



## Culture Pirate

By OMER AHMED  
News editor

## Dual school is über cool

So I probably should have written this column back when students were applying to four-year schools but I am a procrastinator. That and, to enjoy the benefits of the school I'm going to mention, you would have to move to Texas. Nobody wants to move to Texas. I know; my family moved *away* from Texas.

Anyway, my cousin went to a school in his hometown called University of Texas, Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) before joining the military. Long name for a school to be sure, but the name is bloated for a reason. UTC/TSC is both a community college and a four-year university.

At the UTB/TSC, a student can apply for admission at the community college portion of the school, Texas Southmost College, and get in pretty easily. Just like Ohlone, TSC has an "open admissions" policy. Unlike Ohlone, you can be admitted into a bachelor's program at the four-year university portion of the school, UT Brownsville, without reapplying as long as you maintained an acceptable GPA. This way, you avoid going through the hell that is the transfer process. You just have a seamless transition from community college to university.

Now, UT Brownsville isn't the best school. It's fourth tier in the *US News & World Report's* college rankings and is ranked seventh in the UT system as a whole. Still, it is a real college where you can get a real education. My mom went to UTB and eventually transferred to the more selective University of Houston. UTB is also the place to be, supposedly, for the field of gravitational wave astronomy. Kind of random, but the school has a niche.

So, the TSC to UTB partnership is not like getting a free ticket to UC Berkeley or Harvard but it is still a pretty good deal. Very few schools have such a system in place. Here at Ohlone, we have a partnership with Alliant International University where students can get "fast-track" admission into the bachelor's programs in psychology or business and take the classes at Ohlone. Unfortunately, the program is somewhat limited and, more importantly, it doesn't provide a seamless transition/transfer.

One of the goals of community colleges like Ohlone is to provide education to anyone wanting to learn. That's the reason for the open admissions policy and the low \$20 per unit price. A seamless transfer policy is the next logical step to providing universal quality education. Texas shouldn't hog the few good ideas it gets and you know...doesn't the name California State University, Fremont and Ohlone College sound wonderfully long/impressively bloated?



Photos courtesy of Rachel Tishara Stacey

**Ohlone graduate Rachel Tishara Stacy, center, plays guitar with her country music band in Texas. Below left, Stacy fiddles at a concert, and poses, below right.**

## Student 'gone country' in Texas

By KYLE STEPHENS  
Staff writer

From Ohlone can come great things.

Case in point, country music star on the rise and Ohlone alumna Rachel Tishara Stacy. Currently on tour in Texas promoting her new album and single, "Damn You Look Good," Stacy's compelling stage performances are the product of strong natural talent, as well as her instructors' efforts at Ohlone.

Stacy, who has toured with the likes of Keith Anderson, ZZ Top, Ty England and Phil Vassar, traces her roots back to the heart of Oklahoma. Growing up, she traveled the road throughout the Midwest with her musician and songwriter mother.



Early on, Stacy began to sing on her own, and learned the violin. Which such, she earned first chair in the Oklahoma Junior Symphony. Through these years and high school, she earned many more accolades in pageants and talents competitions, and was voted "most talented" in high school.

Through these years and college, Stacy, "the girl who sings," as she grew to be known, performed for the Special Olympics, and acted and sang in various musical and drama shows.

When she moved to California to attend Ohlone, the performance trend continued, and she was extensively involved with the theater, video and TV departments, starting in many shows, anchoring for ONTV, and appearing in an Ohlone TV pilot. She even sang in the choir. Concerning her time at Ohlone, she said with a laugh, "I think I lived there!"

In her two and a half years at Ohlone, Stacy was taught extensively by Ohlone theater professor Tom Blank. Blank, according to Stacy, was encouraging but

hard on her, because he believed in her potential, conditioning her for live concerts on tour, performing and songwriting in, to say the least, rough conditions.

"He always supported me," said Stacy.

Blank's praise of Stacy is extensive. "She was probably one of the most enthusiastic students I have ever had," Blank recalled. "The word 'no' was not in her vocabulary. She had the most infectious laugh.

"We have performances of her on tape that I show to my classes, demonstrating different things: she did a strung-out drug addict in one play, and half an hour later, in another play, she was this über-controlled attorney arguing a case against Satan."

Even after Stacy graduated from Ohlone, she was asked to come back for certain performances needing of her talents.

