



Shahab Ghobadi travels from Iran to study at LSUS, braving incredible turmoil along the way.
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Orientation seeks student leaders

Jennifer Middleton
STAFF WRITER

LSU Shreveport is offering a substantial scholarship opportunity for students applying to serve as freshmen orientation leaders.
Andy Osborn, assistant director of admissions at LSUS, provided details about the event.
"Freshmen Orientation is an action-packed, day-long program designed to orient all incoming freshman to LSUS," Osborn said. "It is intended to not only introduce them to campus life and college-level classwork, but also to help them transition from high school to college."
Osborn said that there are several orientation sessions to choose from prior to the start of the fall semester. During these sessions, new students meet their academic advisors, register for their first classes, meet fellow incoming freshmen, learn about student life, and get a tour of the campus. The leaders help to organize the day's events.
"Our Freshman Orientation leaders are a vital part of the program and work very closely with their assigned groups of incoming students," Osborn said.
Orientation leaders receive a \$2,000 scholarship for their participation.
"There are several other perks, too," Osborn said. "Freshman Orientation leaders get the

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Photo by Krista Wilson

A group of participants gets ready at the starting line of the Children's Miracle Network 5k Run/Walk.

Greeks run into national charity

Krista Wilson
STAFF WRITER

Phi Mu and Phi Lambda Chi showed support for the community on Thursday by hosting the Children's Miracle Network 5K Run/Walk, planned to be an annual event.
"I believe [the race] is something we can do every year," said Phi Mu Philanthropy Chair Chelsea Carroll, junior, pre-physical therapy.
The event, open to LSU Shreveport students and the general public, was created as a

means to bring awareness and raise money for the Children's Miracle Network. The program reaches out to and helps children across the country, including in the Shreveport/Bossier area.
Phi Lambda Chi President Matt Nieves senior, business management/marketing, helped organize the race and spoke with participants.
"Our philanthropy is Arkansas Children's Hospital which is in the Children's Miracle Network," Nieves said. "It was Phi Mu's

idea and they brought us into it. I believe they brought us into it because we share the same philanthropy."
Carroll said that Phi Mu is community oriented and hopes to gain more involvement in the activities they host. The organization also seeks to be a part of future charity events.
"Children's Miracle Network is basically an organization [for] kids that cannot afford to get treatment or surgery," Carroll said. "So, as Phi Mu fraternity, we adopted Children's Miracle Network as our philanthropy to raise

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Administration reveals Wellness Center plans



Photo by Christopher Talerico

Interim Chancellor Dr. Paul Sisson speaking at the "State of the U for You" address, held earlier this semester.

Christopher Talerico
STAFF WRITER

Few may remember its inception, but LSU Shreveport is looking to expand the services it offers the student body by building a Wellness Center.
The Wellness Center, which is still in the early developmental stage, would offer students a central location to work out and engage in school-sponsored, recreational activities.
Unlike the Health and Physical Education building, the center would focus on more than caring for the body; it would also help students deal with mental, emotional, and professional issues as well.
The proposed Wellness Center still requires the necessary funds and approval from the Board of Regents and the Board of

Supervisors before construction can begin.
"Even though we have less state funding than we did in 2008-2009 and every year it is getting cut more, we're getting close to the point where there is nothing left to cut in state funding. We've gotten pretty good at making that transition to effectively being a private university. We've gotten to this point and we're a lot more self-sufficient than we used to be," said Dr. Paul Sisson, interim chancellor.
A Wellness Center would give a central location for students to engage in recreational activities including yoga, ping pong tournaments, or flag football that are currently shuffled around ever-changing schedules.
"What students are missing out on now are facilities for services. You can't use [certain school facilities] because sports teams need to use them. We could expand

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SOC hosts meeting, election

Last Friday, the Student Organizations Council hosted its monthly meeting and elected a new group of officers. Shadi Darzeidan was re-elected president, Samuel Cooper was elected vice president, and Rodney Miller was re-elected secretary. Following the election, and addresses from HPE Facilities Coordinator Nathan Dunams, SGA Vice President Cody King, and Director of Student Activities and Recreational Sports Angel Martin, SOC representatives were invited to participate in a “round-table” discussion of upcoming planned events and any suggestions or concerns they wanted to discuss with their fellow organizations.

