Red Rose Ball 2005

Scholars Academy: A Star in the Lone Star State

Future medical researchers, environmental biologists, and computer geniuses are in development in UHD's Scholars Academy, which received new accolades this year. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board honored the program with its Star Award, given to only four higher education programs in the state.

The board created the award to recognize contributions toward closing the educational gaps that challenge the state. UHD's Scholars Academy was recognized for academic excellence and for successfully implementing a vital mission that focuses on nurturing diverse students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

"We've incorporated best practices in a program that builds academic success," said Dr. Larry Spears, a founder of the academy. "It's the sum of all these things -- the opportunity for research with UHD faculty and in labs at major medical and science facilities, individual attention from faculty and peer mentors, study groups that reinforce camaraderie, field trips, and more."

Students in the Scholars Academy meet rigorous academic requirements. The program supports exceptional students underrepresented in higher education, especially women and minorities. Its mission is to increase the number of academically capable students graduating with STEM degrees, and to encourage graduate studies in these fields. The academy boasts 175 members this semester.

Raymund A. Paredes, commissioner of higher education said, "The winners of these awards..."
Willow Street Pump Station: A Good Brick in Houston

UHD’s Willow Street Pump Station received accolades from a significant historical preservation group, The Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, which presented the project with its prestigious Good Brick Award. Founded in 1979, the awards program recognizes local contributions to the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of Houston’s architectural and cultural heritage.

An excellent example of adaptive reuse, the red brick building’s original architectural elements are beautifully preserved and integrated with modern technology, air-conditioning, lighting and plumbing. In 1902, the facility was constructed as part of the very first municipal utility system in the city. Once considered high-tech, the city used it as little more than a storage facility as years passed until it was abandoned in 1984.

Agreeing with preservationists that renovation would fit nicely with the university’s ongoing efforts to improve the overall campus environment, UHD-Downtown worked with the City of Houston to arrange a 30-year lease on the site for one dollar a year.

Houston Endowment Inc. underwrote the effort through a one million dollar pledge. UHD approached the Texas Legislature to secure $1.3 million in tuition revenue bonds, then contracted with Gensler Architects and Swinerton Contractors to bring the site back to life. A national register designation has been secured for the site.

UHD-Downtown is making Willow Street available for art exhibitions, workshops, receptions, and other events. “Perhaps the most important aspect of the Willow Street project is that it enhances UHD’s contribution to our community,” said UHD President Max Castillo. “The continued evolution of the property is critical to the economic development of this historic district.”

UHD hopes to work with local government to convert an abandoned railroad trestle that spans White Oak Bayou into a pedestrian walkway to connect with the One Main Building and to provide access to the METRORail station.

The Seiglers also participated in UHD’s Partners in Excellence campaign, which generated a total of $300,000 through a matching grant for an endowed professorship in Computer Information Systems in the first year, and student internships and other forms of field experience in the second.

In addition, Jim Seigler linked UHD with Foley’s after his retirement as vice president of stores. Foley’s sponsored the O’Kane Gallery’s High Art program, which encourages precollege students in the arts and gives them an opportunity to exhibit in a university gallery. Seigler made a personal gift to the High Art program as well.

Seigler is a respected artist whose colorful works are only rivaled by his colorful life story. After earning a degree in fine art from the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida, for several seasons he designed sets, floats and costumes for Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus. Seigler’s subsequent art works have been shown in numerous group shows and one-man shows. Recently, he won first place in the prestigious Dishman Competition, sponsored by the Dishman Art Museum at Lamar University.

UHD-Downtown continues to be inspired by Seigler’s work, as he grew up in the Houston area, spent much of his life here, and returned to create a sense of place for local artists and visitors. The Seiglers also have served as part of the very first municipal bond campaign.

UHD-Downtown is fortunate to receive generous funding from many sources that include foundations and corporations whose funding criteria are in harmony with the university’s academic programs, diverse student population, and service to the community.

The individual who pulls out a pen to write a check makes a difference. However, the individual who pulls out a pen to write a check makes a difference. However, the individual who pulls out a pen to write a check makes a difference. However, the individual who pulls out a pen to write a check makes a difference.

A lineup of community partners: (from left) David Bush, Greater Houston Preservation Alliance; Anne Olson, Buffalo Bayou Partnership; Ann Mandel, grant officer at Houston Endowment; Barry Khan, Gensler Architects; a member of the University of Houston architecture faculty; and Gerald Halter, a preservationist involved in the earlier stages of the Willow Street project.

For Your Singular Support.

