Tell us what you think: www.uh.edu/magazine At The University of Houston Magazine, our goal is to create a publication you’ll 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.
I'm sure those of you fortunate enough to view the recent "Legacy of the Pride" exhibit in the M.D. Anderson Library will agree that it was a marvelous and inspiring display. The multimedia presentation, which traced our university's evolution from a modest junior college founded in 1927 to its current status as a world-class institution, offered a rich array of historical artifacts, vintage photographs, period documents and a wonderful video putting this all in context.

The exhibit certainly helped me understand why "You Are the Pride" rings so resonantly with our campus community and our alumni. "Legacy of the Pride" was another reminder of what a truly impressive heritage our institution can claim. For those who missed this important exhibit, you can read more on page 8 then treat yourself to an online version at www.uh.edu/magazine/bonus.

We can talk at length about this university's high-profile accomplishments and trumpet its internationally recognized researchers and scholars, renowned Olympic and professional athletes, show business stars, celebrated artists, prominent political leaders and powerful business magnates. That is indeed a legacy of which to be proud.

There is, however, another kind of legacy that is every bit as uplifting and personally pleasing to me. When I'm invited to appear at local functions, I often ask those in attendance how many of them are UH students or alumni. A number of hands shoot up, usually making the "Go Coogs" sign as they do! Then I'll ask the remaining folks how many have a friend or a family member who attended UH. More hands go up. Then I'll ask how many work at a business alongside a Cougar? Or attended a football game or theater performance on campus?

I invariably wind up with every person in the room holding up a hand.

I could continue, of course. How many have children taught by school teachers and principals who graduated from UH? Gone to an optometrist or a pharmacist or a lawyer from UH? Been in homes and buildings designed by our architects? Driven across bridges devised by our engineers? Had medical treatment facilitated by our researchers? Eaten at a restaurant staffed by Cougars? Semester after semester, year after year, decade after decade, the University of Houston has played an essential role in shaping and sustaining the city whose name we proudly bear.

And, we share a pride built on determination, achievement and success.

Message from the President
The University of Houston had only 3,500 students by the close of the 1946 spring semester. A little more than three months later, 10,500 students had enrolled for the fall. I was one of them. Most were returning GIs from World War II.

There were only three permanent buildings on campus then. To accommodate the tremendous influx of students, housing was in the form of 300 army surplus house trailers located where the Bauer College of Business parking lot is today. My brother Jack and I lived in trailer number 67. The bathroom was a block and a half away — not exactly convenient during a cold and wet winter day.

Nevertheless, the University of Houston was an exciting place to be. We had few traditions and few rules. We students, the faculty and the administration were all “winging it.” I got a job as business manager for The Daily Cougar (then a weekly newspaper). I sold advertising, had six employees, contracted with the printers and, in effect, at age 18, ran a small business. What an opportunity for me!

In 1949, I graduated with a business degree and got married the same day to a campus beauty named Joanne Guest. Last August, we celebrated 60 years together. I owe much to the University of Houston.

My point is this — the University of Houston is still a very exciting place. A world-class campus with state-of-the-art laboratories, modern classrooms, nationally ranked academic programs and sports teams, an annual budget of almost $1.3 billion and 37,000 students.

This issue of the Uh Magazine explores the meaning of the “Legacy of the Pride.” For me, that meaning is simple — I am as proud of our university today, and will continue to be, as I was when I first set foot on campus 63 years ago.

Welcome W. Wilson Sr. ('49)
Chairman
UH System Board of Regents

The University of Houston Magazine
Applied Research Hub Gets Green Light

By Amanda Hosey

The Applied Research Hub will build on existing resources and foster key collaborations in an effort to develop HTS applications that have the potential to revolutionize medical equipment and improve the efficiency, security and stability of the next-generation electric power grid.

By partnering with UH mechanical engineering faculty and leading HTS company SuperPower Inc., the Applied Research Hub will create pathways to quickly move superconductivity innovations into industry.

SuperPower’s specialty products facility will provide a pipeline to full-scale manufacturing directly from the hub.

A recent $3.5 million Research Superiority Acquisition grant from the Texas Emerging Technology Fund (ETF) — the second such award for UH — was the final crucial piece to establishing the Applied Research Hub puzzle. The ETF grant allows Venkat Selvamanickam (M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’92), director of the Applied Research Hub and M.D. Anderson Chair Professor in Mechanical Engineering, to round out his team of top HTS researchers and construct research facilities.

“The ETF grant will be used to establish facilities with state-of-the-art equipment to conduct research on superconductor wires, devices and other materials,” explains Selvamanickam, with the goal of transitioning the research to industry.

“The hub will bring together research expertise to translate superconductor products to the energy market and eventually to the medical instrumentation market,” adds Don Biv. UH vice president for research. Support from the ETF “is key in developing TCSUH’s capabilities and advancing HTS applications to put UH and the state of Texas at the center of the international stage,” Bivs says.

Plans currently are under way for the construction of the Applied Research Hub facilities in the UH Energy Research Park.

Making An Impact

Building the UH Health Initiative

New Hires and Texas Medical Center Membership Pave the Way to Expanded Health-Care Presence.

By Shawn Lindsay

Xiaoliu Shaun Zhang’s career in medicine and cancer research has taken him around the world. He received his medical training in China, a Ph.D. in Australia and conducted postdoctoral work in Australia and the U.K., coming to the U.S. in 1999 as a faculty member with an established lab at the Baylor College of Medicine (BCM).

So, some might consider the five-mile move from BCM to join world-renowned scientist Jan-Åke Gustafsson at the University of Houston, a short one. In reality, it has far-reaching implications, as Zhang illustrates the long distance UH will go to recruit top talent as it builds UH Health and strengthens its ties to the Texas Medical Center (TMC).

UH Health coordinates under one umbrella the existing strengths of the university’s health-related academic programs, including psychology, pharmacy and optometry, and its $61 million in health-related research.

Zhang left BCM to become part of a 40-member team undertaking world-changing research related to understanding and curing complex health problems such as cancer and diabetes.

