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# DATELINE: DOWNTOWN



Photo Courtesy of the City of Houston  
**Harvey: The Road to Recovery**  
Pg. 4-5



Photo by Naomi Caldwell  
**Dr. Duchess Harris Visit**  
Pg. 10



Photo by Jesse Uppal  
**“Playing Politicians”**  
Pg. 3

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# SGA “Plays Politicians” and Not Leaders?

by Kara Moore

If you weren't fortunate enough to have time to tune into Dateline: Downtown's livestream of the Student Government Association's first General Assembly of the semester, then you missed out on a very interesting four-hour ordeal. The assembly, taking place October 5 in A436, was originally scheduled to last from 4-6 p.m. and, after getting off to a late start, ended up lasting until about 7:45 p.m. On the agenda for that night? Some of your basic stuff: Senate Appointments, Swearing in, Elections, Budget Confirmations, Impeachment, and a DACA resolution. Those last two might be the most interesting, to say the least, but all issues on the docket were up for debate this night.

The first disagreement of the night happened when Ignacio Hernandez, currently a Senator for the College of Sciences and Technology, attempted to run for Speaker of the House against Elizabeth Bosquez, Senator for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Ignacio was nominated by Senator-at-Large Thomas Canny, but his nomination was refuted by Chief Justice Irene Nuñez. The SGA constitution currently states “The Judicial Power shall extend to all cases, in Resolutions and By-Laws, arising under this Constitution, the By-Laws set forth by the Senate, or the precedent that has been established under their positions' authority.” Based on this wording, it allegedly allows for Chief Justice to interpret the constitution. This power has been fulfilled by previous Chief Justice's. Therefore, when Irene Nuñez interpreted that only active members of SGA could run for Speaker of the House, several debates arose. Does the constitution state only active, what is the definition of active, and is it truly the power of the Chief Justice to interpret the Constitution? Ultimately, the issue had to be tabled for later in the night as several SGA members and SGA advisor Dean Santos met in the back of the room to discuss the issue. It ultimately culminated in a vote to accept Nuñez's interpretation, which passed, and Senator Hernandez was not allowed to run. Senator Bosquez won the position with all the votes against Senator Shay Tatum, also representing the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

There was also immediate debate in the Budget Presentation, Senator-at-Large Ramiro Ojeda motioned to reject the budget before it could even be presented. Then, Senator Canny motioned to accept the budget. Finally, President Faryal Gul requested the budget be presented before votes be taken on it. After presentation, the budget was ultimately passed.

The DACA resolution was moved up early in the night. The resolution promised that SGA would stand with in solidarity with the “DACAmended” students, stating “This being said, the Student Government Association will continue to serve every student no matter their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and legal status”. It was one of the few docket items to pass without any debate.

Finally, the most interesting part of the night

was most obviously, the issue of impeachment. Senator Ojeda made the official motion to call for the impeachment of President Gul and Vice President Armita Tajadod. The crowd, which had been unruly all night, seemed mostly displeased by these motions and SGA seemed confused by them. There was a lot of discussion and determinations had to be made based on the constitution, how the impeachment process moves forward. It was determined that only one motion could go forward at a time, so the motion to impeach President Gul went forward first.

Impeachment is a multi-step process, and it was a bit confusing to follow. Here's what was finally determined: first, the motion to move forward with impeachment must pass with over half the senate votes. Then, there is a preliminary vote to impeach and this must pass with 2/3 of the senate vote. If impeachment passes, the next meeting to be called would allow for the President to defend themselves, then another vote would be taken. Senators have until the meeting following this one to change their minds, as the votes will be finalized at the second meeting following the original one calling for impeachment.

Senator Ojeda then made his argument for impeachment of President Gul, passing out a packet which included a list of alleged constitutional violations by Gul. The packet also included pictures of the SGA office closed at various times and dates which ranged from early September to the day of this meeting, October 5. After making his presentation, the vote was cast and ultimately the impeachment of President Gul did not pass with 2/3 of the senate vote. The process stopped there for Gul, and when the motion to impeach Vice President Tajadod came to a vote, it did not receive enough votes for the impeachment process to move forward. The rest of the night continued without as much spark, except for open forum. Several students went up to express dissatisfaction with the lack of organization, current and former SGA members went up to call for unity, and notably Senator-at-Large Jessica Plascencia-Delgado gave an impassioned speech stating that “I personally do not want to play politician, I want to help people”, and apologizing to the students for “acts of hatred” and “inhumane representatives”.

Speaking to President Gul and Vice President Tajadod after the fact, they both expressed the sentiment that “We just want to move forward and work on our seven goals for SGA: safety, facilities/renovation, food options, school pride, parking, activities, and student resources”.

