

# Sombrilla

The University of Texas at San Antonio **MAGAZINE** Spring 2003  
Vol. 19, No. 2



Protecting America's borders  
East meets West in the College of Business    An American parade  
Honors students explore American identity





# SPRING 2003 Sombrilla

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

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The 1604 Campus at sunset.  
Photo by Patrick Ray Dunn.



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### Write back!

We welcome your letters pertaining to Sombrilla's content. Please send them by mail or e-mail to the addresses below. Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### Variations on a theme

I used to live in a neighborhood that threw a spirited Fourth of July parade every year. Little kids, parents and grandparents assembled on foot or on all manner of decorated vehicles for a short march down our "main street." Neighborhood musicians could be reliably counted on to provide patriotic music. The parade ended in a park where the late, great Maury Maverick Jr. would read, not the Declaration of Independence, but the Bill of Rights. It was a most American moment, and now that I've read faculty member Judith Sobre's book, *San Antonio on Parade*, I realize it was right in tune with local history.

We didn't set out to develop a theme for the spring issue of Sombrilla Magazine, but when we looked at our Table of Contents a few weeks ago, we had accidentally created, if not a themed issue, then variations on a theme.

The stories we assigned long ago (the profile on Department of Homeland Security attorney Daniel Vara), together with the ones that fell into our laps (the Chinese business students' semester-long immersion in American culture, the personal essay by globe-trotting alumna Sonia Campos), asked similar questions about experiencing America. What does it mean to be American at home and abroad? For international students, what does it mean to experience America?

Even our book excerpt about San Antonian's nascent parade mania marches to this issue's beat. Sobre writes that America's 19th century parades and festivals emphasized "culture expressed as spectacle." That goes for Fourth of July parades as well as those honoring Diez y Seis, Juneteenth and German-American Volksfests, celebrations by immigrants and former slaves. We wished we had room to include Sobre's chapter on the first Battle of Flowers parade—a rude and chaotic affair compared to its modern counterpart—but her prologue comparing the same patriotic parade over two generations advances our "theme" nicely.

"We are our own bundle of history," said Marian Aitches, lecturer in the Department of History, referring to the experiences and perspectives of students in her Honors class, "Being American in the 21st Century," last fall.

Ever so slowly, UTSA is creating its own history, one that values the exchange of ideas, successful alumni and enlightening research. Pretty soon, we should throw ourselves a parade.

— Lynn Gosnell

### YOUR LETTERS

To the editor:

As a '79 graduate of UTSA, I never had to contend with multi-campus locations as they exist today. When I attended classes, there was one campus and it was known as UTSA. Since there are now several components in the system there is a need for distinction.

However, I feel the site on Loop 1604 and the "Downtown" location are deserving of tags beyond "1604 Campus" and "Downtown Campus." They are hardly becoming for a "university of first-class," as designated by the legislature.

Perhaps "Main Campus" can be applied to the 1604 site while something of a neighborhood attachment like "Vista Verde Campus" could be used for the branch downtown. Let's drop the commonplace terms for something more than geographical points on a map.

Darrell Havel '79

To the editor:

As UTSA alumnus I am always eager to hear about the bright future of our university. Therefore, I read with great interest the article on "2020 Vision" in the fall issue of Sombrilla. Keeping us alumni up to date on the university's plans for growth helps us to remember where we've come from, which is important when we are deciding which charities and institutions to support.

As a UTSA alumnus who has had to go to a different university to receive an M.A., I support President Romo's desire to grow the university's graduate programs. I am also glad to hear about the new dorms that will be built. After all, what we learn in the classroom is only part of what it means to receive an education.

Duane A. Miller Botero '99

## A Grand Opening New buildings change face of campus life

January marked the grand opening of two long-awaited student support facilities.

The \$19 million Recreation and Wellness Center provides students with a host of health and recreation services, including a gymnasium for basketball and volleyball, racquetball courts, cardiovascular and strength-training rooms, exercise classrooms, a demonstration kitchen and student lounges. The Student Health Services Center, a physician- and nurse-staffed health center, relocated to the complex as well and now offers expanded services to meet the health needs of students.

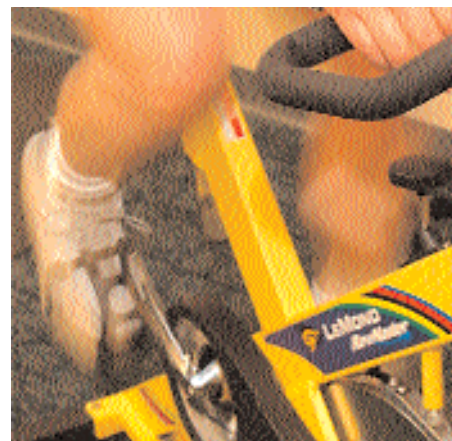
The new Child Development Center provides on-campus care for more than 90 toddlers and preschoolers. The center will serve student parents, but will also be open to children of staff and faculty.

The dedication ceremony was attended by President Ricardo Romo, UT System Chancellor Mark Yudof, Vice President for Student Affairs Rosalie Ambrosino and Student Government President Melissa Killen, as well as a large crowd of students, faculty and staff. The center came about through a student-funded initiative.



### HEALTH AND CARE

At left, Pres. Ricardo Romo and Development Board Vice Chair Edith McAllister tour the new Child Development Center. Below left, UTSA students learn new cooking techniques during a nutrition class at the Rec/Wellness Center. Below right, spinning class is one of the many fitness programs offered daily at the new center. For a look at what else you can find at the new center, go to their Web site, <http://www.utsa.edu/recreation/index.cfm>.



## Construction update

Groundbreaking on the university's Biotechnology, Sciences and Engineering Building is scheduled for May. The five-story atrium building is expected to be one of the largest science-related facilities in Texas when it opens in 2005 and will include research and instructional labs for biotechnology, biology, biomedical engineering, electrical engineering, civil engineering and chemistry.

Construction of a new 500-bed student housing complex begins this summer. The \$12 million complex is the first in a four-phase project to double the school's student housing capacity from 2,000 to 4,000. The new complex will be located near UTSA's residence hall, Chisholm Hall, and is scheduled to open in time for the fall 2004 semester.

Work continues at Academic Building III on the 1604 Campus. Academic Building III will provide 240,000 square feet of space for classrooms, lecture halls, specialized teaching labs and academic-support space. The \$52 million building, located just east of the John Peace Library Building, is scheduled to be complete in spring 2004.



# First Edition

## Recent faculty publications

English professor and literary critic **Steven G. Kellman** has co-edited (with Joseph Dewey and Irving Malin) a volume of literary criticism on the fiction of American author Don DeLillo. *Underwords* (University of Delaware Press, 2002) is a collection of 13 essays on a single book, *Underworld*, DeLillo's 1997 masterwork praised by one critic as "courageous, ingenious and demanding."

"No essay here pretends completeness, or argues that, now, the novel is exhausted.

Each is an eloquent act of clarity, a stunning recovery of a sustainable picture, like the longitude and latitude of a single constellation," writes co-editor Joseph Dewey in the collection's introduction.

Linguist **Robert Bayley** and Sandra R. Schecter (York University) have published *Language as Cultural Practice: Mexicanos in El Norte* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002). The book explores the relationship between home language socialization and the development of bilingualism and bi-literacy among language-minority children. The authors conducted extensive field interviews among Mexican immigrant and Mexican American families in South Texas and Northern California. Through their research, they hope to shape public debate on language socialization and education issues.

It wasn't too long ago that UTSA created a graduate-level degree program in educational leadership. One of the program's faculty members, Associate Professor **Bruce G. Barnett**, has co-authored a book that the program's more than 200 students are sure to find useful. *Developing Educational Leaders* (Teachers College Press, 2002) advocates the fostering of learning communities in today's complex school environment as a way to "provide students and staff with a renewed sense of meaning and purpose to their work." Barnett and co-authors Cynthia J. Norris, Margaret R. Basom and Diane M. Yerkes believe that the values of learning communities must first be fostered among future

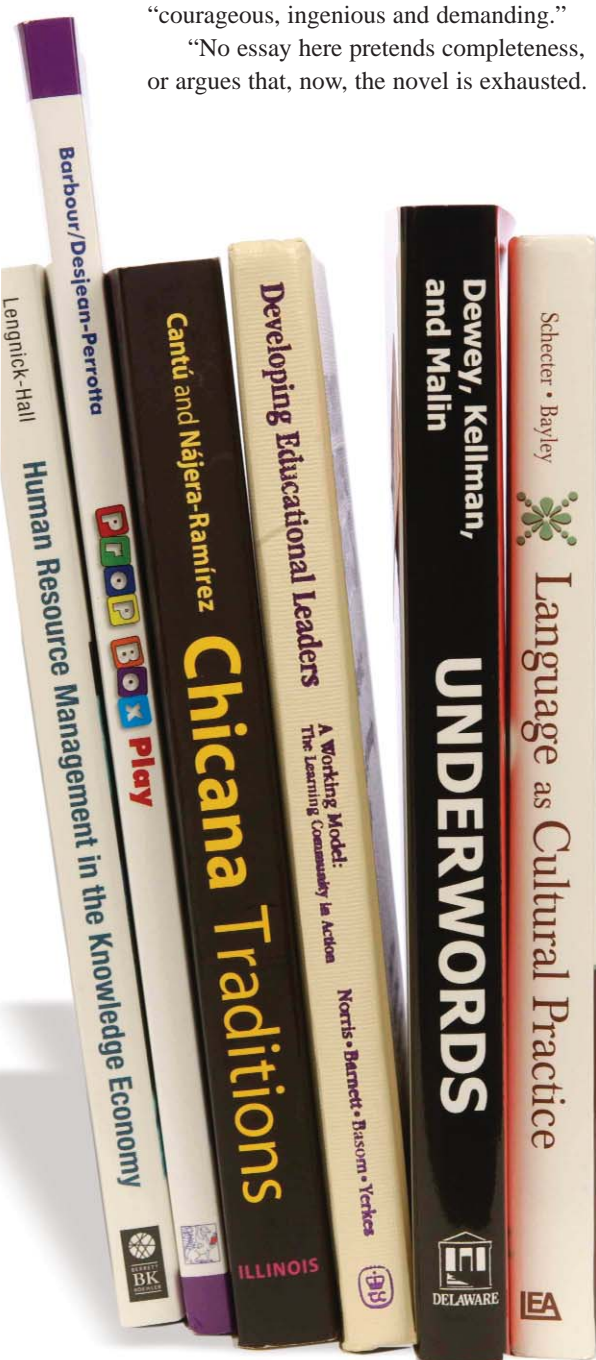
administrators in leadership training programs.

**Mark and Cynthia Lengnick-Hall**, professors of management, believe that most human resource management practices and goals are outdated. Their new book, *Human Resource Management in the Knowledge Economy* (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2003) lays out an argument for a fundamental shift away from the policies, programs and practices that grew up during the industrial era and are no longer optimal in today's economy. The book offers a detailed "blueprint for change" for the industry.

English Professor **Norma E. Cantú** co-edited and contributed to *Chicana Traditions: Continuity and Change* (University of Illinois Press, 2002). The anthology "places questions of the politics of culture at the intersection of folklore, feminism, and Chicana/o studies," say Cantú and co-editor Olga Najera-Ramirez. Cantú's essay, "Chicana Life-Cycle Rituals," focuses on her ongoing study of quinceañeras, the coming-of-age ceremony for young Latinas.

Children love to dress up and pretend, but what they don't know is that such play is full of learning opportunities. **Blanche Desjean-Perrotta**, assistant professor of early childhood education, and co-author Ann Barbour have published a book of playful and educational ideas: *Prop Box: 50 Themes to Inspire Dramatic Play* (Gryphon House, 2002). The book will be useful to preschool teachers and caregivers who want to nurture dramatic play in their young students. Each themed chapter comes with suggestions for basic props, additional props, activities and related literature.

— Lynn Gosnell





## Snapshot, Texas

From the photographic archives  
of the Institute of Texan Cultures

### TEXAS RICE FARMERS

In 1902, Seito Saibara, a lawyer, member of Japan's Parliament and president of Doshisha University in Kyoto, left Japan to study theology in Connecticut. A year later, he left all of this behind to become a rice farmer in Texas. Saibara, along with Rihei Onishi, Toraichi Onishi and Shotaro Nishimura, bought land near the east Texas community of Webster, hoping to establish a large Japanese rice growing community.

Fifteen family members and friends, including Saibara's wife, Taiko, and son, Kiyoaki, arrived from Japan in January 1904 to begin life as farmers. Within five years, the Saibara farm had almost tripled in size and Webster had approximately 75 Japanese residents. The introduction of Japanese short-grained rice to Texas, hard work, innovative farming practices and rich land yielding huge crops made the community, now known as the Saibara colony, a success. Kiyoaki Saibara, pictured fourth from left, ca. 1904, remained a rice farmer on the family land until his retirement in 1964.

— Kendra Trachta

*Institute of Texan Cultures at UTSA, 86-256. Loaned by May Onishi.*

## Campus News in Brief

**GO STUDENTS!** UTSA students passed two of four ballot issues in a referendum in February. With more than 3,000 votes cast, a majority of students voted to approve a fee increase that would support Recreation and Wellness Center programs and expand the University Center. They narrowly rejected two measures that would increase athletics and transportation fees.

**GIFTS AT WORK** The George W. Brackenridge Foundation contributed \$500,000 to create the Brackenridge Endowed Chair in Literature and the

Humanities. This is not the first time the foundation has been so generous: It provided the funding to create the Brackenridge Distinguished Visiting Professorship in the Humanities and the Sue E. Denman Distinguished Chair in American Literature.

**JOINT DEGREE** The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and UTSA will jointly offer a graduate degree in biomedical engineering. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the plan in January. The program will confer Ph.D.

and master's degrees, and the first class of no more than eight student will begin studies this fall.

**STATE BUDGET CRISIS** In response to a request by UT System Chancellor Mark Yudof, all UT System components, including UTSA, have implemented a "flexible hiring freeze." Each institution will be allowed to fill positions critical to their operations.

**LOTS OF GRADS** More than 2,100 students received their degrees in the December commencement. That's 1,721 bachelor's, 442 master's and six doctorates.



## Strings attached Music students teaching students



At left, Luis Ramos, sophomore and student coordinator of the String Project, instructs a student from Maverick Elementary School; above, senior Amanda Ligon reviews the scales during a String Project class.

What do hair, frogs and pepperoni pizza have to do with music? Ask any of the 55 fourth- through sixth-graders who come to the UTSA String Project classes every Tuesday and Friday at the 1604 Campus. Most likely, they will explain that this odd assortment of things helps provide an understanding of how to make music with a stringed instrument: Hair and frogs refer to mechanical parts of the bow. Pepperoni pizza? Saying the words in staccato manner—PEP-per-O-ni-PIZ-za—is just a fun way to teach rhythm.

