



SIGHTS *and* SOUNDS

February 2023

A Newsletter for the College of Fine Arts & Communication

FRONT COVER
Caden Moran

WRITER & EDITOR
Caden Moran

DESIGNER
Michelle Lancaster



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Upcoming Events

Dishman Art Museum Exhibitions

Until March 4 – M-F (9 to 4), Saturday (12 to 4)

Beaumont's Black History - In Moving Pictures

February 2 – 5:30-8pm - Dishman Auditorium

Flute Ensemble Concert

February 6 – 7:30pm - Rothwell Recital Hall

Framing Workshop w/ Alice Tull

February 17 – 10am - Art & Design Building

Swingin' Into Spring Jazz Concert

February 23 – 7:30pm - Rothwell Recital Hall

Woodwind Weekend Concert

February 24 – 7:30pm - Rothwell Recital Hall

The Heidi Chronicles

February 23-25 – 7:30pm - University Theatre

The Heidi Chronicles

February 26 – 2pm - University Theatre



Golden Wright

Interim Dean, College of Fine Arts & Communication

Hello! My name is Golden Wright, and I am the Interim Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at Lamar University. In my opinion, the College of Fine Arts and Communication is one of the best kept secrets. The students, staff and faculty in this college are brilliant and extraordinary. The creation of this monthly newsletter is to highlight and promote the amazing accomplishments of these individuals within each discipline of the fine art and communication fields. Within this newsletter, one can find out when and where to experience live performances, learn about current research topics and the accomplishments of our students, staff and faculty. This is just one of the ways we are trying to rewrite that narrative and tell our story.



‘Not a surprise’

FORMER LUTV ANCHOR NAMED LOUISIANA SPORTSCASTER OF THE YEAR

Former Lamar University communication student and LUTV sports anchor Brooke Kirchofer was awarded the “Louisiana Sportscaster of the Year” award from the National Sports Media Association on Monday, Jan. 9.

The NSMA is an organization of more than 600 members and honors excellence in the sports media industry. Each year, organization members elect a sportscaster and sportswriter of the year from each state and nationally. Kirchofer, sports anchor and reporter for WWL-TV Channel 4 in New Orleans, Louisiana, was recognized as Louisiana’s best sportscaster in 2022.

Before graduating from LU in 2017, Kirchofer was a student in the Department of Communication & Media where she studied broadcasting. During her time, Kirchofer was involved in LUTV where she became a sports anchor covering and highlighting all LU sports.

“First and foremost, I would not be in this position to accept Louisiana sportscaster of the year if it prepared me for what I was going to face in the television industry while I was at Lamar University. I have all of my communications teachers to thank as well for laying the groundwork for what was to come in my career.”

Gordon Williams, LUTV studio operations manager, said he expected his former student to find this level

of success.

“To see Brooke’s success and her receiving this accomplishment is not a surprise,” said Williams. “From the moment she arrived at LUTV News, Brooke made the most of every opportunity. Her drive and work ethic are inspirational. I hope our current students see this as motivation to pursue their craft and what is possible.”

Kirchofer and the other award winners will be honored in June in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, during an awards weekend and banquet.





Mattie's mentor

COMMUNICATION STUDENT CREDITS ADVISOR FOR SUCCESS

For senior public relations major and LU graduate Mattie Hamilton, it all started as a standard research paper for an eight-week online class during the fall 2021 semester. Following a conversation with Professor Andre Favors in the Department of Communication & Media, Hamilton continued her research.

After adding more to her paper, she was able to present at the Office of Undergraduate Research conference at Lamar University. She was awarded first place in advanced-level research.

Now, one year later, she has been awarded the Stephen A. Smith award for her research at this year's National Communication Association convention.

The National Communication Association is responsible for promoting communication as an academic discipline, and each year they host a convention for Lambda Pi Eta honor society members to present undergraduate research. Hamilton, who is the president of LU's Lambda Pi Eta chapter, received her award for the top-ranked individual paper.

"When I found out I won, I was completely shocked," said Hamilton. "I worked tirelessly for a very long time to compile the research I did and get my paper in pristine shape. This was an incredibly daunting process, especially while I was still taking classes full-time."

Hamilton's paper, a 21-page document titled "A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of Hillary Clinton's Keynote at the 2015 Women in the World Summit," explores third-wave feminism and assesses Clinton's rhetoric during one of her speeches. It was a process

that took a year to complete and, according to Hamilton, included many sleepless nights.

During this time, Hamilton garnered the support of the faculty in her department, however, her biggest support system existed with Favors.

