

Summer 2010

# UTEP Magazine: The University of Texas at El Paso

UTEP University Communications

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SUMMER 2010

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

# UTEP

MAGAZINE

**HOMECOMING 2010**



## Dear UTEP Alumni and Friends:

There's a lot of buzz in the El Paso community about the major construction projects under way at UTEP. These dramatic changes in the UTEP skyline serve as a vivid reminder of the enormous progress that is occurring on this campus. Robust growth in both enrollment and externally funded research have accelerated our need for additional space and, perhaps more importantly, for highly specialized space to accommodate the cutting-edge work that is increasingly being undertaken by UTEP faculty, staff and students.

Two imposing new buildings—Health Sciences/Nursing and Chemistry/Computer Science—have had their official topping out events, symbolizing the completion of their structural steel skeletons. I was honored to be invited to relay instructions to the crane operator to “cable up” the final sections of the roof structure on both those occasions...now that I've worked hard to develop these new construction management skills, I certainly hope that there will be many future opportunities to apply them!

The center of the UTEP campus also is being transformed as we upgrade existing laboratories and create new research space, with major renovations and expansions in both the Engineering and Physical Science buildings. We also recently completed the renovation of three apartment buildings on Schuster Avenue, at the southern edge of the campus, creating Miner Heights, a new on-campus residential complex that will accommodate 208 students beginning this fall. Demand for campus housing has grown so fast that we are anticipating there'll soon be a waiting list for this new complex! And UTEP's College of Business Administration has expanded into downtown El Paso, establishing a Graduate Business Center in leased space in the Chase Building for its Accelerated and Executive M.B.A. programs.

UTEP also has become more creative in identifying new funding sources for campus expansion. A 90,000-square-foot addition is being made to the 40,000-square-foot Swimming and Fitness Center, and it will be funded entirely by a recreation fee that students approved via a referendum. And in a joint venture with the City of El Paso, a 440-space parking garage and transit terminal is being constructed at the corner of Glory Road and Oregon Street, across from the Don Haskins Center.

These signs of change and progress on the campus energize us all. Equally energizing, however, is the constancy of our commitment over the past century to serve residents of this bi-national region with quality higher education opportunities. UTEP's sustained mission represents the strong foundation upon which all of today's progress solidly rests. For nearly 100 years, the lives of talented and highly motivated students have been transformed by the educational experience offered to them by dedicated faculty and staff on this campus.

All of us at UTEP are, in turn, richly rewarded by the joy and pride that we feel when we learn of our graduates' extraordinary professional and personal accomplishments, and their recognition of the role that UTEP has played in their success. I know that you'll be as proud as we are of the outstanding graduates featured in this annual Homecoming issue of *UTEP Magazine*—our 2010 Distinguished Alumni and Gold Nuggets.

Approaching 100,000 alumni and our 100th birthday and achieving progress toward becoming the first national research university with a 21st century demographic, all of us associated with UTEP have much to be proud of...Go Miners!



*Diana Natalicio*

Diana Natalicio  
UTEP PRESIDENT

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STAY CONNECTED WITH UTEP:



THE ENTIRE MAGAZINE CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT  
UTEPMAGAZINE.UTEP.EDU.

# National Magazine Ranks College of Education No. 1

The University of Texas at El Paso's College of Education is ranked No. 1 on the list of Top 100 degree producers for Hispanic students in education by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* magazine. The publication released the information in early June.

The ranking was based on the 424 undergraduate degrees the University conferred in education (interdisciplinary studies) during the 2008-09 school year using data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Josefina V. Tinajero, Ed.D., dean of the College of Education, said this recognition is a testament to the trust and the value people see in the program across the spectrum, from students to the employing school districts.

"We do much more than just award degrees," Tinajero said. "We are making sure that our graduates are prepared to work with the students enrolled in Texas public schools today."

She said her faculty members use a combination of teaching, research and service to instill their students with the desire to be the best teachers they can be. They build a foundation of best practices to which their students can refer as they grow into their academic careers.

The University earned a third-place finish overall for number of Hispanic graduates, behind Florida International University and The University of Texas-Pan American.

UTEP earned several other high rankings. The College of Engineering came in second among engineering colleges for numbers of degrees awarded to Hispanics. UTEP's biological and biomedical sciences program was ranked third. The College of Business Administration finished fifth.

*Diverse*, a twice monthly magazine that debuted in 1984, focuses on minority access and opportunity for all in higher education. It covers issues of tenure, salary, faculty, student body, recruitment, retention, access and equity. ☒

**"WE ARE MAKING SURE THAT OUR GRADUATES ARE PREPARED TO WORK WITH THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS TODAY."**

Josefina V. Tinajero, Ed.D.  
Dean of the College of Education



Members of UTEP's inaugural Master of Social Work class, shown in front of the College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing building, began their 20-month program in June.

## First Master of Social Work Class Begins

The 25 students in The University of Texas at El Paso's first Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) class are well on their way to becoming border region specialists in their field.

"The M.S.W. program at UTEP is the only one in the country that emphasizes social work in the border region," said Mark Lusk, Ed.D., professor and chair of UTEP's Department of Social Work.

The new 20-month degree program began in June with a diverse group of students who have worked for organizations including Child Protective Services, the Education Service Center-Region 19, Bienvivir Senior Health Services, STARS rape crisis program and the U.S. government.

"It's clearly going to enhance their employability," Lusk said about the program and its first class of students. "Most of the agencies that hire social workers in El Paso say they must be bilingual. But we're also training social workers to work with what I would call the Mexican-American diaspora—in the meatpacking plants of Omaha, Neb.; the potato fields of Boise, Idaho; the agricultural packaging and assembly plants in Ames, Iowa. You can go across the United States and see pockets of Hispanics where there are no Spanish-speaking social workers trained at the master's level."

Amanda Volker, a recent graduate of Western Michigan University, said she was attracted to the program's focus on the border region.

"That's what I would like to learn," she said. "I would like to be as culturally diverse as possible."

Jose Escobar is a retired Marine staff sergeant also enrolled in the M.S.W. program. He worked in social service settings while serving with the Marines and has volunteered with organizations and at hospitals in the Philippines, Cambodia and Japan. He wanted to stay in the El Paso area to pursue his master's degree.

"UTEP is the only school that offers [a Master of Social Work] here," he said. ☒



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM, GO TO [SOCIALWORK.UTEP.EDU](http://SOCIALWORK.UTEP.EDU)**



## Business Administration Adopts New College Seal

➤ The University of Texas at El Paso's College of Business Administration updated its seal recently to better reflect its academic mission in the 21st century and the enduring nature of the subject.

The circular design features a flame that depicts knowledge and enlightenment, a pickaxe to show its connection with UTEP, a column that stands for strength and the importance of accreditation by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, and laurel branches that wrap around the edge of the sphere to denote academic and professional success.

The new seal, which was unveiled in May, is "business relevant, but timeless," said Robert Nachtmann, D.B.A., dean of the College of Business Administration.

The emblem is the result of the time and talents of Michael Nuñez, director of graphic design services for University Communications, a college committee led by Nena Gonzalez and the Office of University Communications. The intent was to capture the essence of the college's goals and status as a worldwide organization with international students and various academic degrees.

Among the college's latest accolades was its No. 2 ranking in 2009 by *Hispanic Business* magazine for best business graduate programs for Latinos. ☑

THE NEW SEAL IS "BUSINESS RELEVANT, BUT TIMELESS."

Robert Nachtmann, D.B.A.  
Dean of the College of Business Administration

## National Hispanic M.B.A. Society Starts Chapter at UTEP

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO'S COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IS ESTABLISHING A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF HISPANIC M.B.A.s (NSHMBA).

El Paso native and 1978 UTEP alumnus Victor Arias was among the founders of NSHMBA in the late 1980s, said Carlos Careaga, the society's west regional development executive.

"[The founders] got together and realized there were some issues they were seeing in the business world," Careaga said. The NSHMBA founders noted a declining number of Hispanics in graduate school and found very few Hispanic colleagues at their places of business.

They started NSHMBA with six chapters in 1989. Today, they have more than 30 chapters and about 8,000 members.

The goal of the organization is to increase the number of Hispanics attending graduate business programs. To accomplish this, it provides scholarships to graduate students, offers professional development opportunities, trains chapter volunteers to be better leaders and publishes *The Business Journal of Hispanic Research*.



El Paso's new chapter of the National Society of Hispanic M.B.A.s will be led by, from left, Cesar Ayala, executive vice president; Jean-Paul Stanley, secretary of compliance; Leila Melendez, president; Marcos Delgado, treasurer; and Melissa Garcia, membership marketing coordinator.

Once a year, the organization holds a national conference and expo—this year it will be Oct. 21-23 in Chicago—where more than 300 companies and universities will participate.

The Paso del Norte chapter of NSHMBA will become a full chapter in 2011, Careaga said. To become a full chapter, the group must have 40 members, hold two events, have the support of three universities and present to the national board in October. A leadership team has been established and is working to prepare its application, said Laura Uribarri, director of M.B.A. programs at UTEP.

NSHMBA members do not have to be Hispanic or have an M.B.A. to join the organization. ☑

➤ TO JOIN OR LEARN MORE ABOUT NSHMBA,  
GO TO [WWW.NSHMBA.ORG](http://WWW.NSHMBA.ORG)

# UTEP Magazine Upgrades Online Content

The Office of University Communications has developed an online magazine to bring readers expanded content more frequently.

[utepmagazine.utep.edu](http://utepmagazine.utep.edu)



The new site also features stories and photos from @UTEP, a weekly e-newsletter produced by the Office of University Communications.

The site is updated weekly with new stories, photos and videos, expanding on the content provided in the quarterly magazine and providing alumni and friends with new information more often than four times a year.

"The online magazine is an important step in our efforts to be more green and to make UTEP news more accessible to the University community," said Michael Nuñez, director of graphic design services in UTEP's Office of University Communications, who took a lead role in designing and building the site.

The flip-book electronic version of *UTEP Magazine*, where users can view a digital magazine exactly as it appears in print and flip from one page to another with the click of a mouse, will continue to be available on the site.

Nuñez and Seth Kovanic, assistant director of Web content and usability, designed and built the site with assistance from *UTEP Magazine* Lead Designer Gris Campos, *UTEP Magazine* Editor Jenn Crawford and @UTEP newsletter Editor/Social Networking Coordinator Laura Acosta.

# Mine Tracker Provides Map to Success

It takes more than a solid academic transcript to land an interview in today's competitive job market. Companies also want to know what a student has accomplished outside the classroom.

That is why The University of Texas El Paso has created the Mine Tracker, a tool that encourages students to participate in University activities while preparing them for the real world.

Since January, the University has used its newest program to record how students have pursued four different dimensions: career development, civic engagement, global perspective and personal enrichment.

The resulting document speaks to the students' initiative, adaptability and interpersonal skills. It also lists what the students did to improve themselves and their communities.

"Employers look for skills students have demonstrated in the real world. Most learning takes place outside of the classroom," said George Barton, Ed.D, director of UTEP's University Career Center.

Barton was on the committee that brought the Mine Tracker program to the University. In the process, he surveyed about 25 employers and found that many of them favor the system, which encourages students to attend career fairs, participate in community service and study abroad.

Charlie Gibbens, Ed.D, director of Residence Life, said the Mine Tracker is like no other co-curricular program in the country. He likened it to a catalogue of activities that students could use in their evolution from freshmen to senior leaders.

**VISIT THE MINE TRACKER AT**  
[MINETRACKER.UTEP.EDU](http://MINETRACKER.UTEP.EDU)



# iUTEP

With the growing popularity of smartphones, finding information is merely a touch away. A wide range of apps, short for applications, can help users connect to all sorts of content, such as movie show times, real estate listings and breaking news headlines.

Seeing an opportunity to utilize this growing trend, University Communications developed an iPhone app in partnership with Enterprise Computing, a division of UTEP's Office for Information Resources and Planning.

"The app provides a state-of-the-art method for students to access certain University services directly from their iPhones," said Seth Kovanic, as-

sistant director of Web content and usability in the Office of University Communications.

Students, faculty and alumni using an Apple iPhone can download the app from the UTEP website.

Thanks to the expanding capabilities in mobile phone technology and social media, Kovanic said he hoped that students will find the app a fast and convenient way to navigate through the various campus resources.

"The iPhone app will allow the UTEP family to access various things on campus," Kovanic said. "That includes news feeds that cover areas such as campus news, athletics, theater and arts, science and research; Google Maps of the UTEP campus; a calendar of campus events; and directory service to contact faculty, students and staff."

# New Textbook Programs Can Save Students Money

**FOR RENT**  
Textbooks

**SAVE 50%  
OR MORE**  
FALL 2010

**RENT-A-TEXT** Visit [rent-a-text.com](http://rent-a-text.com) to find out more.

In an effort to go green to save green, The University of Texas at El Paso bookstore implemented a new textbook program this fall that could save its students hundreds of thousands of dollars per year.

The new Rent-A-Text program will allow UTEP students to “borrow” books for the semester. The rental prices will be up to 65 percent less than the purchase price. The rentals can be made at the bookstore or through its website, found as a link from the homepage, [www.utep.edu](http://www.utep.edu).

Illinois-based Follett Higher Education Group, which operates the bookstore, piloted the program at seven universities around the country during the fall 2009 semester. The company reported that students there saved almost \$2 million.

Textbook borrowers can highlight paragraphs, write in margins and dog-ear pages, but users who return books with excessive damage will be charged full price when the book is returned.

“This will be beautiful for students,” Fernando Padula, bookstore director, said. “They will save money up front, but if (the book’s) a keeper, they can buy it by the end of the semester.”

Sarah Ryan, Ph.D., assistant professor of communication, said she planned to use books available through Rent-A-Text for her classes because it provided the best way to merge affordability and quality textbooks. She hoped that more of UTEP’s “student-centered faculty” would use the service.

“This program will enable me to assign the best—and most expensive—book without overburdening my students,” she said.

This is Follett’s second cost-cutting initiative at UTEP. The first was last year’s CaféScribe, an online store providing cutting-edge electronic textbooks with multiple features such as audio, video and animation components tied to social networks. Buyers can save up to 60 percent off the retail price.

Sophomore industrial engineering major Jorge Chavira, a self-described “book person,” has used e-textbooks and said the main advantages besides cost are easy access to the information through his laptop computer and not having to carry the weighty hardbacks.

UTEP’s decision to become part of these programs was due in part to a Student Government Association survey that found students were concerned with the price of textbooks. The group planned to add a list of 120 digital textbooks to its website.

“What we learned was that many professors didn’t know they had an e-book option,” said former SGA President Alex Muñoz. ☑

**LEARN MORE ABOUT CAFÉSCRIBE AT [WWW.CAFESCRIBE.COM](http://WWW.CAFESCRIBE.COM) AND RENT-A-TEXT AT [WWW.RENT-A-TEXT.COM](http://WWW.RENT-A-TEXT.COM)**



## FACULTY MUST-READS

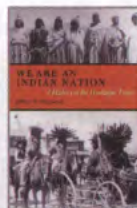
The Collections and Bibliographic Services department of the UTEP Library features numerous titles by faculty, including:



**New Nanotechnology Developments**, article by Jorge A. Lopez, Ph.D., professor of physics, et al (2009)



**Summa Caligrammatica**, José de Peirola, Ph.D., assistant professor of creative writing (2009)



**We Are an Indian Nation: A History of the Hualapai People**, Jeffrey P. Shepherd, Ph.D., associate professor of history (2010)

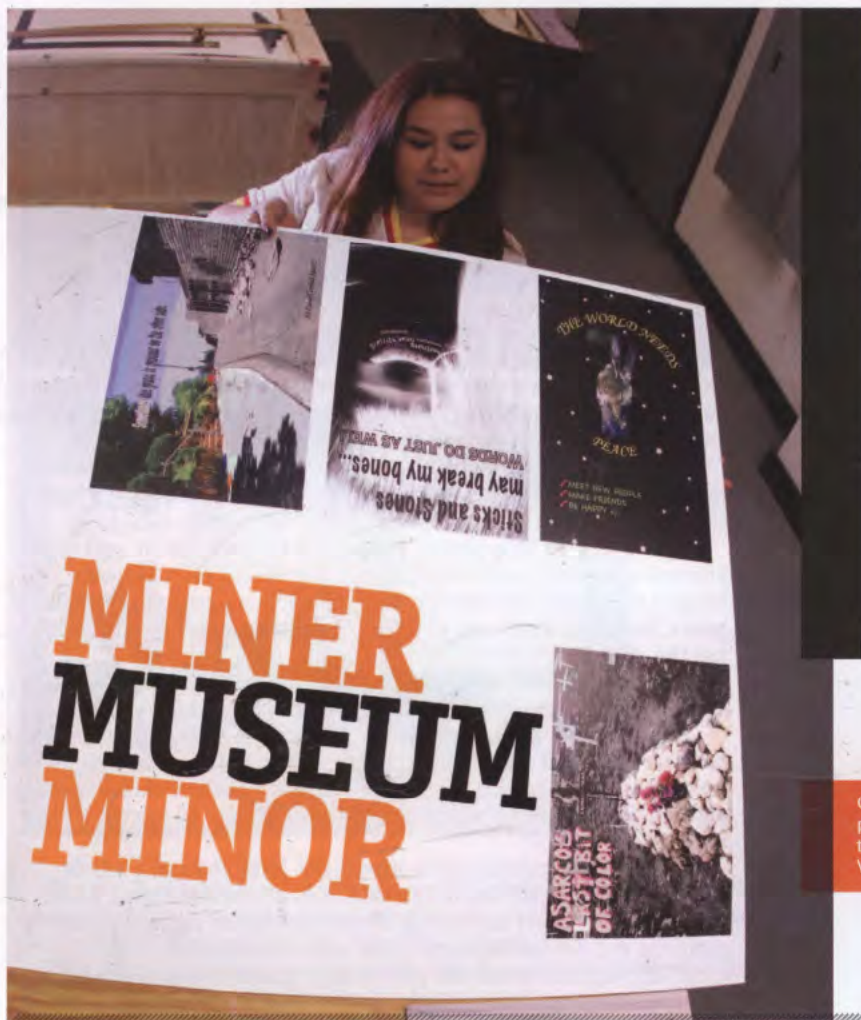
**Academic Repression: Reflections from the Academic Industrial Complex**, edited by Steven Best, Ph.D., associate professor of philosophy, et al (2010)

**The Book of What Remains**, Benjamin Alire Saénz, professor of creative writing (2010)

**Handbook of Latinos and Education: Theory, Research and Practice**, article by Josefina Tinajero, Ed.D., dean of the College of Education; Judith Munter, Ph.D., assistant dean of the college; Blanca Araujo, Ph.D., assistant professor of teacher education (2009)

**Readings on Latin America and Its People: Volume 1 (to 1830) and Volume 2 (since 1800)**, edited by Cheryl E. Martin, Ph.D., professor of history, et al (2010)





While patrons appreciate exquisite pieces of art, historical artifacts and even live animal habitats, curators and administrators at the millions of museums across the globe put precise preparation and attention to detail into the different displays, collections and exhibits.

Gabriela Carballo, junior graphic design major, prepares pieces of art that are to be shown at the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts.

**F**rom restoration and preparatory practices, to the strategic gallery arranging and lighting, to marketing and public relations, everything is carefully planned and executed to ensure the success of each museum as a cultural and educational center, and as a business.

The opportunity to learn those practices and principles is now available to students at The University of Texas at El Paso through the new minor program in museum studies, which begins in the fall 2010 semester.

Kate Bonansinga, director of the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for Visual Arts at UTEP, is the lead faculty member for the program and believes that many students will be attracted to its use of already-existing courses.

"We've re-contextualized the talent we already have here (at UTEP) in order to appeal to a broad student population," Bonansinga said.

Only three other universities in Texas offer programs in museum studies: Baylor, Texas Tech and The University of Texas at Austin. UTEP's program, however, is the first to be offered at a university with a Hispanic-majority student population, and the only program on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Marshall Carter-Tripp, Ph.D., interim director of the UTEP Centennial Museum who also is involved in the minor program, stressed the importance of training minority students in the industry.

"There haven't been many people trained in the profession who are Hispanic," Carter-Tripp said.

According to a study published this year by the American Association of Museums' (AAM) Center for the Future of Museums, non-Hispanic whites make up 80 percent of current students enrolled in museum studies programs across the United States. Because the growing Hispanic population is underrepresented in the industry, Bonansinga sees an opportunity for the new minor program to play an active role in changing that statistic.

"We can position ourselves, as a University, to be a leader in the diversification of the museum professional population," she said.

The 18-credit interdisciplinary minor program consists of a consortium of existing classes from various UTEP departments, including art, anthropology, communication, business, theater and biology. Using these courses, Carter-Tripp said, the program can help students "build a set of skills to help prepare them for museum jobs."

Vanessa Juarez, a junior multimedia journalism major who signed up for the museum studies minor, was attracted to its diverse group of courses.

"This minor really takes the best, most appropriate courses from all over the University and makes them available to museum studies minors in a relevant way," Juarez said. After taking a class in exhibition practices, she became interested in the museum industry and now is pursuing a career as a curator.

"I think that journalism and my writing skills combined with curating and research skills I learn in museum studies will make a powerful match," she said. 📌

The University of Texas at El Paso begins offering a new Master of Science in medical physics degree in the fall.



# Medical Physics Degree

F I R S T I N R E G I O N

When The University of Texas at El Paso begins offering a new Master of Science in medical physics degree in the fall, it will be the first program of its kind in West Texas.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the degree in July.

"There is a strong demand for medical physicists in our community and in the United States," said Marian Manciu, Ph.D., assistant professor of physics at UTEP, who will serve as the program coordinator. Less than 5 percent of U.S. physicists have degrees in medical physics. But based on demand, that number should be about 50 percent, Manciu said.

Historically, medical physicists have worked with radiation therapy (for treating cancer) and X-ray imaging, but now they must also be knowledgeable of new techniques such as ultrasound, tomography, magnetic resonance imaging and many other health care diagnostics. UTEP's master's program will offer a broader study of the field.

"Medical physics is a changing field and the skills for a medical physicist in the future will probably be very different than the skills for a medical physicist 20 years ago," he said. "I think we are going to be probably the only program that also will focus on teaching

solid state and statistical physics to broaden students' academic background."

The two-year program will include some options for online coursework.

"The instrumentation and advanced technologies used in 21st century medicine require highly trained individuals in the application and research of physics for the certification of instrumentation, the diagnosis and treatment of many diseases where radiation and imaging is required," said Anny Morrobél-Sosa, Ph.D., dean of UTEP's College of Science. "But the numbers of these trained individuals is decreasing as they retire from the profession at the same time that the health care needs and demands are greatly increasing with a longer-living and growing population. Thus, this is the ideal time for UTEP to help develop skilled medical physicists to a highly needed and much in demand workforce where a lucrative job is almost a guarantee."

The program will start small, with three or four students per year, Manciu predicted. After completing the degree, students can work in hospitals or medical facilities, research labs, or go on to a Ph.D. program. ☑

# The Sky's the Limit



Chemistry and Computer Science Building, expected to open in May 2011



Swimming and Fitness Center expansion, expected to open in May 2011



College of Health Sciences/ School of Nursing Building, expected to open in June 2011

## UTEP CAMPUS BENEFITS FROM BUILDING BOOM

The unprecedented \$272 million in construction throughout The University of Texas at El Paso progresses daily. The final pieces of the University's four-year building boom should be completed in 2011. By the end of that year, UTEP will have added more than 550,000 square feet of classroom, research and general building space and hundreds of parking spaces. Students, faculty and staff will benefit from the new, state-of-the-art facilities and equipment.

Among the latest projects are a planned parking garage at the northwest corner of Schuster Avenue and Prospect Street in the existing S-2 lot. The multi-floor garage, which still is in design, will have 750 spaces to serve students attending classes in the Chemistry and Computer Science Building and the College of Health Sciences/School of Nursing Building.

University students also will benefit from the Glory Road Transfer Center and Parking Garage at Glory Road and Oregon Street. UTEP signed a long-term lease with the City of El Paso that allows the city to build the seven-story structure. The 202,000-square-foot building was designed to accommodate 450 vehicles. UTEP students will have access to about half of them on a daily basis.

Although the campus's distinctive skyline continues to change, the University's mission has not. It was built on a foundation of access and excellence. It carries that creed on its journey to becoming one of the next national research universities. ☑

### CHEMISTRY AND COMPUTER SCIENCE BUILDING

Construction: March 2009 to May 2011

### COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES/SCHOOL OF NURSING BUILDING

Construction: November 2008 to June 2011

### SWIMMING AND FITNESS CENTER EXPANSION

Construction: October 2009 to May 2011

### NEW PARKING GARAGE

Construction: Fall 2010 to spring 2011

### UNIVERSITY AVENUE/SUN BOWL DRIVE ROUNDABOUT AND SCHUSTER AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS

Construction: March 2010 to August 2010 (roundabout) and fall 2010 to winter 2011 (Schuster)

### GLORY ROAD TRANSFER CENTER AND PARKING GARAGE

Construction: July 2009 to January 2011

### MINER HEIGHTS (STUDENT HOUSING)

Construction: Renovation occurred from October 2009 to August 2010

### NANOTECHNOLOGY FABRICATION CENTER

Construction: February 2010 to June 2011

### BIOMEDICAL/BIOINFORMATICS ANNEX

Construction: January 2010 to February 2011

### CENTER FOR SPACE EXPLORATION AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH PROPULSION LAB

Construction: January 2010 to February 2011

### RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC DATA CENTER

Construction: January 2010 to February 2011

### W.M. KECK CENTER FOR 3-D INNOVATION

Construction: January 2010 to February 2011

### ENGINEERING DESIGN STUDIO

Construction: January to September 2010

# New Union Lounge to Open Officially in August

"THIS SPACE IS WELL DESIGNED FOR STUDENTS. I FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE HERE THAN IN ONE OF THE LABS OR THE LIBRARY."

Edson Estrada, doctoral student in electrical and computer engineering

After a successful four-month soft opening, Miners Lounge will have an official grand opening celebration the first week of the fall 2010 semester.

The lounge, located on the first floor of Union Building East, is the latest setting for students at The University of Texas at El Paso to go for academic or social camaraderie.

The event will be part of the annual Union Open House activities that educate staff, students and faculty about the different offices and amenities offered at the Union, said Ofelia Aguilar Dominguez, director of Union Services.

"The reception to the lounge has been great," she said. "Everybody thinks it's fabulous."

Since it opened in April, student users have been impressed with the area's combination of function and flair. While some use available tables to study, others gather in the comfortable chairs to meet with friends and relax. The lounge also is home to six meeting rooms and an information center where visitors can learn about Union and University activities.

"I plan to be here on a regular basis," said Edson Estrada, a doctoral student in electrical and computer engineering. Estrada, who earned his master's in electrical engineering in 2005 from UTEP, said he was impressed with its modern look that included bright colors, comfortable fabrics and the combination of recessed and hanging lights. "This space is well designed for students. I feel more comfortable here than in one of the labs or the library."

The lounge, which is equipped with Wi-Fi, was part of an 11,660-square-foot renovation of what had been the sales floor of the former UTEP bookstore.

Richard Padilla, Ed.D., vice president for student affairs, said students have asked for more areas where they can meet, study and interact socially and academically. The new lounge and conference area will meet that need, he said. ☒

Designers of the new Miners Lounge matched flair with function. Students have called the congregation area on the first floor of Union Building East "fabulous" because of its comfort and color. The lounge also has an information center where visitors can learn about campus activities.



# Sisters Are Doing It for Themselves

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, women across the United States fought for the right to vote. In the 1960s, women began marching to end gender-based discrimination.

**“We have students who are academically gifted and those who are life gifted.”**

Brenda Risch, Ph.D., assistant professor of women's studies and director of the Women's Studies program

Today the women's movement balances on the intersection of gender and identity, said Brenda Risch, Ph.D., assistant professor of women's studies and director of the Women's Studies program (WS) at The University of Texas at El Paso.

“In the current struggle for civil rights, many younger women are defining themselves by race, culture, class or ethnicity,” Risch said. “The challenge for contemporary feminists is how best to build a cohesive movement that addresses issues common to all women.”

This may be an easier task at UTEP, where cross-cultural interaction among students and faculty is the norm, and where women's studies courses such as “Gender Issues in the Social Sciences” explore topics unique to the U.S.-Mexico border.

During a time when women's studies programs at some colleges and universities are falling under the budget-cutter's axe, UTEP's program, like the iconic Rosie the Riveter, is still going strong.

Ten new courses were added to the women's studies interdisciplinary curriculum in 2009-10, and student enrollment in the program, which offers an undergraduate minor and a graduate certificate, has increased by 100 percent during the past year. A new women's studies major is in development, and Iota Iota Iota, the national academic honor society for women's and gender studies, established its first UTEP chapter last year. The Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance at UTEP, created by Women's Studies, is now an independent campus-based student organization that works on a variety of feminist and progressive issues, from marriage equity to the environment.

