



THE BATTALION

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Conference to focus on Hopwood decision

By JOANNE WHITTEMORE
THE BATTALION

The impact of the Hopwood decision on various Texas universities will be discussed today at a conference hosted by Texas A&M — as the University System Barry Thompson.

Dr. Lee Blank, assistant provost for continuous improvement and conference coordinator, said the conference has two main purposes.

"Number one is education," Blank said. "We need to help representatives, senators and other officials understand the current and projected impact of Hopwood. The second purpose is to try to forge a statewide agenda that would build a more level playing field for Texas with respect to admissions and financial aid."

Cheryl Hopwood and three other University of Texas Law School students filed suit with the 5th U.S. Circuit Court in March 1996.

The law school's separate admissions process based on race and ethnicity prompted the students to claim reverse discrimination. The court ruled in their favor.

All higher public institutions within the 5th Circuit, which includes Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, can no longer use race or ethnicity in admission and financial-aid decisions.

Blank said Louisiana and Mississippi were not affected as much as Texas because they were under a different type of desegregation order from the beginning.

"The Hopwood decision didn't really affect them," he said. "It left Texas quite vul-



nerable so we are not as able to serve the citizenry of Texas who want to come into higher education in Texas."

Bowen said the decision has prompted the University to change some of its procedures.

"We have altered slightly our admission criteria and modified our scholarship process as well," he said. "I estimate the

number of minority students [enrolling in the University] will go down."

Blank said financial aid will be a tremendous determining factor in minority enrollment. Minority students who were inadequately prepared for higher education will be at a disadvantage because their high school and social background will not be taken into consideration, he said.

"A lot of individuals may have not had a good learning opportunity in high school, so they didn't take enough courses to prepare them for college," Blank said. "When their credentials are looked up, they're not going to qualify. Before, other circumstances were taken into account, like schooling location and ethnicity."

Carl Baggett, student body president and a senior accounting major, said that al-

though the case has been decided, A&M students can still recruit minorities on an individual basis.

"Aggies, regardless of what a court case says, can recruit minorities to the University," Baggett said. "We've got to let them know two things. One, about A&M and its traditions, and two, what a great place it is ... A&M is a place built on students wanting to be Aggies."

The conference in Rudder Theatre will be divided into morning and afternoon sessions.

The first session will focus on the consequences of the Hopwood decision. The second session will address legislative and higher education options. Agenda building for the future will also be discussed. The discussions will be summarized at the end of the conference.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Planting Life A.C. Mitchell, a Texas A&M employee, gives the landscaping a new look in front of the Academic Building Monday afternoon.

Students stress concerns about services at forum

By WESLEY POSTON
THE BATTALION

Child care, parking, and food issues were addressed in an open forum Monday night as students directed their concerns and questions toward Texas A&M University department directors.

Mary Miller, associate vice president for finance and administration, said their department's goal is to support the academic mission of A&M.

"We're totally a support and service division," she said. "Our goal is to make everyone's job, including yours as students, as hassle free as possible."

Child care for students and faculty is scheduled to become available next fall, Miller said. The facility will care for 120 to 130 children full time and 50 part time.

"If our demand exceeds our capacity, as we expect, we're not going to go on a first-come-first-serve basis," Miller said.

Before implementing the first-come-first-served system, the children will be selected randomly in a lottery system. This way the number of children of faculty, staff and students will be equal, Miller said.

"After that initial lottery, we'll start a first-come-first-served waiting list," she said.

Separate waiting lists for students and faculty will be created so the service can be balanced between the two, Miller said.

Tom Williams, Parking, Traffic and Transportation director, addressed parking, bus service and safety issues brought up by the students.

"Our main goal is to provide parking," he said.

Williams said PTTS attempts to provide on-campus residents with parking and tries to balance off-campus student parking with bus services.

PTTS is always trying to improve

the bus service to campus, Williams said.

If students would wait patiently, letting busses pass before crossing the street, bus circulation would improve around campus, he said.

"The mode on campus is that if you step off the curb, cars will stop for you," he said. "For a bus to stop every 200 feet is difficult for the bus drivers."

Earlier this semester, parking passes were temporarily suspended in order to make sure the number of passes sold did not exceed the number of parking spaces.

"That may happen again," Williams said. "When you register, sign up for a parking pass."

Ron Beard, Food Services director, answered students' questions about dining on West Campus and expanding low-fat and no-fat menus.

Vicki Beck, a Food Services administrative dietitian, said they are constantly trying to improve the nutrition and selection of on-campus menus.

"We have some fat-free foods and low-fat foods available," she said. "We have some problems advertising and marketing these foods."

Beard said Food Services is always looking for feedback from students on what they like and what should be improved.

"We're not ever satisfied," he said. "We have a lot of work to do."

