Greetings Bearkats,

We hope this newsletter finds you, your family and your friends safe and healthy during these unprecedented times. Today, Wednesday, April 22nd, commemorates World Earth Day, so in today’s issue we recognize and discuss this worldwide day. Additionally, as a part of our Coronavirus special, we look at Governor Gregg Abbott’s recent executive orders as a part of the plan to reopen Texas!

Happy Reading!

Jordan Chang; He/Him/His
Assistant Director
Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs
Happy Earth Day!

By Carlos Perez

Each year, on April 22nd, we see coverage and dozens of social media posts proclaiming “Happy Earth Day!,” but what exactly does that mean? The idea of the first Earth Day came about from the combination of the minds of Senator Gaylord Nelson and Congressman Pete McCloskey. In early 1970, there became a growing consciousness about air and water pollution, and as a result, Senator Nelson recruited Congressman McCloskey, and activist Denis Hayes to organize ‘campus teach-ins’ on April 22nd, a date strategically chosen to receive the most student participation. Officially titling April 22nd as “Earth Day” contributed to the success of the day, as 20 million Americans participated. 1

Today, Earth Day is celebrated across the globe to support environmental protection. This year, celebrates 50 years since its inception. The theme for this year’s Earth Day is Climate Change. According to the Earth Day Network, “The enormous challenge of action on climate change have distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary. Climate Change represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make our world habitable.” 2 Earth Day is celebrated through earth-conscious activities and challenges, educational info-sessions, and a push for governments to consider environmental-friendly policies and regulations.

---

1 https://www.earthday.org/history/
2 https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/
What can I do on Earth Day?

FROM THE EARTH DAY NETWORK
(HTTPS://WWW.EARTHDAY.ORG)

Over the 24 hours of Earth Day (12:01 am ET - 11:59 pm ET on April 22), Earth Day Network will flood the digital landscape with global conversations, calls to action, performances, video teach-ins and more. That’s where you come in.

On April 22, join us for 24 hours of action on earthday.org as we issue a new call to action every hour for 24 hours. Through 24 hours of action, Earth Day 2020 will drive actions big and small, give diverse voices a platform and demand bold action for people and the planet.

And tune into Earth Day Live (https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-live/) on April 22 - 24 as millions of people around the world go online for a three-day mobilization to stop the climate emergency. Tune in to Earth Day Live April 22-24 to watch, discuss and participate in a livestream featuring stories, performances and opportunities for digital collective action.
“Young Greta Thunberg’s reminding us to care, veering us from the dangers of 1.5 Celsius degree global heating, listen to our planet’s open-hearted bleeding.” Aisha Fukushima, a ‘RAPtivist’ (rap activist), the founder of RAPtivism (rap activism), performance lecturer, and a 16th annual SHSU Diversity Leadership Conference keynote speaker, poetically reminds us of young environmental activist, Greta Thunberg’s activism for the environment in Green Power: A Celebration of Greta Thunberg and the Global Climate Strikes. Since 1970, we have gathered nationally to celebrate Earth Day. In 1990, the movement expanded to over 140 countries from around the world further increasing awareness on the action’s mankind has made that negatively affect our home planet.

To no one’s surprise, an environmental concern that is predominantly the focal point of Earth Day is air pollution. Pollution has evolved from volcanoes and wildfires to factories and vehicles. To reduce air emissions, the federal government enacted the Clean Air Act (CAA) which regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources. Over the years, amends were made as different goals arose to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Not only does air pollution affect the earth, it is also harmful to humans. Smog and soot, mercury, benzene, greenhouse gases, and pollen and mold are all detrimental to individuals that suffer from asthma, ADHD, and life-threatening allergies.

