O’Kane Gallery hosts fall exhibits

The UH-Downtown O’Kane Gallery is hosting Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge, October 20–December 23. The traditional art exhibit presents the works of a wide range of the country’s Chicano and Chicana artists. Veteran artist, curator and facilitator Rene Yañez curates the unparalleled exhibit which is comprised predominately of pieces from actor/entertainer Cheech Marin’s private collection.

Security is Academic When Cultures Combine

Teams from the east and west gathered in August at UHD for a journey of unified resistance against industrial crime. Industry professionals from the two worlds assembled for the university’s first International Security Management Conference. Honored visitors from the National Central Police University (NCPU) in Taiwan, Republic of China crossed the Pacific Ocean to sign a mutual agreement with UHD. NCPU Vice President Dr. Dennis I. Lo and Dr. Max Castillo, UHD president, formally agreed to the exchange of students, professors and research. The conference was sponsored by the Bayou Connection, an international exchange program in the Department of Criminal Justice and the UHD College of Public Service. Bayou Connection was created to link university communities specializing in security management.

W.I. Dykes Library:
Quiet Growth with University Progress

For over 30 years, the W.I. Dykes Library has served the UH-Downtown community. To date, it holds over half a million print and electronic books, bound periodicals, microforms, print and electronic journals and audio-visual recordings. The library provides access to electronic databases and journals, reference materials, and article location tools.

Located on the 5th floor of the One Main Building, the library first opened in 1974. Since then it has prepared UHD students for graduate school, doctorates, research, and careers.

There’s more good news inside!

- New Building Update ........................................... p. 3
- CIS Scholarship .................................................. p. 4
- New Spanish Major ............................................. p. 6
- The Arts at UHD ................................................. p. 7
Friends and colleagues remembered

The UH-Downtown community lost close friends and colleagues recently. They will be remembered and admired for their contributions to the UHD family.

Dr. Joan Abramowitz came to UHD in 1980 to teach in the Department of Natural Sciences and became a founding member of the microbiology program. Her legendary mentoring of students resulted in research opportunities and the pursuit of careers in the health professions. “She instilled in her students a passion for learning and excellence in the best tradition of Jewish mothers,” says Dr. Akif Uzman, chair, UHD Department of Natural Sciences. Abramowitz was honored with the 2003 Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching and in 2005 became Associate Professor Emerita of Microbiology.

Larry G. Jones became a great friend of UHD in the late ’90s and generously devoted his time, energy and leadership ability as Chairman of the President’s Advisory Council. He also co-chaired UHD’s signature scholarship event, the Red Rose Ball, for two consecutive years. He continued his service as a member of the Red Rose Ball Committee and his fundraising efforts and commitment significantly contributed to the success of the ball. He and his wife, Lyn, took every opportunity to be involved with the scholars and consistently demonstrated their support. Mr. Jones was managing partner of the Houston office of the international public accounting firm Deloitte and Touche where he recently celebrated 35 years of service.

Dr. Asghar Nazemzadeh, professor of economics and chair of the economics department in the College of Business, began his time at UHD in 1989. He started by teaching economics and eventually became chair in 1998. Born in Iran, he became the first in his family to graduate from a four-year college when he finished his studies at Pahlavi University in Shiraz, in 1972. His dream to hold a Ph.D. in economics came true when he finished his doctorate a world away at Florida State University. In addition to his duties at UHD, Dr. Nazemzadeh devoted his time to the local Iranian community by publishing the monthly cultural magazine Iranmehr.

Renowned poet and author Lorenzo Thomas was a professor of English and came to UH-Downtown in 1984. He was known as a blues impresario, poet, and literary critic with a social conscience. Born in Panama, he moved to New York City as a child and later attended Queens College, City University of New York. He was a founding member of the Umbria Workshop, a collective of emergent black poets. As director of the UHD Cultural Enrichment Center, Thomas brought important scholars and authors to the university, to expose students to a world beyond our walls. His latest book, Dancing on Main Street, was published in 2004.

