Bierdz makes use of a special TV/camera device which enlarges documents and enables him to read them.

By Sarah Silhan
Editor

Most GSU students probably begin their days in the same way each day—you wake up, brush your teeth, get dressed, feed the dog and grab a granola bar on the way out the door. You get in your car, fight traffic until you reach your office or school and then spend your day working or learning, depending on your current situation. But what if you lived in a world where all of these items and tasks were designed to be accessible by everyone else but you?

As Thomas Bierdz, GSU Professor says, “What if, like in an episode of the Twilight Zone, the color of your clothes, or the writing on every paper, book, or item could only be seen by others? What if at the vending machine the buttons went blank: not to be read? Or, what if cars, stoplights and street signs were invisible—only to you—so you had to arrange your life around them of their meanings. Finally, he has a hearing impairment.

Dealing with one disability might be challenging, but multiple ones can be overwhelming, considering that studies show, for most people, the fear of blindness is only trumped by cancer and AIDS.

However, overwhelmed is not the word for Professor Bierdz, who prefers to be called “Bierdz” by his students, many of whom are surprised when they learn of his conditions, because he does not, at first, appear to have any disabilities. That is, until he takes off thick glasses and holds a paper millimeters from his face to read it.

Not allowing his disabilities to hold him back, he remains motivated to make a difference in the lives of students, friends, faculty, staff and virtually anyone he meets. The path he follows is certainly not paved with gold and sometimes his direction isn’t always crystal clear.

“There are still so many things I want to try and experience,” Bierdz says. “At my age, 42, most people have picked a path, or have decided to roll along the path they are on. But I’m still not sure if I want to touch or do something else. I just know that about ten years ago, I recognized that one activity I often found myself doing was teaching.”

Not being sure of why he enjoyed it so much, Bierdz investigated the matter. In an in-depth interview, he explained that there were three main reasons he found teaching to be satisfying.

First, while growing up he lacked social skills, and at times, still finds socialization to be uncomfortable. However, as a teacher, the social process becomes much simpler.

“Everyone knows what they are to do and what is expected of them,” he said. “The topics of discussion switch from nenominal to intellectual.”

Secondly, he says he enjoys learning and likes to figure out “how things work.” Teaching allows him to enjoy sharing what he knows with others and helping them to build their learning skills.

Finally, it comes down to basic enjoyment.

“People tend to do the things they enjoy and/or do well,” he said. “These factors may explain why I teach...Yet, my teaching philosophy is that we are the only ones who can teach ourselves.”

While this may seem confusing, Bierdz used an analogy of two farmers to further his point.

See More Than Meets the Eye page 4
Who's Taking the Heat for Classroom Temps?

By Sarah Silhan

Last week, while driving to campus, I was shocked to see one of the most amazing sights of all time. As I approached GSU, I saw dollars and thousands of them—spewing from the smokestacks of the buildings. They were floating against a beautiful blue sky, a vision that my eyes had never seen before.

I parked my car and got out, stopping to pick up a few dollars on my way to class. I had my jacket tucked into my backpack, but retrieved it long enough to stash a couple of hundreds into the pockets. What a fantastic day at GSU! OK, so this scenario didn't happen quite like I've described. But the part about the money spewing from the smokestacks is true. Well, at least.

Until I came to GSU, I have never spent more of my summer in jeans, sweatshirts, socks and closed-toe shoes. Forget the tank tops, shorts, sandals or skirts. With the temperatures in the classrooms, you need to pack for a couple of hundreds into the pockets. What a fantastic day at GSU! OK, so this scenario didn't happen quite like I've described. But the part about the money spewing from the smokestacks is true. Well, at least.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, legality, and interest to our GSU readership.

All submissions should be signed, and include the student, faculty, or staff member's ID number, department, and phone number.

Earth Final Report

Editor's Note: This piece is written from the perspective of an alien being required to spend two years on the planet and reporting back to their superiors on the status of planet earth. The author submitted it to The Phoenix.

Introduction

Fifty years ago I was introduced to this planet with the hope of establishing and maintaining peace. What I was told was there was intelligent life that could sustain a living peace. This is my final report on the status of this planet called Earth.

People

I have noticed the people of this planet are slow learners. They have repeated errors made by previous generations without regard to consideration of the effect on the planet and the next generation. The people of this planet are slow to change or they attempt to force change. They choose to cling to the mistakes made rather than learn from their mistakes. The people of this planet frequently blame others for the mistakes and forced changes they themselves have initiated.

The people of this planet are violent and engage in conflict for sport. They appear to be fixated on violence. The people of this planet are angry, frustrated and fearful. I was told they should be provided with guidance to overcome their violent and hateful ways, they have rejected all attempts.

The people of this planet seem unable to search for and choose good leaders, even after they have been given generations of written and verbal instruction. They display no compassion and little empathy. They are extremely indifferent and unable to commit to a course of action which will save the planet and enhance the well being of their societies. The people of this planet are greedy consumed with the need to accumulate what they consider wealth. They frequently waste precious natural resources.