When questioned concerning the disorganization present at the General Assembly, Gul reiterated that SGA is currently working on re-doing the entire Constitution, as well as planning a Roberts Rules of Order training so meetings may flow more smoothly in the future.

# Harvey: The Road to Recovery

by Unisha Curry

Scott Padget, Chief meteorologist at CBS Station forecasted that rainfall to the Houston area would be measured in feet, not inches. During the storm many devastating reports occupied the main news headlines. The storm was recorded as one of the worst storms of all time. Trailing Harvey the city began to thrive towards recovery.



Photo courtesy of the City of Houston

Sometimes recovery can be a long processes, that is, it is like a journey. The journey to recovery encompasses many aspects, one of these aspects deals with challenges.

Notwithstanding the prospective challenges, The University of Houston Downtown began diligently working towards rebuilding. Samuel Santos, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students at the University of Houston Downtown recounted the events which transpired around the time of Hurricane Harvey; during the storm the University's first floor was completely flooded and the building loss power. Thereafter, the University was closed for one full week. During the storm the university faced multiple challenges, namely, infrastructure damages in relation to IT systems which hampered communication between the university and its students and staff.

Shortly after Hurricane Harvey the university sent out a survey to its students in order to learn how students were affected by Hurricane Harvey. The surveys indicated that students were affected in various ways such as the loss of textbooks, the loss of transportation, and or the loss of shelter. Among the findings, it was revealed that some students did not have internet and therefore were not able to respond to the survey. Further, Santos expressed that the university does not feel the initial survey conveyed the most accurate representation of how students were affected, this being the case, the university will be administering another survey towards the end of the semester. Moreover, he explained that another measure the university exercised was that it took the add

drop process offline and added a stop gap solution in between, in that, students were required to complete an inquiry form. Approximately 800 students responded by requesting to either drop one or more of their classes. The university reached out to these students by phone to discuss relief service options.

Santos shared that some of the challenges after returning to school included professors having difficulties revising their curriculum and students dealing with a lot of emotional trauma.

Thus, he shared that there were so many needs, however, the greatest need from students were financial assistance. In some cases, the request for financial assistance were as large as \$2,000 and \$3,000. In response to student needs the university created "The gator relief fund"; it consisted of a basis questionnaire. Approximately four hundred students responded to questionnaire. Further, about half of the students' cases were deemed to be a catastrophic loss and these students received the maximum award of \$500 and the remaining students received the award of \$300.

Students who were affected by the storm were also able to purchase either a laptop or desktop computer for five dollars. The laptops and desktop computers were donated by various academic institutions across the state and country. In addition, Barnes and Noble donated \$100 gift cards in the amounts of \$50, the gift cards were distributed to students who lost textbooks. Further, Santos acknowledged that the university is grateful for the gesture. Accompanying the preceding initiatives, the university hired a temporary basis disaster relief specialist.

Santos acknowledged that one of the greatest challenges the university has faced is not having a sufficient amount of monetary resources which are equivalent to its students' financial needs, in that, the support that the university has provided to its students thus far in no way matches the circumstances, instead it served as a deed to support and motivate students to stay with the University of Houston Downtown. Considering the facts, the university's advancement team has made

an ongoing initiative to secure more grants and donations, so that the university can continue offering support to those affected by the storm. Santos stated “We are committed to finding long-term efforts, this is not a one semester thing for administration. Okay, we gave out a little money and we are done. We are already looking to the spring to figure out how we can reopen the gator relief fund.”

Another aspect of recovery relates to determination. Many of the initiatives executed by the University of Houston Downtown encapsulates considerable determination to support its students. During an interview Tremaine Kwasikpui, Director of Student Activities at the University of Houston Downtown, shared that food resources were also available to UHD students, staff, and faculty who were affected by Harvey, as the Houston Food Bank partnered with the UHD food pantry. Kwasikpui recounted how the University’s distribution center was made possible, “There was no way for me to see a foreseeable end of the truck because there were so many items packed to the top! (Kwasikpui, 2017)” Kwasikpui explained that his wife posted

the flyer concerning the UHD’s Gator relief donation drive on Facebook and The Community of Bertie County and the Bertie Alumni Community Association responded. Kwasikpui relayed that Frank Mitchell, the chairperson for the association, stated that a truck driver was

hired to bring a trailer to an old school in the North Carolina area and over the course of three weeks’ individuals from the community brought donations which were stored in the trailer. Donations included diapers, clothes, household products, school supplies, toys, and over twenty-five hundred cases of water. On behalf of the University, Kwasikpui was able to thank Jackie Lyons the president of the association.

