

DATELINE:



Volume 57

Summer
Edition

DOWNTOWN



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Dateline Downtown welcomes submissions to the editor from any member of the UH system. Submissions should be no more than 300 words, include the author's full name, phone number or email address, and affiliation with the University, including classification and major.

Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Deliver submissions to room S-260, email them to **datelinedowntownhtx@gmail.com** or fax them to (713) 221 8569. Letters to the editor may be edited for space. They will be edited for spelling, grammar and malicious or libelous statements. Submissions must be the work of the writer and must be signed. All submissions become property of Dateline Downtown and will not be returned.

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ATTENTION STUDENTS:

This notice is to inform you of an event,
to which your prescence has been requested- the

Dateline: Downtown Treasure Hunt and Race! **Monday September 9th, 2016**

This event will coincide with the first ever
student(faculty)-submission edition of Dateline.

Everything published will be works
written by members of our own UHD community.

SEE YOUR STORY IN PRINT

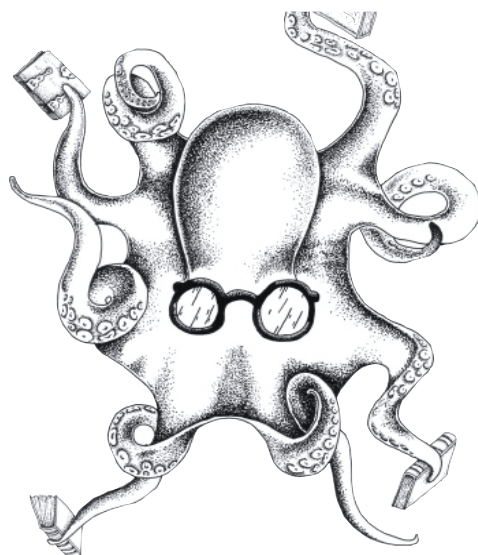
Interested in submitting? Anyone who is a registered
member of the UHD COmmunity may submit up to
two (2) works, covering any topic. Writing Guidelines

are available here-->> and the website,

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Submissions will be accepted until August 18th,

submit to: **datelinedowntownHTX@gmail.com**



4 Change the World

(Author's Note: It is necessary to understand that the politically correct term when referring to black folks is "African-American," however, for the duration of this writing, a more modern and widely accepted description will be utilized: Black.)

In today's technology-driven world, it is highly unlikely there is anyone who has not heard about the activist movement "#BlackLivesMatter." It is also important to point out that while this is a "chapter-based national organization working for the validity of Black life," not all of its leaders or supporters identify as black. Each chapter takes on individual roles appropriate to its region, but the mission remains consistent throughout: "to (re) build the Black liberation movement."

Born in the wake of the 2012 shooting death of Sanford, Florida teen Trayvon Martin, #BlackLivesMatter has since become a rallying cry for many as the public con-

tinues to witness senseless killings of black citizens at the hands of law enforcement officials. As a major component of the movement, civil rights organizers and advocates brilliantly allow the many tools of mass communication to assist in sharing information and developing strategies to combat the seemingly endless narrative of black struggle. In doing so, the movement has made significant progress. On July 10, 2015, after 54 years, the Confederate flag was removed from South Carolina's state capitol grounds. Unfortunately, in light of recent racial tension, on July 10, 2016 (one year to the date), the flag was raised once again for a few hours over the state's capitol in what is being called "a flag raising rally."

During this election year #BlackLivesMatter has raised public awareness in an effort to ensure political figures across the nation develop policies related to issues of concern to black citizens. In

recent weeks, #BlackLivesMatter has been the cornerstone in mobilizing and informing thousands in response to the widely spread video clips of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile being gunned down by law enforcement, both within a 24-hour window. Instant access to social networking sites, coupled with the fact that standard mobile devices are equipped with a video function, introduces opportunities to dispel biased journalism and invite the world (wide web) into the black community. #BlackLivesMatter organizers realized early on that the movement has adequate potential to drastically shift the idea of what it means to be black in America on most fundamental levels. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to accept the idea of racism as a thing of the past, although some traditional media outlets would lead the public to believe this to be true.

