TOPIC OF CANCER

HOW UTSA RESEARCHERS ARE MAKING INROADS TOWARD THE DISEASE’S DEFEAT
Experts are tackling injuries and diseases as part of UTSA's Brain Health Initiative. Here, a three-dimensional rendering of a human brain X-ray.

A digitally illustrated cancer cell with high details.

24 A Disease's Defeat?
On more than one front UTSA researchers are finding success in the fight against potentially fatal cancers.

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More than three dozen top experts are combining forces to power UTSA's Brain Health Initiative.

30 Reversing the Damage
Experts discover that an existing medication could stop some infertility caused by cancer treatment.
Better and Better

Every year proves to be more eventful, more exciting, and more impressive when you’re a member of the Roadrunner family. From the news issued by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings that UTSA is yet again among the top 400 universities in the world—and in the top 100 in the nation—to the football team’s first appearance in an NCAA bowl game, there are points of pride month after month that are fuel to rev up the engines of research, study, and work routines. And these first weeks of 2017 haven’t been idle.

Researchers from across the university are working to battle cancer from multiple angles and have received funding to begin or continue their studies. It’s a great point of pride for UTSA, which doesn’t have a medical program, to be at the forefront of this kind of discovery. Read more about the efforts to curtail the devastation of cancer in this issue’s cover feature, “To Catch a Predator,” and its companion piece on reversing cancer-caused infertility, “A Second Chance.”

Similarly, the university’s priorities for its interdisciplinary Brain Health Initiative are spurring UTSA even closer to its Tier One goal through this extensive effort to tackle neurodegenerative disease, traumatic brain injury, regenerative medicine, stem cell therapies, medicinal chemistry, neuroinflammation, and drug design. A new $5.9 million grant is backing some of these projects, and the university will be adding to its more than three dozen scholars who are already studying various aspects of brain health with an effort to hire a cluster of experts who will delve even further into this area of research.

As well as the others you’ll read about in this issue, these advances create a real sense of excitement about UTSA’s future. There’s rarely a moment when you can’t find active enthusiasm when you’re on one of our campuses among the students. And when they tell us stories about their research or other academic explorations, you see them burning with pride and dreams. And that kind of hope and dedication really is what a top-tier university is all about, isn’t it?
PLAZAS & PASEOS

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What’s In
Appreciating the hard-fought (and -won) efforts of our forebears to achieve voting rights and other freedoms. Find out how UTSA is preserving the history behind one such effort...

A treasure trove of activism documents, photos, journals, propagandist memorabilia, and more is housed within UTSA Libraries Special Collections. Carefully curated by university archivists, the unique assemblage includes the most recent acquisition: coveted historical documents from the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, founded in 1974 by Willie Velasquez (on the right in the slide image, above, which is part of the archives) to help boost Latino voter participation.

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FINGER ON THE PULSE
CONNECTING UTSA TO THE WORLD AROUND US

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DATES TO REMEMBER
UTSA’S LASTING LEGACY

45 Years Ago
1972: Construction of UTSA’s Main Campus begins near Interstate 10 and Loop 1604. With seven buildings planned that will encompass 800,000 square feet, it’s the largest new university under construction in the United States at the time.

25 Years Ago
1992: UTSA’s first doctoral program (in biology with a specialty in neurobiology) is approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

20 Years Ago
1997: The initial construction phases and subsequent dedication of buildings on both the Main and Downtown Campuses draw to a close.

5 Years Ago
2012: UTSA kicks off its first capital campaign, resulting in a $202 million endowment.

SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

About SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

SOMBRILLA (SPANISH):
UMBRELLA
(SOHM–BREE–YAH)

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

University Communications and Marketing produces Sombrilla Magazine and other publications that highlight the achievements and impact of UTSA Roadrunner family throughout the world. This division is responsible for promoting the university’s mission of education and its Tier One drive. We strive to capture the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the university while tackling relevant global issues.

CONTACT US
Are you interested in sending an update for Class Notes or sharing news with other members of the Roadrunner family?

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To request to be removed from our mailing list, to receive the magazine’s digital issues only, or to update your mailing address information, use the same contact details.

STORIES TO WATCH
UTSA IS A HUB OF ACTIVITY

the UTSA Libraries and the UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures will be supporting the celebration as official San Antonio Tricentennial partners. Showcasing the university’s rare and historic materials about the city, library staff will create a digital portal to San Antonio history. Additionally, the university will sponsor events, including two evoked by documentation in the libraries’ Special Collections.

{ 4 } Seekin Infinity UTSA has signed an agreement with the National Observatory of Japan in a multinational effort to build and operate the Thirty Meter Telescope, expected to be one of the most powerful telescopes in the world. The device, which will focus on deep space, is to be operated cooperatively between the U.S., Japan, India, China, and Canada. Increasing the university’s global research opportunities, UTSA will be able to exchange students and professors with Japan.

ARCHIVES BY COURTNEY CAMPBELL / UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING; THIRTY MILE TELESCOPE RENDERING COURTESY OF TMT OBSERVATORY CORP.
capturing the artists: Michele Monseau M.F.A. ’98, arts lecturer; Jason Willome, arts senior lecturer; Richard Armendariz ’95, arts associate professor; Jayne Lawrence ’95, M.F.A. ’00, arts senior lecturer; Ken Little, arts professor; Christie Blizard, arts assistant professor; and Sarah Fox M.F.A. ’15.
Despite being accustomed to expressing himself through his own works, UTSA art professor Richard Armendariz ’95 was having a problem tapping into himself as he sat looking into a camera while waiting to have his portrait shot. Photographer Ramin Samandari knew that “I’d just gone through a divorce,” Armendariz says of his emotional state at the time. “So there was a lot of pain there—as you might well imagine.”

“Think about your son,” Armendariz says the photographer encouraged him. “So I did. In that, I found something to smile about.”

Samandari captured the play of emotions that day as part of San Antonio Faces of Art, his years-in-the-making project highlighting Alamo City artists.

The fact that the 250-plus portrait project features so many UTSA alumni and faculty—who are working artists like Armendariz—is a point of pride for the university. Soon, 100 of these portraits will go on display as part of the university’s art collection.

