Maverick Leader
Jennifer Cowley is making history as UTA’s first female president and 10th overall.
Best for Vets

UTA's veteran and military-connected students benefit from a range of services centered on ensuring they achieve their academic goals.

Art Meets Science

The Hybrid Atelier, UTA's newest makerspace, provides students an opportunity to merge their technical and creative interests.

People-First Medicine

The interdisciplinary Medical Humanities program housed in the College of Liberal Arts focuses on humanizing medicine.

Space Mavs

With academic training and myriad opportunities to develop their skills in specialized fields, Mavericks are launching impressive careers in the space industry.

Dog Days

Students take a study break to pet a very good boy on Tail Waggin' Wednesday, an monthly event that brings dogs to campus to help students de-stress between classes.
You’ll read about students whose lives were changed thanks to this University, and alumni who are pursuing successful and fulfilling careers. You’ll see that traditions like Red Races and Homecoming are still around and remain much loved today. You’ll get a closer look at all the ways the University has grown and changed, and you’ll find insight into the major impact Mavericks continue to have on the world around them.

I’m so excited to become part of UTA, to join the Maverick family and help this amazing University on its path to becoming one of the nation’s most inclusive and impactful research universities. You may follow what I am up to on my Twitter account @UTAPresident and by visiting my website, uta.edu/president, where you may also provide me your feedback and comments.

It is now time to chart where we will go next—what future we will imagine and how we, as a community, will come together to realize our collective vision! Mav Up!

—Jennifer Evans-Cowley, President
AFTER a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bed Races made a triumphant return to UTA. One of the University’s most beloved traditions, Bed Races has been part of UTA student life for over 40 years. This year, hundreds of students gathered to watch and participate.
Distinguished Alumnus Fred Perpall (’96 March, ’96 BS, Architecture) has been nominated as the U.S. Golf Association’s (USGA) president-elect. In 2023, he will become the first Black president since the USGA began in 1894.

After UTA, Perpall graduated from Harvard Business School’s Advanced Management Program. As CEO of The Beck Group, he leads the firm’s domestic and international architectural design, planning, real estate consultancy, and construction businesses. As a design professional, Perpall helped with the implementation of Trinity Forest golf course, which connected him to the USGA.

“I’m proud of what it means for African Americans and all minorities within leadership roles in the game,” he says. “I appreciate my ability to bring a diverse perspective and hope this sends a message, ‘not the color of my skin.’”

Perpall notes that his relationships, the service, and his love and passion for golf allow him to play this role, “not the color of my skin.”

“Golf has let me learn from other leaders, develop deep friendships and relationships, and contribute not only to the game, but to my community and to the lives of others,” he says. “I hope others can learn from my journey and be inspired to join our wonderful game and amazing community.”

MAV SCHOLARSHIP

FOR ALLYSON MILES, scholarships provide much more than a means to make ends meet. They infuse her with the confidence to overcome a painful genetic condition while fulfilling her educational and career dreams. The Master of Social Work (MSW) student faces a daily battle with neurofibromatosis, which causes acute scoliosis and severely restricts her range of motion. But she’s determined to press on, thanks in part to receiving the Lila B. Hagins Scholarship.

“At times, I feel like I’m the only one cheering myself on as I go through this academic journey,” Miles says. “This award shows that people think I can achieve this degree and are supporting me in my efforts.”

Miles, Named for an influential faculty member who helped launch UTA’s MSW program, the Lila B. Hagins Scholarship benefits outstanding social work students who demonstrate financial need and plan to pursue a social service career.

“The opportunity to work with aging populations, particularly those with dementia or who need end-of-life care, drives Miles to succeed academically. Her thesis will explore the use of robotic pets to help dementia and hospice patients. She also wants to advocate for loved ones impacted by the stress of caregiving and loss of family members.

Assistant professors of computer science and engineering, and Gabriela Wilson, professor of kinesiology, director of health informatics at UTA, supervise her work.

When we put the data together, it allows public health advocates to gain the knowledge needed to intervene against misinformation and assist the public in making fully informed health care decisions,” Aleksandric says.

In her research, Aleksandric is analyzing Twitter activity to investigate where COVID-19 vaccine misinformation and disinformation are likely to occur, how social media enhances misinformation, and the impact it has on public health. Her work is supervised by Shirin Nilizadeh, assistant professor of computer science and engineering, and Gabriela Wilson, professor of kinesiology, director of health informatics and co-director of the Multi-Interprofessional Center for Health Informatics.

“When we put the data together, it allows public health advocates to gain the knowledge needed to intervene against misinformation and assist the public in making fully informed health care decisions,” Aleksandric says.
JoAnn Lee (’76 BA, Political Science) Retired Associate General Counsel, ExxonMobil

As a child, JoAnn Lee idolized her older brother. Since he wanted to be an attorney, so did she. But her brother changed his mind in high school, opting instead to pursue acting, a calling young JoAnn did not share. What convinced her to follow her legal dreams was the poise of lawyer and U.S. Rep. Barbara Jordan during President Nixon’s impeachment hearings in 1974.

“I’d never seen a Black woman like her before,” Lee recalls. “We didn’t grow up seeing or interacting with attorneys, doctors, or judges. My family was just regular blue-collar folks, so hearing Ms. Jordan enunciate, speak so eloquently, and command that room sealed the deal for me.”

Lee began her nearly 40-year legal career in the Harris County (Texas) District Attorney’s Office, quickly ascending to chief prosecutor. She then worked as a trial attorney for Union Pacific Railroad before embarking on a 22-year stint at ExxonMobil. She retired from ExxonMobil in 2020 after serving as assistant general counsel of global litigation and associated with the company’s 700-person law department.

Throughout her career, Lee advocated tirelessly for equity and diversity and worked to ensure that ExxonMobil fielded litigation teams with women and minorities in meaningful roles. She also focused on in-house equity and inclusion by recruiting, training, mentoring, and championing women and attorneys of color while actively supporting organizations dedicated to those same goals.

For her efforts, Lee received the Women in Law Award for Outstanding Contribution in Gender Diversity from Chambers USA. She was also named a UTA Distinguished Alumna in 2013 and a University of Texas School of Law Outstanding Alumna in 2017. She also serves on the UT Law School Foundation Advisory Board and helps prepare future legal professionals through generative support of the Pre-Law Center Endowment, which provides hands-on learning opportunities for students.

“The professors and the pre-law curriculum at UTA required me to think more critically,” she says. “The writing and analytical skills I learned contributed to my overall development and were the cornerstone of my strength as an attorney. For that, I am forever grateful.”

REAL-WORLD TRAINING

Partnership boosts student success

UTA students will receive valuable hands-on learning opportunities to advance their academic and career goals through a work experience partnership between the University and Lockheed Martin.

Launched in 2021, the UTA College Work Experience Program (CWEP) will make up to $1.2 million available for eligible students to gain real-world employment skills by holding paid positions at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control in Grand Prairie, Texas.

The program is the second of its kind between Lockheed Martin and a university. CWEP will operate through UTA’s Career Development Center, with a first-year goal of 75 student participants and capacity to expand to 300 students by the third year. Although CWEP jobs will primarily target engineering and business majors, students from all disciplines may apply, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

“Given the increasing need for STEM talent in the fight against climate change and national security that the country faces, with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and ongoing global energy crisis, Lockheed Martin is focused on filling the gap,” said the company’s Chief Talent Officer Theresa Scroggins. “The CWEP program provides students with a unique opportunity to work in high-demand career fields while earning valuable real-world experience.”

At UTA, Lee serves on the President’s Advisory Board and helps prepare future legal professionals through generative support of the Pre-Law Center Endowment, which provides hands-on learning opportunities for students.

“Students, alumni, faculty, staff, and the community enjoy Homecoming,” says Career Development Center Director Lolin Martins-Crane.

“UTA’s Career Development Center’s mission is to inspire others with stories of my success, and the potential to grow this model through a work experience partnership with the University and Lockheed Martin. This partnership allows students to learn about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace, and gain hands-on experience in their desired fields.”

THE MOVIN’ MAVS

After a hiatus thanks to COVID-19, Homecoming returned to UTA this past November with all the traditions that make it a can’t-miss event, including the Street Festival and Parade, Chalk the Mall, the Chili Cookoff, and more.

Sixteen organizations participated in Chalk the Mall, where Mavericks decorated the sidewalks in front of the UTA Library. La Sociedad Hispanica won the fan favorite competition with its design that highlighted both Hispanic culture and the student organization.

In the Chili Cookoff, 12 teams battled it out for tastiest chili. The Office of Information Technology emerged as the winner.

The Movin’ Mavs men’s wheelchair basketball Homecoming tournament featured a game versus Alabama, which was a rematch of last season’s national championship game. The Movin’ Mavs earned another victory, winning 74-39.

The last day of festivities started with over 450 Mavericks running in the Homecoming 5K and concluded with a Street Festival and Parade on Spaniolo Drive that lasted into the evening.

“UTA alumni return to campus, I think about everything they have accomplished because of the education that they received here, and it makes me proud to be a student at UTA,” says Jarus Johnson, a communication and broadcast junior. “One day, I hope to come home to UTA as an alumnus and be able to inspire others with stories of my successes.”

Campus events, student stories, and more: uta.edu/mag
ADVANCING
TELEHEALTH

New telehealth certificate program launched

A new certificate program at UTA aims to prepare undergraduate students to better understand the fields of telehealth and health informatics. “Telehealth as a delivery method for health care has existed since the 70s, but because of COVID-19, the use of telehealth and health informatics is on the rise,” says Gabriela Wilson, professor of kinesiology and co-director of the Multi-Interprofessional Center for Health Informatics (MICHI) at UTA. “I believe digital technologies in health care settings are here to stay.”

Developed in collaboration with MICHI, the telehealth certificate is geared toward upper-level pre-baccalaureate students and consists of three courses: “Introduction to Telehealth,” “Fundamental Skills in Telehealth,” and “Telehealth as a Delivery Method.” The certificate is offered each fall, “Interprofessional Collaborative Practice,” offered each spring, and “Fundamental Telehealth Skills,” offered each summer.

“This certificate will set our students apart from the competition in the workforce upon graduation,” says Kathryn Robinson, professor and associate dean of academic affairs in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. “Understanding of the field will help our future graduates improve health outcomes, both for patients and providers. The skills discussed and taught in the program are definitely tools health professionals can add to their arsenal of ways to care for people.”

The University of Texas at Arlington
Magazine Summer 2022
Scene
Glass Hot Shop
Studio Arts Center

The University of Texas at Arlington
Magazine
uta.edu/mag
Summer 2022

Call them masters of the elements. Students who take classes in UTA’s Glass Program eventually become just that, melting sand, fire, and water to create everything from basic glass shapes to more elaborate works of art.

“Glass is something we use every single day, but we don’t consider the process behind how it’s made,” says Justin Ginsberg, assistant professor and program coordinator. “Glasswork is an elemental, very visceral activity."

The program includes a 4,800-square-foot hot shop, a 3,000-square-foot cold shop, a kiln room, and more. Students explore the sculptural, conceptual, and functional aesthetics of glass using a variety of glassworking techniques.

As a discipline, glassworking tends to foster a strong sense of community. That connection among glass students starts early, as everyone essentially begins at the same skill level.

