

Summer 2004

Nova Quarterly: The University of Texas at El Paso

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NOVA

SUMMER 2004

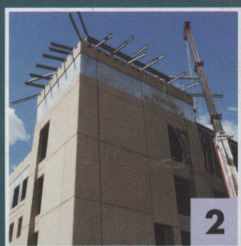
Q U A R T E R L Y
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



UTEP ATHLETICS

*Special section,
pgs. 14-17*

- The move to C-USA
- Football fever rising
- Basketball momentum
- Season wrap-ups



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MOVIN' ON UP

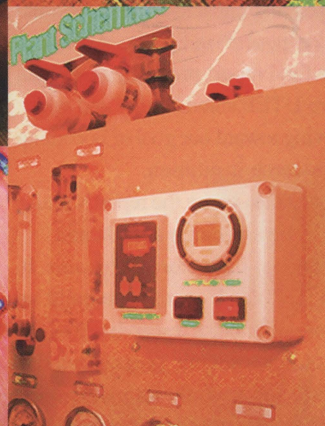
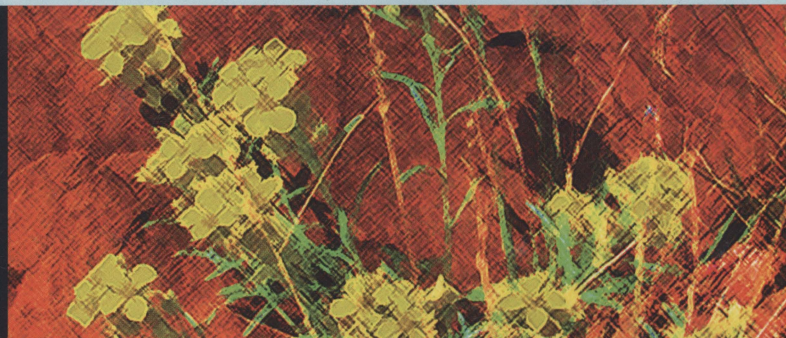
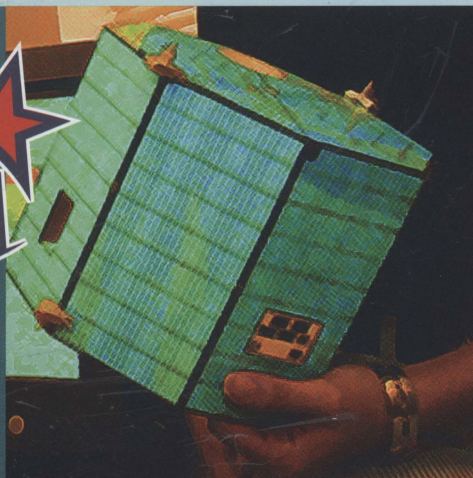
*Construction projects
on target*



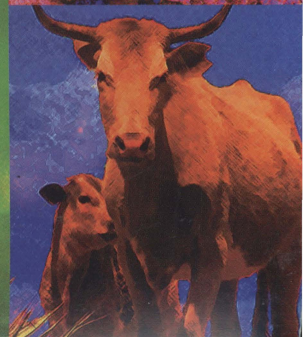
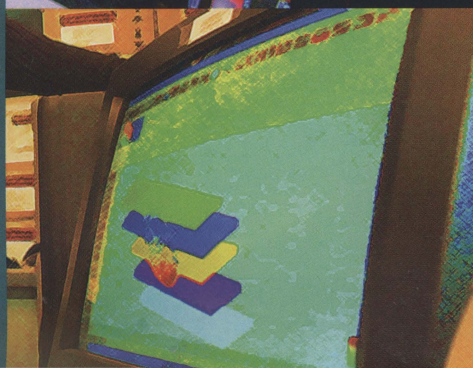
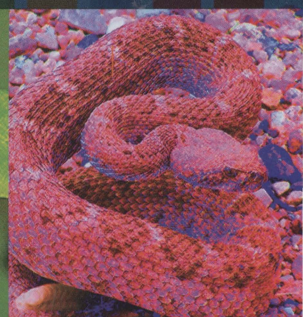
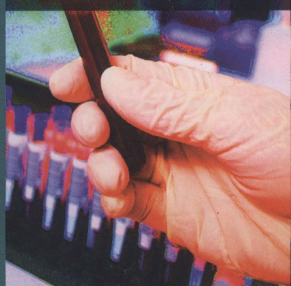
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HOMECOMING

*Preview of events –
mark your calendars!*



UTEP Research on the Rise





The University of Texas at El Paso is well positioned to become a top-tier research institution. That's a fact that UTEP's friends and supporters have recognized for some time. Now a report by an independent panel of experts confirms our belief.

In a report prepared for The University of Texas System by the Washington Advisory Group, WAG consultants note that UTEP has already achieved national "research

prominence," adding that we've had "remarkable success" in expanding research programs and attracting federal research funding over the past 15 years.

The report notes that only two UT System academic institutions appear on a list of the top 200 U.S. research universities, based on federal research expenditures. One is UTEP. The other is UT Austin.

The WAG study examined research capacity and the potential for expansion at UT System components in El Paso, Arlington, Dallas and San Antonio. The final report provides us with an in-depth assessment of where UTEP stands today and what we need to do to continue moving toward our goal of becoming

a top-tier research institution.

We are very pleased by the report's praise of UTEP's strong research agenda and increased number of doctoral programs. It is essential that UTEP continue to build on this momentum, because research drives the expansion of our academic programs, helps us to compete successfully for external funding, and enables us to recruit outstanding scholars to our faculty.

The WAG report also gives UTEP high marks for our "positive impact on the social and economic environment" of our region, citing as examples our national reputation for excellence in U.S.-Mexico border research, our success in preparing students to enter technology-based professions, and the diversity of our research programs.

In this issue of NOVA, we look at UTEP's wide range of research activities, and the role they play in helping build a better, brighter future for our region. Today, faculty and student researchers — often working in collaboration with colleagues from Mexico — are looking at ways to

reduce pollution, provide easier access to quality health care, and develop commercial applications for new technologies.

UTEP's research is not limited to the sciences, nor is it confined to our laboratories. Earlier this year, we were pleased to announce that UTEP is one of only 11 universities in the nation to receive a five-year, \$5 million "Teachers for a New Era" research grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The grant will provide UTEP with the research tools to become a national model for teacher education programs at urban universities, especially those serving a Hispanic-majority student population.

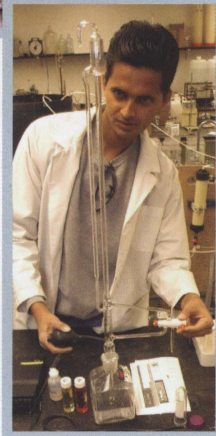
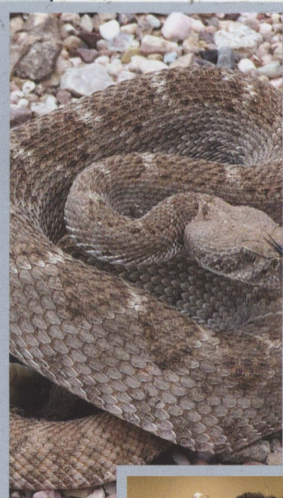
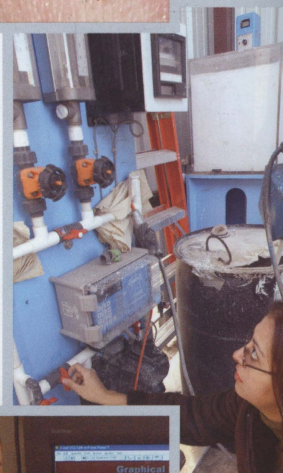
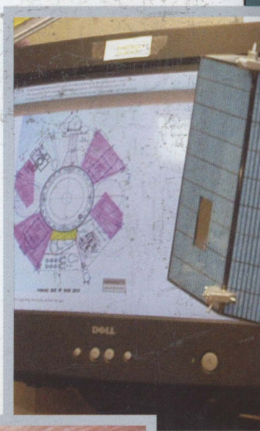
The WAG report reaffirms our vision that UTEP can be a model of excellence while offering access to higher education for students who have been historically underserved, calling our twin goals of access and excellence "nontraditional, but exciting."

In the next few months, we will begin work on a long-range plan to ensure that UTEP will continue to meet the needs of the El Paso region in the 21st century.

We will call upon our friends and supporters to help us establish the Centennial Commission, comprising representatives from UTEP and the community. We will look to the Commission for guidance in how we can best serve the needs of our students, and this region, in the years to come.

We know that the road ahead will not always be an easy one. But, it is UTEP's tradition of success that inspires our confidence in the future. We invite you to join us as we prepare for a new and exciting chapter in the history of this great university.

Diana Natalicio
UTEP President



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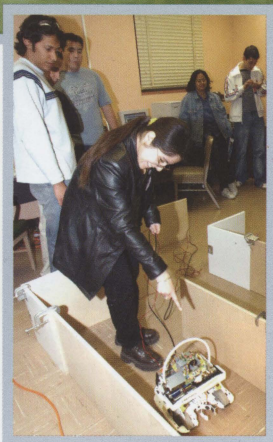
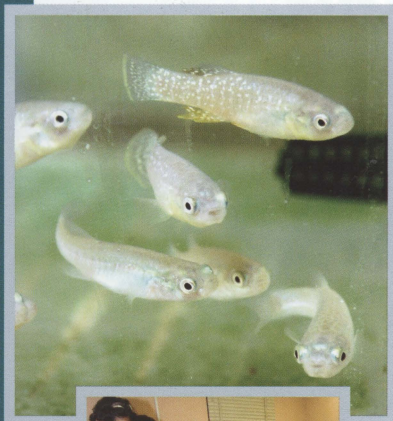
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ON THE COVER

Boosting its research capability,
UTEP aims for top-tier status.

COVER DESIGN

John Downey



COVER STORY

4 Climbing to the Top Tier

Innovative research is propelling the university toward its goal of becoming the next public flagship university in Texas.

6 Laboratory Without Walls

Indio Mountain Research Station, a 38,000-acre research treasure in the Van Horn desert, is every biologist's dream. UTEP researchers are living it — conducting a wide variety of animal and plant research.

8 Kicking Ro-Butt

A bucket-sized machine packed with a variety of sensors is attracting students to a robotics class — and challenging them to explore advanced computer science.

10 The Pulse of Research

The rhythm of life is in sync for a team of UTEP students who developed a cardiometer—a device that monitors a human's beating heart and transmits the data to a computer.

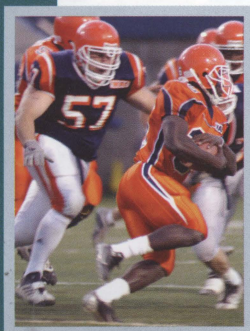
FEATURES

2 Movin' On Up

Once a storage facility, the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts is ready for its grand opening this fall. The center is among several major construction projects taking shape around campus.

3 Memories and Momentum

Through laughter and some tears, UTEP alumni in El Paso and across the nation are celebrating the university's 90th anniversary. And the party's not over yet.



DEPARTMENTS

14 Athletics

A special four-page section looks at the future of athletics as the Miners leave the WAC for Conference USA next year. New head basketball coach Doc Sadler is confident more glory days are ahead. Plus, a pictorial season wrap-up of other UTEP sports.

19 AlumNews

UTEP's new class ring connects the past and the future. Also, mark your calendars for Homecoming 2004 activities October 11-16!





Building the Future

Construction projects on target



Academic Services Building



Engineering expansion



Biosciences Building

by Erica Martinez

Renovated and freshly painted, the walls of Seamon Hall are ready for art.

