Redefining the News Spring 1995





The Dream of Matteo Aguirre By Tanya Garza

After attending schools in at least five states, along with seven younger brothers and sisters, Matteo Aguirre has not missed one day of high school education in Austin. He graduated last summer as a math prodigy, dreaming of attending UT's engineering school. **Page 4**

When Education Offers the Only Way Out By Tanya Garza

More than 100,000 children follow their parents yearly in the U.S. as mobile victims of the migrant farm worker cycle. Austin's Travis High fields one of the nine local programs striving to provide a future for local farm worker youths. **Page 7**

"Where's this Kid's Records?" By Roberto Gonzalez

Migrant farm worker children usually must endure indifferent school bureaucracies, who often regard them as "less intelligent." But the loss of formal records symbolizes much more. **Page 9**

Breaking the Migrant Cycle By Elizabeth A. Salinas

Maribel Martinez and Esme Lozano live between two worlds. They will become the first members of their large families to receive college degrees. But everyone else still labors in the fields. Page 10



Rebecca Flores Harrington — Life Under the Hot Texas Sun By David Trinidad

Rebecca Flores Harrington used to work under the hot Texas sun constantly exposed to harmful pesticides. Her dreams of a different future led her to the University of Michigan, becoming the first member of her family to attend college. **Page 13**



Brazil's Fiery Music— Central Texas Style By Rochelle Bass

With the largest Brazilian studies program in the U.S. and one of the greatest collections of Brazilian materials outside Brazil, Austin is becoming a music making center for sultry sambas and fiery carnival rhythms. **Page 15**

"So, You Can't Understand Your TA?" By Annette Granat

UT enrolls more international students than any other public research university in the U.S. Approximately 25 percent comprised the foreign teaching assistant and assistant instructor population. **Page 18**

Minority Retention Redux By Stella M. Chávez

Only 32 percent of African Americans, 41 percent of Latinos, and 30 percent of American Indians enrolling at a four-year institutions complete their degree within a six years. Whites and Asian Americans have the highest graduation rates of 56 percent and 63 percent, respectively. **Page 20**

Retention Answers to "Students at Risk" By Phillip Kim-Shelton

Higher admission standards and reductions in the student body at the University are changes that some people fear will increase the number of minority "students at risk." Page 24

Asians and Asian Pacific Americans: Majority or Minority? By Jennifer Salcedo

The image "model minority" forces people of Asian ancestry to confront hidden burdens based on both facts and stereotypes. They comprise about 11 percent of UT's population. **Page 27**

Barbara White: UT's First African American Dean By James Williams

Barbara W. White is the first African American to head a school or college at UT-Austin, but has had little time to ponder her distinction since her appointment to Dean of the School of Social Work in January, 1993.

Page 30



Gay Male Latinos: From Conflict to Unity By Federico Cura

Young homosexual Latinos immersed in the family context face the near impossible task of coming out or doing so in a meaningful way that will be validated by their families. Page 32

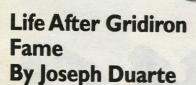


The TAAS—"Terminating" Young Lives? By Annalisa Galván

Critics charge that the TAAS test perpetuates racial and economic inequality, because it holds too much undeserved power. In elementary school, administrators can use the test scores to place minority children in lower level classes. **Page 35**

Immigration Conflict Roils La Frontera By Patricia Moore

Undocumented workers rarely have access to welfare; however, nationwide, they pay \$29 billion more in taxes than they now receive in public benefits. Page 36



Today, many of the nation's top collegiate football players —or more precisely, Black athletes—fail to graduate from college. Many choose to fight the long odds of making one of 30 NFL teams. But others fall short. **Page 40**

Statement of Purpose

Tejas is a publication of J352/MAS374/LAS322: Latino Community News, a course taken for credit in Journalism, Mexican American Studies and Latin American Studies. **Tejas** encourages Latino and other student interest in minority community news and opinion, and attracts students to the journalism profession. By providing opportunities to acquire clips and practical experience, **Tejas** prepares students to apply for internships, scholarships, grants, and jobs.

Write to:

Tejas c/o Chuck Halloran Department of Journalism A1000—CMA 6.144, UT-Austin, 78712 or call (512) 471-3791.

Founded Spring 1989

Art Directors

Adela M. Etcharren Rebecca Gonzales Alana N. Taylor

Photo Editor

Marsha Miller

Consulting Editors

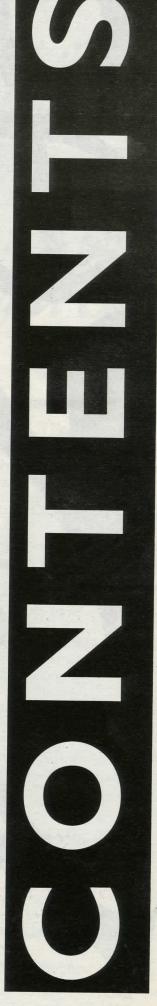
Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte, Founder Chuck Halloran, Faculty Adviser

Staff TAs

Pam Schwartz José Luis Benavides

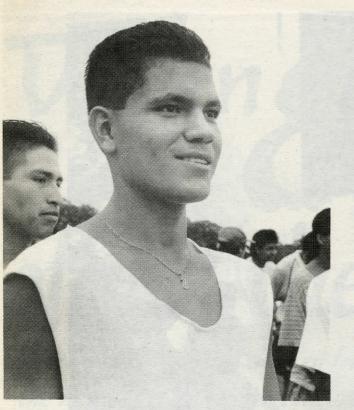
Staff Writers

Rochelle Bass Stella Chávez Federico Cura Joseph Duarte Annalisa Galván Tanya Garza Christian R. González Roberto Gonzalez Annette Granat Patricia Moore Jorge Renaud Jennifer Salcedo Elizabeth A. Salinas Phillip Kim-Shelton David Trinidad James Williams



TEJAS 3

TAP Dreamol Of Marie Of M Aldirer e



By Tanya Garza

Photos by Kristine Wolff

After attending schools in at least five states, along with seven younger brothers and sisters, Matteo Aguirre has not missed one day of his high school education in Austin. He graduated last summer as a math prodigy, dreaming of attending UC's engineering school.

Matteo Aguirre, formerly of the Migrant Education Program at Travis High School, has a dream. He wants to attend the University of Texas as an engineering student.

He has the grades, placement scores, extracurricular activities and recommendations.

Matteo graduated last May in the top 10 percent of his class with honors, has excellent SAT and ACT scores and ranked among the best high school soccer players in the state.

But he is not a legal U.S. citizen. Without a social security card or a legal residency number, he cannot even apply to college, regardless of his accomplishments.

Still, he symbolizes the "American Dream." His family came to this country from Mexico when he was two, departing again for Mexico five years later. They returned permanently when he was ten.

Faced with economic hardship, the Aguirre family worked as migrant laborers nationwide, constantly moving in a search for seasonal wages.

"We picked everything from oranges to tomatoes to peaches; sometimes it was hard but it was okay because I was always with my family," says Matteo, the oldest of eight children.

"Every time we got to a new place, my parents would find the closest school and enroll us. Most of the time we did not have our old records, but the school officials usually understood because a lot of us kids would come in at the same time."

Until the eighth grade, Matteo attended schools in Florida, Pennsylvania, Washington, Texas and Ohio. He finally settled with his family in Austin, Texas and enrolled at Travis High School four years ago.

His attendance record carries enormous importance for Matteo, whose perfect record was marred by a simple bureaucratic glitch. He must find his 9th grade math teacher, who counted him absent from her class more than three years ago.

He hurriedly explains that he was not absent, only late. He delivered his mother to a doctor's appointment that day, receiving an excused tardy. However, the teacher had already forwarded the absentee list by the time he arrived. He hopes that she will remember him so that he can remove the one blemish from his perfect record.

"I promised myself that if I ever got the chance to stay at one school, I would never miss a day of it," says Matteo.

His nomadic migrant farmworker identity, however, has created more problems than Matteo could have ever realized.

In order to receive his social security card, which he needs to apply to college or get a job, he must prove that he has been in the United States continuously since May of 1986. The many schools he attended have not always maintained scrupulous records. Academic reports were sometimes never sent or received, making documentation difficult.

"It's so frustrating. I know I was here, but when we call some of my old schools, they say they cannot find my records or that I was there for such a short period of time that they never had records on me," he explains.

Receiving a social security number without those records is next to impossible, says Miriam Arene, a volunteer with the Political Asylum Project of Austin.

"He needs to have proof that he was here since 1986. There cannot be any gaps in time and the best way to show that, especially for children, is with school records," says Arene. "These things usually take a long time."

Time is something Matteo does not have. Without clear records, it could take years before he receives a



social security card or legal residency status. Matteo worries constantly about how he can respond to UT admission deadlines.

"I really want to go to UT. I hear it has a great engineering department and I wouldn't have to leave Austin," says Matteo, who fears leaving his family.

Typically, Matteo often babysits his six younger brothers and sisters. "I should be there for my family whenever they need me," he says. "I only wish I could get a job to help out more, but every time I try, they ask me about my social security number or residency status."

Despite too many schools, Matteo has always been an "A" student. His English language abilities remained limited until his 8th grade year.

"I have to say I am proud to know Matteo," says Marissa Gomez, his tutor in the Travis High Migrant Education Program. "The running joke around here is that if we want Matteo to keep his grades up, we better not tutor him," she adds.

Matteo's coursework covered advanced chemistry, advanced physics, advanced English and calculus. He decided to take calculus pass/fail because he was afraid he would not do well. His teachers said that he carried high A averages in all classes, including calculus.

Matteo never realized that honors classes existed at Travis until he listened to a cafeteria lecture during his sophomore year. No one told him that he was consistently above average scholastically, nor had any of his early teachers ever recommended honors classes.

"I was really bored," he recalls. "I would just listen to the teacher and have the assignment done usually before the end of class, so I went to the counselors and asked them to put me in honors classes. His



counselor was reluctant, emphasizing the difficulties.

"I've always had to push myself. No one ever told me I could get good grades or go to college," he says. Even now, Matteo believes he is just an average student, who wants to do well so that he can be a role model to his younger brothers and sisters.

Early in 1995, he will begin visiting U.S. Immigration and Naturalization offices. Despite his proven abilities in math and science, Matteo Aguirre realizes that his dream of attending UT depends on receiving a nine-digit number on a card.

TEJAS and asked

When Education offers the only way out...

More than 100,000 children follow their parents yearly in the U.S. as mobile victims of the migrant farmworker cycle. Austin's Travis High fields one of the nine local programs striving to provide a future to local farmworker youths such as Matteo Aquirre.

By Tanya Garza

By 8:30 a.m. there are already three students waiting in Marissa Gomez' office. Andrea needs help with algebra, Tony wants to know if his school records have been located and Matteo awaits news on his legal residency status.

"This is a typical day for me," says Gomez, who tutors migrant students in the Migrant Education

Program at Travis High School.

Each year, more than 100,000 "migrant children" uproot from their school and communities to accompany their families in a treacherous cross-country trek searching for seasonal migrant wages.

According to the Commission on Migrant Education, approximately 700,000 migrant laborers work in the United States. More than 100,000 fall under the age of 18. These estimates, considered by many experts to be far below actual figures, are based on inspections by federal investigators.

California Assemblyman Phillip Isenberg, D-Sacramento, says that with only 135 state and federal investigators assigned to account for the entire migrant labor force, ascertaining the number of those children working the fields— legally or illegally—becomes impossible.

Furthermore, laws vary from state to state on the legal age limits of children allowed to work the fields as laborers. Generally, those as young as 12-years-old are considered legal migrant laborers. In most other industries, the minimum age requirement for employment begins at 16.

Dr. Frederic P. Rivera, a pediatrician in Washington State, has conducted a three-year study on hazardous industries such as mining, transportation, construction and migrant labor. According to the study, more than 300 migrant laborers die and 24,000 are injured yearly in the fields. During the 1980's, more than 50 workers under the age of 15 died in labor related accidents in California alone.

Other studies emphasize that migrant students have a 75 percent dropout rate, the highest of any minority group.

The Migrant Education Program, federally funded by grants, provides tutoring, counseling, parental involvement representatives and a record transfer system. Children of migrant agricultural workers or migrant fisheries are eligible for the program six years

after a qualifying move for securing work. However, due to recent cuts by the Texas Education Agency, students entering in the 1995-96 school year will only be eligible for two years after a qualifying move.

Travis High School, one of the nine schools in the Austin Independent School District with this program, provides supplementary instructional services like preparation for the TAAS exam and social services, such as access to health care agencies.

Adrianna Gonzalez, program coordinator for AISD, says that their main concern is dropout prevention.

"The challenge is getting them past the ninth grade. If we can get them to their junior year, we have a pretty good graduation rate," says Gonzalez.

"We cannot just focus on academics. There are other factors that inhibit migrant students' ability to complete their education. These may be cultural, economic or psychological," adds Gonzalez.

Tutors and counselors, generally bilingual college students, assist in coursework but also provide guidance and support specifically aimed at the obstacles migrant students must face.

"Most of these kids have more to deal with than anyone could possibly imagine," says Marissa Gomez, the tutor for Travis High School. "They come into our school system lost, not knowing what classes they should or shouldn't take to graduate."

Confronting severe economic hardship, migrant students find themselves moving from school to school each new season. This, says Gomez, makes it impossible to gauge where the students place academically.

"Even if they no longer have to move to find work, it is very difficult to track down their records from previous schools because sometimes they were there for such a short period of time records were never kept," claims Gomez

The Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), run by the Office of Research and Evaluation in Little Rock, Arkansas will soon lose most of its funding. Previously, they monitored all academic and health records. However, children must first be identified by administrators as qualifying migrant students before any records can be kept.

In order for a move to be qualified, a student must provide documentation on their most recent move,

TEJAS Migrant Youth



Marissa Gomez

including proof of payment for labor or an employer's legal statement. Seasonal laborers are usually paid in cash and many employers are unwilling to provide proof that they employed migrant laborers, especially

"The problem is that we have no way of knowing where the student is academically before they are placed in the system," explains Gomez. "By the time we find them, they are either finishing junior high or in the middle of high school and it is very difficult to begin tutoring that late."

Elena Vela, principal of Travis High School, enacted a block schedule of four classes per day, an hourand-a-half each. Students can earn credit for an entire course in one semester, allowing migrant students who enter school late to earn credit in a much shorter time period.

Students can attend tutorials on Saturdays to replace an absence. This type of scheduling benefits all students, but specifically caters to migrant students.

At Travis, four of the six seniors enrolled in the program are applying to college.

Gonzalez believes that student achievements stem from the ability of tutors and counselors to provide long-term, problem-specific counseling. However, recent budget cuts will severely limit the number of services provided.

