

# The Roads Scholar

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The Office of Commuter Student Services (CSS) is a University administrative office whose mission is to contribute directly and indirectly to the enhancement of the educational experience of all undergraduate commuter students at Stony Brook University. We accomplish this by providing services, programs, advocacy, research, and outreach.

*The Roads Scholar* is the official newsletter of Stony Brook University commuter students.

## In this issue:

### Page 2-3

**Spending Wisely in a  
Commuter's World**  
*By Caitlin Waring*

### Page 4-5

**Sankofa and Arising  
Social Consciousness**  
*By Amparo Abel-Bey*

### Page 6

**O-M-G! Texting and Driving**  
*By Elaine Vuong*

### Page 7

**Treat Your Taste Buds**  
*By Amanda Marzullo*

### Page 8

**Rockin' Back in Time**  
*By Elizabeth Mancuso*

### Page 9

**Sakina's Travels!:**  
**Next Stop- Muscat, Oman**  
*By Sakina Nayaz*

### Page 10

**SPRING FESTIVAL 2009 Schedule of Events**

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# Spending Wisely in a Commuter's World

By Caitlin Waring

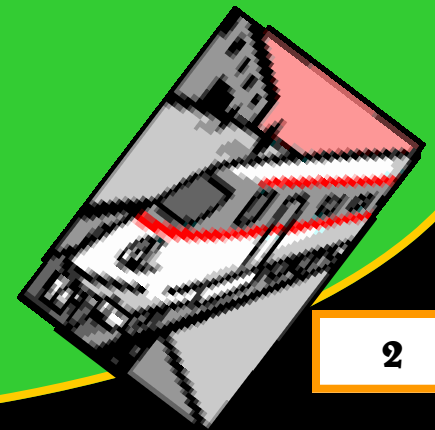
It is no secret that today's economy is in bad shape. There is no way to sugar coat the fact that the stock market has plummeted, leaving investors with stocks worth virtually nothing. Unemployment is reaching heights this country has not seen in a long time. While the stocks may not affect your savings directly, at the very least you probably have nightmares about the day your next credit card bill will arrive. Those loose nickels and dimes in your pocket may mean the difference between stopping for a bite for lunch and waiting until you get home to see what your family member or apartment mate has conjured up that evening.

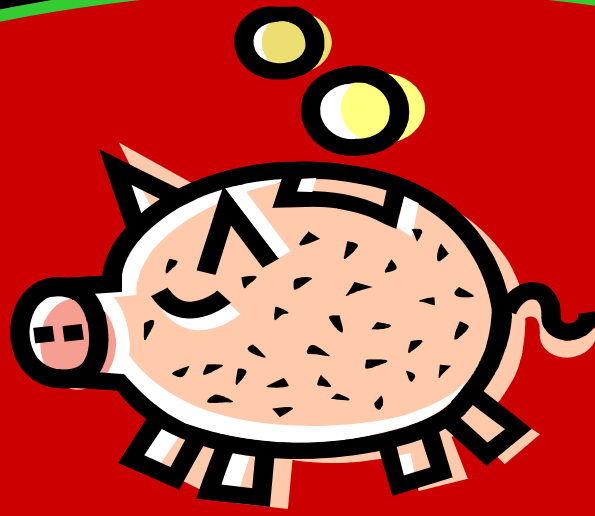
We have no choice but to wait until the economy improves, but there are changes that we can make as commuter students to ease our financial struggles. There are little decisions that we make every day that cause our savings accounts to dwindle- so let's be proactive and make our own changes for the better.

Like many of you, I too need a caffeine boost in order to function in the morning. I often see students on campus walk past me with their *Starbucks* cup filled with a delicious flavored coffee. As they walk past, I wonder where they get the funds to spend over four dollars on a drink every day. For that reason, I have come up with some other ways to start your morning without burning a hole in your pocket. There is nothing wrong with taking the old fashioned route of making coffee at home. If you already own a coffee maker, *Target* and *Wal-Mart* carry a wide range of coffee pots. You could buy the most basic one for as little as \$13 to the deluxe edition that can put you back as much as \$300.

