

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Sweating it out in summer school

Students share their joys and woes of the summer

By Ashley Marshall
THE BATTALION

As the spring semester draws to a close each year, students must decide what to do for the summer. For thousands of Texas A&M students, summer school is the winning option.

Although some students dread the thought of taking classes during the summer, others thoroughly enjoy the experience.

Bryan Osborne, a senior chemistry major, enjoys summer school more than the regular semesters because of the relaxed atmosphere. In fact, Osborne said he would rather take all of his classes in the summer.

"Being up here in college and only taking one class is the perfect world," he said. Jim Johnson, a professor in the Benz School of Floral Design, enjoys the laid-back environment as well.

"Everything's easier during the summer," he said. "Parking is easier, getting around campus is easier, running errands is easier and it's nice because more students tend to be in class on time."

"It makes school a softer atmosphere," Johnson said. "You don't look across the room and see stressed faces like you do in the spring and fall."

Since the majority of A&M students go home for the summer, parking and the flow of traffic are greatly improved around campus and the city. Commuting students are allowed to park in red and blue lots for the summer, alleviating some of the parking congestion. Licia Dodson, a graduate student in finance, said this is a major advantage to summer school.

"It's nice that there are less people," she said. "More open spaces means I can park where I want rather than wherever the wait for a space is shortest."

"I love that I can find a parking spot when I go to the Rec," said senior English major Damaris Johnson. "But I do end up sweating from the walk to the front door because it's so hot — and that's before I even work out."

"Being up here in college and only taking one class is the perfect world."

—Bryan Osborne
senior chemistry major

In addition to the rising heat, students may find the course load heavier and may need to redefine their study habits.

Although students can receive credit in a month, classes may seem more rigorous because the same amount of material that would be learned during a normal semester must be covered in a fourth of the time. Tests are usually given every week, and with the exception of kinesiology, classes meet daily.

"It's like high school again," Dodson said. But Johnson feels the professors have a certain amount of sympathy for students.

"I think the professors know the reason

we're here in the summer is because most of the students are just trying to graduate, get married or get out," Johnson said. "I think the professors are more understanding, laid back and in some ways more fun."

Justin Whitaker, a senior kinesiology major, has been in the Corps of Cadets for four years and enjoys the opportunities summer school gives him. Since the Corps is not active during the summer session, Whitaker says his hair is the longest it's been since he graduated high school.

"It (summer school) was different in the fact that I didn't have the structure I was used to," he said. "It was weird not wearing a uniform to class and having facial hair, little things like that I had never experienced."

Summer school also offers a different format than regular semester classes, which Whitaker finds beneficial to his learning style.

"I love summer classes because they're so condensed and it requires me to keep up with my studies daily," Whitaker said. "You don't forget what was taught in lecture, because you keep up with it every day."

As a professor, Johnson finds the every day style of teaching rigorous, but also beneficial for helping students retain information taught in the classroom.

"There's a continuity you can have in summer classes you can't have in the fall or spring," Johnson said. "I tell my advisees to take the courses they hate the most in the summer because day-to-day continuity helps them focus on the material and really learn it. And it's also over quicker."



GRACIE ARENAS • THE BATTALION

Recent college grad finds his niche in booming invitation company

By Teresa M. McAleavy
KRT CAMPUS

Zak Kunish isn't one to turn down invitations.

The guy does, after all, make a living creating exclusive invites for special, high-end occasions, like a baby shower for media mogul Rupert Murdoch's wife, Wendi.

So some folks who know him were surprised when the Wyckoff resident opted to say "Thanks, but no thanks," to joining 2,000 fellow graduates at the podium Wednesday for Fairleigh Dickinson University's commencement ceremony. Until they learned he had business to conduct.

"That's Zak," says Leo Rogers, director of FDU's Entrepreneurial Studies, the program from which Kunish just earned his bachelor of science degree. "He couldn't be here for an awards ceremony Sunday, either, because busi-

ness came first."

But don't pity Kunish for missing the graduation festivities. At 20, he owns and operates ZAK & Co. Inc., a Midland Park-based business that designs original, funky, three-dimensional invitations for select retailers and event planners. As many of his peers graduating throughout the country face one of the toughest job markets in recent decades, Kunish's most pressing concern is continuing to grow a business that he said doubled its sales for 2002 in the first four months of this year.

