



# UTSA

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**In this issue:** **Building blocks of science**

**Faculty doors up close • Kelly reservists remembered**

**Comedy for credit • Class notes and alumni profiles**



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# PREVIEW

## SERIOUSLY FUNNY

Anyone who’s wandered the labyrinthine halls of UTSA’s academic buildings knows it takes time and patience to find your destination. The fuzzy math that created the corridors’ numbering system confounds old-timers and newcomers alike. Advanced degrees are of no use when looking for a classroom or professor’s office—breadcrumbs are advised.

Fortunately, many of these corridors offer a scenic view. I’m referring to the time-honored academic tradition of turning office doors into bulletin boards of humor, opinions, news, art and philosophies.

Rebecca Luther, Sombrilla’s associate editor, took her notepad around campus to survey faculty’s office doors. In “Door Culture,” she writes that many faculty display a talent for using humor to poke fun at their profession or provoke a response from students. And, not surprisingly, there’s often a lesson between the punchline.

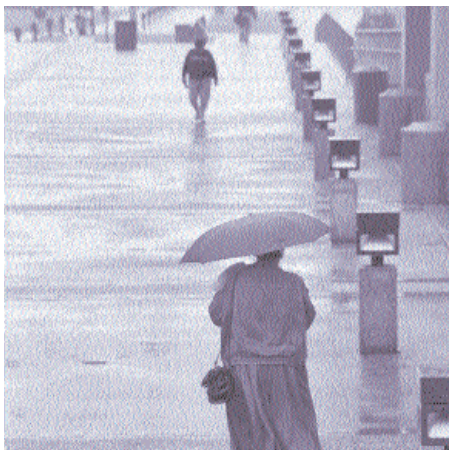
Humor, or comedy, is also the topic of this issue’s course profile. This fall, Assistant Professor John Rundin’s students studied the origins of Western comedic tradition by reading the 2000-year-old plays of Euripides, Aristophanes and Menander, among others. These ancients took comedy seriously and appreciated the seriousness of comedy. The Greek philosopher Horace once asked, “What prevents a person who’s joking from telling the truth?”

Humor might seem out of place in the story of an ofrenda created by Institute of Texan Cultures staff to honor the Kelly Air Force Base reservists who died in a plane crash in 1990. Yet traditions surrounding Día de los Muertos, an annual ritual of remembrance, dance on the edge of humor and pathos. In “An Altar of Memories,” freelance writer Jenny Browne reports that items in the ofrenda included “plastic replicas of plates of meat and potatoes, small bottles of Bud Light and the recordings of Patsy Cline and Vicki Carr.” Along with the grinning skeletons, or calaveras, they gently mock the finality of loss. Humorous, yes, but the deeply playful spirit that infuses these altars is life-giving.

After all, “Humor is just another defense against the universe,” as another 2000-year-old comic said.

Menander? Nah . . . Mel Brooks.

— Lynn Gosnell



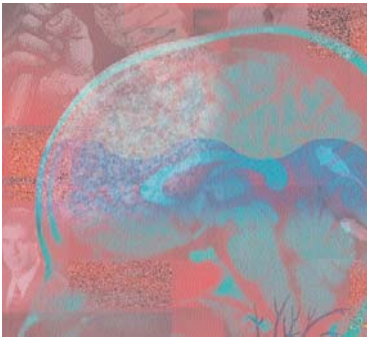
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*When is a laboratory like an artisan’s workshop? An NIH grant called the Specialized Neuroscience Research Program may help medical science remedy diseases of the brain. The grant pairs younger scientists with senior investigators, building new science knowledge in more ways than one. By Clinton Colmenares.*

14 DOOR CULTURE

*Faculty are entitled to express their opinions—especially on their doors. We trekked the academic hallways in search of doorways that express the fascinations, opinions, affiliations and provocations of UTSA faculty.*



DEPARTMENTS

4 In the Loop

Guitar festival takes city by strum; Ewing Halsell and the City of San Antonio give gifts for biotech initiative; alumna Jamie Rochelle speaks out; Annual Fund drive begins; spring calendar; plus more campus news.

10 Campus Scene

Institute of Texan Cultures employee Lorenzo “Junior” Galvan remembers everything about the night all nine of his fellow crew members died in an accident at Ramstein Air Base. ITC dedicated this year’s Día de los Muertos altar to the memory of these reservists. By Jenny Browne.

Heard any good jokes lately? Assistant Professor John Rundin proves that all comedy is old comedy in Humanities 4953, aka Classical Comedy. By Lynn Gosnell.

20 Class Notes

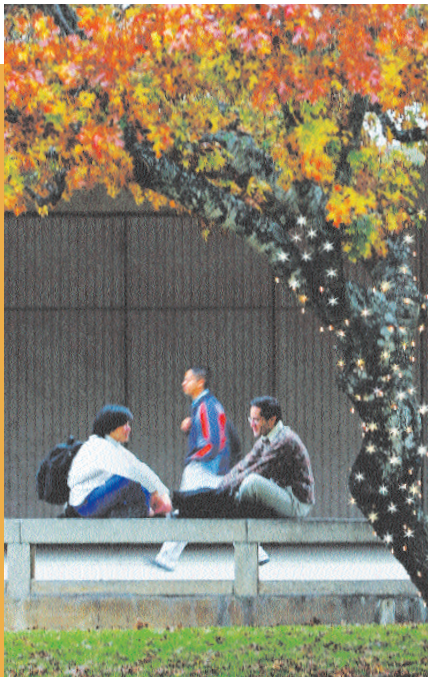
Run for student scholarships in the Diploma Dash. Also, class notes and profiles of two alumnae.

23 Other Voices

Carmen Tafolla contributes a poem from her new collection, *Rebozos*, which includes paintings by Catalina Gárate.

24 Looking Back

The first-ever basketball game featured short shorts and high flyers.



A season of lights and music unfolds on the campuses in winter. Holiday lights add sparkle to the oak trees in the Sombrilla quadrangle, above. At left, the Madrigal Dinner, a tradition since the University’s earliest days, fills guests with food and music every December. Photos by Mark McClendon.



## Biotechnology Initiative receives \$2 million in lead gifts

The City of San Antonio and the Ewing Halsell Foundation have contributed \$1 million each toward UTSA's Biotechnology Initiative. These gifts will support the expansion of biotechnology and bioengineering programs and contribute to bricks-and-mortar funding of a new facility that will house the programs.

Last year, the University of Texas Board of Regents gave \$35 million to UTSA for a biotechnology/bioengineering facility. However, the regents stipulated that these funds would not be released until UTSA raised a minimum of \$5 million from the community.

"Today, our goal is to surpass the \$5 million requirement in order to ensure that laboratories, teaching resources and space requirements are fully met," President Ricardo Romo said.

"The new Biotechnology Building will provide students with both educational and research opportunities in biotechnology and bioengineering not

available elsewhere in the South Texas region. These significant contributions from the City of San Antonio and the Ewing Halsell Foundation demonstrate confidence that UTSA can make this vision a reality," he added.

The city's contribution, part of a funding allocation to support workforce development and education, was announced in September. Mayor Howard Peak and Councilwoman Debra Guerrero helped secure the support of the city council for this funding. It is the first time the city has allocated budget funds to UTSA.

The Ewing Halsell Foundation's donation will support scholarships for students from South Texas who wish to major in science, engineering or biotechnology programs. It is the University's largest endowed scholarship fund to date. Nine South Texas counties provide 79 percent of UTSA's enrollment.

Finding adequate financial support for UTSA's students is an ongoing challenge.

"UTSA's students last year demonstrated \$47 million in need for which we were not able to find assistance," said Shirley Bañez, assistant director of the Scholarship Office.

With a projected completion date of 2003, the biotechnology/bioengineering facility will include 180,000 square feet of space for research and teaching laboratories.

The initiative will help UTSA expand its programs in the critical job-growth areas of bioengineering, cell and molecular biology and computational biosciences. As the city expands its biotechnology industries, students with degrees in these fields will be well qualified for the job market.

The proposed areas offer possibilities for increased partnerships not only with the city and private industry but also with the UT Health Science Center, Southwest Research Institute, Texas Research Park Foundation, Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research and local military facilities.

## Make way for backhoes

This fall, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) gave final approval for the construction of four new buildings at the 1604 and Downtown campuses, and to a new doctoral degree.

The 190,803-square-foot Academic Building III will house the College of Education and Human Development, lecture halls, the Visitor Center, New Student Admissions and administrative offices. The building is expected to cost \$52 million and will be located to the east of the John Peace Library Building.

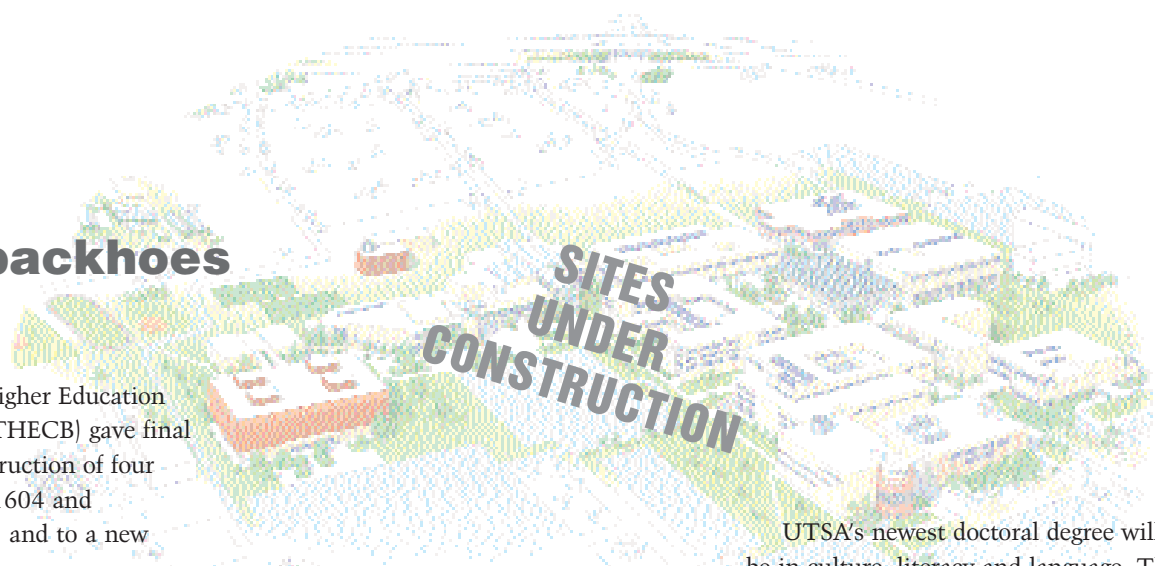
A child care center and a recreation/wellness center will be constructed on the southwest side of the 1604 Campus near the University Oaks apartments.

The \$2.9 million facility will serve approximately 125 children. This facility was originally scheduled for groundbreak-

ing in 1999, but changes in architectural plans forced delays in the construction and required THECB reapproval.

The two-story recreation/wellness center will feature basketball and racquetball courts, a weight room, an expanded health services area and locker rooms.

The board also approved an addition to Phase III of the UTSA Downtown Campus that will increase the size of the facility from 122,500 square feet to 155,500 square feet to accommodate UTSA's Institute for Economic Development.