“In the past we’ve not had any material—photographic material—about San Antonio movers and shakers in the art world,” says Arturo Infante Almeida, the university’s art specialist and curator for the UTSA Art Collection. “It’s a really good addition for UTSA.” Almeida helped to select the portraits to purchase for the university. For him, the interest in art isn’t just professional but also personal. He is also one of the artist’s included in Samandari’s Faces project.

Other Roadrunners in the series include Kent Rush, photographer and professor as well as one of the founding members of downtown San Antonio’s Blue Star Arts Complex and co-curator of 2015’s UTSA printmaking exhibit Veinticinco; painter, alumna, and lecturer Soomin Jung M.F.A. ’08; longtime art curator and supporter Patricia Ruiz-Healy M.A. ’05 [see our video profile of Ruiz-Healy in Sombrilla Magazine online]; and internationally known sculptor and alumna Jesse Amado ’78, B.F.A. ’87, M.F.A. ’90, whose pieces have been exhibited at Ruiz-Healy’s gallery. Amado has also donated papers to the Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian Institution.

“The arts are an important part of cultural identity, and UTSA is a community leader,” says photographer and professor Libby Rowe, also featured in the series. “We educate not only artists but art connoisseurs. President Romo is commendable for his dedication to supporting artists in our community. UTSA is setting a glowing example.”

Michele Monseau M.F.A. ’98, who is a UTSA new media lecturer and artist also in Faces, echoes Romo’s sentiment that such a legacy project is needed. “We haven’t had anyone thoroughly chronicle or archive the art, music, and other creative participants in the art scene here until now,” she says. “I was happy to participate, knowing Ramin and his
work for years, and since I had seen some of the pieces he had already done for this project. It can be difficult to capture this kind of ‘inner state’ without being sappy or clichéd—or it looking like a Hollywood head shot. Ramin did it beautifully with a certain stark gravity but also with optimism. It’s quite a feat.”

Samandari’s own relationship with the university dates back roughly a de-

The arts are an important part of cultural identity, and UTSA is a community leader. We educate not only artists but art connoisseurs.

Capturing the artists: 1 Kent Rush, arts professor; 2 Lloyd Walsh ’89; 3 Libby Rowe, arts associate professor; and 4 Mark Hogensen M.F.A. ’90.

Check out our interactive galleries of these artists’ work by visiting Sombrilla Magazine online.
Marvin Gonzalez was already working several jobs in 2006 when he started Gonzalez Trading, a business selling handmade soaps and cleaners in a small town in Guatemala. But seven years later, with the cost of ingredients increasing and his inability to compete against national competitors’ pricing, his company was floundering.

Not wanting to lose his business, Gonzalez contacted Centro Promipyme, one of the five small-business development centers that have opened in Guatemala since 2012, when the country first began working with UTSA’s International Trade Center. Just one arm of the university’s Institute for Economic Development, the center helps countries outside the U.S. to create their own centers to help spur business creation and job growth.

“They guided me to being able to focus my sales and rescue my company,” Gonzalez says. “Now I am able to contribute to my community through my business, giving people a decent job.”

UTSA’s efforts in helping small businesses thrive hasn’t gone unnoticed. Along with press coverage of the university’s efforts in Central America’s so-called Northern Triangle—an area comprising Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras—the U.S. State Department has awarded UTSA a $1.8 million grant to continue providing technical assistance in the region.

UTSA’s Institute for Economic Development reports that it has already launched 44 small-business centers in Central America, resulting in 11,500 new jobs.

For Gonzalez, the program meant getting connected with the International Trade Center’s partners, which even provided access to a specialist in the production of soaps. He was able to create new product lines along with a corporate logo and label for each new product. He also received financial support through the Guatemalan government to make sure his business was properly registered to sell products internationally.

The SBDC model first launched in El Salvador in 2009 and in Honduras and Guatemala in 2012. Economic growth and job creation in the Northern Triangle is seen as a long-term method of helping to lower the number of immigrants who leave their homes in those countries—fleeing violence, instability, and extreme poverty—and embark on an often dangerous trek to reach the United States.

“UTSA is very engaged to strengthen economic development in Central America,” says Robert McKinley, the university’s senior associate vice president for economic development. “Our institute is a top performer among U.S. Small Business Administration and Commerce Department programs.”

For Minerva Garcia M.S. ‘05, her job as a senior international project manager with the trade center is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: “I can think of the many moments when working in Central America that I had the feeling, We are really doing something good!” That good extends throughout the Western Hemisphere, including the U.S., where the IED assists Texas-based and other businesses.

“Having a successful business not only benefits its owners but also their families, their future, and their local community.”
As a result of the university dedicating 6.8 acres of land to the preservation of the monarch butterfly, the university has been designated a certified wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

“I’m excited for our research, the environmental sciences program here at UTSA, and especially our students,” says Janis Bush, professor of environmental sciences, who is leading the university’s studies with monarchs and their milkweed habitat. “I think the great benefit of certifying that area through the NWF helps us further solidify our commitment to maintaining that area to preserve and study monarch butterflies.”

Faculty and students began a two-year study in 2016, conducting roadside surveys throughout the state to determine the prevalence of monarch larvae and eggs in Texas. [See “Of Monarchs & Milkweed” in the Spring 2016 issue of Sombrilla Magazine.] Their results will help preservationists determine whether the monarch should be placed on the federal endangered species list. “As our state insect, the monarch needs our protection,” Bush says. “Our laboratory at UTSA has been honored to lead the research for the state on the status of the monarch.”

According to Bush, early estimates from northern wildlife organizations show the population of monarch butterflies may have tripled last year as a result of efforts to maintain their Texas breeding grounds. “I think all of the attention that has been paid to the monarch butterfly over the last year is helping them begin to thrive again,” she says. “I’m very excited to see how they’ve progressed since they were last here.”

The preserved land for the monarch is adjacent to the Brackenridge parking lots on Main Campus. Students have already been planting milkweed on the acreage to attract the butterflies and give them a place to lay eggs.
When John Kauth is not in his downtown San Antonio office, he can often be found on a golf course. For the businessman, the course is a familiar scene, one he’s been part of since he was 12.

“We moved every year, and I never attended the same school twice,” says Kauth, CEO and cofounder of Intercontinental Wealth Advisor. “We would move in the middle of the summer, so it was hard making friends, but thankfully, we always lived next to a golf course.” By understanding golf, he found he could make connections with people of all ages.

