Our Mission

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is devoted to discovering, communicating and applying knowledge in a complex and changing world. The university identifies, attracts and graduates students of high potential, especially those from groups who have been historically under-represented in Texas higher education.

Through a commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi prepares students for lifelong learning and for responsible participation in the global community.
Three years after the University launched its Momentum 2015 campaign of excellence, engagement and expansion, these challenging initiatives are quickly being transformed from concept to reality.

We are proud that Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi now ranks among the state’s top public universities in research. Many of our professors and administrators have earned national recognition for their work through awards and appointments to influential boards and organizations.

Innovative research being conducted by our faculty and students includes measuring toxins in marine sediments, studying the effect of man-made structures on coastal currents and exploring the feasibility of using old oil platforms as deep water reefs to provide habitat for marine creatures vital to the sustainability of the Gulf of Mexico.

A&M-Corpus Christi’s diverse student population gives the campus a distinct international flavor. And as a Hispanic Serving Institution, the University’s Title V and Trio “Opening the Pipeline /Closing the Gaps” program has gained national recognition from the non-profit organization Excelencia in Education for creating a more welcoming ambience for Hispanics on campus, especially those from under-served and first-generation families. With a Hispanic enrollment of 38 percent, our University exceeds the state average of 24 percent.

The University is reaching into the community through the new Preparatory High School which allows Flour Bluff ISD students to earn up to 60 college credit hours that, while focused on the core curriculum at A&M-Corpus Christi, will transfer to many other universities. Our faculty, staff and students engage elementary and middle school students and their parents through their participation in family math and science nights and writing grant proposals that benefit area non-profit agencies.

Our students also continue to bring honor to the University whether they are exploring the deepest Gulf waters, participating in national academic and theatrical competitions or winning NCAA national championships. At the same time, the University is developing and expanding financial aid programs that will allow other talented students to attend our Island University.
Institute Receives $1.5 Million Endowment

The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies has received a $1.5 million endowment to support fellowships for scientists from Mexico and Cuba. The Furgason Fellowships were made possible by a pledge of $1.5 million from the families of philanthropist Edward Harte and attorney Jonathan Hornblower.

Construction booms rising above the campus are testament to the growth A&M-Corpus Christi is experiencing. In early 2010, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences will move into a new $45 million building which will also provide much-needed facilities for our Kinesiology Department. When completed in late 2008, the $21 million Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center will give students, staff and faculty access to top-notch workout facilities and expanded healthy-living programs. And our baseball and softball programs are benefiting from the new facilities at the John O. Chapman complex.

With space on Ward Island at a premium, the City of Corpus Christi’s gift of approximately 137 acres just minutes from campus makes it possible for the University to move some non-academic operations to the new site, ensuring room for additional classroom and laboratory facilities on campus. By doing so, we

### Fund Revenues FY07
($127.5 million)*

### Our Accountability

#### PARTICIPATION
Fall 2006 Enrollment (5-year increase: 16.5%)  
8,584
Fall 2006 Hispanic and African-American Enrollment (5-year increase: 23.4%)  
3,633
Fall 2006 Percent Hispanic and African-American Enrollment  
42.3%

#### SUCCESS
Number of Degrees Awarded in FY06 (5-year increase: 22.4%)  
1,530
Percent of 2005-06 Degrees Awarded to Hispanic and African-American Students  
38.2%

#### EXCELLENCE
Pass Rate on Nursing Licensing Exam  
100%
Teacher Certification Exam Pass Rate  
97%

#### RESEARCH
FY07 Sponsored Research Expenditures  
$19,829,822

#### EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS
Administrative Cost as a Percent of Operating Budget  
8.9%
FY06 HUB Vendor Expenditures (5-year increase: 41.0%)  
$3,278,000

*Tuition discounts ($7.4 million) removed for the purpose of this illustration.
will be able meet the needs of our growing student population which could eventually reach 16,000, thanks to the city’s gift.

In 2007, the University continued to experience financial growth with $127.5 million in revenues and $116.4 million in expenditures. Our Office of Graduate Studies and Research experienced a record year in both submitted proposals and dollar amount awarded. Around half of the 193 proposals submitted were funded, bringing in approximately $19.8 million, an increase of almost $7 million over the previous year.