If you would like to make a memorial contribution in someone’s name, please contact UHD University Advancement at 713-221-4045, or affrank@uhd.edu.

Summer heats up Collaborative Programs

As many professors take to the road for research excursions the halls of UH-Downtown don’t go quiet or unused. In addition to regular summer classes, over 1,200 pre-college students take advantage of programs in reading, science, technology, engineering or mathematics. For many, just setting foot on a college campus is the first step to a higher education.

The Ketelsen Academic Institute has been in partnership with UHD for some 16 years beginning with the Jeff Davis Educational Collaborative. Project GRAD (Graduation Really Achieves Dreams) students from inner-city high schools participate in the intensive four-week curriculum which covers reading, composition, critical thinking and analysis, and preparation in mathematics and the natural sciences.

Houston PREP, Precollege Enrichment Program at UHD, gives middle and high school students supplementation in mathematics, engineering, computer technology and the sciences. At the end of the session, they compete in groups to test their skills in robotics, engineering design, and project management.

High school juniors benefited from a UHD collaborative project with Baylor College of Medicine, funded by the National Institutes of Health. They shared in biomedical research projects at the medical school and then performed weekly coursework with a UHD professor.

The UHD Urban Center for Student Success in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (UCSS/STEM), funded by a grant from the Department of Defense Army Research Office, supported summer workshops for teachers and students to promote student success in biology, chemistry, or mathematics.

NASA-trained “ambassadors” from UHD, Texas Southern University, Raul Yzaguirre School for Success and Houston Independent School District gave space science enrichment demonstrations for the Urban Outreach in Space Science as part of a grant from NASA/Johnson Space Center to attract young people to science.

UHD’s Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs work in public schools year-round and in the summer, boosting the college-going rates of students traditionally underrepresented in higher education. They receive academic support, tutoring, mentoring, and counseling, and take part in college campus tours and cultural enrichment activities.

Well-deserved “time off”

T. Chaney Anderson began his academic career at UH-Downtown over 30 years ago. His retirement in June prompted many to remember Mr. Anderson’s history and imprint on the university. Mr. Anderson was a mathematics instructor at South Texas Junior College when the UH-System acquired its assets in 1974. He became an assistant professor and the first assistant to the dean in the mathematics department. In 1986 he was named Vice President of Administration and held this position until his retirement. He has served seven administrations during his time at UHD and has been a steadfast force throughout. Above all, Mr. Anderson values the students and always made decisions based upon the measured impact upon them. He will be missed, but is much deserving of “time off.”
College of Business will have new home

Construction for a sixth UH-Downtown building will begin in 2007. While initial funding has been secured for the structure, additional support would ensure ample resources to support the future residents: members of the College of Business faculty and administration and the students who will be using the classroom and laboratory space. Executive Director of University Advancement, Dr. Nicole Sabino, says working on a shoe-string budget makes it challenging to meet student needs. “We are very excited about expanding our classroom and faculty office space. What we need now is for our generous donors and supporters to help add to our momentum,” she said. "The College of Business generates the largest number of graduates at UHD. Given our location at the northern edge of the Central Business District, downtown workers, CEOs and employers are looking to us to provide an educated workforce for the future of Houston.” Naming opportunities are available for friends of the university who choose to support the College of Business through contributions to this capital project. The building will combine classroom and office space, along with parking, primarily to serve the college. It will sit on the corner of Shea and Main Streets, adjacent to DiverseWorks Studios where the current UHD Shea Street lot is located. The structure will increase parking by 19 percent and dramatically reduce the university space deficit of 255,000 square feet, as stated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The architect of record for the project is Pierce Goodwin Alexander and Linville (PGAL).

