

# Sombriilla

The University of Texas at San Antonio **MAGAZINE** Spring 2007  
Vol. 23, No. 2

## Breaking the Ice

RESEARCHERS  
STUDY CLIMATE CHANGE  
IN ANTARCTICA

**Also in this issue:**

Showcasing the Campus  
Art Collection

Students Reach Academic  
Goals through Coaching







SPRING 2007

# Sombrilla

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### FEATURES

#### 18 On the Ice

An assistant professor and a doctoral student got a white Christmas this year—and then some—when they traveled to Antarctica to study environmental changes in the polar region.

#### 22 Wide Open Art Spaces

UTSA might not have its own specialized art museum, but that doesn't stop University Curator Arturo Almeida from collecting and displaying the work of South Texas artists. Here, every hallway, office and classroom is a potential gallery.

#### 26 Personal Best

Think coaching is only for athletes? Think again. Academic coaching offers one-on-one help with study skills and time management—just the ingredients needed for a successful academic career.

### DEPARTMENTS

#### 5 In the Loop

Officials finalize a plan to propel the university to premier research status; a vice president for student affairs is selected; UTSA provost returns to teaching; and more campus news.

#### 12 Investigations

Researchers from UTSA and Brooke Army Medical Center team up to test a potentially life-saving device; UTSA is awarded a \$900,000 grant for undergrads from the National Science Foundation; and an assistant professor of criminal justice looks into white-collar crime and corporate corruption.

#### 14 Roadrunner Sports

Senior track and field standout Rynne Dupree aims to collect more Southland Conference titles, compete in the NCAA heptathlon championship and help UTSA win a conference championship before her days at UTSA are done. She also dreams of representing the United States at the 2008 Olympic Games.

#### 16 Syllabus

Bilingual education teachers-in-training learn how to incorporate the community into their lesson plans.

#### 30 Class Notes

Celebrating collaborations between UTSA and Southwest Research Institute; profiles of New Orleans native and Coast Guard storekeeper Tammy Rice '05; Ed Guerrero '87, business owner and trainer; and social entrepreneur and founder of Precious Minds, New Connections Megan Elizabeth Kromer '04.

#### 36 Looking Back

From models to model students—18 years after dressing up in oversized caps and gowns to illustrate a story for Sombrilla, these students are preparing to walk the stage for real.

#### On the cover

A glimpse of Antarctica. See story, On the Ice, on page 18. Photo by Ute Kaden.

#### On this page

Roadrunners get in the spirit of the game. Photo by Mark McClendon.

#### 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

### Goodphil Hunting

Earlier this semester, after reading national news articles about students at different universities who'd gotten in trouble for photographs that were posted online, I decided to do some online sleuthing to see what our students were up to. Basically, I anticipated bad news; what I found surprised and impressed me.

Every spring break, students in UTSA's Filipino Student Association get together with other FSA students from around the state for a little camaraderie and competition in the Goodphil Games. "This is like an Olympics for the FSAs around Texas. That's pretty much what you can compare it to," says UTSA senior Tatiana Bakhoun, who's served as the organization's president for two years.

This year the University of Houston hosted the event; UTSA has hosted twice since Goodphil's inception in 1991. Forget the rhythmic gymnastics you saw in *Old School* or the beer drinking/tricycle riding event à la *Revenge of the Nerds*. At Goodphil, students compete in real athletics competitions—football,



volleyball, basketball, softball, and so forth—and attend back-to-back practices on the weekends leading up to Goodphil. (Last year, Tatiana played on the co-rec soccer team and says, "We winged it, and we got first place. But this year we have practices.")

But the events requiring the most practice are those that have become the hallmark of Goodphil: the modern dance, spirit dance and cultural dance competitions. These are the videos you will find if you go looking online. For this year's dance competitions, UTSA students Kim Pham, Aimee Florete, Marikar Magno, Jeff

Ganzon and Cristofer James Escobar choreographed intricate routines involving multiple songs and dozens of students. In modern dance, male and female students perform hip-hop style dancing. For spirit dance, the men take the stage and show their school spirit with more high-energy dancing. And for the cultural dance, the students honor their Filipino heritage with traditional folk dancing such as tinikling, which to an outsider looks a lot like tandem jump roping with bamboo poles instead of ropes.

The expressed focus of the Goodphil Games is celebrating Filipino culture, but the reality is that UTSA's FSA, which numbers up to 80 members, is more diverse than you might think. While most of the group's members are Filipino, like other cultural groups on campus it is open to any student. "We welcome anybody and everybody," Tatiana says of the association, "just as long as they embrace what we do and participate like any other member."

In addition to Filipino and other Asian students, there are African American, Caucasian and Hispanic students in FSA, she says. And, she adds, "I'm actually Mexican and Egyptian, so I'm not even Filipino."

So, what drives a Mexican/Egyptian student who's pulling a full courseload with a double major in business management and French to sacrifice her free time for dance and athletics practices several days a week?

"Tradition ... bragging rights ... pride for our school and our organization," she replies.

At the 2006 Goodphil Games at UT Austin, the UTSA FSA failed to place in the overall competition, but they did bring home the Barkada Award, which is given to the school that shows the most sportsmanship and school spirit—essentially the Miss Congeniality award.

And I think that's something we can all be proud of.

—Rebecca Luther



A student writes a message to the Virginia Tech community.

## In Memory UTSA community sends message of hope 1,300 miles away

They offer words of peace, comfort, prayers, sympathy and strength. Some quote scripture. Others are more personal, such as a goodbye to Mary, one of 33 people killed April 16 at Virginia Tech University.

Days after the deadliest campus shooting in U.S. history, an outpouring of support from the UTSA community filled poster-sized sheets of paper at the Downtown and 1604 campuses. The posters were sent to Virginia Tech.

As Whitney Broughton, a 19-year-old junior, stood at the posters, she thought about her friends and a family member who attend the school. They're fine, she said, but the tragedy hits a little too close. She can't help but wonder if it could happen here. "I live in the residence halls, so it touches very deeply—to think that it could happen to me," she said.

But writing on the posters is her way to deal with the grief and concern. "I come from a very religious town and whenever there was a time of need, we expressed our feelings as a way to confront them," she said.

## HOMECOMING SPARKLES BIGGER AND BRIGHTER

Homecoming 2007 attracted more participants than in previous years, something organizers said could be attributed to good weather and developing traditions.

"It went very, very well," Barry McKinney, director of student activities, said of the events that ran Feb. 15–17. "I think that we're in an exciting time at UTSA. Although we have had homecoming for several years, I think we have created some things that have really added to student life at the university."

Jazz in the Plaza at the Downtown Campus attracted about 300 people the first day, while more than 500 people attended the Golf Cart Parade. Fireworks from Rowdy Rampage on Friday were seen as far as two miles away from the 1604 Campus, McKinney said. But it was the annual tailgate party on the Convocation Center lawn Saturday that attracted the biggest crowd with between 2,000 and 3,000 participants. That number almost triples last year's figures.





**UTSA  
ENGINEERING  
PROFESSOR,  
STUDENTS  
FILMED FOR  
PBS SERIES**

**M**obile robots created by Mo Jamshidi, UTSA professor of electrical engineering, and his graduate students will be featured this spring as part of a 13-episode public television series titled *State of Tomorrow*. The 30-minute program will run on PBS stations throughout Texas from April to June.

In one episode, UTSA engineers will demonstrate how these sophisticated machines work together to complete a high-risk task, in this case, finding the origin of a fire.

Designed to assist the military, the robots are equipped with biosensors and global positioning system technology that enable them to “swarm” or work together to complete dangerous tasks, such as detecting improvised explosive devices, mines or biological and chemical spills.



*State of Tomorrow* examines how public higher education innovators are pursuing solutions to Texas’ biggest challenges in public health, homeland security, energy policy, economic development, environmental quality and education. The series highlights new research in biosafety, nanotechnology and proton therapy through thought-provoking interviews and visuals.

The series is co-produced by Austin-based Alpheus Media and represents a collaboration of a documentary production company, public television and public higher education institutions, including UT System institutions, Texas A&M, Texas State, Texas Tech, the University of Houston and the University of North Texas.

— Kris Rodriguez

## Gage Paine brings her vision to student affairs

**P**resident Ricardo Romo announced in January the selection of Gage Paine as vice president for student affairs.

“I am extremely pleased that Gage Paine will bring her experience and talents to the UTSA community,” Romo said. “She is an energetic and talented administrator with a deep commitment to students. Moreover, she has an excellent grasp of the educational challenges facing Texas.”

“I am honored and delighted to have been selected to lead student affairs at UTSA,” Paine said. “It is exciting to have the opportunity to work with President Romo and the entire UTSA team. I look forward to getting to know the students, faculty and staff at the university so we can work together to create an environment that fosters student success.”

Paine served as vice president for student affairs at Trinity University in San Antonio. Previously, she was associate vice president for student affairs and dean of student life at Southern Methodist University in Dallas (1997–2000) and associate dean of students at the University of Texas at Austin in the areas of judicial affairs and disability services (1986–1997). She holds a juris doctorate degree from Texas Tech University and a Ph.D. in educational administration from UT Austin.



“The committee recruited candidates who demonstrated a passion for serving students, while also having the vision and strategic ability to move student affairs forward in the years to come,” said Sonia Martinez, vice president for university advancement and chair of the search committee.

— David Gabler

## UTSA PROVOST TO STEP DOWN, RETURN TO TEACHING

**R**osalie Ambrosino, provost and vice president for academic affairs at The University of Texas at San Antonio, announced April 25 that she will leave her administrative position Aug. 31 for family reasons and return to teaching and research. Julius Gribou, founding dean of the College of Architecture, will serve as interim provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Ambrosino has served as provost at UTSA since December 2005. Before becoming the chief academic administrator, Ambrosino had been vice president for student affairs at UTSA since 2001.



“I’m very proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish during my time as provost, and it has been an honor to serve UTSA,” Ambrosino said. “However, my academic focus is in social work, and returning to teaching will allow me time I need to spend with my family.”

UTSA President Ricardo Romo said he is grateful for Ambrosino’s service to the university. “Due to her hard work and leadership in both academic and student affairs, UTSA has made significant strides toward becoming a premier research university,” he said. “She is a respected colleague, and everyone at UTSA is very grateful for her dedication and hard work.”

Ambrosino said, “A highlight of my career has been working with friends and colleagues who share a passion for providing the highest quality programs and services to support our institution’s mission of excellence and access. And I look forward to continuing our work together in a different role.”

Before the end of the semester, Romo will appoint a committee to conduct a national search for a chief academic affairs officer.

— David Gabler

# Snapshot, Texas

From the photographic archives of UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures



## TALE OF A TEA GARDEN

In 1917, San Antonio Parks Commissioner Ray Lambert began building a garden in a deserted stone quarry north of the city. Two years later, the city invited Kimi Jingu to move there with his wife, Alice, and small daughters, Mary and Ruth. With the support of the city's parks department, Jingu developed the Japanese Tea Garden into a unique tourist attraction with waterfalls, koi ponds on two levels, islands connected by arched stone bridges, plantings and a pagoda-style pavilion.

To add to the visitor experience, Alice Jingu sent the little girls out wearing kimonos, but she soon observed with alarm that visitors often would use candy to try to entice a smile

from them. Undaunted, her husband conferred with a jeweler to design necklaces for the girls. Hanging from each dainty chain was a small silver plaque that said clearly, "Do not feed me."

The garden thrived over the next two decades, and the family increased to eight children. Jingu ordered tea from Japan and his wife or an older child prepared and sold it to visitors. For many years, a harpist played in the gardens daily, and female members of the Jingu family would continue to appear in kimonos, enchanting visitors.

Kimi Jingu died in 1938. In 1942, shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the city

forced Alice Jingu and the children still living at home to leave. A Chinese family was invited in, and the site became the Chinese Tea Garden; later, the name was changed again to Sunken Gardens. It was not until 1983 that the name Japanese Tea Garden was officially returned to this Brackenridge Park landmark. Now, after years of neglect and disrepair, the site is being restored to its former beauty.

— Mary Grace Ketner

*Rae Jingu in San Antonio's Japanese Tea Gardens, c. 1939. UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures, photo 100-0699.*



## HISTORY REPEATED

The children who entered the one-room schoolhouse at UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures March 13-16 were instantly transported to the 1800s, a time when students wrote on slates instead of paper and endured hours of sitting on wooden benches without back supports. Back then, time away from school was spent helping parents gather crops from the fields.

But it was for fun and education that hundreds of visitors toured the schoolhouse, log house, barn, adobe house and old fort behind the museum during the institute's second annual Spring Break on the Back 40. Participants in the event learned how to create braid dolls, make spurs and bake in a traditional *horno*.