Each year, the Migrant Labor and Education Board provides an estimate of the amount of money which should be allocated for migrant students. However, the board has no control over actual appropriations. A recent re-authorization of the plan, signed by President Bill Clinton, severely cuts program funding.

In Austin, tutors can work a maximum of 19 hours per week, per school, regardless of the number of students enrolled in the program. This hinders the amount of time that tutors, like Gomez, can spend with each of her 15 students. Also, the program can no longer afford to pay for SAT and ACT application

fees or basic school supplies. All of these cuts affect students who live well below the poverty line.

The social, cultural and psychological problems faced by migrant students serve as the major obstacles to their ability to complete their education, adds

Many students have parents who do not speak English. Parents depend on their children as interpreters for doctor's visits, in-person bill payments and

According to Tony Acebo, the parental liaison for the program at Travis, family economic survival remains a problem. Parents must rely on their children to provide financial support.

"If you're worried about putting food on the table for your brothers and sisters, school is not high on your priority list," says Acebo.

"It's my responsibility to let (a student like Matteo Aguirre) know that he should not feel guilty about spending time on his schoolwork. Many of these kids actually feel like they're letting their families down when they spend time on themselves," says Gomez.

Emotional issues must also be confronted. Gomez says that many migrant students lack confidence in school because they are the first in their families to reach high school.

"Many of these migrant students have seen so much working in the fields. Sometimes it's like they're 17 going on 45, and that's not always good," says Gomez.

Marissa Gomez began her position as the only tutor at Travis without any training and only a few months of experience, which typifies the entire program. Still, says Principal Vela, scores and overall attitudes of the migrant students have improved.

"No amount of training or experience can truly prepare you for this job," explains Gomez. "Persistence and really caring about what happens to these kids counts for real program success in the end."

Wigrant farmworker children usually must endure indifferent school bureaucracies, who often regard them as "less intelligent." But the loss of formal records symbolizes much more. By Roberto Gonzalez

Margarita Acevedo endured Laredo Jr. College registration, worrying constantly that missing school records would block her admission.

She resembles other students, but her family's migrant farmworker history works against her in this formal bureaucracy.

By October 1995, late or missing transfer of academic records may be all the more prevalent for migrant students. The federal funds for the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS), an electronic academic database, will soon be terminated and school administrators are concerned about how this will affect more than 100,000 migrant students nationwide.

Currently, when the children of migrant farmworkers migrate during the school year, MSRTS transfers all educational information to their new school.

"What scares me is for a student to be halfway in trigonometry in his hometown, migrate in the middle of the school year, then get transferred to another school where the student gets placed in a beginner's math," says Jorge Rivas, an MSRTS programmer for Region I in the Rio Grande Valley.

A 1994 report, entitled "Migrant Education at a Glance," says that the children of migrant farmworkers withdraw regularly in the middle of the school year, eliminating academic and curriculum information required by a new district's curriculum.

"I never knew how, but (some) school districts always seemed to have my records when I migrated from Texas to Wisconsin," says Salomon Torres, a former migrant, who is now an attorney in Washington, D.C.

"I remember by the time I arrived in Wisconsin, my counselor would know the names of my teachers in La Feria as well as the grade conversions," he adds.

The report also reveals that the current migrant student population will increase by 32 percent from the 1990 total by the year 2000. Findings in the report suggest that migrants are still the most educationally disadvantaged group in the U.S.

"The need for migrant education began in the late 1960s, national funding took place in 1967 and within two years MSRTS was established to better serve the children of migrant farmworkers," explains Bob Treviño, Texas Director of Programs in Migrant Education

"The transfer of academic information as well as health was seen as a critical need to better address the children's educational needs," Treviño adds.

The database MSRTS system has drawn regular criticism over the years, but recent complaints have triggered its downfall.

"MSRTS was done in because Congressman William Ford (D-Michigan) just soured on it; it is a system that has had its share of difficulties and Ford got sick of hearing of all the problems so he just got rid of it," says Rick Lopez, executive director of the

Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Ford chaired the Committee on House Education and Labor and worked with the Subcommittee on Post Secondary Education and Training.

"A tool with money for rewards for state directors—ranging from traveling funds for state directors to allegations of rewarding friends— are the kinds of complaints that Ford gets from people on Capitol Hill," says Chris Gilbert, a legislative associate on Ford's committee

Gilbert alleges that Washington kept a close eye on MSRTS, because criticism said the system focused more on management than student needs.

This management tool used by migrant programs and administrators throughout the country will be greatly affected by October '95. Arizona, like other states have depended on the vital statistics that MSRTS provides.

But other officials at the local or statewide levels sharply disagree.

"Group records and reports have helped design our [migrant] program," says Jane Hunt, deputy associate with the Arizona Department of Education.

"Take Mesa School District in Arizona, which has a small population of 800 migrant students," she says. "That program is designed to predict the students' needs in areas such as health, limited English proficiencies, and other academics as a result of MSRTS reports. These reports allow us to meet the individual needs of the child. You can call it individual service," adds Hunt.

Gilbert says that tougher questions have to be asked: "How many children will benefit and how much is spent on their benefit?" he queries.

In preparation for the transition from MSRTS to a new alternative, Texas has applied the trial "Red Bag" plan for the last three years.

"It was thought if they (migrant students) carried the information in a red pouch that looked important, that parents might keep a more watchful eye on the child's academic information when migrating," says Jorge Madrigal, program specialist with the Texas Interstate Migrant Program.

"This system will be in place during the transitional period, when a new system will be replacing MSRTS," adds Madrigal hopefully.

But less optimistic analysts point out that the federal government no longer provides funding; however, Washington still mandates that states continue migrant student tracking.

Funding is needed, they chorus, to make any alternative to the old MSRTS plan work in the late 1990s.

"MSRTS was a system designed with an ideal. We may not have always reached the ideal, but in the end, this system did more good than harm," argues Hunt from her Arizona education office.



Greaking the Migrant Cycle TEJAS 10 Higgrant Youth

Maribel Martinez and Esme Lozano now live between two worlds. They will become the first members of their large families to receive college degrees. But everyone else still labors in the fields. By Elizabeth A. Salinas

At the age of 17, Maribel Martinez made the most difficult decision of her entire life. Feeling terrified and alone, she packed up her few belongings, tearfully kissed her parents good-bye, and left the security of the only life that she had ever known.

She didn't know if she could survive in her new world, but Maribel was driven by an overwhelming desire to obtain a college education.

The daughter of migrant workers, most of her childhood was spent picking fruits and vegetables in farms across the United States. On an average day, she would work grueling twelve-hour shifts, from 4:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at night.

The Martinezes' lived a typical migrant lifestyle, following the growing season from May through October. Although this constant movement forced her to transfer in and out of schools frequently, Maribel was determined to finish high school.

Now 21, she graduated again—this time from St. Edwards University. "My parents always told me that the only way out was through education," she says.

Martinez is only one of a handful of migrants who have beaten the odds. She became the first in her family to pursue higher education.

Within the last decade, migrant students have begun to break away from the "generational cycle" of migrant life by exploring educational opportunities that go far beyond field work.

However, the obstacles they confront are substantial, says Sarita Rodriguez, director of the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at St. Edwards University in Austin, which helps fund a migrant student's first year on campus.

Historically, many students fall into a pattern set by their families. "Migrant work is a cycle," says Rebecca Trevino, program coordinator for the Migrant Education Program at The University of Texas. "They think that since their parents and grandparents are migrants, they are destined to be migrants too. They see no other options in life beyond field work."

Problems such as poor housing, sickness and limited English skills—combined with irregular school attendance—cause many migrants to drop out of school in their early teens, say migrant education analysts.

Migrant enrollment in public high schools climbed by 13 percent in 1990, according to the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME). Despite this increase, the study also found that migrant students have the lowest graduation rate of any population in public schools today. Only about 40-50 percent of all migrant students actually complete high school or a General Education (GED) Program.

"At any given time there are approximately 8,000 migrant students who will graduate from high school on a national level," explains Rodriguez. "Of those that graduate from high school, approximately three percent will pursue some form of higher education."

More than half of these migrant students will graduate from college within five years. "The number of those who go to college is small," Rodriguez explains. "But those that do go, have a higher graduation rate than non-migrant students."

But the road to a diploma is emotionally and mentally stressing; many migrant students often find themselves caught between two worlds when they enter college

"Being a migrant student and coming to college is difficult because all of a sudden we are experiencing things that our parents just don't understand because they have never experienced them," says Maribel.

For Esme Lozano, Maribel's roommate, whose father is a migrant worker, these experiences can be very painful.

"I find myself going home and trying to explain to my mother what my life here (at St. Edward's) is like, but sometimes I can see it in her eyes that she just doesn't understand what I am trying to tell her. It hurts because I want so much for her to know what is going on, but she never will," she says.

"There are other times that my father will ask me what I have been doing and where I go out," Esme says. "But I can't tell him that I go to Sixth Street because . . . how do you tell a father who never let you out of his sight that you are going to bars . . . you just can't."

This dilemma often makes it more difficult for migrant students to make a rapid transition from field to college life. "Not only are we leaving behind the sheltered life of a migrant worker, we are forced to adapt to a whole new lifestyle which many of us have never even been exposed to," says Maribel.

"When I first came to St. Edwards," she said, "I met a girl who also came from a migrant background, and she had never even seen a movie theater. I know people who go on their first date here, who have their own room for the first time here . . . it is a complete change from where we come from," she explains.

In the midst of a rocky transition into the college classroom, migrant students are also faced with the realization that they are unlike traditional students.

"What is different about us is that we are breaking the norm in a particular population of students," Maribel says.

"A typical student knows that college is the way to go, but for many of us, who didn't even realize that we had the option of going to college, it's different. It's hard realizing that once you are here, you are not going to go back into the fields. You are going on to something different, something unknown."

Migrant students also find themselves experiencing tremendous guilt, because their families continue to work in the fields while they attend school.

For Maribel and Esme, the guilt is not only overwhelming, it can lead to deep feelings of sadness and depression.

Migrant Youth

"There were times when Maribel and I would just cry and cry,' Esme remembers. "She and I would just talk about packing up and going home so that we could get jobs, and give all of the money to our parents so that they wouldn't have to worry about us anymore. If a traditional student hasn't felt the pains of being economically deprived, they can't really know the guilt. Money provides a lot of security that migrant students don't have.

"I felt guilty my first year in college because in comparison to my father and my mother, I was doing nothing," she adds.

Not only do economic circumstances affect a migrant student's education, the culture and family structure also play a vital role in their decision not to leave home, explains Trevino.

Migrant and Latino culture dictates a sense of togetherness that simply will not allow students, particularly young women, to

become separated from their family unit, Trevino adds.

"For the sons, pursuing higher education is a tough decision because they must think about the fact that they have to leave a family which is in dire need of economic help," she says.

"In this case, the goal they set is graduation from high school. Many do not see any (educational) options beyond that," says Ernesto Flores, a migrant counselor in the Laredo Independent School District. "We are breaking a barrier down just to get them to graduate from high school."

Although there is a reluctance to let migrant children leave home, once the parents have allowed the students to go, they are often extremely supportive. Esme believes that parents can provide a wealth of support for a student experiencing self-esteem problems.

"My parents' support gave me the confidence to leave home," she said. "In my junior year I went through a phase where I just wanted to go home. My father told me that I had to stick it out and that I could do it," she recalls. "They could have told me to come home, but they didn't. That made all of the difference in the world to me, to know that they believed in my ability to finish college."

Mobility plays a key role in the education of these students, which is continuously disrupted as they migrate. It is not uncommon for them to have attended as many as five to six schools in one year, says Peggy Wemberly, director of The Migrant Education Program at The University of Texas.

"Because they leave school in April and don't return until October or November, many will fail out of high school or possibly even drop out," says Rodriguez of the St. Edwards University CAMP program.



"Another problem with mobility is that they may not have the opportunity to enroll in honors (college prep) classes because, by the time they go back to school, all of these classes are full. They invariably wind up being put into classes that are less challenging academically, and which don't prepare them for college," she adds.

A student's status as a "migrant worker" inevitably fosters a "certain attitude," held by both teachers and counselors, that they are unable to handle regular or advanced school work, says Maribel. This often results in migrant students being placed in either special education or remedial classes.

"There was always an assumption that because I was a migrant, I was dumb," says Maribel. "They (teachers, counselors and administrators) seem to believe that migrant students are slower and less intelligent than non-migrant students."

The two roommates both credit CAMP as the major factor in their decision to continue with higher education.

"When I first came here, I asked myself what I was doing here. I wasn't about to stay at this place," Maribel said. "When I first saw the professors I never thought that I would be able to learn what they were trying to teach me. CAMP gave me the courage to go on, it always made me feel as if this was the right thing to be doing," she adds.

For Maribel and Esme, who five years ago had no idea what college life would bring, the future looks promising. Each hopes to attend graduate school, and return to work within the migrant community.

"I want to go back to the Valley one day and run the school board," Esme says wistfully. "The students there need to know that there is hope, a way to escape."

TEJAS 12 Migrant Youth

Rebecca Flores Harrington Life Under the Hot Texas Sun

By David Trinidad

Rebecca Flores Harrington used to work under the hot Texas sun daily—constantly exposed to harmful pesticides while dreaming about a new future.

"We had it hard, my family and I. We all worked long hours for next to nothing in pay," says Flores Harrington. "I remember staying in housing that the Midwest farm owners provided. We didn't have running water.

"After working all day in the fields, we would have to eat cold dinners out of cans, because we had no stove in which to cook our meals and no fire to heat things with. One room was all we had for our entire family. The beds would be stacked like bunk-beds, as much as three high," she recalls.

Creating new housing standards and making growers responsible for them resulted from decades of farmworker agitation for better living conditions, she says. Even though change came slowly, the battle continues.

"Today's living conditions have improved. Parents now have their own room, separate from the children. Also, all sexes must be separated. Adequate sewage and heating are now standard. No longer does anyone have to sleep on three tiers of bunk-beds. Violations can carry heavy fines for those growers who do not comply," she explains.

But her life mirrors these conflicts, even when she temporarily escaped farmworker issues by becoming the first member of her family to attend college.

Her dreams of a different future led her to the University of Michigan, where she witnessed the triumphs of the Civil Rights movement. Organizing, boycotts, and protests augmented her classes, while she read about César Chávez and Jesse Jackson.

She met Chávez, the founder and president of the United Farm Workers, for the first time on the Ann Arbor campus. After receiving a degree in social work, she returned home to Texas and promptly joined the farmworkers' movement.

Decades later, she heads the Texas state chapter of the United Farm Workers movement, setting policy, negotiating contracts, and making sure that the UFW receives exposure and recognition.

