

## Run-off Elections

The Dateline : Downtown endorses Annise Parker  
for Mayor of Houston  
FRONT PAGE

## Ken Pham Found Dead

Former UHD student is found dead after being  
suspected of a triple murder in November  
CAMPUS NEWS

## Dickens Revived

"A Christmas Carol" is revisited with a recent spin  
on a Dickens classic  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

# Dateline: Downtown

S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E

NEWSPAPER FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

Volume 43, Issue 7,

DECEMBER 7, 2009 – FEBRUARY 8, 2010

www.uhd.edu/dateline

## For Mayor, We Endorse Annise Parker

### Dateline Staff Report

After much debate and deliberation, *The Dateline* believes that Houston's next Mayor should be Annise Parker. Former democratic opponent and City Council Member Peter Brown describes Parker as having a "12-year proven track record of public service, particularly in terms of efficient, open government, quality of life, and fiscal responsibility, especially important in these difficult economic times. That candidate is Annise Parker." Since 2003, Parker has proven her fiscal responsibility as City Controller as she stopped wasteful spending on soccer stadiums and the wants, not the needs, of the city. Now more than ever, we need a fiscally responsible Mayor.

Although Bill White has done some great things and is quite popular, he has left Houston with a million dollar deficit under his leadership. Measures such as the Rainy Day Fund taken by Parker as Controller have absolutely kept Houston thriving. A native Houstonian herself, Parker continues to show her commitment to this city and its possible growth with visionary ideas. One vision is possibly allowing fellow HCC or UHD Cadets to become peace keepers because they receive the same state certification as those students in the HPD Academy.

Although the Mayoral Forum that was supposed to take place at UHD in September was cancelled by all democratic candidates, Parker and Locke continued to go to debates and forums. At

a forum taking place at Texas Southern University (attended by *The Dateline*), Parker quickly answered questions posed and quickly shut down opponents attempting to harp on education, which the Mayor has no control over. Peter Brown came in thirty minutes late and Gene Locke came in ten minutes after Parker, who was there early with her team greeting voters and preparing for a forum. It was obvious from then on that one candidate wants to be the next Mayor of Houston. *The Dateline* believes that your vote for Mayor should be for Annise Parker. As more allegations about Locke come to light (in regard to conflicts of interest), we can trust that Parker— who gladly published her and her partner's taxes for all to see— has nothing to hide.



## New Standards for Freshman

Christina Rodriguez  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

On Friday, November 13, 2009, faculty, administration, students and guest speakers met in Robertson Auditorium to discuss the need for raising admission standards. The guest speakers were Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Texas Higher Education Coordination Board, and Dr. Steve Murdock, State demographer. The mediator was Dr. Michelle Moosally, President of the UHD Faculty Senate. Dr. William Flores was also present for the opening speech

and participated in the panel discussion.

Dr. Moosally spoke first and while discussing the need for higher standards, she stated that "Access without direction...does not support our students." Dr. Flores spoke next and discussed University of Houston Main Campus, which is already discussing raising their admission standards, and what kind of effect this change would have on our campus. If UH Main does raise their standards, then those students who do not meet that standard will come to UHD.

The first guest speaker was

Dr. Steve Murdock, whose work has been to study the changes in population in Texas. One of the first things he said was "I may become a bit preachy, but I just want you to know I have a right to." In his Powerpoint presentation, he made it clear that UHD's future is tied to non-Anglo populations. He gave the percentage of population growth in Texas in 2000-2001 compared to 2007-2008. The Anglo population decreased from 42 percent to 35 percent, while the Hispanic population increased from 40 percent to 47 percent. Murdoch also stated that "Texas is

a predictor of the nation's growth," and continued to show slides that supported this fact. The main reason for Murdoch's presentation was to demonstrate that as a school, we must keep in mind that if the given statistics hold true, we need to consider the prevalence of Hispanic population when discussing admission standards because it may mean fewer students will be able to attend school.

Dr. Paredes then gave his own speech that focused on the main cause of establishing admission standards. He maintains that a major problem lies with students

failing placement tests and being forced to take remedial courses at UHD, which is a waste of time and money on all sides. He stated that a big part of the problem is in our area high schools, because they are having children graduate who are not able to pass placement tests. "There has to be more collaboration between public and higher education." He also discussed the possibility of making financial aid more selective, which would require students in high school to take AP or IB classes, which are good for college credit, and having at least a B average exiting high school. One statement that he reiterated

see **STANDARDS** on page 3

# STUDENT LIFE

## Model Winners at Seattle Debate

**Travis Alford**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) Model United Nations Debate Team traveled to Seattle on Friday Nov. 13 2009 to compete in the Northwest Model United Nations (NWMUN) event held at the University of Washington. The intensity at the debate where high as competing universities proved to

respectively represent their countries in a debate. The buildup to the NWMUN could be seen as having parallels to an arms race; the delegations were mounting ammunition for every possibility of conflict during debate.