"I absolutely could not have accomplished all that I did without the help and support of the university along the way, especially Mr. Favors," she said. "He's been my mentor for about 2 years now and he's been one of my biggest support systems throughout this entire process."

"Mattie has been a great asset to the Department of Communication and Media," Favors said. "She models for others how to do academic scholarship and has been a great leader as the president of our Lambda Pi Eta chapter. I am very proud of her."

As Hamilton graduated in December, she looks back on her time as a student, her accomplishments, friendships and mentorships.

"Without their help, I could not have done all of this," she said. "It is exactly that unwavering support that reaffirms my choice in Lamar University every day. I am extremely excited to give LU my continued support as an alum."

When asked about what's next, Hamilton's answer is one that has been inspired by her time at LU and her mentors along the way.

"At some point in the future, I would love to come back and teach and inspire other students in just the same way that my professors have inspired me," she said.

Springing into action

THEATRE & DANCE ANNOUNCE SPRING 2023 PRODUCTIONS



The Lamar University Department of Theatre & Dance is pleased to announce their performances for this spring semester; “The Heidi Chronicles” by Wendy Wasserstein, “The Revolutionists” by Lauren Gunderson and “Dance Unleashed” choreographed by LU dance faculty and guest artists.

The first production, “The Heidi Chronicles” is written by Wendy Wasserstein and directed by assistant professor Alan Brincks. This Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning play continues to impress years after its debut in 1989. Heidi Holland and her friends navigate careers, friendships and lovers as they make their way through the last decade of the 20th century, questioning their identities, relationships and daily lives as women in an ever-changing world. “The Heidi Chronicles” will take the stage on Feb. 23 through Feb. 26 with showtimes beginning at 7:30

p.m. and the Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. All performances will be held in the University Theatre between the Dishman Art Museum and the Jimmy Simmons Music building on the campus of Lamar University.

The second production, “The Revolutionists” is written by Lauren Gunderson and directed by guest artist Laura Moreno. Lauren Gunderson has been the most produced playwright in the U.S. for the past few years. Gunderson brings us this brutal comedic quartet of four very real women who lived boldly in France during the French Revolution’s Reign of Terror. This grand dream-tweaked comedy is about violence and legacy, feminism and terrorism, art and how we go about changing the world. “The Revolutionists” will take the stage on April 13 through April 16 with showtimes beginning at 7:30 p.m. and the Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. All performances will be held in the Studio Theatre between the

Dishman Art Museum and the Jimmy Simmons Music building on the campus of Lamar University.

The third production is the faculty dance concert, “Dance Unleashed,” choreographed by Lamar University dance faculty and guest artists. The audience can expect to see a variety of dance styles performed by Lamar University student company and guest artists. Jazz, silks, modern, tap, contemporary and more will be featured in this once-in-a-lifetime dance concert. “Dance Unleashed” will take the stage April 28 at 7:30 p.m. and April 29 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. All performances will be held in the University Theatre, between the Dishman Art Museum and the Jimmy Simmons Music building on the campus of Lamar University.

Tickets range in price from \$7-\$15 and are available at lamar.edu/lutdtix

DSDE takes on Thailand

DSDE STUDENTS AND FACULTY IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN A NEW CULTURE

To kick off the new year, 20 members of the Lamar University Department of Deaf Studies Deaf Education took off from the runway and traveled 9,000 miles to study, explore and adventure in the hills and coast of Thailand.

Dr. Beverly Buchanan, program director for the DSDE master's program, journeyed with 13 undergraduate and three doctoral students, an ASL interpreter, an LU alumnus and the chair of the department to experience the rich culture of Thailand with the goal of experiencing a different deaf community and education.

"I was a volunteer teacher of the deaf in Thailand for three years," said Buchanan. "The tour itself was designed based on my experience living in Thailand as it had a balance between Thai culture and Thai deaf education and community."

It was Buchanan's prior experience in the country that allowed the opportunity for LU students to experience it as well. Despite the potential stress of organizing activities and tours in a different country, it was never a problem for Buchanan as she and the students were able to tour and interact with no issues.



"I was able to meet my former colleagues and introduce them to the LU group," she said. "Networking and arranging an educational tour were easy since I used to live in the country. I knew Thai Sign Language and I am very familiar with their education system and community."

While it was a return to a country that allowed Buchanan to reconnect to a place she spent years of her life in, it also was an opportunity for her to witness her students embrace Thai.

