

Teacher of the Year: SHANIKA INGRAM

At Texas NeuroRehab Center, Ingram works with some of the most cognitively challenged students in the district. She was awarded for her ability to set high expectations while holding all of her students accountable for their learning. She runs her classroom with compassion and humor, making everyone feel welcome.



Staff of the Year: AUDREA CARMACK

Carmack has been a loyal and dedicated employee at UT Charter School for over nine years. She has been honored for helping the district receive the maximum funding to provide high quality instructional services to all students.



Staff of the Year: AUTUMN LEAL-SHOPP

Leal-Shopp, the assistant director of special education, has been honored for demonstrating a high level of professionalism and efficiency in all areas related to her position. She brings many years of knowledge of special education evaluation and services to the district.



Rookie of the Year: TRISH CLIFFORD

At Texas NeuroRehab Center, Clifford is dedicated to her students' social and emotional well-being. She has been honored for demonstrating a high level of respect for her students and, in turn, teaching them to do the same for others.



Rookie of the Year: JESSICA SALAZAR

Salazar brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership to the newly established elementary team at the Seton campus in San Antonio. She has been awarded for creating enriching and diverse learning environments where every student feels safe and ready to learn.



UT-UCS Opens Two New Campuses

UT-UCS has recently partnered with two facilities in Central Texas to open new campuses: The Refuge and SJRC Texas.

Located in Bulverde, SJRC Texas serves students who have been removed from their homes by the Department of Family Services. Now UT-UCS is partnering with the facility to help students stay on track in the classroom despite transitions in their residence. Led by Executive Principal Sally Arnold, the UT-UCS team of teachers

and staff are working to meet the needs of more than 40 students residing at the campus.

Early last spring, UT-UCS opened a new school at The Refuge, a residential center in an undisclosed location that provides a trauma-informed, long-term restoration shelter to young women (ages 11-19) who have been exploited through sex trafficking. The school, led by Executive Principal Melissa Ruffin, is projected to serve up to 12 residential students in the fall 2019 semester.



CAMPUSES

Annunciation Maternity Home (GEORGETOWN)

A free, full-service home for young women (grades 7-12) who are in crisis pregnancies.

Austin Oaks (AUSTIN)

A day treatment program that serves adolescents (grades 6-12) experiencing a serious behavioral disturbance or an inability to function at home or school.

A school that provides adolescents with the ideal conditions for fostering a holistic recovery from addiction while attaining a fully-accredited high school diploma.

Cedar Crest Hospital (BELTON)

An inpatient program which is designed to stabilize immediate psychiatric needs for patients of all ages and their loved ones.

DePelchin-Richmond (RICHMOND)

An inpatient facility that treats children and adolescents (grades K-8) who suffer from mental health conditions and behavioral problems.

George M. Kozmetsky (RESTRICTED LOCATION)

A K-12 campus housed in a shelter for families who are victims of domestic and/or sexual violence.

Georgetown Behavioral Health Center (GEORGETOWN)

A 118-bed acute care psychiatric hospital offering comprehensive mental healthcare programs and services for adults and teens with 24-hour inpatient care for adolescents (ages 13-17) whose acute symptoms require a safe and therapeutic environment.

Helping Hand Home for Children (AUSTIN)

Provides a nurturing and therapeutic home for children (grades K-6) who have suffered severe abuse and neglect.

High Point (SAN ANTONIO)

A day treatment program serving students (grades 1-12) with psychiatric, neuropsychiatric, sexual behavior and developmentally delayed issues.

Laurel Ridge (SAN ANTONIO)

A residential treatment and hospital facility serving students (grades K-12) with psychiatric, neuropsychiatric, sexual behavior and developmentally delayed issues.

Methodist Children's Home (WACO)

A non-profit childcare ministry that services adolescents (grades 7-12) who are unable to live at home for various reasons.

Munday (RESTRICTED LOCATION)

A K-12 campus housed in a shelter for families who are victims of domestic and/or sexual violence.

Olympia Hills Gymnastics (BUDA)

A gymnastics program for students (grades 4-8) who are participating at the elite level in competitive gymnastics.

Pathfinders Camp (DRIFTWOOD)

A therapeutic camp that services emotionally disturbed and learning-disabled boys (grades 5-12) lacking skills necessary for successful community living.

