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At The University of Houston Magazine, our goal is to create a publication you’d be proud to receive, read and share with others. Your involvement as an engaged reader is critical to our success. As we strive to continue to improve the magazine, we want to hear from you. Please help us by going online at www.uh.edu/survey to take a brief survey about your thoughts on The UH Magazine. We want to know whether you prefer the print or the online edition, what sections you most enjoy, what sections you don’t prefer and suggested improvements for our online edition. We look forward to hearing your ideas.
The start of the academic year is undoubtedly one of the most exciting times on the university’s calendar.

This year we have enjoyed the sight of a new freshman class — many of them newly minted TierOne Scholars — joining returning students in record numbers. With the opening of Cougar Village freshman housing and the newly refurbished Moody Towers dining facility, the university has taken the next bold steps in its transformation into more of a residential campus.

The fall semester also brings with it the anticipation of the biennial Texas Legislature. Economic uncertainties, a projected state revenue shortfall, and the redistricting that follows each national census will be foremost in the minds of our state legislators. It will be our job to keep funding for higher education and Tier One as prominent as possible on their list of priorities.

And the fall semester also brings with it a time for taking stock of how we ended the fiscal year, and the tremendous progress we have made on our journey to attain Tier One national recognition.

In this issue of UH Magazine, we highlight many of the successes that are bringing us closer to our Tier One goal, among them our expanding roster of our distinguished faculty who have earned nationally recognized awards that qualify the university for Tier one status. The list, I think you will agree, is impressive indeed.

I admire each and every member of our faculty and staff for their support and their commitment to Tier One and everything that designation encompasses, from recruiting, retaining and graduating the best and brightest students, to conducting exceptional world-class research and maintaining excellence in teaching.

To our alumni, donors and friends, you have our gratitude for your investment in our Tier one aspirations. You have come through with strong and steady support. The University of Houston posted a 51 percent gain in private support during the last two years — the greatest increase for any Texas university. This is an unequivocal endorsement from the private, corporate and philanthropic sectors that reaffirms our conviction that the University of Houston is destined to be, and will be, the state’s next Tier one university.
I’m proud to see that this issue of The University of Houston Magazine celebrates the continuing progress UH is making toward Tier One status. In particular, the university’s nationally recognized, award-winning faculty and programs are being saluted, along with such fundamental UH strengths as our diversity and community engagement.

Each of those elements plays a vital role in helping UH achieve the levels of excellence and success that are required of a Tier One institution.

While it’s certainly gratifying to acknowledge the outstanding accomplishments of our stellar researchers and teachers and their nationally ranked programs, I also am reminded of the poet John Donne’s observation that “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main.” It’s important to note that whatever individual successes may be in the spotlight — and UH is indeed fortunate to have many — they are part of an overall effort. Such seemingly singular achievements, we should remember, are almost always the result of considerable collegial support, guidance and inspiration that may not be apparent but is no less valuable or indispensable.

Just as it’s been said that it takes a village to raise a child, I would say it takes a campus community to build a Tier One university.

And our campus community has been doing just that.

Interestingly, when you read UH’s Mission Statement, you may notice that nowhere in this official declaration of the university’s purpose, responsibilities and aspirations will you actually find the phrase “Tier One.”

That may seem surprising because this institution’s commitment to achieving Tier One status is now such a fundamental and clearly recognized goal. Of course, precisely defining “Tier One” always presents a challenge since there are different definitions and designations involved. But I believe we all agree that our Tier One objectives are fully in keeping with — to use the words of the Mission Statement — becoming “the nation’s premier public university in an urban setting” and applying our “expertise to the challenges facing the local, state, national and international communities.”

Achieving Tier One may not be mentioned in the Mission Statement, but it is certainly our mission.

Michele (Mica) McCutchen Mosbacher
Secretary, UH System Board of Regents
Making An Impact

Making Book: “Lonesome Dove” Drafts on Display at UH
Exhibit Rounds up Larry McMurtry Papers on 25th Anniversary.

by Marisa Ramirez (00)

From Big Chief tablet papers lined with suggested character names to typewritten manuscripts with handwritten remarks, the Larry McMurtry Papers housed in the University of Houston Libraries Special Collections provides a window into the author’s mind as he was writing “Lonesome Dove.”

With the celebration this year of the 25th anniversary of the publishing of the epic story of two ex-Texas Rangers who drive cattle from Texas to Montana, it’s an opportune time to study the material and learn more about McMurtry’s writing process, said Julie Grob, digital projects and instruction librarian for Special Collections.

“We have typescripts for most of his major works through 1987,” Grob said. “We have a lot of things that were different side projects, works of nonfiction, screenplays for movies and TV. We have a little correspondence and photographs.”

Fans of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, which was brought to the small screen in 1989 in a popular television mini-series of the same name, will be particularly interested in the 50-page synopsis McMurtry shopped to various publishers.

“The west was virgin but for an instant, and in making the frontier safe for settlement, they also made it not a frontier, and thus doomed the way of life for which they were supremely fitted and which they dearly loved,” McMurtry wrote in his description of the characters and story of “Lonesome Dove.”

Fans familiar with the text know the character Newt Dobbs. Margin notes show McMurtry toyed with the idea of naming him Skipster or Luke. One title page considers an alternate name for “Lonesome Dove” – “Clara’s Orchard.”

Everything in the collection is either handwritten or typewritten and is preserved in acid-free folders, acid-free boxes and secure climate-controlled storage to keep out the heat, humidity and light.

McMurtry, a Texas novelist, essayist and screenwriter, lived in the Bayou City in the late 1950s. he completed graduate school and taught at Rice University and worked as a book reviewer for the Houston Post and a manager of a bookstore on San Felipe.

“The correspondence that we have is a series of letters to Grace David, who owned a book shop where he worked starting out, and you see that he really wants to be a writer. He’s trying to organize his life in such a way that he can do it.”

The Larry McMurtry Papers is available for viewing by visiting the Uh Special Collections on the 2nd floor of the M.D. Anderson Library.

News Media Pump Professor For His Oil Spill Expertise
New HoustonPBS Studio Helps Don Van Nieuwenhuisen Shine in National Spotlight.

by Laura Tolley

After an explosion and fire on the Macondo offshore drilling rig killed 11 people and caused a massive oil spill, the world watched and waited as BP tried to cap the blowout in the Gulf of Mexico. And as TV and print journalists worked to explain the complicated experience and ability to explain complex issues in easy-to-understand terms, “People ‘got it’ after Van Nieuwenhuisen explained it.”