“Overall, it’s an equalized playing field,” Ginsberg says. “Everybody pretty much starts at the same place and grows together as a collective. You get a strong sense of community in that way, and that’s certainly true at UTA."

This year, UTA added glass as a minor in addition to the established bachelor’s and master’s degree programs. Ginsberg notes that this will give students from other disciplines the opportunity to learn glasswork.

“There’s something magical about our program; he says. “I have witnessed several people realize they’ve found the thing they want to do with their lives. It’s a privilege to provide access to something that will become someone’s passion.”

**Glass Sale**
The annual glass sale offers student and faculty work for purchase, raising funds for the program.

**Reheating Furnace**
To make glass malleable and soft, it must be reheated to above 1600 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Fluffy Torch**
A torch—known to glassblowers as a fluffy torch—is idle, ready for specific and directive heating on the molten glass.

**Punty**
Derived from the French word “punt,” which means “point,” a punty is a long iron rod that glassmakers use to gather molten glass.

**Rolling Yoke**
A student heats glass, balancing on a rolling yoke to assist with getting the glass in and out of the reheating furnace.

**Teamwork**
Faculty and students pour molten glass into a mold to help realize a student project. Almost all glass processes require a team working together.

**Glass Sale**
The annual glass sale offers student and faculty work for purchase, raising funds for the program.

**Reheating Furnace**
To make glass malleable and soft, it must be reheated to above 1600 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Fluffy Torch**
A torch—known to glassblowers as a fluffy torch—is idle, ready for specific and directive heating on the molten glass.

**Punty**
Derived from the French word “punt,” which means “point,” a punty is a long iron rod that glassmakers use to gather molten glass.

**Rolling Yoke**
A student heats glass, balancing on a rolling yoke to assist with getting the glass in and out of the reheating furnace.

**Teamwork**
Faculty and students pour molten glass into a mold to help realize a student project. Almost all glass processes require a team working together.
A n adventurer of sorts, Ashley Lemke has traveled from the Arctic to Australia, excavating on land and underwater on three continents. “I am passionate about archaeology because I love being outdoors, I love to travel, and I love to learn about the past,” says Dr. Lemke. “Learning about past cultures is fascinating because on one hand you can easily recognize how similar we all are as humans, but on the other, you can also see how different groups of people are. Archaeology combines hard and social sciences in a unique way, and there is always something new to learn.”

What accomplishment makes you proudest? Being elected by my peers to serve as chair of the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology. I have been honored to work alongside colleagues and experts in underwater sciences.

What are you excited about right now? Right now, I am most excited about a new project—looking for very old archaeological sites in the Atlantic Ocean. Right near an area called the “Graveyard of the Atlantic” due to the large number of shipwrecks there—including a Civil War ironclad warship—recreational scuba divers found a unique rock outcrop and the bones of now-extinct animals, such as mammoths. I’m working with those divers to explore the site scientifically to record any evidence of past human behavior there.

What are you most looking forward to? Every summer I teach a course called “Archaeology Field School,” an upper-level vision anthropology class that is taught off campus at an archaeological site. We live and work at an archaeological site, and students receive hands-on training in excavation, mapping, and curating artifacts. This summer the class will be held at Way Ranch, a private property in San Marcos, Texas, that has many archaeological sites, some 6,000 years old. Every year I look forward to getting back out into the field and digging!

A PERSONAL APPROACH
Student researcher is driven by personal experience.

From age 12 to 17, Christine Abasi attended speech therapy to correct a stuttering disorder. Now, as an undergradu- date researcher, she is using her experience to help others.

Abasi, a student in UTA’s Honors College double-majoring in psychology and communication studies, is researching the psychological causes of stuttering to gain insight into effective therapies and develop methods to reduce its stigma.

“Researchers have only been investigat- ing stuttering for the last 60 years,” she says. “It’s an under-resourced field, and research into the cause of the disorder is inconclusive.”

This shortage inspired Abasi to conduct an interdisciplinary investigation, combining existing studies from the fields of biology, neuroscience, psychology, and communication. Her paper on the subject earned an invitation to Texas Undergraduate Research Day, where she presented her research to Texas legislators and members of the public.

With the goal of becoming a speech pathologist, Abasi will spend her final year at UTA researching approaches to reduce the stigma associated with stuttering. She plans to examine how public education and interpersonal communication between those who stutter and the people in their lives can influence how communities respond to those with speech disorders.

TRACKING A ROCKY START
Researcher explores sustainability of Mexican beach pebbles.

In Baja California, Christian Zlolniski, professor of anthropology, noticed miners mining for products that aren’t impacting the environment, “It’s an under-resourced field, and research into the cause of the disorder is inconclusive.”

His work, funded by a $255,000 National Science Foundation grant, explores the labor and environmental implications of natural resources being marketed as sustainably sourced.

When people see products that are part of the green industry, they are looking for products that aren’t impacting the environment,” Zlolniski says. “It’s important to take it a step further and learn where the products come from.”

Mexican beach pebbles are sold in the United States as sustainably sourced products for landscaping, landscape architecture, and beautification projects as a substitute for mulch along walkways, gardens, and other outdoor areas. The market for beach pebbles has expanded rapidly in recent years, and Zlolniski, who is also the director of the Center for Mexican American Studies, is tracking the com-
Doctoral student wins national award

Teaching has transformed Rodrigo Augusto Dos Santos’ experience at UTA. Sharing what he has learned with students who might someday build upon that knowledge has broadened his views on research as well.

“I came to realize that I want to continue to be a mentor to students and others who are just getting started,” he says.

Dos Santos, a doctoral candidate in the Computer Science and Engineering Department, was one of 10 students nationwide to win a Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (CAHSI) Google Dissertation Award last year. The CAHSI Google Dissertation Award recognizes promising doctoral research from computer science students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. Dos Santos’ research focuses on neural networks and how they can be used for safety-related sound detection.

Devices that run services such as Alexa and Nest make extensive use of neural networks, which are known to be vulnerable to cybersecurity attacks. His work involves attacking these networks to find security flaws and sharing them up to make the services using them less susceptible to hacking.

“Until those vulnerabilities are reasonably dealt with, we won’t fully realize their potential on actual practical applications,” Dos Santos says. “I hope I can somehow contribute to the rise of the area.”

Congratulations on receiving the 2021 American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR) Young Investigator Award! How did it feel when you learned you had won? When I found out I had received the award, I felt a tremendous amount of joy. It was like I was hit with a jolt of adrenaline. After the initial shock wore off, I had a feeling of validation. I felt validated for the hard work I have been putting in, that I was headed down the right track, and that my research had value.

What is the benefit of this award for you and your career? The ASBMR Young Investigator Award is so humbling for me to attend and present at the European Calcified Tissue Society’s Digital Master Class. This class was designed for students like me to learn and collaborate with international experts in the field of bone physiology and pathology. I was able to receive invaluable feedback on my research project, get tips on how to navigate the world of academics and industry, and create connections with senior researchers and peers.

Why were you drawn to osteoarthritis research specifically? I was drawn to osteoarthritis (OA) research for the complexities of the disease. OA is a major public health concern, as it is the most common joint disorder. This painful and debilitating disease has no cure and limited treatment options. The causation is multifactorial, which leads to a wide range of individuals being affected.

How would you describe your work as a graduate research assistant in the Marco Brotto Laboratory? As a graduate research assistant, I have been afforded the ability to work with world-class researchers. The lab is a highly collaborative environment, as we all work together to elevate our research. My research is geared to understanding the biological mechanisms and functionality of musculoskeletal disease and more specifically osteoarthritis. This research is focused on the relationships between joint tissues (bone, muscle, cartilage) in the onset and progression of disease.

And finally: Why is science so cool? Science is everywhere. If you are passionate for something and start learning more about it, then you are a scientist. It is so amazing what we can learn about! It could be anything: health, space, the oceans, sports, culture, business, and the list could go on and on. Without science, we could not be where we are today.
MAVERICK SWEEP

PhD students earn best presenter awards

Three materials science and engineering doctoral students—Allison Osmanson, Mohsen Tajedini, and Jimmy-Bao Le—earned the Best Student Presenter Award at TECHCON 2021, the flagship technical conference of the Semiconductor Research Corporation (SRC).

The Top Student Presenter Award is granted to the top 10 presenters out of 160 total. It’s the second straight year all three of UTA’s presenters earned the award, marking a first in TECHCON history. Osmanson earned the award both years.

All three students are conducting research supported by three SRC grants. They are working with materials science and engineering Professor Choong-Un Kim, who has engaged in semiconductor packaging research for more than 25 years. The students’ focus is on reliability engineering and electronic materials.

Each student was presented with a certificate, a medal, and a plaque for their achievements.

SRC is a world-class technology research consortium whose members include the semiconductor industry’s biggest companies, such as Texas Instruments, IBM, Intel, and Micron.

“This competition gives a great foot in the door with these companies,” says Le. “If they see research, skills, and experience that align with their needs, it gives an easy segue into a potential hiring conversation.”

FAST ENGINEERING

Texas Autocross marks a milestone

The Texas Autocross celebrated its 20th birthday in November, attracting 250 students—and their 33 race cars—from more than a dozen universities.

“The Autocross has been around for a long time,” says Rob Woods, professor in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and adviser to the Formula Society of Automotive Engineering (FSAE) teams. “It’s a great place where these students get together, build relationships, and share some automotive secrets.”

The Texas Autocross is a part of Dr. Woods’ annual build—a racecar—from-scratch exercise via UTA Racing, a volunteer organization that has engaged students from all across the University. UT Arlington made its FSAE racing debut in the early 1980s, and Woods has been involved from day one. He conceived Texas Autocross as a way to create an atmosphere without all the pressure behind the official collegiate competition.

“We wanted to sponsor an event where all the students could share with each other what they know, what they don’t know, and what the future might hold,” he says.

Though the technology has advanced and sponsor interest has continued to grow over the years, one aspect of the Texas Autocross hasn’t changed.

“We still have students dedicated to figuring out how to build the best race cars around,” Woods says. “Students still discover, are amazed, and develop their own ways of creating that car.”
Donald Shorter
Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts and Dance

“I’m part of Donald Shorter’s 2019 production, Genderosity: It’s Messy. Shorter walks across a stage barefooted, on tiptoes, taking elegant strides reminiscent of a woman taking purposeful steps in high heels. Then, Shorter, whose preferred pronouns include he/him/his, explodes forward, arms out and flying back in a burst of power, the feminine shapes turning masculine and back again. As their movements flow, the lines between feminine and masculine blur, causing viewers to consider their own perceptions of gender. “Genderosity was the first time I was able to take my words, my voice, and my body and present them in a way that was real and authentic to me,” says Shorter, assistant professor of theatre arts and dance. “It was a launching point for me to say, ‘You know what? I do have a voice in theater.’ It was very cathartic.”

Since creating Genderosity, this interplay of gender expression and identity has been a consistent theme of Shorter’s work, which includes drag, song, dance, choreography, storytelling, and improvisation. Their goal, ultimately, is to draw inspiration from their life experience to bring awareness to social injustices. “When we look at gender as a physical form of expression, my work exposes how easy it is to throw the whole gender binary out—but how complex that is, too,” they say.

