As store manager for Anne Fontaine at the Houston Galleria, Carrie Johnson is doing exactly what she had in mind when she embarked on her Consumer Science and Merchandising degree at the University of Houston. She is managing a high end women’s retail store, that is part of a global chain.

As a transfer student, Carrie stuck to her degree plan and was able to finish her program a semester early. Looking back at her experience in the program, she credits her retail math and statistics classes as some of the most beneficial, as she gets to use that knowledge on a daily basis.

Carrie started her retail career as an intern with Tootsies and then went on to lead their shoe department. After leaving Tootsies, she became an assistant manager at Michael Kors before being recruited by Anne Fontaine for her current position. With just under a year and a half under her belt at Anne Fontaine, she is striving to meet and exceed the benchmarks she has set for herself.

Most sons follow in their father’s footsteps, but for Consumer Science and Merchandising alumnus, Gary Whittredge, his son was the influence for his college degree. With years of experience in sales behind him, Whittredge was already retired when he decided to pursue his bachelor's degree, soon after his son graduated with his degree from the Bauer School of Business.

His career started off with an assignment in the U.S. air force as an electronics instructor at the Kierstler air force base in Gulfport, MS. Since the air force, Gary has held top level sales positions in companies such as Texas Instruments and Fujitsu. After retiring in 2001, Gary completed his Associates of Arts degree at Kingwood Community College, before transferring to the University of Houston. While pursuing his CSM degree, he discovered that the company his wife worked for was going bankrupt and they would lose their lifetime health benefits. Gary decided to go back into the workforce as a sales manager for Home Depot’s At-Home Services division.

He is currently completing his graduate degree in Futures Studies in Commerce. Gary hopes to get his doctoral degree in Future Studies and pursue teaching in higher education.
A grueling schedule and heavy workload sums up Megan McPherson’s internship with New Living, a green home store in Rice Village. “I would not trade my experience for anything in the world” says Megan. At New Living, she had the opportunity to work for a new start-up company which afforded her the ability to help build a business from the ground up. Her role at New Living involved everything from sales to working as a liaison to product vendors.

Soon after her internship with New Living, Megan received a job offer from Target as an Executive Team Lead in their hard lines division. In her new role, she is responsible for ensuring that guests have the best possible Target shopping experience with every visit, while motivating her team members to improve performance.

Working in the fashion industry has always been a dream of Victor Puentes. With his parents urging him to include business as part of his educational plan, he found a perfect home in the Consumer Science and Merchandising program at the University of Houston. As the Vice President of Marketing for Houston based M2M Fashions, Victor oversees two stores, handles all marketing and PR activities and serves as a buyer for the men’s line. He started with the company during his sophomore year in college and worked his way up from the sales floor. “I volunteered a lot so I could get to learn the business” says Puentes “and I got rewarded with more responsibility.” At only 25, and at what most people would consider the top of his career, Puentes sees a lot of room for growth. The downturn in the economy and slowing sales has given him the opportunity to be more innovative with his marketing and PR, as he collaborates with other boutiques and industry professionals to cut costs while satisfying customers. His long-term plans are to move to an emerging market where he can leave his mark.
For Tara Peters, the word retail meant long hours, bad customers and worse pay. That was until she went to work for an upscale gourmet cookware company, William-Sonoma. She quickly found out that she actually loved what she did and after finishing up her degree in theatre, she decided to go back for a second bachelor’s in Consumer Science and Merchandising.

During her last semester, she got a little nudge by Dr. Shirley Ezell to attend an informational lecture given by Target. She listened to Target executives describe career paths with the company and their enthusiasm was contagious. Tara was moved. She made a decision at that moment to pursue a career with the company. That was four years ago and today, Tara is an Executive Team Lead for Target in Pasadena, TX.

Tara is delighted to be working with a group of professionals that believe in having fun, working hard and helping out the community it serves. She has had the opportunity to visit schools and read to children, volunteer at the children’s museum and help residents with clean water and ice after Hurricane Ike.

Fashion and Web Consultant Lindsay Holtz started her career at upscale European-styled women’s boutique, BB1 Classic, as an intern for her capstone course in the Consumer Science and Merchandising program at the University of Houston. Prior to starting her assignment, Holtz was anxious as she pictured herself taking coffee orders and pushing paperwork. Her fears were soon laid to rest as she found herself creating and executing marketing and web campaigns, working on photo shoots behind and in front of the camera, and building relationships with customers.

Holtz’s hard work led to a job offer with BB1 Classic after her internship. She says her experiences in the Consumer Science and Merchandising program and with BB1 Classic have been very diverse and she feels prepared to tackle any challenge in the retail industry.
A great boss pushes their employees to be their best and for Carla Loe, that meant going back to school. Loe’s manager, who was getting her PhD at the time, encouraged her to pursue a master’s degree in Human Resource Development at the University of Houston.

