Greetings Bearkats,

We hope this newsletter finds you, your family and your friends safe and healthy during these unprecedented times. The Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs (CDIA) at Sam Houston State University recognizes the challenges our community currently faces because of the ongoing Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result, we have developed The Mosaic: Diversity Newsletter to continually meet the needs of our Bearkat community by providing engaging content and information.

Happy Reading!

Jordan Chang; He/Him/His
Assistant Director
Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs
Recognizing Arab American History Month
By Carlos Perez

During the month of April, Arab Americans formally recognize their achievements through the celebration of National Arab American Heritage Month (NAAHM).

Across the country, Arab Americans will engage in special events that celebrate the community’s rich heritage and numerous contributions to society.

ARAB AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

Much of the success and efforts have come via Arab America, an organization dedicated to promoting the Arab American identity and heritage. Arab America organized a national advisory committee of more than eighty Arab Americans from twenty-six states to approach state legislatures, city councils, school boards and other public officials to issue NAAHM proclamations and adopt the Arab American educator curriculum kit, which was disseminated to school districts across the nation as part of the month-long celebration.

COMMUNITY ISSUES

One of the main issues within the Arab-American community that this month highlights is the amount of hate crimes & injustices that are committed against Arab-Americans. Many of these cases are directed toward the dominant Arab religion of Islam. According to many reports, hate crime rates increased after President Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign. As of 2019, more than 500 hate crimes have been committed, making the crime rate for the time period one of the all-time highs in our country’s history.

Arab America believes that by introducing more proclamations into the daily lives of all Americans, we will see these numbers drop. However, we all must do our part to see this happen.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS COVID-19
By Jordan Johnson

COVID-19, commonly known as the Coronavirus, has undoubtedly affected millions of people worldwide. In America alone, schools are closed, businesses shut down, and churches are forced to operate online. Among the groups most affected from “side effects” of the pandemic are college students. At many universities across the nation, including SHSU, administrators have closed campuses and moved all classes online for the remainder of the semester. I spoke to a SHSU student to see how she is adjusting.

“Everything around me has changed in some way because of the pandemic. I don’t attend school, I can no longer go to work, I haven’t seen my friends. Our world turned upside down in a matter of weeks, and now things change every day. It’s definitely a transition that I think has shifted people’s awareness.”

Krystal Nero, Senior

MANY STUDENTS are in the same situation as Krystal. There are many university and government resources to assist college students through this time of uncertainty.

Visit https://www.shsu.edu/katsafe/coronavirus to see the latest updates on how SHSU is supporting the student body.

CARES ACT

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act

The CARES Act is another resource students may be able to utilize. It offers $1,200.00 in stimulus payments to those who earn $75,000.00 or less, 4 months of unemployment insurance benefits for affected workers, and suspended student loan payments and interest. As long as you filed your taxes in 2018 and claimed yourselves (your parent/guardian did not claim you as a dependent), payments will be directly deposited in your bank account.

Aside from financial stress, it is important for college students to take care of their mental health during this time. Practice self-care, check in on your friends, and keep washing your hands!

At this time, all SHSU events over 10 people are suspended through May 15, 2020, as per CDC guidelines.²

Ring Ceremony: The Spring Ring Ceremony is cancelled and rings will be distributed to students.

Commencement: Commencement will not be cancelled, but postponed until July 30th and July 31st. Those scheduled to graduate in May will have their degree conferred with May’s date. Diplomas will be printed and mailed to the graduate’s permanent legal address on file with the university. The commencement schedule will be released at a later date.

Athletics: The Southland Conference announced that all remaining spring sports competitions and championship events have been cancelled.

² https://www.shsu.edu/katsafe/coronavirus
³ https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3548/text#toc-id95a1b08914bc4fbc80472f4071a2fc49
DIVERSITY DISCUSSIONS: ASIAN-AMERICAN DISCRIMINATION

By Davion Banks

It’s “just the tip of the iceberg,” Russell Jeung, an Asian American professor of Asian American studies at San Francisco State University says in an interview with host Steve Inskeep on the NPR Program: Morning Edition.  

Russell Jeung helped launch a website, Stop AAPI Hate, which collects reports of discrimination and xenophobia against Asian Americans. A 50% increase in the number of news articles mentioning Coronavirus and anti-Asian American discrimination was monitored during a four-week period (February 9, 2020 through March 7, 2020). Since then, he has received a hundred reports every day from bullying, verbal assault, name-calling, taunting and attacking. From public displays of racial intolerance and avoiding Asian American businesses, it is most certainly a nightmare Asian Americans have dealt with.

