

## COM News

May 2011 Employee Newsletter



### Friendship agreement signed

COM President Michael Elam and Rafael Torres Valdez, president of Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca, signed a friendship agreement between the schools Friday, April 15. The Consulate General of Mexico in Houston and the Consulate General of Japan attended the event.

### Mural unveiled

Internationally-renowned artist Maestro Shinzaburo Takeda unveiled his mural that he created painted in collaboration with COM art students. The mural was unveiled with the help from COM President Michael Elam, Rafael Torres Valdez, president of Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca, Consulate General of Mexico in Houston, Consulate General of Japan in Houston, COM Board Member Clem Prevost, COM Board Member Bennie Mathews and various COM faculty and staff.

Maestro Takeda was the first speaker in the Robert Handy International Lecture Series. Maestro Takeda spoke on the history and social influence of mural movements in Mexico. He also discussed the history of Afro-Oaxaqueños and how he supports the social group through his art.

The Robert Handy International Lecture Series is an ongoing series that will feature experts on international affairs.



### HOLA donates to project

COM's Hispanic Organization for Learning Advancement (HOLA) donated \$100 to the Takeda Art Project.

Left to right: Linda Moreno, Rosie Rojas, VP of HOLA, Martin Perez, Gina Castro, President of HOLA, Rafael Naranjo, Maestro Shinzaburo Takeda, Misayo Tsutsui and Mayuko Gray

## COM News

May 2011 Employee Newsletter

### Sewell recognized by BOT

Dr. Steve Sewell was recognized at the March Board of Trustees meeting for his service as President of the Southwestern Historical Association for 2010-11.



### Motorcycle adventures

COM celebrated National Library Week April 14 in the library with speaker Johanna Liska. Liska spoke about her father's motorcycle adventures. There was a slideshow of pictures from his adventures, as well as his motorcycles.

Liska's father, Danny, was the first person to travel by motorcycle from the Arctic Circle in Alaska to Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America. He rode a BMW R60/2. He began his journey in the summer of 1959, reaching his northern-most point, Arctic Circle City, Alaska, in August. When the days

began to get shorter, he returned to his home in Niobara, Nebraska, for the winter. In the spring of 1960, he headed South and made it to Panama City on Thanksgiving Day. He shipped his bike from there to Medellin, Columbia, then walked across the Darien Gap on "the Smuggler's Trail." He retrieved his bike in Medellin, rode throughout much of South America, and made it to the end of the road in Ushuaia, Argentina in 1961.

This is a major feat today but in 1961 it was unheard of. BMW was so pleased, they gave him a brand new motorcycle, which he rode from North Cape, Norway, to South Cape near Capetown, South Africa.

### Week of the Young Child

Students at COM's Lab School celebrate Week of the Young Child with a Children's Parade through campus Tuesday, April 12. The students walked a loop around the campus celebrating the event. The Lab School also had an art, lemonade and bake sale to raise funds for the lab.





## PTK Spring Induction

---

College of the Mainland held its Spring 2011 Induction Ceremony for the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society on Sunday, March 27. A total of 31 students were inducted as new members of the Sigma Delta Chapter. To be eligible, students must be a current student, have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher and have completed at least 12 credit hours at COM. The guest speaker of the ceremony was 2010 COM graduate, Ms. Thu Vy, who currently is attending the University of Texas at Arlington pursuing a degree in physical therapy.



COM Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society inducted new members on March 27. Inductees are: Lisa Allison, Tomeka Blanks, Cathe Brown, Wendy Brown, Sarah Clem, Patrick Damrath, Erika Del Bosque, Connie Duke, Ogechi Ebere, Taylor Endecott, Shannon Ferrell, Lauren Goduto, Melanie Grover, Taylor Hernandez, Christian Johns, Twila Johnson, Christina Kiamar, Larry LaBove, Donald Lacy, Christine La Foy, Christopher Marshall, George Megress, Jessica Munn, Bryan Polivka, Wessely Reyna, Manuel Romero, Basil Singh, Natasha Stevenson, Annette Strayheart, Ricky Valdez, and Merretta Vasquez.

## COM Nursing Program Receives Community Partnership Award

---

College of the Mainland's Associate Degree Nursing Program received the "2010 Interfaith Caring Ministries Community Partnership Award" on April 29 at ICM's annual volunteer appreciation dinner. The award was given to the Nursing Program for the many volunteer hours that students dedicated to ICM's Resale Shops in Webster and League City. The program received a glass statue of two interfolding hands representing the community partnership that is shared between COM Nursing Program and IMC.

COM's Nursing Program has partnered with ICM for several years and the partnership benefits both the nursing students and ICM. Through this experience, they begin to understand some of the community needs that can be met by volunteering at valuable organizations such as ICM.

