



areté ²⁰¹⁹

The Magazine of The Honors College at the University of Houston





UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

THE HONORS COLLEGE

EDITOR & DESIGNER

Martha S. Hayes

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Julia Brown

Staff Photographer/Videographer

Brenda Cruz-Wolf

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Dana Awad
Joseph Grey
Marc Hanke
Martha S. Hayes
Megan Mahanay
Jack Mraz
Kinza Muzahir
Jesse Rainbow
Nathan Smith
Marina Trninic

WRITERS

Julia Brown
Mallory Chesser ('08)
Daniel Wallace

THE HONORS COLLEGE

William Monroe, Dean
Stuart Long, Associate Dean
Jonathan Williamson, Associate Dean
Brenda Rhoden ('98, M.Ed. '05, Ph.D. '15),
Assistant Dean

Ted Estess, Founding Dean

thehonorscollege.com

Cover Photo:
Cala d'Aiguablava beach in Begur, Spain near
Barcelona during a learning abroad trip

The University of Houston is an EO/AA institution.

Dear Friends,

A *reté* is an annual review that gives us a chance to recognize major award recipients and faculty award winners and to share a few of the many stories of teaching and learning within and beyond the classroom. In the following pages you will also hear from a distinguished alumnus, Dr. Elliot Rose, who shares his journey in his own words, and learn about some upcoming occasions where we would love to see you.

In this issue, I am also pleased to introduce Dr. Jonathan Williamson (Political Science '95), our new associate dean for academic programs and faculty affairs and the Michael Andrew Little Professor in the College. He is an Honors College alum, joining our team after 17 years at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where he served as chair of the Department of Political Science and president of the Williamsport City Council. You can learn more about him on page 32.

Among Jonathan's many responsibilities is providing leadership on a new transcript designation, Co-Curricular Honors, which will allow us to encourage and recognize students who take advantage of all that the Honors College and the University of Houston have to offer. We are also excited about the approval of two interdisciplinary minors: Global Engagement Research, which replaces the Global Studies certificate, and Data & Society, a program to be directed by Dr. Dan Price. You will also see that the Honors College has helped the University make great strides with major award finalists and recipients. Those numbers have nearly tripled, from 18 in 2017 to over 50 in 2019. This number includes a record 12 students receiving Fulbright awards for research and teaching in 2019, making UH among the top producing Fulbright institutions in the nation.

The Fulbright program, initiated by Senator J. William Fulbright in 1946, is designed to give "passionate and accomplished students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals of all backgrounds and fields the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to important international problems." We are thrilled to be contributing to this important work. Major awards such as the Fulbright and experiential opportunities such as learning away and abroad, service learning, and undergraduate research create the confidence, courage, and readiness that are the hallmarks of this University.

One of the ways we celebrate the lasting value of "Great Books & Grand Challenges" is the annual gathering of the Honors family for the Great Conversation. In 2019, outstanding faculty and staff as well as UH alumni led guests in lively discussions on the basketball court of the newly-opened Ferttita Center. It was only fitting that our special guest was Hakeem Olajuwon. This year, the Great Conversation will return to the Ferttita Center on April 4, 2020. Please visit thehonorscollege.com/thegreatconversation and join us!



Bill



Mark Your Calendar

April 2	UH Undergraduate Research Day
April 4	The Great Conversation
May 7	Honors Graduation Banquet
Sept. 1	Fall Convocation

Just Launched!

A UH Honors College Young Alumni Group has formed in the Houston area. Request to join their Facebook page to learn more about upcoming alumni socials.



TheHonorsCollege



HonorsCollegeUH



HonorsCollegeUH



UHHonorsCollege

Generous Gift Doubles the Impact of the Houston Scholars Program

By Mallory Chesser ('08)

► Before meeting, marrying, and founding a successful law firm, Patrick Scott ('07) and Jesika Orellana Scott ('08) were undergraduates in the Honors College. They were also among the first cohort to conduct faculty-mentored research through the Office of Undergraduate Research. They benefitted so much from the experience that the couple wanted to give future generations the same opportunity.

The Scotts have made a generous gift in memory of Patrick's mother, Susan Oliver, through which 15 students will be able to



conduct mentored research in the coming year. Their gift effectively doubles the size and impact of the Houston Scholars Program, administered through the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR).

"I would not be the lawyer I am today without the foundation the Honors College provided me," said Patrick. "I am grateful for the time and effort everyone poured

into me while I was a student. Karen Weber and the Office of Undergraduate Research helped me apply for nationally competitive scholarship programs, and that support set me apart from other applicants. Jesika and I are blessed to be able to give back through the Houston Scholars program, and we look forward to seeing what the students do in the coming year."

Houston Scholars is a competitive program for high-achieving freshmen and sophomores to receive mentorship and scholarship funding to pursue research, internships, and other experiential learning opportunities.

Through targeted programming, participants hone their academic and professional skills, develop connections with faculty, engage in scholarly endeavors, and prepare to apply for nationally competitive scholarships and top graduate school programs as well.

Students in the Houston Scholars program each receive a \$1,000 scholarship and participate in academic enrichment activities, such as a semester lecture series, developmental workshops, and mock debates. This combination of financial support and a supportive community can be instrumental in a student's success.

"Receiving the PURS scholarship (Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship) was a defining moment in my career development," said Jesika. "I was able to do research under Dr. Tracey Ledoux, one of my most influential mentors while at the University of Houston. The experience I had with PURS and Dr. Ledoux is one that I wanted future generations of students to have."



In the 2018-2019 year, Houston Scholars engaged in research, lectures, and debates around the theme "Flooding: Houston's Great Challenge for the 21st Century." In 2019-2020, research will focus on the theme "Urbanization: Preparing Houston for the 21st Century."

Houston Scholars are well-positioned to take advantage of other Office of Undergraduate Research programs, such as the Houston Early Research Experience (HERE) and the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF), which are supported with \$1,000 and \$4,000 scholarships, respectively.

Students participated in a retreat in August, a faculty-led workshop series throughout the year, a proposal development boot camp in January, and a proposal pitch party for a faculty committee in April.

2019-2020 Houston Scholars

Benjamin Diaz Villa
Mechanical Engineering

Vincent Laroche
Mechanical Engineering

Sharan Sabu
Management Information Systems

Cristobella Durrette
English

Clara Martin
Chemical Engineering

Carl Suerte
Biology

Marco Garcia
Philosophy

Austin Mitchell
Religious Studies

Leonard Wang
Honors Biomedical Sciences

Christina Gligorova
Biology

Anushka Oak
Biology

Summer Willig
Teaching and Learning

The following 2019-2020 incoming Houston Scholars will receive Susan Oliver Scholarships made possible by the generous donation of Patrick and Jesika Scott.

Amaris Bobbio-Tarco
Architecture

Ricardo Del Rio
Chemical Engineering

Kristen Harris
Biochemistry

Jordan Pemberton
Health

Abhya Chopra
Business

Carlos Fuentes
Health

David Hilton
Political Science

Jocelyn Ramos
Mechanical Engineering

Cade Coligan
Theatre

Nikki Hammond
Chemical Engineering

Daniel Lee
Hotel and Restaurant

Salar Sanati
Biochemistry



L-R standing: Carlos Fuentes, Jocelyn Ramos, Salar Sanati, Abby Chopra, Daniel Lee, Amaris Bobbio-Tarco.

L-R sitting: Kristen Harris, Ricardo Del Rio, Cade Coligan, Jordan Pemberton, David Paul Hilton. Not pictured: Nikki Hammond.

Undergraduates Build a Bridge Between Big Data and Communities

By Mallory Chesser ('08)

▶ In every industry, in every part of the world, data is changing the way companies do business, from reaching customers to rendering services. By touching every sector of the economy, data is also changing lives.

Through two programs, Data Analytics in Student Hands (DASH) and the Honors in Community Health (HICH) program, students are learning how to compile, interpret, and apply this information, harnessing the power of big data to make positive, meaningful change in the world around them.



What began as a series of interdisciplinary research projects coalesced into the Data Analytics program in 2014. In true interdisciplinary form, the program was founded by Peggy Lindner, who is now an assistant professor at the University of Houston College of Technology, and Dan Price, clinical associate professor in the Honors College, data science researcher, and philosopher. “Data should be about embedded, real-world activities,” said Price. “Putting living projects into data. In that way, the program finds a natural home in the humanities and in the Honors College.”

Motivated to find better ways of understanding how context could drive the use of data to achieve outcomes, Price and his students began identifying needs and challenges in the surrounding, Third Ward community. This dovetailed naturally with Price’s work in the Honors HICH program, a student organization founded in 2015 that has drawn in undergraduates from a range of majors, from computer science to biology, and many students in the Honors College Medicine & Society minor.

Students in the Data Analytics and Community Health programs collaborate on a variety of community-focused, project-based activities. The Community Health Worker Initiative (CHW), one of the first programs developed through Price’s data and community health work, has been a successful model and driver for other programming.

Community health worker classes, which Price has offered since 2016, allow University of Houston students and members of the surrounding community to earn community health worker certifications, licensed by the Texas Department of State Health Services, while also gaining experience in launching and managing service projects, like the first Diabetes Prevention Program at New Hope Housing. In 2019, the Honors College was approved as a CHW Training Center, bringing on more instructors at more sites, under the direction of long-time CHW and instructor Donaji Stelzig.

By working collaboratively with community members, UH students are practicing a new model of engaged learning. By empowering members of underserved communities, the program changes the service paradigm.

“We ask people to think like leaders—not service recipients, but service providers,” said Price. “Let’s change the language we use for what it means to fight poverty. Instead of giving money to people, we help people from those communities to think of themselves as providing opportunities to other people—their friends and neighbors. And it’s a career path for them.”