#BlackLives

Some might argue the law enforcement/black citizen relationship is strained in part due to the sheer amount of criminal activity taking place in many black communities - activity largely influenced by white-owned entertainment companies disguised as "Hip Hop culture." Others may cite increased military and tactical training of officers, which undoubtedly encourages civilian officers to view black citizens as enemies in a war zone rather than residents of a community. Either way, law enforcement officials - with the justice system as a shield - have and continue to get away with

murder. #BlackLivesMatter is simply expressing, "enough is enough" while taking the necessary steps to uplift, inform and defend black lives.

Many leaders on a national level, such as Shaun King and DeRay McKesson, gained their affiliation with the movement through their large social media followings. King, a social justice writer, became a household name after penning a viral article analyzing the crime scene of the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, Missouri. King has also successfully raised significant funds for many #BlackLivesMatter projects

including \$60,000 for the family of 12-year-old Cleveland boy Tamir Rice after he, too, was gunned down by police. McKesson is an activist and Baltimore Public Schools administrator, known for traveling the country, taking part in speaking engagements on behalf of the movement. While these efforts are commendable, it is the activists on the ground in these communities who keep the movement alive. To date, unnamed protesters who were arrested in Ferguson continue the fight for justice in court cases of their own.

by **Lacresha Rosenthal**
Reporter/Journalist



5 Change the World



Pictured: (From Left Top to Right Bottom)
 1- Hannah Bonner giving an interview regarding her work
 2- Bonner and fellow activist holding protests outside the Waller County Jail
 3- Sandra Bland hosted a V-Log and offered words of hope to her followers.
 4- Sandra Bland as she was being arrested by police 5- The scene at one of many #BLM pre-tests.



Matter



#BlackLivesMatter
 #handsupdontshoot

On a more local level, Hannah Bonner has been a force in the fight for #JusticeForSandraBland. Bland was found dead in her cell on July 13, 2015, after having been arrested under questionable circumstances. Bonner, a minister, writer and respected justice advocate, is praised for her unyielding support of #BlackLivesMatter and has no problem asking, "What happened to Sandra Bland?" or getting out into the community affectionately reminding citizens to #SayHerName. In the days leading up to the one-year anniversary of Sandra Bland's death, Bonner joined with others from the community to commemorate her life. For 64 hours (the amount of time Bland was in custody), Bonner and a diverse coalition of activists camped out in front of the Waller County

jail. Each night, Sandra Bland's face was projected onto the wall outside the jail while her voice echoed from a loud speaker: #SandyStillSpeaks. While it may be tempting to be distracted by city officials honoring Bland's life with the naming of "Sandra Bland Parkway," it is important to remember justice has yet to be served. Of course there is the conversation of #BlackLivesMatter versus #AllLivesMatter. And while there has been no shortage of speeches, analogies and memes delivered toward the debate, facts remain. Racial profiling by law enforcement does exist. Research proves black citizens are targeted more frequently and more aggressively than their white counterparts. By its own admission, per a Department of Justice report following the death of Mi-

chael Brown, Ferguson Police Department and the city's municipal court engaged in a "pattern and practice of discrimination against African Americans, disproportionately targeting them for traffic stops, use of force and jail sentences." While there is no debating all lives should matter, the justice system has sent the message loud and clear: the lives of a select portion of society do not matter as much as others. The mission of #BlackLivesMatter is not to discredit or devalue the lives of any other group, but to provide the black community, its leaders and allies with a call to action. The mission is to step up, explore the various challenges and take responsibility for the communities in which racial disparities are taking place.

Don't Minimize Any Part of the Pulse Shooting

By Kara Moore

The shooting at Pulse Nightclub on June 12, 2016 was the largest mass shooting by a lone gunman ever to take place in the United States, the largest terrorist attack since 9/11. It happened at an LGBTQ+ nightclub, which was hosting a Latin night, causing 90% of the victims to be of Hispanic background. All of these are facts, but how are they interrelated?

Following the shooting, the LGBTQ+ community felt fear they had not felt in years of struggling for equality and acceptance. The reports quickly started coming out that the shooter, Omar Mateen, was possibly gay or bisexual himself. Reports streamed out from people claiming to be ex-lovers, and bar patrons of Pulse claimed they had seen Mateen at the club no less than a dozen times before the fateful night. His ex-wife has even suggested that she believed him to be gay. Yet, the FBI found nothing to show that he was living an openly gay or closeted life. His father said that the motivation for the shooting might have stemmed from his upset at seeing a gay couple kissing in public not long before that night.

