



Agriculture recruits Hispanic students

By Michael Player
THE BATTALION

For students enrolled in high schools in the Rio Grande Valley to gain insight into the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, a new outreach program that has been created to increase diversity within the college.

The program, called the Undergraduate Educational Initiative Program, targets students and their parents to inform them why minorities should enroll here.

"We want to destroy the stereotype that agriculture means migrant labor, and I am unaware of any other program that has such an extensive outreach program like ours," said Edward Romero, assistant dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "We have over 25 degree plans here at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and we want

people to know that there is more than just ag production."

According to a state mandated report from the office of Gov. Rick Perry, by the year 2040, 67 percent of college students will be Hispanic and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences wanted to find a way to reach out to this particular group.

"In our Abriendo Puertos (Opening Doors) Program, we can connect with the parents and empower them to support their children's college access and participation efforts," Romero said.

Romero is the co-creator of the initiative program along with Hector Aldape, who is in charge of student recruitment and works in the Valley.

The new program is supported by other programs such as Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS), which is aimed at implementing initiatives and advancements of members of ethnic and minority groups under represented in the field of agriculture.

Last year, the A&M chapter of MANRRS was named national chapter of the year.

"We are really proud of that award because MANRRS is a national organization and it brings us a lot of recognition," said Cindy Garza, the chapter president.

Because of the recognition the college is receiving, last year the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences saw a 14 percent increase in minority enrollment, which is proof that the outreach is paying off, Garza said.

An important program new to the initiative program is the Master Volunteer Program, centered in Hidalgo County. The

Undergraduate Educational Initiative Program

The program was created to increase diversity within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Targets minority students and parents

College saw a 14 percent increase in minority enrollment in the 2002 - 2003 school year

Only program of its kind at Texas A&M



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: EDWARD ROMERO, DEAN OF COALS

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In step



ART WRIGHT • THE BATTALION

Delta Sigma Theta sorority members perform a dance routine in Rudder Auditorium Friday night. The step show was hosted by the MSC Town Hall and the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference.

Step show highlights conference

By Kristin Kemp
THE BATTALION

As more than 600 students gathered on campus for the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference (SBSLC) this weekend to participate in workshops and listen to speakers, Jumoke Babalola said her favorite part of the conference is the variety show performance, which she attends every year.

This year, Babalola, a junior elementary education major, said she was there to support a friend who was performing.

The show on Friday featured performances by representatives from three sororities and one fraternity, as well as poet Amanda Diva, Step Afrika and a hip hop freestyle contest.

Performers from the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Delta Sigma Theta sorority and Sigma Gamma Ro

sorority performed step routines.

"I'm here to support the Delta undergrads stepping tonight," said Daphne Watkins, a Texas A&M Ph.D. student.

Each group included information about its organization and what it represented during its performance.

Poet Amanda Diva portrayed her liberal views in creative rhymes and enlightened the audience on her opinions about various controversial topics.

Step Afrika, the internationally known dance ensemble, put on several step performances and informed the audience about the links the art form of stepping has to its origin in the mines of South Africa.

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'Lord of the Rings' top winner at Golden Globe awards

By Anthony Breznican
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Hobbits ruled the Golden Globes on Sunday as "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" won four trophies including best dramatic film.

"Lost in Translation," a story of two lonely Americans who find friendship in a Tokyo hotel, collected three awards, including best comedy film, best comedy actor for Bill Murray and best screenplay for Sofia Coppola, who

wrote, produced and directed the film. "Rings" master Peter Jackson was recognized as best director, and the film won two musical awards.

"I never realized that seven years on this movie would end up turning me into a Hobbit," Jackson said, referring to the shortish, big-footed magical characters in the J.R.R. Tolkien stories. "To all of the actors, our magical cast, you just gave so much to the movies and equally importantly you made it so much fun to work on."

Among TV nominees, HBO's six-hour adaptation of playwright Tony

Kushner's "Angels in America" won five trophies, including best miniseries or TV movie.

But movies gathered most of the attention as Sean Penn collected best movie drama actor for playing an emotionally ravaged father seeking revenge for his daughter's murder in "Mystic River," and Charlize Theron won the drama actress honor for "Monster," the story of a prostitute serial killer.