For two days, the UHD student lounge operated as a distribution center which was open to students, staffs, and faculty. During that time Elena Martinez, Administrative Assistant to student activities at the University of Houston Downtown, operated in the role of facilitator by directing the affairs correlated to the distribution center. Martinez organized the event so that students, staffs, and faculty could easily retrieve the items they needed. Martinez and her team could comfort many of the students and staff

who came the distribution center. Basil Baldauff is one of many students who came to the distribution center. During an interview Baldauff reported that he received non-perishable canned goods, paper towels and a few cases of water from the university’s distribution center.

Kelvin Dangtran a UHD student reported that his home was flooded after the Addicks Reservoir was opened and consequently he had to move in with relatives. Dangtran expressed that one of the challenges he faced after returning to school was being overwhelmed by multiple circumstances and falling behind in his eight-week course. He shared his class situation with Ruama Camp, the university’s relief specialist, and was advised in how to address the issue. Despite the unfavorable circumstances that Dangtran encountered he has strived to be a part of multiple relief efforts. One effort involved that he and a few cousins go to the Houston Hong Kong Mall and purchase five cases of assorted canned goods to donate. He expressed that he is currently formulating an action plan of how to help those in Puerto Rico; “We have been helped by them, it is our turn to step up.”

Similarly, McDonald Nwosu, a UHD



Photo by Unisha Curry

student who serves as Associate Chair harbors a compelling desire to help others. During the time of Hurricane Harvey, McDonald assisted the Cajun Navy by relaying address information to rescue teams and monitoring the progress of rescue attempts. Directly after, McDonald was able to

help Houston Police Department in a similar fashion. Another endeavor McDonald took part in entailed transporting hot meals and pet food. In observance to Harvey McDonald gave a narrative which described the social environment preceding Harvey as divisive and the social environment succeeding Harvey as a light at the end of the tunnel.

It holds true, that recovery is a process which entails both challenges and determination. Although, some challenges cannot be avoided and this can pose a problem on the factor determination, it is important to take that first step on the road to recovery as each step taken will contribute to the final outcome.

## Tail-Gatoring

by Jesse Uppal

Homecoming week served as a wild reminder of the true humanity for the students who had just recovered from the devastating hurricane that ravaged the city. Tasty food, dancing, and even open bars for those old enough changed the usual learning landscape that UHD features every other week of the year. The homecoming tailgate at the end of the long, fun week was no different.

Bright and early, trucks and tents began to fill the meter lot near the Student Life Center at 7am, October 10th. Organizations from all corners of the University began pulling out smokers and grills and filled their tables with slabs of meat and sides for the barbecue event of the season. Organizations from Student Veterans, to SGA, to the Alumni Association, and even a number of sports teams gridlocked around the parking lot and

groups joined together in an artistic display of unity and amusement. With the centrally located DJ, students flocked from all corners to either watch or join in the dancing across multiple genres of music. The mascot even joined in as Greek Life organizations such as Kappa Alpha Psi and Zeta Phi Beta took command of the dance floor with varying routines to a plethora of music.

The event was kid-friendly as well, as children of both students and staff played and filled the air with their childlike wonder. The event organizers set up a fun house for the children to jump in, as well as a booth for balloon animals and face painting. Children with toy swords and alligator painted faces joined their parents in the feast and in many tents outnumbered them. Student Veterans Organization even managed to snag a 30-foot wall climb from the US Army and were allowing guests to climb one



Photo by Jesse Uppal

smells of food entered the air. Succulent ribs, crispy grilled chicken, hot dogs and burgers sizzled on the grills and pits as tail-gators walked the lot perusing the various selections. Attendees piled on meats and breads as their hunger cravings became insatiable. Across the tents, nearly eleven distinct types of beer and four different options for potato salad were available. Many of the organizations were even walking about and offering food and drinks to other organizations.

Senior administration joined in on the fun as Dr. Munoz and Mr. Hugetz went from table to table greeting the various organizations and even partaking in many of the food and refreshments. Dr. Munoz even brought members of his family to enjoy the event. Amongst the other staff were leadership in Student Affairs, including Dean Santos, Tremaine Kwasikpui and Percy Jackson. The University Staff Council and the police even had their own tents set up and were participating in the decoration contest.

As with any homecoming event that week, students took no time before filling the open areas with their fantastic and audacious dance moves. From the Texas Two Step to the Macarena, students from diverse

side and rappel down the other as they would do in boot camp.

The tailgate featured four competitions for the various organizations participate in. The first of the competitions was to see who decorated their tent area the finest. The setup and creativity played a huge part in who took home the prize in this category. This was the only category in which there was a winner for student organizations and a winner for non-students. The other three competitive categories were best appetizer, entrée and dessert. Taste, aroma, texture and presentations were concurrently judged by a panel of four judges with each category only having one winner. From sliders to shrimp, ribs to cakes, competitors from every corner of the university put forth their absolute best in hopes of coming home with the W.

