

# THE BAYLOR LARIAT

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## OPINION PAGE 2

*“Cornell is an example from which every university in the nation can draw inspiration. ...Cornell should be praised for its actions and the precedent that it has set in response to these terrible tragedies is an important one for Baylor to follow.”*

## SPORTS PAGE 5

*Nation’s Best Players*  
Women’s tennis enjoyed the No. 1 spot in America, stays consistently competitive

# Jury awards family nearly \$22 million

## Driver found guilty of gross negligence in death of BU student

By HOGAN ALLCORN  
REPORTER

A Robertson County jury awarded \$21,825,000 on March 17 to the family of a Baylor student who was killed in a car accident over the 2007 Thanksgiving break.

On Nov. 25, 2007, Megan Small, a 21 year-old Baylor senior at the time of her death, was driving north on Highway 6 from her home in Houston.

Jason Reed Vestal, a 20-year-old A&M student at the time, was driving south on Highway 6 when his pickup truck crossed over the center line divider and hit Small’s Camaro head-on.

Small died instantly while Vestal was taken to St. Joseph Regional Health Center in Bryan and in critical condition.

Vestal’s cell phone use while driving is suspected to be the main contributing cause of the accident.

According to a press release from the plaintiff’s attorney, Vestal claimed in a sworn interrogation that he was not in possession of his cell phone at the time of the incident. However, mobile telephone records subpoenaed from AT&T by the plaintiff’s counsel presented evidence that showed Vestal sent and/or received 15 text messages

and placed seven phone calls in the 45 minutes preceding the fatal crash.

After approximately two-and-a-half hours of deliberation on March 17, the jury unanimously found that Vestal was both negligent and grossly negligent and awarded the nearly \$22 million in damages to Small’s family.

Baylor School of Law graduate and Houston attorney Hunter Craft represented the Small family.

“It wasn’t too hard to attain the records,” Craft said. “AT&T was very cooperative. The fact that he clearly lied about using the phone certainly made matters worse for him.”

According to Fox 26 News in Houston, Vestal apologized for his actions during the trial. The defendant and the defendant’s attorney declined an interview with the Lariat. The Robertson County district judge and clerk also declined to comment on the trial.

“This is a tremendous verdict in sending the message to not text while you’re driving,” Craft said. “This is the largest wrongful death verdict in Robertson County by a factor of three.”

Megan’s father, Kevin Small, said in a press conference Friday that he was pleased that the jury understood the dangers text messaging presents while driving.

“It told me that they were se-

see VERDICT, pg. 6



MATT HELLMAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## A New Perspective on Fun

Janesville, Wis., sophomore Travis Hegle and Hurst freshman David Smith luge Tuesday on their skateboards in the SUB Bowl.

# Despite inactivity, housing association still represents area

By LAURA REMSON  
STAFF WRITER

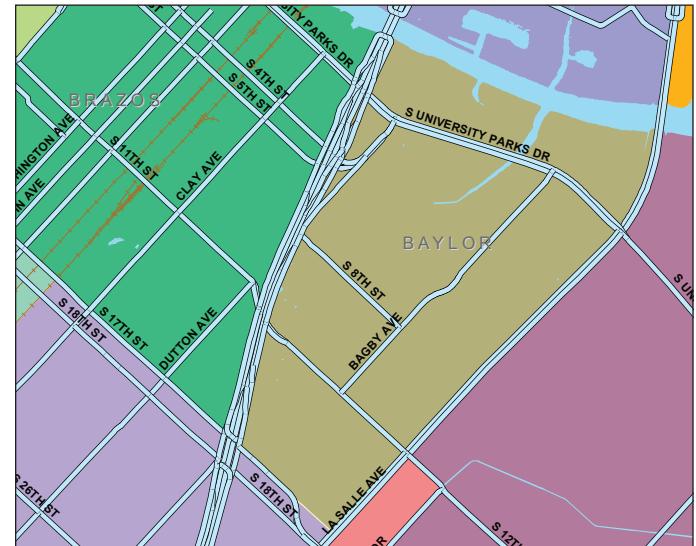
Many people who live in the neighborhood just south of Baylor have never heard of an organization that has worked to protect their rights for years.

The Baylor Neighborhood Association, one of the 24 neighborhood associations in Waco, works with the area from the Brazos River to 17th street and from I-35 to La Salle.

The city Web site describes a neighborhood association as an “independent, autonomous organization that defines its own purpose, determines its goals and strategies, and develops its own neighborhood plans.”

April Hull, program coordinator for neighborhood associations and economic development for the City of Waco, said these associations were initially created to increase community involvement in making decisions for their local areas.

“A lot of the neighborhoods have gotten improved parks. There’s been improved lighting in many of the areas, more active citizen involvement in community programs like Citizens on Patrol and Neighborhood Watch, National Night Out,”



COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WACO

Hull said. “They have regular clean-ups in their neighborhoods — a lot of them, not all of them, but a lot of them.”

Kelvin Williams, president of the Baylor Neighborhood Association, said that in recent years, the association has become inactive.

Williams said the group had become a much smaller and less-involved association until it eventually became inactive.

Williams attributed much of the association’s decline to

many of its original members either moving out of the community or dying.

Additionally, many people sold their properties in the area and apartment complexes took the place of the old homes.

“We’ve been in business for quite a while, and no one from the association ever contacted us,” said Shirley Black, manager of University Rentals. “I’d like to know more about it.”

see HOUSES, pg. 6

# Physics professors submit particle-research proposal

By SARA TIRRITO  
STAFF WRITER

Baylor researchers may soon be able to study high-energy physics as part of the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experiment at CERN’s Large Hadron Collider, if their proposal is accepted by the experiment’s collaboration board.

CERN is the European Council for Nuclear Research.

Dr. Kenichi Hatakeyama, assistant professor of physics, presented the proposal last Friday in Geneva, Switzerland, where the collider is located. Hatakeyama drew up the proposal in collaboration with Dr. Jay Dittmann, associate professor of physics. Post doctorates Hongxuan Liu and Azeddine Kasmi are also participating in the research.

A vote will be taken on the proposal during CMS Week in June.

“What it means to join this experiment is we will be full participants in what is basically a global collaboration to study the tiniest particles in nature,” Dittmann said. “It’s really a tre-

mendous thing for Baylor because it gives us exposure; a lot of other prominent universities in the U.S. are involved in this experiment, and we’re delighted to be getting involved as well.”

Dittmann said one of the main goals of the experiment is to determine whether the Higgs Boson particle exists. He said the existence of this particle is theorized to be the reason that all things have mass and would also give support to the Standard Model theory.

