

Winter 2011

UHD magazine



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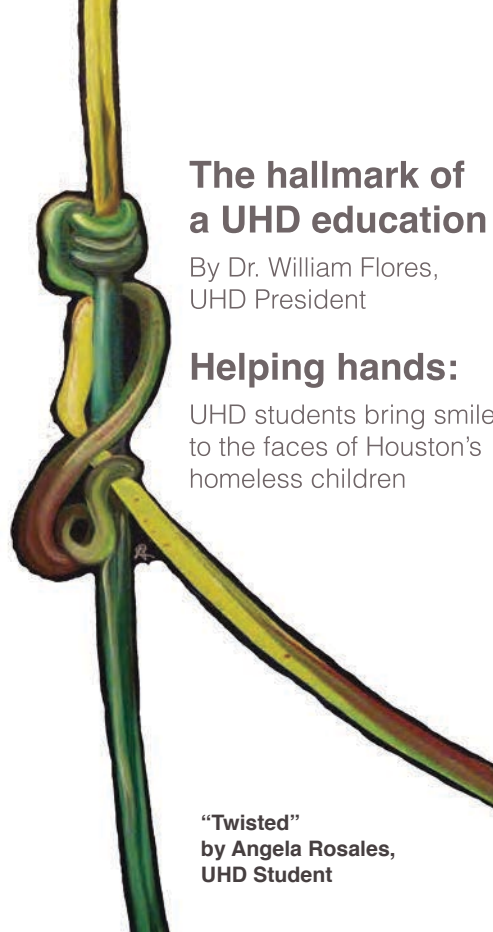
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The hallmark of a UHD education



By: Dr. William Flores
President,
University of Houston-Downtown

With this issue of UHD Magazine, we honor UHD's commitment to provide our students with opportunities to be engaged learners. Our students often have had opportunities to participate in undergraduate

research, working alongside faculty mentors. They have put their newfound knowledge to work as interns in business and nonprofit settings. Students have volunteered with social services and community agencies. They have tested their education, reinforcing what they learned from faculty in our classrooms and affirming their interests and skills in “real world” settings.

Now our UHD faculty, staff and administrators are making a new pledge to our students – a commitment to provide every student with learning experiences that reach across individual disciplines and beyond the classroom to deepen understanding and learning. In academic circles, these are called “high-impact practices,” and they will be the



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Our high-impact practices will ensure our students are self-directed learners, competent graduates prepared to contribute to the local, national and global community.

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distinctive and defining characteristics of a UHD education. These practices are not new to UHD. With a large number of transfer students, working students and adult learners, our students have long had opportunities to apply their knowledge in a variety of settings, but these experiences have not always been formalized as part of the curriculum.

Our UHD students have participated in service learning, community service, undergraduate research and field experiences. They have interacted with faculty, traveled abroad and attended academic conferences. Now we will bring these opportunities and others like them together as part of our curriculum. A faculty and staff task force is developing a plan to implement these high-impact practices into the UHD experience for all students. To accomplish that, faculty will redesign curricula to ensure that every student participates in multiple high-impact practices, both in face-to-face and online classes. It's an ambitious undertaking, but research - and our own experience - shows that it will make a significant difference for our students.

Students who are engaged in opportunities to apply their classroom learning in a variety of settings are more successful. High-impact practices enhance learning for all students, but especially for African-American, Hispanic, first-generation and transfer students – the students who comprise over 80% of the UHD student population. Implementing high-impact practices will ensure our students are self-directed learners, competent graduates prepared to contribute to the local, national and global community with the skills and knowledge to be successful in the 21st century.

80%
of UHD students
are African-American,
Hispanic, first-generation
and transfer students.

So, take this opportunity to learn more about the experiences we provide today...the commitment we've made to House of Tiny Treasures, the opportunities for research in our labs, the accomplishments of our nationally recognized social work student. And, watch us as we expand to offer high-impact opportunities to all of our students. It will make a difference for them – and for the contributions they make to our city and beyond.



Dr. William Flores
President



Helping Hands: students bring smiles to the faces of Houston's homeless children

By: Mary Ann Cozza

Compassion and a helpful spirit are traits many students at UHD are cultivating thanks in part to their involvement with the homeless outreach center, the House of Tiny Treasures.

The University began a partnership with the center in 2006 and today, students in the Departments of Urban Education, Natural Sciences and Criminal Justice are working, sometimes in tandem, to bring smiles to the faces of Houston's homeless children.

The House of Tiny Treasures was created by SEARCH Homeless Services and is Houston's only nationally accredited early childhood development center dedicated to serving homeless children and their families. The center provides these children with early care, education and therapeutic services they otherwise would go without.



Leigh Van Horn, professor of urban education, is dedicated to making a difference at HTT and in the lives of her students. She takes UHD student volunteers, the majority of whom are studying to become urban educators, to host family literacy events at the center twice a semester and knows how rewarding the experience can be for them.

"Our students are always surprised at how much they get out of volunteering at the House of Tiny Treasures," she said. "They might think they'll go and do a service for their community, but they gain so much more in return, like confidence and compassion."

Van Horn began hosting the literacy events at the center in 2006. Each year, she chooses books and interactive learning games she thinks the HTT children will enjoy. Some of the student volunteers will read books aloud to the children and families, others will lead the constructive activities and still others will survey the parents about their thoughts on the events.



“We are trying to learn what parents do naturally with their children, while also teaching our students how to successfully communicate with those parents,” Van Horn said. “During our events, everyone, the UHD students, the parents and the HTT staff, are all collaborating to do what’s best for the children.”

Two other urban education faculty members, Kathryn Jenkins and Amelia Hewitt, are supporting the center by taking volunteers from their early childhood (ECH) education classes to lead lessons and conduct research.

“The lessons our students teach at the center fit into one of our four ECH classes,” Jenkins said. “For example, if we teach the class ‘Aesthetic and Physical Development of Children’ this semester, the lessons we develop would allow our students the opportunity to integrate music and movement into their teaching.”

Jenkins, Hewitt and their students travel to the center twice a month and can see the effects the visits have on the UHD students and the HTT children alike.

“Our students gain real world experience and confidence in their abilities through interacting with young children in a live classroom and many



friends



of the HTT children gain improved language skills and a sense of stability from our lessons,” Hewitt said.

After learning about the work UHD is doing with HTT, assistant chemistry professor, Michael Matson, decided to get involved as well. Matson and several other natural sciences faculty members hosted a “magic show” for the HTT children during the annual Fall Carnival because, “what’s Halloween without exploding pumpkins and mad scientists,” he said.

The tricks included making slime, purple fire and ice cream with liquid nitrogen.

“We planned for this to be 100 percent UHD student run,” Matson said. “Hopefully, it was a memorable event for the HTT children, as well as for our student volunteers.”

At UHD and the House of Tiny Treasures, giving back has never been more rewarding.



