INSIDE

Into the World,
Our Alumni Shine

The University Impacts
the Culture of the Coastal Bend

OVERFISHING OF SHARKS THREATENS GULF'S BALANCE OF POWER
Helping out freshmen biology majors has recently made me wake up and realize that my undergraduate career is almost over. This past summer, I had the fantastic opportunity to work as a marine mammal training intern at the Vancouver Aquarium in Canada. I got to interact with and help train beluga whales and sea otters as well as to learn about the career from the inside out from some of the best trainers in the business. It was, without a doubt, the best summer of my life.

There are so many great memories from my internship but one of my most cherished comes from my last day in Vancouver. I was done with my internship but went to the aquarium one last time. I walked by the underwater viewing area at the sea otter habitat where one of the otters, and my favorite, Milo was swimming. He saw me and swam over to me at the glass. I moved over to the right, then back over, and all around the glass and he followed me the whole time. That moment, along with so many others, is what strengthened my resolve to become a marine mammal trainer, working with dolphins, whales, seals, or sea otters like Milo.

In this career field, hands-on experience is essential and the internship in Vancouver helped me tremendously. I wouldn’t have even thought an internship was possible if it hadn’t been for the President’s Council Scholarship. Unpaid internships aren’t cheap and because of your support with the scholarship, I was able to focus on learning and making memories that will last the rest of my life.

The President’s Council has grown to become our most prestigious private giving society. It is part of the annual giving program, and is rich in tradition. 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.

As a member of the President’s Council, you become our partner in progress, because your support helps guide us toward the many milestones we will reach.

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 in which you have the opportunity to meet with fellow President’s Council members. We greatly appreciate the support of this devoted group and ensure ample recognition.

MEMBER BENEFITS

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MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- **Platinum Circle**
  - $10,000

- **Gold Circle**
  - $5,000

- **Silver Circle**
  - $2,500

- **Bronze Circle**
  - $1,000

**BRITTANY HORTON**

**PC SCHOLAR**

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Over the past 20 years, the vision and commitment of elected officials and community and business leaders has transformed Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi from a small upper-level university with a narrow mission into a major four-year institution with five colleges and a growing state and national reputation for excellence.

This evolution was achieved through efficient, strategic use of state and private investments. Wise utilization of our resources has resulted in the addition of a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs and a near doubling of enrollment since 1994 when freshmen and sophomores were welcomed to the campus for the first time. Our accomplishments are impressive. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi is ranked second in the state among regional public universities in the West by U.S. News and World Report and our graduation rates are the highest of any Hispanic Serving Institution in the state. At the graduate level, we are third in the state in awarding of doctoral degrees to Hispanic students.

Today, with the expectation of deep cuts in state funding for higher education and a projected enrollment of more than 11,000 students by fall 2015, it is more important than ever that we employ our resources efficiently. From keeping administrative costs low to ensuring the highest-return on the states’ investment of higher education funds we are preparing for these inevitable economic challenges by evaluating cost saving suggestions; suggesting instructional efficiencies; streamlining administrative structures and processes; increasing the efficiency of physical plant operations; enhancing auxiliary enterprises; and developing ideas to increase revenues.

However, these measures alone cannot offset cuts in state and federal aid that threaten to stall the momentum of the past 20 years. It is our responsibility to invest our financial and human resources efficiently and wisely. Our highest legislative priorities are to maintain institutional enhancement funding for special projects and engineering, and sustain the base funding that is essential to our quality of education.

At this critical time in our history, I am extremely proud of the response from our donors and supporters. Thanks to their generosity, our “Momentum 2015” campaign has exceeded its original goal of $25 million and our challenge goal of $30 million is well on the way to being met. In September, we will celebrate the campaign’s success and its immediate and long-term contributions to the excellence, engagement and expansion of the Island University.
For their final field exercise of the fall 2010 semester, students in the National Spill Control Schools (NSCS) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) class responded to a mock on-campus hazmat spill near the Carlos F. Truan Natural Resources Center. The class experienced the entire response process from tabletop planning to wearing totally-encapsulating suits with self-contained breathing devices while cleaning up the spill. In addition to training response personnel, industrial workers and military personnel, the NSCS supports the Environmental Protection Agency’s National Response Team’s Strike Force with consulting and research.

Watch the Spill Control Class at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okHFejhWxc

Dr. Killebrew Selected For Texas Statewide Transfer Issues Committee

President Flavius Killebrew has been selected to serve on the new Texas Statewide Transfer Issues Committee of the Community College Initiative. The committee consisting of a state representative body of presidents, provosts and vice presidents will address issues that promote highly effective and efficient transfer of community college students to universities and health-related institutions. The information generated by the committee will assist the Legislative Budget Board, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, elected officials and other stakeholders in addressing policies and practices to promote successful student transfer.

NGA Selects University as Success Story in Research Program

The United States’ National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) selected Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science’s research as a success story at the 2010 NGA Academic Research Program meeting in Washington, D.C. The research at the Conrad Blucher Institute focused on a two-year project conducted by undergraduate and graduate students that investigated the best methods for building an online rapid education system.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi honored the contributions of Dean Emeritus Ruth Bakke by naming a conference room in her memory in Island Hall, home of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Education’s Kinesiology Department. The “Dean Emeritus Ruth Bakke” Conference Room was made possible by more than $32,000 in donations by faculty, alumni and community members. Dr. Bakke joined the University in 1974 as associate professor and director of the nursing program. Beginning in 1979, she served as dean of the College of Science and Technology until her retirement in 1994.
CAMPUS BRIEFS

Last November, three area institutions of higher learning observed Geography Awareness Week by co-hosting “GIS Technology is Changing our World” at the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science. Del Mar College and Texas A&M University-Kingsville joined with Texas A&M-Corpus Christi to educate area students, professionals and residents about the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) used to solve problems related to the environment, health care, land use, business efficiency, education, public safety, and other areas. The technology allows users to see geographic features on a map and provides better understanding about specific locations so that planners, analysts and other users are able to make more informed decisions regarding their communities or the industry in which they work.

Since its inception in 2009, the Young Business Professionals of South Texas has dedicated its energies to expanding the area’s international economic development by creating opportunities that encourage young entrepreneurs to establish their careers and businesses in the Coastal Bend.

With monthly activities that include roundtable speaking forums, professional networking events and community service opportunities, the organization’s more than 200 members are able to build relationships with other young professionals and established business people in the Coastal Bend. At a roundtable discussion, “We Started from Scratch: Inspiring Your Entrepreneurial Spirit,” Sam L. Susser, president and CEO of Susser Holding Corporation, offered candid advice to young professionals as one of the featured speakers of the evening. Through these networking opportunities, members learn about best business practices and social responsibility in the global marketplace.

The Young Business Professionals of the Coastal Bend was created by the International Relations Office of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in partnership with the City of Corpus Christi, Port Corpus Christi and the World Affairs Council of South Texas.

The Ancients faculty team defeated “The Neophytes” student team from the University’s First-Year Learning Communities Program during KEDT Challenge held Oct. 26 in the University Center commons. This was the second year that the popular South Texas Public Television show, which features area high school teams answering questions in the areas of math, science, social studies, language arts and fine arts, has promoted its season on the University campus.