Now overseeing a group of companies managing in excess of $1 billion in clients’ assets, he calls San Antonio home. His love for golf was first ignited by his parents, particularly his mother, Maryb, a Navy nurse and avid golfer.

Although a Texas A&M University alumnus, Kauth got involved with UTSA golf nearly a decade ago when the program was eager to build its competitiveness at a national level. He, along with other local business leaders, established UTSA24, a group that supports student athletes not only with donations but also with time by mentoring them. “These [business leaders] loved golf, wanted to touch young lives, and felt UTSA was key to San Antonio’s future,” Kauth explains. “The partnership is a unique opportunity for students to learn from and build relationships with community leaders.” To date, the group has donated more than $400,000 and helped take UTSA golf to top-level NCAA competitions.

After witnessing the success of UTSA24, Kauth and his wife, Melissa Kauth ’90, took their support even further. They began sponsoring the Alamo Invitational in memory of a woman dear to them both—John’s mother, Maryb. The annual women’s golf tournament hosts some of the best Division I programs nationally.

The Kauths have also pledged the largest gift in UTSA athletics history: $3 million to support women’s golf. The estate gift will provide scholarships to athletes and financially challenged students and continue to fund the renamed Maryb S. Kauth Invitational.

A former banker and San Antonio Water System executive, Melissa Kauth attended UTSA evening classes while working full-time jobs. “Graduating from UTSA was one of the proudest moments of my life,” she says, “and I could not have done it without the help, support, and guidance of some very special people in my life. Both John and I were blessed with parents who instilled in us a strong work ethic and integrity. We were further blessed to have mentors who gave us guidance and support during the early days of our careers.”

For the Kauths, their philanthropic efforts don’t end with a signed check, though. They continue to mentor students, teaching them about life lessons and how, according to John Kauth, a little hard work can take you far. “You’d be amazed how wonderful it feels to give,” he says. “By giving back we want to touch lives by helping young people. I know Mom would be proud of what we’ve done.”

A love of golf and a drive to mentor inspire a couple to provide UTSA with its largest athletics gift.
After nabbing the top prize in the mechanical engineering category at UTSA’s College of Engineering Senior Tech Symposium, a student-crafted wind tunnel is now furthering research into aerodynamics. Under mechanical engineering professor Victor Maldonado, students are studying how turbulence affects airplane wings. Maldonado says, though, that the wind tunnel’s potential doesn’t end there. He hopes that as studies using it advance, other university researchers find ways to harness the device’s potential, especially for collaboration across disciplines.

Maldonado, whose students helped to design and build the machine as a two-year class project, has described the function of the component parts for Sombrilla Magazine.
1 **CONTRACTION.** Air enters the contraction and gains speed before reaching the test section. Air speed must increase to viable speeds for individual tests and can reach up to 75 mph.

2 **TEST SECTION.** The study object is placed inside. The team is testing how the use of piezoelectric actuators (electrical-to-mechanical energy convertors) inside a wing can improve its aerodynamics.

3 **DIFFUSER.** Air moves from the test section into the diffuser and gradually expands, causing a decrease in air speed and a rise in pressure. The diffuser has been designed to minimize turbulence intensity in the test section.

4 **MOTOR AND FAN BLADES.** The motor drives the fan, which pulls air through the tunnel.

5 **STAND.** Students built the stand to support the diffuser and raise it to the proper height to connect to the test section.

6 **OPTICAL TABLE.** The table supports test instruments.

7 **TEST INSTRUMENTS.** For the aerodynamics project, instruments include a load cell (to measure lift, drag, and pitching movement), pressure transducers, and a camera. A signal generator and amplifier support activation of piezoelectric actuators. Finally, all the equipment connects to a data acquisition board and is controlled by a computer.
Breastfeeding for an extended period could help some children curb their junk food intake later in life, according to new UTSA research published in Public Health Nutrition.

Dylan B. Jackson, a criminal justice professor in the College of Public Policy, and his colleague, Kecia R. Johnson of Mississippi State University, studied data from the U.S. Department of Education related to the development of 10,000 American children from birth to 5 years. They hoped to determine whether infant breastfeeding, paired with family socioeconomic status, would affect junk food consumption in children.

Jackson and his collaborator were also interested in examining whether race and ethnicity would affect their research findings, particularly among white, Hispanic, and black families.

The researchers used data compiled over several years by the National Center for Education Statistics to review key points during the development of 10,000 children. Between ages nine months and 2 years, mothers were asked whether they breastfed their child and, if so, for how long. By the time the children were in kindergarten, those same parents were asked to report the frequency of their children’s junk food consumption over a seven-day period.

Junk food, in this case, was defined as fast food, soda or other sugary beverages, salty snacks, or sweets. Families were categorized as being low or high in socioeconomic status.

Across racial and ethnic groups, the researchers found that breastfeeding duration had little to no effect on the junk food consumption of children from high socioeconomic families.

“Being breastfed was consistently associated with lower junk food intake across all junk food types among black children of low socioeconomic status,” Jackson says. “Black mothers, however, tended to breastfeed less and for shorter durations than other mothers in the sample.”

The researchers hope to identify and promote strategies that assist women in their efforts to breastfeed. Their goal is to create a healthier future for children, particularly black children from low socioeconomic families.

In particular, Jackson and Johnson point to the federal Women, Infants, and Children special supplemental nutrition program as a useful point of intervention, since black women are often overrepresented among participants. The program also offers breastfeeding peer counseling services, which could serve as an added opportunity for educational, emotional, and social support for mothers.
Janakiram Seshu, associate professor of biology and associate dean of the Graduate School, has received a grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to support research to better understand and prevent the spread of Lyme disease.

The big question at the heart of Seshu’s research is how the bacterium that causes Lyme disease, called *Borrelia burgdorferi*, is able to adapt to its immediate environment inside the tick vector or infected mammalian hosts. Mammalian bodies are very rich in nutrients and fatty acids, which make it easy for the bacteria to thrive. The tick’s body is different. It’s very poor in nutrients. Yet the bacterium adapts very quickly and allows the disease to spread. To limit the transmission of the disease, Seshu’s entire laboratory is focused on understanding how the Lyme disease–carrying bacterium can reinvent itself to live for so long in such a disagreeable environment.

“As Lyme disease–carrying ticks now present in more than half of the United States, Dr. Sheshu’s research and findings will provide new insights into the treatment against the particular bacterium,” says Bernard Arulanandam, UTSA interim vice president for research.