learn

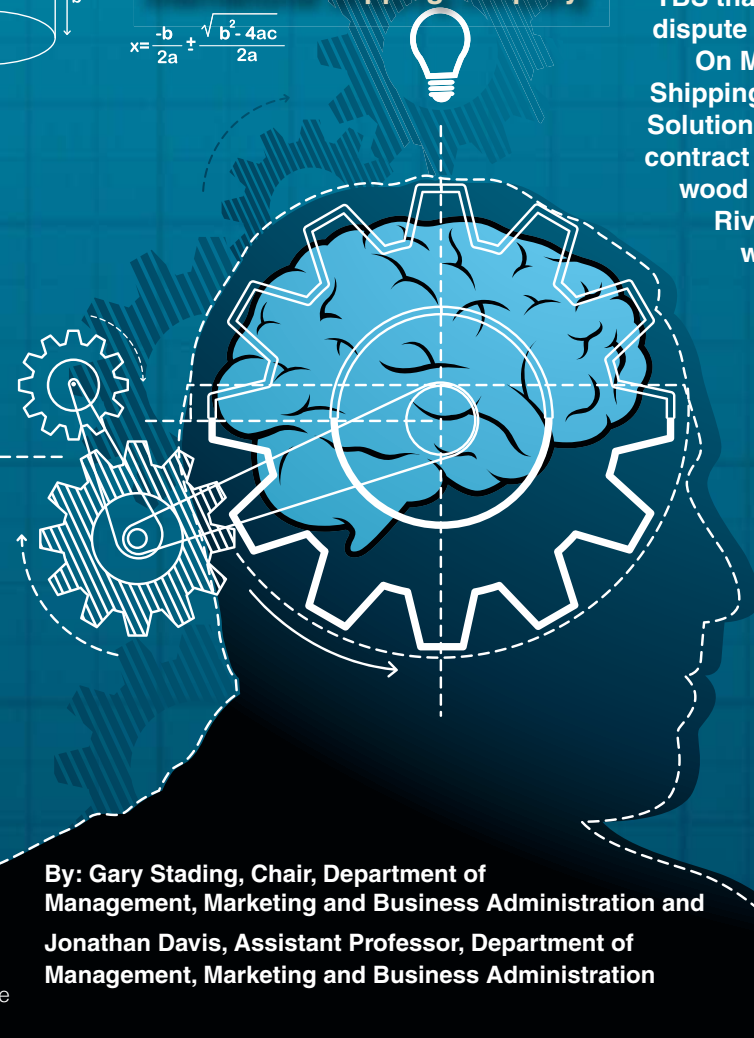




The Problem With Pellets

How UHD students helped resolve a contract dispute for an international shipping company

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$



TBS Shipping Services is quite impressed with UHD students and faculty who helped solve an expensive and puzzling cargo problem, saving the company time and money.

The project began when TBS Chief Operating Officer Gregg McNelis met Gary Stading, Department Chair in the UHD College of Business, at a Transportation Club of Houston meeting. The two men were discussing various problems shipping companies face, when McNelis asked Stading if UHD students would be interested in helping him solve a problem at TBS that involved a contract dispute with a customer.

On March 29, 2011, TBS Shipping Services and Lee Energy Solutions, LLC signed a three cargo contract for the carriage of bulk wood pellets from the Mississippi River to Tyne, U.K. The cargo was described to TBS as having a “stow factor” of 53 cubic feet/metric ton. Stow factor, in supply chain companies, describes how much weight of cargo will fit into a given amount of space.

The cargo originated from a plant in Alabama before it was moved by truck to the Tennessee River where it was loaded onto grain barges. The barges traveled down the Mississippi River to Louisiana, where the cargo was to be transferred to the ocean-

By: Gary Stading, Chair, Department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration and Jonathan Davis, Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration



going vessel for the journey to Tyne, U.K.

TBS expected the cargo, which had a stow factor of 53 cubic feet aboard the barge, would easily fit aboard the ship that also had a stow capacity of 53 cubic feet. They were puzzled then, when the cargo wouldn't fit aboard the ship and was measuring a stow factor of 55.5 cubic feet. Why wasn't the ship holding as much as it was supposed to? That was the question posed to the UHD students by TBS – to find an explanation for the difference in the stow factors.

TBS turned over its data to UHD professors and the project, which would require hard work and a focused effort of data analysis, was assigned to the students of a senior Supply Chain Management seminar course, the capstone course in the major. The research project and the students involved were directed by Jonathan Davis, assistant professor, plus Gary Stading and Jeff Adams, associate professors.

“The shipper wanted to understand why a recent shipment wouldn't fit into the cargo vessel carefully selected for the voyage,” said Davis. “The students attacked the problem with intelligence and enthusiasm and, despite being handicapped by a short deadline and limited access, they developed several key ideas that turned the cause of the problem from mysterious to perfectly clear.”

Students Steven Blythe, Freeda Duplan, Jessica Fischer, Mark Hafner, Adam Hipp, Richard Lee and William

McCormick scoured product descriptions, cargo manifests, ship specifications and international materials-handling standards in an effort to discover possible causes of the problem. With information in hand, they built spreadsheet models of the ship's cargo holds, the cargo volume and weights, and multiple materials standards. Their results surprised everyone involved.

The central finding by the students revolved around the detection of subtle—but very crucial—differences in the way shippers and manufacturers determine the stow factor of a product. For some cargos, like liquids, stow factor is fairly straightforward because a liquid will completely fill a space it is put into without leaving any voids. Small particle cargos, however, like pellets, potato chips or wooden blocks, will occupy a large space at first, but then settle into a smaller space when jostled. This accounts for the seemingly large gap between the top of a potato chip bag and the potato chips themselves. Between the potato chip factory and the store shelf, the chips settle. The same effect was in play for TBS Shipping.

“When a manufacturer wants to know a stow factor, what they might actually want to know is how much product can be forced into a space if you really work at it and make it settle,” said Davis. “In this project, the students discovered that this manufacturer's method of measuring the stow factor was incompatible with the reality of stowing product on a ship. But nobody realized there was a difference



Wood pellets are a type of fuel source made from compacted sawdust or other wastes from wood product manufacturing.



“ [I gained] the confidence to not only explore problem solving in a creative manner, but also the ability to stand up and convey this [solution] to a group of business executives in an honest but confident manner. In addition, it reinforced my belief that academic pursuits can be translated into real-world tangibles. For me, this was a great accomplishment that will define my experiences at UHD in the future. ”

— Steven Blythe, a project participant and recent Supply Chain Management graduate



Students investigated the dispute by closely studying wood pellet product descriptions, cargo manifests and international materials-handling standards and discovered the factors creating the discrepancy.



until the ship was full and cargo was still waiting to be loaded.”

For TBS’s customer, their idea of stow factor meant packing a sample box with product, lifting it and dropping it several times to force the contents to settle, and then refilling the available space with more product. While this is valid for their own purposes, shippers do not have the luxury of these methods when loading cargo. “One can’t exactly pick up



a gigantic cargo ship and drop it several times to free up more space,” said Davis. “The shipper received an important understanding of how to approach this customer going forward and was very pleased with

the results of their collaboration with UHD’s Supply Chain Management program.”

At the conclusion of the

project, the students prepared a video conference presentation for the TBS Shipping executives, both a written detailed report of their findings and a verbal presentation that originated from UHD’s Technology Teaching and Learning Center (TTLC). TBS was excited about the findings and grateful for the students’ effort. One TBS executive wrote, “The video conference proved to be very informative; the students did an excellent job with the presentation of their hypothesis! We wanted to thank you and your students again for providing us with what we also now believe to be the root cause of the stow factor discrepancy. We’re very much looking forward to the final report from your team and to further case study collaborations.”

For the students, the project provided important educational benefits as well. “I feel very strongly that I received...great value from [the project],” said Steven Blythe, a project participant and recent Supply Chain Management graduate. “[I gained] the confidence to not only explore problem solving in a creative manner, but also the ability to stand up and convey this [solution] to a group of business executives in an honest but confident manner. In addition, it reinforced my belief that academic pursuits can be translated into real-world tangibles. For me, this was a great accomplishment that will define my experiences at UHD in the future.”



UHD student named 2011 Social Work student of the year

By: Randy Cypret

The little girl wanted to sit next to Damaris Cortez at an event in Chiapas, Mexico, but a 6-year-old boy told her she couldn't.

Cortez, a University of Houston-Downtown student, picked the girl up, scooted the other children down the bench and sat the girl next to her.

"You should have seen the look on the little boy's face, that I, a woman, had gone against what he said and stood up for myself and the little girl. I was surprised at the level girls are separated and put in their role," Cortez said. "I didn't realize the stereotypical role behavior was ingrained so early. Teachers at the children's school told me girls need to see women standing up for themselves."

Cortez was in Chiapas doing research for a paper on women's empowerment.

Cortez is part of UHD's first cohort in the Bachelor of Social Work Program. The National Association of Social Workers – Texas recently named her Undergraduate Social Work Student of the Year for 2011. She received her award at the organization's state convention in October. She also has received the Houston area association's top undergraduate social work student award and the UHD BSW program's Community Service Award.

Her Chiapas project grew from a deep-seated desire to spend time in the Central American countryside and study women's empowerment. "I always wanted to connect with my indigenous roots," she said.

Cortez has some firsthand knowledge of difficult circumstances and strong women. She survived Hurricane Mitch in El Salvador and helped with disaster relief. As a teenager, she volunteered at an orphanage and helped collect and distribute medical supplies and clothes to rural El Salvador.