"We want the students to have an alternative for spring break and learn what students did 150 years ago, and what life was like in early Texas," said Charlotte Boord, ITC administrative associate who made presentations on Civil War uniforms and learning in the 1800s. "You can

have fun and learn at the same time—that's what we're trying to get across here."

The highlight of 8-year-old Tyrai Stewart's visit was the chance to model an Army uniform from the Civil War era. "I want to remember this because it's cool," he said.

Jacqueline Jemerson, with Second Baptist Church in San Antonio,

took Tyrai and 33 other children to the museum. The experience made history come alive, she said. "They will not forget this," she added. "They're really learning what life was like in the 1800s."



# iBRAVO!

## Faculty, staff and student achievements

**Keith Clutter**, associate professor of mechanical engineering, was named an associate fellow in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics; the **College of Business** received the Brillante Award for Educational Excellence from the National Society of Hispanic MBAs; graduate health and kinesiology student and occupational safety specialist **Martin "Marty" Contreras** was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his work as a Special Forces medic with the Mississippi National Guard in Afghanistan; **Marcheta Evans**, chair of the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Adult and Higher Education, was selected as Outstanding Counselor Educator 2006 by the Texas Association for Counselor Education and Supervision of the Texas Counseling Association; **Wendell Fuqua**, director of media production at UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures, and videographer **Alejo "Alex" Velez** earned a Telly Award for a nine-minute video about the late West Side activist Emma Tenayuca; **Jerry Goldstein**, adjoint assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, received the Macelwane Medal from the American Geophysical Union for his research on the Earth's plasmasphere. The medal recognizes significant contributions to the geophysical sciences by a young scientist; **Christopher Hajek**, assistant professor of communication, was awarded the Presidential Citation for Outstanding Service to the National Communication Association for his role as co-chair of the local arrangements committee for the association's annual meeting, held in San Antonio in November 2006; **David Heuser**, Department of Music, won the Fauxharmonic Orchestra's 2006 Orchestral Composition Contest for *A Screaming Comes Across the Sky*. The Fauxharmonic Orchestra's mission is to use digital instruments to bring together the best of music performance technology with outstanding conductors and composers to create the best possible performances of orchestral music; **Jerome Keating**, professor of management science and statistics, was presented with the 2006

Don Owen Award, given to nominees who are exemplary in the areas of scholarship, dissemination of statistical knowledge and service to the profession, by the San Antonio Chapter of the American Statistical Association; **Steve Kellman**, professor in the Department of English, Classics and Philosophy, was awarded the National Book Critic Circle's Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing; **Robert McKinley**, associate vice president of the Institute for Economic Development, received an award of excellence from Juan Carlos Romero Hicks, governor of the Mexican state of Guanajuato, for his work building the state's Small Business Development Center and for creating similar centers across Mexico; **Carolyn Orange**, professor of educational psychology, was honored with the Yellow Rose of Texas Education Award by the Constance Allen Heritage Guild for Lifetime Learning, an educational foundation of the Business and Professional Women's Club of San Antonio; President **Ricardo Romo** was appointed by Gov. Rick Perry to the Commission for a College Ready Texas, a 21-member group charged with providing guidance and support to the State Board of Education. The purpose is to align high school curriculum with college standards in order to improve college readiness programs; **John Simonis**, senior lecturer in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, was elected life fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, recognizing significant engineering achievements and contributions to the engineering profession; **Rick Utecht**, associate professor of marketing, was one of seven faculty from across the nation to receive the 2006 Hormel Meritorious Teaching Award from the Marketing Management Association; **Gerry Voisine**, a volunteer coordinator at UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures, received the Outstanding Mentor/Volunteer Award from the San Antonio Independent School District for her service at Herff Elementary.



## A fitting tribute UTSA alumnus honored by local school district

**UTSA graduate Ricardo Salinas' life was brief**—he died when he was just 24 years old. But the Judson Independent School District is making sure his memory will continue through generations of students.

In January, the district dedicated an elementary school to the U.S. Border Patrol agent who was killed in the line of duty. Ricardo Salinas Elementary opened Jan. 4 at 10560 Old Cimarron Trail in Universal City. About 445 students are enrolled.

"It means a lot to us that [the district] is acknowledging that he made a sacrifice for our country," said his father, Arturo Salinas.

Salinas graduated from Judson High School in 1992. Four years later, he received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from UTSA. He was 23 years old when he became a border patrol agent assigned to the Harlingen U.S. Border Patrol Station. A year later, he and his partner, Susan Rodriguez, were killed while helping the Cameron County Sheriff's Department capture a murder suspect.

Judson officials said the community wanted the school to be named after a Judson graduate who had accomplished many things in life.

Naming it after Salinas was an obvious choice, said Sean Hoffmann, director of public information for the district. "The community could not have picked a more appropriate name for an elementary school," he said. "Now his memories can live on throughout the halls of the campus."

UTSA Vice Provost Jesse Zapata, who attended the school dedication March 27, said it was an honor to Salinas and his family.

"Based on the comments [the school board] made, they seemed to fully grasp the importance of selecting a person who had done well while in school there and who had done well at UTSA and who would have been a good role model in life," he said.

UTSA and UT Pan American have scholarships dedicated to Salinas' memory. A San Antonio health center is named for him, as well as a boat for the Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine office, which works in conjunction with the U.S. Border Patrol.

"I've done a lot for his memory," his father said. "The reason I do this? I believe that the day you forget about someone who passes away, they die forever. As long as you keep them alive in your memory, they'll never die."

## PLANNING FOR PROGRESS

Projections show that by 2016, UTSA's enrollment could be at an all-time high of 35,000 students.

This spring, university officials plan to present a 10-year strategic plan to the University of Texas System that outlines how the university will accommodate that growth while transforming into a premier public research institution.

"This plan lays out an ambitious agenda to take UTSA to new levels of excellence as we build a premier public research university," said UTSA President Ricardo Romo.

The strategic planning process began in 2006. Since then, administrators, faculty, staff, students and members of the community have solidified a vision for the university, a mission statement and core values. Each stresses affordability, accessibility, diversity, teaching and research.

Committees also identified five strategic initiatives: ensuring access and affordability for students, serving society through innovations and expanded research, enriching educational experiences to enable student success, engaging

and serving external communities, and expanding resources and infrastructure.

With these initiatives, officials hope to emphasize teaching and research programs on a global level and train students to become leaders. They also want to create programs that are culturally diverse.

"While our role is critical to South Texas, we want to prepare our staff and students to become global leaders," said Sandra Welch, vice provost for academic compliance and institutional research and chair of the strategic planning process.



## TRADING BATHING SUITS FOR WORK BOOTS

Senior Sheldon Weingust's work with a Mexican orphanage didn't end when spring break did. The interdisciplinary studies major traveled to Piedras Negras for his week of vacation to help children at the orphanage, but he was so moved by the need he saw that he's returning on his own to continue what he began. "I didn't really want to leave," he said. "The smiles on [the kids'] faces were worth a million bucks."

Weingust was one of nine students to travel to Mexico as part of UTSA Volunteer Services' Alternative Spring Break program. Twelve other students spent their week helping Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans.

Through the volunteer program, students learn about issues such as hunger, homelessness, the environment and poverty as they perform community service projects. To ensure that the experience will be a positive one, they discuss what they see, said Sharis Slocum, volunteer services coordinator. "It's just good educationally because it opens up students' eyes to what is beyond their traditional college bubble and shows what issues are out there," she said. "It's an intense experience."

Maria Rosales, a junior pre-nursing major, wanted to observe firsthand the effects of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans. What she saw when she arrived shocked her. "Being almost two years later, I kind of expected it not to be completely fixed, but to see something getting done," she said. "But nothing's being done."

On a rainy day, her team was given a break from building homes, so the students helped another volunteer organization clear ravaged areas in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Because of her experience, Rosales, a member of the Campus Activities Board, decided to create fundraisers at UTSA to help the people of New Orleans. "We decided to do good from our events," she said. "We decided to do something different and help out at the same time."

Research that profits

## Colleges launch joint Center for Innovation and Technology Entrepreneurship

The Center for Innovation and Technology Entrepreneurship (CITE), a new interdisciplinary center in the College of Business and the College of Engineering, was established at UTSA this fall. CITE will create a pipeline for UTSA faculty, students and the surrounding business community to develop new technology ventures.

"One of our goals for the center is to help unlock the entrepreneur in both faculty and students through education and experiential activities," said Cory Hallam, director.

During its start-up period, the center conducted an innovative student project that brought together four undergraduate mechanical engineering students in a senior design class with a business graduate student in the management of technology program. As part of their final class project, the engineering students designed a mechanically augmented and ergonomic laryngoscope, a medical instrument used for intubations. Partnering with the business graduate student, they developed a prototype for their device, and created a working business plan to manufacture and market it. Student participants were senior mechanical engineering students Daniel Carrola, Tim DeLeon,



Illustration by Michelle Wilby Friesenhahn



Eric Dillon and Guy Lenny, and graduate management of technology student Neil Leatherbury.

"This project was beneficial for both student groups," said Hallam, who holds master's and doctoral degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in engineering and technology management and policy. "The undergraduate students gained exposure to the business context of technology development, and the graduate business student developed a functioning business plan for a new technology product."

Following their class project, the team submitted their work to the UT System technology transfer office in support of a patent. Plans include expanding the project in the coming year to include more student teams.

"The goal is to select the projects which have the most business viability, create the business development plan and secure patents on these projects," Hallam said. "This gives students hands-on experience as early stage entrepreneurs, brings in additional revenue for the UT System through technology licensing and lends prestige to the university's efforts in entrepreneurship."

— Wendy Frost

# An Interview with **Leticia Van de Putte**

**Texas state Sen. Leticia Van de Putte says she never misses a Texas Folklife Festival. Her husband, Pete Van de Putte, is owner of Dixie Flag Co., which is a sponsor of the annual event, and their six children have grown up as “Folklife Festival kids,” she says. But Van de Putte’s connection to the festival and UTSA’s Institute of Texan Cultures goes back a lot further than her family ties.**

**Before she became a four-term senator representing District 26, which includes a large portion of San Antonio and Bexar County, before she served five terms as a state representative and before becoming a pharmacist more than 25 years ago, Van de Putte’s first job out of high school was as a tour guide at ITC. It’s a job she still remembers fondly.**

**“The best times of my life—when I was single—were my times as a guide at the institute.”**

## **How did you become involved with ITC?**

I was a student at St. Mary’s University, so this was 1973. I actually had gone to apply right out of high school; they kindly took my application and interviewed me, but they only hired college graduates. At the time the tour guides were all college graduates, and they were a paid staff of about nine tour guides—mainly folks who had history or culture backgrounds.

So they thanked me very much. I did meet a great man; I met O.T. Baker [former field and research director and project manager at ITC, and founder of the Texas Folklife Festival] and that was my first impression there.

Then I happened to be there right at the end of finals. O.T. Baker came up to me and said, ‘Excuse me, I thought I recognized you.’ I reminded him of who I was and that I had applied several months earlier. He said, ‘You speak Spanish, don’t you?’ I said, ‘Yes, sir, I do.’ ... The next thing I know I have a job because their bilingual tour guide left suddenly and they only had one other bilingual tour guide by the name of JoAnn Andera [who now is director of the Folklife Festival]. I learned so much from the other guys and from O.T. Baker, from [former festival director] Claudia Ball, just so many people who were there at the time. It was great.

## **What interested you about ITC?**

It amazed me that finally somebody told the history of Texas, not with dates and not with events but with people and their different cultural groups, and it was so refreshing for me as a true Tejano—you know, my family, my dad’s family, is like the ninth generation—to see Texas portrayed or shown to our visitors and to schoolchildren as the Texas that it really was, with a huge indigenous population that was here first, and with the Spaniards, the French. ... It told stories about people and families.

It was also interactive. You know, we had a chuckwagon area, and I went to school [at Jefferson High School] in San Antonio and I was a Lasso [roping team member], so I could do rope tricks. So when the children came

through, even the adults, I would do rope tricks and talk about what life was like on a ranch. ... It was so interactive that there were things that children could touch and could hear. I mean, it was not your typical museum. So it was quite innovative. I loved the interaction with the people, and I loved the people who worked there.

All the staff was just wonderful. We wore uniforms and everybody from the security guard to the people who made the type displays, the historians, the archivists, the folks that were working on curriculum guides for schoolchildren—I mean it was all one team and we were treated with such respect, and, you know, I was just 19 years old.

I worked for the institute part time even when I went to pharmacy school. Mr. O.T. Baker was doing a seminar in Sinton, Texas, at the schools, and I would meet him there to help because we took the show on the road back then. Even in pharmacy school, I would, if he was in the area, I would try to meet up with him.

Then I would always work, of course, the Folklife Festival. It’s interesting to know that the first two Folklife Festivals were not very successful; they were successful with people, but we really did not make any money. The decision was almost made not to continue them except at the insistence of O.T. Baker, and it turned out to be Texas’ great block party. But those beginning years of the Folklife Festival were struggling ones. But after the third one, it became a San Antonio favorite and a Texas favorite.

