Your Island University has been distinct from that day in 1947 when it opened on Ward Island as the University of Corpus Christi. The first students met in facilities used by the military during World War II to train technicians on radar, the high-tech revolution of the time.

With a new era in technology upon us, the Island University will once again take on a distinctive role as the “Home of Unmanned Flight.” Our new Federal Aviation Administration test site designation is already putting us at the forefront of the business community, with hundreds of calls from industry since the announcement. And, just as important, we’re getting the attention of the public at a national level. More than 16 million people heard, saw, or read about the University after the announcement – a bigger audience than most primetime season premieres. What’s most exciting is the attention from leaders in this expanding research field.

We are planning for new faculty in this area that will provide our South Texas students with a measurable advantage over others in competitive fields like engineering, computer science and geospatial surveying.

I invite you to read our cover story to find out how the Island University can prove to be a game changer for the future of South Texas.

Dr. Flavius Killebrew
President/CEO
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
@FlaviusKillebrew
The Islander is produced each spring by the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Office of Marketing & Communications, part of the Division of Institutional Advancement. Content in the magazine is designed to enlighten the University’s alumni and friends on Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s people, programs and activities. Comments and editorial ideas should be sent to: The Islander c/o Office of Marketing & Communications, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5726, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5726
More than 50 Fish Species in Gulf Rely on Artificial Reefs

New data from the western Gulf of Mexico shows an abundant population of red snapper, the most economically-important reef fish in the Gulf, living around decommissioned offshore oil rigs. These structures are now serving as artificial reefs, supporting diverse fish assemblages within the Gulf.

Scientists from the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi say 52 fish species from 18 families have been identified at 13 surveyed sites near Port O’Connor, Port Aransas, and Port Mansfield, Texas.

Dr. Greg Stunz, Executive Director of the Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation, estimates there are about 4,000 rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

“About 75 percent of those rigs will be decommissioned and removed in the next 20 years, so we are very concerned that we facilitate getting these rigs into reef programs,” said Stunz. “There’s a lot of evidence that the red snapper populations we see today wouldn’t be here if we didn’t have the habitat provided by oil and gas platforms.”

This new evidence is the reason the HRI’s newly-formed Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation was recently awarded $600,000 by Texas Parks and Wildlife and $50,000 from the Fondren Foundation to expand their studies on artificial reefs.

The “South Texas Artificial Reef Monitoring” program will work to enhance the effectiveness of current conservation and management initiatives in Texas, which has one of the largest rigs-to-reef programs.

“About 75 percent of those rigs will be decommissioned and removed in the next 20 years, so we are very concerned that we facilitate getting these rigs into reef programs.”

Dr. Greg Stunz
Executive Director of the Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation
Saving lives during a hurricane is the goal of current work at the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science (CBI) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

The CBI is using a $2 million grant from the Texas General Land Office to install four “Sentinels of the Coast” data collection stations. These sentinels, which can withstand the effects of a category four hurricane, will collect federally approved water level and meteorological data.

“The data will be used by the National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center for forecasting models,” said James Rizzo, CBI Assistant Director of Operations. “The accuracy of these forecasts is what saves lives.”

The CBI is overseeing design, construction and installation of each structure and will install equipment and initiate operation and data collection from these new monitoring stations that will be incorporated into the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network.

The stations should be complete by July 2015 and will provide accurate, real-time water level; wind speed, direction, and gust information; barometric pressure and temperatures. They will be located at Surfside (Freeport), Port Aransas, the Matagorda Ship Channel (near Port O’Connor), and South Padre Island.
University Professor Creates Tool to Help Victims Forgive Even When They Can’t Forget

If you caught your spouse cheating, would you be able to forgive and forget? Helping you answer that question could help a counselor decide the best way to treat you and your relationship. Dr. Richard Balkin, Assistant Dean for the College of Education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, has developed a method for counselors to assist clients in working through conflict issues and identifying feelings related to forgiving.

“I often work with people who struggle with forgiveness and do not know what to do,” said Balkin. “This tool frees you of the burden of reconciliation.”

Counselors start with the Forgiveness-Reconciliation Model. This process consists of four stages: collaborative exploration, role of reconciliation, the extent to which change and remorse are evident from the one who caused harm, and renegotiation of the relationship. Counselors use these stages to explore and identify areas of conflict. Once the area of conflict is known, counselors can use the Forgiveness Reconciliation Inventory (FRI). This assessment is used to help clients visualize their feelings and pinpoint where they are in the forgiveness process.

“The FRI is a process tool, designed to provide the client and the counselor with information, which enables the client to make choices influencing their health and well-being,” said Balkin.

For example, a wife and husband who have an affair can use the FRI to decide if they want to forgive each other and whether they want to continue with the relationship. If the answers indicate the victim is likely to forgive and the perpetrator is regretful, they may find that the relationship is more beneficial and can move forward together. But if the relationship is deemed harmful, they can learn to forgive but move on without the relationship.

Balkin was counseling a young abuse victim whose mother wanted her to forgive her attacker. In this case, Balkin realized that being able to forgive and being able to reconcile are two different things.

“We see a lot of examples where the perpetrator is not sorry, especially in cases of abuse, and this tool can help the harmed person decide if they want to keep the relationship.”

Balkin is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology (CNEP). CNEP recently received reaccreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs for eight years, a rarity among graduate programs. The University’s doctoral program in Counselor Education is the national leader in graduating Hispanic doctoral students who enter faculty positions in Counselor Education nationwide.

“We see a lot of examples where the perpetrator is not sorry, especially in cases of abuse, and this tool can help the harmed person decide if they want to keep the relationship.”

Dr. Richard Balkin
Assistant Dean for the College of Education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
EXERCISE: The Best Kind of Medicine

Move over laughter! Senior kinesiology students are showcasing exercise as the best medicine.

Students of Dr. Don Melrose, Exercise Physiologist and Associate Professor of Kinesiology, presented displays representing numerous health conditions and the role of exercise as a treatment for those conditions during the “Exercise as Medicine Symposium” at Island Hall on Dec. 5.

Students explained how particular exercises can play a role in treating various conditions, increase one’s quality of life, lower reliance on medications, and improve overall well-being. Presentations were given on Type 2 diabetes, obesity, pregnancy, Alzheimer’s disease, and cancer. The students also offered proper exercise guidelines to those in attendance.

Piñatas, lotería crafts and birthday cake marked the 20th anniversary celebration of the Antonio E. Garcia Arts & Education Center in October.

The birthday/cumpleaños-themed event honored those involved with the Garcia Center and celebrated Hispanic heritage and arts.

“These events help connect students and the community,” said Dr. Gilda Ramirez, Director of the Garcia Center. “We are trying to honor our founders and supporters by recognizing our local Hispanic history.”