Newly-certified community health workers, who have gained both the credentials and project-based job experience, have been able to find work as community health providers, wrap-around specialists in HISD, education and outreach workers at Aids Foundation Houston. In terms of the lifetime impacts of behavior and

lifestyle, community health workers can have a bigger impact than doctors and the mainstream medical system.

“Our diagnosis is that the existing medical system has no way of reaching out to people,” said Price. “There is a wall of mistrust between the doctor and the patient. People know that the doctor knows more, but they don’t trust the message, and they don’t change their behaviors. We think we can change the paradigm, empowering community health workers to be the primary carriers of the message, the enthusiasm.”

Community health workers can help close the gap between doctor and patient, gather information on emerging health trends that allows the medical system to better respond, and spread information about available services, like community health clinics and fitness facilities. And because community health workers often focus on prevention, research suggests they can actually cut down on the costs of medical care.

Price’s community health worker initiative has benefited from a grant from Humana allowing the program to partner with Patient Care Intervention Center, a health data and community health care specialist. This partnership allows his team to compare health outcomes of those who have participated in a community health worker program with those in Harris County who have used the medical system in other ways.

By showing that community health worker programs can help insurance companies—like Humana—to save money, Price

hopes to secure long-term financial stability and expand the worker program.

Through asset-mapping and logic models, Price and his students also use data to discuss what does and does not work in addressing a problem. But in addition to studying statistics and formulating theories, students and program leaders talk to residents of the community where potential problems, such as diabetes, food scarcity, or asthma, have been identified. These residents may know several people who have diabetes, for example, and describe the problem in the concrete.

Cindy Paz ('17) a clinical researcher in the Honors College and the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluations, and Statistics, was a student in the first community health worker classes taught by Price. Now a certified community health worker, researcher, and program manager, she trains new community health workers and spearheads initiatives in asthma and diabetes treatment and prevention.

“We went to Royal Palms, a section eight housing complex down the street, wanting to set up another diabetes prevention program,” said Paz. “But that was not what the community needed. They have a lot of single families—the median age for parents is 25—lots of children. So, I sat down with the apartment manager to figure out what the community really needed.”

The result was a community engagement and recruiting event on August 2, which marked the beginning of the partnership between





Royal Palms complex and the CHW program and established a presence in the community. Children enjoyed yoga, healthy smoothies, a waterslide, and STEM activities, while parents got to learn more about positive health outcomes and the community health worker certification course being offered at Royal Palms this fall.

Paz is also facilitating an Athena specialist internship program at Casa El Buen Samaritano, through which nine pre-health student interns are being trained on using the Athena medical record system.

“The interns offer elbow support to the health providers, help with the charts, do research, and engage with the community health workers at the clinic. They try to conduct research that could actually better the health of the patients there. For example, studying mental health in immigrants.”

Cara Shokler ('16), also a clinical researcher and program manager, focuses on STEM education projects built around project-based learning in community schools. One program, called Project Engagement Encouraging Rising Students, or PEERS, is now in its second year. It was initially conceived by three students in one of Price's community health worker classes, then implemented through the HICH program.

Around 50 student mentors go into high schools in Houston to facilitate learning modules based around a theme. Last year, the theme addressed Hurricane Harvey. This year, high school students have been asked what kind of preventative community health program they would create with \$5 million dollars.

“Students get to learn about community health and the assets in their community that they can utilize and bring to their family,

friends, and neighbors,” said Shokler. “They also compete for prizes here at the University of Houston.”

Another project Shokler helped facilitate focused on elementary school students. For the 15th annual Mars Rover Celebration, the Honors College partnered with Cuney Homes and public housing communities across the country. Community health workers worked with fourth and fifth graders at Cuney Homes, helping the students to research, plan, and build models of healthy habitats on Mars.

By approaching prospective partners that are open to collaboration, and then learning what the community really needs, the Data Analytics and Community Health programs have been able to build sustainable projects in a variety of community hubs.

“Education should be more than just saying these are the facts, memorize them,” said Price. “I try to treat a course like an incubator: What projects would be best received in the community? How would you establish leadership? How would you make a project sustainable? By the end of the class, we end up with a couple of projects that are good enough to take out into the group's work community to see whether they work.”

Any student willing to learn, whether majoring in computer science, planning to go into medicine or public health, or looking to integrate data analytics into another field, is welcome to participate in a community health project. Even those who are intimidated by the idea of big data.

“Engagement and creativity are more important than expertise,” said Price. “You can get the expertise along the way. You might just start by collecting stories, and writing them down. That's data.”



Engaging with, and learning from The COMMUNITY

By Amanda Beck and Amritha Siby

► Students in the UH Bonner Leaders program dedicate 5-10 hours weekly of service to alleviate the effects of poverty in Houston. As a chapter of the national Bonner Foundation, a service-learning organization devoted to improving nutrition and education, UH's Bonner program began in 2013 with a handful of eager students and has grown to over 75 Honors College students dedicated to service learning.

In a field that is constantly evolving, "service-learning is at the cutting edge of the future of education," said Douglas Erwing, director of service learning and the Bonner program in the Honors College. "The Human Situation is our unrivaled core. We need to add experiential learning to deepen the Honors College education."

Bonnors focus their efforts on food insecurity, nutrition, and access to education. To address food insecurity, Bonnors created FIT, the Food Insecurity Team, which partners with New Hope Housing, Inc., Riverside Methodist Church, the Houston Food Bank, and Chartwells, UH's contracted caterer. FIT runs food markets for New Hope residents and the Riverside community and has distributed over 9,600 pounds of food to community members since the markets' openings in June 2019.

Since 2015, FIT has also recovered over 27,000 pounds of food that would otherwise have been wasted from UH dining halls and served it to New Hope residents. In conjunction with FIT, Project Cultivate develops sustainable community gardens in low-income areas in Houston, promoting healthy lifestyles, increasing access to fresh produce, and providing green spaces for community

engagement at locations like its garden and orchard at New Hope Housing Canal.

Bonner's student-created and data-driven mentoring programs empower students to pursue college and their post high-school ambitions. Austin Test Prep (ATP), focuses on SAT preparation and college readiness at Stephen F. Austin High School.

Writing to Inspire Successful Education (WISE) serves 105 middle school students at KIPP Liberation College, matching them with UH student mentors to improve writing skills for the STAAR test. Science Mentoring for

a Richer Tomorrow (SMART) prepares 5th graders at Shearn Elementary for the STAAR science test, complementing in-class science learning with after-school lab experiences and fostering curiosity and a love of learning. WISE, ATP, and SMART have earned accolades for the high-quality service they deliver to aspiring scholars.

Outside of community impact, service learning is more about the growth of our Honors students. Bonnors participate in leadership development, a service-learning course dedicated to fostering civic engagement, and issue-based research.

Assistant Director Trinity Rinear ('19), a former UH Bonner, reflected that "the transformative power of Bonner and service learning lies in the connections students make from what they learn through their academic experiences to real world questions and challenges, a process which changes the way students think about themselves and the world."

Sarah Mangrem, director of resident programs at New Hope Housing, said that the true influence of Bonner leaders at New Hope is the relationships students form with residents. "Rescuing and serving food is really about having a healthy meal together. UH Bonnors are learning how to engage meaningfully with, and learn from, their community," she said.

The Bonner Leaders program equips students with skills to take on life's challenges, supports the work of Houston organizations, and ultimately alleviates some effects of poverty in UH's immediate community. Its mission of student leadership and poverty alleviation enhances the Honors experience and empowers those in our community.



Speech & Debate Program Creates Competitors from all Majors

by Julia Brown

► The history of the Speech and Debate Program at the University of Houston extends as far back as the University itself—the first debate activity on campus began in 1927. Students began to compete locally in 1950, quickly making their mark on the Texas college debate stage. The UH team first attended the National Debate Tournament (NDT) in 1951, and has since been invited to NDT twenty-three times, including in 1957, when UH student Patricia Stallings became the country's first female top speaker.

From the mid '60s to the late '70s, the UH debate team achieved several national milestones under the leadership of policy debate coach William English. These included a Novice (first time debater) championship, multiple top speaker placements and top five team accolades. Between 1972 and 1976, UH was represented nationally by its first African American competitor, one of the first African American students in the U.S. to compete in policy debate—Sylvester Turner, who went on to earn his law degree from Harvard and become mayor of the city of Houston.

In 1978, the team suffered a major loss when Bill English transferred to Baylor University in Waco. The '80s and '90s brought several top 20 rankings in the American Forensics Association Individual Events tournaments. In spite of this, campus involvement in debate gradually declined, and in 1998, the UH Speech and Debate team disbanded.

The team reemerged in 2002 and, after going through several leadership changes, has begun its surge toward its former strength. In 2014, UH advanced to the Elite Eight in the national quarter finals, and claimed the "seventh speaker" position. Richard Garner, director of the Speech & Debate program and Honors College faculty member, and Rob Glass, assistant director, are building a foundation not only to strengthen team performance in competition, but also to foster the culture of debate, on campus, in the city of Houston, and beyond.

The Speech & Debate program encompasses Model debate (which includes organizations such as Model UN and Model G20), speech, legal debate (which includes Mock Trial and Moot Court), and policy debate.

The UH Policy Debate team participates in National Debate Tournament-Cross Examination Debate Association (NDT-CEDA) style intercollegiate competitions. Participating schools vote on the year's debate topic. Teams do a tremendous amount of research on all sides of the chosen issue, taking care to be flexible in their approach, not knowing pre-competition which side of an issue they will be assigned. Tournament season runs from September to April. Approximately 35 UH students competed in 12 tournaments in the last academic year as far away as Wake Forest University in North Carolina and Northwestern University in Illinois.

Director Richard Garner has his own illustrious history as a debater, including a national championship when he was an undergraduate at New York University. He coached at Harvard and Emory while earning his doctorate from the University at Buffalo in New York.

