ASL makes a splash pg. 14

World vision pg. 22

Legend and miracles pg. 48
During the graduation ceremonies recently, I was taken by the quality of men and women graduating from Lamar. I wish I was possible for each of you to stand at my shouldered’s I would love these graduates. There is a vision that radiates from each of them. They go from this place armed with a fine education. I am most thankful for them, for the parallel of possibility that crosses the Montagne Center platform each December, May and August.

Not many days later, another parade of eager young faces appeared on our campus. This time, taxes were replaced with overstuffed boxes of belongings, and sometimes parents were in tow. As they found their new home-away-from-home in Cardinal Village, these eager young men and women are embarking on a new era in their personal journey — college life. A new academic year has begun.

What a year it promises to be. Cardinal Village is fall to the brim with (more students in Brooks Hall) and nearby housing is full as well. That is why we have put forward plans to build more student housing, and, if approval is received, we will be breaking ground for a fourth phase of Cardinal Village in the coming year.

This fall, we’re setting another record on campus — our first year with five doctoral programs, including the university’s first Ph.D. (chemical engineering). Each of our doctoral-level programs is supported by a breadth and depth of experience in our colleges — they are both tribute to and a result of our excellence.

In other academic news, Lamar has set another milestone with the beginning of the bachelor’s degree in American Sign Language — the first such degree offered in Texas. Congratulations are in order to our chemical engineering department — ranked No. 1 last year in the number of master’s degrees granted. With 55 graduates, Lamar outpaced MIT, Yale, Michigan and Georgia Tech.

Construction continues on campus, The Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center — truly a state-of-the-art complex — will open in the spring, and construction on a new academic building — the old dining hall — will prepare it to house communication programs and several student support services.

Another exciting development is the establishment of the Office of Sponsored Programs. Administration. With the mission of “concept to completion” support for scholarship and research at the university, this new office has the potential to increase grant-supported research many-fold — enriching all areas of the university.

I am humbled each year when I see the support you give to the annual fund. Your generosity does so much to help students achieve an outstanding education at Lamar University. I trust you will respond again to the opportunity to make a difference when you receive your copy of the annual fund appeal in the mail in the coming weeks. We are a team — students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni and friends. Together we are making a difference. Thank you.

With Cardinal Pride,

Janis M. Simmons
President
Lamar University

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Students bring playtime to children
In the most recent issue of Chemical & Engineering News, Lamar University was ranked first in the nation for the number of mas-
ter’s-level chemical engi-
nearis in 2004-2005. Lamar’s numbers topped those of Illinois Institute of Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Lamar awarded 52 master’s degrees in chemical engineering, while MIT granted 45 and M.I.T. granted 29.

The department’s production remains strong. During the same period in 2005-2006, the department granted 38 bachelor’s degrees, 40 master’s degrees and had one graduate student admitted to the doctor of engineering (D.E.) degree.

Growth in the program is attrib-
uted to new courses in process simula-
tion that give graduates an advantage when seeking employment, said Kuyen Li, chair of the Department of Chemical Engineering.

Chemical engineering
stands first in nation

Movers and shakers

Congratulations to six retirees, who represent more than 150 total years of teaching excellence: Stephen Hodges, associate professor of art; Barbara Pietsch, professor of music; John Pearson, associate professor of management information systems; Richard Price, associate professor of mathematics; Chester Runnels, associate professor of biology, and Ovidia Sexton, Clinical Instructor in nursing.

District 4 of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education recognized work submitted by the public relations department and alumni affairs offices in the Division of University Advancement with two awards in the five-state communication competition: a writing collection by media specialist Laura Winstead and the Red, White, and You. Simmons & Friends cam-
paign.

, Tina Valenzuela has stepped into the role of assistant director of student activities after five years as a graphic technician in the Sezar Student Center.

Larry Ackerman is assistant director of public relations for the Division of University Advancement. He has served as director of public relations at Langston University and Wiley College and brings 30 years of experience with him.

Castillo, marketing specialist in the office of public relations, received the 2006 Julie & Ben Rogers Community Service Award. Castillo volunteers with the Bridges to Life Shelter.

The White lab coat, worn as a badge of knowledge and authority in the clinical setting, was central to the ceremony June 17 when Lamar presented coats to its inaugural class of audology doctoral students. The traditional role of the coat in early medical history signifies the transition from the classroom to clinical training. The recipients are: Janet Werner of Corpus Christi, Crystal Wegner of Port Arthur, Heather Lawson of Groves and Evelyn Williams of Lake Charles.

Rita hits enrollment, campus springs back

The fall semester began with a few empty seats on campus resulting from fallout of Hurricane Rita, offi-
cials said. First-day enrollment headcount was 9,566 students, down from 10,230 students on the same day in fall 2005, a 6.5 percent decrease.

“The drop was anticipated,” said Kevin Smith, senior associate provost at the university. “These students who have not returned are primarily from the local region, students whose lives were disrupted by the hurricane.”

Housing shortages and more stringent admission policies are also factors in the drop in enrollment, Smith said.

Lamar’s class day headcount had climbed to 9,906, down 6 percent from the previous fall’s 10,523. Semester credit hours were down 5.3 percent from the previous year.

Even so, the number of full-time students, those taking 12 hours or more, has increased by 2,000 over the past six years—from 4,800 to 6,800. That trend is reflected in the smaller drop seen in the number of semester credit hours.

“Students are enrolling sooner than ever before,” said President James Simmons. “We are making the drop in enrollment a good opportunity to attract new students and those seeking a quality education.”

The university is seeking approval to construct additional student housing to accommodate the increased student enrollment.

Girls get WIRED

Girls get WIRED for Computer Science brought almost 30 young women in middle schools and high schools to Lamar campus.

“Girls get WIRED is an amazing program that goes beyond giving girls the opportunity to learn computer science,” said Barbara Mathis Hodges, executive assistant to the university president. “It has a lasting impact as girls are more likely to seek education and careers in science and math.”

Lamar conferred more than 660 degrees to graduates from 14 countries, 15 states outside Texas and 89 Texas cities during spring commencement. Six students attained perfect 4.0 grade point averages to become co-recipients of the Plummer Award, honoring them as the top-academic graduates in Lamar’s class of May 2006. April Boudoin of Port Neches, accounting, Wenatchi Bushime of Beaumont, electrical engineering, Tina Runnels of Nederland, accounting, Belen Espiritu of Nederland, chemical engineering, and Andrey Tsetyuev of Orange, fines and economics. At the Toast to Leadership banquet in April, Branden Still of Beaumont received the Robert Kerble Award as outstanding senior man; Divya Verma, a native of Tenesina, Brazil, now living in Orange, received the Beta Gamma Honor Award as outstanding senior woman, and Stephanie Kolar of Angleton received the Ann Shaw Award for exemplary leadership.

Counts holds Chemical Engineering

Chair in

Chemical Engineering

DALE ORTEGO

Professor of Chemistry, as Honors Professor of the Year. Ortego has been a faculty member since 1968. Ten faculty have received 2006-2007 Research Enhancement Grants: Paul Bernazzani, chemistry and physics; Daniel Chen, chemical engineering; Joseph Hoch, earth and space sciences; Sidney Lin, chemical engineering; Jiangjiang “Jane” Liu, computer science; Ray Robertson, sociology, social work and criminal justice; Perreira Sue, English and modern lan-
guages; Saul Stephan, electrical engineering; J. Enr. Wisk, earth and space sciences; and Steven Zer, English and modern languages.

Ray Davis is assistant professor of political science, received the 2006 Liberty Bell Award, presented by the Jefferson County Bar Association for her lifetime commit-
tment to principles of the U.S. Constitution. Davis serves each summer as a Summer Scholar for the Arizona Legal Foundation, the State Bar of Texas “We the People” program and the Houston W. Sumner’s Institute... Direct, a web-based worldwide digital library, recently selected three Lamar scholarly research articles for its Top 25, pre-
sented in a special section of the web site at www.wis-
dencore.com. Author of two of the articles is David

Girls get WIRED for Computer Science brought almost 30 young women in middle schools and high schools to Lamar campus. Girls get WIRED

One of the girls at the event is David
dencomore.com. Author of two of the articles is David

Girls get WIRED for Computer Science brought almost 30 young women in middle schools and high schools to Lamar campus.

