Springtime is nature’s way of reminding us to embrace new beginnings, to accept change, and find balance in all that we do. As we anticipate forthcoming life changing moments and events, I invite you to recall those special moments and people that have made your experience at SHSU so memorable.

The colors “orange” and “white” represent our University, and whether you are a faculty member, staff, or a student, you are a BEARKAT, and we encourage you to show your school spirit by wearing your school colors with pride. I also invite you to participate in the many sporting events, programs and activities that take place on campus.

Throughout the academic year, the departments within the Division of Student Services work very hard to provide exciting and motivational programs and educational events for the SHSU community. For more information regarding these exciting programs and events, please refer to our Student Services Activities Calendar at www.shsu.edu/calendar/. In this issue of the division newsletter, learn a little more about these special programs and events, and read about the achievements and accomplishments of our students and staff members as we recognize those, who through their involvement, have brought recognition to Sam Houston State University. Join us also in welcoming new staff and so much more!

Finally, I invite you to visit the Student Services homepage at www.shsu.edu/vpss and become familiar with the departments and services available through Student Services to serve our Sam Houston Bearkats!

As conveyed in the division motto, “Enhancing Learning for Student Success,” Student Services is dedicated to providing our students with opportunities and resources that will promote life skills within the academic environment.

Sincerely,

Mr. Frank Parker
VP for Student Services
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The departments in the Division of Student Services plan and coordinate programs and events throughout the year to help our students become more familiar with everything that Sam Houston has to offer.

A few of these programs and events that were held during the spring semester are highlighted in the following pages. To find out more about upcoming programs and events, visit the Student Services Activities Calendar at www.shsu.edu/calendar.
The Texas Outdoor Leadership Conference (TOLC) was held at the SHSU University Camp the weekend of January 23-25, 2009. The conference was coordinated by the outdoor programs of Sam Houston State, Stephen F. Austin, and Texas A&M Universities. Over the course of the weekend, 94 students and professional staff from 12 universities took part in various workshops, clinics, and outdoor oriented activities. Highlights from the conference included an adventure race, dutch oven cook-off, live music, an outdoor film festival, bonfire, and keynote from local home builder and environmental activist Dan Phillips. It was the first event of this size and scope to be held at the University Camp, and reaction from all in attendance was overwhelmingly positive. The 2010 Texas Outdoor Leadership Conference will be next January at Texas A&M Commerce.

submitted by Mr. Steve Thompson, Recreational Sports
Nick Vujicic presents

“Life Without Limits”
On February 17, 2009, Nick Vujicic, presented an inspirational message of hope and encouragement to over 1,000 students at SHSU. Mr. Vujicic, who was born without arms and legs, conducted a general motivational presentation in the afternoon and a faith-based presentation in the evening.

Approximately 350 people attended the afternoon presentation in the LSC Theater with several professors accompanying their classes to the event. Nick’s afternoon presentation focused on overcoming obstacles in life’s pursuits and never giving up.

“There are sometimes in life when you fall down and you feel like you do not have the strength to get back up. Do you think that you have hope? Because I’m down here, face down and I have no arms or legs. It should be impossible for me to get back up, but it is not. You see, I’ll try 100 times to get back up. If I fail and then give up, do you think that I will ever get up? No! But if I fail, I try again and again and again. I just want you to know that it is not the end. It matters how you finish. Are you going to finish strong? You will find that strength to get back up like this . . . .”

said Vujicic as he demonstrated his ability to upright himself after falling.

Approximately 700 students, faculty and staff, as well as community members packed the LSC Ballroom for Nick’s evening presentation. The evening presentation focused on Mr. Vujicic’s faith as part of the BOLD (Bearkat Ongoing Leadership Development) Program. “It is a worthy pursuit to find out what inspires a person who inspires others. It is my faith that inspires me. That is what I would like to talk to you about tonight,” stated Vujicic.

At the end of both presentations, Mr. Vujicic invited attendees to come to the front and give him a hug. Many attendees took him up on the offer, some waiting up to an hour. “It was simply amazing. I think it would be great if SHSU participated in a regular presentation of motivational speakers. Being a college student, traditional or not, it is easy to lose faith in yourself and to lose focus,” stated one student.