“One of the main goals is the discovery of a particle called the Higgs Boson, which is a particle that is predicted to exist by scientific theories, but so far has never been observed anywhere in nature,” Dittmann said. “If it’s discovered, it would be a huge success for our current theories of the universe, but if it doesn’t exist and we don’t observe it at the collider, then it leads to some interesting new questions and it tells us there’s a lot we don’t understand about our current theories.”

Martin Frank, a graduate student in the physics department, said the high energy of

the collider will allow for more accurate particle research.

“It’s the highest-energy collider in the world right now and so we can use it to probe the nature of matter more closely and the higher the energy goes, the closer we can come to what the universe looked like in its early stages,” Frank said.

Dittmann said if the proposal is accepted, the research group would become permanent members of the collaboration, which is important because the experiment should continue for years.

“We expect this experiment to run for the next decade,” Dittmann said. “It’s really a long-term thing and that’s why it’s so important for us ... because we really believe this experiment is the future of our high-energy physics research program here at Baylor.”

Dr. Greg Benesh, professor and chairman of the physics department, said he is confident the proposal will be accepted.

“From what Dr. Hatakeyama said, the comments were very positive and he had shown the

see PHYSICS, pg. 6

# Doctoral student first to attend research trainings

By TORI LIGGETT  
REPORTER

Danielle Fearon, doctoral student in the educational psychology program is the first student of the educational psychology department that has been selected to attend the 2010 American Psychological Association’s Quantitative Training for Underrepresented Groups.

At the workshop, student participants will have the opportunity to be exposed to the work of outstanding scientists.

“I first met [Fearon] when she was a research associate at the University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica. She was working at the social welfare

training center. Our work coincided when their department helped us get data on some research,” said her adviser Dr. Terrill Saxon, associate professor of educational psychology. “She was amazingly organized and a hard worker with very high standards for her own educational goals. She overcame so many obstacles in education by her hard work. I was very impressed with her story.”

Fearon is a transfer student from Jamaica and was recruited by Baylor in fall 2009. She is working on her doctorate in educational psychology.

Fearon received her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Northern Caribbean University

in Mandeville, Jamaica, and a master’s degree in clinical psychology from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.

“I love research. I have always been excited about research,” Fearon said. “I am excited about the people I am going to be working under, and being able to meet other students.”

Fearon said she likes the environment at Baylor because the departments are student-friendly, so she has been able to work with good professors.

The American Psychological Association’s developed the training session to provide “quantitative training in con-

see PSYCH, pg. 6



# Democrats pass daring charity

By DAVID BROOKS  
NEW YORK TIMES COLUMNIST

Political parties come to embody causes. For the past 90 years or so, the Republican Party has, at its best, come to embody the cause of personal freedom and economic dynamism. For a similar period, the Democratic Party has, at its best, come to embody the cause of fairness and family security. Over the past century, they have built a welfare system, brick by brick, to guard against the injuries of fate. If you grew up, as I did, with a

of religious fervor and material abundance, but it was nurtured by choice. It was nurtured by our founders, who created national capital markets to disrupt the ossifying grip of the agricultural landholders. It was nurtured by 19th-century Republicans who built the railroads and the land-grant colleges to weave free markets across great distances. It was nurtured by Progressives who broke the stultifying grip of the trusts.

Today, America's vigor is challenged on two fronts. First, the country is becoming geriatric.

**For the past 90 years or so, the Republican Party has, at its best, come to embody the cause of personal freedom and economic dynamism. For a similar period, the Democratic Party has, at its best, come to embody the cause of fairness and family security.**

Hubert Humphrey poster on your wall and a tradition of Democratic Party activism in your family, you recognize the Democratic DNA in the content of this bill and in the way it was passed. There was the inevitable fractiousness, the neuroticism, the petty logrolling, but also the basic concern for the vulnerable and the high idealism.

And there was also the faith in the grand liberal project. Democrats protected the unemployed starting with the New Deal, then the old, then the poor. Now, thanks to health care reform, millions of working families will go to bed at night knowing that they are not an illness away from financial ruin.

Watching this bill go through the meat grinder was like watching an old family reunion. One glimpse and you got the whole panoply of what you loved and found annoying about these people.

Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi were fit to play the leading roles. They both embody the two great wings of the party, the high-minded aspirations of the educated class and the machine-like toughness of the party apparatus.

Obama and Pelosi both possess the political tenaciousness that you only get if you live for government and believe ruthlessly in its possibilities. They could have scaled back their aspirations at any time but they hung tough.

Members of the Obama-Pelosi team have spent the past year on a wandering, tortuous quest — enduring the exasperating pettiness of small-minded members, hostile public opinion, just criticism and gross misinformation, a swarm of cockeyed ideas and the erroneous predictions of people like me who thought the odds were against them. For sheer resilience, they deserve the honor of posterity.

Yet I confess, watching all this, I feel again why I'm no longer spiritually attached to the Democratic Party. The essence of America is energy — the vibrancy of the market, the mobility of the people and the disruptive creativity of the entrepreneurs. This vibrancy grew up accidentally, out of a cocktail

Other nations spend 10 percent or so of their GDP on health care. We spend 17 percent and predicted to soon spend 20 percent and then 25 percent. This legislation was supposed to end that asphyxiating growth, which will crowd out investments in innovation, education and everything else. It will not.

With the word "security" engraved on its heart, the Democratic Party is just not structured to cut spending that would enhance health and safety. The party nurtures; it does not say, "No more."

The second biggest threat to America's vibrancy is the exploding federal debt. Again, Democrats can utter the words of fiscal restraint, but they don't feel the passion. This bill is full of gimmicks designed to get a good score from the Congressional Budget Office but not to really balance the budget. Democrats did enough to solve their political problem (not looking fiscally reckless) but not enough to solve the genuine problem.

Nobody knows how this bill will work out. It is an undertaking exponentially more complex than the Iraq war, for example. But to me, it feels like the end of something, not the beginning of something. It feels like the noble completion of the great liberal project to build a comprehensive welfare system.

The task ahead is to save this country from stagnation and fiscal ruin. We know what it will take. We will have to raise a consumption tax. We will have to preserve benefits for the poor and cut them for the middle and upper classes. We will have to invest more in innovation and human capital.

The Democratic Party, as it revealed of itself over the past year, does not seem to be up to that coming challenge (neither is the Republican Party).

This country is in the position of a free-spending family careening toward bankruptcy that at the last moment announced that it was giving a gigantic new gift to charity. You admire the act of generosity, but you wish they had a sold a few of the Mercedes to pay for it.



## After tragedy, Cornell sets impressive example

### Editorial

While to some students it may seem that their university is a distant and uncaring figure, Cornell University is working to prove this stereotype wrong.

After three student suicides in less than a month, with two occurring on consecutive days, Cornell has now begun to implement commendable precautionary measures to further ensure the safety of its students.

In the past few years, Cornell, which has a reputation of being a high-stress school, has gained recognition for its implementation of measures to make the faculty and staff aware of potentially suicidal signs that students may be displaying.

