



## **RENU KHATOR • CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

---

UH System Board of Regents Meeting • May 15, 2024

## University of Houston System

### UH System Spring 2024 Graduation Total Reaches Nearly 10,000

The UH System spring 2024 preliminary graduation total is 9,922. With the addition of 6,861 degrees awarded during the fall 2023 semester, the estimated total number of degrees awarded systemwide for the 2023-2024 academic year is 16,783.

## University of Houston

### UH Fertitta Family College of Medicine Celebrates Inaugural Graduating Class

This May, the outstanding cadre of students in the inaugural class of the Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine celebrated their historic graduation. All 22 of the newly minted doctors are matched with a residency or research program at esteemed institutions such as Baylor College of Medicine, Houston Methodist Hospital, the U.S. Navy Medical Center in Portsmouth, Virginia, and Ascension St. John Hospital in Detroit.

### NASA Awards UH Grant for New Center

Karolos Grigoriadis, Moores Professor of Mechanical Engineering, interim department chair of mechanical engineering and director of the aerospace engineering graduate program, has been awarded a nearly \$5 million grant from NASA to establish a NASA MIRO Inflatable Deployable Environments and Adaptive Space Systems Center at the University of Houston. A specific goal of the center is to establish UH as a premier academic hub in aerospace research and education.

### Federal Appropriations Allotted to UH

In the federal FY24 appropriations bill, the University of Houston received several member-directed awards, totaling nearly \$15 million.

- \$13 million, supported by Senator John Cornyn, is allocated to defense related initiatives at UH that improve radio technologies, create new defense AI technologies and improve ship readiness.
- \$500,000, a request by Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia, supports the start of construction for a new battery facility at the UH Technology Bridge.
- \$500,000, a request from Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher, is slated for UH at Sugar Land to build a new AI and Manufacturing Technology Center.
- Several hundred thousand in funding, a request made by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, will support the Center of Excellence in Health Coaching.

Additionally, the UH System expanded its requests to support all four UH System universities in the upcoming FY25 budget; and in the coming week, information will be available on other projects requested by members.

### UH Professor Wins 2024 Pulitzer Prize

Cristina Rivera Garza, M.D. Anderson Distinguished Professor in Hispanic Studies and director of the Ph.D. program in creative writing in Spanish, has won a 2024 Pulitzer Prize for her memoir “Liliana’s Invincible Summer: A Sister’s Search for Justice.” The Pulitzer Prize is regarded as the highest national honor in journalism, letters and drama, and music. She is also a recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship, among a variety of high-profile international literary awards and was a 2023 finalist for a National Book Award.

### Ziaee Named 2024 Truman Scholar

UH junior and 2023-24 UH System student regent Mielad Ziaee has been honored with a Harry S. Truman Scholarship. Ziaee is the third Cougar to receive this prestigious award. The scholarship is awarded to students who demonstrate a commitment to their communities and to public service.

### UH Athletes Claim Title, Set Records

UH was crowned the national champion at the 2024 ITA National Wheelchair Tennis Championships, the premier competition for collegiate wheelchair tennis. During the Big 12 Championship, the UH Track & Field program won five conference titles and set several facility records.

## University of Houston-Clear Lake

### UHCL Rises in National, State Rankings

UH-Clear Lake notably progressed in the latest U.S. News & World Report’s 2024 Best Online Programs rankings. UHCL moved up to No. 35 nationally for “Best Online Master’s in Education Programs,” No. 97 in “Best Online Master’s in Business Programs” and No. 32 in “Best Online Master’s in Business Programs for Veterans.” Additionally, UHCL’s College of Education is ranked No. 12 among Texas schools and No. 5 among non-R1 institutions in the 2024 Best Graduate School Rankings.

### UHCL and KBR Elevate Astronaut Preparedness at Second SHOP Summit

UH-Clear Lake, in partnership with KBR, hosted the second annual Spaceflight Human Optimization and Performance Summit at Space Center Houston in April. The event is a hub for innovative thought in astronaut performance, bringing together interdisciplinary expertise to address the complexities of long-duration space travel. Attendees, especially students, benefitted from unprecedented access to spaceflight professionals, enhancing their learning and career trajectories.

## UHCL Earns Full NAEYC Accreditation and Introduces PK-3 Certification

UH-Clear Lake's early childhood education bachelor's degree program is the first in Texas to hold an accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Additionally, UHCL launched a unique PK-3 certification program, the only one of its kind in Houston, set to begin with a paid full-year teacher residency in fall 2024 in partnership with local school districts.

## University of Houston-Downtown

### UHD's Urban Education Program Receives Commendations from TEA

UH-Downtown's Urban Education program excelled in the Texas Education Agency's recent rankings for the 2022-2023 academic year. It received commendations in two key categories: "Preparing the Educators Texas Needs" in Bilingual/ESL, considered a content shortage area in the state, and "Preparing Educators for Long Term Success" with five consecutive years of retention as a Texas educator.

### UHD Joins JED Campus in Its Continuous Improvement in Mental Health Care

Committed to the wellness and well-being of its students, faculty and staff, UH-Downtown continues to improve its mental health services. To that end, UHD recently joined JED Campus to assess and enhance services for mental health, substance misuse and suicide prevention efforts over a four-year period for positive, lasting, systemic change in the campus community. JED Campus is a nationwide initiative of The Jed Foundation.

### UHD's First Fulbright Specialist Named

Associate Professor of Management Candace TenBrink was recently named a Fulbright Specialist by the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. It is the first time a UH-Downtown faculty member has received this honor. TenBrink is serving as a consultant to Alecu Russo Bălți State University in Moldova and creating a strategic plan that will enhance the capabilities and footprint of a technology and innovation center.

## University of Houston-Victoria

### Annual Math & Robotics Day Inspires High School Students in STEM

UH-Victoria hosted the 27th annual Math & Robotics Awareness Day, which is funded by a grant from Alcoa Foundation, to commemorate STEM disciplines during Mathematics Awareness Month in April. The event offered multiple activities and contests to 167 high school students from more than 10 schools in and around Victoria. UHV has hosted the event for 26 years, attracting nearly 5,000 students, with top talents from each school participating in the competition.

### UHV International Festival Showcased Global Diversity, Culture

UH-Victoria invited all campus and local community members to go abroad on an international odyssey, without leaving campus. The ninth annual UH-Victoria International Festival is a joint effort between UHV International Programs and the University's International Student Organization and Student Life. The event included a mariachi band, belly dancers, Our Lady of Sorrows Ballet Folklorico and a Brazilian dance performance.

### UHV Alum Named Principal of the Year

UH-Victoria alumnus and Victoria East High School Principal Justin Gabrysch (M.Ed. '11) was named the Principal of the Year for the Victoria Independent School District and then for Region III in 2023. In 2010, he was named a Victoria ISD Teacher of the Year, and in 2017, he was named Assistant Principal of the Year for Region III.