

Fall 2000

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Texas Southmost College



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Breashears Headlines Distinguished Lecture Series



While the rest of the Rio Grande Valley is sweltering through the dog days of autumn, participants in UTB/TSC's Second Annual Distinguished Lecture Series will be scaling the icy heights of Mt. Everest with famed mountain climber and filmmaker David Breashears.

Team leader of the 1996 Everest IMAX filming expedition, Breashears is an Emmy Award winning cinematographer as well as a veteran of four ascents of the world's highest mountain. On Monday, October 23, at 7 p.m., he will bring his lifelong passion for mountaineering to the Lecture Hall of UTB/TSC's Science and Engineering Technology Building (SETB).

Determined to surpass last year's phenomenally successful lecture event, planners chose Breashears as the perfect combination of educational inspiration and multi-media entertainment.

"We believe Mr. Breashear's mountain adventures have excellent parallels to education," said Development Board Chairman elect Tudor Uhlhorn, who serves on the lecture series planning committee. "If you want to climb Everest, to make an adventure like this, you have to plot your course and plan for the future.

"It's just like life. You have to be thinking 3 or 4 or 5 years down the line in order to get where you want to go." Participants at this year's Distinguished Lecture are in for an exhilarating climb: The first American to twice reach the summit of Mt. Everest, Breashears has traveled to remote locations throughout Tibet, China, Nepal, India, Pakistan and East Africa. He will bring with him a wealth of stories from these far points on the globe.

It was during work on his IMAX film "Everest" that Breashears and others from his team broke off to help rescue stranded climbers involved in the disastrous May 1996 tragedy there – the deadliest day in the history of Mt. Everest. After helping several climbers reach safety, Breashear and team went back to work, summiting the mountain successfully on May 23, 1996.

During the "Everest" filming, Breashears toled a 42-pound camera to capture priceless images from the top of the world. His still shots from that expedition were published in the best-selling book, "Everest: Mountain Without Mercy."

In 1997, for his fourth ascent, Breashears again photographed the mountain for the PBS science series, "NOVA This Boston-based adventurer – who directed or participated in photographing the feature films Seven Years in Tibet with Brad Pitt and Cliffhanger with Sylvester Stallone – has written of his lifelong passion for climbing in his autobiography "High Exposure."

Community businesses, institutions and individuals who sponsor the Distinguished Lecture Series say it has given the Valley a new window to a world of ideas. "We as an organization are very interested in increasing the level of intellectual curiosity in the area. That leads to more wisdom, which leads to better health," explained Charles Sexton, Chief Executive Officer of Valley Regional Medical Center, a lecture series founder. "Last year, we went to the bottom of the sea; this year to the top of the world. Very appropriate."

The day after his lecture, Breashears also will be meeting with high school and college students "I think it's important to demonstrate, especially to students, what you can do if you set your mind to it," said Uhlhorn. "That there are exciting careers like filmmaking that can take you all over the world, lead you on great adventures, and you can be successful doing it as this man certainly has."

Planners, who chose the 350-seat SETB venue for its intimate setting, are expecting a sell-out. There is limited seating so advance ticket purchases are strongly recommended. Tickets at the sustaining level are \$500 per couple and include a VIP reception with Breashears before the lecture, preferred parking and seating and a reception afterwards. General admission tickets are \$150 per person and include the post-lecture reception.

Sponsors for this year's event are Valley Regional Medical Center, Texas State Bank, Coca Cola-Dr. Pepper Bottling Company, Wells Fargo, KRGV-TV and CableRep Advertising. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at 983-7359.



Serafy Family Makes an Investment in UTB/TSC



Chemistry and music might seem a strange mix, but they produce a positive reaction for UTB/TSC in the form of a \$350,000 gift – its largest ever from a family foundation – from longtime supporters Nicholas T. and Jean Serafy.

Both the chemistry and music departments will benefit from the generosity of this Brownsville family, which forged ties to UTB/TSC almost 60 years ago. Founder of a successful Brownsville medical laboratory, Nicholas T. Serafy took his first college chemistry course at what was then Brownsville Junior College. Jean Serafy created and chaired the UTB/TSC Music Department until her retirement in 1977.

In a recent ceremony, The Serafy Foundation Chemistry Wing of the Science and Engineering Technology Building was christened in honor of the Serafys, whose generous \$250,000 pledge will be used to leverage future gifts in support of the program and eventually be used to purchase equipment as well.

Another \$100,000 portion of the Serafy gift will be used to launch the Serafy Foundation Endowment for Music.

“We’ve given scholarships for a number of years, going back to the 1970s,” said Mr. Serafy, who attended Brownsville Junior College before moving on to The University of Texas at Austin. “We just enjoy the progress that’s going on at the university here.”

A WWII veteran, Mr. Serafy received his master’s degree from UT-Austin before returning to Brownsville in 1951 and founding Serafy Laboratories, a medical laboratory servicing South Texas and Northern Mexico. He was also chairman and founder of Sunrise Bank in Brownsville.

Mr. Serafy served as President of the American Association of Bioanalysts, a national professional organization, and has served for many years as director of AAB’s Proficiency Testing Service. He has been a technical consultant for the American Society of Internal Medicine’s Medical Laboratory Evaluation Program and has been a panelist and consultant on various committees for the Centers for Disease Control on matters dealing with clinical laboratories.