Built in 1927 and most recently used as a storage facility, the building now sports a new look and a new name: The Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts.

The center, to be inaugurated in September, includes three exhibition galleries, two large classrooms and studio space for students. The \$2.25 million in renovations were completed in May.

The center is only one of several major construction projects taking shape around campus.

The Biosciences and Academic Services buildings and engineering expansion, totaling \$45 million, are on schedule.

The frame of the engineering and science facility was recently covered by about 420 concrete panels – each weighing about 6,000 pounds. The first phase is to be completed in September. Completion of the new

Academic Services Building is more than six months away, but one can almost hear students' voices bustling around the offices of the registrar, admissions, scholarships, financial aid and graduate school.

The Biosciences Building, a rigid, concrete structure, will provide more laboratory space, allowing the university to expand its capacity for biomedical

and health-related research. Scheduled completion is July 2005.

Additional student housing and a parking garage are in planning, said Greg McNicol,



A balcony overlooks the atrium of the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts.

associate vice president of finance and administration.

Construction of Phase II of Miner Village student housing will begin next year on part of the former Rudolph Chevrolet property on Sun Bowl Drive. It should be completed in 2006.

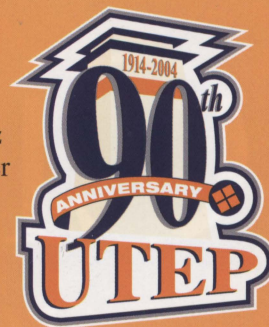
Designs for UTEP's first parking garage are also in the works, with construction slated to begin in April 2005. The five-level garage east of the Union Building would accommodate about 550 cars and a bookstore and should be completed in 2006.

In a joint project with the city's Sun Metro public transportation system, a transit terminal and parking garage will be built on university property at Mesa Street and Baltimore Drive. The 550-space garage will accommodate university students and Kern Place patrons. Construction should begin later this year.

UTEP's Campus Master Plan also includes plans for a parking garage on the university's south-end – across from the new Academic Services Building.

The projects will help accommodate growing academic programs and a booming student population, which reached a record 18,542 in fall 2003. ■

90th anniversary marked with Memories and Momentum



by Cindy Ramirez

Through laughter and some tears, UTEP alumni in El Paso and across the nation are celebrating the university's 90th anniversary with memories and momentum.

From the dedication of the university's Mining Heritage Park, to a Wear Orange Day and the unveiling of a Sun Metro city bus wrapped completely in a UTEP advertisement, the university is commemorating its birthday in grand style.

But the party's not over.

On Sept. 23, a special student event will mark the day in 1914 when 27 students first attended classes at the Texas State School of Mines and Metallurgy. This October, Homecoming, too, will be a celebration of our anniversary.

Alumni across the nation are joining the festivities, sharing their memories of UTEP through letters, e-mails and phone calls.

Henry Quintana Jr., who graduated from UTEP in 1975, recalls his most memorable days at UTEP were when "streakers" invaded campus.

He especially remembers "Grandpa," an elderly gentleman who sang in his church choir: "To my surprise and amazement, this was the same gentleman that I saw that afternoon riding on top of a car completely naked, carrying a strategically placed brief case."

Others remember professors who inspired and befriended them.

Stanley J. Bass, a 1970 UTEP grad, pays tribute to Dr. John Creighton, a world history professor who died in 1982: "He was a wonderful man: totally unpretentious and kind, and very easy to befriend."

Many more fell in love at UTEP.

Tom D. and Gerry Laird Porter, both 1951 graduates who married during Easter break that year, met at the Christmas Dance in 1947.

"Now we are proud to be Golden Grads of 53 years!" they write. "We look forward to many more years of growth and improvements at our great UTEP!" ■



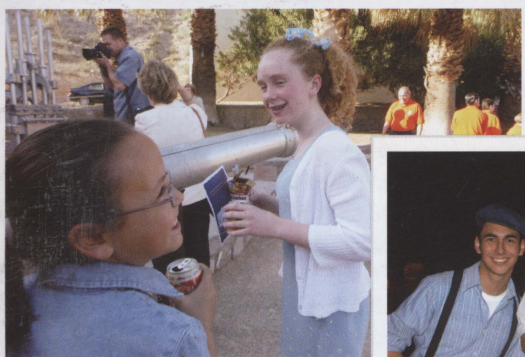
Rollin' ad: UTEP President Diana Natalicio and El Paso Mayor Joe Wardy roll out a Sun Metro city bus wrapped completely in a UTEP advertisement April 12.



Mining the future: UTEP President Diana Natalicio mines through a faux-rock to discover the university's 90th anniversary logo during the dedication of Mining Heritage Park March 30.



Banking on pride: Bank of the West employees were among hundreds of El Pasoans who donned UTEP colors during Wear Orange Day April 13.



Past and future: Sofia Maese, 10, and Moriah Momsen, 12, check out old mining equipment once used at the school of mines. The girls are descendants of the original group of investors who in 1914 secured \$50,000 for the Texas State School of Mines and Metallurgy.



Hawking history: UTEP students hawked special 90th anniversary editions of *The Prospector*, the student newspaper, during the annual Donor's Dinner in April.

www.utep.edu/90thanniversary



Climbing to the Top Tier

From freshmen to graduate students to faculty, researchers are moving UTEP toward flagship status.

| Stories by *David Peregrino* |

With soldiers' lives and the survivability of multi-million dollar spacecraft at stake, it's no surprise the Department of Defense and NASA are eager to know what happens to metal when a projectile slams into it at super-high speeds.

The surprise then—to university outsiders, at least—is that one of the researchers adding to this important body of knowledge is a University of Texas at El Paso freshman.

Christina Piña, a 2003 graduate of Andress High School in Northeast El Paso, is part of a metallurgical engineering team analyzing impact craters in stainless steel.



Piña

"I like it because (metallurgical engineering) is sort of a cross between chemistry and physics," says Piña, who was drawn to UTEP because of the research opportunities for undergraduates.

This issue of *Nova Quarterly* honors students like Piña and the faculty and staff at UTEP who are propelling the university toward its goal of becoming the next public top-tier research university in Texas.

For the past decade and a half, UTEP has made significant strides toward joining UT Austin and Texas A&M among the ranks of the nation's flagship research universities.

It's an exclusive membership that requires world-class faculty, the latest

in research equipment and facilities, and research spending that typically exceeds \$100 million a year.

UTEP has added several Ph.D. programs and boosted its research spending from \$3.9 million in 1989 to \$32.9 million in 2003, according to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects.

This growth means UTEP could reach top-tier status in about 15 years, according to a Washington Advisory Group report issued in May. The report was commissioned by the University of Texas System to examine research capacity and the potential for expansion at the El Paso, Arlington, Dallas and San Antonio campuses.

The report praised UTEP's use of federal minority set-aside funding to jump-start research and its expansion of doctoral programs.

The strategy has positioned UTEP to compete against big research schools for money that doesn't fall under that minority set-aside umbrella. An example of this is the recent \$3.85 million grant from the National

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

Chemists with the Materials Research and Technology Institute at UTEP are developing paints based on formulas used by the ancient Mayan culture. The long-lasting, vivid paints have commercial potential.

Institutes of Health to outfit the new Biosciences Building.

"I think we're doing great," says UTEP president Diana Natalicio, who recently discussed with *Nova Quarterly*

the challenges of taking the university to tier-one status.

"We have to invest, we have to build the credibility with those who make decisions about awarding grants," says Natalicio. "You can't do that overnight. It takes time."

Natalicio says UTEP's best weapon in the competition against other universities for research grants is the campus visit.

The average person, if asked what kind of research UTEP does, probably "wouldn't have a clue," Natalicio says. Hence, there's tremendous value in bringing in outsiders for tours of classrooms, laboratories and the university's numerous research centers.

"We have to show them the size of the facilities, the size of the campus, to make them believers," Natalicio says.

Itzia Cruz-Campa, who is completing her master's degree in chemistry at UTEP, says astonished reactions were the norm when she recently presented her work on a drug-delivery system at the American Chemical Society conference in Anaheim, Calif.

The system uses magnetic properties to deliver drugs to targeted areas in the body.

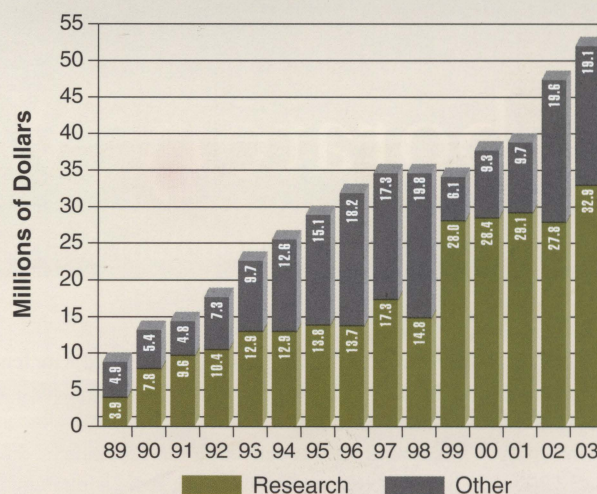
"They are always surprised to see this kind of work being done here," says Cruz-Campa, who plans to remain at UTEP to begin work on her Ph.D. in chemistry.

"I have seen the program and it is really good," Cruz-Campa says. "I am interested in continuing the kind of work I am doing now." **N**

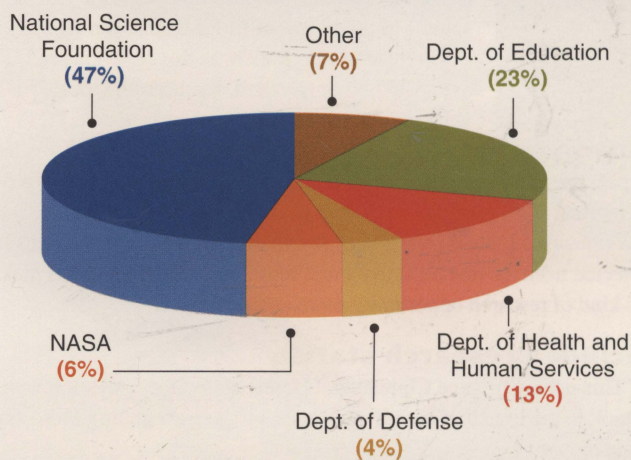
ON the WEB:

- **Washington Advisory Group report:**
www.utsystem.edu/news/WAG/homepage.htm
- **UTEP Research and Sponsored Projects:**
orsp.utep.edu
- **Model Institutions for Excellence at UTEP:**
mie.utep.edu

UTEP Sponsored Projects Expenditures 1989-2003



UTEP Total Active Awards by Federal Agency 2002-2003



Source: UTEP Office of Research and Sponsored Projects

UTEP Lands Major Biosciences Award

NIH grants \$3.85 million for animal resource facility and research laboratories

The National Institutes of Health has awarded the University of Texas at El Paso \$3.85 million to help create a state-of-the-art Animal Resource Facility and research laboratories within the new Biosciences Building now under construction.

The 11,000-square-foot facility, laboratories and offices within the five-story building will give UTEP scientists much-needed space to conduct research, says College of Science Dean Thomas Brady.

"We will have space in the new building for 25 or 26 research groups," says Brady.

Brady expects some of these researchers to begin occupying the new labs and offices after the building is completed in late spring of next year.

Among the labs the NIH grant will fund is a Biological Safety Level 3 laboratory, which will allow scientists to conduct research on

disease-causing organisms that are of concern to the U.S.-Mexico border, such as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

Brady said the NIH funding did not come from federal minority-serving institutions programs, which UTEP historically has applied for to create research facilities. This time, UTEP had to compete with many of the nation's top-tier research schools to land the prestigious NIH award.