“Even though my group has only been here for about six months, all the research projects have been going extremely well. I am confident that we have made the right move,” says Zhang, a tenured faculty member in the Department of Biology and Biochemistry.

Under the direction of Gustafsson, who was recruited last year to head the new Center for Nuclear Receptors and Cell Signaling (CNRCIS), Zhang’s work has brought more than $2 million in federal grants to UH. His team is collaborating with several renowned clinicians in the TMC to take a patented cancer-fighting biotherapy agent to clinical trials — one of a growing number of collaborative opportunities with TMC institutions after UH became an official member of the world’s largest medical center in late 2009.

“UH is possibly the most exciting university in the nation right now, especially if you’re interested in the momentous race for Tier-One status, closer ties with the TMC, new breakthroughs in health-related research, and innovative new interdisciplinary health science programs,” says Kathryn Peek (M.S. ’76), longtime biomedical educator spearheading UH Health.

While Gustafsson, one of the world’s leading hormone researchers, is considered the “superstar” there are a number of co-stars in CNRCIS. Zhang’s work has brought more than $2 million in federal grants to UH. His team is collaborating with several renowned clinicians in the TMC to take a patented cancer-fighting biotherapy agent to clinical trials — one of a growing number of collaborative opportunities with TMC institutions after UH became an official member of the world’s largest medical center in late 2009.

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Xiaoliu Shaun Zhang

Quick Takes

The UH Wellness comprehensive alcohol prevention program is among the nation’s best, according to the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors and the National Prevention Network. The program received the 2009 National Exemplary Award for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices and Policies.

The UH Law Center is ranked 24th in the 2010 Super Lawyers U.S. Law School Rankings. The list ranks law schools by the number of graduates included in the annual Super Lawyers list, which is based on evaluations by peers within legal specialties.

UH is ranked 14th among the nation’s “best neighbor” colleges and universities, according to a presentation, "Saviors of Our Cities: A Survey of Best College and University Civic Partnerships," compiled by Evan Dobelle, president of Westfield State College. The academic institutions were selected for their positive impact on their urban communities, including both commercial and residential activities such as revitalization, cultural renewal, economics and community service and development.

The C.T. Bauer College of Business Entrepreneurship Program ranked second in the top undergraduate category of the 2009 Best Schools for Entrepreneurs, according to Entrepreneur magazine and The Princeton Review.

The Young Artist Apprenticeship Program, a six-week comprehensive art-making workshop for teenagers from neighboring Houston Independent School District high schools, earned national endorsement with a Coming Up Taller award and $10,000 from President Barack Obama’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. First Lady Michelle Obama presented the award. The program is organized by Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston.
Legacy of the Pride...

Humble Beginnings + Committed Supporters = Remarkable Future.

by Jo Anne Davis-Jones (’79)

Legacy can be defined as the passing of a gift or a precious memory to future generations. The University of Houston’s legacy is filled with an overwhelming number of success stories that paint a beautiful tapestry of promise, excellence and pride.

A Seed is Planted

E.E. Oberholtzer, the University of Houston’s founder and first president, headed the call of a small group of eager and enthusiastic working-class high school students who sought higher education. On June 5, 1927, with a student enrollment of 232 and 12 faculty members, their dream began to take form with a few college classes held in downtown Houston churches and area schools.

On April 30, 1934, that young college had burgeoned into a four-year institution with a fall enrollment of 909 students under the formal charter name of the University of Houston. A secure place to call home, however, still eluded Houston’s university. That was until the J.J. Settegast family heirs and Capt. Ben Taub donated two contiguous tracts of swampy land filled with oaks, pines and other native trees and contiguous tracts of swampy land filled with oaks, pines and other native trees and shrubs three miles southeast of downtown Houston along St. Bernard Street (now Cullen Boulevard). The only stipulation: the University of Houston’s legacy of promise was born.

Supporting an Evolution

Officially becoming a state university in 1963, the university has since grown leaps and bounds in the number of bright and creative students and faculty members who have passed through these hallowed halls. And, those two tracts of swampy land have evolved into a lush, 667-acre campus featuring high-tech laboratories, student housing and state-of-the-art facilities. The Cullen family has remained a strong supporter of the University of Houston for decades. Leaving a legacy of service and philanthropy including the late Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen; the late Wilhelmina Cullen Robertson Smith (’44, HON ’18) and first husband, the late Corbin J. Robertson Sr., who were strong supporters of athletics; Wilhelmina E. “Beth” Robertson, former chair of the Uh System Board of Regents; Lillie T. Robertson, friend and supporter of UH arts programs; Corbin J. Robertson Jr., advocate for the Texas Center for Superconductivity at UH; Carroll Robertson Ray (J.D. ’02), current member of the Uh System Board of Regents; and Alison S. Robertson Baumann.

With 83 years under its belt, the university’s legacy of pride continues with thousands of other alumni, friends and supporters, such as the late Jeffery C. and Jackie R. (“73) and Lucille (“87) Melcher, George (“84) and the late Cynthia Woods Mitchell, former regent John (“70, J.D. ’73), HON ’19 and Rebecca (“70, J.D. ’78) Moore, the late C.T. (“72) Bauer (HON ’01), the Hilton family, Gerald N. Hines, Michael J. Cemo (“86) and the list goes on.

Impacting the World

Today, the University of Houston, with an enrollment of 37,000 students, is a nationally ranked research institution with a rich legacy that has positively impacted the lives of its graduates, students, faculty and staff members, and a global society. Its legacy can be measured by a tradition of innovation, dedication, distinction and achievements. UH is a pivotal player in the growth and success of the city of Houston, state of Texas and nation.

UH is a major provider of innovative research and technology, including energy, environmental, biomedical, superconductivity, nanotechnology as well as social and economic research with real-world applications. UH’s strong creative and performing arts programs have touched tens of thousands locally, nationally and globally. Of equal importance, the university continues to provide educational and cultural opportunities and the skilled employees and leaders who are helping to develop and advance society — solidifying its legacy of excellence.

