I get a bit sentimental this time of year. Commencement is a great celebration for our graduates and their families and friends, but it is tough in many ways too. Tough because young people with whom we have walked life’s journey leave this place to fulfill God’s call on their lives. It’s not that commencement is negative. It is just one of those days when you act as though you are totally 100 percent glad this day has come, when the fact of the matter is that one is going to Dallas, another is going to California, and another is going to Russia, and the deeper the bond, the more painful the absence.

We say farewell, hoping that God will keep them close and knowing that in our hearts we will as well.

Standing at Ring Out a couple of weeks ago, I was overwhelmed looking at the faces of students who are so dear, hearing the music sung for 81 years on the lawn in Burleson Quadrangle. It’s enough to make you love Baylor (or love it even more)! Let me then share the words from “Baylor Blessing,” one of those songs sung with the hope that the words will encourage and inspire you about all we have done this year in this place.

Towers in the Texas sky.
Lifting heart and mind and soul;
Brazos River flowing by,
As the centuries unfold to eternity.

God in heaven bless this place.
Accept our praise and hear our prayer,
For the friendship of these days,
Give their presence, joy, and care through eternity.
DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE
AWARD SELECTIONS FOR 2008

On May 6, during the 2007-08 End of Year Celebration for the Student Life Division, recognitions for outstanding service to our Division were made and awards were announced. Congratulations to each of you; and thank you for your outstanding service to Baylor and its students.

The recipients were:

Jim Broaddus — Pillar of Baylor Award
Joann Black — William Tryon Award for Outstanding Support Staff
Matt Fulmer — James Huckins Award for Outstanding Graduate Assistant
Van Smith-Davis — Customer Service Award
Keane Tarbell — Rising Star Award for Outstanding New Professional
Team Award — Team Body IQ

Van Davis, Facilitator and Sandra Northern, Co-Facilitator
Randy Boldt, Tam Dunn, Karen Hall, Lisa MacMaster,
Sarah Newton, Lydia Stones, Cynthia Wall

Kelly Mobley — Outstanding Student Assistant Award
Thomas S. Hibbs — Outstanding Faculty Partner Award
Rishi Sriram — To Light the Ways Award for Contributions to the Profession
Karla Leeper — Student Advocate
THE ALCOHOL WORK TEAM AT DIADELOSO

The Alcohol Work Team had a booth at Diadeloso this year; students were given informational brochures regarding alcohol and other drugs, invited to drive a golf cart while wearing intoxication goggles (with a shot at getting a Dia T-shirt if they knocked down three or fewer traffic cones), and take field sobriety tests with a Baylor Police officer. A representative from Hillcrest Hospital (Daniel Donaldson) partnered with the Work Team this year and talked with students about the effects and dangers of underage drinking throughout the day. About 250 students took the Golf Cart Challenge and an additional 150 students took the field sobriety tests. No fatalities were reported; however, we did have one underage driver take out an entire wall of snow fencing! We are withholding the name of his father, but he does teach in the Business School. Chief Doak commented, “the fun factor is high and the educational factor is high, which is always a winning combination.” Many thanks to Chief Jim Doak and Warren Ricks for their support of this program.

MISSION TRIP DESTINATIONS, PARTICIPANTS, AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Rwanda—The General Ministry Team, Social Work Team, Religion Team, and Youth Sports Team will all be working with various ministries in schools, churches, and NGOs in and around Kigali. Staff and Faculty going includes Maxey Parrish, LeAnn Gardner, Jon Singletary, Kim Scott, Rebecca Kennedy.

Ghana—The Collins Team will be working with various ministries in schools and churches in and around Tema and then in Kumasi and Sunyani. Staff going includes Karen Hall, Ryan Richardson, seminary intern Vincent Asamoah, resident chaplain Marquette Bugg.

Pray for safe travel and safety in country. Pray for the students and team leaders as they serve others each day – that they might not only touch lives but their own lives be touched as well. Pray for those that are gracious enough to be assisting our teams while in country. Pray for good health and smart choices. Pray that students will come back with an understanding that the world is bigger than they are and God is bigger than they ever thought possible.