Brady calls the construction of this building dedicated solely to research a "milestone" for UTEP.

"We need facilities like this to become a major research institution," says Brady. "With these first-class facilities, we'll be able to attract both students and researchers to the university." **N**

Laboratory Without Walls

The 38,000-acre Indio Mountain Research Station is research treasure

It's a biologist's dream. Endless, undisturbed acres free of the locked gates and wire fences that have turned the vast Chihuahuan Desert into an inaccessible checkerboard of private and public land.

The University of Texas at El Paso is delivering this researchers' dream with the 38,000-acre living laboratory known as the Indio Mountains Research Station.



"There's really nothing else like it," says UTEP biology professor and director of the station Jerry Johnson. He recently hosted a group of 30 UTEP and El Paso Community College students at the vast facility some 116 miles east of El Paso near Van Horn.

For years, Indio Ranch, as this little-known UTEP asset is commonly called, has been the locale for a wide variety of animal and plant research. UTEP anthropology researchers have been drawn to the ranch to study evidence of the ancient indigenous hunters and gatherers who traveled and lived in the region.

What makes Indio Ranch unique is its acre after acre of contiguous land protected from the human activity and urban encroachment that is making this kind of research opportunity more and more rare.

Secluded research station

"This is very pristine Chihuahuan Desert landscape," says Johnson, as he took in the breathtaking views offered by the surrounding Indio and Eagle mountains.

Hector Riveroll, a UTEP biology Ph.D. candidate, says the remoteness of the ranch has allowed him to collect data on reptiles year after year without worry of new human activity that could disrupt his research.

That kind of study longevity draws the awe and envy of his peers at other universities, he says.

"They always say, 'It's really great that you have data over five years,'" Riveroll says.

Riveroll, who has been studying the species of rattlesnakes and lizards who make their home in and around Indio Ranch, introduced UTEP and EPCC undergraduate students to the finer points of snake trapping, tagging and releasing during this visit.

"You have to think like a reptile," says Riveroll, explaining how he tracks down the rattlers. "They like the shady stuff...you have to look

under yuccas or trees."

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

Chemistry professor Carl Dirk and his student researchers are developing a filter to protect delicate Old Master paintings from damage caused by exposure to light.



Rock-solid shelter

Until this April trip, students and staff also had to scramble for shelter—two-man

tents being a popular choice—to find respite from the desert's sun, rain and wind.

But thanks to a \$100,000 National Science Foundation grant, a student dormitory now stands at the ranch.

The rock-and-mortar dormitory sleeps 28 on bunk beds in separate women's and men's quarters.

The dormitory has showers and flushing toilets, a far cry from the primitive conditions of before.

The dormitory was completed in January of this year. These 30 students were the first to use the new building.

"We can bring more people now and house them much more comfortably," Johnson says.

The remoteness of the ranch and the difficulty of transporting building materials and skilled construction workers via the ranch's rugged roads made construction of the dorm a significant challenge, Johnson says.

In some places, the rock-strewn roads would easily gut the underbelly of a family sedan. High-clearance, preferably four-wheel drive vehicles are a must for reaching Indio Ranch.

"I really must compliment (UTEP) Facilities Services for getting the job done," Johnson says. "Workers had to gather rocks from alongside the roads and bring them here to build (the dormitory)."

Tent cities

Helen Brewer, who is finishing her master's degree in biology this year, recalled the old days when the "tent city" at Indio Ranch would sometimes fall prey to the Chihuahuan Desert's wild weather.



"During a windstorm, some of the tents blew over," Brewer says. "And one time it snowed out here, too. It was pretty miserable sometimes."

But students will still bring their tents—because they say nothing beats camping when the weather is gorgeous, as it was on this trip.

"I was just sleeping on a cot outside," Brewer says.

Slumbering under the stars rested Brewer for several days of hiking in the mountains with groups of UTEP and EPCC students.

At different sites, they placed folding metal traps as part of Brewer's study of the ranch's mammal population.

Common critters lured to the oatmeal in the traps are the silky pocket mouse and the kangaroo rat, Brewer says.

When the traps are checked the following day, animals caught are identified and released.

A glowing review

Research doesn't end when the sun goes down.

Lauren Esposito, a UTEP graduate student, led a group of undergraduates on a nighttime search for scorpions.

Using black-light lamps, Esposito and her crew slowly worked their way up a large arroyo, scanning nooks and crannies among the scrub and rocks for the arachnids.

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

UTEP scientists are measuring levels of arsenic and heavy metal concentrations—lead, copper and zinc, for example—to determine what health risks exist in El Paso.

When hit with the light, the scorpions—for reasons still debated—glow a rich blue. Esposito, spotting a creature glowing beneath a bush, reached out with a

long pair of tweezers and lifted the scorpion by its tail.

She says a pigment in the scorpion's exoskeleton creates the blue glow.

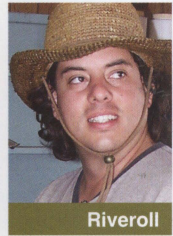
"We think that the color may act as some sort of attraction to things that the scorpion eats," Esposito says. "It also could be telling other creatures to stay away."

Esposito says scorpions have stung her several times.

"The ones here are not anything to worry about," Esposito says, explaining that a jab from the stinger at the end of a scorpion's segmented tail feels "like a wasp sting."

Rattler round-up

A ranch resident with a much more powerful sting, or bite, actually, is the rattlesnake.



Riveroll

Ph.D. students Justin Hobert and Riveroll have been studying the variety of rattler species making their home at Indio Ranch.

On this trip, they collected a pink-hued rock rattlesnake, a western diamondback and a black-tail rattler.

While carefully demonstrating how to use a long-handled set of pincers to nab a snake, Riveroll explained to the surrounding students that the sound of a rattle meant the snake was just making its presence known.

"If you hear a rattle, just walk away. He wants to be left alone."

As the black-tail rattler slithered to a hiding spot beneath a creosote bush, Riveroll says, "I worry about the ones that don't rattle. Those are the ones that are saying, 'I don't need to rattle. I'm bad!'"

Cotton's Legacy

The origin of Indio Ranch is a notable chapter in the history of UTEP, which celebrates its 90th anniversary this year.

UTEP students and faculty have the 38,000-acre Indio Mountains Research Facility thanks to a gift from the estate of Boston industrialist Frank B. Cotton, who died in 1907.

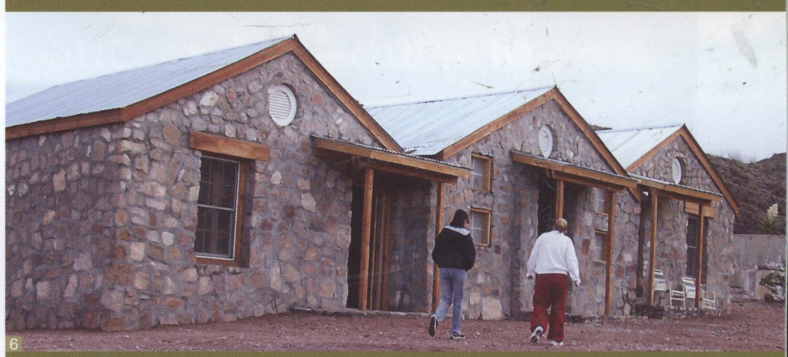
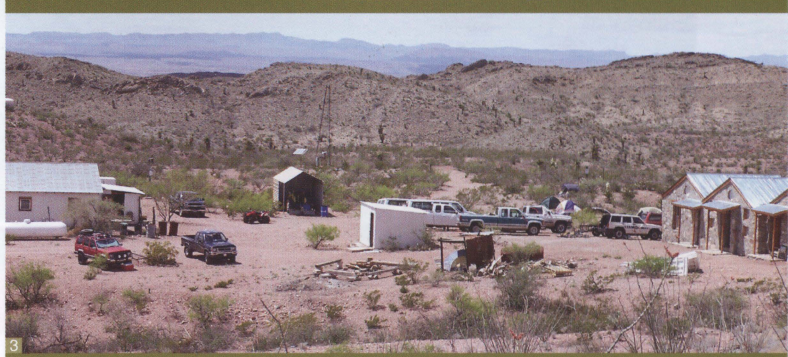
Cotton, who spent six months in El Paso in 1881 on what he reportedly considered the "greatest adventure" of his life, bought ranch land in Hudspeth, Culberson and El Paso counties.

In the 1930s, his estate gave a portion of his land holdings to create a Texas educational endowment. The land trust was transferred to the nearest state school, the Texas College of Mines, now UTEP.

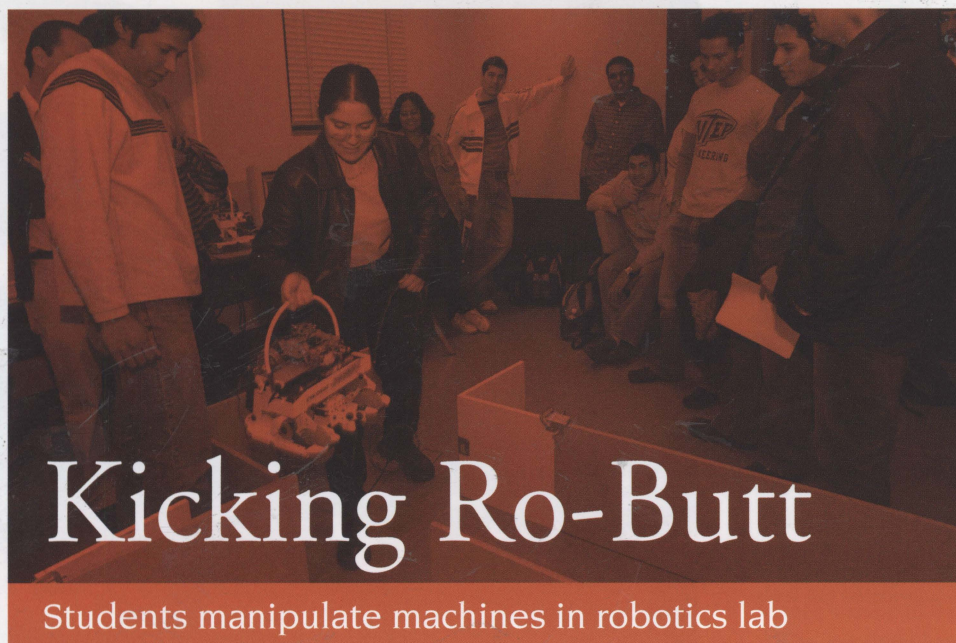
In 1987, former UTEP President Haskell Monroe proposed the Cotton lands be used for research and instruction in biological and geological sciences.

In 1991, UTEP President Diana Natalicio approved the organization and mission statement for the Indio Mountains Research Station.

Sources: Dr. Jerry D. Johnson; and *UTEP: A Pictorial History of the University of Texas at El Paso*, by Nancy Hamilton.



1. A scorpion glows blue beneath a black-light lamp. 2. With a rattlesnake safely ensconced in a plastic tube, Hector Riveroll and El Paso Community College biology instructor Dominic Lannutti prepare to insert a tag beneath the snake's skin. 3. The ranch house and dormitories are the heart of the 38,000-acre Indio Ranch. 4. UTEP biology undergraduate Cynthia Quintero places an oatmeal-baited mammal trap in the desert at sundown. 5. Watch your step! Western diamondbacks and other species of rattlesnakes abound on the ranch. 6. A stone-and-mortar dormitory with bunk beds and hot showers was built last year thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. 7. Cow crossing: Cattle are a common sight outside the boundaries of Indio Ranch. 8. A scorpion graces the hand of UTEP graduate student Lauren Esposito.