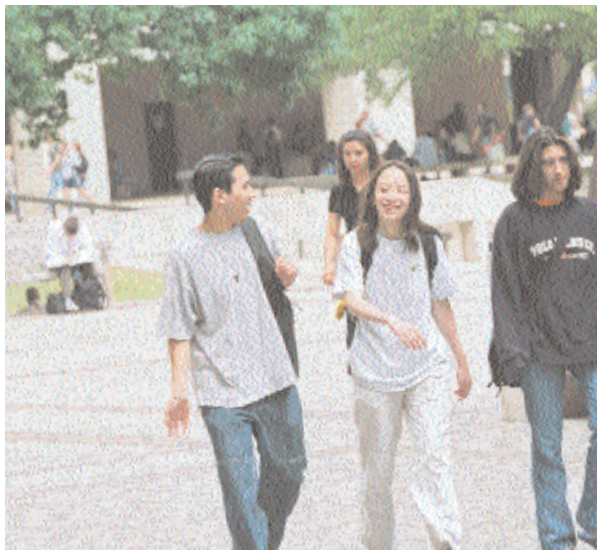
UTSA's newest doctoral degree will be in culture, literacy and language. The fourth doctoral degree program for the University, it will be housed in the new College of Education and Human Development. Students will focus on the teaching of reading and language and study the effects of cultural and linguistic differences on literacy, educational success and employment, especially for people whose first language is not English.

Classes will begin in fall 2001; applications are already being accepted. For more information about the program call 458-4426.

## Recruitment efforts result in record freshman class

Enrollment at UTSA continues to increase. A Sept. 14 census recorded student enrollment at 18,830, including 16,487 undergraduates and 2,343 graduate students. With a 7.2 percent increase in fall freshmen enrollment, the fall 2000 semester slightly exceeded last fall's total of 18,608.

University officials credited the freshman enrollment boost to enhanced recruitment efforts, more degree program offerings and a package of scholarship programs aimed at new freshmen, specifically those who graduated from high schools in San Antonio and Bexar County.



More than half of this year's freshman class is from Bexar County.

Hispanic and African American students have helped strengthen diversity at UTSA, increasing by more than 3 percent each from one year ago. Overall, minority enrollment is up 3.14 percent, constituting 54 percent of the total student body.

For the second year, the number of graduate students dropped somewhat, despite increases in graduate students' total number of semester hours.

Enrollment at the Downtown Campus increased by 94 students to 3,187. Two-thirds of these students also attend classes at the 1604 Campus.

## Findings

### Health insurance a critical need for many San Antonians, study shows

According to a report by UTSA's Metropolitan Research and Policy Institute (MRPI), nearly one-fourth of people residing in San Antonio lack any form of health insurance.

Based on analysis of U.S. Census data released in March, researchers found that 23 percent of San Antonio household members are without health insurance. The "typical" uninsured San Antonian, the study showed, is a married Hispanic male between the ages of 40 and 64, who lives with his family, works full time, but has not completed high school.

"The health of citizens is of particular importance to any community," said Juanita Firestone, professor of social and policy sciences and a principal investigator in the MRPI project. "It takes healthy individuals to actively participate and keep San Antonio moving toward a positive future.

"When groups of people are denied health care access because of race, ethnicity, age or economic status, the entire community suffers."

To determine their findings, Firestone and her colleagues compared data from the national census on health insurance with data from the San Antonio area.

### MRPI surveys local attitudes toward homosexuality

Another recent MRPI study showed that San Antonians are more tolerant of homosexuality than the nation as a whole. The findings, assessed in a 1999 two-part study conducted by the UTSA Division of Social and Policy Sciences, compare national opinions regarding same-sex sexual relationships with those held by San Antonians.

Although 34 percent of San Antonians believe there is nothing wrong with homosexual relationships (as compared to the national average of 29 percent), the majority of both local and national respondents oppose allowing gays and lesbians the right to wed. Statistics indicate that 67 percent of Americans oppose granting same-sex couples the symbolic recognition of marriage, while 60 percent of San Antonians share the view.

When considering the controversial question of whether homosexuality is a choice or something that cannot be changed, San Antonian's responses were similar to those nationwide, which indicated a 50-50 split. Fifty-three percent of San Antonians feel homosexuality is a choice, while 47 percent believe that homosexuality is something that cannot be changed.

### UTSA studies ways to promote inner-city revitalization

San Antonio's Neighborhood Action Department, along with UTSA's Center for Economic Development and the Institute for Studies in Business, has completed socioeconomic and market research in three San Antonio neighborhoods for the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Program (NCRP). NCRP promotes revitalization in traditional neighborhoods that have low economic activity by attracting customers and private sector investors.

Research focused on the neighborhoods of Midtown on Blanco, Presa Real and East Commerce Street. Residents of the three inner-city districts are characterized as having lower income and education levels than those of Bexar County residents on average. Residents are typically older and Hispanic, and 70 to 80 percent of the residential housing is more than 50 years old.

Market research indicated that residents in the three districts felt their shopping needs weren't being met. Participants expressed desires for more restaurants, department stores and service stations, as well as upkeep and maintenance in their areas. The majority indicated a willingness to take an active role in revitalization efforts.

Using the findings from the study, San Antonio will develop strategies for economic revitalization in each district.

## Festival brings international guitar performers to city

San Antonio was the site of a harmonic encounter of the classical guitar kind when the humble instrument of Segovia invaded the city for a week in October.

More than 400 classical guitarists, educators and students attended the Guitar Foundation of America (GFA) annual convention and competition Oct. 16–21.

The Southwest Guitar Festival, a UTSA-sponsored festival that has been held biennially since 1991, took place this year in conjunction with the GFA convention. Matthew Dunne, a lecturer in the Division of Music,



**The Southwest Guitar Festival brought together some of the world's greatest classical guitarists, at right. Photo by Susan Riley. Matthew Dunne, festival director, above.**



served as festival and convention director. Performances, master classes, competitions and lectures took place at UTSA's Downtown and 1604 campuses, Travis Park United Methodist Church and Mission San José.

Most performances drew standing-room-only crowds as convention participants and local residents took advantage of the unique opportunity to hear virtuoso performances by some of the world's leading classical guitarists.

Organizing the festival was a monumental task, said Dunne, who has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe, and has recorded two CDs of guitar music. He is a candidate for a doctor of musical arts degree at UT Austin.

"After doing months of prep work, I finally got to enjoy the fruits of all that

work," Dunne said, acknowledging the efforts of the festival's assistant director, Michael Richter, also a guitar teacher at UTSA, and of the office staff in the Division of Music.

Headlining the convention were Greek virtuoso Costas Cotsiolis; Colombian Ricardo Cobo; the Assads, a Brazilian duo; French guitarist and composer Roland Dyens; Segovia student Robert Guthrie, who performed at Mission San José; five-time international competition winner Adam Holzman; and the Cuban composer Leo Brouwer, who conducted the San Antonio Symphony in a performance of guitar concerti.

Grammy nominee Paul Galbraith and world-renowned lutenist Nigel

North also performed. Dunne is particularly pleased with his accomplishment of bringing Brouwer to the festival. U.S. Congressman Charles Gonzalez and his staff, along with a local immigration attorney, helped cut through the red tape to get Brouwer to San Antonio for his

U.S. conducting debut. In addition to performances by three of Mexico's acclaimed guitarists—Juan Carlos Laguna, Martin Madrigal and Gonzalo Salazar—the Orquesta de Los Niños del CIDEIG, a children's guitar orchestra from the guitar-making town of Paracho, Michoacán, made their U.S. debut.

Rounding out the events were lectures in English and Spanish by Abel Garcia, Mexico's leading guitar builder, and Miguel Alcazar, a scholar on the music of Manuel Ponce, Mexico's well-known 20th-century composer.

The performance Dunne may be proudest of resulted from his efforts to create the United States/Mexico Guitar Orchestra, the first guitar orchestra made up of university students from the United States and Mexico. Admission to the orchestra was by taped audition.

The troupe of 23 guitarists (12 from the United States and 11 from Mexico) and two conductors, many of whom had

never met, had less than a week of intensive practicing before the concert.

The festival was presented by the UTSA Division of Music. Co-sponsoring organizations included Arts San Antonio, Instituto Cultural Mexicano, UNAM, Travis Park United Methodist Church, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, the Adam's Mark Hotel, the Austin Classical Guitar Society, the D'Addario Foundation for the Performing Arts, C.F. Martin Guitars, Aerolitoral, HEB, the Newman Family Charitable Trust, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation and the City of San Antonio.

— Lynn Gosnell

## Annual Fund

The University's Annual Fund moves into high gear in February with a telephone campaign.

The Annual Fund provides UTSA's six colleges with unrestricted funds for the support of programs that normally do not receive support from the University's general budget. These may include new academic programs, faculty recruitment, research, community outreach, specialized equipment for laboratories and scholarships.

The goal for this year's Annual Fund, which runs through the 2000–2001 academic year, is \$200,000, said Adriana Gonzalez, assistant director of development for annual giving.

"We would like to encourage donors to move up to the President's Associates level," she said. President's Associates make unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or more. Other giving society levels are Leaders Circle, \$500–999; Fellows Circle, \$250–499; Scholars Circle, \$100–249; and Friends of UTSA, up to \$99.

To make a contribution, contact Gonzalez at (210) 458-4130.



## Rochelle calls for increased funding, resources for UTSA

The following is an excerpt from a speech by Jamie Rochelle '94 at the annual President's Dinner Nov. 9. Rochelle is the chief executive officer of City Public Service and chair-elect of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

Jamie Rochelle speaks at the President's Dinner.

As an alumna who found the right program at UTSA when I went for my master's in engineering, I've watched with pride as the University has grown.

But UTSA wrestles with chronic underfunding, and I wonder if, as a community, we are making enough noise to work UTSA out of its dearth of permanent faculty and staff, to draw attention to the hundreds of thousands of square feet of space shortage and to address the inadequate support and incentives to grow faculty research.

I've experienced this as an executive who happened to be a graduate student at UTSA, with a class convened in a storeroom, standing room only, and the instructor asking, with apology, for consideration by students that they drop the class because classroom space and capacity in the computer lab was insufficient.

Comparing state formula funding at Texas public universities shows these FY 1999 numbers for per-student funding:

UT Austin, \$3,100      UT Dallas, \$3,100  
UT Arlington, \$2,900      UTSA, \$2,300

Having heard the explanation for how this happens, and considering how hard our community is trying to overcome poverty, I'm not satisfied. I am angry, knowing that this funding system is not based on economic realities today. Maybe getting angry about insufficient funding for UTSA won't help, but putting formula funding, with all its peculiarities, back on the table for candid discussion will help.

Looking to the student population, retention and persistence rates are too low—less than one-third have graduated after six years and less than 60 percent of freshmen return. This is not a measure of student talent; it is a function of hardship. Despite the generosity of this group and others, there remains a large and growing unmet need for student financial aid—estimated to be about \$38 million.

Only 9 percent of financial aid is from scholarships, and loans don't appeal to the very poor who are not sure they'll make it to graduation and a higher-paying job. Forty-five percent of UTSA students report a family income of less than \$25,000 per year; 28 percent have a family income of less than \$15,000.

Remember the income gap? It is holding our student population back, reducing their access to higher education and lowering our community's academic achievement. . . .

Many excellent initiatives are under way: mentoring; K-16 partnerships and curriculum alignment; the Urban Systemic Initiative's drive for teaching excellence through the National Science Foundation; new doctoral programs; the establishment of the Centers for Excellence and Innovation; and institutional collaboration. It is clear to me that we are doing many of the right things, building on unique community strengths and striving to achieve the impossible. . . .

With a passionate drive for higher academic achievement with specific goals each year, UTSA can have a profoundly positive impact on building wealth and economic opportunity in San Antonio. Success will not only boost new job formation, drive down poverty, preserve and grow San Antonio's existing businesses—including those home grown in San Antonio—it will return recognition, talent, cash and other resources to UTSA.

All it takes is the right plan of action and the will to achieve it.

