

COM News

August 2010 Employee Newsletter

Chemistry professor heading to India for year of service to the poor

Tom Johnson has always used his chemistry lab at COM to introduce his students to the “science of matter,” but starting this fall Johnson will be showing students what matters most to him as he takes a sabbatical to his native India to work with the poor.

“My passion is to help the underprivileged children and other villagers in the rural areas,” Johnson explained. “This includes taking care of the many orphans and poor children, conducting medical camps for the poor villagers, feeding the hungry, drilling wells, and advancing adult literacy.”

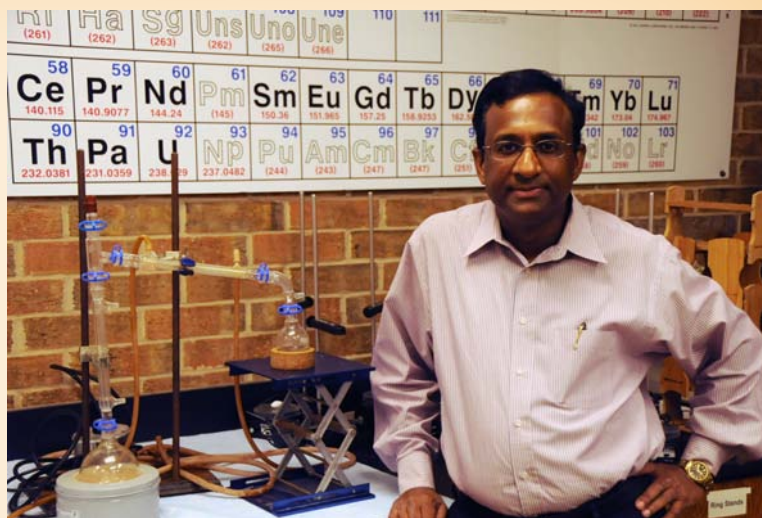
Johnson, who grew up Christian in Southern India, saw the plight of the poor as a student in northern India. He has been performing humanitarian work there for the past 15 years, using his time off from teaching in summers and Christmas holidays to perform what he considers his calling.

“My family and I are blessed by God so we go back each year to make sure the money we raise is providing the care and community services for the people who need it most,” Johnson explained. “These visits to the rural areas of West Bengal challenge my family to sacrifice some of our comforts to spend quality time improving the lives of the less fortunate.”

Johnson’s wife, who has 20 years experience in clinical laboratory science, will accompany him and together they plan to coordinate community services and work with teachers to connect simple scientific principles to real life situations.

The Johnsons are also bringing their 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son with them on what promises to be a humanitarian adventure of a lifetime. In fact, Johnson has already set up a web site—proffessorforthepoor.com—and plans to send back regular You Tube video reports and blogs about his work in the village to encourage COM students and others to value community service.

“When I return to COM in August 2011, I plan to present my experience to students and employees in special presentations that will motivate everyone to engage in local community outreach,” he said. “Educated and passionate volunteers are needed in every community. Community service, whether in a distant land or across town enriches the lives of all of us.”



**Employee Recognition and
Retiree Luncheon**

Friday, August, 27, 2010

11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Student Center

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Houston playwright/actor returns to COM stage



“It couldn’t please me more”— Herr Schmidt (Steve Garfinkel) and Fraulein Schneider (Zona Jane Meyer) share a tender moment and a pineapple in a scene from “Cabaret,” now playing at College of the Mainland Community Theatre in Texas City through August 8.

Steve Garfinkel who plays Herr Schmidt, the Jewish fruit seller in the College of the Mainland Community Theatre’s production of Cabaret, is no stranger to the theater though he had not appeared on a COM stage in more than 30 years. But the intervening years allowed the Houstonian to flourish as a playwright, director and actor. Besides co-authoring the long-running rock musical “Stomp,” he has written 14 plays produced professionally in Houston, Nashville and Dallas, and directed 19 plays at Main Street Theater in Houston.

