

CAMPUS GUIDE

The Academic Support Center provides free math and writing services, guidance to all Gators, past or present

BY ALLISON NOLASCO

The UHD's Writing and Reading Center and the Center for Math and Statistics Services are on the ninth floor, room N925, of the One Main Building.

These services are part of the Academic Support Center, which offers assistance that students, staff, and alumni can use at no cost.

Students can schedule appointments to use the tutoring and writing center by either calling the center or setting one up on the Navigate app. The center also accepts walk-ins.

Tutors are composed of UHD faculty and students, and most are familiar with UHD course assignments.

Students can receive

assistance in any writing assignment and several early degree math assignments. The tutors work with the students to edit writing assignments and/or help a student grasp various math concepts for their classes.

"We want to expand the staff members and maybe have some peer tutors, not just faculty who are tutoring," Jema Pantoja, a UHD alum and current interim assistant director for the ASC said.

"We are trying to expand the types of writing and math we tutor. We want to expand [our resources offered to] APA, journalistic writing, how to do cover letters and resumes."

Pantoja talked about how while all the math tutors are



Students Amy Nguyen and Yasmeen Ammourah use the center to study together.

Credit: Diana Ambrosio

faculty, the writing tutors are all current or previously enrolled UHD students with undergraduate or graduate degrees, many of whom are licensed, professional tutors.

"We are always recruiting

both writing and math tutors and they can find employment information on our webpage," Pantoja added.

The expansion will benefit a lot of people. Many students are unaware of the

ASC or do not know where to go.

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STUDENT STUDIES

UHD alumna Mouchaty discusses 'How to Talk to a Nudibranch' in art exhibition

BY MADIHA HUSSAIN

Nudibranchs, also known as sea slugs, are marine molluscs without shells. Most people have gone their entire lives without encountering a single nudibranch. So, why are these seemingly insignificant creatures the subject of artist Suzette Mouchaty's artwork?

Mouchaty explained that her Nudibranch sculptures were a response to a New York Times opinion piece about environmental problems.

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A sculpture of a real life Nudibranch Mouchaty once encountered. Courtesy: Rick Wells

STUDENT CLUBS

New student organization welcomes everyone to celebrate Latinx students

BY INDIRA ZALDIVAR

After learning that UHD did not have a student organization solely dedicated to celebrating Latinx students and teaching about Latinx culture, sophomore David Mesa Ventura started a new club that has welcomed over 120 members since its creation a month ago.

The brand-new Student Organization for Latinxs, is here to "create a safe and educational space where everybody, Latinx or non-Latinx students, can come together,

learn from each other [and] the Latinx heritage," according to Mesa Ventura, the club president.

The term Latinx is a gender-neutral or nonbinary alternative to Latinos and Latinas.

The 19-year-old was inspired to dedicate a community for himself, his friends, and current and future generations to learn to be more inclusive.

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Credit: I.Z.

Faculty spotlight 2



Credit: G.O.

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# Professor Richard Conde highlights value of service in making connections, building future relations

BY INDIRA ZALDIVAR

Expert on inside sales performance, leadership, and operations, Richard Conde, the “Inside Sales Geek,” left a higher-paying corporate tenure to overcome his “mid-life crisis.”

As an executive, Conde led mid to large inside sales operations of up to 400 inside sales agents and leaders, increased sales revenue from \$65 million to more than \$100 million in three years with fewer inside sales agents, decreased annual inside sales agent turnover from mid 60% to 28%, and improved employee satisfaction from 3.6 to 4.6 based on the Gallup Survey.

Contrary to the mid-life crisis cliché involving convertibles and such, Conde questioned where he could mark more difference. He remembered the first-generation graduates that came to work in his booming department who were “never quite as prepared” as individuals who were in households where their parents or previous generations had a college education.

“There was always something missing,” Conde said. “It wasn’t hard work. It was understanding that corporate game.”

The combination of wanting to help first-generation college students and explore his research ideas derived from his successful experience in the industry inspired him to become a university professor. He left his executive job to become a full-time Ph.D. student at the University of North Texas, where he was once mistaken as the professor for being the oldest in the program.

“I left it all behind, corporate, the compensation, the admiration, everything you are when you lead 400 people, and I became a college student.”

Three years later, UHD stood out from the three



Credit: Indira Zaldivar

other universities that offered him a position as a professor for its designation as a Hispanic-serving institution and enrollment of many first-generation college students. In addition, the family-oriented sales expert wanted to teach at a university in Texas to stay close to his family.

“I just felt a calling for the university,” Conde said. “It’s purpose and mission to students, and I thought I could make a difference at [UHD] versus others.”

While Conde takes pride in how he positively influenced employee engagement and their success, Conde said he is accomplishing greater things with UHD students. He is a beloved assistant professor in the MBA program and the only full-time academic inside sales researcher. In addition, his research has been published in the *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Business and Industrial Mar-*

*keting*, and the *International Journal of Higher Education*.

“Success for me, more than anything, is about helping my students move forward in their lives,” he said.

