

THE

# WORD

Summer 2023



EN LAS MANOS DE DIOS  
(In the Hands of God)



*How one family's faith and perseverance led to four UIW graduates.*



Join us for  
**HOMECOMING**  
**2023**  
 One Word. Forever.  
*Honoring the Past  
 Elevating the Future*  
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 for the latest information.

# THE WORD

Summer 2023

A publication of the Office of Communications & Brand Marketing

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# CONTENTS

## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 5** Up Front  
*University News, Here and Abroad*
- 14** Living the Word  
*Celebrations and Reflections on the UIW Mission*
- 15** Class Notes  
*Professional Achievements  
From Our Alumni*

## FEATURES

- 8** En las Manos de Dios  
*In the Hands of God*
- 12** Nobel Laureate Visiting UIW  
Fall 2023  
*Leaders of the Americas Speaker Series*
- 24** Thank You Margaret Mitchell  
*31 Years of Service*

Do you know someone interested in attending UIW? For more information on what UIW has to offer or to schedule a campus visit, go to [uiw.edu/admissions](http://uiw.edu/admissions)

For correspondence or to change your address: [pr@uiwtx.edu](mailto:pr@uiwtx.edu)

## ABOVE:

UIW proudly conferred 1,068 professional, doctoral, graduate and undergraduate degrees during the Spring 2023 Commencement Ceremony. The graduating Spring Class of 2023 completed an inspiring 32,473 hours of community service, providing an economic impact of nearly \$1 million.

[Read More](#)





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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Alumni and Friends,

Welcome to the digital summer edition of *The Word Magazine*. I, like so many friends and colleagues throughout the University, often refer to our enormous community all around the world as our UIW family, and with good reason. Like any family, we all have our roles to play and our own ways to contribute, but together we share core values, learn and grow, and are always welcome home.

In this issue, we celebrate the many ways that we are a family. Meet the Zarates, a close-knit family of six whose deep values led each of the four children, David Jr., Dustin, Desse and Daisy, to choose UIW for their journeys. With our recent spring commencement and the graduation of the youngest, Daisy, all four are now alumni who are utilizing their education and formation in Mission as they serve others. The issue also features other members of our UIW family: Dive into a profile on Margaret Mitchell, UIW Theatre Arts professor, who concludes a 31-year tenure. Get to know Clint Killough, alumnus of the class of 2015, who will lead our Cardinals as UIW's head football coach. Finally, celebrate with our alumni as they reach milestones in their lives.

At the end of every commencement, I remind our newest graduates that no matter where any of us are in our journeys – just beginning, continuing on, or moving into new seasons of life – UIW is family. I hope you enjoy this new edition of the magazine. May it remind you, too, that no matter your year of graduation or affiliation, this is your university home, where you are always welcome.

Praised be the Incarnate Word!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas M. Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas M. Evans, PhD  
President



UIW's inaugural First-Generation College Celebration

## UIW Accepted into First Gen Scholars Network

Membership Will Bring Additional Support to First-Generation Students

UIW has been accepted as a member of the First Scholars Network. The Network is a program run by the Student Affairs administrators in higher education, known as NASPA, which is the professional home for the field of student affairs. The First Scholars Network is a community of institutional partners committed to transforming the higher education landscape in ways that elevate potential and advance outcomes for first-generation students today and in the future. Through a number of engagement opportunities, the Network maximizes learning opportunities across a broad, diverse, ever-expanding set of institutions.

“UIW is committed to supporting our first-generation students both in and out of the classroom through the UIW Alpha Committee and the Somos Unidos-One Word Project,” says Monica Jimenez, associate provost of Student Success. “Being accepted into the First Scholars Network Member Class of 2023 will provide the UIW Alpha Committee with access to evidence-based practices, resources and networks across the nation to help improve outcomes for first-generation students.”

The UIW Alpha Committee is a group of faculty and staff committed to understanding the needs of first-generation students, providing professional development

in evidence-based practices that support their retention and graduation rates, improve their instructional experience and success, and help create processes and procedures that remove barriers for them.

In the Spring of 2023, UIW received a \$180,000 grant for the Somos Unidos – One Word Project from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The funds are being used to accelerate student success by supporting innovative ideas in and out of the classroom that promote a sense of belonging and well-being for students, specifically first-generation students.



## UIW Human Resources Program Makes “Best of” List

Best Accredited Colleges has ranked the UIW School of Professional Studies (SPS) #31 on its Best Online Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources list.

“We focus on many aspects of workforce development at the School of Professional Studies,” said Dr. Osman Özturgut, dean of SPS and associate provost of Strategic Outreach and Partnerships. “This degree provides the ability to upscale and rescale through fundamentals implemented in HR throughout the country. When students graduate from our program, in alignment with our Triple Helix Executive Leadership for Global Competitiveness, they are prepared to lead with the most up-to-date knowledge essential in advancing organizations to the next level of workforce and employee relations.”

The UIW School of Professional Studies shared that the purpose of the Human Resources (HR)

major is to prepare students for challenges in the workplace related to managing and developing people. This includes those interested in HR careers as well as those who desire to improve their ability to solve problems, improve processes and enhance the effectiveness of people in organizations.

The UIW Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources has been acknowledged by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) for its full alignment with SHRM’s HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates. The HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates were developed by SHRM to define the minimum human resources content areas that should be studied by HR students at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

## Celebrating Juneteenth

On Monday, June 19, the UIW community observed Juneteenth through action. The event, hosted by UIW Mission and Ministry, student social justice organization As One We Will, UIW Athletics and more, focused on educating attendees about the detrimental effects of racial biases in healthcare, which negatively impact the well-being of health outcomes for Black and minority populations. Guests enjoyed a healthy lunch and an informational fair, focused on the wellness of Black patients, families and other minority populations.

Following the fair an educational panel of experts discussed “best practices, advocacy, and social action that can foster greater equity and community wellness.” After the panel discussion, everyone enjoyed a celebration of music performed by the Gospel Praise Team, followed by spoken word performances by UIW poets, and local actress and poet Jess Mahogany.





## UIW Plays Host to San Antonio Sports 2023 Corporate Cup

On Saturday, June 3, UIW employees participated in the San Antonio Sports 2023 Corporate Cup, hosted on the UIW Broadway campus. The event brought together companies and organizations from across San Antonio, including RBFCU, H-E-B, Whataburger and more, to compete in different sporting events. UIW employees were determined to represent their University well among them.