Pathways 3H (MOUNTAIN HOME)

A residential wilderness program for pre-adolescent and adolescent boys (grades 6-12) with behavioral difficulties who may otherwise be headed to incarceration or therapeutic lockup.

The Refuge (RESTRICTED LOCATION)

A residential center offering trauma-informed, long-term restoration shelter and services to girls (ages 11-17) who have been exploited through sex trafficking.

Seton Home (SAN ANTONIO)

A residential program providing a caring home, education and support services necessary to transform the lives of pregnant and parenting teen mothers and their children.

Settlement Home (AUSTIN)

A residential treatment center for girls (grades 6-12) who are in need of 24-hour therapeutic care.

Shriners Hospitals for Children (HOUSTON)

A medical facility that serves students (grades K-12) with a host of orthopaedic and neuromusculoskeletal disorders and diseases, as well as cleft lip and palate.

SJRC (BULVERDE, TX)

A campus caring for children who have been affected by trauma, abuse and neglect.

Texas NeuroRehab Center (AUSTIN)

A medical facility that serves students (grades K-12) with brain injury, neuro-behavioral issues, and/or who are considered medically fragile.

University High School (AUSTIN)

An independent recovery high school that has the unique advantage of strategic collaborations with recovery, social service and higher education organizations in and around the Austin community.

University of Texas Elementary School (AUSTIN)

A research-based demonstration school in the heart of East Austin that serves urban students in grade levels pre-kindergarten through fifth.

Unlimited Visions Houston (HOUSTON)

A treatment program that meets the spiritual and physical needs of chemically dependent adults and adolescents on their journey of recovery.

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL



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University Charter School System
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Letter from the Vice President

In many ways the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement represents the soul of the University of Texas—whether through our work with underserved community members or meeting the needs of UT Austin students with disabilities or from low-income backgrounds. But nowhere is this more apparent than at our UT-University Charter School (UT-UCS) sites across the state. UT-UCS helps the university meet its mission to serve the people of Texas through the education of our state’s most vulnerable students.

As you’ll learn in this annual report, many of our students are in the foster care system; others face profound physical and mental health challenges; and others are in the juvenile justice system or face challenges of teenage motherhood. Their stories are all different as are their ability levels. When I visit UT-UCS schools, I am impressed by the respect and dedication our charter school teachers give to each child and by the potential of our students.

Superintendent Melissa Chavez and her team work to ensure all students receive the solid education they deserve no matter what circumstances have brought them to our care.

Sincerely,

Dr. Leonard N. Moore
Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement
George W. Littlefield Professor of American History



Letter from the Superintendent

New developments have taken shape over the 2017-18 academic year—and I’m excited to share some highlights in this annual report. In addition to campus renovations at existing schools, we have added two more schools: The Refuge and SJRC Texas.

And while the schools were under construction, our teachers and support staff were also doing some renovations of their own in two professional development training programs, which also included a book study project of “The Fundamental 5: The Formula for Quality Instruction.”

It’s exciting to watch our teachers employing new strategies into their classrooms—resulting in safer, more inclusive and engaging learning environments for students of various backgrounds, abilities and needs.

I’m proud to share that their efforts have helped us earn an “A” rating in Academic Accountability from the Texas Education Agency during the 2018 school year.

I hope you enjoy learning about our work, our faculty and staff and students in this brief document. Thank you for your investment and partnership in these endeavors. We could not do this without you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Melissa M. Chavez
Associate Vice President and Superintendent
UT Charter School System

The University of Texas-University Charter School

The University of Texas-University Charter School (UT-UCS) is an accredited statewide public charter district that provides specialized instruction for K-12 students in alternative education settings. Established in 1998, UT-UCS educates more than 3,100 students across 23 campuses that are co-located within shelters, hospitals and other residential facilities. UT-UCS addresses the unique learning needs of children in crisis by combining high expectations and highly qualified teachers with accredited learning curricula, small classroom settings and individualized instruction.