Originally from Upstate New York, Assistant Director Rob Glass had been working in and around debate teams for nine years when he was recruited by the Honors College to help grow UH's Speech & Debate program. In addition to his experience coaching high school and college teams, he has worked extensively with the Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL), an organization formed to help underserved high school students gain skills and proficiency in debate. Garner and Glass primarily coach the policy debate team, while providing organizational and institutional support to the more student-run speech and legal debate teams.

UH debaters are as diverse as the UH student body itself—participants represent a wide range of age, classification, and experience. Some have participated in debate since middle school, and some have never done any debate at all. “Our mandate is to work with as many students as possible,” Glass said.

Unlike many other campus teams, the window to join the debate group is wide open for most of the year. Debate attracts students of all majors; present and former debaters have majored in math, political science, engineering, philosophy, and architecture, among other majors. Participants spend a significant amount of time researching the year's debate topic. The group meets weekly to share their research, hone and refine their positions and arguments. In an article for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Professor Gordon Mitchell estimated that the level and extent of research required of the average college debater for each topic is equivalent to the amount of research required for a master's thesis.

Debate is a demanding activity—the amount of research, the extensive travel, the competition requires a lot of students, but it also enhances the academic lives of the participants. Debaters form a robust intellectual community and, through competing and volunteering, grow their networks, city-wide, as well as across the country. Participating students become eligible for membership in Pi Kappa Delta, the national speech and debate honors society. Not all of the students on the UH team travel for competition—many students act as debate coaches in high schools and middle schools, and participate in the significant community outreach events that the speech and debate team has made part of its ethos.

Each January, UH hosts one of the largest high school debate tournaments in Houston, The Cougar Classic. Three hundred

students from 50 high schools from four states participate, along with 100 judges, coaches, and observers. In addition to the Cougar Classic, UH works closely with the HUDL, hosting other tournaments and sending members of the debate team to middle schools and high schools. These events become recruiting tools for the University, bringing students to campus, allowing them to get a taste of college life.

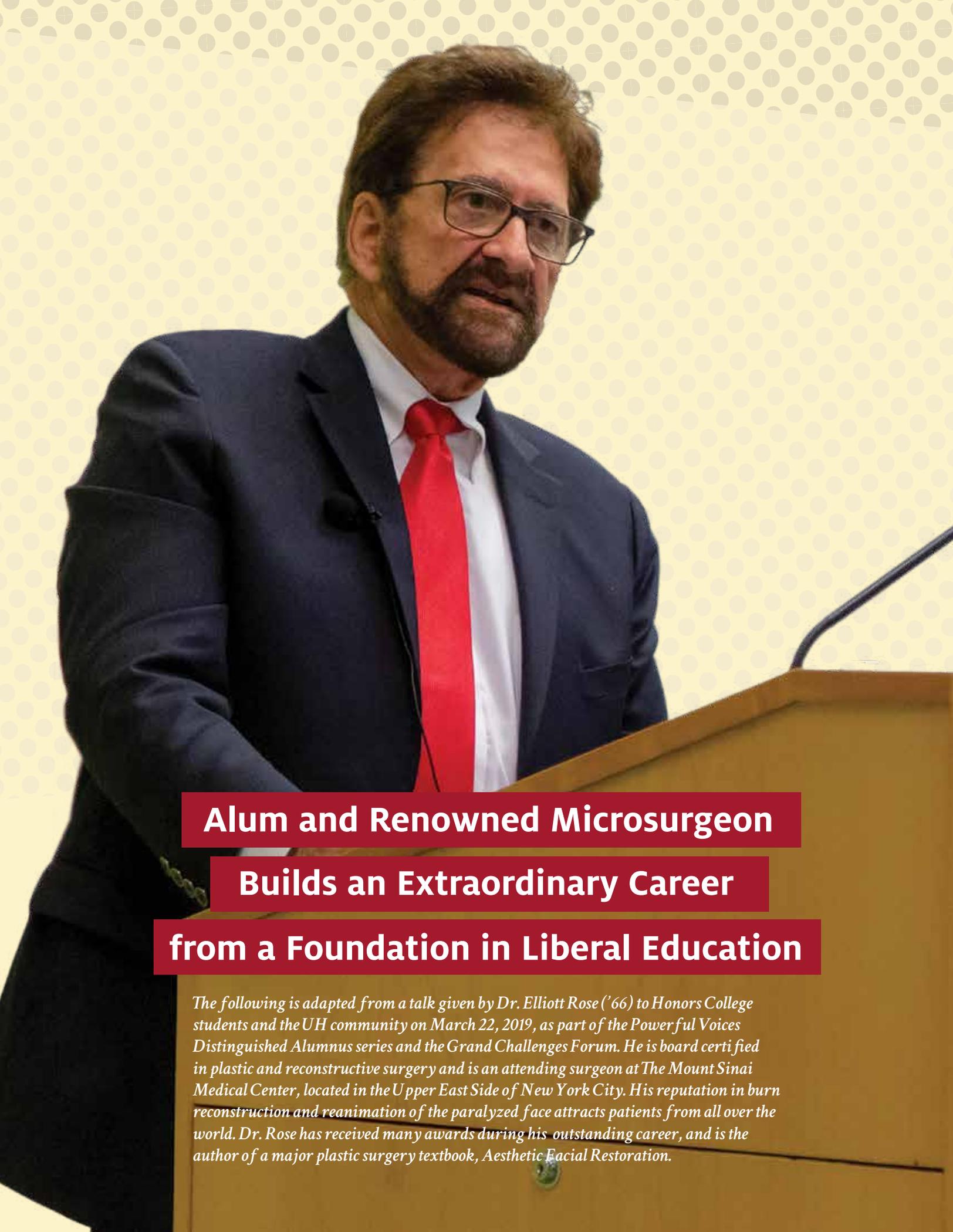
Local media outlets regularly call on members of the speech and debate team to comment on matters of free speech and civic discourse. During election season, they hold watch parties and provide debate forums for on-campus groups and organizations. “The wins and losses are less important than community building, hosting public debates, being ambassadors in high school communities, and creating a culture of people interested in these ideas,” Garner said.



UH currently ranks in the Top 50 collegiate policy debate teams, with an estimated 40-50 students participating across speech and debate programs annually. Garner and Glass have a long-term vision for the Speech & Debate program at UH. They are laying the foundations to become even more competitive nationally, aiming for performance consistency.

Further strengthening the culture of debate, Garner teaches the Debating Space City course, offered by the Honors College. The class familiarizes students with the intense research methods that policy debate requires, and prepares students to travel and compete.

Many humanities majors can tailor their policy debate study and activities to dovetail with their homework and class projects. “Sometimes debaters feel like they're cheating, being able to take all their external research and apply it in their classes,” Garner noted. “But this is how a high impact co-curricular activity should work—the work you do outside of the classroom fertilizes the work done inside the classroom to make you a better, all around student.”



Alum and Renowned Microsurgeon

Builds an Extraordinary Career

from a Foundation in Liberal Education

*The following is adapted from a talk given by Dr. Elliott Rose ('66) to Honors College students and the UH community on March 22, 2019, as part of the Powerful Voices Distinguished Alumnus series and the Grand Challenges Forum. He is board certified in plastic and reconstructive surgery and is an attending surgeon at The Mount Sinai Medical Center, located in the Upper East Side of New York City. His reputation in burn reconstruction and reanimation of the paralyzed face attracts patients from all over the world. Dr. Rose has received many awards during his outstanding career, and is the author of a major plastic surgery textbook, *Aesthetic Facial Restoration*.*



Photo credit: Michael Ramos

Family members pose with Dr. Rose at the Powerful Voices Distinguished Alumnus lecture. Left to Right: Dr. Robert Friedman, Herb Kalman, Dr. Joel Rose, Susan Rose, Dr. Elliott Rose, Dr. Miriam Kalman, Steve Rose, and Dr. Diane Loria Rose.

By Dr. Elliott Rose ('66)

▶ I stand before you a beneficiary of opportunities provided by this great and diverse country and what was then known as the Honors Program at the University of Houston. Like many of you, I am a first-generation immigrant. My father arrived at Ellis Island from Russia as a young boy escaping the pogroms in Eastern Europe, where Cossacks rampaged through villages, indiscriminately killing Jews, Romas, and political adversaries. My uncle describes the journey from hell, across the Black Sea, while being chased and shot at by Russian patrol boats as my grandmother and the three siblings were confined to a dark corner of steerage.

My family shortened their name from Rosenblum to Rose and settled in Philadelphia as a Jewish-American family. My grandfather, a watchmaker by trade, opened a small jewelry store in South Philadelphia. The family lived above the business in a tiny, two-room apartment.

In the mid-1930s, my grandfather and his three sons, then in their twenties, decided to pull up stakes and head toward California, where allegedly the sidewalks were "paved in gold." They shut down their business, packed all their possessions in an old Ford, and began their odyssey across America.

During their journey through the South, my grandfather suffered a double hernia and was hospitalized in Beaumont, Texas for a 10-day stint. During his hospitalization, my father and his brothers explored Houston 90 miles away—a rough and tumble oil town at

the time. They saw a land of opportunity and never left. As heirs to a long line of watchmakers and jewelers, the brothers did what they knew best and opened a store on Telephone Road, The Rose Jewelry Company. As in most families, the brothers squabbled, and they ultimately set up separate competing stores.

During WWII, my mother, Mickey, a graduate of San Jacinto High School, ran the store while my father was in the Air Force stationed at Ellington Air Force base in Houston. My mother's family had an equally storied history. The Rothstein family lived for generations in the small Eastern Polish town of Radzyn Podlaski. During the inter-war years, they were subject to intense anti-Semitism and ever-changing domination of the town—alternately, by the Germans and the Russians.