A Bright Future

Here we sit at the beginning of a new decade ready to march into 83 more years of achievement — laying the path for many more to add to the legacy of pride cultivated by thousands of proud Cougars.

This issue of The University of Houston Magazine highlights those special memories of pride and tradition. Having awarded a total of 253,643 bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral and professional degrees since 1927, there is a weltering of stories to share.

Dedication of the Ezekiel W. Cullen Building, 1950.

Sure enough, the first building was dedicated June 4, 1939, as a memorial to Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen’s only son, Roy Gustav, who died at age 31. When Hugh Roy Cullen made that first gift, one of many Cullen family contributions over the years — now totaling nearly $70 million — to UH and the Uh System, he said, “I have only one condition in making this gift. The University of Houston must always be a college for working men and women and their sons and daughters. If it were to be another rich man’s college, I wouldn’t be interested.” Thus, the University of Houston’s legacy of promise was born.

The Birth of a University

Enter oilman Hugh Roy Cullen, who personally guaranteed that “a university would rise on their land.”
As the University of Houston continues its path to Tier One, it’s important to reflect on the institution’s history to understand just how far it has come. “The Legacy of the Pride” exhibit did just that — celebrating the university’s history while highlighting what the future may hold.

The exhibit, held Feb. 8–11 at the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Pavilion in the M.D. Anderson Library, commemorated UH’s glory years and acknowledged the founding fathers who helped shepherd the university from its beginning as a fledgling college to an accredited, metropolitan research institution.

Presented by the Division of University Advancement, the exhibit offered material from the university’s special collections and archives, a UH Legacy photo gallery, a presidents’ exhibit and a “Legacy of the Pride” video presentation. Several colleges, the University of Houston Alumni Association, The Daily Cougar, the Student Video Network and UH Athletics also participated.

“My favorite part in organizing this event has been uncovering the story of the University of Houston and presenting it to those who maybe never knew our roots of success,” says Gus Forward (‘09) marketing manager and event organizer. “It is gratifying to know that pride and love for this university did not begin during our Tier-One campaign. It began when we opened our doors in 1927.”

“This was a wonderful pride-building tool. I’m so pleased that we could furnish a fitting backdrop to document such a bold assertion — Legacy of the Pride. UH Libraries’ Special Collections is home to the University Archives with all the nostalgic memorabilia and documentation that come with a rich past such as ours,” says Dick Dickerson, university archivist and historian. “Our legacy is clearly that of a Tier-One university.”

From the Hugh Roy & Lillie Maria Cullen H Schechter, Ph. D. Science Building, UH’s first academic building on the College of Science, to the first school established on campus; from returning WWII veterans playing practical jokes to a young Jack Valenti (‘46, HON ‘02) kissing a hall, the “Cougar Spirit” has remained strong throughout UH’s history. See more vintage pictures online.

Our stories are their stories... stories of diversity and entrepreneurship, of accessibility and authenticity, of passion and sacrifice.

In a highly competitive landscape of higher education choices in Texas, the University of Houston needs to distinguish itself from other institutions. Through the “You Are The Pride” campaign, launched in the summer of 2009, UH explains that it’s our students that set us apart. At other universities, students get their identity from the university itself. But UH gets its identity from its students, faculty, staff, alumni and community.

Everyone’s story contributes to the unique tapestry that is the University of Houston. By illustrating our strengths, we can raise the profile of the university, and sustain the momentum that will take us to Tier One.
Hakeem Olajuwon
Growing up in Nigeria, Hakeem Olajuwon saw his first athletic success on the soccer field, using his fancy footwork to fend off points as a goalie.

But after picking up that first basketball in high school, he found his true passion — one that would lead him first to a stellar career with UH’s “Phi Slama Jama,” which made it to three Final Fours and two national championship games, and eventually to the Basketball Hall of Fame.

One of Olajuwon’s fond memories of UH includes living in Moody Towers.

“It was just a wonderful life for a student to experience,” he says. “When you live on campus, you don’t worry about the outside world.”

He also enjoyed his classes, especially business law, which he says gave him “exposure to the real world.”

Reflecting back on his career, Olajuwon says he is thrilled at the opportunities he found at UH, and couldn’t imagine having gone anywhere else.

“To be here at the University of Houston, to be drafted by the Rockets in Houston ... that is something that is part of a dream situation,” he says.

Barbara Padilla
Born in Guadalajara, Barbara Padilla (M.A. ’04) remembers being touched by opera at a young age. Now she is an opera sensation herself and runner-up in the 2009 season of “America’s Got Talent.”

Diagnosed with cancer in 1996, Padilla underwent chemotherapy and radiotherapy near her vocal chords and was even told she wouldn’t be able to sing again. But that didn’t stop her.

While in Houston for treatment, she managed to audition for Peter Jacoby, then music director at the Edythe Bates Old Moores Opera Center, who offered her a full scholarship.

“I just wanted to suck everything in ... like a sponge. Whatever you learn, you learn for life, and I really wanted to seize the moment and learn from all of these people,” she says of her time at UH. “It’s like working with the greatest opera company.”

Chitra Divakaruni
Chitra Divakaruni, an award-winning author and poet whose works have been translated into 20 languages, thinks a lot about her early days in America — learning how to cope with missing her family in Calcutta and the traditions of her culture.

Her experience taught her that she had stories to tell — stories that could bring people together and reveal the common humanity in everyone.

As a UH creative writing professor, she’s also inspired by her students and tries to use her experiences to help international students feel comfortable in their new environment.

“One of the things I love about UH is that while it is striving to become more and more highly ranked in the country, it wants to still remain inclusive ... particularly for students who maybe their family hasn’t been to college before,” she says.

Brett Cullen
Actor Brett Cullen (’79) has garnered many roles in more than 100 movies and hit television shows, including recent stints on “Ugly Betty,” “Friday Night Lights” and “Lost.”

“The University of Houston enabled me to grow as a man, to grow as an artist,” he says. “And it gave me the ability to do what I do now.”