## ¡ Bravo !

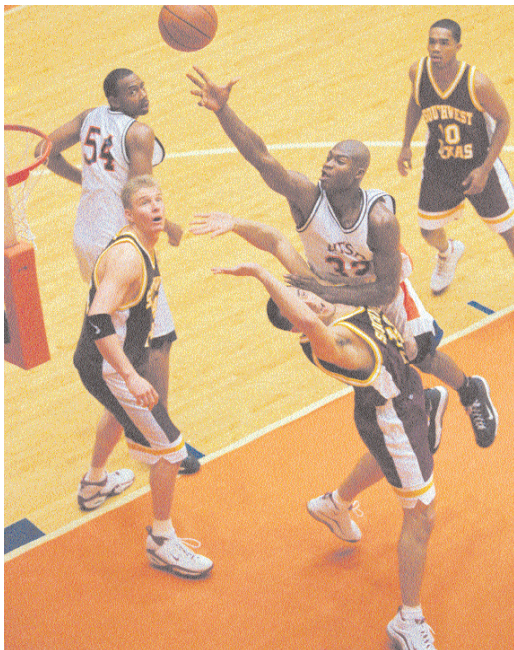
**Amir Karimi**, professor of mechanical engineering, recipient of the Charles E. Balleisen Award from the San Antonio section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers–International; **Kristina Conlin**, alumna and psychology major, recipient of the Golden Key Scholar Award, a \$10,000 prize that will fund her doctoral studies in learning disabilities at Northwestern University; **John Poindexter**, assistant director for multimedia imaging and photographic services, recipient of the Roland Barrett Award for his articles featured in the University Photographers Association of America newsletter, *The Contact Sheet*; **Robert Milk**, professor and director of bicultural-bilingual studies, named to the editorial board for the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*; **Carolyn Kessler**, professor of bicultural-bilingual studies, recipient of an \$18,000 scholarship from the Sisters of Providence in Saint-Mary-of-the-Wood, Ind.; Educational Talent Search participants **Julio Dovalina**, **Robert Dovalina**, **Cassandra Oyervides** and **Maria Teresa Torres**, recipients of scholarships presented at the Texas Association of Student Special Services program's Student Leadership Conference; interdisciplinary studies majors **Maria Spieth** and **Maria Elena Garcia**, recipients of the Gates Millennium Scholarships, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and administered by the United Negro College Fund; **Jo Ann Andera**, Texas Folklife Festival director, and **Rita Cortez**, TRIO Programs director, selected for Leadership San Antonio Class XXVI, sponsored by the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce; UTSA debaters **Jeremy Stevens**, **Maty Golando**, **Javier Quintanilla**, top-10 speakers at the opening collegiate tournament for the academic year at Georgia State University in Atlanta; **Wing Chung Ng**, associate professor of history, on faculty development leave to study the social history of Cantonese opera; **Brenda Stevens**, administrative assistant in the Student Life Office, semifinalist in the International Open Amateur Photography Contest, sponsored by *Parade Magazine*; **Jeffrey W. Noyes**, associate vice president for information technology, chair of the 2001 Nomination and Election Committee of EDUCAUSE, an international professional association; student-athletes **Jesus Flores**, **Samantha Perez**, **Amanda Garcia**, **Sandra Duque** and **Noemi Lozano**, recipients of the Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholars Award for 2000.

## Looking toward spring sports

### March Madness

One of America's most anticipated sporting competitions comes to San Antonio in March, and UTSA will play a lead role in the event.

UTSA is the host of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Midwest Regional on March 23 and 25 at the Alamodome. Having already played host to the 1997 Midwest Regional and the 1998 Final Four, UTSA is preparing for some of the largest crowds in NCAA tournament history and a national television audience on CBS. In 1997, over 61,000 fans attended the Midwest Regional.



The 2001 regional will be the first of four consecutive years that UTSA plays host to NCAA championship events, as the 2002 Women's Final Four, 2003 Men's South Regional and 2004 Men's Final Four will also come to San Antonio.

For ticket information, call (800) 884-3663.

### Basketball

The men's and women's basketball teams will each have eight home games in the Convocation Center in January, February and March. For ticket information, call (210) 458-UTSA.

Check out UTSA Athletics online at [www.goutsa.com](http://www.goutsa.com) for the latest in Roadrunners sports information.

### Baseball

Sherman Corbett returns home to lead the baseball program as the third head coach in Roadrunner hardball history. The 38-year-old Corbett starred at Samuel Clemens High School in Schertz, Texas, before playing at Texas A&M University. The former pitcher enjoyed a 10-year major league baseball career, including stops with the California Angels, the Detroit Tigers and the Chicago Cubs.

A tough schedule awaits Corbett as he welcomes back 12 senior lettermen from last season's 17-37 squad. The schedule includes a road series against Louisiana-Lafayette, the third-place team at the 2000 College World Series. Six teams on the schedule were in post-season play, including Baylor, Texas and Nebraska, which were ranked in the top 15 nationally.

UTSA will split its home schedule between Roadrunner Field and Wolff Stadium, home of the San Antonio Missions Baseball Club.

### Softball

The winningest program in Southland Conference history returns with a new goal—to make it to the NCAA tournament. The team looks strong again with first-team all-conference pitcher Denise Briggs and a powerful hitting attack from a squad that recorded a school-record 39 wins in 2000. The Roadrunners bring an exciting brand of softball that last year ranked among the nation's leaders in home runs with a school-record 64.

Joining Briggs is all-conference short-stop Christy Brownlee, infielder Ashley Oswald, catcher Michelle McElyea and outfielder/pitcher Monica Briggs.

Head coach Corrie Hill and the Roadrunners enter the season with the second-highest rating percentage index (RPI) in Texas, trailing only the University of Texas at Austin.

### Tennis

The men's and women's programs are eyeing conference championships after placing second in the Southland Conference last season.

The men are coached by Oliver Trittenwein and will be led by first-team all-conference junior Frederik Darmont, who returns along with second-team all-SLC netters Justin Work and Andy

Murillo. Moscow, Russia, transfer Maxim Dounaev, Thomas Macquet from Hillcrest, South Africa, and Brett Veale of Sherwood, South Africa, bring depth to the squad.

Coach Brenda Niemeyer will lead a women's team that is paced by all-conference performers Eva Soderkvist and Svenja Fuhrig. The Roadrunners hope to return to the Southland Conference winner's circle after capturing the league title in 1999.

### Track and field

Several track and field athletes are returning this season after setting school records in 2000.

Tiffany Talbert, a junior from Comfort, set a school mark of 13.36 seconds in the 100-meter low hurdles. Corpus Christi's Cara Cooper established the school record in the discus with a throw of 155-8. San Antonian Rhonda Ray set a new school mark in the heptathlon.

Russell Dauphin of Mathis is returning after setting the school record in the pole vault at 16-0. Other school record holders include Alex Flores of Carrizo Springs (triple jump) and Goliad's Justin Youngblood (high jump).

Head coach Que McMaster will lead the Roadrunners to an indoor season that began Jan. 12 at Houston and concludes Feb. 18–19 with the Southland Conference Indoor Championships. The outdoor season opens Feb. 23 at the Trinity Invitational. The Whataburger/UTSA Relays are set for March 16–17 at Trinity University.

### Golf

Roadrunner golf enters the spring after a strong fall season, finishing in the top 10 at the Kansas Tournament and at the San Diego State Invitational.

Chris Donielson is the new head coach. He will rely heavily on Laredo, Texas, native Gibby Martens, who captured the individual medalist crown at the Kansas Invitational last September. Jerry Carnahan, a sophomore from San Antonio's Churchill High School, also returns as one of the top golfers in the Southland Conference.



Volleyball team earns first NCAA berth

The UTSA volleyball team capped the 2000 season by making its first NCAA tournament appearance. The achievement was short-lived, however, as the No. 14 seed Roadrunners lost to the No. 3 UC Santa Barbara Gauchos Nov. 30 in the first round. The Roadrunners earned the trip to the NCAA after defeating Lamar University for the Southland Conference Championship. They finished the season 24-9. Senior Tamara Luckemeyer was named most valuable player in the conference, and teammates Stacy Schmidt and Natasha Biggers were named to the All-

Tournament Team. Luckemeyer and Schmidt were also named Verizon Academic All-Americans.

**President Ricardo Romo congratulates members of the Southland Conference championship volleyball team. At far left, outside hitter Stacy Schmidt shows winning form.**

Spring 2001Calendar

**Through Feb. 16**  
**10th Biennial Visual Arts Faculty Exhibition.** 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday–Friday and 2–4 p.m. Sunday. UTSA Art Gallery. Arts Building. Call 458-4391.

**Jan. 26**  
**Reading by Christine Hume, poet.** 7:30 p.m. Business Building Auditorium. Call 458-4374.

**Jan. 26–Feb. 3**  
**Homecoming.** Call 458-4133.

**Jan. 27**  
**Asian New Year Festival.** 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Institute of Texan Cultures main building and grounds. Call 458-2300.

**Feb. 5–9**  
**Black Heritage Week.** Call 458-4770.

**Feb. 10**  
**American Institute of Architects 2001 Beaux Arts Ball.** 7:30 p.m. Club Sonterra. Call 226-4979.

**Feb. 22**  
**Lecture by Ramon Saldívar, Brackenridge Distinguished Professor.** 7:30 p.m. Business Building University Room. Call 458-4374.

**Feb. 23**  
**Lecture by Ramon Saldívar, Brackenridge Distinguished Professor.** 2 p.m. Business Building University Room. Call 458-4374.

**Feb. 24**  
**UTSA Alumni Association Diploma Dash.** Registration 8 a.m. Race 9 a.m. Call 458-4133 for more information.

**Feb. 28**  
**UTSA Graduate Program Day.** 9:30 a.m.–2 p.m. Sombrilla Plaza. Call 458-4330.

**March 1–30**  
**UTSA and San Antonio Potters Guild National Ceramics Competition Exhibition.** 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday–Friday and 2–4 p.m. Sunday. UTSA Art Gallery. Arts Building. Call 458-4391.

**March 5–9**  
**Women’s History Week.** Call 458-4876.

**March 9**  
**Reading by Nickolai Popov, poet.** 2 p.m. Business Building University Room. Call 458-4374.

**March 9**  
**Reading by Heather McHugh, poet.** 7:30 p.m. Business Building Auditorium. Call 458-4374.

**March 23**  
**Reading by William Greenway, poet.** 7 p.m. Business Building Auditorium. Call 458-4374.

**March 30–31**  
**Spring Opera Production.** 7:30 p.m. UTSA Recital Hall. Arts Building. Call 458-5685.

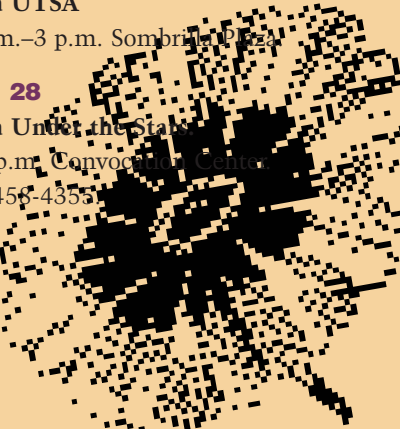
**April 1**  
**Spring Opera Production.** 3 p.m. matinee. UTSA Recital Hall. Arts Building. Call 458-5685.

**April 2–6**  
**Asian Heritage Week.** Call 458-4770.

**April 12–May 11**  
**17th Annual Student Juried Exhibition.** 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday–Friday and 2–4 p.m. Sunday. UTSA Art Gallery. Arts Building. Call 458-4391.

