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CAMPUS

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THE BATTALION

Friday, November 19, 1993

Conference to address racism, sexual issues

Leaders unite for Drive-In

By Michele Brinkmann

THE BATTALION

The "Connecting The Pieces" Drive-In for Diversity conference will address multicultural issues at several workshops in Rudder Tower Friday.

The workshops deal with a variety of diversity issues including: leadership development, gender issues, international awareness, First Amendment rights and gay and lesbian issues.

The workshops are designed to bring together student leaders and staff of the Southwest region in an attempt to combat racial and sexual discrimination and to promote appreciation for cultural diversity.

Dr. Malon Southerland, interim vice president for student services, said the program was started because of the need to discuss these issues on a wider range.

"Past conferences have been very productive and have drawn people from all over this region," he said.

Gloria A. Flores, conference coordinator, agreed.

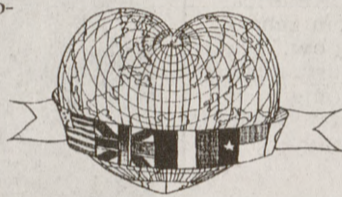
"In past conferences, we have been able to share and get ideas with institutions across the state," she said. "This year we are trying to make sure people at A&M really take advantage of this program."

"The faculty has been very supportive of the conference. Some have even called and said they will send their classes over."

Dr. Thelma J. Douglass, the associate vice president for student services and dean of student life at Sam Houston State University, will be the keynote speaker. Her speech will focus on the meaning of diversity in the campus community.

She will also discuss diversity initiatives and how to help the process and progress of awareness.

The workshops at the fifth annual regional conference are sponsored by the Department of Student Affairs and will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Scientists study birth defects in Brownsville

Medical scientists at Texas A&M University are dedicated to solving the problem of why so many babies with serious birth defects are being born near Brownsville, Tx.

The University plans to spend more than a million dollars over the next three years to fund the research.

The National Institutes of Health-funded research team will screen birth records, conduct genetic and nutritional studies and analyze soil and water samples to see if they can find a link between environmental pollution and the normally rare neural tube defects (NTDs).

Since 1991, more than 30 babies have been born with NTDs in and near Brownsville. This concern gained widespread attention when health authorities in Brownsville reported six babies all born within six weeks with a NTD known as anencephaly.

Anencephalic babies are born with severely under-developed brains, sometimes with no brains at all and is invariably fatal.

Researchers say that NTDs are among the most common birth defects, but they still don't occur that often.

Dr. Stuart Shalat, the study director and a Texas A&M epidemiologist, said he hopes the research will find the solution to this rash of birth defects.

He said, "Texas A&M is rich in research expertise and has a history of commitment to the rural communities of Texas."

"What we have in Brownsville is a tragic puzzle," Shalat said. "Our goal isn't to point fingers at anyone or anything. We just want to find the truth."

International officials visit U.S. universities

Texas A&M University is hosting delegations with visitors from around the world.

Campus News Briefs

Visitors include three deans from the University of Western Sydney's colleges of commerce, humanities and science and technology in Australia, who are here to explore potential collaborations.

Professor Nikolai Karlov, deputy minister of science and technological policy of the Russian Federation and president of the Moscow Institute of Physics, is visiting to learn more about Texas A&M and the College of Science.

The Secretary of Agriculture of Mexico, Carlos Hank Gonzalez, is here to receive the first international Norman Borlaug Award. The award is presented by the Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society for promoting international cooperation.

Ten university presidents and administrators of technical universities from the People's Republic of China are touring United States universities. While at A&M, they will visit several administrative departments because their primary interest is in the planning and administration of universities.

Ambassador Dr. Friederich Hamburg, chief of cabinet and foreign policy adviser of the Austrian Association for International Cooperation in Research Development and Education was a guest lecturer to a marketing class while touring United States universities.

Nuclear engineering under-used, says dean

A University official testified in front of a Congressional hearing last month, saying nuclear engineering is under-used in our nation's health care system.

Dr. Kenneth Peddicord, interim dean of engineering at A&M, said there is a valuable link between isotope production, university research reactors and nuclear engineering education to help solve medical, health and environmental issues.

"In view of the national need, the university reactors remain an underutilized resource for isotope production," Peddicord said. "The faculty and researchers in the nuclear engineering departments have the capability to make numerous future contributions relating to the use of isotopes in medical and life science fields."

EXCITING NEWS



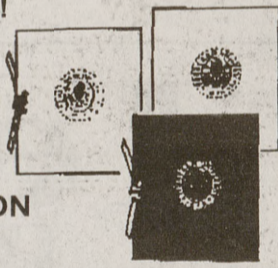
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JUNIOR MAKE UP PICTURES FOR THE 1994 AGGIELAND YEARBOOK WILL BE FROM MONDAY, NOV. 15 THROUGH FRIDAY, DEC. 3.

The make up schedule is as follows:
Juniors: Nov. 15-Dec. 3
Sophomores: Dec. 6-14

Pictures are being taken at A R Photography, located at 707 Texas Ave. S., near Taco Cabana, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For more information, call 693-8183

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