



UHD Unveils New Gator

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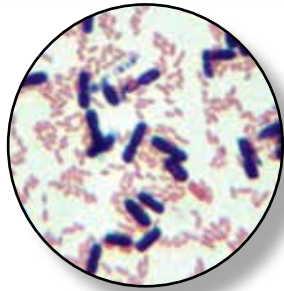
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One of the most rewarding aspects of the academic year for me as president is the recognition of our outstanding faculty with the annual UHD Faculty Awards. Many of our faculty members are experts in their fields and have received national and regional awards and appointments for their research and service on and off campus. I am always impressed with their efforts in and out the classroom, as well as their dedication to student engagement.

UHD faculty have a breadth and depth of experience that enables students to learn real-world principles from subject matter and industry experts. Their passion for research, service and creativity ensures their classrooms are exciting and rewarding places for our students to learn and succeed. With more than 600 faculty dedicated to student success, community engagement and scholarly excellence, UHD is uniquely equipped to provide high-quality educational opportunities to the Greater Houston area and beyond.

I am proud to acknowledge faculty, lecturers and adjuncts who are recognized for their work in the classroom. The UHD Faculty Awards offer five categories of excellence: Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Service, Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity, Outstanding Lecturer and Outstanding Adjunct.

Please join me in congratulating and recognizing these individuals for their outstanding contributions to our University and the students we serve.

Dr. William V. Flores, President
University of Houston-Downtown

Faculty



Excellence in Teaching

Jerry Johnson, Associate Professor, Natural Sciences

“My drive for excellence in teaching is motivated by three factors: my belief in the value of a strong liberal arts education, the recognition of the qualities and skill sets that students must acquire in order to be successful, and best practices in current pedagogical theory.”



Excellence in Teaching

Andrew Pavelich, Associate Professor, Social Sciences

“I love our students and the diversity and maturity they bring to the classroom. In the classroom, I try to think about what my students will remember in 10 years and I hope they take away the careful thought and inquisitiveness that philosophy is all about.”

Faculty



Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity

Kenneth Johnson
Associate Professor, Natural Sciences

“Research makes me a more effective teacher. It allows me to stay up-to-date with current ideas, and to share my enthusiasm for geology with my students. UHD is the perfect place for me to pursue my research interests and to teach what I learn.”



Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity

Chu Nguyen
Assistant Professor, Finance, Accounting and CIS

“I enjoy providing students with high-impact learning opportunities, such as joint research, which enables them to take what they gain in the classroom and apply it in real-world settings. These experiences benefit students long after graduation.”

Award Winners



Excellence in Scholarly/ Creative Activity

Ashley Blackburn, Associate Professor, Criminal Justice

"Our disciplines do not grow without scholarship. I don't feel that, as a scholar, one can grow if they are not actively participating in research. Therefore, having an active research agenda has been and will continue to be a significant part of my academic career."



Outstanding Lecturer

Phyllis Griffard
Natural Sciences

"I define learning as a change in the quality of one's experience of the world, and teaching as any activity that leads to that kind of meaningful learning. It's one thing to teach biology concepts that a student can parrot back perfectly, and another entirely for learners to see biology before their very eyes in their everyday lives."



Excellence in Service

Carolyn Ashe, Professor, Management, Marketing and Business Administration

"Extending beyond the classroom broadens my exposure to other audiences and encourages additional preparation that will at the same time benefit my students, colleagues and profession. My overall service philosophy is embedded within this fourfold framework: service to the University, to the student, to the profession, and to the community."



Outstanding Adjunct

Carrie Cutler
Urban Education

"As a mother of seven children, I have a vested interest in preparing Houston-area teachers to be the best they possibly can. Because I know my students will mirror my teaching methods, I model principles of child development and child-centered teaching practices in our UHD classroom. I love seeing students fully engaged in hands-on, minds-on learning."

Award Finalists



Excellence in Service

Susan Henney, Associate Professor, Social Sciences

"Service by faculty is what solves problems, generates new ideas, keeps the institutional wheels rolling, and provides balance to the bureaucracy. I am pleased to be a part of growing the UHD mission and improving the work and school experiences of students, faculty and staff through my service at UHD."



Outstanding Lecturer

Catherine Howard
English

"Everyone talks about UHD's remarkable diversity. What I like about it is that the students aren't just racially diverse - their geographic diversity, age diversity, and diversity of life experience make it so much easier to get them to learn from each other."



Excellence in Service

Jerry Johnson, Associate Professor, Natural Sciences

"As a faculty member and expert in my field, it is my professional duty to apply my knowledge, skill set, and efforts for the betterment of UHD and other people. I am passionate about my students, my scholarship and the ability to serve UHD in any manner I am able."



Outstanding Adjunct

Meghan Minard
Natural Sciences

"Over the course of the semester, it is very rewarding to see students develop an interest in biology and use the knowledge they gain to help solve everyday problems. If my students can see science in their day-to-day lives, I consider the semester a success!"

Learning from the Best

New M.A. in Non-Profit Management Offers Students a Front-Row Seat to Houston's Top Leaders and Philanthropists

By: Claire Caton

It is one thing to model leaders' successes from afar, and another entirely to sit at their feet and absorb their advice.

The new Master of Arts in non-profit management (NPM) at UHD offers students the rare opportunity to hear from top non-profit leaders and prominent philanthropists in an interactive format. At the heart of the program's 30 hours of core and elective coursework – offered entirely online for working professionals – are presentations by guest lecturers with unparalleled success and contributions to the Houston community.

Students view these lectures as live video streams and then have the opportunity to submit questions via Twitter and interact directly with the leaders on a variety of topics affecting the non-profit industry.

Brian Greene, president and CEO of the Houston Food Bank, and Robert Sanborn, Ed.D., president and CEO of CHILDREN AT RISK, serve on the advisory committee and as adjunct professors for the NPM program. Through their extensive connections in the industry, Greene and Sanborn invite other top non-profit leaders in Houston to participate as guest lecturers for the program.

Greene and Sanborn were among several non-profit and business executives who, along with faculty in UHD's College of Humanities and Social Sciences, helped to develop the curriculum for the NPM. In collaborating with industry leaders, faculty tailored courses to ensure that students graduate with the knowledge and skills most conducive for effective non-profit management.

“The NPM program fills a great need, in that it equips students to understand financial complexities and manage board issues, while also allowing students to learn from current leaders who share their experiences in the field.”

– Brian Greene,
President and CEO of the Houston
Food Bank. Shown here interviewing
Houston philanthropist, Laura Arnold,
for UHD's NPM program.



"I find that many leaders in the non-profit industry may be subject matter experts, but they lack the financial and management perspectives to effectively lead an organization," said Greene. "The NPM program fills a great need, in that it equips students to understand financial complexities and manage board issues, while also allowing students to learn from current leaders who share their experiences in the field."