University Earned ‘A’ in Rating System

The general education programs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi were one of only 17 nationwide to earn an “A” from WhatWillTheyLearn.com, an interactive Web site that grades college and universities on requirements that students complete coursework in the seven key academic areas of English composition, literature, foreign languages, American history, economics, math and science. Both Texas A&M University and Texas A&M-Corpus Christi ranked in the top 3 percent of the 718 colleges and universities reviewed, making Texas A&M the only flagship university system in the nation to have multiple campuses earn an “A” grade.
New Blood Makes Islanders True Contenders
Nationally-recognized recruiting class includes top local players, big-time transfers

With victories over two national champions under their belt in their first eight games, expectations are high for the Islanders baseball team. The early schedule was good to the Islanders. They defeated the nationally-ranked Texas Longhorns in Austin, and beat the Oregon State Beavers, who won national championships in 2006 and 2007, in the Kleberg Bank College Classic.

But they still have many challenges ahead, including a major non-conference showdown when they face the Longhorns in a rematch on April 5 at Whataburger Field. The win on Feb. 22 was the second time the Islanders have knocked off the Longhorns, who were defending national champions when the Islanders blanked them 5-0 to open the 2006 season.

The key to the Islanders success is the recruiting of Coach Scott Malone and his staff who raked in the talent with last year’s group that gained honorable mention on Collegiate Baseball Newspaper’s list of top national classes.

“It’s exciting to have our program recognized on a national level,” says Malone. “This group of student-athletes puts us in a position to have a special season in 2011. Our recruiting coordinator, Chris Ramirez, has done an excellent job of assembling a class that will be a difference maker in the Southland Conference.”

All but two members of the freshman class are native Texans, including local product Justin Meza, a right-handed pitcher and outfielder from Moody High School who was named All-South Texas Player of the Year in 2009. But, homesickness may be the best thing going for the pitching staff which adds depth thanks to the addition of right-hander Sean Hoelscher, a Calallen product who played at Texas Christian University before following his younger brother, Adam, a sophomore left-hander, to the Island University.

“It’s a lot of fun finally being able to play in front of my dad and my mom,” Hoelscher says. “They didn’t get to catch a lot of games at TCU in Fort Worth. They watched on the Internet, but it’s not the same, so they’re really excited about getting to see every game.”

The two brothers who each led Calallen to state championships would like nothing better than to help the Islanders win a Southland Conference title. But, they don’t talk about it. For the Hoelscher brothers, actions speak louder than words.

“It’s pretty cool because we got to play a little bit together in high school, but being in college together is really great,” Adam says. “We don’t really talk about baseball that much. We’re not big talkers anyway, so I guess that carries over.”

Three junior college transfers are also expected to contribute to the team immediately. Left-handed pitcher Todd Simko, from Cuesta Junior College, and right-hander Michael Boyle, from Alvin Junior College, give depth to the pitching staff. Catcher “Jumpy” Garcia, who earned second-team Junior College All-America recognition after hitting .436 with 20 home runs and 91 RBI at Southeastern Iowa Community College, adds power to the line-up.

Inspiring “once in a lifetime” performances... on the field and in the classroom.
ISLANDER ATHLETICS

Athletic Hall of Honor

Jerry Vandergriff quarterbacked the University of Corpus Christi Tarpons during the 1962 and 1963 seasons, earning All-Texas and Little All-America honors. His senior year, he was team captain and won the Jack Hickman Award as the University’s Most Outstanding Athlete. Vandergriff, who also served as student body president, graduated with a degree in education with a minor in physical education. After earning his master’s degree from Texas Tech, he coached high school football for seven years before joining the staff at Angelo State University in 1971 as an assistant under future Hall of Fame coach Grant Teaff. He became head coach in 1982 and, in 23 seasons, compiled a 143-101, record that included 18 winning seasons. He was named Lone Star Conference Coach of the Year honors four times.

Ken de Koning led the Tarpons to the fifth spot in the Division I national polls in 1971, the highest ranking ever achieved by a University team. He excelled off the court also, making the dean’s list in seven of his eight semesters at the Island University and serving on the student council and cheerleading squad. Following graduation in 1973, de Konig spent 22 years as a director of tennis and general manager at several private clubs before returning to his alma mater in 1998 to take over the newly formed Islanders women’s tennis team. He led the Islanders to two independent championships before retiring in 2007, the year after the University joined the Southland Conference.

The Hoops for Blue Scholars fundraiser held Feb. 15 raised nearly $11,000 to benefit the One Hundred Club Scholarship Endowment that provides scholarships to active duty, regular certified Texas Peace Officers employed by the Corpus Christi Police Department and the children of former and active officers. During the game against the Texas State Bobcats, fans pledged a set number of dollars for every field goal made by the Islanders.

Support the Momentum Campaign. • giving.tamucc.edu
“Parody and Taste in Postwar American Television Culture,”
by Dr. Ethan Thompson, associate professor and coordinator of the Communication program, was released by Routledge Publishing Company in December 2010. The book examines the boom in socially relevant humor that took place alongside the birth of television, analyzing and theorizing the production and consumption of television, parody and satire. Thompson is co-editor of 2009’s “Satire TV: Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era.” In October 2010, his op-ed article “Entertainment as Politics,” appeared in The New York Times online.

In November 2010, Dr. Joann Canales, associate dean of Graduate Studies, was appointed to a six-year term as secretary of the board of directors of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE). Canales has more than 25 years experience working with school districts, regional entities, state departments, and state, national organizations and international institutions of higher education. She has served on state accreditation teams in Texas, Louisiana, and Rhode Island and as an evaluator of educational needs in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

“Collecting Texas: Essays on Texana Collectors and the Creation of Research Libraries”
co-edited by Dr. Tom Kreneck, head of the University’s Special Collections and Achieves, was featured at the 2010 Texas Book Festival in Austin, Texas. The volume was co-written with Dr. Gerald D. Saxon, dean of the library at the University of Texas at Arlington. The book represents a culmination of Kreneck’s 20 years as curator of rare books at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. “Collecting Texas” contains 195 pages explaining how private collectors significantly contributed to the building of Texas history research resources across the state.

A book co-written by Dr. Fabio Moretzsohn, assistant research scientist at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) and adjunct professor of Environmental Science, has made the best-seller list on Amazon.com, America’s largest online retailer. “The Book of Shells: A Life-Size Guide to Identifying and Classifying Six Hundred Seashells,” published by the University of Chicago Press, reached number 57 among the millions of books sold on Amazon.com, and number one on several lists, including Biological Sciences, Marine Biology, Outdoors and Nature, Zoology, Animals, and Seashells. Moretzsohn’s co-author is Dr. M. G. Harasewych, curator of mollusks at the Smithsonian Institution.
**DR. MAGESH THIYAGARajan**, director of the Plasma Engineering Research Lab and an assistant professor of engineering in the College of Science and Technology, has received $700,000 research grant from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to establish a state-of-the-art Plasma Engineering Research Laboratory (PERL) facility. The award from the DOD’s Army Medical Research and Materiel Command-Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center allows the PERL, which is part of the University’s mechanical engineering program, to carry out atmospheric pressure “cold plasma” based biomedical engineering research for combat care medical treatment applications.

**DR. CHRISTOPHER L. MARKWOOD** has been named University provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. Markwood began his professional career as an assistant political science professor at the University of Central Oklahoma in 1994, becoming the inaugural dean of the College of Arts, Media and Design in 2001. He has taught at Lamar University, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia College and Southwest Baptist University. He received his bachelor’s degree in political science and history from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and earned his master’s degree and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

**DR. ROBB JACKSON**, Dr. Robb Jackson, a professor of English in the College of Liberal Arts, has received the designation of Regents Professor from The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents. Jackson, one of 11 professors within The Texas A&M University System to receive the designation of Regents Professor for 2009-2010, is the author the recently published “Child Support,” a collection of poems about his 20 years as a noncustodial father of four children during and after his separation and divorce from their mother. His other books of poetry include “From Halsdon Mill Cottage” (2005) and “Living on the Hurricane Coast” (2003).

