DAWN OF A BOLD FUTURE

TAKE A DEEP DIVE INTO UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES & THE NEW CAMPUS MASTER PLAN
A Vision for 2020 & Beyond

From the new School of Data Science and an expanded Downtown Campus to the vibrant Roadrunner Village and a vast green park called Paseo Verde on Main Campus, Sombrilla Magazine takes you on a visual exploration of the new Campus Master Plan and the university initiatives leading UTSA to a bold future.

Growing and Growing...

As populations—and the data collected about them—continue to swell, the study of demographics has become more valued than ever. With a new master’s program and fingerprints on all kinds of research, UTSA’s demography department has positioned itself as a state and national leader in population studies.
FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK
BY TAYLOR EIGHMY

A Bold Future

What an exciting time to be a part of Roadrunner Nation. As we look forward to 2020 and beyond, it’s important to acknowledge all of the amazing progress UTSA is making toward reaching its three key destinations as a model for student success, a great public research university, and an exemplar of strategic growth and innovative excellence.

As we grow in the heart of San Antonio, we want to deepen our relationships with nearby neighborhoods surrounding our campuses. Toward that end, we are enhancing connections with the West Side community with the opening of UTSA’s new community center, part of our Westside Community Partnerships initiative [read about it on page 21]. These efforts go hand in hand with our ongoing, ever-evolving identity as a Hispanic-thriving university where students from all backgrounds are positioned for success. Explore examples like our new campus living and learning community, designed to enhance students’ campus experience [see page 25], and the efforts of the team in our First Generation and Transfer Student Center [see page 27].

UTSA’s new Campus Master Plan is our road map. It guides us to responsibly develop our land and infrastructure across all campuses in a way that maximizes our ability to generate prosperity through education, employment, and arts and culture. You can read about key plan elements on page 16 and the inspiring vision it presents.

Included in the master plan is an expansion framework for our Downtown Campus, which is moving forward with major development projects over the next several years. Additions will include our new School of Data Science—the first of its kind in Texas and destined to be a national leader in big data research and education. UTSA’s new National Security Collaboration Center will be another signature component of the Downtown Campus and will advance our nation’s ability to solve our greatest cybersecurity threats. Learn about the new school and center on page 22.

On the heels of celebrating UTSA’s 50th anniversary in grand style over the past year, I am heartened by the momentum we’ve gained toward our vision as a university creating bold futures. Thank you for joining us on the journey!
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SOMBRILLA MAGAZINE

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# UTSA WATCH
SHOWCASING THE PRIDE OF ROADRUNNER NATION FROM SOCIAL MEDIA AND AROUND THE GLOBE

Alumna Muse
Maribel Valdez Gonzalez '13, who was featured in Sombrilla Magazine’s Fall 2017 issue, has been further immortalized when artist Shepard Fairey reproduced his image of the UTSA alumna from the women’s march in a Defend Dignity mural (“meant to inspire sensitivity toward our fellow human beings and the planet itself”) on a building in downtown Los Angeles.

Arts Forever
Mantando a la Escoba Voladora (Riding the Flying Broom) is one of five linocut prints by UTSA alumnus and art lecturer Juan Mora ’09, M.F.A. "I acquired by The Smithsonian Institution’s American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., for its permanent collection. Read more about Mora and the collection in this issue on page 38.

He’s Got a Shot
Men’s basketball guard Jhivvan Jackson [pictured with the ball] has been named to the Oscar Robertson Trophy watch list, presented annually to the nation’s top collegiate player. The 6-foot, 170-pound Jackson was named National Player of the Week in December. The trophy will be presented to the winning player at the NCAA Final Four in April.

#utsa watch
showcasing the pride of roadrunner nation from social media and around the globe

## ABOUT US

Sombrilla Magazine is the official publication of The University of Texas at San Antonio. It is published twice a year and distributed without charge to students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of UTSA. The magazine strives to capture the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the university.

UTSA’s Office of University Strategic Communications produces Sombrilla Magazine and other publications that highlight the achievements and impact of Roadrunners throughout the world. The division is responsible for promoting the university’s mission of academic and research excellence.

#### CONTACT US

Are you interested in sharing news with members of Roadrunner Nation in Class Notes? Or you’d like to change your contact details, be added to, or removed from the subscriber list? Send submissions to:

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**Flexible Buildings**

Researchers have won funding to test architectural materials that can help reduce the lateral movement caused by earthquakes and other seismic events with little disruption to people’s everyday lives. Mechanical engineering professor David Restrepo intends to place repeating structures within walls to avoid deformation during impact and extreme temperatures. He is currently assessing flexible architectural materials and working on mathematical formulas to calculate the strength needed for an optimal product.

**Cybersecurity Growth**

Texas has the most cybersecurity growth potential in the United States, according to Business Facilities’ 15th Annual Rankings Report. The report also notes that San Antonio houses some of the country’s leading cyber education programs, including The University of Texas at San Antonio’s cybersecurity undergraduate program and the newly established National Security Collaboration Center.
Ana Gonzalez, who racked up a league championship in 2019, says Batiste has always prioritized players' studies.
It may require six degrees of separation to connect any living Hollywood actor to Kevin Bacon, but it takes only one degree to link any past or present UTSA women’s golfer to head coach Summer Batiste. As a standout player for the women’s golf team from 2007 to 2012, she drove balls and sank putts with the inaugural class of 2005 as a freshman and sophomore. After graduation she stuck around the program as a volunteer assistant before becoming a full-time assistant coach in 2014. She’s now in the midst of her third season as head coach. If you’re talking UTSA women’s golf, she has literally just about seen it all. That’s why Batiste isn’t taking her team’s recent success for granted. She knows just how uniquely special the past two seasons have been. In that time she has coached the Roadrunners to back-to-back Conference USA championships, first-place finishes at last season’s Texas State and Lady Maxwell invitational, and two NCAA regional appearances—in addition to two individual league champions: Julie Houston (2018) and Ana Gonzalez (2019). It’s the program’s greatest two-year run since 2010–2012, when UTSA snagged two Southland Conference championships under Carrie Parnaby.

Batiste’s fantastic work didn’t pass by unnoticed. She was named Conference USA Coach of the Year by her peers in both 2018 and 2019. “I really appreciate the award, but it’s a byproduct of what our team has been doing,” she says. “They’re the ones listening to me. I could be saying all the right things, but they have to listen and buy in.” Her team’s athletic performance was stellar, but Batiste was recognized just as much for their academic performance.

The women’s golf team had the highest GPA among UTSA’s athletics programs for the past four semesters, and the entire roster has made the Conference USA Commissioner’s Honor Roll in each of the past two years. The team has collected a total of six C-USA academic medals for a 3.75-or-better cumulative GPA in that time and has also received a pair of NCAA Public Recognition awards.
Awards for posting an Academic Progress Rate among the top 10% nationally within the sport. “Batiste has always prioritized schoolwork since day one,” Gonzalez says of her head coach. She and her teammates sing the praises of academic adviser Beth Noteware as well as a culture of flexibility and motivation that their coaches have cultivated. “Coach Batiste is looking for excellence,” Gonzalez says, “in the classroom, on the course, and in our lives.”

Nikki Long ’18 and Julie Houston ’19 were two student-athletes who led by example. Both made the Conference USA Women’s Golf All-Academic Team in 2018, which recognizes the conference’s five most excellent scholars in the sport each season, and Houston received All-Academic honors again in 2019. Long was a three-time All-Academic Team honoree and a Distinguished Business Student who earned an overall 3.96 GPA in economics at UTSA. She is now studying at the USC Gould School of Law in Los Angeles. Houston won a number of awards during her college career, including 2017–2018 Hathaway Academi-sic Female Athlete of the Year and 2018–2019 Female Athlete of the Year at UTSA’s University Life Awards. She earned a 3.87 GPA as a marketing major and has her sights set on a professional golf career.

Now preparing for the spring portion of the 2019–2020 season, UTSA’s squad is looking forward. Among its goals are a top 50 national ranking and a third consecutive conference title. Furthermore, both Batiste and defending C-USA champion Gonzalez have stated that making it to an NCAA regional event isn’t good enough anymore. They want UTSA to advance and score the program’s first appearance in the NCAA Division Women’s Golf National Championships, which would require a top-six finish in regionals.

“The more you’re at regionals, the more you can see yourself doing well enough to get out of regionals,” Batiste says. “We have the talent and we’re as close as we’ve ever been.”

