

Colby student chosen for research internship

Raymond Velazquez, a Colby Community College sophomore, has been selected to participate in a prestigious research project at Kansas State University. The Live Oak, Texas, native was one of 10 students chosen nationwide to be a part of the K-State Chemistry Department Biosecurity National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates Program this summer.

Velazquez will be provided with the training and support to participate in the 10-week project, which runs from late May to early August. Over 140 students applied for the 10 summer positions. In addition to opportunities for independent research, Velazquez will have access to campus resources and a chance to participate in several short chemistry workshops.

He will receive a \$4,500 stipend for the 10-week program and provided with housing close to campus, a meal plan and up to \$500 for travel expenses to and from the university.

Velazquez is the first member of his family to attend college. In addition to excelling in the classroom at Colby, he is a member of the Trojan cross country and track squads. He was on the President's Honor Roll for fall 2010 with a perfect 4.0 grade average. He was also named as a member of the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference All-Academic team.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for me," said Velazquez. "I'd like to thank my chemistry instructor, Dr. Chad Magee, and biology instructor, Lowell



Raymond Velazquez has been active as a member of the Trojan cross country and track squads and was named as a member of the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference All-Academic team.

Coon, for their encouragement and assistance in applying for this internship. They are great teachers and were instrumental in my selection to this program."

College team leads Cowpokes

The Colby Community College Equestrian Team will be leading the Cowpokes session for youth 7 through 12 at the High Plains Horseman's Day Saturday, April 16, at the Logan County Fairgrounds in Oakley.

The class, from 9 to 10:45 a.m.,

will teach kids all about the horse. Horses will be available for hands-on activities. Preregistration is required by Friday.

To register or for information, contact the Thomas County Extension Office at (785) 460-4582 or go to www.thomas.ksu.edu.

Do you know new health law?

It's been just over a year since the federal health care legislation known as the Affordable Care Act was signed into law. The massive law now on the books is the most comprehensive federal health reform law since the passage of Medicare back in the 1960s.

For most of the past year, state insurance departments throughout the U.S. have been straining to understand the parts and pieces of the law. That's because our national organization, the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, was charged with working through many of the law's provisions as part of our mission to help our states' consumers.

Kansas Insurance Department staff members have worked to understand what potential impacts the law will have on Kansans. We do that so we can do our job as insurance regulators, which means first and foremost that we want to help Kansas consumers know what could change with their health insurance.

In the meantime, Kansans and the American public in general have been subjected to media and political bombardment of information – and misinformation in some cases – regarding what the law actually says. So, whether you agree with the act or not, what do you as a citizen actually understand about the law?

According to results from a nationwide Kaiser Family Foundation survey, one in four Americans – 25 percent – can score a "C" or



Sandy Praeger

• Kansas Ins. Commissioner

better (at least 7 questions correct on a 10-question survey) when it comes to understanding the law. Approximately 40 percent of Americans correctly answered 5-6 questions, and 36 percent of Americans answered 0-4 questions correctly on the same survey.

The survey was first conducted in December. You can go online to take your own quiz, view how you did and find out what percentage of Americans taking the survey answered correctly. Go to healthreform.kff.org/quizzes/health-reform-quiz.aspx to take the quiz, which can be completed in about 2-3 minutes.

From the survey results, it appears that we could do our homework better when it comes to knowing what's in the most controversial reform legislation in decades.

The one question Kansans and the rest of the survey takers missed most was one that asked if all businesses, even small ones, will have to provide health insurance to their workers. The law doesn't do this, but only 25 percent of the

survey respondents knew that.

The law does not require employers to provide health benefits, especially with employers who have fewer than 50 employees (which is the majority of small businesses in Kansas). However, it does impose penalties, in some cases, on large employers (those with 50 or more workers) who do not provide insurance to their workers or provide coverage that is "unaffordable."