Students in the program learn first-hand from engaged community and business leaders, including Scott McClelland, president of H-E-B Houston and the company's Central Market Division; Houston philanthropist Laura Arnold; Frazier Wilson, vice president of Shell Oil Company Foundation; Diane Cervenka, vice president of development and marketing at Catholic Charities; Emelda Douglas, senior vice president and chief development officer of Neighborhood Centers; Ben Samuels, CEO of Victory Packaging; and Les Cave, president and executive director of CHRISTUS Health Foundation.

The multidisciplinary program is based on two practical objectives: offering a highly experiential curriculum and creating a strong focus on teambuilding. Upon graduation, students will exhibit mastery of essential

skills of non-profit management, including strategic planning, entrepreneurial skills, fundraising, legal issues, program evaluation and assessment, budgeting, board development, leadership and ethics.

"Coming to UHD to teach NPM classes is like going back to my roots," said Sanborn, who teaches both leadership and fundraising courses in the program. "Like many of my students, I was the first in my family to attend college and I enjoy sharing with students how exhilarating education can be.

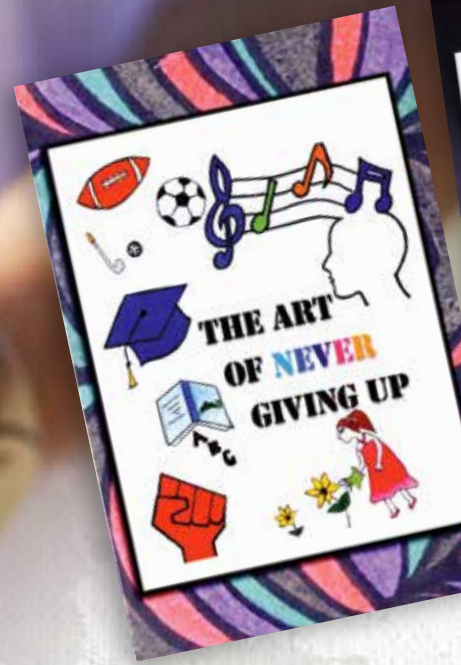
"I feel passionate about this program - the first of its kind in Texas - because I believe that it represents the future of engaging education. There is great potential for the program to benefit non-profit leaders nationally."

According to the Urban Institute, the growth rate for the nation's non-profit sector has surpassed the rate of both business and government sectors over the past decade. NPM graduates will be fully equipped to make an immediate impact on this high-demand industry. The program's strong faculty and curriculum, coupled with the invaluable guidance of Houston's most prominent non-profit executives, equal a major opportunity for graduates and for Houston's 12,000 non-profit organizations.



Robert Sanborn, Ed.D., president and CEO of CHILDREN AT RISK, interviews Tara Black, chief development officer of the Houston Area Women's Center.

Creativity behind BARS



Urban Education Students Work With Detention Center Juveniles

By: Mary Ann Cozza

More than 60,000 juveniles are sent to detention centers across the country each year. Ranging in age from 6 to 16, these youths are in need of more specialized attention than adults who are incarcerated, including educational support and instruction.

Two professors in the UHD Department of Urban Education have joined forces to provide an element of creative instruction to the youths housed in the Harris County Juvenile Detention Center (HCJDC), just a stone's throw from the UHD campus. Nearly 20 urban education students visited the HCJDC to lead the juveniles in a project of writing poems, personal narratives or short stories and drawing pictures that were collected and printed into five books.

"Our students visited the detention center twice for this

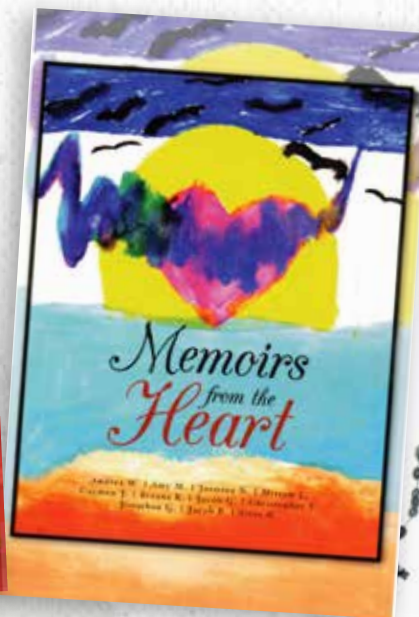
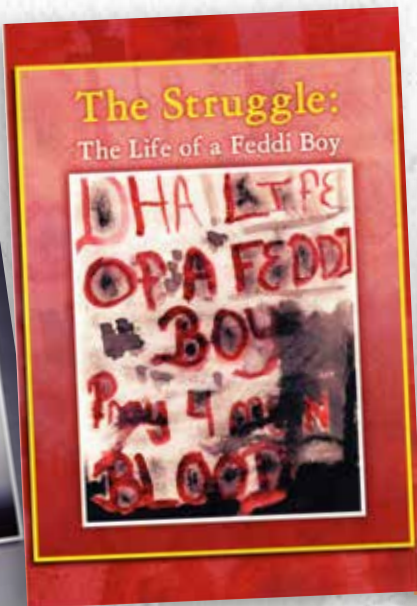
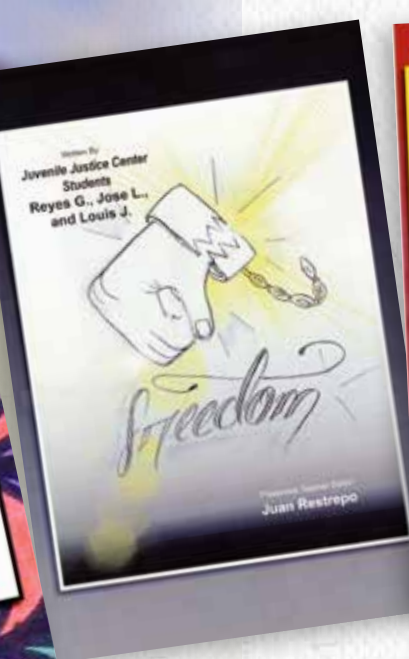
project," said Colin Dalton, assistant urban education professor. "The experience was very powerful for both the UHD students and the juveniles. Our future teachers felt great empathy for them and were shocked by how young many of them were."

The project, funded through a grant from state Rep. Sylvester Turner's Community Development Fund, administered by the Center for Public Service and Family Strengths was intended to provide pre-service teachers with experience in community engagement and dealing with "special populations."

According to Assistant Professor John Kelly, "We wanted our students to understand that their future classrooms might contain children who have disabilities, come



(Left:) Inside the Harris County Detention Center, (Right:) Exterior of the Harris County Detention Center
(Photo courtesy of Richard Ross)



from many countries and different socioeconomic backgrounds, and have various developmental issues. Through this project, the students were exposed to youths just like this and have developed the skills to better handle those situations.”

