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CENTER FOR MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
Noticias



Dr. Tatcho Mindiola

FROM THE DIRECTOR

In this issue of *Noticias* we feature articles by three UH students who are members of our Academic Achievers Program. We also present an evaluation of the program conducted by Dr. Susan E. Moreno, Assistant Director of the University's Institutional Research office, and we say goodbye and good luck to Maria Cobio, our Special Programs Counselor, who has been in charge of our Academic Achievers Program at Austin High School.

The articles by the students have common themes. Each was born outside of the United States, and came here to pursue opportunities and a better life. They encountered cultural obstacles, but their ambitions and will to succeed propelled them forward towards a college education.

Laura Hernandez migrated to the U.S. from Mexico by herself when she was fourteen years old to live with her uncle. Her transition to the U.S. was difficult because she did not speak English. She describes her experiences of adapting to the U.S. as overwhelming. Through perseverance,

however, she mastered the language and was fluent in English by the end of her sophomore year in high school. She is now a sophomore at UH and is pursuing a degree in Advertising. After considering several majors, she decided upon Advertising because it allows her to conceptualize the best way to present information to the public.

Chantal Nguyen was born in France and came to the U.S. with her parents when she was eleven years old. She likewise struggled because of the language barrier and her unfamiliarity with the culture. She had to work from her arrival to help her parents earn a living and she credits this work experience for giving her an interest in business. She also says that she has always had a passion for wanting to become a healthcare professional. She developed an aptitude for biology and math while in high school. Thus, when she enrolled at the University of Houston she decided to pursue a degree in Optometry. She graduated in 2008 and is now a first-year student in the College of Optometry.

Guillermo Velasco is also from Mexico and he has a story that is very familiar. His father lost his

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Jorgina Franzheim: Endowment Board Member and Community Activist

Jorgina Alcayaga Petriocioli was born in 1940 in Mexico City with a Mexican and Italian heritage. During her adolescence she attended the American School and married at age seventeen. She readily acknowledges the different educational expectations of that era, especially for girls. "In my generation in Mexico, no one told us [girls] we could do anything except be secretaries, and then get married. So that's all we did. We didn't have educational goals."

While raising two children, Franzheim studied the liberal arts. Her first pioneering role arose out of her concerns regarding birth control. She engaged MEXFAM, a branch of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. Her work resulted in the establishment of a desperately needed clinic in a densely populated, poor neighborhood in Mexico City. She says, "When I started working on birth control issues in Mexico fifteen years ago, no one else was doing it." Franzheim and her cousins donated the money to start this first clinic. A British international organization provided additional monetary backing through MEXFAM. The first challenge once the clinic was open was to forge a bond of trust with the people they were trying to help. Once this was established the



Jorgina Franzheim

education about all the available methods of birth control could begin. Franzheim lauds the fact that attitudes in Mexico about birth control are finally changing and notes that last year a bill was passed in that country legalizing abortion.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) at the University of Houston was established in 1972, as an interdisciplinary academic program encompassing the liberal arts, education, and social sciences focusing on the Mexican American and broader Latino experience in the U.S. Its mission is to advance knowledge, promote critical thinking, and foster the value of service to the community. This involves designing a broad spectrum of public and scholarly programs. Located within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, CMAS has evolved into an academic unit with several major components: teaching, research and publications, recruitment and retention, leadership training, academic advising, and community service.

Chantal Nguyen: Combining Business Acumen and A Love of Science

I am a French-born Vietnamese immigrant who at the age of eleven followed my parents in the summer of 1999 in their efforts to achieve the American Dream. We had previously spent a few summer vacations in the U.S. but I was faced with a cultural shock. Armed with minimal conversational skills in English, I was placed in eighth grade ESL classes at Stevenson Middle School, a few minutes from a Vietnamese neighborhood. When I enrolled into Chavez High School the next year, the teachers noticed my academic aptitude, which had been hidden beneath a language barrier. My psychological transition between France and the U.S. was more or less complete by the end of high school.

When I graduated from Chavez High School in May 2004, college was unquestionably the next step in the events that led to where I am today. Throughout middle school and high school, I aspired to become a healthcare provider to heal wounds, lessen sickness, and help the underprivileged. Fortunately, I also developed a passion for the biological sciences and arithmetic. I especially find satisfaction in interacting with new people and working in a commercial environment. In a world of imperfection, I realized that pursuing a health career would give me a chance to improve the world one patient at a time while challenging my business skills. I decided that a career in optometry would offer the perfect environment in which I could maximize my potential in both business and in the sciences.

