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CONTENTS

1. DEAN'S MESSAGE
2. FOND FAREWELL
3. CELEBRATING FACULTY AWARDS
4. RESEARCH SUPERSTARS
5. RESEARCH SUPERSTARS
6. COE GRANT SUCCESS
7. CONNECTION TO THE COMMUNITY
8. SUCCESS THROUGH EDUCATION PROGRAM
9. KIDS U
10. BEATING THE ODDS "A MOTHER – DAUGHTER JOURNEY TO GRADUATION"

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

JOAN PEDRO DEAN, COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION

Dear College of Education Community, Alumni and Friends,

As we prepare for Fall 2025, I want to extend my warmest wishes for a joyful and restful summer to all our students, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, and community partners. May the upcoming semester be filled with new possibilities and continued growth.

I want to share some personal news: I will be retiring on May 31st, 2025, after nine wonderful years at UHCL and the College of Education. Serving as Dean for the past six years has been a profound honor and an experience I will cherish forever. As I prepare to embark on this new chapter of my life, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you.

Reflecting on my time here, I am deeply appreciative of the incredible journey we've shared. Together, we have navigated challenges, celebrated many successes, and most importantly, made a meaningful difference in the lives of countless students and educators. The dedication, passion, and resilience of our faculty, staff, students, and community partners have continually inspired me.

Our collective efforts to enhance curriculum, expand outreach programs, and foster an inclusive environment have not only strengthened the College of Education but have also created lasting impacts beyond our campus. I am especially proud of the initiatives and celebrations that will continue to inspire future generations.

While I am stepping away from my role, I am confident that the College is in capable hands. I look forward to witnessing its continued growth and the positive influence it will have on future educators and our community.

To our alumni, I encourage you to continue supporting and advocating for the College of Education. Your ongoing engagement is vital to our shared mission and success.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support, kindness, and collaboration during my tenure. I cherish the relationships I have built and the memories we have created together. I hope to stay connected as I begin this exciting new phase of my life.

With warmest regards,

Dr. Joan Pedro

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FOND *FAREWELL*



Ms. Barbara Kelley
Administrative Assistant



Ms. Deborah Mitchell
Administrative Assistant



Dr. Takisha Bolden-Gastile
Lecturer

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Celebrating FACULTY AWARDS



Ms. Deani Quick

Outstanding Adjunct Award



Dr. RJ DAVIS

Distinguished Teaching Award

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Research *Superstars*

The Center for Faculty Development awards go to:

Scholarship to Improve Higher Education award for 2025

Emily Horton

De-Colonizing and Enlivening Lifespan Development in Counselor Education with Experiential Exercises Across the Curriculum," in the Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision (2024)

Texas Research and Scholarship Award for 2025.

Carol Waters

"STEM-driven school culture: Pillars of a transformative STEM approach" in the Journal of Pedagogical Research (2022).

Diana Wandix-White

"Caring and Uncaring Teacher Practices: Examples from Past offer Guidance for Present and Hope for Future" in Urban Education (2023),

COE *Grant Success*

College of Education received the Strategic Staffing Grant with Goose Creek CISD (\$10,000 for UHCL) from TEA.

College of Education received ten \$12,000 scholarships from the Charles Butt Foundation. The money is for students who start at a community college to complete a teacher education program and complete a vetted teacher residency.

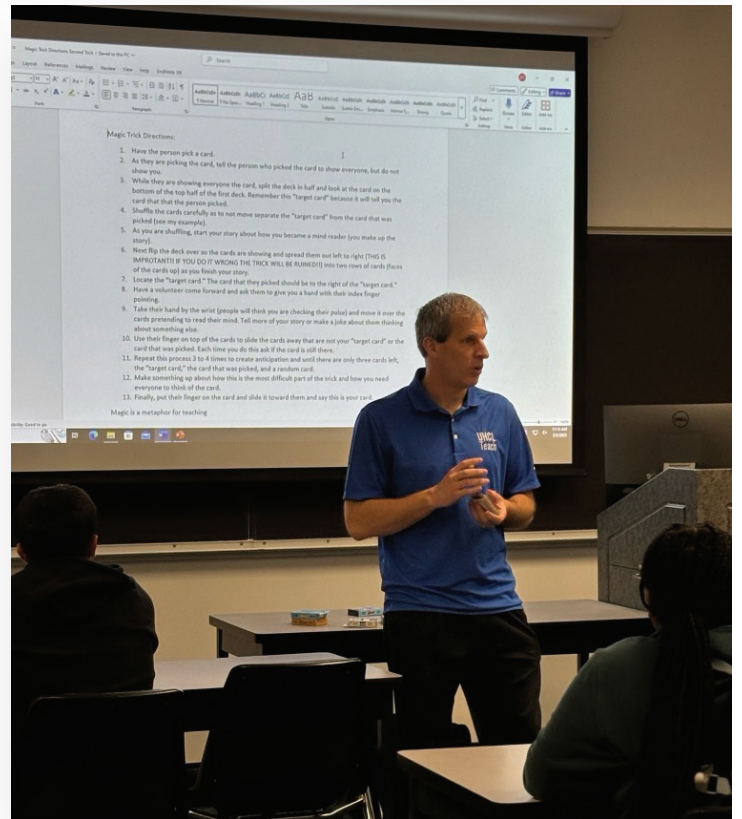
College of Education partners with Goose Creek ISD to receive the 2025-2027 Texas Strategic Staffing Grant for Sustainable, Paid Teacher Residency.

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Connection to Community *Spring 2025 Future Educators Day at UHCL*



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Success Through *Education* Program

STEP Program Summer Camp for students is around the corner. The camp is funded by the Houston Endowment Grant awarded to the University of Houston Clear Lake to support the STEP program.

