

Rebel YELL



Happy Holidays! With Thanksgiving behind and Christmas ahead, we appreciate you taking the time to read this edition of the RebelYell, your Alumni & Friends newsletter.

There continue to be many great things happening at Hill College and in the lives of our alumni. Please consider sending an update on career, family and personal accomplishments for inclusion in the next newsletter via website form or email.

Be sure to check out the Updates Section for classmate news, college happenings and upcoming events. Recently redesigned, the new Hill College website is definitely worth a visit. Check us out at www.hillcollege.edu/alumni.

Please send suggestions on how you can be better served as valuable alumni and friends of the college. Contact me at mbusby@hillcollege.edu or 254-659-7510.



Matthew Busby
Coordinator of Alumni Relations

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Dr. Sheryl Kappus, president of Hill College, announced her impending retirement following 10 years of dedicated service
- Dr. Robert Riza, vice-president of student services leaves Hill College to assume Clarendon College presidency
- Benjamin Hobbs, '11, tech at Pep Boys
- Tatiana Booth, '12, assistant volleyball coach at Vernon College
- Paulette Simpson, '13, educator at Regency Beauty Institute
- Claudia Rodriguez, '13, promoted to financial aid specialist at Hill College

90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



Performing Arts Reunion



Performing Arts Reunion



1947 Championship Football Team



HJSD Ex-students & HJC Alumni Reunion

STUDENT CORNER

From the bustling city of Brisbane, Australia, with a population of over two million, Lachlan Brinkley found his way to Hillsboro, Texas where the number of people just exceeds eight thousand. Without a car or a friend, he came in August of 2012 for the opportunity to pursue success both on the soccer field as a center back and in the classroom.

Brinkley's open personality, 'Happy to do anything' attitude and well-versed intellect found a great home in Texas where he notes how "people come up and say hey" and are quick to welcome strangers to their world. This general friendliness among Texans, the helpfulness of instructors like Dr. Lori Rose and Paula Curbo and teammates who made him feel at home are what he will miss most when he leaves the States. The biggest culture shock and the one he has yet to accept is how Texans put gravy on their biscuits.



Lachlan Brinkley

A "role model of a student-athlete," Hill College Soccer Head Coach Paul Davenport said. "He never quits, he never complains and is completely selfless in contributing to the team."

Focused on saving time and money, Brinkley expects to graduate early. Feeling how fast time flew by, the pre-physical therapy honor student says, "If America has a pathway for me to continue playing while pursuing academics, I'll take it gladly. If not, I'll go home." The future is bright for Brinkley and wherever he goes he will always be a Hill College Rebel. And no, for those wondering, he does not have a pet kangaroo.

ICE CREAM HOUR

*Join Alumni, Students, Faculty and Staff...
Free Ice Cream Floats...See You There...*

This free monthly event-starting in February-is a perfect time to reconnect with fellow alumni, current students, faculty and staff. Hope to see you there!

Burleson: First Tuesday
Noon - 1 p.m.
Student Center

Cleburne: First Wednesday
11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Student Center

Hillsboro: First Thursday
1 - 2 p.m.
Student Center



PERSONAL ENRICHMENT CLASSES AVAILABLE AGAIN

Contact the Community & Workforce Education Office for more information.

The purpose of the CWE Office is to prepare students for certification in a skill or trade and to facilitate continual self-improvement through professional development and personal enrichment classes.



If you need to update your computer skills, learn QuickBooks, brush up on your Spanish, take better pictures, trace your family roots, or want to create fabulous cakes, here's where to find it.

817-760-5820
cweinfo@hillcollege.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 29 - Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon in Cleburne, Room 400. 11:30 a.m. Appreciation luncheon for scholarship donors and student scholarship recipients.

January 30 - Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon in Hillsboro, South PAC. 11:30 a.m. Appreciation luncheon for scholarship donors and student scholarship recipients.

February 10 - Baltimore Consort, Performing Arts Series in Hillsboro. 7:30 p.m. Free admission. Proficient in their early-music instruments, and unsurpassed as musicians, the Baltimore Consort's arrangements of early music from England, Scotland, France, Italy and Spain, speak to the heart as well as the mind.

February 17 - Cashore Marionettes, Performing Arts Series in Hillsboro. 7:30 p.m. Free admission. Unmatched in artistry, grace and refinement of movement, the internationally acclaimed Cashore Marionettes redefine the art of puppetry.