Shorter—a former principal dancer with the famed Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company—has restaged works at universities across the United States and toured in national productions of Broadway shows such as La Cage Aux Folles, A Chorus Line, and Hairspray. Recently, they began exploring filmmaking, first with A Guide to Breathing Underwater, a dance film airing on the Criterion channel, and The Power of We, a documentary film that asks what it means to be visibly LGBTQIA+ in a suburban or rural area. “This work has become a community,” Shorter says. “It started a community that continues to give me passion and a purpose to continue exploring these narratives in dance and theater.”

“When we look at gender as a physical form of expression, my work exposes how easy it is to throw the whole gender binary out—but how complex that is, too.”

“Top Left and Center: Select moments from Genderosity: It’s Messy, Donald Shorter’s one-woman show in which they use transformation to explore themes of self-hatred, internalized homophobia, and self-love.

Bottom Left: A still from Shorter’s short film, A Guide to Breathing Underwater. Filmed entirely on a smartphone camera with a team of three, the movie won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2018 Mobile Motion Film Festival and was favorably reviewed by The New York Times.

Above: Shorter explores movement at a park in Arlington.”
Majie Fan, associate professor of earth and environmental sciences, was born on the Loess Plateau in northern China, a dry highland named for its loose, fine-grained, yellowish topsoil. As a young girl living in a rural province, she spent much of her time playing in the dirt that defined her home.

Today, the time Dr. Fan spends with loess—a sediment formed by the accumulation of wind-blown dust—is academic. Through a National Science Foundation grant, she and her collaborators at the University of Connecticut are investigating the nature, causes, and climate importance of loess’ appearance in the western United States.

“We know that the region was under ocean water about 80 million years ago,” Fan says. “How could loess, which is transported by wind and signals a very dry climate, form there?”

She said her motivation for the project is to understand the sudden, regional climate change that caused continental aridification to accumulate loess. Discovering the reason for the rapid shift could inform geologists’ forecasting of subsequent environmental changes.

“We don’t know what will happen in the future, but we can always learn from the past,” Fan says. “Using that knowledge, we can better predict how the climate will change in the future.”

Dirt and Climate

Geologist looks at loess

To better understand climate change, geologist Majie Fan and her collaborators are studying loess.
Arkansas Travelers: Geographies of Exploration and Perception, 1804-1834

Andrew J. Milson, Professor of History

Historical geographer Andrew J. Milson brings together the travel accounts of four important early explorers of the Arkansas frontier in the 19th century. In addition to sharing their colorful tales of beautiful and dangerous landscapes, interesting people, and unique food, Dr. Milson presents maps that detail their routes as well as their environmental and cultural perceptions.
A NEW ERA IN ATHLETICS

In January, UTA announced a new era of Maverick Athletics by officially accepting an invitation to join the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). The move took place July 1, making UTA the 13th member of the WAC and the eighth school based in Texas during the 2022-23 academic year.

“We are thrilled to join the Western Athletic Conference and help bolster a league that shares a similar strategic vision, is in the best interest of our student-athletes, and enhances the University’s profile,” says Jim Baker, UTA’s director of athletics. “The WAC’s short- and long-term objectives, goals, and overall mission run parallel to UTA’s, and we envision this move being advantageous for all parties.”

The WAC was formed in 1962 and currently comprises 13 member institutions. Incarnate Word and Southern Miss joined the conference during the 2021-22 academic year.

UTA joins the Western Athletic Conference

The move will bring a new era of Athletics to UTA, with the Mavericks competing in 12 sports: men’s and women’s basketball, football, soccer, baseball, softball, golf, tennis, volleyball, cross country, track and field, and swimming.

UTA cross country teams earn academic top spot

The UT Arlington track and field teams concluded the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) Indoor Championships in February with several tremendous performances, including some that broke UTA and SBC records. The women finished third overall with 82 total points, while the men were fifth overall with 69 total points.

Jade Ronke, a senior kinesiology major, earned a pair of gold medals and recognition as the top scorer for the meet. The first day of the championships started with a bang as the Mavericks took control of the multi-events. Ronke dominated the pentathlon, winning four of the five events to cruise to a UTA record. She also set an SBC record with her long jump win. She added wins in the 60-meter hurdles, the high jump, and the 800 meter. The only event she didn’t earn first in was shot put, where she placed second.

Decathlete Lucas Van Kluiwen pulled ahead for the men’s team, finishing with a Sun Belt and meet record of 5,734, the second-highest score all-time and good for sixth in the nation. All-American Bryson DeFerry won his second straight SBC title in the indoor high jump, at 2.14 meters, and Abigail Kelly-Salo capped a brilliant day for field with a win in the pole vault at 3.86 meters. UTA closed the meet with a strong performance in relays, as Ronke, Shelby West, Tatiana Tereft, and Vanessa Ugoffi broke the gang’s school record with a time of 4:43.83 to earn third place.

UTA was a home team and on the road at every meet during the 2022 season, bringing a tremendous amount of work into their studies, just like they do in their training.

In order to qualify for All-Academic distinction, teams must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or 4.0 scale, including the most recent grading period. Overall, 166 different programs across the nation were named All-Academic Teams by the USTFCCCA for their efforts during the 2021-22 season.

Indoor track and field teams break SBC, UTA records

In January, UTA announced an invitation to join the Western Athletic Conference (WAC). The move took place July 1, making UTA the 13th member of the WAC and the eighth school based in Texas during the 2022-23 academic year.

“We are thrilled to join the Western Athletic Conference and help bolster a league that shares a similar strategic vision, is in the best interest of our student-athletes, and enhances the University’s profile,” says Jim Baker, UTA’s director of athletics. “The WAC’s short- and long-term objectives, goals, and overall mission run parallel to UTA’s, and we envision this move being advantageous for all parties.”

The WAC was formed in 1962 and currently comprises 13 member institutions. Incarnate Word and Southern Miss joined the conference during the 2021-22 academic year.

The UT Arlington track and field teams concluded the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) Indoor Championships in February with several tremendous performances, including some that broke UTA and SBC records. The women finished third overall with 82 total points, while the men were fifth overall with 69 total points.

Jade Ronke, a senior kinesiology major, earned a pair of gold medals and recognition as the top scorer for the meet. The first day of the championships started with a bang as the Mavericks took control of the multi-events. Ronke dominated the pentathlon, winning four of the five events to cruise to a UTA record. She also set an SBC record with her long jump win. She added wins in the 60-meter hurdles, the high jump, and the 800 meter. The only event she didn’t earn first in was shot put, where she placed second.

Decathlete Lucas Van Kluiwen pulled ahead for the men’s team, finishing with a Sun Belt and meet record of 5,734, the second-highest score all-time and good for sixth in the nation. All-American Bryson DeFerry won his second straight SBC title in the indoor high jump, at 2.14 meters, and Abigail Kelly-Salo capped a brilliant day for field with a win in the pole vault at 3.86 meters. UTA closed the meet with a strong performance in relays, as Ronke, Shelby West, Tatiana Tereft, and Vanessa Ugoffi broke the gang’s school record with a time of 4:43.83 to earn third place.

UTA was a home team and on the road at every meet during the 2022 season, bringing a tremendous amount of work into their studies, just like they do in their training.

In order to qualify for All-Academic distinction, teams must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or 4.0 scale, including the most recent grading period. Overall, 166 different programs across the nation were named All-Academic Teams by the USTFCCCA for their efforts during the 2021-22 season.

The men’s and women’s wheelchair basketball teams both competed in the National Intercollegiate Wheelchair Basketball Tournament (NIWBT) on their home court in March. The Movin’ Mavs won their second consecutive national title and 10th overall, defeating the University of Alabama 67-56 before a spirited crowd.

The Movin’ Mavs entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed after finishing the regular season with a 10-2 record, while the women were the No. 3 seed. The NIWBT is a double-elimination contest, with 12 teams competing in the men’s division and six in the women’s.

As a group, the UTA women secured a cumulative GPA of 3.53. “We are very proud of our women’s team,” says head coach John Sauerhage. “It shows that our student-athletes put a tremendous amount of work into their studies, just like they do in their training.”

In order to qualify for All-Academic distinction, teams must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, including the most recent grading period. Overall, 166 different programs across the nation were named All-Academic Teams by the USTFCCCA for their efforts during the 2021-22 season.

The women’s cross country team excelled on the field, too, placing 15th overall at the NCAA South Regional Championships to close out the season. Two athletes earned top 50 finishes: Charlotte Murphy and Valeria Diaz-Gonzalez.

Winners: The Maverick Meyer dominated the nation tournament yet again this year.

The Maverick Meyer dominated the nation tournament yet again this year.

The Lady Movin’ Mavs defeated the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 58-37, to earn third place in the tournament. UTA hosted the tournament in College Park Center for the first time since 2014.

Lisa Nagy, vice president of student affairs, says she enjoyed watching the teams’ passion, perseverance, and athleticism.

“The dedication and hard work of each of the student-athletes are the key to achieving their aspirations,” Nagy says. “We are so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate to create a positive experience for everyone involved in the NIWBT.”

The Maverick Meyer dominated the nation tournament yet again this year.

The Lady Movin’ Mavs defeated the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 58-37, to earn third place in the tournament. UTA hosted the tournament in College Park Center for the first time since 2014.

Lisa Nagy, vice president of student affairs, says she enjoyed watching the teams’ passion, perseverance, and athleticism.

“The dedication and hard work of each of the student-athletes are the key to achieving their aspirations,” Nagy says. “We are so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate to create a positive experience for everyone involved in the NIWBT.”

The Maverick Meyer dominated the nation tournament yet again this year.

The Lady Movin’ Mavs defeated the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 58-37, to earn third place in the tournament. UTA hosted the tournament in College Park Center for the first time since 2014.

Lisa Nagy, vice president of student affairs, says she enjoyed watching the teams’ passion, perseverance, and athleticism.

“The dedication and hard work of each of the student-athletes are the key to achieving their aspirations,” Nagy says. “We are so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate to create a positive experience for everyone involved in the NIWBT.”

The Maverick Meyer dominated the nation tournament yet again this year.

The Lady Movin’ Mavs defeated the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 58-37, to earn third place in the tournament. UTA hosted the tournament in College Park Center for the first time since 2014.

Lisa Nagy, vice president of student affairs, says she enjoyed watching the teams’ passion, perseverance, and athleticism.

“The dedication and hard work of each of the student-athletes are the key to achieving their aspirations,” Nagy says. “We are so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate to create a positive experience for everyone involved in the NIWBT.”
Welcome back to Arlington! What is it like to return to the city you grew up in?
It’s super exciting! I’m finding places that I loved when I was growing up and new places to explore. In particular, it’s amazing just seeing how much the UTA campus has changed along with the area around it, and seeing how the downtown area is becoming much more vibrant. I think all of these changes have added to the appeal for prospective students and potential faculty and staff to consider UTA. I’m really looking forward to getting to know all the people in the community.