All in all, homecoming events this academic year were significantly better than the last year, with noticeable turnout differences being noticed. The events will serve as success stories and as templates for future events being arranged by various groups on campus. Whether being drenched in paint while dancing is your preference, or having a nice meal with friends and family, homecoming 2017 catered to all walks of life.

# Dance the Paint Away

by Archie Gayle

At 5:30 p.m. UHD students lined up on the South Deck to sign in, barely containing their dance moves ready to be let loose on the dance floor. The DJ had already begun, playing pop-music EDM remixes that got the crowd excited for the night to come, and volunteers carried buckets upon buckets of paint to the front of the stage. This event was the third annual P3 Paint Party thrown by Student Activities for UHD's Homecoming Week. The backdrop was the mesmerizing view of Houston's Downtown Skyline. Each student got a white t-shirt and a pair of goggles along with a chip for two slices of pizza that tasted more delicious than free pizza usually does. The crowd slid their t-shirts and goggles on, and once they got the go signal, they clamored to the dancefloor.

Groups of friends mingled with others on the dancefloor as the DJ called as many people to center as he could. The volunteers, equipped with water guns full of paint, blasted the crowd with red, blue, green, orange, and purple colors. Many of the hesitant newcomers eventually let loose alongside veteran students who were dancing with the music but were afraid to get in the splash zone. Once a color sliced the whiteness of their shirts it was an invitation to become as colorful as possible. Unfamiliar students cheered each other on when a person got into the music. It would start with a couple of kids yelling "ay!" Next thing you knew, the dancing student had the entire deck's encouragement as they finished with their own big finale. It wasn't just EDM being played; the music ranged from pop-remixes to Reggaeton chart-toppers, to Hip Hop favorites and Caribbean dance singles.

As the night took the sun and the skyline lights became a luminous view behind the DJ set, a plethora of rainbow-colored shirts mixed and socialized with one another on and off the dancefloor. It was a different side of students than what you usually see when you're hurrying down the hall to your next class. I spoke to Tremaine Kwasikpui, the Director of Student Activities who helped coordinate the Paint Party, about how it felt seeing the students unite in having a good time. "It's great. For me, it's all about unity. It's Homecoming Week, and homecoming celebrates family—the UHD family. That includes students, alumni, faculty, and potential students. We know you all went through a lot with Hurricane Harvey, and midterms are here, so it feels good to give back and see students let loose; forget about the stress of real life for little bit." Soon after that, a crowd favorite came on and I, along with several other colorful individuals rushed to the dancefloor. What was most apparent by the dance moves of the students, volunteers, and even the security guards was that the music was infectious—more importantly, so were the good vibes. Even after the dancefloor had cleared of most people, friends and couples paired up to dance to the smooth sounds of Latin music. The multi-colored footprints on the ground cemented good times that would last long after the music stopped.

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## Pajama Jam is a Slam-Dunk

by Angel Lopez

On October 18th in room A300, UHD students lit up the dance floor with colorful lights. Moving to a mixture of Spanish and hip hop music, students came together to celebrate a thrilling night to remember. For homecoming week, Student Activities put together a Pajama Jam event to give students the chance to show off their coolest and most creative pajamas. Those attending seemed more than happy to be a part of the event as they danced in their tiger and shark onesies along with themed costumes to add to the excitement. Student Activities provided wings from Pluckers as the food to serve along with alcohol for those over 21. The variety of food and drinks was more than enough to satisfy the students as the lines for margaritas were constantly forming throughout the night.

Three types of beer were served as well as the non-alcoholic beverages and the presence of alcohol was rare as most UHD events don't serve alcohol. This event proved to be memorable, as Kevin Nguyen, a sophomore in the Honors program, commented "The environment was very welcoming and I think students needed a break, especially after Hurricane Harvey, and I think that they definitely got



Photo by Ignacio Hernandez

that." With a bouncy house on one end of the room and a photo booth on the other, Student Activities definitely knew how to give the 325 students attending a reason to stay.

To add on to the excitement, door and contest prizes were given away for most creative pajamas. Prizes included thousand-dollar headphones, speakers, and massagers, just to name a few. Kevin even won

It is evident that there was much work put into this event due to things like the music choices and the fact that students could make requests, which fit everyone's preferences as the dance floor filled with people singing and dancing along.

All in all, this event was a clear success because of the school spirit every single student in that room showed. The colorful lights; the variety of food and drinks, the ability to take a break from dancing to enjoy the photo booth or bouncy house, and finally the overall attitude of the students gave this event that memorable aspect. Student Activities did an incredible job at satisfying every student's wants and creating a night that students never wanted to end.

