

Commencement Ceremonies Highlight 159th Academic Year of Austin College

Sunshine and blue skies were perfect backdrops for the smiling faces of Austin College students and parents at Commencement ceremonies May 18 for the Class of

2008. The event marked the close of the 159th academic year of the College and a new beginning for approximately 340 Bachelor of Arts graduates and 20 Master of Arts in Teaching graduates.

The Honorable Antonio “Tony” Garza, Jr., U.S. ambassador to Mexico, presented the Commencement address to approximately 4,400 people gathered on the Clyde L. Hall Graduation Court, north of Caruth Administration Building. Garza began his speech by assuring the audience he was not there to “give the big speech” or lecture about issues like globalization, terrorism, world famine, or immigration.

“How you face these issues has more to do with the person you are than just about anything else,” he said. “While you can’t be certain where life will take you, you can plan on living it a certain way. My advice to you is to be open, honest, and good, and success will follow.”

Axel Nze Akoue of Libreville, Gabon, was selected by his classmates as senior speaker. Akoue said that he and fellow classmates learned about service and global vision at Austin College and gained a broad worldview, evident in his classmates by their election of him as class speaker and by the \$51,000 gift from the class to create a scholarship for international students.



Michael Imhoff, vice president for Academic Affairs; Stuart Baskin, who presented the Baccalaureate sermon; Professor Light Cummins, who introduced the Commencement speaker; Antonio Garza, Jr., Ambassador to Mexico and Commencement speaker; Robert M. Johnson, chair of the Board of Trustees; and President Oscar C. Page prepare for the procession.

“We’re about to go into a world that needs us, a world that will learn from us the concepts of global vision and service to others,” Akoue said to his classmates. “These are the things that will come to define us. This is the Austin College difference.”

The two graduates with the highest academic records, with no distinction between them, are selected by faculty to receive scholarship medals for their achievement. **Laura Ellington** received the J.C. Kidd Scholarship Medal, and **Will Radke**, the J.M. Robinson Scholarship Medal. (See profiles on page 25.)

Garza and Stuart Baskin, senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Tyler, Texas, and 2008 Baccalaureate speaker, each received honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees during the Commencement ceremony, with President **Oscar C. Page**, Vice President **Michael Imhoff**, and **Robert M Johnson** ’53, chair of the Board of Trustees, presenting the degrees.

Members of the Class of 1958, on campus to celebrate 50 years since their own graduation, also were recognized.



See Commencement Photos, pages 22–23. Axel Nze Akoue

Law Symposium Celebrates Texas Law Beginnings at Austin College

Even many Austin College alumni may not be aware that the first study of law in Texas was offered at Austin College. In celebration of the legacy that began in 1855, members of the Alumni "L" Law Association and the College's Pre-Law Society have hosted educational events for students and law professionals for several years.

On April 7, legal analyst and commentator Jeffrey Toobin, author of *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*, provided the keynote address for the 2008 Law Symposium on campus. His address, "The Supreme Court: the Personal and the Political," set the stage for an afternoon of panel discussions with law professionals covering topics such as "Finding Reality in Defining Judicial Philosophy," "Is Federalism a Guiding or Bygone Concept?," and "Playing to Reality or Zealous Representation?"

Toobin is a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, a senior analyst for CNN, and the author of five books. He provides analysis of many high profile court cases and received a 2000 Emmy Award for his coverage of the Elián González custody saga.



Jeffrey Toobin

PHOTO BY VICKIE S. KIRBY

No Beach Time for Students on Spring Break Trip

Forty-seven Austin College students and four sponsors gave up potential trips to the beach for an Alternative Spring Break, sponsored by the College's Service Station this spring. The students spent the week rebuilding homes devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The group stayed in Luling, Louisiana, working through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

This was not the first time Austin College students volunteered to help with the recovery effort. Through JanTerm and spring break opportunities, five groups of Austin College volunteers have mobilized to help residents of the Gulf Coast.