The event was also an opportunity for alumni who

were competing for their respective company teams to come back to the Nest and reconnect with fellow alumni and friends.

“We had dozens of former students stop by to visit and pick up their free alumni T-shirt gift,” said Will Bailey, senior director of Alumni Relations. “Corporate Cup is such a special event for UIW, not only because it’s a signature community event for our employees, but also because we get to welcome so

many alumni back to campus – we can’t wait to see them back again during Homecoming 2023!”

Special thanks to San Antonio Sports for once again hosting this wonderful community event at the beautiful UIW campus, and to our UIW Corporate Cup committee and facilities teams for ensuring the event was a success!



# EN LAS MANOS DE DIOS

In the Hands of God

By Victoria Reyna Varville, MBA '21

Four siblings, driven by their parents' lessons of faith, service and education, become alumni of the University of the Incarnate Word

*“One day for every class and one day for the Bible.”*

This is how Francisca Zarate, mother of four UIW graduates, described the schedule she kept for her children during time off from school. While weeks away from the classroom during Spring Breaks and Christmas holidays were filled with fun and lots of love, she knew the importance of teaching them to prioritize education, service and faith. Those are the principles that have guided the Zarate family through years of challenges, triumphs and most recently, the celebration of the final Zarate child to graduate from the University of the Incarnate Word.

The Zarate family's UIW journey began in the fall of 2011. From the moment he graduated high school in the Rio Grande Valley where the family is from, the eldest Zarate, David Jr., knew that his calling was to serve patients in the field of optometry. UIW's Vision Science program was specifically designed to help him achieve that goal and paved the way for him to later enroll in UIW's Rosenberg School of Optometry.

Affectionately called the







Daisy Zarate



David Zarate Jr.



Desse Zarate



Dustin Zarate

“pathfinder” by his younger siblings, David Jr.’s two brothers, Dustin and Desse, followed in his footsteps, both studying Biology with the intention of entering the healthcare field – Dustin in dentistry, and Desse as a physicians assistant. The siblings’ time at UIW finally reached its conclusion when their little sister Daisy, the youngest of the family unit, graduated with a degree in marketing.

“Growing up, I’ve always seen my eldest brother as my role model,” Daisy said of David Jr. “He’s the one who first came here, and he would always talk about UIW, mainly his relationships with his professors that he just adored, and I thought, if I went to a public school or bigger university, it wouldn’t be the same.”

Over the years, as brother after brother chose to attend Incarnate Word, each sharing tales of their rich, life-changing experiences, making the same decision to study at UIW became the natural next step for Daisy, and one that she looked forward to.

Four years later, the siblings are celebrating each other’s impressive accomplishments, with their parents, Francisca and David Sr., watching proudly. David Jr., known to his patients as Dr. Zarate now, moved back to the Rio Grande Valley to give back to his community. After treating patients as part of a larger clinic, he decided to “go full rebel” as he described it, by launching his own practice, the RGV Eye Institute. Dustin and Desse will soon begin treating patients of their own in their respective healthcare professions. As Daisy takes her first steps into the world beyond college, she hopes to follow in her brothers’ footsteps once more, putting her degree and education to use in the service of others.

Though each sibling has proven successful

in their own right, you can’t talk to a single one of them about their achievements without tears appearing in their eyes, as they point back to the two people they credit it all to – their mom and dad.

*“God gave you all your talents and everything you have ... So if you see a child who has fallen behind? Help him.”*

While many children grow up being told about the value of hard work and education, the Zarate siblings were able to witness it firsthand, as David Sr. continued his higher education in pursuit of a better life with more opportunities for his children. He is described by the four siblings as the parent who taught them the importance of discipline, and that any goal can be achieved if you’re not afraid to do the work.

“We come from [humble beginnings],” recalled Desse. “From living in a trailer, to building our own home with our own hands with our father. We couldn’t afford to have people build it, so we did it... our dad not only said, ‘Hey, you’re going to do something and you’re going to finish it,’ but he was an example of it the whole time.”

“We witnessed the quality of life he was able to give to us with each milestone of his education, from being a teacher’s aide, to being a teacher, then to earning the administrative position that he was eventually in,” Dustin added. “I think with each step, we were able to see how much he was willing to sacrifice and how much that impacted us.”

That impact is one that carried the siblings through challenging times as they pursued their goals. David Jr.’s move from home proved difficult, as he found himself longing for family and



familiarity. But it was his father who gave him the strength to persevere.

“We come from the middle of nowhere, where there’s a lot of space, not from the city at all,” David Jr. explained. “I still remember, I think it was the first year, I said, ‘I want to go back ... I don’t know if I want to be here.’ And my dad said, ‘You’re not there just for you. You’re there for your siblings as well.’ So, he’s been very inspiring throughout the whole process.”

As for the question of whether to pursue higher education in the first place? Well, it was never actually a question with David Sr. leading the way.

“My father never said, ‘if’ you go to college. It was ‘when you go to college,’” Daisy recalled with a smile.

If their father served as the four siblings’ steady example of strength and discipline, their mother Francisca was the glue that held them all together. As David Sr. studied and worked his way up the ladder, Francisca provided the stability at home that allowed her family the space and support they needed to thrive.

“One of the things that I credit my wife so much for is the fact that she was there to support them at home,” David Sr. said. “Since they were in grade school, she instilled in them a routine, a pattern of the importance of school, and coming home and preparing themselves ... in elementary, she instilled a pattern that helped them all the way through college.”

“My mother is very compassionate and caring,” David Jr. added. “I always say she’s an angel.”

This angel had a charge, and one that she handled with the utmost care – to raise her children in a loving home so they could become the best possible versions of themselves – both in school and in their character. As frequently as she was in her children’s classrooms, asking their teachers to provide more challenging, thought-provoking work for them, she was reminding her children that their gifts from God were to be used in the service of others.

“Dios te dio todos tus talentos y todo lo que tienes,” she

recalled telling them from the time they were children. “Entonces, ¿ves a un niño que se ha quedado atrás? Ayúdalo.”

(“God gave you all your talents and everything you have... So, if you see a child who has fallen behind? Help him.”)