New Chairs announced

New chairs for the departments of criminal justice and computational and mathematical sciences were announced this summer. Elizabeth McConnell, Ph.D., will head the Criminal Justice Department in the College of Public Service. Dr. McConnell hails from Georgia originally, and holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology from Sam Houston State University. Her Master of Science in Sociology is from Valdosta State University. Prior to UHD she was professor and chair of the Criminal Justice Department, and director of graduate studies at Charleston Southern University in South Carolina. Dennis Rodriguez, Ph.D., has been professor of applied mathematical sciences in the College of Sciences and Technology since 1991 and first came to UHD in 1976. He received his doctorate in mathematics from the University of California at Riverside. Dr. Rodriguez has co-authored textbooks on algebra and trigonometry. He has been published in the Journal of Mathematical Statistics; the College Mathematics Journal; American Mathematical Monthly; and the International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology, to name a few. Dr. Rodriguez received the UHD Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1995 and was named a Piper Professor of 1996 by the Annie Stevens Piper Foundation.

Bragging Rights

Professor of Mathematics Dr. Andre DeKonin has published a book of poetry called Dreaming in Indigo Time. Known for his expertise on probability theory, fuzzy logic, and the Theory of Evidence, DeKonin balances his logical world by writing poetry. His published works include The Four Hard Edges of War (1992), and The Day Clocks Spoke Russian, published in English and Spanish. Cover art for Dreaming was done by local artist Tiziano Hernandez (BS Interdisciplinary Studies, ’00).

Dr. Patricia Golemon has been accepted as a Fulbright Fellow to teach in Taiwan. She will live in the city of Tunghai for six months and teach graduate students American literature and business writing at Providence University. Golemon is an assistant professor of English in professional writing and has been with UHD since 2000.

Floyd Newsum, professor of art and artist-in-residence at UHD, was commissioned by the City of Houston Housing and Community Development to create a sculpture for the Acres Home Multi-service Center. Newsum’s student, UHD junior Auco Dang, assisted him with the sculpture. The sculpture was funded by a federal Community Development Block Grant, designated for the physical, social and economic improvement of communities. Community leaders, city council members and the mayor were invited guests at the dedication ceremony in August.

In January, Dr. JoAnn Pavletic, associate professor of English and director of composition, will begin her term as a Fulbright scholar at the University of Antananarivo in Madagascar. She will research how the Malagasy people view African American culture as she teaches American Studies to upper-division students and advises graduate and doctoral theses.

Dr. David Ryden, professor of history will take a funded leave to work on a book which challenges the conventional wisdom in the political economy of the abolition of the British slave trade (1807). To illustrate the historical importance of both black West Indian slaves and white pro-slavery advocates, he is using an interdisciplinary strategy which combines economic data, and archival manuscripts, public records, and pamphlets.

Dr. Jacek Turski, professor of mathematical science, was invited to present his research on “Harmonic Analysis on SU(2,C) with Applications in Cognitive Vision Systems” at The Erwin Schrödinger International Institute for Mathematical Physics in Vienna, Austria during the special semester on Modern Methods of Time Frequency Analysis. Dr. Turski was recently published (February 2005) in The Journal of Fourier Analysis and Applications. His article, presenting the whole mathematical formulation of image processing for human-like robotic visual system, was cited as the second most viewed article in the journal. This computational vision application of his research was first presented at the 2003 Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) Conference on Mathematics for Industry: Challenges and Frontiers, and published in SIAM Review in 2004.
Staffords Endow Award for Top CIS Graduate

James Stafford (CIS, ‘90) appreciates how a computer information systems degree from UH-Downtown benefited his career. Now, Jim and his wife Emily have endowed the Stafford Outstanding CIS Graduate Award, bestowed on the student with the highest overall grade point average (GPA). One $1,000 award is presented annually to a student who has completed at least 60 hours of course work at UHD, including 18 hours in CIS with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Jim’s longtime employer, Brown & Root, matches the award. “It’s open and willing to meet someone’s personal attention he received in UHD’s small classes and a faculty that’s ‘open and willing to meet with students whenever we have challenges.’”