Last year the Department of Music began participating in the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) String Project Consortium, a program that benefits children wanting to play a stringed instrument (violin, viola, cello and bass) as well as university students wanting to teach music. The goal of the project is to help alleviate a national string teacher shortage by encouraging musicians to become teachers. The project also provides financial incentives by offering assistantships to undergraduate music education majors, as well as giving them supervised teaching experience.

Luis Ramos, student coordinator of the project, finds comfort in feedback from the master teachers who supervise the classes at UTSA. Also, “I enjoy teaching these kids, especially in our group lessons,” Ramos said. “It is amazing how smart kids are, and they learn fast.”

The ASTA String Project Consortium assists universities in building the practical training component of their music education program. The UTSA String Project is based on current models at the University of South Carolina and the University of Texas at Austin and was originally funded by a 10-year, \$100,000 grant. The ASTA Consortium has now asked individual projects to secure their own funding beginning fall 2003.

“This program is an exciting opportunity for UTSA string students to learn the art of teaching in a controlled and stimulating environment. Furthermore, it brings national recognition to UTSA’s growing orchestral program and highlights our commitment to music education,” said Gene Dowdy, master teacher of the String Project and chair of the Department of Music.

The UTSA String Project enrolled 55 students with six student teachers and two supervisory teachers, Dowdy and fellow master teacher Andrea Yun. The first year of the project focused on beginning string instruction. This year students are receiving advanced instruction, music theory and ensemble classes in which they are encouraged to continue advanced orchestral training with the Youth Orchestras of San Antonio. Next year, the project will expand to offer classes at the Downtown Campus.

“The potential of the String Project is unlimited—the fact that it helps grade-school students while also educating our future educators is an amazing process,” said Yun. “The college students enjoy working with the students very much, and the safe teaching setting makes it possible for them to try things that they might not feel comfortable to try in a public school setting. Even as the master teacher, I am learning new things about teaching and learning every day.”

—Jasmin Dean



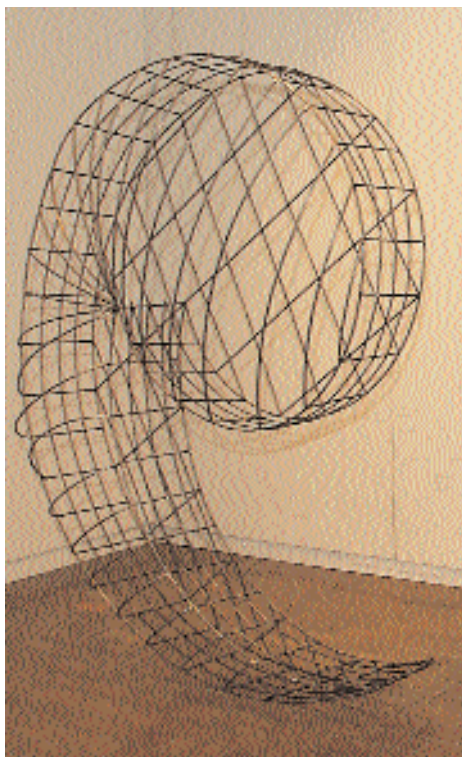
# ¡Bravo!

## Faculty, staff and student achievements

Music student **Charles Flores**, recipient of an enrichment award from the American Musicological Society's Committee on Cultural Diversity to attend the AMS annual meeting; **Ron Rutherford**, Elmo J. Burke Jr. Endowed Chair and professor in the College of Business, ranked 25th in the country for the number of publications in top real estate journals; **John Merrifield**, professor of economics, recipient of the Col. Jean Migliorino and Lt. Col. Philip Piccione Endowed Research Award; **Robin Radtke**, associate professor of accounting, recipient of the Endowed 1969 Commemorative Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence in Business; **Ram Tripathi**, professor of management science and statistics, honored with the Patrick J. Clynes Service Award for 25 years of dedicated service to the university; **Ken Weiher**, associate professor of economics, awarded the E. Lou Curry Teaching Excellence Award in the College of Business; **Cheryl Schrader**, associate dean for graduate studies and research in the College of Engineering, named president of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Control Systems Society; the Texas Prefreshman Engineering Program, founded by **Professor Manuel Berriozabal**, recipient of the Texas Higher Education Star Award from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the program's contributions toward increasing the number of Texas students who choose to pursue higher education; **Dhiraj Sardar**, professor of physics, awarded the 2003 "Prize to a Faculty Member for Research in an Undergraduate Institution" by the American Physical Society for his research on the interaction of laser light with matter; **Lucio Tavernini**, professor of applied mathematics, invited to join the editorial board of the International Journal of Hybrid Systems.



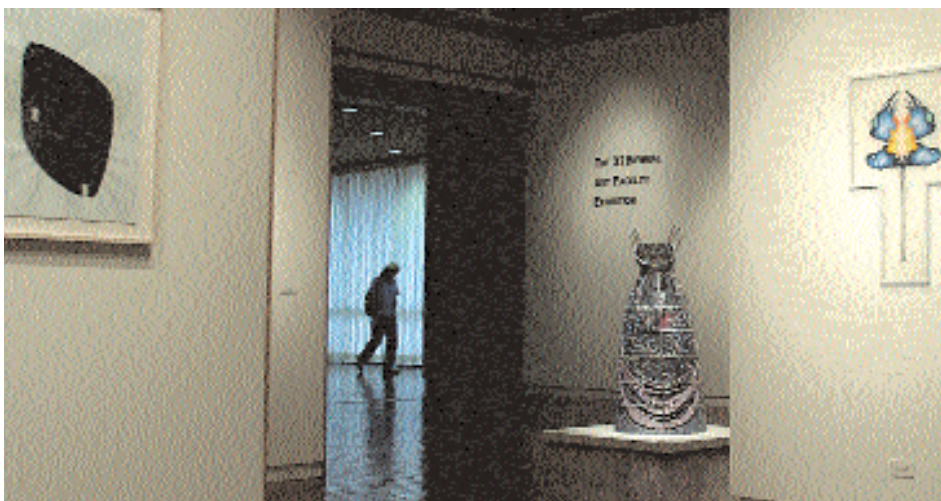
**THE CITY WAS ALIVE** Two UTSA-grown music festivals brought fans of classical guitar and new music to their feet this spring. From Jan. 29 to Feb. 2, the Southwest Guitar Festival, co-produced by the Department of Music, brought legendary musicians to San Antonio for five days of classical guitar performances and master classes. From Feb. 19 to 21, the annual New Music Festival featured works of 20th century classical composers as well as newer works and a world premier. This year, the festival featured a celebration of the large ensemble works of Sir Malcolm Arnold.



**PAUSE FOR ART** Faculty took over the UTSA Art Gallery during their biennial exhibition held Jan. 23 to Feb. 16. Visiting artist Kay Whitney's sculpture, "Punctuation," is shown above.

## XI Biennial features faculty artists

Members of the visual arts faculty exhibited their work during the XI Faculty Art Biennial at the UTSA Art Gallery, Jan. 23 to Feb. 16. The show featured works by Jesse Amado, Ron Binks, James Broderick, Dennis Coffman, Meredith Dean, Johanna Fauerso, Rose Harms, Jene Highstein, Leticia Huerta, Jayne Lawrence, Ken Little, Alex Lopez, Constance Lowe, Neil Maurer, Roxi McCloskey, Dennis Olsen, Steve Reynolds, Kent Rush, Hills Snyder, Kay Whitney and Robert Ziebell. "Overall, this exhibit shows why UTSA has been such a strong, consistent player in the city's emergence as a major art scene," commented Dan Goddard, San Antonio Express-News, in a brief review.



# Investigations

From the sponsored research files at UTSA

## Coming soon: Turtle vision

Turtles may move slowly, but it turns out they are acute observers. **David Senseman**, associate professor of biology, and **Kay Robbins**, professor of computer science, are studying the visual system of turtles for clues to how information about the world is encoded in brain waves.

Although brain waves were first measured more than 70 years ago, neuroscientists still don't know whether they are directly involved in brain function or are merely a by-product of cognitive activities. Senseman and Robbins have discovered a way to analyze brain waves that were recorded from the cerebral cortex of turtles using a specialized high-speed imaging device developed at UTSA. The device measures changes in the electrical activity of nerve cells. Senseman and Robbins can discern by the speed and direction of the wave propagation how turtles encode the physical location of objects they see. Their work has attracted the attention of neuroscientists at the University of Chicago and Washington University, and now they are collaborating on developing a large-scale computational model of the cortex. The ongoing research is funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

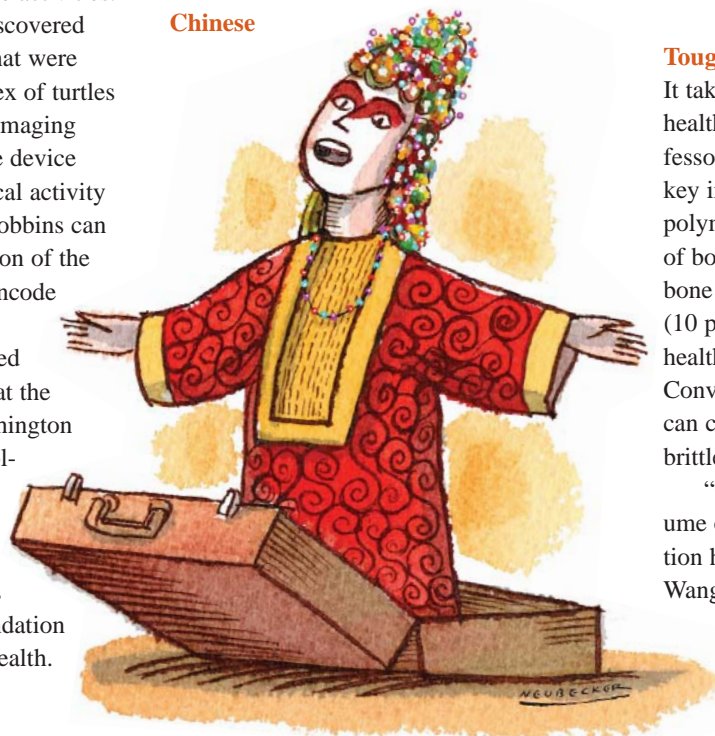
## Will Hot Wells bubble again?

Hot Wells, once a popular resort for wealthy health-seekers and tourists a century ago, now lies in ruins on San Antonio's South Side. Despite its long dormancy, some civic leaders and developers are hoping to bring the once-posh resort back to life. But what's the best way to return the neglected grounds and still-steaming springs to their former splendor? Can spa culture be economically viable for investors and a boon to the community? Enter **Ernest Gerlach** of the Center for Economic Development. He's been hired by the Hot Wells Institute (a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to restoring the Hot Wells Spa complex) to develop several concepts for the site and then to do a market analysis of each model. The

analysis will include determining the potential economic, social and demographic impact on the surrounding neighborhoods and will help the institute develop a strategic plan for redevelopment.

"We're trying to come up with a concept that involves restoring Hot Wells to its former glory, and maybe adding residences and retail space. It's a very strategic location near the San Antonio River and the missions. And the water still has special qualities," Gerlach says.

## Chinese



## Opera

In stark contrast to our contemporary notions of opera as a pastime for the elite, Cantonese opera was a very popular form of theatrical entertainment beginning in the late 19th century. Its stars were as famous as today's celebrities. People flocked to performances, which were written about in magazines. Its music was carefully preserved in some of our earliest recordings. **Wing Chung Ng**, professor and chair of the Department of History, is studying the early history of Cantonese opera, which emerged as an itinerant art form in the 1860s and then adapted to a more commercial, urban setting in the early 20th century. Ng's research delves into the social history of opera, especially its role as a social and

business institution. He's studied the migration of Cantonese opera from its origins in Southern China to its travels with Chinese emigrants. Ng recently returned from a research trip to San Francisco where he documented a vigorous opera tradition in early Chinatown in that city.

"The traveling of opera is one form of Chinese transnationalism," Ng says. "Anywhere in the world you have Cantonese immigrants, you have Cantonese opera."

## Tough bones

It takes more than calcium to keep bones healthy. In fact, says **Xiaodu Wang**, professor of mechanical engineering, another key ingredient to bone health is collagen, a polymer-like material that forms 30 percent of bone mass. The other components of bone are minerals (60 percent) and water (10 percent), but it's collagen that enables healthy bones to resist breakage. Conversely, adverse changes in collagen can cause otherwise strong bones to be brittle.

"Collagen takes up almost half the volume of bone. In the past very little attention has been paid to collagen health," Wang says. "We found that collagen contributes to the capability of the bone to absorb energy that could cause fractures."

Here's an analogy: if you drop a ceramic bowl on the floor, it breaks. But if you drop a plastic bowl, it doesn't break, even though intuitively it seems the ceramic container would be stronger, more durable. But ceramic cannot absorb a lot of energy without breaking.

Wang sees a strong correlation between age and the structural integrity of collagen molecules in bone. "When we study age-related bone factors, we have to take into account collagen health." To date, there are no simple diagnostic tests to measure bone collagen, but with continued research, such a test may become available. If so, a solution to the development of unhealthy collagen, like medication now available to treat the loss of calcium, might be discovered.

— Lynn Gosnell



# An Interview with **Ricardo Romo**

By Lynn Gosnell



**When the Texas Legislature goes into its biennial session, President Ricardo Romo goes into a different kind of education mode—shaping the debate over the resources that will enable UTSA to fulfill its mission and meet the demands of a growing student population. We reached him by phone in his mobile office, a Toyota 4Runner, where he was returning from one of his frequent trips to the capital.**

**How much time do you spend in Austin during the legislative session?**

I try to limit my visits to two days a week, frankly, because there's just too much to do back in San Antonio. If there are hearings obviously, we may end up there for three days a week. . . . We go to Austin to advocate, we go to educate, we go to clarify. We're there to answer questions, but not to lobby.

**Is your primary focus on the budget, or is there other legislation that you're monitoring for UTSA?**

The primary concern this month is the budget. This is a real key time. They are conducting the mark-ups, which is what the legislators perceive to be the recommendations of the Appropriations Committee. And the student referendum in support of the expansion of the student center and the support of the Recreation and Wellness Center requires legislation. So we spent some time talking to Sen. Van de Putte who sponsored that bill for us in the Senate and to Rep. Ken Mercer who sponsored that bill in the House. We need legislative approval to implement the fees. **Everyone's heard about the state's request to cut this fiscal year's budget 7 percent. What has UTSA already done already to comply?**

Texas had a budget shortfall for this current budget, so we were told to cut instantly 7 percent of our budget. We did that by cutting back some capital expenditures like renovations—we were going to renovate some old classroom buildings—and we also had deferred maintenance things that we have to do. That's when we repave parking lots or paint the Convocation Center, which is one of the ugliest buildings on earth. We just won't have the funds to do those projects. We have made some reductions on travel, some reductions on hiring consultants, and implemented a flexible hiring freeze. We can continue hiring, but we have to be very prudent in making hires.