“[The project] gave me a deeper understanding of how to support students in the classroom and provided me with skills to do better when I become a teacher,” said urban education student Shelley Genovese. “This is an opportunity to change people’s lives and to make a difference in this world.”

At the beginning of the semester, the participating UHD students were required to pass a criminal background check at the local, state and federal level, including fingerprinting and photos. The center also provided the students with an orientation session before they were allowed to meet with the juveniles.

Dalton recalls walking into the center for the first time, seeing the concrete walls, thick glass and bleak atmosphere.

“The seemingly normal downtown building quickly reveals itself to be a jail after exiting the elevators on the detention center floor. The center is then divided between girls’ and boys’ sections,” he said. “The youths sit at group worktables all day, where they eat their meals and participate in school work through the Excel Academy Charter School.”

The project allowed the juveniles to work with professional quality art materials, including paints, drawing pencils and colored markers to express their

opinions and creativity. This was an added luxury for the youths as they are not usually permitted access to these types of materials for fear they will misuse them. According to Kelly, this experience might be the first time these individuals were listened to, felt important or received individualized attention.

“[One of the juveniles] looked at me in surprise and realized I was just like him. They want someone to relate to, not someone who talks down to them,” said Athena Chenevert, an urban education student. “The kids I worked with were not bad kids and were very well mannered. They want someone to care and give them attention.”

According to Dalton and Kelly, other UHD students had very similar feelings about the juveniles. All students recognized the youths’ willingness to learn and participate in the project.

The professors look forward to continuing this project, pending additional funding.

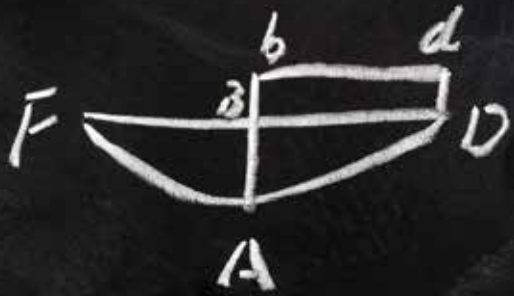
“We’ve already begun work on putting everything in place for the fall 2014 semester and hopefully every semester after that,” said Kelly.

“We need to write another grant,” Dalton explained. “But we’re excited to show the professionally published books to the juveniles in the detention center when we visit next.”

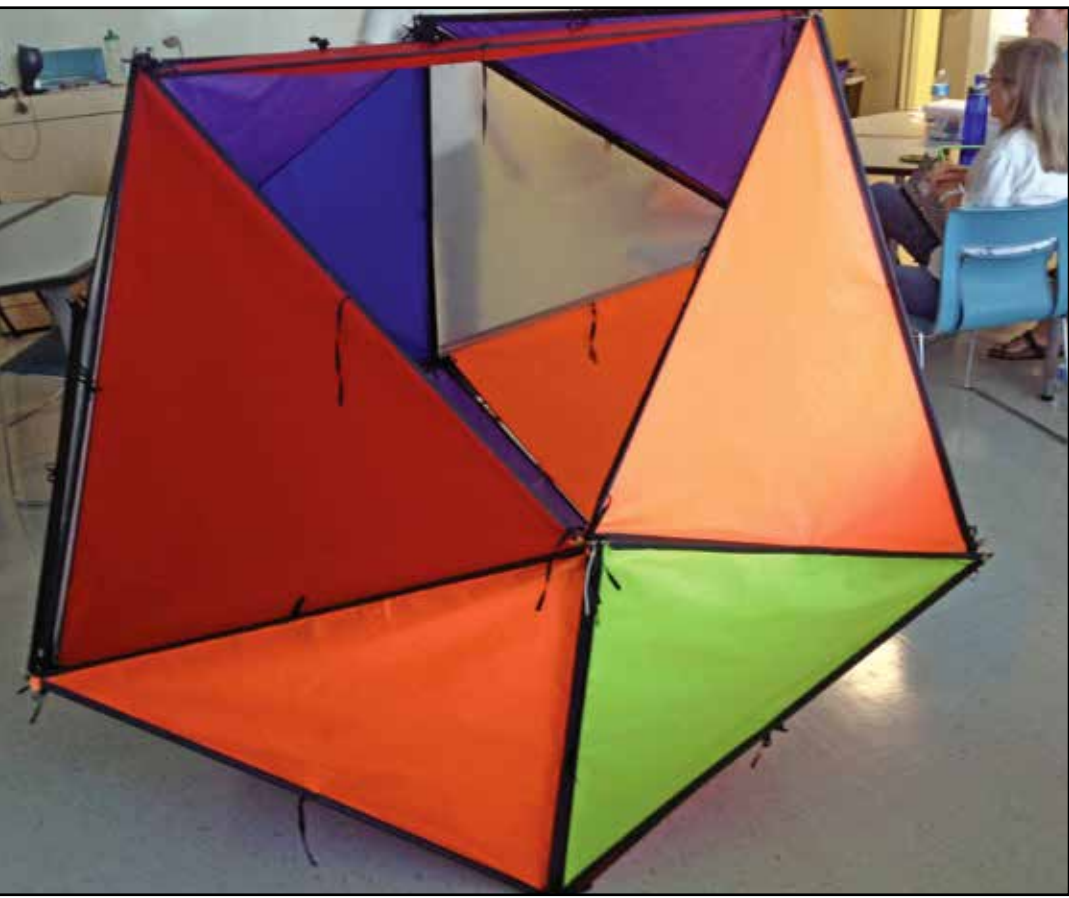
The books are available to purchase at Amazon.com under the names, “Memoirs from the Heart,” “The Art of Never Giving Up,” “Keep Faith, Stories and Letters,” “Freedom,” and “The Struggle: The Life of a Feddi Boy.” All funds generated from the sale of the books will be funneled back into the program.



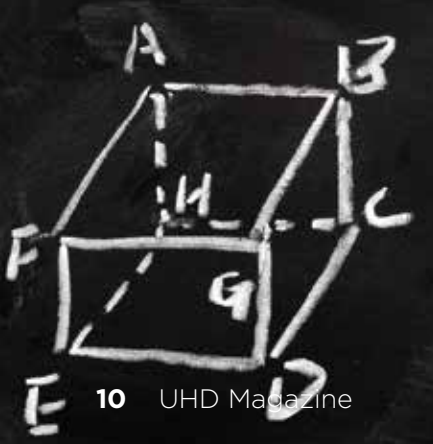
Urban education professors Colin Dalton (third from left) and John Kelly (right) took students to the Harris County Detention Center for a unique literacy project.



"I feel that I have learned more about what is best for my students in this program than any professional development that has been provided by my district."
-Program Participant



"I have learned how to address each type of learning style and this has helped more students gain knowledge of whatever subject I'm teaching."
-Program Participant



Teaching Teachers

UHD Program Develops Learning Strategies for Middle School Math Teachers

By: Mary Ann Cozza

Albert Einstein said, "The only source of knowledge is experience."