Coach Batiste is looking for excellence—in the classroom, on the course, and in our lives.
GOING TO Extremes

NASA HELPS LAUNCH NEW UTSA ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER

BY MILADY NAZIR

Kealas and kangaroos burn in hellish fires Down Under. The Australian 2019–2020 fire season is estimated to have killed over 1 billion animals. Climate change has created extreme environmental conditions such as ocean and polar warming and sea ice reduction. Severe weather now seems nothing new in the 6 o’clock news. In the United States alone approximately 200 million Americans were under extreme heat advisories during the summer this past year.

To investigate these conditions, NASA has awarded $3 million to UTSA to develop an interdisciplinary Center for Advanced Measurements in Extreme Environments. The agency and UTSA will collaborate to push the boundaries of current measurement and modeling technology by conducting research in harsh and extreme environments.

“The scope of extremes is incredibly broad,” says sea ice specialist Alberto Mestas-Nuñez, who was one of the developers of Arctic Cyber-Infrastructure, an open-source dashboard to track sea ice changes in the Arctic Ocean. As it evolves, the extreme environments center will also welcome collaborators from UTSA’s other academic disciplines.

What we have in common are harsh environments where all these measurements are made, but it’s really hard to make a measurement because the conditions are so extreme,” Combs says. Whether it’s hypersonics, where everything is incredibly hot and you have plasma and disassociated air, or the polar ice caps, where everything is frozen and you have to do things remotely, we have similar challenges.”

The team is completed by sea ice specialist Stephen Ackley and oceanographic Alberto Mestas-Nuñez, who was one of the developers of Arctic Cyber-Infrastructure, an open-source dashboard to track sea ice changes in the Arctic Ocean. As it evolves, the extreme environments center will also welcome collaborators from UTSA’s other academic disciplines.

“We are measuring and studying extreme conditions in the entire earth system, including the atmosphere, the ocean, and sea ice,” Bhaganagar says. “This is one novelty of this new center.”

THE SCOPE OF EXTREMES

How the new UTSA center will advance research opportunities

The UTSA team responsible for the Center for Advanced Measurements in Extreme Environments anticipates training 64 highly skilled professionals in STEM disciplines to support NASA’s mission. Their work will enhance the agency’s efforts to develop a diverse workforce in earth system sciences, remote sensing technologies, computational fluid dynamics, and experimental fluid mechanics in support of NASA’s Science, Aeronautics, and Space Technology Mission Directorates.

Participants will enroll in summer internships at three NASA centers: the Goddard Space Flight Center, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and Langley Research Center. Hands-on workshops will be offered to K-12 teachers to further develop an interest in earth system science, measurement, and data analytics among the next generation of students. The center will also create several experiential learning opportunities for UTSA students, providing them with unique training to pursue new career opportunities.

UTSA will collaborate with the Alamo Colleges District, which will provide an additional pool of students to help with recruitment efforts, and the Dee Howard Foundation, which will also assist with local K-12 outreach activities.

Additionally, the center will include academic partners from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and University of California, Los Angeles, who will provide expertise in atmospheric sciences to tackle large-scale phenomena such as how high-velocity Santa Ana winds are generated, potentially leading to massive forest fires. Other research collaborations will include Southwest Research Institute, Texas Space Grant Consortium, and the U.S. National Ice Center.

“One of the end goals of the center is to add to the nation’s research capability in earth system science research and education,” says sea ice specialist Ackley.
UTSA has joined the City of San Antonio in celebrating acclaimed artist Maestro Sebastian to mark the sculptor’s 50-plus years in the profession. *Sebastian in San Antonio*, which runs through May 2020, features creations from the famed Mexican artist displayed in public spaces across the Alamo City.

UTSA Libraries is hosting a selection of the artist’s sculptures on the Main, Downtown, and Hemisfair campuses. UTSA and the Institute of Texan Cultures are partners of the exhibit. Sebastian has exhibited work in more than 235 exhibitions and has earned many accolades, including the 1999 Paris Medal, the Jerusalem Prize in 2005, and Mexico’s National Prize of Arts and Sciences in 2015. Locally, Sebastian’s Torch of Friendship has stood for nearly 20 years in downtown San Antonio and is a symbol of the intertwined relationship between the United States and Mexico.

The city selected art specialist and UTSA Libraries Art Collection curator Arturo Infante Almeida to curate pieces for *Sebastian in San Antonio* and to select exhibit locations across the city.
Committed to tackling San Antonio’s grand challenges, UTSA is collaborating with District 5 City Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales, Family Service, and Northwest Vista College to reduce child abuse in one of the most economically distressed parts of the city. Together, the partners are implementing Child Maltreatment Prevention Project, which aims to provide training to become a promotora. Promotoras, who are lay Hispanic community members who receive specialized training to provide basic services, will be subsequently placed in District 5 to work with at-risk families.

In 2017 San Antonio had the third highest rate of reported child abuse cases in Texas, with a total of 5,588 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect. Within San Antonio, Child Protective Services referrals are higher in District 5 than in any other part of the city.

“Someone cares and the community is serving its citizens to improve lives.”

“We found that the most effective way to change that reality was through peer-to-peer intervention,” says Gonzales. “That’s what the promotoras are. They build trust, educate, and make a difference from a position of familiarity.”

Promotoras are knowledgeable in a variety of areas, including individual and family functioning, safe environments in the home, and how to acquire services.

UTSA criminal justice professor Megan Bears Augustyn is conducting a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation on the two-year project to determine whether it is achieving its intended effect.

“Given the vast array of consequences associated with child maltreatment, it is a worthwhile endeavor to prevent any form of maltreatment,” she says. “Someone cares and the community is serving its citizens to improve lives.”

“This is a true community effort,” says Councilwoman Gonzales. “Projects like this work best when partners like UTSA, Family Service, Northwest Vista College, and the City of San Antonio come together with a common goal. It serves as a model for other cities to follow.”

Dr. Bizios exemplifies research excellence and scholarly output. Her induction brings great acclaim to the university and demonstrates the institution’s commitment to innovation and applied solutions for societal impact.

—BERNARD ARULANANDAM, university vice president for research, economic development and knowledge enterprise, speaking on the election of UTSA’s Rena Bizios to the National Academy of Inventors. Bizios [pictured], the Lutcher Brown Chair and professor of biomedical engineering, was recognized for demonstrating a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development, and the welfare of society. Also a member of the National Academy of Medicine, Bizios is UTSA’s fourth member in the National Academy of Inventors.

It lends credibility to the fact that what we’re doing is right—and that we’re doing it well. Most importantly, it’s something that the cadets can be proud of.

—LT. COL. BRIAN RENDELL, commander of UTSA’s Air Force ROTC, on the university’s detachment 842 being named the U.S. Air Force 2019 High Flight award winner for the second consecutive year, signifying the best large detachment in the region that spans Louisiana to Hawaii.

Quote/Unquote
This project gives students the opportunity to explore topics such as nuclear materials and nuclear security, and they may never have considered these fields before.

Bad Lighting?

RESEARCH WARNS OF SECURITY GAPS IN SMART LIGHT BULBS

BY MILADY NAZIR

Could lighting your home open up your personal information to hackers? Amazon’s Echo made global headlines when it was reported that consumers’ conversations were recorded and heard by thousands of employees.

Now, researchers at UTSA have conducted a review of the security holes that exist in popular smart light brands. According to the analysis, the next prime target could be that smart bulb that shoppers are buying.

“Your smart bulb could come equipped with infrared capabilities, and most users don’t know that the invisible wave spectrum can be controlled. You can misuse those lights,” says Murtuza Jadliwala, professor and director of the Security, Privacy, Trust and Ethics in Computing Research Lab in UTSA’s Department of Computer Science. “Any data can be stolen: texts or images. Anything that is stored in a computer.”

Some smart bulbs connect to a home network without needing a smart home hub, a centralized hardware or software device where other internet-of-things products communicate with each other. Smart home hubs, which connect either locally or to the cloud, are useful for IoT devices that use the Zigbee or Z-Wave protocols or Bluetooth, rather than Wi-Fi.

If these same bulbs are also infrared-enabled, hackers can send commands via the infrared invisible light emanated from the bulbs to either steal data or spoof other connected IoT devices on the home network.

Smart bulbs have moved beyond novelty to a lucrative mature market. Last year consumers spent close to $8 billion, and that amount is expected to more than triple to $28 billion in less than a decade.

“Think of the bulb as another computer,” adds Jadliwala. “These bulbs are now poised to become a much more attractive target for exploitation even though they have very simple chips.”

Jadliwala recommends that consumers opt for bulbs that come with a smart home hub rather than those that connect directly to other devices. He also recommends that manufacturers do a better job in developing security measures to limit the level of access that these bulbs have to other smart home appliances or electronics within a home.

UTSA joins project to train the next generation of nuclear scientists

BY KARA SORIA

UTSA is educating and preparing the next generation of scientists and engineers to provide innovative solutions to the grand challenges in nuclear security.