“We have students who are academically gifted and those who are life gifted,” Risch said. “They work at City Hall, they start foundations, they become the grade school teachers and insurance agents and engineers. What I love about women's studies is that everyone has a place here.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [ACADEMICS.UTEP.EDU/WS](http://ACADEMICS.UTEP.EDU/WS)

## A Guide to the Women's Resource Center



- » For **UTEP STUDENTS** who are parents, the Women's Resource Center is a haven on those days when childcare plans go awry. The center's family room is equipped with a changing table, a comfortable rocking chair and an assortment of children's books.
- » For the **GROUP OF WOMEN ENGAGED IN A LIVELY STUDENT DISCUSSION ABOUT WORKPLACE RIGHTS**, the center is a gathering place where seasoned activists can share their experiences with young women who are just discovering feminism.
- » For the **YOUNG MAN WHO ATTENDED A WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER TALK ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** and recognized that he could become a batterer, the center is the wake-up call that led him to address his problems through counseling.
- » For **LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER/QUESTIONING AND INTERSEXED MINERS**, the center, home to the Rainbow Miner Initiative, is a source of information about LGBTQI activities on campus and in the community.

Perhaps the most accurate description of the Women's Resource Center comes from its director, Edith Fernández, Ph.D. “We're about student empowerment,” Fernández said. “Academic success is not measured solely by the amount of knowledge students acquire; it's also measured by how empowered they feel to use that knowledge in their lives. This is the essence of education.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [STUDENTAFFAIRS.UTEP.EDU](http://STUDENTAFFAIRS.UTEP.EDU)

Shannon Osborne, UTEP Women's Resource Center coordinator, celebrated after a successful rappel at Fort Bliss. The Women's Resource Center invited 30 women to the Army post in El Paso to participate in confidence-boosting activities such as rappelling and target shooting.

BY DANIEL PEREZ

# THE ROACH COACH

## TEACHERS LEARN FROM INVERTEBRATES THAT INVADED CLASSROOM

Several dozen area science teachers studied the large, menacing-looking Madagascar hissing cockroaches this summer at UTEP as a way to improve how scientific inquiry is taught in the classroom.

Almost 20 students, mostly science and math teachers from El Paso area middle and high schools, were introduced to the orange and brown Madagascar hissing cockroaches during a workshop in the College of Education Building at The University of Texas at El Paso.

The class, which was part of UTEP's SaBe MaS (Supporting a Better Education in Math and Science) Academy, used the slow-moving, three-inch invertebrates to integrate science and statistics. Ron Wagler, Ph.D., assistant professor of science education, and his wife, Amy Wagler, Ph.D., assistant professor of statistics, taught the course.

Ron Wagler, a lifelong fan of insects, said the bugs are fun, safe, easy to care for, and a relatively inexpensive way for teachers to develop an interest in science among students before the youngsters are jaded by peer pressure or a fear of bugs.

"If what you're doing involves experimentation, it's more interesting," Ron Wagler said during a brief class break. "We want to keep the kids interested (in science). If you don't enjoy what you're doing, you won't gravitate to it."

The National Science Teachers Association has reported that hands-on scientific activities such as the ones demonstrated by Ron Wagler are important for students, especially in the early grades. Experiments help students develop the problem-solving skills that will help them compete in a world that depends more and more on science and technology.

Hector Navarro, an astronomy teacher at Del Valle High School who earned his bachelor's (2000) and master's (2010) degrees from UTEP, said he found the invertebrates "gross" at first, but the feeling faded as he continued to study and handle the mild-mannered creatures.

Lorena Salinas, a chemistry and science teacher at Fabens High School, said she hoped to incorporate what she was learning at the workshop in her classroom because hands-on experiments would keep her students interested. Salinas earned her bachelor's degree in microbiology from UTEP in 2005.

Science inquiry-based instruction is effective because it allows students to use new investigative skills to build on their previous knowledge, said Ruben Galaviz, a master teacher at Canutillo High School who mentors UTEP student-teacher interns.

The study of hissing cockroaches can cover several scientific disciplines, such as biology (anatomy), geography (places of origin) and ecology (decomposition and food chains).

"As students are engaged in open-ended, student-centered, hands-on activities, they develop the ability to ask questions, investigate aspects of the world around them and use their observations to construct reasonable explanations for the questions posed," Galaviz said. ☒



Monica Aguirre, left, and Gina Esposito participated in an experiment that involved Madagascar hissing cockroaches.



"WE WANT TO KEEP THE KIDS INTERESTED IN SCIENCE."

Ron Wagler, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Science Education

# BBRC Grant *Boosts Research Capabilities*

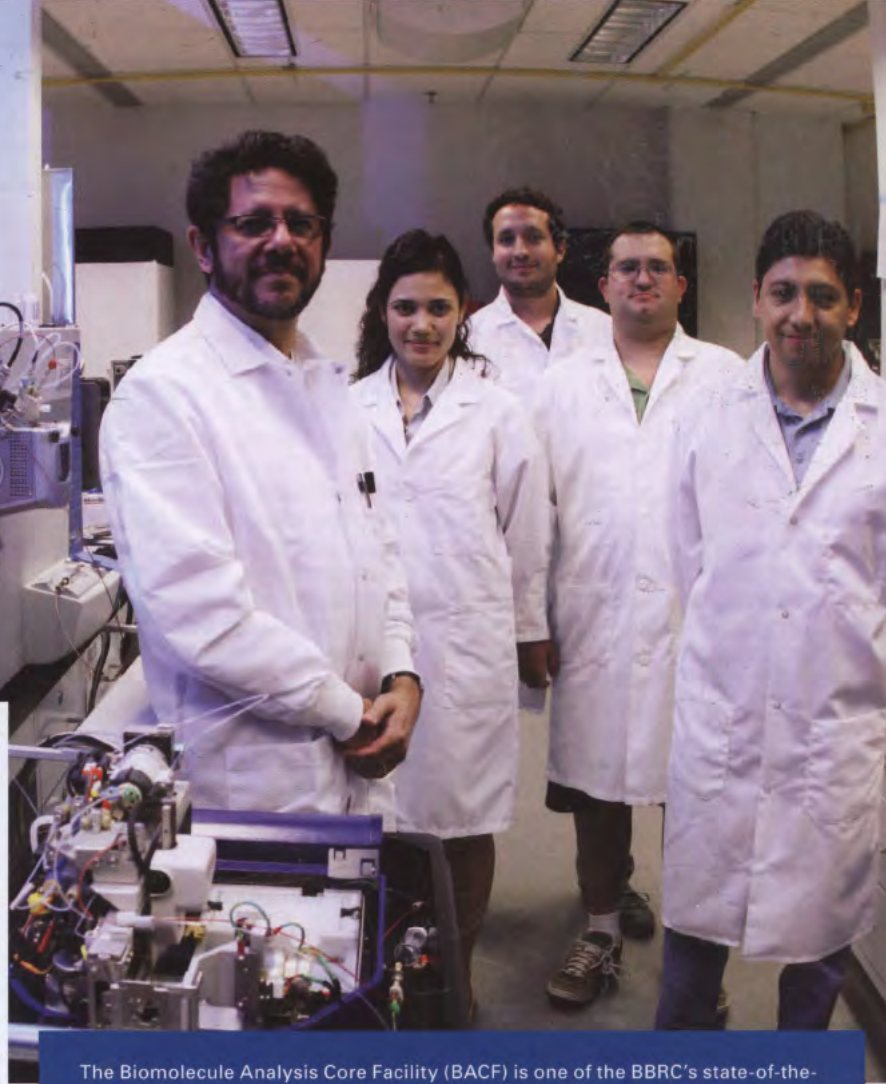
BY JENN CRAWFORD

The University of Texas at El Paso's Border Biomedical Research Center (BBRC) is comprised of outstanding faculty who work in a state-of-the-art research facility with equipment like that housed in some of the best laboratories in the world. The center provides unparalleled research opportunities not only to UTEP College of Science professors, but also to faculty throughout the University and at other institutions.

"The BBRC's core facilities are open to UTEP faculty interested in biomedical research in and outside of the Department of Biological Sciences," said Robert Kirken, Ph.D., chair of the department and director of the BBRC. Support staff in each lab are available to carry out the research using high-end instrumentation.

"We welcome collaboration," said Kirken, who is working to foster partnerships with researchers at neighboring universities and institutes interested in addressing questions of border health and health disparities.

"[Area researchers] can take advantage of some outstanding equipment that they don't have access to at their own institution, and support personnel with the expertise to use the equipment and interpret the results," he said.



The Biomolecule Analysis Core Facility (BACF) is one of the BBRC's state-of-the-art labs. Among its users are, from left, Igor Almeida, Ph.D., associate professor of biological sciences; Lani Alcazar, BACF coordinator; and Ph.D. students Felipe Lopes, Mathew Gaynor and Clemente Aguilar.

Equipment in the BBRC's core facilities is helping researchers develop vaccines and new drug treatments for Chagas disease, leishmaniasis and cancer by providing screening of drugs and high throughput confocal microscopy, which can view a cell in three dimensions.

Grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have supported the BBRC since it was established in 1992, Kirken said. In 2009, the BBRC was awarded a \$12.4 million, five-year grant renewal from the NIH.

"The renewal of this grant provides us with the ability to enhance our instrumentation and our research capabilities," said Anny Morrobel-Sosa, Ph.D., dean of the College of Science. "In addition, it also allows us to increase our intellectual capacity by being able to recruit faculty who are experts in the areas that the BBRC focuses on: neuroscience and metabolic disorders, toxicology and infectious diseases."

The grant will create six new faculty positions for researchers to study issues of border health, provide support for postdoctoral fellows and faculty members, and offer four \$25,000 pilot grants per year to faculty working on new research projects.

The grant also includes money for support staff in each lab, seminar speakers and an external advisory team to evaluate the program, Kirken said. 🗨️

**In 2009, the BBRC was awarded a \$12.4 million, five-year grant renewal from the NIH.**

# A

s an occupational therapist, Stephanie Capshaw, O.T.D., knows that her field is closely linked with that of her colleague, physical therapist Celia Pechak., Ph.D. But due to time constraints in their respective master's programs at The University of Texas at El Paso, their students often do not have a chance to work together until they graduate and start their careers. Capshaw, clinical associate professor of occupational therapy, and Pechak, assistant professor of physical therapy, developed a program to give students experience working together in the field while helping children in a developing country.

BY JENN CRAWFORD



Photo courtesy of UTEP College of Health Sciences

Four UTEP graduate students and their professors traveled to Guatemala in May to learn about the role of rehabilitation in global health. They are, from left, Paulina Herrera; Stephanie Capshaw, O.T.D., clinical associate professor of occupational therapy; Claudia Yagel; Celia Pechak, Ph.D., assistant professor of physical therapy; Christopher Jimenez and Jesse Aguirre.

## Rehabilitation Collaboration

The women taught a new week long course, *Rehabilitation and Global Health*, in Guatemala in May. Their goals were to teach graduate students in occupational and physical therapy about rehabilitation's role in global health, to give them exposure to living in a new country, and to provide service to another community.

They spent the week working with children in a residential therapy center, visiting an orphanage and collaborating with colleagues at a local university.

Christopher Jimenez, a second-year physical therapy master's student with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from UTEP, said visiting *Los Gozosos* (The Joyful Ones), an orphanage in the city of Chimaltenango, was a powerful moment for him.

"I saw children who had different levels of disability, but what I found to be impressive was that this place was not only a home for these children, but it was their school, their park, and the people around them were considered family to them," Jimenez said. "These children were well taken care of and they were loved."

The moment was a reminder of how he should approach patients in his career as a physical therapist.

"I will always be mindful that whomever I'm working with receives my best attention because they are important and they are cared for by others," he said.

Capshaw, Pechak, and the four students—Jimenez, Jesse Aguirre, Pauline Herrera and Claudia Yagel—also spent several days making adaptations to the wheelchairs of two children to better accommodate their disabilities.

Herrera, a third year Master of Physical Therapy student who earned a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from UTEP, said adapting the wheelchairs was the best part of the trip for her.

"Seeing these two beautiful children smile as we felt carefully for the best way to create their cushions so as to prevent further deformity just touched my heart," she said. "Their little bodies simply yearned for physical touch. We can all get so caught up with technicalities, theories, etc., and sometimes we forget that a simple touch can make a person's day and return their dignity."

The UTEP group also provided positioning pillows for more than 50 children that allowed them to sit up in bed, especially while being fed.

The group spent time at Mariano Galvez University in Guatemala City, where they discussed establishing a partnership with the university faculty to help them develop an occupational therapy program and learn new skills in their fields.

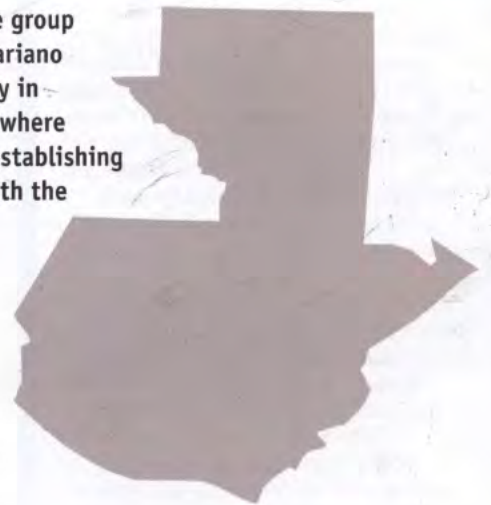
"In general, physical therapists in Guatemala probably practice at the level we did in the 1950s and '60s," Pechak said.

She and Capshaw hope to continue to grow the Rehabilitation and Global Health course in future years.

"Stephanie and I want to create a program that has some immediate feedback in the students learning clinical skills, but we also want our program to have an element of creating change over the long term in terms of how people with disabilities are cared for in that country," Pechak said.

"We're proud of our first start, and excited to see where it goes from here." 📩

**GUATEMALA:** The group spent time at Mariano Galvez University in Guatemala City, where they discussed establishing a partnership with the university.





*On the evening of Nov. 26, 2008, two gunmen from a Pakistan-based militant group opened fire in Mumbai's Leopold Café, killing 10 people and wounding dozens more. During the next two days, coordinated terrorist attacks on the city, India's commercial capital, would leave 195 dead and more than 370 injured.*

Photo courtesy of Arvind Singhal



Arvind Singhal, Ph.D., UTEP professor of communication, center, and Lucía Durá, a UTEP doctoral student in rhetoric and composition, far right, were in Kedoyo Village in Tulungagung District in East Java, Indonesia, in August 2008. The pair was there to assess a positive deviance intervention to reduce girls' trafficking from the village.

# *From Tragedy* To Triumph

BY CATHERINE DUNN

At The University of Texas at El Paso, the Indian Students' Association (ISA) held a memorial service to honor victims of the attack. Among the speakers was Arvind Singhal, Ph.D., the Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston Endowed Professor of Communication and senior research fellow at the UTEP's Sam Donaldson Center for Communication Studies.

"There was a lot of grief that day, and a lot of anger toward Pakistan," Singhal said. "My challenge was to help people focus not on the violence that had occurred, but on what they could do to promote peace."

Singhal is a world-class scholar in the field of positive deviance, which proposes that in any community there are outliers: people who become agents of social change despite facing the same obstacles and challenges as their peers.

"We think that the solutions to the world's problems are external, but each of us has a voice. Each of us is capable of making a difference, even through the smallest act," Singhal said.

Inspired by Singhal's message, the ISA partnered with the Donaldson center to create "Gandhi, Mandela, King and Me: Together For Peace," an event that raised more than \$5,000 for area food banks.

This would become the foundation for UTEP's Social Justice Initiative. Housed in the Department of Communication, the program educates and empowers students to work for human rights on both a local and global basis. "I started the initiative primarily because of the interest I saw

among my students to continue this kind of social activism. Issues of justice and equality are something that all of us breathe in daily, and students bring this sensibility into the classroom. They're eager to change the world for the better," Singhal said.

"I am delighted that UTEP is emerging as a national leader in the field of social justice and positive deviance," he continued. "Our students benefit from the research and learning opportunities created by the initiative, and our community benefits when students put their energy and ideas to work in the field."

With Lucía Durá, a Ph.D. candidate in rhetoric and composition at UTEP, Singhal launched the Social Justice Lecture Series, which brings to the University speakers from social change organizations such as Minga Peru. Working with the indigenous population of the Peruvian Amazon, Minga uses entertainment education to promote women's rights and gender equity.

"Because there are no roads or televisions in this region, most people listen to the radio," said Durá, who traveled to the Amazon to study the impact of Minga's community-based outreach programs. "Minga broadcasts a popular daily soap opera, *Bienvenida Salud*, whose plots deal with issues such as domestic violence, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention." In addition to raising awareness of social issues, the organization offers training and education initiatives to enhance the quality of life in rural villages.

Durá, who planned to go to law school, now is fixed on a career in academia: "I can have a greater role in shaping public policy as an educator and writer than as a lawyer."

Through the Social Justice Initiative, the University has forged links with, among others, Save the Children USA, the Chemnitz University of Technology in Germany, and the Centre for Health and Media in the Netherlands. UTEP students and faculty have traveled to Rwanda to document higher education needs, to Indonesia to study natural resource conservation and to Uganda to learn how positive deviance strategies are being used to reduce human trafficking.

Through a collaboration between UTEP and Tufts University in Massachusetts, Singhal and Durá have written several case studies published by Tuft's *Positive Deviance Wisdom Series*, including *Combating Malnutrition in the Land of a Thousand Rice Fields: Positive Deviance Grows Roots in Vietnam*, *Will Ramon Finish Sixth Grade? Positive Deviance for Student Retention in Rural Argentina* and *Sunflowers Reaching for the Sun: Positive Deviance for Child Protection in Uganda*.

UTEP partnered with Save the Children to produce *Protecting Children from Exploitation and Trafficking: Using the Positive Deviance Approach*

in Uganda and Indonesia. Written by Singhal and Durá and designed by Sara Sanchez, who is pursuing a master's degree in communication at UTEP, the publication is available through Amazon.com.

In 2010, the Department of Communication and the Social Justice Initiative awarded the inaugural ChangeMaker award to four UTEP communication students, providing each winner with \$250 in seed money to begin their own social justice projects.

Among the winners was Davi Kallman, a UTEP alumna who, like Durá, has abandoned her plans for law school to enroll in the University's graduate program in communication. Kallman is using her ChangeMaker award to expand programming and services for disabled students at UTEP.

"When you empower students to generate change, you prepare them to become community leaders," said Frank Pérez, Ph.D., chair of the communication department.

"UTEP has a new Ph.D. program in communication for social change in the pipeline, and if all goes as planned, we will begin accepting our first students in 2012," Pérez continued. "As far as I know, we would be the first university in the United States to offer this kind of degree at the doctoral level. As UTEP moves toward [national research university] status, the Social Justice Initiative will make us all the more competitive in our ability to attract new research funding."

For Singhal, the goal of the initiative is to create what he calls "good troublemakers," men and women who are unafraid to be trailblazers in their quest to help others.

"A university should provide students with an intellectual environment that encourages debate and creativity," Singhal said. "I think that this is something that UTEP does very well." 🍌

## Lucía Durá

### UTEP STUDENT WINS PUBLIC INTEREST AWARD



Lucía Durá, a doctoral candidate in the rhetoric and composition program at The University of Texas at El Paso, has traveled the globe documenting the success of "positive deviants"—those few individuals in every community who find unique ways to look at, and overcome, seemingly intractable problems.

Durá's proposal to apply the positive deviance approach to help raise student retention and graduation rates in Texas has earned her the highly competitive 2010 Public Interest Award from The University of Texas at Arlington Academy of Distinguished Scholars. In addition to receiving a \$5,000 cash prize, Durá will have an opportunity to present her ideas to the Texas legislature.

"The use of positive deviance in problem-solving requires a simple shift in perception," Durá said. "Rather than focusing on the problem and seeking external solutions, we look at what an individual or community is doing right and make that a model that can be replicated by others."

"If we want to raise graduation rates in Texas, we should study the behavior of what I call the least-usual suspects: those students who, despite facing the same obstacles and limited resources as their peers, remain in school and graduate. How did they do this? What can we learn from their success?"

Durá, who graduated magna cum laude from St. Mary's University and received her master's degree in rhetoric and writing studies from UTEP, is the co-author of the book *Protecting Children from Exploitation and Trafficking: Using the Positive Deviance Approach in Uganda and Indonesia*, written with Arvind Singhal, Ph.D., the Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston Endowed Professor of Communication at UTEP.

Durá and Singhal also have written several case studies for the *Positive Deviance Wisdom Series* published by Tufts University.

"WE THINK THAT THE SOLUTIONS TO THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS ARE EXTERNAL, BUT EACH OF US HAS A VOICE. EACH OF US IS CAPABLE OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE, EVEN THROUGH THE SMALLEST ACT."

Arvind Singhal, Ph.D.  
Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston  
Endowed Professor of Communication

Photo courtesy of Rodrigo Armijos



UTEP-Central University of Ecuador (CUE) Research Team members, from left, Rodrigo Armijos, Sc.D. (UTEP); Christian Cando, research assistant (CUE); Hector Olvera, research assistant (UTEP); Marcia Racines, study coordinator (CUE); Natali Heras, research assistant (CUE); and Wen-Whai Li, Ph.D. (UTEP), focused their research attention on the air of Quito, Ecuador.

# Research

FOCUSES ON IMPACT OF AIRBORNE PARTICLES ON HEALTH

BY DANIEL PEREZ

There are many factors that go into someone's health—or lack thereof. They include the usual suspects: diet, exercise and genes. But one of the biggest X-factors is your environment. What you breathe on a daily basis could be what eventually kills you.

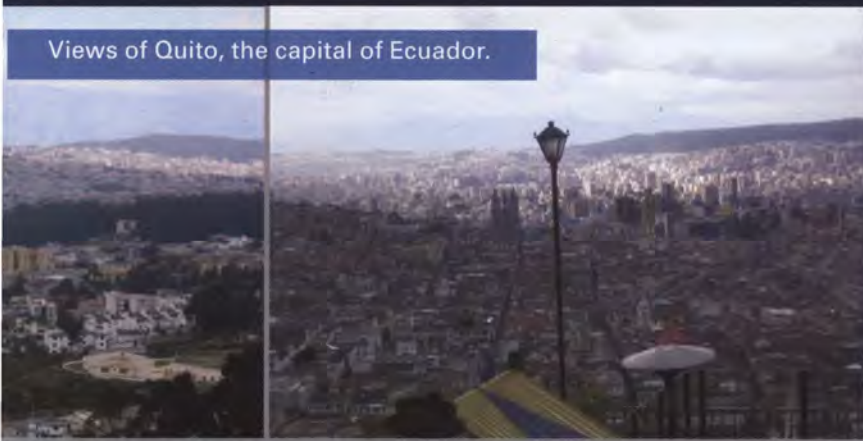
Ingesting a steady diet of airborne pollutants over time could wreak havoc on your cardiovascular system. It could lead to arterial inflammation and arteriosclerosis, which could lead to angina, strokes and heart attacks.

The American Heart Association reported that in 2006, cardiovascular disease (CVD) killed more Americans (831,272) than cancer, accidents and HIV/AIDS combined (693,600). The World Health Organization stated that in 2003, almost 30 percent of all deaths (16.7 million) were a result of CVD.

A multidisciplinary research team from The University of Texas at El Paso is taking the lead on a two-year National Institutes of Health (NIH) study to learn more about the impact of airborne particles on a body. The factor that encouraged the NIH to approve the \$428,000 grant was that, for the first time, the research would be done on 300 healthy children ages 7 to 12 in the hope of finding out when and why cardiovascular problems start.



Views of Quito, the capital of Ecuador.



The team is led by Rodrigo Armijos, Sc.D. and M.D., associate professor of public health sciences. He planned to spend much of his summer break overseeing the research in Quito, Ecuador, that also involves faculty from UTEP, the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and the medical school at Central University of Ecuador in Quito, where Armijos earned his medical degree.

"We chose Quito because it's very polluted. You can feel (the pollution). You can see it," Armijos said. "We needed a polluted place to prove our hypothesis."

Traffic and industry in Quito, the nation's capital, has created a thick layer of pollutants. The city's elevation, 10,000 feet above sea level in the Andes Mountain range, adds to the cardiovascular problem. The thin air forces residents to take in more breaths to get the same amount of oxygen. That means they're inhaling more pollutants more quickly.

Learning which pollutants those are will be among the study's side jobs. For example, Nick Pingitore, Ph.D., professor of geological sciences, will research the air's elemental composition, looking for toxic metals such as arsenic and lead, and the makeup of the dust particles.

The subjects, and in some cases their families, are interviewed and tested to create a baseline from which to build the research. Among the subjects discussed are food consumption, physical activity and medical history. The youths also are tested for early signs of cardiovascular disease with blood draws and ultrasounds.

The researchers partnered with several schools in three different lower-middle-class areas around Quito, which has a population of about 1.4 million. They set up portable air monitoring stations around the students' schools, homes and neighborhoods.

Members of the Quito team, including medical professionals and undergraduate students,

check on those stations monthly. The sites, which are within 10 miles of each other, vary in their level of pollution from high to low.

The study is important because it's trying to pinpoint the when and why behind cardiovascular disease, said Marianne Berwick, Ph.D., professor and chief of the division of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of New Mexico's Center for Health Policy. She has teamed up with UTEP researchers on several air pollution and asthma projects.

If the results show that children are developing cardiovascular disease, the team can suggest stricter controls on air quality to improve the subjects' health as they mature. If the results are negative, the researchers can reassure the residents by marking off at least one health problem.

"However, even if the results are negative, we are gathering other information that may have an impact on the health of the children in the city, and that may be useful in the future," Berwick said.

The staff in Quito appreciate the work done by Armijos and his U.S. colleagues, said Edmundo Estevez, M.D., director of the Center for Biomedicine at the medical campus at Central University.

"This is part of the innovative contribution that Dr. Armijos makes to Ecuador and the world," Estevez said. "Observing the facts, setting their meaning and making visible the hidden relationships that bind the new discoveries."

Upon completion of his work in Ecuador, Armijos plans to continue his research around the El Paso/Juárez region, the most polluted area along the U.S.-Mexico border because of traffic, industry and dust storms.

Once both research studies are compiled and understood, he hopes to create a more comprehensive document that promotes healthy lifestyles, especially among children. ☑

## Alliance

SHINES LIGHT ON VALUE OF UTEP'S REHAB PROGRAMS

Officials at The University of Texas at El Paso have combined a desire to expand global health research opportunities with an opportunity to help an Ecuadorian medical school to develop its faculty, infrastructure and community.

Leaders at UTEP's College of Health Sciences are spearheading this collaboration with Central University of Ecuador in Quito, the nation's capital.

The association began as part of the Minority Health Interdisciplinary Research Training (MHIRT) Program, a \$1.12 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health. The program also includes universities in Mexico, Chile and Costa Rica.

"The first step is to help (Central University officials) to develop the infrastructure that will lead to a successful graduate program," said Kathleen Curtis, Ph.D., dean of UTEP's College of Health Sciences. "The plans are being put in place."

Initial ideas for the Quito campus have included upgrades to the technology, revisions to the curriculum as well as coursework and technical assistance to advance faculty skills.

One of the more ambitious ideas is to create a graduate program in Interdisciplinary Clinical Rehabilitation Sciences (speech-language pathology and physical and occupational therapies). The goal is to generate a steady stream of qualified therapists who can serve the estimated 3 million Ecuadorians who have some kind of disability.

Fausto Coello, M.D., deputy director of the university's School of Medical Technology, said he looked forward to seeing the program implemented at his school because it will raise the academic levels of its faculty.

Coello, one of the Ecuadorian educators who visited UTEP in March, said he hoped the collaboration would expand to the school's managerial and organizational processes.

"(The partnership) will take shape through specific projects. Teachers and students from both universities will participate in training programs, research and technical assistance," he said.

As for UTEP students participating in the MHIRT program, the college wants them to expand the depth and breadth of their international research experience beyond the U.S.-Mexico border. They will live with families while in the country to immerse themselves in the culture and improve their understanding of local customs, and health and social issues.

Celia Pechak, Ph.D., assistant professor in UTEP's physical therapy program, has worked in Guatemala, Haiti, Nepal and Vietnam during the past 20 years to promote global health. She looks forward to what may eventually come from this partnership.

"This is a work in progress, and in the very early stages," she said.

