summer of 2007 at Wisconsin Badger Camp, which serves people with develop-

mental disabilities, Mohammed returned with new ideas to implement in her role as president. Despite a busy schedule — Mohammed is secretary of UST's Pre-Health Professions Society and volunteers at Ben Taub General Hospital — her devotion to Best Buddies does not wane. Most members meet twice a month with their buddies for activities that include bowling, dancing and trips to the zoo, but Mohammed goes to the group center on her own at least three times a week.

"I just love going there and spending time with Candis and the other buddies," she said. "The second we walk in the door they gather around to greet us. They really treasure our visits. This is one club where I know I'm making a difference."

Mohammed, who is majoring in Spanish and liberal arts with a concentration in biology and business, said she would like to pursue a graduate degree in health administration. No matter what career she practices, she said she wants to keep helping others through volunteering.

Center for Irish Studies Offers New Scholarships

Two new scholarships are available to UST students through the Center for Irish Studies for study abroad in Ireland for fall 2008 and spring 2009. The Ryan Scholarship will award up to \$5,000 per semester for two students or up to \$10,000 for the fall or spring academic year for one student. The Bishop McCarthy Scholarship will award \$1,000 for coverage of airfare and other travel. For more information, contact Lori Gallagher at 713-525-3592.



ROAR

Food, Games and Prizes at Senior Class Lunch

Graduating seniors are invited to the Senior Class Roar at noon to 2 p.m. April 17 in Scanlan Room, Jerabeck Center. RSVP to alumni@stthom.edu

UST Theology Major Presents Research at Rice

When junior Theresa Hoang first entered college with the intention of becoming a pharmacist, she never imagined



Theresa Hoang

she would one day be presenting a paper on St. Clare of Assisi at a medieval studies symposium. A change in plans led her to UST, where she would major in theology in an attempt to better understand her own faith. Hoang recently presented a paper titled "The Unique Vocation of Saint Clare of Assisi: Impractical, Yet Authentic" at the Rice University Medieval Studies Undergraduate Program and Symposium.

Hoang originally completed the paper for Associate Professor of

Theology Sister Madeleine Grace's Church History I class. Hoang said St. Clare of Assisi "jumped out" at her the most from a list of research topics, as she had heard about St. Francis, but knew nothing of St. Clare. Sister Grace encouraged her to enter her paper in the symposium. Hoang was the only student from UST to participate.

"It was a great experience to present at the symposium," she said. "It was very interesting to get up in front of an audience and share something with them that I cared about. I was the only UST student there, everyone else was from Rice. I've always considered Rice to be a wonderful school, so I'm glad that what I'm learning at UST and the skills that UST has helped me develop makes me able to compete with Rice students."

SAVE THE DATE

Knights host a blood drive



Save a life and join the University of St. Thomas Knights of Columbus #13940 for a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday, April 7 in Jerabeck Center.

Vote: GSA Elections



The Graduate Student Association will hold a general election meeting at 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 11 in Malloy Hall, Room 022. Deadline to file for office is Friday, April 18. Online voting will take place April 25-30 on Blackboard. www.ustgsa.org

Rice Hosts China Town Hall



Join the Center for International Studies for the second annual China Town Hall Meeting, "The China Issue in the 2008 Presidential and Congressional Campaigns," at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 17 at the Baker Institute, Rice University.

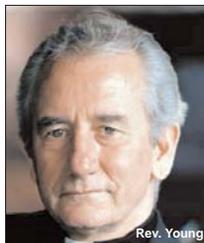
Summer Social Justice Institute to Address 'Solidarity in an Election Year'

The 2008 Rev. William J. Young Institute Social Justice Summer Conference will cover the topic of "Solidarity in an Election Year," from June 4 to 6 in Scanlan Room, Jerabeck Center. This year's summer conference focuses on two themes – the principles of solidarity and faithful citizenship.

The discussion of solidarity will focus on the the challenges of justice – especially the extensive disparity between the rich and the poor in the Western Hemisphere. The Rev. Daniel Groody, CSC, will lead attendees in a considera-

tion of challenges posed by immigration. The discussion on faithful citizenship will center on the

U.S. Bishops' articulation of the moral and social justice principles people need to consider when deliberating on whom to vote for in the presidential, congressional and state legislative elections. David Cochran, associate professor of politics at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, will



Rev. Young

lead attendees in a discussion of the impact of the Catholic vote.

Open to the public, the event is co-sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and the archdiocese. Individual registration is \$35.

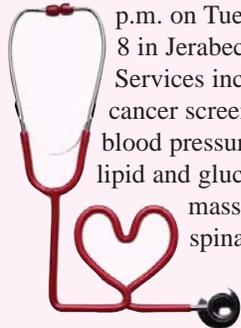
A three-hour credit course at UST (JUST/POSC 4306: Catholic Political and Social Thought) will be offered in conjunction with the conference.

For more information and registration details, contact John Francis Burke at 713-525-3814 or jfburke@stthom.edu.