My expertise and interest in commerce began when I was eleven years old and first exposed to the art of trade. In the summer, I often accompanied my mother during her baked goods deliveries. I was in charge of writing the receipts and making sure we received the right amount of cash for goods sold. When my father brought home shrimp and crabs from his month-long fishing trips at sea, we would set up shop in Vietnamese neighborhoods and sell the seafood below retail price, but high enough to have a profit margin. I was in charge of double bagging and watching the goods while my father negotiated with persistent homemakers. Even though I was exposed to hard labor from a young age, it did not stop me from appreciating the arts. I continued to take piano lessons in the U.S. This year will complete the fourth year that I have been teaching the piano and organizing annual recitals for my students. I have enjoyed



Chantal Nguyen

every minute of my hobby and plan to continue spreading a love for music to one young person at a time, or to a large audience.

When I first visited the University of Houston, I met Mrs. Rebeca Treviño when I stepped off the school bus. She was representing the Center for Mexican American's Academic Achievers Program (AAP). She talked to my group about this student retention program, which includes an annual scholarship in exchange for tutoring, community service, and leadership retreats. Fortunately for me, there is no ethnicity requirement. The program not only provided academic support for me, the smiling faces that greeted me every time I visited the office brightened up my

day. I have made unique friendships within the program that I intend to keep for life. More importantly, the scholarship funds I received during my four undergraduate years allowed me to devote my full attention to academics rather than to the woes of financial instability. Through the AAP seminars, the program offered many networking opportunities and presented valuable tools to succeed in the real world. Being surrounded by people who have a different cultural background, I also improved my interpersonal skills and unearthed a degree of versatility within myself as I participated in various social settings, a poise that I would not have discovered had it not been for the program.

I have now graduated from the college of Natural Science and Mathematics of the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in biology and a minor in business administration. I am enrolled in graduate school in the UH College of Optometry, class of 2012. After graduation from that program, I plan to practice at a commercial-based optometry office with a high customer flow in order to hone my practical knowledge in a non-academic environment. After several years of commercial experience, I look forward to opening my own private practice and undertaking a fully entrepreneurial venture on my own.

I will be forever grateful for the opportunities that AAP presented to me throughout my undergraduate years. The program made my college experience as painless as possible. There really are no words that can express my appreciation for the critical influence AAP has on the UH community and, most surely, beyond. I am sure that the Academic Achievers Program will continue to provide moral and financial support to all those who need it most. 



Guillermo Velasco: Being the Best He Can Be

I was born in Mexico City and my parents always worked hard to give my younger brother and me a good lifestyle. My childhood was normal with our family doing well. One of my clearest memories is of my dad telling me, "If you want to be a street sweeper, it's okay with me. But be the best street sweeper there is." Ever since hearing his words, they have motivated me to try my best at everything I do.

Then in the summer of 1994 my dad lost his job due to the devaluation of the Mexican peso. After a year of trying to find a way to provide for us, my dad decided to immigrate into the United States. When my dad left, it became very difficult for me. I began associating myself with the "wrong crowd." These negative influences caused me to do badly in school. In fact, I almost began such bad habits as smoking and drinking. During this time, my mom was always there ready to give me advice when I needed it. I thank her for doing so because I was very close to making some serious mistakes.

In the fall of 1996 my parents decided it was best for the family to be together. We then moved to the United States to join my dad. The first few years were rough. We had to get used to a new country, a new culture, and a new language. It was a nightmare going places and having people talk to me without being able to respond or even understand what they were telling me. Moreover, we had the financial problems that come with starting a new life. We struggled to pay for our basic needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing. I can recall how we barely had any clothing or furniture.

Nevertheless, in the midst of these difficulties I remember what my dad had told me about always striving to be the best at whatever I did. Therefore, I did my best during middle school and was rewarded by being an honor roll student. My greatest satisfaction throughout those years was seeing the joy of my parents every time they saw my report cards. At the age of fourteen, I entered high school and I decided to work to buy my own clothing and school supplies. So, I began working in construction. I quickly realized it was not an easy job; I had long workdays and



Guillermo Velasco

very hot temperatures outside. Every night after work I promised myself I was not going to do this job for a living for my entire life. Although it was earning an honest living, I knew I could do better. I went through high school knowing that college was the smartest path, but I did not know if it was possible for me.