It was this lesson that inspired the siblings to devote their adult lives to service in their chosen career paths.

“I feel that the caring, compassionate factor of healthcare is missing, especially in areas where we’re from,” explained David Jr. “So, I wanted to bring that element back to our community... I think in all forms of healthcare, we need that empathy and that compassion.”

Above all, Francisca prayed for her family ceaselessly, a gift she silently bestowed upon them daily, perhaps even more frequently once they moved to San Antonio to attend UIW.

“When they came (to UIW), we cried and said, ‘God, it’s in your hands, esta en tus manos.’”

And it was. The Zarate parents soon realized that their beloved children, whom they nurtured, inspired, taught and prayed for, had found a new home where their family’s core values of faith, education and service, were upheld. Their faith was celebrated by professors and peers who prayed together. Their commitment to service was nurtured, as each sibling completed the necessary service hours to fulfill degree requirements and chose career paths that would allow them to continue



helping others. And their love of education was set ablaze, with faculty who “accepted them with open arms,” took the time to get to know them and provided one-on-one time for discussing everything from class assignments, to internship opportunities, and even, as Daisy remembered, noticing when they started sporting a new hairstyle.

It was that individualized attention and the peace of knowing that their children wouldn’t be just another number at UIW, that made the transition of each child leaving the home they built together a little bit easier.

“We got to know the campus and felt comfortable with the way that the University presented itself to taking care of our kids,” David Sr. remembered. “I feel safe with my kids being here at this University. That in itself for a parent is very important because it’s not easy to be home and not know where your kid is at ... UIW is an outstanding University and they do take care of their students.”

Now that the Zarate family has completed their time at UIW, they’re looking forward to spending more time together and enjoying their hard-earned success, knowing they have fans and supporters in one another, and in their University home. The four siblings enter their next chapter grateful for every educator, motivator, mentor and friend along the way, especially and most importantly, their devoted mother and father and all the lessons they passed on to them.

“Like I always told them,” Francisca said of one of their many lessons, perhaps this one the most vital. “Mijos - you just do your best, and God will do the rest.”

How right she was.



# Nobel Laureate Visiting UIW Fall 2023

1992 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Rigoberta Menchú Tum

The Liza and Jack Lewis Center of the Americas at UIW will host the second lecture of the Leaders of the Americas Speaker Series on October 4. The series was created to give the UIW community, students, faculty and staff the opportunity to hear from leaders and dignitaries who have impacted society through their life's work. The speaker for the 2023 lecture will be Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum, one of the most important champions of native people's rights in the modern history of the Americas, and particularly of the rights of the K'iché and all Mayan peoples in Menchú's native Guatemala.

"The opportunity to bring Rigoberta Menchú to our campus is special and timely," said Dr. Rafael Hoyle, director of the Lewis Center of the Americas. "Her lifelong dedication to service and her defense of human rights aligns directly with the work that UIW's founders, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, have advanced for decades in indigenous villages and communities of the Americas. Our founders inspired UIW's tradition of international service programming, including two programs that took place just this summer in Ms. Menchu's native Guatemala. One of these programs, led by Sr. Martha Ann Kirk, CCVI, and UIW Professor of Nutrition Dr. Bethe Senne-Duff, was in collaboration with a non-governmental organization founded by UIW alumni to help underserved Guatemalan children."

"Ms. Menchú's work certainly exemplifies the search for social justice that is at the heart of UIW's Mission," added Hoyle. "Her forthcoming presentation, furthermore, will be a perfect follow-up to the inaugural Lewis Center lecture delivered last year by former Mexican President Vicente Fox with his focus on immigration. The phenomenon of immigration in the Americas, and specifically the arrival of immigrants to the United States through the U.S.- Mexico border, cannot be separated from the socio-economic conditions and acts

*continued on next page*

*Photo provided by Asociación Menchú Tum*





Mr. Vicente Fox, 62nd President of Mexico and the 2022 guest speaker for the Leaders of the Americas Speaker Series

of injustice that have led millions to emigrate from their Central American homelands, mostly heading north to the United States through Mexico. We will not solve the crisis of immigration without addressing and understanding the conditions that have plagued Central America for centuries. Ms. Menchú has dedicated her life to shedding light on these conditions and encouraging humanity to act.”

Menchú’s struggle for human rights began through her participation, while she was still a teenager, in social justice efforts led by the Catholic Church. The trajectory that followed would be filled with terrible moments of sacrifice, suffering and loss of family members at the hands of opponents of the struggle for justice, as was documented in *My Name is Rigoberta Menchú* and *This is How my Conscience was Born*, a book that brought Menchú international renown.

Menchú’s perseverance and commitment to her cause kept her on a journey that was deservedly recognized when she won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1992.

The visit to UIW’s Broadway campus by a Nobel Laureate marks another historic first for the University because of the work of the Lewis Center and the success of the Leaders of the Americas Series. 62nd President of Mexico, Vicente Fox’s visit to campus was the first to UIW by a former President of any nation. Hoyle continued, “It is extremely rewarding to have speakers of this caliber as our guests. By bringing them we are not only enriching the experiences of our University community, but we are also contributing to San Antonio’s identity as an international city and to Mayor Ron Nirenberg’s efforts to elevate the city’s global engagement on multiple fronts. Nirenberg helped us personally welcome Mr. Vicente Fox last year, and

we look forward to having him on campus again to welcome Ms. Menchú.”

Menchú’s schedule of activities on October 4 will include her speech to the UIW community at the Diane Bennack Concert Hall in the Luella Bennack Music Center, and an evening panel and

fundraising reception.

For more information, please contact Dr. Rafael Hoyle at [hoyle@uiwtx.edu](mailto:hoyle@uiwtx.edu), or visit the [Lewis Center website](#).



Photo provided by Asociación Menchú Tum

**“Ms. Menchú’s work certainly exemplifies the search for social justice that is at the heart of UIW’s Mission.”**



**MOMENT FOR REFLECTION**

By **Clint Killough, BBA '15**

**A**s the head coach of the UIW football program, I consider it an honor to lead young men who are experiencing things I experienced as a Cardinal student-athlete. It's a huge responsibility, and it isn't one that I take lightly. Fortunately, having spent countless days in Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium and having first-hand experience living out the UIW Mission and core values as a student, I feel well-prepared to help the 2023 UIW football student-athletes become concerned and enlightened citizens.