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Making class count

Patricia Villarreal of Groves arrived first place in the 2006 Student Entrepreneur of the Year competition sponsored by The Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies. The elementary education major began a jewelry design business eight years ago, Patsy’s Hemp Creations. . . . The University Press won first place among non-
college and university newspapers at this year’s Hattie Mae Excellence in Journalism Awards sponsored by the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors. . . . More than 400 students interviewed with 65 school districts during the Educator Career Fair in April. Another fair is scheduled Nov. 2. . . . Senior pre-med major
Lindsey Cauthen completed a highly interactive internship this summer at St. Jude’s Hospital in Memphis. . . . Forty-four Lamar music students received recognition, including first place, from the Greater Houston Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing this past spring. Scholarship recipient Phillip Case of Beaumont won the first place in the Undergraduate Music Division. His voice instructor is Angela Rickerson. . . . Senior music major Hugh Baker, along with Abdulrahman Mohammad of Kurnay, Sudan, and members of the local chapter of Amnesty International sponsored a lecture on the history and context of the Sudan conflict. Baker, an Australian native and member of the tennis team, is president of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. . . . PH Kappa Phi initiated 86 students and one faculty member, Keith Needham, instructor of English, into the national honor society, the nation’s oldest and most selective all-discipline society. . . . Sigma Theta Tau International inducted 15 nursing students into the nursing honor society. . . . Jay Beauregard, a senior
commerce major from Houston, has been named a McGowan Scholar, an award conceived and funded by William G. McGowan, the late founder of MCI Communications, to recognize management students who exhibit extraordinary leadership. . . . A junior broadcast journalism major, Damir Parga, Jesus Valenzuela, Mehmet Kesmez, Jewel Gomes, Hector Moreno and Ventura Valverde, were selected by the society from all papers published during the year. The society’s membership includes metallurgical and materials engineers, scientists, researchers, educators, administrators and philanthropists from more than 70 countries on six continents. Codaix’s research into electroacousti-
ca holds promise for many of the world’s nations facing growing water pollution problems. Using a bicycle-powered water treatment plant and the electroacoustica processes researchers produced 10 liters of clean water with only 20 minutes of pedaling. Countries with aridic-contaminated ground and surface water are particularly interesting in the technology. The device can produce five cubic meters of clean water at a cost of one-cent, Codaix said.

Future nurses to follow in Nightingale footsteps

The Department of Nursing hosted 40 students from 15 area high schools during its Nightingale Experience in June. The two-day program gives students a first-hand look at the hospital setting and job opportunities from obstetrics to surgery and critical care to emergency. Co-sponsors are Christus St. Elizabeth and Christus St. Mary hospitals. A Lamar nursing instructor works closely with area school counselors to identify high school sophomores who are interested in nursing careers.

Math teacher from southeast Texas — As many teachers — were among educators participating in the Lamar conference. Pictures, from left, senior Lori Redeau, ‘03; Widad Abedelwahab, ‘03; Mekko Minix, ‘04; Widad Abedelwahab, ‘03; and Kermit Armstrong, ‘04.

Pins for pups raises funds

The Humane Society of Southeast Texas benefited from more than $6,000 in funds raised during “Pins for Pups,” a campaign organized by students of the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities and area high schools. They obtained pledges from Lamar faculty and staff and their friends and in an advancement within the profession in passing a series of examinations. Recently, the Society of Actuaries approved two Lamar courses for credit from the society, corporate finance and economics.
E

evry research project – from its birth as an idea through infancy to full flower – needs someone to nurture it toward success. Donald Cotten, administrative dynamo and veteran educator, has stepped into that role to spur the necessity of any research endeavor – money, by helping Lamar’s faculty maneuver proposals, ideas, financial relationships and funding sources to grow each project in its best channel of success.

Cotten will be Lamar’s first executive director of the newly created Office of Sponsored Programs, a position designed to provide “conception-to-completion” assistance for Lamar University. He comes to Lamar with a highly successful track record in helping universities expand research and teaching opportunities, said Stephen Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Cotten’s career spans almost four decades, beginning in the science classroom and extending to technology transfer, strategy, planning, leadership and program support. He connects Lamar with a highly successful track record in competing for external support from private and public sectors, said Doblin.

The office Cotten will head is designed to provide “conception-to-completion” assistance for Lamar University faculty members as they develop proposals seeking external support for their research and teaching initiatives, Doblin said. Cotten was selected as a result of a nationwide search.

Since retiring several years ago, Cotten has worked as a consultant and as director of technology transfer for Radiance Technologies in Huntsville, Ala. In that capacity, he worked closely with Lamar’s College of Engineering to identify potential funding opportunities. In the process, Doblin said, “He became excited about Lamar’s growth and what we are doing in research and economic development.”

Cotten said: “The Lamar family is committed to ensuring the university continues to sustain and strengthen its programs. It is truly exciting to be a part of a team that is implementing an infrastructure that will enhance the ability of the university community to compete for extramural resources.”

“Success in the world of competitive funding provides resources that complement instructional efforts, research and service activities, which are critical to the university. In many instances people focus on the funds that come through the competitive enterprise,” but, Cotten said, it is just as important to point out the quality of the faculty, staff and programs that make those awards possible.

“Every research project – from its birth as an idea through infancy to full flower – needs someone to nurture it toward success.”

DOLLY COTTEN

LU RATCHETS UP SUPPORT FOR SPONSORED PROGRAMS

Don Hopper said: “After working with me as a consultant on the structure and staffing for the new organization, Don became excited about being part of what we all envision as a tremendous opportunity to make significant advances in research and scholarly activity at Lamar University. These efforts will help fulfill the community’s vision of Lamar’s leadership in economic development in Southeast Texas.”

Conception to completion

by Louise Wood
is awarded for life to recognize a senior faculty member for distinguished teaching and exemplary service to the university. Lamar president James Simmons presented Cavaliere the most prestigious academic award the university can bestow.

Cavaliere was born in New York City and later spent five years in the Navy where he rose to the rank of lieutenant. His last duty station upon returning from serv- ing on an assassination ship in Vietnam was at the naval reserve station in Orange. He earned a bachelor’s degree in economics at Brooklyn College and earned a second degree in accounting at Lamar before attending the University of Texas Law School in Austin. He practiced law in Dallas and Pensacola for several years prior to joining the Lamar faculty in 1960.

“I am in my 22nd year at Lamar and still feel as though I have the same energy and the same passion for teaching and research as I did when I was just beginning my teaching career,” he said. “Lamar University is a great institution, better than most, because you are rewarded for your efforts.”

The award-winning professor uses all types of media to involve students and makes class discussions as interesting and interactive as possible. He believes that the Internet is the computer, through the use of the Internet. He created and maintains a website called The Web-Wise Lawyer (www.webwiselawyer.com) and encourages his students to use the Internet for research and study. Even before the advent of the World Wide Web, lawyers had access to proprietary databases filled with legal opinions and specific case studies for research and trial preparation. There are literally thousands of web sites offering free resources for lawyers. He’s quick to point out, however, that sometimes you have to open the hard copy of a legal journal to verify your web-based research.

Cavaliere brings a real-world approach to his classes, urging his students to seek the spirit of the law rather than considering law a science. He draws their attention to the ambiguities of the law and gives real-life examples of how the law is interpreted differently from lawyer to lawyer and from one judge to the next.

“When you try a case in court and the judge makes a ruling that is subsequently overruled by two of the three judges at the appellate level, you effectively have three different lawyers who ruled one way and two judges who ruled the opposite way,” he said. “And if the case should go further to the Supreme Court and you get a 5:4 ruling, you ultimately have a total of six judges who interpreted the law one way and seven who have a different interpretation.”

In his earliest days of teaching, he was interested in franchise law because it was a relatively new and exciting field. Those days, however, he enjoys exploring the fiduciary relationships between corporations and shareholders and the abuses that occur in the corpo-rate environment and in the mutual funds market. Another interest is employment law.

Cavaliere created a new course dealing with employment law that is required for all students majoring in human resource management. He developed the course to reflect the changing work environment as a means of presenting a more up-to-date way to reflect the changing trends in employment in the United States.

“The textbooks we were using at the time had a chapter or two about the various forms of discrimination and harassment,” he said. “I thought mostly with the relationships between unions and management. However, now that unions are no longer as powerful and the majority of employees are not union workers, it became important to shift the focus of the course to the types of workplace activities that were seen as the most litigation, such as the various forms of discrimination and harassment. Curriculum dealing with labor unions and management has now been integrated to a few chapters.”

Cavaliere is a prolific writer and author, having published more than 30 refereed papers and publications and written more than 75 columns for The Web-Wise lawyer, a column dealing with innovative ways legal professionals can use the Internet in their practices. He has served on numerous campus committees, including the Faculty Senate, Faculty Salary Equity Committee, University Promotion and Tenure Committee, and serves as a pro bono law advisor for students interested in attending law school. He is currently conducting research with several colleagues for publication.

Cavaliere believes publishing research is a great asset to the college and the university.

“I have the same energy and the same passion for teaching and research as I did when I was just beginning my teaching career.”

— FRANK CAVALIERE

[Image]
Nothing compares to it, the feeling of weightlessness," said Richard Wooten.

Wooten, a physics major from Dayton, was one of five students from Lamar University to experience zero gravity aboard NASA’s Reduced Gravity Student Flight Opportunity Program. The students conceived, designed, built and flew an experiment aboard NASA’s C-9B aircraft. The flights were the sixth time Lamar University has been represented in the competitive national program and the seventh time LU students have gone weightless since 1995, when students flew in a state-level program.

"I enjoyed every minute," she said of her time aloft. "She'll have plenty of opportunity to share her experience in the future as she takes her minor in space sciences into the classroom."

Karen Wooten, a general studies major from Beaumont, and Erica Williams, a political science major from Winnie, served as ground crew for the team. George Irwin, associate professor of physics, and Jim Jordan, professor and chair of the earth and space sciences department, are faculty advisors for the team.

Lotharius and Hennigan’s flight was only the 13th flight where no students experienced the airsickness that has earned the aircraft the ribald nickname the “vomit comet.” As such, their flight was designated as a “no kill” in the program’s parlance, earning the students recognition for their intestinal fortitude and a photographic record that will remain on the wall of the program office.

The LU team performed experiments to measure the electromagnetic responses from powders consisting of magnetized and non-magnetized particles subject to alternating current – and direct current – applied fields under reduced gravity. They also investigated the G-force dependence of magnetic resonance-like behavior in the magnetized particle sample, based on measurement of the effect in 1-G conditions.