## **In recent years, the museum has broadened its objective of showcasing the people of Texas to include more science, more technology and bring more of the big-name exhibits to San Antonio. How do you see ITC’s focus evolving?**

Well, I think the story is still a valid one to be told; it is extremely important for us to tell the story to children and to tell the story to future generations and to our guests. But we



also know that you cannot be stale ... and that space was meant to be interactive and to have conferences, and so I think it fits in greatly.

## **You have been a very strong supporter of this university. Where do you see UTSA in 10 years?**

A world-class research, tier-one institution.

## **You helped introduce the Life Sciences Institute Bill in the 77th Legislature in 2001, which supported collaboration between UTSA and the University of Texas Health Science Center for research and teaching. How do you see the Legislature supporting this project this session?**

Well, it is the No. 1 legislative appropriation request from both the Health Science Center and UTSA, so I am delighted. I think we have seen a tremendous amount of interest in private contributions as well. I think that it is a great niche for the synergies between the Health Science Center and UTSA and so I am very confident that it is going to continue to grow and be a terrific part of both those institutions.

# A matter of heart, a matter of time

## UTSA tests potential lifesaving device



Illustration by Michelle Wilby Friesenhan

Every day nearly 1,000 people in the United States die outside of the hospital from sudden cardiac arrest. Despite the application of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), fewer than 5 percent of these sudden cardiac arrest patients survive.

Another dangerous condition, hemorrhagic shock brought on by massive bleeding, remains a leading cause of death in both civilians and soldiers involved in battlefield trauma.

For years, doctors and researchers across the country have searched for methods to address these grim statistics. Replacement fluids and lower body counter-pressure (such as shock trousers or g-suits, like those worn by pilots and returning astronauts) have risen to the forefront as lifesaving procedures for countering hemorrhagic shock. However, these devices are neither portable nor widely affordable.

Recently, researchers with UTSA's Department of Health and Kinesiology have partnered with the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) at Brooke Army Medical Center to test a device designed to reduce the progression to hemorrhagic shock and increase survivability of cardiac arrest. Known as an Impedance Threshold Device (ITD), this new product creates a small amount of resistance when air is drawn into the chest through inspiration (drawing in of breath).

Invented by Dr. Keith Lurie, an associate professor of medicine at the University of Minnesota, the ITD resembles a small plastic facemask that fits over the nose and mouth.

Weighing approximately eight ounces and standing less than nine inches tall, an ITD sells for approximately \$100, addressing both portability and cost concerns. Within the ITD is an impedance threshold valve, which creates the breathing resistance for the patient.

"It's interesting to try and convey to the general public that we want to create resistance in breathing for a trauma patient," said UTSA associate professor and researcher William Cooke. "But resistance in a hemorrhaging patient can actually enhance the circulation. So far in our testing and research, the results have been quite exciting.

"The best way to describe the resistance introduced by an ITD is to tell someone to insert the tip of their index finger into their mouth and then inhale," Cooke added. "It is not a tremendous amount of resistance ... but it is just enough."

ITDs are also being tested in cases of CPR administration. Recently, animal studies conducted by researchers in Europe show that blood flow to the heart and brain are doubled by the addition of an ITD during CPR. Research using the ITD indicates that resistance helps raise blood pressure and increases cardiac filling, stroke volume, cardiac output, arterial pressure and cerebral blood flow. The device helps increase airflow into the lungs and blood flow in the heart, the critical components to stabilizing a patient and reducing the risk of hemorrhagic shock while increasing the chance of out-of-hospital survival.

"What we are trying to do is essentially

'buy time,'" said Dr. Vic Convertino, a physiologist at the USAISR. "We are trying to steal back those valuable minutes when a soldier or patient is in transit to a field hospital or hospital where definitive lifesaving procedures can begin."

However, testing of the ITD as a treatment for hemorrhagic shock has produced challenges all its own. "You certainly can't walk up to a volunteer and withdraw large amounts of blood in an attempt to simulate hemorrhagic shock," said Cooke. "Not only would it be dangerous beyond description, it's also unethical."

Up to this point, controlled testing of the ITD has been limited to either animal studies or human studies where blood loss is induced by voluntary blood donation. In the case of humans, only a small fraction of total blood volume can be drawn, and in most cases that limited amount of blood loss does not provide researchers with enough information to predict the point at which blood pressure decompensation will occur.

Now, UTSA and USAISR researchers believe they have found an effective alternative testing method. By using a Lower Body Negative Pressure chamber (LBNP), researchers are able to simulate the decrease in central blood volume that occurs during an acute hemorrhage. The LBNP chamber pulls blood away from the thorax into dependent regions of the pelvis and legs. The procedure is safe because symptoms of progression to cardiovascular collapse can be immediately terminated by simply stopping the decompression.

To study the effectiveness of the ITD, a group of volunteers was outfitted with the device while another group was given a “sham” ITD. Tests conducted included squat-stand tests, supine tests and LBNP tests. Participants who were given an active ITD reported milder orthostatic hypotension symptoms, including lightheadedness, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, tremors and visual disturbances, than those who were administered a “sham” device.

Approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, forms of the device are already in use by select ambulance services. NASA also has requested the devices for its astronauts to assist them with fluctuating blood pressure problems.

“We are still in the initial stages of testing and research with this device and there is a tremendous amount of work that has yet to be done,” Cooke said. “But we see a tremendous potential for quite a few clinical applications for both civilians and battlefield soldiers.”

— Ashley Harris

## UTSA awarded \$900K grant for undergrads

The National Science Foundation has awarded UTSA a five-year, \$900,000 grant to promote undergraduate interdisciplinary education in mathematics and biology. The Undergraduate Mathematics and Biology (UMB) Scholar grant will educate students studying in both disciplines to prepare them to be well-rounded candidates for careers in biomedical and health-related fields.

The UMB Scholar program began with a start-up class of 10 students last fall, each receiving \$8,000 annually over the next three years. One of the UMB Scholar grantees is Max Grayson, a 17-year-old biology major from Russia who plans to be a neurosurgeon. Grayson is researching the origination and function of spiral neuron waves in the brain.

“We want this to be a top-end scholarship for UTSA’s best and brightest students,” said David Senseman, assistant professor of biology and UMB Scholar grant collaborator.

Other grant collaborators are Nandini Kannan, professor of management science and statistics in the College of Business, and Dmitry Gokhman, associate professor of mathematics in the College of Sciences.

“One of the problems this country faces is a shortage of well-trained students in these disciplines,” Kannan said. “This is a great opportunity for us to recruit and mentor the students so they can go on to graduate school and enroll in our doctoral programs.”

Gokhman said he hopes that biology students will realize there is a significant mathematics component in research today. “Hopefully it will open doors for them by having mathematics and statistics as a minor,” he said.

— Kris Rodriguez

## Understanding corporate corruption

Sociologist Olivia Yu, an assistant professor in the Department of Criminal Justice, picked the right time to join the UTSA faculty. She arrived shortly before the Enron scandal of 2001, which served to galvanize her research interest in corporate and white-collar crime. But in addition to using Texas-sized business scandals as compelling classroom material, Yu’s research interests are shedding light on student’s attitudes toward unethical business practices and uncovering ethical misconduct closer to home.

In 2003, Yu wanted to know if corporate corruption was a result of attitudes developed in the business world or its training grounds on college campuses, so she surveyed the ethical practices of business majors and non-business majors. Her findings, published in a 2006 edition of the *Journal of Criminal Justice*, reveal that business and non-business majors both hold negative views toward illegal conduct, but business students were more tolerant of, or apathetic toward, unethical, though legal, behaviors.

“That’s the thing about white-collar crime,” Yu said. “A lawyer will tell you to look at the paper work. It’s all legal. White-collar crime starts as unethical behavior, so ethics must remain a key part of the business curriculum.”

Yu’s perception of corporate corruption led to another investigation in spring 2004. It came after an undergraduate student told her about a new San Antonio neighborhood facing a serious foreclosure problem. Suspecting corporate wrongdoing, Yu challenged the student to investigate. The project quickly exceeded undergraduate skills, but the initial findings convinced Yu to continue the investigation.

She discovered entire minority neighborhoods categorically denied mortgages, a practice called “redlining.” Yu found other lenders targeting these same populations with predatory lending practices, charging exorbitant interest rates or grossly understating property tax information. Families could not make mortgage payments or forfeited their homes because of the sudden tax burden. Yu concluded that foreclosures did not correlate with the median income of the neighborhoods in question, but rather the concentrations of minority populations.

Yu’s findings gained the attention of mortgage lender Fannie Mae, Texas state Rep. Mike Villarreal and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, among others.

Yu is currently seeking funding through the San Antonio Area Foundation to continue her



Illustration by Michelle Wilby Friesenhan

investigations into lending inequalities. In summer 2007, she intends to carry out a quality study on lending by interviewing lending industry insiders.

— James Benavides

# Chasing Dreams

**UTSA senior track and field standout Ryanne Dupree balances a busy schedule with Olympic aspirations.**

By Kyle Stephens

**R**yanne Dupree has a dream, and you'd better believe she will do everything in her power to make it come true.

Dupree, one of the most decorated track and field athletes to don a UTSA uniform, wants to represent the United States at the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China.

Training to get there has required focus and energy, qualities Dupree has in abundance. She's used to competing in two-day multi-event competitions such as indoor pentathlon and outdoor heptathlon for UTSA while simultaneously participating in school and extracurricular activities. For Dupree, this kind of balancing act has become a way of life.

While taking a full class load, she finds time to fit in grueling three-hour workouts. She also serves as treasurer of her sorority and president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Council. But chasing her lifelong dream of making it to the Olympics is what keeps her going, she says.

Dupree has goals for her final season as a Roadrunner as well, like adding more Southland Conference (SLC) titles to the six she already owns, competing for the NCAA Championship in the heptathlon—which consists of the 100-meter hurdles, high jump, shot put, 200 meters, long jump, javelin and 800 meters—and helping UTSA win a conference championship.

In March 2006, Dupree capped her senior indoor season by finishing fourth in the pentathlon at the NCAA Championships. She broke her own school record in the event and posted the highest national finish by a UTSA track and field athlete since the 4x400-meter relay team took fourth at the 1992 NCAA Outdoor Championships.

That would seem like a perfect momentum-builder for someone about to begin her final outdoor campaign. However, Dupree decided to take a redshirt season, something allowed by the NCAA but more commonly used for freshmen, since student-athletes have five years to complete four seasons of eligibility.

“Coach [James] Blackwood and I first discussed the possibility of redshirting me following my sophomore season,” says Dupree, who earned the first of three All-America certificates with a seventh-place finish in the heptathlon at the 2004 NCAA Championships in Austin. “With the team he was putting together over the next two to three years and the thought that stretching out my collegiate eligibility would help my training down the road, we decided we could compete for a conference championship and help me get better prepared for making the Olympic Trials in 2008.”

Dupree looks back on that first All-America performance as the one that proved to her and her competition that she had the potential to develop into one of the best multi-eventers in the country. She views her 2006 pentathlon performance as the next step.

“That’s when it hit me. I thought, ‘Hey I’m right up here with the best of the best, within striking distance of everyone.’ That really gave me the confidence that I can compete for a national title and maybe more.”

Dupree wasn’t always sure she would wind up in this position, as the final two events in the heptathlon—javelin and 800 meters—presented early mental and physical challenges. “I did the multis a few times in summer track back in high school, but I had never thrown the javelin and I never really wanted to run the 800. The javelin is such a technical event, and the 800 is a tough run to finish with. I would get through the first five events and not want to go any further.”

Despite the challenges, track is in Dupree’s blood. Her mother, Rosemary, volunteers as an official at numerous high school, amateur and collegiate meets. Her older brother, Michael, was a state champion in the high jump and went on to a successful basketball career at Kentucky State. Her younger brother, Marcus, was a two-time state qualifier in high school.

Recruited by several schools after an outstanding prep career at East Central High School, Dupree chose to stay close to home and continue UTSA’s remarkable tradition in the multi events. Competing as an understudy to All-American Rhonda Ray in 2003, Dupree immediately proved she had the tools to develop into a national-caliber competitor by finishing as the conference runner-up to Ray in the pentathlon.



Photography by Jeff Huehn, Lazy J Photo



Her sophomore and junior seasons saw her garner a pair of All-America certificates in the heptathlon. She was also named the 2005 SLC Outdoor Athlete of the Year after breaking the league record in the heptathlon at the championship meet. All totaled, Dupree captured four conference crowns as a junior. Her fourth-place national finish in the pentathlon put an exclamation point on her final indoor year that saw her collect SLC Indoor Athlete of the

Year accolades and break school records in the 60-meter hurdles and pentathlon.