A cross-disciplinary team of researchers led by faculty members in the College of Sciences and the College of Engineering has been awarded nearly $3 million in grant funding by the National Nuclear Security Administration for project CONNECT (The CONsortium on Nuclear sEcurity Technologies).

Team members Kelly Nash, associate professor, and Elizabeth Sooby Wood, assistant professor, both in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, say the consortium will create a pipeline of diverse students with strong backgrounds in nuclear science fields and data and visual analytics.

Students studying physics, computer science, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering, among other disciplines, will work together on interdisciplinary research and net-work with experts in nuclear security. “The overall goal of the project is to connect students interested in STEM with U.S. Department of Energy labs and top experts so they are prepared to enter the workforce and be leaders in careers pertaining to national nuclear security,” explains Nash, grant principal investigator.

“This project gives students the opportunity to explore topics such as nuclear materials and nuclear security, and they may never have considered these fields before. It has both an educational and scientific impact as it introduces students to various career opportunities,” Wood says.

First Fellows

UTSA’s inaugural fellows in the Advancing Next-Gen Faculty Leadership Fellows Program, designed to provide intensive one-on-one training and development experience to promote diverse academic leadership, are biology lecturer Emmanuel Akwa and Erica Sosa, an associate professor of kinesiology, health, and nutrition.

Serving Vets

Retired Air Force Col. Lisa Carrington Firmin, associate vice president for veterans and military affairs, has been appointed to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The committee advises the secretary of veterans affairs on the agency’s effectiveness in delivering services to minority veterans.
DISCOVERY AT UTSA

BRAIN RESEARCH
To help individuals afflicted by motor neuron disease, UTSA has embarked on revolutionary research that uses magnetic nano-sized disks and magnetic fields to individually modulate functionality to crucial neurons in the brain. This research could open the door to reversal of degenerative conditions to restore the quality of life for about 1 million adults across the globe.

CYBER DEFENSE
To detect and quickly respond to escalating cyberattacks, UTSA researchers have developed the first framework to score the agility of cyberattackers and defenders. The researchers used a honeypot (a computer system that lures real cyber-attacks) to attract and analyze malicious traffic. As both the attackers and the defenders created new techniques, the researchers were able to better understand how a series of engagements transformed into an adaptive, responsive and agile pattern.

HOME OF THE FUTURE
ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS WILL BUILD A SMART HOME ON DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

“...and NTSA at the heart of development for a zero-carbon building future. By Ingrid Wright

Students in the College of Architecture, Construction and Planning will be part of the design, construction, and optimization of a sustainable smart home. The project—being designed and built as a living laboratory for students, researchers, and the San Antonio community—will provide students an opportunity to collaborate with engineering students and incorporate technology in the architecture of a building that serves end users and preserves the environment.

The home, which will be built on the Downtown Campus beginning early this year, will provide the ability to replicate the design for a multigenerational family and will generate, store, and release its own renewable energy, making it 100% self-sufficient. It will also serve as a live-work unit and include a bike repair shop to support UTSA’s walkability initiative.

“This project positions UTSA at the heart of development for a zero-carbon building future to amplify the research in the areas of low carbon supply, storage, and demand that could be replicated in other areas of the United States,” says Antonio Martinez-Molina, an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture.

He adds that the United States has one of the oldest and the most energy-consuming populations in the world and this project could have an enormous impact in this country.

“We are incorporating universal design principle into the architecture and interior design of the building in order to provide a higher-quality built environment for people of all ages and abilities,” says Neda Norouzi, an assistant professor of architecture. Universal design refers to designing products that can be used by everyone, regardless of age or ability.

“There are 65 million people age 60 and older across the country, many of whom prefer to grow old in their own home and community,” said Norouzi. “However, only half of homes meet the physical needs of people who choose to age in place. This project is aiming to serve the needs of 86% of San Antonians who want to age in place.”
At the Top of Their Game

Four of UTSA’s athletics programs have been ranked at the top of Conference USA in their respective sports, according to NCAA graduation data, by posting a graduation success rate of 100%. The programs—women’s basketball, women’s golf, women’s tennis and volleyball—posted the perfect GSR in the NCAA’s latest report. Two additional programs ranked in the league’s top five in their respective sports, giving UTSA Athletics an overall graduation success rate of 82% for the second straight year. This GSR figure arrived on the heels of a successful report for UTSA’s latest Academic Progress Rate. The men’s cross country, men’s golf, women’s golf and volleyball programs received NCAA Public Recognition Awards for having multiyear rates in the top 10% nationally in their sport. All four programs achieved a perfect multiyear rate of 1,000. In this issue of Sombrilla Magazine on page 5, read about the long-running academic success of the women’s golf program’s student-athletes.
Geared Up for the Gridiron

Jeff Traylor, a former associate head coach at UT Austin, Southern Methodist University, and the University of Arkansas, has taken the helm of Roadrunner football as head coach. Traylor has nearly 30 years of coaching experience, including a highly successful 15-year career as head coach at Gilmer High School, where he led teams to three state championships and two state runner-up finishes, winning more than 87% of his games. Traylor has served most recently as associate head coach and running backs coach for two seasons at Arkansas. Prior to that he served in the same role at SMU for the 2017 season. He began at the collegiate level as the special teams coordinator and tight ends coach at Texas in 2015 before becoming the Longhorns’ associate head coach for offense and wide receivers coach the following year. 2020 marks the 10th anniversary of UTSA’s inaugural signing class of football players.
In Search of a Sea Change

Alumnus Benoit Lecomte ’95 arrives alongside some plastic debris in the Pacific Ocean during The Vortex Swim, his adventure of swimming from Hawaii to California. The Vortex Swim is an abbreviated trip, retooled after Lecomte and his team had to call a halt to his swim from Japan to California because of damage his escort vessel suffered during a string of storms. With the goal of raising awareness of ocean pollution, Lecomte set out on a course last summer that would take him directly through the path of tons of floating plastic and other debris, known collectively as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

On the first day of his swim, Lecomte reported in his online log that he encountered his first ghost net, a free-floating giant net that’s been lost or abandoned by its commercial fishing vessel.
Big things are happening at UTSA. Since President Taylor Eighmy arrived in 2017, he’s been setting the stage with characters and plot points for a dramatically advanced university ready for its starring role among the world’s preeminent institutions of research and higher education. Focused on hiring esteemed faculty and leadership, creating initiatives to elevate how UTSA engages and operates, and now a Campus Master Plan to support expanded enrollment and research activity, every move has been directed to support the university’s three destinations: to be a model for student success, a great research university, and an exemplar for strategic growth and innovative excellence. “Innovative.” “Excellence.” They’re going to be just part of the rave reviews for UTSA’s bold new future. Remembering 1969 was a revelatory experience. But there’s an even grander story taking the stage. It’s “2020 & Beyond.” Come along for the amazing adventure.
Embrace a Distributed Urban Campus Model

A new entry pavilion [see next pages] at Buena Vista Street and I-10/I-35 will anchor the main east-west corridor at the corner of the existing campus at Bill Miller Plaza.
Advancing Human Health

Timed perfectly to kick off the university’s second 50 years, UTSA announced the launch of an innovative college dedicated to advancing human health. Slated to begin enrolling students for fall 2020, the College for Health, Community and Policy will transform the way the university prepares students for modern, population-based health care settings.

The new college will incorporate UTSA’s health-related programs—including academic departments currently in the College of Public Policy and the departments of psychology, sociology, and kinesiology as well as nutrition and dietetics studies—to help students navigate health-related career options and give them a thorough understanding of the factors that contribute to human health and wellness.

The venture is intended to create opportunities for research across traditional disciplines, both within UTSA and with external partners, and is expected to be home to more than 175 faculty and more than 6,800 undergraduate and graduate students.

“"In addition to better caring for San Antonians, the lessons learned will provide scientists, researchers, and clinicians with a deeper understanding of how to improve health care in their own communities.”

Cutting Edge of Breakthrough Treatments

UTSA has joined forces with three other San Antonio research institutions for a major initiative in precision therapeutics, the process that ultimately leads to breakthrough treatments that can be individualized to specific patient populations.

The initiative, San Antonio Partnership for Precision Therapeutics, was established with UT Health San Antonio, Texas Biomedical Research Institute, and Southwest Research Institute. It will address the specific and diverse medical needs of the Alamo City’s population, while serving as a model for the development of therapies to improve medical treatment around the world.

While precision medicine generally focuses on personalized interventions that are based on genetics, environment, and diet, precision therapeutics represents a unique merger of this discipline with the complete drug discovery pathway. This pathway includes basic research, lead compound development, formulation, testing, production, and clinical trials—all leading to new FDA-approved treatments. In addition to better caring for San Antonians, the lessons learned from the SAPPT will provide scientists, researchers, and clinicians with a deeper understanding of how to improve health care in their own communities as their demographics shift to look more like San Antonio’s current population of 1.5 million, which is 65% Hispanic.