Today, professors at UHD are using this theory as a model for a leadership project that develops inquiry-based instructional strategies for middle school math teachers. The Teacher Quality Mathematics Leadership Project, a collaborative effort between the Department of Urban Education and Department of Mathematics and Statistics, is funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Teacher Quality grants program and is in its second year.

Under the direction of Jacqueline Sack, assistant urban education professor, and Tim Redl, associate math professor, 18 middle school teachers from Aldine, Alief and Houston Independent School Districts visited UHD for 10 four-hour class sessions during the summer. They studied director-provided resources, and experienced learning and teaching strategies to help them develop action plans for personal growth and classroom action research, with the goal of implementing these plans in their classrooms in the upcoming academic year.

"Inquiry-based learning is not having a teacher just talking in front of a classroom," Redl said. "For students to understand and learn math, they have to do math. If you let students play with the problem and ask interesting questions, they will learn through interaction."

Sack, who has years of experience teaching math in middle and high school grades, knows that for teachers to grasp the inquiry-based learning strategies, they must first be exposed to it as learners themselves.

"During the summer classes, our participants were able to learn aspects of geometry, measurements, and numeracy strategies for supporting struggling students and other concepts as inquiry-based learners," she said. "We then encouraged them to include these principles in their own teaching."

During one of the first class sessions, Redl and Sack provided the teachers with large triangles that can be connected together to form 3D figures and told them to "build something interesting and beautiful."

"We then discussed the shapes that were created, as they relate to math," Redl said. "It was fun and interactive and several teachers planned to take the activity back to their own classes."

After the summer classes were complete, for which teachers earned graduate course credit, directors Redl and Sack hosted evening progress meetings at UHD and visited the teachers' classrooms in order to observe the inquiry-based learning strategies being put into practice.

"The program has been a great success," said Sack. "Our teachers have really grown professionally and I have seen them do amazing things with what they learned."

Although this project was funded only until the end of spring 2014, the professors are actively seeking funding for a larger grant to provide this type of support to math teachers in the Greater Houston region.



Tim Redl, associate math professor, and Jacqueline Sack, assistant urban education professor.

"This class has inspired and invigorated me to continue my quest to help my students be more successful. I'm excited to continue this class and hope to bring more energy into my teaching."

-Program Participant



Turning
Passion
into **ACTION**



UHD Champion's Gift Creates Valuable Career Center

By: Claire Caton

While many executives would agree that a specialized career center for business students is an invaluable tool – both for students and industry – few take the next step and make it happen. Fred de Roode, chairman and CEO of PPC Loan, is among that elite group.

As a successful banking executive and long-standing champion of UHD's College of Business, de Roode understands the importance of effectively preparing students for today's competitive marketplace. To assist the University in this mission, he recently donated funds to create a new career center in the College and help provide support for its operation.

"The College of Business is establishing a strategy that places career development at the center of what we do," said Michael Fields, dean of the College of Business. "The invaluable support of Fred de Roode will enable us to provide tailored, hands-on career guidance and training to business students during and beyond their educational journey at UHD."

De Roode's long commitment to UHD is substantial. He is a cofounder and serves on the steering committee for the Center for Insurance and Risk Management (IRM) in the College of Business, and is a generous donor of this center, as well as the College's Center for Entrepreneurship. His wife, Diane, is a former employee of UHD, and his son, David, is an alumnus of the University.

When his son graduated and later became chief operating officer of a publicly traded insurance brokerage, he realized the industry's great need for new, qualified professionals. "There is no training ground in Houston that prepares new graduates for the competitive and lucrative insurance industry," said de Roode. "My son took it upon himself to approach Don Bates, former dean of the College of Business, to create the IRM program and, together with my financial support and the support of other leaders from the Houston insurance and risk management community, we raised north of \$500,000 to start the IRM program."

Through his involvement with the IRM program, de Roode realized what could happen in a short amount of time at UHD. "I love this program and what it accomplishes for students," he said. "But we can't stop at the university level. We must ensure that these well-trained students have rewarding, top-notch jobs



following graduation. I believe this is a responsibility of universities and there must be some accountability at the university level for ensuring students' success in their chosen industries."

De Roode has a passion for helping individuals succeed, become responsible citizens and accountable to themselves and their companies. "When I speak to students at UHD, I always reinforce that they are their own brand and they must invest in themselves to project the best image to future employers. I believe that the new career center in the College of Business will provide the foundation and training these students need to develop their best 'brand' and, therefore, earn the best jobs following graduation. This not only benefits the students, but the industries in need of competent, skilled employees."

Among other services, the career center will host workshops to assist students in developing effective resumes and cover letters, advise students on how to dress and interview to make the best impressions, and link students with companies in need of their specific skill sets and talents.

Career development counselors will begin working with students early to help them select appropriate majors for their individual interests and aptitudes. Carmen Cuevas, assistant dean of the College of Business, insists that students need career guidance and training before their last semester.

"Along with learning the theory and practicum of their programs, students need to know the art of selling and branding themselves to industries early in their business education," she said. "Many business students already have good paying jobs, but it is important for them to learn how to get the best job, or the best promotion they've long deserved. Training in the art of networking, career skill-building, communication and proper use of social media as soon as they decide on a business career is paramount."

With de Roode's significant contribution for the career center, the pathway between the classroom and the boardroom will be much more seamless for countless undergraduate and graduate students in the College of Business.

(Left and Right): Michael Fields (left), dean of UHD's College of Business, with Fred de Roode, chairman and CEO of PPC Loan, at campus events.

REDEFINING



(Above): Criminal justice students congregate outside the Harris County Jail.

By: Claire Caton

REHAB

Innovative Jail Reentry Program Revolutionary for Inmates and Criminal Justice Students Advocating on their Behalf



(Top): UHD criminal justice students work with Katherine Griffin-Grinan (left) and Jennifer Herring with HCSO Reentry Services.

(Bottom): UHD Assistant Professor Judith Harris (left), joins Jennifer Herring (center) and Katherine Griffin-Grinan at the Harris County Jail.

An enterprising group of students in Judith Harris' criminal justice senior seminar course is helping to set jail inmates back on their feet – and setting a national precedent in the process.

In the first jail program of its kind in the nation, UHD criminal justice students are working closely with licensed social work professionals and counselors in the Harris County Jail to enact a rehabilitation program for inmates as soon as they enter the criminal justice system. Unlike other national jails that provide rehabilitative services only upon reentry to the community, this program – offered as part of the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Reentry Services – extends much needed training throughout inmates' incarceration.

HCSO Social Worker Jennifer Herring serves as program manager and is heavily involved in the day-to-day coordination of non-profit support and student supervision. She notes that the program represents a paradigm shift for criminal rehabilitation.

