

# THE WORD

Summer 2022

## SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

*From Out of the Past, the  
Newly-Renovated Dubuis Hall  
is Ready for Future Students*





From June 13-16, the Feik School of Pharmacy hosted 30 high school students from the Rio Grande Valley for its PharmCamp 2022. The campers, led by eight Pharmacy students and five administrators, attended lectures at the Feik School of Pharmacy, toured the UIW campus, experienced CVS y Mas site visits at four different locations, toured the San Antonio Zoo Animal Health Center, and more. The PharmCamp, which is sponsored by CVS, began in the summer of 2019 and seeks to promote the career of pharmacy and the need to be part of the healthcare field to South Texas students, with an emphasis on outreach to Hispanic students.

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A publication of the Office of  
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*Do you know someone inter-  
ested in attending UIW? For  
more information on what UIW  
has to offer or to schedule a  
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## UIW Welcomes New Deans

UIW is proud to announce the appointment of two new Deans. Dr. John Pham will head the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) and Dr. Javier Clavere will take over as the dean of the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS).

Dr. John Pham served last as the vice dean and associate professor of Family Medicine at Western University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific Northwest. While in Oregon, he was also the medical director, preceptor and family physician. He immigrated with his family from Vietnam to Portland, Oregon, in 1975. Pham opened a solo practice in Portland where he served many 1st and 2nd generation Vietnamese families. His work earned him D.O. of the Year from the State Association in 2010 and Mentor of the Year from the American Osteopathic Association in 2007. His love of teaching led him to Western University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Northwest in 2011.

“I am absolutely delighted that Dr. Pham has joined the UIW family as the next leader of the SOM,” said Dr. Caroline Goulet, interim provost. “His passion for teaching and mentoring and his dedication towards community health were a perfect fit for the Mission of the University and that of the School of Osteopathic Medicine. I am looking forward to collaborating with him and the other Health Professions deans in co-creating a virtual UIW College of Health Professions.”

Dr. Javier Clavere held the McGaw Endowed Chair position and served as the chairman of the Department of Music at Berea College in Kentucky,



Dr. John Pham



Dr. Javier Clavere

a position he began in 2018. He was responsible for assessing the music programs, managing budgets and resource allocation for 16 endowed accounts, and conducted alumni and donor outreach to promote engagement and secure funding for the music department. Throughout his career, Clavere has distinguished himself in his discipline as well as in higher education leadership, and he is the recipient of several prestigious awards as a result.

“We are blessed to welcome Dr. Clavere as the new dean of CHASS,” said UIW Provost Emeritus Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo. “He brings to UIW a rich career in liberal education as well as unique gifts for innovative leadership. We look forward to Dr. Clavere joining our community of faculty and the provost’s leadership team to support the continued success of the college which has formed the enduring foundation of our great University.”

Pham replaced retired and founding SOM Dean Dr. Robyn Phillips-Madson on June 15. Clavere assumed his position from CHASS Interim Dean Dr. Lydia Andrade on June 1.

## UIW Honored for Work with Transfer Students

The University of the Incarnate Word earned a place on the 2022 Transfer Honor Roll in recognition of the dynamic pathways UIW has created to support transfer students. The Transfer Honor Roll was created by the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society, the premier honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges. This marks the first time UIW has been named to the list.

“We appreciate PTK’s recognition of our efforts to serve our transfer students and ensure they graduate from UIW with the knowledge and skills to be successful,” says John Bury, vice president for Strategy and Enrollment. “We are committed to retaining and graduating every transfer student who enrolls at UIW and we work closely with each student to provide them with the individual support that they need.”



## UIW Celebrates 2022 Spring Graduates

Graduates Completed 139,153 Hours of Community Service



The University of the Incarnate Word is proud to announce the conferral of 1,090 professional, doctoral, graduate and undergraduate degrees to students at the Spring Commencement Ceremony. The ceremony took place in front of family and friends at Freeman Coliseum during two ceremonies on May 7, 2022.

The commencement marked the first time that graduates from UIW's five health professions schools (Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions, Feik School of Pharmacy, Rosenberg School of Optometry, School of Physical Therapy and School of Osteopathic Medicine), participated in the same commencement ceremony.

## UIW Receives Major Funding for Kidney Research

UIW has received a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fund further research into kidney disease and diabetes. The \$300,000 grant will specifically go into research regarding an enzyme, Duox2, and how it effects those with kidney disease.

"Diabetes and diabetic nephropathy (DN) are major causes of morbidity in the general population," says Dr. Bridget Ford, assistant professor in the UIW Department of Biology and

lead on this research. "There is an urgent medical need in developing strategies for the treatment of DN. Our objective is to characterize the role of the reactive oxygen species-producing enzyme, Duox2, in DN and identify it as a convenient target for therapeutic intervention. This could allow targeted therapy to prevent or reverse DN and potentially translate to treating patients with specific antioxidant therapy."

## Latest Donation from Seddon Family to Fund Scholarships

Thanks to the generosity of the Seddon family, UIW is home to the Ingrid Seddon Recital Hall and the Ingrid Seddon Endowed Voice Scholarship in Music. In May, Seddon made his latest contribution that will change the lives of UIW students and South Texans. A \$100,000 gift brings the total of the Ingrid Seddon Endowed Scholarship in Osteopathic Medicine to \$400,000. It is the largest endowed scholarship fund benefiting students at the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine.

"Mr. Seddon's generous donation in memory and honor of his beloved wife will be used for scholarships for osteopathic medical students," said founding dean of SOM, Dr. Robyn Phillips-Madson. "These scholarships will enable student doctors to carry on Mr. and Mrs. Seddon's values of compassionate and holistic health care. We are grateful for this very special gift."

The newly endowed SOM scholarship is a bit of a full circle moment for Seddon who says he had his own dreams of a life in medicine, until real life got in the way. But now, he says, years of wisdom and good fortune have brought him to this moment.

"When I grew up, osteopathy had a bad name," recalls Seddon. "I wanted to go into medicine, but I had to quit school and go into the service towards the end of World War II. I met Ingrid and we got married and had a son, so going into medicine did not fit. But now I believe osteopathy is the future of medicine."





## Feik School of Pharmacy Tops in Texas

The Feik School of Pharmacy (FSOP) graduating Class of 2021 led the State of Texas by finishing No. 1 on the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX). The NAPLEX is a standardized test that is considered one of the last steps before a student becomes a licensed pharmacist. This is the second year in a row that FSOP students led the state. The scores also ranked No. 12, putting the class in the top 8% in the nation.