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY
2008 ORIENTATION DATES
Summer I Session, June 2
Transfer Sessions, June 10-11 and June 23
Freshman Sessions
Fall Freshman Session 1, June 11-12
Fall Freshman Session 2, June 12-13
Fall Freshman Session 3, June 16-17
Fall Freshman Session 4, June 17-18
Fall Freshman Session 5, June 18-19
Fall Freshman Session 6, June 19-20
Fall Freshman Session 7, June 23-24
Fall Freshman Session 8, June 24-25
Fall Freshman Session 9, June 25-26
Fall Freshman Session 10, June 26-27
Summer II Session, July 9
August Session, August 20

ABOUT 250 STUDENTS TOOK THE GOLF CART CHALLENGE AND AN ADDITIONAL 150 STUDENTS TOOK THE FIELD SOBRIETY TESTS.
GRADUATE ASSISTANTS HOODING DINNER

Congratulations to the graduate students of the Master of Science in Student Affairs Administration Program! In honor of the 2008 graduates, Student Life hosted a dinner and Hooding Ceremony on Friday, May 16, at the Hughes Dillard Alumni Center. We are thankful for all the hard work and contributions they made during their time in the program and wish them the best as they begin the next chapter of their lives.

2008 Graduates of the Master of Science in Student Affairs Administration Program

Carrie Anderson  Ashley McCafferty
Kristen Balderas  Jennifer Perkins
Candice Bullard  Tiffani Riggers
Matt Fulmer  Trinity Robb
Melissa Gruver  Katie Robertson
Lyndsy Henkelmann  Britanny Temple
Tasha Lee  Katie Treadwell
Kali Lucas  Heather Turner
Jonathan Manz  Kathryn Wheatley

ALIVE CAMPAIGN
Alaska Bike Ride

Five Baylor students started a 4,500-mile bicycle trip to Anchorage, Alaska, on Thursday, May 15. The trip was inspired by a friend who tried to kill himself because he said he had nothing to live for. His five friends vowed if 250,000 people joined a Facebook group promoting suicide prevention, they would give him a reason to live. Two weeks later, they reached the 250,000 mark and by a month's time it grew to 300,000. The ride, dubbed the Alive Campaign, is sponsored by Ford, and supported by Baylor University's Student Life Services Department.

Dr. Susan Matlock-Hetzel worked closely with the students assisting them in learning about the topic of suicide to be better informed advocates. The students have taken Baylor’s QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Certified Gatekeeper Training Course on suicide prevention on how to question someone about their suicidal thoughts, communications, or behaviors, how to persuade someone to stay alive and get help, and how and where to refer someone at-risk to the next level of intervention. As a non-profit organization, the Alive Campaign hopes to establish a university chapter system to foster a peer support community and to continue spreading awareness and education locally, especially among high school and college campuses.

The journey is expected to take all summer. The students will stay with Baylor alumni along the way. They will document and update their journey on their Internet site. [Click Here For Web Site]

GREETER INFORMATION

We are quickly approaching one of the most important times in a student’s career at Baylor: The time they begin the transition from life as high school students where everything is known to life as college freshmen where everything is unknown. National research has shown students are more likely to graduate from the same institution they enter if they can develop a strong sense of belonging during the initial transition to the university. Those of us in Student Life have the opportunity to play a central role in helping with that transition by becoming involved as a Baylor Greeter. Baylor Greeters provide an initial contact with each incoming student during the summer months. Because of the success of the effort in previous years, we are again inviting you to serve as greeters for students who will be entering in the fall.

Here is what will be asked of you:

Send an e-mail during June to 20-30 incoming students who will be assigned to you;
Hand write a note of welcome during July;
Call each student in August to answer any last minute questions they may have; and
Serve as a resource person for them to call during the summer.

Your commitment ends when Welcome Week begins. This is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our students. Please don’t think that because you don’t work directly with students each day that you may not have much to offer. We all long to find a place to belong. You may be that place for an entering student.

To sign up, please e-mail Martha Lou Scott at Martha.Lou Scott@baylor.edu and let her know of your interest. If you would like a specific group of students based on area of study, classification as a transfer, or hometown or state, please share that with Martha Lou.

Professional Development/Presentations

Jim Marsh attended the TUCCDA (Texas University and College Counseling Directors Association) annual conference this past week. He assumed the role of President for the organization at the conclusion of the conference and will serve as president for the coming year.

FAMILY CORNER

Tori Watson, a graduate student serving as an assistant in Outdoor Adventure, has been named the Outstanding Sport Management Student for 2008. Of all the sport management faculty who voted, she was the only one named on all the ballot. What a great accomplishment Tori. Congratulations.

Congratulations to Dr. Dave Rozeboom who successfully defended his dissertation and will graduate in August with his Ph.D. from Texas A&M. We are happy for you, Dave!

Student Life Web Site