Irwin said the student team’s goals for the flight had been “very ambitious” as it is difficult to do anything on the aircraft. "Our data is not complete, but it is pretty good data," Irwin said. "The data seems to confirm our overall hypothesis, but we will be doing more analysis in the weeks ahead."

"Five of the students are seeking minors in space science and are planning careers in the field after graduation," Jordan said.

Sterling said the experience gave him a renewed interest in a space-related career. "I had the opportunity to see things most people never see at NASA and experience things a lot of people never experience," he said.

Hanging from the rafters of the Ellington Field hangar that houses the immaculate C-9B and other NASA aircraft are flags of a number of universities, including the red and white of Lamar. The flag had "gone missing" after Lamar’s last student flight, only to be rediscovered there in July, Jordan said.

More significant “from the standpoint of JSC and NASA are the courses in microgravity we offer,” he said. Those new courses are indications that the vision of education evidenced in the NASA program are seeing results that will inspire scientific exploration and discovery for generations to come, Jordan said.

"We got it done – finished and flown – that’s what matters," Sterling said. "It was a blast!"
Lamar University’s deaf education programs are nationally recognized and now their collective cap holds an unusual feather—the Bachelor of Arts in American Sign Language—the only such program in the state of Texas and one of only four in the nation.

The new degree accompanies another beneficial change. The Texas State University System Board of Regents has approved the separation of the Department of Communication Disorders and Deaf Education into two entities to better serve students and the community. 

The reorganization has created the Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, which will include deaf education programs and the new American Sign Language (ASL) program. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the creation of the new program to begin with the fall 2006 semester.

The deaf education program has been serving deaf individuals on and off campus in the southeast Texas region since the early ’70s. Deaf education students are placed in schools and classrooms to work with deaf education teachers. Texas is one of many states that recognize ASL as a foreign language, and many High schools offer ASL as a foreign language option. Martin expects the new ASL program to grow rapidly during the next few semesters.

The second entity created by the reorganization is the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, which will include the master’s program in speech-language pathology and the doctoral program in audiology. Both programs recently received continued accreditation through 2012 by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The CAA is recognized as a national accrediting body by the U.S. Department of Education.

According to Martin, continued accreditation of the programs is critical for the students and the university because ASHA is the national overseer for all speech-language pathology and audiology programs with regard to curriculum, facilities and faculty. Students graduating from ASHA-accredited programs go through a much broader licensing process upon completing the program. Lamar University itself is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and when there is a national accrediting body in a particular field of study, SACS strongly recommends programs be accredited by that body as well.

“Accreditation of the speech-language pathology and audiology programs acknowledges the quality of these programs,” Schultz said. “It is important for our constituents and prospective students to know the programs are accredited, especially the audiology program because it is one of only four such programs in Texas.”

“Submitting to the accreditation process and a site visit is voluntary, and the requirements are very stringent, focusing on all areas of each program, such as curriculum, student enrollment, student admission standards, student retention, placement and post-graduation tracking. The site visit also reviews areas such as faculty credentials, the types of research in which the faculty is engaged, program facilities, office space, testing resources and faculty workloads. The CAA audit team is comprised of individuals from CAA-accredited programs and practitioners who are employed full-time in non-academic settings. The team includes seven members who represent the profession of speech-language pathology and six members who represent the profession of audiology.

Many opportunities exist for students to acquire practical experience in a clinical setting in Houston, Lake Charles, San Antonio, Biloxi and Shreveport. Community outreach is also an important component of the curriculum. Lamar students and researchers serve deaf individuals from Beaumont and the surrounding area by performing diagnostic testing and advising patients on hearing aid selection as well as group and individual therapy.

New ASL degree makes a splash

By Larry Acker

Hard-working faculty, a visionary department chair and a pressing need within both the hearing and deaf communities combine to create a rather exclusive cadre—American Sign Language degree candidates.

Lamar University’s deaf education programs are nationally recognized and now their collective cap holds an unusual feather—the Bachelor of Arts in American Sign Language—the only such program in the state of Texas and one of only four in the nation.

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Lovin’ every minute of it

On report date to Lamar’s football camp in August of 1965, Bill Lucas took one look around and figured he might be in a tad over his head. A freshman from Navasota, Lucas stood 5 feet 8 and weighed 136 pounds.

Lucas’ first question to Bobby Gunn centered on whether Lamar’s athletic trainer could suggest any weight-inducing or strength-enhancing supplements he might take to enable him to catch up—or to speak—with his new and larger teammates.

“Mother Goose, as everyone called Bobby because he took care of all of us like we were his own children, glared back at me with those squinty eyes of his, and his face started getting redder than I could imagine,” said Lucas while recalling that scene from more than 40 years ago. “He told me that if I would just eat like a madman and work like a madman, I would be able to do whatever I wanted to do.”

ALLEN PEARSON
CARDINAL CADENCE

One day, an informant called the DPS narcotics office in Houston and told them some drug dealers were getting ready to kill Bill Lucas," said Lucas. "This was before cell-phone times, but as soon as the Houston office could get word to me, my instructions were to get out and get out now."

"That's exactly what I did," Lucas forced leave of absence from the TOPS in the mid-1970s to lead him to Hawaii, where he worked first for an old Haaeula friend as an assistant manager at a steak-and-lobster restaurant and later for a delivery service. Eventually, Lucas caught on as a stuntman for Universal Studios, which had a crew in Hawaii to film The Castleway Coven starring James Cagney, Vera Miles and Robert Culp.

"I was mainly diving off waterfalls and falling off horses," laughed Lucas. "I remember writing home once telling my parents it was the first time I ever got paid for falling off a horse instead of staying on it.

"The main thing, though, was that I got to see how a Hollywood studio worked from the inside out, and it was a wonderful experience. I even met Spencer Tracy's personal stuntman --- Ernie Neal --- and later spent time with him in Los Angeles. The Hollywood scene was beautiful and wonderful, and so, too, were the people. Ernie Neal encouraged me to stay involved in movies, but I decided it was about time to get back to Texas."

In the five years since he left the Haaeula Police Department, Lucas has concentrated on helping protect all of the state's citizens in his position with the National Response and Rescue Training Center for Texas. "We do everything from firefighting training to disaster training, to disaster-emergency training, to helping communities set up plans for hurricane evacuations, terrorism-oriented attacks or things like that," said Lucas. "I love it because I get to work with so many intelligent and interesting people throughout the state. At the same time, I get to visit with some of my old law enforcement friends."

"My primary focus is on the law enforcement measures that will need to be enacted in the event of any of these disasters or emergencies. We are there to help the people of Texas in any way we can."

"When I first went into law enforcement, I did so with the attitude that if I wasn't in it to help people, I was in the wrong business. That's still my attitude today."
Land, Oil, Cattle. This Trinity of Texas icons has played a major role in the life of Dr. C.R. “Dick” Sherron ’62. Sherron raises cattle in Jefferson and Duval counties and is corporate medical director for Trinity Industries, a $2.5 billion diversified industrial company headquartered in Dallas.

HONORABLE PROFESSIONS

by Brian Sattler

Succeed in medicine, the military and management. Through the years, Sherron has proved he has the mettle to succeed in medicine, the military and management.

He was born in Livingston, but his family moved many times during his youth as his father’s work for Gulf Oil took him to new areas of oilfield development in Texas and Louisiana. During those years, the family’s interest in cattle was never far away, and, as a boy, he was active in caring for them.

Sherron attended Beaumont High School and worked the family’s cattle in Raywood and Batson. At 15, Sherron took money earned as a roughneck to purchase 21 head of crossbred cattle of his own. He managed the herd throughout his high school and college years.

Sherron attended Lamar his freshman year, then transferred to the University of Texas at Austin. When Hurricane Carla made landfall between Port O’Connor and Port Lavaca on Sept. 11, 1963, its impact on the oil industry meant a lot of recovery work for Sherron’s father. “I knew I would be needed to take care of the cattle, so I came home to Beaumont,” Sherron said.

While home, he assayed the benefits of continuing his schooling at Lamar. “Lamar had a great pre-med program under Dean Edwin Hayes,” he said. “At the time, Lamar had the second-highest acceptance rate into medical school of any state-supported school.” Sherron found he could complete his pre-med program in three years, stay in the cattle business, and live at home where “mom was an awful good cook.”

After he graduated Lamar, Sherron sold his herd to pay for the ring he slipped on the finger of sweetheart Ella Mays, who attended Lamar from 1960 to 1961. That sale also helped finance his start at UT Medical Branch in Galveston. When he completed his studies and residing, Sherron was a board-certified family practitioner.

Later, Sherron served three years in the Army including a tour of duty in Vietnam, where he received the Army Commendation Medal and Bronze Star. As a battalion surgeon for 3rd Corps during the Tet Offensive, he treated the U.S. commander in Vietnam, Gen. Creighton Abrams Jr., for a minor burn. “I was just a captain, but he was very gracious,” Sherron said.

After completing his military service, Sherron joined a practice in the Lake Jackson-Freeport area. Three years later, he returned to Beaumont and established his own practice. Sherron bought land and began ranching again, and his Brahman- influenced cattle proved a must for heat, humidity, insect and parasite resistance in Southeast Texas. Through the decades, the family property has been expanded several times, and another ranch was acquired in Duval County.