"I am very proud of the Class of 2021, faculty and staff on their licensure exam results," says Dr. David Maize, dean of the UIW Feik School of Pharmacy. "I am privileged to be a part of a team at the FSOP that produces highly qualified pharmacists as demonstrated by being ranked No. 1 for two consecutive years in the licensure exam passing rates in Texas."

In addition, the FSOP Class of 2021 finished No. 3 in Texas on the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE). That put the class at No. 18 in the country for that exam and in the top 12% across the nation.

## UIW Recommits to Growing Southland Conference

Coming off its most successful year on and off the playing field on June 24, the University of the Incarnate Word recommitted to continue its Division I athletics program in the Southland Conference. UIW had accepted an invitation to join the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) effective July 1, 2022.

"In the ever-changing landscape of Division I athletics, change can happen fast, but it has always been our goal to find stability, the best fit and the best opportunities for our student-athletes," says UIW President Dr. Thomas M. Evans. "Today's announcement is just another example of putting those interests first. Our decision to remain in the Southland Conference will optimize class time with competition time and time in our community and allow our students to once again excel in all those areas."



*For current schedules and more information on UIW Athletics, please visit: [uiwcardinals.com](http://uiwcardinals.com)*



## UIW Professor Inducted as Distinguished Fellow by National Academies of Practice

Joseph Pizzimenti, OD, FAAO, FORS, FNAP, a professor in the UIW Rosenberg School of Optometry, has been inducted into the National Academies of Practice (NAP) as a Distinguished Fellow. The Class of 2022 Fellows were

welcomed into the NAP during an awards and induction ceremony in San Diego, California, on March 5, 2022.

"Interprofessional clinical education and collaborative practice can bridge gaps in healthcare, positively impacting outcomes and quality of life," says Pizzimenti. "Earning this Distinguished Fellow in the NAP has been both educational and professionally rewarding. I am grateful to the UIW Rosenberg School of Optometry for its commitment to integrative health care."

# BROADWAY CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS

As a growing and expanding university, UIW is constantly looking at new and innovative ways to serve its students. Let's look at a few of the changes coming to the Broadway Campus.



## DUBUIS RESIDENCE HALL

Built in 1928, the Dubuis Residence Hall has undergone major renovations over the past two years. Located in the heart of the UIW Broadway Campus, Dubuis Hall has been home to thousands of students over the past near century.

The new and improved Dubuis Hall features renovated rooms, bathrooms and hallways, new furniture in rooms and lounge areas, electronic card access to doors and updated outdoor spaces for student gatherings and programming.

During the official ribbon cutting and reopening, April 24, UIW President Dr. Thomas Evans shared the following words, "Generations of students have lived inside these walls, so it was

very important for us to keep its historic significance as we upgraded and readied it for generations more. Today, we are proud to share that the exterior of Dubuis Hall looks much like it did nearly 100 years ago, but the interior reflects a first-class living and learning environment."

"Throughout the planning and renovation process it was extremely important to preserve Dubuis Hall to honor the history and legacy of its service to UIW, while updating for the needs of current and future generations of Cardinals," explained UIW Dean of Campus Life, Dr. Chris Summerlin.

It is expected that approximately 90 students will call Dubuis Hall home for the 2022 fall semester.





### FOUNDERS HALL

Located at 4119 Broadway, Founders Hall is a 10-acre property that includes an eight-story building with approximately 350,000 square feet of office space, a 500-car parking garage, and a surrounding lot with hundreds of additional spaces. The property expanded the footprint of the Broadway Campus by 20 percent and its ample parking has considerably alleviated congestion.

Careful and strategic renovation and design have the greatest potential to transform the Broadway Campus. Founders Hall is the site for the Liza and Jack Lewis Center of the Americas, as well as academic, student services and administrative purposes.





## STARBUCKS

UIW is excited to welcome a new addition to the Student Engagement Center as the 2,315 square foot Starbucks opens in August. The new coffee shop will offer students a space to gather, study, and enjoy their favorite Starbucks creation.



CONCEPT ART



## SPIRIT WALK

Honoring our natural and spiritual heritage is another focal point of the capital priorities. The Spirit Reach project was initiated by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word as an extension of the San Antonio Riverwalk running through the Broadway Campus and leading to the river's origin at the Blue Hole. The vision for Spirit Reach supports an improved outdoor and pedestrian experience along beautiful, landscaped paths on the Broadway Campus. Spirit Reach would establish another walkable corridor from Founders Hall to the rest of campus north of Hildebrand. Additionally, Spirit Reach offers further opportunity to highlight the natural landscape and historic connection to our neighboring sister ministries.



For the latest information on the campus master plan, visit <https://www.uiw.edu/president/strategic-planning/campus.html>

# HEALTH DISPARITIES

## Making Us One Through Service and Education

By Cari Gold Photo Credit: Luis Donaldo

Health disparities is a growing concern throughout the world, particularly among underserved populations. The University of the Incarnate Word believes in a reverence for the dignity of each human being as created in the image of God. The commitment to justice and to the common good, as well as the solidarity of the human family, drives UIW to serve the community to lessen, and hopefully alleviate, the effects of health disparities. The UIW Health Professions schools (the School of Osteopathic Medicine, the Feik School of Pharmacy, the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions, the School of Physical Therapy and the Rosenberg School of Optometry) have served the community through clinics, mission trips and more.



Psychiatry resident, fourth year SOM students and several first and second year SOM students working on patients and practicing OMT on each other at Street2Feet MOM clinic.

### UIW Participates in Local Fair Addressing Health Disparities

Faculty and learners from the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) and the Cardinal Nursing and Wellness program participated in the Access Denied Health Fair on May 28.

The event was organized by Laura Garcia, a *San Antonio Express-News* reporter, as part of a fellowship she received from USC Annenberg Center for Health Journalism. Her area of focus revolves around social health disparities. According to Dr. Emma Santa Maria, associate dean of the UIW School of Professional Studies and former SOM assistant professor, the topic is one that many at UIW “hold very close to our hearts on a professional and personal level.”



### Schools of Osteopathic Medicine and Physical Therapy Hold Follow-up Amigos en Medicina Clinic

In January, the UIW School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM), the UIW School of Physical Therapy (SoPT), Ortho-SA and CHRISTUS Health partnered to form Amigos en Medicina (AEM). Together they are providing free hip and knee arthritis evaluations for Southside residents in San Antonio. The goal of the clinic is to care for patients that may otherwise not seek medical attention, educate patients by providing information that targets ailments identified, and build trust between the health-care system and participants.