My grandfather Isaac, a cobbler and one of five siblings, came to America in the Galveston migration in the early 1900s and settled in Tyler, Texas, where my mother Mickey was born. Three of the four siblings left behind in Poland perished at Treblinka; the fourth was captured by the Russians, expelled to Siberia, and ultimately emigrated to Israel.

After the war, my father's business was growing. My mother helped out at the store and began to raise our family. Tragically, she died of a brain tumor when I was seven years old, leaving behind me, my five-year-old brother, a six-week-old infant, and my grieving father. Fortunately, my father remarried Frances Kalman, a widow with two

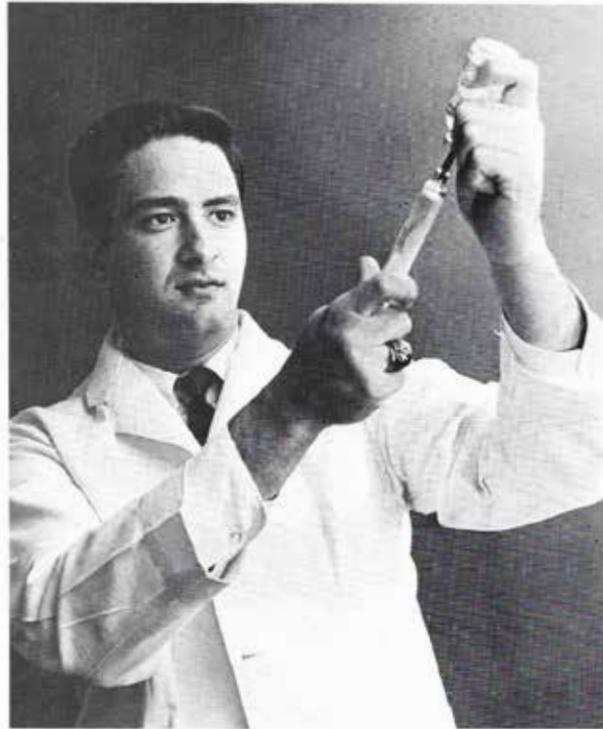
children close to our ages. They had one together, for a total of six. I am proud to say that all of my living siblings are here today—Miriam, Herb, Steve, and Joe.

I and my five siblings grew up in a modest home in Southwest Houston. Resources were limited, and we were expected to contribute to our own clothing and personal expenses. From the time my brothers and I were little boys, we were always working. At age eight, I was taking a bus across town selling donuts door to door; I had a paper route with the now-defunct Houston Press at age 10, and the Chronicle at age 12; I hawked peanuts and popcorn at Rice Stadium or at Houston Oiler games at age 13; sold shoes at the Shoe Market in downtown Houston during high school; and later, during college, sold ladies shoes at Foley's two nights a week and on Saturday. Each of these experiences reinforced my independence and embedded social skills for interacting with people of all walks of life.

Education was of paramount importance in my family. My father only had completed the 8th grade, but my stepmother, Frances, finished as valedictorian of her high school class in Lubbock, Texas. Of the six kids, two became doctors, two became lawyers, one became a CPA, and my sister has her doctorate and is an English professor and author in the field of women's equality. Of note, six of the six Rose/Kalman siblings have attended or taught at the University of Houston. My brother Phil, may he rest in peace, was on the 1967 Cougar baseball team that went to the finals of the College World Series, and he was an Honorable Mention All American.

I graduated from Bellaire High School with honors but didn't have sufficient grades to get into Rice University or the money to go away to school. I was disappointed but, by good fortune, the University of Houston had joined the state school system in 1963, just as I was applying to college.

During the summer of 1963, I received a letter from the dean inviting me to join the first Interdisciplinary Honors Program at UH. I was thrilled. I was one of 25 eclectic students chosen from around the country to receive an extraordinary education from top professors in each discipline. Each week our Honors group would have an interactive seminar that allowed us to express our thoughts and ideas related to the week's studies. What a unique and innovative opportunity!



Elliot Rose is pictured in the 1966 UH Houstonian yearbook.

Today, the Honors College admits almost 700 students each fall and is considered one of the top honor programs in the country.

When I began at UH, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I had flirted with the idea of being an architect, but my older sister Miriam had trained as a dental hygienist and convinced me that I should be a doctor or a dentist. During my first year, I joined the Pre-Med Pre-Dental Society, the brain child of Dr. Catherine Cominsky, professor of biology. Dr. Cominsky instilled in me the confidence to know I could succeed as a physician, gave advice for navigating the medical school admissions process and advised me to take advantage of a liberal education as an undergraduate.

So, in addition to my required pre-medical courses, I majored in psychology and minored in philosophy. I had an interest in law and was appointed to the Supreme Court at UH. To this day, I see my time as an undergraduate as an opportunity to open my horizons, become versed in many disciplines, and become a more interesting, well-rounded person. I encourage you to take advantage of your college experience: establish the foundation of your learning pillars and become "complete" men and women.

In 1966, I was accepted to the University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston (UTMB). Medical school was tough, but early on I learned that as a UH graduate, I was capable of competing with fellow students from Rice, Tulane, and the Ivy League. I worked hard, played hard, traveled all over the world on clerkships, and matured as a soon-to-be doctor. While in Galveston, I was exposed to the plastic surgery program under the tutelage of Dr. Truman Blocker and Dr. J.B. Lynch. There, I first witnessed the extraordinary work that was being done at the Shriner's Hospital Burn Unit on the UTMB campus. I knew that plastic surgery would be my calling.

I graduated UTMB in 1970, first in my class—again, a tribute to my strong educational foundation. I applied and was accepted for a general surgery residency at UCLA. In 1973, a position at Stanford University, Stanford, California in the Integrated Plastic Surgery program became available, and I promptly accepted.

To me, plastic surgery offered the right synthesis of manual dexterity and creativity. I had always loved to draw portraits of faces, and would always have a pencil and paper in hand to draw sketches from the cover of *Time Magazine*.

In 1973, I did a clerkship in the plastic surgery unit at Tel Hashomer Hospital in Israel, treating battlefield casualties from the tank battles in the Golan. Many of these young people had sustained disfiguring facial injuries that required sophisticated reconstruction. It was then and there that I decided my life mission was to become a reconstructive facial surgeon.

In my four years of residency at Stanford, I learned all aspects of plastic and reconstructive surgery. My boss, Dr. Donald Laub, was the founder of Interplast—an international organization providing cleft lip and palate surgery to kids around the world. Our teams traveled to places such as San Pedro Sula, Honduras; Mexicali, Mexico; and other Latin American countries, bringing our own personnel and operating equipment to perform dozens of cleft lip and palate surgeries within a week. Several years after completing my residency at Stanford, I served briefly on the faculty at UCLA. While there, I was challenged by Dr. Richard Grossman, head of the largest burn unit in Southern California, to use microsurgical technology to reconstruct severely disfigured burned faces.

At that time, facial burn scars were treated with simple skin grafting that left the face flat, unemotional, and scarred. By microsurgically transferring composite blocks of tissue—like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle—to replace whole units of the burned or traumatized face, texture and form could be immediately restored to a more normal appearance. This microsurgical technology was the precursor to full facial transplantation. In a way, I had come full circle, achieving my childhood dream of becoming an architect, but with different building materials.

These microsurgery cases last eight to 10 hours and require intense concentration and manipulation of instruments to within a tenth of a millimeter. I can't help but think of myself as a young boy observing my father, the watchmaker, spending hours with his loupes repairing the intricate movements of fine watches with the greatest of precision and dexterity. I know that the DNA of many generations of watchmakers in my family have been passed to me in my skills as a microsurgeon.



The Pre-Medical Pre-Dental Society pose for the 1966 UH Houstonian yearbook. Dr. Elliott Rose is highlighted on the back row. His mentor and inspiration, Dr. Catherine Cominsky, is highlighted on the first row.

In 1990, I joined the clinical faculty at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, where I have been operating and teaching for the last two and a half decades. I also took on the challenge of restoring facial balance and function in paralyzed faces following tumor or Bell's palsy using microsurgical nerve grafting techniques and various facial muscle transfers. Our service has attracted hundreds of patients with facial disfigurement from around the world.

If there is a message that I want you all—Northern talk for y'all—to take away, it is to follow your dreams. Don't settle for creature comforts at the expense of your passions. Do what your gut tells you. I just as easily could have been a New York City cosmetic surgeon for the "carriage trade" and lived quite well.

But, I chose to make a transformation in the quality of people's lives, to go to bed every night knowing that I have made a difference. You should feel the same way in your career choices.

Only in America can the son of an immigrant with an 8th grade education—in one generation—have the opportunity to become a Park Avenue reconstructive microsurgeon at one of the most prestigious hospitals in America. I am grateful to my wife of 34 years, Susan, and my sons Adam and Mitchell, for their unconditional support during the long hours devoted to my professional life.

As I return here to Cullen Boulevard where it all started four decades ago, I thank the University of Houston faculty, administrators, and fellow students—past and present—for being an important part of that trajectory.



L to R: Dean of the Honors College William Monroe, UH President Renu Khator, Dr. Elliott Rose, and Susan Rose visit together before the Powerful Voices lecture.

University of Houston Ranked Top Producer of Fulbright U.S. Students

By Daniel Wallace

It's official: The University of Houston is now ranked among the Top Producing Fulbright Institutions in the nation. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has announced the Top Producers of U.S. Fulbright Scholars and Students for 2019-2020, and UH, for the first time in its history, is on the list. The results were published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, on Feb. 10, and only one other institution in Texas, the University of Texas Austin, has been named for 2019-2020. This marks another milestone achievement for UH and its outstanding students.

"Our goal is to create a vibrant Fulbright culture at UH," said Dr. Ben Rayder, director of National Fellowships and Major Awards. "To be recognized as a Fulbright Top Producing Institution not only demonstrates that we are well on our way, but also that UH students will continue to be competitive for this opportunity in the future."

The University of Houston celebrated a truly historic, record-breaking year in 2018-19, with 12 outstanding students receiving Fulbright awards for research and teaching, the most awarded in any given year in the school's history. In the past two years, the University has received 18 Fulbrights in total. To put that in perspective: UH received 35 Fulbrights altogether in the years between 1966 and 2017.

Last year's Fulbright recipients came from four colleges at UH: The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM), Bauer College of Business, and College of Education; and they are currently teaching, studying, and conducting research abroad.

"We are delighted to see that the colleges and universities we are honoring as 2019-2020 Fulbright top producing institutions reflect the geographic and institutional diversity of higher education in the United States," said

Marie Royce, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The Fulbright Program was created to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. Since its inception in 1946, the Fulbright Program has given over 390,000 passionate and accomplished students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals of all backgrounds and fields the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to important international problems.

Participating governments and host institutions, corporations, and foundations around the world also provide direct and indirect support to the program, which operates in over 160 countries worldwide, with the aim of solving global challenges.

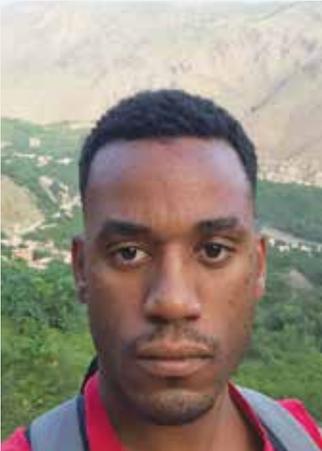


UH Fulbright recipients will have the chance to address critical issues—from sustainable energy and climate change to public health and food security—in all areas, while building relationships, knowledge, and leadership in support of the long-term interests of the United States and the world.

Fulbright alumni have become heads of state, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, CEOs, and university presidents, as well as leading journalists, artists, scientists, and teachers. They include 59 Nobel Laureates, 82 Pulitzer Prize winners, 71 MacArthur Fellows, 16 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients, and thousands of leaders across the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

"Like Tier One status and the granting of permission to shelter a Phi Beta Kappa chapter," Dean Monroe said, "being recognized as a Fulbright Top Producing Institution is another milestone in the history of the University of Houston."

2019-2020 Fulbright Scholars



Yusuf Bavi
Political Science and History
Morocco, English Teaching Assistant



Britnee Chuor
Political Science and Liberal Studies
Spain, English Teaching Assistant



Brendon Hillebrand
Computer Science
Taiwan, English Teaching Assistant



Crystal Tran
Political Science and Psychology
Taiwan, English Teaching Assistant



Layla Kratovic
Psychology
Bosnia/Herzegovina, Study/Research



Alberto Wilson III
History
Mexico, Study/Research



Danielle Niangar
Political Science and Sociology
Italy, Study/Research



Lisa Menda
Political Science and Economics
Morocco, English Teaching Assistant



Johnny Zapata
History and Spanish
Turkey, English Teaching Assistant



Hina Uddin
Finance
India, English Teaching Assistant



Michelle Orsi
Creative Writing
Argentina,
English Teaching Assistant



Chelsea Sanchez
Teaching and Learning
South Korea,
English Teaching Assistant



The Honors College surprised Paula Myrick Short, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, with a red leather document envelope inscribed with her name and her UH stationary bearing the Fulbright 2019-2020 Top Producing logo. William Monroe, dean of the Honors College, and Ben Rayder, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards (OURMA), presented Provost Short with the gifts in appreciation for her leadership and support in making UH a Top Producing Fulbright Institution for 2019-2020.

Honors faculty and staff attended the afternoon reception where the provost was photographed above, with Dean Monroe and OURMA faculty and staff. From left, Rikki Bettinger, coordinator for the Mellon Research Scholars Program; Stuart Long, Honors College associate dean and engineering professor; Provost Short; Ben Rayder; Richard Armstrong, classical studies and Human Situation professor, serving as faculty liaison and student adviser; Dean Monroe; and Brittni McCleod, associate director of OURMA.

CELEBRATING

5
Years

Mu of
The Phi Beta Kappa Society

Where
are these
Phi Betes Now?

2016: Hayder Ali taught high school in Houston for several years and is now attending medical school at the University of Chicago.

2017: Megan Goh conducted research in Germany on a Fulbright research grant after graduating. She is currently doing a fellowship with the National Institutes of Health.

2018: Mason Malone was the first student to matriculate into the UH Law Center as part of the 3+3 dual degree program and will graduate with his juris doctorate in 2021.

2019: Hina Uddin moved to India to teach English on a Fulbright Scholarship and will begin her studies in the Human Rights Program at Harvard Law School in September 2020.

2019: Michelle Tran was a member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as an undergraduate and currently serves as a research associate at the Federal Reserve Bank in Washington, D.C.

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

The PHI BETA KAPPA
Resident Faculty

cordially invite you to

The PHI BETA KAPPA *Society*
Induction Ceremony

Hosted by

Paula Myrick Short

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
University of Houston

Special Guest

Frederick M. Lawrence

Secretary/CEO

The PHI BETA KAPPA Society

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

6 p.m. Reception

6:45 p.m. Induction

University of Houston, Hilton Hotel
Shamrock Room

4450 University Blvd. | Houston, Texas

Business Attire

Please RSVP to Keri Myrick at pbk@uh.edu by March 17



Europe

LEARNING ABROAD

By Nathan Smith

My experiences in Europe were surreal, like a dream state immortalized through pictures and memories. A day after my last

final, I boarded a plane and headed off across the pond with my travel partner Danielle. I had expectations of what Europe would be like, but nothing prepared me for the moment when I woke up and realized that I was seven hours ahead, in a foreign country, experiencing my dreams.

From the second we arrived in Amsterdam embraced by the warm hospitality of our sponsors, the Economons, to the

melancholy moments after taking off from Rome heading back home, I was immersed in new experiences.

The art, museums, food, and sights in general were only the tip of the iceberg in regards to the F.E.E.T. (Faber-Economon European Travel Scholarship) trip. Navigating train stations, decoding public transit maps, and deciphering restaurant menus all in foreign languages added to the enjoyable difficulty. I was particularly fond of the glimpse I got at Dutch, French, and Italian politics and society.

As I write this a month after the trip, I still feel as if I'm in a dream. To me, the trip was about experiences, both familiar and foreign. To that, I am thankful to all the people who made this surreal trip a tangible reality.

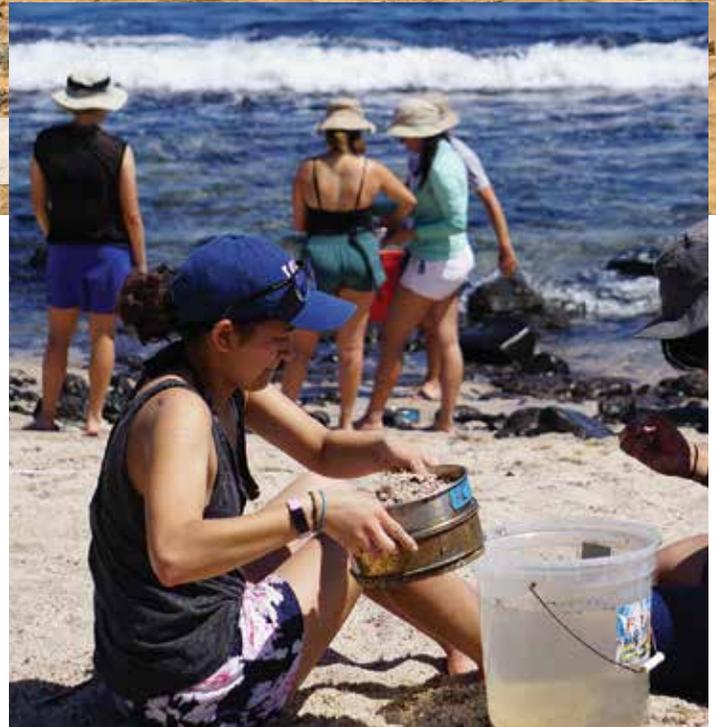


Galápagos

LEARNING ABROAD



Trip Leaders: Marc Hanke, Ann Cheek, Ricardo Azevedo, Rebecca Zufall



By Davis Nguyen

“Was it worth it?” Yes—it was, and I wouldn’t trade it for anything else. For three weeks, I was immersed in a foreign culture, environment, and lifestyle. Before this trip, I genuinely laughed at the idea that the islands would be life changing—it was too cliché. However, learning abroad was truly an eye-opening experience.

I was a sheltered child, so I faced a number of challenges that others did not. I remember almost drowning one day, then falling off my bike the next—it was miserable. I hated the water, the biking, the heat, the language barrier, and the bugs. I hated how strange everything was—and in a way, I hated myself for my inability to do anything. Being so far away from home, everything hurt so much more. Although my learning abroad program was an opportunity for research, it ultimately became an opportunity for me to grow ;;; as a person.

Learning abroad on the Galápagos Islands made me realize how small my world was. There were a lot of firsts for me on this trip, among those being stargazing, snorkeling, and hiking. Never in my life had I ever seen so many stars in the sky or fishes in the sea. Every moment was breathtaking, and no amount of words could ever describe the feelings I felt or the things I saw.

I learned how to ride a bike, and I learned how to swim and snorkel. I learned how to be more independent. I made new friends and family, and found a new place to call home—and above all else, I found myself.

Although my program lasted only three weeks, it felt like it was at least a year. The days were long, but the nights were even longer. I felt like I was in paradise. Even now, I can’t stress it enough how grateful I am. To everyone who has supported me and made my dreams become a reality—thank you.