Environment

The planet is dying. After years of sucking the life blood of the earth, they have repeatedly ignored alternative fuels. They are still burning fossil fuels, thus destroying the atmosphere which was to have sustained them. Their use of nuclear fuel and their intention of fashioning weapons from the by-products will seal their future and ultimately destroy the planet. Their attempts at recycling although important I fear are too little too late. The inexusable waste of food products and water is discouraging.

The planet is burning. Failure to preserve clean water resources will ultimately enrage every living plant, animal and person on this planet. Failure to use forest products effectively and replant for conservation purposes, shows a total disregard for life. The waste of plant and food by-products is thoughtless. If every banana peel could be recycled into a new tree, or human waste could be recycled without the use of water or danger of contamination, then we would have a new beginning. The warnings you have been given, the earth quakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, monsoons, volcanic eruptions, tornados and lighting strikes have fallen on deaf ears. No one seems to understand the earth is crying out to the inhabitants, the only question left is it too late?

Collapse and eventual Self-destruction

It was my original intention to recommend early termination of all advanced life forms. This is a final option, to ensure possible reclamation of the planet and enable possible slow re-entry of base life forms. I have been contacted numerous times requesting the natural destruction date. It is my recommendation a comparison should be made using the natural destruction date, and comparing eventual collapse and implosion; rather than early termination. The planet cannot continue to sustain life without an end to the violent, wasteful actions of those whom inhabit it.

Alternatives

The planet has been given the opportunity to use solar power; there is no reason for a shortage of energy. The wind was originally used to draw clean water, and can now be used as a source of energy. Water can be used as a source of energy. Water can be used as a source of energy.
Voice of the People

Compiled by Michelle Hulett
Staff Writer

We asked a few GSU students to give their opinions of The Phoenix! From what they'd like to see to their feelings about current stories and event coverage, here's what they had to say:

"I read it briefly but I think it should target more things about student life and what they have to offer, like the gym or different clubs." 
-- Bernessa Morris 
(Interdisciplinary Studies)

"I think the paper is ok. I wish it would cover more activities that are coming up. I read it to see what's going on at school."
-- Kelly Legner 
(Accounting)

"It would be interesting to read about the different art structures on campus. A lot of people have no clue what these structures are or why they're on campus grounds. It would also be interesting to have a Math vs. English article. Students could debate which is the 'better' subject."
-- John Major 
(Math)

"It would be interesting to read about the faculty and to see students' different views about world/US events as well as GSU issues. A 'name that professor' game would be cool to put in the comic and crossword section."
-- Joseph Lacy 
(English)

Editor's Note: Thanks to everyone who participated and gave us great feedback about YOUR student newspaper! Other comments and/or suggestions for The Phoenix are always welcome via email to phoenix@govst.edu or sarahsilhan@aol.com.

Who's Who at GSU

Eric Matanyi
Director of Public Affairs and Marketing

By Sarah Silhan 
Editor

With all the events and exciting things happening on campus on a daily basis, it's up to someone to oversee all the internal and external marketing and communication needs of the University. Lucky for GSU, there's Eric Matanyi.

His responsibilities as Director of Public Affairs and Marketing include everything from sending business cards and press releases to the local media, to the creation of the GSU View newsletter and radio ads. Matanyi has been a south-sider his entire life, growing up in Midlothian and Tinley Park (though he proudly admits he "bleeds Cubby blue") and graduating from Eastern Illinois University. He first came to GSU in 2002 as a contract employee with The CenterPoint for Entrepreneurs, where he eventually handled their marketing needs and counseled regional business clients. He was then hired by the University's Public Relations team in 2004.

He says that the opportunity to interact with a wide range of people on a daily basis is the best part of his job. "From speaking with network news anchors to our exceptional faculty and from elected officials to local business leaders, each day is totally different from the next," he said. "I enjoy coming to work knowing that each day will be a new adventure." Matanyi also explained that the PR department at GSU is literally working on hundreds of projects in any given month, and this year will be no exception.

"We've always got something new on our plate," he said. "I'm particularly excited about using new marketing mediums this year, including pre-show commercials in area movie theaters. And, the University is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2002, so we will be working on several exciting projects for that, too."

When he's not at work, Matanyi enjoys challenging himself through outdoor adventures like skydiving and hiking. He says his biggest personal accomplishment was traversing the Grand Canyon, rim to rim, on foot in a single day. He and his fiancée, Jessica, are also busy planning a wedding for this coming spring.

When asked what the GSU community should know about the PR department, Matanyi joked, "We're actually top CIA operatives. OK, we're not. But we do eat a lot of raisins and pistachios."