## Welcome new COM employees

---



Alesha V. Aulds  
Coordinator  
Senior Adult Program  
aaulds@com.edu  
Ext. 8432



Dr. Rod Fluker  
Vice President  
Enrollment and  
Student Success  
rfluker@com.edu  
Ext. 8213



Tomas Garcia  
Examiner  
Advising and Testing  
tgarcia457@com.edu  
Ext. 8521



Angela Dampier  
Director  
Human Resources  
adampeer@com.edu  
Ext. 8324



Evalisa Whistler  
Print Operator  
COM Press  
ewhistler@com.edu  
Ext. 8618



Trish McIntosh  
Emergency  
Management Coord.  
Instructional Admin.  
tmcintosh@com.edu  
Ext. 8267



Bret Stephens  
Course Management  
System  
Distance Education  
bstephen@com.edu  
Ext. 8206



Jill Hamm  
Police Officer  
Police Department  
jhamm@com.edu  
Ext. 8403



Kristin Hatfield  
Admin. Assistant  
Wellness  
khatfield550@com.edu  
Ext. 8112



Carmen Allen  
Research Analyst  
Assessment & Surveys  
Institutional Research  
& Effectiveness  
callen13@com.edu  
Ext. 8157



Tara Saleem  
Admin. Assistant  
Human Resources  
tsaleem@com.edu  
Ext. 8269

## Teacher of the Year finalist selected

---

Finalists for the 2010-2011 College of the Mainland "Teacher of the Year" have been selected. The five finalists are:

**Tami Allison in Academic Success**

**Savannah Davis in Cosmetology**

**Bridget Mahoney in Public Service Careers**

**Selina Rahman in Business and Computer Technologies**

**Bernie Smiley in Humanities**

The finalists were chosen after two weeks of online student voting.

The "Teacher of the Year" will be announced during this year's commencement ceremony Wednesday, May 11 at Moody Gardens. They will be expected to serve as chairperson of the 2011-2012 "Teacher of the Year" Selection Committee. Please join us in extending congratulations to these finalists on this achievement! They bring both honor and nobility to our profession and to this institution.

## Blackboard Learn change for CE courses

All credit and a select number of continuing education courses will be hosted on our new Blackboard Learn system beginning with the Summer I 2011 semester. The older CE 8 Blackboard system will be taken offline and we will be flipping the switch on the new Blackboard Learn 9.1 system on Friday, June 3, 2011 at 5 p.m.

The URL for the new Blackboard Learn system is being changed from <http://pilot.com.edu> to its permanent URL <http://de.com.edu>. What does this mean for students and faculty? Faculty and students will access all distance education courses, and traditional courses that provide online content, on one system located at <http://de.com.edu> beginning at 5 p.m. Friday, June 3. The logon procedure, user names and passwords will remain the same.

## COM-Unity scholarships

COM-Unity will award 10 \$500 scholarships for use at COM in 2011-2012. Applicants must have a 2.5 GPA in college work and be a union member or related to a union member. Applications are available in the COM Foundation office and the Social Sciences Department. The deadline for applications is June 15. For more information, please contact Professor Alex Pratt or Professor David Michael Smith.

## Media symposium

College of the Mainland will be hosting a media symposium May 12, 2011 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building, room F-117. Speakers from area media outlets will be on hand to talk about newsworthy information and how the media processes the information. Everyone is welcome to attend. For details, call Ext. 8437.

## Mark Your Calendar

- May 2-6 Outdoor Experience, Texas City Park
- May 11 Commencement, Moody Gardens
- May 12 Media Symposium, F-117
- May 13 Coffee, Cokes and Conversation with Dr. Fluker, SC Sun Room  
8-10 a.m. and 2-4 p.m.
- May 14 Bond Election Day, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Adjunct Job Fair, 9 a.m. - Noon, Gym
- May 19 Golf Tournament, Bayou Golf Club, Texas City
- May 26 COM Foundation Gala, COM Gym
- May 28 COM-BAT Triathlon