Mrs. Serafy received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in performance from the University of Michigan, attended the prestigious American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France, and taught at UT-Austin before moving to Brownsville with her husband. A teacher of music appreciation in her first years at TSC, Mrs. Serafy led the department as it added classes and continued to grow. She also oversaw construction of the Music Building, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

"I'm very impressed with the music program today," said Mrs. Serafy, who is widely credited for her vision in establishing UTB/TSC's Fine Arts Department. "There's a great deal of talent there. They're going great guns."

The Serafys enjoy landscaping, and have beautified the Music Building and other areas of the campus. Mr. Serafy has donated specimens for UTB/TSC medical technology classes for many years.

The Serafys have three children: Nicholas Jr., who serves on the UTB/TSC Development Board, Lisa and Lauran. Lauran and Nicholas, Jr. attended TSC. They also have nine grandchildren.

At dedication ceremonies for the renamed chemistry wing, the Serafys were praised for putting their generosity to work close to home.

"They are setting the pace. They are teaching others to come forward and be generous and invest in education," said TSC Board Chairman Mary Rose Cardenas.

"The fact that you chose to invest your money in the area in which you made your money and raised your family is as significant or more significant than anything I can think of," agreed Development Board Chairman Robert Shepard. "And I can tell you from personal experience, it is much more important to have a gift from the heart from a family. I think that is as fine a gift as we could ever receive."

Dr. Jose Martin, Dean of the College of Science, Mathematics and Technology, promised that UTB/TSC would prove itself disserving of the honor. "We are so very grateful for this vote of confidence ... that is going to allow us to go further and do more."



Jason Project an Adventure for Valley School Children



Thanks to UTB/TSC, Valley school children hold tickets to an innovative science learning adventure that combines virtual field trips to exotic locales, live interaction with field researchers and a curriculum that mixes science with geography, literature and culture.

With help from major financial supporters, UTB/TSC has become a primary conduit for the Jason Project, an interactive, multi-disciplinary Internet-based science curriculum. Longtime Valley science educator Mary Jane Shands has been appointed Project Director.

The Brownsville Foundation has pledged major support for the project for Health and Education and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration/National Aeronautics and Space Administration. This support enables the university to serve as a primary interactive network site for the Jason Project, giving participating students access to live hook-ups with scientists in the field.

Shands, who has more than 20 years experience in the field of science education, describes the Jason Project as an "extraordinary opportunity for the children and teachers in our area.

"It's just so exciting and so innovative – it's the future of education," said Shands. "The whole aim is to get students excited and enthusiastic about learning science ... and to forge a pipeline of better prepared students into UTB/TSC."

UTB/TSC's connection with the Jason Project began last year, when its founder – famed explorer and scientist Dr. Robert Ballard – was on campus for his inaugural presentation in the college's Distinguished Lecture Series.

His description of the Jason Project so captivated Dr. Roberto Robles, a member of the Texas Southmost College Board of Trustees, that he quickly put together a group to meet the next day with Ballard and discuss how to bring the Jason Project to the Valley.

"We all brainstormed and at the end of the session, we all left with big smiles, thinking what a wonderful opportunity for the children of South Texas," said Robles, who hopes the Jason Project will also serve to make more local students acquainted with UTB/TSC. "At both the elementary and college level we are all struggling to do one thing: help our students succeed. This is one great way of introducing our students to science. It thrusts the kids right into state-of-the-art technology."

"It sounded like a very exciting program and that's why we decided to get involved," agreed David Garza, Chairman of the Brownsville Foundation for Health and Education, a non-profit entity that has pledged matching funds for the Jason Project. "We inquired into it in a lot more detail, and it just seemed like a real worthwhile project."

This year's Jason Project theme is "Hawaii: A Living Laboratory," combining subjects like volcanoes, ocean reefs and endangered species with literature and geography. In past years, themes have focused on rainforests, marine environments and other topics.

Via the Internet, students interact with other participating students around the country, take "virtual field trips" and keep on-line journals. In the spring, UTB/TSC will welcome all participating students for special live satellite hook-ups with scientists in the

field.

Shands, who is busy training schools that have signed aboard the Jason Project, believes Valley teachers will enthusiastically welcome it, as it has been in other areas around the county. "It's a school teacher's dream!"



Alumni Board Profile: Sandra Z. Zayas



When it came time for college, Sandra Zamora Zayas' hometown campus fit her varied educational needs – twice.

The youngest of 11 children, Zamora Zayas enrolled in Texas Southmost College partly for financial reasons when she graduated from high school at Port Isabel in 1980. Two of her seven sisters were students there as well, and attending TSC allowed her to live and study close to home.

Later, she transferred to the University of Texas at Austin, but came home again to finish her degree when her father fell ill. She earned her degree in political science at what was then Pan American University at Brownsville.

Today, working as a federal public defender – an attorney representing indigent defendants in federal criminal cases – Zamora Zayas says her choice of college helped her successfully navigate law school at the University of Houston Law Center.

“I truly believe my professors at TSC prepared me to be competitive in law school,” said Zamora Zayas. “I had a great time there.”

After graduating from law school, Zamora Zayas served as a Cameron County Assistant District Attorney from 1990-93, and then went into private practice for a time and launched her own law firm with her husband, attorney Richard Zayas.

In 1998, she became an Assistant Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Texas. Zamora Zayas now represents clients as a court-appointed attorney, most often in immigration and drug cases.

A New Bookstore for the Community

UTB/TSC's new \$1.8 million Student Bookstore opened in grand fashion September 12, amidst predictions that this "bookstore for the entire community" would be a gathering place for the exchange of ideas, opinions and dreams.

Officials from Texas Book Company, the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, the City of Brownsville and the UTB/TSC Alumni Association and other special guests were on hand for ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

In a week of special activities at the bookstore, visitors were treated to music, gourmet coffee, book signings with local authors, special discounts – and, of course, lots of bookshelves to browse.

