

Aggie Corners

In those long ago days before every student had a car, Aggies (and others) helped Aggie students by providing transportation to and from campus as they sought to “achieve their education.” There were “Aggie Corners” in cities throughout the state where they could find transportation as they pursued their education — this present Aggie (newspaper) corner is where Sea Aggie students can transport locally and to the world their “educational achievements.” Bryant Badeaux is an undergraduate student at TAMUG.

Texas Maritime Academy an integral part of TAMUG

I have attended Texas Maritime Academy since Fall 2012 and am currently a junior in the marine transportation program. The Texas Maritime Academy is an integral part of the Texas A&M Galveston campus and trains future merchant marine officers. For as long as I can remember, I have always loved traveling and experiencing other cultures. Early on, I realized that I did not want to merely hope to get a job I loved after earning a college degree. After reflecting about alternate choices and researching schools, I decided to pursue my Third Mate’s Unlimited Tonnage License and to learn a particular skill set that prepares me for work as a merchant marine officer after graduating.

The Texas Maritime Academy encourages the application of cadets to both studies and professional development. This includes working on the training ship, the General Rudder, and using ship bridge and wave simulators offered throughout the coursework. The most interesting class I have participated in since my enrollment is Seamanship III. This class closely examines the physics behind a ship’s movement and allows us to use the simulator to experience various realistic scenarios with different types of vessels.

The university provided the most exciting opportunity of my life, this past sum-

mer, while working aboard the Maersk Utah, a container ship, where I experienced, firsthand, the duties of an officer. I boarded the ship in Newark, NJ and traveled along the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf of Mexico before transiting the Atlantic Ocean to Algeciras, Spain. From there, I sailed through the Mediterranean Sea to Egypt before navigating the Suez Canal. Upon reaching the Middle East, my ship called on various ports including: Jebel Ali, Colombo, Jeddah and Aqaba. In Jebel Ali, I used the Dubai Metro to travel into Dubai and observe sites such as the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world, and Ski Dubai, an indoor ski resort. While staying in Jordan, I was fortunate enough to visit Petra, an ancient stone city that dates back to 6th century B.C.E. Aqaba, Jordan, was my last port of call before once again journeying through the Suez Canal, commencing the voyage back to the East Coast of the United States.

Through the Texas Maritime Academy and Texas A&M University, I have and hope to continue exploring the world and learning from others while sharing what I’ve learned. Excited by the opportunities my career path is preparing me for, I am eager to finish school so that I may continue sailing the seas and traversing the world.

COM

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lyn Henderson supports reading aloud to children. “It increases their vocabulary,” said Henderson. “It develops readers and listeners, especially when you ask questions.”

The books are part of the Scholastic book series, and Scholastic trained volunteers at the beginning of the year in how to read, discuss and ask age-appropriate critical thinking questions. Funding for the

books is provided though the Gulf Coast PASS grant, made possible by Houston Endowment. Awarded to the college in 2012, the grant funds initiatives to increase college readiness among the COM service area.

“Education at home is as important as education at school,” said Sabido. “We want to create those bonding and reading opportunities.”

For more information on the Hitchcock Head Start Reading Program, contact Sabido at lsabido@com.edu.

Living-wage movement is growing

Poverty-level wages are a grave problem for tens of millions of Americans. In the past few years, a new generation of low-wage workers has begun organizing for a living wage. Thousands of Walmart employees and union members protested at 1,000 stores on Nov. 28. Fast food workers and other low-wage employees went on strike in almost 200 cities Dec. 4.

The movement for a living wage has already produced results. About 20 states increased their minimum wages in 2013-2014. Last February, President Barack Obama signed an executive order requiring federal contractors to pay their employees at least \$10.10 an hour. Chicago has raised its minimum wage to \$13 an hour, and Los Angeles is considering a comparable measure. Seattle and San Francisco have raised their minimum wages to \$15 an hour.

Locally, the formation of the Galveston Living Wage Study Group is a welcome develop-

From the Left



ment. Steve McIntyre’s columns in support of a living wage for all have resonated throughout the community. So have Heber Taylor’s sympathetic editorials. However, the recent arguments against a living wage by Ron Pearrow and Bob Horn cannot withstand scrutiny.

Pearrow and Horn ignored the fact that full-time minimum-wage workers cannot afford the basic needs of life. They also omitted the fact that most Americans want to increase the federal minimum wage. A CNN poll last June found 71 percent of the public in favor —

including 54 percent of Republicans.

Pearrow erred when he claimed, “The vast majority of minimum wage workers are young people trying to get their first work experience.” As economist Jared Bernstein pointed out in The New York Times last June, half the minimum-wage workers are older than 30, about one-third are 40 or older, and only 12 percent are teenagers. Pearrow and Horn were also mistaken in contending minimum wage increases lead to substantial job losses and higher prices.

Last January, 600 economists signed a letter urging the federal government to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. They wrote, “The weight of evidence now show(s) that increases in the minimum wage have had little or no negative effect on the employment of minimum-wage workers.” Berkeley Professor Michael Reich has shown that only tiny price increases occur for each 10 percent increase in the minimum wage

in restaurants, and no detectable price increases occur in other businesses.

Pearrow was incorrect when he stated the movement for a living wage is “happening mainly in areas controlled by the Democrats.” In November, voters approved minimum wage increases in Alaska, Arkansas, Nebraska and South Dakota — all Republican states. And Pearrow was wrong when he wrote that unions are “the main beneficiaries” of increased minimum wages. Most union contracts are not pegged to the minimum wage.

Horn’s claim that “the free market price is the fair price for everything, including wages” reveals more about his ideology than reality. Horn must have forgotten there used to be a market in slaves and a market in child laborers in this country. Neither Pearrow nor Horn understand that the exploitation of labor today is coercive and harmful. Fortunately, a growing number of Americans do.

*“...and the numberless unsung heroes,
equal to the greatest heroes known.”*



Tell Us About Our...

BEST Citizens

In April 2015, The Daily News will publish a special section called “PROFILES.”

We are asking you, our readers, to participate by providing nominations for our 2015 “Unsung Heroes”.

Do you know someone who has done something to help make our community better? We call these people “Unsung Heroes”. With your help we can assure these special “Unsung Heroes” are recognized for their selfless efforts and contributions.

To nominate someone for this special honor, send a letter describing the nominee and why he or she should be chosen. Keep your essay to 300 words at most. Please include the name, address and telephone number of your nominee, and yourself, so that we may get in touch with you.

Deadline to submit entries is January 17, 2015.

Send your entries to: angela.taylor@galvnews.com

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The quote used above is from American poet Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892), published in a collection of his works titled *Leaves of Grass*.