It was a mess before the radical conservatives got ahold of it. Reports and videos of preachers/priests saying they wished he had killed more LGBTQ+ people started to appear. Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick tweeted out a Bible verse which stated "A man reaps what he sows" hours after the shooting, which was deleted shortly after people began to become upset. (Of course, he

claims that it's mere coincidence.) And finally, people started to say that Mateen did not target the LGBTQ+ club because it was a gay club, but just targeted the club at random – that it was an attack on America, and not on the LGBTQ+ community.

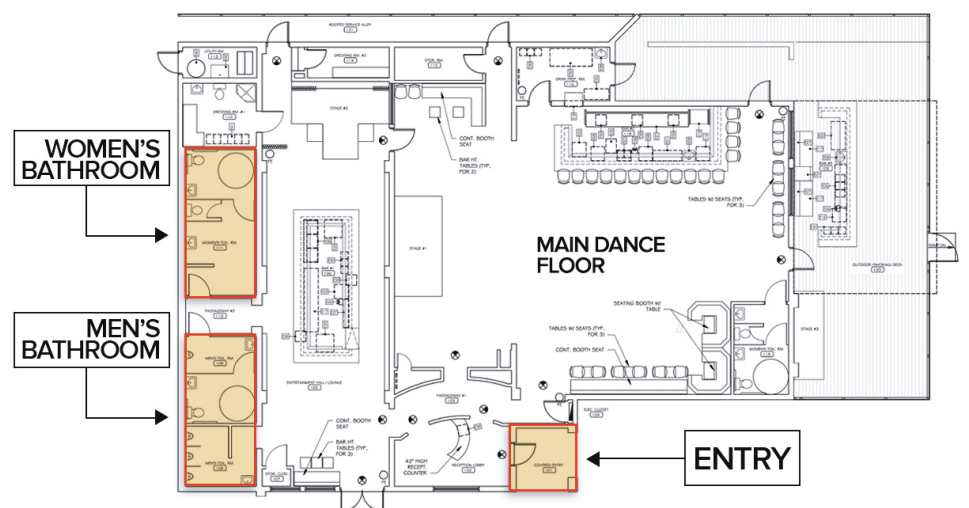
While the FBI couldn't find anything to show Mateen was closeted, I want to make one thing clear to the public: He could have targeted any club, on any night. While he might have pledged allegiance to ISIL and made threats against America, he didn't choose a gay club at random. He chose it for whatever reasons he had to want to kill members of the LGBTQ+ community in mass quantities. It was an attack on the community – and yes, in some respects, America – but by claiming it was random, you are diminishing the impact this shooting has had on the LGBTQ+ community.

People are scared in a way they haven't been for a long time. Same-sex marriage made the community celebrate, and the shooting brought out the radicals in our country to remind them that they should still be careful, and probably should still be afraid. And don't forget: it was on Latin night. The fact that nearly all of the victims were Latinx speaks to our current culture, a country where a candidate for president wants to "build a wall" along the Mexican border. None of this is random. It all matters. By minimizing any part of it, you minimize the impact it should have on everyone.



Images courtesy of abcNews
Pictured: Pulse Nightclub and (R) a mockup of the floorplan the night of the murders.

PULSE NIGHT CLUB



SOURCE | CITY OF ORLANDO RECORDS DEPARTMENT



Open Carry

By Kara Moore

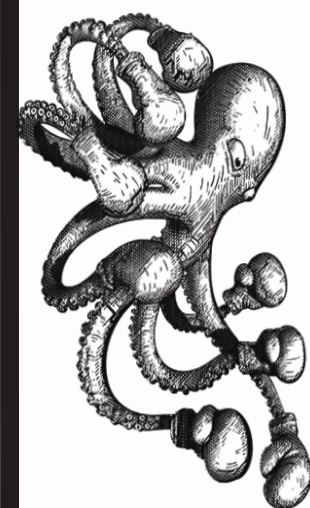
If you haven't heard by now, let me bring this to your attention: Thanks to Texas lawmakers, pretty soon students, staff, and whoever else will be able to bring concealed weapons onto all public college campuses (and private colleges that did not opt out of the new law). That is, it extends the previous allowance of guns onto campus grounds, to buildings and classrooms. What does that really mean, though? And how will we determine when to "see something, say something"?