**JANICE AND RICHARD HASWELL**, professor and retired professor of English, respectively, use their own perspective of authorial potentiality and singularity to reconsider staple English-studies concerns such as gender, evaluation, voice, character, literacy, feminism, self, interpretation, assessment, signature, and taste. The authors embrace competing realms of English studies, drawing examples and arguments equally from literary and compositionist research. In the process the Haswells have created a “big idea book” and a critique of the field.

Support the Momentum Campaign. • giving.tamucc.edu
AROUND CAMPUS

MICHAEL AND KAREN O’CONNOR BUILDING
When completed this spring, the Michael and Karen O’Connor Building, will be home to the University’s College of Business. The $25 million, 75,000-square foot facility made possible in large part to a $6 million gift from the late Corpus Christi businessman Michael A. O’Connor and his wife, Karen O’Connor Urban, will house a Center for Economic Research with space for an Executive Education Department, faculty offices, classrooms and two computer labs.

Watch the O’Connor Building Topping Out at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EOkV1NjXe4

BAYSIDE PARKING GARAGE
To provide more parking for a growing campus community, the University is constructing the $19.8 million Bayside Parking Garage. When completed in August, the garage will have 1,270 parking spaces. Two parking lots are also being expanded, creating an additional 450 parking spaces.

“MOMENTUM CAMPUS” Because preparing for future growth is a top priority, the University is relocating non-academic facilities to the new “Momentum Campus” to create space for expansion of academics on Ward Island. An ROTC Field Leaders Reaction Course is already in use and the $2.4 million tennis complex is scheduled for completion in May. A $16 million sports complex for track, soccer, baseball and softball is scheduled for completion in March 2012. The new campus, which also includes a physical plant, additional parking and housing, is being built on around 140 acres near Nile Drive and Ennis Joslin Road that was donated by the City of Corpus Christi.

Endowed Scholarship Council

Lena D. Coleman, founder and CEO of The LC Foundation, Inc., recently established an endowment to help fund student scholarships, faculty enrichment, and activities and programs implemented through the president’s office.

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. Donors with cumulative gifts to endowed scholarship funds of $50,000 or more are inducted into the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Endowed Scholarship Council and recognized at the annual Endowed Scholarship Banquet.

For more information about the Endowed Scholarship Council or other giving opportunities contact
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi • 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5741
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5741 • (361) 825-2420

Invest in Your University.
For 400 million years, sharks have been the apex predators of the world's oceans, the top of the food chain, the lions of marine life. But today, the great fish are the hunted ones, their numbers drastically depleted by the one factor that nature can’t control. Man.
Dr. Greg Stunz, endowed chair for Fisheries and Ocean Health and associate professor of Marine Biology at the University’s Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI), is a leading researcher on shark migration. As part of a “tagging project” for the United States Geological Survey to access the ecological health of the Gulf of Mexico, Stunz is tracking the migration patterns of sharks using the Padre Island National Seashore as a home base.

“Sharks are an integral part of our ecological system because they keep everything below them in balance,” says Stunz. “Since they are at the top of the food chain, nature didn’t need them to reproduce early in life nor in large numbers. So the female gives birth to very few pups which are very slow to become reproductively mature. Unfortunately, nature didn’t figure man’s efficiency at removing fish from the ocean into the equation.”

Although sharks are almost unrivaled beneath the waves, it’s a different story on the ocean surface. Shark fin soup is considered a delicacy in many Asian countries, and fishermen slaughter the mighty fish indiscriminately, often cutting off just the fins and letting the shark sink to the bottom to die. And recent global and regional trends suggest alarming declines in shark populations due to overfishing and their inability to reproduce in large numbers.

Currently, United States and even foreign ships hunt sharks for their fins in the Gulf of Mexico. However, President Obama recently signed the “Shark Conservation Act of 2010” that will severely restrict the legal gathering of shark fins in U.S. waters. But, Stunz says, laws will do little to stop the lucrative trade by poachers from Latin American countries, who threaten the sustainability of several species of sharks including the sand tiger, hammerhead, tiger and the mako, one of the fastest fish on the planet. Many female sharks are killed before they can reproduce, dangerously thinning their numbers and threatening the balance of nature.

For instance, Stunz points out, when there are not enough sharks to keep the stingray population in check, these dorsoventrally-flattened cousins of the shark play havoc on the shellfish population, threatening the economic stability of the shellfish industry in many areas. There is also mounting evidence that this “cascading effect” can impact other types of fish and marine life.

Historically, sharks have been plentiful. But in the 1980s they were determined to be an “undeveloped fishery” by the U.S. government which began offering subsidies and low-cost loans to fishermen targeting the shark populations. Within 10 years, many of the large species of sharks were overfished and, because of their low-breeding output, are less abundant and smaller than the giant monsters once commonly hooked along the Gulf coast.

Some species, like the bull shark, are not on the decline but are tagged to study their migration patterns. Bull sharks, which along with the tiger and great white sharks, are the most likely of their species to attack humans, dwell in shallow waters and are capable of thriving in fresh water. They have been found in the Ohio and Mississippi rivers as far north as Indiana and Illinois.

“Although sharks have always been around, little is known about how they interact with their habitats and the consequences of natural and man-made behaviors on the near-shore waters that are vital to their existence,” Stunz points out. “We need a better
The Scientific benefits provided by studies that employ tagging technologies are immense. However, the growing use of marine animals for the collection of oceanographic data raises important legal implications under the marine scientific research provisions of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, according to Dr. Richard McLaughlin, endowed chair with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.

“This important international treaty provides coastal nations with the exclusive right to regulate foreign marine scientific research in ocean waters from their coasts out to the edge of their 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zones,” explains McLaughlin. “If the research has a direct relationship on the exploration or exploitation of natural resources, the coastal state may deny permission for the research to occur in its ocean waters.”

Technological advances in the global tracking of electronic tagged marine animals provide scientists with unprecedented insights into ecological behavior and associated oceanographic conditions. Information that can be currently downloaded from these electronic tags includes animal location and movement, temperature (internal and external), depth, salinity, chlorophyll levels, water chemistry and other properties. The datasets acquired from this technology have provided important fisheries management insights such as migration patterns, foraging behaviors, nursery areas, and water-column variability.

As a result of advances in design and miniaturization of tag technology, tagged marine animals are beginning to be viewed by the scientific community as a substitute for more traditional oceanographic data collection from vessels. Consequently, it may be only a matter of time before coastal nations exercise their rights under the United Nations Law of the Sea Treaty and attempt to prevent research involving tagged marine animals from taking place in ocean waters under their control.

“Opportunities exist to address this potentially destabilizing legal and policy scenario before it has a profound effect on the conduct and promotion of marine scientific research in the world’s oceans,” says McLaughlin. “If the research has a direct relationship on the exploration or exploitation of natural resources, the coastal state may deny permission for the research to occur in its ocean waters.”

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“Opportunities exist to address this potentially destabilizing legal and policy scenario before it has a profound effect on the conduct and promotion of marine scientific research in the world’s oceans,” says McLaughlin. “However, this outcome will only occur after a full and candid discussion of the issue by members of the international community. This exchange of views should take place sooner rather than later so that a future crisis does not unduly color perceptions or reduce available policy choices.”
Ed Hicks, founder and chairman of the board of the Ed Hicks Family of Dealerships, is the recipient of the 2011 G. Russell Kirkland Distinguished Visitor in Business Administration Award presented by the College of Business at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

“Mr. Hicks is a fine example of American ingenuity for his ability to build a highly successful business from the ground up while remaining strong in his faith and not forsaking his ideals,” says Dean Moustafa Abdelsamad of the College of Business.