Arriving on campus with hair down to his waist and sand in his flip flops after a summer spent surfing in California, Cullen says he probably didn’t look the part of a serious actor. But very quickly, under the direction of theatre professors Cecil Pickett, Sidney Berger and Claude Caux, he learned the skills that would serve him well in his career.

That experience paid off almost immediately, when Cullen moved to Hollywood and landed a part on a television series, “The Chisolms.”
Exceptional Cougars

Binh Vu

Inspired by the death of a brother he never had a chance to meet, Binh Vu is pursuing a career in medicine, hoping to help others with limited access to health care.

Born in Vietnam, the senior biology major was drawn to UH. Because of UH's connection and nearness to the Texas Medical Center, he now works in the pharmacy department at the UT Health Science Center and is a researcher at The Methodist Hospital.

Vu, a recipient of several scholarships, including a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo scholarship, still finds time to enjoy the college experience. “The university has a lot of events where you can have a chance to experience school pride,” he says. After graduation, he says he wants “to stay in Houston, close to family and close to UH. I want to give back.”

www.uh.edu/pride-stories/binh-vu

Play-by-Play

Cougars Make It to the “Big Dance”

by Shawn Lindsey

After 18 years, the Houston Cougars didn't sit this dance out. Choreographed by a four-game winning streak and the Conference USA tournament title, the Houston Cougars (19-15) managed to two-step their way to the NCAA Big Dance, two points at a time.

The Cougars earned a No. 13 seed in the first-round Midwest Regional match against No. 4 seed Maryland in Spokane, Wash., where they fell 89-77. Head coach Tom Penders resigned a few days later, saying he had achieved his goal of returning UH to the NCAA tournament and looked forward to the challenge of building another program.

Coach Joe Curl and the UH women’s basketball team joined the men in postseason play, traveling to Lubbock to play Texas Tech on March 18 in the first round of the Women’s National Invitational Tournament. Though suffering a defeat, the 2010 WNIT berth put the Cougars back in postseason for the eighth time in program history. Curl took the program to new heights, but also resigned after the season, citing ongoing health issues.

For Cougar basketball fans, it may have been a long time coming, but most dances are worth the wait.

“To know that from now on everyone is going to know us, the 2010 Cougars, as the team that won the Conference USA championship and took Houston back to the NCAA tournament, that’s amazing,” says junior guard Adam Brown.

Senior guard Aubrey Coleman is a leader, but not just of his Houston Cougars basketball team. Coleman leads the nation in scoring.

Coleman often made basketball look easy — but making it to the University of Houston was a bumpy road. After graduating from Gulf Shores Academy in Houston, he enrolled at Southwest Mississippi Community College. It was there that Coleman’s unrelenting work ethic paid off, earning him scholarship offers to universities across the country. His choice: the University of Houston.

“I’m able to hug my mom and sister after the game, and it feels good to see a smile on their faces,” Coleman told NCAA.com.

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Senior guard Aubrey Coleman is a leader, but not just of his Houston Cougars basketball team. Coleman leads the nation in scoring.

A complete player, he also ranked in the top 10 in steals and pulled down an average of 7.4 rebounds per game.

“Aubrey is one of the finest kids, both on the floor and off the floor, that I have had the privilege to coach,” says Tom Penders, who resigned as head men’s basketball coach at the end of the season. “He is an exemplary student-athlete in all ways.”

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“I’m able to hug my mom and sister after the game, and it feels good to see a smile on their faces,” Coleman told NCAA.com.

“After practicing for hours before we even practiced,” Penders told the NCAA. “I’ve been doing this for 36 years, and he has, without question, the best work ethic of any player I’ve ever had.”

—Thomas Campbell
Creating a UH Tradition

Four Families Share Their UH Journey.

by Michelle Klump

When Lauren Aalund ('09) donned her cap and gown to walk the stage for the University of Houston’s December graduation, she looked across the sea of new UH alumni to find two very proud Cougars in the audience — her parents.

“She saw me cry,” says Niels Aalund ('79), Lauren’s father. Aalund already shared his passion for Uh with his wife, Charlotte ('78). But when one of their three daughters decided to attend their alma mater, a wish was fulfilled, and a legacy started.

For the Aalund family, and many others, attending the University of Houston has become a family tradition.

“I wanted my daughter to receive a great education and, hopefully, enjoy some of the same things that I enjoyed,” Niels Aalund says. Aalund loved Uh from the beginning. As a freshman, he walked onto the football team, received a scholarship and played defensive Lineman for three years, including 1976 — when the team won the Southwest Conference championship. He lived in Moody Towers, joined the Sigma Chi fraternity and took full advantage of an education he describes as first rate.

Charlotte received her degree in art education and now teaches art at an elementary school. “My education at Uh fully prepared me for a career I really enjoy,” she says. The couple always hoped one of their daughters would attend Uh, but feared their chance for a legacy was lost when Lauren attended another school her freshman year. But after many visits home, Lauren began to give Uh as second look.

“When I was off from school, so I was here already,” says Lauren. “I had been to Uh so many times, and I liked it. I decided this is where I belonged.”

Charlotte, Lauren and Niels Aalund

Thirty years to the month after her father graduated, Lauren Aalund ('09) donned her cap and gown to walk the stage for the University of Houston’s December graduation, she looked across the sea of new UH alumni to find two very proud Cougars in the audience — her parents.

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Charlotte, Lauren and Niels Aalund

Thirty years to the month after her father graduated, Lauren walked the stage, earning a degree in psychology and sealing the family tradition. Now, she works in Uh’s Bauer College of Business management office and has plans to pursue her master’s degree at Uh.

“We were really pleased,” says Charlotte Aalund. “It just makes you feel close, that we all want to the same place.”

UH Families

“Creating a UH tradition

of my family being a part of the University of Houston’s history of education.”

— Callistus Nnabuife

Nnabuife Family

From the moment he stepped foot on campus in 1978, Callistus Nnabuife ('82) felt at home at Uh. Now, it seems natural that his children should find a home here as well, he says.

