



Renu Khator • Chancellor's Report

UH System Board of Regents Meeting • August 2015

University of Houston System Achievements

Enrollment Increases

Preliminary headcounts at our four UH System universities indicate an overall increase of 2.1% compared with last year's enrollment. Growth is robust at UH and UHCL.

Nursing Program Transition

Transition of the Nursing Program at UH Sugar Land to the University of Houston will be complete by the beginning of the Fall 2015 semester, a critical step in the process of the planned transition of the Sugar Land teaching center to a campus of UH as the sole provider.

UH System Presence in Katy

Following approval of Capital Construction Bonds by the Texas Legislature, which included \$46.8 million for land and construction of an academic facility in the Katy area, a UH task force is evaluating options to provide greater access, visibility and expansion opportunities. Dean [Joseph Tedesco, Ph.D.](#), UH Cullen College of Engineering, has retained a firm to determine which engineering programs are needed in the region. The Sugar Land and Katy initiatives will provide UH presence in two of the fastest growing suburbs of Houston.

University of Houston Achievements

Global Student Recognition

The Moores School of Music's Concert Chorale has hit another high note! The group returned home last month from the Grand Prix of Nations in Magdeburg, Germany with the World Championship in the Youth Choir category. The chorale, led by [Betsy Cook Weber, D.M.A.](#), also earned gold awards in pop, jazz, youth choir and folk. Since first venturing on the world stage in 2009, when the chorale won top awards at a competition in Llangollen, Wales, they have brought back the highest awards from competitions in Tours, France, and Marktoberdorf, Germany.

Basketball Team in China

The Cougar basketball team returns to Houston tonight – ready to start classes August 24! – after a 10-day exposure to China where they competed against high-quality opponents while experiencing the country's culture, history and beauty, including a climb up Yellow Mountain and a visit to the 900-year old Hongcun Village. Team members earned three social sciences credit hours for their academic work.

Student Success

We are starting the second year of our “UH in 4” program designed to increase four-year graduation, saving students time and money. Students who joined “UH in 4” last year have completed more hours and displayed higher academic performance than students who did not join the program. As of today, more than 2,600 incoming students have requested to participate in the program, which is over 800 students higher than this time last year.

Global and National Faculty Recognition

Earl Smith III, O.D., Ph.D., former dean of the College of Optometry and the university's Interim Health Officer, has been selected for induction in the National Optometry Hall of Fame. Herbert C. Freyhardt, Ph.D., research professor in the Texas Center for Superconductivity, has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Cryogenics Materials Conference. Robert McPherson, Ph.D., dean of the College of Education, has been ranked as one of the “30 Most Influential Deans of Education” in the nation, according to Mometrix, a global test preparation company. Kevin E. Bassler, Ph.D., John and Rebecca Moore Professor of Physics and Mathematics, and Wu-Pei Su, Ph.D., professor of physics, have been elected Fellows of the American Physical Society.

Research Highlights

- UH has recruited Frank McKeon, Ph.D., an outstanding cancer specialist from the Genome Institute of Singapore and a former Harvard faculty member, with the support of CPRIT's (Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas) program to recruit established investigators. CPRIT will provide \$6 million and UH has committed \$4.6 million towards this hire. Dr. McKeon has a notable record of mentoring and preparing the next generation of researchers, having trained 11 postdoctoral fellows since 2008.
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has awarded UH with a Center of Excellence for Borders, Trade and Immigration, to be funded with an initial amount of \$3.4 million for the first year, with a five-year total anticipated in excess of \$17 million.
- Wei-Chaun Shih, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and his team of students have developed an inexpensive lens – already being called the “penny lens” – that can turn a budget smartphone into a microscope.

UH-Clear Lake Achievements

Patriotic Presentation

Approximately 80 school children visited UHCL in July when Communities In Schools of Brazoria County and Southeast Harris County took part in “Building Patriotism: Let Freedom Ring!,” a special summer presentation. The children captured a glimpse of history while visiting UHCL’s replica Liberty Bell and participated in a mock trial.

Water Research Awards

BIO-WEST/Texas Water Development Board awarded \$85,000 to George Guillen, Ph.D. executive director of the Environmental Institute of Houston and associate professor of biology and environmental science, for a Brazos River Basin study. He also received year-two, \$557,523, and year-three, \$696,008, of a multi-year award totaling \$1.25 million from the San Marcos/Edwards Aquifer Authority for a San Marcos River study.

Celebrating CASA Graduates

UHCL’s School of Education celebrated members of the first graduating cohort funded by the U.S. Department of Education grant “Collaborating in the Academic Success for All” at a reception. Fifteen teachers from five area independent school districts received full scholarships and graduated with a Master of Science in Multicultural Studies degree with certifications in either Bilingual Education or English as a Second Language, which will prepare them to improve classroom instruction for English language learners with emphasis in math and science. A second CASA cohort of 15 teachers began this summer.

UH-Downtown Achievements

Supporting Student Success: \$950,000 in Grants

UHD has received \$950,000 in grants over the past two months to support student success. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission awarded UHD a five-year, \$850,000 grant to provide STEM scholarships for minority students and ensure mentored nuclear-related research experiences for undergraduates. And The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awarded UHD \$100,000 through its “Minority Male Initiatives” program to help close the gaps separating lower-achieving minority male students from other student groups.

Deputy Head of EU Delegation Discusses Global Trade, Security

UHD was honored in June to host Francois Rivasseau, deputy head of the European Union (EU) delegation to the United States in partnership with the Consul General of France in Houston, Surjiro Seam. Rivasseau's speaking engagement was the first in the UHD President's Ambassador Lecture Series, designed to align institutional priorities with diversity and global learning.

Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Awards Katrina Rufino

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health awarded Katrina Rufino, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology, a grant to conduct mental health research. Through the grant, Rufino will work with patients at Houston's Menninger Clinic to examine mechanisms of change and predictors of post-discharge suicide risk in suicidal psychiatric inpatients.

UH-Victoria Achievements

New Academic and Economic Development Building Opens

University North, the university's new academic and economic development building, has opened. The 63,000-square-foot, \$12.7 million facility houses the School of Business Administration, Career Services, the new Center for Economic Development & Entrepreneurship, and a 200-seat auditorium. The building is the new home of UHV's Small Business Development Center, which recently earned a regional SBDC Excellence and Innovation Award from the U.S. Small Business Development Administration for the first time.

Department of Education Awards \$1.1 Million

The UHV School of Education, Health Professions & Human Development will receive a \$1.1 million grant this fall from the U.S. Department of Education for its Master of Education in Special Education with an emphasis in autism. The five-year grant will pay the tuition for 40 graduate students and program expenses. UHV's grant funding increased 79.5% from FY 2014 to FY 2015.

Expanding Health-Related Degrees

UHV is expanding its offerings of health-related degrees with a new Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology to start this fall in addition to the existing Bachelor of Science in Health Studies. A Bachelor of Science in Nursing will be offered beginning in fall 2016 or earlier. All health-related degrees are housed in the newly renamed School of Education, Health Professions & Human Development.