Many hours were spent in research and considering diplomatic strategy on how to pilot the conversation to places where our respective country's position could change the game. The actual debate was challenging in sustaining focus on the topic while maintaining our composure and respecting the serious decorum.

The decorum is members of the staff that oversee each committee, appearing like judges in room full of attorneys. Division within each of the 8 committees was expected, but

the ultimate goal was to reach a consensus. UHD's resolve never waned. The fundamental views of delegates were impressed upon the committees and the decorum. The delegates from The University of Houston- Downtown triumphed through dialogue and engagement. Fortune favored the bold on Nov. 15, 2009 and there were none bolder than UHD as most outstanding delegation was earned.

Model United Nations is an organization that simulates the actual duties and priorities of the United Nations (UN): peace-keeping, helping in emergencies, and preventing nuclear proliferation. When conflicts threaten international security, it provides a forum for negotiation; it can also

send peace-keepers to stabilize a crisis. At times, the UN organizes humanitarian relief and food supplies for millions of refugees and victims off a mine and natural disasters. Through the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN has helped minimize the threat of a nuclear war by inspecting nuclear reactors in more than 140 countries in order to ensure that nuclear material is not used for military purpose. These are just a couple of affairs where the UN is unsurpassed.



The University of Houston-Downtown won outstanding delegation which was the top overall award. The University of Houston-Downtown Model United Nations Debate team includes Jennifer Phillips, Travis Alford, Luis Galindo (Award Winner), Adam Tiffin (Award Winner), Sarah Mayer, Lissette Charcousse, and led by The HOUMUN President Eduardo Landaeta.

## The Ghosts of Black Friday

**Amanda White**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To most Americans, Black Friday is considered the largest shopping day of the year, which also signifies the official start of the holiday season. Black Friday falls on the fourth Friday in November after Thanksgiving Day. People usually go out to the stores before sunrise to take advantage of sale. Some people get an early start by camping outside stores on Thanksgiving evening. Most people find Black Friday convenient, because they can get their holiday shopping done early and save money by buying several items for less, but people who hate crowds and like to get things done quickly logon to their favorite store's website to do their holiday shopping.

Although Black Friday may save time and money, there are some downfalls to the event. There is a growing trend in which out of control customers push and stampede their way into stores. A large number of people are hurt every year due to this (luckily this seems to have diminished in 2009), and some stores suffer property damage due to people breaking down doors and windows. Last year, one person was killed by two hundred anxious customers on November, 28, 2008 a thirty-four year old Wal-Mart

employee named Jdimytai Damour was trampled to death while he and other employees were opening the doors for the predawn sales. In an article from CNN.com, Bruce Both, president of United Food and Commercial Workers Union stated, "Where were the safety barriers? Where was security?" Wal-Mart, Green Acres Mall, and Securitas Security Services USA faced a lawsuit from the Damour family on December, 3, 2008.

To avoid a repeat of last year's disaster, about eight hundred Wal-Mart stores around the country remained open twenty-four hours starting November 27, 2009. This change will not affect the majority of super Wal-Marts, since they are always open twenty-four hours. In an article from USAtoday.com, David Tovar, a Wal-Mart spokesperson, said, "Instead of lining up outside Wal-Mart, customers can already be shopping in different areas of the store until sales officially begin at 5 am".

So how did the tradition of consumers gone mad start anyway? The term Black Friday is believed to originate back to the 1920s from a story about a man named Laurence Black, who worked for Osberger's Department store for thirty years. Everyone in town came to know Mr. Black as the man with the black suit

see **BLACK** on page 5

## Online Sound-Bites

Fans - 112 (Currently)

Come join the discussion on our fan page to answer questions that could be featured in @TheDatelineDowntown.

**facebook**

**twitter**



Followers - 105 (Currently)

Come join the discussion on twitter and possibly be featured in The Dateline Downtown. Follow @TheDateline or search **uhd** at [www.search.twitter.com](http://www.search.twitter.com)

Due to the addition of a new HD channel, UHD is no longer distinguishable. If you would like to be part of Online Sound-Bites please use @ symbol on either Facebook or Twittter to publish your thoughts.

# Ready? Set? Register!

**Brittany Musgrave**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's that time again. The race is on to see who will get the classes they want. It's registration time again, and everyone should know what to expect when everyone goes through the motions of registering for the upcoming semester and to get everyone properly prepared for the registration process. One of the many things that needs to be considered is which major are

you interested in? Knowing the answer to that question will make the process a whole lot easier, because then you will know who you need to speak to about course approval.

**UOnline**  
Register, Pay, Class Schedule, e-services, Blackboard Vista, ...

To register for classes, students must go into student e-services by clicking on the U Online link on the UHD website.