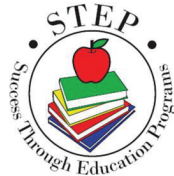
STEP Program Summer Camp



Join us for the inaugural Success Through Education Program (STEP) summer camp and explore the exciting world of teaching through hands-on activities and mentorship, while experiencing college life firsthand and gaining valuable insights into a future career in education.

Covered Expenses

- Transportation
- Food
- University Housing



For more information, please contact the STEP Program at stepprogram@uhcl.edu

Event Dates:

Monday, June 16th

through

Wednesday June 18th



"Any individual requiring an accommodation in order to participate in this event or utilize these services will need to contact the College of Education at stepprogram@uhcl.edu or 281-283-3600 in advance."

College of Education
2700 Bay Area Blvd. Houston, TX 77058
Bayou Building, B1231
stepprogram@uhcl.edu | 281-283-3600

UHCL University of Houston
Clear Lake

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KidsU 2025

Summer Camp Registration

University of Houston  Clear Lake



Apply to
be a
Camp
Counselor
TODAY!



ADVENTURE AWAITS at Kids U!

June 2 - July 25, 2025*

Monday - Friday:

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
& 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*No camp during the weeks of
June 19 and July 4 in observance of Summer Holidays

Camp Directors and Counselors needed for
Pre-K – 7th Grade Science Camps

Starting Salary - \$500 - \$1000 per week

Half and Full-day Camp Sessions @
UHCL and UHCL-Pearland Camp Sites

Apply **TODAY**, through May 1!



<https://forms.office.com/r/kBvTQDk0J5>

kids
U

CONNECT WITH US:

UHCL Science Methods

281-283-3547

Dr. Omah Duncan | duncan@uhcl.edu

Any individual requiring an accommodation in order to participate in this event or utilize these services will need to contact (Curriculum & Instruction Department, Science Division) at (Duncan@uhcl.edu) in advance.

 @uhclkidsu

www.uhcl.edu/cep

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Beating the ODDS

A Mother-Daughter Journey to Graduation

Written By: Daniel Ramirez

When Kathryn Shaffer walks the stage to receive her Master of Science in Educational Management from the University of Houston–Clear Lake (UHCL) this May, her daughter, Olivia Baker, won't be far behind. Graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Education with Core Subjects EC–6, Olivia will follow her mother across the same commencement stage, a shared moment built on decades of sacrifice, strength, and family support.

"I always wanted to go back to school," Kathryn said. "I was a teen mom. I dropped out of high school, and life took me in a different direction for a while. When I turned 30, I knew it was time. I enrolled in college, determined to finally pursue the degree I'd always wanted. Along the way, I received the Robert Noyce scholarship, which helped me stay focused and keep going. In 2016, I graduated with my bachelor's and started teaching."

She began teaching soon after and eventually decided to return to UHCL to pursue her master's degree and principal certification. "I wanted to lead a school. I wanted to make a bigger impact on kids who might be on a path like I was," Kathryn said. "One reason I wanted to go back to school so badly was just to beat the odds. The probability was not in our favor to be successful."

Olivia's journey into higher education took a different shape than her mother's—but she was no less determined. She began at San Jacinto College in a teaching cohort, gaining early hands-on experience before transferring to UHCL. The decision to stay close to home, and close to her mom felt like a natural next step.

"UHCL was the closest school, and I never really wanted to go far," Olivia said. "I knew they had a strong education program—and it ended up being an outstanding experience."

While their programs and timelines did not always overlap, the shared journey made all the difference.

"My mom has always been our biggest supporter. She's had to be every figure in our lives mom, dad, everything. Being able to be her cheer leader through her experience and for her to be mine through mine, it's been amazing." **Olivia Baker said.**



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"She'd call me with questions, and I'd try to remember," Kathryn laughed. "Things have changed since I graduated, but I could still give advice. She's just good support, she's my little cheerleader."

"Graduating together is more than symbolic, it's transformational."

"I'm so proud that all my children graduated high school," Kathryn said. "Olivia is the first grandchild to graduate college and all three of my sons are currently in college."

"I don't know the statistics, but not many people get to graduate with their parents," Olivia said. "Watching my mom get her master's shows me anything is possible. She's my superhero."

With commencement just around the corner, both Kathryn and Olivia are beginning to look beyond the stage toward what comes next. Olivia is currently interning with a local school district and hopes to start teaching close to home. But she sees her future expanding beyond the classroom.

"I want to help students know that their situation in life doesn't define them," she said. "I see myself as a peer leader, a principal, maybe even opening my own school. That's why I want to get my master's."

Kathryn, too, has her sights set on what's next. "I'm going to take a year off and continue to pursue my education, maybe superintendent courses, or even a doctoral degree in education," she said. "I just want to keep growing."

If she does return, she'll look no further than UHCL. "The professors, the registrar's office, the students, everyone's been so helpful," she said. "Even in my master's, I had a professor, Dr. Deckman, who kept a class open even though I was the only student. He moved it online so I wouldn't have to drive an hour to campus. That kind of support really meant something."

Olivia echoed her mother's experience. "I had an early morning class, and the professor was always understanding of my drive," she said. "She made sure I had what I needed. That kind of support made UHCL feel like the right place."

For Kathryn and Olivia, graduation is more than a ceremony, it's a celebration of how far they've come and a signal of where they're going.

"We're breaking cycles," Kathryn said. "We're doing what we weren't expected to do."

And this May, they'll walk across the stage not just as graduates but as living proof that beating the odds is possible.

UHCL University of Houston
Clear Lake

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