Stay connected. Update your information online.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Tongai Makoni

To dream is a powerful thing. More than 9,000 miles away from Texas, in the small south African country of Zimbabwe, a young boy-orphaned since the age of 12-dreamed of coming to America. Tongai Makoni was his name. When you meet him it doesn't take long to see that besides the humbleness and the eyes full of life and excitement, there are still big dreams.

Raised by relatives and church members, Makoni graduated high school in 2005 and began working as treasury clerk for a bank. Originally hoping to attend Bible school, Makoni was encouraged to apply to Hill College by alumnus and friend, Wadzahai Ngoma.

Coming to the United States in 2008 and leaving Africa for the first time was definitely a cultural shock. So much was different: the food, how people treat and talk to others, and of course, adjusting to Texas slang (fixin' to). Frustrating as well were the many incorrect assumptions that Africa is one country, that people ride lions or that TVs are non-existent.

Initially not knowing anyone, Makoni quickly came to appreciate the Texas culture full of warm, nice people quick to smile, wave and help. Soon he "felt like a Texan, a Zimbabwean Texan".

Makoni arrived at Hill College excited about the possibilities. Pursuing academic excellence from the start, he benefited from instructors like Jason Abbott in government, Earl Elam in History and Kathy Hilbert in English Composition, who were not only "very strict" but "very helpful". Dr. Sheryl Kappus, president of Hill College, quickly recognized the dedication and potential he exhibited and provided mentorship in the form of multiple internship opportunities. At first nervous and intimidated, the presidential internship was "one of the most humbling experiences," Makoni said.

Makoni was able to observe and learn firsthand the inner workings of leadership, educational models, how Texas supports veterans and experience how politics works in Austin. Key lessons in planning and developing relationships were also learned from interning with Nancy Holland, dean of the Burleson center.

Some of his achievements include being a founding member of the Hill College Young Democrats and working as a certified tutor in math, economics and government, while taking 18 hours of classes each semester.

Makoni's hard work and genuine commitment to a job well done paid off in May 2010 when he graduated from Hill College with a degree in Business Administration.

Taking skills he learned at Hill, Makoni transferred to Gordon College in Boston, Massachusetts. There he played on their Division III tennis team, served as international student leader and soon graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics.

This fall he began a master's program in public administration at Cornell University in upstate New York. He hopes to work for the United Nations and the World Bank to gain experience in development work in developing countries.

This proud first generation college student and rising star is not done dreaming. Despite all circumstances, he continues to put his "heart in making things happen that seem impossible" and hopes to be an example to others. His dream: "return to Africa and get in the trenches" by bettering the education system to improve economic development and empower the million plus orphans with educational opportunities.



Tongai Makoni

"One of the most dedicated people I have ever known, Tongai appreciates education. I look forward to his future success."

- Dr. Sheryl Kappus, Hill College President

"If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough." - Ellen Sirleaf

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Linda Kennemore is not only a proud Hill College alumna but has also served as a dedicated member of the college staff for the last six years. Education was always important; a college degree a long-time aspiration. Thanks in large part to encouragement and support from Donald Joe Bennett, former Hill College welding and auctioneer instructor, in 2007 she accepted the position of Dorm Manager in charge of Frazier Hall on the Hillsboro campus as well as becoming a college student. "Like coming into a new adventure each day" is how Kennemore describes the work she does on a daily basis, managing and mentoring the nearly 80 students in her dorm. More than a challenge or a simple job, she loves to see students develop into leaders and willingly commits the immense time and energy into helping make that happen.



Linda Kennemore

Kennemore's advice to students has always been to "make the best out of education. Study and you will learn." Advice not only given but lived, her passion for learning meant many sleepless nights. She received her associate's degree from Hill College in 2009 and her bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2011 and 2013 respectively, all with top honors.

Currently, Kennemore serves as resident life coordinator and student government advisor, in addition to her recently elected position as region advisor for TJC SGA. She is also a certified Merlot Peer Review volunteer. Hearing Kennemore speak about her dorm students is more like hearing a mother proudly brag about her children. Telling her residents often that she "expects great things" from them and seeing that "spark of potential" in them excites her and serves as motivation to continue helping them learn and grow.

Originally from Dallas, Kennemore is a longtime Hillsboro resident that has found a home in working with students. Dedicated to making a difference now and in the future, she looks forward to moving up the ladder in higher education and continuing to learn. Her mantra and advice: "Learn something every day and enjoy the experience".

"Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises." - Demosthenes



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