The “Life Without Limits” program was co-sponsored by the Counseling Center, Dean of Students’ Office, Health Center, Student Activities, and One Music Square. Thanks to the LSC staff for the operation and set-up of the venues. We also greatly appreciate the support of the faculty that encouraged their students to attend.

submitted by Mr. Keith Lott, Student Health Center
Midnight Mayhem was a huge success with over 1000 students attending, making it the largest turnout ever. This is one of the largest and most anticipated events coordinated by the department of Recreational Sports and Activities. This year’s “Mardi Gras” themed event included a fortune teller, street performers, mask making, and much, much more! Congratulations to freshman, Jason O’Bryant for making the $500 half-court shot. Students attending also enjoyed free food and lots of fun riding the bull, running through the inflatables, climbing the wall, playing blackjack, and competing in the eating contest.

Special thanks to all the student organizations that volunteered their time.

submitted by
Ms. Tina DeAses, Recreational Sports
This year, the conference welcomed over 250 registrants and hosted several different schools from across the state to Sam Houston State University for the two-day event. Twenty-five workshops were presented throughout the conference on topics ranging from women and leadership to race and ethnicity issues in the workplace. On the final night of the conference, President Gaertner introduced Texas State University System Regent Dora Alcalá as she presented a keynote speech about her personal life experiences with diversity and leadership. The Diversity Council would like to extend their appreciation to Regent Alcalá for taking the time from her busy schedule to present as the keynote speaker during this event.

Overall, the conference was a huge success and the Diversity Council is already starting to work on making next year’s conference bigger and better than ever!

submitted by
Ms. Ashley McDonough, Multicultural & International Student Services
The Bearkat OneCard Services Office and the Student Money Management Center proudly hosted the 1st Annual Sam Houston State University Financial Literacy Week from February 23 through February 27, 2009. One thousand plus students participated in seminars, workshops, and games educating themselves on financial awareness while enjoying free food and prizes!

An organizational contest attracted many students to the week-long series of events. The top three campus organizations with the most members in attendance, by percentage of their membership, won money for their respective organization. The prizes were $1000 for first place, $750 for second place and $500 for third place.

In addition, students had the opportunity to win (2) scholarships worth $650. After students attended four events, they were entered into a drawing for the scholarships. There was a separate $650 scholarship sponsored by Higher One, which was awarded to one lucky student who attended the Financial Aid and Vendor Expo on Thursday. Students who attended the Expo were entered into a drawing for the prized scholarship. The following students each won a $650 scholarship: Carolyn Hall, Stephen Ferguson, and Patricia Wilken.

Financial Literacy Week was a great success and Sam Houston students can look forward to future financial literacy events hosted by The Bearkat OneCard Office and the Student Money Management Center.

submitted by Ms. Jacqueline Brossman-Ashorn, Student Money Management Center
BEARKATS on the GO:
Achievements and Accomplishments

SHSU Political Science Junior Fellows witnessed the historic
2009 PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION
in Washington, D.C.

Submitted by:
Mr. Michael Yawn, Political Science
Four students from Sam Houston State University attended the 2009 Presidential Inauguration as part of a nine-state tour of the southeastern United States from January 17 through January 22. Professor Mike Yawn and political science students Megan Bryant, Blake Roach, Chris Rahlwes, and Justin Veillon visited four state capitol buildings, five homes of United States presidents, Vulcan State Park in Alabama, and the Martin Luther King, Jr memorial and grave site en route to the historic inauguration ceremonies in Washington, DC. “It was a wonderful trip,” noted SHSU Junior Megan Bryant, “one that we will remember for a lifetime.”

The inauguration was as crowded and chaotic as reported. The students spent the night before awake, assiduously planning their route. They left their hotel at 4:30 am, drove to a park and ride, shuttled to the Metro station, then arrived in DC around 9:00 am. They then began their circuitous path to their ticket gate. Given crowds and security, what should have been a twenty minute, ten-block walk turned into a three-hour, multi-mile hike. While they never did get to their ticket gate, they each found a spot where they could be part of history. According to Chris Rahlwes, “We were forced to accept the crowds and become part of two million people at a historic event. Around me, some people cried out of happiness. Others argued, apparently letting the stress of the crowds and chaos get to them. A little girl was lost, crying for her mother. But most of the two million people were transfixed on the inauguration. The excitement and pride were palpable. I could barely hear the speech over the cheering.

It was historic, and we were a part of it.”

The group experienced history in other ways as well. The day before Martin Luther King Day, the students visited the MLK grave site and memorial. The students stood before King’s grave and toured a museum devoted to his life and philosophy of civil disobedience. Other favorite stops on the trip were the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, where the Japanese Gardens on the grounds proved popular; the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama; and the state Capitol Building in Montgomery, one of four state capitol buildings they visited. Among the presidential homes, students were most impressed with Monticello and Mount Vernon. According to Bryant, “The homes were beautiful, and the numerous original pieces really added to the sense of history.”

