

SOMBRILLA

THE UTSA **MAGAZINE**

**NEW COACHES
HERALD A NEW
ATHLETICS ERA**

TEACHING AIR,
LAND, & SEA
DRONES TO
COMMUNICATE

**PARTNERING
WITH S.A.'S
WITTE MUSEUM**

HOW STUDYING
ABROAD HELPS
STUDENTS EXCEL

Vision *Quest*

UTSA CONQUERS
RESEARCH FRONTIERS
WITH ALTERED REALITY

ISSUE
76
FALL
2016
SOMBRILLAMAG.COM

Welcome to
SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

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to Big Data

Researchers are using virtual environments and data visualization to create real-world solutions to people's everyday problems.

22 Collaboration That's
No Ancient Study

UTSA faculty members have been working on projects with San Antonio's Witte Museum for decades.

26 The New Big Men
on Campus

Frank Wilson and Steve Henson are taking charge on the gridiron and hardwood as head coaches.

EDITOR'S LETTER

Collaborating & Advancing

A new school year brings new opportunities—for incoming first-year students; for returning undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students; for just-arrived faculty and staff; and for the potential of fresh educational and research collaboration as well as athletic ambition.

UTSA is a powerhouse for research in areas of the tech industry. A couple of these areas that you'll be hearing more and more about very soon are in the use of altered realities and big data. In our cover story we delve into how teams in UTSA's College of Science, College of Engineering, and College of Business are collaborating on the use of virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, and data visualization [see page 14]. While some of the terms might sound like the stuff of science fiction, the projects are anything but. They're actually about solutions to problems that many people will use in their everyday lives—helping patients who have multiple sclerosis with physical therapy, letting children with autism design virtual teachers so that they might more readily interact with them, allowing artists to explore in great detail works of art that aren't easily accessible, and training cardiac bypass surgeons in special situations. There are more, and this is just the beginning for our university.

We've taken the opportunity to explore the technology ourselves in creating this issue. You didn't notice as you first picked up this magazine, but it's interactive. With a smartphone or tablet, you can see something special on our front cover. Using an app called Layar, which is available on all platforms, point it at our cover, and see how it comes to life to show you highlights of the technologies discussed in our cover story. We're excited about it, and we hope you will be too. This kind of interactivity, through apps like Layar, are coming into everyday use more and more. So there will be other opportunities that you'll come across, not just from *Sombrilla Magazine*, to use it. Don't be left out of the loop on the amazing things that others are seeing.

Finally, about the new faculty and staff who are coming aboard. Among them are three new deans [see page 8] as well as new head coaches of football and men's basketball [see page 26]—all of whom we've interviewed to introduce you to what exciting things they plan on bringing to UTSA. Enjoy!



SALUDOS!
MICHAEL

SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

FALL 2016 | ISSUE 76

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STORIES TO WATCH

UTSA IS A HUB OF ACTIVITY

{1}

Change on the Gridiron

It's football season again. And, let's admit it, that's no small event in Texas. Eyes will be on UTSA as Frank Wilson takes the field as new head coach [see our interview with Wilson on page 28]. And TexasFootball.com, the bible of state football, has named three Roadrunners to "The 50 Most Important College Players in Texas": running back Jarveon Williams (9th), defensive end Marcus Davenport (23rd), and quarterback Jared Johnson (34th).

Additionally, San Antonio's CW station says it will televise the September 3 season opener against Alabama State, among other games.



{2}

Cancer in the Crosshairs

Biology professor Matthew Gdovin's research on a revolutionary method for helping cancer patients with inoperable tumors, published in *The Journal of Clinical Oncology*, has garnered media attention worldwide. It's not the only cancer research being tackled at UTSA, though. In our January issue, we'll explore in-depth the ways our researchers are working to defeat this dreaded disease.

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Welcome to SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

DEPARTMENTS | FALL 2016



Plazas & Paseos

A roundup of what's going on around our campuses plus university accolades.

4 Educators at UTSA are opening up exciting avenues in education by employing some pretty creative topics and tools. Anyone up for creating your own superhero or studying the social world through Beyoncé?

6 When U.S. travel restrictions to Cuba ended, a UTSA architecture professor's work at one of Ernest Hemingway's home became big news.

8 The university is welcoming three new deans for the new school year. We talk to each to find out what they plan to bring to their areas.

10 Bird's-eye View

Documenting standout moments with some pretty brilliant underwater drone technology (they're learning to talk to other drones on land and in the air) and students take in amazing views—and broaden their perspectives—when they study abroad.

40 Lesson Learned

Had enough of all the noise of the presidential campaign season? (And that's just among your friends and family!) A UTSA expert explains how to survive it all for a few more months.



'Runner Reunion

UTSA alumni are making impressive advancements in their careers and lives.

32 Come take a bite out of our celebration of alumni who are San Antonio foodies.

36 Jessica Elizarraras '08 knows how to have you eating all the right stuff. As a local food critic, she keeps her followers watering at the mouth.

37 Jesse Treviño '14 has a special job with the San Antonio Police Department—helping people with mental health issues get the assistance they need.

39 Alana Coates M.A. '12 looks at the art world with a special perspective: past, present, and future.

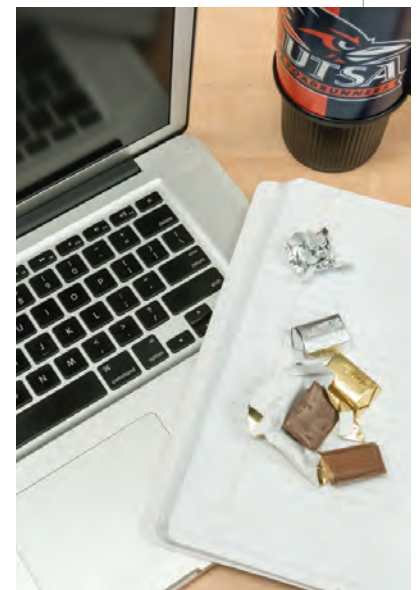
ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

FOR THESE STORIES AND
MORE DIGITAL-ONLY
CONTENT, VISIT US AT
SOMBRILLAMAG.COM

Easy-Peasy Nutrition

If your arrival on campus as a new, current, or former student left you confused about how to eat well—or discovering an all-new waistline—you might be glad to learn that UTSA has a registered dietitian who can work with you to sort out some eating solutions. And she offers up some tips if you can't meet her in person.

AVAILABLE NOW



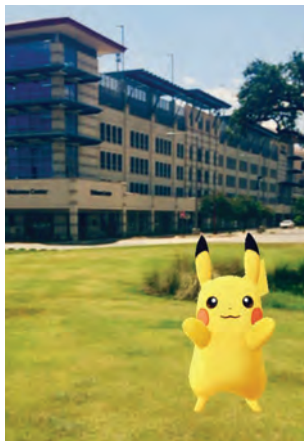
Reinventing Teaching

In a collaboration between the College of Education and Human Development and the College of Engineering, faculty are embarking on a grant funded program that is designed to hone techniques for improving learning for students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields.

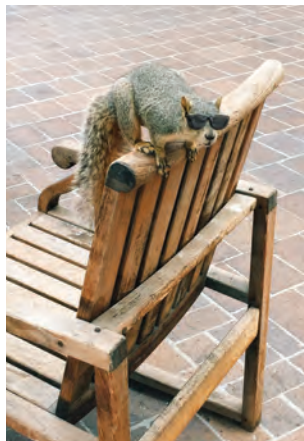
AVAILABLE NOW

#UTSA WATCH

A SHOWCASE OF ROADRUNNER PRIDE DISPLAYED ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@utsa: Look who's taking a campus tour today. Come hit over 20 PokéStops at UTSA!



@utsa: Even our campus squirrels are ready for the weekend! #utsasquirrels



@crazycyclistic: These 'Runners know how to do it! #utsatriathlon #funinthesun #smilesformiles



@susanmarie: Now that I have my own clacker, I can really make some noise! #utsa20 #utsafamily



@soooemily: Our orientation week team won the contest for best photo! #prettypride #gorunners

About SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE



SOMBRILLA (SP): UMBRELLA
(SOHM-BREE-YAH)

Sombrilla Magazine is the official publication of The University of Texas at San Antonio. It is published four times a year (two print and two digital issues) and is distributed without charge to alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends of UTSA.

University Communications and Marketing produces *Sombrilla Magazine* and other magazines that highlight the achievements and impact of UTSA Roadrunner family throughout the world. This division is responsible for promoting the university's mission of education and its Tier One drive by informing, engaging, entertaining, and inspiring the diverse university family and larger community. Through compelling and vibrantly designed stories, UTSA magazines promote an open exchange of ideas. We strive to capture the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the university while tackling relevant global issues.

CONTACT US

Are you interested in commenting on articles, sending an update for Class Notes, or have news to share with the Roadrunner family?

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STORIES TO WATCH

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All Roads Lead to UTSA

Named as one of San Antonio's growing "activity centers" as part of a city plan called SA Tomorrow, UTSA's Main Campus and the surrounding area could expect greater options in housing, jobs, and transportation. A major two-year project on UTSA Boulevard is under way. Improvements include reconstruction and expansion of the roadway with a raised median and new turn lanes. Additional improvements include sidewalks, curbs, and a shared path for pedestrians and bicyclists. The entire project is expected to be completed in 2017.

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International Research Hub

UTSA will lead a UT System effort to enhance ties with Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology, known as CONACYT, overseeing new academic and research exchange programs between the U.S. and Mexico.

UT System has approved \$5 million to support the initiative; CONACYT will also provide funding, approximately a three-to-one match. UTSA plans to launch an office to oversee the exchange programs this fall. 🌂



UTSA President Ricardo Romo with UT System Chancellor William McRaven and CONACYT director Enrique Cabrero



Art history professor Juliet Wiersema goes over placement of art elements in her students' exhibit, located outside Special Collections.

Inspired TEACHING

*Superheroes, Beyoncé, and 18th century tomes
are among the topics and tools opening up
a world of creative learning for students*

BY MICHELLE MONDO

In one of their last classes before the end of the spring semester, a group of art history students gathered around two glass cases near the entrance of UTSA Libraries' Special Collections on the fourth floor of JPL. Their conversation bounced from topic to topic as they assembled the exhibit curated from months of classes.

"Did you find out how big those monkeys really are?" one student asked another.

"I think we need to bring that forward a bit more," said another.

"Do you want to see the two sea animals on this side?" a third asked.

UTSA art history professor Juliet Wiersema watched

the progress while offering feedback and asking her own questions of the students. At the end they'd put together pieces that highlighted watercolors from a nine-volume collection of books that document Peru's natural history of the 18th century.

The facsimile of *Trujillo de Peru*—the volumes created

by a bishop who collected the watercolors from the native population—gave the students an opportunity to really delve into the material they were studying in class, rather than being lectured via a PowerPoint, which can fail to get across a work's more complex concepts.

"What's most exciting

about this approach is the possibility of showing students works of art or visual culture as they were meant to be seen—one page of several hundred, bound in a large volume," Wiersema says. "The fact that students can actually hold the books and the turn their pages is quite special. It's had a lasting impact on them."