Conde has formed a profound connection with his students in just four years at UHD. For example, UHD MBA student Brian Thorne said he is fortunate to have had Conde for all his concentration courses in business development and sales management. Thorne said he is more patient, thoughtful, and a better listener, collaborator, and presenter because of how Conde leads his classes.

“Classes led by Dr. Conde have given me the confidence to ask difficult questions and share uncomfortable answers and the tact to do so tastefully,” Thorne said. “I am without a doubt a better salesperson because of Dr. Conde, a more capable

leader because of Dr. Conde, and it is not a stretch to say I am a better person, husband, and father because of Dr. Conde.”

Conde transferred the servant-leader approach that made him a successful leader in corporate to the classroom. As a professor, he needs to be a resource and help students by first getting to know them and understanding what is important to them. He always strives to learn from his students. He treasures the thoughts and feedback students give him at the end of the program.

“I always save those things because that’s why I chose to do this.”

He has connected many of his students to contacts and careers, helping them with their resumes and bolstering their communications and leadership skills. All his students have the lifetime opportunity to network in the “Conde Cohort” group on

LinkedIn with 110 members.

“The ability to build relationships [is] what helps you stand out in corporate America or any business,” Conde said. “By creating relationships, you are serving others.”

“It’s really an investment in your future. It may not pay off today, but you’ll be surprised in two or three, or even a year from now, you’ll need something, or someone will need something, and they will think about you, which will help you be successful.”

Like many UHD students, Conde is a first-generation college graduate who worked three jobs while obtaining his BBA. He immigrated to the U.S. from Bogota, Colombia, with his mom and two older sisters. He thanks God for his early life in Earlsboro, Oklahoma. The diverse 200 people in the small town set the foundation for being curious and learning about others.

He decided to pursue higher education as a senior in high school, working with his stepfather installing roof shingles on a sunny June day. His older sister set the example for him to pursue an MBA.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, Conde wants others to learn that Latinos are a complex, diverse group of people with different layers, beliefs, and commonalities bound by a cultural script grounded in family and faith.

“The beautiful thing about Latinos is that we’re all different and think differently, but we’re grounded by common beliefs that are very important to us,” he said.

Without a doubt, Conde looks forward to more years at UHD, where he hopes to leave a legacy for his students.

“If I can touch a few lives, then I think I have accomplished what God wants me to do.”

# GatorServe students volunteer to clean up North Houston locations

BY DIANA AMBROSIO

On Sept. 10, Gators and community members came together on GatorServe day to beautify and clean up areas in the Northline community. GatorServe is a National Day of Service held twice a year for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and in remembrance of Sept. 11.

UHD Mariachi Los Caimanes performed the national anthem to open the event. UHD President Loren Blanchard and council member Karla Cisneros spoke at the event.

Blanchard mentioned that beautification of campuses is essential.

“When stepping foot on campus, everything really needs to grab you to really help you to know that this a welcoming and beautiful environment that is dedicated to the education of people,” Blanchard said.

UHD looks for plenty of opportunities to partner with community members to give back. It is important to show that they care about community and should be at the core of what we do.

“It is more than just community service,” Blanchard said about the meaning of

the event. “It comes from the heart and from the fiber of who you are as people, the willingness to help and give to others is the representation of this day.”

During the event, people were divided into three groups to work at each location. Volunteers went to Farias Early Childhood Center, Durkee Elementary School, and Northline Park.

The volunteers spent the day picking out weeds, pulling plants, and mulching areas. The garden areas of the school were cleaned to allow students to plant items later.

These areas are used to instruct students about the

cycles of water, plants, and butterflies as well as other things. Maintenance will be kept up by parent-volunteers and students.

During an interview with KHOU, Principal Maria Nevarez-Solis of Farias ECC expressed her gratitude towards all the volunteers. She shared her amazement at the transformation the school had after the cleaning.

“It felt nice to help the school by cleaning it up,” UHD student Cristina Ambrosio said about the service event. “Also, knowing that the beds are going to be filled with new plants that would help educate the kids is exciting.”



Cristina Ambrosio poses while gardening Credit: Diana Ambrosio

are also planning a writing retreat. It’s a portfolio dash where students can come by with their portfolios and talk to the tutors.” Pantoja said.

The ASC is a vital resource anyone, students, or staff can use. Anyone who needs help polishing their assignment can use the writing

center. If anyone needs help with math assignments, they can also go to the CMSS.

The center is there to support students. If anyone feels shy or intimidated about going to the center, the center is there to make you feel welcome.

## ASC

FROM PAGE 1

The website for CMSS has a list of available math courses and lists the types of writing services they offer. They currently have tutors for beginner math and statistics. While there are no tutors for upper-level classes, the available tutors do their best to assist students.

The ASC is planning events to help students familiarize themselves with the center and its services. Some of the events include weekly tabling events and writing retreats. The center is also planning to do classroom visits and an open house.