Theron thanked writer-director Patty Jenkins for believing she could play the role: "There's only so much you can do, but if somebody doesn't

give you a chance there is nothing you can do."

Murray thanked Coppola and went on to dryly mock Hollywood award speeches, declaring he had fired all his agents and representatives and had no one else to thank.

He also poked fun at the idea that comedy performers are overshadowed by dramatic stars. "Too often we forget our brothers on the other side of the aisle — the dramatic actors," he said. "I'd just like to say: Where would our war, our miseries and our psychological traumas come from?"

Coppola, collecting the best screenplay trophy, thanked her father — "The Godfather" director and co-writer Francis Ford Coppola, calling him "a great screenwriting teacher."

Diane Keaton as an older woman in love in "Something's Gotta Give" collected a Golden Globe for lead comedy performances. "Getting to play a woman to love at 57 is like reaching for the stars with a step ladder. I know I got lucky," said Keaton.

The Hollywood Foreign Press

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Memorial



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Workers unload the integral piece of the Bonfire Memorial early Friday morning. This particular piece of granite is the first of 89 stones to arrive that will be placed on the history walk representing each year that Bonfire was a part of A&M tradition. Each piece of granite is imported to San Antonio from Southern China and then delivered by truck to the memorial site. The Bonfire Memorial is set to open next November, the 5th anniversary of Bonfire collapse.

U.S. rescue helicopter crashes in Tigris River

By Paul Garwood
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TIKRIT, Iraq — A U.S. helicopter crashed in the Tigris river while searching for a missing soldier on Sunday, and the aircraft's two crew members were missing, the military said.

It did not say what caused the crash of the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter, attached to the 101st Airborne Division.

The helicopter was searching for a soldier missing when the boat he was in capsized earlier

Sunday while on patrol. The other three soldiers in boat were safe, but two Iraqi police officers and an Iraqi translator were confirmed killed in the incident, said Maj. Josslyn Aberle, a spokeswoman for the 4th Infantry Division.

She said the search for the two pilots was underway. U.S. troops and Iraqi police sealed off the area and established checkpoints to secure the search and rescue operation.

U.S. troops rushing to the scene came under "limited and ineffective small arms fire," the

spokeswoman said. An Iraqi policeman manning one of the checkpoints was killed in a drive-by shooting, witnesses said.

It was the fifth helicopter crash in Iraq this month — three of them due to hostile fire.

U.S. troops arrested nearly 50 people Sunday in raids in the Sunni Triangle after attacks in the volatile region killed six American soldiers.

Most of the arrests occurred in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, where 46 people were detained in a series of raids, the

U.S. military said. Three were arrested for alleged anti-coalition activities and the rest for illegal weapons possession.

Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division also seized 220 hand grenades in a raid on a house in the town of Mukayshifa, located south of Saddam Hussein's hometown Tikrit, according to spokeswoman Maj. Josslyn Aberle.

The raids in the Sunni heartland followed a series of bombings and attacks Saturday in

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NASA 'flabbergasted' by Mars' unusual rock photos

By Andrew Bridges
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PASADENA, Calif. — NASA's Opportunity rover zipped its first pictures of Mars to Earth on Sunday, delighting and puzzling scientists just hours after the spacecraft bounced to a landing.

The pictures show a surface smooth and dark red in some places, and strewn with fragmented slabs of light bedrock in others. Bounce marks left by the rover's air bags when it landed were clearly visible.

"I am flabbergasted. I am astonished. I am

blown away. Opportunity has touched down in an alien and bizarre landscape," said Steven Squyres, of Cornell University and the mission's main scientist. "I still don't know what we're looking at."

NASA began receiving the first of dozens of black-and-white and color images from Opportunity about four hours after its flawless landing. Mars at the time was 124 million miles from Earth.

Mission members hooted and hollered as the images splashed on a screen in mission control at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger was

there with his wife, Maria Shriver, to watch the drama unfold, and walked through mission control shaking hands with the scientists.

"The pictures just blow me away. We've certainly not been to this place before," deputy project manager Richard Cook said.

Opportunity plunged into the martian atmosphere at more than 12,000 mph and bounced down on Mars just six minutes later, swaddled in protective air bags. It hit with a force estimated to be just two to three times that of Earth's gravity. Engineers had

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