UTSA’s research portfolio in biomedicine, the nation’s top cybersecurity program, and robust expertise in cloud computing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence will lead to technological innovation and the creation of new algorithms to accelerate drug discovery and therapeutics. The university’s Center for Innovative Drug Discovery, a joint venture with UT Health San Antonio, also provides core facilities and expertise to facilitate the translation of basic scientific discoveries into tangible preclinical candidate drugs that can be further developed into clinical therapies for human disease.

Bill Miller Plaza will be better linked to campus surroundings to become a more welcoming and engaging open space.

As the City of San Antonio-owned blocks west of South Frio Street become available, they will be integrated into the campus and house a variety of academic and research buildings, housing, and parking.

A promenade will run north-south through this area, connecting to VIA Centro to the north through a pedestrian-only extension of South Medina Street.
A new entry pavilion [see previous pages] at Buena Vista Street and I-10/I-35 will anchor the main east-west corridor at the corner of campus at Bill Miller Plaza.

Attractions beneath the expressway, such as food trucks and active park space, will be implemented over time, tying the existing campus into the street network.
As the City of San Antonio–owned blocks west of South Frio Street become available, they will be integrated into the campus and house a variety of academic and research buildings, housing, and parking.

A plaza at the level of the bridge connecting to the West Side neighborhood will provide a welcoming entry to the campus. Shared community facilities, possibly including a recreation and wellness center, will be located near this point of entrance to facilitate shared usage by the community.

A promenade will run north-south through this area, connecting to VIA Centro to the north through a pedestrian-only extension of South Medina Street.

A new pedestrian bridge alongside the existing Buena Vista Street bridge will cross over the railroad tracks into the West Side neighborhood.
Opportunities

Creating Bold Opportunities

To increase access to a college education for students from low- and middle-income families, the groundbreaking UTSA Bold Promise initiative will cover 100% of an undergraduate's tuition and fees for four years. Launched in fall 2019, the program is designed to create opportunities for students from across Texas whose families may not otherwise have been able to afford a college education.

“Every day, in everything we do, UTSA students, staff, and faculty embrace the ideal that education is the great equalizer of our society,” President Taylor Eighmy says. “UTSA was founded 50 years ago on the belief that San Antonians deserve access to high-quality education and opportunities. With UTSA Bold Promise, we are re-affirming that commitment and creating a pathway for students from all across the state to pursue higher education and build prosperity for themselves and their families.”

It's open to first-time freshmen who are state residents and who come from families with an income up to $50,500 (the median income in San Antonio) and qualify for admission by ranking in the top 25% of their high school class.

Advancing the Labor Force

UTSA's creation of the San Antonio Workforce Initiative is the next step in the university's commitment to ensuring a qualified and educated workforce. It's an effort that promotes continuing education and professional development for adult learners to support the city's need for a skilled workforce.

Additionally, it advances UTSA's capacity to meet the educational needs of San Antonio employers through customized degree and certificate programs in various disciplines. Using both online instructional formats and traditional face-to-face and hybrid teaching methods, the program will accelerate the training of qualified workers to meet the region's skilled employment needs.

“We can up our impact on our city by increasing the number and range of programs to support workers to advance in their current jobs,” says Kimberly Andrews Espy, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, “or to enable people without a college degree to finish and successfully compete for better-paying jobs.”

Bridging the Divide to San Antonio’s West Side

Just beyond the Downtown Campus is San Antonio’s West Side, an underserved world in need of hope for a bold, bright future. Shirley Gonzales, who represents the District 5 neighborhood on San Antonio’s city council, acknowledges that the area has struggled for years.

“We thought we were going to have to revitalize, build businesses, and take care of families all on our own. And then UTSA, under the leadership of Taylor Eighmy, came to help.”

Gonzales made this statement as UTSA announced plans to expand the Downtown Campus over the next 10 years, including working with the city to anchor a new technology district and provide opportunities and social mobility for the neighbors. Important steps in this expansion plan have been to establish the Westside Community Partnerships initiative to give families, business owners, and prospective students a part of the ownership and decision making as they grow along with UTSA.

The initiative is an ongoing plan to help shape educational, economic, and cultural programs and services for residents living and working in the eight ZIP codes that make up the community.

The initiative aligns with UTSA’s master plan process, which establishes a framework for the development of academic, research, and community outreach programs to serve San Antonio’s growing population. By creating a forum to encourage ongoing university-community dialogue, the initiative will help ensure that those programs and services are shaped in a way that is responsive to the needs of the community.

The first order of business was to open a community center in a historic building on Guadalupe Street near the campus and Lanier High School. This is a place where neighbors can come in, make connections, and learn about the opportunities a higher education can provide and how it is possible for anyone who dares to dream as well as for community and business leaders to discuss economic prosperity, educational excellence, sustainable partnerships, advocacy, community-campus engagement, and the benefits of working together.
Launched as an initiative in 2018, the School of Data Science answers the national call for a highly skilled workforce to fill growing needs in cybersecurity, data analytics, business intelligence, and digital asset management.

Collaboration across these distinct disciplines will foster radical innovation to address critical challenges. The school’s location in the heart of San Antonio on the Downtown Campus will provide government, industry, and community partners with access to UTSA's nationally recognized programs and expertise. Construction on the new school is planned for fall 2020, to be completed in spring 2023.

Targeting federal, state, and local agencies’ need for greater collaboration to protect America’s national security infrastructure, UTSA has established the National Security Collaboration Center. Giving business and local government partners direct access to the technical expertise, highly trained students, and specialized facilities that make UTSA a premier program in cybersecurity, the NSCC is devoted to the advancement of cybersecurity, data analytics, and cloud computing to improve national security and global defense.

UTSA is leveraging its unique opportunities of being located in the nation’s second-largest cybersecurity hub and home to the largest concentration of cybersecurity experts and industry leaders outside Washington, D.C., firmly positioning the university and San Antonio to lead the nation in cybersecurity research and workforce development.

The center will be one of the core developments in UTSA’s Downtown Campus expansion. The NSCC’s founding executive director, Guy M. Walsh, a retired Air Force brigadier general, brings a wealth of experience in building strategic alliances between federal and state government, academia, and industry partners. He is among the nation’s foremost leaders in national security as the inaugural strategic initiatives lead for U.S. Cyber Command, the Department of Defense’s newest Combatant Command.

As a hub for cyber activity in the region and a home for various federal and industry partners to engage with faculty and student researchers, the NSCC allows students direct access and engagement with innovative projects and—due to the highly secure environment—the opportunity to have government clearance that will help them secure higher-level job placements in government and industry more easily upon graduation.

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The need to reintegrate the unique natural setting was central to a major new element, the Paseo Verde, in the heart of the Main Campus.

This green space will augment the campus paseo network and incorporate native planting, a stream, and sustainable elements.

The Paseo Verde will augment the campus paseo network, connecting with an additional plaza in the center of campus.

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MAIN CAMPUS

KEY IDEAS

- Introduce Open Space
- Promote Pedestrian Circulation
- Create an Athletics District
- Establish a Southeastern Gateway
The need to reintegrate the unique natural setting was central to a major new element, the **Paseo Verde**, in the heart of the Main Campus.

This green space will augment the campus paseo network and incorporate native planting, a stream, and sustainable elements.

Athletics and recreation facilities will be consolidated on the west side of campus. The new **Roadrunner Athletics Center of Excellence**, a future arena, and other improved athletics and recreation uses will be located to the west of the Recreation Wellness Center along the future extension of the Paseo Principal.

**KEY IDEAS**
- Introduce Open Space
- Promote Pedestrian Circulation
- Create an Athletics District
- Establish a Southeastern Gateway
Campus roadways will be improved to become a true campus loop road, easing circulation congestion by removing vehicular-pedestrian conflicts and promoting a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

The Paseo Verde will augment the campus paseo network, connecting with an additional plaza in the center of campus.

**Enhancing Athletics**

UTSA’s athletics facilities won’t lag behind conference counterparts. The Roadrunner Athletics Center of Excellence is slated to be constructed on Main Campus. The multipurpose sports center will provide UTSA’s 350-plus student-athletes a hub to improve their own academic success, health, wellness, and performance.

The facility will be home to a much-improved strength and conditioning space, football locker rooms, offices for athletics administration, team meeting spaces, and an academic center. A sports medicine center, research labs, and classrooms will enhance academic collaboration with academic departments and public-private partnerships in health and sports medicine.