Post-Ohlone, Stacy moved south on to University of California at Irvine. However, she strongly believes that "Ohlone taught me more than Irvine."

When not occupied with her studies at Irvine, Stacy would travel to nearby Los Angeles in search of venues to showcase her music, guitar and performing spirit. After graduating from Irvine, she formed a band, and decided to take her show out on the road.

Fueling her journey now and as long as she's taken to the stage, she says, is the affinity with her audience. On her website she says, "There is nothing better than being on stage and watching my audience sing along to the songs I've written and knowing they can relate to every word; that's connection."

Her debut single, "Damn You Look Good," is being played on stations all over Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico, and can be heard on her MySpace page, <http://www.myspace.com/stacystacymusic>, and can be downloaded via iTunes or Wal-Mart music.

A new self-titled CD is scheduled to be released this month.

And good news for California fans - at year's end, Stacy will be touring the Golden State.



## MTV a stepping stone to future fame

By MICHAEL ABURAS  
Staff writer

"All through high school I would tell everybody that I didn't just want to be another girl who goes to Ohlone and stays in Fremont," said aspiring actress Meesha Larijani.

In pursuing her dream, Larijani moved to Los Angeles, getting a gig on MTV's "Next" and filming a promo for the company as well. "Most of my auditions were in West Hollywood," said Larijani.

Larijani described the show "Next" as a reality show dating game with one guy choosing from five girls, or vice versa. The people waiting to be chosen got to hang out in a bus and badmouth the person choosing a mate by saying "next."

The episode she was featured in was filmed at Dodger Stadium with a sports theme and she was "nexted" right away. The man who was in the position to pick was portrayed as a

big baseball fan.

"They wanted me to play the dorkier type. The kind of girl who didn't know anything about baseball and was the complete opposite of his type," said a dejected Larijani.

Larijani described the facial shots, done every hour of the 14-hour shoot, as the most tedious part of her "Next" experience. The expression shot included rolling their eyes, shock and laughing together. "Most of the time we were in the bus. There are different facial expressions that they could cut and edit wherever they want," Larijani said.

Converse to the task described, Larijani's favorite part of the pro-



Photo by Jack Husting

**Student Meesha Larijani auditioned for MTV reality show 'Next' in L.A.**

duction was lunch, at which point she had the chance to network herself. "I was chatting with the production assistant and was interested in finding out what they do for a living because I want to go into the industry."

Larijani has received some flack for being on MTV from her friends asking: why MTV? She usually responds with "I have to start somewhere. Most actors don't have something that big on their resume. An A-list role isn't just going to fall in my hands."

Once upon a time there were variety shows on TV for young stars such as the Gong Show, American Band Stand and Mickey Mouse

Club. "We don't have a Mickey Mouse Club and MTV is like the Mickey Mouse Club," said Larijani. "I guarantee you all the budding stars are going to come from MTV or the Disney Channel."

During Larijani's time in L.A. she spent most of her time living with her grandpa, who taught her French in her spare time. Here grandpa also attended her auditions. "He's my good luck charm," said Larijani.

Concerned with acting and a career outside of the industry, Larijani decided to move back to Fremont. "I moved back because if acting fell through I had nothing to fall back on," she said.

Moreover, there was a large temptation to ditch class for an audition. "My mom said 'if it was meant for me it will find me again.'"

"But I love Fremont and Ohlone now that I'm back," added Larijani. In her spare time she writes music, plays guitar and publishes poetry.

# Panel discusses career options

By MARGARITA KITOVA  
Staff writer

Bay Area professionals from fields in business, marketing communications, corporate communications, public relations, human resources, training and development and education gathered together at the "Careers in Communication Panel Discussion" Wednesday in Room 3103. The seven panelists stressed importance of communication in everyday life.

The panelists, pictured at right, were Siiri Hage, an employee communications manager; Jeff Cowan, director of marketing communication for *Interwoven*; Lars Ahnholtz- manager of *Marcum*; Pam Cingerman, owner of a business in performance connections, Renee Gonzales, Ohlone's campus activities assistant; Saphna Kanakya, Ohlone speech alum and Dave Curtis, corporate trainer in the medical field.

The panelists each spoke about their own approach to success and the features they looked for when interviewing candidates who will

then manage their relationship with customers. On the question about the best way to earn six-figure salaries, the panelists' answer was: "Find what speaks to your spirit and what you love doing and get paid for it. The more fields it applies to, the better."