## University Honors Program: A Place of Acceptance

by Angel Lopez

The University of Houston-Downtown's Honors Program is in the learning connection in the main building of the school. This program was an idea that floated around the school before becoming

its own entity within the university since the fall of 2012. It began with a small group of students to kick off the program. The program focuses on giving gifted students the opportunity to engage in programs which expand on their talents and passions while still challenging them academically. This is standard for honors programs across colleges, however, given the small size of UHD it is much easier for the incoming freshmen to adapt to the new environment while easily meeting new people. The honors program, although it does provide academic opportunities for the students, also provides social opportunities for the students that might have a fear of not making connections which, granted, is the expected fear all students experience after high school. The program doesn't just promote academic excellence, it promotes acceptance and diversity in every aspect. The founder and director of the honors program, Dr. Nicholson-Preuss has made it her goal from the very beginning to provide for her students and give them the resources needed to make this college experience feel like a second home which, in my experience as a member of the Honors Program, has successfully been carried out.

The honors program is a small but continuously growing community of intelligent and diverse students that has taught me, aside from challenging myself



Photo by Ignacio Hernandez

academically, the importance of building friendships with people different from myself. In the program, you're bound to make life-long friends because of the overall

welcoming nature of each of the students- no matter what year they are in, they never make the incoming students feel any less than. That transitional fear I felt from high school to college didn't last long once I was introduced into the honors program, simply because of the general and genuine curiosity of both the original and new students of the program. This program, because of these students who make it what it is, has made being myself extremely easy. With emphasis on diversity and overall inclusiveness, it is easy to find your place. One of the most important things to consider before introducing a new student into the program, says Dr. Nicholson, is that they are "not just academically gifted, they're also motivated and that this is what they want". The program is meant to reward and recognize our academic successes and talents, that a regular college education might fail to recognize. We are given the opportunity to choose classes that fit our major, as well as take smaller classes with other students in the honors program with excellent professors who take the time to get to know their students, simply because they made the decision themselves to specifically teach honors students. This program, and all that it does for its students, has created some amazing UHD leaders and star-students and I only hope to continue to be one of them.

## Chance the Rapper Raises Money to Aid Puerto Rico

by Chris Joseph

After Hurricane Maria came and wreaked havoc on the island of Puerto Rico, Chicago artist Chance the Rapper live-streamed a benefit concert on October 4th, at the Hollywood Bowl in California.

As a three time Grammy award winning artist, Chance the Rapper has always been vocal about helping those in need. Chance saw this moment as opportunity to play his part in helping those who are suffering from the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, a category 4 storm that devastated Puerto Rico. When it came to the last show on his tour, Chance decided to live stream his concert for free on his YouTube channel. In exchange, he encouraged everyone watching the live stream to donate money to humanitarian aid organization Direct Relief.

Just a month ago Hurricane Maria crashed through the Caribbean, causing a substantial amount of damage to the Dominican Republic, The U.S. Virgin

islands, and Puerto Rico, which according to CNN, more than 80 percent of Americans are still without electricity

and roughly 1 million Americans don't have any drinking water. Chance's live stream gained over \$30,000 in donations.

Chance wasn't the only musician doing his part to help Hurricane victims. Houston's very own Beyoncé Knowles-Carter shared a remix of J Balvin and Willy William's hit song "Mi Gente," donating all the proceeds from the song to natural disaster relief in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and other Caribbean Islands affected by the Hurricane.

Later this month, Chance the Rapper is set to perform at Barack Obama's Foundation Summit in Chicago, where leaders from all over the globe will come together to share ideas on how to make this world a better place.



Photo Courtesy of Adrian Mustredo; Flickr Public Domain



# UHD Gator Sighting at ETHA in Galveston

by Helen Martinez

# 9

There was an increase in gator sightings in Galveston earlier this month, specifically of UHD Gators. A group of UHD students (myself included) from the University Honors program, UHD Historical Webb Society Garna Christian Chapter, and UHD LULAC Council 22268 attended the East Texas Historical Association (ETHA)



Photo Courtesy of Professor Gene Preuss

Fall meeting in Galveston at the Moody Gardens Hotel from Oct. 12-14. From the eye-opening presentations to the tropical lunch that was, surprisingly, mostly half a pineapple.... this was a trip for the books.

Many happy moments on the trip were captured by the advisor for Webb Society and LULAC Council 22268, Dr. Gene Preuss. Dr. Preuss took an excellent picture of our group posing in front of the Bryan History Museum, where we attended a reception in honor of the late Archie McDonald and learned about this historic orphanage turned museum the first evening of our trip. We explored the museum in its entirety, from the lovely pastel paintings hanging next to displays of polished pistols on the top floor, to the basement display of toys left from the orphans who once called this place home. We read the descriptions and gazed at exhibits, ending the night by eating pizza and ice cream together in our rooms until the early morning hours.