Many Thanks
To honor the late Dr. Bobby Bizzell, former dean of the UHD College of Business, BMC Software has established four scholarships for UHD business students. The Bobby Bizzell Memorial Scholarships are in addition to BMC’s six ongoing College of Business scholarships.

“Bobby Bizzell had been in close contact with executives at BMC Software, and they were so happy with the relationship he helped them forge with the UHD College of Business,” said Dan Ghosh, a lecturer in the Department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration. “When we told them of Dr. Bizzell’s death in October, they rapidly established these new scholarships to honor him.”

The university and BMC Software will award the $1,000 scholarships annually in the fall semester. To qualify, students must be pursuing one of selected business degrees at UHD and have a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

The Bobby Bizzell Memorial Scholarships from BMC Software

In Short, an Honor

Dr. Kathryn Laity, assistant professor of English, is recipient of the Eureka! Fellowship for Short Story Writing, a one-month, all-expense paid fellowship that offers recognition to a gifted writer. Dr. Laity will be able to focus fully on her work at the Writers’ Colony at Dairy Hollow in Eureka Springs, Arkansas.

Nothing to Hiss At

Dr. Aaron Krochmal, assistant professor in the Natural Sciences Department, received nationwide attention when results from his research on pit vipers was featured on the home page of the Science Now website, a web publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Krochmal’s research was published in the Journal of Experimental Biology.

On to Greater Things

Three alumni – all recipients of scholarships while at UHD through the Lewis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation – have received prestigious National Science Foundation Bridging to the Doctorate fellowships through UT-Pan Am: Kelly Wroblewski, a teacher at Waltrip High School who graduated in ’02 with a degree in mathematics; Cyril Harris, an ‘04 graduate in computer science; and Odabiah Kegege, an engineering technology major who graduated in ’02.

Students in the Spotlight

Scholars Academy students Gina Miles, Leslie Cook, and Colin Carandang won first, second and third place awards (respectively) in the student poster presentation session at the Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Society student research conference in Montreal, Canada.

Wendy Callejas won a third place award at the American Society for Gravitational and Space Biology annual conference in New York, NY, based on work done with researchers at the UT Health Science Center at Houston.

Bragging Rights

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December Commencement: A Family Affair

Enthusiastic friends and family of UH-Downtown graduates snapped pictures and waved posters with “Way to go!” messages at Minute Maid Park at UHD’s commencement ceremony for August and December grads. The total class included 1,044 students who completed their degrees. 736 took part in the ceremony. Mother, Delsie, and daughters Lauren and Jessica (Evans) arranged to walk the stage together. They are all products of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. “We’re blessed to be able to do this together,” said Delsie Walters, who is graduating with a 4.0 grade point average (GPA). “We’ve really enjoyed UHD for its small classes and accessible professors. It is a more personal experience.”

Coincidentally, oldest sister Brook will graduate next May from UHD and the youngest daughter, Victoria, recently transferred to UHD. Jessica’s husband, Chris Evans, should graduate from UHD next summer.

UHD’s most persistent December graduate was Phyllis Cannon, who completed her degree in interdisciplinary studies with a perfect 4.0 GPA. Phyllis first began work on her degree at age 23 – back in 1949.

Spring Commencement will take place at Minute Maid Park, 2 p.m., Sunday, May 8.

Phyllis Cannon, age 78, a college graduate at last — and with a perfect 4.0 GPA! Cannon received her bachelor’s in entomology & animal sciences, with a minor in history.

Stacy Martin, triumphant graduate, receives heartfelt congratulations from President Max Castillo as she receives her Bachelor of Science in Professional Writing.

The family that learns together, graduates together: (from left) mom Delsie Walters, and daughters Lauren and Jessica (Evans). All three received degrees from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.
Alumni Society News

UHD Alumnus:
Blake Cook

Blake Cook went to law school after graduating from UHD with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice in 2002. But after only one semester, the Army National Guard sent him to Washington, D.C., to serve as an intelligence analyst for a year.

Although Blake had meant to go back to law school once his service was over, his job as an analyst was more in line with what he really wanted to do. The Diplomatic Security Service offered him a special agent position, and he grabbed it. “I never wanted to practice law – I wanted to go to law school to be better positioned for what I’m doing now,” Blake said.

The Diplomatic Security Service is a federal law enforcement agency within the state department. The service handles dignitary protection and criminal investigations, which includes protecting the secretary of state and foreign dignitaries below the head of state level in the United States and in embassies overseas. The service’s criminal investigation handles primarily visa and passport fraud investigation. Blake works in the service’s New York field office.