Photo by Crystal DuRousseau

RUN cont.

money and make sure we give these children the surgery and [help] they need.” Carroll said it is something those in the community can get behind, because they will feel good about being able to add support to the organization. Also, giving money helps children with medical care and the opportunity needed for operations their families may not be able to provide without the help of Children’s Miracle Network. “On behalf of Phi Mu and Phi Lambda Chi, because we both support the same Children’s Miracle Network organizations, we would like to thank LSUS students for coming and the community for coming out here and supporting the 5K run, as well as Rebecca Chiles, and Lottie Huckaby,” Carroll said. Although the event’s turnout was smaller than Carroll hoped for, she said that she remains optimistic about having a larger turnout in years to come. “I wanted to do it as a community health [activity],” Carroll said. “As Phi Mu we try to create events for kids to learn [that it’s] healthy to exercise.” Other Greek organizations are planning several upcoming charitable events including working with food banks, working with homeless shelters, cleaning up lawns, painting houses, hosting silent auctions, and selling spray-paint art.

LEADER cont.

chance to make a real difference on campus by helping the newest members of our LSUS family transition into life here.” Osborn said that working closely with the new students can be very rewarding. “Our orientation leaders are also very visible students on campus and get the chance to be trained on lots of LSUS facts and information,” Osborn said. “Additionally, this position provides some great leadership and teamwork experience since they will be ‘in charge’ of their group of incoming students, but also have to work together as a team to make sure the event runs smoothly.” Osborn explained that leaders are selected through a competitive application and interview process. “After students submit an application, they will be notified as to whether or not they have been selected for a group interview,” he said. “Following the group interview, the selection committee will choose which students will be given individual interviews. Final selection of our ten Freshman Orientation leaders for the next year will then be based on students’ performances in both the group and individual interviews.” Being an orientation leader is also a good thing to put on a résumé, Osborn added. “It shows you were selected through a competitive interview process,” he said, “and that you possess the qualities needed to be successful in the position: personality, charisma, problem solving, responsibility, [and] public speaking.” As for future leaders, Osborn said that he hopes to have a very strong group of applicants to choose from. “I hope that we will have another great team of excited and committed student leaders to show our new students what it means to be a Pilot,” he said. “Overall, we are looking for well-rounded, responsible, kind, personable, knowledgeable LSUS students who will go above and beyond to give our incoming students a great introduction to life at LSUS.”



Photo by Krista Wilson
Phi Mu and Phi Lambda Chi hosted a registration table at the starting point of the race.

PLANS cont.

our intramural leagues. We [could] start doing a lacrosse league or water polo league,” said Angel Martin, director of student activities and recreational sports. The early business model projects the center paying for itself within a few years of opening. Countless studies around the country show that facilities like the wellness center increase student recruitment and retention. New and continuing students would then aid the institution in covering a budget that is becoming less supported by the state. The idea for the Wellness Center originated in 2001. The idea was met with interest but still required preparatory work. A firm was contracted, a business plan created, and a design drawn up. A referendum to raise student fees to help pay for the Wellness Center was voted down due to some internal political disputes. According to Sisson, the standing SGA president at the time of the vote was actually in favor of the Wellness Center, but disagreed with the distribution of the monies collected from student fees. Because an agreement on the distribution of student fees could not be reached, the standing SGA president campaigned against the Wellness Center and the referendum was voted down. “This may remind you of what’s happening with the federal government right now. He engaged in politicking and basically said ‘I’m not going to campaign for the Wellness Center unless I get my way on how student fees are distributed,’” Sisson said. If the LSUS strategic planning committee approves the development of a Wellness Center, the student body would have to pass a student fee increase via another referendum.



Photo by Christopher Talerico
Angel Martin, director of student activities and recreational sports

said Angel Martin, director of student activities and recreational sports. Aside from the services provided, the center would also be cost-effective for the already struggling campus. The early business model projects the center paying for itself within a few years of opening. Countless studies around the country show that facilities like the wellness center



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Foundation grants science department equipment

Corey Drummond
STAFF WRITER

The National Science Foundation provided LSU Shreveport with a federal grant to acquire two new high-pressure liquid chromatography machines for the science department.