"I am the only one in my family who has made a career out of helping farm workers," says Flores Harrington. "César Chávez did help to influence me, but he alone was not the driving factor in my decision." She simply believed that that farm worker issues was her calling.

If having grown up under harsh conditions had any advantages, Flores Harrington is grateful for her family. "Working in the fields and having nothing really made us stick together. We are all very close, even now that everyone is grown and living separate lives. We still call on one another for help and/or support."

The thought comforts her as she prepares for a 1995 that she already knows will be full of conflict, particularly after last November's elections.

She knows that the Texas Agricultural Commissioner, Rick Perry, will more than likely gain huge ground in the readmission of controversial pesticides.

Pesticide usage has long been at the heart of the controversy between the UFW and growers. Flores Harrington believes strongly that agricultural workers should not be harmed due to pesticide exposure, just because some growers refuse to apply safety measures.

The major reason growers neglect to promote safety in the field is that they feel it might cost them extra in terms of time and money. She feels that to endanger even one life is too important to overlook.

Major problems stem from pesticides drifting away from intended usage areas onto unsuspecting individuals. Five years ago, the California Dept. of Pesticide Regulation defined drift exposure to include "all people not engaged in applying pesticides who were exposed incidentally to an application."

Flores Harrington argues that two drift exposure cases have particularly alarmed her: the first involved 41 strawberry harvesters, followed by 64 broccoli harvesters. Both allegedly caused serious health problems

But drift exposure is not always limited to farming ares.

Last year, several students and teachers at a San Antonio middle school were hospitalized with nausea, headaches and dizziness. A subsequent investigation revealed that morning maintenance workers sprayed a pesticide around all building exteriors. Under the sun's rays, the pesticide drifted into nearby clasrooms.

"It was rare to have such strong supporting evidence," says Flores Harrington. "Usually that is not the case."

"It has been estimated that only one percent of pesticide poisoning in farm workers is reported by doctors," says Dr. Marion Moses, a physician and envi-



Rebecca Flores Harrington

ronmental health specialist, who consults for the UFW.

In 1989, while testifying before the Toronto Board of Health, Dr. Moses said that "agriculture uses almost 80 percent of the more than one billion pounds of pesticides used annually in the United States. Pesticides have only one purpose—to kill or harm living things."

Gene Hall, of the Texas Farm Bureau, continually argues against Flores Harrington and other UFW consultants. "Before we ever use a pesticide in the field, it has to undergo extensive testing. Otherwise, the government would not approve the pesticide for use in the field if it has not undergone such tests.

"Our tests are designed to determine just what are the tolerance levels of each pesticide," he adds. "To do this we use laboratory rats. We test them to see what the tolerance levels of the pesticides are and what the effects are on the rats. After we find that out, we then set limits that are far below what the tolerance level would be," says Hall.

As for drift exposure, Hall stated that the Farm Bureau encourages everyone to use safety first and to follow the guidelines set by the Agriculture Commission regarding field pesticides.

Flores Harrington, however, does not share Hall's view.

Farm workers cannot avoid exposure. "The pesticides are all around them, on the harvest, in the ground water, in the air, in the dirt. At the end of the day, the farm workers have pesticides in their cloths as they enter their homes and expose their unsuspecting families," she says firmly.

Grapes top the list of controversy. A full one-third of the pesticides used on grapes are known to be or

suspected of being carcinogenic or cancer causing. Five are consistently proposed for permanent bans:

•Methyl bromide—a highly toxic chemical called a fumigant and known to be extremely poisonous to all forms of life. Used to kill insects, weeds, bacteria, fungi, rats, squirrels, and gophers.

• Parathion and Phosdrin—related to the family of oganophosphates or nerve gas. Parathion easily breaks down into a more toxic pesticide known as paraoxon, which has a tendency to be readily absorbed through contact with the skin. Because of its gaseous state, parathion has been recognized as a drift pesticide, drifting as far as 20 miles from the site of application. Because it does not easily absorb into surrounding foliage, it has also been classified as a residue poison.

• Captan—used as a fungicide and also known to be a carcinogen, teratogen (causes birth defects) and a mutagen (DNA altering). Because captan is believed not to cause immediate harm, it has been listed as a "safe" pesticide.

•Dinoseb—symptoms have been known to resemble heat stroke and have caused death. According to Dr. Moses, "a farm worker in Texas was spraying Dinoseb with a backpack sprayer wearing his regular work clothes. After three days ... he collapsed in the fields, and was taken to a hospital where he later died."

Flores Harrington says that migrant farm workers usually do not report such cases, because it draws unwanted attention to them, singles them out as potential trouble makers and inevitably causes work loss.

Please see Flores Harrington, page 37

TEJAS 14 Migrant Youth

5/5=1Zil5 MUSICS CONTRACTOR SIN

Austin becomes a

creative center for the

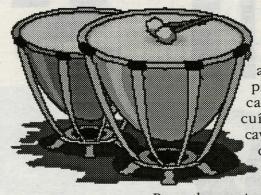
vibrant rhythms

of Brazil



BY Rochelle Bass

יונתותות



Why is Austin now a mecca for Brazilian musical talent?

Because Gerard Béhague, an ethnomusicologist and UT professor, marched onto UT's campus 20 years ago with a cuíca in one hand and an cavaquinho in the other—forever changing the rhythmic fabric of UT and the Austin community.

Recently nominated to become a member of the prestigious Brazilian Academy of Music, Béhague created courses titled "Music of Brazil and Argentina" and the "Brazilian Music Ensemble."

Now in the 1990s, the Capital City is not just home to the Texas Longhorns and the legendary Stevie Ray Vaughn, but it is a music-making center for sultry sambas and fiery carnaval rhythms.

The tunes of Susanna Sharpe, Antonio Dionisio and the Purple Martins reverberate in Austin's club scene—often playing gigs in popular venues like Club Palmeras, Symphony Square and Liberty Lunch. Sharpe's latest release—A Musica das Almas (The Music of the Souls) remains in the top five of Waterloo Records' world music bestsellers since its December 1993 debut, says Hayes McCauley, world music buyer.

"Brazil in Central Texas is rather removed from the local culture," says Béhague about South America's Portuguese-speaking culture--defined as a population exceeding 150 million.

With the largest Brazilian Studies program in the

United States and one of the greatest collections of Brazilian materials outside Brazil, this continent-sized nation continues to

attract UT's attention.

A Brazilian Film Festival premiered last spring on UT's campus, showcasing a variety of films and videos from Brazil. Instruction in capoeira, a gracefully powerful Brazilian martial art which choreographs kick-boxing with music, was featured at the South Austin Recreation Center.

Local radio enthusiasts also fly down to Brazil on KUT's 90.5 FM sound waves—or more specifically, Horizontes—every Friday afternoon with the melodies of popular Brazilian artists like Milton Nascimento, Nazare Pereira or Maria Bethania.

Over the last 17 years, Austinites have transformed the City Coliseum every February into a mirage of wildly clad revelers performing the samba or lambada. It may not be Rio de Janeiro, but Austin's Carnaval Brasileiro is the next best thing.

Declared by *Texas Monthly* as the "Best Public Bash of the Year," the original carnaval celebration was held in a local Unitarian Church in the early 1970s; now, Mike Quinn produces this Brazilian fest, which sells out every year, in the City Coliseum.

"It is remarkable that a city the size of Austin, throws a carnaval of such importance to the community," Béhague says. He can think of only a few cities in the U.S.—New York, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco—where a carnaval of this caliber is held.

"This is a town of very special people attracted to music," Béhague says. "The Austin music life would not be what it is, if it did not have an audience that supported music."

Growing up in Rio de Janeiro and dancing samba

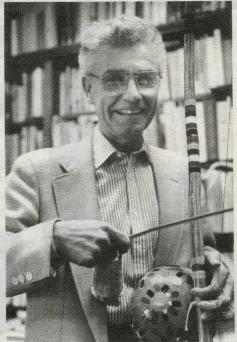
with his friends at an early age, music was a natural part of Béhague's family tradition.

"Music is a very strong tie between people, a very strong symbol of identity," he says, pointing out that it

is a primary means of unifying Austin's Brazilian community.

Michael Crockett, host and producer of Horizontes, shares Béhague's passion for what many consider to be one of the most innovative musical genres in the world. KUT 90.5 FM broadcasts the 20-year-old almost show which explores a panorama of Latin American sounds-Andean, Caribbean and Brazilian popular music.

Horizontes, according to Crockett, is the only Brazilian radio show in the state of Texas.



Dr. Behague

People are generally attracted to Brazilian music because of its unique syncopation, says Crockett. "Your body responds to the fact that the rhythms do not fall on the beat," he adds.

"Maybe about 20-30 percent of my audience has an understanding of Portuguese, but I say that most of them just like the feel of it—the rhythms and the instrumentation," Crockett says.

And what is so different about Brazilian music?

"It is a mosaic – a multiplicity of expressions," Béhague says. The blend of races and cultures in this South American country creates multiple musical heritages, including the native indigenous cultures, the Portuguese and the African.

Samba is what most people traditionally think of

when discussing Brazilian music. Often referred to as the "musical bread and butter of the poor," samba is "a musical form largely created and sustained by the black and mulatto working classes in Rio de Janeiro," Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha say in their book, *The Brazilian Sound*.

The thundering beat of surdos, a type of Brazilian bass drum, and the scraping sounds of the reco-reco are just a couple of the various instruments which produce samba sounds.



Michael Crockett, KUT

Brazilian music redefines itself in the various regions of Brazil, among the differing racial, ethnic, and religious communities. Bossa nova, música popular brasileira and samba reggae are just a handful of Brazilian musical genres.

by Jim Gai

SAMBA REG



In the 1950s, a "new way" of doing samba introduced itself as bossa nova. "It had a harmonic richness previously heard only in classical music and modern jazz, McGowan and Pessanha say.

In the late

In the late 1960s to the early 1970s "música popular brasileira" or MPB emerged. "Compelling melodies, rich harmonies, varied rhythms, and poetic lyrics," were introduced, McGowan and Pessanha say.

During the black pride movement Afro-Brazilians were inspired by the reggae artists Bob Marley and Peter Tosh. Reggae

Susanna Sharpe found its way to Brazil as samba reggae.

Performing Brazilian music in Austin for almost a decade, Susanna Sharpe currently indulges herself in the musical genres of samba, samba reggae and baião—stemming from a 1940s African dance popular in northeast Brazil.

Sharpe completed two degrees in Spanish and Latin American Studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, then became an Austin resident in 1984.

Although the 33-year-old native of New York State was fluent in Spanish, she did not learn Portuguese until she came to Austin.

Sharpe, whose mother is a singer and songwriter, did not discover her own voice as a soloist until late in her college years when she began singing in coffee-houses with an acoustic guitar. Much later, she became the vocalist for the Samba Police. "Beautiful melodies, harmonically rich chords, and the rhythmically diverse beat generate an appealing quality to [Brazil's] musical expression," she says.

Receiving musical instruction from Professor Béhague, enrolling in Portuguese courses at UT and living with two Brazilian roommates, Sharpe immersed herself in the music, language and culture of Brazil.

She then joined Takiy-Orqo, a four-member Latin American traditional folk band, and participated in the UT Brazilian Music Ensemble, directed at the time by Larry Crook.

After playing in Austin's first successful Brazilian band, Quizumba, Sharpe and two former Quizumba members—her husband Sergio Santos and Russ Scanlon—created Susanna Sharpe and the Samba Police in 1988. The band launched their first tape in 1989; their first CD arrived more than three years later.

"Although Brazilian music is rather 'exotic' in Texas," Sharpe says, "there is an openness in Austin for different traditions which yields to our sizable and growing following—from students to older listeners in both the Brazilian and non-Brazilian community."

Working as a book editor by day, Sharpe hopes her evenings will continue to be filled by singing seductive Brazilian music in Austin nightspots.

Quizumba also birthed Antonio Dionisio, a Brazilian who began his U.S. career playing with this group.

Surrounded by music in childhood and then receiving his professional musician license in Rio de Janeiro in 1977, Dionisio played guitar throughout the continents of South and North America—Brazil to Panama and Costa Rica to Canada.

The 40-year-old native of Tres Pontas, located in the state of Minas Gerais—north of Rio de Janeiro—was heavily influenced as a teenager by the music of another performer from his hometown, Milton Nascimento.

He founded a six-piece group in 1991—Antonio Dionisio & MMR— and the band continues to perform predominantly traditional and popular Afro-Brazilian rhythms. The other five members are from Rio de Janeiro, commuting regularly to Austin.

Sharpe not only launched Austin's premiere Brazilian band with Dionisio, but she and Sergio Santos of the Samba Police worked closely with Karen Hoffman to produce what is now a 25-member percussion band—The Purple Martins.

A former *Harper's Magazine* editor, Hoffman once played classical choral melodies on the piano, but her musical tastes migrated to Brazilian music.

Now a Plan II graduate student at UT, Hoffman spends her spare time singing traditional carnaval tunes in the Purple Martins and directing the UT Brazilian Music Ensemble under Dr. Béhague.

The Purple Martins began with 12 members in 1992, including Sharpe and Santos, who remained with the band for only a short time. Coined by Santos, the name—the Purple Martin—refers to a bird that migrates from South America. "We felt in a metaphorical manner we were going back and forth by acquiring the music and bringing it here," Hoffman said.

But the purple-clad performers continually confront conflicts over enough stage space to hold 25 people, Hoffman says.

"In fact, until La Zona Rosa closed, the only places we could really fit comfortably were La Zona Rosa and Liberty Lunch," he says. "So it was really bad news for us to hear that they were closing." (The popular bar reopened, however, this February.)

Duplicating the samba school rhythms played in the streets of Rio de Janeiro during carnaval, the Purple Martins created the Brazilian Ball last year where Austinites can dance into pre-lenten revelry.

Hoffman points out that their emphasis, however, has gradually shifted from playing cover renditions of the Rio carnaval samba-enredos (samba theme songs) to northeastern carnaval music, including Bahian Afro-Brazilian sounds.

Often drawing crowds of more than a thousand, Hoffman attributes the Purple Martins' success to group execution of Brazilian beats with only percussion and vocals. "Those are the most primitive forms of music-making – drums and voice," she adds. "Those speak directly to people in a very basic way than anything else."

And why is Brazilian music successful in Austin?

"I think it has to do with

that unique character of Austin that's so hard to define, but that character which makes people want to live here, that provides a certain quality of life and culture," Hoffman says. "Musically, it is a place for people to explore a lot of venues for different musical genres."

