

TEXAS LEADER

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2015



WORLD CLASS

From international service projects to deciphering Maya hieroglyphics, Texas is redefining what it means to be a global university



Message from the Executive Director



Here at The University of Texas at Austin, “What Starts Here Changes the World” is more than just a tagline; it’s a commitment realized every day by the alumni, faculty, and students of this global university.

Every year, thousands of students worldwide come to study at UT Austin, bringing with them their own distinct languages, cultures, and customs. Currently, more than 5,000 students from 70 countries are represented on the Forty Acres. At the same time, the university has thousands of graduates living outside the United States, taking with them into the world their own experiences of Texas. The importance of the international experience affects every area of the university, nowhere more so than in the study-abroad program, which is currently the second-largest in the country.

The University of Texas at Austin is fast becoming a global educational powerhouse — the graphic on the back page of this issue demonstrates our inclusion in many world university rankings. Much of our success on the world stage is made possible by the generous support of our alumni and friends like the ones profiled in this issue of Texas Leader:

- Julian Suez came to Texas from China in the 1950s and credits his experiences at UT Austin with shaping the rest of his life. His generous gifts will provide those same opportunities to future generations of students in the Cockrell School of Engineering.
- Retired faculty member Patrick Olivelle and his wife, Suman, have directed their planned gift to create graduate

fellowships in South Asian Studies, ensuring that UT Austin has the resources to recruit the best and brightest graduate students.

- A life insurance gift from deceased faculty member Linda Schele helped establish the *Linda and David Schele Chair in the Art and Writing of Mesoamerica* in the Department of Art and Art History. The holder of that chair, Schele’s protégé Dr. David Stuart, has since gone on to establish UT Austin as one of the world’s foremost centers for Maya studies.

The University of Texas at Austin is committed to welcoming students, faculty, and researchers from across the globe and encouraging students from the United States to explore the world, both from their seat in the classroom and through the in-person experiences afforded by study-abroad programs. We hope you will continue to join us on our journey as we take what starts in Texas and share it with the world.

Hook ‘em!

Marcia Inger Navrátil
Interim Executive Director, Gift Planning team
The University of Texas at Austin



UT'S DAVID STUART AND TULANE UNIVERSITY'S MARCELLO CANUTO EXAMINE A GLYPH PANEL THAT HAD BEEN LOOTED.

Coming full circle: the birth of UT's dominance in Maya studies

How a planned gift helped a UT professor give her protégé the tools to carry on their work

She was in her early 30s, a studio art professor turned pioneer in deciphering the writings and art of the ancient Maya. He was the 11-year-old son of archaeologists.

When their paths first crossed in 1977 at the Washington, D.C., offices of the National Geographic Society, David Stuart so impressed Linda Schele — unprompted, he translated a hieroglyphic she was drawing — that she invited him to Mexico to work with her in the field the next summer. She went on to earn a doctorate at The University of Texas at Austin, where she became a professor and world-renowned scholar.

Schele's star was on the rise when the two met, and — even then — so was Stuart's. He presented his first academic paper at 12, and at 18 he became the youngest person ever awarded a MacArthur "genius" grant, a distinction he still holds. Today the former Harvard curator and lecturer is one of only a couple of dozen people in the world who can decipher Maya hieroglyphics.

Both Schele and Stuart went on to become authorities in Mesoamerican art and art history. After the summer together in the Maya city of Palenque, Mexico, Schele and Stuart crossed paths many times over the years, first as mentor and protégé, then as colleagues. And although Schele died of pancreatic cancer in 1998, the connection between the two continues thanks to gift and estate planning.

Before she died at age 55, Schele and her husband, David Schele, purchased a life insurance policy, and the proceeds were combined with donations from her

admirers to create the *Linda and David Schele Chair in the Art and Writing of Mesoamerica* in the Department of Art and Art History. In 2004, UT hired the first holder of the chair: David Stuart.

"The chair was to close that circle, in a sense," Stuart said. "I thought it was so appropriate."

David Schele thinks so, too.