There has been encouragement for students who might not consider counseling to seek it. Staff has been trained to recognize signs of depression or suicidal warning signs. Moreover, there are 10 locations on campus at which therapists hold open-door hours.

While these measures have surely helped many students, since the recent suicides at the school, Cornell leaders have gone to the next level and put into practice even more precautions.

Teachers have been addressing their

classes personally about the importance of seeking help if they are dealing with depression.

The president of Cornell, Dr. David J. Skorton, took out full-pages ads in the school's paper which said, "Your well-being is the foundation on which your success is built. If you learn anything at Cornell, please learn to ask for help."

The gorge near Cornell, which was the site of two of the three recent suicides, is now being watched by guards to help prevent any more injury or loss of life to students.

Cornell has also created the Web site caringcommunity.cornell.edu to reach students who may be dealing with suicidal thoughts. The Web site provides telephone numbers for students to receive help, various places that students can go to talk to counselors and even events for students to become involved in as a deterrent to suicide.

This Web site allows students to receive help from the privacy of their own dorm rooms or homes and is an innovative use of the university's technology.

There are multiple reasons behind

student suicides, including the stressful schedule that most students endure, especially at an Ivy League school like Cornell.

While it is tragic that Cornell University has lost three students to suicide, it is encouraging that this school is taking steps to prevent any further loss of life.

It may seem to those who are depressed that they are alone, but these steps that Cornell has taken are proving to students that they are more than just a number and an amount of tuition to the administration. Cornell's administration is sending a message to students that suicide is not the right answer.

Cornell is an example from which every university in the nation can draw inspiration, including Baylor University, which has not been immune to student suicides.

Many Baylor faculty, staff and students, including Campus Living & Learning staff and resident chaplains, have received QPR suicide prevention training.

Cornell should be praised for its actions. The precedent that it has set in response to these terrible tragedies is an important one for Baylor to follow.

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rections can be submitted to the editor by sending an e-mail to Lariat\_letters@baylor.edu or by calling 254-710-4099.

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ing students or faculty may be considered for a guest column at the editor's discretion. The Lariat reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, length, libel and style. Letters should be e-mailed to Lariat\_Letters@baylor.edu.

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# Baylor German professor named teacher of year

BY JAMES BLAKE EWING  
REPORTER

Rita Abercrombie, lecturer of German, has been awarded teacher of the year by the Texas Foreign Language Association.

Abercrombie will be presented the award at The Texas Foreign Language Association's spring 2010 conference in Arlington.

"I was surprised I got it," Abercrombie said.

The award is given to a professor from any level of education who achieves excellence in teaching a foreign language.

In order to receive this award, one must be nominated by a member of The Texas Foreign Language Association.

"The Texas Foreign Language Association is the largest foreign association in Texas," Billie Hulke, lecturer of Spanish, said.

Abercrombie was nominated by Hulke, who said there are

more than 2,000 members in The Texas Foreign Language Association who have the ability to nominate teachers for the award.

"I think she's an incredible teacher," Hulke said. "She connects with students. She's not the sage on the stage, she's the guide on the side."

For Abercrombie, teaching German doesn't just take place in the classroom. She provides opportunities and events outside of the classroom for students to attend.

"Foreign language isn't just a class, it's a lifestyle," Abercrombie wrote on her faculty profile page.

One of the opportunities she offers is a weekly coffee hour for German students from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Mondays in 200 Old Main.

"I thought they were wonderful," said Waco senior



JED DEAN | PHOTO EDITOR

Rita Abercrombie, lecturer of German, demonstrates her award-winning teaching style by showing some of her lecture materials Tuesday in her office in Draper Academic Building.

William Priest. "It gives you a chance to practice your speech in a low-stress environment."

She also has a cooking evening once a year at her home where German students cook food based on German recipes.

"[Teaching is] not just seeing students in the classroom," Abercrombie said.

The students who are really interested in the material are the ones who work outside the classroom, Abercrombie said.

Abercrombie is originally from Germany and said she began to learn English in fourth grade.

Abercrombie said there are differences in the high school learning styles of the United States and Germany. In Germany, students learn a specific trade once they reach the eighth grade. Germany has more honesty in education, Abercrombie said.

She was required to take choir

and some of the teachers would tell students to mouth the songs because the students didn't have a singing ability.

"They were a little more honest about what you can and what you can't do," Abercrombie said.

Abercrombie became interested in English when Americans in Germany were talking around her and she didn't know what they were saying.

At first, she decided to learn enough to where she could understand them.

"I always enjoyed English; I always enjoyed teaching," Abercrombie said.

She tutored English in Germany when she was 15 years old. Abercrombie has taught junior high, high school and college students in both Germany and the United States.

"She makes learning fun," Priest said. "The class is full of inside jokes."

# Q&A: A heart for ministry, a passion for Christ

**Vertical Ministries: a college-focused worship service that seeks to involve Waco college students with a better relationship with Jesus**

BY BRITTNEY HERMAN  
REPORTER

With passion for ministry and sharing the gospel, speaker and co-founder of Vertical ministries, Afshin Ziafat explains how Vertical began.

Afshin is in charge of several other ministries across the nation as well as internationally. He travels with his wife and ministers in different locations on a weekly basis. Vertical ministries sparked Ziafat's interest when four Baylor students met with him and his wife, Meredith, asking for guidance and direction to begin it at Baylor.

Ziafat travels to Baylor every Monday for Vertical and explains the journey he has been on with the ministry since the beginning. Ziafat said Vertical first began Oct. 26, 2009, and has had prob-

ably 10 sessions so far.

**Q:** Do you have another job besides Vertical?

**A:** I have my own ministry called Afshin Ziafat ministry. I travel around the country talking at conferences and retreats. I do Vertical on Monday nights, Truth on Tuesday nights at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville speaking to 350 students, and on Wednesday at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, I lead a men's morning Bible study. On weekends I travel around the country doing ministries and camps. My life verse is Acts 1:8 and this speaks about my ministry. There's a local, national and international part that describes my ministry. Local would be Vertical, national would be traveling around country on weekends doing retreats, preaching in churches and camps, and international is the Elam ministry where I train pastors to do underground ministry.

**Q:** What exactly is Elam ministry?

**A:** As a partner with Elam ministry, I train Iranian men and women with skills to go back to

Iran and conduct underground churches. You can also look at my Web site, which is afshinziafat.com.

**Q:** How often are you working on Vertical outside of getting ready for the Monday night worship?

**A:** It's hard to know an exact number. I spend quite a bit of time talking to our student leadership team. We are in contact continually throughout the week. I would say 5 to 10 hours a week outside of Vertical and everything else. This encompasses getting ready for my message and contacting my student team that does all the leg work. They are amazing.