This was the second semester Wiersema held her manuscript class in Special Collections instead of a traditional classroom, and she is just one example of how students at UTSA are delving into topics that approach class work in a different way. A student can study Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries. Then there's Dogs, Wolves, and Human Evolution. They can tap into today's cultural zeitgeist to explore the #BlackLivesMatter movement as well as the impact of Beyoncé. Students can even dive into the Anthropology of Superheroes, which will be returning as a staple this fall, following a successful inaugural class in 2015.

"I think professors often use current events as a touchstone for their students and course material," says Sonja Lanehart, who holds the Brackenridge Endowed Chair of Literature and Humanities. As the English department professor who created the #BlackLivesMatter class, she says the time was right for the class considering the emergence of a #BLM student chapter on campus, UTSA's NAACP student chapter, and concerns raised by the university's black students.

"Current events make past events more real and understandable. The #BLM movement is a current event, but it really has a rich tradition. It is simply an evolution of

International
Saving the Home
of Hemingway

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Profile
Three New
Deans Arrive

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Utopeus and Dove, a student's class-project superheroes.



a tradition of protest and standing for social justice.”

Fellow English professor Kinitra Brooks also incorporates pop culture in her classes; this fall she has a new offering titled *Black Women and Beyoncé*. Brooks says students can expect to work hard in the class, which will expose them to different ways of thinking about everyday music, television, and literary culture. “We will ‘read’ across texts—music, film, short stories, and novels,” she adds. The course will examine themes in the singer’s most recent visual album release, *Lemonade*, as well as her “Formation” video.

“I have students contacting me and asking me questions about so many things—especially black feminism and theories of black womanhood,” Brooks says. “The course will be new, fun, and exciting—but I expect my students to come in hungry for knowledge and open to new theories about race and gender in popular culture.”

Also returning this fall is anthropology professor Jamon Halvaksz’s *Superheroes* class. Halvaksz says having superhero fans in class is a way to introduce

social science through media that they already care about and are actively engaged in. “Anthropology is really about understanding ourselves as a species,” he says. “We use superheroes to talk about theories of myth, ideology, race, ethnicity, inequality, nationalism, human-machine interfaces, cyborgs, dystopias and utopias, as well as the publishing market and creativity.”

An anthropology and English major, Meghan Glover took the class because it sounded different from other upper-division courses she was considering. And it exceeded her expectations. “We had these really fun projects,” she says, “like doing an ethnography on Comic-Con and creating our own superheroes.”

For art major Megan Doss, who plans to get her teaching certification, the manuscripts class being held in the library and working with the actual material presented plenty of inspiration for her own future as a teacher: “Especially with teaching elementary and middle school kids, being able to see and touch what they are learning about makes it more than just names and dates.”



Cuban CONSERVATION

Architecture professor William Dupont continues his work to preserve Ernest Hemingway's former home

BY MICHELLE MONDO

For more than decade—while leisure travel for Americans to Cuba was forbidden—UTSA architecture professor William Dupont made the trip about twice a year without much fanfare.

But that changed this past spring when news of Dupont's longtime collaboration with the Boston-based Finca Vigía Foundation and the Cuban Ministry of Culture to restore Ernest Hemingway's midcentury home collided with the loosening of America's embargo and travel restrictions to the Caribbean nation.

Suddenly, his trips became national news, and Dupont, who at UTSA is director of the Center for Cultural Sustainability as well as a San Antonio Conservation Society Endowed professor, was able to provide a small

window to the island nation where the Nobel Prize-winning author lived during much of his final 20 years.

Located 12 miles outside of Havana in the village of San Francisco de Paula, the home has remained intact as a museum. "You get a real sense of Hemingway's daily life," Dupont says. "One can see the pool where he swam, the books he read, the typewriter he used, the records he listened to, and even the bottles of liquor that he drank—all right where he left them."

Dupont is helping with the construction of a new archival storage facility at the location, Finca Vigía, which translates to Lookout Farm. He calls the project one of his most rewarding because of the collaborative spirit among Cubans and Americans. Once completed, the project will be the first build-

“You get a real sense of Hemingway's daily life. One can see the pool where he swam, the books he read, the typewriter he used, the records he listened to, and even the bottles of liquor that he drank—all right where he left them.
”

ing in Cuba constructed using U.S. materials since the late 1950s.

During one of Dupont's latest visits, he received an award from the Cuban Ministry of Culture for his preservation work, and the first shipment of building materials arrived. "It's very rare to ship anything from the U.S. to Cuba," he says. "Very few types of products were not subject to embargo."

The work was even honored by Rep. James McGovern of Massachusetts. During a speech on the House floor, McGovern praised the Finca Vigía Foundation and all those who have helped, including Dupont: "With passion and professional skill, they recognize that the life, memory, books, papers, and home of Ernest Hemingway are above politics and policies, which are fleeting, while art is eternal." ☂

◀ A painting of Hemingway and period magazines are part of the decor in the author's Cuban home, where he lived in the 1940s and 1950s. **Inset:** UTSA architecture professor William Dupont is interviewed by local media at the residence.



ACADEMICS

We Three DEANS



SEAN KELLY WANTS TO OPEN UP UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS THROUGH THE HONORS COLLEGE

Sean Kelly previously served as director of Florida Gulf Coast University's honors program from 2007 to 2014 and was appointed the interim dean of FGCU undergraduate studies in 2015. He says he sees abundant opportunities at UTSA to expand service learning and research for undergraduates.

Do people often ask you what an honors college is? Yes! A

lot of people ask that question plus, 'Why do we have an honors college and what do we do at the college?' I see an honors college as an opportunity generator on a much more personalized level than if the students were coming in, showing up for classes, and leaving. If you find the student who really would take advantage of all of the things the university has to offer, the Honors College

is what puts them in touch with all of those opportunities—it makes it possible for a lot of students who didn't even know what was available.

What about people who say it's elitist? Well, a lot of people think an honors college is elitist, but what I see is, for example, where you take students who don't know they can study abroad or don't think they have

the means but would benefit from that, so you put them in touch with financial aid, etc. This is something that can be very helpful for first-generation college students. Maybe they don't know those kinds of opportunities are available and don't know they can be real for them too.

What are you looking forward to as new dean? I am very excited

to be engaging honors students in such a big city. There are so many opportunities for students to develop relationships in San Antonio. UTSA is an aspirational university. We want to be the best, and there is a focus on the students and student learning. It's not just rhetoric. I'm looking forward to getting creative with faculty, being unique, and serving students in all kinds of developmental ways.

DEAN HENDRIX IS PLANNING INNOVATIVE RESEARCH MATERIALS FOR THE UTSA LIBRARIES

Returning to San Antonio after 29 years, Dean Hendrix (yes, he's Dean Dean Hendrix) barely recognizes the city he once called home. Change is inevitable, of course, and Hendrix embraces the challenge of linking the past, present, and future through the UTSA Libraries. He has many goals, and they revolve around a few key points.

KNOWING YOUR HISTORY: "The best university libraries are going to be distinctive and develop distinctive collections. Even now and more in the future, no one is going to care if you have *The Old Man and the Sea* or *A Confederacy of Dunces*. That's all going to be online. What is going to make your university distinctive is unique research materials. Part of our mission is to serve the communities, and we have an almost reverence for history here. History matters. In life, everyday decision making is constantly based on what came before."

RESPOND WITH FLEXIBILITY: "Every user group is a moving target. A tenured faculty member is going to have different needs from a post-doc

or undergrad student or community member. Part of that flexibility is staff development. The UTSA Libraries staff is wonderful. They care about the users here, and that's a really great piece of the puzzle. We want them to take it to the next level by instituting a strategic plan in which we're constantly assessing how we are doing on projects. That way, we are always meeting our users' needs."

PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE: "Information literacy is really important. There's this kind of a thought that the students who were born into technology already know what they need to know. It's a trope of, 'Oh, they just know technology.' But the real skill is critical thinking, and that's even more of a premium. One of our missions is to make sure that we're creating global citizens who are informed, know how to deal with research, and are catalysts for development in their communities. We want to create spaces with technology—3D printers or laser cutters, for example—that students can use that also help them learn those critical thinking skills."

The new academic year marks the arrival of three new deans. In between their packing up and moving to the Alamo City, they each spoke with Sombrilla Magazine's MICHELLE MONDO to share insights about their respective areas of oversight

MARGO DELLICARPINI HAS A MISSION OF EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE FOR COEHD

When talking to Margo DelliCarpini the ideas she has for the College of Education and Human Development rush out in excited descriptions. She envisions different academic departments and centers collaborating in new ways to broaden their reach—like the Department of Kinesiology, Health, and Nutrition becoming a hub for grant writing, research, and partnerships. She imagines an international campus laboratory school that could provide even more opportunities to secondary education students.

"The work of COEHD faculty is the kind of work that drives the change we need to ensure equity, social justice, respect, and excellence," she says.

As the former dean of education at Morehead State University, DelliCarpini has expertise in linguistics and teaching English to speakers of other languages. She says what interested her about coming to UTSA is the broad scope in mission that COEHD aspires to, adding that by coming to San Antonio she's returning to her philosophical roots. "From a personal and profes-

sional standpoint the mission of the college and San Antonio community really speaks to me," she says. "The focus is on preparing diverse professionals to work with diverse populations. The core values of integrity, equity, diversity, and service are things I'm really committed to."

With the current partnerships already in place, she adds, COEHD could become a leader in state and federal research in academic language development, behavioral health, early childhood language, and STEM research. There could even be a dual-language early childhood learning center.

"COEHD is already active and successful in the area of research and sponsored programs," DelliCarpini says. "The space for growth that I see is in leveraging the existing external funding to enhance private giving and additional grant funding. The key is relevancy. My first few months on the job will be learning what the faculty will be doing, what partnerships exist, and what the needs are. There's a lot of potential for really innovative things." 🐾

By Land, Sea, Air

With a new location for UTSA's Autonomous Control Engineering Center that includes a lab for underwater drone testing, College of Engineering professor Mo Jamshidi and his students in the electrical and computer engineering department are steps closer to creating an autonomous drone army for the land, sea, and air. The drones would all communicate with each other and

interact accordingly, so a drone in the air could react to what a drone in the sea is doing. Much of the work on this underwater drone has been done by Australian Ph.D. student Ben Champion, the fourth Australian doctoral student to come to UTSA through a 10-year partnership between the ACE Center, Jamshidi, and Deakin University in Melbourne.





The Arts on the Go

Each summer as part of the UTSA Lyric Theatre's Opera on the Run program, a small cadre of students, faculty, and staff travel to elementary schools to give kids a glimpse into the world of opera. This year's 40-minute version of *Little Red Riding Hood* was performed more than 30 times at 20 different San Antonio schools.

Nationally recognized, Opera on the Run has performed for close to 200,000 students and has become so popular that there's a waiting list. Roadrunners and the public can see the Lyric Theatre and UTSA orchestra each spring when they present a fully staged opera, operetta, or musical in either the Downtown or Main Campus.

A Buddhist monk in an orange robe is seen from behind, looking over a decorative metal railing. The railing has intricate cutouts and is part of a stone wall. In the background, the ornate, multi-tiered roof of Wat Arun temple is visible, featuring colorful mosaics and traditional Thai architectural details. The scene is set in Bangkok, Thailand.