Melanie Oelfke, who served as Service Station coordinator at the time of the trip, said the trip filled quickly. "Volunteerism and community service seem to be a natural part of our students' DNA," she said. The College's Service Station has organized Alternative Spring Breaks since 1992.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). For \$20 per day, PDA provided food and lodging for each volunteer, as well as tools and materials for the home repairs. Most of the costs for the Austin College trip were provided through a grant to the Service Station from Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas.

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How many volunteers does it take to nail a ceiling? Austin College students find out firsthand when working in New Orleans during Alternative Spring Break 2008.

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Alternative Spring Break Photos

An Evening With Your Scholar

Austin College scholarship recipients come together each spring with the donors who have funded their scholarships at the College's Evening With Your Scholar program. At the 2008 event, **Will Radke '08** spoke on behalf of students, telling of some of the adventures he experienced as an Austin College student who spent three summers in China, interned with a major business company, and served as a campus leader. "It can't be said enough tonight and everyday: thank you for your support of Austin College. But more importantly, thank you for your support of us, the students," Radke said. "It is especially because of you that so many of our dreams continue to take flight."

Radke used the proverb "To whom much is given, much is expected" as the basis for many of his

comments. He spoke about a new program at the College, Global Outreach Fellowships, that funds summer international service projects for students. He served on the committee that selected the first recipients and is proud of the work students will begin this summer and continue for years to come. "Perhaps the greatest feeling of all," Radke said, "is being a part of something that will impact someone I will probably never meet. This program symbolizes what is at the heart of an Austin College education: empowerment. We are empowered because of you, the donors, to participate in so many life-changing opportunities."

Marcus '58 and **Betty (Tappan) Payne '58** sponsored the event, as they have for several years, recognizing the importance of scholarships in the College's recruiting efforts and in the ability of many students to afford a college education.

Austin College Board of Trustee Chair **Robert M. Johnson '53** of McLean, Virginia, said the opportunity for students and donors to become acquainted allows each to benefit from the experiences of the other, making the scholarship about more than money or a name on a check. The opportunity to see the students and hear of their accomplishments allows donors to see the results of their scholarship investment, he said.



Rachel Dragoo, Betty and Marcus Payne, Priscilla Shaner, and Gabrielle Acobyan visit during the Evening With Your Scholar event in April.

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More Evening With Your Scholar Photos

Global Learning Is Focus of Quality Enhancement Plan

Austin College seeks reaffirmation of accreditation as an institution of higher education by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) every 10 years. One requirement of that process, to be completed in 2009, is submission and implementation of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for the College that has the potential to have substantive and lasting effect upon students and student learning.

In December 2007, the Austin College faculty chose “Global Learning for Cultural Awareness” as its QEP 2008–2013. The plan encompasses traditional study abroad programs, international JanTerm courses, internships and service projects in other countries, and campus programs focusing on international issues.

The faculty-elected QEP committee — consisting of **David Baker**, physics; **Wayne Crannell**, music; **Bart Dredge**, sociology; **Patrick Duffey**, Spanish; **Karann Durland**, philosophy; and **Julia Shahid**, education; with **Steve Goldsmith**, appointed as chair — are working on development of the plan.

One goal of the program is to strengthen traditional study abroad programs, the JanTerm, and other types of international experiences, with the ambitious aim of providing every Austin College student an international experience, said Goldsmith. A second goal is to promote global learning on campus by strengthening area studies, interdisciplinary programs, and co-curricular activities that foster cultural awareness. The enhancements to off-campus and on-campus programs will be integrated by administrative infrastructure that seeks ways to streamline and coordinate global learning, Goldsmith said.

Members of the committee welcome input and encourage any interested individuals to visit and post to the blog listed below where an outline of the QEP goals and objectives is posted. The final version of the QEP will be submitted to the SACS in early January 2009.