With all that Dupree has accomplished, she constantly trains to get better. "I need to work on improving my marks in the javelin. My competitors always tell me if I get the javelin down, they're scared of me."

It's obvious to Dupree that an improved javelin is one of the keys to qualifying for the Olympic Trials and eventually the Olympics.

She already has the international experience on her résumé, competing in the World Heptathlon Challenge in the Netherlands the last two summers.

"The experience of going overseas and competing against the best in the world is irreplaceable," says Dupree, who lists the great Jackie Joyner-Kersey as her idol. "Track and field is very popular in Europe and with the professional meet circuit they have, I would definitely love to go back and compete as a professional.

"At the same time, I am realistic about being in an event that does not get as much publicity as the sprints or jumps. Jackie Joyner-Kersey is the epitome of what anyone in this event wants to be, and thank goodness for her or people might not even know what the heptathlon is. There are more professional opportunities for sprinters or long jumpers, but if I have that chance I'm going to take it."

For now, though, she'll continue juggling her two passions: helping the Roadrunners succeed in her final outdoor season and chasing her Olympic dream.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### SENIOR EARNS ALL-AMERICA HONORS IN MEN'S INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD

Larry Brooks, who competed in the 800 meter at the NCAA Indoor Championships, was named a 2007 All-American, the United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association announced March 13.

The senior from Stafford, Texas, becomes just the fourth athlete in UTSA men's track and field history to earn the honor, and the third under the direction of fifth-year head coach Aaron Fox. He also is the first Division I honoree for first-year assistant coach Scott Slade.

Past honorees include Leonard Byrd, a three-time outdoor All-American from 1995 to 1997 in the 400 meter; Justin Youngblood, who earned honors in the multi-events in 2002 (decathlon) and 2004 (heptathlon/decathlon); and current Roadrunner Brandon Buteaux, who collected his certificate in the heptathlon in 2005. He has one outdoor season of eligibility remaining.

### SOFTBALL SENIOR BREAKS CAREER HOME RUNS RECORD

Jessica Rogers, UTSA softball senior third baseman, broke the school and Southland Conference (SLC) career home run records by hitting her 56th in a 4-1 loss to No. 8 Texas on March 8, breaking the mark she shared with former Roadrunner Christy Brownlee. That home run also moved her past former Louisiana-Monroe standout Lori Tande (428) for the league's all-time total bases mark.

In a 10-0 victory against Rutgers on Feb. 16, Rogers drove in five runs to break the conference's career runs-batted-in record of 147.

Rogers, a native of Grand Prairie, Texas, and the 2005 SLC Player of the Year, continues to add to all three records in her final campaign with the Roadrunners.

### EWALEFO, GIBBS EARN ACCOLADES IN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

UTSA senior Vivian Ewalefo and sophomore Monica Gibbs garnered All-Southland Conference accolades for their performances on the court during the 2006-07 women's basketball season. Ewalefo collected first-team honors for the second year in a row, while Gibbs, the 2005-06 SLC Freshman of the Year, picked up her first all-conference award when she was named to the second team.

Ewalefo, last season's SLC Newcomer of the Year, is the second UTSA player in the program's history to earn first-team accolades in consecutive seasons. Ewalefo led UTSA in scoring at 16 points per game and is second with 7.5 rebounds per contest. She also recorded six double-doubles during the season.

Highlighting the second team was Gibbs, who led the league with 13 double-doubles and was a two-time SLC Player of the Week selection. She averaged 12.9 points per game and led the Roadrunners with 8.1 boards and 4.8 assists per contest.

# Lessons from the Neighborhood

Enlivening language learning in San Antonio's bilingual education classrooms

By Lynn Gosnell

**C**onsider the corn tortilla. Curled up around itself or cradling a delicious filling, it is a staple of authentic Mexican cuisine. At Mi Rancho Restaurant on San Antonio's West Side, cooks prepare and serve hundreds of these humble delicacies every day. Now, reconsider the corn tortilla as the main ingredient in a lesson plan for second-graders with limited English proficiency.

Assigned to write a "community ethnography" during her pre-service teacher training at Storm Elementary, UTSA bilingual education student Erika Delgado came upon Mi Rancho, a cavernous orange building a few blocks from the school, where she interviewed and photographed tortilla makers. By building on facts about the history of corn as well as figures having to do with the sale of tortillas, Delgado created a lesson plan that satisfies Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) requirements in math and social studies. But until she did her pre-service training last semester, says Delgado, "I didn't know that I could incorporate the community into my lesson plans."

Bilingual Approaches to Content-Based Learning (BBL 4063) is one of four courses taken concurrently by bilingual education teachers-in-training at UTSA. This block of classes, informally referred to as Approaches courses, covers the theory and practice of teaching essential content areas (math, social sciences, language arts and natural sciences) as well as methods for assessing student learning in elementary bilingual education classrooms. All four Approaches are taught in Spanish in an effort to strengthen UTSA students' academic literacy in the language.

During the Approaches semester, pre-service bilingual education teachers take their college classes together on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and spend Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in local elementary schools. Each pre-service teacher is required to spend a total of 85 hours observing in a classroom during the semester. In BBL 4063 alone, the pre-service teachers attend class, carefully document their observations in their assigned schools, create lesson plans and design learning centers—all in Spanish.

"To be able to harness this linguistic knowledge and apply it academically and in your profession is empowering," says Patricia Sánchez, assistant professor of bicultural-bilingual studies.

An El Paso native and former second-grade teacher, Sánchez earned her Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in 2004. Her dissertation, "At Home in Two Places: Second-Generation Mexicanas and Their Lives as Engaged Transnationals," was recognized by the National Association of Bilingual Educators.

In fall 2004, Sánchez, then a new UTSA faculty member, walked into her BBL 4063 classroom for the first time. Her students were all Latinos, ranging from third-generation Mexican Americans to Costa Ricans and Puerto Ricans.

"I had some who had been trained in Mexico as teachers, who were psychologists in Mexico—and they were all trying to become bilingual ed teachers," she recalls. "And we were at Storm Elementary, teaching the UTSA course there."

Ringed by a gunmetal gray hurricane fence, Storm Elementary is next to San Juan Courts, one of San Antonio's oldest public housing sites on the city's West Side. Nearly all the school's students are economically disadvantaged; 31 percent are defined as "Limited English Proficient," a number that is nearly twice the average for the school





district as a whole and more than twice the average for Texas.

To Sánchez, the school and its surrounding community provided a perfect setting for bilingual education pre-service training—a neighborhood that advertises its many small businesses in Spanish, a neighborhood rich in pride.

“I had worked in a lot of barrios, in a lot of community centers. . . . So, to me, I saw a richness in the community,” Sánchez says. But her students were not as confident.

“I ended up hearing students saying . . . that they felt a little uncomfortable coming to this school,” Sánchez says. “They felt a little unsafe in this neighborhood. They felt like [it was] not a neighborhood with the best-looking material comforts. . . . [They] kind of had some prejudgments of the community there.”

Sánchez knew that these attitudes would hamper her students’ effectiveness as teachers, and that this was exactly the kind of school—exactly the kind of community—where most of them would work as bilingual educators. The very next class, Sánchez scrapped her written lesson plan and gave the pre-service teachers a new assignment—to complete a community ethnography. In groups of three, they were to fan out to meet, interview and photograph interesting people and places in the school’s surrounding community. They were being sent to discover and document the assets that lay hidden in plain sight.

The pre-service teachers interviewed muralists, postal workers, gardeners, piñata sellers, bakers and small business owners; they visited nonprofit community centers, the sprawling produce terminal, health clinics and even the San Fernando Cemetery.

The experience was “transformative,” Sánchez says. “They came back with a totally different idea of the community.”

When Sánchez created the community ethnography assignment, she was working from a theory called Funds of Knowledge that helps teachers see their students’ world from the inside out. First articulated by education professor Luis Moll and colleagues at the University of Arizona, this approach encourages teachers to tap into the knowledge and strengths of their pupils’ communities and turn this information into learning tools. The idea is that by connecting the classroom

**In groups of three, they were to fan out to meet, interview and photograph interesting people and places in the school’s surrounding community. They were being sent to discover and document the assets that lay hidden in plain sight.**

with the community in working-class or economically disadvantaged areas, teachers and students will create a richer, more successful educational experience.

Since Sánchez first sent her students out with notebooks and cameras, the community ethnography assignment has been integrated into all the Approaches courses that address pedagogy. It’s a concept that Robert Milk, director of UTSA’s Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies, finds especially powerful.

“Most of our [college] students reflect societal attitudes that have negative views of poor communities, working-class neighborhoods or immigrants,” Milk says. “Funds of Knowledge turns all that on its head and says that kids from working-class neighborhoods come from dynamic families and neighborhoods. . . . It sees the community around the schools in a positive light.”

And that, say both Sánchez and Milk, can have a profound impact on classroom teaching. “Dr. Sánchez and her colleagues are trying to help teachers . . . to better understand what is good and beautiful about that community,” Milk says.

By the end of the semester, Sánchez sees a new maturity in her students and a more realistic appreciation of the demands of teaching. That’s important because although the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies graduates approximately 70 teachers with bilingual generalist certification each year, it is straining to meet the demand for bilingual educators both locally and statewide.

Statewide shortages of certified bilingual educators have prompted some school districts in Houston and Dallas to recruit teachers from abroad. A 2002 study from the Institute of School-University Partnerships at Texas A&M University found that universities are not able to supply enough teachers for the state’s ESL and bilingual classrooms. Many school districts end up hiring teachers who are not fully certified, says Milk.

To help meet the need, UTSA’s bicultural-bilingual education program relies on federal funding and grants to attract future teachers. More than half of current students receive some kind of federal support, with typical grant assistance reaching close to \$10,000 per student annually. According to Milk, such support is essential to attracting bright and dedicated teachers into a demanding program. Compared to the requirements for a standard education degree, the bilingual education degree demands not only the ability to speak and write Spanish fluently, but also carries with it additional exam requirements.

And because of their intense preparation, he says, UTSA’s graduates are always in great demand.



**UTSA  
professor  
and  
doctoral  
student  
spend  
Christmas  
in Antarctica**



**ON the ICE**

**As her ship cut through the frigid ocean at 3 a.m., Burcu Cicek caught sight of an ice floe adrift in the open water. She screamed in excitement. Then she ran to awaken her fellow traveler.**

Cicek, a doctoral student at The University of Texas at San Antonio, had studied polar sea ice from afar using remote-sensing technology. But she had seen only satellite images, never an actual ice floe.

Last December, after a week aboard the Swedish icebreaker *Oden*, she finally saw polar ice in person. Although she had a clear view, thanks to the 24-hour daylight that illuminates Antarctic summers, she could hardly believe what she was seeing. “I was asking people, ‘Is that the sea ice? Is that the one we are looking for?’” she later recalled.

The trip to Antarctica gave Cicek and Hongjie Xie, an assistant professor of earth and environmental science, a chance to compare satellite data they had collected on sea ice concentrations and elevations with their own observations from the field. The pair from UTSA gave something back as well—their findings were added to a global body of knowledge on the polar regions that will someday serve as a baseline, making it easier to recognize and understand future changes to the environment.

Scientists and teachers from Sweden, Chile and elsewhere in the United States joined them on the voyage, which served as a prelude to the International Polar Year. That event, which actually covers the two years from March 2007 until March 2009, will include more than 200 scientific expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Thousands of scientists from more than 60 nations will take part.

Organized through the International Council for Science and the World Meteorological Organization, the current International Polar Year is actually the fourth; the earliest polar year was held from 1882 to 1883. In the United States, the National Science Foundation is coordinating International Polar Year activities.

It was the foundation that chartered the *Oden*, primarily to handle the annual chore of breaking and maintaining a shipping channel to allow supply and fuel shipments to reach McMurdo Station, the logistics hub for the U.S. Antarctic Program. But it was a new member of the UTSA faculty who gave Xie and Cicek the opportunity to go on the trip.

Associate Professor Stephen F. Ackley, who joined UTSA's Department of Earth and Environmental Science last year, has been receiving grants from the National Science Foundation since 1976 for the study of Antarctic sea ice. Ackley has conducted sea-ice research in McMurdo Sound and elsewhere in Antarctica since that time; an ice-covered spot near McMurdo is named “Ackley Point” in honor of his work.

“It’s really quite a thrill to have a piece of the continent where you’ve been working for so long named after you,” Ackley said. Although he did not go on this particular Antarctic expedition, Ackley is helping to analyze data collected on the trip.

Over the past 30 years, Ackley said, studies have shown that Antarctica in its entirety has not lost much, if any, sea-ice cover. But individual regions within the continent have seen significant changes. The impact, Ackley said, has been visible.



By Sheila Hotchkin

Photographs by Ute Kaden

“The entire ecosystem has changed tremendously on the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula,” he said, singling out the peninsula that juts toward the Drake Passage between Antarctica and South America. “And the temperature changes are huge.”