Earth

Cont. from page 2

A hydrogen based energy was deemed too volatile, when in actuality the by product is water and oxygen, the hydrogen is recycled to power the generator. They were allowed to develop energy storage devices, some which could be used as a fuel. Successive years have been re-engineered into bio-fuels creating further atmospheric problems. What good is the universe is moving, even the galaxies are moving; you are not. To re-claim your planet, you must now consider every re-action of your actions, before you take them. If you choose to continue to waste the natural resources you have been given, then you are condemning the next generation to living without those resources. If you choose to continue to violently force change, then the changes made will not be sustained, and the generations to come will pay for your actions without thought. There is an answer to your dilemma; I believe you call it peace.

Kim Kahl
Contributing Alien

Take Control of Your Child's Education with Affordable, Private Tutoring

For more information, visit The Black Ray Project, located at 9001 South Oakley Drive, Tinley Park, Ill. 60477. Call (708) 945-8800. Visit our website at www.blackrayproject.org.
"Consider two farmers and their seeds," he said. "One prepares the soil, plants, weeds, waters, fertilizes and so on, but the other simply scatters the seeds and walks away. At harvest time, each gathered their crops. The good farmer had plenty and the other farmer had few. We all recognize that the seeds in the field of the good farmer will grow much better than the in the field of the farmer who scattered and walked away. But more importantly, we also know that each seed grows according to its own inborn capacity."

According to Bierdz, the ability to grow is in the seed, but the conditions for growth come from the farmer. Because of this, he sees his role as an educator to be like a farmer: "I till the soil of each student's mind, remove the weed of error and ensure conditions for growth are prime," he said. "But, like the seed, each student must grow themselves according to their capacity."

But despite his intelligence, wit and incredible ability to live life in spite of his disabilities, Bierdz often had trouble gaining employment. Many times, employers would make excuses for not hiring him and he was often judged negatively before being given the opportunity to prove his ability to perform in the workplace.

"Interviews would end as soon as my visual problem was noticed," explained Bierdz. "At that point, the employer would say something like, 'Thanks for your time, but we're really looking for someone who speaks Spanish', even though that was never mentioned in the ad."

Bierdz said that oftentimes, employers wouldn't even consider how he could perform simple tasks. For example, for emails, he uses voice programs that read aloud what displays on the screen. For paper documents, he has a special TV/camera device that shows the document on the screen where it can be enlarged so it can be seen and read—just like normal text can be for the sighted.

With so much discrimination from potential employers, how did he end up at GSU? Dr. Maribeth Kasik, Multicategorical Special Education program coordinator, says she decided to hire Bierdz while he was but a student in her class after she noticed his talents. He was my student in SPED 335 and provided correct, yet eloquent, explanations for several complex and difficult concepts," she explains. "As Bierdz progressed through the class, I saw he already had developed a set of important skills that are vital in a special education and trainer of educators."

The formula simply made sense: Allow Bierdz, a man who coupled his disabilities with a desire and gifts to teach, to show Education majors that children with disabilities truly can be successful. This allows his students to see firsthand that a disability is not, as they might think, a prerequisite for failure.

"Having someone like Bierdz as an instructor lets [students] see, not read about or hear about, but really see that effective, resourceful and productive a person can be with a disability." Dr. Kasik said. "They can see that in their role as teachers, disability should never be an issue that will prevent anyone from doing anything."

"When you buy a puzzle, you look at the picture on the box so you can see what you are shooting for. For our students, Bierdz is that picture," she added.

Though students might look at Bierdz with wonder and awe, his goal is not to impress. That is, unless it is to impress upon his students that by being creative and diligent to fully assess a student's situation, kids facing handicaps (barriers) will be successful.

The secret is in removing the handicapping conditions.

"The world is constructed by humans for humans, but for humans without disabilities," Bierdz explains. "If teachers, who already work hard, would look around the classroom and find five handicapping conditions and remove them, the world becomes reconstructed: made a little more even."

For example, he explained that some students are overwhelmed by too many problems appearing on a page. For this child, simply spread the problems out across multiple pages. Or, for the student who has trouble with reading comprehension, but is a good listener, assign a reading buddy who will take turns reading and coaching the struggling student.

"The major problem for those with disabilities is not the disability! states Bierdz. "The problem is handicapping conditions! We all face them. The difference is that our fellow humans with disabilities run up against more of them in multiple levels of their lives."

Through his work at GSU, Bierdz is truly showing students that children with disabilities are just as capable as any other student. He is living proof that seeing people for their potential, giving them the same advantages afforded to others, and keeping in mind that we all want compassion, and thus should offer it to others, is what people needs to succeed, whether at the primary level or college level.

"If we view all people as having potential, view disability, poverty, minorities, age, etc, as something we all sociologically share, handicapping conditions become everyone's responsibility," he says. "I'm not asking people to take major action, spend money or commit themselves to a cause. I simply suggest that each person looks at the world a little differently."

This attitude is why Bierdz has become such an important part of GSU's education faculty. As he shows day after day, sometimes, it is those who face the most barriers that can best lead the way.

The heartwarming story of a cute little girl on the Southside of Chicago and her "surprise" first day of school—and how she was embarrassed when she did not know her "real" name.