A few years ago, Garfinkel was commissioned by Main Street Theater to write the book for “Ps and Qs: The ABCs of Manners” while four-time Grammy Award nominee Trout Fishing in America was commissioned to write the music.

“I had written several commissioned adaptations of children’s literature for Main Street’s Youth Theater program, and when they decided to create this musical they approached me to write the book, even though this was to be “created from the ground up” rather than as an adaptation of an existing work,” Garfinkel explained.

The director of “Ps and Qs” was Mark Adams, COM Community Theatre’s executive director who also directs “Cabaret.”

“Our collaboration on that play was a great experience, and since I’d always liked Mark’s work as a director, the chance to audition for

the role of Herr Schultz in “Cabaret” provided an opportunity I couldn’t resist,” he said.

Garfinkel has been acting for 44 years, but hadn’t directed professionally until about 22 years ago.

“I have written since I was a kid, although my first writing for the stage, professionally, was about 27 years ago,” he noted.

He co-wrote STOMP in 1969 with several other University of Texas students. The rock musical, not to be confused with the 1990s percussion production by the same name, played Austin, Houston, Atlanta and eventually off Broadway before heading off to Europe for a successful six month tour.

But it was back in Houston where Garfinkel honed his skills as a playwright, actor and director, and worked with many local actors and directors who eventually formed the core group of Main Street Theater.

“I have seen theater on and off Broadway, and other places and consider some of the talent in Houston and the productions done here equal to anything one can see anywhere.”

And Grafinkel applauds his fellow “Cabaret” actors, too.

“Everyone involved with the production, from the cast to the musical director and choreographer to the set, costume and lighting designers and production stage manager, brings a huge amount of talent to the mix making it the outstanding theatrical experience that it is.”

The musical runs through August 8 at the COM Community Theatre Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2.30 p.m. For ticket information call the box office at ext. 345. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.com.edu/theatre.



PACT program “commended” by state for curriculum, student support

The Texas education Agency (TEA) “commended” COM’s Partners in Alternative Teaching Certification (PACT) program for its strong curriculum, active advisory committee and teacher support, and for being in compliance in all areas addressed in the TEA code. The recently released written report followed a January site visit by TEA.

“The TEA site visit was extremely successful,” said PACT director Carla Boone.

“It was a very productive exercise for our program to experience as it allowed us to more clearly see our successes, as well as areas where we could continue to improve. The TEA committee validated our belief that we have a strong, exemplary teacher preparation program. We were especially thrilled with the support we received from Dr. Elam, the PACT Advisory Committee and PACT Faculty during the audit process.”

The TEA site visit was the first for the program since its initial approval in May 2002. Since then, the PACT program has had 395 Galveston County individuals become certified Texas educators, receiving their standard teaching certificate.

Congratulations to Carla and the PACT staff for eight great years of preparing more qualified teachers to enter Galveston County classrooms.

Information nights planned for August

The Partners in Alternative Certification for Teachers (PACT) will hold an information meeting Monday, August 2 at 6 p.m. at PACT office in Suite 4 at Appomattox Square. Those holding a bachelor’s degree who wish to become primary and secondary school teachers should attend this informative meeting. For more information, call ext. 610 or go to www.pact4teachers.com.

PTEC Information Night

College of the Mainland will hold an information meeting about its process technology degree program Tuesday, August 10 at 5:30 p.m. in Room T-1101 of the Technical-Vocational Building. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss high paying careers in process technology and outstanding employment opportunities along the Texas Gulf Coast and elsewhere. Industry and college personnel will be on hand to answer questions and describe what it takes to work in an industry making \$60,000 a year or more. For more information, call ext. 536.

Reminder about hurricane season

Have you updated your contact information for the College’s Hyperalert emergency notification system? The system will notify all employees and students when the College closes or reopens during hurricanes or other emergency situations. Employees should go to www.hyperalert.com and the user ID is ***** and the password is *****. The asterisks represent your COM 7-digit ID and your password. You can also go to <http://www.com.edu/police/hyperalert.cfm> for more information.

