

The Ampersand

UIC Honors College

September 2004

Important Upcoming Dates

Sept. 20-24: Alcohol Awareness Week

Oct. 1: Last day to drop a course
Oct. 8: Fall Ball

Upcoming: Honors College Teas
Honors College Hoodies are in!

Looking and Seeking

by Jonathan Huang

For many of us freshman, the transition from high school to UIC has not been an easy one. After a long, unproductive summer of laziness and lounging around with my friends, it has been difficult to get back into the routine of things.

After the initial weeks of school, I have come to many realizations. First, life in the city, with its hustle and bustle, is nothing like that of the suburbs. Plus the fact that we are no longer under our parents' wings has hit me hard. I now have to plan out my day accordingly so that I am able to cram in academics, fun, and tasty food in between naps. Usually it is not hard because I can get more or less of each depending on how I feel. For instance, let us say hypothetically on Monday I do not feel like listening to that 8:00 am teacher, I can always be like, *Whatever. There's always Wednesday.* Or if I am hungry, I can just grab some Snyder's of Hanover Pretzels to eat.

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Tips for Freshmen

by Judy

Out of your college career, your first year on campus can be the toughest. From trying not to look like a freshman to actually knowing your way around may be obstacle, but here are some helpful tips for you to build your street smarts on:

Try to plan as much of your four (or five or three or other) year schedule as possible. Some majors require classes that follow a sequence (see your course catalog) or are only offered in the fall or spring. Since your first year will generally include introductory classes, it's better to save electives and Gen Eds for later. This balances out your schedule so that you can take something with your three psychology classes without wasting any time. And, when you have higher standing, you will be able to choose more interesting classes.

If you're not sure where you are, visit the Honors College to request your 'DARS report. These precious pieces of paper tell you which requirements you've fulfilled overall and for your specific major, as well as a list of all qualifying classes if you haven't. Hint: to save time in school, look for "two-for-one" classes like LALS 101, which fulfills a humanities credit as well as a cultural diversity credit.

When registering for classes, don't forget the importance of a good professor. Visit www.pickaprof.com (free registration) to search for UIC professors and classes, helpful student reviews, and grade histories. Grade histories are obtained directly from university records, and they display the percentages of each letter grade given in the past. Similar records are also available in Douglas Hall, compiled from a collection of questionnaires students complete at the end of each semester.

New classes means more books and you can save money buying them online or from other students (you won't miss their flyers). A few weeks before each semester begins, visit the UIC bookstore with a pen and paper. Find your classes and write down the ISBN of every book you need and note the prices. Then, search the web with the ISBN on websites like www.cheapesttextbooks.com or www.bookhq.com for your best online options. In 3-5 business days, your book will come to *you*. (note: avoid buying books from other countries. Sometimes textbooks get stuck in U.S. customs and may ultimately arrive after the semester has ended or not at all.)

After the rush of the first few weeks of school, you will have more time to explore the city. If you are a full-time student, every semester you pay \$80 for your U-Pass. Just to spend that much paying regular fare you would have to make 23

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Political Issues

Bush and Kerry on Higher Education

by Tara Brennan

Fact: Under the “No Child Left Behind” Act, the Bush administration has toughened standards for teachers and students in elementary and secondary schools across the country, monitoring progress and awarding funds based on improvements in standardized test scores¹. Government spending allocated to education has also increased tremendously since 2001, from about \$24 to \$36 billion.

Fact: If elected, Kerry plans to spend \$10 billion more per year on the NCLB Act (a law he initially embraced but now criticizes as a “one size fits all” testing model that can turn schools into “testing factories”¹), and will concentrate efforts on improving conditions in schools and teacher salaries. He also proposes a National Education Trust Fund that would authorize the approval of educational initiatives proposed by Congress.

Both presidential candidates have defined elementary and secondary education as priorities in their campaigns. But what’s in the cards for higher education? UIC students confirm that tuition has definitely risen in the last couple of years. And whether the cause is the war on terror, corporate scandals, tax cuts, or the natural ups and downs of our post-internet-boom economy, the net result is the same: students are taking out more loans to pay for school and have less cash to spend on beer.

So what are they going to do about it? Mr. Kerry laments the recent hikes in tuition under the Bush administration, and highlights his plan to increase Pell Grants (which provide funding for low-income students) if he were elected president². He also proposes a \$3.2 billion community service plan that would offer college students the equivalent of four years of state tuition funding in exchange for two years of national service. The President, on the other hand, is sticking to his guns in saying that even though tuition has gone up in the last few years, there is more financial aid and scholarship money available to college students than there was before he took office.

Do Bush and Kerry exist in the same reality as us college students? Perhaps not, but if you break down the Bush-Kerry rhetoric, you find that the differences can, indeed, be explained away. For example, the Bush campaign is correct in saying that overall funding has risen over the past four years; but, at the same time, students are being squeezed by substantial state budget cuts¹. Moreover, since 2001, college enrollment has grown faster than federal aid can keep up, and thus per capita financial aid has decreased. So it seems that Mr. Kerry may have a point in suggesting an increase in funding for low-income students who have been most affected by the tuition hikes and grant freezes since Bush took office. Pell grant awards in contrast have remained flat, and today, more scholarship aid is merit- rather than need-based (message? study hard, people).