Keynote speaker for the grand opening ceremonies was the Honorable Reynaldo G. Garza, senior judge of the Fifth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, who called the new bookstore a "great asset" to the community, and a bricks-and-mortar testament to the importance of reading.



"Reading opens up your mind to new fields, to new places that you may never be, to what is going on in the world," said Garza, the 1993 Texas Southmost College Distinguished Alumnus. "The opening of this bookstore is a great thing for the community."

The 15,000-square-foot bookstore, designed by architects Marmon Mok and built by D. Wilson Construction, features a clock tower with mosaic-tiled cupola, arched walkways and patios overlooking the resaca. Inside, the bookstore boasts an impressive medical and allied health section aimed at the community's growing medical sector; an extensive Spanish language section to complement the university's mission as a bi-literate campus; and special displays highlighting the works of more than two dozen local authors. Bestsellers and children's books round out a collection that, of course, offers a full array of student textbooks. UTB/TSC memorabilia and office supplies are added shopping bonus.

Built by Texas Book Company on Texas Southmost College land, the complex also includes a gourmet coffee shop and "cyber cafe," Puro Café, with bougainvillea-trimmed decks overlooking a quiet resaca. There's also a business services center offering everything from mailboxes, passport photos and word processing to design and production services.

At its heart, said Texas Book Company President Brent Dyer, the bookstore is the vision of UTB/TSC President Dr. Juliet V. García.

"Dr. Garcia visualized a gathering place in a beautiful resaca setting, an inviting place where people could spend time around books, a place where people could meet and discuss ideas. My hope is that many local young people will come to know and love books because of this bookstore."

In her remarks, García said the bookstore was designed to be "friendly," while at the same time multiplying several times over the previous bookstore's space.

Flanked by Texas Book Company officials and TSC Board Vice-Chairman Chester Gonzalez, García placed a time capsule in this newest addition to a rapidly growing campus. Inside were historical items discovered during construction – a muleshoe, a horseshoe and a bullet dating back to old Fort Brown – as well as campus directories, t-shirts, a student government constitution and a calendar of events.

"What a difference 30 years makes," said TSC Vice-Chairman Gonzalez, recalling the tiny bookstore of his own TSC college days. "It just tells us that this institution is growing and has a lot more to grow ... This is just the beginning."

Heads Above The Crowd



Celebrate With Us The Success of the Faculty and Staff of UTB/TSC

 **Silva, Hilda.jpg**

Dr. Hilda Silva, *Director of the Learning Support Center*, earned her doctorate in *Educational Leadership and Cultural Studies* from the University of Houston. She successfully defended her dissertation “*The Impact of a Mentoring Experience on the Withdrawal Behavior of First time Freshmen in a Community College.*”

Dr. David E. Pearson, *Associate Professor of Behavioral Sciences*, has written a book entitled *WWMCCES: World Wide Military Command Control Evolution and System Effectiveness Cold War History Department of Defense Command Mega-structure*. His book traces how organizational structures changed technology and ideology.

Nancy Sclight, *Associate Professor of Fine Arts*, exhibited more than 40 sculptures and photographs at the Rio Grande Valley Museum this past summer. She was also selected for membership in the *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. Five percent of the nation's teachers are recognized and former students nominated teachers who have made a difference in their lives.

At the Annual Meeting of the American Accounting Association in Philadelphia in August, **Dr. Douglass Cagwin**, *Assistant Professor of Accounting*, presented two papers entitled “*The Association of Strategic Business Initiatives with Improvement in Financial Performance: Evidence from the Motor Carrier Industry*” and “*The Association Between Activity-Based Costing and Improvement in Financial Performance*” which was co-authored with Marinus Bouwman from the University of Arkansas.

Dr. Marcia J. Barrett, *Kinesiology Field-Based Teaching Specialist*, and **Dr. Judith D. Walton**, *Professor of Kinesiology*, have co-authored *The Kinesiology Department Majors/Minors Guidebook*. This booklet is intended to acquaint prospective kinesiology students with the information necessary to successfully complete a bachelor's degree at UTB/TSC.

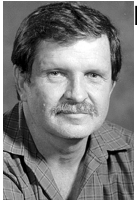


Dr. Katherine Barker, *Assistant Professor of Accounting*, co-authored a paper entitled “*Sources of*

Nonfinancial Accounting Information” which will be published in the fall/winter 1999/2000 issue of the journal *Accounting Enquiries*.

Dr. Peter Gawenda, *Professor of School Specialties*, is serving as a member of the State Agency Energy Advisory Group (SAEAG) and was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Texas Building Energy Institute (TBEI). He is also serving as Director of Doctoral Student Research at UTB/TSC.

Rebecca Day, *Learning Instructional Specialist in Writing*, has written an article entitled "Dungeon Rock" in the July issue of *Lost Treasure*, a magazine devoted to treasure hunting. The article is about the legend of Pirate Treasure in Lynn Woods, a Public Trust in Lynn, Massachusetts.

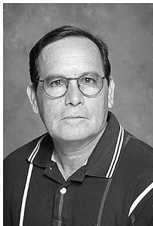


Dr. James B. Sullivan, *Professor of Social Sciences*, presented a paper entitled "Politicos, Technology and the

Decline of a Sierra County Seat: Hillsboro, 1884-1939" at a meeting of the New Mexico Historical Society on the Valencia Campus of the University of New Mexico in April. He was also asked to submit his paper for possible inclusion in the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*.