**How is the additional 12.5 percent budget cut requirement for FY 04/05 going to affect UTSA?**

That's the tough one. And it looks like it's going to happen, I heard today. . . . [We'll] probably have to reduce our hiring goal. We have a hiring goal of 60 professors per year in order to meet state standards for faculty-student ratios. Again, remember that is in the discussion stages. [UTSA gets about 40 percent of revenue from the Legislature.] We don't know what the budget will be until the governor signs it.

We'd likely have to increase class sizes, going to at least a minimum of 20 students. We'll have to make sure that all classes are a substantial size. That's one example. I also worry that these cuts could possibly delay implementation of our proposed Ph.D. programs.

**What about construction projects?**

The good news is that the buildings that we have planned and underway are going to start. Tuition revenue bonds would not be issued this session, and therefore, we are not able to go to the Legislature for any construction requiring state tuition bonds. Some of the things we hope to construct including housing do not come from state funds, but come from the System's PUF fund. We're monitoring it, and we think that this will not impact our goal to start construction this summer on a 1,000-bed residence hall.

**Can UTSA continue to be a leader in closing the gaps in higher education opportunity in Texas with these cuts?**

UTSA is committed to closing the gaps. We launched this initiative, and we're not going to abandon it. We will continue to do what we can to close the gap, to see that San Antonio raises the number of students attending college. We have to do more to get young people from this region into college. We have not abandoned our mission.

**What can alumni do to help UTSA?**

Well, I think that alumni *are* helping. We see alumni involved right now in trying to protect higher education. Higher ed is in great need of support from the community. If they would like to tell legislators that higher education has been important for them and their community, they should express that.

**And what's your favorite Austin eatery?**

Las Manitas on South Congress.

*Information on the 78th Texas Legislature and higher education issues is available on*

*the following Web sites:*

[www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us)

[www.utsystem.edu/news/weeklyupdates/Homepage.html](http://www.utsystem.edu/news/weeklyupdates/Homepage.html)

# Courting Success

**Svenja Fuhrig left Germany to attend college in the state where she was born. Now, she's not only one of UTSA's standout tennis players, she's earned a reputation as a true campus leader.**



Svenja Fuhrig can recall a heated doubles match early in her playing career that threatened to have dire consequences off the court. She and her doubles partner were trouncing their competitors. But because Svenja's people skills were as well-developed as her serve, she and her father were able to restore family harmony after defeating her mother and younger sister.

That friendly family outing might have been a microcosm of what was to come for the Texas-born, German-raised tennis player who has made her mark on both the court and the campus. In addition to earning all-conference honors in tennis, Fuhrig maintains a 3.52 GPA while double-majoring in international business and tourism. She was one of only two UTSA students named to the 2002-03 Southland Conference Student-Athlete of the Year Award list.

So how does a young tennis player from Harrislee, Germany end up at UTSA?

"Being born in Texas, I wanted to go to a Texas school," said Fuhrig of her decision to come to UTSA. Her father had been in the German Air Force, and the family had lived in El Paso from 1987 to 1990. "We have friends here, so we came to San Antonio for Thanksgiving every year," Fuhrig explained. When it came time to send out letters to colleges, it was natural for her to send one to UTSA.

"UTSA was the first school to reply to my letters and the coach [then-coach Becky Roberts] started talking to me and that made me feel very welcome," said Fuhrig. "I knew I wanted to come here."

UTSA women's tennis coach Brenda Niemeyer noticed Svenja's leadership and organizational abilities right away.

"She has everything planned out," said Niemeyer. "She has been my team captain the past two years because she is one to follow our game plan and has the ability to change once a match is underway."

## Svenja the Athlete

Following in the footsteps of her mother and father, Fuhrig took to the tennis court at the age of three.

"Tennis is a big part of my family," Fuhrig said. "My parents still play competitive tennis. I can remember beating my father for the first time when I was 12 years old. He is a very smart player and it took me another year to beat him outdoors on clay. My older sister plays tennis, so we would go and play doubles all the time."

Fuhrig has made headlines with her racquet since she set foot on the 1604 Campus. She has been named all-SLC four times and has helped the Roadrunners to their first NCAA tournament berth in program history last spring with a victory over rival Texas-Arlington in the SLC Tennis Championships at the UTSA Courts.

In all, Fuhrig has won 97 career matches at UTSA prior to the spring 2003 season. She and doubles partner Nicole Bouffler posted one of the top records in the country last spring, winning 21 straight matches en route to a 21-1 record. She also helped the Roadrunners land their first national ranking during the 2002 spring season.

"She leads by example," said Niemeyer of Fuhrig. "She is extremely competitive. She shows up for the big matches. I don't have to worry about Svenja and her match. She finds a way to win."

## Svenja the humanitarian

Along with tennis and academics, Fuhrig has made a commitment to improving her surroundings. A member of the UTSA Ambassadors and the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, Fuhrig helps make the college experience better for her peers.

"Svenja has been one of most active members," said Patricia Graham, coordinator of the UTSA Ambassadors, an organization of student volunteers who contribute more than 5,000 hours a year assisting the university with tours, recruitment and help with orientation and the first weeks of

school. Each student must commit to a required number of hours per month in order to be an Ambassador.

"We really can appreciate her dedication because we know she has a very busy schedule, especially during the spring," Graham said.

The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee is the voice of student-athletes to the athletic administration.

"Svenja has taken the term student-athlete to heart," said Associate Athletic Director and Senior Women's Administrator Elizabeth Dalton. "She is truly what we strive for every one of our students to be—successful in the classroom, on the field of competition and in the community. Svenja excels in all of those areas."

Fuhrig credits tennis in her development as a person.

"Tennis, I think, has been a big teacher of life for me," she said. "You may have to fight through difficult times on your own and I think that happens a lot in life."

I've traveled a lot because of tennis and it has helped me learn to get along with so many people."

— Bill Pettit







## Sports briefs

### BASKETBALL NEWS

The women's basketball team earned its first regular-season championship in the Southland Conference in 2003, finishing with a 17-3 conference record and setting a school record of 13 consecutive wins along the way. Head coach Rae Rippetoe-Blair was named SLC Coach of the Year and has led the Roadrunners to three consecutive winning seasons for the first time since the 1984–1987 seasons.

Four players also were named to the all-conference squad: junior forward Nikki Hendrix (first-team); senior guard/forward Julie Rampley and junior center Tanisha Jackson (third-team); and junior forward Dewella Holliday (honorable mention). Hendrix, the first UTSA player to earn first-team all-conference honors, ranks fifth in the SLC in scoring with 13.6 points per game. Rampley ranks third in the SLC in 3-point field goal percentage (38.8%) and leads the Roadrunners in assists, steals, and 3-pointers made and attempted. Jackson finished the year with 10 double-figure games and three double-doubles. Holliday averaged 10.1 points per game in conference play and was also named SLC Newcomer of the Year.

The Roadrunners lost their NCAA bid when they fell to Southwest Texas in the SLC title game on March 15.

Plagued by injury, the men's team finished the season with a 10-17 record, failing to qualify for the post-season. However, junior LeRoy Hurd was named Newcomer of the Year and was chosen for the second team of the All-SLC team. A transfer from Miami, Hurd finished the season as the leading scorer in the conference, averaging 17.6 points per game. Senior forward Ike Akotaobi earned an honorable mention.

### STAYING ON TRACK

Senior Katie Poindexter was named a 2003 Southland Conference Indoor Track and Field Student-Athlete of the year. She and Southwest Texas State University's Ryan Gorman are the first-ever recipients of newly established academic awards that are presented to the top male and female student-athletes in each conference sport.

Poindexter finished fourth among all women at the SLC championships in February. She won the 800-meter run with time of 2:11.78, finished second in the mile run with 4:49.79, and ran the second leg of the third-place 4x400-meter relay team. She has a 3.53 GPA in her biology major, has been on the Dean's List at UTSA, and was named to the Southland Conference All-Academic Team and Who's Who Among Collegiate Students.

On the men's team, senior Carl Johnson was the Outstanding Track Performer after scoring 16 points for the fifth-place Roadrunner Team at the championship meet. He won the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 7.81 and finished third in the 60-meter dash with a time of 6.92.

### FINAL FOUR FINALIST

San Antonio, which will host the 2004 NCAA Men's Final Four at the Alamodome, is among a group of finalist cities under consideration to host a Men's and Women's Final Four beginning in 2008. UTSA would serve as host institution for an NCAA championship event. The Men's Basketball Committee and the Women's Basketball Committee will both announce their city selections in late June.

"To be on the short list for both Final Fours is a testament to the outstanding city we live in, the commitment of UTSA and the San Antonio Sports Foundation, and the presence of a facility like the Alamodome," said UTSA Athletics Director Lynn Hickey. "We plan to do everything in our power so that both these prestigious events return to San Antonio."

The university has a solid history of hosting NCAA basketball championship events. UTSA hosted the 1998 Men's Final Four and the 2002 Women's Final Four as well as the Men's Basketball Midwest Regionals in 1997 and 2001. In March, the university hosted the Men's South Regionals at the Alamodome.

### WHAT'S THE LATEST?

For up-to-date information on spring sports and schedules, visit [www.goutsa.com](http://www.goutsa.com).

— From staff and press reports



# LAW AND BORDERS

Story by Laurel Kalser  
Photos by Craig Ambrosio

At a fall 2000 immigration hearing in Tampa, Fla., Daniel Navaira Vara, chief attorney for the Immigration and Naturalization Service office in Miami, pressed witness Sami Al-Arian to admit that he and his brother-in-law, Mazen Al-Najjar, helped raise money for the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Organization.

Al-Najjar had been arrested three and a half years earlier for overstaying a 20-year-old student visa, but the INS kept him in jail based on secret evidence that the government said established the terrorist ties of the brothers-in-law.

At this hearing, which took place after a federal judge ruled that the government could not use the secret evidence to keep Al-Najjar in custody, Vara, a 1978 UTSA graduate and a member of the first graduating class of criminal justice majors, was trying to prove the man's terrorist connections—without using the classified documents. Questioning went on for six hours, with the witness asserting his Fifth Amendment right 99 times in response to Vara's persistent cross-





## examination.

Although Al-Najjar was released from jail a few months later, he was ultimately deported in August 2002 for overstaying his visa. Al-Arian, however, remained under federal investigation, and this February was arrested and indicted along with others on racketeering charges for supporting and financing Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Though the government never charged Al-Najjar with having ties to terrorism, the pre-9/11 episode triggered public outcry over the INS's efforts to use secret evidence against a seemingly upstanding Islamic man.

Vara is no stranger to controversy. He began his legal career by pursuing the government's own cops who had gone bad. During the 11 years he has headed the INS's litigation division in Miami, (now part of the Department of Homeland Security) Vara has been involved with the highly publicized cases of ousted Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, notorious Miami drug dealer Alberto San Pedro, and, most recently, Adham Hassoun, who the government believes helped plan another terrorist attack inside the United States with alleged "dirty bomber" Jose Padilla.

Vara, tan and trim, with striking good looks that could easily rival the television action heroes he worshipped as a child, is unshakable in his commitment to protecting the country. He speaks in terms of "good guys" and "bad guys" and lightheartedly refers to himself as a "Lone Ranger," the maverick who will push the

envelope (within organizational boundaries) to catch perpetrators of crime.

"We bag the bad guys that nobody else bags because there is no fear," Vara says. "We don't go out wondering if we're going to lose or if somebody's going to be critical. I know the perception sometimes is that guys like me get up in the morning and say, 'Let's go arrest somebody for the heck of it today.' It doesn't work that way, especially for the kind of cases that we do. There's no way in the world I can move forward in a bureaucracy without getting a lot of people involved and convinced about what we're doing."

Vara is not the least bit intimidated by the controversy his cases often generate, particularly with regard to halting terrorism.

"Anybody who's read how the 19 hijackers survived in the United States before the activity on September 11 knows that to the average Joe, [terrorists] look like average people," he says. "You rent an apartment. You have a job, or you go to school. And it's unfortunate that there are situations where the U.S. government has to make a choice between potentially harming the national security interests and doing its job against a particular individual who is good at keeping the veil of legitimacy."

Vara's colleagues say of him that what you see is what you get. They point to his vigorous presentations in and out of court, the high expectations he has for himself and the people who work for

him, and the composed, straightforward and even-handed way he runs the litigation arm of the INS's Miami district office as his most outstanding characteristics.

"I can tell when someone throws a lot of bluster," says Bill West, head of investigations for the Miami office and Vara's close friend. "Unfortunately, there's a lot of that among lawyers, but he's not that way. He bases his opinions on the facts, his interpretations on the facts, and he lets you know that up front."

Adds former top deputy Keil Hackney, now in private practice: "Dan runs a tight ship, but a fair one. He expects 200 percent from his attorneys, who are given almost complete autonomy. Eventually, I was selected as deputy counsel, where I supervised a team of 65 attorneys. I worked hard, but learned more. How could I not? I was working with the best litigators in the INS."

### Early ambitions

Vara, now 46, knew at age 5 he wanted to be a cop. He and his two brothers grew up in a single-parent home in the moderate-income, Hispanic neighborhood of southwest San Antonio. He fed his law enforcement dreams early on with a steady diet of 1960s TV shows like "Sky King" and, of course, "The Lone Ranger." Later, as a teenager, Vara soaked up every story his half-brother, Jose Perez, shared about working for the U.S. Secret Service, including being a uniformed officer assigned to the White House.

"When my brother would come home, he'd have a gun, a badge, he'd look important, groomed. Articulate," Vara recalls. "He told us about his travels all over the country with dignitaries. I said, 'That's it. I really have to become a cop now.'"

Shortly before he was scheduled to graduate from high school, Vara was called into the principal's office. Wracking his brain to figure out what he did wrong, he was surprised to be told instead that he could get an academic scholarship to nearby St. Philip's College. Putting aside plans to join the army, he enrolled in St. Philip's in 1974 and became the first person in the family to pursue higher education.

In 1975, Vara entered UTSA's criminal justice program, where then-director Ron Rogers became his mentor.

"We used to snicker [at the courses at other schools]—Baton Building I, Handcuffing II," Vara says. "There was some of that in his program, but it was more structured around the organization, management and behavior in law enforcement agencies."

All was going well until New Year's Day, 1978. Six months before graduation, Vara severely injured his knee during a game of sandlot football, ruining his chances of meeting the physical fitness requirements for becoming a federal officer after he graduated. The disappointment was traumatic, until Rogers stepped in. He encouraged Vara to do an independent study while he recuperated.

