

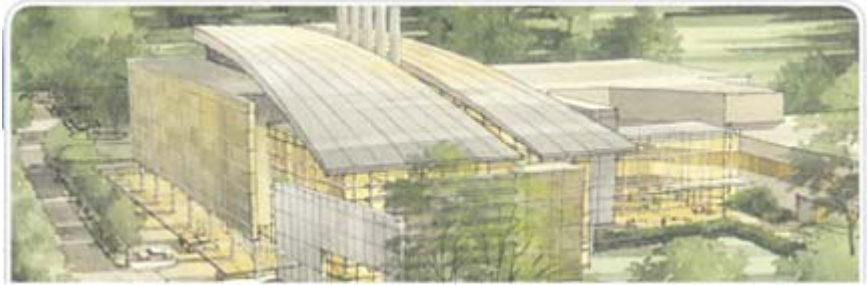


# INSIGHTS

## NEW CAPITAL PROJECT TO EXPAND NEURO/COGNITIVE RESEARCH AND HOUSE NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED RESEARCH CENTERS

In the University of Houston's quest to achieve national Tier One status, the Department of Psychology plays a significant role. This year, the National Science Foundation (NSF) ranked UH 5th nationally in extramural funding for research in Psychology, the highest ranking received by UH in any discipline in the NSF report. By any metric of faculty productivity and scientific recognition, from total research funding to scholarly publications to national awards, Psychology ranks among UH's premium research departments.

Currently, research within the Psychology Department takes place in multiple centers located in different buildings on campus and within the Texas Medical Center Annex. The Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES), directed by Dr. David Francis, Chair of the Psychology Department, houses several national research centers (see pg 4 for a short inventory) and is located primarily in the Texas Learning and Computation Center (TLC<sup>2</sup>) Annex, the old public TV building on Cullen. The Texas Center for Learning Disabilities (TCLD), housed in UH's Hornberger Center within the



*Architectural Drawing of the tentative plan for the Health and Biomedical Sciences Center Building*

Texas Medical Center (TMC), is a multi-institutional collaborative research program led by Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Dr. Jack Fletcher. TCLD closely involves TIMES faculty as well as researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, and at several institutes in the TMC.

The UH System Board of Regents recently approved the construction of the Health and Biomedical Sciences Center Building. The six-story building at the corner of Wheeler and Calhoun will provide space and facilities for the College of Optometry and unite two of UH's premier research centers, TIMES and TLC<sup>2</sup>. "The Health and Biomedical Sciences Center Building will be UH's first truly interdisciplinary research facility that will incorporate researchers from the Colleges of Optometry, Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Engineering, Natural Science and Mathematics, and Pharmacy" said Dr. David Francis, director of TIMES and co-director of TLC<sup>2</sup>.

The current research space and scattered distribution of Psychology's centers of excellence have limited the Department's growth and interactions. Due to new opportunities made possible by the Health and Biomedical Sciences Center Building, TIMES and the neuropsychology and neuroscience research groups within psychology will have a chance to lead and participate in new and exciting directions for research at UH. Faculty and students from these groups in psychology comprise major components of the Complex Systems Supercluster that will occupy the third and fourth floors of the building complex. The cost of the TIMES, Neuropsychology/Neuroscience portion of this capital project is estimated at \$25 Million for construction, space, equipment, core facilities, faculty labs, and recruitment / retention of premier researchers. This new building will significantly enhance psychology's ability to compete for research grants in the 21st century, where "team" science that is large and inherently interdisciplinary predominates. The project is expected to be finished in 2-3 years. Various financing options are being considered.

In the current economic climate, all higher education institutions compete for outside sources of support for endowments, building projects, and student scholarships. Philanthropic support from the community and our own alumni will be vital in realizing the university's long term objectives and ensuring psychology's continued leadership role in those efforts.

## Inside this Issue

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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Alumni and Friends:

Greetings from the Department of Psychology at the University of Houston! I hope that you find this first installation of the Department of Psychology newsletter interesting and informative. Since I assumed Chairmanship responsibilities in 2002, we have met many challenges and embraced success both inside the department and within our university community. Many of you stay connected with your alma mater through the University of Houston Alumni Association (UHAA), special event visits to the campus, or through the College's Graffiti-e newsletter.

Through this Psychology newsletter-INSIGHTS we hope to connect directly with alumni, family members, colleagues and the community at large.