Blake credits UHD as instrumental in getting him where he is today. He went through the police academy at the university before pursuing his bachelor’s degree, and he said both programs were well-suited for those who worked full-time and for someone seeking hands-on experience.

“UHD had the great program I was looking for, it was accommodating to my work schedule, and the career services office was great in helping me get an internship with the Department of Defense’s Office of the Inspector General. That internship definitely helped me get this job,” Blake said.

Calendar

O’Kane Gallery: Brian Ransom: Ceramic Sound Works, March 1-April 7; UHD Student Exhibit, April 14-May 5; 713-221-8042

Willow Street Pump Station: The Missing Story of Ourselves, March 10-April 1; Huffington Center on Aging — works from the Arts in Aging Calendar, April 4-9; viewing by appointment, 713-221-8042.

Fine Arts Festival: April 1-10; 713-221-8104

University Theatre: The Mandrake by Niccolo Machiaveli, O’Kane Theatre, April 1-9, 713-221-8104

Red Rose Ball: Hilton Americas-Houston, April 20, 713-221-8563

Spring Commencement: Minute Maid Park, May 8, 2 p.m.
Alumni Gifts: A $10 Start

At each UH-Downtown commencement ceremony, all graduating UH-Downtown students are offered the opportunity to donate their UH-Downtown property damage deposit to support alumni programs at the university. Hundreds of them happily sign on the dotted line, taking their first steps in making gifts to their alma mater.

Vernaize Coleman, who graduated in December 2004 with a bachelor’s degree in social science, said she was willing to donate her $10 in appreciation for the services that the university offers its alumni. “I’m still eligible for so many things UHD provides: the career services center and the fitness center are just two examples. In fact, I’m planning to go back to school for a master’s degree and I’m going down to the career services center to talk with them about my options. I’d love to get into social work or counseling or open my own business that helps women.”

Vernaize said she loved her UHD experience. “UHD welcomed me with open arms. I really enjoyed the campus and the professors, and it was so convenient: I live in the medical center, so I could easily zip right downtown on the METRORail.”

Red Rose Scholars: Please Check In!

25th Red Rose Ball Scheduled for 2006

Are you a recipient of the Red Rose Scholarship? We’d like to hear from you!

Since 1981, the Red Rose Ball has supported a number of scholarships – for students in the Scholars Academy, transfer students, and of course, the 25 Red Rose Scholars who are presented at the ball each year.

While a volunteer committee prepares for Red Rose Ball 2006, plans are also beginning for the gala’s 25th anniversary in 2006 – and that includes making connections with former Red Rose Scholars.

Virginia McMaster received the scholarship in 1985: “The Red Rose Scholarship was an honor,” said McMaster, who went on to become a certified financial planner and work in private practice. UHD’s student diversity enriched McMaster’s experience: “I learned so much from so many students from around the world, and that was a big part of my education.”

McMaster has volunteered extensively in the community and is a life member and former board member of the Women’s Fund for Health, Education and Research.

If you’re a former Red Rose Scholar, let us know how you’re doing. Please contact Gilda Parker in the Office of University Advancement, at 713-221-8363.

What’s New? Send a Note!

Update your former UHD classmates on your life by submitting an item for the “Alumni Notes” in New Horizons. We’ll also post your item in the alumni section of UHD’s website.

You can email directly from the website at www.uhd.edu/alumni/notes.htm. Or, send an email to Karen Alfaro-Chamberlin at alfaro@uhd.edu. Or, mail your item to Karen at UH-Downtown, One Main Street, Suite 9905, Houston, Texas 77002.

Efrain Guzman (’98) went to work as a research technician at Baylor College of Medicine after graduation. In 2000 he started to pursue a doctoral degree in molecular virology at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom. He was awarded a Ph.D. in June 2004 and worked for Horticultural Research International, a biotech company specializing in crop management and development. He recently has been appointed as research fellow at the Institute for Animal Health, the UK equivalent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where he is working on developing vaccines for the prevention and control of biological agents that could be used in terrorist attacks.

Toby Hunt (’02) is working at Sealake Yacht Sales in Kemah, Texas as the accountant of record, handling a budget of well over $1 million. Sealake is owned by Vince Morvillo, a competitive sailor also known for overcoming a sight impairment to achieve world championships. Toby grew up in Sarasota, Florida and feels much at home in the sailing business.

Frank J. Morales, ’02

Accounting Manager at KTMD-TV Telemundo 47 in Houston, has been with the Spanish-language station for twelve years. He oversees and manages accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger, and payroll. He is a member of the National Association of Credit Managers and Treasurer for Houston Association of Hispanic Media Professionals.