Seshu, a member of the South Texas Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases, is best known by his peers for his inventive approach to stop the spread of Lyme disease. His work, described in a recent paper, leverages medication that is normally used to lower cholesterol.

“Dr. Seshu’s top-tier efforts in infectious disease research are a source of immense pride for the UTSA College of Sciences,” says George Perry, the Semmes Foundation Distinguished University Chair in Neurobiology and dean of the UTSA College of Sciences. “His work will undoubtedly have a great impact on our knowledge of Lyme disease as well as our efforts to fight it.”

“As Lyme disease–carrying ticks increasingly spread to new areas of the country, we need to improve our understanding of the disease. Dr. Seshu’s bacteria research will help us limit Lyme disease’s spread and allow folks here in Texas and across the nation to live healthier lives,” says U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro.

“This award from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is an exciting investment to tackle a major debilitating disease in the U.S.,” Seshu says. “I’m looking forward to advancing our understanding of this disease so that we can start finding better solutions.”
Plans are under way for a new state-of-the-art building on Main Campus that will include teaching laboratories and research facilities for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Currently, a number of UTSA’s STEM-related spaces are spread out across campus.

One of the most unique features of the building is the magnitude of exterior and interior glass. Many laboratories will be surround-ed in glass so students and visitors walking by can see what’s going on, a concept referred to as science on display. “The biology, chemistry, and engineering labs are going to be very visible,” says Paul Goodman, assistant vice president for facilities. “Students with different majors will interact, so there’s a higher potential for people with different interests to connect. Some may discover a new passion.”

The building will be home to UTSA’s Brain Health Initiative [see “Great Minds” on page 26] and will feature a 17,000-square-foot engineering design, testing, and fabrication area as well as a two-story space for distillation columns, which will be used for the new chemical engineering program [see Stories to Watch on page 1].

Utility work will begin this summer, and design plans will be finalized by fall with construction expected to begin in early 2018. The building should be complete in the summer of 2020 in time for use in the fall semester.
BY MICHELLE MONDO

Nick and Amanda Ellwanger are a husband-and-wife team of UTSA anthropology Ph.D. candidates doing research in South Africa while raising a daughter. In an email exchange, the couple discussed the field of ethnoprimatology and what it’s like researching with a partner.

Where are you and what are some of the other places you’ve conducted research?

AMANDA: We are in South Africa and conduct research in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley. I did an undergraduate honors thesis on mantled howling monkeys on Om-etepe Island in Nicaragua and M.A. research in Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve in China.

NICK: I have studied baboons on the Cape Peninsula of South Africa and ring-tailed lemurs in Berenty Reserve in Madagascar.

What is ethnoprimatology?

AMANDA: It’s an approach to examining the ecological, biological, and cultural interconnections between people and nonhuman primates. This can include ecological and spatial overlap, bidirectional pathogen exchange, and nonhuman primates in people’s worldview, myth, religion, and economic systems. Often these areas of study are linked.

My particular research examines how people’s attitudes and behaviors may influence chacma baboon foraging and social relationships.

NICK: And my research examines baboon diet and nutrition across time and space. I’m interested in how baboons utilize human-modified habitats and nonnative food sources that are introduced, like agricultural products and invasive species.

What does that mean in a broader sense?

AMANDA: Baboons are deeply embedded into South African culture—from centuries of ecological overlap and conflict between people and the monkeys to people’s recognition that baboons are special among animals because they are so much like humans. I hope my research will help people understand how they are tied to baboons, ecologically and culturally.

NICK: In my work, because baboons use human landscapes so often in South Africa, it is important to understand what nutritional benefits baboons derive from human and natural landscapes. I hope that this research aids land management in respect to baboon conservation.

And finally, what’s it like doing this research with your partner?

AMANDA: We spend almost every day, all day long with each other...so luckily we work together really well. And we don’t get sick of each other.

NICK: But we also have endless support and complete understanding from each other. We are both involved in research, so we share an understanding of the sacrifice and commitment involved. Plus, we get to talk about monkeys and anthropology all day.
Students Marisol Esqueda, Shalin Purik, and Natalie Johary examine a SynDaver synthetic human body. This is one of six SynDavers acquired by the College of Sciences that students enrolled in human anatomy and physiology labs have access to, beginning this semester, to aid in identifying anatomical structures and better understanding their relationship within the human body. Each SynDaver, which must be stored in antifungal solution for preservation, has complete representations of human bones, joints, muscles, organs, and tendons as well as the major nervous system and vascular components.
Circle of Life

A Tibetan monk from Drepung Loseling Monastery adds fine touches to a mandala sand painting during a presentation in the University Center. As part of a Mystical Arts of Tibet tour, a group of monks invited to UTSA created the sand work over four days during the fall’s Education Week and Diversity Month observances. After completion, the creation is destroyed to symbolically illustrate the fragility and impermanence of life.
One for the Books

Only six years after the team’s inaugural season, UTSA football made its first bowl appearance on Dec. 17. Placekicker Victor Falcon’s 27-yard field goal in the first quarter was the first score of the game, placing Falcon in the UTSA record book for the first points ever scored during a bowl game. Facing the University of New Mexico Lobos, the Roadrunners eventually fell in 20–23 play. But the university’s invitation to the Gildan New Mexico Bowl in Albuquerque matched the NCAA record for the fastest program to reach a bowl game.
Architecture professor Antonio Petrov and a group of his students have created a plan—and this 50-foot-long model—that envisions a makeover of Broadway Avenue. Stretching 8.6 miles from its culturally active source downtown to beyond San Antonio International Airport, Broadway is flanked by 60 percent parking, 38 percent consumer, and only 1 percent public space. The plan, “1,000 Parks and a Line in the Sky,” proposes repurposing 1,000 unused spaces along the corridor for public gatherings and R&R with new modes of transport, including an elevated service, much like the Brackenridge Park Sky Ride, which launched in 1964. Details of the plan and the model are on public display through April at the UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures.
State of the Art

Art lecturer Andrei Renteria and one of his students add touches during the painting phase of a team project from a mural class he led, along with graduate student Houston Fryer. A committee reviewed student design proposals for the mural and narrowed them to the winning submission. Renteria and his students then carried out the sketching and painting indoors on five 4-foot-by-10-foot canvases, which were mounted onto wooden panels. The completed 20-by-10 mural has been installed on the second floor of the Arts Building near the Main Gallery.
A digitally illustrated breast cancer cell in the telophase stage of division. Researchers at UTSA have discovered a noninvasive way to attack cancer cells.
CANCER IS ONE OF THE MOST FEARED DIAGNOSES FOR ANYONE. 