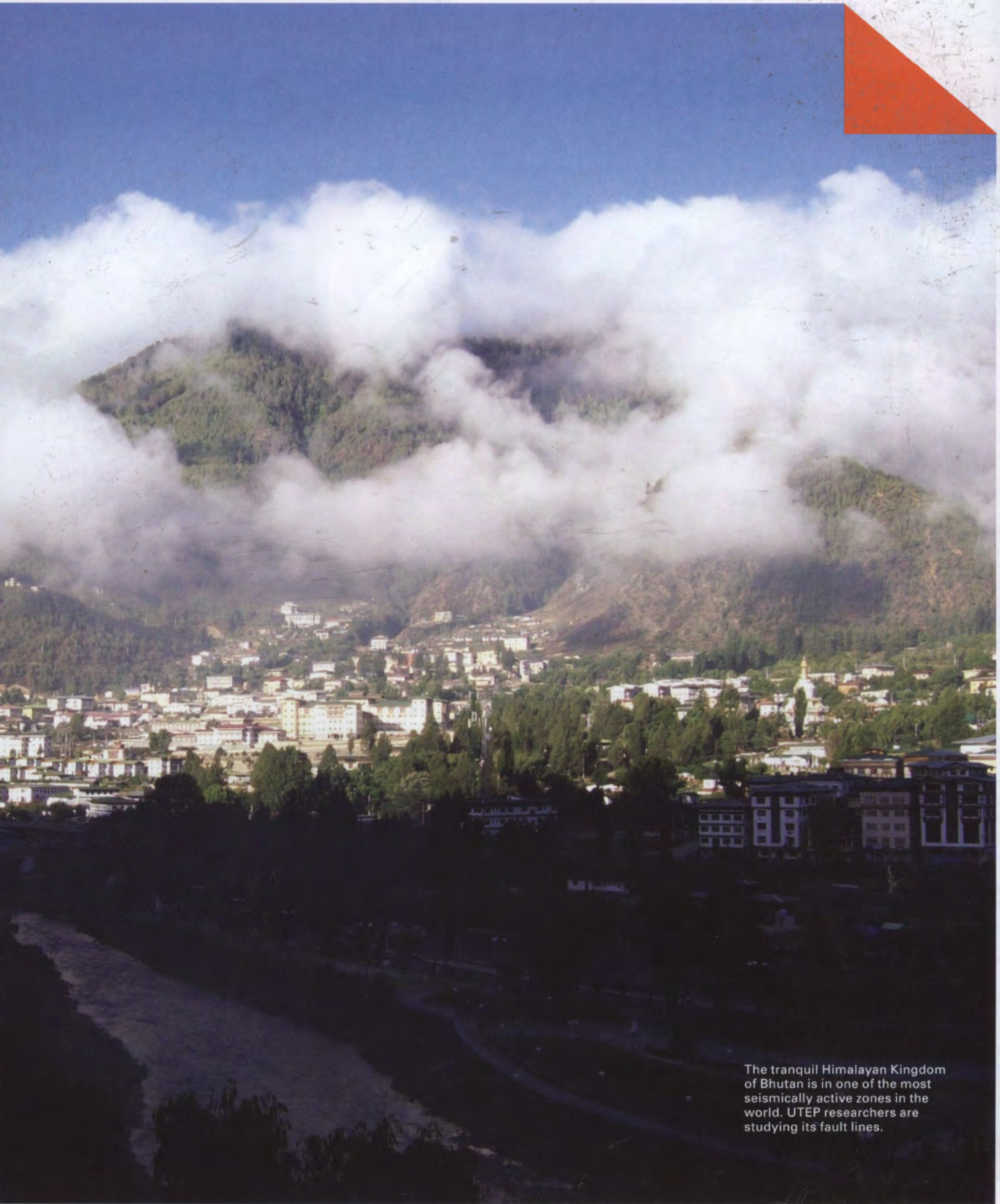


Photo courtesy of Nacho Cubillos

The tranquil Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan is in one of the most seismically active zones in the world. UTEP researchers are studying its fault lines.

# UTEP Geologists Take

BY DANIEL PEREZ

## 'Sedimental' Journey in Bhutan

Jose Hurtado, Ph.D., associate professor of geology, has a simple goal for his Himalayan research: identify undiscovered earthquake faults that could generate glacial outbreaks that would cause catastrophic flooding in unsuspecting Bhutanese villages below.

But the devil is in the details.

Hurtado spent much of May 2010 continuing his field investigation in the Kingdom of Bhutan. He and Matt Cannon, a UTEP geology graduate student, hiked most of the time around 12,000 feet above sea level in isolated areas to collect sediment samples that may not have seen the light of day for thousands if not millions of years.

NASA's Earth Surface and Interior program provided nearly \$200,000 for the two-year study. It included hundreds of hours studying the space agency's satellite imagery and topographical maps developed from data collected during space shuttle missions. The purpose was to find hidden geological hazards in one of the most seismically active zones in the world.

Very little is known about the fault lines below the Land of the Thunder Dragon, but the fractured landscapes and the morphing faces of river terraces imply that there are underground faults that need to be identified.

"This is a very exciting assignment," Cannon said. He was part of a team researching the northwest part of the country near the crest of the Himalayas. "Because of the site's remoteness, it has received little attention. We have the potential to do groundbreaking work."

In some ways, the two scientists became topographical detectives who looked for clues in rocks and sediments as much as from data collected using laser range finders and global positioning systems.

While many faults have been discovered via satellite imagery, the kind of research that Hurtado does will provide additional benefits to the country and its geologists. He and Cannon worked with representatives of Bhutan's Department of Geology and Mines, including some who earned geology degrees at UTEP.

Their calculations will determine the level of earthquake risk in the tranquil country that has almost 700,000 people in a land mass half the size of Indiana. It has valleys, subtropical savannahs, and is bordered by China, India and the often inhospitable Himalayas.

The Bhutanese government's interest in its fault lines also is economic. The country has ventured into hydro-electric power and exports energy to India. Bhutan hopes to generate employment and sustain growth through hydropower options, according to the 2010 CIA report on the country.

Hurtado's main concern is if a quake were to crack open a glacier that has served as a natural dam. The massive volume of water heading down would be powerful enough to carry vast amounts of debris in its path. The effect when it hits a populated area would be devastating.

For example, a 2009 quake about 110 miles east of Thimphu, the nation's capital, registered 6.1 on the Richter scale. Ten people were reported killed by the temblor, which also produced several major landslides, including some that clogged key rivers.

The possible destruction is what makes Hurtado's research so important, said Randall Parrish, Ph.D., professor of isotope geology at the University of Leicester, England. He has made five trips to the "geologically fascinating" Bhutan since 1996 to study its fault lines.

Knowing the location of a fault and its recent activity could indicate the area's quake potential along with related natural disasters. The clues uncovered through these investigations will help scientists and government officials to better understand the future.

"The work of Hurtado and his colleagues will contribute to this

overall goal," Parrish said.

Working with the UTEP professor can be challenging, but rewarding, said Abby Woody, a geological sciences graduate student who earned her master's degree in early May. She was part of his Bhutan research team in spring 2009 and studied deformations in four river terraces.

"He has high expectations. He knows if you have promise and he'll push you to do your best," she said, adding that he shows a different side of himself on research trips. "He thrives in the field. He's in his element."

The data she collected was important because it could impact the location of roads, villages and hydro-electric plants. But the project's benefits go beyond providing information wanted by NASA and needed by Bhutan.

It provides professional development for the Bhutanese government geologists who join the researchers, gives UTEP representatives the opportunity to leave a positive mark in the country whose architecture inspired the University's, and it helps train young scientists such as Cannon and Woody to become primary investigators of the future. ☞

**BHUTAN:** Very little is known about the fault lines below the Land of the Thunder Dragon, but the fractured landscapes and the morphing faces of river terraces imply that there are underground faults that need to be identified.



UTEP graduate student Abby Woody, back left, and Jose Hurtado, Ph.D., associate professor of geology, back center, stand with members of their Bhutanese research team in front of the "Tiger's Nest" Dzong.

Photo courtesy of Jose Hurtado

# SUMMER AT The Office



The UTEP featured summer interns are, from left, Elida Perez (Associated Press), Alex Muñoz (JPMorgan Chase), Jeffrey Richards and Robert Viña-Marrufo (Novartis) and Natalia Garcia Ferreiro (International Music Academy).

School may have been out for summer, but a number of undergraduate and graduate students from The University of Texas at El Paso continued their education by participating in internships around the country and overseas.

"Doing an internship makes you more marketable when you graduate," said George Barton, Ed.D., director of UTEP's University Career Center. "Recruiters want to see folks who have experience."

Getting a job right out of college can be a catch-22: employers want to hire people with experience, but in order to get experience, candidates have to get a job in their field. An internship is a way to overcome that dilemma, Barton said.

"Employers understand when they hire you as an intern that you don't necessarily already have experience," he said. "You're providing a great service to the employer as well. Students bring energy and enthusiasm to the workplace, and also the knowledge base and expertise that they are developing in the classroom. Additionally, employers become partners in the educational process; they are

enhancing our students' educations and the quality of our graduates."

Internships also are important for exposing students to life in their chosen career field and opportunities beyond El Paso. They can experience other places without making a lifelong commitment.

"Candidates who do internships are able to test-drive their careers," Barton said. "It gives students more specific direction in their chosen professions, and it helps them find out early on if they're pursuing the right major."

Sometimes, internships result in job offers.

"They've demonstrated that they're valuable candidates and can hit the ground running," Barton said. "From an employer's point of view, they have less turnover and they have happier employees because they're hiring someone who knows what they're getting into."

Barton said about 500 students register their internships with the University Career Center each year, but probably three times that many complete internships or jobs related to their field of study.

## Blogroll

In the summer of 2010, interns represented UTEP around the country, from Wall Street in New York to the Associated Press in Dallas and the Novartis pharmaceutical laboratories in Cambridge, Mass. One student traveled as far as the Czech Republic to participate in a summer music program.

Five of those students wrote blogs about their summer internship experiences. (See blog websites on page 21)

## Elida Perez

Associated Press, Dallas  
[utepcommunication.blogspot.com](http://utepcommunication.blogspot.com)

Recent UTEP graduate Elida Perez calls herself the "Internship Queen."

During the past three years she has polished her skills as a journalist by interning each summer with newspapers and news bureaus, including the *The Spokesman Review* in Spokane, Wash. (2007), *The Statesman Journal* in Salem, Ore. (2008), and Scripps Howard News Bureau in Washington, D.C. (2009).

This year she spent 12 weeks from June to August interning as a general assignment reporter at the Dallas bureau of the Associated Press.

"Internships have made me into a stronger journalist. It's one thing when you're learning how to write stories in school and it's completely different when you're in a newsroom," she said.

The newsrooms where Perez has interned have become the classrooms where she's learned to develop story ideas and overcome challenges faced daily by professional journalists.

"You get to see firsthand what it's like to work on deadlines and run out and cover something when you're not quite sure what it's about," she said.

Perez earned her degree in communication studies from UTEP this summer. While at UTEP, she took advantage of the training opportunities the University offers aspiring journalists by working as the editor-in-chief of UTEP's student newspaper, *The Prospector*, and as the media editor of UTEP's student online magazine, *Borderzine.com*.

"What I've tried to strive for the last couple of years of my education is to be able to learn different things and know how to be more versatile as a journalist," she said.

## Alex Muñoz

JPMorgan Chase & Co., New York City  
[utepbusiness.blogspot.com](http://utepbusiness.blogspot.com)

Alex Muñoz, a senior finance and accounting major, spent the summer with financial behemoth JPMorgan Chase & Co. at the company's headquarters in Manhattan.

He was one of four undergraduates from the College of Business Administration who represented UTEP and the school's chapter of the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) in coveted internship positions based in New York City.

The other interns were Kristin White, a junior who worked with IBM; Jose Guerra, a senior who worked with Citi; and Diego Rico, a junior who was an intern at Goldman Sachs.

"The students participated in intern positions of the highest level," said Robert Nachtmann, D.B.A., dean of the College of

Business Administration. "[The firms each student worked for] are not looking for assistants, they're looking for the next generation of professionals in the field of business and economics."

Before Muñoz took the train from his Brooklyn Heights apartment into the financial district for the first time, he represented the student body as president of the UTEP Student Government Association (SGA). But he always dreamed of interning with the best of the best.

His mother did her part to keep her son motivated. Every morning before school, he would find an SEO flier taped to the mirror of his bathroom as a constant reminder of his goal.

"She made sure I saw it every morning, and every morning she would ask me if I had applied," Muñoz said.

During his time at JPMorgan, Muñoz worked as a member of the U.S. equity derivatives control group, evaluating the financial consequences of the creation and selling of certain investment products.

"This was the best opportunity for me, while I'm still young and flexible, to see part of the world I'd been waiting to see for so long," he said.

"DOING AN INTERNSHIP  
MAKES YOU MORE  
MARKETABLE WHEN  
YOU GRADUATE."

George Barton, Ed.D.  
Director of UTEP's  
University Career Center

## Jeffrey Richards and Robert Viña-Marrufo

Novartis, Cambridge, Mass.  
[utepscience.blogspot.com](http://utepscience.blogspot.com)

Jeffrey Richards and Robert Viña-Marrufo were the first students from UTEP to be selected for The Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR) Scientific Internship program in Cambridge, Mass., one of the world's pharmaceutical leaders.

From June to August, juniors Viña-Marrufo and Richards performed ophthalmology and organic chemistry experiments, respectively, under the guidance of an NIBR research mentor.

"One of the reasons I wanted to get this

internship was because I've been working with chemistry in an academic environment," said Richards, a chemistry major at UTEP who worked on a hypertension drug at NIBR. "The opportunity with Novartis worked out perfectly because now I have experience working in an industry setting."

The NIBR Scientific Internship Program is a paid, 40-hour per week program that combines practical laboratory research with educational components.

An aspiring academic researcher, Viña-Marrufo said the NIBR internship helped him develop the techniques he needs to set up well-designed experiments, techniques that he said are necessary if he intends to have a successful career as an academic researcher studying infectious diseases. It also helped him make connections with other scientists who may help him advance his research in the future.

Richards' background working in the organic chemistry labs at UTEP gave him the hands-on experience he needed to qualify for the internship.

"A lot of the concepts in chemistry are hard to understand coming from a book," said Richards. "But once you're able to apply what you learn in a laboratory setting, you become a lot more comfortable in the concepts in chemistry and how they work and why they work."

## Natalia Garcia Ferreiro

International Music Academy, Pilsen, Czech Republic  
[utepmusic.blogspot.com](http://utepmusic.blogspot.com)

Natalia Garcia Ferreiro is no stranger to the stage. The sophomore music performance major began playing piano at age 7 and has since performed for audiences as far away as Spain.

When the opportunity came up to take summer classes at one of the premier music programs in the world, it was music to her ears.

In July, Garcia participated in the International Music Academy in Pilsen, Czech Republic, a four-week program that consisted of classes taught by world-renowned piano faculty.

"I tried to learn as much as I could about music," Garcia said, "from the technique to how to achieve better interpretation."

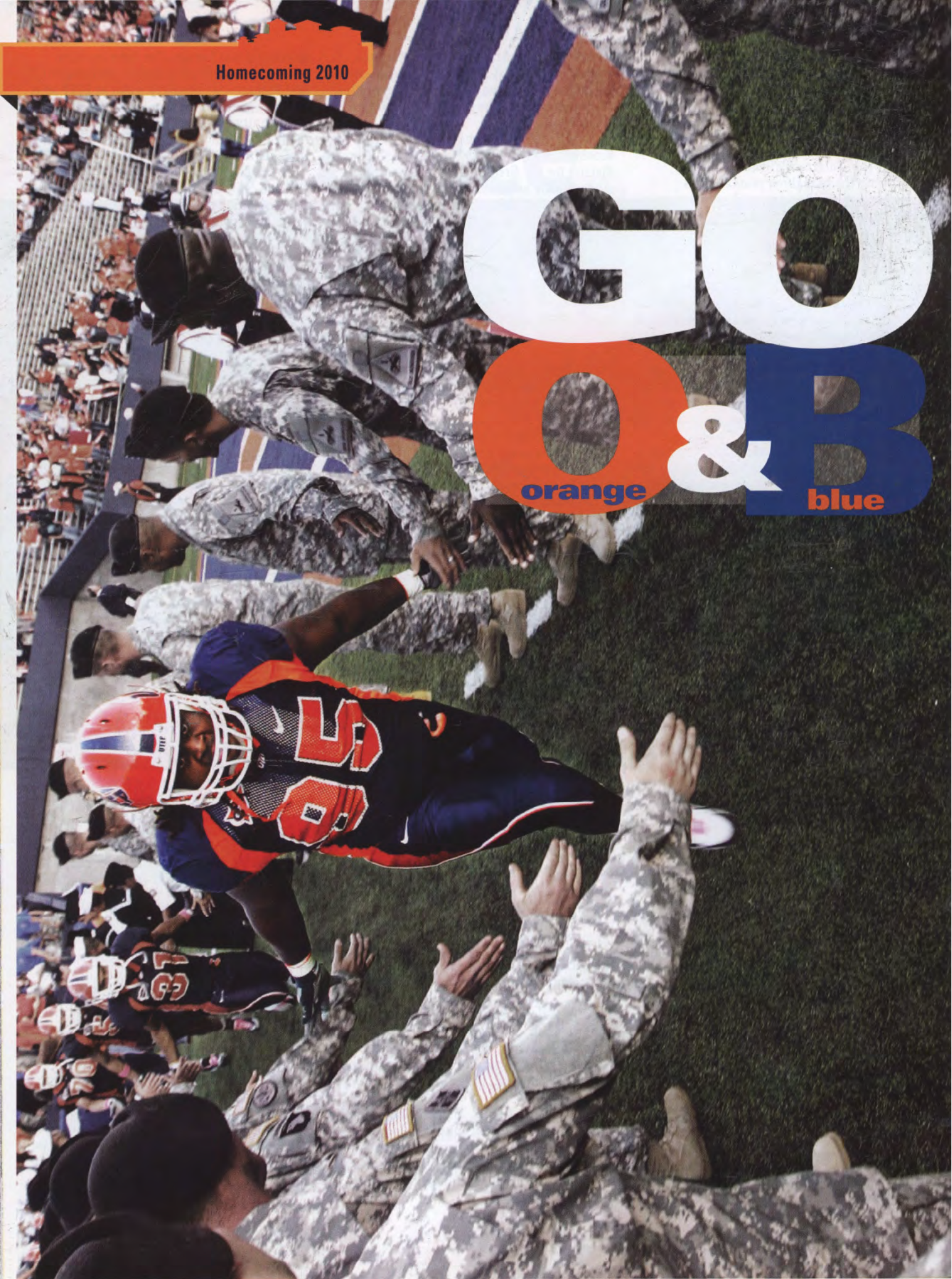
Garcia encouraged other students to seek chances to study abroad and work at internships. "I think everyone is capable and deserves to take advantage of opportunities like this," she said.

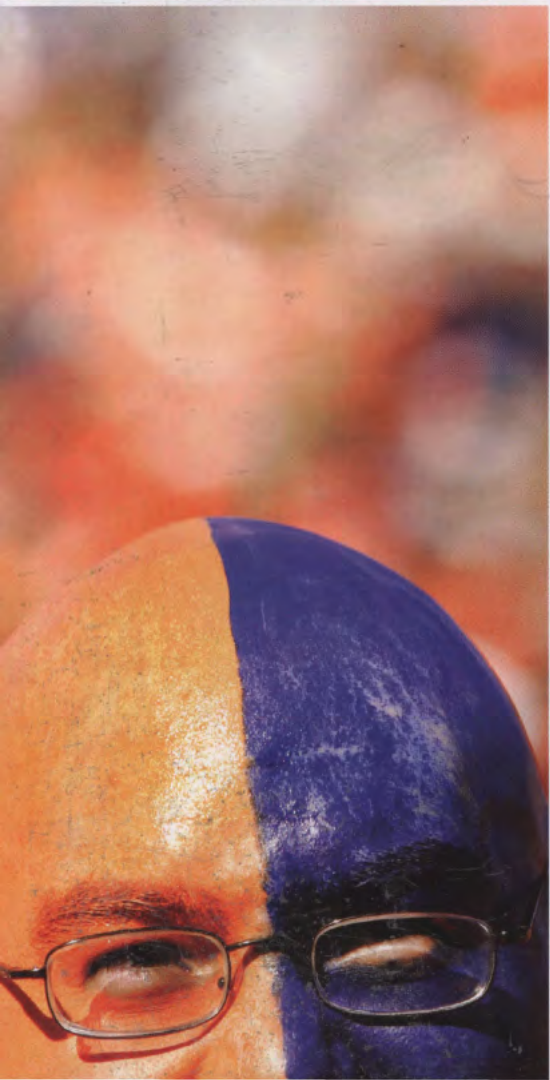
"I cannot express how important these summer music festivals are for students," Dena Kay Jones, D.M.A., division chair of keyboard at the UTEP Department of Music, said. She noted that this type of study abroad program can "amazingly develop self-confidence, performance ability and skill sets required to be successful as a performing musician." 🎵



Homecoming 2010

# GO O & B orange blue





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TEXAS AT EL PASO

*Distinguished  
Alumni*

Every year, The University of Texas at El Paso honors a group of men and women whose achievements stand out as monuments to dedication, integrity and hard work. They are the finest among us. They are the Distinguished Alumni.

We do not cite them solely for their accomplishments, however. We recognize them because they inspire others, the current generation of students who will follow their path, guided by their bold examples. Setting the bar high is hard, and reaching it is even harder, but neither can be done without mentors.

This year, the University has selected three Distinguished Alumni who will be celebrated during Homecoming in October. Please join us in honoring those who have honored us through their achievement and example.

STORIES BY ELIZABETH B. LANG

2010



2010 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI



Ceci Miles Mulvihill

Ask Ceci Miles Mulvihill '69 what inspires her work and what she liked best about her undergraduate days at UTEP, and the answer is the same. It comes with an exclamation point: "People!"

It is no wonder, then, that Miles Mulvihill now heads RMPersonnel, the successful integrated personnel and business services firm based in El Paso. As the president of a 3,000+-employee, six-state operation focused on human resources, she has the opportunity to build on her passion for people. "We get to help the business owner, and at the same time the job seeker," she said. "It's great when you can find the connection. I have worked with so many marvelous people!"

Her passion for the business side of helping people goes way back to a part-time job in the personnel office at The Popular department store.

With 10 children to educate, her dad paid only her Texas Western tuition. "We had to work, had to find jobs for everything else, for books, clothes, just everything. I had to really learn to organize myself, with job, sorority and my classes. That was a great challenge," she remembered.

And she loved the whole experience: job, sorority, clubs, football games, and "basketball - oh, my goodness, basketball in 1966!"

The university experience, which culminated in a bachelor's in education, brought lessons both in and out of class. She learned in her first Spanish class not to be so sure she really "knew" anything. And though she was an admitted science-phobe,

the surprising rush of teaching the mysteries of the amoeba to nine-year-olds convinced her that it's important to try "what you think you don't like." The most essential lesson of all, though, was the passion and satisfaction she found in that necessary part-time college job.

Later, although she enjoyed the challenge of teaching her young students, she kept her hand in her dad's customs brokerage business - in the personnel office. When life changes in 1987 required a bigger paycheck, she channeled her powerful passion for people into Integrated Personnel Services, which evolved, with family help past an early failure, into today's RMPersonnel. Now, the company she and her sisters started with their father's help is ranked 147th in *Hispanic Business's* annual list of the U.S.'s top 500 Hispanic-owned businesses, and has the second-highest volume of the list's El Paso firms. The secret to her success? "Look for your passion!"

Miles Mulvihill's dedication to people extends to numerous community and civic groups, including the El Paso Zoological Society, the Regional Economic and Development Corp (REDCo), UTEP's Centennial Commission and Campaign Leadership Council, College of Education Advisory Board, and Development Board, and the Paso del Norte Group. Last fall, she was one of 35 role models honored by the Paso del Norte Entrepreneurship Oral History Project, and she is the 2006 UTEP Department of Education Gold Nugget.

## 2010 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI



## Hank Cohen

The fast-paced life Hank Cohen leads as CEO and Partner in Trifecta Entertainment & Media, which plays an increasingly influential role in the entertainment industry's dynamic indie-syndie segment, seems far removed from his days at The University of Texas at El Paso.

Since playing Miner baseball for his dad, El Paso legend Andy Cohen, he has risen steadily in his field, and most would view his previous position as CEO of huge and profitable MGM Television as a pinnacle. But Trifecta, the fully integrated multi-media development, production, distribution, sales and programming company Cohen created with his ex-MGM management team, is revolutionizing the marketplace and promises to be his crowning achievement.

An unmotivated pre-law student, Cohen reluctantly answered his dad's challenge to audition for an El Paso Playhouse production. Showing up with sister Marina along for moral support, he found that the project was *Death of a Salesman*, the only play he'd ever read. Encouraged by this serendipity, he won a leading role. From the first rehearsal to the final curtain, he "enjoyed everything about it." And he knew that the entertainment world was where he belonged.

Cohen, the 2001 College of Liberal Arts Gold Nugget, quickly moved to the Communication Department's Radio-TV-Film program. From then on, college was no longer work; it was play. In a hurry now to finish his education and move on, he didn't do university theater, but after

earning his bachelor's degree in mass communication in 1978 he set off to tour the country in dinner theater for several very enjoyable years.

The fun of live theater couldn't last forever, so Cohen went to Burbank, where the connection between UTEP mentor John Siqueiros and *The Tonight Show* producer, El Paso native and 1970 UTEP Distinguished Alumnus Rudy Tellez, gained him an interview at NBC. A bit older by now than the usual studio page, Cohen still made the waiting list. When his turn came, he began a rapid trajectory: he moved only a short time later from page staff at NBC to his first network executive job at ABC. It was that leap that eventually propelled him to the top of MGM Television.

With the creative and savvy Cohen at the helm, MGM Television produced and distributed such hit series as *Stargate SG-1* and its spin-offs, as well as *Dead Like Me*, *Jeremiah*, and the syndicated hit show *She Spies*.

"Not to be trite," Cohen said, "but if you find what you love, you'll not only succeed, but you'll never feel like you're even working."

UTEP's inclusive, "grounded" atmosphere laid a solid foundation for Cohen's endeavors. The security of acceptance on his own terms lent resilience when the bumps and disappointments came. And when he became President at MGM, he says, he knew he could either become what the high-flying television business expected him to become, or "stay me." He chose wisely: he stayed Hank Cohen.



## Mike Loya

Mike Loya '77 thrives on competition. Loya heads Vitol Inc., the muscular American arm of The Vitol Group, one of the largest energy trading companies in the world. Multibillion-dollar Vitol beats the competition through the efficiency and diversity of product and partnerships that are hallmarks of its powerful global presence.

Competitiveness always has been a factor in Loya's success. "I always wanted to be the best at what I did... You're proving yourself to yourself." It was like that going from El Paso, where he was raised the oldest of seven high-achieving siblings in a first-generation Mexican-American family, to the Harvard Business School. And it has been like that ever since.

His competitive project at present is the assembly of a first-class electricity trading team. "It's like a pro team. You try to get the best players, your stars and your support players. The challenge is identifying, recruiting and getting the best of the best for your team," he said, with all the enthusiasm of an NBA coach. Early in his career, the object was to get ahead, but now "it's more internal: can I stay on top of the game?"

Loya's game at UTEP was rugby, a game that rewarded his competitive drive and a passion he took with him to Harvard. He continued to play club rugby as his business career advanced, in Houston and in London. "I was good," he said.

He was good at his classes, too, but it was more than class work that contributed to his future success. "We had labs on Friday afternoons,"

he remembers, "and you would go in and play with messy fluids." The professors were accessible, and students often joined them off-campus after lab, developing the ability to relate well to educated, intelligent people. "That helps you a lot in life," said Loya, the 2006 Gold Nugget from the College of Engineering.

Loya had planned to leave UTEP after two years to study architecture, but he stayed for the stimulating mechanical engineering curriculum and faculty. Business beckoned, however, as the right fit for his competitive nature. And to be the best, he decided, he should earn an MBA from Harvard. The idea of the Ivy League, distant from UTEP in so many ways, intimidated him at first, he said, but "pretty soon I realized I had a very good education. I had nothing to be insecure about." He received his M.B.A. in 1979.

Now, he's interested in seeing that tomorrow's students have a chance at a good education, too. With little time to spend in civic activities these days, one board he makes room for is YES Prep, an innovative multi-campus charter school initiative in Houston that, through its rigorous curriculum and "whatever it takes" attitude, places 100 percent of its graduates—95 percent of whom are Hispanic or African-American—in four-year colleges.

Above all, Loya is a believer in risk-taking. "You may stumble along the way, but take calculated risks," he offered, "and don't overestimate the downside, or you'll make sub-optimal decisions. Don't play it safe. Take chances."

## 2010 GOLD NUGGET AWARD RECIPIENTS



The University of Texas at El Paso and the UTEP Alumni Association are proud to present the 2010 Gold Nugget Award recipients. These outstanding alumni are recognized by each of the University's colleges and schools for their achievements and dedication.

STORIES BY ROBERT L. SELTZER



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**ROBERT W. "BILL" GILMER**

B.A., Economics, '68

Robert W. "Bill" Gilmer, Ph.D., is proof that the quality of a university is best measured by the success of its graduates.

As the vice president in charge at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, El Paso Branch, this UTEP alumnus now recruits UTEP graduates.

"I work very closely with several UTEP graduates at the branch," he said. "They're all top-notch. If you respect the graduates, you have to respect the institution."

He has earned the same respect he gives the UTEP alumni who work for him.

Gilmer's bachelor's degree in economics in 1968 propelled him to a successful career that has earned him a Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's College of Business Administration.

He earned master's and doctoral degrees in economics from The University of Texas at Austin and set out on a career path that began with a researcher position at the Institute for Defense Analyses, an Alexandria, Va., think tank.

Since 2002, he has overseen Federal Reserve operations for West Texas and Southern New Mexico, including the annual receipt of more than \$10 billion for regional banks.

Gilmer also is the El Paso Branch's senior economist, researching critical issues including energy interests and the border economy. By determining which areas of the local economy are weak or strong, Gilmer's research helps protect client assets.



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION

**DAVID RAPISAND**

B.B.A., Accounting, '76

Even in an age when the recession has taught every household the meaning of the term "budget," few individuals understand the word as well as David Rapisand.

As the director of financial analysis and overhead control for the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. in Fort Worth, Texas, he is responsible for a \$2.6 billion operating budget.

Rapisand's remarkable budget management skills have been a tremendous asset to his company, the nation's leading maker of jet fighters. The company relies on him to keep a firm rein on expenses. Analyzing strengths and weaknesses, Rapisand, a 1976 UTEP graduate with a bachelor's degree in accounting, determines the budgets for each department, cutting back where he sees waste and inefficiency.

"When I present a budget plan, I put all the dots together," he said.

It's a demanding job, one that requires both business acumen and strong character. Rapisand has shown he's up to the task, and that has earned him this year's Gold Nugget Award from the College of Business Administration. In addition to his financial duties, Rapisand, who also holds an M.B.A. from Loyola University in New Orleans, has launched a significant recruiting effort at UTEP, maintaining a close relationship with the University.