The anniversary celebration, Oct. 1-6, included a Community Resources Fiesta, two evenings of arts and crafts, gallery events, adult diabetes prevention classes, Zumba classes, guest speakers and movie viewings.

The Garcia Center offers programs in art, dance, health and nutrition, family support, and literacy at low or no cost to community members, and it hosts widely-popular, cultural events. The Center features a gallery space with rotating exhibits, a computer lab, art room, and multipurpose/dance space.

Check out the online calendar for the Garcia Center.

garciacenter.tamucc.edu
Normally, electrical current is something you want to keep away from water, but researchers at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi have developed a way to create oyster reefs by charging sea water with electricity. The research can be used to help restore, maintain and protect oyster reefs throughout Texas and beyond.

In some areas of the Gulf of Mexico, oyster reefs have declined nearly 90 percent over the last 130 years, jeopardizing the well-being of several Gulf Coast industries, the infrastructure that supports them and the residents who depend on them.

“Oysters are an important ecological and economic resource,” said Dr. Paul Zimba, Director of the Center for Coastal Studies at A&M-Corpus Christi. “They create habitats for fish and shellfish, filter and clean bay waters, protect shorelines from erosion and are a valued commercial fishery element.”

The idea of restoring such vital habitats using electricity has intrigued people in the Coastal Bend for quite some time. The Ed Rachal Foundation partnered with the University to provide the funds necessary to establish the practicality of such an endeavor.

While the method had been experimented with before, Zimba’s team focused on evaluating polarity, voltage and electrical current to identify the conditions under which artificial oyster reefs or hard-bottom substrate habitats could be created. Zimba found that the growth was strongly affected by current type and polarity, making it important to have just the right mix. Once they were able to perfect the formation of artificial reefs in a laboratory setting, they moved their work to a site in Corpus Christi Bay using solar power to charge rebar structures.

“After one month we had a solid community covering the original material,” said Zimba. “Our hope is that this technology is used for restoration of reef communities.”

“Oysters are an important ecological and economic resource,”

Dr. Paul Zimba
Director of the Center for Coastal Studies at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
Study, Snails and Safety: There’s an Islander App for That

**Soar Si**
Created by Innovation in Computing Research (iCORE) Lab students.
- Search up-to-date list of study sessions
- Identify the leader holding study sessions
- Map the location of study sessions

**OpihiMapper**
Developed by Dr. Chris Bird, Assistant Professor in the College of Science and Engineering during his research of “opiihi,” a sea snail, in Hawaii.
- Keep count of opiihi in Hawaii
- Identify key opiihi locations
- Available starting this summer

**Islander Mobile: Islander Watch**
Created by Innovation in Computing Research (iCORE) Lab students.
- Call University Police Department
- Report an incident to the UPD via e-mail
- Upload a photo with GPS coordinates
A group of University researchers are on a quest to protect sensitive coastal waterways from disasters like oil spills, bringing national attention to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

The National Spill Control School (NSCS) is using a $144,430 grant to create the Texas Tidal Inlet Protection Strategies program. The tidal inlets connect the bays and estuaries of the Texas coast to the Gulf of Mexico. An oil spill in any of these sensitive habitats has the potential to kill fish, shut down popular tourist areas and even disrupt shipping traffic.

“Inshore marine species are at the base of the marine food chain and support sport and commercial fisheries, ecotourism and the quality of life for everyone who lives in or visits the Texas coast,” said Tony Wood, Director of the NSCS. “Protecting them in the event of an oil spill will be of paramount importance.”

Wood and Dr. James C. Gibeaut, Endowed Associate Research Professor for the Harte Research Institute, will serve as the primary investigators for the project that also serves as an invaluable educational experience for students.
A new tool, co-developed by a researcher at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, could help scientists worldwide better understand the respiratory problems faced by dolphins that contribute to the dwindling populations of the beloved animals.

Dr. Andreas Fahlman, Assistant Professor of Life Sciences, is in the process of analyzing data he collected from tests of his “Pneumotachometer” that were done in collaboration with Dolphin Quest-Oahu. The cone-shaped device fits on the blow hole of a dolphin and measures the animal’s respiratory flow rates and levels of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

“It provides baseline values for healthy dolphins, or what is normal,” said Fahlman. “This information can then be used for early detection of disease both in captive and wild animals.”

Dolphins are adored for their intelligence and for what some say are the marine mammals’ “human-like” characteristics. Fahlman says it shouldn’t be surprising that the lungs of dolphins function similarly to those of humans. This device sheds light on those similarities as well as differences, helps scientists understand the environmental changes that could be affecting the number of dolphins in the wild and brings humans one step closer to protecting these amazing creatures.
A University nursing professor answered the call for medical assistance after an intense typhoon struck the Philippines this fall.

Dr. Patricia Olenick, Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, spent three weeks in December in the Tapaz region of the Philippines as part of the Project HOPE Volunteer Foreign Medical Team.

Olenick arrived four weeks after Typhoon Haiyan struck. It had brought torrential rain, sustained winds of more than 195 mph and a storm surge of up to 30 feet.

Much of the debris had been cleared, and immediate injuries addressed, but there were still medical issues, Olenick said.

“The hospital still had part of the roof missing, and hunger was starting to set in,” she said.

Olenick’s group ended up coordinating food relief and treating ailments that often come after suffering the trauma of losing livelihoods, housing and family members.

“We were working at clinics, but we were also doing a lot of talking and listening,” Olenick said.

Back on campus, Olenick plans to share her experiences with students in the global health class. The event served as a reminder, she said, to all nursing professionals that meeting those basic needs — nutrition, clean air, water and basic safety — is fundamental to nursing care yet may get lost with technology or bureaucracy.
Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Addresses Shortage of Medical Professionals

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is working to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree (DNP) soon.

In October, the Texas A&M System Board of Regents approved the new degree. It is expected to appear before the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board within the next year.

If approved, it will be the only such program south of San Antonio, and the second one in the Texas A&M System.

South Texas has the highest incidence in Texas of several preventable diseases like diabetes and infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, listeriosis, and dengue fever.

To make matters worse, of all South Texas counties, 16 have a shortage of primary care clinicians, while others have areas that are medically underserved.

eLine Military Program: Military Medical Experience for Credit

The eLine Military Nursing program (ELM) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi received the 2013 American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Innovations in Professional Nursing Education Award.

This unique program gives college credit to active-duty military and veterans for their medical experience during their service. These students can then finish their degrees online, from anywhere in the world.

The AACN chose the Island University for this award out of the more than 700 schools the organization represents.

The ELM program also was recognized with the 2013 President's Silver Wave Award on Aug. 26 during the President’s Fall Faculty Staff Meeting.

The eLine Military Program is the seventh recipient of the Silver Wave Award, which was started in 2005. The award is presented to a person or program that brings national and international attention to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

The ELM program had its first three graduates in August.
One of the largest reefs located in Matagorda Bay, along the Texas Gulf Coast, is almost gone. Researchers at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi say Half Moon Reef has been devastated by several factors including changes in freshwater inflow, the rerouting of the Intracoastal Waterway, and impacts from Hurricane Carla in 1961.

