

Now is the time to help the hurricane victims

By AMAN MEHRZAI
Editor-in-Chief

By now everyone has seen the TV images of devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi.

Reports of millions without power, houses and streets completely submerged, images of what news officials are calling refugees here in America are enough to stir strong sentiments not felt since Sept. 11.

It is important, however, that these sentiments be changed into action by assisting those who had

the unthinkable happen to them. Those who are affected are Americans, and should be abounded with assistance by all who can help.

One Ohlone student, whose wife used to live in a small town called Pascagoula, Mississippi, reported that the place had an 85 percent destruction level with permanent damages.

Unfortunately, the National Guard is hampered in its relief efforts to distribute help and control crime because many of the guardsmen and women have been deployed to Iraq.

According to Pentagon reports,

40 percent of Mississippi's and 35 percent of Louisiana's National Guards are in Iraq.

We, as Californians should remember that disaster is no stranger to us and should keep in mind the millions in relief and assistance that were sent here by others outside our state when we had the big earthquake.

Now is the time to act where it counts, to pay back goodness with goodness. Those interested in assisting the relief efforts can do so by contacting any one of the following relief agencies:

To Donate Cash Only:

- The American Red Cross (800) Help-Now (435-7669) English; (800) 257-7575 Spanish.

- Operation Blessing (800) 436-6348

- America's Second Harvest (800) 344-8070

To Donate Cash or Volunteer:
- Adventist Community Services (800) 381-7171

- Catholic Charities, USA (703) 549-1390

- Christian Disaster Response (941) 956-5183 or (941) 551-9554

- Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (800) 848-5818

- Church World Service (800)

297-1516

- Convoy of Hope (417) 823-8998

- Lutheran Disaster Response (800) 638-3522

- Mennonite Disaster Service (717) 859-2210

- Nazarene Disaster Response (888) 256-5886

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (800) 872-3283

- Salvation Army (800) SAL-ARMY (725-2769)

- Southern Baptist Convention-Disaster Relief (800) 462-8657

- United Methodist Committee on Relief (800) 554-8583

Puente Project motivates students to do their best

By KRISTA MARTINEZ
Features editor

The Puente project has been around, in some form or other, since Tracy Virgil, English professor, first came to Ohlone as a student back in the '80s.

The beginnings were extremely simple. Groups of students would talk to each other after classes, take classes together and, in general, motivate one another in a positive way.

Now, Puente is back for the first time in 25 years. The Puente Project has grown into an outreach program to Latino students to help cure our abysmally small

Hispanic Latino registered population and to provide the familial support most traditional Latino families rely on. The Puente Project not only caters to these students, but also offers an orientation for the family; everyone can be involved in the schoolwork and make sure that time at home is allotted for student use.

Puente Project, though very much geared toward Hispanic students, through Hispanic literature centered English classes and the "familias" students are grouped in, is open to all students, regardless of race, creed, religion or any of those other stipulations.

Virgil teaches the first semester of English for project participants. Puente counselor Brenda Arteaga and mentors, working people who have already achieved at least a Bachelor's degree, help guide students through school and classes, check up and talk with their charges at least once a month and help to motivate them, showing these students that college can be done. This is very important to students who are the first of their family to attend and, hopefully, graduate from college.

Mentors for Puente bring students with them to their day jobs as well, bringing personal, academic and professional friend-

ship to their charge.

According to the California Community College Chancellors Office, the general transfer rates for students from Ohlone is 34 percent, for under-represented students the statistic drops to 25 percent but for students involved in Puente, transfer rates jump all the way up to a remarkable 47 percent, an outstanding feat for any group.

Connections and relationships are built within the first year for all Puente students, providing valuable contacts for success in later life and jobs.

Though Puente only has one official counselor, Brenda Arteaga and one official English

instructor, Tracy Virgil, Puente is going smoothly for this semester and is ready to start connecting students with mentors - a process that involves Virgil and Arteaga working together to create hopefully harmonious matches between the two. Though the ideal mentor-to-student rate is one-to-one, sometimes exceptions must be made when actual numbers come in.

Puente Project is a huge help to the large Hispanic/Latino/Mexican population in our Fremont area, bringing culture and a sense of identity to a group that hasn't been particularly reached out to recently.

Talent, food, celebration for Smith Center birthday

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it. The comic artist got her start in San Francisco doing improvisation, went on to be "Miss Swan" on MADtv, and now voice-acts "Lois" and is a writer and producer on the TV show "Family Guy", tours the

country in a critically acclaimed one-woman show, and has appeared in the movie "Catwoman" with Halle Berry.

Pete Escovedo, a well-respected figure in Latin jazz, salsa, rock and pop, has toured with Carlos

Santana, founded Azteca, a Latin big band, and recorded two albums. Escovedo was an appropriate pick for Ohlone, currently in the process of attracting a wider Hispanic student body.

The evening's dress code is informal, though the audience has been invited to doll up.

"It's to have fun - we want to let people know we're here," reiterated the dean.

Areas around the Smith Center will be roped off and campus security will be present, assisted by the show crew and volunteers.

Admission to the party will be \$50 for adults, \$40 for seniors and

\$25 for students and staff.

The Smith Center is gearing up for a thrilling gala season with many more notable events throughout the year. More information along with the evening's performance schedule can be found at www.ohlone.edu/org/smith_ctr/instruc/gala/gala.html

Clarification

Last week in a Page One photo spread, the Monitor tried to clarify the process of putting money into the machine that issues parking permits. The caption accurately described the process. Push the button, wait for the signal, put in the money, then take the ticket. No problem. But the photos were printed in the wrong order. Sorry. It's a simple process. Really.

Big-time fascination: Murder in America

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"(Most studies show) there are more serial murderers in the U.S. than anywhere. Is it cultural? Is it psychological? Why are these crimes more prevalent in the US?" said Cominos, referring to one topic the class will study.

In addition, he points out, there are many aspects of these crimes that are tied into myth rather than fact - which he is hoping to dispel in lieu of more accurate factual knowledge.

Additional topics that will be covered are sexually driven homicides and paraphilia (a condition in which a person's sexual arousal and gratification depend on fantasizing about and engaging in sexual behavior that is atypical and ex-

treme). Oftentimes these tendencies will lead a person (or should we say "patient"?) to increasingly deviant behavior and sometimes, ultimately, to murder.

Cominos says he hopes to debunk the idea that Administration of Justice courses are just for those who want to ultimately join the police force, and intends to attract a variety of students who are considering careers in forensics, law enforcement, intelligence, and psychology, among others.

For those of you whose interest has been peaked, there are currently still some 12-odd openings for the fall 2005 semester.

If you have any questions, please email Richard Cominos at rcominos@ohlone.edu.