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Texas Politics: UH's Murray Honored For 40 Years of Insight and Mentoring

Annual scholarship to be announced at reception featuring "Who's Who" in Texas politics

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Who's at Fault?

With recent reports of a minor earthquake occurring south of San Antonio, what are the chances of a tremor threatening the Houston area? **Shuhab Khan**, professor of geology at the University of Houston, has conducted extensive research of Houston surface faults to assess the vulnerability of the city's roads and buildings. Search for UH **faculty experts**.

Friends and colleagues, democrats and republicans will gather at the home of University of Houston President Renu Khator to celebrate political scientist Richard Murray's 40 years as a teacher, consultant and leading voice for political insight.

The gathering is planned from 6 – 8 p.m., Tuesday, April 8 and also will announce a scholarship named for Murray.

"Dick's reputation as a political prognosticator is far and wide," said Jim Granato, director of the UH Center for Public Policy (CPP). "His love and dedication to teaching and mentoring students runs so much deeper, so it is entirely appropriate that we honor him in a way that helps students."

The Richard W. Murray Endowed Scholarship celebrates his passion for politics, policy and community service. As a result of a fundraising campaign led by former Texas Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby and Harris County Clerk Beverly Kaufman, \$5,000 will be awarded annually to students with a demonstrated commitment to policy and public service.

Murray has been a UH institution for more than four decades, teaching political science since 1966. He is also the co-founder of CPP, which provides scientific, non-biased data and analysis to public officials, business professionals, community leaders and others within the Houston community. He has served as a political consultant for more than 200 campaigns and has written extensively about elections, political parties, interest groups and public opinion.

"Dick Murray has always brought tremendous insight to the political arena," former Houston Mayor Bob Lanier said. "He is a Houston institution, and I don't know anyone who doesn't value his perspective." Murray holds the UH Bob Lanier Endowed Chair in Urban Public Policy.

Many of the guests are former students now making careers in public service, such as Sen. John Whitmire (D-TX 15th), who will serve as emcee for the evening. The guest list includes Hobby, Kauffman, attorney Rusty Hardin, Rep. Gene Green (D-TX 29th), Harris County Sheriff Tommy Thomas, Harris County Commissioner Steven Raddack and former Congressman Chris Bell.

"Richard Murray's imprint on Houston is truly infinite," said Renee Cross, associate director of CPP. "He has mentored countless students as well as aspiring and established politicians of all partisan persuasions over the last four decades. I have been very fortunate to have benefited from Dr. Murray's guidance as a student, staffer and friend."

Murray's name is in the Rolodex of local and national reporters, who call on him for comment and analysis. He is currently the political consultant for the local ABC affiliate, KTRK-TV. Dave Strickland, vice president and news director, says Murray is both commentator and teacher. "Dick does much more than give political analysis," Strickland said. "He has extended his teaching skills to my team of reporters and producers by giving them the detailed background information they need to be a better informed journalist. That is an asset that benefits my staff as well as the viewers."

Murray is director of the CPP's Survey Research Institute, which conducts an ongoing program of public opinion polling. The institute has provided extensive polling data for the Houston Chronicle and local television outlets as well as for regional public and private sector entities. In addition, Murray's analyses are frequently carried by national media sources.

For more information about the UH Center for Public Policy, visit www.uh.edu/cpp/

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston, Texas' premier metropolitan research and teaching institution, is home to more than 40 research centers and institutes and sponsors more than 300 partnerships with corporate, civic and governmental entities. UH, the most diverse research university in the country, stands at the forefront of education, research and service with more than 35,000 students.

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