



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

Spring 2018

Upcoming Events

UHCL Alumni

CLASP: "The Impact of Immigration on Houston and the Texas Medical Center" by Dr. Stephen Cherry
Thursday, March 1, 2018 | 6-8 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room
www.uhcl.edu/clasp

CLASP: "Using Mix Realities to Prepare for Life in Outer Space" by Evelyn Miralles
Thursday, April 5, 2018 | 6-8 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room
www.uhcl.edu/clasp

CLASP: "Exercise is Good Medicine" by Dr. William Amonette
Thursday, May 3, 2018 | 6-8 p.m.
Bayou Building, Garden Room
www.uhcl.edu/clasp

UHCL Bayou Theater

Riyaaz Qawwali
UHCL Bayou Theater
Saturday, March 31, 2018 | 7:30 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

Mercury Orchestra: Spondors of Italian Baroque
UHCL Bayou Theater
Friday, April 13, 2018 | 8 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

Brave Combo
UHCL Bayou Theater
Friday, April 27, 2018 | 7:30 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

Mercury Orchestra: Vivaldi's Four Seasons
Mother's Day Special
UHCL Bayou Theater
Sunday, May 13, 2018 | 2 p.m.
[Purchase Tickets](#)

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

Update Your
Information

UHCL Here, We Go Capital Campaign

\$20 Million by 2020



On Friday, Feb. 23, UH-Clear Lake launched the UHCL Here, We Go Capital campaign at the 2018 Partners in Philanthropy dinner.

Vice President of Advancement Rhonda Thompson, who emceed the event, welcomed everyone and UH-Clear Lake President Ira K. Blake addressed the guests, highlighted invaluable impact that UHCL's supports have made on the university and its students.

President Blake said that the launching of the "Here, We Go" campaign illustrated the transformative impact the university has in the community. "This campaign is our bold commitment to partner with our alumni and friends to continue the evolution of UHCL and expand opportunities for more and more students in Bay Area Houston and beyond," she said.

The university hopes to raise \$20 million by 2020 to invest in faculty development and research, create more scholarships and opportunities for experiential learning and bolster the university's centers of excellence and the arts.

"We're illustrating four priority areas of our campaign: engaged teaching, inspired learning, fearless imagination and emerging opportunities," Blake said.

She shared stories about UHCL's professors and alumni who have transformed students' futures by helping them prepare for careers that are the best match for their interests, talents and skills.

"Thank you all for not forgetting your alma mater over the years, and for continuing to give back to help us become a stronger, more relevant university in the 21st century," she said.

To learn more about the Here, We Go campaign, visit herewego.uhcl.edu or call 281-283-2021.

Take Your Seat Campaign

Play a leading role in the transformation of the Bayou Theater! By naming a seat at the UHCL Bayou Theater during this renovation campaign, you become a leading supporter of the arts in Clear Lake.

Make a Gift Today

Become a
Lifetime Member

Class Notes

Seun Adigun, '17 MS, competed in the 2018 Winter Olympics as a member of the Nigerian women's bobsled team.

Vanessa Reyes, '00 BA, '05 MS, has been named principal of Sam Rayburn HS in Pasadena ISD.

Robert Stock, '03 MS, has become the director of Pasadena ISD's Transportation Department.

Kevin Scott, '06 MS, was named to the Gulf Coast Authority Board of Directors by Governor Greg Abbot.

Cris Daskevich, '97 MHA/MBA, has been selected by CHRISTUS Health as the new chief executive officer at The Children's Hospital of San Antonio.

Sergio Lira, '98 MA, was elected as the District III trustee for HISD.

Daniel O'Neill, '89 BBA, was named airport manager for Chicago Midway International Airport by Chicago Department of Aviation.

Vicki Garcia, '08 BBA, was named executive director of financial operations for LaPorte ISD.

Lisa White, '09 BS, became the finance director for the town of Waxhaw, NC.