What is the way to have marketable skills? How can you deliver a product and gain market share, how to sell yourself? The panel responded that it was all about communication. They added that communication serves as an important link between a company and its clients; without it, there's a gap.

There are four directions in which the communicational process can take you: Inform, Educate, Entertain, or Motivate, depending on the audience. Performance and performance connections, said the panel, help the heavy corporate giants get the clients they are looking for.

How do we prove the quality of our performance when our resume consists of sales positions in retail, cashiering at Albertson's, or working in a restaurant, though? The advice from the panelists was to take



Photo by Jack Husting

## Student Affairs Volunteer Renee Wong Gonzales stands up to speak at the Career and Communication Panel Discussion Wednesday.

the classes that touch the aspects of communication - speech classes, organization communicational and even sociology - classes that explain how people interact and what's going on a cultural level. Then, they suggested to get involved in an internship that will help you get where you want to go.

This will also help you find mentors that will write letters of recommendation for you and be your future network. Some of the local companies offer internships with a wage of \$20 per hour, 20 hours per week. That's how you'll get your resume together and

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Devil's  
Advocate

By ANNA  
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Editor-in-chief

## To fish or not to fish

A businessman in a small coastal village comes across a fisherman with a small boat but several particularly large fish. Complimenting him, he asks the fisherman how difficult of a catch it was. "Very easy," says the fisherman "I catch just enough for my family, then go home, have dinner, play with my kids, go to town with my wife and spend my nights relaxing on the beach with my friends and a couple of beers." The businessman's eyes light up, "You should expand. Work longer hours, have your children help you, hire some workers. Then you can sell your surplus in town, establish a monopoly and a brand name, move to a big city, diversify into foreign markets, build an overseas empire and finally sell it all for millions!" "Then what?" "Why, then you would retire, move to a small coastal village, fish a little, play with your kids, spend some quality time with your wife and your nights relaxing with friends and a few drinks."

When I first heard this joke, I wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry. Half of what you hear these days is advice on how to relax; the other half is encouragement to work harder. Today's civilized, commercial world, at least in the Bay Area, is a far cry from the villages of a few centuries ago; it's more and more difficult to locate a place on the globe free of industrialization. If you do, chances are they have tour guides and signs: "Don't feed the llamas!"

Forgetting the entire pot calling the kettle black issue - never mind that with school, classes and miscellanea I have the equivalent of an 80-hour work week - why the hell are we so busy?

Even with all that, I still manage to have a social life, commune with my cats and even wave hello at my parents now and again. And if you tell me I'm particularly organized I'll laugh in your face. For days.

But still, I'm afraid we'll soon see a new leading cause of death among college students in particular and the populace at large in general - locked doors with "Busy" plaques concealing corpses with scribbled notes nearby - "Gtg. Too busy to breathe."

I've seen babies with PDAs and second graders with schedules that would make the average CEO weep.

The latest diet craze is photosynthesis - running from history class to math lab in the sun should provide enough nutrients, easy. What are we, worse than plants?!

The proper order goes - three cups of coffee, THEN exit bed. Or is that pour into bed, drink exit? At least we still have alcohol - better for sleep than any pill.

Meanwhile, back to photosynthesis.

# Opera San Jose hits high notes

By BRIAN CHU  
Staff writer

Opera San Jose performed scenes from eight different operas Saturday at the Jackson Theater. The playbill featured not only recognizable pieces such as "Madame Butterfly" and "Romeo and Juliette" but also more obscure pieces such as "La Boheme," "Barber of Seville" and "Carmen".

The opening presentation, shown before a near-capacity crowd, was strong and captivating as I was suddenly pulled out of my own world and to the one of this man in front of me singing out "Figaro!" vigorously. While watching the show I felt enraptured, as if there were no world outside of the characters and events I was witnessing. It was almost as if my presence as an audience member added to the effect and feel of the atmosphere and the story itself. The singing resonated as if the vocalists were amplifiers set on the highest gain and echo setting.

Throughout the night I noticed that the power and resonance of the

performers' voices made normal human conversations seem lackluster. When the tones and octaves of the singers and pianist changed, the lighting effect in the back of the theater changed colors as well.