Sherron became the chief of staff at St. Elizabeth and Beaumont Medical Surgical Hospital. “That was a pretty big honor for a family practitioner,” Sherron said. “I was just a captain, but he was very gracious.”

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Today, Sherron brings his medical acumen to bear on challenges facing the 20,000- employee strong Trinity Industries.

Active in the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association for more than three decades, and elected a director in 1993, Sherron became president in March 2005.

His contributions to health care extend far beyond the region. A former chairman of the Texas Animal Health Commission, Sherron was a member of the original working group that helped USDA and the beef industry develop firewalls to protect both people and cattle from exposure to bovine spongiform encephalopathy. He worked on mad cow disease.

Sherron’s medical background has made him a valued member of the Secretary of Agriculture’s Advisory Committee for Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases and the Tuberculosis Committee of the U.S. Animal Health Association. He is also a former member of the Texas Beef Council and National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and has chaired NCBAA’s Human Nutrition Research Committee.

Perpetually a proponent of quality, Sherron blends his knowledge of medical science with industry savvy wrought by years of hard work. He is quick to point out the importance of a high-protein diet to Americans aging population who face the reality of sarcopenia, or loss of muscle mass, as they age. Sherron’s concern is that today’s low-protein, high-carbohydrate diets may cause a natural process, leaving tomorrow’s elderly with less muscle for strength and balance, which leads to increased potential for disability.

What about the concerns of fat? “The industry has developed 29 cuts of beef that have only 1 gram more fat than skinless, tasteless chicken breast, with a lot more protein,” Sherron said. “I understand the concerns about bad fats, but what we need is balance. If you eat a modified high-protein diet, you can maintain muscle mass, strength and agility much longer than Americans are doing today.”

Today, Sherron helps guide the association as it addresses a myriad of issues affecting Texas’ cattle industry and the state’s farmers and ranchers. Those issues include urban sprawl, private property rights, water rights, transportation challenges, liability, economics, estate taxes, international trade, bioterrorism, animal health and more. While those issues can seem as big as the Texas sky and political winds can change as suddenly as the weather, Sherron takes a long-term view.

“Four of these ranches, the land is almost a sacrament,” he said. “They want to pass that heritage on to the next generation.”

For Sherron and Ella, future generations mean their four children — Scott Sherron, a cardiologist in Beaumont; Collen Jackson; Gretchen Bjerke; and Paige Andrews — and 13 grandchildren.

At the time of the interview, Sherron was preparing for a three-week, association-sponsored trip to New Zealand to learn first-hand about the nation’s beef industry.

“If you rest, you’ll rust,” Sherron said. “I love Lamar, and I love UT,” Sherron said.

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World Vision

From tsunami-devastated Sri Lanka to an international women’s conference in ultra-modern Abu Dhabi, two Lamar students experienced global volunteerism — and the many possibilities to be found in crossing borders of all kinds.

Half a world away from home and a gulf away from war, they rode camels, feasted at an exotic desert extravaganza and heard from sheikhs and scientists, ambassadors and economists, heads of state and human rights advocates.

Most important, they experienced the shattering of myths and long-held perceptions.

Their destination was Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates — 8,210 miles, an ocean and several time zones from Beaumont.

Ali Girard of Hamshire, who graduated summa cum laude in May 2006 with degrees in biology and psychology, and Stephanie Kelsey of Angleton, who will earn her nursing degree this summer, went to the 2nd World Conference on Women as Global Leaders. Nicki Michalski, assistant professor of communication, accompanied them.

Instead of spending their spring break at the mall, movies or basking in the sun, they basked in a different sort of enlightenment among a handful of Texas college students gaining acceptance to the highly selective conference. “I was reminded how wrong stereotypes about different cultures can be,” Kelsey said.

At the invitation of conference organizers, Girard and Kelsey participated in a panel, “Learning Across Borders: International Service Learning,” presenting a paper on their experiences in summer 2005 as volunteers in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of that country’s devastating tsunami. “Global Volunteerism in Sri Lanka: Educating Today’s Students and Tomorrow’s Leaders” was their topic.

“It was a very, very big honor,” Girard said. “This really put Lamar on the map.”

Leaders from around the world addressed the assembly. Heading the list was Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahayan, minister of higher education and scientific research and president of Zayed University, which hosted the conference. Other speakers included Quam Rania Al-Abdullah, queen of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Mary Robinson, former United Nations high commissioner for human rights; Cherie Booth, noted British attorney and human rights advocate and wife of Prime Minister Tony Blair; Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, UAE minister of economy; Rola Dallal, chairperson of the Kuwait Economic Society and a leader for women’s suffrage; Aisha Maki Elmi of Somalia, founder of Save Somali Women and Children; Pia Badmann, Lord mayor of Wurzburg, Germany; and Ambassador Barbara Bodine (R), senior fellow, The Belfer Center of Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

From close to home, the group heard from Taisan Linda Ellerbee, award-winning journalist and television producer.

Delegates hailed from 87 countries, including Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cameroon, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom, as well as the United States. Although the conference was international and the primary language of the UAE is Arabic, English was the official language of the event.

From Texas, only Lamar, Baylor and St. Edwards’ universities were represented. The roster included American universities from coast to coast.

According to its president, Zayed University hosted the conference as an expression of global vision, as well as a reflection of its position as a regional leader in the education and training of women. “We have students coming from universities all over the world for a noteworthy cause.”

The trip took 16 hours — Beaumont to Houston to Miami to London to the destination, situated between Saudi Arabia and Oman and across the Persian Gulf from Iraq and Iran.

Arriving a day before the conference officially began, Michalski and the students had time for a half-day safari, including a camel ride and an activity known as “dune bashing” in which they gleaded through the desert dunes on boards. They tried on traditional garbs for the safari, but opted for western dress - three-quarter to full-length sleeves and either slacks or a full-length skirt were a must.

At the desert extravaganza, they dined on exotic fare, which was to be a preview of culinary experiences to come: hummus every day, plus tabouli and lots of lamb, rice and vegetables.

Girard said she missed the fresh fruit when she got home.

Michalski recalls: “The first day we got there, Ali and Stephanie looked around and went, ‘Wow, this is so different from Sri Lanka,’ where they were dealing with devastation and poverty and death. And now they’re staying in this gorgeous hotel — the conference was in the Emirates Palace. You walk in and there’s this huge dome, marble tile and a mosaic floor. There’s gold everywhere. They were thinking, ‘How can the world have such extremes?’ It brought home to you how different things can be.”

“Global Volunteerism in Sri Lanka: Educating Today’s Students and Tomorrow’s Leaders” was their topic.

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“Lamar made Sri Lanka possible, and it made this possible, and we are very grateful.”

— ALI GIRARD

PHOTOS COURTESY OF STEPHANIE KELSEY, NICKI MICHALSKI AND ALI GIRARD
I had always wanted to volunteer abroad, but never believed I could until I was encouraged by Dr. Birdwell,” said Kelaty. “The Honors Program inspired the coordination, guidance and financial support for our trips to Sri Lanka and Abu Dhabi. Dr. Birdwell has been with us every step of the way.”

Klein Dodson, assistant director of the honors program, brought the conference to the student’s attention. “We sat down to see how we could formulate a paper from our experience in Sri Lanka.” Kelaty said. “We decided to make it an inspiration to other students, for them to take back to their schools and show people you can volunteer on a global scale.”

Birdwell vowed: “We are going to get this done!” And that she did, with support from Stephen Doblin, provost and vice president for academic affairs; Brenda Nichols, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; and Russ Schult, dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

“We have reviewed the possibilities available for undergraduate students to participate in service programs around the globe,” Kelaty said. “In Sri Lanka, we made every effort to increase the visibility of women at leadership. Our goal was to empower and encourage women, and others, to realize the multiple possibilities of crossing borders – of all sorts – and encountering other cultures. While there, we witnessed genuine devastation but also embraced a new culture.”

After graduating in December, Kelaty will pursue her doctorate in nursing practice and become a family nurse practitioner. “I would also like to write for a health magazine, do legal consulting, teach at the college level and write children’s health and wellness books,” she said.

I inspired by her mother, a registered nurse, and her grandmother, who was a certified nurse assistant. I graduated from University of Texas Medical School in Houston. I have a dream to become a pediatrician and open a small family practice “so I can watch my patients grow.” She would also like to travel overseas and become involved in Doctors Without Borders.

Michalski said she felt a sense of pride in the students’ representation at the conference.

“So they did a great job,” she said. “I, of course, went on their pan. On the way home – and this made me so happy on their behalf – someone on the plane had been to the conference, recognized them and came over and told them how much she enjoyed their presentation.

“The conference was incredible,” Michalski said. “Being all of these amazing women was an empowering experience, but it also made you think. If we can stop looking at all the differences and look at what we have in common, just think what we could accomplish.”

People I have had the privilege of meeting were our alumnus in the field of nursing, who now works as a nurse, and students in the field of education, who are now teachers. And we found that mutual interests, which led them to the international volunteer projects as well as leadership roles in the association.

“Stephanie and I had always wanted to go overseas as volunteers,” Michalski said. “We see the value as the choice they make. In fact, someone made the comment that the rest of the world believes American women are oppressed by men because of the over-sexualization in our society.”