Dr. Cran Lucas, professor of biological sciences, worked on the grant proposal for these tools, which allow for the separation of specific molecules in a mixture. This device is essential for biology graduate students to complete their coursework.

“HPLC is used universally to identify molecules or quantity of molecules. You can use it in any kind of research situation to see what kind of molecules are present,” Lucas said.

The HPLC device is an expensive piece of hardware, and the science department does not receive budget money from LSUS to pay for new equipment. Before the new HPLC model, science labs were using a 10 year old, less-sophisticated model that was running on its last legs. The only way for the science department to obtain new, vital equipment is through federal grants.

Applying for federal grants typically involves filing for specific research projects. The NSF runs an MRI program geared towards research equipment infrastructure. This allows for multiple people to work on several projects using the federal grant money.

The path to acquire the grant was a competitive one. Initially, when Lucas and another LSUS professor who has since retired, wrote and submitted the grant proposal, they were declined. Lucas revamped the proposal and sent it to the Board of Regents, but was once again declined. Finally, he revised it again and sent it back to the NSF where it was accepted at last.

“It is a very competitive program. You’re up against everybody across the country; a lot of the big boys like major research universities apply for these grants,” Lucas said.

The science department was awarded \$152,000 from the grant nearly three years ago. Initially, they were planning to buy a single HPLC analytical system with the grant money, but Lucas discovered the same device at a cheaper



Photo courtesy of Cran Lucas

The new high-pressure liquid chromatography device for the science department.

price. Jumping on the opportunity, the department found itself with over \$50,000 left after the purchase.

“I went back to NSF and told them we had extra funds. I asked them if we could use the extra bucks to buy a preparative system, and they agreed,” Lucas said.

Now, the department has two HPLC systems for research and student coursework. The preparative system is not as elaborate as the analytical system. The main HPLC device is the heavy-duty worker and the most used. The preparative system doesn’t have all the bells and whistles of its big brother.

“The analytical system runs small samples. With the preparative system, you want to run large samples and con-

centrate them. The preparative prepares the samples for being run on the analytical system,” said Dr. Dalton Gossett, chair of the biological science department.

The HPLC systems are a necessity for the graduate programs. It is one of the most important tools in the science department.

In the past few years, the department obtained over \$250,000 of federal grant money. Due to the highly competitive nature of federal grant proposals, it is highly irregular for a single school to be awarded this much in such a short time. It is a testament to how hard the science department works to have the best equipment for its students.

Facility services shoulders budget cuts, responsibilities

Frank Johnson
STAFF WRITER

College students are often accused of taking things for granted. Included in this could be the facility services staff at LSU Shreveport—trash, litter, and other unattractive messes are cleaned up, not by trash elves, but rather by a custodial department dwindling due to continued budget cuts.

“We have not been able to replace housekeepers who have retired or quit or moved on,” said Donald Bloxom, director of facility services.

Due to budget cuts, the custodial department has been reduced by approximately 50 percent over the past five years ago.

The typical housekeeper in an institution such as LSUS will maintain around 25,000 square feet; the 13 housekeepers currently working on this campus maintain around 45,000 square feet. So, whereas one person used to take care of one floor, in these days of tighter budgets, some housekeepers must take care of a whole building.

Still, facility services works hard to maintain and make sure that LSUS is a comfortable, attractive, and functional campus that is conducive to learning for students and faculty.

Administration, custodial, grounds, maintenance, and central utilities are the five departments that are included in facility services. The administration department consists of a professional staff of three: the director, an assistant director and an administrative assistant.

Maintenance is composed of three people who generate 150 preventative maintenance work orders a month.

“We try to fix it before it fails,” Bloxom said.

Central utilities are where the heat, air conditioning, and all of the energy comes in, and then it is distributed to the campus. The south is hot most of the year and air conditioning is a primary concern for most students and faculty.

“Heating is not a big deal in the big scheme of things, but cooling is huge, and we have been able, through various sources of funds and techniques, to reduce our electrical consumption by about twenty percent over the past five years,” Bloxom said.