The program's objective is to use evidence-based practical approaches to meet inmates – referred to by Herring as "clients" – exactly where they are and determine their needs based on what they identify as barriers in their lives. She insists that a one-size-fits-all method is inadequate to provide her clients with the specialized rehabilitation they need.

Getting clients "moving"

"My goal is to quickly determine who is moving, and for those who are not, what it will take to inspire them to move," said Herring. "By 'moving,' I mean those who are fulfilling their life purpose. One of the first questions I ask my clients is, 'What is keeping you from fulfilling your goals and lifelong dreams?'"

She insists that her clients need well-trained professionals and upper-level criminal justice students who understand the unique jail population. According to Herring, other jails nationwide utilize paraprofessionals, such as church volunteers, who are well-intentioned, but ill-equipped to effectively get inmates "moving."

She notes that many of the inmates are depressed and feel unable to rise above their current situations. Herring disagrees with this notion and embodies the opinion of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who said, "Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds."

That is exactly where Harris, UHD assistant professor of criminal justice, and her senior seminar students fit into the program. The students undertake rigorous training prior to working with the inmates to ensure they are fully prepared for the experience.

Once trained, Harris' upperclassmen jump directly into the program, working alongside social workers and clergymen in the day-to-day rehabilitation of their clients. Rather than sitting in court and observing the criminal justice system from the sidelines, these students are assigned clients and regularly advocate to Harris County judges on their clients' behalf, working in conjunction with court-appointed attorneys. They also provide case management services as part of the pilot program, develop relationships of trust with their clients and encourage their daily progress through the program.

A foundation of trust

“This program is built entirely on the foundation of trust,” said Harris. “It takes an immense amount of trust in and among the students themselves, because they are afforded a tremendous amount of responsibility. Since my students joined the program last August, they’ve proven that the more responsibility we give them, the more they grow and benefit from the experience.”

At the beginning of the semester, Harris and Herring divide the senior seminar students into four primary teams focused on research, technology, the courts and the creation of a resource directory for clients. Throughout their tenure with the program, these students devote countless hours and energy to enhance opportunities for their clients to succeed and thrive.

The research team studies programs and policies that are working in jails across the nation and then implements these best practices within HCSO Reentry Services. The technology team works to develop and update a website for the program, which Harris hopes other jails will replicate, that includes testimonials of former inmates who found success upon reentry to the community. The courts team builds a directory of the criminal court system to identify judges, staff and

key personnel, and also captures information on the processes of the court. Students charged with developing the resource directory create a product that connects inmates to non-profit organizations and professionals to assist them and their families during and after incarceration.

“At its core, this program is about helping inmates become empowered, and therefore, make better choices,” said Herring. “In accomplishing this main goal, we help make our streets safer, reduce the rates of recidivism and help people find their purpose. Our holistic approach involves clients’ minds, bodies and spirits, which is essential to their rehabilitation and helps to slow the revolving door that has become our nation’s jail system.”

A “monumental” opportunity for inmates and students

Herring’s clients approach her on a regular basis to say, “Thank you for my life. I owe everything to you.” She is quick, however, to share credit with the entire HCSO Reentry Services team - including UHD students - for its contributions.

Both Herring and Harris laud the program for its revolutionary influence on clients and its life-changing impact on students.



“The program did wonders for me and gave me so much confidence. It brought everything from my four years of college to life.”

— Chance Lanyon, a recent UHD criminal justice graduate and case manager for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

“Students’ key mission in this program is to get their clients moving in a positive direction,” said Harris, “but it is astounding to watch the students’ monumental movement as they generously give to and inspire their clients. It’s impossible to participate in this program and not change. This is what life is all about — connecting to your career and life-purpose and tapping into your innate skills and passions.”

Chance Lanyon, a recent UHD criminal justice graduate and case manager for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, agrees. “When I began Dr. Harris’ senior seminar course, I didn’t know what I wanted to do,” she said. “Now I can’t see myself doing anything else. The program did wonders for me and gave me so much confidence. It brought everything from my four years of college to life.”

One of Lanyon’s favorite roles in the program was escorting her clients outside the jail upon their discharge to the community. “Seeing joy and relief in their eyes following their incarceration was my biggest reward,” she said. “So many of my clients would then turn to me with tears on their faces, hug me and tell me that they loved me. I know that I made a real difference in their lives — and, without a doubt, they did the same for me.”



Houston PREP Celebrates 25 Years of Training Tomorrow's Scientists

By: Claire Caton

For a quarter of a century, Houston PREP (Pre-Freshman Enrichment Program) at UHD has provided young students with an invaluable gift — an investment in themselves and their futures.

And this investment has paid dividends for the 4,000 middle and high school students who have graduated from the program, enrolled in universities and become leaders in valuable STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. Since its inception in 1989, Houston PREP has produced a pipeline of highly qualified incoming freshmen with the skills and passion to chart their own academic and professional success in a variety of high-paying and rewarding STEM careers.

Houston PREP is designed to encourage young students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue technically challenging majors and jobs, which helps maintain the nation's leadership in research and development. The summer enrichment program pairs classroom learning with exciting field trips to the Texas Medical Center, NASA and national museums to incorporate high-impact practices with real-world experiences in high-tech industries.

Each year, Houston PREP concludes its summer training with "Engineering Day" at UHD, which brings together key corporate sponsors, student participants and professors from the College of Sciences and Technology (CST). At this year's 16th annual Engineering Day, nearly 300 students gathered to share their own engineering projects and compete in races of their balsawood mousetrap cars.

Hosted by CST, Houston PREP pairs adolescent students with leading college professors, scientists, engineers, mathematicians and premier high school teachers, who transform STEM subjects from intimidating, difficult classes into vibrant and exciting new career possibilities.

"The bottom line is that Houston PREP changes lives," said Sangeeta Gad, director of Houston PREP at UHD. "The program ignites young students' passion and interest in scientific discoveries, engineering achievements and the great potential mathematics can bring. In addition to supplying students with a foundational knowledge base, the program gives them fun opportunities to apply that knowledge with their peers, which increases their confidence and desire to become STEM leaders."

Gad knows firsthand the benefits of this process and how investing in young students, encouraging their success and following their progress through the program's four-year trajectory can change the course of their lives.



“Houston PREP is especially geared for minorities and female students who are underrepresented in STEM fields and may lack the confidence to pursue challenging science and technology courses,” said Gad. “The program’s six-week summer session helps to break down stereotypes, shows students that they can succeed and provides them with a glimpse of the potential they’ve had all along.”

Gad, herself, is a hallmark of the program, with 21 years of service to Houston PREP students and their families. Also a lecturer of mathematics and statistics, Gad pours her own passion for the field into her commitment to the program’s young students.