While you are at the store you should pick up a reusable "to-go" cup for hot beverages. After a week of using this cup, not only will you help the environment by producing less trash, you will also have already paid for your cup in savings! In about a month, your new coffee pot will also pay for itself in the money you save by not buying coffee on a daily basis. Ultimately, if you are still yearning for that cup of *Starbucks*, consider saving your used paper cup after one purchase, as they offer free refills of their regular coffee when you reuse your cup.

At times, paying for gas can be a traumatic experience. As the gas-price rollercoaster continues to take us for a ride, there are several things you can do to spend less money at the gas station. If you have friends or classmates in your town with





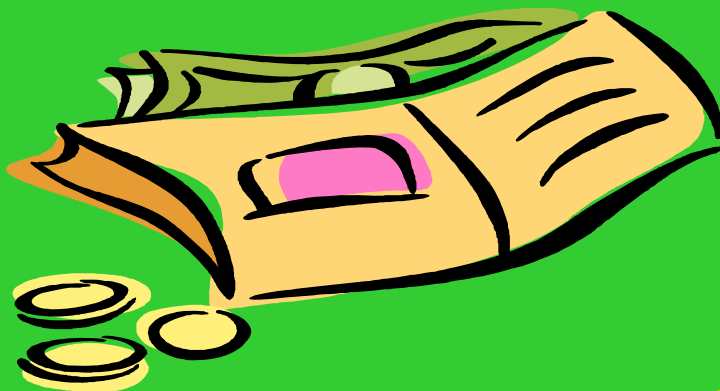
similar schedules, carpool and take turns driving. Also Commuter Student Services has a Carpool Forum on their Blackboard page for Commuters to post carpooling requests. For some extra help when it comes to gas prices, check [www.gasprices.net](http://www.gasprices.net) before heading to the gas station in order to get the most for your money. This website allows you to view the price of gas at various stations across Long Island.

Using the LIRR is another way to save money and gas. Purchasing round-trip tickets before boarding the train will save a significant amount of money rather than buying single trip tickets on the train. An even more cost-efficient way of riding the train is to buy a Monthly, Weekly, or Ten Trip ticket. As long as you are certain that you will be taking the train enough times for it to be worth it, this option will save you some cash.

If you have a break of a few hours between classes, stay on campus. Bring books with you and find a quiet spot in the library. This extra time could do wonders for your grade point average at the end of the semester. It is reported that an hour's worth of studying in daylight, is worth two hours of studying at night, leaving you more time to get rid of those bags under your eyes (Verdeyen, 2000.)

Ultimately, the best way to save money in times like these is to spend wisely. Everyone has different financial situations and it is important to know your personal spending limits. Saying "no" to unnecessary expenditures will help you in ways you cannot even imagine. Here's to a fat wallet!

Verdeyen, Meagan. "Where To Study/How To Study". *Academic Skills Center*. Revised 2000. Dartmouth University. March 26, 2009. <<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/study.html>>



# Sankofa and Arising Social Consciousness

By Amparo Abel Bey

My recent winter study-abroad trip to Ghana was inspiring. The first time I had learned about the concept of Sankofa, I was at a Kente village outside of Kumasi, which is in the Ashanti region. Villagers were decorating kente cloths with stamps of several Adinkra symbols, which have different meanings. A few symbols caught my eye. First, there was one that was shaped like a moon and star, called Osram Ne Nsoromma which symbolizes love and faithfulness. The second was Gye Nyame, which I had recognized by its popularity in decorative items all over Ghana. This symbol means “except for G-d”, which in essence, means that G-d is most supreme. This shows how deep-rooted religion is to daily life of Ghanaians. The third symbol looked like a goose bending its neck backward. This was the Sankofa symbol, which stresses the importance of learning from the past. Following the idea of Sankofa, I felt that it was not only important but necessary for me to experience as much of my motherland as possible.

Ghana taught me to value and learn from traditional thought and integrate it into my daily activities. For example, I now turn to homeopathic remedies first for any ailment, and then if that does not have a successful outcome, I will seek assistance from my doctor. This way of thinking is popular in many other African countries. However, I think it is important to understand why people conduct medical care in this fashion, the socio-economic context of this thought, and why it is still practiced in modern day Ghana.