“Further to his credit is his staunch commitment to the Corpus Christi community and to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.”

Hicks, who originally intended to enter the ministry like his father, earned his bachelor’s degree from St. Paul Seminary in 1955. However, his personal goal was to be a businessman, so he became a salesman for a family-owned Chevrolet dealer in Detroit, Mich. He was soon promoted to general sales manager and later realized he was determined to open his own automobile dealership.

In 1966, Hicks moved his family to Corpus Christi and opened a pre-owned auto dealership. In 1973 he purchased what is currently his Nissan franchise, which at the time was named Ed Hicks Datsun. Then in 1975, the Mercedes-Benz franchise was added to Ed Hicks Datsun and the dealership was subsequently named Ed Hicks Imports.

The Ed Hicks Family of Dealerships is family-owned and operated. Hicks’ wife, Gloria Hicks, a certified public accountant, handles its local, state, and federal taxes. Their son, Charlie Hicks, serves as president and CEO. Their daughter, Debbie Layton, who is also a certified public accountant, serves as vice president and CFO.

The Hicks family is heavily involved in the community, serving on several boards and participating in many charitable fundraisers. Hicks has served on the Texas State Medical Board, the Governor’s Business Advisory Council, and the Presidential Business Advisory Council. Additionally, he has served as director of the American International Automobile Dealer Association, chairman of the Board of the Corpus Christi International Airport, and as president of the Corpus Christi Police Foundation.

The G. Russell Kirkland Distinguished Visitor in Business Administration Award was created to honor Kirkland’s distinguished service to the University, Corpus Christi, and South Texas. Recipients are chosen for their personal accomplishments and contributions to the success of students, faculty, the University and the Corpus Christi community. Kirkland was the University’s vice president for development from 1975 through 1978. Prior to joining the University, he was associated with Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith, Inc. for 35 years.

The Islander Dance Team won grand champion at the Showtime Collegiate Nationals held March 12 at South Padre Island, Texas.
And it is the accomplishments of alumni that are creating the momentum to elevate Texas A&M Corpus Christi into a nationally-known University with a reputation for excellence in all of its five colleges. Whether they are homegrown or transplants, graduates of the Island University are making their mark in business, education, the liberal arts, nursing and health sciences and science and technology.
WELCOME TO WALMART

When Theresa Barrera enrolled in the University’s College of Business in 1985, she never dreamed that one day she would become one of the top executives at the corporation that runs the world’s largest chain of discount department stores.

Beginning as a part-time cashier at the Corpus Christi Sam’s Club, a membership-only retail warehouse club owned and operated by WalMart Stores, Inc., she succeeded at every rung. She eventually relocated to WalMart’s corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Ark., where she made her mark as divisional merchandise manager with the ability to study merchandising trends and predict as far as a year in advance what would be hot during the busiest seasons.

Barrera excelled again when she was named vice president of WalMart’s Supplier Diversity Program. Under her guidance, the corporation greatly expanded its partnerships with minority and women-owned businesses, increasing business with those suppliers by 25 percent in one year. But to truly appreciate Barrera’s accomplishments, it’s important to know the path she has traveled and the part the Island University played in her success.

“I attribute my success today to the great mentors I had in college,” says Barrera, who graduated in 1989 from what was then Corpus Christi University while visiting her mother in Corpus Christi during the summer of 1985. Losing only three semester hours, she transferred to CCSU. But when her mother died suddenly, Barrera had to use her savings to pay for the funeral and faced the prospect of having to drop out of school. Learning of her plight, a manager at Sam’s Club helped her get a corporate scholarship that allowed her to complete her undergraduate degree. Fifteen years later, she delivered the commencement address at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and shared her keys to success with the new graduates.

“Always have a mentor to help guide you through your journey,” she says. “Every day, look at where you are and think about where you want to be in five years. But most important, be equipped to deal with the changing times and work very hard. It does get you noticed.”

YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

Not many successful professionals can boast that they work within a mile of where they were born. But that fact is a great source of pride for Dr. Mark Escamilla, president of Corpus Christi’s Del Mar College.

Escamilla comes from hard-working stock. The fourth of five children, he grew up working in his family’s construction and automobile repair shops. As he developed a strong work ethic, he also set his sights on a college degree. In 1987, when most of his friends went off to large universities, Escamilla enrolled at Del Mar College where he received his associate’s degree in criminal justice.

After earning his four-year degree in criminal justice and a master’s degree in counseling from the Island University, he joined the border patrol and was stationed in Arizona. When three knee surgeries ended that career, he looked for other ways to satisfy his desire to work in public service. He returned to school and, in 2001, received his Ph.D. in Educational Administration with specialization in Community College Leadership from the University of Texas.

Following a stint at Morton College in Illinois, Escamilla became provost and chief academic officer at Tyler Junior College. In 2008, he returned to his hometown as president of Del Mar College. Today, his mission is simple: increase the level of education in the community.

“Nothing makes me happier than to help people get a college education,” says Escamilla. “When people get their college degree, they discover a level of freedom they never knew existed. “Every day, I recall what a struggle it was to get from point A to point B, and I do what I can to make that struggle easier.”

Escamilla’s commitment doesn’t end when a Del Mar student receives their diploma. Knowing that a four-year degree opens doors, he is committed to helping students make a smooth transition to the university level.

In August 2010, Escamilla

INSPIRATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Alumnus grows up at-risk, rises to 2010 Irving secondary teacher of the year

When Juan Frausto began taking theatre classes at the Island University, he realized his dream wasn’t to become a Hollywood actor, but to inspire students in the classroom.

“I loved acting so much, that I wanted to pass it on to others,” Frausto says. “That’s why I became a teacher.”

Alumnus grows up at-risk, rises to 2010 Irving secondary teacher of the year

Juan (center), his sister, Vicky (left), and brother, Joey (right), help sack onions in Idaho.
A TRADITION OF CARING

Although the College of Nursing and Health Sciences opened its doors less than 10 years ago, graduates of the Island University have been making significant contributions in the world of healthcare for many years.

In 1993, when the nursing program was still part of the College of Science and Technology, Jerry Rodriguez received his Bachelor of Science in Nursing Technology and went on to earn a master’s degree in Nursing Leadership Administration. Immediately, doors began to open and before long he was offered a position with the Christus Spohn Health System.

“The nursing program helped me build a foundation for my career that has allowed me to develop my full potential,” says Rodriguez, who grew up in Corpus Christi. “Because of the personal type of learning experience I received, I was able to expand and grow.”

Rodriguez has been with Christus Spohn his entire career and, from 2006 to 2010, he was vice president and chief operating officer at the System’s hospital in Beeville, Texas. While there, he was able to employ his leadership skills to reverse what had been a bad situation before he arrived.

“When I took over, the hospital was financially unstable and there was discontent among the medical staff,” Rodriguez recalls. “I am really proud that, while I was there, we developed a strong relationship with the doctors and put the hospital back on track financially.”

During his tenure in Beeville, Rodriguez, who also served as the regional chief nurse executive for the Christus Spohn System, the hospital improved its service excellence, clinical quality and financial performance. His accomplishments earned him notice. In November 2010, he was named regional vice president and administrator of Christus Santa Rosa Hospital-City Center in San Antonio, Texas, a 400-bed acute care facility.