A question to ponder: In instances of discrimination, why are responses primarily discriminatory and rarely supportive? As we globally continue to protect ourselves from an invisible enemy, we must remember our humanity and strengthen each other regardless of our individual background.

The TED talk titled, “An End to Procrastination” by Archana Murthy is something that each college student has come across at one point: procrastination. With the unfortunate event of COVID-19, and all of our classes being moved online, procrastination could become a college student’s worst enemy! Speaker Archana Murthy shares her experience through which the audience (college students) can relate through their own experiences. As college students, we realize that when we have the most work to do, we procrastinate the most. Archana goes on to say that the cure for procrastination is to set a goal, be positive, acknowledge your feelings, be grateful and lastly, record your day. As college students, we must self-reflect so that we can experience a lasting change.

**SELF-REFLECTION**

01 Of the 5 cures presented, which would be the most challenging for you to overcome and why?

02 What could you do differently so that you do not procrastinate?

03 If you were to make a plan of action to do all of your work, what would it consist of?

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6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTQ2xDNILf8
March 18, 2020:
A Mass in Rio de Janeiro honors coronavirus victims around the world. Brazil's Christ the Redeemer statue was lit up with flags and messages of hope in solidarity with countries affected by the pandemic.

Source: CNN Website/Wagner Meier/Getty Images

April 1, 2020:
The hashtag #StayHome is projected onto the Matterhorn Mountain that straddles Switzerland and Italy. The mountain was illuminated by Swiss artist Gerry Hofstetter, who is transforming buildings, monuments and landscapes all over the world to raise awareness during the pandemic.

Source: CNN Website/Fabrice Coffrini/Agence France Presse/Getty Images
March 06, 2020:
The Kaaba means “cube” in Arabic and is considered the House of God in the Muslim faith. Millions of worshippers come to pray toward and touch this structure in Mecca’s Grand Mosque. In this picture, the Mosque sits completely empty, now that health measures prevent those from touching the Kaaba.

Source: Bandar Aldandani/Agence France Presse/Getty Images

March 16, 2020:
A nurse in Cremona, Italy, takes a moment in this photo posted to Instagram by photographer Paolo Miranda. Italy’s healthcare system has been severely tested by the coronavirus pandemic.

Source: CNN Website/Paolo Miranda via Instagram @PaoloMiranda86
April 02, 2020

A healthcare worker stands at the entrance of a mall in Tehran, Iran as he takes patrons temperatures before they can enter. Iran is among the worst hit countries by the Coronavirus.

Source: National Geographic via Instagram @NatGeo/Photo Credit: Newsha Tayakolian @NewshaTayakolian

March 22, 2020:

Giuseppe Corbari holds Sunday Mass in front of photographs sent in his by congregation members in Giussano, Italy. Many religious services are being streamed online so that people can worship while still maintain their distance from others.

Source: CNN Website/ Piero Cruciatti/ Agence France Presse/ Getty Images
SHSU SPOTLIGHTS
Each week, we will highlight two SHSU entities that are doing great work at the institution!

By Tiana Hale

Staff Spotlight:
Breanna Provost

Breanna Provost is the Administrative Assistant for the Department of Student Activities. She assists each of the 4 departmental areas with anything needed for their events. “I try my absolute best to be sure and attend every event that the students have on campus or online.” This year, she played an integral role in the preparation and development of the Blind Spot during the 16th annual Diversity Leadership Conference. Breanna is always willing to assist the Diversity Council in the execution of their monthly events. Additionally, she received an award of recognition during the 2018 CDIA End of the Year Banquet!

Shout out to YOU Breanna Provost!

Department Spotlight:
Student Activities

The Department of Student Activities serves to create student engagement to support and promote extra-curricular activities. Student Activities is comprised of four areas including: Program Council, The Center for Diversity and Intercultural Affairs, Spirit Programs & Traditions and Special Events.

Each of these individual areas are responsible for conducting their own unique events, programming and student support system. Some of the events and initiatives hosted include: Bearkat Spirit Fridays, The Sammys, SammyPalooza, The Diversity Leadership Conference, Miss Sam Houston, The Tree of Light and many more.

From upholding Bearkat Sprit to supporting university initiatives through collaboration with other departments on campus, Student Activities continues to provide a safe, engaging and quality environment for students.
The Arabic Alphabet has 28 letters.  