The trip changed their perception of Arab women, the three agreed. “A culture walk, Girard and Michalski strolled alongside Islamic women. “They are very outspoken,” Girard said. “Because of the way they dress, our media often portrays them as being rather reserved, which is certainly not the case. They will tell you exactly how they feel. One of the most important things they want us to do is return to our country with the message. ‘Our men don’t make us do this. We show our own people.”

“Before traveling to the Middle East, I had always felt that the Muslim veil (Hijab) was a symbol of women’s oppression and slavery,” Katay said. “After speaking with women from many different Muslim countries, I realized that wearing the veil is the women’s choice – they reveal themselves only to special people in their lives like their husbands and children.”

The trip to Abu Dhabi began when Girard and Katay met during the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life, in which they participate on the Honors Student Association team. They found they had mutual interests, which led them to the international volunteer projects as well as leadership roles in the association.

“Stephanie had always wanted to go overseas as a volunteer, and we were looking through the Internet one day and came across the Global Crossroads website,” Girard said. “The trip was just perfect, we chose Sri Lanka where we did reconstruction on weekends, taught English at a school in the rural area of the jungle and worked in orphanages.”

Donna Birdwell, director of the University of Honors Program and professor of anthropology, was instrumental in the students’ journeys. “Lamar made Sri Lanka possible, and it made this (conference) possible, and we are very grateful,” Girard said.

“I had always wanted to volunteer abroad, but never believed I could until I was encouraged by Dr. Birdwell,” said Kelaty. “The Honors Program inspired the coordination, guidance and financial support for our trips to Sri Lanka and Abu Dhabi. Dr. Birdwell has been with us every step of the way.”

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Henry C. Rapkoff ’73, B.S. sociology, is retired from International Chemical, where he served as former president and CEO. He lives at his farm in Rompoe with his wife, Emily. (Kronen) ’74, home economics, is partner and office manager for S.P. Paul Lobbier Chartered Eds. She lives in Vicksburg with her husband, Dwayne, who is owner of Precision Machine Works.
A.A.S. business data processing. He is operations manager for Linens-N-Things.

Michael P. Noonan "78, B.S. computer science, works for Hewlett-Packard and lives in Cypress with his wife, Carol; '88, B.S. computer engineering, is president of Voyles Enterprises in Sugar Land and lives in Richmond with her husband, Leonard.

Deborah (Olive) Voyles "87, B.S. mathematics, is a child support officer for the Office of the Attorney General in Fort Worth, where she lives.

Steven E. Newman "77, B.A. general business, is contractor administrator for the Texas Workforce Commission in Austin, where he lives.

Gregory W. Hold "97, B.S. computer science, earned his master's degree in public administration at Texas Southern University in 2000. He is an assistant director of court operations for the city of Houston Municipal Courts. He has been married for 10 years, has two daughters and lives in Pearland.

Deborah (Kuhl) Willey "77, B.S. marketing, is president of Vogue Enterprises in Sugar Land and lives in Richmond with her husband, Leonard.

James D. Cunningham "80, B.B.A., B.A.A.S. applied arts and science, is president of DePaul Technologies in Conroe. He has been married for 10 years, has two sons and lives in Spring Valley, Calif.

Barbara M. Christopher "80, B.S. nursing, is a registered nurse in the operating room at Texas Western Medical Center in El Paso, where she lives.

Linda Stipek "78, B.S. business administration, is program director of the business program at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, where she lives.

Kerstin West "77, B.S. elementary education, is an administrative assistant at Absolute in Beaumont and lives in Nederland.

Patricia (Cleere) Chappell "80, B.S. elementary education, is a telecommunication technician for New Edge Networks in Vancouver, Wash., and lives in La Center, Wash.

Teresa L. Zimmer "81, B.B.A. management, is president of Zimmer Financial Group in Stephenville and lives in Fort Worth with her husband, John.

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Terry Wood
Ronnie Turner, Jr.
mechanical engineering, is project lead for Oceaneering Space Systems in Houston and lives in Seabrook.

'B88, Beaumont
'B93, Beaumont
B.B.A. office administration.

Paula (Douresseau) Farris

Lynda (Glaze) Manriquez

Stratford (Gutmann) Fallon

Lauren (Kirksey) Murray

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Raymond E. Smith, Past President '57, Beaumont
Rochelle (Bottley) Anderson, Past President '56, Beaumont
Nashville, Tennessee

4:00 p.m. Speaker  |  5:30 p.m. Dinner

FEBRUARY 17, 2007
6:00 p.m. Reception  |  6:45 p.m. Dinner
University Reception Center Mary and John Gray Library

Sigmas Nu 50th Anniversary 2007
Kilgour Lodge encouraged to attend

Friday April 20
Dining Tournament T.E.C.

Saturday April 21
Golf Tournament R.E.C.

Back and White Star Formal
Black tie optional
Beaumont Plaza Holiday Inn

Sunday April 22
Brunch

For information or to sponsor, contact
Lamar University Career Center Mary and John Gray Library

28 | CARDINALCADENCE

Project author: Chris Glauber
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**March 3, 2007**

**King’s Ball Location TBD**

**BLACK TIE**

Invitations will be mailed in late 2006.

Don Burnett ’92 | jdmst@adl.com

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**SIGMA PHI EPSILON 50th Anniversary Celebration**

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We will miss...
As entrepreneurs, advocates, executives, civic leaders and mentors, these five individuals have one thing in common: their achievements honor their alma mater.

**Five earn honor**

**PHIL DRAYER**

At 22, Drayer wondered how he would fare in the job market in 1967 with a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Lamar. He soon accepted a position as a systems design engineer with Teledyne Systems where he designed electronics for helicopter heads up displays and logic for the first high speed digital computer used in navigation for military aircraft.

“I was always impressed by the education I got at Lamar Tech. Lamar equipped me to go head-to-head with people from Cal Tech, MIT and Stanford,” Drayer said. “After six months, they were all coming to me for answers.”

Later at Texas Instruments, he led a team that transformed semiconductor technology from military to commercial application.

In 1980, he launched EPI Technologies to manufacture semiconductor products for many of the emerging industry’s leading producers. In 1990, he returned to Teledyne as president charged with restructuring the business globally. He rescued Teledyne’s founding semiconductor company to create TelCom Semiconductor. As CEO, the company became profitable from the first quarter of operation and was among the top performing venture investments when it was purchased by Microposit in 2000.

He began his third business venture in 2003, Kalydus Asset Advisors, which provides investment opportunities in the technology sector.

Drayer currently chairs Lamar’s Engineering Advisory Council and is a trustee of the Lamar University Foundation. In 2005, Gov. Rick Perry appointed Drayer to the executive committee responsible for the state’s $200 million Emerging Technology Fund. In 2002, Forbes Magazine recognized him as CEO of one of the top 100 small companies in America.

**SARAH JOSEPH**

Sarah (Pickens) Joseph, who earned a bachelor’s degree in communications from Lamar in 1984, is in her 12th season with the Houston Rockets and her eighth as director of community relations. Joseph oversees all aspects of the team’s community service efforts.

Although the honorees took different career paths, their education at Lamar helped them obtain success in their chosen fields.

**WAYNE REAUD**

Honoree Wayne Reaud, ’71, earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Lamar. Reaud is a trial lawyer and founder of the law firm of Reaud, Morgan & Quinn. For more than 30 years, he has represented clients in significant cases involving personal injury product and premises liability, toxic tort and business litigation.

Reaud has handled mass tort litigation involving asbestos, premises liability claims, and was a class counsel in Cimino vs. Celotex Corp., which was the largest asbestos product liability class action lawsuit in the history of Texas.

He also represented the State of Texas in its landmark litigation against the tobacco industry.

Reaud was a two-term regent of the Lamar University System and served as a trustee of the John Gray Institute.

He is chairman of the board of the Beaumont Foundation of America, a member of the board of director and chairman of the Compensation Committee of Huntertan Corp., and president and director of the Reaud Charitable Foundation. He is a life fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation and a fellow of the International Society of Barristers. In addition, Reaud is a former chair of the Lawyer-Client Conciliation Committee.

Reaud is a former regent and president of the Southeast Texas Trial Lawyers Association; served on the District 3A Grievance Committee, was secretary of the Jefferson County Bar Association; and was a director of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association.

Listed in the Best Lawyers in America, he was chosen as the most distinguished alumus of Texas Tech University Law School in 1998.

**ROBERT SWERDLow**

The late Robert Swerdlow received a degree in marketing from Lamar in 1970 and earned the master of business administration a year later. He left LU to earn a Ph.D. at the University of Arkansas, and briefly taught as an assistant professor at Stephen F. Austin University. Swerdlow served Lamar University’s College of Business in many capacities, from assistant professor through associate dean. He also served as interim dean of the college twice during his career.

Swerdlow recalled how Lamar officials convinced his husband, Robert, to leave Drake University, where he was teaching marketing. He saw C. Robert Kemble, former LU president and chancellor, and W. L. Pate at the Drake Relay— an event involving many schools, including Lamar. At that time, Kemble asked Swerdlow if he wanted to teach at his alma mater, she said, but he turned Kemble down. Later, the chair of Lamar’s marketing department phoned Swerdlow to offer him a job. Again, he refused. He got another call in the winter, when snow was piled high enough to reach his second-story office. At that point, she said, her husband decided it was time to return to Texas. “He knew that department head was watching the weather report,” she said. The couple worked together until he passed away in 2003.