Remember to listen to nature as Fukushima asks us to. We have a duty to protect ourselves and our planet from harmful toxins, oil spills, pesticides and pollution every day. Today marks 50 years of loving our beautiful planet and all that it has to offer. A new generation of young people like Greta Thunberg have called for the world to change human behavior, create global, national and local policy changes. Our planet grows older day by day, let’s take the time to ensure we are doing our part to protect the earth on Earth Day!

Question to Ponder: In what ways does air pollution affect humanity and the planet?

3 https://aishafukushima.com/bio
4 https://www.earthday.org/history
5 https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-air-act
6 https://www.nrdc.org/stories/air-pollution-everything-you-need-know
7 https://www.earthday.org/history
In honor of “Earth Day,” here is a Ted Talk presented by Greta Thunberg. Greta is a 15-year-old that is very informed in matters regarding weather and climate change. Being only a 9th grader, Greta studied the environment, reading what was good/bad for the environment. Ultimately, she convinced her family to adopt to a sustainable lifestyle. As college students, we need to see the amount of resources around us and how we can use them without it being harmful for the environment. Whether it may be utilizing a recycling bin or planting a tree, we must realize that everyone can and must play a part in keeping the Earth a healthy place.

**SELF-REFLECTION**

**01**
Why do you feel adapting to a more sustainable lifestyle is important for our Earth?

**02**
Have you ever taken an extra step to ensure that our Earth is being treated well?

**03**
What are 3 easy tasks that you think a college student can do to help keep our environment clean and healthy?

---

8 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmmUIEsN9A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmmUIEsN9A)
Can you guess the missing word in these songs? Here’s a hint: Each song is related to the Earth and answer key at the bottom

1. _ _ _ _ the _ _ _ _ _ make it a better place, for you and for me and the entire human race.
   *Song by Michael Jackson*

2. You know _ _ _ _ makes the _ _ _ _ _ go around.
   *Song by Deon Jackson*

3. Find me in my _ _____ of grass, _ _____ Nature’s Son.
   *Song by The Beatles*

4. Oh oh _ _ _ _ _ of the _ _ _ _ _.
   *Song by Queen*

5. So, we keep _ _ _ _ _, waiting on the _ _ _ _ to change.
   *Song by John Mayer*

On the first worldwide Earth Day, a group of students from the Centennial Secondary School in Welland, Ontario, Canada picketed outside of the gates of a polluting Union Carbide plant. Their sign reads “If you aren’t part of the solution, you are part of the pollution.” 50 years later, activists are still fighting to protect the environmental rights of the planet we call home.

Source: Doug Draper/Niagara At Large

Environmental activist Greta Thunberg visits Iowa City, Iowa to lead local students’ climate strike. The 17 year-old gained international recognition for bringing to light the crisis that humanity faces as a result of climate change.

Source: David Guttenfelder via Instagram

October 4, 2019

Environmental activist Greta Thunberg visits Iowa City, Iowa to lead local students’ climate strike. The 17 year-old gained international recognition for bringing to light the crisis that humanity faces as a result of climate change.

Source: David Guttenfelder via Instagram

April 22, 1970

On the first worldwide Earth Day, a group of students from the Centennial Secondary School in Welland, Ontario, Canada picketed outside of the gates of a polluting Union Carbide plant. Their sign reads “If you aren’t part of the solution, you are part of the pollution.” 50 years later, activists are still fighting to protect the environmental rights of the planet we call home.

Source: Doug Draper/Niagara At Large

https://niagaraatlarge.com/2013/04/21/earth-day-2013-lets-all-make-an-earth-day-pledge-to-be-part-of-the-solution/
https://instagram.com/dguttenfelder
As of March 3, 2020, Australia’s New South Wales is free from bushfires for the first time in over 240 days. Bushfires are common during Australia’s summer months (December-February); in 2019 Australia experienced its hottest and driest year on record as the fires began sprouting up in early spring (July 2019). Changing climate is increasing the likelihood of bushfires and that more extreme fires are likely to become more common as temperatures continue to rise in the future.