In Ghana, there is a very visible economic disparity between those who have power and those who do not. This socio-economic problem has a trickle-down effect on healthcare. This is to say that if an individual lacks the means to have access to a dependent mode of transportation, the number of possible healthcare providers that one can go to in order to seek treatment for an illness is significantly decreased. This will negatively impact the health of the individual and most likely the health of his or her dependants. Therefore, it is not only beneficial but necessary for there to be increased access to primary healthcare in villages where the only mode of long-distance transportation is using a tro-tro, which is a public bus that goes down a set path between large cities.



Osram Ne Nsoromma



Gye Nyame



Sankofa

My trip to Christ Faith Foster Home was one of the experiences during this trip that really engaged my interest in raising international social consciousness in my peers. The orphans associated with this foster home in Fafraha, which is a town in the Accra region of Ghana, simply wanted attention and someone to play with. The children were given provisions and basic care. However, I feel that with more volunteerism, the quality of their care could be greatly improved, thus positively impacting the larger society.

Due to this fact, I am urging those who are interested in healthcare to go and volunteer in Ghana for any amount of time, distributing health services or just educating those who cannot afford to go beyond traditional medicine as a means of curing. Most diseases that plague Ghanaians are those that can be prevented by basic sanitation and hygiene, good nutrition and different lifestyle choices. Therefore, I feel that using the concept of Sankofa as a starting point, people should volunteer and assist those in need. There is much to be done and there should not be any time wasted.



# OMG! Texting and Driving

By Elaine Vuong

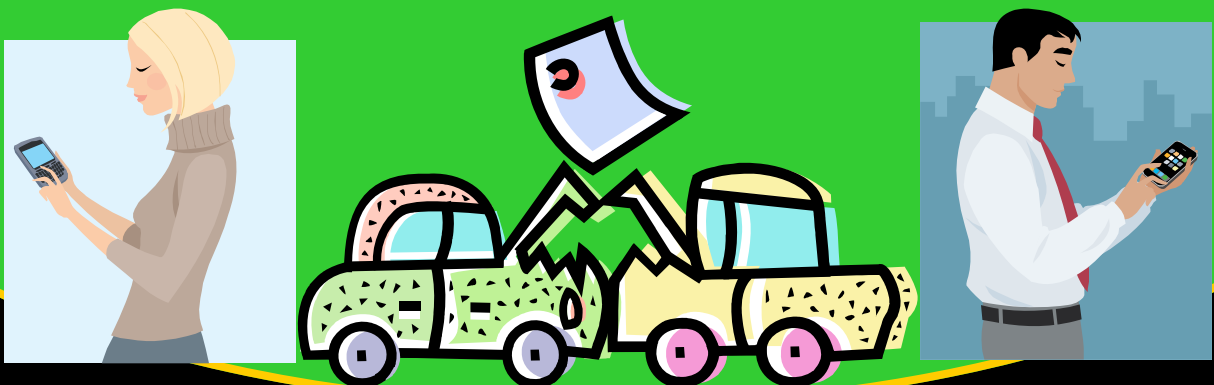
When a person is drunk, you should take away the keys before they enter the car. You should consider doing the same for a person who is addicted to text messaging while driving. While there are laws against cell phone use while driving, there should also be laws against text messaging while driving, as this point is not emphasized. When texting and driving, a driver's reaction time is cut by 35% (Attwood, 2008.) Furthermore, since text messaging is profoundly recognized and practiced by young students, inexperienced drivers can potentially harm others more than the experienced and wary.

It is common sense that it is essential to "keep your eyes on the road" while driving. Stealing glances at your cell-phone and texting while driving clearly contradicts this noble phrase. If you regularly use text messaging as a means of communication, you know that it is almost impossible to "just take a quick look" at your cell-phone during a red light or hasty stop sign. When that "quick look" causes you to see a blinking reminder of a "New Message!" it is tempting to reply! One text message reply almost always leads to a long line of text message exchanges.

Teens send thousands of text messages in a month. In an ABC News report, they discovered 28% of teens admitted to texting while driving. Since attention is diverted from the road to the phone, drivers can literally be prone to drifting the wrong way. These occurrences are slowly leading to anti-text messaging laws. The first state to enforce a strict anti-texting and driving law was Washington. This risky combination of texting and driving can lead to dangerous consequences. In Salt Lake City, Utah, their Governor recently imposed three levels of offenses: Primary Offense documents as a Class C misdemeanor or license suspension, an accident with injury leads to a Class B misdemeanor, and an accident with death is authenticated as a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felony.