After completing her degree in 2005, Carla worked as a Performance Consultant at Halliburton for two years, where she managed the training function, designing certification programs for Sales & Operations. She joined Waste Management in 2008 as a Learning Consultant.

Mr. father of three boys, James (Jay) Clancy, can now add author to his repertoire. The Occupational Technology graduate, which was the former name of the Human Resource Development program, just published his first book “Frugal Is The New Posh.” The short book is about managing your money to get the most of what you want and provides readers a model with five simple questions to ensure all financial bases are covered.

Clancy has over 15 years of experience designing and facilitating learning programs on a variety of topics for organizations around the world. Organizations have included Shell, ExxonMobil, Martin Brower, Dell, Corporate Express, Pitney Bowes, Fleetwood, Honda/Acura, Texaco, and ABB. He started his own learning company, Strategic Ascent, in 2000, and rebranded to Clancy Learning in 2009.

He has also written articles for several newsletters and for the Houston Business Journal and has presented at several local and international conferences. Clancy has taught learning design at the University of Houston and currently serves on the advisory board for the Human Resource Development Program. He has been the Texas Director for the International Alliance for Learning and the President of the Houston Chapter of the International Society for Performance Improvement, and is now the Vice President of Marketing for the Houston Chapter of ASTD.

In her current position, her role includes instructional design, web-based training development and vendor negotiations and sourcing. Loe’s advice to current students is to enjoy learning and take the knowledge you gain in the classroom into the real world. She is also a member of the Human Resource Development Advisory Board at the University of Houston.
A native of Belize, Nuria Castellanos completed her first master's degree in Public Sector Management and was hired by the government of Belize in the Ministry of the Public Service as a training officer. This role allowed her to manage training functions and organize, coordinate and develop internal training programs. After five years with the Belize government, Nuria moved on to the University of Belize where she taught management courses at the undergraduate level.

She moved to the United States in the spring of 2007 to pursue a second graduate degree, a master of science in Human Resource Development at the University of Houston. She worked as a graduate assistant with Dr. Consuelo Waight and was involved in numerous research activities, including collaborating with the Cullen College of Engineering faculty to conduct qualitative analysis of interviews held with female engineering students to identify barriers to pursuing careers in engineering.

Nuria is currently an Instructional Designer with Weatherford International, where she is responsible for designing and developing technical training for various petroleum service product lines.

Director of Communications and Marketing at the University of Houston, Chris Cheatham radiates with Cougar pride. A 2005 graduate of the Human Resource Development program, Cheatham stayed with the university after graduating, working as the Director of Recruitment and Retention for the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. During his two years in that position, he oversaw all recruitment and retention based communications for the college.

His recent promotion to Director of Communications and Marketing for the university has Chris overseeing the day-to-day communications and marketing operations of the UH Academic Affairs Office of Enrollment Services. Cheatham's passion for students to get the UH experience started during his student days when he was president of the Organization for Training and Development.

Despite working in a field other than Human Resource Development, Chris says he uses many key concepts that he learned in his graduate program each and every day.
With an undergraduate degree from the University of Akron in Ohio, Amy Abdallah always had hopes of completing her master’s degree. Like most people, life got in the way, and she found herself working various jobs after college. While working for a multi-family housing acquisitions company, she was relocated to Texas where her role involved travelling to newly acquired assets and recruit/hire and train the new staff. It was there she got bit by the training bug.

For three years she served as the regional trainer for a well known property management company until her dream position came up at Camden Property Trust’s Education Services Department. She successfully pursued the position, and during one of her training classes, she was approached by a colleague who suggested she look in the Human Resource Development program at the University of Houston. She did just that and enrolled in the program soon after. “My experience as a student in the HRD program has created a richer, more developed employee,” says Amy, “I feel these days that my contributions to my organization are much more valuable for me and for them.”

Dr. Kay Strong’s career began at Bowling Green State University (BGSU), Ohio, in the fall of 2000. As a new Ph.D. in econometrics, she taught across the disciplines of economics and applied statistics and was promoted to the rank of tenured associate professor in 2004. While attending a Creative Problem-Solving short course conducted in Seattle, Washington during the summer of 2005, she was introduced to the field of future studies.

So after years standing in front of the classroom, Dr. Strong took a seat behind the teaching station. A sabbatical gave her the opportunity to complete an M.T. in the future studies program at University of Houston. “My time at the University of Houston has been chocked full of new adventures” says Strong. “My thoughts whirled from new information; framework forecasting, post-modernism and critical theories, appreciative inquiry, strategic planning and leadership as transformational change. And my questions constantly challenged definition, interpretation and application.” Outside the classroom, her instruction continued as she worked alongside Dr. Bishop, the University of Houston program director, in community outreach activities.