Getting courses approved is the more time consuming part of prepping for the registration race. Generally you would speak to the Academic Advisors. They are here to help students out by approving the courses they've picked out, and helping each student choose the courses that would best benefit them. The advisors are located in the Academic Advising Center in the University Center. If you have already declared your major you would speak to the advisor in your specific college about course approval.

Once you get approved for your classes all you have to do is register. You can do that online at UHD.edu and click the U-Online link at the top. You'll log in using your student identification number and your password, then click my registration and schedule. You'll need your CRN numbers which you can get from the class schedule option in U-Online. Who will get the classes they desire? Well Gators, we'll have to wait and see in 2010.

# STANDARDS

Continued from page 1

constantly was "Access without preparation is not opportunity," which supports his claim that high schools are to blame for such low scores upon entering secondary education.

During the panel, someone asked the question "Why aren't we applying these standards to transfer students?" This is a relevant question because UHD is a campus whose average student age is 28 and where many students have been to school before. The panelists

answered that for right now the focus is on freshman students. When asked whether the school was consciously trying to recruit traditional, first time in college students, Dr. Flores replied that that is something they hope to do. Dr. Flores stated that he wants there to be more of a 'freshman experience' that keeps students feeling like a cohesive group rather than an 'everyone on their own' mentality.

# Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I'm an accounting major at UHD College of Business and as an accountant we are taught that full disclosure is always the best policy. I was reading some of the criticism of the article "Who makes, what". As a stakeholder of UHD, I'm intrigued by the incentives that motivate our UHD top officials. And if the critics like Gabriela don't care about being fully informed, then that would explain why our campus and country are in the current quagmire.

JONATHAN CASANOVA  
ACCOUNTING MAJOR

## Contact Us

**Managing Editor**  
Wilbert Chinchilla  
dateline@gator.uhd.edu  
(713) 221-8569

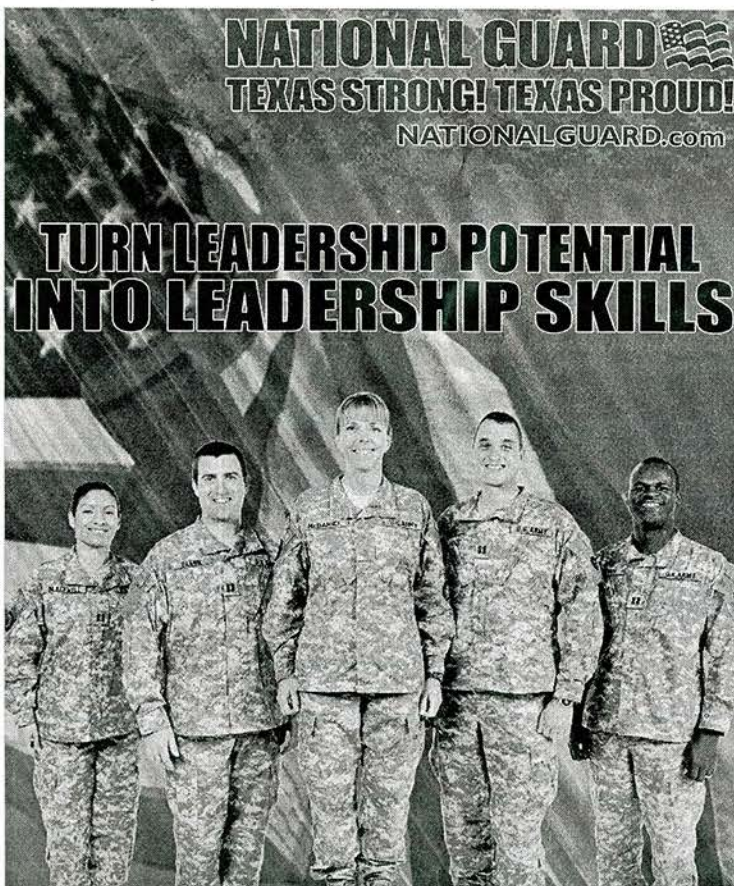
**Associate Editor**  
Christina Rodriguez  
dateline@gator.uhd.edu  
(713) 221-8569

**Business Manager**  
Daniel Almanza  
dateline@gator.uhd.edu  
(713) 221-8192

**Staff Writers**  
Judith Wattlely

**Contributing Writers**  
Sana Tobaccowala  
Travis Alford  
Brittany Musgrave  
Jong Hyun Koh  
Amanda White  
Lindsay Young  
Jose Gutierrez  
Frank Raia

**Faculty Advisor**  
Anthony Chiaviello  
chiaviello@uhd.edu  
(713) 221-8520



**Letters to the Editor:** Dateline welcomes letters to the editor from any member of the UH system. Letters should be no more than 250 words, include the author's full name, phone number or email address, and affiliation with the University, including classification and major. Anonymous letters will not be published. Deliver letters to Room S-260 Main Bldg; email them to dateline@gator.uhd.edu; fax them to (713) 221-8119. All submissions are subject to editing.