"He gives me this little, thin book and says, 'Dan, I want you to read this cover to cover and come see me next week. We'll talk about it,'" Vara recalls. The book was Machiavelli's *The Prince*, the 16th-century treatise on politics.

"[The book is about] organizational behavior," Vara says. "And

the way I learned it . . . if you know what they are going to use against you, you know how to defend yourself." He summarizes Machiavelli's thesis this way: "If you acquire a principedom, you get rid of the people before you who hold positions of significance, because they are potential threats to you."

Vara quickly clarifies that he doesn't necessarily believe that.

"But I realize that's a theory that has some merit, as long as you understand the concept, as long as you know how to identify a potential threat to yourself. You don't have to use Machiavelli as an offensive weapon because you have your eyes open. It allows you to deal with things in a particular way."

**"It was the first time I had to actually deal with a major conflict of opinion within the U.S. government on what to do with any particular case."**

The people who have worked the closest to Vara in Miami would agree that he shows impressive management and administrative savvy.

"Dan was not just the lawyer in charge of a government office, he was a partner running a private law firm," says Hackley. "He taught me how to survive within the government's intricate chain of command. By watching him, I learned what to say and when to say it."

Between 1978 and 1983, Vara worked as a Department of Defense investigator in a small division, internal security. He ultimately led an electronic surveillance group that investigated employee wrongdoing on military bases around the country, and he thrived on the autonomous nature of his position.

During this time, Vara, who is now divorced, met and became engaged to a woman who also worked for the federal government. Then in his mid-20s, Vara decided it was time to go to law school, a career goal that evolved from his high school dream of becoming a uniformed officer.

When his fiancée was reassigned to northern Virginia, Vara applied and was accepted to law school at George Mason University in Arlington, Va. He graduated three years later and joined the INS, rising quickly within the ranks to the position he holds today.

### Into the fray

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (which was absorbed into the new Department of Homeland Security on March 1) enforces federal laws that regulate the admission (and continued presence) of foreign-born people in this country. As with the old INS structure, Vara serves as District Counsel and Chief Legal Officer for the Miami District Counsel's Office, which covers the entire state of Florida and the Bahamas.

In this position, Vara oversees both the investigative and prosecutorial functions of the office. The investigative arm identifies and then arrests people who have no lawful immigration status here. The prosecutorial arm represents the government in immigration court to prove that the individual is here illegally and





Daniel N. Vara, chief legal counsel for the Miami District Counsel's Office, Department of Homeland Security.

should be deported.

Since 1986, when Vara was hired, the cases confronting the agency have become increasingly complex and controversial. One of the most highly publicized examples was the trial of ousted Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, the first case Vara became involved with when he took over the Miami district counsel's office in 1990.

A Miami Herald story described the trial as "filled with strange episodes," going on to report that "the most surprising and possibly significant moments came when top drug busters of the same government trying to convict Noriega emerged as his best character witnesses."

The U.S. Attorney's Office, the lead prosecuting authority, made deals with the numerous witnesses—almost all of them South or Central Americans charged with drug-related offenses—promising some that they would be protected from deportation later on in exchange for their testimony against Noriega.

According to the Herald report, the deals caused tension between the U.S. Attorney's Office and the INS, which had been called into the case to provide guidance on what promises the government could make without running afoul of federal immigration laws.

Into this scenario walked Daniel Vara, the new district counsel. As an INS assistant regional counsel in D.C. from 1987 to 1990, he had supervised some hairy investigations into INS agents accused of, in his words, "some pretty bad stuff," like drug-dealing, counterfeiting, fraud, abusing the position for sexual favors, cover-ups, and in one instance, a suspected homicide. But the Noriega case was different.

"It was the first time I had to actually deal with a major conflict of opinion within the U.S. government on what to do with any particular case," he says. In 1992, Noriega was convicted on drug-trafficking charges and remains in federal prison in Miami serving out a 40-year sentence. Although he cannot discuss his role in detail, Vara says that the disagreements between the INS and the U.S. Attorney's Office were significant.

Since Noriega, Vara has led his deputies through a succession of high-profile cases. In 1996, he and another INS litigator won a victory against Jorge Luis-Rodriguez, a courier for Cuban intelligence who had been relaying information about anti-Castro groups in Miami to various Cuban agents in the U.S.

The precedent-setting decision by an immigration court appeals board in northern Virginia said that the INS could deport Luis-Rodriguez, even though he was not caught actually spying against the government.

The same year, Vara and his deputies won what he says was another precedent-setting victory when a federal appeals court in Atlanta ruled that the U.S. Attorney's Office could not make deals promising to protect criminal aliens from deportation.

The case involved notorious Hialeah, Fla., drug dealer Alberto San Pedro, dubbed "The Great Corrupter" by the press. A Miami federal grand jury had indicted San Pedro in 1988 for bribery and conspiracy. In 1989, faced with a long prison term, San Pedro agreed to cooperate with the U.S. Attorney's Office in its investigation of corruption in the Hialeah city government. As part of the

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# Immersed i

## Liu Fellows learn about business, basketball and the birthday song.

By Rebecca Luther

Sometimes you have to experience things firsthand to fully appreciate them. Take the NBA, says Shanghai native Zhu Jun.

Sure, there's basketball in China; after all, China was hip to Yao mania long before the No. 1 pick of the 2002 draft arrived in Texas. Also, a number of NBA games are broadcast live on Chinese television, which means fans watch a Tuesday night match-up on Wednesday morning. But it's just not the same as being there. For example, it wasn't until Zhu attended her first professional basketball game in the United States—Spurs versus the Portland Trailblazers—that she learned that the proper way to cheer on your team when the other team is driving for the basket is to clap your hands, stomp your feet and holler "Defense!" But not like that.

"It's 'Dee-fense! Dee-fense!'" Zhu bellows before breaking up in laughter at her mock cheer. "It was very exciting," she says. "Unfortunately, they lost the game."

Zhu is an M.B.A. student from China who spent the fall 2002 semester studying at UTSA as part of the Liu's Family Foundation U.S.-China Business Education Initiative. The program was developed after Hong Kong businessman Richard Liu donated \$1 million to UTSA in 1998 to form partnerships with Chinese universities that would foster such opportunities. Since the first class of Liu Fellows, as they are called, arrived on campus in August of 2000, UTSA has hosted almost 50 students from such leading Chinese universities as Fudan University, Tongji University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

But what does an M.B.A. have to do with the NBA? Plenty. The Chinese students, program organizers point out, are not here just to go to class and go home. They're here to learn as much about American life and culture as they are about American business practices, since they often go hand in hand. They go on university-sponsored field trips (including a Spurs game) and spend their breaks traveling the country—Las Vegas, New York, New Orleans—on their own to soak up as much as they can for as long as their visas will allow.

Although the program does allow for some fun, admission is highly competitive. For example, more than 100 students at Fudan University in Shanghai began the application process last year; the university whittled the field down to 10 by the time College of Business administrators arrived in China last spring break to interview the candidates. Only five were selected to come to UTSA for the 2002–2003 academic year.



# n AMERICA

"The opportunities for a Chinese student to have a college education are much more limited than for American students," says Clyde Stoltenberg, director of International Business Programs and East Asian Business Studies. "They've been opening new schools and developing new programs, but given the population and the spaces available at the college and university level, it's a very coveted thing just to be in college at all in China. For university students to have an opportunity to spend a semester in another country is so coveted that they'll endure personal sacrifices to have that opportunity."

Coming to the United States was important enough to Zhu that she took a leave of absence from her job at a chemicals company and left her husband and 9-year-old son in China. Though she'd already had a lot of contact with Westerners through extensive travel in Europe for her job, it was her first time in the States, and at the end of her four-month stay, she deemed it "totally different" from the European cities she'd visited.

"Before coming here, we read books, we watched Hollywood movies, we talked to American people," Zhu says. "But only when you come here can you know what America is and what Texas is."

## The Exchange Also Goes West to East

Although bringing Chinese students to UTSA has been the central component of the U.S.-China Business Education Initiative thus far, it has others. In 2002, through a collaboration with the Shanghai Municipal Personnel Bureau, a group of six Chinese executives arrived at UTSA to participate in the university's E.M.B.A. program. The Liu program has also brought two Chinese scholars to teach at UTSA. So far, only one UTSA student has studied in China with support from the program: In 2002, Rito Raullerson spent five months studying Chinese business, including China's accession to the World Trade Organization, at Beijing's University of International Business and Economics. Raullerson, who will graduate in May with a B.B.A. in international business, says he first developed an affinity for Asian culture while stationed in Korea for two years in the military.

"I started recognizing a trend in business development, especially in China. It's growing really rapidly," he says. "There's so much potential there, and there are so many opportunities; it's just unbelievable. ... I'm going back to China for spring break, and I'm just going to pass out my resumés like flyers."

The language barrier is one reason more UTSA students haven't studied in China. English language instruction is common in Chinese schools, but "we don't have a lot of students that speak Mandarin," says Kyle Snyder, associate director of International Business Programs and the Liu's Family Foundation U.S.-China Business Education Initiative. Even Raullerson doesn't speak Chinese fluently—instruction at his university in Beijing was in English. More universities are beginning to offer English-language instruction, which will allow American students who are interested to study in Asia, Stoltenberg and Snyder say.

In December, UTSA marketing department chairman Joel

Saegert taught a two-week English-language graduate course at Tongji University in Shanghai. (Though his trip was not officially sponsored by the Liu's Family Foundation, Saegert was invited to China by former Liu scholar Yeng Dehua, an information systems professor at Tongji.)

"When I said something and it didn't seem to register, someone would say it in Chinese to the rest of the class," Saegert says.

But language isn't the only difference between Chinese and American classes. Saegert also had to modify the content of his course to suit the life circumstances of his Chinese students. In discussing market variability, Saegert usually talks about products that can be branded for specific consumer conditions or wants. In his UTSA courses, he's used lawnmowers, vacuum cleaners, microwaves and potato chips as examples—but none of those are commonly used in China. Instead he talked about bicycles, shampoo and thermos bottles (used for hot tea in China, he explains).

Zhu Jun found that M.B.A. classes at UTSA were "much more focused on concepts" and on identifying problems, whereas "in China, we're more focused on how to mathematically solve that problem," she says.

A more striking difference is in how teachers and students behave in class. "American education is a lot more interactive with the professor than in China," Snyder says. "They wouldn't ask as many questions or have to participate in as many team projects. One of the hardest things for all the students is when they have a class where they have to give a presentation. Of course, that's difficult for Americans, too, but we expect to have to do it."



"In [the] USA, students are encouraged to express their own opinions in class," says former student Wen Xu, who completed his M.B.A. at Tongji University in 2001 and now works for a Chinese import-export company doing business with American clients. "But in China, we were told since childhood that a good student should be quiet and obedient in class."

Wen says he didn't often participate in class discussions during his semester at UTSA. For one, he didn't think his English was good enough and he didn't want to waste class time fumbling for the right words. But also, he says, "Chinese students think it impolite and kind of stupid to raise questions or challenge teachers."



Pictured at left are the spring 2003 class of Liu Fellows with College of Business personnel. Front row: Fan Songlu (Linda), Liu Xiaoling (Helen), COB Dean Bruce Bublitz, You Lianming (Raymond) and Tian Lin (Michael). Back row: Dong Mei (Lily), Marilyn Bellows, Liu Feng (Frank), Clyde Stollenberg, Kyle Snyder, Cao Qian (Jane) and Zhang Weidong (Gingko).

"God forbid you challenge something that the professor says. It's not done," says Department of Finance chairman Keith Fairchild of the Asian education system. Fairchild says he'll sometimes ask his Chinese students specific questions—to compare something they're talking about in class to how it's done in China—to help draw them out. He not only wants them to get more out of their class time, he wants his American students to hear another perspective.

Management lecturer William Spruce agrees that the Liu program benefits not only the Chinese students but their American classmates, too. "Our students grow up with a sort of insular mentality. ... It's a terrible disadvantage for us," he says. But having foreign students in class—and not just business classes but classes on any subject, Spruce emphasizes—broadens the scope of the discussion. "Chinese students tend to ask questions about things that we may take for granted," he says.

Jia Yi, a member of the first group of Liu Fellows who now works for a life insurance company, says she enjoyed the interaction in her UTSA classes. "I also enjoyed group work assigned by the professor which allowed me to interact and cooperate closely with group members with different backgrounds."

Chinese students tend to ask more questions of their professors and participate more in class as they become acclimated to living and studying here, Fairchild says.

"As the semester goes along, they realize, 'I can talk to this guy, I can talk in class, it's OK.'"

### Beyond the Books

Marilyn Bellows reaches a stopping point in her lesson plan. Does anyone have any questions before she moves on?

Yes, one bespectacled male student answers. "You just coughed and said 'Excuse me.' What is our appropriate response?"

Bellows smiles broadly. No, it's not necessary to say anything when someone coughs, she explains. However, when someone sneezes, it is polite to say 'Bless you.' Some people say 'God bless you,' and you might even hear someone say '*Gesundheit*.'

Meticulous note-takers, her Chinese students all want to know how to spell *gesundheit*. Sorry, Bellows says with a laugh: She doesn't know, either.

While all the Liu M.B.A. Fellows take 9 credit hours of graduate-level courses in the College of Business, they also are required to attend twice-weekly cultural enrichment classes taught by Bellows. The wife of political science professor Thomas Bellows,

Bellows got the job as the Liu Fellows' cultural liaison because of her own interest in Asian culture. The Bellowses once lived in Taiwan and "traveled quite a bit through Southeast Asia," she says. She even studied Chinese in college, but contends that her Chinese is not good. In a conference room on the fourth floor of the Business Building, Bellows and her class discuss everything from culture shock and American values to the Super Bowl, affirmative action, homosexuality and tipping. They carve jack-o'-lanterns at Halloween and learn how to sing Happy Birthday. Classroom instruction is supplemented by field trips to hospitals, churches and museums. They visit Leon Valley City Hall (where Bellows serves as a city councilwoman) so they can gain an understanding of American city government. Fall semester students get a trip to WursthFest in New Braunfels; spring semester students go to the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo. And they go to a Spurs game.

The field trips are crucial to giving the Chinese students firsthand cultural experience, Bellows says. "For me to sit here and



Regular outings—from shopping trips at HEB to a night at the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo—allow the Liu Fellows to immerse themselves in American culture.



lecture for four hours a week in a windowless room, they could just as easily be in China hearing this lecture,” she says. “You can talk about sports culture and how important that is, but you get out there [at a sports event] and you feel it—you feel the bleachers when everyone’s jumping up and down.”