SAMBA BAIAO

Conflict You Don't surrounds International Understand **Teaching** Assistants Your TA277 on

campuses

around

the

country

Looking back, Jurgen Streeck says he was puzzled. The veteran speech communication professor

encountered complex intercultural dilemmas as a teaching assistant and later as a professor at UT, including the former linkages between his native Berlin and teaching stints in the Philippines.

"The irony of my own situation is that I was experiencing some of the most difficult intercultural communication problems while teaching intercultural communication," says Streeck.

"For example, when I arrived at UT, I had a friend of mine, a German sociology professor who came to give me advice on my teaching. After class, he told me: 'Take your hands out of your pockets and keep them outside, and if you need to sew up your pockets, then sew them.'

"That's what I did. I didn't have to sew them, but I gestured more. Then I asked an American graduate student of mine to come to my class and evaluate my class like he would evaluate his students' speeches in 'Public Speaking.' After class, he told me that my gestures were kind of exaggerated and effeminate.

"I thought it was a real bummer, because the funny thing is that I teach and do research about gesture, and I believe it is an extremely effective means of intercultural communication." Streeck concluded that he had to relearn everything.

For international teaching assistants, who journey to heartland-based Austin with no prior teaching experience, the confrontation with Texas university culture can also be distressing.

First of all, there's the problem with daily English. For example, in 1989 the 70th Texas Legislature required that all public universities evaluate international teaching assistants (ITAs) and assistant instructors on their English skills. However, American students still complain about their command of the English language.

The fact that Texas is a "heartland state" contributes

to the problem, says Streeck. A major conflict stems from UT students' non-acquaintance with other cultures. "The average UT student does not speak a foreign language. It's very different from the European situation where people are much more bilingual. Learning a foreign language and traveling to other countries is not very familiar to many American students," he says.

"Most of my undergraduate students have never worked or studied outside of Texas," says Jaqui Chmielewski, an international teaching assistant, born in Argentina. "They are very surprised when I tell them that I did my undergraduate work in Israel and my graduate work in the US, " she adds.

The University of Texas enrolls more international students than any other public research university in the United States: 4,014 students, or nearly 9 percent of the students arriving from foreign countries in 1993, says the UT International Office. Approximately 25 percent comprised the foreign teaching assistant and assistant instructor population.

For unsophisticated students confronting multicultural conflict for the first time in their lives, this significant ITA proportion sparks conflict, say experts.

Cross-cultural communication also affects ITAs in very particular ways. For example, ITAs often complain about having to work more than the required 20 hours a week.

"I tell them: write it down on a sheet of paper, what your hours are, what you do and give that to your supervising professor. I think ITAs from certain cultures are not assertive enough. I don't think they understand that you can say no," says Ghislaine Kozuh, coordinator of UT's international TA Training Program in the Teaching Effectiveness Center.

If ITAs communicate clearly to their professor, their concerns would at least be taken into account, she explains. This only occurs with fair supervisors, says Curtis Polk, former UT race relations counselor, who



now works for the Texas Insurance Commission.

Also, some cultures are not used to asking for help. The supervisor should not wait until the ITA seeks formal assistance, he adds.

"ITAs don't go for advice," agrees Streeck. They tend to stick to their own culture, he says. "Many don't try to ask people, 'what can I do to become more a part of American culture?' Also, it's not so clear whether people can answer these questions," he explains.

Misunderstandings among ITAs and American students are legion.

•At a lab, an ITA had specific orders from his supervisor to not let anyone into the classroom except students. But when a student knocked on the door, the ITA refused entry. A quarrel ensued, with the American student threatening to report the ITA.

"You don't have any right to leave me outside," argued the student. After an angry exchange of words, he added: "I don't know where you are from, but in America we do not raise our voices."

•An Asian TA was shocked at the University of Florida when a male American student patted her shoulder in excitement after getting a good grade. In another instance, an Arabic male TA put his arm around a student's shoulder thinking he would ease the student's anxiety. The student resented the gesture.

Experts believe the solution to these problems must involve both sides. "First of all, I think American students should not expect every teacher or every TA to be perfect right away," says Streeck.

There should be more tolerance, he adds. Diversity will enhance the quality of teaching because of the ideas it generates, adds Streeck. "Students might be better served many times to be exposed to a TA who may not be totally competent in the American system, but has a lot of other things to offer that a mainstream American teacher, who is very skilled at a superficial level, may not offer," explains Streeck.

ITAs must learn the rules of the culture they are joining, experts claim. Every institution features different cultures, says Polk. "People need to figure out the rules of success to be successful in the culture where they are, " he explains.

"Students in some ways define themselves as the customers and teachers as the providers of the service. If you don't deliver that service in the way students are used to, there is a communication problem," explains Streeck. Teaching is an ongoing communication process and therefore there should be a lot of good preparation for ITAs, he adds.

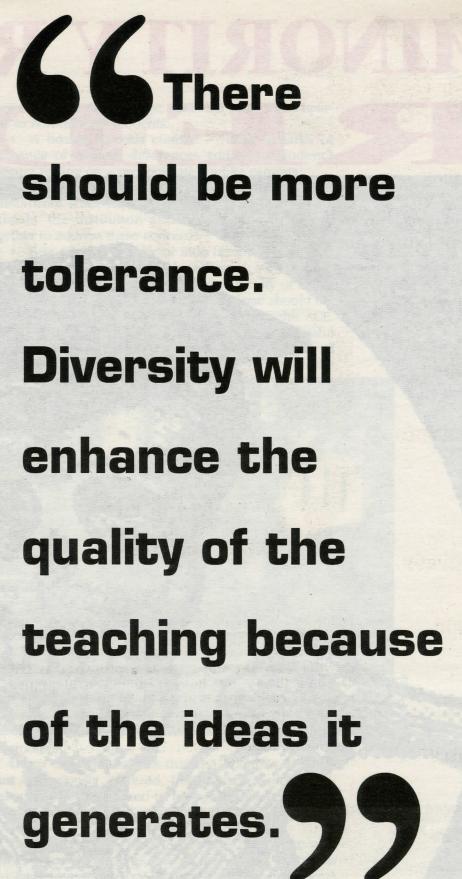
The University of Texas at Austin leads in teaching assistant training, says Leo Lambert, associate dean of the Graduate School at Syracuse University in New York.

The Center for Teaching Effectiveness organizes a four-day orientation session each year aimed at preparing international students for their new roles. About 300 students attend these orientation sessions annually.

ITAs learn about communication skills, teaching techniques and American culture. The workshop culminates when each ITA presents a five-to-ten minute lesson. International students also need to pass a written and oral test when required, as well as enroll for one semester in T398, a "how-to" teaching class.

But the training is more individualized at the University of Washington in Seattle. First, all students attend a workshop. Students with language difficulties meet with a consultant weekly for half an hour during the whole year. ITAs don't need to enroll in any special course for teaching guidelines.

"We do not believe a course is an effective way to



enhance teaching," says Gabriel Bauer, instructional development specialist at the University of Washington in Seattle. "Because teaching needs are different from discipline to discipline and from department to department, the best way we can really help people is by providing help with the course they are teaching at that point. We cannot do that in a class," she adds.

"We go in and observe the person teach, once or twice a quarter, depending on what we see and what needs to be done. We videotape ITAs in the actual class they are teaching. We go and interview the students about the ITA's teaching," Bauer says.

When an undergraduate at UT cannot understand the ITA's accent he or she will drop that class, say many students. "Some undergraduates have a more difficult problem with that than others and some American undergraduates are less flexible and have fewer coping skills in dealing with the additional stresses of having to learn with an ITA," responds Kozuh.

Please see TA's, page 37

MINORITY RETENTION IRLED JUNE 1. The second second



By Stella M. Chávez

Despite renewed emphasis on recruiting minority students, serious problems remain with UT's campus retention efforts. Severe attrition statistics continue.

- Maria Aguilar's SAT scores were just average and her high school grades dipped below the top ten percent. She enrolled at UT, however, under a summer program for at-risk minority students. But, when Maria (not her real name) failed her first exam, worries about survival escalated into daily anguish.
- Last November, UT President Robert Berdahl and administrators eagerly presented minority initiatives in front of a 250-student audience, highlighting the president's recruiting tours throughout South Texas. But students of color responded critically about enduring repetitive frustrations on campus, leaving officials unsettled.

• For more than two decades, Hector Garza, Director of Minorities in Higher Education for the American Council on Education (ACE), has monitored conflicts between recruiting and retention. Minority

progress in higher education continues, but Garza adds that studies show minorities still battling on equality issues.

Overall, minority enrollment increased 53.6 percent from 1982 to 1992, reports the ACE. In 1990, the National Center for Education Statistics counted 2.6 million minorities, or 19.8 percent of the total college student population. Yet administrators know that those recruiting efforts are only part of the battle — retaining and graduating more minorities presents an even greater challenge. In 1987, only about 12 percent of all baccalaureate degrees in the U.S. went to minorities.

Educators explain some of the pressing issues stem from views that universities remain elitist institutions in which a student's cultural needs are not met, where minority faculty play a small role, and where student enrich-

ment programs do not reach all at-risk students. To combat these issues, universities like UT have found a more user-friendly campus works best by focusing attention at the departmental level. At the same time, institutions have broadened their admission standards, are providing supplemental instruction and hiring more faculty of color.

By targeting those areas historically ignored, universities hope to change reports that minorities withdraw from college at higher rates and obtain their degrees at much lower rates than do their white and Asian American peers. ACE's 1993 Minority Status Report found that only 32 percent of African Americans, 41 percent of Hispanics, and 30 percent of American Indians, who enroll at a four year institution, complete their degrees within a six-year period—versus 54 percent of all students. Anglo and Asian Americans have the highest completion rates of 56 percent and 63 percent, respectively.

Manuel Justiz, Dean of UT's College of Education, who recently co-authored *Minorities in Higher Education*, explains that major factors influencing minority retention rates include:

- Limited financial resources -- fewer grants and more loans awarded to students. The Department of Education estimates only \$6.4 billion in Pell Grants were available last year, compared to about \$24 billion in loans. As a result, students will work more hours or even delay graduation to pay off their debts.
- Inadequate academic preparation -- many minorities come from school districts with limited or insuffi-

cient resources; their college readiness pales in comparison to non-minority students.

- A hostile campus climate -- racial remarks or ignorance of cultural differences adds to a student's insecure feeling on a predominately white campus.
- Lack of institutional commitment -- despite complaints from students, community leaders and school officials, the institution as a whole does not work together to address these concerns.
- Few minority faculty or little faculty support -- a university's commitment must be reflected, for example, in the hiring and promotion of staff and faculty of color.

"The institution's mission statement alone should tell its need and willingness to diversify," reports the ACE. "Student recruitment and retention are most successful when one coherent, comprehensive, and integrated process is institutionalized from the boardroom to the



lan Poque

classroom."

Garza also emphasizes that the "campus climate" must be seriously analyzed, because academic performance is "strongly related to college satisfaction, a student's involvement, and strong relationships with faculty members."

"Studies show African Americans, Hispanic and Native American students tend to feel greater alienation and have less satisfactory relationships with their peers and faculty on predominately white campuses," says Garza. "The typical Anglo kid has had a far better curriculum...there may be a big difference in terms of preparation."

At UT, where minorities make up about 17 percent of the total enrollment, only 18 percent of Hispanic and 13 percent of African Americans graduated after four years—versus 34 percent of Anglos and 32 percent of Asian Americans between 1984-1992.

However, the completion rate more than doubled after six years, with nearly half of Hispanics and 45 percent of African Americans students graduating. Nevertheless, minority retention rates still fell below the 65 percent white and nearly 70 percent Asian American completion rates.

On the other hand, UT's attrition rates—or the total number of students dismissed and those who have dropped out—steadily increased from 32 percent after two years to 45 percent after six years. An even higher jump occurs among Blacks, who have a 30 percent attrition rate after two years, but a 50 percent rate after six years.



Such figures alarm educators, because in less than 10 years, minorities will make up one-third of the nation's workforce, reports Justiz.

"The failure of colleges and universities to educate minorities, quite apart from the social and moral issues involved, is jeopardizing our economic future. Unless we make fundamental changes in our system of higher education, there simply won't be enough well qualified job applicants to fill the workforce," Justiz explains.

Today, 24 percent of the population and 32 percent of children under age 18 are either African American, Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian. By the year 2020, more than half of all children will comprise these racial or ethnic groups, which also means a large

pool of entering college students.

Just in the last 20 years, minorities increased by 40 percent, compared to only a six percent growth in the majority population. The highest increase of 53 percent, came from Hispanics, while the Black population jumped 13 percent. The 1990 Census reported that 23.3 million Hispanics and 29.9 million Blacks live in the United States.

"There is a tremendous impact," says Justiz. "By the year 2000, 80 percent of K-12 will consist of minority kids."

As a result, the Education Commission of the States (ECS) did a comprehensive 18-month study in which every four-year public institution in Texas and institutions in nine other states participated.

Justiz says the 1990 report, Achieving Campus Diversity: Policies for Change, sets two goals for state governments and post-secondary institutions:

 Minority representation at every level in higher education must be at least proportional to the state's minority population.

• Minority achievement (i.e. graduation rate) should be comparable to that of other students.

"It's appropriate for institutions to impose standards, but they must strive to have proportional representation. Not having proportional representation creates a problem," Justiz emphasizes. "Diversity has to be a promise by the university. It is critical, because without it, students get a sense of alienation," he adds.

"A lot of minorities come to university with a sense of inferiority," says Janiece Green, a UT government senior.

Raymond Zepeda, biology senior, agrees—arguing that the campus environment should change. "There is tension, because of the different worlds, and not a lot of interrelations." Zepeda says he's seen minority groups celebrating a cultural event followed by protests. "It seems like as long as they (minorities) keep to themselves, it's all right, but anytime someone tries to demonstrate their cultural pride, there's hostility," he says.

Along with creating a more amiable environment, UT President Robert Berdahl says he would like to see more minority faculty hired; however, he adds that any faculty member can be a role model to a minority student.

"When I've talked to faculty, they've been very receptive," says Berdahl. "We must recognize faculty through teaching and advising awards.

"Having an environment that recognizes contribution should tell minority faculty this is a place that wants them," says Berdahl. "It's a gesture, but gestures are important."

Currently there are 2,342 total teaching faculty at the University of Texas. Only four percent lists as Hispanic, 2.3 percent as Black, 4.6 percent as Asian American, and 88.7 as white.

Berdahl says more money will go to recruiting faculty, outreach and retention programs after this next legislative session and that programs, such as Gateway, which began this fall, will double in size.

Other attempts to reach minority students include those offered through the Dean of Students. Under "Success," "Preview" and "Gateway," programs provide minority students with both academic counseling and social activities to help the transition to college.