**Leisure Activity and Wellness Center**

**Seventh Annual**

**Golf Tournament**

**Thursday, May 19, 2011**

**Rain-out date TBA**

**Bayou Golf Club**

**2800 Ted Dudley Drive, Texas City, Texas**

**For details, call Ext. 8421.**



### May Birthdays

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

Leanne Downton	Executive Admin. Asst., VP Enrollment/Student Success...5/2	Courtney Moore	Sr Programmer/Analyst, Information Tech Services .....5/15
Janet Kidd	Admin. Assistant, Learning Center-North County.....5/2	Eric Goins	Communications Coordinator, Marketing .....5/17
Albert Bass	Dean of Weekend College & Special Projects.....5/3	Danny Bacot	Assistant Director, Continuing Education .....5/18
Anita Garcia	Research Analyst, Institutional Research.....5/3	Larry Click	Laboratory Assistant, Instructional Tech Lab .....5/18
Kenneth Mathew	Maintenance Technician.....5/3	Kiran Dutt	Custodian .....5/18
Mara Cooper	Director of Student Engagement, Student Life .....5/5	Susan Plasek	Faculty, Child Development/Education .....5/18
Jack Howard	Professional Trainer, Continuing Education .....5/5	Thomas Dulick	Professional Trainer, Continuing Education .....5/21
Sherrie Jackson	Generalist, Human Resources .....5/6	Floyd Perkins	Custodian .....5/21
Marilynn Kish-Molina	Faculty, Math/Science.....5/7	Wanda Bass	Records Specialist, Admissions.....5/22
Larry Purswell	Laboratory Assistant, Industrial Technology .....5/7	Pamela Berry-Richardson	Career Counselor, Outreach and Career Services .....5/24
Ruthe Newman	Financial Aid Officer, Student Financial Services.....5/10	Chiquilla Brown	Faculty, Nursing.....5/24
Elaine Baker	Faculty, Cosmetology .....5/11	Kimberly Davis	Administrative Assistant, Industrial Technology .....5/25
Scott Saragoza	Police Officer.....5/12	Igor Yakushkin	Faculty, Science/Math.....5/25
Lucille Green	Custodian .....5/14	Evalisa Whistler	Print Operator, COM Press .....5/30
Marlon Stevens	Student Recreation, Weekend College & Sp. Projects.....5/14	Telishia Long	Library Technician .....5/31
Karen Elliott	Program Coordinator, Academic Success .....5/15		

### Bond Election

In November the College of the Mainland Board of Trustees unanimously approved a modified version of the bond plan recommended by the Community Bond Advisory Committee and called the election at its regularly scheduled February 2011 board meeting.

#### 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.

#### What is included in this bond package?

- New Health Science Center Building (with Math-Science Building renovation and a new addition to the Science Building)
- Workforce Training Center Addition (with renovations to existing WTC and the Welding-Auto area)
- New Process Technology Center Building
- Tech-Voc Building Renovation
- Learning Resource Center Renovation
- New Academic Success Center Addition
- Maintenance Building Addition (with renovation of existing structure)
- Student Center Addition (includes renovation of existing center)
- Wellness Center Addition (with renovation of the Physical Education Building)

- Fine and Performing Arts Center Addition (with renovation of existing facilities)
- Central Plant Equipment Upgrades/Screening
- Infrastructure and Parking
- Bond costs, inflation, contingencies

\* Total bond package = \$86,173,555

#### How will the bond package affect my property taxes?

Taxpayers can expect an estimated tax increase of \$0.065 cents/\$100 valuation, which is \$65 per year or \$5.42 per month on a \$100,000 home.

#### What if I'm 65 or older?

College District taxes on primary residences are frozen in the year that a taxpayer turns 65 years of age and will not increase as a result of this bond election. The dollar amount you pay in the year you turn 65 will not increase as long as you live in the home and do not make major improvements. It is important to note that seniors must request this status to qualify.

## Set the Record Straight

I reserve the right to reword questions for clarity and to omit questions or certain parts of questions when it pertains to individuals.

**Q** Why do we have to fill out forms for everything from Marketing? Why even with the “Minimum 10 day turnaround, not including printing” time do some projects from Marketing come in late?

**A** Marketing informed me that personal conversation and private e-mails are easily forgotten but the requests are logged in and tracked. The marketing department is currently working to make the form process more efficient. It is not a 10-day guarantee. The job list changes from week-to-week and depending on the workload, you might get your job back sooner.

**Q** We say we celebrate and multiculturalism. Why is there no voice for gay and lesbian students?

**A** I don't know. However, moving forward, all aspects of multiculturalism are addressed in the new design.

**Q** HR has this fancy conference room and they tell hiring committees they can't meet anywhere else except that conference room but the conference room is never available. How will this be remedied? It's very difficult to have hiring committees that can meet in one room only.

**A** The conference room availability should increase due to the conclusion/closure of the review of personnel files in anticipation of the SACS visit. Additionally the limited availability of the conference room is also due to search committees, delays in reviewing applications and scheduling interviews. Fortunately we have been extremely successful in attracting extremely qualified candidates. There are times however that many days and times the conference room is not booked. For example, April 25 and 26 the conference room was available all day.

**Q** In the October 2010 newsletter you mentioned that the Planning Council recommendations were posted to the I Drive for everyone to review at their leisure. You also stated that recommendations were being disseminated to the appropriate departments to be implemented. How does the loop get closed? Who will assess whether or not recommendations and the corresponding goals of the sub-committees were effectuated and whether or not they were successful?

**A** As part of the Planning Council recommendations/review cycle, the Planning Council should be requiring follow-ups each year to give a progress report of implementation of proposals that were approved. This closes the loop.