“Around November, we will have a student open house where we provide food, and students can come over and visit the center. We

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# THE DATELINE

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The Dateline is the official student newspaper of the University of Houston-Downtown. Since its first issue in 1982, The Dateline is proud to be “Student Run since Volume One.” We strive to meet the needs of a growing university as well as the growing metropolitan city that surrounds us.

## Submission Policy

The Dateline staff consists of students from UHD who complete all tasks required to produce the newspaper, which serves all UHD campuses. The opinions and commentaries expressed within reflect the views of the contributing writers. No opinions expressed in The Dateline reflect the viewpoints of UHD, its administration, or students.

The Dateline reserves the right to edit or modify submissions for the sake of clarity, content, grammar, or space limitations. All submissions become property of The Dateline and may not be returned. All paid writers must be currently enrolled students at UHD. All paid writers must also complete vendor registration with the University of Houston System prior to contributing. Press releases, story ideas, news tips and suggestions are always welcomed. We encourage all students to contribute.

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## Geoscience students apply paleo skills over summer excursion

BY RYAN PRICE

In July of 2022, several geoscience students from UHD were given the opportunity to attend a paleontological excavation just outside Holbrook, Arizona.

A little over 900 miles away, just outside of the city of Holbrook, Arizona, UHD's very own Professor Jeffrey W. Martz has been excavating the remains of ancient animals from the distant past. These fossilized remains date to the Late Triassic, around 213 million years ago, and are now embedded in the rock. Armed with rock hammers, icepicks, dental tools, and the humble paintbrush, several UHD geoscience students endeavored to expose these creatures in a multiple week, cross-state, adventure.

The trip began, and ended, with a day and a half road trip beginning at the UHD campus and ending at the field camp outside Holbrook.

The team spent their early mornings and late evenings

at the campsite.

During the day, the team hiked one-fourth of a mile to the excavation site. The site, which consists of a small tarp used for temporary breaks and a depression consisting of various elevations about two meters wide, was where all of the hard work was done.

The excavation itself consisted of the team slowly removing small quantities of rock using picks and then brushing away the debris. When a find was made, it would quickly be coated in a thin covering of special glue called vinac. When the find was ready to be removed from the site, it would be covered in a plaster jacket, measured into the grid system, and then taken back to camp.

The work is hard and can be tedious, especially when the weather hits triple digits, but it was well worth it.

"There was no feeling better than returning from a day's work and feeling

accomplished while looking forward to the next day," said geology student Rose Campos about the experience.

This particular situation happened often as various fossilized remains were extracted during the two-and-a-half week period.

Dozens of specimens representing several prehistoric genera were recovered. These included isolated teeth, limb bones, ribs, and armor plates called osteoderms. These finds range from bones less than one centimeter to blocks of rock that weigh well over 300 pounds.

Not only was the trip productive for its fossil finds, it was also productive for the students involved.

Three UHD students attended the excursion: Acenith Claassen, Rose Campos, and Ryan Price. On the experience, Campos said that she could not refuse the opportunity that the trip gave her for her career plans.

"It may sound strange, but when I uncovered my



From Left: Dr. Jeffrey Martz, then Rose Campos, Acenith Claassen, and Ryan Price Courtesy: Ryan Price

first osteoderm, I teared up a bit. It was amazing to witness that small part of our history," Claassen stated about her experience. "The experience gave me a real world and tangible view of what I have been studying."

Campos shared this view as well, "The excavation trip gave me [experience] and motivated me in my career goals."

The team also spent time studying the geology of the surrounding area which

included visits to Meteor Crater, Arizona and Grand Canyon National Park.

Overall, the trip was a great success and all of the students that attended agreed that they would venture back out if given the opportunity.

While the students begin their semester, and the specimens are prepared and placed into storage, the sense of discovery still lingers over Arizona and the prehistoric past that yearns to be uncovered in the coming years.

## LATINX

FROM PAGE 1

"A lot of us are immigrants or immigrant-born, [or first-generation students], so we struggle together."

He pointed out that while the campus is very diverse already, people are not connected and are "segregated by choice."

"People are just scared to ask the hard questions and learn from each other," he added. "SOL can be a safe place for you to ask whatever questions you have with no judgement."

Through SOL, Mesa Ventura wants to leave a legacy of open-mindedness and acceptance of Latinx culture for younger generations to expand on for many years.

"Hopefully at some point my dream would be for [the club] not to be there to educate people but to just celebrate us to the point that we are welcome no matter what," Mesa Ventura said. "We don't have to educate people on why we should be accepted, why we belong here, why we have to fight for our rights in this state."

Besides his role at SOL, he is a student worker at Student Activities and serves as the vice president of SAGA as of spring. Mesa Ventura credited his SAGA Faculty Adviser John Hudson, who also directs the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, for pointing out during summer meetings the missing student organization. The last student organization similar to SOL was the Latin-American Student Services Organization roughly 20 years ago.

After gathering Hudson's full support, Mesa Ventura first proposed the idea during SAGA meetings and later extended it out to everyone with the creation of the GroupMe chat and Instagram in mid-August. By the end of the first week of school, the club had all the officers and registered as a student organization with Student Activities.