Kicking Ro-Butt

Students manipulate machines in robotics lab

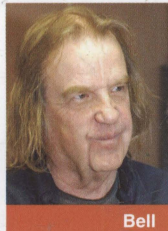
“(The class) always fills up. Everybody likes to play with robots.”

With a click and a whirl, the rotund little fellow enters a corridor it has never seen before. As a roomful of UTEP students watch intently, the bucket-sized machine looks left and right, seeming to hesitate before exploring further.

“*Tiene miedo* (It’s scared),” someone says in Spanish.

Laughter erupts from the 30 young men and women in Ray Bell’s robotics class, easing the tension of the difficult robot-programming exercise.

Early in this spring semester’s robotics class, Bell, a computer science lecturer, challenged his students to program their robots to find their way through a maze.



Bell

Packed with a variety of sensors, the little robots attempt to negotiate their way to the proverbial block of cheese—in this case a light source (a flashlight attached to the labyrinth’s wall).

“It’s difficult because the students don’t know what the maze is going to look like,” Bell says. “With an unknown maze, it is an unknown problem.”

One robot, nicknamed Ayanami after a heroine of Japanese anime, eventually beeped and bumped its way to the flashlight with a little hands-on nudging by team member Roxanne Martinez.

“It’s challenging, but at the same time a lot of fun,” says Martinez, a senior computer science major.

Bell says robotics classes continue to be in high demand among advanced computer science students.

The students share five Trilobot educational robots, which the department purchased last year for about \$2,000 apiece.

Looking over the 30 students in the robotics lab in CS Classroom 118, Bell says, “(The class) always fills up. Everybody likes to play with robots.”

Bell says some of the student enthusiasts formed a robotics club last year, with a goal of building their own robot.

Using Java and C computer languages, the robotics club



Senior computer science major Roxanne Martinez turns Ayanami loose in the robotics lab maze.

students also have created a program they’ve dubbed “TriloBoss.”

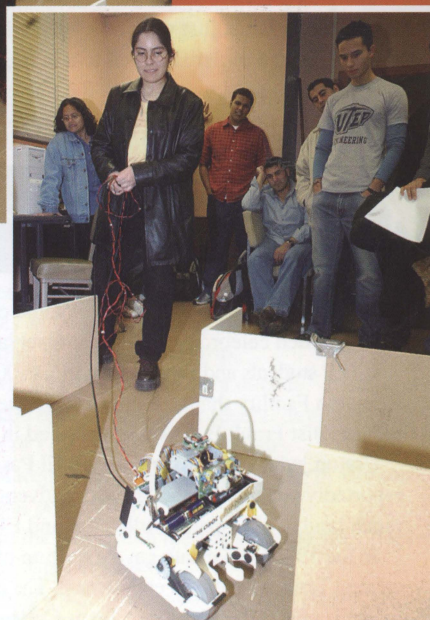
TriloBoss’ point-and-click commands let neophytes easily instruct the bots to move and perform grasping and lifting tasks with their grippers.

Bell says the robotics club plans to take the Trilobots to area schools to introduce youngsters to the fascinating world of robotics and computer science.

Martinez says she hopes UTEP will be able to offer more opportunities in robotics education.

Given the United States’ emphasis on worker productivity, Martinez anticipates there will be a future in robotics systems design, manufacturing and maintenance.

“I’d love a job in robotics,” Martinez says. ■



Photos by Laura Trejo

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

Chemistry professor Jorge Gardea-Torresdey is leading research into “phytoremediation”—using plants to remove toxic metals from soil.



Deadly Rites

Binge drinking, drunk driving a problem among area teens

“Students who drink in Mexico are six times more likely to binge drink, five times more likely to drink and drive and three times more likely to ride with a driver who’s been drinking.”

Living on the doorstep of Juárez nightlife is leading to disturbingly high rates of binge drinking and drunk driving among El Paso’s high school students, a new UTEP study reports.

Students who drink in Mexico are six times more likely to binge drink, five times more likely to drink and drive and three times more likely to ride with a driver who’s been drinking, says lead researcher Sharon E. Thompson, an assistant professor in the College of Health Sciences.



Thompson

“The results are very startling,” Thompson says. The data “indicate the need for more research and culturally-appropriate prevention programs that address alcohol consumption in Mexico, particularly in terms of students driving back home.”

Almost three-fourths of student drinkers say they obtain most or all of their alcohol from Mexico, where the drinking age is 18.

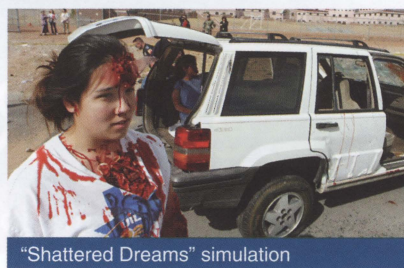
Crossing the bridge to party in Juárez has long been considered a rite of passage for many El Paso youth.

Darlene Ortega, a Bel Air High School senior active in underage drinking prevention programs, says she was an occasional social drinker, but stopped after witnessing the destructiveness of alcohol abuse.

While conducting research for Operation BRIDGE, a Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition program designed to reduce the number of border-crossing underage drinkers, Ortega saw first hand the dangers of binge drinking in Juárez.

“It was really sad. I saw a lot of the girls coming back alone. I saw a couple of girls coming back that couldn’t even walk,” Ortega recalls. “And I saw some guys who had gotten beaten up over there.”

RGSCC partners are addressing the problem with several programs, including “Shattered Dreams,” a simulation of an alcohol-related car crash that kills high school students.



“Shattered Dreams” simulation

One sobering demonstration took place in March outside Chapin High School. An actor dressed as the Grim Reaper pulls one student from selected classrooms as officials announce to the class that their friend has died in the car accident, says Mary Ellen Hernandez, RGSCC’s Youth Services Coordinator.

“We want people to understand what the costs are to family and friends,” Hernandez says. “But people still close their eyes to the problem.” **N**

Research Fuels Successful Education

To collect data for the drinking habits study, lead researcher Sharon E. Thompson’s team needed to survey more than 1,300 students from 16 El Paso high schools in 2001.

That’s when Myriam Leyva, then an undergraduate eager to participate in research, volunteered to help administer the survey.

Thompson believes that the high school students related well to Leyva, a 1998 graduate of El Paso High School. This was important in developing a bond of comfort and trust with the students that made for a successful survey, and ultimately a successful study, Thompson says.

“I just approached my professors and asked them how I could take a more active role in some of the research that was going on,” Leyva recalls. “They welcomed it, of course.”

Leyva was selected as a UTEP Top Ten Senior in 2003.

Leyva, 24, is now in her first year of a master’s program in public health. Her undergraduate experience has paved the way for more research projects, including a study of *acanthosis nigricans*—an indicator of diabetes—in El Paso communities.

“I love learning,” says Leyva, who says she wants to pursue an education to the Ph.D. level. Regardless of where her education takes her, border health issues will pull her to El Paso.

“I will definitely try and make a difference here.” **N**



Leyva



A night on the Juárez “strip”

Photos by Javier Vicencio



The Pulse of Research

Senior-year project sparks interest in biomedical technologies

“When we were looking for a senior project, we wanted to do something related to human health, something to make people’s lives better.”

The rhythm of life is in sync for a team of UTEP students who are using their talents in the biomedical field. For their senior-year project, electrical engineering majors Zoe Aguirre, Vianney Alonso and Galia Gamboa took on the challenge of developing a cardi tachometer—a device that monitors a human’s beating heart and transmits the heart-rate data to a computer.

The timing is good for the young women, who are poised to either enter the workforce or continue their studies at UTEP’s graduate school.

Their project has turned them on to biomedical engineering, just as UTEP begins to establish itself as a major part of an evolving health-research complex in El Paso.

A cornerstone of this will be the five-story Biosciences Building now under construction next to the University Library.

As El Paso attracts more health professionals and researchers, the city’s economic engine is expected to rev up, helping create more job opportunities for talented UTEP students.

A biomedical engineering career “is definitely something I would be interested in,” says Aguirre, who plans to pursue a master’s degree in electrical engineering at UTEP.

Aguirre’s team displayed their cardi tachometer project at UTEP’s Model Institutions for Excellence Student Research Expo in April. To underscore their interest in the medical field, the women donned matching monogrammed nurses’ uniforms for their presentation.

The cardi tachometer was a challenging project to develop from scratch, the women said.

multivibrator. A microprocessor counts the beats and calculates real-time and average heart rates.

The women developed a program that displays the heartbeat’s peaks and valleys on a computer monitor.

Aguirre says bringing the team’s electrical engineering talents to the realm of health care was a rewarding experience.

“When we were looking for a senior project, we wanted to do something related to human health, something to make people’s lives better.”

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

Senior Mechanical Engineering major Jun-Young Park and fellow student researchers are studying the effectiveness of water-purification methods in El Paso’s *colonias*. This summer, they will investigate the effectiveness of a new counter-top purification device that holds promise for residents who are not connected to municipal water systems.

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

Electrical Engineering master’s student Namdev Shenoy is developing a cost-effective, portable PDA-based air-quality monitoring system that will let researchers easily collect data beyond the locations of fixed air-quality monitors.



The process begins with electrodes that pick up the electrical signals generated by a beating heart. The signals are amplified and filtered. The pulsing of the heart then triggers a module called a



Photos by Javier Vicencio

Wearing medical scrubs, Vianney Alonso presents the cardi tachometer project at the UTEP Model Institutions for Excellence Student Research Expo in April. Above: from left, Zoe Aguirre, Vianney Alonso and Galia Gamboa.

Snack Attack

Eating meals early and turning off TV may reduce overindulgence

A University of Texas at El Paso researcher has some ideas why we constantly test the tensile strength of our waistbands. Department of Psychology Chair John M. de Castro recently published two studies that shed light on some causes of overeating.

One study investigated how the time of day affects calorie intake; the other examined how much we eat while watching TV.



de Castro

In the time-of-day study, de Castro found that people who ate more calories in the morning would tend to consume less calories overall for the day.

The reverse was true for calories taken in later in the day—those meals didn't satisfy as much, says de Castro, who came to UTEP from Georgia State University last year.

"Over the course of the day, people tend to be less satisfied (less full) from their meals," he says.

Further study is needed, but de Castro speculates that our biological clocks, ticking in daily rhythm with sunlight, may explain why breakfast satisfies more than dinner.

"People can be eating at times when their physiology expects them to be sleeping," de Castro says. "This is strictly a hypothesis, but it indicates obesity could be due in part to artificial light."

In the other study, de Castro found TV watching anathema to weight watching.

Led by Nanette Stroebele, de Castro's doctoral student at Georgia State University, the researchers found people ate more — almost one extra meal — on days when they ate while watching TV.

Though the study didn't address why TV encourages overeating, de Castro speculates that food commercials could be a culprit. Also, people don't usually think about what or how much they eat when entranced by the tube, he says. **N**

RESEARCH at a GLANCE

The recently formed Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center is a collaborative between UTEP and the UT Houston Health Science Center and is funded by a \$4.1 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health.

Swimming Sentinels

UTEP researchers use mummichogs to monitor polluted waterways

An unassuming fish with an odd name is playing an important role as an environmental early-warning system for University of Texas at El Paso researchers.

University biologists are using these "mummichogs," as they are called, to monitor waterways for the harmful effects of industrial and agricultural pollutants.



Baldwin

Also known as mud minnows, mummichogs are found in abundance in estuaries—places where rivers and oceans meet, mixing freshwater and seawater.

But the little fish have another home, inside the Aquatic Facility at UTEP.

Biology professors William Baldwin, Lisa Bain and other researchers are examining the effects a variety of toxins have on the mummichog.