"I enjoyed doing that. To me it was service for other communities that were less privileged. I never thought about it in terms of a profession," Cortez said. "I didn't know it was called social work."

Then, in the early 1990s her mother gathered the family and left El Salvador for Canada to escape the civil war. Cortez eventually settled in the United States in 2001. She found a job and enrolled in Houston Community College-Central. Eventually she was able to get financial assistance and transfer to UHD's new social work program.

In Houston, she has volunteered for several organizations and helped start a social justice group focused on providing people with healthy food choices and information about community gardens.

Two summers ago, she left Houston for a Chiapas

volunteer youth hostel with little more than a letter of introduction. She lived in the rural Zapatista communities and volunteered with Alternativa Tzotil, an organization "devoted to teaching Mayan children to read and write in Spanish along with mathematics and social studies from a social-political-historical perspective," she said. Many of the children had not been to school because their families had been displaced when the Mexican government took their land. Her research focused on women's empowerment and political expression through collectives. The families had no land to farm, but the women were gaining in political strength.

"They said, 'we have to feed our children.' They could sew and embroider. They were selling their work on the streets, making contacts with other vendors and creating networks for economic gain," she said. "It was about more than the money. They had a voice, they had friendships and empowerment."

Back home, Cortez is excited about the UHD Bachelor of Social Work Program as well as its instructors: Jo Bailey, associate professor, and Dawn McCarty, assistant professor.

"This is the best program ever. Not just the program, but Dr. Bailey and Dr. McCarty who make the program



Damaris Cortez sits with girls in a Chiapas, Mexico community where she volunteered with Alternativa Tzotil, an organization devoted to educating Mayan children. Cortez was also conducting research on women's empowerment in the Zapatista communities.

happen. They are really good at motivating you," Cortez said. The instructors recognize that many of their students work jobs while going to class, and they encourage the strengths of each student and help build their positive self esteem.

"They encourage your passion to help people and learn from different communities," she said. "It makes me very proud to be part of the program and the first cohort."

The UHD program and her experiences have solidified her desire to be an activist in the political arena lobbying for social welfare policies.

Grad TX: targeting adult students

By: William Flores, UHD President

The United States is losing its advantage in the global talent pool as the number of adults gaining college degrees in countries such as China and South Korea increases rapidly, according to a new study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Two years ago, the U.S. ranked 12th in young adults 25 to 34 years of age with degrees or certificates. Now OECD reports that the U.S. has dropped to 15th.

Amid this disturbing news, the University of Houston-Downtown is one of eight universities invited to participate in Grad TX - a statewide initiative to encourage more than 40,000 Texans with college credits and no degree to return to school and earn their bachelor's degree.

In early August, The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board launched Grad TX with funding from a federal College Access Challenge Grant. The Grad TX program targets adults who "stopped out" of college to return to one of eight participating public universities in Texas and earn their bachelor's degree.

Of particular help at www.GradTX.org is an online transfer tool that allows candidates for re-admission to college to enter their completed coursework and assess how their credits would count toward a bachelor's degree at a participating university. Advisors at UHD and the other universities specialize in meeting the unique needs of returning students, evaluating how previous college work, military credits or credit by exam can provide credit toward a bachelor's degree and helping returning students graduate faster. Grad TX also offers information and guidance related to paying for college tuition, obtaining financial aid and addressing the needs of U.S. military veterans.

University of Houston-Downtown is well suited to be among the Grad TX universities. For many years, we have enjoyed a solid reputation for helping returning adult students complete their baccalaureate degrees while balancing work, family, and school. The accessibility and flexibility that we offer

through our campus in the heart of downtown Houston situated near many major employers, coupled with our satellite suburban campuses and online course offerings, have made it easier for adults to pursue and complete a degree.

UHD is one of the most ethnically diverse universities in the nation, ranking 37th nationally for graduating both Hispanic and African-American students with bachelor's degrees. Our demographics match those of the City of Houston and its surrounding communities, with under-represented students making up the majority of our student population. Our students range from age 16 to 76, and the average age of an undergraduate is 27. UHD is the second largest university in Houston, with a current enrollment of over 12,900 students.

Although returning students may choose to pursue any of UHD's 40 undergraduate degree programs, one program has particular appeal to returning adult students. Our Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences in Applied Administration (BAAS-AA) offers students the opportunity to develop competencies and skills that prepare them for promotion to upper level administrative and supervisory positions. Students who have completed an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in technical and occupational fields are strong candidates for the BAAS.

College graduates earn 84 percent more than people with only a high school diploma, according to The College Payoff Report recently released by Georgetown University's Center on Education and The Workforce. Those who hold a bachelor's degree currently can expect median lifetime earnings near \$2.3 million while those with only a high school diploma average roughly \$1.3 million or slightly more than \$15 per hour.

Clearly, Grad TX is an excellent reminder that it is never too late to return to college and that investing in higher education pays dividends for life - and for Texas.

UHD Welcomes Two New Faces

Idea Broker: **Lisa Montgomery**

LISA MONTGOMERY, UHD's new Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management, said the one state she never pictured herself living in was Texas. But fortunately for UHD, the recently-appointed Montgomery enjoys Houston's urban culture and says, "I plan to stay awhile and plant roots."

With a solid track record of success at several universities in implementing technology, efficiency in operations and enhanced student service delivery, Montgomery is eager to bring new tools to UHD. Her ability to multitask is impressive and her staff observes the multitude of projects she can simultaneously manage, while continually asking for new ideas and better ways of doing things. "I consider myself a broker of ideas," she said. And indeed, Montgomery's eyes sparkle as she speaks with enthusiasm about seeing an idea come to fruition to bring about positive change. She finds her greatest reward is "having an idea, bringing it to life, and creating a sustainable benefit that leaves a lasting improvement. That's my benchmark of success."

Along with bringing new tools to improve operations, Montgomery sees an



Left and Right Brain Champion: **Brian Chapman**

BRIAN CHAPMAN, UHD's Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost credits his grandfather's knowledge and appreciation of the outdoors as the foundation for his love of biology. As a young boy, Chapman took extended walks with his grandfather and learned about plants and their medicinal uses. Years later in college when professors would ask if anyone knew the uses for chemical compounds found in a specific plant, Chapman knew the answers. The knowledge his grandfather passed to him was exceedingly accurate, and this wisdom fascinated Chapman for years.

Although he planned to be a dentist and was accepted into two dental schools and two graduate programs, one college course changed Chapman's life. "Vertebrate Natural History" intrigued Chapman enough to cause him to change his educational plans. "I knew I could be a dentist, but I decided I'd rather study bats and birds," he said. His fascination with these animals took him through a doctorate program where he discovered that he wanted to teach. Chapman wanted to pass his love of biology on to others.

Fresh from his doctorate program, he received two offers, but decided to go with a new university that was being established, Texas A&M Corpus Christi. The new president of the university heard from four separate referrals within the community that he needed to bring Chapman to the school to help lead it. These referrals ranged from a banker to a barber, so the president acted on the recommenda-

By: Diane Summers

opportunity to help students build life skills. Recalling a survey she once read that revealed the majority of college graduates felt unprepared for life, she sees a chance to make a difference. She encourages all student services staff to understand the impact they can have with each student, and that a staff member's role can also be one of mentoring and teaching. She said, "By interfacing with our offices, students can learn how to navigate systems—better preparing them for life. Whether managing their financial aid, registering for class or working with administrators, we can help prepare them in building valuable life skills."

With a long list of plans for UHD, Montgomery sees her role as one that is rewarding and challenging for years to come. Originally from Arkansas and one of seven children, Montgomery enjoys the outdoors by hiking, biking, rock-climbing, and participating in water sports. Texas and UHD are a natural fit for Montgomery. Although she wouldn't have believed it years ago, she now plans to remain in Texas for a long, long time.

tions and brought in Chapman to be the first chairman of the biology department. This enabled him to combine two passions: teaching and university administration. Chapman finds both roles satisfying.

Chapman's goals for UHD are to "continue to grow quality academic programs." He's particularly interested in bringing completely different and diverse programs to the university, including fine arts programs and technology-based programs, such as digital art, animation and gaming. With each university he has worked, he finds it most rewarding "when there is something that I have added that has strengthened the university and left an innovative and recognized program."