“I want to create a tradition of my family being a part of the University of Houston’s history of education,” Nnabuife says. “We have seen other families do that ... we are trying to follow in their footsteps to become a Cougar family.”

As a student, Nnabuife, a native of Nigeria, was thrilled with the diversity that made the campus feel “like an international town.” He spent time attending student activities on campus and he enjoyed playing soccer with friends.

He stayed on at Uh after graduation, working in the library, the chemistry department and, now, in the environmental health department, where he works as a lab safety officer. Nnabuife gives back by participating in campus outreach programs, such as Cougar First Impression, a program designed to welcome new and returning students. He considers encouraging his children to attend Uh another way of giving back.

Currently, his two daughters — Ogechi, a biology major, and Emeka, a psychology major — attend Uh.

“I don't think I would be what I am today without the University of Houston,” he says. “Part of my own way of sharing that appreciation is bringing my own kids to the university — having them experience the Cougar spirit and sharing the experience that I had in college.”

Ogechi also decided her father’s alma mater provided the best resources for her as well.

“I like the many study areas and the different resources for the courses. I also like the different services they have that help students move into graduate programs,” she says.

With three more children in middle and high school, Callistus says he hopes to see other family members on campus soon.

Charlotte and Callistus Nnabuife

Emeka, Callistus and Ogechi Nnabuife

UH Families

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Johnson Family

Joel and Margaret Johnson advertised their hopes for a UH family tradition on their vanity license plate. When they bought it, ‘VCooGS’ was intended to represent five Cougars — themselves and their three children.

Their oldest, Beth Ann Johnson (’90), made the first step when she decided to attend UH. After their remaining two children moved away to attend school, it was decided the ‘V’ stood for victory. With Beth Ann at UH, the family tradition lived.

“Obviously, I had been indoctrinated in the UH spirit,” Beth Ann says. “My parents often told me they were happy to pay for college as long as I went to the University of Houston. While they said that in jest, once you repeat it enough times, it starts to sink in.”

The Johnsons’ love for UH began in the 1960s when the two were undergraduates and living in the same private dorm just off campus. Margaret Johnson (’67) was majoring in home economics education and Joel Johnson (’69) was majoring in electrical engineering. A traffic accident brought them together.

Margaret was injured, and the driver went to the dorm for help. Joel was manning the front desk and went out to assist. Because both of their last names were Johnson, the ambulance drivers assumed they were related and asked Joel to accompany Margaret to the hospital.

“There was no separating us after that,” says Margaret. “We just started going out, and we ended up getting married my senior year.”

Since then, they’ve maintained their interest in the Houston Cougars — buying season tickets to football games every year.

“We are both fans of football and the University of Houston,” says Joel. “We struggle with them through good years and bad years.”

Along the way, they encouraged their kids to attend UH. That encouragement paid off for Beth Ann, who credits her time at UH, including the invaluable experience she gained working on the yearbook and for The Daily Cougar, with helping her succeed in her chosen career as a senior communications manager.

“I was really happy there,” she says of her time at UH. “It’s fun growing up in a UH family.”

Carrasco Family

It was cheerleading that started the Carrasco family tradition at UH. With six brothers and sisters, Rick Carrasco (’92) knew he had to find a way to help pay for college, and after discovering he had a talent for it, he opted for cheerleading.

Raised in Garland, Texas, just outside of Dallas, Carrasco’s first stop was a junior college, and then Sam Houston State University. But the University of Houston beckoned.

“The University of Houston had, and still does have, a phenomenal cheerleading squad,” he says. “They would go to nationals and place high every single year. I wanted to be on the best squad I could be.”

When he tried out and made the squad, Carrasco moved to UH to begin what he describes as one of the happiest years of his life.

“I love UH,” he says. “It gave me everything. It gave me the jumping off point for my career.”

— Rick Carrasco

(continued on page 18)
Cougar Class of 2023

In 1991 two Uh students, Gina Gardner (’92) and Scott Covell (’92), were young and in love — both with each other and their university.

“If we have a son one day,” joked Scott, “we should name him Cougar.”

Nothing was spoken of the idea until almost a decade later. During a doctor’s appointment while Gina was pregnant with their only child, Scott took the ultrasound paddle like a microphone and, in his best sports announcer voice, proclaimed “In the starting lineup … Cougar Covell!” From that moment on, their little cub was known as Cougar.

“People either loved it or thought we were insane,” says Gina.

Now 9-years-old, Cougar, or “Coog” as his friends call him, is well known in his Florida community.

“I love it!” says Cougar. “My mom says it’s unique, and I like it that way!”

“I love it!” says Gina. “It was because of my brother talking so highly of the university,” says Ruben Carrasco (’98). “It was just the perfect place for us.”

Both ended up at the Bauer College of Business, with Rafael majoring in business marketing with an emphasis on advanced professional selling and Ruben majoring in accounting.

“I loved it. It was great … to be able to attend college with your brother,” says Rafael Carrasco (’98), adding that he also felt the professors at Bauer really prepared him for his future as a real estate broker. “It was just a great program to be in.”

The three brothers still love Uh, attending football games when they can — they traveled to North Carolina in 2009 for the Conference USA Championship game — and promoting the university to anyone who will listen. Ruben, who married on New Year’s Eve, even put the Uh logo on his groom’s cake.

The Carrasco brothers say they would love to see the Uh logo on his groom’s cake. Ruben, who was married on New Year’s Eve, even put the Uh logo on his groom’s cake.

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Younger brothers to attend college, he made the case for Uh. That insistence, along with scholarships and financial aid, soon brought Ruben and Rafael Carrasco to Houston.

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Faculty Kudos

Lisa Alastuey, clinical assistant professor of health and human performance, has been honored with the 2009–2010 Southern District University/College Educator Award for her research on the physical and emotional health of women and young people. Alastuey also received the 2009 Texas Health Educator of the Year Award.

Kimberly Biritcher, clinical associate professor of pharmacy, has been elected Fellow of the American Heart Association’s Council on Atherosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology.