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

UHCL in the News

UHCL's President Blake meets AASCU leader
[Read more...](#)

UHCL awards STEP scholarships to teacher candidates
[Read more...](#)

New CEP director seeks to increase center's presence, offerings
[Read more...](#)

UH-Clear Lake to offer mechanical engineering degree this fall
[Read more...](#)

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



Your one-time contribution of \$1,000 per seat will make a lasting impression for generations of Bayou Theater patrons. For more information, visit www.uhcl.edu/bayouthheater.

MESSAGE FROM THE AAEC CHAIR

Quarterly Alumni Updates

Fellow Alumnus,

What a crazy way to end 2017 and to begin a new year. The Houston Astros won the World Series, snow fell in the area twice, and once again, a semester was delayed due to weather. But it is officially the spring semester and your Alumni Association has some great opportunities to network with current students and fellow UHCL alumni.

A great way to reconnect with your classmates is to come out to the annual chili cook-off. UHCL's longest-standing tradition, this year's chili cook-off is Saturday, April 1 from noon-4 p.m. at UHCL. For more information, visit www.uhcl.edu/campus-life/events/chili-cook-off.

Another way to get involved is to nominate a favorite professor or fellow alumnus for a 2018 UHCL Alumni Association award. Only UHCL alumni can submit nominations for the Distinguished Alumni Award, Early Achievement Award, the Marilyn S. Sims Leadership Service Award and Outstanding Professor Award, so I need your help to identify and nominate alumni and professors who have had a significant impact on campus, in the community and beyond.

For award criteria and nomination packets, visit www.uhcl.edu/alumni/honors-awards. Nominations are due on Friday, March 30, 2018, so be sure to get them finished and turned in on time!

Your Alumni Association is here to help you find ways of getting involved and giving back that are the most meaningful to you. From attending events and planning activities to making financial gifts for scholarships and endowments to help current UHCL students achieve their dream of a college degree, there is a place for every Hawk to help our university soar.

To keep up with all the latest alumni association news, events and activities, visit www.uhcl.edu/alumni and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to connect with other UHCL alumni and get updates on events and activities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the UHCL Alumni Association at 281-283-2021 or alumni@uhcl.edu, or stop by the Alumni Association office in the Bayou Building, Suite 1604.

Go Hawks!

Randall Garcia, '88, '96, '14
Chair, UHCL Alumni Association Executive Council



Volunteer for Senior Send-Off on May 18, 2018

We're looking for a few volunteers to help us at Senior Send-Off, formally known as Soaring Hawks Celebration, on Friday, May 18 at 6 p.m. Alumni are encouraged to attend and congratulate the newest members of the UHCL Alumni Association. You'll have a chance to take photos at the photobooth and enjoy refreshments. [Get More Information...](#)

Call for Nominations!

UH-Clear Lake alumni continue to play an important role in the community and each year the university strives to recognize those alumni by presenting the Alumni Association awards. The award recipients are recognized annually at the Alumni Celebration in October. Nominate a fellow alum for



Distinguished Alumni, Early Achievement, Leadership Service or Outstanding Professor. Nominations are due March 30. [Get More Information...](#)

Donor Spotlight: Yuvaraj Mani, '06 MS

Alumnus Gives Back in Scholarships



“UHCL faculty and staff went out of their way to help me. I feel a responsibility to give back.”

When Yuvaraj Mani was selecting a university to pursue his master's degree in software engineering, he had many options to choose from. The choice was clear, however. UH-Clear Lake's strong academic programs were clearly more valuable than others due to their connection with industry. He knew that he would go further in his career because of the opportunity to connect people working in the field and to see how things work in the real world, not just in theory.

Yuvaraj was delighted to find that fellow students and university staff are very supportive of international students like him. He excelled because of our commitment to diversity. He's especially proud that UHCL works to understand and accommodate the needs of this special group of students. It was a very welcome surprise. As a proud alum, he enjoys the connection and camaraderie within the close-knit alumni community.