The night ended with a beautiful four-person a cappella all singing simultaneously, and was followed with an endless roar of clapping that lasted minutes.

The performers all wore shiny dresses or black and gray suits. There were no complicated backdrops or special effects. The entirety of the presentation was in the skill and ability of the performers.

One might think that opera is outdated and not for the modern contemporary hip bohemian. However through the different scenes presented, I witnessed otherwise. From a melancholic woman waiting at home for her husband to come back from overseas and becoming ecstatic at the news of a ship harbored in port and his possible return, to reading old love letters and reminiscing about the beauty and innocence of a past love, to a

hilarious wooing scene involving getting a woman back to his abode, the pieces each applied themselves accordingly so that the audience could readily relate and enjoy the performances. Opera is timeless tradition and art and I witnessed this first hand.

The emotions conveyed were strongly due to the outstanding performances of the performers themselves. In one particular scene, two brotherly best friends sang of their tragic situation in which they both had fallen in love with the same woman.

As the singers' voices and expressions synchronized together and complemented each other along with the piano performance, you could feel the passion through their work. With the voices coming together and combining in a rise of volume, the piece culminated as the two best friends entered an embrace of the forearms while glaring into each other's eyes with a look of resolve tinged with sadness.

Baritone singer Kenneth Mattice said that "Expanding to a new audi-

ence is important to us for we want to spread the wealth of music."

The bass singer Carlos Aguilar said, "Thank you for the opportunity to perform at Ohlone, you were all a great audience. We wanted to bring and present more of the well-known operas to perform. I believe opera changes lives and it changed my life when a performing opera group came to San Jose State [the college he was attending at the time]. We want to do outreach to college students interested in opera. We want to inspire students."

As a person whose experience with opera consists only of the obligatory "Phantom of the Opera" attendance, I can definitely say that opera is something I would go to again. It's classy but affordable classic but not too formal or constraining. It's a perfect type of event to take your theatre or performing arts girlfriend to. Or yourself and anyone else who wants to witness the pinnacle of performing arts.

Opera San Jose's next set of performances begin April 21 and will be "Madame Butterfly."

# Speech alum performs through words

By KRISTA IMUS  
Staff writer

"The hills were long and white.... and on one side was the sun," said Shawna Luce as she began her dramatic performance adaptation of *Hills like White Elephants* by Ernest Hemingway.

The Speech and Communication Club sponsored speaker Luce at a meeting Monday, March 19. The Speech and Communication Club aims to bring speakers to campus, trying especially for Ohlone alumni.

Luce performed two adaptations; *Girl* by J. Kinkaid and *Hills like White Elephants*. *Girl* was about a mother giving her daughter instructions on how to live life in order to survive. The piece featured a mother

determined that her daughter stay on the straight and narrow.

Next came *Hills like White Elephants*. Luce performed it as though she were telling a story.

The meaning of the story did not become clear until the end. "And if I do it you'll be happy and things will be like they were and you'll love me?" Her body gestures helped suggest what was going on. "Well," he said, "if you don't want to you don't have to. I wouldn't have you do it if you didn't want to. But I know it's perfectly simple."

Every so often she would drink out of a beer bottle prop and as she went on, she began to stammer. Her character, now drunk, said "...he took both bags and got on the train." The story ended with the woman pulling a baby blanket

out of a bag, symbolizing piece's abortion theme.

Both performances were lively, controversial, and well-emphasized using props. About 30 students and teachers attended the performance. Afterward, a discussion was held about the authors, stories, and Luce herself.

"What got you motivated to pursue doing what you're doing?" asked a member of the audience.

"I got more passionate about it when my teacher told me that I had done the best interpretation of 'Girl' she had ever seen," responded Luce.

When asked why she chose this piece she replied, "I chose it because I like to see struggles women go through."

Luce was previously a student

at Ohlone and a member of the speech honor society. She acquired her A.A. here at Ohlone and now attends San Jose State University to complete her B.A. but can still be seen around campus working down in the EOPS. She will major in performance studies.

"Once she completes her B.A., we hope to hire her as a teacher here at Ohlone," said Speech Instructor Brenda Ahnholz. President of the Speech and Communication Club Brian Chu commented on Luce's performance.

"I liked it because it was interactive and makes me think about a topic," noted Chu. "The way she presented it makes you step outside of your comfort zone. It makes you think about the topic differently. It was very good overall."