So I suppose the next logical issue to be addressed concerns proposals to remedy the present tuition hikes and grant freezes that affect those seeking higher education. To this end, Kerry has proposed to reduce the cost of college by expanding tuition tax credits³, while Bush has supported modest increases in Pell grants, with further increases for students who take challenging high school

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A Second Civil War?

by Vivas Kaul

I’m sure that nearly everyone at this school has heard of President Bush’s new “Sanctity of Marriage Act”. The act is President Bush’s answer to “activist judges” who support gay rights. As of this moment four states - Massachusetts, Vermont, Alaska, and Hawaii - have ruled in favor of gay marriage. For those who are history buffs, this might sound too familiar.

The main purpose of the act is to help preserve traditional families and their values. In my opinion this act could be considered more likely to break up a family than bring them together. Proof of this exists in the television coverage of the Republican National Convention. Notice how the openly lesbian daughter of Vice President Cheney is absent from the stage. Mary Cheney is still stirring a hornet’s nest of activists and politicians although she never spoke a word at the convention. Vice President Cheney in a rally in Davenport, Iowa said, “people ought to be free to enter into any kind of relationship they want to” and then went on to state that the legalities of same-sex marriage should be left to the states. Cheney’s wife, Lynne, said in slight contrast that her daughter “has never declared such a thing.”

President Abraham Lincoln once said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” At the time he was referring to the division of the country, but that is not a far cry from what is happening now. We all remember the stories of brothers fighting against brothers, and fathers fighting sons during the Civil War and to think that that is not happening now is naivety. The Cheney family is probably as divided on the issue as many of the other families that have had relatives or friends publicly admit that they were homosexual. The family that is dividing is the American people and to me the White House is at the center of this rift. It is clear that undivided attention will eventually have to be given to this issue if we hope to avoid history repeating itself.

classes or agree to study math or science in college (rock on). Yet on education, the differences between Bush and Kerry seem small. Both support holding schools accountable to government standards of excellence in exchange for increased government funding [we don't have]. The problem, says Perry Bacon, Jr., of *Time*, is that neither candidate truly has a plan to decrease America's current budget deficit of more than \$400 billion⁴. In fact, both Bush and Kerry hope to cut the deficit in half over the next four years by implementing budget plans that hide costs, assume unlikely savings, and add a trillion more in spending (hmmm. I'm not a math major, but...).

... If you ask me, by the time politicians figure out how to address the college tuition issue we'll have bigger things to worry about—like if Medicare covers face lifts and hair implants. Voters and politicians need to concentrate on some other salient issues too, like how in the world we're going to pay social security benefits to the Baby Boomer generation (which is due to start collecting in 2008) when we're \$400 billion in debt? Or how either Kerry or Bush plan to decrease that budget deficit while pledging to stay in the war, increase funding for education and healthcare, and keep up homeland security. If you have any bright ideas, please run for president—I'll vote for you.

¹Bacon, Perry Jr. (*Time*, September 2004). "Who's the Education President? Bush and Kerry stress their differences on education, but there are a lot of similarities in their plans."

²Washington Post (August 10, 2004). "Tuition sticker shock."

³Robblee, S., et al. (September 2004). "Education proposals in the 2004 Presidential campaign: a preliminary assessment."

⁴Bacon, Perry Jr. (*Time*, August 2004). "Bush v. Kerry on the deficit: both candidates have plans for dealing with our fiscal mess. But



When it comes to extracurricular activities though, I am clueless. Last year, I was the senior with all the know-how, whereas now I am a very disoriented freshman. Right now I'm basically just attending clubs and organizations. So for all you clueless people out there, do not fret: I'm in the same boat as you. However here is some advice that could help you out.

You might be thinking, *Hey Jon, I feel you. I am that clueless kid you were talking about. But I have no idea where to start.* Well you could have begun with the fun fair last week, but it is okay if you didn't. Campus Programs has a website that lists the names of different extracurricular activities open for you to participate in. Whether it is Women's Rugby Club or the Biomedical Engineering Society, UIC has it all. Just check it out at: www.uic.edu/depts/chcc/programs/sor/

Perhaps you're thinking: *What is the point of taking part in these clubs. I mean, I understand that in high school extracurricular activities were important for getting into college, but now are there any real benefits?* The truth is, extracurricular involvement will definitely help you in the future, both in getting into graduate school and finding a job. As Kathryn Madeja, my peer advisor, says, "Involving yourself in extracurricular activities shows that you are a well-rounded person."

Furthermore, by involving yourself in a club, you can get away from the routine of school and homework. There is no doubt that throughout the academic year stress and frustration will build up. As Brian Zielinski, President of the UIC Volleyball Team stated, "[Taking a break from learning and studying to enjoy an activity] allows you to achieve something that you are interested in." You will have the ability to discover new ideas and grow in friendships that can possibly last a lifetime.

Lastly, you will find that through these clubs, vital skills like "critical thinking, [being a leader], and [communicating well]" will be refined, notes Kate Knicker of the Office of Special Scholarship Programs.

Certainly, I can not guarantee that you will find the perfect match for an extracurricular activity, because hey, I am just another kid on campus. However, let me urge you to explore UIC, and just maybe you can find something that will, as B. Zielinski says, "[give us] a sense of accomplishment that nothing else can give."

