



RENU KHATOR • CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

UH System Board of Regents Meeting • May 21, 2026

University of Houston System

UH System Sets Graduation Record, Bestows Three Honorary Degrees

The University of Houston System's spring 2026 preliminary graduation total is 10,517 — and we expect this to be the highest in the UH System's history. This spring commencement, the University of Houston bestowed honorary degrees on two alumni — world-renowned astrophysicist Donald Kessler and Pulitzer Prize winner Jericho Brown. The University of Houston-Downtown bestowed an honorary degree on prominent businesswoman and philanthropist Marilyn Davies.

University of Houston

UH Tops Texas in NAI Membership; Faculty Earns Guggenheim Fellowship

UH is No. 1 in Texas for members of the National Academy of Inventors. Seven University of Houston faculty have been named Senior Members of NAI, including Cullen College of Engineering Professors Haleh Ardebili, Vemuri Balakotaiah, Jose Contreras-Vidal and Jae-Hyun Ryou, and College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics Professors Jakoah Brgoch, Preethi Gunaratne and Yingcai Zheng. In addition, Professor Ardebili won the 2026 Guggenheim Fellowship for her groundbreaking work in mechanical and aerospace engineering.

\$800 Million, and We're Not Slowing Down

UH has crossed a major milestone in its "Can't Stop Houston: The Centennial Campaign," with \$800 million raised toward the \$1 billion goal. This moment reflects a campuswide effort, with partnership between leadership and the Division of Advancement and Alumni, alongside the thousands of donors who believe in UH's future.

NIH Grant Funds New National Research Center

UH Psychology Professors Elena Grigorenko and Jack Fletcher have secured an \$11.8 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support a new national Clinical Research Center on Developmental Language Disorders. This will establish UH's 14th national research center.

College of Medicine Advances With New Partnerships, Match Day Success

UH's Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine is expanding clinical training opportunities through a new partnership with Memorial Hermann and DHR Health, which recently broke ground on its new medical research and education hub in Rio Grande Valley. In addition, 100% of the college's medical students matched into a residency program, with nearly 70% staying in Texas and 65% going into primary care.

UH Graduate Programs Surge in U.S. News & World Report Rankings

UH placed 19 graduate programs in this year's top 50 rankings — up from 15 the previous year — with four programs, including three at the UH Law Center and one in Cullen College of Engineering, ranked among the top 10 nationally. Overall, 48 programs placed in the top 100, with multiple programs achieving double-digit improvements, signaling continued upward momentum.

Biology Student Awarded Esteemed Barry Goldwater Scholarship

Biology student Brandon Than, who is driving discovery in cancer immunotherapy, has received one of the nation's most prestigious academic honors: the Barry Goldwater Scholarship — marking this the second straight year a UH student has earned the award. So far, 14 UH students have received the award for pursuing research careers in the sciences, mathematics and engineering.

The University of Houston-Clear Lake

UHCL Leads Global Autism Screening Initiative

On World Autism Awareness Day, the University of Houston-Clear Lake served as the Houston anchor site for Spark a Spectrum 2026 — a free international autism screening initiative. The transformative event engaged 78 centers across 32 countries and mobilized over 2,000 volunteers worldwide.

UHCL Co-Hosts Summit on Human Performance in Space

UHCL's Health and Human Performance Institute partnered with KBR to co-host the 2026 Spaceflight Human Optimization and Performance summit, addressing the physical complexities of sustaining human health during extended space exploration. UHCL is preparing students for specialized careers supporting NASA and the commercial space industry.

The University of Houston-Downtown

UHD Begins Search for Next President

The national search for the next president of the University of Houston-Downtown launched in April with the naming of a 16-member search committee. Chaired by UH System Board of Regents Chairman Jack Moore, the committee aims to fill the position by next spring. UHD Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Deborah E. Bordelon has been appointed interim president.

UHD Addresses Teacher Shortage Crisis

UHD has received a \$750,000 Houston Endowment Certification Grant to help mitigate the teacher shortage. The critical funding will provide training, support and scholarships, enabling students with an undergraduate degree to become certified teachers in the high-need areas of bilingual and special education.

Donor Gifts Expand Nursing Lab, Launch Business Scholarship

UHD received a \$400,000 gift from the Brown Foundation to fully equip and transform its 5,000-square-foot Nursing Skills and Simulation Laboratory into a state-of-the-art facility. An almost \$300,000 gift from the C.T. Bauer Foundation has funded a new scholarship for business students facing academic challenges due to extenuating circumstances, such as full-time work or family responsibilities.