"I loved my entire college experience and wanted to be there, but it just happens that the biggest industry trade show of the year falls on the same day," Kunish says during a brief break from wooing potential customers during the four-day National Stationery Show at the Jacob K. Javits Center in Manhattan.

After a visit to the trade show a few years ago, Kunish incorporated ZAK & Co. in

September 1999. He had been dabbling in invitation designs since he was 14, and even sold some of his offbeat originals through a local stationery store.

"I always knew I wanted my own business, so I decided to follow my passion," he said.

Kunish plunked down about \$2,500 in savings for start-up capital. Although he declines to say just how much revenue the business has generated, the one full-time and two part-time employees who fill orders that get shipped across the country and to Puerto Rico point to growth. So does operating from a rented 1,250-square-foot studio in Midland Park.

"It's very profitable; I'm very happy," he says with the confidence and purposeful evasiveness of a seasoned chief executive.

The invitations range from about \$8 each to \$90 each, retail, with the average selling somewhere between \$20 and \$30.

"Our invitations are high-end," Kunish says. "We only sell

to select retailers and corporate and private event planners."

Rogers, who heads the entrepreneurial institute, says it's rare, even for those students eyeing eventual ownership, to see one graduate with a profitable business already up and running.

"Most entrepreneurs have an idea but go to work for someone else first," Rogers says. "It's not that common to be out there as an employer at his age."

And if the folks he already does business with have anything to say, Kunish doesn't have much worrying to do at all. In addition to offering the original invitations, Kunish sells tailor-made announcements, place cards, menus, programs and other event accessories to many customers who plan to keep the orders coming.

When she asked him to fill a last-minute order, Bernstein says Kunish delivered it in the middle of the night so she could make an early morning flight to Aruba.



THOMAS FRANKLIN • KRT CAMPUS

Fairleigh-Dickinson University graduate Zak Kunish displays some of his company's products at the National Stationery Show in New York City

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Avril Lavigne's "Sk8er Boi" to become movie

Teen pop-punk sensation Avril Lavigne is going Hollywood: The 18-year-old Canadian singer's high school anthem "Sk8er Boi" will be adapted into a movie about teen rebellion and romance — sort of "Flashdance" meets "Footloose" for the Y Generation.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, Paramount Pictures has optioned the song and signed writer-producer David Zabel, of "ER" and "Dark Angel" fame to adapt its lyrics.

The song, off Lavigne's 2002 CD "Let Go," which sold five million copies, is about a skatepunk boy who falls in love with a high school ballet dancer only to be spurned because the girl fears her friends will not approve of him. Years later she comes to regret her decision, when the skater dude becomes a music star "rockin' up MTV."

No word on whether the waifish Lavigne, a self-proclaimed tomboy and roller-blader, will be featured in the flick.

Lavigne will also be one of a host of Canadian musical acts slated to play a concert in Toronto aimed at convincing

tourists that it's safe to visit Canada despite the SARS outbreak which has claimed 27 lives in the city.

Pageant queen brings lawsuit against Web site

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A judge has ordered the operator of a raunchy Web site to stop posting details of an alleged sexual relationship he had with a former beauty queen who promotes abstinence and sobriety. The temporary order forbids Tucker Max, 27, from "disclosing any stories,

facts or information, notwithstanding its truth, about any intimate or sexual act" involving Katy Johnson, a two-time Miss Vermont who founded a "Sobriety Society" and has a Web site of her own filled with tips on living a virtuous life.

Johnson, 24, acknowledges knowing Max but denies having a sexual relationship with him.

She sued Max last month, arguing that he was using her name and photograph on his Web site to promote his "career as an authority on 'picking up' women."

Max's attorney, John C. Carey, called the order "inconsistent with the free-

dom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution."

Circuit Judge Diana Lewis imposed the order May 6.

John Seigenthaler, the founder of the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University, questioned whether the order will stand. Federal courts have found that the same First Amendment protections that protect newspapers and television should be extended to the Internet, he said.

Max's Web site includes an application for women who want to date him and promotes his book, "The Definitive Book of Pick-Up Lines."

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