



Renu Khator • Chancellor's Report
UH System Board of Regents Meeting • May 2015



UH System Achievements

Student Success

The four system universities are awarding a total of 7,687 degrees at six commencement ceremonies in May 2015.

	University of Houston	UH-Clear Lake	UH-Downtown	UH-Victoria	Total
Doctoral	133	16			149
Professional	389				389
Master’s	1,113	534	49	217	1,913
Bachelor’s	3,323	510	1,093	310	5,236
Total	4,958	1,060	1,142	527	7,687

Legislative Update

With just a few more days before the 84th Texas Legislative Session ends, there is high expectation our universities will fare well. House Bill 100, which would provide our universities and the UH System with approximately \$360M in capital construction bonds – formerly known as tuition revenue bonds – has been forwarded to the full Senate for consideration.

The projected funding would be used for:

	Funding	Purpose
University of Houston	\$63 million	Health and Biomedical Sciences building
	\$54 million	Academic building in Sugar Land
UH-Clear Lake	\$54 million	STEM and classroom building
	\$24.6 million	Health Sciences and classroom building in Pearland
UH-Downtown	\$60 million	Science and Technology building
UH-Victoria	\$60 million	Academic expansion and land acquisition
UH System	\$46.8 million	Land acquisition for construction of a building in the Katy area
Total	\$362.4 million	

UH System Day in Austin

More than 400 students, representing all four universities, participated in UH System Day in Austin on February 23. By the time they boarded nine buses to return to Houston, Victoria, and Clear Lake, they had visited the offices of *all* 181 House and Senate members. Lending their support as students presented the case for increased funding to their legislators were Chairman Tillman Fertitta and Regents Welcome W. Wilson, Jr., Roger Welder, Durga Agrawal, Peter Taaffe, and Asit Shah, as well as our four university presidents.



University of Houston Achievements

Student Success

The grand tradition of a UH General Commencement, with all colleges participating, was brought back May 15 with a spectacular ceremony at TDECU Stadium. I thank our Regents for your attendance. In spite of the weather, the largest commencement audience in UH history witnessed the awarding of 4,958 degrees. Among the graduates were Omar Harmouche, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology at age 18, and Christopher Gantela, who graduated with a Ph.D. in geophysics at age 78. President's Medallions were awarded to Rick Lowe and the Robert A. Welch Foundation, and honorary degrees were granted to James McIngvale and Melvyn Wolff.

Fundraising Campaign

Still in its "quiet phase," our \$1 billion fundraising campaign has raised \$430M to date. Some of the major gifts received recently are:

- \$4.5M from an anonymous alumnus for an engineering scholarship endowment;
- \$2.6M year to date from Houston Endowment to support UHD programs and UH Student Success initiatives – the latter a planning grant for a project to ultimately help 300,000 students structure their academic plans so they can graduate on time;
- \$2.5M from former Lt. Governor and former UH System Chancellor Bill Hobby for the Hobby School of Public Affairs. Former BOR Chair Beth Robertson is providing exceptional vision and leadership on this project;
- \$2.5M pledge from Regent Durga Agrawal and his wife Sushila, their capstone gift for the Multidisciplinary Research and Engineering Building.

Although not in the million-dollar range, but equally important, more than 1,425 graduating students gave to our annual fund through the purchase of "Spirit Cords" they wore at commencement.

Athletics

Hunter Yurachek, who came to UH in February 2014 as associate vice president and chief operating officer for intercollegiate athletics, and who was honored as the 2014 Under Armour Football Championship Athletic Director of the Year while at Coastal Carolina University, is our new Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics.

I thank Chairman Fertitta and Regents Jarvis Hollingsworth and Spencer Armour for their invaluable insights as members of the search committee. Hunter's passion and commitment particularly impressed me during his interview, and these qualities were displayed again at the press conference that introduced him to the community. Among his immediate plans are to fast-track the division's marketing and fundraising efforts.



These past few days have seen exciting developments in UH athletics, among them:

- Our baseball team won the American Athletic Conference regular season title with a sweep of UConn last weekend.
- Men's golf finished fifth at the NCAA regional, their fourth consecutive year to qualify for NCAA postseason play.
- In just its first year as a team, women's golf qualified for an NCAA regional and finished third at the American Championships.
- The men's track and field program finished third at the American Outdoor Track and Field Championships last weekend.
- The tennis program advanced to NCAA regional action for the second straight year and Despoina Vogasari became the seventh player in UH history to qualify for the NCAA Individual Championships after being named The American Athletic Conference Player of the Year.
- Kadi Kullerkam has been named "2015 Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year" by the American Athletic Conference. The volleyball player has been on the Dean's List for six consecutive semesters.

Research

Our superconductive materials research efforts received a boost with the announcement of a \$500,000 grant from the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The grant will support the establishment of an Advanced Superconductor Manufacturing Institute to develop an industry-led consortium to address technical obstacles that have limited superconductor manufacturing. Venkat Selvamanickam, M.D. Anderson Chair Professor of Mechanical Engineering, will serve as principal investigator. The University was one of 16 recipients of the grant among 118 applicants in a competitive selection process.

