



**UHCL ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION**
University of Houston  Clear Lake

Fall 2018

Upcoming Events

UHCL Alumni

Investiture of Ira K. Blake
Sept. 17-21, 2018

Find Your "Callings" Alumni Panel
Monday, Sept. 17 | 10:30 a.m. - Noon
Bayou Building, Garden Room

**UHCL History Panel featuring
Charter Faculty**
Monday, Sept. 17 | 4-5:30 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room

UHCL History Exhibit
Monday, Sept. 17 | 5:30 p.m.
Bayou Building, Atrium I, Level II

UHCL History Reception
Monday, Sept. 17 | 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Bayou Building, Atrium I, Level II

Investiture Ceremony
Thursday, Sept. 20 | 2-4 p.m.
Bayou Building, Bayou Theater

**Meet & Greet Reception with
President Ira K. Blake**
Thursday, Sept. 20 | Immediately
following the ceremony
Bayou Building, Atrium I

*Learn more about these events and
more at www.uhcl.edu/investiture.*

CLASP

Robots in the Doctor's Office
Presented by Dr. Thomas L. Harman
Thursday, Oct. 4 | 5:30 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room

**Exercise and Nutritional Health
Institute Grand Opening**
Thursday, Nov. 1 | 5:30 p.m.
Recreation and Wellness Center

**"The Oxford of the Floodplain": The
Saga of UHCL in (Mostly) Light
Verse**
Presented by Dr. John Gorman
Thursday, Dec. 6 | 5:30 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room

UHCL Hosts Grand Opening of Two New Buildings



State legislators, University of Houston-Clear Lake administrators from past and present, architects and building project managers shared the excitement of the grand opening of two new UH-Clear Lake buildings during a special reception in late August. With a welcome by UHCL President Ira K. Blake, all involved in the creation of the new buildings were recognized.

"Vision without action is merely a dream," asserted President Blake during the program that ended with special ribbon-cuttings and tours of the STEM and Classroom Building and the Recreation and Wellness Center.

State Sen. Larry Taylor spoke about the need for state-of-the-art facilities to educate the workforce of tomorrow.

"The future leaders of tomorrow walk the halls here today," said Taylor.

Former UHCL President William A. Staples, who retired in August of 2017, reinforced Sen. Taylor's remarks about the importance of updated equipment and facilities and noted that without them students "are behind the curve."

He added that the historical importance the opening of the buildings as a major milestone for the university, referencing the 1975 Bayou Building grand opening, the Student Services and Classroom Building opening in 2004, the addition of UHCL Pearland Campus in 2010, as well as the future Health Sciences and Classroom Building at UHCL Pearland Campus.

To recognize the Recreation and Wellness Center, State Rep. Dennis Paul spoke, as did former

Learn more at www.uhcl.edu/clasp

UHCL Bayou Theater

The 2018-19 Season Kicks Off on Sept. 21!

Mercury: Vivaldi vs. Paganini
Friday, Sept. 21, 2018 | 7:30 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

Mercury: Brahms' Third Symphony
Friday, Oct. 5, 2018 | 7:30 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

For more information, visit
www.uhcl.edu/bayouthheater.

Update Your Information

Make a Gift Today

Become a Lifetime Member

Class Notes

Rebecca Wingfield, '15, has been selected by NASA as a flight controller at Johnson Space Center.

Christina Lovette, '03, '16, has been selected as the new principal of Whidby Elementary School (HISD).

Venitra Senegal, '06, was named instructional officer for the Fort Bend ISD Early Literacy Center.

Antonio Corrales, Ed.D., '07, '15, has been selected as grant reviewer for the U. S. Department of Education as content expert on educational leadership, bilingual / ESL education, gifted and talented education and Human Resources.

Stephen I. Chazen, '77, chairman, president and CEO of TGP Pace Energy, has been named to the University of Houston System Board of Regents.

Kristin Harper, '04, has been named principal of Seven Lakes Junior High School in Katy ISD.

Diego Linares, '08, is the new principal of Raines High School and the Opportunity Awareness Center in Katy ISD.

Steve Christopherson, '81, '98, has been appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to chair the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors.

UHCL Associate Vice President for Student Services Darlene Biggers, current interim Vice President for Student Affairs Daniel Maxwell, and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Steven Berberich.

"It is always great to see what is going on at this wonderful university," acknowledged Paul.

Biggers added that the new buildings were "products of dreamers, visionaries, builders and many supporters."

Other speakers included College of Science and Engineering Dean Ju Kim and Professor of Industrial Hygiene and Safety Magdy Akladios in reference to the STEM and Classroom Building, while College of Human Sciences and Humanities Dean Rick Short and Associate Professor in Exercise and Health Sciences William Amonette discussed the Recreation and Wellness Center.