Students Without Borders

Kristiana Paman '15 snapped this photo at the Buddhist temple Wat Arun, which sits along the Chao Phraya River in Bangkok, Thailand. After she and a friend climbed the temple's steps they looked back to see two monks gazing out across the river toward the city.

Each year UTSA sends hundreds of students to more than 35 countries in study

abroad programs. Find out more about the international opportunities available at the fall study abroad fair on September 8 in Sombrilla Plaza. And for more photos from fellow Roadrunners be sure to check out *Sombrilla Magazine's* inaugural all-digital issue in November, in which we'll have an interactive feature on reasons to study abroad.





Advance **Read**

COVER STORY
MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

ed nity

UTSA'S USE OF VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS IS
CREATING REAL-WORLD SOLUTIONS FOR HEART
SURGEONS, AUTISTIC CHILDREN, MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS PATIENTS, AND MORE

BY MICHELLE MONDO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COURTNEY CAMPBELL

In UTSA's virtual environments laboratory, tables are covered with mobile phones, headsets, and game consoles that intermingle with projectors, big screen TVs, and cutting-edge technology in virtual and mixed reality. Taking in the entire view, it might seem chaotic to some. But for computer science professor John Quarles, who heads up the lab, and the students who use it, this place is an experimenter's paradise. It's where researchers are taking consumer products used for entertainment and transforming them into tools for teaching, rehabilitating, and solving complicated problems.

"This is the time for using VR in research," Quarles says. "Right now is when VR is huge, and it's going to keep getting bigger. There are lots of companies and lots of money behind it."

The tech media proclaimed that 2016 would be the year of virtual reality, and UTSA researchers exemplify what that could mean beyond the average consumer product or video game. With multidisciplinary applications—that can train new heart surgeons, create games for kids to learn how to be safe on computers, and create virtual teachers for kids with autism—UTSA has its finger on the pulse of advancing the technology of virtual and augmented realities.

Virtual reality has been around in some form since the 1950s and came to a bit more prominence in the 1990s. Ford Motor Co. has been using VR for manufacturing since 2000. Yet the biggest boon to the technology was more recent—Facebook's \$2 billion purchase in 2014 of the then-obscure VR-development company Oculus Rift. Since then, the industry has exploded. Google, Microsoft, Samsung, HTC, Amazon, and Apple have all also entered the race in developing reality-based technologies. Tech experts predict future mobile phones will all be VR-ready. Even amusement parks are getting into the fray. This summer San Antonio's Six Flags Fiesta Texas added virtual reality to its Superman roller coaster, allowing riders to wear a headset and become immersed in the world of Metropolis.

All of this means an expected boom in the job market with employers looking to fill areas that already have an abundance of vacancies. While jobs are mostly in development and engineering, they do cross over into marketing and communications, security, sales, and business development as well as the arts, music, and graphic design. At the university level, by combining VR and other digital realities—plus the expansiveness of big data and data visualization—a world of opportunities opens up for disciplines from the arts to history and anthropology.

"We are early adopters of technology at UTSA," says College of Engineering professor Yusheng Feng. "Even before Facebook bought Oculus Rift we recognized the importance of that technology. How we stay competitive is to develop applications for using those technologies, whether in research or for the general public."

To keep the technology up to date, UTSA has upgraded VizLab, the Advanced Visualization Lab, and its centerpiece VizWall. The lab is part of the Center for Simulation, Visualization, and Real-Time Prediction, established by Feng in 2009. In addition to the cutting-edge facility, the College of Business has established a new master's of science in data visualization program, which begins this fall [see "Talk to Me, Big Data" on page 18]. The goal is to help faculty and students across the university unlock the potential for use of big data, high-resolution imaging, and virtual reality in their own research.

➤ Using sensors placed on his head, hands, feet, and waist to interact with an on-screen avatar, a computer science student in UTSA's virtual environments lab uses VR technology to study how people with mobility issues compensate for latency in movement.



Know Your Reality

Augmented, mixed, virtual? If you need help to understand the reality you're sinking into, we've got you covered.

□ **Virtual reality:** A user wears a headset and becomes "immersed" in a new virtual environment. Examples of VR hardware include the Oculus Rift, Samsung Gear VR, and Sony's PlayStation VR.

□ **Augmented reality:** Less immersion for the user. Virtual information—whether by using glasses or a smartphone camera—can be seen in the real world. The now omnipresent Pokémon Go and Google Glass are two augmented platforms.

□ **Mixed reality:** This is often interchanged with augmented reality, but experts distinguish between the two. Mixed reality, which can use headsets, blends augmented and virtual concepts, creating a new world that mixes and interacts with the real one. The biggest examples right now are the Microsoft HoloLens (which lets aliens break through your living room walls!) and Magic Leap.

VIRTUAL WORLD, REAL SOLUTIONS

Punching sharks in the nose may not immediately come to mind as a therapy method for multiple sclerosis patients. But it does when that patient is UTSA's Quarles. In 2007, he was diagnosed with the disease, which his sister also has. Once he started physical therapy a couple of years later he stumbled upon a realization: "It just wasn't any fun. I thought to myself, *I could do better than this.*"

Quarles, who loves to experiment and play video games, says he is always stressing the message to his two daughters that science and research is great fun. (He also bemoans the lack of women in technology and engineering fields—computer science, in particular.) So as a personal project he developed Shark Punch, a VR method of aquatic physical therapy. For the past year Quarles has been working on the game, which involves strapping a waterproof smartphone to a user's chest. A second phone attached to a dive mask places the user in a virtual underwater world filled with sharks. As part of therapy, the user then strikes out to punch a too-close shark on the nose. "The idea is to think outside of the box when it comes to virtual reality gaming," he says. "Games can have a positive effect on people's lives, and that's what we're striving for."

That message is seen throughout the San Antonio Virtual Environments laboratory at UTSA, where Quarles and his students are developing programs to help underserved populations. Quarles believes the explosion in VR popularity, especially with gaming, will raise questions about accessibility, so the team is trying to address that earlier rather than later. "I've been doing a lot on rehabilitation with persons with disabilities," he says. "It's not always a quality-of-life issue but just people with disabilities who want to play VR games too."

At any given time, there are multiple ongoing projects. In one of those, being conducted in partnership with a Brazilian doctor, a student is creating a physical therapy game that instructs the user to walk through a house and do everyday chores. Patients can watch their own progress on screen as they try to open medicine bottles, open a door for a pizza delivery, and answer a phone [see "Taking On Virtual Solutions" on page 20].

"Virtual reality can revolutionize how people live their daily lives," says Gayani Samaraweera M.S. '14 Ph.D. '15, who has





Talk to Me, Big Data

UTSA launches a data visualization master's program

Data visualization jobs are in high demand and the need for qualified employees is expected to grow. UTSA's new master's of science in big data visualization from the College of Business is designed to meet that demand. The new program will produce highly skilled and educated data analysts who can transform big data into usable information for decision makers across a variety of disciplines, including business, health care, and national security.

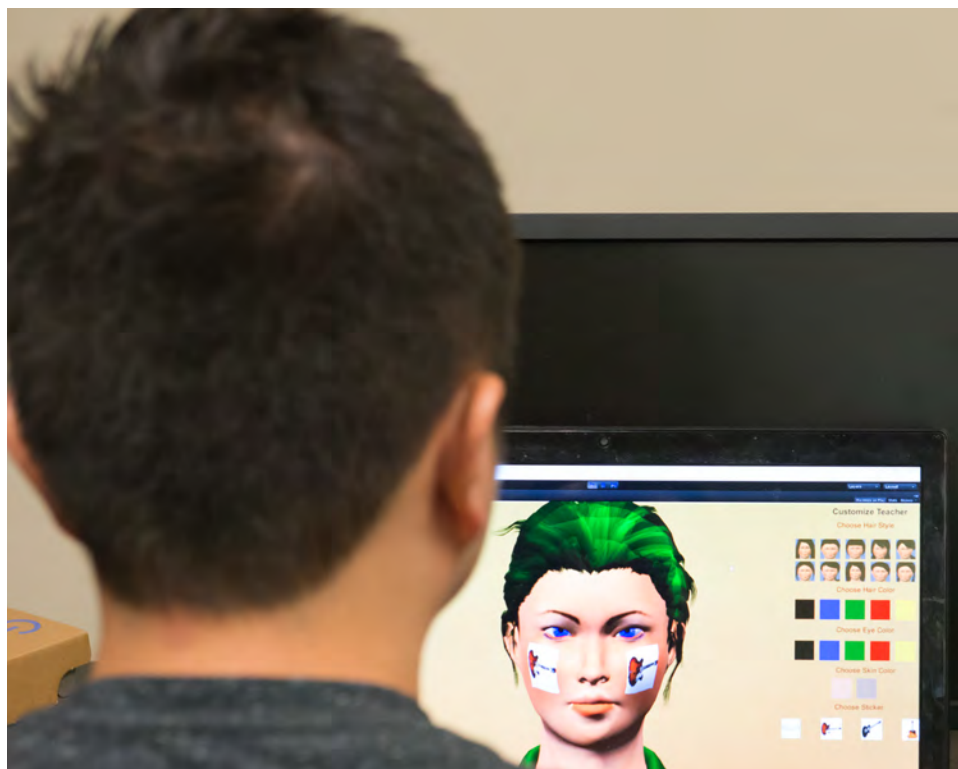
By 2018, "the United States alone could face a shortage of 140,000 to 190,000 people with deep analytical skills," according to the McKinsey Global Institute, "as well as 1.5 million managers and analysts with the know-how to use the analysis of big data to make effective decisions."

Both daytime and evening classes within the new UTSA program will focus on traditional business-intelligence analytics as well as provide students specialized expertise in the areas of data science management and data analytic algorithms.

Students will learn to analyze data sets and develop communication and visualization techniques, including use of the university's Advanced Visualization Laboratory, to share these insights within organizations.

"We are entering the era of big data," says Harry Millwater, associate dean for research in the College of Engineering. "The tools in the VizLab can interconnect data points in the billions; then putting that on the wall means you can visualize it so much better."

“We are early adopters of technology at UTSA. Even before Facebook bought Oculus Rift we recognized the importance of technology. How we stay competitive is to develop applications for using those technologies whether in research or for the general public.”





moved to Seattle to work as a software engineer at Amazon. “We work with understudied special-user groups, like people with mobility issues. The sense of impact is quite unique.”

CREATIVE COLLABORATION

Standing over a patient, scalpel in hand, a heart surgeon’s split-second decisions can mean the difference between life and death. With that in mind, a collaboration among faculty and students at UTSA and The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio was born. “We created the bypass surgery simulator not really for skills training but more to train in making real-time decisions,” Feng says. “We wanted to be able to psychologically prepare them for when they are in surgery, so if we can simulate that experience, it would provide another training tool.” [Watch a video of the bypass simulator in action on Sombrilla Magazine online.]

The project was one of the first to be funded by the San Antonio Life Sciences Institute, which provides annual grants to partnering teams from UTSA and UTHSC. Feng, Quarles, and their students worked with Edward Sako, chief of UTHSC’s adult cardiac surgery division, to come up with the simulations. “Members of the team observed an operation and saw what we were dealing with and what it looked like,” Sako explains. “The idea was to look at situations that don’t occur very often in real life. And while it’s good they don’t occur often, that also means our trainees may not see that type of situation, making it harder to train for situations that occur in their career.”