This fall Kay joins Dr. Bishop to infuse futures thinking into the undergraduate curriculum building toward a minor in futures studies, while she continues working with teachers in Houston area schools to help “futurize” their teaching practice.
A 1990 graduate of the Futures Studies program, Andy Hines is also an Adjunct Professor for the program at the University of Houston. As Managing Director of Social Technologies, he is bringing together the experience he earned as an academic, organizational, and consulting futurist. Prior to joining Social Technologies, Hines enjoyed earlier careers as a consulting and organizational futurist. He was a partner with Coates & Jarratt, Inc., a think tank and consulting firm that specialized in the study of the future. He was also Futurist & Senior Ideation Leader at Dow Chemical with a mission of using futures tools and knowledge to turn ideas into new business opportunities. Before that, Hines established and ran the Global Trends Program for the Kellogg Company.

He co-founded and is currently Vice Chairman of the Association of Professional Futurists, and has co-authored three books -- Thinking About the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight (Social Technologies, 2007), 2025: Science and Technology Reshapes US and Global Society (Oak Hill, 1997) and Managing Your Future as an Association (ASAE, 1994). He has also authored dozens of articles, speeches, and workshops, including the 2003 Emerald Literati Awards’ Outstanding Paper accolade for best article published in Foresight for “An Audit for Organizational Futurists” and the 2008 award for “Scenarios: The State of the Art.” In the last year, he has appeared on several radio and television programs, including the CBS “Early Show,” to talk about a study MTV commissioned his team at Social Technologies to investigate: “The Future of the Youth Happiness.”

NEW PROGRAM

The department of Human Development and Consumer Sciences is pleased to announce the approval of its new Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Development. The new program builds upon the existing Training and Development minor and includes courses in International Business and Organizational Development. For more information about the new Human Resource Development program, contact Boi-Yeanoh Adams at 713-743-4015.

Endowment Opportunities

Contribute to our permanent endowment, which supports student scholarships and program enrichment. To find out how you can help, contact Dr. Shirley Ezell at sezell@uh.edu. Your contribution entitles you to a tax deduction and provides long term support for HDCS and student scholarships.
Delta Epsilon Chi (Collegiate DECA) will host its annual career development conference for DECA members on October 30th in the College of Technology Annex. Last year the conference, organized by DECA members, drew 380 students from 17 high schools.

Dr. Peter Bishop and three UH futures graduates appeared with Larry Payne, host of Dialogue Houston on HCCTV. The discussion concerned the future of Houston and how people get the city that they want. The UH futures graduates on the show were the new futures faculty member Kay Strong, freelance futurist Alexandra Montgomery, and Stephanie Carroll who works with KUHT, the UH PBS affiliate. The hour-long show aired on August 5th, 7th and 8th.

This fall, the UH Futures program is partnering with the UScholars’ College Success Program to deliver a 10-week one credit hour course for undeclared majors. Approximately, 1500 undeclared undergraduate students will participate in a mandatory course identified as Core 1101. The program’s goal is to close the gap on the number of undeclared undergraduates at the University of Houston who have earned 45 credit hours. The course has been designed to integrate content across three curricular areas, college life skills and career placement with a strong futures component.

Dr. Alyssa Adomaitis’ research paper titled “The Impact of Celebrity Images on Postpartum Self-perception” was accepted to the International Textiles and Apparel Association. This year’s conference acceptance rate was only 54 percent. Dr. Adomaitis will present at the 2009 International Textile Conference in Belvedere, WA in October. She will also present her paper “From Sacred to Secular: Adorning the Cross.”

The Student Society for Human Resource Development (SSHRD) hosted its annual welcome back orientation for new and returning students. The group invited alumni, board members and shared information on the group and membership.

Futures faculty and students from the fall 2008 course on the Futures of the US assembled material on seven key long-term issues affecting the future of the United States as a prelude to the 2008 Presidential election. New futures faculty member, Kay Strong, and one of the students in the class, Morgan Kauffman, presented their insights on the future of climate change energy and the U.S. federal budget, respectively, at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the World Future Society in July.

This past June, Dr. Bishop delivered a presentation “Regional Foresight in the United States” to the European Conference on Regional Foresight at Centre International de Deauville in France.

Ross Shott, advanced student in futures studies at the University of Houston, was one of the 40 students accepted into the first class at Singularity University (SU). SU is an extensive (nine-week) program set up by the luminaries of the futures field, notably Ray Kurzweil, author of The Singularity is Near and other well-known books, and Peter Diamandis, founder of the X-Prize and the International Space University.