Yes, we are scholars, and half of us were presenting the next day. However, we are also young students who wanted to gossip and do homework together. Yes, we complained about how early some of the sessions were. No one wants to attend a 9 am lecture after staying up half the night playing Marco Polo in the pool or studying for midterms or watching anime. Yes, we did joke about only eating pineapple for lunch because we thought it was hilarious to be served chicken salad on top of half a pineapple. Yes, we did dab for our first picture at the ETHA conference in front of the Bryan History museum. However, one of those dabbing hooligans in that picture, Alondra July Morillon, was a recipient for the Archie McDonald scholarship for history majors, focusing specifically on Texas history, and was later honored at one of the luncheons. UHD also had six Gators presenting original research on two panels. This was a diverse group of young scholars taking the time and effort outside the classroom to research and present on topics such as mental illness, gender, race, business, religion, sports, and the importance of constitutional consideration in politics

from a much-needed, fresh perspective. It was incredibly refreshing. This was the first time such a large and diverse group of UHD students attended one of these Texas Historical Association conferences. As someone who plans to devote herself to history and has attended a few of these conferences before, I can honestly say it is

much easier to wake up early for sessions

on Teaching African American History in East Texas when I can look forward to both intelligent conversation and meme jokes from the people sitting across the table at lunch. I have often experienced academic discussions and decisions about history and the future, that did not include the voices of the young and different. It is assumed that because we are young, we are naive and therefore unable to participate in such important matters. This is wrong. We may be inexperienced, but this is precisely why it is imperative that young scholars attend and present their research at such conferences.

We are learning from professionals and gaining experience. I, personally, have learned how to become a better presenter, how to ask questions effectively, how to relate my research to current events, and how to use sources to their full potential. I have also learned to appreciate different perspectives, especially from people from various backgrounds, which is why it is so important that so many UHD students of differing race, religion, and economic background attended this year's ETHA. Not only physically showing their diversity by participating in sessions, these students also add their voices to the discussion by presenting and asking questions.

There was one phrase that chilled me during a presentation. When describing the treatment of Mexican Americans by Caucasian political leaders in his presentation, Carlos Guajardo used the words, "You don't belong here." The rarity of those words being spoken nowadays is a relief, but we still have a long way to go. This conference was a step in the right direction to bring in different perspectives and voices. As a proud UHD Gator, it was an honor to support my fellow Gators in presenting their research, and I look forward in doing it again soon.

# Dr. Duchess Harris Shows Us the Hidden Human Computers

by Naomi Cardwell

On Monday, October 16, Dr. Duchess Harris spoke at a symposium that UHD's center for Critical Race Studies and UHD Scholars Academy hosted. Dr. Duchess Harris is a professor and chair of the American Studies department of Macalester College in St.

Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Harris earned her PhD in American Studies, and her Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law. Her grandmothers name was Miriam Mann, who was born in 1907. She went to college and got a four-year degree in chemistry with a minor in math and in 1943, she was one of the first of eleven black women who worked for NASA. Dr. Harris grandmother isn't mentioned in the Hollywood film "Hidden Figures", which told the public a story about a select few of the hidden computers who worked for NASA. However, she was there in the early stages of when women started working for NASA due to a worker shortage caused by WW1, and the necessity of "computers" to check the mathematics of engineers.

In Dr. Duchess Harris lecture she explained when her curiosity and understanding of her grandmothers' work grew, which was in college. She talks about the book she wrote "Hidden Human Computers" which is a product of research behind the Black Woman of NASA. She states in her lecture "I knew that eventually I would want to write this story.... It ended up being my fourth book but it's

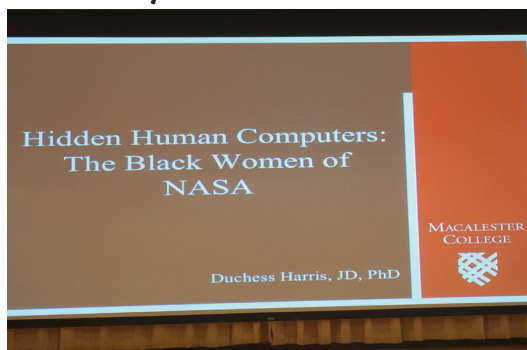


Photo by Naomi Caldwell

the book that is closest to my heart." She gave a brief history lesson on how black women were getting jobs at NASA and she also gave details about the racism and sexism they faced while working at NASA. For example, when she talked about in the film Kevin Costner who plays Al Harrison tears down the big sign that was labeled "colored restrooms" that it related

to a story about her grandmother. Her grandmother had similar reaction to a slip in a NASA dining room that was labeled "colored computers"; when Miriam Mann saw this slip, she would put it in her purse, removing it each time it showed up.