The simulator exemplifies ways virtual reality can cross disciplines and research projects. Other collaborations include students working with Quarles and computer science professor Greg White to develop a game for kids about cybersecurity and a recent Ph.D. graduate who reached out to the College of Education and Human Development to research how VR could assist children with autism. Chao Mei ’16 was interested in virtual reality when he started as a Ph.D. student in computer science following receiving his master’s from UTSA in 2015. After seeing autism in the news he started to consider the possibilities. “I was thinking that, maybe, if they are not willing to talk to the people in real life, they could have an imaginary friend or an ideal person they would want to talk to. That’s something we can make in the virtual world.”

“This is the time for using VR in research. Right now is when VR is huge, and it’s going to keep getting bigger. There are lots of companies and lots of money behind it.”

▲ Master’s student Bushra Zahed and Ph.D. student Brita Munsinger mark up specs for their game designed to help children learn how to protect themselves and personal information in online environments.

◀ A computer science student shows how another VR endeavor will allow children with autism to create a customized virtual teacher that they may be more likely to engage with than a human.

He got in touch with interdisciplinary learning professor Lee Mason, the executive director for the university’s Teacher Education Autism Model Center, an applied behavior analysis clinic that serves the needs of children with autism and other intellectual disabilities in South Texas. Mason supplied the expertise about children, learning, and autism that Mei needed for his research—which later became his doctoral dissertation. “This was novel, groundbreaking stuff,” Mason says of the research. “He did see a positive difference in how kids with autism reacted to the virtual world and the virtual teacher, but we need more research on how it can be applied in real life to help kids communicate with others.”

And as more and more children at younger ages are using computers, the need to teach them ways to stay safe online increases. Ph.D. student Brita Munsinger and master’s student Bushra Zahed have teamed up to create a fun way to do just that. “Nowadays, kids are exposed to the internet, online media, and sometimes cyberbullying,” Zahed says. “We want them to have ideas on what to do in these situations—how to take care of their privacy, how to protect themselves from cyberbullying, and how to protect their password.” It will be designed to be used as a regular computer game, but it could venture into the virtual world. Instead of looking at the room, the user would be inside the room.

This isn’t just about a different platform for the sake of variety, experts say. “You can explain to people what virtual reality is, and they think they understand it. But you don’t really get it until you experience it,” Quarles says. “When you experience it, that’s when you have a stronger physiological and emotional response to it.”

ANCIENT ARTS, NEW DIRECTIONS

Virtual painting, dance performances generated from body-tracking software, 3D modeling, and moving images across a 24-monitor, high-resolution screen. Mark McCain, art professor and coordinator of UTSA’s new media program, knows the endless possibilities that pop up by combining the seemingly opposite disciplines of computer science and fine art. “We focus on the moving image, sound art, and digital art,” he says. “What makes new media art different is we focus on interdisciplinary, time-based works using technology. If we could get into virtual reality—using a tilt brush or 3D aesthetic

Taking On Virtual Solutions

Researchers at UTSA have multiple projects under way that use virtual environments

In the San Antonio Virtual Environments lab at UTSA, computer science students are using virtual, augmented, and mixed reality to create solutions to universal problems. Professor John Quarles heads the lab and encourages his students to work across disciplines and topics. Here's a breakdown of some of the most recent projects in the works.

Virtual car ride: Designed to make users sick, subjects sit in a



virtual passenger seat and have their brain waves monitored to study cybersickness, which can feel like motion sickness to people who experience it. Cybersickness is one of the industry's biggest concerns for end users.

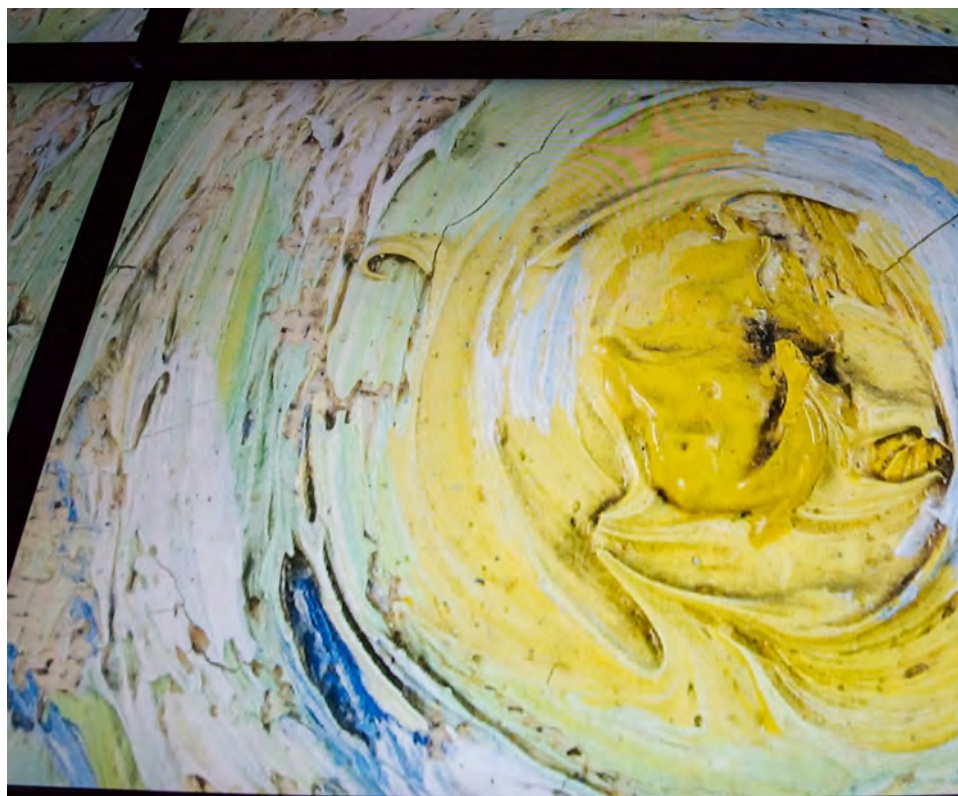
Walk MS fundraiser: Created in partnership with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, students re-created the setting of one of San Antonio's annual Walk MS events. The program is made from the vantage point of a wheelchair user as the person navigates Walk MS, an annual fundraiser held by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Quarles says the goal is to help people participate in such an event from their homes, whether it's for the MS Society or another organization.

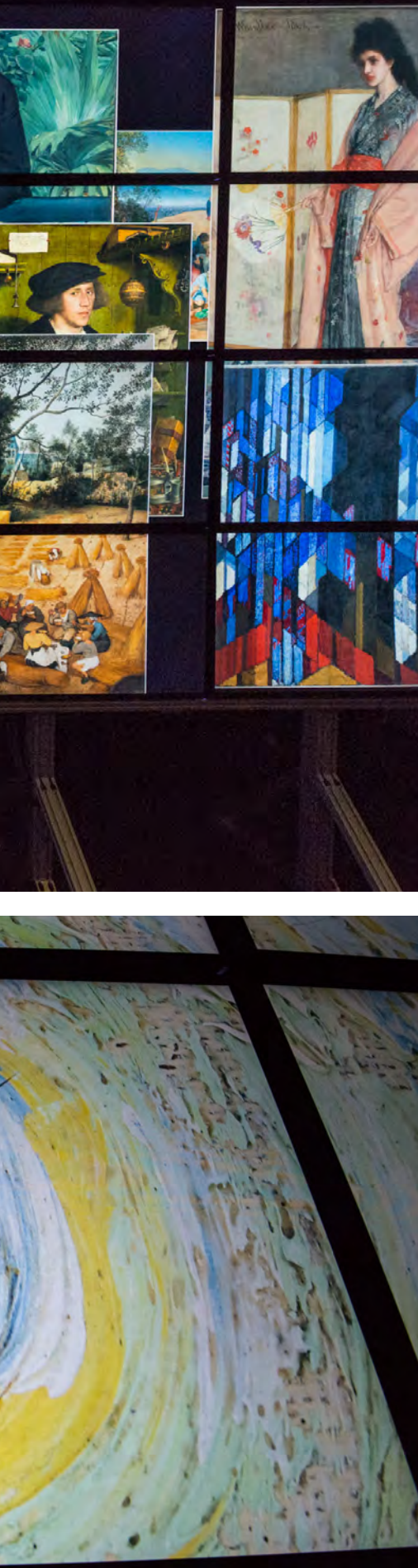
Home navigation: Developed for a Brazilian neuroscientist, this virtual game takes a user through everyday household chores, like answering a door, picking up medications, and walking down a hallway. It's made for patients or people who need muscle coordination rehab.

Virtual teacher: This game allows autistic children to create their own virtual teacher. It uses eye-mapping software that is programmed to make sure the kids are following the instructions of the teacher. If a student's eyes veer away from the page, the teacher stops and repeats instructions.

Dodgeball: Built to help with balance and coordination, the simulation lets users wear a virtual reality headset and they have to dodge balls that come their way.

Latency: Using time delay in virtual environments or as a cognitive function that slows the brain sending a message to move muscles, students created an avatar that responds to a user wearing sensors. The avatar automatically slows response on one side of the body, which helps study how a person, such as a stroke patient, compensates for affected movement.





installations where you go in and create these whole new worlds—that is an artistic experience. There are so many ways we can play around with this.”

McCoin sees that potential being unlocked in UTSA's VizLab. Along with the high-resolution VizWall, the lab contains a haptic feedback device (users can feel the pressure of touching a virtual object as if they were touching a real one) for surgery or injection simulations, a 3D stereoscopic monitor, and a holographic visualization device, among other technology.

In addition, staff and faculty at UTSA's Center for Archaeological Research see a future where prehistoric rock shelters that they've already documented in 3D could be made virtually available to the public. “It's important for communities to be involved with their past so that they understand what happened before them,” says Katherine Smyth, data systems coordinator for the center. “We can harbor all of that data, but we need to have creative and engaging ways to share that with others. The technology offers new, exciting ways to do that.”

Realizing the need to help researchers like Smyth and McCoin use the lab to its full potential, the university funded full-time staffers for the lab as well as upgraded equipment and made the supercomputer that runs everything more powerful. That means an even greater ability to process information using big data research.

Just one example of UTSA's use of big data is a new federally funded study of chronic medical conditions. Mechanical engineering professor Adel Alaeddini is beginning with 12 years' worth of data from more than 100,000 patients being monitored for up to 32 different chronic conditions, including hypertension, depression, lower-back pain, and post-traumatic stress disorder. “The main object is identifying the major patterns in the disease,” he says. “We can tailor this approach to each patient so that their physician knows that if this person isn't treated within the next few months, they will probably develop a certain chronic condition.”

Whether scientists who are researching biomedicine or artists who are creating new pieces, the goal is to make access and use of the lab easier, including by adding workshops, scheduling tours, and increasing awareness, says Harry Millwater, associate dean for research in the College of Engineering. “We want this to become the face of research for UTSA,” he says. “Our mea-

“Virtual reality can revolutionize how people live their daily lives.... The sense of impact is quite unique.”

sure of success for the lab isn't just going to be what research is getting done but how many colleges on campus are using it.”

MEETING REAL-WORLD DEMAND

College of Business alumnus Roberto Viejo '15 has an inside look at how the VR job market is growing. He's a partner in local virtual reality company Level 2 VR, which will have a game released on all major platforms this year. Viejo says he's pleased his alma mater is focusing on these types of computing resources and sees even more areas where future expansion could be possible, such as expanding computer science programs to tackle gaming, which brings together all sorts of talent, like graphic designers, animators, and developers.

“As far as virtual reality and augmented reality, we are all in the learning-to-walk stage,” Viejo says. “But this is the future, and these are the jobs of the future.”

As the cybersecurity and VR industries continue to grow, Quarles believes even more opportunities exist for synergy among disciplines, like art and business, especially in the gaming industry. To that end, he and Greg White are hoping to cultivate partnerships across UTSA's colleges. Quarles says he would love for the university to expand its offerings by starting a game development program. “The artists are the creative ones, so if we had someone focused on teaching 3D modeling or animation, which falls between arts and sciences, that would help our students become multidisciplinary team players. I would love to work with more artists.”

According to industry publication *Road to VR*, the full impact of the demand for the job market may even be years away; the market is visibly continuing to grow with more than 200 companies in 2015 hiring for VR. Experts predict that the jobs will continue to expand into the medical, military, and education fields. Professional sports and even news agencies have also jumped into the VR field. *The New York Times*, for example, launched a VR app to be used with Google Cardboard and now produces immersive stories regularly.

But there's potential for other progress as well. “With all of the different applications, VR even has the potential to break down racial, gender, and other societal biases via manipulating perceptions, providing different virtual experiences,” says UTSA alumna Samaraweera. “The potential of these technologies is just incredible.” 🐼

▲ The supercomputer-powered, 24-monitor VizWall at UTSA allows art students to analyze high-resolution scans of works of art that aren't readily accessible—like Vincent Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*.

◀ By using the VizWall to zoom in even more on *The Starry Night*, students can study Van Gogh's paint strokes in extraordinary detail.





▲ This bison specimen is part of the exhibit "Splendor on the Range: American Indians and Horses," which explores how life changed for American Indians after the Spanish arrived in the Americas with horses in the 1500s.

◀ Indian figurines that are part of the "Splendor on the Range" exhibit.

◀◀ A carved stela, an inscribed stone pillar that tells the history, usually of a royal individual, is part of the "Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed" exhibit.

RESEARCH

The Witte Affinity

WITH A MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR EXPANSION DUE TO BEGIN OPENING THIS YEAR, THE PREMIER MUSEUM OF SOUTH TEXAS WILL EMERGE AS THE NEW WITTE, BUT A LONG HISTORY OF COLLABORATION WITH UTSA RESEARCHERS IS CERTAIN TO ENDURE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COURTNEY CAMPBELL

UTSA AND THE WITTE MUSEUM have been building partnerships for decades. And just as our university is San Antonio's top-tier research institution, the Witte is the city's premier museum of South Texas history, culture, and natural science. Its exhibits, which include dinosaur skeletons, cave drawings, and wildlife dioramas, have been attributable in part over the years to the expertise of some of UTSA's faculty. And as the Witte expands at its site along the banks of the San Antonio River in Brackenridge Park—with new exhibit areas due to open this summer and in 2017—the potential for continued collaboration between the museum and UTSA's growing numbers of premier researchers remains strong.

Typically, the College of Sciences and the College of Liberal and Fine Arts have worked closest with the Witte. *Sombrilla Magazine* takes a look at some of these collaborative efforts that bridge the present to the past—and the future.

IN THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND FINE ARTS

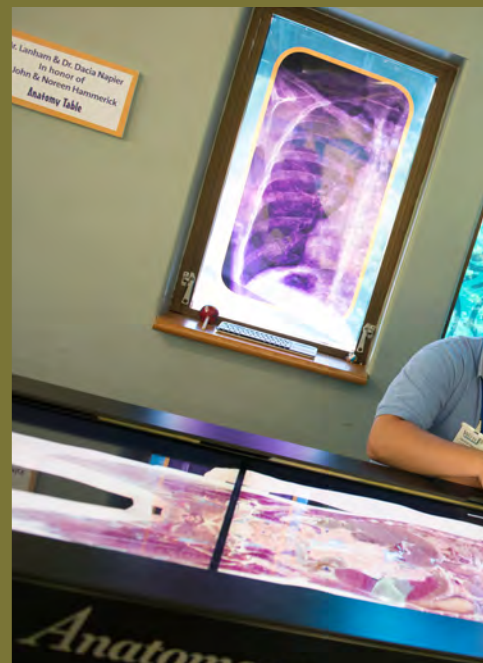
□ Dan Gelo, COLFA's dean, has been working with the Witte since the 1990s, including as part of the planning team for the "Thundering Hooves: 500 Years of Horse Culture in America" exhibit in coordination with the Smithsonian. Gelo has served as a consultant for other exhibits on Texas history and American Plains Indians over the years. Most recently, he produced research on Comanche history for the museum's "Splendor on the Range: American Indians and the Horse" exhibit.

□ Every year, anthropology professors Jason Yaeger and Kathryn Brown—plus 10 to 15 UTSA undergraduates students—spend part of their summer in Belize studying Maya sites. Some of their most recent findings are a big part of "The Mind of the

Maya" lecture series, which is in conjunction with the "Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed" exhibit. The two UTSA researchers also consulted on the exhibit. Two summers ago, they found two royal burials—containing mostly ceramics and shell jewelry—dating back 1,500 years. One of the more fascinating finds is a carved pendant that Yaeger believes an ancestor god wore on her head. The Belizean government is letting the researchers borrow 15 to 20 artifacts that will be on display in the Witte exhibit.

□ COLFA also has a new museum studies minor that helps students acquire skills for a career in museums and cultural institutions, and includes areas of curating, collections management, exhibition development, educational programming, and

➤ A team of researchers from UTSA's anthropology department explore an area of Government Canyon State Natural Park where dinosaur tracks are in danger of being lost.



▲ The Witte's Marshal Weinkam uses the Anatomy Table in the H-E-B Body Adventure to teach children about the human skeletal system and internal organs.

➤ In the H-E-B Body Adventure, an interactive exhibit that teaches children about health and nutrition, Kaylee Clelland and Jenny Conterds use a rope-and-pully device to try to lift their own body weight.



GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE NATURAL PARK COURTESY OF ALEX GODET / UTSA DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY



◀ An example of one of the dinosaur tracks at Government Canyon State Natural Park, located west of San Antonio.



▲ A scale model of temples in a Maya archaeological site is part of the Witte's "Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed."



◀ Kaylee Clelland takes a quiz on nutrition options in the H-E-B Body Adventure.

administrative operations. Students in the program are placed as interns at the Witte to assist museum staff and ensure accuracy in online information about the museum.

□ UTSA professor Jill Fleuriot and the Witte's Bryan Bayles are both medical anthropologists with a deep interest and commitment to understanding and reducing community health issues. They are working together to examine public perceptions of causes and solutions of ethnic health disparities prevalent in San Antonio. They want to understand how San Antonians perceive ethnic health disparities, such as higher rates of diabetes among Mexican Americans. They believe that by identifying misconceptions, there can be more support for effective health interventions in the community.

IN THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

□ UTSA professors Marina Suarez and Alexis Godet in the Department of Geological Sciences are researching dinosaur tracks at Government Canyon State Natural Park, located west of Loop 1604. The UTSA researchers are working with Thomas Adams, the Witte Museum's curator of paleontology and geology, to study how environmental factors are affecting the tracks so that they can attempt to preserve the site.

□ Eric Schlegel and Chris Packham in the UTSA Department of Physics and Astronomy are helping to create a display at the Witte that represents an accurate facsimile of the night sky by using LED lights. The installation is set to open in the spring as part of the Kittie West Nelson Ferguson People of the Pecos Gallery in the Witte's new main building.

□ Floyd Wormley and George Perry in the Department of Biology are collaborating with Bryan Bayles, the Witte's curator of anthropology and health, on research in health education for children. The UTSA researchers will use data from stations in the Witte's H-E-B Body Adventure, a four-floor interactive experience that allows children to learn how to maintain a healthy body and mind. The exhibit tracks health information confidentially. Perry and Wormley are planning to use the exhibit as a gauge for how well we're educating children on these issues in various ZIP codes. 🦋



BUILDING NEW
TEAMS

BUILDING NEW
CONFIDENCE

BUILDING NEW
ROADRUNNERS



ATHLETICS

The 2016–2017 athletics season at UTSA sees two new head coaches taking the helm of their respective sports programs. *Sombrilla Magazine* caught up with the gridiron’s **FRANK WILSON** and the hardwood’s **STEVE HENSON** to talk about their drive and ambitions for their Roadrunner teams.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY BY COURTNEY CAMPBELL



COACH FRANK WILSON

ALL HANDS ON DECK

BY MICHELLE MONDO

Born and raised in the Big Easy, Frank Wilson grew up in a city known for its parades—from the tourist magnets of the French Quarter to the neighborhood-centered jazz funeral processions that date back to the 1800s. So when UTSA's new head football coach found out he would be floating along the San Antonio River in April during Fiesta's Texas Cavaliers River Parade he didn't expect any surprises. "I'm from New Orleans," Wilson says. "I mean, I've *done* parades."

But surprised he was. "When we got to the judging area and the crowd began to chant 'U-T-S-A!' it was overwhelming. And it was humbling," he says. "I didn't have an expectation of people being so generous. It was a beautiful thing."

Wilson's appreciation that night was clear to people who follow him on Twitter. Savvy at social media (Wilson's emoji game is on par with his recruiting skills), he posted video and photos of the crowd, tweeting, "Speechless. San Antonio, you are lit," along with hashtags #birdsup and #allhandsondeck.

That kind of energy has been contagious, ushering in renewed excitement for UTSA's football program as it enters its sixth year.

Considered one of college football's

top recruiters—with more than 20 years of coaching experience—Wilson came to UTSA after six years at Louisiana State University. There, he was assistant head coach, running back coach, and recruiting coordinator. Six LSU running backs were selected in the NFL draft during Wilson's tenure there. He's also helped to lead teams to eight bowl games and says he's eager for the same opportunity at UTSA.

Wilson knew UTSA was the perfect fit for his foray into becoming a head coach. Having a football program ready to go to the next level—as well as being an educational leader, even though it's a young university—UTSA was everything he was looking for, he says.

If there's pressure, though, it comes from within. "There's an expectation to deliver," Wilson explains, "and all the coaches and I appreciate that opportunity. I want to give fans and the university a brand they can be proud of."

His family's input was crucial as well, he says. His wife, Tiffany, and their kids—Alaina, Sa'bree, and Frank IV—were on hand at his introductory press conference. He thanked them while talking about the long road they'd been on from the time he started as a high school football coach until the morning he accepted the UTSA job.

With family being such an important theme in Wilson's life, he extends a "live

“There's an expectation to deliver, and all the coaches and I appreciate that opportunity. I want to give fans and the university a brand they can be proud of.”