What experiences did you have with UTA growing up?
One of my first experiences with UTA was going to sleepaway orchestra camp, and back then, it was the most exciting thing ever. It was really, really fun to have those early experiences of connecting to a university—of getting to eat in a student union, play tennis, and of course perform on a big stage. When the opportunity arose, I had my son enjoy these same opportunities at UTA through summer camps. It’s such a great part of the learning experience to have the convenience, benefits, and opportunities of a vibrant, top-tier research university right in my hometown.

What made you want to take on the role of president of UTA?
UTA has been on my radar for quite some time. I saw it as a university on the rise, as a place with serious aspirations, a belief in its potential, and a commitment to diversity and inclusion. When the presidency opened up, I thought it could be the right time for me to join the UTA community. And, you know, the stars aligned, and I’m just excited to get to have the opportunity to lead this wonderful Tier 1 institution.

What are your first priorities as president?
The No. 1 priority is to fill a number of leadership vacancies, and I am confident we’re going to find some great team members who will be a perfect fit for us. I am also very much looking forward to getting to know the campus community and engaging with our students, faculty, staff, and our alumni. Together, we will be able to foster an inclusive culture that improves upon the opportunities for our students’ success, accelerate UTA’s research excellence, and build upon UTA’s relationships throughout the DFW Metropole—one of the nation’s fastest-growing and economically thriving metropolitan areas.

With your background in city planning, do you see parallels between your expertise in that field and the skills you’ll be using in your role as president of UTA?
Absolutely. City planners are trained to be systems thinkers, and when you think about the complexities of a campus, campuses are a lot like small cities. As a planner and builder, I have a unique ability to quickly assess the landscape and, in collaboration with the diversity of stakeholder figures, figure out together where we need to go and, more importantly, how we will get there.

How do you see UTA’s role within Arlington and in our region? How might that role evolve going forward?
UTA is an important part of Arlington and North Texas. We have excellent relationships and collaborations in the city on a number of fronts, and I look forward to continuing to strengthen those. Beyond Arlington, if you consider the population of Dallas-Fort Worth, we are bigger than many states in this country. How much we’re growing is just phenomenal, and I want to make sure we’re taking advantage of that growth. Continuing to expand our impact in Fort Worth and the surrounding communities will certainly be a priority.

What can you share with us about your family and/or life outside of work?
I have a husband named Jon, a 27-year-old son named Nathan, and a pet chinchilla named Chinch. Who has been in our family for about eight years now. Our family is very much into Lego building. My husband and son are into Star Wars and some of the other action sets. It is probably no surprise that as a city planner, I like the city cities. uta.edu/mag
Equipped with a strong foundation in science and math and advanced skills in specialized fields, UTA students are ready to launch into impressive careers in the space industry.

BY LINSEY RETOFSKY
Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei is often credited as the first human to point a telescope toward the cosmos. He used the instrument to discover rocky craters on the moon, prompting philosophical questions about life beyond Earth. Since then, scientists have discovered thousands of exoplanets beyond our solar system and estimate that there are billions more in our galaxy alone.

Astronomers searched the skies from ground level, capturing images of the dust and light beyond our atmosphere. Technological advancements of the 20th century propelled our investigations to the furthest corners of the universe. As we launched mechanical and manned missions into orbit, nations competed for prime real estate on the final frontier. Within decades, space exploration became a global industry.

Despite all that advancement of knowledge, questions about our existence remain. Is humankind alone in the universe? How did our existence begin? What exactly is the universe made of?

Employed by companies at the leading-edge of astrophysics, UTAs students and alumni work to answer these questions and far more, seeking knowledge and resources that will benefit humanity. From collecting soil samples on Mars to analyzing the chemical composition of Venusian clouds, Maverick innovators are helping to decode the mysteries of the universe.

SPACE STORMS
In December 2021, NASA launched its most powerful telescope to date, the gold, mirror-plated James Webb Space Telescope. Its mission is to catch glimpses of light from ancient, cloudy galaxies and uncover hidden truths about our universe. Like air traffic controllers before a plane’s ascent, two days before the Webb Telescope launch, NASA’s crew was watching the weather—in outer space.

Approximately one to four times per day, massive tangles of plasma and magnetic field explode from the sun’s surface in a process called a coronal mass ejection (CME). The twisted, fiery ropes slingshot billions of tons of charged particles, nations competed for prime real estate on the final frontier. Within decades, space exploration became a global industry.

To mitigate such disturbances, students in UTA’s Department of Physics work alongside their professors on research collaborations with NASA, the Air Force, and institutions across the nation. Through these partnerships, young researchers become problem-solvers for the most urgent issues in atmospheric science.

Under the leadership of Yue Deng, professor of physics, students contribute to NASA’s Geospace Dynamics Constellation mission, a satellite investigation of how the boundary between Earth’s atmosphere and space redistributes external energy on a global scale. The team supports the successful launch, operation, and return of the mission’s spacecraft by providing state-of-the-art physical models and ground-based observations. Information provided by the mission will improve scientists’ ability to specify and forecast space weather.

When strong enough, coronal mass ejections like the one pictured here can impact particles, radio signals, and electrical grids.

LORI GLAZE
Director, NASA’s Division of Planetary Science
By MB, BS BA, Physics

As director of NASA’s Division of Planetary Science, Lori Glaze oversees the agency’s flight missions and scientific research that address fundamental questions of solar system formation and evolution, including understanding the planetary environments that can support life. But there is one planet that truly captivates her: Venus.

At the formation of our solar system, Venus was akin to Earth. But as Earth evolved into a home for living inhabitants, Venus matured into a toxic wilderness. “Venus has a thick, noxious atmosphere filled with sulfur dioxide, and the air pressure at ground level is similar to the pressure almost a mile below Earth’s ocean,” Glaze says. “It’s an enigmatic place. How did the two planets evolve so differently?”

To answer that question, Glaze led a team of scientists and researchers at Goddard Space Flight Center through nearly a decade of mission concept development. The team proposed the deployment of a small probe containing an analytical chemistry laboratory that would dive from the planet’s yellow clouds to its volcanic surface, making precise measurements of noble gases and other elements to understand why Venus’ atmosphere differs from Earth’s. Through the Deep Atmosphere Venus Investigation of Noble Gases, Chemistry, and Imaging (DAVINCI) mission, is set to launch by 2025.

Pauline Dredger
Newkirk Fellow, NASA Graduate Research Fellow
PhD candidate, Physics

Most people think of outer space as a dark void. For Pauline Dredger, space is a busy corridor where high-speed particles and electrical currents travel between the sun and Earth. “To the untrained eye, the solar system can seem like a dull place,” she says. “People think of space as empty, but it’s full of active elements whose interactions are really fun to observe.”

Dredger is part of the growing international scientific community whose mission is to improve the forecasting and mitigation of the effects of space weather events on Earth’s magnetic field and technological systems. When she’s not conducting doctoral research in the lab at UTA, you’ll likely find her at work in one of two national research centers.

As a Newkirk Fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Dredger is conducting research at the agency’s High Altitude Observatory, investigating the potential hazard of super-solar wind impacts Earth’s magnetic field. The appointment runs concurrently with her work as a NASA Graduate Research Fellow at the Goddard Space Flight Center. Her busy schedule matches her curiosity. Although dedicated to space physics research, she also has a strong interest in particle physics. If she could answer one question about our universe it would be, “What is dark matter?”

Ian Lim
Computer Scientist, NASA Glenn Research Center
BS PhD, Mathematics

Contrary to popular belief, Ian Lim does not have an archive of secret extraterrestrial technology. He works computer at the NASA Glenn Research Center. As a computer scientist at what he calls the “hallowed place to work,” Dr. Lim spends his days managing data science projects for the center’s chief information officer. His current focus is to collect and provide data on the agency’s space communications. Whether or not he has tapped into any alien conversations, he couldn’t say, but the job always satisfies his mathematical fervor.

Lim began his college career as an engineering major, but when it was time to say goodbye to his mathematics classes, he just couldn’t do it. After filling out a few add/drop forms, Lim spent the next few years studying the subject he loved most. In his fourth year of UTA’s mathematics doctoral program, he stumbled across a NASA internship that described his skills exactly. Within a year, he had converted that internship into a full-time position.

For Lim, considering a life after a mathematics degree, Lim’s advice is simple. “Follow your interests, and look for extracurricular opportunities to expand your skills set while you’re in school.” Lim says.
{MORE OF} THE RIGHT STUFF

WENDY A. OKOLO
Associate Project Manager for NASA’s System-Wide Safety Project, Aerospace Engineering Researcher in the Intelligent Systems Division, NASA Ames Research Center

When Wendy A. Okolo told her elementary school class she wanted to be an engineer, she was met with laughter, even from her teacher. Dr. Okolo, now an aerospace engineering researcher in the Intelligent Systems Division at NASA Ames Research Center, says her mom encouraged her to keep dreaming.

“I have always been fascinated by the mechanics of flight,” she says. “The mathematics behind space travel is mind-blowing.”

Drawing inspiration from the Wright brothers, the duo who pioneered pilot-controlled aircraft, Okolo has applied her mathematics talents and curiosity to a number of aerospace projects at NASA. One of her favorite projects is an umbrella-shaped cargo spacecraft that will enable safe access to the national airspace for autonomous vehicles.

If you ask Steve Hunker how he got the job to design the robotic arm for NASA’s Perseverance Mars Rover, he’ll modestly tell you, “Life just worked out that way.”

Hunker’s engineering career began in the oil and gas industry, where he designed equipment to perform complicated tasks on the sea floor. He had no idea his talents for developing hardware for harsh environments would be invaluable until his next employer, Masar Technologies, received a NASA contract.

Appointed to a team of five engineers and technicians, Hunker spent four years in phases of design, testing, assembly, and integration of the rover’s robotic arm. Its dexterity would serve the greater mission to seek signs of ancient life and collect soil and rock samples for return to Earth.

Since landing on Mars in February 2021, Hunker’s hardware has helped scientists discover details of crater origins and determine the location of ancient water features.

“You can’t beat the feeling of knowing that you’ve built hardware that is on another planet,” Hunker says. “To be intimately involved in the design of a mechanism that is now performing complex tasks 100 million miles away is very fulfilling.”

KATYA BOSTAPH
Senior NDE Engineer and Level III in Computed Tomography, Space X

As a native of Simara, Russia, Katya Bostaph grew up in the birthplace of the Soyuz rocket family—the longest-running human spaceflight program in history surrounded by aerospace engineers. On Cosmonautics Day, an annual Russian celebration, Dr. Bostaph would watch national broadcasts about humanity’s adventures in space.

Bostaph’s engineering career began in the aerospace industry on the leading edge of exploration. Often, they begin development with only an idea and a blank piece of paper. Over the years, many budding aerospace engineers at UT have gotten hands-on practice for their future careers from what may seem like an unlikely place: building cars.

Every year, students in UT’s Formula Society of Automotive Engineers (FSAE) group construct a formula racing car from scratch. Under the supervision of Robert Woods, professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering (MAE), students manage the automobile design from initial drawings through race day. In the weeks before competition, the automotive shop converts into an unofficial dormitory, and Maerck engineers work around the clock to perfect the vehicle.

The hard work pays off. UT’s FSAE racing team is one of the most successful student race car programs in the nation, having won eight championships in the United States and three abroad. Each year, by the time they return from competition, the team’s members have received several job offers.