The root of the UIW Mission is service. The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word came here to serve and to help, and I've always kept that as central to who I want to be as a leader. As we get ready for Fall Camp, I've been thinking back to some specific experiences that helped

mold my leadership mentality.

There were the days when Sr. Walter Maher, CCVI, came and worked with the football program when I was a player. She'd split us up into groups of six or eight, and we would converse about different topics. Sometimes they were spiritual topics and sometimes they were topics about our everyday life, but whatever it was, it was important to be able to communicate and relate with people from different walks of life.

Another experience involving servant leadership that I am grateful for is with a former teammate. Eric Castillo, a defensive back on our 2013 team, has a foundation called A Walk In My Shoes. He takes shoes and gives them to

people who need new shoes. Even as a college student, I had the opportunity to help him live out the UIW Mission. Now, I want to teach our student-athletes how to integrate service and the UIW Mission into their everyday lives.

First and foremost, I focus on repetition. I believe repetition is king, especially when you're trying to implement a mission statement for a university into a person and the way they live their life. Every day, we talk about winning with intention and having a purpose behind doing what we're doing. We talk about intentional detail, intentional effort, intentional love and intentional trust.

Two things we've done a great job with are focusing on intentional love and intentional trust. In today's college football landscape, change can happen a lot, from coaching changes to transfers. When there are a lot of new guys that come into our team, we want them to know we're welcoming them into a family.

How do we create that family? With intentional love. Intentional love is doing something out of the ordinary or going out of your way to show someone you care. And what comes out of that intentional love is intentional trust. These are daily routines. This is how we talk to our teammates and how we as coaches communicate with each other.

Along with being intentional towards others in our program, we talk about being intentional in our own personal lives. When

we're talking about mind, body and spirit, the best way to take care of ourselves is thinking about how we approach our daily lives, from meetings to lifting weights to studying. It's a daily routine and learning how to be intentional in all of it is part of the experience of being a UIW football student-athlete.



# CLASS NOTES

Celebrate UIW success stories. Keep up with your class and be part of *The Word* in print and online! Send your achievements to [alumni@uiwtx.edu](mailto:alumni@uiwtx.edu).

*Photos submitted for Class Notes may be included on the online alumni community site.*



**Mary “Ninfa” Villegas Tannen, BSN ’57**  
Celebrated her 63<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary to her husband Dr. Peter D. Tannen, PhD, Col., USAF (Ret) on July 9. They are blessed with six children, 15 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Pictured on their wedding day and on their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020.

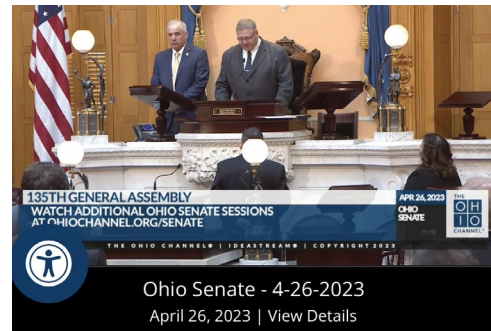
1950s

1980s



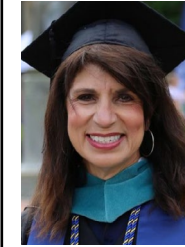
**Louanne Hausmann RN, MA, BSN ’81, USAF NC (Ret.), Veterans Affairs (Ret.)**  
Enjoyed a five-week “bucket list” vacation, visiting Australia, New Zealand, French Polynesia and Hawaii. Highlights included an 18-day cruise and a private moment with koalas at Taronga Zoo in Sydney. What’s more, there were Texans on the cruise who knew about UIW!

2000s



**Austin Schafer, Pastoral Institute ’02**  
Invited to lead the Invocation for the Ohio Senate 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus, Ohio. Schafer served as a Campus Ministry peer minister in UIW’s Campus Ministry de-

partment from 2000-2002 and is currently the director of Mission and Pastoral Care for St. Elizabeth’s Healthcare in the greater Cincinnati area (KY, IN, OH).

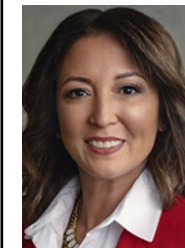


**Ramona Teter, MAA ’04**  
Graduated in May with a second master’s degree: Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Sports Industry Management from Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies.



**Dawn Cunningham, MAA ’06**  
Joined the leadership team of AVANCE San Antonio as the Chief Human Resource Officer. AVANCE assists under-resourced families with young children in overcoming isolation and lack of opportunity.

2010s



**Yvette Reyna, BA ’12**  
Is one of 13 women from across the state to receive the prestigious Women of Distinction award from the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC).

Each year, TAMACC honors women who have outstanding professional achievements and have made a positive impact in the community.



**Jovanna Nicole Kenney-Lour, BA '13**  
Welcomed her son Lucas to the world on January 25, with her husband CJ. Lucas shares his birthday with his mother.

**Carlos E. de Leon, MBA '16**  
Announces that Devils River Whiskey has partnered with award-winning Romph Pou Agency, where he serves as San Antonio manager.

"Partnering with Devils River Whiskey is a perfect fit for our agency as we continue to grow our presence in the Texas market," said de León. "Our continued ability to deliver results, efficiency and cost-effectiveness for our clients puts us in a leading position to help other brands in San Antonio and across Texas meet critical milestones and goals, especially those looking toward expanding their footprint."



**Fr. Jordan Milligan, BA '16**  
Was ordained a Priest of Jesus Christ for the Archdiocese of San Antonio by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller MSPS on May 20.

Additionally, Milligan celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Chapel of the Incarnate Word for the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and members of The Village on June 11.



