



## Culture Pirate

By OMER  
AHMED  
News editor

## Virtually learning

One of the highest aspirations of my academic career is to take a class in my pajamas while eating cereal and watching cartoons. I have partially achieved this lofty, though admittedly somewhat pointless, dream by taking online courses. In classes ranging from women's lit to Java programming, I have combined my love of relaxing on a comfortable couch with my desire for knowledge.

Unfortunately, it is not quite the same as being in a regular classroom, as there are significant limitations to the conventional online class. The root of most of these problems lies in the lack of a physical classroom and a set class period. As Rebecca Nes-son, a Harvard computer science instructor said in the New York Times, "No matter how good a distance-learning class is, an inherent distance does still exist between you and your students."

Without the variety of in-person lectures or discussions, the routine of most on-line classes becomes read the book, post on forums, submit an assignment or take a test, repeat. While it is possible to learn with these methods, there is a lack of interactivity and the ability to question the instructor is impaired.

In a conventional classroom, you can ask an instructor a question and get an answer immediately. When online, you have to resort to e-mail, and will have likely moved on to new ideas by the time a response is received. Student discussions also suffer from the delayed response time.

Luckily, a way around the limitations of most online classes has been found, allowing me to learn and have my Cheerios at the same time. Harvard, Pepperdine and New York University have started holding class session in the online "virtual world" of Second Life. Students log-on to the online, free-to-play videogame, create a character to represent themselves and go to class. The teacher, who also has a virtual character, lectures using PowerPoint, a digital white-board and a microphone. Students can communicate in real time using their own microphones and can take notes directly into a file that they can later print.

This may all seem unnecessarily complicated. Too much work just to emulate what we already have on campus. However, the ability to have the total classroom experience from anywhere makes education near universally assessable. Not only could I take my classes from my couch if Ohlone used this technology, I could take a vacation in Hawaii and still "physically" attend class.

Once you look past the absurdity of learning in an on-line videogame, this technology could be the perfect form of distance-education short of virtual reality.

# Alumni battles fires on, off TV

By ERIC DORMAN  
Features editor

As a firefighter and paramedic, Holly Novak appears at the scene of blazes, car wrecks and medical emergencies. But on the Discovery Channel?

"I guess I've always been a ham," said a laughing Novak, speaking about her appearance last January on Discovery's "Dirty Jobs" series. The choice to be part of the show wasn't just random, either; Novak, who works for the Fremont Fire Dept., took two semester's worth of acting classes at Ohlone 20 years ago.

"Dirty Jobs" is a weekly reality-based show that aims to showcase the world's dirtiest jobs—from sewer inspecting to oyster shucking to collecting garbage in Chinatown. The show, which is unscripted, features show founder Mike Rowe performing whatever dirty job is featured that week. The show's viewers are encouraged to send in their own "dirty jobs," which is where Novak first got the idea of appearing on the show.

"I was browsing through the [Dirty Jobs] message board and I saw a post that suggested firefighting, and I'm like, 'cool, I'm onto that one,'" said Novak.

As soon as Rowe learned of the possibility of doing a segment on firefighting he was very enthusiastic, said Novak. A "big fan of the show" herself, Novak lost no time in volunteering to show Rowe what firefighting was all about.

Determined to help Rowe experience the true work of a firefighter, Novak and Fremont Fire Capt. Ron McCormick started a healthy blaze in the kitchen of an abandoned house on Mowry Avenue near Mission Boulevard. Finding the location, said Novak, was not a problem.

"We found an old abandoned house and we asked the owner, 'can we light it on fire?' and the owner said, 'oh, yeah, we don't want it,



Photos courtesy of Holly Novak

**Fremont firefighter and Ohlone alumni Holly Novak, above left, prepares to enter a burning house during a filming for Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs" series in September 2005. Below, Novak, right center, helps "Dirty Jobs" founder Mike Rowe, left, in ankle-deep water.**

burn it to the ground,'" recalled Novak.

After waiting 30 seconds to let the blaze intensify, Novak and Rowe moved in, both fully outfitted with firefighter's gear and filmed by Rowe's camera crew. They turned their hoses on the fire, then moved in to try to extinguish the blaze from the inside, tearing rooms apart in search of live embers. Novak said that not only was the burn realistic, it was even more difficult that what she generally encountered on a daily basis.

"They closed all the windows to make it really really smoky and hot," said Novak. "It was fairly characteristic of what a training burn is like."

Novak said that there were no major safety issues taking a rookie like Rowe through a burning building. She said that not only was Rowe in good physical shape, but also that she and McCormick "wouldn't let him do anything that was too dangerous."