**April 20**  
**Fiesta UTSA** 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Sombrilla Plaza

**April 28**  
**Fiesta Under the Stars** 7:30 p.m. Convocation Center. Call 458-4353.



# An altar of memories

By Jenny Browne

**A 27-year employee of the Institute of Texan Cultures, Lorenzo “Junior” Galvan has held many positions. As exhibits installer supervisor, he oversees both local and touring exhibits. But for the past 10 years Galvan’s other title has been “survivor.” His work is remembering.**

Galvan remembers everything about the night of Aug. 28, 1990, when all nine of his fellow 68th Airlift Squadron crew members died in an accident at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. To mark the 10th anniversary of the tragedy, Galvan helped the institute construct a Día de los Muertos ofrenda, or altar, to honor the Kelly Air Force Base reservists who perished.

Galvan did not want to be the focus of this story. But as he stood quietly before the vivid and detailed altar it was evident that

his personal history is fused with the details of that night and of the lives it took with it.

“Every year on the day of the crash I go visit all the guys. I go see Eddie in Laredo where he’s buried, then Carpio at San Fernando Cemetery and the others at Fort Sam. This is the first time we’ve done this [a Día de los Muertos altar]. My grandmother used to take us up to San Fernando to visit the graves, but my generation kind of got away from it,” explains the 56-year-old Galvan.

According to ITC Director of Programs Laurie Gudzikowski, El Día de los Muertos, or All Souls Day, is a rich aspect of Mexican culture. A blending of old and new, El Día de los Muertos comes from both the indigenous pre-Columbian cultures and the modern Catholic Church. The structure of the altar is rooted in Aztec cosmology and modeled after pyramids of sacrifice. Most altars also contain religious icons of the Virgin Mary and are tied to belief in the cycle of life, death and resurrection.

Celebration of the holiday actually encompasses two days: Nov. 1, All Saints Day, is dedicated to children who have died and Nov. 2, the official All Souls Day, is reserved for adults. The holiday is experiencing a revival in cities like San Antonio that have a large Hispanic population.

Gudzikowski says that El Día de los Muertos has long been observed by the institute. She’s not sure when the institute constructed its first altar but says it predates her 13-year tenure. In 1991, the institute also produced a film documenting the tradition.

“We felt it was important even before the more recent attention on the holiday. Even doing this altar, some of the Hispanic families we contacted do not observe the custom,” Gudzikowski says. According to institute research, many younger Hispanics are reclaiming the tradition and erecting altars in homes, churches and public places and holding graveside “family reunions.”

The sanctioned day of grief and the visual appeal of the altars have also drawn many non-Hispanics to the practice. In recent years local artists and HIV/AIDS activists have constructed altars in public places and galleries.



**Lorenzo Galvan (far right) and three of the 68th Airlift Squadron crew members stand in the cargo bay of their C5 Galaxy transport. They are, left to right, Staff Sgt. Edward Sheffield, Master Sgt. Carpio Villarreal, Technical Sgt. Daniel Perez and Galvan.**



In the past, the institute has erected a general exhibit altar, as well as specific altars honoring certain regions of Mexico, farm-workers and Indian ancestors. Last year the institute dedicated its altar to San Antonio leader and philanthropist Raul Jimenez.

This year’s altar for the Bravo 12, as the 68th Squadron was called, is accompanied by a smaller memorial for former institute employees and employee families.

“This year is especially meaningful to institute staff because of Galvan’s involvement in the crash,” Gudzikowski says. “It has also just been an unusually hard year for the staff. We have lost a number of former employees, including two former directors, Jack Maguire and John McGiffert.”

This year has also been a challenge for Galvan. In October, he lost his mother. The same month, Kelly Air Force Base dedicated a memorial to the flight crew.

“Seeing everybody’s families brings it all back. People ask about closure and all,” he says. “My closure will be when I meet them again.”

At an institute reception for families of the victims, fresh tears quickly eclipsed the past 10 years. Velma Lopez, daughter of Senior Master Sgt. Carpio Villarreal Jr., and Elvira Herrera, widow of Master Sgt. Rosendo Herrera, speak about the men.

“They were great buddies, the best,” Herrera remembers. “Rosendo never missed work,” she continues. “I brought the award he won for that and his Dallas Cowboy hats, winter and summer.”



## Campus Scene



The altar also holds plastic replicas of plates of meat and potatoes, small bottles of Bud Light and the recordings of Patsy Cline and Vicki Carr. To the right of the area designated for Villarreal and Lopez, the music changes to Led Zeppelin. The Zeppelin record and replica of fajitas recall the tastes of 28-year-old Staff Sgt. Edward Sheffield. Staff Sgt. Daniel Garza preferred a glass of red wine and classical music. Most haunting are the flight boots, check pads and gear.

"The bond of a flight crew is unexplainable," recalls

Galvan, a staff sergeant who was loadmaster on the flight. "Your life depends on trust and respect. When you go up, rank loses significance. You are a team."



Galvan replays many events. "[Eddie] Sheffield had just gotten a hat to give to his little girl. It was white with a yellow ribbon. He was asking me where to keep it safe. That trip he was really wanting to talk more than usual. He was talking about his dad. I was like, 'Why are you telling me these things?' It was his stepdad, but he raised him and Eddie thought of him as his dad.

"It was so strange after the crash; his dad was the first to come visit me. I'd never met him, but I knew it was him.

I guess that was why he was telling me."

Galvan's voice cracks, but he seems comfortable with the emotion he carries.

"There is guilt, you know. Eddie was so young. Carpio [Villarreal] was going to retire. This was his last trip. He told

me, 'This is it. I have everything all ready in a little box in my closet.' After the accident, I had to tell his wife, 'Go get that box. It's all in there.' "

In addition to personal relics, the Bravo 12 altar contains standard ofrenda elements. These include sweets, fruit and traditional



Mexican foods: pan de muerto, or bread of the dead, baked in the shape of skeletons, and papel picado, colorful cut paper decorations. At the top of the altar, a large photo of an imposing C5 Galaxy transport plane is rimmed with marigolds.

The juxtaposition of metal and flower petals mirrors the feelings of strength and fragility that often accompany mourning. More than other customs, El Día de los Muertos incorporates such emotion into the cycle of daily life. Galvan is proud of the tribute to his buddies but says he doesn't rely on the holiday to remember them.

"Some people have a guardian angel," he says quietly. "Well, I've got nine. They are with me all the time."

*Jenny Browne is a freelance writer and poet in San Antonio.*



# THE 2,000-YEAR-OLD COMEDY

By Lynn Gosnell

**Amid the standard course announcements posted on bulletin boards across campus, the flier for Humanities 4953 was wicked funny. Printed on pink paper, it featured comic-style word balloons that promised a semester of satire and slapstick—“stuff so funny, Shakespeare ripped it off!”**

About 20 students, mostly humanities and English majors, signed up for Classical Comedy, the topic of this special studies course. If they were drawn by the subversive notion of getting credit for studying comedy, no doubt they were also curious about the professor behind that wacky flyer.

Assistant Professor John Rundin, who came to UTSA three years ago from UCLA, is an unabashed advocate for classical studies. Rundin is eager to share his enthusiasm for the ancient Greek and Roman world with a new generation of students who are badly in need of a broader historical perspective.

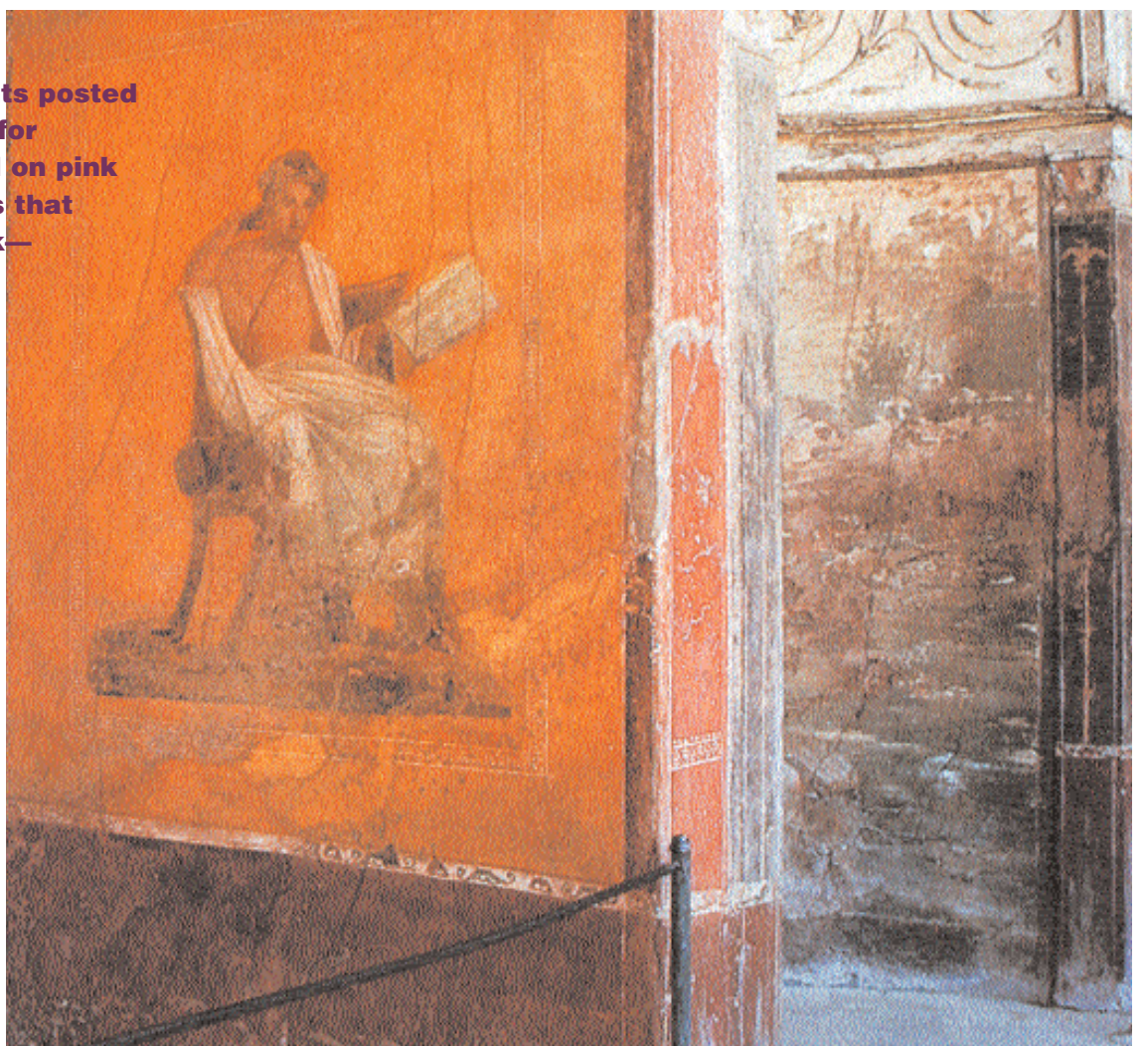
But when he walks into a Thursday afternoon lecture midway through the fall semester, he faces a roomful of skeptics. *The Girl from Samos*, a play written around 310 BCE by the popular Athenian poet Menander, has left a lot of students scratching their heads, not laughing them off.

After gauging his students' reaction, Rundin explains that the play came to light when a papyrus fragment of the text was dug out of the Egyptian sand. The surviving text is literally full of holes.

Many students found the translator's notes about the missing text confusing, or at least distracting from the play's fast-paced dialogue.

One student says it was “as if the punchline was missing” in some sections. Another allows that the play was probably “hilarious on stage” but fell flat on the page.

Finally, one student voices more critical feedback: he much prefers the “scatological, low-down humor” of the playwright Aristophanes to Menander's wry comedy of manners. The class breaks up in laughter.



All in all, it was not the reaction Rundin was hoping for.

“I'm hurt, but I'll get over it,” he says with a laugh. “We'll go over the play bit by bit and by the time you get out of here I hope you'll be convinced this is a funny play.”