The University’s commitment to growth and quality has indeed brought us a long way. But, for us to truly make the vision of Momentum 2015 a reality, we must invest financial and human resources while continually recommitting ourselves to excellence on our campus, within our state, country and throughout the world.

**Expenditures FY07**

($116.4 million)*

- Benefits $13.0
- Utilities $3.4
- Operations and Maintenance $24.1
- RFS Debt Service $10.0
- Transfers to SAGO $10.0
- Scholarships $17.2
- Salary and Wages $55.4
- Other Non Operating Expenses $.5

*Scholarship discounts ($7.4 million) removed for the purpose of this illustration.

**Islanders Take Honors**

A project created by a team of students from the College of Education took third place at the 11th annual NASA Pre-Service Teacher Conference. The project titled “Get in Motion to Save Our Ocean: Break Free from Ocean Debris” will be featured on the NASA Web site.

The University’s stage production of “Bloody Poetry,” a fictional drama by British playwright Howard Brenton about Romantic Age poets Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, received five commendations from the 2007 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF). In April 2008, three students from the University’s theatre program received national recognition at the KCACTF held in Washington, D.C.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi advanced to the quarter-finals of the Intercollegiate 2008 National Ethics Bowl Competition. A&M-Corpus Christi has competed in 10 consecutive National Ethics Bowls, winning four regional titles, a national championship and finishing in the top 10 four times.
University Receives 137-Acre Gift from City of Corpus Christi for Expansion

A gift of around 137 acres from the City of Corpus Christi will give the Island University the opportunity to almost double its enrollment to approximately 16,000 students by concentrating academic activities on the island and shifting other units to the newly-acquired site.

The city’s donation includes about 96 acres surrounding the water treatment plant west of Nile Drive and 41 acres of South Guth Park on Ennis Joslin Road. The land will be used for non-academic facilities such as athletics, student housing, a physical plant and remote parking, which will create space for expansion of academics at the University campus on Ward Island.

Campus expansion studies have shown that the 240-acre Ward Island site will support around 10,000 students. The recent level of campus growth indicates that this capacity will be reached within a few years. Because of this gift, as the campus expands, the University will be able to preserve its unique setting while providing faculty with support and capital resources for the expansion of existing programs.

The University has experienced phenomenal growth since opening its doors in 1947 as a small Baptist college. Today, the University, which joined The Texas A&M University System in 1989, has approximately 8,600 students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in five colleges.

New Degree Programs on Campus

A new Master of Science in Kinesiology program is addressing the needs of students who require an advanced degree to have a competitive edge in the job market. Under the 36-hour program, students choose between a thesis or non-thesis degree.

A master’s program in Geospatial Engineering offers a unique academic approach to geospatial problems by using a scientific approach for developing and building new systems and methods. The degree includes 25 semester hours of course work, three semester hours of thesis proposal and nine semester hours of thesis research.

A new interdisciplinary program allows students to earn master’s and doctoral degrees in marine biology. The program, the first in any university adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico, is designed to attract students interested in marine biology and prepare them for careers in higher education, government, and private industry.

The Bachelor of Applied Sciences program provides multiple career tracks for students with vocational-technical training and for graduates of an associate in applied sciences program. This program requires completion of 120 semester hours and ensures that the student has the essential courses needed to pursue a specific career.
Joining University President Flavius Killebrew at the groundbreaking are (left to right) Texas Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, State Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa, Texas A&M System Board Chairman Bill Jones and A&M System Chancellor Michael D. McKinney.

**State Officials Help Break Ground for New Campus Building**

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst and State Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa were guest speakers at the groundbreaking for the University’s $45 million, 140,000-square-foot building that will include space for the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the University’s Kinesiology Department.

Among the ceremonial dignitaries attending were A&M System Chancellor Michael D. McKinney, A&M System Board of Regents Chairman Bill Jones, Regent John White and State Reps. Abel Herrero, Juan Garcia and Solomon Ortiz Jr.

The well-documented shortage of nurses makes construction of the building extremely urgent. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the University’s fastest-growing college, is currently located in several buildings on campus. In four years, it has grown from 400 students to more than 1,250 and is projected to enroll 1,400 nursing majors by 2010.