The second AEM clinic held in May partnered the SOM, SoPT, Ortho-San Antonio, CHRISTUS Health and River City Produce to follow up with 12 patients, tracking their progress from the inaugural AEM clinic held in January.



Bryanna Espinoza (Community Health Education Student) and Kennedie Martinez (Psychology Student) pose with business owner Janie Cantu at the Interprofessional Rural Health Vaxambassador Community Conversation and Blood Drive in Pleasanton, Texas

Interprofessional Rural Health Outreach Program continues throughout the summer. Currently, the grant is scheduled to be completed by August 2022. Program leads, Dr. Maria Felix-Ortiz and Dr. Heather Barton-Weston hope to secure additional funding so they may continue the program during Fall 2022 and Spring 2023. Vaxambassadors partner with South Texas Blood and Tissue and Fantastic Sam's in Pleasanton, Texas, to host a blood drive and COVID-19 community conversations. To help increase participation, Fantastic Sam's owner (Janie Cantu) offered an entire day of specials for anyone who donated blood and engaged with Vaxambassadors.



Community Pride Celebration and Health Fair at Crockett Park; San Antonio (Samantha Perez and Andrea Martinez)

Community Health Education students assist Dr. Lucero Martinez Delgado at a health fair at this year's community pride celebration. Students were asked to provide body composition and basic nutritional recommendations, as well as substance misuse and COVID-19 education.



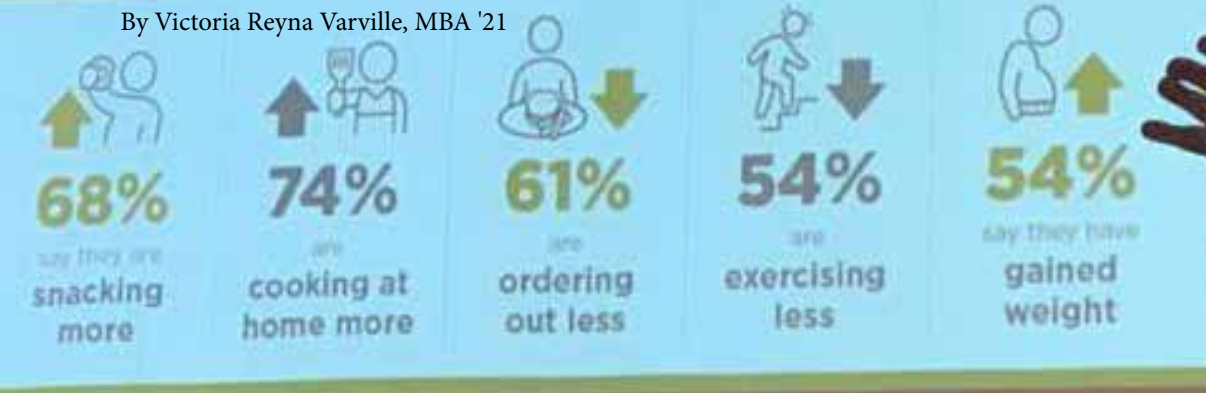
## Strength in Unity, Hope in Understanding: Feik Students and Faculty Live the Mission in Puerto Rico

Ten learners and three faculty members from the University of the Incarnate Word Feik School of Pharmacy used the gifts of medicine and compassion on a mission trip held from May 14 – 21. The group travelled to Las Piedras, Puerto Rico, where they served the Celia Mondriguez Elderly Center and residents of the local community. The trip was a collaborative effort with the National Hispanic Pharmacy Association and the UIW Ettling Center for Civic Leadership and Sustainability.



# Healthcare: A Global Solution

By Victoria Reyna Varville, MBA '21



UIW's Center for Medical Tourism Research (CMTR), part of the Liza and Jack Lewis Center of the Americas, has been at the forefront of research in the medical tourism industry for more than a decade. The CMTR is committed to serving as the world's premier academic center for medical tourism research, providing quality literature and thought leadership on the economic, social justice and societal impacts of the industry around the globe.

As the world adapts to what it means to live with COVID-19, and tourism subsequently picks up again, the CMTR's founder and UIW faculty member, Dr.



David G. Vequist IV, has been a sought-after voice of expertise on new trends in medical tourism from the likes of *The New York Times* and *USA Today*. And that's not all. The CMTR most recently signed a contract with one of the top five hospital systems in the U.S. to conduct research regarding international patients travelling to this premiere healthcare

facility for medical treatment. This system is famously known for its medical breakthroughs and advancements throughout its century-long history. To be considered, let alone selected to conduct research for this iconic hospital, along with the ongoing national media attention, is what Dr. Vequist calls an honor for UIW, the CMTR, and for him.

"UIW is being mentioned in *The New York Times*, along with elite research universities like Harvard, Columbia and Stanford, so it's a source of pride for me," Vequist shared. "And the great thing for the CMTR and for the Lewis Center of the Americas is that we have been able to secure a number of exciting collaborations, such as this new research project with one of the best healthcare facilities in the world. We are also working on a new joint effort with the Mexican ministries of economy and tourism to help develop the medical tourism industry in Mexico by providing training on the topic. Some of these opportunities may not be happening if we weren't being seen and heard by people around the world because of the media attention."

That work in Mexico is no small opportunity for the CMTR either. Vequist has been tapped by

Mexico's Secretaría de Economía and Secretaría de Turismo to develop and deliver training to the country's medical tourism healthcare facilities. It's a project he says aligns with the mission of the Lewis Center, which is to "promote better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the United States, Mexico, Canada, Central and South America through cooperative study, research, service and dialogue."

When thinking back on the journey to this moment in the CMTR's history, Vequist is amazed that one research paper ultimately led to him becoming one of the world's leading experts on medical tourism. When asked what initially drew him to such a niche area of research, he chuckled and admitted, "Well, the honest answer is having come from industry, and before that, consulting, when I came to academia, I didn't have a research agenda."

He went on to explain that he and a colleague of his, a finance professor from St. Mary's University, decided to co-author an article about patients travelling for medical treatment. During his time in the healthcare industry as an executive for Methodist Healthcare System, Vequist had seen first-hand

how tourists from Mexico travelled to San Antonio for a weekend of healthcare and shopping at North Star Mall.