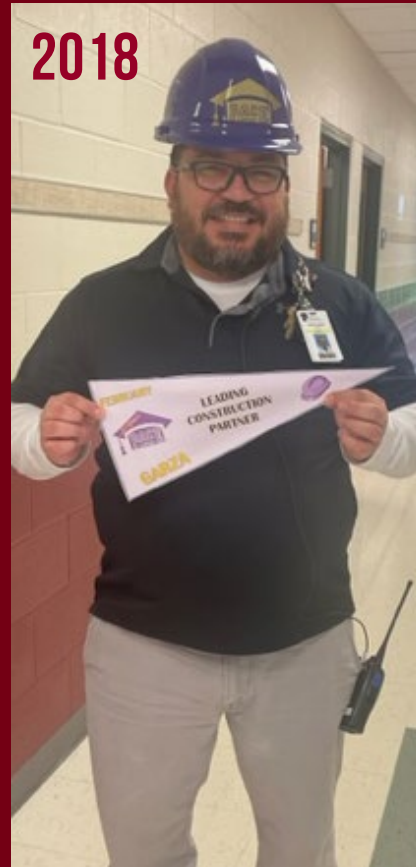
**Iris Gutierrez, BA '18 and Travis Magness, BA '18**

Will wed on November 18. Iris and Travis met on the UIW campus in the Consumer Behavior course. Iris was a member of the Marching Cardinals, the UIW Wind Ensemble, Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority, and President of the Panhellenic Council. Travis was a pitcher with the UIW Baseball team. Iris and Travis credit UIW for bringing them together. They are both proud alumni.

**2020s**



**Denise M. Zuniga, BBA '22**  
Accepted a new position as the manager of Pearl Cowork in the historic Pearl District. Pearl Cowork builds on Pearl's history as a place where ideas are brought to life-through ingenuity, creativity, and collaboration.



**2018**

**Hector Carlo Garza, BA '18**  
Completed his first full year as a special education inclusion teacher at Pearland ISD's Alternative Learning Academy (ALA). This campus is for those children who find themselves having a difficult time on their home campuses. The population that they serve is considered at high-risk of dropping out. "I have loved everything about working with this student population. I made the move to junior high and to coach football and basketball in the hopes to reach these students before they find themselves in trouble," shared Garza.

At the close of 2022-2023 school year at Pearland ISD's annual awards banquet, Garza was recognized as the Glenda Dawson New Teacher of the Year for the Pace Center and he was also recognized as Pearland ISD's Glenda Dawson New Teacher of the Year. "I have truly been humbled by this first year of teaching," continued Garza, "and I always remember to embody what every Cardinal should, and that is service to others."

**WE WILL MISS YOU**

- Sr. Mary Jane F. Dardenne, MSC, MA '65
- Sr. Maria E. Flynn, CCVI, BSN '71
- Ms. Linda D. Johnston, BA '85
- Ms. Teresa A. Hilario, BS '11
- Mr. Theodore V. Mylenbusch, BSN '81
- Mrs. Rose L. Hoelscher, BS '59
- Mrs. Joan C. Hood, Donor
- Mr. Robert Kusenberger, Donor
- Ms. Martha V. Baker, BA '66
- Sr. Theresa M. Yndo, CCVI, BA '62
- Mrs. Margaret A. Obringer, BA '64

- Sr. Philomena Birmingham, CCVI, BA '66
- Mr. Robert J. Lamboy, BAAS '07
- Ms. Theresa Y. Canales, BA '94
- Sr. Carol A. Jokerst, CCVI, BA '64, Trustee Emeriti
- Mrs. Ruby D. Boyett, BA '69
- Sr. Mary C. Grehan, CCVI, BA '73
- Sr. Grace E. O'Meara, CCVI, BS '58
- Dr. Byron A. Bonner, O.D. '13



# UNIVERSITY COLLECTIVE

NEWS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACCOLADES FROM OUR ILLUSTRIOUS FACULTY AND STAFF



**Dr. LuElla D'Amico**  
Director of the Women's and Gender Studies program,  
College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

**Erika Arredondo-Haskins**  
PhD candidate,  
Dreeben School of Education  
Graduate research assistant,  
Women's and Gender Studies

Dr. LuElla D'Amico and Erika Arredondo-Haskins presented at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual American Literature Association Conference, held at the Westin Copley Place in Boston, Massachusetts. In addition to their presentation on Stowe's book *Little Pussy Willow*, D'Amico organized and moderated a job market roundtable and presented "On Being Glad: Pollyanna and Stoic Thought," in collaboration with Dr. Gregory Eiselein, an English professor at Kansas State University.

Additionally, D'Amico and Dr. Robin Cadwallader, an English professor and chair of Literature and Languages at St. Francis University, have been commissioned as contributing editors for Stowe's children literature for *The Collected Works of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, published by Oxford University Press. Dr. Cadwallader also serves as the director of the Women's Studies program at St. Francis University.



**Dr. John Hooker**  
Assistant professor of  
Environmental Science,  
School of Mathematics,  
Science and Engineering

Dr. John Hooker took his work and expertise to Japan this summer. This work involved fieldwork as part of a National Science Foundation (NSF) funded project on earthquakes.

"In particular I am interested in what kind of natural fluid-flow and mineral reactions affect the size and timing of earthquakes, and so my colleagues from Penn State University and I went to Japan to sample rocks that have been through the earthquake cycle," he explained. The research will show what kind of deformation occurs in the rocks that make it a certain distance through the earthquake cycle, and how much deep fluid pressure and flow was involved.

"Knowing these will allow us to more precisely predict how much energy is available for generating earthquakes ... By studying the rocks that have been through the earthquake cycle, we can retrace how much of the plate motion was aseismic (non-earthquake-causing) and how much was seismic, and try to understand why there were differences," said Dr. Hooker.

Additionally, Dr. Hooker delivered a lecture called "Factors producing asynchronous fluid flow and slip behavior in subduction zones" at the annual meeting of the Japan Geoscience Union, a large organization of 51 academic councils related to earth and planetary sciences. The presentation was co-authored by Don Fisher, professor and associate head for Graduate Programs and Research at Penn State.



**Dr. Kevin Salfen**  
Professor of Music and  
assistant dean,  
College of Humanities,  
Arts and Social Sciences

Dr. Kevin Salfen traveled to Thailand and Japan for presentations and performances of his dramatic song cycle *Stations of Mychal*, a moving work about Fr. Mychal Judge, the Franciscan priest who was Victim 0001 on September 11, 2001. The performance in Salaya, Thailand, was at the 48<sup>th</sup> International Viola Congress, and the performance in Tokyo, Japan, was at the Franciscan Chapel Center at Roppongi Catholic Church.

"Our performances of the cycle in Thailand and Japan this summer were so special because we were able to share the work with audiences who were less familiar or even completely unfamiliar with Mychal's story," shared Dr. Salfen.