**Don't forget to VOTE
on November 2nd.
It's YOUR future!**

World View



Summer in the Paris of the Middle East

by Zina Alkafaji

Beirut has a certain aura to it that is not easily found in any other Middle Eastern city. Located between the vast, sparkling Mediterranean Sea and mystical mountains peppered with orange-roofed apartment buildings and villas, Lebanon's scenery is so breathtaking that one cannot help but always be aware of the picturesque surroundings. The tiny country's variety of religious and ethnic groups makes it exceptionally cosmopolitan. The country is strewn with Islamic, Christian, Druze, and even Jewish communities and their symbols which represent their coexistence. National landmarks such as the Virgin Mary statue situated at the top of a mountain, and the Beitedinne Palace once occupied by a famous Druze politician; in addition to the numerous mosques, churches, temples, and synagogues that date back centuries further add to the country's exclusive ethnic blend.

In the midst of this relatively modern and updated world are Roman ruins scattered throughout the country. One may be strolling through a park in Sidon, a port village thirty miles south of Beirut, and come across a Roman column from the early 14th century B.C. that may needed to be stepped over. Several imperialist empires, such as the Roman, Turkish, and French have crossed through and reined Lebanon. Their effects are still very evident both through their influential architecture and cultures. The fairly liberal and westernized customs that the Lebanese embrace today can be attributed to the French rule of Lebanon during and after World War II. It can

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Big, Beefy, and Beastly: My Encounter with a Sumo Wrestler

by Jessica Huang

He was the largest man I had ever seen in my entire life. Though the head was small in comparison to the rest of the body, it still seemed to me the size of a watermelon. His hands could have easily flattened me with one punch. He was decked out in a blue striped robe, barelegged, and his feet were encased in little wooden sandals. Like a mountain rising above a small village, he towered over everyone in the subway station, and filled the unbearably hot air with the overwhelming aroma of bubbly soap and shampoo. Then in an instant, he purchased his train ticket and daintily walked away, parting the crowds of people effortlessly and disappearing down the passageway.

As I walked in the opposite direction, out of the station into the blinding sunlight, I wanted to lament a golden Kodak moment lost forever. But I did not have time to mourn. Suddenly I was standing in complete darkness and I froze like a deer in headlights as I lifted my head to see two men, both much larger than the first, thundering towards me at alarming speed. Now, I have skimmed through a few survival guides before, but I don't recall any one book telling me what to do in the case of an attack by sumo wrestlers. Having no help at all, I stood there in total shock as they blew past me in a whirlwind, totally oblivious to my state, gossiping in Japanese the entire way.

After that, nothing exciting happened for the rest of the day.

Okay, wait! I'm just kidding. In fact, nothing else could be farther from the truth. If I almost got killed just because two sumo wrestlers were walking to the subway station, what do you think happens during an actual match? They drink tea and eat crumpets? I've never been a big fan of

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South Africa in the Summer

by Emiranda Carcani

This summer I spent 14 amazing and wonderful days in the Republic of South Africa. As a member of NSCS (National Society of Collegiate Scholars), I participated in a program of International Missions: Diplomacy in South Africa. In just 14 days we traveled to three of the most beautiful cities in South Africa: Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. The education and sightseeing in South Africa are worth mentioning to you all, especially for those of you who are members of NSCS and may be considering a trip like this in the near future. Education played a huge part on this trip - days were carefully planned so students could learn about the country's history, government, and culture.

The journey began in Cape Town, a city on the shore of South Africa. The few days were well spent with trips to South Africa's Houses of Parliament, LoveLife Y Center (a crisis center) and Robben Island. At the Houses of Parliament the group visited with various members, discussing the Apartheid era and the Decade of Democracy in RSA. The LoveLife Y Center was both an educational, as well as hands on experience. Students were given the opportunity to learn more about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa. Also, many participated in sports activities with members of the center and the surrounding neighborhood. The third stop, Robben Island represented a visit to the country's past. This tiny island is the location of the prison in which Nelson Mandela was held for many years. All visitors went on a tour of the prison and many were shown Mandela's holding cell. The guides were ex-inmates of the island's prison. They escorted tourists around main areas of the prison, sharing information about their treatment while incarcerated. For the final day, the group took a bus trip to learn about local life in Cape Town. Our time had come to end in the Cape, but the trip continued elsewhere.

As we left the shores of Cape Town, we traded them for the shores of Durbin. Diplomacy and culture were the main themes in this locale. We attended conferences where representatives from NEPAD (the New Partnership for Africa's Development), the African Union and a few NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations), presented insightful information regarding South Africa's local and international diplomacy. The cultural aspect occurred during a tribal visit to the Zulu Kingdom; a

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Summer at the CDC

by Veronica Arauz

I've spent my whole life wanting to be a part of the medical field, particularly preventive medicine. So, I did what any prospective pre-med student would do: I went to the UIC Medical School to obtain guidance and information about medical school. An alumnus of the UIC Medical School suggested I speak to Dr. Girotti, the Dean of Admissions at the UIC College of Medicine. While trying to make an appointment to see Dr. Girotti, I met Melissa Hernandez, the Project Coordinator of ¡Escucha!, the Latino Student Network. She introduced me to many opportunities available to help me enter medical school.

One of these opportunities that I came across was a summer internship provided by the Hispanic Serving Health Professional Schools (HSHPS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, GA. The internship's goal was to foster the development of Hispanic medical and public health students by equipping them with the current techniques in surveillance and interventions used to improve public health. Although at the time I knew little about the public health field, I saw that it related to preventive medicine experience.