“And so I was familiar with this interesting mixture of both medical and tourism combined here in San Antonio, and it was a pretty nice revenue stream for the hospital,” he explained.

Following the article’s publication, Vequist began receiving requests for commentary and opinion on the growing medical tourism industry. The calls followed a similar pattern, whether from bloggers and reporters writing about the topic, or organizers of national healthcare conferences in search of a keynote speaker. I’m working on (insert story, article, event) about medical tourism, they began. There don’t seem to be many experts on medical tourism, but I saw your publication...

And the rest, as they say, is history. Vequist had found his research focus and invitations quickly came in, calling him to present on the national stage in Washington D.C., San Francisco and more. It was after one of his keynote addresses at a national medical conference that he was approached by the vice president of international affairs for Medtronic, a leader in global healthcare technology, with a suggestion that Vequist launch a medical tourism research center at the University. With that, the UIW Center for Medical Tourism Research was officially born in 2007.

Since then, Vequist’s research has taken him around the globe to places including Seoul, Mexico City, Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Zurich, Manila, Havana, Berlin, Bogota, Venice and more. During his travels, he’s met with state officials, advised governments on the impact of medical tourism on their economies, and delivered keynote address at conferences with international audiences and leaders in global healthcare. In fact, his knowledge and expertise regarding medical tourism have been shared on every continent except Australia and Antarctica, the former which he hopes to soon visit.

However, in the immediate future, Vequist is shifting the CMTR’s focus a bit closer to home. As a key entity of the UIW Liza and Jack Lewis Center of the Americas, his work will take him on professional trips to Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Colombia this year, in addition to the agreements the CMTR is entering into with one of the best hospital systems in the U.S. and the Mexican ministries of economy and tourism. All these efforts are in service of the CMTR’s short-term goal of having more of an impact on the Americas, and it comes at a crucial time in healthcare. The CMTR’s research indicates that the global population is sicker than ever due to rising obesity rates, mental health issues and poor nutrition. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic caused people to delay preventative and interventive treatment. All of this combined with a global shortage of healthcare workers may

paint a bleak picture, but Vequist is optimistic and insists medical tourism offers a silver lining.

“I think the idea of sharing resources among countries has always been a natural free market response that has allowed industries to continue to grow,” he explained. “There is still a need for local healthcare ... but there can be other things that we can get from, for example, Mexico, our largest trading partner, and that frees us up to think innovatively about other ways in which to serve people. It’s truly an

organic, wonderful thing, like God intended us to work with other people, and by working with other people, we then find ways to meet more people’s needs.”

And service is, in the end, what it all comes back to. At the heart of the Center for Medical Tourism Research’s work is a resolve to better the lives of people around the world through improved access to quality healthcare. It’s a goal that Vequist carries near and dear, one that he views as a continuation of the work of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, UIW’s founding congregation.

“Medical tourism is linked to the original Sisters’ mission in ways that I could have never imagined.”



“I almost lucked into this idea of medical tourism, and then it turns out, medical tourism is linked to the original Sisters’ mission in ways that I could have never imagined,” he beamed.

He talked through the story every UIW community member knows by heart. The story of the Sisters making the difficult journey to Texas in the 1800s in response to a cholera epidemic, how they began a hospital, then an orphanage, then a school, leading to what would eventually be the University of the Incarnate Word.

“We have education and healthcare being two of the first missions that the Sisters brought with them from France, and more than one hundred years later what we have is a premier medical tourism research center which focuses on globalization, healthcare and research,” he continued. “Particularly, the education of topics around the globalization of healthcare happens to occur right here at the University of the Incarnate Word. It was almost like in 1881, the seeds were planted, and now we have this blooming center that is one of the fruits of what the Sisters originally brought here.”

## Moment for Reflection

# REFLECTIONS OF A SERVANT LEADER

By Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo, MS '88



**A**s a child, you never realize how important being safe and loved by your parents and family shapes your outlook on life and the choices you make in your vocation. I was blessed to have grown up with loving parents, seven brothers and one sister, and many extended family members including both my paternal grandmother, Petra Cordoba-Aranda, and my maternal grandmother, Barbarita Gonzalez-Ramos, both of whom were born in Mexico. As a second-generation Latina-American, I was reared in both the Mexican and American cultures. Because I was child number eight of nine, I spoke English first and Spanish was my second language. I also spoke Tex-Mex in our barrio in Houston, Texas. My parents and grandparents believed strongly in a Catholic education and most of the family were fortunate to attend Catholic school through the 8th grade. I continued through high school at Incarnate Word Academy in downtown Houston.

I share the above short biography because, in the Latino culture, it is important when you start a “platica,” a conversation, that you let your audience know “quien eres,” who are you. In other words, we

are all family, and it is part of being “amable” or affable to get to know the people you are having dinner with or engaging in a discussion. As I reflect on my vocation as a servant leader in my roles as a nurse, teacher, and administrator both at universities and the public sector, the major theme in my work has been to reach out with love and kindness to the people and communities I have had the privilege to serve. I chose early to work with vulnerable, disenfranchised populations. I have learned through listening to their stories that we should always address them as resilient-vulnerable populations, which may seem to many as a contradiction in terms, but it is not. Even the most vulnerable person, student, or family has resilient characteristics that enable him or her to flourish with your help as a teacher, clergy, nurse, social worker, or other health care provider.

I want to pause here to share a poem a client shared with me early in my nursing career that I think beautifully describes the importance of showing kindness and love in the professional sense to the people we work with and those we serve through our selected vocations.

Poem:

## Abou bin Adhem

by James Henry Leigh Hunt

Abou bin Adhem Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw, within the moonlight of his room,  
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,  
An angel writing in a book of gold,  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
'What writest thou?' - The vision raised its head,  
And with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered 'The names of those who love the Lord.'  
And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'  
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,  
But cheerly still; and said 'I pray thee then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow men.'  
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night,  
It came again with a great waking light,  
And showed the names who love of God had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

I have been blessed by God to have had teachers, mentors and supervisors in my life who took interest in my development as a person and a professional. As a first-generation college student, you can easily lose your footing and doubt if you really belong in college. One of the key tools that grounded me in my trials and tribulations was knowing how to pray to God and seek counsel from sisters, priest and brothers who were angels in my path and some who became my spiritual counselors. My grandmother Petra had a hotline to God, and she taught us not only to pray but to have reverence in our prayer. We are all transformed by our failings, fears, and successes but without a strong spiritual framework to help you interpret your experiences you can easily be derailed and lose faith in yourself and others. Prayer does not change God, it changes and develops our relationship with God. At UTW, I have been asked on many occasions by students to share with them how to pray. I start our conversation with the following question: If you had a chance to have a private conversation every day with the CEO of the world would you make the time to share your thoughts and needs? Of course, students look at me puzzled and then chuckle a bit and say, "Who is the CEO of the world"? I give them one hint...it is the name of our University: The Incarnate Word!