It has been my great pleasure to participate in the rebuilding of the Psychology Department. Psychology has long been one of the most popular majors at UH, with more than 1,600 undergraduate majors. However, during the late 90's, we were forced to reduce graduate enrollments in order to combat our declining faculty size, which eventually dropped to 19 in 2001-2002. Since then we have grown to 30 full time tenured/tenure track faculty and our graduate student enrollment has

climbed to a robust 145 students across four program areas, Clinical, Developmental, Industrial & Organizational and Social. Although the names remain the same, our programs have been reshaped and revitalized to meet the demands of the future. Our once free-standing Clinical Neuropsychology program has been positioned as a specialization within our APA accredited Clinical program and continues to be one of the top neuropsychology training programs in the country. Four years ago we began accepting students back into the Developmental program, which we reshaped and refocused to offer students training in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience. We have also recruited new senior and junior faculty to all of our graduate programs, situating them for success in the 21st century as we investigate the biological bases of normal and aberrant behavior, basic cognitive and attentional processes, development of language and cognition throughout the lifespan, occupational health & safety, diversity and organizational effectiveness, mechanisms of recovery from brain injury, social and biological factors in smoking and other addictions, close interpersonal relationships, prevention and treatment of domestic violence, and the development and educational attainment of at-risk populations.

We have accomplished much that we hope will make you proud of your alma mater. As the feature article shows, UH ranked #5 nationally in the most recent (2008) National Science Foundation rankings for extramural funding for research in Psychology. Also in 2007-2008, our clinical program was ranked by Academic Analytics as being among the top 10% of programs nationally (of 81 programs) in faculty productivity. During the last 12 months, faculty and alumni of UH Psychology have served as the President of APA (James Bray) and of the International Neuropsychological Society (Jack Fletcher). And, of course, our faculty serve on the editorial boards

of major journals, federal grant review panels, and national advisory groups.

Today, we are working to provide more support and opportunities for our students, and looking to increase our national competitiveness in the recruitment and retention of top students and faculty. We are home to several national research centers, and continue to search for new opportunities to collaborate with business and with other academic institutions around the country, including those in the Texas Medical Center, with whom we have partnered for decades. We are also working to build a special graduate readiness track for our undergraduates, many of whom are first generation college students. UH has been ranked as high as #8 nationally in the number of degrees awarded to Hispanic students. We want to see this ranking improve, while also placing more of our students into top doctoral and professional programs.

President Renu Khator has set a goal for UH to be recognized as a Tier One research university and Psychology will play a significant role in these efforts. We need to remain nationally competitive, to continually improve student success, and deepen our engagement with the community. We appreciate the many ways that our alumni continue to represent the department to the world outside the university and to support our efforts to become one of the best Departments of Psychology in the country. If you have a moment, drop us a note and let us know how you are doing, or stop by and visit the Department. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

David J. Francis, Ph.D.  
Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen  
Distinguished Professor and  
Chairman, Department of Psychology

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# INSIGHTS

## FACULTY NEWS

**James H. Bray, PhD.** Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Psychiatry at Baylor College of Medicine, UH Alum and Adjunct Psychology Professor at the University of Houston, was elected President of the American Psychological Association (APA) for 2009.

**Bruno G. Breitmeyer, Ph.D.** was named a Fellow in the Association for Psychological Science for his “sustained and outstanding distinguished contributions” to the field. Breitmeyer joins seven other University of Houston faculty on the esteemed fellows list at the Association for Psychological Science: Richard Evans, Donald Foss, Merrill Hiscock, Richard Kasschau, Gordon Paul, Lynn Rehm and L.A. Witt.

**Jack M. Fletcher, Ph.D.** Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor of Psychology, was elected President of the International Neuropsychological Society. His term began in January, 2008.

**David J. Francis, Ph.D.** 2008 Esther Farfel Award Recipient, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor, Chair of the Department of Psychology, and Director of the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES), was named an Inaugural Fellow in the American Educational Research Association.

**J. Leigh Leasure, Ph.D.** is this year’s recipient of a Ross M. Lence Award for Teaching Excellence in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. The award was presented during commencement ceremonies on May 15. Candidates for the Ross M. Lence Awards for Teaching Excellence are nominated by students and are chosen by a committee formed by the college. Award winners receive a plaque and a \$3,000 prize.

**Peter J. Norton, Ph.D.** was named the recipient of the 2009 American Psychological Foundation’s Theodore Blau Early Career Award. This honor is presented to clinical psychologists for their accomplishments within the practice and carries a \$2,000 prize.