I began my internship in June and spent eight weeks in Atlanta, GA. This was an experience I will never forget. Working in the Division of International Health, I was fortunate enough to meet several epidemiologists all so different in personality, experience, and knowledge that it was a particularly unique area. The staff had a casual manner, including the division director and my mentor was especially ready to answer my questions.

In this division I had the opportunity and privilege to work with multiple experts. Each project enhanced my knowledge about CDC and public health. Most projects were reports and translations - updating and aiding in the merge with the Office of Global Health. I also had the chance to do research through literature searches learning about intervention effectiveness and what areas need more attention. Also, I helped with a larger project called "Attributable Risk and Preventive Fractions for the Conditions with the Highest Burden that CDC is involved with" researching infectious diseases such as nosocomial, STDs, waterborne and foodborne diseases.

The division I worked in also had major international goals. We assisted countries in the development and implementation of dynamic, cost-effective public health systems by providing services such as Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETP's) and Data for Decision Making (DDM) for health professionals. The CDC epidemiologists traveled to other countries

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Featured Artist: Lucky Boys Confusion

by Elizabeth Gomez

If you haven't heard of them, this band is definitely worth investigating. If you have, congratulations, you have discovered another one of Chicago's great "local" bands. This band consists of five members: Stubhy (lead vocals), Ryan (drums), Joe (guitar), Adam (guitar), and Jason (bass). They've been rocking together since 1997; bringing a fresh new sound from the 'burbs. Although they are often categorized in the punk/rock genre, their music also showcases reggae, ska, Indian, hip hop and rap influences. With their latest album "Commitment," they've shown a great deal of musical and lyrical creativity. From the infectious chorus of "Hey Driver" (currently featured in the Motion Picture "Without a Paddle") to the serious lyrics of "Mr. Wilmington," which deals with suicide, this album does not disappoint.

Their live shows are always an experience. You laugh, you cry, you mosh, you get hurt but you are always guaranteed to have a good time. They recently performed at Congress Theater to an audience of over 2,500. From beginning to end, they gave a stellar performance. They've toured with Eve 6, Reel Big Fish, Blackeyed Peas, Something Corporate, Bowling for Soup and many more. Currently, they are headlining the "Suburban Curse" tour.

So make sure you pick up their albums, visit their web site at www.luckboys.com, or check out a show.

Upcoming Show: October 14th, House of Blues, all ages, featuring 15 Minutes Late, Plain White T's and Army of Freshman.

be said that French is spoken as widely, if not more than English, following the native Arabic language.

My plans for the summer of 2004 took me to Lebanon simply for a visit; however, not much time had passed before I found myself immersed in a culture and way of life so familiar yet so foreign. Originally from the Middle East, I instantly felt a strapping connection to the culture, traditions, and language. The land and people around me were very strange, nonetheless incredibly well known.

Part of my stay was spent in Sidon where I lived in a large, fairly old and primitive home dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century. Without car, air conditioning, dishwasher, computer or Internet access, and even electricity at times, I really came to appreciate the phrase "The Simple Life". The call to prayer (ethan) could be heard from several nearby mosques loud and clear everyday, five times a day. The vegetable and fruit man would walk by yelling the prices and offerings he had for the day.

The second part of the trip was spent in Beirut, a world away from Sidon, yet only thirty-minutes by bus. The apartment building which we stayed in was near the American University and was surrounded by internet cafes, coffee shops, clothing stores, large bright supermarkets carrying everything from hummus to pepperoni pizza, night clubs, and more 24-hour restaurants than one could ever wish for. We could often be found lounging with other Arab American students at the nearby University, situated on the Mediterranean Sea. It had a private beach and a quad covered in palm trees with a central impressive fountain. It became evident to me this summer that Lebanon really is the point at which east meets west. In the Paris of the Middle East, that unique occurrence elsewhere is here considered the norm.

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and taught health professionals topics such as biostatistics, epidemiology, communication, and how to apply surveillance knowledge and so on. Within the division, programs such as MiniModules, self-paced training tutorials to practice the skills learned through example were created.

I had a wonderful experience at CDC and learned the importance of public health within the medical field. Many problems associated with the public health field can also be found in various medical fields. Identifying research that directly improves public health is a major issue.

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boxing or wrestling, but for some reason, it is absolutely fascinating to see the wrestlers going at it. For nine straight hours I kneeled on my purple cushion (there were no chairs) and witnessed men slapping each other, locking heads and arms, each aiming to push the other out of the ring or bring his opponent to the ground. The entire arena was focused on this amazing spectacle of muscle, sweat, and cellulite. During a specific match, one of the wrestlers lost his balance and was pushed out of the ring. He tumbled into the crowd, like a 400-lb train wreck, and landed on one unfortunate lady.

No doubt, sumo has the potential to be quite a violent sport, but the modern day tournaments still follow their religious origins. In the early Shinto period, sumo was established as a court ritual, and sometimes wrestlers were used to resolve political differences. Eventually, it became a professional sport. Though sumo remains a very centralized Japanese competition, many foreigners have taken part, including today's *yokozuna*, the highest-ranking wrestler, who is Mongolian. What struck me as interesting were two European wrestlers (comparably hairy in all their glory) but they both had the traditional female fans from the local high schools cheering for them in the crowd.