## The beginning

*The Girl from Samos* is typical of Menander's plays, Rundin tells the class. It has a five-act structure, a chorus that provided singing and dancing between the acts, and a prologue by one of the main characters.

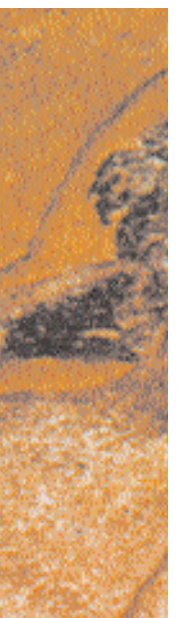
In this play, the prologue is given by a young Athenian bachelor named Moschion, who is the adoptive son of Demeas, an elderly bachelor. The main characters are Chrysis, a Samian woman who is Demeas' mistress; Nikeratos, Demeas' good friend and neighbor; and Plangon, the daughter of Nikeratos and the lover of Moschion.

Rundin summarizes the setup to the class. Chrysis has gotten pregnant by Demeas. Because an illegitimate child would complicate his inheritance, Demeas instructs Chrysis to “expose the child” after its birth.

“It's hard for us to imagine that someone would say ‘Leave a child out to die because we don't want to mess up the family fortune,’ but this is the way people thought about these things in the ancient world,” Rundin says.

In the prologue, Moschion explains that he has gotten Plangon pregnant during the festival of Adonis and that he would very much like to marry her.

Chrysis' and Plangon's babies are born when Demeas and Nikeratos are out of town together on a business trip. The play doesn't say what exactly happens to Chrysis' baby, Rundin says, and there is no more mention of it in the play. However, Chrysis, in an act of maternal care and love for Moschion, decides to help care for Plangon's and Moschion's newborn.







**Top, an image from the House of Menander, Pompeii. Photo courtesy of Paul Alessi, UTSA classics professor. Above, detail of fresco.**

“[Plangon’s] a nice, respectable girl and you can’t have her running around with a kid,” Rundin says. “So Chrysis has taken the child to wet-nurse.”

Throughout the synopsis, Rundin keeps eye contact with his students, asking, “Everybody following me?” So far, so good.

Now, Demeas and Nikeratos are about to return from their trip. In an ironic coincidence that foreshadows the happy ending, they’ve been discussing an arranged marriage between their children, Moschion and Plangon. But when Demeas comes home to find his mistress with an infant, he is furious. Demeas assumes that the baby is his, and before Chrysis can explain, he’s threatening to turn both of them out of the house. Chrysis leaves the scene in despair.

When Demeas tells Moschion of his plan to have him marry Plangon, Moschion is only too happy to comply. Indeed, he tells his father he has fallen in love with Plangon—leaving out the small detail that the two have already had a son. Demeas walks away from the conversation marveling that “coincidence must really be a deity.”

Preparations for the wedding begin.

## The middle

Now that Rundin and the class have dispensed with the fragmented first two acts, he assigns the students roles in Acts 3 and 4 to read aloud. The student reading Demeas begins with lines full of portent:

*In the midst of a fair voyage, a storm can suddenly appear from nowhere. Such a storm has often shattered and capsized those who a moment ago were running nicely before the wind.*

Demeas has just overheard an old nurse saying that the baby is Moschion’s. He jumps to the terrible conclusion that his son and his own mistress have had a baby!

He decides to try and keep this terrible scandal secret, but he also banishes a confused Chrysis from his house.

As the class reads the lines aloud, the play begins to lift off the page and take shape. The students’ voices infuse the witty dialogue with real feeling and they laugh appreciably at each new comic turn.

Just when the play reaches a crescendo of chaos, Menander has one of his characters say, “I’m just beginning to understand what’s going on.” Within a few pages, everything is put right and the play ends in a wedding.

By the end of the reading, there’s no doubt that the class has a better appreciation for Menander’s comic genius.

## The end

During the rest of the class, the students discuss the differences between comedy and tragedy.

“Mistaken identities can be really, really funny or they can be really horrific,” Rundin says, reminding the class of the hair-raising episodes of mistaken identity in Euripides’ *Helen*, a play they read earlier in the semester.

But what’s the difference between a mistaken identity that’s funny and one that’s tragic? Rundin asks.

“Depends on the consequences,” answers one student.

Before sending the class home with an assignment to create their own comic scene, Rundin and the class improvise some ideas. The students, one of whom

works as a stand-up comic, jump in with scenarios where comedy arises from mistaken identity or incongruity.

Perhaps Rundin will discover a modern-day Menander in the bunch. Or perhaps he just wants the class to take a walk in the writer’s shoes—to try to write a farce as funny as Menander’s.

## SYLLABUS: CLASSICAL COMEDY

Of his teaching method, Rundin says, “I think of teaching as a sort of ritual process where people are transformed.

“You have a process, sort of a beginning, a middle and an end. I think teaching has that quality of a transformational performance.”

The assigned texts include plays by Aristophanes (*Wasps*, *Lysistrata*, *Frogs*, *Ecclesiazusae*), Euripides (*Helen*), Menander (*The Dyskolos*, *The Girl from Samos*), Plautus (*Miles Gloriosus*; *The Menaechmi*), Terence (*Brothers*) and Juvenal (*various satires*).

The first part of the course is devoted to Aristophanes, the most revered writer of Old Comedy, whose plays were produced from 427 to 388 BCE.

“Old Comedy is like Monty Python,” Rundin says, referring to the legendary English troupe that specialized in outlandish political satire.

On the other hand, New Comedy is surely the mother of all screwball sitcoms (think “I Love Lucy”). The full-frontal parody of Old Comedy is absent, replaced by witty plots featuring stock characters who get crosswise with one another. Happy endings are the norm.

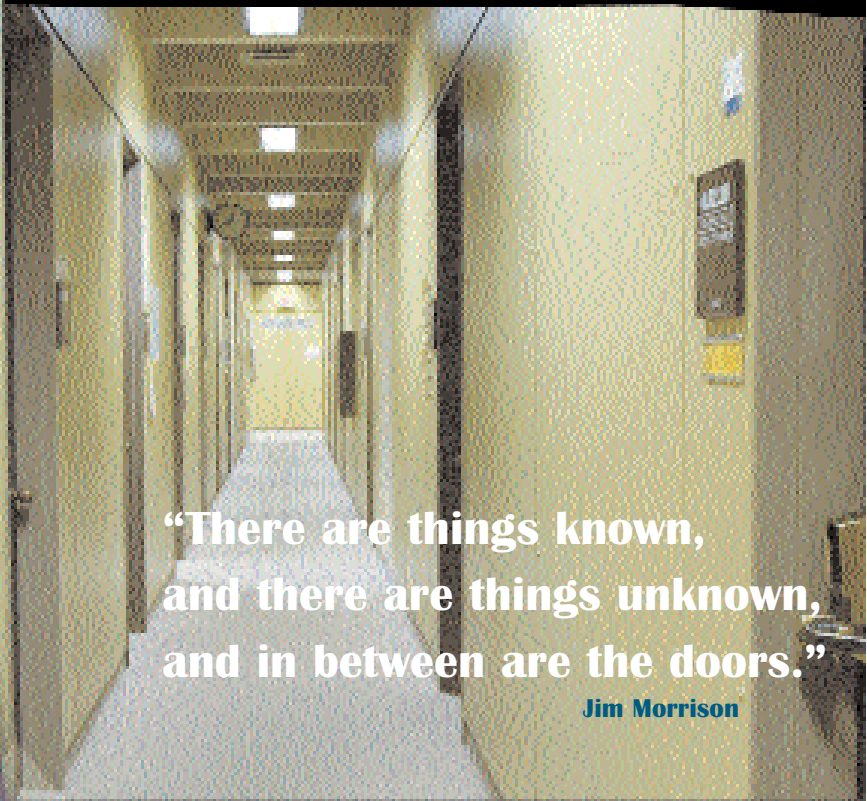
New Comedy plays were adopted and adapted by Roman playwrights, and from there they served as the foundation of western comedic tradition.

The foolishness and clever dialogue was indeed “ripped off” by Shakespeare. We owe Menander a great deal of thanks.

*Editor’s note: BCE means “before the common era” and corresponds to BC (before Christ) and CE means “the common era” and corresponds to AD (in the year of our Lord).*



# DOOR CU



**“There are things known,  
and there are things unknown,  
and in between are the doors.”**  
**Jim Morrison**

John Morris sits in his fourth-floor office in the Multidisciplinary Studies Building, contemplating what he considers one of the shortcomings of working in higher education: Faculty don't tell jokes anymore.

At least not verbally, muses Morris, an associate professor of interdisciplinary studies and geography. It could be that universities are like any other work environment where people may have fallen out of the practice of sharing chuckles at the watercooler for fear of possibly offending a PC passerby. Maybe the advent of the Internet and e-mail has changed the way people communicate humorous ideas—visually instead of verbally.

Whatever the reason, Morris concludes, “There’s not enough humor in academia.”

And that’s a shame, he says. But he’s doing his part to keep colleagues and students laughing. The door to his office is covered with a neatly aligned mosaic of cartoons, drawings and photographs. Even in its remote, short hallway, Morris’ door always attracts attention from those walking by.

“It’s like an accident on 1604,” he says. “Everybody stops.”

Causing hallway traffic jams is not his intention. Rather, Morris says, the door is an outward projection of his personality. “It is a way for me to be expressive,” he says.

Morris is one of many faculty who use the doors of their offices as a canvas for displaying jokes, posters, ads, newspaper clippings, children’s drawings and other printed materials. Their doors share ideas, both serious and satirical, and sometimes just a pretty picture.

It is, in fact, the world’s best-known pretty painting that serves as the theme for art history professor Judy Sobré’s office door, which sits in a well-traveled hall in the Arts Building.



# CULTURE

By Rebecca Luther

"I have a collection of cartoons on a bulletin board inside my office, and I realized I had a bunch of Mona Lisas," says Sobré, a faculty member since 1974. "Because Mona Lisa is such a popular thing, funny things keep turning up with Mona Lisa on them."

Aside from a bumper sticker that reads, "The ship sank. Get over it," Sobré's door is devoted to images of Mona: Mona Lisa posing for her driver's license photo, Mona Lisa sporting wild-eyed contact lenses, a clan of Mona Lisas playing poker, and, Sobré's favorite, Monica (Lewinsky) as Mona. "Everybody loved that one," she says.

Like Morris, Sobré says her door has become an interactive effort, with admirers providing her with new images (and occasionally snatching ones they covet). "People started bringing Mona Lisas to me. . . . Students and colleagues have found some of the best ones."

Not all faculty who post items on their office doors do so for amusement purposes only. Mark Bernstein, who has taught philosophy at UTSA for 17 years, uses his office door to express his deeply held opposition to animal testing. While many doors in the Humanities and Social Sciences Building—arguably the most door-decorated site on any UTSA campus—are plastered with cartoons or art posters, Bernstein's features photos of caged animals that have been used for scientific and cosmetic testing.

"My intention is to get people's attention, and hopefully to get people to read the material," he says.

To that end, Bernstein thinks he's been successful. Some of his own students have become vegetarian or simply stopped buying from companies that test products on animals. But the door, he says, is a way of sharing his beliefs with others who may never take one of his classes.

"I don't even know how many people read it," he says. "Hopefully, it's had a good effect."

Connecting with students is one reason Amy Jasperson, an assistant professor of political science, displays on her MS office door a collection of photos of politicians superimposed with humorous dialogue bubbles. In one, George W. Bush promises, if elected president, to study real hard. Pointing from a podium, Jesse Ventura offers to field one more question—from the woman in the wet T-shirt. Those photos and the other jokes Jasperson posts serve a purpose other than to entertain students waiting to meet with her during office hours.

"It's supposed to be funny, but it's also to get people to think," she says. "For every joke, there is a very serious and true point behind it."