Although Chapman has shown his strength in left-brain activities, one surprising aspect of Chapman's skills with which few may be familiar are his right-brain strengths, or his artistic abilities. In Chapman's office there is a drawing by Chapman showing birds with delicate features illustrated in great detail, and he enjoys building mountain ranges for a club of model railroad enthusiasts, of which he is a member.

"Through drawing, painting or model railroad building, I keep myself sane. It relaxes me," he said. His wife, Sandy, holds similar interests, as she too holds a master's degree in biology and studies bats. Her current fascination is in sculpture and Chapman has a life-like sculpture of a Texas prairie dog on his desk that she created. He fondly recalls many trips taken with her at his side, and smiles as he says, "We've bothered animals all over the world."





The
Priceless
Gift
of

By: Diane Summers

Giving

"Service learning is matching course learning objectives and community needs. UHD is at the forefront of collaboration and community-based research. Course content becomes real-world experience, and students learn the benefit of a life-long commitment to service and the impact it can have on the community."

**Jean DeWitt,
Director, Office of Community Engagement**

Last Year

Number of students
who gave 20 hours or
more: **600**

Number of students
involved in community
service: **1,330**

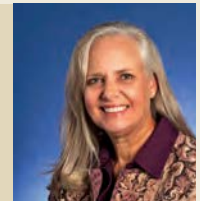
Total community
service hours from
UHD students: **34,244**

We call it service learning, and UHD is proud to have this form of teaching integrated into courses across the university. Three groups at UHD have truly shone this past year by giving thousands of hours of service and are highlighted here.

UHD Office of Community Engagement

Purpose: Linking student learning through service that is directly tied to class objectives.

Service Hours Last Year: 668 **Director:** Jean DeWitt



How does a small, non-profit organization like Crime Stoppers meet the demand for their presence in a city the size of Houston? By marshaling the resources of passionate UHD students who offered over 600 hours of their time last year to help get the Crime Stoppers message out.

Crime Stoppers exists to solve and prevent serious crimes by partnering with residents, the media and our criminal justice system. The Crime Stoppers tip line (713-222-TIPS) offers callers a chance to report crimes while maintaining the caller's anonymity, and sometimes offering callers a cash reward.

During a chance meeting between Crime Stoppers Executive Director Catherine Cabaniss and UHD Office of Community Engagement Director Jean DeWitt, both women realized the benefits of a relationship between the two organizations. DeWitt, who also teaches communications courses at UHD, was seeking an avenue to teach course curriculum while engaging students in the community. Cabaniss was seeking a means for getting the Crime Stoppers message out into the community. The collaboration has been beneficial to both organizations.

The project involved 90 UHD students and three faculty members. Students were trained on the Crime Stoppers message and created their own presentations commu-

nicating the Crime Stoppers purpose. DeWitt took the project a step further to make it meaningful. "Students were given authority to select the locations to present the Crime Stoppers message. They had to craft their presentations to match the audience," she said. Presentation locations included churches where students were members, and high schools or middle schools in their neighborhoods. Cabaniss of Crime Stoppers complimented the students' efforts saying, "UHD provided strong volunteer resources, more than doubling our outreach volunteer efforts."

The Crime Stoppers message has spread across the city exponentially. DeWitt smiles as she sees the power of the numbers. "Imagine a class of 30, and if each student goes out in the community with this message — that can help the entire city. And they do it again, and again. It teaches the importance of giving back to the community and builds a life-long commitment to service."

DeWitt and Cabaniss have continued the relationship between the organizations for two years, and see the multi-year benefit as a boost to both UHD and Crime Stoppers. Cabaniss states, "Every semester there are new classes and new students. With every new group we see the same support and enthusiasm year after year. UHD students are an invaluable resource."

Scholars Academy “Pay It Forward”

Purpose: Students majoring in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) participate in the academically-competitive Scholars Academy, but also join forces in providing community service.

Service Hours Last Year: 602

Director: Mary Jo Parker



Some of UHD’s best and brightest belong to the Scholars Academy. This scholarship and mentoring program is for students pursuing bachelor’s degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The requirements to remain in the Scholars Academy are rigorous, and one component includes community service.

At the beginning of each semester, Scholars Academy students are assigned to teams consisting of seven to 12 students based on their major. These groups are responsible for determining their own service project, completing it, reporting on it and making a presentation. Groups have a designated leader known as a Peer Mentor, who is responsible for coordinating the team’s efforts.

“It’s fascinating to see the students select their work based on their interests. The environmentalists will usually select a job that involves the environment. Athletes will build a house. What’s most rewarding is seeing the leadership styles grow and develop from the work,” said Mary Jo Parker, Scholars Academy Director.

At the end of the semester, students make presentations on the projects they have completed. Parker states,

“It’s the showcasing that helps them realize how powerful this is.” It reinforces the importance in giving back, and Parker notices a change in students’ thinking when they see the impact they have made in a community.

Powerful synergies occur when students make the connection of matching their unique strengths with a service project. Parker recalls a Peer Mentor and computer science student, Brian Holtkamp, who led his team of computer science students in refurbishing old computers for a school. “It’s exciting to watch the students connect the power of discovering their own personal strengths and the act of volunteering,” reports Parker.

Community projects completed are as diverse as the students themselves, including beach cleanups, working with Habitat for Humanity and assisting at the Children’s Museum of Houston. “When they work as a group together they make a greater impact,” said Rene Garcia, Scholars Academy Program Manager. He also notes the changes that he sees in students throughout the process, “Students that give service to the community see the benefits that everyone gains, they become more mature and they continue this gift of service throughout their lives.”



Collected

1,500
pounds of
food for hungry
families

Donated over

34,000
hours of com-
munity service
to the City of
Houston.

Built

and distributed
300
gift bags to
the elderly

Distributed

Easter eggs &
healthy treats
to children in
a homeless
shelter



UHD Community Involvement Center

Purpose: Matching students with nonprofit organizations to enable them to volunteer in projects meaningful to them.

Service Hours Last Year: 1,944 **Associate Director:** Liza Alonzo



“**T**he students built amazing things out of hundreds of cans we collected for the Houston Food Bank. That project was probably the most fun,” said Liza Alonzo, Associate Director of the Community Involvement Center at UHD. “They built things that were meaningful to them, such as a giant ribbon in honor of breast cancer awareness, or a bridge. The structures were incredible; and they were all built from cans.” This effort generated over 1,500 pounds of food, and is only the tip of the iceberg in what students have done through their efforts with the Community Involvement Center.

The purpose of the Community Involvement Center is to make connections with non-profit organizations that need volunteers, and inform students about these needs. But the CIC has had to extend little effort in outreach, as faculty and students generate a wealth of ideas, connections and projects that UHD can support. “We’re seeing more and more faculty, staff and student recommendations for volunteer opportunities, and the students always step up to the plate to meet the challenges requested of them,” says Alonzo. Multiple examples of this can be seen in UHD’s Community Involvement Day, where doz-


ens of nonprofit organizations come to campus seeking volunteers for their cause. “The Bayou City Arts Festival desperately needed 16 volunteers and they signed up all 16 in one day at our event,” said Alonzo. “The groups told us that they were impressed with the level of interest and participation they see in our students. They couldn’t believe how many signed up to volunteer on the spot.”

Another project that Alonzo finds heart-warming is the Secret Santa Workshop held every year. “We take a bus-load of students to help load boxes of the collected Angel Tree toys from around the city onto 18-wheeler trucks, and every seat on the 52-seat bus is filled. The level of support is amazing,” she said. The toys collected go to various community centers by way of the Salvation Army. “Our students say that it’s a rewarding experience to be a part of this process.”

Regardless of the effort, UHD students have shown their support. A two-day blood drive held recently generated over 100 units of blood. When you consider that a unit of blood can save three lives, the effort generated by UHD students will save as many as 300 lives. “It’s magical,” said Alonzo. “When students come together for a purpose, there is nothing they cannot do.”