**Q:** As the founder of Vertical, how did it get started? Is this something you have always dreamed about doing?

**A:** The Lord is the founder of Vertical. This started on the grass roots level with God working. I would only be comfortable being called the co-founder. I was there from the beginning but this started from the hearts of the college

students who came to me for help to start this. The core leaders were Carter Hopkins, Bo Weathersbee, Davis Hudiburg, Abby Walker. They took Meredith and I out to dinner where we talked about this opportunity, prayed about it and felt the Lord's calling. When you say founder, I would say that was the Lord working in the hearts of these students. They were the real ones that started it.

**Q:** What were your initial hopes for Vertical? Have these exceeded your expectations?

**A:** God immediately knit our hearts with the students. We all had the same hopes. We said were not trying to take people from the church; we want all college ministries to know we're trying to be an ally with them. We want them to come to Vertical for God to touch their hearts and go from there. We want to be a ministry where we can gather students from Baylor campus and other areas like McLennan Community College to come together as one. People can come regardless of denomination or background. We want to be a place open for everyone. That was our dream.

Yes, I would say it exceeded my expectations. It's not about how many, but we saw the desire for the college students at Baylor who wanted something like Vertical. This is something that the Lord has done. I want to give the glory number one to God and then credit to the leadership team for doing this.

**Q:** Was it difficult getting Shane & Shane to come to Vertical at Baylor this Monday?

**A:** Being in ministry as long as I have, that was another great thing because I have relationships with all of these bands. I am actually friends with Shane & Shane and was able to get them to come to Baylor. They said they would love to come do a night for us.

**Q:** What are your connections with them and how do you think this concert impacts Vertical?

**A:** We have partnered with Mission Waco. They needed personal hygiene items. We said if we are having this many Christians gather weekly, then others around us should feel an impact.

We decided to tell each person coming to Vertical this past Monday to bring three or four hygiene items per person, trying to reach our goal of 1000 items.

**Q:** What are your hopes and plans for the future for Vertical?

**A:** Meredith, my wife, and I definitely have a heart for the ministry. We see ourselves being part of this long term. We want God to receive glory for Vertical. We don't want it to be all about Vertical; we want Jesus to be glorified through the hearts of college students. Success isn't judged by numbers, but by those students who come to Christ or are touched. We want students to graduate closer to the Lord, more passionate for his glory going out into their lives with a mission to make Christ known to this world. I want them to walk away with God's word and have a passion for it. This is in my heart for them to leave college on fire for Christ.

The full text version of this Q&A is available online at <http://www.baylor.edu/lariat>

# Lecture highlights greater role, importance of women

BY LELA ATWOOD  
REPORTER

During the most recent presidential election, 10 million more women voted than men, according to Dr. Susan Hartmann, a professor of history at Ohio State University a lecture Tuesday, titled "Women and the Transformation of American Politics."

At the lecture, which was sponsored by the history department in celebration of Women's History Month, Hartmann spoke about the status change of women in the last 60 years and how that translated into politics.

Hartmann said that change was amiss even as early as the 1950s, before the birth of second wave feminism.

"Even before the 1960s more women were working outside the home. They increasingly attended colleges, and they began to limit the number of children they birthed," Hartmann said. "They became less involved in child-bearing and more involved in the public arena."



Hartmann

and more involved in the public arena."

At the beginning of the 1960s, Hartmann said, it was legal for businesses to practice gender dis-

crimination, and issues including wife battering were ignored by the law, even though women had the freedom to vote 40 years prior.

Hartmann said gender provisions were added to the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by a southern representative who wanted to see the bill defeated.

Despite the addition, the bill was passed, but the portion that mentioned gender discrimination (Title VII) was not enforced.

"The failure to enforce Title VII was the spark that led to the founding of the National Organization for Women, the first organization created out of the new feminism that arose in the 1960s," Hartmann said.

By the 1970s, an Equal Rights

Amendment was in making, that would have voided all laws pertaining to gender differences.

Ultimately, the amendment failed to be passed by the required number of states in the required amount of time.

Dr. Keith Francis, an associate professor of history, said it is interesting that women do not seem bothered by the fact that they are not represented in the Constitution.

Concerning the lack of gender discrimination rights in the Amendments of the Constitution, Francis had much to say.

"I am surprised that women don't make more of a fuss about this because it seems to me that if you look at the Constitution, there are rights for the minorities

there are rights for blacks there are rights for property holders," Francis said. "The only group that doesn't have rights in the Constitution is women, which is odd."

Although the Equal Rights Amendment was not passed, women have increased their influence in the political field.

Hartmann said political parties are becoming more polarized by gender.

"Gender is the fault line in politics and gender will continue to shape politics," she said.

In the 2008 election, 56 percent of all women voted for Barack Obama, while only 47 percent of all men voted for him.

In all, 70 million women and 60 million men voted in this elec-

tion.

When it comes to the feminist movement today, Hartmann said that few women call themselves feminists today because of its association with extremism.

"Feminism has gotten a bad name," she said. "Many equate it with extreme radicalism, with ugliness — people equate feminism with things that they consider bad."

Austin sophomore Meagan McManis said although feminism has bad reputation, its stance for equality is good.

"I think it does get a bad rap, but I think that if you're going for equality. I don't think that being a feminist is a bad thing," McManis said. "I guess I would consider myself a feminist."

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# Taylor Swift gives Texas a 'Fearless' concert

TAYLOR HARRIS  
CONTRIBUTOR

With the music scene today being invaded by Disney Channel stars and reality TV show winners, genuine artists are getting harder and harder to find. So much of the music now is commercial fluff, written to attract anyone with curious ears. In every genre, artists who sing their own songs are dwindling rapidly. Maybe they are not as uncommon as snow in Texas mid-March, but singer/songwriters are becoming an endangered species.

## CONCERT | REVIEW

However, there is still one young star who is proving that composing songs and performing them live isn't an outdated fad. Sure, she has her own clothing line. Yeah, her face is probably on the lunchboxes of preteens everywhere. Her music may be on almost every country, pop, and crossover radio station you flip to in the car. But she wrote each of those catchy songs that stick in your head all day long. Taylor Swift is living proof that singer/songwriters are not extinct. And from the looks of it, she's not going out of style anytime soon.

Having just kicked off the 2010 leg of her Fearless tour, Swift is showing the world what she's made of. That adorable, curly-headed blonde isn't just a one-hit wonder. This 20-year-old is branding herself just like all the past music legends did. And she's doing it at an expedited rate.

Swift recently took Texas by storm and showed everyone why she took home top honors at the Country Music Awards back in November. During Baylor's spring break, she made three stops in the Lone Star State: Austin, Dallas and Corpus Christi. If cowboy boots and sundresses weren't already typical to a coun-

try concert, the Fearless tour intensified the look. Luckily, the weather was ideal in Corpus Christi before the show.