The building will allow for growth and development of new programs and expansion of existing nursing programs. The new nursing facilities will consist of offices, various-sized classrooms, computer labs, a simulated hospital ward, patient simulator laboratories, and other specialized research spaces.

The kinesiology area will include classrooms, computer labs, a gymnasium, large meeting areas, cardiovascular training space and specialized labs for exercise physiology, biomechanics, and motor evaluation and development.

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**Wellness Center Named**

The new wellness center under construction on campus will bear the name of the donors whose $1 million gift seeded the financing of the $21 million health and recreation facility.

When it opens in fall 2008, the “Dr. Jack and Susie Dugan Wellness Center” will meet the needs of students, faculty and staff and serve as an enticement for future students considering attending the Island University. Construction was made possible by a $1 million private gift from Dr. Dugan and his family, who are longtime contributors to the University. The remaining construction costs will be financed by student fees.

Approximately $17.5 million will finance construction of the wellness center. An additional $3.5 million in University funds will be used for construction of a partial third floor that will house a new emergency operations center.

The 67,000-square foot complex will include two regulation NCAA basketball courts, weight and cardio areas, group exercise rooms and locker rooms—including two for those with special needs. Other support areas include laundry facilities, offices for Athletics and Recreational Sports personnel and public restrooms near the entrance to the building.

The University’s existing facilities at the Glasscock Fitness and Wellness Center were built in the 1960s for an enrollment of 800 students. With 8,600 students, as well as faculty and staff on campus in 2007, the current facilities cannot meet the needs of all those desiring to use them.

Alumnus Woo Sung Lee donated funds to build the “Woo Sung Lee Alumni/Welcome Center” to house alumni relations and University advancement functions. Lee, a 1959 graduate of the University of Corpus Christi, turned one fast-food establishment into a highly-successful chain of “Boat-N-Net” Restaurants.
60th Anniversary of American GI Forum

The University’s Clearinghouse for Mexican-American Research (CMAR) and the American GI Forum (AGIF) presented “Looking Backward, Looking Forward: Celebrating Dr. Hector P. Garcia and 60 Years of American GI Forum Activism” when leading Mexican-American scholars from around the nation observed the 60th anniversary of the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi.

University presenters were Dr. Patrick Carroll, author of “Felix Longoria’s Wake: Bereavement, Racism and the Rise of Mexican American Activism;” Dr. Tom Kreneck, author of “Mexican American Odyssey: Felix Tijerina, Entrepreneur and Civic Leader 1905-1965;” and Dr. Anthony Quiroz whose book “Claiming Citizenship: Mexican-Americans in Victoria, Texas” received the Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.

Resource for Funding, Scholarships

The Clearinghouse for Mexican-American Research was established in October 2006 to generate external funding for faculty and graduate student research. The clearinghouse also works to provide scholarship opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students and to promote interaction between the University and the broader community.

Garcia Center Provides L.E.A.D. Program

The Antonio E. Garcia Arts & Education Center provides the Life Enhancement & Academic Direction (L.E.A.D.) program, which is staffed by College of Education graduate students. The program focuses on self-efficacy through academic success and vocational awareness, family connectivity, and healthy interaction through drug and alcohol prevention and intervention.

The Pollution Prevention Partnership has been honored as a “Blue Skyways Partner” by the Environmental Protection Agency for its AutoCheck Program that quickly identifies vehicles that are discharging harmful pollutants into the air and schedules them for repairs, typically at no cost to the owner.

In the Arts

Jack Gron, a professor of sculpture and art department chair, heads the Mobile Foundry Project which presents hands-on aluminum casting workshops that introduce students in kindergarten through high school to art processes not usually available in the classroom.

The Furgason Bravo! Series, which has featured Michael Martin Murphey’s sold-out “Cowboy Christmas” holiday concert for the past three years, brings internationally-known performers to the Performing Arts Center. Former University President Robert Furgason and his wife, Gloria, led the fundraising drive to build the $18 million entertainment venue.

The annual “Heart Gallery of South Texas” highlights children who are challenging to place because of their age or because they are part of a sibling group. The exhibition is a collaborative project between the College of Liberal Arts, Community Outreach and various adoption agencies.
Fifth-grade students from the West Oso Independent School District learned about conducting restaurant inspections and crime scene investigations during the 2008 Science Rules! Exposition. The interactive learning experience is designed to stimulate interest in subjects ranging from chemistry to mathematics using hands-on activities.