Dr. Joseph A. Zavaleta, Jr., *Assistant Professor of Accounting*, presented a paper entitled "The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act: Kids, Cookies, and Chatrooms" at the annual meeting of the Academy of Legal Studies in Business in Baltimore, Maryland. Also, his paper "Title II of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act: Point and Click Pirates" will be published in the fall, 2000 edition of the *Southern Law Journal*.

The President of the Texas School Counselors Association has appointed Dr. Alma G. Leal, Associate Professor of School Specialties, Chair of the TSCA Advocacy Committee.



Rene Torres, *Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction*, was re-appointed to serve a four-year term

on the South Texas Independent School District. This past summer, he joined trustees from across the state at the Texas Association of School Boards Summer Leadership Institute held in San Antonio, Texas.

Dr. Olivia Rivas, *Vice President for Student Affairs*, was invited to participate in the Oxford Round Table held at Oxford University in Oxford, England. She joined a select group of educators from the United States and the European community in a process of dialog and understanding of higher education issues. She is also serving a two-year term as President of the Texas Council of Student Affairs Vice Presidents.



Cipirano Cardenas, *Chair of Modern Languages and Associate Professor*, led a presentation entitled "The

Spanish Language Newspaper in the Elementary and Secondary Classroom" at the Valley Wide Newspaper in Education Conference Workshop held in August. He also joined **Maria Cavazos**, *Lecturer in Modern Languages*, and **Juan Antonio Gonzalez**, *Associate Professor of Modern Languages*, as they read original poetry in Spanish at the Third Annual Simposio de Literatura Fronteriza at Texas A&M International University in Laredo.

Martie DiGregorio, *Coordinator of Special Events*, **Juan Vicente Garcia**, *Senior Budget Analyst*, and **Maria Ruth Torres**, *Operations Manager for Business Affairs*, were selected to serve on the Board of Directors of Leadership Brownsville.

Under the direction of **Antonio Briseño**, *Associate Professor of Fine Arts*, the Mariachi Escorpion, the student mariachi group, earned a 1st division at the Texas Mariachi Festival in Lubbock, Texas and won the college division. Since winning this competition, the Mariachi Escorpion has received an invitation to perform at the 7MO. Encuentro Internacional del Mariachi y la Charrería 2000.

The Hispanic Educational Telecommunications System (HETS) has **awarded Dr. Mark Sorensen**, *Director of Continuing Education*, a Learning Anywhere, and Anytime Program (LAAP) stipend to develop an on-line course on Orientation of New Continuing Education/Adult Education Short Course Instructors.



Sonia Cunningham, *Associate Master Technical Instructor in Nursing*, is serving on the Board of Directors

and as *Chair of the Education Committee of the International Society of Nurses in Genetics*. She also served on a panel of experts that met in Washington D.C. to discuss *Genetics in Nursing Education and Practice*.

This past summer, **Dr. Rodney Sullivan**, *Associate Professor of Biological Sciences*, led a workshop titled "June 2000 Microbiology Workshop" for teachers in the Brownsville Independent School District. The three-day workshop concentrated on laboratory safety, laboratory procedures, classroom-laboratory management, advanced preparation, ordering of materials, laboratory resources, suppliers, and the "how-tos" of setting up a new laboratory.

Dr. Alan Church, *Assistant Professor of English*, has published "Beowulf's 'ane ben' and the Rhetorical Context of the Hunfer Episode," in *Rhetorica* 18.1 (Winter 2000): 49-78.



Dr. Juliet V. Garcia, *President*, was inducted into the 2000 Texas Women's Hall of Fame. The Governor's

Commission for Women created the Texas Women's Hall of Fame to honor outstanding women and their contributions to the state. As the single inductee this year in the education category, she is one of 11 women selected for induction.

Carlos G. Gómez, *Professor of Fine Arts*, has been invited by Coronado Studio in Austin, Texas to participate in Coronado Studio's "Serie Print Project". Every year a distinguished committee of noted artists from across Texas nominate a specific number of artists to join in the production of a body of work. Artists selected must go through a competitive process and are ultimately chosen by their peers based on career work.

Dr. Dawn Rodrigues, *Professor of English and Speech*, served as the disciplinary leader for the July 2000 on-line discussion forum called "Teaching Composition." Her topic is "Are You and Your Students Ready for Distance Education?" This forum is a collaborative project between McGraw-Hill and the Teaching and Learning Group sponsored by the American Association of Higher Education.

Dr. Ralph M. Hausman, *Professor of School Specialties*, is serving as President of the Texas Council for Exceptional Children. He recently presented a multimedia session entitled "Project DEED: Distance Education for Educational Diagnosticians: Putting Available Technology to work via the Internet for Rural, Bilingual Sites along the Texas/Mexico Border" at the ED-MEDIA 2000 World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia, and Telecommunications held in Montreal, Canada.



Dr. Francisco Rocafuerte, *Assistant Professor of Fine Arts*, performed and gave master classes in the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam and in Frankfurt, Fuhr and Zwickau this past summer. The Cultural Community of the Netherlands, the Frankfurt Conservatory and the Zwickau and Fuhr Festival and Conservatories invited him. He also conducted master classes at the Universidad Central de Costa Rica in August

Dr. Sue Zanne Urbis, *Chair/Assistant Professor of Fine Arts*, presented a workshop on the "Extra-Advantages of a Musical Education" at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas.

Leticia Cerritos, *Interim Director for the Career Opportunities Retraining Program-Technical Academy*, published her third book of poetry entitled "Pensamientos del otoño/Thoughts of Autumn." She is the author of two other books "Vivencias" and "Eruption of Sentiments."