Great for children of all ages (and adults too!) www.createspace.com/3331964 or www.tinyurl.com/3ng4tm takes buyers directly to the Amazon page to purchase the book.

On sale at Amazon.com

written by Iris Montgomery-Ileri
By Jonathan Vizona
Contributing Writer

In an age of Al-Qaeda and campus shootings, Governors State University found itself a very safe place on Oct. 9 as the Office of Career Services hosted its Criminal Justice and Public Safety career fair in the Hall of Governors. Representatives from organizations such as U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Chicago Police Department, Will County Sheriff's Department as well as various municipal police departments met with GSU students who expressed an interest in careers in law enforcement.

“Our career fairs have started to be specialized,” said Loretta Haddox, Administrative Associate of Career Services, who organized the event in which over dozen organizations had tables and displays. “So we contact faculty, department chairs and the deans of each of the colleges at GSU and ask who they'd like to see at the Career Fairs. Once we have a master mailing list, we invite a large number to participate. Once they submit a registration form and fee, they are guaranteed a table at the fair.” Admission for those attending the fair was free.

The various agents and officers, some of whom were clad with radios, vests, and pistols, were part of the 18 organizations who attended the fair, the second of its kind at GSU.

Keith Williams, DEA Special Agent Recruitment Coordinator, was looking for students who met the stringent physical and academic requirements necessary for acceptance and training in the DEA.

"Special Agents are on the ground where the action is," Williams said. During the fair, he distributed pamphlets which specify the criteria the DEA is interested in, such as degrees in criminal justice, political science, finance and computer science, as well as fluency in foreign languages like Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Nigerian.

Many local police departments were also on hand to answer questions and explain the training process for new officers and dispatchers. Detective Sergeant Michael Cornell represented the Blue Island Police Department.

"We are really looking for a diverse workforce, and the new requirements for the department mandate that candidates have at least two years of college completed," he explained. "During the next year, we will be hiring five new officers - three with the help of a grant we just received and two more to fill the spots of two retiring officers."

He also explained that the written and physical test will be administered on Oct. 25, and the Blue Island Police Department will be accepting applications through Oct. 16.

On the other side of the hall, the Will County Sheriff's Department had a table manned by Deputy Robert Kikkert. Despite the fact that the tables were disparately federal, state, county, municipal or local in the case of GSU's Department of Public Safety, the sense of a shared importance of mission permeated the event.

"We are autonomous, but a lot of [municipalities] send us their forensics, or we have to do traffic investigations," Kikkert said, highlighting the strengths of being independent but cooperative.

Haddox hopes the fair gave GSU students and local community members the opportunity to ask questions and get more information, as well as submit resumes to the departments.

"Ideally, we’d love to help our students find employment," she said.

GSU's Career Services department will be offering another specialized fair in December, this one for those interested in working in the Health fields. More information can be found at www.govst.edu/careerservices or by emailing career@govst.edu.

Social workers from around the Chicagoland area gathered at GSU to socialize, network, and learn.

By Jonathan Vizona
Contributing Writer

Both Governors State University (GSU) students of social work and more than 50 Chicago-metropolitan social workers came together on GSU's campus recently to socialize, network and learn more about how they can make a difference in their career.

"Our field instructors guide, mentor and teach our social work students during their field placement. Their work helps our students apply what they are learning in the classroom in the field," said Jo Anne Smith, Director of Field Education for the School of Social Work at GSU, a veteran of more than thirty years in the field.

Mentored by social workers volunteering as field instructors, both undergraduate and graduate students of the program participate in two off-campus assignments over the course of two years. By working in courts, schools, counseling centers, and hospitals, the students - under expert guidance - integrate theory with practice.

"The situations [the students] encounter in the field are much more complex than the ones in the classroom," said Smith, who believes the current stresses due to the mortgage and investment banking crises will require an increase in services of social support networks.

She also added that while the program currently offers a concentration of family and children's issues, other concentrations of study may be added to expand the scope of the program such as issues affecting the elderly.

At the event that brought field instructors and students together, Kathleen Bankhead, Chief of the Juvenile Justice Bureau for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, commended the instructors' dedication and presented "Anchoring Families: Securing Our Own Future," which concerned social workers' efforts to anchor families in communities.

Starting with the Juvenile Justice Bureau in 1990, Bankhead was appointed by Richard Devine, Cook County State's Attorney, in November of 2004. A panel response to Bankhead's presentation was facilitated by Gerri Outlaw, Chair of the Department of Social Work at GSU. A dialogue, facilitated by field instructors Ray Mosby of Aunt Martha's Youth Services and Michelle Cuebas of Rite of Passage, also took place following Bankhead's presentation.

Bankhead's position currently entails responsibility for more than 80 lawyers, hundreds of trials, and leading training across the division. She will also be speaking about restorative justice and peer mediation today at GSU.

She consistently stresses the importance of social workers within any community.