People of all ages crammed their way into the American Bank Center on March 12 before 7 p.m. rolled around. The band Gloriana and former American idol contestant Kellie Pickler opened for Swift.

Whitney Smith of Hot Springs, Ark., drove 11 hours to make the show.

"I was as excited about Kellie performing as I was Taylor. She brought the house down, too. I've listened to her since she was on American Idol, and she just continues to impress me. She did a wonderful job at the show," Smith said.

After the opening bands, the arena finally darkened, but instead of the music beginning, a video ran across the screens on each side of the stage. Cameos of celebrity friends like Faith Hill told what being "fearless" meant to them. Throughout the video, there were clips of awards Swift had won this past year and her acceptances.

Then the band started to play, and the crowd erupted. Rising from beneath the stage, Swift finally became visible. Standing on her set was Swift, dressed in a full band uniform, hat and all. Her band members were in similar attire and her dance crew was dressed as cheerleaders. She recreated her "You Belong With Me" music video into a live performance.

As she made her way down the flight of stairs that led to the stage, fans danced and raised their homemade signs in the air. There were screams, squeals and whistles.

She had already exceeded everyone's expectations, and it was only the first song. Mid-song she even had a costume change, in true Taylor Swift fashion. Her band uniform was ripped off and exposed was a beautiful spar-



COURTESY: TAYLOR HARRIS

Taylor Swift performs at a sold-out concert in Corpus Christi for her Grammy Award-winning album of the year in 2009, "Fearless."

bling dress.

So many hit songs. So many dresses and set changes. On the screens, the backdrop changed with each song. The performance was nothing less than a Broadway show. Swift rocked out to songs from her debut and sophomore albums. Songs like "Tim McGraw," "Our Song," and "Picture to Burn" brought the fans back to her pre-superstar days. "Fearless," "The Way I Loved You," and "Tell Me Why" were a few of her newer songs performed.

She sang each song with all her heart, giving the audience the emotions she felt when she was writing about her breakups and fairy tale moments. During "Forever and Always," Swift even threw a sofa chair off the second level of her stage. Set up as an interview with a reporter, the sing-

er confessed if guys didn't want songs written about them, they "shouldn't do bad things."

Part way through the concert, there was a brief intermission. Projected on the screens now was a comical investigative video with cameos from guys she's either written about or had in her music videos.

The new country group Love and Theft, Tyler Hilton, and even Tim McGraw were featured. Throughout the show, Swift joked about how she writes about boys and they know it.

When the clip ended, a spotlight made its way to the back of the venue. There she was, in the middle of the crowd, performing "Hey Stephen." It was clear that none of the fans up there had any idea she had made her way into the audience.

Throughout the song, she

slowly made her way down the stairs, stopping to give hugs and high fives to anyone close to her. She then reached a small stage on the floor, and with nothing but her guitar, crooned some of her slower songs.

Though her vocals haven't always been perfect during live performances, they were excellent as she sat on a stool and played "Fifteen," "Tim McGraw" and "White Horse."

During "Love Story," she and her dancers came out in Victorian clothing. The stage was set back in the days of Romeo and Juliet. The fairy tale scene Swift portrays in her song came alive. Again, a costume change during the song had her in a gorgeous white flowing dress and a tiara that she put on a young girl's head.

Another moment to gasp over was her "You're Not Sorry" song

mashed with Justin Timberlake's "What Goes Around." Taylor Swift made JT's song her own.

She came back out after "Picture to Burn" as her name was chanted by thousands to do an encore. "Today Was a Fairytale" was performed, and her kiss with the hunky Taylor Lautner in the movie Valentine's Day scrolled over the screen. Heart shaped confetti fell down for what seemed like an eternity.

To end the show, Swift sang an extended version of "Should've Said No." Thunder rumbled in that venue, even on a perfectly clear night outside. The backdrop rolled in storm clouds, the scene grew dark and bitter. Swift and her fiddle player, Caitlin Evanson, had a drum-off on these indescribable instruments that rose from under the stage. Then, as the song came to a close, Swift walked down the steps to the front of the stage. As she sang the chorus, "rain" began to pour from the top of the arena.

As the song ended, Swift laid down in the water. She made a heart with her hands and raised it to the sky.

Swift had successfully pulled off an unbeatable performance.

Music Editor of The Vent magazine in Corpus Christi, Mike Henneberger, was blown away.

"I practically watch concerts for a living, and Taylor Swift put on one of the best shows I've ever seen. I saw Green Day's tour last year, Blink 182's reunion tour, Sugarland, and Kelly Clarkson. And while Swift's music plays along with all of those artists on radio, her performance was in a whole other league and definitely the most entertaining concert I've seen in a long time."

Incredible opening acts, theatrical sets, crowd interaction, and ending each show completely drenched, Taylor Swift has reached superstardom, and she's not looking back.

# Has the ninth season of 'Idol' lost its magic touch?

By BARRY KOLTNOW  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

There is nothing quite as sad as an aging champion who doesn't know when to quit.

It's the boxer who fights one too many bouts, the baseball player who plays one too many games and the television show that airs one too many seasons.

## POINT of view

I'm talking about "American Idol," the ratings champ that should have quit while it was ahead.

This is absolutely the worst season in the nine-year history of a storied franchise that has launched a handful of significant music careers - Kelly Clarkson,

Chris Daughtry, Jennifer Hudson, Carrie Underwood and Clay Aiken. There have been a few other success stories, and I don't begrudge any of them.

But the blows to the head that the show has taken this season are evident. "American Idol" is ripe for a fall and, of course, every great fall starts with a misstep.

At this point, it is an inescapable fact that dumping Paula Abdul was the beginning of the end. Kara DioGuardi was a mistake from the beginning, and the show's producers are too stubborn to admit it. They even hired Ellen DeGeneres to cover their mistake, without having to concede the original sin.

DioGuardi is not only a drama queen (give me a break; a professional songwriter shedding tears at the end of an amateur's per-

formance?), but she likes to hear herself talk. So does Simon Cowell, but at least he's occasionally humorous, albeit predictable.

DeGeneres, who at first was a breath of fresh air because she wasn't Kara, is already starting to annoy. She has nothing substantial to offer, except for the well-placed joke. She says she likes everybody, even those she criticizes. I know she's trying to be Paula, but it's not working. She completely lost me when she hugged that contestant a couple of weeks ago. Not only was it unprofessional, but she unfairly influenced the voting.

Randy Jackson has become a caricature - Hey, Dog, you're pitchy" - and Simon's superficial pop sensibilities are silly.

But the judges' greatest crime is their inability to spot talent.

More than 100,000 wannabes auditioned, and this is the best they could come up with? It doesn't say much for the musical talent in this country.