Well, it means that any of your classmates of or over the age of 21 will be able to bring their guns to class, so long as you don't see them. Concealed carry means you aren't even supposed to know a gun is there. Proponents of the law say that it will make campuses safer because if someone who does something bad comes, then the good people with guns will be able to stop them. It's the same logic some conservatives have used when discussing all mass shootings – if only more good people had guns, someone could have stopped the bad guy with a gun. Many major Texas colleges were against the measure; in fact, retired Admiral William McRaven, who is the chancellor of the UT system, said he didn't think it would make colleges safer, in an interview with NPR. "I mean, the fact of the matter is, you know, any time you introduce guns into an environment that has high stress [...] you have a number of concerns." The only positive thing he had

to say regarding the measure? "I'm also very appreciative that the state legislature has given us the latitude to take a look at where we allow guns on campus."

So, how will UHD handle Campus Carry, as it starts on the 1st of August? Well, it has to be careful. While the law does allow limitations of guns on campus in some respects, those respects are again limited by the fact that the "gun free zone" can't be the classrooms or the whole campus. Of course, they can be areas where large amounts of people might convene, say the theatre or Student Life Center. UHD does plan to implement gun free zones, posting the required signs in all of those areas. (Note: As of Aug. 1st, the One Main, Academic, and Girard Street buildings have all been designated as "gun-free areas," per UHD Campus Carry Policy section 3.2.5.1.)

When it comes to how we will "see something, say something" the campus website still encourages students to contact UHD Police if they see a handgun not fully concealed. If you see the outline of the gun but not the gun itself, that counts as concealed under Texas state law. Make sure you know what is and isn't legal before reporting students to the police. You may also report someone you believe may be carrying a firearm illegally. How you can determine whether someone is legally or illegally carrying a gun remains to be seen.



Summer Times
IN THE
City

“UnderTale” for the Pope

By Christopher Joseph

When you meet the Pope, most people would expect that you'd give him something that represents the culture, something with meaning, but YouTuber Matthew Patrick gave Pope Francis something a bit different: a video game.

Host of the YouTube gaming channel Game Theory, Matthew Patrick had a chance to meet with the pope, along with several other YouTubers from across the world. They met to address how the Internet can bring people together. When Patrick was asked to meet up with Pope Francis, he was told it was customary to give him a tribute that not only represented America but also YouTube's gaming community. Patrick saw this to be the perfect opportunity to give the pope something unique, the critically acclaimed video game “UnderTale.”

“To me, if I was going to be a representative of any culture, it was going to be of this culture: the Internet culture, and more specifically of gamers, because our voice has so rarely gotten represented offline. And when we are discussed, it's always, always in the negative,” Patrick said in his YouTube video titled, “Game Theory: Why I Gave the Pope “UnderTale.” “UnderTale.” is a role-playing game created by indie developer Toby Fox. In this game the player takes control of a human child, who has fallen into the Underground, a large secluded region under the surface of the Earth. The player is met with various monsters that inhabit the Underground during their quest to return back to the surface.

At first glance, a video game is an odd choice to give, as it is not a traditional gift given to the Pope. Usually it's some kind of trinket. However, this is not just a video game for the Pope to play as entertainment, but an art form for him to experience.

“UnderTale” is different breed of your run-of-the-mill, kill-an-enemy-to-get-to-the-objective, triple A game. This is a game that drives its players with an enriching storyline, a cast of lovable characters and a gameplay system that the player is in control of. Many forms of art offer different impressions for each person who views them. “UnderTale.” does exactly that, giving the player a different experience depending on the path

that they choose to take.

On the surface level of any game you can quickly deduce that graphics is what makes a game an art, when that's not entirely true. When you dive deeper into a video game and look past the graphics, you will be able to see a much more compelling side of a game that evoke some sort of emotional response. These games are designed to capture a player, remove them from reality, and let them enjoy being the hero of their own story – one that unfolds like a book the more you play it, and can install love and compassion just like any other form of art can.