Club Treasurer Danyelle Lopez said SOL provides an environment and community where she feels safe embracing her heritage and sharing it with others.

"I have always been questioned about my ethnicity, culture, and heritage

because of the way I look," Lopez said. "So, I was more than happy to join a community where I was not going to need to prove my identity as a member of the Latinx community."

As an officer, she wants to provide a safe community where everyone can express their culture, heritage, emotions, and collaborating with different clubs for "magnificent" events. Her favorite thing about Latinx heritage is getting a better idea of all the cultures each Latinx may come from like, food, events, and beliefs.

"The way I celebrate Hispanic Heritage is by eating my favorite dishes, listening to my culture's music more than I usually do, spend more time with my family, and remembering Hispanic heroes," she added.

SOL has virtual educational sessions planned in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. In addition, SOL will participate in the open forum on the state of the Latinx student at UHD on Sept. 28. After gathering funding, the club plans to host and participate in social events for the spring semester.



Credit: Indira Zaldivar



Credit: Indira Zaldivar

"The Latinx community, we are everywhere," Mesa Ventura said. "We are women. We are men. We are

queers. We are Afro-Latinos. We are everything, so we are going to celebrate everything."

# Houston delegate Sheila Jackson visits Pakistan as third of nation is under water, thousands dead, over 30M displaced

BY SHAHERYAR KHAN

U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Tx, traveled to Pakistan on Sept. 5 to meet with government officials and offer aid to the victims of the catastrophic floods.

Lee Jackson was accompanied by Rep. Al Green, D-Tx, and Rep. Tom Suozzi, D-NY.

This was the country's first visit to Pakistan following a strained relationship with the last presidential

administration, indicating the U.S.'s interest in rebuilding ties with the South Asian nation.

"As far as the eye could see, I saw water," Jackson Lee said on Twitter. "We saw people still racing to helicopters to be rescued as well as met and listened to the men, women and children who experienced the raging deadly waters."

The floods started on June 14 and have affected a third of the nation, killing more

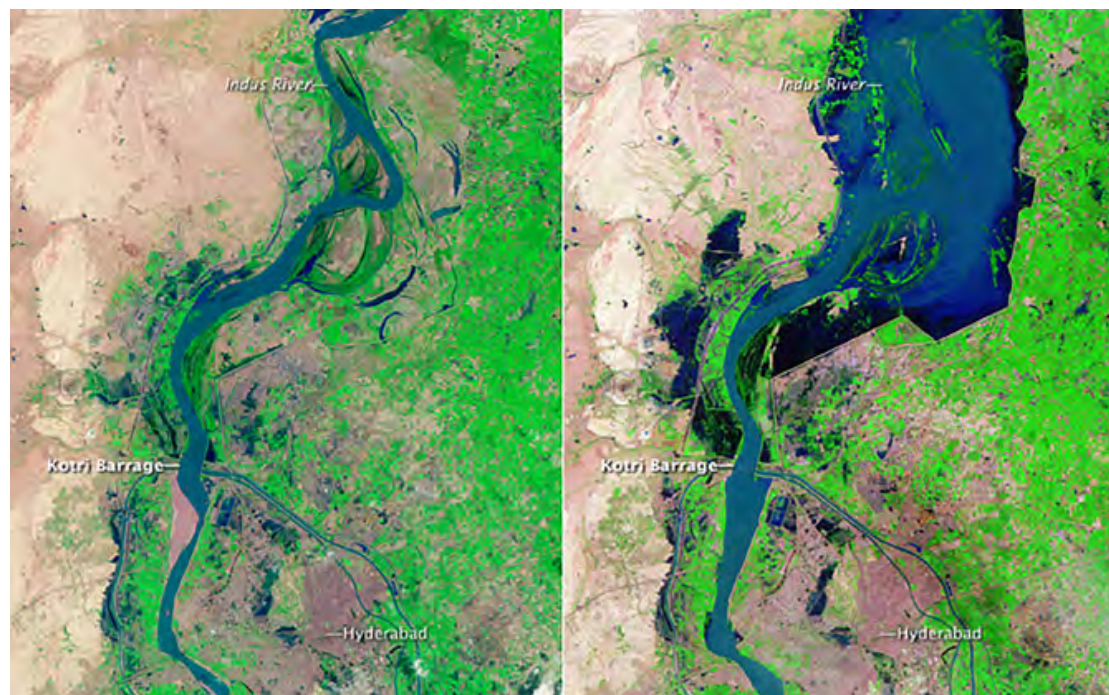
than 1,300 people and displacing more than 30 million people from their homes.

The cause of these floods is the heavy monsoons and melting glaciers from the mountains of northern regions. Pakistan's Minister of Climate Change Sherry Rehman, states that all these events are linked to global warming.

"Global warming is the existential crisis facing the world and Pakistan is ground zero – yet we have contrib-



Credit: Shaheryar Khan



A satellite view of Pakistan before and after the flood. Courtesy: NASA

uted less than 1% to [greenhouse gas] emissions," said Rehman.