Erian Armanios, chair and professor of MAE, says his faculty continually evaluate their research to address timely, essential issues on the leading edge of engineering.

At the end of her studies in the Advanced Materials and Structures Lab, Katya Bostaph, an MAE alumna, says her skills were so specific she worried she wouldn’t find a job. On the contrary, her talents in X-ray computed tomography, or CT scanning, made her a valuable hire for the position of nondestructive evaluation engineer at SpaceX.

“I absolutely would not have the job I have today if it weren’t for the education and resources I received at UT,” Dr. Bostaph says. "The reason that NASAs and other aerospace companies are desirable to engineers is because they fundamentally understand each phase of the design process,” Dr. Armanios says. “Their knowledge is grounded in practical experience, and they are ready for real-world challenges.”

To maintain students’ 100% job-placement rate, Armanios says his faculty continually evaluate their research to address timely, essential issues on the leading edge of engineering.

Effects around the world.

ought to be something that is on another planet,” Hunker says. “To be intimately involved in the design of a mechanism that is now performing complex tasks 100 million miles away is very fulfilling.”

space companies is because they fundamentally understand each phase of the design process,” Dr. Armanios says. “Their knowledge is grounded in practical experience, and they are ready for real-world challenges.”

To maintain students’ 100% job-placement rate, Armanios says his faculty continually evaluate their research to address timely, essential issues on the leading edge of engineering.

At the end of her studies in the Advanced Materials and Structures Lab, Katya Bostaph, an MAE alumna, says her skills were so specific she worried she wouldn’t find a job. On the contrary, her talents in X-ray computed tomography, or CT scanning, made her a valuable hire for the position of nondestructive evaluation engineer at SpaceX.

“I absolutely would not have the job I have today if it wasn’t for the education and resources I received at UT,” Dr. Bostaph says. "There’s nothing more satisfying than controlling aircraft, Okolo has applied her mathematics talents and curiosity to a number of aerospace projects at NASA. One of her favorite projects is an umbrella-shaped cargo spacecraft that will enable safe access to the national airspace for autonomous vehicles.

If you ask Steve Hunker how he got the job to design the robotic arm for NASA’s Perseverance Mars Rover, he’ll modestly tell you, “Life just worked out that way.”

Hunker’s engineering career began in the oil and gas industry, where he designed equipment to perform complicated tasks on the sea floor. He had no idea his talents for developing hardware for harsh environments would be invaluable until his next employer, Masar Technologies, received a NASA contract.

Appointed to a team of five engineers and technicians, Hunker spent four years in phases of design, testing, assembly, and integration of the rover’s robotic arm. Its dexterity would serve the greater mission to seek signs of ancient life and collect soil and rock samples for return to Earth.

Since landing on Mars in February 2021, Hunker’s hardware has helped scientists discover details of crater origins and determine the location of ancient water features.

“You can’t beat the feeling of knowing that you’ve built hardware that is on another planet,” Hunker says. “To be intimately involved in the design of a mechanism that is now performing complex tasks 100 million miles away is very fulfilling.”

KATYA BOSTAPH
Senior NDE Engineer and Level III in Computed Tomography, Space X

As a native of Simara, Russia, Katya Bostaph grew up in the birthplace of the Soyuz rocket family—the longest-running human spaceflight program in history surrounded by aerospace engineers. On Cosmonautics Day, an annual Russian celebration, Dr. Bostaph would watch national broadcasts about humanity’s adventures in space.

Bostaph’s engineering career began in the aerospace industry on the leading edge of exploration. Often, they begin development with only an idea and a blank piece of paper. Over the years, many budding aerospace engineers at UT have gotten hands-on practice for their future careers from what may seem like an unlikely place: building cars.

Every year, students in UT’s Formula Society of Automotive Engineers (FSAE) group construct a formula racing car from scratch. Under the supervision of Robert Woods, professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering (MAE), students manage the automobile design from initial drawings through race day. In the weeks before competition, the automotive shop converts into an unofficial dormitory, and Maerck engineers work around the clock to perfect the vehicle.

The hard work pays off. UT’s FSAE racing team is one of the most successful student race car programs in the nation, having won eight championships in the United States and three abroad. Each year, by the time they return from competition, the team’s members have received several job offers.

Erian Armanios, chair and professor of MAE, says his faculty continually evaluate their research to address timely, essential issues on the leading edge of engineering.

At the end of her studies in the Advanced Materials and Structures Lab, Katya Bostaph, an MAE alumna, says her skills were so specific she worried she wouldn’t find a job. On the contrary, her talents in X-ray computed tomography, or CT scanning, made her a valuable hire for the position of nondestructive evaluation engineer at SpaceX.

“I absolutely would not have the job I have today if it wasn’t for the education and resources I received at UT,” Dr. Bostaph says. "There’s nothing more satisfying than
No One Left Behind

After serving their country, veterans at UTA have turned their service-first energy toward each other, working arm in arm as they journey through life after the military. BY DANA JENNINGS

At the University of Texas at Arlington, where veterans and military-connected students accounted for 11% of UTA’s total enrollment in fall 2021, with veterans alone making up 4.7%, a point of pride is the thriving Office of Military and Veteran Services (MAVS). The impact of the program is evident, as UTA was recognized by Military Times as the nation’s top four-year institution for veterans and their families in 2020 and 2021.

For veterans and military-connected students at UTA, the Military Times ranking cemented what they already knew: This place is special, filled with people who care and programs that go the extra mile.

Within moments of starting a conversation with Mavericks who are involved in military and veteran programs, the passion for service and for each other is clear. Their dedication paints a vivid portrait of a community bonded by shared experiences and a commitment to moving each other toward their goals.

As these people work vigilantly to offer resources, helping hands, and listening ears, it’s clear the “no one left behind” creed of the U.S. military has permeated UTA’s campus.

U.S. Army veteran Derron Gadison found a network of individualized support through UTA’s MAVS program.
“When you find a group of people who understand where you’ve been, the mentality, it makes it easier to make connections and find that motivation.”

**BY VETERANS, FOR VETERANS**

When James Kumm, a veteran of the U.S. Army, arrived at UTA in 2017 to assume his role leading programming and services for veteran and military-connected students, he was not initially met with the well-oiled machine that exists now.

“We had no idea what UTA’s military and veteran services would look like when I got here,” says Kumm, executive director of MAVS. “There were 17 different programs and offices. It took our students a literal mile-and-a-half walk to get everything done in order to get their benefits or just get involved.”

Kumm was given nine months to evaluate the programs and offer a plan on where the University should go from there. With this hefty challenge on his plate, Kumm looked to the people who knew the programs the best.

“My third day on the job, there was an orientation for veterans,” Kumm says. “We had a good group of students participating in that program, so I asked them where they were on campus congregates.”

The students pointed Kumm to the Veterans Lounge in UTA’s Central Library.

“I was in that library lounge at least once a day for several hours talking to any student I could,” he says. “I asked them what they thought, what they felt, and took notes on their experiences to help determine our next moves.”

Empowered by the firsthand experiences of veterans on campus, Kumm got to work centralizing military and veteran services. What was once 17 programs spread across campus became three primary offices: MAVS/ Veteran Services, Certification Benefits, and Veterans Upward Bound.

His time spent in the library lounge set the template for how the MAVS program would be run going forward: the people they serve.

“Our program is run by veterans,” Kumm says. “Everybody on our staff, in some capacity or another, has been in the students’ shoes. They understand what obstacles they’re facing and the challenges they have to overcome. Our entire goal is to make sure our students get their degrees. We’re here to help; to listen, and to get them connected with resources for mental health or benefits, for example, so they can stay focused on their education.”

**“IT’S JUST LIKE A FAMILY”**

As far as Albright Wilbert, U.S. Army veteran and Master of Social Work student at UTA, is concerned, the value of the shared understanding throughout MAVS cannot be overstated.

“Transitioning out of the military is difficult when it’s all you’ve known, and people who haven’t spent time in the military don’t understand the struggles you’ve faced,” Wilbert says. “After being in combat, it’s not easy to get your mind in the right place to further your education.

“When you find a group of people who understand where you’ve been, the mentality, it makes it easier to make connections and find that motivation. It’s just like a tight-knit family that actually understands. That’s what I’ve found here.”

Wilbert has a passion for working with veterans and connecting them with the resources that help ensure they are taken care of after they leave the service. As she started the final year of her master’s program in fall 2021, she discovered an opportunity in the MAVS office that would foster this passion while meeting her capstone internship requirement.

In her role, which she continued in spring 2022 as her May graduation date approached, Wilbert served as a resource for students, regularly reiterating Kumm’s steps to the Veterans Lounge in the library to interact with fellow students and hear what their needs are.

She spent her time helping to make sure veteran students know what they need to stay on track with their courses and that they are aware of the benefits available to them through the University and beyond. She says it was good practice for her future career in social work.

“IT’S JUST LIKE A FAMILY”

For Kumm, Gadison’s relationship with MAVS is a two-way street, as Gadison’s passion for the community has always shined through.

“James and the MAVS staff will get down in the muck to solve a problem if any of us are in a situation that could bring unnecessary stress,” Gadison says, encapsulating the MAVS goal of connecting students with resources to keep them on their path to graduation.

“They’ve been a great advocate for me.”

As Albright Wilbert, a U.S. Army veteran, pursues her master’s degree, she’s also making sure other veterans have the support they need to succeed.

**HANDS-ON SUPPORT**

UTA’s military-connected students have access to a wide range of support services.

**MavVets,** a student veterans organization that provides campus networking with community leaders, access to veterans scholarships, and community service opportunities.

**VetSuccess on Campus** helps veterans, service members, and their qualified dependents succeed and thrive through a coordinated delivery of on-campus benefits, assistance, and counseling.

**The Career Development Center,** which helps veterans and other students pursue their professional goals and connects them to employment opportunities.

**Veterans Upward Bound,** a program for qualified veterans designed to motivate and assist in developing academic and other requisite skills necessary for acceptance and success in college.

“James and the MAVS staff will get down in the muck to solve a problem if any of us are in a situation that could bring unnecessary stress,” Gadison says, encapsulating the MAVS goal of connecting students with resources to keep them on their path to graduation.

“They’ve been a great advocate for me.”

As Albright Wilbert, a U.S. Army veteran, pursues her master’s degree, she’s also making sure other veterans have the support they need to succeed.
has made it her mission to give back to service families. James Kumm Dayton Williams (left) directs the MAVS program at UTA. “It’s a social necessity”

Helping veterans transition into life outside of the military is a big piece of what drives Dayton Williams. Her eldest son, Sgt. Tyrell Seth Williams of the U.S. Marine Corps, was tragically killed in a hit-and-run less than 90 days after returning home from his third tour in Iraq. As she grappled with grief and the challenge of coming to grips with her son dying after making it home from the dangers of a warzone, Williams started to ask herself about what matters.

“I would not have chosen the military for him, but I did everything I could to support him, and I believe that’s what we need to do,” Williams says. “Supporting our military... I think it’s a social necessity.”

She took an early retirement from a career that had once been her passion, determined to make her next chapter one of service. What followed was a decade-long journey of discovering how she could fulfill her new mission of serving veterans, a journey that ultimately landed her at UTA pursuing a master’s in social work with an emphasis on mental health and substance abuse. Williams completed her foundational internship for her master’s program in MAVS.