She is quick to extol the instrumental support of Houston PREP’s corporate, school district and individual sponsors who form the backbone of the successful program. Recent financial contributors include Schlumberger, The Powell Foundation, the KBR Foundation and CenterPoint Energy. School districts Alief, Galena Park, Sheldon and Spring Branch provide transportation to students and teachers to the UHD campus. Technology for All also lent 20 laptops for Houston PREP students to use in their research and classroom studies over the past year.

While Houston PREP’s impressive statistics stand for themselves, Diana Leal, a former student participant, shines a light on the true value of the program. She entered Houston PREP as an eighth-grade student and completed four years of the program before enrolling at UHD as a microbiology major.

Leal received the Academic Excellence Award in microbiology from CST and was a two-time winner of UHD’s signature Red Rose Scholarship. At her commencement ceremony in 2005, Leal gave the student address and credited Houston PREP as a vital stepping stone in her life. Following her tenure at UHD, she graduated from UT Southwestern Medical School’s physician assistant graduate program and now practices in the field in Fort Worth, Texas.



Diana Leal,
former student participant
in Houston PREP

“Houston PREP was absolutely foundational for me at a time when I really needed its support to pursue and excel in college,” said Leal. “Because neither of my parents attended college, I didn’t know what to expect or the importance of hard work – even as a middle school student – in my lifelong dream to work in the medical field. I am so grateful for the doors Houston PREP opened to me and the confidence it gave me to pursue the life I’d always imagined for myself.”



(Left): Lisa Morano, Ph.D. (right), chair of UHD’s Department of Natural Sciences, leads Houston PREP students in a science experiment on campus.

(Right): Houston PREP students work in the lab during UHD’s “Engineering Day.”

New Center for Critical Race Studies Empowers Students to Enact Social Change

By: Claire Caton

American philosopher Cornel West said, “A fully functional, multiracial society cannot be achieved without a sense of history and open, honest dialogue.”

Upon this basic foundation, UHD recently established its new Center for Critical Race Studies, housed in the College of Humanities and Social

generations of leaders who reflect the diversity of our nation in such fields as non-profit management, education, business and law,” said DoVeanna Fulton, Ph.D., dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at UHD. “Through the CCRS, we aim to transform students’ thinking about human equality and equip them with the passion and skills to eradicate social inequalities working toward lasting social justice.”



Dean DoVeanna Fulton, Ph.D. (left) appears as a guest on KRIV-TV’s “The Black Voice” to discuss UHD’s new Center for Critical Race Studies.

Sciences, to educate students on modern, critical race issues and empower them to take action to create a more just society.

“It’s one thing to teach students about the history of race in our society, and another entirely to build on that knowledge to produce future

Rooted in interdisciplinary scholarship and social practices that attend to race, difference, culture and power, the Center will expand and make a unique contribution to foundational work begun at UCLA School of Law’s Critical Race Studies Center. As an intellectual enterprise, critical race studies

acknowledges the intersections of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and age as categories of difference that are systemically used to perpetuate injustices.

UHD’s CCRS will work to both increase students’ and citizens’ knowledge of pressing racial concerns, while simultaneously heightening their understanding and capacity to respect the

breadth of human difference.

“A core tenet of the Center is that knowledge is not solely produced in the institution, that knowledge production happens in communities,” said Fulton. “Therefore, one of the goals of CCRS is to bridge the divide between educational institutions and communities to create useful knowledge and approaches that address critical social justice concerns.”

UHD officially inaugurated the CCRS by hosting its first scholar-in-residence, Brittney Cooper, Ph.D., an internationally recognized expert on the African-American culture and assistant professor of women’s and gender studies and Africana studies at Rutgers University. Students, faculty and community members attended her presentation entitled, “When Blackness was in Vogue: Intersectionality and Post-Racial Politics.” The event drew a wide audience from the Greater Houston area and increased recognition of UHD as an institution committed to diversity, social justice and progress.

“From the moment I arrived at UHD,” said Fulton, “I envisioned this institution as the natural and unquestioned center of intellectual interrogation of race matters. Our mission and student body demographic demand that we address these issues in a way that engages our academic and local communities. The educational access and experience that UHD provides has a very real impact on the future of our students. CCRS increases UHD’s capacity to transform lives.”





(From left to right): UHD alumna and current Delphian Scholar Kristina Grant served as the December 2013 student commencement speaker at Minute Maid Park in front of thousands of attendees, including Delphian members Gail Burns, Ann Herbage, Abbey Brewer, and her mother, Wanda Grant (front).

Delphian Mentors Grant Graduation Dreams

Non-Profit Provides Essential Scholarships and Support for UHD Students

By: Claire Caton

In a long-term race to win a coveted prize, even the most competent and well-trained runners sometimes need a helpful boost to cross the finish line. The multiyear journey toward a prized college degree is no different.

Since 1982, the Houston Assembly of Delphian Chapters — a non-profit organization dedicated to intellectual enrichment, social enhancement and philanthropic endeavors — has forever changed the lives of numerous undergraduate Gators and the UHD community through individual scholarships and grants to University departments.

The organization seeks female students with academic success, good character and financial need to nurture and support to graduation and beyond. Delphians keep in touch with their former scholars long after commencement ceremonies to follow their success and help ensure their evolution into happy, contributing members of society.

“Mentoring is extremely important to us,” said Gail Burns, scholarship chairman of the Houston Assembly of Delphian Chapters. “Delphians are different in that we develop close relationships with our scholars, work to anticipate their academic and personal needs, and collaborate with the University and outside sources to overcome barriers to students’ success.”

Each Delphian Scholar meets twice a year with a panel of Delphian leaders to provide an update on their academic progress, as well as any current needs or challenges. Students selected as Delphian Scholars are

sophomores or above and receive \$2,000 a semester — or \$4,000 a year — for up to eight semesters, totaling \$16,000, or graduation, whichever comes first.

Seniors Stefani Rodriguez and Brittany Goff — along with alumna Kristina Grant, who graduated in December and served as the student body commencement speaker — are UHD’s 2013-2014 Delphian Scholars.

Rodriguez recently noted, “I could not have achieved my dream of a college degree without the great assistance of the Delphians. From much-needed scholarship funds to help with challenging courses and even a shoulder to cry on, the Delphians became my cheerleaders, along with my parents and teachers.”

Since 2007, the organization has provided student scholarships and departmental grants to the University for purposes such as updating labs and creating study spaces on campus.

The Houston Assembly of Delphian Chapters awarded its first scholarship to a University of Houston (UH) student in 1930. Since that time, the Delphians have provided more than \$1.5 million for students in more than 500 scholarships and other gifts to the UH and UHD communities.



Stefani Rodriguez and Brittany Goff, 2013-2014 Delphian Scholars

“Our Delphian Scholars are winners who just need a little help to reach their full potential,” said Burns. “It is a joy for us to get to know these students, provide key help that they need and eventually see them blossom into young women who will then impact our communities and city.”