Dr. Maosen Zhong, *Assistant Professor of Finance*, had four papers accepted and published in peer review journals. "Category Forecasting: An Alternative of BVAR – Artificial Neural Networks" was accepted by the *Decisions Sciences Journal* and "Stock Returns, Inflation and Macroeconomy: The Long- and Short-run Dynamics" was accepted by *Advances in Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management*. In the August 2000 issue of *The Financial Review*; his article "On Testing the Random Walk Hypothesis: A Model-Comparison Approach" was published and "Testing Export Exogeneity in Taiwan: Further Evidence" will appear in the *Applied Economics Letters*, volume 7, 2000.

During his summer tour, **Richard Urbis**, *Associate Professor of Fine Arts*, was a featured performer in the South Bohemian Music Festival in Bechyně, the Czech Republic.



Dr. Wayne E. Wells, *Professor of Engineering Technology*, has established the Elvira Kiefer Wells Foundation to help South Texas residents who were abused as children or who are being abused by their spouses find counseling, job training and education grants. The family created the foundation in memory of Wells' late wife, Elvira, herself a victim of child abuse.



Grants Grants Grants

“So much of the work that faculty want to do as part of their professions requires external funding. In turn, the external funding can free the faculty to accomplish the research or student support projects that give them a real feeling of accomplishment, while also bringing recognition to our university. For a faculty member in today's university – anywhere in this country – grants are an essential part of their lives. I am especially proud of those who have submitted grant proposals, whether they have been funded or not.”

– Dr. Raymond J. Rodrigues, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

The National Science Foundation has awarded UTB/TSC a five-year grant for \$450,000. The grants are awarded under the new \$90 million **Information Technology Research (ITR) Initiative**. The awards, which will spur fundamental research and innovative applications of IT, are a step toward building on U.S. Leadership in this area of growing importance to the economy.

Dr. Joseph Romano, *Assistant Professor of Physical Sciences*, will be the principal investigator on this grant.

The **National Science Foundation (NSF)** has also renewed a grant for \$259,962 to Dr. Romano for his project titled "Collaboration to Integrate Research and Education between UTB and LIGO. LIGO is a facility dedicated to the detection of cosmic gravitational waves.

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a three-year \$4 million grant to the UTB/TSC **Continuing Education Department** and the Brownsville Independent School District to collaboratively develop 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLCs) at five BISD campuses.



Dr. Mark Sorensen, *Director of Continuing Education* and **Robin Dahl**, formerly with the Brownsville Independent School District co-designed the programming and wrote the grant proposal collaboratively. Dr. Sorensen also was the principal investigator on a new contract that was awarded funding from the Texas Commission of Alcohol. The contract for \$85,840 provides funds to help prepare Hispanic students to pass the Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor licensure examination.

Dr. Michael Sullivan, *Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction*, has been awarded an implantation grant from the U.S. Department of Education totaling \$262,505.00 for a project titled "Preparing Tomorrow Teachers to use Technology." The grants will support efforts to improve teacher training by consortia involving colleges, state agencies, school districts and nonprofit organizations.



Cheryl Strauser, *Director of the Americorps and Literacy Project*, has had her sub-contract with UT Dallas for her "Reading One to One Program (Americorps Project)" renewed for \$243,586. The project provides one-to-one reading instruction to low performing students in grades 1 thru 4 on 12 Brownsville Independent School District campuses. Her contract with the Brownsville Independent School District for \$101,400 for a literacy project which provides one to one reading instruction to students in grades 1 through 5 has also been renewed.

James Holt, *Dean of Workforce Training and Continuing Education*, received a \$1,000,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce to support the efforts of the community to establish the International Innovation Center.

Mr. Holt was also the principal investigator on two contracts from the Port Isabel School District that were renewed. The grant for \$78,647 continues to establish secondary level education opportunities in the form of health science technology to be available within the Port Isabel School District. A second grant in the amount of \$19,592 will be used to provide educational opportunities in criminal justice education to high school students in Port Isabel.

Dr. Sylvia C. Peña, *Dean of the School of Education*, received a \$1,000,000 sole source grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration for a project titled "Future in Quality Education Workforce: A Teacher Certification Model For Incumbent Teacher Assistants and Other School Personnel."

Dr. Peña together with **Dr. José Martín**, *Dean of the College of Science, Mathematics and Technology*, and **Dr. Margie Mancillas**, *Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs*, received a \$100,000 planning grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities for Education) program to increase opportunities for Hispanics to enter and complete college.

Dr. William M. Davis, *Assistant Professor of Physical Sciences*, received a grant of \$75,000 from the Robert A. Welch Foundation of Houston, Texas. The three-year grant will support chemical research by faculty members and will provide an opportunity for students to study chemistry.

Dr. Leticia Cabrera, *Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences*, received \$50,000 from the Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation of San Antonio, Texas for the Herbarium Project. The grant will help provide the physical resources and capacity to educate students and the community of the importance of conservation and protection of native specimens in the area of biological sciences.

Dr. Dawn Rodrigues, *Professor of English and Speech*, received a grant for \$25,000 from the National Writing Project to continue the Sabal Palms Writing Project. The project is a professional development project designed for teachers in all disciplines who enjoy writing and want to help their students become better writers.

Dr. Joan E. Price, *Assistant Professor of Fine Arts*, received \$13,500 from Clayton Fund, Inc. of Houston, Texas for an Art Slide Collection. The funds will be used to purchase slides and slide storage cabinets. The slides represent cultural images ranging from the Parthenon to Washington's National Gallery of Art, which will help enhance the awareness and knowledge of students.