“When I met James, that’s when my journey in social work began to get really fun,” she says. Through her internship, Williams got involved in Veterans Edge, a mentorship program for veterans and military-connected students in need of support. She says the sheer undertaking of the Veterans Edge mission is part of what sets UTA apart.

“Every semester, Veterans Edge mentors split up the roster of new veteran and military-connected students coming to UTA and get in contact with every single one,” Williams says. “I had 80 people on my call list. Who else does that? Who else makes that kind of personal commitment to engage an entire community and remind them we’re here for them?”

As she has made her way through her degree program, Williams secured her Mental Health Peer Specialist certification to offer pro-bono peer services to veterans. After graduating in fall 2022 with her master’s and a certificate in Military Social Work, she intends to continue providing free mental health services to veterans.

“My personal purpose is to advocate for the removal of the mental health stigma in the veteran community; whatever way I can accomplish it,” Williams says. “They deserve a happy, free life, one that’s worthy of the sacrifices they and their family members have made. Receiving mental health assistance can make the difference between the prison of the mind and stepping into the sunshine, the freedom. That’s why I want to make a difference for them.”

MAKING EACH OTHER BETTER

When it comes to identifying the reasons for MAVS’ resounding success at UTA, students and staff alike point to each other: Kumm attributes it to the students who engage and offer feedback, creating a grassroots-style organization that makes the program better, while Wilbert, Gadison, and Williams all emphatically insist that all credit goes to Kumm and MAVS staff members.

“This may be the best illustration of why UTA’s MAVS is so acclaimed: the selfless nature of the program and the people involved, along with their collective passion for making sure every student has the chance to succeed. A community the size of UTA’s veteran and military-connected population has the power to make a tremendous impact on campus, and Kumm says the students do so in ways that only serve to make UTA stronger.

“Military-connected students make great students, parents do so in ways that only serve to make UTA stronger. They bring a different level of maturity to campus, maintaining average GPAs above 3.0. “What’s great about our community is they come in with robust educational and life experience,” Kumm says. “They bring a different level of maturity to campus, and those skills get noticed and influence others. Our veterans understand the concept of teamwork, and they’re not afraid to ask questions. We hear consistently that they stand up as leaders in the classroom.”

“Supporting our military... I think it’s a social necessity.”
At the Nexus of Art & Science

Students at the Hybrid Atelier merge the creative with the technical.

By Amber Scott
Near a work table at the Hybrid Atelier, UTA’s newest research makerspace, a dorukha (a two-sided shawl) sits on a dress form. Embedded with seven lights, the shawl glows warmly in a slow pulsing pattern that reflects sensor readings from an ambient sound meter. When a wearer touches the intricate capacitive touch embroidery on the fabric, the shawl changes its rhythm, pulsing faster.

It’s just one of the many kinds of innovative creations you’ll find underway at the Hybrid Atelier, where students complete projects that range from electronics-infused fabrics like the dorukha to 3D-printed clay vessels and silicone bladders. The digital fabrication facility is set up for craft practices in ceramics, textiles, printmaking, and glass-working. As a research makerspace, the Hybrid Atelier contributes to a branch of computer science known as Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), which aims to understand how technology can be embedded within our everyday environments and culture.

“It’s a twist on traditional makerspaces because we’re exploring how we create new practices that other people can participate in,” says Cesar Torres, assistant professor of computer science and engineering and director of the Hybrid Atelier. “Our makerspace serves as a nexus between the arts, engineering, and the sciences.”

Shreyosi Endow, who is working toward her PhD in computer engineering with a focus on HCI, became involved with the Hybrid Atelier after

**DuckCheck!**

**WHAT IS IT?**

A resin-printed duck that helps control a coding environment

DuckCheck! is an interactive version of the “rubber duck debugging” concept of software development. The project aims to help novice programmers get into the art and science of programming by providing them with a fun and interactive avatar that can aid them in the process of coding/debugging. The duck delivers visual cues through a customizable LED and provides haptic feedback through an embedded motor. For example, the duck glows red when there is a major error in the code. These cues can help a programmer figure out errors in their debugging process and help them build better programming practices.

**WHAT IS IT?**

A two-sided shawl embedded with capacitive-touch embroidery and a sound meter

Dorukha, which means “two-sided” or “double-faced,” is a type of shawl that has been produced for centuries. In this modern iteration, the dorukha is made from a smock-constructed textile that has been infused with capacitive-touch embroidery and a sound meter that responds to proximity interference through an LED, which is also incorporated into the shawl.
The Hybrid Atelier is close partners with the ecosystem of makerspaces at UTA.

FabLab and the Studios

Located at the Central Library, the FabLab opened in 2014 and is the crown jewel of UTA’s makerspace ecosystem. Open to students, faculty, and staff, the 8,000-square-foot makerspace contains 3D printers, laser cutters, screen printers, kilns, sewing machines, and much more. Unlike other makerspaces on campus, the FabLab doesn’t necessarily prioritize academic use over recreational use. “Our goal is to democratize the access to some of these tools so students can explore,” says Katie Musick Peery, director of the FabLab. “Our primary focus is to be a teaching space in a teaching lab so you don’t have to have any prior experience with any of the tools when you’re coming in.”

Most recently, the FabLab has grown its footprint so that the shop room contains more wood- and metal-working equipment, including traditional hand tools and CNC (computer numeric control) equipment, like a plasma cutter. It has also grown to the Studios, which adds an additional 8,000 square feet of making and learning space. The Studios includes whisper booths for recording instrumentation and vocals; musical instruments like MIDI keyboards, guitars, and microphones; photography studio that can be utilized as green screen rooms; and a motion-capture studio that will allow students to do animation work and special effects. Other components of the space are a robotics and electronics studio with a drone cage and soldering equipment for electronic materials. In addition to the Studios, the Basement also includes a gaming-focused space, adding a social component to the area.

“People often wonder why we have these makerspaces, these creative spaces, in libraries. They think libraries, and they think of books,” says Gretchen Tokay, associate university librarian and head of experiential learning and outreach. “But libraries have always been a place for building community and getting access to resources that may not be affordable or accessible to you in your home.”

Embr

WHAT IS IT?
A hand-embroidered liquid crystal textile display
Consisting of a resistive heating circuit made of conductive thread that activates liquid crystal ink to make dynamic color changes, these embroidered pieces demonstrate how electronics can be meaningful, customizable, and fun. The team behind the project created Embr as an engaging introduction to e-textiles and electronics.

Computer Science and Engineering/Electrical Engineering Makerspace

Open to all students currently enrolled in the College of Engineering, this makerspace provides equipment for academic or personal engineering projects.

Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Design Innovation Lab

The Design Innovation Lab in Woof Hall is an additive and subtractive manufacturing lab that includes eight 3D printers on the additive side. On the subtractive side is a machine shop that includes a mill, lathe, drill press, metal-bending equipment, sander, bench grinder, and more.

College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs Digital Fabrication Lab

The Digital Fabrication Lab is a research facility focused on the testing and production of architectural components, modeling and simulation, and Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM) equipment. The lab is organized into two sections. One is dedicated to small prototyping production with multiple 3D printers and laser cutters; the other is designed for large-format production and holds several pieces of CNC-controlled equipment.

Endow’s main research interests in the field of HCI include creativity support tools, digital fabrication, wearable technology, and assistive technology. While she typically focuses on developing the hardware side of project production, the interdisciplinary nature of the Hybrid Atelier has allowed her to branch out and try new things—and she has used those experiences to expand her research as well.

“I was able to get my hands on a pottery wheel, and as a result, I spent an entire semester researching how to create tutorial systems for tasks, like throwing clay on the wheel,” Endow says. “Makerspaces are great for creating many opportunities to get hands-on experience and learn new skills, which is not only useful for the future, but also keeps the current learning experience inspiring and fun.”

Lan Nguyen, a senior computer science major, joined the Hybrid Atelier after taking Torres’ “Intro to HCI” class. He says the class sparked his interest in interactive design and HCI, and after joining the Hybrid Atelier, that interest turned into a passion for creativity he didn’t know he had.

“A lot of people have creative interests, but they don’t know where to start or how to express them,” he says. “The Atelier is my creative home, and outside meeting Dr. Torres and learning about the makerspace at the Student Research Computing Festival, UTA’s annual research workshop and conference. “The Hybrid Atelier felt like a great fit for my research interests,” she says. “I’ve been working in the lab for the past year and a half now, and it has been a great experience so far.”
of research, I actually come back consistently to do things I never thought I would do.”

For Nguyen, that runs the gamut, including laser printing, woodworking, screen printing, weaving, and more. “Makerspaces are so important because they literally induce creativity, and then they mix creative thinking with engineering logic,” he says. “After I graduate, I’m planning on pursuing a hybrid design and engineer role, and my work at the Atelier is right in line with this. We literally merge art and code.”

As An Nguyen, an undergraduate computer science student, notes, having a place to explore more creative endeavors while developing technical skills at the same time is invaluable for any student. “Regardless of the outcome, the making process allows you to take charge of your learning and is a very empowering experience for students,” she says. “Being part of an uplifting research community has continuously pushed me out of my comfort zone and has led to opportunities and experiences I wouldn’t have had otherwise.”

These intangible lessons are exactly the point of any makerspace, Torres says. And it’s also why they tend to thrive on university campuses. “Makerspaces align with the pedagogy strategies that are all the rage in an experiential learning—it’s thinking through doing,” he says. “Also, the overarching aim is for students to create personally meaningful artifacts, meaning that they are working on personal projects and solving real problems within the lab community. That way, students can actually work on what they want and still learn the skills needed for their coursework.”

Endow agrees, noting that the real applications of what they learn in their classes only serve to expand the boundaries of learning. “I think makerspaces give students a lot more autonomy and freedom in realizing their ideas than the traditional classroom,” she says. “Access to makerspaces is essential to allow students to think of new and unique applications of the concepts they learn in class and get curious about what exists outside of classes.”
Through its Medical Humanities program, UTA is working to humanize medicine.

BY DEVYNN CASE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DANA SMITH
She found herself short of breath in the midst of mundane activities like changing her clothes or walking to class. At the same time, she started experiencing intense pain in her calves. Her visit to the local health clinic uncovered what was a life-or-death scenario. She was 19 when she almost died. At first glance, it would seem that liberal arts and medicine wouldn’t necessarily go hand in hand, but they share a key commonality: humans. That connection is exactly the point of medical humanities, which seeks to bridge the disparate areas to understand problems. Humanities in Medical Education, “edicts the practice of medicine is the heart center around students’ scientific, pre-med, or nursing studies, “ says Dr. Nagarajan. “It’s a unifying factor.” Comprised of instructional programs that explore the ethical, historical, literary, and philosophical dimensions of medicine or health, medical humanities can include education in art, cultural studies, economics, history, literature, anthropology, religion, technology, visual art, and writing. As reported in an extended article published by the Association of American Medical Colleges titled “The Fundamental Role of the Arts and Humanities in Medical Education,” educating the health care workforce with a dose of arts and humanities delivers outcomes that improve the patient experience and their health, and can aid in a clinician’s ability to meet 21st-century needs. “A counsel pre-med students regularly regarding the changing characteristics for the ideal medical school applicant,” says Steven Gallman, founder of UTA’s Medical Humanities program and associate professor of practice. “Many pre-med and health professions students find value in a science major alongside a minor in medical humanities and bioethics, where we teach about hope, about pain and suffering, about empathy. These are all things that I wish I had learned when I was in medical school, but it was never taught. Somehow it’s supposed to be picked up along the way.”

