6th ANNUAL
UHD STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Sponsored by the UHD Scholars Academy
Funded by the National Science Foundation (0336612), U.S. Army Research Office (W911NF-04-1-0024),
U.S. Department of Education (P120A050068), and UHD.

A showcase of academic excellence demonstrated by UHD undergraduates majoring within the Colleges of Business, Humanities and Social Science, Public Service, and Sciences and Technology.

Friday, April 20, 2007

8:30 - 9:30 am Registration and Continental Breakfast, Coffee House
9:30 am Dr. Larry Spears, Co-Director, UHD Scholars Academy
Welcoming Remarks, Auditorium
9:40 - 10:10 am Dr. Bryan Williams, Honors Faculty Member
Hampton University
Keynote Speaker, Auditorium
10:15 - 11:15 am Oral Presentations, Session I, Auditorium
11:20 - 12:20 pm Oral Presentations, Session II, Auditorium
Introductions by Dr. Vicky Estrera, Director, UHD Scholars Academy and Lecturer in Biology
12:20 - 1:30 pm Lunch break
1:30 - 3:30 pm Open Poster Sessions, Room A300

Conference Co-Chairs:
Mr. Rene Garcia, Program Manager, UHD Scholars Academy
Dr. Akif Uzman, Chair of Natural Sciences Department, UHD

Conference Planning Committee:
Dr. Richard Alo, Executive Director, UHD Center for Computational Science, Professor of Mathematics
Dr. Ermelinda DeLaVina, Associate Professor of Mathematics, UHD
Dr. Vicky Estrera, Director, UHD Scholars Academy
Dr. Weinig Feng, Associate Professor of Engineering Technology, UHD
Dr. Kenneth Johnson, Visiting Assistant Professor of Geology, UHD
Dr. Madeline Johnson, Professor of Marketing, UHD
Dr. Marilyn McShane, Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the Institute for Community Justice, UHD
Dr. Lisa Morano, Assistant Professor of Biology and Microbiology, UHD
Dr. George Pincus, Dean, UHD College of Sciences and Technology
Dr. Gene Preuss, Assistant Professor of History, UHD
Dr. Herbert Rebhun, Associate Dean, College of Business, UHD
Dr. Aimee Roundtree, Assistant Professor of English, UHD
Ms. Anne Sherman, Director, UHD Office of Sponsored Programs
Dr. Larry Spears, Professor of Chemistry and Director of UHD Urban Center for Student Success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
Dr. Jeong-Mi Yoon, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, UHD
Ms. Celeste Zamora, Media Relations Coordinator, Communications and Marketing, UHD

Oral and Poster Presentations:
Adolfo Aranzales and Michelle Chatman, “Concretes with High Content of Fly Ash”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jorge Tito-Izquierdo
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

Christopher Bowers, “Knowledge Representation and Semantic Networking using Dependency Parser (MINIPAR)”
Co-Author: Lieu Luong
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ping Chen
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

Joel D. Henderson and Norma Ascencio, “Experimental Simulation of Weathering of Sulfide Ores by Rainwater in an Arid Environment”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Kenneth Johnson
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

William Holtkamp, Jonathan Keele, Troy Mason, “Intelligent Traffic Controllers”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ongard Sirisaengtaksin
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jerry Johnson
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

Mesias Pedroza, “The Role of the 30s ‘GP’ Motif in Interleukin-8 Stability, Structure, Function, and In Vivo Physiology”
Co-Author: Aishwarya Ravindran, Panan Gangavarapu, Sai Hari Gandham, Prem Raj Joseph, Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, UTMB; Gregg Nagle, Greg Prado, Dept. of Neuroscience and Cell Biology, UTMB; Roberto Garofalo, Dept. of Pediatrics, UTMB
UHD Faculty Mentor: Krishna Rajarathnam
Project Location: University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)

Demetrios V. Perezous, “The BWG Trouble-Ticket System”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shohreh Hashemi
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

Poster Presentation Session I (1:30PM-2:30PM):
1 - Zaher Abd, Hien Nguyen, Hugo Perez, Ali Abadi, “Thermal Decompositions of Metal Amines Containing Oxo-nitrogen Moieties Either in the Coordination Sphere or as Charge Compensating Anions”
Co-Author: Dr. Ivan Bernal, Chemistry Department, University of Houston-Central
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ivan Bernal
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

3 - Jennifer Abrams, “Analysis of Coastal Prairie Soil Fungi by Denaturing Gradient Gel Electrophoresis”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Phil Lyons
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

The UHD Scholars Academy (SA) is an academically competitive program in the College of Sciences and Technology (CST) that promotes scholarship and student success for undergraduate students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Krishna Rajarathnam
Project Location: University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)