Jordan

LEARNING ABROAD

Trip Leaders: Keri Myrick, Bill Monroe, Helen Valier, Adrian Castillo

By Karina George

I signed up for this trip knowing very little about the Middle East and looking forward to learning more about the humanitarian crisis and the nonprofit world. What I never expected to happen was that I would fall in love with Jordan—the people, the food, and the incredible views. I had seriously underestimated what the Middle East had to offer.



I went into the trip with the primary goal of growing academically and professionally. And I did. While working in headquarters at JHAsI (Jordan Health Aid Society international), I was introduced to a lot of aspects of humanitarian work I had never considered.

It raised a lot of issues and prompted me to reflect on the work I was doing back home and look at problems in Houston through a different lens. Needless to say, I was incredibly inspired by the people I met and quickly gained several new role models.

Besides work, I had never expected to get so comfortable so quickly. I was stepping far out of my comfort zone by going to Jordan, and it was a big step for me, but I can't imagine that Jordan could have been any more ideal for my first big trip.

After just the first week, I felt so at home that I couldn't really imagine what life had been like before the trip. Leaving was harder than I had imagined, and I'm still ready to go back at any moment!



By Sahar Baig

In high school, I attended a global languages magnet program and my Spanish teacher often incorporated lessons about Spanish culture and politics into our curriculum. My interest in Spain's language and people followed me into college, where I continued to work on my skills on my own and practiced with people I met around Houston. Actually, being in Barcelona was like nothing my experiences here could have prepared me for. The city was restless, with Catalan independence flags visible on every street, and full of people who were eager to share their fervor for the movement.

A bookseller in Barceloneta, a manmade island just off of Barcelona proper, insisted upon giving me a book of Shakespearean sonnets for free after I asked him if he preferred to be called a Spaniard or a Catalan. "Nos cansamos," he told me—we grow tired. There are many people living in Barcelona, too, who are less invested in independence.

While on a tour of the rooftop of a basilica, a few other students and I found that there was an American woman in our group who had just moved to Barcelona. So in love was she with the vibrancy of the city, she explained, that she decided to retire there. Barcelona has no end of delicious food and breathtaking sights to offer, but what will stay with me forever are the people I met and the things they taught me.

I will close with something that a woman I met in Barcelona told me: "I remember being your age. Everything felt so free. There is nothing better than to be young, see new countries, and meet new people, and you should do it while you can."

Barcelona, Spain

LEARNING ABROAD





Trip Leaders: Jesse Rainbow, Keri Myrick, Adrian Castillo



By John Walkington

My trip to Tunisia with the Honors College was the bright spot of my 2019. I made wonderful friends, ate amazing food, and left with memories that will stick with me forever. My trip to Tunisia was my first time abroad, and I could not have asked for a trip so full of laughter and excitement. I could talk forever about all the beautiful sites I got to visit, and fascinating conversations I had about the ancient history of Tunisia, but I'd like to highlight one particular moment.

The personal high point of my trip was a brief intermission at a small, simple cemetery at the highest edge of Sidi Bou Said, a small seaside village built on a cliff overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Reaching the cemetery required a hike along steep, winding streets, and I was winded by the time we arrived at the top. Our tour guide, Mounir, took a moment to reflect on the symbolic meaning of the cemetery's remote location. The panorama before us of the deep blue Mediterranean, with its forever-cycling tides, was a metaphor for the inexorable ebb and flow of life and death. We move like waves, and crash on the shore. Mounir explained that the inscriptions on the headstones in the cemetery referenced a Roman proverb from Tunisia's ancient history: "Stop and think, traveler. This life is temporary. You are only passing through."

I will admit that I welled up with tears at that moment. I was overwhelmed by a sense of wonder for the whole of the trip, but that visit to the cemetery was so deeply emotional and meaningful to me.

That Roman proverb continued to speak to me during the rest of my time in Tunisia. I was a traveler who was being called to stop and think. Tunisia was the most amazing place for me to do that. Its rich and layered history, with pieces of diverse ancient and modern civilizations, created a cultural experience that was wonderfully immersive. Tunisia is something of a mosaic that I could stare at and study forever. I'm itching to go back.

Virginia

LEARNING AWAY

By Edmund Carroll

During our trip to Virginia, I was able to interact with the professors outside of the normal classroom setting, which enabled me to see them more as human beings, with interests and personal histories, than is usually apparent in the classroom.

I think the faculty-led learning away trips exemplify the nature of the Honors College, namely in helping students develop an eager desire for knowledge, which seeks truth and understanding in all aspects of life and in all places.

Besides being with the professors, I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with the students on the trip. As we were all interested in the subject matter, it was easy to have discussions and conversations on a number of different topics, sometimes pertaining to the educational material, other times not so much, but all of which

further enhanced my experience and enjoyment of the trip. I learned much about the people we were studying (primarily Thomas Jefferson and James Madison) that is not facilitated in a classroom setting. By this, I mean the historical presence of so many artifacts which made these figures more real to my imagination and understanding and brought to life the realities which they underwent and lived.

Going forward in my studies, I will be able to reference both the readings and the facts which I learned and studied on this trip. The course which is associated with this trip, the Early American Republic, is a course on the foundational structures of our country and government, which is both a necessary and enjoyable area of study, principally because of the importance of partaking in and studying our government.



By Kinza Muzahir

As soon as we entered Pittsburgh and crossed the beautiful yellow iron bridge over the Monongahela River, we were overcome with awe. The green hills were peppered with structures, both rusting and new, on either side of the paved roads that snaked down them. Houston seemed so far away. It was an oddly nostalgic feeling to refer to a classroom back home in room 17 of the Moody Towers' basement where we studied texts from artists who have called Pittsburgh home (Michael Chabon, August Wilson, Terrance Hayes and Lynn Emanuel to name a few).

We were surrounded by old buildings, but not enough old people, as our van (read: chariot) driver pointed out as well. He called Lawrenceville a neighbourhood of millennials and we were, indeed, witnesses to the shifting demographic of the city. Pittsburgh was now defined by bike lanes, technology, and immigration—elements of reinvention and ingenuity, some might say. Others might say gentrification is playing too prominent a role in reshaping the progress.

Either way, I realized that the people who left after the factories began to shut down, and the economic collapse that followed it, left a footprint that was clearly being preserved in some capacity. The Carrie Furnace and Falling Waters House, both of which we visited, were testaments to that. The legacy they left behind of

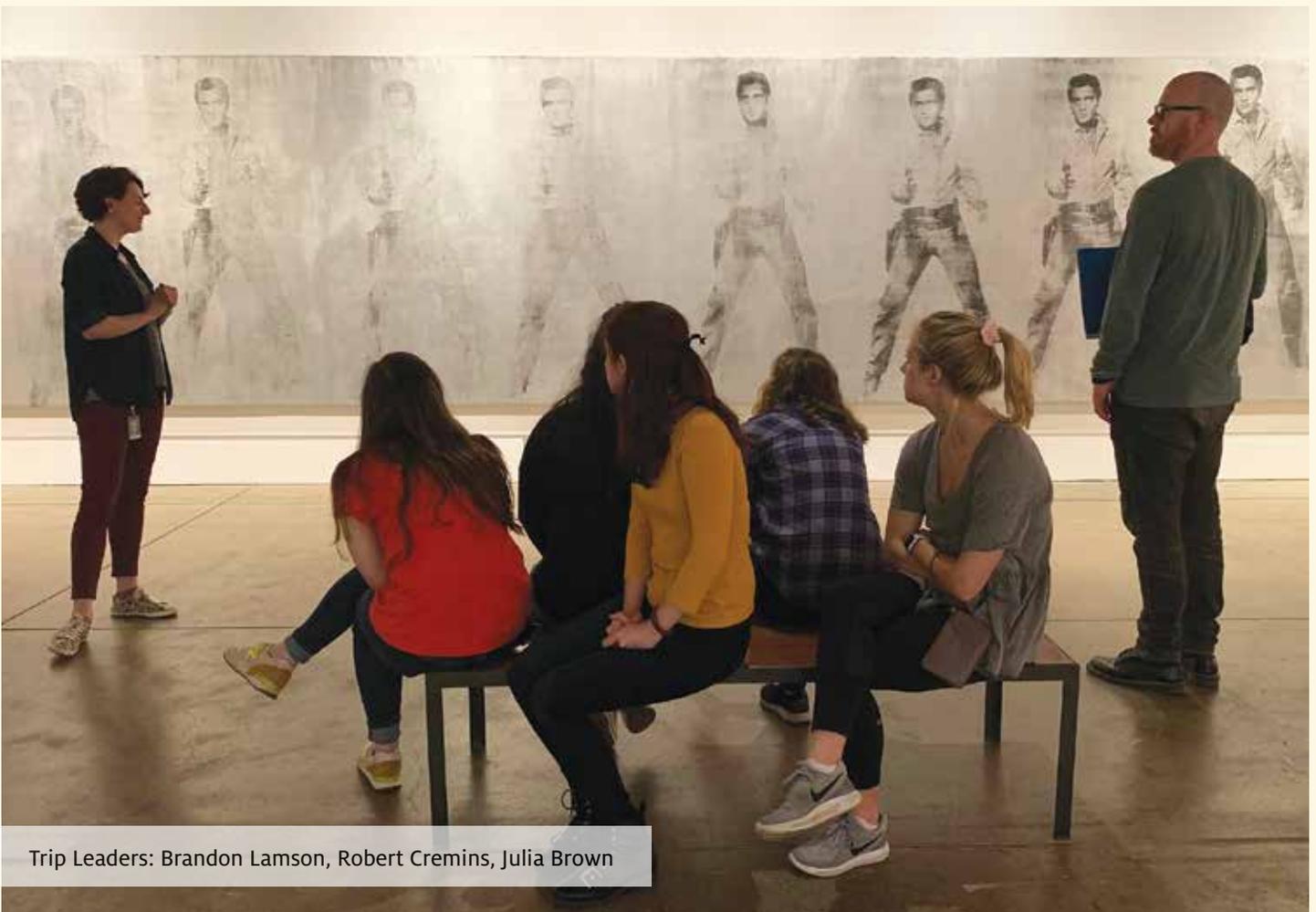
Pittsburgh

LEARNING AWAY

Pittsburgh's economic boom was mirrored now as it gradually became one of the top tech cities of America and attracted fresh crowds from around the country, just like it did in the last two centuries, with coal and steel.