Angela M. Petit (’98) recently received her MBA in eBusiness from the University of Phoenix. She currently works for HP as a business systems analyst and is the CEO of her own beauty consulting business. Angela actively participates in ministry activities and enjoys traveling worldwide.

Wendy Rios (’03) recently received her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and is now a community supervision officer (adult probation officer) here in Houston. She is very proud of her UHD education.

Christy Salinas (’01) is currently pursuing a master’s degree in marriage and family therapy. She moved to Pasadena, California, in 2003 and is now in her second year at California State University-Dominguez Hills. She hopes to graduate in Fall 2005.

Efrain Guzman

Angela M. Petit

Alumni Notes
The Office of the President hosted the Intercultural Development and Research Association (IDRA) Urban Forum for Urban Learning technologies. The applications of intelligent addressed the conference on Korvin, an expert on fuzzy logic, UHD Professor Dr. André De methods of soft computing. and uncertainty processing and artificial intelligent techniques; intelligent technologies; traditional programs; and provides teacher, administrator, and parent training and technical assistance. An independent, non-profit organization, it works for excellence and equity in education in Texas and across the United States.

Researchers and practitioners exchanged ideas on learning, adaptive systems, and data mining, mathematical foundations of intelligent technologies, traditional artificial intelligent techniques, and uncertainty processing and methods of soft computing. UHD Professor Dr. André De Korvin, an expert on fuzzy logic, addressed the conference on the applications of intelligent technologies.

Forum for Urban Learning

Generous Friends of UHD

Contributions to UHD/Downtown are vital to fulfilling our mission of providing quality educational opportunities to all students and opening doors to many who might not otherwise be able to pursue a college degree. We greatly appreciate the generosity shown to UHD by the following corporations, foundations and individuals between September 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004. Please note that numbers following a name signify the year of graduation from UHD.

$100,000 to $400,000
- The 100 Club, Inc.

$50,000 to $99,999
- El Paso Corporate Foundation
- The Simmons Foundation
- Jason Yoo

$5,000 to $9,999
- Charles and Beth Saunders

$1,000 to $4,999
- Asia Chemical Corporation
- Bridgeway Capital Management, Inc.
- Patti and Emilio Chemali
- ExxonMobil

$99 and below
- Sandra Ridgeway, '87

ALUMNI ANNUAL FUND

$200 to $600
- Rodolfo E. Lopez, '94

$100 to $199
- Angela South Clifton, '87
- Delta W. Hayes, '00
- Anita Cadena Longoria, '86
- Lisa L. Mathena, '97
- Mt. and Mrs. Nnamenka Odunze, '85
- Melvin Robinson, '02
- Desiree, '94, and Matt, '94
- Woodruff

$99 and below
- Tolan Ceylon Beck, '01
- William A. Cope, '02
- Dora Espitia, '03
- Sophia Gusman, '03
- Mark Elliott Miller, MPH, '88
- Ryoko Machuzuki, '85
- Irma Morales, '98
- Troyon Rydell Myree, '02
- Irma Morales, '98
- Ryoko Machuzuki, '85
- Melvin Robinson, '02
- Desiree, '94, and Matt, '94
- Woodruff

ENDOWMENTS

Christina and Terry Axtmann Red Rose Scholarship Endowment
- Terry and Christina, '96, Axtmann

The Terry and Christina Axtmann Endowment Fund
- Terry and Christina, '96, Axtmann

Clyde and Susan Miller Scholarship Endowment
- Clyde, '96, and Susan Miller

Distinguished Faculty Endowment
- Michael R. Dressman
- Charles A. Warrell, Jr., '89
- Jason Yoo

MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

In Memory of Jay Anderson
- Jo Jean and Chaney Anderson

In Memory of Bobby Bizzell
- Fredric J. Atteimsor
- Forrest and Patti Aven
- Ming M. Chang
- Orapin Duangploy
- Bryan and Laura Emerson
- Ralph and Barbara Kaufman
- Jack and Brenda Lord

Pearson Education
- Marietta and Ernest Pekmezaris
- Herbert Reibhun
- Randy Serrett
- Dr. Margaret L. Shelton
- Steve and K Sucher

In Memory of J. Don Boney
- Floyd Newsom
- Susan Ahern

In Memory of Donald Bonham
- Bienda Bonham Geiland

In Memory of William Brignon
- Susan Ahern

In Memory of Robert Browne
- Paulette and Gordon Purdy

In Memory of Alicia Spencer Castillo
- Susana Jimenez-Petiton
- Elizabeth R. Rockwell

In Memory of Nancy T. Rich
- Philip Stackable, '01

MATCHING GIFTS

Listed beneath the company names are the donors whose contributions made these matching-gift possible.