Prayer with reflection is powerful and worth cultivating early in one's vocation. I am thankful for all the spiritual mentors in my life, especially the CCVI Sisters whose history and charism I carry in my heart forever. The song "Be not Afraid" that we sing at mass captures the love God has for us and when I hear this song it always brings tears to my eyes. In these challenging times and social unrest, this song gives me hope and reminds me that God is with us and goes before us and will give each of us the rest we need.



## Be Not Afraid

St. Louis Jesuits

You shall cross the barren desert  
But you shall not die of thirst  
You shall wander far in safety  
Though you do not know the way  
You shall speak your words to foreign men  
And they will understand  
You shall see the face of God and live  
Be not afraid

I go before you always  
Come, follow me and I will give you rest  
If you pass through raging waters in the sea  
You shall not drown  
If you walk amid the burning flames  
You shall not be harmed  
If you stand before the power of hell  
And death is at your side  
Know that I am with you through it all  
Be not afraid

I go before you always  
Come, follow me and I will give you rest  
And blessed are your poor  
For the kingdom shall be theirs  
Blest are you that weep and mourn  
For one day you shall laugh  
And if wicked men insult and hate you  
All because of me  
Blessed, blessed are you  
Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come, follow me and I will give you rest

Source: Musixmatch  
Songwriters: S.j. / Bob Dufford

The final thought I would like to share came to me as a lesson from a young father who had AIDS and had just buried his wife who had just died of AIDS. He was left to raise his four children ages 2, 4, 6, and 8 with the two-year-old also infected with the AIDS virus. He was reported to CPS for child neglect because his children kept getting lice. At the CPS meeting where I was present after the team had given their report, they asked the father to share what he had to say about the lice issue. He quietly said, “before I share my thoughts, I hope you all will be open to hearing what I cannot say.” The lead case worker asked him to repeat what he said for clarification. Once again, the husband said, in a quiet voice, “I hope you all can hear what I cannot say.”

The young father began to speak in a low voice sharing the difficulty he was having managing the four children and then he stopped suddenly, and he sat stoically with tears running down his face....and ended his remarks by saying, “Can you hear what I cannot say.” Emotional pain and losing our loved ones can be so great that it can paralyze our very voice and as we do our work as educators and healers we need to pause and try to listen to each other and to what a student, patient, parent or loved one is not able to say to us due to the emotional pain they are experiencing.

As the provost of the University of the Incarnate Word, it has been my distinct pleasure to work with many nationally recognized individuals who are leaders in their own

“  
**Together, we  
can prepare our  
students to give  
their voice to  
those that  
“cannot say.”**

disciplines. I am proud of the collaborative teams we have developed across the campus and especially of those working collaboratively in the Provost’s Office. Together, we have developed the Academic Master Plan, the planning document that guides us as we develop services and programs that will guide the University into the future. With the Academic Master Plan, we can effect positive change for our communities and can guide

and develop students into servant leaders ready to take on the challenges of the next generation. Together, we can prepare our students to help those “suffering in the persons of a multitude of sick and infirm of every kind,” the same as did Bishop Claude Dubuis when he issued the original call for the Sisters that founded this great University. Together, we can prepare our students to give their voice to those

that “cannot say.”

I want to recognize and thank my husband, Sonny, for his unwavering support of my efforts and his unconditional love. I truly could not have taken this journey without him and am so proud to have shared this journey through life with him by my side.

As servant leaders, we are honored to participate in the sacred transformation and formation of others that requires patience, time, silence, discernment, education, and training because every human being is a sacred member of the family of God.

Praise be the Incarnate Word...forever amen.



# UNIVERSITY COLLECTIVE A FOND FAREWELL

Every UIW employee, whether beloved faculty or dedicated staff, leaves their mark on the University and makes a lasting impact on students. This year, the University bid farewell to esteemed members of the community who began a new chapter in their lives – retirement. The UIW family thanks each and every one of these individuals for their years of service to bettering the lives of students and the many contributions they made to the University.



## Sr. Kathleen Coughlin

Sr. Kathleen Coughlin grew up in the suburbs of St. Louis before entering the congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio in 1960. Although she thought she would become a teacher, she was assigned

to a role in healthcare instead. She earned her undergraduate degree in Nursing from Incarnate Word College and her master's degree in Health Administration from St. Louis University.

Over the following three decades, Sr. Kathleen spent time as a director of nurses, hospital administrator, president/CEO of Spohn Health System, president of the Catholic Health Association of Texas and other leadership roles in the congregation. She retired from healthcare in 2000 and embarked on a second career, this time in the field of institutional advancement.

Sr. Kathleen joined the UIW family as vice president for Institutional Advancement in 2002. Eventually serving in her most recent role as senior advisor to the President for Leadership Gifts and Sponsored Ministries, her areas of responsibility have included cultivating large gifts and acting as a liaison between UIW and all sponsored ministries of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word.

During her time at UIW, Sr. Kathleen was involved in numerous fundraising projects, including the opening of the AT&T Science Center, raising funds for the Feik School of Pharmacy, the renovation and rededication of the school of nursing to the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions, the renovation of the former fine arts building, which became the Kelso Art Center, the Source of Life mural installation, Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium, the Luella Bennack Music Center, the Diane Bennack Concert Hall and the startup of the School of



Osteopathic Medicine. Additionally, with Sr. Kathleen's help, UIW's annual gala, Swing-In is now in its 45th year, and serves as both a vital scholarship fundraiser and a beloved tradition. In 2002, the event raised a net of \$45,000. For the three years prior to COVID-19, the event netted nearly \$400,000 per year.

"It is impossible to overstate how meaningful and how significant a contribution Sr. Kathleen has made since joining UIW in 2002," said Dr. Thomas M. Evans, UIW president. "She has welcomed new friends and benefactors and has ushered in some of the most transformational gifts in our institution's history, helping UIW grow and prosper. Sister also made education possible for so many students and because of that, she has changed their lives. We are extremely grateful for her presence, her leadership and all that she has brought to our community."



## Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo, UIW Provost

From being a student of Incarnate Word College to serving as provost of the University of the Incarnate Word, you might say the career of

Dr. Barbara Aranda-Naranjo has come full circle. This dedicated servant and educator retired from her position as vice president for Academic Affairs and provost at UIW on July 29, 2022.

Dr. Aranda-Naranjo has had a remarkable career that spanned more than 30 years, with many of those years dedicated to UIW. Here, she served as General Dunlap Endowed Chair for Nursing Research, Associate Provost for Health Professions, Associate Provost for Civic Engagement, Director of Student Health Services and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. In this role, she was responsible for the quality of all academic programs and the development of the Academic Master Plan. As an alumna, Dr. Aranda-Naranjo has had a particularly keen insight into the lives of our Cardinals and a profound understanding of their needs throughout their UIW journeys and well after graduation. To help support students, she led successful efforts to build collaborative academic, government, and community partnerships to meet the needs of those organizations and their workforce.

"This announcement comes with mixed emotions," said UIW President Dr. Thomas M. Evans. "Dr. Aranda-Naranjo has served the University of the Incarnate Word with deep dedication and a heart for Mission for many years and, as a result, she has made significant impacts on the lives of our faculty and students. I know that, while we will miss her daily presence and all that she has brought to UIW as an educator, leader and provost, we all wish her health, happiness and nothing but the best in this next chapter."



**Dr. Robyn Phillips-Madson, UIWSOM Founding Dean**

Dr. Robyn Phillips-Madson arrived at the University of the Incarnate Word in November of 2013 when its School

of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) was in its beginning stages. Getting a medical school off the ground was nothing new to her. She had already served as dean of another medical school during its first year of classes. She knew what the expectations would be, and she thrived on them.

From the earliest days, Phillips-Madson oversaw spectacular growth and major milestones for UIW's medical school. In Spring 2021, UIWSOM celebrated many firsts. March saw its first round of graduates experience Match Day, where they learned where they would complete their residencies. Two months later, those same learners became the first graduates of UIWSOM.

In May 2021, UIWSOM also announced it had been granted full accreditation from the American Osteopathic Association's Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation. Through it all, Phillips-Madson says her greatest joy was working with and watching the learning community of UIWSOM grow.

"Words are insufficient to express my gratitude to the many people who welcomed me and my husband to San Antonio and UIW, and supported UIWSOM throughout our start-up years," she shared upon the announcement of her retirement. "I will carry fond memories in my heart of the precious people I encountered here, and will be forever grateful for their prayers and commitment to the charism of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Praised be the Incarnate Word forever and ever!"



**Dr. Timothy Wingert, UIWRSO Dean**

Dr. Timothy A. Wingert has retired as dean and professor at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry (UIWR-

SO). Prior to his promotion to dean, Dr. Wingert served the UIWRSO community as the associate dean for Academic Affairs.

Dr. Wingert has authored or co-authored over 100 refereed publications and peer-reviewed presentations, most of which have concentrated on access to care issues and providing Optometric care to populations in need. Most recently, he received the Fulbright Specialist Program Award from the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

"Dr. Wingert has served admirably at three different schools and colleges of optometry over his 37-year career in academic optometry," shared Dr. William Miller, UIWRSO associate dean for Academic Affairs. "His distinction as a Fulbright Scholar to Poland on two occasions is honorific in the optometric profession. His career in public health, representing optometry, has impacted not only the U.S., but countries around the world. Dr. Wingert has contributed to over 36 optometric publications and over 80 academic paper and poster presentations in his distinguished career.

"In my nearly three decades of academic life, it is rare to serve under a leadership that has left such an impact on me and my colleagues," Dr. Miller continued. "Dr. Wingert has brought a leadership that can best be summarized as fair and approachable with an active listening approach. He is quick-witted and humorous, while his empathetic side exhibits concern for faculty and their families. Dr. Wingert has always been intentional about hearing all sides of an issue before weighing in with his own. Dr. Wingert can be clearly described as a servant leader."



**Dr. Linda Hook, Assistant Professor of Nursing**

After 40 years in professional nursing practice in various specialties, including 20 years in community and public health nursing, Dr. Hook

transitioned into academic practice with a teaching role. Hook was a leader in UIW's community efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. She also organized and led numerous clinics that resulted in thousands of Bexar County residents getting immunized for the virus.

"We certainly will miss Dr. Linda Hook's leadership, especially in everything related to community health nursing," shared Dr. Holly Cassells, dean of the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions. "She has a vision of the possibilities for both students and faculty, and for the vulnerable communities we serve. And then she creates ways to respond. She has a passion for addressing public health needs, whether by getting vaccines to the underserved, inserting professional nurses into primary care, or showing students the value and the joy in helping clients improve their lives. Everything she does is with exuberance and energy, and a deep understanding of how to make things happen in complex and shifting community environments. Her commitment to our UIW Mission and to finding ways to carry it out, have been an inspiration to all of us!"



**Dr. Alison Whittemore, Department of Engineering and Physics Chair**

Dr. Alison Whittemore served as chair of UIW's Department of Engineering and Physics. She spearheaded the creation

of the University's Solar House, a project that she led for five years prior to its grand opening. The Solar House was created to be a fully functioning residence as well as a visitor's center and learning laboratory on the UIW campus.

"As I reflect on the many tremendous contributions of Alison Whittemore to the School of Mathematics, Science and Engineering, the ones that stand out the most are her service to sustainability efforts on campus and the contributions she made to the growth of Cardinal Engineering," said Dr. Carlos Garcia, Dean of the School of Mathematics, Science and Engineering. "Dr. Whittemore is an excellent example of an individual that used an engineering background to serve the international developing communities in Peru by demonstrating how to build an oven from recycled materials and crafting bags and purses from recycled trash bags. Perhaps the most visible legacy is Dr. Whittemore's contribution to the construction of the LEED Platinum UIW Solar House on campus."



**Dr. Dora Fitzgerald,**  
*Emeritus Associate Professor, School of Media and Design*

Dr. Dora Fitzgerald taught at the University of the Incarnate Word for more than 20 years. During

her time as a film professor, she also gave back to students by actively serving on the University Undergraduate and Graduate Councils over the years.

