Student Success & Engagement

Star of the Month:
Deborah Harrison—A Foot in the Door

When one door closes, another door opens; Lone Star-College Aurora Project participant Deborah Harrison knows. Shortly after graduating high school, Deborah married and started a family, and then (some years later) found herself a single parent.

When the door closed on her white-picket-fence dream, Deborah and her three young children moved back to Houston, where she focused on getting a job. The medical field always interested her, so she earned her medical assistant certificate, knocked on the door of a local hospital, and began a 13-year career starting in the business office and soon taking her to the telemetry department where she clerked and, on occasion, tracked heart monitors.

Recently, the door closed again on Deborah as her job function at the hospital was redefined and she found herself with no path to advancement with her current skill set. That realization led Deborah to yet another door—Lone Star College-Tomball, where she enrolled in the Aurora Project with the long-term goal of enrolling in the Lone Star College nursing program to become a registered nurse (and, ultimately, a case manager, helping people with hospital discharge arrangements such as hospice, home help, equipment and medications).

The journey has not been easy, but with the support and help of her husband, children and friends, she’s getting closer to her new dream, one class at a time. “It’s been a long, hard road, but it’s been very rewarding. I didn’t think college was ever going to be an option for me, but I’m at a time in my life where I can appreciate the learning experience,” said Deborah.

What advice does Deborah have for others following her path? “Hard work, dedication, desire and study, study, study—it will pay off!”

When not studying, Deborah can be found running half-marathons, competing in triathlons, and spending time with her husband of 11 years, her children (now 28, 23 and 20), and her three grandchildren.
Fall 2013 Involvement Fair Sparks Students’ Interests

On September 11–12 (from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.), the fall 2013 Involvement Fair presented new and returning Lone Star College-Tomball students with a wealth of opportunities to become involved in the college community beyond their classroom activities. More than 30 student organizations — representing an eclectic variety of interests as diverse as the arts, sports, academics, technology and social action — filled the Commons with creative and energetic outlets for students’ academic, vocational, cultural and recreational interests and needs. A record number of organizations and students participated in the Office of Student Life event, which was highlighted by the Best Start committee working with students to set a goal, make a plan, get connected, and stay involved.

Fall 2013 Work-Study Job Fair a Win-Win for Students and Departments

The Lone Star College-Tomball financial aid department held its College Work-Study Job Fair on September 12 from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. in Room N-103, adjacent to the Commons. The annual, 90-minute event (held at the start of every fall semester) brought together 12 departments and approximately 65 new and returning students to explore the work-study opportunities and financial aid options available at LSC-Tomball.

Reducing Poverty Through Solar Cooking

On September 23, students in Lone Star College-Tomball Biology Professor Brandon Lowery’s environmental science class took advantage of the sunny day to test their solar cooking designs on the west lawn. “This project is part of the topic of poverty that we are covering throughout our environmental course. Many nations in Africa, and around the world, are using more solar cooking devices to reduce the need for fuels. In many cases, fuel such as wood required a great travel distance to acquire. So the goal for the students is to show how different designs of solar cookers can be used to cook and/or pasteurize water for safe drinking using only sunlight,” said Brandon.

Accolades

Tracie Wood—Appointed to Statewide Education Committee

Nursing Professor Tracie Wood has been appointed to represent Lone Star College-Tomball on one of the committees of the Texas Team “Advancing Progression in Nursing” (APIN) initiative. The goal of APIN is to meet the Institute of Medicine’s recommendation of increasing the proportion of nurses with Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) degrees to 80 percent of the workforce (from

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ELC Early Intervention Program Helps Students Who Are Falling Behind

Lone Star College-Tomball’s extended learning center (ELC) knows that the key to getting ahead in college is not falling behind. That’s why Robbie Richard Rogers, ELC early intervention program coordinator, has been going from classroom to classroom to let students, faculty and staff know that if students feel themselves falling behind, or if faculty and staff see a student falling behind, the ELC’s academic support services and early intervention program are there to help. Robbie estimates that the program serves 250–300 students a year, and she is proud of that success. “I measure the success of the program by how many students are referred by faculty and how many students respond to the calls and interventions set in place for them,” she said.

