PIONEERING PROGRESS
UT Arlington Heads National Initiative on Digital Learning

Thanks to the explosive growth of mobile communication devices, individuals and organizations are becoming not just digitally connected, but digitally intertwined.

For institutions of higher education, sharing and expanding knowledge by leveraging technology requires more than coordination—it demands an approach based on proven methodologies to ensure that both students and society benefit. Luckily, The University of Texas at Arlington is leading the way.

Supported by a $8.6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Learning Innovation and Networked Knowledge (LINK) Lab at UT Arlington has been chosen to lead a national initiative that will examine digital learning’s effect on higher education today and in the future. The LINK Lab, which was established in 2014, supports professional learning communities at UT Arlington that are focused on implementing strategies, activities, and projects to improve the learning experience.

“This is a chance to take a look at digital learning and articulate the conditions needed for all learners to succeed, better their own lives, and participate in the global economy,” Siemens says.

UT Arlington has been a leader in online education for many years. Through a collaboration with Dallas-based Academic Partnerships, the University provides fully online bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education, nursing, and public administration. In Fall 2014, about 37,000 UT Arlington students out of more than 40,000 worldwide took at least one class online.

“UT Arlington is a recognized leader in digital learning, and we are committed to fostering robust research as to how technology can be leveraged to help all learners realize their dreams,” says UT Arlington President Vistasp Karbhari.

“The Digital Learning Research Network combines those two aims. It puts UT Arlington at the center of a vital global conversation about the future of higher education.”

UT GOES GREEN
University launches new Institute for Sustainability and Global Impact

UT Arlington’s long-standing commitment to sustainability took on a new dimension recently with the establishment of the Institute for Sustainability and Global Impact. The program will unify and integrate environmental improvement approaches across campus, and is aligned with the University’s Strategic Plan 2020, which aims to enhance quality of life by developing more sustainable communities that focus on the natural, built, economic, cultural, and social environments.

“The activities of the institute will be broad in scope focusing on research, education, operations, training, outreach. It will be the focal point for sustainability activities and resources,” says John Hall, vice president for administration and campus operations. “Extending beyond our campus, we are also part of the larger community of North Texas, which is rapidly growing and facing challenges like poor air quality, constrained water supplies, energy demand, and lack of transportation options. The institute will collaborate with businesses, government, and communities to solve these problems.”

Meghna Tare will lead the institute as executive director and will oversee the strategic planning and day-to-day operations. Since 2010, she has served as director of the Office of Sustainability, which will transition into the new institute and eventually move from Preston Hall to a new location on campus.

“We will develop partnerships with entities outside of UT Arlington in the implementation of sustainable programs and policies that will help North Texas be a sustainable community and increase our global impact,” she says. “The Institute will naturally connect to the University’s undergraduate minor in environmental and sustainability studies, and the graduate program in earth and environmental science, preparing students for success in a complex and changing global environment.”

Over the past few years, UT Arlington has implemented a number of sustainability initiatives, including a new car-sharing program; the Green at College Park, the first certified Sustainable Sites Initiative landscape; and a community garden. It has also received national recognition from the Environmental Protection Agency for its efforts to reduce food waste.

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Upgraded baseball and softball facilities make their debut

It’s an exciting time for UT Arlington Athletics with the completion of new, state-of-the-art facilities for baseball and softball. After years of planning, digging, and building at the corner of Fielder and Park Row, two dramatically remodeled stadiums are ready to showcase the Maverick teams.

Clay Gould Ballpark, home of UTA baseball, has undergone renovations highlighted by the addition of a clubhouse that features an on-site locker room, players’ lounge, and coaching offices. The upgrades also include a new home dugout, a new outfield fence, and a renovated press box.

“Having a home for our players at the ballpark is something we’ve never had before,” says baseball coach Darin Thomas. “It’s going to make a difference in recruiting and player development, and will help our program continue to grow. We’re excited about the future.”

A dedication ceremony for Clay Gould Ballpark is set for April 17. Visit utamavs.com for more details.

The makeover for softball’s Allan Saxe Field is more extreme. While the complex similarly includes a clubhouse with a locker room, players’ lounge, and coaches’ offices, UTA softball will also enjoy a new playing field, dugouts, bullpens, bleacher seating, and press box.

“Seeing the work every day gave us something to look forward to and work hard for, and having that pride in being a UT Arlington Maverick,” says softball coach Kristie Fox. “It’s going to make a difference in recruiting and something we’ve never had before,” says baseball coach Darin Thomas. “It’s going to make a difference in recruiting and player development, and will help our program continue to grow. We’re excited about the future.”

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NICE DIGS

Anyone who’s attended a game at Allan Saxe Field in the past will hardly recognize it. And that’s a good thing.

The team is really excited about the new facility,” says softball coach Kristie Fox. “Seeing the work every day gave us something to look forward to and work hard for, and having that pride in being a UT Arlington Maverick.”