“I am where I am today because of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi,” says Rodriguez. “It’s my experience that the nursing program is one of the best in the country. It’s phenomenal.”

A TRADITION OF CARING

JERRY RODRIGUEZ

MARK ESCAMILLA

Frausto, who was named the 2010 Secondary Teacher of the Year by the Irving, Texas, School District, graduated in 1998 with a bachelor’s degree in communication with an emphasis in theatre, and a minor in math. He teaches theatre and video production classes at Lorenzo de Zavala Middle School, and is coordinator of the Advancement Via Individual Determination college-preparation core class, targeting first-generation college students.

The Brownsville, Texas, native, whose parents were raised in Mexico, relates to at-risk students, and sets high expectations in his classes. Growing up, Frausto witnessed crime and violence in his neighborhood and missed several weeks of school each year to clean sugar beet fields, and pick onions and other crops in Idaho with his family of migrant farm workers.

“I always told myself, ‘This is not what I want to do for the rest of my life,’” Frausto says. “I wanted to be in air conditioning.”

Although his parents spoke no English, they encouraged their children to attend college. Four of the five siblings received university degrees including Frausto’s brother Jose, also a Texas A&M-Corpus Christi graduate.

During his career, Frausto has taught math, theatre and bilingual education in Corpus Christi, Brownsville and Dallas/Fort Worth. He has also worked as a producer, reporter and kids’ TV show host in Brownsville. In 2006, he accepted his current position.

“Knowing I had a hand in developing students’ independence, confidence and their mental and spiritual growth is very rewarding,” he says.
Late brought Dr. Peter Etnoyer, now a marine biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Coastal Center for Environmental Health, to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

A former Hollywood cameraman and film editor who worked on several low-budget fright movies, Etnoyer left show business after 10 years to pursue a more rewarding career. He enrolled in a six-week marine laboratory summer session at Duke University and rediscovered a passion for sea creatures that he’d had since age 8 when, after receiving an aquarium, he had declared that he would one day explore the oceans.

Etnoyer earned his master’s degree in coastal environmental management from Duke after doing research in the Philippines, the epicenter of marine diversity, and was a student researcher at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks when he met his mentor, Dr. Tom Shirley. After Shirley accepted the position as endowed chair for Biodiversity and Conservation at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI), a newly-created marine institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Etnoyer followed.

While working on his doctorate at the Island University, Etnoyer received the prestigious David Johnson Award for outstanding and innovative use of satellite data. In 2009, he became the first research fellow to graduate from the HRI. Even before he completed his studies, Etnoyer was getting phone calls from prospective employers.

“I feel like I am visiting an alien world.”

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“Working at the HRI gave me a clearer vision of where I wanted to go in life,” says Etnoyer. “I was working at a new research facility that had a broad vision of a tri-national collaboration and learning new things about the academic process and the intersection of sciences, marketing and teaching. It was exhilarating.”

At NOAA, Etnoyer’s specialty is locating “sweet spots” in the ocean where life is rich and organisms abundant. He then works with governments and non-profit organizations to secure and protect those resources for future generations.

While people in the United States spent last fall’s Thanksgiving holiday enjoying good food and fellowship with family and friends, University alumnus Liza Mucheru-Wisner traveled to Kenya where she visited primary schools and explored first-hand how she could help introduce children in her native country to the world of digital education.

Mucheru-Wisner, a former member of the Kenyan National Women’s Golf Team, attended the Island University on a golf scholarship, earning her bachelor’s degree in computer science in 2004 and a master’s degree in Educational Technology in 2007. Her first stop on her return home was at a pastor-run primary school in the city of Kibera, Kenya’s biggest slum, where the need for educational tools is most acute and her efforts could make an almost immediate impact.

“It’s at schools like this that we can make the biggest difference,” says Mucheru-Wisner. “These kids are smart and can compete academically with private schools. It’s not about whether they can learn. It’s about providing them the opportunities to learn.”

During her visit, Mucheru-Wisner, associate director of the University’s ELITE graduate student retention program, met with several government officials. Among them was Kenya’s vice president who wanted to hear her ideas on introducing technology integration into the schools and how it will help make Kenya more competitive in the global marketplace.

Tapping into the resources of Texas Techies, a small company she started through the University’s Business Incubator Program, she created the POWERUP (Providing Opportunities Where Everyone Rises Up) pilot program to prepare youngsters for educational readiness through technology-rich learning.

“Digital education: making an impact

Alumnus empowers primary schools in Kenya

Liza Mucheru-Wisner visited primary schools in Kenya to help introduce children to the world of digital education.
“Most everything I do relates to the fact that countries have exclusive rights to the waters within 200 miles of their coasts,” says Etnoyer. “The most fascinating and intense moments I have are encounters with big fish, turtles, sharks and marine mammals. These animals have thoughts and feelings that you can sense. Every time I go under water, I feel like I am visiting an alien world.”

Hollywood cameraman turned marine scientist Dr. Peter Etnoyer explores the “alien world” beneath the ocean surface that is ruled by “fascinating fish and mammals.”

**THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD**

Few students have taken a more interesting path to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi than David Kendrick, a College of Education graduate and director of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at the University of Northern Colorado.

After earning his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English from Colorado State University, Kendrick went to work for a private defense company in 1988 teaching English to military in the United Arab Emirates. He continued working with U.S. allies during the first Gulf War when American troops drove the Iraq Army from Kuwait before returning to his home state.

It was an unexpected phone call from a friend that brought Kendrick, who had been a competitive gymnast in college, to Texas. The friend offered him a job as director of a private gymnastics club in Corpus Christi and, as quickly as he could make arrangements, he was on a plane. That led to a position with the Corpus Christi Athletic Club but after four years he was anxious to get back to his first love, teaching. He heard about the master’s program in Educational Technology at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and applied.

“Even though I was 40, I didn’t bat an eye,” Kendrick recalls. “Texas A&M-Corpus Christi is a hub for developing teachers and the program was a perfect fit with my educational goals.”

While working on his master’s degree, Kendrick also worked in the Center for Teaching Excellence. After obtaining his master’s, he began his new career as an educational tech at the Island University, rising to assistant director of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program while earning his doctorate in Educational Leadership. In 2006, he accepted the position of director of Educational Development for the Corpus Christi ISD.

“Every time I turned around, A&M-Corpus Christi opened doors for me at just the right time,” says Kendrick. “Even though I enjoyed my job, I was anxious to get back into higher education and, after five years experience I had the credentials I needed.”

Today, Kendrick is back in his home state, serving at the University of Northern Colorado as the director of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning which supports and promotes emerging technologies.

“It’s been a long road and there’s no way I’d be where I am without Texas A&M-Corpus Christi,” he says. “The University prepared me to be where I am today.”

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Record Enrollment

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi marked a major milestone in its history when more than 10,000 students reported for fall 2010 classes at the Island University. The total of 10,037 undergraduate and graduate students marked an increase of 6 percent over the 9,468 students enrolled a year earlier. The University’s current capacity is estimated at 12,000 students but will expand to approximately 16,000 when construction of new non-academic facilities on the “Momentum Campus” is completed.