**Editorial Policy:** The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in the Dateline reflect the viewpoints of the University of Houston-Downtown or its administration or students. Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. Submissions should be sent to dateline@gator.uhd.edu in Microsoft Word format. All submissions become property of Dateline and may not be returned. If you have any questions, please call (713) 221-8569.

# CAMPUS NEWS

Do you have tips? Contact us at [Dateline@gator.uhd.edu](mailto:Dateline@gator.uhd.edu) for any tips, events, or story ideas to cover.

## Meeting Highlights Safety in the Streets and School

**Frank Raia**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The UHD Police had a safety meeting on November 16, 2009 at the Auditorium. UHD happens to be a somewhat safe place. The recurring idea from the slideshow demonstration given by Richard D. Boyle, UHD Police Chief, was keeping your belongings with you at all times. The other topic was that crime has gone up in some places but gone down in others. People aren't aware that UHD is actually a safe campus. However, sometimes things happen in parking lots or on school grounds; but with the cameras in place, some of the crimes are able to be solved.

Generally most crimes committed are theft because people are stupidly leaving their possessions unattended. Or every few years a student goes bonkers and brings a bow and arrow to school trying to assault a teacher. If the suspect(s) escapes pursuit, UHD Police will track them down to the ends of the earth leaving no stone unturned. Because Texas is awesome, as long as it happens on campus the fuzz can track whomever responsible down and pillage them.

Other than parking, getting across Main Street and into Commerce and Shea buildings continues to be a problem.

Each student has had close calls with cars nearly hitting them, and that is what UHD college life is all about. Dodging cars and the Light Rail is part of our life because they are everywhere and hit people all the time — until METRO begins construction on Main Street. At UHD, nobody's been hit by the Rail, but cars do hit people more often than you think. Not quite splatter city, more likely just a tag or slight tap; but, it does happen. The city of Houston isn't going to do much to change the gauntlet of brewing carnage that Shea's surrounding streets are. You can thank the Rail expansion plan for that. In order to maintain safety from almost certain never ending peril, be careful when crossing the street.

Also, just because you see a camera doesn't mean they are watching you, UHD has over a hundred cameras and that number will grow. So school will be even safer soon. The gym and the metered parking lot next to it will be the next area to be covered. They do see things eventually. So please keep your eyes open and when you see something that looks suspicious say something. The cops can't do everything, (they need our help too) and not saying something is helping ill things happen to people and that is no bueno.

## Former UHD Student, Pham Found Dead After Alleged Murders

Photography by Christina Rodriguez

This was where Ken Pham lived with three roommates who were allegedly murdered by the former part-time UHD student. Less than two minutes away from UHD, university officials issued a campus security alert asking students to be vigilant if Pham were to be seen on campus.



**Judith Wattlely**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The UHD killer has been found. Ken Pham, who fled from the scene, was considered missing until December 1, 2009; when he was found dead in his car from a self inflicted gunshot. But it was November 15th, a Sunday night, when neighbors heard eight gun shots about 7pm at Brooks Street near Common Street. Roy Lozano, a local bar owner, heard the gun shots and came outside to see what the disturbance was. He then saw the thirty-six year old part-time UHD student

Ken Pham locking the Family Grocery-Washateria gate, which was also his place of residence. Lozano yelled "There's a fire up above. Don't close that security gate," Pham then "turned around and pulled the gun on me." Pham then drove away in his 1996 green Toyota Camry, wearing a security guard uniform.

Detectives later discovered that Pham shot and killed his three roommates, then set fire to the building in order to cover his tracks. The bodies of the victims were found tied up in the closet, near the balcony, and in a bedroom. One of the

victims was still holding a cell phone to their ear, in what they thought was probably a cry for help. It also seemed that when he started the fires, it was in different parts of the building. Autopsies have identified these men to be forty-eight year old David Aguilar, fifty-three year old Scott Waldo, and forty year old Say Trier.

UHD Gatormail issued a campus security alert email that included his picture to inform all students about Pham and to be on the lookout. A student source stated "This man was in my summer class. He was so quiet. Unbelievable..."

The Dateline is Now on Twitter!  
Come voice your opinions in 140 characters or less! Come tweet us @ TheDateline or [twitter.com/TheDateline](http://twitter.com/TheDateline)



DO YOU WANT TO BE AWESOME LIKE THESE GUYS? YOU CAN IF YOU JOIN THE DATELINE STAFF BY SUBMITTING ARTICLES JOIN TODAY! COME DOWN TO 260-S DOORS ALWAYS OPEN

# In Search of A Provost

**Christina Rodriguez**  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The search for a new provost has continued with the help of the consulting firm R. William Funk and Associates, but more information has been found that sheds more light on their process of finding a new Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. In an interview with Dr. Flores, he stated that the reason we are using this firm is because the University of Houston System had an existing contract with them. This is the same consulting firm that found Dr. Flores during our search for a new president. Using this company was the easiest way to begin recruiting. Funk and Associates has a working list of those individuals who have been looking for employment in higher education, and this is the first place they look. They then look at the list of those people who have been hired at various schools and ask these people for

recommendations.