➤ Coach Frank Wilson, photographed at UTSA's Rec Field, will lead the Roadrunners into their sixth year of NCAA football.

by example" ethos to coaching. All of the coaching staff, he stresses, should be someone the players can look up to for inspiration. But he wants not just family and friends to be proud of UTSA football but the entire city.

"We hit a home run by hiring Frank Wilson," says Lynn Hickey, UTSA's athletics director. "He has brought so much energy, enthusiasm, and excitement to our program and university." In just a few months on the job, she adds, he's done a wonderful job of engaging fans and alumni and getting the community excited about UTSA football.

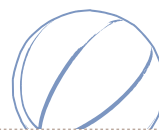
"That's why you hear me talk about all hands on deck," Wilson says. "The battle cry for all San Antonians is to get in the stands—to cheer, to be proud of your city program. We've made a commitment to go out and put our best foot forward in this state and this conference, and we need that same commitment from fans and family."

"It's always good to look at stands and hear that rally cry," he adds. "Is it the reason you win or lose a game? No, not at all. But does it help out? Of course it does."

Wilson knows, though, that there are challenges ahead. He wants to keep an emphasis on what he calls the "full measure of success," having players excel in both academics and athletics as he brings in quality student players.







COACH STEVE HENSON

LOOKING FORWARD

BY VANESSA A. DAVILA

Basketball is king in San Antonio. The Lone Star State overall might be football country, but in the Alamo City it's all about roundball, courtesy of the five-time-championship Spurs. New UTSA basketball coach Steve Henson doesn't think this adds pressure on Roadrunner basketball, but he would welcome it.

"To be honest, I *hope* there is some pressure on us. We need to raise the expectation right now," says Henson. "The Spurs have lit a fire under a lot of basketball fans in this area, and we want to piggyback off of that."

Henson comes from a rich sports background, thanks to his small-town upbringing. In the "old days," as he jokingly recalls, it was common for kids to play a number of sports, especially in a small town like his native McPherson, Kansas. Henson grew up participating in an array of sports. In addition to playing high school basketball and four years of college basketball at Kansas State, followed by seven seasons in the NBA, during his high school days Henson was a Junior Olympic national champion in the decathlon and the high jump.

Henson's coaching career began in 1999 as an assistant at University of Illinois under coaching mentor Lon Kruger. After a 22–10 winning season with the team the NBA came calling again. He spent the next two years with the Atlanta Hawks as an advance scout and then assistant coach. While he enjoyed coaching in college and

“To be honest, I *hope* there is some pressure on us. We need to raise the expectation right now.”

◀ Coach Steve Henson, photographed in UTSA's Convocation Center, shows off the skills he developed as a lifelong athlete.

the NBA, Henson says the two jobs are drastically different.

"You're not dealing with many things other than basketball at the pro level," he says. "Staffs are so large that there's just not many duties outside of basketball. That's not the case in college. To have the opportunity to help kids develop—to help them grow and prepare for life—that's the rewarding part. That is the part that I want, and that's why I came back to the college side."

Henson comes to UTSA after five seasons with the University of Oklahoma Sooners as assistant coach, culminating with a Final Four appearance in 2016, the team's first since 2002.

Hired in April, Henson says his first three weeks at UTSA were an absolute whirlwind. Because of NCAA rules, he and his coaching staff had a small window of opportunity to interact with players. So he hit the ground running to fit in court time with the team, attend recruitment events, connect with assistant coaches, and hire new staff. But his motivation, he says, was a vision of the future and to build the best team possible.

"We're looking forward," Henson says. "We're going to talk to the recruits about the opportunity to come in and be part of the group that makes the change. And it's an exciting change to be part of. Our guys will be able to look back years from now and say, 'Hey, I was part of that group that came in here and helped rebuild the Roadrunner program.'" 🐾



Nothin' Fishy About These Tacos from Rebel Mariposa's La Botánica restaurant (as well as her vegan cocktail on the facing page). Read about the chef on page 34.



Catch our videos and photo galleries of these alumni foodies in action by visiting [Sombrilla Magazine](#) online.

Foodie FERVOR

*UTSA alumni are helping to revitalize
San Antonio's culinary landscape*

BY MICHELLE MONDO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY COURTNEY CAMPBELL

THE ALAMO CITY LOVES its classic tacos and beer. But there's always room for experimentation, as several UTSA alumni have discovered. From vegan to meat lovers, cocktails to beer, *Sombrilla Magazine* talked to five alums who have been part of an epicurean renaissance that is even helping to revitalize San Antonio's city center.

With the opening of La Botánica, Rebel Mariposa has created a space for the marginalized, while serving up an all-vegan menu—even the drinks. For the meat lovers, Andrew Samia at Dignowity Meats helps bring a Mid-west-cum-Northeast flair to barbecue and sand-



wiches. Manisse Davison gives her tips on stocking a great home bar. And Nick Kenna talks cocktail creativity.

And how could we leave out beer? Scott Metzger, owner of Freetail Brewing Co., talks about turning a hobby into a thriving brewery.

RUNNER REUNION



East Side Meat Feast

ANDREW SAMIA
REIMAGINES THE DELI

AT DIGNOWITY MEATS, the mom-and-pop delis of Andrew Samia's childhood in the northeast U.S. meet the barbecue flavors of the Alamo City. And while his restaurant's in-house-made pastrami itself may be traditional, sandwiches like the KC Brisket Burnt Ends, which tops macaroni and cheese and pears on brisket, take the deli concept to a whole new level.

The brick-and-mortar location was born from the success of Crazy Carl's food truck, started by Samia and Shane Reed. The two partnered with Denise Aguirre and Noel Cisneros, the owners of The Point Park & Eats, to launch Dignowity Meats.

"When people think of sandwiches they think of their mom making peanut butter and jelly," Samia says, "and that nostalgia plays a role. If you get all the different pieces at once, it's going to come together for that perfect bite."



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Rebel with a Cause

REBEL MARIPOSA CREATES A PLACE TO VEG OUT

AS OWNER AND CHEF at La Botánica, San Antonio's only fully vegan restaurant and bar (yes, drinks can be vegan too), Rebel Mariposa wants to spread the word that vegetables don't have to be boring.

What are some of your go-to meat substitutes? First, try to match the consistency in texture. And second, use the same cooking method you would use for the meat, if possible. In terms of substitutes, mushrooms are great because there are so many different types. Squash, avocado, eggplant and nuts are also all excellent. You can throw almonds in a lot of different dishes as well to give them some texture and crunch. I've used cashews as a base for vegan cheesecake. Dessert is my favorite thing to play with. Just remember to have fun with it. It's an experiment. I've often failed many times to "veganize" a recipe.

What if people aren't certain they want to change their entire lifestyle? It can be extremely overwhelming. Start with one thing—something really simple like stop drinking cow milk and replace it with almond or soy or cashew milk. Then try one meal a day without animal products, maybe breakfast or lunch. Dinner is a lot harder to shift because there are often family ex-

pectations. Also, you have to be able to be brave enough and love yourself enough to deal with how much you'll be judged [for your choice to go vegan].

How do you stay close to your cultural roots when the food associated with that is far from vegan? There is such a misconception when people say Mexican food isn't healthy. It's the colonization of Mexican food that isn't healthy. Mexican food is extremely clean and healthy. Take what has happened over last 100 years and add poverty. My dad, he has vivid memories of being a migrant farmer and getting blocks of cheese from the government. Add that flour costs less than corn, and now you have flour tortillas and extremely processed cheese. I remember when I would go to water polo practice; afterward, we'd be so hungry, and I'd order half a dozen flour tortillas and a side of butter. So even though I was active, I wasn't necessarily healthy. It's all tied together.

Visit Sombrilla Magazine online to read our full Q&A with Rebel Mariposa and watch a video of how to make one of her most popular dishes. Get a preview of it on page 32.

Cocktail Shaker

NICK KENNA RAISES THE BAR

NEW COCKTAILS ARE BORN from pushing boundaries, says bartender Nick Kenna. In the business for more than a decade, he started as a barback at P.F. Chang's and worked his way up to mix at some of San Antonio's most prominent restaurants and bars, such as his current gigs at Brigid and George's Keep.

He's also been called on by the San Antonio Museum of Art to craft drinks for special events, like a party highlighting the work of famed Mexican painter Miguel Covarrubias.

Using food, art, history, and names, Kenna derives inspiration for his cocktail creations from many

sources but always goes back to experimentation as the key to creativity. "You have to escape that bubble," he says, referring to pushing himself out of his comfort zone.

That is how one signature cocktail—the Southern Gentleman—was born (the two ns are an homage to Thomas Osborne Mann, the winery founder who created the Osborne sherry used in the drink.) And while watching the kitchen staff at Brigid use cinnamon

sticks in different ways, he decided to also use them in the cocktail.

"Never be comfortable," Kenna adds. "Just like anything else, your palate is learned, and if you don't use it, it will become rather mundane."



Natural-Born Tastemaker

MANISSE DAVISON STOCKS THE BEST BARS



"FOOD IS IN MY BLOOD," Manisse Davison says of growing up with parents who were caterers and a grandmother who was a home economics teacher.

After years of working in the hospitality industry—including as beverage manager for Boiler House Texas Grill & Wine Garden—Davison now is a transatlantic sales consultant for Glazer's Distributors, stocking some of the city's best bars.

"I developed my love and appreciation for service and quality early in life," she says.

"When I moved to San Antonio, I knew that I would be good at this line of work—and for a 17-year-old it paid pretty well. I love the

speed and accuracy and allure that comes with being a bartender. Plus, spending most of my career on the River Walk, I was always meeting new and interesting people."

Want to wow your own guests at home? We asked for Davison's advice on setting up a own home bar—with a selection that can be created on a moderate budget to combining pricier items.

\$100 OR LESS

- ☐ Ranger Creek .44 Texas Rye whiskey and Ranger Creek Rimfire whiskey
- ☐ Cinco vodka
- ☐ Bacardí Ocho Años rum
- ☐ Roca Patrón Reposado tequila
- ☐ Angels Envy Cask Strength bourbon
- ☐ The Botanist gin
- ☐ Dorcol Kinsman Rakia brandy

\$200 OR LESS

- ☐ "Always pay for a good cognac and Scotch."
- ☐ Rémy Martin XO cognac
- ☐ Glenmorangie Nectar D'Or Scotch whisky or Yamazaki 12-year Scotch whisky

\$350 OR LESS

- ☐ Clase Azul Añejo tequila
- ☐ Gran Patrón Piedra tequila
- ☐ Whistle Pig The 15 Year rye whiskey

SPLURGE ITEM

- ☐ Clase Azul Ultra Añejo tequila ("It's about \$1,500 but it's worth the investment!")



The Brew Master

IN HIS OWN WORDS: SCOTT METZGER
TAKES A HOBBY TO NEW HEIGHTS

IF YOU WANT to open a business, make sure your passion is really there. When you're only 90 percent passionate, it comes across. If you are going to make that leap, be fully living, breathing, and sleeping that idea all the time. When it consumes you, that is when you know it can be successful.