Most notably, the complex will feature an indoor practice field with an artificial turf surface adjacent to an outdoor practice field with a grass surface. Both have the potential to be used by local sports organizations and community partners.

The center will be developed in partnership with the Roadrunner Athletics Foundation. The $44 million estimated cost of the facility will be fully covered by external fundraising and philanthropic support.

**Testing Beyond Limits**

UTSA has recently opened one of the most unique research buildings in the country. The Large-Scale Testing Laboratory is a 50-foot-tall facility where civil engineers can test in a realistic setting the structural integrity of systems such as concrete buildings.

“This building is one of few of its kind in the country,” says JoAnn Browning, dean of the College of Engineering, commenting on the lab’s features, such as a reaction floor with the capability to apply test loads up to 4 million pounds of force—making it one of the highest reaction floor capacities in the U.S.

The laboratory will facilitate the testing of components and systems at near 100% scale. Civil engineering students and researchers will build and test structural systems, such as concrete beams. Areas of focus include bridge and building components and new materials needed for increasingly complex construction projects.

The $9.95 million facility serves the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, where research has tackled preventing landslides, creating drinkable water from rainfall, and harvesting energy from hot pavement.

**Upgrading Campus Living to Boost Success**

UTSA’s drive to enhance student success reached a significant milestone recently, when construction started on Guadalupe Hall, the university’s newest living and learning community, designed for freshmen.

“This new living and learning community will dramatically impact the student campus experience, further supporting student success.”

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This new living and learning community will dramatically impact the student campus experience, further supporting student success.

UTSA’s senior vice president for business affairs, Espy, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, “By providing our students with the tools to be successful from the day they step foot on campus we are starting them on a path to becoming workforce-ready and successful in a global economy.”

The integrated living and learning community will include group study areas and multipurpose space to give students more opportunities to engage faculty, staff, and fellow students. The residence hall will feature affordable double-occupancy rooms, which have repeatedly been shown by researchers to promote retention and social skills development.

The four-story building will feature study lounges, an academic resources center, community lounges, community kitchens, laundry rooms, group study areas, a multipurpose and seminar room, and a coffee shop.

Students are expected to move in before the fall 2021 semester, raising the number of UTSA students living on campus to more than 4,500.
**KEY IDEAS**
- Introduce Open Space
- Promote Pedestrian Circulation
- Create an Athletics District
- Establish a Southeastern Gateway

**MAIN CAMPUS**

A transit hub will be in the new southern campus gateway, strengthening connections to downtown and the surrounding areas.

The master plan accommodates the need for a collaborative space through the Tricentennial Innovation Park on the southeast corner of campus, adjacent to Roadrunner Village.
UTSA is enhancing its services for students with a history of foster care with its new Fostering Educational Success Center. A joint venture between the Division of Student Success and the Department of Social Work, the center is designed to help students with a history of foster care overcome the unique challenges they face in pursuing higher education.

“The mission of the center is to support all UTSA students who have a history of foster care through coaching, connecting them to resources on campus and in the community, and creating their own sense of community,” says Christopher Goldsberry, the center’s associate director.

According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, nearly 35,000 children are in the state’s foster care system. Research has shown that 33% of foster care alumni enroll in college, but just 1.3% graduate with a bachelor’s degree by age 24.

Goldsberry believes UTSA’s Fostering Educational Success Center can help improve these outcomes.

This new center is a tangible demonstration of UTSA’s commitment to supporting these Roadrunners to make sure they can succeed in college.
"It helps people see that UTSA is a leader in terms of demographic issues."
Over the course of three weeks last summer Lloyd Potter spoke with the Chicago Tribune about the boom of Illinois natives moving to Texas, the Dallas Business Journal about the large senior percentage remaining in the North Texas workforce, and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram about the growing Hispanic, black, and Asian populations in Tarrant County. In that same time frame Rogelio Sáenz was quoted in an Associated Press piece about the 2020 census before being interviewed by KENS-5, the San Antonio Express-News, and Texas Public Radio about the major challenges facing San Antonio women. Demographers at UTSA are exceedingly being called upon as a trusted source on population studies and trends on the local, state, and national levels. It’s only natural.
THE AGENTS OF CHANGE

If you've never understood why agencies gather information about age, race, income, gender, ZIP code, or any other number of data sets, UTSA's demographers talk about some of their work and how their research actually affects people's lives.

Addressing Women's Issues

Demography professor Rogelio Sáenz admits that it’s often difficult for demographers to affect policy. Even when they provide valuable information, the resources aren’t always there to push any real change, so he didn’t know how San Antonio officials would respond to the 74-page Status of Women report he coauthored with former demography graduate student Lily Casura ’19 in May 2019. The report explored 13 issues involving women in San Antonio.

Among many deficiencies, Sáenz found that there was a significant earnings gap between men and women in the city and that wages for local women lagged behind those of women in Dallas, Austin, and Houston.

More troubling, the rate of violence against San Antonio women is increasing each year. The number of women murdered by a male intimate partner more than tripled in Bexar County from 2012 to 2017.

“The reaction from city council has been, frankly, [that they’re] horrified,” Sáenz says, but he’s pleased to see that reaction has spawned swift action.

“After seeing the report they really have been focusing on the next steps and putting together programs that address these issues.” Among those next steps were discussions about pay parity and low-income programs for low-income customers.

Working with five years of customer data, Potter was able to identify neighborhoods where people who were eligible for the affordability discount largely weren’t taking advantage of it. SAWS has since worked to appear at more community events and improved marketing of the program in those areas. “That’s an example of a pseudobusiness using our demographic resources to try to do more good,” he says.

As the co-investigator on a National Science Foundation project looking at urban water resiliency in the demographic hot spots of Texas, Potter indicates that access to clean water will be a key issue in Texas going forward. The water infrastructure difficulties coming for Texas in the 21st century will resemble the kind of water crisis that happened in California in the 20th century as climate models indicate a warmer, drier future for Central Texas coupled with rapid population growth along the I-35 corridor, stretching from the Dallas–Fort Worth area to the Rio Grande Valley.

“My observation is that SAWS has been very thoughtful and strategic about diversifying water sources and thinking well into the future,” Potter says. “When I look across the state that’s not happening everywhere. Smaller utility districts aren’t thinking about where they’re going to get water in 20 years, and it’s similar in some cities.”

Investigating Water Access

UTSA professor Lloyd Potter, who is also Texas’s state demographer, has done socioeconomic research for the San Antonio Water System, examining the utility’s affordability discount for low-income customers.

Making the U.S. Census Count

“I would say about 95% of the work I do involves census data,” Sáenz says before flashing a warm smile. “It’s my bread and butter.” It’s no understatement to say that the U.S. census is monumentally important to demographic researchers, but UTSA’s demography faculty and alumni are going out in their communities to tell the general public why it’s important for them as well.

The census has a big impact on federal funding for programs like Medicaid and Head Start, while also fulfilling the constitutional purpose of real-locating congressional seats among states.

States with growing populations pick up more seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, which is why Texas gained four seats after the 2010 census. “It was a big winner,” Sáenz says, “and it’s likely to be a big winner again in 2020, provided we get as complete a count as possible. Texas is in a position to gain three seats, but it might only be two.”

The hardest communities to count have traditionally been minorities, immigrants, lower-income individuals, people living in rural areas, and those who move frequently. They’re less likely to respond, and Texas has a lot of people in all five categories, making it a thorny state to completely count.

Although the 2020 census can now be filled out online (in addition to the traditional phone and mail options), and modern technology such as aerial maps and mobile apps will aid Census Bureau workers, they still have to visit any location in the bureau’s master address file that doesn’t send its response. “That’s expensive,” Potter says.
As the world’s population—and the data collected about it—continues to increase, the study of demographics has become more valued than ever before. UTSA’s Department of Demography was already well-positioned in one of the nation’s fastest-growing cities in a state with a rapidly evolving population, but the department’s strides in research and collaboration have been hard to ignore.

“We have this visibility with other universities and in media coverage, and that gives us some status,” says Potter, who’s not only a professor at UTSA but also Texas’ state demographer as well as the director of the university’s Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research and interim dean of the new College for Health, Community and Policy. “It helps people see that UTSA is a leader in terms of demographic issues.”

It’s apt recognition, then, when the provost and the vice president for research identified population studies among UTSA’s research specialties in 2019. The Department of Demography was established in 2006, offering a Ph.D. in applied demography. What made it immediately unique was that it was one of the nation’s few standalone demography departments; it wasn’t folded into sociology or another department as it often is at most universities. That status provided more pathways for interested graduate students with backgrounds beyond sociology, whether it was economics, urban planning, geography, health sciences, statistics, or public policy.