There is a bigger message that Patrick is trying to send. His giving the Pope a copy of a video game does more than to represent a different form of art, but to convey a message that has plagued gamers: negativity. Games such as Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty, has brought nothing but bad press towards the gaming community, and gamers are put in this category of being “violent.” The result has been unpleasant stereotyping of gamers as “spoiled, foul-mouthed kids who laugh over killing people,” as Patrick puts it in the video. This is what Patrick speaks up about during his visit with the Pope, that gamers want nothing more than peace. “UnderTale” does exactly what Patrick is representing for the community, a game that gives players a choice to not kill at all and show compassion to those who try and hurt you.

“I gave the Pope this game because it speaks his language. This year is his self-proclaimed year of mercy for the Catholic Church, a period of celebrating forgiveness and compassion when one could otherwise choose to harm a person,” Patrick stated in his video.

Matthew Patrick, goes into a more in depth explanation as to why he gave the Pope “UnderTale”, giving multiple reasons in his 16-minute video. But his overall point is that the gaming community wants nothing but change in how the world views something different. That change would create more humane people both inside and outside the video screen.



SUMMER IN THE CITY



Houston's Summer Climate: After Severe Rainfall, Here Comes the Heat

By Karen Reyes

Houstonians are no strangers to extreme summer heat and this year, with temperatures reaching past 100 degrees, is no different. Although we often blame Mother Nature for spoiling our plans, Houstonians are accustomed to Houston's tendency for harsh weather. From severe tropical storms to rare snowy winters, we have grown to love its "bipolar" weather.

Houston may be used to extreme summer heats, but we can not deny that temperatures have been increasing in recent years. The mercury has risen so much that our city has been called the "most air-conditioned city in the nation" as far back as 1953, with more than 95 percent of the homes having some sort of A/C since the 1980s.

Texas had been subject to weathering long dry periods following intense floods. Remember a couple of months back how our city was affected by severe flash floods? Well, now the tables have turned, and for the next few months drought will be knocking at our doors. State Climatologist John Nielsen Gammon reported back in April, "Expect warmer and drier weather." In his report or the Texas A&M University newsletter, he wrote that these irrational climate changes have a lot to do with El Niño and La Niña. Both are part of a cycle (called ENSO) in which sea temperatures in the Pacific Ocean fluctuate between warm and cool. In short, this phenomenon means rain and drought. El Niño was responsible for the state's wettest years on record in 2007 and again in 2016. Now that the extreme rainfall has faded away, La Niña is expected to take its place and we are just starting to feel its intensity.

Heavy rainfalls come with overflowing bayous and inches of rain; hot summers come with unbearable heat and drought. On both cases, Houstonians must bear with

both climates. We clearly saw the potential of Mother Nature last April: cars being swept away by angry overflowed bayous, houses being intruded by rising rain levels. Summer is no different. It is not recommended to be outdoors during noon hours as the heat is at its highest intensity yet; despite these warnings, people seem to discard them.

As much as we love to spend our summer outdoors, laying on the pool, doing daily workouts or just simply enjoying the sun, too much sun exposure can lead to multiple health complications and even death. The way the body reacts to heat is by sweating and breathing. The thing with sweating is that the only way for it to be effective in cooling down the body is when it has the ability to evaporate. If the body loses the ability to cool down, meaning the sweat can not evaporate, the body temperature keeps increasing and can cause a heat stroke or heat exhaustion.

As reported by the The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, extreme heat causes 658 deaths in the U.S each year; taking more lives than those in tornadoes, hurricanes, floods and lightning combined. Sadly, these deaths could have been prevented if precaution was taken. Last month, a three-year-old toddler was found death in a car just as the heat advisory alert was send to the residents of Houston. Evan Trapolino was said to be playing outside the house but apparently slipped inside the car, climbing to get a toy. The car had child-proof locks on the backseat doors and unfortunately, the toddler became trapped inside a scorching hot car. This is not the only life the heat has claimed; the total number of U.S heatstroke deaths of children left in cars is currently at 19. In 2015, the number of

children's deaths rose up to 24.

Although climatologists advise to stay inside during noon hours, this advice is not applicable to busy people or university students who take summer class on campus, like us. If that is your case, it is important to take precautions when heading outdoors, especially for children, seniors, athletes, people working outdoors, and pets. To prevent any heat-related illnesses, below are some precautions to remember:

- Wear light-colored clothing that is loose-fitting and lightweight to let the body cool properly.
- Avoid sunburn. If you are heading outside for a long period of time make sure to apply sunscreen to any expose skin.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Staying hydrated will keep the body at a normal body temperature and help you sweat.
- Avoid hot spots. Your car can rise up to 20 F in just 10 minutes during extreme hot days. Wait a few minutes to let your car cool off before you drive it.