"Dora Fitzgerald was a valued faculty member in the Communication Arts program for 20 years and was instrumental in the development of a film studies concentration before her retirement," shared Dr. Sharon Welkey, Dean of the School of Media and Design. "It will be exciting to finally launch the film studies concentration effective Fall 2022. Dora's dedication to planning every detail of this concentration was typical of any project she worked on, meticulously and carefully crafted!

Dora loved teaching and was a tireless advocate for students and was genuinely interested in the overall wellbeing of each and every student in her classes."



**John Miller,** *Convergent Media Manager*

John Miller was a familiar face on UIW's Broadway campus, where he served as the University's convergent media manager for nearly 12 years. His role

involved troubleshooting, updating and training users of UIW's various digital products such as Zoom, Blackboard and more. Miller also served as the online administrator for various student-run media organizations including UIWtv.

"UIW was fortunate to hire John as its Convergent Media Manager," shared Terry Peak, UIW instructional designer and a colleague of Miller's. "He came to UIW with more than 25 years of experience in media recording, editing and production, which he willingly shared with students and faculty."



**Priscilla Johnson,**  
*Academic Advisor, UIW School of Professional Studies*

Priscilla Johnson made her UIW home as an academic advisor at the University's Corpus Christi School of

Professional Studies campus. A graduate of the University of the Incarnate Word, Johnson served the University for more than twenty years, where she counseled countless students as they began their own higher education journeys.

"Priscilla loved working with her students," said Valerie Vargas, senior advisor at the UIW School of Professional Studies. "She was passionate about

the care she provided to each of them and did not hesitate to go above and beyond to help them. We continue to see the impact she had on her students daily, and I'm confident we will continue to see it for some time."



**Theresa Lopez,** *Senior Instructor of Fashion Management*

Theresa Lopez served in the School of Media and Design's Fashion program for nearly two decades. A UIW graduate, Lopez helped students realize their dreams as a senior instructor of Fashion Management.

"Theresa 'Teri' Lopez spent 15 years teaching and shaping students into future fashion designers, merchandisers, and product developers who graduated from the Juren-Sullivan Fashion Management program at UIW," shared Dr. Sharon Welkey, Dean of the School of Media and Design. "During this time, she was actively involved with every aspect of the annual Cutting-Edge Fiesta Fashion Show, whether assisting students in the planning, designing, and production of garments for the show or in the actual production of the show. Teri worked tirelessly to make sure each fashion show was a success and had a personal stake in making sure the fashion management graduates were also on a path to achieve success."



**Dr. Roger Barnes,**  
*Chair of Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice*

Dr. Roger Barnes was well-known on campus for being a leader in social justice. He made

UIW his permanent higher education home

in 1983, beginning as an assistant professor of Sociology. Dr. Barnes had a true passion for helping students. He was once quoted as saying, “Over the years, I’ve learned never to give up on my students. Students should be considered ‘raw material’ on their way to greatness.” This belief led him to become the first recipient of UIW’s Presidential Teaching Award in 2005.

“Dr. Roger Barnes was a servant leader long before the term came into vogue,” said Dr. Kevin Vichales, associate provost for Undergraduate and Graduate Education. “In the classroom, his focus on holistic student development epitomized his teaching and resulted in the transformation of generations of students. His service to the UIW community at the departmental, college, and university levels are exemplified through the numerous awards and honors bestowed upon him by his faculty colleagues. Dr. Barnes’ focus on the growth, development, and well-being of the various communities he belongs serves as an example to us all.”



**Peter Reininger, HVAC Superintendent**

Peter Reininger’s history with UIW dates back all the way to the 1800s. In the late 1800s, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word were moved

to open an orphanage, and in doing so, they gave care and housing to many young orphans without a family. Among them were Reininger’s grandparents. In the decades that followed, every generation of the Reininger family worked to contribute to the Sisters’ mission.

“Peter served the University with great dedication for decades,” said Phil Lopes, director of Facilities Management. “It’s been a pleasure working closely with him over the years – the combination of being an expert in his field and having such a passion for serving the Sisters’

ministry made him a valued member of our University community.”



**Cynthia Rodriguez, Office of the Registrar**

Throughout Cynthia Rodriguez’s time at UIW, she wore many hats and served in several capacities, both in the School of Professional Studies and in the Office of the Registrar. Her colleagues called her the “ultimate go-to person” because of her vast institutional knowledge.

“Cynthia has been an amazing colleague to work with throughout our time together, both in the School of Professional Studies and the Registrar Office,” shared Marisol Scheer, registrar. “Cynthia’s dedication to her work and her co-workers was an example of commitment to our One Word community. I am so happy her hard work has led her to a wonderful retirement, but we will surely miss her here at UIW.”



**Sylvia Kutschenreuter, Secretary to Dean of Academic Affairs, UIWRSO**

Sylvia Kutschenreuter served in various roles as a University employee. Once the Office of Development’s office manager, she is now ending her UIW career as secretary to the dean of Academic Affairs at the Rosenberg School of Optometry. Ever a friendly face and helpful teammate, Kutschenreuter’s service is remembered fondly by all who worked with her.

“When I reflect and think about people in my life who have helped me be a better person, there are a few selected individuals who come to mind,” began Lynn-Davis Johnson, manager of

Advancement Services. “Sylvia Kutschenreuter is one of the special individuals because when I’m around her I feel a spirit of goodness!”

Reflecting on her time at UIW and calling on the University’s tenets, Kutschenreuter said, “We are ‘family’ is not just a cliché. It was a deep down feeling I had with strong and never-ending ‘faith,’ creative ‘innovation,’ enlightening ‘education,’ continuous ‘service’ and genuine ‘truth.’ I am blessed to be a Cardinal.”

### **Victor Aguilar, Shipping and Receiving**

Victor Aguilar initially joined the University community as a part-time employee. However, his department quickly realized that he was a wonderful asset to the team. After a little convincing, Aguilar agreed to a full-time position. His team shared that UIW was blessed over his years of service to have such a hard-working, dedicate team member.

“Victor’s work ethic and friendly spirit will be hard to replace,” shared his colleague, Marisa Vasquez.

“Victor was a great person to work with,” added Joe Cadena, Aguilar’s supervisor. “He understood his role in Shipping and Receiving and went above and beyond to assist others when needed. He will be missed.”



## UIW Grad Making a Difference for those Escaping War Torn Ukraine

By Michael Valdes

**T**his experience changed my life the moment I got off the plane. The mission was in Poland where I could medically assist displaced Ukrainian citizens running away from violence, destruction, and hostile environments caused by the war.”

