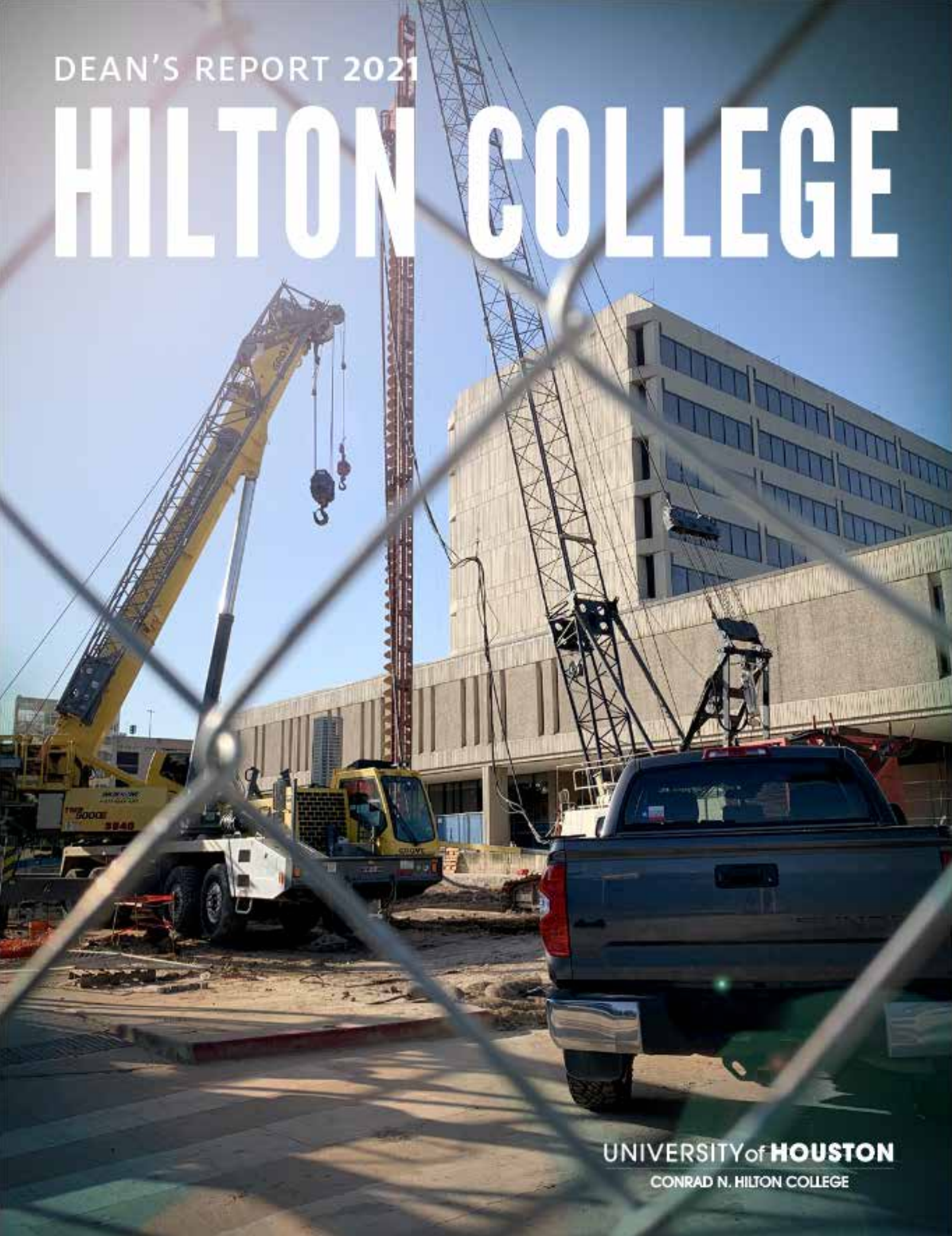


DEAN'S REPORT 2021

HILTON COLLEGE



UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE

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ON THE COVER: Construction has begun on the Hilton University of Houston's new five-story guest tower. Completion is slated for the end of 2022. (Photo: Katie Guidroz)

A YEAR OF SILVER LININGS

Friends,

It's been a time like no other. And for those of us in hospitality, I don't have to tell you what an unbelievable blow to our industry this global pandemic has been. While this chapter may go down in our collective history as one of the toughest, I will remember it as a period of silver linings – a time of creative collaboration, collegiality and support of each other to lift up our students. Through it all, we remained true to our mission and are starting the new academic year well prepared for whatever comes next.

For example, when COVID-19 shut down the UH campus in March 2020, we had a week to convert our entire curriculum to online delivery using Zoom and Teams. Now, three of our classrooms have been outfitted with the latest HyFlex technology that will dramatically improve our virtual instruction and enhance our face-to-face teaching as well. (More on page 14.) And, of course, we took the time and precautions needed to make our facilities extra safe and ready for our students' much anticipated return.

In February, we received an historic \$10 million gift from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. As we navigate an industry that has been turned on its head by the coronavirus, the timing of this extraordinarily insightful gift could not be more critical in advancing our capacity to prepare our students to lead innovation and change in what will be our industry's new landscape. (More on page 7.)

What else did we accomplish while working from home, besides fruitless attempts to limit trips to the fridge? For me personally, I was able to complete my sixth textbook and – I'm proud to say – my first as dean. I also have the honor of co-chairing the University's Strategic Planning Committee with Provost Short. It's been a lengthy process, but the outcome will position UH for an even brighter future. We are now working with the implementation committees to effect sweeping change as quickly as possible. (More on page 17.)

Additionally, this last year allowed us to confront a challenge that has been a topic of debate for quite some time. For years, we have known that *Conrad N. Hilton College of "Hotel and Restaurant Management"* no longer adequately describes who we are to the industry or to prospective students and their parents. We will always be *Conrad N. Hilton College*, but how do we best complete the moniker?

For answers, we hired a market-research firm last fall to explore renaming our now 52-year-old "HRM school." The eight-month project was externally funded by an anonymous donor, which is noteworthy given the cost of such an endeavor. Moreover, the group's name recommendation was completely data driven. These data came from more than 30 phone interviews plus some 250

survey respondents, including faculty, staff, alumni, students, industry partners, as well as hospitality deans and directors from around the planet.

We still have layers and layers of approvals ahead of us, but at least we now know where our new path can take us. And I must confide, it's *super* exciting. Having the summer to submit the stack of required paperwork proved to be a good thing because this was a lot more complicated than changing a name on a driver's license! Fortunately, we already have support from the Hilton Foundation and a unanimous thumbs-up vote from our faculty. As soon as we have both blessings and protection, we will send out an official birth announcement to the world.

For those who have been to campus, you surely noticed the crane out front and the stacks of rebar, all of which is surrounded by a big blue fence that spans the building. To answer the most common question, YES. It will be disruptive. But such disruption will be so worth it! On June 30, we gathered for a special groundbreaking photo op to officially mark the beginning of construction on our new hotel guest tower. Working concurrently, we are also renovating the College's West Wing – home of the new Eric's Club Center for Student Success, which will house recruiting, undergraduate academic services, career development AND everyone's favorite student-run coffee shop, Cougar Grounds. (More on page 8.)

Speaking of construction, I would be remiss if I didn't mention our Hospitality Industry Archives expansion. Again, thanks to the generosity of the Hilton Foundation, we are creating additional space in our archives to provide a dedicated section for the late Barron Hilton's papers. (More on page 18.)

And as some of you will remember from my introductory meetings in 2015, our sights have always been focused on the future. A fundamental aspect of our vision for that future is to be financially independent of the state. This would require a total endowment of some \$200 million. This remains a key priority. In 2015, we had an endowment of \$32 million. Today, I am happy to report that as of August 31, 2021, we can take pride in an endowment of \$51.5 million.

Another long-term goal has been to provide life-changing experiences for our students. One idea



Hilton University of Houston General Manager Steve Cunningham, Dean Dennis Reynolds, Provost Paula Myrick Short, President Renu Khator and Regent Doug Brooks ('75) pose for a groundbreaking photo op. (Photo: Ben Corda)

that percolated early was to form a partnership with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). I visited the Hyde Park campus in early 2017, an essential trip that allowed me to "plant some seeds." Fast forward four years and I am *thrilled* to announce that we just signed an agreement with the CIA for a true immersive culinary experience! What's equally exciting is that this customized three-week summer program is EXCLUSIVE to Hilton College students. *Please read the article on page 7 for more details*, and know that we are already looking at ways we can subsidize this program, so that every student who wants to take advantage of this amazing opportunity can.

I could share many more points of pride for this past 2020-21 academic year but, as space is limited and we continue to raise our own bar, we have to be selective! Here are just a few more highlights of note:

- Our faculty published a record number of manuscripts in leading hospitality journals – up 38% over last year
- An instructional designer was hired to support our faculty as we continue to push the boundaries of hospitality education
- Our development office was repositioned, again with eyes focused on the horizon
- The search began for an assistant professor with expertise in environmental, social and/or corporate governance.

As you can see, there were *lots* of silver linings to be found in a year fraught with challenges, yet ripe with opportunity. Whatever the world throws at us next, together, we got this! I am humbled to work alongside and to be inspired daily by the *best* faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry partners and friends at any college anywhere, and equally as grateful for the unwavering support from President Khator and Provost Short. We are an unbeatable team.

As the construction disruption signals the start of "A New Era of Hospitality" and we continue to build upon our successes, Hilton College remains poised to lead the way in hospitality education and research – today and into our *bright, bright* future.

Yours in service,

Dr. Dennis Reynolds
Dean and Barron Hilton Distinguished Chair

GROUNDBREAKING USHERS IN 'A NEW ERA OF HOSPITALITY'

College and University leaders, along with faculty, staff and representatives from the Dean's Advisory Board, Eric's Club, Alumni Board and Dean's Undergraduate Student Advisory Council, gathered at our Hotel on June 30 for a groundbreaking photo op to officially kick off construction of the Hilton University of Houston's new hotel tower. Complete with branded hard hats and commemorative shovels, this milestone moment marks the beginning of "A New Era of Hospitality" at Hilton College.

In addition to the new guest tower, this building project includes renovation of the Eric's Club Center for Student Success in the College's West Wing. When complete, it will be a game changer for the College and its students.



"This changes everything! It is monumental and will help define our future," Dean Dennis Reynolds said. "We've always provided a good student experience, but these new facilities will allow us to offer fantastic opportunities like no other."

Budget constraints require value engineering on any construction project, but Reynolds said the team has "stuck to their guns" to ensure that what students experience at our Hilton hotel is on par with what they will see in the real world. This has to be done correctly.

"President Khator, Provost Short and the UH regents have all been extremely supportive of this project," Reynolds added. "And the fact that so many faculty and staff showed up to our groundbreaking all wearing red really underscores that our new tower and adjacent student success facility renovations are important to all of us, not just the administration. We're all in this together and we're successful because of everyone's efforts."

As a symbol of the future and gratitude for this unwavering support, the commemorative shovels used for the groundbreaking were placed in individual shadow boxes and gifted to the President and Provost. One shadow box is also in the Dean's office, and the fourth will be displayed in our Hotel lobby until it is renovated as part of this construction project. Faculty and staff also received mini keepsake shovels!

"We're all in this together and we're successful because of everyone's efforts."

\$10 MILLION LEGACY GIFT FROM HILTON FOUNDATION BENEFITS ENDOWMENT

In February, Hilton College received an historic gift of \$10 million from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. This legacy gift, which creates an unrestricted endowment, will help the College fulfill its mission of training the next generation of hospitality leaders. Interest earned from this endowment will go toward operations and to support student success initiatives.

At every major stage of the College's growth, the Hilton Foundation has been there to support our students by funding critical facilities, programs, endowments and scholarships. Starting with a founding gift of \$1.5 million to build the first hospitality school in Texas more than 50 years ago, Hilton College has been the beneficiary of the Foundation's generosity with gifts in excess of \$95 million. With this donation, it has once again made an indelible impact in supporting a new generation of students – many of whom are the first in their families to attend college – in becoming leaders in the global hospitality industry.

"This gift allows us to do so much more," Dean Dennis Reynolds said. "As we navigate an industry that has been turned on its head by the coronavirus, the timing of this extraordinarily insightful gift could not be more critical in advancing our capacity to prepare our students to lead innovation and change in what will be our industry's new post-pandemic landscape."



NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH CIA OFFERS UNDERGRADUATES EXCLUSIVE CULINARY EXPERIENCE

Beginning summer 2022, undergraduate students can participate in the experiential learning opportunity of a lifetime, thanks to an agreement recently finalized between Hilton College and the Culinary Institute of America (CIA). For 10-18 students annually, this new partnership offers a concentrated three-week culinary course with chef instructors in the CIA's state-of-the-art learning labs on its strikingly beautiful Hyde Park, New York campus. This customized immersion experience is available exclusively to Hilton College students. Upon completion of the program, students can transfer six elective credits toward their UH degree.

"This has been a long time in coming," said Dean Dennis Reynolds, who made his first site visit to the Hyde Park campus in 2017 to plant the seeds for a partnership. "Many schools have tried, but we were persistent! Since we aren't a culinary program, our goal was to provide our students who want a taste of the culinary world with a one-of-a-kind hands-on experience. But to be able to receive this caliber of immersive training from the premier leader in culinary education and get course credit? Well, it just doesn't get any better than this!"

The cost per student is \$6,150 and includes on-site room and board, knives and equipment. Airfare and ground transportation are not included. Students will stay in campus dorm rooms that overlook the Hudson River.

"Initially, there might be some sticker shock, but this is a tremendous deal. The CIA has also waived the application fee," Reynolds said. "The reputation of the CIA speaks for itself and this partnership will offer our students yet another set of skills they can add to their toolbox that they just won't get anywhere else. We are already looking at ways to subsidize this program, so that every student who wants to participate can."

The first class is slated for May 16 to June 3 and is open to all undergraduates who have taken the prerequisite classes in Foodservice Management Safety and Sanitation in the Hospitality Industry. Another added value for students? Free time on the weekends to explore NYC – just a two-hour train ride away – for an epic New York experience!

If you are interested in funding a scholarship, please contact Chris Miller, senior director of development, at cmiller13@uh.edu or 713-743-3152.



PARDON OUR DUST!

Hotel Expansion and Renovation

Don't be fooled by the blue construction fence surrounding Hilton College and Hilton University of Houston. Both are open for business! Work has begun in earnest by DPR Construction, and there are no plans for downtime for any hotel services – including Eric's Restaurant – during the construction phase of our new hotel guest tower, expected to be completed by late 2022. Construction also won't impact underground garage parking for guests, faculty and staff.

Here's where things stand since we first announced in our 2019 *Dean's Report* that the UH System Board of Regents had approved a \$30.4 million revenue bond for this game-changing expansion and renovation project of our Hilton hotel.

- The new five-story, 70-room tower, designed by Kirksey Architecture, will expand our total number of guest rooms to 150. It will also be an iconic landmark for UH given the tower will face the University's Student Center and the campus' main entrance.
- The rendering shared in our last report has been updated and the design now includes *lots* of glass and shimmering steel. Kirksey will also integrate cutting-edge Hilton brand standards for room design and amenities in both the new *and* existing towers.
- To keep an open inventory of rooms, a two-phase renovation of the existing 80 guest rooms in our eight-story North Wing is on track for summer 2022.
- The towers will be attached by a sky bridge and share an elevator bank in the new tower, with the north tower elevators converted for service.
- The existing lobby will also be renovated and our traditional hotel desk replaced with a kiosk-based design for guest check in.

"Everything about this new tower is designed to show our students the hotel of tomorrow," Dean Dennis Reynolds said. "The new glass and steel façade is just gorgeous. For anyone driving onto campus, this will be the first thing they see – it's going to be a real showstopper and a tremendous point of pride for the College and the University."

The two driving forces behind this expansion are to provide more space and additional hotel rooms for University functions. And, of course, to provide our students with the ultimate learning experience while witnessing firsthand what a real state-of-the art, full-service hotel looks like.

"All of the technology will be the very latest from Hilton. For example, you'll be able to check in and even change the thermostat and the TV channel from your phone," Reynolds said. "What's really exciting is that guests will have the same experience regardless of which tower they use."

Another exciting and noteworthy aspect of this project?

"If everything is completed as promised in late 2022, we'll be able to cover our debt and have cash reserves starting the first year of operations – and that's a *big deal* in the hotel business," Reynolds added.

The bond will be repaid over the next 25 years with increased revenue from our hotel's larger scope of services.

West Wing Renovations

Renovation to the West Wing begins this fall and will run concurrently with the construction of the new hotel tower. Kirksey Architecture and DPR Construction will also renovate this space, which houses the offices



of recruitment and enrollment, undergraduate academic services and career development under the umbrella of the Eric's Club Center for Student Success. This space will also be the new home of a bigger and better Cougar Grounds – our student-run coffee shop.

As of press time, architectural renderings with furniture and color palettes are being finalized for the Center. The space has been designed for the future and allows for extra office space as the need for student success services grows.

Renovation highlights include:

- The addition of an entry door from the courtyard, a student concierge desk, lobby seating, a meeting room, interview space for recruiters, computer kiosks for students and enhanced storage space
- Existing bathrooms will be renovated and turned 90 degrees, so that access is available for the Center and to Cougar Grounds customers.

“Everything about this space is *fantastic* – it will have the same feel as our new hotel, so it will look fresh and current for years to come,” Reynolds said.

Final touches to the architectural renderings for Cougar Grounds, which will face the center of campus, are also in progress.

Build-out highlights for this much anticipated coffee shop move include:

- A 50-percent larger footprint than its current space in the South Wing
- Seating for 99 inside, including stadium seating complete with charging stations, plus additional outdoor seating
- Three entrances for ease of customer access – one facing the University's Student Center, a second opening up to the Hotel courtyard and the third overlooking Lynn Eusan Park.



“Our new Cougar Grounds is going to be so much more open and truly reflective of what we want our students to experience, both as customers and baristas – or ‘Cougaristas’ as we like to call them,” Reynolds said. “All the credit goes to Sean Lawless, our Cougar Grounds manager, who has been key to facilitating and enhancing this design concept.”

Cougar Grounds will remain operational in its current location on the first floor of the South Wing until the buildout of its new space is complete.

“Our expectation is that the Eric’s Club Center for Student Success will be ready to serve students roughly six months after renovation begins,” Reynolds said. “Student success remains our highest priority, so we want this facility completed and open for business as quickly as possible.”



HILTON FOUNDATION FUNDS NEW

HYFLEX CLASSROOMS

When COVID-19 hit and campuses closed their doors in March 2020, educators worldwide scrambled to pivot to remote teaching. Hilton College had a week to convert its entire curriculum to online delivery using Zoom and Teams. A stressful time for faculty, staff and students alike, to be sure.

By summer 2020, the Provost's Office gave guidance that colleges would be required to offer three models of teaching, including hybrid or "HyFlex," for the upcoming fall semester. HyFlex, a combination of face-to-face instruction and online livestreaming, allows students to decide how they want to participate.

"The \$20,000 we had budgeted for our classroom technology before the pandemic wasn't nearly enough to support this new model of teaching – even for one classroom," said Gautam Taneja, director of information technology. "I always love a challenge and, between our limited funding and the various ways our faculty uses technology to engage their students, this was definitely a challenge."

To roll out HyFlex teaching initially, the University of Houston's IT department added simple webcams to classroom podiums across campus that allowed online students to see and hear their professors. This temporary fix worked fine until the instructor stepped out of the camera's frame, or until students who were physically in the classroom asked questions that webcam microphones just weren't designed to pick up. That left students participating remotely confused and unable to hear the entire discussion.

With feedback from faculty over the course of the fall 2020 semester on what was and wasn't working using this new HyFlex model, Taneja began targeting the issues, exploring what other programs were doing, researching his own technology options, and evaluating companies that could supply the hardware needed to offer our students the best classroom experience, be it online or in-person.

As they say, luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. Luck, in the form of a very timely \$150,000 technology grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, allowed Taneja to implement his innovative plan and outfit three of our most used classrooms with the latest in HyFlex technology.

Alumni Hall (S104) was the first to receive this technology, which was installed during spring break 2021 and utilized during the last half of the spring semester. In May, installation was completed in rooms 180 and 247. This fall, students and faculty will benefit from classes taught in all three rooms as UH continues to offer HyFlex, in-person and synchronous options. Training

has been ongoing for faculty scheduled to teach in these classrooms to make the very most of this great interactive technology that includes:

- 1 Microphones in the ceilings to capture audio from both the audience and the professor
- 2 An auto-tracking camera in the back of the room that allows remote students to see the professor standing anywhere in the front of the classroom
- 3 Touchscreen monitors for faculty to annotate on PowerPoint presentations and other applications that can be screen shared with in-person and online participants
- 4 85-inch TVs in the back of the room that project the online audience. When HyFlex is not being used, instructors can use them as confidence monitors.
- 5 New computers to support these capabilities.

Another important feature of this technology? HyFlex and traditional face-to-face lectures can be recorded with just two clicks of a mouse, complete with PowerPoint slides and video feed, and shared after the session. Students can then watch lectures for the first time or reference them as needed at another time on Blackboard, Teams or Zoom.

At nearly \$50,000 a classroom, it was the cost – not the ideas or implementation – that was the biggest hurdle. Without this generous grant, the opportunity to upgrade these classrooms simply would not have been possible at this time. So impressive is this system that the University's technology team will be implementing Taneja's HyFlex plan to upgrade 27 classrooms across campus.

"The motivating factor behind this technology was to improve our HyFlex classes, but it has also enhanced our in-person classes," Dean Dennis Reynolds said. "Now that we know the cost and what's involved, depending on the need, future funding and what the world throws at us next, we hope to be able to update our other classrooms with this technology as well."

"This pandemic showed us that we have to be extremely versatile and progressive, and that we need to be prepared for the unforeseeable," he added. "We're dedicated to being the leader in hospitality education and research, but this readiness requires investment in technology. We are grateful for the opportunity that the Hilton Foundation gave us to continue to take this College into a 'new era of hospitality' – literally with the flip of a switch!"

CHAPTER ENDS ON HILTON COLLEGE- SAN ANTONIO

Hilton College-San Antonio opened its doors in fall 2014 as the Alamo City's first and only provider of a Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management. Housed in Sunset Station's historic Mission Hotel building and wholly embraced by the city's hospitality industry, the program had a 100 percent placement rate of its graduates. On March 1, 2021, Hilton College-San Antonio became another casualty of the pandemic.

"It was a tough decision to shut down this program, but when we found ourselves switching completely to online teaching, it just didn't make sense strategically or operationally to carry the weight of a physical space we weren't using," Dean Dennis Reynolds said.

At the time, the program only had 35 students and, with so many other financial constraints dealt to us by the pandemic, Reynolds explained that, ultimately, it was in the College's overall best interests to close the doors. Negotiations are underway to sublet the building.

"Importantly, we're keeping our promise to help the affected students graduate in a timely manner, either through online or face-to-face classes if they prefer to come to Houston," Reynolds said. "Our San

Antonio students took this news exceedingly well and were even appreciative of the situation we faced financially. Dr. Nathan Jarvis and Mr. Tucker Johnson, who have been with this program almost since its inception, were instrumental in making this a smooth transition for their students. We're excited that both are continuing to teach remotely from San Antonio as part of our faculty."

