Fun Facts and Figures

A dam Penrose

Top Ten... ways you know it is time for the winter holidays:

10. Your house is clean.

9. You see too many relatives.

8. Dad now seems to want to watch football all the time.

7. Grandma is wearing an extra sweater when in the house.

6. Finals.

5. When you see Jack-O’-Lanterns with Santa’s face.

4. Chestnuts are roasting... oh nevermind.

3. When the President pardons a bird.

2. You are eating leftovers for weeks at a time.

1. When you hear the word Kwanzaa.

In the Spotlight: Duan Jackson

Feature Article

A vianta Robertson

She is the woman who helps run the University Honors Program. She is there to advise students on which classes to take as well as takes time to sit and listen to students’ problems, achievements, frustrations and anything else they might want to tell her. Duan Jackson always listens to students’ stories, so now is the opportunity for students to read about her story.

Although she was born in Plaquemine, Louisiana, near Baton Rouge, Jackson did not spend much time there because her father’s military job called for a move to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where she grew up. She said it was a wonderful place to grow up, but once she became an adult, she had to move on because she wanted more than the town could offer. “I just knew that I had to get out of there. I was suffocating,” she said, “I knew that I needed to be in a big city because it was such a small town. There was nothing to do.”

So, Jackson and her mother (her parents divorced) loaded up a U-Haul truck and made the cross-country trip to California. “I remember, for the first time,
Winter Break Travel

Ariana Oliva

Once the fall semester is over, most of us will be in need of some well-deserved vacations. However, some of us might have to work or take care of other things, but this is a great opportunity for us to get in touch with ourselves.

There are many places in Los Angeles that are economical for students as well as inspiring and beautiful. One of these places is Descanso Gardens, which is located in La Canada Flintridge. These 80 acres of land are filled with many diverse and magnificent gardens, trails, and shaded picnic areas. It is a great place to come and visit if you just want to relax in a peaceful and calm environment.

Two of the most memorable gardens located on the premises are the Japanese Garden and the International Rosarium. Amidst tall bamboo trees and jasmine flowers, you can enjoy a sip of tea or a homemade lunch while watching koi fish navigate through the ever-flowing creeks in the Japanese Garden. One can also be transported to eighteenth-century Europe while walking through mazes of flowering rose pathways in the International Rosarium.

Whatever you desire to do, Descanso Gardens is a very peaceful place to meditate about life, or better yet, to simply enjoy life. You could go to exercise, read, take pictures, or work on a masterpiece painting! Every season brings along its own charm to this vast land of flourishing blossoms.

Descanso Gardens is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission is $5, but students get a $2 discount with their student ID card. Parking is free. For further information you can visit the Descanso Gardens Web site at www.descansogardens.org or you may call (818) 949-4200. Enjoy your winter break!

UHP 150

In the Spotlight: UHP 150

Jasmine Shaw

It seems all you have to do is mention “Harry Potter” and the media goes loco. ABC news and the Long Beach Press Telegram may have beaten us to it — both have recently highlighted the UHP 150 Honors class: Harry Potter, a section taught by English professor Mimi Hotchkiss. As some of you may have seen/read, the media presents the class as part of the Harry Potter phenomenon and are amazed that students at CSULB can get college credit — honor’s credit nonetheless — for reading the popular books that many read on their own time anyway for fun.

Students at both CSULB and neighboring universities have expressed their surprise (and jealousy) at this unique opportunity twenty-four students have been granted this semester. But like any other UHP 150 “Exploring a text” class, the objective (according to the Catalog) is to closely read the books and explore “issues of personal identity, moral choice, freedom and commitment.” The majority of class time is spent in lively discussions and debates featuring topics such as “Is there a clear distinction between good and evil in Harry’s world?” or “What role do stereotypes play?” It is only right that a class should explore these important issues through exciting books that we want to read.

The class may be offered again, so any who are interested should keep their eyes peeled.