Innovation Center Grand Opening

In December, the University and Corpus Christi government and civic leaders celebrated the grand opening of the Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center at the University’s Flour Bluff building at South Padre Island Drive. A key component of the Center is its innovative incubator program that nurtures entrepreneurial startup companies by providing targeted resources and services to accelerate their growth and ensure long-term success. Under the program, fledgling businesses receive appropriate rental space and flexible leases, shared basic business services and equipment, and technology support services. Additionally, they have access to professional Ph.D.-level consulting, student internship programs, coursework modeling and interaction, executive-level education classes and assistance in obtaining the financing necessary for company growth.

Watch the Innovation Center Grand Opening at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLoB3D88cl
enriching the culture of the coastal bend

The arts thrive at the Island University where, each year, students in the Theatre Department stage four campus productions and present the annual One Act Play Festival. The Weil Gallery, Islander Art Gallery and the Art Museum of South Texas host exhibitions by internationally and nationally-acclaimed artists and the Music Department holds performances ranging from orchestra to jazz, many in the world-class Performing Arts Center (PAC). The PAC is also the principal performance venue for the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, Corpus Christi Chorale, Corpus Christi Live! and the Furgason Bravo! Series.

continued on page 20

islander revue

One of the campus entertainment highlights each year is the “Islander Revue” music and dance extravaganza that gives student groups and organization a chance to show off their creative talents while competing for cash prizes. The show sponsored by the Student Foundation draws large crowds to the University's beautiful Performing Arts Center to enjoy comedy, interpretive dance, hip hop and stomp routines, and other acts. Groups are judged on creativity, choreography, musical quality and entertainment value. All proceeds from the annual talent show help fund student scholarships.

Watch the Islander Revue at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppDOxQzPxh4
FEATURES

study abroad programs

A group of University students and faculty advisors experienced the beauty and culture of Florence, Italy, as part of the faculty-led “Photography and Art History in Florence” Study Abroad Program. Each year, students from all academic disciplines have a myriad of opportunities to experience the world outside the classroom through these challenging, yet affordable Study Abroad programs which also include “Photography in Costa Rica,” “Theatre in London,” and “Discover Istanbul.”

south texas cinémathèque

The South Texas Cinémathèque brings internationally-recognized filmmakers who come to Corpus Christi to screen and discuss their innovative independent films. The free series highlights award-winning films that have premiered at the South by Southwest Conference and Film Festival, the Sundance Film Festival and other events across the nation. The South Texas Cinémathèque, which is held each spring and fall at the Art Museum of South Texas, exposes students to independent films and makes them more accessible to South Texas residents.

upcoming events

Through April 15 University Galleries: “Steve Reynolds: In Retrospect.” 361.825.3756
April 15 Department of Music: Flicka and Friends Presents “Carmen” in concert. 361.825.2371
April 18 Office of International Education: “Parade of Nations.” 361.825.3922
April 19-24 University Theatre: “The Skin of Our Teeth.” 361.825.5800
April 21 Department of Music: University Symphonic Winds Concert. 361.825.5523
April 25 Department of Music: Lichtenstein String Quartet Recital. 361.825.3746

May 2-7 University Theatre: Student-Directed One-Act Play Festival. 361.825.5800
May 3 Department of Theatre: Island Dance Demo. 361.825.2586
May 5 College of Education and Amigos de Mexico: “Cinco de Mayo Celebration.” 361.882.7837
May 5 –July 10 Art Museum of South Texas: “In Search of Norman Rockwell’s America.” 361.825.3500
FEATURES

sculptures afloat

Last fall, students in Professor Jack Gron’s Sculpture I class created flotillas of art from recycled materials including aluminum cans, Styrofoam and cardboard. The rafts had to float in the waters at the University beach for a minimum of five minutes; and, as art, they had to make a socio-political, economic and/or environmental statement.

As part of a “Second Self” assignment, teams of students used their bodies as elements in compositions made from plastic wrap and heavy-duty tape. Students also deconstructed a man-made object into shapes on paper and developed a new design based on those shapes.

Watch Float a Sculpture at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cknBLcJMF0E

camp danger

Islander Improv’s Camp Danger received second place at the 2010 National College Improv Tournament’s Southwest Regional Competition held in Austin, Texas, and is ranked in the top 20 university improv troupes in the nation, by Chicago Improv Festival Productions. Camp Danger members are Ellen Buschang, Andrew Robinson, Gary Turman Jr., Esteban Reyna, Travis Delgado and George Coffman. Islander Improv, which consists of both short and long form improvisation troupes, is open to any interested Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi students.

parade of nations

Each year, students representing countries from around the world present native dance and musical performances during the University’s “Parade of Nations.” This year’s colorful festival on Monday, April 18 at 6 p.m., in the Performing Arts Center will feature a fashion show and music and dances by students from Azerbaijan, Colombia, India, China, Turkey and Vietnam. The Middle Eastern Dance Club, the Latin Girls, and the Corpus Christi African Students Organization will also perform.

Watch the Parade of Nations at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCbxX1Vaav0

June 6-16 College of Education: Youth Leadership Academy. 361.882.7837
June 6-17 & June 20-July 1 College of Education and the Art Museum of South Texas: Art & Reading Summer Camps. 361.882.7837
Aug. 4-6 University Theatre: “Alice in Wonderland” summer children’s show. 361.825.5800
Sept. 8-Oct. 1 University Galleries: John Norris Exhibition. 361.825.3756.
Oct. 6-Nov. 18 University Galleries: Faculty Art Exchange with Palo Alto College. 361.825.3756
Sept. 14 State of the University: “American Bank Center.” 361.825.5894
Oct. 14 Student Foundation: “Islander Revue” music and dance extravaganza. 361.825.5558
Nov. 12 Islander Cultural Alliance and affiliate organizations: “Culture Fest.” 361.825.2182
Dec. 1-17 University Galleries: Annual Gallery 100@100 Fundraiser. 361.825.3756

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College of Business

David E. Dunkin ’76 BBA Management, ’77 MBA Management is a volunteer at SeniorNet, where as the president, he helps provide computer classes for older adults and seniors. He also officiates in college tennis and is a member and the starter for the Private Golf Club.

William “Eric” Vauter ’90 BBA Marketing is a sales engineer for Schlumberger Oilfield Services in Houston, Texas.

Meliza I. Perez-Guajardo ’93 BBA Management is celebrating 10 years with McMillin Homes in the Estimating Department.

Jay A. Nesbit ’95 MBA Management is a preceptor for students at the Northeast Ohio University College of Pharmacy.

Stacy Mitchell ’01 BBA Accounting and husband John McTarnahan’s little girl, Ally, turned 1 on Feb. 1, 2011.

Denise S. Morales ’05 BBA Management, ’07 MBA General Business is a training specialist for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. She is busy travelling and has interviewed for a promotion.

Imsael Leal ’06 BBA Management completed his Master of Business from the University of Incarnate Word.

Camilla “Cammy” Simone ’06 BBA Finance is an auditor for the Compliance Department at American Bank in Corpus Christi.

Stephanie White ’06 BBA Finance is in her third year as a master’s student in Houston, Texas.

Christie M. Roberts ’06 BBA Marketing is an executive assistant for the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Office of the Registrar.

Leah F. Kowald ’07 BBA Management and Marketing has lived in San Antonio, Texas, for the past three years and works for Accenture as a quality analyst and process expert.

Damon J. Cook ’08 MBA Business Administration is head of the Operational Department on the USS Nimitz.

Monica A. Bonugi ’09 BBA Management took over her parents’ health club, family fitness and event center as a creative director. In 2010, they held their first yoga workshop, summer day camp, haunted house, craft festival and blood drive. This year’s events will include a rummage sale, chili cook off and farmers market.