Graduates from the Ph.D. program have applied their skills in a number of different academic, health, business, and government fields. Locally, USAA is the leading employer of UTSA demography graduates, who have examined factors such as the demographics of people who experienced foreclosures and insured houses that exist in flood plains. Health care access, health disparities, and health policy have been a focus of many UTSA demography students, so it’s no surprise that University Health Systems, UT Health San Antonio, Methodist Healthcare Ministries, and Haven for Hope have all hired graduates. Some have gone on to either become state demographers or work in state demography offices, while others have taken positions in school districts and academia. One alum even runs data analytics for Instagram. “Our students are only limited by their creativity,” says Johnelle Sparks, associate professor of demography, department chair, and president of the Southern Demographic Association.

For 13 years, however, the department was missing a key offering: a master’s degree. That changed in fall 2019 with the new M.S. program in applied demography. The program trains students to be able to work with large and complex data sources, analyze data using statistical tests, present data using statistics and geographic information systems, and write reports and papers based on empirically based questions. Students have the opportunity to work with faculty on research projects and present their work at regional and national conferences. The demand for master’s-level demographers in industry and research settings has grown significantly in recent years. While Ph.D. students are essentially trained to conduct independent research and ask their own questions, demographers with a master’s degree often work in collaborative situations. They organize “messy” data, produce tables, and generate reports. “It’s a really great degree for people who want to work with real data to answer practical and applied questions,” Sparks says.

The M.S. program marks a big step forward for the demography department, but there are more on the horizon. Potter says a long-term goal is for UTSA to compete for a population research center grant from the National Institutes of Health. “There’s an opportunity for us to take the mantle as a powerhouse demography program,” he says. “That would put us squarely on the map.”
UTSA alumni [clockwise from topl left] guitarist Joe Reyes, Selena tribute singer Stephanie Bergara, drummer Cristina Hinojosa, and ocarina player David Erick Ramos star in a Sombrilla Magazine homage to the Meet the Beatles! album.
UTSA's musician alumni can be quite eclectic—anything from a Grammy-winning guitarist and the front woman for one of South Texas' most popular tribute acts to a talented Tejano drummer and a wind instrument innovator with a big digital fan base.

Sombrilla Magazine spoke with four amazing talents who have been essential to popular music in their home state and beyond

BY SHEA CONNER

Alamo City Ace

Joes REYES ’92 empowers San Antonio’s music scene with an ear for the interesting gigs in the 1980s, played guitar for the jazz fusion band Fine Line later in the decade, reeled off a successful run as half of the flamenco guitar duo Lara & Reyes throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Reyes now performs regularly with the wildly fun art-rock group Buttercup, the scorching Americana band Mitch Webb and the Swindles, and the plaintive pop outfit Demitasse. All the while he consistently grinds away as a producer and session musician, even working with renowned Texas artists like Doug Sahm, Flaco Jiménez, Augie Meyers, and Freddy Fender.

“I get to work with great artists all over Texas, and they all have the same sensibility, the same personality, and we all have the same sort of musical wheelhouse that we work from,” Reyes says. “Dude, it’s a great world to be in.”

Reyes admits that a fair amount of the musicians who venture to his home studio to lay down recordings gawk at his Grammy at some point. He won the award for producing and contributing guitar and backing vocals to the 2002 Freddy Fender record La Música de Baldemar Huerta, which won Best Latin Pop Album. Reyes fondly remembers the surreal experience of those studio sessions in Corpus Christi and the swagger that the Tejano legend exhibited despite his failing health (Fender would die from lung cancer four years after the album’s release).

“I couldn’t believe that the guy I used to watch on Hee Haw is standing next to me, and we’re giving each other head nods and connecting,” Reyes recalls, adding that the work he did for Fender made his dad proud, which remains far more important to him than the Grammy he received.

Reyes also
THE UTSA INSPIRATION

Reyes breaks down what's influenced his work throughout his career

On UTSA

Joe Reyes took the nontraditional path to his bachelor’s degree at UTSA. Starting fresh out of high school in 1981, he briefly pursued a B.A. with a concentration in industrial management. Over an ensuing decade of semesters peppered around musical tours, Reyes found a better fit in liberal arts programs, graduating with a B.A. in English in 1992. He credits poetry workshops for helping him hone sharp lyrics and avoid songwriting clichés.

As he recalls typing English papers on flights home from gigs, he’s thankful for the guiding discipline UTSA provided. “UTSA’s art and humanities departments helped me be not only a better artist and teacher but a better person.”

On His Favorite Guitarists

▷ GEORGE HARRISON

“He was the youngest Beatle and, man, that guy could really play guitar by the time he was 20 years old. He wasn’t a flashy guy, but he was an effective guitar player.”

▷ EDDIE VAN HALEN

“I was in high school when [Van Halen’s first] record came out. I’ll never forget that we were driving and I was like, ‘What’s this?’ I turned it up and was just wondering how he was doing all the things he was doing. His tone, his phrasing—everything about it was so new and fresh. He literally flipped the world over and nobody could escape him. The thing I love about Eddie Van Halen the most is that he’s smiling in most of his photos on stage. I do that too.”

▷ JON BRION

“He plays this style that I play—an ‘it will work in any genre’ kind of style. I definitely copied all the things he did on all of the favorite records I’ve produced.”

Reyes [left] on stage with fellow members of Buttercup at San Antonio’s Empire Theater.

UTSA’s art and humanities departments helped me be not only a better artist and teacher but a better person.

earned a Latin Grammy nomination for Best Instrumental Pop Album in 2001 while in Lara & Reyes. The instrumental group that Reyes formed with Sergio Lara in 1989 remains the most globally visible point of his career. The pair recorded six albums on Higher Octave Music (including the timeless Christmas album Navidad) and embarked on several tours through California, Texas, and Mexico before going on hiatus when Lara moved to Mexico shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. Burned out on the flamenco style, it was during this break that Reyes immersed himself into several eclectic projects.

It took some arm-twisting, but he convinced his friends Erik Sanden and Odie to let him join Buttercup and never looked back. Buttercup has become well-known in San Antonio for its unique performances—taking its audience on a musical tour at the Majestic Theater, rocking outrageous fan-selected covers in art galleries, and even staging an “Audience of One” night where they sequestered themselves in a small bar room and performed songs for audience members one by one. In recent years Reyes and Sanden developed a side project called Demitasse as a means of coping with each of their fathers’ deaths. Their reflective lyrics and somber pop caught on with NPR, which featured the band on All Things Considered and marked Demitasse as a band to see at SXSW in 2015.

When Reyes isn’t performing with Buttercup, Demitasse, the Swindles, Nicolette Good, or as a solo act these days, he’s producing recordings for local artists and giving lessons to young guitar players at Space-Tone Music in San Antonio. Although his skills have taken him far, Reyes says that making connections and being there for his fellow artists has been just as vital to his longevity in the music industry. “I just do what I can to help other people,” he says, “and when you do that, your life basically writes itself.”
Tejano Torchbearer

STEPHANIE BERGARA celebrates Selena and keeps the Austin music scene weird

From the time she was singing Selena tunes into a hairbrush as a child, Stephanie Bergara imagined herself pursuing a career in music. What she couldn’t have imagined, however, was the path she would take in the industry and the amazing bond she would forge with Selena’s biggest fans. After studying music and political science at UTSA, Bergara returned to her hometown of Austin and worked in artist relations and stage management. From 2008 to 2012 she was an agent assistant for High Road Touring, a manager for the kid-friendly stages at Lollapalooza and Austin City Limits while at C3, an event manager for Giant Noise, and a talent coordinator for the Pachanga Latino Music Festival. She sought change, though, and found it as the music tourism and audience development program coordinator for the City of Austin in 2012.

“Honestly, my grandparents and parents didn’t think I had a real job until I went to work for the city,” Bergara says with a big laugh. “They were all telling me to stay there and never quit.”

Eight years later she still hasn’t quit. Bergara manages the finances for city programs that benefit Austin’s music community, and it’s a job she loves. Her office’s programming has made great strides in providing better compensation for the city’s 10,000-plus musicians. “We can’t write a paycheck to all of them,” she says, “but we can provide a curriculum that helps them continue their music careers in a way that will make them money for as long as they want.”

Bergara has successfully executed those game plans as the front woman of her own band, Bidi Bidi Banda, one of the nation’s most popular Selena tribute acts. Bergara’s connections have also aided Bidi Banda, which has evolved from a ragtag group playing five Selena songs at a festival kickoff party to a masterly tuned celebration of Selena that has opened for Taylor Swift at the Formula 1 fan festival. The group has also performed on the campaign trail with Beto O’Rourke, sold out venues like Austin’s Empire Control Room and San Antonio’s The Rustic, and has even built solid followings outside of Texas in cities such as Phoenix and New Orleans. Bidi Banda recently wrapped up a Texas tour with electronic pop acts Neon Indian and Empress Of.

