

THE BATTALION

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A&M alters immunization requirements

By Justin Smith
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M will no longer block students from registration for not having their measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) or tuberculosis immunizations.

However, TB screening is still required for all international students and students traveling to countries where TB is an endemic.

Students of certain majors, such as health science, are also required by law to fulfill certain immunization require-

ments before they begin working clinical rotations.

"Requiring just (TB and MMR) vaccinations puts an emphasis on those diseases when other diseases are just as bad. Instead, we are now giving students the full menu of vaccinations and letting them make their determination because it is a personal thing," said Dr. Linda Lekawski, director of Student Health Services.

The menu recommends students get vaccinations for MMR, TB, diphtheria and tetanus, varicella for students who

have not had chicken pox, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, pneumonia, meningitis, and influenza.

"We do not require vaccinations for all of these because some are expensive and many students could not afford them all, so how can we block them for that?" Lekawski said. "Most incoming freshman will have had both of their necessary MMR doses, because it is required by most schools, and tetanus is non-communicable."

She said not all students need to take every vaccination, but who are at high

risk, such as those having chronic illnesses such as diabetes, should protect themselves by doing so.

Lekawski said educating students to make informed decisions about their own health is now the priority of Student Health Services.

She said everyone should be aware of these vaccinations and the importance for college-age people to be informed about certain diseases such as hepatitis B, which is sexually transmitted.

A&M is not the only university to

have such a policy. Most colleges in Texas carry the same policy and only a few schools in Texas still have requirements. The University of Texas still requires the two MMR doses and TB screening.

"MMR are easily communicable and can cause birth defects, so mothers are screened as soon as they are found to be pregnant," said Dr. Theresa Spalding, medical director at UT.

For domestic students at UT who do See **Immunization** on page 2

Qatar branch OK'd

By Natalie Younts
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M will open a new campus branch in the Middle Eastern country of Qatar in September.

The campus will be located in Doha, Qatar's capital city, and is the result of a 10-year agreement between A&M and the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for Texas A&M to expand its international presence and to provide educational and research opportunities for our faculty and students," said A&M President Robert M. Gates. "It will foster greater understanding among future leaders in the Middle East and the U.S."

The campus will offer undergraduate degree programs in petroleum, chemical, electrical and mechani-

Degree programs offered at Texas A&M - Qatar

- Petroleum Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

All classes will be taught in English

SOURCE: OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

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cal engineering. All classes will be taught in English.

"The degrees are going to be exactly the same as the degrees here. Same quality, same curriculum," said Dr. David Prior, executive vice president and provost.

Prior said the Qatar campus is an extension of the strength of the Dwight Look College of Engineering, but in a different part of the world where there are great

relevancies to the economic development of Qatar.

"For example, our petroleum engineering degree that will be offered in Qatar relates directly to the petroleum and chemical engineering that is associated with the economic development of the country," he said.

The campus will enroll

See **Qatar** on page 2

Colonize this



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Microbiology graduate student **Brian Cantwell** creates slides of a bacteria colony in a third floor laboratory at the Biology Science Building. The lab studies the behavior of bacteria and how they sense chemicals in their environment.

Chilifest donates funds

By Megan Orton
THE BATTALION

More than \$200,000 was donated to local charities from Chilifest 2003, doubling its endowments from last year.

"Twenty percent of the profits go to alcohol awareness in the community, and the remainder goes to help children," said Todd Gilmore, Chilifest 2003 chairman.

Chilifest has already donated \$105,000 of the \$200,000 and still has \$95,000 left to donate, Gilmore said.

Charities and organizations benefiting

CHILIFEST 2003

Donated \$200,000 to local charities

- MADD
- Burleson County Go Texas Association
- Boys and Girls Club of Brazos Valley
- Snook Lions Club
- Snook Volunteer Fire Department
- Coalition of Alcohol Responsibility and Education
- College Station Morning Lions Club

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SOURCE: 2003 CHILIFEST COMMITTEE

from the chili cook-off include Burleson County Go Texas Association, Boys and Girls Club of the Brazos Valley, Snook Lions Club, Snook Volunteer Fire Department, College Station Morning Lions Club, Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Coalition of Alcohol Responsibility and Education.

Six computers were donated to area high schools for Project Graduation programs and proms, and the Boys and Girls Club of Brazos Valley received funds for educational materials and supplies, Gilmore said.