**“You can talk about sports culture and how important that is, but you get out there and you feel it—you feel the bleachers when everyone’s jumping up and down.”**

Another of her goals is to help dispel misconceptions about America, though those are generally few as the graduate students are pretty savvy, Liu program coordinators say. “The students that we get have a much better perception of what America is like than the typical UTSA student would have about what China is really like, or Americans in general,” says Clyde Stoltenberg.

Still, sometimes people get the wrong idea.

When she was accepted into the program, Zhu Jun says, “Some of my colleagues say, ‘Oh, good. You’re going to Texas. You can have a chance to meet cowboys.’”

Bellows has heard the cowboy question before. “There really weren’t a lot of cowboys, but an awful lot of movies got made about them because Americans admire that self-reliance,” she tells her class.

Because the students are in San Antonio for such a short time and because they are so knowledgeable about America, full-blown culture shock is rare. More often, it comes in a series of small surprises. On a tour of the UTSA library, for example, one Liu student asked Bellows why so many students were sleeping on the sofas. And, “they’re always astounded to find out I have four children,” she says. “When we go to the hospital, the highlight of the tour is the nursery. They will stand—the guys, too—and watch those babies cry for 20 minutes. They’re just astounded because there are so few babies in China,” she says, referring to the Chinese government’s one-child policy.

As for Zhu, she says one of her biggest surprises in America was the casualness with which Americans dispense ritual greetings: “When you’re walking down the street and somebody says, ‘Hi, how are you?’” The first time it happened in San Antonio, she says she kept trying to remember where she’d met the person before. “Now I know how to respond,” she says with confidence.

“‘Good, how ’bout you?’”

*WEB EXTRA: Visit [www.utsa.edu/pub/sombrilla](http://www.utsa.edu/pub/sombrilla) to read how the Liu students choose their American names . . . and why.*

## Richard Liu’s \$1 Million Gift

It is to date the largest single cash donation in UTSA history. When Hong Kong businessman Richard Liu gave \$1 million to the College of Business to establish the U.S.–China Business Education Initiative, he gave more than money—he also gave the university instant clout in China, says one COB faculty member.

“Chinese universities have been bombarded by American universities [wanting to establish programs] in recent years. The difference is we had a million dollars in our pocket,” says management lecturer William Spruce, who accompanied former COB Dean James Gaertner to China in 1999 to scout 10 leading universities. The college formed partnerships with five, and has since brought almost 50 Chinese M.B.A. students to study at UTSA.

It was through Gaertner that Liu, chairman of international business conglomerate Superior Holdings Limited, became acquainted with UTSA. One of Liu’s early successes in the United States came as a supplier to Tandy Brands, a leather products company in Yoakum, Texas. Gaertner served as a controller for the company before entering academia and later was elected to the company’s board of directors. A noted philanthropist, Liu began thinking about ways to advance business education for China and the United States, and he naturally thought about his friends in South Texas. Now each semester, Liu Fellows make a sort of pilgrimage to Tandy Brands and tour that company as well as others in the region.

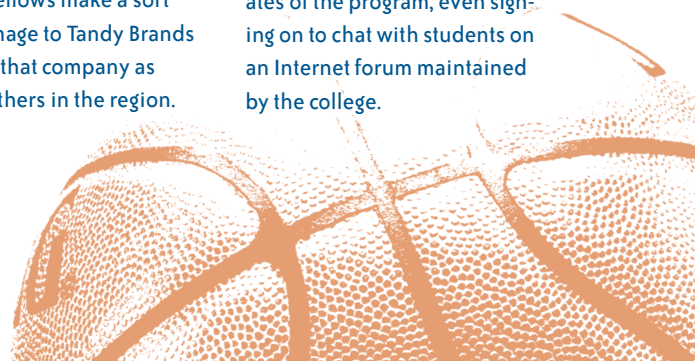
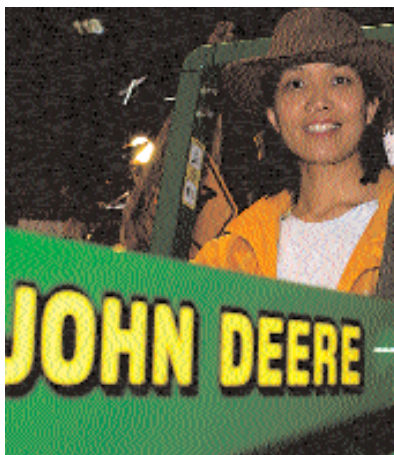


Though Liu was offered scholarships to study at U.S. business schools after he finished his bachelor’s degree at the National Taiwanese University, he did not then have the resources to travel to the United States. “He didn’t get to go for a master’s because he couldn’t afford it. So he’s giving others the opportunity he didn’t have,” says Liu program coordinator Kyle Snyder.

“I want my gift to help a new generation of business students in the United States and China realize their dreams,” says Liu.

“He’s very interested in Chinese business people really understanding the American business environment and Americans understanding better the Chinese business environment,” says Clyde Stoltenberg, director of International Business Programs and East Asian Business Studies. “That’s a strong interest of Mr. Liu’s—that Americans learn more about China.”

But his support is more than financial. Liu usually travels to San Antonio every semester to meet each new class of Liu Fellows, and he maintains contact with graduates of the program, even signing on to chat with students on an Internet forum maintained by the college.



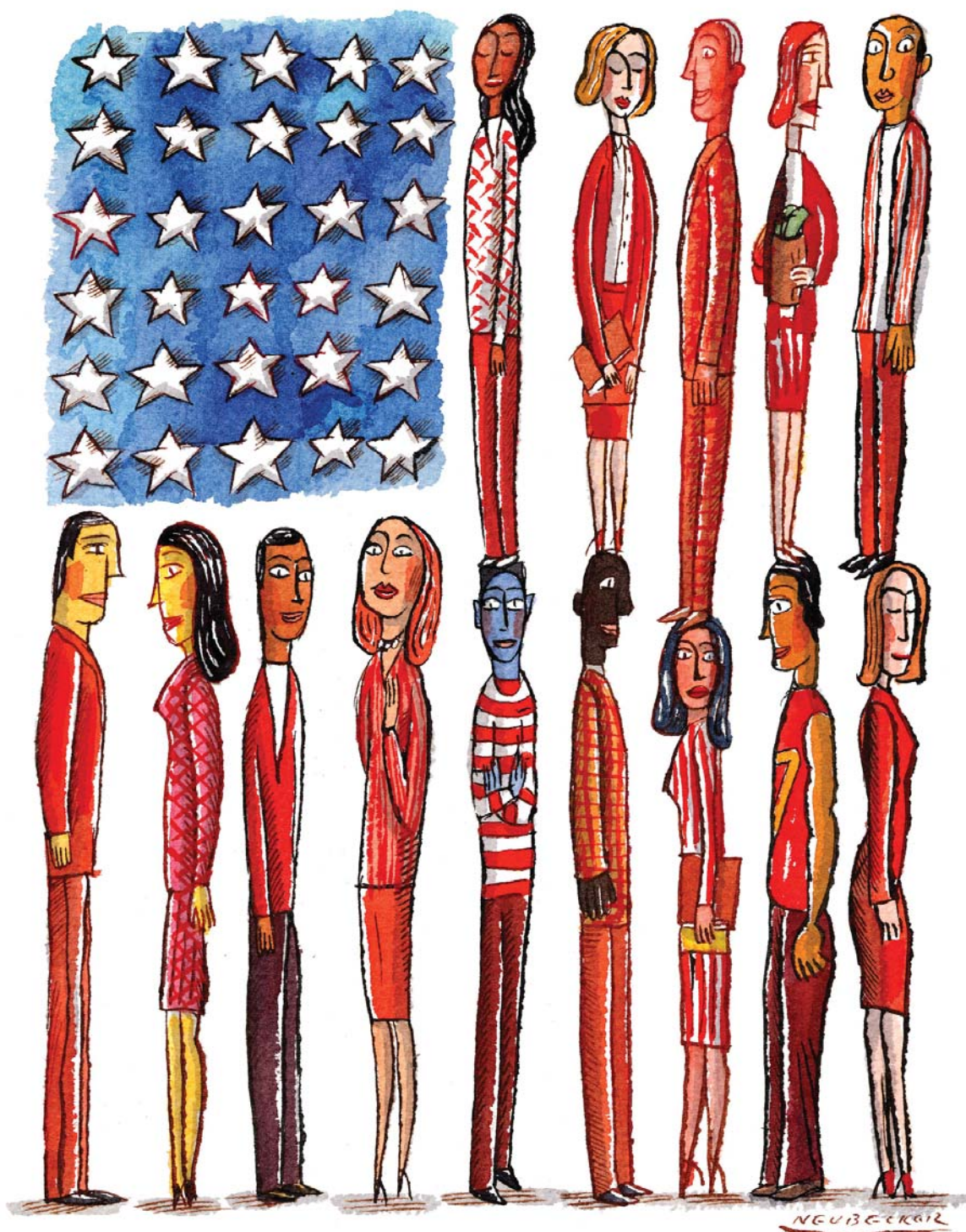


# Being American

By Lynn Gosnell

Arriving to a morning class in the haphazard fashion of undergraduates, a small group of students rearrange the room's desks into a semi-circle and throws down backpacks, coats, books and sodas. Their teacher, Marian Aitches, keeps up a lively chatter while passing out multi-hued copies of articles and cartoons she's culled from various media. On each piece of paper, she hopes, is a debate waiting to happen.

Throughout the semester, Aitches has pushed the students to pay attention to the ways that race is portrayed in media and popular culture. This morning, she draws her students' attention to magazine covers, where, she notes, "the full racial palette is still rare." She also hands out a page of editorial cartoons that skewer the grammar-school myth of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. In one classic cartoon, two Indians stand on a shore contemplating a ship in the harbor. One says to the other, "Maybe if we refuse to educate their kids, they'll go away."





"I like for you to think about things," she remarks, somewhat slyly. The students know better—Aitches, a lecturer in American studies with a Ph.D. in English literature, prefers that her students question things.

Last fall, the 14 students who enrolled in Honors 3233: Being American in the 21st Century were asked to think a lot, and aloud, about American identity and cultural formation. They asked many questions: What values are crucial to being American? How do race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality and religion affect identity formation in

But the heart and soul of any honors seminar is critical and open discussion. In this assignment, the students excelled.

"Definitely the conversations were the best part of the class," said Lee Beeler, a junior criminal justice major. "In a lot of other situations, people tend to hold back what they think. People were really trying to put their view out, to hash it out."

"Opinion was never rejected or suppressed in any way. I talk a lot . . . it's my character," said Momchil "Mo" Roussev, an international student from Bulgaria.

agreed on what the derogatory comment meant. They argued about the seriousness of the mascot issue. And they questioned the differences between the author's description of reservation life and their own struggles for identity.

Aitches refereed the discussion with aplomb, putting each point into a larger context while deftly preventing any one student from monopolizing the discussion.

Aitches, who grew up in the Victoria Courts public housing project in San Antonio in the 1950s, claims Creek,

## "I've never had a course that forced me to ask the question, 'Where do I fit in in this country?'"

American culture? How does popular culture reflect our ideas about being American?

The syllabus included books on the contemporary American experiences of Hispanics, Asian Americans, African Americans and Native Americans. Some of the authors were familiar names to students, such as San Antonio resident Sandra Cisneros, author of *The House on Mango Street*, and Terry McMillan, who wrote *A Day Late and a Dollar Short*, among other works. Almost all the books used in the class were non-fiction accounts or edited collections of personal and family history.

Aitches, who had taught the class before, added a Middle Eastern perspective this time (*Saffron Sky: A Life between Iran and America*, by Gelareh Asayesh), and a memoir about growing up white in a New York City neighborhood where whites were a minority (*Honky* by Dalton Conley). Rounding out the syllabus were film documentaries, such as "In Whose Honor," about American Indian mascots in sports, and "On Orientalism," an interview with historian and critic Edward Said. She also included some historic writings, such as accounts from Charles Dickens' two trips to America in the 19th century.

"I liked the diverse readings," said Carlos Cardenas, a junior computer science major. "The common thread was that they were all about being American from different points of view."

The students had spirited debates about topics that are not often talked about in civil tones. Tolerance for different opinions ("even the skewed ones," one student remarked) and life experiences was held up by Aitches as a virtue—and tested frequently.

Take the discussion about American Indian mascots. The class had just read *The Rez Road Follies*, a narrative about reservation life, delivered with biting wit and tenderness by Anishinaabe storyteller Jim Northrup. Aitches wanted to make the point that cultural capital includes the ability to control the use of racial or ethnic symbols. Mascot images seen in the sports world are a big, controversial deal to American Indians, she told the students. Many were skeptical. How can mascots be insulting?

"I think if you polled people," one student said, "they would say, 'get over it,' because there are stereotypes in every mascot. This is distracting from more important issues."

"Why aren't the Saints and Padres insulting [to Catholics]?" another asked.

Finally, a student held up Northrup's book and said in disgust, "This is the first book we read that I wanted to spit at." He quoted a line that asserts that some American Indians view the Statue of Liberty as a symbol of oppression.

At this, the class erupted. They dis-

Choctaw and Lithuanian ancestry. Her experience being "on the margins" of so many American identities allows her to bring particular insight and sensitivity to the class discussions.

"All my life, I've thought about and understood issues of class and race and ethnicity," she explained.

When she taught at Eastern Michigan University in the 1990s, Aitches took her students on field trips to reservations. Here in San Antonio, she has found it more difficult to communicate the realities of contemporary American Indian life.

The students didn't resolve any issues in their discussion, but they clearly relished the debate. And after viewing the documentary on American Indian mascots in the next class, many saw the issue in a different light.

Anne Shaffer, a junior English major and enthusiastic participant, believes that the class should be a required course for every undergraduate. "I've never had a course that forced me to ask the question, 'Where do I fit in in this country?'"

"This class was wonderful in a way because the students were honest and open," said Aitches. "I really thought that was great because they would even say things challenging to me. To me that was a mark of success, that they would say things they knew were going to make me mad!" she laughed.



# SAN ANTONIO ON PARADE

In the late 19th century, San Antonio was transforming itself from an isolated frontier town to a cosmopolitan and uniquely American city. That transformation was played out in the city's many civic festivals and parades, a very public stage indeed. Art historian Judith Sobre researched six civic festivals—their pageantry, organization, participation, and the myths and traditions on which they thrived. Her book, *San Antonio on Parade*, has just been published by Texas A&M University Press. An excerpt from the book's prologue follows.

1870

## Two Parades in San Antonio, 1870 & 1898

Alamo Fire Company No.1—the members of the company will assemble at their engine house, at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 4th, where they will form and march to the Alamo Plaza, and take their place in the procession.