The vast majority of the national TV interviews were taped at a new interview studio at the HoustonPBS studios on the UH campus.

With his real-world experience drilling more than 15 exploration, production and blowout kill wells, Van Nieuwenhuisen knew what he was talking about, and it showed. Journalists came to trust and depend on his unique combination of intelligence, experience and ability to explain complex issues in easy-to-understand terms. “People ‘got it’ after Van Nieuwenhuisen explained it.”

The interview studio was built to provide live video feeds nationwide via the Vyvx fiber-optic transmission network. Vyvx is a nationwide switched fiber-optic broadcast-quality television transmission system.

The Vyvx Studio allows local experts to be seen and heard across the country without ever leaving Houston. So thanks to a knowledgeable and trusted UH professor and a new studio at HoustonPBS, millions of viewers and readers gained a better understanding of this terrible tragedy.

BONUS ONLINE

GRADUATE DESIGN/BUILD STUDIO CONSTRUCTING A BETTER COMMUNITY
As part of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, the design/build studio unites the minds of first-year students who conceptualize and construct unique spaces for Houston nonprofit organizations.

UH MOMENT: STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS AT COUGAR GROUNDS
Cougar Grounds, a student-run coffee shop at the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management, is the first university coffee shop in the country managed and staffed by students as part of an educational experience.

VISITING PROFESSOR INDUCTED INTO CHINESE ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING
Suresh P. Shah, visiting professor at the College of Engineering, was inducted into the Chinese Academy of Engineering as a foreign member.

UH IN NATION’S TOP 20 FOR HISPANICS
The University of Houston is among the top 20 colleges and universities conferring degrees to Hispanics, according to Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education.

BIOLOGY, COMPUTER SCIENCE COMBINE EFFORTS TO FIGHT CANCER
UH received a $2.4 million grant to fund research on postdoctoral scientists whose research combines cancer biology with computational disciplines like computer science, theoretical physics or chemistry.

UH MOMENT: CELEBRATING A DIVERSE CAMPUS
The University of Houston is one of the most diverse campuses in the United States and the most ethnically diverse university in Texas.

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Eat, Read, Drive—New Options Improving Campus Quality of Life

From New Dorm and Dining to Textbook and Car Rentals, Amenities Abound.

by Shawn Lindsey

Fall 2010 ushers in both new students and new amenities to the University of Houston. From new dorms to fresh dining, the quality of life and number of services offered to students has never been greater.

The new Cougar Village residence hall, UH’s latest state-of-the-art housing complex, is redesigning the freshman experience. It opened its doors to first-time-in-college freshmen in August, and the seven-story 295,000-square-foot facility is now home to more than 1,100 students.

“*This amazing new residence hall is built for student success,*” said UH President Renu Khator. “It is here that our newest Cougars are beginning their academic journeys, so great care was taken in its design. With its ample study spaces, computer labs and meeting areas, Cougar Village will be home to both great students and bold ideas.”

Residents of Cougar Village — and the entire campus community — also are enjoying a new dining hall on campus. Following a state-of-the-art $11 million renovation at the Moody Towers dining hall, the new Fresh Food Co. takes the idea of on-campus dining from cafeteria to cultured all-you-can-eat cuisine. The facility offers nine made to order stations facilitating a variety of cooking styles and tastes, from vegetarian to international fare.

UH students who wish to venture off campus for a meal or otherwise, but don’t have a car, can now rent a set of wheels by the hour. Students 18 and older with a valid driver’s license can participate in the Connect by Hertz car share program at UH, which offers four vehicles: Mazda 3, Mazda 6, Ford Fusion and Ford Escape. Two vehicles are housed at Cougar Village, while the other two can be picked up at Calhoun Lofts.

Cars can be rented by the hour or for a day, beginning at $8 per hour. The rate includes fuel and insurance, and all of the vehicles are equipped with GPS systems and a smart control screen pad that can be used to request rental extensions and other services. The car share requires an annual $50 membership, but UH students, faculty and staff who sign up before Dec. 31 will have their annual fee waived. Car share participants are given a membership card to access the vehicles.

Another unique rental option new to UH students this fall is textbook rentals. UH students now have the option to rent textbooks for the semester from the UH Bookstore, which could save them 50 percent or more over purchasing new books.

“Approximately 56 percent of all of our courses at UH have a textbook rental program associated with them,” said Emily Messa, assistant vice president for university services. “Additionally, we also have a number of titles available in digital or e-books. More and more of our students are getting comfortable with apps and digital products, so that’s something we also are glad to offer to our students.”

Led by Heisman-candidate Case Keenum, the University of Houston Cougars are celebrated for a high-flying offense that ranks among the best in the nation. Now, with first-year defensive coordinator Brian Stewart, the Coogs want to prevent opponents from demonstrating similar firepower.

Stewart, who comes to Houston after an eight-year coaching career in the NFL, including a two-year stint as the defensive coordinator for the Dallas Cowboys, immediately saw a major advantage for the Cougars as he began reviewing past game films.

“Those cats can run!” Stewart said. “We’re not big, but we can move. That’s exciting. We have the chance to outrun most people, and that’s where the advantage comes to us as we add more linebackers. We’re fast, and we’re furious.”

Play-by-Play

Getting Defensive: Brian Stewart Hoping 3-4 Adds Up to Frustrated Opponents

New Coach Fields ‘Fast, Furious’ Defenders.

by Alissa Bauer

This comes as comforting news to the Cougar faithful as UH unveiled its version of the 3-4 defense this season. The Cougars are running a defense that thrives on its personnel being quick and explosive rather than big and bulky.

Known as a 3-4 specialist, Stewart was brought into the defensive coordinator role by head coach Kevin Sumlin. He saw firsthand the rampant use of the 3-4 in the professional game and now is one of the few pioneers in collegiate football to bring it back.

With a 3-4 pattern now in place, assembling a crew of several 330-pound linemen is not nearly as urgent as it once was. “Speed is key,” Stewart said, “and speed we’ve got.”