College of Education

Elma D. Holden ’65 BS Elementary Education, ’71 MA Counseling and Guidance has a grandson from Hawaii, Nathanael Holden, who has come to live with her in Corpus Christi. Nathanael has joined the Air force Reserve.

Pamela Neven ’97 BS Kinesiology is a technology integration facilitator for the Keller, Texas Independent School District.

Grace Guerra ’98 MS Counseling and Guidance is an extension agent in San Antonio, Texas, where she implements research-based programs in the areas of food and nutrition, family resources and youth development. Grace and her husband bought a home in 2007 and enjoy spending time with family and friends, traveling, attending sporting events and outdoor activities.

Dianne Chan ’99 BS Kinesiology moved to Palm Springs, Calif., in Oct. 2009 with her boyfriend, Chris. They survived their first summer in the desert, which locals called a “mild summer” with the highest temperature being only 117 degrees.

Werner “Bucky” Hartman ’02 BS Kinesiology is a basketball coach and chemistry teacher in Victoria, Texas. He has three children, an 8-year-old son and 5-year-old identical twin girls.

David L. Garcia ’03 BS Occupational Training and Development has a 14-month-old granddaughter, Mia Gabriella.

Randall E. Stuart ’03 MS Secondary Education Curriculum and Instruction is the secretary of the Corpus Christi Rugby Football Club.

A paver in the Walk of Recognition is the perfect way to commemorate your time spent at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Proceeds of a Paver on the Walk of Recognition directly support scholarships for students who demonstrate leadership in their schools and communities.

The Student Foundation Association is a select group of student volunteers who are responsible for the Walk of Recognition and Islander Revue. All fundraising efforts go toward the Student Foundation’s scholarship fund.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi • 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5741 Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5741 • 361.825.2420 http://studentfoundation.tamucc.edu
Lisa M. Wood '07 MS Elementary Education is an English as a Second Language teacher at Serna Elementary School in San Antonio, is an English as a Second Language teacher for Protective Operations Management Group in Corpus Christi.

Lee M. Floyd '94 BA Sociology is the BSM director at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas.

Sergio Olivores '94 BA Art, '07 MPA Public Administration is the owner, president and general manager for Protective Operations Management Group in Corpus Christi.

Paul "Mystro" Perea '95 BA Music lives with his wife, Veronica, in San Antonio, Texas. He enjoys teaching music for pre-kindergarten through fifth grade in the San Antonio Independent School District.

Rodney Buckwalter '98 BA Communications, '03 MS Occupational Training and Development is the director of Training and Development with FTD in Essex, Conn.

Velma Sanchez '99 BA Psychology is a human resources and training manager in Austin, Texas.

Roger A. Fortner '00 BA Political Science began a program to market accounts receivable insurance.

Refugio P. Rodriguez, Jr. '00 BA History is a FMT specialist for Texas Rural Water Association (TRWA) in the Austin, Texas, area.

Veronica D. Ramirez '01 BM Music has started the new semester with 10 new students at her Bella Nota Vocal Studio. She held a successful beginning piano and singing Christmas Holiday Student Recital and is preparing for high school senior recitals and general studio recitals in June.

Dolores A. Zuniga-Summers '00 BA Communications earned a master’s degree in school library and information sciences in 2010 from the University of Houston Clear Lake. She successfully passed the Texas School Librarian certification exam.

Nadia I. Chandler '03 BA Political Science, '05 MPA Public Administration provides special project support for Development Services, Planning and Community Development, Code Enforcement Services, Historic Preservation and the Public Library in San Antonio, Texas. She also assists in the preparation and analysis of performance management and performance measures for the City’s organization. She is participating in the City Manager’s Management and Leadership development program for future city leaders.

Elsa Garcia '03 BA Psychology, '05 MPA Public Administration, '09 MS Educational Administration is working on a master’s degree in counseling from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

continued on page 24

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SPRING 2011 • THE ISLANDER | 23
Vanessa Ballmer ’04 BA English, ’06 MA English teaches English Composition for Lone Star College System, one of the largest community college systems in the nation.

Amando R. Cantu ’04 BA Communications, ’06 MS Secondary Education works for Texas A&M International University in Laredo, Texas.

Marie Metting-Boles ’04 BFA Art is excited about creating art in her new art studio.

Mario Torres Jr. ’04 BS Criminal Justice is an engineer for PathFinder Energy Services, Inc. (Shlumberger). He celebrated his one year wedding anniversary with his wife, Monica, in March. Their daughter, Juliana Maria Torres, turned 1 on Jan. 31.

Gregory L. Diehlman ’05 BS Criminal Justice is a professional student working on his doctorate in public safety with a concentration in criminal justice.

Geneva Gonzales ’05 BS Criminal Justice works for the Latchkey Program, a recreational program for children ages 5-13 licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The program features structured activities in a fun recreation environment.

Janice A. Hala ’05 BA Theatre plans to graduate in August 2011 with a Master of Science in Secondary Education and a teaching certificate in theatre. She is the vice president of Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society for educators, and a YWCA Y-Teens leader.

Erin R. Patton ’05 BS Criminal Justice bought a home in Portland, Texas, in 2009. Since graduation, Erin has had two children, a daughter in 2007, Kendahl, and a son, Harold, in 2009. Erin has worked for the same employer for eight years and married for eight years.

Jason Pruett ’05 BA Communications is enjoying life in San Antonio, Texas, and his career at NewTek, Incorporated, which gives him the opportunity to travel across the country, make worldwide contacts and be involved with the production of many exciting events.

Anne E. Ries ’05 BA English, ’07 MA English and husband, John Woelke ’04 BA English, have been busy with their photography company, W Studios. They will celebrate their third wedding anniversary this spring. Anne works at Bell Helicopter, and is an adjunct at Tarrant County College District in Fort Worth, Texas.

Justin Budz ’06 BS Criminal Justice moved to Arizona for a promotion.

Megan Crump ’06 BA Theatre married Greg Owen on July 25, 2009. They live in the NASA area in Houston, Texas, with their red Abyssinian cat, Dexter. Megan is a teacher and theatre director at Clear Lake High School. She is also in her fifth-year singing with the Houston Symphony Chorus.

Jessica R. Viar ’08 BA Communications is returning to school for her master’s degree in counseling with an emphasis in clinical mental health. She plans to work toward her Professional Counselor license (LPC).

Alexander D. Snowden ’06 BA Political Science, BA Communications is the coordinator of Greek Life and Intramurals at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

Gavarae Jones ’07 BS Criminal Justice is celebrating two years as a singer in the local gospel group, “Total Devotion,” singing and ministering to young adults in the South Texas region.

Brian Tullis ’07 BS Criminal Justice works in the Special Investigative Unit of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. He is also working on his master’s degree in public administration at Texas A&M International in Laredo. He enjoys coaching Little League football, fishing and spending time with his wife, Kathy.

Benjamin P. Hoffman ’08 BA History is the project director on a federal grant at the University of Maryland, working with Prince George’s County Public Schools to implement 18 lesson social studies curriculum focused on developing students historical thinking and writing skills using primary sources.

Sylvia M. Hernandez ’08 BA English is an English teacher for the San Antonio Independent School District.

Carlos J. Martinez ’09 BA Theatre is teaching sixth grade reading where his students are excelling and showing vast improvements. This year Carlos was made director of the one-act play, “Still Life with Iris” by Steven Dietz, at the middle school level. He hopes his students will bring home the district championship. He prides himself on strong discipline management and creating a classroom with an “amazing learning environment.”