Dr. Juliet V. García, *President*, received a \$10,000 grant from the Public Welfare Foundation of Washington, D.C. The grant will support a scholarship endowment for the establishment of a Community Leadership Studies program at UTB/TSC.

Dr. Allison Abell, *Assistant Professor*, **Dr. Leticia Cabrera**, *Assistant Professor*, **Gregg Dieringer**, *Lecturer*, **Javier Gonzalez**, *Lecturer*, and **David McNeely**, *Professor* received a grant in the amount of \$199,910 from the U.S. Department of Defense, Army Research Office for a proposal titled "Enhancement of Resources for Environmental Education and Research." Their project will fund equipment to be used in environmentally related teaching and research in the laboratory and in the field.

Dr. Abel also received a grant for \$263,664 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the purpose of enhancing the teaching of laboratory techniques in genetics by integrating Agricultural Biotechnology Research.

Dr. James Talese, *Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction*, has been awarded a grant from NASA for \$196,160 for his project "C+P=M2T: South Texas Master Mathematics Teacher Preparation Program." The goal of this program is to increase the number of certified middle and high school mathematics and science teachers.

Dr. Jon Steingass, *Director of Developmental Education* has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education for \$425,000 for his project, "Title V-Increasing Retention Through Improving Academic Programs." The goal of the project is to improve retention by training instructors in developmental and gatekeeper courses in best practices and use of technology in the classroom, providing more tutors and supplemental instruction leaders for them by instituting cohorts of paired courses and by providing more computer hardware and software.



Dr. Gene Paull, *Chair of the Physical Sciences Department*, was awarded a subcontract from UT Austin for \$97,124 for his project "Regional Ecological Resource Assessment of the Rio Grande Riparian Corridor: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding Anthropogenic Effects on Riparian Communities in Semi-Arid Environments."

Linda Alaniz, *Director of the High School Equivalency Program*, was awarded a subcontract for \$181,941 from the San Benito School District for the project "Public Education From the Home to Doctorate (Ph.D.)." Ms. Alaniz is also the principal investigator on a continuing grant that has been awarded for the second year, also from the U.S. Department of Education for \$395,000 for the project "Secondary Achievement to Further Education (SAFE)." The total award of this grant is for \$790,000 and it provides basic academic skills and GED preparation for migrant students in Cameron County so that they can enter into post secondary institutions.



Shamina Davis, *MLT Program Director*, received a grant for \$21,978 from the U.S. Department of Education for her project "Web-Based Education in Clinical Laboratory Science." The project, in collaboration with the University of Texas Medical Branch, provides an articulation route for non-traditional associate degree clinical laboratory technicians (CLTs/MLTs) in rural, medically underserved areas of the United States who wish to obtain their baccalaureate degrees.



Dr. Mario Díaz, *Interim Chair and Associate Professor of Engineering Technology*, received funding from NASA in the amount of \$100,000 for the second year for a project entitled "Blast Off to an Engineering Career." The program provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of engineering for 8th through 12th grade students in middle and high school. Dr. Rutilio Hernandez, Associate Professor of Engineering Technology, leads the program.

The South Texas Engineering Math and Science Program (STEMS) received a Community Outdoor Outreach Program (CO-OP) grant in the amount of \$29,835 from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to

increase outdoor opportunities for youths and minorities. 27 local groups throughout the state were awarded the grants. CO-OP assists and provides grants to non-profit organizations to introduce youths, minorities, and adults to outdoor services, programs and activities.

The Licensed Vocational Nursing Program received a \$60,000 grant from the Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA). The purpose of this grant is to prepare at-risk students to enter the nursing program. The organization also helps in preparing students to take the entrance exams and take the pre-requisite courses in the School of Health Sciences.

The Division of Student Affairs brings in approximately \$3 million annually in external funding aimed at helping students gain access into college. The TRIO grant programs, which are Student Affairs largest externally funded grant programs and administered through the U.S. Department of Education, are designed to motivate and support low income, first generation students attend and succeed in college. Talent Search, Upward Bound Classic, Upward Bound Math and Science Center, and Veterans' Upward Bound have been awarded approximately \$1 million for four or five years.

The Veterans' Upward Bound program at UTB/TSC is the only one funded in the state of Texas.



A Salute to Our Donors

The Amador R. Rodriguez Scholarship Fund

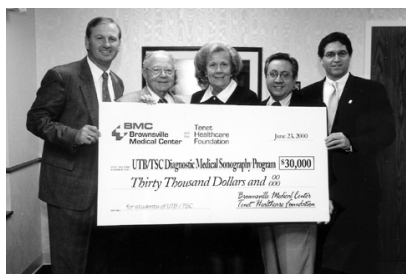
Brownsville attorney Eddie Rodriguez has established The Amador R. Rodriguez Scholarship Fund in memory of his brother, Amador R. Rodriguez.

Amador Rodriguez began working for the county's juvenile probation department in 1971 and served as the country's chief juvenile probation officer from 1974 in February. He has been described as passionately committed, loving, loyal, proud and a believer of justice and accountability.



The scholarship fund will go to help juniors and seniors who have chosen a law enforcement career. "My brother was a leader in the field of juvenile justice in the state and through his efforts, he helped convince the legislature to create the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission," recalled Eddie Rodriguez, who also serves on the UTB Development Board. "He is missed not only by his family but by many of the people he worked with."

Brownsville Medical Center and the Tenet Healthcare Foundation



Brownsville Medical Center and the Tenet Healthcare Foundation presented UTB/TSC with a \$30,000 donation for the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program.