"Since 2007, we have hired just over 40 UTEP alumni," he said. "UTEP delivers. These kids get a fine education, and our executives are totally impressed. They tell me, 'Bring them on.'"

## 2010 GOLD NUGGET AWARD RECIPIENTS



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
**SUSAN RUTLEDGE CREWS**  
 B.S., Education, '68; M.Ed.,  
 Guidance and Counseling, '72

Susan Rutledge Crews embodies the notion that the greatest triumphs in life are those that you help others achieve. That philosophy has guided her as a counselor for nearly 40 years.

A recipient of the 2010 Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's College of Education, Crews earned her bachelor's degree in education (1968) and a master's in guidance and counseling (1972) from the University. Like many of this year's award recipients, she felt humbled by the honor.

"I immediately thought of the many outstanding educators I have met during the last 41 years," she said. "To receive such an award was earth-shaking for me."

Crews need not have been surprised. She is the lead counselor for the El Paso Independent School District, where her responsibilities include coordinating the guidance and counseling programs at 36 PK-12 campuses. Crews has won numerous awards, including the Governor's Educational Award of Excellence.

"My goal as a professional counselor is to lift up the people around me," she said. "If I can help other people taste success and overcome barriers, no matter how small, I can help them attain the tools to cope with almost any life situation."

"My largest success," she said, "is realized every day when I see my clients, students and interns look at the real issues that may be plaguing them and the tools they need to move past their pain into a place of hope and possibility again."



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
**JOSE "JOE" CARDENAS**  
 B.S.C.E., '74

Upon learning he had been selected to receive a Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's College of Engineering, Jose "Joe" Cardenas took a journey no travel agency can set up: he went back in time.

"Going back to 1974, the year I got my civil engineering degree, I said, 'Who would have thought?' I never dreamed of an honor like this."

After graduating, he worked as a petroleum engineer and later joined an engineering consulting firm. In 1990, he and another UTEP alumnus, Roberto Moreno, launched their own civil engineering consulting company, Moreno-Cardenas Inc.

"We look back and say we're glad we were too naïve to understand the risk we were taking," he said.

It was a risk worth taking. The company focuses on public works projects for the city and state. It was the lead engineering firm for the Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant, a joint venture of Ft. Bliss and El Paso Water Utilities to help a water-starved region cope with future shortages. The plant earned Moreno-Cardenas the Texas Council of Engineering Companies award for the top engineering project in Texas in 2008.

Cardenas also has lent his leadership skills to organizations including the Housing Authority for the City of El Paso and the Texas Board of Professional Engineers.

Another rewarding experience is the fact that his brother, who graduated three years earlier, is also receiving a Gold Nugget Award from the College of Engineering this year.



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
**TOMAS "TOM" CARDENAS**  
 B.S.C.E., '71

For Tomas "Tom" Cardenas Jr., receiving the Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's College of Engineering is a family affair.

Cardenas receives the honor this year along with his younger brother, Jose "Joe" Cardenas. They earned bachelor's degrees in civil engineering three years apart: Tom in 1971, Joe in 1974.

It's not the first time they have received the same award. The Texas Society of Engineers, El Paso Chapter, named Tom the year's Outstanding Young Engineer in 1982. Joe received the award a year later.

Each was selected for the Gold Nugget Award on his own merits. For Tom, that meant being one of the most successful entrepreneurs in El Paso. He launched Cardenas and Associates, a civil engineering design and consulting firm, in 1983.

"In 1985, a friend approached me with an opportunity to do construction management on a facility in Mexico City, so we started ECM International Inc.," Tom said. "He later left [the business], and I became sole owner of two companies."

Tom sold Cardenas and Associates in 1996, allowing him to focus on ECM. As president of the company, Tom has managed more than 70 million square feet of facilities construction for local and international projects representing more than \$60 billion.

"The solid base of learning provided by UTEP during my four years [there] allowed me to comfortably and confidently undertake new challenges," he said. "The well-rounded curriculum along with excellent professors was the beginning."



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
**JUAN HERRERA**  
 B.S.M.E., '69; B.S.Met., Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, '70;  
 M.S.M.E., '70

As a UTEP engineering professor from 1977 through 2003, when he was granted emeritus status, Juan Herrera, Ph.D., operated under one guiding principle: the more his students achieved, the more he himself achieved. By that standard, Herrera was a huge success.

One student was John "Danny" Olivas, Ph.D., the former NASA astronaut and 2006 UTEP Distinguished Alumnus who flew two space shuttle missions.

"Danny was an ace, an achiever," Herrera said. "But he was not my only great student. I saw many of them do as well or better than students from Yale or Harvard."

Herrera knows about accomplishments. He earned two bachelor's degrees from UTEP—one in mechanical engineering in 1969 and the second in metallurgical and materials engineering in 1970. He also holds a master's degree in mechanical engineering (1970) from the University. This year, he is a UTEP College of Engineering Gold Nugget Award recipient. The honor reflects his success in both the academic and business worlds.

He earned a doctorate in mechanical engineering from the University of Houston in less than two years. Then, after joining UTEP's College of Engineering, he co-founded a small but successful engineering consulting firm with fellow UTEP alumnus and professor, Steve Stafford, Ph.D. That company, Herrera, Stafford & Associates, has found a deep recruiting pool at UTEP.

"I know what great engineers these students can be, you better believe it," Herrera said.

## 2010 GOLD NUGGET AWARD RECIPIENTS



COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES  
**VIRGINIA MARTINEZ**  
B.S.W., '89

Virginia Martinez launched her UTEP career in her early 30s, but whatever she experienced in lost time, she made up for with determination and enthusiasm.

She enrolled at UTEP in 1987—a decision fueled by her love for a job she had just started: secretary for the agency now known as the Texas Department of Human Services.

"When I left the office on my first day of work, I said to myself, 'I want to be a social worker,'" she said.

After earning her social work degree from UTEP in 1989, she completed a master's degree in social work from The University of Texas at Austin in 1992.

She found a position at what is now El Paso's University Medical Center, where today she is the senior social worker for the Crime Victim Services Program.

"I identify patients who need help: victims of assault or domestic violence or other crimes," she said. "I assess their needs, guiding them to agencies that may help them, either emotionally or financially."

Martinez was chosen this spring as the Social Worker of the Year by the Texas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and this fall will be honored by UTEP's College of Health Sciences with the 2010 Gold Nugget Award.

"You start by helping your clients get their noses above water," she said. "When you help them, you help society."



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
**BEVERLY PENN**  
B.F.A., Studio Art/Sculpture, '82

A young woman studying painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, Beverly Penn was captivated by a huge work of art when she visited El Paso in 1977. The work of art was the city itself.

"That early impression of the natural world in and around El Paso influences my art to this day," she said.

Inspired by the splendor of the region, she moved to El Paso, enrolled at UTEP and was introduced to metal as an artistic medium.

"Some cutting-edge work was being done in the Art Department, particularly in the area of metal," Penn said.

With her fine arts degree from UTEP completed in 1982, she went on to a distinguished career that has earned her a Gold Nugget Award from the College of Liberal Arts. An art and design professor at Texas State University in San Marcos for the past 20 years, Penn has exhibited her sculpture and jewelry internationally.

Her recent works include bronze castings of weeds and other botanicals harvested near her home in Austin. A review in the online magazine *TheDetroit.com* lauded Penn as one of the artists whose "deep thought and fine craftsmanship have established the continued relevance of metalsmithing."

Penn's pieces are in the permanent collections of, among others, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York and the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
**BERTHA TOSCANO**  
B.A., Spanish, '33

It's not often that one individual can outdistance an entire university. But Bertha Toscano has done it.

UTEP will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2014; Toscano will beat the University to the punch by one year.

In the meantime, the 97-year-old graduate of what was then the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy has received an honor she says she does not deserve—a Gold Nugget Award from the College of Liberal Arts.

"It has made me very happy," the Mexico City resident said. "But I don't think I deserve it. Maybe UTEP is honoring me because of my age."

Toscano is a marvel of longevity, but her modesty belies her accomplishments. Toscano's remarkable career spanned nearly 40 years at ASARCO, where she was a human resources director at the company's now-shuttered copper smelter in El Paso and at facilities in Mexico City. For much of that time, she was one of the company's only female executives.

Toscano, who earned her degree in Spanish in 1933, will attend this year's UTEP Homecoming, an event she has attended every year since her 50th class reunion in 1983.

"My goodness, I'm so old," she said, laughing. "I don't know what I'm doing here. I think God lost my file upstairs."

UTEP did not lose her file, and is proud to honor her for her professional achievements.



COLLEGE OF SCIENCE  
**MATTHEW "MATT" DIETHELM**  
B.S., Mathematical Sciences, '63

Matthew "Matt" Diethelm, Ph.D., UTEP's College of Science Gold Nugget Award recipient, believed the knowledge of electronics and digital computers would take him far. He just did not realize how far.

After graduating from Texas Western College (now UTEP) with a mathematical sciences degree in 1963, he worked for General Electric, focusing on mission planning for NASA's Apollo space program in Florida.

"It was an amazing experience, and I never really realized exactly what we had done until the moon landing in 1969," he said.

The moon landing came a year after he had transferred to Phoenix, where he earned master's and doctoral degrees in engineering from Arizona State University. He began the second phase of his career in 1979, joining Intel Corp.

"The first few years with Intel were incredibly dynamic," he recalled. "The moment that stands out most for me is my appointment as vice president for systems group in 1987. This was for me a high honor and responsibility, [as] the senior people [I was] involved [with] were, and are, the builders of completely new technology and businesses."

Diethelm retired in 1998, but retirement did not lead to inactivity. He was vocal about his belief that all children can learn when provided with proper teaching environments and was named to the Arizona State Board of Education, where he served from 2003-06, including one year as president.

2010 GOLD NUGGET AWARD RECIPIENTS



COLLEGE OF SCIENCE  
**LAURANCE NICKEY**  
B.S., Biological Sciences, '51

Laurance Nickey, M.D., a 2010 College of Science Gold Nugget Award recipient, attributes his successful medical career to the day he decided to attend UTEP.

"Going to UTEP was the smartest thing I ever did in my life," said Nickey, who earned his biological sciences degree in 1951 from what was then Texas Western College.

"I had outstanding professors, and I enjoyed myself tremendously," he said.

A medical degree from Baylor University in Houston followed. Nickey then interned as a pediatrician before he was drafted by the Army in 1958 and stationed at Fort Chaffee, Ark., as a staff pediatrician. A year later, he was transferred back to El Paso and assigned to William Beaumont Army Medical Center. He has been in El Paso ever since.

After his military service ended in 1960, Nickey launched a pediatric practice. He retired in 1982.

Retirement led to public service. Nickey directed the El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District from 1983-1995. He also was president of the Paso del Norte Health Foundation from 1996-1998. So significant were his contributions that he won the Conquistador Award, the City of El Paso's highest honor, twice.

"What stands out for me is being in El Paso," he said. "It's been a wonderful experience, and the progress at UTEP—oh my God, what a wonderful thing for the community."



COLLEGE OF SCIENCE  
**MARY LOU "LOU" VALDEZ**  
B.S., Biological Sciences, '86

Mary Lou "Lou" Valdez is working hard to ensure your safety—with every bite you eat, every pill you take, every medical device you use, and every time you powder your nose.

Named associate commissioner for international programs with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2009, Valdez, a 2010 College of Science Gold Nugget Award recipient, helps oversee the agency that regulates food, drugs, cosmetics and medical devices imported from overseas.

"The FDA is looking ahead on how to manage the increasing challenges and complexities of the global landscape," she said. "Products that Americans consume are increasingly imported from other countries, developed and developing countries alike."

Valdez has worked for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) since 1991. Prior to her recent appointment with the FDA, she was deputy director of the HHS Office of Global Health Affairs.

She now helps lead the FDA's efforts to position the agency globally. The goal of those efforts is to expand the agency's capacity to oversee imported food and medical products, and to increase standards for safety and manufacturing quality in other parts of the world, thereby ensuring that Americans are protected as they continue to benefit from the advantages of a global marketplace.

Valdez credits her UTEP experience—she earned a bachelor's in biological sciences in 1986—with helping her meet the challenges faced by the FDA.

"My strong orientation toward public service was influenced by my time at UTEP," she said.



SCHOOL OF NURSING  
**YVONNE ACOSTA**  
B.S.N., '83; M.S.N.,  
Nursing-Maternal/Child, '88

As a lawyer, Yvonne Acosta might seem an unlikely choice for the Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's School of Nursing.

When people note the chasm between law and nursing, however, she responds that she has built a bridge between the two professions.

After graduating from UTEP with bachelor's (1983) and master's (1988) degrees in nursing, she worked at an El Paso hospital in various capacities, including staff nurse and patient educator in newborn and obstetrics nursing. She also found time to serve as an associate professor of nursing at UTEP.

And yet, somehow, that was not enough. She wanted to do more, and she hit on a novel idea: she would become an advocate for those in the profession she had chosen and loved—nursing.

"I have always had a passion for law and nursing," she said. "I wanted to mesh both fields. When I was at the hospital, nurses and doctors were named in lawsuits if there was a bad outcome. I thought people should understand how hard they fought for a patient. [The doctors and nurses] needed protection from liability challenges."

Acosta left nursing to pursue a law degree, graduating from St. Mary's University in San Antonio in 1995. She is now a lawyer at ScottHulse in El Paso, working tirelessly to defend the professionals with whom she once served.

"I felt my nursing background gave me insight to defend them even more zealously," she said.



SCHOOL OF NURSING  
**GLORIA BOMBACH**  
B.S.N., '77

Life in the country often means life in the slow lane, an escape from the frenzy of urban living. Not for Gloria Bombach, who has spent most of her career in rural towns in Texas and Oklahoma, where the rewards have been as big as the workloads.

Seeking neither fame nor fortune, she found her payoff in the significant impact she has made on traditionally underserved regions.

A 2010 recipient of UTEP's School of Nursing Gold Nugget Award, Bombach graduated with a nursing degree in 1977.

"I had a wonderful education," she said. "I loved my teachers. They helped instill within me a passion for nursing."

In 1980, she and her husband, a general physician, opened a practice in Boise City, Okla., population about 1,200. As the clinic's business manager, she found time to conduct free seminars throughout the area on self breast examinations and Lamaze childbirth methods.

"There was an opportunity to make an impact," she said. "I was a pioneer when it came to preventive care. It was hard to quantify, but I did notice improved health among the townspeople."

Now divorced, she has been the school nurse for the Dalhart (Texas) Independent School District for the past five years. With a population of 7,000, Dalhart is larger than Beaver and Boise City, but still small enough that more than 1,000 school children depend almost solely on her for quality care.



# HOMECOMING

UTEP VS. RICE • OCT. 9, 2010 • KICKOFF 7:05 PM

With a full slate of fun activities to reunite friends from years past, Homecoming week is a great opportunity to get a firsthand look at the exciting changes on the UTEP campus. Great things are happening at the University, and Homecoming 2010 is the time to celebrate all the reasons why we're proud to be Miners!

**Sunday, Oct. 3**

**SGA Homecoming Pageant**

6 p.m. Magoffin Auditorium

**Wednesday, Oct. 6**

**Miner Morning Mania**

5 a.m. Outside Larry K. Durham Sports Center

**Open House: The History of UTEP**

10 a.m. - noon UTEP Heritage House

**Lip Sync Competition**

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Union Plaza stage

**College of Health Sciences/School of Nursing Gold Nugget and Friends Recognition Ceremony**

3:30 - 5 p.m. College of Health Sciences, 1101 N. Campbell (Morgan Roderick Auditorium)

**Thursday, Oct. 7**  
**Open House: The History of UTEP**

10 a.m. - noon UTEP Heritage House

**Department of English Homecoming Reception**

1:30 p.m. Hudspeth Hall foyer

**College of Business Administration Gold Nugget Reception**

4 p.m. Lobby of the Business Administration Building

**College of Liberal Arts Gold Nugget Ceremony and Reception**

4 p.m. Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts

**College of Science Gold Nugget Reception**

4 p.m. Geology Reading Room

**Homecoming Float-Making Party**

6 p.m. - 1 a.m. P-9 parking lot (by Kidd Field)

**Friday, Oct. 8**

**College of Education Gold Nugget Breakfast**

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Templeton Suite, Union Building East

**Open House: The History of UTEP**

10 - 11:45 a.m. UTEP Heritage House

**Civil Engineering Luncheon**

11:30 a.m. El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center

**Homecoming Parade and Pep Rally**

Noon Starting at P-9 parking lot (across from Memorial Gym). Route from Randolph to Robinson to Oregon to University, ending at Wiggins. The Pep Rally immediately follows

the parade at Memorial Triangle.

**Department of Sociology and Anthropology Student and Faculty Welcome Orientation**

1:30 p.m. Old Main

**Varsity Club Reception**

5 - 7 p.m. Hilton Garden Inn

**UTEP Black Alumni Network Meet and Greet**

5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Followed by a Homecoming Celebration 9 p.m. - midnight Hilton Garden Inn

**Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner**

6 p.m. Don Haskins Center

**WAC 10th Anniversary Dinner**

7 p.m. Larry K. Durham Sports Center, Hall of Champions

**Golddigger Alumni Reunion Activities**

Time and location: TBA

**Saturday, Oct. 9**

**College of Engineering Alumni and Gold Nugget Breakfast**

9 - 11 a.m. El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center

**Welcome Back to Political Science**

9 - 11 a.m. Benedict Hall, Room 205

**Open House: The History of UTEP**

10 - 11:45 a.m. UTEP Heritage House

**Department of Communication Homecoming Brunch**

10 a.m. - noon Cotten Memorial, Room 207

**College of Education Pre-Game Party**

Noon Heritage House lawn

**Campus Activities Board (CAB) Alley No**

**alcoholic Tailgate for Students**

Noon - 3 p.m. CAB Alley is located between the parking garage and the Fox F Arts Center

**University College Homecoming Tailgate**

3 p.m. Behind Kelly H on the back patio

**UTEP Alumni Association**

**Pre-Game Party** 4 - 6:30 p.m. Glory Road Practice Field

**Varsity Club Tailgate**

4 p.m. Glory Road Practice Field

**Graduate School Tailgate**

4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Academic Services Building patio

**Law School Preparation Institute**

**Homecoming Tailgate** 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Glory Road Practice Field

UTEP Golddigger Savannah Laneaux and cheerleader Jimmy Salais



# PAYDIRT PETE TURNS 30

## CLASS OF 1960

### Golden Grad Reunion Schedule of Events

#### Thursday, Oct. 7

Registration 9 a.m.  
Peter and Margaret de Wetter  
Center

Campus Tour 11 a.m.  
Peter and Margaret de Wetter  
Center

Welcome Luncheon 1 p.m.  
Larry K. Durham Sports Center,  
Hall of Champions

Dinner and Dance 7 p.m.  
Ardivino's Desert Crossing

#### Friday, Oct. 8

Open House and Bookstore Visit  
8:30 a.m. to Noon  
Peter and Margaret de  
Wetter Center

Homecoming Parade and Pep  
Rally Noon  
Memorial Triangle

Alumni Luncheon 1:15 p.m.  
Peter and Margaret de Wetter  
Center

#### Saturday, Oct. 9

Heritage House Tour  
10 - 11:45 a.m.  
Peter and Margaret de Wetter  
Center

Class of 1960 Golden Grad  
Reunion Luncheon  
Noon to 2 p.m.  
Tomas Rivera Conference  
Center

UTEP Alumni Association  
Pre-Game Party 4 - 6:30 p.m.  
Glory Field/Practice Field

Homecoming Football Game 7:05  
p.m. UTEP vs. Rice Sun Bowl  
Stadium

## FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Sept. 4 vs. Arkansas - Pine Bluff  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Sept. 10 at Houston \*  
Houston, Texas  
8:15 p.m.

Sept. 18 vs. New Mexico State  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Sept. 25 vs. Memphis \*  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Oct. 2 at New Mexico  
Albuquerque, N.M.  
4 p.m.

Oct. 9 vs. Rice \*  
Homecoming  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Oct. 16 at Alabama  
at Birmingham  
Birmingham, Ala.  
2 p.m.

Oct. 23 vs. Tulane \*  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Oct. 30 at Marshall \*  
Huntington, W. Va.  
1 p.m.

Nov. 6 vs. Southern Methodist \*  
Sun Bowl  
7:05 p.m.

Nov. 13 at Arkansas  
Fayetteville, Ark.  
TBA

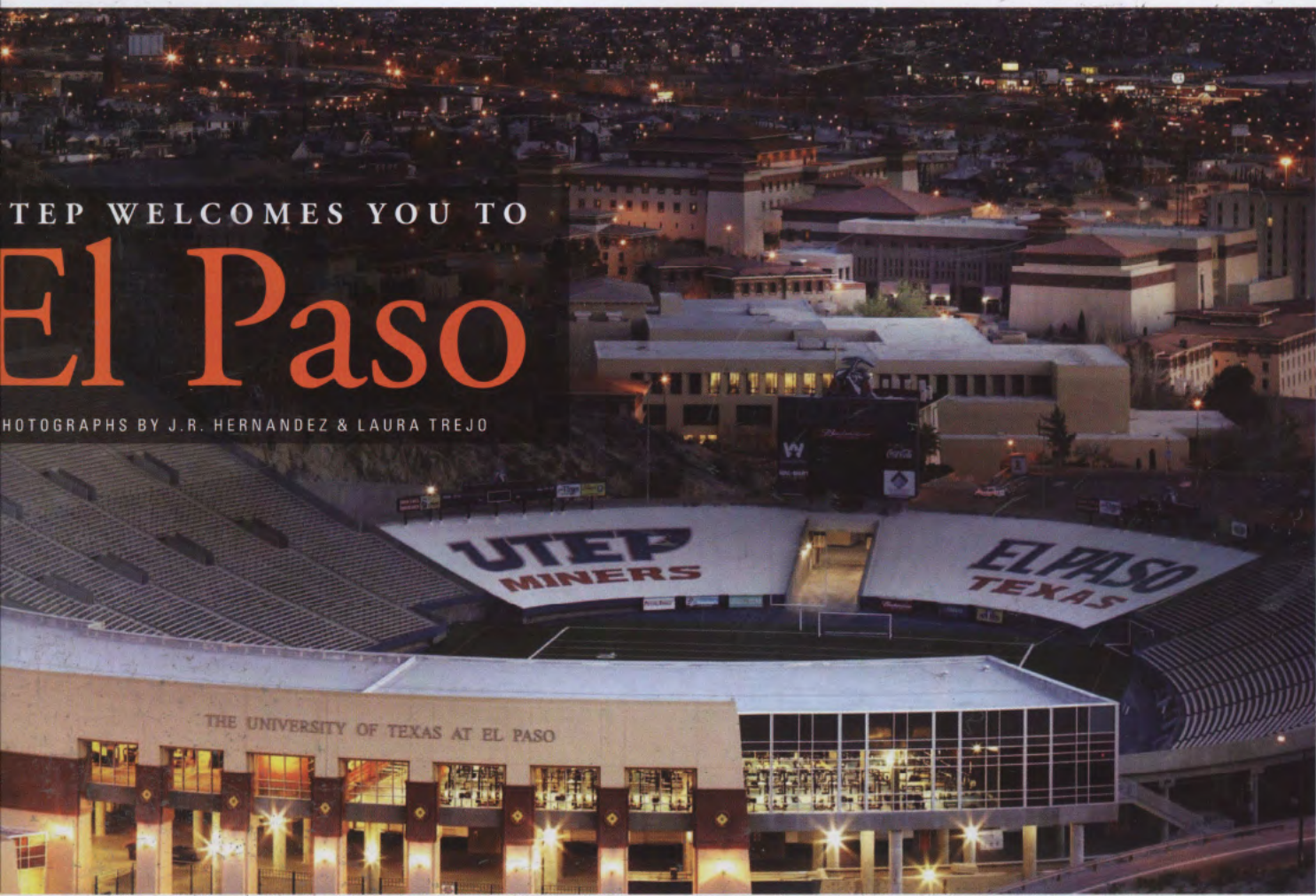
Nov. 20 at Tulsa \*  
Tulsa, Okla.  
TBA

\* Conference Game  
All games are Mountain Time.



One of the most recognizable faces in the city is celebrating his 30th birthday in September. Since 1980, Paydirt Pete has been a mascot and goodwill ambassador for The University of Texas at El Paso. As with most of us, Pete has changed his style during the past three decades. Sometimes he's needed a shave and a haircut, other times a different outfit or a nip/tuck. Today, when he's not in the gym, he can be found at UTEP athletic events entertaining fans. He looks forward to another year where he can wield his mighty pickaxe in support of the Miners. Pete said life begins at 30. Come by the Sun Bowl and see for yourself.







# PARADISE *found*

BY LAURA L. ACOSTA

Visitors to the Centennial Museum at The University of Texas at El Paso often are amazed by the abundance of wildflowers, drought-resistant plants and desert shrubs that flourish in the heat of the Chihuahuan Desert Gardens.

Located on the museum's grounds, the 15 themed botanical gardens represent the largest collection of Chihuahuan Desert flora in the world. Sightseers will find nearly 800 different species of plants that grow in the arid climate of the desert, which stretches into parts of New Mexico, Texas and southeastern Arizona.

For 11 years, the gardens have cultivated scholarly research, academic learning and community outreach at UTEP.

"The gardens are regional resources that are used for different purposes," said Wynn Anderson, the museum's botanical curator. "They meet the educational needs of faculty and students who study botany or do botanical research; they show people that desert plants and desert landscaping are something other than rocks and cactus; and they promote the wise use and conservation of native plants."

The gardens' serene and aromatic environment also provides an area where visitors can relax and enjoy unique structures such as a prayer wheel that was a gift to the University from the people of Bhutan in 2004. A recent addition is the El Fortín Garden, which includes a partial replica of an early Hispanic adobe fort.

Anderson said the gardens provide inspiration for landscape architects, designers and homeowners who want to grow water-saving plants as alternatives to lawns.

The gardens also serve as laboratories where biology and desert ecology students study plants in their natural habitats and where researchers use specimens to conduct molecular and environmental studies.

Wen-Yee Lee, Ph.D., an associate chemistry professor, studied the accumulation of organic contaminants on the gardens' desert plants.

A group of researchers from the University's

chemistry and health promotion departments and the environmental science and engineering doctoral programs, used seeds from red and white desert willows to study how the plants responded to arsenic contamination.

The Centennial Museum's website, [museum.utep.edu](http://museum.utep.edu), features a vast database of Chihuahuan desert plants that includes photographs and descriptions of indigenous plants useful for xeriscaping.

In September, the Centennial Museum will host SunSCAPE classes, where novice gardeners and enthusiasts can learn about desert landscaping. The gardening seminar takes place twice a year. Participants learn how to use native plants to create a water-friendly garden.

The workshops help gardeners new to El Paso or new to xeriscaping acclimate themselves to the plants, soil and weather conditions of the Southwest, said John White, assistant curator of the gardens.

Guest speakers from past seminars have included soil scientists who talked about fertilizers and plant nutrition; extension entomologists who discussed insects and pest management; and forest service representatives who offered advice on planting and caring for native trees. For more information, call the museum at 915-747-5565 or visit [www.museum.utep.edu](http://www.museum.utep.edu).

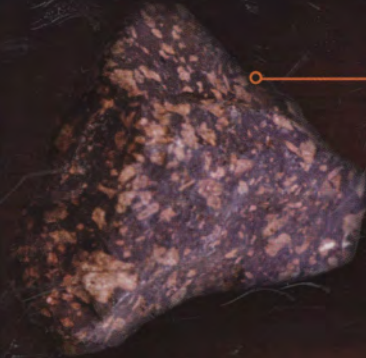
Each year on the last weekend of April, Anderson organizes a native plant sale, which serves as the gardens' major fundraising event. Hundreds of El Pasoans line up early in the morning to buy hard-to-find native and adaptive desert plants that normally are not sold at local nurseries.

"We started the plant sale to provide the community with a place where they can acquire native plants that are better adapted to our environment and use less water," Anderson said. "With desert plants, people can still have the traditional aspects of landscaping: texture, color, form and beauty." ❧





# el paso rocks



**Rhyolite** (LOCAL: THUNDERBIRD RHYOLITE)  
LOCATION - FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS, AT THE SUMMIT OF TRANSMOUNTAIN ROAD; "FORMS" THE CORONADO HIGH SCHOOL THUNDERBIRD MASCOT IN THE FRANKLINS



**Andesite** (LOCAL: CAMPUS ANDESITE)  
LOCATION: ON THE UTEP CAMPUS, ALONG SUN BOWL DRIVE, ALONG I-10 AFTER SCHUSTER AVENUE WESTBOUND, MOUNT CRISTO REY, CORONADO COUNTRY CLUB



**Marble** (LOCAL: CASTNER MARBLE)  
LOCATION: ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF TRANSMOUNTAIN DRIVE, RIGHT ALONG THE ROAD



**Conglomerates**  
LOCATION: FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS

Scientists believe that at one time, the El Paso-Juárez region was near the edge of the North American continent. The oldest rocks in the area were deposited along the shoreline of a shallow tropical sea 1.2 to 1.4 billion years ago. El Pasoans see a number of those rocks daily, probably without knowing it. To go on your own geology expedition of the area, refer to the guide below.