UHP 150

UHPoetry: Downtown

Chhunny Chhean

Lost, I scan the signs for the 405. Turning right leads me to a strange area as Fifty-story structures flank my left and right sides.

The structures are like protective giants As they shield me from the angry freeway, I feel safe in their paternal shadows.

Soon, the skyscrapers bid me farewell as I follow the thin, black, glittering and Tired road, which is gladly void of cars.

Once more I am on that fast, fierce freeway But I look behind my shoulder to lights Of buildings that shine on like warm porch lights.

(UHP 150 Contest Winner)
seeing the Hollywood sign. I was all excited,” she said.

One of her first jobs in California was at an entertainment law firm in Century City, where the lawyers represented celebrities such as Sylvester Stallone and Dolly Parton. In fact, Jackson’s original plan was to become a big star, but acting did not meet all of her financial obligations, so she looked for other jobs.

In September of 1990, she started her first job at Cal State Long Beach as a receptionist in Academic Affairs. By January, Jackson decided to finish getting the degree she started in Kentucky. Like many other students, she, too, changed her major a number of times. She considered communications, theater, film and journalism, but ultimately earned her bachelor’s degree in English. She recently got her master’s degree and is considering a new doctorate program on campus in educational leadership. She said this opportunity would help her take her job of working with students on a one-on-one basis to a higher level.

Through these one-on-one interactions, Jackson said she lives vicariously through the students in the Honors Program. For example, she will be a doctor through one student, a journalist through the next student and an actor by way of another student. To her, being the advisor for the program was divinely ordered. As she explained, “Even in this, God has a plan for my life to be here, at this time, to help people. I realize that some of these students can talk to me when they can’t talk to their parents and know that it’s confidential and know that I’m not going to judge [them].” She said she understands students because she has either been in the same situations they face or she has heard very similar stories repeatedly. “Every day [there are] little rewards, here and there, that I can walk away and say ‘Wow, I kinda help people. I’m helping them make life decisions,’” she said.

Although she spends lots of time with students, Jackson still has time to enjoy her life outside of school. Some of her favorite past-times include finding a new theater to watch movies with friends, spending quality time with her family, and reading books.

Likewise, her dreams of working in the entertainment business have not been totally overshadowed. She still would like to see some day direct films and television sitcoms, but right now she is just taking a detour. As she said, “Everything that happens to you, good or bad, and whenever it happens, gives you character.”
With Flying Colors

Compiled by Jasmine Shaw

Finals are looming dangerously on the horizon... but do not fret! Here are the weapons you need to dominate them, provided by certified experts.

“I find that studying at coffee shops is productive because the distractions give me the break I need to absorb what I was just reading. Also, coffee really turns my mind on, and affects me so that I cannot sleep until very late at night, so I usually study some more. Beware, though, it may be hard to find an open table, especially during the peak study time of Finals. On a side note, I read a study somewhere that women who drank coffee during their younger years have better memories in their older years than women who did not drink coffee. So if you really want to remember what Carl Popper’s philosophy on science is forty years from now, drink that coffee!” — Chhunny Chhean, Philosophy and English

“Study early and always study in the same spot. My psychologist teacher said that there are hypnosis studies that show this is a good relaxation technique. Right before you take the test, count to ten while taking deep breaths and envision yourself in your usual study spot.” — Nicole Hartman, Biochemistry

“Study up until the day of and then don’t look at [the material] anymore. Tell yourself that it’s all there in your head by now. Because you do know it by then, you just have to have confidence in yourself.” — Rachel Malarich, Communications

“I have to advocate the group study sessions in the library because they have helped me in the past. I do not recommend cramming at the last second, procrastination never really gets me the A or B-ya know?” — Joann Bae, Pre-nursing

“You want to know how I study for my tests? I rewrite all my notes backwards. Not only does this help me remember them better, but then I can read them in the mirror while I’m admiring my handsome face. This makes learning fun, but sometimes it can be a distraction, so be careful when trying this at home!” — Thomas Albertson, Religious Studies