The United States Agency for International Development has pledged to give \$30 million in response to the flooding, which Green says, "is not enough."

"The richer nations of the world must do more to aid the people of Pakistan," he said.

Lee Jackson described the flood as "being of biblical proportion," and said the flooding "requires our continued work and commitment to help end this unspeakable suffering in Pakistan."

"The Pakistan Government is committed and resilient and ready to help save

their nation from this deadly flooding that killed a high number of children," said Lee Jackson towards the end of her visit. "The people of Pakistan are not giving up!" More than 400 children have been killed in the floods, and many more have been injured. According to UNICEF, 3.4 million children are at risk of waterborne diseases, drowning, and malnutrition.

It is estimated that 16 million children live in unsanitary conditions, without homes, drinking water, and access to clean water.

To help the people of Pakistan, visit UNICEF's website at [UNICEF.org](https://www.unicef.org)

## Axios Local expands local news program to include Houston

BY BETTY CRUZ

Axios, a national news organization, launched the Axios Houston newsletter on Aug. 15 on its website to inform Houstonians about changes unfolding in their backyard.

"Houston is an exciting city with a lot of news," Axios Deputy Managing Editor Emma Way said. "We saw that we could be a good complement to the existing media ecosystem."

In 2021, the company started the Axios Local initiative to provide people experiencing information overload with five critical local stories through free newsletters. The program now has a total of 1.2 million subscribers.

The company hires local, experienced reporters familiar with their hometowns

to bring local coverage to readers.

With many headlines coming out of Texas, the Axios leadership wanted to bring Axios Local to the state and build a presence in the largest cities, including Houston.

Jay Jordan, who wrote for Chron, and Shafaq Patel, who worked at the Houston Business Journal, report for Axios Houston, showing their love for the city through their work.

"[Jordan] and [Patel] are passionate reporters that care about Houston as a whole," Way added. "They are embedded in their communities."

Axios Local hopes to make readers smarter, encourage them to share local news with their co-workers

and family members, and connect them with their communities.

The Axios Houston newsletter has a readership of 20,000, and the goal is to increase that to over 100,000.

Jordan and Patel collaborate with an editor to reach as many people as possible to bring compelling, relevant, digestible, and informative pieces every weekday to subscribers. Both reporters joined this project after seeing a wide range of opportunities.

"Axios is doing things [in a different way] than everybody, and we would like to find a new audience that might not want to [get their news from traditional media or want a supplementary news source in a distinctive format]," Jordan shared.

According to Patel, Houston does not get enough national coverage despite its size, diversity, and importance to national discourse.

"Even though we are the fourth largest city in the United States, Houston is not as covered as New York City and Los Angeles," Patel said. "A lot of stories are not shared."

To her, Axios Houston offers a way to report what is happening and put the Space City on the map.

The duo wants to write high-quality content that informs and updates Houstonians on their city and often has abundant material to write on.

Together, they decide on topics that will matter to readers and narrow them down for the newsletter,

whether it is about the I-45 expansion project, the local weather, or flood mitigation policies.

Over the years, several communities across the state have lost local journalism resources, making it difficult to learn about and understand what is occurring around them.

According to a report by the Local News Initiative at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, 27 out of 254 counties in Texas lack a local newspaper.

Gators can support local journalism by subscribing to local news sources such as Axios Houston for free, and, if possible, becoming an Axios Local Member. All donations from the member program support local journalism.

## NUDI

FROM PAGE 1

“I can’t even remember what exact article it was, but the whole purpose of it was just to say, ‘Extinction is natural, so it’s okay if humans cause extinction.’ So, humans can wreck nature? In 28 years, coral reefs will become extinct unless we change,” Mouchaty said.

She further explained why she chose Nudibranchs as her inspiration.

“Well, Nudibranchs are found in coral reefs, and they symbolize the problems we’re facing when it comes to climate change,” Mouchaty said. “We lose these beautiful creatures when the coral reefs disappear.”

She also chose Nudibranchs because of how interesting they look. Mouchaty explains that Nudibranchs are fluid, colorful, and have a peculiar anatomy, which made them the perfect muse for her. Mouchaty clarifies,

“They’re not science models. They are ART that have attitude.”

Nudibranchs are typically between a quarter of an inch to 12 inches long, yet Mouchaty made her sculptures as large as people.

“I scaled them to the size of a human because you can’t ignore them anymore at this size,” she explains.

“They’re demanding, so you acknowledge them. You acknowledge that we will lose these beautiful creatures when we lose the coral reefs. They have a sexy form that draws you in, but you can’t look away because they’re mysterious and beautiful.”

Even though Mouchaty is an accomplished artist, making art is not her full-time job. She is a biology professor at UHD. In 2015, she took a break from teaching and studied for a master’s degree in fine arts at the University of Houston.

When asked how she balances her artwork and her job as a professor, she replies, “I don’t! It’s super challenging. I’m trying to balance everything. If I stay away from my art for too long, I become disconnected with the emotional impulse I need.”