"Linda's faith and hopes for establishing the chair have been amply rewarded by the current chair holder, Dr. David Stuart, who has parlayed this tool into the establishment of The Mesoamerica Center at UT Austin and the Casa Herrera research center in Antigua, Guatemala," he said. "Most important, David and his colleagues have advanced the decipherment of Maya writing to the point that it is now seen as a poetic form of literature, something that Linda could scarcely envisage. Linda would be well pleased."

Stuart is still at UT, carrying on the work he and Schele began. In addition to the chair he holds, which includes teaching, research, and fieldwork, he is also director of The Mesoamerica Center.

"Linda helped set the stage for a lot of what we do today," he said.

Today UT is an interdisciplinary powerhouse of Maya expertise that includes artists, archaeologists, geographers, anthropologists, and linguists.

"We have this kind of microcosm here at UT," Stuart said. "It doesn't exist in any other university in the United States — or in the world, for that matter."

The *Schele Chair*, in addition to helping recruit Stuart, enabled him to launch

Casa Herrera, a research, conference, and teaching facility operated by UT's Department of Art and Art History in collaboration with the Guatemalan nonprofit Fundación Pantaleón. Casa Herrera provides a major venue for research and teaching of pre-Columbian art and archaeology serving scholars, faculty, and students from a wide range of disciplines, institutions, and countries.



LINDA SCHELE, LEFT, AND DAVID STUART, THEN 16, HAD KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR FIVE YEARS BY THE TIME THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN 1982 AT HARVARD'S PEABODY MUSEUM IN CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Linda Schele had been considering establishing a chair in Maya writing even before she got sick, although the cancer diagnosis accelerated the process, David Schele said. The only potential drawback: raising enough money.

"The fact that the chair did reach the funding required," he said, "is a testament not to the philanthropy of one individual but to the very many friends and supporters who contributed both small and large amounts." ✨



THE Chinese Cowboy

How life at Texas earned a nickname, launched a career, and sparked a philanthropist

by ANGELA CURTIS

Texas has always been a good fit for Shanghai-born Julian Suez. His older cousin graduated from The University of Texas in 1958 with a degree in mechanical engineering, and he suggested that Suez become a Longhorn, too.

"To me that was an easy one," Suez said. "And I never regretted it."

He graduated from UT in 1961, also with a degree in mechanical engineering. He followed that up with a master's from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a five-decade career with IBM. He still works for the company a few hours a week from his New York City home.

Suez's career at IBM isn't the only part of his life that has spanned decades. So has his pattern of yearly giving to UT, which in recent years has grown to include major gifts to the Cockrell School of Engineering. An outright gift will create the Z.F. How Lecture Hall, named for his grandfather, in the Engineering Education and Research Center (EERC), scheduled for completion in 2017. He also has a planned gift, a charitable gift annuity that will create a scholarship in the Cockrell School after his lifetime.

"I think what makes this country so great is there is a spirit of giving back to society," he said. "Growing up in China, you don't see that."

As far as deciding where to give back, UT again was the right fit.

"I've always wanted to do something, and I thought of no better place than The University of Texas," he said. "I really thought Texas gave me a head start."

Suez considers himself fortunate to have found a university that suited him so well.

"It's just a combination of what Texas gave me and how I reacted in that environment," he said. "The university gave me the opportunity to realize my potential."

His maternal grandfather was not able to attend college, but thanks to Suez's gift the Z.F. How Lecture Hall in the new EERC will bear his name. In 1897, How co-founded the first modern publishing house

in China at age 26, and although he never received much of an education, he helped bring learning to others by publishing textbooks. The company, Commercial Press, is still in business today, with offices in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other countries in Southeast Asia.

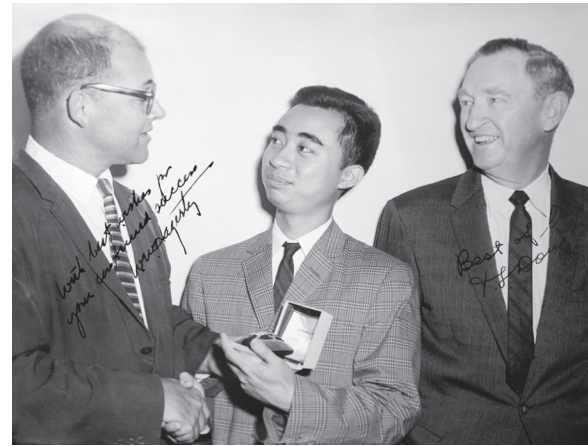
Suez made the most of the opportunity his grandfather never had. At UT, he earned the Hugh Scott Cameron Award, recognition for the top senior in mechanical engineering. And he found time for fun, too. Like many Texans, Suez spent the summer months looking forward to fall and football season.

"At first when I went to a football game I had no idea what was going on, but the spirit is definitely contagious," he said.

Suez made his UT home at the university's first co-op, the Campus Guild Co-op at 2804 Whitis Ave. (The Campus Guild is no longer there. It was condemned in 1972 and burned down the following year.) During Suez's years there, the house was a lively place with plenty of pranksters, and Suez didn't escape their attentions. He'd go to bed to discover he'd been short-sheeted. That was if he was lucky—sometimes the surprise in his bed was a snake. Then there was the time he was paged over the house PA only to be carried off and dumped into the Littlefield Fountain.

When he asked a friend why his housemates teased him, he was told, "Oh, Julian, don't worry. They like you. If they don't like you, they leave you alone."

By the time he moved to New York state to work for IBM, he'd been away from Texas for a year getting his master's at MIT. No matter—something about him telegraphed "Texas" to his IBM co-workers, who dubbed him "the Chinese cowboy."



JULIAN SUEZ RECEIVES THE HUGH SCOTT CAMERON AWARD, GIVEN TO THE TOP SENIOR IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, IN 1961.

He still doesn't know which Texan traits earned him the nickname.

"Whatever I picked up I did unintentionally," he said.

The Texas influence has stayed with him more than half a century later. After working for IBM in Poughkeepsie and other locations in Westchester County, New York, Suez settled in Manhattan in his semi-retirement. Still, it's the Lone Star State he invokes when reminiscing.

"My life in a way is kind of simple," he said. "It's just Texas and IBM."

Part of what made UT stand out for Suez was the teaching.

"I had such good experiences with the professors at the university," he said.

He remembers two mechanical engineering professors in particular—Grady Rylander and Leonardt Kreisle—and a math professor, Fowler Yett.

"What is unique about Texas is that I got a lot of encouragement to grow," he said. "You can call it homey or you can call it whatever. To me it is very important to have that kind of spirit." ✨



Gift boosts fight to recruit top graduate students

Retired professor pays a debt by creating graduate fellowship in South Asian studies

Patrick Olivelle has one child, a grown daughter with three children of her own. But he's the intellectual father of many more.

The professor emeritus of Sanskrit and Indian religions calls these offspring his "mind-born" children. They're his former students.

"They are the children of your mind," he said.

"Mind-born," or "manoja," comes from Sanskrit, one of eight languages Olivelle knows. (He doesn't say "speaks" because some of the languages are no longer spoken.) Others include Latin, Italian, French, German, and Sinhalese.

For professors, the desire to work with top students is like wanting to have children, he says.

"They want to train the next generation of scholars," said Olivelle, who taught in the College of Liberal Arts' Department of Asian Studies from 1991 until he retired in 2013. "It's almost like being parents."

And good faculty members, like loving parents, want the best for their children—even want their children to be the best.

"You want this next generation to be very good," said Olivelle, who earned undergraduate and master's degrees from Oxford. "If you cannot recruit the best students, then the best faculty will go to those universities that do support them."

Faculty members go where the good graduate students are because the two work so closely together—graduate students assist with the teaching load and work on professors' research. Unlike undergrads, graduate students often take many classes from the same professor. And if the faculty member happens to be the student's adviser, the connection is even stronger.

"I think most of the students actually do feel that you are a parent," Olivelle said.

That's why Olivelle and his wife, Suman, have two estate gifts in the works—a charitable gift annuity and a bequest—to support fellowships for graduate students in his department. Both gifts will support the *Patrick and Suman Olivelle Graduate Fellowship in South Asian Studies*.

The charitable gift annuity accomplishes two things: It allows the Olivelles to support UT after their lifetimes, and it provides them extra income in their retirement. Another reason Olivelle decided to support graduate students: He believes they're often overlooked.

"The most important resource we have here is students. Without our students we would not have a university," he said. "Undergraduates generally have many ways in which they are funded. Graduate students have much fewer. They are generally independent of their parents, so that source of funding is cut off, and we don't have that much funding from within the university."