"[Social Workers] know what is right for families," she said in a recent press release. "They know what is right for kids. Think of how they can be helped. These may be helpless individuals for personal or societal reasons, and they are counting on you to help them survive."
NUCLEAR PHYSICS

\textbf{GSU Art Faculty Participate in Artists Month}

\textbf{By Barbara Haga Contributing Writer}

Javier Chavira and Jeff Stevenson, two of GSU’s art faculty members, are currently participating in Chicago Artists Month by exhibiting their work at the Chicago Artists’ Coalition’s (CAC) Annual Chicago Art Open at Merchandise Mart in Chicago.

The Annual Chicago Art Open exhibition showcases visual artists during the month of October. This particular event has been held for 11 years. However, this is the thirteenth annual celebration of Chicago Artists Month. Over the years, it has expanded to encompass more than two hundred events.

Chavira exhibited a painting titled “Preciosa y El Aire” for this year’s event. It is an oil painting with glass rhinestones on a panel which was painted this year. Chavira was selected to participate in this exhibition after a nomination from the National Museum of Mexican Art.

“Various arts organizations were asked to nominate a couple of artists to represent their organization,” Chavira said. “I was nominated to participate and I gladly accepted. It was a great honor.”

He also recently was featured in an exhibit at the Lee E. Delugar Gallery of the Department of Art and Design at South Suburban College. The “Preciosa y El Aire” painting was the image on the postcard that announced and advertised this exhibit, called “Iconic,” which refers to images that are revered and revered like the images of Jesus, Mary, or a saint.

Chavira says this piece is a part of an ongoing series of iconic figures that he has been creating for the past three years.

“I don’t want to create new versions of saintly pictures, but I am influenced by the symbolism,” he explains. “Some people may see religious overtones (in my work), but I really want to push the idea of beauty – the idealized beauty in society, in this figurative female. But at the same time, (it) shows a little of the vulnerability, the human factor.”

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Also featured at the Chicago Art Open is Stevenson’s work. He exhibited a mixed media piece titled “Predecessors,” which recently won the Curator’s Choice Award at the Chicago Art Open. In a Web statement, Stevenson said he is “currently creating mixed media book work pieces that are made up of oil portraits on canvas, acrylic on altered books, collaged imagery with wax technique and images painted over the wax with oil paint.”

Stevenson says his works “explore cultural issues of sexuality, masculinity, race, gender, and humor among other issues.”

Social Commentary is also an important aspect of his work, as well as an intuitive approach in creating them. When one views “Predecessors,” this becomes quite evident in the use of the collaged book pages and printed figurative illustrations.

“The interpretation of my work is, in a large part, up to the viewer,” Stevenson says. “Although I am inspired to bring the piece together with a personal narrative in mind, it is important to me to allow the room for interpretation that makes looking at art interesting for the viewer.”

Stevenson explained his inspiration for “Predecessors” as well.

“I would highlight an image in the World Book Encyclopedia of Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty viewed over the shoulders of immigrants. Because the encyclopedia is a history book, the image got me thinking about those who have come before us, our predecessors, and who among them are represented in the book and who are not.”

Chavira and Stevenson’s works can be viewed along with 298 other artists at Merchandise Mart, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza until Oct. 19 from 10 am to 5 pm. The exhibit is on the eighth floor. Admission is free. Chavira will also be exhibiting as a member of the 33 Collective Gallery in Chicago on Oct. 17 from 7-10pm. Check out www.33collective.com for more information.

\textbf{Nurses Needed: GSU Can Help}

\textbf{By Michelle Hulett Staff Writer}

A new program designed to meet the rising demand for advanced practice nurses and educators has recently started at GSU. The new Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) program is meant for students looking to pursue an advanced degree in Nursing.

"There is currently a critical shortage of doctorally prepared nursing faculty who can bring the expertise as clinicians to nursing education," Dr. Linda Samson, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, said in a recent press release.

Without qualified nurses to teach incoming students, the current nursing shortage is headed towards a breaking point. The program is not only geared towards students who want to teach, however.

A doctorate in nursing can open many doors for nurses looking to branch out into other fields. Dr. Samson recently explained that "the program will educate nurse practitioners and educators, healthcare administrators, and specialists in both the direct care of vulnerable populations and in community health disaster management."

Upon completion of this program, nurses can focus on direct practice, community behavior, leadership and administration, and education. Currently, there are only two other DNP programs in Illinois, one at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the other at Rush Medical Center.

Dr. Nancy MacMullen, the program coordinator for the DNP program, compares the quality of Governors State’s new program to the others, saying "the quality is excellent as we have been approved by state and national organizations for their intensive reviews."

The program includes theory and practice, leadership and administration, and direct practice and community in addition to core classes. There are only 20 students currently enrolled, but Dr. MacMullen sees a bright future for the program.

"We expect it to grow," she said. "We are expecting to hire more teachers in the future. We also have a flexible class schedule with onsite and web-enhanced classes."

The students are equally as excited about the new program.