Seth Chandler, Law Foundation Professor, developed the spatial and dynamic model of jury behavior featured on the Name3s tv series on CBS. The model illustrates how jurors may vote to convict or acquit based on a random variable affected by factors such as actual guilt. The show’s plot used the concept to illustrate jury tampering.

Yuhua Chen, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering, has received two National Science Foundation grants, totaling more than $890,000, to develop a multimode switching platform that will allow the transfer of all types of data using one piece of technology.

Diana Chow, professor of pharmacy, with arulnasala Raghaveshan ’95 and U.M. M.D. Anderson Cancer Center’s Bruce S. Anderson, received the 2009 Inventor of the Year Award from the Houston Intellectual Property Law Association for developing innovative formulations of a pre-transplant drug for leukemia patients prior to stem cell transplantation.

Mark Clarke, assistant professor of health and human performance, is the principal investigator in research that has resulted in a process that grows real human bone in tissue culture, which can be used to investigate how bones form and grow. The technology will examine ways the breakthrough research can be used in a clinical setting for applications such as spinal fusions, facial reconstructions following bomb blasts or the re-growing of an individual bone outside of the patient.

Gavin Clarkson, associate professor of law, has a paper titled “The Social Efficiency of Fairness,” which was co-authored with an MIT economist, listed on the Social Science Research Network’s Top Ten downloaded list for Property, Citizenship, & Social Entrepreneurship.

Seamus Curran, associate professor of physics and head of UH’s Institute for NanoEngineering, and his research team have found a rare element in the waste excreted by tiny bacteria which his research group discovered in the mid-1990s. That most important finding is a previously unknown receptor for estrogen (ER-beta), which his groundbreaking research on their significance in several common diseases. One of his current projects into obesity and flavonoids.

Thomas E.G. Hsu, John and Rebecca Moores Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, has been honored for his contributions to structural engineering. His University Element Tester is one of only two machines like it in the world. The American Concrete Institute and the American Association of Civil Engineers sponsored a four-part symposium in his honor with presentations from researchers around the world who shared their own research that has been heavily influenced by Hsu’s accomplishments.

Tahir Hussain, associate professor of pharmacology, and Ming Hu, professor of pharmacology, have received $2.65 million in renewal awards from the National Institutes of Health for their respective research projects into obesity and flavonoids.

Alex Ignatiev, director of the Center for Advanced Materials, received a five-year appointment as World Class University Professor by the Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology in South Korea. Distinguished University Professor of Physics, Chemistry and Electrical and Computer Engineering, Ignatiev’s research in resistive memory gained international recognition as a possible major paradigm-shifting technology for computer memory.

Craig Joyce, Andrews Kurth Professor of Law and co-director of the Institute for Intellectual Property & Information Law, has been reappointed chair of the American Society for Legal History’s Executive Committee and the Annual Meeting.

Neah Lim, associate professor of marketing, has received the 2009 Management Science Merit Award for his notable service as a reviewer for Management Science.

Brian K. McFarlin, associate professor, and Thomas W. Lovejoy and Richard J. Simpson, assistant professors of health and human performance, have been appointed section editors for the International Journal of Exercise Science.

Antonya Nelson, Cullen Foundation Chair in Creative Writing and award-winning author, has been named the United States Artists Fellow for 2009. The prestigious $50,000 fellowship recognizes the best and brightest artist.

Ray Mimmer, UH Law Center dean, has made the list of The Best Lawyers in America in his dual specialties of Information Technology Law and Intellectual Property Law.

Carlos Ordóñez, associate professor of physics, has been elected a Fellow of the American Physical Society for his contributions to the “Effектив langrangian theory of the nucleon-nucleon interaction and to conformal quantum mechanics and its applications, particularly to black-hole thermodynamics, and for extensive efforts toward developing science in Latin America.”

Monica Perera, assistant professor of history, has been elected to a three-year term on the board of directors of Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

SUBMIT YOUR FACULTY KUDOS: magazine@uh.edu

UH FACULTY: YOU ARE THE PRIDE

Amanda Baunme, assistant professor of sociology, has written “Sex Discrimination and Law Firm Culture on the Internet: Lawyers at the Information Age Water Cooler.”

Paul Butler, assistant professor of English, has written “Style in Rhetoric and Composition: A Critical Sourcebook.”

Alice Gepada, assistant professor of sociology, has written a chapter, “The Relationship of Ecological Containment and Heroin Practices,” in “Geography and Drug Addiction.”

Helen Rose Ebaugh, professor of sociology, has written “The Gulen Movement: A Sociological Analysis of a Civic Movement Rooted in Moderate Islam.”


Michael Leroy Oberg, professor of history, has written “Native America: A History.”

Guadalupe San Niglet Jr., professor of history, has co-written a chapter, “Latino Education in 20th Century America: A Brief History,” in “Handbook of Latino Education.”

Simon Stamos, director of the O’Quinn Law Library and assistant professor of law, has written “Texas Legal Research.”

Tamir Sommers, assistant professor of philosophy, has written “A Very Bad Wizard: Morality Behind the Curtain.”

Steve Werner, professor of management and doctoral coordinator, has co-written “Managing Human Resources, 10th ed.”

Ira Wollinsky, professor emeritus of health and human performance, has co-edited “Nutritional Concerns in Recreation, Education, and Sport.”

Quick Takes

Patricia Belton Oliver has been named dean of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture. Oliver previously served as the senior vice president of educational planning and architecture at the Art Center College of Design, where she created an environmental design department to bridge architecture and product design. She also established the Institute for Community Development to collaborate on projects with low-cost housing organizations. Oliver chaired the 2009 American Institute of Architects National Convention and National Education Committee. She is also a director on the National Architectural Accrediting Board.

