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UHD President



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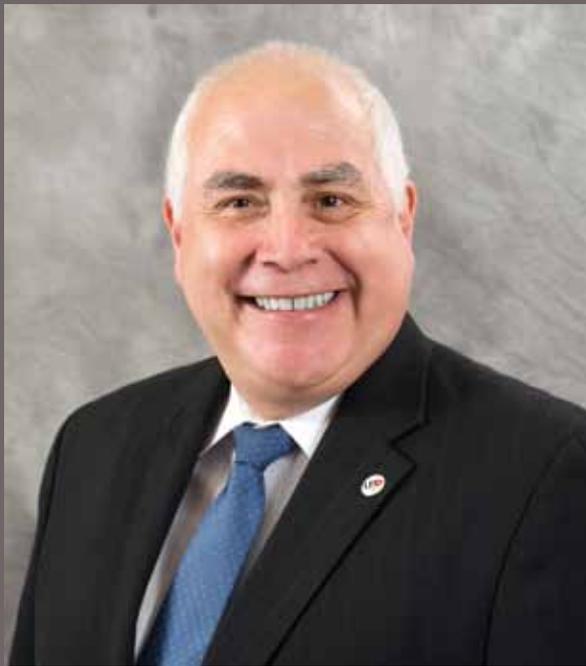
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## Faculty Awards Honor Excellence



As president, one of the most rewarding events of the academic year is the annual UHD Faculty Awards. This year was no different, and I was reminded again of the exceptional quality of our faculty. Many have received national awards and accolades for their teaching and others have been recognized for their outstanding research, but I am most impressed by the synergistic connection between teaching, research and service that is the crux of what we do well at UHD.

Our faculty are passionate about their scholarly research, service and creativity and that passion is evident to students, bringing excitement and enthusiasm to the classroom and creating an invigorating learning environment. With over 600 faculty dedicated to the success of our students, I am proud of the broad expertise offered in our classrooms and of our faculty's ability to translate their passion into student learning and success.

I am pleased to acknowledge UHD faculty, lecturers and adjuncts who are recognized for their work in the classroom. The UHD Faculty Awards offer five categories of excellence: Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Service, Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activity, Outstanding Lecturer and Outstanding Adjunct.

Please join me in congratulating these individuals for their outstanding contributions to our University, and recognizing the dedication they demonstrate daily.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William V. Flores". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. William V. Flores, President  
University of Houston-Downtown

## Faculty Award Winners

### EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



**Brad Hoge**

Associate Professor  
Natural Sciences

"I'm a science educator as well as a scientist. I use project-based, hands-on teaching methods to focus on student engagement in addition to content mastery. At UHD, our students are fantastic. Each one brings a unique perspective to classroom discussions."

### EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARLY/ CREATIVE ACTIVITY



**Robin Davidson**

Associate Professor  
English

"Literature, and poetry in particular I think, fosters human empathy – across time and cultures. What a joy to witness how deeply the literary arts impact my students' lives and the communities in which they participate!"

## EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE



**Poonam Gulati**

Associate Professor  
Natural Sciences

“At UHD, I can continue my research with students working alongside me. I want to instill in them the importance of being engaged in and out of the classroom.”

## OUTSTANDING ADJUNCT



**Nancy Lopez**

Social Sciences

“History is about chronicling change over time and storytelling. My favorite classes are evening classes because the non-traditional students who take them are so engaged and intellectually curious – they’re really inspiring.”

## OUTSTANDING LECTURER



**Branden Kuzmick**

University College

“I try to provide my students a supportive, nurturing environment for their personal and academic growth. The classroom is a place for self-discovery. My students inspire me daily and my mission is to support their learning in whatever ways possible.”

## Faculty Award Finalists

### EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



**Andrew Pavelich**

Associate Professor  
Social Sciences

“Being interested in the material you are teaching is important. I want to be engaged with the ideas I’m talking about and I know that will come across to my students.”

### EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE



**John Hudson**

Assistant Professor  
English

“In teaching and in coaching, I always try to be a mentor to students and encourage them to switch their attention from perceived weakness to their core strengths. My goal is to take students from “I can’t” to “I can” to “I will.”

### EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARLY/ CREATIVE ACTIVITY



**Chu Nguyen**

Assistant Professor, Finance,  
Accounting & Computer Information Systems

“I enjoy providing students with high-impact learning opportunities, such as joint research, the ability to present at national conferences and publish in peer-reviewed journals.”

### OUTSTANDING LECTURER



**Robert Trevino**

Finance, Accounting &  
Computer Information Systems

“There is a can-do attitude at UHD. It can be challenging to teach students with wide ranges of experiences and abilities, but when I can meet that challenge, it’s an awesome feeling.”

### OUTSTANDING ADJUNCT



**Montse Feu-Lopez**

Arts and Humanities

“My goal is for students to become independent learners and work for their academic and professional development. I always encourage students to set and achieve their own agendas, both in the classroom and in the community.”

# Public Art Project Opens the Door for Student Artists

By: Mary Ann Cozza

“Creativity takes courage,” said French painter Henri Matisse and that is exactly what five students and O’Kane Gallery Director Mark Cervenka needed when participating in the local public art project, Open the Door.

This ground-breaking project was organized by the Texan-French Alliance for the Arts (TFAA) and the Paris art collective 9eme Concept. It seeks to break down social barriers and cultural stereotypes and foster intercultural understanding through art. Twelve professional artists, six Texan and six French, were selected to paint one side of commissioned doors into works of art that are now part of a citywide public art exhibition. Along with these 12 professionals, about 20 teams of students, professors and professionals from area educational and arts institutions also were chosen to participate.

“It is pretty amazing and a great testament to our students that four UHD proposals were selected,” Cervenka said. “It’s phenomenal exposure and a life-changing experience for the students to go



through the entire commission process from submitting a proposal to executing the design.”

The four selected proposals were submitted by Cervenka with student Jose Gonzalez; Karla Morales; Bereniz Martinez; and Quentin Pace and Michael Martin. The Cervenka-Gonzalez team and Morales each painted the second side of a door belonging to one of the 12 professional artists. The Pace-Martin team and Martinez collaborated with students from other universities on the painting of their doors.