I don't think I am alone in my disappointment with this season's crop of singers. The guys are a painful waste of our time every time they step to the microphone. Of the women, only two showed any promise, and one of them already is off the show. I understand that Lilly Scott was ousted by a public vote, but I think the judges set her up with their constant carping.

What is really pathetic is a noticeable change in attitude in the last couple of weeks. The judges are trying to be nicer to the contestants - particularly the male performers - because the show's producers fear a viewer backlash.

They are afraid that the public will turn off their TV sets anytime a male contestant performs. Their fear is justified. I went out one night when the men were competing, and I didn't even bother to record the show. Frankly, the women aren't worth recording, either.

Other than the judges' bad taste in musical talent, I can't really explain the lack of exceptional performers this year. I don't buy into the notion that the first eight seasons exhausted all the undiscovered talent in America. With a minimum age of 16, there should be a never-ending supply of young performers turning 16 each year.

Perhaps the fix is in. We know that Cowell is jumping ship, and I suppose it is possible that "American Idol" producers also

have other projects in the works. Rather than go out on top, they might assume it would be easier to make "American Idol" so bad that nobody will miss it when it's gone. At the same time, those frustrated fans would be hungry for a new talent competition.

Whatever the reasons, the show is clearly running on fumes. Yes, it continues to garner impressive ratings but it's been a ratings behemoth so long, it has become a habit in American households.

What's needed is an intervention. That's the point of this diatribe. I am trying to free you from your addiction to "American Idol."

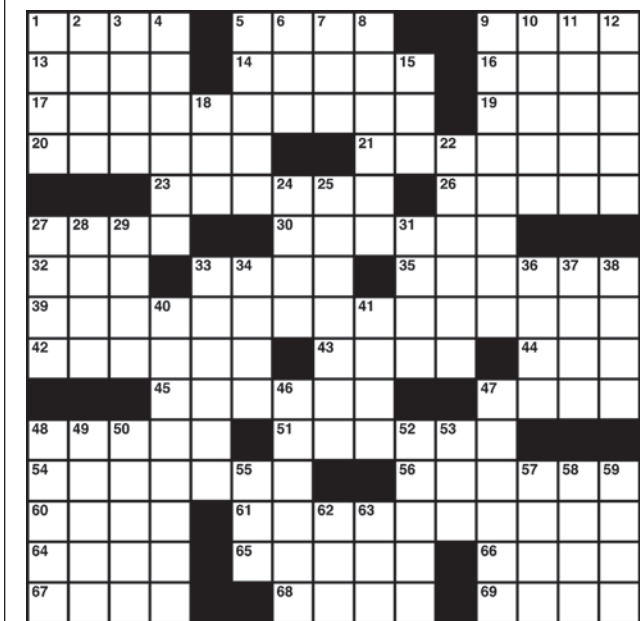
I believe that you can beat this thing. Your world will not collapse if you stop watching.

Perhaps you could wear a patch. Or read a book.

## FUN TIMES

Find answers at [www.baylorlariat.com](http://www.baylorlariat.com)

McClatchy-Tribune



### Across

- 1 Hippo's attire in "Fantasia"
- 5 Fashionably smart
- 9 Sun ray
- 13 Actress Lena
- 14 "Lion's share" fabulist
- 16 Hockey great Phil, familiarly
- 17 John Denver #1 hit
- 19 Largest of the Near Islands
- 20 Place for a massage
- 21 Campaign funders
- 23 Locale in a 1987 Cheech Marin title
- 26 "Yay!"
- 27 Charon's river
- 30 Rub elbows (with)
- 32 Western \_\_\_: history class, briefly
- 33 Industry kingpin
- 35 Bullies
- 39 "Guys and Dolls"

- showstopper
- 42 Mississippi River explorer
- 43 Take charge
- 44 Baby talk word
- 45 Trial sites
- 47 Rough file sound
- 48 Measuring tool
- 51 Billiards blunder
- 54 Fork or spoon
- 56 Longtime buddy
- 60 \_\_\_-Honey: candy
- 61 "Dr. Zhivago" melody
- 64 "Cool" rapper?
- 65 Polished
- 66 They're removed via shafts
- 67 With 68-Across and 69-Across, classic game show, and this puzzle's title
- 68 See 67-Across
- 69 See 67-Across

### Down

- 1 Repulsive sort
- 2 Bone near the funny bone
- 3 Mite-sized
- 4 Like many salons
- 5 Andalusia abodes
- 6 Bulls and boars
- 7 Prefix with metric
- 8 Informal discussion
- 9 Shell collector, maybe
- 10 Cornerstone abbr.
- 11 Is \_\_\_: likely will
- 12 Meek
- 15 Org. for drivers?
- 18 Eco-friendly fed gp.
- 22 "Tough luck"
- 24 Senator Cochran of Mississippi
- 25 Legendary siren
- 27 Big batch
- 28 Mariner's concern
- 29 Part of YSL
- 31 "The Lion King" lion-ness
- 33 Furnishes food for

- 34 Temple area of Jerusalem
- 36 "Sonic the Hedgehog" developer
- 37 Grandson of Eve
- 38 Train station
- 40 It includes terms of endearment
- 41 Meeting of Cong.
- 46 Diacritical pair of dots
- 47 On a winning streak
- 48 Apply before cooking, as spice to meat
- 49 New York city
- 50 "Who cares if they do?!"
- 52 Math subgroup
- 53 Last: Abbr.
- 55 They, in Calais
- 57 Llama land
- 58 Church approval
- 59 Suffix with Congo
- 62 Rooting sound
- 63 Gardner of "On the Beach"

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# A view from the *top*: Women's tennis team enjoys stint as No. 1 squad in America

By DANIEL CERNERO  
REPORTER

In its newly established role as the No. 1-ranked women's tennis team in the country, Baylor took down Oklahoma State University and the No. 34-ranked University of Oklahoma, both by a score of 6-1, this past weekend to extend its Big 12 win streak to 35 matches.

Despite not faltering, the group dropped to seventh in the latest ITA rankings, which were released Tuesday.

"It's still early in the season and right now there's about eight to 10 teams that could be No. 1," head coach Joey Scrivano said. "It's a great honor to be the No. 1 team, and I think we're better because of it. It made the team feel re-energized."

The Lady Bears continue to benefit from consistent production out of No. 18-ranked sopho-

more Nina Secerbegovic, who pushed her record this season to 15-0. Secerbegovic knocked out Oklahoma State's Sasha Belova in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2, before making quick work of Oklahoma's Marie-Pier Huet, winning 6-2, 6-0.

"As the number goes up, it's a little bit tense," Secerbegovic said of her current winning streak after the match against the Cowgirls. "Because if you're winning a lot of matches in a row, it only takes one to lose. It's a big difference if you win three matches and then you lose; that wouldn't be that bad. If you keep winning, winning, winning, there's more tension."