Source: Peter Parks/Agence France-Presse

As cities and, in some cases, entire nations weather the pandemic under lockdown, Earth-observing satellites have detected a significant decrease in the concentration of a common air pollutant, nitrogen dioxide, which enters the atmosphere through emissions from cars, trucks, buses, and power plants.

Source: Barry Wilmore/NASA

---

SHSU SPOTLIGHTS

Each week, we will highlight two SHSU entities that are doing great work at the institution! Additionally, we’ll sit down with our individual spotlight!

By Tiana Hale

Student Spotlight:
Lauren Perry

Lauren is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and currently serves as a Resident Assistant In Estill Hall. She is also involved with the Kinesiology Health and Recreation Association for Sam Houston (KHRASH)

We sat down with Lauren for a few questions!

Tiana: What is the best & most challenging part of being a RA?
“Getting to know many residents & being a positive role model for them is the best part. When I first decided to become a RA, I had no idea of the impact I would have on others. Becoming a RA has been one of the most rewarding experiences for me at SHSU. The hardest part is balancing schoolwork with RA work. – Lauren

Tiana: How has COVID-19 affected Residence Life?
“Due to COVID-19, there are many new changes and adjustments for residents and RA’s. Dining halls remain open for residents and provide to-go meals every day. In addition, RA staff teams from different halls are continuously working together to make current residents feel safe and comfortable during their stay.” – Lauren

Organization Spotlight:
Project Sunshine

This week our Student Organization Spotlight belongs to Project Sunshine! Project Sunshine is a National Non-Profit Organization that provides service to families with special needs ages 3 and older along with their families in the Walker County Area.

Children and/or siblings have diagnosis ranging from, but not limited to autism, down syndrome, ADD, developmental delays, and many more. The goal of Project Sunshine (SHSU Chapter) is to offer experiences to everyone involved to improve quality of life and create lasting relationships. This chapter also donates resources and spends time at the Texas Children's Hospital in the Woodlands.

We would also like to recognize and commend Project Sunshine for winning the ‘Outstanding Advocacy Award’ in this year’s Sammy Awards.
CORONAVIRUS SPECIAL: TEXAS’ STRIKE FORCE

By Jordan Johnson

In the last few days there has been a lot of conversation and discussion about the state of Texas reopening. It wasn’t until Friday, April 17th, that we received some type of remarks from Governor Gregg Abbott. According to the Texas Tribune, Governor Abbott has announced a team to restart the economy and loosen restrictions in the state of Texas.14 The governor said the reopening will happen in phases and will be guided by data and doctors. Additionally, Governor Abbott has established the Strike Force to Open Texas – a team of nationally recognized medical experts and private and public leaders, who will advise the Governor on safely and strategically reopening the state of Texas.15 The Strike Force is comprised not only of medical experts, but also a council of 39 business leaders from across the state. All entities will work together to develop solutions, both medically and societal so that proper strategies and time frames can be developed to reopen Texas.

In addition to announcing the Strike Force, Governor Abbott released three executive orders in the first phase to Reopen Texas. The first executive order allows retail stores to provide product pickups. This is similar to how certain restaurants are currently offering curbside pickup. This is set to begin on Friday, April 24th. In the second executive order, nonessential surgery restrictions at medical facilities will loosen. Previously, the concern was that conducting all surgeries would deplete the hospitals’ supplies of personal protective equipment, and the hospital capacity would be overwhelming. The third executive order will allow state parks to reopened on Monday, April 20th. However, park visitors will be required to wear masks and stay at least 6 feet away from others.

Governor Abbott repeatedly pointed to Monday, April 27th as the next date for which he could announce additional steps to reopen the economy, as long as Texas is continuing to make progress in slowing the spread of the virus. Governor Abbott insisted at the news conference that Texas was preparing to dramatically increase its testing capacity, but he did not provide details beyond suggesting a timeline of late April or early May.16 Of course we would all like to see the economy reopened and would like life to return to normal sooner than later, but I also think that it is important that lawmakers and elected officials not only act for what is best for the economy, but also for what is best for the health and wellbeing of the citizens they serve.