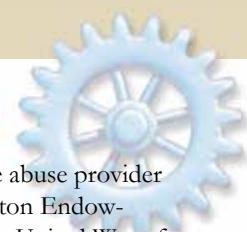
UHD Social Work internships set national model

By: Randy Cypret



Few things are worse than needing care and having no one around to provide it...especially if you're battling a mental health or addiction issue.

The Network of Behavioral Health Providers have chosen UHD to help pilot a program to put more trained professionals in the Houston area.



and profit, mental health and substance abuse provider agencies. This project, funded by Houston Endowment, the Meadows Foundation and the United Way of Greater Houston, is the first phase of their social work 'Pathways' education initiative to help correct a significant work force shortage in this area. Their vision for Pathways is to eventually touch all levels of the education process from high school to graduate school and steer students toward careers in the mental and behavioral health service community. UHD's involvement is the first piece of the undergraduate effort.

"It has been a massive undertaking this summer. I'm thrilled we will be getting financial support for our students and that we could become a national model for undergraduate social work programs," McCarty said.

The Pathways internships will enable the students to complete their mandatory 400 hour practicum (15 to 20 hours each week) at a participating Network member agency and receive stipends of \$400 each semester.

In the past, agencies that provide mental and behavioral health services have offered limited opportunities to undergraduates, preferring more advanced graduate students.

McCarty said the organization chose UHD to pilot the program, in part, because of UHD President Bill Flores and his support of the mental and behavioral health service community as well as UHD's willingness to explore new opportunities for students.

"If our reputation for having a good BSW program is growing, it is because we have great students. They are our best ambassadors. We also have a reputation for being willing and eager to try new ideas," she said.

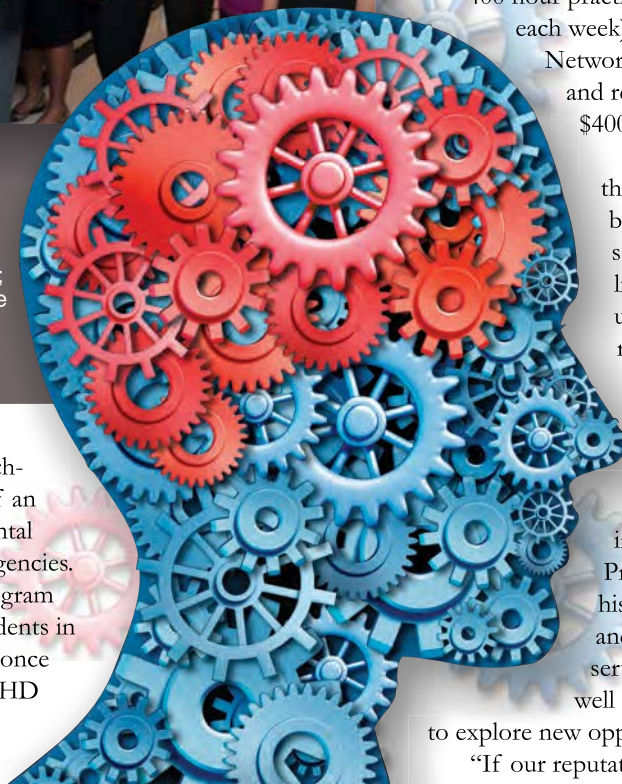


On hand for the presentation of the internships were, from left, Jeff Jackson, Interim Chair, UHD Department of Social Sciences; Jo Bailey, UHD associate professor and BSW program director; intern Damaris Cortez; intern Michelle Riley; intern Terrance Benson; Bill Flores, UHD President; Marion Coleman, Pathways director; intern Renee Hamilton; intern Natasha Marlow; intern Barbara Pruitt; intern Katherine Little; and Dawn McCarty, UHD assistant professor and BSW field director.

The Network recently awarded seven internship stipends to UHD Bachelor of Social Work students as part of an effort to place them with targeted, mental health and substance abuse provider agencies.

"Network members hope this program will lay the groundwork to interest students in nonprofit and public agency positions once they graduate," said Dawn McCarty, UHD assistant professor, BSW Program. "They plan to funnel social work students into behavioral health-serving agencies, and they've chosen us (UHD's BSW Program) to pilot this program."

The Network is a nonprofit agency composed of the leadership of Houston-area public and private, nonprofit





*Graduates of the Prisoner Entrepreneurial Program in Cleveland, Texas.
Photo courtesy of PEP.*

UHD students go to prison with UHD professors

By: Taylor Luce and Mary Ann Cozza

During the spring, two UHD students from a Desktop Publishing class went to prison, but for a good reason.

The students were part of a class taught by English lecturer Barbara Canetti to help inmates develop business materials in collaboration with the Prisoner Entrepreneurial Program (PEP). They were visiting the prison, along with other members of the community, to meet the program participants in person.

PEP chooses inmates from across the Texas prison system and relocates them to the Cleveland Correctional Facility, an hour northeast of Houston in Cleveland, Texas. It's there the prisoners receive a rigorous five-month business education, which includes mentoring from MBA professionals and executives, taking business exams and pitching their business concepts.

According to their website, PEP's mission is to change the way private institutions and state governments view correctional facilities, and to reduce the high recidivism rate by redirecting the energy normally put

towards illegal endeavors to positive, legitimate businesses. And the statistics for PEP proves their program is succeeding; recidivism among PEP graduates is only 10 percent, compared to the national recidivism rate of approximately 43 percent.

Each student in Canetti's class had seven or eight PEP clients, and each client had a different idea for their business and how they wanted it to be presented. The businesses ranged from landscaping and fencing services to barber shops and car detailing services. The project for the class was to design brochures representative of each client's business.

The class as a whole could not meet their clients face-to-face, so Canetti sent PEP a basic tri-fold brochure template for the men to illustrate or write to give her students an idea of what each client wanted. What PEP sent back floored Canetti.

"The designs on the [templates] were so intricate. [The men] had even designed their own logos," she said. "[The students] were scouring the

internet for images to fit as closely as possible to what the men wanted. It generated the most enthusiasm I have ever seen in a class."

Jamee Cox, one of Canetti's students that visited the prison said, "I was blown away by the program. But, I don't know if I would have felt as strongly about it had I not taken the time to go to the prison. These guys in this program are so passionate about what they are doing and they give so much energy - it's just amazing that they can be so positive, yet they are still in prison."

Canetti said she feels the collaboration serves as an "excellent example of high-impact learning," where students strive to do their best because they are working for a real-world client and not just their professor. And when asked if she would be continuing the PEP collaboration with her fall Advanced Desktop Publishing class she said, "Yes, and I will definitely encourage more of my students to go to prison."

Future teachers get a boost

By: Randy Cypret

Judith Quander, UHD assistant professor, remembers the first time she saw the spark in students' eyes when they understood the concept she was trying to get across to them.

"That's really when you get the teaching bug and understand what it's like to be a teacher," Quander said.

The summer internship and hands-on classroom experiences of UHD's Robert Noyce Math and Science Teacher Scholarship Programs are designed to help UHD students experience that feeling and advance to become certified secondary school teachers.

The National Science Foundation and the Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program recently awarded UHD \$1.08 million for a five-year project to prepare future middle and high school mathematics teachers for Houston-area classrooms. UHD also received a four-year \$889,010 grant to prepare certified secondary school science teachers through UHD's award-winning Scholars Academy in 2009. The math program starts this spring. UHD's awards annually provide 30 undergraduate scholarships for junior and senior math majors and 26 science majors who are preparing to teach grades 6-12.

The Noyce program is named for Robert Noyce, the co-founder of Intel and inventor of the integrated

circuit, and is designed to attract the next generation of math and science teachers across the country.

"Historically, many graduates with math or science majors eventually become teachers, but they arrive in the classroom indirectly," said Quander, who is principal investigator for the math grant. "They go into the industry and find it unfulfilling or not what they expected. They reach the classroom through alternative certification programs and miss the opportunities available through a regular certification program."

"We wanted to give math majors the incentive to start earlier in giving some thought to teaching as a career. UHD's Urban Education department is so good at preparing teachers for urban schools through courses, field experience and partnerships. Noyce scholarship recipients will graduate with a strong mathematics background and strong preparation for teaching in Houston-area schools," she said.