It was certainly a one-of-a-kind experience to be able to witness actual sumo wrestling in person, and I thought the adventure was over when the final ceremony was performed. But while purchasing a train ticket back to my apartment in Okazaki, I happened to run into yet another giant. This time, he glanced down and smiled at me before strutting away on his wooden shoes. I was left standing there, in the wake of an extremely respected man, snapping pictures like a typical tourist, and inhaling the scent of an obviously recent bubble bath.



journey of the past and the present. The tribe's people shared their traditional dance and music and also shared their cooking recipes with a lunch prepared especially for us in their homes. Time flew by in Durbin, and the trip led on to Johannesburg.

Johannesburg, a large metropolitan area, was founded in 1886 when gold was first discovered there. Housing the country's main international airport, Johannesburg serves as the country's main international business center. Issues regarding international relations and South Africa's role in foreign affairs were thoroughly covered by representatives of the United States Embassy. These issues and debates continued during our visit at Rand Afrikaans University. Discussions with staff and students were insightful as to how South Africa's citizens view themselves and the world. The everyday discussion of the country's present state though, was temporarily placed on hold as a trip to the Apartheid Museum revealed more South African History. Knowledge regarding the rise and fall of Apartheid added a new level to our dialogues.

Finally, our trip in Johannesburg was concluded with a three-day journey to the Tshukudu and Timbivati safari camps. Morning bush walks and evening game drives were unforgettable experiences. However, for me, the encounter with Savannah will forever be impressed upon me. She was raised at a rehabilitation center and later released back in the wild. Our guide knew her so students were able to pose with her for a quick picture.

The sights and experiences South Africa offers are definitely one of a kind. The education provided by the tour guides and the country's representatives was a once in a lifetime experience. For those who want to work towards making the world a more inclusive place, a trip such as this is an eye-opener. Informed diplomacy is the key to open relations between countries. Therefore, learning should be prioritized on a diplomacy mission, especially one taken in an emerging country such as South Africa.

"Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world."

- Nelson Mandela



Making a Difference

Get Involved

by Darius Barwacz

I am one of many students who just started their first semester at the University of Illinois at Chicago. There are thousands of us on campus, but did you ever wonder why we are here? I believe that the main reason is to attain knowledge and a diploma. For some, a degree might be enough, but I strongly encourage individuals to do something more during their time here at UIC. Becoming involved and volunteering helps others, and helps you.

Why is it worth doing this besides satisfaction? First, you can make a positive difference in many peoples' lives. If you are uncertain about your life path, you might discover your passion. If you already know, you can find an opportunity to volunteer in an environment similar to your future job and have hands on experience in your field. Somebody might even hire you before you complete your degree.

There is one more important thing about volunteering – friendship. It is hard to make strong and long lasting friendships if you do not live on campus, mostly because you rarely have different classes with the same people. On the other hand, through organizations offered, you have a chance to develop friendships that will last longer than you would imagine. You never know when you will meet people like these again, soon they might be very successful and then you may help each other.

There are many different organizations that are active on our campus and there have been a few opportunities to meet with their members during the 'Fun Fair' or 'Meet the Greeks' events. If you missed these opportunities, there are still plenty of sources to research including the UIC catalog and website. Often there are flyers posted by various organizations throughout the campus announcing their meetings. Do not be afraid! Go and check out what it is about and get a free food. If you do not try, you will not know what opportunities you might be missing. I encourage you again to get involved, find your passion, find new friends, and have fun while making a difference!

Making a Difference: Reach Out and Read

by Jyoti Shenai

As a member of the Honors College we are required to participate and successfully complete an activity each semester. Last spring I volunteered at the Rush Copley Hospital's Pediatric Clinic in the Reach Out and Read (ROR) program. Reach out and Read is a national literacy program that was created in an effort to fight illiteracy in impoverished communities. In short, my job was to spend time reading books to the children waiting in the clinic. It started out as just another honors college activity, and dedicating three hours per week seemed easy. However, not only did I get my activity credit, but I also gained a wonderful experience and opportunity that I will never forget.

One of my fondest memories was of a little girl, around the age of 4, who came in with her younger brother. She came to the table and sat in the chair next to me. She began talking nonstop about herself, what she likes, dislikes, her family, and asked me several questions as well. Overall, I would say that she was an extremely happy and friendly little girl who was curious about the world around her (as most toddlers are). I even remember her dad stating with a smile, "that girl will talk you to death." I smiled back and asked the girl if she wanted to read a book. She picked one and I began reading to her as she sat intently listening to me and joyfully gave her input towards the story. After a while the girl stood up from her chair and sat on my lap. I continued reading to her and after about twenty minutes her dad told her that they had to leave. The girl did not respond back and continued talking to me about the story. Her dad reminded her several times afterwards and finally he had to pick her up and take her out. She began crying and I told her that she could take the book with her. So her dad grabbed the book, thanked me, and the girl continued to cry as they exited the clinic.

What I love most about that experience is the sense of closeness and comfort that arose between the little girl and myself that I had recently met. Never had I expected a child to get that close to me and feel so comfortable all from the simple joy of reading a book. As a child, I had always had books. My mom would take my sister and I to the library, she would constantly be reading to us, and before we knew it we were reading to ourselves. Not only did the books allow me to learn, but it also gave me the memories of the time I had spent with my mom. To think that most of the children that come to the clinic do not have that opportunity is saddening.

Recently I had the opportunity of talking to the coordinator of the ROR program, Jessica Brach. I asked what her opinion was on why it is so important to read to children and she stated, "At an early age parents can give their children books

Orientation Leader for Life

by Kathy S.