See the QEP blog:
www.austincollegeqep.blogspot.com

Seniors Endow International Student Scholarship

Knowing firsthand the importance of scholarships in financing a college education, as well as the richness created by the presence of international students on campus, members of this May’s graduating class established the Class of 2008 International Student Scholarship at Austin College through return of residence hall deposits and other fundraising efforts.

The new scholarship will be awarded annually to an international student, with preference given to a student studying at Austin College on an F-1 visa issued by the U.S. Department of State.

Will Radke, a member of the 2008 Senior Committee, was an organizer of the initiative after the idea was submitted to the committee by **Axel Nze Akoue** ’08 of Gabon. A total of \$50,000 was needed to endow the scholarship.

Students gave more than \$14,000 through room deposit donations, with 82 percent of students participating. Abby and **Todd Williams** ’84 made a challenge grant of \$18,000 toward the effort, pledging that amount if students raised an additional \$18,000.

Through gifts from senior parents as well as Rotary clubs and other individuals, the seniors raised the needed total. With Williams’ gift, the scholarship endowment was complete.

“We hope to encourage actively more international students to become part of the multicultural fabric of Austin College and to contribute the knowledge, culture, and perspective that only students of an international background can,” Radke said.

Alumni Seek to Memorialize Matthew Brandon Reed '06

Matthew Brandon Reed '06 lost his life in March 2007 at the age of 23 as a result of an oilfield accident. Reed played football for Austin College in the 2002 to 2004 seasons, was a three-year starter for the team, and became an All-Conference player as a defensive back and a return specialist. In 2004, Reed was selected by his teammates as the Duke Babb Award winner as the team's most valuable player. "He was a young man who played with heart and commitment, not only for Austin College but also for his teammates and friends," said **David Norman '80**, who was Reed's coach at Austin College.

Several of Reed's friends, coaches, and teammates, seeking a way that Reed's name could live on at Austin College, have begun a fundraising initiative to create the Matthew Brandon Reed Varsity Dressing Room in the Mason Athletic-Recreation Complex.

"Future student-athletes will see evidence of commitment, loyalty, athleticism, and heart each and every time they enter this dressing room," Norman said.

A total of \$50,000, to be paid in gifts and pledges over the next four years, is needed to name the room. Gifts may be of any size and can be one-time gifts or four-year pledges paid on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis.

A target date of September 30 has been set to secure the gifts and pledges so that the announcement of the naming in honor of Reed can be made in conjunction with the Homecoming football game against Rhodes College on October 25, 2008.

For more information, contact Norman, assistant director of athletics, at (903) 813-2499 or dnorman@austincollege.edu. Information on the funding initiative also can be found online:

www.austincollege.edu/Info.asp?6588



COURTESY OF FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY

Matthew Brandon Reed

Allen-Head Lecturer Discusses U.S. Political Culture

Author and theologian Mark Lewis Taylor presented Austin College's 2008 Allen-Head Lecture, "The Future of the Christian Right in U.S. Political Culture," on April 9, followed by a book signing.

Taylor is Maxwell M. Upson Professor of Theology and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary. His most recent book is *Religion, Politics, and the Christian Right: Post 9-11 Politics and American Empire*.

Taylor also wrote *The Executed God: The Way of the Cross in Lockdown America*, theologically addressing issues of the contemporary prison-industrial complex, police brutality, and the death penalty. He is the author of *Remembering Esperanza: A Cultural-Political Theology for North American Praxis* and *Paul Tillich: Theologian of the Boundaries*; as well as co-author of *Reconstructing Christian Theology*.

The Allen-Head Lectures, established at Austin College by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Allen, Jr., and Mr.

and Mrs. R.B. Head, Jr., of Whitesboro, Texas, feature nationally prominent speakers in the areas of religion, philosophy, psychology, history, and literature made available to the local community

Columbia University Philosopher Offers Lecture

John Collins, associate professor of philosophy at Columbia University, visited Austin College in March to present the lecture, "Scams, Hustles, and Confidence Tricks: Elements of Anti-Social Epistemology."