"The mummichogs act as an environmental sentinel," says Baldwin, an assistant professor of biological sciences. "The fish are born, live and die

in the same location, so we can look at mummichog to examine the health of the estuary."

When exposed to pollutants—chromium, arsenic and pyrene are some examples—the fish respond to this stress by producing protective proteins. By understanding and documenting the genetic "signature" of these



Bain

protective proteins, the researchers can look to the mummichog to tell when chemicals are polluting an estuary.

When these "biomarkers" of chronic toxic exposure are detected in the mummichog, environmental agencies can act to clean up the waterway before the pollutants or the decline of the mummichog population itself cause harm to other creatures.

UTEP biologists also are using their fish expertise on waterways close to home.

The fathead minnow, for example, has been used to help evaluate the health of the Rio Grande, says Bain, an assistant professor of biological sciences.

Bain also says the fishes' eggs have been valuable teaching tools in the classroom.

"The mummichog egg is translucent—you can see right through it," Bain says.

Freshmen biology students use the mummichog eggs for embryology studies, she says.

"You can look under the microscope and see the beating heart, the eyes and other organs as they develop in the egg," Bain says. **N**



HONOR THY PARENTS

DONOR GIVES LIBRARY, ATHLETICS GIFTS IN HIS PARENTS' NAME

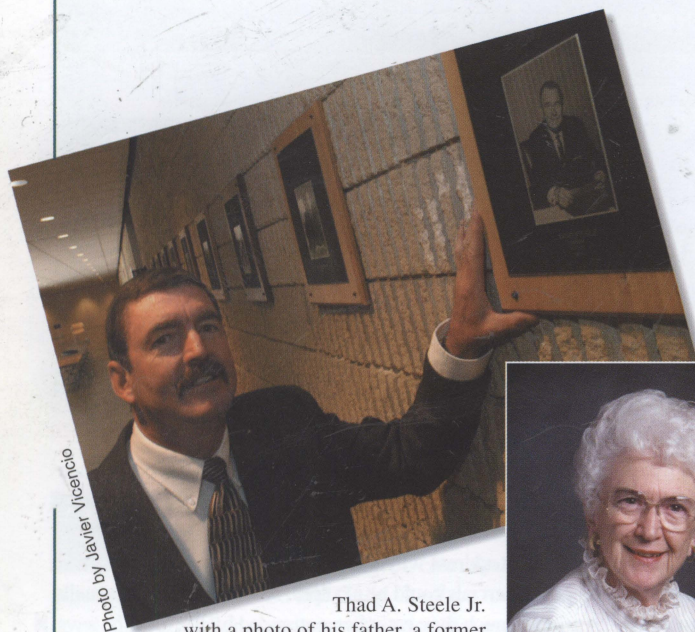


Photo by Javier Vicencio

Thad A. Steele Jr. with a photo of his father, a former star UTEP athlete, which hangs in the Hall of Champions at the Durham Center.



Maxine Bray Steele



Thad A. Steele Sr.

by Megan E. Baeza

When he was younger, El Paso businessman Thad A. Steele Jr. had no idea he was shooting hoops with history.

He'd reaped the benefits of his father's everlasting support of Miner athletics: Former basketball coach Don Haskins gave Steele a practice ball from the 1966 NCAA championship game.

"At the time I was a kid and didn't realize I was holding a piece of history," Steele says of the ball he wishes he still had.

Steele, now president of T&T Staffing in El Paso, is giving back to the university that long held his family's loyalty – and its own history.

He has set up a library endowment in honor of his mother, Maxine Bray Steele, and a football scholarship in memory of his father, Thad A. Steele Sr.

"My parents were introduced by former Texas Western College President Wilson Elkins," Steele says. They fell in love and were married in what was then the president's home in 1950.

His father was a star football, basketball and baseball player for the College of Mines before graduating in 1932

with a bachelor's degree in education. He earned the nickname "Stellar" Steele, served as captain of the Miner football team and was an All-Border Conference center for three years.

His father's lifelong ties to athletics inspired Steele Jr. to create the scholarship.

"It was because of Dad's love of football and coaching with Mike [Brumbelow]," he says.

Steele Sr. joined the Navy in 1942 as a lieutenant with Brumbelow, who would go on to be the Miner head football coach and athletics director in the 1950s.

After leaving the Navy as a lieutenant commander, he made his home in El Paso and created a legacy of service to his community and UTEP.

Steele Sr. served multiple terms as president of the Ex-Students' Association and was named Outstanding Ex in 1968. He helped organize the Touchdown Club and served as a president of the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame. He was a 50-year member of the Masonic Lodge and a member of the Scottish Rite Bodies and the El Maida Shrine Temple. He died in 1990.

Maxine Bray Steele came to El Paso in 1949 as dean of women at Texas Western College, where she served until 1951. She was appointed acting dean in 1953-54 and 1957-58. She continued her service to UTEP as a founding member of the Women's Estate Planning Conference and as a member of the Women's Auxiliary. She died in 1988.

"UTEP is a big part of my family's life," says Steele, whose sisters Martha Tita Williams and Dorothy Broderon are UTEP graduates. "I feel that the success of my company is enabling me to give back to the university that gave so much to my family. It's what I can do." ■

Awards and Accolades

Staff Report

The momentum continues at UTEP, which has recently received the following awards and accolades:

- **The Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center** opened in April. The center is a collaborative between UTEP and the University of Texas at Houston Health Science Center funded by a \$4.1 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities. It will provide mentoring and training for health researchers focused on Hispanic health disparities.

- **Sierra Providence Health Network and the Tenet Healthcare Foundation** awarded UTEP's School of Nursing a \$460,000 grant to assist in the development of an accelerated bachelor's in nursing degree, as well as student and faculty retention and success programs.

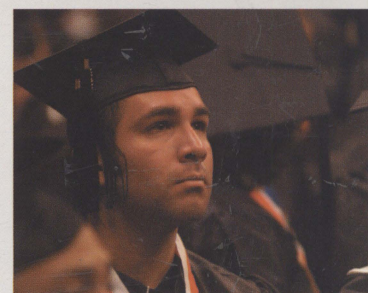
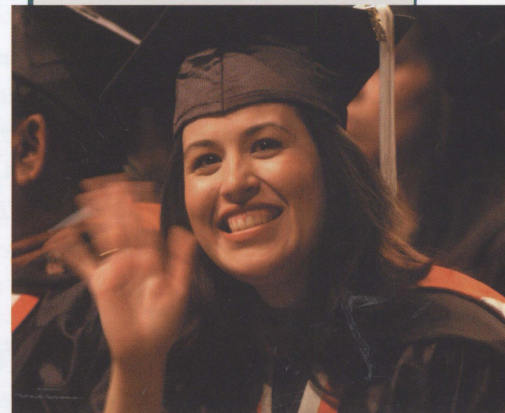
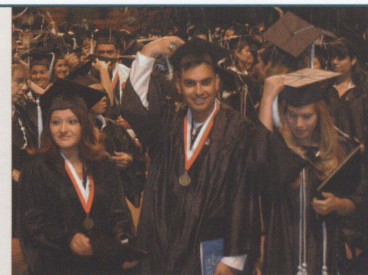
- **The Texas Instruments Foundation** awarded UTEP \$1 million for semiconductor

fabrication and wireless communications laboratories.

- **The State Farm Foundation** donated \$75,000 to UTEP's College of Business Administration for the creation of an innovative Student Investment Center in the College of Business.

- **The Paso del Norte Health Foundation** has awarded UTEP's Center for Environmental Resource Management \$250,000 for a program that will address the environmental health challenges of colonia residents. The "Healthy Home Environments for the Paso del Norte Region" program use community partnerships and home environmental-review visits to address the water, solid-waste, sanitation and pesticide issues faced by thousands of colonia residents in El Paso and Juárez.

- **UTEP ranked second** among the top 25 institutions with most Hispanic women enrolled, according to a report by The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine. ■



Laughter and tears overcame the more than 1,300 students who graduated during UTEP's 2004 spring commencement May 8.

Photos by Javier Vicencio

UTEP News Online

The latest news about UTEP is just a click away in the revamped *Horizons Online News* at www.utep.edu/horizons.

The Web site for UTEP campus news was launched in May by University Communications.

The site includes top news and features, faculty and staff profiles, student success stories, Miner Moments slide shows, Que



Pasa? news briefs, campus photos, links to UTEP-related stories in local and national media, and more.

Formerly a monthly newsletter, *Horizons Online News* will now be updated regularly as events and news happen around and about the campus.

Add *Horizons Online News* to your "favorites" list today! ■

Salute to Service

Staff Report

The 2004 Honors Convocation, the university's annual springtime salute to service, honored faculty, staff and students for their achievements.

Among the honorees were professors who attained emeriti status and faculty and staff who received Distinguished Achievement Awards, one of the university's highest honors.

Professors Emeriti:

- **James Michael Gray** - Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences
- **Dilmus D. James** - Professor, Economics and Finance
- **David V. LeMone** - Professor, Geological Sciences

- **Arturo P. Perez** - Professor, Languages and Linguistics
- **Sally M. Segal** - Associate Professor, Art
- **Walter F. Taylor** - Professor, English

Distinguished Achievement Awards:

- University of Texas at El Paso Faculty Achievement Award for Research: **Russel R. Chianelli** - Professor, Chemistry
- Chancellor's Council Outstanding Teaching Award: **Patricia A. Nava** - Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Distinguished Service to Students: **Maggie Ortega** - Administrative Secretary, Student Government Association
- Distinguished Service to Students:

- **Lawrence J. Johnson** - Associate Professor, English and Western Cultural Heritage
- Distinguished Service to the University: **Michael L. Spence** - Don Haskins Center ■



Recipients of UTEP's Distinguished Achievement Awards with university President Diana Natalicio.

Photo by Laura Trejo

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

For 36 years, the Miners have been part of the Western Athletic Conference family, winning 20 national championships and 53 conference team titles. Starting next summer, UTEP will move into a new league: Conference USA.

The move promises to elevate UTEP to a whole new playing field — with the potential to become a major player in what is emerging as one of the nation's top conferences.

Miners to leave WAC for Conference USA

by Megan E. Baeza and Cindy Ramirez

By next summer, UTEP athletics will have a new home.

The university will move to Conference USA starting July 1, 2005, after 36 years in the Western Athletic Conference — creating a buzz of excitement about what lies ahead for Miner sports.

"We look forward to continuing to compete in the Dallas and Houston areas, where there are large concentrations of UTEP alumni who have enjoyed following our teams," says UTEP President Diana Natalicio.



Photos by Javier Vicencio

Super support: The Miners sold out eight home games on their way to the NCAA tournament, and drew a slew of supporters to Denver.

UTEP will join current WAC members Rice, SMU and Tulsa in the 12-member conference.

The Miners will participate in the league's Western Division with Houston, Rice, SMU, Tulane and Tulsa. The Eastern Division will feature Central Florida, Marshall, Memphis, the University of Southern Mississippi and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

UTEP has won 20 national championships as a WAC member. The Miners have claimed 53 conference team titles.

University officials — and fans — hope the move to Conference USA will bring athletics a rebirth and help grow those championship titles.

The promise of great games and the potential for increased national exposure, too, may put university athletics on a whole new level.

"It took a lot to leave," UTEP Director of Athletics Bob Stull says of the WAC. "But we feel it was in our best interest at this time to point ourselves east instead of west."

But even before the move to C-USA, Miner fans had been reinvigorated by the hiring of Mike Price as head football coach and, after more than a decade, the basketball team's return to the NCAA tournament. Track and field, too, continues



Out of WAC: The Miners, basketball co-champs in the Western Athletic Conference this spring, will move to Conference USA in 2005. Above, UTEP cheerleaders rally the crowd during the NCAA tournament in Denver.