Dr. Michael Elam  
President

**Q** The population of ducks has dwindled SIGNIFICANTLY in the last two weeks. A rough estimate, we have about 20 missing. Is the administration culling the flock? Or, conversely, does the administration have any idea why this is happening, or even care?

**A** Personally I have no idea how many ducks there are. However, Lt. Sylvia Chapa keeps a close watch over the ducks. She has informed me that the ducks are nesting and you should see many ducklings in the near future. I assure you the college is not culling the ducks. I have been informed by Chief Carr and Lt. Chapa that there is an animal predator (perhaps a coyote) attacking the ducks.

**Q** Will all the positions of the retiring employees, that are being replaced, be made known to current employees first? And how soon will we be told?

**A** We compiled a list of all employees who have selected to participate in the retirement incentive at their appropriate times. Any list we have is for public consumption. However all of those positions will not be replaced. Those that are being filled will be advertised appropriately. If you wish to obtain the list you must submit a Public Records Request to the President's Office and the list will be made available to you.

**Q** My question is about pay period. Why can't we have a bi-monthly (every 2 weeks) pay period? Every college and school in this area have this. During these bad economic times and since we did not get a cost of living raise, it would surely help.

**A** See February 2011 Employee Newsletter

**Q** Are there plans to replace the phones we had around campus for student use? Several employees have told me they get requests all the time to use the office phone because the student or visitor does not have a cell phone. Do you know what happened that led to the removal of these phones? Are there plans for any new phones to be put in? We have to remember that just because a lot of people DO have cell phones a lot more don't. Just as with just computerized schedules, we have a lot of people without home computers and it is really not fair for them to have to come out here or go to the library just to check the classes.

**A** Yes, we have extra VOIP phones and a few will be strategically placed in various locations to give students and the community limited service.

### Set the Record Straight, continued

**Q** Our student ambassadors are good employees but are they being utilized effectively? Shouldn't they be out in the community (schools, community events, etc.) being ambassadors for COM? How is it helping by sitting in an office all day? Is that a good resource for the funds? How many people do you need to help answer the phones and direct people especially when it's not busy?

**A** Dr. Fluker and his staff have been in discussions about this very topic for weeks. They are nearing the completion of a plan that will be available soon. This plan will enhance the role of the student ambassadors.

**Q** How would you characterize your management style, and why do you think this is the best way to manage COM employees?

**A** My management style is participative. I believe that style offers employees the maximum amount of input and buy-in in decisions that impact the college. It's the best way for me because it suits my educational philosophy of inclusion.

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

## Honesty and the Work Environment

All employees have a part in managing risks in their departments and in doing so support a high ethical standard at COM. A risk could be an employee's misappropriation of work hours, which CDE (LOCAL) defines as fraud. For instance, an employee comes in late and/or leaves early, extends lunch time or breaks or does sloppy work. DH (LOCAL) refers to such risks as moral turpitude, which is conduct contrary to honesty and which violates the college's standards of conduct. But to what level could an employee's dishonesty impact a work environment? Dishonest acts are significant and can cost a department through decreased morale and productivity.

The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) in their publication Corporate Con: Internal Fraud and the Auditor recommends creating a low-fraud environment by the following characteristics as a best practice for a department's work environment.

High-Fraud Environment	Low-Fraud Environment
Autocratic management	Participating management
High trust of employees	Normal trust of employees
Short-range planning	Long-range planning
Management by crisis	Management by objectives
Routine reporting	Reporting by exception
Rigid rules	Flexible rules
Negative feedback	Positive feedback
Differences repressed	Differences discussed
Poorly defined ethics	Clearly defined ethics
Hostile environment	Supportive environment

For more information, please contact me by phone or stop by Appomattox Square.



**Frank Scheidler, CPA, CFE**  
**Internal Auditor**  
**Appomattox Square, Suite 11**  
**Ext. 8695**  
[fscheidler@com.edu](mailto:fscheidler@com.edu)

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



## 2011 Mainland Heroes Gala

Hosted by the College of the Mainland Foundation

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Benefiting College of the Mainland Foundation and  
Honoring the 2011 Mainland Heroes

*Rev. D.N. Benford, Sr.*

*Mitchell Dale*

*Sharon Free*

*Emken Linton*

*Fred Newhouse*

Dinner and Silent Auction 6 - 9 p.m.

2011 Mainland Heroes Presentation 7:30 p.m.

Entertainment Provided By  
Sparky's Jazz Express

\$45 per person (Business Casual Attire)

College of the Mainland  
Gymnasium - Physical Education Complex  
1200 Amburn Road  
Texas City, Texas

RSVP to 409.933.8508

 College of the Mainland®

Education for  
Everyone

## Adjunct Instructor JOB FAIR



COM is seeking  
qualified instructors.

*Join us*

Sat., May 14, 2011

9 a.m. - noon

COM Gymnasium