Pre-service teachers in the University’s Engaging Hispanic Parents in Mathematics and Science Program participate in three Family Sciences Nights each semester at different schools throughout local districts. The program, aimed at elementary and middle school students, is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

Math Nights Get Families Involved
Throughout the year, the Council of Teachers of Mathematics holds Family Math Nights to engage young students and their families in exciting hands-on mathematical investigations. At each activity station, families participate in exercises that involve problem solving, logic and spatial reasoning.

Prep school teacher Tracy Erickson works with Flour Bluff High School sophomore Julie Chapman.

**Students on College Fast Track**

Approximately 180 freshman and sophomores from Flour Bluff High School are on the fast track to a college education by earning up to 60 tuition-free college credit hours through the University’s Preparatory High School.

Just one year into the program students are responding to the challenge of adding college preparatory courses to their already heavy load of high school classes by reading up to 600 pages independently every six weeks and keeping abreast of current events. Although the main focus is on the core curriculum at A&M-Corpus Christi, classes transfer to many other universities.

The Preparatory High School, which will add 100 students a year until a maximum of 400 is reached, targets first-generation students for whom the cost of college would be prohibitive, English language learners, and students who come from underrepresented demographics for college completion.

The program creates a seamless pipeline between high school and college with a strong emphasis on reading, writing and math. While freshmen course work is mostly college prep and reading intensive, sophomores concentrate on the core curriculum of math, science, social studies and English with opportunities to earn dual credit in fine arts, Spanish and communication application.

**Professor Recognized for Work with Food Bank**

Dr. Charles Etheridge, associate professor of English, received the 2007 Bill Crook Award for his work on behalf of the Food Bank of Corpus Christi. Since 2005, Etheridge and his students have written successful grant applications totaling more than $270,000 for the food bank.
An analysis of water specimens from Oso Bay collected in Dr. David McKee’s marine ecology classes over the last 19 years has given one of the most underappreciated bodies of water along the Texas Gulf Coast a clean bill of health.

Each year, the marine ecology class conducts a study of Oso Bay to determine the presence and abundance of large and small fish and invertebrates. The students also measure water quality. Students are required to write an extensive research paper to describe the collections made and to compare this year with the previous studies.

The Oso Bay is an important nursery area for many species of fish, crabs and shrimp, much which would not survive long enough to develop and move into open waters without its protection. Monitoring is essential because three sewage plants discharge their treated water into the bay.

Prior to the construction of the Barney Davis power plant in 1976, waters from the upper Laguna Madre to Oso Bay suffered from a lack of oxygen due to stagnation. But as the power plant takes in and discharges water to cool its pumps, circulation is increased, which leads to more plant growth where young fish, crabs and shrimp can survive until they reach maturity.
Pulse!! The Virtual Clinical Learning Lab, that uses videogame technologies for the serious business of medical education, is in its fourth year of development at the University. So far, the project has received more than $12 million in federal grants through the Office of Naval Research. The Texas A&M Board of Regents recognized the significance of this remarkable program in 2007 by creating the University’s Center for Virtual Medical Education, with Pulse!! as its signature project.

Pulse!! is the first research and development project designed to measure whether high-level learning occurs in virtual reality created by computer technology. The project was conceived and is overseen by Dr. Claudia L. McDonald, the University’s associate vice president for special projects. An international team of subject-matter experts is developing the Pulse!! cases hand-in-hand with a top-flight commercial producer of virtual-world simulators.

Research results so far in system design, learning features, usability and preliminary training effectiveness have yielded positive responses from medical students and physicians at Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Conn.; The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, Md.; and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. Cases developed in 2008 include procedures for battlefield first-responders and anthrax cases resulting from urban terrorism.

Dr. Jim Needham, dean of the Department of Community Outreach, and Dr. David McKee, professor of biology and mariculture, have been named winners of the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation’s (CBBF) Conservation and Environmental Stewardship Awards. Needham, who received the Public Awareness Award, was recognized for raising Texans’ public awareness about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend. McKee, who received the Higher Education Award, was recognized for his dedication and effectiveness in educating Texans about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

Taking the Pulse!!