Bergara would be the first to admit that she doesn’t look like Selena or sing quite like her either, but she does try to capture her iconic energy and essence every time she takes the stage. “Her personality was as big and enchanting as her music was,” she says. More than anything Bergara loves connecting with Selena’s fans. They often tell her stories about seeing Selena’s final concert at the Astrodome in 1995 or spotting her at Whataburger before she became a superstar.

“The band is giving me so much life, so much fulfillment,” she says.

“It warms my heart to see people hearing their favorite song played live. I may be performing, but I’ll never stop being exhilarated by hundreds of people getting so excited that they want to start a cumbia circle.”

NOW AND FOREVER...

This alumna explains why she’s a Roadrunner for life and reveals her top Selena hits

On UTSA

Stephanie Bergara may have been born and raised in Longhorn Country, but the Austinite is a Roadrunner for life. She had musical aspirations from a young age, and chose UTSA for its prime location, she says, in “the Tejano capital of the world.” From 2004 to 2006 she split her studies at UTSA between music theory and political science because she wanted to learn more about how governments operate. “What I do now for the City of Austin is the perfect marriage of what I studied,” she says. She still draws inspiration from an item she received at orientation: a leather bookmark emblazoned with the words COME HERE, GO FAR. “It’s always a huge point of pride for me to see someone wearing a UTSA shirt and talk about it right away,” she laughs, “even if I’m on stage.”

On Her Favorite Selena Songs

• YO ME VOY

“It’s one of those traditional Tejano two-step songs. I love that song—and songs like that—because it truly reminds me of when I was a little kid watching my parents dance at weddings and quinceañeras. Those are the kinds of songs that were a catalyst for me becoming interested in Tejano music in the first place.”

• COMO LA FLOR

“It was her first number 1 in Texas radio. In the chorus there’s an echoing voice singing “como la flor.” That echoing voice is her brother. As the story goes, she was done in the recording studio that day, and despite their best efforts to have her record one more vocal, she was not coming back. So her brother jumped on the microphone and recorded that backing vocal for her. I think it’s a true testament to the things you do for your family in the best way possible.”

• NO ME QUEDA MAS

“She sings it in front of the Alamo in the movie. She recorded the music video at the River Walk. It’s my favorite Selena song because it’s the one I sang with a hairbrush when I was a kid. I would imagine myself singing that song on the River Walk under the twinkle lights. Whenever I get to perform that song in San Antonio, it’s pretty dreamy. That song is the reason I started the band and the reason I became a singer in the first place.”

Bergara performs with Bidi Banda for a capacity crowd at The Rustic in San Antonio.
Cristina Hinojosa's stage name is La Fabulosa. It's a reference to her bloodline—she's the daughter of the late Juan Hinojosa, drummer for the famed conjunto band Los Fabulosos Cuatro—but that's where the fatherly influence ends. While Juan was out on the road and rarely at home, Cristina took private lessons, played drums in churches, and joined a Tejano band called Grupo Excito by the time she was in high school. "He never held out a drumstick to me," she says. "I did it on my own."

That fiery, independent streak has driven Cristina Hinojosa over the course of her career. It drove her to learn the fundamentals of Tejano from the considerably older men of Grupo Excito all those years ago. It drove her to make an overnight road trip to a studio in Big Spring to arrange and record her entry video for the Hit Like a Girl online drumming competition, in which she was a finalist in 2013. It also drove her to work with several San Antonio musicians, such as Cacy Savala, Mike Torres III, and most notably six-time Grammy nominee and 2017 Tejano Music Awards Entertainer of the Year Stefani Montiel. Hinojosa has served as Montiel's drummer for six years now.

Hinojosa says she's been offered other gigs, but she's too happy being in Montiel's band to give it up. In fact, it's more of a close-knit community than a band. Montiel's husband, Gabriel Zavala, is the musical director, and Montiel's sister, Sasha Sullivan, is a backing vocalist in the band. In addition, Hinojosa's cousin, Ariel Hinojosa, recently came on as the bassist. "They're my family," she says. "It's not like gigs with other bands where you're there to get paid and leave."

Hinojosa is well-versed in both Montiel's modern Tejano sound as well as being one of only a handful of drummers who knows her way around the vintage orchestra style. She's a tremendous jazz drummer (an area where she excelled at UTSA) and has been known to rock out to some emo and pop-punk. Hinojosa's diverse drumming background has made her a popular instructor. She teaches private lessons in addition to drumming as the assistant band director at Antonian College Preparatory High School in San Antonio.

With afternoons devoted to Antonian, weekends booked for Stefani Montiel, and mornings and evenings dedicated to her two real estate jobs, Hinojosa is as busy as ever, but she'd never give you any indication that it's too much to handle. "I wasn't raised in the 'musician' household," she says. "I was raised in the 'you go to work, make money, and pay the bills' household; and there's nothing wrong with that."

I credit UTSA a lot for my playing, even at this point [in my career].

On UTSA
A native of Boling, southwest of Houston, Cristina Hinojosa studied music at the University of Houston before transferring to UTSA in 2011. She made the jump because she sought more one-on-one time with instructors, and she wanted to study with former percussion lecturer Graeme Francis. She credits Francis for remolding her entire approach to drumming. Hinojosa fulfilled her jazz certification and received a jazz ensemble award at UTSA in 2014. "I credit UTSA a lot for my playing, even at this point," she says. "My jazz studies don't necessarily correspond with the kind of music I play now, but my chops do."

On Her Favorite Drummers
- Dennis Chambers
  - "He's a famous studio drummer who plays with Santana quite often. I used to watch his instructional videos growing up. As I've gotten older, he still tops my list."

- Sheila E.
  - "She's been with Prince and Beyoncé, and I actually got to take a private lesson from her. It was the best two hours of my life. I think I learned more in two hours with her than I did from years of being on the road. She is incredibly knowledgeable."

- Sheil E.
  - "Sheila E. is a queen. She's probably the most famous female drummer of all-time. She was Prince's drummer, but she's had her own successful career."

On UTSA's music tutoring options help launch a career

A car of Zelda, Stefani Montiel, is known for playing the ocarina. Ramos describes it as a clay flute that is most often shaped like a sweet potato. They come in all different sizes and hole configurations. Although the ocarina was created in Italy and slowly traveled all over the world, it never really had its moment in the sun until Nintendo released "The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time" (arguably the most acclaimed video game ever) in 1998. As both an instrument and a collectible, interest in the ocarina soared, but Ramos was one of the first musicians in the world to capitalize on this surge in popularity.

On New Year's Eve, 2006, he posted a simple webcam video to YouTube of himself playing "Song of Time" on his first ocarina. He knew he was on to something when the video generated a couple thousand hits in a few days and more than 10,000 in just a few weeks. Today, that video has notched more than 10 million views. Ramos has immersed himself in the ocarina universe.
Ocarina Icon

DAVID ERICK RAMOS has created a following by mastering Link's favorite instrument of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses concert tour. “I can die happy now,” he says. “That game changed my life, so to be part of an official Nintendo event dedicated to it was literally a dream come true.”

As a soloist, Ramos warmed up concert audiences with ocarina sets in the lobby before finally realizing a decade-long dream and performing with the symphony onstage in Houston in 2016. While it was a thrilling experience, his most cherished memories of the symphony tour come from the educational workshops he staged at many of the stops. Ramos absolutely loves teaching people about both the history and the capabilities of the ocarina, and he uses his vast repertoire of ocarinas to get the point across. "When I do presentations, I bring about 200 years of history with me," he says, noting that his private collection includes ocarinas dating back to the 16th century. After hosting ocarina workshops at several video game and anime conventions (including San Japan in San Antonio), his burgeoning reputation caught the interest of colleges. He gave a presentation at Duke University and has collaborated with UCLA's Game Music Ensemble. When students at Appalachian State University started an ocarina septet, they flew Ramos in to coach them on their technique and balance their arrangements. Ramos says he's determined to prove that the ocarina is not only a fully functional concert instrument but also fun to play. That's why his YouTube channel features tutorials and informational videos alongside his performances. His fans show their appreciation in more places than just the comments section. His presentations are usually packed, as were his shows on a 2017 European tour. "More than anything else, it was cool to see that my fan base was real," he says. "When you're posting on YouTube, you don't always know."
Cultural INFLUENCE

After years of dazzling San Antonio with his prints, UTSA senior art lecturer and alumnus JUAN MORA ’09, M.F.A. ’11 is now a Smithsonian artist.

walking the halls of UTSA’s Arts Building in a flat-billed Flying Chanclas baseball cap to an office littered with video game and pop culture memorabilia, Juan Mora doesn’t jump out as the kind of artist whose works you’d find in one of the world’s most prestigious museums. Yet it’s that approachability, unique perspective and appreciation for all things creative that makes his prints so incredibly interesting.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum has acquired five linocut prints by Mora, an artist and senior art lecturer at UTSA, where he also earned his B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees. “It’s been a wonderful experience,” he says, “but I’m not sure how I got there, to tell you the truth.”