Closing out the ceremony was UHCL Student Government Association President Izuh Ikpeama, thanking earlier SGA officers and UHCL students for the Recreation and Wellness Center, which came about after a 2016 student-approved referendum to increase student service fees.

[Read more online](#) about the buildings by reading about the groundbreaking in 2017. View photos from the ceremony on the [UHCL Newsroom](#).



Investiture of UHCL President, Ira K. Blake - Sept. 20, 2018

UHCL will host the investiture of President Ira K. Blake Thursday, Sept. 20, 2 p.m., as the culminating event in a week of activities commemorating President Blake's 2017 appointment to the post. She is UH-Clear Lake's fifth president, its first woman and the first African-American to be appointed to the university's highest office. The theme for the event is "Transcending Expectations," a focal point for President Blake since her arrival. For more information, visit www.uhcl.edu/investiture.



UHCL launched a dream come true for best-selling alumnus

It might seem like a dream to come to Texas from Singapore as an 11-year-old boy, find a way to cope successfully with all the social and cultural adjustments that immigrant kids face, finish college and become the best-selling author of a book trilogy who has recently taken his place on the 2018 Time 100 List. With the first book of the trilogy, "Crazy Rich Asians," to be released in movie theaters this summer, Kevin Kwan has been living what might be described as a dream. But the 1994 alumnus said for him, his years working toward his bachelor's degree in media studies were the "dream experience." [Read More...](#)

Alumni Spotlight: Dustin and Mona Mortazavi

A Couple Whose Success Comes Back to UHCL

Alexis Alexander, '18, has been awarded an internship in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. She will be working in the library's Educational Outreach Division.

David James Langenberg, '12, has been named Fire Chief for Humble, TX.

Alan E. George, '94, has been named Chief Operating Officer of St. Francis Hospital in Columbus, GA.

Submit your class notes by sending an email to alumni@uhcl.edu or by completing the [online submission form](#).

UHCL in the News

Interpreters assist UHCL autism therapist in international telehealth sessions
[Read more...](#)

New STEM and Classroom Building is prof's dream come true for entire campus community
[Read more...](#)

CLASP continues educational outreach initiative under new leadership
[Read more...](#)

UHCL alum's feature film about wealthy Asians offers rich insights, cultural perspective
[Read more...](#)

Read these stories and more on the [UHCL Newsroom](#).



Dustin and Mona Mortazavi may never have met if not for their time at University of Houston–Clear Lake. While Mona was helping to organize a charity 5k run, she noticed Dustin studying at a nearby table. She stopped by the table with flyers, and long story short, they started training together for the race, and the rest is history. [Read more...](#)



Request Your Alumni Membership Card

As a graduate of UH–Clear Lake, you're automatically a member of the UHCL Alumni Association. If you haven't received your card already, be sure to request yours today to ensure your getting access to a variety of benefits and services. [Request Your Card!](#)

Career Corner: A Case of the Stinking Thinking

by Mitali Paul, '05 MHA/MBA



Are you or anyone you know suffering from an advanced case of “stinking thinking,” as Zig Ziglar would call it? Quick, you must do something about it! Do not get stuck in the vicious cycle of misery motivation as misery loves company. Read on for some simple tactics that can help. [Read more...](#)



Save the Date: 2018 Alumni Celebration

Mark your calendars for the 2018 Alumni Celebration on Saturday, Oct. 20, 2018 at South Shore Harbour Resort.

Jonathan McFadden: Let Me Be Part of Your Search History

In his exhibition at the UHCL Art Gallery, Houston-born and Lexington, Kentucky-based artist Jonathan McFadden will create a site-specific installation using text and imagery taken from his social media feeds, exploring the theme of surveillance within these platforms. The photographic



prints and installation work he creates from the appropriated imagery reinforce the permanence of the source material. The exhibition will be on display Sept. 7-Nov. 1, 2018. For more information, visit www.uhcl.edu/artgallery.

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Alumni Spotlight: Dustin and Mona Mortazavi

A Couple Whose Success Comes Back to UHCL

Dustin and Mona Mortazavi may never have met if not for their time at University of Houston – Clear Lake. While Mona was helping to organize a charity 5k run, she noticed Dustin studying at a nearby table. She stopped by the table with flyers, and long story short, they started training together for the race, and the rest is history.

Dustin and Mona chose UHCL because it was close to home, affordable and a smaller campus with smaller classes. The intimate class environments allowed their professors to be more reachable and personable than at a larger university.

Another factor in each's decision to attend was that both of their moms graduated from UHCL. Mona's mother, Wafa Lotf, graduated from the university with her BS in Accounting in 1993. Dustin's mom, Rochelle Mortazavi, got her BS in Interdisciplinary Studies in 2004. She recently obtained her Masters of School Librarian and Informational Science in 2017 from UHCL.