The pace of the trip was frenetic. The first three and a half days, the students slept for a total of seven hours. During the first two days, the students spent approximately thirteen hours a day driving and seven hours seeing sites, leaving only a few hours for other things, such as sleep. For Blake Roach, however, the pace was part of what made the trip so interesting, “we saw more in six days than most students will see during their entire college years. These types of opportunities are crucial to the overall college experience, complementing a student’s academic experience—not competing with it. We feel grateful that our professors, university staff, and the administration support and promote these types of opportunities for students. They make a huge difference in our lives.”
Four undergraduate students, Hamad Aldawod, John Williamson, Whitney Randall, Jacob Brewer, and one graduate student, Mariana Freites from the Industrial Technology Program attended the 2008 National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT) Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. The four-day conference consisted of presentations, workshops, banquets, a plant tour, and IT competitions. John Williamson and Jacob Brewer competed in the IT IQ competition, and Jacob placed fifth.

These students witnessed a groundbreaking change in the 41-year history of NAIT with a name change to The Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE). This change reflects the demands of a 21st century workforce. The students enjoyed the learning experiences which the conference provided. For Fall 2009, the chapter plans to send officers to represent Sam Houston State University at the ATMAE Conference in Louisville, Kentucky on November 11-14, 2009.
Student Leaders Visit the Texas State Capitol

Nicole Lozano, Texas State University System Board of Regents’ student regent, Student Activities Event Manager, Brandon Cooper, and a group of student leaders from across the SHSU campus visited the Texas House of Representatives floor at the Texas State Capitol in Austin as part of the Texas State University System Legislative Day held on February 18, 2009. The purpose of the trip was to enhance their knowledge of governmental affairs. While there, the group met with various legislators and saw the legislative process at work. They also were recognized during both the House and Senate meetings.

Submitted by Mr. Brandon Cooper
Student Activities
Ag Ambassadors, **Abigail Beard, Angelica Adame, Heather Olguin,** and **Elizabeth Underwood,** from Sam Houston State University served as the hosts for the 2009, National Ag Ambassador Conference held January 4-6, 2009, in Huntsville, Texas. This year’s theme was Historic Past, Dynamic Present, Limitless Future.

Ms. Olguin indicated that she had a great time at the conference, “It was really helpful to see how different universities recruit new students and to see what kind of standards they expect from their students. There were interesting speakers, one of which was a comedian that had me laughing so hard I was crying! It was also fun getting to meet people from all around our nation as well as other students from SHSU.”

Ms. Underwood, another host ambassador added, “The break out sessions gave useful information which can be easily applied to the College of Education’s recruitment strategies. One college discussed presentations that they use when visiting potential students. Specifically, the presentations covered topics such as, What to Pack for College, How to be Professional, and The Effects Social Websites such as Facebook/MySpace Can Have on Future Employment Opportunities.”

Ms. Underwood also stated, “in networking with other students, I was able to gain insight into the organization of their ambassador groups. We are a young organization, but we need to focus on our group’s overall goal and the direction of our program. The Nolan Ryan dinner and the comedian were an added bonus to a great conference!”

submitted by
Ms. Susan Scheiner, College of Education
UCA Nationals
Orlando Florida

SHSU Co-Ed Cheer team just returned from UCA (Universal Cheerleading Association) nationals in Orlando, Florida with a 4th place in Division I. The team was featured on ESPN II on February 22 at 1:30 pm EST. The competition is scheduled to re-broadcast on April 8 at 11:00 am EST.

Also, the Orange Pride Dance Team, the All Girl Cheer Team, and Sammy Bearkat will be attending NCA (National Cheerleading Association) nationals in Daytona Beach Florida from April 7 to April 13. Orange Pride is coming off a 5th place finish from last year and is looking to build off that success. The All Girl team is returning to the nationals stage after winning nationals in 1998. After a 10 year break for the ladies, we hope to make a strong showing this year. Sammy is returning to nationals after a great showing last year, finishing in 3rd place. If you would like to see one of the three program performances before they leave, they will be having a friends and family showing on April 4th starting at 3:00 pm in the HKC (Health & Kinesiology Center) on the basketball courts.

submitted by Mr. Brian McColpin,
Student Activities
Francisca Hernandez  
Custodian, Lowman Student Center

Francisca began working at Sam Houston State University on January 16, 2009. She came to us from Monterey Mushrooms where she worked for 25 years. She and her husband Jose Santos live in Huntsville, and they have 4 children.