Phill Hansel 1925-2010

Long touted as the most influential man in Cougar swimming and diving, former UH head coach Phil Hansel died Aug. 6. The 85-year-old was considered the father of Cougar swimming and diving for assembling the university’s first team and heading the program from 1957–1996. Hansel guided the Cougars to more than 70 dual meet wins and 10 top-20 finishes at the NCAA Championships. He also was a three-time recipient of the Southwest Conference Swimming and Diving Coach of the Year award.

Hansel managed the U.S. Swimming Team in 1992 that won 27 medals, 11 of which were gold at the Barcelona Olympic Games. He also coached the Singapore Olympic Team in 1984 and was an assistant in 1988.

Hansel’s legacy of success continues at UH. The 2009-2010 season was another success for the UH swimming and diving program. Diving has finished in the top 25 in nine of the last 10 seasons. Five Cougars took individual titles and the Houston divers took home top honors in all three events of the Conference USA Championships. The UH team is among the youngest in Conference USA, graduating only one senior last season, which gives the Cougars plenty of ammo for 2010–2011.

—Shawn Lindsey
program offers students a support system that includes mentors, roundtable discussions and opportunities to network with local entrepreneurs.

The results speak for themselves. In addition to being ranked first in the nation in 2010, the program’s students have seen individual success, winning 10 awards in national business plan competitions in the past five years.

Students also are proving themselves after graduation by creating hundreds of new businesses.

“There is such a variety, it is hard to name a business that one of them hasn’t tried,” Sherrill said.

For example, Ashley Hurst, a May 2010 graduate of the program, is in the early stages of launching a health/nutrition consulting business called Wellness by Design. Hurst said her experience with the entrepreneurship program gave her the tools she needed to take the leap.

“I think the program taught me is your goals don’t have to be far off and unreachable. You can break it down into smaller pieces.”
It’s also important for the department’s research focus to evolve, he said.

“In any kind of good department, you find the research emphasis changes because different areas become more popular,” Luss said. “In recent years, I think the department really succeeded in defining some of those frontier research areas.”

For instance, Luss has applied his expertise in chemical reactor engineering to reducing emissions created by diesel engines. Other faculty members are beefing up their research in materials and biochemical engineering, he said.

LEGAL EXCELLENCE

At the University of Houston Law Center, home to three programs ranked in the top 10 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, success is due, in part, to its ability to capitalize on the strengths of the city of Houston.

A case in point: The health law program, ranked 4th in the nation in 2010, has been among the top five health law programs for 13 consecutive years. It also has developed a great partnership with the Texas Medical Center.

“Houston is a major medical community, and health law is a natural addition to that,” said Bill Winslade, director of the Health Law & Policy Institute. “We intend to follow up on the University of Houston’s new affiliation with the Texas Medical Center by finding even more projects of common interest where we can collaborate.”

With offerings such as a concurrent law/Ph.D. program in conjunction with the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, the health law program is able to attract a wide variety of students, from practicing doctors who want to gain legal expertise to students who want to focus on health policy research, Winslade said.

“Our students aren’t just one type of lawyer, but lawyers who have gone off in many different directions,” he said. “We offer things across the board broadly, but we also offer people the opportunity to go in-depth into their area of special interest.”

The intellectual property law program housed within the Institute for Intellectual Property and Information Law (IPII), is ranked 8th in the nation, and consistently out ranks comparable programs at well known public and private universities, said Craig Joyce, Andrews Kurth Professor of Law and co-director of the institute.

“In survey after survey, IPII continuously outranks comparable programs at even the highest levels of private universities throughout the nation,” Joyce said. “UH’s IP program outpaces those at Harvard, Yale, Duke, Chicago, Northwestern, Vanderbilt, Emory and Georgetown, to name a few. Among public universities against which UH benchmarks itself, IPII outranks UCLA, UNC and UT, just for starters.”

Another top-ranked program is the part time law program, ranked 10th in the U.S. The program, which allows students to take classes part time, fills a need for working professionals seeking a law degree.

“It takes a huge commitment of time and money to build those types of programs, and they stand as cornerstones of our curriculum,” said Raymond T. Nimmer, dean of the Law Center and Leonard H. Chiles Professor of Law. “Not every student wants to specialize in these areas, of course, but it’s clear that our ‘top 10’ programs underscore the excellence of the education we provide.”

Together, the programs help bolster the university’s Tier One aspirations, Nimmer said.

“The national and international reputations of the UH Law Center and other UH colleges put some muscle behind [President Renu Khator’s] continuing effort to push the University of Houston to the higher regional and national standing it deserves,” he said.

AWARD-WINNING FACULTY

While award-winning programs help the university prove its Tier One potential, so does an award-winning faculty.

The Center for Measuring University Performance — the entity that produces the Top American Research Universities (TARIU) report each year — designates the top research universities based on nine different measures, including the number of recognized faculty awards and the number of faculty members elected to national academies.

With seven members of National Academies on faculty, and two more slated to join the faculty within the year, UH has already met the benchmark in that category for inclusion among the top 50 public universities.

In addition, more than 50 faculty members have earned either TARIU-recognized awards or other national awards recognized by the Association of American Universities, including Guggenheim fellowships and National Science Foundation Career awards. (For a list of these and other award winners, please see pages 14-17.)

In an effort to increase the number of faculty awards, UH created a website that highlights faculty award winners and provides information on national awards. In addition, deans and administrative staff are helping with the nomination and awards application process, said John Antel, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

Though awards are important, they are not the only measure of faculty success, Antel pointed out.

“The awards are a fairly objective way to measure faculty status. There are only a limited number of these awards, however, and some dimensions of excellence are not measured by them,” he said. “For example, if a faculty member did a well-reviewed concert at Carnegie Hall, it would not be counted among TARU awards, but it would certainly be recognized by people in the music business.”

UNIQUE QUALITIES

Of course, Tier One caliber elements at the University of Houston don’t begin and end with professors and programs. There are other institutional qualities, such as its diversity — UH has been consistently ranked among the top three most diverse public research institutions in the nation — or its community involvement that clearly set it apart from many other universities.

Carroll Parrott Blue knows that firsthand. As a research professor with the Texas Learning and Computation Center and the Center for Public History, Blue has been involved with dozens of collaborations between UH and the surrounding Third Ward community.