The dangers of drinking and driving are comparable to texting and driving. They both severely risk the lives of other drivers in the most preventable situations. It is important to keep this information in mind the next time you consider picking up your phone after that short beep or vibration. Friends shouldn't let friends text and drive!

Attwood, Daniel. "Dangers of Texting While Driving Revealed". *Fleet News*. September 18th, 2008. <http://www.fleetnews.co.uk/news/story/Dangers-of-texting-while-driving-revealed/48261>



# Treat Your Taste Buds!

By Amanda Marzullo

Tired of the same old fast food places or don't know where to eat on a Friday night? Want to try something different and delicious? *Kotobuki Japanese Restaurant*, *Pasta Pasta*, and *The Melting Pot* are three great restaurants to take that special someone to or to just enjoy a meal with friends.

If you love sushi and are willing to try some outstanding sushi rolls, *Kotobuki Japanese Restaurant* is a perfect choice. It is located on Nesconset Highway in the Hauppauge Shopping Center. It is only about a 10 minute drive from campus. They have a great selection of main entrees and the desserts are exquisite, too. However, you cannot leave *Kotobuki* without trying the sushi! It is fresh, wonderfully presented and the taste is out of this world. The Crazy Tuna and Dragon Roll are great choices. The décor is modern, the atmosphere is very comfortable and the service is great. The seating arrangements can be a bit cramped- but the food is worth the trouble. The price range depends on what you order, but for a college student the food is moderately priced. The restaurant is always crowded, so plan ahead and make reservations. You don't want to miss out on a great dining experience.

*Pasta Pasta* is located a short distance from campus, on East Main Street in Port Jefferson. It is a small and quaint restaurant filled with ambience. It is a great place to go on a date or to take that special someone because the dining experience is very intimate. The lighting is romantically dim and the tables are illuminated by candle light. Most of the dishes on the menu are unique and tasty pasta creations. However, they also have pizza, chicken, steak and seafood entrees. Make sure to save room for one of *Pasta Pasta's* desserts because they are outstanding. The chocolate bag is one choice which is elegantly presented. It is a box made out of chocolate overflowing with strawberries and whipped cream. After a great meal, don't hesitate to finish off the evening with a walk on the Port Jefferson Harbor boardwalk.

*The Melting Pot* is another great choice. It is a little far from campus, but if you and your dinner guests are up for a drive to Farmingdale, the food is well worth it. It is located on Broad Hollow Road right across the street from Farmingdale University. *The Melting Pot* caters to all fondue lovers. They offer several options such as cheese fondue, cooking your main dish in a fondue pot and then finishing off your meal with delicious chocolate fondue. The menu is very flexible, allowing you to choose how many courses you wish to have. It is a great experience dipping your food and being your own personal chef. The service is very helpful and they explain everything you need to know about how to use the fondue pot and utensils. The restaurant is always booked, so reservations are a must! Their website allows you to make reservations online via [www.opentable.com](http://www.opentable.com).

Enjoy these great places and don't hesitate to try something new and different. Make your Friday night dining experience fun, entertaining, and most importantly, pleasing to your taste buds!

# Rockin' Back in Time

By Elizabeth Mancuso

Are you a bit tired of listening to the local pop music radio stations on your way to campus or while riding the Express Bus? If so, these tips are for you. Whenever you want an escape from hearing the same modern music tracks, you must check out the music artists that I recommend in the list below! Have you ever heard the phrase “it’s an old-ey but a goody”? That certainly applies! All of this music is from the past, but definitely not out of style.

One of the best ways to get a hold of this music is through your local library. You can go online and reserve nearly any album, as most libraries carry older music. I hope you enjoy the following list of artists and albums I am recommending. Happy listening!