Then one day I went on a field trip to UH sponsored by CMAS. During the day the CMAS staff explained the process of enrolling and going to college. At the end of the trip I knew I was well on my way to get an education because I had found an organization truly dedicated to make a difference by helping young students like me through college. During the following months, I made several trips to CMAS and everyone was eager to help me. They followed my application process and even advised me on which classes to take. When it was time for me to start at UH, I was well prepared thanks to the help I received at CMAS. After my first semester at UH, I was invited to apply for the CMAS-sponsored Academic Achievers Program (AAP). If I was accepted, the program would provide me with tutors, an annual scholarship, and advice about how to make the best out of college. What I would have to give in return would be weekly study hours, maintenance of a certain GPA, and work on community projects.

Fortunately, I was accepted into the Academic Achievers Program, and even though I have held many different jobs, the motivation of being the best student I could was always a constant. Since I did not have to worry much about having enough money for school, I was able to keep focused on my father's words. Thanks to the help I received from CMAS and to my dedication, I will be graduating with honors in the fall of 2008 with a dual major in Accountancy and Spanish, and a minor in Italian. Those words that my dad passed on to me seem to be significant today more than ever because I have learned that only those who prepare themselves are the ones who achieve their goals. Even though no one knows what the future holds, thanks to CMAS I feel prepared to live out my dreams and be the best at whatever I do. ❌



Laura Hernandez: UH Sophomore in AAP

When I was 14 years old I decided to move to the United States. The transition from Ciudad Valles, San Luis Potosi to a metropolitan area like Houston was difficult, scary and overwhelming. Likewise, leaving my family was not easy, but I have been rewarded with experiences that have made me grow as a student, a future professional, and a member of my community.

Learning a new language was without a doubt the most difficult challenge I faced. When I started high school I was placed in the ESL program, which, unfortunately, didn't allow me to gain the English language skills as fast as I desired. After requesting the transition from ESL classes to regular classes, my real odyssey began. Some of my peers made fun of my poor English, but with the help of other classmates and teachers I started to improve. I was determined not to let poor language skills become a roadblock to my academic success. By the end of my sophomore year I could maintain a fluent conversation in English. This not only benefited my academic performance, but also granted me the opportunity to engage in after-school activities and relate to other students.

My first encounter with the Academic Achievers Program was a coincidence. I was walking in the hallway between classes in high school when I heard an announcement saying that applications for a college-preparatory organization were available. I immediately rushed to get one, filled it out, and dropped it off to the counselor's office.

Being accepted to the AAP in both high school and college has been a blessing. I thank God every day for putting help like this in my path. The program has assisted me by tutoring sessions and by mentoring which have affected some crucial personal and school-related decisions. Being an AAP member in high school set me apart from other students. By the end of my senior year, I was not only ranked in the top five percent of my graduating class, but also received quite a few scholarships.

In the fall of 2007 I became a freshman at UH. The transition from high school to college was a lot easier than I had



Laura Hernandez

expected. Mrs. Maria Cobio and my mentors from the program had prepared us academically, emotionally, and mentally for the change. I have enjoyed the college life. For instance, I love spending hours at the M.D. Anderson Library, and learning from professors from different backgrounds.

My first semester passed fast. By the second one I was improving my GPA. What I enjoyed the most was bonding with other AAP students. Having a close relationship with students whose background is similar to mine helps me feel secure. The program participants feel like part of a big family. We are constantly encouraging each other to do well academically.

Last spring just a few days before going on summer break I asked Mrs. Treviño about potential internship opportunities. Because of my last-minute request it appeared highly unlikely that I would find one. However, she gave me some contacts and encouraged me to try reaching them. I was lucky enough to find a spot as an intern for the St. Julien Creative Group and Houston Style Magazine. I worked as the personal assistant to the publisher, sales manager, and public relations representative. Working with them was phenomenal. I was assigned duties that included contacting all the media partners and sponsors for the diverse community events promoted by the magazine.

The constant encouragement of people such as Mrs. Cobio and Mrs. Treviño is what is vitally important in helping students to stay motivated to not give up on our dreams and goals. The CMAS staff is always encouraging us to reach our full potential. I know I am far from reaching mine, but I work every day toward this.

I am very glad to be part of such a program. It aids students from challenging backgrounds to achieve things that they thought impossible to achieve. If they were able to help me, I know they can help others as well.

As I wait for my UH sophomore year, I look back to four years ago when I was wondering how I might be in the position that I am today, enjoying life as a student and anticipating being a professional in the advertising industry. 