Olivelle saw the extent of the problem during his years as founding chair of his department from 1994 to 2007.

"We lost so many of our best student recruits because Harvard and Columbia and Chicago were giving five-year fully funded fellowships that we could not match because we had no money," he said.

For Olivelle, giving to graduate students is returning a favor he received many years ago.

"I want to give to graduate students because people helped me as a graduate student," he said. "I came from Sri Lanka without a penny in my pocket. I went to Oxford on a scholarship. Others paid for it. When I wanted to do a PhD, I tried many universities, and the University of Pennsylvania gave me a fellowship and funded me.

"I think for those to whom much is given, much is expected." ✨

PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICK OLIVELLE



UT ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING STUDENT ABDUL ALQAROOT RECEIVES A HUG FROM A NICARAGUAN BOY DURING A 2014 SERVICE-LEARNING TRIP.

Engineering, social work students team up to change the world

All over campus, students are learning how to change the world. And increasingly they're turning to one of the best teachers around: practice.

"Service learning" — students using their growing skills to perform community service — is a chance to make a difference while gaining real-world experience. Sometimes the community service happens close to home; sometimes it takes students to other countries. When it does, it provides the additional benefit of teaching students firsthand about other cultures.

One of UT's global service-learning programs is Projects for Underserved Communities (PUC), a collaboration between the International Office, the Cockrell School of Engineering, and the School of Social Work that helps prepare Longhorns to become global leaders. Through PUC, engineering and social work students team up to design and implement sustainable development projects in communities around the world.

Launched in 2010, PUC uses an innovative yearlong course sequence to hone students' leadership skills and cultural competency while providing much-needed services. More than 100 students have participated, visiting villages in Peru, Ghana, and elsewhere. Students solicit philanthropic support from a combination of private and corporate sponsors.

"I think it is very important for students to be exposed to real-

life experiences during their college career," said 2014 architectural engineering graduate Abdul Alqaroot, who served in Nicaragua.

Alqaroot's team partnered with a nonprofit organization to develop a community center and medical clinic in Cedro Galán, a neighborhood outside the capital, Managua. When the center needed a restroom, PUC students designed and built a flush toilet and septic system.

A PUC team is returning this year to continue improvements to the center. The 2015 team was one of the first to use the university's new crowdfunding platform, HornRaiser (hornraiser.utexas.edu), to raise money to cover the cost of raw materials. The group exceeded its \$4,000 goal by \$1,500. With the extra funding, the group was able to cover the travel costs of an expert engineer who is volunteering his time to work with the team in Nicaragua. He will help them cultivate job skills on-site, provide hands-on experience in proper engineering procedures, and guarantee that the team gives the community a sustainable solution.

"The UT students involved in this program must learn how to think on their feet and consider various stakeholders' views and effectively communicate their ideas," said Laurie Young, director of special projects in the International Office. "As one of our past students said, 'Life doesn't happen in a textbook.'" ✨

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Second-largest study-abroad program
in the United States

International students

5,000

Students
studying abroad

2,600

Host countries

70

English as a Second
Language students

800

International faculty/
researchers

1,600

Countries
represented among
faculty/researchers

120

Sample will language

Wondering how to include the
university in your will?

Here's the language we suggest:

I hereby direct \$_____ (or _____
percent of my residual estate) in cash, securities,
or other property to the Board of Regents of The
University of Texas System for the benefit of The
University of Texas at Austin.

This gift shall be for the further benefit of

[college, school, unit] _____
and shall be used to _____ [purpose]

*As with any decision involving your assets, we urge
you to seek the advice of your professional counsel
when considering a gift to The University of Texas
at Austin.*



COVER: Julian Suez, photographed at Rockefeller
Center in his current hometown of Manhattan, came
to UT from Shanghai to study mechanical engineer-
ing. He has established a charitable gift annuity that
will create a scholarship for UT engineering students
after his lifetime. Cover photo by Alyssa Kirsten.

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members of the Texas Leadership Society and other
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Austin. To submit story ideas, comments, questions,
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Editor: Angela Curtis
Art director: Kevin Rathge
Graphic design: Dana Taylor
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