It was Cicek and Xie’s turn to see firsthand what they previously had studied only from a distance. The pair learned they would be hitching a ride aboard the *Oden* less than two months before their mid-December departure from Chile. For the next several weeks, they threw themselves into preparations.

Each needed visas for Chile and New Zealand, the beginning and ending points of their Antarctic voyage. Both had to undergo physical examinations to make sure they were in reasonably good health, since medical evacuations from Antarctica are exceedingly difficult and can end an entire expedition prematurely. They had to prepare for their scientific work by learning the protocols for making sea-ice observations and the codes used in data entry.

Cold-weather gear would be waiting for them in Chile, courtesy of the organizers of their trip. Conducting research on an icebreaker requires Marine-issue wind parkas, gloves, hats, mittens and boots suitable for working on wet decks. Work on the frozen continent itself requires extreme cold-weather gear—a heavy down parka with a fur-ruff hood, bear-paw mittens, insulated pants and heavy boots.

Cicek admitted to being nervous as the trip approached. “The big icy continent was waiting for us,” she said. On the day they left, she and Xie

flew first to Dallas and then caught a 20-hour flight to the Chilean capital of Santiago. From there, they flew to Punta Arenas, Chile, a common starting point for Antarctic journeys. On Dec. 12, when the rest of their party had gathered, they boarded the *Oden* and left for Antarctica.

On the first day, the *Oden* passed through the Strait of Magellan, which separates mainland South America from the Tierra del Fuego Archipelago to the south and connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. From there, the icebreaker headed to Cape Horn, the southernmost tip of South America, and then through the Drake Passage. The *Oden* then followed the Antarctic coastline, turning inland at the Ross Sea and eventually reaching McMurdo Station.

On Dec. 18, the travelers crossed the Antarctic Circle. The next day, Cicek got her first glimpse of polar ice. The first floes she saw were not very big. But they became larger and more concentrated as the *Oden* traveled further south. Cicek and Xie took measurements and noted the types of ice they encountered.

There are distinctions. Fast ice is attached to land, while pack ice is free-floating. Newer ice is thin, while older ice can extend several meters below the water’s surface. New ice is smooth; older ice has ridges around its sides from crashing into other floes.

Early in the trip, Cicek had to rely on measurements to determine what type of ice she was studying. But her Antarctic experience has given her a keener eye. “Right now,” she said, “I feel more comfortable when I look at the ice.”



Left: Hongjie Xie launches a probe to measure water temperature. Burcu Cicek begins the long trip home. Photos courtesy of Xie. Ute Kaden (below) contributed all other photography.



The information they gathered will be added to the collective body of knowledge on the polar regions, Xie said, adding that “the purpose is to try to see whether there is a systematic change, and whether it is related to the climate change.”

As part of their research, Xie and Cicek took regular note of temperatures. Because their trip was in the Antarctic summer season—seasons in the Southern Hemisphere are opposite those in the United States—air temperatures inside the Antarctic Circle ranged between 18 and 32 degrees Fahrenheit. The ocean, which had a minimum temperature of about 29 degrees, warmed the air. The temperature at McMurdo Station was 14 degrees, but had they headed into continental Antarctica and gone all the way to the South Pole, the temperature would have been between 40 and 58 degrees below zero.

As they approached the continent, the researchers saw a world far different from anything they had seen before. Xie took note of the mountains and grey smoke from an active volcano. “You can see the smoke come out from the white. It was all white, except that smoke. You could see it from far away.” They also saw plenty of wildlife—seals, whales, penguins and other birds. On Christmas Eve, standing on the bridge of the icebreaker, the travelers watched the midnight sun skimming low along the horizon. The sea reflected a mirror image of the icebergs floating above.

After two weeks at sea, the expedition ended when the Oden landed on the ice near McMurdo Station on Dec. 27. A helicopter was sent to collect the travelers and their luggage; the Oden and its crew remained behind to begin the work of breaking a shipping channel to McMurdo.

With their research concluded aboard the icebreaker, Xie and Cicek stayed at McMurdo only a few hours before they were shuttled aboard a U.S. Air Force C-17 to Christchurch, New Zealand, the first stop on their way home.



Since their return to the United States, the two have been analyzing the data they collected while aboard the Oden, comparing it with satellite images. “We didn’t get too much correlation between the two data sets,” Cicek said. But she surmised that was because of the time of year they traveled.

Satellites send different signals for ice and water, Ackley said, so studying those signals can offer an idea of how much sea ice is concentrated in a body of water. But melting ice has water on its surface, so it can look like water in satellite images.

Polar sea ice is a relatively new area of study for Cicek, who earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in surveying engineering in her native country of Turkey. Prior to her Antarctic studies, she had used remote-sensing technology to locate oil spills.

For Xie, Antarctica is just one area of study. He also uses remote-sensing data to look at vegetation, agriculture, Mars and the moon. He said that his time in the field will benefit his Antarctic research.

Ackley agreed that fieldwork is invaluable for Antarctic researchers—even those who specialize in remote-sensing technology. “The complexity of the system is very dramatically illustrated, and it’s very important for people who are involved with remote sensing to get that appreciation,” he said.

There was another benefit to the trip. Also aboard the Oden was a Brownsville teacher, Ute Kaden, who had learned a little about sea ice on a 2005 expedition to the Arctic region. She helped the UTSA researchers record measurements and observations while at sea, and she has continued her association with the university by putting its researchers in touch with her students at Homer Hanna High School.

Kaden said her trip has heightened her students’ interest in UTSA. She believes her experiences will enhance her lessons on Antarctica. “It’s a different spirit to talk to a person who has been there, who has seen it,” said Kaden, who also teaches at the University of Texas at Brownsville.

She kept a Web log during her time on the Oden and in the days immediately afterward. The blog includes Kaden’s colorful photographs from the trip, as well as a question-and-answer session with Ackley that took place shortly after her return home. In it, Ackley recalled his own early experiences in the 1960s in the polar regions.

Now, after three decades in the field, Ackley is helping to initiate other researchers. In his exchange with Kaden’s students, Ackley recalled meeting Charlie Bentley, a famous Antarctic continent geophysicist, and talked about how Bentley’s studies had been expanded by working with his students.

“In some smaller way,” Ackley said in the blog, “I’ve felt gratified to have a similar experience through students and colleagues and that it is continuing now through my new involvement at UTSA with Hongjie Xie and Burcu Cicek.”

Soon there will be others on that list. In September, Ackley will travel to Antarctica with four more UTSA students and a teacher from Boerne. They will study sea ice in the Bellingshausen-Amundsen Sea in western Antarctica. Xie and Cicek will not make that trip, although Cicek said she will provide satellite images to the ship for navigation purposes.

But Cicek is hooked on Antarctica, and she hopes to return someday. “I would love to go back to Antarctica—it was a lifetime chance,” she said. “You can just buy a ticket to go some places any time. But not to Antarctica.” ★



## FOR UTSA'S CURATOR, THE UNIVERSITY IS HIS **ART** **MUSEUM**

With its open, airy design that lets sunlight stream in on all sides, the atrium of the Biotechnology, Sciences and Engineering Building provides students with an **attractive place to study or rest** between classes. But the newly constructed building on the southern edge of the 1604 Campus has more to offer than student friendly architecture alone. **A closer look reveals an extensive, carefully chosen** selection of paintings and other artwork on every floor.

# WIDE OPEN

# ART SPACES

BY SHEILA HOTCHKIN





On the first floor, an enigmatic self-portrait by Angel Rodriguez-Diaz incorporates the artist's face into the body of a blue butterfly. Nearby, Mark Hogensen's assertive acrylic-on-wood piece, *A Well-Oiled Machine*, almost explodes off the wall in a burst of colors. On the fourth floor, Armando Sanchez's *The Galaxy* draws onlookers into a swirl of reds, oranges and pinks.

And the BSE Building is not the only place on campus to view such an exhibit. As the 38-year-old University of Texas at San Antonio matures, it is developing a greater appreciation for art. The fast-growing university boasts an expanding collection, one highlighted by artists from San Antonio and South Texas. Having no bricks-and-mortar museum to showcase its collection, UTSA has artwork on display all over its 1604 and Downtown campuses.

Most of the collection has come together due to the efforts of two men: President Ricardo Romo, who was an accomplished photographer long before he became a university president, and Arturo Almeida, the university's full-time curator.

"When I first arrived at UTSA," Romo says, "I noticed too many blank walls, which is something one doesn't see at other university campuses around the country. So I took an immediate interest in improving the aesthetics of our campuses for our students, faculty, staff and visitors."

UTSA had a "percent-for-art" program in place under former President Samuel A. Kirkpatrick, Almeida says. Some U.S. cities use similar programs, setting aside a percentage of their construction budgets and using it for artwork. Under UTSA's program, Almeida says, out-of-town artists were typically commissioned to do projects for specific buildings, such as a mural to decorate a particular entryway.

Then Romo assumed the presidency and suggested collecting as much artwork as possible from South Texas artists. San Antonio has a strong network of galleries and talented artists, Romo says, and artwork here is often reasonably priced compared with places like New York or California. But the reasons for collecting the local works go beyond cost.

"It makes sense that the UTSA collection represents the population we serve, which helps reinforce our sense of community at the university and in San Antonio," Romo says.

As it happened, Almeida already knew many artists in San Antonio, having worked as a photographer and curator before he arrived at UTSA. "We have a small art community. Everybody knows everybody," he says.

The collection has grown to nearly 500 pieces and includes paintings, sculptures, photographs, ceramics and more. The most valuable is a series



of 15 photographs by Mexican photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo, each worth about \$15,000.

While artists from other regions are represented, the collection has maintained its focus on the San Antonio area. Rodriguez-Diaz, of the butterfly self-portrait, is a native of Puerto Rico who now lives in San Antonio. Sanchez, who did the galaxy painting, is a San Antonio native. Henry Stein, whose mixed-media sculpture *Spring* also graces the walls of the BSE Building, is a UTSA alumnus.

Almeida says the majority of artists in San Antonio are represented at the university. "I feel really strongly that, right now, we're going through a renaissance," he says. "A lot of people don't know what we have in San Antonio. . . . We know what we have here in San Antonio, and we support the people here.

"Who knows?" he adds. "In the future, we're going to find, 'Oh wow! We have one of these!'"

**Opposite page: Arturo Almeida stands next to a banner outside the Durango Building art gallery. Top left: Angel Rodriguez-Diaz's *The Butterfly*, 1994. Top right: Armando Sanchez's *The Galaxy*, 2005. Above right: Mark Hogensen's *A Well Oiled Machine*, 2003.**



**This page top left: In the Mexico Center, prints by Al Rendon and Bastian Schmidt. Top right: Juan Miguel Ramos' *What is Our Current Relationship with Our Ancestral Past?*, 2000. Right: A collection of works by various artists in the Tobin Lab. Opposite page, right: Cesar Martinez's *El Tiempo Borra Todo*, 1997. Far right: Ben Mata's *=N Series*, 2004.**



Both Almeida and Romo hunt for new additions to the collection. Romo and his wife, Harriett, have collected art since the late 60s—primarily Mexican-American art and lithographs—and they have identified galleries around the country they like to visit. When possible, they prefer to meet artists in their studios.

When the university receives art as part of a gift, Almeida and Romo decide whether it suits the collection's theme. They are limited each year by the university's budget for art. Still, not having the money for a particular piece one year does not mean they will not reconsider it the next.

Once an artwork is purchased, Almeida takes over. He has a photo taken so it can be added to a computerized master list, and he assigns the painting a bar code so it can be easily identified and counted during inventories. Then the painting goes into storage at the 1604 Campus or the Downtown Campus until he finds just the right spot for it.

Almeida keeps a file on each artist represented in the collection, filling it with invoices, clippings, résumés and anything else that might be helpful. The file cabinet is so full, he's getting a larger one, he says.

Not every university has a curator. Those that do typically have them work within a particular department, such as the art department, and they don't report directly to the president the way Almeida does.

Almeida feels lucky to have found a situation where not only can he take his ideas and suggestions straight to the top, but also where the

president understands art himself and is an able collaborator. "I'm very fortunate to work with him, and it's great to work with someone who has a passion for art, just like myself," Almeida says.

Some universities do have something UTSA does not—an art museum to house their collections. The University of Texas at Austin has the Blanton Museum of Art, which houses 17,000 works. Southern Methodist University in Dallas has its Meadows Museum, which displays Spanish art in addition to pieces from the university's collection of Texas art. UTSA does have several galleries, but they are used mostly for temporary exhibits, not to display the university's permanent collection.

"I'm hoping that eventually, one of these years, somebody would donate a museum," Almeida says. "Because the pieces that we have, they're incredible."

While Romo agrees it would be nice to develop an art museum like the Blanton, he estimated it would cost about \$80 million to build. "For now, my goal is to build more classrooms and research facilities at UTSA, while also working to make our campus more beautiful and inviting for our students and visitors," he says.