An Analysis of AAP-UH by UH Office of Institutional Research and Dr. Susan E. Moreno

Seeing a need to support the college experience of Latino students at the University of Houston (UH) and as a response to the underrepresentation of Latinos among bachelors degree recipients, the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) sponsors the Academic Achievers Program at UH (AAP-UH). The program rewards the students with a scholarship if they agree to participate in mandatory skills workshops and maintain a 2.7 grade point average. AAP students must also attend monthly meetings, an annual leadership conference, and become involved in a community project. The program engages the students in academically and socially rigorous activities which enhance their overall collegiate life. One of the reasons this program is so important is illustrated by the fact that while Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic population in the United States today, they are one of the least educated. According to the U.S. Census and the Department of Education statistics, Latinos comprise 15% of the population, but earned only 7% of the bachelor degrees conferred in the 2005-2006 academic year.

In 2005 and again in 2007, the UH Office of Institutional Research (IR) was asked by CMAS to conduct an evaluative analysis of the AAP-UH. The 2005 evaluation had found that students in AAP-UH had higher average GPAs and were more likely to have either graduated or still be enrolled at UH than other UH Latino students. The graduation rate of AAP-UH students was 77% in comparison to 60% for the nation. These were impressive findings for the AAP-UH and illustrated that the program enables students to be successful at UH.

One unresolved issue in the 2005 AAP-UH evaluation was the possibility that AAP students earn higher grades and have higher graduation rates because they represent the top achievers among Latino students despite their modest backgrounds. Thus, AAP-UH Latino students would succeed regardless of AAP support because they are better prepared, more motivated and more ambitious.

The 2007 evaluation addressed this issue through a methodology using a matched sample. A sample of UH students were matched with AAP-UH students on both demographic and academic characteristics, such as high school GPA and SAT scores. The average high school GPA was similar for the 142 AAP-UH students and 142 UH Latino (non-AAP) students, 3.37 and 3.35 respectively. Furthermore, the average SAT combined total for the verbal and mathematics components was



Dr. Susan E. Moreno

comparable with UH Latino students having a slightly higher average of 898 compared to AAP students at 877. Through this method, any differences in academic achievement at the University of Houston between the UH sample and AAP students would be the result of the AAP experience rather than the other factors previously mentioned, such as ambition, motivation, preparation and selection.

In this new matched evaluation, the research showed that the higher achievement of the AAP-UH students is maintained. The AAP students had a significantly higher average GPA at 2.76 compared to other Latino UH students at 2.58. Furthermore, 40% of Academic Achievers earned a GPA at or above 3.0 compared to 32% for the other matched Latino UH students. The average GPA of male Academic Achievers, 2.77, was significantly higher than the average GPA of the other Latino male students, 2.32. For female students, the average GPA was not significantly different between Academic Achievers and other UH Latino students. The higher achievement of AAP-UH students was also seen through higher numbers of graduates or students who continue enrollment at UH. Seventy-eight percent of the AAP-UH students were either still enrolled or had graduated in comparison to 59% of the UH sample.

An interesting finding of this recent evaluation is the success of male students in the AAP-UH relative to male students in the UH sample. The AAP male students have higher GPAs and a higher number of graduates compared to males in the UH matched sample. Both nationally and at UH, more Latinas will graduate with a bachelors degree than their male counterparts. One conclusion might be that females in AAP may not be receiving the same attention and investment as the males. But an alternative conclusion might be that AAP enables male students to earn a degree when they might not have otherwise. For example, AAP males and females earn the same GPA, but females still graduate at a higher rate, a standard that the program emphasizes for the males.

The IR evaluations have focused on quantifiable outcomes for the AAP and we have read the inspiring voices of the AAP students in the CMAS newsletter. I hope that future research will take a broader look at the other facets of the AAP, such as the skills workshops, counseling, or the student networking to assess their roles in the students' documented higher academic achievement. ❏



Two AAP-UH Students Return from Summer Internships: Carla Gonzalez and Erwin Garcia

Two AAP-UH students participated in very different internship experiences last summer. Carla Gonzalez, who is currently a UH senior in Biochemistry was selected to participate in a ten-week research experiment at the Johnson Space Center. This Internship Program enables a student to work under the supervision of a NASA technical mentor. Interns also have the opportunity to discuss their research in public forums and/or to participate in NASA-sponsored colloquia, workshops, and technology demonstrations.

Gonzalez worked from June 2 to August 8, 2008 in the department of Astromaterials and Exploration Science (ARES). This department's scientific staff researches collected astromaterials. Gonzalez' general assignment for the summer was to measure the particle size of different lunar dust stimulants by using a laser diffraction instrument, the Microtrac S3500. As part of the conditions of her internship, Gonzalez will submit a paper on her NASA research.

Erwin Garcia, a senior in Electrical Power Engineering, was an intern for Powell Industries Inc. He received this position through the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center, whose mission is to help students

find a company where both student and company will benefit from the assignment.