“Today, 85 percent of the world’s oyster reefs have disappeared, making oysters among the most imperiled marine species on earth,” said Dr. Jennifer Pollack, Assistant Professor of Marine Biology. “The good news is that the Gulf of Mexico is widely considered the last, best hope for re-establishing sustainable oyster populations.”

Restoration of Half Moon Oyster Reef began in October 2013 as 93,600 tons of limestone were used to build a 40-acre structure. The structure will be an ideal habitat for blue crabs, oysters, and shrimp. The Nature Conservancy project is being funded by a $1.2 million cost-share agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is a critical phase of a larger $5.4 million project to restore the reef. Pollack and her team of researchers will monitor the reef’s progress for the next five years, paying special attention to the abundance and diversity of reef residents and how salinity levels in the bay are affecting the organisms.

“We expect to observe ecosystem benefits within months of completion,” said Pollack.

Regents Approve Electrical Engineering Program at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is planning for its second engineering program, receiving Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approval in January for a new Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. The Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board both report a need regionally for professionals in engineering to support growing industries in the area.

If approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the university plans to begin accepting its first class of electrical engineering students in Fall 2015.

“Today, 85 percent of the world’s oyster reefs have disappeared, making oysters among the most imperiled marine species on earth.”

Dr. Jennifer Pollack
Assistant Professor of Marine Biology
at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
Dr. Magesh Thiyagarajan, Director of the Plasma Engineering Research Lab at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, and his research team are on the front lines in the war against cancer, and their weapon of choice is a ray of light.

Thiyagarajan uses what is called “cold plasma” to kill leukemia cells and says it is research that could someday, not only prolong lives, but could also lead to treatments that are less traumatic for cancer patients than current ones.

Traditional plasma is made by heating up gas molecules to form what looks like a colored ray of light. This form of plasma can be seen every day in plasma televisions and fluorescent lights. Thiyagarajan developed a way to make this happen without using the harmful heat, and, he says, when he directs that ray of light called “cold plasma” at cancer cells, what happens is incredible.

“Within 24 hours, we began to see the destruction of over 90 percent of the cancer cells,” said Thiyagarajan. “Cold plasma induces the cancer cells to self-destruct, but leaves the healthy cells unharmed.”

Further testing is needed before this can be tried on humans, but Thiyagarajan says with additional funding, it could be available for clinical trials in as soon as three to five years.

“Cold plasma induces the cancer cells to self-destruct, but leaves the healthy cells unharmed.”

Dr. Magesh Thiyagarajan
Director of the Plasma Engineering Research Lab at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
A revamped Media Production Program at the Island University will help students stand out in the crowd as they compete for careers in film, television, and new media.

“Our new department chair, Dr. Amy Aldridge-Sanford, is tremendously enthusiastic about these new developments,” said Dr. Kelly Quintanilla, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Director of the School of Arts, Media & Communication.

The Department of Communication and Media’s Media Production Track curriculum centers on equipping students with the expertise in shooting, editing, and visual storytelling using state-of-the-art equipment.

“Through the leadership and support of Dean Quintanilla and Provost Markwood, the Department of Communication and Media has been given a tremendous opportunity to expand its Media Production offerings,” said Edward Tyndall, Assistant Professor of Media Production. “This track will become one of three tracks available to students, along with Media Studies and Communication Studies.”

Students will also engage with award-winning faculty members who have screened at international film festivals. Last fall, Tyndall received the Feature Screenplay Award for his screenplay titled “Falfurrias” during the 36th annual Starz Denver Film Festival. His latest feature film “Tasmanian Tiger” will be released this spring. And, Bobby Lewis, Assistant Professor of Media Production, has produced “The Union Man” and “Waves,” which will premiere at the 2014 Big Sky Documentary Film Festival.

The department also links students to other hands-on experiences. Students interact with internationally-recognized film artists as part of the South Texas Cinémathèque screening series. And, each semester students screen their capstone coursework at the Production Track Student Showcase. They also submit their capstone work to film festivals. Recently, student films have been selected for screenings across the nation including the Toronto Student Film Festival and the Catalina Film Festival.
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

• Set to begin in fall 2014.

• Students will use professional digital cinema, lighting equipment, and specialized editing software to create documentary, narrative, and experimental short films as well as commercial content.

• The University is developing a Media Production Track internship program to offer opportunities for students at regional and national production companies.

“We’re looking forward to this exciting opportunity to develop new and innovative ways to serve the needs of students and to prepare them to be highly-competitive film artists with a combination of market relevant skills and creativity.”

Dr. Kelly Quintanilla
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Director of the School of Arts, Media & Communication

STUDENTS WINNING EDGE

Graphic Design Lab Features Latest Technology

Undergraduate and graduate graphic design students at the Island University have access to the latest Macintosh work stations and Adobe design software in the Graphic Design Lab that opened in fall 2013. The innovative lab, located in Bay Hall, also features a critique area and print stations that allow students to stay up-to-date on the latest technology. The lab will complement a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Graphic Design, which may be offered to students as early as fall 2015. Just adjacent to the lab is the Graphic Design “Think Tank,” which offers students the ability to conduct research, sketch, and work in groups.

Study Abroad Program Offers New Opportunities

Students will be given new opportunities, through the University’s Study Abroad Program, to travel all over the world and gain credit toward undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The Study Abroad Program has recently expanded to include new locations in Edinburgh, Scotland; the Yucatan Peninsula; Germany; Spain; Rome; Belize; Seoul; and Indonesia. The London program, for theatre majors seeking upper division theatre credits, will return for the third time. Last summer, students were exposed to cultural differences between American and English theatre.

Upcoming programs include Marine Biology dolphin studies in Cancun; Education Cultural Investigations in Costa Rica, and Studio Art courses for graduate students in Rome.
IT STARTS WITH A GIFT...

Just as Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to the well-being of its greater community, many businesses and professionals see the University as an investment toward the growth of a quality, global-minded workforce. The Achieve Partnership provides the opportunity for many to support students first-hand through scholarships which help defray the costs of tuition and fees.

The Achieve Partnership offers an excellent venue for supporting our youth who aspire to become leaders within many industries during their careers. Please consider how your gift today can develop the future of a student who one day may improve the quality of your life.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Have you been thinking about ordering your Official University Ring? Make today the day! Call the Alumni Office at 361.825.5787 to place your order. We will inform you of how to get your bachelor’s ring upgraded to reflect your master’s degree free of charge.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Alumni Association
IslanderAlumni.News@tamucc.edu 361.825.5787

Watch the Islander Ring Wish Ceremony!
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Lone Star Unmanned Aircraft Systems Center is now the launch pad for the next era of aerospace development. As one of only six federally designated test sites, the University’s proposal beat 50 others around the nation to become the home of unmanned aerial technology.
Locate a lost hiker before sending a search crew in all directions. Target a wildfire hotspot or monitor extreme weather without putting pilots in the danger zone. Map coastlines, crops and wildlife for research data.