"We are all excited about this opportunity," says Colleen Andeone, a student enrolled in the program. "There are a lot of programs that offer a clinical practice track, but this is my specialty. This will allow me to further my career."

Another student, Marie Hansel agrees, saying "I am very interested in addressing the huge disparity in access to healthcare experienced by rural areas."

With this new program, GSU is embarking on an exciting new chapter in education. By expanding on existing programs and creating new ones, GSU continues to open new doors for students. The addition of the DNP program shows that GSU is keeping close watch on the growing demand for nursing education and have clearly risen to the challenge.

\textbf{Doctoral Program Coming Soon}

\textbf{By Cynthia Huten Contributing Writer}

Have you heard that all the best jobs are now in the healthcare industry? Well, there may be some truth there, and Governors State University (GSU) is working to prepare students for the demand.

"GSU’s College of Health and Human Services can give you all the details about the new Transitional Doctoral of Physical Therapy (DPT) and the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) at an informational session on Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2009.

"The Doctor of Physical Therapy program has been offered for about 18 months, while the Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy will begin in January, 2009. Both degrees are an ideal pursuit for anyone who holds a degree in biology, chemistry, exercise science or nursing. However, the Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy program is specifically designed for licensed physical therapists who are looking to transition into a doctoral physical therapy program."

Registration for the informational session begins at 4 p.m. on Oct. 29 and the formal program will run from 4:30 to 7:30 pm in room D-2400. Participants will learn more about the degree programs and have an opportunity to meet current students, faculty and advisors.

For additional information or to RSVP, call (708) 534-7290 or e-mail m-ency@gsu.edu.

Physical Therapy, which can be described as providing services which help restore function, improve mobility, or relieve pain by using heat, light, or electrical stimulation, has experienced strong growth over the past 30 years, according to Dr. Russell Carter, Department Chair, Physical Therapy.

The U. S. Department of Labor also states that the employment of physical therapists is expected to grow “much faster than average” and that “job opportunities will be plentiful” for licensed physical therapists in all settings.
Across the University:

A pictoral page of events, happenings, & goings-on occurring across the campus.

Mystery Photo

Can you guess where on GSU's campus this photo was taken? If you think you know the answer, send an email to phoenix@govst.edu. Correct answers will be entered into a drawing for great prizes! Answers due by Oct. 26. Look for the answer to this Mystery Photo in our next issue on Oct. 29! Good luck!

Members of ALAS created a documentary which was viewed in The Hall of Governors on Oct. 10. The movie was called The Latino Experience. It examined the experiences of Latinos and non-Latinos and the way Latin culture has impacted their lives.

During the month of October, which is Mental Wellness Awareness Month, GSU will offer workshops and other services to students. At this table on Oct. 9, students had the opportunity to get more information about depression screenings and other services. Look for more information about upcoming workshops in our Happenings section.

ALAS recently held an event to promote Latin American cultures from around the world. Guests enjoyed ethnic foods and information tables about various Latin cultures.

Members of the Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) create masks (above) such as this one (below) to promote their upcoming Masquerade Ball. Look for more information on this event coming soon!

Phoenix Photos by Trio Martinez
College of Business and Public Administration

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This November will mark one year until the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) starts Governors State University's (GSU) review and accreditation process. Coming this November, students will see a revised school mission posted in the halls and classrooms of GSU. The mission will serve as the starting point for the whole accreditation process.

To help GSU on its path to reaccreditation, Dr. Robert Appleson, liaison from the HLC visited GSU on Sept. 25 and spoke with a number of GSU's team of committee members and staff. This was Dr. Appleson's first visit to GSU, but so far, he is pleased with the progress the University is making.

"The overall length and level of GSU's plan is very good," he said. "We are certainly focusing on the right things."

Next year, the University will be required to submit this plan, a self-study, to the HLC. This document chronicles GSU's progress over the past 10 years, and looks to see that there is evidence of GSU improving as a university and working effectively toward its mission.

Dr. Appleson's role is to help those writing and finalizing the plan to make sure they have included all the components the HLC will be looking for. For example, he noted that when the committee arrives in November 2009, they will want to see staffing and enrollment information for the 2008-2009 school year. Knowing this in advance, the committee can work to make sure this information is up to date and available in time for the presentation to the HLC.

Dr. Sherilyn Poole, Interim Associate V.P. and Dean of Student Affairs and Services is also working as a consultant evaluator for the HLC. According the Poole, the HLC will send five to seven Consultant Evaluators (CE's) who will review the school's mission and determine if the university is taking the necessary steps towards fulfilling its mission.

Dr. Poole explained that students should expect to be approached by CE's and asked a series of questions including: "Why did you choose to come to GSU?" "How does the school support your education?" "Are tutoring and counseling services available to you?" Essentially, the CE's want to know what an average day for GSU students is like.

Dr. Poole reminded that the CE's are not at the school to ask trick questions. Dr. Appleson agreed, saying this information is important and in order to attain it, there must be a systematic gathering of information on campus.