He served on 20 thesis committees and authored more than 60 articles on a wide range of business topics, contributing to the body of knowledge that will guide future business education. Gov. George Bush appointed him to chair the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities, a position he held from 1995-2000. Among his other commitments was service with United Way, Rotary, the Young Men’s Business League and the Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Swerdlow was inducted into the College of Business Hall of Fame in memory of the indelible mark he left within the college and in the lives of his students.

**MILT WING**

Milton Wing worked almost full-time throughout his college career at Lamar, but nevertheless earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry in only four years. He immediately went to work at Dow Chemical in Freeport and became technical director for the Dow division research branch engaged in product and process research, earning a total of 17 U.S. patents for process improvements and new inventions.

His sense of responsibility to his alma mater never wavered. He was an active recruiter of young talent for Dow Chemical and became technical director for the Dow division research branch engaged in product and process research, earning a total of 17 U.S. patents for process improvements and new inventions.

His memories of his time as a student are fond. “I met my wife, Mary Nita, at Lamar Tech, and we dated—at the expense of my differential equation class. We were married my junior year. Her support has melded many facets of my life,” Wing said. He also praises his professors. “They literally knew what I was doing and did their best to bring out the best in you,” he said.

Wing was instrumental in obtaining an Environmental Protection Agency grant to begin the Gulf Coast Hazardous Substances Research Center at Lamar and has continued working on behalf of Lamar students by encouraging investment that has led to 10 scholarships awarded annually to engineering students.

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS**

Friday, Oct. 27, 2005

J. John Gray Center

1155 E. Florida

Reservation: 880-8921 or www.lamar.edu/alumni.

The Lamar University Distinguished Alumni committee selects the award recipients.

The awards recognize alumni who have distinguished themselves in their careers or life work. The awards also honor alumni who work in community service or young alumni who have distinguished themselves early in their careers.
After helping the Lamar Cardinals to the 2002 Southland Conference baseball tournament championship, Thomas Atlee and Micah Hoffpauir ventured to the ranks of professional baseball, but have not strayed too far from one another during their careers. Playing professional baseball is what Hoffpauir always wanted to do growing up. A success as a college player, he’s now just one step away from making his dream come true.

Atlee’s road to professional baseball, however, appeared to be at an end after high school. He spent his freshman year at College Station but not as a member of the Texas A&M baseball team. He thought he had left his playing days behind. But the dream and the drive didn’t die, so he transferred to Lamar University where he spent the next three seasons hurling for the Cardinals.

Atlee and Hoffpauir made an impression on pro scouts during their time at Lamar, enough so that the Chicago Cubs selected the Cardinal teammates in the 2002 amateur draft. Hoffpauir was selected in the 13th round, and Atlee was taken in the 19th round. Since that time, both have continued the steady climb toward the big leagues.

Moving on from the college game to the pros usually means moving on from college teammates, but not always. Former Cardinals Bruce Aven and Kevin Millar, who were teammates in 1992 and 93, were reunited as teammates with the Florida Marlins in 1999.

Although they haven’t always been on the same team during the last four years, Atlee and Hoffpauir have played together off and on in the Cubs minor league system. The two were most recently reunited as teammates with the triple A Iowa Cubs.

Those teammate experiences have helped them, both on the field and away from the diamond.

“It’s been a lot of fun because you know what to expect out of a guy when you go out on the field,” Hoffpauir said. “Other guys might not know what he may or may not be throwing in certain situations, but I can step out there and know that Thomas is going to throw a slider in a certain situation, and I can be prepared for it. On that end of the spectrum, it’s really neat because you’re almost ahead of the game.

“Having someone you know really well, that you’ve been around—it’s a lot of fun. To have someone you played college ball with, that went through all the stuff we did in college, is fun.”

Atlee echoed the sentiments of Hoffpauir, saying the comfort level they have with each other on the field gives him one less thing to think about on the mound.

“If the infielder fields a ball and makes a throw to first, it’s going to get caught. I don’t care if they bounce it over there, roll it over there or throw it five feet over his head; Micah is going to catch it. He’s been making professional quality plays as long as I’ve known him, so, in that aspect, it’s great having him over there. He’s also a great hitter, which he proved, in a pitcher’s ball park, at Lamar. Also the fact that we came up together since college is a good feeling because you know you have a friend on your side.”

Several players from Lamar University have transitioned their college games into the pros, with the likes of Millar, Jared Clark, and Aven. Most recently, Clay Hensley, Randy Williams and Brian Sanches have made their way onto the big stage.

The success of former Lamar baseball players on a professional level is due in large part to their days as Cardinals. Both Atlee and Hoffpauir said their playing experience at Lamar helped transition to where they are today.

“All I know how to do when I got to Lamar was throw hard,” Atlee said. “Coach Gilligan taught me my arm action and really taught me how to pitch. I owe him a lot of credit because I don’t think I’d be where I am now without him. Lamar is definitely a great building ground for getting guys to the next level, and that’s due to the great coaching.”

Hoffpauir said a Lamar baseball made the move to the pros a smooth transition because the approaches to the game are very similar.

“When I went into Lamar, I didn’t look at it as a college program with the way Gilligan ran things,” he said. “He ran it in a similar manner to how a professional team runs their practice. You had to work, but it wasn’t a dictatorship. If you had something to say, you could always go talk to Coach Gilligan, Coach (Jim) Gilligan and Coach (Scott) Hatten, which made it a very enjoyable atmosphere. The fact that they turn out so many pro ball players is a real testament to the coaching staff and the players they get in there.”

With the major leagues just a step away, they both know their dream of making it to the next level will become a reality if one of them makes it. They hope to be reunited again in Chicago.

“It’s not something you can dwell on,” Atlee said. “You think about it of course, but you can’t let it consume you. Whenever somebody gets called up, it’s a reminder that you really are that close. If you continue to perform, you are going to get that opportunity as well.”

Resident of Buna, Delome was named Southland Conference Hitter of the Year and Player of the year, as well as being named First-Team ALL-SLC. He is the first Lamar player to be named SLC player of the year, which the league began awarding in 1989, and is just the third Cardinal to earn hitter of the year accolades, joining third baseman Clark (1984) and Michael Ambort (2005).
I'm very fortunate to have a coach of his caliber to keep the continuity of the program,” Tubbs said.

White, who served as the primary coach of the women’s program, has guided the Lady Cardinals to Southland Conference Championships in 2003, 2005 and 2006. He was named SLC Coach of the Year in 2005 and has coached 12 All-SLC performers, two freshmen of the year and two newsmakers of the year.

A native of Beaumont, White was instrumental in the resurgence of the men’s program that has resulted in six straight NCAA Central Regional appearances and SLC titles in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2006. The Cardinals advanced to the NCAA Championships this season for the first time since 1986, finishing in a tie for ninth place.

White played golf at Lamar from 1986-89, while earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology. He played professionally from 1990-96 and was assistant golf professional at Beaumont Country Club from 1998-2004.

“I’m very excited about the job,” White said.

“We have a great program and great kids, and we look forward to competing and winning more championships.”

After 10 years at the helm of Lamar University golf program, Brad McMakin announced his resignation to become the 13th head coach at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

McMakin recently completed his 10th season at Lamar by leading the Cardinals to a ninth-place finish at the 2006 NCAA Golf Championships, the highest finish of any Texas school. Last season, Lamar won an NCAA-best seven tournaments in 13 events and placed two golfers among the Top 10 individual finishers at the NCAA Championships, as well as having three golfers named All-American.

“I’ve had a super career here,” McMakin said.

Tubbs will assume the duties of both men’s and women’s golf programs, announced athletics director Billy Tubbs.

“We are fortunate to have a coach of his caliber to keep the continuity of the program,” Tubbs said.

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Fairways lush for Cardinals

In winning its fourth SLC title in six years, Lamar posted a 54-hole score of 873, nine strokes better than Texas-San Antonio. Sophomore Casey Clendon led the Cardinals with a second-place finish with a 54-hole score of 204. Senior Dusty Smith tied for third place at 207, and sophomore David Van Der Walt placed 11th at 221.

Van Der Walt placed third at the NCAA Central Regional at Sand Ridge Golf Club in Chardon, Ohio, which was hosted by Cleveland State. He tied for 10th place at the 2010 SLC tournament with a 54-hole score of 215. Smith tied for 15th place with a 54-hole score of 217. The Cardinals placed fifth in the 27-team field to advance to the NCAA Championships. The Top 10 teams from each of the three regions qualify for the championships.

A native of Cape Town, South Africa, Van Der Walt placed fourth to pace the Cardinals at the NCAA Championship, which was hosted by the University of Portland at Crosswater Golf Club in Sunriver, Ore. He opened the championships with a pair of 2-under 70s and shot a final round 5-under par 67 to post a 54-hole score of 7-under par 210. Smith tied for 10th place for the Cardinals at 2-under par 71-69-73-74—286.

Van Der Walt’s four-day total of 281 is the best 72-hole score by a Cardinal golfer in NCAA Championship play, surpassing the 289 turned in by Trevor Dodds in 2005. Dodds went on to play on the PGA Tour.

Lamar finished in 11th place with the University of Washington with a 72-hole total of 292-283-290-293—1158, one stroke behind UCLA and Clemson who tied for seventh place. The Cardinals posted the best finish by a Texas university as Texas A&M placed 14th and Texas Tech placed 15th.