Campus Amnesty International Program

Raises Awareness of World's Refugee Stories

The College's Amnesty International chapter hosted its annual event March 31, designed to raise awareness of refugees and displaced people around the world. The 2008 event, *Forced Out*, included refugee guest speakers John Chol, a Lost Boy of Sudan, and Asli Parker, president of Somali Community Outreach Center in Dallas.

Asia Week Brings Speakers, Cultural Experiences

Austin College's annual Asia Week, March 31-April 3, included several opportunities to share Asian culture through demonstrations of mandalas, origami, and calligraphy, as well as to hear lectures from experts.

Junhua Wang, M.D., of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center spoke on "Severe Immunodeficiency Disease in Navajo and Apache Indians: The Responsible Gene and Its Function." A native of mainland China, Wang endured the Cultural Revolution and came to the U.S. recently to continue his research.

Ban Wang, professor of Chinese literature and film at Stanford University, presented a lecture, "Where Are All The Villages Gone?: Landscape and Home in Chinese Literature and Film." He also introduced the film, *Postman in the Mountains*, and led a discussion afterward.

Scott Langton, associate professor of Japanese, is director of Asian Studies.

Student Fundraiser Supports Clean Water Worldwide

A 6K Walk for Water March 29 on the trails at Herman Baker Park in Sherman raised \$2,820 in support of WaterCan, a charity that provides clean water and sanitation to millions of people in eastern Africa. The event was sponsored by the Austin College Rotaract Club, with assistance from the Austin College chapters of Alpha Phi Omega national service fraternity and the Environmentally Concerned Organization of Students (ECOS). Students raised funds sufficient to provide access to clean water to 112 individuals.

Many elements of the Walk for Water had significance, volunteer **Rachel Dodd '11** said. The \$25 entry fee represented the cost of providing one person in Africa with clean water and sanitation. The 6K distance of the walk symbolized the average distance that women and girls travel each day to retrieve clean water.

The Walk for Water was held in conjunction with World Water Day, designated by the United Nations. Statistics show one in five people in the world lacks access to clean water, affecting 80 percent of diseases in developing countries. Proceeds directly support clean water projects in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

PHOTO BY JACQUELINE ARMSTRONG



Students weathered gray skies to raise more than \$2,800 in support of clean water and sanitation in a 6K Walk for Water at an area lake in March.

AIDS Quilt Display Returns to Campus

Austin College hosted its annual AIDS Quilt Program April 10 with AIDS quilts from the Grayson County Home Hospice on display. The program included poetry readings, prayers in various languages, and discussions about issues surrounding AIDS, as well as remembrances of those who have died from the disease. A raffle at the event raised funds supporting the Simbaradenga Children's AIDS Orphanage in Zimbabwe.

Roger Platizky, professor of English, coordinates the annual campus event.

Lecture Addresses Biblical Archeology and Faith

Milton C. Moreland presented the lecture "Raiding the Tomb of Jesus: Biblical Archaeology, Conspiracy Theories, and the Consequences for Faith" April 15 on campus, sponsored by Austin College's Humanities Division.

Specializing in archaeology and the origins of Christianity, Moreland is associate professor of religious

studies at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. Since 1993, he has served as a senior staff member and field archaeologist at the Sepphoris excavation in Galilee. He also has traveled and led student groups to Greece, Israel, Turkey, Jordan, Italy, and Germany.

Moreland is co-director of the archaeology program at Rhodes, where he also directs the Institute for Regional Studies. He heads research projects to sites extending from the historic plantations of west Tennessee to ancient Palestine.

Moreland co-directed a project on the "James Ossuary," that surfaced in 2002. The James Ossuary is a sepulchral, limestone box for containing bones, claimed to have held the bones of James, the brother of Jesus. Moreland's project has focused on the scholarly, commercial, and religious aspects of the phenomena related to the box and the media coverage it received. The Israel Antiquities Authority assess it as a modern forgery, but some scholars maintain its authenticity.