Such programs are needed, explains Dr. Margarita Arrellano, Coordinator for Success, because some minorities arrive lacking adequate resources. Many soon find that their level of preparation does not equal that of others.

Despite these initiatives, some officials fear that many students continue being overlooked; in effect, they are not given the opportunity for an education. Gilbert Zepeda, Commissioner for the Texas Commission on the Arts and Drama Director at San Juan-Los Alamos High School, says he has seen top universities recruit only the upper 10 percent of a graduat-

Equality stems from lawsuits on campuses

Because attrition rates for minorities are so high, equal opportunities in higher education have been hotly debated for more than two decades

"Some of the initial lawsuits filed are cases which have set the basis for minority recruitment and retention services," says Jeff Trevillon, president of the Austin NAACP chapter. "The process has slowly evolved."

In 1970, for example, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund filed a lawsuit, known as the "Adams Case," against the U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, charging that HEW's Office of Civil Rights had failed to enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Title VI bars racial or ethnic discrimination in programs receiving federal money. In effect, the NAACP requested that the government cut off federal funding to 10 states, which they alleged were racially segregated.

However, in 1987 the same federal judge presiding over the original case dismissed the suit, because he said the NAACP failed to prove that their actions against the Education Department would bring changes to public colleges in Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and

Virginia

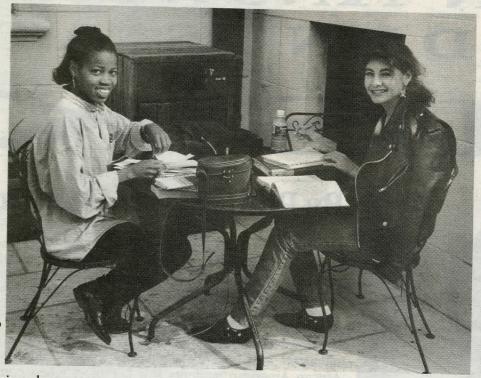
Meanwhile, the Education Department declared that some states complied with Title VI. Two years later, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed the federal judge's 1987 dismissal, allowing the NAACP to continue their case and ordering additional hearings on desegregation.

In June 1992, the State of Mississippi fought against a similar suit, which claimed resources were not being equally distributed to historically Black colleges. Trevillon says the University of Mississippi gets three times more money than predominately minority institutions.

In *United States v. Fordice*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that "a state does have an affirmative obligation to eradicate all traces of segregation in state systems of higher education. In that case, the Court found policies that "while race-neutral on their face may restrict an individual's choice of which institution to attend and would contribute to the racial identifiability of public universities."

"If we're serving the same size institution, why are fewer resources going to educate them?" asks Trevillon. "The question then becomes: 'Do we want to spend the money?' not do we have the money?"

"We've gotten to a point where things aren't really clear as to what's right or wrong," he adds.



ing class.

"They often only look at the tip of the iceberg, but it's the rest of the iceberg that needs to be reached," says Zepeda, who actively works on recruitment-retention issues.

Justiz explains that minorities from low-income families or poor school districts can be viewed as remedial or vocational students.

Zepeda says that recently only the 20 top honor students were dismissed from their classes to visit with recruiters of a Texas university, because that institution requested them specifically.

"School administrators often want their schools to look good, so they only bring out the top students. The problem is many kids are left out and have no access to these recruiters," he adds.

"Many of the students coming from the inner city schools are less prepared," says Andres Garza, Assistant Director of the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) at the University of Chicago (UIC). "We want to get beyond that. We try to recruit from the inner cities as opposed to the suburban schools."

UT's Arrellano says she would like to see her office reach out to greater numbers. Nearly 700 students participate in either Summer Success, Preview, Gateway or MAPS tutorial services. She says more staffers are needed.

At times, students become discouraged. "This is a very competitive place," says Arrellano. "We tell them to do the best they can and that it's not going to be easy."

(Raymond) Zepeda remembers his 1991 UT entrance. Although an honor student in high school, he says he felt lost in his biology courses, because he lacked academic preparation.

"I think the problem of retention starts in high school...it even goes all the way back to junior high and elementary, because predominately minority high schools often don't provide as good of an education as these rich suburban school districts."

Berdahl emphasizes that UT's efforts should tackle new approaches.

"We're better off working at the departmental level," he explains. "We need to get focus and get the departments to take ownership of students. The key to change comes at the departmental level, because they have the principal responsibility for the student and more direct contact."

Some UT analysts track the Dean's Office of Minority Affairs within the College of Communication, which counsels more than 700 minority students. First introduced in the fall of 1991, the office fields programs and offers a sense of community for students of color.

Katina Johnson, journalism senior, explains that students feel empowered to seek help. They know that Darrell Rocha, the Assistant to the Dean for Minority Affairs, will take time out of his schedule to confront problems, whether academic or personal.

"It's really easy to get lost in this university," adds Johnson. "Darrell is a person who really cares. Sometimes the Journalism Department can be extremely frustrating...if it hadn't been for Darrell, I would have changed my major."

However, reaching all cultural backgrounds at a large, impersonal

public research university can be difficult.

For example, at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), students from the Latino, African American, Native American and Asian Pacific Islander communities considered new approaches after they encountered problems with the 5,000-member Academic Advancement Program (AAP) for low-income and historically underrepresented students.

"We felt the students were being mainstreamed, and they (AAP) were not serving their special needs," says David Maldonado, Director of MEChA CALMECA. "Their whole orientation didn't address issues of culture, race or gender. They needed to be more progressive."

As students within AAP became more critical, internal problems arose, explains Maldonado. He says students were either fired or blacklisted.

Maldonado explains that the administration's program was not helping retention; trying to promote a diverse campus was less of a priority.

In 1985, the four groups began negotiations with the university. After little progress was made, students withheld paying their \$1 services fees. Over the next three years they collected more than \$50,000. Finally, in 1989 the four student groups submitted a proposal to UCLA, forming an eight-person committee comprised of one administrator and students from each group.

As a result, controlled funding now goes to any student group providing retention programs that do not duplicate AAP's services.

"The expenditures come at a time when there are tremendous budget cuts in California, but we're managing to expand because the students believe," says Maldonado. "The students are really spearheading it all."

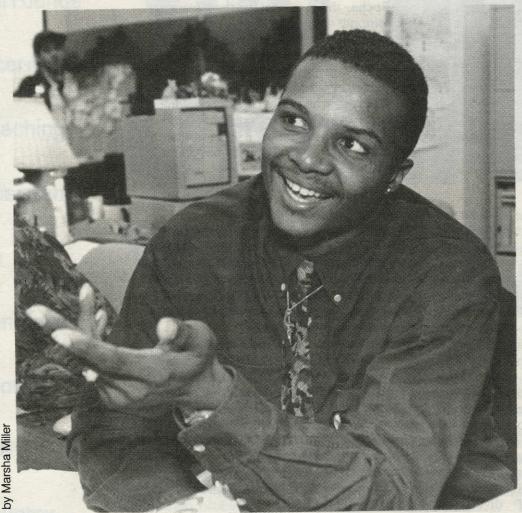
What distinguishes MEChA CALMECA from AAP, explains UCLA's Maldonado, is their one-on-one peer academic counseling and cultural perspective.

At UT, which offers very small retention programs in comparison to other premier state universities--including the University of California--Dr. James Vick, Vice-President for Student Affairs, says he wants to keep refining the programs on campus. But he notes that not enough financial resources and too many conflicting opinions can create barriers.

"We want students to know this campus is a warm, inviting place," says Vick. "But that depends on a lot of people...the commitment has to come from the whole university."



RETENTION ANSWERS TO STUDENTS AT TOSTUDENTS AT



Leon McCallum

Leon McCallum's dreams of attending the University of Texas at Austin became a reality during his senior year of high school, but the 18-year-old from Desoto, a suburb of Dallas, saw that it was not going to be easy.

He was labeled a "student at risk," requiring him to give up his last summer before college and attend a provisional program created for Latino and African American students at UT during 1992.

Besides attending the Summer Success Program, he had to pass the curriculum in order to enroll in the fall semester. Typical first-year anxieties included huge classes, homesickness, and personal stress about the widespread lack of acceptance and failure of African Americans at the University.

Now in his junior year, 20-year-old Leon McCallum studies MIS (Management Information Systems) at the University and plans to graduate after nearly five years.

Higher admission standards and student body reductions spark fears about future UT minority "students at risk," say analysts. Conflict continues between those supportive of an elitist university, which would tend to accept only high achievement academic records, versus established campus remediation for minority students—recognizing that not all high school districts within Texas prepare individuals for "an even playing field" at a large, impersonal research university.

But McCallum also symbolizes increasing minority

By Phillip Kim-Shelton

enrollment at colleges nationwide. The American Council on Education reported that from 1982 to 1992, minority enrollment at educational institutions increased 53.6 percent. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, minorities made up 19.8 percent of 2.6 million total college students in 1990.

However, the status of minority college students is ultimately measured by graduation rates. Latino and African American students still fall short when compared to Anglos and Asian Americans.

Retention figures for Latino and African Americans at the University have been notoriously poor over the years, say critics. UT graduated 18 percent of its Latino students and only 13 percent of its African American students after four years from 1984 to 1992. However, Anglo students graduated at a 34 percent rate, trailed by Asian American students at 32 percent in four years.

After six years, Anglo students rose to 64 percent; Asian American students increased to 67 percent. The number for Latino and African American graduates stalled for Latinos at 50 percent, followed by African Americans at 45 percent, respectively.

Curtis Polk, former race relations counselor for the University and current Ombudsman for the Texas Department of Insurance, explains that higher education is built on a hierarchy, which provides more funding for academics and less funding for student affairs.

The Dean of Students Office at UT assists in student affairs, yet supervises the academic programs for minority retention and recruitment.

According to Jeff Cooper, the assistant to the Director of the Academic Advancement Program (AAP) at UCLA, they serve more than 6,000 undergraduates who are ethnically or financially underrepresented.

Cooper says moving AAP out of student affairs to the College of Letters and Science in 1982 brought more involvement from UCLA faculty; many were originally critical of affirmative action programs. Six years later, AAP joined the honors and undergraduate program, further improving the academic success of AAP students, Cooper maintains.

"We are one of the very few undergraduate programs with an academic department. This is the effectiveness of our program," he emphasizes, even though UCLA minority faculty often criticize the process for its alleged lack of cultural affirmation for minority students.

Based on his UT years, Polk says two factors affect students of color at the University: limited amounts of funding and staff. Six Dean of Student staff members have the responsibility of recruiting and retaining minority students at UT.

"You can't increase staff without funds. If you do increase the staff, you have the problem of space," Polk says.

Three programs are designated to help Latino and African-American student retention. Preview, estab-



24 TEJAS Minority Retention

lished in 1986, brings in more than 100 students recognized for their high academic achievements in high school and prepares them for the fall semester.

Preview's budget of \$208,000—based on 120 students— amounts to \$1,390 per student, according to figures obtained from Dr. Sharon Justice, the Dean of Students. This includes tuition, fees, orientation, housing and meals provided for the students during the summer; however, Preview funds do not include permanent staff costs.

Last summer, the staff enrolled an all-time high of 142 students. Preview also received a retention excellence award from sponsors of the eighth National Conference on Student Retention in Washington D.C., which evaluates successful programs nationwide on minority retention rates.

"Not only are Preview students graduating after four years, but they graduate at higher or comparable rates than the rest of the UT student body," says Dr. Wanda Nelson, associate dean of Students.

This fall marked the beginning of the newest program, Gateway, which provides roughly \$1,000 per student, but does not include academic or faculty costs because the program lasts one full academic year. An additional \$8,000 funds supplemental instruction for the students.

This pilot program accepts 50 Anglo, African-American, and Latino students, who are regularly admitted by the University. Structured Gateway classes range from chemistry, physical science, and math to English and educational psychology, which is taught by Gateway coordinator, Jo-ann Robinson.

Since its inception in the summer of 1991, the Summer Success Program, or SSP, has enrolled minority students who do not meet the University's regular admission standards. Approximately 340 students have participated in SSP's provisional program.

SSP costs \$203,000 per 120 students, according to the Dean of Students Office. Each student costs \$1,692, which includes tuition, orientation fees, and permanent staff costs.

SSP moves students through yet another structured curriculum of math, English, and educational psychology. After passing these courses, students are allowed to enroll for the fall semester.

Preview and the Summer Success Program draw criticism, because they specifically target minorities. UT does offer a regular summer provision open to students of all ethnicities and races, who do not meet regular University admissions.

However, Dr. Margarita Arellano, the Summer Success Program coordinator, says SSP students achieve at a higher or comparable rate academically than many Anglo students, and far better than fellow minority students as a whole.

"It has to be an overall effort. We can't make miracles but we all can make it happen," Arellano says.



Margarita Arellano

Last fall marked the fourth year for SSP students. During the preceding summer, 80 students enrolled in the program, entering the fall semester with an average GPA of 2.07. At the end of their third year last spring, 41 students, or 51.25 percent of the original class, were enrolled with a cumulative GPA of 2.13.

SSP received approval very late in the year, allowing staff members little time to selectively admit students, Arellano says. As a result, the staff admitted students who were academically prepared to attend UT and some students who were not, which resulted in low first-year GPAs.

In the same semester, SSP students from the summer of 1992 had 61, or 66.3 percent of its 92 students retained with a cumulative GPA of 2.36. SSP 1993 had a total of 87, or 80.55 percent of its 108 students retained with a cumulative GPA of 2.32.

"We created academic standards for students after SSP 1991," Arellano says.

But when comparing these figures to minorities not assisted by these programs, the numbers drop further. First-year Latinos and African Americans not enrolled in SSP carried an average GPA of 2.04 and 1.87, respectively, at the end of the 1992 spring semester. However, first-year Latinos and African-Americans for SSP 1992 possessed an average GPA of 2.37 and 1.97, respectively.

Two factors affect students of color at the University: limited amounts of funding and staff.



TEJAS

Latino students possess relatively higher GPAs than African-American students, because many receive credit and grades from Spanish language placement exams, Are-llano adds.

She says: "We may be successful in some areas, but we are only targeting a small number of students."

by Marsha Miller

Leon McCallum

The Dean of Students Office selected approximately 210 minorities through Preview and SSP last summer, prior to the 1994-1995 academic year. However, more than 450 African-American and Latino students were left without Dean of Students Office resources.

"There was a time when the University felt that 'Just because we're UT you should want to come here.' But those students of color who do get 1400's on their SATs go to schools with better academic reputations and a social niche," Polk says.

Douglas Lacour, a 1993 UT graduate, said his advice to other minority students would be to "find your own niche" in order to enjoy a successful UT experience.