"The best part of the trip was watching students experience a new culture and language," she said. "They enjoyed the different types of Thai food and different activities that allowed them to immerse in Thai culture.

The best part, she said, was

witnessing them interact with the deaf community.

"Most of all, they enjoyed interacting with deaf children at two different deaf schools," she said. "The students enjoyed learning how to communicate in Thai Sign Language with deaf Thai people."

The group spent 10 days in Thailand and achieved a lot in that time. From meeting deaf Thai students and spending time on the beach to learning how to negotiate and bargain at the night markets, Dr. Buchanan and the group found joy in every moment during this study abroad trip to Thailand.



Signing off

Former KVLU Station Manager Byron Balentine reflects on career

When the word “legacy” was mentioned, KVLU Station Manager Byron Balentine had to pause. It was a word he had not thought of until that moment. As he stared off thinking about that word, he prepared to talk about it, because after 45 years of service with KVLU radio at Lamar University, Balentine signed off for the final time and left his legacy imprinted on the university at the end of 2022.

“It’s been so busy getting things ready that I haven’t had a lot of time to think about it up until late last week,” he said. “I had moved most of my personal items out of my office, and I looked at it and it just didn’t quite look the same. Then, I thought, this is getting real.”

In 1975, Balentine attended Lamar University and earned a degree in political science in 1979. At first, he had pre-law aspirations and went on to attend Oklahoma State University. After spending a year at OSU, Balentine immediately

realized where his passion was.

“Most of the time that I was there, all I could think about was broadcasting,” he said. “I came back [to LU] and went to grad school in the College of Business. I did everything but finish my thesis for an MBA and, at the time, I was brought on as program director. Suddenly I realized that an important radio job takes everything you’ve got.”

He had a decision to make, and he chose to stick with KVLU and enter the world of professional radio.

For 45 years, Balentine has been a part of the KVLU team. Starting out in a part-time role, he continued to learn as much as he could and worked his way up through a number of positions.

“They always had something for me,” he said. “By 1981, I was put on regular staff and had regular shows since then. I then went from staff announcer to music director to operations director and then to

program director in 1985.”

It wasn’t just his commitment to working the odd radio hours and passion for the industry that brought him into the fold, though, it was also his knowledge in the music that was played and featured from the station.

“I knew the music,” he said. “I had been a part of jazz bands in high school and college, and I played trumpet since third grade. I was interested in making music and was schooled a bit in jazz, so it came naturally to me to play jazz.”

It was because of his knowledge in jazz music that opened more doors for him within KVLU, eventually becoming music director for the station.

“I had moved most of my personal items out of my office, and I looked at it and it just didn’t quite look the same. Then, I thought, this is getting real.”

This allowed him to expand his knowledge further and to become more involved with the Beaumont jazz community.

“There used to be a jazz society in Beaumont, and so it was always KVLU that hosted these things,” he said. “So, if there was a jazz star in town, they would come and spend a half hour with me on the radio. I got a chance to drive Freddy Hubbard and other jazz artists to the theater and other venues.”

Over the years, Balentine’s knowledge and confidence began to grow, leading to increased roles and opportunities despite the initial doubt he had at first.

“There was a certain imposter syndrome early on,” he said. “There have always been a lot of good people here. I thought ‘I’ll never be as good as these people.’ There was a certain amount of concern at first that I could ever be a part of the club.”

But, 20 years after being given the privilege of serving as the program director for KVLU, Balentine was given the opportunity to serve in a position that he had never expected: station manager.

“Looking back on it, I never could have predicted that I would be sitting here at this point,” he said. “I wish to give credit to the previous manager George Beverley, who saw potential in me and taught me how to manage a radio station. Thanks to him, I was prepared to lead, and he was always a telephone call away when I needed advice. I hope to be that person to the next manager.”

For the next 17 years, Balentine

took control of KVLU. During his time, there were several challenges that he and his team faced. From hurricanes to a worldwide pandemic, the obstacles were plentiful. However, as one of his mentors had previously told him, Balentine knew the only solution to any problem.

“You’ve got to make that broadcast happen,” he said. “It doesn’t matter what else goes on or what gets in the way. You’ve just got to make that broadcast happen.”

This was the mindset and work ethic of Balentine for his entire broadcasting career. In fact, during Hurricane Rita, Balentine and KVLU broadcasted for a week from his own kitchen. In a time where technology wasn’t as advanced as today, the KVLU team made the broadcast happen in one of the worst hurricanes ever recorded.

This achievement gained the attention of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and they were given an award for creative use of their capabilities.