"I think my hope, and the hope of my artistic collaborators in the project, has always been that Fr. Mychal's spirit can rise above the tragedy of that day and can reach us through it. That line from The Prayer of St. Francis – 'Lord, make me an instrument of your peace' – is, I hope, something that we 'pray' every time we perform *Stations of Mychal*."

Additionally, Dr. Salfen shared best practices in music education with EducationUSA, the comprehensive advising center in Japan. Per the organization's website, the center "is a one-stop shop for students, parents, teachers, and working adults interested in accessing information on studying at higher education institutions and intensive English programs in the United States."

# The Road to Redemption

By Callum Riley, BA '13

In 2004, Fernando Mora looked out of his cell in the Bexar County Jail and knew that his life needed to change. Facing the judge for the second time in two years for repeat offenses, he was at risk of spending a significant amount of time behind bars.



At this point, Fernando did not realize he was taking the first step on his road to redemption. He was also unaware he was about to receive a helping hand from a surprising place.

It was May 2004 in the very first hours of a new Monday morning. All of San Antonio was wide awake, watching the NBA playoffs and cheering on the Spurs as they took on the Los Angeles Lakers in California.



Caption

Mora's focus wasn't on the game – it was on his upcoming 8 a.m. courtroom appearance.

"I was set to see the judge at 8 a.m. on Monday to find out my fate," he remembered. "Why is that important? Because of the time difference in California! The game was crazy and there was a delay, so everyone was up until 2 a.m. cheering on the Spurs...including the

judge."

Mora arrived for his appearance, only to be met by the bailiff who said to him, "It's your lucky day. The judge is giving you another chance."

"I guess more paperwork was involved in sentencing me to jail, and he was tired from watching the game, so he let me off the hook," Mora said of the judge who altered the course of his life "I couldn't believe it!"

It was this second chance that ultimately changed his life trajectory.

Born and raised on San Antonio's Southside, Mora grew up next to an area called The Circle, nestled between Southcross and Zarzamora St., just off I-35 – an area with a notorious reputation in the city for drugs and crime.

His mother and father came from big families who grew up in this neighborhood. Many of his uncles spent time in and out of prison. Mora saw family members struggle with addiction and jail sentences so often that he grew up thinking it was normal. That was just life.

“Of my eight uncles, five spent time in and out of prison,” he shared, “My grandfather died from cirrhosis of the liver, and my father died at 57 from alcoholism. Everyone I knew would drink and take drugs each week. If you didn't do it, you were the odd one out. So even after the judge let me off, I was still up to no good, until one night ...”

The night was October 18, 2005. Fernando was at home watching a Spurs game alone. His table was littered with beer cans, cigarettes and drugs. A feeling struck him – the realization that he'd been squandering the second chance he'd been gifted more than a year before. It was a moment that changed his life forever.

“As I'm sitting watching the game, I just started crying,” he revealed. “Not just a tear, but floods of tears. I didn't know why I was crying ... the Spurs were winning! But I quickly realized it was my inner soul that was crying out for help.”

“Right then I took all my stuff off the table – the beer, cigarettes and drugs, and flushed it all down the toilet. I knelt and prayed. I said ‘God, you've got to help me out of this. I'm tired. I don't want to live like this anymore.’ I haven't touched alcohol, drugs or cigarettes since that day.”

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“It's been an amazing ride so far. I'm so excited to see where this journey takes us next.”

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Two months later, Mora had another epiphany. He felt a calling to go back to school. It was at the University of the Incarnate Word that Mora found the program and support he needed to completely alter the course of his path and begin living his life in the service of others.

Beginning his higher education journey at 35 years old, Fernando set a goal to earn his bachelor's degree before age 40. He enrolled in classes each spring, summer and fall while working full-time at an orthopedic surgery center.

In May 2010, Fernando graduated with his BBA from UIW at age 39, fulfilling his goal. At this point, he wasn't sure if he wanted to continue.

But he credits his academic advisor at UIW, Olga Barton, for providing him with the advice he continues to share with people today.

When Mora asked Barton how long it would take to

complete his master's degree, she was honest – about two years. Having just completed four challenging years of school, he was a bit hesitant to immediately jump back in.

“Fernando, look at it this way,” he recalled her guiding him. “Two years are going to come and go whether you do something, or you don't. Don't be that person two years from now thinking, ‘if I'd started back then, I'd be done now.’”

It was exactly what he needed to hear.

Fernando crossed the stage to collect his MBA from UIW's H-E-B School of Business and Administration in December 2011; just one short month after his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Not satisfied with simply using his education to better his own life, Mora got to work applying his newfound knowledge and skills to improve the lives of others. In 2013, he founded a non-profit organization called [Mora-Vation Ministry](#). For the last nine years, his non-profit has organized an annual Christmas event to gift toys and bicycles to children on the Southside of San



Antonio.

"It's a play on words with my name," he beamed about the name of his organization. "You say it pretty fast and it sounds like Motivation. This year will mark our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and so far, we've gifted 10,000 toys and 1,000 brand-new bicycles to less fortunate children from the same streets on the Southside of San Antonio I grew up on."

Mora didn't stop there. He expanded his non-profit this year to give back to another group in need in his home community. The new division of the non-profit is called Milagritos – Spanish for little miracles.

"We helped the children, and now I want to help the senior citizens in the Southside too," he explained about the purpose of the Milagritos branch. "I've been in medical sales for over 30 years and noticed that many senior citizens in our area go without medical braces;

for their back, knee, wrist and ankle."

Mora pointed to two reasons for this unfortunate reality. One, the medical braces are too expensive. Two, many of the senior citizens in need in the area don't have medical insurance. So, Mora got to work.

"I reached out to some business contacts in the medical industry, told them about my plan, and asked if they could help," he said "I thought they might send a few hundred braces at most ... they sent 7,000! It's been an amazing ride so far. I'm so excited to see where this journey takes us next."

Today, Mora has been clean and sober for nearly 18 years. A proud two-time graduate of the University of the Incarnate Word, he has gone on to use his BBA and MBA to help improve the quality of life of others. In addition to his non-profit organization, Mora founded two small businesses in the medical sales industry. He looks back on that fateful night when the Spurs played the Lakers nearly 20 years ago with gratitude.