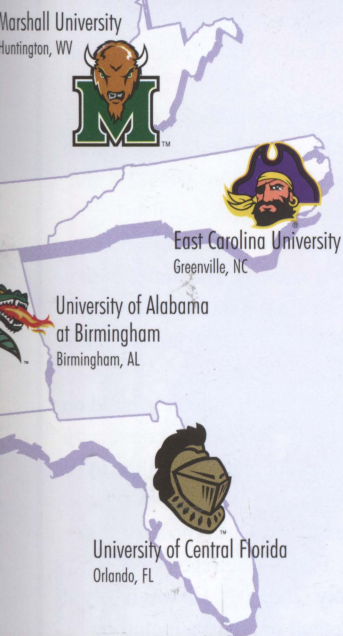
its winning streak, placing second in the 2004 WAC Outdoor Track and Field Championships this spring.

Conference board members said the historic 1966 NCAA basketball championship combined with tournament play this spring helped convince them it was time to offer UTEP membership in the league.

UTEP's ability to draw large numbers to its football and basketball games was another plus. On the road to the NCAA, eight home basketball games sold out.

"They're a terrific asset to the league," says C-USA Commissioner Britton Banowsky.

Banowsky said structural improvements to the



conference will help tighten its geography and group similar institutions together. And possibly stage a football championship game.

"It will be very exciting to see this league grow and develop," he says.

Conference USA began in 1995 in Chicago. Since its inception, the league has fielded 34 NCAA tournament teams in men's basketball, including one Final Four team and three Elite Eight teams; 22 bowl teams in football; and 34 NCAA Tournament teams in women's basketball.

"This is a great move for the UTEP athletic department," says women's basketball head coach Keitha Green. "Year in and year out, they have several teams in the NCAA tournament. It's going to be an exciting challenge for our program and the athletic department."

Conference USA sponsors 18 sports — baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, soccer, tennis and track and field (indoor and outdoor) for men; and basketball, cross country, golf, soccer, softball, swimming and diving, track and field (indoor and outdoor) and volleyball for women.

Fifteen of UTEP's 16 intercollegiate teams will compete under the Conference USA banner. The exception is riflery, which will continue to compete as an independent. **N**

Play By Play

Football
Fever
Brews

by Megan E. Baeza and Cindy Ramirez

Head Football Coach Mike Price has thrown out the team's old playbook.

The Miners spent spring training learning new offensive and defensive plays — and discipline.

"They're relearning everything from how they stretch to how they snap the ball," Price

says. "They're going to learn it pretty quickly."

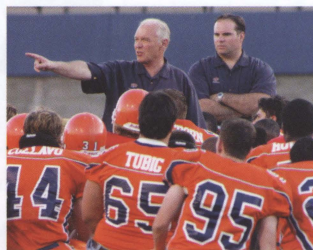
Price has wiped the slate clean. Players must compete for all positions, having to prove themselves before they can play in the fall. The quarterback job is no exception.

"Now I know for sure that I'm not ready to make a decision about our starting quarterback," says Price following the annual Spring Game in the Sun Bowl in April. He says a quarterback will likely be named "within a couple of weeks of the first game."

And although UTEP's 2004 football season doesn't open until Sept. 2, anticipation is already brewing.

Season tickets are selling steadily — earlier and faster than the past few years — as fans look forward to a promising season under Price.

Price, the 1997 national coach of the year, was hired by UTEP in December 2003. He was the football coach at Washington State University from 1989-2002.



Senior running back Howard Jackson is looking forward to the end results.

"We're trying to get better as a team, and we will with Coach Price," he says. "We needed this — we weren't very disciplined at all. It's going to be tough, but we needed this."

For Price, the 2004 season can't come soon enough.

"I'm as excited as I have been at any time in my life," he says. "This is a great place to be." **N**

Hot Tickets

Season tickets are on sale starting at \$66 for adults and \$39 for children. Family packages and upgrades are available.

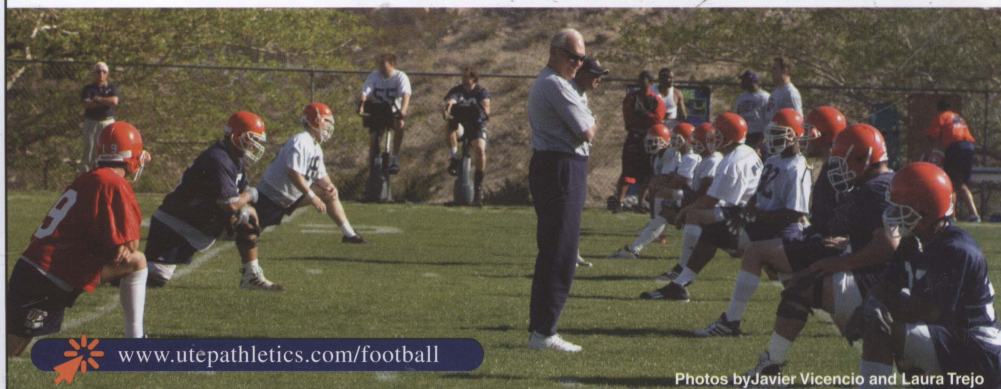
Individual tickets will go on sale in August and begin at \$12 for adults and \$7 for children for general admission.

Information: Miner Athletic Club Season Ticket Hotline, 915/747-6150 or University Ticket Center, 915/747-5234.

2004 Miner Football Schedule

Sept. 2	@ Arizona State	7 PM
Sept. 11	WEBER STATE	7:05 PM
Sept. 18	BOISE STATE*	7:05 PM
Oct. 2	NMSU	7:05 PM
Oct. 9	@ Fresno State*	8 PM
Oct. 16	HAWAII* (Homecoming)	7:05 PM
Oct. 23	@ Louisiana Tech*	1 PM
Oct. 30	@ San Jose State*	3 PM
Nov. 13	RICE*	7:05 PM
Nov. 20	SMU*	3:05 PM
Nov. 27	@ Tulsa*	1 PM

* Western Athletic Conference game



www.utepathletics.com/football

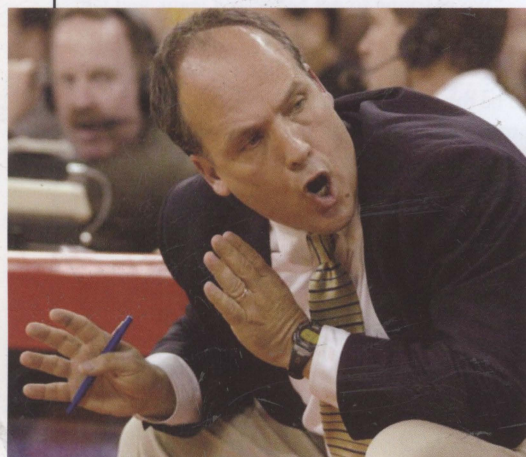
Photos by Javier Vicencio and Laura Trejo

New coaching staff, fans, ready for another *Sensational Season*

by Megan E. Baeza

Doc Sadler hopes the Miners' return to the NCAA tournament last season is more momentum than memories.

"Every waking minute and every sleeping minute, I'm going to do everything I can to continue this ride," says Sadler, who was named head basketball coach in March.



Sadler

Sadler replaces Billy Gillispie, who resigned to become head coach at Texas A&M University. Gillispie turned the Miners' 6-24 record of last year into an impressive 24-7 at the end of regular season play this year.

The Miners were co-champions in the Western Athletic Conference and for the first time in 12

years were invited to the NCAA tournament. UTEP lost to Maryland 86-83 in the first round of tournament play in Denver, but won the hearts of fans hungry for more.

"I don't think we'll skip a beat under Doc's leadership," says legendary UTEP basketball coach Don Haskins, who led the 1966 NCAA championship team. "My support is totally with Doc."

Sadler and his new coaching staff — assistants Randall Dickey and Ed Custodio — hope to keep the team in high gear.

"As an assistant coach, it is always a dream to have the opportunity to run your own program," says Sadler, who served as an assistant coach

for the Miners under Gillispie in the 2003-04 season. "Never did I dream the opportunity would come at the only school in the state of Texas to have won a national championship."

Sadler earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Arkansas in 1982 and a master's degree in education from Northeastern State University in 1991. He and his wife, Tonya, have two children.



Dickey

Dickey most recently was an assistant coach at Washington State for four seasons. His duties with the Cougars included coaching, scouting and game plan implementation. The Cougars' 2000 junior college class was ranked fifth in the country.

"UTEP is coming off a sensational year. I'm excited to help build on the groundwork that has been laid," Dickey says. "The El Paso community is warm and friendly and loves UTEP basketball, and I'm thrilled to be a part of it."



Custodio

A native of The Bronx, N.Y., Custodio served as an assistant coach at St. Francis College (1998-02) and Long Island University (2002-03). He was involved in all facets of the basketball operation, including coaching, practice planning, recruiting, academic monitoring, scouting reports and other administrative duties.

"When I think of UTEP, I think of Don Haskins," Custodio says. "The history of the program is unbelievable." ■

Hi-flying: Jason Williams goes for a lay-up as John Tofi stands guard during the NCAA tournament in Denver this spring.



So close: Former UTEP head basketball Coach Billie Gillispie reacts in the last minutes of the NCAA game against Maryland. The Miners lost a heartbreaker 86-83.

Photos by Javier Vicencio

By the Numbers

Number of Fans for Home Game Sellouts **96,000**

Number of Regular Season Points Scored **2,189**

Number of Regular Season 3-Point Shot Attempts **441**

Number of Regular Season Successful 3-Point Shots **175**

Number of Season Home Game Sellouts **8**



www.utepathletics.com/mens.basketball

CHAMPS AGAIN



Photos by Javier Vicencio

Poised With Promise

Miner athletics buzzing with excitement, success

by Megan E. Baeza

From the basketball court to the fields of soccer and softball, Miner athletics are on hiatus from competition for the summer.

While some teams had successful seasons, others had rocky records.

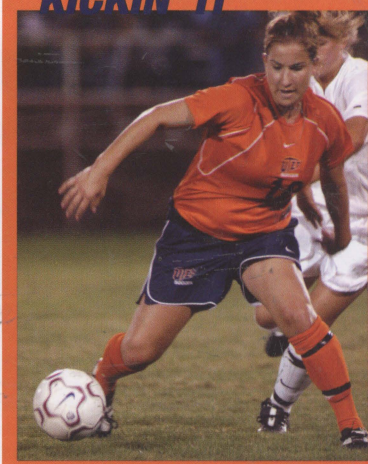
But in the summer silence, excitement simmers for next year, as all 12 Miner athletic teams are poised to showoff new recruits and seasoned veterans.

HOT HOOPS



Marta Dydek, a junior standing 6'6", drives forward against an NMSU defender. The team finished their 10-18 season in March. Two players, Ingrid Goslin and Noni Wharemate, received Academic All-WAC awards.

KICKIN' IT

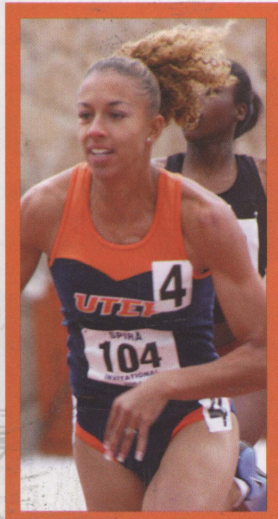


Freshman midfielder Leslie Platz blocks an opponent during a home game. The soccer team finished its season with an 11-8-0 record and has signed four talented players for 2004-05. Soccer opens on Aug. 27 against Texas State University.