Powell Industries builds high voltage switch gears for power companies, oil and gas companies, and other types of factories. In an effort to understand the "big picture" of this company, Erwin spent most of his internship understanding how the company worked. He saw the product from its beginnings as a metal sheet and spare components to the finished product ready to be installed. Toward the end of the internship, Garcia was responsible for checking wiring schematics, fixing problems with the company's order entry database, and verifying that the engineering drawings included the necessary components to assemble the finished product.

Garcia was pleased at how this internship helped him understand what his job might be if he worked for such a company. He is currently working part-time with Powell Industries. 



Carla Gonzalez



Erwin Garcia



Top Left: Rosalinda Martinez, Vanessa Guerrero, Edith Guerra, Liceth Castro, Efigenia Morales, Chantal Nguyen. Bottom Left: Rebeca Treviño-AAP-UH Program Manager, Carlos Fernandez, Jesus Vigil, Guillermo Velasco, Freddie Rodriguez, Daniel Hernandez, Ruben Morales, Lorenzo Cano, Associate Director, CMAS

KUDOS

Congratulations to the following Academic Achievers Program students who made the Honor Roll at the end of the spring 2008 semester at UH: **Diego Almazan, Maritza Argueta, Eva Briones, Liceth Castro, Melissa Duran, Viridiana**

Hernandez, Rosalinda Martinez, Yesica Mexo, Miguel Moreno, Chantal Nguyen, Jacqueline Ortiz, Claudia Paez, Dennis Perez, Yuri Solis, Claudia Vazquez, Celia Zamarripa.

AAP-High School Program During the Summer

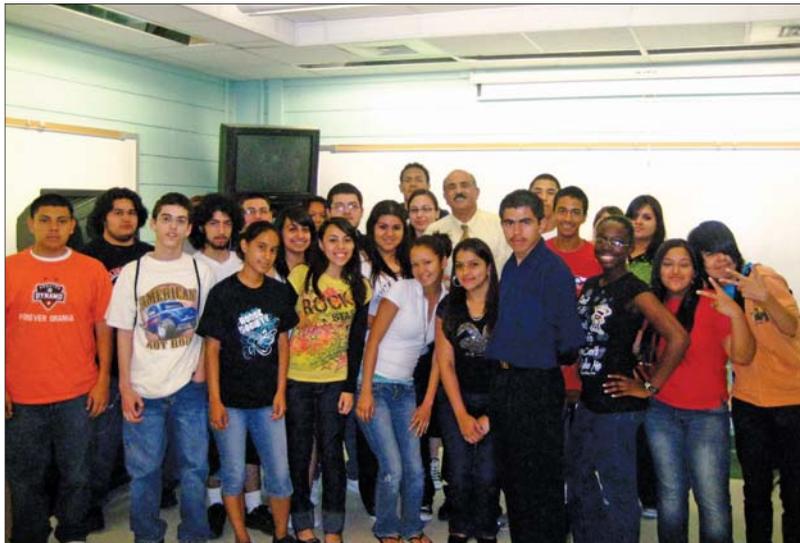
This year's Summer Session for AAP-High School (AAP-HS) students began on June 9th and lasted until July 2, 2008. The location was the UH campus and the students received guided tours of Blaffer Gallery, the Hilton Hotel, the College of Technology, and the C. T. Bauer College of Business Administration.

The principal components of instruction were done by Mr. Mohamad Elkhatib in math and by Dr. Joseph Rodriguez in a Young Writers Workshop. Dr. Rodriguez introduced the students to ways to practice reading and writing to achieve success in schoolwork. The students participated in mini-lessons, readings, homework assignments, individual conferences, forums, and

reading and writing exercises. The students completed assignments at night to fuel their increasing knowledge in verbal skills as tested on the SAT. Dr. Rodriguez taught techniques for responding to test questions and applying critical reading to locate, select, and evaluate information.

In mid-July the students participated in a two-day Leadership Retreat at Camp Allen. Presentations were made on topics as diverse as "Careers in Educational Leadership" and "Developing Your Elevator Speech."

The AAP students also took workshops to prepare them for the PSAT exam on October 18, 2008. ❏



AAP-Austin students with Mr. Elkhatib, instructor of the Math PSAT workshops conducted during the summer sessions at the University of Houston.



AAP-Austin Students in their guided tour of the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management led by Danny Arocha, Director of Enrollment at the University of Houston.



AAP-Austin students visiting the College of Technology at the University of Houston during the summer session.



AAP-Austin students participating in the Young Writers Workshop conducted by Dr. Rodriguez at the University of Houston.