Dustin graduated with honors in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Chemistry. He found his coursework in Analytical Chemistry to be especially helpful as he began his career as an analyst in an environmental laboratory. He later started working at the Johnson Space Center and eventually secured a great position in Project Management/IT. He now manages the global deployment and onboarding team at iland, a Houston-based cloud service provider.

Mona Mortazavi earned her BS in Business Management with a concentration in Human Resources in 2011 and followed up with an MBA in 2013. Mona connected with a speaker, a VP of human resources at a local Wendy's franchise she met during her service as vice president of the student organization Society for Human Resource Management. She stayed in contact with him after receiving her undergraduate degree. It paid off, and that connection helped her land her first full-time job in human resources for that local Wendy's franchise.

Mona's career led her to a position with an electric utility company as an HR coordinator, which led into a leadership role in the company in a few short years. She spent time in finance and HR, as well as real estate and facilities. The team-based projects and classwork in her MBA program helped prepare her for the challenges she faced while working in different groups in a large and growing company. Mona now works at Waste Management in their supply chain operations and business solutions department. She manages projects and leads process improvement initiatives leveraging her education and professional work experiences. UHCL has given her the tools and confidence to excel in her career.

Mona and Dustin continue to work hard in the community, something that brought them together all those years ago. Mona recently joined the board of directors for a local nonprofit called A Simple Thread. They create and distribute care packages filled with essential items for the homeless. She has volunteered with them since 2012 and is excited to join the board.

Together, the Mortazavis have been involved with Friends of Down Syndrome since it opened in 2014. This post-high school nonprofit academy for adults with Down syndrome provides lifelong education and community for its students.

UHCL has opened many doors for both of them in their personal and professional lives. They thank UHCL for the foundation they received, and acknowledge they would not be where they are now without it. Much has changed since their time here, and they are excited to see UHCL continue to grow, serve the community, and develop professionals.

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Carrer Corner: A Case of the Stinking Thinking?

by Mitali Paul, '05 MHA/MBA



Are you or anyone you know suffering from an advanced case of “stinking thinking,” as Zig Ziglar would call it? Quick, you must do something about it! Do not get stuck in the vicious cycle of misery motivation as misery loves company. Here are some simple tactics that can help:

- Research supports that the first significant encounter of the day impacts the rest of the day, more than 4 encounters combined in the rest of the day. Start your day with positive, relaxing or energizing activities and stay away from experiences or people that are negative triggers. You cannot avoid them, but knowing that they sap your energy, you need to ensure that they are not at the beginning of your day.
- Self-talk is proven to lead to a winning attitude. May feel a little weird but it works! Your brain needs positive stimulation in terms of encouragement and who better to do it than you. The Pygmalion Effect or self-fulfilling prophecy is equally true when applied to yourself.
- If you do not enjoy self-talk, have a wish box. Write down notes or desires or wishes that you want to come true. Every night or morning take a quick look at them, so you are reiterating them to yourself. The power of repetition cannot be underestimated.
- Eyes are a window to your soul! You cannot consistently perform in a manner that is inconsistent with how you see yourself. So, work on your self-image. You must be your biggest advocate and promote yourself. Be aware of your strengths, leverage them and work on your areas for improvement. Set simple goals for yourself so you view progress and that enhances your self-confidence.
- Attitude is a discipline - it teaches you obedience and enhances your leadership abilities. We all look up to role models that inspire us with their attitude as well as actions. Positive thinking has its limitations I agree. You cannot do everything just with an attitude perhaps, but you can surely do everything better than you can with a negative attitude.
- Change your lens. Do not be a fault finder. Find the good in things or people. Use appreciative inquiry when you interact with others. You cannot control what others do or say but you can choose how to react or be proactive and choose how you let other people in.
- Get your neurotransmitters to do the work! Dopamine, serotonin, epinephrine and endorphins are known to physiologically boost your “emotions”. Learn more about how you can help yourself release these and build that into your routine. Physical exercise is one easy way, but everyone’s body and life circumstances are different so find what works for you.
- Attitude of gratitude. The healthiest of all emotions is gratitude. It is very easy to let one negative encounter or one aspect of our life or work that is not working in our favor to influence everything else. Make a gratitude list and look at it often. On better still, think of one thing that you are grateful for at the start of each day. For every reason that you find to be miserable, I guarantee you can find at least 2-3 to celebrate, you just need to look!
- Give it all you got! I tell students that I mentor, don’t have too many options. Although prudence suggests having a backup plan, it dilutes your efforts and attention. Data supports that immigrants are 4 times more likely to become millionaires in America. Why is that? As an immigrant, it is the unwavering persistence and the commitment to excel and not having many options that has driven me consistently. Now your goal doesn’t have to become a millionaire but regardless push yourself to your limits and see how your destiny unfolds.

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