**Gordon L. Paul, Ph.D.** Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor of Psychology, received the Trail Blazer Award from the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies for his lifetime achievement in the area of schizophrenia and severe mental illness.

**Lynn P. Rehm, Ph.D.** retired after serving the university for 30 years. He received lifetime achievement awards from the Texas Psychological Association and the Houston Psychological Association at a joint annual meeting in May. See full coverage on page 7.

**John P. Vincent, Ph.D.** Executive Director of Forensic Psychology Services and Director of Clinical Psychology, received the Houston Bar Association’s outstanding legal article of the year (2009) award. The article focuses on the roles and methodologies of psychological experts in civil litigation.

Dr. B. Breitmeyer   Dr. J. Fletcher   Dr. J. L. Leasure   Dr. P. Norton   Dr. G. Paul   Dr. J. Vincent



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# RESEARCH CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

## NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTERS LED BY UH PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY

**National Research and Development Center for English Language Learners:** This center for research and development is supported by a \$10 million Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences (IES) grant in partnership with the Center for Applied Linguistics and four other universities, UT-Austin, UC Berkeley, Harvard, and Cal State-Long Beach. The center aims to test and validate the effectiveness of scientifically based interventions and focuses on literacy and English language development of Spanish-speaking elementary and middle school students. The Center is also known as the Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (*CREATE*).

<http://www.cal.org/CREATE>

*David Francis, Ph.D. Director*

**Texas Center for Learning Disabilities (TCLD):** one of four national research centers on learning disabilities established through a competitive grant process through the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. This transdisciplinary center focuses on the classification, early intervention, and remediation of learning disabilities (LD). The center develops evidence-based assessment through teaching and training practitioners, and with a goal to disseminate research based information and impact national policy on LD. Collaborators include UT Health Science Center, Baylor College of Medicine, and UT-Austin. <http://www.texasldcenter.org>

*Jack Fletcher Ph.D., Principal Investigator*

## UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH CENTERS

**Collaborative Applied Research Group of Industrial & Organizational Psychology:** funded by industry, faculty supervised graduate students participate in applied research experiences through project contracts and grants established with different organizations such as ExxonMobil, U.S. Navy, City of Houston, Houston Transtar, Saudi Aramco, and local consulting firms.

*L. A. Witt, Ph.D. Director*

**Complex Systems Supercluster:** collaboration among psychology, biology/biochemistry, pharmacy, engineering, computer science, health and human performance, and optometry that is focused on interdisciplinary research targeted at solving 21st century challenges in neuroscience, computational physiology and psychology, biomedical engineering, and health.

*David Francis, Ph.D. Director, Jack M. Fletcher, Ph.D. Co-Director*

**Psychology Research & Services Center (PRSC):** a state-of-the-art clinical service center, it provides low cost services to the community and serves as a training facility for the doctoral students in Clinical Psychology under the supervision of faculty members. PRSC's general service clinic offers assessment and empirically supported cognitive-behavioral treatment and is subdivided into problem-focused specialty clinics, such as couples therapy, psychoses, anxiety, depression and forensic psychology.

*John Vincent, Ph.D. Director of Clinical Training; Robin Weill, Ph.D. Clinic Director*

**Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES):** a university wide interdisciplinary research center, TIMES provides statistical and methodological expertise for projects in education, health and energy. Multiple contracts and grants support TIMES, whose collaborators are based at leading research universities and centers around the world. Among its many projects, TIMES directs the state evaluation of the Texas Reading First Initiative, which is part of a national program to improve literacy in grades K-3. TIMES provides measurement and evaluation activities for state and federal reporting, and provides technical support for assessment and intervention for language minority students.

*David Francis, Ph.D. Director, Coleen D. Carlson, Ph.D., Associate Director*

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



**Dr. Christiane Spitzmüller** whose research focuses on occupational health psychology, employee surveys, job attitudes, and personality, was awarded a grant titled “Examining Individual Technology Uptake at ExxonMobil.” The grant is sponsored by ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company.

**Dr. Arturo Hernandez** whose research focuses on language processing of bilingual speakers won a National Institutes of Health exploratory grant titled “Neural correlates of lexical processing in child (second language) learners.” The grant is sponsored by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

**Dr. Carla Sharp**, whose research interests are in social-cognitive correlates of psychiatric disorders and childhood disorders in interpersonal functions, recently moved to UH. She received two grant awards, a NARSAD Young Investigator Award which focuses on the neurobiological correlates of reward processing in children at risk for depression. She has also received a RO1 from the NIH to develop diagnostic measures to identify emotional-behavior disorders in children affected by AIDS in South Africa.