ROCKY SEASON



Softball began its run at UTEP with a rocky start and a 8-46 season — though its prospects are looking up. In September, the \$1.8 million Helen of Troy Softball Complex will be completed. It will house offices and locker rooms for the softball and soccer teams. The 900-seat facility will include a VIP seating area, three batting cages and two bullpens.



Above, junior thrower **Correy Harrison** spins the discus at an outdoor meet this spring. UTEP track and field athletes are regularly awarded for their achievements on and off the field — including WAC players of the week and NCAA All-American honors. The Miners placed second in the 2004 WAC Outdoor Track and Field Championships in May. At left is junior sprinter **Alisha Leverett**.



www.utepathletics.com

Senior Success

Staff Report

The **Top Ten Seniors Awards** are presented each spring to students who have combined academic success with a proven commitment to the community.

They represent the best and brightest graduates of the university and are measured not by class ranking, but by what they've accomplished and what awaits them in their careers and personal lives.



GARCIA

Lorena Garcia learned the value of service to community through participation in numerous community and

outreach programs, including UTEP organizations such as the Golden Key Honor Society and Eta Sigma Gamma.

"These experiences have given me a sense of satisfaction knowing that I am able to make a difference in someone's life," she says.

Garcia graduated with a bachelor of science degree in health science, a minor in community health and a 4.0 GPA.

In addition to a place on the Dean's List for four years and receiving the presidential scholarship since 1999, Garcia won the Golden Key Honor Society Outstanding Academic Achievement Award in 2000.



GOMEZ

Hard work has accounted for Emmanuel Gomez's success, including his December 2003 graduation with a

combined B.B.A. and master of accountancy.

Gomez says he thrived in the "work hard, play hard" atmosphere at UTEP. He is now with KPMG International, one of the country's Big Four accounting firms.

"UTEP has made me a strong professional," Gomez says. "I am just as qualified as any other person around the country."

Gomez, 22, graduated with a 3.61 GPA, making the Dean's List four semesters while in the rigorous accounting program.

He was active in the Student Government Association and was elected president in 2002-03.



MADRID

Carlos Madrid, 21, a product of UTEP's Law School Preparation Institute, is being courted by the

country's top three law schools: Yale, Stanford and Harvard.

Having scored in the 98th percentile on his law school admissions test, he also was accepted at Columbia, New

York, Cornell and Georgetown universities – all recognized as top law schools in the United States.

Madrid's flawless 4.0 GPA earned him Rotary Club of El Paso Foundation and UTEP Presidential Excellence scholarships, and membership in Alpha Chi National Honor Scholarship, and Golden Key International and Alpha Lambda Delta Collegiate honor societies.

His selfless spirit was reflected in his volunteer work for Salvation Army, Special Olympics and the Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Foundation. He was also a tutor at Eastwood High School and a teaching assistant for the Department of Political Science.



MENA

Myrna Aleheli Mena juggled school life, personal life and community service—and didn't drop the ball once.

She carried a 4.0 grade point average into her senior year, and graduated in December with a B.B.A. and master of accountancy combined degree.

As a teaching assistant and president of the UTEP chapter of Beta Alpha Psi, a professional accounting and business information honors fraternity, Mena says she's built "a strong foundation on which I plan to build a successful career in accounting."

While at UTEP, Mena added numerous honors and awards to her impressive resume, including the Presidential Excellence Scholarship, the YWCA Community Service Award, and the Reading is Fundamental Service Award from the Lydia Patterson Institute.



MERRITT

Jo Lynn Merritt says UTEP supplied her with more than the right education to enter medical school.

"Without the education and training I received from UTEP and MPI, I would have not had the opportunities that have aided my success," Merritt says.

Graduating with a B.S. in microbiology in May, the 22-year-old has been accepted into the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

Merritt participated in UTEP's Medical Professions Institute and

Early Medical School Acceptance Program while earning a 3.58 GPA.

Merritt earned many honors and awards while working towards her degree, including Woman of UTEP 2002-2003 and the Del Sol Medical Center Volunteer Auxiliary Scholarship.



RAMIREZ

Luis Ramirez has mentored and built rockets with middle school students – launching their interests in

engineering and his goal to work for NASA.

After interning at Johnson Space Center in Houston throughout college, the 23-year-old is headed to NASA's Mission Control to work as a flight controller – a step closer to entering the Astronaut Program.

While earning his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering, Ramirez maintained a 3.9 GPA and was a member of the Engineering Students Leadership Council, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, Golden Key International Honor Society and others.

He was a recipient of the NASA-Texas Space Grant Consortium Scholarship, NASA Space Station Engineering Scholarship and Gates Millennium Scholarship, and has been recognized on the National and UTEP's Engineering deans' lists.

RODRIGUEZ

Aaron Rodriguez swam his way to success at UTEP – giving every stroke his greatest effort.

An avid swimmer since the age of 4, the 22-year-old Rodriguez applied the same dedication to his political science degree.

With a 3.87 GPA, Rodriguez has been

recognized on the National Academic, and UTEP's College of Liberal Arts and Engineering Deans' Lists.

A member of the UTEP Water Polo Club, he also served as president of Alpha Chi National Honor Scholarship Society and was co-founder of UTEP's Phi Alpha Delta law fraternity and Psi Sigma Alpha political science honor society.

Rodriguez worked as a high school liaison for the Center for Law and Border Studies and was part of the Law School Preparation Institute. He will attend the University of Arizona-James E. Rogers College of Law.

SAAD

Danya Saad knows how to keep busy. The 21-year-old graduated in three years with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and a 3.88 GPA.

Saad carved out time to participate



in various clubs and organizations, including Students in Physical and Occupational Therapy, Student Government Association,

Golden Key International Honor Society and Kinesiology Club.

She is currently a research assistant at UTEP, and has offered numerous volunteer hours to several organizations.

The 2003 UTEP Woman of Valor, member of the Dean's List and National Dean's List, Saad says, "I feel that I am now prepared to face any challenge, whether they arise academically, professionally or personally."



YU

Lorraine Yu completed her undergraduate career at UTEP at the top—as president of this year's nursing class

and of the Texas Nursing Student Association.

Other honors include both a spot on the Dean's List and a Presidential Scholarship.

"I have learned ethics and morals that could only have been bestowed on me at UTEP," she says. "I believe I will be a better health care provider and person because of it."

Yu graduated with a bachelor of science in nursing degree and a 3.83 GPA.



ZUBIA

Suizette Milagros Zubia served her family and community for 14 years before deciding to pursue a higher education.

The life experience that came with the wait has paid off: She earned her bachelor's degree in education with a 3.81 GPA.

A transfer student from El Paso Community College, Zubia is a faithful donor with United Blood Services, a Sunday School teacher, Neighborhood Watch captain, and a volunteer with the Socorro district and Keep El Paso Beautiful.

She has been honored for contributions and service by organizations, including Kappa Delta Pi and Bilingual Education Student Organization.

Zubia received a Wolslager Foundation Scholarship, is on the National Dean's and Presidential Dean's lists, and is in the Student Leadership Institute, Golden Key Honor Society and Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society. ■

Fellowship of the Ring

Class emblem encircles past, future

by Donna Dennis

The shiny gold ring Dario Arroyo wore for the first time was more than a piece of jewelry. It signified the end of



Ring in Tradition: Luis Ruben Alarcon (2000) and Juan Zayas (2004) show off their new UTEP class rings.

his long journey, and the beginning of a new tradition.

"I'm the first in my family to graduate and to get an official ring so this is a really big accomplishment," says Arroyo, a kinesiology major who dressed in coat and tie during UTEP's first ring ceremony April 23.

The ceremony is the university's newest tradition,

and marked the introduction of UTEP's first official class ring to alumni and students.

Custom designed, the ring displays symbols unique to the university — the University Seal, the Texas flag, the "M" on the mountain, the Bhutanese architecture, the founding year, Paydirt Pete and the UTEP pick logo.


For Arroyo, slipping the ring on his finger marked the end of endless studying. "It's not easy, but it's not impossible," he says.

Only alumni and students who have at least 90 credit hours can purchase the ring.



UTEP President Diana Natalicio says Arroyo and others who have ordered the ring since its unveiling in November are today's leaders — much like the pioneers of the past who started the School of Mines in 1914.

"You are pioneers. You are the first," Natalicio says to the ring recipients, reminding them the university is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. ■

 <http://www.balfour.com/ORP/default.aspx?id=926>



Tea Party: UTEP alumni gather at Leach Grove after a Sorority Reunion Tea April 24.

Mark Your Calendars!

UTEP HOMECOMING 2004

October 11-16

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

- **Parade** — 12:20 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, University Avenue
- **Pep Rally** — 1:15 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, Undergraduate Learning Center. 747-5670 or eweatherly@utep.edu
- **Football Game** — 7:05 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, at the Sun Bowl vs. Hawaii Warriors. UTEP Ticket Office, 747-5234.
- **Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Event:** 6:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, Don Haskins Center
- **Golden Grads Luncheon** Honoring the Class of 1954: 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, Tomás Rivera Conference Center, Union Building East, Third Floor
- **Reunion Reception:** Honoring the Classes of 1979, 1994 and 1999: 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, de Wetter Center
- **Alumni Association Pre-Game Party:** 5-6:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, de Wetter Center

Alumni Association

For information on alumni events and fees, contact **915/747-8600**, toll free at **866/GO-MINERS**, via e-mail at alumni@utep.edu or www.utep.edu/alumni

- **Alumni Association Scholarship Golf Tournament:** 1:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 8, Emerald Springs Golf Course
- **Golden Grads Dinner and Dance:** 6-10 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 14, La Hacienda Restaurant
- **Open House:** 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday, Oct. 15, de Wetter Center
- **Reunion Luncheon Honoring the Class of 1954:** 1 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, Geology Reading Room, Geological Sciences Building, Third Floor
- **For information on specific college events, contact:**
 - **Business Administration:** Shari Schwartz at 747-7728 or sschwartz@utep.edu.
 - **Education:** Julie Cooper at 747-5572 or jcooper@utep.edu
 - **Engineering:** Leticia Diaz Rios at 747-8801 or 747-5460 or lrrios@eng.utep.edu
 - **Health Sciences:** Merced Sierra at 747-7268 or msierra@utep.edu
 - **Liberal Arts:** Dean's Office at 747-5666 or libarts@utep.edu
 - **Science:** Dean's Office at 747-5596 or science@utep.edu

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news about UTEP

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- **VISIT** us on the Web at www.utep.edu/alumni
- **E-MAIL** us at alumni@utep.edu



Girls Night Out: Students enjoyed Karaoke at the Senior Party April 30.

50s

Neil E. Weinbrenne (B.B.A. '58), a retired lawyer, received a master's degree in history from New Mexico State University in 2003.

60s

Stanton L. "Skip" Camp (B.A. '66) is the chief pilot for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Huntsville.

Patricia L. Palafox (B.A. '66) is a hearing examiner, certified by the Texas Commissioner of Education, for local school district employment hearings. She also is a hearing officer for the El Paso City Civil Service Commission.

Joe H. Smith (B.S. '66) celebrated the 30th anniversary of his Houston-based petroleum exploration service company, Petrophysics, Inc., in May 2004.

Dorcas Wilkinson (B.S.Ed. '62; M.Ed. '69) is the Beta Sigma Phi sorority First Lady for 2004. She was selected for the honor in recognition of her work with children in El Paso.

70s

Mary C. Alverson (B.S. '73) was a procurement supervisor for Harris Corporation until 2003 when she moved to

Jacksonville, Fla.