When it came to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the previous innovations that had to be made due to the hurricanes prepared them for the unknown.

“Long before COVID, we figured out we actually didn’t need studios up here in order to do what we needed to do,” he said. “That informed us pretty well during COVID.”

Despite the challenges faced, Balentine also looks back on some of his favorite memories made over the years from working alongside the charismatic Gordon Baxter to educating LU students about radio

and broadcasting.

As Balentine’s time with KVLU nears its end, he now looks back on his contributions to the station and the legacy he hopes to leave behind.

When asked about his legacy, he had to take a moment. After looking back on his career and all the memories he had made, Balentine spoke on the important word “legacy.”

“That’s a big question,” he said. “I hope a number of students that have gone through my class and people who have gone through the station have caught the attention that I have for this station and for radio in general. There are personalities that only people can be, and I think that you need to grasp that and use it as a method of getting a voice out there. Not necessarily your own but representing a reflection of the community.”

As he nears his retirement at the end of 2022, Balentine hopes to leave behind a legacy of reflecting the genuine community of Southeast Texas.

“I think there will be remnants of me for some years to come,” he said. “To be genuine you have to be everything you are and use everything you know.”

I have nothing but great love for the station and I hope that it continues to prosper,” Balentine concluded.

Frame it up

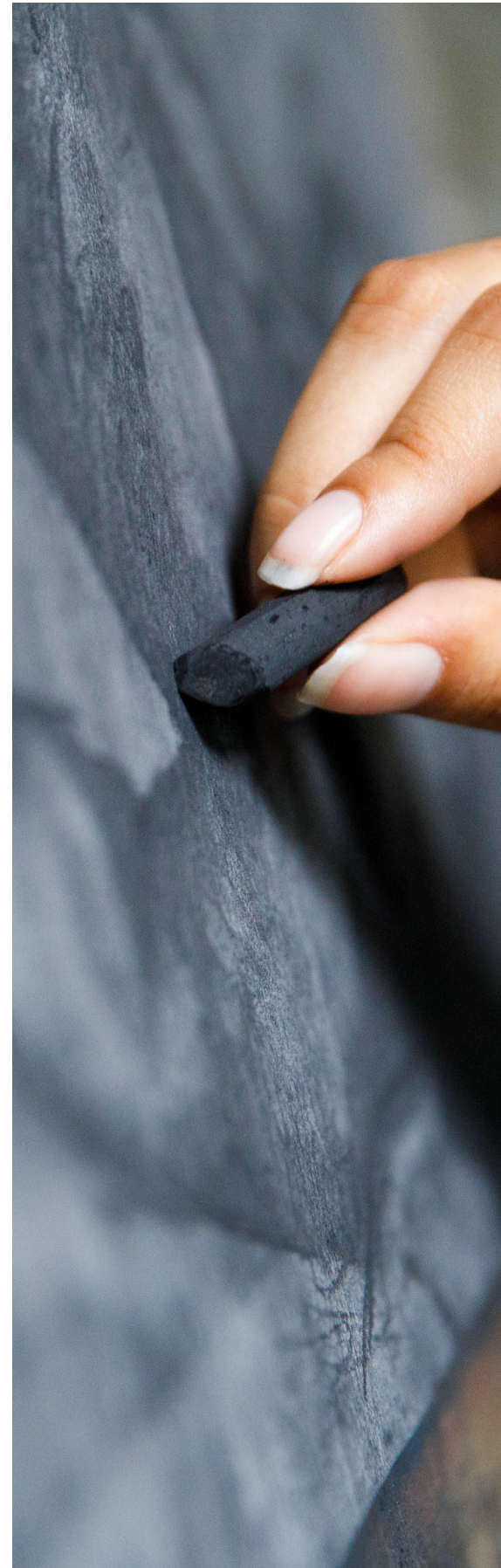
ART & DESIGN TO HOST FRAMING WORKSHOP

The Lamar University Department of Art & Design will be hosting a framing workshop led by Alice Tutt on Feb. 17 at 10 a.m. in the art building located on the campus of Lamar University. The event is free and open to the public.

Tutt, owner of Valverde Studio in the middle of the Red Bud Art Center in the heights of Houston, will be sharing her knowledge with LU students and the surrounding community.

Tutt received her bachelors degree in printmaking at Sam Houston State University and always had a passion for ceramics. It wasn't until a friend in art school asked her for assistance with frame work that Tutt became passionate about the art of framing.

Now on the verge of retireing, Tutt will be showcasing her work, talent and knowledge to those interested.