**Dr. Hanako Yoshida** whose research interests are in language and cognitive development received a grant titled “Basic Mechanisms of Language’s Effect on Attention and Learning.” The grant is sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

**Dr. Qian Lu** whose research interests are in developing culturally sensitive psychosocial interventions for cancer survivorship has received a five-year grant from American Cancer Society concerning the health benefits of expressive writing among Chinese breast cancer survivors. The long term goal is to disseminate the intervention to benefit other limited English proficiency cancer survivors.

### ALUMNI GIVING

is an opportunity for all of us in the extended Psychology family to renew our commitment to UH. There are many ways to give. Supporting scholarships can honor our commitment to student education and is a good return on investment today and in the future. You can also support our research programs by specifying a research area of interest. Please contact Director of Development, Lolin Wang-Bennett, 713-743-8522.

**To donate online:**

<https://giving.uh.edu/class> From the Gift Information section, click the “Please designate my gift to” menu and select Psychology. You can specify your gift further to a scholarship fund or a program in the special instructions box provided.

Dr. C. Spitzmüller

Dr. A. Hernandez

Dr. C. Sharp

Dr. H. Yoshida

Dr. Q. Lu



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## Interview with Judge Alvin Zimmerman

Judge Alvin Zimmerman ('64 BS Psychology, '67 JD) former Assistant Attorney General for the State of Texas, elected State District Judge to two State courts and distinguished alumnus of UH, notably included in the Best Lawyers in America, and repeatedly considered a Super Lawyer by Texas Monthly, has clearly achieved much success in the field of law. I sat down with Judge Zimmerman to discuss his many accomplishments and to reflect on the influences UH has had on his career.

**Q:** You have had an illustrious career in law. Were you always planning on a career in law during your undergraduate years?

**A:** I was thinking of going into the medical field, but meeting my future wife helped change my plan. I decided the medical field would take many more years, and senior year I decided to go into law.

**Q:** How did you choose to be a Psychology Major?

**A:** I was good in hard science and completed those courses. I consider Psychology as soft science, and I could go from Psychology to a number of fields.

**Q:** Has your background in Psychology been useful in your handling of legal disputes or judicial rulings?

**A:** In legal work, I deal with human behavior and legal opinions. Knowing psychology is a perfect fit. Looking back, I have studied Abnormal Psychology that relates to behavior of people, perspectives in life, handling life, and managing conditions and interrelations with people. As a judge, I have to react to aberrant behavior and I act more gently, contrary to others. The Psychology training gave me the insight. In family law I work with psychologists in child custody cases, with professional consultants and reconcile many

conservatorship cases. Family law is a partnership between a lawyer and a forensic psychologist. When I was a student at UH there was no forensic psychology. I am glad to hear that there is now a Center for Forensic Psychology.

**Q:** Comments or advice to undergraduates in Psychology contemplating legal careers?

**A:** Psychology opens up fields in professions-an array of possibilities, not just law and could include business, medical areas (science of human nature), and industry. It's important to integrate more closely a curriculum in law.

**Q:** What preparation is valuable for students? (skills, work experience...)

**A:** It is important to find curriculum integration early between psychology and law, especially family law. This works in two ways, not necessarily integrating into law, but partnering with law. The same applies to Industrial Psychology and Forensic Psychology.

**Q:** What sort of activities or classes at UH helped you achieve success?

**A:** The quality of professors I had in the Psychology classes-especially, James McCary, Bliss Red and Richard Evans as professors. I regarded Richard Evans as vital, inspirational for both graduates and undergraduates. These faculty members helped me achieve what I achieved.

**Q:** How do you feel about the direction of UH in recent years?

**A:** I am a great proponent of UH becoming Tier One, achieving a better ranking and rating, and recruiting better students and professors (UH already has good professors). I think the new President, Dr. Renu Khator, has fine leadership. I would like to see this change being ongoing and on a long term basis.



Judge Alvin Zimmerman

### Psychology Alumni Honored by UHAA . . . . .

In April 2009, Judge Alvin Zimmerman received the 55th UHAA distinguished Alumni Award given to individuals who have "distinguished" themselves in their field of endeavor and whose accomplishments have brought credit to the university.

University of Houston Alumni Association (UHAA) is the new name for the former Houston Alumni Organization (HAO). Other Psychology Alumni that have shared the ranks of the HAO/UHAA Distinguished Alumni Awards are:

Mrs. Elsa Rosborough, (BS '46, ML '63, Psy '66);

Mr. Archie Bennett, Jr. (BS '62);

Mrs. Cynthia Woods Mitchell, (Psy '43).