Grounds-keepers are four men who have to maintain the 256-acre campus. The work includes cutting the grass, edging the sidewalks, picking up trash, maintaining the trees,



Photo by Frank Johnson

Donald Bloxom, director of facility services, began working at LSUS in 1985.

cutting the crepe myrtles, moving furniture, and whatever is required.

“Since 1985, when I came to work here, we had eight groundkeepers; we had a handful of trees and a handful of crepe myrtles. Since then, we’ve planted over four hundred live oak trees and crepe myrtles, and I now have four groundkeepers. We simply do not have enough man power to keep them properly pruned all the time—that’s a disappointment,” Bloxom said.

Larger vehicles, such as buses and big trucks, do hit the limbs protruding from these massive trees surrounding the campus.

The trees on the LSUS campus bring life to the univer-

sity and stretch all around the 256 acres, and provide shade and visual stimulation for visitors, students, and faculty.

“I love the campus, it’s very clean; and it’s nice to look at. My favorite part is the trees leading up to the administration building,” said Chassidy McMillon, sophomore, criminal justice.

Although struggling with budgetary limitations, facility services continues to serve the campus and attempts to keep it looking its best.

“Everybody who steps on this campus is our customer. Our only reason in being here is to serve them, we do the absolute best we can,” Bloxom said.

Olympic hopeful finds success in weightlifting program

Montana Davis
STAFF WRITER

LSU Shreveport is known nationwide for its weightlifting facilities and athletes. One of its most recognized champions is Kollin Cockrell of Salmon, Idaho.

Cockrell is an Olympic hopeful, currently training for the 2016 games. Cockrell earned countless titles nationally, and even internationally, since the beginning of his career several years ago.

Cockrell began lifting weights in 2007, while still a student in high school. After taking a strength training class there, he said he found it a good way to deal with stress and decided to take up the sport professionally shortly after.

He later began Olympic-style weightlifting in 2009 and entered his first Junior Olympics in 2010, a year before graduating high school.

Cockrell was a natural to weightlifting and went on to conquer ten Idaho weightlifting state records before moving to Shreveport in 2011.

Cockrell found out about LSUS through other weightlifters, such as LSUS student Angelina Moreno, during competitions.

Recruiting the northerner was not an easy task—the distance from his family and home state made him hesitant to take such a leap.

“Idaho to Louisiana, I don’t know, that is really far. I don’t know if I can do that,” Cockrell said he told Moreno after she offered him a try-out for the team.

Throughout high school, he said that he remained in close touch with the LSUS weightlifting team and even kept up with Kendrick Farris, a two-time Olympian from LSUS.

“I was like ‘wow he’s really strong, I wonder what program he is doing,’ ” Cockrell said.

After his high school graduation, he finally made the life-changing decision to join the LSUS team.

The move was a success for Cockrell—within his first year, he qualified for the 2012 Junior World Team and competed in Guatemala, finishing in tenth place.

In 2012, he competed in the American Open, taking home sixth place. His clean-and-jerk for that competition



Photo courtesy of Kollin Cockrell

Kollin Cockrell, junior, community health, is a nationally and internationally recognized weightlifter.

was 187 kg, even though he tried going for second by jumping 14 kg for the American record. Cockrell cleaned it but missed the jerk at 201 kg.

Cockrell later traveled to compete in Iceland, becoming the 2013 International Champion.

He is a three-time national champ with wins in the 2010 AAU, 2012 Collegiates, and 2012 Jr. Nationals. He is currently a 2013 University World Team member as well.

Cockrell devotes most of his time to the sport and works out five days a week, two to four hours at a time. His favorite workouts are squats, clean-and-jerk, and deadlifts. His least favorite is snatches.

“Two months out, I change my diet because I have to cut weight to make my weight class. I work out with lower reps, try to sleep more and stay away from carbs,” Cockrell said about the diet and training he goes through before a competition.

“I don’t eat junk food but I do eat a lot—more meat, vegetables, and proteins. I lose about a couple kilos. I’ll only eat one meal before a competition and I’ll make weight,” Cockrell said.