“I was so excited to work on this project,” Gonzalez said. “It was nerve-wracking at first, but a really great experience.”

The Cervenka-Gonzalez proposal centered on the idea of exploration, the human experience and passages leading into more passages. It features several rooms separated by archways and doors and shows two figures at different depths.

“It is always important when working on a commission to be respectful of the theme, but also to be respectful of one’s own vision. It’s really about meshing those two elements together,” Cervenka mused. “That is something our students learned during this experience, as they were working as professional artists rather than students.”

TFAA Executive Director Karine Parker-Lemoyne stated that the decision to include educational institutions and student artists was an exciting one. “We wanted to open doors to the future

generations of artists and to the ones who are supporting them in their development, the professors,” she said. “We had to find a way to engage the community and the public as well.”

Other institutions that participated in the project included The Art League, Lone Star College, the Glassell School of Art and the Awty International School.

The doors were completed on March 5 and installed in public places selected for their diverse cultural neighborhoods and local significance, including the Houston Public Library, French Consul General residence, Emancipation Park, Hermann Park and UHD’s Willow Street Pump Station.

“Open the Door is designed as a ‘cultural trail,’ leading the public from one location to another through a creative narrative,” Parker-Lemoyne said. “This allows the public to discover Houston through the artworks, which are placed in ways that reflect the surrounding community.”

Through their art, UHD students performed a community service, exposing “Houston’s vibrant cultural scene, quality of life, and its wonderful diversity to the world,” according to the project mission statement. Already, other major cities around the world are vying for the opportunity to bring this project to their regions.



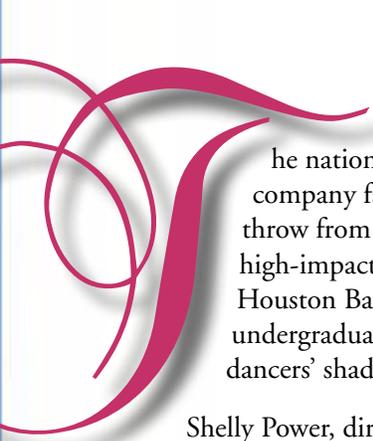
Student artists Karla Morales, Quentin Pace and Michael Martin and O’Kane Gallery Director Mark Cervenka (right) with their “Open the Door” works of art.

# Alumna En Pointe with UHD Dance Collaboration

University's New "Dance in America"  
Course at Houston Ballet Offers Students  
First-Hand Fine Arts Experience

By: Claire Caton





The nation's largest professional dance company facility sits nestled a stone's throw from UHD, and through a new, high-impact collaboration with the Houston Ballet and one special alumna, undergraduates can now learn in the dancers' shadows.

Shelly Power, director of the prestigious Houston Ballet Academy, has a long-standing relationship with UHD. Not only is she a summa cum laude graduate, she also has played an instrumental role, working alongside UHD administration, in broadening educational opportunities, both for dancers and undergraduates.

Through this partnership, the University launched its "Dance in America" course this semester, enabling students to learn the basics of dance appreciation through observation of dancers' training and attendance of live performances, including "La Bayadère" and "Rite of Spring." Throughout the three-credit-hour course, held at the Ballet's state-of-the-art facility, students will broaden their awareness of this important cultural art form and study a variety of dance styles, including ballet, modern dance, jazz, social dance and tap. Undergraduates also will analyze African-American contributions to dance in America and gain an understanding of behind-the-scenes dance production at the Houston Ballet.

During the course, students will develop an appreciation for the social, cultural and historical contexts of dance in America and learn to write critically about the evolution of dance throughout the 20th century.

"We're thrilled to offer this real-world learning experience for students," said Tom Lyttle, professor of drama at UHD. "The University has a long-standing relationship with the Houston Ballet, as we initially provided company dancers with undergraduate courses at their West Gray Street facility. Through this new partnership, students not only learn the practical business of dance, but also have the opportunity to apply their fine arts knowledge through interactive class discussions and readings."

UHD alumna Shelly Power, director of the Houston Ballet Academy, is pictured with company dancers and student dancers at the Houston Ballet's state-of-the-art facility. Photo Credits: (Top) Deborah Wallace; (Lower) Amitava Sarkar





Students have the added benefit of learning from dancer and UHD Adjunct Professor Jennifer Clagett Sommers, who honed her skills through a master's of fine arts degree in dance, performance and choreography, and as an outreach associate for the Houston Ballet.

While Sommers serves as the course's primary professor, students also will learn under the watchful eyes of Power, whose own expertise permeates all instruction at the Houston Ballet Academy.

Power brings 30 years of artistic and administrative experience to her position at the Academy, home to more than 500 students, aged 4 to 60. She offers a personal history of dance that began in her hometown dance studio, Southbridge School of Ballet, in Massachusetts. She, herself, studied and performed at the Houston Ballet Academy in classical favorites, including "The Nutcracker," "Alice in Wonderland" and "Swan Lake."

She went on to open her own dance studios in Alief and West University, but returned to teach at the Houston Ballet Academy and became director of administration for the Academy in 1997. During this time, she created pivotal programs for students and teachers, including "Chance to Dance," designed to introduce dance to students in Houston's inner-city schools, the annual Teacher's Training Seminar attended by dance teachers from across the country and a career planning seminar for student dancers.

In spite of her success at the Academy, Power longed to complete her college education, so she enrolled at UHD in 2001. She chose the University because, as an adult student, she appreciated the varied student ages and levels of experience. She also had worked closely with UHD Professor Michael Dressman in developing a program that allowed dancers to accumulate fine arts college credit for their work at the Academy.

"Dr. Dressman was invaluable in establishing this program for UHD transfer credit for Academy dancers, which enabled them to pursue their dual dreams of an education and a dance career," said Power. "While dancers must sacrifice many things en route to achieving their professional goals, education shouldn't be one of them. I've always encouraged our dancers to jointly pursue their education, and we're working to expand their educational opportunities even further."