For the next few weeks, temperatures are expected to stay at three digits. Summer season began on June 26 and will end on September 23. Remember that your physical health is much more important compared to any summer activity, so stay safe and hydrated.



Viking Adventures

By Kara Moore

When I went to Finland and Sweden, I knew I was going to study their education system and why they are rated the top systems in the world; what I didn't know is that I would fall in love with the near-perfection of Finnish society in Helsinki, or the gorgeous bustling city of Stockholm, Sweden. The cities, located more north of the equator than I've ever been before, gave a look into a different way to celebrate youth and education, a way that America should really consider if they want to see the results you find in those two countries.

Helsinki is literally a utopia, kind of ridiculously so. The air is clean, the water from the tap is purer than anything bottled in the US, and the streets have more people walking and biking than riding around in cars. It's pretty much always quiet and peaceful. If you're a person who gets anxious at the loud noises of NYC, but loves the city life where there is always something to do, then Helsinki is truly paradise. It has everything you want in a city – all of the art and bars and fun – without the honking or yelling or dirty streets. I mean, I walked from my hotel 30 minutes on a bike path, and made it to downtown to go to a club. And then I walked back. The entire time, I never felt unsafe.

In Stockholm, it gets a bit louder and more diverse. Sweden in general is a bigger and more populous country, so of course that is to be expected. It still had the gorgeous buildings and lots of people walking around and biking, but it also had more cars and taxis. It was still more quiet than most American cities, but not as peaceful as Helsinki. The best thing about Stockholm is the fact that it is a bunch of interconnected islands, so you can find lots of boats and people hanging out by the water and swimming all over the place. This is especially true during the summer months, because most of the time it's pretty cold over there.

Regarding the education system, it celebrates the individuality of student interests while simultaneously crafting a stress-free learning environment. The school handbooks, which cover all subjects, don't tell teachers how to teach, just what concepts to teach. The focus isn't on pitting students against each other to get the highest grade, but encouraging the students to help each other succeed. One of the biggest issues with today's American economy is the lack of entrepreneurship in the younger generations. In both Finland and Sweden high school students were working together to do start ups and come up with business ideas. Their mentality is literally "the worse that can happen is it fails." Now, the culture of Finland is to blame for this optimism. Kids are taught to work together, not compete with each other, unlike our intensive market economy. Our generation went through a recession which rocked their childhood, and they watched parents lose jobs and businesses. The fear to even attempt to start a business is very real here in America, whereas over there they know if they fail they can try again. If our education system encouraged students to work together and focused better on individual greatness, maybe our students wouldn't be so afraid to try.

If you've never been on a study abroad trip or study tour before, you might want to start saving money and looking into programs now. It will probably be the cheapest and best way to have an adventure and get a new perspective on the world. In our current political climate, that's probably a good thing.

Passport Stamp to Greece

by Ashley Peters

Opa! It was truly a pleasure to walk the same paths of the legendary Greek god, Dionysus; to stand in the spot where democracy was born; and to be able to look upon such astonishing views as classical ruins, ancient seas, and breathtaking landscapes. This rich cultural aesthetic was all a part of UHD's 2016 Drama Trip to Greece this past May. Included in those who went were UHD students, faculty, staff, and alumni as well as some family members and several students from neighboring colleges and universities.

Reports student Jasmine Major:

"Our group really bonded during the 10 days that we resided in Greece. The sights were amazing. I always say that I go places for the sights, not the food. Good food is always a plus, though. Hopefully I was able to catch the essence of what makes Greece unique in my pictures because these will be the pictures that I show my family and future children. As they say: "It was lit!"

Throughout this once-in-a-lifetime vacation, not a moment was wasted. The food, shopping, sunshine and smiles flowed nonstop. Art and history were around every corner. Each nook and cranny had a back-story or mythological tale. And the Greek people were uniquely warm, inviting, and eager to share their culture and history.

Reports student Teria Millhouse:

"It was such a great experience being in a different country especially it being Greece. The water was so beautiful and everybody there was so friendly. I'm very happy I was able to experience it."