If college students are not in summer school finishing their degree quicker or expanding their horizons in an exotic land, the next best option, often a mandatory one, is to take on a summer job. College students are as poor as they come and money and experience in the work force is a blessing. Often though, summer jobs leave students overworked and stressed – condition detrimental to their functioning.

While last summer I worried about housing, this summer I had none of those issues. I attribute the difference to my über wonderful experience as a UIC Summer Orientation Leader. Honestly speaking, the benefits of the job were quite enticing. My leader told me that one of the benefits of being a Summer Orientation Leader, or SOL for short, would be free housing. I signed up to apply not realizing that housing was a bonus and I would absolutely love the entire experience.

It was a competitive pool of individuals applying for the 35 positions. I felt completely intimidated at each of the three spring training sessions. Applicants received a chance to work with each other in team activities and I did not think I had what it took to be an Orientation Leader. Everyone seemed so outgoing and confident while I felt like the polar opposite. One might imagine then, I was elated beyond belief when I was notified I received the position. I still had fears and anxieties about the summer to come though – I was afraid of meeting the new staff members and was not sure what to expect.

Training was 2 weeks long in which we performed more team builders and listened to speakers representing each of the innumerable divisions and offices of the university. Essentially, it was like a crash course degree in UIC, ranging from the rules of LAS all the way to the history of the University. For example, did you know that the architect who designed UIC also designed the Air Force Academy? It was rigorous training!

Even after our course, I was nervous to see the program in full swing. I kept thinking, “Why would people want to follow me?” In the end though, helping new students and parents was extremely rewarding. Being a leader became natural because my prime motive was to help the transition into college as easy as possible.

Quite honestly, I feel like a totally different person after being a Summer Orientation Leader. I feel much more connected to the university and part of a family. I know more people now: students, professors, and advisors alike. I can even locate departments and offices. My public speaking improved drastically as well as my time management skills – punctuality is critical! Most of all, I learned something about myself – it is essential that I work in a field involving social interaction. I have a newfound need to help others. I am definitely a “SOL for life” (that’s the orientation motto). Whenever people have questions about the whereabouts of the LAS advising office or the SSB, you know I’m there. It seems trivial, but really it’s not. Recall when you were brand new at UIC, it was hard to discover the secrets of the lecture centers or decide what was actually the CCC? If you’re interested in helping new freshmen as a summer orientation leader, look out for fliers and emails in the spring semester. You won’t miss them!

Unexpected Learning

by Kristin Toranzo

All of us wish we had more. The most prized possession of some. And most take it for granted. Time. As individuals we are always vying for more time, but to do what? There are few tasks that we should beg for more time to accomplish. Imagine for an instant that time is not on your side. Envision waking up each morning knowing that time is something you do not have much more of. Most of us are fortunate enough to not have this worry. Others however are not.

As a kinesiology major, hoping to one day earn my doctorate in Physical Therapy, I decided to volunteer my time in the outpatient physical therapy rehab center at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Joliet, IL. I had the privilege of working with many hard-working men and women who helped me learn the intricacies of physical therapy and follow in their footsteps. Throughout my summer I aided many patients, ranging from stroke paralysis to knee replacement patients. While each one was unique and willing to share endless stories one little girl I particularly remember.

The first time I met Emily, her smile lit up the room and the hearts of those in it. She was only five years old with blue-eyes and blonde hair but she was born with a severe (and usually fatal) disability that impaired her lower body. Using a device that stabilized her back and walking sticks, Emily attended daily physical therapy sessions. Each session was grueling especially for such a serious disability. Yet, every time I saw her, Emily had a smile on her face. She possessed qualities most adults lack. Rarely was Emily heard to cry or complain. She didn’t list her many tasks for each day, week, or month. And never did Emily wish for more time in her day, because she did not have any to spare.

I decided to volunteer my time this summer to fulfill my own needs – to gain experience for my future. This may not seem selfish, but volunteering should remain as a gift to fulfill others needs. Most patients at St. Joseph’s needed someone to share a story with, or just extra motivation. Occasionally though, while helping, volunteers can learn too - look to live life, not race to the end.

My Residence Life: How Simple Talk Can Change the Lives of Others

by Saleh Jahedi

Life is an unpredictable journey. Whether one is going to another country or renting a new movie, exciting and unexpected events happen in everyday life. Through struggle and laughter, annoyance and happiness, people learn from each experience and are able to improve future adventures. By working with others and sharing stories, individuals continue to learn the mysteries of life. Many freshmen, especially those in the UIC residence halls, are gradually learning from, and with, one another about their environment.

As a Peer Mentor this year in the UIC Residence Halls, and I am primarily responsible for addressing the academic questions and inquiries new freshmen have about life on campus. Most questions range from how to register for a class to how to form study groups. Although I am able to provide general information, I also spend time with freshmen to learn more about them and their experiences adjusting to life at UIC. Specifically, a few days ago, I had lunch with a freshman resident and the RA on my floor in the Chicago Circle Center cafeteria. We began our lunch discussing the intricacies of movie genres. However, our relaxed conversation turned from talking about movies to examining the problems of homeless in society.