BUT RESEARCHERS ACROSS MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES AT UTSA ARE TACKLING THE DISEASE—AND MAKING SERIOUS HEADWAY TOWARD ITS DEFEAT.

Groundbreaking discoveries in cancer research this past year have showcased the intensive efforts of UTSA faculty and students to combat the disease. From professor Matthew Gdovin’s innovative new method to kill cancer cells to the nearly $4.6 million grant awarded to the Center for Innovative Drug Discovery to find more effective cancer drugs, university researchers are making international news with their successes. And they show no signs of slowing down.

BY MICHELLE MONDO

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ERIC BUTTERMANN, JOANNA CARVER, DEBORAH SILLIMAN, AND KC GONZALEZ
But beyond the headlines, there is an undercurrent of research and innovation across UTSA’s campuses that’s focused on cancer—the second leading cause of death worldwide.

**CELL SELF-DESTRUCTION**

Biology professor Matthew Gdovin had spent nearly two decades researching the human respiratory system when a query from a student led to a shift in perspective: What if you could make cancer cells kill themselves? It was, Gdovin had to admit, an excellent question.

He’s since developed a method that involves injecting a chemical compound into a group of cancerous cells that diffuses into the tissue. He then aims a beam of light at the cells, which activates the compound, causing the cells to become very acidic inside. Overwhelmed by the acidity, the cells self-destruct. Within two hours of the treatment, Gdovin estimates that up to 95 percent of the targeted cancer cells will be dead.

In the past two years he’s advanced his photodynamic cancer therapy, originally reported in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, to the point that it’s noninvasive, requiring just an injection of nitrobenzaldehyde fluid followed by a flash of ultraviolet light to cause the cancer-killing reaction. Gdovin has begun to test the method on drug-resistant cancer cells to make his therapy as strong as possible. He’s also started to develop a nanoparticle that can be injected into the body to target metastasized cancer cells. The nanoparticle is activated with a wavelength of light that can pass harmlessly through skin, muscle, and bone.

Gdovin tested his photodynamic acidification method against triple negative breast cancer, one of the most aggressive types of cancer and one of the hardest to treat. The prognosis for triple negative breast cancer is usually very poor. After one treatment in laboratory testing, he stopped the tumor from growing and doubled the chances of survival in mice.

Gdovin hopes that his noninvasive method will help cancer patients with tumors in areas of the body that have proved problematic for surgeons, such as the brain stem, aorta, or spine.

It could also help people who have received the maximum amount of radiation treatment and can no longer cope with the scarring and pain that goes along with it as well as help children who are at risk of developing mutations from radiation as they grow older.

The work has also made a difference to Gdovin’s students who assisted him in his research. “The fact students were so involved is part of the joy of it,” he says. “You shouldn’t underestimate what they can bring to research. Sometimes it takes someone young, someone unaffected who’s just looking at the problem from a new angle.”

**I WANT A NEW DRUG**

Cancer killed three of Doug Frantz’s uncles. Stanton McHardy lost his father and sister to the disease. Now the two UTSA chemistry professors are working to discover cancer treatments at the Center for Innovative Drug Discovery, a joint venture between UTSA and The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

“We’re not just studying existing cancer drugs,” says McHardy, the CIDD’s codirector and also its Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker medicinal chemistry core director. “We’re designing and creating novel molecules that can be designed and engineered to treat cancers from multiple biological pathways. It takes a collaborative team at both UTSA and UT Health San Antonio to be able to do that.”

In August the center received a nearly $4.6 million grant from the Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas. McHardy is the principal investigator on the grant, which will support the center’s ongoing research in the preclinical stage of small molecule cancer drug discovery as well as provide opportunities to develop new cancer therapeutic programs. The CIDD will also continue to focus on programs that target triple negative breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and brain cancer.
“We’re not just studying existing cancer drugs. We’re designing and creating novel molecules that can be designed and engineered to treat cancers from multiple biological pathways.”

Stanton McHardy (right) leads the UTSA Center for Innovative Drug Discovery, studying new cancer treatments.
The fact students were so involved is part of the joy of [this discovery]. You shouldn’t underestimate what they can bring to research. Sometimes it takes someone young, someone unaffected who’s just looking at the problem from a new angle.

Matthew Gdovin has developed a promising, noninvasive procedure targeting breast cancer.

Doug Frantz is working to prevent stem cells from wanting to become cancerous.
Frantz, the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker distinguished professor in chemistry, is leading a team of UTSA students in chemical biology research. Because stem cells can become any type of cell in the body, Frantz’s laboratory is focused on identifying molecules that can convince stem cells they want to become something other than cancer. Frantz’s and McHardy’s research in this area are very synergistic with the PriStem initiative and stem cell research for cancer and regenerative medicine that’s ongoing at UTSA.

With the CPRIT funds, the center will be able to venture further into discovering novel compounds for multiple types of cancers and expand the CIDD’s cancer program portfolio. According to McHardy, what differentiates the research at the center from that at other universities is the developmental mentality. “We would ultimately love to see intellectual property come out of here that’s going to benefit patients,” he says, “and spin out to become companies.”

**CONNECTING MORE DOTS**

Research at the university isn’t limited, though, to the more obvious science and engineering disciplines. For example, under the direction of UTSA College of Education and Human Development kinesiology professor Meizi He, the Building a Healthy Temple Cancer Primary Prevention Program partners with local churches to help people live healthier lives. The program targets three modifiable risk factors—poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and obesity—by educating church congregants and their families. Additionally, the program uses the train-the-trainer method to enable community residents to carry on educating their neighbors, which ensures the program’s sustainability after implementation.

Additionally, in the College of Liberal and Fine Arts, communications professor Kimberly Kline studies cultural sensitivity around health issues in the popular media. “For instance,” she says, “my colleagues and I noticed there had been an upsurge in reports of side effects from the HPV vaccine. Our study suggested that the upsurge could have been related to the heavy public debate regarding the vaccine. In other words, it appears that public discourse in the mass media can influence health promotion efforts.”