At the final going-away banquet, which was a traditional Greek dinner, everyone ate like kings and danced the night away on top of the chips of broken dishes that littered the floor. (Breaking plates is a long-time Greek tradition at special celebrations.) The recognizable expression "Opa" was ringing from each group member as they bade farewell to Greece. The 2016 Drama Trip to Greece provided a lifetime of memories that they will never forget.



High School vs. College

By Lacresha Rosenthal

11 Campus & Local News



Whether you are a freshman coming straight out of high school or a less traditional student coming straight out of life, the following information can be helpful as you navigate the halls and bayous of UHD. As a college student you will discover many differences between high school and university life: no annoying bells between classes, no prudish dress code, and no detention! Not to mention that high school is free, and your four-year university degree is accompanied by a continuously mounting debt that weighs on your soul and crushes every ounce of your will to live.

Oh, the sweet taste of freedom from the micromanagement of parents is as wonderful and joyous as you could imagine! But the looming doubt of not knowing what to do with that personal freedom can paralyze those unaware of their own identities. Without some personal reflection, the vast array of choices could easily claim you as a hostage, demanding answers. Your advisor, in a sense, becomes the de-facto parent, reminding you of your responsibilities and the weight of choices made too lightly when planning your courses.

At least you can rest easy knowing that never again will you endure the ratchet (or wretched) frozen whole-sale supplied excuse for food often found in public schools, because at UHD we have a cafeteria filled with various vendors who offer you a plethora of foods from popular chains we all know and love. Never mind the fact that by the time finals hit, it will become the only thing you have eaten for a whole semester and it will take whatever ounce of energy left in your over-worked, sleep-deprived body to look at the person at the counter and once again order the same meal that you always do before you schlep off to finish that 10-page research paper, single-spaced, due at midnight.

No doubt, college life is guaranteed to introduce you to some of the most diverse and challenging experiences you will ever be exposed in life, while consistently testing your will to be great. Once the semester gets underway the sound of your professor's voice will become reminiscent of a lullaby, encouraging you to drift away into sleepy land. You might swear that the universe is conspiring against you while working on assignments when answers become as elusive as the Loch Ness Monster. A sense of guilt might creep in as you push that study guide aside in exchange for one of those late night parties that are just too exhilarating to pass up!

After a long day of classes and studying, there are several places around campus to unwind. Whether you prefer to burn off steam in the gym, shoot a few rounds of pool, challenge a buddy to an array of Xbox games, get in a few minutes of meditation or simply grab a coffee, we have you covered! There are numerous organizations and clubs to join depending on your interests.

Soon, you will find that your life is your very own creation. You are now free to set different goals and explore alternative ways of thinking. You may find yourself changing your habits, adopting a new hobby, or possibly expanding your circle of friends. All of this can add up to a renewed sense of self - a new way of being in the world. So, without further ado, welcome, and G0



As “Star Trek” Steps Forward, Rihanna Stuns

By Terrance Turner

“Star Trek has been a part of my life since I was a little girl,” says music superstar Rihanna in a promotional trailer for Star Trek: Beyond. She credits her father with introducing her to the show, which took all of one episode to win her over. “This is something that’s been a part of me since my childhood. It’s never left me,” she said in the promo for the film. So it was a no-brainer that she would accept an offer to record for the movie’s soundtrack. Because of the franchise’s global impact, she explains, the stakes were high. “This song – it needed to be big and impactful, very emotional, dramatic, and haunting at the same time.”

The song is all of those things – and it’s a stunner. With the chilling new single “Sledgehammer,” Rihanna has hit yet another artistic peak. “I’m bracing for the pain and I am letting go,” she sings, hitting spine-tingling high notes against the ticking clock of the arrangement. The song’s anthemic feel, with lyrics about surviving both devastation and heartbreak, has singer-songwriter Sia’s unmistakable stamp. (She co-wrote the song, along with Jesse Shatkin and Rihanna herself.) Initially a dark, desolate piano ballad, the tune builds into a stirring electropop chorus. “I was sure your words would leave me unconscious/And on the floor I’d be lying cold, lifeless/But I hit a wall, I hit a wall...watched it fall. You’re just another brick, and I’m a sledgehammer.” Her vocal growth is audible in this rousing performance, and it may be one of her most memorable yet.