Power graduated from UHD with a degree in interdisciplinary studies, which she says is foundational to her current role at the Academy. Upon her graduation, the Houston Ballet's Artistic Director Stanton Welch immediately recruited her back to the organization to help lead the Academy.

"I wear so many hats each day that my degree – with a heavy focus on psychology and business – was an ideal fit for me," said Power. "From working closely with parents, to counseling students on everything from career planning to proper technique, my degree gave me the knowledge and confidence to achieve my own professional goals."

While all Academy dancers will not progress to join the professional company, Power notes that all students develop foundational life skills, including self-discipline, poise and an appreciation for the arts. In fact, whether students follow the Academy's "Dance for Life" track that focuses on discipline, goal setting, body awareness and physicality, or the more rigorous "Dance for Professionals" pathway, Power helps

all students "incorporate dance into the fabric of their lives."

Power also is working to make dance more accessible for all Houstonians, and she is proud to report that nearly 25,000 students, elementary through high school, visit the Houston Ballet each year. She also helped extend the "Dance for Life" program to people with Down syndrome, Autism and Parkinson's disease. By bringing adaptive dance to these individuals, the program instills confidence and a sense of personal fulfillment, along with fun and an opportunity to meet others.

"Whether I'm traveling across Europe recruiting for the Academy, overseeing outreach related to grants, or working to embed dance into the curriculum of local schools, I use the knowledge I gained at UHD every day," said Power. "Now, with the new "Dance in America" course at the Ballet, I'm excited to see how UHD students will integrate dance into their lives and cultivate a personal passion for Houston's vibrant arts scene."



Left: UHD Adjunct Professor Jennifer Clagett Sommers teaches undergraduates in the University's new "Dance in America" course at the Houston Ballet.

Photo Credits: Cameron Durham

By: Mary Ann Cozza

# Veteran Uses Military Training in Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief

*“It was great to be around other veterans and to use my military training to help those people when they needed it most.”*

—Daniel de la Cruz, UHD Student and Veteran



Veterans often have a difficult time transitioning out of the armed forces and into lives that take advantage of the unique skills they learned while in the service. With help from veteran organizations like the Lone Star Veterans Association (LSVA) and UHD’s Veterans Services office, veterans can apply their technical abilities, hard work and commitment to their communities in rewarding ways.

UHD student and veteran Daniel de la Cruz did just that when he volunteered for the LSVA Emergency Response Team, an all-volunteer group dedicated to using veterans’ valuable skills to aid communities during times of need.

Last November, the team took 15 volunteers, including de la Cruz, on a week-long trip to New Jersey to assist with disaster and medical relief for victims of Hurricane Sandy, the super storm that devastated much of the northeast in Oct. 2012.

“The trip was an amazing experience,” said de la Cruz. “It was great to be around other veterans and to use my military training to help those people when they needed it most.”

The LSVA group received additional medical training before traveling to New Jersey where they rendezvoused with Team Rubicon, another veteran-volunteer disaster relief group, which had set up operations on the East Coast several days prior.



“Although we were supposed to provide medical support for victims, there were very few incidents that required extensive medical attention,” said de la Cruz. “This freed us up to get into the affected neighborhoods and houses and help with the actual clean up. I was really surprised to see how long it took for other organized aid groups to get into these areas. It was good that we were there.”

After working long hours during the day, de la Cruz and his team stayed in an open warehouse with 60 other volunteers, sleeping on cots and in sleeping bags overnight.

“We had to walk five or six blocks to the nearest shower and even further to do laundry,” he said. “But the locals were so appreciative of our efforts and so thankful. One man invited us to his apartment to do our laundry for free when we couldn’t find an open laundromat. He even bought us dinner.”

While the work was hard, de la Cruz calls the experience therapeutic and says he enjoyed the camaraderie with the team.

De la Cruz was in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1997 to 2002 and traveled the world on a Maritime Preposition Force vessel, a ship that transports nearly all the supplies the Marines need for initial military operations. After leaving the service, de la Cruz attended the police academy at Houston Community College, moved to his hometown of Chicago and then back to Houston, eventually working for AT&T.

He is now enrolled at UHD in interdisciplinary studies with a

concentration in business and serves as president of the Student Veterans Organization (SVO). He was introduced to the LSVA Emergency Response Team by Mike Records, director of the UHD Veterans Services office.

“Daniel is a natural-born leader,” Records said. “Once he found out about the SVO he wanted to get involved however he could. Because of his experience, personality and ability to motivate others, he was quickly elected to serve as the president of the organization. His service both in and out of uniform is a benefit to all.”

Records and the UHD Veterans Services office provide the University’s more than 500 veterans with assistance easing into higher education through academic and military benefits counseling, financial aid guidance and cooperative relationships with outside organizations such as the LSVA.

“LSVA takes a holistic approach in helping our returning veterans successfully transition back into society, so I make it a point to make UHD veterans aware of this great resource,” said Records, who previously served on the LSVA board of directors and is currently on the association’s advisory council.

Since returning home from New Jersey, de la Cruz says he often thinks about the East Coast and his experiences there.

“Some of the people from the trip have talked about going back,” he said. “Not to work this time, but to see how things are now. It would be a surreal experience, that’s for sure!”



## East Coast power blackout following Hurricane Sandy.

By: Mary Ann Cozza

From Greek to Mexican  
to Creamy Treats, UHD  
Alumni Serve Up Success

# Bon Appétit



# Multi-Talented Taqueria Owner

**M**aria Maldonado is the owner of Taqueria Huetamich in southwest Houston, a Mexican restaurant dedicated to providing a variety of authentic dishes at affordable prices. To Maldonado, consistency and hardwork are the two keys to her restaurant's success, as well as her success as a businesswoman.

Maldonado came to the United States from Mexico in 1992 with nothing, speaking only Spanish. After working in a restaurant for several years, she and her husband purchased the taqueria to branch out on their own.

"We started with just seven tables," she said. "My husband was the only cook and I was the only server and we worked every day from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. It was hard work but we were happy just to be together and working for ourselves."

