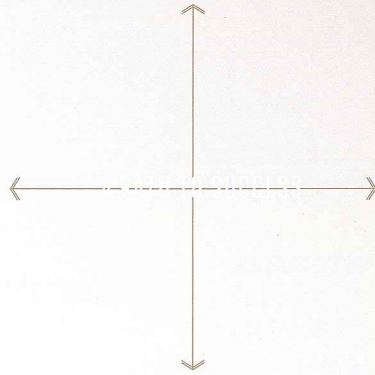


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vol. 44 no. 1 | Summer 2013 | MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™



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The rising STAR of Texas

Using eyes for security p14    New game-day venue p55



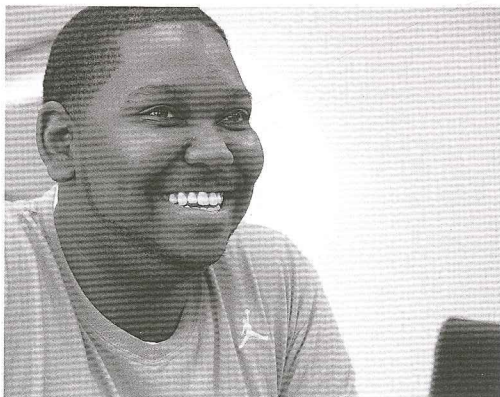
p. 26

**FEATURE**

# STUDENT SUCCESS

There are many paths to success at Texas State, and students are finding them.

Emerging Stars:  
Program gives students a boost before school year begins



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vol 44 no 1 | summer 2013  
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## RESEARCH OUTSIDE THE LAB

ALIX SCARBOROUGH

HONORS STUDENT

URBAN PLANNER





I HOPE MY  
**RESEARCH** WILL MAKE  
 A **DIFFERENCE**

Alix Scarborough says she has long had a geographical perspective on the world, so it's not surprising she chose Texas State when she was deciding on a college. "The Geography Department at Texas State is one of the best in the nation," she says. "And they offer a degree in urban and regional planning which is exactly where my interests lie."

Scarborough currently works as a planning intern at the City of San Marcos, where she assists city planners in a variety of capacities on a comprehensive master plan that will guide growth and development over the next 20 years. Focus areas of the master plan include land use and transportation, environment and resource protection, neighborhoods and housing, parks and facilities and economic development.

The real-world work experience is invaluable on her résumé and the research she's conducting on the job will serve as the basis of her Honors College thesis.

"I'm researching the effectiveness of public participation in the planning process," she says, "and using the comprehensive planning process of San Marcos as a case study."

For more than 40 years, honors students have benefited from interdisciplinary classes in subjects that bring students and faculty together from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Students enrolled in honors thesis courses have the opportunity to develop an independent research project, and work with a faculty member who guides them through the process of selecting, researching, writing and presenting a scholarly work. The creation of the Honors College in 2011 should extend these opportunities to even more students.

Last year, the City of San Marcos held a weeklong event called the Design Rodeo that created growth scenario alternatives to the city's current development trends. These scenarios considered the impact on areas ranging from the protection of natural resources and water quality to job creation. The event offered a forum for public input on each scenario. Scarborough designed and conducted a participant survey during the event that serves as the basis for her thesis.

Scarborough plans to present the results of her findings to the City of San Marcos Planning and Zoning Commission. She also hopes to see her thesis published in *Planning*, a monthly journal by the American Planning Association that chronicles how innovative planning programs and techniques are reshaping our nation's communities.

"I hope my research will make a difference," she says, "and help define how public participation is considered in planning projects in the future."