For instance, just last fall, Blue, whose focus is using new media for citizen engagement, worked with a broad range of UH departments, including architecture, technology, art, history and education, and including faculty, staff, students and alumni in an...
Major Initiatives Capitalize on UH’s Strengths

As the University of Houston builds its reputation, President Renu Khator has prioritized three major initiatives that she believes will provide the clearest pathway to Tier One. Those initiatives, which are the focus of many of the university’s efforts, best capitalize on UH’s existing strengths, as well as the strengths of the city of Houston.

**UH ENERGY**

Located in the “energy capital of the world,” the University of Houston is a natural hub for innovation and bold approaches to address the energy challenges of today and the future. UH Energy encompasses the brightest minds in UH engineering, law, business, geosciences, technology, research and public policy. Spanning fossil fuels, water, wind, solar, nuclear and biofuels, energy is derived from multiple sources, with essential research being done across a variety of disciplines.

UH Energy team members shape research and energy policy and forge new business approaches to the way energy is created, delivered, used and shared. These leaders also educate tomorrow’s innovators, providing a dynamic environment for students and faculty to exchange ideas and work in partnership with industry, researchers, organizations and the community.

With its location and faculty expertise, UH is uniquely positioned to become “The Energy University.” Underpinning this commitment, President Renu Khator created the UH Energy Advisory Board, comprised of several global industry energy leaders, poised to help guide UH toward its vision. They recognize this is a critical time for Houston to provide national leadership tackling the incredible energy challenges faced by the nation and world.

An integral part of the UH Energy vision includes the creation of the new Energy Research Park located near the Gulf Freeway on land that once housed Schlumberger’s global headquarters. The park is comprised of 74 acres with 15 buildings and 19 acres of developable land. The vision for the complex is for a university-sponsored development that includes research, workforce training and industrial partnerships — the three legs of the economic development triangle.

With the national agenda of health care reform and an aging population, the timing is right for the University of Houston to expand its presence in the health care arena. UH is well positioned to make a major impact in research and education in fields spanning biology and biochemistry, psychology, mathematics, pharmacy, engineering, optometry and computer science.

The Texas Medical Center (TMC) makes Houston one of the most important locations for healthcare in the world, and UH is exploring the best way to build on that. With health-related research making up more than half of the university’s externally funded research, UH is poised to gain an even stronger foothold in TMC, particularly with its recent induction as a member institution.

Collaborations between UH and The Methodist Hospital Research Institute, such as the Abramson Center for the Future of Health, have been working successfully for many years and will continue to grow. Just one shining example among many, the center is home to translational research, genetic research and personalized medicine, patient and provider education, and remote sensors and Web-based programs that are tailored to individuals.

“The University of Houston is increasingly having a positive impact with the 49 member institutions of the Texas Medical Center,” said Richard E. Wainerd, president and CEO, Texas Medical Center. “Their scientists, researchers and educators are quickly establishing themselves among their peers and creating new opportunities for collaboration and success.”

According to Kathryn Peek, assistant vice president of University Health Initiatives, an advisory board of top health care executives will be created next year, which will give the industry an opportunity to weigh in on research collaborations, essential personnel and professions. The future of UH Health holds promise for an increase in and balance of basic research, applied research, educational programs and community outreach. There also is considerable potential for commercialization of intellectual property given UH’s health-related research.

**UH Tier One**

The arts at the University of Houston are an essential part of the city’s vibrant cultural fabric. Over the years, UH students have been mentored by such acclaimed faculty as the late fiction writer Donald Barthelme and American playwright Edward Albee.

UH Arts includes the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, School of Art, Moores School of Music, School of Theatre & Dance, Blaffer Art Museum, Creative Writing Program, and several other programs throughout the campus. The UH Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts connects artistic disciplines through partnerships on campus and in the arts community, resulting in creative research, cross-disciplinary courses and a range of public programs.

The mission of UH Arts is to educate students and the community by imagining and giving form to the dreams and concepts that shape contemporary culture. Its vision is to be a creative center for the study, practice and presentation of the arts, contributing to Houston’s cultural vitality.

“The University of Houston has exceptional arts programs in all of the major disciplines, making UH a leading force in Houston’s arts landscape,” said Jonathan Glus, president of the Houston Arts Alliance. “UH alumni populate Houston’s thriving arts community, from showing their work in our theaters and museums to managing our many venues. Now, with the new UH Arts initiative, the university is poised to become a leader in the education and presentation of the arts locally, nationally and even internationally.”

On the horizon, an enhanced UH Arts section of campus is being planned, which will become a cohesive neighborhood for the UH community and an important arts destination for the general public.

—Lisa K. Merkl (’92, M.A. ’97)

**UH HEALTH**

Community outreach is an important element of a Tier One university, Blue said. The university already has been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with its highest designation for community-engaged institutions in the nation.

“Universities right now are really shifting and changing in terms of how they operate in the world,” she said. “They are realizing it is really important to take the knowledge, the expertise that is in the university and apply it to the surrounding community.”

By doing so, UH is proving that it can have a positive impact on the quality of life and economic health of the region. As UH President Renu Khator has said, “That is what a Tier One institution does, and that is where UH is headed.”

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We are pleased to list the following University of Houston faculty with distinction based on fellowships, prizes and awards recognized by the Association of American Universities (AAU) and/or Top American Research Universities (TARU), used to determine Tier One status; UH’s own faculty awards such as the Esther Farfel Award, the highest award accorded a UH faculty member, the Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranuz Cullen Distinguished Chair and Professorship and University Professorship; the M.D. Anderson Professorship and the John and Rebecca Moores Professor Program. Below are the UH professors who have received these prestigious honors.*

**NATIONAL ACADEMY MEMBERS**
- Neal Amundson  
  Professor Emeritus – Chemical Engineering and Mathematics  
  • National Academy of Engineering  
  • National Academy of Sciences
- C.W. “Paud” Chu  
  Professor – Physics  
  • National Academy of Sciences
- Jan-Åke Gustafsson  
  Professor – Biology and Biochemistry, Chemistry  
  • National Academy of Sciences
- Dan Luss  
  Professor – Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering
- James Symons  
  Professor Emeritus – Civil Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering
- John H. Lienhard  
  Professor Emeritus – Mechanical Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering
- Fazle Hussain  
  Professor – Mechanical Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering
- Surendra P. Shah  
  Professor – Civil and Environmental Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering
- Kaspar William  
  Professor – Civil and Environmental Engineering  
  • National Academy of Engineering