Since the main source of applicants for this 2+2-degree program came from community colleges throughout the San Antonio area, the College's recruitment efforts in the city will continue to make prospective students aware of our program at the University of Houston. Recruiting here will also honor the mission of the College's seven-year presence in San Antonio, which aimed to provide the Tourism Capital of Texas and the sixth largest city in the country with college graduates well prepared to lead its hospitality workforce.

DEAN REYNOLDS CO-CHAIRS UH'S STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The University of Houston's vision for the next decade is simple: **Five Goals to Building a Top 50 Public University**. Possible? Absolutely! Simple? Not so much, yet *definitely* attainable with the new strategic plan that was announced virtually to the community at large in late January. Themed "Together we rise, together we soar," this seven-year strategic plan is designed to transform core initiatives that will position the University of Houston among the best of the nation's top public universities in the coming years.

Provost Paula Myrick Short and Dean Dennis Reynolds serve as co-chairs of the University's Strategic Planning Committee. In formulating the final plan, the Provost wanted the process to be driven on a grassroots level and to be as inclusive as possible. To that end, two trial sessions were held, followed by 53 hours of 41 feedback sessions that included 1,203 participants and generated 1,857 comments. This input resulted in the plan's strategic goals that address student success, nationally competitive research, social responsibility, nationally relevant athletics and competitive funding.

"To make sure we are contributing to this shared vision, at the College we will adapt this plan to build upon our own strategic plan and align it with the University's

overarching goals where they apply to us," said Reynolds. "It's one thing to have an overall strategic plan, but then how do you implement it at the college level? We'll want to include our faculty and staff in what this implementation process looks like for us, so that we can operationalize it."

Provost Short and Dean Reynolds meet with the five implementation committees quarterly. Annual reports will update the committee's progress. Also of note, our Dr. Agnes DeFranco is serving on the Competitive Funding committee.

"The implementation process is probably more difficult than the actual planning, which is what we're doing at the University level right now," Reynolds said.

"These committees are big with lots of moving parts, but it is gratifying to see the pieces coming together. This collaborative effort will elevate UH to its rightful place among the top 50 public universities – and it's exhilarating to be a part of that!"

If you'd like to learn more about the University's strategic plan, visit uh.edu/strategic-plan.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
STRATEGIC PLAN

TOGETHER
WE RISE
TOGETHER, WE
SOAR



ARCHIVES

TO HOUSE PAPERS OF THE LATE BARRON HILTON

EXPANSION

When Barron Hilton died on Sept. 19, 2019 at the age of 91, it seemed only fitting that the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation would gift his papers to the College's Hospitality Industry Archives, the world's largest repository for the hospitality industry. After all, the Archives house the entire Conrad N. Hilton collection, as well as documents and artifacts from his sons (Nick, Barron and Eric), along with some 3,300 linear feet of shelf space devoted to the history of Hilton hotels and the evolution of the brand.

Recently, the Hilton Foundation provided a generous grant to expand the Archives and to create the **Barron Hilton Reading Room**, a dedicated space for the complete collection of the hotel magnate's papers and memorabilia. Barron, who led his father's global hotel empire as well as his private foundation throughout his life, remained one of Hilton College's most ardent champions since the school's founding in 1969.

"The fact that the Hilton Foundation is paying for this expansion speaks volumes about the standing that our Archives holds internationally," Dean Dennis Reynolds said. "The Hiltons changed the hotel industry. To be able to share Barron's entire collection of papers, which will tell even more of the Hilton story, with scholars, industry and media around the world is pretty exciting."

Historian and archivist Dr. Mark Young is eager to acquire Barron's papers that document how he took his father's company, valued at \$300 million in 1966, to more than \$25 billion at the time it was sold to a Wall Street investment bank in 2007. Young also argues that Barron's contributions to the hotel industry were as significant as those of his legendary father.

Plans for this expansion, to be built out in the space behind the existing Archives in the Massad Family Library Research Center, are underway. Once construction begins, completion of the space is expected by spring 2022.

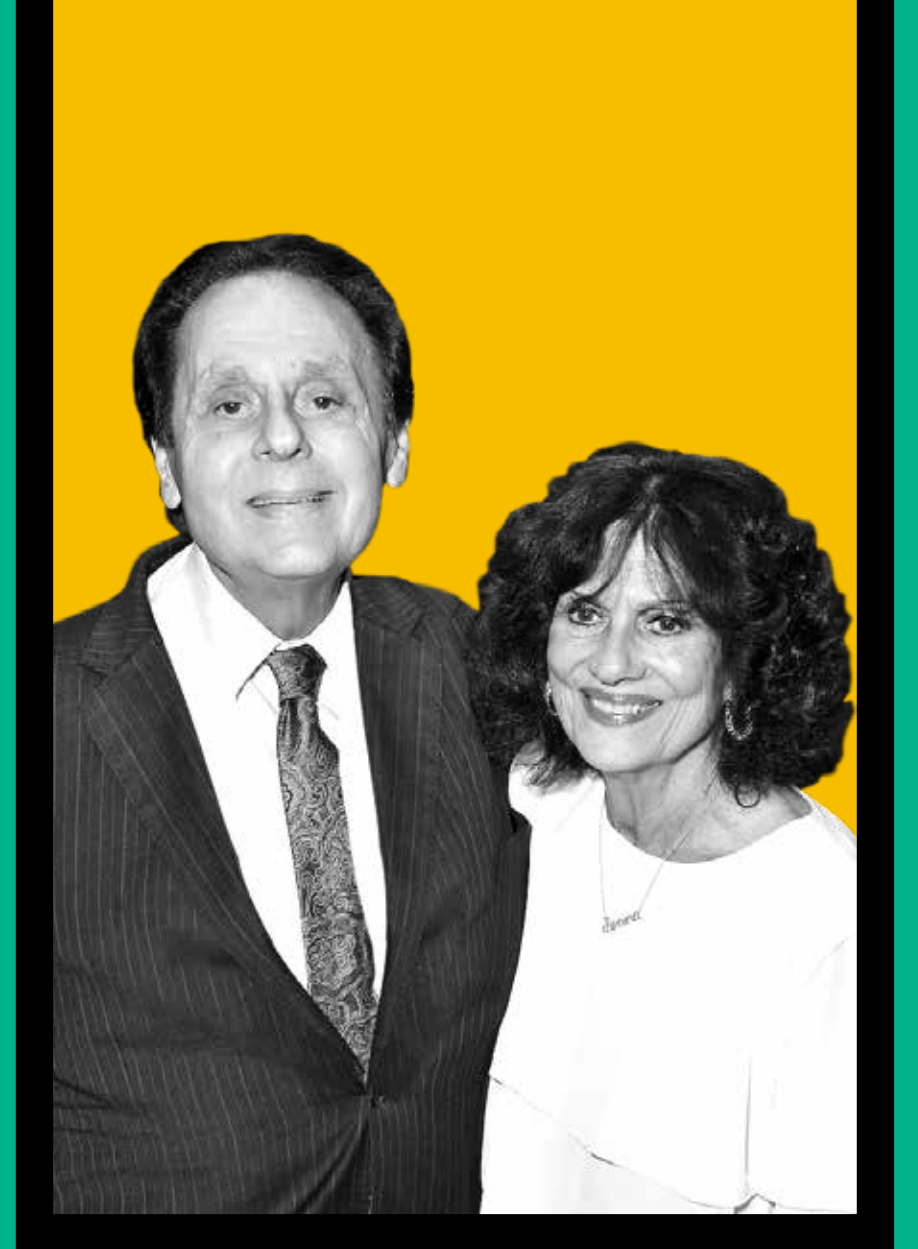
The dining landscape in Houston changed forever when legendary restaurateur Tony Vallone opened his Tony's Restaurant in 1965. For 55 years, he was the force behind the city's most acclaimed fine dining establishment, frequented by Houstonians and the rich and famous alike for its exquisite cuisine, world-class wine lists and impeccable service. When he passed away on Sept. 10, 2020, our industry, our city and our College lost a true legend and friend.

Tony was passionate about the role that Hilton College played in training future restaurateurs and enjoyed a longtime relationship with the College. For years, he served on the Dean's Advisory Board and remained involved even as board member emeritus. He also taught a class in fine dining. In 1997, Gourmet Night celebrated his contributions to the Houston restaurant scene with the theme "A Tribute to Tony Vallone, a Restaurateur to the Rich and Famous." Robin Leach, host of the TV series "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous," emceed the evening. To support our events and scholarships, Tony donated countless dining certificates, as well as an elegant wine dinner at his iconic restaurant that was the highlight of the live auction during our 50th Anniversary Gala.

After his passing last fall, Donna Vallone was invited to join the Dean's Advisory Board and serves as an active member – though this isn't her first tie to the University of Houston. Before partnering with her husband in the restaurant business, she worked as a music teacher in HISD for 14 years after receiving her Bachelor of Music from UH. Under Donna's leadership, Tony's Restaurant and Catering remain at the forefront of Houston's dining scene.

In celebration of his life and legacy, the Vallone family asked for donations to be made to their endowment – the **Donna and Tony Vallone Family Endowment Fund** – to benefit Hilton College. He is deeply missed.

If you would like to contribute to this endowment in memory of Tony Vallone to benefit our students, please contact Chris Miller, senior director of development, at cmiller13@uh.edu or 713-743-3152.



*ENDOWMENT
CELEBRATES
LIFE OF
LEGENDARY
RESTAURATEUR*

PIVOTING FROM IN-PERSON TO VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES

When things started shutting down in March 2020, it could have spelled C-A-N-C-E-L-E-D for many of the College's annual in-person events. With international travel for conferences becoming less likely, funding for programs cut, and gatherings of only 10 allowed in public spaces, it was clear the world wasn't getting back to normal anytime soon. Decisions had to be made, and *quickly!* With the hospitality industry also having to bend and adapt in immediate and unprecedented ways, what better way for our students to learn from life's unexpected curveballs than to pivot and reimagine our events from a virtual perspective? Our faculty, staff and students also all rose to the occasion and made "going virtual" look easy – with support from our ever-present IT team, **Gautam Taneja and Ray Gutierrez.**

Here are just four of our events that went virtual:

Hosted every other year at Hilton College, this annual gathering of graduate students and hospitality educators from around the globe could arguably be said to have been one of our best events yet – online or otherwise. Held in early January, this was the first time this conference had ever been held virtually. Not only did it set an attendance record with more than 400 participants, but it raised the bar and set a new standard in virtual academic hospitality conferences. Complete with Zoom rooms, a career fair, breakout sessions, and concurrent research and paper presentations, the hours of planning and research time on the technical and logistical considerations alone to pull this off for the first time – *and to do it right* – was tremendous. The ease in which attendees were able to navigate from session to session and room to room via the conference website, plus the excellence of the career fair component, was the talk of the conference.

Drs. Yoon Koh and Jason Draper served as co-chairs, with support from dedicated behind-the-scenes staff, graduate students and faculty moderators. Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies **Ki-Joon Back** was also integral to making this opportunity an unparalleled success. And once again, the College took the conference's top honor with doctoral student **Hyekyung Park** and **Drs. Minwoo Lee, Ki-Joon Back** and **Agnes DeFranco** winning the *Best Paper Award*.

26TH ANNUAL GRADUATE EDUCATION & GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

HOSPITALITY GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR

In February, the College held its first-ever Hospitality Graduate School Fair, designed to be virtual from the outset. The brainchild of the **Dean's Undergraduate Advisory Council**, this student-driven initiative allowed prospective graduate students to compare programs, learn about financial packages, and ask questions directly to the advisors and directors of the participating colleges. The end goal of this first-of-its-kind online information session was to showcase the options for students who may have never even thought about the possibility of earning an advanced degree, and to help them find the best fit – no matter what program they choose.

This first fair drew 19 hospitality graduate schools from throughout the United States, as well as our global master's partners in Switzerland and Hong Kong, with 134 prospective graduate students registering for this unique forum. With the success of this first fair, a second will be presented this September with a focus on having more international programs. The College is also working with partner institutions to make students from underrepresented-minority backgrounds aware of this opportunity.

THE ERIC HILTON DISTINGUISHED CHAIR ALUMNI SERIES

Going virtual also generated additional excitement for the bi-annual **Eric's Club** lectures, historically also an in-person networking event. In fact, online participation for the last two presentations set attendance records for this alumni lecture series established in 1999 to provide one-on-one engagement opportunities between aspiring industry leaders, Eric's Club

GOURMET NIGHT

Last year's Mary Poppins-themed Gourmet Night was canceled shortly after the pandemic was declared. It was simply too late to make other arrangements with the event just weeks away. So, with a seated dinner for 300 literally off the table and the need for social distancing, the next student Gourmet Night team was forced to rethink the entire event, virtually from scratch. Pun intended! Guided by lecturer **Reba Haskell**, executive director of the event, the students cooked up "Gourmet Night 2021: A Virtual Dinner Party," which featured **Chef Hugo Ortega**, a James Beard Foundation Award recipient and the executive chef and owner of Hugo's, Caracol, Xochi and Backstreet Café.

Presented on March 25, the Zoom event showcased a live cooking demonstration by Chef Hugo, breakout sessions that included a beer tasting with **8th Wonder Brewery's Aaron Corsi** and floral design with **H-E-B's Andy Hopper**, and even an online silent auction. Guests were also given the opportunity to pick up food kits from Backstreet Café or do their own food shopping for the option of cooking along with Chef Hugo in their own kitchens, or watching the livestream demo coming from the College's **Sysco Student Kitchen**. On the menu? Asparagus risotto with seared scallops, panzanella salad, chimichurri and banana Nutella pudding. And, of course, there was a wine tasting, which was livestreamed from the **Spec's Beverage & Food Appreciation Lab** with **Dr. Chris Taylor**.

Naturally, this year's Gourmet Night looked very different and, as a virtual dinner, it could not have gone better! Student managers totally embraced the technology and created a fun evening for everyone involved, as evidenced by the "exploding" chat board with guests engaging with each other and the students throughout the evening. Plans are underway for an in-person Gourmet Night on April 9, 2022.

members and featured speakers, who share their career path stories and professional insights. **Kelly Roberts** ('81), chief administrative officer for hospitality and gaming for Landry's Inc., was the fall 2020 lecturer in October with 260 participants. Following his lecture, students had the chance to choose Zoom breakout sessions, hosted by Eric's Club members, to learn more about the industry. With the success of this first virtual lecture, turnout was even higher in April for the spring 2021 lecturer – **Aylwin Lewis** ('76, MBA '90), retired chairman and CEO of Potbelly Sandwich Works. An impressive 468 students, alumni, faculty, staff and industry friends registered for the event.

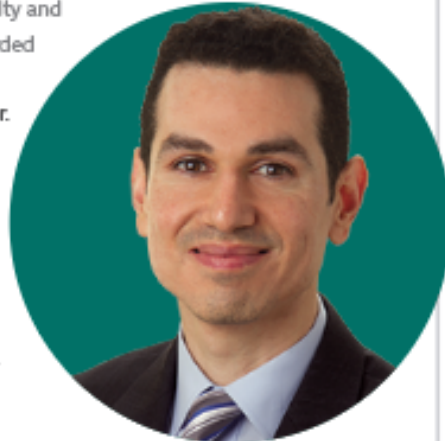
The next featured Eric's Club speaker is **Mike Pedé** ('89), assistant vice president for alumni relations at UH. Mike will take the podium to speak in person on Oct. 12 at 10 a.m. in Alumni Hall. And if the world throws us another curveball, we've proven it's no big deal to just Zoom in for the lecture!

THIS IS US

During the 2020-21 academic year, we promoted two of our standout researchers, welcomed three assistant professors and one lecturer, met several new staff members on Zoom, and bid adieu to two Hilton College "institutions."

PROMOTIONS

DR. JUAN M. MADERA has been a rising academic rock star since he first joined Hilton College in 2008 as an assistant professor. He earned tenure and was promoted to associate professor in 2014. One of the College's most prolific and respected researchers, he's had 74 peer-reviewed journal articles accepted for publication and some \$2,667,948 in external grants from sources that include the National Science Foundation, the Sloan Foundation and the USDA. This funded research ranges in projects from bias in faculty tenure and promotion decisions, to increasing underrepresented minorities in food science careers. His scholarship, as well as his teaching excellence and mentorship of junior faculty and Ph.D. students, was rewarded in 2020 when he was promoted to **full professor**. And in August 2021, Dr. Madera was given one of academia's highest honors – a named professorship. He can now add **Curtis L. Carlson Endowed Professor** to his growing list of accolades.



Dr. Madera's research focus is in diversity and discrimination in the workplace, employment interviews and selection issues, training and development, and research methodology. He earned both his Ph.D. and M.A. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Rice University. Currently, Dr. Madera teaches Qualitative Research Methodology for our doctoral program, Organizational Behavior and Leadership Strategies for our global M.S. program, and Human Resource Management for our master's and undergraduate programs. He also holds a joint teaching appointment with the Department of Management & Leadership at UH's Bauer College of Business. What he loves most about being on our faculty is mentoring his students on the "how-tos" – how to conduct top quality research, how to publish and how to discuss research with different stakeholders. "Having a friendly, collaborative climate, surrounded by top quality researchers, also makes working at Hilton College a researcher's dream come true," he says.

DR. SUJATA SIRSAT, our superstar food safety scientist, earned tenure and was promoted from assistant to **associate professor** in May 2021. Since first joining our faculty as a research assistant professor in 2011, she has shined a spotlight on the scientific side of hospitality and become the media's go-to expert when disaster strikes the food industry. From *Salmonella* and *Listeria* outbreaks to FDA recalls, Dr. Sirsat has helped put the College's Food Safety Lab on the map – not only winning important grants, but through her research is also improving food safety at farmers' markets and grocery stores to help prevent foodborne illness. A self-described "science nerd," she earned her Ph.D. in Poultry Science from the University of Arkansas and her M.S. in Biotechnology from Texas A&M University. Her research focus is in food safety, food microbiology, food insecurity, molecular biology and public health.

Since starting her tenure track as an assistant professor in 2015, she has published 23 papers in peer-reviewed journals and been awarded 10 research grants totaling \$1 million. She loves pursuing "heart work" research – studies that can make an impact on the community and industry. To that end, Dr. Sirsat is currently working on a project that investigates food safety in food insecure Houston neighborhoods, the overarching goal of which is to address food safety disparities among low-income populations. At the undergraduate level, she teaches Food Safety and Sanitation, and Foodservice Management, as well as Grant Writing at the doctoral level. She takes pride in watching her students "grow, mature and lead the way." This summer, Dr. Sirsat's family adopted a black lab mix puppy and named him Atticus. So, is Atticus' mouth *actually* cleaner than her toddler's? According to our resident food safety scientist, that's a definite "I HOPE NOT!"



NEW FACULTY

DR. ZEYA HE joined our faculty in fall 2020 as an **assistant professor**. She brings industry experience in destination and hotel marketing with partners like TripAdvisor and Destination Canada, and skills in experience design to her classroom. Before joining the College, she taught marketing and tourism classes at Temple University, where she earned her Ph.D.



in Business Administration. Dr. He holds an M.S. in Geography from Peking University and a B.E. in Urban Planning from Sichuan University in China. She also has her Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics (CHIA) and is a Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE). Her research interests include visual marketing of destinations, hotels and restaurants, digital media technology and the consumer experience, service innovation and computational content analysis.

Currently, she is working on research projects that will aid destinations, hotels and restaurants in finding effective visual marketing strategies using photos and videos to communicate experiences and commitments to consumers on social media and online distribution channels. And she is exploring the role of service innovations – digitalization, robots, augmented reality and such – in influencing consumer experiences and purchase behaviors. Dr. He teaches Hospitality Marketing and Marketing Strategies at the undergraduate level, and Tourism and Travel at the graduate level. The thing that excites her most about Hilton College is the supportive environment and opportunities to create innovations in research and teaching – and that includes working with our Hotel and "the best faculty, staff and students that one cannot find anywhere else!"

DR. SADEGH KAZEMI joined our faculty in fall 2020 as an **assistant professor**. While pursuing his Ph.D. in Operations and Management Science at Washington State University, he taught related classes and brings five years of teaching experience in business disciplines to his classroom. He earned both his B.S. and M.S. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Kerman in Iran. Currently, he is teaching the College's graduate and undergraduate revenue management classes. The focus of Dr. Kazemi's research interests are in the areas of revenue and supply chain management, machine learning and business analytics. Currently, he is investigating two revenue management and pricing projects. The first – online pricing in the presence of interventions – involves estimating the time of change in the customer's willingness-to-pay and, subsequently, finding the optimal post-change selling price. The second – pricing with customers' star ratings – is an effort to model the behavior of products' average rating over the course of the selling season and finding optimal pricing policies for new products and/or services.



Dr. Kazemi also shares his time and expertise with several professional organizations, including the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences, the Manufacturing and Service Operations Management Society, and the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education. He appreciates the College's collaborative research environment and has already had many "unique and rewarding experiences" liaising with fellow faculty with diverse expertise and students with different backgrounds in the service industry.

DR. MINJUNG SHIN (Ph.D. '20) joined our faculty in fall 2020 as an **assistant professor**. With an industry background in marketing, sales and operations, and human resources in the areas of travel, retail and hospitality, she teaches hospitality marketing classes at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Dr. Shin's research focus is in customer-brand relationships, luxury marketing and traveler psychology. She is also interested in identifying constructs unique to hospitality and travel contexts that shape customers' perceptions and relationships with brands. Her latest research project identifies traveler psychology pertinent to the pandemic, which can be used as a post-COVID marketing strategy aimed at fueling people's motivations to resume travel.



Originally from Seoul, Korea, Dr. Shin also lived in the vibrant tourism destinations of Singapore and Hong Kong for 13 years and has been innately drawn to hospitality and tourism from a young age. She attended the Seoul National University, where she earned both her B.S. and M.S. in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. As a doctoral student here, she took great pride in our passionate student body and internationally recognized faculty and is grateful to continue her academic journey at Hilton College. She's also "excited to build upon more legacies as part of this wonderful community." The consummate marketer, Dr. Shin loves trying out new restaurants and cafés, especially those with "pleasing aesthetics and design" – a.k.a. Instagrammable spots!

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NEW FACULTY



KATIE GINAPP is the newest addition to our faculty, joining the College as a **lecturer** just two weeks before the start of the fall 2021 semester. Prior to her appointment here, she was an assistant teaching professor at Iowa State University, where she also earned her B.S. in Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management, as well as her M.S. in Hospitality Management. Katie is a Certified Hospitality Educator (CHE) and brings 10 years of combined teaching and industry experience in foodservice, banquet and catering management, event sales, wedding planning, non-alcoholic beverages and café operations to her classroom. She is teaching the Foodservice Operations course and is the new **faculty advisor** to the **Texas Restaurant Association-Cougar Chapter**. She is most excited about getting back to in-person classes and giving her students the hands-on experiences they deserve and are eager to have – and learning from them, too.

For Katie, “coffee is life.” She’s also a hot sauce enthusiast and, recently, discovered her green thumb. She’s moved her burgeoning houseplant collection to Houston, along with cats Ollie and Zoey, and hopes to successfully grow herbs on her new patio.

NEW STAFF

DIANE NGUYEN is championing the College’s enrollment efforts as the new **director of recruitment**. She joined the College in February 2021 and brings 11 years of experience in higher ed academic advising, admissions, recruitment and student programming to this important student success position. Most recently, Diane served as the senior associate director of admissions and recruitment at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs. She is excited to be working with prospective students who are passionate about hospitality and crafting an amazing customer experience in the industry. Diane earned a B.A. in Anthropology and an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration from The University of Texas at Austin. She is into powerlifting and also enjoys graduate admissions consulting and creating content for social media.



ALLISON HENDRICKS began her professional journey in higher ed 10 years ago as a recruiter. Before moving to Houston in February 2021 to become our **director of career development**, she worked as the employer relations manager at her alma mater – Auburn University at Montgomery. Among her many goals, Allison aims to help students develop their own personal brands to strengthen their networks, build employer and campus relationships, connect recruiters with quality talent, and design programs to meet students’ specific career needs. She earned her B.A. in Mass Communication and Broadcast Journalism from Auburn Montgomery and an M.A. in Communication Management from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Allison continually challenges herself to be the person she wishes she had when she was in college. Her favorite quote? Robert Ingersoll’s “We rise by lifting others.” Allison also enjoys time with family and friends, finding new wines at Trader Joe’s, and exploring her new city.

ASHLEY SHEPHERD brings more career development experience in position as **career counselor and coordinator**. Before joining the January 2020, she worked at Lone as a career services specialist. proud alumna of Prairie View A&M where she earned both her M.B.A. degrees. In addition to working with placement and teaching our internship to build partnerships with employers to create opportunities for our graduates. She is also the **staff advisor** for the **National Society of Minorities in Hospitality-Cougar Chapter**. What does she love most about helping her students? Hearing them say, “I got the job!” Ashley, a recent newlywed, enjoys drinking strawberry margaritas and trying new restaurants with her new husband. She also adores her “dog son,” Kane.



CHRIS MILLER is a 30-year veteran of the hotel industry and brings his special style of hospitality to his new role as **senior director of development**. Before joining the University’s Advancement team in April 2021, he served as GM of Wyndham Houston West Energy Corridor. With experience working in a variety of leadership positions for brands from Wyndham to Westin and Red Lion to Hilton, at properties from Seattle to Chicago, Portland to Philly, Phoenix to Houston and back again, Chris is spearheading the College’s fundraising and “friend-raising” efforts. He’s most excited to “make a difference in the overall experience of our students.” Chris earned his B.S. in Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management from Penn State. He and his wife, Jane, frequent estate sales. This father of three also has an extensive collection of sports and entertainment memorabilia.

RAY GUTIERREZ joined the College as a temporary employee and was hired full time in March 2020 as a **technical support specialist**. His daily presence on campus has been essential to support faculty, staff and students and to insure that “all systems are GO” at both the College and Hotel. Ray has always loved helping people and learning new things, but he credits our “We are hospitality” culture with making him a friendlier person. He holds associate degrees from Houston Community and San Jacinto Colleges. Ray started his career as an audio engineer and has also worked in local TV as a camera operator, a media director for area churches, an IT consultant for the oil and gas industry, and is a Realtor®. He has a daughter who he “loves more than anything,” plays guitar and treasures spending time in Hawaii.



H. C. “RUS” TREBILCOX JR. joined Hilton College in March of 2020 as the **executive assistant to Associate Dean Mary Dawson**. He brings to his position more than 35 years of senior administrative experience working extensively in health care administration support for organizations throughout southeast Texas and southeastern Michigan. His diverse resume also includes positions in oil and gas, banking and finance, education, and even the culinary arts and catering. In college, Rus majored in music and fine art. He is “honored to be a part of Hilton College” and loving the latest chapter of his career.

SOPHIE MULVANEY ⁽¹⁵⁾ bleeds Cougar Red and is thrilled to be back at Hilton College as the new **program manager for development and alumni relations**. Actively involved as a student with NACE, the Hilton College Ambassadors, Gourmet Night and Hall of Honor, she “came home” in June 2021 after gaining experience in sales, marketing and property management in various roles with AMLI Residential. In her new position, she is supporting the College’s development efforts and will work with fellow alumni to build networking opportunities through events and related advancement initiatives. Sophie loves taking her dogs, Lilly and Dottie, on walks in Memorial Park and stopping for coffee. She is “obsessed with Disney” and can’t wait for her trip to the Magic Kingdom in December.



ISA DO PRADO first started working at Hilton College as an undergraduate research assistant for Dr. Sujata Sirsat while pursuing her B.S. in Human Resource Development from the College of Technology. She also minored in Psychology and received a specialization in Hospitality. Encouraged to apply for the **instructional designer position**, Isa joined our IT team in April 2021 to provide consultation and support to faculty and staff working with Blackboard, Teams, Rise and other related platforms. She loves that this position allows her to help others, express herself creatively and problem solve. Originally from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Isa moved to Houston in 2014. Before attending UH, she worked as a breadmaker and earned an A.A.S. degree in Baking and Pastry Arts from Culinary Institute LeNôtre. She also brews her own kombucha!





NAFISEH GONABADI

('14, MS '17) returned to her alma mater in June 2021 after earning her M.B.A. from UH-Victoria and gaining industry experience with Minuti Coffee, where she worked for five years as a sales, marketing and accounts

manager. In this position she wore many hats and "learned a lot." Nafiseh is excited to be able to use her degrees to contribute to the College's business office as the new **assistant business administrator** for the Hilton University of Houston. She is responsible for the Hotel's sales and services accounting, accounts receivable, revenue audits, and cash and credit card accounting and audits. No surprise, Nafiseh loves coffee. She also loves working out. Her happy place? Orange Theory Fitness!

SARAH LAWSON

('10) is the ideal candidate to fill the Hilton University of Houston's new position of **director of rooms**. Joining the team in August 2021 to help prepare for the opening of the new guest tower, Sarah's 10 years of experience working in front desk, reservations, guest services and operations management positions for Wyndham properties in Galveston and Houston will serve her well as she oversees the hotel's front office and housekeeping



operations. And she's an alumna! Sarah has also assisted in several hotel renovations, travelled nationwide to work on national taskforce missions and, most recently, contributed significantly to turning three Wyndham-managed hotels into independent properties. She loves training and teaching and is "super excited to work with students." Sarah commutes from League City, where she lives with her husband and six-month old daughter, Macy Grace.

RETIREMENTS

It's been strange not seeing **Dr. John Bowen** and **Kevin Simon**, both ever-present figures during their nearly 30-year tenures at Hilton College. Both officially retired in August 2020, without the proper College sendoff because of... well, you know... A heartfelt *thank you* to our sixth dean for his leadership and unwavering dedication, and cheers to our "Wine Guy" who uncorked the passion for wine in literally *thousands* of students. Their legacies loom large.



FORMER DEAN JOHN BOWEN

began his relationship with the College in 1980, when he first joined our faculty as an assistant professor. In total, he was a faculty member for 10 years before being named dean. In his words, "I never aspired to be a dean. It just happened." Embracing the role from 2003 to 2015, Dr. Bowen recruited top candidates

from doctoral programs throughout the country to build a diverse faculty and fostered a research culture that, today, garners international recognition. He created global partnerships, enhanced experiential learning opportunities and secured the first endowments created by alumni. Under his leadership – for example – our Beverage Management minor, bachelor's program in San Antonio, tripartite M.S. program in Global Hospitality Business, and Ph.D. program in Hospitality Administration were developed and approved. Dr. Bowen also left his mark with the transformational upgrades to our facilities, including renovations to the Hotel in 2009, renovations to the beverage production lab and Alumni Hall, and the addition of our student-run coffee shop Cougar Grounds and the Spec's Beverage & Food Appreciation Lab. In 2015, Dr. Bowen transitioned back to the faculty as a professor and was honored by the University with the title of "Professor Emeritus" after teaching his last marketing class in spring 2020.

KEVIN SIMON

('92) served as an academic advisor and the director of undergraduate academic services, but he was at his very best when sharing his knowledge of wine. He took over the Wine Appreciation class in 1996 and had just 30 students in his first lab. That number has grown to more than 250 students annually. He was also the College's liaison in the development of the annual Sugar Land Wine & Food Affair and created hundreds of volunteer opportunities for our students during this regional event. And Kevin relished the opportunity to accompany his students to the Sonoma and Napa Valleys as part of the annual California Wine Experience, which he led since the class was first offered in 2002. Countless students credit him with inspiring their careers in the beverage industry. For Kevin – "There is NOTHING like standing out in the middle of a vineyard on a beautiful, warm sunny day drinking a glass of wine. This is a 'God take me now moment' because it isn't getting any better than this!"



WE ARE HILTON COLLEGE

This is the part of our Dean's Report where we brag about the individual accomplishments of our HC community.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

During the College's annual spring Rally, faculty and staff gather to welcome newcomers and celebrate collective accomplishments, years of service and promotions. It's also awards presentation time!

TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

RALLY 2020
Tucker Johnson

RALLY 2021
Dr. Sujata Sirsat

SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

RALLY 2020
Dr. Jason Draper

RALLY 2021
Dr. Chris Taylor

STEPHEN RUSHMORE/HVS RESEARCH AWARD

RALLY 2020
Dr. Tiffany Legendre

RALLY 2021
Dr. Minwoo Lee

HOTEL STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD

RALLY 2020
Jenniffer Gonell
Front Desk Supervisor

RALLY 2021
Yolanda Castro
Administrative Assistant

DONALD GREENAWAY EXCELLENCE AWARD

RALLY 2020
Dr. Sujata Sirsat

RALLY 2021
Dr. Yoon Koh

COLLEGE STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD

RALLY 2020
Dawn Deurell
Undergraduate Academic Advisor

RALLY 2021
Caitlin Campbell ('14)
Undergraduate Academic Advisor & Social Media Coordinator

RISING STAR AWARD

RALLY 2020
Maggie Padilla
Director of Executive Programs

RALLY 2021
Caitlin Fuller ('18)
Recruitment Manager



It is rare for two professors from the same college to receive more than one of the University's top awards in the same academic year, but then we don't have ordinary professors. During the 2021 UH Faculty Awards, two of our own did just that! **Dr. Ki-Joon Back**, associate dean for research and graduate studies and the Eric Hilton Distinguished Chair, received the *Faculty Excellence Global Award*. This honor is given to tenured or tenure-track faculty who have demonstrated excellence in the promotion of globalization of teaching, research and/or service. **Dr. Yoon Koh**, associate professor, was presented with the *Teaching Excellence Award* in recognition of her outstanding achievements in teaching.



AUTHOR, AUTHOR!

Dean Dennis Reynolds has co-authored his sixth book. Titled *Introduction to Hospitality Management*, this is the first textbook he has written as dean – an uncommon accomplishment given the considerable time commitment required. Published by Wiley and expected to be a market leader in introductory hospitality textbooks, the narrative gives readers a comprehensive survey of the industry from bar and restaurant management, hotel and lodging operations, to travel and tourism, and more. And yes, it's available on Amazon!



SHINING BRIGHTLY AT ICHRIE

International CHRIE's (Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education) annual conference provides a world stage on which our faculty and doctoral students continue to shine. Once again, they did not disappoint! Held in July, this year's virtual gathering recognized hospitality educators and students for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years.

For 2020, Hilton College and partners EHL and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Hotel & Tourism Management won the *McCool Breakthrough Award* for our tripartite M.S. in Global Hospitality Business. Our Eta Sigma Delta International Honor Society Student Chapter, under faculty advisor **Dr. Tiffany Legendre**, earned *Chapter of Distinction*. The *Best Paper Award* went to **Dr. Juan M. Madera** and former doctoral students **Chandler Yu** and **Lindsey Lee**.

Dr. Priyanko Guchait won the *Faculty Collegiality Award* for 2021. He serves on the Eta Sigma Delta Board of Governors, which was also honored with the *McCool Breakthrough Award*. Recognized as well for work in 2021 was **Dr. Carl A. Boger Jr.**, who won *Best Reviewer of the Year* from the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*. And finally, ANOTHER *Best Paper Award* was presented to co-authors doctoral candidate **Michelle Russen**, Associate Dean **Mary Dawson**, **Dr. Chris Taylor** and **Dean Dennis Reynolds**.



IN SCHOLARLY PURSUIT

There is a special term for people like **Deepu Kurian**, executive director of academic and business operations for the College and Hotel. It's called "scholar practitioner." In addition to his substantial responsibilities here, for four years Deepu made the twice weekly trek to College Station in pursuit of his doctoral degree. In May 2020, he graduated with a Ph.D. in Human Resources Development from Texas A&M University. Now, we call him "Dr. KI"

WINNING BIG IN VEGAS

The odds were 10 to 1 in favor of our **National Association for Catering and Events (NACE)** students hitting the proverbial jackpot during the 2021 NACE Experience Conference, held at the Bellagio Las Vegas in August. As expected, they beat the house, winning the lion's share of the organization's awards and scholarships.

Carlee Grimes was named *National Student Member of the Year* for 2020. **Alexis Clark** was awarded the 2021 *NACE Foundation Vince DeFinis Scholarship*, and **Casey Cramer** also received this coveted scholarship for 2020. **Olivia Betka** was presented with the *National Foundation of NACE Scholarship* for 2021 and, incidentally, was named *Houston Student Member of the Year* in April. Recent graduate **Anna Oakes** was nominated for the *National Student Member Award* in 2019. Seven out of the last 10 recipients of NACE's highest student award, introduced in 2011, have been members of the NACE UH Student Chapter.

The ace up their sleeve year after year? NACE faculty advisor **Erin Kenyan**, who over the last 15 years has grown this chapter to become the BIGGEST and BEST in the nation. Thanks to Erin's mentorship, our students continue to play a winning hand!



Casey Cramer, Carlee Grimes, Erin Kenyan, Olivia Betka and Alexis Clark

FINANCIAL HEALTH

FISCAL YEAR 2021* (Sept. 1, 2020 – Aug. 31, 2021)

ANNUAL REVENUE

	AMOUNT
College Fees & Operating Revenue	795,492
Endowment & Private Gifts	2,457,435
Grants	148,996
Hotel Operations	1,811,362
University Allocations	5,985,400
Total Revenue	\$11,198,685

ANNUAL EXPENSES

	AMOUNT
Benefits	963,981
Maintenance & Operations	2,261,351
Salary & Wages	5,934,965
Scholarships	344,875
Travel & Business	55,564
Total Expenses	\$ 9,560,736

* The data provided in this Dean's Report are for information only. The financials presented are preliminary, unaudited and subject to revision upon completion of the fiscal year closing and audit processes.

CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE DONOR HONOR ROLL

GIFTS FROM JANUARY 1, 2019 – DECEMBER 31, 2020

In recognition of their commitment to excellence and in support of OUR MISSION, a heartfelt "THANK YOU" to all of the individuals, foundations and companies for these generous gifts.

GIFTS \$100,000 AND UP

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
Sysco Corporation

GIFTS \$99,000 - \$25,000

Alternative Resource Technologies, LLC
The Honorable Doug H. ('75) Brooks
Hilton Worldwide
Holidan Holdings LLC
The Holly & Doug Brooks Family Foundation
Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals
International Wine & Food Society
Dorothy T. Nicholson ('77)
Nicholson Interests LLC
Christopher J. Pappas
Harris J. Pappas
Pappas Restaurants Inc.
Fred and Mabel R. Parks Foundation
Mike Przechlanski ('78)
Shipley Do-Nuts
David H. Smalley ('79)
Tres Grace Family Foundation

GIFTS \$24,999 - \$10,000

AboveTraining, Inc.
The Baker Foundation
Brotherhood of Knights of Vine Houston Chapter Inc.
Charles D. ('80) and Karen Dorn
Greater Houston Restaurant Association
Gulf Coast Distillers
Buddy Hagner
Allen C. Hermansen
J. Keith Hughey
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