After several years, Maldonado's natural desire to improve herself and her circumstances led her to learn English and

take basic courses at Houston Community College. She transferred to UHD and graduated in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in business management.

"I chose UHD because several of my customers recommended it to me," she said. "I had this restaurant and two kids and UHD worked with my busy schedule. I also liked the diverse student body and always felt comfortable there."

In addition to being a mother and tireless restaurateur, Maldonado also earned her real estate license, thanks in part to her time at UHD.

"Most of the electives I took were in real estate and my professor really got me excited about the subject," she explained. "When I decided to get my license, I realized that a lot of my UHD classes would transfer and I only needed six more weeks of instruction to become an agent. Now, I love being my own boss because I have flexibility, autonomy and great opportunities to grow."

Maldonado calls her education life-changing and hopes to encourage others to follow their dreams like she did.

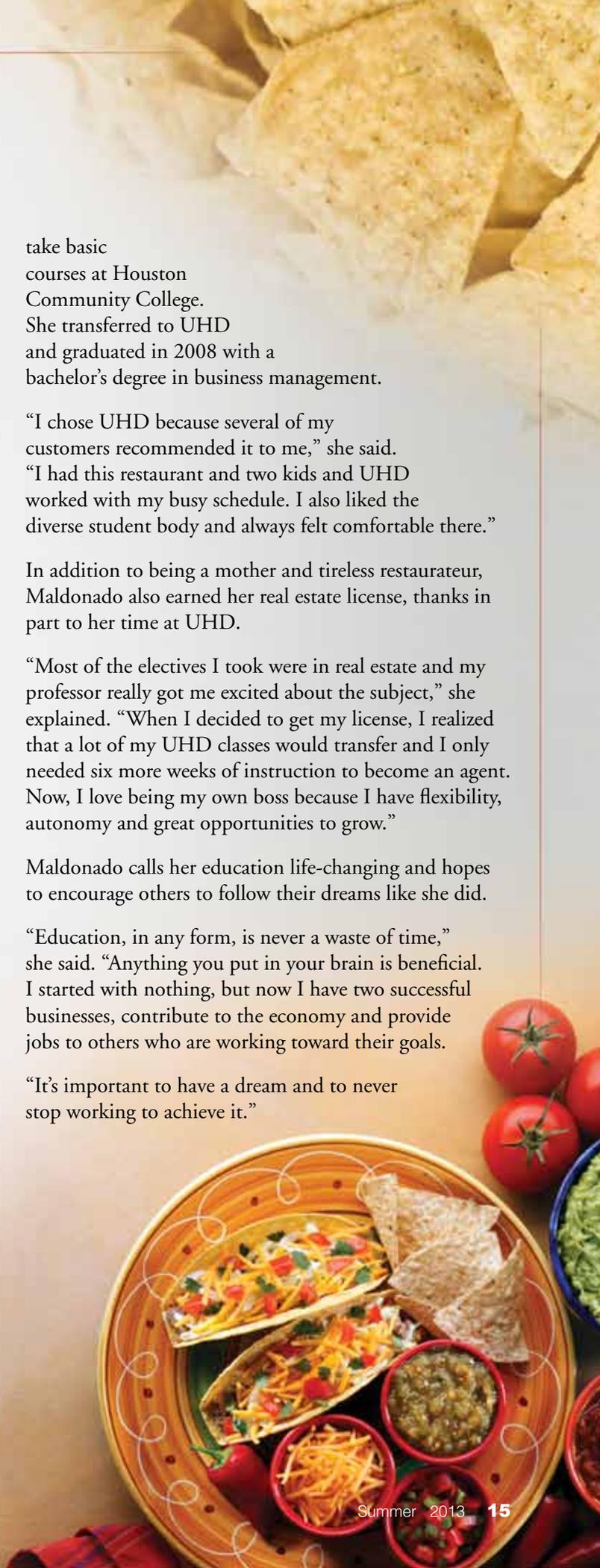
"Education, in any form, is never a waste of time," she said. "Anything you put in your brain is beneficial. I started with nothing, but now I have two successful businesses, contribute to the economy and provide jobs to others who are working toward their goals."

"It's important to have a dream and to never stop working to achieve it."



Top: Alumna Maria Maldonado, middle, poses with employees at her restaurant Taqueria Huetamich.

[www.taqueriahuetamich.com](http://www.taqueriahuetamich.com)



# All-In-One Greek Treat

Another alumna who would agree with that sentiment is Dora Manolopoulos, owner of Byzantio Café & Bar in the Montrose neighborhood. Manolopoulos graduated from UHD in 2000 at the age of 36 with a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies after several false starts at higher education. Though she was working full time for an accounting firm, she knew the importance of completing her degree.

"I had a lot of starts and stops with my education," she said. "But I wanted to finish what I started and it was important to me that I get that degree."

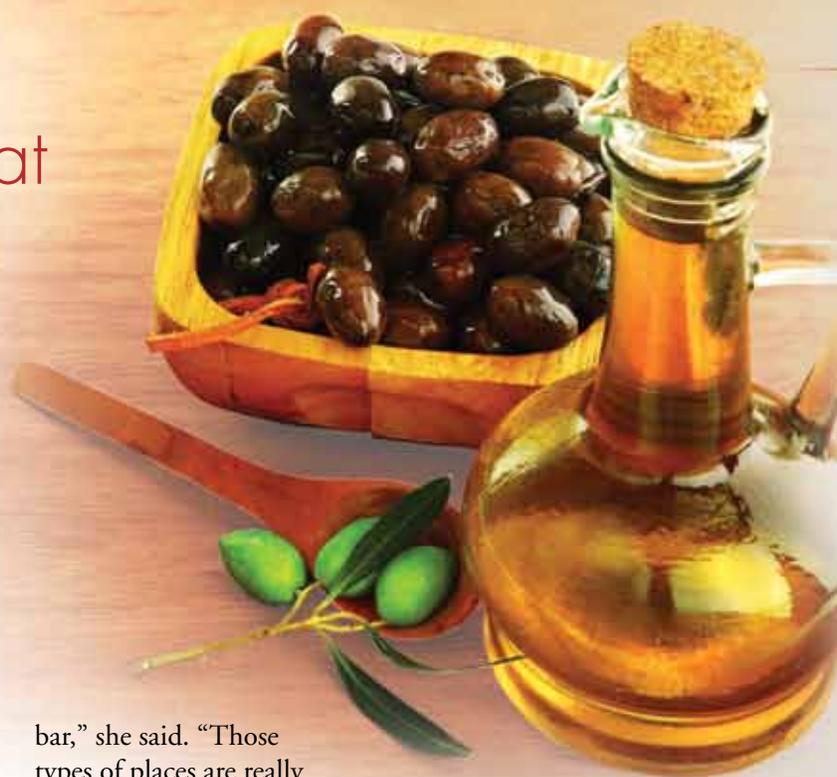
Manolopoulos opened Byzantio in 2003 with her husband in a converted bungalow that was once his home and takes advantage of her Greek heritage to provide an authentic Mediterranean atmosphere.