Dr. Harris really pushed the reality behind the lack of recognition of what these women did and how it got lost in history. She is on a mission to prevent the on-going act of black women computers being lost in history. She decided that she wouldn't let her grandmother and other black woman computers that worked for NASA be forgotten. She sought her story and it inspired her accomplishments. She pointed out that everyone has a story, you just need to go out and find it for yourself. She then states, "Good people are everyday people." This inspiring lecture not only told people about what it was like for black women in NASA and pointed out some of the differences in the film and what happened in history, but collectively it was inspiration to hear about how hard Dr. Harris's grandmother worked, and how hard she works now.

## US Men's Soccer Misses World

by Michael Case

For the first time since 1986, the United States Men's National Team (USMNT) did not qualify for the World Cup in Russia in 2018. This is now an important time in American soccer history. Major League Soccer (MLS) game attendance rises, along with TV ratings, and the current numbers may not be comparable to NFL or MLB numbers, however those leagues are seeing the average age of their viewers get older. The MLS remains the youngest TV market with an average age of 40 (NFL is 50; MLB is 57).

From the week of September 25 to October 1, out of the top 46 soccer games aired on TV, only two were MLS games. Every other game on that list was a Mexican League (Liga Mx), Barclay's Premier League (BPL), or European tournament game. The problem resides not with a disinterest in the sport, which could've been a reasonable argument decades ago, however, the interest is increasing but the quality of play on the field is not.

The issue with the quality of play on the field starts with youth players and youth development. When speaking with UHD Men's soccer Coach Josh Rivas about what US soccer could do to change that

he said, "To start, stop running USA soccer like a huge business, youth soccer is only for kids with money. Too expensive to play at the youth academy level." This pay-to-play" system is not the norm around the world and no other popular American sport does this.

Soccer in America looks to continue its slow growth over the next few years, and the United States Women's National Team has seen tremendous success on the world scale, winning the Women's World Cup 3 times. The growth of soccer in the US no longer depends on popularity of the sport here, but with the development on the youth level. Let's hope US Soccer can figure it out before World Cup 2022.

Come out and support the UHD Men's soccer club team trying for their sixth championship, this coming Friday at Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet, at 7:00 PM, for the semi-finals against Lone Star College-Cy Fair. The final is Sunday October 22, at 9pm at Bayland Park.

# UHD Ranked No. 3 Safest Campus

by Delia Leal

It may come as a surprise, but crime at UHD picks up during the summer instead of the regular semesters due to the school being unpopulated. Although you'd think there would be more crime during winter due to it being darker and just as unpopulated, the summer is really when crime heats up.

This is possibly why some students who don't check their email often and opened it during the beginning of this semester felt flooded with school alerts. Yet, don't fret, as UHD has been ranked No. 3 in the nation by "College Choice's List of 50 Safest Large Colleges". This of course is all possible because of our UHDPD who do not tolerate mediocre work. As well, take into consideration the university's location; not only do we have our UHDPD patrolling but we are surrounded with the Metro police, Sheriff's Department police, Precinct One police, Precinct Seven police, and of course HPD. This all keeps reported sexual assault and gun violence relatively low.

This is downtown, so crime will happen. Theft occurs the most and it's the usually under the radar so be aware when that you abandon your belongings to relieve your bladder, something might go missing. Typically, people will steal your stuff when you walk away from it or are asleep. These thieves slyly lift your belongings and keep on walking, leaving you none the wiser. With that said if you're planning to be unconscious, be conscious of your belongings by at least putting them away and if not then hopefully there was a camera nearby to catch the thief. Most of the time, criminals are caught but this does not necessarily mean they will be prosecuted. That decision is left to the District Attorney, where the criminals are turned in and the campus police department has no actual say on if they get prosecuted, it all comes down to the case.

As Sergeant Delafance emphasizes, "RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. AVOID. DENY. DEFEND." Not



## **THEFT HAPPENS QUICKLY!**

Don't Leave

### Personal Belongings Unattended

UHD Police can be contacted at:

Emergency: 713-221-8911

Non-Emergency: 713-221-8065

everything is in the control of campus police, such as being on the way to a scene of a crime. It does take time for campus police to get to where a reported crime is, and in that time, any student should follow the above words. Defending or fighting is the last option, but everyone should try to not become a victim.

Any women out there who think they cannot fight even if your life depended on it, the police department does offer a female-only self-defense class every semester. The class is called "Rad" and it is instructed by a trained officer so consider taking advantage of the resource. There are more resources offered like escorting you to your car, jumpstarting your car, unlocking your car, and they send a wrecker truck to change tires, thought this does cost \$35. A good option is to keep the UHD Police extension (8065) or phone number (713-221-8911) on speed dial as you never know when a crisis will occur.