But why the search for a new Provost? The current Provost, Molly Woods, announced at Dr. Flores' convocation that she would be stepping down at the end of this semester and plans to take a hiatus, but ultimately wishes to be a part of the faculty again. She was in the business department before being Provost, and will likely return. Another possibility is that she may do other administrative work.

Dr. Flores stated that this is a good opportunity to have another different set of skills in administration. Provost Woods is regarded well by Dr. Flores, but he considers the fact that a new president and new provost will be a more dynamic team in a new, changed environment. Dr. Flores also said he hopes to find someone with the same values as the current administration, but with a different set of experiences.

The Provost and VPAA position not only requires

working with the Senate Faculty and policy changes, but also with the UH System, and even throughout the state of Texas. Whenever UH introduces new degree programs, such as the new Fine Arts and Social Work degrees, these must be advocated here in Houston and statewide to the Texas Legislature, because it is the Legislature that will ultimately fund these new programs.

The job advertisement for this position has been posted on higher education websites such as the Chronicle of Higher Education, Hispanic Outlook, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, and Women in Higher Education, not to mention UH's home page on the right hand side. The committee and Dr. Flores hope to be conducting on-campus interviews by February, although applicants who send in their documents before December 31 will be given more consideration.

# Admission Changes for Tier 1

**Jong Hyun Koh**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

University of Houston- Main Campus (UH) announced that it will make the admission standards stricter than ever before. According to John Entel, the Dean of Academic Affairs at UH, by raising the admission standard, UH can receive superior students from many schools all over the country and enhance its reputation as well as graduation rate. Entel insists that this will be the first step to make UH one of the top-ranking schools in the U.S. He claims that UH will raise the standards for admission gradually and continuously. According to the data presented by the council of UH, the new admission standard will limit the number of students who are considered as Open Admission and

increase the minimum score of SAT and ACT scores. Until now UH used to accept most of the students who ranked below 20% in high school.

Entel states that the purpose of the foundation of UH was to offer education to working class people. For the people who cannot go to UH because of its elevated admission standards, they can choose UH-Downtown as their alternate option. UH-Downtown currently employs the open admission policy for students who graduated from a high school or passed the GED. Even though UH tries to raise its admission standard, it won't be as hard as getting into University of Texas at Austin or Texas A&M University-College Station. However, the school authorities expect that UH will reach to an

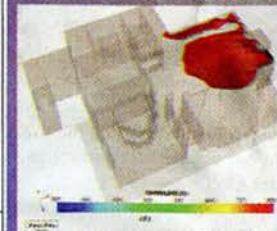
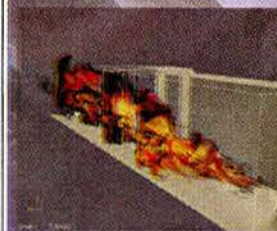
equivalent level as Texas Tech University and UT-Dallas.

Recently, among the students who enrolled as a freshman at UH, the percentage of the students who graduate in 6 years is only 42%. This percentage is much lower than the average graduation rate of the universities in Texas, which is 56%. Some people are concerned that this change of admission standards may decrease the number of freshman students and harm the cultural diversity at UH campus. But Entel said that the current racial distribution of UH is very diversely constituted: White 35%, Hispanic 20%, Asian 20%, and Black 13.5%. This item will be discussed by the council of UH thoroughly where new admission standards will possibly be applied starting in 2011.

# FIRE PROTECTION Engineering Technology

This accredited Bachelor of Science degree program is the only one of its kind in Texas

This program uses technology where



students can

- Simulate Virtual Fire
- Prepare Fire Safety standards
- Use advanced technological skills

to do so

For more info contact  
**Prof. Edward R. Sheinberg,**  
MME, Coordinator  
Room 706-North  
713-221-8441

# BLACK

Continued from page 2

with a red carnation on the front jacket pocket. Black was a much respected man in the local retail industry, and was offered the opportunity to train other new workers as Osberger's Department Store expanded in the 1950s. Black died of a heart attack on November, 27, 1964 while finishing up his twelve hour shift at work. The next day, Osberger's Department Store remained closed, while the owner joined other retail workers around the city to mourn Black's death. The next year on the Friday after Thanksgiving, all employees at Osberger's Department store wore black suits or dresses along with a red carnation in memory of Mr. Black. All employees also remembered Mr.