**ARAB AMERICAN RESOURCES**

**ARAB AMERICA BLOG:** [https://www.arabamerica.com/category/blog/](https://www.arabamerica.com/category/blog/)

*Featuring content written by Arab America regarding identity, culture, history, cuisine, contributions and Arab American issues.*

**CENTER FOR ARAB AMERICAN STUDIES:** [https://umdearborn.edu/casl/centers-institutes/center-arab-american-studies](https://umdearborn.edu/casl/centers-institutes/center-arab-american-studies)

*The Center for Arab American Studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, the only academic institution in the United States devoted solely to the study of Arab Americans.*

**ALIF INSTITUTE:** [https://www.alifinstitute.org/](https://www.alifinstitute.org/)

*Alif Institute fosters an understanding and appreciation of Arab Culture and to engage Arabs and non-Arabs alike to achieve this mission.*

**ARAB AMERICAN CULTURAL & COMMUNITY CENTER:** [https://www.acchouston.org/](https://www.acchouston.org/)

*Serves the community through cultural programs, outreach, and social services; promotes Arab culture and heritage and fosters a greater understanding of Arab Culture in Houston.*

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[https://www.britannica.com/topic/Arabic-alphabet](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Arabic-alphabet)
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) Department of Student Activities: What’s Your Favorite Tradition?

The Department of Student Activities is providing a $500 scholarship to one lucky student who completes an essay detailing their favorite SHSU Tradition! Please find more information in the infographic below or contact the Department of Student Activities!

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 8TH – APRIL 15TH

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROMOTE AN UPCOMING VIRTUAL 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 8, 2020</td>
<td>Sam Houston State University</td>
<td>LAST DAY to submit defended &amp; approved thesis/dissertation to the Library for Final Draft Review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8, 2020</td>
<td>Student Activities</td>
<td>26th Annual Sammys</td>
<td>Blackboard, YouTube, Vimeo</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8, 2020</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Do Wearables and Technology Help with Nutrition?</td>
<td>Zoom Meeting ID: Shsu.zoom.us/j/886033675</td>
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<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Virtual Adventure Education</td>
<td>Zoom Meeting ID: <a href="https://shsu.zoom.us/j/518926333">https://shsu.zoom.us/j/518926333</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8, 2020</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on Programs &amp; Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Cardio &amp; Core</td>
<td>rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on Programs &amp; Register</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>rsconnect.shsu.edu, click on Programs &amp; Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>Recreational Sports</td>
<td>Eating Healthy on a Budget</td>
<td>Zoom Meeting ID: Shsu.zoom.us/j/886033675</td>
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<td>April 13, 2020</td>
<td>Center for Diversity &amp; Intercultural Affairs</td>
<td>Easter Celebration</td>
<td>Twitter, Instagram: @SHSUdiversity</td>
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<td>April 14, 2020</td>
<td>Program Council</td>
<td>PC Bingo!</td>
<td>Visit @SHSU_PC for more information!</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15, 2020</td>
<td>Center for Diversity &amp; Intercultural Affairs</td>
<td>Chat &amp; Chew: Coronavirus</td>
<td>Instagram: @SHSUStuAct</td>
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</tbody>
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My name is Edwin Cantu, Coordinator of the Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs, and I serve as the Advisor for the Diversity Council. As we are currently accepting applications for the upcoming 2020-2021 Diversity Council, I wanted to share a few words on what the Diversity Council does and my role as their Advisor.

The Diversity Council is a student programming board tasked with creating and hosting diversity programs for the SHSU student body. Some of the monthly programs we host are our history/heritage month celebrations, as well as our Chat & Chew series. Each council member also gets the opportunity to lead the team by hosting their own event relating to a diversity topic they care about. Previous events include a Cultural Fashion Show, an Abilities Expo, PRIDEfest, Painting with a Diverse Twist, and many more. Lastly, as part of being on the Diversity Council, you get the opportunity to travel to a regional or national conference, where you will get to network with students and professionals from across the country in the hopes that we bring back best practices and programming ideas to Sam Houston State University. As the Advisor, I can easily say that working with the students is my favorite part of the job. Being a SHSU alum, there were many faculty and staff members here who took the time to invest in my future and now that I am on the other side of the student experience, I get the chance to pay it forward and invest in our Diversity Council students.

One important quality we look for in a Diversity Council member is a student who is doing their best to make the most out of their collegiate experience. If being a part of the Diversity Council sounds like something you would like to do, please visit our website: www.shsu.edu/diversity to download the application and get the Job ID Number for the Jobs4Kats posting!

Best,

Edwin Cantu; He/Him/His
Coordinator
Center for Diversity & Intercultural Affairs
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.

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