To get pumped up for a workout or competition, he will listen to dub-step, hip-hop or rock and visualize the workout first. Cockrell said that he also meditates and prays beforehand, thinking about his family back in Idaho.

Cockrell is a junior at LSUS and is majoring in community health, specializing in physical health. He is also a member of the LSUS cheer squad.

He is currently training for future competitions such as the 2013 American Open and another trip to Iceland to reclaim his title.

He will continue to train for the 2016 Olympics. Afterwards, he hopes to return to Idaho and become a weightlifting coach in his northern home.

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Shahab Ghobadi braves turmoil for education

Christopher Talerico
STAFF WRITER

For most people in America, the first day of college is an exciting and, potentially, over-whelming experience. But for Shahab Ghobadi stepping onto the LSU Shreveport campus was the easy part.

Ghobadi, an Iranian native from the small village of Shanini, Kurdistan, comes from humble beginnings. His father, an unemployed farmer afflicted with a lifetimes of mental illness, had long been incapable of providing for the family. As such, Ghobadi grew up in abject poverty, much like his future subject of study: Abraham Lincoln.

A quiet, humble man, Ghobadi dedicates the lion's share of his time to studies, whether in class or not, and has little time for things like "socializing." Though concerned about his heavily-accented English, Ghobadi speaks better than many natural-born American citizens and displays a reverence for the noblest "American" intellectual aspirations: freedom, equality, opportunity, such that it can be humbling to compare one's loyalty and national pride.

To help support the family, Ghobadi worked as a translator of English in his native Persian tongue. Ghobadi worked twenty hours a day from his eight by ten bedroom in the basement of his house that also doubled as his "office space." Those are the days that Ghobadi light-heartedly refers to as the "dark ages of [his] life."

Ghobadi, living in Sanadag, Kurdistan and studying his native Middle East region, came across the Association of Third World Studies.

Ghobadi contacted Dr. William Pederson, professor of political science at LSU Shreveport and American Studies Endowed Chair & Director of International Lincoln Center, seeking to work with the ATWS. It was Pederson that introduced Ghobadi to the history and icon of Abraham Lincoln.

Pederson, a bit of a Lincoln late-bloomer himself, holds the position of Executive Director in the ATWS, a largely ceremonial position designed to maintain continuity in the ATWS throughout its yearly leadership changes.

But his journey to becoming the head of the International Lincoln Center is long and meandering as well, if less tumultuous.

Pederson became aware, and later interested in, the ATWS through circumstance and loyalty to a friend. It was during a conference at Harvard for the National Endowment for the Humanities on slavery that Pederson met a fellow professor who introduced him to the ATWS.

Pederson's friend, a professor from Ghana teaching at Southern University, was heavily involved in the ATWS and invited Pederson to take part in the organization's activities as well.

It wasn't until 1999 that Pederson really began opening up to the idea, initially through self-interest. Pederson's Lincoln-based stamp collection was running out of material easily obtained in the United States. Pederson desired to travel the world to find and collect Lincoln stamps through-out.

But the proverbial piper came calling in 2003.

That year, LSUS was hosting its conference on an American president, Thomas Jefferson, as well as the annual ATWS conference. Pederson, who was already slated to run the presidential conference, was tapped by his Ghanan friend to organize and host the ATWS conference as well.

Through the successful hosting of both events, Pederson earned the recognition for dependability amongst the members of the ATWS and was tapped to hold a leadership position within the organization.

Growing up in Eugene, Oregon, Pederson was initially interested in international politics, an interest fostered by



Photo by Christopher Talerico

Shahab Ghobadi pictured in the LSUS Lincoln Center.



Photo by Christopher Talerico

Shahab Ghobadi, an Iranian native, was inspired by Dr. William Pederson to attend LSUS and study Abraham Lincoln.

a hobby of collecting stamps when he was a child. It was through the various international stamps that Pederson became aware of international politics. The countries, capitols, and leaders of many countries lined the sleeves of his collection.

In 1992, Pederson attended a conference at LSUS that honored previous presidents. The conference was planned to be biennial and the subject for the first conference was the "best president in American history," as voted for by historians: Abraham Lincoln. It was at this event that Pederson's flame of interest in Lincoln would first be stoked.

