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Monday August 30, 2010

## News Briefly - 8/25/2010

By Staff, Daily Texan Staff

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### UT ranks as fifth-best university in Washington Monthly list

UT was ranked the fifth-best university in the nation in Washington Monthly magazine's 2010 national universities rankings.

The magazine's editors worked with Education Sector, an education reform nonprofit, to gather data for this year's rankings. The universities were graded based on social mobility for low-income students, excellence in research and public service contributions.

"We're trying to get at what colleges are giving back to the country," said Erin Dillon, a senior policy analyst for Education Sector. "Other [institutions that rank colleges] measure existing prestige of the institution. While those are useful, what we're trying to get at is what colleges are doing with their resources."

Five new subcategories in this year's rankings are mostly responsible for UT's rank, since the University's statistics remained about the same from 2009 to 2010, Dillon said. UT ranked third in student community service hours, only following the University of California, Los Angeles and St. Louis University. An estimated 27,000 UT students participated in nearly 3 million hours of service last year, she said.

Despite its high overall rank, the University scored the lowest in the ROTC and support for service, staff, courses and financial aid categories.

— Aziza Musa

### UT's custodial services takes award for training program

For the third time in nearly a decade, UT's Custodial Services Division won the Training Program of the Year Award, according to a statement released by the Facilities Services Department.

Robert Moddrell, manager of training and development for the division, also won the (OSI) Trainer of the Year Award, according to the statement. (OSI) is a benchmarking organization for custodial services.

— Collin Eaton

### Groups ask Justice Department for Youth Commission probe

Four advocacy organizations, including Texas-based Advocacy Inc. and Texas Appleseed, sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Justice on Tuesday, calling for a federal investigation of 10 secure facilities operated by the Texas Youth Commission.

Based on interviews conducted with children and information obtained by open records requests, the organizations claim that the conditions at these facilities are unsafe and in violation of their residents' constitutional rights. Among the groups' major complaints are that the TYC facilities use excessive force and unnecessary restraints, and that they lack adequate mental health treatment.

"TYC has not been able to adequately address the problems related to mental health care" raised in their meetings with TYC leadership, the letter said.

Jim Hurley, a spokesman for the commission, said the letter in question is "not an accurate portrayal of the Texas Youth Commission." He said that the commission takes the accusations very seriously and over the past three years has worked with Advocacy Inc. and Texas Appleseed on behalf of the children and teens committed to the juvenile justice system and will continue to do so.

— Kate Ergenbright

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