Black with a moment of silence at exactly 7:48 pm, which is the time Mr. Black died. Honoring Mr. Black became a tradition for Osberger's Department Store and other stores around the city for many years to come. Due to the growth of technology, more people are participating in a event related to Black Friday called Cyber Monday. Cyber Monday is on the Monday following Thanksgiving, and is the largest online shopping day of the year. It is designed for people who don't like crowds, like convenience, like to put their purchases on reserve to pick up at a later time, and for people who prefer to pay for products using credit. Like stores, online retailers and store websites offer sales and deep discounts on goods and services, and also online sales and discounts see **BLACK** on page 7

# EDITORIAL

The Dateline Downtown accepts editorials from students. Has something irked you on campus? Has something gone well? Contact us at [Dateline@gator.uhd.edu](mailto:Dateline@gator.uhd.edu).

## Eff the Status Quo Open Letter From UHD Grad

**Jose Gutierrez**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

December 2, 2009, 4:45pm – I'm currently sitting at this university in the non-smoking section on my laptop and I decided that this letter was a long time coming, (pause taking a drag of my cigarette). I am about to graduate this December. There have been several things that have happened in order for me to get to this point, but that's not important anymore. (Pause as I take another drag). I am a very proud future graduate of this University.

First and foremost to all the students, listen and learn from what I am about to say because it's the truth. I decided to write this because I'm tired of repeating myself and nobody listens.

To all the professors who have a constant passing rate of less than 35% of the class, what the fuck is your major malfunction? Do you not know or care? If students leave and can't pass, it's your fault we have an 18% retention rate. It is the lower 50% of the students that require help, not the top 50%.

You could put many obstacles in front of top students, but they will still overcome the odds. The bottom of the barrel students and border line students are the bread and butter of this college. To brush them off is to provide a bad service and last time I checked, this is a service based business. (Puff, puff, the tip of the cig burns bright red). Then again, the administration needs to get a clue on how to provide a service first.

Student advising is a joke and so are the advisors; I'm not sorry, it's true. The parking is bullshit, and what the fuck happened to my game-room? When I first started at this university back in 2001, we had a pretty good one. Where was my place of relaxation when I had to spend 16 to 18 hours here in this shitty building? It used to be in the area now

known as student activities where you can see the old TV's from the game-room days.

I guess certain administration needed bigger offices to buy useless mini Frisbee's and shitty pens that don't write, with UHD badly printed on them; which we as students pay for anyway. (Light another cigarette). SGA is under the poorest leadership in its history; I've seen monkey shit fights that are more organized than this poor excuse of a SGA. They also have shitty little pens and pads that don't write, which are also paid by us. UHD's Green Sustainability plan is a poor idea of a joke with one crappy garden, one Ford Escape Hybrid and some bad recycling plan that does not include aluminum or glass, solar power, wind power or pretty much anything else. The UHD police department is under staffed and 50% of them are out of shape to boot.

It would be funny to see a foot race with these guys against some heavy smokers. (As I take another drag and exhale the smoke slowly). An

see **GRAD** on page 8

## Does UHD Really Need a Student Lounge?

**Sana Tobaccowala**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

UHD is deciding on a plan to build a student lounge for students where they can hang out before or after class, and have a place which is informal and unstructured. However, there are quite a few downsides of this move, such as possible tuition increase with the cost of building this new lounge. This means that students are going to have to pay more for something they may not even use. Another point is the logistics that are involved in making this lounge and its effects on students' lives. The money going towards this lounge might end up being provided by students through increased tuition fees in the near future.

Students have a hard enough time paying their regular tuition fees and to add something that is unnecessary is difficult for most students. Moreover, the money that would be budgeted for this student lounge could be used in better ways such as adding more restaurants to campus so there are more choices for students, as all students have to eat and to have more selection would be ideal for most of us. The money could also be put towards more books in

# CON

Do you have a Pro response? Please Contact us at [Dateline@gator.uhd.edu](mailto:Dateline@gator.uhd.edu)

the library or another computer lab, so students are able to have more areas to do research for classes. There are many more efficient ways that this money could be spent to benefit students. The fact that we are located on the edge of Downtown would make it difficult to create space for this upcoming lounge.

This could cause problems because student organizations that use specific rooms for their clubs or meetings may have to move or find another place. There is also the problem with noise from the renovations. The students are not going to be able to complete assignments in quiet areas when sounds are going to be escalating from various places in the building. This could also hurt students' concentration in class and disturb time in the cafeteria spent trying to relax. Therefore, it is important for students to speak up and give considerable thought towards a student lounge. It may sound nice to have one, but it may also be unnecessary and cause additional problems.

**ACT NOW**  
Holiday Mini Term registration ends and classes begin **December 14th**  
*classes run through January 5*

**Three Semester Credit Hours in Three Weeks**

register today  
713.718.2000  
hccs.edu

**HCC**  
HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Houston Community College's Mini Term classes let you make the most of your holiday.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Dateline Downtown accepts unsolicited music, film, and video game reviews from students. Have an event to promote or cover? Contact us at [Dateline@gator.uhd.edu](mailto:Dateline@gator.uhd.edu).