But even after putting out the house fire, Rowe's day wasn't over yet. He, Novak, McCormick and the camera crew rode the fire engine to the other side of town, where they showed Rowe how to fix a fire hydrant that had sprung a leak. This illustrated part of how firefighters got their hands dirty, said Novak, because the only way to fix a broken hydrant to simply jump in to the middle of the jet of water and cap it.

This also added to the comedic aspect of the show, for as Novak put it, "sometimes the water flies up in the air and comes back down and hits you one the head."

Novak said Rowe enjoyed the experience, so much so that he hopes to film another segment with

Novak within the next month or two. Novak said that this time, the focus would be on paramedics' response to vehicle accidents, and would feature the kinds of things paramedics do to rescue trapped passengers, such as tearing apart cars.

No date has yet been set for the filming, as Rowe is temporarily out of action after suffering a back injury.

Novak said her time at Ohlone started almost by accident. She never had any intention of attending the college, but after being talked into taking a few theater classes by a friend, Novak said she enjoyed acting so much she stayed on for another semester.

Novak remembered the college as being very different in her time her; for example, her two performances, "Grease" in 1986 and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way To the Forum" in '87, were both performed in the outdoor theater, as the Jackson Theater did not yet exist.

After Ohlone, Novak attended Mission, Chabot and Las Positas colleges before becoming a firefighter and paramedic in the early 1990s, a job she said she enjoys.

In her daily work, which consists of three or four 24-hour shifts per week, she responds to everything from house fires to people worried they're having a heart attack.

"I do a little of everything," said Novak.

To learn more about "Dirty Jobs," tune in to the Discovery Channel Tuesdays at 9 p.m. or go to <http://dsc.discovery.com/fansites/dirtyjobs/dirtyjobs.html>, where you can watch clips of recent episodes or buy the season on DVD.



## Student rakes in scholarship winnings

By KYLE STEPHENS  
Staff writer

Free money? Cool. Free money for school? Not as fun, but certainly just as desirable. And when it comes to obtaining money for school in bulk, Ohlone alumni Candice Nance has it down to an art.

Nance, in her time at Ohlone and studies abroad in Cambridge, England, has earned over a dozen scholarships, totaling more than \$10,000. Of scholarships, which provide money for school to students based on merit or simply the act of applying, Nance said "anything is possible."

Nance developed a systematic approach to applying for scholarships. For one, she devised form letter-type reference letters, simplifying the writing process. Where that wouldn't work, she just got used to writing application essays.

Further in her arsenal was a folder with 12 sections for each month; as new scholarship entry and deadline windows approached, she had her materials already on hand, and ready to send. The key, said Nance, was

organization.

Seminars on developing this kind of sweeping planning are possibly in the works, with the aid of a former teacher of Nance's, Associate Professor Christine Bolt, who teaches business at Ohlone. As it stands, there are also many scholarship-hunting sites online, such as [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com).

Among Nance's more notable scholarships were the Amelia Earhart Scholarship, worth \$3,000, which applied toward her training as a private pilot, and a recurring scholarship through Toyota. Nance was able to secure the scholarship because her mother worked at NUMMI, a Fremont car manufacturing plant that produces both Toyota and GM vehicles. Both these scholarships illustrate the kinds of special funding that can



Photo courtesy of Candice Nance

**Ohlone alumna Candice Nance has acquired over \$10,000 in scholarship money.**

be secured based on situation.

Nance's scholarship proceeds also extended overseas; she was able to study in Cambridge through Ohlone's study abroad program. "In general, my tips are to look in multiple places," said Nance, "[from] obvious places like at Ohlone's Financial Aid office (I've won a couple of ASOC Scholarships while I was at Ohlone), to organizations that you are active in (i.e. my Amelia Earhart Scholarship), to family members (NUMMI scholarship), to unusual places (the Lowrider Scholarship).

"The most important thing is to let all of your friends and especially family know that you are actively applying to scholarships, and then they are usually nice enough to save newspaper clippings or any announcements they see and give

them to you," said Nance.

Scholarships are of special value to the average middle income family, added Nance. In this particular tax bracket, federal aid alone cannot be relied on for educational funding. Organizations that have scholarship programs know this, and are just about willing to hand out the money to any interested party.

There are scholarships for every kind of person imaginable, said Nance, be it Latino, Chinese-American, left handed, related to an electrical engineer or Scouting scholarships. And for some, one need not even be of the intended group to claim the funds; by proxy of being the sole claimant, you too could score some help paying for those pricey textbooks.

"It never hurts to apply," said Nance. "Anybody can do it." Nance is currently developing a workshop that will teach college and high school students how to get organized to set up an efficient system as she has done to increase their chances of winning scholarships. Interested students may contact her at [CandiceNance@yahoo.com](mailto:CandiceNance@yahoo.com).

## Instructors present art at show

By **CHEYENNE MARTIN**  
Staff writer

Students and faculty gathered in the Louie Meager Art Gallery Wednesday to view the Faculty Art and Design Show. Almost every faculty member was present to represent their art and answer any questions the crowd might have.

A piece representative of the show was Adjunct Instructive Roald Hartman's wood, seed, charcoal and glass installation, which reminded students of an Indian sand painting with a modern twist. The piece was unique to the show and a favorite of student Jennifer McCurdy because there was work "on the floor, not just on the wall." Students also liked the simplicity and the fragility of the piece.

Local artist and faculty member Katie Frank featured a piece called "Untitled Index" which consisted of nine three-dimensional squares made of encaustic - a style of



Photo by Kevin Protz

**Ohlone instructors showed several pieces of their artwork at the Faculty Art and Design Show Wednesday. Above, Professor of Fine and Performing Arts Denise Owen stands before two of her pastel works, "Still Life" and "Portrait of a Murder." Below left is Adjunct Instructor Jian Wu's oil painting, "Sailboats."**

painting using hot wax - and wood. Frank crafted the piece from parts of a diary and a book, as well as many other elements, to give each form its own personality while still relating to the others. Moitreyee Chowdhury, a student of Frank's, said Frank's piece was one of her favorites because it was "tactile, it makes you want to know more."

Anthropology Instructor Barbara Rodgers's "Chaos Return" was well

received by the crowd. The piece featured oils in bright colors, with short and sporadic lines that conveyed a sense of extreme energy. Rodgers said her inspiration behind the painting was to "describe emotions everyone feels, the chaos that everyone experiences."

The crowd favorite by faculty and students was a four-piece series of pastel on paper by Professor of Fine and Performing Arts Denise

Owen, titled "Allegory, Landscape, Still Life and Portrait of Murder." Many faculty and students said they appreciated the individuality of each work.

The salient piece in the series was "Portrait of a Murder," which conveyed a sense of loss and haunting even before the title was revealed.

"It was dark while being light at the same time," said a student.

In a different art medium, Adjunct Instructor Jian Wu created a very colorful "Chiaroscuro" oil piece called "Sailboats." "Chiaroscuro" is an Italian word that describes the process of painting where the artist uses colors that would not normally be present, and the viewer's eyes optically mix the colors to a recognizable image. From close-up it was very Van Gough-esque, but as the viewer backed up, the picture became more present.

Instructor of Art Paul Mueller showed a different kind of art, entitled "Water works," featuring black and white photos of various people watering lawns. Though simple, the art provoked curiosity about the subjects in each picture.

Chowdhury said she also liked Mueller's work because of the symmetry and repetition, and described the piece as "not just a topic, it's how it's displayed."

Next to come to the Art Gallery is "Art of Pysanky," which will run from March 23 to April 6.



**Devil's Advocate**

By **ANNA NEMCHUK**  
Editor-in-chief

## Gas mask, anyone?

I've avoided touching this topic for quite a while. Anyone actually acquainted with me in person should appreciate my Herculean restraint but, alas, I simply can no longer do it. Pardon me, but I must relieve myself.

Why, oh WHY, do people smell so bad?!

It's not enough that I'm a college student regularly stuck in rooms of what can charitably be described as claustrophobic proportions with 30 odd teenagers whose philosophy on bathing tends toward being firmly convinced that they must take a bath once a month, whether they need it or not. Never mind the professor who, in between running from class to coffee vendor to class, has somewhat neglected their deodorant that morning.

It's not enough that I live with five cats who, while certainly being capable of self-cleaning, (in fact, any actual bathing attempts made by me tend to result in lacerations, stitches and heart palpitations - on my part) choose regularly to highlight that most admirable of catly traits - terminal pig-headedness, hold the bacon - and refuse to do so on general principle. "Love me, love my stinky butt," purrs my little orange tabby as she lovingly sits on my head every morning.

It's not enough that I work in a bookstore where, despite general conviction, the regular patron is not so much a bastion of the community as the small green fungus spore growing halfway up its left armpit and tends to spit copiously, leave Vaseline-smearing secret stashes of books, demand valet service and call me ma'am, in my view the greatest offense of all.