Meet Dr. Boulton

THE CHAIR OF SPEECH AND HEARING SCIENCES

On Aug. 1, 2022, the Lamar University Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences gained a new chair that aimed to inspire the faculty, students and overall direction of the department. Six months later, the energy that flows through the hallways, classrooms, offices and clinic of the speech and hearing building is an energy that gives a simple impression when entering: excitement.

Now, after becoming established with the job and environment, Dr. Johanna Boulton reflects on her time thus far as the chair of speech and hearing sciences while joyfully looking toward the future of the department she has been tasked to lead.

“Absolutely,” said Boulton, when asked if she was happy she took a chance to join LU half a year ago. “It’s a standard practice for people to wake up and complain about going to work, but I love my job.”

Boulton, born and raised in Northern California, became interested in

the study of human language and communication due to her upbringing in a multi-cultural family. Her father, from Texas, and her mother, from New Jersey, allowed Boulton to grow up in a house that involved daily cross-cultural communication. From the moment she was born, Boulton knew where she was going.

“It just always fascinated me when it works well,” she said. “It’s a beautiful thing, so I became interested in language. When I was in college, I got a linguistics degree with an emphasis in psychology from the University of California Santa Cruz because it was so interesting to me. I studied the thing that I love.”

Following a conversation with her mother and one of her friends, Boulton became introduced to the field and study of speech-language pathology. From there, she applied to multiple schools and, after taking a leap of faith in the application process, was accepted into Northwestern University where she completed her master’s degree.

After graduating, Boulton would go on to work in hospitals in Hawaii and within the rural Louisiana school system. It was during this time that her cross-cultural communication background came into play and opened her eyes up to a glaring problem within the profession.

“Wherever I worked, I saw the need for us to do better as a profession and providing services to clients from diverse backgrounds,” she said.

Boulton became passionate about putting in place better policies and procedures when serving people from different cultural and language backgrounds. Her passion and drive led her to visiting a lecture given by Ida Stockman, professor emeritus from Michigan State University, at a community college in Bossier, Parish.

“The only way to describe it was like being in church,” she said. “Everyone else faded away and all I could see and hear was her. It was life altering and mind shifting. After her lecture, I just stood up and



she asked me to come talk to her.”

Boult was invited to join Stockman at MSU and to study with her. Later, she graduated with her doctoral degree in audiology and speech sciences with a focus in urban studies after assisting Stockman with her work on the assessment of African American child language.

Boult then spent the next 14 years in teaching and administration positions at the University of Louisiana-Monroe and LSU Health Shreveport. After being approached by a former student from ULM regarding the open chair position at LU, Boult took the time to research the department and began to fall in love with the prospect of being at LU.

“I looked at all of the faculty members’ areas of interest, and there was a lot of overlap between theirs and mine,” she said. “I read the departmental strategic plan and it was so thoughtful. I was really impressed, and when I came to interview, I realized that there is meat in this system. I wanted to be a part of where this program was headed. I saw the promise.”

Before being offered the job, Boult had the opportunity to present a guest lecture to speech and hearing students at LU in early 2022. In a similar manner to the lecture she experienced from Ida Stockman, it was the students who convinced her future decision.

“The students are so integral to the vibe of the department,” she said. “I gave my guest lecture and the students were engaged, optimistic, responsive, empowered and involved in the discussion. I was so impressed by the students and that is the thing that made my decision.”

Not only did the engagement of the students play a role in Boult’s decision to come to LU, but it also was due to the faculty of the department. Boult defined them as “world class.”

“They are focused on teaching excellence but also have all sorts of research projects that are being published and funded,” she said. “As an administrator, it’s an ideal situation to be able to support faculty that are generally excellent.”

As Boult reflects on her past and the present state of the

department, she is also looking towards the future of the department, its faculty, students and growth.

With the department running a fully functioning speech therapy and audiology clinic, offering bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees and most recently launching an SLPA track for current undergraduate students, Boult is excited for the future of the department and what it can offer.

“We are in the business of producing well-educated students,” she said. “We just want the community to know that we are a resource for education and a service to the community.”

Soul-stirring spring

Department of Music prepares for loaded spring season



As the spring semester kicks into gear, the Lamar University Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music has begun preparations for their loaded schedule of concerts and events that will take place all over Southeast Texas this season.

“The music department is making preparations for about 30 evening concerts,” said Dr. Jeannette Fresne, chair of the department of music. “The choir performing with the Symphony of Southeast Texas, festivals for flute, clarinet, percussion, jazz, voice and several concerts and presentations by faculty in Texas, nationally and internationally will all be taking place.”