Light-hearted discussion about the contradictions in particular movies had led to serious debate about the struggles many homeless people face in America today. When asked about how society should address this situation, I found I did not have an answer, and simply suggested more social programs and community volunteers. This suggestion though, led to more discussion about the root of homelessness in the nation, and if the homeless could strike to improve their conditions. I am not an urban planning scholar or a sociology major, and I learned from the ideas of my fellow RA and the freshman resident. I realized that every time we help others in their lives, volunteering, working for a club, or supporting a company cause, we make the lives of others simpler and a little less stressful. In all situations, individual's services and enthusiasm to help those we do not personally know help make life worth living.

Because of people's everyday struggles, both emotional and physical, people often forget what fortunes life has in store for them, and the good we take for granted. Receiving an education, having a social support system, possessing a home, or holding a job can all easily be overlooked. A simple smile or a common hello are effortless actions that can make a big difference in the lives and attitudes of others. After talking about the neglected areas of our society, it motivated me to try to improve the lives of those I can. One of my favorite quotes is, "I am one and only one, I cannot do everything, but I can still do something." In any case, I learned from the ideas of my fellow RA and resident, and walked away with the realization that despite the problems in society, I can and will continue to improve those people's lives I can reach. Working as a Peer Mentor continues to teach me more about the student population at UIC through discussion and social activity. With a little effort, people learn from each other and can make a difference society. The more people work together, the happier they will be.

ROR continued from page 8

and they can put it in their mouth. Their cognitive skills grow and most importantly it promotes a parent/child bonding process." Secondly, I asked her how she felt about the affects of reading on our community and she responded, "By giving a child positive reinforcement they are more likely to excel in school and less likely to drop out."

This semester I am taking an honors course as my activity, but I continue to volunteer in the program. Currently about 35-36 honors college students are involved in ROR. "We stick with Honors College," as Jessica stated, "Because the students' take on an educational foundation is a lot stronger." The ROR program receives about 8,000 donated books each year. If any of you are wondering what you can do with your children books that you are not using anymore, this would be a great way to give back to the community. This program not only gave me an opportunity to assist others, but it also helped me realize how important reading is to children, especially at a younger age. Lastly, I would like to thank Jessica for all her input and time, and remember it is never too late to give the gift of reading.



trips via the “L” and back, so wear that pass out—it’s plastic for a reason. Don’t know how to get around on the CTA? Visit www.yourcta.com, click on “trip planner” in the right column, and type in the address/select a landmark from the drop-down menu/type in the CTA station (format: UIC/Halsted CTA). Or call the RTA at (312) 836-7000 for directions.

Playing downtown doesn’t have to mean spending all your money. Sometimes you can just spend half. Take advantage of campus, dorm, or SAFC-sponsored/subsidized events. Periodically, Lion King or Phantom of the Opera tickets sell for about half price at the CCC Service Center (next to CCC Copying), but beware and prepare for long lines and fast ticket sales.

You could also spend no money in the city. Take time to walk/rollerblade/bike/whatever to the lake—it’s *much* closer than it seems and more enjoyable than taking public transportation. The Adler Planetarium and museum campus offer beautiful views of the skyline at night as well. In the summer, play beach volleyball and make sandcastles (or sand lumps) at the beach. In the winter, bring your own skates and ice-skate for free at Millennium Park. Websites like www.metromix.com are useful tools when you run out of ideas.

When cramming (or “studying”) for midterms and finals, it’s a good idea to make a studying schedule of what to study when. T.A.s often hold review sessions and tutoring is available through the Honors College by students who received an A or B in that course. Also, ask around for old exams, even through the professor. With a simple request, some professors are more than willing to provide practice questions or study guides for anxious students.

On campus, there are several quiet study area nooks and crannies for students to wedge into, such as in the Art and Architecture building, the UIC library (with extended hours during finals), the Montgomery Ward lounge, or even the dorm kitchens (bring an extra desk lamp). Off campus, the Loyola library has a tranquil study area on its eleventh floor. Borders is also popular, with locations on North/Halsted, State, and Michigan Ave. For all-nighter fighters, 24-hour Starbucks may be an option, such as the one on the corner of North Ave. and Sheffield. You’ll run into students just like yourself (who else would really need caffeine at 1 a.m. on a weekday night?).

Some of these tips may be helpful, while others not as much, but regardless, freshman year will hopefully be a pleasant surprise and a fun learning experience.



Alternative Spring Break

by Jenny Yeh

Spring break: to college students across the country, these two words conjure up images of wild, drunken parties on the MTV-ridden beaches of Cancun. For some UIC students, however, spring break entails something completely different – an *alternative*. Every winter and spring break, the student-run Alternative Spring Break organization sends groups of UIC students across the U.S. to participate in weeklong service trips across the nation, volunteering and focusing on a wide variety of social issues such as hunger, homelessness, poverty, illness, and environmental awareness. Rather than partying and drinking, these students volunteering with a group of strangers, in a situation rather like MTV’s “Real World.” Each program takes participants out of their sheltered university communities and immerses them in diverse cultures and environments, giving them the opportunity to become more aware of the world around them. Many have hailed this experience as fundamentally life changing and overwhelmingly positive.