"We wanted an all-in-one place that offered patrons a full menu of Greek food, as well as a full beverage and coffee



Below: Dora Manolopoulos, a UHD alumna, enjoys every aspect of owning a restaurant, including tending the bar and working with her husband.

[www.byzantiohouston.com](http://www.byzantiohouston.com)



bar," she said. "Those types of places are really popular in Greece, but not in America. We knew that we needed to bring that to Houston. This place is a home-away-from-home for our customers."

According to Manolopoulos, great service is one of the most important things in operating a successful restaurant. A self-described people-person, she believes owning Byzantio and working behind the bar are the perfect jobs for her.

"Working with the people is the best part of the job. I can be their psychologist and their best friend, make them feel welcome and be really creative with what I serve," she said.



# We All Scream for Ice Cream

**S**arah Johnston also knows a thing or two about being creative in the kitchen. Johnston and her husband, Jarvis, began making ice cream in their home for friends and family to fill the void of nearby frozen treats before launching Fat Cat Creamery in 2011.

Johnston said, “We were sitting around with friends, complaining that we didn’t have an ice cream shop close by. Since it’s my favorite food, I declared that I would start an ice cream business. After a few years of experimentation, we decided to make a real business out of it.”

Today, Fat Cat Creamery creates small-batch ice creams and hand-delivers the pints to area vendors. Using local and seasonal products, the Creamery churns out interesting flavors like Mexican Vanilla, Milk Chocolate Stout and Strawberry Buttermilk.

Johnston, a marketing manager for a real estate firm, graduated from UHD in 2009 with a bachelor’s degree in professional writing, which she says has helped her tremendously in both her jobs.

“I really use the knowledge I gained from my UHD professors, especially for Fat Cat Creamery. From designing some of my own marketing material to writing a press release, my degree has been invaluable,” she said.

To enjoy a tasty treat, head to Georgia’s Market or Revival Market, catch the Johnstons on their portable ice cream cart around Houston, or wait until summer 2013 when their new storefront will open in the Heights.



Ice cream connoisseur and UHD alumna Sarah Johnston opened Fat Cat Creamery with husband Jarvis in 2011.

[www.fatcatcreamery.com](http://www.fatcatcreamery.com)



# A High-Impact Cup of Java

By: Diane Summers

What's the newest, hottest spot on campus that features a sophisticated view of the past combined with a stylish and contemporary atmosphere? The new 40,000 Windows Café, right in the heart of the W.I. Dykes Library. Students, faculty and staff can grab a tasty sandwich or a cup of their favorite java while enjoying the newly-renovated, well lit and loft-like surroundings.

Interestingly, the creation of this space occurred as a result of a high-impact educational experience. As part of a project management course in the College of Business, UHD student Megan Gilman chose the construction of the café as her capstone project. Gilman also is an employee in the UHD Facilities Management Department and knew over a year ago that this project was under consideration. Gilman felt it would be a creative opportunity to build a unique environment, so she asked to lead the construction efforts.

Timing was fortuitous. The café build-out was approved at the same time Gilman was seeking a project she could use for the course, which is a requirement for all management majors. Because this is such an intensive project, a team effort is required to complete the voluminous work in a project plan. Project Management Professor Margaret Shipley groups her students into teams of three to four people to enable students to delegate tasks and use each student's strengths to complete a robust and thorough plan.

Gilman worked with two classmates, Magali Ndong and Haleema Siddiqui, to complete the project, which resulted



in more than 125 pages of information, including a scope statement, work break down structure, identification of resources, costs, timelines and even potential risks. Budgets and responsibilities also were identified, which enabled the project to be completed on time and on budget.

Now that the construction is complete, what does Gilman think? "I am very pleased with the space. People have positive reactions to it," stated Gilman. "The One Main Building is so old and has so many quirks. This was an opportunity to showcase them. At the very beginning when we demolished the space, we saw the brick and wanted to make it look as though it has always been exposed. We wanted it open and bright."

Her efforts were successful. The exposed brick and concrete structural beams show the historic nature of the One Main Building, while the modern lighting, blue-glass tile and sleek surfaces make it uniquely appealing to customers.

But the project had its snags, too. "I may have been too ambitious in completing some of the tasks," said Gilman. "I had optimistic dates on some things and I learned specific tasks may require more time than expected. The class project made me break down the tasks in great detail. It made me think through the steps and consider things I might have forgotten. The project plan helped make things cleaner. I was very pleased that at the very end, the construction was completed within a week of the anticipated completion date."

Left: Professor Margaret Shipley and project management student Megan Gilman visit the 40,000 Windows Café, enjoying the environment created as part of a project management course Gilman completed under the guidance of Professor Shipley.

Above: Gilman and Professor Shipley enjoy a beverage with the key craftsmen responsible for creating the 40,000 Windows Café. Left to right: Gerardo Aguilera, Juan Guerrero, Megan Gilman, Roberto Romo, Margaret Shipley and Wence Trevino.



The UHD Facilities Management crew who assisted in creating the relaxing environment in the 40,000 Windows Café enjoys an afternoon break with Professor Shipley and Megan Gilman.

