

UHD's Urban Center for Student Success Razzle-Dazzles

Shining Star Emily DeLaGarza Credits her Success to the UCSS

(Houston, Texas, June 3, 2007) UH-Downtown's Urban Center for Student Success (UCSS), directed by Dr. Larry Spears (professor of chemistry), supports UHD students and local teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. The Scholars Academy, along with a strong stipend program for student researchers, is among its five components.

Sponsored by the Department of Defense Army Research Office and UHD, the UCSS annual services include the following (numbers are approximate): 100 one-semester \$1800 scholarships for STEM undergraduates, research stipends ranging from \$600-\$1500 for 30 students per semester, summer research stipends of \$6000 for nine faculty, summer stipends of \$600 for 85 pre-college students, \$720 stipends for 60 high school teachers, 4 summer Pre-AP certification courses in math and science, travel funds for 22 UHD students to present research at major professional meetings, a student research conference at UHD, a graduate school/ internship fair at UHD, a free GRE prep course, and more. What a powerful resource for UHD!

Emily De La Garza entered the Scholars Academy (SA) in 2004 with a UCSS scholarship and has been in the Honors Corps for two years. She was peer-mentored as a freshman, has served as a Peer Mentor for two years, and will be the Senior Peer Mentor this fall.

"I've always been a shy person," De La Garza says. "I went to my peer mentor a lot in the first year - with personal questions and with schoolwork. It's better and less intimidating going to someone your own age."

De La Garza has done summer research at Rice, evaluating schedulers, and at UC Santa Cruz, determining the accuracy of galaxy dating methods.