Kline is also a consultant for a CPRIT-funded Baylor College of Medicine initiative to develop culturally appropriate educational videos to be shown in health clinics. The videos will encourage English-speaking African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Caucasian parents to talk to their health care providers about having their children vaccinated against HPV.

And in UTSA’s College of Public Policy, demography professor Corey Sparks is conducting research to find cancer hot spots in Bexar County and South Texas using demographic and environmental risk factors. One of these hot spots—or a cancer cluster—occurs when a greater than expected number of cancer cases among a group of people in a defined geographic area over a specific time period, according to the National Cancer Institute.

“This information has an application because people in county health departments are going to be interested in knowing what we have in our backyard, whether we have a level of cancer that is four to five times the level that should exist, and what is causing that,” Sparks says. “What I expect is a lot more questions. The first goal is to identify where these places are and then to focus on specific hot spots and learn as much as we can about these places.”

Cancer research has come a long way in recent decades, says Bernard Arulanandam, UTSA’s interim vice president for research, but he adds that such a persistent disease requires more work. UTSA, he stresses, is ready to meet the challenge: “We are committed to world-class research that improves quality of life. We are equally passionate about training the next generation of brilliant cancer researchers.”
Male infertility is an intuitive disease, and we need creative solutions.
Losing fertility is a frequent problem among many men cancer patients, particularly since treatments for the disease often halt sperm production. But a new study led by Brian Hermann, assistant professor of biology at UTSA, has shown promising evidence that a medication previously used to prevent infections in cancer patients can also keep them from becoming infertile.

Hermann and his research team have been pursuing a number of cutting-edge research initiatives to restore fertility in men who have lost their ability to have children as a result of cancer treatments they received as children. While working on methods to restart sperm production, the researchers discovered a link between a drug for recovering cancer patients and the absence of normal damage to reproductive ability.

The drug is called granulocyte colony-stimulating factor, or G-CSF. It stimulates human bone marrow to produce neutrophils, which are white blood cells that are needed to fight infections. They’re commonly lost after chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

“We were using G-CSF to prevent infections in our research experiments,” Hermann says. “It turned out that the drug also had the unexpected impact of guarding against male infertility.”

Because cancer treatments like radiation and chemotherapy often kill sperm stem cells, male reproduction becomes essentially impossible. In Hermann’s laboratory, G-CSF, by promoting cell growth, unexpectedly began creating new sperm stem cells to replace the dead ones. A study authored by Hermann and his students has been published in the journal Reproductive Biology and Endocrinology.

Hermann’s laboratory efforts focus almost exclusively on regenerating dead testicular tissue through the use of stem cells, making the project an exciting but unexpected detour that he hopes to continue, if possible.

The next step would be observing whether the drug, which is already in wide use by cancer patients, has any correlation with restored fertility among humans. Until then, Hermann is focusing on better understanding the stem cells that make reproduction possible so that he can find more effective solutions to treating male infertility.

“Male infertility is an intuitive disease, and we need creative solutions,” he says. “But we need to understand how things work before we can fix them.”
As it ramps up for accreditation, one of UTSA’s newest graduate programs is showing big successes among its alumni

BY VANESSA A. DAVILA

On a stretch of Texas FM 78, which runs between San Antonio and Seguin, sits the sleepy city of Cibolo. It won’t be that sleepy for much longer, though. With more than 28,000 residents, Cibolo experienced a 44 percent population increase between 2010 and 2016. By 2020 the city is expected to more than double in size. Lisa

Gonzalez ’06, M.S. ’12 is the city planner preparing Cibolo for such a drastic jump in population.

Gonzalez was one of the first two graduates of UTSA College of Architecture, Construction, and Planning’s master of science in urban and regional planning. Her graduation peer, Sergio Martinez M.S. ’12, is now the director of transportation and infrastructure in Bogotá, Colombia. Gonzalez and Martinez are part of a group of already more than three dozen alumni who are literally changing the landscape of cities.

The highly visible impact of such graduates from the relatively new master’s program, launched in 2010, is a big reason professor Richard Tangum, who is also the director of UTSA’s Center for Urban and Regional Planning Research, is confident that the program will achieve national accreditation within the next three years. More than 80 percent of its most recent graduates, for example, are employed in planning fields.

Gonzalez initially studied architecture at UTSA, and when she graduated she moved back to her hometown of McAllen to work as an architect for the city. It wasn’t until McAllen’s planning department requested her assistance with an update to its development codes and guidelines that she became hooked on the field’s scope. “In architecture you design based on certain parameters, such as local codes or guidelines,” Gonzalez says. “When I was introduced to planning I realized that the planner is the one who creates those guidelines. This experience allowed me to link the macro sense of planning to my background in architecture at a whole different scale.”

Gonzalez is now an integral part of improving the increasingly burdened I-35 corridor between San Antonio and Austin. Experts have been associating the I-35 stretch to megaregion Dallas–Fort Worth for decades. Austin is noted for its population and traffic, which are bursting at the seams, and San Antonio’s relatively low cost of living and economic growth is enticing to young professionals looking for affordability. In turn, young couples with children are flocking to corridor cities like Cibolo because of even more affordability and desirable school districts. For Gonzalez, her role meant an opportunity to create a comprehensive plan to map out the things that Americans often take for granted: utilities, fire stations, city halls, and additional schools.
While many new residents are choosing to live outside San Antonio’s city limits, there are many more who want to live in the city’s urban core. Sarah Esserlieu M.S. ’15 is a senior management analyst for the Alamo City who manages three incentive programs: the Inner City Reinvestment and Infill Policy Fee Waiver Program, the Center City Housing Incentive Policy, and the Brownfield Redevelopment Program, each of which promotes growth within San Antonio’s urban core. The programs encourage downtown real estate development by providing financial incentives and technical assistance for developers.

After living in San Diego at the height of the 2000s economic recession and then moving to South Korea, where her interest in urban planning sparked, Esserlieu made contact with UTSA graduate advisor Tangum after she returned to the U.S. and began to further explore the field. She says she made the leap of faith, moved to San Antonio, and immediately saw the potential in downtown San Antonio to make use of her future studies. “Being here, working here, and seeing the way the city is going,” Esserlieu says, “I think, Yeah, this was the perfect choice. There is still so much transition in San Antonio, and I can say I was part of that. It’s not necessarily something you can do in an already-established city like Portland or Seattle.”

Gonzalez and Esserlieu both chose to stay close to San Antonio after receiving their UTSA degrees, but others, like Martinez in Bogotá, have gone farther to affect change. Carla Burrell ’09, M.S. ’15 says she always hoped to help people live better. Thinking she’d achieve that, though, by improving their experiences with home comforts, she studied interior design as an undergraduate. But she realized she wanted to do something even more substantial. She is now an environmental planner with a private firm that has been tasked with delivering the first phase of California’s high-speed rail, which will connect the San Francisco Bay area to Los Angeles. As California’s population has grown, the demand for intrastate travel has as well. Proponents believe that the rail line is the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly way of meeting that demand.

Any project this massive, however, doesn’t happen without some controversy, and the planned rail service is no different. “I take comfort,” Burrell says, “in the fact that I am attempting to provide people with sustainable development through green public infrastructure, good air, land and water stewardship, economic development, and expanded mobility choices.”

With cities and regions around the world growing and changing so rapidly, urban planners will be an integral part of the future, according to UTSA’s Tangum. “Our program is paying off because we can see the results, and our graduates are moving along even faster in job responsibility than I’d anticipated,” he says. “But one of our basic philosophies from the start was to do everything we can to get our students in professional positions where they can succeed.”
doctors, and lawyers, but it was downtown cocktail bar Juniper Tar that cemented the firm as the go-to for top-to-bottom design. They were brought in from the beginning and assisted with interior design and fabrication, wall art production, full branding and identity, photography, and print production, according to Hilmy. Other clients include the St. Anthony Hotel and Pearl venues Jazz TX bar and Botika restaurant.

Hilmy says managing his own design firm wasn’t his original plan when he left home in Mercedes, in far South Texas, to attend UTSA as a premed student with expectations of following in his father’s footsteps. But even with strong role models like a surgeon father and a mother who is a dean at DePaul University in Chicago, Hilmy says both parents wanted him to find his own path in whatever way that meant—which included supporting his aspirations of fixing cars and running an eBay business. He realized eventually, he says, that he was more intrigued by the idea of being an entrepreneur so he switched his major to business and followed a new dream.

He hopes to one day have a satellite office or two, especially in Chicago, where he could see his parents and sister, but for now he’s happy to be part of the Alamo City’s future. “We’re a bunch of friends who decided we could grow something bigger than ourselves,” he explains. “And now we’re helping to reshape the face of downtown San Antonio.”
Air Force Col. Jimmy Canlas, B.S. in electrical engineering, has been named the new commander of the 437th Airlift Wing, Joint Base Charleston, in South Carolina. Canlas is a native of Port Hueneme, California.

1996
Darrell E. Coley, B.A. in criminal justice, has been named the inspector general for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Region 8 Investigations.

1997
Manny Longoria, B.A. in mass communication, is now an agency owner of Goosehead.

2003
Author Veronica Campbell “Ronnie” Stich, B.B.A. in information systems, has ventured into movie making and has taken home awards for Best Documentary and Audience Choice at the San Antonio Horrific Film Fest for her first film, which explores the emerging punk music scene in the Alamo City. Returned to This is currently in consideration at other festivals nationwide along with a short horror film she made.

Formerly with La Fonda on Main and Acenar, Ceasar Zepe-da, B.B.A. in management, has opened Sangria on the Burg. Located on Fredericksburg Road in the South Texas Medical Center area, the restaurant is the first that Zepeda has owned and operated.

2004
Keith Norman, B.B.A. in marketing, was named sales counselor of the year; custom builder at the Greater San Antonio Builders Association 2016 Summit Awards. The event recognizes builders and associates with awards in a number of categories, including promotional, product, and personal achievement.

2005
Julio Ramos Jr., B.S. in civil engineering, has been selected as a member of the 2016 Institute of Transportation Engineers Rising Stars Class. The program recognizes members who made an impact on the profession, demonstrated the ability to lead, and have implemented innovative techniques to solve transportation problems. Ramos is a project manager at civil engineering consultants.

2007
Jenny Deptuch, B.B.A. in marketing and M.B.A. ’09, has published her first book, Seek, Find, Pursue: Knowing and Following God’s Calling, from Westbow Press.

2009
Azuee Bernard, B.A. in interdisciplinary studies, a teacher at the Pasadena Independent School District, has joined the Houston Choral Society for another season.

2012
Luke Guillemette, B.B.A. in accounting and M.AcY. ’14, has been promoted to senior associate at the BKD accounting firm. Guillemette serves clients in the BKD WealthPlan group and BKD Construction & Real Estate, Healthcare and Not for Profit Industries.

2014
Kallisyn Gouard, B.A. in communications, has been promoted to brokerage associate at Peloton Commercial Real Estate. Gouard will work with senior brokers to provide marketing services and identify new opportunities for third-party office projects in the San Antonio market.

2016
Lisa May Palacios, Ed.D. in educational leadership, has been named associate dean of the College of Education and Health Sciences at Touro University California. Palacios was UTSA’s director of graduate recruitment from 2005 to 2014.
When John Collins went to a barbecue in 2007, it wasn’t just any social event. At the end of an internship at the time at Microsoft, where he was working on the Xbox 360, Collins received an invite to Bill Gates’ house for a backyard cookout. That meeting with Gates and his experience as a Microsoft intern (“You’re not grabbing coffee and running errands,” he says. “You’re actually contributing to a product that will be used by millions of people.”) left quite an impression on him.

So when he received an offer for full-time work at the technology giant while finishing up his senior year at UTSA, he jumped at the chance.

Collins says he knew he wanted to work with technology from an early age when his electrical engineer father introduced him to electronics using hobby kits and building radios. By the time he graduated from San Antonio’s Communications Arts High School, he had built his first gaming computer with his dad’s help. After taking a mentorship class during his senior year where he explored electrical engineering, Collins was firmly set on becoming one himself. “I loved reading about how computers worked and how I could modify them to get the best performance,” he says. “My dream was to create gaming hardware.”

With the grades to support his college dreams, Collins had an array of options and ultimately decided on UTSA, despite its smaller size. For him, it was about being either one of many or one of a few. “I could have gone to UT Austin or Texas A&M with their bigger programs, but I wanted to have an opportunity to make a difference in my school,” he says. “I thought I could have more of an impact in electrical engineering at UTSA.”