Paul C.W. Chu, founding director of the Texas Center for Superconductivity at the University of Houston, has returned to campus full time. The T.L.L. Temple Chair of Science, professor of physics and executive director of TC^SUH, concluded an eight-year term as president of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where he continued to lead his productive research group in Houston. Chu has received a $2.8 million grant from the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research for his ongoing efforts to search for novel materials that become superconducting at higher temperatures, preferably close to or above room temperature, and with higher current carrying capacity.
The capacity crowd at Robertson Stadium was quieted as the public address announcer spoke. His husked tones conveyed the sobering news of the death of famed Houston attorney and UH alum, John M. O’Quinn. For a moment, the sea of red shirts was still, as were the voices that would soon cheer their team to victory.

John M. O’Quinn (65, L.L.B. ’67, J.D. ’69), a man who was the consummate Cougar — frequently joining fans in the stands — had been killed on a rain-slicked Houston road.

His UH team kept him close in mind that afternoon. “JMO.,” O’Quinn’s initials, adorned the playing field, flowers placed there in respect. Before the first kickoff that began the Cougars’ routing of Southern Mississippi, the crowd joined in one rousing cheer for John O’Quinn.

What does it mean to be a Cougar? For the late O’Quinn, it meant being dedicated, loyal and generous.

“The vision and generosity of the Mitchells have added so much to what the festival offers to its participants, and to Houston audiences each summer,” says Alan Austin, the festival’s general director.

Through a generous unsolicited gift, she also launched UH’s Distinguished Authors Program. Mitchell has provided support to the university’s Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture as well.

Reflections

John M. O’Quinn: The Consummate Cougar
1941–2009

by Marisa Ramirez (’00)

Reflections

Cynthia Woods Mitchell: A Life of Creativity and Community
1922–2010

by Mike Emery

The University of Houston recently lost one of its most passionate supporters of the arts. Cynthia Woods Mitchell (’43) passed away Dec. 27 at age 87.

Mitchell was born in 1922 in New York City. She arrived in Houston in 1939 and enrolled at UH to study art, literature and psychology. Two years later, she met George Mitchell (DON ’42) on a train ride from College Station to Houston. That meeting led to marriage and a lifetime partnership fueled by their mutual dedication to the greater Houston and Galveston communities.

Her enthusiasm for the arts prompted her to make one of the largest individual gifts in the university’s history — a $20 million gift to create the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts. The center cultivates collaboration among artists of different disciplines and forms an alliance of UH’s School of Art; Moores School of Music; School of Theatre & Dance; Creative Writing Program; and Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston. The center hosts public events, residencies and curriculum that unite renowned visiting artists with UH students in all artistic disciplines.

Following a renovation in 2006, the facility housing the Wortham Theatre and the School of Theatre & Dance was renamed the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts. The center has commissioned world-premiere performances and brought renowned artists to campus.

“She was a visionary philanthropist whose dedication to the arts was apparent in the founding of the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center,” says Karen Farber, the center’s director. “Mrs. Mitchell and her family’s generosity has made dozens of significant new art works possible and left a lasting legacy that will continue to influence the entire university and city of Houston with creativity and innovation.”

Mitchell also has provided support for UH’s Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival. Each year, the event introduces audiences to student musicians through the Cynthia Wood Mitchell Young Artists Competition.

“Just as she lived a productive and creative life with extraordinary commitment to our community, she has left a legacy that will fuel creativity for future generations in our community and far beyond,” Khator says.
Keepers of the Pride

Leaders of the Pack
Spirit of Houston Band Pumps up the Excitement.

by Mike Emery

It’s halftime, the Coogs are exiting the field for the locker room. Some fans are lining up at the concession stands for their favorite snacks, but hundreds more are still perched in their seats eager to witness the Spirit of Houston Cougar Marching Band sprint on field with their “untraditionally organized chaos.”

Always ready to pump up the excitement, the Spirit of Houston Band, Cheer and Dance team exude university pride with every high-energy performance and appearance.

David Bertman (M.M. ’98) has led the band since 2000 and has overseen its immense growth over the past decade. When he arrived at Uh, only 87 musicians comprised the marching squad. Now, there are 280 members. Combined with the Dolls and cheerleaders, it has 350 students committed to promoting Uh.

In addition to wowing Cougar fans, the Spirit of Houston is a parade favorite. It also brings its brand of school spirit to pep rallies and other Uh functions.

In 2003, the band played to its biggest audience ever at Super Bowl XXXVIII at Reliant Stadium. More than 71,000 fans were in attendance and approximately 144 million television viewers witnessed the Cougar Marching Band performing alongside Justin Timberlake, Janet Jackson and others.

That performance was a high point for the Spirit of Houston, but it was not the group’s creative zenith. According to Bertman, the Cougar Marching Band strives to make every show better than the last.

“It’s hard to do that,” Bertman says. “It’s all entertainment with quality, so we try to add a twist in every show to draw the audience’s attention. We always try to deliver a top-notch performance that will keep people talking about Uh and the band.”

The Spirit of Houston began entertaining audiences in 1946. Through the years, it has earned a reputation as one of the country’s top university bands.

In 1969, the arrival of band director Bill Moffitt signaled a new era for the Spirit of Houston. With Moffitt’s pioneering “Patterns of Motion” drill techniques and reworking of rock and pop songs into marching band numbers, known as “Sound Power,” Uh served as a model for other college band programs. He passed away in 2008.

Bertman has followed in Moffitt’s footsteps, energizing the student musicians, dancers and cheer squad. In turn, the student performers consistently invigorate Cougar fans with dazzling marching routines and brilliant musicianship.

For the university, the group is not just an entertainment machine. It’s a symbol of Cougar pride, and one that continues to personify Uh’s energy, diversity and commitment to excellence.

“It’s about pride,” Bertman says. “Whenever and wherever the Spirit of Houston performs, it’s representing thousands of Uh students and the thousands of alumni in Houston and around the world. That’s what drives traditional college marching bands, and that’s what drives us.”

“It’s about pride.
Whenever and wherever the Spirit of Houston performs, it’s representing thousands of Uh students and the thousands of alumni in Houston and around the world.”