It's definitely not enough that I deal regularly with a predominantly male editorial staff that views showers as photo opportunities and the algae on the pond as greatly beneficial to the pores.

It's not enough that my best friend constantly insists on taking overloads roughly equaling the national debt and immediately ceases all grooming behavior not involving the consumption of insects abiding on his hair-covered regions, nutritious as they are.

It is, of course, not nearly enough that whenever I do take BART the one I happen to choose will invariably be filled with at least three bleary-eyed individuals toting little brown paper bags on the next stop, all of whom will descend on the seats surrounding mine and proceed to engage in deep philosophical musings on the falling value of the dollar, the moral legitimacy of the Vietnam war and the merits of vodka vs. low-carb beer.

It's not enough...excuse me, a squirrel just ran by. It smelled of Old Spice. I think I'm going to propose marriage.

## 2007 Citizen of the Year honored

By **KANYA GOLDMAN**  
Staff writer

Fremont Bank Vice President Gloria Fuerniss was honored as "2007 Person of the Year" by the Ohlone Foundation in a celebration last Friday at the Fremont Marriot.

Picture disco balls on stage, *Grease* playing on the big screen, groovy costumes and hundreds of people. That'll give you a good glimpse of the afternoon's festivities.

The theme was "Back to the Future, A View of Our Journey" and the event included a glance back at Ohlone's nearly 40-year history and a look to the college's future. Rick Geha, chair of the Ohlone's Foundation Board of Directors and last year's Citizen of the Year, along with foundation executive director Josephine Ong-McBride donned 60's, 70's and 80's outfits to keep with the event theme.

The event started off with a parade of dancers lead by Director of Dance Janel Tomblin-Brown. College President Doug Treadway then thanked Fuerniss for her hard work and for being "the kind of person to get things done."

Fuerniss's older sister Angelina attended, as well as about 30 other family members. The elder Fuerniss spoke tearfully about losing their brother and father, saying they would both be proud of Fuerniss today. She was also awarded a proclamation from the city of Newark, presented by Mayor Dave Smith, a proclamation from the city Fremont, presented by Mayor Bob Wasserman.

At the end of the ceremony, Fuerniss expressed her own gratitude, "this is such a pleasure, so many people around me make it possible; thank you to Ohlone College and my Fremont Bank family."

## First meeting held for Sydney trip

By **MARGARITA KITOVA**  
Staff writer

Are you interested in going to Sydney - the melting pot of cuisines with a drinking age limit of 18, with free theater and dances, scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef and the possibility of scavenger hunt in Gothic cathedrals? Then you can join the group of Ohlone students who will be studying at Billy Blue University of Sydney, Australia this fall.

Associate Professor of Business and Technology Christine Bolt made this pitch and more at the first exploratory meeting Tuesday in room 5209, which drew a crowd of seven students. She is still looking for more applicants.

Eight students from Ohlone have already signed up for the program and have checks, and another seven have turned in applications so far. With a total of 15, the group needs at least 10 more people, which will then cause the price per person to go down. The more students that sign up, the lower the price will be for each individual student, said Bolt.

For example, if 25 to 29 students sign up, the program will cost approximately \$6,099 per person, while if only 20 - 24 students sign up, the program cost increases to \$6,599 per person.

The program price includes accommodation at a twin home stay with a pre-screened host family in Sydney, a meal plan (breakfast and dinner provided most days), travel insurance, transportation to and from the Sydney airport, a group

orientation and a group Thanksgiving dinner, as well as selected group excursions.

There are no age restrictions on the trip.

There are three deadlines for application. The first was on March 5, the second is April 6 and the third will be on April 30. Priority will be given to those who applied before the March 5 deadline. Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on the due date. All courses offered are transferable to a CSU or UC system.

Bolt, who will be traveling with the group, will teach the business and macroeconomics classes. Ohlone professor Kay Harrison will teach a travel journaling course; the other courses will be taught by Australian professors.

Two group excursions are planned for the trip. One excursion will be a Winery Tour of three individual wineries, while the other will be a tour of the Australian Blue Mountains.

While up to 15 units are offered, many students prefer to take only 12 units to allow for more time to soak up the atmosphere and the culture of Australia.

All majors are eligible for the program, including undeclared majors.

The trip will last from Sept. 5 to Dec. 3. Students are free to make their own travel arrangements as long as they arrive in Sydney on time for the start of the semester. All participants in the program are required to have a visa. For more information, contact Bolt at (510) 659-6233 or at cbolt@ohlone.edu.

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