

Priscilla Velez wins Donghia Foundation scholarship



UTSA senior interior design major **Priscilla Velez** was named one of 11 **Donghia Foundation** scholarship recipients for the 2007-2008 academic year. The Donghia Foundation scholarship is awarded by the estate of Angelo Donghia, prominent New York interior designer and founder of a New York furniture and textile company, the scholarship awards up to 15 scholarships annually, up to \$30,000 each, to cover students' tuition, housing and supplies. To be awarded the scholarship, applicants from accredited interior design programs must go through a three step process including faculty nomination, a personal statement on how the scholarship will assist in their studies, and a portfolio of their work. The portfolio goes through a blind jury review and scholarship winners are chosen.

An El Paso native, Velez moved to San Antonio in 2004 to study interior design at UTSA. With the financial assistance from the scholarship, Velez can now focus in her senior year on mastering her art and exploring career opportunities in interior design. "I was certainly

in disbelief," said Velez, on learning of her scholarship award. "It was really surreal... one of those things you think can never happen to you, but you are sure glad it did."

Velez described her decision to move to UTSA as a difficult decision for her as an only child leaving her family behind and having to pay for her college expenses on her own. Her tenacity has helped her maintain a 3.42 grade point average and earn a place on the National Dean's List three years in a row. "Without the help of friends, family, teachers, administrators and classmates, I would not be at this point," said Velez.

Susan Lanford, IIDA, coordinator of the UTSA CoA Interior Design Program, says she is proud to report that our UTSA Interior Design Program has officially become a **Destination Program**. "We continue to attract local and regional area students; but in addition, we have students entering our International Award Winning Program from Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Illinois, Indiana, California, India and the UK just to name a few far away places."

