

## “I Want to **Be** a **Teacher!**”



Anna Lowery  
“I want to be a Teacher!”

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**JOAN PEDRO**

**DEAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Dean's Message

*Dear College of Education community, Alumni and Friends,*

*As we ended the fall semester and moved through Spring 2024, we reiterate our College's commitment to continue to engage in practice and inquiry with integrity. We continue to work to reflect our vision and mission of the college that reflects transformational education and to reach out to the community in meaningful ways. We also strive to be culturally responsive and caring for all of our students. Our faculty continue to engage in innovative teaching and research that add to the knowledge base of education.*

*I am so proud of the faculty, staff and students in the College of Education, as we strive to enhance our relationships with our community and provide a sense of belonging. Our future is bright if we make it so, as we continue to transform students' lives, translate knowledge and transcend boundaries.*

*Sincerely,*

*Joan Pedro*

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## FACULTY AND STAFF



**Alex Smith**

Alex Smith is the new STEP Coordinator for the College of Education.

Alex Smith brings great experience with district leadership, coordination and implementing of programs.



**Dr. Judith Marquez**

Dr. Judith Marquez retired after 34 plus years at UHCL and COE.

An esteemed professor and great educator who has influenced many lives in the field of education, she will be missed for her wise counsel.



## COLLEGE EVENTS



### 8th Annual Greater Houston Area STEM

College of Education hosted the 8th Annual Greater Houston Area STEM Conference on March 2, 2024. This year's theme, *Fostering a STEM-Driven Mindset*, drew approximately 300 attendees, exhibitors, presenters, students, volunteers, and even a live Hawk!

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## FACULTY AWARDS



Dr. Emily Horton

Dr. Emily Horton received the “Researcher Advocate Award” from the Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling. This award goes to a researcher who has demonstrated advocacy for the mental health of children and adolescents by participating and publishing research that may have impacted legislation, developed new methodology or challenged older methodology, or impacted the larger community.



Dr. Carol Waters

Dr. Carol Waters received the Jhumki Basu Fellow, National Association for Research in Science Teaching. This award, offered by the NARST Equity and Ethics Committee, recognizes Water’s experiences and research projects as crucial to NARST’s mission to promote equity and justice-oriented science teaching and learning.



## FACULTY AWARDS



### Faculty Development Successes by COE

At the UH-Clear Lake 45th Annual Staff & Faculty Awards, Dr. Elizabeth Beavers received the Distinguished Service Award and Dr. Jenni Willis - Opalenik received the Outstanding Adjunct Award.

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## FACULTY SUCCESS



Dr. Leslie Gauna  
was featured on Edsurge.com  
in January 2024 on the article by Nadia  
Tamez-Robledo on  
The US Is the Fifth-Largest  
Spanish-Speaking Country.

Where Are Our Bilingual Teachers?

Dr. Antonio Corrales presented at the  
7th Latino Health Summit at the  
University of Houston main campus  
together with educational leaders and  
health professionals around the world.



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## FACULTY SUCCESS



Dr. Paul Wagner has published Inquiry:  
Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines.

ONLINE FIRST  
published on February 13, 2024

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## GRANT SUCCESS



Left to right: UHCL Provost - Dr. Christopher Maynard, State Rep. - Ed Thompson of the 29th district, UHCL College of Education Dean - Dr. Joan Pedro, and UHCL President - Dr. Richard Walker

The College of Education hosted a recognition ceremony at the Pearland campus to honor State Representative Ed Thompson for his advocacy and support in securing A \$1 million grant for funding for the Success Through Education Programs (STEP) at UHCL. STEP is a collaboration between UHCL, local school districts and community colleges to provide opportunities for students interested in a career in education.

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## PROGRAM SUCCESS

COE Early Childhood program received over \$500,000 from the Moody Foundation for Early Education.

This grant was submitted by the Early Childhood faculty in the College of Education.

COE was approved to be part of the Coalition of the US Prep to plan the pilot of the Teacher Residency for first year teacher preparation.

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## CELEBRATING COE



Staff from the College of Education UH-Clear Lake completed two workshops put on by the University Staff Association on becoming Recruiting Stars and Developing LinkedIn profiles.