Most of the time, when crime does happen, it is not perpetrated by a fellow student and as a public university, UHDPD cannot stop people from entering onto campus. But, UHDPD is growing and they are constantly striving to work harder and better for the protection of students. They try to have all eyes everywhere to ensure our safety whether it's from their body cameras or cameras placed around the school. Students, I know UHD is a commuter school and we just want to show up for class and go, but be considerate of your safety. Crime happens everywhere.

Crimes

Violations	2014	2015	2016
Murder	0	0	0
Sexual Assault	0	1	0
Robbery	1	4	1
Burglary	0	3	2
Assault	3	5	2
Theft	77	54	43
Auto Theft	2	0	0
Arson	0	0	0

Note: Uniform Crime Reporting requires assault reporting to include assaults by firearms, knives, cutting instruments, dangerous weapons, hands, fists, feet, etc. The above statistics do not necessarily represent aggravated assaults but rather a combination of aggravated assaults and simple assaults.

Statistics Courtesy of the UHD Police Department

# Advice from Your Typical Student

College is the place where many people seek to find and better themselves, but it is not always that easy. It tends to be a place where plenty of mistakes balance out accomplishments and often it can leave students feeling a bit drained by the real-world weight their school career now holds.

In recognition of this, **Dateline: Downtown** wants to invite students to submit their questions to our new advice column “Your Typical Student”. Our advice-giver is a little more than typical, but just like you, she feels the same pressures, the same exhaustion, and the same un-ending desire to achieve greatness in these 4 or so years we spend at UHD.

With a 4.0 GPA, excellent study skills, and a knack for writing emails, she can be an excellent resource academically. If you’re looking for more personal advice, she can provide a well-balanced outsiders point of view - something people often feel lacking in. Read a little about our new advice-giver below and then submit your questions to [typicalstudentadvice@gmail.com](mailto:typicalstudentadvice@gmail.com)

I did not know the definition of thirsty until I read aloud for 56 minutes and 34 seconds. Now, I’ve listened to the occasional audiobook where brave souls risk their vocal cords for our convenience in situations where we cannot physically pick up a book and read the words on the page. However, until last Sunday I never knew how much dedication it took because I was two seconds away from randomly pausing in the middle of a sentence to say, “We interrupt this broadcast to bring you this important news, I’m thirsty”.

Someone reading this might say, “Well why were you torturing yourself like that anyway?”. Let’s just say that I take 15 credit hours every semester. I’m no stranger to pain. This particular pain rose from the call to help a student by a professor. The professor sent an e-mail to a select group of students that were not in the class requesting some assistance in recording the chapters of a book that had been assigned in the class for this student. I responded to the e-mail almost as fast as I run when I hear the words free food. Keyword: Almost. I mean how hard could it be? There was reading involved and I love reading.

56 minutes and 34 seconds later and I had made up my mind that I did not want to talk for two days. My self-imposed silence lasted about 5 minutes because my sister announced that there was pizza in the kitchen and I get really excited about pizza (that’s an understatement). After returning to my room, I sat and thought about the chapter that I had just got done struggling with—I mean reading. The book that the chapter belonged to was *Ethnicity in the Sunbelt* by Arnaldo de León and while I cannot tell you diddly-squat about the book in its entirety, I’m pretty much an expert on chapter five. Did you know that LULAC Council #60 met over in Magnolia Park? Yeah, me neither until last Sunday. I think that it is an amazing historical fact because we have our own UHD LULAC Council, LULAC Council #22268.

Even though my throat was burning with every word, I’m thankful that I got to help a fellow UHD student. UHD is wonderful in how its students are very committed to service, but I also know

that there are students out there who really want to get out there in the community and help. They just don’t have the time. I understand because sometimes after completing 15 hours’ worth of tests, quizzes, projects, and homework and working two jobs I barely have time to help myself (I always have time to help myself to some pizza though). I want to say to those who face this dilemma that there is no volunteer opportunity or gesture that is too small and you should never feel like you are not doing enough.

In taking the step to pursue higher education you are already doing a huge service to your community and the city that we live in. We need hardworking, dedicated individuals who sometimes don’t sleep for two days to get out there in the field and show the world that we are a force to be reckoned with. You might not have time help with client intake at The Beacon every morning at 6 am or attend every volunteer event that your organization hosts. That’s okay. Just help when you can. Cliché Alert: It’s the little things that matter. Whether that’s briefly pausing your busy life for a few minutes to give someone directions or reading for 56 minutes and 34 seconds.

So how does all of this end? Obviously, I didn’t learn my lesson the first time because I signed up to do another 54 minutes and 24 seconds worth of chapters.

Questions? Comments? Does your throat also hate you after reading for 56 minutes and 34 seconds? Let me know at [typicalstudentadvice@gmail.com](mailto:typicalstudentadvice@gmail.com).

Signing Off,  
Just Your Typical Student