"Brownsville Medical Center and the Tenet Healthcare Foundation feel very fortunate to be able to partner with UTB/TSC on this very important project, said Jack Chubb, Chief Executive Officer for BMC. "To be able to train diagnostic medical sonographers right here in Brownsville represents an incredible advantage for local hospitals. "

Diagnostic Medical Sonography is one of the fastest growing imaging careers and the diagnostic medical sonography program at UTB/TSC is one of only six sites to offer training in Texas.

Matt and Patty Gorges

Matt and Patty Gorges of Harlingen presented a check for \$7,500, its sixth installment of a \$90,000 pledge to the Matt and Patty Gorges Presidential Scholar Endowment in the School of Health Sciences. Initially started as a \$60,000 pledge, the Gorges family increased the endowment to \$90,000.

The endowment was established for upper division undergraduate students in the School of Health Sciences who have demonstrated high academic achievement and a potential for continued success. An additional scholarship fund was established for immediate dispersal each academic year. The scholarship fund began with a pledge of \$12,000 and was fulfilled this past year. Patty Gorges is a former UTB Development Board member and a registered nurse.

Dr. Lawrence W. Siegle Excellence Endowment

Established by the Brownsville Society for the Performing Arts, the Dr. Lawrence W. Siegle Excellence Endowment for the School of Liberal Arts specifically for the Fine Arts Department is one of the first of its kind for this area.

This \$10,000 endowment will provide scholarships to recipients chosen by a selection committee made up of fine arts faculty. Each student applying will undergo a performance audition and be enrolled full time in the Music Program.

"Our mission is to promote performing arts in the community and provide opportunities for people in the community, said Michael Quantz, UTB/TSC Assistant Professor of Fine Arts and a board member of the BSPA. "Naming our scholarship endowment for Dr. Siegle is our way of honoring him for his many years of service in the arts to the community."

Dr. Siegle served as Director of the Camille Playhouse in Brownsville for 16 years.

PREVIOUS ★ ARTICLE

ORANGE ★ & WHITE

NEXT ★ ARTICLE



Development Board Profile: Martha Jane Russell

Family ties in the Valley and an appreciation of positive changes at UTB/TSC keep Austin, Texas realtor Martha Jane Russell – a new member of the university’s Development Board – in close contact with her alma mater.

Russell, who grew up just north of Brownsville and attended TSC in the 1960s, says she’s happy to contribute to an important community institution that has impressed her with its recent growth and progress.

“I went to school at Texas Southmost College and I like what’s happening to it,” said Russell. “I like what it’s evolved into.”

Russell, whose work gives her a special appreciation for historic architecture, is especially pleased with how UTB/TSC has preserved its priceless ties with old Fort Brown.

“It’s really been sort of a shock to see all the things that have changed and happened and to see how really attractive the campus has become,” said Russell. “I think they’ve done a really good job with restoration. I’m very happy that the college is paying attention to the historic aspects of Brownsville. I think it’s terrific!”

She has fond memories of her days at a much-different TSC. “When I took chemistry, it was in the old guard house. There was no air conditioning; it was an old beat up building. It’s just totally different now.”

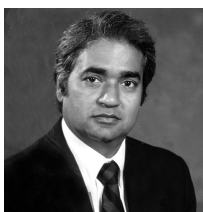
A member of a longtime Valley farming family, Russell now lives in Austin with her husband, retired U.S. consular official and realtor James Taylor Blanton. She specializes in residential real estate with Wilson & Goldrick Realtors.

A graduate of The University of Texas at Austin, Russell says “the combination of joining the University of Texas System and still retaining its junior college status makes UTB/TSC unique, and makes it a very accessible school for the needs of the Valley.”



UTB/TSC Appoints New Deans and Directors

Dr. Farhat M. Iftekharuddin



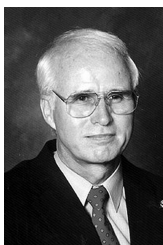
Dr. Farhat M. Iftekharuddin is the new Dean for the College of Liberal Arts. The largest of the colleges and schools at UTB/TSC, Iftekharuddin had been serving as Interim Dean since the fall semester of 1998.

"I am very excited at the challenges that I am facing," said Iftekharuddin "There are many wonderful things happening here and the university. The future looks good for this institution and this community."

Iftekharuddin joined the university in 1990 serving as an Instructor in the Department of English. He moved up the ranks as Assistant Professor, and an Associate Professor teaching undergraduate and graduate courses. In 1997, he became acting chair of the department. He has also served as an adjunct faculty member at UT Pan American in Brownsville. Iftekharuddin has worked closely with the faculty having served as President of the Academic Senate.

Iftekharuddin holds a B.A. in English with honors and an M.A from the University of Dhaka. He earned his Ph.D. in English from Oklahoma State University.

Dr. Eldon L. Nelson



Dr. Eldon L. Nelson is the new Dean for the School of Health Sciences. Before joining UTB/TSC, Dr. Nelson was among the inaugural faculty that initiated the Oklahoma College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1975. He developed and taught the unique three-year systems-based medical curriculum used by other medical schools.

"The University is in a vibrant stage of development and its focus as a 'Community University' is uniquely attractive in idea and function," said Nelson. "Principally, it was that character that brought me to UTB/TSC."

Nelson received his B.A and his B.S. in biology from East Carolina College in 1964. He earned a Master of Arts degree in biology (biophysics) from East Carolina University in 1970. Four years later, he was awarded a Ph.D. in medical physiology from the College of Medicine at the University of Florida. He also conducted postdoctoral studies in hypertension.

