Putting COM on the map

On Wednesday, Feb. 23, COM’s new electronic sign was turned on and is now running messages.

A new sign was installed recently for COM Cosmetology. The sign is in Gulfway Plaza Outlet Mall in La Marque.

COM’s Administration Building received new signage on Monday, Feb. 28. The building has been renamed the Enrollment Center, which is a one-stop shop for students.
Dr. Bill Spillar retires after 41 years of service.

Astrid Lowery, Humanities, shares with Spillar the April 1987 issue of the student paper InterCOM, covering a story about him.

Dr. Spillar’s twin daughters, Kelley and Karen, attended the retirement reception and praised their father’s hard work, dedication and love for the students.
Appreciation from Oaxaca University

Dr. Bernie Smiley and James Tabor were awarded certificates of appreciation from the University of Oaxaca Feb. 10 for their involvement in the Oaxaca Study Abroad Program last summer. Both Smiley and Tabor gave lectures at the University of Oaxaca during the trip. Rafael Naranjo presented the awards for the University of Oaxaca. Left to right, Martin Perez, International Student Counselor; Dr. Bernie Smiley, Faculty; Rafael Naranjo, Director of Oaxaca Study Abroad Program; and James Tabor, Faculty.

Student-Faculty Mixer

More than 50 students and faculty talked during college hour Feb. 17 in front of the Learning Resource Center. Dr. Elam gave a presentation about the need for a bond to renovate buildings and the addition of new buildings to the campus.

COM President Michael Elam visited the Mainland Optimist Club. From left to right, James Rankin, Lieutenant Governor of the Optimist International Clubs, Zone 15, South Texas District; Michael Elam, COM President; William McGarvey, COM Graduate and current President of the Mainland Optimist Club.
Alumna of COM music brings students to campus

The Spearman High School Band from Spearman, Texas, will perform a concert March 11 at 7 p.m., in the Fine Arts Building Recital Hall.

Amber TeBeest is a 1998 graduate of LaMarque High school and attended College of the Mainland from 1999-2001. While at COM, TeBeest studied Music Education, and participated in the jazz combo and the concert band. She was also the first recipient of the Larry Stanley Music Scholarship.

TeBeest has been the Director of Bands for Spearman ISD since 2005.

The band has 52 members and half of the ensemble will be traveling for the concert and then staying in Galveston for the weekend. To attend the trip to COM, students fundraised and earned the money to travel. “This will be not only a wonderful musical experience for these students, but also a life experience. Many of these students have never seen the Gulf of Mexico. Teaching music is about instilling a life-long love of music and the arts but also encouraging these students to always try and experience new things,” said TeBeest.

For details contact Sparky Koerner at ext. 8347.

Emerging Ceramic Artists in Texas

The COM Art Gallery presents Emerging Ceramic Artists in Texas through March 31. Artists included in the exhibit are Jennifer Ling Dutchuk, Kira Kalondy Enriquez, Marianne McGrath and Ryan Takaba. An artist talk and reception will be held March 3 at 1:30 p.m. in the gallery. For details and gallery hours, call Mayuko Gray at ext. 8354.
March Birthdays

Birthday information is submitted by Human Resources. If there is a discrepancy in your birthdate or title, please contact HR.

Nancy Oliver  Child Development Specialist  3/1
Martin Perez  Admissions-International Students  3/2
Laura Divine  Assistant Registrar, Admissions  3/4
Lisa Plasek  Accounting Specialist, Financial Services  3/10
Doloris Dutton  Library Technician  3/13
Estela Leon  Administrative Assistant, Nursing  3/13
Doc Miller  Faculty, Continuing Education  3/13
Tige Cornelius  Coordinator of Wellness  3/14
Darin Plasek  Auto Mechanic  3/14
Giao Nguyen  Computer Support Specialist, IT Services  3/15
Katherine Friedrich  Director, Institutional Research  3/16
Alan Bigos  Faculty, Academic Success  3/18
Ethel Johnson  Custodian  3/18
Pamela Millsap  Faculty, Social and Behavioral Sciences  3/20
Lester Taylor  Custodian  3/23
Hortencia Garza  Custodian  3/24
Tina Burkhalter  Administrative Assistant, Public Service Careers  3/25
Vernette Jones  Police Officer  3/26
Michael Johnson  Professional Trainer, Continuing Education  3/26
Juanita Sanchez  Administrative Assistant, Strategic Enrollment Mgmt  3/26
George Bowes  Faculty, Performing/Visual Arts  3/29
Johnny Tinsley  Custodian  3/29
Fatima Abdeldaim  Academic Advisor, Advisement/Testing Services  3/31

Welcome

Please welcome Eric Goins to COM. Eric is the new communications coordinator in Marketing and Communications. Eric will be handling media relations, communications and writing, as well as photography.

Eric is formerly Director of Business Direction for the Gulf Coast MDA, copy editor at the Tyler Morning Telegraph and he has held various photographer positions. Eric has a bachelor’s degree in geography and communications from Stephen F. Austin State University.

If you have a story or event that you would like Eric to promote, submit a media request. Eric’s extension is 8438.

Getting your information publicized

Remember to visit the Marketing website at www.com.edu/marketing to submit requests for:

On-Hold Messages · to announce your event on the recorded message played while callers are on hold.

Social Networking Web Request · to have your event, activity or announcement posted on COM’s Facebook and Twitter websites.

Paid Advertisement Request Form · to develop a paid ad for newspapers, magazines or other print or online media.

Media Request Form · to have information published in the local newspapers and websites including COM’s. Remember that the newspapers do not always publish everything we send them.

Mark Your Calendar

March 7
COMPACT Information Meeting 6 to 8 p.m., Appomattox Square, Suite 6

March 10
Career and University Expo 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the COM Gymnasium

March 11
The Spearman High School Band Concert 7 p.m., in the Fine Arts Building Recital Hall

through March 31
Emerging Ceramic Artists in Texas Call for times, Art Gallery
I counted 57 different Math classes in the spring schedule (academics) and only two classes for this specialty program (workforce) that were canceled. It would be nice, but we all won’t have degrees. We live, work and cater to the working class. We are the working class. To take away the very programs that develop on-the-job training seems to be a step back. It is very disheartening to give 150 percent and then what? For a specialty program to grow it must be here. I have worked very, very hard to build a program for COM, one that I would be pleased to be associated with. I have taught 2, 4 and 6 classes per semester, from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. to build a strong program and to continue the momentum. The community needs to know that classes, programs, certificates and/or degrees are attainable here on a continuous basis. Not an “if.” Help, how do we prevent this from happening again?

Our workforce and technical programs are extremely important to the College and the community. In fact, more than half of our students are enrolled in these programs, and our community employers rely on the programs to train and develop a superior talent pool of highly skilled workers. Some programs experience ups and downs in enrollment – sometimes dependent on the job market – and we then must make adjustments in our offerings if there are not enough students enrolled to offer a particular class. I don’t know which program you are referring to, but I can tell you that several of the technical programs are currently under review to make adjustments in offerings to ease program completion. If you have suggestions about ways to better schedule classes to meet students’ needs I would urge you to share those with the department chairperson or dean over that area. We value your input in ways to better serve our students and surrounding employers.

Why would COM launch a new website that is so incomplete, that the Associate of Arts Degrees are not listed on this website or any of the Department Web pages, there are no Syllabus on the website. How is this helping students find out what they need via the web at COM?

We made some errors and learned some lessons on implementing the new website. The website looks wonderful and will be very helpful to students once all the information and appropriate adjustments have been made. We apologize for any confusion and inconvenience that may have been caused, however, we would also like to commend Chris Carpenter and the Marketing staff for their hard work and effort to launch a more user-friendly College website. Mission accomplished! We will continue to improve the site.
Will you be promoting employees who deserve to be promoted or promoting those employees who are socializing with decision makers to get promoted?

I have had no discussion about promoting any employee. If I were going to promote an employee it would not be based on who they socialized with but rather on competence, performance and their ability to get the job done.

Is it true the new VP was told to apply for this job by a COM director who already knew him? Isn’t this a conflict of interest? Won’t he now favor this person?

No.

What exactly is Institutional Advancement? Is this fundraising? Since our last director of development left we have not had a strong fundraiser. Will you expect the director to have a stronger, more prominent role in bringing money to COM?

Institutional Advancement is creating resources to move the institution forward and this includes fundraising and grants development. Most of all it includes developing friends to the College willing to contribute large sums that will help provide adequate resources for faculty and students. Yes.

Grants or other money have been brought to COM by other people. Like other colleges, will you be setting a monetary goal for the director to reach?

Yes.