After the procession, spectacle &c., shall have been concluded, the company will march back to the engine house and will there be dismissed.

—*San Antonio Express*, July 1, 1870

The Fourth of July was celebrated in San Antonio yesterday as it has never been celebrated before in Texas. Something like 5000 people manifested their patriotism by marching together in a procession that seemed to extend over endless distances. This procession in itself formed a spectacle, such as has not before been presented in this city, and it was but the inauguration of a patriotic demonstration which was continued all through the day and until late at night.

—*San Antonio Express*, July 5, 1898

Alamo Plaza at 7:30 in the morning on July 4, 1870, was dusty and already showing signs of the coming heat of the day when parade participants came together and lined up, ready to march. Leading the procession were the marshals, rancher R. D. Bonnett, policeman Alejo Perez, and lumberman and volunteer fireman Hans Degener. They rode on horseback in formal dress with top hats. A band, pioneers, and a color bearer marched next. Then came a contingent of military from the local army post. County, city, and state officials who happened to be on hand followed. Members of the three white volunteer fire companies in dress uniforms marched, pulling along with them their firefighting equipment, decorated with red, white, and blue bunting.<sup>1</sup> Their star was Fire Company 2's shiny steam pumper, the *William Menger*, named after its hotelier purchaser, who was also the fire chief. It was barely two years old and the first such in the city. There was also a hook and ladder company made up of members of the Turnverein, a gymnastic and athletic club of German origin. The Beneficiary and Laborers' Associations, with their badges, and Tejano members of the Club Mexicano-Texano came next. Schoolchildren marched in a body. At the end of the procession were two African American organizations, the Colored Laborer's Association and the Loyal Union League. As a postscript, any citizen who cared to participate was welcome to join in.<sup>2</sup>

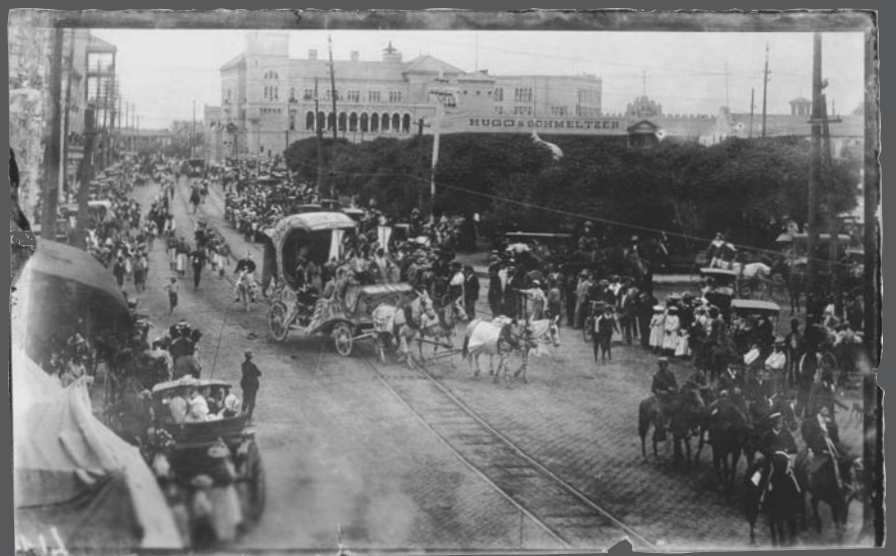
The route of the parade took them over the unpaved streets and plazas through the heart of the city, where citizens who had already been up and about for several hours lined the narrow and irregular sidewalks. They first marched around Alamo Plaza, then proceeded up Commerce Street, crossing its wooden bridge over the lush San Antonio River. Arriving at Military Plaza, they circled it as well and then returned to Alamo Plaza via Market Street. In Alamo Plaza they disbanded in front of the Menger Hotel, where Stanley Welch read the "Declaration of Independence" and S. G. Newton delivered an oration.





**READY FOR A FIESTA** C. M. McAmis on his decorated bike, 1893.  
Gift of Dr. Josephine McAmis, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, CN98.7.





**THEY LOVE A PARADE** Clockwise, from top left:

**Speakers stand**, San Pedro Park, Diez y Seis, 1893 or 1894.

Courtesy Institute of Texan Cultures at UTSA;

1890 German Day float, Teutons and Cimbri. Courtesy Witte Museum, San Antonio; **Battle of Flowers Parade**, 1897.

Courtesy San Antonio Conservation Society;

**Possible Juneteenth parade in Alamo Plaza**, circa. 1900.

Courtesy Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, 10156;

**Decorated Alamo facade**, year unknown. Courtesy

San Antonio Conservation Society.



After the parade, members of Fire Company 1 and their guests proceeded on foot, on horseback, or in carriages about a mile and a half north of the plazas, up Acequia Street to San Pedro Springs Park, where the company hosted a barbecue. This was preceded by another reading of the “Declaration of Independence,” by Capt. W. H. Houston, who stood on the park’s speaker’s platform surrounded by the firemen and thirty-eight young ladies representing the states of the union. The hot afternoon was occupied by concerts by various German singing societies of the city, and another address was delivered at 5 p.m. by Gen. William H. Young. The park activities reached their height with a ball at 6, winding up with a free lunch thrown by Gustav Duerler, proprietor of the park, at 9 p.m.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, downtown, there were two additional balls, one at the Menger Hotel, the other at the Casino Club. The celebrations terminated with a fireworks display.

Though the city’s African American population was welcome in the parade, integration did not extend to the activities that followed. Members of the Loyal Union League and their families, and families of the children who attended the Colored School, had their own picnic at Guenther’s Mill, south of the city.

## 1898

Nearly a world away in size was the Fourth of July parade held in San Antonio in 1898.<sup>4</sup> At that moment, the city was in the patriotic frenzy of the Spanish-American War, and word had just been received of the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago. Enthusiastic spectators lined the streets and filled second- and third-story windows en route by 8 a.m., an hour before the procession was to start. Once again, the early-morning weather was hot, but the streets were considerably less dusty thanks to paving. Spectators and marchers alike were apparently willing to have the parade begin at the more fashionable, if warmer, hour of 9. The parade was a mile and a half long and so big that it was split into three divisions. The first consisted of the military, including Confederate and Union veterans marching side by side; twelve troops of U.S. mounted cavalry; three bands; city and county officials; members of the Cuban Club; and large contingents of the fraternal orders of the Elks, the Knights of Pythias, and the Odd Fellows; plus the United Commercial Travelers in full regalia, totting symbols and insignias. In the second division were various German American *vereine*, or clubs, of veterans, athletes, marksmen, and gardeners; several singing societies; and lodges of the German fraternal orders of the Sons of Hermann and the Knights and Ladies of Honor. The second division also included trade unions, with a band and a commercial float sponsored by Joske Brothers’ Department Store. The third division had everyone else’s societies: Catholic groups of both sexes, including orphans, and Irish, Italian, French, and the numerous Mexican mutual aid societies. The now-professional fire department marched here along with their horse-drawn equipment, augmented by a contingent of ex volunteer firemen. The rear was brought up by a couple of cowboys and finally, as in 1870, any other citizens who cared to march. Missing were organizations representing the city’s African American population.

The parade started just to the north of Alamo Plaza, on Avenue D, at 9:15 a.m. Marchers proceeded west on Houston Street, now paved with hexagonal mesquite blocks, as were the other streets on the route, crossing San Pedro Creek and passing by the old cemetery. They then turned south on San Saba and east on Commerce, circling the narrow plaza then called Paschal Square on the way. At Military Plaza, they marched around City Hall. Proceeding on to Main Plaza via Treviño Street, they circled it as well, passing the handsome new neo-Romanesque courthouse and the recently planted garden, trees, and fountain in its center. They then continued on up Commerce Street, crossing the now-sluggish San Antonio River on the ornate iron Commerce Street bridge, to finish at Alamo Plaza.

The city’s extensive electric streetcar system took festivalgoers to two venues for further celebration. Five thousand people chose San Pedro Park, where at 3 p.m., William Dobrowolski read the official notices of the American victory at Santiago. Judge Edward Dwyer then read the “Declaration of Independence.” There were also additional patriotic orations in Spanish and English, mostly relating to the Spanish-American War. Athletic contests followed.

Twenty-five hundred people, mostly German Americans, repaired south of downtown to Riverside Park to hear a concert by Cark Beck’s Band, view a shooting exhibition by Adolph Toepperwein, and applaud Casino Club president Conrad Goeth’s reading of the “Declaration.” Orations followed in English and German, and the fete concluded with dancing and a fireworks display.

In some ways, these two festivals, separated by twenty-eight years, were quite similar in their route of march and their musical, military, fire-department, and civic-society components. In general, the parades and the concomitant orations, food, contests, dances, and fireworks echoed a pattern that had been firmly established in the United States for civic celebrations since the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

The specific composition of the two processions differed somewhat, but that was because of the change in demographics in the city over thirty years. In 1870, the population was a little over twelve thousand people, with German Americans, Anglo-Americans, and Mexican/Spanish Americans making up its bulk, and a minuscule black community. By 1900, the city topped fifty-three thousand inhabitants, with Anglo-Americans in a firm majority, the Germans well on their way to joining with them socially and culturally, a dwindling Hispanic component, and a proliferation of other ethnic groups, though none great in number. The black community was flourishing but still set apart. The greater size and elaboration of the 1898 parade mirrored these changes, following the growth of the city. For by the end of the nineteenth century, San Antonio had become a substantially different place physically, culturally, and in its relationship with the rest of Texas and the United States. . . .

*Excerpted from San Antonio on Parade (2003), Texas A&M University Press. Used by permission of the publisher.*

1. Although teams of horses or oxen could be commandeered by the volunteer fire chiefs to pull the fire apparatus in time of emergency, they were basically hand drawn until 1881, when the first horse-powered apparatus was purchased.

2. *San Antonio Express*, July 3, 1870, 3.

3. *Ibid.* At this time, “lunch” referred to a buffet-style meal, which was not necessarily restricted to midday; bars offered “free lunches” all night.

4. *San Antonio Express*, July 5, 1898, 5.

5. See Daniel Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century*, 9–28.

deal, San Pedro claimed, he was promised he would not be deported.

When Vara's office sought to have him deported in 1993, San Pedro raised the earlier promise, leading to the Atlanta appeals court's ruling in the INS's favor. The case eventually went as far as the U.S. Supreme Court, which refused to disturb the Atlanta ruling.

In March 2000, Vara was part of the team of government lawyers that tried to negotiate a settlement over the custody of Elian Gonzalez, the Cuban boy who lost his mother during their flight from Cuba to the United States on a raft. The child's Miami relatives wanted him to remain in their custody, but ultimately, Elian

**"I can tell you that I sleep well at night. I'm a person who, naively or not, believes in being a good guy."**

was sent back to his father in Cuba.

Many in the government consider the INS's role in the case a shining hour for the agency, Vara says. Even more important, he adds, was the personal and professional satisfaction he received from having "had a big hand in the very basic but significant issue of reuniting a father with his son."

The following year, Vara and his office confronted the case of Juan Angel Hernández, a former Honduran army intelligence officer accused of kidnapping and killing guerrilla fighters who opposed the Honduran government. Hernandez became the first Latin American military officer to be deported under a program that permits the removal of foreign human rights violators from the United States.

Vara is currently overseeing efforts to deport Fort Lauderdale resident Adham Hassoun, who the government believes helped alleged "dirty bomber" Jose Padilla with his plans to set off a radioactive bomb.

An immigration judge in Florida ruled that Hassoun can face deportation charges because he was living in the United States on an expired visa when INS agents arrested him. Both Padilla and Hassoun are still in custody and have appealed the rulings.

With his ongoing involvement in these sensitive cases, does Vara ever fear for his own safety?

"I've been asked that question many, many times, and the answer is no," he says. First of all, he explains, the danger is perceived, not real, and second, he's been involved with law enforcement for so long, he's used to the environment.

### The good guy

Although the demands of Vara's job are relentless, he says that his two daughters are a top priority. His eyes light up when he talks about Katarina, 12, and Kristin, 9, and he plays an active role in their life. A hands-on dad, he recently took them snow-skiing for the first time, something they'll be doing now every chance they get, he says. They love going to the movies, a favorite pastime for all three, and going on thrill rides at theme parks, especially Fiesta

Texas, which they visit during yearly excursions back to Vara's hometown.

The girls also inherited Vara's love of softball and play in an after-school neighborhood league. Growing up, Vara was a pitcher and all-star player for the St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church's Catholic Youth Organization team. Professional commitments keep him from volunteering as a coach for the girls, but he regularly attends their games and delights in sharing pointers whenever he can.

Vara says he sees his own sense of humor and headstrong personality in his daughters, and he's pleased they've acquired the same hard-working values his mother instilled in him.

"They know how to make decisions," Vara says. "They know what's right and wrong. While they won't ever be hungry, I don't think they'll take things for granted."

When Vara travels to San Antonio to visit his mother, he also keeps in touch with his older brother, who still works with the Secret Service there. At family reunions, he's likely to run into his cousin, popular Tejano singer Emilio (Navaira).

As for his future, Vara expects new opportunities to come from the recently passed Homeland Security Act, which on March 1 brought the INS under the umbrella of the Department of Homeland Security.

Immediate changes to his office are unlikely, Vara says, because we "still have people coming here or who are here in violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act. They still have a due process right to a hearing when action is taken to prevent them from entering the U.S. or to remove them from the U.S. The hearings will require lawyers. So we will continue to litigate matters, not just for the INS but for Homeland Security."

Within the new law's framework, however, Vara's dream is to create an elite unit to go after criminals, terrorists and spies—the individuals who threaten the safety of Americans.

There are similar groups, called Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF), in place in various cities around the country, and Vara frequently works with them; most of the national security cases he's handled, in fact, originated from the JTTFs. The difference between these task forces and the one that Vara hopes to form is that JTTFs are composed of members from many different agencies, and their primary focus is on criminal prosecutions.

The group Vara seeks to create "will be composed of personnel from one agency, with one purpose, one command structure and one perspective: take alien violators who pose a threat to national security out of play in the fastest, most efficient and most effective way," Vara says. "In short, mimicking what we've done in the office over the last few years, replicating the successes we've had by simply eliminating bureaucratic obstacles, inefficiencies and less-than-effective practices."

In the meantime, "I can tell you that I sleep well at night," he



## Get Rowdy on the 'Net

The UTSA Alumni Association announces the grand opening of its new online Alumni Store. Now proud Roadrunners can purchase alumni merchandise at the association's Web site, [www.utsa.edu/alumni](http://www.utsa.edu/alumni). Choose from a wide variety of alumni logo wear including shirts, caps, jackets and more. Display your UTSA diploma in one of several styles of quality diploma frames. An extensive gift selection includes everything from commuter mugs to collapsible chairs. On the site you'll also find information on ordering the official UTSA ring and specialty UTSA license plates.