"I'm just trying to raise students' interest in politics, just to get them to think about things."

Not all faculty are door decorators. Posted cartoons, pictures and the like are not as prevalent in some of the newer buildings, and they're simply nonexistent on the doors in the Business Building. But don't take that as a sign of a humorless faculty, says 24-year veteran marketing professor Joel Saegert.

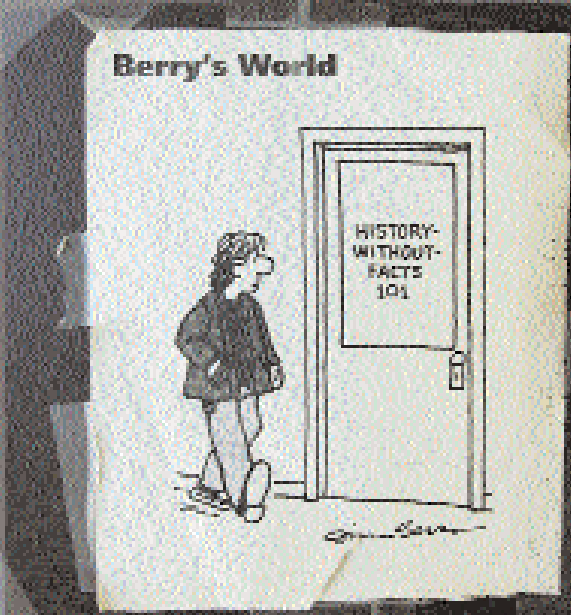
Saegert says many business professors posted items on their doors when the College of Business was housed in the HB



(Humanities-Business Building), which is now the HSS. But when the college moved into its own building in 1997, it was decided, in an effort to keep the new facility looking tidy, that the decorated doors would stay behind.

"There was a spirit, at least, that we were not going to put things on the doors," he says.

But bare doors, Saegert cautions, don't necessarily mean the offices behind them are equally uncluttered: "If you saw the inside of my office," he says with a laugh, "you certainly wouldn't think so."





# The Building Block of

Think of them as modern-day stonemasons, as valuable to their day, and to their field, as the men who gave a permanent and distinctive shape to Central Texas towns a century ago. Only instead of limestone or red granite, the materials assistant professors Richard LeBaron, Brian Derrick and Matthew Gdovin work with are microscopic slides of multisyllabic material—slices of brain cells, bits of



One cell at a time, UTSA neuroscientists search for answers about the brain—and cultivate minority scholars along the way.

# ocks Science

protein. They're skilled laborers in the field of neuroscience, and what they're crafting is knowledge about the brain.

Under the guidance of a job foreman of sorts—Joe Martinez, Ewing Halsell Professor of Biology and director of the Division of Life Sciences—they are part of a cadre of neuroscientists who are studying how experience changes the brain.

Martinez calls himself a builder. He left the highly competitive University of California at Berkeley to construct a “nonelitist” department. Although he has garnered top NIH awards, he values working with junior faculty.

Derrick, Gdovin and LeBaron are just three of the life sciences investigators who are researching why brains cells do what they do, how these cells communicate with one another and how we might influence a cell's behavior for the better. Collectively, their research could help doctors remedy or treat such daunting medical challenges as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and sleep apnea. This promising research is being supported by a unique federal grant program that funds collaborative research at minority-serving institutions.

## SNRP—it's all in a name

After years of belt-tightening, the federal government's flow of funds through its science pipeline, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has relaxed a few notches. Most recently, NIH recognized the need to direct some of the flow of funds to a task that has largely been overlooked: nurturing minority scientists.

“If minorities aren't educated at the same rate and at the same level as everyone else, the United States will have a hard time competing in the world,” says Martinez, a native of New Mexico.

Data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board puts a local face on the national problem. In 1990, Hispanics made up one-quarter of the state's population; in 2030 that figure is expected to be 46 percent. But as recently as 1990, 55 percent of Texas' Hispanics age 25 and older hadn't finished high school and only 11 percent had obtained at least an associate's degree.

By Clinton Colmenares

The number of Hispanics graduating with advanced college degrees is growing, but the overall total remains very low. In 1976, 1.8 percent of all graduates with a doctoral degree were Hispanic; in 1996, the total was 3.2 percent, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics.

Specialized Neuroscience Research Programs (SNRP) at institutions with large minority populations is the NIH's answer to leveling the playing field. Despite its cartoonish acronym (it rhymes with “slurp”), SNRP stands for serious science and serious money—\$6.2 million over five years to LeBaron, Derrick and Gdovin and their collaborators.

UTSA is one of five inaugural SNRP recipients. Howard University, the University of Puerto Rico, the Universidad Central del Caribe in Puerto Rico and the University of Hawaii also received SNRP grants.

The federal funds help outfit laboratories and pay salaries. By including students and postgraduates in their lab work, Martinez points out, the grant trickles down to the community. For South Texas undergraduates who want to pursue careers in neuroscience, there's a research institution in their backyard.

“The government is making available large amounts of resources to us to provide teaching and research. The NIH can't do those things. Only [university and research institutions] can do that,” Martinez says. “For our students, it gives them experience to work in these labs, with these scientists, so they can go on to compete with any other students, and so they can go out and contribute.”

One SNRP stipulation is that the “young investigators” collaborate with senior scientists. LeBaron chose Martinez, whose interest in cellular activity parallels his own. Gdovin and Derrick went outside of UTSA, extending the school's reach. Gdovin spent his graduate school days in a lab at Dartmouth Medical School, next to his chosen collaborator, James Leiter, professor of physiology and medicine. Derrick's collaborator is Bruce McEwen, professor and head of the neuroendocrinology lab at Rockefeller University in New York, whose work already dovetailed the UTSA professor's.



Joe Martinez



**Breathing and the brain**

Matthew Gdovin is blessed—or cursed, depending on perspective—with “tenacious intellect,” according to his SNRP collaborator.

“He will not let go of a problem until he has a full understanding of it,” Leiter says.

It’s been that way Gdovin’s entire academic life. It took him nine years to complete his undergraduate degree at UTSA. To pay his way through school, he’d skip semesters to work construction. If intellectual curiosity fizzled, manual labor under San Antonio’s summer sun put him back on track.

“I had to stay focused. I didn’t like roofing houses,” he says.

His determination paid off with a full scholarship to Dartmouth for his master’s degree. Then it was on to doctoral work at the University of Calgary, where he pioneered the use of tadpoles as research subjects.

There’s a room off of Gdovin’s lab full of aquariums. Hundreds of *Rana catesbeiana* (or bullfrog) tadpoles swim in the tanks. Some have full range of the tanks. They’re the control tadpoles. Others, however, are restricted from reaching air by a clear plexiglass barrier two inches from the water’s surface.

Halfway across the country, Leiter’s lab is replicating Gdovin’s experiments, looking for the key to breathing by examining the tadpoles that mature to air-breathers and those who are stuck under the surface. He wants to find the differences in their physical and neurological makeup.



“My idea for tadpoles is that they undergo a transition from gill to lung breathing,” Gdovin says, just as humans go from amniotic “breaths” to gasping for air.

Matthew Gdovin, left.  
James Leiter, right.



Within the medulla oblongata—a part of the brain stem—there’s an arching formation called the arcuate nucleus that’s responsible for telling the brain and lungs when the body has too much carbon dioxide.

When arcuate nucleus senses high CO-2 levels, it signals the diaphragm and the lungs to breathe faster and deeper.

It’s believed that babies with SIDS have a defect here.

“The fetuses of all mammals in late gestation develop breathing movements,” Gdovin says. In amniotic fluid, of course, there’s no exchange of carbon dioxide for oxygen, but “the brain’s synaptic connections signal the diaphragm to work and the fetus actually practices breathing movements. Receptors in the brain convey the flexing of the diaphragm muscles,” he adds.

A tadpole has this same section of brain stem. And, Leiter says, “tadpoles offer the opportunity to look at development outside a uterus and a representation of advanced brain stem function.”

“My idea for tadpoles is that they undergo a transition from gill to lung breathing,” Gdovin says, just as humans go from amniotic “breaths” to gasping for air.

“The function of the respiratory circuitry is to coordinate lung breaths and stimulate CO-2 response. By preventing tadpoles from taking a breath, would the nerve signals that stimulate lung function and CO-2 response also be restricted? Would that prevent the maturation of lung circuitry?” Gdovin wonders.

If the barrier modifies the tadpoles’ development, Leiter says, “it would be a fantastic finding.” It would go a long way toward explaining how the respiratory system works. And, Gdovin says, the implication for explaining SIDS is indirect but possibly absolute.

“I keep thinking if I can describe how the respiratory system works, I can work my way out of it to find the defect,” Gdovin says. “If the animal model can produce CO-2 sensitivity, we can find the signal that prevents it.”

**Memories and the brain**

His dad sold cars; mom was a typist. Not exactly science wizards, at least not in vocation. But somehow out of this amalgam of middle-class America, Brian Derrick was certain of two things: he would be a neurobiologist, and he would drive a sports car.

After six years of undergraduate studies in pharmacology, neurophysiology and microbiology at UC Berkeley, he was a scientist. In graduate school, he was also a teacher and a published researcher.

Now Derrick is on a quest to understand how the brain grows, specifically how to spark the brain into growing new cells.

“For many years it was believed that the adult brain doesn’t change in structure, that it stops and remains fairly stable,” says Bruce McEwen, Derrick’s collaborator.

In the 1960s, Shirley Bayer, one of the early pioneers of Parkinson’s research, discovered that the adult brain made new nerve cells. Her discovery in laboratory rats was largely ignored, Derrick says. About five years ago, a postdoc named Liz Gould, working in McEwen’s lab, discovered new cells being formed in the brains of primates. This process of making new nerve cells, called neurogenesis, is now commonly accepted.

But, McEwen says, “increasingly we’ve come to recognize that some cells in the brain can be broken down and reformed. The dendrites [the cell part that communicates with other nerve cells] can get shorter or grow and expand. What’s been missing is whether nerve cells can be replaced.”

Derrick’s work may help answer that question affirmatively and help describe how to do it.

When a laboratory rat ages, its brain slows the making of new nerve cells. It also stops producing new memories, and long-term memories fade, Derrick says.

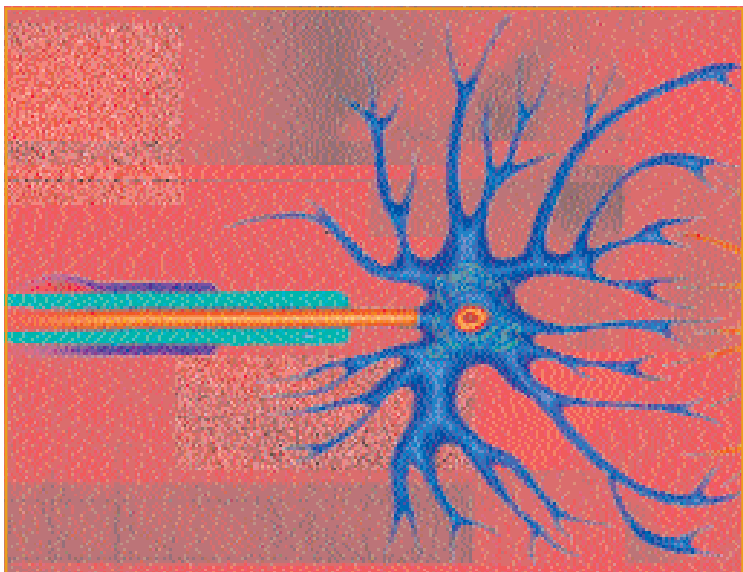
In humans, this phenomenon, known as interference with working memory, is accentuated by dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. Since Gould’s work, Derrick has discovered that a part of brain’s hippocampus (the brain’s memory center) called the dentate gyrus can be stimulated into neurogenesis, thereby, he says, creating the potential for new memory and learning capacity.