## A Modern Twist on a Classic Carol



Image via Alley Theatre  
Performers in ghost costumes in the modern production of "A Christmas Carol".

**Travis Alford**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Saturday November 21, 2009 The Alley Theatre downtown opened its doors

family favorite Christmas Show. There were children from ages 6 to grandparents in attendance Saturday night. The excitement was electric ringing in the reminder that the holidays are here. The alley theatre is lit up with a lot of Christmas trees that tower over the lobby. Every seat in the theatre is a great one. The play is roughly two hours with a twenty minute intermission.

The contemporary Associate Director and Alley's own James Black puts a futuristic twist on the old play. This classic story follows Ebenezer Scrooge (Jeffrey Bean) as he revisits past experiences with the three ghosts that visit him on Christmas Eve. Black uses eye popping props, and

seasonal sets to laugh you through Scrooges life. After all had given up on him, Scrooge truly defines redemption. This foggy production created by Award-winning scenic designer Tony Straiges (Alley's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?), costumes by Alejo Vietti (Alley's Rock n Roll), original music by John Gromada (Alley's Treasure Island), and lighting by Rui Rita (Alley's To Kill a Mockingbird), ended in a roaring standing ovation. This is a wonderful time for a date, a family, or flying solo. A Christmas Carol A Ghost of a Christmas left cheer in my heart and a smile on my face.

## BLACK

Continued from page 5  
sometimes last longer than sales in the stores. For consumers, Black Friday means great deals on the hottest products of the season. For businesses, Black Friday means increased profits and placement into the black, or in terms of accounting practices, being in the black means to gain profit, while on the other hand, being in the red means that businesses are losing profit. This belief about businesses going into the black on Black Friday has proven to be untrue, as most businesses really generate the most profit on the days closer to Christmas.

## Taking Back Concerts

**Lindsay Young**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With a large blue and red banner hung high, swirling lights, screaming fans and ready to go security, one of Warner Bros and Reprise Records' finest bands hit Houston's House of Blues stage on their headlining tour on November 30. With one broken footed guitarist and back up vocals, a lead singer with a swinging microphone, an aggressive bassist, an all original guitarist full of love for music, and a passionate drummer, you have yourself the five-piece band Taking Back Sunday. Now on tour with Houston's Buzzfest veterans Anberlin and popular radio favorites, All American Rejects, Taking Back Sunday has really brought on a great value for co-headlining shows.

With nominations from the Teen Choice Awards and having one of their new songs featured in this year's Transformers movie, Taking Back Sunday has really

come a long way this year. In response to their success, Taking Back Sunday's lead singer, Adam Lazzara said, "When we first started we just wanted to tour and have music be our line of work. So to have accomplished so much is just amazing. I mean, I still feel like we have a really long way to go, but we have the best jobs ever. I don't think that when the band started we knew where it was going to go, we just went."

Upon finding out about the Transformers movie soundtrack for this year, Lazzara was a little confused. The movie ended up using a song off the new album called Capital M-E, rumored to be about the loss of their guitarist Fred Mascherino. Just reading the lyrics of the song can get the listener stirred up with emotions of betrayed friendship, a message often covered in songs on Taking Back Sunday albums. However, Lazzara feels that the sound of the song was odd for the Transformers movie.

Having lost Fred Mascherino

in 2008, Taking Back Sunday has come back in 2009 not only with a new guitarist and backup vocals, Matt Fazzi, but also a new album released back in June called New Again. The band got to work with some of the greatest producers out there, such as David Kahne (who has worked with Paul McCartney, Sublime, and Stevie Nicks) and producer Matt Squire (who has worked with Boys Like Girls, Katy Perry, and 3oh!3). Their first single on this album, Sink Into Me, was released before the album and represents real life emotion.

For the video of Sink Into Me that was released in April of 2009, the band is actually in a silly putty mix that they created on set. "That song in particular is a good indication of where the band is at right now... It is a very literal interpretation of the title of the song. It was a fun experience and I was purple for a week after that," Lazzara said.

Although Lazzara was excited see TBS on page 8

It's not out in the open, but **GRIEF IS HERE.**

1 out of 3 college students experienced the illness or loss of a family member or close friend in the last year. Talk about loss and help your friends in need by starting a National Students of AMF Support Network Chapter at your school.

[TalkAboutLoss.org](http://TalkAboutLoss.org)

# The Used Present Artwork

**Lindsay Young**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Released Aug. 31, the brutally dark and twisted songs of Reprise Records band The Used have returned in a new and twisted album entitled *Artwork*. Having been started in the business with the help of John Feldmann in 2001, with this album *The Used* takes *Artwork* in a different and darker direction with producer Matt Squire (Panic at the Disco, All Time Low, etc). Guitarist Quinn Allman seems to think having a new producer has brought out some of their best stuff.