The Alumni Store utilizes shopping cart technology with secure credit card processing. Proceeds from all purchases made through the UTSA Alumni Association benefit the association.



UTSA Visitor Center coordinator Chris Chipps '99 shows off the merchandise available through the Alumni Association's new online store.

**75** **Jose N. Uranga, M.A.** in environmental studies, and his wife, alumna **Joan T. Uranga, M.A.** in education, have relocated to Sarasota, Fla., where they are enjoying the Gulf of Mexico and year-round swimming. They say they chose Florida because it's between New Mexico, Jose's home state, and New York, where Joan hails from. Jose retired from Gen Corp., where he practiced environmental law, and Joan retired from USAA.

**76** **William K. Borellis, B.B.A.** in marketing, is president of Predictable Employee Evaluations in Pacific Palisades, Calif.

**77** **Kay Topletz Danziger, B.A.** in early childhood education, was named 2002 Elementary Teacher of the Year by Lamar Consolidated Independent School District. She lives in Richmond, Texas.

**Marco A. Lucio, M.A.** in environmental studies, is a financial representative for Foresters Financial Services in San Antonio.

**Rick Williamson, M.B.A.** in management, was appointed vice president of finance for City Public Service, where he is responsible for accounting, finance, risk management, corporate

reporting, business operations, cash management, purchasing and small business development.

**78** **Christopher Long, B.A.** in art, has had his book *Jose Frank: Life and Work* published by the University of Chicago Press. Christopher is an assistant professor in the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his M.A. and Ph.D.

**79** **Jorge Vega, B.A.** in political science, is relocating to Bellingham, Wash., where he has accepted a position as city attorney.

**80** **Kenneth B. Mercer, B.B.A.** in accounting, is the new Texas state representative for District 117, which includes the UTSA Campus.

**82** **Paula Anne Miller Jordan, B.B.A.** in accounting, is director of Enterprise Risk Management at USAA. Paula and her husband, Robert Hoagland, were married March 10, 2002. They have a son, Nathan, who is 7.  
**M. Susan Spiering, B.S.** in chemistry, is associate general counsel and patent attorney for Celanese Ltd. in Bishop, Texas.



Roy Braswell on site at one of his latest architectural projects.

## Roy Braswell

When Roy Braswell, A.I.A. (B.F.A. with a concentration in architectural design) was drafted in 1982, it wasn't into the military; but into a profession in which his success would grow with each passing year—designing and building homes. When he first entered college, however, architectural design was not even on his list of possible majors.

After graduating from Cole High School in 1979, Braswell, at that time a scuba enthusiast, had enrolled in the marine engineering program at Moody College (Texas A&M) in Galveston. But after one semester, he realized that marine engineering wasn't for him. He attended a couple of other schools before returning to

San Antonio in 1981 and taking a job on a building construction crew. He also enrolled at UTSA.

For 14 months Braswell worked as a laborer and carpenter's helper at the West Oak commercial complex on the city's north side. When construction was finished, he went to work as a nighttime custodian on the property, still attending classes during the day.

One of the first tenants to occupy the new office complex was architect William Hablinski of Hablinski and Associates. When he learned that Braswell was studying architecture, Hablinski asked to see some of his drawings. Soon thereafter, Braswell had a new job—in drafting. It proved to be the perfect environment for nurturing his newfound interest.

Braswell worked for Hablinski and Associates for nine years, attending UTSA for four of them. In 1991, he opened Braswell Architecture Inc., specializing in high-end residential architecture. After 11 years of operation, Braswell Architecture, Inc. now has a staff of five, three of whom are alumni of the UTSA architecture program. His client list includes such notable San Antonians as Spurs owner Peter Holt and Valero CEO Bill Greehey.

Designing structures that complement the site—its trees, topography and views—provides one of Braswell's greatest professional rewards. This often involves persuading clients to consider new ideas about their dream homes.

"You have to educate clients about what they can do, and try to make them understand good design. It shouldn't cost more to be sensitive to the site," he explains.

Braswell confides that his most challenging project to date was one in which he was his own client. Wearing both hats, the architect found himself in some delicate negotiations with the client's wife, Susan. One dispute involved a linen closet in the master bedroom, a disagreement that led one of the clients to storm off the site. The relationship survived both design and construction, and Susan Braswell, once the bookkeeper for Hablinski and Associates, is now the office manager at Braswell Architecture, Inc.

Braswell's advice to future architects? Get as much work experience as you can. The technical skills that you learn on the job will help you in school, and the design theory that you learn in school will help you on the job.

— Pat Hedelius



**83 Clayton E. Killinger**, B.B.A. in accounting, has been promoted to vice president and controller at Valero Energy Corporation in San Antonio.

**84 Jeanette D. Burns Kloos**, B.S. in math, is a co-recipient of the 2001 James B. Castels Heritage Award from the Center for Columbia River History in Vancouver, Wash. Jeannette, who is scenic area coordinator for the Oregon Department of Transportation, served as project manager for several projects to restore and reconnect abandoned portions of the historic Columbia River Highway as a multi-use trail. The Columbia River Highway is the first state highway in America to be designated a National Historical Landmark.

**William H. Pope**, B.B.A. in accounting, was certified as a special education teacher by the State of Texas. He teaches in San Antonio's Northside Independent School District.

**Henry Samelson**, B.A. in English, is completing his M.F.A. in painting and new media at the school of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Mass. He is represented by Miller Block Gallery in Boston. Visit Henry's Web site at [www.henrysamelson.net](http://www.henrysamelson.net) to view his work.

**86 William H. Wright III**, B.S. in math, is an associate technical fellow at USAA in San Antonio.

**Jeannie R. Wyatt**, M.B.A. in business, is chief executive officer for South Texas Money Management Ltd. in San Antonio.

**87 John Clamp**, B.B.A. in accounting, M.B.A. in finance '97, is the owner of Landmark Realty in San Antonio. E-mail John at [Landmarkrealty@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Landmarkrealty@sbcglobal.net).

**Karen L. Samas Regner**, B.S. in computer system design, announces the birth of her daughter, Emily Catherine, on Oct. 30, 2002.

**90 Eugene Dowdy**, Master of Music, has been appointed chair of the Department of Music at UTSA, where he is an associate professor and conductor of the UTSA Orchestra. For the second time, Gene was listed in Who's Who Among American Educators.

**James H. Graham**, B.S. in biology, M.S. in environmental science '94, holds an environmental position with the U.S. Postal Service for Texas, New Mexico, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. James also manages two self-owned businesses and has a cumulative 18 years with the United States Marine Corps reserve and active duty forces. James is married to alumna **Melissa D. Goodspeed**, B.B.A. in human resource management '93. Melissa is a human resources manage-



Megan Getz and Gilly, one of Sea World's rescued bottlenose dolphins.

## Megan Getz '95

In the service of seals at SeaWorld

When SeaWorld San Antonio opened in 1988, a lot of teenagers saw it as an opportunity to make a little extra summer cash. Megan Getz saw her future. A native of Coronado, Calif., near San Diego, Getz grew up visiting SeaWorld there. Now, as senior animal care specialist at the San Antonio park, Getz and her staff care for 72 seals, sea lions, dolphins and otters—all of the park's non-show mammals.

Her responsibilities include feeding the animals (hers alone eat about 1,200 pounds of herring and smelt a day), giving them their daily vitamins, and providing medical treatments. She is certified to operate the park's 22-ton crane when an animal needs to be moved, and when an animal dies, she'll assist the veterinarian performing the necropsy.

But her job also allows for fun. "We'll have play times and jump in the water and play with the dolphins," she says.

No, she doesn't train the killer whales to spin above the water or teach the seals their stunts. "We do some training," Getz says, but it's primarily husbandry training. She demonstrates with one bottlenose dolphin, Gilly, how she can get him to roll over to be examined, offer his tail fin to have blood drawn or blow through his blowhole so she can collect a culture to test for respiratory infections.

Getz is especially proud of the park staff's rescue and rehabilitation efforts. Gilly, she says, is so named because he was found wrapped in a gill net off the Texas coast when he was about two months old. Getz was featured on the Animal Planet show

"That's My Baby" when another of SeaWorld's rescued dolphins, Mattie, gave birth last year.

"You definitely have animals you favor more than others," Getz admits, "but you can't make them a pet. You can't anthropomorphize them."

Getz has her own animal companions at home. She and her husband, a SeaWorld marine biologist, have a cat, two dogs, and an array of saltwater fish, snakes and frogs.

When she started at SeaWorld in 1988 as a high school senior, Getz's first job was in park operations—cleaning Shamu Stadium and sweeping the park. "I wanted to get my foot in any way I could," she says. The strategy worked, and in 1990 she became an animal husbandry assistant.

In the meantime, Getz was going to UTSA to earn a biology degree. It took her seven years to finish college because she was working—both at SeaWorld and sometimes other jobs, too—to pay her tuition. In 1994 SeaWorld offered her a full-time job, with the proviso that she complete her degree.

Her commitment to her goals and enthusiasm for her work has made her a popular speaker at UTSA's annual "Expanding Your Horizons" conference, which teaches girls in sixth through 12th grades about careers in math and science. Megan has participated for eight years, offering young girls this advice: Find something you love to do, and find ways to succeed. "I didn't have any money to go to college," she says, "but I made my dream come true."

—Rebecca Luther

## Paul Heaston '02

Keeping the world in perspective

Paul Heaston (B.F.A. in art) points to the series of grand yet intimate portraits that made up his senior show at UTSA and says, “See how they keep getting closer?” In one, just the center of a woman’s face fills the four-by-six-foot plywood panel. When asked how he works on such a large scale, he replies, “I just step back a lot.”

Though a recent graduate, Heaston has already had three San Antonio shows. In 2002 his paintings were exhibited at the Bismark Studio in the Blue Star Arts Complex, in the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Annex and at the EYE II EYE Gallery. But you won’t find Heaston’s latest and largest work at a First Friday Art Walk—it’s at the renovated San Fernando Cathedral.

Part of a team of five artists working through San Antonio-based Restoration Associates Limited (RAL), Heaston was responsible for hand-stenciling and painting the 300 three-by-seven-foot ceiling panels with one of 12 different patterns. A winner of the 2001 Fiesta Scholarship, the prize given to a promising art student in San Antonio by the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, Heaston was recommended to RAL by Roxi McCloskey, senior lecturer in UTSA’s art department. But the concept of restoration art was something that Heaston was not familiar with when he began the project.

“I thought it meant ‘working on some tiny thing under a magnifying glass,’” Heaston says. Now, Heaston has a new definition of restoration art: “busting your butt without a lot of room for

error.” The restoration team for the San Fernando Cathedral worked full time from late May through the second week of November in a studio located off of Broadway. They completed between two and four panels a day.

Because the artists actually recreated the panels, the San Fernando project was technically a reproduction rather than a restoration. After the new panels were installed, the team went into the cathedral and scaled 60-foot scaffolds to seal their work with an acrylic resin.

“I am not a fan of the scaffold,” Heaston quips.

Now he can really step back and admire his work. “The amazing thing is finally to see everything at once. I didn’t think we were capable [of so much work].” Heaston knows that a lot of visitors to the cathedral will just assume that the panels have merely been cleaned.

“But we know better,” he says.

Heaston enjoyed the hard work on the cathedral so much that he’s continuing to work with RAL. His current project is the restoration of 1914 Harvey House, once a thriving hotel and dining facility located next to the Santa Fe Depot in Brownwood, Texas.

The restoration work has affected Heaston’s own painting, too. Prior to his senior show at UTSA, he had worked mainly on small portraits. “It has really tempered my fear of scale. I’m not afraid of working big anymore,” he explains. “I just know that you have to be patient.” —Jenny Browne



Paul Heaston, second from right, worked with a team of artists on the restoration of the San Fernando Cathedral. Right, one of Heaston's own paintings.



ment consultant.

The Grahams have two children.

**Haydee Victoria Suescum**, M.F.A. '90, traveled last fall to Havana, Cuba, for the opening of "Del Centro a la Isla," an exhibit that featured two of her oil on canvas paintings. Victoria's work rearranges images from handpainted signage seen in the Spanish-speaking portions of the Americas, including San Antonio, where she lives. She has exhibited in countries in North, Central and South America, including Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and the United States. Locally, she has been invited to exhibit at the Russell Hill Rogers Gallery of the Southwest School of Art and Craft in an exhibit titled "H2O: Artists Consider the Hydrosphere," to be installed in January 2004.

**92 Thomas Myer**, B.A. in English, and Kevin Beck have co-founded Triple Dog Dare Media, an Austin-based Web application development shop specializing in content publishing systems, Web e-commerce, information architecture and database design. Tom says the company's name was inspired by the film *A Christmas Story*, in which one boy "triple dog dares" another to lick a frozen flagpole—and because the owners have three dogs between them. Visit their Web site at [www.tripledogdaremedia.com](http://www.tripledogdaremedia.com) or e-mail Tom at [tom@tripledogdaremedia.com](mailto:tom@tripledogdaremedia.com). **Carla Sue Rayborn O'Dell**, B.B.A. in accounting, is the owner of Done Right Management Services in Bandera, Texas. Her granddaughter, Kyra Nicole-Marie Peyton, was born July 9, 2001, and Carla says she loves watching her grow and learn new things.

**93 Gilda Arteaga Dieringer**, B.A. in interdisciplinary studies, received the 2002 Sam's Club Teacher of the Year award for the San Antonio area. Gilda has taught at Mary Hull Elementary for 10 years. She enjoys teaching the fourth grade, especially "watching the children's faces light up as they discover new things." **Linda Lee Gould**, M.A. in bicultural-bilingual studies, is a teacher with South San Antonio Independent School District. **James M. Warner**, B.A. in political science, is an attorney-associate with Decker, Jones, McMackin, McClane, Hall and Bates, P.C., in Fort Worth, Texas.

**94 Parker J. Faut**, B.S. in electrical engineering, married Diane Newman on Sept. 1, 2001.

**95 Mark A. Connell**, M.B.A. in business, is a captain in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico where he is maintenance supervisor with the 58th Maintenance Squadron.

**Jacklyn M. Letendre Green**, M.A. in early childhood education, announces the birth of son Tyler Austin on Aug. 16, 2002.

**Ginger Bredemeyer McKeel**, B.S. in architecture, and her husband, Matthew, announce the birth of son Eian Bryce McKeel on May 31, 2002.

**Paul Lee Watkins**, B.A. in criminal justice, is a correctional officer with the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Marianna, Fla. Paul and his wife, Dolores, have been married since 1993.