"Our main goal is to recruit students who are interested in mathematics, but who also are really committed to teaching. We know, in general, Texas has a need for math teachers. If we have better math teachers in secondary schools, we will have students who are better prepared and who will be more successful when they reach college."

Students have an opportunity to experience science through hands-on experiments.

From left: Latarsha Emerson, Junior, Claudia Turcios, Senior and Dulce Guevara, Senior.





Faculty involved in the NSF and Noyce Program are from left: J. Quander, J. Sack, T. Redl and N. Leveille, Assistant Professors and Mitch Connell, Associate Professor and research evaluator.

Students in the math and science programs are eligible for scholarships and stipends for two years and can receive up to \$12,000 a year for math, and/or \$10,000 for science. Students are required to commit to teach for two years in a high-needs school district for each year of scholarship they receive. The scholarships are open to juniors and seniors.

The summer program is open to all students, and participants serve as student mentors with Houston PREP, a summer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program for high school students, to get a sense of what teaching is like, Quander said.

“If we give undergraduates the early experiences to show them how cool teaching can be, they get the teaching bug,” she said. “They can see what it really means to be a teacher and they can be thoughtful about choosing it as a career as opposed to seeing teaching as a fallback option.”

The math program is a joint venture between UHD’s Departments of Computer and Mathematical Sciences and Urban Education, the Aldine and Alief Independent School Districts and Houston Community College-Central Campus. The science award involves the UHD Departments of Natural Science and Urban Education, the Aldine Independent School District, the Harmony Academy of Science and the Houston Urban Network for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.



Assistant professor Brad Hoge and student, Dulce Guevara.

UHD students create, act, write

By: Mary Ann Cozza

UHD's cultural, literary, theatrical and visual arts scene provides students, faculty, staff and the surrounding community with events and productions of the highest caliber. UHD also offers students career-launching opportunities and experiences for those with a passion for the fine arts.

O'Kane Gallery

The O'Kane Gallery serves as a resource for the study of art and art history while broadening exposure to visual arts for UHD and the surrounding community. Here, students can discover their inner artists through annual student exhibitions and opportunities to view the works of renowned artists from Texas and across the globe.

Former student, Stephanie Chadwick, devoured every opportunity the Gallery and UHD had to offer. She presented her work in student exhibitions and *The Bayou Review*, served as an intern for faculty member and Gallery director Mark Cervenka and assisted with the presentation of an African-American editorial cartoon show. Today, Stephanie is in the first class of Rice University's new doctoral program in Art History. She has interned at the Menil Collection and studied abroad in Paris. She credits her success, in part, to her experiences at UHD.

"These opportunities enhanced my university study and opened up more possibilities to improve my resume for graduate school," she said. "My undergraduate experiences at UHD were instrumental to my current success."

This season UHD's O'Kane Gallery features a number of unique and engaging exhibits, including "Ubiquity" by the Czech artist Barbara Benish and "African Tribal Art in Context: Then and Now," a selection of African tribal art contrasted with contemporary commercial pieces.

The Gallery also hosted one of 10 citywide exhibits in honor of Houston 175, a celebration of the 175th anniversary of Houston's birth. Displayed at UHD's renovated Willow Street Pump Station, the exhibit featured historic photos, artifacts and a timeline of Houston's educational endeavors.

The Bayou Review

The Bayou Review is a literary magazine published bi-annually by UHD students to serve as a creative forum for the UHD community. The publication includes poetry, fiction, essays, reviews and visual art from UHD faculty, staff and students.

UHD students, including one lead editor, three genre editors and a host of interns, guide the publication from concept to completion with help from faculty advisor and associate English professor Robin Davidson.

Submissions are solicited each semester and chosen by students based on relevance to that edition's theme.

"Working on this publication is such

great experience for our students," Davidson said. "We've even developed a focused class, Literary Magazine Production, which will be available in the fall for the student editors."

The latest edition of the Bayou Review commemorates the publication's 25th anniversary. It is printed in two parts and includes one piece from each of the previous 24 volumes.

"We are very proud of this volume as it is especially beautiful and provides an expansive view of our community's literary accomplishments," Davidson said.

"Botanica" by Angela Rosales, UHD Student



O’Kane Theatre

The O’Kane Theatre and UHD’s theater classes strive to introduce students and the community to quality live theater. Sometimes students get more than they bargain for.

Gwendolyn Goins, Communications Division Manager for the Municipal Courts at the City of Houston, took a leap of faith and auditioned for ‘Ain’t Misbehavin’” while a student at UHD. It was her first experience on stage. She says her experience helped her become a stronger public speaker and improved her memorization skills. By battling nerves and memorizing lines, she learned to speak with poise and confidence.

“As a spokesperson for the Municipal Courts, I have done numerous interviews for TV and radio,” Goins said. “Maintain-

ing one’s composure and being a confident, credible source is of the utmost importance. I honed these skills during my time in the UHD theater program.”

This season, the O’Kane Theatre is presenting two major productions in addition to the annual student-directed one-act play series.

Peter Shafer’s “Equus,” a psychologically and emotionally complex human study of a boy who blinds horses, ran earlier this semester. Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s “The Rivals” is the delightfully satiric 1775 restoration comedy that introduces Mrs. Malaprop, one of English drama’s most famous characters, to the literary world; it will run from March 30 to April 7, 2012.

Students rehearse Peter Shafer’s “Equus,” a complex story of a boy who blinds horses, at UHD’s O’Kane Theatre.





UHD President Bill Flores, from left, UHD Scholars Academy students Athena Pasuelo and Asad Durrani, Professional Writing Program student Lucha Morales and Office of Community Engagement Director Jean DeWitt with Rep. Sylvester Turner at the Community Partnership Breakfast.

Grant program helps community, provides students with real world experience

By: Randy Cypret

The University of Houston-Downtown's Office of Community Engagement has awarded three internal grants to service-learning projects engaging UHD students in the community.

"Service learning is designed to work directly with our courses," said Jean DeWitt, director of UHD's Office of Community Engagement. "We look at what can we do with the course that helps the community and reinforces concepts learned in the classroom."

State Rep. Sylvester Turner developed the Community Partnership program to award Community Development funds to UHD and community agencies serving north Houston residents.

"One of the primary reasons to provide funds is to try to bring college to the community," Turner said at a Community Partnership Breakfast. "Students get out into the community and have a multiplier effect. Parents may not be able to motivate students to go to college, but through these students, we can take college to the community."

UHD President Bill Flores said, "This has been a wonderful opportunity for UHD to partner with these organizations. For the students, it deepens learning, builds enthusiasm and engages them. Engagement builds success. The more engaged they are, the deeper the knowledge and the more likely they are to graduate."

UHD Urban Education students received stipends to tutor students in the Aldine Independent School District.

"This was a community-based, field-based, urban school laboratory that was an extension of the theoretical education we offer," Associate Professor Viola Garcia said. "It was an opportunity to work with elementary school students and practice strategies, to experience different learning styles and to vary teaching methods."

A second grant provided a paid internship for a UHD Professional Writing Program student at Acres Homes Community Development Corporation (CDC). Lucha Morales was selected for the position. She helped write grant applications, designed marketing brochures and created copy for websites for Acres Homes CDC as it helped low-income families become first-time homeowners.

"You meet people and see their living conditions and it's a humbling experience," Morales said. "I've never seen people in such circumstances. They may not have the best jobs or a good education, but they're looking for a chance to own their home and be in charge of their own future."

Scholars Academy students worked at ReStore, a Habitat for Humanity project that recycles and sells building materials at reduced costs to homeowners in north Houston. Scholars Academy student Asad Durrani, a senior biology major, said, "I'm a pre-med major and most of the volunteering I've done has been in healthcare. I saw firsthand the impact I can have in the community through volunteer opportunities I didn't even know existed."



Online criminal justice master's degree starting in spring 2012

UHD's College of Public Service will offer a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice entirely online for the first time starting with the spring semester 2012. The online MSCJ is designed to prepare students to become future leaders in the criminal justice system and blends theory and practice as they relate to the adult and juvenile criminal justice systems.

Faculty and staff have been planning the online initiative for a year and a half and Beth Pelz, Dean of the College of Public Service, said, "This online degree program includes features designed to make it convenient for working professionals."