Birthdays

Michele Betancourt	Faculty, Social Behavioral Science	8/2	Dianna Munson	Faculty, Nursing	8/20
Joann McNeill	Administrative Assistant, Media Services	8/2	Terry White	Faculty, Humanities	8/20
Janet Wortman	Director of Distance Education	8/6	JaMargaret Lowry	Faculty, Nursing	8/21
Ronald Collins	Maintenance Technician	8/7	Rose Shirey	Faculty, Academic Success	8/21
Jennifer Williams	Administrative Assistant, Teacher Education	8/7	Maryann Urick	Director of Recreation, Student Life	8/22
Regina Castro	Coordinator of Publications, Marketing	8/8	Susan Meadows	Administrative Assistant, Public Service Careers	8/23
Qing Li	Faculty, Social Behavioral Science	8/8	Denise Parrish	Buyer, Purchasing	8/23
Donna Bohmfalk	Faculty, Nursing	8/11	Aurea Carrera	Faculty, Nursing	8/24
Frank Barbuto	Administrative Assistant, Adult Education	8/13	Marvel Jackson	Systems Analyst, Information Tech Services	8/24
Jerry Bryant	Faculty, Physical Education	8/14	Christina Poston	Records Specialist, Admissions	8/24
Cynthia Kater	Database Disability Support, SSS	8/14	Jeannette Slaughter	Administrative Assistant, Physical Education	8/24
Byron Williams	Grounds Worker	8/14	Ellen Chicon	Faculty, Cosmetology	8/25
Martha Willis	Professional Trainer, Prof Development Academy	8/15	Margaret Cussen	Instructional Designer, Distance Education	8/27
Leslie Richardson	Faculty, Science/Math	8/15	Tracy Orr	Faculty, Science/Math	8/27
Kristi White	Instructional Designer, Continuing Education	8/16	Jameeka Williams	Advisor, Public Service Careers	8/27
Ricky Ertell	Counselor, Nursing	8/17	Arlinda Billington	Faculty, Nursing	8/29
John Kiefer	Faculty, Performing and Visual Arts	8/18	Judy Pryor	Administrative Assistant, Foundation	8/30
Vernon Ewell	Police Officer	8/19	Charles Dwyer	Technical Writer, National Science Foundation	8/31
Chandra Iwasaki	Web Support Specialist, Distance Education	8/19	CB Wilborne	Bookstore Manager	8/31
Roger Stallings	Faculty, Humanities	8/19			

Get Ready, Set, Bid ... Online Auction set for September

The Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Committee is preparing for another online auction that will begin in September. There will be artwork, ceramics, Oaxaca items, jewelry and much more. If you would like to donate, please contact Gina Castro at gcastro@com.edu for more information. All proceeds will go toward the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship fund.



Years of Service List

If anyone has already received an award to please notify HR in addition to notifying HR if your name should be on the list