A lawyer, and later a good friend of Pederson's, attended the conference and was a collector of Lincoln books and paraphernalia, holding the largest collection in private hands.

Wanting to connect with his friend, Pederson thought he should share in the Lincoln-centered interest and began amassing his own collection of Lincoln paraphernalia in a familiar form: stamps.

With a modest beginning of only five stamps, Pederson's collection grew to well over thirty sleeves of a stamp collection book.

But it was here that Pederson's focus of Lincoln's effect and influence throughout the world was born. Pederson noticed how many and varied the stamps of Lincoln were, more specifically the fact that Lincoln was commemorated on a stamp from countries all over the world.

Ghobadi, much like Pederson, developed an interest in Lincoln later in life and through unexpected means. Pederson discovered a love of Lincoln through a friend and stamps. Ghobadi discovered Lincoln through Pederson—the circle of (academic) life.

"At that time, President Lincoln was just a name to me. Gradually, I learned more about him. Then I felt some kind of epiphany inside, that I was touched by the soul of President Lincoln, as he touched every heart that is in search of freedom and good qualities of human beings. His virtues touched me and influenced me, and I asked [Pederson] if I could focus my studies on President Lincoln," Ghobadi said.

After doing some research, Ghobadi felt his best opportunity to study Lincoln would be as a student at LSUS, the only university in the country with a center that studies the impact Lincoln has had abroad throughout the international community.

It was at this point that Ghobadi's journey began, and it would test his resolve beyond what most American college students could conceive.

Like most prospective students wanting to study in the United States, Ghobadi's first step was a literal test: the SAT. Unlike most students, however, he had to travel 15 hours to another country to take it. If that wasn't trouble enough, the country Ghobadi had to travel to was Iraq.

Thankfully, the SAT was being held in the relative safety of northern Iraq. Unfortunately, the trip had to be traversed by bus and the whole process: travelling to Iraq, taking the test, and travelling back home would take a week.

Moreover, during the trip to take the first part of the SAT, doctors informed Ghobadi that his father was diagnosed with a late-stage, aggressive laryngeal cancer and could die at any moment.

Despite his occidental aspirations, Ghobadi is the eldest son who was living in a "traditional society." This cir-

cumstance obligated Ghobadi to return home to be with his father and look after the family.

Ghobadi's father suffered from schizophrenia and the family relied on Ghobadi and his brother's income. During Ghobadi's second trip to Iraq to take the second part of the SAT, Ghobadi's father lost his battle with cancer.

Once the tests had been taken and the results returned, Ghobadi's next task was to obtain a student visa. Again, hardship would challenge Ghobadi's resolve.

While seeking a sponsor for his visa, the Muslim holiday of Ramadan began, and, after being turned down by Turkey and Dubai, the only country Ghobadi could find to sponsor him was Armenia.

Another week and another 25-hour bus ride and Ghobadi was nearing the finish line, but this journey would be nothing if not consistent.

While in Armenia applying for his student visa, Ghobadi's uncle in Iran also passed away. Adding insult to injury, upon returning from getting his visa, Ghobadi discovered that all of his money and valuables had been stolen from his room by another Iranian, a soccer player also getting a passport.

Thankfully, all of the peripheral tragedy and turmoil would not affect Ghobadi's visa application and one of the more essential steps in his journey would be resolved without exceeding amounts of difficulty.

Optimism and determination paid off and Ghobadi was granted a student visa.

Ghobadi, having achieved his initial goal of making it to the United States to study Lincoln and political science at LSUS, is a full-time student who works very closely with Pederson.

Unable to work in the United States and coming from a modest background, Ghobadi also lives with Pederson, a situation that Pederson expressly describes as "a one-time deal," though makes it a point to clarify that Ghobadi is "a perfect houseguest."

Though Pederson is not opposed to the idea of recruiting more international students to attend LSUS, Ghobadi being his first "recruit," he laments that LSUS does not even have an office to handle international student admissions (the university admissions office handles all student applications regardless of their location of origin).

Moreover, the bureaucratic headache of dealing with both foreign and domestic consuls serves as a formidable obstacle to any human even remotely aware of their blood pressure.