**FELLOWSHIPS, PRIZES AND AWARDS**

**recognized by**

**THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES (AAU) and/or**

**TOP AMERICAN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES (TARU)**

- Rigoberto Advincula
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 1999
- Thomas Albright
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1982
- Kevin Bassler
  Professor – Physics  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 2001
- Eric Billtner
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 1999  
  • Guggenheim Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 2007
- Elizabeth Bollinger Huxel
  Professor – Architecture  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 1998
- Stanko Brankovic
  Assistant Professor – Electrical and Computer Engineering  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2010
- David Brenner
  Visiting Assistant Professor – Modern and Classical Languages  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2006
- Chengbi Cai
  Associate Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2004
- Shankar Chellam
  Professor – Civil and Environmental Engineering  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2002
- Xiaping Cong
  Associate Professor – History  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2009  
  • American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellows (TARU) – 2009

**UH Tier One**

- Staha Douglas
  Associate Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2007  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 2007
- Steven Doyle
  Associate Professor – History  
  • American Antiquarian Society Fellowships (TARU) – 2000
- Richard Doke
  Professor – Law  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2009
- Stuart L. Dryer
  Professor – Biology and Biochemistry  
  • American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow (AAU) – 2001
- Donald Foss
  Professor – Psychology  
  • American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow (AAU) – 1985
- Robert Fox
  Professor – Biology and Biochemistry  
  • Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigators (TARU) – 1987
- Edgar Gabriel
  Assistant Professor – Computer Science  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2002
- Arnold Gayly
  Associate Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 1998
- P. Shiv Kalyanam
  Associate Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2001  
  • Beckman Young Investigators (TARU) – 2002
- Zhu Han
  Assistant Professor – Electrical and Computer Engineering  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2010
- John Hart
  Professor – History  
  • American Council of Learned Societies Fellows (TARU) – 1974  
  • National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1991
- William Haves
  Professor – Communication  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2001
- Stephan Hillerbrand
  Assistant Professor – Art  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2004  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2005
- David Hoffman
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1992
- Scott Imberman
  Assistant Professor – Economics  
  • National Academy of Education (AAU) – 2010
- Karl Kadish
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 1990
- Ioannis Kakadiaris
  Professor – Computer Science  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2000
- Donald Kourti
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1982  
  • Guggenheim Fellow (AAU, TARU) – 1978
- Ramanan Krishnamoorti
  Professor – Chemical Engineering  
  • NSF Career Award (TARU) – 1999
- Demetrio Labate
  Associate Professor – Mathematics  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2006
- Barbara Rose Lange
  Associate Professor – Music  
  • Fulbright-American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2007
- T. Randall Lee
  Professor – Chemistry  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 1995
- Ailing Li
  Associate Professor – Earth and Atmospheric Sciences  
  • NSF Career Awards (TARU) – 2006
- Carl Lindahl
  Professor – English  
  • Fulbright-American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2004
- Vassiliki Lubchenko
  Assistant Professor – Chemistry  
  • Beckman Young Investigators (TARU) – 2008  
  • NSF Career Award (TARU) – 2010
- Martin Melosi
  Professor – History  
  • National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1980  
  • National Humanities Center Fellowships (TARU) – 1982  
  • National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1988  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2001
- David Mikics
  Professor – English  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2004
- John Miller
  Professor – Physics  
  • Sloan Research Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1987
- Raymond Nimmer
  Professor – Law  
  • Fulbright American Scholars (AAU, TARU) – 2006
- Julian Olivares
  Professor – Hispanic Studies  
  • Ford Foundation Fellowships (TARU) – 1985  
  • American Philosophical Society (AAU) – 1992  
  • National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 2000
- Carlos Ordóñez
  Associate Professor – Physics  
  • Guggenheim Fellows (AAU, TARU) – 1989
Nationally Recognized Advanced Materials Research Puts UH in the Spotlight.

by Laura Tolley

“You know that we are living in a material world” – Madonna, 1985

“Paul Chu’s discovery involving superconductivity was a major step in UH’s work on advanced materials,” Jacobson said.

“It brought significant recognition and visibility to the university. The exposure helped attract faculty and resulted in more money from the state to build the materials program. We’re still the 600-pound gorilla in the room when it comes to superconductivity.”

Chu continues his work at TC SUH, searching for new and better materials. Another standout in the superconductivity arena is Venkat Selvamanickam (M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’92), Selva to his colleagues, who is director of the Applied Research Hub and the M.D. Anderson Distinguished Professor in Mechanical Engineering. Selvamanickam has developed a superconducting wire that can be used to carry electricity more efficiently than existing wires.

“A person can be more efficient if you use high-temperature superconducting wires,” said Selvamanickam, who also is applying his research to solar cells.

Another key area for advanced materials research is UH’s work in offshore wind technology. That effort received a boost earlier this year when the Department of Energy granted UH a $2.3 million grant to establish the National Wind Energy Center, which will be the site for development and testing of composite materials and components for large offshore wind turbines. The new testing facility will help propel the region to the forefront of U.S. offshore wind development.

UH’s accomplished track record in advanced materials research continues to attract students and faculty members, such as Francisco Robles-Hernandez, an assistant professor in the College of Technology. Robles-Hernandez is working on a number of advanced materials research projects, including the development of materials that can significantly extend the life of railroad wheels and tracks.

“All of my work is in material sciences,” noted Robles-Hernandez, a Mexico City native. “I came here two years ago because of the university’s work in advanced materials.”

At the Center for Advanced Materials, Ignatiev has his eye on the moon. One of his ideas centers on developing a technology to mine lunar silicon and make solar cells out of the material right on the moon. It’s nicknamed the “lunar Zamboni,” because it would resemble the famed ice-resurfacer, rolling across the moon’s surface and paving it with solar cells. An area the size of a football field could power one lunar plant. Larger swaths of land could produce enough power to beam back to Earth, with few, if any, environmental consequences.