Adela Andea—Featured Texas Biennial Artist

Everyone has “light bulb moments,” except Adela Andea, Lone Star College-Tomball art appreciation adjunct faculty member—she has “illuminant biomorphic” moments. In this case, her installation “Primordial Garden” is being exhibited in the prestigious Texas Biennial, an independent survey of contemporary art in Texas, September 5–November 9, at the Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum in San Antonio. Adela’s illuminant biomorphic work is a high-tech recreation of a real biological ecosystem using artificial materials (including cold cathode fluorescent lights, LED lights, and wiring) that, from an aesthetic point of view, represent nature and beauty. It allows viewers to “immerse” themselves in the artwork, the lights and mass-produced objects providing extra visual overstimulation. “I’m exploring the environment from a physical level as well as a biological level,” explains Adela.

PSSA Employee of the Month

Alexandria Byrne—If You Want Something Done, Ask a Busy Person to Do It

In her role as Lone Star College-Tomball Student Life Program Specialist, Alexandria “Allie” Byrne supports the student life program manager, manages the program’s purchasing, supports student clubs and organizations, and just makes things happen. Additionally, she’s also the student activities board co-advisor, member of the 25th anniversary committee, and a driving force behind the new LSC-Tomball mascot.

In her letter nominating Allie for PSSA Employee of the Month, Deena Donaho, ABBSSS division coordinator, said, “When you give Allie a task, you can rest assured that it will be taken care of.”

Transformations

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the current 41 percent) by 2020. One way to help Associate Degree in nursing (ADN) nurses achieve their BSN is through the articulation agreements between community colleges and four-year institutions. Tracie’s committee is working to improve these agreements by developing a standardized concept-based curriculum designed to strengthen partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions, and a simplified, guaranteed transfer process. “This curriculum, once implemented, will facilitate ADN students to transition seamlessly into BSN programs,” she said.
Vincent Carret—It Begins and Ends with Service

“He profits most who serves best.” While this credo is typically about community service, for Vincent Carret, Lone Star College-Tomball food services manager, it’s not only good business—it’s essential.

Part of the LSC-Tomball family for only five months, Vincent brings a perspective to his job that’s born from years in the hospitality industry and an international upbringing that took him from Vietnam to France, to California, to Houston. He may be very busy (updating the menu, sharing his hospitality philosophy, overseeing catering), but he never loses focus on customer service.

Barbara Lujan—Helping Others Achieve Their Dreams

For 23 years (21 at Lone Star College-Tomball), counselor/professor Barbara Lujan has been helping students find their direction in life. Specifically, she provides academic counseling for students who are at risk, have disabilities, and have come from other countries. “I like building relationships with students so that they know they have someone to go to if they encounter any challenges while in school,” she said.

Barbara discovered her own direction while working with counselors in a junior high school. Watching them help students, she realized the impact they could have on students’ lives. “I decided then that I would like to pursue counseling in a school setting,” she recalled.

Helping, it seems, threads itself throughout Barbara’s life. Currently co-chair of the Working Against Violence through Education (W.A.V.E.) committee, Barbara also co-founded the Culture Club and Hispanic Outreach Program for Education (H.O.P.E.) as well as served as Phi Theta Kappa advisor, Spanish Association Leading Students Ahead (S.A.L.S.A.) Club advisor, and Latino American Student Association Club sponsor.

In her off hours, Barbara enjoys spending time with her two daughters, reading, watching movies, and helping at the Abandoned Animal Rescue.

New Faces

Jeanne Walker
Division Coordinator, DSELM

Amy Galaviz
Advisor II, Student Services

Leslie Conley
Advisor II, Student Services

Spotlights
Constitution Day Celebrated at LSC-Tomball

On September 17, Lone Star College-Tomball students, employees and community members celebrated Constitution Day in Room N-103. Jill Riethmayer, dean of the Lone Star College-Tomball arts, business, behavioral science and social science division, welcomed the assembly, and was followed by a video rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.” Dr. Annie Johnson Benifield, social science chair and political science professor, introduced the event’s guest speaker, Dr. Deborah Schildkraut, political science professor from Tufts University and co-author of “The Challenge of Democracy: American Government in Global Politics,” the textbook used in Government 2305 classes at LSC-Tomball. Prior to and during the presentation, Houston League of Women Voters volunteers conducted voter registration in the Commons.

Recent Events

Constitution Day Celebrated at LSC-Tomball

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First PSSA Meeting of the School Year Held

The LSC-Tomball Professional and Support Staff Association (PSSA) convened for their first meeting of the year on September 6. Following an introduction of new members, a summary of the year’s upcoming events by PSSA president Jacquelyn Shepherd, and a brief update on the compensation study by Human Resources Manager Kristi Bonnin, members were invited to remain for a few rounds of an annual tradition: Welcome Back Bingo!