But Pederson is open to the idea of playing a more active role in the identification and recruitment of students from abroad, especially if they have an interest in the accomplishments and legacy of Lincoln outside the United States's borders.

Ghobadi, having reached LSUS, now works with Pederson translating the Persian poet Basij Khalkhali's epic poem "The Epic of the Woodcutter," written in honor of Lincoln, and studying political science.

After an arduous odyssey Ghobadi has finally realized his objective. Sometimes it's the journey, but sometimes — it IS the destination.

Local musicians create vibrations in local scene

Iris MacLean
STAFF WRITER

Do you ever find yourself sitting at home on a Friday night with nothing to do? Well, there’s a music and bar scene here in Shreveport that caters to both underage as well as those of you who can have a beer.

For those under 21, there are various places to go enjoy local music during the week and on weekends. Rhino Coffee, a locally owned coffee shop, offers live, local, and free music on their back patio. While you enjoy local musicians, you can also enjoy Rhino’s plentiful food and drink choices. Rhino is open everyday from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Self-described folk-synth-pop singer/songwriter Seth Dykes often plays shows at Rhino, and said that it’s definitely his favorite place around town to perform and go to see other musicians. Dykes, underage, also enjoys playing at another local coffee joint called The Naked Bean.

“The thing about Shreveport music is that people don’t come to shows, but they’re still really fun. I wish more people knew about the local music scene, and would come support it. It’s just hard to get recognition when you’re not famous and touring,” Dykes said.

Dykes encourages people to like his page on Facebook. You can find out information on upcoming shows, and listen to samples of his music there.

Hannah Unverzagt, freshman at LSU Shreveport, is another local singer/songwriter. She describes her music as a mellow alternative mix with original material as well as covers.

“I like playing at Twine the most because of the atmosphere and the general good vibes the people there give off,” Unverzagt said. Unverzagt has a CD for sale and can be contacted on her Facebook page.

Twine is a restaurant on Line Avenue open from 11:00-



Photo by Iris MacLean

Hannah Unverzagt, a singer/songwriter freshman at LSUS, performing at Marilynn’s place.

2:00 p.m. and 4:00-10:00 p.m. featuring tea, wine, craft beers, and a unique and contemporary menu. Unverzagt regularly plays at Twine about twice a week.

Another restaurant she enjoys playing at is Marilynn’s Place, a Cajun and Creole restaurant fully-equipped with good food and spirits. Marilynn’s has a local musician every Wednesday evening.

“Wednesday nights at Marilynn’s are great. The live music is going, people are everywhere, hot and delicious food is made fresh to order, and the daiquiris and beer are flowing!” said Zak Strezo, employee at Marilynn’s.

Marilynn’s is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and for brunch on Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Aside from Wednesday nights, they hold

various events, including local music, such as Mardi Gras parties and crawfish boils.

For those of you 21 and up, there are many more options for nightlife. Dakota Clark, member of The Bristol Hills, said he likes local bars Bears and Fatty Arbuckle’s the most.

“I like going to Overtime, Straycats, and Centenary Oyster House a lot because they are all full of good spirits and people down to have a good time after a long week of school and work,” Clark said.

The Bristol Hills are an up-and-coming band from Shreveport, currently in the recording process. Clark described his band as “mainly rock and roll with a little bit of psychedelic rock influence.” They have recorded some tracks found at www.thebristolhills.bandcamp.com. Clark said that his band has played at many places around town, including Bears, Fatty Arbuckle’s, Voodoo Art Bar and Café, Tiki Bar, and more. The band said they love going out on the weekends to listen to other local musicians as well.

Clark said the band will be taking a break from local shows to go record in Austin, Texas during October, but they will be back in action in November. They are hoping to have an album completed by December and then tour after it’s released in January.

Shreveport even has a few musicians that have made it happen outside of the local parameter. For example, the pop band Super Water Sympathy has hit it big, but still plays shows in their hometown of Shreveport. Another local band, Dirtfoot, has been around for years and gone on to play at various music festivals.

Other local bands that play frequently at local bars include The HWY Lions, Irene & the Sleepers, Engine, and Victor Olsten. Local music covers a wide range of rock, alternative, acoustic, pop, metal, and folk. There are cover bands, original artists, solo, and groups.