“Now, THAT’S a real advanced application for advanced materials,” Ignatiev said.
UH Welcomes Students and Scholars From All Backgrounds

As Campus Changes, Diversity Remains a Focus.

by Mike Emery

New residence halls, academic buildings and parking facilities are helping transform UH into a bigger and better university. METRO and UH are working to link the campus to the community through light rail. Academically, UH is growing with unique new courses and majors. And research institution of higher education in the country and the most ethnically diverse higher education institution in Texas.

"UH has a culture that not only welcomes diversity but also celebrates it," said Jerald Strickland, assistant vice chancellor for international studies and programs. "This university is very welcoming place for students and scholars from all backgrounds."

"Diversity comes in all colors," said State Rep. Garnet Coleman of Houston. "I spoke to a journalism class at UH, and a student asked me if Tier One would change the university. He said that he and many other students wanted the university to remain a place of opportunity for students of all colors. That particular student wasn't a minority at all. He was white."

UH will not doubt continue to provide opportunities to students from all backgrounds and is committed to making sure all future Cougar are college ready. In 2012, UH's new freshman admissions policy will offer automatic acceptance of first-time-in-college freshmen in the top 15 percent of their high school classes without requiring college entrance examinations. In 2014, UH will modify these standards to accept incoming freshmen within the top 10 percent of their classes.

These admissions policies will help UH remain competitive on its journey toward Tier One, while maintaining a commitment to a culturally diverse campus.

"With Texas' large pool of talented students, we can maintain diversity and admit students who are ready to succeed," said John Antel, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. "We will make sure we get the most prepared students from all backgrounds."

Students have long appreciated this dedication to diversity, understanding that working with peers from other countries and cultures enhances their college experiences.

Erica Fletcher, a senior in UH's Honors College, was raised in League City, Texas. She also is firmly connected with her South American heritage (her mother is from Brazil). So much so, she incorporates Latina issues into her class projects — including "Marianismo," a short film focusing on HIV/AIDS among Latinas.

"UH's diversity has had an impact on my education and research philosophy," she said. "It's helped me understand cultural sensitivity and cultural differences between populations. Being able to talk to friends and classmates about these issues has been very beneficial. It's helped me experience other cultures in a relaxed, friendly environment."

Cultural exchanges such as these reflect the university's international ties. UH is among the top 25 institutions with the most international students, serving more than 4,000 students from other countries.

The growing international presence, combined with UH's existing multicultural element, prepares students for an increasingly diverse society.

"They used to call it the "New America," Coleman said. "Now, it's just 'America.' Our country is now a mosaic. It's important that we understand others around us. Diversity is now the norm in America, not the exception."

The face of the university is no doubt changing. The faces in classrooms and on campus, however, continue to represent a range of local and global cultures. This unique pairing of vision and tradition is fueling its flight toward Tier One and its commitment to excellence.

"UH is consistently ranked as one of the most diverse campuses in the nation," said State Sen. Rodney Ellis of Houston. "This distinction did not happen by accident but by investing significant time and resources into developing the type of programming and learning environment that attract such a diverse student body. I have no doubt that UH will continue with these efforts — and perhaps more so — as it moves resolutely toward Tier One status."

EH is a relaxed, friendly environment."

As the lead voice for UH's Tier One drive and the first Indian immigrant to lead a U.S. research university, she has been embraced by the campus community.

UH President Renu Khator discovered this welcoming atmosphere when she arrived on campus in 2008.

Diversity is now the norm in America, not the exception."

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Looking north from the UH Welcome Center, you can see the top of the Houston skyline. To the east, Maximus Coffee Group greets you, its fragrant coffee aroma wafting over the campus around mid-afternoon. And just a short drive down Interstate 45 south puts you at NASA’s doorstep. The University of Houston, nestled in its Third Ward neighborhood, is immersed in the city whose name it bears. But more than being a good resident of the community, UH aims to be connected to it.

Recently, UH was honored by the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as one of the top community-engaged universities in the nation. UH was the only public metropolitan university in Texas given the distinction, which considers, among other things, a university’s service to the community and its students’ involvement in community issues.

“Our American Humanics students embody community responsibility and service... Last year they gave more than 8,600 internship hours to Houston nonprofit organizations.”

American Humanics, a program of the Graduate College of Social Work, trains the next generation of nonprofit managers and leaders. UH’s chapter was rated first among AH chapters in the country in 2007 by the American Humanics Management Institute.

“Not only do our students learn about careers through these internships, they build their passion for working in the Houston community,” Godwin said, speaking of students like graduate Carlie Brown. “And the vast majority of our students stay in Houston after they graduate.”

Similarly, the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) is immersed in Houston’s Latino community. Beginning with middle school students, officials with the CMAS Academic Achievers’ Program (AAP) work to ensure students—first in their families to pursue higher education—stay in school, graduate from high school and enter college.

“We recognize the challenges first-generation students experience on the road to higher education,” said Rebeca Trevino, the program manager. “Together with our business partners who help us with scholarships, internships and mentors, AAP has helped many Houston students graduate and enter careers.”

“CMAS does so much for Houston and UH,” said AAP student Alicia Valdez. “It makes me want to do the same.”

Community connection is built into the fabric of the Civic Houston Internship Program (CHIP). Part of the Hobby Center for Public Policy (HCPP), the program annually places nearly 100 undergraduates in Houston government and nonprofit offices.

“These interns are the next generation of civic leaders,” said Renée Cross (’97), associate director of the HCPP and director of CHIP. “We strive to encourage students’ interest and commitment to their community by preparing them through public service, as well as academic knowledge.” The HCPP also has developed civic volunteerism projects with students to educate and promote the 2010 U.S. Census throughout the Houston region, organized on-campus pet food drives to benefit Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston’s AntiMeals program and collaborated with county offices and nonpartisan organizations on voter registration and education projects.

Community involvement creates more than just connections for the University of Houston; it creates Cougar Pride.
Quick Takes

Faculty Kudos

Mark Bly, Distinguished Professor of Theatre, Dramaturgy and Playwriting, received the G.E. Leasing Career Achievement Award from the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA). Bly, one of the nation’s most respected dramatists, is only the fourth artist in LMDA’s 25-year history to receive its most prestigious honor.

Zhigang Deng, assistant professor of computer science and director of computer graphics and Interactive Media Lab, received a one-year Google Faculty Research Award to work on the development of a novel talking avatar interface for mobile computing platforms such as Apple iPhones and Google Nexus.