Educator Proposes "Darwin Loves You"

Educator George Levine presented "Darwin Loves You: Natural Selection and the Re-Enchantment of the World" April 17 during a campus lecture funded by a grant from the Keck Foundation.

Levine's lecture title comes from his 2006 book by the same title. The book has been described as an exploration of Darwinism's implications for moral and spiritual values, proposing that Darwin and scientific theory are not dehumanizing or amoral, and that it is possible to be a Darwinist and still believe that the world has meaning.

Professor *emeritus* of English at Rutgers University, Levine is the author of several books. He received his master's degree at the University of Minnesota, served two years in the army, and then returned to the University of Minnesota to earn his doctorate in Victorian literature. He taught Victorian literature at the University of Indiana from 1959 until he joined the faculty at Rutgers College

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“Parade of Fools” Supports the Fight Against Cancer

Even faculty and administrators act a bit foolish sometimes, especially on April Fools Day. This April, though, the cause was a serious one — the battle against cancer. A team of Austin College faculty and staff who signed up to participate in the local Relay for Life walk had set a goal to raise \$4,000 by the May walk, and combined fundraising efforts with a little April Fools Day fun.

Seven individuals on campus were asked to participate in a Parade of Fools, with the degree of costume required dependent upon the donations contributed in each name — ranging from a hat to a full costume. Contributions were worthy of complete costumes for all, making a colorful Parade of Fools for the many faculty, staff, and students gathered in Wright Campus Center for the event.

Good-natured participants and their costumed alter-egos were **Andrew Carr**, associate professor of chemistry, as Mad Merlin the Wizard; **Nan Davis**, vice president for Institutional Enrollment, as Pierette the Clown; **Molly Dougherty**, assistant director of Annual Giving, as Slim the Rodeo Clown; **Steve Goldsmith**, dean of Sciences and professor of biology, as Scotty the Highlander; **Mike Imhoff**, vice president for Academic Affairs, as the Easter Bunny; **Steve Stell**, associate professor of religious studies and John F. Anderson Chair of Christian Thought, as The Prom Queen; and **Diane Walsh**, Registrar’s Office records specialist, as Flutterby the Butterfly.

The chance to see friends and co-workers in costume raised \$3,193, with Imhoff supporters giving more than \$400. The ‘Roos Down Under Relay for Life team reached its goal by the day of the race and immediately began to plan its fundraising goal for next year’s event.

Parade of Fools participants are, left to right, Nan Davis, Steve Stell, Diane Walsh, Andrew Carr, Molly Dougherty, Steve Stell, and Mike Imhoff. Behind them is Kim Snipes, biology lab coordinator and a member of the ‘Roos Down Under team.



PHOTO BY VICKIE S. KIRBY

in 1968, where he taught for almost 40 years in many capacities from chair to associate provost. In 1986, he became co-founder and Director of the Center for the Critical Analysis of Contemporary Culture, a program that focuses on making intellectual connections, especially between humanities and the sciences.

Art History Students Hear from Expert

Cheryl Snay, associate curator of prints and drawings at the University of Texas Blanton Museum of Art, spoke to students on “The Pantheon in Paris: Art and Politics in 19th Century France” on April 17.

Undergraduate Conference Examines “Transformation and Translation”

The fifth annual Austin College Undergraduate Conference in the Humanities and Social Sciences, “Transformation and Translation,” was held April 25-26. The topic related ideas of translating and transforming, as from thought to word, from word to image, from one

language to another, from one genre/medium to another (e.g., literature to film), from script to performance, from male to female (and vice versa), from data to policy, from one business paradigm to another (e.g., going green), from one political party or system to another, or from theory to practice.

Plenary speakers:

❖ Carmen Perez Romero, translator, *emerita* professor of English literature at Universidad de Extremadura, and author of the only full translation of Shakespeare’s sonnets into Spanish, spoke on “Translating Shakespeare’s Sonnets.”

❖ Philip Boehm, translator, playwright, and director, presented “Challenges of Translating Drama,” addressing the problems of translating plays from one language to another and from page to stage.