Dr. Lawanda Blakeney creates the soundtrack to her life

The Almagest invites you to get to know your professors through weekly professor profiles.

Ebonie Nelson
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Lawanda Blakeney, associate professor of fine arts at LSU Shreveport, is constantly dancing to the music that guides her life.

“I have a passion for music that’s always been there, and I can’t help it,” Blakeney said. “It is a very deep intense feeling that I can’t explain.”

As an instructor at LSUS for over 25 years, she is known for her interactive teaching methods. She teaches several fine arts and piano courses at LSUS.

“She is very passionate about her [classical] music. She always helps her students, like me, to have the most possible chance of passing,” said Qualeshia Richardson, senior, community health.

With a doctoral degree in musicology from the University of Texas, she devotes the majority of her time to music. Blakeney previously received the award for the Sybil T. and J Frederick Patten Endowed Professorship for Excellence in Teaching in the College of Liberal Arts.

“Education [to me] is when you have the ability to sort out the significant information from the less significant,” Blakeney said.

Blakeney grew up in an environment strongly influenced by both music and education. Both of her parents and all four grandparents had college degrees. Some of them had

advanced degrees. There are also a number of teachers and piano players in her family.

“Growing up in this atmosphere made teaching and playing music just come easy,” Blakeney said.

Outside of LSUS, Blakeney is extremely busy with all the professional teaching organizations she is a member of. As an active member in the organizations she holds several high-ranking officer positions. Some of those organizations and positions include:

- President of Greater Shreveport Music Teacher Association
- Vice President of Louisiana Music Teachers Association
- Music Teachers National Association
- College Music Society
- Past Dean of American Guild of Organist
- American Musicological Society
- Musicology representative for the Regional Board of College Music Society
- Co-chair of the Piano Rally

Locally, she is the director of a piano contest held at LSUS called Bartok Sonata Festival, the co-chair of the Northwest Piano Rally, and teaches private piano lessons.

In her down time, she loves to garden, go walking, do research, and travel. This summer, Blakeney and her husband visited Paris for a nine-day getaway.



Photo by Ebonie Nelson

Dr. Lawanda Blakeney, associate professor of fine arts

A degree in history promises students a bright future

Don’t know what to do with your degree after college? This weekly series is dedicated to helping you find out.

Iris MacLean
STAFF WRITER

A history degree can open the door to a world of valuable knowledge and skill along with many job opportunities.

Many students interested in history shy away from the degree thinking it’s an impractical major that leads to very few possible careers. However, a liberal arts degree is substantial in obtaining many career positions.

“Like any other humanities degree, it gives you that comprehensive spectrum to exposure of all ways of thinking and all ways of knowing,” said Dr. Cheryl White, assistant professor of history.

White said a lot of students think becoming an educator is the only option with a history degree, but that’s simply not true. She said many students go on to pursue a graduate

degree, museum studies, archival work, and historical preservation. She also said many students use the degree as a stepping-stone to law school because history is an excellent preparation.

Other job opportunities include, advertising executive, analyst, broadcaster, campaign worker, consultant, congressional aide, editor, foreign service officer, foundation staffer, information specialist, intelligence agent, journalist, legal assistant, lobbyist, personnel manager, public relations staffer, researcher, and teacher. Still, the options are not limited to just that. With creativity and a plan for success, a history major can get a lot of jobs.

“Going into college I was always interested in history, but I don’t want to become a teacher, so I worry about majoring in it and then having no job and being forced to teach,” said Jasmyrn Davenport, freshman, undeclared. “Now that

I know about other options, I am considering a degree in history.”

According to the LSUS website, the study of history enables students to not only have knowledge of what happened in the past, but also understand humans on a deeper level by studying human behavior and environment throughout the course of history.

“We have four historians. There are two Europeanists and two Americanists, so we offer a pretty good spectrum of coursework for people who are interested in the discipline,” White said.

LSUS has a quality staff of historians providing their insight and knowledge to students. If you are interested in history and have a vision, contact the department of history and social sciences at 318-797-5337 or history@lsus.edu.