**96 David A. Cortez**, B.A. in criminal justice, received an M.S. in justice and public safety from Auburn University in Montgomery, Ala., in 2002. He is a captain in the U.S. Air Force at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama, where he is a flight training officer. **Lance Lira**, B.S. in biology, is a sales professional with Hawthorn Pharmaceuticals. He is responsible for marketing Hawthorn products in the Corpus Christi, Texas, area. **Eddie Ramirez Jr.**, B.A. in criminal justice, is a claim specialist with the special investigative unit of State Farm Insurance in Austin, Texas. He also announces the birth of a son, Matthew, on Jan. 14.

**Thaddeus Fanon Wordlaw**, B.S. in kinesiology, received a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in May 2002. He married Nia Gilliam of Bellwood, Ill., on Jan. 20, 2002. They reside in Willowbrook, Ill.

**97 Julie Jung**, B.S. in biology, is director of marketing for Industrial Complex Property Group in San Antonio.

**Christel Neumann Nieschwitz**, B.B.A. in accounting, is a manager with Burnside and Risheburger in San Antonio.

**Troy Thompson**, B.S. in kinesiology and health, is a sales professional with Hawthorn Pharmaceuticals. He is responsible for marketing Hawthorn products in the San Antonio area.

**98 Kelly A. Laskowski**, B.B.A. in accounting, is a senior auditor with Ernst and Young, LLP, in San Antonio.

**99 David J. Cohen**, B.S. in mechanical engineering, is an M.P.A. student at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he received an Alley-Sheridan Fellowship.

**JoAnn G. Gonzalez**, B.A. in English, is a teacher with the South San Antonio Independent School District.

**Suzanne L. Johnson**, M.B.A. in business, is a financial services professional with Patricia R. Johnson, P.C., in San Antonio.

**00 Loretta J. Davies**, M.A. in counseling, is a licensed professional counselor at the San Antonio Rape Crisis Center. She also is a registered nurse and is pursuing a master's degree in nursing.

**Laura J. Henson Majors**, B.A. in interdisciplinary studies, is a second grade teacher with North East Independent School District in San Antonio. She was nominated for American Legion's Teacher of the Year and Trinity University's Teacher of the Year.

**Frank J. Kleman Jr.**, B.B.A. in accounting, is a revenue agent with the Internal Revenue Service in San Antonio.

**James Michael Northam**, B.B.A. in management, is a client financial analyst for Citicorp in San Antonio. James and wife Tina Marie were married April 13, 2002.

**Kyle M. Tate**, M.P.A., is a captain in the U.S. Air Force. Kyle was promoted to assistant professor at the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.

**01 James William Cox**, B.S. in biology, works as a research lab technician on a tissue engineering project at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio. He will begin medical school at UT Houston in the fall.

**Anthony Jeffrey Curtiss**, B.B.A. in accounting, is employed at KPMG, LLP, in Houston.

**Caryn Lynn Gervasoni**, M.S. in accounting, is an associate with Squire, Lemkin and O'Brien, LLP, in Rockville, Md. She passed the CPA exam in May 2002.

**Tammy Ann Gould**, B.B.A. in personnel human resources, is a human resource specialist with Employer Solutions in San Antonio. Tammy is engaged to marry Darryl Alva on March 29, 2003.

**Anthony G. Harris**, B.S. in electrical engineering, is a systems engineer for Lockheed Martin Aeronautics in Fort Worth, Texas. Anthony is engaged to marry alumna **Michelle L. Kopecki**, B.A. in psychology '01, in October 2003.

**Jennifer Barnett Holmquist**, B.A. in political science, is in the management program at Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union in San Antonio.

**Marshall D. Hopper**, B.A. in political science, an ensign in the U.S. Navy,

received his commission as a naval officer after completing Officer Candidate School at Naval Aviation Schools Command, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla.

**Paul Kevyn Skiles**, B.A. in criminal justice, announces the birth of son Michael Raymond on April 7, 2002.

**02 Estela Ann Guerrero**, B.A. in communications, has accepted an assignment with the Peace Corps to Zambia, where she will assist in the decentralization of health care as well as educate the community about its major health concerns.

## I N M E M O R I A M

**Joan Boisvert**, B.A. in political science and American studies '96 and member of Pi Sigma Alpha honor society, died on March 7, 2002. Joan enjoyed tutoring children with reading problems and was active in Girl Scouts, Holmes High School Band Boosters and PTA. Her favorite past times were reading, gardening and embroidery. She is survived by her husband, Donald H. Boisvert; children, Linda Boisvert, David Boisvert, Marcia Boisvert and son-in-law Michael Eakin; grandson Conor Eakin; brother Raymond Sykes and sister-in-law Alyce Sykes, and several nieces and nephews. Her daughters Linda and Marcia are UTSA graduates.

**Enriqueta G. Olivares**, M.A. in bilingual-bicultural studies '74 and a member of UTSA's first graduating class, died on Dec. 5, 2002. Enriqueta was employed with the Eagle Pass Independent School District for 24 years as a social worker before retiring in 1992. She also assisted the school district in translating important documents from Spanish to English. After retirement, Enriqueta moved to Kingsville, Texas, to live near her son, Alberto Olivares, who is dean of Graduate Studies at Texas A&M Kingsville. She is survived by her other children, Esther Gudowski of Bulverde, Texas; Enriqueta Freeman of Athens, Texas; Ricardo Olivares of Bryan, Texas; and Angeles Lehmann of Eagle Pass, Texas; as well as numerous grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and great-grandchildren.



Jamie Martin, as herself, and below, in her honorary role as San Antonio's Mud Queen. The Mud Festival is held downtown on the River Walk each January during the river's draining and cleaning.

## Jamie Martin '02

The muddy road to radio stardom

Jamie Martin (B.A. in communication) can't bear to pass a traffic accident, though she's neither an ambulance chaser nor a junkie for other people's tragedies. Rather, accidents make Martin want to get to work.

"I just can't help it," she says. "I see an accident and I'm all ready to report, 'There's a disabled vehicle blocking the right-hand lane.'" Her impulse comes from five years of reporting traffic woes, first for KENS radio and then for WOAI's Mix 96.1. But recently, Martin has taken up a new and more vocal radio beat. She co-hosts the popular morning program "The Woody Show."

Her path from college student to radio celebrity began at UTSA's job bank.

"I was 19 and desperate. I needed a job and I just wanted to be on TV," says Martin. "I went in and said, 'I'll do anything,' but all I could find was a radio job."

"By the end of my job at KENS radio, I was doing airborne feeds for all the radio stations in the city but two," she continues.

Early on at Mix 96.1, the station's producers told her to choose a radio name—for privacy as well as for marketing purposes.

At the time, a certain hip-swirling lover of la vida loca was at the height of popularity.

"I thought Ricky Martin," she laughs. "I'll be Jamie Martin." (Radioheads might also remember announcers Jamie Martinez and Jamie Jackson—that was Martin, too, using different names for different markets.)

When the Mix's morning show with "Deb and Dean" ended last summer, the station hired 15-year radio veteran Woody (whose real name is also a mystery), but needed a co-host closer to the show's target demographic—females between the ages of 18 and 32. By this time, Martin had grown to love radio, especially the ability to come to work wearing something "close to your pajamas."

Nowadays, however, after her 6 to 10 a.m. shift on "The Woody Show," Martin does a segment on the WOAI Living Show, on television.

"That means I have to get all dressed at 4 a.m.," she says unhappily. Indeed, Martin's days begin very early. She arrives at the studio by 4:30 a.m. to prepare for her show.

A 1998 graduate of Providence High School in San Antonio, Martin says she changed her mind "weekly" about a career path.

"First I was going to be an artist, then a nurse, then in business." Having a range of interests helps her now on a show that covers a little of everything and a little of everybody, where guests have included such disparate personalities as Tim Duncan, Ozzy Osbourne, Elf Louise and Shakira.

Martin just upped her own celebrity quotient a notch. She and Woody were named the 2003 Mud King and Queen of San Antonio's annual Mud Festival. The festival, sponsored by the Paseo del Rio Association, draws tourists to downtown's River Walk during the river's annual draining and cleaning.

"This is the first time I've ever worn a crown, so I'm going to take full advantage of it," Martin says. And there's an added benefit: the queen's outfit includes a fluffy white bathrobe—perfect for wearing on the radio.

—Jenny Browne

## Keep in touch

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## Letter from Dubai: By Sonia E. Campos '00 M.A.

**Ahlan Wasahlan (Welcome)!**

For the last two years, I have lived and worked in Dubai, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the United Arab Emirates. Situated on the edge of the Arabian Gulf, the U.A.E. is next to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

Dubai, along with other Middle Eastern cities, often elicits nervous curiosity from the rest of the world because of its geographic location and Islamic government. What many Westerners may not know is that Dubai is predominantly English speaking; approximately 80 percent of its residents are expatriates from other countries. With its petroleum revenues, well-developed highway systems and low cost of living, Dubai caters to Westerners from North America and Europe who work in both the academic sector and in private corporations in fields including engineering, construction, computer software and finance.

As a peripatetic English instructor, I have learned so much from my job posts and travels throughout Asia, Europe and North Africa over the last 10 years. For me, Dubai has given new meaning to the phrase “having the best of both worlds.” Its progress and investments in technology, business and commerce, along with its strong Arabian and Bedouin traditions, have made each day something to relish. On any given day I am only 15 minutes away from white sandy beaches and turquoise waters, large shopping centers and abundant luxury hotels. It’s a place where you can go dune-bashing in the desert and enjoy high tea at the Ritz-Carlton.

Although daily life in Dubai and the U.A.E. often bears strong similarities to life in Western countries, there are noticeable differences due to the prevalence of the Islamic faith. There are plenty of mosques—built around neighborhoods and shopping centers—rather than churches. The idea is to have enough mosques available for Muslims to be able to walk to them each day. I am usually within earshot of the five calls to prayer (*adhan*), which start at 4:30 a.m. and end around midnight. Just as you grow accustomed to the noise of traffic, I’ve gotten used to the *adhan*, though I still find the sound of it somewhat eerie and intriguing.

As a guest in this nation, I adhere to rules set in place by the religiously influenced local government (*sharia*). During the holy month of Ramadan, for example, most public restaurants are closed during the daytime and eating is allowed only in private dining areas of hotels. After sunset, the fast is broken and people celebrate their meal (*iftar*) with family and friends. Though I have never participated in this ritual of fasting, I see it as a special time for family, bright lights and warm wishes of peace for all—much like Christmas is in many Western countries.

The strict rules of fasting during Ramadan also require shorter office hours to allow for prayer and rest for those participating in the fast; of course, even non-Muslims welcome those shorter workdays. Apart from holidays, the regular workweek in Dubai is from Saturday to Wednesday, saving the Muslim holy day of Friday for prayer and sermons. Because I’m not likely to find any shops open until late afternoon, Fridays for me usually mean leisurely days at home or at the beach.

While traditional Gulf Muslim women wear the black headscarf (*shayla*) and gown (*abaya*), as a non-Muslim, I do not cover my



hair. This has not posed any problems for me, as I have observed a high level of respect by and for women. One of the up-sides of being a woman in the U.A.E. is that counters in shops, government and financial agencies are set aside for women only, which usually means no waiting in bank lines!

Other differences in daily life include separate pork rooms in supermarkets for those non-Muslims who consume products made from this forbidden (*haram*) animal in Islam. Mandatory liquor licenses are also required for both purchasing and consuming alcohol, and it isn’t unusual for the country to celebrate a holiday (which are exclusively based on the Islamic religion), by announcing a “dry” weekend of no alcohol consumption in public.

No McDonalds drive-thru windows here. Rather, we have kebab restaurants where Lebanese waiters wait in parking lots for customers to drive up and place an order for mouth-watering lamb or slowly roasted chicken combined with freshly made pita bread, vegetables and sauce. At only 30 cents a pocket, this *shawarma* makes a cheap and utterly delicious treat any time of day. In Dubai, a night out at a posh hotel for dinner and drinks could set you back \$15 for the entire evening, and a full tank of gas for a mid-size car could be as little as \$9. Yes, life can be very comfortable here.

But because I live among a large number of Muslim Arabs from the Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan and Afghanistan, my friends and family in the United States often ask about my safety and about animosity toward Americans—particularly after September 11. My answer is that nothing threatening has ever happened to me.

In fact, Dubai had always been a place I had imagined myself living in. Traveling and living in several Muslim countries in the past has helped me understand and appreciate Arab hospitality and Muslim thought and tradition. My Mexican background and traditional values have been nurtured here among Muslims who share the same beliefs. Warmth, generosity and devotion to family, friends and especially children come above all else to many of the Muslim faith. I enjoy learning from people here who share the common ideas of peace and respect for each other’s differences. Dubai has become home for me and, although I don’t see myself in the U.A.E. forever, as an American I’ve had a wonderful time in the Gulf.

*Sonia E. Campos earned an M.A. in Bicultural-Bilingual Studies in May 2000. A visual artist and a former Fulbright scholar, Campos is a faculty member for the College of Arts and Sciences at Zayed University, the namesake of His Highness Sheikh Zayed, ruler of the U.A.E. Zayed University, a public university, was established four years ago for U.A.E. women striving for further education and career opportunities in the Gulf.*

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Photo by John Poindexter

## Looking back And the walls came tumbling down

They called it the Pepto-BisMall, among other names.

In 1995, a failed retail experiment, formally known as Fiesta Plaza, was torn down to make room for UTSA's new Downtown Campus. The mall, which opened in the 1980s on the western edge of downtown, couldn't draw enough retail traffic to stay in business. In 1992, Bill Miller Bar-B-Q Enterprises purchased the property from the Resolution Trust Corp and donated it to UTSA. With the help of \$20 million from the South Texas Border Region Initiative, construction on the Downtown Campus began.

Our 1995 photo taken during the ground-breaking for the Frio Street Building shows Balous Miller, president of Bill Miller Bar-B-Q, tearing down one of the Fiesta Plaza's pink walls. In the background, you can see the Radisson Hotel. By 1997, the Downtown Campus was holding classes at the infant campus. Two more buildings, the Buena Vista Street Building and the Durango Building, have been completed since then,

and an addition, which will house the Institute for Economic Development, is scheduled to open this May. Since its opening, enrollment at the new campus has increased from 1,910 to more than 5,000 students.

Architecture professor Richard Tangum, whose office is located on the fourth floor on the Buena Vista Street Building, has a special interest in the continuing development of the Downtown Campus area. Tangum grew up in the working class neighborhoods of the near West Side and witnessed the slow death of this area by well-intentioned urban renewal projects.

"My grandfather lived on the corner of Ruiz Street, now Frio. There were a lot of corner stores and restaurants. It was a vibrant place," Tangum said. Now, he sees UTSA's Downtown Campus as a catalyst for more sensitive redevelopment and community restoration in this area.

— Jeff Miller '04