Lacour is an African-American who graduated with a 4.0 grade point average in biology. He said he found the UT Austin environment friendly and supportive, admitting his Houston suburban upbringing provided him with an easy transition to college life.

"I come from a predominantly white, very suburban area," he said. "For students who have grown up all their lives in a minority community, I think the transition would be harder, because they are used to living in a community geared to minorities and things on campus are not particularly minority-oriented."

Cooper says the Academic Advancement Program at UCLA is the nation's largest undergraduate Affirmative Action program. First established in 1971, it assists more than 6,000 historically underrepresented-African-American, American Indian, Chicano/Latino/a, Pacific Islander, Filipino and low income stu-

dents of all ethnicities and races. AAP also has 180-200 tutors per 2000 students, providing tutoring for more than 450 courses.

"Ninety-eight percent of our students are admitted to UCLA under regular admission standards and that is one difference between our program and others," he says.

Nearly 63 percent of AAP students graduate after six years, which is up 13 percent from 1992, Cooper adds. This rate falls one percent short of the six year graduation rate of Anglo students and just three percent short of Asian students at UT.

Roughly 25 percent of the 6,000 AAP students possess a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Polk says many factors outside of the classroom affect students of color inside the classroom.

"Most students of color at UT are just looking for someone to relate to. The largest disadvantage UT has compared to other campuses is that our campus is decentralized. When a campus is centralized there is an advantage for minority students, because they have a place to go to relate with someone," he says.

UCLA's Academic Advancement Program takes place in just one building, which houses the tutorial center, graduate mentor program, counseling, peer counselors, special services counselor, computer lab, and the summer programs office, Cooper says.

"At UT, each department is not responsible for their own retention—so there's no incentive for departments to work with student affairs. Instead, we have 13 pockets (departments) of money on campus and no collection of money for our students," Polk says.

Academic departments at UCLA are responsible for AAP students who drop out of school.

AAP experiences similar problems to UT, due to the elitist approach of a large research university, says Cooper.

"AAP is a redress of the shameful lack of nonwhite professors at UCLA. When AAP was first established, people in opposition to our Affirmative Action program thought it was the center of radicalism. They perceived it as destructive to the university and hostile to the status quo," he says.

Today, AAP has the open support of school administrators from the chancellor to the provost, Cooper says

Dr. C. Adolfo Bermeo, AAP Director, says that "our charge, however, has always been more than simply to increase our numbers. Ours is a threefold mission: first, to ensure the academic success, retention, and graduation of more than 5,500 AAP students; second, to increase the numbers of those entering graduate and professional schools; and, third, to develop the academic, political, economic, and community leadership necessary to transform our society in the 21st century."

AAP students remain in the UCLA program for all their undergraduate studies, specifically aimed at improving retention.

But at UT, Preview and SSP students participate in retention programs only for their first summer and academic year. After this period, the Dean of Students Office must prepare for yet another student wave: the retention of the new entering freshmen.

UCLA's Academic Advancement Program assists more than 6,000 historically underrepresented students —including 180-200 tutors per 2000 students and help for more than 450 courses.



26 Minority Retention

Asian and Asian Pacific Americans: MAJORITY @ MINORITY?

Robert Guevarra, a Fine Arts major at the University of Texas at Austin, is not a model minority.

He prefers his art classes over required math and science courses.

He doesn't come from an affluent family; he works part-time and receives financial aid. His grade point average of 2.3 is just that, average.

For an Asian/Pacific American, Guevarra's situation shatters predictable stereotypes, which depict Asian Americans as always successful in the sciences, medicine, and engineering.

"During my freshman year my grades took a major dip, because I hadn't learned how to juggle working part-time, school, and my social life," Guevarra says.

"I was having trouble with a class and I heard that UT had a program offering free tutors for minorities," he adds. "So I looked into it, but I was told Asian Americans aren't considered minorities here."

Guevarra is listed under Pacific Islander as a Filipino American.

"Asian Americans do not have the minority status of African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians on this campus, in reference to certain programs," says Tito Garcia, student head of the Minority Information Center at UT.

Out of 34,746 undergraduates at UT-Austin in the fall 1994 semester, there were 3,896 Asians and Asian Pacific Americans—making up 11.2 per-

cent of the student population, according to Office of Admissions research.

"Asians are considered an ethnic minority according to federally stated codes," says Dr. James Vick, Vice President of Student Affairs, "but they are not an underrepresented minority in that their representation among students (at UT) is actually higher than their percentage in the population."

In the 1990 Texas Census, the category "Asian & Other" comprised 2.5 percent of the total population between the ages of 18 and 24.

"So we have certain programs that are targeted for underrepresented minorities and they address the needs of African American, Hispanic, and (some dealing with) Native American students," says Vick. "The desire of the university to increase those student populations is key to the programs that we have in recruitment, retention, financial support, and other areas.

"Those populations in our state have been historically underrepresented and have had to struggle

By Jennifer Salcedo

against legal and societal pressures that were unfair," Vick adds, "So as far as certain programs are concerned, the university's decision has been to address the underrepresented minorities."

Non-minority status means that Robert Guevarra and other students like him are ineligible for UT's recruitment and retention services.

In 1980, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that people of Asian descent had the nation's highest median family income in any racial or ethnic group.

Further, they carried the highest academic achievement record, along with the highest representation at the nation's best universties.

But some critics argue that the "model minority" image transists into an ideological burden for Asian Americans who don't fit into neat stereotypical boxes.

"Many recent Asian immigrants had already made

The Asian and Asian/Pacific American population consists of 23 ethnic groups from countries in Asia, which includes the Pacific Islands.

substantial career achievements before their arrival in the United States," says Andrew Chin, a mathematics Ph.D and lecturer at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs.

"After 1965, an immigration policy that allowed Asian immigration only under heavy biases of educational attainment, coupled with the large number of Asian nationals coming to get doctorates and staying here, preconditioned the next generation of Asian American citizens to be college bound," he argues.

Such important factors, Chin adds, must be confronted when understanding statistics on Asian Pacific Americans. Although Asian/Pacific Americans represent more than three percent of the national population, only 3.7 percent of this group enrolls in U.S. universities.

In 1985, Asian Americans and Asian Pacific Americans made up 2.1 percent of the national population, or 5,147,900. By the mid-1990s, the number increased to 7.3 million. In just another five years, the population will have doubled to 10,000,000, or four

11.2% of the UT student population is Asian and Asian Pacific American

percent of the nation.

"It's dangerous to homogenize Asian Americans and assume they're all successful," says Ronald Takaki, an Ethnic Studies professor at the University of California at Berkeley, "because there are some groups that are not doing well."

Between 1975 and 1985, an estimated 700,000 refugees resettled in the United States after the fall of Saigon and unrest throughout Southeast Asia. Many were poorly educated, unskilled or victims of war atrocities and broken families.

For example, the West Coast Hmong—a tribal culture without a written language from Laos and Cambodia—are heavily dependent on welfare. Filipinos, who are the second-largest Asian group after the Chinese, represent a very low proportion of university enrollment nationwide.

Danielle Tran immigrated from Vietnam in 1980. A business senior, who goes to school part-time and works full time, she has always worked to support her education.

"It was too much trouble worrying about next month's rent and going to school," she says. "My grades improved a lot after my financial status changed with the full time job."

"A lot of my friends not only have to worry about their grades and finances, but they also work to help support their families," she says. "With that kind of responsibility, some of them end up dropping out."

The Council for Asian American Studies Education (CAASE) is in the process of organizing representation, which includes UT student organizations, to gain minority status for Asian/Pacific American students at the University of Texas, says executive director Andrew Chin.

CAASE has authored a preliminary version proposing standards for university policy, including the needs of Asian Pacific American students.

The effort also addresses the need for recruitment and retention services in disciplines where Asian Pacific Americans have been historically underrepresented.

"Asian Americans in the universities are not represented fully in all the fields, with the exception of technical sciences and math," says Takaki. "They are underrepresented in the social sciences like social work, humanities, and communications."

On the national level, Asian/Pacific Americans confront similar problems in higher education.

In the University of California system, Asians and Asian/Pacific Americans do not have minority status. At UC-Berkeley, Filipino Americans had minority status until this year, which was obtained through a movement of separation by nationality.

"Filipino Americans had reached what is called parity. They had reached their proportion of high school graduating seniors who would be eligible for enrollment at Berkeley," says Takaki, "but because they are

BANGLADESHI BURMESE CAMBODIAN (KAMPUCHEAN) CHINESE FILIPINO HMONG ASIAN INDIAN (SOUTH ASIAN) INDONESIAN JAPANESE KOREAN LAOTIAN MALAYAN OKINAWAN PAKISTANI SRI LANKAN (CEYLONESE) VIETNAMESE FIJIAN HAWAIIAN

HAWAIIAN GUAMANIAN SAMOAN TAHITIAN TONGAN no longer eligible for affirmative action programs, their representation has dropped below parity."

At UC-Berkeley, 35 percent of the undergraduate student population are Asian/Pacific Americans, along with a high number of Chinese and Korean students, which causes the non-minority status.

Enrollment ceilings have also become a common barrier to college-bound Asian Pacific Americans.

In 1985, *The Los Angeles Times* reported that "despite the high percentage of Asians at UC Berkeley, some students have charged that the campus was putting 'subtle' limits on Asian enrollment."

Similar allegations were heard from other schools in the UC system and Ivy League schools like Harvard University.

Five years later, these prominent schools were investigated by the Department of Education through the Civil Rights Department. In its 30-month investigation, the decline of Asian admission rates in the 1980s revealed a serious bias within the nation's colleges and universities. admission policy, UCLA was found guilty of discriminating against Asian-Americans, confirming that students of Asian descent were being penalized due to their academic achievements.

One discriminatory practice focused on the subtle manipulation of admissions criteria. For example, the required verbal score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) was increased—without raising the math score. The initiative punished newly arriving Asian immigrants, who tend to experience more difficulty with English standardized testing.

"The system praises the academic achievements of Asian students, but in the end they are denied allocated resources in the form of scholarships, services and restricted enrollment," says Dr. Trudy Hu, a counselor-psychologist at the UT Student Counseling and Mental Health Center.

Other observers point to the "model Minority" myth as an obstacle stemming from cultural tradition and high societal expectations.

"My parents have always emphasized academic excellence in my family," says Ann Kuo, a Chinese-American junior majoring in German and anthropolo-

"Asian American stereotypes are very frustrating, because they add to your feelings of failure."

gy. "I remember getting A's in high school and my parents never being satisfied. My Dad wanted me to bring home A-pluses."

Kuo attributes this attitude to a cultural tradition that emphasizes success to prevent family dishonor or shame.

"A lot of Asians succeed scholastically, but then they have parents pushing them constantly, telling them that they don't try hard enough or that they're a failure if they don't succeed," Kuo adds. "It's important to 'save face."

On the other hand, Julia Lee, a first-year psychology major of Chinese descent, says: "I never felt any pressure from my parents, but I can say I feel this from society.

"I felt the pressure from my friends' parents comparing me to them, using me as an example for my peers to excel," says Lee, who grew up in a predominantly Anglo area in Houston. "And I still feel like I have to fit into this 'model minority' myth."

Filipino-American Janella del Mundo, a government junior, agrees that such a mentality exists among Asian Pacific American students.

"Asians have the tendency to stereotype themselves, because people are always telling Asians 'you're smart' or 'you're always good at math,'" she says. "And for a long time I kept the mentality of 'you're Asian and you have to live up to that standard."

"It's frustrating when people view you in that way, because they take it for granted that academic success comes naturally, as if I don't put the same effort as someone else in studying," says del Mundo.

Kuo, a former chemistry major, recalls a time when she took calculus and was having difficulty with the course. Her father told her, "You're Chinese—you're supposed to be good at math."

"It's even more difficult when teachers hold such stereotypes," Kuo adds. "They expect you to make good grades in that class, especially in math and science courses, and when you don't they're very surprised.

"The stereotypes are very frustrating," she says, because they add to your feelings of failure."

"The 'model minority' myth can serve as an incentive for students to strive for higher education and a successful career," says Trudy Hu, but adds that "in the long term, it will sabotage their internal motivation."

Specific Asian cultures emphasize family honor and the importance of a financially prosperous future. So career paths are chosen for children.

Danielle Tran, who graduates this May in business, is currently considering staying at UT to get a psychology degree. She had originally wanted to become a social worker, but her family persuaded her to study business.

"It was too late, before I realized what was right for me," she says. "The next thing I know, I'm four years into my major."

"A lot of Asian American college students major in

premed—some of them hate it—but they have to do it for their parents' sake. Because their parents want them to have good careers or their parents' friends have children that are premed majors," says Hu. "In order to 'save face' and bring honor to their parents, the students make sacrifices, but not for themselves."

The UT counselor explains that students are first motivated, because of the field's competitive reputation. But when they perceive that their career choice stemmed entirely

from parental influence, they become frustrated and unhappy.

"These students tend to focus all their time and energy on their studies, and lose sight of their social and family life, physical health, spirituality—and that affects their development as whole beings."

When poor grades result from this syndrome, the students blame themselves. Feelings of guilt and shame arise with the inability to bring honor to parents

"They sacrifice everything for success, and they do nothing to reward themselves in order to feel really happy," Hu says. "When there is frustration or failure, they don't know how to deal with the shame or disgrace."

U.S. ASIAN HISTORY

Historically, federal immigration and other race-based laws have denied people of Asian ancestry equality since the arrival of Chinese immigrants in the late 1840s.

The following examples stem from the Asian Pacific American Experience in the United States, a brief chronological history report compiled by the Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP).

The Chinese first came to the United States between 1848 and 1852 to mine gold during the California Gold Rush, often as indentured servants. Thousands arrived later as a source of cheap labor to work in other industries such as the railroads. The Chinese built most of the Western section of the U.S. transcontinental railroad.

Throughout the 1850s, Chinese workers were subjected to discriminatory laws based on race. They were forbidden to testify against whites and were excluded from public schools in San Francisco.

In 1870, they were denied U.S. citizenship and laborers' wives were forbidden entry to the U.S.

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act halted, then slowed Chinese immigration for 60 years; they were also denied naturalization rights. At this time there were 105,000 Chinese in the United States, but by 1920, population declined to 62,000.

The Japanese replaced the Chinese as a source of cheap labor in 1883, enduring similar legalized discrimination.

By the early 1920s, the U.S. was encouraging immigrants from Europe, while restricting Asian immigration. For several years thousands of immigrants came from Ireland and Poland, zero from Japan.

In the same period, the passage of the Alien Land Law made it illegal for Japanese-born U.S residents to own property.

It wasn't until the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act that the Chinese and Japanese became eligible for U.S. citizenship.