These newly formed cells are nerve stem cells. Similar to those recovered in umbilical cord blood, they are formed without a predicted function but take on a purpose as needed by their environment. When these cells are placed among other learning and memory cells, those roles become theirs as well.

“If stem cells are in an enriched environment, they not only will







**Brain cells do have finite life spans, and if they're not used, they shrink. Lack of stimulation and natural turnover can actually shrink the brain—it's the old "use it or lose it" scenario.**



**Brian Derrick, left, and Bruce McEwen.**

not die off, they will make new connections," Derrick says.

Using laboratory rats fitted with special helmets that measure stimulation in different parts of the brain, Derrick is trying to determine exactly what kind of stimulation, where and when, prompts the making of new nerve cells.

"If we can keep the neurons dividing at the same rate through adulthood, we can possibly prevent memory deficits with aging," Derrick says. "This is a pretty big step toward making a clinical application to understanding, and reversing, brain damage."

The work might also have implications for people with post-traumatic stress disorder and depressive illness, McEwen says.

By the way, being a scientist wasn't Derrick's only accomplishment. When he goes home at the end of a long day in the lab, he makes the drive in a sporty BMW. Some predictions are simply an understanding of fate.

### Learning and the brain

There's a large poster of a mature bald eagle above Richard LeBaron's desk. The bird's stare is stern and focused, its powerful, golden beak prominent.

The bird means business. If there's any doubt, a block-lettered phrase wipes it away: "I am smiling."

Beneath this portrait there's Richard LeBaron. Perched in his chair, LeBaron displays a similarly concentrated stare, albeit from behind a hefty pair of reading glasses.

LeBaron's work hinges on cell adhesion and how nerve cells communicate and bond with each other chemically to stimulate learning and create a memory.

"We want to know how the brain stores information," says LeBaron's collaborator, Martinez. "If we remember something our

first-grade teacher taught us it's because it created a physical impact." He and LeBaron are trying to find what allowed that impact to occur within the brain.

"We're really going to find out some interesting things. It's going to be a great time to be in the lab," Martinez says.

Proteins—the integrins and proteoglycans—create ports in a cell membrane that open or close, allowing ions to move in or out of the cell. Working under a microscope, the researchers tap into individual brain cells with a micropipette, an ultra-thin hollow glass tube that provides a suction and opens the cell. The environment within the pipette is altered to target specific ports, and electrodes measure the volts of energy flow created when these ions move across the cell membrane. The greater the voltage, the greater the flow.

By measuring these results, LeBaron and Martinez have narrowed the search from 16 integrins to six, and from around 30 proteoglycans to four.

Also key to their research is a process called long-term potentiation (LTP). Lightning-like firing between cells keys a chain reaction of learning. When LTP takes place, these cells have undergone a long-lasting, not quite permanent improvement in synaptic, or firing, efficacy, enabling them to learn something more easily and hold onto the information longer. It's thought that LTP is the basis, at the nerve-cell level, for long-term memory.

If scientists like LeBaron can learn how to increase LTP, they might discover how to increase long-term memory.

"Maybe integrins and proteoglycans play some role in cell adhesion. Maybe a synapse occurs and strengthens physical or trans-membrane signaling. Maybe there's a connection and hard wiring between the genes," LeBaron says.

And maybe he and collaborator Joe Martinez will find it. Understanding this neuropathology, Martinez says, could explain what happens during Alzheimer's disease.

And, LeBaron says, scientists might also learn how cells communicate during wound healing, cancer cell growth or even development.

"Pretty cool, huh?" says LeBaron.

Yeah, he's serious about this science business. And there's a smile there, somewhere.

### What's ahead

UTSA's SNRP scientists aren't working in a vacuum. It will take the work of neuroscientists and others to test the information on living models and translate the data to meaningful applications, such as understanding SIDS, memory and learning.

Martinez, the science sage, reminds us that one of the most important future implications of SNRP and the research it supports lies in the possibilities of further exploration and understanding.

"We can use the SNRP grant as a core, to build a larger entity at UTSA that will encourage basic science and clinical research," he says. "Our scientists here understand that the largest contribution to science may be the legacy of the people they train, who go off and have a multiplicity effect on society."

*Clinton Colmenares is a science writer living in Nashville, Tenn. He is a previous winner of the Anson Jones M.D. Award from the Texas Medical Association.*



**Richard LeBaron, left, and Joe Martinez.**

# Class Notes

## Alumni



### Fruit and bagels, beer and burgers, live music and free goodies

Diploma Dash is much more than a race. The 5K run and fitness walk, sponsored by the UTSA Alumni Association, raises approximately \$18,000 annually for student scholarships and serves as the San Antonio City Championship. Participants and volunteers receive a free long-sleeved Diploma Dash T-shirt. Medals and cash awards are given to the top finishers in each age category and the corporate team division.

Diploma Dash will be held on Saturday, Feb. 24, at the Convocation Center on the UTSA 1604 Campus. On-site registration and check-in begins at 8 a.m. The race starts at 9 a.m. Early registration is \$15 per person before Feb. 19, or \$20 on race day. Registration for corporate teams of five is \$250. Registration forms are available at San Antonio sports stores, or you can register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). For more information or to serve as a race-day volunteer, contact Jane Findling at (210) 458-4133 or [jfindling@utsa.edu](mailto:jfindling@utsa.edu).

**77 Marco A. Lucio**, M.A. in environmental science, is an insurance agent for Farmers Insurance in San Antonio.

**79 Tim McCallum**, B.B.A. in accounting, was elected to the board of directors for Security Service Federal Credit Union, where he has been a volunteer for eight years. Tim and his wife, Frankie, have three children.

**80 William "Bill" Bassett**, B.A. in political science, was promoted to squadron commander and is stationed at Fort Rucker, Ala. Bill commands the only U.S. Air Force squadron that awards pilot wings to all Air Force helicopter pilots.

**Randy C. Quiroz**, B.B.A. in accounting, M.P.A. in accounting '85, is an agent for the Internal Revenue Service in Long Beach, Calif.

**81 David Blackwell**, B.A. in criminal justice, has been a pilot for the U.S. Customs Service for 11 years. He served in the U.S. Army from 1981 to 1988 and resigned with the rank of major. David and his wife, Pam, have three children: Travis, 17; Trent, 15; and Tara, 11.

**Jack T. Thornton**, M.A. in English, has moved to Crownsville, Md., where he is an adjunct professor and is writing a book. His wife has joined the faculty at the Naval Academy.

**82 Martin W. Gordon**, B.B.A. in management, and his wife, Amy, have a son, Martin Wright Gordon III, born August 22, 1999.

**Reeta Mathis Holmes**, B.A. in psychology, is a compensation consultant for the City of Austin.

**Cynthia (Suggs) Medlin**, B.B.A. in accounting, is a captain in the U.S. Army and works with the ROTC at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. Cynthia and her husband, Chris, have one son, Zachary.

**Jerre B. Richardson**, B.B.A. in management, M.B.A. in business '84, is self-employed as an educational consultant in San Antonio.

**83 James R. Miller**, B.A. in sociology, is employed with the Department of Defense at Lackland Air Force Base as a GS-09. He teaches pipeline students in the Traffic Management Apprentice Course.

**84 William L. Patton**, M.P.A. in accounting, was named to the executive board of the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants.

**William Pope**, B.B.A. in accounting, is president of E-Commerce Development Associates, which conducts marketing/market development projects for major e-commerce businesses.

**Ruben Sepulveda Jr.**, B.B.A. in finance, is the owner of Sepulveda Enterprises Inc., the parent company of Don Pedro Mexican Restaurant on Southwest Military Drive in San Antonio.

**86 Michael C. Williams**, B.S. in mathematics, lives in Silver Springs, Md., with his wife, Esco, and their four children. Mike is the owner of Williams International, an international Internet e-commerce business in Washington, D.C.

**87 Dave De Leon**, B.B.A. in accounting, and his wife, Susan, have three children. He works for the American Red Cross National Headquarters out of Falls Church, Va. They moved to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., after an assignment in Europe and will be going to Kosovo for a four-month tour.

**Mario Marcel Salas**, B.A. in English, and city councilman for District 2 in San Antonio, is the author of *Frankenstein: The Drawing and the Passing*, published by the Watercress Press, San Antonio.

**88 Sandra T. Welch**, M.P.A. in accounting, is interim division director of UTSA's Division of Accounting and Information Systems.

**89 John René Haase**, B.A. in biology, is the business manager for Advanced Smile Care. He received his M.B.A. at Our Lady of the Lake University in May.

**90 Mark J. Gavora**, B.A. in psychology, married Lizbeth Campos on Sept. 4, 1999. They are living in Atlanta, Ga., where Mark is human resources Web product manager at Southern Company.



**Susan (Japuntich) Huether**, B.A. in psychology, is a licensed nursing facility administrator for Menard Manor and Retirement Center and was chosen a preceptor for administrators in training. She and her husband, Ronald, have two grandchildren, Ariel and Zachary.

**91 Sheila Roper**, B.A. in early childhood and elementary education, is a fifth-grade teacher and student council sponsor at Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary after teaching for seven years at Somerset Elementary. Sheila and her husband, Dale, have two children.

**92 Stephen C. Brown**, M.S. in environmental science, is an assistant professor in UTSA's Division of Earth and Physical Sciences.

**Margaret Van Alstyne Gonzales**, B.A. in psychology, has been promoted to executive assistant for the City of San Antonio.

**Richard E. Krampe**, B.B.A. in accounting, received his C.P.A. in May and is senior auditor for Armstrong, Vaughan and Associates in Universal City, Texas.

**Carl C. Machemer Jr.**, B.B.A. in accounting, has been promoted to GS-13 in the U.S. Air Force, stationed at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii.

**Mark E. Villarreal**, B.B.A. in accounting, M.B.A. in information systems '00, was promoted to vice president/assistant director at San Antonio Federal Credit Union.

**93 Larry Thompson**, B.F.A. in art, has been named assistant professor and chairman of the visual arts department at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkansas.

**94 Don Barker**, B.S. in mechanical engineering, married Elvira Ravicz on May 15, 1999.

**Adam J. Rodriguez**, B.B.A. in finance, works at USAA in the property and casualty department. Adam and his wife, Ludivina, have been married for four years. Adam hopes to complete his M.B.A. in 2001.

**95 Don Bergstrom**, B.S. in computer science, was promoted to senior Web developer at Clarke American. He and wife, Lori, have been married for two years.

**Jacklyn (Letendre) Green**, M.A. in early childhood education, is a stay-at-home mom to her son, Parker, after teaching in the South San Antonio Independent School District for nine years. Jacklyn and her husband, Air Force Captain Randy Green, are stationed at West Point, N.Y.

**Luis T. Guerrero**, B.S. in kinesiology, accepted a position as senior process engineer, quality assurance with Bell Helicopter, Textron, in Hurst, Texas, after completing service in the U.S. Army at Fort Hood, Texas. Luis and his wife, Tonya, have two children and are expecting their third child in May.

**Bret A. Love**, B.B.A. in information systems, was promoted to programming supervisor at Universal Computer Systems in Houston.

**Robert S. Martinez**, B.A. in history, is a flight engineer on the CH-47D army helicopter. He is a civil service employee working at Corpus Christi Army Depot. Robert and his wife, Nita Arlene, have two children: Liana, 5; and Ben, 18 months.

**96 Karl William Boehme**, B.S. in biology, married Kathryn Anne Epley on July 1, 2000.

**David A. Cortez**, B.A. in criminal justice, is a captain in the U.S. Air Force stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala.