Mouchaty began making her Nudibranch sculptures in

2019, and it took her several months for each one. She started by designing a small, preliminary copy with clay. She then used graph paper to sketch what she wanted, which she redrew onto a larger paper surface.

She cut out the sketch and traced it over her Styrofoam material. Mouchaty used Styrofoam to create her sculptures, one of the most harmful products for the environment, as a juxtaposition for the purpose of her artwork.

The “How to Talk to a Nudibranch” art installation in the STB building ended on Sept. 1. When asked where her artwork would go after the installation was over, Mouchaty said they would go back into storage.

“They’re just too fragile to be put on display,” referring to the fact that someone must be paid to watch over them while they’re displayed. “I have been encouraged to sell them, but I can’t help but be attached to my artwork.”

We hope that Mouchaty will again grace our campus with another art installation soon. As for the “How to Talk to a Nudibranch” installation,



An artistly modified Nudibranch that Mouchaty imagined for the exhibition. Courtesy: Rick Wells



The three sculptures that are the center pieces of Mouchaty’s exhibition. Courtesy Rick Wells

Mouchaty hopes to have a panel to discuss the problems with biodiversity and climate change in November alongside her artwork. Pictures and

information of her Mouchaty and her artwork can be found on her website at [www.suzettemouchaty.com](http://www.suzettemouchaty.com). her artwork.

## Part mockumentary, all satire, ‘Honk for Jesus’ delivers epic laughs

BY JAMES JUREWICZ

“Honk for Jesus. Save Your Soul” is about an evangelist, Lee-Curtis Childs (Sterling K. Brown), who experiences a public disgrace leading to losing many members of his congregation. The film is about his wife, Trinitie Childs (Regina Hall), helping him make a documentary about their comeback.

The film was not always presented in just one format, shifting from documentary to regular film form. The couple is rehabilitating their image after the church controversy, the reasons for the presence of the documentary cameras.

Directed by Adamma Ebo, this is her first time directing a feature film. She also wrote the screenplay. Monkeypaw production distributed the film, the company that belongs to Jordan Peele.

Unfortunately for the couple, even when trying for

the cameras, they still do and say things that make them look bad.

The professional comedic performances of Hall and Brown are worth the admission price. The veteran actors play off each other so well, the on-demand release should have some great outtakes.

Intentionally, the costumes are fantastically over-the-top. The audience is given a tour of Brown’s character’s closet. Everything is vibrantly colorful, designer expensive, and tastelessly flashy.

The film’s fantastic soundtrack started with the opening credits playing the Three 6 Mafia song “Popping my Collar.” This classic baller ballad sets the perfect tone and vibe for a film about hypocritical extravagance.

One great scene stands out, embodying what the film is all about. When Hall and Brown’s characters are in the car leaving a church function,

they accurately sing along with the lyrics of the explicit version of the hip hop song “Knuck if You Buck” by the group Crime Mob.

In another very telling scene, the Childs ask a couple who run a neighboring church to cancel their long-planned Easter celebration so everyone will attend at the Childs’ church instead.

The couple politely refuses but offers to lead them in a genuine prayer for both churches to be successful. The Childs refuse to hold their hands during the prayer and stare at them in bemused disbelief.

“Honk for Jesus. Save your Soul” was a humorous and satirical look at the culture of the megachurch. A commentary on the big personalities of the patriarch and matriarch of large congregations. The film is currently playing in cinemas.



Courtesy: Focus Features

# Pokémon Go overcomes summer heat, event complications

BY EDWARD SAENZ

Pokémon Go completed its summer festivities on Aug. 27 with the Go Fest finale event.

Throughout the summer, Niantic hit the ground running with live events worldwide, an aspect of the game sorely missed over the past two years.

The company put on two types of events. The game's monthly meetup events, called "Community Days," and three large-scale live events in Seattle, Berlin, and Sapporo, Japan.

"These events have been great. It's fun to get out with my family. It also helps that it's not unbearably hot too," Houstonian Tyler Daniels said about the recent Pokémon Go events.

The Community Day events have been around since Jan 2018 but were put on hold in March 2020.

The events were designed to get local communities worldwide to organize meetups and enjoy the game the way it was meant to be played, exploring your area with friends.

In May 2020, Niantic began partnering with parks worldwide to have special



Credit: Giselle Oviedo

in-game features for Community Day. All of Houston's events were held at Discovery Green.

"I can't remember the last time I saw so many people here. [Discovery Green] is usually fairly packed on weekends, but on these Pokémon days, it's actually crazy busy," Alex Gomez, a Discovery Green ambassador, said.

"It's funny, watching all of you walking around cause you're all staring at your phones, so we know

exactly who is here for the Pokémon."

The highlight events of the summer were the three massive events, called Go Fest Live, put on in Seattle, Berlin, and Sapporo, Japan. These events were large spectacles with tons of in-person features, attractions for fans, and location-specific in-game events.