**Limestone/Dolostone**  
LOCATION: FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS, MCKELLIGON CANYON, TOM MAYS PARK AND SCENIC DRIVE

**Quartzite** (LOCAL: LANORIA QUARTZITE)  
LOCATION: ALONG TRANSMOUNTAIN ROAD, LOOK UP AND SEE THE CLIFF FORMERS OF A LIGHT-COLORED ROCK

**Peridotite**  
LOCATION: KILBOURNE HOLE NORTHWEST OF EL PASO

**Basalt**  
LOCATION: NORTHWEST OF EL PASO, KILBOURNE HOLE, NEAR LA UNION, GADSDEN AREA

## OTHER EL PASO ROCKS

**Granite**  
(LOCAL: RED BLUFF GRANITE)  
LOCATION: FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS, MCKELLIGON CANYON (THE BACKING OF THE AMPHITHEATER)

**Pegmatite**  
LOCATION: SMALL LENS ON THE NORTHEASTERN END OF TRANSMOUNTAIN ROAD

**Scoria deposits**  
LOCATION: NORTHWEST OF EL PASO—ADEN'S CRATER AND KILBOURNE HOLE

**Sandstone**  
(LOCAL: BLISS SANDSTONE)  
LOCATION: MOUNT CRISTO REY, FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS, MCKELLIGON CANYON

**Rock Salt**  
LOCATION: SALT FLATS BETWEEN EL PASO AND CARLSBAD, NM





Aaron Velasco, Ph.D., chair of UTEP's Department of Geological Sciences, traveled 2,200 miles around Chile to collect earthquake data from seismometers like the one shown above.

# it's not just about rocks

BY JENN CRAWFORD

To most people, the word geology means the study of rocks. That's true, said Aaron Velasco, Ph.D., chair of The University of Texas at El Paso's Department of Geological Sciences, but studying rocks is just a small part of what geoscientists and geophysicists do.

"Geosciences is the study of the whole Earth system and planetary systems," Velasco said. "These are critical sciences for the future. If you think about the problems we're facing—climate problems, water issues, energy issues—these are all geoscience-related issues."

UTEP has a rich history in the geosciences. The University was founded in 1914 as the State School of Mines and Metallurgy, and geology was a core discipline of the mining school. In 1974, geological sciences became the first doctoral degree at the University.

Today, UTEP's geosciences professors are studying earthquakes and volcanoes as well as soil contaminants, sand dunes, economic geology in the mining industry, asthma, water resources, border tunnel detection and planetary science.

The geosciences offer many career opportunities. The oil industry employs geologists and geophysicists to find and produce oil and natural gas. Geoscientists work in the environmental industry to clean up hazardous chemical spills, to protect wetlands and groundwater and to design waste facilities. Local, state and national governments employ geologists to help determine where roads should be built and where landslides might occur. Geologists also do research in government laboratories, or teach science in middle and high schools.

In the summer months, UTEP's geologists usually leave town to travel to remote locations for field research, including Alaska and the countries of Chile, Iceland and Bhutan, using funding from NASA, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Defense.

Velasco spent two weeks in late May traveling 2,200 miles around Chile, collecting data from 60 seismometer stations in a 400-mile area south of Santiago.

After an 8.8 magnitude earthquake hit the central coast of Chile Feb. 27, the resulting damage covered an area almost the length of the California coast. Immediately after the quake, volunteers deployed seismometers to record the earthquake's aftershocks.

As a member of the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology (IRIS), UTEP was asked to participate. Velasco led a team that col-

lected the first set of data from the seismometers, devices that record all ground movement.

"Any insight we can gain about the earthquake processes is incredibly valuable," Velasco said. "We have never recorded an aftershock sequence for an earthquake this large."

Chile is in a large subduction zone, where one tectonic plate slides beneath another, Velasco explained. That's what created the Andes Mountains and what causes earthquakes in the area. By studying the seismometer data of the earthquake's aftershocks, Velasco and other scientists can better understand how the faults heal and readjust.

Jose Hurtado, Ph.D., associate professor of geological sciences, traveled to Bhutan in May to study fault lines with funding from NASA's Earth Surface and Interior program (see pages 18-19). He teaches geology techniques to U.S. and international astronauts and helps to test technology such as robots and rover vehicles that could be used in the agency's Constellation manned-space flight program during field exercises throughout the Southwest.

Hurtado, an FAA licensed private pilot and seasoned outdoorsman, also recently joined a non-profit organization, Astronauts For Hire, which develops "commercial astronaut candidates" for the emerging commercial (sub-orbital) space market.

Diane Doser, Ph.D., professor of geological sciences, spent part of her summer in Iceland on a vacation that also resulted in photos and geologic insights to share with her UTEP students.

"It's hard for geophysicists to go anywhere without being interested in the geology," Doser said. "We made it a point to see a lot of geological sites. I understand more now about the plate tectonics of the area, plus I have a lot of good information for teaching my introductory classes."

Doser made the trip shortly after an Icelandic volcano created enough ash to shut down Western European airports for several days in April. She saw the impacts of earthquakes in the 1970s and '80s and volcanoes that erupted in the 1960s and '70s. She took pictures of large cracks in the Earth created by the temblors and houses that had been destroyed by lava flows from volcanoes to show her students.

"I think these kind of photos bring geology alive in the classroom," she said. ☒



Diane Doser, Ph.D., professor of geological sciences, in Iceland



Aaron Velasco, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Geological Sciences, in Chile

Photo courtesy of Diane Doser

Photo courtesy of Aaron Velasco



Army Spc. Kevin Ziegler

miners in the

# military

BY LAURA L. ACOSTA

**A walk to the mess hall at Forward Operating Base Summerall in Bayji, Iraq, was similar to going on a combat excursion for Army Spc. Kevin Ziegler. Each time he stepped out of his barracks, he could taste the gasoline fumes he inhaled from a nearby refinery. His skin burned from the desert heat as he patrolled the landscape for poisonous snakes and scorpions, a task that was further complicated by his attempts to evade indiscriminate gunfire and exploding mortar shells.**

Ziegler's life, while serving a one-year tour in Operation Iraqi Freedom that ended in November 2007, was in sharp contrast to his days as a student at The University of Texas at El Paso.

"One day I was outside (on base in Iraq) and there were these indirect shots coming at me," Ziegler, a UTEP junior, remembered. "These shots were maybe 10 feet from me, and I just stood there. I thought, 'Well, if it hits me, it hits me; there's nothing I can do.'"

A native of Michigan, Ziegler enrolled at UTEP in 2005, a year after he enlisted in the Army and was stationed at Fort Bliss. Since then he has been deployed twice. During a mission in Iraq, Ziegler, a Humvee mechanic, dislocated his left shoulder and suffered nerve damage to his left hand.

In February 2010, he was redeployed for one year to Camp Arifjan in Kuwait but his tour was cut short on April 20 when a fire extinguisher overheated and exploded behind his head while he was riding in a Humvee. The force from the blast pushed Ziegler's head into the front seat and catapulted him out the vehicle's windshield.

The accident caused traumatic brain injury. Among the side effects, Ziegler has had to deal with memory loss, vertigo, dizziness and permanent hearing loss in his left ear.

"I suffered injuries that modern medicine can't fix," he said. "I'm on over 12 prescriptions a day. I have prescriptions to help wake me up and help me go to sleep and prescriptions that help me cope with the pain."

Today Ziegler is a soldier in the Warrior Transition Unit (WTU) at Fort Bliss. According to the U.S. Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation website, the program assists severely wounded, ill and injured soldiers and their families throughout their recovery with medical treatment and rehabilitation and with their transition to active duty or civilian life. The WTU also provides soldiers with financial, educational, employment and legal resources.

As part of his transition, Ziegler returned to UTEP this summer to pursue his Bachelor of Multidisciplinary

Studies (BMS) degree. Since 2006, the University's BMS program has allowed students, both military and civilian, to customize their degree plan by using the credits they've earned institutionally or by transfer into a functional four-year interdisciplinary degree. Military members can earn academic credit for their military training and job experience.

Julio D. Rogers, the program's advisor, said about 75 soldiers from Fort Bliss are enrolled in the program.

"It's ideal for soldiers because most of the time they take courses at different universities or community colleges, depending on where they're stationed," he said. "Sometimes they started their academic career, then joined the Army and never finished school. There are different scenarios and the good thing about this degree is that it really helps them consolidate those credits into a working degree."

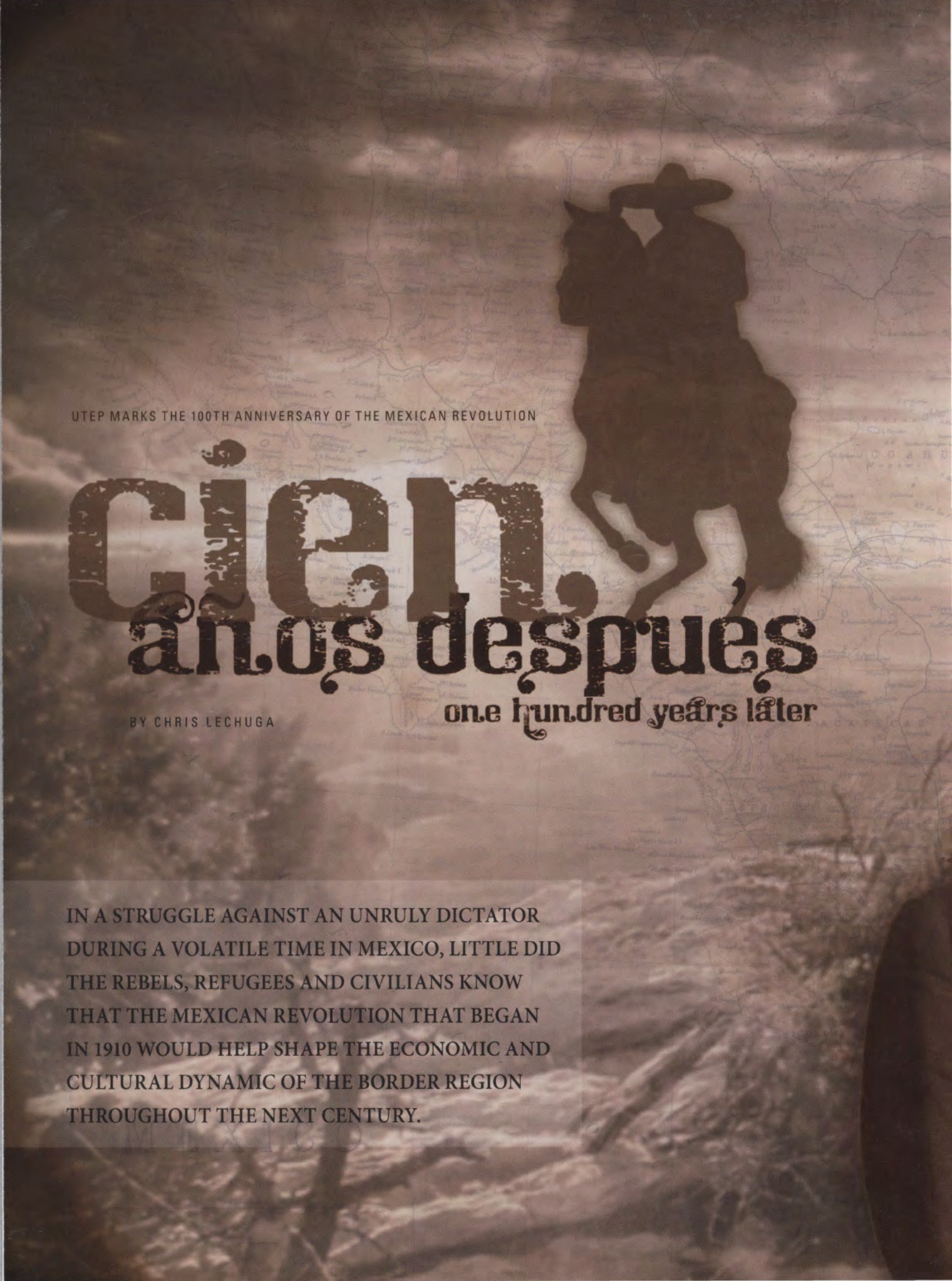
In spring 2010, the University began offering an online version of the BMS, which Rogers said gives soldiers the opportunity to continue working on their degrees from anywhere in the world.

An aspiring politician, Ziegler said the BMS enables him to focus on three fields that he loves: social science, political science and criminal justice.

Ziegler intends to take as many classes at UTEP as he can fit into his schedule, even if that means taking classes during his lunch hour and at night. During the fall 2008 semester, he took 23 credit hours to make up for the time he was stationed in Iraq.

For Ziegler, who is married and has two sons ages 1 and 3, education is a form of stress relief that allows him to take his mind off the past and cope with whatever hardships he is currently going through. He remembers someone once telling him "You never stop learning; you never stop becoming a student," and he takes that advice to heart.

"Long after I get my bachelor's degree and possibly my master's degree, I still will love to learn," he said. "UTEP has helped me immensely. I feel the professors do care. I think it's an excellent education." ❧



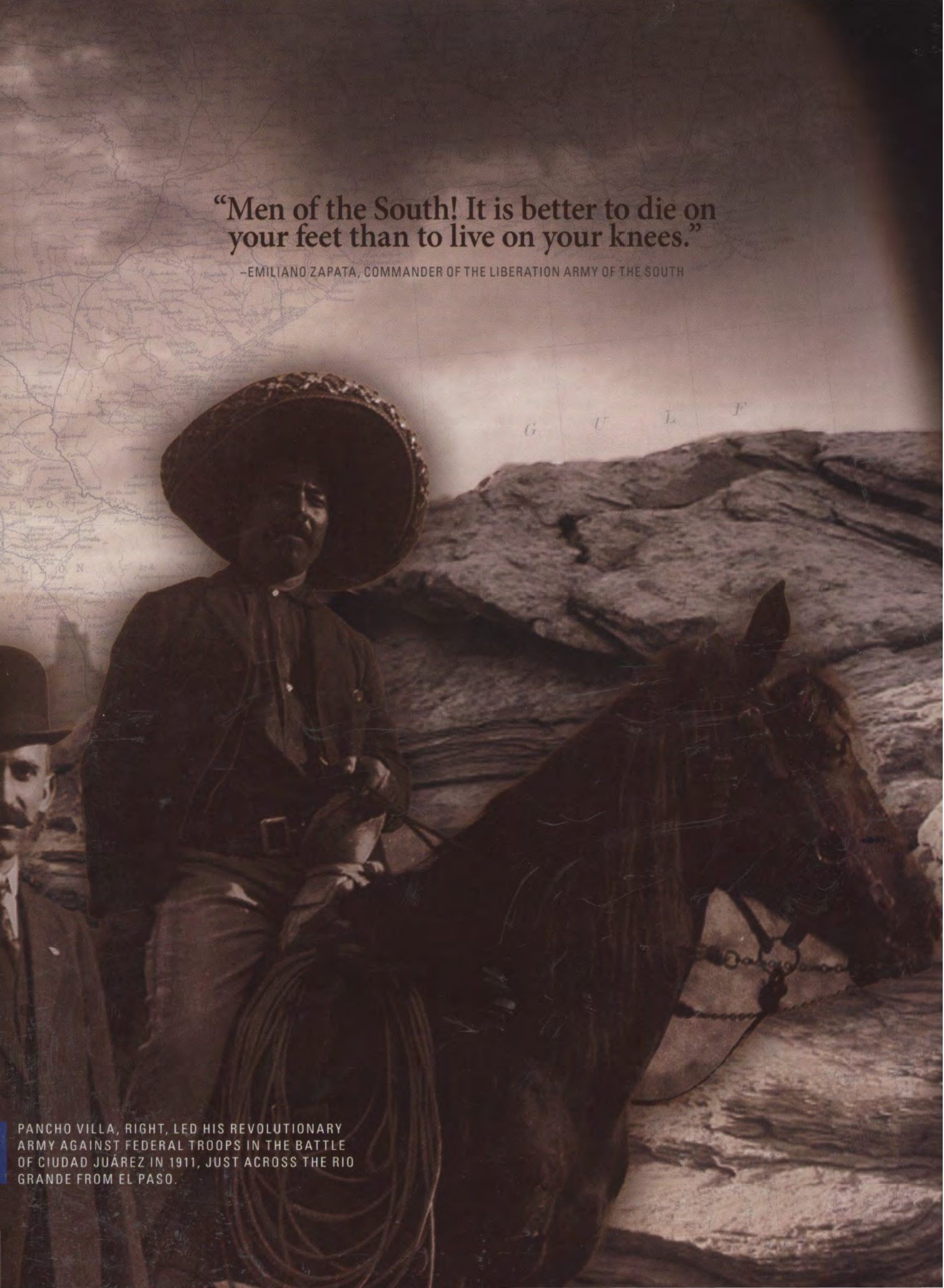
UTEP MARKS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

# cien años después

one hundred years later

BY CHRIS LECHUGA

IN A STRUGGLE AGAINST AN UNRULY DICTATOR DURING A VOLATILE TIME IN MEXICO, LITTLE DID THE REBELS, REFUGEES AND CIVILIANS KNOW THAT THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION THAT BEGAN IN 1910 WOULD HELP SHAPE THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DYNAMIC OF THE BORDER REGION THROUGHOUT THE NEXT CENTURY.



**“Men of the South! It is better to die on  
your feet than to live on your knees.”**

—EMILIANO ZAPATA, COMMANDER OF THE LIBERATION ARMY OF THE SOUTH

G U L F

PANCHO VILLA, RIGHT, LED HIS REVOLUTIONARY ARMY AGAINST FEDERAL TROOPS IN THE BATTLE OF CIUDAD JUÁREZ IN 1911, JUST ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE FROM EL PASO.

## ¡REVOLUCIÓN!

During the administration of Porfirio Díaz that began in 1876, Mexico underwent much change. The self-proclaimed president had a vision of his country's future.

In the years leading up to the revolution, Díaz's plan was to modernize Mexico's economy, according to Yolanda Leyva, Ph.D., associate professor of history at The University of Texas at El Paso. He invited foreign investment and began trade deals with the United States and other countries that would help jumpstart the economy.

"During that time of investment, the things that became very important were mining and the railroads," Leyva said.

However, to the disapproval of many of those opposed to Díaz's top-down approach to progress, the expansion of Mexico's rail network and industrial operations led to much displacement of indigenous and working-class people.

"Their villages would be sold from under them by force," David Romo, UTEP doctoral student in history, said. "That was the idea of progress that was very prevalent under the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz."

In his book, *Ringside Seat to a Revolution: An Underground Cultural History of El Paso and Juárez*, Romo indicates that the revolutionary leaders, including Francisco Madero, Francisco "Pancho" Villa and Emiliano Zapata, were in fact not anti-modernist, but rather were against the ways that Díaz had implemented his progressive ideals.

"It was more like the revolutionaries had visions of modernity that didn't include displacement," Romo added. "They wanted direct control of their own communities—their own land."

Madero, who had attended the University of California at Berkeley, also pushed for the modernization of Mexico, but criticized Díaz for undermining the rights of the working class and giving special treatment to rich, foreign businessmen to spur economic development.

In 1910, he wrote a manifesto, *The Plan of San Luis Potosí*, in which he called for Díaz to step down as president and pointed out his crimes, inspiring many people in Mexico to join the revolutionary cause.

## FRONT ROW SEATS

After returning from his exile in San Antonio, Madero recruited Villa to join the fight against Díaz and begin the resistance in northern Mexico. In May 1911, the two revolutionary leaders recruited civilians and readied their army to begin their campaign against the federal army in Juárez.

Many spectators in El Paso crowded the banks on the U.S. side of the river to try to catch a glimpse of history. Hotels and other downtown buildings sold seats on their roofs for people to watch the fighting across the border. This, according to Romo, led to a commoditization of the war, turning it into a sort of spectator sport.

"There was a lot of profit being made from the violence," Romo said. "People sold everything from binoculars and postcards to arms and weapons."

The fighting lasted three days, with the revolutionaries capturing Juárez, which forced Díaz to announce his resignation. However, the revolution continued as loyalties shifted and new rivalries were created. Two other battles occurred in Juárez in 1916 and 1919.

During the decade-long war, many civilians from Juárez fled to El Paso to escape the violence, causing an economic, cultural and social transformation within the city.

"There was a huge [economic] boost," Romo said. "For instance, between 1914 and 1920, there was an 88 percent rise in bank deposits."

In the commercial sector, The Popular department store added three more floors to its three-story downtown building to accommodate the increased traffic flow, while cinemas started showing Spanish-language movies to cater to middle-class refugees.

Politically, the influx became so great that in 1916, the City of El Paso commissioned the federal government to conduct a special census to somehow understand the demographic impact to the city.

"It was the first time [the census] categorized Mexican-Americans as 'people of Mexican descent,'" Paul Edison, Ph.D., chair of the UTEP Department of History, said.

By the time the Mexican Revolution officially ended in 1920, El Paso's population had doubled due largely to the flood of refugees from Juárez.

**During the decade-long war, many civilians from Juárez fled to El Paso to escape the violence, causing an economic, cultural and social transformation within the city.**

## UTEP CONNECTION

Beginning before the revolution, Mexico began exporting minerals, ore and raw materials to the U.S. and continued during the fighting. The practice soon would establish the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso interchange as the major trade link on the border.

"Because we [El Paso and Juárez] are where the railroads come from Mexico to the border and into the interior of the United States, El Paso was very important in that railroad transportation network that was developed," Leyva said.

As a result, the need to educate people to work in the smelter and refineries in the area grew. In 1913, the Texas legislature passed a bill that established the State School of Mines and Metallurgy in El Paso as a means to produce mining and engineering professionals in the region.

"This becomes, in many ways, the logical place to have this kind of training," Leyva added.

The new school opened its doors in 1914 and was housed in three buildings on the old Fort Bliss post, located just across the Rio Grande from Juárez. Samuel Brunk, Ph.D., professor of history, noted that because Villa was in control of the border city during this time, "there was no warfare in Juárez" while the School of Mines was in its first years.

However, in 1916, the School of Mines sought

out a new location to build its campus due to the arrival of thousands of troops to Fort Bliss after Villa's alleged attack in Columbus, N.M., and a fire that destroyed the school's main building. One year later, thanks to a donation of land by the city and civic leaders, the school began construction on what would be the permanent location of the UTEP campus.

## A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE

As part of the celebration commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Mexican Revolution, UTEP, the City of El Paso and other local organizations have teamed up to host cultural and historical community events throughout the fall.

The UTEP Department of History will host a series of lectures and exhibits that give historical insight into the significant changes that occurred in El Paso during the revolution. *Battlegrounds of Culture*, the first part of *El Paso: The Other Side of the Mexican Revolution*, is an exhibit that will display various cultural and commercial artifacts from the revolution at the El Paso Museum of History. Further, members of the history department will facilitate *Museo Urbano 2010*, an outdoor walking tour of historical buildings and sites in El Paso that are important to the revolution.

"With our department's expertise on the

Mexican Revolution and in public history, and the area's outstanding collections, we are in a good position to create an important exhibition," Edison said.

To display artistic depictions of the war, the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at UTEP is hosting *2010: (In)dependence and (Re)volution*, an exhibit featuring contemporary Mexican artists who incorporate the theme of revolution in their work. On the official anniversary of the revolution, the center will present *Fernando Llanos: Revolutionary Imaginary*, a video art exhibit that uses contemporary images of Mexico that are projected onto historical buildings in El Paso.

Since Madero was the key figure in the revolution, the University Library's Special Collections Department will host *Francisco Madero and the Beginning of the Mexican Revolution*. This exhibit will display photographs taken of Madero and other important figures during the early years of the war.

"A lot of people tend to think that the revolution was just part of Mexico's history," said Edison, who is serving as exhibits committee chair for the city's Mexico 2010 events. "But really, it was a central part of El Paso's history too."

## 2010: (In)dependence and (Re)volution

Aug. 26 to Dec. 11

Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at UTEP

Opening Reception

7:30 pm Thursday, Aug. 26

This exhibit presents the work of seven Mexico City-based new media artists who challenge the discourse of progress that is being promoted by Mexico for the 2010 celebrations. Artists will employ sound, video, computer programming, robotics and kinetics in a wide range of site-specific and installation pieces in and around the Rubin Center.

For more information, contact the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at 915-747-6151, [rubicenter@utep.edu](mailto:rubicenter@utep.edu), [rubicenter.utep.edu](http://rubicenter.utep.edu) or [www.facebook.com/rubicenter](http://www.facebook.com/rubicenter).

## El Paso: The Other Side of the Mexican Revolution. Battlegrounds of Culture

Oct. 1 to Jan. 10, 2011

The El Paso Museum of History  
10 N. Santa Fe

The Department of History at The University of Texas at El Paso presents the first part of a multi-venue exhibition exploring how El Paso shaped the Mexican Revolution, experienced it, and was changed by it. As a strategic base for revolutionaries and home to the largest Mexican population in the United States at the time, El Paso became a major site of cultural production by journalists, writers, businessmen, photographers, filmmakers and musicians. This culture not only chronicled the revolution, but was itself a battleground of images and ideas. Parts of the exhibit will remain on display after Jan. 10 in the permanent gallery upstairs. Free admission. For visitor information, contact the El Paso Museum of History at 915-351-3588.

## Francisco Madero and the Beginning of the Mexican Revolution

The University of Texas at El Paso Library, Special Collections Department  
Nov. 1 to Dec. 31  
Third floor gallery, UTEP Library

This exhibit will feature photographs and publications relating to Francisco Madero and the beginnings of the Mexican Revolution. Among the featured materials will be a photograph of Francisco Madero by El Paso photographer Fred Feldman, a publication of his 1909 book, *La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910*, a facsimile of the handwritten manuscript, and illustrated magazines from the time.

For more information contact the University Library at 915-747-5672 or on the Web at [libraryweb.utep.edu](http://libraryweb.utep.edu).

## Fernando Llanos: Revolutionary Imaginary

Nov. 20 to Feb. 12, 2011

Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts

Mexican video artist Fernando Llanos will respond to the theme of the revolution by projecting images of contemporary Mexican society from a mobile video onto historic buildings and sites of the Mexican Revolution in El Paso. Llanos will present a public performance on Nov. 20. Documents of this performance and of Llanos's Videoman series will be on display in the Rubin Center Project Space through Feb. 12, 2011. For more information, contact the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at 915-747-6151, [rubicenter@utep.edu](mailto:rubicenter@utep.edu), [rubicenter.utep.edu](http://rubicenter.utep.edu) or [www.facebook.com/rubicenter](http://www.facebook.com/rubicenter).

## Museo Urbano 2010

Starting Aug. 1

UTEP Welcome Room at 500 S. Oregon St.

El Paso's skyline in 1910, much of which still survives, served as an arena for many revolutionary activities. A free outdoor museum circuit and walking tour through the streets of Downtown and the Segundo Barrio, Museo Urbano 2010 tells the stories of numerous historic buildings that played a role in the revolution, and the individuals associated with them. Visit the Welcome Room at 500 S. Oregon St. for orientation, maps and cell phone instructions. For more information, contact the UTEP Department of History at 915-747-5508, or go to [www.utep.edu/history](http://www.utep.edu/history).

## El Paso: The Other Side of the Mexican Revolution. A City Transformed

March 1, 2011 to June 30, 2011

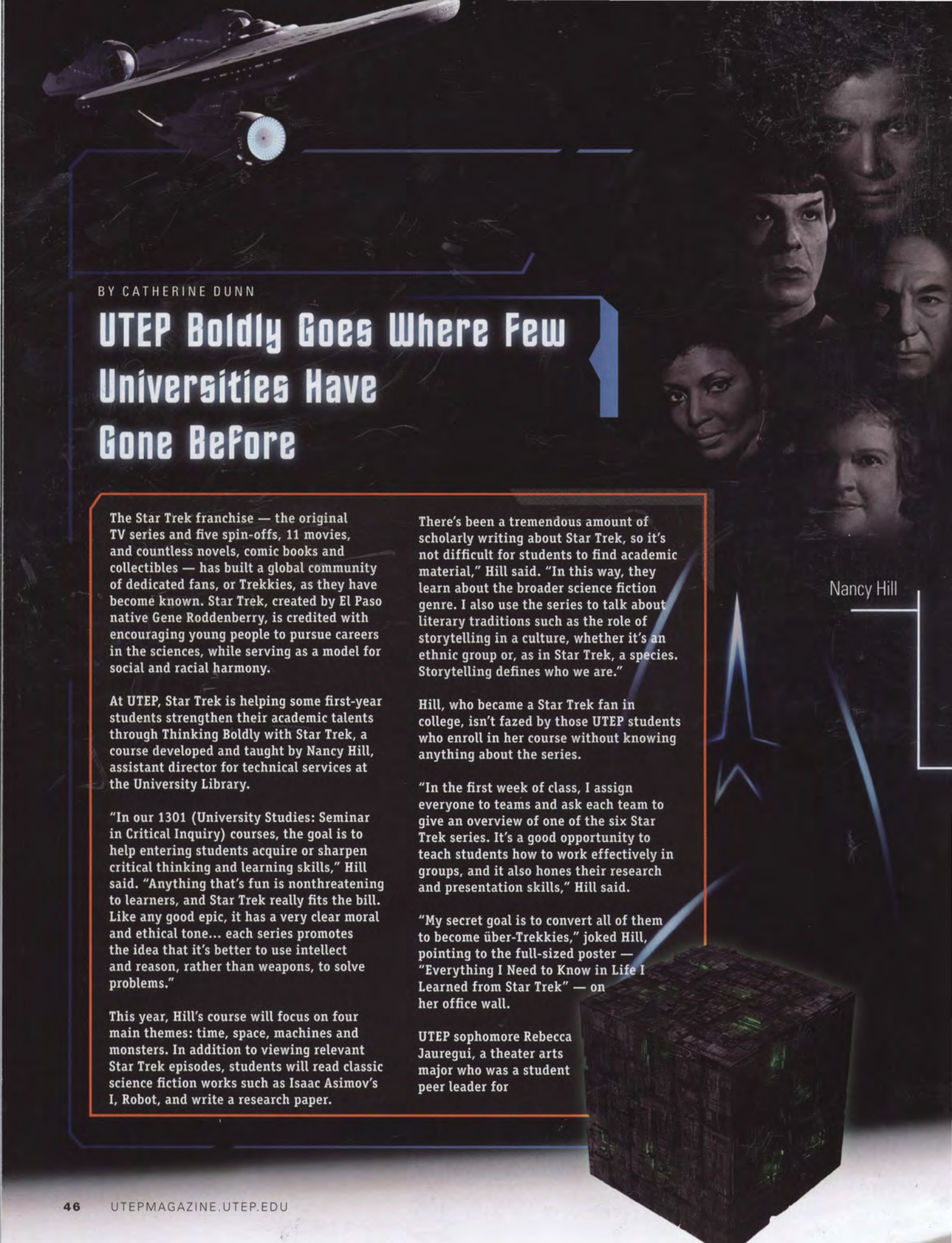
The Centennial Museum, The University of Texas at El Paso

The revolution had a profound impact on the physical, social and political landscape of El Paso. As violence flared along the border and the city's population more than doubled due to the influx of refugees fleeing civil war and famine in Mexico, neighborhoods and urban spaces underwent significant change. Authorities responded with new ways of managing immigration and public health, defining race and ethnicity, and conducting warfare. As part of *El Paso: The Other Side of the Mexican Revolution, A City Transformed* will show how both longtime residents and newcomers experienced this tumultuous decade. Free. For information, contact the Centennial Museum at 915-747-5565.