**Ian S. "Buddy" Lovestock**, B.S. in criminal justice, formerly with the Bexar County Sheriff's Office in San Antonio, accepted the position of assistant police chief for the Seguin, Texas, Police Department.

**Kevin Wingfield**, B.B.A. in personnel/human resource management, married April Heinz in October.

**97 John M. Canavan III**, B.B.A. in management, is engaged to marry Rebecca Ann Houser on March 3. He is self-employed in the oil and gas business.

**Michelle McCabe**, B.B.A. in personnel/human resource management, was promoted to firm administrator at Burford and Ryburn L.L.P. Michelle lives in the Dallas-area suburb of Sachse, Texas.

**Martha Treviño**, B.A. in communication, is a reporter for KMOL in San Antonio (see profile, page 22). Martha is the daughter of Alicia C. Treviño '86, who was president of the board of directors of the Alumni Association for 1999–2000.

## Profile Alumna turns love of soap-making into Internet business

*Her e-mail user name is "soapdoc," a reference to the fact that she's a Ph.D. who gave up working as a psychologist to make soap. Yes, soap.*

*In fact, Lois Kelch Petrella (B.A. in psychology '83) has been known to rise before dawn to make the decorative, scented soaps she sells through her Web site, [www.soap-n-more.com](http://www.soap-n-more.com). Not that soap-making necessitates the early hours; it's just that she gets so excited about her new career.*

*"I love soap," she says. "I have never been happier in a job in my whole life."*

*And she has had several jobs before starting Soap-n-More last February. An Alabama native, Petrella enlisted in the Army to earn college tuition through the G.I. Bill. She served as an administrative assistant from 1975 to 1978, then in the U.S. Army Reserves. But her military career and that of her then-husband kept them on the move. She finally found the opportunity and time to get her degree in 1981, when the couple were transferred from Kansas City to Fort Sam Houston.*

*"I started UTSA immediately. I went and checked the catalog and found they had what I wanted," she says. "It was a great program. I think I learned more there than I did in grad school."*

*Petrella completed her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in Alabama in 1992 after moving back to her hometown of Huntsville, Ala. She worked for one year at a mental health institute in Chattanooga, Tenn., then opened a private practice in that city.*

*But she closed her practice after a few years when she realized she was no longer "invested" in the work. She taught psychology classes at Alabama A&M University while spending her free time preparing for her next career—as the "soapdoc."*

*"I don't know exactly why it was soap, but I've always loved making things," she says.*

*Petrella is a self-taught soap maker. Using information she found on the Internet and in books, she followed existing recipes and created new recipes through trial-and-error to build the line of products available at [soap-n-more.com](http://soap-n-more.com). She relies on aromatherapy tenets to guide her in matching scents. Her favorite is one of her own creations, Warm Morning, a blend of rose oil, lavender oil, calendula flowers and chamomile. She's also proud of another Soap-n-More invention, bath and shower mousse.*

*"It's like creamy soap in a jar," she says.*

*But soap-making isn't always sweet, she cautions. "The thing about soap is, first of all, you're dealing with caustic materials, and you have to be careful. You have to measure to the tenth of an ounce. You have to get the temperature of the oil and the lye exactly right."*

*While the Soap-n-More operation is outgrowing her home, Petrella has hopes of growing the business well beyond a cottage industry. She is negotiating to sell franchise rights to an importer in Japan.*

*"I want to be a soap tycoon," she says. "I am becoming a soap tycoon."*

— Rebecca Luther



# Class Notes

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**Judy A. Juarez**, B.B.A. in management, married Brad Crockett in July. Judy is a sales assistant at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter in Highland Park, Texas.

**Susan J. Leigh**, B.S. in geology, is a geoscientist at GeoQuest-Schlumberger. Susan lives in Richardson, Texas.

**Gerald L. Salters**, B.B.A. in personnel/human resource management, is regional human resource manager at Home Depot in San Antonio.

**Cliff Whittingstall**, B.B.A. in architectural design, graduated from Clemson University with a master's degree in architecture in May.

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**Kenneth Guzman**, B.B.A. in general business, is working in marketing for M2 Global Technology in San Antonio.

**Mark D. Howard**, B.Music, is a lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force receiving navigator training at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio. Mark is engaged to marry Shannon Charles, B.A. in communication '98, on Jan. 20.

**Ruben J. Reyna**, B.B.A. in finance, is an investment representative for USAA.

**Jacqueline Kay Roman**, B.S. in biology, received the National Scholarship for Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists.

00

**Tamara Grubbs**, B.B.A. in finance, is co-owner, with UTSA alumnus Luke Robinson, of EPSM, an e-commerce consulting company in San Antonio.

**Jason Honeycutt**, B.A. in criminal justice, attends Baylor Law School.

**Jayne Lawrence**, M.F.A. in art, was awarded the Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Award by the International Sculpture Center (ISC). She is a participant in the Grounds For Sculpture's fall/winter exhibition, which is on view until April 8 at the Hamilton, N.J., sculpture park. Jayne's work will also be featured in an issue of ISC's *Sculpture* magazine and on the ISC Web site, [www.sculpture.org](http://www.sculpture.org).

## Profile

### Reporter comes home to San Antonio

*The new reporter on the 10 o'clock news should look familiar to many. She is alumna Martha Treviño (B.A. in communication '97), reporting the news for KMOL-TV in her adopted hometown—San Antonio.*

*Born in Monterrey, Mexico, Treviño and her family moved to San Antonio in 1982. She attended Hobby Middle School and Clark High School, then decided she wanted to attend college in San Antonio, too.*

*"UTSA offered what I was looking for, and I wanted to stay close to my family," she says.*

*"I was fortunate to attend UTSA with my mother, Alicia Treviño, and my sister, Gaby. We remain close with the Alumni Association, where my mother was the 1999–2000 alumni president."*

*It was while attending UTSA that Treviño got her big break, when she participated in a beauty pageant, Nuestra Belleza, sponsored by Univision. After winning the title of Ms. Nuestra Belleza, she was offered an internship at the local Univision station. "This was a very exciting time for me," she says. "I gained a new perspective about pageants as well as direction for my future."*

*The internship led to appearances on Univision's internationally syndicated entertainment program, Fuera de Serie. "I was able to interview many talented Tejano musicians, and I was especially lucky to interview Selena," Treviño says.*

*After graduation, her first professional job took her to Laredo's NBC affiliate, KGNS, where she was weekend anchor and was eventually promoted to the 6 and 10 p.m. anchor spot.*

*"While I was in Laredo, my team was awarded the Associated Press' Mark Twain award for the difficult story on the district attorney federal investigation," Treviño says, referring to the investigation of Webb County District Attorney Joe Rubio's office that led to the August convictions of the "Webb Five."*

*Moving quickly up the broadcast journalism ladder, Treviño moved to Waco to anchor the morning*



*and noon broadcasts for KCEN-TV. Her next move was to KXAN, Austin's NBC affiliate, where she was the Hill Country bureau chief.*

*"Each move has been a progression of my career, and I was so excited to be offered a position in San Antonio," she says.*

*In June, Treviño began reporting for KMOL, San Antonio's NBC affiliate. Her job allows her to report on issues ranging from courtroom trials to education.*

*"This is where I want to be. I consider San Antonio home, and I want to develop and grow my talents in this market," she says. "My family and friends are very supportive. They are so happy to have me back in San Antonio."*

*Though she switched from Spanish-language broadcasting several years ago, Treviño believes that her ability to speak two languages continues to help her gain momentum in the industry. Speaking Spanish in San Antonio goes a long way, she says—it helped her land an exclusive interview on one of the biggest local stories of the year.*

*"I had just begun working with KMOL when Archbishop Patrick Flores was taken hostage. I really worked hard to get an interview with the hostage-taker's wife. She only spoke Spanish, and I worked hard to gain her respect, and she granted me an interview," Treviño says.*

*Treviño believes in giving back to the community she's reporting on.*

*"I give speeches to children to encourage them to attend college," she says. "Since my job has brought me back to San Antonio, I can hardly wait to give back to my community." — Anita Uribe Martin*

4

## easy ways to keep us informed

Keep in touch with your fellow Roadrunners. New jobs, relocations, accomplishments, marriages—whatever your news, share it with friends and classmates.

1

**E-mail:** [alumni@utsa.edu](mailto:alumni@utsa.edu)

2

**Fax:** (210) 458-7227

3

**Mail:** Office of Alumni Programs,  
UTSA, 6900 North Loop 1604 West,  
San Antonio, Texas 78249-0619

4

**Online:** [www.utsaonlinecommunity.com](http://www.utsaonlinecommunity.com)





## LA OFRENDA

Thanks to Carmen Tafolla for permission to print the poem, *La Ofrenda*, from her forthcoming book, *Rebozos*, and to Catalina Gárate for permission to print her painting, *La Ofrenda*, from the same volume.

Una ofrenda te traigo  
porque sé que nunca morirás  
que en cada alba estarás,  
en las gotas de rocío que apagan mi sed,  
en el aire que respiro,  
en la arena  
que besa blandamente  
los dedos de mis pies.  
Sé que nunca morirás  
porque dejaste tus sonrisas  
en los rayos de luz  
que esperan el último momento  
del anochecer  
para esconderse y después,  
jugando, reaparecer, chisporroteando  
en las estrellas  
Sé que nunca morirás,  
porque dejaste tu calor  
en cada puñado de tierra que siembro  
y que sembraste  
tú.

## OFFERING TO THE DEAD

I bring you this offering  
because I know  
you will never die.  
In each dawn you will be,  
in the drops of dew that extinguish my thirst,  
in the air I breathe,  
in the sand  
that softly kisses my toes.

I know you will never die.  
You shine your smiles  
in the last rays of light  
that wait  
till the very last moment  
before nightfall  
to play hide-and-seek,  
till they reappear, surprise me,  
sparkling your laughter,  
through the stars.

I know you will never die.  
Because your warmth is in  
each fistful of dirt  
I plant today  
and that you once planted  
with me.

# Looking Back



Robert Wallace (No. 12) takes a shot in the Roadrunners' inaugural basketball game, against Arkansas in November 1981. Mike Gray (No. 52) gets in position for a rebound.

## The first time

On Nov. 30, 1981, UTSA's men's basketball team gave the Arkansas Razorbacks a run for their money. It was their first game—ever. The second half wasn't pretty, though, and it ended in a 71-42 loss for the Roadrunners.

The NCAA Division I independent played formidable opponents like Texas Tech, TCU, UT El Paso, Houston and Rice that season. They played some games at the Convo and some at HemisFair Arena, the former home of the San Antonio Spurs, which has since been replaced by the Convention Center expansion.

It was a mad schedule, but the Roadrunners were a new team, and games can be hard for independents to come by. They ended the season 8-19.

Don Eddy was head coach, and Nevil Shed, who today works with the Wellness and Recreation Program, was assistant coach. Amid a team of players recruited from junior colleges, two freshmen bear mention.

San Antonian Robert Wallace (No. 12), who racked up 571 career points at UTSA, went on to play for the Harlem Globetrotters under the name "Skywalker," as in Robert "Skywalker" Wallace. That's because he could hover at the rim. Rick Nixon, UTSA's assistant athletic director for media relations, says the 6-foot-1-inch player could jump so high that his head was level with it.

The other freshman, Ike Thornton, from Indianapolis, scored 1,064 career points at UTSA and is ranked eighth on the Roadrunner scoring list.

In the years since, the Roadrunners have been to the NCAA tournament twice—in 1988 and 1999, the Convo's tarton floor (easy to clean but hell on the players' knees) has been replaced with benevolent wood and the Roadrunners have graduated from independent status to the Trans America Athletic Conference to, in 1991, the Southland Conference.

They still play host to madness. This March UTSA hosts the NCAA tourney for the third time—the Men's Midwest Regional at the Alamodome.

— Sarah Nawrocki

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