This year, UIC’s Alternative Spring Break promises to carry on its legacy, offering a wide variety of trips for the winter 2004/2005. For those who enjoy nature’s beauties, there is the environmentally conscious Roberta Case Pine Hills Reserve in Clanton, AL. For those interested in working with seniors and illnesses, Second Wind Dreams in Atlanta presents a perfect fit. Dreampower Equestrian Therapy in Alpharetta, GA, offers students the chance to work with children with disabilities, and at the same time interact with horses. And Hearth Home in Saginaw County, MI, caters to those interested in AIDS/HIV outreach. These are just some of the potential sites ASB may be offering this winter, but to find out for sure what amazing trips are in store, come to **Alternative Spring Break’s First General Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 22nd, at 4:00PM in the White Oak Room, CCC**. Come to learn about ASB and its upcoming trips and outreaches, pick up an application, meet new people, eat yummy free food, and simply have fun!

For more information, visit ASB’s website: http://www2.uic.edu/stud_orgs/service/asb/

Odds 'n' Ends



Chicago Hot Spot

by Jalene Lanter

A sweet treat is a great way to start off a morning, keep a day going, or end a meal. If you have a penchant for pastries or an hour to adventure, try a Mexican bakery called Panadaria la Central literally across the street from the California blue line stop. Inside is a vast array of cookies, sweet and savory rolls in large clear plastic, serve yourself cases. The best part is everything is thirty cents. That's right, for less than the price of a payphone call; a large cookie or a flaky croissant could be yours. With the convenience of the U-Pass it is an opportunity hard to pass up – especially for a quick study break on Sunday afternoon. This bakery is no frills, as the few labels are in Spanish and a single tray with tissue paper is used to collect bakery, but worth a trip to discover a new spot in Chicago. Bring a friend, or your dorm floor and I especially recommend the Chocolate Chip cookies.

Panadaria la Central
2218 N. California Ave.



THE HOODIES ARE COMING, THE HOODIES ARE COMING!

Actually, they are here! If you haven't already done so, stop by the Honors College lobby and check out the new hoodies designed by Honors College student Rossenie Almazan. For a mere 24 dollars, you can choose from black, grey, navy or white. We currently have a few XL's, a plethora of Larges, and a stock of Mediums are here as well! Give us a call if you have any questions, and we look forward to seeing you trek through campus sporting the new Honors College Hoodies!

The Upcoming Fall Ball

Every fall semester the Student Alumni League organizes numerous events to connect UIC's student body under a common theme. One of the most prominent events is the Fall Ball. Having been modeled after the Homecoming dance that is held in the nation's high schools every fall, this event is famed for usually drawing hundreds of people to enjoy the night in one of the city's legendary landmarks. Last year, it was predicted that 200 people would attend the event. However, as time progressed, the popularity of the event, based on the high demand for tickets, caused an additional 150 tickets to be printed.

This year's Fall Ball will be held on October 8th, 2004 at the Adler Planetarium. Situated at a close proximity to Lake Michigan and the museum campus, the event is expected to attract 1000 people. The theme that was established for this year's ball was the Moonlight Mixer. The event will feature music provided by 103.5 KISS FM. Light refreshments and a closed bar will also be an integral part of the ball. This event is open to everyone, including individuals that do not attend the university. The attire is expected to be semi-formal.

Tickets will be sold throughout September and early October. They are only \$10 each and \$15 at the door. Tickets are available online, in the UIC Bookstore, and at certain times in the front entrance of the CCC, which will have a ticket booth set up for the event. Free transportation will be provided to and from the dance.

If you wish to purchase the tickets online, please visit: http://www.uiaa.org/calendar/view_event.asp?sel_event=9008

Student Alumni League organizes events like this and numerous others that not only connect students with each other, but also provide opportunities for networking with alumni and building leadership skills. Some of the other events that characterize SAL's legacy include Etiquette Dinners, Student Spirit Week, and Hustle Up UH. If you feel that you want to be a part of this exciting organization, please contact Sara Porras, Vice President of Membership and Retention, at sporras2@uic.edu



STUDENTS RAISE MONEY FOR CANCER RESEARCH

As some of you may recall, Benefit had a fundraiser for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society last Spring that raised over \$7,000. (If you're scratching your head about what *Benefit* is, we are a group of former and current UIC students raising money through piano concerts each year for The Society.) We want to give you a couple of ways you can help the cause if you're interested:

1. *Benefit 2004*, last spring's CD, is now out! It consists of all piano solos and includes the complete *Moonlight Sonata*, *Clair de Lune*, and one of the Hungarian Rhapsodies that is featured on many Tom and Jerry cartoons. If you would like to purchase it for \$15 (half proceeds going to The Society and the other half going to Benefit), stop by MidAmerica Bank or Barbara's Bookstores (just south of Roosevelt Road on Halsted), or email benefitorg@hotmail.com.
2. Start saving your change, because BRING CHANGE FOR CHANGE II is in planning! Early in February we will have a concert (the first concert of the tour!) and Gala in the new Thomas Beckham Hall. Entry will be a donation to the Society, and there will be lots of food, drinks, and, of course, piano music. Rumor has it that Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* piano solo to orchestral soundtrack is among the list to be performed!
3. If you are looking for a new bank account, or already have an account at MidAmerica Bank, let them know about Benefit... they have a "community account" in which the bank gives Benefit money every time a customer opens an account or mentions Benefit's name.

If you have any questions or want more information, feel free to contact James Criss (312-355-9014) at the front desk, or email benefitorg@hotmail.com!

On Friday, August 20th, Honors College Students Consultants and HCAB members helped new incoming Honors College students kick off the new school year with a luau-themed cookout on the lawn in front of SEO. Here are some photos for you to enjoy.