Serving Students in Crisis

UT-UCS provides students in crisis with a safe environment where they can pursue their education while accessing the specialized treatment they need via:

- Domestic abuse and human trafficking shelters
- Foster care and residential childcare agencies
- Maternity homes for children and teens in crisis pregnancies
- Medical and psychiatric facilities
- Substance abuse recovery programs
- Other specialized facilities

• Graduates **60** students annually who are unlikely to finish high school without the resources of UT-UCS

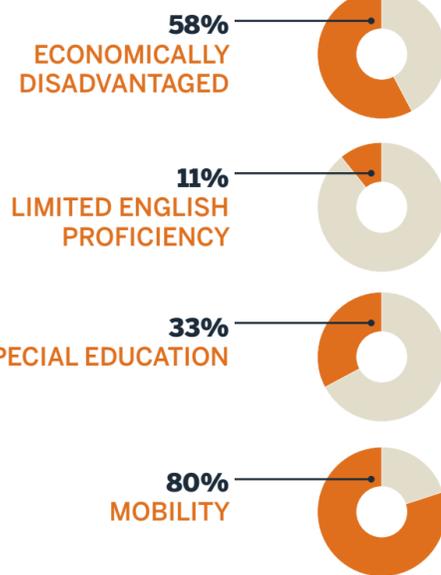
• **21** locations across **10** counties in Central Texas and Greater Houston

• Rated **A-Superior** in Academic Accountability by the TEA in 2017-18

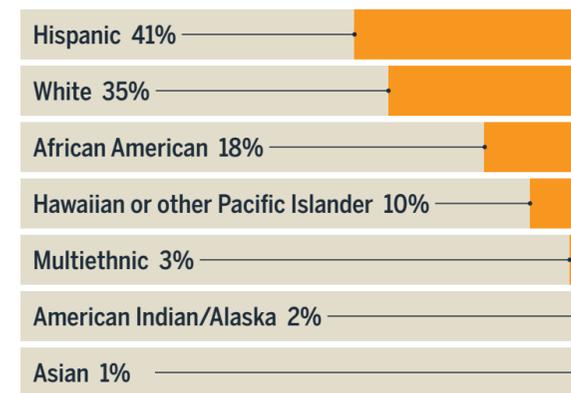
• Achieved **100 percent** in the Texas Education Agency’s School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST)

• Serves over **3,100** students in crisis per year

Student Population Chart



Student Demographics Chart



Lessons in Courage and Resiliency

At Shriner’s Hospital for Children, Angela Lara teaches students (grades K-12) who are undergoing treatment for orthopaedic and neuromusculoskeletal conditions such as scoliosis and cerebral palsy. During their short time at the school—typically two to three weeks—students often see Lara as more than just a temporary teacher.

She feels a connection with her students because she, too, overcame significant challenges while pursuing a teaching degree on the sprawling UT Austin campus so far away from her home in Guadalajara, Mexico.

“I feel like a temporary family member,” says Lara, who graduated with an M.Ed in special education in 2014. “I’m there for them when they’re going through a lot of physical and emotional pain. It’s hard for them, but it’s amazing how much they open up when I tell them I come from a similar background.”

Unlike the traditional classroom comprised of 30-plus students, Lara teaches about one to two students at a time for one hour. On any given day, she’ll teach the basics of spelling for one hour then jump into intermediate algebra in her next class. In addition to quadratic formulas, Lara’s constantly learning new life lessons about strength, courage and the resiliency of the human spirit.

“They’ve taught me a lot about appreciating life,” Lara says. “Every day they remind me that you cannot give up, even when life is really tough and painful.”



Helping Young Women Prepare for Bright Futures Ahead



At Settlement Home, students always start and end their classroom sessions on a good note.

“The teachers provide a very welcoming environment,” says Tonya King, associate principal of the UT-UCS school located within the facility. “They give students the opportunity to share one good thing about their day at the start or toward the end of every class.”

The homelike atmosphere can be therapeutic for the students who are currently in the care of Child Protective Services. The Austin-based residential treatment facility is a temporary home for 37 young women (grades 7-12), half of whom require special education services. Students are placed in small classroom settings and regularly meet

with an academic transition counselor who works alongside their teachers and therapists on individualized academic plans.

As part of its mission, the school works to create safe environments and hold high expectations for both students and teachers. UT-UCS Executive Principal Holly Engelman says she can see the teachers’ impact when students are fully engaged in the classroom.

“It’s so rewarding when you see the light that goes on when they have that ‘aha’ moment,” Engelman says. “When they start realizing their potential, we tell them, ‘Yes you can do this—and you can finish school and succeed in life.’”