"Everyone has their stories," he reflected. "But for me, it's how you react to your story. I want my story to show perseverance. Because no matter where you're from, no matter your past, if you think about what you genuinely want and go after it with your heart, you can do anything."



# TEDx UIW<sup>®</sup>

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES,  
ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2023

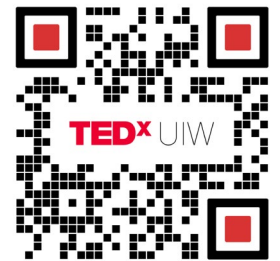
Join us for UIW's first ever TEDx event, organized by the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of the Incarnate Word. In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx UIW is a program of internationally renowned scholars and presenters who promote community engagement, idea-forward events, and dialogue. Members of the UIW community and the community at large are invited to apply for a seat at the live presentations (limited seating), or sign up for the webcast link to attend virtually. Don't miss your opportunity to participate in this historic event where the idea of liberal arts as a model for innovation, leadership and sustainability will be advanced.

"Grounded in social justice, ethics, and aesthetics, the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences is committed to nurturing education excellence, innovative research and instruction, and community engagement through service, commitment to helping others, and personal growth. We invest in the lives of future innovators who will unlock their potential, develop their strengths, and contribute to the well-being of our society, transforming others as they are transformed.

Our award-winning community of educators learns and grows with our students as they embark on their journey of self-discovery. We cultivate an academic environment where *humanistic entrepreneurship* flourishes, providing fertile ground for growth, turning every challenge into diverse perspectives, channels of opportunities, and awareness of possibilities."

**Dr. Javier Clavere, Dean**

We invite you to be part of this historic presentation on our campus. Visit [www.uiw.edu/chass](http://www.uiw.edu/chass) to reserve your tickets (limited seating) or get the link to the webcast.



SCAN ME



**UIW ATHLETICS EARNS  
BACK2  
BACK  
SOUTHLAND  
CONFERENCE  
COMMISSIONER'S CUPS**

By Alexa Low

**F**or the second year in a row, the UIW Athletics Department won the Southland Conference Commissioner's Cup. The Commissioner's Cup is awarded annually to the university compiling the highest combined total of men's and women's all-sports points. Points are earned based on final regular season standings.

Additionally, the department finished first in the Men's All-Sports standings following four regular-season conference titles from football, cross country, indoor track & field, and outdoor track & field to lift the men to 63.5 points and top the chart.

"Once again, UIW student-athletes have demonstrated excellence in their sports and in their academic programs," said

UIW President Thomas M. Evans. "Our University community is deeply proud of all that they have accomplished competitively, academically, personally and for the benefit of others. We thank the SLC for these awards and look forward to successful seasons ahead."

"At UIW, we often talk about striving to be champions in the classroom, the community and competition," added UIW Athletic Director Richard

Duran. "This award is an example that you can accomplish all three. To have won the Southland Conference Commissioner's Cup for the second year in a row is a credit to all our student-athletes, coaches and staff across all of our programs. It is 500-plus people all working together to excel and make certain that our student-athletes have the best experience in all phases of their college years and beyond. I cannot thank them enough for all they do for UIW."

In the fall, football won the regular season title with a 10-1 overall record, followed by the furthest playoff run in UIW football history. The Cardinals defeated No. 11 Furman University and No. 2 Sacramento State before falling to No. 3 North Dakota State in the FCS Semifinals. The men's cross country team had a standout showing at the SLC Championships, taking home gold.

In the winter, the men won the Southland Conference Outdoor Track & Field Championships for the second year in a row. The Cardinals set several new UIW and Southland records and were well-represented in the top eight in all but two events on day two. The team carried their success into the Southland Conference Indoor Track & Field Championship where the Cardinals took home gold once more. Then finally, a second-place regular season finish from the UIW baseball team lifted the Cardinals to yet another Southland Conference Commissioner's Cup.

UIW was fourth in the Women's All-Sports standings to round out 117 total points for UIW. The women's cross country and indoor track and field teams secured third place, respectively. In the spring, Alex Giles then won the individual title to lead the Cardinals to a second-place finish at the SLC Women's Golf Championship and women's tennis took home second place at the SLC tournament, the highest finish in UIW women's tennis history. Additionally, Brandelyn Fulgenzi was named the 2023 Southland Women's Tennis Student-Athlete of the Year.

# Men's Track & Field Wins SLC Outdoor Championships, Secures the Triple Crown

By Alexa Low

The UIW men's track and field team swept the Southland Conference Championships this season, collecting the second track and field title after taking home first place in the SLC Outdoor Track & Field Championships on Saturday, May 6. The men's program adds the title to an impressive resume this season, including indoor track and field, and cross-country champions for a remarkable three titles in one academic year. This is the first SLC men's track & field triple crown in the last 38 years. In October, the men's program took home gold at the 2022 Southland Conference Cross Country Championships, then in February, the men's indoor track & field team dominated the field, winning the meet by nearly 40 points.

Both the men and the women started the meet strong. Matilde Poli was the highest finisher for the women taking second place in the pole vault. Others such as Klaire Bentley and Alisa Novosad had

top-five finishes to score key points for the Cardinals. On the men's side, Garrett Stokes also grabbed a silver medal after a 60.87-meter hammer throw. UIW dominated the men's pole vault with Kyle Sieracki, Austin Davisson, Isaiah Hudgens, Jonah Ulbricht, and Tyler Hunter taking second through fifth and seventh place scoring an amazing 25 points for UIW. At the end of day one, the women were two points out of second place with 23 and the men were firmly in first with 35 points.

On day two, the star throwers Bentley and Stokes each found their spots on the podium. Bentley claimed the shot-put title with a 15.31-meter throw and was the only woman to throw over 15 meters. Stokes took third in the shot put with a 17.44-meter throw. The men's team had two more podium finishes with Christopher Daniels and Alexandre Fetizon finishing second and third in the 3,000-meter steeple. The standout of the day was the men's decathlon team. Hudgens, Sieracki, and

Jeremiah Gilliam had a clean sweep of the event, once again, scoring big points for UIW. The men accumulated 55.5 points on day two for a total of 91 through seven events, and the women fell slightly to fourth heading into the final day.