Beard hosts, "Piping-Hot Ideas," a student feedback program similar to Monday night's forum. Students interested in attending may contact Food Services at 845-3005.

Matt Mayfield, student executive vice president of administration and a senior animal science major, said the program, sponsored by Student Government, is an indication of how concerned administrators are with students' needs.

"That seems to happen when you get students and administration in the same room," Mayfield said.

Rudder undergoes shack attack

Habitat for Humanity constructs city for fund raising, awareness

By MARIKA COOK
THE BATTALION

It is common to see students camping out on campus for sports tickets, but a group of students are camping out tonight to increase awareness for underprivileged housing.

Habitat for Humanity's Shack-a-thon participants will construct a "Shack City" tonight at Rudder Fountain with the help of 11 other student organizations.

Ryan Tram, president of the Texas A&M chapter of Habitat for

Humanity and a senior biomedical science major, said awareness is a necessity for students.

"We live in Aggieiland. We don't see shacks except on TV," he said. "People really do live like this."

The Shack-a-thon groups will occupy their shack for 24 hours. MSC regulations permit only Habitat to remain at Rudder Fountain until Friday to minimize clutter.

"Ironically, University officials thought it would be an eyesore on campus," Tram said.

Kate McKeon, vice president of Habitat and a junior civil engineering major, said she is excited about the support they received from other organizations.

"We have a wide variety of organizations shacking with us," McKeon said. "We tried to get every group we could get our hands on, but ended up having to turn some groups away. Now we need support from students."

Students are encouraged to drop by the Shack City to ask questions about Habitat for Humanity and substandard hous-

ing conditions. For \$1, they can "sponsor-a-stud" by engraving their name on a stud to be used in the next Habitat house or on a roofing nail.

Habitat is giving other organizations cardboard to build their shack with.

"They can build anything they want, design and paint it," McKeon said. "After it's over, we're giving the cardboard to EIC (Environmental Issues Committee) to recycle."

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A&M campus beckons car burglars, police say

By BRANDON HAUSENLUCK
THE BATTALION

Some unsuspecting Texas A&M students and Bryan-College Station residents have returned to their cars to find smashed windows, stolen handbags and missing audio equipment.

The University Police Department responded to at least 15 car burglaries in October. The College Station Police Department responded to 81 burglaries in September and 82 in October.

Of the 15 burglaries on campus, 11 occurred in Parking Area 61 (West Campus "Fish Lot") between Oct. 29 and Oct. 31.

Bob Wiatt, director of UPD, said the burglars travel from far away places.

"These clowns come from all over," Wiatt said. "Most are not students breaking in ...

Vehicle burglary in College Station and on campus

College Station	Burglaries
September '95	47
September '96	81
October '96	82
University Police	
September '96	4
October '96	15

They just smash, grab and away they go."

Wiatt said some of the burglaries committed in October were connected.

"We had six (car burglaries) reported in one night," he said. "Those were probably done by the same group."

The A&M campus, Wiatt said, is sacred ground to car burglars. He said they can walk through large parking lots to find cars with expensive "goodies" and pick out which ones they want to burglarize.

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Black Awareness Committee presents 'A Celebration of Life'

By ANN MARIE HAUSER
THE BATTALION

The MSC Black Awareness Committee invites everyone to participate in their Pre-Kwanzaa festivities, entitled "A Celebration of Life," tonight at 7 in 601 Rudder Tower.

Kwanzaa is an African-American cultural holiday observed from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. It is based on seven principles and seven symbols.

LaSondra Carroll, BAC director of programs and a sophomore general studies major, said the celebration is open to everyone, although it is centered around the African-American culture.

"Kwanzaa is a very special holiday because it is not religious or heroic but a cultural holiday," she said.

Dr. Maulana Karenga, a black studies professor in California, founded the holiday in 1966 to recapture the roots and culture of African-Americans.

The holiday spread by word-of-mouth and information about Kwanzaa can now be accessed on the Internet.

Various Texas A&M African-American student organizations will present skits, step shows, and dramatic interpretations reflecting the seven principles of Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba.

Based on the Swahili language, the principles are Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity) and Imani (faith).

Carroll said integrating the principles into her life has provided encouragement.

"It has made a difference in my life," she said. "It makes me think more about unity and our collective responsibility and not placing the blame on individual acts but looking at the whole."

The number seven is emphasized because it is a whole number, Carroll said.

Stephanie Rhodes, BAC adviser, said Kwanzaa is a time of reflection centered around the family and community. Each principle celebrated builds on the next.

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THE BATTALION TODAY

Work It Baby

Somewhere between classes and homework, students are working to pay bills. Aggiefife, Page 3

Home Cookin'

The seventh-ranked A&M Soccer Team will host San Diego in the first round of the NCAAs. Sports, Page 7

Tried and true

McAlister: Students should understand the true intentions behind tradition. Opinion, Page 11