❖ Bioethicist, barrister, and Penn State Professor of Law Jonathan Marks presented “‘False Friends’ and Uncertain Enemies: The Transformation of U.S. Interrogation Policy and Law in the War on Terror.”

❖ **Tricia Sheffield**, a theorist of gender and sexuality and a Lilly Visiting Professor in religious studies at Austin College, offered “Performing Jesus: A Queer Counternarrative of Embodied Transgression,” discussing the Chalcedonian Creed’s relevance to transgendered people.

Julie Hempel, associate professor of Spanish, and **Alex Garganigo**, assistant professor of English, co-directed this year’s conference, with the assistance of several students, including **Szende Szabo** ’08, chair of the student committee.

Gender Studies Talk Explores Networking Phenomenon

Dr. Tim Dean, professor of comparative literature at State University of New York at Buffalo, presented a lecture, “Breeding Culture: Barebacking, Bugchasing, Giftgiving,” in April. The lecture, funded by the College’s Gender Studies program, examined a recent gay male subcultural phenomenon: viral transmission as the basis for creating new kinship networks.

Henry Winkler to Present Opening of School Address

Henry Winkler, actor, director, producer, and author, will present Austin College's Opening of School Convocation address Monday, September 1, at 7 p.m. in Wynne Chapel.

Winkler remains best known as the television icon "The Fonz" on the 1970s sitcom *Happy Days*, though he has since added many television, film, and Broadway acting and directing projects to his credits. He also has



COURTESY PHOTO

Henry Winkler

emerged as a distinguished speaker, humanitarian, author, and advocate of young people and education.

The Opening Convocation will officially begin the 160th academic year of the College and will include investiture of the Class of 2012 as well as recognition of the Class of 2009 as its members begin their final year at Austin College.

Homer P. Rainey Award Is Presented

Cynthia Curtis Bean, associate director of Alumni and Parent Relations, received Austin College's Homer P. Rainey Award during academic year-end ceremonies on campus. The Board of Trustees presents the award annually to a member of the faculty or staff for outstanding service to the College.

Bean, a 1975 graduate of Austin College, joined the staff in 1994. Her involvement with alumni spans many generations, as she works with GOLD alumni (Graduates Of the Last Decade) and Golden 'Roos, alumni of 50 or more years ago.



PHOTO BY VICKIE S. KIRBY

Cindy Bean

Alumna Janell Watson Offers Lecture

The Austin College Humanities Division presented an alumna lecture, "Psychoanalysis, Philosophy, Politics," by **Janell Watson '82** on April 30.

Watson is an assistant professor of French at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. She is the university's coordinator of the master's program in Area Studies and has taught women's studies courses as well.

Her teaching interests are French language, 19th to 21st century French literature, cultural studies, gender studies, globalization, and French film. Watson earned her doctorate in French from Duke University.

Watson's book, *Literature and Material Culture from Balzac to Proust: The Collection and Consumption of Curiosities*, was released in 1999 and she has written for several journals and professional publications.

Can a Chosen People Have a True Politics?

Kenneth Surin, professor of literature at Duke University, spoke at Austin College on May 1, presenting "Can a Chosen People Have a True Politics?"

Surin, born in Malaysia and educated in Britain, taught in city schools in and around Cambridge, England, before joining the University of Gloucestershire.

In 1987, he took a position in the Department of Religion at Duke, moving to the program in literature in 1992. He is professor and chair of the program in literature, with an appointment in religion and an adjunct appointment in the German Studies doctoral program. He is director of Undergraduate Studies and has served as director of the Duke Center for European Studies.

Founder of the journal *Modern Theology*, Surin is the author of two books, editor of another, and has written many journal articles for publication.