There are advantages to displaying art campuswide the way UTSA does, Almeida says. The paintings are accessible. People pass by them every day instead of having to make a special trip to a museum. And, of course, viewing them is free.



Almeida says he **treats the university like a gallery**. When he is searching for the best place to hang a painting, he **considers the space, the focus of that space, the details around it.**

Right now, the collection is still small enough that all of it can be on display at the same time. Almeida uses his storage space primarily for new acquisitions. And, as the collection grows, so does the university.

Even before the BSE Building was finished, Almeida donned a hardhat and went inside to figure out how art might be displayed. In his office now are expansion plans for the Recreation and Wellness Center.

Almeida says he treats the university like a gallery. When he is searching for the best place to hang a painting, he considers the space, the focus of that space, the details around it. At the same time, he has learned that displaying art around the university is different from doing so at a gallery.

When curating exhibits in galleries, he works with an empty white wall—a blank canvas. At the university, he contends with sprinkler heads, fire alarms and exit signs. He has to be aware of building codes. He has been looking for the right venue to hang one particular piece, but because it protrudes more than 3 inches from the wall, it violates regulations. So he is on the lookout for an alcove or some other appropriate place. “My priority is to put these paintings on the wall,” Almeida says. “Every building you go, you’re going to see artwork.”

While a gallery is climate controlled, some places where art is displayed at the university are not. Almeida pointed out one spot in a hallway beside a door that opens and closes all day. He has to be

careful what he puts there because it will be exposed to humidity and more extreme temperatures than it might be in another location.

Almeida also takes pains to complement a building’s architecture. “I don’t like to compete with architecture,” he says. “They did it for a reason, so I leave it like that. I respect the architects because they’re artists, too.”

These days, Almeida attends shows and gets out in the community to keep up with San Antonio’s arts scene. He spends some time curating local exhibits, in part “to support the people that we have in our collection. Because we’re banking on these people, too.” Almeida also is working on a book featuring 50 artists from the collection.

Joan Grona, whose Joan Grona Gallery displays contemporary art at the Blue Star Arts Complex in Southtown, an art district just south of downtown San Antonio, says UTSA’s patronage has been a boon to local artists. She praises the university’s foresight in recognizing what some of the artists might achieve in coming decades.

“It’s been such an asset to our city that they’ve made this collection and bought from local artists, and that the artists are represented at the university,” she says. “Any large corporation or institution that takes an interest in their work, it only adds to their résumé. They should be extremely honored to be part of such a collection.” ★





# personal **BEST**

**Academic coaching  
helps students  
achieve their goals.**

**By Jenny Hannah Moore**

**T**wo years ago, during Christmas break, Veronica Dominguez received a thin, inconspicuous letter from UTSA. The letter informed her that her GPA had fallen below a 2.0 and that she had been placed on academic probation. Unless she could raise her grades by the following semester, it warned, she would face academic dismissal. “I was honestly shocked. I thought the letter was to inform me that I had made the honor roll. I just started crying because all of my self-assurance just vanished,” she remembers.

Dominguez had done well in high school, rarely needing to study. But college proved more challenging. As a first-semester freshman, Dominguez was struggling. “I was 18 years old, and I needed help to study for my classes. That was a hard concept for me to grasp,” she says.

Beyond that, Dominguez was emotionally stressed, embarrassed and confused over where to go for help. The stigma of her probationary status prevented her from asking her old high school classmates for help. “I did not want them to know what a failure I had become. And I couldn’t ask my new classmates, who all managed to make A’s and B’s even with their new party habits,” she explains.

After some initial advising from her academic counselor, Dominguez was referred to the academic coaching program at the Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success (TRCSS). It was a good move. She received one-on-one coaching sessions with a learning specialist who gave her individualized instruction in study skills and time management. Referrals also were available for any other problems that might be getting in the way of her studies.

She would see her coach once or twice a week, but they also communicated through e-mail for additional advice. For Dominguez, who teetered on a GPA of 1.2, academic coaching was what she needed to become the kind of student she is now: a confident junior majoring in early childhood education with a solid 3.0 GPA.



Academic coaches meet with students in one-on-one coaching sessions. Pictured above is Karen Roth, associate director for the TRCSS downtown.

### A Pioneer in the Field

The TRCSS, a division of Academic Affairs focused on improving the academic skills and retention of students, has offices at both the 1604 and Downtown campuses. It is available to all registered UTSA students. Services are categorized under three headings: learning assistance, advising and retention, and seminars and outreach. Academic coaching and tutoring fall together under learning assistance but differ at the level of training and services offered. A tutor is another UTSA student who has been trained for this task. An academic coach is a counselor with a master's degree.

The TRCSS began its academic coaching program in fall 2003 under the direction of Patricia Glenn, the program's founder. In the beginning, Glenn—who was executive director of the TRCSS and was recently promoted to associate dean of retention and graduation—saw a need to establish a program of assistance for students who wanted help with study skills and time management. She envisioned a place where students would get the time, attention and high-quality help they needed with time management, strategies in note taking, reading, test taking, test preparation and memory boosting.

The academic coaching program has grown under the learning assistance team, which is made up of Karen Roth, associate director for the downtown center, and academic coaches Stella Abuabara and Kathy Wilkins. Sherry Castillo is the assistant director of learning assistance.

Although academic coaching is now a popular service in many institutions of higher learning, one thing is strikingly different about UTSA's program: it's free. "Students pay [student service and learning resources] fees and several university programs are funded to support students' academic and other support needs," says Leticia Duncan-Brosnan, director of the TRCSS. That means that while students at other schools are paying upwards of \$100 per coaching session, UTSA's students receive this help at no additional cost.

"In addition," Roth says, "we provide other services for free that many other institutions charge students for. The online study skills program, Learning and Study Skills Inventory, is a nationally recognized program that helps students assess and develop their personal study habits. Some institutions charge students to take the assessment and access the online help, but the TRCSS makes it available for students [and faculty] for free."

Free tutoring and instruction are also available online for reading, writing and science. Other schools charge students \$35 each semester for the same learning program. "I really feel the coaching program is a vital resource to students," Roth says. "UTSA is a pioneer in this field."

The incentive for the university to offer these services at no cost, aside from its desire to help and support students, is this: coaching programs point reliably to a more skilled student body with a higher GPA, which means higher graduation rates, says Roth.

### One-on-One Coaching

UTSA employs four full-time academic coaches. Wilkins and Abuabara work at the 1604 Campus, Roth works at the Downtown Campus, and Melissa Thomas, program coordinator for graduate learning assistance, provides academic coaching for graduate students at both campuses.

The coaches, also referred to as educational specialists, meet with students up to one hour biweekly or once a month, depending on their needs. "There is no limit on the amount of sessions as long as they remain a registered UTSA student," Castillo says. In addition to one-on-one coaching, coaches teach study skills workshops, provide tailored in-class presentations and teach a study skills-based freshman seminar.

"Academic coaches work individually with a student, help the student to assess their strengths and needs, and devise a personalized plan of action," Castillo says. "Essentially they help students to use their notes more effectively, understand and remember more of what they read, prepare better for tests, develop better time-management habits and enhance study skills."

Timing can affect the number of students who use the services of the TRCSS. While every day is variable, coaches see more students in the fall, especially during October and November, fewer students in the spring, and almost none during the summer.

In their effort to measure outcomes, TRCSS tallies which student populations use the coaching service most regularly. Records show that more female students, around 61 percent, made coaching appointments than male students, about 39 percent. The majority of students using the service are freshmen, with sophomores as the next-largest



**“We help them understand that 12 hours of classes implies at least 24 hours of independent study time if the student wishes to do well. They are already putting in 36 hours on studying, and if they are employed for 30 or 40 hours weekly, they have the right to feel overwhelmed.”**

some seek personal support in their academics, others seek validation of their study strategies. Others simply feel overwhelmed by the amount of work that college demands.

“Some students are already failing classes and they want to know if we can help them turn things around,” Wilkins says. “We work with them to figure out their options and determine what changes they are willing to make. As academic coaches, we work with them on developing more effective study skills. We also refer them to tutors, supplemental instruction or their professors.”

Academic coaches do more than teach academic skills. With advanced degrees in counseling, they are also trained to listen, counsel and make referrals concerning roommate situations, anxiety, relationship problems and family issues.

“Our academic coaches set boundaries on what they can and cannot help students with. Our focus is [on] academics and study skills. Therefore, we refer students to other services on campus if other issues surface during coaching sessions,” Castillo says. Since a variety of factors may be impeding student learning, referrals are frequently made to subject tutors, the counseling center, career counseling, financial aid and the health center.

Coaches also help students learn to prioritize. “Some students are overextending themselves with many activities on their time,” Abuabara says. “For example, one might be working full time and taking a full load of classes, which is 12 hours. We help them understand that 12 hours of classes implies at least 24 hours of independent study time if the student wishes to do well. They are already putting in 36 hours on studying, and if they are employed for 30 or 40 hours weekly, they have the right to feel overwhelmed. With these students, we work on time management.”

### **If You Think Nobody Cares, Think Again**

When Erin Freeman, an art major, signed up for a coach during her freshman year, she was having difficulty with time management. Her tutor, Abuabara, gave her a worksheet resembling a day planner, in which each hour of the day was allotted a blank space. Abuabara helped Freeman map out a schedule to designate time blocks for all of her activities, from the most basic task of waking up to when to study for her most challenging class. In essence, Freeman was taught to “visualize” her day, which then allowed her to organize her time differently.

Freeman says the coaching program taught her discipline. “Stella made the subject matter interesting. She made me want to try harder and made me want to work,” she says. As a result, Freeman’s grades improved.

group. Abuabara and Wilkins do hold appointments with older students, but more than 80 percent of the students are younger than 23 years old.

Each student requires careful assessment to determine specific problems and solutions, the coaches say. While

And her one-on-one coaching and tutoring have given her the confidence to attempt personally challenging courses such as marketing, a course she would otherwise have considered too difficult.

The motto of the coaching program is, “If you think nobody cares, think again.” It sends a message to all students having trouble that there is help available. Students just need to get themselves in the door. Still, it’s not always easy to ask for help.

Dominguez remembers how hard it was to walk into the TRCSS. “On my first visit with my coach, Stella, I felt very nervous and shameful,” she recalls. “I was almost tempted to leave while I was waiting. I was convinced that I didn’t need anyone’s help and I could do it on my own. I’m glad now that they called my name.”

Dominguez credits the academic coaching program with helping her to become a stronger student. “I remember I was having a hard time with [my] politics class. My coach showed me a helpful technique for taking notes. She also taught me how to use my planner efficiently. At the time I was using a weekly planner. I lived by the week, and on the weekends I would play and neglect my studies for the week ahead. By switching to the monthly version, I could see that I had a test in three weeks or that a project was due in four days,” she says.

Like Freeman, Dominguez’s coach also suggested she complete a time management chart. “After filling it out, I saw how I was neglecting my studies,” Dominguez says. “I didn’t realize how often I watched TV or went shopping. Those are all fun things, but they left no time for school. By becoming better organized with my notes and planners, I soon felt the effect and saw a reduction in my stress levels.”

Dominguez says the thing she liked most about her coaching sessions was that they taught her how to face the “real world.”

“Everything isn’t going to go my way [but] that doesn’t give me a reason to give up,” she says. “Often I thought about quitting school and just getting a real job. That is what college is for, right? To get a job? Or so I used to think. Now I see what benefits I have reaped by staying in school.”

### **Reaching Out**

All new students receive a flyer from the TRCSS letting them know of available resources to assist them on their individual academic paths. “We’re always looking for more students,” Roth says.

Academic coaches and the TRCSS adhere to student confidentiality practices. Dominguez and Freeman say they want to let more students know the benefits of making an appointment with an academic coach and other services at the TRCSS. “I would recommend academic coaching because the program helps you to become a better student,” Freeman says. “They do not judge you or try to make you feel ashamed of yourself. They are there to help. You get the one-on-one attention you need.”

Other students agree. Each student who uses the coaching service—about 120 students per semester—is given an evaluation form and asked to rate the program. The results: 83 percent rated academic coaching as “excellent” and 14 percent as “good.”

“It’s good to know that help is out there,” says Freeman. ★



## Southwest Research hosts UTSA alumni reception

Nearly 100 UTSA alumni who also are employees of Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) recently attended a reception hosted by the UTSA Office of Alumni Programs.

The event celebrated the collaborative programs of UTSA and SwRI. The Office of Alumni Programs recently organized similar receptions with H-E-B Grocery Co. and Valero Energy to reach out to alumni through the business community.

At the reception, UTSA President Ricardo Romo and SwRI President Dan Bates touted the collaborative projects of the two institutions, including master's and doctoral degree programs in physics established in fall 2005.