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Martinez, Shelander tops in doubles

The Lamar University men’s and women’s tennis teams wrapped up their respective seasons with trips to the Southland Conference Tournament, hosted by the University of Texas-Arlington in April.

For the final individual championship, Ashley Martinez of Southland, a senior from Mexico City, was named the conference’s Most Valuable Player. She finished the season with a 12-7 record and was named Southland Conference’s Newcomer of the Year.

The Cardinals’ women’s team finished the season with a 3-16 overall record and a 1-11 record in conference play. The men’s team finished the season with a 3-16 overall record and a 1-11 record in conference play.

In addition to the women’s team, the Cardinals’ men’s team was also named Southland Conference’s Newcomer of the Year. The Cardinals finished the season with a 3-16 overall record and a 1-11 record in conference play.

All-Sports Banquet honors athletes

The Lamar University track program wrapped up a successful season with a solid performance at the Southland Conference Outdoor Championships, held at the University of Texas-Arlington in May.

The Cardinals collected four individual championships at the SLC meet and sent six runners to the NCAA Regional Track Meet in Austin.

The first championship was won by Amanda King, who broke out the field in the women’s 3,000-meter steeplechase. King shattered the Southland Conference championship record by 21 seconds and set a new national record, running a 10:31.46.

The previous record was 10.52.92 set by Rebecca Johnson of Texas A&M in 2003. King’s time was a new Lamar University record, breaking her own time of 10:44.54 at the Ty Tamble Relays.

In 1990, Zeek transitioned into athletic administration as the school’s first compliance director. The longer he stayed in administration, the more responsibility he accumulated to the point where he handled not only compliance, but also the day-to-day operations of the athletic department.

In 1983, the National Athletic Trainers Association recognized Zeek as National Trainer of the Year, and, in 1988, he was inducted into the NATA Hall of Fame. He was a 1996 inductee into the Cardinal Hall of Honor for his service as the athletic trainer from 1971-90.

Zeek and his wife, Phyllis, have two daughters, Karen Hartzler ‘85 of Boerne and Leanne Jackson ‘90 of Arlington. Having purchased a home in Boerne close to Karen and his two grandchildren, Zeek’s not sure what lies ahead.

“I’ve spent the last 45 years of my life helping others, and I’ve made a lot of contacts,” Zeek said. “I’ve spent all day every day helping others, and I’ve made a lot of friends.”

Among the most memorable events for Zeek are the football team’s win over Baylor in Waco during the 1981 season, the Cardinals’ run to the Sweet 16 in 1980, and the NCAA Regional tournaments by the men’s golf program and the many trips to Austin for baseball NCAA Regionals.

In 35 years, Zeek built friendships that have made his job enjoyable, but none more so than Dr. James Shuffield, who was the athletic department’s athletic trainer. In addition to his training duties, he also headed the training program that sent numerous graduates into athletic training jobs in the professional, collegiate and high school ranks.

Zeek reminisced about his No. 1 source of professional pride: “Seeing the student-athletes I’ve had over the years go and succeed . . . in taking care of young people who get involved in athletics. After that, it’s the student-athletes that I was able to help grow up while they were here.”

“People have been my schedule,” Zeek said. “This is the first time I can look forward to no one making a schedule for me.”

Taking a breather: Zeek retires

Senior Associate Athletics Director Paul Zeek retired Aug. 31. Well wishers gathered for a retirement party to thank him for his service to Lamar’s student-athletes.

Zeek came to Lamar in 1971 as the athletic trainer. In addition to his training duties, he also headed the training program that sent numerous graduates into athletic training jobs in the professional, collegiate and high school ranks.

Zeek reminisced about his No. 1 source of professional pride: “Seeing the student-athletes I’ve had over the years go and succeed . . . in taking care of young people who get involved in athletics. After that, it’s the student-athletes that I was able to help grow up while they were here.”

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In 35 years, Zeek built friendships that have made his job enjoyable, but none more so than Dr. James Shuffield, who was the athletic department’s athletic trainer.

“If not for Dr. Shuffield, I’m not sure what would have happened,” Zeek said.

“When I came here, he made life great for me. He told me when I got here, if I would teach him sports medicine, he would teach me orthopedics.”

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**A Rather sweet weekend**

La Dolce Vita will host The Pastry Queen this fall, and a sweet culinary experience is sure to result. Beaumont native Rebecca Rather will be the featured chef Oct. 20 and 21, when the weekend of fine wine and haute cuisine returns to Lamar University. She is also an author and owner of Rather Sweet Bakery & Café in Freerickburg.

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**JIM SANDERSON**

writing students to continue with their writing, with Pearson-Longman Publishers, traveled from San Antonio to present the awards April 7. "A high school student and someone who were soon to follow—all

La Dolce Vita is the centerpiece of a fundraising campaign to create an endowment that will ensure continuation and enhancement of the museum’s collections and educational programs.

Tickets are $175 per person for the dinner; $45 each for the cooking demonstration and wine pairing; $80 for both cooking class and the dining experience. Reservations are required and may be made by calling (409) 880-8959.

**awiLe and a ScholAR**

Jim Sanderson, professor of English and an award-winning novelist, is the 2005-2006 University Scholar, the recipient of Lamar’s top award recognizing research and creative activity. Sanderson, a faculty member since 1989 and Lamar’s writing director, accepted the prestigious award at a reception hosted by the Office of Research.

"Wow. This has been some semester," Sanderson said in accepting the award April 20. "I’m in January I became writing director. Now I’m getting this; and in another month I’m getting married. I need to catch my breath."

Sanderson has been described as a scholar versed in the literature and landscape of Texas — a prolific talent who writes books you can’t wait to read and whose characters you are eager to meet again.

His books span the literary spectrum from essays and short stories to crime fiction. His latest trilogy following an intriguing band of colorful characters from West Texas to Sanderson’s native San Antonio and back—and on to an intricately researched work of historical fiction. One more novel is completed, and another is in the works, including an extension of the trilogy that began in 1996.

"Sanderson is a prolific and widely respected short-story writer, novelist and critic," said Joe Nordgren, chair of Lamar’s Department of English and Modern Languages. "He is a writer whose work has been acknowledged by the Texas Institute of Letters and the Texas Center for the Book."

Sanderson plans to use the grant that accompanies the award to take time off for projects now underway. Previous works, along with a publisher’s contract award, made possible the publication of his first novel, El Camino del Rio, and his second novel, Delivery Safe. More is on the way, including an extension of the trilogy that began in 1996.

"I believe these awards are praise of our entire writing program. I encourage the winners and all writing students to continue with their writing, no matter their major." — Jim Sanderson

Buna High School junior Amanda Seaman accepted a prestigious writing award at Lamar, received a round of applause and attended a lunch in her honor hosted by the Department of English and Modern Languages. She and her dad were off to a softball diamond at Cold Spring High, where she was starting pitcher for a varsity match-up between the Lady Cougars and the Lady Trojans.

More applause was in store for Alaniz Vasquez, a pre-mechanical engineering major from Orange, who took time off from his job as a mechanic to attend the ceremony. While working full time and commuting from Orange, Vasquez tries to take three classes per semester, he said.

"A writer and a Scholar" are selected as the best of about 2,500 papers. Nordgren said.

The awards presentation was staged in a distance-learning lab in the Education Building and beamed live to a classroom in Buna. While compiling her junior year at Buna High, Seaman is co-enrolled at Lamar, earning dual credit for high school English and college composition.

Byattacks and praise are coming from winning students to continue with their writing, no matter their major," said Jim Sanderson, professor of English and Lamar writing director. "I encourage the winners and all writing students to continue with their writing, no matter their major." - Jim Sanderson

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 Besides building award-winning phrases, Vasquez has spent many years rebuilding engines as a mechanic. He also plays drums, guitar, bass and other instruments. Vasquez is married and the father of a 3-year-old son. The family is active in Orange Community Players.

"I believe these awards are praise of our entire writing program," said Jim Sanderson, professor of English and Lamar writing director. "I encourage the winners and all writing students to continue with their writing, no matter their major."

Longman representative Sorio agreed: "I want to give the award winners a little advice: Writing is a process that doesn’t stop when you’re a freshman in college. ... There are financial rewards, and there are other rewards within yourself that you will receive throughout your lifetime."
It will give viewers a rare insight into Carter’s work and life at festivals, said the hour-long documentary, which highlights Carter’s artistic techniques and philosophy. In addition, the film features an interview with the photographer and Lamar professor, is the subject of the first in a documentary series that presents a comprehensive study of the world’s most influential photographers. Filmmaker John Spellos will also be a guest at the film festival Nov. 10-12 at Lamar.

Carter has lived in Beaumont since early 1990; he moved from New Orleans to Texas in 1992; he has exhibited his work in galleries throughout the U.S. and abroad. He is a 1979 graduate of Lamar, holds the Homer Walles Chair in Visual and Performing Arts at Lamar University. Carter has had more than 70 solo exhibitions and has published monographs of his black and white photographs, including From Uncertain Tolstoi (1988); The Blue Man (1990); Miija (1992); Heaven of Animals (1995); and Rags, 1996. A mid-career survey, Keith Carter Photographs—Twenty Five Years, was published in 1997. Both Holding Venus and Esalki in Her Hair were released in 2000.

His photographs are in permanent collections across the country, including the George Eastman House, the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Wittliff Collec­tion of Southwestern and Mexican Photography at Texas State University.