2013 – 2014 LSC-Tomball Lecture Series Opener Generates Strong Emotions

The opening lecture of the 2013–2014 COTE (Center for Organizational and Teaching Excellence) Lone Star College-Tomball Lecture Series, “Morality and Film—the Ethics of Neurocinematics,” generated strong emotions in the audience September 26. Dr. Sean Tiffee, LSC-Tomball associate professor of speech, discussed the science behind the new field of neurocinematics (a combination of neuroscience and cinema studies) and its moral implications. Specifically, should neurocinematics’ ability to manipulate the human mind to create a desired response be explored and evaluated concurrently with its scientific development? The next lec-
Business Success Seminar series returns to LSC-Tomball

Continuing the success of its spring 2013 series, Lone Star College’s Small Business Development Center (in conjunction with Lone Star College-Tomball Community Library; Greater Tomball Area, Greater Magnolia, Magnolia Parkway and Houston Northwest chambers of commerce; and the Tomball Economic Development Corporation) held the first of its three-part Business Success Seminar series September 6 in the Lone Star College-Tomball Community Library. "Google Tools for Business" was presented by Doug Mansfield (owner of Mansfield Marketing, a Google Certified Partner online marketing company) and covered Google services designed to help businesses discover tools to perform market research, create business listings, advertise locally, and analyze website traffic.

First Friday Luncheon Focused on Effective Marketing

Lone Star College-Tomball’s Executive Director of College Relations Nicole Finkbeiner was the keynote speaker at the September 6 Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce First Friday luncheon held in LSC-Tomball’s Beckendorf Conference Center. Through interactive and humorous examples, Nicole walked the audience through five ways that businesses might be reducing the effectiveness of their marketing and then presented three ways to reduce marketing mishaps and increase the effectiveness of the marketing for their businesses and organizations.

The Breakfast Club Returns to LSC-Tomball

Tradition was revived at Lone Star College-Tomball on September 18 as the LSC-Tomball 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee sponsored The Breakfast Club, an opportunity for all college employees to gather and share a meal before beginning their work day. Many years ago, faculty would meet on a regular basis over breakfast to discuss their school year and share their insights and experiences. As part of LSC-Tomball’s 25th anniversary year, the committee, hoping to engender similar fellowship, decided to reinstitute the practice. Over 40 employees attended the event, partaking of breakfast tacos, kolaches and bagels, while visiting with one another and enjoying tunes from “The Breakfast Club” soundtrack. The event was a huge success and another will be held in the spring.

Community Partnerships

Business Success Seminar series returns to LSC-Tomball

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LSC-Tomball Commuters Soon to Enjoy Benefits of State Highway 249 Extension

For many Lone Star College-Tomball students and employees, the dream of an easier commute to campus officially took a step closer to becoming a reality when ground was broken for the long-planned extension of Texas State Highway 249 on September 25. During the groundbreaking ceremony, several individuals were thanked for the work they contributed to the project, including LSC-Tomball Vice President of Administrative Services John Fishero. When completed, the toll road will connect College Station and downtown Houston, providing a corridor between Texas A&M and Baylor University, as well as increased commerce for businesses along the way.

PSSA Employee of the Month
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Originally hired as a graphic designer two years ago, within a year Allie assumed her administrative responsibilities and has been juggling ever since. “It’s challenging, trying to keep my brain straight between the business side and the creative side, but it’s fun, too, and never boring,” she laughed.

What Allie likes best about her job is getting to know the students, watching them grow and seeing them succeed. What she’ll miss most about LSC-Tomball (she and her husband are moving to Virginia in October) is the atmosphere. “I’ll miss working with the people, inside and outside my department. They’re very inclusive, very family-like—like a wolf pack.”

We’ll miss you, too, Allie.

Lecture Series
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Lecture, “Historical and Personal Reflections of the Camino,” will be presented by Dr. Vanessa Gilbert-Cronen on October 22, from 2–3 p.m. in Room N-103; additional series topics and dates can be found at lone-star.edu/tomball-lectureseries.
Upcoming Events

“Leaving Iowa”
October 17 – 19 at 7:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

COTE Lecture: “Historical and Personal Reflections of the Camino”
Dr. Vanessa Gilbert-Cronen
October 22, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Room N-103

Disability Awareness Day
October 23, 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Rooms N-103, C-210 & E-100

Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony
October 24 at 7:00 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

OTA Halloween Carnival
October 25, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Health Science Building

Vet Tech Fun Run
October 26, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Campus

To see the most current events, visit LoneStar.edu/Calendars