Shipley agrees, “When you consider that Megan was learning the fundamentals of defining the project, scheduling tasks, managing resources, and ensuring that the project was delivered on time, within budget and to such a quality as is readily observable in the 40,000 Windows Café, anyone must surely be impressed.

“At UHD, we as professors strive to give our students these types of high-impact learning experiences. Megan’s very visible accomplishment is but one example.”

Shipley noted that many other students have benefitted professionally from the class. “Learning objectives for this course focus on students’ analytical and critical thinking skills and use of technology. Students experience firsthand how the puzzle pieces of a real-world project fit together. And as an added benefit, they walk away with a valuable skill set that helps them get a job as a project manager, whether starting out in a new position or advancing at their present place of employment,” she said.

The course was designed to meet the demands of today’s employers, Shipley explains. “We listened to the community. We formed a board for the College of Business and asked what skills business leaders needed in management graduates. They emphasized project management skills,” she said.

She explains that students conduct projects involving family businesses, their places of employment, and even ventures they’d like to pursue as entrepreneurs. Some have managed a project for a showroom renovation for a family business, while others have developed plans for remodeling projects, sports tournaments, IT installations, the expansion and renovation of offices or restaurants or even weddings. “Our students are proud to show their plans to their family or their employer, and from what I’ve heard, family members and employers see the potential of utilizing the soon-to-be UHD graduates’ project management knowledge,” stated Shipley.

It’s not an easy course. One glance at the project plan Gilman completed is a testament to the amount of work involved. Shipley confirms that many students tell her this was the hardest thing they’ve ever done. But they also tell her they’ve gained a vast amount of knowledge and real-world experience.

“Anything to help our students get a leg up at work or build their confidence, that’s what we do,” said Shipley. “Gaining these skills, learning the vocabulary, all our efforts give them an opportunity they may not have had before. I’m very proud of our students.”

And UHD benefits well beyond the 40,000 Windows Café project. Gilman explains that it has helped shape the way her department approaches project management. “I’ll be able to plug these skills into other projects I manage, and it will streamline all our processes even more.”

### One Main Building History\*

- Built in 1929
- Originally named the Merchants and Manufacturers Building
- Cost to build:** \$6,000,000
- Capacity:** 90,000 people, or nearly one-third of the city’s population at the time of construction
- Original building features:**
  - 11 acres of offices
  - 40,000 window panes
  - 17 miles of steel
  - Two million feet of lumber
- South Texas Junior College acquired the building in 1968
- University of Houston-Downtown was created in 1974
- Major renovations began in mid-1980s at a cost of \$8.4 million

\* Christian, Garna L. *40,000 Window Panes: The Story of the Merchants and Manufacturers Building*. 24 Oct. 1986.

### 40,000 Windows Café

- Location:** W.I. Dykes Library, Fifth Floor
- Hours:** Mon – Thurs, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
- Customer Recommendations:**
  - Cookies ‘n Cream Javalanche
  - Cinnamon Roll Latte
  - Hot Green Tea
  - Mayan Mocha
  - Hot Chocolate
  - Marble Strudel Cake
  - Yogurt, Fruit and Granola Parfait

# From Bacteria to Wine

UHD Collaborates with Universities on Research

By: Mary Ann Cozza

Since when did digging in the dirt, making wine and analyzing proteins become part of student life? For some students in the Department of Natural Sciences, it's all in the name of research.

Providing students with exciting and rewarding high-impact educational experiences in coordination with classroom instruction is one of the cornerstones of a UHD education. Through these experiences, students are getting their hands dirty, often literally, and engaging their minds in an effort to foster learning and acquire firsthand knowledge of complex research practices. Often, relationships with other institutions can open doors for faculty and students to participate in research projects that fit this bill.

## The Business of Bacteria

Assistant Professor Gabriela Bowden recently teamed up with University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHealth) Associate Professor Eric Brown on a project that screens children for the presence of *Staphylococcus aureus*, bacteria that can cause severe infections and is more commonly known as staph. The project aims to determine whether the immune response to the bacteria is different between colonized and non-colonized children. Colonization refers to the presence of the bacteria, but no signs of illness or infection. In fact, according to WebMD, approximately 25 percent of healthy people carry the organism on their bodies at all times.

To start, Brown's students visit a local pediatric clinic and collect nasal and saliva samples from healthy children. UTHealth processes the samples to determine colonization and then UHD receives the samples for further analysis, including detecting antibodies that recognize the bacteria.

During the project, students are able to conduct immunological assays, a procedure for detecting and measuring specific proteins, as well as statistical analysis and protein purification.



"This is a great and unusual opportunity for undergraduate students," Bowden said. "They are learning important techniques that will prepare them for other research projects and even graduate school. Also, many of my students hope to attend UTHealth and working with the institution allows them the ability to get a head start."

According to Bowden, while the project will continue for several semesters, the goal is to provide a general picture of who might be more or less susceptible to infections.

"This kind of information would be very interesting to parents, to help them know the health status of their children and allow them to be better prepared in case of infections," she said.

## Don't Soil the Wine

Another project in the Natural Sciences Department deals not with immunology, but with a combination of biology, geology and business. In a project called "Rocks to Wine," Lisa Morano, department chair, and Ken Johnson, associate professor, are working with faculty from the UH Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management to research the effects different types of soil have on grape vines and wine characteristics.

Funded through a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant, the project begins in the spring when the professors and students select Texas vineyards that have different types of soil, including calcareous (lime-rich) or granitic (quartz-rich). The students test these soils for basic texture parameters and also to determine if they cause distinguishable differences in the wine produced from them. In the summer, students collect grapes from the selected vineyards and make wine with the assistance of Jay Neal, UH assistant professor, and Aaron Corsi, UH lecturer.

"Dr. Neal and Aaron teach our students how to make the wine and conduct a wine sensory analysis, a tool for evaluating wines," Morano said. "Our students begin by smelling and becoming familiar with flavor standards of berries, black pepper and other common wine characteristics. This helps them train their brains to recognize those properties and will prepare them for tasting and scoring the wines they make themselves."