Maria D. Cobio: Retiring AAP-High School Project Coordinator

Maria D. Cobio embodies the CMAS goal of transforming lives...one person at a time. She has worked as the project coordinator for the UH-AAP at the high school level for the last seven years. She recently stepped down from her position in order to finish her B.A. degree, which she has been working on each semester for many years.

Cobio grew up in both Pharr and Edinburg in the Texas Rio Grande Valley. She moved to Houston in 1996 and a year later began attending San Jacinto College North. A few short years after her graduation there with an associates degree, she began working at CMAS as an office assistant. Her eye for detail and her conscientious handling of projects brought her work to the attention of Director, Tatcho Mindiola. When a promotion opened up the position of AAP-High Schools coordinator, it was offered to Cobio. Says Cobio, "I had been at CMAS as an office assistant only one and a half years when the position became available. I never thought I would be offered it. Dr. Mindiola was very instrumental in convincing me to take it."

When asked which of her many accomplishments during her seven year tenure at CMAS she is most proud of, Cobio listed the following. First, she is happiest about being able to motivate high school students to pursue a secondary education. Cobio pointed out that some of the AAP-HS students despite their membership in the college-bound program were still unsure that college was the best option for them. Working along with Cobio to convince them were various guest speakers and the entire CMAS staff. Cobio is also proud of helping so many of the students receive scholarship funding. Cobio mentioned the importance of funding as a necessary partner to an individual's internal motivation to obtain an education. One of Cobio's most noticeable accomplishments is her success in writing grant proposals and receiving funding. In fact, funding from one of her grant proposals enabled a year's schedule of costly SAT preparation classes for the students. Cobio's follow-up documentation with the foundations enabled the funding to continue for multiple years. Tatcho Mindiola says, "Our success in recruiting so many students for college enrollment is the direct result of Maria's dedication and her extraordinary management skills."



Maria D. Cobio

Some of Cobio's fondest memories arise when she thinks of the annual students retreats. Her enjoyment was twofold: getting to know the students as individuals, and being inspired herself by the guest speakers. She says, "I could feel myself growing."

Cobio feels that her role as project coordinator coupled with the supportive CMAS staff has made "all the difference in my life. At first, I was very shy. But doing what was required helped me leave my introversion behind. It helped me learn to maintain professional relationships and communicate better."

Cobio has often remembered her father's words as she helped so many students achieve their dream of a higher education: A lot more can be accomplished by someone with the desire and scant resources than by someone with a lot of resources and no desire. Cobio has had her own desire to grow and excel fueled by her CMAS role models, just as she has sought to fuel the desire of the high school students by being a role model herself. Her replacement, Ruben Morales acknowledges Cobio's contribution to his career profile. "It was great working with Maria while I was a tutor, then a mentor during a six-year time period. I learned a lot from her. For example, she taught me how to bond with the students while also maintaining a professional relationship. I learned organizational skills from her and have applied those principles to both my personal and my professional life."

Another grateful recipient of Cobio's skillful mentoring is Eva Briones, currently a sophomore in Psychology at UH. Eva has worked with Cobio for a total of four and a half years, the first three of which were in high school. Says Briones, "Maria encouraged me like a mother would encourage and support a daughter. She understood the issues in my life, while also inspiring me. She gave me practical advice. When I found out she had come from a large family who couldn't help her financially with her education, I knew she had faced some of the same issues that we face."

As Tatcho Mindiola says, "Although we will miss Maria very much, we enthusiastically support her decision. After all, that's what we're about – helping students achieve a college degree." 



CMAS Faculty Updates, Fall 2008

Alice Cepeda, Assistant Professor, Sociology Department, published the following article with A. Valdez, A. Neaigus and A. Russell, "Heroin Transition Risk among Daily and Non-Daily Marijuana Users who are Non-Injectors of Heroin," *International Journal of Drug Policy* (2007).

Sarah Cortez, editor of CMAS *Noticias*, had poems anthologized in *The Weight of Addition*, ed. Randall Watson, (Mutabilis Press, 2007) and in a Russian anthology of poetry edited by Dana Gioia. Her poems were published in the following journals and chapbooks: *The J Journal: A Literary Journal for John Jay College of Criminal Justice*, Spring 2008; *Texas Poetry Calendar 2007*, *Texas Poetry Calendar 2008* (Dos Gatos Press, Austin, TX), *The Lineup: Poems on Crime* eds. Gerald So, Patrick Shaw Bagley, R. Narvaez, Anthony Rainone (2008). Her essay "Día de Los Muertos" appeared in *The Houston Chronicle* (October 2007). She edited *Windows into My World: Latino Youth Write Their Lives* (Arte Público Press, 2007), which was awarded the 2008 Skipping Stones Honor Award for being "an exceptional contribution to multicultural awareness." She chaired panels at the Texas Book Festival in November 2007, at the Texas Library Association conference in April 2008, and for the Houston Independent School District Gifted and Talented Program in June 2008.