"It is probably one of our heaviest records to some degree. We lived in a house and worked on songs for about two or three months. We worked with Matt Squire so that was new for us. He laid back and let us do what we wanted to. It really worked

out for us," Allman said.

Bringing a new drummer to the scene has also changed things up for The Used. According to Allman he brought a lot of focus for the group. Dan Whitesides, having been the drummer for The Used since 2006, and finally recording with them in 2008 for *Artwork* was a great bonding time for the band as well as a growing experience.

The first single for the album is the song *Blood On My Hands*. With lyrics like, "There's blood on my hands like the blood in you," listeners are sure to be looking for a vicious video to follow. The Used definitely came through. One of their most intense videos ever to be released, this video is full of smoke, blood, knives, and anger. Allman and lead singer Bert McCracken came up with the plot of the video.

"We basically just came up

with a rough idea of a serial killer stalking scenario. It worked out perfectly. It was meant to be," Allman said. "This song is pissed and we really wanted to come out strong. It's our favorite song on the album. It's a great sing along and its just powerful. We thought it would be a good choice."

This album covers many different messages, one of them about living a reckless life which could cause an accidental death, loosely referencing the death of Heath Ledger. The dark themes covered in this new and unique album from The Used are sure to draw their diehard fans and future listeners in like a fly to a spider web- wrapped up in it. This album is a definite listen for those who are fans of pop and heavy music combined.



Photography by Lindsay Young  
Guitarist Quinn Allman plays a riff off of the band the Used's album, *Artwork*.

## TBS

Continued from page 7

about the making of the video for the single, he feels that Taking Back Sunday's live performance is what really counts. He feels that with a great live performance, he is really getting in touch with the fans as well as the music that he has created. When fans are able to sing songs back to him at a show, he says "just to know that you can affect somebody and possibly help them out through something that you love to do is just a great feeling. There has always been this raw energy surrounding the band and for me going to a show has always been kind of an escape. It is like the outside world stays outside. People coming to our shows can hopefully forget about all that and just get lost in the moment. For me, that is a very important thing."

Their live set featured many of their old and popular singles

such as *Cute Without the E* (Cut From the Team), *Decade Under the Influence*, *MakeDamnSure*, and *What's It Feel Like to Be A Ghost?* Even though the band performed a lot of the old crowd pleasers, Lazzara truly enjoys playing his songs off the *New Again* album "I like playing the newer songs just because the more you play a song the more it develops. Little things in the song will start to change so it is kind of like you really get to explore all the possibilities for the song and grow closer to it," Lazzara said.

They closed the show with their guitarist Eddie Reyes playing guitar on the bar, Lazzara swinging the microphone those last few times and Fazzi running and stomping around even on his broken left foot. Leaving Houston with these final lyrics, "I just wanna break you down so badly, in the worst way." A final wave ended the night as the band left a thrilled crowd running for the merchandise.

## GRAD

Continued from page 6

underfunded and super small library with little to no books. Career services that can't help anyone find a job (I have yet to meet anyone who has found a job through career services). What about a book store that receives over priced books late that also cannot be sold back. The Cashiers' office window that usually only has three employees when there is a line of over 100 students, which is the same for financial aid.

What the fuck is the problem with printing checks instead of useless gator-one cards that rape you at every ATM machine — even their own ATM. Thank you for giving the students another way to lose money.

What about the business hours on Fridays that imply Friday is no longer a regular business day for the book store, cafeteria or the administration. Some leaving at 3pm or not

even coming to work at all. Maybe it's the fact that the food selection is limited and overpriced since UHD is fleecing and gouging the rent to the vendors; thus, increasing the price for food. Let's not forget the fun game called running for your life every time you cross the street dodging cars and buses.

Finally, we come to the smoking section. (As I Open a new pack of cigarettes and light another). Apparently many of you non-smokers have a problem with me; even some old guy who asks me if I can read because I'm smoking outside typing on a bench marked with a no smoking sign on it. To him I politely respond, "fuck-off! at least I'm not smoking indoors". I have no covered smoking section to shelter me from the rain and maybe snow this Friday. There are literally many entrances to this building; pick one to come in and out and we will stay away — I promise.

(Angrily puffing). Things need to change, but it's not all

bad. I will miss homeless people showering in the sinks on the third floor restrooms. The same people who watch porn in the library and pan-handle for change and cigarettes. I will miss students on the south side wall of the 8th floor computer lab watching porn and playing video games instead of doing their work. The always nice, yet underpaid custodial staff are wonderful people; if you stop for a second to get to know them.

The few good professors, worth their weight in gold, are either gone or are not allowed to teach the class that best suits them. I could go on but I challenge you to fix this; I've done my best but I'm only one man; but after reading this, hopefully you can become many. If they want to raise the tuition, maybe they can better manage money they get now. Ernest Hemingway once wrote, "The world is a fine place and worth fighting for." I agree with the second part. This place is definitely worth fighting for.