The Cardinals went to work on the final day, starting with a third-place finish in the 4x100-meter relay from Thomas Gignoux, Corin Burns, Cameron Crowe and Tevijon Williams. Daniels took home silver once more, this time in the 1500-meter run to hand UIW eight more points. Then finally, a third-place 110-meter hurdles finish from Matheo Bernat helped secure first place for the men's program with a total of 142 points. The women's outdoor track and field team finished the championship in seventh place.

Following the championship, Hudgens was named the Outstanding Field Events Performer and Dr. Derek Riedel was named the Leon Johnson Coach of the Year for the fifth time in the last two seasons. Fourteen other student-athletes were named to the 2023 Southland Outdoor Track and Field All-Conference teams.





# CALENDAR

## ALUMNI EVENTS

**AWAY TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. UTEP FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Sept. 2  
University of Texas – El Paso

**TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. NORTH AMERICA FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Sept. 23  
Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium

**MEN’S AND WOMEN’S SOCCER ALUMNI EVENT**

Sunday, Sept. 24  
UIW Broadway Campus

**TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. SOUTHEASTERN FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Oct. 7  
Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium

**TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. TAMU - COMMERCE FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Oct. 14  
Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium

**TRUNK OR TREAT**

Sunday, Oct. 29  
UIW Broadway Campus

**HOMECOMING WEEKEND EVENTS**

Thursday, Nov. 2 – Sunday, Nov. 5  
Learn more about [Homecoming 2023](#).

**TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. NORTHWESTERN FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Nov. 11  
Gayle and Tom Benson Stadium

**AWAY TAILGATE FOR UIW VS. HCU FOOTBALL GAME**

Saturday, Nov. 18  
Houston Christian University

## ARTS, MUSIC AND THEATRE PERFORMANCE

**ORCHESTRA OF THE INCARNATE WORD**

Sunday, Oct. 8  
Diane Bennack Concert Hall, 3 p.m.  
Admission: Adults: \$15, Children: \$10, UIW Faculty, Staff, and Students: Free with UIW ID

**CLAVERE PIANO DUO**  
Friday, Oct. 13  
Diane Bennack Concert Hall, 8 p.m.

**CARDINAL CHORALE CONCERT**  
Sunday, Nov. 12  
Diane Bennack Concert Hall, 3 p.m.

**CARDINAL JAZZ BAND**  
Thursday, Nov. 30  
Diane Bennack Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

**ORCHESTRA OF THE INCARNATE WORD**  
Sunday, Dec. 3  
Diane Bennack Concert Hall, 3 p.m.  
Admission: Adults: \$15, Children: \$10, UIW Faculty, Staff, and Students: Free with UIW ID

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**LIGHT THE WAY**  
Saturday, Nov. 18  
UIW Broadway Campus

**GRADUATION**  
Saturday, Dec. 9  
Celebrate the 2023 Graduates at Freeman Coliseum.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

**WELCOME MASS**  
Sunday, Aug. 20  
Chapel of the Incarnate Word, 11 a.m.

**MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
Wednesday, Set. 6  
Our Lady's Chapel, 12 p.m.

**BACCALAUREATE MASS**  
Friday, Dec. 8  
Celebration of Mass for the Fall 2023 Graduates.

*Please check the [UMM Events Calendar](#) for updates and information on additional services, times, and locations.*

**UIW ALUMNI EVENTS**

**UMM EVENTS CALENDAR**

**UMM EVENTS REGISTRATION PAGE**



Costume Design by Margaret Mitchell and Nikki Hernandez; Set Design by Christopher McCollum; Directed by Mark Stringham; Photography by Candice Stringham.

# Thank You, Margaret Mitchell

Scenery and costume designer, writer, professor, mentor, colleague and friend are just a few of the roles that Margaret Mitchell played at UIW over the course of her 31-year tenure. As Christopher McCollum, senior instructor of Theatre Arts shared, “She leaves not only a powerful legacy, but also an empty space that is daunting to try to offset.”

Sr. Germaine Corbin, CCVI, first met Mitchell in 1992 when they both became full-time faculty members in the theatre department. Corbin shared, “Margaret has been a gift to the University and really embraced the Mission of UIW totally. One example of that was shown when COVID-19 hit. Mitchell and her staff began making masks for people. She worked closely with one of our Sisters (of Charity of the Incarnate Word) who also worked with immigrants and helped get them COVID masks.” As Corbin reflected on their years together, she noted, “I realize how talented and creative Margaret Mitchell is. She has an international as well as national reputation for her designs in costume and has written about the history of costume design.”

McCollum had the pleasure of working with Mitchell for eight years and saw firsthand the significant impact she had on the lives of her students, the department, and the entire University over the course of her extensive career. McCollum shared another impactful story of Mitchell’s compassion during COVID-19. While students were online in theatre Zoom sessions, she recognized through conversations the profound and deep impact the issues of social change and justice were having on their emotional well-being. She realized that they were hungry for a classroom experience that offered context and guidance. As a result, she took it upon herself to create a new course for the following fall semester. Mitchell’s new course, Theatre for Social Change, launched in a hybrid format. McCollum

said, “The course was a resounding success and was so popular (and needed) that she taught it again her final semester this past spring; something that the department hopes to continue offering moving forward.”

When asked if Mitchell had a favorite quote, McCollum reflected that it was one she learned from mentor Sr. Germaine Corbin. When receiving any constructive criticism, her students were expected to respond with, “Thank you for your correction, please continue your interest in me.”

Mitchell has done just that for her students. Her interest is reflected in the legacy she has left, including the final production of the 2022-2023 school year, which she wrote for her students. *The Reluctant Dragon*, by Mitchell, was directed by Mark Stringham. In this beloved classic story, a young boy befriends a poetry-loving dragon living in the Downs above his home. When the townsfolk send for St. George to slay the dragon, the boy needs to produce a clever

plan to save his friend and convince the townsfolk to accept him. During this show, colleagues and students alike found a moment to celebrate Mitchell and all that she has done for UIW. We thank her for her years of service, her legacy, and for her “continued interest” in the UIW family.





# THE WORD

COMING IN THE FALL 2023 MAGAZINE

The Rosenberg School of  
Optometry 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Summer 2023

A publication of the Office of  
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UNIVERSITY OF THE  
INCARNATE WORD

ALUMNI RELATIONS

ABOVE:

Rosenberg School of Optometry  
alumni reconnected at Elsewhere  
Garden Bar & Kitchen to kick-off the  
school's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration