



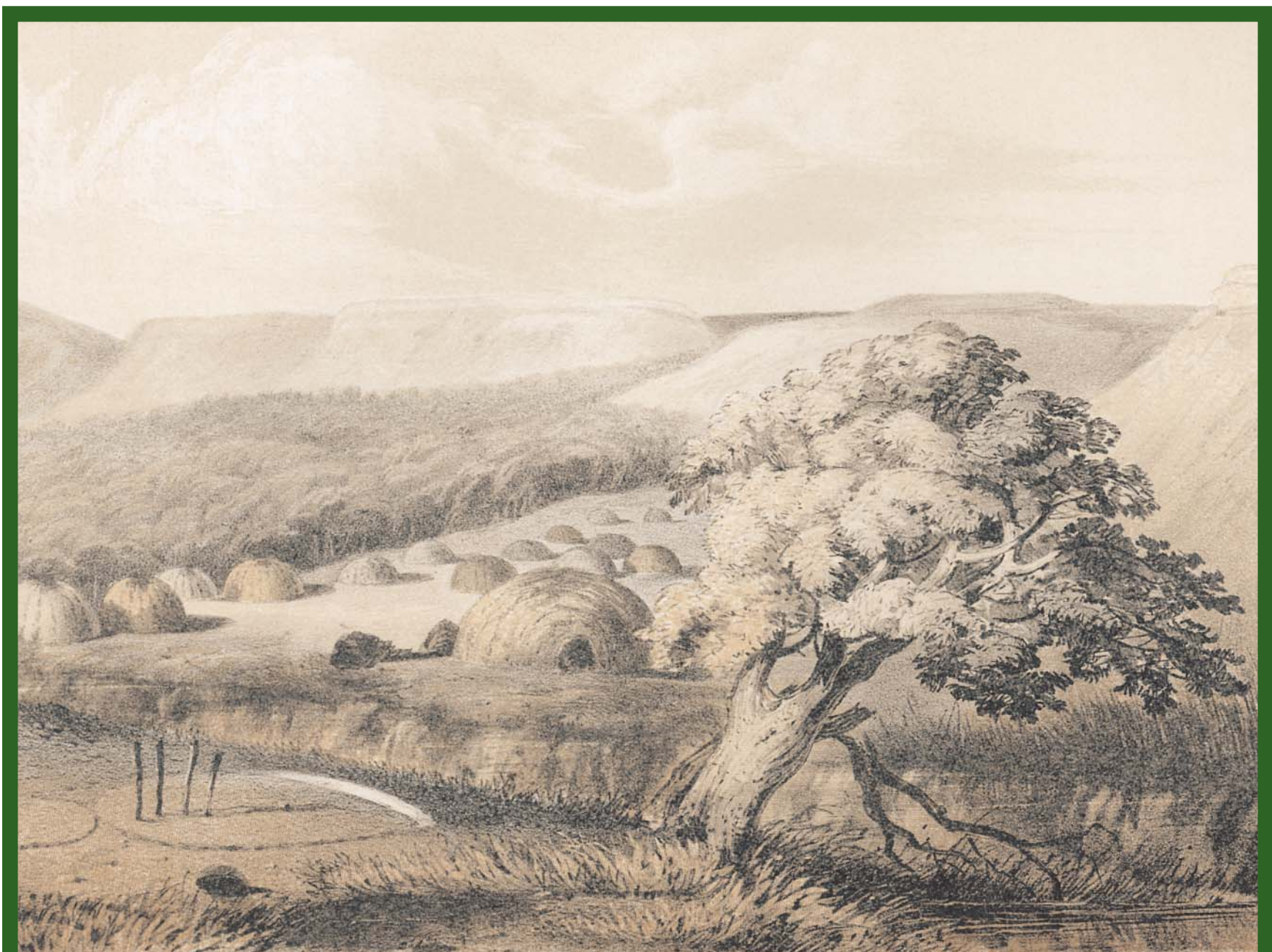
SOMBRILLA

Vol. 5, no. 2
Winter 1999

A PUBLICATION FOR THE FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

In this issue

John Miller Morris crosses academic boundaries ❖ Brackenridge lecturer unearths new ideas
Nevil Shed's past lives ❖ John Phillip Santos' family history ❖ ITC photo archives a vision of the past



Comanche Camp on Shady Creek, chromolithograph by T. Sinclair after Heinrich Mollhausen, 1856

EXPLORATION AND IMAGINATION

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Sometimes it takes more than one academic discipline to understand a place. John Miller Morris' award-winning study of El Llano Estacado combines history, linguistics, geography, biography and old-fashioned legwork to produce a breathtaking work of scholarship.

10 1998–99 Report on Philanthropy

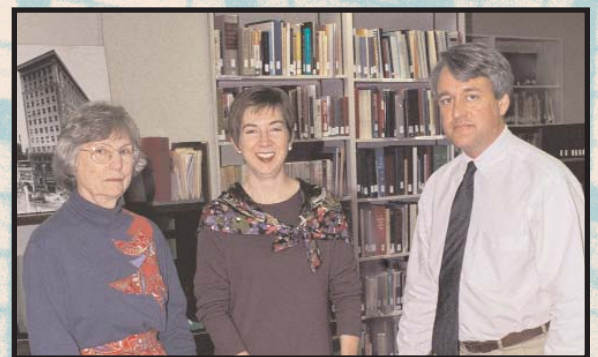
Our annual listing recognizes the generosity of friends, alumni, faculty, staff, businesses and foundations who contribute to UTSA's educational mission.

18 Library holds keys to Texas past

The Institute of Texan Cultures library houses a treasure trove of historical photographs, books and ephemera where family, city and regional history can be found.



A rare painting of the 1857–58 "Pope's Wells" encampment on the margin of the southern Llano Estacado, signed H.S. Sindall. Color photo of oil painting courtesy of Dan Hynes, Hynes Fine Art.



Keepers of the archives. From left, Alice Sacket, librarian; Kendra Trachta, library director; Tom Shelton, photo archivist; and Chris Floerke, program coordinator (not pictured) field requests from around the world for use of images from Texas' past.

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A new department dedicated to writing and writers. This issue we offer a brief excerpt of John Phillip Santos' memoir about growing up in San Antonio.

SOMBRILLA

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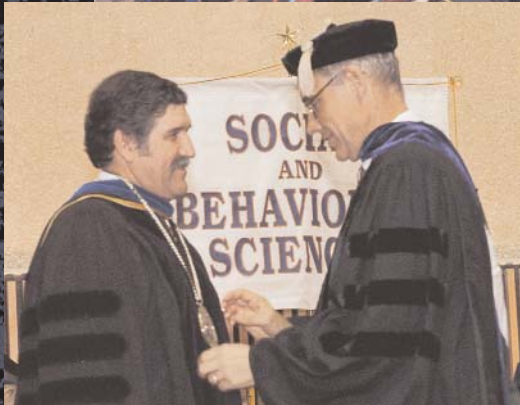
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In the Loop



Chancellor Cunningham presents the medallion to President Romo.



Tim O'Sullivan, son-in-law, daughter Ana Romo, and son Carlos Romo helped make the convocation a family event.



Harriett and Ricardo Romo have supported each other's academic careers during more than 25 years of marriage.

A formal welcome

Ricardo Romo was installed as the fifth president of the University of Texas at San Antonio during a convocation Oct. 11 in the University's Convocation Center.

As part of the installation ceremony, Romo received the University's presidential medallion from UT System Chancellor William H. Cunningham. UTSA faculty and representatives of regional universities and colleges participated in the ceremony.

"Thirty years ago a new vision was born, when the promise of hope and opportunity was made to the citizens of South Texas of receiving a first-class university for San Antonio," Romo said. "We, with all of your support, intend to keep that promise."

A nationally respected historian, Romo is best known for his book, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio*, which chronicles the assimilation of the Latino population in Southern California. Romo

previously served as vice provost for undergraduate education at the University of Texas at Austin.

Mark Yudof, president of the University of Minnesota and former provost of the University of Texas at Austin, delivered the keynote address.

"As we approach the new millennium, it's a time of retrospection and introspection for individuals as well as university communities," said Yudof. "With Dr. Romo at the helm, UTSA is poised to develop a new vision for this university based on his own moral compass."

Romo received his doctorate from the University of California at Los Angeles, his master's degree from Loyola Marymount University and his bachelor's degree in education and history from UT Austin, where as a track star he became the first Texan to run the mile in less than four minutes.

"From my grandparents, I learned about the power of imagination. Their vivid and exciting stories about the Mexican revolution, the great depression and the home-front during two world wars, sparked my own interest in history."

Ricardo Romo



In the Loop

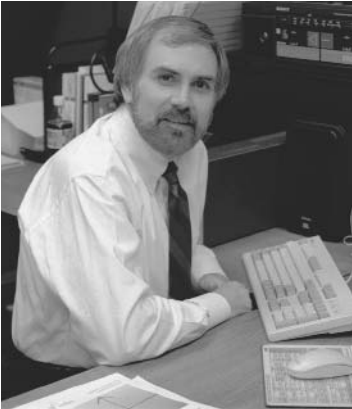
**Interim no more—
Bailey appointed
new provost**

Guy Bailey, who has served as interim provost since June 1998, was appointed to the permanent position of provost and vice president for academic affairs on Nov. 5. The appointment by President Ricardo Romo was effective immediately.

As provost, Bailey has responsibility for all academic programs at UTSA, including leadership for academic planning, the administration of the academic budget, academic policy development and implementation and all matters directly affecting the faculty.

Bailey, who joined UTSA as dean of graduate studies and associate vice president for research in 1997, is the author or co-author of more than 70 books, monographs and articles in the fields of sociolinguistics and dialect geography. He is also a professor in the Division of English, Classics, Philosophy and Communication.

Before coming to UTSA, Bailey was dean of liberal arts and professor of English at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He also has served on the faculties of Memphis State, Oklahoma State and Texas A&M universities.



Guy Bailey

**DOE grant to
boost math and
science skills**

UTSA has received an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to fund its new Upward Bound Math Science program. The program will help secondary students in South Texas attain the math and science skills necessary for success in college.

“Our goal is to help students recognize and develop their potential to excel in professional math and science occupations,” said Rita Cortez, TRIO program coordinator.

Upward Bound Math Science will target first-generation college students from Eagle Pass, Del Rio and Uvalde.

UTSA is also seeking approval to include San Antonio–area students in the Upward Bound Math Science program, Cortez said.

Some students in the academic-year program will qualify for a Summer Residential Program in which they live on the UTSA campus and participate in the Prefreshman Engineering Program. Intensive PREP curricula includes math and science, computer technology, scientific research, study skills and career development. University and high school faculty as well as graduate students will serve as academic resources and mentors.

TRIO programs were established by Congress to help low-income, first-generation Americans enter college and graduate successfully. They are funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

UTSA TRIO programs include Upward Bound, the Educational Talent Search and the Ronald E. McNair Scholarship program.

**Proposition 17 passes;
UTSA among beneficiaries**

It may not have been the most exciting item on the Nov. 2 ballot, but Proposition 17’s passage signaled good news to students enrolled in the University of Texas System and the Texas A&M University System.

Proposition 17, which will generate an additional \$30 million from the Permanent University Fund, was approved by more than 60 percent of voters statewide. The vote means the fund’s investment managers can take advantage of broader investment strategies and increase the proceeds available for programs and facilities at PUF institutions.

UTSA will be eligible to receive several million dollars a year in new capital funds. Plans call for using the funding for new facilities, equipment and library materials, thus reducing the potential financial burden on students.

Fall enrollment breaks record . . . again

The news is beginning to sound like a broken record, but enrollment continues to increase at UTSA.



Census-day tallies for fall 1999—taken on the 12th class day—showed 18,606 students taking 193,564 semester credit hours, a gain of 209 students over last fall.

“The increase reflects greater numbers of transfer students, which are up nearly 10 percent,” said John Brown, interim associate vice president for enrollment services.

Enhanced recruitment efforts, more degree program offerings and innovative programs for student success and retention are also part of the equation, he added.

Numbers of first-time freshmen are down slightly over past years, possibly linked to the state-mandated “top 10 percent” rule that requires the University of Texas at Austin and

Texas A&M University to accept the upper 10 percent of all graduating high school seniors in Texas.

“UTSA’s freshman pool, without question, included students who opted for one of these institutions this year,” Brown said.

Total enrollment for the UTSA Downtown Campus grew by 135 to 3,092 students, about two-thirds of whom also take classes at the 1604 campus.

Although UTSA continues to attract the majority of its students from Bexar County, the number of students from other counties rose by 5.5 percent. The number of international students attending UTSA increased by 17.2 percent.



Brackenridge professor shares expertise in ancient Scythian culture

Esther Jacobson-Tepfer, noted scholar of art and culture of the ancient Scytho-Siberians, spent two busy days on campus as this year’s Brackenridge Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Humanities.



Esther Jacobson, right, on site in the Mongolian Altay last August; center, the Hon. Alphonse La Porta, U.S. ambassador to Mongolia; left, Mongolian research assistant Ochirkhuyag.

Her visit coincided with the opening of “Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from the Ancient Ukraine” at the San Antonio Museum of Art, an international touring exhibition of exquisitely wrought gold objects once belonging to the nomadic Scythians. The exhibit, which features objects exca-

vated in the past two decades, will continue through Jan. 30. The objects are on loan from museums in Kiev.

During her classroom visits, faculty seminars and public lectures, Jacobson-Tepfer drew from archeological fieldwork, historical records and observations of contemporary Central Asian nomadic cultures to try to “strip myth and ideology from the historical data” on the ancient Scythians.

“Esther Jacobson’s talk to my Introduction to Ancient Greece class gave my students a completely different perspective on Herodotus, whose work we had been reading,” said John Rundin, assistant professor of classics.

Because the Scythians had no written language, clues to their lives can be gleaned from the archeological record and from ancient texts written about the Scythians. For the past five years Jacobson-Tepfer has spent summers conducting fieldwork in the Altay Mountains of Mongolia, with the goal of shedding new light on the origins of the Scythian people.

Much of her research focuses on surface archaeology such as rock art, standing stones and altars found throughout the vast and empty landscape of northern Mongolia.

The name *Scythian* is often applied in a broader sense to many of the scattered ancient peoples who inhabited regions that stretch from the Carpathian mountains in Eastern Europe in a broad band through the Eurasian interior clear to the Altay Mountains in Mongolia and Siberia.

The Scythians left a rich archaeological legacy in the Black Sea area. Burials in the area of the Kuban River and in Ukraine and Crimea have been particularly abundant in finely wrought objects of gold and other precious materials.

In conjunction with the Jacobson’s visit, the College of Fine Arts and Humanities presented a six-week lecture series exploring this little known ancient culture. Faculty participating included Paul Alessi, John Rundin, Carol Justus, Bridget Drinka, Jim Gallagher and Chaddie Kruger.



On view at the San Antonio Museum of Art through Jan. 30 are these and many more Scythian objects. From top, 5th century B.C.E. cup of gold, amber, glass; left, 4th century B.C.E. gold helmet; right, 4th century B.C.E. gold and iron sword and scabbard.

Since 1987, the George W. Brackenridge Foundation has funded annual visits by distinguished scholars from the humanities. Previous Brackenridge Distinguished Visiting Professors include Jacques Barzun, Joan Ferrante, Coleman Barks and Houston Baker Jr.



A good read. Children from local schools gather around for a sample of what the Reading Place offers. The center opened this fall and will help improve children’s reading skills and give student teachers a chance to gain skills and experience.

Reading Place brings young readers and student teachers together

The written word takes center stage at the UTSA Reading Place/Plaza de Lectura, a new center for reading improvement that opened in October at the Downtown Campus.

Sponsored by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Reading Place will bring UTSA education students together with local children who need to improve their reading skills. Undergraduate education majors working toward a reading specialization will tutor children from local elementary schools for an hour each week to assess and identify reading problems.

Similarly, graduate students will get hands-on experience in the art of teaching reading. In the spring, several classes of nonreading majors in the education program will also use the center for fieldwork experience.

“I had a very long waiting list as parents heard about the program and wanted to get their children enrolled,” said Miriam Martinez, assistant professor of education. “As we expand our service, we’ll be able to fill those needs.”

In the Loop news items by Wendy Frost, Elizabeth Green and Lynn Gosnell



Campus Scene

Nevil Shed’s past lives

By Rick Nixon and Lynn Gosnell

San Antonio, 1999

“Dee-fense!” calls the coach before stamping his feet twice on the basketball floor. “K.Y.P!” he yells to the class of male and female students about to wrap up their weekly scrimmage. When the buzzer sounds and the bedraggled students walk off the court, the 6’8” former basketball forward-center calls out again, a little more quietly this time.

“Good game—Coach Shed loves a game like that.”

At 57, Nevil Shed still radiates youthful enthusiasm for a good game. UTSA’s coordinator of wellness and recreation helps oversee an active intramural program that includes basketball, flag football, soccer, softball, tennis and table tennis, among other sports. Part coach and all motivator, he’s got a job that puts him in touch with thousands of UTSA students.

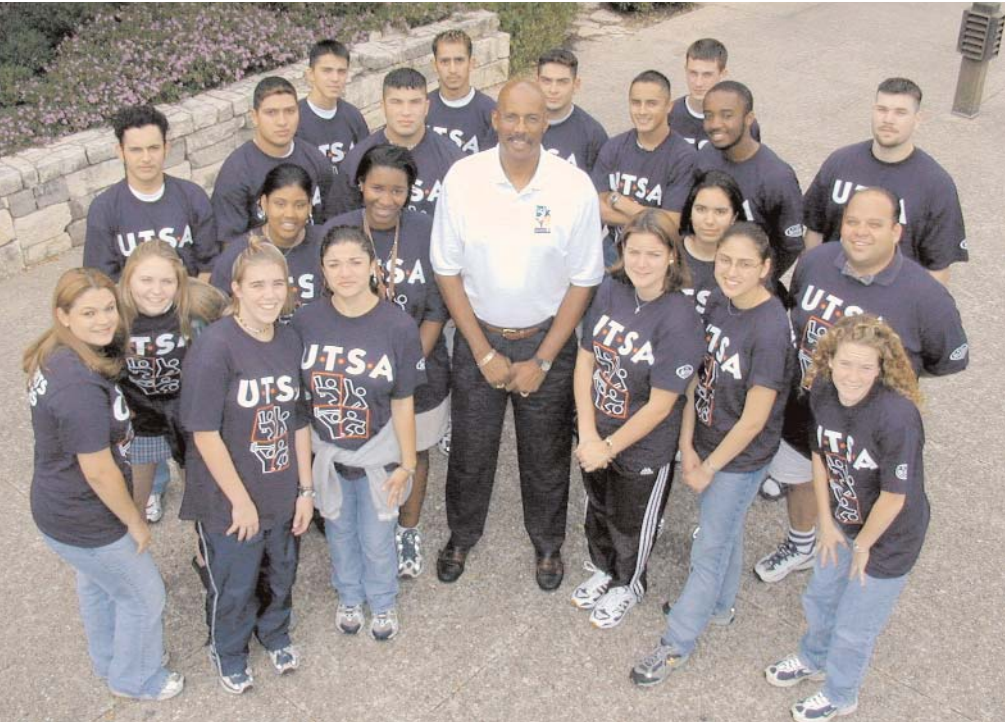
“In rec sports, we deal with everybody—faculty, staff and, most important, the student body,” he says, adding, in a voice that reverberates off the cinderblock walls, “I love my job!”

As Shed talks, students wander in and out of his modest office in the basement of the Physical Education Building. A student assistant is trying to finalize a roster for an intramural football tournament, another student wants to compare impressions about the previous night’s Spurs game, a student referee is summoned for a pep talk. In each interaction, Shed manages to be easygoing, polite and direct all at once.

“They know me,” he says. That’s an understatement, according to Suzy Gray, the Wellness and Recreation Program’s director and Shed’s supervisor. “Students are drawn to him like a magnet,” says Gray, who first met Shed when both were volunteering for a Special Olympics tournament about a dozen years ago. “He’s one of the jewels of the campus.”

Shed’s office—he has another in the Convocation Center—is filled with photos and memorabilia from his 1966 NCAA championship basketball team, Texas Western (now the University of Texas at El Paso).

The students take little, if any, notice of the black and white prints and faded color photos hanging somewhat haphazardly



Standing tall. Wellness and Recreation Coordinator Nevil Shed poses with a group of students bound for an intramural tournament in Arlington in November.

along one wall. They’d have to look hard to see the 15-year-old UTEP basketball poster in the corner that bears an scrawled inscription by Shed’s college coach, Don Haskins. It reads, “Nevil—Thank you so much for your great years of play—I appreciate you so much. Thanks again. ‘Your Daddy’ Coach Haskins.”

They may or may not notice the national championship ring that never leaves his left hand.

And though he doesn’t talk much about it to students who are mostly too young to remember the Civil Rights movement, who think basketball history begins with Michael Jordan and who never heard of a coach named Adolph Rupp, Shed never forgets that he was part of a team that made a difference in college basketball.

New York City to North Carolina and back

Shed’s father, James, worked as a Pullman porter for the Pennsylvania Railroad. His mother, Lillie Mae, worked as a seamstress making lamp shades. They provided a loving and stable home for their two children.

“The one thing I was surely taught was the value of work and the importance of religion,” said Shed, whose deep voice sounds as if it could have found a home in the pulpit.

Shed’s peers, teammates and opponents

during his formative years included some of the biggest names in the sport, including Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), Wilt Chamberlain, Connie Hawkins, Billy Cunningham, Roger Brown and Earl “The Pearl” Monroe.

After earning all-city honors at Marris High School in the Bronx, Shed was heavily recruited by colleges.

“I was offered more than 100 scholarships coming out of high school because Nevil Shed does not sound like a black man’s name,” he recalls. “There were more than a few scholarship offers taken back after they found out I was black.”

He enrolled at North Carolina A&T University in Durham, only to leave within the year after a disagreement with his coach and numerous unpleasant experiences in the segregated South.

Returning to New York, Shed found work in a hotdog stand. A friend told him about Texas Western College in faraway El Paso. It sounded like a good place to make a new beginning.

Gone to Texas

Nicknamed “the Bear,” Coach Don Haskins stressed relentless defense and deliberate offense. He also didn’t care about the color of a player’s skin. Haskins’ players were recruited from city courts all over the



Campus Scene

country. One writer called them “a collection of quick inner-city dunk artists.”

Words like “incorrigible” and “undisciplined” were appended to Haskins’ team before the finals. No one, except maybe Kentucky Wildcats coach Adolph Rupp, would use those words after the tournament.

“Coach Haskins’ motto was play hard, keep a clean nose and represent the school well. He had zero tolerance for mistakes,” remembers Shed, who claims he was one of Haskins’ “whooping dogs” for four years.

“Someone started calling him my ‘daddy’ because he was always yelling at me.”

Texas Western swept through the 1966 season with a 28–1 record, losing only to Seattle in the final regular season game. But the Miners had a little luck on their way to the Final Four, with consecutive overtime victories over Cincinnati and Kansas in the first two rounds of the NCAA playoffs in Lubbock.

College Park, 1966

In March 1966 at Cole Field House in College Park, Md., the Miners, an unknown team from a college lacking a basketball tradition, beat the top-ranked Kentucky Wildcats, four-time NCAA champions. The score was 72–65.

It was so much more than a Cinderella story.

Haskins, who retired last year after 38 years at UTEP, played five black starters against Rupp’s all-white lineup. The contrast was made all the more apparent by Texas Western’s relative obscurity as compared to Kentucky’s traditionally strong program.

And college sports were part of a larger conversation about race relations going on around the country in that decade.

Although black players had long been effective and prominent in some college basketball programs (mostly in urban Catholic colleges), an unwritten policy existed among top schools against recruiting and playing “too many” black players. In 1966, not one black started in the Southeastern Conference, of which Kentucky was a member.

Haskins has been quoted as saying he played his “five best guys” and that he didn’t think it was a big deal that all of them were black. It certainly never occurred to a coach as demanding as

Haskins that his team was “undisciplined.” Even his players have stated that they were fairly oblivious to the race issue at the time.

The seven black members Haskins relied on all season were Dave “Big Daddy” Lattin, Bobby Joe “Slop” Hill, Orsten “Little D” Artis, Willie “Iron Head” Worsley, Harry “the Cricket” Flournoy, Will “Scoops” Cager and Nevil “the Shadow” Shed.

Haskins inserted 5-6 guard Willie Worsley into the starting lineup in place of Shed to help the Miners keep up with the quicker Wildcats, who were led by future NBA players Pat Riley and Louie Dampier. It was the first time Shed had not started all year.

The gamble worked. Worsley scored eight points and grabbed four rebounds. Shed tallied three points and three rebounds. After Kentucky took a 1-0 lead,



The Texas Western Miners pose with their 1966 NCAA Championship trophy. Nevil Shed stands at far left, top row.

Lattin, a 6-7, 250-pound behemoth, threw down a massive dunk shot that set the tone for the game. When guard Bobby Joe Hill made two consecutive steals early in the first half for two quick baskets, the Miners took a lead they never relinquished.

The Wildcats came within a point on a couple of occasions, but the Miners held on with crucial foul shooting by Hill, who tallied a game-high 20 points, and Lattin, who added 16 more.

Texas Western claimed the only NCAA men’s basketball championship ever won by a Texas school.

No doubt, Rupp’s well-documented racist comments helped the game take on the aura of a historic watershed. He was quoted as saying the team was “a bunch of crooks,” among other names. Sports writer Frank DeFord has said that in the locker

room after the game, an angry Rupp, who wouldn’t play a black player until 1970, called his opponents “coons.”

To Boston and back

After one more season, Shed was drafted in 1968 by the Boston Celtics, coached by Bill Russell, of the National Basketball Association. Just before the start of his rookie season, Shed suffered a severe injury to his right knee and went on the injury list, never to return to full-time playing status. After reinjuring his knee in a desperate return to the game, Shed returned to New York. He worked for the city as recreation director for the New York Housing Department.

Lacking 18 hours toward a bachelor’s degree, Shed returned to El Paso to finish his degree requirements.

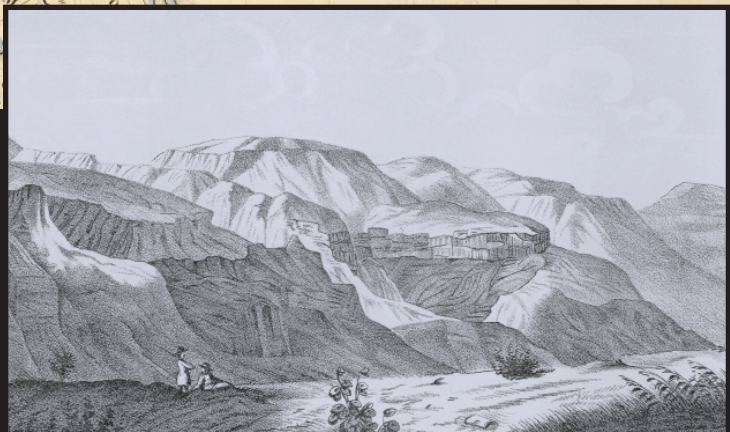
After graduating, he remained in El Paso as an assistant basketball coach for the Miners. After several seasons, he made stops at the University of Wyoming, Wisconsin–Milwaukee and the Milwaukee School of Engineering before getting a call from a new program in Texas.

Shed first came to UTSA in 1981 to work for Head Coach Don Eddy as an assistant basketball coach. When Eddy left in 1986, Shed became intramural director. He is the only remaining original member of the Athletic Department.

“When Don Eddy called and I came for a visit, I quickly saw what UTSA and San Antonio had to offer,” Shed said. “We had a lot of growing pains and several years of success. I realized it was a great place for me to be, and an outstanding place to raise a family.”

A grandfather of two and father to seven children, Shed tries to leave the campus in time to spend time with his family and catch his younger children’s own sports performances. He’s also called upon every now and then to give speeches at schools and clubs around the city, a task that the extroverted Shed enjoys immensely. In the summer, he works with the San Antonio Spurs’ basketball camp.

“There is a life after athletics and you have to realize that,” Shed said. “The thing I’m most proud of about that team is the fact that of the 12 players, all but two graduated from school and were very successful in our own fields of work.”



Maps and images of the Texas frontier offer glimpses of the geography and the geosophy of explorers. Top right, *Canadian River near Camp 38*, chromolithograph by T. Sinclair after Heinrich Mollhausen, 1856; center, *Map of Texas Shewing the Grants in Possession of the Colorado & Red River Land Company*, colored lithograph map by unknown artist, ca. 1835; right, *Border of El Llano Estacado*, lithograph by Henry Lawrence after unknown artist, 1853; bottom right, *A Conical Hill, 500 Feet High*, chromolithograph by Heinrich Mollhausen after field sketch of Jules Marcou, 1856. More complete historical information on the sources of these maps and images can be found in Morris' book. Facing page under text, *Mapa del Nuevo México por el cosmógrafo Enrico Martínez*, by Enrico Martínez, ca. 1602. This is believed to be one of the earliest extant maps of the trans-Mississippi West based on travelers' observations. Black and white versions of these maps appear in Morris' book.

The language of discovery

By Elizabeth Green

Imagine a landscape so vast, flat and void of trees and structures that it resembles the middle of an ocean more than any place on dry land.

Now imagine crossing such a place by foot or on horseback, with little knowledge of where you are or where you're headed.

In his book, *El Llano Estacado: Exploration and Imagination on the High Plains of Texas and New Mexico, 1536–1860* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1997), John Miller Morris, associate professor of geography and interdisciplinary studies, follows the trail of early explorers of the Llano.

By translating texts of diaries and reports, Morris reconstructs a landscape as fascinating and frightening to of Hispano and Anglo-American explorers as the landscape of Mars is to us today.

"It's the largest flatland in North America with one of the richest timelines," he said. "Yet people still don't know much about it."

While growing up along the edge of the Llano in the Texas Panhandle, Morris said he developed many ties to the landscape through reading works by western writers such as J. Frank Dobie and camping on the Llano as a Boy Scout.

Hoping to invite a renewed appreciation for the environmental issues the Llano faces, Morris said he set out to rediscover a big chunk of Texas and New Mexico. The vast territory—far from power centers of the evolving countries of its explorers—was one of the last frontiers of North America.

Even though it had been one of the first sites in America to see European exploration, it was one of the last to see Native Americans dispossessed.

This treeless borderland, Morris said, is full of romance and intrigue, mirages and illusions. It has intrigued visionaries from Coronado to Georgia O'Keeffe.

Morris originally subtitled the book "Language and Landscape" because of the difference in Hispanic, Native American and European perceptions of the landscape. Names given to certain features, by very different visitors, made impressions on those who saw the Llano either as wealthy with buffalo and gold or dangerous and void of life.

Reviewers have commented on the book's readability—something that surprises those expecting a dry, scientific account, as featureless as the landscape itself.



Untitled [Pope's Wells], oil on paper by H. S. Sindall, c. 1857

"It's been called 'loving prose,' which I really like," Morris said.

The book is divided into four parts, half examining the region from the western approach of Hispanic explorers during the 16th–19th centuries and the other half exploring the eastern approach of Anglo-American explorers.

Part One, "Lo Llano: Coronado and the Llano Road to Quivera, 1536–1542," focuses on the famous and infamous expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado (1540–42). By retranslating historic texts and engaging in his own trail detective work, Morris proposes a location for Cona, one of the lost landscapes of Coronado's Trail.

Part Two, "Geography and Geosophy of Spanish Contact, 1542–1860," leaps far into Spanish exploration of the northern frontier of New Spain after Coronado's

return. Sporadic expeditions gave way to more strategic military, religious and trading expeditions. Morris' discussion of the imaginative liberties taken by European mapmakers reveals the truly political nature of cartography.

In Part Three, "The Illimitable Prairie: Anglo-American Imagineers and the Romantic Discovery of the Llano Estacado, 1803–1844," Morris shifts his attention to the rediscovery of the land by explorers from the East looking to improve trade routes and shore up political boundaries.

With a very different set of eyes, these explorers reinvented the landscape anew. Their Llano was simultaneously grand, remote and terrible, a "great American desert" brimming with danger.

The last section of the book, "The Great Zahara: National Exploration and Environmental Discovery, 1845–1860," takes up a region that has been partially subsumed by the United States. Into this feared

expanse went railroad surveyors, map-making expeditions and visionaries such as Captain John Pope, who reasoned that the arid landscape hid an untapped aquifer.

Morris' book has garnered a number of major awards, including a prestigious Spur Award from the Western Writers of America; the T. R. Fehrenbach Book Award of the Texas Historical Commission; the Texas Institute of Letters Friends of the Dallas Public Library Award; and the Kate Broocks Award of the Texas State Historical Association.

In addition to having the beginnings of another manuscript, which may be a sequel to *El Llano Estacado*, Morris is working on books about early Texas photographers and about the "real" Texas Rangers of the 1880s.

1998–99 Report on Philanthropy

From the President

As UTSA's fifth president, I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of you for supporting an institution that has permanently and positively changed the landscape of our great region. When I arrived at UTSA in May, I was immediately impressed by the private support that is so crucial to the success of our city's only public university. Your efforts have tremendous impact on the lives of thousands of students. With your continued support, UTSA is prepared to move into the next millennium with bold initiatives, including renewed commitment to undergraduate education, expansion of our research capabilities and strengthening of collaborations with local K–12 programs to enhance education for all members of our community. I am truly appreciative that you have joined UTSA in this great endeavor.

Thank you!

Sincerely



Ricardo Romo

The 1998–99 Report on Philanthropy recognizes the support extended to the University of Texas at San Antonio recorded between September 1, 1998, and August 31, 1999. In compiling this Report on Philanthropy, care has been taken to ensure that it is complete and accurate. Please report any errors to the Development Office and accept our sincere apologies.

PRESIDENT'S ASSOCIATES

UTSA is honored and grateful to have a core of loyal, dedicated individuals and couples who annually support the ongoing needs of the University. Recognition of unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 and more is provided by membership in the President's Associates.



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1998–99 Report on Philanthropy

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UTSA SOMBRILLA SOCIETY
There are individuals and couples among us who are as farsighted in their thinking as they are generous in their souls. The Sombrilla Society celebrates these individuals. The gifts they have made from their estate plans will assure the future of UTSA.

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ENDOWMENTS
Endowments are provided by a special group of supporters who have chosen to establish permanent funds to provide ongoing financial support to UTSA. Endowment funds are carefully invested. Income generated from these investments is used in the most effective ways possible to further our educational mission.

Alamo City Building Owners and Managers Association, Inc./Charlotte Rainford Memorial Scholarship
The Alamo Group Endowed Faculty Devt. Fund in Engineering
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The Sam and Ann Barshop Scholarship
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The Evelyn Berg Endowed Scholarship Fund
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The Celia Berwin Memorial Foundation Endowed Scholarship
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Roland K. and Jane W. Blumberg Professorship in Bioscience
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The Peggy and Richard Calvert Endowed Scholarship
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The Anna May Day Memorial Endowed Scholarship
The Diamond Shamrock Endowed Scholarship
The Endowment for Accounting Distinction
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The Peter T. Flawn Endowed Scholarship Fund
The Frost Bank Endowed Scholarship Fund
Joseph Gdovin Memorial Scholarship Fund
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The Governor's Club Scholarship Endowment
The Andrew Gurwitz Memorial Endowment
H-E-B Endowment
The Betty Murray Halff Endowed Scholarship
The Ewing Halsell Chair in Biology
Bill and Diane Hays Endowed Scholarship in Architecture and Interior Design
Steven H. Heath Endowment
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The Hobby Foundation Endowed Faculty Development Fund
The Janice K. Hodges Memorial Scholarship
The Benjamin Dean Holt III/ Holt Companies Scholarship
Eugene Marvin Hord and Sonia Bly Hord Memorial Endowment
The Reagan Houston III Memorial
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India Asia Association Endowed Scholarship
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The Quincy Lee Memorial Endowed Scholarship
Dr. Harold G. Longbotham Endowed Scholarship
The Eileen Lundy Scholarship for Excellence in English Education
The Sam Madrid, Jr. Endowed Scholarship in Science and Engineering
Pat and Jack Maguire Cultural Outreach Endowment Fund

The Allen N. Martinese Endowed Scholarship in Computer Science
The Minnie P. Mastoris Endowed Scholarship Fund
William V. Mastoris Endowed Scholarship Fund
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Felix and Elizabeth McKinney Memorial Scholarship Fund
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The John Miller, Douglas Miller, and Louis and Vivian Vance Endowed Scholarship
George Muller Scholarship Fund
Kenneth D. and Ada Muller Scholarship Fund
Janet M. Muller Student Loan Fund
Kenneth D. and Janet M. Muller Unrestricted Gift Music Faculty and Alumni Endowed Scholarship
NACUBO Award Scholarship
National Council of Jewish Women, S.A. Section, Ethel Weiner Bloom Endowed Student Loan Fund
North Loop 410 Assoc., Inc. Endowed Scholarship
Onderdonk Family Memorial Scholarship
Shelly Palmer Memorial Scholarship Fund
Peat Marwick and Co-Partners Endowment
The Albar Peña Memorial Scholarship Fund
Lt. Col. Philip J. Piccione Endowed Scholarship
Linda Poetschke Endowed Scholarship in Voice
The Anju Rai Memorial Endowed Scholarship
The Wade Richmond Endowed Scholarship Fund
The Tomás Rivera Scholarship Fund
Border Patrol Agent Ricardo Salinas Criminal Justice Memorial Scholarship
The San Antonio Conservation Society Endowed Professorship in Memory of Mary Ann Blocker Castleberry
San Antonio Express-News Scholarship Fund
The San Antonio Oak Hills Rotary Club Endowed Scholarship Fund
Southwest Gem and Mineral Society Summer Field Camp Scholarship Endowed Fund
The Southwestern Bell Computer Science Endowment Fund
Sjoerd Steunebrink Scholarship Endowment
The Henry and Leonora Stumberg Endowed Scholarship Fund
The Sturchio Family Endowed Scholarship
Keith Thomas Memorial Fund
Dr. B. Thyagarajan Endowed Scholarship
The Diana Lynn Tidwell Endowed Scholarship
The Tomerlin Endowed Scholarship Fund
UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures Special Fund
The UTSA Library Endowment
U.T. San Antonio Student Deposit Endowment Fund
The James W. Wagener Endowed Presidential Scholarship
J. Craig Youngblood Memorial Scholarship

*Deceased

Rose shares success with computer science majors

By Stephen J. Cross



The first recipients of the Joseph A. Rose Sr. and Frank Cooper Scholarship are, from left, Kevin Jennings, Rita Arsenault and Jason Cochetti.

Like a lot of students at UTSA, Joe Rose (B.S. '88) worked his way through college. Now, more than ten years out from graduation, he's easing students' financial burden by funding scholarships for computer science majors.

“My education in computer science and math was truly the basis of my current success,” Rose says.

“I want to give back to UTSA by helping students majoring in computer science to build a foundation for a successful career.”

Rose has gone from strength to strength in that most intensely entrepreneurial of fields—computer technology and services. In 1994, he and Trina Cooper co-founded Cooper Consulting, a computer systems business. (The couple married and now make their home in Austin.)

The Roses have named their scholarship in honor of their fathers, Joseph A. Rose Sr. and Frank Cooper, both deceased.

Cooper Consulting, which grew

from less than \$250,000 to more than \$8 million in sales in its first four years, puts 50-plus employees to work designing systems and providing technical consultants for state agencies.

Projects include financial systems for the \$1.8 billion Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, inventory controls and Y2K compliance for the Texas Department of Public Safety and contract work for many other agencies.

Educational philanthropist honored at Downtown Campus

By Sarah Nawrocki

On Nov. 5, the Frio Street auditorium at the UTSA Downtown Campus was dedicated to Sam J. Riklin, a longtime friend of UTSA and champion of education.

Riklin, who died in September following a lengthy illness, was president and CEO of Advertising



Sam J. Riklin

and Marketing Services, Inc., a firm he founded in 1965. Plans had long been under way to honor

Riklin's support of the campus by naming the facility the Sam J. Riklin Auditorium.

An advocate of educational opportunities for young people, Riklin spearheaded a \$1.3 million scholarship initiative for the Downtown Campus in 1996 and 1997. As part of this initiative, he personally sponsored 150 two-year scholarships for students.

"Providing educational opportunities for our kids is the best way to assure our community's future," Riklin said during the Downtown Campus' 1997 opening. "I can think of no smarter investment than the one we make in education and improving the future of our young people."

Riklin grew up in San Antonio

and attended Brackenridge High School and St. Mary's University before earning a bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley. He continued his education at Stanford University, where he earned a master's degree in accounting and economics.

"Sam wanted kids to have the opportunities our family did not have, and he believed in education as a solution to many problems," said Riklin's brother, Art. "He made it his mission later in life to contribute as much as he could to education, and to see that his projects would continue after him."

In 1991 Riklin gave a leadership gift to launch a multimillion dollar campaign for Diploma Plus, a program designed to help high school students stay in school.

"I felt that a lot of kids, without the tools of education, would be demeaned so much in 16 or 20 years from now in low-level jobs that they'd never be able to share in the fruits of democracy, which I've been able to share in," Riklin said in a 1996 interview with the *San Antonio Express-News*.

Diploma Plus is unusual in that it targets students who may not already be college bound. The program, offered through the Rotary Club of San Antonio, provides monthly financial assistance to high school seniors to help

them spend more time studying instead of working.

Although there are numerous scholarships rewarding high academic achievement, before Diploma Plus was established none were available to students who showed potential but were in danger of leaving school due to financial pressures. These students are often the first in their family to attend college.

Unlike many charities, Diploma Plus has minute operating costs. Riklin insisted that 100 percent of the funds raised go to students; his staff donates the administrative and marketing phases of the program.

"When my father developed the program, he wanted to be sure that as much money as possible went to scholarships, that very little was absorbed by the overhead of running the charity," said Riklin's son, Seth, who added that his father thought he'd be happy raising enough money for 35 scholarships over three years. "He never anticipated the success the program has seen."

Diploma Plus has provided scholarships to about 1,200 high school students, more than 80 percent of whom have gone on to college.



Mr. Arthur Riklin, Sam Riklin's brother, and Mrs. Helene Riklin join Ed Riklin and Sue Riklin at the UTSA Downtown Campus auditorium dedication.

The program isn't a free ride, Seth Riklin added. Applicants write an extensive essay on why education is important to them. Once students are in the program, they have to maintain a certain grade point average and attendance record.

In 1995 Riklin was named the National Socially Responsible Entrepreneur of the Year, and in 1992 he was honored with Rotary International's highest award, the Service Above Self Award.

"My father lived very frugally and did not rate himself very high on self-importance. He was focused on what he could do for others," Seth Riklin said.

In addition to his support of educational programs at UTSA, Riklin's philanthropic leadership has directly benefited the lives of students in numerous colleges, universities, school districts and public and private high schools throughout the city.

Getting to this level of success was not easy, Rose admits. Before the endless working days that mark the true entrepreneur, he struggled through his junior and senior years.

"That's why I wanted to create these scholarships. I know how tough it can be to make ends meet while working toward a demanding degree."

In October, Rose met with the first three scholarship recipients—Kevin Jennings, Rita Arsenault and Jason Cochetti.

Richard Sincovec, director of the division of computer science, said, "We look for people who not just excel academically but have a strong ability to communicate, and who give back to the community through volunteering."

Before coming to UTSA, Jennings worked for many years servicing medical equipment. He aims for graduate school and a doctorate. The scholarship helps financially, and with two kids approaching high school, Jennings is especially delighted about the

lesson his kids may draw from the award: hard academic work can pay off.

Arsenault, a mother of two and one of the few women in the computer science program, is contemplating working in human services after graduation.

Cochetti was a telecommunications specialist in the U.S. Army before landing in San Antonio after a base closure.

A relative newcomer to the computer science field—he insists that before 1995 he thought com-

puters were just for playing games—he is fast becoming an expert. He is active in Cyberbytes, the UTSA chapter of the national student computer science organization work.

Rose acknowledges that a university degree—and a scholarship—can open doors to different kinds of success.

"Above all, I want to help my scholarship students build something challenging and meaningful from their education, and through that find their own happiness."

Institute library holds keys

By Lynn Gosnell

Kendra Trachta, the new library director at the Institute of Texan Cultures, presides over a hidden treasure of documentary and historical materials pertaining to the life and lore of Texans.

A little too hidden, says Trachta, who wants to develop an online catalog of the photos, oral histories, books and other materials that comprise this unique collection.

"One of my main jobs is helping researchers access our materials, but I'm also organizing what's here so we can move ahead," says Trachta, who holds an M.S. in library and information science from the University of Texas at Austin.

The holdings of the institute's research library include 6,000 books (scholarly and popular works on immigration and ethnic heritage, ranching culture, architectural history and folklore); vertical files (newspaper clippings, correspondence and other published documents); archival and manuscript material

(maps, business records, diaries, ledgers); tape-recorded and transcribed oral histories (more than 500 interviews conducted by volunteers between 1968 and 1997); audio- and videotapes (sound recordings, film and video produced by graduate students and Institute staff); archival materials in microfilm and microfiche (early Texas newspapers, census data, city directories); and periodicals and photographs.

This photographic archive, a trove of 3.5 million historical and documentary images, represents a fragile and irreplaceable record of more than a century of life in Texas.

The archive includes photographs from the San Antonio Light (1924-93), and San Antonio Express-News (1940s-90), and the Zintgraff Photography Studio Collection (1930s to 1987), and a general collection that includes more than 40,000 photographs donated by individuals and institutions.

This general collection, pieced together



Houston Street at night, circa 1950. Zintgraff Collection.



"Red Cross class in home nursing for negroes has enrolled 180 members since March, 1941" reads the caption on this photo from the San Antonio Light, Dec. 1942.



Emma Tenayuca, former labor leader and teacher, in the Bexar County jail following her arrest for disturbing the peace, 1937. San Antonio Light Collection.



Babe White "human fly" hangs from the Bexar County Courthouse, April, 1925. San Antonio Light Collection.

to Texas past

over the past 20 years, documents “the changing cultural landscape in Texas,” according to the library’s guidelines.

The same phrase could aptly be applied to the entire archive, though it does not begin to reveal the breadth of images contained in the collection—of the famous and not-so-famous, special occasions and everyday life, the natural landscape, architecture and industry of the region. San Antonio figures prominently in these images, many of which reveal the ghost of a cityscape, lost in fact but preserved in these images and in many older residents’ memories.

“Some people who come in,” Trachta says, “are looking for a link to their past.”

Approximately 50,000 4x5 negatives have been contact printed, with the prints filed in wooden and metal library card cabinets for easier use by patrons. Seventy-five percent of the images are available in negative form only. These negatives are kept in an environmentally controlled room, built in 1989, that

is designed to preserve black and white negatives. Color negatives require colder storage.

Tom Shelton, who has worked with the photos since 1978, probably knows the archive and the history behind the photographs better than anyone does. Along with Trachta and staff member Chris Floerke, Shelton has helped place the collection’s photographs in the hands of such disparate sources as historians, architecture firms, magazines, television and music producers, academic presses and journals, publishers and individuals searching for records of family and business life.

Alice Sackett, another longtime staff member and librarian, helps organize negatives and prints, following standards set by the Library of Congress.

Together with a loyal core of about 25 volunteers, the staff must regularly attend to the Sisyphean task of cataloging, labeling, filing and other essential organizing tasks.

The photographs are the library’s biggest

audience draw. On any given month, staff members field approximately 100 phone calls and e-mail queries regarding the use and publication of these images.

The public can purchase prints of most images, depending on copyright restrictions. The institute, well known for its educational and photographic displays on the exhibit floor, processes many photo orders in-house.

The library’s hours are noon to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Researchers may make appointments to use the library during the morning hours by calling 258-2228. The service-oriented staff recommends calling ahead so that they may retrieve materials in advance.

Trachta, who has spent her first two months documenting the “points of access” to each photo collection, remains undaunted by the task before her.

“There’s so much potential here.”



Alamo Plaza during the Fiesta San Jacinto parade, April 1931. Note the Joske’s sign in the background. San Antonio Light Collection.



Inside a chili stand. Published March 4, 1936. San Antonio Light Collection.



Popular communications program puts graduates to work in local markets

By Elizabeth Green

Since Crystal Ragsdale (B.A. '97) graduated with a degree in communication, she has worked, been out of work and



Crystal Ragsdale and Alan Lansing, marketing director, on the KENS-TV set

landed her dream job. Now she has some insights to share with students who are about to embark on that journey known as searching for gainful employment.

"Wake up . . . and appreciate the knowledge that is being extended to you. You can't go back. Life is not a test you can cram for.

Secondly, to those who are genuinely studious, remember that the best students . . . are those who turn what they learned in class and read in books into consistent work habits," she advises.

In particular, Ragsdale cites Amiso George, assistant professor of communication, for teaching her the skills that led to her current post as research director for local CBS affiliate KENS-TV. At the station, Ragsdale creates sales pitches and analyzes various media outlets.

Ragsdale went to interviews with a small portfolio of press releases, media kits and campaign pitches.

"That small portfolio, sheer determination to succeed and the public relations courses from UTSA are what landed this job that I love so much," she said.

Tales of job success for graduates of UTSA's unique communication major are partly responsible for the surge in enrollment in this relatively new major. This fall, 458 students have declared communication as their major.

"We're the largest degree program in the College of Fine Arts and Humanities and still growing," said Steven Levitt, associate professor of communication and assistant director of the division. Levitt came to UTSA in 1991 to help create the program, which was up and running by 1994.

The degree offers four concentrations: speech, technical, electronic media and public relations communications. Of the four, the public relations component is the most popular with students. Levitt notes that UTSA's public relations component takes a broader perspective than most journalism-based majors do.

"We look at public relations from a strategic planning perspective. We also have an very active internship program that places students in advertising and public relations agencies, radio and

television stations, nonprofit organizations, health care systems and telecommunications companies," he said.

Though the concentration in speech communication is fairly traditional, said Levitt, the technical and electronic concentrations reveal the program's unique stamp. Technical communication includes coursework in writing and visual communication with applications for Internet and CD-ROM design.

The electronic media component focuses on the technical side of communications, including data networking, needs assessment and how technologies are put to use for communication.

"We have a strong emphasis on the use of technology for communication," Levitt said.

He knows his program's graduates not only do well in the job market, they also have shown an interest in pursuing graduate degrees. Plans to inaugurate a master's degree in communication are also on the table.

To cope with the large student load, the department will hire three new faculty by next fall. Meanwhile, alumni such as Ragsdale are helping to spread the word about the program's strengths.

"I'm fortunate to have had a great experience and great teachers," she said.

Balloon Fest '99



Thousands of children enjoyed trick-or-treating among hot air balloons at UTSA Alumni Balloon Fest at Retama Park. Pilots in costume handed out candy while many parents served as balloon crew. The Halloween weekend festival, in its third year, is presented by ReMax Realtors.



Roadrunner Sports



Tamara Luckemeyer spikes one over her opponents. Luckemeyer led the team and the conference in number of “kills” per game.

Volleyball team captures Southland Conference title

Led by two-time Southland Conference “Player of the Year” Tamara Luckemeyer, the UTSA volleyball team captured its first Southland Conference (SLC) title, winning 16 straight matches and giving SLC “Coach of the Year” Katrinka Jo Crawford something to brag about.

“I’ve won other conference titles while I was at Lamar, but this one is extra special because it is the school’s first. I’m very glad to be a part of that,” Crawford said.

The Roadrunners’ run to the SLC title started on Sept. 25, when they defeated McNeese State 3-1 in Lake Charles, La. Fourteen matches later, they had yet to lose a match. UTSA’s win streak came to an end against nationally ranked Florida on Nov. 13. The team lost to McNeese State during the semifinal round at the Southland Conference Tournament on Nov. 19.

“I have a group of girls that work just as hard as any team I’ve ever coached and I’m very excited for them because they know now that hard work pays off,” Crawford said.

She has guided the team to a 65-55 record in four seasons. This was the Roadrunners best season ever.

Crawford is not the only one who is excited about the team’s achievement.

“I think when we see the banner hanging in the gym, it will hit us,” Luckemeyer said.

The junior outside hitter has been the leader and “go-to” player for the Roadrunners all season and leads the team and the SLC in kills per game (5.08). She had her best match of the season in the victory over Stephen F. Austin, collecting 28 kills with a percentage of .383.

1999–2000 Men’s Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	PLACE	TIME
Dec. 28	@ Sam Houston State*	Huntsville	5:30 p.m.
Dec. 30	@ Texas-Arlington*	Arlington	4 p.m.
Jan. 6	Southeastern Louisiana*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 8	@ Stephen F. Austin*	Nacogdoches	2 p.m.
Jan. 13	McNeese State*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 15	Lamar*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	@ Northwestern State*	Natchitoches, La.	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 22	@ Louisiana-Monroe*	Monroe, La.	7:45 p.m.
Jan. 27	Stephen F. Austin*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 29	Southwest Texas State*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 3	Texas-Arlington*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 5	Sam Houston State*^	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	@ Nicholls State*	Thibodaux, La.	7:45 p.m.
Feb. 12	@ Southeastern Louisiana*	Hammond, La.	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	Louisiana-Monroe*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 19	Northwestern State*	San Antonio	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 26	@ McNeese State*	Lake Charles, La.	7:30 p.m.
March 4	@ Southwest Texas State*	San Marcos	8 p.m.
March 7–11	SLC Tournament	TBA	TBA

Home games played at UTSA Convocation Center. Starting times are CST.

* Southland Conference game

+ Exhibition games

^ Homecoming game

1999–2000 Women’s Basketball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	PLACE	TIME
Dec. 28	@ Sam Houston State*	Huntsville	7:45 p.m.
Dec. 30	@ Texas-Arlington*	Arlington	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	Southeastern Louisiana*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Jan. 8	@ Stephen F. Austin*	Nacogdoches	4:15 p.m.
Jan. 13	McNeese State*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Jan. 15	Lamar*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Jan. 20	@ Northwestern State*	Natchitoches, La.	5:30 p.m.
Jan. 22	@ Louisiana-Monroe*	Monroe, La.	5:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	Stephen F. Austin*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Jan. 29	Southwest Texas State*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Feb. 3	Texas-Arlington*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Feb. 5	Sam Houston State*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Feb. 10	@ Nicholls State*	Thibodaux, La.	5:30 p.m.
Feb. 12	@ Southeastern Louisiana*	Hammond, La.	5 p.m.
Feb. 17	Louisiana-Monroe*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Feb. 19	Northwestern State*	San Antonio	5:15 p.m.
Feb. 26	@ McNeese State*	Lake Charles, La.	5:30 p.m.
March 4	@ Southwest Texas State*	San Marcos	5:45 p.m.
March 7–11	SLC Tournament	Shreveport, La.	TBA

Home games played at UTSA Convocation Center. Starting times are CST.

* Southland Conference game

+ Exhibition games



Calendar

Winter 1999

December

9–11, 17–18

Madrigal Dinners
“A Holiday Cruise on the SS Paisano.”
7:30 p.m. MS Kiva, 2.02.18. \$35 and \$45.
Call 458-4357.

13–17
Final Exams

14
University Assembly
3:30 p.m.
JPL 4.03.08.

18
Commencement

January

17
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

20–Feb. 25
Bert Long Exhibition
Opening Reception 6–8 p.m. Jan. 20. Art
Gallery. Exhibit hours Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
and Sun. 2–4 p.m. Call 458-4352.

29–Feb. 5
Homecoming

February

17–19
**Food Representation in Literature,
Film and the Other Arts Conference**
Times TBA. Downtown Campus.

18 or 25 (TBA)
Doctors in Concert
8 p.m. Ticket price TBA. Buena Vista Street
Building Theater. Downtown Campus.
Call 458-5685.

19
**American Institute of Architects
2000 Beaux Arts Ball**
Call 226-4979.

March

9–April 14
Neo-Rococo Exhibition
Frances Colpitt, curator. Opening Reception
6–8 p.m. March 9. Art Gallery. Exhibit hours
Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Sun. 2–4 p.m.
Call 458-4352.

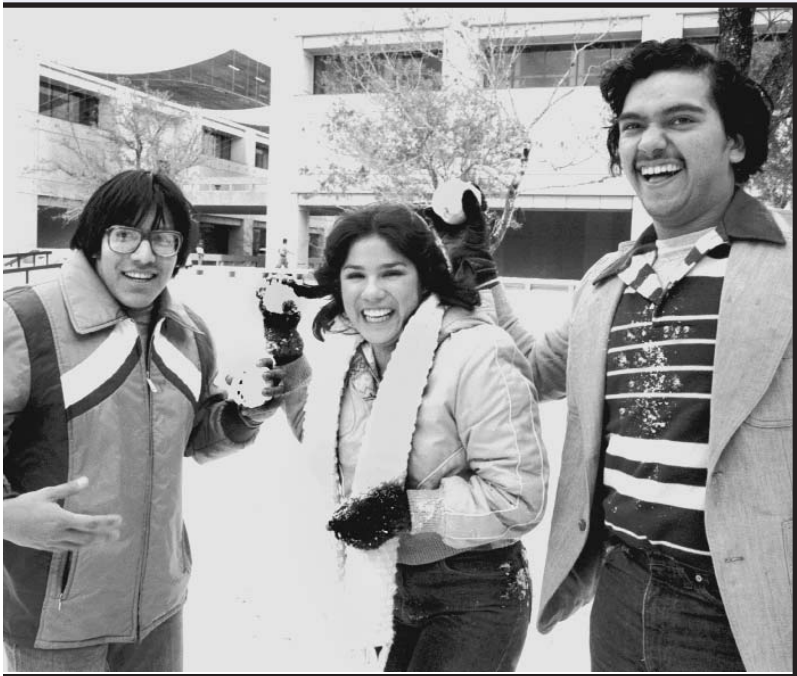
9
Canadian Brass Special Concert
7:30 p.m. Recital Hall. Tickets \$50.
Call 458-4354 or 458-5685.

11
UTSA hosts Spanish competition
Call 458-4373.

22
COFAH Advisory Council dinner
6:30 p.m. Business Building University Room.

24–25
Spring Opera Production
8 p.m. Buena Vista Street Building Theater.
UTSA Downtown Campus. Tickets TBA.
Call 458-5685.

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3 p.m. Buena Vista Street Building Theater.
UTSA Downtown Campus. Tickets TBA.
Call 458-5685.



UTSA Campus, January 1982

The last laugh

What's a snowball's chance in San Antonio? Very slim this year according to long-range weather forecasts. The weather phenomenon known as La Niña continues to produce above normal temperatures over much of the country's south-central region. Although not likely, the best chance of snow is in late December or early January, according to the Farmer's Almanac.

It could happen.
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Web site reports less than a thin inch of snowfall on Jan. 13, 1982. On Jan. 2, 1985, a 2.4-inch frosting heralded the whopping 13.5-inch snowfall of Jan. 11–13. (UTSA classes were not yet in session, though). Just over an inch was

recorded Jan. 21, 1987. The most recent year NOAA reported snow in San Antonio is 1988, and then it was only a dusting.

On Jan. 17, 1982, UTSA President James Wagener closed campus when the white stuff started falling. Although it didn't stick, according to one witness, most staff and students hit the road. Staff photographer John Poindexter grabbed his camera and headed outside to record the rare moment.

“The students who did stay around found an opportunity to have a little fun on campus,” Poindexter said. Posing three students, he instructed them to “act like you're throwing the snowballs at me.” He snapped the shot a moment before the snow hit him.



Other Voices

AS USUAL THAT YEAR, UELA'S HOUSE WAS CROWDED WITH VIEJOS, THE OLD ONES, FOR A CHRISTMAS FIESTA. All of her brothers and sisters were there, along with my aunts and uncles. Most of my cousins were playing in the large backyard, lit up by a streetlamp Uncle Frank had installed just for the occasion. At these family pachangas, these gatherings of the tribe, I was always attracted to los viejos and the slow quiet that seemed to revolve around them.

Whether we were in one of our houses or encamped for an afternoon in one of San Antonio's thick-gladed parks, their presence, confident and wise, made it feel as if we were all denizens of a secret Mestizo city, a world that existed parallel to the apparent physical lineaments of the city everyone else saw. There was a sense of ceremony around them: Uela; Madrina; Tia Pepa; Uncles Frank, Jess, Manuel, Chale, and Gilbert. Plates of aunt Minnie's fresh Christmas bean and chicken tamales were especially prepared and set before los viejos, along with a Negra Modelo beer, poured into freezer-chilled fountain glasses. The tamales were delectable corn masa dumplings, some pork, some bean, some chicken, wrapped tightly in pale corn husks. A bowl was passed around with fresh jalapeños to be bitten raw, along with a mouthful of tamal. Among that generation, they ate chile into their nineties impervious to the stomach ailments that force many middle-aged Mexicanos these days to renounce the "fire of the earth," as one uncle calls it. The room was quiet, except for the sound of them eating and gently sipping their beers.

Time took on a different quality around them. There was never any alarm. All could be witnessed. Everything could be endured. Elsewhere in our lives, we were careening through a century of accelerating atrocities and wonders. The bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the tremors of the 1960s over civil rights struggles and the Vietnam war, even the Apollo landings on the moon passed before the Garcias as if they were watching a long movie.

"We have to admit we like things to be easier than they were before," Uncle Frank once told me. "But there will always be pain."

Around los viejos, it seemed time was spiraling in cycles that eventually brought us around the same curving nebula of tales and trials. The grief of a new widow. An uncle leaning heavily on the tequila. Famine brought on by war, revolution, or a change in the weather. A grandchild crazed on drugs, with no respect for anyone. They gave you the sense that the story was always longer than just the tale being told. It didn't matter how desperate these times appeared to be to others. They knew how the world could spin through long spells of grief and solace, need and succor.

That Christmas, the Garcias had a message drawn from their long years of witness:

This too shall pass.

Excerpted from *Places Left Unfinished at the Time of Creation* by John Phillip Santos (New York: Viking Press, 1999). This book was nominated for the 1999 National Book Award.



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