Barbara Evans (L.L.M. ’03), director of the Center on Biotech, co-director of the Health Law & Policy Institute and associate professor of law, has been named a Greenwood Foundation Faculty Scholar in Bioethics for 2010–2013. Her research will focus on governance models for large, interoperable health data networks and the ethics of large-scale observational research.

Thomas Kalbhzig, chair professor of educational psychology, has been selected as a Distinguished Practitioner to the National Academies of Practice in Psychology. The organization, which represents 10 health care professions, advises public policy makers on health care issues.

Yashashree Kulkarni, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, has received a 2010 Young Faculty Award from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. The award, given annually to junior faculty, recognizes talented researchers whose work will help develop solutions that could enhance security.

Dan Luss, Cullen Professor of Engineering, has been named the 2010 recipient of the International Symposium for Chemical Reaction Engineering’s Near P.A. Amundson Award for Excellence in Chemical Reaction Engineering. One of the highest honors in the field, the award is bestowed every three years to recognize a pioneer in the field.

Lewis T. May, associate professor of architecture, has received a grant from the Texas International Education Consortium to create a long-range strategic and physical guide plan for the new Al Salim University in Sana’a, Yemen. The university is the 23rd higher education institution May has planned in the Middle East.

Suresh Shah, visiting professor in the Cullen College of Engineering and Walter P. Murphy Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Northwestern University, has been inducted into the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) as a foreign member. Shah is one of only four engineers in the world—and the only civil engineer—who is a member of both the CAE and the United States National Academy of Engineering and is a fellow in the Indian National Academy of Engineering. He will join the UH engineering faculty full-time in January.

Earl Smith, associate professor of architecture, has received the 2010 Houman A. M. Alwan Distinguished Architectural Alumni Award from the American Institute of Architects.

Joel Bloom, associate professor of health and human performance, has received the American College of Sports Medicine’s 2010 Career Award (Honors a UH career of demonstrated excellence in teaching).

William Dupe, associate professor of geology, will receive the 2010 Regional Fessenden Award from the Society of Exploration Geophysicists. The award is given each year to a person who has made a specific technical contribution to exploration geophysics.

University of Houston Honors

John and Rebecca Moore Professors (This five-year renewable award is given to two faculty members who are outstanding in teaching, research and service. The award includes a $10,000 annual stipend.)

Lawrence Finkley (J.D. ’97, L.L.M. ’01), professor and chair of physics and adjunct law professor

Richard Wittson, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering and biochemical and biophysical sciences

Excellence in Research and Scholarship Award

Proven Kumar, Texas Bank of Commerce/Tejcco Professor, chair of finance and executive director of UH–GEMI

Asisilate Professors

Casey Duui Hackney, associate professor of classical studies

Tahir Hussain, associate professor of pharmacology

Assistant Professors

Stanko Brankovic, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering

Rong Zeng, assistant professor of computer science

Teaching Excellence Awards (Honors outstanding achievements in teaching)

Andrew Davis, associate professor of music

Olaf Steghuis, associate professor of chemistry

Richard DeFrank, associate professor of management

Douglas Elkmorng, associate professor of pharmacology

Alexander Parsons, assistant professor of English

Innovation in Instructional Technology (Honors outstanding achievements in teaching using innovation in instructional technology)

Bernard Robin, associate professor of instructional technology

Mary Keen (Ph.D. ’89), instructional professor of chemistry

Micky Fleischer (M.S. ’73, Ph.D. ’78), adjunct professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering

Graduate Teaching Assistant (Honors graduate students)

William “Willy” Bolander, business

Jason Pitrzullia (M.A. ’08, English)

Career Award (Honors a UH career of demonstrated excellence in teaching)

Joel Bloom, associate professor of health and human performance

Faculty Award for Mentoring Undergraduate Research (Honors mentoring undergraduate research and scholarships)

Rigoberto Adrivon, associate professor of chemistry

Provost Faculty Advising Award (Honors excellence in undergraduate academic advising)

William Dupe, associate professor of geology

Submit Your Faculty Kudos: magazine@uh.edu

Uh Faculty: You Are The Pride

Book Shelf

Johnny Buckles, assistant professor of law, has written a chapter, “Professors and University Librarians” in “Law and Religion: Cases in Context.”

Michael Economides, adjunct professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, and Xiuli Wang (Ph.D. ’80) have written “Advanced Natural Gas Engineering.”

Antonio Gidi, assistant professor of law, has written “Class Actions in a Comparative Perspective.”

Paul Gregory, Cullen Distinguished Chair of Economics, has written “Politics, Murder, and Love in Stalin’s Kremlin: The Story of Nikolai Bukharin and Anna Larina.”

Casey Duui Hackney, assistant professor of modern and classical languages, has written “Percequiting a Homeric Legacy: Images and Insights from the Venus A Manuscript of the Iliad” and has co-written “Raid 10 and the Poetics of Ambush: A Multiword Edition With Essays and Commentary.”

Dale L. Johnson, professor emeritus of psychology, has written “A Compendium of Psychosocial Measures.”

Nicolas Kamatos, Brown Foundation Professor of Hispanic Literature, has written a chapter, “A Schematic Approach to Understanding Latino Transnational Texts” in “Imagined Transnationalism.”

Julian Ollivier, professor of Spanish, has written “The Love Poetry of Francisco de Quevedo” and “Studies in Women’s Poetry of the Golden Ages.”

Jacqueline Weiler (J.D. ’73, A.A. White Professor of Law), has written “Texas Oil and Gas Law Cases and Materials 2009” and has co-written “International Petroleum Exploration & Exploitation Agreements: Legal, Economic, and Political Aspects, 2nd ed.”

Marc Zimmermann, director of world cultures and literature, has written “Bringing Aztlan to Mexican Chicago: My Life, My Work, My Art (Lose Gamañel González).”
Celebrating Nearly 40 Years of

CMAS Increases Knowledge About the Latino Culture and Community.

by Emily Smart

With its 40th anniversary on the horizon, the University of Houston’s Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) is gearing up for a celebration of the program’s progress. “Forty years is a real milestone for us, and if you look at where we started and where we are now, there’s been tremendous growth,” said CMAS director Tatcho Mindiola Jr. (’67, M.A. ’70).