Even though Secerbegovic is only a sophomore, this is not the first time she's experienced this kind of winning streak.

As a freshman, she ended the year on a 21-match winning streak, while playing most of

those matches at the No. 5 position.

This year, Secerbegovic has moved up to the No. 2 position and has continued to play at a high level.

"Now, I'm playing better players," Secerbegovic said. "My old coaches always said that I play much better when I'm playing better players, because I can actually show what I'm capable of."

The progress she made over her freshman and sophomore years can be seen in her added maturity and her ability "to serve at an extremely high level," Scrivano said.

He added, "And when you're on a streak, you're not afraid to go for your shots, and that's what she's got going right now. She's got that mentality that she just can't lose, and that goes a long way."

The No. 1 ranking the Lady Bears received last week is its

highest ever, its previous high being a No. 2 ranking reached during the 2008 season.

"It puts pressure on you, being No. 1," No. 5-ranked senior Lenka Broosova said. "We've never had that feeling before, so it's a new feeling and you have to get used to it. We need to keep working hard and getting better, because people are going to be chasing us from now on."

Scrivano said that the No. 1 ranking was "another check on the checklist."

"We want to do it at the end of the year, absolutely," Scrivano said. "But sometimes you have to get there before it happens at the end, just to give your players confidence and let them see that this is obtainable."

The Lady Bears will put their current seven-match winning streak on the line today as the No. 27-ranked SMU Lady Mustangs travel to Waco.



DANIEL CERNERO | LARIAT STAFF

Sophomore Nina Secerbegovic crushes the ball against Oklahoma State University Friday at the Baylor Tennis Center. The No. 18-ranked Secerbegovic is on a current 36-match win streak, and helped catapult Baylor to its first No. 1 ranking in program history.



MATTHEW HELLMAN | LARIAT STAFF

Nicole Wesley beats out an infield single during a March 2 game against Prairie View A&M University. Wesley and the softball team begin Big 12 action this weekend when they travel to Stillwater, Okla., to take on Oklahoma State University.

## Softball splits doubleheader on road

By MATT LARSEN  
SPORTS WRITER

The No. 24 Lady Bears (19-8) found their rhythm in the second game of a doubleheader against Sam Houston State University (12-18) Tuesday night, taking one of two from the Bearkats in Huntsville.

"We definitely were not happy with our bats tonight," head coach Glenn Moore said. "It was very frustrating because we did knock on the door, but (the opposing pitcher) pitched a good game. Good pitching beats good hitting usually in our game, and if (pitchers) step it up, usually they come out on top."

Though not downplaying the need to improve output at the plate, Moore credited Sam Houston's senior Morgan Mikulin with shutting down his squad in the first game.

"I really think she had the best game I've seen her pitch in college," he said.

The Baylor hitters struggled for all seven innings of the first match, falling 4-0.

It was not until the fourth inning of the second match before senior Courtney Neiten homered that center to bring the first Baylor run across the plate for the evening.

That was all it took to reawaken their bats, however, as the Lady Bears drove home three in the following inning to take a 4-1 lead they never gave up.

"Yeah it was definitely a much-needed spark that got us going," freshman pitcher Courtney Repka said of Neiten's deep solo shot. "We really needed someone to step in and do something big, and she did."

Moore also voiced the importance of his senior catcher's homer as the innings were slipping away halfway into the second game.

"We needed to see the ball leave the park," he said. "It was well hit. There

was an exclamation point put on that one, and it probably juiced us up a little bit."

Repka tossed both games, giving up 10 hits, three earned runs, seven walks and striking out eight in her 13 innings of work.

"We've got to improve on her walks," Moore said. "She's got to have enough confidence in our defense to throw strikes. If she gets beat [throwing strikes], she gets beat. She's working at it, and I think we saw a little improvement the second game."

Although it was not the best outing for the freshman, her catcher made note of a difference in demeanor between the two games.

"She was competitive each pitch," Neiten said of Repka's approach in the second game. "Having thrown in one, it's tough to come back and throw a second, and I thought she did a great job of staying locked in for two full games."

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**VERDICT** from pg.1

rious about the kind of behavior they expect on the roads of their county. I was proud of them," Kevin said.

Laura Gleffe, Small's life-long best friend and a student at McLennan Community College at the time, was following Small at the time of the accident. The accident caused Gleffe to drive her Volkswagen Beetle off the road and roll over. Gleffe suffered a concussion and was treated and released from the hospital that night.

"All I remember is seeing Megan's car exploding and the debris flying into my car and then rolling off the road," Gleffe said. "I was there for the entire trial. The verdict was great and justice was served on behalf of Megan."

Vestal's counsel was quoted in a press release as saying Vestal "used to have a lead foot" but is "a much safer driver now."

Evidence at the trial revealed that Vestal received a ticket for speeding in a school zone within six months after hitting Small.

He also received another citation for running a stop sign months after that.

There are currently no laws against text messaging along the route from Waco to Bryan. However, texting while driving is becoming outlawed in various areas across the nation, including 20 states. Though Texas does not have a state-wide law, Austin banned texting while driving this year.

"You're going to be seeing a lot more of [banning of text messaging and driving]," Craft said. "I'm glad that Austin has taken some initiative in Texas."

Before the trial, Vestal declared bankruptcy, so it is unlikely that the Small family will receive the millions of dollars awarded by the jury.

Jim Underwood, a Baylor Law School law professor explained what could happen to Vestal.

"If the defendant doesn't have the funds to pay or insurance, this may all be largely moot," Underwood said. "The civil system basically works in terms of monetary payments. There might be potential criminal liability, like vehicular manslaughter, as well." It has yet to be determined if Robertson County prosecutors will pursue criminal charges on Vestal.

"We were not in it for the money," Megan's mom Pat Small said. "We just wanted closure, answers and healing. And basically to send a message to the community that texting and phoning behind the wheel is wrong."

Craft said he gained a good sense of who Megan was during the trial. "From an emotional standpoint Megan was an unbelievable person, and that really showed through her family and friends," Craft said. "A large part of the verdict was made out of anger because the jury could see how great of a person Megan was and what a stupid thing (Vestal) was doing."

Gleffe remembers the good times that she had with her best friend. "She was just a very happy-go-lucky person," Gleffe said. "We were always together laughing, shopping and doing whatever."

**PSYCH** from pg.1

junction with the annual American Psychological Association (APA) convention" while expanding the group of people interested in quantitative science.

"It's a quantitative pre-conference workshop to become better equated with quantitative methods, to help people in the field of psychology and give them the opportunity to work with some of the top scholars in the field," said Dr. Alex Beaujean, assistance professor of educational psychology. "[The American Psychological Association] is the biggest in the United States. It is exciting because this is the first student from our department to get accepted to the conference. It is a great opportunity and will help students develop their skills in research quantitative psychology."