While studying at UHCL, Yuvaraj had the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant for James C. Helm, associate professor in the College of Science and Engineering. He not only enjoyed helping undergrads in software engineering, but credits the work ethic and professionalism that he developed under Dr. Helm, which has made him a success today.

More generally, Yuvaraj benefited from student services programs offered by many departments throughout the university. Dedicated staff in the Math Center and Writing Center worked to find him the right resources to deal with the academic issues he faced. Administrators in CSE went the extra mile to expedite paperwork for his last-minute placement in an internship in New York - and to ensure he received class credit when he returned. Finally, Career Services hosted workshops that helped him with resume writing and interviewing. Resources like these ensured Yuvaraj was fully prepared for life after graduation.

Yuvaraj gives to UHCL because of the people who find ways to help students succeed in every way possible. Because the help he received made a difference in his education, he wants to pay it forward for the next generation of Hawks. He tries, in some small way, to repay their generosity with his own by supporting scholarships in CSE to help students who are like he was. Supporting scholarships also allows him to honor professors like Dr. Helm whose engaged teaching continues to transform UHCL students.



Save the Date: 2018 Alumni Celebration

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

Career Corner: Career Lattice vs. Career Ladder

by Mitali Paul, '05 MHA/MBA



Last week when the guest speaker in my Organizational Behavior class mentioned “career lattice,” I saw many quizzical expressions on my student’s faces. I realized, where other industries have adopted this method of talent development and retention, the healthcare industry largely lags. Part of the reason is the level of specialization, training, and even licensure requirements in certain roles. Certain skills need to be honed over time and you get better at your “trade” the longer time you spend in it. This can and has, however, led to burnout in many healthcare professionals leading to a talent drain. [Read more...](#)

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Healthcare is now one of the largest employers in the country, so it is time we paid attention to breaking stereotypes. The hierarchical career ladder has always been around and may have worked well in the past. But as more and more professionals look towards versatile and rewarding careers, while still maintaining a semblance of balance and flexibility, the concept of a career lattice makes much more sense that it ever has. The other limiting factor is our definition of career growth. We mostly tie it to a title or compensation, making it very prescriptive and limiting our options. But how about expanding your professional toolkit or repertoire, getting outside your comfort zone to challenge your abilities, utilizing your skills and experience in a different area – is that not a growth opportunity? Sometimes to take a step ahead, you may need to take a few steps back or sideways!

Though it may not be applicable in some specialized niches, it is important that healthcare organizations explore and adopt the concept where high potential employees are given growth opportunities to explore other roles and develop new competencies. We know that changing an individual’s attitude or behavior based on an organization’s culture is a much harder journey than teaching new skills and competencies. They why lose a professional who has become an integral part of the organization due to a lack of opportunities? In some industries, it is the norm for professionals to remain in their roles only for a couple years before they move into another role. This enhances employee engagement, retention and loyalty, while ensuring a steady pipeline of motivated individuals within the organization to fill critical vacancies. It also significantly reduces the costs associated with recruitment. What are some best practices that healthcare can adopt? Most healthcare organizations are accustomed to matrix structures, so opportunities are plentiful.

When I look at my own career path, it has certainly been a lattice. I planned to get to the “top” and the quickest way was the hierarchical ladder. It was a competitive rat race. I wanted to remain in hospital operations as that was the world I knew, loved and thrived in. I exceled and did achieve my career goals becoming a hospital CEO. But that also got me to a crossroads in my personal life. I loved my work, but I also loved my growing family and had to make some difficult career choices to give both my best. What I have learned through my experience is to keep your options open and never be afraid to take risks. The adage “greater the risk, greater the reward” maybe cliched but is so true! What I feared to have been career suicide (stepping down from my first CEO role) launched my career into a very different and equally rewarding path! So, whether your organization supports a career lattice or not, don’t be wary to explore it in your own career journey and seek out opportunities that help round your experiences and not typecast you or limit your options. Be creative and enjoy the journey. It is not a race so why not take the scenic route?

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