CMAS, which has been instrumental in fostering research and understanding of the Mexican-American experience, as well as providing the Houston community with well-educated Latinos, is anticipating the upcoming anniversary as an opportunity to further develop its current initiatives and plan for its future.

The center’s Visiting Scholars Program and Graduate Fellowship Program have advanced serious intellectual interest among the Mexican-American community. Visiting scholars, who are invited by CMAS to the University of Houston to study and conduct research, play a significant role in increasing knowledge about the Latino community and raise the status of the university. To date, CMAS has brought in 32 scholars who may be interested in staying at UH in a tenure or tenure-track position.

Through the University of Houston Series in Mexican American Studies, the program’s print partnership with Texas A&M University Press, previous visiting scholars have published five books with two additional titles currently under review. This series includes some of the first books ever written about Mexican-Americans in Houston.

By encouraging the development of this research, CMAS fosters a higher degree of knowledge among Mexican-Americans and places a stronger emphasis on the value of education for this community’s future generations. To date, CMAS has supported 41 successful graduate students.

Beyond its research and scholarly contributions, the center has played a large role in increasing the number of Latinos with a college education in the Houston area. CMAS’s Academic Achievers Program (AAP), which provides students with financial and academic assistance, has aided in the graduation of numerous students and has a graduation rate of 77 percent.

Viridiana Hernandez (’09), one of the AAP graduates, credits her success to the program and the resources it offered her. “There’s a lot of different streams of support that I used to get from the center,” Hernandez said. “There’s nothing I needed that I wasn’t able to get from them.”

The center’s annual banquet to raise scholarship funds for students in AAP is set for Oct. 21 and will feature NASA astronaut José Hernández as the keynote speaker. The event generates the majority of scholarship funding for the program and involves members of the local community in raising awareness of the center’s mission. Juanita Elizondo, director of Corporate Relations for Fiesta Mart Inc., joined the committee for this year’s banquet to personally support what she sees as a vital mission. “I just think that the program has done so much in addressing a need in the community, and the fact that they have provided this opportunity is truly a commitment to future and generation futures,” she said.

A $5 million fundraising campaign recently was launched to ensure the longevity of the center’s overall impact and its distinct initiatives. The plan involves five separate $1 million endowments to support each of the major areas: the Visiting Scholars Program, the Graduate Fellowship Program, AAP, the director’s chair and a discretionary fund. It also will provide long-term funding for the program and ensure an eventual successor for Mindiola.

Along with continuing to advance its current programs, the center is exploring additional options for expansion, including the establishment of an academic major in Mexican and Mexican American Studies. With plans to develop a proposal for the idea still at least a year away, Mindiola sees the major, which would offer courses on the history, culture and geography of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, as benefiting a growing number of people. “The Mexican culture is spreading in the U.S., and the U.S. culture is spreading in Mexico,” Mindiola said. “So we think the long-term future is that there will be more integration between the two countries, and we hope to bring forth a greater understanding of both communities.”

CMAS also is considering a future collaboration with the Valley Alliance of Mentors for Opportunities & Scholarships (VAMOS) that would expand their recruiting efforts in the Rio Grande Valley. Alonzo Cantu and Eliva Saenz, two of the founders of VAMOS, are enthusiastic about the potential benefits of the relationship. “We’re very excited about the CMAS program,” Saenz said. “If we can learn from them and work together, then I think it’s going to be wonderful for years to come.” While no concrete plans for a partnership between the two groups have been developed, CMAS is looking forward to the possibility of opportunities for additional growth.

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Graduate student fellowships advance the specialized study of topics relating to the Mexican-American experience.

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By Emily Smart

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Giving to UH, Benefitting Houston
Businesswoman, Alumna Recognizes the Importance of a Tier One Urban University.

by Kelli Gifford

Beth Madison (’72), president and co-founder of Madison Benefits Group, Inc., has spent years giving generously to the University of Houston, the city of Houston, and its dynamic business community out of gratitude for the opportunities they have afforded her. She is determined that others get those same opportunities.

“We must promote and maintain this vibrant cultural and business context we have in Houston. One of the best ways is to support our youth being educated in a first-class, Tier One university,” she said.

Madison devotes countless hours and financial resources to helping UH reach greater heights, especially through her devotion to the athletics program, the Moores School of Music and the Cullen College of Engineering, to name a few.

“I personally believe in urban universities. They are wonderful places to get an education, develop negotiating skills and a different kind of leadership,” said Madison.

From that she realized how athletics create “an opportunity for students and alumni to spend time together in a spirited format that inspires all of us to appreciate education and the values that are important in our world.”

Her other passion is the arts — she serves on the boards of the Houston Grand Opera, the Houston Symphony and the Alley Theatre.

“Music and the arts are such an important part of our cultural landscape, and we look to our universities to feed these world-class arts programs that we have,” she said. The Moores School of Music honored Madison this spring, giving her the Outstanding Philanthropist Award for her ongoing support. Madison recognizes that with Houston being the “energy capital of the world,” support of the Cullen College of Engineering is vital. “One of the most important leadership contributions that [UH President] Renu Khator brought to UH is emphasizing those particular disciplines that create and maintain our vigorous economy.”

Engineering is clearly cornerstone to developing our key energy resources. Having a university full of opportunity in this great city inspires Madison, who sees the importance of being able to provide an educated work force for area industry.

“Universities make cities world-class,” she said. “It’s simply important to have the opportunity for young scholars to develop academically here within our community. It’s motivating to be part of that dynamic.”

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— Beth Madison

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For more than three decades, professor Joel W. Sailors bestowed his knowledge and love of economics on University of Houston students. And by the time he retired in 1987, teaching at UH was more than just a job to him.

“The department has been my family,” Sailors said. Because of this, he felt compelled to support the department in numerous ways, including establishing an endowment and a charitable remainder trust. His trust qualified him for membership in The 1927 Society. Both gifts will help UH continue the traditions that unite the campus.

The 1927 Society was created to celebrate alumni and friends of the University of Houston who show their commitment to UH through a planned or deferred gift. Their generosity demonstrates an investment in the future of UH, and the other UH System universities, and their missions.

And once donors know they want to name UH as a beneficiary of their estate, staff at UH lead them in the right direction.