With this support in their corners, Delphian Scholars are sure to become the next generation of mentors to future UHD undergraduates and tomorrow’s philanthropic leaders.



Microbes in the Classroom

A Collaboration to Improve Elementary Science Education

By: Mary Ann Cozza



Collaboration is an important aspect of education and can be the key to successful endeavors. This was the case with a unique service learning project that combined resources and brain power of students in the

Departments of Urban Education and Natural Sciences.

During the spring and fall 2013 semesters, students in General Microbiology 2305 joined forces with pre-service teachers to assist in the planning and development of science investigations for pre-k to fifth grade classes at local elementary schools.

The project began when two professors, Poonam Gulati, Ph.D., associate microbiology professor, and Maria Bhattacharjee, Ed.D., associate urban education professor, met on a UHD campus bus and began talking about service learning and high-impact practices.

"Service learning is so important. If we can introduce our students to

the concept of community engagement early in their lives, hopefully they will continue similar work after leaving UHD," said Gulati.

Bhattacharjee spoke to Gulati about her urban education course, which is field based in local elementary schools. She knew her students were having difficulty with the methodology and content of their science instruction.

"We wanted the children to have a strong base in math and science, but our UHD students needed more content knowledge before they could feel comfortable teaching the material in classrooms," she said.

To remedy this, the two professors developed a model that would allow Gulati's microbiology students to develop science experiments and teach them to the urban education students. The classes, of nearly 70 students, worked in groups with team leaders who served as liaisons with the professors and managed the logistics of assignments.

The benefits for both groups of UHD students were evident.



UHD faculty, Poonam Gulati, Ph.D., (left) and Maria Bhattacharjee, Ed.D., (far right), partnered to improve science education in local elementary schools.

"Going into the classroom used to be scary for some of the urban education students," Bhattacharjee said. "But with the help of the microbiology students, they now feel more confident teaching science to the children."

"We had to learn the material [more thoroughly] than we normally would because we had to teach it," said one student. While the urban education students gained confidence, microbiology students improved their own understanding of the material learned in Gulati's classroom.

And to ensure the children enjoyed participating in the project, the science investigations developed by the microbiology students had to be fun! They included composting, planting, growing bacteria on Petri dishes, measuring the effectiveness of hand sanitizers, comparing normal versus bottled water and more.

"These were easy experiments, but each was relevant to everyday life," Gulati explained. "The children were most excited to see the microbes, which grew on ager plates after swabbing locations around their schools or their bodies."



Students from Crockett Elementary learned about the preparation of composting soil (left and right) and swabbed vegetables in order to grow microbes in petri dishes (center).

Bhattacharjee added, “The children did a great job with the investigations. They’re natural researchers, with an innate sense of curiosity. And many of our projects can have a real impact on their lives, especially when they take the information back to their families.”

“One of the children told us that she asked her parents if she could compost at home,” noted one microbiology student.

The enthusiasm shown by the students is a nice benefit of the project, explained Gulati, as there are fewer students entering the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields in college, especially among minorities. This could be related to the lack of confidence many teachers have in those subjects. This project can combat that issue by providing children with an interactive introduction to science at an early age and increasing the science knowledge base of those elementary teachers.

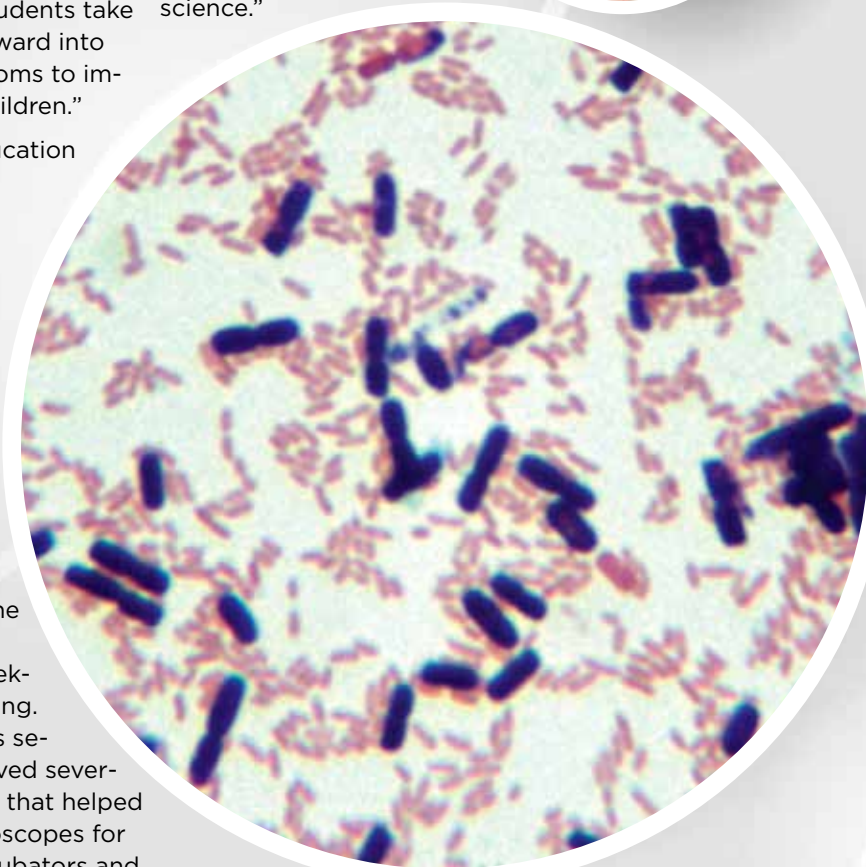
“This project has

far reaching consequences,” Gulati said. “We worked with 10 teachers in the Houston Independent School District each semester and every classroom had approximately 22 children. We hope that the urban education students take this knowledge forward into their future classrooms to impact their future children.”

Both the urban education and microbiology students have presented this project at various meetings and conferences, including the Student Research Conference and High-Impact Practices Showcase at UHD.

The professors hope to continue the project in fall 2014, though they are seeking additional funding. During the previous semesters, they received several grants from UHD that helped them acquire microscopes for the classrooms, incubators and other supplies.

“It has been a dream working with Dr. Gulati and her students,” Bhattacharjee said. “It’s the perfect partnership of education and science.”



the Community

By: Mary Ann Cozza

UHD Faculty in

Viola Garcia



Department of Urban Education Chair Viola Garcia is very involved in local, state and national education associations and boards. Currently, she serves as the immediate past president for the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and on the board of directors of the National School Boards Association (NSBA).

Since 1992, Garcia has served on the Aldine ISD board of trustees as president, vice-president, secretary and assistant secretary. Garcia was elected to the TASB board of directors in 2001 and has since chaired the Member Services, Bylaws and Resolutions, Planning and Development, and Nominations Committees and acted as vice-chair of the Legislative Committee. She also is a life member of PTA, served as the education liaison for the Greater Inwood Super Neighborhood Council, and is active in the Mexican American School Board Members Association, having served that group as president.