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Suggested Album(s)</u>
The Byrds	The Byrds Play Dylan; Fifth Dimension
Donovan	Donovan’s Greatest Hits; Catch the Wind
The Doors	Morrison Hotel, The Doors Greatest Hits
Joan Baez	Baez Sings Dylan
The Nazz	Nazz I; Open Our Eyes: Anthology
Fleetwood Mac	Rumours; The Dance
Jefferson Airplane	Surrealistic Pillow
The Kinks	Well Respected Kinks
13th Floor Elevators	The Psychedelic Sounds of the 13th Floor Elevators
Simon and Garfunkel	Bridge Over Troubled Water; Sounds of Silence
The Beatles	White Album; HELP!; Revolver
Bob Dylan	The Essential Bob Dylan, Blonde On Blonde
George Harrison	All Things Must Pass, Brainwashed
John Lennon	Lennon Legend
Creedence Clearwater Revival	Chronicle Volumes 1 & 2
CSNY	Déjà Vu; CSN

# Sakina's Travels: Next Stop- Muscat, Oman

By Sakina Nayaz

I went to San Diego in January 2009 for the first time. While I was sightseeing, I felt as though I had been there before. This is because I have been to a place that looks very similar to San Diego. It is Muscat, the capital city of the Middle Eastern country of Oman which I had visited during the summer of 2000. It is officially referred to as the Sultanate of Oman because the Head of State is a Sultan. It borders United Arab Emirates, the country I lived in until the age of 14 before I moved to the United States in June 2002.

## Muscat, Oman >>

Muscat is a coastal city just like San Diego. While Muscat overlooks the Gulf of Oman, San Diego overlooks the Pacific Ocean. What I admired the most about both places is the beautiful sunset that I was able to witness from the



beaches there. Most of the houses in these cities are on hills and the view of the water is breathtaking. The palm trees lining the streets along with beautiful flower beds is a sight I cannot forget. However, there are differences between the two cities primarily because of the different geographical regions they are located in. Muscat is more desert-like which means that its weather is warmer than that of San Diego.

Interestingly, Oman has a Hollywood connection. Actress Isla Fisher, who starred in

movies such as *Definitely, Maybe* and, most recently, *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, was born to Scottish parents in Oman.

Muscat, like most Gulf cities, has beautiful mosques every few blocks, centrally air conditioned shopping malls, restaurants that serve international cuisine, modern high-rise buildings, and a peaceful life.



## << Downtown Muscat

# Commuter Spring Fest 2009

**April 20-May 1st!**

## Monday, April 20

*Commuter Student Association's (CSA) Relax-a-Thon*

11a.m.-3p.m., Ballroom B

*It's Like Riding A Bike* (Collaboration btwn. Commuter Student Services (CSS) and Free Wheel Collective)

1 - 2 p.m., Commuter Commons (SAC 144)

## Tuesday, April 21

*Reduce Your Environmental Tire Track* (Collaboration btwn. CSS and the Environmental Club)

12-1p.m., SAC 144

## Thursday, April 23

*Drive-In Movie: THE DARK KNIGHT* (Collaboration btwn. CSS and CSA)

Parking will begin at 7:30 p.m. - Movie will begin at 8 p.m., South Parking Lot

## Saturday, April 25

*Complexions Contemporary Ballet*

8p.m., Staller Center Main Stage

## Monday, April 27

*Guessing for Gas and the Skip the List raffle!*

11a.m.-1 2p.m., SAC Lobby

## Tuesday, April 28

*Guessing for Gas*

10-11a.m., SAC 144

*SMILE! Tips on Preparing for Dental School*

12-1p.m., SAC 309

*Commuter Appreciation Day*

3-5p.m., South Parking Lot

## Wednesday, April 29

*Lunch & Learn Workshop: Naughty or Nice? How Ethics Apply to You*

1-2p.m., SAC 311

*Guessing for Gas*

1-2p.m., SAC Lobby

## Thursday, April 30

*Depression Screenings with the Center for Prevention and Outreach*

12-2 p.m., SAC 144

*Guessing for Gas- Last Chance!*

3-4p.m., SB Union Lobby

## Friday, May 1

*Roth Regatta: Cheering on the CSA Boat!!*

11 a.m., Roth Pond

### COMMUTER SPRING FEST SPECIALS:

**50% off coupons for food at Roth Food Court**  
4/20-5/01 (Courtesy of Campus Dining and FSA)

Look for coupons at SPRING FEST 2009  
EVENTS and to print off of your *Blackboard!*

**Skip the Stadium Parking Waiting List Raffle**  
(Courtesy of Parking and Transportation)

Enter to win the opportunity to jump the  
waiting list at all *Guessing for Gas* tabling events.

For more information about Spring Festival 2009 events go to:

[http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/css/fest\\_events.shtml](http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/css/fest_events.shtml)