In the fall, students test wines for basic characteristics like percent alcohol, anthocyanins (color) and tannins (dryness). Students also enroll in the "Texas Wine Marketing" course with Professor Madeline Johnson, in which they create extensive marketing plans for two wineries.

"One of the strengths of the collaboration of science with business is that each brings a unique perspective that



enriches what we can offer the wineries," Johnson said. "In discussions with the client wineries, the students are able to develop a marketing plan that is grounded in an understanding of the wine industry from production to sales. This type of interdisciplinary study broadens the students' perspectives in understanding the challenges and opportunities of an industry."

According to Morano, Texas has one of the fastest growing grape and wine industries in the country and the agriculture sectors represent a significant number of high quality job opportunities for graduating science students, especially those with experience.

"This project is so fun," she said. "Our students gain a lot of experience in several academic disciplines. They also make posters and present their findings at scientific meetings across Texas, including the annual meeting for the Texas Grape Growers and Winemakers Association."

While both the bacteria and wine research projects are ongoing, it is clear that UHD students have already reaped the benefits of the University's commitment to high-impact practices and collaborations with peer institutions.



Students in the "Rocks to Wine" program visit select vineyards to test the soil for texture and to determine possible differences in the wine produced from it.

# Alumna with “Grit” Extends Global Entrepreneurship at Department of State

By: Claire Caton



When UHD alumna Brenda Rios got her first taste of entrepreneurship, it was as a waitress at her family’s small diner, a job she performed full-time while earning her degree in international business. Little did she know that this small foray into business would lead to a position as a foreign affairs officer student trainee in the

Global Entrepreneurship Program, an initiative of the Economic and Business Affairs Bureau at the U.S. Department of State.

Rios discovered a love for global affairs as a high school delegate to the Congressional Young Leaders Conference, the Presidential Classrooms initiative, and the Bill Archer Fellowship program, through which she met Sen. John Cornyn and former Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and Rep. John Culberson.

“The reason I first became involved in governmental affairs was because it’s a great way to give back to the community,” said Rios. “In government, you get to see all the decisions that affect our lives, and with our democracy, I have the opportunity to make my voice heard. Ultimately, I feel as if I’m contributing to the betterment of our society and world in general, which is something I’m very passionate about.”

Rios further honed her skills as a founder and secretary general of UHD’s Houston International Model United Nations. During her tenure with the student organization, she brought 80 undergraduates and high school students from Colombia, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Venezuela and the United States for a three-day conference at UHD. The event provided students with an understanding of the purpose and dynamics of the United Nations, and helped them develop their skills in debate and global politics by giving them the opportunity to act as ambassadors from 25 member nations.

Rios now uses her leadership and organizational skills in managing the E-Mentor Corps, a web-based mentoring program for entrepreneurs, first introduced by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. She also works daily to help convene U.S.





Brenda Rios, UHD alumna and foreign affairs officer student trainee with the Department of State, greets former President Bill Clinton at a Clinton Foundation Millennium Network event in Los Angeles.

and understand the challenges entrepreneurs face in starting businesses. At times it felt burdensome, especially when I had six classes per semester, but it kept me busy, interested and fully engaged in trying to achieve my full potential.”

Rios is quick to laud those who supported her through this journey. “My family is my biggest inspiration,” she said. “They are what I always want to be – hardworking, ethical, honest, supportive, positive and happy. I also owe so much to my UHD professors who were always there for me. The diverse student population taught me to work with people of all ethnicities and ages, which is so reflective of the workforce and important in my current position.”

From a waitress to an up-and-coming global ambassador, Rios mirrors the tenacity of the entrepreneurs she assists each day. With her grit, determination and degree, she is a rising star and an impressive alumna.

companies, non-governmental organizations, foundations and universities interested in deepening their entrepreneurial programs worldwide. Her portfolio includes programmatic efforts aimed at expanding global entrepreneurship, including preparing for delegations in Egypt and the Maghreb region, as well as supporting efforts for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Dubai.

While Rios’ climb to success has been swift and sure, she is a model of “grit,” a term often used in higher education to describe students who juggle multiple responsibilities and overcome substantial obstacles along the way. In addition to helping to support her family while in college, she jumped an even greater hurdle in mastering the English language as a native Spanish speaker. In doing so, she learned the value of effective communication skills, a tool critical to her work at the State Department.

Rios claims the obstacles she’s faced weren’t hindrances, but stepping stones to reaching her dreams. “Helping to support my family was a huge opportunity for me. It gave me the skills to organize myself as a full-time student



UHD alumna Brenda Rios receives the Meritorious Honor Award from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Jose W. Fernandez for her contributions to the first Global Entrepreneurship Program Partner Conference at the Department of State.



# A Distinctive Year for UHD's Graduate Programs

By: Diane Summers

2013 marks two special milestones for UHD's graduate programs—the first MBA class will graduate in December and a new master's program in nonprofit management will begin in the fall.



This December, MBA students will be awarded their well-earned master's hoods. Anticipation will be high as this first cohort completes a program they began two years ago.

The graduating class is an impressive one, with job titles ranging from project scientist to CEO. Their industries include banking, government and nonprofit, with Fortune 100

companies represented in the mix. This diversity of industries and occupations is appreciated by both students and faculty. Assistant Professor Whitney Botsford-Morgan observed the benefits this provides in teaching course content. "The students bring a range of real-world experiences to the program that creates lively classroom discussions and practical learning," she said.



Students note the changes that participation in this program has brought in their careers and lives.

**Gerardo Barrera**

"The program opens your eyes and allows you to see things differently and more clearly. You begin to understand the tactics that businesses use to attract consumers."

**Timothy Johnson**

"The College of Business faculty have taught me skills that I can take directly back to work, such as ways to motivate people by using different team incentives, rather than individual incentives. Leadership and strategy skills are needed everywhere."

**Tayyaba Sheikh**

"The program has helped me gain insight with my day-to-day responsibilities. I don't feel like I am in a professional rut anymore."

## MBA Program Highlights

The program's curriculum was carefully crafted by College of Business administrators and faculty to focus on highly applied skills. Students learn tools for dealing with real-world challenges that organizations face today and are immediately able to use the knowledge learned in the classroom in their professional positions.