When he decided to study medicine, Wilcox worried about finances. Because of medical school’s demands, working wasn’t an option. The Stafford award provided some relief. “It’s helping financially,” Wilcox says, “and it’s nice to receive recognition for my hard work.”

Award Spells Financial Relief for UHD Grad

For the first time since starting college, Darrell Wilcox doesn’t have to work to support his family while pursuing his education. Thanks in part to UHD’s Stafford Outstanding Computer Information Sciences (CIS) Graduate Award, he can focus full attention on his studies.

After leaving the Army, Wilcox began working days and studying CIS at night. He attended two other colleges before transferring to UHD-Downtown because, he says, “it’s the only area college that caters to night students.”

Last December, Wilcox graduated summa cum laude. He praises the personal attention he received in UHD’s small classes and a faculty that’s “open and willing to meet with students whenever we have challenges.”

What’s New?

Call him Doctor Cervantes

Marco Cervantes, BS English, ’03, is finishing up his master’s degree in English at the University of Texas San Antonio. He has been accepted into the university’s Ph.D. program in English and literature of the Americas. Marco was a returning student to UHD after serving in the U.S. Army.

Roll Tape!

Humberto Jaime, BS Professional Writing, ’93, came back to campus in his professional capacity, helping produce Laws of Chance, an ABC pilot about famed Harris County prosecutor Kelly Siegel. Jaime took a leave of absence during his senior year to attend the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University to study film and subsequently graduated from UHD. He’s been working in the industry for over ten years now. His work has taken him to places all over the United States, Latin America and Europe.

Scientific advancement

Carmen Galvan, BS Microbiology, ’04, and Melinda Harkness, BS Biology, ’03, were admitted into the incoming Fall 2005 medical school class at Texas Tech University.

Calendar

First Book Conference
September 24

Kemah Jazz Festival
September 25

Full Career Exp., October 5

Houston Poetry Fest, October 7-9

College Bowl, October 8

Crossroads Festival, October 19

HFD Safety and Survival Symposium, October 22

President’s Report to the Community, October 27

O’Kane Theatre, “MacBeth”
October 28 - November 5

Graduate School and Internship Fair, November 4

Student Services Fall Open House, November 12

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day, November 17-18

Admissions Deadline for Spring Semester, December 1

Winter Commencement
December 18
Generous Friends of UHD

Contributions to UHD improve our ability to provide quality educational opportunities to all students and open doors to many who might not otherwise be able to achieve a college degree. We greatly appreciate the generosity shown to UHD by the following corporations, foundations and individuals, and individually and in groups between April 1, 2005 and July 31, 2005. Please note that numbers following a comma indicate the year of production from UHD.

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ENDOWMENTS

MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

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Alumni Profile: Fletcher turns opportunity into career path

C olin Fletcher is gifted. He is fascinated with technology, has worked in West Texas radio, and has provided technical consulting services since his early college days. Double Colin’s gifts with his love of challenges and you find a young man in the Rice MBA for Executives Class of 2007. A recent graduate of the UHD Business Class of 2007. A

minor in Marketing, ‘05) came to UHD three years ago after stepping out of college life for a while. The two things that inspired him to come back were his younger brother’s graduation and his wife’s perseverance in getting her own degree. The management and marketing curricula at UHD answered Colin’s desire to balance his technical skills with practical business knowledge.

“The experience in the classroom illuminated my career path,” he reflects. “I wanted to break out of the technical specialist box. I knew if I could take my technical background and the business knowledge I’ve gained through education, I could turn it into a powerful combination.” In 2003 Colin was awarded the

In Memory of

Joy Longoria
Gail Evans

In Memory of

Michael McShane
Elizabeth H. McConnell

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New Spanish Degree Program: Marketable in any language

UHD-Downtown has introduced a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish to address Houston’s growing demand for bilingual professional employees. Although the degree program benefits any student interested in a bilingual career, it’s designed primarily for heritage speakers, who comprise the largest student population at UHD. Heritage speakers are born and educated in the U.S. and speak Spanish at home but typically do not read or write it proficiently, says Dr. Susan Baker, chair, Arts and Humanities Department.

