

THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE

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T H E A W I L L I A M S

The Thea Williams Memorial Award **TIE: Jordan Gass-Pooré; Rob Cohen**

Welcome to our inaugural Thea Williams Memorial Award for Distinguished Interns. We want to brag on two of our own, but first, a word on the lineage of this award. Thea Williams was an executive producer and journalist at KVUE and a gifted instructor of journalism at Austin Community College, where she treated students as *journalists*, not student-journalists. She was also a friend of the *Chronicle*. In so many ways, the passing in 2010 of this kindly hardass with a heart of gold is a loss that is still felt in Austin. So, in homage of the greatness that will remain Williams' legacy, we've ferreted out two of our own emerging talents who wear the mantle well. They couldn't be more different: There's Jordan Gass-Pooré, a student at Texas State University and reporter for the *University Star*, and Rob Cohen, who embodies the punk-rock spirit and founding principles of alternative news weeklies. Both have made it their business to know their culture/sub-culture well. Both are inquisitive and kind, virtues important to Williams, and unrelenting in journalistic mettle. We could go on about their skill for sentence structure, their inherent wit, their baffling work ethic, curious eating habits, or the scarily accurate Morrissey impressions that issue forth from the mouths of these babes, but we've already buried the lede. The truth is, Gass-Pooré and Cohen remind us, not only of ourselves at their ages, but of the importance of our chosen vocation, and the kind of joy that can be endemic to it.

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