DATELINEDOWNTOWNHTX@GMAIL.COM

SUBMIT
YOUR
WORK

Star Trek: 50 Years Beyond the Galaxy

By: Christopher Joseph

The future of Star Trek has never been so bright, with a new installment of the Star Trek movie franchise, Star Trek: Beyond, arriving just in time to celebrate 50 years of the series. The majority of the main cast from the first two movies, Star Trek and Star Trek: Into Darkness, have returned to reprise their roles: Captain Kirk (Christopher Pine), as the helm of the USS Enterprise, Spock (Zachary Quinto), as the first officer, and Uhura (Zoe Saldana) as the communications officer. Along with the returning cast, we have two new faces joining the ranks. Idris Elba plays Krall, a ruthless alien commander, and Sofia Boutella portrays Jaylah, an alien warrior.

The crew of the USS Enterprise is halfway into a five year mission when they are suddenly attacked by a seemingly unstoppable wave of unknown aliens, forcing them to abandon the Enterprise. Stranded on an unknown planet with no apparent means of rescue, the crew find themselves at odds with a new and ruthless enemy.

Star Trek: Beyond is stated to be a completely original story, taking no cues or themes from prior Star Trek history. This is very different from the second film, Star Trek: Into Darkness, which gained some criticism for drawing too much inspiration from 1982’s Star Trek 2: The Wrath of Khan. A completely original story can give the writers something more to play with as they are now able to bring something new to the table, instead of relying on storylines from the original series. Star Trek: Beyond can be the catalyst to give the audience a new experience, while staying true to the feel of exploration of the old series. Star Trek: Beyond can ultimately pave the way

for reboots to not stick to the same beat of the old movie, but become something original to win back fans and also gain new ones.

In an interview with the pop culture website Nerdist.com, Simon Pegg, one of the writers of Star Trek: Beyond –who also portrays Scott Montgomery, the Enterprise’s Chief engineer– said about the movie, “There will be things for every Star Trek fan. It is the same world, and so some of the points of reference will be the same. But they are off in a part of the galaxy that they’ve never seen before. They are far away from the usual suspects.”

Speaking of originality, a major character on the Enterprise has been changed in honor of George Takei. Jon Cho plays the Enterprise’s helmsman, Hikaru Sulu, who was originally portrayed by Takei. In Star Trek: Beyond it will be revealed that Sulu is gay, in honor of Takei, who is a prominent activist in the LGBTQ+ community. However, even though this move was to pay homage to Takei, and his work with the community, Takei wasn’t a big fan of the change.

“Well, I’m very flattered, I’m delighted that the issue of the LGBT is being finally addressed on Star Trek, but because I respect and admire Gene [Roddenberry] as a bold and strong producer of the television shows and I love him as a friend, I want to honor him.” Takei said in a conversation with Cho, which he later retold to People magazine.

Takei stated that when the show was on air, he and the show’s creator, Gene Roddenberry, with whom Takei had a close friendship, had discussed the possibilities of a gay character. Roddenberry ultimately decided against the idea. Takei wrote in a July 13 Facebook post that ratings had plummeted following the

“Plato’s Stepchildren” episode, which featured TV’s first interracial kiss. According to People, Roddenberry feared that the inclusion of a gay character “would destroy ratings beyond repair.” Justin Lin, the director of the film, even got into contact with Takei, and Takei suggested that instead of making Sulu gay, just create a new character who is gay, with no reimagining on Roddenberry’s characters. Ultimately, Pegg and the other writers decided against it, stating in an email sent to Takei a year later, “We didn’t want to create a fresh new character, we wanted to take an original hero and suggest he is gay.” Takei eventually accepted the change, writing on Facebook: “While I would have gone with the development of a new character in this instance, I do fully understand and appreciate what they are doing—as ever, boldly going where no one has gone before. Star Trek will live long and prosper.”

Star Trek has been around for 50 years and there are no signs of this series dying. Gaining new fans almost every day, the series has not been forgotten in the slightest. In fact it has been announced that a new series is slated to be released in 2017, in the same world as the movies, but with a different crew. For this 50th anniversary, fans are excited to see that the series has stayed relevant this long. This film will be a tribute not only to the original Spock, Leonard Nimoy, who died last year, but also to Anton Yelchin, who played Pavel Chekov in the films and who passed away earlier this year. Their contributions to this franchise and this world will never be forgotten. Star Trek: Beyond beams into theaters July 22.