For information about city events that deal with the Mexican Revolution centennial, visit [www.elpasotexas.gov/history/mexicanrevolution](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/history/mexicanrevolution).







BY CATHERINE DUNN

## UTEP Boldly Goes Where Few Universities Have Gone Before

The Star Trek franchise — the original TV series and five spin-offs, 11 movies, and countless novels, comic books and collectibles — has built a global community of dedicated fans, or Trekkies, as they have become known. Star Trek, created by El Paso native Gene Roddenberry, is credited with encouraging young people to pursue careers in the sciences, while serving as a model for social and racial harmony.

At UTEP, Star Trek is helping some first-year students strengthen their academic talents through Thinking Boldly with Star Trek, a course developed and taught by Nancy Hill, assistant director for technical services at the University Library.

"In our 1301 (University Studies: Seminar in Critical Inquiry) courses, the goal is to help entering students acquire or sharpen critical thinking and learning skills," Hill said. "Anything that's fun is nonthreatening to learners, and Star Trek really fits the bill. Like any good epic, it has a very clear moral and ethical tone... each series promotes the idea that it's better to use intellect and reason, rather than weapons, to solve problems."

This year, Hill's course will focus on four main themes: time, space, machines and monsters. In addition to viewing relevant Star Trek episodes, students will read classic science fiction works such as Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot*, and write a research paper.

There's been a tremendous amount of scholarly writing about Star Trek, so it's not difficult for students to find academic material," Hill said. "In this way, they learn about the broader science fiction genre. I also use the series to talk about literary traditions such as the role of storytelling in a culture, whether it's an ethnic group or, as in Star Trek, a species. Storytelling defines who we are."

Hill, who became a Star Trek fan in college, isn't fazed by those UTEP students who enroll in her course without knowing anything about the series.

"In the first week of class, I assign everyone to teams and ask each team to give an overview of one of the six Star Trek series. It's a good opportunity to teach students how to work effectively in groups, and it also hones their research and presentation skills," Hill said.

"My secret goal is to convert all of them to become über-Trekkies," joked Hill, pointing to the full-sized poster — "Everything I Need to Know in Life I Learned from Star Trek" — on her office wall.

UTEP sophomore Rebecca Jauregui, a theater arts major who was a student peer leader for

Nancy Hill



“There’s been a tremendous amount of scholarly writing about *Star Trek*, so it’s not difficult for students to find academic material.”

—Nancy Hill, assistant director for technical services at the University Library

Hill’s course last year, is proud to be among Hills’ converts. Jauregui and her grandmother attended the 2009 Star Trek convention in Las Vegas, which drew more than 15,000 participants from across the globe.

“A lot of people came to the convention in Star Trek costumes,” Jauregui said. “You’d see Starfleet officers, Vulcans, Klingons...pretty much everybody had their own group. It was great because you could communicate with everyone, no matter where they came from.”

Jauregui likened the cross-cultural event to living on the U.S.-Mexico border, “where everybody’s different but everybody gets along.”

This fall Jauregui will be a peer leader again for Hill’s class. “I hope that students leave this course wanting to learn more about the world and their place in it. I want them to love education and this University, because UTEP is a great school with a lot to offer.”

Or as Spock might say, “UTEP? It’s the logical choice.”

# Okagbare Named Conference USA Women's Athlete of the Year

BY JOE VELARDE

The University of Texas at El Paso's stellar track and field standout Blessing Okagbare finished her illustrious collegiate career by claiming the title of Conference USA's Female Athlete of the Year.

Following in the steps of outstanding athletes produced by Head Coach Bob Kitchens, Okagbare set a precedent as being the first woman in school history to be recognized as conference athlete of the year.

"This is just a reflection of the kind of year she's had and the kind of athlete she is," Kitchens said. "To be recognized by, not only your track and field peers, but by athletics is a very significant honor."

Okagbare concluded her UTEP career with four national titles, 11 All-American honors and 15 C-USA championships. Her most recent achievement was a win in the 100-meter sprint at the NCAA Outdoor Championships with a time of 10.98.

Since planting her feet onto the starting blocks of UTEP's Kidd Field in 2008, Okagbare has been making her mark as one of the most successful athletes in UTEP history, by capturing 15 C-USA gold medals, a conference record.

Two weeks prior to the outdoor nationals, she earned her third consecutive C-USA long jump title with a leap of 6.58 meters, more than 22 feet, placing her first at the Texas Relays. It was the best jump in the world at the time.

The 2008 Olympic bronze medalist hopes her collegiate success is only a precursor of future achievements. Her decision to remain at UTEP after the 2008 Beijing Olympics has opened up that possibility.

"My goal is to be one of the longest (jumping) and fastest women in the world," she said in the spring 2010 edition of *UTEP Magazine*.

Her performance has granted her a spot on The Bowerman Watch List and the NCAA Honda Collegiate Women's Sports Award list, which recognizes the top collegiate athlete in track and field. 📌



Blessing Okagbare is wearing her bronze medal for the long jump from the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics.

# Marching to the Beat of a Different Drum

BY CHRIS LECHUGA

During the summer, Sun Bowl Stadium was filled with practices, drills and planning for the fall football season at The University of Texas at El Paso, but Mike Price's team is not the only club that is looking to start the year on the right foot.



In May, T. Andre Feagin joined the faculty of the Department of Music as assistant professor of music and associate director of bands. He will take over the direction of the UTEP Marching Miners, Pep Band and Symphonic Band. He comes to campus as faculty and students seek to expand the music department's role within the University.

"Their energy and excitement is contagious and it sets a wonderful palette for the future," Feagin said. "I am very much looking forward to all of that."

A graduate of the University of Memphis, Feagin brings much instructional and musical arranging experience from his years teaching in public schools in Tennessee, Texas and California. He also has served in different roles with various drum and bugle corps—elite youth music and marching ensembles that tour the country each summer, which he calls "professional marching bands."

In his new position, Feagin looks to bring concepts from the drum corps arena to the UTEP marching band program.

"What I will bring here is a heightened sense of detail," Feagin commented. "It's about bringing a sense of pride, professionalism, precision and power to what we do."

Having worked with the Carolina Crown and Phantom Regiment drum corps and as the current brass caption head, or primary instructor, for Santa Clara Vanguard, Feagin noted that there is not much difference between a world-class drum corps and a great college band because both groups consist of "the same kids, just in different uniforms."

Those "kids" who make up the 200-plus members of the "Sound of the Southwest" band are all UTEP students majoring in all fields of study. The Marching Miners perform at all UTEP home football games as well as at University pep rallies, parades and other campus activities, spreading Miner pride wherever they perform.

Feagin especially is interested in increasing the band's collaboration with the UTEP athletic clubs and student body by acting as a "musical ambassador" for the University community. He pointed out that involvement from all areas of the school is critical in the success of the band.

"I want the school to know that this band is here, and that it's alive and it's growing," Feagin said. He intends to help the ensemble become part of the college experience at UTEP by being the largest hard-working and enthusiastic student organization on campus to support the teams.

"We'll be one of the most entertaining things that people have seen and heard in a long time." 📌

The disappointing end to last year's 4-9 football season generated some changes on the Miners team, but most importantly, in the attitude of the players

# Redemption

BY JOE VELARDE

## The 2010 Miner Football Preview

### TEAM LEADERS HOPE THE OFFSEASON ADJUSTMENTS WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE IN 2010.

Led by 11 returning starters, including record-setting running back Donald Buckram, quarterback Trevor Vittatoe and defensive back Braxton Amy, these Miners choose to focus on their team's future.

The desire to win has been evident in the locker room for the better part of the grueling eight-month offseason. Team leadership is stronger than ever, said Head Football Coach Mike Price, who enters his 29th year as a collegiate head coach—his seventh with the Miners.

"It's been a really great attitude going into the season," Price said. "I keep telling them, 'It's your team.' They're talking, they're leading, and they're ready to jab that pickaxe into the ground."

One of the biggest keys to UTEP success this year will be Buckram, a senior electronic media major who rushed in 2009 for 18 touchdowns and 1,594 yards. His yardage total eclipsed a 62-year-old UTEP record—1,548 yards by Fred Wendt in 1948. He wound up with the third most rushing yards in the country.

The player from Copperas Cove, Texas, was a semifinalist for the 2009 Doak Walker Award, given to the nation's top running back for his performance on the field, in the classroom and in the community.

Buckram holds the Miners records for most 100-yard games with nine and most 200-yard games with three. The coach predicts the running back will achieve greater success this year with the help of the "biggest, fastest and most athletic offensive line" he's coached at the University.

"(Buckram's) the whole package," Price said. "He's a dominant leader on the team, and an outstanding young athlete."

The coach also holds high hopes for his quarterback, who along with a sound receiving corps, could be part of a dynamic air attack. While Vittatoe, a senior business administration major, has sharpened his physical mechanics, Price is just as enthusiastic about the changes in the player's mental preparation.

"His attitude has changed immensely," Price said of the player from Bedford, Texas. "It's his attitude and desire to be everything he wants to be."

Vittatoe threw for 3,300 yards last season and 17 touchdowns. One of his main targets this year will be Kris Adams, senior business administration major. He finished with 580 yards on 42 catches last season, but racked up 980 yards on 50 grabs in 2008.

"With this (offensive) line and these players, I'm expecting us to put up a lot of points," Price said.

While UTEP's offense has been consistent during the Mike Price era, the same cannot be said about the defense. Last year, the Miners' allowed a combined 402 points and 5,363 yards.

New defensive coordinator Andre Patterson has installed a fundamental 4-3 scheme to clamp down on opponents. Patterson is a former assistant head coach at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

"I really think Coach Patterson is a great 'x and o' guy," Price said. "He's more than just a coach, he's a teacher of both the players and the coaching staff."

One of the team's key defensive weapons will be Braxton Amy, a leadership studies graduate student. Price called the Richmond, Texas, native the best all-round athlete on the Miners' squad. He thinks the defender and Buckram are potential All-American candidates.

Amy re-introduced himself last season as a UTEP powerhouse with a team-best five interceptions. He led the Miners with stops (112) and interceptions (5) in 2007, but was sidelined with a knee injury the following year. Deshawn Grayson, who had an impressive rookie season with 65 tackles in 2009, will join Amy in the defensive backfield.

As for Buckram, he knows the Miners' conference foes have him and the team in their crosshairs, but he is not worried because the team will be competitive. Their last four losses were by seven points or less.

"We're a good, strong and tough team. We've got a new coach on defense, and we got strong leadership. There's no excuse why we can't get it done this year," Buckram said.

The Miners open the 2010 season against Arkansas-Pine Bluff at 7:05 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 4, in the Sun Bowl. ☘



Senior running back Donald Buckram broke a 60-year-old school record with an impressive 1,524 yards and 18 trips to the end zone last season.

During the early to mid-1990s, in the midst of a dark era for the UTEP football program, a class of outstanding young athletes came to relight the Sun Bowl, just in the nick of time. Ten years later, their magical year is remembered as UTEP football heads into another blistering season.

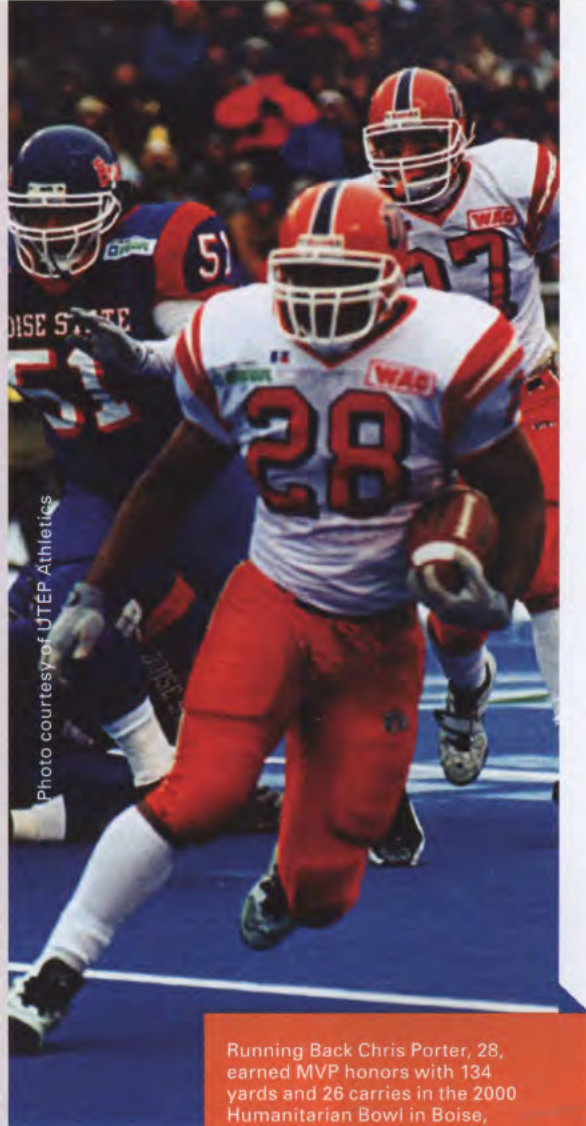


Photo courtesy of UTEP Athletics

Running Back Chris Porter, 28, earned MVP honors with 134 yards and 26 carries in the 2000 Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho. Porter now works as an attorney for Yetter, Warden & Coleman L.L.P. in Houston.

# First and Ten

BY JOE VELARDE

"I remember when I first came to El Paso. I went out to eat with four or five of my teammates thinking, 'Yeah, we're college players now,'" said former running back Chris Porter, who graduated from The University of Texas at El Paso in 2001 with a degree in political science. "Our waitress asked us if we were new in town. We told her we were here to play football at UTEP. She asked us, 'UTEP still has a team?'"

The Miners had been dismal on the books, having only put up a total of 18 wins in eight years. UTEP had fallen from their 15 minutes of glory in 1988 when they were 10-3 and went to the Independence Bowl in Shreveport, La.

Sun City fans had abandoned the boys in orange and blue. Former wide receiver Lee Mays, who earned his degree in criminal justice in 2008, remembers running out onto the field of an empty stadium nearly every home game during his first season of 1997.

"It was bad," Mays said. "Sometimes there would be more fans from the other team in our own house, sitting up there booing at us."

However, there was talent in these men, many of whom had come from winning programs in their respective high schools.

"Each week was a battle, and each year we kept getting better," Mays said. "We were actually a great team. We were playing for the city, and slowly, win after win, the fans started coming back."

The Miners managed to pick up five wins during the 1999 season—more than any of the 11 previous seasons. The Sun Bowl saw three sold out crowds in 2000, and witnessed resurgence in attendance by averaging 44,715 fans per home game.

"It was exciting. There was so much energy in the air; we were ready," said Rocky Perez, the team's quarterback, who graduated in 2001 with a degree in kinesiology. "The stadium was packed; it was something we'd never really seen before. This was really the turning point for us. We knew what we had to do."

The Miners, who opened their season at 3-2, continued their path of destruction by eliminating the competition and winning eight games in a row, the most since their 1988 campaign.

In front of a sold out, school record crowd of 53,304, the city of El Paso watched in anticipation as the Miners faced off against Rice University. The game ended with a score of 38-21, their eighth win, earning the Miners their first conference championship in 44 years. The fans responded by running out onto the field and shredding decades of frustration.

"I just remember jumping with the fans, crying and yelling, everyone with this huge smile on their face, and looking up to the score board, where the big marquee was flashing 'WAC Champions.' It was one of the most memorable moments of my life," Porter said.

That year, the team went on to represent UTEP and El Paso as Co-WAC Champions in the 2000 Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho.

In his first year with the Miners, Coach Gary Nord would be named the 2000 WAC Coach of the Year after spending his previous three years as the team's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach.

Since then, the Miners have become part of Conference USA.

"There have been some extraordinary things to happen to our school since we became champions in 2000," Porter said. "We owe so much of our success to the coaches and the school, but mostly to the fans that came back to see us."

For Perez, he ended his career with a squad that racked up 20 wins in four seasons, the best four-year class since 1986-89.

"Watching everyone run out onto the field after we beat Rice was like a dream," Perez said. "Today, I'll go watch the games with my family and see all of the Miner Maniacs going crazy in the Sun Bowl, and think to myself, 'Wow, the fans are still here, even after 10 years, and they all still love UTEP.' I love UTEP. It's a great feeling. I know how those players feel." 🍌



Photo courtesy of John W. Rolph

# Grateful for His Second Chance

In 1973, John W. Rolph made a momentous decision. With his academic career threatened by what he termed a “lack of direction,” he left The University of Texas at El Paso after two semesters to join the Navy for two years of active duty.

**A**fter leaving UTEP and affiliating with the Navy Reserve, John W. Rolph faced a stormy future back on dry land in El Paso, where he learned you never completely leave your past behind.

“I came back to a UTEP transcript filled with bad grades,” he said during a telephone interview from his home in Charleston, W.Va. “I had failed to properly withdraw from my courses when I left to join the Navy. I ended up with all F’s for that semester.”

Displaying the wisdom and compassion that would make him a legendary UTEP figure, the late Ray Small, Ph.D., then dean of the College of Liberal Arts, took a chance on Rolph.

“I walked meekly into [the dean’s] office and said, ‘Sir, I know you don’t know who I am, but here’s my predicament. Is there something I can do?’” Rolph said. “I really didn’t expect him to do anything.”

Small surprised the aspiring history major.

“He told me, ‘John, we see people like you often. They’re lost when they get here, and they decide to leave early to figure things out. When they come back, they are often well focused and more mature. If you can demonstrate to me in the next couple of semesters that you’re serious about your education, we’ll see what we can do for you.’”

Thirty-two years, three degrees and more than two dozen impressive positions within the military and civilian legal system later, Rolph looks back on his return to UTEP with a mixture of appreciation and astonishment.

“My future would have been far less promising without Dean Small’s inspiration and vote of confidence,” he said. “I often reflect upon that incident as a reminder to myself to always give everyone a second chance to make a first impression.”

After receiving so much from UTEP, Rolph decided to give back. In 2009, he established the Herbert and Harriet Rolph Endowed Scholarship in memory of his parents.

“I was one of nine children,” he said. “I now have two sons of my own, and the idea of raising nine children is still mind-boggling to me. We were blessed with phenomenal parents. My father was a career Army officer and my mother was a registered nurse. Both were exceptional role models who worked very hard to give us everything we needed in life, and led by their own personal examples of integrity, hard work and perseverance, despite difficult circumstances.”

The scholarship, Rolph said, was intended to honor not only his parents, but also the University.

“I credit UTEP for pointing me in the right direction,” he said. “I was a compass without a needle until the amazing faculty at UTEP helped get me reoriented.”

Rolph earned a B.A. in history from UTEP in 1978, a J.D. from Baylor University School of Law in 1981 and a Master of Laws degree from the Army’s Judge Advocate General’s School in 1991.

After his two years of active duty, Rolph served in the Navy Reserve from 1975 until 1980, when he was commissioned an ensign in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps Student Program. He then attended Officer Indoctrination School and Naval Justice School. He would serve around the world, including two tours at sea, three overseas assignments and service in a combat theater in Baghdad, Iraq.

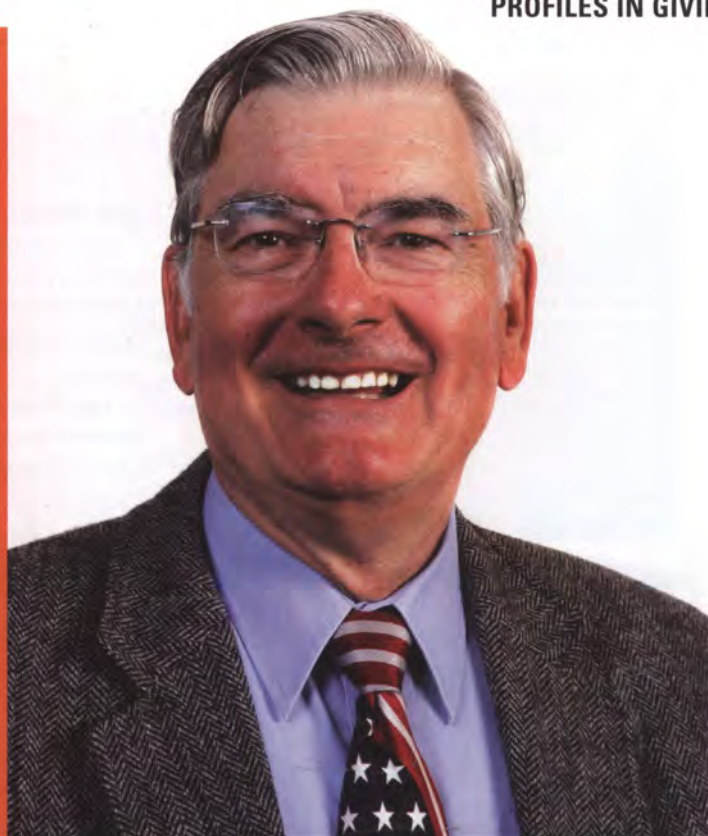
Now a U.S. administrative law judge for the Social Security Administration, he retired from the Navy as a captain in 2008, boasting a career of great depth and diversity that included positions as chief judge of the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals, commanding officer of the Naval Legal Service Office and deputy chief judge of the U.S. Court of Military Commission Review.

And it all started at UTEP, with the lessons he learned here, both in the classroom and beyond, setting him on a career path that would earn him the College of the Liberal Arts Gold Nugget Award in 2008.

“In El Paso, you enjoy the huge benefit of growing up in a rich and culturally diverse environment,” said Rolph, who graduated from Coronado High School. “UTEP made me appreciate how beneficial that exposure is, how it helps you grow as a person. UTEP also encouraged me to make learning a lifelong pursuit, and not something that is confined to a classroom or time on a campus.”

# Leading Students on the Path to Success

Chemistry professors know that the real laboratory is the classroom itself, a place where students, under the proper nurturing, often experience remarkable breakthroughs.



THE ENDOWMENT PROVIDES HELP FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, AND IT ALSO SUPPORTS RESEARCH AND TRAVEL STIPENDS FOR STUDENTS. "

James Becvar, Ph.D.  
Professor of Chemistry

"They [the students] do things they don't realize they're capable of," James Becvar, Ph.D., a chemistry professor at The University of Texas at El Paso, said. "Then they see what is possible, and it changes everything for them."

Becvar should know. At UTEP since 1978, he has seen students exceed their own expectations through determination and hard work. And for Becvar, a man who calls chemistry the "central science," the result is gratifying.

"I'm very proud of them," he said. "And when I think of what they accomplish, it brings tears to my eyes."

An innovator who believes the learning process can be as exciting and eye-opening as detective work, Becvar introduced the Peer-Led Team Learning approach to his general chemistry class in 2000. In the Peer-Led Team Learning model, student leaders guide small groups of classmates through course-related activities, engaging them with the material and each other.

Adapting a program developed at the City College of New York in 1990, Becvar provided student peer leaders with more freedom and flexibility to develop their own teaching and motivation strategies, an approach so successful that it has improved passing rates in the class from about 53 percent to about 74 percent.

While Becvar conducts two classroom sessions a week, the peer leaders hold a weekly workshop to supplement the lectures, often tailoring the lessons to fit the needs of each student. The workshops consist of 12 students each, as opposed to the average of about 150 students who attend the lectures delivered by the professor.

Encouraged by the results, Becvar established an endowment at UTEP in 2008 to help fund the hiring of peer leaders.

"The program allows the [peer leaders] the opportunity to grow and develop," Becvar said. "And it creates a sense of community. I have benefitted enormously from their creativity. They take what I teach in the classroom, and they adapt that in different ways for different

students. I call this kind of student-facilitated learning 'freestyle' Peer-Led Team Learning."

Becvar created another endowment this year to provide financial assistance to doctoral students in the chemistry department—the William C. Herndon Ph.D. Student Excellence Endowment, named in honor of his friend and fellow faculty member. Herndon, a professor emeritus of chemistry, has been with UTEP almost 40 years.

"Bill Herndon has a *tremendous* brain," Becvar said. "He's a very intellectual researcher, and there were decades, *decades*, when he would come in at 6 in the morning and not leave until 5 in the afternoon."

The establishment of the endowment vividly illustrates how members of the UTEP family feel toward each other. But, in addition to honoring his colleague, Becvar is honoring the students whose discipline energizes and inspires him.

"The endowment provides help for scholarships, and it also supports research and travel stipends for students," he said. "I can't tell you how important it is for students to go out and see what professionals in their fields are doing."

By creating a mechanism to help students long after he has left the classroom, Becvar has demonstrated his devotion to teaching, to research and to the young people of this region.

"I know that at least one other professor has expressed interest in adding funds to the Herndon endowment," Becvar said.

He encourages others, including alumni, to support it as well.

"I also hope that other endowments will be forthcoming," he said.

Becvar, whose own valuable research involves bioluminescent organisms used to detect toxic substances in chemicals, has received statewide honors for his teaching strategies, including an Outstanding Teacher Award from the UT System Board of Regents in 2009.

Through his lectures and his endowments, he is leading students on the path to similar success. ☞

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



"What a privilege to be able to contribute to such a worthy cause."

Dr. Lou E. Burmeister,  
Professor Emeritus,  
College of Education

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[givingto.utep.edu](http://givingto.utep.edu)

## A LETTER FROM UTEP ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni,

Along with a new decade and a new school year, the UTEP Alumni Association is more than ever enabling the Miner Nation to stay-connected and build on its success.

I am honored to serve as the new president for the UTEP Alumni Association, and I express my deepest gratitude to the hard work of my predecessor, Richard O. Martinez, for his leadership and commitment to advancing the organization.

Our goal of achieving 5,000 members by 2010 is in effect and we need your help. We aim to not only reach but also surpass this goal by a wide margin. Take a moment to respond to the Miner Nation Census 2010 and encourage your friends to do so as well.

Visit our new website that hosts the UTEP online community, the Miner Notes monthly e-newsletter and a variety of new tools that can be used in conjunction with your favorite social networking sites.

But most importantly, I encourage each of you to engage and get involved with alumni in your area. Participate, volunteer or become a leader. There are several official chapters and an entire network of contacts throughout the world.

Wherever you are on your journey, know that there is always a home away from home at UTEP. During this next year, I look forward to welcoming each of you to the growing Miner Nation.

Sincerely,

Mary Helen Padilla '97  
President  
UTEP Alumni Association



Mary Helen Padilla '97



## HERITAGE COMMISSION CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

This year's homecoming festivities also will mark the 30th anniversary of the Heritage Commission, which was founded by history scholar and former University President Haskell Monroe.

"Celebrating this milestone touches the hearts of so many Miners," said Heritage Commission Vice Chair Betty Wilkinson, who is chair of the 30th anniversary committee. "Keeping our legacy alive is a true achievement for all the volunteers and supporters throughout the years."

Today's board members include dedicated faculty, staff and alumni who have assumed the duty of preserving and showcasing UTEP traditions and history for future generations.

In 1994, President Diana Natalicio designated the Heritage House as the official campus repository for UTEP memorabilia. Collections and rotating exhibits date back to the University's founding as the State School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1914.

Operated by volunteers, the building is open from 10 a.m. to noon, Wednesday through Friday, or by appointment. Docents are available for tours, video or DVD viewings, archive searches and discussions of the collections maintained.

Have memorabilia to share with the University?  
Contact [heritage@utep.edu](mailto:heritage@utep.edu) or call 915-747-5700.





## New Online Community Connects the Miner Nation



UTEP alumni and friends have a new way to stay connected with the University and its network of Miners. Along with two new websites, Alumni Relations and University Development have launched the UTEP online community.

Here, alumni and friends of the University can update their profile, find an official directory of Miners throughout the world, register online for the Alumni Association and make secure online gifts to their areas of interest.