Symphony Offers Opera Arias and Guest Lectures

The Sherman Symphony Orchestra gave its final concert for the 2007-2008 season May 3, presenting "Opera Arias, Choruses, and Overtures" with guest soloists Emily Newton, Lawrence Harris, **Wayne Crannell**, and the Austin College choirs performing selected scenes from Verdi's *Rigolletto* and *Don Carlo*, Gounod's *Faust*, and Puccini's *Turandot*. **Daniel Dominick**, music director and conductor of the orchestra since 1992, is an Austin College associate professor of music. He also conducts internationally and has arranged several pieces of music for orchestra.

Crannell, tenor, is associate professor of music at Austin College and chair of the Music Department. He has appeared with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Des Moines Symphony, and the Des Moines Metro Opera, and has performed extensively in Texas.

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Austin College Students Present Chekhov's *Three Sisters*

Austin College's Department of Communication Studies presented Anton Chekhov's play, *Three Sisters*, translated by American playwright Lanford Wilson, in April.

Kathleen Campbell, professor of communication studies, directed the production. "The three sisters of Chekhov's play long to

leave the provincial town where they live and return to Moscow," Campbell said, summarizing the story. "During the play they dream, hope, and plan, but their lives turn out very differently than their expectations. Still, these characters seek life and happiness, even when events seem to be turning against them. As is usual with Chekhov, the mood is both melancholy and funny, as we are asked to see both the foibles and flaws of the characters even as we deeply empathize with them."

The three sisters were portrayed by **Jackie Purdy '08**, **Averie Bell '09**, and **Maria "Mimi" Malphurs '10**.



PHOTO BY MARCUS URBAN

Actors, left to right, Jackie Purdy, Averie Bell, and Mimi Malphurs rehearse for the Austin College production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*.

Guest vocalists Emily Newton, soprano, and Lawrence Harris, baritone, presented two campus lectures. Newton shared thoughts on music as vocation in "The Path to the Profession: A Singer's Journey from a Small Town to New York City." A native of Lake Jackson, Texas, Newton lives in New York City and has performed widely on the opera and concert stage. Harris offered "A Master Class in Voice" for students. He made his debut in the title role of *Rigoletto* at Philadelphia's Kimmel Center. Response to that performance established him as an important new Verdi baritone.

Staff Members Win Publication Awards

Staff of the College's Institutional Advancement Division earned a Grand/Gold Award for the brochure "Science Matters" at the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District IV conference in Arkansas in April. The brochure also earned a Bronze Award in the CASE Circle of Excellence International Awards.

Students Host World Health Week

The Posey Leadership Institute's Global Issues special interest group sponsored a series of education initiatives for World Health Week in April. The students' efforts focused on global diseases still prevalent in the world, distributing information and colored ribbons representing each disease. Students also held a small health pandemic simulation in Wright Campus Center in which they quizzed students on a particular disease's symptoms. **Claire Balani '10**, a coordinator of the effort, said that next year the group hopes to involve the Pre-Medical Society and create a larger impact on campus.

Religious Life Students Host Peace Week

Austin College's second Peace Week, sponsored by the Religious Life staff and students, began with a dinner following the chapel service April 13. **Patrick Coffman '08** discussed the Ulster Project and its efforts to unite Protestant and Catholic youth in northern Ireland.

Later in the week, a discussion on terrorism and Jihad and a campus lecture, "Muslim Resources for Peace and Interfaith Dialogue," were presented by Yahya Hendi, Muslim chaplain at Georgetown University. Georgetown is the first American university to hire a full-time Muslim chaplain. Hendi also is the Imam of the Islamic Society of Frederick, and is the Muslim chaplain at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He serves as a member and the spokesperson of the Islamic Jurisprudence Council of North America and is an adjunct faculty member for Johns Hopkins University and the Fordham University.

In addition, musician, activist, and Rotary Peace Fellow David LaMotte shared stories and conversation around the question of how one individual can have a positive impact on the larger world.

Peace Week ended with a communion service and a program with an Earth Day focus, "Peace on Earth Requires Peace with Earth."

2008 Faculty Retirees Mark More Than 90 Years of Service

Three members of the Austin College faculty retired at the close of Spring Term 2008.