Getting data from the skies is vital for research, business and safety. The data-collection methods are set to change dramatically as unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) continue to develop and, eventually, become regular sights in the national airspace.

For example, a stranded hiker can be rescued within hours, instead of days, because a UAS will be able to provide aerial images without the expense and time of sending up a traditional piloted airplane. Or, a UAS can serve as a relay for cell phone signals after a storm has knocked out towers. Companies are studying UAS use for deliveries too.

Congress mandated that UAS be safely integrated into the national airspace by 2015. One of the main research goals is finding the safest methods for unmanned planes to sense other aircraft and take measures to avoid collisions.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) selected Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s Lone Star UAS Center to facilitate testing and research of UAS technologies and the safety issues surrounding unmanned flight.

“We are proud to be a part of this historic moment in aviation history,” said Dr. Flavius Killebrew, President and CEO of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. “Together with our partners, we will lead the way for the research and development of this new age in aviation technology.”

The FAA test site designation, announced Dec. 30, is expected to bring other UAS researchers and private companies to the University’s Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence and Innovation and the 6,000 square miles of airspace in 11 proposed test ranges across the state.

“Our exceptional wide-open airspace and well-respected aviation industry partners such as Camber Corporation took us to the top of the test site designation list,” said Dr. Luis Cifuentes, Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach. “That is also what will lure innovative UAS research to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.”

The test site designation is credited with putting A&M-Corpus Christi “on the map” nationwide as the home of this new technology. Media from as far away as Japan are following these developments, and more than 16 million people saw and heard the news of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s test site on their TVs, radios, computers and newspapers.

The anticipated investment from the private sector is expected to elevate the Coastal Bend as a hub for unmanned aircraft research and technology, with a potential for huge economic impacts for the state, especially South Texas, according to the Association of Unmanned Vehicles International study.

The University’s Lone Star UAS Center proposal was the only one from Texas being considered by the FAA, and had the backing of Texas Governor Rick Perry.

“Texas has a long and distinguished history in the aerospace industry, and this test site is an important opportunity to create jobs and grow the industry in our state,” Perry said. “This technology will not only protect our country, but has the potential to advance other industries as well, and this test site will play a role in ensuring it is used in a way that benefits our citizens while protecting their privacy and safety.”

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**Economic Impact Over 10 Years:**
- $8 billion and 1,200 jobs in Texas
- $260 million in South Texas

Association of Unmanned Vehicles International
Super lightweight fixed-wing craft

Sensefly Ebee
Wingspan: 3 feet
Weight: 1.5 pounds
Fly time: 45 minutes per battery
Uses: collect aerial imagery for high accuracy 3-D models

Fixed-wing craft
RS-16
Wingspan: 12 feet 11 inches
Max Weight: 85 pounds
Fly time: 12 to 16 hours
Uses: long-distance surveying of coastlines or large areas for herd counts, coastline mapping

Rotorcrafts
Diameter: 20 to 35 inches
Max Weight: 3 to 7 pounds
Fly time: 30 minutes
Uses: the hover capabilities allow for testing of autopilot and mission control software, remote sensing and damage assessments.

The Lone Star UAS Center team
• Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
• Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station
• Camber Corporation
• University of Texas at Arlington Research Institute
• Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio
• other research institutions and private-sector companies

Check out video of our last UAS mission to see the RS-16 in action
The Lone Star UAS Center’s Mission Control Center (MCC) is air traffic control for the unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) that will operate at the 11 proposed test ranges.

Operators there will be able to track and control aircraft using all the latest technology, including NASA’s World Wind Viewer, situational awareness and autopilot software, and receive data and communications from mobile operations centers throughout the test ranges.

The University has partnered with the Camber Corporation, which serves as the lead systems integrator, assisting with the technological implementations related to the unmanned aircraft systems.

“The intellectual energy and capital brought to the table, along with the leadership and vision of University officials makes us very excited about our partnership with Texas A&M-Corpus Christi,” said Joe Henry, Camber Corporation.

Eventually, operators at the center, which opened in October, will have the ability to control and fly the unmanned aircraft at a moment’s notice.

“This technology is rapidly being integrated, tested and implemented in the Mission Control Center so we can be open for business when the FAA gives us the green light,” said Dr. Luis Cifuentes, Vice President of Research, Commercialization and Outreach at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.
Texas A&M–Corpus Christi students are getting ahead of the learning curve for unmanned aircraft technology. In tandem with the test site designation, the University is stepping up efforts to prepare students for this new field.

The School of Engineering and Computing Sciences is adding faculty and classes such as Introduction to Aircraft Aerodynamics and Performance; Introduction to Unmanned Aerial Systems; and Control Systems, where students will learn what makes these systems fly, and how new and developing technology can be used for research and practical applications.

In addition, the University is seeking approval for a new electrical engineering degree program that will further develop UAS programs and applications, said Dr. L.D. Chen, Director of the School of Engineering and Computing Sciences.

Established University programs in Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Geographic Information Science (GIS) and Surveying Engineering have embraced unmanned systems applications and development too. The Innovation in Computing Research (iCORE) Lab has become a hub for finding new ideas and solutions with UASs.

Students with interest and talents in engineering, technology and software, business applications, or surveying science are a great fit to study UAS development and applications through classes in mechanical engineering, computer sciences or geographic information systems.

“The University has a place for these students now, and will continue to accommodate any new educational aspects this UAS frontier will require,” Chen said.

The University’s long-term planning includes developing a certification program in UAS and flight training for those who want to fly these unmanned aircrafts.

The University’s Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center also is adding new businesses with interest in UAS for agriculture, real estate, and other uses. College of Business students work hand in hand with these innovative companies through internships and other class projects through the entrepreneurship program.
The Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center (CBBIC) is lending a helping hand to new companies by providing essential elements that can help businesses succeed in their development, and also expanding local economic opportunities in the Coastal Bend region. Research has shown that by participating in this type of program, new businesses are twice as likely to succeed.

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and the Innovation Center provide an array of resources and services through the College of Business including expert faculty and staff advice, and research laboratories and computer systems. “The Innovation Center has provided value to our community by enabling clients to produce more than $4.6 million in gross revenues just in 2012,” said Dr. John Gamble, Dean of the College.
of Business. “The center includes cutting-edge companies like ‘Hydro Enviro Clean,’ that recycles fracking water; and ‘InnerGeo,’ which generates renewable energy.”

A federal designation recently awarded to the CBBIC will help cultivate innovation and support regional commercialization efforts in the Coastal Bend community. It’s the second time the CBBIC has been designated as a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center.