James M. "Jimmy" Day Jr. (B.B.A. '72), chief executive officer of DPR Investments in San Antonio, Texas, gave the commencement address at Our Lady of the Lake University in December 2003.

James K. "Jim" Hunt Jr. (B.B.A. '72) is the founding managing partner of Bison Capital Asset Management, LLC, in Los Angeles.

William B. McAleb (B.S.M.E.T. '78) is head of the oil and gas practice at R.W. Beck, Inc., a Denver engineering firm that provides services to public and private sectors in the areas of energy, water resources and telecommunications.

Lorraine O'Donnell (B.S.Ed. '75; M.Ed. '85) is a visiting associate professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations at UTEP's College of Education.

Ronald Saenz (B.S. '79) won the Diamond Award as the outstanding design consultant at Thomasville Home Furnishings in El Paso.

Auston M. Wilson III (B.S.Ed. '73), who is retired from the U.S. Army, is a full-time artist working in El Paso.

80s

David A. Montoya (B.S. '86) is the assistant inspector general for investigations in the Office of Inspector General at the

UTEP *alumnos* key to *Al Día* newspaper

By Erica Martinez

Being well educated, bilingual and bicultural are vital qualifications for today's journalists, says Alfredo Carbajal, a 2000 UTEP graduate and managing editor of the Dallas Spanish-language newspaper *Al Día*.

Carbajal – along with a handful of other UTEP graduates working at the newspaper – are part of the fast-growing segment of Spanish-language media.

Al Día, a product of Dallas Morning News, is responding to the burgeoning Hispanic population in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, which makes up 22 percent of the population, or 1.3 million people.

"The number of Spanish-language papers are growing in all major markets," says Carbajal.

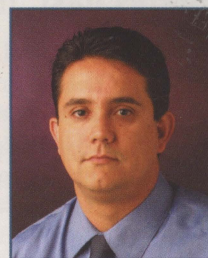
The Spanish paper was launched in September 2003 and has a daily circulation of 40,000.

Along with Carbajal, UTEP alumni and news editor Mauro Diaz (B.A. '99), news wire editor Jorge Chavez (B.A. '00); assistant city editor Julian Resendiz (B.A. '87), advertising designer Karla Garcia (B.A. '01), Mexico Bureau reporter Alfredo Corchado (B.A. '87) and Dallas Morning News news editor Alma Lozoya (B.A. '91) were part of launching *Al Día*.

The National Association of Hispanic Publications reports an estimated 344 daily and weekly Spanish-language papers were published in the United States in 2003, compared to 166 in 1990.

In conjunction with UTEP's Department of Communication, the university's Sam Donaldson Center for Communication Studies seeks to educate bilingual and bicultural professionals in a variety of media and communication fields.

The center established the Ruben Salazar Spanish Language Media Program in October. The program allows undergraduate students to take bilingual classes in print and electronic media. ■



Carbajal



García

U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

90s

George L. McLendon (B.S. '72) is dean of arts and sciences at Duke University. **Angelica M. Perez** (B.I.S. '95) is an examiner with the

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. In 2003, she received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., and is currently working there on her electrical engineering master's degree.

Frank G. Pérez (B.A. '93; M.A. '97), an assistant professor at UTEP and a research fellow at the Sam Donaldson Center for Communication Studies, received the German-American Fulbright Commission Junior Researcher Award.

Benny Joe "BJ" Tomlinson Jr. (B.S.M.E. '90; M.S.M.E. '97) is operations manager for the High Energy Laser Systems Test Facility at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

00s

Tiffany Cynor (B.B.A. '03) received the Employee Recognition Award for her work on a software

development project at JDW Insurance Company in El Paso, where she is a lead application developer.

Susan E. Dils (B.A. '00; M.A. '02) is studying for a bachelor of science degree in secondary education at Kansas State University in Manhattan.

Ernest Fernandez (B.B.A. '01), an application development manager with JDW Insurance Company in El Paso, received the Employee Recognition Award for his contributions to a software development project.

OBITS

Jeannette Campbell Dooley Cole (B.A. '33) Jan. 9, 2004. Cole, a resident of Arizona, had been an elementary

school teacher at both Aoy and Burleson elementary schools in El Paso.

Robert A. Estes (B.S.M.I. '34) Nov. 9, 2003. Estes was a resident of Midland, Texas.

Leanora A. Brasmer Mosier (B.A. '37) March 30, 2004. Mosier was as a teacher at San Jacinto School in El Paso for 53 years until her retirement in 1976. She also taught at parochial schools and at the El Paso Technical Institute.

J.D. Lambeth (B.A. '40) March 20, 2004. Lambeth worked for the U.S. State Department at the consulate in Mexico. He later became co-owner of Southwestern Venetian Blind Co. and then co-owner of L&L Builders.

Lafayette Nelson "Lafe" Arnold (B.A. '42) Dec. 29, 2003. Arnold was a lifelong resident of El Paso and a U.S. Army veteran of World War II. He retired in 1987 as president of the S.W.I.G. Corp.

Peter Terwey Jr. (B.A. '43) Feb. 22, 2004. Terwey, a resident of San Antonio, Texas, served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, achieving the rank of first lieutenant. He was a mathematician at NASA, and a professor at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas; Davidson College in North Carolina; and Trinity University in San Antonio.

Thomas Byron LaRock Jr. (B.S.M.I. '43) March 11, 2004. A native of El Paso, LaRock served in the U.S. Navy during World War II as executive and commanding officer of the USS LCI(R) 785. He retired from the El Paso Natural Gas Company as chief metallurgical engineer in 1983 after 35 years of service.

Warren E. "Scooter" Carr (B.S. '50) Oct. 4, 2003. A resident of Bethany, Okla., and a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, Carr was a consulting geologist.

Ollie D. Miller (B.A. '52) Dec. 27, 2003. Miller, a U.S. Army veteran, retired

as an accountant from Southwestern Mill Distributors in El Paso.

Andrew Franklyn "Frank" Linville Jr. (B.S. '53) Jan. 19, 2004. A resident of Dallas, Linville worked as a radar technician at Fort Bliss, Texas, and in Little Creek, Va. As a geophysicist, he was employed at Texas Instruments for 21 years and, later, retired from Mobile Research and Development Corp. after 15 years of service.

Grand W. Derfelt (B.A. '55) March 18, 2004. Derfelt, a resident of Benton Harbor, Mich., and a U.S. Army veteran, was the president of Barensten Candy Co.

James "Rocko" Holt (B.S.C.E. '55) Aug. 18, 2003. Holt, a resident of Hacienda Heights, Calif., was retired from Southern Pacific Pipelines.

Louis Matthew Cornett (B.A. '56) Jan. 6, 2004. Cornett, a resident of Oxnard, Calif., served during World War II with the U.S. Marine Corps, was a U.S. Air Force veteran of the Korean War, and also worked for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. He retired in 1982 as an elementary school teacher.

Vincent Earl Pivarnick (B.A. '58) Dec. 30, 2003. Pivarnick, who served in the U.S. Air Force, was a lifelong El Pasoan. His career included employment with the U.S. Post Office; 35 years in the insurance industry, culminating in a position as

regional supervisor with State Farm Insurance.

Lt. Col. Gary P. Welsh (B.S. '59) Jan. 28, 2004. Welsh retired from the U.S. Army in 1983 after 30 years of service. He then worked as a sixth-grade teacher at Vista Hills Elementary School in El Paso.

Compiled by Shannon Kanorr
and Howard Rigg

Southwest treasure added quality to life

by Erica Martinez



Myrick
Villalobos

In a standing room-only memorial service, more than 300 family members and friends celebrated the life of longtime El Paso journalist and actress Robbie Myrick Villalobos (B.A. '83).

She died Feb. 18, 2004, at the age of 50 of complications from non-Hodgkins Lymphoma.

Myrick began her career with the El Paso Times and later worked with the El Paso Herald-Post as a reporter and editor for about 20 years. She also worked with the Juárez newspaper *El Diario* and at El Paso Inc.

She was a founding member of *Teatro Los Pobres*; business manager of the Festival Association for the Performing Arts; and co-founder of !Viva! El Paso. Myrick performed with *Siglo de Oro* Drama Festival during its early years, and was a third reader in the touring version of the "Vagina Monologues" in El Paso.

"She was very talented and she passed that on to whom over she worked with," says longtime friend Rosa Guerrero. "She was a treasure to El Paso."

From 1996-99, Myrick hosted KTEP's State of the Arts Show and co-hosted the cable TV show *Border Journalists*. In 1997, she developed another show, *Accent on the Arts*, which she co-hosted with friend Randy Limbird.

"If the quality of our life is measured by the quality of our love, then Robbie lived a full measure of life, despite it lasting just 50 years," Limbird said at her memorial.

In 2001, Myrick was inducted into the El Paso Commission for Women Hall of Fame. ■

Heartbeat of a fan Alumnus dedicated life to medicine, Miner athletics

Staff Report

An ardent sports enthusiast, UTEP alumnus Dr. Michael A. Maros didn't live to see one of his contributions to Miner athletics.

Maros passed away the day before UTEP's 2003 Homecoming game against Louisiana Tech, which the Miners played in new orange uniforms provided by Maros.

"We were saving them for a special game," says then-head football coach Gary Nord.

Maros, who earned his bachelor's degree from UTEP in 1971, died Oct. 10, 2003, in El Paso at the age of 54. An oncologist and pecan farmer, he was a committed supporter and benefactor of UTEP athletics.

Maros earned an M.D. from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and completed his rotating internship at R.E. Thomason General Hospital in El Paso. He fulfilled his



Maros

internship residency at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, and his medical oncology fellowship at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

In 1980, he opened his private oncology practice in El Paso, which he operated until 1996 when he took over as general manager of his parents' Mike Maros Farms in Fabens, Texas.

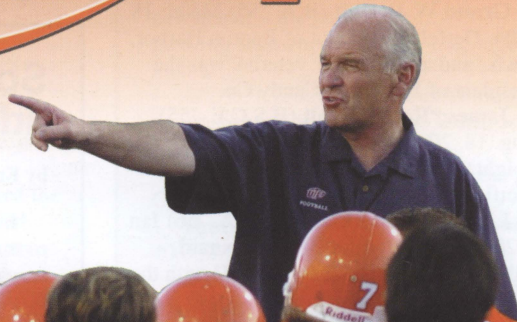
Maros also was a stockholder and served on the board of directors for the Fabens Long Staple Gin, the West Texas Pecan Growers Association, the Western Pecan Growers Association, the Texas Pecan Growing Association and the Sun Valley Pecan Co.

Maros volunteered as the football team doctor for El Paso's Bel Air High School and was a longtime friend of UTEP Intercollegiate Athletics. His generous contributions included a leadership gift to help finance the construction of the Larry K. Durham Sports Center, and funding to purchase the orange football uniforms. ■

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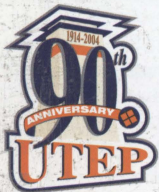


2004 Miner Football Schedule

Sept. 2	@ Arizona State	7 PM
Sept. 11	WEBER STATE	7:05 PM
Sept. 18	BOISE STATE*	7:05 PM
Oct. 2	NMSU	7:05 PM
Oct. 9	@ Fresno State*	8 PM
Oct. 16	HAWAII* (Homecoming)	7:05 PM
Oct. 23	@ Louisiana Tech*	1 PM
Oct. 30	@ San Jose State*	3 PM
Nov. 13	RICE*	7:05 PM
Nov. 20	SMU*	3:05 PM
Nov. 27	@ Tulsa*	1 PM

** Indicates Western Athletic Conference game*

***DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE**



NOVA

Q U A R T E R L Y

The University of Texas at El Paso
500 W. University Ave.
University Communications
El Paso, Texas 79968-0522