Humble but brilliant, Mora is the first artist with UTSA ties to be featured in the SAAM permanent collection in Washington, D.C. His work is frequently inspired by people he’s met throughout his lifetime and the melding of cultures he experienced as an immigrant in adolescence.

Mora’s family immigrated to the United States and settled down in Laredo when he was 14. Living in Laredo gave Mora a heavy dose of culture shock. He was fascinated by American art, entertainment, and folklore. But certain traditions, racism, and stereotypes made life difficult for him and other immigrants in the community.

Influenced by the playful and political black-and-white illustrations of Mexico’s Taller de Gráfica Popular, Mora’s phenomenally detailed prints are often surreal portrayals of the kinds of “typical” Mexican Americans you’d find in Laredo, but he approaches them with pride, sentiment, and a healthy amount of humor that wavers between satire and whimsy.

Find more Mora prints online at SombrillaMag.com.
UTSA laid out the foundation on how I hustle, because going to architecture school was more than enough.

While Nirav Bhakta engulfed himself in his architecture studies at UTSA, deep down he dreamed of one day finding himself amongst the bright lights of the film world. Now nearly nine years since graduating with his bachelor of science in architecture, Bhakta is among the Hollywood lights.

Although film was a passion for Bhakta long before he attended UTSA, it wasn’t something he could pursue, so he picked what he believed could give him the same creative freedom. “Being South Asian and undocumented, going to a film school or drama school was not really an option for me,” he says. “It was important to go into a field that had some sort of safety net. Architecture still gave me this feeling that acting did.”

Bhakta juggled his time between classes and booking gigs through a local talent agency, but in doing so he discovered the Texas film industry’s lack of South Asian roles. The only way to move forward in a film career was to take a leap of faith. In 2012 he moved to Los Angeles, where South Asian roles were plentiful—but not in the way he believed they should be. “The roles that were being written were still very stereotypical,” he explains. “I realized if I wanted to see the changes on my television screen that I dream of, I have to be in a creative position to create these stories.”

Bhakta’s film Halwa does that as it takes its lead actor, Vee Kumari, out of a stereotypical role. The film was part of HBO’s 2019 Asian Pacific American Visionaries, where it took first place out of 300 films, making Bhakta the first South Asian director to win. “When we found out that we were finalists—and then won first place,” Bhakta says, “it became bigger than us in some ways. It’s a story that at the end of the day will find its way. And nobody can take that away from me.”

While Bhakta’s career has shifted since his studies at UTSA, he attributes his time at the university for building the foundation of his current success. “UTSA laid out the foundation on how I hustle, because going to architecture school was more than enough,” he says. “I worked twice as hard and I think that stamina and endurance helped me for the future. I think the only reason I was able to do that was because I was so hungry for what I wanted to do.”

As he looks toward the future, Bhakta says he hopes to continue to use his voice to share everyone’s stories. “My golden rule is only speak if you have something to say,” he says, “and I have a lot more to say.”

SNIRAV BHAKTA ’11 goes from creating building plans to penning award-winning Hollywood scripts

BY VALERIE BUSTAMANTE

Star Storyteller

PROFILE
ALUMNI

Bhakta is interviewed by media at the HBO Visionaries event.
Reaping Benefits

DO DECEASED MUSIC STARS TRULY SELL MORE ALBUMS NOW THAN WHEN THEY WERE ALIVE? A DUO OF UTSA RESEARCHERS TAKES A LOOK

BY SHEA CONNER

Legions of rock 'n' roll fans have long held a belief that's dark and difficult to dispute—that dying is the best thing that can happen for a musician's legacy. There's circumstantial evidence aplenty. Buddy Holly, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Tupac Shakur, and Kurt Cobain all reached an iconic status after their unexpected deaths at relatively young ages. But even musicians who died in their 50s and 60s in recent years, such as Prince, Tom Petty, and Chris Cornell, have spawned a resurgent appreciation of sorts.

Will anyone ever be able to prove it? It's not likely, although two UTSA researchers have come about as close as possible. Stan Renard, assistant professor of music marketing and virtuoso violinist, and Richard Gretz, associate professor of marketing, have teamed up to study the impact of an artist's death on the sales that follow. They examined the deaths of 81 notable artists (and their associated acts) who died between 2015 and 2017 and analyzed their sales figures for up to three years afterward. Their findings have been published in the Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association, but here's a spoiler: Dead musicians have become cash cows for record labels, retailers and publishers.

Sombrilla Magazine caught up with Renard and Gretz to discuss the article and similar research on the horizon.

You found that the sales figures for a dead artist don't quite reach the predeath peaks, but they are persistently higher even three years after death. How surprising was that to find?

**GRETZ:** It was very surprising. I could not find a model where you would see the sales going back to predeath levels. I just couldn't do it. When you look at the graphs in the article, you see sales pop up early and come back down, but they never drop all the way back.

**RENA RD:** We're talking about post-death sales persistently being 20% better than predeath. If you look at someone like Michael Jackson, he's making more money today in sales, streams and merchandise than he ever did when he was alive. Usually the way the industry works is that you make more sales because you play shows and sell from the bandstand. The more shows you play, the more opportunities you create to make sales, whether it's vinyl, CDs, or whatever. So it's surprising to see artists selling in greater numbers when they clearly can't do that anymore.

Who's benefiting from this boost in post-death sales? Is it just record labels and surviving family members, or does this have any positive effect on living artists?

**GRETZ:** It looks like there are some significantly positive spillover benefits, which we will cover in our next article. What we're thinking, theoretically, is that when Prince dies, you become interest-
ed in the types of musical genres Prince was part of. If you listened to a lot of Prince after he died, you were also more inclined to listen to music like it. What we’re seeing in our research is that there are a lot of benefits from a notable musician’s death for artists of the same genre.

RENAUD: It’s very much a copycat game in the music business. Another side effect of that is all of the tribute bands that start popping up every time someone dies. There’s a lot of money in that, especially in San Antonio, which is a cover band market. The highest paying gigs in town are now cover band gigs, not original music.

So there’s definitely some residual benefit for the artists.

Who else?

RENAUD: If you run a record store selling vinyls or reissues, you’re going to be able to capitalize on any artist’s death. You can increase that artist’s footprint either physically in a store or digitally online, and then get the word out with some digital ads and social media blasts. And if you own the portfolio of an artist’s songs, there’s a lot of interest in this research. There are new tech companies that can take that catalog and put it at auction. At Royalty Exchange, for example, you can buy Jay-Z’s catalog for 10 years. Check it out. It’s crazy. It’s almost like stock investments, but you’re buying into the catalogs of artists. I think using our model will help those folks make more educated guesses at what the value of those catalogs will be.

What artists in this study sold particularly well after their deaths?

RENAUD: Tom Petty was one. The surge in sales the day he died was close to 7,000%. Prince had a 16,000% surge. David Bowie had a number 1 album after he died. Those are definitely massive superstars. Most of the artists we sampled for the article are pretty well-known artists, but they weren’t quite on that level.

GRETZ: On a three-year average, though—I hate to say it—they are all selling better dead than they were alive.

How do you hope to further this research and connect with industry professionals and music fans alike?

GRETZ: The biggest contribution of our initial research is that we’ve found, on average, that those sales just don’t drop back to normal. But we also have a lot of stuff that we can build on. Do age differences matter? Does it matter if the artist is emerging? Are there spillover effects to artists that are still alive? Does the genre of music itself matter? This is the opening to a lot of interesting questions that we hope to answer down the line.

RENAUD: Anything related to music always tends to be fascinating. Death is fascinating too. We’re in a university that’s research-centric, so I think we’re both really happy that we can do this kind of research that’s relatable and piques everyone’s curiosity.
A much-loved mural of the late Texas Rep. Henry B. González that once graced the walls of Estela’s Restaurant on San Antonio’s West Side before it was painted over has been restored by UTSA’s Analy Diego. The adjunct assistant professor in the Department of Architecture was able to re-create the image of González using design software so that it could be reproduced on canvas. González’s son, former Rep. Charlie González [pictured], and community leaders unveiled the canvas in its new home at San Antonio’s downtown convention center. The elder González, Texas’ first Mexican American congressman, was known for efforts to end racial segregation and to establish HemisFair.