ConocoPhillips
- Gerald Pinto

Halliburton
- James Edward Stafford, '90

Hewlett-Packard
- Christopher Olson, '00

Houston Exploration Company
- Dolores Stavitz, '99

KPMG Foundation
- Ryoko Machuzuki, '85

JP Morgan Chase Foundation
- Thomas R. F. Lee, '85

GIFTS IN KIND

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University Theatre – at Home and Abroad

Scripts mix with travel itineraries at the O’Kane Theatre this spring. The University Theatre troupe rehearses for another extraordinary production: The Mandrake, the classic 16th century Italian comedy by Niccolo Machiavelli. The satirical plot involves a man who, as a ruse, uses a mandrake plant to seduce the young and beautiful wife of an elderly fool. Performances are April 1-9, part of UHD’s spring Fine Arts Festival. For ticket information, call 713-221-8104.

At the same time, plans are under way for the annual theatre excursion to one of the world’s centers for professional theatre: London. The trip exposes UHD students to a range of cultural experiences in addition to dramatic performances, including sightseeing tours, museum visits, baseball games and much more. Every year since 1978, drama tour destinations have alternated between London and New York City.

What, or Who, is Missing: Pulled from the Path of Poverty through Education

The Missing Story of Ourselves, an exhibit at the Willow Street Pump Station on view from March 7-April 1, features photographs and narratives representing 40 women and men who either are, or were, parents and students from poverty changing their lives through the pathway of higher education. Eight of the participants are UHD Downtown alumni, students, faculty, and/or staff.

The exhibit begins a four-year, nationwide tour following its inauguration at UH-Downtown, stopping at colleges, universities, organizations, and legislative bodies in Washington, D.C. UHD’s status as the launching point is appropriate, given the university’s mission of access and opportunity. Dr. Sandra Dahlberg, assistant professor and assistant chair of the English Department, explains that first-generation students from poverty-class backgrounds face a series of hurdles unimaginable by middle- and upper-income people: “I know because I was such a student.” Poverty-class students do not have the support systems that middle-class, upper-class, or even working-class students have. Said Dr. Dahlberg, “Poverty-class families often do not understand why one should spend so much money on a degree.”

Dr. Dahlberg chose to teach at UH-Downtown “because most of our students, like me, are first-generation-in-college students and many are from poverty-class backgrounds,” said Dr. Dahlberg. “Teaching at UH-Downtown provides me the opportunity to give back, to help others succeed in their goals.”

“The Missing Story of Ourselves” was created and funded by The ACCESS Project at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. The exhibit is available for viewing by appointment. Call 713-221-8042.

On show in March: works by Brian Ransom
left: Whistling Pods, 2004
below: Whistling Water Vessel, 2004

“In August of 2005, I will graduate and begin teaching high school English. I am determined to provide inner-city youth with an education that will make them college-ready.” Tomayia Colvin

“Education is without question the ticket to success, be that economic, social, or civic. Unfortunately, the education itself is the easy part. The hard and often impossible part of the equation is the opportunity to become educated.” Carlos Garcia

Dr. Sandra Dahlberg

On view in March: works by Brian Ransom
left: Whistling Pods, 2004
below: Whistling Water Vessel, 2004

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Fereshteh Fanian may sum up best what many scholarship recipients feel: “I do my best to keep up the good work, but thinking about the school tuition and the book expenses makes my life very stressful. Any scholarship relieves the stress and the burden on myself and my family.”

Fereshteh, who maintains a perfect 4.0 grade point average, is among the 25 superb students chosen this year to receive the prestigious Red Rose Scholarship, which is funded by UHD’s annual Red Rose Ball, scheduled this year on Wednesday, April 20 at the Hilton Americas-Houston.

The Red Rose Scholars are only a sampling of the many students who will benefit from the ball. The event also generates funds for transfer students and students in UHD’s award-winning Scholars Academy.

A committee of dedicated university friends is hard at work to solicit ball underwriters.


Named endowed scholarships can be established for $60,000. Underwriter levels that include Diamond ($20,000), Platinum ($15,000), Gold ($10,000), Silver ($5,000) or Bronze ($3,500). For information, contact Gilda Parker, 713-221-8563.

In only a few years, the Scholars Academy has grown to include 175 students. Students wearing white shirts are in the program’s elite honor corps.

Scholars Academy: A Star in the Lone Star State

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