Interview conducted: May 12, 2009  
by Lolin Wang-Bennett, Ph.D.

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## Psychology Professor Lynn Rehm Honored By Peers, Rep. Garnett Coleman

Before he retires from the University of Houston, pioneering depression researcher, Dr. Lynn Rehm, must take one more bow.



*Dr. Lynn Rehm (L) received a lifetime achievement award from HPA President Dr. Michael Winter.*

Dr. Rehm, professor of psychology and founding director of UH's Depression Research Clinic, recently was honored with lifetime achievement awards by the Houston Psychological Association (HPA) and the Texas Psychological Association (TPA). Both honors were presented at the spring joint meeting of HPA and TPA. "Both are great, active organizations, and I am pleased to have been associated with them for many years. I feel quite honored to be recognized by them in this way," Dr. Rehm said.

Additionally, Dr. Rehm was presented with a proclamation authorized by Texas state Rep. Garnett Coleman. A portion of this resolution reads as follows: "Whereas Dr. Lynn Paul Rehm has had a profound impact on both the scientist and practitioner components of the field of psychology; and he is most deserving of the illustrious recognition he has attained; now, therefore, be it resolved."

Dr. Rehm arrived at UH in 1979, bringing to campus his research interests in depression. He also brought new perspectives to the University's Psychology Department, revising the curriculum for its clinical training program and later creating the Psychology Research and Services Center (PRSC).

In March, Dr. Rehm's career was celebrated as part of the conference "The Etiology, Assessment and Treatment of Depression in Women and Girls." The conference was

co-organized by Dr. Jeremy Pettit, then a UH Psychology Associate Professor, and Dr. Nadine Kaslow, one of Rehm's former Ph.D. students.

At the joint meeting of HPA and TPA, it was announced that a UH campaign is now under way to create a named scholarship in Rehm's honor (*announcement below*).

"Dr. Rehm's career accomplishments are the very embodiment of the scientist-practitioner creed that guides professional psychology," said Robert McPherson, executive associate dean of the College of Education, who initiated the campaign. "He has excelled in the classroom as a teacher and has been masterful as a clinical supervisor holding high expectations for his supervisees. As a mentor, he has been both inspirational and instrumental in the professional achievements of his graduate students. Also, he has been a leader among leaders in our state and national psychological associations."

[Mike Emery contributed to this article.]

### Campaign for an Endowed Fellowship in Dr. Rehm's name

A campaign committee, with the leadership of Drs. Robert McPherson, John Vincent and Nadine Kaslow, has been formed to raise an endowed fellowship from multiple prospect groups. This will produce an annual award for a clinical psychology graduate student. We are pleased to acknowledge Dr. James Weatherly's pledge and gift to set the campaign in motion and encourage others to do the same.

The goal is to raise a minimum of \$25,000 in order to set up an endowment scholarship. The Dr. Lynn Rehm Endowed Fellowship will be a powerful tool for recruiting the finest candidates for future aspiring clinical psychologists.

#### To donate online:

<https://giving.uh.edu/class/> From the Gift Information section, click the "Please designate my gift to" menu and select Psychology. Please designate your gift to: Dr. Lynn Rehm Graduate Scholarship Fund in the special instructions box, or contact

Lolin Wang-Bennett, Development Director  
713-743-8522

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# INSIGHTS

Volume 1, Number 1, Fall 2009

Newsletter from UH Psychology Department to the Community and Psychology Alumni

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Lolin Wang-Bennett, Ph.D.

#### Editorial Team

L. Wang-Bennett, S. Kieffer, and J. Powell

### Psychology Department Fact Sheet

UH Founded 1927

First B.S. awarded 1937

First B.A. Awarded 1947

First Ph.D. Awarded 1945

#### Alumni Total (As of 08/2009) 11,055

Ph.D. 692

M.A. 653

M.S. 89

B.S. 6699

B.A. 3143

Post Baccalaureate B.A. 4, B.S. 6

Unknown 360

#### Current Enrollment

Undergraduate Majors 1416

Ph.D. Candidates 145

#### Faculty

Clinical 10

Developmental 11

Industrial Organizational 6

Psychology Science 2

Social 7

Research Faculty 11

Professor Emeritus 6

Have you included the UH Department of Psychology in your will ?

<http://www.uh.edu/plannedgiving>