David McComas, senior executive director of the SwRI Space Science and Engineering Division, said the 27 students applying for the doctoral program in physics is almost double the number of those enrolled in the program when it began.

"The students seem to love it because they are getting to work

in laboratories with real-flight hardware and handling aircraft that will be up in space," McComas said. "We're starting to really draw nationally from students who could go anywhere, but they are wanting to come here due to the strength of our joint program."

Additional presenters included UTSA College of Engineering faculty members Philip Chen and Harry Millwater, who are working with SwRI scientists on projects to develop new ways to monitor the health of aircraft jet engines.

Among the alumni in attendance was Sandra Dykes, who has three UTSA degrees, including a master's in chemistry and a doctorate in computer science. Her husband, James Dykes, is a UTSA associate professor of psychology.

Dykes' research focus is network security, but she also works on space flight and satellite software. "It's that kind of diversity of work that I think makes Southwest Research Institute a really exciting place to be," Dykes said.

— Kris Rodriguez

**74** **Marian Beck Hersum**, M.A. in education, was included in the fall 2006 *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. She has been a teacher for Northside Independent School District in San Antonio for 34 years and is currently a second-grade teacher at Timberwilde Elementary School.

**80** **Manny Flores**, B.B.A. in management, is CEO and managing partner of Austin-based advertising agency LatinWorks. The company produced a Bud Light commercial starring comedian Carlos Mencia for Superbowl XLI that was rated the top Superbowl ad by the *Wall Street Journal* and *Chicago Sun-Times* and was the most-viewed

Superbowl spot according to interactive television service TiVo. Fellow alumnus, **Hector Silva**, B.B.A. in finance '92, is CFO for LatinWorks. The company's Web site is [www.latinworks.com](http://www.latinworks.com).

**81** **Marcia Gygli King**, M.F.A. in art, was featured at the Blue Star Contemporary Art Center in December 2006. Check out her work at [www.marciagygliking.com](http://www.marciagygliking.com).

**82** **Gloria C. Arriga**, B.B.A. in management, is the executive director of Alamo Area Council of Governments in San Antonio. Gloria has been with AACOG since 1971, most recently as deputy executive director.

**Rebecca Parrish Waldman**, master of public administration, was appointed city manager for the City of Alamo Heights, Texas, in 2006.

**84** **John "Mike" Pickett**, M.A. in environmental studies, is the owner of Pickett's Videos and Training and author of the book *Explosives Identification Guide*, which is available on Amazon.com. A retired firefighter and EMT, Mike was the director of the San Antonio Regional Fire Academy and Fire Science Program at San Antonio College and is an associate professor emeritus teaching explosive identification and bomb search procedures to public and private

audiences throughout the country. Find out more about him at [www.pickettsprimer.com](http://www.pickettsprimer.com).

**86** **Reymundo de la Fuente Jr.**, B.A. in finance, is president of Conn Credit Company, Conn's TV & Appliance, in Beaumont, Texas. **Jeanie Wyatt**, M.B.A. in business, received the Distinguished Alumni Achievement award from the UTSA College of Business in February 2007. Jeanie is the CEO and chief investment officer for South Texas Money Management, Ltd.

**88** **Felecia Rushing Fitzgerald**, B.B.A. in accounting, and her husband, Sean, announce the birth of their son, John James,

## Megan Kromer '04

A social entrepreneur

Some people might be satisfied with their education once they've earned a doctorate, but not Megan Kromer. She has a thirst for information that continually leads her to new experiences.

"My friend Bettie Ward, an artist, called me up late one night and said, 'I just heard about this M.B.A. program. You've got to go. It has art in it and numbers, and it sounds like it's for you.'" Ward was describing the executive M.B.A. program at UTSA.

Kromer already had attained a Ph.D. from UT Austin in educational psychology with a focus on statistics and research methods. She had worked as a program evaluator and had also been involved in the formation of the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation. But she thought a business degree would give her new tools.

"I worked in a charitable foundation, so I had six years of people talking to me about money. I'm very good with numbers, but money seemed to carry a whole different connotation," Kromer says. "I decided that I wanted to learn this information in a human way. If the only meaning you're going to derive from the business program is from the financial statement, you are limiting the success and the opportunity for communication."

After completing the program in 2004, Kromer decided to work with different organizations to form community-based initiatives. She now identifies herself as a social entrepreneur, which she defines as "bringing innovation and creativity to how we create social networks."

Kromer's involvement with the Kronkosky Foundation began shortly after it was founded in 1997. She decided right away that she wanted to narrow her focus, and she developed an umbrella parenting education initiative called Precious Minds, New Connections. This initiative carries out its mission of freeing children from abuse and neglect through funding to 26 different organizations in Bexar, Bandera, Comal and Kendall counties.

"Looking at all the interests that foundation had, I kept thinking, there's got to be one charitable interest that really relates to all of them. So if you're thinking about return on your investment, ultimately it could affect every single one of them," she says. "For me, freeing children from abuse and neglect was the one. At that same time, information was coming out, very mainstream, about the importance of the first three years of life on brain development. If we can really show people how important those three years are, you can really enrich the lives of those children. We can ultimately end up with teenagers who are making better decisions just because of the stimulation they've had as children."

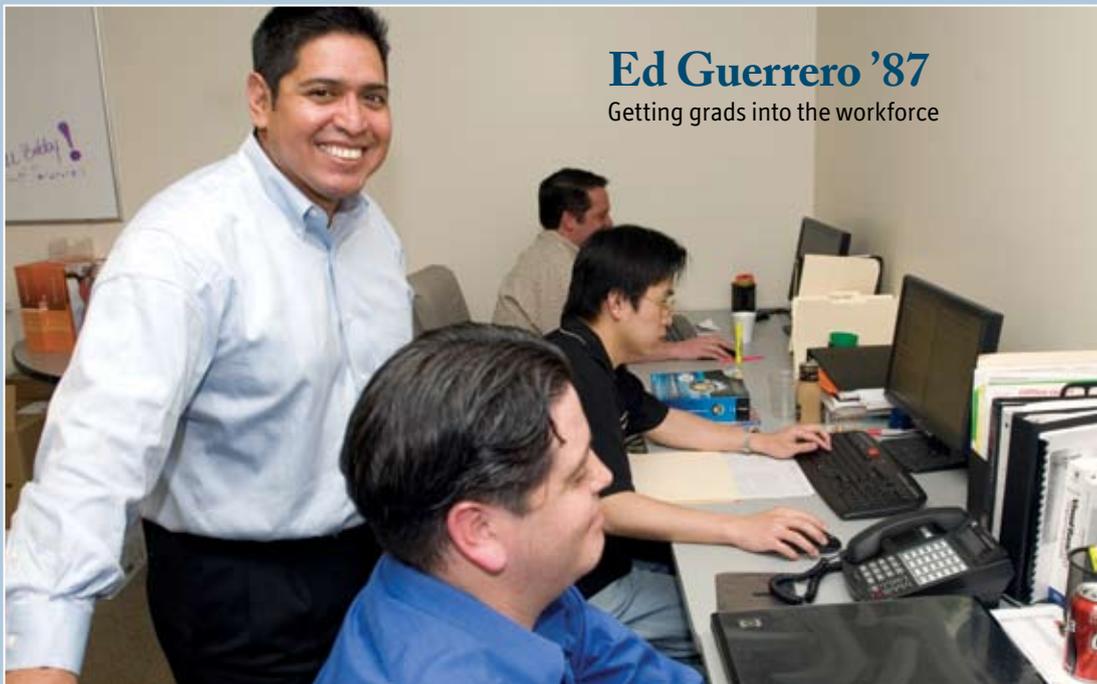
For her work on Precious Minds, New Connections, Kromer received the 2006 Athena Award from the North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. Kromer says it felt great to be acknowledged for her work. But she is even more excited about attending a national conference for Athena Award



winners. She thinks that getting together so many women who have done things for women is a wonderful opportunity to brainstorm.

Kromer remains similarly enthusiastic about her experiences in the E.M.B.A. program. She and some of her classmates continue to meet and talk about applying their classroom knowledge to their real-world experiences.

— Dawn Pomento



**Ed Guerrero '87**  
Getting grads into the workforce

**A**utomakers aren't the only ones turning out hybrids. Ed Guerrero, owner of Guerrero & Company CPAs and ABI Business Solutions, is producing a cross between an accountant and an information technology manager. And businesses are snapping them up.

What started as a program to train interns—many of whom are UTSA students and graduates—to meet his own business needs has evolved into the Jump Start Academy, a fast-track accounting/IT boot camp that's putting experienced financial managers into the field in as little as 30 days.

"I started my career as an auditor and then went into computerization for audits and then into computerization integration for companies," explains Guerrero, who graduated from UTSA with bachelor's degrees in both accounting and finance.

When Guerrero opened his own firm, he realized small businesses were being underserved. While large companies could afford IT managers to maintain and integrate accounting software, small businesses were being left behind.

"There aren't many CPAs who can bring systems integration to small businesses," he explains. "Most small businesses start out with QuickBooks [accounting software]. If you start talking to them about some of the larger, more complex packages out there, they're not going to know what you're talking about."

That's when Guerrero realized that if he could create an accountant who could double as an IT manager, especially with experience in QuickBooks,

he'd have a product small businesses needed and could afford.

"I'd say 95 percent of the students come out of school as either an accountant or an IT specialist. What we're doing is cross training them in both," he says. "This is the only camp that's developing entry-level accountants with a mix of qualifications and moving them into the marketplace."

Once boot camp participants complete their initial 30 days of intensive training, they start getting field experience working for small businesses. "It's a win-win for everyone," Guerrero says. "Small businesses get a resource to help them manage their accounts, and our students get real-world experience. They get to develop their résumé and learn how businesses operate."

For his own education Guerrero had to choose between UT Austin and UTSA. "I wanted to go to a school with a good accounting program but I also didn't want to get lost in the crowd. Being close to home was important, too. That's why I chose UTSA. It had everything I was looking for."

Guerrero was the first of eight siblings to graduate from college and insisted that his whole family attend the CPA ceremony. "I'm the youngest in the family. All of my brothers and sisters had some college, but I was the first to graduate. When they saw what I had done, half of them went back to school and got their degrees. They all decided if their little brother could do it, so could they."

— Randy Lankford

on April 26, 2006. Felecia is a CPA in Houston.

**Karen W. Wish, M.A.** in education, is a temporary instructor of kinesiology and health science at Augusta State University in Augusta, Ga. Karen received her doctoral degree from Texas Tech University.

**89 Tammy Barker, B.B.A.** in accounting, received honorable mention for her entry "Scavenger Hunt in Las Vegas" in La Belle Lettre's Summer Mystery writing contest. Tammy's story was selected for its leading clues, which ushered readers into and around Las Vegas.

**90 Linda S. Harrison, M.S.** in biology, is a biosurety officer at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio.

**92 Victoria Ford, B.A.** in political science, master of public administration '00, is a senior adviser for health and human services for Hughes & Luce in Dallas. Victoria previously served in the Texas governor's office as health services policy director; assistant director of the Office of Budget, Planning and Policy; and senior adviser for health and human services.

**Richard Krampe, B.B.A.** in accounting, and his wife, Regina, announce the birth of their son, Carson Richard, on July 29, 2006.

**93 Teresa Gil, B.A.** in sociology, is a team leader, special projects, for University Health System, Carelink, in San Antonio.

**Lisa Dominguez Gillaspia, B.A.** in interdisciplinary studies, received the 2005–2006 Leon Springs Elementary Teacher of the Year and the 2005–2006 Northside Independent School District Educator of the Year. She was also a finalist for the Trinity Prize for Excellence in Teaching.

**94 Michael G. Clemenson, M.S.** in environmental science, is a senior geological interpreter for H.B. Zachry in San Antonio. **Phong D. Nguyen, M.S.** in biology, is an attorney with Baker Hostetler LLP in Washington,

## Tammy Rice '05

Call to duty

**Y**ears ago, New Orleans native Tammy Rice made the decision to leave her hometown to pursue her education and career. The job market in New Orleans wasn't especially good; San Antonio, she reasoned, offered better career opportunities and quality of life.

But when Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans just as Rice was beginning her last semester to complete her psychology degree at UTSA, she knew it was time to go home. Having previously served four years in the Coast Guard before moving to San Antonio, Rice volunteered to be recalled to active duty, and in April 2006, just a few months after earning her degree, she went home to assist in the Coast Guard's mission of salvage, wreck and debris removal—working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and civilian contractors to clean up the city.

"This is my city," Rice says. "I don't necessarily want to live here again ... [but] it's the only place I have to come home to."

As a Coast Guard storekeeper, 2nd class, Rice's specialty is logistics, and for the first few months after returning to New Orleans, she worked a desk job purchasing resources to distribute to the Coast Guard's field teams. "I got tired of being in the office and said, 'Put me out in the field.'" So she was assigned to a field team as a load ticket writer. "I'm still spending taxpayer money, just in a different capacity," she says. "I look into a truck and estimate how much cubic yardage is in that truck."