During World War II, the Japanese Internment Act incarcerated more than 120,000 Japanese U.S. citizens and immigrants in primitive camp settings. They were considered a threat to national security and were subsequently deprived of their freedom for more than three years.

It wasn't until 1987 that the survivors of the internment camps received partial financial compensation, along with a formal apology from the U.S. government for wrongful imprisonment.

arbara Thite UT's First African American Dean

She recalls the turbulent times. Sit-ins, rallies, student demonstrations protesting segregation. She recalls the division created by the railroad tracks, which racially separated her hometown of Jacksonville,

While the rails divided Blacks and whites, they did

not prevent Barbara White's success.

Growing up in a low-income, working class neighborhood, she is keenly aware of obstacles, but attributes her success to a loving, nurturing environment. The neighborhood was filled with people who then, like now, embraced family values as the covenant for success.

She is clear. intensely clear, about her background, and does not have a problem saying so. She understands who she is, and where she came from. "It was part of me, and part of what makes me who I am today," says White. "There are no bad

memories from that background."

Barbara W. White is the first African-American to head a school or college at UT-Austin, but has had little time to ponder her distinction since her appointment to Dean of the School of Social Work in January,

Today, African Americans are being named to highly visible positions more than ever before.

White recalls a time when her resolve was questioned during an elevator ride with a white colleague at Florida State University. Speaking about her political science studies, his question was: "Are you going to make it"? Her response: "Of course I'm going to make

Rather than become discouraged by his implied negative doubt, White doubled her determination to complete the doctorate.

"Realizing that this sort of thing is going to happen,

you must step back and get yourself together, and then go on, because it is difficult to change peoples' attitudes," says White.

She continues: "I don't walk in wearing my color. My color is obvious, and if someone can't deal with me on that level, then that is their problem. Some

people still have difficulty accepting African-Americans in leadership roles, and there is not a lot that can be done about that. People just have to accept it, that's life," says White.

White recognizes that her UT leadership position will be perceived differently. "What I see is the hired in this position people have to make adjustments." She recalls feeling selfish ment at first, because immediately recognized that this achievement would have some effects on

fact that my being means that other about her appointshe focused on what it meant to her, but the University at large.

"There is always, unfortunately, the assumption that somehow you are less qualified, you get reactions from people that you are not up to snuff, and that the offering of the position was an affirmative action move only, and so expectations are not very high," she explains.

White is one of five women deans at The University, including The School of Nursing, The Graduate School of Library and Information Science, The College of Communication, and The College of Natural Sciences.

In her profession, there is little time to focus on skin color or gender. Searing social problems such as poverty, crime, drug abuse, and teen pregnancies confront White and her faculty as they prepare tomorrow's social workers.

Recent census bureau statistics emphasize the dilemma. In 1993, the poverty rate rose to its highest



Barbara White by Deborah Cannon

By **James** Williams level in 10 years. Children make up 40 percent of the people living in poverty, although they account for little more than one quarter of the population. Among children, 22 percent live in poverty, the highest level since 1964.

"Those statistics should always be broken down to demonstrate that the vast majority of poor people living in poverty are children across all ethnic groups," says White.

With a degree in music education from Florida A&M University, White spent more than eight years as a teacher in the Florida Public School System.

While she had no aspirations to be a super woman, White has known first hand what it means to be a student, mother, and employee simultaneously.

"I was always struck by the way she handled having so much to do, and managing to keep it all together, and get it done," recalls former colleague Sheila Sansom, Coordinator of Graduate Programs at Florida State University.

White earned a second bachelor's degree in Social Work and a Master's in Social Work Administration from Florida State University.

Immediately after her graduate degree, White returned to the Florida public school system as a social worker. Tallahassee is a small city, and she recalls feeling grateful to have a job.

"I did not stay in that position for very long because I wanted to try some of the other opportunities a degree in social work could provide."

As director of a federally subsidized child care agency for low income families, White recalls the impact of working with individuals barely surviving on low incomes and government assistance.

"This job gave me an opportunity to see in real life the tremendous problems that families have in trying to survive and live out the ideals of being independent and self-sufficient - given all the barriers which would impede the best intentions."

White has taught at both her alma mater schools, beginning with the historically black college, Florida A&M University.

Vivid in her memory is the kind of tense division which existed between the two schools, especially when merger talks between the two state universities jumped into the public affairs spotlight.

Located next to one another, the schools remain independent today.

White recalls a time when African-American students were not encouraged to appear on the campus of Florida State University, which was considered the centerpiece of the university system.

Years later, White would savor the irony of an invitation to become a faculty member on the same campus, when she was recruited by the Dean of the School of Social Work.

White does not see these accomplishments as overcoming barriers. She prefers to use today's lexicon, "challenges," which indicates that individuals must overcome.

Between 1991-1994, White served as President of the National Association of Social Workers, an international professional association based in Washington, D.C. She was interested in issues related to child welfare, adoption, protective services, and foster care.

White concedes that more needs to be done on the part of social workers to continue to play a vital role in creating public policy.

The general public does not understand that help for needy families consumes only a small part of the federal budget, or any state budget for that matter, says White.

The majority of people on welfare are not there

permanently, but are temporarily out of the job market, she asserts. Chronic welfare recipients are people on welfare rolls from birth to death. The dean is clear about this aspect of welfare reform.

"I think that welfare reform itself is desperately needed, because our current system is anti-family, it promotes the breakup of marriages, particularly in some states where an intact family would not be eligible for assistance."

"Barbara White is wonderful at grasping the short

abstract issues, while recognizing the long-term consequences of policy decisions," says Kim Maddox, Director of Field and Part-Time Programs at the School of Social Work at Florida State University. "She possesses an ability to articulate ideas and imple-

"I think that welfare reform itself is desperately needed, because our current system is anti-family..."

-- Dean Barbara White

ment decisions. She is diplomatic, yet stands her ground," recalls Maddox, a colleague for more than twelve years.

Her departure was met with sadness by fellow faculty members at Florida State.

White recognized that she was inheriting a good program at UT, but had no idea of the many buried resources she would discover in her faculty, and their commitment to the programs. She considers herself fortunate among UT deans to field a strong, dedicated faculty.

The School of Social Work contains just under 600 students. But size does not diminish University expectations to raise money for faculty recruiting, research and equipment.

"We don't attract people to the profession who have a lot of financial means," says White.

White confronts constant challenges to prevent Social Work from becoming obscure in the wake of larger, richer UT entities. She remains committed to battling for university resources to provide research growth.

"If you look at today's problems, our research in some respects is more important, because we are trying to deal with the issues that affect everyone in our society," she says.

Of the last faculty members hired, one was an African American woman recruited by twenty-seven different schools. She chose UT.

"I think that says something about what she saw in this University, and the opportunity she would have," says White. A believer in self-help, White has embarked on a major fundraising campaign.

But her message to students remains compassionately focused.

"Here is a good way to deal with your anger and frustration. Our students come to a vocation where it is okay to care about people. A profession where the students are allowed to see things differently, especially those who want to make things better for our society.

"As a profession, we have long had a commitment to diversity. It is part of our accreditation standard, and it is part of our value base. We look better than most schools or colleges in that regard, but we are increasing our effort to improve, to have our student body look more like the populations we serve," says White.

GAY MALE LATINOS: FROM CONFLICT TO UNITY



José and Elly Orta

By Federico Cura

hen José Orta, 32, was growing up, his mother Elly hoped for many grandchildren from her three sons and four daughters. She got 23, but none from José.

lly Orta would later see her son leave their small Texas town to join the U.S. Army. But Orta says his main motive was escape from too many secrets.

He didn't return for almost eight years.

"I wanted to prove to myself and to my father that I was a real man," he explains.

Young homosexual Latinos face the near impossible task of coming out in any meaningful way that will be validated by their families, explains Tomás Almaguer, sociology professor at The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

They describe their youth as compartmentalized.

"You're split," Orta explains. "You have two totally separate lives, which are totally incompatible from each other." He says he felt guilty for hiding so much from his family.

"Everything having to do with what it means to be gay or lesbian in this culture is completely at odds with the basic tenets of the church and Chicano family ideals," argues Almaguer—an openly gay professor who has written extensively about Chicano gays and is currently writing a book about Chicano gays in the San Francisco Bay area.

Although family intolerance of gay lifestyle is a problem across race and ethnic spectrums, "it is particularly oppressive in Chicano life and Chicano communities," Almaguer says.

Chicanos are the largest Latino group in the United States. But Almaguer's findings are extensive to all Latino families, adds Robert Vásquez, a Puerto Rican gay who is coordinator of HIV prevention at the Washington-based National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization.

Most gay Latinos are socialized by Catholic values, which are mixed with a strong emphasis on established sex roles determining "who is who in *la familia.*"

The Catholic church condemns homosexuality and bisexuality, and bans condom use. Homosexuality and bisexuality are taboo subjects in most Latino communities.

"It's a matter of respect. You just don't talk about sex [in front of your family]," says Julio Rodriguez Jr., midwestern regional co-chair for the National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization (L.L.E.G.O.) and director for drug abuse prevention services at the Chicago Department of Health.

Rodriguez believes that many gay Latinos worry that coming out will appear "disrespectful" to their families.

Accordingly, most gay Latinos are not "out of the closet" in the Chicago area, Rodriguez says. Latino family cohesiveness in relation to the rest of the community lies at the heart of the problem, he adds.

While whites are taught to be more independent, Latinos are taught to think more in terms of the group, Rodriguez says. "When you come out, your whole family has to come out too."

Traditional sex roles and "machismo" also inhibit ay Latinos.

Orta dealt with his sexual orientation in an environment that did not remind him that he was "less of a man."

In Chicano communities, there is no cultural equivalent of the modern "gay man," Almaguer says. "Because, [being gay] it is so absolutely antithetical to what it means to be a man in the Chicano family."

Almaguer defines machismo as an exaggerated

sense of masculinity which, he says, abounds in Chicano communities.

"Machismo is an expression of a cultural ideal of what it means to be a man," Almaguer explains. "And the term has both positive and negative connotations; it defines a man who is the protector, benefactor, head of the family and it can also carry negative connotations ... [which can be the way] machismo generally

"NEGATIVE LANGUAGE ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS IS EMBEDDED IN SPANISH. WORDS ARE USED AS TOOLS OF OPPRESSION."

devalues women and devalues that which is considered feminine."

Some Latinos, who have sex with other men, still do not perceive themselves as homosexuals, Vásquez says. Terming the phenomenon the "macho-loca dichotomy," the definition focuses on the concept of male dominance, which is familiar to many Latinos.

Many Latino gays blame a difficult relationship with their families on the biggest influence of the Latino communities—the very church who maintains they are going to hell.

"Latino gays often show some resentment toward the church," said Fr. Patrick Hensy, director of the Austin University Catholic Center (U.C.C.).

Indeed, Almaguer's resentment remains forceful.

"[Religion] has been nothing but a bane on my existence and a source of tremendous guilt. Both my children are spiritual people but totally areligious," Almaguer says.

Many young gay Latinos perceive the family as a trap, a place of doubt, of potential hostility and of isolation—refuting traditional Latino family images.

For example, school dropout rates—despite massive unawareness by school administrators—are partly related to sexual orientation/preference conflicts. They remain one way for gay Latinos' family doubts to surface.

Twenty-eight percent of lesbian and gay youth drop out of school due to unsafe or hostile school environments, Vásquez says. "Add to that the pressures of being a minority and of being condemned by your church, and you can see how they are in a unique situation," he adds.

Orta, for example, left his home, religion and inability to reveal sexual orientation. "There is a need to escape both a strict set of sex roles and questionable church values," clarifies Vásquez, who is a former

grass roots organizer for the Latino and Gay Men of New York.

But not all gay Latinos reject the church permanently. The U.C.C. sponsors a gay group that meets regularly and Hensy says the majority are Latinos.

Because religious and cultural factors make it more difficult for young Latino gays to come out, Hensy says their struggle and isolation can lead to despair and suicide.

Orta and other gay Latinos consider themselves survivors of a suicide epidemic related to sexual identity.

Gay and lesbian youth are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers—30 percent of all completed teen suicides involve sexual orientation issues, Vásquez explains.

Almaguer says he interviewed several young Chicano gay men for his book about their suicide attempts.

Observers say the lack of neutral words to describe homosexuality in Spanish reinforces Latino prejudice, reflecting family intolerance toward gay lifestyles and increasing the difficulty of coming out.

"Negative language about homosexuals is embedded in Spanish. Words are used as tools of oppression," Rodriguez says. "If you are a Latino gay and want to define yourself in front of your parents, try finding a word for 'gay' in Spanish that's not offensive"

The gay movement tries to "take back derogatory words," analysts say. "Just as white gays try to desensitize 'queer' and 'faggot,' we are doing the same with 'joto' (faggot) and 'maricón (butterfly)," Orta says.

As linguistic intolerance surfaces in Latino communities, it may also enforce denial and silence.

Denial about the homosexuality of a family member runs high in Latino families, Vásquez says. "Once your family learns you are gay, they sometimes choose not to believe the news," Vásquez explains. Acceptance can occur as long as it is not discussed directly, he adds.

But José Orta, who heads Informe-SIDA, an AIDS prevention program aimed at the Latino community, believes family denial and lack of discussion about sexual matters contribute to a disproportionately high Latino HIV infection nationwide.

While Latinos represent nine percent of the US. population, they account for 16 percent of all AIDS cases reported between 1987 and 1993, says the

National Hispanic/Latino AIDS Coalition.

During the same time period, most HIV-positive Latino males reported having sex with other males as the primary source of infection, say coalition members.

Almaguer attributes the higher number of HIV

number of HIV
Latino infections
to unsafe sex:
"because of the
anal nature of
the sexual practices, and
because that's
the principal
way in which
people contract
HIV."

Many Latinos
avoid the use of

Many Latinos avoid the use of c o n d o m s because of a "live for today m e n t a l i t y," Rodriguez says. "Ours is a fatalistic society. We believe fate is already written and that there's nothing we can do to change it."

Catholic teaching influences this mind set, he claims. Latinos had the lowest rate of condom purchases among minorities nationwide, say Market Segment Research analysts from their 1993 survey.



by Marsha Miller

Young Latino

gays must also overcome white-dominated homosexual symbols, José Orta says. After leaving Latino families, many blend unthinkingly into white gay groups.

He and others believe that so-called understanding between races and ethnic groups inside the gay umbrella is often considered a "fantasy" among Latino gays

For example, Orta resents being expected to support issues such as "gays in the military," or "sodomy laws"—when most white gays appear indifferent to the "grape boycott," "school funding" and much more.