Through this designation, the CBBIC will receive $102,590 per year over the next five years. Bill Cone, Director of the Innovation Center, says this grant will allow the center to help the Coastal Bend grow household incomes and close the gap between the region and the rest of the nation. With funding from the EDA, the CBBIC can provide continued assistance to innovative entrepreneurs with the goal of enhancing local economic development.

“We are committed to activities that will concentrate on the creation of high-paying jobs and economic diversification,” said Cone. “Creating better jobs helps us to keep some of our young, highly educated talent in this region as opposed to losing them to larger metro centers.”

Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center Highlights

• Established by A&M-Corpus Christi in 2009 to promote higher education, research, commercialization and economic development
• Has created more than 400 full and part-time direct, indirect, and induced jobs since its inception
• Generates more than $2.7 million in annual salaries
• Has assisted more than 100 businesses in 14 different industries
• Currently has 30 active small business clients in various stages of development

Available this Fall to Opportunity-Minded Students

The College of Business is creating an Entrepreneurship major that will be available for students as early as fall 2014. This major will add on to current entrepreneurship classes, which include:

• Introduction to Entrepreneurship: This course provides students with a broad overview of the entrepreneurial process and helps them to build an environment that supports new business opportunities.
• New Venture Creation: Students learn the process of making an idea for a business into a plan for viability and commercialization.
• Guerrilla Marketing: A small-enterprise marketing course that is designed to help students learn successful sales and marketing without large budgets or traditional media exposure.

With the new degree plan, opportunity-minded students can anticipate the addition of classes in Social Entrepreneurship, Family Business, Trans-Generational Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Finance.

Study Abroad Program Offers Challenging Business Courses in Germany

College of Business students learned about future study abroad opportunities in Europe last fall during a visit from Joachim Mayer, Director of the International Center for the University of Applied Sciences in Worms, Germany. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s partnership with the German university offers graduate and undergraduate students academically challenging business courses. The Worms campus is centrally located, an hour from the French border. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi students who choose to study at the University of Applied Sciences in Worms will not be charged additional tuition and fees.

Students Connect with Local Businesses at Internship Fair

More than 100 University students had the opportunity to connect with local corporate recruiters and business owners at the College of Business Internship Fair held in November at the Michael and Karen O’Connor building. Students met with several local businesses including the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center, Frost Bank, Kiewit Offshore Services, Susser Holdings, and the Texas State Aquarium.
Q: What’s the key to overcoming obstacles?

A: When we arrived at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, we had quite a task ahead of us. We found ourselves with only two returning players. The key to overcoming the challenges has been trust. That has made a huge difference in the quality of our play.

Q: Talk about your long-term goals for Islanders Basketball. What should people expect in the coming years?

A: Our University is in an outstanding position to become a mid-major breakthrough program that makes regular appearances in the NCAA Tournament. We are growing both in enrollment and appearance. Our administration has remained committed to giving us the resources we need to accomplish our goals.

Q: What are you proud of most?

A: The growth I’ve seen in the young men of our program is truly special. We’ve seen our team GPA elevate to right around a 3.0, with nearly half the team above a 3.0. Academics is a big emphasis for me, so I’m proud that we’ve made that progress.

Coach Wilson wears blue sneakers to help raise awareness for the fight against cancer as part of the Coaches vs. Cancer Suits and Sneakers annual event.

Willis Wilson
Head Coach - Men’s Basketball

Q: How do you continue to build a winning culture at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and make it a powerhouse in the Southland Conference?

A: It begins with recruiting – explaining to young people what you’re hoping to achieve and what you’re working toward at A&M–Corpus Christi. The fact that we have so many young players shows the development of the program. You can feel it on campus. Our group is starting to generate some excitement and some enthusiasm.

Q: What are your long-term goals and vision for this program?

A: We are looking for players who we think can compete at the highest level of college basketball, where they expect to win games and expect to compete for championships.

Q: What sort of culture or attitude do you look to establish within your teams?

A: A competitive culture. We tell our players that there’s nothing you can’t do with this basketball. You want to teach your players competitiveness in every aspect of the game, and then they become winners.

Q: How do you motivate your athletes to perform at a high level both athletically and scholastically?

A: We hope to have a 3.5 team GPA every semester. Our players really bought into this goal, thinking they really had to raise the bar and not let their teammates down. Each of our student-athletes is taught to work hard in the classroom. Players need to move toward fruitful lives after college basketball, and I think that college basketball helps them prepare for the adversity that comes throughout a lifetime.
Islanders Achieve Highest Graduation Rates in Southland Conference

Our student-athletes not only show their skills on the court and on the field, they also demonstrate a strong commitment to education – from the time they step foot into the classroom to the time they walk the stage at graduation.

That’s why the Graduation Success Rate (GSR) of student-athletes at the Island University is 77 percent overall, according to NCAA statistics released in fall 2013. This is the second straight year that the Islanders have achieved this rate and the seventh consecutive year the Islanders’ rate is 75 percent or higher.

“The success and graduation of our student-athletes is one of the central pieces of the Islander Way,” said Director of Athletics Scott Lazenby. “I’m always proud to see continued success in our Graduation Success Rate.”

The Islanders’ GSR was the highest overall among Southland Conference teams for the third consecutive year. This data is based on student-athletes who entered college as freshmen between 2002-2006.

This is the 23rd release of institutional graduation rates since national “right-to-know” legislation was passed in 1990. In 2005, the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance implemented the initial release of the team GSR data.

Islanders’ Top Graduation Success Rates By Team:

- Women’s golf team: 100%
- Men’s tennis team: 88%
- Women’s basketball team: 87%
- Women’s softball team: 83%
- Men’s baseball team: 81%

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The Island University has implemented a master plan for both the Island Campus and the Momentum Campus that maximizes available space, and accommodates growing enrollment and evolving academic goals.

The master plan makes room on the Island Campus for 39 new buildings, (shaded in tan below) including a life sciences research building, an arts and media building, an expansion of the Mary and Jeff Bell Library, and a new Aquatics Center. It will also enhance green spaces, create more “spine” walkways, and add four new parking garages.

The largest space needs are in the College of Science and Engineering, where enrollment is expected to more than double in the next 12 years, and the College of Liberal Arts, which is expected to have a 150 percent increase in enrollment.

Regents Approve New Momentum Campus Housing

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents has approved new student housing on the Momentum Campus. The housing project, planned for seven acres off Ennis Joslin Road, will house 350 to 500 students. American Campus Communities will be the developer for the project, which is scheduled for completion by July 2015.
Master Plan Paves the Way for Research, Growing Student Population

New Dining Hall Set to Open This Fall
The 18,700 square-foot building, set to open in the fall semester, will provide a relaxing gathering space for students and a variety of dining options to ensure students have access to quality, affordable meals. It will also include indoor and outdoor seating for 400 students, and offer the first ever “all-you-care-to eat” meal plan as well as vegetarian options.