"The CE's will be looking to see how GSU gets their business done, and teaching and learning are the most important business [for GSU]," Dr. Poole said. "The CE's are not interested in students reciting the mission like the A, B, C's, but rather how students' time and experiences at GSU are impacting their lives."

The committee wants to insure that students are aware of the school's goals and to know how these goals impact students.

The CE's will have attended training seminars on how to evaluate universities, participated in mock self study reviews, and are all university administrators. They will also review GSU's self study.

As Dr. Poole pointed out there are two reasons why CE's chose to participate in the accreditation process. First, she says it is the best professional development she has ever been a part of. "Every time I visit a University I see how I can do my job better," she said. "I get ideas I wouldn't have come up with otherwise."

Secondly, it is her responsibility as a leader and a professional to make the university system work and to be part of the process of insuring that schools are evaluated by qualified evaluators.

Ultimately, the staff at GSU is working to make sure that the HLC representatives see that GSU is consistently and actively working to better its students through education and available services. By simply making GSU a positive and productive place for education, the team is on the right track to reaccreditation in 2009.
College Students Must Compete For The Best Jobs

By Bob Roth
The “College & Career Success” Coach

If you are attending college to make a better future for yourself, there is a question that you must answer. Do you know how to compete for the best job? Well, let me give you a better idea of what is needed. Since recruiters and employers only know what you give them, you must work very hard to give them strong and positive reasons to interview you, refer you on to the next step and eventually hire you. To compete effectively, you can’t leave anything to chance.

A Powerful Resume

Oftentimes, your resume is the first thing a recruiter sees. It may be read and evaluated to determine if you will even be interviewed. Keep in mind that your resume is built first with your accomplishments, then with your words. If you haven’t been active in academic, campus, community and work activities, you will have few examples of your capabilities and potential. Resumes are less about what you did and more about what you accomplished. Remember too that employers generally believe that your past accomplishments are the best predictors of future performance.

First Impressions

When it comes to your resume and interview, first impressions count. Since the best employers almost always have large numbers of candidates, they look for reasons to screen people out, not screen them in. Only the final few will be considered.

Let’s start with the way you look. You must dress and look as though the job interview is of great importance to you. Be and look professional. If you don’t care about the impression you make, you will kill your chances for success. Your clothing, hair, jewelry, shoes, tattoos, piercings, handshakes, smile, speech and mannerisms all help to create that first impression. When the first impression is not good, the recruiter will have little reason to keep you in the mix.

Well Spoken

What words will come out of your mouth and how will you say them? Recruiters pay close attention to your vocabulary and speaking style. Your words reflect on your education and level of sophistication. When you use slang, mispronounce words or use a style that is too familiar and not businesslike, you will hurt your chances of success.

Significant Accomplishments

Since employers want to know how you can contribute to the success of their organization, they will want to learn about the capabilities that you have already demonstrated. Those capabilities carry more weight when they extend beyond the classroom. Every employer is looking for people who can get things done and have developed communication, leadership and people skills. Anytime you have success in one of these areas, make certain that your positive results are highlighted on your resume.

Stories and Examples

Your capabilities are more interesting and more powerful when you are able to provide impressive examples. Stories about your accomplishments add realism and excitement. Therefore, wise students spend time thinking about and polishing the stories they will tell, especially the problems they were able to overcome. Employers love students who are willing to fight for success.

Differentiation

Being able to differentiate yourself from other candidates is always important. However, it is especially important when every candidate has the same major, has taken the same courses and has achieved good grades. To give yourself the opportunity to stand out, smart students seek out job-related activities and employment. As students participate in campus, community and work activities, they can gain experience, improve their skills and develop a list of accomplishments and success stories.

Importantly, there is an opportunity to differentiate yourself in everything you do. Think more, better, faster, solve problems, help someone, benefit your employer or a customer, demonstrate creativity or generate revenue, etc.

Be Memorable

If after a day of interviewing the recruiter doesn’t remember you, it is unlikely that you will make the referral list. Your resume and your interview must be impressive and memorable in a positive way. You must leave the interviewer with a reason to remember you.

When the interviewer returns to his/her company office, you should be in the forefront of their mind. Use your creativity to find ways to be memorable. Consider these possibilities: 1) Leave them with a vexing question, 2) Ask them to do something for you, 3) Give them something to read or take back with them, or 4) Send them a thank you note. Whatever you do, it should be businesslike, related to your field and memorable. Your accomplishments, if powerful enough, are the best way to accomplish this task.

References and Recommendations

While in college, students should make a special effort to connect with and build relationships with respected and influential people on campus, at work and in the community. Employers expect the best candidates to have previously impressed leaders and professionals in all three areas. Multiple references from a variety of sources are impressive, especially when they provide enthusiastic and specific examples of your accomplishments and capabilities.