Shelton Williams, professor of political science and John D. Moseley Chair in Government and Public Policy, joined the Austin College faculty in 1970. “Highlights of my years here are the many interactions with students in classes, on foreign trips, in Model UN, in the Leadership Institute, and in Washington, D.C.,” he said. “My colleagues — my friends — were great associates. My greatest honor was to serve as the John D. Moseley Chair of Government and Public Policy.”

Williams’ plans include continued work as president of the Osgood Center for International Studies in Washington, D.C., where, among other things, he conducts foreign policy programs that often include Austin College students and alumni. “I think I will always be teaching,” he said. “I hope Austin College students are always part of my classes.”

Janet Lowry, associate professor of sociology, will move to Hanover, Indiana, this summer, transitioning from teaching about and researching the aging process to experiencing it through caregiving for her frail parents. Lowry is an alumna of Hanover College and grew up on the campus where her grandfather was president and her parents, as well as her husband, graduated.

Lowry came to Austin College in 1983 so has a long career of memories of Austin College students and colleagues. “Highlights of my Austin College experience include 25 years of sports, plays, and concerts just two blocks from home, extensive service to the community through two decades with the Social Science Lab, and developing ties to India through sponsored trips, JanTerm classes, and sabbatical research.”

Lowry’s involvement with India will lead to her first professional project of retirement. She plans to begin work on a book, *Before the Sister Churches*, about the first years of international partnership between Grace Presbytery and North Kerala Diocese in building global Christian relationships and mutual mission.

James Gray, professor of English, joined the faculty at Austin College in 1978. After 29 years of dedicated service, Gray has been forced for health reasons to take early retirement. 🐦



Organizations Focus on Earth Day Events

The Environmentally Concerned Organization of Students (ECOS) sponsored several events for Earth Day, April 22, showing an episode of *Planet Earth* and co-hosting, with the Center for Environmental Studies, representatives of Re-Energize Texas, who spoke campus solutions for climate change and the organization’s focus on college campuses committing to reducing CO2 emissions year-by-year.

In addition, the group sponsored an Earth Festival, which showcased live music from Austin College students and offered free drinks to those students with reusable containers. Several campus organizations hosted booth activities and offerings, including leaf rubbings, go green ideas, free seeds, and vegetarian and vegan recipes.

Video Students Screen Films

Students in the Digital Video Production II course offered a film screening May 11 of three narrative fiction short projects written, cast, shot, and edited by students.

The students spend the entire term working on this single video project, starting from the germ of an idea and working it through script, storyboard, and footage captured on location into a final cut that includes soundtrack and visual effects. The films and students who created the work are *Ezekiel* by **Raif Smith** '10 and *Deepa Shridhar* '09, *How the West Was Lost* by **Sam Maclin** '10 and **Daniel Phipps** '09, and *Waiting for Alexis* by **Austin Tooley** '09 and **Shane Gannaway** '10.

“The casts included nearly a dozen student volunteers, some of whom are regulars on the stage, some who have not acted before, and almost none who have acted for the camera,” explained **Brett Boessen**, assistant professor of communication studies, who led the course designed to provide students knowledge in storytelling, screenwriting, preproduction planning, casting, production, photography, and non-linear editing.

Senior Art Exhibit Provides Color

The 2008 Juried Senior Art Invitational featured work by Austin College seniors. Faculty members of the Department of Art selected the pieces for exhibit.

Works in the 2008 exhibit were created by **Carl Antonowicz, Kristen Bagnall, Katie Burgoon, Kathryn Cantrell, Christine Cunningham, Claire Gardner, Shannon Graves, Ashley Ledbetter, Krista Miller, Karena Rogers, Nicole Ruano, Anna Sebesta, Beth Shaw-Meadow, Dianne Smith, Sherry Spangler, Richard Talabay, Matthew Whitenack, Rachel Wilkes,** and **Mary Anne Woolley**.

All art majors also present individual senior exhibits during the year. 🐦