69 - Stacey Candice Ramirez, “The Disciplinary Culture of African American Teachers: No Favoritism Here!”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. David Branhman
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

71 - Juan Carlos Romero and Gloria Matta-Aldana, “Test of 3” X 9” Beam with Stirrups”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jorge Tito-Izquierdo
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UHD Faculty Mentor: Drs. Cindy Stewart*, Deborah Rhatigan**, Todd Moore**
Project Location: *University of Houston-Downtown, **University of Tennessee - Knoxville

Co-Authors: Juan Tito, Dr. Larry Spears, Dr. Jorge Tito-Izquierdo
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Mian Jiang
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Akif Uzman
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Tyra Montgomery
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Aimee Roundtree
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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Co-Authors: Sylvia Slaolson
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ruth Robbins
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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Co-Authors: Liem Luong
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ping Chen
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16 - Dustin Bryant, “Comparison of rDNAs from Ascomycete Fungi Cultured from Coastal Prairie Soils with Ascomycete rDNAs Amplified Directly from Soil”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Phil Lyons
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

18 - Daniel Burnham, “Does Racial and Ethnic Status and Educational Attainment have an Impact on School Equity Importance?”
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. David Branham
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

20 - Francisco Castillas, Erika Escandon, Brenda Marquez, Rocio Martinez, Christian Montez, Farrah Montez, Jessica Munoz, Angelica Najera, Erick Hernandez, Juan Rodriguez, “Transportation and its relation to Air Pollution in Mexico City”
Co-Authors: Sylvia Slaolson
UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ruth Robbins
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jorge Tito-Izquierdo
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UHD Faculty Mentor: Drs. Aaron Krochmal and Lisa Morano
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Drs. Derek de la Pena and Christine Bachman
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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Co-Authors: Patricia Ramon
UHD Faculty Mentor: V. Estrera, R. Garcia, M. Nakamura, L. Spears
Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

30 - Cynthia Gabriela Garza, “A Penul based Sensor for Environmental Remediation and Monitoring”
Co-Authors: Ambar Cancino
UHD Faculty Mentor: Drs. Mian Jiang and Larry Spears
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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Eric Carson, San Jacinto College North
Project Location: Unita Mountains (Utah), San Jacinto College North and University of Houston-Downtown

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UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ongard Sirisaengtaksin
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Poonam Gultati
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  Co-Author: Josh Wolfe
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Byron Christmas
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jerry Johnson
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Maria Benavides
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  Co-Author: Sylvia Slawson
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  Co-Author: Christopher Bowes
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ping Chen
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Hab Stanislaw Wysoczki
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Aimee Roundtree
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54 - Stefanie Matta, “The Accessible Web: Standards Alone Are Not the Answer”
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56 - Mary Beth McGraw, “Dominating Sets in Bipartite Graphs”
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ermelinda DeLaVina
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jeffrey Flosi
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Aimee Roundtree
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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Poonam Gultati
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  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Shohreh Hashemi
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70 - Brian Rodriguez, Ernesto Ramirez, Si Nguyen, “An Investigation of Reactivity Rates in Polymerizable Films”
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Byron Christmas
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72 - Timothy Saludo, “Bridging the Industry Subject-Matter Gap between Software Documentation and End Users of Specialized Software”
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Aimee Roundtree
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jeong-Mi Yoon
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

76 - Nicolas Spaminato, Trisha Pfuger, Thomas Kincard, “Confirmation of the Insertion of the ATF yeast genes in pTRC-His expression vectors for the production of isoamyl acetate in Escherichia coli”
  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Catherine Horton
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Alberto Gomez-Rivas
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ping Chen
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Dr. Jerry Johnson
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

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  UHD Faculty Mentor: Drs. Mian Jiang and Larry G. Spears
  Project Location: University of Houston-Downtown

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to recognize the many individuals, organizations, and institutions supporting UHD students in their research endeavors. These include significant funding of on-campus research over the past year from the National Science Foundation's STEP Program (DUE 0336612), U.S. Army Research Office HBCU/MI Infrastructure Support Program (W911NF-04-1-0024), U.S. Department of Education MSEIP Program (P120A050068), Welch Foundation, and UH-Downtown. Many students conducted their research during summer research programs on and off-campus. Faculty and staff members of these and many other academic institutions, as well as personnel at industrial facilities, have done much to support and mentor our students.

In addition, we thank the UH D faculty and staff who’ve worked tirelessly to support undergraduate research experiences as well as the administrators who’ve helped make this event a reality. We especially thank Drs. Richard Aol, Alberto Gomez-Rivas, Kenneth Oberhoff, Dennis Rodriguez, Larry Spears, Akif Uzman, as well as Dean Susan Ahern, Dean Donald Bates, Dean Elizabeth Pelz, Dean George Pincus, and UH President Max Castillo.