All of this is a little like getting your drivers license. You probably thought about driving for a couple of years before you received your learners permit and eventually your license. You found out what was required. Then, you studied the drivers manual and perhaps you took a class. You practiced your parking, developed your driving skills and discussed strategies with your parents and friends. When you were ready, you took your written test and then your road test. If you did well enough, you received your license. You did this because driving was important to you.

If it is important to you to land a great job with a respected employer, you should get started early. The success factors described above must be incorporated into each yearly plan of action (You can’t wait until your senior year). Only students who pay close attention to these factors will be able to compete effectively. Even the best students (academically) can greatly increase their employment potential by addressing these key factors.

Are you ready to compete?

Wowed By Wao: The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

By Michelle Hulett
Staff Writer

For a few months now, I have been avoiding a novel. I first saw The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, by Junot Díaz, on the New York Times book review, where I usually look for interesting new reads. I scanned the review and cast it aside. It's not that I thought it wouldn't be worth my time; after all, it did win a Pulitzer Prize. I just thought it was looked like something that would be assigned in one of my classes, something for deep contemplation and analysis. I was looking for something light, something witty and easy to read. But, as I continued to see the book on TV, in bookstores, and on book lists, I finally decided to pick it up. I am glad I did. This is, by far, the best novel I have read in a long time — and I have read quite a few. I found myself unable (or unwilling) to put it down, promising myself "just one more chapter and I'll start my homework."

The core of the story follows Oscar Wao, an overweight Dominican-American teen. Diaz writes, he "couldn't play sports ... or dominoes, was beyond uncoordinated, threw a ball like a girl ... no hustle, no rap, no G. He wore his semi-kink hair in a Puerto Rican afro, rocked enormous Section 8 glasses, sported an unappealing trace of mustache on his upper lip and possessed a pair of close-set eyes that made him look somewhat retarded" (20). Throughout this tale, Oscar falls in and out of love, obsesses about Sci-fi and Genre literature, and struggles with his identity. This is not only Oscar's story, however, as the title suggests. In fact, at times, Oscar is completely excluded from entire chapters. No, this story is much, much larger than Oscar.

This is also the story of Oscar's sister, Lola, a captivating character who struggles with her own identity. A rebellious young woman, Lola searches for "a life that existed beyond Paterson, beyond family, beyond Spanish" (55). This is also the story of Beli, Oscar and Lola's mother, who provides the true foundation for the novel, and who is perhaps the most dynamic character within the pages. The novel details her own life, from her orphaned childhood to her romance with a powerful criminal. In many ways, the characters mirror each other as we see each of their individual journeys. Junot Díaz's writing is at once profane, witty, and poetic as he weaves countless references to literature, myth, and folklore throughout the novel. Through the family's journey, Diaz provides a captivating lesson in modern Dominican history, focusing much of his lesson on the infamous dictator Rafael Trujillo: "a portly, sadistic, pig-eyed mulato who bleached his skin, wore platform shoes, and had a fondness for Napoleon-era haberdashery."

This novel is nothing short of a treasure in both literature and history. It is an easy read that is sure to leave its mark on all who read it.

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Crossword & Sudoku found on page 8.
Crossword & Sudoku: solutions on page 7

Across
1. Surname of The Picture of Dorian Gray author
2. Metal fastener
3. Rain and snow
4. Square measure
5. Musical element
6. Vegetable, related to onions
7. Italian poet, Allegri
8. Eye
9. Japanese female entertainer
10. Before or after the chicken?
11. Fragrant plant
12. Ship's company
13. Senior
14. Loop made with a slipknot
15. Fish
16. Young woman
17. Not in active use
18. Opposite
19. Implement
20. Essential thriller
21. Loop made with a slipknot
22. Nature Center, Flossmoor
23. Edible root
24. Expert
25. Fish
26. Fish
27. Author of The Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey
28. Referee
29. Cutting implement
30. Female
31. Graphic symbol
32. Piercing cry
33. Reads superficially
34. Limb
35. Scottish for lake
36. Small monkey
37. Ancient site of the Trojan war
38. Land
39. Succulent plant
40. Fishing implements
41. Succulent plant
42. Aroma
43. French novelist, Zola
44. Literary composition
45. Object of worship
46. Overwhelming
47. Ship's company
48. Make anew
49. Essential thriller
50. Historie period
51. Essential thriller ingredient
52. Waiting for Godot author
53. Partial
54. Spell
55. Fish
56. Unit of language
57. Concedes
58. Concedes
59. Concedes
60. Concedes
61. Concedes
62. Concedes
63. Napoleon escaped from this island in 1815
64. Author of Exodus, Urus
65. Surface impression
66. Eye infection
67. Lacking sensation
68. Arouse
69. Metal fastener
70. Australian animal
71. Rain and snow
72. Pinnacle
73. Square measure
74. Dark wood
75. Metallic element
76. Vegetable, related to onions
77. Italian poet, Allegri
78. Almanac
79. Japanese female entertainer
80. Before or after the chicken?
81. Fragrant plant
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86. Vestige
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