Now, there has to be some sense of realism, but the passion is the greatest thing. Don't rush to execution. Really take your time understanding what you are trying to accomplish. I worked on a business plan for three years before I opened. You need to think about every single scenario—and think about the answers.

Maybe on paper, some consultant or bank manager will think it's not a good idea—a lot of people thought opening a brewery in San Antonio in the mid-2000s

was not a good idea—but our belief in San Antonio to support a business like ours overrode everything else.

I'm a native San Antonian, and I take a lot of pride in that. When it was time to find the location for Freetail, I really wanted to take part in rejuvenating the parts of town that had a lot of history and culture. There were a lot of logistics that go into putting an operation downtown, but it was important to me to not just be in an industrial park outside of town.

I don't home-brew anymore. The few hours I have free I spend with my family. It's not like I'm not involved in making beer in any way anymore; it's just a different vibe. But being able to take home a six pack of beer that we made here certainly fills whatever void that there might be from not home brewing.



BY VANESSA A. DAVILA

Jessica Elizarraras is a pioneer of sorts. As San Antonio has changed over the past decade, she has been quick to embrace the Alamo City's progressive food landscape. She's been the food and night-life editor at the *San Antonio Current* since June 2013. It's a position that didn't exist before the Brownsville native became the first person to fill it. For Elizarraras, it meant she could put her unique stamp on what it means to be a food critic in San Antonio.

Before becoming the city's authority on cuisine, Elizarraras worked at the *San Antonio Express-News*, starting as an intern in 2008 and filling various positions over the next four years, including writing for the paper's food section. Her insight on food, though, began after college when she decided to start a blog as a way to document her journey into balancing her health while still eating out and cooking more at home. "That had me taking my own photos, trying recipes, going out to eat, and talking about it," says Elizarraras. "And that's how I was brought on board with the food section at the *Express-News*. I was familiar with the growing scene."

Food in San Antonio has become a major part of the fabric of the ever-evolving city. The *Current* has become the place many residents turn to for the latest and greatest in food. "San Antonio is in this really great moment where things are changing fast, and there's got to be some authority behind it," she says. "I'm in the scene day in and day out. I'm always at restaurants. I'm always at bars. I'm talking about what's new on the menu. I'm talking about what new ingredients they're using."



What's Good?

Jessica Elizarraras is a pro at documenting her favorite dishes on Instagram: @jesselizarraras. She says that nowadays sharing snapshots of your food is so commonplace, it would almost be weird if I didn't share it. I usually share new dishes or fun drinks with cheeky names.

Her tips for shooting:

1. Never use flash under any circumstances. Ever.
2. Use natural light when possible. I usually sit by windows.
3. Overhead shots are usually the easiest way to go, while still making everything look good. I'm big on circles, so bowls, plates, etc., are usually in my feed. Though I am terrified of dropping my phone in ramen one of these days.

The Food AUTHORITY

JESSICA ELIZARRARAS '08 *has become*
San Antonio's go-to expert on local eats



Elizarraras' career in journalism began her second semester at UTSA when she joined *The Paisano* student newspaper. She stayed there for 4½ years, making her way up to editor in chief. "My time at *The Paisano* was really fun, and now that I work at the *Current*, it's the same kind of thing," she says. "It's a small office, we shoot our own photos sometimes, and we deal with a lot of freelancers who don't turn stuff in. And that's kind of what you do when you're at a student paper."

After a short stint as one of two senior editors at the *Current* who filled in for the editor in chief, Elizarraras is back to finding delicious drinks and food and telling her readers about it. And she says she has no plans on going anywhere because she wants to grow with the Alamo City. 🍷

Making a DIFFERENCE



BY VANESSA A. DAVILA

After finishing up his service in the U.S. Marine Corps, Jesse Treviño found himself behind a desk working in mutual funds. Then the 2008 financial crisis happened, and he encountered a lot of angry people who lost everything. "I grew up very poor, and I had just come back from parts of the world that were extremely poor," Treviño says. "I got the sense that the corporate world just wasn't for me."

Because of his military experience, he was drawn to public service, so he joined the San Antonio Police Department in 2010. Five years later Treviño decided to join the SAPD's mental health unit, which tries to help people with mental health issues get

SAPD officer JESSE TREVIÑO '14 helps the city's mentally ill via a special policing unit

assistance, instead of arresting them. The unit's training model has become a national standard.

"There are differences in the way the public responds to its law enforcement," Treviño says. "Generally speaking, we don't have a strong negative perception of law enforcement in San Antonio that you might find across the United States. I think crisis-intervention programs like the mental health unit help to foster that."

It's a position Treviño wanted, he says, thanks in part to his undergraduate experience at UTSA. "UTSA's professors really care about the science behind criminal justice," he ex-

plains. "I got excited about the fact that you could use research to influence policy."

In fact, if it weren't for his professors, he says, he would have never considered attending graduate school, especially considering his trepidation about heading back to school at all. "I remember thinking, *It's not for me. I don't know how I'm going to do,*" says Treviño. "But then I took a violent-crimes course, and when I got my midterm test back, I was really bummed about getting an 86—because I'd studied really hard. When I found out from the professor that it was the highest score in the class, I thought, OK,

this might not be so bad."

He's since flourished, even becoming the first UTSA student to receive the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Kenneth H. Ashworth Fellowship. This prestigious \$5,000 award is granted to graduate students who show exceptional promise in a field of public service.

The accolades keep coming in his professional life as well. This past January, Treviño and his SAPD partner helped the department implement the Integrated Mobile Partners Action Care Team, a homelessness decriminalization program that focuses on jail diversion, treatment, and sustainable housing. It's an initiative he is says he's proud of: "I've been very fortunate to be put in a position to help people." 🍷

CLASS NOTES

1983

José L. Parra, B.A. and M.A. in English '89, had his second anniversary as superintendent of Irving Independent School District. In the past two years Irving ISD was named a 2015 AP District of the Year by the College Board; several of the district's high schools earned a Silver Badge from *U.S. News & World Report*, ranking them among the top 10 percent of high schools nationwide.

1986

Jeanie Wyatt, M.B.A., founder of South Texas Money Management Ltd., made her debut, at number 23, in the *Barron's* 2016 ranking of Texas' top 90 financial advisers. The publication

mans, B.A. in interdisciplinary studies with a concentration in biology, has said goodbye to San Antonio and is now looking forward to connecting with alumni in Colorado. Rummans, formerly with the San Antonio Independent School District, has taken a position at the Cherry Creek School District. He was recognized in 2014 as the SAISD Joel C. Harris Academy Teacher of the Year.

Laura J. Campa, B.S. in physical education, has moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, following a promotion to office manager at Terracon Consultants Inc., where she has worked since 2003. Campa has participated in numerous 5K runs and is the

founder of *nio Express-News* and founder of *The Rivard Report*, received the Community Voice award.

1998

Annette Goodson, B.B.A. in accounting, has been honored by UTSA's accounting department as its 2016 Accounting Alumna of the Year. The award has been recognizing alumni for their outstanding contributions to the school for the past 13 years. Goodson is a member of the UTSA accounting advisory board and has been an active volunteer for the college and the department. A local CPA and manager at ATKG LLP, Goodson has been instrumental in the UTSA department's mentoring program as well as networking efforts.

Rio Grande Valley Alumni Association chapter president and UTSA Alumni Association board member **Armando Marroquin Jr.**, B.B.A. in management, has been nominated to be a member of the Order of Alhambra in McAllen. The fraternal organization is dedicated to assisting people who are developmentally disabled.

2001

The *San Antonio Business Journal* has recognized **Lindsey Tucker**, B.A. in communications, of CBRE Group Inc. among San Antonio's top 25 real estate brokers.

2002

Mirella Campbell, B.A. in interdisciplinary studies, has been appointed to principal at Scarborough Elementary School in San Antonio's Northside Independent School District.

2003

Pedram Afshar, B.B.A. in information Systems, has been named senior vice president for service experience at New York Life Insurance Co.

April Ancira, M.B.A. in business, completed the Ironman Texas North American Championship in 13 hours 5 minutes.

2004

Bonnie Berlanga, B.A. in communication, who records music under the name Bonnie Lang, has released her third album, *The Road Is Wide Open*.

2006

The *San Antonio Business Journal* has recognized **Zar Haro**, B.B.A. in finance, of firm JLL among San Antonio's top 25 real estate brokers.

Brittany Pratt, B.A. in communication, has been named director of social responsibility at WellMed Medical Management.

2010

Ross Langham, B.B.A. in management, and wife Amanda are the new parents of twins, Clara Bell and Ross Graham, born just one minute apart in March.

2012

Maricela Alarcon, Ed.D in educational leadership, has been appointed principal at Knowlton Elementary School in San Antonio's Northside Independent School District.

2014

Darryl Wyrick, B.A., M.Ed. in educational leadership '16, has

taken a position at Texas Christian University as a coordinator for student development.

Ericka Avila, M.Ed. in educational leadership, has been named vice principal of Villarreal Elementary School in San Antonio's Northside Independent School District.

ALUMNAE EXCEL

Three Honors College alumni are recipients of National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships:

Jessica E. Burch '15, B.S. in chemistry, will enter the Ph.D. program in chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley. **Christine DeMyers** '15, B.A. in anthropology, is in the Ph.D. program in anthropology at Arizona State University; and **Audrey Yniguez-Gutierrez** '14, B.S. in chemistry, is now in the Ph.D. program in chemistry at Vanderbilt University.

MEETING NOTICE

The Alumni Association's annual meeting will convene October 25 at 4 p.m. in UTSA's Faculty Center Assembly Room, JPL 4.04.22. UTSA is located at One UTSA Circle, San Antonio, TX 78249. Current members are invited to vote on the bylaws, which can be reviewed online at utsa.edu/alumni.

YES, SIR, COLONEL!

Robert G. Ramirez '93, B.A. in criminal justice, has been promoted to the rank of colonel in the U.S. Air Force. The promotion ceremony took place at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska and was officiated by U.S. Air Force Col. Mark Williamson, the 55th Wing vice commander. In June Ramirez was reassigned as the director for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance for Air Force Global Strike Command at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

ranks the advisers based on assets, revenue generated, and the quality of their practices. Wyatt's firm has \$2.6 billion of assets under management, with a typical account size of about \$1 million and average client net worth of \$2.8 million.

1995

Former Alumni Association board member **Orlando Rum-**

mans, founder of the Revenge of the Nerds 5K Run/Walk, annually held in San Antonio during Engineers Week.

1996

The San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has honored **Robert Rivard**, B.A. in political science, at its annual business luncheon. Rivard, a former editor of the *San Anto-*

A portrait of Alana Coates, a woman with long brown hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a dark top. The background is slightly blurred, showing some colorful objects.

Alana's WONDERLAND

BY MICHELLE MONDO

Like Alice's wonderland, art for Alana Coates is a rabbit hole she's all too eager to jump into. "I really do enjoy all art from all time periods," she says. "Once you start diving a little bit deeper it just keeps getting more and more interesting, and before you know it you're 20 books deep into research."

As associate director of the gallery Ruiz-Healy Art for the past three years, an art history lecturer at Northwest Vista College and a curator of independent projects, Coates has plenty of reasons to indulge her life's passion.