Where will the contents of the SMP application be kept and who will ultimately be responsible for the safekeeping of the personal information? I believe great and positive strides have been made to maintain confidentiality in our personnel, business (accounting) and student records. I applaud the lock and key. Is the same rigor going to be made for an individual’s SMP information: DISK, etc.?

All of the records will be kept in my office.

Will the SMP have incentive funds available if it is recommend for an individual to enroll in a doctoral level class to prepare them for the job of tomorrow?

I am exploring the possibility of creating a supplement that employees would be eligible for. I have no details at this point but once it’s developed I will share with those that are interested.

What is the new URL for the COM Rumor Mill? Or is it no longer available?

www.com.edu/rumors/. It is up and running.
Set the Record Straight, continued

Q  Recently I had to attend a BOT meeting and noticed that the room was packed with COM employees. When the president first started here he told us that employees who have no business at the BOT meetings but want to attend the meetings can do so on their lunch hour or take leave. I understand why certain employees are attending the meetings like the marketing director, the IR director, the HR AVP but looking through the agenda I didn’t understand why the foundation director, the diversity director, the leadership director were there. Do directors just get to attend these three-hour meetings or are they required, like the rest of us, to take leave to be at the meetings? Are we back to double-standard rules?

A  They are professional employees. They had a purpose for being there. My recollection is that all of the individuals did not stay for the entire time until their portion on the agenda was done. There are no double standards.

If you have a question you would like President Elam to answer, submit your question to your council president.
Faculty Council President - Leslie Richardson
Professional Council President - Tamara Hoodye
Classified Council President - Nancy Chacon

All questions are submitted to Marketing without names or identifying information.

Early Voting
Monday - Friday | May 2 - May 10, 2011

Election Day
Saturday, May 14, 2011 | 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

All registered voters living within the College of the Mainland taxing district are eligible to vote. The COM taxing district includes these independent school districts: Dickinson, Hitchcock, La Marque, Santa Fe and Texas City.

COM’s Hispanic Organization for Learning Advancement presents

Latino Education and Advocacy Days Summit

Monday, March 28, 2011
College of the Mainland, L-131
8. a.m. - 5 p.m.

The objective of the LEAD summit is to promote a broad-based awareness of the crisis in Latino Education and to enhance the intellectual, cultural and personal development of our community’s educators, administrators, leaders and students.

For more information or to register, e-mail hola@com.edu or call Ext. 8243.

Sponsored by COM’s HOLA
(Hispanic Organization for Learning Advancement)
Co-sponsored by DALO (Dream Act Leadership Organization)
Internal Auditing Services

In the August 2010 Employee Newsletter I answered the question, what are audit services?

I want to add to that. Direct audit hours are spent in three ways. One way is on operational reviews that concern a department’s business activities from a perspective of best practices, efficiency and effectiveness, and adequate internal controls for risk management. A second way is on compliance reviews that concern a department’s following of laws, regulations, industry standards and college policies. A third way is on providing advisory services that primarily include reviews requested by management throughout the fiscal year regarding risks or areas of concern, but also investigations of allegations of moral turpitude as defined in college policy DH (LOCAL) and follow-up reviews of previously issued audits.

Of interest is that the advisory services segment as a percentage of direct audit hours has grown, for example, 38 percent for fiscal year 2010 compared to 30 percent through January of the current fiscal year. This illustrates an increasing risk management effort by departments to ensure that perceived risks and areas of concern are addressed.

For more information on Internal Auditing services for your department, please contact me by phone or visit my office in Appomattox Square. Also, an archive of all Internal Auditing articles presented in the Employee Newsletter are now in a PowerPoint presentation. Please go to Internal Auditing at infocentral (I:) and click on Employee Newsletter Articles.

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

COM’s Experts Guide and Speakers Bureau

The Marketing and Communications Department is updating COM’s Experts Guide and forming a Speakers Bureau. If you would like to participate in either one of these or both of these, please send your name, educational background, area of expertise and a short bio to lpgao@com.edu.

Experts Guide

The College of the Mainland Experts Guide is a list of College faculty and staff who, because of the depth of their knowledge and experience, are considered experts in various fields. This guide is a tool for the media to use when searching for expert sources for news stories. It also represents those COM experts who have experience or an interest in speaking with journalists.

Speakers Bureau

The COM Speakers Bureau is a means of disseminating and exchanging educational, vocational, and cultural information between the people of the greater Houston-Galveston area and the faculty and staff of COM. These faculty and staff members have volunteered to speak at professional and civic organizations on a variety of subjects.