University Center Expands
The University Center expansion is expected to be completed by summer 2015. The 35,000 square-foot addition will include a lounge area, outdoor patio, new ballroom, doubled kitchen and dining areas, and a renovated convenience store open late hours. There will also be more UC student dining offerings.

Did You Know?
• Island University enrollment has increased 22 percent over the last five years.
• Since 2011, freshman enrollment has increased 20 percent.
• The University’s official student enrollment, as of fall 2013, is nearly 11,000 students.
Texas A&M University System Hosts Appreciation Reception for Coastal Bend Legislative Delegation

The Texas A&M University System hosted an appreciation reception last October to honor the Coastal Bend members of the Texas State Senate and House of Representatives for their commitment and outstanding work during the 83rd legislative session. Thanks to their efforts, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi received additional funding for education programs, financial aid, and engineering research and programs. Pictured from left: Chairman Todd Hunter, Chairman Abel Herrero, Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, and University President/CEO Flavius Killebrew.

Flint Hills Resources and AEP Texas were honored at the 2014 “Friends of Engineering” Awards luncheon in February for their support of the Mechanical Engineering program. The award honors the outstanding achievements of supporters for the School of Engineering and Computing Sciences. Honorees are chosen for their significant impact on the development and continued excellence of the facilities, faculty, and students.

PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Premier Giving Organization

The President’s Council has grown to become our most prestigious private giving society. Members of the President’s Council support the Presidential Scholars program, the highest-level scholarship awarded to our best and brightest students. Funds also are used for numerous annual activities and programs implemented through the President’s Office which further build upon community engagement.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Membership in the President’s Council places you among individuals who continually focus their efforts on the vitality of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. You are both an advisor and a friend to the University. Throughout the year, we have many events and activities exclusively for President’s Council members. We greatly appreciate the support of this devoted group and ensure ample recognition.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Platinum Circle
$10,000

Gold Circle
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Silver Circle
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$1,000

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Top 100 Universities
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Recognized for affordability, academic quality and accessibility for prospective students.

Affordable, Quality Online Education, Return on Investment
Affordable Colleges Online
Recognized as number 19 of 472 Texas institutions for return on investment and number 21 for offering affordable and quality online courses and degrees.

‘Military-Friendly School’ for Fifth Consecutive Year
G.I. Jobs magazine
Recognizes efforts and results in recruiting and retaining military and veteran students to increase diversity among the student body, faculty and staff.
Dr. Robert (Bob) Maroney

Dr. Robert (Bob) Maroney, a standout athlete at Annona High School, was recruited to play basketball at Austin College, where he was named Most Valuable Player for 1956-57. In 1961, Maroney came to South Texas and served as Assistant Coach of the University of Corpus Christi (UCC) Tarpon Basketball Team and Head Coach of the Tarpons from 1962-1964. After completing his doctorate at the University of North Texas, he returned to UCC in 1968, where he taught for nearly 50 years.

He served as Director of Teacher Certification, Director of the Texas A&M University System Regents’ Initiative for Excellence in Education, Assistant Dean, and Associate Dean of the College of Education. At the national level, he served on the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representatives Association’s Executive Council. He was named Professor Emeritus by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents. Maroney and his wife, Judy, live in Boxelder, Texas.

Johnny Cloud

Johnny Cloud was introduced to boxing in 1953 when he entered the United States Army. He quickly became the Army’s Lightweight Boxing Champion. After completing his service, Cloud was recruited to the Howard Payne University Boxing Team in fall 1955, and later to the Cisco Junior College track team in spring 1956. He arrived at the University of Corpus Christi in fall 1956 as a sophomore securing the Regional Lightweight Championship.

During the 1956-1957 campaign, the Tarpon team won 62-of-78 bouts in team matches with Cloud moving on to state matches. During his junior year, the Tarpon team finished the season with a 66-16 record. Cloud won the Regional Lightweight Championship that year representing the Tarpons. By senior year, Cloud had been a five-time entrant into the Texas Golden Gloves tournament. Today, he and his wife, Bunny, reside in Killeen, Texas.

Donald “Trey” Hearne

After two seasons at Angelina Junior College, Donald “Trey” Hearne arrived at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in fall 2003. To date, Hearne’s 2005 ERA total and strikeout total are still single-season records and his 201 career strikeouts are second all-time records. His career record was 16-6, an ERA of 3.64, and 201 strikeouts in a total of 197.2 innings. Hearne was named the Independent Pitcher of the Year as a senior in 2005 and was named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America First Team. He was selected by the St. Louis Cardinals in the 2005 First-Year Player Draft and pitched professionally for six seasons. In 2009, with Double A Springfield, he finished with a 12-3 record and a 2.82 ERA, garnering the Texas League Pitcher of the Year recognition. He pitched in Triple A for the Memphis Redbirds from 2009-2010. Hearne retired after the 2010 season. He and his wife reside in Tyler, Texas.
Distinguished Alumnus

Dr. Haysam Dawod

Dr. Haysam Dawod, who owns Dawod Dental Center and SmileTeam Dentistry, has been a business owner in Corpus Christi since 1991. Dawod, who was born in Syria, serves as a mentor for Texas A&M-Corpus Christi pre-dental students, speaks to groups of pre-dental students on campus, and provides supervision for pre-dental students in their internship. Dawod’s impact extends to Central America, where for 15 years he has volunteered his time, and helped fundraise to open dental clinics in the region.

After completing the School of Dentistry at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, Dawod and his wife returned to Corpus Christi to begin his dental practice and her nursing career. He graduated from Corpus Christi State University in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. He serves on the Del Mar College Board of Regents, the Corpus Christi Evening Rotary Club, and the Flint Hills Resources Community Action Committee.

Outstanding Alumnus

Libby Averyt

Libby Averyt was named Publisher and CEO of the Corpus Christi Caller-Times in January 2014, after spending the better of 20+ years with the newspaper. Her positions with the newspaper have included Metro Editor, Managing Editor, Online General Manager, and Vice President of Advertising. Averyt is a Board Member for South Texas Public Broadcasting, the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, and the Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. She has been recognized by the YWCA of Corpus Christi as a Y Woman in Careers honoree. As a reporter, Averyt was jailed for refusing to testify about unpublished information. In 1990, she received the esteemed Edward Willis Scripps Award for Distinguished Service to the First Amendment. She has also won numerous journalism awards including Newspaper of the Year.

Averyt graduated from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi with a Master of Arts in Communication in 2012.