Since we were part of the Creative Work minor, we focused on the artists of the city. Pittsburgh took care of its artists through community and opportunity, and the local artists in Braddock were great examples of that. We saw a full group of them juggling their lives, families, expenses, and art by engaging their communities in projects and practicing their own art in their studio spaces provided by Unsmoked Systems. The City of Asylum Poetry Houses, Mattress Factory, August Wilson Center and Andy Warhol Museum were also some of the most influential institutions we saw which uplifted the arts scene in Pittsburgh.

We wrapped up a semester of intense preparation and a week of exploration, wonder, and excellent food with projects of our own inspired by Pittsburgh and a brunch thanks to the Honors College.



Trip Leaders: Brandon Lamson, Robert Cremins, Julia Brown



Trip Leader: Paul Stapleton

Chicago

LEARNING AWAY

By Clara Martin

When the opportunity to visit Chicago came up I immediately grabbed at it. The Art Institute, a Cubs game, “West Side Story,” the Chicago Sinfonietta, and one of Shakespeare’s First Folios? Who wouldn’t want to go? I was ecstatic about the trip months before we took off. Despite this, nothing could have prepared me for Chi-Town.

A year before the trip, I had visited New York and, if I’m honest, this meant I wasn’t all that excited about the actual city. Sure, I was ready for everything we had planned, but a city is a city right? It’s big buildings, steel and glass, crowded sidewalks and busy streets, how different could it be?

Very different. One of the first things I noticed when we got to downtown Chicago on our first day in the city, was the frankly

stunning architecture. More than that, I saw the beauty in the small things around the city.

The detail in carved outdoor handrails, the elegance in the street lights, and the abundance of gardens and tulips. Chicago’s beauty was both breathtaking—towering skyscrapers in blues and greens and grays—and subtle, a feeling of both elegance and down to earth artistry in everything around you.

It was startlingly different from New York and added new fuel to my desire to travel. Chicago and New York are just two cities. How many others out there hold the potential to shock me?

Washington, D.C.

at the Smithsonian
LEARNING AWAY



Trip Leaders: Alison Leland, Mary Ann Ottinger

By Rebecca Hentges

During my time at the University of Houston, I have been extremely lucky to participate in numerous internship opportunities. However, all of these experiences have been built around my school schedule. While during the semester this helps me to balance my academic and professional growth, I have always felt that it limited my performance potential at my internships.

Even during my last summer internship, the responsibilities and routines of my life at home didn't allow me to fully dedicate myself to getting as much out of the internship as possible. I wanted to participate in the Smithsonian Study Away Internship to remove myself from the atmosphere I was comfortable with and give myself a chance to reprioritize.

By doing this, I was able to make my internship my No.1 priority. During my five weeks at the Smithsonian, I successfully set and achieved goals in a way I had never been able to during previous internships. I attribute a lot of my success to my central location on Capitol Hill and the supportive cohort of students who were there with me.

Before arriving in D.C., I had hoped for an internship specifically related to political science or history. In order to directly apply my coursework at UH to my internship. After communicating the concerns I had with my internship director, we were able to come up with a long-term project that would help me achieve my personal goals while also serving the needs of the Office of Fellowships and Internships (OFI). This project involved compiling data and stories to include in OFI's 2018 annual report. The process of compiling this report gave me incredible behind-the-scenes insight to the research process.

I also gained insight into the scope of academic appointments that only the Smithsonian offers and was able to broaden my understanding of what a career in humanities research would look like. I had never before considered a career in humanities research because I believed the opportunities for research were few and hard to find. However, my experience at the Smithsonian showed me the diversity of research opportunities available, and that I might consider it as a potential career path.

Austin

LEARNING AWAY

By Justin Bui

Austin is not an unfamiliar place to most Houstonians and definitely not one to me. So, when I heard that the Artists in Their Regions class would be traveling to the Texas capital city, I wasn't sure what I could expect that I hadn't seen before. What could surprise me?

I should have known better. Our class taught me how a city could be a creative space, with its own culture and identity—and with that, it showed me things about Austin I had never seen before. The city is rife with history and creative spirit, and over a weekend I learned how much I had never known about Austin.

We stayed at Drifter Jack's Hostel, a repurposed college. From there, we got a low-to-the-ground perspective on Austin's creative climate, which is run by Austin residents and university alumni, covered in wall art and filled with knick-knacks. There, the city's quirky and diverse spirit was front and center: a place where you could just as easily join a bar crawl as you could sit in watching old movies on VHS.

We investigated the arts in the city across a wide variety of venues. Visiting BookPeople, a wonderful, independent bookstore, we

learned more about Keep Austin Weird, Austin's brand and identity, representative of its independence and creative spirit.

The Harry Ransom Center is a veritable treasure trove of history, literature, and art—a dragon's hoard of snapshots from the past, like the Gutenberg Bible or the world's first photograph. And much like the museum in our own city, the Blanton Museum of Art gave us a varied selection of art from both past and present, ranging from medieval depictions of monsters to modern installations. In particular, Ellsworth Kelly's Austin stood out as a silent space that lends itself to an almost religious artistic experience with colored windows and cut marble panels, all centralized on a great wooden totem.

Austin's artistic aesthetic shone as something both incredibly historic and aggressively new, a place looking to uphold the traditions of the past while still moving forward as a growing city. Historic places like the Texas Capitol and the Bullock Texas State History Museum were also prominent stops during our trip. At the same time, there was a modern spirit of innovation and progress to many of the local businesses. Restaurants, dessert parlors, and arcades were all run by young graduates and entrepreneurs.

We made a stop at the Irish Consulate over in Austin, where we got another outsider perspective of the city, and a better idea of how Austin draws in outsiders and makes them feel welcome. By the end of it all, it was clearer than ever that at the core of its trendy and 'Weird' brand, Austin is home to a powerful, creative spark.



Welcome New Faculty and Staff



Jonathan Williamson ('95)

Jonathan Williamson was named associate dean for academic programs and faculty affairs and the Michael Andrew Little Professor in the Honors College at the University of Houston, beginning in the fall 2019 semester. Williams is a returning alumnus of the University of Houston and the Honors College, where he graduated magna cum laude in 1995, earning his bachelor's in political science and psychology. He received his doctorate in philosophy from Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

Before returning to UH, Williamson served as chair of the Department of Political Science and associate professor of political science at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. During his 17 years at Lycoming, he was the founding director of both the Center for Energy and the Future and the Center for Community and the Economy. In addition to his academic roles, Williamson was elected to serve for nearly twelve years on the Williamsport City Council, including terms as president, vice-president, and chair of the finance committee.

Reflecting on what coming back means coming back to the Honors College means to him, Williamson said, "My time here provided me an unmatched foundation for lifelong personal growth and professional success, the debt of gratitude for which I feel is substantial. The experiences and skills I return with after nearly 25 years of professional development and public service were made possible because of my formative time here. I feel so

fortunate that those same experiences and skills will enable me contribute to the ongoing and accomplished legacy of the Honors College,” he added.

Williamson recognizes the College’s history of offering creative and innovative projects and programming opportunities to all students across the UH campus. “In my role as associate dean, I’m driven to facilitate the successful development and implementation of the tremendous

ideas generated by Honors faculty, staff, and students and to ensure that each stakeholder has had the opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the College’s success,” he added.

He said that the College has remained the same in many ways, “... providing students with a community of passionate and motivated colleagues, faculty, and staff within which to explore important ideas and to develop personally and professionally.

That said, the many changes since my time as a student are concentrated on the explosion in depth and breadth of curricular and co-curricular opportunities made available to students to achieve those ends.”

Although Williamson is coming back home, he is introducing his wife, Jessica, and their two children, Madison and Tyler, to Houston and the University for the first time.



Brittni McCleod

Brittni McCleod is associate director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards (OURMA). She supports students as they conduct research projects with faculty at UH. McCleod is currently pursuing a doctorate in Higher Education Research at Texas Tech University, researching students’ perceptions of programs and services. She holds a Master of Education in Higher Education Administration degree and a bachelor’s degree in psychology, and is also a Gallup-Certified Strengths coach. McCleod assists undergraduate students interested in conducting research at the University to apply for the SURF, PURS, and Senior Honors Thesis programs.



Rikki Bettinger ('18)

Rikki Bettinger is the coordinator for the Mellon Research Scholars Program in the Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards (OURMA). She works directly with the Mellon Scholars as they conduct individual research projects in the humanities and apply to competitive graduate programs. Bettinger received her doctorate in Latin American history from UH in 2018. She specializes in nineteenth-century transnational Latin American and Caribbean women’s histories with an emphasis on travel writings in the Americas. She also has a master’s degree in history from the University of Texas, San Antonio and holds a bachelor’s degree in history secondary education from the University of Northern Colorado. Prior to pursuing graduate studies, Bettinger taught high school history in San Antonio.