"Beyond our new look, we've added new online functions that will make maintaining your active membership, getting involved and staying connected at your fingertips," said Richard Daniel, assistant vice president for alumni and constituent relations.

"The UTEP online community is a way to broaden the scope of communication and connection with and among our alumni and friends. Colleagues can find each other and reconnect. Meanwhile, the University can stay on top of what services and programs best benefit our alumni."

The array of online tools will continue to grow. For now, the site also features online event registration, membership sign-up, event calendars, increased privacy measures and dedicated platforms for special interest groups.

Overall, Daniel hopes this new online tool will keep Miner alumni and friends involved with the University, and encourage membership in the UTEP Alumni Association. ☒

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR THE UTEP ONLINE COMMUNITY, VISIT [ALUMNI.UTEP.EDU](http://ALUMNI.UTEP.EDU) AND [GIVINGTO.UTEP.EDU](http://GIVINGTO.UTEP.EDU).**

# SAVE THE DATE

**Parents Weekend**  
OCTOBER 22-23, 2010



For more information, contact the Parents Association at [parents@utep.edu](mailto:parents@utep.edu) or 915-747-8600. [www.utep.edu/alumni](http://www.utep.edu/alumni)



The Parents Association will host the inaugural Parents Weekend from Oct. 22-23, 2010. The event combines entertainment, networking and informational activities for UTEP parents. Moreover, this event creates an introduction to the opportunities available for parents to engage with the University and actively participate in their students' experience.

"A newer, yet important organization to campus, the Parents Association bolsters the role of parents by giving them a voice in the quality and direction of their students' UTEP education," said Yvonne Franco-Herrera, president of the Parents Association.

"Together, UTEP and the Parents Association will prepare the Miner Nation for their future lives and careers," added Richard Daniel, assistant vice president of alumni and constituent relations at UTEP. ☒

**At Parents Weekend, be sure to meet the newly elected 2010-11 Parents Association Executive Committee:**

- President: Yvonne Franco-Herrera
- Vice President: Rick Vilardell
- Secretary: Guadalupe Prieto
- Treasurer: Patsy Tullius
- Historian: Ismael Prieto
- Chairs of Membership: Vicky and Eric Munoz
- Chair of Outreach: Priscilla Partida
- Chair of Fundraising: Josie de la Fuente
- Chair of Special Projects: David Herrera

UTEP ALUM VOTED PRESIDENT-ELECT OF STATE BAR OF TEXAS



Photo courtesy of Bob Black

# Bob Black

## Texas' Top Lawyer

BY JOE VELARDE

"(BLACK) IS WIDELY RESPECTED FOR HIS INTEGRITY AND ABILITY TO RESOLVE DIFFICULT DISPUTES."

Paul Yetter '80  
Trial lawyer for Yetter,  
Warden & Coleman L.L.P.

Lawyer Bob Black has been a proud UTEP alumnus for 33 years. A few months ago, he became the president-elect of the State Bar of Texas.

Black, who earned a bachelor's degree in history from The University of Texas at El Paso in 1977, in June 2011 will take over the group that boasts almost 86,000 attorneys licensed to practice law in Texas.

The El Paso native is managing shareholder at MehaffyWeber, a regional law firm with offices in Houston and Beaumont, Texas. He started with the company 30 years ago after earning his law degree summa cum laude from Texas Tech University.

The State Bar of Texas is the association for attorneys licensed to practice law in Texas. It is a public corporation and an administrative agency of the state's judicial branch.

Throughout his success as a litigator, mediator and arbitrator—he has been honored as a Texas Super Lawyer six times since 2004—and his leadership roles within the State Bar, he has never forgotten about the campus that put him on the road to success.

"UTEP is a very special institution that dominates an entire region," he said, adding that its academic programs continue to evolve to answer the needs of its students.

Among his fans is fellow UTEP alum and trial lawyer Paul Yetter of Yetter, Warden & Coleman, L.L.P.

"(Black) is widely respected for his integrity and ability to resolve difficult disputes," said Yetter, a 2008 UTEP Distinguished Alumnus who earned a bachelor's degree in business in 1980.

"As a lawyer, I'm excited for Bob to lead our State Bar in the coming years. As a UTEP alumnus, I'm proud to see our University's graduates continue to achieve great success. Texas has over 80,000 lawyers, and Bob has been voted by his peers to lead them all. It's a singular achievement."

Black's fondest University memories include crisp fall evenings in the Sun Bowl, memorable victories and losses with the school's debate team, and watching movies on the lawn outside Union Building West. While Black cherishes each recollection, he is most grateful for the scholarships he received, particularly from the National Honor Society.

"Without those, I'm not sure my career would've happened," he said

Black, a product of El Paso's Eastwood High School, encouraged other students to follow a similar path, whether or not it takes them away from home.

"A marvelous world awaits them, but they have to be prepared," he said. "I would challenge them to enjoy everything that UTEP has to offer, but also to prepare themselves for the world that awaits them, either in El Paso or far beyond Texas." 🗨️

# Ruben R. Chavira

BY DANIEL PEREZ

El Paso native Ruben R. Chavira grew up in a military family. He joined the Air Force after high school to earn money for college and soon realized that the quickest way for him to become an officer was to get his degree.

He left the service after four years and used the GI Bill to pay for his education at The University of Texas at El Paso. He earned his bachelor's degree in business management in 1995, but instead of returning to the Air Force, he took a job in the production field.

Chavira decided to return to the service and entered the Naval Reserve as an officer. Around the same time he got a job at UTEP where today he is director of business assessment and planning and the services' liaison officer to the University.

He uses the skills that he learned at UTEP and honed during 18 years in operations management in the United States and Mexico to assist different University directors to design strategic plans that focus on budgets, procedures, staff development and customer service. When put together, the plans put the University on a solid path to becoming a national research institution.

"It's a challenging job, but in the long run, it will benefit the University," he said.

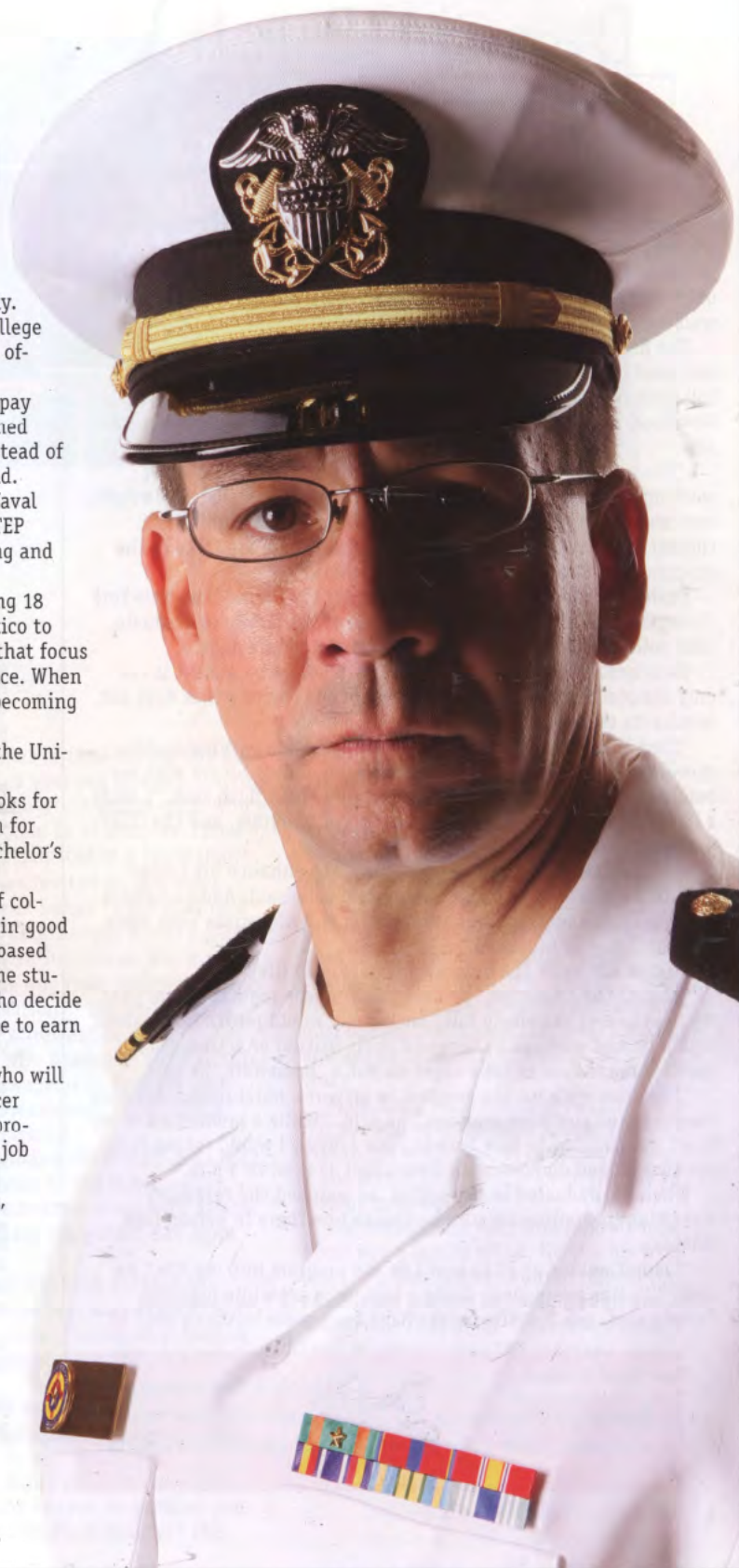
When he's not overseeing UTEP's strategic processes, he looks for ways to help today's students who might share his enthusiasm for education and the Navy. Many are interested in the Navy's Bachelor's Degree Completion Program (BDCP).

To be eligible for the BDCP, students must have 60 hours of college credit, must maintain a 3.0 grade point average, must be in good standing with the University, and take a calculus or calculus-based physics class. In exchange for the scholarship and stipends, the student commits to a four- or six-year naval enlistment. Those who decide to remain in the service can attend a university of their choice to earn a master's degree.

Jonathan Lozano, a senior mechanical engineering major who will graduate in December, expects to be a nuclear propulsion officer aboard an attack submarine within two years because of the program. He applied for it because he liked the financial aid, the job certainty, and the opportunity to study nuclear engineering.

One of the program's bigger fans on campus is Mike Acosta, national president of the Society of Mexican-American Engineers and Scientists and associate director in UTEP's University Relations office. He speaks confidently to students about its opportunities.

"I joke with admirals that if I was of that age, I would sign up," he said. 🚢



# Dennis Bush

BY JENN CRAWFORD

Since 2002, The University of Texas at El Paso has been home to the only bilingual Master of Fine Arts program in Creative Writing in the country. UTEP also has the distinction of having the nation's only completely online M.F.A. program in creative writing with no residency requirement.

The first graduate of the online M.F.A. program, Dennis Bush, managed to complete the degree in two years while maintaining a full-time teaching job in Phoenix, writing plays for production in New York, and operating a coaching and consulting business on the side.

"The all-online aspect has been great for attracting a lot of working professionals like me," said Bush, a professional playwright, writing and acting coach, consultant and full-time high school theater and film teacher based in Phoenix. "There are folks in the program who live and work all over the world."

Bush, who earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in drama from New York University in 1986, was the first member of his family to graduate from college and now is the first to earn a graduate degree.

He originally was attracted to UTEP's program because it is the only completely online M.F.A. program in the country that does not require its students to come to campus.

"Most M.F.A. programs require a residency of a varying number of weeks, each year, and that was not a possibility for me with my teaching and other professional responsibilities," Bush said. "I made a list of all the things I wanted in an M.F.A. program, and the UTEP program was a perfect fit for me."

The program gave him the opportunity to enhance his credentials in fields where he had less experience, he said. Additionally, a screenplay and several plays he wrote for M.F.A. courses have since been optioned or produced.

So how did he fit the program into his busy life?

"There's the challenge," he said. "During the regular school year, my days [were] extremely full." He usually would return home about 5:30 p.m. and work with clients on their writing or acting, then spend three to four hours a night on M.F.A. homework, he said.

"I've done work for the program in airports, hotel rooms, between meetings and coaching sessions," he said. "While a production of my plays was running in New York in June [2009], I would return from the theater and do homework from about 11 p.m. to 3 a.m."

When he graduated in the spring, he watched the ceremony streaming live online because he couldn't be there in person (see sidebar).

"I'm not unique at all in how I fit the program into my life," he said. "It's like everyone is doing a high-wire act while juggling. Complicated, yes. But the results have been quite lovely to see." ✉

**Dennis Bush** sent this note to UTEP President **Diana Natalicio** after the spring 2010 Commencement ceremonies. It has been edited to meet space constraints.



Photo courtesy of Dennis Bush

May 16, 2010

Good afternoon,

I hope this correspondence finds you well.

Saturday morning, I watched the spring commencement on live streaming video. I was unable to be at the ceremony in person due to scheduling conflicts. As the first graduate of the online Bilingual Creative Writing Master of Fine Arts program, I was delighted to be able to view the event allowing me to be there in spirit.

Your speech at the Liberal Arts ceremony ignited a powerful moment of resonance for me. Up till that point, pursuing my M.F.A. had just been what I was doing, what I was working on. As you asked the graduates to stand if they had been working while taking classes, I raised my hand. In addition to being a professional playwright, coach and consultant, I teach theatre and film and am the chairperson of the Fine Arts department of a large high school in Phoenix, Arizona. You asked graduates to stand if they had a 3.0 or better. I raised my hand. A 3.5 or better? Yes, my hand remained raised. I completed my degree program with a projected 4.0. I'm also the first in my family to graduate from college (in 1986, with a B.F.A. in drama from New York University) and am now the first to earn a graduate degree, with the conferring of my M.F.A. in Creative Writing.

In those moments of your speech, I was able to reflect on and acknowledge the accomplishment of what I had done. I was moved to tears. I am so grateful to you for triggering that resonance.

Participating in an online program often leaves one feeling disconnected from the institution. Many times, procedures aren't in place to deal with students who can't just drop by an office on campus to address an issue. We're not able to experience the sense of community that exists on a bricks-and-mortar campus. Of course, the upside is that online students are able to schedule their studies around their own work and family-life parameters. For me, it meant allowing me to continue my career while pursuing the degree.

The education I received through UTEP's Creative Writing program has been exceptional. Led by Lex Williford, the faculty challenged, guided and inspired me.

Again, thank you for your commencement speech. And for all you've done to create a university that has served me so well.

Cordially,  
Dennis Bush, M.F.A.

Photo courtesy of Jeopardy! Productions, Inc.



Jeopardy! Host Alex Trebek, left, and UTEP Alum Manny Maldonado '05

JEOPARDY!

## Manny Maldonado

BY ARLEENE BARRIOS

"Alex, how about Dreams for \$14,500?" A UTEP alumnus did not actually utter those words recently, but he might as well have.

Manny Maldonado fulfilled his dream of being on *Jeopardy!*, and he won \$14,500 after a two-game stint on the popular television show.

It was the chance of a lifetime for the 38-year-old UTEP alumnus, who went from answering *Jeopardy!* quiz questions from his living room couch to being a contestant on national television.

"It's great, also very surreal," said Maldonado, who graduated from UTEP in 2005 with a degree in biological sciences and a minor in chemistry. "It's one of those (experiences) where you wish you could go back and relive it."

Maldonado, a trivia buff who teaches chemistry at Irvin High School in El Paso, prides himself on having watched every *Jeopardy!* episode broadcast in the last five years.

"The game has truly gotten harder. The categories have gotten tougher. It's the way they word the answers. You have to really reason it out, 'What could it be?'" Maldonado said. "Before they would ask, 'Who composed this?' Now you have to know where he or she's from...who they dated..."

His 60 minutes of fame on the CBS network show was a yearlong process, starting first with a 50-question online quiz, which he had to complete in 15 minutes. Those who passed participated in a mock show before they were invited on *Jeopardy!*.

"It was a week before Thanksgiving. I received a call and thought it was a joke from my dad or father-in-law, but it was legit. It was the guy from *Jeopardy!* checking (my information)," Maldonado said, recalling the excitement he felt.

He and his wife headed to Sony Pictures Studios in Los Angeles in January with high hopes for Maldonado to become a returning champion.

As the first round of the half-hour quiz show wound down to the last question, Maldonado was in third place with \$7,400, and the first-place contestant had more than \$11,000.

The category was 19th century literature. *Jeopardy!* host Alex Trebek read: "In this 19th century novel, Mrs. Gordon suggested the name Ebony for this title character."

"I (had) told my wife I would smile and look at the camera if I knew the answer," he said.

Maldonado didn't smile at the camera, but based on the answer he gambled and wrote out "What is *Black Beauty*?" The

correct answer put him over the top with \$12,500.

Maldonado moved on to the next round as the returning champion, but lost. He walked off the set with a two-day total of \$14,500.

"If I hadn't won anything I could bring back nothing but a great experience. They're (the *Jeopardy!* staff) very encouraging and supportive," he said. "Alex Trebek is very nice, outgoing and gregarious. During the commercial breaks he'll go and answer audience questions. He's very witty."

Maldonado returned to El Paso, but was not allowed to share what transpired with others. He would forfeit his prize money if the media found out prior to the shows' airings in late March.

Maldonado said watching himself from home was a family affair. He and his wife and their four young children relived the experience in front of their living room television. That night, he received calls from relatives across the country.

When asked what he planned to do with his winnings, he said some would go to taxes and the rest will fund home improvements. ☞

QUICK ON HIS FEET

# Obadele Thompson

BY STEVE LAZARIN

When you want to talk speed, you go to the local expert, the guy who left orange and blue sparks wherever his feet fell. When you want to talk about what it takes to be a top student-athlete, he's also the man to see.

He is Obadele Thompson, former sprinter at The University of Texas at El Paso who won a bronze medal in the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia, and has gone toe-to-toe with some of the greatest runners in the world, including Olympic champions and world-record holders Michael Johnson and Donovan Bailey.

Thompson has put his track and field experience and knowledge in a new book aimed at college student athletes and their success on and off the field.

The idea for his book, *Secrets of a Champion Student-Athlete: A Reality Check*, first came to him in 2007 after visiting with a friend who was also a former student-athlete. During their conversation, the two shared how much they wished someone had told them certain things to look out for while they were in college.

"On my drive home, it occurred to me that although most schools give their student-athletes handbooks during freshman orientation, those books really don't give certain real-life, practical advice for student-athletes to use in their daily lives," Thompson said.

"I did some research and discovered that there's really nothing like this from someone who's actually been there and done that and who can relate to the experiences and pressures of trying to do well as a student-athlete."

Born Obadele Olutosin Thompson on March 30, 1976, in Saint Michael, Barbados, Thompson came to UTEP in the fall of 1993 after being inspired by former UTEP sprinter, Olapade Adeniken (1992 NCAA Champion in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes). Thompson graduated summa cum laude and received his Bachelor of Business Administration in economics and marketing in 1997.

"Being at UTEP was a tremendous growing experience for me," Thompson said. "I came to UTEP as a skinny 17-year-old kid from the small Caribbean island of Barbados and graduated four years later more mature and well-rounded.

"I lived in the dorms (Kelly Hall) the whole time, which was quite an enjoyable and unforgettable experience. I really appreciated the warm and personal nature of UTEP from staff to students—something that is not always present at larger universities."

"I also appreciated the love I received from the El Paso community. Although I was almost 3,000 miles away from home, El Paso became a true home-away-from-home for me."

During his time as a university track star, Thompson won four NCAA championships. He is UTEP's record holder in the outdoor 200 meters with a time of 20.03 set in 1997, and he also owns the indoor records in the 55-meter dash and 200 meter dash. Thompson is an 11-time All-American and 16-time Western Athletic Conference Champion.

Academically, Thompson was named a 1998 UTEP Top 10 senior, graduating with a 3.91 GPA. He received the NCAA Today's Top VIII Award that recognizes student-athletes for academics, athletics and leadership.

In many ways, Thompson's book is a "pocket mentor," as Thompson described it, for student-athletes in college, although much of it can also be applied to high school student-athletes who will enter the college ranks. According to Thompson, the book is based mainly on his experiences at UTEP and as a professional athlete, and it in-



cludes input from former coaches and other former student-athletes.

He shares tips and "reality checks" that student-athletes can use to improve in the classroom and on the field. He also discusses life skills, attitudes and habits that the student-athletes can develop while in school to become successful personally and professionally.

After UTEP, Thompson enjoyed a long career as a professional track and field athlete. He competed on every continent and in more than 30 countries throughout the world. He also participated in three Olympic Games and seven World Championships. One of the biggest highlights of his track career was winning a bronze medal in the 100-meter dash at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

Although he does not mention UTEP by name in the book, the University serves as the backdrop for his college experience. The book contains several stories mentioning the campus, as well as anecdotes about his relationship with UTEP Track and Field Coach Bob Kitchens and some former teammates and staff.

"Oba was and is the perfect example of what a student-athlete should and can be," Kitchens said. He graduated with a double major. He was a four-time NCAA Champion, a world record holder in the 55 meters and his freshman year, he set a world junior record in the 100 meters.

"He was always a responsible person in everything that he did and his accomplishments on and off the track testifies to this."

On the subject of his mentor and former coach, Thompson said. "I was fortunate to be trained by Coach Kitchens, who, in my humble estimation, is one of the best college coaches with regards to sprinting and getting the best out of his athletes.

"During my time at UTEP I had the chance to train side-by-side with several NCAA and conference champions which greatly impacted my athletic career. I am happy that the UTEP track team continues the great tradition of producing All-Americans and champions.

"I often reminisce about my time at UTEP with a smile because being there was such an irreplaceable and invaluable time in my life. I am impressed by the growth of UTEP, which makes me feel even prouder to be a Miner." ❧

# Brian Carter

BY JOE VELARDE

Brian Carter, director of the Swimming and Fitness Center at The University of Texas at El Paso, loves to travel. This summer, he planned to take his wife to France to enjoy the fine culture of the French—and participate in the Ironman Triathlon.

"It's sort of like our vacation," Carter said, laughing.

While most men and women dream of running the Boston Marathon or swimming the English Channel, Carter, who recently turned 50, completed his sixth Ironman, which took place June 27 in Nice, France.

In the men's 50 to 54 age division, Carter finished 117th out of 163, and 2,131 overall. His performance in the water was best—he completed the swim in third place in his age group. He finished the entire course in 14:48:58.

"I felt like it was the hardest (of all other previous Ironman competitions)," Carter said. "(It was) the worst race I'd ever done (related to time) and the best race I'd ever done...in regards to finishing."

Although his condition remained stable, he was administered IV fluids promptly after crossing the finish line, he said.

A triathlon is designed to test the limits of human endurance. The event is divided into three parts: a 2.4-mile ocean swim, a 112-mile countryside bike ride and a 26.2-mile run.

Carter's inspiration came from two friends. One of them, the man who introduced him to cycling, passed away earlier this year. The other, a woman from Dallas who ran, cycled and swam with him in New Zealand, was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) last year, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

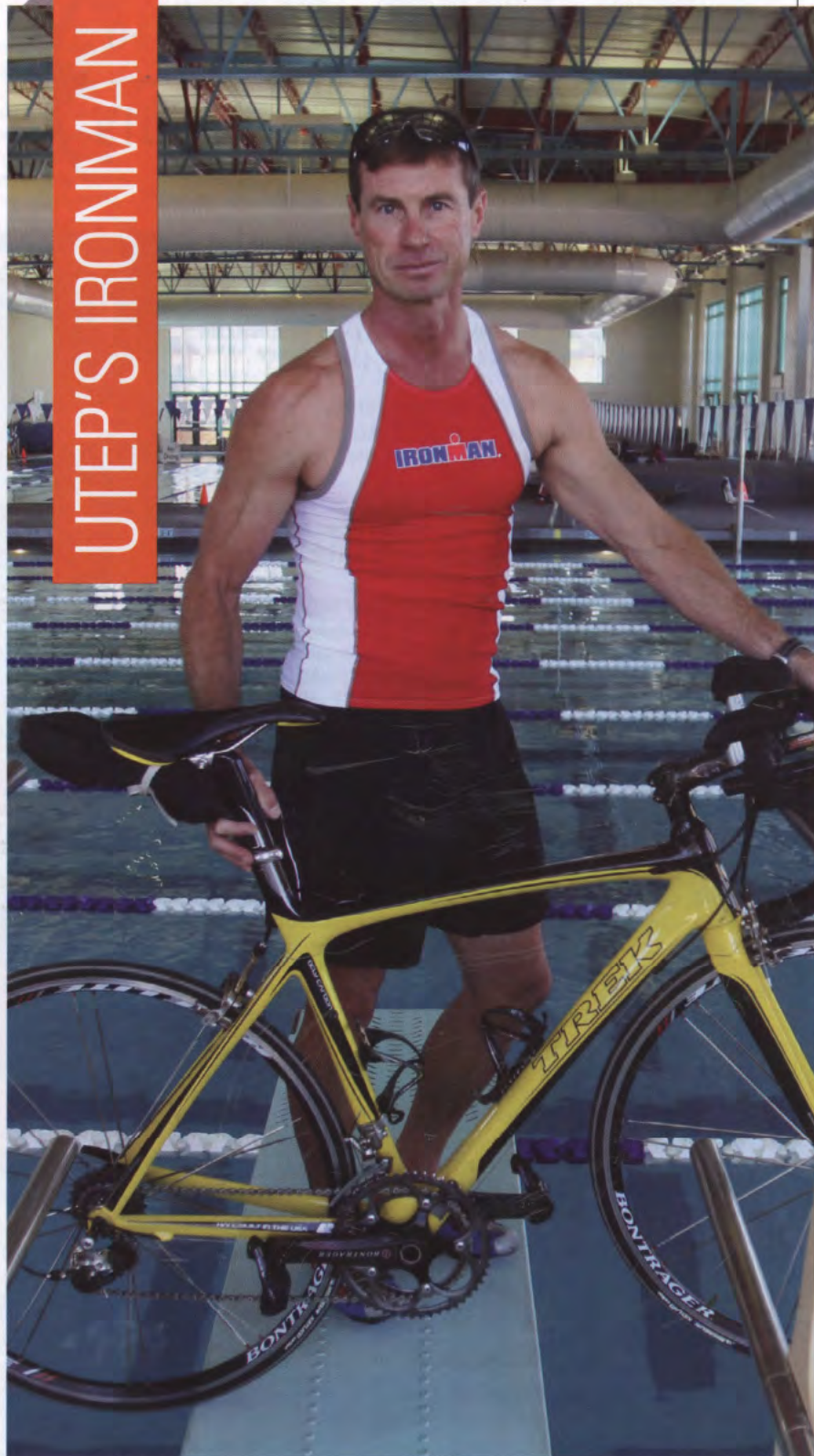
"Time becomes very important," he said. "I look to those people as true inspirations. When I'm out there suffering in the heat, trying to attain this goal, it's not nearly as much as what they have had to live with."

While he insists he's not much of a risk taker or adrenaline junky, he has defied gravity by bungee jumping from a hot air balloon and skydiving over the Chihuahuan Desert.

"People think I'm an adrenaline buff, and I'm really not," Carter said. "I'm not even a big roller coaster guy."

There is always something on the horizon for Carter. Nevertheless, he said this Ironman competition would be his last...or will it? 🏹

UTEP'S IRONMAN



IT'S A MINER NATION AT THE WORLD CUP

# Nohemi and Aida Rubio Fernando and Lu Padula

BY CHRIS LECHUGA

Every four years, the world unites in sport and spirit as countries compete for one of the most coveted and storied championships known to man—the World Cup.

This summer, teams from 32 countries convened in South Africa for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, and soccer fans from the Miner Nation were on hand to join the festivities.

Nohemi Rubio, alumna of The University of Texas at El Paso, took the trans-Atlantic trip to South Africa with her sister Aida, also an alumna, to support the Mexican team in the tournament.

“It was an incredible experience,” Rubio said. “This was my first World Cup, and we were amazed how the cultures mixed and how the people in South Africa were so friendly.”

Nohemi Rubio double majored in psychology and public relations at UTEP, graduating with her bachelor’s degree in 1999 and earning a master’s degree in public administration in 2003. Aida Rubio received her bachelor’s degree in business administration with a triple major in management, marketing and international business in 2003.

With their Mexican and UTEP flags on hand, the Ciudad Juárez natives cheered on “El Tri” as they played against Uruguay in the final group stage game. They also witnessed the heartbreaking loss to Argentina in the round of 16, which took Mexico out of the tournament.

Rubio was impressed with the number of fans who made the same trip to support their country’s team. She met people from all over the world, including Italy, South Africa, Honduras, Brazil, Argentina, Spain and other fans from the United States, with whom she exchanged e-mail addresses to share pictures and memories from the World Cup.

Outside of the soccer activities, the siblings took the opportunity to explore South Africa as they visited some of the outlying cities and even went on a daylong safari.

As the Rubios were on their way back to the United States, Fernando Padula, director of the University Bookstore, was on his way to Johannesburg to catch the semifinal and final games of the World Cup. Born and raised in Brazil, he has been a huge soccer fan for as long as he can remember.

“I’ve been involved with soccer my whole life as a player and as a coach,” Padula said. “Soccer is almost like religion in Brazil.”

Padula joined his brother, Lu, and eight friends who were already in South Africa for their two-week trip. Like Rubio, he appreciated the camaraderie that soccer created among all the fans.

“It is just incredible to see all the countries coming together for this celebration of sports, culture and peace,” Padula said.