But the most rewarding part of being in New Orleans for the cleanup has been the volunteer work she does in her free time. Because so many homes owned by Coast Guard personnel in Louisiana were damaged by the hurricane, Coasties including Rice volunteered to spend their week-



ends cleaning out the homes of some of their peers.

"Even if you want your house demolished, it has to be gutted because not everyone has been found," Rice says. "They're not going to bulldoze your house if you haven't emptied it."

For families who lost everything, paying the contractors' going rate of \$1.99 per square foot to gut a house is prohibitive, Rice says, but a team of a dozen Coasties can do the job in a day for free.

"It's a unique experience to walk into a home that has sat for a year after it had seven feet of water in it. The smell is horrible," Rice says. "All the bigger guys get in and start pulling the furniture out. Then you start pulling the sheetrock. You just kind of eat away at it. It's kind of like termites eating away at a house, pulling out what you can and piling it in the front yard."

While the work is rewarding, it also can be heartbreaking, Rice says. "It's really hard to have the homeowners there," she says. "You see them looking at the stuff coming out of their homes and they're trying to save it, and you have to tell them, 'No, I'm sorry. You can't. It's not safe; it's infested with bacteria and mold.'"

It's a heartbreak her own family experienced. "My grandmother and grandfather had seven feet [of water] in their house in Slidell and they couldn't save anything," she says.

When Rice finishes her work with the Coast Guard, she intends to return to Texas and begin a master's degree at UT Austin. As for New Orleans, she tries to remain optimistic. "If I had all the answers for what this city should be, I would run for governor," she says.

"Like everyone else, I know it needs to be something better than what it is."

— Rebecca Luther

D.C. He received his law degree from St. Mary's University in 1997. Phong is a member of Baker Hostetler's business group and concentrates his practice in intellectual property litigation and patent portfolio procurement and management.

**98 Stephen P. Bourassa**, B.S. in chemical engineering, is a structural engineer for Alpha Consulting Engineers, Inc. in San Antonio.

**Kelly A. Laskowski Madla**, B.B.A. in accounting, M.S. in accounting '00, announces her wedding to alumnus John Madla, B.B.A. in accounting '98, M.B.A. in business '00. They were married on May 6, 2006.

**A.J. Rodriguez**, B.B.A. in management, M.B.A. in business '00, was awarded the Young Alumni Achievement Award by the UTSA College of Business in February. A.J. is CEO of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

**99 Susan Budge**, M.F.A. in art, had her work featured at the New Gallery in Houston in October and November 2006. Her work can also be seen at [www.susanbudge.com](http://www.susanbudge.com).

**Sandy Jimenez-Huizar**, B.F.A. in art, and her husband, Ronald, announce the birth of their daughter, Ashley Lauren, born April 5, 2006.

**Martha Tijerina**, M.A. in Spanish, received the 2007 Benitia Humanitarian Award from the

Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence. She is an interpreter and works under the U.S. Department of Justice with the U.S. Immigration Courts. Martha volunteers as a host/producer for Catholic Television of San Antonio. She was recently named a recipient of the *La Prensa* Outstanding Women in Action media award. E-mail her at [marthatij@satx.rr.com](mailto:marthatij@satx.rr.com).

**00 Stephanie L. Brown, B.A.** in French, is a French teacher at McCollum High School in San Antonio. She received the 2005–2006 Teacher of the Year Award for McCollum High School and Harlandale Independent School District, and the KENS 5 Excel Award. She also was a semifinalist for the 2006 H-E-B Excellence in Education Award and a finalist for the 2006 Trinity Prize for Excellence in Teaching.

**Jeff Bureman, B.B.A.** in general business, is a member service underwriter for USAA in San Antonio.

**William F. “Bill” Drees, M.A.** in education, received a doctor of education degree from Sam Houston State University in December 2006. Bill is a professor at North Harris College in Kingwood, Texas. E-mail Bill at drees3@kingwoodcable.com.

**Waleed Kanakreh, B.A.** in economics, is the owner of Petra Café, a Middle Eastern café and coffee bar on the corner of Fredericksburg and Medical in San Antonio. The name of the café refers to the famous “Red Rose City” of Petra, Jordan, where Waleed is from. He has been in the restaurant business for over 15 years.

**Christopher J. Rosas, B.B.A.** in accounting, M.B.A. in business '02, works for PricewaterhouseCoopers in Dallas, Texas.

**01 Christina Murrell Bell, B.B.A.** in personnel and human resource management, announces her marriage to Jacob Bell on Jan. 6, 2007. Christina is a human resources coordinator for Spurs Sports and Entertainment in San Antonio.

**James Bendele, M.S.** in biology, is the chair of the Science Department at Central Catholic High School in San Antonio. James is the recipient of the 2007 Marianist Heritage Award, Central Catholic’s highest honor. The award recognizes leadership, service, school spirit and spirituality.

**Angelina B. Jackson, B.S.** in kinesiology and health, M.A. in education '06, is a member of the adjunct faculty of the University of the Incarnate Word and San Antonio College. E-mail her at angelina@satx.rr.com.

**02 Roland Davis May, B.A.** in psychology, is program director for Roy Maas Youth Alternatives in Boerne, Texas.

**Linda M. Moore, B.A.** in interdisciplinary studies, M.A. in early childhood education, is librarian at Glenoaks Elementary School District in San Antonio.

**Melissa Potucek, B.S.** in biology, is a paramedic for the San Antonio Fire Department. Melissa has one daughter, age 3.

**03 Brian Hill, B.B.A.** in information systems, is a production manager for Security National Mortgage in Houston.

**Sonia M. Quirino, B.A.** in communication, is communications and marketing director for the American Heart Association in San Antonio.

**Veronica “Ronnie” Campbell Stich, B.B.A.** in information systems, has published a science fiction book, *The Rise of the New Queen: The Human Conspiracy*. It is available on Amazon.com.

**José D. Villalobos, B.A.** in political science, is a graduate student and research assistant at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. José is president of the Political Science Student Government Organization at Texas A&M University.

**04 Major William Hayden, B.S.** in biology, is a systems administrator level II at Rackspace Managed Hosting in San Antonio.

**Ronnie Ramirea, B.A.** in communication, is an account executive with Creative Civilization in San Antonio.

**05 Janet Louise Atkins, B.S.** in health, is a medical record coding professional with MedaPhase Inc. in San Antonio.

**Fernando P. Lozano, B.B.A.** in management, is operations officer for X-Press Wallboard Inc. in Comfort, Texas.

**Marc R. Begnoche, B.B.A.** in management, announces his marriage to Mary Sardelich Begnoche on Dec. 30, 2006.

**06 Lynda Schrack Hansell, B.A.** in history, recently opened the Sandlot Baseball and Fast Pitch Academy, San Antonio’s first indoor, climate-controlled baseball facility. Visit her Web site at www.sandlotsa.com. E-mail Lynda at lynda.hansell@sandlotsa.com.

**Jennifer Matonis, B.A.** in interdisciplinary studies, is an image assembly specialist at Maximus in San Antonio.

## Keep in touch

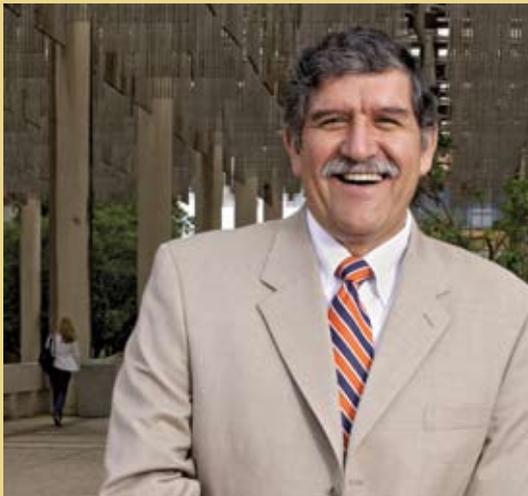
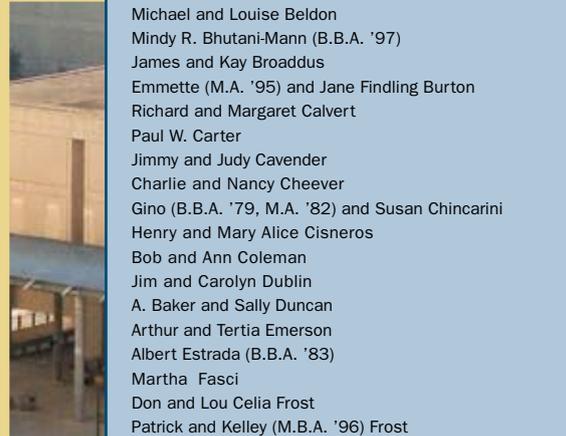
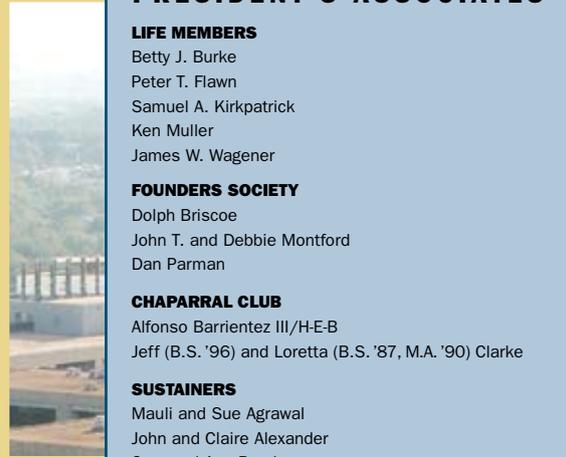
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*Friends are like windows through which you see out into the world and back into yourself. . . . If you don't have friends you see much less than you otherwise might.*

—Merle Shain, Canadian writer (1935–1989)

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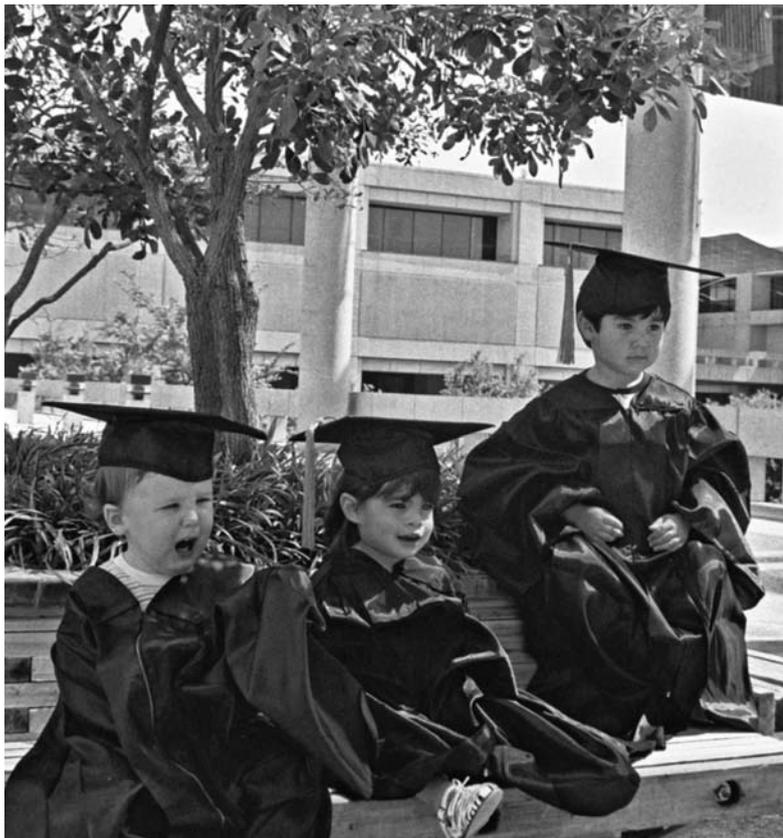
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## Looking back

### Romp and circumstance

On a warm summer day in 1988, three UTSA staff members dressed their children in academic regalia to illustrate a Sombrilla article, “Investing in the Future,” about procuring private funding for scholarships and other programs. Nineteen years later, the trio all are college students and looking forward to donning their caps and gowns for real.

Christopher Nixon (left), son of former sports information director Rick Nixon, is a freshman at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis. (Christopher cried through much of the photo shoot even though his dad was the photographer.) The girl is Rachel Maldonado, daughter of former

Sombrilla editor Carla Maldonado. Today, Rachel is a junior studying pre-med at St. Mary’s University and is a captain of the women’s soccer team. Finally, there’s Steven Sachs, son of Gina Mendez, who is director of community relations at the Downtown Campus. Steven is planning to enter law school—after he graduates from UTSA with his bachelor’s degree in criminal justice this spring.

*Photo courtesy of the  
UTSA Archives at the Institute  
of Texan Cultures*