Young Alumni

Dr. Mark Olson

Dr. Mark Anthony Olson is currently a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, where he has established a Materials Chemistry Research Laboratory. He started his position at the University at age 28. He has published 21 peer-reviewed journal articles and has been cited a total of 723 times with an average of 31 citations per manuscript. Born and raised in Corpus Christi, the Miller High School graduate went on to earn his Bachelor of Science from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, graduating Cum Laude in 2005. He was supported by both a University Honors and a Citgo Refining Math/Science Challenge scholarship. Olson obtained a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from Northwestern University in 2010 after having worked in research laboratories at the California Institute of Technology and the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was affiliated with the California Nanosystems Institute.
Creating a scholarship endowment is one way to ensure your contribution will remain in perpetuity to support higher education and to help the University remain competitive in attracting the brightest students.

In recognition of donors making significant contributions to endowed scholarships, the University established the Endowed Scholarship Council.

For more information about the Endowed Scholarship Council or other giving opportunities, contact
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Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5741 • (361) 825-2735
A regular presence at Islanders’ games, Julia Frances Roberts Townsend, a University of Corpus Christi (UCC) alumna, died on Feb. 9, 2014. She was 81.

Julia (B.S. Education ’54) and her husband, Howard (B.S. Accounting ’51), met on campus and married in 1955. The couple often made one-day trips from their home in Houston to Corpus Christi to show their school spirit at Islanders basketball, softball, and volleyball games.

Julia Townsend told people she returned to her alma mater because she always felt welcomed at the Island University. Townsend said she was proud of the campus transformation from a small Baptist university of 300 students into an institution with nearly 11,000 students.

Julia, along with Howard, received the University’s Outstanding Alumni Award, and served on the National Alumni Association’s Board of Directors. They also recruited UCC alumni to return to campus for Homecoming events.

In addition, Julia and Howard provided contributions for annual scholarships benefiting Houston students who attend the University, and supported the Tarpon Foundation and the Endowed Scholarship Program.
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Allison Barrett Andrews '13 BBA General Business is living in Corpus Christi and working for Andrews Distributing Company as an Assistant Purchaser while pursuing her MBA at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Chase Knetsch '11 BBA Management is living in California working as a Store Manager for Hurley. He plans to one day branch into the corporate world in Costa Mesa, Calif.

Damla Eytemiz '12 MBA General Business started working at Fulton Construction as a Special Projects Manager. She has shown her hard work and dedication in the company and the company offered to be a sponsor for her. She has met her lifetime best friend and he is from Corpus Christi. She says she is so thankful for her boyfriend, her job, and her amazing boss.

David Davila '82 BBA Accounting became a grandpa for the first time in February 2014. His son, David, and wife, Amy, had a baby girl named Adrina.

Dick Runyan Jr. '74 BBA Management and his wife traveled this past summer to Philadelphia, Pa., to visit her parents. On the way, they stopped in Louisville, Ky., and went through the Patton Museum. They also went to the Louisville Slugger Company to see how baseball hats are made.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Allan Cox '59 Bachelor of Music Education has been at the Rock Hill Baptist Church for three years. He and his wife, Linda, love their seven grandchildren with two of the seven married. Allan says he is having much joy.

Ashley Brooks '12 BA History lives in San Antonio, Texas, where she works with the Alamo Colleges as a Financial Aid Specialist. She is currently working on her master’s degree in Public Administration at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Brant Nugent '08 BS Criminal Justice/’11 MS Counseling is currently the Director of Case Management and Unit Director. He recently obtained his Licensed Professional Counselor license. He also serves his country as a Boatswain’s Mate 3rd class in the United States Coast Guard Reserve.

Bret Anthony Johnston '96 BA English wrote the novel, “Remember Me Like This,” that is being published by Random House. He is also the author of “Corpus Christi: Stories.” He is the Director of Creative Writing at Harvard University. His website is www.bretanthonyjohnston.com.

Carolina Blumberg '12 BA Communication got promoted three times and accumulated 11 company awards so far. She says that she remembers daily the passion her communication teachers shared with her. In addition, Carolina got engaged during 2013 and welcomed 2014 by tying the knot in February.

Daniel Lozoya ’13 BA Psychology obtained the job as a Case Manager with the Center for Health Care Services (Clinical Practitioner 1) in October. He is currently applying for masters programs in social work.

Debra Soto Fincher ’93 Master of Public Administration has been with the A&M System Internal Audit Department for 11 years. She loves her job as a Senior Investigative Auditor, where she uses her law enforcement background investigating Fraud, Waste and Abuse within the network of 11 universities, seven state agencies and two service units. She says it’s important to her to ensure that the System is being a responsible steward of students' tuition, as well as state and federal research funds the System receives.

Diane Goforth Bray '86 BA Studio Art/’87 MAIS retired from teaching public school art and is a Professional Gallery Painter. Her three grown sons live in Texas with three beautiful grandchildren.

Forrest Deviney '13 BA Philosophy married Mercedes Ruiz on June 15, 2013, and they subsequently moved to Irving, Texas. Forrest attends seminary at Perkins School of Theology and Mercedes works at Reading Partners, a non-profit group focused on literacy in elementary schools.

Giovanna Carrera '97 BS Criminal Justice and Chad Goetz ’96 BS welcomed a new baby boy, William “Henry” Goetz, in 2012. They currently reside in Pasadena, Calif.
Kelly Katrina Dye '04 BA Communication followed her dreams and moved to New York City shortly after graduation. She started her career at NBC, and is currently working in advertising as a Creative Recruiter at JWT. She loves the city life and can’t imagine herself living anywhere else.

Matt Teifke '13 BA History recently graduated in August of last year. He is getting ready to attend the Mays Business School at Texas A&M University in College Station. He is looking to get his master’s degree in real estate. He recently got the Corpus Christi Rookie Realtor of the Year award. He also got engaged to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi graduate, Alexandra Martin, who graduated with an education degree in December. She just got a second grade teaching job at Mary Branch Elementary School in Bryan, Texas.

Mercedes Ruiz Deviney '13 BA Communication married Forrest Deviney and they subsequently moved to Irving, Texas. Mercedes works at Reading Partners, a non-profit group focused on literacy in elementary schools. Forrest is attending seminary at Perkins School of Theology.

Michael Francis Coggins '09 BA History was recently married this past year to Brittain Hungerpiller of Myrtle Beach, S.C. He is currently a Business Development Manager at Heartland IT Consulting while his wife works as an Interior Designer for Workplace Solutions. They both work in downtown Dallas and reside in Rockwall, Texas.

Robert Mac Donald '09 BS Criminal Justice left his job as Chief of Police of Uvalde, Texas, which he held from 2010 to 2013, and took a position as Chief of Police of Jasper, Texas, in November 2013. This is a terrific opportunity to help a community divided, become a community working together.

Rommel J. Legaspi '07 Master of Public Administration was married at the Corpus Christi Cathedral on April 27, 2013, to Mary Jane “MJ” Albacete. MJ is a registered nurse at Christus Spohn South.