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Hazardous Waters

Study Finds Man-Made Structures Create Dangerous Conditions for Swimmers

Rip currents along the South Texas coast can be extremely dangerous for swimmers, particularly during storms and cold fronts and near man-made structures, according to Dr. Philippe Tissot, an assistant professor of physics and physical sciences.

While rip currents can be particularly strong during storms and frontal passages, the study emphasized the important role of man-made structures for the onset of rip currents and found that they may have as much to do with piers and jetties as meteorological conditions. His findings were published in "Texas Shores," a publication of the Texas Sea Grant College Program.

Rip currents, which are sometimes confused with rip tides or undertows, are seaward moving currents which, after being pushed ashore, retreat along the path of the least resistance, especially in areas where the strength of the waves has been weakened by jetties, piers, natural reefs and even large numbers of swimmers.

Rip currents are recognized by the National Weather Service as the leading surf hazard for beach-goers. Tissot, whose study included data on more than 160 cases of drowning and near-drowning on Nueces County and Cameron County beaches since 1983, stressed that other factors are likely very important for the prospect of swimmers finding themselves in distress.

Dr. Gary Jeffress, director of the Conrad Blucher Institute, and James Rizzo, research specialist III in the Division of Nearshore Research, have been awarded a three-year $445,504 contract for the installation, maintenance, repair, and management of Mobile Bay Physical Oceanographic Real Time Systems (PORTS) along the Gulf Coast. PORTS promotes navigation safety, improvement of the efficiency of U.S. ports and harbors the protection of coastal marine resources.

Dr. Phillip McEndree, associate professor of special services, has been awarded Texas Education Agency grants totaling $480,000 to improve professional development programs related to careers involving agriculture ($330,000); professional development for career and technical education ($60,000); and professional development for career and technical education administrators and counselors ($90,000).
Dr. Marion Nipper, a senior research scientist at the Center for Coastal Studies, spent three weeks in September 2007 at Estación de Ciencias Mariñas de Vigo University of Vigo, Spain, working with faculty and graduate students as a member of the Fulbright Senior Specialists Program.

**Measuring Health in Marine Sediments**

Dr. Marion Nipper, a senior research scientist with the University’s Center for Coastal Studies, has received a $275,000 grant to develop the Sediment Profile Imaging and Micro-Sampling System, a tool to measure the health of marine sediments.

The grant is part of a national initiative to insure the cleanliness and health of the United States’ coastlines. The approximately 3-by-3-foot instrument weighs around 400 pounds and contains a camera that sends real-time data back to scientists aboard ship.

Gathering data is important because any changes in chemical composition, temperature or salinity, affect animals and plants, and have a major economic impact on areas with fisheries or recreational areas that depend on healthy water. Even changes that destroy organisms on the low end of the food web can be extremely dangerous because without them, fish, shrimp lobster and other sea creatures harvested as food would desert the waters. Those that do remain, such as clams and scallops, absorb heavy metals and carcinogens, making them dangerous for human consumption.

The submergible tool will also help cut the cost of cleaning up polluted coastal waters by identifying the boundaries of contaminated sites so the negative impacts of dredging can be reduced.
Dr. Greg Stunz, a professor with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, and Science and Technology Professor Deborah Overath, have received a $100,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to conduct genetics studies on fisheries. The grant will allow them to assess the efficacy of hatchery reared fish in replenishing overfished stocks such as spotted sea trout and their contribution to adult populations and the ecology of estuaries.

A database developed by researchers from the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies earned first place in the Bi-National category of the 2006 Gulf Guardian Awards. The awards, sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency, honor outstanding projects related to the conservation of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology received the Dr. Robert Frank Outstanding Counselor Education Program Award from the Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors. The award is named after Northern Iowa University Professor Robert Frank in recognition of his work in program development and accreditation.

Brien A. Nicolau, assistant director of operations/research associate, and Erin M. Hill, research specialist II, both with the Center for Coastal Studies, have been awarded $159,959 from the City of Corpus Christi to continue Rincon Bayou Diversion Project-Biological Monitoring 2007-2008 in the Nueces Delta.