Guillermo de los Reyes, Assistant Professor in the Department of Hispanic Studies, published the following book review: *Los Limites de la Femenidad en Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*. By Rosa Perelmuter. Iberoamericana-Vervuet, 204. *Caliope* (Winter 2008).

Sandra Guerra Thompson, UH Law Foundation Professor of Law and Director of the Criminal Justice Institute, published the following articles: "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt?: Reconsidering Uncorroborated Eyewitness Identification Testimony." *U.C. Davis Law Review*, (2008); "Immigration Law and Long-Term Residents: A Missing Chapter in American Criminal Law." *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, (2008); "Latinas and Their Families in Detention: The Growing Intersection of Immigration Enforcement and Criminal Law." *William and Mary Journal of Women and Law*, (2008).

Nicolás Kanellos, Brown Foundation Professor in Spanish and Director of Arte Público Press published the following articles: "José Alvarez de Toledo y Dubois and the Origins of Hispanic Publishing in the Early American Republic." *Early American Literature*, (2008); "Félix Varela's Activist and Intellectual Precursors in Philadelphia." *Cien años de lealtad en honor a*

Luis Leal/One Hundred Years of Loyalty in Honor of Luis Leal, Eds. Sara Poot Herrera, Francisco Lomelí and María Herrera Sobek. Mexico City: University of California-Santa Barbara, UC-Mexicanistas and Universidad Autónoma de México, 2007.

Rafael Longoria, professor of Architecture, edited the following book along with Kim Tanzer, *The Green Braid: Towards an Architecture of Ecology, Economy, and Equity*, Routledge/Taylor & Francis, London/New York City, 2007. He also co-authored the following article with Susan Rogers, "The Urban Horseshoe: Historic Black Neighborhoods on the Periphery." *Cite: the Architecture and Design Review of Houston*. Spring 2008. Longoria was also awarded the William Bremond Visionary Award from the Black United Fund of Texas in 2007, and the ACSA Creative Achievement Award from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture in 2007.

Michael A. Olivas, William Bates Distinguished Chair of Law and Director of the Institute for Higher Education Law and Governance, published the following: "Education Law Stories: Law and Society in the Classroom" in *Education Law Stories* (Foundation Press, 2007) with R.G. Schneider; "State College Savings Plans and Prepaid Tuition Plans: A Reappraisal and Review" and "The DREAM Act and In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students," in B. Lauren, ed., *The College Admissions Officer's Guide*, (DC: AACRAO, 2008). He also published the following in the *Gale Encyclopedia of the Supreme Court of the United States* (2008): "University of Missouri v. Horowitz," "Governance of Colleges and Universities," and "Non-Citizens and Federalism." He published "Colleges and Undocumented Students" in *Change Magazine* (July 2008).

Monica Perales, Assistant Professor of History, was awarded the 2008 Article Award from the Oral History Association for her article "Fighting to Stay in Smelertown: Lead Contamination and Environmental Justice in a Mexican American Community."

Avelardo Valdez, Professor, Graduate School of Social Work and Director of the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research, published the following articles: with A. Cepeda, A. Neaigus, and A. Russell, "Heroin Transition Risk among Daily and Non-Daily Marijuana Users who are Non-Injectors of Heroin." *International Journal of Drug Policy* (2007); with C.D. Kaplan, "Conditions That Increase Drug Markey Involvement: The Invitational Edge and The Case of Mexicans in South Texas." *Journal of Drug Issues*, (2007); "Machismo" in *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism* (2007). ❌



Endowment *continued from page 1*

Jorgina's marriage to Kenneth Franzheim resulted in her relocation to Houston in 1995. Some of her first volunteering experience in the U.S. was at hospitals. But her natural instinct for building led her to a commitment to volunteer work whose goal was to better educational opportunities for Latinos. As vice-president of the Mexican Women's Initiative, she approached Tatcho Mindiola, the Director of CMAS, and helped arrange an endowment for young women. Her work with the Mexican Women's Initiative provided yet another platform for Franzheim's pioneering vision. One of her innovative ideas was to bring the famous Mexican designer, Armando Mafud, to Houston to organize the organization's first fashion show as a fundraiser. Franzheim and her organization felt that by introducing some of Mexico's music, vitality, and color that the audience would both learn about Mexican culture and have fun. The show was an overwhelming success and began a series of annual fashion shows which could net anywhere from \$100,000 to \$300,000 each. At the time of Franzheim's tenure, the organization focused on helping La Rosa, another organization whose focus is helping women who speak Spanish and who are abused. Through seeing the plight of these women, Franzheim came to the conclusion that the best way to help improve the situation on a long-term basis would be through education. Thus began Franzheim's goal of helping Latinas achieve college degrees. It is this commitment which led her to CMAS.