Welcome New Faculty and Staff



Douglas Erwing (J.D., Ph.D. '07)

Doug Erwing, a lecturer in American history, has also been named director of Service Learning in the Honors College. He began teaching in the College in 2009. Erwing received his juris prudence in 1993 and his doctorate in 2005 from UH. He recently returned from a year of teaching and traveling in China where he held a visiting scholar position and lectured at a number of Chinese universities about the U.S. political system, real estate law, and the U.S. Constitution. He teaches courses in U.S. History, political science, and constitutional law. He is currently working on a book about how the federal system worked during the 1790s, and is practicing real estate law.



Trinity Rinear ('19)

Trinity Rinear is assistant director of the Bonner Leaders Program, providing support to student leadership development and experiential learning opportunities for Honors College students. The UH Bonner Leaders Program is a four-year service learning experience in which students create, manage, and develop long-term service projects with local community partners and learn about poverty through course work, practical program management experiences, and research. Rinear earned her Bachelor of Science in Political Science degree from UH and is an Honors College alumna.



Brian Apicella

Brian Apicella comes to the Honors College from the University of California, Los Angeles where he received his master's and doctoral degrees in the classics. Apicella areas of specialization include ancient philosophy (Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism). Some of his publications include, "The Theaetetus' Midwifery of the Statesman's Knowledge", "The Revisionist History of Statius' Thetis" and "The Epistemological Function of the Myth of the Reversed Cosmos in Plato's Statesman." Apicella is currently teaching the Human Situation course in the Honors College.



Rita Sirrieh ('10)

Rita Sirrieh is an instructional faculty member in The Honors College who teaches biology, biochemistry, science communication, and electives for the Energy and Sustainability minor. She also serves as the associate director for the Energy and Sustainability minor, with a focus on cohort building and co-curricular programming for minor students. Sirrieh is a graduate of the Honors College at UH with a bachelor's degree in biochemical and biophysical sciences. She earned her doctorate in biochemistry and molecular biology from the University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston.



David Tucker ('10)

David Tucker ('10) returns to the Honors College at the University of Houston where he earned his bachelor's degree in political science, with minors in English and *Phronêsis*. He received a master's in rhetoric from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and is a doctoral candidate in rhetorical studies at the University of Minnesota. His research interests include the history of rhetoric, argumentation, and persuasion theory. David is currently director of Honors Relations and teaches in the Human Situation course for the Honors College.

Faculty Achievements



Richard Armstrong, classical studies and Human Situation professor, was named a fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington D.C. in spring 2018. He won the Ted L. Estess Award for excellence in teaching, mentorship, and service to the Honors College in fall 2018 and the Nationally Competitive Scholarship Mentor Award (OUR) in spring 2019.



Jeremy Bailey, political science professor and *Phronésis* director, published *The Idea of Presidential Representation: An Intellectual and Political History* (University Press of Kansas) and, with Susan McWilliams of Pomona College, became co-editor of *American Political Thought: A Journal of Ideas, Institutions and Culture*. The *Phronésis* program also received a grant from Institute for Human Studies for a speaker series on freedom of speech and inquiry.



Frank "Fritz" Claydon, engineering professor, received the Cullen College of Engineering Career Teaching Award for the 2018-2019 academic year. He also received a patent for nanocomposite polymer carbon-based nanomaterial filters for the simultaneous removal of bacteria and heavy metals.



Robert Cremins, Creative Work and Human Situation professor, led a part academic, part experiential student group on a learning away trip to Austin. He conducted an on-stage interview with novelists Jonathan Lethem and Gary Shteyngart at an "Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series" event held in Cullen Performance Hall in Nov. 2018.



Irene Guenther, history professor, was promoted to associate instructional professor. Her book, *Postcards from the Trenches: A German Soldier's Testimony of the Great War*, was published by Bloomsbury in Nov. 2018, and is currently under contract with a German publisher. She received a 2019 Lerner Family Faculty Fellowship Award for academic leadership.



Stuart Long, engineering professor and Honors College associate dean, published a paper in the *IEEE Transactions* on "Antennas and Propagation" and presented at the National Radio Science Meeting and at the IEEE International Symposium on "Antennas and Propagation on leaky wave antennas." He also received grants from the National Science Foundation for research experiences for undergraduates in neurotechnology and for an engineering student success program serving low-income academically talented students.



David Rainbow, instructional assistant professor of history, received a Lerner Family Fellowship award and a Lerner Lecture award. His book *Ideologies of Race: Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union in Global Context* was published by McGill-Queen's University Press.



Jesse Rainbow, Human Situation professor, was promoted to associate instructional professor. He also received a Teaching Excellence Award, a Lerner Family Fellowship, and a Lerner Lecture Award. He was part of a team that led Honors students to Egypt twice.



Ben Rayder, director of major awards and fellowships and instructional assistant faculty member, received a Lerner Outstanding Faculty Award and the Wong Engagement Award. He was also chosen as the president-elect of the Phi Beta Delta Honors Society for International Scholars at UH.



Tamler Sommers, professor in the *Phronésis* program, was promoted to full professor in the Philosophy Department at UH.



Helen Valier, Medicine & Society professor, won the 2018 McGovern Award for Excellence in Biomedical Communication from the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), Southwest Chapter, for her book, *Cancer, Men, and Medicine* (Palgrave, 2016). She was also awarded the 2018 Vince and Louise Foster Award for Teaching Excellence.



Robert Zaretsky, French history professor, published a new book, *Catherine & Diderot: The Empress, the Philosopher, and the Fate of Enlightenment* (Harvard University Press). Zaretsky has also completed a manuscript for a book on Simone Weil, which will be published by University of Chicago Press.

Faculty Awards

A variety of awards have been established to recognize exemplary faculty who go above and beyond in their efforts to reach students, and whose leadership grows and sustains our curricular and co-curricular programming. The Honors College thanks the following 2018-2019 recipients for their commitment to mentorship, teaching, and service.

2019 TED L. ESTESS AWARD
FOR FACULTY LEADERSHIP

Jesse Rainbow

LERNER FAMILY
FACULTY LEARNING
ABROAD SUPPORT

Dustin Gish
David Rainbow
Jesse Rainbow

2019 VINCE AND LOUISE FOSTER
AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

David Rainbow

HUMAN SITUATION
LECTURE AWARDS

Dante's Inferno
Michael Barnes
Laura Bland
Hayan Charara
Jamie Ferguson
Paul Stapleton

2019 MATTHEW B. AND TAMARA STEELE
AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Michael Barnes

2019 WONG FACULTY ENGAGEMENT
AWARDS

Michelle Belco
Dustin Gish
Marc Hanke
Max Rayneard
Rita Sirrieh

*Dostoevsky's Notes
from Underground*
Tamar Abramov
Iain Morrison
David Rainbow

2019 DEAN'S AWARDS
FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Laura Bland

Plato's Crito
Tamler Sommers
Iain Morrison

2019 DEAN'S MASTER TEACHER AWARD

Irene Guenther

Sophocles' Electra
Tamler Sommers
Hayan Charara
Danny Wallace

2019 DEAN'S AWARDS FOR
OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Stuart Long

The Book of Matthew
Jesse Rainbow
Jaime Ferguson
Max Rayneard

THE GRAND CHALLENGES AWARD

Daniel Price

STAFF SCHOLARSHIPS

Keri Myrick

2019 LERNER FAMILY
FACULTY FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

Dustin Gish
Irene Guenther
David Rainbow
Jesse Rainbow
Ben Rayder

2019 NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE
SCHOLARSHIP MENTOR AWARD

Richard Armstrong

2019 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
MENTOR AWARD

Aaron Becker
Jakoah Brgoch



HONORS IN ACTION



Photos: (1-3) Donors and friends of the College, including the Honors Advisory Board members, faculty, and students attended the 28th Great Conversation, which was held at the new Fertitta Center; (4) Students participate in an art walk at the Museum of Fine Arts-Houston as part of the *Phronésis* minor; (5) Madison Troxler, an Honors Biomedical Sciences major, conducts research during her Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship; (6) Club Theater is an organization of non-theater majors who produce their original work; (7-9) Jeffrey Church, the Ross M. Lence Distinguished Teaching Chair in the Department of Political Science and the Honors College, spoke at the "The Ross M. Lence Dinner & Dialogues." A silent auction was held, where guests bid on books and memorabilia owned by Professors Lence and Andy Little, a former student of Dr. Lence and long-time adviser in the Honors College; (10) The Honors Student Governing Board hosts the Coffehouse, converting the Commons into coffeehouse-style venue for open-mic performances; (11) Honors alumni and staff came out in full force to the College's tailgate on Homecoming day. (12, 15) Dr. Virgil Wood, civil rights activist, author, and former lieutenant to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., addressed a group at the Common Ground Teachers Institute held annually in the College; (13) Dean Monroe speaks at the Undergraduate Scholars and Major Awards Recognition Dinner; (14) the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society's Mu Chapter of Texas at UH inducted 65 students in 2019; (16) Jane and Ron Lerner are pictured with Honors faculty and staff who have received support from the A. Ronald and Jane H. Lerner Family Fund.





7



8



9



10



11



14



12



13



15



16

M.D. Anderson Library
4333 University Dr, Room 212
Houston, TX 77204-2001

The Honors College has been rated among the top 10 in the nation by *Public University Press*.

SAVE THE DATE

The Great Conversation

April 4, 2020 | The Ferttita Center

thehonorscollege.com/thegreatconversation



(16) Outstanding 2019 graduating seniors celebrate and receive their awards at the spring graduation banquet; (17) UH Provost Paula Myrick Short and Dean Monroe had lunch and visited with fellowship honorees; (18) The burn on bracelets are a continued tradition at Honors College retreat. The bracelets symbolize the forging of new bonds and friendships, marking the start of a student's journey into Honors.; (19) UH President Renu Khator was featured at the Fall Convocation hosted by the Honors College. Honors alumna and Executive Adviser to the Chairman of ExxonMobil Corporation April Feick ('97) was the keynote speaker.