The question that received the second-fewest correct answers was one that asked if the law creates a new government-run insurance plan to be offered along with private plans. Only 27 percent of survey takers knew that was not the case. The law does expand Medicaid to cover more lower-income people, however, and tax credits would be provided under the law to make private health insurance more affordable for some.

I urge Kansans to take the test for themselves and find out what the major facts are about the legislation. Along with the correct answers is a link to find out more about each question.

After completion – even if you still have the opinion about the law that you had before taking the survey – you can give yourself a pat on the back for thinking critically about one of today's most challenging issues.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE

Saturday
 2:25 a.m. – Alarm: spoke to clerk; drunk subject in store. Subject called family to pick her up.
 3:08 a.m. – Subject reported wallet taken. Lost or mislaid property report filed.
 10:05 a.m. – Parking complaint: caller had questions on vehicle.
 1:35 p.m. – Subject came to station for recovered wallet. Turned over to owner; no report.
 2:21 p.m. – Dog at large in back yard. Unable to catch.
 2:37 p.m. – Caller reported injured dog at large. Turned over to animal clinic.
 3:05 p.m. – Caller reported drug paraphernalia left in guest room. Report filed.
 5:12 p.m. – Assisted Sheriff's Office.
 7:09 p.m. – Caller reported subjects at Fike Park stole skateboard. Report filed.
 8:22 p.m. – Caller reported fight in progress. Spoke with subjects; everything OK.
 11:36 p.m. – Security check at

Twister's.

Sunday
 7:36 a.m. – Caller reported stray dog contained in garage. Turned over to animal clinic.
 12:17 p.m. – Caller reported decorative deer in yard damaged.
 4:46 p.m. – Walk through at 285 E. Fifth.
 6:19 p.m. – Nurse reported a dog bite.
 6:54 p.m. – Accident in parking lot at 115 W. Willow.
Monday
 12:30 a.m. – Security check at Walmart.
 8:13 a.m. – Spoke to subject on phone about identity theft; information provided.
 9:41 a.m. – Funeral block.
 12:04 p.m. – Transported prisoner for Sheriff's Office.
 1:16 p.m. – Provided traffic blocks for ambulance.
 4:55 p.m. – Report of lost cell phone near 1075 W. Fifth.
 5:36 p.m. – Removed debris from roadway in the 1600 block of S. Franklin.
 8:57 p.m. – Report of two dogs

at large at Franklin and Hill. Not found.

Tuesday
 2:18 a.m. – Supplement filed to report on car theft March 20. Victim was contacted by the Wichita Police Department. Vehicle removed from National Crime Information Center.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

Friday
 10:17 p.m. – Assisted Colby Police with domestic battery call.
 10:25 p.m. – Arrested Laura Murphy on warrant.
 11:49 p.m. – Booked Justin S. Downs.
Saturday
 3:16 p.m. – Caller preparing to move, had possession of other's property in Thomas County. Spoke with subjects; information provided.
 4:55 p.m. – Caller reported subjects knocking on house in violation of protection from abuse order. Report filed.
 5:33 p.m. – Caller reported subjects at abandoned farmstead.

Spoke with subjects.
 5:35 p.m. – Caller reported trash and other items dumped in pasture. Report filed.

8:08 p.m. – Motorists having vehicle trouble in the 2300 block of U.S. 24. Provided escort to ensure safe arrival in Colby.

Sunday
 9:47 a.m. – Assisted Rexford Fire Department.

6:32 p.m. – All OK on report of suspicious vehicle driving in field northeast of U.S. 83 and County Rd. J. Was landowner.

Monday
 9:23 a.m. – Third-party report of rollover accident on U.S. 24 about five miles west of Colby.

10:41 a.m. – Report filed for protective custody.
 1:16 p.m. – Provided traffic block for ambulance.

3:28 p.m. – Booked Damen Justin Siruta.
 8:49 p.m. – Caller advised transformer sparking on pole in the 2900 block of County Rd. G. Police contacted Midwest Energy.

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