Despite the hype around in-person events, several of the early summer events were marred by controversy.

For the Southern United

States, the massive summer heat waves made it near impossible to play the Community Days during their 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. time slots. The summer's "Go Fest Global" marquee event in June was plagued by in-game glitches that made catching Pokémon frustrating and, in some cases, impossible. Thankfully, all these issues subsided throughout the summer.

The August Community Day, which featured the adorable raccoon Pokémon Zigzagoon, was received well

globally due to the lowering temperatures. The event's in-game rewards were also a welcome change to the previous month's rewards.

The festivities closed out on Aug. 27 with the Go Fest Finale event. This one-day event was similar to the kick-off event in June. However, it was received far better by the Pokémon Go community.

The event featured the release of four brand new Pokémon to the game, referred to as "the Ultra Beasts."

Along with their release into the game came the release of the legendary Pokémon, Shaymin. This Pokémon is based on the virtues of thankfulness and Prayer.

The event closed with a sneak peek of the Autumn events coming to Pokémon Go. Once the event ended at 6 p.m., the Pokémon Solrock and Lunatone began to appear across the globe. The two are based on the sun and moon, respectively.

On Aug. 29, Niantic announced the events to close out the remainder of 2022 would be centered around space and light; the season is aptly named "The Season of Light."

## September workshops, fitness classes at Student Life Center

BY ASTI PHEA

The Student Life Center SLC offers a variety of group fitness classes, sports, and workshops for no extra cost to students.

The month of September has many exciting activities open to students.

On Sept. 30, women officers from the UHD Police Department will host the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) System workshop. This is a free, three-day workshop for female students only. It provides hands-on training in self-defense techniques.

Rhonda Scherer, Associate Director of the Student Life Center, said past

self-defense classes taught techniques that saved one student's life.

"She came back to tell us she believed the workshop saved her life, when a man followed her into the parking garage."

Scherer explained, "it was a simple technique," the student remembered from the workshop training that stopped her from being abducted.

"Aside from other things going on in the world, at UHD it's just a different vibe. I feel that people are happy to be here. They are nicer to each other. Our UHD is a nice place to be right now," Scherer said.

The SLC staff welcomes students back on campus with in-person group fitness classes and workshops.

There will be an HIV Awareness workshop held in room OMB N-600 on Sept 22. This workshop will provide information and resources for HIV/STD prevention and awareness.

Low-impact classes offered include Yoga and Functional Training. Functional Training is a class focused on movements to improve daily activities.

There are a variety of Zumba classes offered. Zumba Toning is a cardio workout focused on body sculpting. Zumba Strong combines

strength training with music to help students enjoy rhythm instead of concentrating on reps.

For students wanting to build muscle strength, there are three classes offered. Gator Gainz is a full-body workout designed to build strength and endurance. Lower Body Power Hour is a high-intensity interval training, or HIIT for short, class focused on leg muscle building. Butts N' Guts is a workout that helps tone glutes and abs.

Full Body Workout is a virtual class offered on Friday at 2 p.m. This class is a live stream for students who prefer to work out at home instead of going to the gym.

The K-pop Club is a social club that focuses on enjoying Korean culture, dance choreography, and field trips, including attending cup sleeve events and music concerts. Meetings are on Friday at 3 p.m. in the SLC third-floor studio.

Other club sports beginning fall semester, with meetings in September, are the Runners, Women's Basketball, and Wrestling clubs. Intramural Sports beginning this month are Fantasy Football, Volleyball League, and FIFA 22 Online.

Students are encouraged to contact sports&fitness@uhd.edu or call 713-221-8225 for more information.

# Awareness, the first factor in accessibility equity equation

BY INDIRA ZALDIVAR

The Office of Disability Services and Facilities Management collaborated on the large-scale installation of vertical accessibility bars for restroom doors in all campus buildings ahead of the fall semester.

The only restrooms with accessibility push bars were found on the third floor of the One Main Building. Person-

ally, pressing the bar once requires much less effort than manually pushing or pulling doors open, especially when I am carrying something or avoiding surfaces for sanitary purposes.

More importantly, accessibility features and guidelines enable equal access, which are critical factors in the equity equation. Everyone should strive to learn and be aware of opportunities to in-

clude people with disabilities. Since the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the civil-rights law has prohibited discrimination based on disability.

However, not all disabilities are visible. Assistant Director Nkechi Uchegbu of Disability Services explained how the accessibility press bars in restrooms provide fair access to someone with a disability or limited mobility.

“It can be a challenge when you’re trying to open a bathroom door if maybe your hands don’t work to the best of their ability or maybe you’re in a wheelchair,” Uchegbu explained. “You can’t necessarily grab the handle because your wheelchair is in the way.”

Uchegbu has served at UHD for a month but has worked in disability services for 15 years. She is passionate about disability services because her mom has a disability.

“I’m constantly looking around trying to ensure that she has access,” Uchegbu said.

For example, she said restaurants have often lacked a designated area close to the entrance to limit the amount of physical exercise a person with disabilities should exert before finding a table.