Both programs opened indoor facilities before the 2013 season as part of a $5 million project that encompasses the new clubhouses. The fan experience for both sports has been enhanced with new sound systems and full-service concessions provided by Fuzzy’s Taco Shop.

Ticketing options have been simplified for both programs, with season and individual-game tickets available at uttickets.com. Softball season tickets are $75 (reserved seats) and $40 (general admission). Baseball season tickets are $75.

Softball is also introducing the Diamond Club, which offers members the opportunity to help give back to the program. For $800, fans will receive season tickets in the reserved sections behind home plate, as well as a 2015 commemorative T-shirt, a seat cushion, and the opportunity to have first selection of seats. Buy your tickets today at uttickets.com.

SAFETY FIRST

TxDOT partners with UT-A’s Public Works Institute for training program

City and county crews working in traffic zones throughout Texas will soon receive new safety training, thanks to a recently announced partnership between the Public Works Institute at UT-A’s Division of Enterprise Development and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

“Our focus will be to work with city and county departments that are in the road, traffic, water, sewer, and telecommunications areas,” says Public Works Institute Director Bryan Sims. “We need to bring together thousands of miles of roads extending across the state, work zone safety training is crucial.”

Topics for the institute’s new courses include work zone construction site safety, planning work zone traffic control, the installation and maintenance of signs and pavement markings, an update and work zone safety training is crucial. Tips for the institute’s new courses include work zone construction site safety, planning work zone traffic control, the installation and maintenance of signs and pavement markings, an update and work zone safety training is crucial.

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**Distinguished Service**

Six outstanding UTA alumni were honored at the 49th annual Distinguished Alumni Awards, held during 2014 Fall Homecoming festivities: (from left) Serena Simmons Connelly ’95; Fred Perpall ’96, ’98; Vicki Tanner ’79; Jim Greer ’84; Baron Concors ’93; and (not pictured) Bruce Tanner ’90.

**ART EXTRAVAGANZA**

Main St. Fort Worth Arts Festival

From April 9 through 12, the Main St. Fort Worth Arts Festival will return to downtown Fort Worth. UT Arlington will be right in the thick of things as the Main Stage sponsor.

The festival is the largest four-day event (and highest-rated arts festival) in the southwestern United States. Attendees will have the chance to hear hundreds of musical acts on three stages, ranging from alternative rock to indie folk to cool jazz, while also browsing blocks and blocks of booths lined with original art. In addition, the festival will showcase the work of nationally recognized fine artists and craftsmen and feature a wide variety of dishes from food vendors.

During the Main St. Fort Worth Arts Festival, visitors can stop by the UTA booth for fun giveaways and information about University academic programs and athletic and cultural events. Guests can also register for a chance to win an original piece of art created in the UT Arlington studios. On April 11, several UTA jazz ensembles will perform on the Main Stage.

Admission is free. Food and beverages, plus select event access, will be available for purchase. For a full schedule of events, parking, and other festival information, visit mainstreetartsfest.org.

**EXPLORE College Town**

**ART EXTRAVAGANZA**

Main St. Fort Worth Arts Festival

**NEWS & NOTES**

**LENDING A HAND**

Big event, big impact

Spend Saturday, April 11, side-by-side with UTA students, faculty, and staff as they volunteer throughout the community. The Big Event, the largest student-run community service day in the United States, will be held by UT Arlington and more than 70 universities across the country. Community members can sign up to volunteer at any of the 50 local project sites at uta.edu/thebigevent.

Do you know of a non-profit organization that wants to be included in The Big Event next spring? Email thebigevent@uta.edu for more information.

**PLAY DATES**

Summer camps entertain, inspire

UT Arlington offers affordable summer camp activities in a variety of areas for children in grades 1-12. Whether your child likes music, math, painting, playing sports, engineering, cheerleading, or conducting science experiments, there is something for everyone. For a complete list of programs and registration information, visit uta.edu/summercamps. For information on Kids and Teens University, hosted by the Division of Enterprise Development, visit uta.edu/ded/ktu.

**LEARNING ONLINE**

Students and teachers get ConnectED

UT Arlington is one of more than a dozen universities participating in a new White House initiative aimed at helping U.S. teachers and students leverage technology in the classroom.

ConnectED is a national program that is partnering with online learning platform edX to offer free professional development courses and accompanying certifications to teachers, along with courses to prepare students for Advanced Placement exams.

For their part, UT Arlington’s College of Education and the Learning Innovation Networked Knowledge (LINK) Lab are offering a massive open online course (MOOC) this year called “Technology, Literacy, and Diversity in Education.” More classes will likely follow over the next three years.

“As an experienced leader in offering online classes and degrees, UT Arlington is proud to participate in this national program of impact for educators and learners,” says Pete Smith, vice provost for digital teaching and learning. “The University’s deep faculty expertise and experience in the areas of online learning, digital literacies, and success of all learners online make it a natural partner for this nationwide initiative.”

For more information, visit uta.edu/linklab.

**COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT**

**A Pride-Filled Homecoming**

It may have been cold and wet outside, but Homecoming was warm and festive inside College Park Center as thousands of students, faculty, staff, and community members enjoyed indoor games, activities, food, a pep rally, and basketball games.

**Commencement Celebration**

The UT Arlington alumni base climbed to over 192,000 last fall, when about 5,700 new graduates received their degrees during commencement ceremonies.

**Home Away from Home**

Students showed off campus, residential halls, classrooms, and facilities to their families during the annual Parents & Family Weekend. A time-honored tradition, the fall Festival featured pumpkin painting, photo booths, caricature artists, and more.

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**UTA.EDU/COLLEGETOWN**
National Academy of Inventors honors faculty discoveries

Better sensors that help people who suffer from sleep apnea and related respiratory maladies. Computer and smartphone software that automatically corrects typos. Improvements in homeland security technology. Necessity may have been the mother of these inventions, but UT Arlington may have been the mother of these inventions, but UT Arlington’s NAI fellows are President Vistasp Karbhari, who also is a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and of civil and environmental engineering; Ron Magnusson, Daniel W. Armstrong, the Robert A. Welch professor of chemistry and biochemistry, and Richard Timmons, a distinguished economic development, and the welfare of society.

For the complete list of NAI fellows, visit the College Town UTA website.

Top-level research status.

Dr. Elsenbaumer says. “The large numbers of faculty fellows this spring.

Our recent top-level research status.

Inventors (NAI), a leading organization that recognizes and encourages innovation. Ten UT Arlington professors have been named NAI fellows. This high professional distinction is accorded to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development, and the welfare of society.

MODERN-DAY PIONEERS

The University of Texas at Arlington. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

College Town UTA is a community engagement initiative of the Division of University Communications at The University of Texas at Arlington.

Contact us at 817-272-2741 or MaverickCommunications@uta.edu.

Debra Harrison
Assistant Director, Community Relations

Katherine Zilkowski
Assistant Director, Community Relations

Kristin VanderGrinten
Social Media Coordinator

If you would like to receive the College Town UTA weekly e-calendar of events, email us, call us, or visit the College Town UTA website.

Find us on Facebook at College Town UTA.

Find us on Twitter at CollegeTownUTA

Around Town, our weekly e-calendar of events, email us, call us, or visit the College Town UTA website.

If you would like to receive this complimentary newsletter or any other information from College Town UTA, please email us at maverickcommunications@uta.edu and include “Subscribe to Around Town” in the subject line.

DON’T MISS A THING AROUND TOWN

We give up! We can’t possibly fit everything that’s happening in College Town UTA into this newsletter. But we’ve figured out a way to ensure that you don’t miss a single educational, athletic, or cultural event on campus. Just sign up for Around Town, our free weekly e-calendar of events. To subscribe, email us at maverickcommunications@uta.edu and include “Subscribe to Around Town” in the subject line.

College Town CALENDAR

There’s so much to do in College Town UTA! Here’s a small sampling of campus activities, exhibitions, plays, concerts, lectures, and athletics you can enjoy this Spring.

MARCH

MARCH 4-5: 50TH ANNUAL MALTER PRESCOTT WEBB MEMORIAL LECTURES PRESENTS BEYOND ATICS AND ACTIVISTS: RETHINKING FAMILY IN DISABILITY HISTORY

MARCH 16: UNIVERSITY CENTER OPEN HOUSE

MARCH 17: BASEBALL: MAVERICKS VS UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

GLOBAL GAMES WEEK

MARCH 17: SOFTBALL: MAVERICKS VS GEORGIA SOUTHERN

MARCH 20: MAVERICK SPEAKER SERIES: HENRY CISNEROS

MARCH 27: FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: JANE ROBERTS WOOD

MARCH 28: WORLD CLASS GLASS ART SALE

MARCH 30: GUEST BASSOON RECITAL WITH ANN KOSCH

APRIL

APRIL 12: MAIN ST. FORT WORTH ARTS FESTIVAL

APRIL 13: MAVERICK SPEAKER SERIES: BOB COSTAS

APRIL 14: BASEBALL: MAVERICKS VS TCU

APRIL 15: MUPPETS ONE ACT THEATER FESTIVAL

APRIL 16: SPRING UTA JAZZ CONCERT

APRIL 17: FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: JAMES L. HALEY

APRIL 18: PREVIEW DAY FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND PARENTS

APRIL 25: UTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT

MAY

MAY 1: GUEST ARTIST RECITAL: NICK SCALES

MAY 9-10: BASEBALL: MAVERICKS VS APPALACHIAN UNIVERSITY

MAY 14-16: UTARLINGTON COMMENCEMENT

ONGOING

COLLEGE PARK CENTER

COLLEGE PARK CENTER

SUMMER CAMPS

All events are subject to change. Please visit uta.edu/events for the complete calendar of events, times, and ticket information.