40 years		Janis Cutaia	08/01/95	5 Years		Martin Perez	01/03/05
Tillie Henson	09/01/69	Christine Brown	08/14/95	Melissa Collins	05/10/04	Elida Matthews	01/03/05
Jerome Anderson	07/01/70	Kathye Bergin	08/21/95	Sabrina Vincent	05/18/04	Cynthia Kater	01/03/05
William Spillar	08/24/70	Pete Rygaard	08/26/95	Elodia Salazar	06/01/04	Kirk McVey	01/10/05
30 Years		Paul Boyd	08/26/95	Anita Garcia	07/06/04	Crystal Collins	01/10/05
Rita Miller	09/05/79	10 Years		Leanne Downton	07/06/04	Pamela Millsap	01/10/05
Carolyn Sharer	08/04/80	Carla Boone	08/23/99	Scott Turnbough	07/19/04	Karen Elliott	01/10/05
25 Years		Rafael Naranjo	08/23/99	Melissa Judson	07/26/04	Sylvia Chapa	02/01/05
Melvin Williams	08/12/85	Terry White	08/23/99	Bernard Smiley	08/23/04	Martha Crain	03/01/05
20 Years		Sheryl Wright	09/01/99	David Anderson	08/23/04	Cory Oliver	03/01/05
Nicholas Canton	06/01/89	Elaine Baker	09/01/99	George Bowes	08/23/04	Cindy Gallaway	03/29/05
Matthew Clausen	08/01/89	Courtney Moore	11/01/99	Tyishka McDavid	08/23/04	Arnetta Henderson	04/01/05
M. Ravandi	09/01/89	Bonnie Hoy-Myers	11/01/99	Elizabeth Hammett	08/23/04	Leticia Wilson	04/01/05
Richard Nowak	09/01/89	Donna Allen	11/01/99	Carla Anderson	08/23/04	Kathlene Robles	04/04/05
Jewell Mobley	09/15/89	Lisa Templar	12/01/99	Marianne Friedell	08/23/04	Monica O'Neal	04/25/05
Regina Castro	01/03/90	Thomas Johnson	01/03/00	Luis Sabido	09/01/04	Marnie Schutz	05/01/05
Dorothy Jones	06/01/90	Janet Wortman	01/18/00	JaMargaret Lowry	09/17/04	Joann McNeill	06/01/05
15 Years		Phyllis Batten	02/29/00	Katherine Friedrich	09/27/04	Theresa Jones	07/25/05
Ellen Chicon	09/01/94	Steven Sewell	05/30/00	Jerrye Grady	10/11/04	James Tabor	08/22/05
Doloris Dutton	10/17/94	Anne Kettler	06/01/00	Jimmi Selman	11/22/04	Bridget Walton	08/22/05
Jacqueline Andres	12/12/94	Hortencia Garza	07/05/00	Karen Earl	01/01/05		
Judith Hudson	05/01/95	Blanca Comeaux	07/24/00				
		James Cobb	08/21/00				

Retirees

Aguirre, Juanita	Hanson, Harry	Nowak, Rich
Anderson, Hollis	Hassinger, Janet	Rac, David
Anderson, Jerome	Hayward, Galen	Rodriguez, Rebecca
Arcidiacono, Nunzio	Higgins, James	Smith, Larry
Blizzard, Margaret	Huerta, Guillermo	Spillar, William
Bryant, J B	Jones, Hilda	Templar, James
Casper, Carol	Jones, Rita	Tolden, Earl
Cothorn, Debbie	Magee, Kay	Urick, Maryann
Dutton, Doloris	Marshall, Mona	Vodovar, Marilyn
Ewell, Vernon	McGary, LaVeta	Washington, Arlinda
Fiesel, August	Miller, Rita	Whistler, Alice
Gordy, Sharon	Moran, Cathy	Wilcox, Anne
Gust-Thomason, Suzanne	Neinas, Eva	

Employee Engagement Survey Coming Soon

In September the University of Houston will be conducting an Employee Engagement Survey for College of the Mainland. This is your opportunity to share your views and opinions about the college and your job. The survey is completely confidential and will help us develop communication methods and training programs for employees. If you have any questions please contact Kathy Friedrich at ext. 150 or Lana Pigao at ext. 434.

What are audit services?

Audit services assist College Trustees and management to effectively perform their responsibilities as decision makers through audit recommendations to improve the effectiveness of risk management and internal controls. Audit services are independent and objective, as the internal auditor reports directly to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees and comply with professional standards from the Institute of Internal Auditors.

College policy CDC (REGULATION) requires audit services to assist management in areas of reviewing operating controls, assuring compliance to college policies, safeguarding assets, assuring the reliability of management data, appraising services performed, and recommending operational improvements. Audit services are scheduled in an Annual Audit Plan approved by the Board of Trustees and result primarily from a risk assessment review with management. Other audit services during the plan year include unscheduled management requests and investigations of suspected activity.