JAIANNA MEGAHAN, now a senior psychology major and pre-med student at UTA, was just 19 when she almost died. She had just begun her college experience, and it unfurled much the same way it does for other freshmen: lots of studying, making new friends, and fun. But somewhere along the way, she started to feel sick.
Students should be trained to be interested in the patient as a whole, rather than as symptoms alone—to be interested in people rather than diseases.

The organization also published the first issue of Stimulus: A Medical Humanities Journal in May 2022. The collection featured prose and visual arts from UTA students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Medical humanities students are offered other opportunities for creative expression, facilitated by an established studio space within UTA’s Philosophy and Humanities Department. Art supplies are available for students to use for free to help integrate the creative and the theoretical.

As the forward for Stimulus, co-written by founding editors Nelson and Thao Thu Nguyen (’20 BS, Biomedical Engineering), reads: “We want to highlight the importance of ethics and empathy in health care providers while simultaneously recognizing that they, just like their patients, are multifaceted. We hope to provide a space for our students and staff, many of whom are current or future health care workers, not only to keep their passions alive, but to find a way to incorporate their art into their roles as providers.”

Growing Importance

Smriti Ghimire, an undergraduate student in pre-medical studies at UTA and member of Mavericks for Medical Humanities, believes it will benefit her to broaden her viewpoint beyond a single discipline. “You can connect anything back to medical humanities,” says Ghimire. “One of my early interests in medical humanities stemmed from its presence in our daily lives, especially during the pandemic.”

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a once-in-a-century crisis that has forced health care professionals and educators to look beyond the traditional tools of contemporary medicine. Now more than ever, scientific knowledge must be woven together with emotional intelligence, critical-thinking skills, and an understanding of social context. The significance of COVID-19 has forced both health care professionals and those that have pursued a career in physician’s or a dentist’s or a nurse’s professional life—it’s not just for the benefit of their work treating patients, but also for their own lives.\n
"The Future of Health Care"

The future is wide open for Mavericks who pursue medical humanities training on their path to becoming health care providers. The skills can translate easily into medical school, public health departments, community services, health education, or even in research laboratories. Essentially any profession that was created to help someone who is struggling can benefit from providers who have pursued medical humanities as part of their training. "Our liberal arts courses combined with UTA’s amazing programs across disciplines like science, nursing, knitting, and social work are a huge strength," says Cavanagh. "Combining this critical mass of experts from across the colleges creates an inspiring, unique, and timely experience for our students."

The interdisciplinary connections between campus units are able to bring students who wouldn’t typically be in liberal arts classes into arts and humanities classrooms. As the Medical Humanities program grows, UTA administrators aim to grow its value for pre-professional students and students in other fields alike. "We hear from colleagues across the medical field how important the skills that they learn here can be," says Cavanagh. "That human compassion and understanding how things like the arts can play a role in a physician’s or a dentist’s or a nurse’s professional life—it’s not just for the benefit of their work treating patients, but also for their own lives."

“Students should be trained to be interested in the patient as a whole, rather than as symptoms alone—to be interested in people rather than diseases.”
UTA has been awarded a $1 million matching gift from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation in support of the University’s new School of Social Work/College of Nursing and Health Innovation Smart Hospital Building.

The gift serves as a dollar-for-dollar challenge grant with the goal of inspiring alumni as well as other members of the Maverick community to take part in bringing the state-of-the-art facility to life.

Help us meet the match!

To learn more, visit uta.edu/giving/impact/ssw-sh.

1971
Laxmi Mrig (MS, Electrical Engineering) and his wife, Raj, endowed a $100,000 graduate fellowship for UTA electrical engineering students.

1974
Mitch Womble (BA, Health, PE, and Recreation) retired in 2009 after 34 years in the photography and microfilm industry. In 1994, he retired after a 26-year career in the U.S. Naval Reserves.

1975
Tom Moore (BA, History) has been president and senior consultant of the Thomas R. Moore Executive Search LLC, a retained search firm serving the nonprofit community nationwide, for 32 years.

1980
Lloyd “Loi” D. Khuc (BS, Electrical Engineering) retired in November 2020 after working at Motorola Semiconductor, Lockheed Missile & Space Co., and serving 16 years with the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Armaments Center at Picatinny Arsenal, New Jersey. He received the Army's Research and Development Achievement Award for technical excellence in 2010 and was granted six patents over the years.

1982
Michele Wong Krause (BA, Political Science) has been elected chair of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit board of directors.

1984
Ron Berggren (MBA) has been promoted from controller to CFO at Palomar Modular Buildings in DeSoto, Texas. Palomar designs and manufactures advanced modular buildings.
1986
Ken Cummins Hall
(RS, Civil Engineering) is a vice president and south-west regional manager at Hazen and Sawyer, an environmental engineering firm in Fort Worth. Hall’s 35-year career includes multiple global and regional management and technology roles. He serves on the advisory board of the UTA College of Engineering.

1990
Toska Medlock Lee
(BA, Communication), owner of The Mythical Group & Co., received the 2021 President’s Volunteer Service Award silver medalion. Lee’s service and engagement activities include community building through Project Unity, voter and education awareness, COVID-19 relief through food giveaways and school drives, and breaking barriers for the underserved.

1991
Sam Mahrouq
(BA, Journalism) threw the first pitch during UTA Night at the Rangers. Mahrouq is chairman and CEO at M2G Group. In 2019, UTA’s College of Business dedicated the Sam Mahrouq Financial Markets Lab.

1996
Mark Dvorak
(Mild, Teaching, ’83 BM, Music) retired after 30 years of teaching music at Holiday Heights Elementary School in North Richland Hills, Texas. He directed the Husky Harmonics, a fourth- and fifth-grade choir, and he also sang during the College of Education holiday reception from 2000-20.

1999
Lee Mulcahy
(PhD, Humanitie, ’88 BA, French) exhibited paintings and sculptures on Africa Water Wells—a clean water well mission in Kenya started by Mulcahy’s late father—at UTA’s Gallery West in late 2021. The installation at Gallery West celebrated the ministry’s plans for a 10th water well out an existing clinic in Temitwak Hospital. Mulcahy is based in Aspen, Colorado.

2000
Theresa O’Donnell
(MPA) has been appointed the director of planning and general manager of planning, urban design, and sustainability for the city of Vancouver, Washington.

2001
Lee Mulcahy
(PhD, Humanitie, ’88 BA, French) exhibited paintings and sculptures on Africa Water Wells—a clean water well mission in Kenya started by Mulcahy’s late father—at UTA’s Gallery West in late 2021. The installation at Gallery West celebrated the ministry’s plans for a 10th water well out an existing clinic in Temitwak Hospital. Mulcahy is based in Aspen, Colorado.

2002
Linda Plank
(PhD, Public and Urban Administration) was appointed dean of Baylor University’s Louise Herrington School of Nursing in Dallas, where she is a clinical associate professor. Previously she was interim dean and se- nior associate dean of aca-demic affairs.

2007
Michael Talley
(BA, Sports Management) has been named se- nior associate athletic director at the McKinney Economic Development Corporation. Previously, he was the director of eco-nomic development for Denton County and for the city of Kent, Texas.

2009
Jennifer Ellison
(MBA, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies) is chief of staff for Midlothian ISD. She began her career as a middle school teacher and coach in Arlington, Lancaster, and Bryan, all in Texas. She was also an assistant principal in the Arlington ISD. She served as the dean of instruction at South Gran Prairie High School, chancellor at the Grand Prairie Collegiate Institute, executive direc-tor of secondary curricu-lum at Southwest ISD, and director of high school programs at Palo Alto College in San Antonio.

2006
Anthony Sorola
(MBA, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies) is the associate superintendent of opera-tions for the Ector County ISD in Texas. Previously, he was an elementary bilingual teacher and as-sistant superintendent for Dallas ISD and interim superintendent at Donna ISD.

2010
Joseph Chacon
(MPA) has been named chief of the Austin Police Department. Chacon previously served as interim chief since March 2021. He has 29 years of law en-forcement experience.

2011
Esperanza Sanchez
(BSN) is a nurse on the Rapid Response Team at the George-Washington University Hospital and a lawyer for the U.S. Department of Labor.

2012
Brian Joseph Kentera
(MPA) is a certification officer at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth. He is a member of Board Build, a nonprofit organi-zation focused on community stewardship.

2013
Peggy Espanza
(MBA, Management; ’16 BBA, Accounting) has been named the new CFO at Texas Trust Credit Union. She is a 26-year Texas Trust veteran who began her career in 1995 as a part-time teller.

2015
Samuel Lackey
(MS, Exercise Science and Health Fitness) is the new director of football sports performance at California State University in Fresno. Previously he was head strength and condition-ing coach at Northern Arizona University.

2016
Amina Taj
(MArch) is an archi-tectural designer at Tesla in Fremont, California. She develops designs, im-proves, and articulates fu-ture manufacturing/pro-duction design strategies for a wide range of Tesla’s project areas. Previously, she was design coor-dinator at HGA Architects and Engineers in San Jose, California.

2016
Krista Torralva
(BA, Journalism) is a re-porter covering primarily Dallas County criminal courts for the Dallas Morning News. She first joined the newspaper as an intern on the business desk in 2013. Previously she was an education re-porter for the San Antonio Express-News and a court reporter for the Orlando Sentinel and the Corpus Christi Caller-Times.

My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.

“My business degree helped me build my insurance agency, and we are now in our 44th year in business. Go Mavs!”

— EMORY ESTATES III
(73 BBA)
Owner and President of the Esquire Insurance Group LLC

Intermediate School in White Settlement, Texas.
Leaving a Legacy

Alumnus supports dreams of future generations of Mavericks

Like many students at UTA, Edward Perez, Jr. (’75 BS, Mathematics) completed his coursework while working full time to support his family. Thanks to his hard work, he went on to have a successful career prior to retiring from AT&T.

Based on his experience balancing personal responsibilities with a desire to pursue higher education, Perez wanted to find a way to provide scholarship support to students studying the physical sciences or nursing while employed. To accomplish this goal, he created a bequest that named UTA as the sole beneficiary of his IRA account upon his passing.

Thanks to his foresight and generosity, UTA was granted more than $1.5 million—the value of the IRA account—when he died in 2018. The funds have created two endowed scholarships in honor of Perez and his late wife, Dorothy. Scholarships are a critical resource that help UTA recruit and retain the best and the brightest students from around the country and the world while advancing them along their career paths. Thanks to Perez’s generosity, promising scholars are receiving the financial assistance they need to achieve their academic dreams and become the next generation of leaders.

To learn more about gifts of retirement assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact assets like IRAs or other planned giving options, visit uta.giftlegacy.com or contact.