Although UHD has offered Spanish courses since 1975, the degree program includes newly designed courses, such as classes in professional writing and oral communication. Degree candidates must complete a 120-hour internship, which requires using Spanish in a business environment. “In addition to applying what they’ve learned in a work situation, this will help them network and obtain letters of recommendation,” Baker says. “Students who pursue this degree will be well-positioned for employment opportunities in which bilingualism is an asset.”

Language institute translates into connections
International and corporate liaisons forged

A long-time resource for English language support and instruction at UHD is the English Language Institute (ELI). Although its main mission is to provide English language and cross-cultural communication instruction to incoming international students, the EU also helps the university recruit students from abroad and maintains contacts with international businesses and organizations.

The language program works with international organizations to provide Business English instruction to governmental agencies. It also contracts with major companies here and abroad, such as Chevron Upstream, ExxonMobil and Marathon Oil, to provide customized training for employees. Entities within the university, such as Bayou Connections in the College of Public Service, also benefit from ELI. Recently, an international student from Taiwan was able to polish her English skills for entry into the Criminal Justice Masters program in Security Management. At EU, international students and residents whose first language is not English, get a steadying hand into this new culture while refining English language skills and preparing for future careers.

New Deans Round Out UHD Leadership

The recent round of appointments of deans is complete with the final placement of Don Bates, Ph.D., Dean of the College of Business, and Susan Ahern, Ph.D., Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Dr. Bates has over 25 years experience both in the university classroom and administration. Before coming to UHD, he served as Dean of the College of Business and Economics, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, the national university for the United Arab Emirates with over 17,000 students. Earlier, Bates was Dean of the School of Business and Public Administration at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

In 1992, he served as Dean of the School of Business at Indiana State University. He earned a BS in business administration and MS in management from Indiana State University. He received the Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching and is an associate professor of English. This semester he is teaching Studies in Dramatic Literature.

Mission Driven: UHD staff recognized

“The University of Houston-Downtown is a public, urban university committed to providing quality academic programs that serve the needs of the multicultural population of Houston and surrounding communities.” — First Sentence of the UHD Mission Statement

Standing behind the university’s mission is an administrative team whose individual members demonstrate the truth of that statement. This year those who stood out were Rita Patel (BS Interdisciplinary Studies, ’99) academic advisor for Cinco Ranch; Distinguished Staff Award; and Melissa Price, administrative secretary, College of Business, and Frank Muñiz, corporal, UHD Police Department, Merit Awards.
Do you have a question about UHD? The Campus Information Center opened this spring on the third floor of the One Main Building. It was created to relieve other student service offices where lines for university business often delayed visitors who just had general questions. The center has welcomed an increasing number of students with inquiries, and many new visitors from the UH-Downtown MetroRail station.

The information center staff is trained and equipped with information about every facet of the university. If you call the UHD main phone number, the center staff members will answer. Email inquiries are also encouraged.

Brief tours are available through the center for small groups. Any groups larger than 8-10 people are directed to the Office of Admissions, but the general public or potential students and their parents are encouraged to visit.

Shakespeare in the Fall

The O’Kane Theatre will host the performance of Macbeth, by William Shakespeare, October 28-November 5. A bloody tragedy, Macbeth tells the story of a brave Scottish general who receives a prophecy that one day he will become king of Scotland. As in the past, UHD faculty, staff, and alumni are encouraged to audition. The O’Kane Theatre also provides guest speakers such as the director, the dramaturge, and the actors or short class readings. Theatre personnel also coordinate seasonal drama trips. During Spring ‘06 the group will travel to New York, and in 2007 a trip to Greece is being planned.