The department will officially

begin its run of concerts in February when three shows will take place: a flute ensemble concert on Feb. 6; a jazz concert on Feb. 23; and a woodwind concert on Feb. 24.

“Additionally, we have full day festivals for flute, clarinet, percussion, jazz and voice happening in the next few months,” said Fresne.

The department of music will also be hosting its annual “Collage Fundraiser” at the Jefferson Theatre in downtown Beaumont. This fundraiser is an opportunity to learn more about the department, listen to music from all areas of the department and to donate to support the students and faculty.

Additionally, some of the faculty and students will be

traveling to San Antonio to take part in the annual “Texas Music Educators Association Convention” where Drs. Brielle Frost and Francisco Perez will perform with their respective ensembles.

As the department of music prepares for a busy semester, there is an energy of excitement and joy for what is to come.

“I want to invite everyone to come hear the soul-stirring and exquisite music presented by the Mary Morgan Moore Department of Music in spring of 2023,” said Fresne.

Return of the print

UP PUBLISHING FIRST PRINT OF SPRING

ARTICLE CONTRIBUTED BY ANDY COUGHLAN

The University Press is kicking into gear for its first print edition of the spring to be published Feb. 24. The student newspaper publishes online stories on a regular basis, but the print edition is returning slowly after a hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We kept publishing online during the time school was out but with a skeleton staff,” adviser Andy Coughlan said. “It was hard to cover the campus when there was no one here to cover.”

The newspaper is in a rebuilding mode and published two editions in the fall.

“It is nice to have something you can hold in your hands and see other people walking around reading,” managing editor Maddie Sims said. “There is a lot of value to having the immediacy of being online, but there are skills we use in print, such as page design.”

The Feb. 24 edition will be available for Cardinal View and Sims said it is an important recruiting tool.

“It is a chance for us to hand them out to prospective Cardinals and say, ‘Look, we have something you can be involved with that covers the entire campus.’”

The University Press is always looking for new staffers. Modern media encompasses all types of production, from writing to photography to video. The University Press even has an award-winning podcast.

“We really have something for everybody,” Coughlan said. “And it’s a great place to build a portfolio that students can carry into job searches.”

“It is nice to have something you can hold in your hands and see other people walking around reading. There is a lot of value to having the immediacy of being online, but there are skills we use in print, such as page design

– Maddie Sims



40 years of the Dishman

Dishman Art Museum set to celebrate history

Two new exhibitions will soon open at the Dishman Art Museum on the Lamar University Campus: “Our Back Pages” featuring works of LU alumni and a collaborative exhibition alongside The Art Studio, Inc. featuring works of Maudee Carron and Lynn Sweat. The exhibitions will run Jan. 21 through March 4 with a reception being held Jan. 27 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

“Our Back Pages” will be located on the first-floor gallery and will feature works of Marvin Hayes, Michael Kennaugh, Paul Manes and Allie “Bill” Skelton, four acclaimed Lamar University alumni who have distinguished themselves throughout their careers.

“With this year being LU’s centennial year, I had the idea to feature some work of former students who have gone on to do well in their careers,” said Dennis Kiel, director of the Dishman Art Museum.

Taking place on the second-floor gallery, an exhibition featuring works of Maudee Carron and Lynn Sweat will be featured. This will be a collaborative exhibition between the Dishman Art Museum and The Art Studio, Inc. as both celebrate their 40-year anniversaries.

“Greg Buscemi from The Art



Studio told me that this is their 40th anniversary, and I said ‘ours too,’” said Kiel. “I told him we should do something together, but at that time I wasn’t sure what.”

After thinking of possible collaborative opportunities, Kiel thought of two artists with long-term connections to Lamar University, the Dishman Art Museum, and The Art Studio, Inc.

“Lynn Sweat is a big supporter of The Art Studio and he graduated from LU, so I thought of showcasing Lynn,” said Kiel. “But then I realized that Maudee Carron was a big supporter of The Art Studio, and the Dishman gave her a big solo show in 1993. They were both good friends and inspired one another, so

that’s what we wanted to do with this show, to show off the similarities and connection they had.”

Kiel has spent the last several weeks curating both exhibits in preparation for LU’s centennial celebrations and for the Dishman’s 40-year anniversary.

Admission to the Dishman Art Museum is free of charge and open to the public. Museum hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. while there is an exhibition open. The museum is closed for major holidays.