2019

Branhon Heake (MArch, ’17 BS, Architecture) was promoted to professional designer as announced by BOKA Powell, an architecture interior design, planning and strategic services firm with offices in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin.

John Wheeler Jr. (’69 EMBA) is a customer success manager at Allergy in Plano, Texas.

2020

Megan Cardona (BA, Broadcasting) is a service journalism reporter at the Star-Telegram. Previously, she was a reporter for Community Impact Newspaper in Pflugerville and Hutto, Texas and at The Shorthorn.

2021

Alexia Christine (BS, Interior Design) won first place in the Commercial Student Design Category at 2021 Celebrating Design Day by the American Society of Interior Designers. This award recognized the NEXT Steelcase Project completed in fall 2020 at Interior Design Studio with Barbara Marini, director of interior design.

Rocio Hernandez (BS, Interior Design) was also a winner of the 2021 FORM Student Innovation Competition.

Maria Rodriguez (BS, Interior Design) was the second-place winner of the 2021 FORM Student Innovation Competition.

For more information on scholarships or to make a gift, please contact the Development Office at (817) 272-2344 or giftandestateplanning@uta.edu.

Chelsea Yerger (BS, Exercise Science) has been promoted to fitness manager at 24 Hour Fitness in The Colony, Texas, after more than three years as a master coach.

Amy Pace (BS, Exercise Science) has been promoted to fitness manager at 24 Hour Fitness in The Colony, Texas, after more than three years as a master coach.

Susan Grafton (MSN, Nursing Administration, 72 BSN) works for the California Department of Justice in the Division of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse, working side by side with special agents to conduct investigations and serving as the team’s medical expert in criminal prosecution.

Brayden Garcia (BA, Journalism) is an intern for the education lab at the Dallas Morning News. He previously was a freelance reporter covering Arlington.

Brandt Wood (BA, Kinesiology) is general manager of World Gym Burleson and a certified personal trainer. A former UTA baseball player, he specializes in baseball and softball programming.

Ben Young (BS2, Kinesiology) won Experimental Physiology’s prestigious Early Career Author Prize for 2020-21 for his research on blood pressure regulation in Black men. The paper was based on research conducted in the Human Neural Cardiovascular Control Lab at UTA.

Chelsea Yerger (MSW) is employed at NEXT Steelcase as an intern. She is a member of Ebony Alliance Advocates for African Americans with disabilities.

Rocio Hernandez (BA, Advertising, and Public Relations) is the insider membership producer for KSAT-12 in San Antonio, Texas. Previously, she was an intern at the International Center for Journalists and a fellow at The Texas Tribune.

Alexia Koltes (BS, Interior Design) was the second-place winner of the 2021 FORM Student Innovation Competition.

For more information on scholarships or to make a gift, please contact the Development Office at (817) 272-2344 or giftandestateplanning@uta.edu.
IN MEMORIAM

ALUMNI

Milton D. Lamm
('65 BS, Mechanical Engineering) 82, July 26, 2021, Arlington.

Clayton Gary Dye
('68 BS, Microbiology) 79, Nov. 16, 2021, Arlington.

Don G. Parvin
('68 BS, Electrical Engineering) 86, Oct. 9, 2021, Rockwall, Texas.

William “Bill” Donald Taylor Jr.

Patricia Harlan
LeBlanc
('71 BA, English) 97, Nov. 13, 2021, Denison, Texas.

Sheila Faye
Richburg Douthit
('72 MA, Political Science) 77, Dec. 2, 2021, Lakeway, Texas.

Beverly Phyllis
Grogan
('72 BA, English) 71, Dec. 7, 2021, Grand Prairie, Texas.

Robert “Bob” Gardner Hunt
('73 MSW) 85, Aug. 22, 2021, Pearland, Texas.

Sally Jo Panulli
Curby

Joseph
“Phil” Lee
('78 BBA, Management) 66, Nov. 17, 2021, Edgewood, Texas.

Eric Martin
Bianco
('79 BBA, Finance) 68, Sept. 20, 2021, Aisle, Texas.

Michael Douglas Lane
('80 BBA, Marketing) 65, Aug. 27, 2021, Irving, Texas.

Vernon Hyliard
Sorgee Jr.
('80 MS, '76 BS, Civil Engineering, '85 BS, Physics), 81, June 24, 2021, Phoenix, Arizona.

Walt Schaepker
('81 BA, Economics) 89, Oct. 21, 2021, Lubbock, Texas.

Judy Lynn
Bush Strowd
('83 RN) 65, Nov. 9, 2021, Granbury, Texas.

Mark Edward Kerr

Debbie Turner
McIroy

Daniel Martin
Told
('83 BBA, Management) 72, Oct. 31, 2021, Quinlan, Texas.

Duane Marvin
Weast
('84 BBA, Finance/Real Estate) 63, Aug. 5, 2021, Fort Worth.

Jerry William
Chevalier
('85 MSN) 68, Aug. 31, 2021, Dallas.

Jon Charles
Turner
('92 BA, Music) 55, Dec. 4, 2021, Terrell, Texas.

Lori Anne Geary
('93 BSN) 51, Oct. 29, 2021, Bedford, Texas.

Penny Lynne
Fletcher
('00 MS, Education) 54, Oct. 8, 2021, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Lisa Michelle
Robb Frank
('03 BA, English) 41, Dec. 20, 2021, Fort Worth.

Elizabeth
Marie Moore

John Frederic
Montalto

Miranda
Elizabeth
Mitchell Meckel

David “Barry” Dowd
85, Aug. 20, 2021, Jonesboro, Arkansas. Coach Barry Dowd was head basketball coach for Arlington State College from 1966-1976, and he led the team to Division 1 status in 1967-68. In his first season at UTA, he was named Texas College Coach of the Year. Dowd also served as president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches, and in the 1990s, became athletic director for Arkansas State University.

Kimberly Burden
Milbauer

Michael Gao-
Truong Nguyen
('22 BS, Exercise Science) 21, Oct. 16, 2021, Arlington

STUDENT

Whitney
Nicoles Seibell
23, Oct. 11, 2021, Arlington. She was a senior majoring in business and finance.

LeeAnn Dumas
Hopper
68, Dec. 19, 2021, Justin, Texas.

Charles A. Lyes
84, Aug. 31, 2021, Terrell, Texas.

Ann McFadyen
Millican
85, Aug. 12, 2021, Fort Worth.

Kevin Sloan
85, Oct. 28, 2021, Dallas.

IN MEMORIAM

Robert “Bob” Gardner Hunt
('73 MSW) 85, Aug. 22, 2021, Pearland, Texas.

Sally Jo Panulli
Curby

Joseph
“Phil” Lee
('78 BBA, Management) 66, Nov. 17, 2021, Edgewood, Texas.

Eric Martin
Bianco
('79 BBA, Finance) 68, Sept. 20, 2021, Aisle, Texas.

Michael Douglas Lane
('80 BBA, Marketing) 65, Aug. 27, 2021, Irving, Texas.

Vernon Hyliard
Sorgee Jr.
('80 MS, '76 BS, Civil Engineering, '85 BS, Physics), 81, June 24, 2021, Phoenix, Arizona.

Walt Schaepker
('81 BA, Economics) 89, Oct. 21, 2021, Lubbock, Texas.

Judy Lynn
Bush Strowd
('83 RN) 65, Nov. 9, 2021, Granbury, Texas.

Mark Edward Kerr

Debbie Turner
McIroy

Daniel Martin
Told
('83 BBA, Management) 72, Oct. 31, 2021, Quinlan, Texas.

Duane Marvin
Weast
('84 BBA, Finance/Real Estate) 63, Aug. 5, 2021, Fort Worth.

Jerry William
Chevalier
('85 MSN) 68, Aug. 31, 2021, Dallas.

Jon Charles
Turner
('92 BA, Music) 55, Dec. 4, 2021, Terrell, Texas.

Lori Anne Geary
('93 BSN) 51, Oct. 15, 2021, Aisle, Texas.

Penny Lynne
Fletcher
('00 MS, Education) 54, Oct. 8, 2021, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Lisa Michelle
Robb Frank
('03 BA, English) 41, Dec. 20, 2021, Fort Worth.

Elizabeth
Marie Moore

John Frederic
Montalto

Miranda
Elizabeth
Mitchell Meckel

David “Barry” Dowd
85, Aug. 20, 2021, Jonesboro, Arkansas. Coach Barry Dowd was head basketball coach for Arlington State College from 1966-1976, and he led the team to Division 1 status in 1967-68. In his first season at UTA, he was named Texas College Coach of the Year. Dowd also served as president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches, and in the 1990s, became athletic director for Arkansas State University.

Kimberly Burden
Milbauer

Michael Gao-
Truong Nguyen
('22 BS, Exercise Science) 21, Oct. 16, 2021, Arlington

STUDENT

Whitney
Nicoles Seibell
23, Oct. 11, 2021, Arlington. She was a senior majoring in business and finance.

LeeAnn Dumas
Hopper
68, Dec. 19, 2021, Justin, Texas.

Charles A. Lyes
84, Aug. 31, 2021, Terrell, Texas.

Ann McFadyen
Millican
85, Aug. 12, 2021, Fort Worth.

Kevin Sloan
85, Oct. 28, 2021, Dallas.

CREATE YOUR LEGACY

Through an estate gift, you can establish your legacy at The University of Texas at Arlington and influence our future.

Visit uta.gifitlegacy.com to learn more.
We are also learning that we can identify people who have a particular difficulty controlling and sustaining their attention via pupillometry. We believe these individual differences will give us insight into the brain systems that underlie clinically significant cognitive deficits and cognitive aging, and thus might be targets for intervention. Specifically, we are working on a theory tethering pupillary fluctuations to differential functioning of the locus coeruleus-norepinephrine system, a nucleus in the brainstem that projects densely into almost all areas of the brain. We believe this system may be crucial for the regulation of attention and its effect on memory.

Much of our work so far has focused on healthy young adults. But in a collaborative project with Hunter Ball, assistant professor of psychology and colleagues at Washington University in St. Louis, we use pupillometry to understand how attention changes as we enter older adulthood. In one study, we gave younger (age 18 to 30) and older adults (age 65 and plus) a 30-minute reaction time task. This task typically yields a vigilance decrement—people get slower over time because they cannot sustain their attention to it. Interestingly, we found that older adults did not show a vigilance decrement, and their performance was more stable over time than younger adults. Further, older adults’ pupillations indicated they exerted greater attentional effort, but those dilations happened significantly later in time than younger adults’. Collectively, these results support a processing speed theory of cognitive aging, but that does not necessarily mean we cannot control our attention as effectively. In fact, our ability to sustain our attention might even increase as we get older.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Matthew Robison is in his second year as an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology. Before coming to UTA, he completed his PhD in psychology at the University of Oregon and two years of postdoctoral training at Arizona State University. He was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, and he lives in Dallas with his wife, Emily, and their two-year-old son, Henry.
Officers of Eta Kappa Nu’s Epsilon Mu Chapter—Mike Sowers, Danny Bonham, and Sami Ajan—explain equipment to other members. An Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society, Eta Kappa Nu founded its Epsilon Mu Chapter at UTA in 1966. Epsilon Mu is active still today at the University, providing professional, technical, and academic opportunities to electrical and computer engineering students.