Kurt Stanberry

In addition to being a professor in the Department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration, Kurt Stanberry also is an attorney and a trustee on the Montgomery ISD School Board (MISD). He has served on the board for 15 years and currently is in his fifth term of office. He previously served as board president from 2007-2011.

“Since I have worked in higher education as a professor for 38 years, 20 of those at UHD, I feel that my involvement in K-12 public education has allowed me to give something back to the educational system of Texas,” he said.

During his tenure on the board, Stanberry has helped MISD accomplish a wide variety of goals, including plans for multiple new facilities in a district that has almost tripled in size, significant expansion of the dual credit and AP programs, and plans for the expansion of the high school technology system, including a laptop initiative.



Gary Stading



Gary Stading, associate dean of the College of Business Graduate Studies, was selected by industry transportation leaders in Houston to chair the 2014 National Transportation Week (NTW) in May. NTW is a week set aside through presidential proclamation to honor and commemorate the efforts of the transportation industry.

In Houston, several transportation organizations, including Transportation Club of Houston, International Transportation Management Association, Houston Transportation Professionals Association and many more, come together to discuss major economic and political issues affecting their industries, to promote greater awareness, and to acknowledge the accomplishments and contributions of the industry.

“I believe that being asked to chair NTW is indicative of UHD’s growing role of supply chain management education in the Houston transportation community,” he said. “I am proud to represent UHD in this capacity and am honored and humbled to have been asked by industry executives to lead this project on behalf of the transportation community.”



UH-Downtown
Southbound Red Line

UH-Downtown
Northbound Red Line

Carlos Lacayo, UHD employee, stands near the METRO light rail stop at UH.

METRO Map UHD Employee Creates Interactive Tool to Simplify Commuting

By: Mary Ann Cozza

For one UHD employee, simply wishing the Houston transit system was easier to navigate wasn't enough he took matters into his own hands by developing an interactive map for commuters.

Carlos Lacayo, web technical support specialist for the College of Public Service, was raised in San Francisco and grew up taking public transportation across the bay area. When he moved to Houston, he found the network of buses and limited light rail line inefficient and hard to navigate. Instead of complaining, Lacayo decided to take action along with Dr. Noel Bezette-Flores.

In June 2012, Lacayo attended the METRO Transit Academy, a transit education program for emerging community leaders created to foster partnership with the community and develop advocacy in the Houston region.

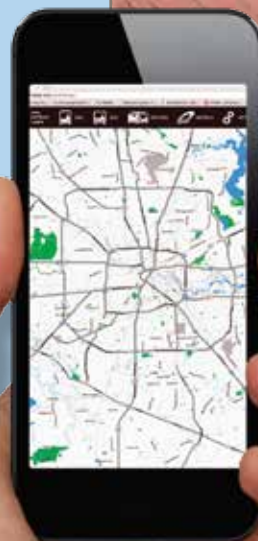
Each person in the Academy was tasked with developing a transit solution by the end of the program. Lacayo was inspired to develop an interactive transit map that was easy to use and provided more information than the current map, which often crashed and was hard to read. Lacayo presented his project before the METRO board, CEO, and other officials and was offered a contract to develop his idea into an actual product.

"The group loved my idea and they wanted to invest in it," he said. "This was a huge project, but I really enjoyed working on it."

Lacayo was able to work on the project at METRO on Thursdays and Fridays, on loan from UHD. As such, the intellectual property rights belong to the University. But Lacayo was the designer and builder of the map and looks forward to the future of his project.

"This map provides the big picture of the whole system, like parking availability and real-time HOV information," he said. "Our next phase will include real-time bus arrivals, trace bus routes and provide alternate routes."

The map can be viewed on a computer, any mobile device, as well as tablets, at www.ridemetroapp.org/systemmap.



Around UHD

UHD Community Votes for New Gator

UHD is excited to debut the new logo for Ed-U-Gator, the University's mascot!

This spring, faculty, staff, students and alumni were asked to vote on a new Gator logo, which will become the first trademarked mascot logo for UHD.

The winning image was unveiled at Culture on the Bayou April 9 with a spirited pep rally!



President Grants New Award for Community Engagement

UHD President Bill Flores recently granted three faculty and staff leaders with the University's inaugural President's Community Engagement Award for their outstanding service beyond the classroom and campus.

Faculty award winners include Maria Bhattacharjee, associate professor of urban education, for her work pairing science and urban education majors with elementary students to introduce exciting science fields, in addition to her support of Crockett Elementary; and Judith Harris, assistant professor of criminal justice, for her senior seminar course that pairs students as case managers with jail inmates in a novel reentry program.

Flores recognized Paulette Purdy, director of Administration and Operations in the College of Public Service, as the staff award winner for her efforts to organize events and donation drives for the House of Tiny Treasures – an early childhood development center serving homeless children and families.

Flores initiated the President's Community Engagement Award based on recommendations from the University's Service Learning and Community Engagement Committee through The Center for Public Service and Family Strengths.

"This award reflects UHD's strong commitment to community engagement," said Flores. "As our mission states, UHD 'engages with the community to address the needs and advance the development of the region.' In supporting our community, we set the example of volunteerism and service for our students and help to instill this important priority in our city's future leaders."

Alumni Reconnected with UHD and Learned About Wine During Downtown Social Series Event

Alumni enjoyed camaraderie and wine education during the last Downtown Social Series event. Over 100 alumni gathered on campus to hear Lisa Morano, Ph.D., Department of Natural Sciences chair and wine researcher, speak about the history, varieties and evaluation of wine.

Morano encouraged attendees to sample the nine wine varieties available to determine characteristics including aroma, flavor, dryness and more.

Attendees agreed that the presentation was educational, but also fun and engaging. Contact Jaha Williams, director of alumni relations, at williamsjah@uhd.edu for news and information on upcoming alumni events.



Faculty/Staff Annual Giving Campaign Raises Funds for Student Scholarships and Programs

The 2014 UHD Faculty/Staff Annual Giving Campaign once again was a great success! After kicking off on Thursday, Feb. 27, with barbeque, music and fun, UHD employees were excited to raise money for student scholarships and programs.

This year, nearly 50 percent of faculty and staff participated in the campaign.

For information on giving back to UHD, contact Jaha Williams at williamsjah@uhd.edu.



UHD Thursday Concerts at Discovery Green

Join us! Bring the family for a stellar line-up of Texas and Gulf Coast musicians—free!

Every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.
May 8 - June 26, 2014

Attention UHD Alumni!

UHD Alumni Night at Discovery Green

Thursday, June 19 • 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Featuring SKYROCKET! -
playing hits from the '70s and '80s.