Mind and Body Health Fair

The Office of Health Promotion and Wellness will host a "Sound Mind, Sound body" Health Fair with more than 25 health and wellness vendors from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30

p.m. on Tuesday, April 8 in Jerabeck Center. Services include: skin cancer screenings, blood pressure, total lipid and glucose, vision, massages, spinal assessments and more.



UST Hosts Interfaith Discussion of Three Faiths

UST's Muslim Student Association and Alnadi Arabic Cultural Society present an inter-faith discussion titled, "What do the Major Religions Say About Each Other: A Perspective from Christian, Jewish and Islamic Scholars," at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 10, in Jones Hall.

In a time of tension and discord among the three Abrahamic religions, the interfaith discussion will

attempt to seek understanding and emphasize areas of commonality rather than differences.

Speakers include Vice President for Academic Affairs John Hittinger, Rabbi Shaul Osadchey of Houston's Congregation Or Ami and Shaikh

Omar Inshanally.

For more information, contact Dr. Javed Ashraf at 713-525-2109.



2008 Research Symposium

<p>Casino Royale</p>  <p>7-10 p.m. Friday, April 11 Dining, entertainment and fun Crooker Patio, Cost \$10</p>	<p>SideShow Tramps in Concert</p>  <p>4:30 p.m., Saturday, April 12 On the Campus Life Mall after Big Bob's Barbeque</p>	<p>Big Bob's Barbeque</p>  <p>4:30 p.m., Saturday, April 12 Cash awards will be presented for best student papers Campus Life Mall</p>
--	--	---

Friday, April 11

10 a.m. - noon; 12:30-4:30 p.m.
Oral Sessions
Jerabeck Center Rooms 201, 202, 207

Noon Lunch; 12:00 - 12:40 p.m.
Scanlan Room, Jerabeck Center

4:45-5:45 p.m. Honors Presentation
Scanlan Room, Jerabeck

7:10 p.m. Casino Royale
Crooker Center Patio

Saturday, April 12

9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Breakfast and Poster Presentations
Scanlan Room, Jerabeck Center

10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Oral Sessions continued
Jerabeck Center Rooms 201, 202, 207

Noon Lunch; 12:00 - 12:40 p.m.
Jerabeck Center

4:30 p.m. Big Bob's Barbeque/Awards Ceremony
Campus Life Mall

4:30 p.m. SideShow Tramps in Concert
Campus Life Mall

www.stthom.edu/urc

Nam Nguyen Receives Recognition for Poster Presentation

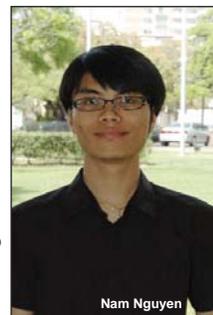
UST biology major Nam Nguyen received the John C. Johnson award for his scientific poster presentation at the South Central Regional Tri-Beta Biological Honor Society meeting, qualifying him to present at the national Tri-Beta meeting this summer. Nguyen won the highest honor for the competition, which included about 50 posters.

Nguyen's research focused on a gene that Dr. Debra Bramblett, assistant professor of biology, had previously discovered in mice. The gene is responsible for aspects of

neural development in mice, including eyesight. Nguyen found a similar gene in the purple sea urchin using bioinformatics and performed experiments to determine where and when the gene is expressed in the developing sea urchin embryo. Dr. Bramblett, who has been working with Nguyen on this project for more than two years, said his research allows for the opportunity to learn more about how the gene ensures proper retina function in mammals without having to use an actual vertebrate animal.

"Nam has all the skills necessary to be an excellent researcher," she said. "I expect him to make great contributions to the field of biomedical science in the future."

Nam will graduate in May 2008 and plans to obtain a doctorate in biochemistry and an M.D.



Nam Nguyen

Mendez, Martinez awarded Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarship



Left to right: Thomas Mendez and Jesse Martinez

UST international studies majors Thomas Mendez and Jesse Martinez have been awarded the Rotary Foundation's Ambassadorial Scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic year, allowing them the opportunity to study abroad for nine months following graduation from UST.

The Rotary Foundation has yet to determine which countries the students will travel to, but it will choose from a list of the

students' top five choices, all of which are cities in Latin America.

Mendez, who is currently the vice president of public relations for the Center for International Studies Micro-Credit Program, says, if possible, he would

like to further his involvement with micro-credit work in whatever nation he is placed in.

"Every Latin American country that I have chosen suffers from poverty in one way or another," he said. "Regardless of whether there is an opportunity to implement micro-credit, there is always an opportunity to serve."

Martinez, who is a member of Rotaract of River Oaks in

Houston, says he hopes to develop a dialog between his club and Rotary clubs in the country he visits to address issues of education and poverty.

"Education is a tool that can change the world, but so many people are denied it," Martinez said. "Every child should have an education. It can empower them to overcome the obstacles of poverty."

Star View is published by the Office of Public Affairs as a means of informing the UST community about University and campus news. Call 713-525-3116 with questions and/or comments.

Executive Editor
Sandra Soliz, MLA '01

Editors
Brenda Benkenstein '05
Ronnie H. Piper
Marcella Vasquez

Contributor
Kristy Attie '07