Photo courtesy of Nohemi Rubio

UTEP Alumnae Aida Rubio, left, and her sister, Nohemi Rubio, center, sport their UTEP pride at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa while celebrating with fellow soccer fans.



Fernando Padula, UTEP alumnus and bookstore director, attended his third World Cup tournament.

Both brothers are UTEP graduates, earning bachelor’s degrees in business administration, Fernando Padula in 2002 and Lu Padula in 2003. Fernando earned his master’s degree in educational leadership in 2005 and was named bookstore director in March 2010.

This was the brothers’ third World Cup journey. They also attended the 1998 tournament in France as well as Korea-Japan in 2002, where they witnessed Brazil win its fifth title.

Despite Brazil’s upset loss to the Netherlands in the quarterfinals, Padula already is looking four years into the future.

“I just can’t wait for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil,” he said. 🏆



'50s

**Hibbard G. Polk** (M.A. '51) was inducted posthumously into the El Paso County Historical Society's Hall of Honor in November. Polk was an El Paso Independent School District deputy superintendent and civic leader.

'60s

**Patricia "Patty" Holland-Branch** (\*) is the founder and chief executive officer of Facilities Connection, a commercial interior design firm. In August, Holland-Branch was named Hispanic Businesswoman of the Year by the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce. In November, her company was recognized by the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as Minority Service Firm of the Year.

**Cecilia Ochoa Levine** (\*) in November received the Minority Manufacturer of the Year award from the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for her company MFI International Inc., which assists global manufacturers doing business on the U.S.-Mexico border to meet their labor needs.

**Silvestre Reyes** (\*), U.S. representative for El Paso, in February received the Rock Award from Frontera Land Alliance for his support of land conservation and the preservation of Castner Range, 7,000 acres of undeveloped desert and mountains on the site of a now-closed military firing range at Fort Bliss, Texas.

**Miguel "Mike" Rosales Jr.** (B.B.A. '66), a State Farm Insurance agent and founding member of the El Paso His-

panic Chamber of Commerce, was named 2009 Outstanding Ex by El Paso High School in September.

**Gerald "Jerry" Rubin** (B.S. '65), president and chief executive officer of Helen of Troy Ltd. in El Paso, in January was named the 2009 Legend of the Sun Bowl by the Sun Bowl Association. Helen of Troy served as the title sponsor of the annual Sun Bowl game from 2004 to 2009. Rubin received UTEP's College of Science Gold Nugget Award in 1998 and the University's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2002.

'70s

**John Cook** (B.B.A. '77), mayor of El Paso, in November was elected to serve on the board of directors of the National League of Cities, a national and professional development organization for cities and municipal officials.

**Edward "Ed" Drusina** (B.S.C.E. '74), an El Paso civil engineer, was appointed United States commissioner of the International Boundary and Water Commission by President Barack Obama in January.

**Gabriel S. Gaytan** (B.A. '79), an El Paso muralist and artist, in September unveiled "El Corazón de El Paso," a 30-by-20-foot T-shaped mural he and his son, Gabriel Itzai, painted on a freeway support column in El Paso's Lincoln Park.

**Col. Stuart L. Leeds** (B.S. '76), an El Paso attorney, was appointed as chairman of the El Paso County Ethics Commission in October.

**Marcos A. Lizzarraga** (B.A. '79), a retired attorney,

was appointed in October to the El Paso County Ethics Commission.

**Robert A. "Bob" Malone** (B.S.Met.E. '74) was appointed president and chief executive officer of The First National Bank of Sonora in San Angelo, Texas.

**David G. Marcus** (B.A. '74), a managing partner of El Paso-based accounting firm Marcus, Fairall, Bristol LLC, earned a certification in financial forensics from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

**Richard O. Martinez Sr.** (B.S.M.E. '79), chief of the Future Force Division at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, was elected chairman of the El Paso Public Service Board.

**Joe E. Smith** (M.A. '71) retired in January after 10 years as associate district court judge in Des Moines, Iowa. Smith will continue to serve the Iowa courts as a senior judge.

'80s

**Col. Michael Apodaca** (B.B.A. '86) in August took command of the Department of Defense Criminal Investigative Task Force based in Fort Belvoir, Va. The military task force investigates alleged terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

**Tracy M. Bristol** (B.B.A. '89), a partner at the El Paso accounting firm Marcus, Fairall, Bristol LLC, in October was elected as vice chair of the Workforce Solutions Upper Rio Grande board of directors.

**Yvonne M. Davila** (B.S.N. '84) in January joined CIMA Hospice in El Paso as clinical director.

**Benjamin C. "Ben"**

**Flores** (B.S.E.E. '85; M.S. '86) was promoted in October to associate dean of the Graduate School at UTEP, where he is also a professor of electrical and computer engineering.

**Leticia Flores** (B.B.A. '88), an assistant controller for University Medical Center of El Paso, has been appointed to the El Paso Mental Health and Mental Retardation board of trustees.

**Susana Gottswinter** (B.B.A. '83) was promoted in February to the position of assistant vice president of finance at El Paso Employees Federal Credit Union.

**Victor M. Mendez** (B.S.C.E. '80), federal highway administrator for the U.S. Department of Transportation, was recognized by *Hispanic Business* magazine in October as one of the nation's 100 most influential Hispanics for 2009. He was named among 30 Hispanic "D.C. Power Brokers."

'90s

**Marco C. Bencomo** (B.B.A. '99), senior vice president of commercial insurance at JDW Insurance in El Paso, was awarded the company's Business Leader Award in November. The award is given monthly to the individual who generates the most new business.

**Kathrin L. Berg Pettit** (B.A. '90), executive director of El Paso Pro-Musica, was elected to the board of Texans for the Arts, a state arts advocacy organization.

**Josefina "Josie" Briones Perez** (B.S.Ed. '90; M.Ed. '96) was promoted in September to assistant superintendent for adminis-

trative services at the Clint Independent School District in El Paso.

**Gilbert Carreon** (B.B.A. '98) in February was promoted to audit manager for Bank of the West in El Paso.

**Edward Escudero** (B.B.A. '92), vice president and chief financial officer of C&R Distributing and president and chief executive officer of Sierra Finance LLP, was appointed to the El Paso Public Service Board in November 2009.

**Mario C. Gomez** (B.S.C.E. '92), of Las Vegas, has been promoted to assistant district engineer in construction for District 1 for the Nevada Department of Transportation. Parker earned the designation of certified public manager in January.

**Ruben Hernandez** (B.B.A. '92), of El Paso, was promoted in February to senior banker in Chase Bank's commercial banking group.

**Shoshana N. Johnson** (\*), a former Fort Bliss soldier who survived gunshot wounds and 22 days as a prisoner of war in Iraq, is the author of *I'm Still Standing*, which was released in February. Johnson is a resident of El Paso.

**Denise Jones** (B.S.Ed. '91; M.Ed. '00) in December was named principal of North Loop Elementary School in El Paso.

**Atticus Rowe** (B.A. '97), a resident of Austin, Texas, is featured in an online advertisement for Frost Bank, a financial holding company in Texas.

'00s

**Mimi R. "Mica" Espinoza** (B.A. '02; M.P.A. '04) was recognized in the fall issue of *Chamber Executive* magazine

as one of the publication's "40 under 40 Rising Stars of the Chamber World." Espinoza, who recently finished a Ford Foundation Fellowship at the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, is vice president of government relations for the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce.

**Lianee D. Fernandez-Rios** (B.B.A. '00) was promoted in February to vice president and credit underwriter III at Chase Bank in El Paso.

**Elsa Y. Galindo** (B.B.A. '02; M.B.A. '09), of El Paso, was promoted by Bank of the West to assistant vice president for business lending in January.

**Octavio Gomez** (B.B.A. '03), an El Paso nightclub owner, and two partners in September opened The Garden restaurant.

**Michael E. "Mike" Guerra** (M.B.A. '04) in January was elected president of the board of directors for El Paso's 2010 Amigo Airshow.

**Laura I. Lizardo** (B.A. '03; M.Acy. '07) in January joined the accounting and consulting firm Strickler & Prieto LLP in El Paso as a staff accountant.

**Shari S. Schwartz** (M.Ed. '07) was named manager of the El Paso Independent School District Fund in January. The foundation provides classroom impact grants to teachers and scholarships to graduating seniors of EPISD.

**Marisa Y. Ybarra** (B.A. '05) in September was named an associate of El Paso-based law firm Rincon Law Group PC.

(\*) denotes attendance at UTEP

## Grad Goes National to Promote Stronger Communities

Our country's future success starts in the schools, but the community must do its part to help the students succeed, said UTEP alumnus, speaker, author and businessman John Linney.

Linney, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees in communication from UTEP in 1995 and 1998, respectively, travels throughout the U.S. and Mexico sharing his ideas about positive youth development, building stronger communities and anti-bullying techniques in schools. His goal is to help communities build partnerships.

He recently published a paper, *Better Together: Strategies for Integration in a Full-Service Community School*, where he promotes the idea of schools staying open after hours to serve as community centers where families can fill their health and social support needs, and students can stay for extended learning opportunities.

Linney, co-author of the 2008 book *Safe School Ambassadors: Harnessing Student Power to Stop Bullying and Violence*, is president of El Paso-based Impact Coaching and Speaking Inc., specializing in climate training. He said governments and businesses have to work with schools for his plan to work.

"We are all responsible for the success of our students," he said.

Too often schools get caught up in the academic success of the students at the expense of their social and emotional growth. He believes a well-rounded student offers communities the best chance for overall achievement. ☑



John Linney, '95, '98

Photo courtesy of John Linney

## In Memoriam

- Beatrice Denis Edwards** (B.M. '43) Whittier, Calif.; March 25, 2009.
- Betty Jo "B-Jo" Hardy Whyman** (\*) Bellaire, Texas; May 4, 2009.
- Leticia Valdez** (B.S.N. '91) Williamsburg, Va.; May 6, 2009.
- Adelaide B. Teel** (B.A. '34) Long Beach, Calif.; Aug. 1, 2009.
- Magdalena C. Sjoquist** (B.A. '65) Las Cruces, N.M.; Aug. 2, 2009.
- Juana Serna** (B.A. '51) El Paso; Aug. 19, 2009.
- Jesus M. Martinez** (B.A. '79) El Paso; Aug. 24, 2009.
- Evelyn L. Vernon** (M.A. '53) El Paso; Sept. 21, 2009.
- Mollie Hightower-Barnum** (B.S.Ed. '63) El Paso; Sept. 22, 2009.
- Rocio Ponce** (B.A. '09) El Paso; Oct. 3, 2009.
- Doris Goetting** (\*) El Paso; Oct. 4, 2009.
- James "Sam" Lambert** (M.A. '55) El Paso; Oct. 5, 2009.
- Joan Q. Osborne** (M.S. '96) San Antonio; Oct. 6, 2009.
- Rafael F. "Ralph" "Rafa" Calderon** (\*) El Paso; Oct. 7, 2009.
- John Espinosa** (B.A. '48) North Hills, Calif.; Oct. 8, 2009.
- Sylvia Franco-Callaway** (B.S.Ed. '79) El Paso; Oct. 10, 2009.
- Arthur "Art" La Capria Jr.** (B.B.A. '58) El Paso; Oct. 11, 2009.
- Col. John Thomas Evans** (M.Ed. '71) Potomac, Md.; Oct. 11, 2009.
- Dennis J. Pugil** (B.S.C.S. '85) Victoria, Texas; Oct. 13, 2009.
- Felix "Wero" Alonzo** (\*) North Las Vegas; Oct. 14, 2009.
- Mary J. "Jean" Calvert** (B.A. '44) McAllen, Texas; Oct. 14, 2009.
- Richard Cortez** (B.B.A. '64) Plano, Texas; Oct. 15, 2009.
- Jonathan P. Lancaster** (B.A. '39) Austin, Texas; Oct. 15, 2009.
- Hiram E. "Eddie" Hudspeth** (\*) El Paso; Oct. 22, 2009.
- Lt. Col. Daniel J. "Dan" McDonough Jr.** (\*) El Paso; Oct. 23, 2009.
- Betty Jane Matocha** (B.A. '65) Galveston, Texas; Oct. 25, 2009.
- Myra I. Flores** (B.B.A. '06) El Paso; Oct. 26, 2009.
- William Hailes "Bill" Healy Sr.** (B.B.A. '50) El Paso; Oct. 26, 2009.
- James Pattison Worsham Sr.** (\*) Clint, Texas; Oct. 26, 2009.
- William C. Friedman** (B.A. '83) Overland Park, Kan.; Oct. 27, 2009.
- Felipe Moreno** (B.S.M.I. '65) El Paso; Oct. 28, 2009.
- Jackey Reace Lumpkin** (M.Ed. '68) Dallas, Ore.; Oct. 30, 2009.
- Raymond M. "Ray" Jones Jr.** (B.A. '48) Baldwin City, Kan.; Oct. 31, 2009.
- Jonelle Queen Carpenter Sleeper** (B.S.Ed. '65) Bryan, Texas; Nov. 2, 2009.
- Raymond Stuart Tanner** (\*) Kennard, Texas; Nov. 2, 2009.
- Elizabeth Escandón-Gonzalez** (B.S.Ed. '81) El Paso; Nov. 3, 2009.
- Philip Jack Kestner Jr.** (\*) Plano, Texas; Nov. 3, 2009.
- Lt. Col. Henry J. "Jack" Reed** (M.S.M.E. '76) Arlington, Va.; Nov. 5, 2009.
- Brett John Burkart** (\*) El Paso; Nov. 6, 2009.
- John Ray "Jack" Harris** (B.A. '64; M.Ed. '72) El Paso; Nov. 7, 2009.
- Chief Warrant Officer Donald E. Penoli Sr.** (B.B.A. '75) El Paso; Nov. 7, 2009.
- Morris O. "Moe" Hill** (B.S. '53) Las Cruces, N.M.; Nov. 8, 2009.
- Dr. Manuel Moreno** (B.S. '71) El Paso; Nov. 9, 2009.
- Lilia Prado Navarrete** (B.S.Ed. '68; M.Ed. '89) El Paso; Nov. 9, 2009.
- Anne Marie Kelly Miller** (\*) Henderson, Ky.; Nov. 10, 2009.
- Veronica Resendez** (B.I.S. '06) El Paso; Nov. 10, 2009.
- Martha Anne Hartline** (B.S.Ed. '72) Arlington, Wash.; Nov. 11, 2009.
- Joseph T. Reydomb a.k.a. Jose "Adan" Reyes** (B.S.Ed. '81) El Paso; Nov. 11, 2009.
- William R. "Ralph" McKinney** (\*) Houston, Texas; Nov. 12, 2009.
- Jesus Rolando Rios** (B.S. '75) El Paso; Nov. 12, 2009.
- Betty Jo Edmonson** (B.A. '51) Slaton, Texas; Nov. 16, 2009.
- Enrique E. "Henry" Guerra** (B.B.A. '75) El Paso; Nov. 16, 2009.
- Newton B. "John" Phillips Jr.** (\*) El Paso; Nov. 16, 2009.
- Debra Kay Pillow** (B.I.S. '93) El Paso; Nov. 16, 2009.
- Christopher R. "Chris" Barajas** (B.B.A. '84) Fort Worth, Texas; Nov. 22, 2009.
- Jose C. Fuselier** (B.A. '54) Minden, Nev.; Nov. 23, 2009.
- Rodolfo Borjon** (\*) El Paso; Nov. 26, 2009.
- Anna Ruth Goodenough** (M.A. '56) El Paso; Nov. 26, 2009.
- Hector Samaniego** (B.A. '59) Mesilla, N.M.; Nov. 30, 2009.
- Concepcion I. "Irene" "Coco" Moncada Gardy** (B.A. '81) Universal City, Texas; Dec. 1, 2009.
- Jose S. "Joe" Holguin Jr.** (\*) El Paso; Dec. 4, 2009.
- Maxine Molt Krupp** (B.B.A. '35; M.A. '53) Lenexa, Kan.; Dec. 4, 2009.
- William Cyprian "Bill" Cross** (B.S.Mi. '50) Lakeland, Fla.; Dec. 8, 2009.
- Woodrow W. "Woody" Leonard** (B.S.Mi. '35) Austin, Texas; Dec. 9, 2009.
- Dr. Edward Sochat** (\*) El Paso; Dec. 9, 2009.
- Sallie Ruth Robertson** (B.S.Ed. '71) El Paso; Dec. 11, 2009.
- Francisco "Frank" Durant** (B.S.Ed. '91) El Paso; Dec. 12, 2009.
- Brenda Ann Carlisle Ruffin** (B.S.Ed. '76) El Paso; Dec. 13, 2009.
- Ira J. Stuart** (B.B.A. '50) Friendswood, Texas; Dec. 14, 2009.
- Bruce McCheane Barnard III** (\*) Durango, Colo.; Dec. 15, 2009.
- Mary E. Stokes** (B.S.Ed. '70) El Paso; Dec. 17, 2009.
- Cecil Edward "Eddie" Brunk Jr.** (B.B.A. '57) Portland, Ore.; Dec. 18, 2009.
- Florence Skene Grosheider Brunner** (\*) El Paso; Dec. 22, 2009.
- Malcolm Hardy Boswell** (B.S.C.E. '51) El Paso; Dec. 23, 2009.
- Angelita Holguin "Angie" Silvas** (B.F.A. '82) Anthony, Texas; Dec. 23, 2009.
- Irene Sanchez Tijerina** (B.I.S. '97; M.Ed. '05) El Paso; Dec. 23, 2009.
- Dennis Rothermich** (B.S. '96) Plano, Texas; Dec. 24, 2009.
- Timothy M. "Tim" Skar** (B.B.A. '97) El Paso; Dec. 26, 2009.
- Burgess Bennett Notley** (B.S.Ed. '66) Keller, Texas; Dec. 27, 2009.
- John Clark Toothman** (B.B.A. '72) El Paso; Dec. 29, 2009.
- Charles J. Kace Jr.** (B.A. '71) Wilbraham, Mass.; Dec. 31, 2009.
- Nicolas "Nick" Perez Jr.** (B.S.Mi. '39) El Paso; Dec. 31, 2009.
- Judith Marie Enriquez** (B.S.Ed. '92) El Paso; Jan. 1, 2010.
- Susan Glen Klahr** (M.A. '90) El Paso; Jan. 1, 2010.
- Wayne L. Miller** (\*) El Paso; Jan. 1, 2010.
- Benjamin Teofilo Muller** (\*) Houston; Jan. 2, 2010.
- Maj. Eugene Edward Froemel** (B.A. '60) El Paso; Jan. 3, 2010.
- Carlos Norberto Hornedo Kock** (B.S.Met. '60) San Antonio; Jan. 3, 2010.
- Elena Maria Beniquez-Colas** (\*) El Paso; Jan. 4, 2010.
- Stephen Edward Crain** (\*) Concord, Calif.; Jan. 4, 2010.
- Lourdes Romero Mosher** (B.S.N. '92) Wylie, Texas; Jan. 5, 2010.
- Robert C. "Rob" Camp** (\*) Converse, Texas; Jan. 6, 2010.
- Marian Kimpell Wisland Mitchell** (B.A. '78; M.A.I.S. '82) El Paso; Jan. 6, 2010.
- Bertha Montes** (B.A. '49; M.A. '56) El Paso; Jan. 6, 2010.
- Athel Eugene "Gene" Tibbs** (\*) Lafayette, La. Jan. 6, 2010.
- Kenneth E. Houston** (\*) El Paso; Jan. 8, 2010.
- Luis Carlos "Louie" Moreno** (B.B.A. '85) El Paso; Jan. 9, 2010.
- Thomas Gay "Tom" Wendorf** (B.A. '51) Lubbock, Texas; Jan. 10, 2010.
- Alva E. La Rue** (M.Ed. '67) El Paso; Jan. 11, 2010.
- Reuben W. Harris** (\*) El Paso; Jan. 12, 2010.
- William B. "Bill" Harris** (\*) Albuquerque, N.M.; Jan. 13, 2010.
- Leroy Leslie "Roy" Brice** (B.B.A. '77) Roswell, N.M.; Jan. 15, 2010.
- Eleanor Rollins Roederer** (M.Ed. '86) El Paso; Jan. 15, 2010.
- Francis A. Sohaskey** (B.B.A. '75) Plano, Texas; Jan. 16, 2010.
- Martin Thomas "Marty" Gold** (B.S.E.E. '64) Garland, Texas; Jan. 17, 2010.
- Russell W. Beasley** (B.A. '71; M.Ed. '74) El Paso; Jan. 18, 2010.
- Quillen R. "Quill" Cottingham** (B.S. '43) El Paso; Jan. 18, 2010.
- Thomas V. "Tom" Lozito** (\*) New Braunfels, Texas; Jan. 18, 2010.
- Donald Jerome "Don" Wooten** (B.S.Ed. '78; M.Ed. '86) El Paso; Jan. 20, 2010.
- Heriberto "Eddie" Maldonado Jr.** (B.A. '92; M.Ed. '01) El Paso; Jan. 21, 2010.
- Molly Moore Berke** (B.A. '63) Nashville, Tenn.; Jan. 22, 2010.
- Tech. Sgt. Raul Mendoza** (B.S. '77) El Paso; Jan. 25, 2010.
- William E. "Bill" Pasteur** (B.S. '58) Euless, Texas; Jan. 26, 2010.
- Dorothy S. Hilbert** (B.A. '48) El Paso; Jan. 27, 2010.
- Guillermo Alcocer II** (B.S.E.E. '66; M.S.E.E. '72) El Paso; Jan. 30, 2010.
- William M. Bilbo** (B.S.Met. '59) Folsom, Calif.; Feb. 1, 2010.
- Edwin L. Harris** (M.Ed. '70) El Paso; Feb. 2, 2010.
- Randy Goss** (\*) Bulverde, Texas; Feb. 3, 2010.
- Angie J. Cooper** (B.A. '71; M.Ed. '88) El Paso; Feb. 4, 2010.
- James Wiley McRimmon** (\*) El Paso; Feb. 6, 2010.
- Mary Ann Moore** (B.A. '57) El Paso; Feb. 6, 2010.
- Jean Marie Larkin Boatright** (B.A. '64) El Paso; Feb. 7, 2010.
- Doris Janette Walker Lea** (\*) Houston; Feb. 7, 2010.
- Maria Teresa "Terry" Lerma** (B.I.S. '95) El Paso; Feb. 7, 2010.
- Kenneth Charles "Buddy" England** (B.B.A. '72) El Paso; Feb. 11, 2010.
- Albert Joseph Perez** (B.S.M.E. '90) El Paso; Feb. 8, 2010.
- Martha Anne Babenco** (M.Ed. '70) El Paso; Feb. 10, 2010.
- Katharine McKenna Terrell** (\*) Kerrville, Texas; Feb. 11, 2010.
- Constantine A. "Mike" Klamborowski** (B.S.Ed. '73) El Paso; Feb. 13, 2010.
- Suzanne Denise Negrete Salas** (\*) El Paso; Feb. 13, 2010.
- Dan Viola** (M.Ed. '78) Los Angeles, Calif.; Feb. 13, 2010.
- Stephanie Marie Olivo** (\*) El Paso; Feb. 15, 2010.
- Kevin Jungers Gully** (M.A. '77) Salt Lake City; Feb. 16, 2010.
- Cpl. Teodoro "Ted" Barron Andrew** (B.S. '93) Socorro, Texas; Feb. 17, 2010.
- Lyle D. Scott Jr.** (B.B.A. '50) Horseshoe Bay, Texas; Feb. 18, 2010.
- Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Allen Blackburn** (B.A. '08) El Paso; Feb. 22, 2010.
- Jessee H. Treadaway** (M.Ed. '73) Tucson, Ariz.; Feb. 22, 2010.
- Sylvester Stemsley** (M.Ed. '79) El Paso; Feb. 24, 2010.
- Mark John Gagnon** (B.A. '88) El Paso; Feb. 25, 2010.

(\*) denotes attendance at UTEP



## Orville Edward "Eddie" Egbert Jr., M.D.

Orville Edward "Eddie" Egbert Jr., M.D., lived a life of service to his country, his community and his alma mater, Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy, now The University of Texas at El Paso. He died March 30 at the age of 84.

The El Paso native and World War II Army veteran graduated from the college in 1947 with a degree in biological sciences. He returned to El Paso after earning his medical degree to join his father in private practice.

Egbert used his hard-earned reputation as a skilled and caring physician to help improve the medical environment around his hometown, whether it was serving on boards to build additional medical facilities or setting up endowments and grants to build up the faculty and curriculum at UTEP, especially in the areas of sciences and health sciences.

Through a deferred gift in 1996, Egbert and his wife, Barbara, created the Edward and Barbara Egbert Chair in Biological Sciences to support a faculty member who is an outstanding teacher and researcher.

"(The University) was part of him. It was part of his home," Barbara Egbert said. "He wanted to see his University grow."

UTEP honored Eddie Egbert, who served on several University boards and campaigns, with the 1997 Gold Nugget Award from the College of Science and named him a 1998 Distinguished Alumnus.



## Douglas E. Swartz

Douglas E. Swartz's values were molded by the Depression, his resolve toughened by his participation in World War II campaigns such as the Normandy invasion.

The Connecticut native, who was stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, returned to El Paso, his home, after his Army enlistment and became a successful businessman as owner of B&D Sales and Supplies Co. He continued to look for opportunities to give back to his adopted community after his retirement in 1983.

In 1994, he established the Douglas E. and Burby M. Swartz Endowed Student Enhancement Fund at The University of Texas at El Paso, in part to honor his first wife who died in 1990. She had a life-long interest in education and shared stories with him about bright El Paso students who were financially unable to attend college.

The fund was set up to help "academically worthy" full-time students from El Paso County who need financial help for tuition, room, board, books, competition and travel fees.

Swartz passed away Dec. 9, 2009, at age 88.

"UTEP is truly grateful to Mr. Swartz for this farsighted gift," said Lucy Garcia, director of gift planning in the University Development Office. "He understood well the value of hard work and an academic degree in today's society. He believed that students who applied themselves ought to have a chance to fulfill their scholastic dreams."



## Henrietta "Penny" Lewis

The gift that keeps on giving is an adage that describes Henrietta "Penny" Lewis and her many contributions to The University of Texas at El Paso.

The University's big-hearted patron died on April 26. She was 93.

"I had the benefit of knowing an individual who was such a generous and loyal friend,"

Patricia Nava, Ph.D., chair of UTEP's Department of Electrical Engineering, said about Lewis.

Lewis' ties to UTEP originated from her husband, Forrest, who graduated from Texas Western College (now UTEP) in 1950 with a degree in electrical engineering. He enjoyed a successful career in construction and often thought of ways he could give back to his alma mater.

After his death in 1989, Lewis fulfilled her husband's wishes and founded the Forrest O. Lewis Electrical Engineering Endowed Fund. The endowment helps the department to conduct teaching and research activities.

"Many students received funding for different endeavors, ranging from research project purchases to senior project supplements, monetary awards and student travel, all through the Lewis endowed fund," Nava said.

In 1992, Lewis established the Forrest O. and Henrietta Lewis Professorship of Electrical Engineering, which is designed to assist new faculty members to begin their teaching careers at UTEP.

In 2007, she established the Henrietta Lewis Scholarship for engineering students. To show its appreciation, the College of Engineering named the Penny Lewis Conference Center in the engineering building expansion in her honor in 2009.



## Tommie D. "Tom" Porter

Tommie D. "Tom" Porter, an active community volunteer and graduate of Texas Western College (TWC), now UTEP, passed away April 27 at the age of 82.

Porter was born Aug. 21, 1928, in Loving, Texas. Raised in El Paso, he graduated from Austin High School in 1946.

He enrolled in the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy a few years before it changed its name to TWC. He was a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and the ROTC. He was elected senior class president and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1951.

That same year he married Geraldine "Gerry" Laird, also a 1951 B.B.A. graduate.

Porter was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army and served three years before starting a successful business career in the energy field that took his family from coast to coast. Despite the distance, the family attended its share of UTEP homecoming activities.

Upon retirement in the early 1980s, the Porters returned to El Paso and became involved in volunteer activities, including some at UTEP.

"We thought it was a good place to help," Gerry Porter said.

Porter, together with his wife, was a lifetime member of the UTEP Alumni Association. The couple established in 2007 the Tom and Gerry Laird Porter Endowed Scholarship in Finance.



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# MINER SPIRIT

David Vasquez, a former Miner Top Ten Senior and 1994 graduate from The University of Texas at El Paso, is beginning his 14th season as head coach of the UTEP Cheerleaders.

With their high-flying acrobatics and catchy Miner cheers, the UTEP squad has become known as one of the top collegiate cheerleading programs in the nation. The orange and blue-clad Miners placed third at the USA Collegiate Cheerleading Championships in 1998, 1999 and 2002, and won the Hollywood in Hawaii Cheerleading Competition. A few members of the team were flown to Honolulu to represent UTEP in a documentary on the sport.

The squad hit paydirt when they won the collegiate and open adult divisions and were named Grand National Champions at the American Grand National Championships in Las Vegas in 2003. They also showed off their Miner spirit in an appearance on MTV while in Las Vegas in 2005.

As a proud Miner cheerleader from 1991-94, Vasquez also serves as coordinator of UTEP's Liberal Arts Teacher Preparation program. As a former high school teacher, he enjoys working closely with future educators. He recently was appointed co-director of the Center for Arts and Science Education (CASE), which is responsible for certification testing and is a liaison for the College of Liberal Arts.

Vasquez has a master's degree in educational policy and planning from The University of Texas at Austin. ☑