Rebecca L. Tims ’09 BA History will graduate in May with her master’s degree from the College of Education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

James J. Shaw ’09 BA History had to close down his business due to the economy. However, things are looking up and he is employed once again.

Danielle Whiteside ’09 BM Music is entering her second semester as a graduate student at the University of North Texas in Denton. She is working on a master’s degree in musicology. Her son is 15 months old.

ALUMNI NEWS

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continued on page 25
**COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

Wanda Gay Smetana '05 MSN Nursing lives in Belton, Texas, where she is self-employed in clinical research.

Amy J. Thornberry '07 MSN Nursing Practitioner is a nurse for Celanese Corporation, Kingsville Medical Center and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Jessica L. Morris '08 BSN Nursing is in the Family Nurse Practitioner program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. She plans to graduate in May 2012.

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Jennifer Scott '01 BS Biology and husband, Joel Darling, are adopting a 10-year old boy from Africa. Jennifer plays with the West Michigan Concert Winds and is active with Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior Gifts Clubs. In addition to working at Muskegon Community College, she works with Joel doing education programs for their non-profit organization, Darling Cetaceans.

Binesh Prabhakar '04 MS Environmental Science joined the Babson College master’s program.

Mark A. Olson Ph.D. '05 BS Chemistry received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. and accepted a tenure-track appointment as assistant professor of organic chemistry at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. He will establish Texas A&M-Corpus Christi's first fully synthetic materials research lab.

Lisa Winnett '05 BS Biology works as a research associate in the Hawaii Endangered Bird Conservation Program at the Maui Bird Conservation Center of the San Diego Zoo Institute.

Tsedal G. Ashby '06 BS Biology lives in Washington, D.C. where she attends the University of the District of Columbia. She is working on a bachelor’s degree in nutrition and food sciences. She is a member of the Student Dietetics Association, the national Dietetics Association, and treasurer of Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resource and Related Sciences.

Christopher L. Egger '06 BS Computer Sciences son's pig made the auction for the San Patricio and Port Aransas County, Texas, livestock show.

Stephanie R. Salinas-Ramos '06 BS Biology, ’08 MS Counseling, and ’09 Post-Graduate Certificate in Health Care Administration was accepted into the spring 2011 nursing cohort and plans to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi by August 2012.

Krista J. Coons '06 BS Environmental Sciences, BS Biology is a floor plan specialist for Triad Financial Services, Incorporated, in Jacksonville, Fla.

John M. Bradley '07 BS Mechanical Engineering Technology lives in Sugar Land, Texas, and works as a senior applications engineer. His son is 2 ½ years old.

Kameron Jorgensen '07 BS Chemistry is in her fourth year as a graduate student at the University of North Texas working on her Ph.D. in physical chemistry. She has published a paper in the Journal of Hazardous Materials titled "Highly Energetic Nitrogen Species: Reliable Energetic Via the Correlation Consistent Composite Approach (ccCA)."

Cassandra Zinke '07 BS Biology and BA Psychology is pursuing a master’s degree in psychology at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Maribell R. Martinez '09 BS Chemistry is working toward her teaching certification to become a science teacher. She is a mentor for an Odem-Edray, Texas, Independent School District after-school program and a long-term substitute for a seventh grade science class.

Russell W. Raab '09 BS Biology lives in Lufkin, Texas, where he works for the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. He is responsible for the care of Malayan tapirs, hippos, and a variety of exotic and native bird species.

Susan Moczygemba '09 BS Environmental Sciences is a medical laboratory technician for the Clinical Pathology Lab in Corpus Christi and plans to get married in the summer.

Lisa Reinertson '09 BS Biomedical Sciences is working on her master’s degree in physician assistant studies at the University of St. Francis in Albuquerque, N.M.

**Engagements & Marriages**


J. Clinton Lainhart '06 BBA Management works with United Services Automobile Association (USA). He will marry Jennifer Tocci in August. The couple built a home on the north side of San Antonio, Texas.

Justin M. Bain '06 BS Athletic Training, ’09 MS Kinesiology will marry Jacklynn Sykora in June at the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi. Justin is teaching Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, Automated External Defibrillator and First Aid for the Professional Rescuer at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Mayra A. Franco '08 BBA Accounting married her high school sweetheart, Jose Lino Lopez, on Oct. 16, 2010. She is a financial accountant for Susser Holdings.

Sarah Fay ‘08 BBA Management married Michael Allan Raffay on Nov. 6, 2010. Michael is a 2004 chemical engineering graduate from Rose Hulman Institute of Technology in Indiana. After their wedding, they honeymooned at Walt Disney World. The newlyweds reside in Corpus Christi.

June L.A. Ness '09 BSN Nursing married John Delgado ’09 BA History. They are working to establish their careers. She has applied to the master’s program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Brent M. Wooten '09 BS Mathematics is working on his master’s degree in secondary education and hopes to become a teacher.
Dr. Pamela Meyer, a professor of sociology, is involved in the City of Corpus Christi’s Homeless Issues Partnership and works with the Corpus Christi Diabetes Association to help promote diabetes education. As the interim core curriculum director, she was recognized for her contribution to Texas higher education. Last year, she received the Chancellor’s Teaching Excellence Award. During spring 2010, Meyer, was one of three University professors who taught for five weeks in Istanbul, Turkey, through the University’s Core Curriculum Study Abroad Program.

Liza Mucheru-Wisner (BS’04, MS’07) has made many contributions to the community and the Island University as a member of the Anchor Alumni Club, the ELITE Graduate Program, and her participation in church and city events. She has received the Employee Excellence Award for engagement and the Women’s Center for Education and Service’s “Change the World Award”. She competed on Donald Trump’s “The Apprentice” and was one of three finalists. She started the Texas Techies program, which educates children about technology.
Educator Roy L. Ford (BS ’71) has established several community programs including the parental involvement team that involves parents in schools and after-school programs. Ford is active in the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi Alumni Association and is a member of the Houston chapter. He has been recognized by the Binglewood Civic Club for his work in eliminating dangerous buildings in the community, and for his work with “The Magnificent Gents” anti-gang group. As a principal, he received the secretary of education’s “A+ Breaking the Mold Award.”

Certified financial planner Gary Cotter (BA ’70) is a founding member and past president of the Financial Planning Association. Cotter founded a chapter of Kappa Sigma Kappa, the first national social fraternity at the University of Corpus Christi, and has received recognition for his services to the University. Cotter, who worked most recently in Tampa and Apollo Beach, Fla., is active in his community, aiding senior citizens who have been the victims of fraud and other forms of financial abuse.
Spring arrives on campus with beautiful sunrises and warm balmy days.
Universities throughout our nation are continually becoming more dependent upon the generosity of private donors to provide the essential dollars required to reach new levels of excellence. It is the nature of an institution growing stronger to require support beyond what can be procured through appropriations and tuition.

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 program 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.
Only the best and brightest students earn the opportunity to serve as Island Callers at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. While their time on the telephones is spent contacting hundreds of alumni and friends regarding the popular Islander Fund, each student is also your connection to latest happenings at the Island University. It’s more than a call for support, it’s your time to learn the greatness of your University and how you can invest in its growth. After all, you share the experiences of being an Islander.

Our Island Callers thank local businesses for their generous support, including: Johnny Carino’s Italian; Denise’s Unlimited Salon, Inc; HEB foods; HEB Plus; Omni Corpus Christi Hotel; Water Street Seafood Co.; Snoopy’s Pier; Mariott Hotels; Olive Garden; Cracker Barrel; and Outback Steakhouse.