At college Collins became president of UTSA’s branch of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers as well as the electrical engineering honor society Eta Kappa Nu. By the time Microsoft showed up at a UTSA job fair Collins’ hard work and achievements earned him the internship. After graduation he spent the next six years with Microsoft, fulfilling his dream of working on gaming hardware and launching the Xbox Slim and Xbox One.

Collins left Microsoft in 2014 to join Apple, where he worked as a program manager on the battery team that helped launch the iPhone SE, iPad Pro, and iPod Touch. He couldn’t stay away from Microsoft, however. The company came calling a year later and asked Collins if he wanted to work on its new HoloLens mixed-reality project as a hardware program manager.

“Every team member is passionate about what they do, and you can feel the excitement that we’re forming the future of computing,” he says of his role.

While the HoloLens is not available to all consumers just yet, Collins is able to take one home and let family and friends have an experience that the average consumer can’t. He’s even used it for something many regular consumers can relate to—capturing a video of his infant son crawling to him for the first time.
Colleen Swain grew up with Mission San Jose just a bike ride away from her grandparents’ house. Now, following the 2015 designation of San Jose and San Antonio’s four other colonial missions as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, she’s director of the city’s World Heritage Office. She’s responsible for implementing a plan to maximize the economic impact of the designation and enhance the experience for visitors—all while keeping the local community’s priorities in mind.

What’s your job as world heritage director? It took nine years with several community partners working together to obtain the designation. But we know it can be a catalyst for social and economic change in the area surrounding the missions. When I go to meetings, I’ve met people who went to high school with my dad and who know me or my family. So this is not simply a job for me; it is a personal passion.

What do you hear from people about what they want to see happen in the area? They want to keep the “authenticity.” There’s a certain feeling you get with each neighborhood surrounding the missions national park, there’s an area nearly 12 miles long and encompassing almost 5,800 acres that I oversee the work plan for and coordinate related projects.

You and your family lived on the city’s south side. How does that impact what you are doing now? First, it’s such an honor to be in this role. But there is also a huge sense of responsibility. Both my maternal and fraternal grandparents made their homes on the south side. My mom went to St. Leo [the Great Catholic School], as did I, and graduated from Blessed Sacrament Academy, and my dad graduated from Harlandale—both in neighborhoods close to the missions. When I go to meetings, I’ve met people who went to high school with my dad and who know me or my family. So this is not simply a job for me; it is a personal passion.

What’s your favorite part of this job? It allows me to do something different every day. I’m working on infrastructure, economic development, transportation, land use, marketing, and outreach. I love the history and culture. I get to be part of something that will have a positive impact on the future of the area, in balance with all the wonderful things that those of us who have grown up in the area know exist. It’s easy to feel so removed when you’re among the missions; you forget that you’re just a short drive from downtown. Taking a bike ride on the river mission reach, you feel like you are miles away. It’s really special to be at a mission at night. I remember during an event everyone commenting about the fireflies. But my favorite experience is the magic of being able to look up, see the beautiful stars and moon as a backdrop to the architecture, and feel like you have been transported back in time.
The news about fake news had already blown up in our nation’s social and political discourse before 2017 got its pyrotechnic start. But what is fake news? How important is it? How can it affect us? Luis Hestres, a UTSA assistant professor of communication whose studies include social change, internet freedom, and political communication, helps Sombrilla Magazine get to the truth.

Is there a definition—or at least an agreed-upon general description—of what fake news is? Unfortunately, there’s no easy definition. For example, is an article from the satirical website The Onion fake news? Many would say no, but you would be surprised how many people believe Onion articles are real. So perhaps they should be considered a form of fake news. I don’t believe they should, since their purpose is to entertain. I think the “fake news” that journalists, academics, and other experts have been most recently concerned about falls under a particular category: online content that looks like news but is based on lies or deeply misleading interpretation of facts and that is created with the intent to mislead.

Can you give some examples of headlines or story topics that show the difference between fake news, conspiracy theories, and satire? One clear example of a fake news story claimed Donald Trump won the popular vote in the 2016 election. He indeed won the electoral vote, but Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by more than 2.8 million votes. We have verifiable information about the popular vote, so claims to the contrary are clearly false.

A conspiracy theory, for example, involves so-called 9/11 truthers, who spread various theories about the 2001 terrorist attacks; they say President Bush had prior knowledge of the attacks but allowed them to happen or that the attacks were conducted by the U.S. government but blamed on terrorists.
A good example of satire is the story published online with the headline “Emotional Obama Greenlights One Last Drone Strike ‘For Old Times’ Sake.’”

Have you seen an evolution of fake news? For example, do you see a difference between when we used to have Bat Boy in the Weekly World News and similar tabloid stories versus what we see now? We’ve always had some form of fake news circulating in our society. But there have been two important changes. First, the sheer speed in the social media era with which fake news can spread makes it difficult to keep a lid on it. Second, there is an economic incentive now for people to set up fake news sites that cater to our prejudices. Since these can drive us to click on articles, more clicks mean more ad revenue.

Trust in the news media is at historically low levels. My hope is that the flood of stories about fake news will drive trust higher in well-established news outlets, but the opposite could happen. That would be tragic because one of the best defenses against being taken in by fake news is relying on well-established media outlets.

How dangerous is fake news? I think it’s very dangerous. Our ability to make decisions collectively is tied to the reliability of the news we consume. It’s bad enough we have become used to using only news sources that we tend to agree with. Having to sift through a barrage of fake news to find reliable information is an additional burden on news consumers that couldn’t come at a worse time for our divided democracy.

And finally, any parting advice? Now more than ever, it’s vital to rely on trusted news organizations. Even biased ones at least won’t make up facts out of thin air.

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Sniff Test

Don’t Get Taken In by Fake News

If you’re ready to be skeptical about news sources, Hestres has some tips. Once you learn these patterns, he says, it’s actually not very difficult to spot fake news.

Be wary. If, from your point of view, news is too good (or bad) to be true, it’s probably not true.

Be discerning. If a site’s logo looks not-quite-right or the page’s design is pretty bad, you’re probably dealing with a fake news site.

Be vigilant. If a story is only on a site you’ve just discovered and no other mainstream news source is covering it, that’s a sign the news is fake.
And everywhere else too.  
Wherever you go, we’re there with you.