As her classmates enjoyed a day of celebration with family and friends, Iryna Aniushkevich missed her graduation day from the UIW Feik School of Pharmacy in May 2022. That’s because, the day before graduation, Aniushkevich was already on a plane starting to fulfill the lessons she says she has learned at UIW.

The 32 year-old Doctor of Pharmacy graduate was part of a mission program sponsored by a nonprofit called International Medical Relief. The group was sent to Poland where the vast majority of refugees from the Ukrainian war with Russia have sought relief.

“The shelter guests were coming from Ukraine’s heavily affected areas with all the belongings they could carry,” says Aniushkevich. “Their journey to Poland was difficult and unsafe, with many involved in long hiding in underground shelters and basements. The Ukrainians staying at the shelter were in a state of psychological distress and anxiety. Some with left family members behind. Some with deceased family members or friends. All without a concrete plan for where to go and what to do.”

For Aniushkevich, the trip to Poland was a bit of a homecoming. She immigrated to the United States more than ten years ago from her home country of Belarus and had not been back to the region in years. Still, she found that her upbringing would pay huge dividends for those in need.

“I was able to play multiple roles: the pharmacist, the translator and the therapist as it was naturally easy connecting to people with an alike mentality,” says Aniushkevich. “Much medical help

was needed, but often people were shy to come to the clinic even being symptomatic. Many patients required persuasive conversation or a walk alongside. I was inspired to collaborate with the medical team driven by the same humanitarian purpose.”

The days at the shelter were long for Aniushkevich and her fellow volunteers. She says she worked from seven in the morning to ten at night for almost two weeks. She admits, the stories she heard from the refugees still bother her. Stories of murder, torture and families left desperate looking for

asylum. But she says she never feared for her own safety and, although the work took its toll, she still found it very rewarding.

“The special interactions with people will remain imprinted forever. Not just for me, but similarly for other American and international volunteers who came on the mission. Despite feeling desperate and helpless, Ukrainians remain true to their homeland and some refuse to immigrate to other countries, establish a new life, and are just waiting for the war to end.”

**Given the continuous massive destruction and the ongoing hostilities in the Ukraine, there is no question if I’m coming back, just a question of when**

And while the end of the war in Ukraine is very much unclear, Aniushkevich is very clear about her future and her role in the future of her homeland. She hopes to return on another humanitarian trip to Poland.

“Given the continuous massive destruction and the ongoing hostilities in the Ukraine, there is no question if I’m coming back, just a question of when,” says Aniushkevich. “Strong commitment and support from the international community are crucial to sustaining this solidarity. I would encourage any American willing to do more for the Ukrainian people to not hesitate stepping out of their comfort zone and participate. This trip changes you.”



# Catching Up With Miss Fiesta



Q&A with Calista Burns, BA '22

**Q:** You are a product of the Brainpower Connection (IWHS 2018, SACS 2014); How has the Brainpower Connection positively impacted you in your education career, and did that influence your decision to attend UIW?

**A:** I have enjoyed being a part of the Brainpower Connection because I had the opportunity to take college courses while

I was a senior at Incarnate Word High School. Being on the UIW campus allowed me to see the warm community the University has. While taking UIW courses in high school, my professors were always welcoming and helpful which is why I decided to attend UIW to earn my degree.

**Q:** You were selected as Miss Fiesta back in 2020, and are still currently holding the crown, is that correct? Can you share how COVID-19 impacted your reign and what you have been able to accomplish despite the pandemic?

**A:** I was selected to be Miss Fiesta San Antonio 2020 and I graciously still holding the title as Miss Fiesta San Antonio 2020-2022. I will be the longest reigning Miss Fiesta in history, which is crazy to think, but I am honored that I am able to hold the title for three years and represent San Antonio and the Fiesta Commission. Even though GEMS was not able to host summer camps in 2020 and could not have in-person club meetings, we still connected with the students in GEMS and were able to work with new schools. Because we didn't have summer camps, I created the GEMS STEAM Activity Kit which was free for our students. I made 50 kits for 5th-8th grade girls that had been a part of GEMS and I personally delivered each kit to the students' homes. Each kit included all the supplies and instructions to do three STEAM experiments at home. As Miss Fiesta, I received support from the San Antonio Fiesta Commission and Valero. GEMS also created the Virtual Research Camp for our high school students where the students conducted college-level research over four weeks. The students did their research on topics such as robotic surgeries and using artificial intelligence in pharmacy. To stay connected to the students during the holidays, we created the GEMS Holiday STEAM Kits. This time we made 100 kits that we gave to students at four of the schools we work with and we were able to make a connection with a new school as well. During the spring of 2021 GEMS hosted Zoom meetings every Monday with students in the GEMS clubs and we did fun STEAM experiments and games with the students. We continued the STEAM kits for a virtual Spring Break Camp and created 100 more kits. Moving into summer, we knew we weren't going to be able to have in-person camps, so we created 200 STEAM Kits and partnered with Valero again to make this happen. Even though we could host anything in-person, we made every effort to stay connected with our students.

**Q:** Who is your greatest role model or greatest influence in your life and why?

**A:** My greatest role model and influence is my mom. She has inspired me to follow my dreams and has helped me make my dreams a reality, one of those dreams was being Miss Fiesta. I had wanted to be Miss Fiesta since I was a little girl and I saw Miss Fiesta on the floats in the parades. When my mom saw that the Fiesta Commission was accepting applications to be Miss Fiesta and that it was based on a community service platform, she quickly shared it with me and encouraged me to apply. She has always been there for me in times of need and has always been the one to cheer me up and make me laugh. She is incredibly hard-working because she completed her bachelor's degree while working full time which is so inspiring. We have always been each other's biggest cheerleader.

**Q:** You recently completed your degree, can you share what degrees you are completing and what you plan to do after graduation?

**A:** I graduated this May with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education with a double minor in Math and Reading. I have accepted a position to be a 5th grade Math and Science teacher in the Round Rock Independent School District and will start in August of this year. This is my dream job, and I am so grateful that I get to start out my teaching career doing what I love.

For more information on Calista's involvement with the GEMS program or Miss Fiesta, visit the following articles

<https://www.uiw.edu/smse/news-and-events/news/2020/smse-hosts-virtual-research-camp-for-high-school-girls.html>

<https://fiestasantonio.org/miss-fiesta-sa/>





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