Franzheim speaks in glowing terms of the CMAS programs and the students. With the emphasis on high school, undergraduate, and graduate education, the CMAS commitment to completing an education matched Franzheim's own interests in the betterment of the Latino community through schooling. She first attended several CMAS events, such as the Noche Cultural Banquet. She also met CMAS students – including girls studying for degrees in fields such as chemical engineering – who inspired Franzheim herself. As Franzheim reminds us, “It is a tough world today. A girl who has been educated is living in a different world from one who hasn't been.” She continues, “I was very impressed with the girls in CMAS programs. They are driven, prepared, and eager for change. They will be mavericks in the Mexican American community as they will raise the educational and economic standards, especially in their own families. These girls will have the opportunity to be in the Anglo economic stream with the same tools as their Anglo peers. Tatcho has made a great difference in this generation. In Mexico the children from families like these would very seldom have the opportunity to attend or graduate from college.”

Additionally, Franzheim and her husband were very active at UH and participated in the development of the new library for which they endowed a professorship. She has also been instrumental in obtaining scholarships for Mexican students attending the Moores School of Music at UH.

Franzheim lauds the social customs in the U.S. which lead Americans to donate generously to worthy causes. She notes that

in Mexico there is no comparable custom of generosity through donations. During her thirteen year residence in Texas she found a “true warmth and generosity of spirit” in Texans. Franzheim has been happy to serve on the CMAS Excellence Endowment Board where she found incredible inspiration in both the CMAS mission and the leadership of its staff.

The advice that Franzheim gives to us also speaks to her life-long commitment of helping others. She says, “Do for someone else what has been done for you. If someone has encouraged you to get a college degree, do that yourself for a younger person. Let the seeds sprout among others.” 

From the Director *continued from page 1*

job in Mexico and he decided to migrate to the U.S. His father's departure affected Guillermo negatively and he grappled to stay out of trouble. Two years after his father came to the U.S. the family joined him. Guillermo describes his transition to the U.S. as a nightmare, but like the other students he and his family prevailed despite economic hardships. He is now a senior Honor student with a double major in Accounting and Spanish, and a minor in Italian.

Dr. Susan E. Moreno's evaluation of our Academic Achiever's Program is the second one that she has conducted for the Center. Our purpose in regularly evaluating the program is to determine if the services we provide the students are effective, and if we are using the funds that we raise from the community in the most prudent manner. We are pleased to report that Dr. Moreno's statistical evaluation shows positive results, and that our students continue to achieve and graduate at a higher rate than the national average, or the rate for other matched UH Latino students. Our community's support has indeed made a difference.

Maria Cobio was employed by the Center for Mexican American for eight years. She started as an office assistant for us in 2000. Her efficiency and management skills were readily apparent and approximately fifteen months after being employed she was asked to oversee the Academic Achievers Program at Austin High School, a job that she performed in an exemplary manner. During her tenure with the Center, Maria pursued a degree in Spanish with a minor in education on a part-time basis. Her goal has been to become a teacher. After eight years Maria became a senior this fall and decided to enroll for her last year of college on a full-time basis, a decision which we wholeheartedly support. We thank Maria for her outstanding service.

In the last issue of *Noticias* we featured articles about several of our graduate students. I erroneously reported that Amalia Mena-Mora, a graduate student in the department of Political Science, was awarded fifth place for a paper she wrote for a national contest in Mexico. In fact, she won first place. We regret the error.

Also, please note that our annual Scholarship Banquet has been rescheduled to Wednesday, March 11, 2009 (see back cover).

Tatcho Mindiola, Ph.D.
Director



**The 13th Annual
“NOCHE CULTURAL”
Scholarship Banquet**

*has been rescheduled
for*

**Wednesday, March 11, 2009
6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
UH Hilton Hotel
Waldorf Astoria Room
University Drive— Entrance One
Houston, Texas 77204-3028**

Keynote Speaker

Renu Khator
Chancellor, UH System
President, University of Houston

Distinguished Alumnus Award

Felix Fraga
Vice President of
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