The MBA class schedule was designed to accommodate the busy lives of working professionals. With classes two evenings per week, students are able to continue working while meeting the rigors of the program.

The next MBA cohort will begin in the fall and prospective students are invited to attend an information session to learn more about the program. Visit [www.uhd.edu/mba](http://www.uhd.edu/mba) to see upcoming information session dates.



Above and right: Team-based projects and work groups are a critical component of the UHD MBA program. Left: Asst. Professor Whitney Botsford-Morgan teaches the first cohort of UHD MBA students, who will graduate in December 2013.

## Master's in Nonprofit Management

Highly multidisciplinary, this new master's program is designed to prepare graduates to manage and lead nonprofit organizations. It will focus on strategic planning, development of entrepreneurial skills, revenue generation, legal issues, leadership and other critical issues relevant to the nonprofit sector.

Every course will offer students the opportunity to learn through experience and practice, with a strong focus on team building. Curriculum content was prepared by executives in the city's most prominent nonprofit organizations and will be taught by many of these executives. The educational experience is further enhanced through coursework taught by faculty from the Departments of Social Sciences, English, Arts and Humanities, and in the College of Business, with disciplines including marketing, accounting and management.

This online master's program will begin in fall 2013 and applications are now being accepted. For more information on the master's in nonprofit management, visit

[www.uhd.edu/npmgt](http://www.uhd.edu/npmgt).

## UHD Master's Programs

Master of Business Administration  
[uhd.edu/mba](http://uhd.edu/mba)

Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management  
[uhd.edu/npmgt](http://uhd.edu/npmgt)

Master of Science in Professional Writing  
and Technical Communication  
[uhd.edu/mspw](http://uhd.edu/mspw)

Master of Science in Criminal Justice  
[uhd.edu/mscj](http://uhd.edu/mscj)

Master of Arts in Teaching  
[uhd.edu/mat](http://uhd.edu/mat)

Master of Security Management for Executives  
[uhd.edu/msme](http://uhd.edu/msme)



# From 'Sage on the Stage' to 'Master Teacher': Changing Science Education from the Inside Out

By: Claire Caton

*Interim Dean Akif Uzman One of 40 National Leaders Charged with Catalyzing Reform*

**S O M E T I M E S** best teaching practices call for tried-and-true methods. And other times it's best to throw out old ways and rebuild from the ground up.

Akif Uzman, interim dean of the College of Sciences and Technology at UHD, is one of 40 national Vision and Change Leadership Fellows selected by the Partnership for Undergraduate Life Sciences Education (PULSE) to take a hard look at science education and set the standard for future practices.

PULSE chose Uzman from a competitive pool of 250 candidates to identify and implement systemic changes needed to improve undergraduate biology education across the country. All fellows are post-secondary life sciences faculty members who are department chairs or former department chairs and they hail from 24 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

"We are charged with two key missions," said Uzman. "First of all, we're looking at undergraduate departments that truly excel when it comes to student success – ultimately those that best teach students to 'learn how to learn.' Secondly, our goal is to replicate those best practices into an institutionalized system that Vision and Change Ambassadors can take to universities, as a next step, to help implement change based on their needs."

He compares the system to the way engineers build LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified buildings. PULSE fellows aim for undergraduate science departments to perform their own self-appraisals using standardized tools provided by the organization. Once the departments identify their unique needs, they can implement change and move up the PULSE rating system, similar to a LEED scale.

Uzman believes that this standardized approach developed by faculty is key to lasting change in the way students learn science, acquire core competencies and apply their knowledge. He explains, "In recent years, we've been moving from a facts-only, professor-led mentality to a more student-centered approach, in which students graduate with essential skills needed for advanced education, or even to be productive citizens."

He notes that a professor can no longer be a 'sage on the stage,' but rather, needs to serve as a 'master teacher,' helping students develop critical thinking skills to approach and solve real-world problems.

"Our goal is to develop an assembly of graduates who can engage in science at any level they choose and go on to make outstanding contributions, both to science and their communities," said Uzman. He explains that professors' roles are changing into that of facilitators who enable student learning through high-impact experiences.

Uzman and other PULSE fellows began their work at the beginning of the 2012 academic year and will submit their accumulated findings this August. While the next step for the organization will be securing funding to support ambassadors' work with individual departments, Uzman is confident in the program's future.

"There is no doubt that the work we're doing is critical in shaping tomorrow's biology researchers, biology professors and scientific leaders," he said. "We must be open to changing with the times and moving outside our traditional roles to best prepare our students for a lifetime of success."



Akif Uzman, interim dean of the College of Sciences and Technology, leads a class discussion in a biology course.

# UHD Welcomes Two New Deans



## DoVeanna Fulton

has joined UHD as dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

“It is rewarding to lead a college of faculty committed to student success and research that engages both scholarly and local communities. With these faculty, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is at the center of the mission of UHD, which is to be a premier urban university.”

Fulton comes to UHD from the University of Alabama, where, as an associate professor, she created the department of Gender and Race Studies (one of the first of its kind in the nation) and served as founding chair. She also served as director of Graduate Studies and director of African-American Studies.

She is the author of several books pertaining to African-American women’s discursive practices and is a member of numerous professional organizations.



## Michael Fields

joined UHD as dean of the College of Business.

“I am delighted to join UHD and look forward to working with businesses to develop programs that meet their needs and serve our students,” said Fields.

Fields comes to UHD from Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he served as dean of the H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship. Prior to joining NSU, Fields served as dean of the College of Business Administration at Central Michigan University.



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[www.UHD.edu](http://www.UHD.edu)

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## Join us!

### UHD Thursday Concerts at Discovery Green

Bring the family for a stellar line-up of  
Texas and Gulf Coast musicians—free!

Every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.  
from May 2 – June 27, 2013

**UHD Alumni Night at Discovery Green**  
**Thursday, June 27, 6:30 – 9 p.m.**

Featuring Grady Gaines and the Texas Upsetters.  
Food and beverages for UHD alumni!