DeLayne R. Hudspeth

The new Director of the Office of Distance Education, Dr. DeLayne R. Hudspeth, believes that successful program and faculty development calls for a constantly evolving blend of personal contact, in-service education, quality support services, investment in technology and institutional policies that encourage, reward and maintain distance education efforts.



"I am impressed with the potential that exists for distance education in this area. I look forward to the opportunity of serving a variety of needs in this multi-cultural area, whether it be through public schools or in the private/corporate sector."

Prior to joining UTB/TSC, Hudspeth served as Associate Professor of Instructional Technology in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin. He also served as Area Coordinator for the University of Texas instructional technology program for nearly 20 years.

Hudspeth earned an A.B. degree in Communications and a master's degree in Psychology from Kansas State University. He received a Ph.D. in philosophy in Education from Michigan State University.

Hershel D. Price

A twenty-three year veteran in law enforcement, Hershel D. Price joins the university as the Director of the Criminal Justice Institute.



Price joined the Brownsville Police Department in 1981 following his graduation from the Lower Rio Grande Valley Police Academy with top academic honors. While at the police department, he served in a number of positions from patrol officer, to criminal investigator to director of training.

"I look forward to sharing my education, training and experience with the law enforcement community of the valley, said Price. "I want to help produce the most skilled, experienced, safe and professional police officers."

Price will direct the Criminal Justice Institute at UTB/TSC, which has been offering law enforcement training for local, state and federally licensed law enforcement and correctional personnel.

Dr. Hilda Silva

Dr. Hilda Silva is the new Director of the Learning Support Center. Silva will direct the work of the current Learning Assistance Center and the Counseling and Guidance Center. Both of these departments now under one director are charged with providing learning support to students.



"I am excited about the new challenges that I will be facing," said Silva. "To be truly successful and meet the needs of our students, faculty, staff and administrators, we must work closely and explore ways of connecting with our students so we can help them reach their goals."

Silva recently earned her doctorate in Educational Leadership and Cultural Studies from the University of Houston. Silva earned her bachelor of science degrees and a master in education degree from Pan American University, Now UT Pan American.

Dr. Deborah Suzzane

Dr. Deborah Suzzane comes to UTB/TSC with many years experience in the field of assessment and evaluation for institutional research purposes.



"I enjoy working at UTB/TSC and believes it provides me an opportunity to further develop my expertise while helping support decision making and planning efforts on campus to benefit students and other university stakeholders," said Suzanne.

Before joining the staff at UTB/TSC, Suzzane served as Director of Institutional Research and Planning at Rogers State University in Oklahoma. She is currently a member of the American Evaluation Association and the Association of Institutional Researchers. She published from her grounded theory on how instructional assessments inform policy on undergraduate learning and skill development.

Suzzane earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Psychology of Aging with an emphasis on Evaluation of Adult Learning Programs at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN. She received a Doctor of Philosophy in Teaching and Learning with an emphasis in Assessment and Evaluation Methods from The University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

Stephenson earned her bachelor of arts degree from what was then Pan American College in Edinburg, She went on to earn her masters and doctorate from Texas Tech University.



Jacob Brown Civic Center to Undergo Major Renovations

Renovations aimed at transforming UTB/TSC's Jacob Brown Civic Center into a showcase for the performing arts are underway or on the drawing boards, under the watchful eye of its new manager.

With a goal of launching a full season of entertainment and arts presentations next fall, former South Texas Symphony Association Executive Director Barry Horn took over direction of the 47-year-old civic center in mid-July.

Several major renovations already are complete, said Horn, who attended TSC himself in 1969 and 1970. These renovations include re-rigging the stage, re-hanging stage drapery, and revamping the electrical system for lighting.

These changes updated the system of stage rigging, which was virtually untouched since the civic center was constructed. Dedicated in 1953, the Jacob Brown Civic Center includes a 1,500-seat auditorium, as well as various meeting rooms. It was acquired from the City of Brownsville in October of 1997, as part of a 170-acre addition that more than doubled the size of the UTB/TSC campus.

"What is in the works right now is the acquisition of new lights for the light system and a new theatrical light dimmer system. That will replace the current system that is also vintage and in poor condition," Horn said.

In addition, another major project is to design and install a blackout system for the 80-foot glass wall that showcases the patio from the auditorium, Horn explained. "We're creating a type of shutter system to black that out for theatrical presentation purposes."

All these changes, and more, are designed to get the Jacob Brown Center ready for the fall 2001 launch of a new performing arts season. "The programs will include touring Broadway shows, opera, ballet, and contemporary as well as ethnic music," said Horn.

Tentative plans call for some as-yet unscheduled arts presentations during the year, but the civic center is shooting for the launch of a full season in the fall of 2001, Horn said. "There are a lot of changes getting ready to happen."

Improvements to the various meeting rooms in the civic center also are in the works. "Another item on the agenda is a state-of-the-art system of risers and portable theater seating," Horn said, "Because all of these rooms will be interchangeable from auditorium seating to tables and chairs for meetings, parties weddings, quifceaneras, etc."

The civic center will continue to welcome such events as "an integral part of the social fabric of our community," Horn said.

A graduate of St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Horn also had a career as an on-air personality and producer for the Houston ABC television affiliate from 1971-1993 before joining UTB/TSC.

"I'm so honored to have been selected for this responsibility. It is a project that I'm going to enjoy working on and which I expect will give me a wonderful sense of accomplishment and contribution to UTB/TSC, and our community."