SCHOLARSHIPS

By Charlotte Ford

Each newsletter, we will provide scholarship opportunities. If your area or department would like to submit a scholarship opportunity, please contact us at diversity@shsu.edu.

1) Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs: How has the Novel Coronavirus Affected you?

Bearkats! Here’s an opportunity to embrace your culture and earn a scholarship while doing so! Submit an original recording/picture to diversity@shsu.edu with 5-7 sentences explaining a family or cultural tradition important to you!

The submission deadline is THIS Friday, April 24th! The submitted content will be reviewed by a selection committee and the scholarship winner will be announced next week!

2) American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) – Leon Bradley Scholarship

The Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) will annually award up to two scholarships of $3500.00 each to assist a minority college student seeking his/her initial teaching certification and/or endorsement. Please find the application and more information about the scholarship at www.aaspa.org/leon-bradley-scholarship
## UPCOMING EVENTS

**APRIL 22nd – 29th**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROMOTE AN UPCOMING EVENT, PLEASE CONTACT CHARLOTTE FORD AT CNF022@SHSU.EDU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Department/Organization</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Platform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 23, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Cardio &amp; Core</td>
<td>Rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on the programs &amp; register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>Program Council</td>
<td>Virtual Bingo</td>
<td>Zoom. Contact Program Council for more details!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Center of Diversity &amp; Intercultural Affairs</td>
<td>Ramadan Educational Celebration</td>
<td>Instagram &amp; Twitter: @SHSUDiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Cardio &amp; Core</td>
<td>Rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on the programs &amp; register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Yoga</td>
<td>Rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on the programs &amp; register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Outdoor Adventures</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM &amp; 5:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Core &amp; Cardio</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Total Body Toning</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Center for Diversity &amp; Intercultural Affairs</td>
<td>Yom Ha’atzmaut</td>
<td>Instagram &amp; Twitter: @SHSUDiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Cardio &amp; Core</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Outdoor Adventures</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Online Yoga</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Intramural Sports Trivia</td>
<td><a href="https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/">https://rsconnect.shsu.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VISION: The Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs at Sam Houston State University seeks to strengthen and enrich the Bearkat community through educational programming, vast cultural experiences and support for traditionally underrepresented populations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: The Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs hopes to engage the Sam Houston State University community through the following guiding principles:

- **Access:** Providing services, resources and unique programming for traditionally underrepresented populations at Sam Houston State University
- **Holistic Education:** Educate students to understand what diversity truly means and give students the knowledge and training required to promote social justice in all areas of diversity including culture, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, etc.
- **Support:** Encourage an appreciation for and celebration of diversity in all of its unique forms.

CDIA STAFF:

**Jordan Chang;** He/Him/His  
Assistant Director  
jordanchang@shsu.edu  
(936) 294-3650

**Edwin Cantu;** He/Him/His  
Coordinator  
Exc066@shsu.edu  
(936) 294-2603
Diversity Council 2019-2020
(936) 294-3468
diversitycouncil@shsu.edu

Kayla Smart; She/Her/Hers
Marketing Director
Kis004@shsu.edu

LaYauna Bonds; She/Her/Hers
Outreach Director
Lsb023@shsu.edu

Davion Banks; He/Him/His
Co-Executive Director
djb058@shsu.edu

Charlotte Ford; She/Her/Hers
Secretary
cnf022@shsu.edu

Carlos Perez; He/Him/His
Programming Director
Cap084@shsu.edu

Saranya Srikanth; She/Her/Hers
Co-Executive Director
Sxs153@shsu.edu

Tiana Hale; She/Her/Hers
Historian
tmh044@shsu.edu

Jordan Johnson; She/Her/Hers
Coordinator
jej032@shsu.edu