The courses are offered every eight weeks so students can complete the program in as little as 14 months. Students are also guaranteed enrollment in the classes.

A majority of the faculty has practical experience and understands how theory applies to the real world. Many faculty members are nationally known and recognized as scholars and leaders in the criminal justice field.

The MSCJ degree prepares students for careers in policing, courts, corrections and a variety of other agencies related to the field. For students already working in the criminal justice field, the degree is designed to lead to career advancement. The degree has also led many graduates to doctoral programs in criminal justice and teaching careers.

For more information on the online MSCJ degree, scan the code above with a smart device.

MBA program to begin January 2012

UHD's MBA program will welcome its first group of students in January 2012. College of Business administrators and faculty designed the new program to provide professionals with the knowledge, tools and critical thinking skills they need to lead organizations.

Administrators held several information sessions on campus so prospective students could learn about application requirements, meet faculty members, view course offerings and understand the unique benefits that the MBA offers.

"The response to the information sessions has been tremendous. Each one has been fully booked, and our venues have reached maximum capacity," said Debbie Francis, MBA program director. "The College of Business is eager to begin the program with our first group of exceptional professional students."

One unique benefit is the program's content focus on highly-applied skills. Students will learn tools for dealing with the real-world challenges that organizations face today, and will immediately be able to begin using knowledge learned in the classroom in their professional positions. With classes held two nights per week in the evenings, professionals are able to continue working while earning their MBA.

The College of Business is accredited by the prestigious AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International), a designation held by only 15 percent of all business schools worldwide.

For more information on the MBA program, visit www.uhd.edu/mba.



The high level of interest in UHD's MBA program has generated maximum-capacity attendance at information sessions like this one held in October, where prospective students learned more about the program.

From covert scientist to generous role model By: Randy Cypret

Friends, family and colleagues agree the late Barry Garrett was an extraordinary person. He may well have been the best scientist you've never heard of, because the inorganic chemist from Waco worked for the CIA.

However, 14 of UHD's Scholars Academy students will never forget him or the generosity of his widow, Cypress resident Marion Garrett Wilson, who funded scholarships in his memory to help the students pay for their educations. Garrett died in 1997, and Wilson, who later remarried, was on campus this fall to present the scholarships, talk with the students and be made an honorary Scholars Academy member, along with her husband, Jack Wilson.

Balding, with gray hair and glasses, you'd never guess Garrett was a star in the world of classified operations and science. He was Senior Scientist in the Directorate of Science

and Technology for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and received numerous honors, awards and commendations—most of which were secret. Garrett ultimately was awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal of Merit for his service.

Although his family generally didn't know about his work until years after it was completed, he worked on early versions of GPS, the Internet and supercomputer chips. He developed a way to stabilize argon so it could be used to etch computer chips, and he came home one day excited to report he could see the expression on a man's face from satellite imagery, Wilson said. Before his government work, he was a university professor who had a genuine fondness for teaching and helping students.

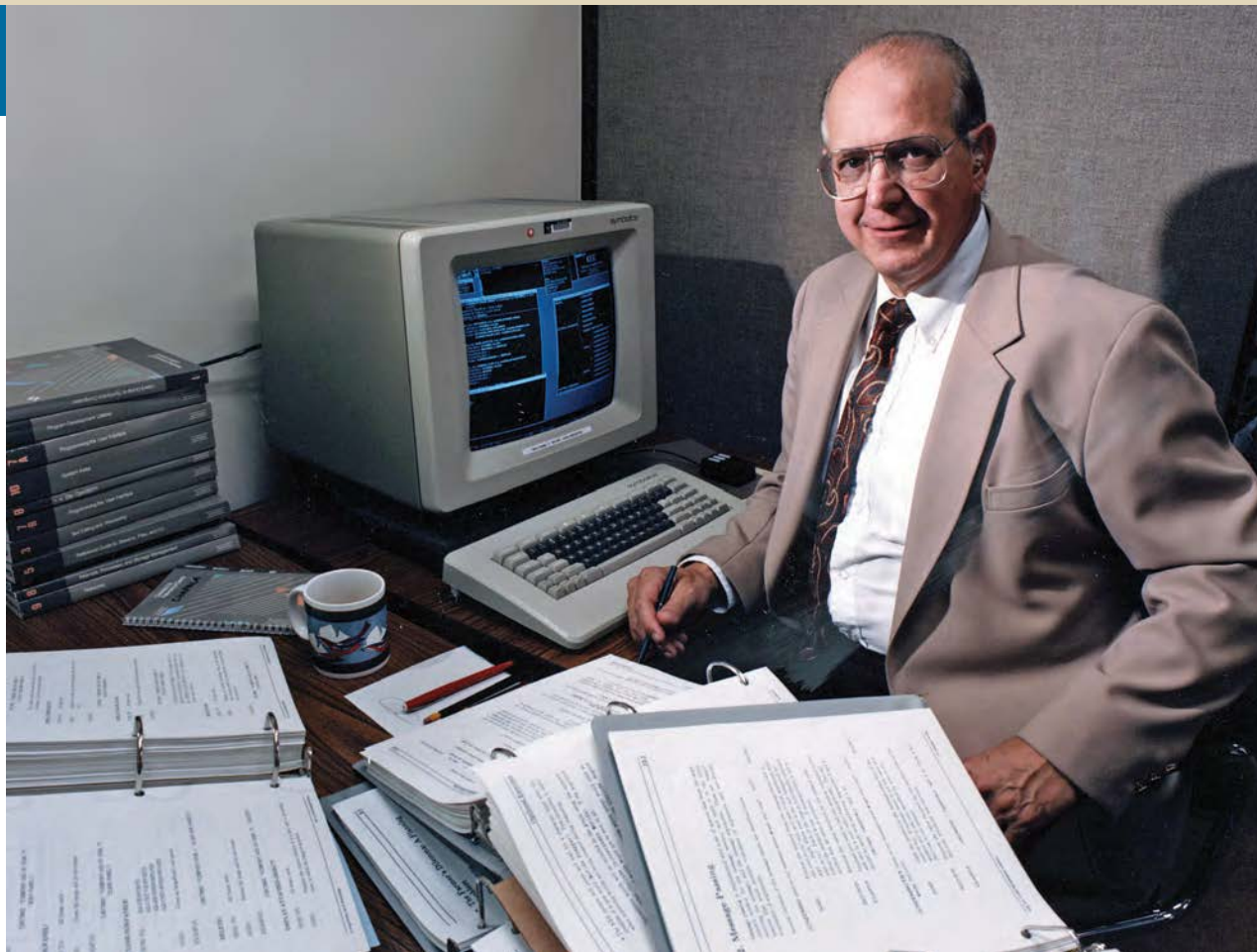
"I think (the scholarship is) the sort of thing Barry would really go for. He had some rough times financially growing up and as a student. For him people's value had little to do with how much money they had," said Wilson, whose daughter is UHD's Erin Mayer, Executive Director of Information Technology. "Providing an opportunity to people who might not otherwise have one would mean a lot to him, and UHD's Scholars Academy is one of the real treasures here in Houston.

"Barry enjoyed thinking and prodding others for their thoughts, and just about any subject could turn into an investigative adventure. His manner was light and his enthusiasm infectious. He was an inspiration. I've never met another with his talents and humanity."

Garrett received his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Texas, and he did post-doctoral work at the University of Illinois. He served as a visiting scientist at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, a visiting professor at the University of Wyoming and rose through the



Jack and Marion Garrett Wilson visited UHD recently to present scholarships to Scholars Academy students in honor of the late Barry Garrett, who had a distinguished career as a professor and as a scientist for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.



Barry Garrett

‘He had a way of helping everyone see beyond what they thought their potential was and realize for themselves their real potential.’

academic ranks to become a professor of chemistry at Florida State University.

“He walked the line between physicist and chemist, and he preferred the theoretical to the practical, disagreeing with researchers who started out with the intent to be practical,” Mayer said. “He thought it was better to go forward on a purely theoretical basis and great things would come from it.”

“He used to tell students he was mentoring, ‘Figure out where you can make your biggest contribution and find what you enjoy doing and it won’t seem like work,’” Wilson said.