— David Bertman
Creating a Legacy

Alumna Encourages UH Supporters to Make a Planned Gift.

by Shawn Lindsey

In 1977, the price of gas was 65 cents a gallon, Jimmy Carter became president, and UH beat Maryland in the Cotton Bowl. Dorothy Nicholson (’77) remembers the year well. It marked her graduation from UH’s Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management.

“The college today is a long way from the ‘school’ I attended in the ’70s,” says Nicholson.

“Following graduation, I was disconnected from UH for 25 years,” says Nicholson. “An event at my college brought me back and ‘wham!’ … I was reinspired!”

As a result of her inspiration, Nicholson became involved with her college by taking on the role as chair of the Eric Hilton Distinguished Alumni Club, which sponsors a biaannual lecture series in honor of Eric Hilton. This further motivated her to raise $1.2 million to help fund the

Plan a gift that will change lives, beginning with yours.

To learn more about making a planned gift at the University of Houston, contact the UH System Office of Planned Giving at 713-743-8880 or plannedgiving@uh.edu or visit www.uh.edu/plannedgiving.

Giving Back Feels Great

Education Advocate Credits UH for Paving the Way for Her Success.

by Kelli Ferrell

It was 1963 when Kaye Stripling (M.Ed. ’67, Ed.D. ’85) walked into her first classroom and became a teacher. She was hooked.

This began a decades-long career in education, culminating with her being named superintendent of schools for the Houston Independent School District.

Stripling says she owes much of her success to the UH College of Education.

“They taught me the skills that I needed to be successful,” she says. “They showed a sincere interest in me excelling in my profession.”

Stripling’s career started with Teacher Corps, then a joint program between UH and HISD to train teachers to work successfully in inner-city schools.

“This gave me the opportunity to really get to know many of the university professors, and they provided guidance and a great opportunity for hands-on learning,” she says.

From there, she held many positions throughout Houston-area schools, which led to her appointment as superintendent in 2001. Stripling retired in 2004, but she still wanted to support education.

In 2009, a $7 million gift from an anonymous donor created the UH TieOne Scholarship program. Stripling was drawn to this program because gifts are matched dollar for dollar, allowing more deserving students to benefit from scholarships.

“It is a great feeling to be able to give back to a university that gave me so much,” she says. “I am proud to be a graduate of the University of Houston, and I want to give that same opportunity to others.

“I had a wonderful career, and I owe much of that to the University of Houston.”

Giving Matters

Plan a gift that will CHANGE LIVES, beginning with yours.

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This information is not intended as legal advice. Please consult your CPA or attorney.
Giving Matters

A Heart for UH
Unwavering Devotion Leads to Decades of Generosity.

by Kelli Ferrell

Elizabeth Dennis Rockwell (HON ’99) has always had a place in her heart for the University of Houston, and her loyalty and generosity have never wavered. Her journey started in 1938 when classes were still being held in the San Jacinto High School building, and it continues today, with her presence constantly felt across campus.

Rockwell left UH in 1944 during her senior year to take a job as a cashier with a mortgage company to begin her long career in finance — becoming widely respected as an expert in retirement, estate, investment and tax planning.

In the mid-1970s, she gained national recognition for her work with IRA rules and regulations. She later became executive director of the Private Client Division of CIBC Oppenheimer Corp., retiring in 2001.

As her career spanned decades, she never forgot her UH roots.

“I decided to support three endowed deanships: One at the M.D. Anderson Library, which is the source of information for all fields of learning; one in the Cullen College of Engineering, which takes current scientific thinking and applies it; and one in the College of Education, which prepares the teachers who help students understand prior knowledge and how to use it to make our world better,” says Rockwell, who was awarded a UH Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in 1999.

“I was very proud to receive this honor,” she says. “Over time, I have seen UH position itself at the forefront of higher education in the 21st century.”

Rockwell’s name adorns many facets of the university: the Elizabeth D. Rockwell President’s Suite in the Houston Alumni Center; the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Career Services Center in the Bauer College of Business; and the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Pavilion in the M.D. Anderson Library.

Rockwell underwrites lectures and events, including the Elizabeth D. Rockwell Library Heritage Lecture Series and the prestigious Elizabeth D. Rockwell Ethics and Leadership Series, which brings national speakers to campus.

“I have an interest in two things — the preservation of the past and the direction of the future. And what better way to secure our future than by supporting the education of tomorrow’s leaders,” she says.

Alumni support is especially important to UH, and it is a university tradition across the United States. Whether you are an alum, the parent of a student or a member of the Houston community, you have a role to play in the future of the University of Houston.

Gifts from individuals have a direct and immediate impact, funding a level of excellence not supported through state assistance. State support for higher education has steadily declined — a nationwide trend. Until now, UH has relied heavily on an equivalent rise supported through state assistance. State support for university programs at status quo.

Individual annual giving is critical to our ability to enhance and expand support to students and faculty. Gifts in support of scholarships impact students directly. Today, the cost of a college degree is higher than ever before.

You can take UH to the next level and make a difference in the life of a student. At any level, in support of any college, department or program, it’s your choice.

Your UH Connection...
YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.

This is Ryan Callard. Talk with him and it’ll be difficult to guess that he has ever been concerned about striking up a conversation with someone he doesn’t know. One of the UH Call Center’s outstanding students, Ryan may be calling you soon. Motivated in part by gratitude for his Kappa Sigma scholarship, Ryan talks with hundreds of UH alumni each week about how their support impacts the university and its students. The number of alumni who choose to participate in giving this year can positively impact our Tier-One journey. Ryan also looks forward to receiving your advice.

“My all-time favorite is learning about how a grad’s college experience shaped them for life outside of school. It helps me see what I can look forward to in the future, and it also helps me make some decisions while I’m in school. It’s surprising — the things I learn and what alumni say they would have changed. Some of the answers will make you laugh.”

Ryan Callard
College: HRM, Sophomore
Major: Hotel and Restaurant Management
Minor: Marketing
Hometown: Quinlan, Texas

Why Give?

University of Houston System Operating Budget

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14% 14% 16%
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