In her spare time, Francisca enjoys cooking, going on family picnics and camping. Francisca says she is very happy to be working at Sam Houston and enjoys the opportunity to interact with the students.

Maria Villatoro  
Custodian, Lowman Student Center

Maria is originally from La Union, El Salvador. She has lived in Huntsville for 19 years. She began working at Sam Houston on January 16, 2009. Prior to coming to Sam Houston, Maria worked at Monterey Mushrooms for 6 years.

Maria has five children and enjoys spending as much time as she can with them. She enjoys cooking and going to church. Maria is very happy to be working at Sam Houston.
Klay Camp
Greek Life Coordinator, Student Activities

Klay serves as the Greek Life Coordinator for Student Activities and began working in November 2008. Before arriving at SHSU, he spent two years in the private sector. He also worked at the University of Texas at Tyler, Texas A&M University Commerce, Lon Morris College and at West Texas A&M University. Klay’s student affairs background is in Admissions, Orientations and Traditions Camps, Recreational Sports, Residence Life, Student Activities and Organizations. Currently Klay advises these SHSU Organizations: National Pan-Hellenic Council, Panhellenic Association, Interfraternity Council, Multi-Cultural Greek Council and United Greek Council.

Klay is originally from Farwell, Texas and attended West Texas A&M University and Texas A&M University at Commerce. Klay is married to Jeannie and they have a son, Wyatt. They are all excited to be a part of the Huntsville community.

Teresa Bird
Secretary III, Dean of Students’ Office

Teresa has been employed with Sam Houston State since September 2007. She currently works in the Dean of Students’ Office after transferring from the Office of the Registrar. Teresa’s responsibilities include: Freshman Leadership Selection Coordinator, Freshman Leadership Program Support, Student Government Association Support, coordination of disciplinary files and appointments for the Assistant Dean of Students, and ensures that all office activities run smoothly. Teresa serves as a volunteer and a member of the Parking Appeals Committee. When away from SHSU, Teresa is a Wolf Den Leader for Cub Scout Pack 96, and the proud mother of two wonderful sons, Taylor and Gaven.
Janice Walding  
Administrative Secretary, Student Health Center

Janice began her employment at the Student Health Center on February 16, 2009, when she transferred from the Department of General Business and Finance where she worked as a Secretary III. She has over 25 years of secretarial experience.

Janice enjoys sewing, quilting, and working in her flowerbeds when she is not at work.

Lauren Hoban  
Pharmacist, Student Health Center

Lauren began her employment at the Student Health Center on January 16, 2009. She earned a Doctorate in Pharmacy from the University of Toledo in 2008. After working for one year in retail pharmacy, Lauren decided that she wanted to become a Texan. She enjoys outdoor activities, shopping, and watching movies in her spare time.
At the annual conference of the University Student Legal Services Association, Sam Houston State University was presented with the Special Project Excellence Award. This award recognizes the university whose Student Legal Services has produced a level of service in programs beyond all other universities in the association. The award is highly prized because it is only given when deemed appropriate. This is the third time Sam Houston State University has been honored with this award. Sam Houston State University earned this prestigious award in both 2002 and 2006.

In addition, Dr. James W. Gibson, Students’ Legal Advisor, was honored with an award for 15 years of service to the Legal Services Association. He has served as both Secretary and Treasurer of the association and was a founding board member.
Haven is an exciting new resource on the SHSU campus for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (GLBTQ) community. It exists to provide safe zone locations for GLBTQ individuals, and information pertaining to GLBTQ issues for interested parties. Safe zone programs provide a means for staff, faculty, and students to visibly show support for the GLBTQ community. Haven locations are identified by a placard placed outside of the location or by visiting their website, which will soon be operational. It is a campus-wide effort to promote diversity, inclusion, and advocacy on the SHSU campus.

Haven is currently in the process of recruiting and training new safe zone participants. Individuals who wish to become diversity advocates are asked to complete a workshop that is hosted by current committee members before being a Haven diversity advocate. The initial workshops will be limited to 20 staff or faculty members, on a first-come basis. Please contact the Haven committee at the e-mail address below for additional information or to sign up for a workshop. The workshops serve to answer questions and educate participants on the various aspects of the GLBTQ community.

Current workshop dates and times for the Spring 2009 semester:

April 16, 2009 - 5:00-8:00 pm; LSC 302
May 13, 2009 – 1:00-4:00 pm; LSC 302

For more information regarding Haven or participating as a safe zone location, please send an e-mail to haven@shsu.edu.