Garrett was known for quickly assimilating information, applying it across disciplines and solving problems. “When the government made him an offer

he couldn’t refuse, he was able to work in a hands-on research capacity as well as be an advisor to leadership, a scout for new scientific opportunities, and a mentor,” Mayer said. “He had a way of helping everyone see beyond what they thought their potential was and realize for themselves their real potential.”

“If a scholarship can help a student who is aspiring to those heights, then I believe there is no better use for the funds I can now commit,” Wilson said. “Barry died over 14 years ago, but his qualities are ageless and still serve as ‘beacons’ to me, and his son and daughter, especially, and to many others. I would like that light to continue to shine and make the world a better place.”

UNIVERSITY

UHD's Urban Education Department received the **2011 STAR Award** from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for "Modeling Excellence in Collaborative Teacher Education," a partnership with UHD, Lone Star College-Kingwood and Lone Star College-CyFair. The Department also received a Guiding Star Award from the Houston Chapter of Parents for Public Schools.

Excelencia in Education, a national nonprofit that promotes Latino education with data-driven analysis, named UHD's **Scholars Academy** as one of 16 finalists in the country for Examples of Excelencia that increase degree completion among Latino students.

The **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board** awarded a grant to initiate a student success program, "Freshman Achievement Communities to Enhance Student Persistence and Success." The university was one of five schools out of 37 applicants to receive the funding.

UHD participated in **Houston 175** — Houston's 175th birthday — by hosting "Educating Houston: 1836-2011," an historical exhibit celebrating Houston's public education system.

Twelve UHD students received **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo** Scholarships for the 2011-2012 academic year.

25 students were recognized as **UHD Red Rose Scholars** and received scholarships for the 2011-2012 academic year.

PEOPLE

Ron Beebe, assistant professor of urban education, and alumna **Martina Ramos-Rey** ('99) were named to the National Association for Professional Development Schools' next team of editors for its flagship journal, "School-University Partnerships."

Jose Cantu, director of admissions, was elected president of the Houston Hispanic Forum. The forum works to improve Hispanic achievement in the greater Houston area through information, service, collaborations and promoting awareness of educational issues affecting Hispanics.

The U.S. Department of State named its creative writing workshop in Bitola, Macedonia the **Merrilee Cunningham** Creative Writing Camp in honor of the UHD associate professor's years of service in creating the camp.

UHD club team powerlifter **Linda Okoro** was featured on the cover of the February issue of Powerlifting USA Magazine. Okoro is a senior majoring in marketing. She also is completing an associate's degree in fashion merchandising at Houston Community College.

Khursheed Omer, professor of accounting, was named to the Fiesta Professorship in Accounting.

Adjunct professor **Ellen Orseck's** artwork was selected for New Texas Talent XVIII, an exhibition of emerging artists at Craighead Green Gallery in Dallas.

UHD students, **Ron Parker** and **Lisa Hatman**, will have essays published in the next edition of "Touchstone," a publication of the Texas State Historical Association.

Ruth Robbins, professor of computer information systems, was named to the Martel Professorship in Computer Information Services.

Adolfo Santos, associate professor and social sciences department chair, was named one of 50 faculty members and administrators in the American Council on Education's newest cohort of ACE Fellows, a program known for identifying senior administrators and future provosts and presidents for the country's universities.

Kurt Stanberry, professor of general business, was named as the holder of the PLM Endowed Chair.

Leigh Van Horn, associate professor of language and literacy, was nominated for the prestigious Thomas Ehrlich Award given by Campus Compact. This award recognizes an outstanding faculty member for community-based research, leadership and partnerships.

In the Department of Urban Education, College of Public Service, education faculty members **Leigh Van Horn**, associate professor, **Carol Bedard**, associate professor, and **Kim Pinkerton**, assistant professor, are co-editors of a state journal, *English in Texas*, recipient of an "honorable mention" from the National Council of Teachers of English.

PUBLICATIONS

Current Reviews for Academic Libraries named associate professor of psychology **Kristin Anderson's** book, *Benign Bigotry: The Psychology of Subtle Prejudice* as one of the Outstanding Academic Titles of 2010. Anderson's book relates myths like "feminists are man haters" and "gays flaunt their sexuality" to real events, showing how errors in individual thinking affect society at large.

The Legal Rights of the Convicted, by **Barbara Belbot** and **Craig Hemmins**. Published by LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Crime Victim Rights and Remedies, 2nd Edition by **Ashley Blackburn**, Peggy Tobolowsky, Mario Gaboury and Arrick Jackson. Published by Carolina Academic Press.

American Victimology, by **Traqina Emeka** and **Marilyn McShane**. Published by LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Criminological Theory, 6th Edition by **Marilyn McShane** and **Franklin P. Williams III**. Published by Prentice Hall.

Iranians in Texas: Migration, Politics, and Ethnic Identity, by **Mohsen Mobasher**. Published by University of Texas Press.

Loan Fraud and the Subprime Mortgage Crisis, by **Tomson Nguyen**. Published by LFB Scholarly.

Constructing Irish Nationalist Identity, by **Anne Kane**. Published by Palgrave Macmillan.

So What's Your Story? Discovering the Story in You, by **Hank Roubicek**. The book is about the theory and practice of storytelling, and incorporates student stories as well as excerpts from his radio show, "Story Time," on KPFT in Houston.

By: Diane Summers

OMAR REID

Finds success and balance in life

Ironically, Omar Reid ('93) never imagined himself as an "HR guy." He always believed his strength was in operations since he has an uncanny ability to streamline processes. During his employment with UPS, the global shipping provider, a colleague made an interesting observation about Reid and told UPS management, "He's good at operations and fixing things because he's good with people." UPS took advantage of this connection and moved Reid into human resources where the company could maximize Reid's ability to build efficiencies through people.

As Director of Human Resources for the City of Houston, **UHD alumnus Omar Reid** oversees 250 employees, the HR functions for more than 22,000 employees and a \$315 million budget.

This move surprised Reid and it changed his life.

"I didn't see the connection between HR and operations, but human resources is about people and processes. If you put people first, they can fix broken processes," he said. Reid's ability to build efficiencies has grown exponentially with his HR team at the City of Houston.

The city has already benefited in Reid's first 18 months on the job. Appointed by Mayor Annise Parker, Reid found the position of heading up the city's HR functions as one of opportunity and challenge. He began by consolidating the city-wide HR function from one that had previously been decentralized. The ratio of HR staff member to city employee was 1-to-38. Reid's efforts to centralize functions dramatically improved this to a ratio of 1-to-75.

Reid also hopes to make Houston a model for other cities across the nation to emulate, something that is already beginning to happen. He has been invited to travel to Atlanta to speak about the efficiencies that Houston has implemented, so other cities can work towards matching these positive changes Houston has achieved.

Persistence is Reid's mantra. Before joining the City of Houston he worked 26 years at UPS, starting as an entry-level employee who checked water and

oil levels for the brown UPS trucks. He began working the night shift as it allowed him to move into supervisory roles, attend classes at UHD during the day and spend time with his daughter. When asked about this non-stop schedule, Reid smiled and replied, "Sleep is overrated." His persistent attitude enabled him to earn his degree while working full time, earning his undergraduate degree in 11 years of continuous classes. After graduating from UHD, he waited only one year before returning to school for his advanced degree, an MBA at Texas Southern University.

His persistence and view of sleep as being "overrated" continues to benefit this busy man. He is pleased with his many accomplishments in all aspects of his life, including a successful marriage of 18 years, serving as a deacon for his parish, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, and traveling on the weekends with his wife and daughter to view colleges since she is currently a high school senior. One special moment Reid will be savoring this fall is the invitation to escort his daughter during her high school's homecoming football game, as she's been named to the homecoming court. Finding balance and success in so many aspects of his life is something Reid finds most rewarding of all.



Above: Reid in his downtown Houston office where he manages the HR functions for the City of Houston.



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“ I will be forever indebted to this school for the person it has shaped me into, the good people I’ve come in contact with, the professors and staff. I even met my wife here. I don’t think I’d have had the same outcome anywhere else and I’m grateful for the scholarship support that made it possible. ”

Jason Gay, '11
BBA, Supply Chain Management

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