Dr. Kim Withers, associate research scientist with the Center for Coastal Studies, has been awarded $113,383 from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for field sampling and benthic invertebrate analysis for the 2007 Texas Coastal Assessment Program.
**SHIPWRECKED**

Recently discovered remains of ships sunk in the Gulf of Mexico during WWII are revealing information about the viability of using old oil rig platforms as deep-water reefs while yielding vital new information about life in the Gulf of Mexico.

Dr. Thomas Shirley, endowed chair for biodiversity for conservation science for the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, was part of an international team of biologists and archeologists who studied the sites of six shipwrecks. Shirley, one of a group of multidisciplinary explorers assembled by the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) after the ruins were discovered during a pre-drilling survey for a major oil company, was honored by the NOPP for his part in the study. Scientists from the Mineral Management Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration focused on the potential of deep water oil and gas structures to create suitable habitat for marine life.

Shirley’s study of deep water habitats is also crucial to the 50-year update of “Bulletin 89: The Gulf of Mexico—Its Origin, Waters, and Marine Life” compiled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1954. When completed, the update will make the Gulf of Mexico one of the most extensively studied bodies of water in the world.

Dr. Marsha Grace, a professor in the College of Education, has received the Literacy Award from the Texas State Reading Association (TSRA) for her outstanding contributions to the promotion of reading. Grace designed a tutoring program for children that encourages life-long learning and the love of reading and writing.

Kelly Russell, an assistant professor in the College of Liberal Arts, has been named president-elect of the Texas Educational Theatre Association. He will hold the position through 2008 then serve as the organization’s president for an additional two years.

Dr. Patricia Hill, director of the University's Academic Advising Transition Center, has received the Student Research Award from the National Academic Advising Association for her research on the influence of E-mentoring on first-year students to adjust to University life.

Dr. Wes Tunnell, associate director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, has been named a Fellow National in the Explorers Club. The Club founded in 1904 has included internationally-acclaimed explorers and conservationists Teddy Roosevelt, Richard Byrd, Jane Goodall, Edmund Hilary, Sylvia Earle and Thor Heyerdahl.
With Honors

Newman Wong Named ‘Honors Student of the Year’

Sociology major and first-generation student Newman Wong has been recognized as Honors Student of the Year for 2007 by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC).

Wong, a native of Hong Kong, was honored for his volunteer work, academic achievement and leadership qualities. Wong has donated his time to non-profit agencies such as the American Heart Association and Corpus Christi Metro Ministries where last spring he worked 100 hours as a receptionist and food server while helping to raise $2,000 for the homeless shelter.

On campus, Wong served as a Student Government Association senator, vice-president of the Phi Theta Kappa Alumni Association and president and founder of the South and East Asian Student Association.

The NCHC serves more than 700 American colleges and universities, promotes and advances honors and similar educational programs at more than 700 American colleges and universities. The Honors Student of the Year Award, the only NCHC award designed, judged and presented by fellow honors students, is presented to one honors student who has made an impact on his or her honors program, and who has participated in honors on a regional and/or national level.

The U.S. Army ROTC marked a new era when the Islander Battalion was activated in September 2006. ROTC training began at the University in 1978 and, for 28 years, the ROTC program was a partner with Texas A&M University-Kingsville as the Javelina Battalion’s Charlie Company.

Student Briefs

Eliana Razo and Cristal Renteria, the University’s first McNair Scholars, presented a paper on second generation college students from Mexico at the Georgetown University Round Table in Washington, D.C. The post-baccalaureate achievement program provides first-generation, low-income minority college students with internships and mentoring in preparation for graduate programs.

The “Students Today … NASA Tomorrow” team presented its interactive lesson plans for middle school students at the NASA Means Business competition at the Kennedy Space Center in May 2007. The program includes lesson downloads and videos to help teachers promote the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program.

Qualified full-time students pursuing their bachelor’s degree will benefit from an $80,000 grant from the Greater Texas Foundation for the Removing Educational Barriers scholarship endowment. Awardees must have a cumulative 3.0 grade point average, be permanent Texas residents, and demonstrate financial need. The non-profit organization awarded an initial grant of $20,000 in March 2007. Both grants have been matched by the University, bringing the total scholarship endowment to $200,000.
Environmental science major Adriana Leiva journeyed to the deepest, darkest depths of the Gulf of Mexico during a 28-day mission to the “Deep Slope” aboard the RV/Atlantis in May 2006.