In 1998, Carter received two of the highest honors given to honor Lamar faculty—the University Professor Award and the Distinguished Faculty Lecturer Award. He is the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Regional Survey Grants and the Langer Taylor Prize from the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. In 1997, Carter was the subject of an arts profile on the national network television program, Different Drummer. He is a member of the American Society of Magazine Photographers, the Arts Regional Council of Lamar University and the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.

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New scholarships benefit students

Family and friends have established two scholarships in the memory of Alicia Bonura and Ashley Brown, the Walt Brown High School soccer players who died in a March school bus accident. The Alicia Bonura Memorial Scholarship in Soccer will be available for award in fall 2007.

John Vila III ’76, vice president and general manager of Alcon’s Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Operations in Fort Worth, has established the Vila-Vila Scholarship in Chemical Engineering in honor of professor of chemical engineering Carl Vila, who is a patent-holder and author of 27 books. Vila’s engineering experience spans process evaluation, research, development and design for Exxon, Ethyl and Texas Instruments. A resulting product, Pavey-Silicon, of his process development work resides with the Smithsonian Institute because of its unique purity and electrical properties. Vila earned a master’s degree in engineering science from Lamar and has 22 years of engineering and management experience in the pharmaceutical and manufacturing industries.

Ed and Tommy Jean Garner have established the Tommy Jean and Harry Edward Garner Scholarship in Business to help young people gain an education that will help them to enjoy life the way the couple has. Ed, a Beaumont native, played clarinet in the Mamie Tillis Band and taught business at Lamar University. Tommy Jean is a graduate of Lamar. She and Tommy Jean have been married for 20 years. Tommy Jean is an associate professor of social work. Ed, the second chairman of the mechanical engineering department, and Tommy Jean, the third, established the Otto Brown Memorial Scholarship in Mechanical Engineering for students majoring in mechanical engineering.

Through their generosity and careful management, the more than 300 members of the Southeast Texas Chapter of the Texas Society of CPAs have endowed a scholarship in accounting in the group’s name. The American Society of Mechanical Engineers Sabine Section has established two scholarship funds, $21,000 each:

- The Otto Brown Memorial Scholarship in Mechanical Engineering
- The Ernest H. Holldridge Memorial Scholarship in Mechanical Engineering

The scholarships honor Holldridge, who was the first chair of the mechanical engineering department, and Brown, the third department chair.

Archie Land was a pioneering program to assist individuals suffering mental illness, substance-related challenges and other kinds of abuse. The Archie Land Good Heart Scholarship for students majoring in social work was established in a bequest from Archie Land Jr., executive director of Land Manör Inc., which operated several halfway houses in Beaumont. In the face of later funding cuts, he fought pas- sionately to maintain services for his clients. In life, he advocated to help those kids blessed with his own talent. His work continues. He is still called him, “Archie Land, the man who made a difference.”

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Friends and family members wanted these two young women to be remembered in perpetuity, and the endowments make that possible.

- The Alicia Bonura Memorial Scholarship in Soccer
- The Ashley Brown Memorial Scholarship in Chemical Engineering

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... and another exciting season for Lamarissimo!

It’s 17 years young and still growing, reaching and making ever more beautiful music for Southeast Texas audiences. Bravissimo to Lamarissimo! Undeterred by a destructive dive named Rita, the show went on, playing to enthusiastic applause in a different venue—the historic Jefferson Theatre—because of damage to the Julie Rogers Theatre. As the hurricane continues, Lamarissimo prepares for its 17th season.

Again, the series has rearranged its lineup, opening Nov. 7 with the Lamar Jazz Band and continuing Dec. 1 with the Holiday Choir Concert — Lamar’s Yuletide gift to the community as well as a celebration of the season. The series resumes in spring 2007 with Faculty Artists, March 6, Wind Ensemble and Concert Band, March 22, and Cardinal Singers and Lamar Dance Company, April 26. All performances begin at 7:30 p.m.

“We’re still recovering, but all the dates are secure in the aftermath,” said H. J. Juy, chairman of the Department of Music Theatre & Dance. “The season is still on, to some extent, reflective of difficulties with Rita. Because of various factors, the lineup is being rearranged.

But I think it’s going to be an exciting season,” Bivel said. “We always think of Lamarissimo as a semi-professional concert series, and this season will be better than ever.”

Concert sponsors, in order of performance, are Bico-Con Contractors Ltd., K J Chevrolet, American Valve & Hydrant, ExxonMobil and Entergy Texas.

Season tickets, priced at $35 for adults and $18 for students, may be purchased in the Department of Music, Theatre & Dance, phone (409) 880-8144. The season tickets include admission to all five Lamarissimo concerts.

... and another exciting season for Lamarissimo!
CHRISTINE BRIDGES-ESSER

"Legends and Miracles: The Pilgrimage Route to Santiago de Compostela" will be the topic of her lecture, to be presented at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 16 in the University Theatre and sponsored by ExxonMobil. A reception in the Dishman Art Museum is planned afterward.

Bridges-Esser has a number of lectures and presentations to her credit and is widely published in professional journals. She has served as chairperson for the Spanish department, an associate professor of Spanish who, though American-born, says she has been Spanish in her heart all her life.

"In Spain they say to me, "Where did you meet your American husband?" When I tell them I am an American, they say, "But we thought you were from here," and I say, "In my heart, I am.""

For Bridges-Esser, the pilgrimage is a time-honored blend of scholarly research and amazing experiences – shared by her husband, James Esser, University Professor of psychology. The most recent of their five pilgrimages was May through July.

"The first few years, we would walk stages of the Camino, then the next year go back to where we stopped and, from there, walk more stages," she said. "This year we did the entire Camino from St. Jean Pied de Port, France, to Santiago de Compostela and then did another stage of the northern route. Along the way, we met a man in his 70s who had done the Camino in stages for the past 10 years. This year, he was doing the last stage and was finally going to make it into Santiago."

Bridges-Esser will make that journey come alive this fall when she presents the 2006 Distinguished Faculty Lecture. She is the 20th recipient of the honor – one of the highest accorded a Lamar faculty member.

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"You name it. Each 100 kilometers has a different menu, different traditions, music, culture, history, language. We've happened upon festivals where we were invited to eat free, fresh grilled sardines and drink free cider, dance traditional dances and just have a great time talking to the people."

— CHRISTINE BRIDGES-ESSER
Getting a film finished takes a frenetic, read-on-anything pace against time, personalities and expenses that drain the energy of the participants even as it pulsates with life. "It's got its own brain," Bernini said. "It's got its own pulse and its own brain."

"I don't know if I'll ever get them out of my system."
Four Lamar University students recently stepped out of their comfort zones to work with children of all ages in Chunox, a rural village in Belize. For 10 days at Camp Believe – so named to complement their motto of “Believe in you, believe in me!” – their mission was to engage the children in creative playtime through music, arts and crafts and simple science to learn more about American culture while giving themselves an opportunity to explore the villagers’ culture and way of life.

The students planned each day’s activities around a specific theme: beach day, opposite day, Earth day, space day and mystery day.

Josmary Ramirez, a sophomore vocal performance major from Baytown, described beginning the first day by “singing *Baby Shark* with all the hand and body movements, and these kids thought we were absolutely crazy,” she said. “But, by the third day or so, they really started to trust us and began having fun. It was really great because they don’t get to do these things very often. They have to harvest fruits and vegetables, feed the chickens and do their chores.”

The children made masquerade masks of feathers and glitter; constructed paper pirate hats, swords and eye patches; learned the art of origami; worked puzzles; and even built and launched their own rudimentary rockets for space day.

Adapting to their new surroundings, the students were housed with a matriarch of the village, a woman by the name of Estella Santoya. They stayed in a concrete, one-room building where they slept on mattresses on the floor. The village has no running water or sewerage system and only primitive bathing facilities.

The food in the village, however, did merit praise from the travelers. Fresh fruit, fresh eggs, beans, bananas, coconuts and plenty of tortillas were the standard daily fare. Josh Bucklew, a senior chemical engineering major from Nederland, was amazed by the green oranges that were much sweeter than oranges from stores in the United States.

Donna Birdwell, director of the University Honors Program, conducted research on the village, the people and the culture in the 1970s. She has maintained her relationships with many residents of the village as well as the principal of the school in the village and has made this trip with Lamar students once before.

“Our students were terrific. They worked very hard and were dedicated to their tasks,” said Birdwell. “They did three two-hour sessions every day and had from 20 to 50 kids at each session. They were very intelligent about what they did and had to do a significant amount of planning. However, they were wise enough to adapt their plans to the realities in the village.”

Belize’s economy is based on agriculture; however, more than 20 percent of the gross national product is derived from tourism, so it wasn’t all work and no play for the Lamar ambassadors. The students were able to spend two nights and one day at a modern hotel in Orange Walk, a popular Belize tourist destination. From there, they traveled to the offshore island of Lamanai to explore a few Mayan ruins.

“We took a river trip to Lamanai and saw manatees and alligators on the way” said Bucklew. “We climbed to the top of the highest Mayan ruin called the Temple of the Rain God. We listened to the sounds of the howler monkeys in the forest below and that was a little scary, but it was an amazing experience.”

Deepthi Lingam, a biology major from Port Arthur, and Ashley Barnes, accounting major from Longview, also made the trip. The students are members of Rotaract, a university-based service organization sponsored by the Rotary Club of Beaumont.