To discuss how audit services may add value to your business operation, please contact the internal auditor, Frank Scheidler at ext. 695.



Do the math without the stress

Enroll in Math for Liberal Arts (MATH-1332-221CL), a survey class that covers a variety of topics for non-math majors. Not only does it satisfy the degree requirement for an associate of arts, but it can also satisfy the math requirement for these workforce programs:

AAS – Business Administration/Emphasis in Accounting
AAS – Emphasis in Marketing
AAS – Net Sys Tech/Inter Web Adm
AAS – Net Sys Tech/Open Source

AAS – Emphasis in Management
AAS – Graphic Arts/Web Design
AAS – Net Sys Tech/MS Net Admin

Classes meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 to 8:50 p.m.

Math for Liberal Arts takes a lot of the stress out of College Algebra.

Talk to an advisor today or call Ext. 244 for details.

August continuing education classes

Have you used your FREE summer class yet? Consider taking one of these CE classes at the COM Learning Center in League City:

Intermediate Photoshop

Tuesdays and Thursdays
6:30 to 9 p.m.
August 3 - August 12

Introductory PowerPoint

Tuesdays and Thursdays
6:30 to 8:45 p.m.
August 3 - 12

Floral design strictly bridal

Mondays
6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
August 9 - 30

For information about any of these classes, call 281-332-1800.

Set the Record Straight

Q We seem to be able to welcome new children and grandchildren to our family. What happened to letting the employees know if someone has left or is leaving the college family for whatever reason - retirement, perhaps leaving for a better position somewhere else? It would be nice to say goodbye and wish them well, instead of hearing it through the grapevine. I think a lot of employees are wondering the same thing.



A I like the idea. For those who wish to participate, with their permission, we will send out a notice.

Q When an employee logs into Web Advisor, why is there no information showing under the categories of "View my employment action history" and "Pay Advices"? Will Datatel ever be set up to show this information? Also, under "Position Summary" Datatel shows start date of employment, etc. It seems to me that a position summary would give more information than that. Why not?

A Starting in September Pay Advices will be available.

Q Why do some people have their names on nameplates in TVB and others do not? There is no one template and several styles. Students notice.

A Marketing will be creating a request form for all door plates. They will be generated once a month (like name tags and business cards). This will bring consistency to the campus.

Q When will the organization chart for the VP of Instruction/ Exec VP of Instruction be shared with staff?

A I plan on sharing this and other important information at convocation.

Q There have been several dead and severed branches hanging from trees on the esplanade for almost one week. Who trims those trees—the city or COM? That kind of clutter sends a messy message to folks arriving on campus from that direction. Can someone ask the city to remove them?

A This has been handled.

Q There is a position listed on the chart that states Vacant (Interim) IT Director Applications/ Financial. Is this a new position or is it occupied?

A This position is filled.

Q We rarely have any students call or stop by our office on Fridays during the summer semester. Would you ever consider changing the work week in the summer to be closed on Fridays like almost all the other community colleges in the area?

A If the right conditions present themselves, I will consider it. However many offices that do see students on a regular basis on Friday and with Weekend College kicking off in the fall, we anticipate weekends (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) being busy.

Q How about a Town Hall type meeting every two weeks opens to all on campus with questions? The president would take on all issues face to face with faculty, students, administrators etc. This would help be more transparent to the staff.

A This is a good idea. I would like to start with once a month and see what kind of interest unfolds.

Q Since Board policy DDA (Local) regarding contract personnel states that reappointment will be placed on the Board agenda in April and DMAB (LOCAL) states that 90 calendar notice will be given if contract is not renewed, does that mean that if we have not been told that we are not renewed then we can assume that we are? See policies attached.

A All employees impacted were notified according to policy. The reappointment list was submitted to the Board during their April board meeting. So your assumptions are correct.

If you have a question you would like President Elam to answer, please submit your question to your council president.