Find answers at the Campus Information Center

Do you have a question about UHD? The Campus Information Center opened this spring on the third floor of the One Main Building. It was created to relieve other student service offices where lines for university business often delayed visitors who just had general questions. The center has welcomed an increasing number of students with inquiries, and many new visitors from the UH-Downtown MetroRail station.

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UH-D Welcomes New Faculty

New faculty “got their feet wet” this August at the UHD New Faculty Orientation. The introduction to our unique university is a professional development opportunity made possible through the Cullen Foundation Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The Center is responsible for development and implementation of a university-wide effort to increase student learning outcomes through enhanced faculty engagement. This is the second time the center has held the orientation.

“Freshmen” faculty were presented with information about student and faculty resources, service centers and key areas, the W.I. Dykes Library and the Technology, Teaching, and Learning Center.

Colleagues from each academic college shared their first-year experiences with the new group to help them adjust to life at Houston’s Downtown University. A twist to the program included an interdisciplinary round-table session to encourage cross-discipline synergy.

The 30 plus faculty members invited to this year’s orientation represented the largest number of newly hired faculty since the formal orientation was first implemented.

Faculty Art Show

The O’Kane Gallery hosted a faculty art show this summer. Featured were the works of Susan J. Baker, associate professor of art history and chair of the arts and humanities department; Mark Cervenka, assistant professor of art and director of O’Kane Gallery; Floyd Newsum, professor of art; Gwen Plunkett, adjunct lecturer of art; Kaneem Smith, adjunct lecturer of art; Ann Trask, former director of O’Kane Gallery; and Sharon Warley, adjunct lecturer of humanities.
Yet growth and technology have challenged the library’s limits. Library professionals have adopted using new technology, and by addressing changing paradigms.

Because UHD is a commuter school, the library needs collaborative work spaces. “Team projects are the norm and the library is the primary information source,” says Pat Ensor, director of library services. “Students want and need a place to devote themselves to study and research, alone and in groups.”

A visit to the library often includes a peek into the Instructional Room, widely used for research training. It is equipped with touch-screen technology, but out of the 48 seats in the room, only eight are equipped with laptops. The room is well-utilized, and planners hope to expand it in order to remain a focal point of the academic community.

At almost 59,000 square feet of assignable space, considerably less than the State of Texas recommendation of 94,000 square feet for a university like UHD Downtown, the library’s needs are clear. To accommodate expansion, the university plans to add space on the adjacent 4th and 6th floors within the next few years. Architects first have to resolve a way to connect and secure contiguous floor space.

Improvements will address the university’s increasing enrollment needs and maintain a competitive edge in a world of constantly changing technology. Currently, operation of the W. I. Dykes Library is made possible by funding from the state and from a student library fee ($3 per semester hour per student). Meeting future needs will require broad-based participation from the entire UHD community. A university library is a highly visible entity on the campus, and can be the physical representation of the academic heartbeat of the university. With growing support, the W.I. Dykes Library can continue its role as the intellectual gathering place for UHD students.

Items on the drawing board:

• Expand space for an extensive audio-visual collection, complete with a modern viewing space.
• Increase collections budget to support all of the undergraduate and graduate programs.
• Enhance electronic resources available in various forms.
• Introduce virtual reference – similar to a live chat – to allow patrons to e-mail reference questions and get online assistance.
• Create an exhibition area, or an information commons, that could be used for lectures, visiting authors, and to display information important to library patrons.

Chung Cheng University in Taiwan was the first to connect with UHD in 2001. At the forum, professionals discussed critical issues of domestic and international, public and private security. Special guests included representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Offices in Houston and the Office of Homeland Security. “UHD’s international relationships in criminal justice are bridging the gap between global economic partners,” said President Castillo.

“Houston shares its ports of entry with every other continent in the world. We hope our work here will help curb international criminal activity through cooperative efforts.” Also attending the conference were representatives from the College of Engineering at UH, the Department of Loss Prevention and Safety at Eastern Kentucky University, and ASIS International – Houston Chapter (the international association for professionals in security management in business and industry).