“That’s something I don’t think people are naturally mindful of.”

Uchegbu spoke more about ways the UHD community can be allies for people with disabilities. For one, she said it’s essential to review ADA and how it impacts those around you and yourself.

Second, she invites you to connect with people with disabilities. For example, suppose you have a classmate who is hard of hearing. In that case, you can always text them and take advantage of technology such as social media to connect.

“We’re conditioned to look at it one way when [technology] can be used in so many ways to make sure that we’re fully including everybody.”

Third, she said that accessibility comes from



Accessibility push bar for operating restroom door on the second floor of One Main Building on Sept. 11, 2022. Credit: Indira Zaldivar

genuine kindness, like offering help. However, never assume someone with a disability needs your help.

“Ask them first before you decide to jump in and say, ‘let me help you.’”

Lastly, if you see any malfunctions in accessibility guidelines, make sure to report it to Disability Services. The office welcomes faculty, students, and staff to raise concerns and questions, provide accommodations, and ensure equal access for all Gators.



**Nkechi Uchegbu**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
OF DISABILITY SERVICES

“Individuals with disabilities should be provided with the same rights and opportunities as every other individual regardless of race, color, sex, orientation, and religion. Equal access is fair access.”

Credit: Indira Zaldivar

# Why the bayou is so dirty, what you can do to contribute

BY MUSA ALANSSARI

The Buffalo Park Bayou, more commonly known as the downtown bayou, used to be a beautiful place to visit. Clear waters, live animals, and a welcoming smell. These things are no longer true.

The Buffalo Park Bayou has turned into a giant dumpster for all of the city’s trash. Anything from bags to phones, you’re guaranteed to find. The brown, deadly, and stinky water is an unwelcoming site to everyone. What was once an active place has now turned into a disaster that no one is proud of.

“The bayou is beautiful from afar, but when you get closer, it is appalling. I would be very hesitant to dip my toes in that water,” UHD student Shaheryar Khan said.

Outside of the pollution, erosion is a huge factor in this. Since this is a natural bayou, the water causes a huge amount of erosion, caus-

ing a lot of bacteria to run down stream and contaminate the water.

“If we stop the banks from eroding so much sediment, we will reduce the bacteria,” according to the Forum, Save Buffalo Bayou.

There are multiple non-profit groups that have been working on cleaning up the bayou and helping slow erosion, but this is not something that can be done without full support from the people. Donating, supporting, or volunteering are all great ways to help participate in repairing the bayou.

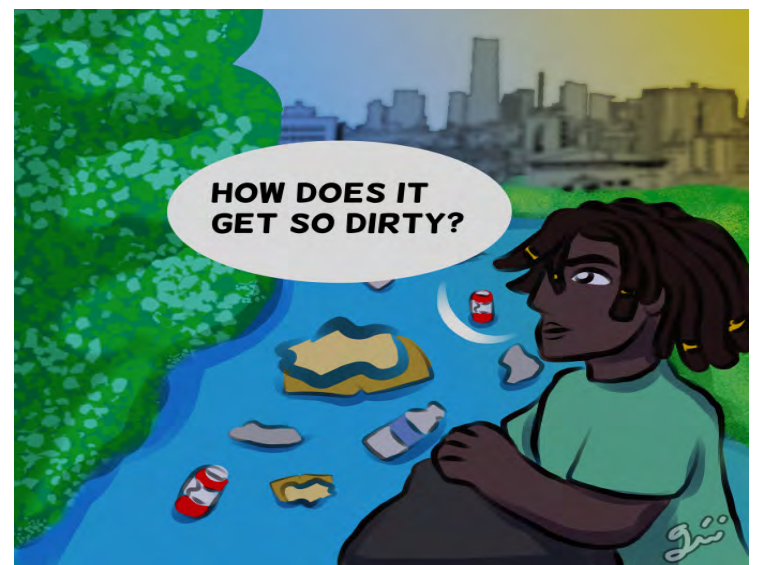
Although there are solutions and people working on fixing the river, no one seems to care about the clear danger that the bayou bridge contains; the handles that run alongside the bridge stands at 2 feet by 3 inches. A clear issue for anyone of average height. If you were to walk in the rain and happen to slip and fall over the railing,

there’s no coming back.

When we have small issues like these, people generally think about them, get annoyed, and then just gloss over them and when this happens change never comes. As long as this danger exists, many UHD students and Houston residents are going to be at a risk that is easily fixable.

Spreading awareness about these issues is the first step to fixing them. This isn’t something that should be put off or make someone else’s problem because the longer these problems exist. The worse it’s going to get for everyone involved, the harder it will be to fix them.

If you want to volunteer and help clean up the bayou, you can contact the official Houston Buffalo Bayou org at [volunteer@buffalobayou.org](mailto:volunteer@buffalobayou.org) or call them at (713) 752-0314, ext. 206



Credit: Giselle Oviedo



A trash collector gathering garbage as it moves down the bayou. Credit: Musa Alanssari