Terri Howe '91 BA Communications/'04 MS Counseling is working on a Ph.D. in Counselor Education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Veronica D. Ramirez '01 BA Music is doing prep work for Laredo Theater Guild International’s summer musical and Gala of My Fair Lady. This marks the second time the Guild has entrusted her and her vision with their summer extravaganza. She is excited and looking forward to a successful run.

Alumnus Returns to Serve Corpus Christi

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi alumnus Dr. Christopher Trevino has returned to Corpus Christi to serve the Coastal Bend community as a Licensed Therapeutic Optometrist at Complete Family Eye Care. Trevino received his Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Science from the Island University in 2009. Trevino is also an active member of the Texas Optometric Association, the American Optometric Association and a new Red Cross house member.

Alumna Named Among Top 40 Mass Transit Professionals

Island University Alumna Rosa Ena Villarreal received a national recognition as one of the “Top 40 under 40” Mass Transit Professionals in the country for her service and accomplishments as the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority Managing Director of Operations. Villarreal oversees transportation, mobility management, eligibility, vehicle maintenance, facilities’ maintenance and materials management. Villarreal graduated from Texas A&M-Corpus Christi with a Master’s degree in Public Administration in May 2013.

Kilgour Explores Ocean Depths

Dr. Morgan Kilgour, a former Doctoral Fellow from the Harte Research Institute, has explored parts of the Atlantic Ocean just off the Northeast coast of the United States that have never before been viewed by human eyes. Last summer, Kilgour conducted exploratory investigations on the diversity and distribution of deep-sea habitats and marine life using the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s new 6,000-meter remotely operated vehicle Deep Discoverer.
Belinda Matthews Pawelek ’85 BS Elementary Education retired from teaching this past May. She taught kindergarten for 28 years. Her youngest son is following in her footsteps and started Texas A&M-Corpus Christi this past August and is majoring in Kinesiology.

Brandey Addison ’97 BS Interdisciplinary Studies and her husband, James, have two beautiful daughters and are anxiously awaiting the arrival of a baby boy this spring. Brandey teaches third grade at Zachary Kolda Elementary. She proudly represents Kolda Elementary as Teacher of the Year for the 2013-2014 school year. She is an active member and Vice President in the local Theta Gamma chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

Jerry Dugan ’13 MS Educational Technology had the honor to give a TEDx Corpus Christi talk about the need to redefine strength in manhood for healthier relationships. There were around 100 people in the audience.

Marci Oncale ’06 BS Kinesiology recently accepted a recreation position for the City of Johnson City, Tenn. She got married in July in Maryland where she grew up.

O.B. Garcia ’54 BS Mathematics had the Martin Middle School library named after him. On Dec. 9, 2013, the Corpus Christi Independent School District Board of Trustees voted to change it to the O.B. Garcia Library. The school held a ceremony on Feb. 6, 2014, to celebrate the naming of the library in honor of O.B. Garcia.

Pamela Pettis ’08 BS Occupational Training & Development/’13 MS Secondary Education implemented the Kid’s Tennis Club and is Head Coach of Meadowbrook Elementary.
Allison Kathleen Kohnen '13 BS Biomedical Science just received her white coat and is finishing her first year at the University of Texas School of Dentistry in Houston, Texas.

Binesh Prabhakar '04 MS Environmental Science has started Cambridge IT Compliance, LLC, a Boston-based IT Consulting firm serving pharmaceutical and biotech companies. Currently, Binesh has four consultants on his team and is expanding. If you are in the Boston area, please stop by his office at 300 Washington St, Ste 510, Newton, Mass., or call him at 617.559.9700.

Glenda Garrett Swierc '87 BS Biology/'96 MS Environmental Science, after 13 plus years with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, has a new job as an EHS manager. Now she gets to use her Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Master of Science degree. Also, her daughter graduated from college this past fall semester.

Greg Diehlman '05 BS Criminal Justice has received his Master’s Degree in Criminal Justice from an accredited university and is still pursuing his Doctorate from another very accredited university. He is still working very hard on his studies. He is a very big fan of the Cincinnati Reds, Hoosier basketball, Cincinnati Bengals, Indiana Pacers, and also a big Islanders fan. He is also a big high school basketball fan.

Mary Jean Sparks '85 MS Biology received her Ph.D. in 1993 and worked at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and Lexicon Genetics. She joined the faculty at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in 2009 as Program Director of the Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program. Her son works at the University of Texas Medical Branch as a Ph.D. Researcher and her daughter is a Transplant Nurse at Methodist Hospital.

Matthew Pritchard ‘12 BS Environmental Science and Diana Sokoly ‘13 BS Environmental Science celebrated their marriage in a ceremony in Plano, Texas, on December 27, 2013.

Paul R. Vargas ’97 BS Biology lives in Clear Lake, Texas, and has been working at the NASA Johnson Space Center for more than 13 years. He just received the NASA Silver Snoopy Award which is the astronauts’ personal award and is presented to less than 1 percent of NASA employees.

Alumna Autumn Caro, a Teacher at Corpus Christi Independent School District’s Kaffie Middle School, appeared on the NBC show “Revolution” last fall. Caro, who has taught Theatre Arts at Kaffie Middle School for 12 years, also had background roles in “Friday Night Lights,” “Trooper,” and “Killer Women.” Caro received her Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts with a Theatre emphasis in 2002. She also received her Master of Science in Secondary Education at the Island University.

Emmy Winner, Alumnus Returns to Island University

Alumnus Mike Henneberger talked with Dr. Ethan Thompson’s Television Criticism class and Dr. David Gurney’s Film Art class last fall. Henneberger, a 2012 graduate of the Department of Communication and Media, is Digital Production Coordinator for Comedy Central. He won an Emmy for “Outstanding Interactive Program” for his work on Comedy Central’s “Night of Too Many Stars: America Comes Together for Autism Programs.” The show benefits programs across the country in support of individuals with autism that need quality services.

University Alumnus Promoted to Chief Operations Officer

University graduate Patrick Wiltshire was recently promoted to Chief Operations Officer at Public Management, Inc. Wiltshire, who has been with the company four years, began his new position in January. As Chief Operations Officer, Wiltshire has authority over all project management and supervisory authority over all personnel. Wiltshire earned his Master’s in Public Administration at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in December 2009.
It’s Your Island University Calling!

It’s your Island Callers on the line. Will you answer? Each student who has earned the opportunity to serve as an Island Caller is also your connection to learn about the great things that are going on at your University.

Be a part of our growth. After all, you share the experiences of being an Islander. When Island Callers reach out, take a moment and ask what’s new on campus and support your Islanders.

Our Island Callers thank local businesses for their generous support, including: Cracker Barrel Old Country Store and Restaurant, Denise’s Unlimited Salon, Executive Surf Club, HEB Plus Saratoga, Johnny Carino’s Italian Restaurants, Olive Garden Italian Restaurants, Omni Corpus Christi Hotel, Tailfins Seafood To Go, Texas State Aquarium, and Water Street Seafood Co.