At the gallery, she's responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations and promoting exhibitions. But one of her favorite parts of the job is client and artist relations. "I

Curator ALANA COATES M.A. '12 immerses herself in the past, present, and future of the art world

get to meet some of the most fascinating people," Coates says. "The artists are amazing, but I don't think people realize how special and unique collectors are too."

The Rhode Island native says her path to art history wasn't an expected one. Calling herself an "odd duck" among a sports-loving family that wasn't really interested in the arts, Coates found herself on a path out of New England to San Antonio in 2009. "When I explored best schools for Latin American and Latino art history," she says, "UTSA was one of them."

She earned her master's degree in art history and criticism

as well as a graduate certificate in nonprofit administration and leadership. The fact she got her degree at UTSA helped in her hiring, says gallery founder and owner Patricia Ruiz-Healy '05, who is back at UTSA as a Ph.D. student. "I knew that she was coming from a very strong program," Ruiz-Healy says, "and that really gave me lots of comfort. She has strong language skills and does a great job with press releases. And she is very professional and reliable. Since I travel a lot for the business growth of the gallery, I feel comfortable leaving her in charge of the day-to-day activities."

Coates' connection to UTSA continues in multiple ways. Throughout August, the gallery is hosting an exhibit from artist and guest curator Jesse Amado that includes work from a recent graduate, ceramist Kaela Puente M.F.A. '16. Coates is also facilitating a three-person exhibition in 2017 at UTSA's Main Campus art gallery that will focus on multigenerational artist inspirations and feature the art of John Hernandez, Louie Chavez, and Megan Solis '16.

Gallery work, independent projects, and even teaching keeps Coates incredibly busy. "I love them all equally, and I'm very passionate about it, so I basically work seven days a week," she says, adding, "Oh, and I do try to squeeze in some yoga every day." 🧘

Feeling Some Campaign Fatigue?

UTSA clinical psychologist Mary McNaughton-Cassill studies stress and coping. With presidential bids going full bore, we decided to check in for insight

Presidential campaigning seems to start earlier and earlier each cycle. And since news comes at us through social media now, not only TV, radio, and newspapers, there's just no escaping someone's opinion or rant. With campaigning revving up toward the general election, compounded with coming holiday gatherings with family and friends, we turned to psychology professor Mary McNaughton-Cassill to find out how to cope with the stress of it all.

To start, let's not avoid what's probably central to many people's stress right now—difference of opinion. Are people with a particular political affiliation actually any less or more confrontational with their opinions? There are definitely differences in the characteristics of liberals and conservatives. Conservatives typically prefer concrete answers and are more sensitive to threatening events. Liberals, ironically, say they are more socially aware but are often less happy than conservatives. Of course, even within groups there are variations.

Is there a particular medium for receiving news that has more impact on people? My research suggests television has a major effect, probably because it is vivid and visual and often occurs very rapidly. By the time you realize you don't want to see something, you already have. However, the same thing can happen online. And with radio, television, and the internet, things get amplified and repeated exponentially more than they did in the print age. The biggest difference, however, is that in a world of 24-hour news coverage we have more access to information than people ever have, and we can choose to expose ourselves to coverage that simply reinforces what we already want to believe.

Is it ever OK to ask friends or family to tone it down with political talk? Well, you can try asking people not to talk about the things they want to, but it is hard to enforce. A central tenet of stress management is realizing that we can't control the things around us; we can only control how we allow them to affect us.

With the holiday season coming up and families getting together, even though the general election will have past, the sense of "pain" over a particular candidate's loss might still be too real for some people. Is there a way people should prepare

THE PRACTICAL AND THE WOW OF RESEARCH AT UTSA

“It is easier to walk away from a stranger at a party than your uncle. It can be hard to accept that people you care about think differently than you do.”

Do you have a question about science or literature or any topic that's always made you wonder "What? How? Why?" but you never got around to looking into it? Let us know at sombrilla@utsa.edu and we'll find a UTSA expert to explain it.

themselves, especially if they'll be surrounded by people who might be boasting over their "win"? It is easier to walk away from a stranger at a party than your uncle. It can be hard to accept that people you care about think very differently than you do. The key, of course, is knowing your triggers, recognizing the nature of a relationship in question, and assessing whether you have any obligation to change someone's mind. There is actually quite a bit of research suggesting that the way our brains process information is a major factor in our political orientation. Of course, that doesn't mean reasonable people can't change the way they view things, but it does mean that arguing in a social setting, especially if alcohol is involved, is likely not to result in a beneficial discourse. Realizing that you can choose how you respond is a great help. There is a book I love called *Rapid Relief from Emotional Distress*, which has the ACT formula.

A stands for "accept reality." As long as you are thinking "if only" a person would listen or see reason, you are trying to change someone. To move forward, you have to decide to cope with the reality of the situation.

C stands for "create a vision." Given the reality of your family member, that person's views, your relationship, what is the optimal way for you to respond? Will they acquiesce if you suggest a change in topic? Can you structure an event so you don't spend a lot of time talking with that person? (I have known adults who chose to eat at the "kids' table" so they could avoid talking to relatives.)

T stands for "take action." Sometimes things still get away from you. At that point you have to take a look specifically at your irrational beliefs—thoughts that focus on negative consequences. If you believe you have to have everyone's approval, then you are bound to fail. If you treat conflict as a catastrophe, you are bound to be anxious and worried after a disagreement. Learning to challenge those assumptions is a key component of stress management. The trick is to assess your underlying assumptions and to learn to generate alternatives. Will your cousin really hate you if you disagree on health care?

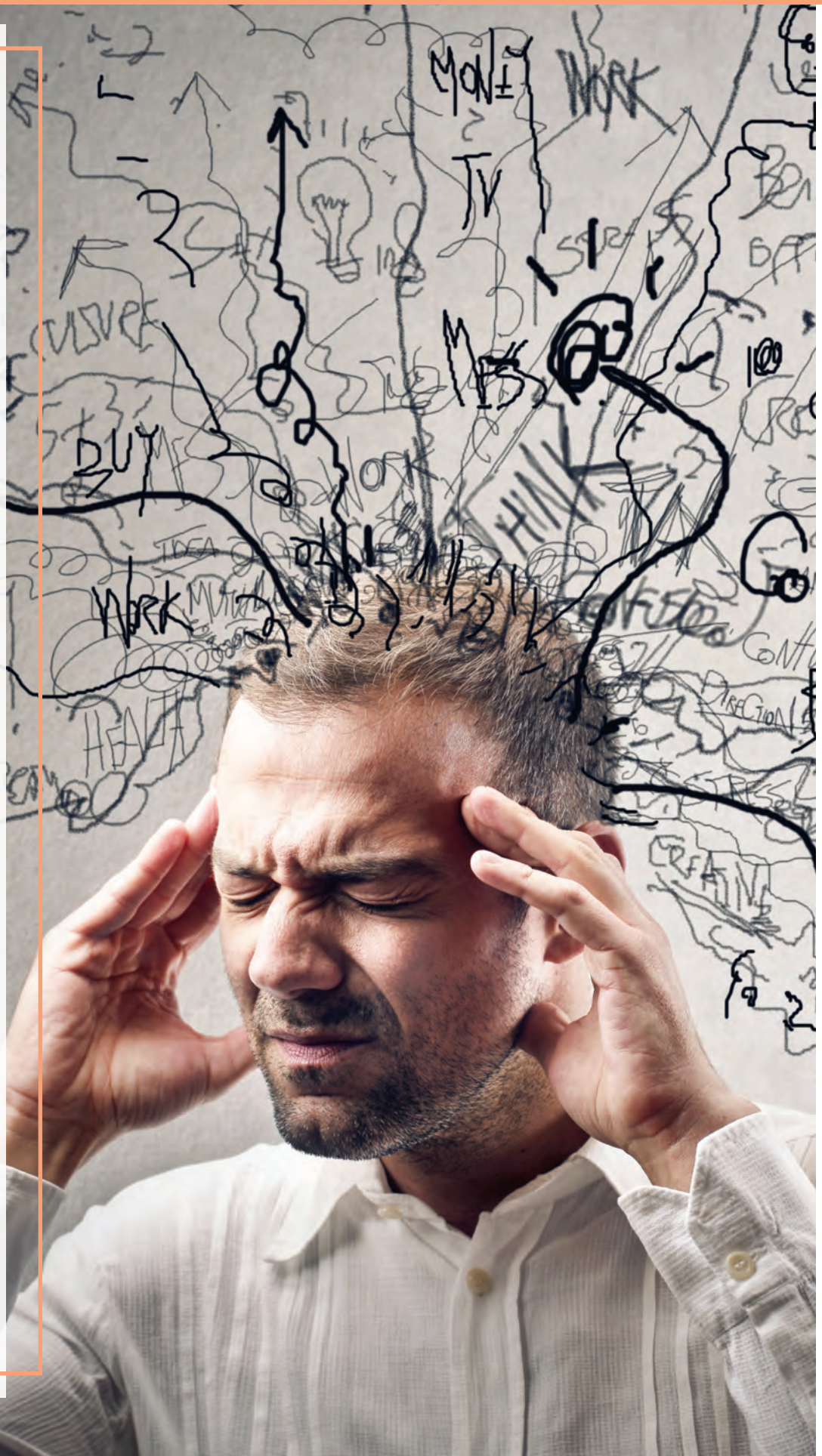
Finally, with these sorts of topics, people's behavior is often deep seated in emotion, not logic. Any personal advice you can give to help people cope? When my father-in-law was alive, there were a couple of news topics you didn't want to discuss with him. The entire family became adept at bailing out of the room if one of those topics came up on the news. And that solved a lot. 🍷

8 TIPS TO HELP YOU GET THROUGH THE ELECTION AND BEYOND

Professor McNaughton-Cassill offers some useful advice for getting along with family members who don't see eye-to-eye with you.

- ❶ Use the ACT formula to plan for possible negative encounters. This can work in terms of political conflict but is also a useful way to manage and respond to the heightened expectations and conflict that can accompany the holidays.
- ❷ Be aware of your own triggers and irrational beliefs and choose how you want to respond.
- ❸ Assess what is more important to you, losing a relationship, being right in an argument, or changing another person's mind. You don't have to agree on everything to like or love someone else.
- ❹ Take care of yourself physically. We all get more emotional when we are tired or hungry. Getting seven to eight hours of sleep, eating well, and spending time outside can all decrease stress.
- ❺ Remember that alcohol and other substances can alter emotions, thoughts, and behavior and rarely contribute to clear, cogent discussions. It is unlikely that talking politics with someone who has had too much to drink will have a positive outcome.
- ❻ Identify people who can help you maintain your perspective. Even if they aren't at the event, you can touch base through social media.
- ❼ Distract yourself when you need to calm down. Reading, watching movies, and playing with kids or pets can all help. If you decide that you really can't handle a get-together, try volunteering. It is harder for people to get mad at you for missing an event if you were volunteering to serve turkey at a homeless shelter at the time!
- ❽ Concede some ground. Your ideas may not be perfect, and your family members may not be idiots for having a different point of view. Look for common ground.

8 Concede some ground. Your ideas may not be perfect, and your family members may not be idiots for having a different point of view. Look for common ground.





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