These workshops featured our very own **Superstars** COE Faculty Dr. Antonio Corrales and Dr. Carol Waters.



## CELEBRATING COE



**College of Education Literacy Clinic *named*  
the  
Elvira M Silva Literacy Clinic**

College of Education hosted the naming of the Elvira M Silva Literacy Clinic.

This event was made possible with funding by Ms. Denise Navarro, donor and long-time friend and supporter of the College of Education.

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## CELEBRATING OUR STUDENTS



- 194 teacher candidates graduated from UHCL College of Education Teacher Preparation program in AY 24, with approximately 90% hiring by school districts.
- 31 EDLS and C&I doctoral students graduated and went into administrative positions in the various school districts.

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## **CELEBRATING ACCREDITATION**



**Clinical Mental Health Counseling program  
is fully accredited by CACREP for 7 years until 2030.**

CACREP accreditation denotes a commitment to program excellence. Accredited status indicates to the public that a program is fulfilling its commitment to educational quality.

This accreditation was led by Dr. Randy Davis and the counseling professors.

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## FEATURE STORY



As a child, Anna Lowery always responded with “a teacher” when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up. Today, she is the one asking the question of a new generation of young students. Lowery teaches 5th- grade science, social studies, and phonics at Parr Elementary School in League City, Texas, where she has worked since 2014.

After a slight detour, Lowery earned her B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies and M.S. in Multicultural Education from the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL). Although being a teacher was her childhood dream, education was not the first degree she pursued.

“I originally entered college as a business administration major but decided after two semesters that it wasn’t the path for me,” she said. “I really enjoyed working with kids and spending time with my younger cousins. In the spring of 2009, I switched majors and began taking child development courses at a local community college. I fell in love with the program and knew I had found my place.”

She later began working as a camp counselor and childcare employee at the YMCA in League City and Webster, where her “love for children and teaching intensified.”

As a San Jacinto College – Central student and a Raven, Lowery knew she wanted to further her education to become a teacher while staying close to home. She was familiar with UH-Clear Lake and its College of Education, so in 2011, a Raven became a Hawk; she became an official UHCL student that fall.

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## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



“I knew UHCL was a safe campus with a strong teacher education program,” she said. “I was impressed with the campus and loved the atmosphere and environment.”

She earned her bachelor’s degree in May of 2014. The same year, she re-enrolled at UHCL as a graduate student and earned her master’s degree in May of 2017. She recalls both graduation days and the joy she felt at each ceremony.

**“I knew UHCL was a safe campus with a strong teacher education program,” she said. “I was impressed with the campus and loved the atmosphere and environment.”**

“Graduation day in 2014 was really exciting because I knew I was about to hopefully get a job as a teacher,” said Lowery. “I wasn’t employed just yet, but I was really excited to reach that milestone and finally enter the career I wanted. In 2017, I was teaching full-time, so it was a lot of relief and excitement because I knew I’d be able to put 100% toward my career. I am grateful for the knowledge and skills gained at UHCL, which have led to my career success.”

Lowery credits her professors for these skills and for being supportive and informative. She said the Methods course and Internship I and II programs were beneficial.

“Being in the classroom at various campuses, with many different students, allowed me to see different teaching styles, classroom management types, and what a real school day would look like,” said Lowery. “These courses were rigorous and had high expectations with a fair amount of work, but they helped me succeed as I transitioned to being a full-time teacher.”

Her position as a full-time teacher within Clear Creek Independent School District (CCISD) helped her receive “mini-grants” through the Clear Creek Education Foundation. These grants allowed her to purchase various items for her classroom at Parr Elementary School, including wobble stools, Legos, and character education books. She also received a Teacher Innovative Grant for \$2,566, which she used to purchase non-fiction books in science and social studies.

Her dedication to her students, and her efforts to enhance their learning and that of other students within her school did not go unnoticed by her peers; in 2018, Parr Elementary School awarded Lowery as “Campus Teacher of the Year.”

Written by: Cynthia Anaya

To learn more about UHCL’s education department and degree programs, go to [www.uhcl.edu/education/departments/](http://www.uhcl.edu/education/departments/).

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