With the money they received, the Brazos Valley MADD chapter hopes to add more programs to deter students from drinking and driving.

Khris Thurmond, MADD victim's assistant coordinator, said the money donated from Chilifest enabled her to buy new software, a laptop and a scanner.

"I can scan in pictures of victims to tell their story to students during programs," she said.

Additional funds were donated for the MADD "Fake ID" program, in which young celebrities speak to students to discourage drinking and driving. The program consists of videos on a three-screen display and is headed by Vicki Mercer.

"The program encourages kids to examine how they feel about their own identity, and how they really feel about drinking and driving," Thurmond said.

See **Chilifest** on page 2

New Geosciences dean appointed

By Jodi Rogers
THE BATTALION

Dr. Mary Jo Richardson has been appointed by Texas A&M President Robert M. Gates as interim dean of the College of Geosciences.

Richardson is currently leading efforts to continue the integrated ocean-drilling program.

The program involves the efforts of 18 different learning institutions of which A&M is the science operator. The project, funded by the National Science Foundation, conducts basic research on ocean

basins and floors from a scientific drill ship.

Richardson has been the acting dean since August 2002, when Dr. David B. Prior was

appointed interim executive vice president and provost.

"Dr. Richardson has done an outstanding job in providing the College of Geosciences leadership during the

past nine months and we look forward to her continued leadership as

we launch a national search for this deanship," Gates said.

Nancy Sawtelle, director of communications in the office of the executive vice president and provost, said Richardson was chosen because of her experience.

Richardson said she is looking forward to serving in her new position. She said a committee will announce two new faculty endowed chaired positions within the next two weeks.

"That's very exciting because in

See **Dean** on page 2

Arab leaders back Bush's Mideast peace plan

By Tom Raum
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SHARM EL-SHEIK, Egypt — Arab leaders, meeting with President George W. Bush as he plunged into the labyrinth of Mideast peace talks, pledged on Tuesday to fight terror and violence and called on Israel to "rebuild trust and restore normal Palestinian life."

"We will continue to fight the scourge of terrorism against humanity and reject the culture of extremism and violence in any

form or shape — from whatever source or place, regardless of justifications or motives," Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said, reading a statement on behalf of the leaders of Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia — all U.S. allies — and the Palestinian Authority.

"We will use all the power of the law to prevent support reaching illegal organizations including terrorist groups," Mubarak said.

Bush, at the edge of the Red Sea, with Mubarak at his side, said: "We meet in Sinai at a moment of promise for the cause of peace in the

Middle East." Terror threatens the United States, Israel and the emergence of a Palestinian state, he said.

"Terror must be opposed and it must be defeated," Bush said.

Bush, making his first major foray into Middle East peacemaking, made clear that both Arabs and Israelis bear responsibility for achieving peace. "Israel must deal with the settlements," he said. "Israel must make sure there's a continuous territory that the Palestinians can call home."

Tuesday's meeting served as a

prelude to face-to-face talks Wednesday among Bush, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his counterpart, Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, in Jordan.

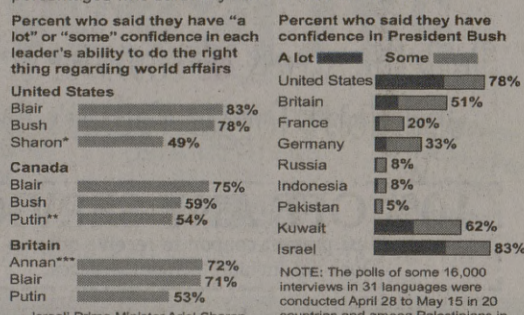
The Arab leaders embraced the internationally crafted "road map" for peace, which calls for an independent Palestinian state by 2005.

"We support the determination of the Palestinian Authority to fulfill its responsibilities to end violence and to restore law and order,"

See **Peace** on page 2

Shaky ground for President Bush

British Prime Minister Tony Blair instills more confidence in the United States than President Bush, according to a recent poll. In addition, those in several major U.S. allies reported only modest percentages who said they have confidence in Bush.



NOTE: The polls of some 16,000 interviews in 31 languages were conducted April 28 to May 15 in 20 countries and among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. They have an error margin of 3 to 4 percent.

SOURCE: Pew Research Center For The People & The Press