The first systematic exploration of waters deeper than 1,000 meters in the Gulf, included scientists who have led the exploration, discovery, and study of the Gulf of Mexico cold seeps for the last 20 years. Leiva took part in the expedition through an internship with her mentor Dr. Ian MacDonald, a professor with the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.

Adriana descended to the “Deep Slope” in the “Alvin,” a three-person submersible that took her, the pilot and a port observer on a seven-hour dive more than 2,200 meters below the ocean surface. When she returned to the Atlantis, she was drenched with buckets of ice water by her shipmates, a ritual suffered by all after making their first deep-sea journey.
University Receives Largest Single Private Gift for Scholarships

Lawrence Atkins, who owned and operated his own specialty advertising firm for almost 40 years until his death in July 2006, bequeathed more than $5 million to A&M-Corpus Christi, the largest single private gift given toward scholarships in the history of the University.

Atkins’ gift creates a new level in the University’s prestigious Presidential Scholarship program that supports the best and brightest students. The new level adds 15 new students a year to the program, who each will get $3,000 a year for four years. After four years, there will be 60 students being served at this level.

In addition, funds from the Atkins’ gift will create the Islander Scholars program, supporting eight new students a year who will each get $2,500 a year for four years. This brings to 32 the number of students supported by this program after the first four years.

Atkins was a native of Alice who attended North Texas Agricultural College in Arlington before joining the military and serving in the Pacific during World War II. After leaving the military in 1946, Atkins worked for Humble Pipeline in various capacities until 1968 when he established Atkins Advertising and Associates.

During his career, Atkins served on the board of the Southwest Advertising Association and was a member of the Advertising Specialty Institute and the Promotional Products Association International. He was also active in the Texas Cattlemen’s Association and Beefmaster Breeders United.

Title V/TRIO Program Recognized by Excelencia in Education

The “Opening the Pipeline/Closing the Gaps” program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has been recognized by the national non-profit organization Excelencia in Education. The Title V/Trio program was one of the top 10 programs among 90 considered for this distinction from across the country.

The National Science Foundation has awarded Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi a five-year, $999,988 grant to increase the number of students who graduate with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degrees. The “Recruitment, Retention, and Success in Science” (R²S²) proposal was one of only 15 funded from the 141 reviewed.

More than 100 fraternity and sorority members cleaned some of the city’s worst graffiti-tagged fences, buildings and businesses April 13 during a Greek-Fitti Cover Up! The public service project was coordinated by the University’s Greek Week committee and the Corpus Christi Police Department’s Graffiti Task Force.
ISLANDERS JOIN CONFERENCE

The Islander athletics program took a giant step with admission as a full member into the Southland Conference. The Conference consists of 11 member universities in Texas and Louisiana including Lamar, Sam Houston State, Stephen F. Austin, Texas State, the University of Texas at Arlington, the University of Texas at San Antonio, McNeese State, Nicholls State, Northwestern State, and Southeastern Louisiana.

The Islander men’s basketball team won the Southland Conference title in its first season with a 14-2 record then swept the postseason tournament to earn an automatic bid to the 2007 NCAA Tournament. A&M-Corpus Christi was the only Texas school to win both its conference title and tournament. For the first time in school history the Islanders received votes in the Associated Press Top-25 Poll.

Songok Captures Second National Title at Indoor Track Championships

Distance runner Shadrack Songok crossed the finish line just two seconds ahead of his nearest competitor to win the 5,000-meter run with a time of 13:52.26 at the 2008 NCAA Indoor Track Championships in Fayetteville, Ark., in March.

With the victory, Songok, the most accomplished athlete since the Islander athletic program was reinstated in 1997, claimed his second national championship. He won the school’s first national title in 2007, winning the 10,000-meter run at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

LONG-TIME UNIVERSITY SUPPORTERS FINANCE CONSTRUCTION OF PRESS BOX FACILITY

The Islander baseball and softball complex has been named John O. Chapman field as a tribute to the long-time University supporter and avid sports fan. A generous donation from Chapman and his wife, Louise, financed construction of a new press box facility for the complex.