Global and National Student Recognition

Students are carrying the UH banner far and wide. Melissa Torres, social work doctoral candidate, traveled to The Hague in April to deliver a presentation before a Women's International League for Peace and Freedom conference.

Jami Summey-Rice, chemical engineering junior, will spend the summer in Washington, D.C. meeting with government officials and technical advisors to learn how engineers can contribute to public policy decisions. She is one of only 14 students nationwide selected for the Washington Internship for Students of Engineering program.

Jeffrey Hong, Lenore Caston-Miller, Ismelda Correa, Ben Lueders, and Madison Richard – all honors students – are also headed to our nation's capital as part of an inaugural partnership between the Smithsonian Institution and UH. They will intern in one of the Smithsonian's museums, galleries, or research centers.

Vanessa Alejandro, junior geology major, was named by Glamour magazine to its list of "Top 10 College Women" in the nation.

Rebecca Done, senior construction management major, earned the highest score on a national certification program. She is the third UH student in as many years to earn this top ranking.



UH-Clear Lake Achievements

Accreditation

A UHCL school and an academic program were re-accredited recently. The School of Business has maintained its business and accounting accreditations by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International. Less than five percent of the world's business programs are AACSB-accredited. And the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation continued its National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accreditation for the School of Education at the initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation levels.

Alumni Award

President William A. Staples presented the 2015 UHCL Community Partnership Award to Flow-Cal Inc. during the president's annual Report to the Community. Flow-Cal President and CEO Michael Squyres, a UHCL alumnus, accepted the award. A privately owned gas and liquids measurement software development company, Flow-Cal was founded by Squyres in 1995. UHCL alumni represent 38 percent of the company's workforce.

Pat and Wendell Wilson Park

"Green" is the new black at UHCL! A special ceremony marked the dedication and naming of the Pat and Wendell Wilson Park on campus. Patricia Wilson is Associate Professor Emeritus at UHCL. Through a legacy gift from the Wilsons and a vision to protect UHCL's natural setting, the park will include a native garden. And the UHCL Pearland Campus was recognized with a 2014 Tree Campus USA award by the Arbor Day Foundation for promoting healthy trees and engaging students and staff in the spirit of conservation.

UH-Downtown Achievements

Student Research

UHD's Scholars Academy recently hosted its 14th Annual Student Research Conference. Throughout the day-long event, nearly 100 students from a variety of disciplines presented posters and/or gave oral presentations on a wide range of topics. UHD alumnus Phillip Gallegos, M.D., staff anesthesiologist at USAP Pinnacle Anesthesia Consultants, served as the keynote speaker. He encouraged students to persist in research and discussed the undergraduate research opportunities at UHD that led him to a career as a researcher and physician.

Campus Mural

French artist Sebastien "Mr. D" Boileau recently completed a building-sized mural of a gator, the UHD mascot, on the north side of a large storage facility adjacent to student parking at Main Street and I-10. The University has garnered national media coverage for the mural during the past month. UHD unveiled the mural as part of its 40th anniversary celebration on campus for faculty, staff, students and alumni in May. UHD's "Major Opportunity" logo is emblazoned across the south side of the building.

Poet Laureate of Houston

Robin Davidson, UHD associate professor of English, has been named Poet Laureate of Houston. During her two-year appointment, she will work with the city to highlight the importance and beauty of poetry and to celebrate poetry and other literary works in Houston libraries, schools and public venues. Davidson proposes to increase poetry's profile in Houston through a week-long celebration of poetry at UHD, to recognize all the working poets in the city on a new website and to launch a favorite poem project. Davidson, a master's and doctoral graduate of the University of Houston Creative Writing Program, is only the second local poet to hold the two-year appointment.



UH-Victoria Achievements

Dalkey Archive Press

An internationally renowned nonprofit literary organization will move its publishing operations this summer from Champaign, Illinois, to UHV. The Dalkey Archive Press has published more than 750 fiction and poetry books during the past three decades. The move will give UHV students additional internship and fellowship opportunities, and the press will be used in the growth and development of new and existing academic programs.

Accreditation

The School of Business Administration was recently re-accredited by AACSB International – the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business – and was ranked nationally and internationally for its degree programs. To maintain its AACSB accreditation, the school must undergo a rigorous review every five years. Less than five percent of business schools worldwide earn this mark of excellence.

The school also earned the No. 1 spot on Value Colleges' national list of 50 Best Value Online Undergraduate Business Schools of 2015, and was ranked No. 17 internationally in the 2015 QS Distance Online Master of Business Administration Rankings.

Student Civic Engagement

UHV is offering new civic engagement opportunities for students with its first Alternative Spring Break trip and the inaugural Jags Join In – Day of Service event. Ten students traveled to New Orleans as part of Alternative Spring Break and helped restore the homes of two elderly veterans. About 20 students also partnered with Golden Crescent Habitat for Humanity in Victoria to help build two houses during the Jags Join In – Day of Service. In addition, students, faculty and staff volunteered at Christ's Kitchen to cook and serve meals to the homeless and others in need.

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