Beaujean said there has been a lack of trained professionals in quantitative psychology and there are positions that need trained professionals with these skills.

The participants will be primarily instructed in showcasing relevant quantitative methods and research.

The conference will be held on Aug. 9 to 11 at the University of San Diego in California.

**HOUSES** from pg.1

While the association is not as active as others in Waco, it still remains in existence.

Hull said that despite the inactivity of an association, the official boundaries of the neighborhood association still exist.

Williams said the last time the group was actively involved in the Baylor community was during Dr. Robert Sloan's time as Baylor president. Since then, activity has dropped off significantly. "The reason why I got involved is that I love that community," Williams said. "I have lived in that community almost all my life. Basically, we knew every person in the block in the neighborhood, from University Parks all the way to the circle. I felt that it was our duty as citizens to make sure our neighborhoods are clean and well kept."

Williams said that he also got involved because of his family history in the neighborhood.

"I still live in there, in the neighborhood," Williams said. "I still live at the same address. I have not moved. Our family has lived in there since 1942. It started with my grandparents."

One of the recent things that the association has worked on was the November hoax where many residences in near the Baylor campus received false eviction notices stating that residents would need to leave to make room for a new multimillion-dollar football stadium.

"Anything that happens in the neighborhood that happens with zoning, we'll help people with zoning and make sure they aren't being encroached on," Williams said.

**PHYSICS** from pg.1

proposal to several colleagues before they presented it and they had very positive comments about what Baylor was offering to do," Benesh said.

Dittmann said the research group has already been working in a voluntary capacity on the experiment.

"Basically in order to have our proposal be approved, other universities that are already a part of the experiment would like to know that we can make strong contributions, so we already are," Dittmann said. "Basically as volunteers we already have some responsibility with the experiment, and Dr. Hatakeyama has been taking certain leadership roles from even before he came to Baylor as a professor."

Dittmann said if the proposal

is accepted, members of the research group will be spending more time in Switzerland to work on their parts of the research.

"The actual name of the system that we are planning to work on is called the Hadron Calorimeter. It's one part of the huge apparatus which measures the energies of certain types of particles called hadrons," Dittman.

Dittmann said the research group is looking for students in the physics program that are interested in participating in elementary particle physics research.

Frank said the university's participation in the CMS experiment could potentially bring more students to Baylor.

"It's a whole new opportunity of graduate studies that we

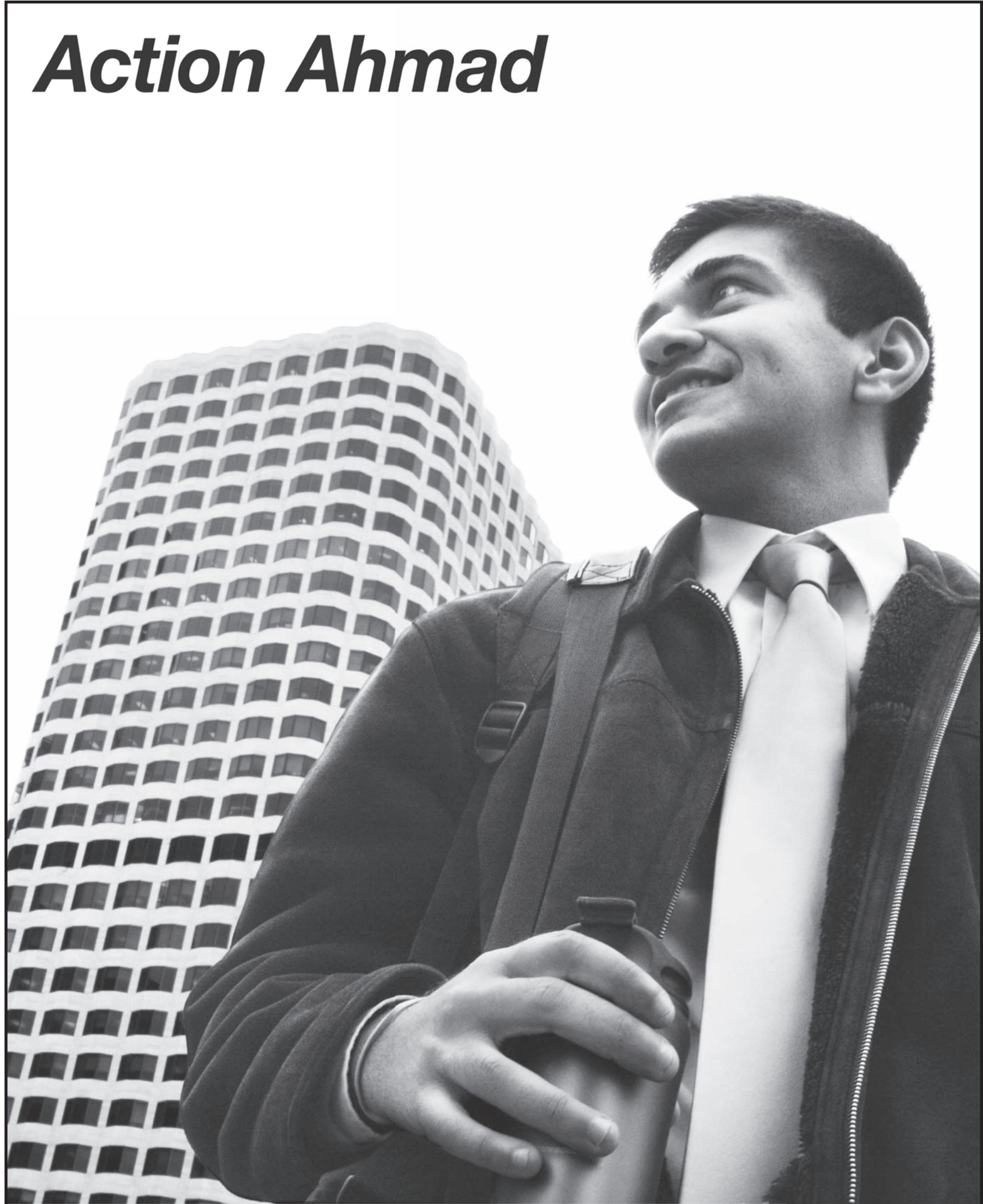
can advertise with," Frank said. "Earlier if students wanted to work on the collider data, they had to look at other universities, but now they can consider Baylor as well. It makes us a bit more marketable."

Benesh said becoming a part of the collaboration would also bring the university more prestige.

"Baylor becoming part of this collaboration is a way to show that we are a peer of other institutions who do this type of research," Benesh said.

"It allows Baylor's name to be on all the publications that come from this collaboration. We'll be there with Ivy League institutions, California universities and other top-notch institutions around the world."

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