UH-Downtown received a resounding series of endorsements from major funders who awarded significant grants to the university.

Multi-millions in Grants for Future Scholars

UH-Downtown was awarded several grants which could total up to $6.2 million over a five-year period. The Army Research Office and the National Science Foundation (NSF) are supporting the Scholars Academy and outreach programs targeting primarily minority students and women. The programs provide scholarships and academic opportunities for students interested in careers and graduate studies in science, technology, engineering and math. Part of the NSF grant supports a collaborative program with San Jacinto College-North to enhance undergraduate science and technology education and establish a bridge program between the community college and UH-Downtown. Both institutions hope the students who transfer to UHD will apply for the UHD Scholars Academy, an academically competitive program in the College of Sciences and Technology.

Red Rose Ball 2004 to Honor Gene Vaughan

Scholarships for deserving students. That’s what the Red Rose Ball is all about. More than $500,000 was raised this past year for a variety of scholarships, including the prestigious Red Rose Scholarship, which awards $3,000 per student.

The 2004 Red Rose Ball will pay tribute to Gene Vaughan, chairman and CEO of Vaughan, Nelson, Scarborough & McCullough, L.P, and to the 25 Red Rose Scholars. Scheduled for April 17, 2004, at the new Hilton-Americas Hotel, the event will kick off UH-Downtown’s 30th anniversary celebration.

As one of four distinct universities in the UH System, UH-Downtown has a unique mission that addresses some of today’s most pressing educational needs. “We are Houston’s Downtown University, and as such, we play an important role in the revitalization of our community,” said Dr. Castillo, as he continued on page 2.

There’s more good news inside!

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New College, New Leadership

The sign on UHD’s organizational chart could read “Under Construction” as the university launches its new College of Public Service. The college is a spinoff from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, which will retain the departments of English, arts and humanities and social sciences. The College of Public Service comprises the departments of criminal justice and urban teacher education.

Interim dean for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is Dr. Susan Kiernan Ahern. Dr. Ahern came to UH Downtown in 1988 and is an associate professor of English. She once served as chair of the UHD English Department and was awarded the Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. Ahern received her doctorate from the University of Illinois.

For the College of Public Service, Dr. Mary Elizabeth “Beth” Pelz has been named interim dean. Dr. Pelz most recently chaired the Department of Criminal Justice at UHD. She came to UHD in 1988 and is associate professor in criminal justice. She received her doctorate from Sam Houston State University.

UHD Awarded Millions in Grants

UHD’s campus is seeing a lot of action as campus organizations partner with the university to help grow the college.

Mayoral Face-Off at UHD

UH Downtown partnered with Fox 26 News to host a debate by the top three candidates in Houston’s mayoral contest. UH Downtown’s Wilhelmina Cullen Roberts Auditorium was wired to broadcast the lively exchange to the FOX 26 audience.

A table of panelists shared the stage with the candidates and moderator Mike Barajas, FOX 26 anchor. Among the panelists was UHD political science professor Adolfo Santos, Ph.D. The would-be mayors also fielded questions from the audience and the com-A

Bragging Rights

UHD Students Compete and Win at Statewide Conference

UHD is seen as a model in recruiting and retaining minority students, says Dr. Richard Alo, executive director of the Center for Computational Science and Advanced Distributed Simulation. “In fact, the National Science Foundation has cited and touted UHD for its engaging and mentoring academic culture.”

As evidence, three UHD students won awards for their presentations at a statewide Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation conference: Cyril Harris, mentored by Dr. Linda Becerra, associate professor in the Computer and Mathematical Sciences Department; Patricia Ramon, mentored by Dr. Lisa Morano, assistant professor of biology and microbiology in the Natural Sciences Department; and Tim Davis, mentored by a professor at the University of North Texas Health Science Center.

Professor Published in Top Industry Paper

In a recently published article in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Dr. Susan Bernstein, assistant professor of English, discussed the value of developmental courses, which are designed specifically to assist underprepared students to increase their academic skills.

Dr. Bernstein noted that many of these students are challenged and supported for the first time — and they “rise to the intellectual occasion...To deny them that opportunity, through our own impatience and lack of understanding, is a terrible waste of educational resources and of human lives.”
A Masterful Cohort

When they began their journey roughly two years ago, the first cohort, or group, of Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students were breaking ground with the newly minted program at UHD. Already recognized for its outstanding undergraduate program, the Department of Urban Teacher Education will celebrate the graduation of its initial team of master teachers in December.

The cohort acknowledged two peers, students Laurie Conley and Rebecca Eden (grade point averages of 4.0 and 3.9, respectively), for outstanding academic achievement.

The MAT program was established in 2001 with the help of a grant from the Gordon and Mary Cain Foundation. The undergraduate teaching program was established in 1995 in direct response to the critical need for qualified teachers in Texas.

Meet UHD Alumna Lillian McKissick

For alumna Lillian McKissick, a UHD degree provided the ticket she needed to live in another part of the country. “All my life, I wanted to try new places, and I just never had the opportunity.”

After graduating from UHD in 1983 with a degree in accounting, Lillian passed the CPA exam and built her accounting credentials in Houston and Dallas before accepting a senior administrative job at American Electric Power in Columbus, Ohio. After two years, Lillian fell ready for yet another challenge. What to do next? “Nothing in business really interested me, the things I liked most about my career were the legal aspects: taxes and contracts.”

So she applied for law school. Currently in her first year of law school at the University of Tulsa, Lillian hopes to do public-interest law when she graduates — particularly law dealing with the underprivileged.

Is it hard to go back to school after so many years away? A little. Lillian said she’s part-time for now, easing into the routine. But she really loves being back in school. “I’m probably the oldest person in my class, but I would encourage anybody, if they wanted to go back to school, to do it.”

What’s it really like out there in the business world? That question is answered frequently at UH-Downtown by knowledgeable and experienced professors who maintain close ties with business executives like Somesh Singh, Vice President for BMC Software International. Mr. Singh addressed international business students at UH-Downtown on exporting and importing issues and other areas of interest. BMC has operations and research and development facilities in dozens of countries around the world. The company recently donated $30,000 in scholarship funds to the College of Business for students in administrative management.

UH-Downtown offers Houston’s only undergraduate program in international business.

New this fall!

UH-D’s first complete degree online:

the B.B.A. in General Business
The O’Kane Gallery hosted High Art in October, an exhibition of high school artists sponsored by Foley’s. The opening coincided with Houston Poetry Fest at UH-Downtown, a gathering of local and national poets. Corporeal Threads, a one-woman show by China Marks, occupies the gallery through December 11. Marks’ art features works in fabric that seem to combine the Medieval with the contemporary.

Fifteen drawings of the male nude make up Paul Cadmus: Human in Form, on view at the gallery January 15-March 4, 2004. Best known for his 1930s paintings of social critique, later in his life New York artist Paul Cadmus (1904-1999) turned to making classically inspired figure drawings. Cadmus scholar Philip Eliasoph, Professor of Art History at Fairfield University, will offer a lecture on the work at UH-Downtown on February 11 at 7:30 pm.

O’Kane Theatre

The O’Kane Theatre’s fall production was The Lion In Winter by James Goldman. Originally a Broadway play, the story of King Henry II of England and Queen Eleanor of Aquitane is best known as an Academy Award-winning movie produced in 1968 starring Peter O’Toole and Katherine Hepburn.

Margaret Bock, with Houston Assembly Delphians, congratulates cast members following a performance of The Lion In Winter. Bock and other friends of UH-Downtown attended a pre-show reception hosted by UHD President Max Castillo and his wife, Dr. Rosario Martinez-Castillo.

Calendar of Events


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