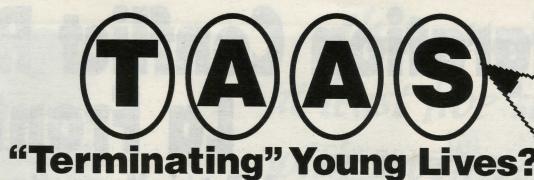
"We have our issues too," Orta adds.

As minorities, says Orta, Latinos grow up with a whole different set of experiences.

"I certainly don't see the white queer world as a refuge or an alternative for our communities," Almaguer says. "They're just as myopic, just as unsympathetic and hostile in some ways as our own people."

Orta, for example, finally moved back to his small home town from active military service in Europe. He now lives with his mother, who has arrived at quiet acceptance.

"I am a Latino and I am gay," he maintains. "Today, I feel I am a more integral person than before . . . coming back was a matter of 'sangre,' (blood ties) and healing after years of painful struggle."



By Annalisa Galván

Critics

the TAAS test

holds too much

undeserved

Christina Garza is dropping out of high school. She passed all of her classes, but the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test stands between her and a high school diploma. In 1992, more than 85,000 Texas students dropped out of school before taking the final

Legislated in 1989 and implemented in 1990, the TAAS test is a state mandated exam, which students take in their junior high school year. Texas law requires schools to deny students their diplomas if

"It's a form of test abuse," says UT Educational Psychology and Mexican American Studies Professor Richard Valencia. "You're making significant decisions about students based exclusively upon test scores."

Critics charge that TAAS perpetuates racial and economic inequality. In elementary school, administrators can use the test scores to place minority children in lower level classes. Denying students their diplomas leads to higher dropout rates among minorities, preventing students from pursuing higher educharge that cation and better jobs.

Limiting graduation and placing children in remedial classes based on their TAAS test scores initiates a cycle of failure, says Albert Kauffman, senior litigation attorney for the Mexican American Legal Defense

Students face the possibility of remedial classes when they first take the test in the third grade, when analysts charge that the disparity between minority and white passing rates

For third graders in 1992, African American and Hispanic passing rates were 46.2 percent and 47.1 percent, respectively. while 71.9 percent of white third graders passed.

At the seventh grade level, 20.1 percent of African Americans and 21.9 percent of Hispanics passed the test in contrast with 55.2 percent of whites.

"It doesn't take a long time to see what happens," says Valencia. "By the time the student reaches late middle school, and early high school, the advantaged students are being exposed to high status knowledge, which is the knowledge that is a prerequisite for college admission, while the disadvantaged students are exposed to low status knowledge, which is basic reading, basic math, or consumer kinds of knowledge."

Once students reach high school, the sanction for not passing is more severe: no high school diploma.

"A lot of Mexican American students and a lot of African American students are being weeded out of the process of graduation from high school and, of course, going on to college and universities. This is such a major detriment to one's career--if you don't get your high school diploma. Especially when you've worked on it for twelve years and stayed in school," Kauffman

Texas Education Agency Public Information

Director Joey Lozano questions whether that criticism is valid, however.

"Each of the last three years, the percentage of seniors who have passed all sections of the test by the time they have gotten to the end of their senior year has been over 90 percent. In fact, the senior class of '94 had a passing rate of 92 percent. So we're only talking about 8 percent of this last year's group of seniors that had not passed the test by the time they got to the end of their senior year," Lozano says.

He argues that he has not seen any analysis showing that the exit test adversely affects minorities.

"Common sense is going to dictate that if you have 92 percent of your senior class passing the test, and we have over 50 percent of the students in our school system who are minority, then there's going to be a very high percentage of minorities in that group of students," Lozano explains.

But in 1992, 32.1 percent of African American juniors and 38.5 percent of Hispanic juniors passed the test, compared to 68.8 percent of whites.

Lozano discounts these statistics, however. "Those aren't cumulative statistics. Those only reflect the results of the initial administration of the

He contends that more accurate statistics would show the percentage of students passing the test each time it is given, from the spring of the sophomore year to the spring of the junior year. TEA, he says, does not have those statistics.

power. academic performance that you see those students (economically disadvantaged minorities) tending to display across the board," he argues, emphasizing that students who fail the TAAS attend the same public schools as those achieving passing scores.

> "The high failure rates are at the high density minority schools," Valencia says, adding that the highest dropout rates stem from segregated schools as well.

> "We can speculate that high-stakes testing is part of the problem related to the high dropout rates among minority youth. After a while, students will say, 'I can't pass this test. I've tried five times and I just can't do

> Knowing that even if they stay in school, they will not receive a diploma. Dropping out results, says

> "We don't know what transpires between the first time a student takes the test and the final time. The human mind and spirit are only so resilient. After a while, people's self-esteem drops to the point where they just give up. How many Christina Garzas are there?" Valencia asks.

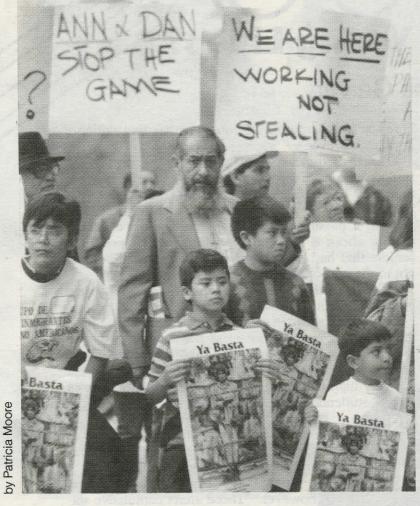
> Students like Christina can take all of the required courses for graduation, participate in extracurricular

The disparity is not limited to TAAS results, Lozano adds. "The performance on TAAS is simply a reflection of the overall

But not all schools are the same, Valencia argues.

Please see TAAS, page 37

Immigration Conflict Roils La Frontera



Immigrants have been targets in Texas ever since the 1830's, when Mexican authorities tried to cut the flow of Anglos into what was then northern Mexico. More than 160 years later, the Texas-Mexico border still echoes from social ills blamed on immigration, says associate editor James Cullen of *The Texas Observer*.

One year after the U.S. Border Patrol blockaded the boundary between El Paso and Juarez, locals are increasingly supportive of steps to crack down on illegal immigration.

Will a national identity card ultimately debut?

"There's always been a latent feeling here that if not for the border, El Paso would have a higher standard of living," says Jose Moreno, executive director

of the Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services.

In 1993, the Urban Institute estimated Texas' undocumented immigration population at two percent and California's at nearly five percent of the population. However, crossings in the El Paso area are second only to San Diego.

The most recent proposal to stop the flow of undocumented aliens recommends a national identification card for eligible workers in the United States. Civil libertarians respond heatedly that the registry system would subject anyone with a dark complexion or a foreign accent to continual status checks by police, banks, merchants, landlords and government agencies—as well as potential employers.

John Swenson, an immigration director from the U. S. Catholic Conference, said recently that the employment verification system would quickly balloon.

"The commission's proposal is the first step toward adoption of a national identification system that carries with it profound implications for the civil rights and privacy of all U.S. citizens and lawful residents," Swenson adds. "We have a serious concern that a national employment verification program will prove costly,

By Patricia Moore - News Analysis

ineffective and would increase discrimination against the minority community."

"Refugees have a lot to overcome," says Swenson. "However, their future in this country may drastically change by the end of the century, because of legislative changes that have and will continue to occur."

Former Texas Rep. Barbara Jordan and current UT-LBJ professor, who headed the nine member federal immigration reform panel, called recently for beefed-up border controls and more stringent enforcement of labor laws.

Her Immigration Reform panel recommended a three-year test program for the ID plan in Texas, California, New York, Florida and Illinois. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) believes that 80 percent of undocumented aliens reside in these regions; they want enforcement to commence immediately.

"If we are to preserve our immigration tradition and our ability to say yes to the people who want to get in...we've got to have the strength to say no to the people who are not supposed to get in," said Jordan.

Paul Glasser-Kerr, who is the coordinator of the North Texas Immigration Coalition, said the ID proposal reflects the growing anti-immigration sentiment nationwide. "Interestingly, they are speaking about spending billions of dollars to target one percent of the population with a program that will require the entire population to give up their privacy," he says.

A recent exit poll taken by the Southwest Voter Research Institute, of San Antonio, shows a majority of Texas Hispanic voters favor welfare cutoffs for undocumented immigrants. The poll indicates a split over the questions of ending non-emergency public health care and a unified opposition to expelling undocumented children from school.

Undocumented workers rarely have access to welfare; however nationwide they pay \$29 billion more in taxes than they now receive in public benefits. In California alone, they pay \$12 billion more in taxes than they receive in services yearly, say analysts.

Experts argue that illegal immigration has not polarized Texas as it has California, because of the state's shared history with Mexico. Texas exports \$20.4 billion in goods, compared to California's \$6.5 billion to Mexico.

Silvestre Reyes, INS Border Patrol sector chief in El Paso, was responsible for Operation Hold the Line. "People in El Paso can relate to California in that they are sick and tired of their taxes going to undocumenteds."

The recent University of Texas study for the government-appointed Commission on Immigration Reform cites the El Paso blockade for reducing the number of people who cross the border, yet the city's unemployment rate remains virtually unchanged.

Like California, El Paso's stagnant economy appears to be one of the central forces behind its anti-undocumented immigration sentiment.

In contrast, civil rights and immigrant advocacy groups from California to Texas have begun a peaceful stance against anti-immigration legislation. Pro-immigrant groups are concerned that the California initiative might spread to other states.

"Flores Harrington" Continued from page 14

Many laws meant to protect farm workers from unfair practices lack enough force to prevent continued farmworker abuse. Flores Harrington does not totally blame growers who violate laws.

She believes that political action committees (PACs), special interest groups, and pro-Grower lobbyists have all weakened existing laws— keeping migrant farmworkers from achieving better pay and working conditions.

With a national annual average of \$5,200 per person and a Texas average of \$2,700, the migrant farm worker is undoubtedly among the lowest paid and hardest worked individuals in the US.

Legislation exists that requires growers to pay workers a minimum wage of \$4.25 per hour, but most workers usually receive piece rates. Flores Harrington hates the practice. "It makes people have to work harder and faster for their money. The only incentive is for the grower, because s/he gets the harvest to market quicker and for less money than he would have had to pay if he were paying the hourly wage."

She worries daily about farmworker economics. By not paying the farmworker better wages, "it drives people toward a life of servitude that is not easily broken and difficult at best to get away from," she says.

"We have a long road to still travel and yes, progress has been achieved. Change is not something that the status quo accepts willingly, because it usually entails having to give up something. And, we're usually dealing with a well-established 'Good old Boy' network."

"TA's" Continued from page 19

The additional stress can benefit them, she adds, because eventually they must deal with people from different cultures.

The ITA's accent does not determine the quality of teaching, says Kozuh. "Some of our ITAs do get teaching awards. These people are really doing excellent teaching even though their language skills are not perfect."

To prevent undergraduates from dropping requires more exposure from both sides; at the orientation, American undergraduates are very impressed with ITA concerns to do well and adapt to American cultures, says Kozuh.

"Some universities like the University of Washington and the University of Missouri at Columbia really try to give the undergraduates some training and some information about who ITAs are and how best to deal with them or with the problems that may arise. I would like to do that here at UT as well," she explains.

"We must empower undergraduates to become self-initiated learners taking responsibility for their own learning, and not to expect the TA to give that experience to them," says Bauer.

Other faculty believe the solution lies elsewhere. Every ITA has the responsibility to work on their accent, says Streeck.

"You cannot expect students to be happy about the fact that there is an ITA whose accent doesn't improve over the years. You should not expect to be paid for communicating to people and at the same time refuse to acquire those basic skills for communicating," he says.

"People often learn a language to a certain degree and then stop. It's called petrification in linguistics."

Nevertheless, Streeck adds, "You can get rid of an accent to a certain extent."

American students evaluate the competence of an accenthavy speaker as below their ranking, he says.

ITAs with an accent must develop relations where they can enhance their English. Listeners must also be more patient and learn that people have differences. "An accent is part of their diversity. Don't be so quick to say you don't understand," says Polk.

Another pressing issue concerns the importance of preparing ITAs for multiculturalism. In 1989, many participants at the Second National Conference on the Training and Employment of Teaching Assistants complained about the lack of ITA training in cultural diversity. In 1994, the situation at UT remains the same, experts agree.

However, faculty have not yet agreed on how to prepare ITAs for cultural differences. Training ITAs for cultural diversity represents a horrendous job, says Kozuh, because of the difficulties that lie in sensitizing even American teaching assistants. Having two accents such as Chinese and Indian, both of which have problems with standard English, complicates matters. "That is a serious consideration, one that at this point we can only touch on," she adds.

"You have to be aware of all those cultures in order to do a good job," says Polk. "If you have people saying 'we don't have the money, we don't have the time,' well, they are not really committed. What you are saying is that we don't have the time or the money to help all of these students do their best for the very thing that they are here to do: to learn."

"TAAS" Continued from page 35

activities, and have good grades, but this will not offset her TAAS score.
The real problem lies with how the test is used, Kauffman says.

"The tests are being used as a sole criteria for determining a student's educational future. Texas puts so much weight on the test score itself that it doesn't look at other parts of the student's background," he says.

Valencia suggests that Texas mandate using data from multiple sources before making important decisions affecting student futures. "Testing is just one part of the assessment process," he explains, suggesting that TEA consider new ways of improving schools, achieve higher teacher salaries, improve the curriculum by making it more multi-cultural, and pondering alternative assessment programs.

"Rather than putting the exclusive burden on the local schools, TEA should try to understand the wider, macro-level problems of schooling here in Texas such as the inequities in school finance and the massive amount of segregation we have in our schools," Valencia says. "These are systemic problems that require systemic solutions."

Gridiron Fame

But Reid disagrees.

(Continued

from back cover)

"Every individual is different. It comes down to how you handle it. If you're serious about graduating you'll find a way to graduate," he says. "The idea isn't to graduate in four years with honors. The idea is to make some academic progress and get some college

will ever make the NFL or NBA."

This happened to Cornell Reese, whose dream of playing professional football died in 1978. "The first year out of football I went through depression," he says, after missing all but two games his senior season due to a knee injury. "Football was going on and I

wasn't in it."

Reese's grades slipped and he left school in Fall 1975—his future uncertain. "I wasn't sure what I would do," he recalls

Reese went to Houston to work with his uncle for 10 months. He attended free agent tryouts in Kansas City, Seattle and Dallas, but didn't have any luck. "I guess they decided to go with people who were healthy," he says.

In 1977, Reese signed with the Austin Texans, a local semi-pro team in the late 1970s. After two successful seasons, he called it quits.

Reese has attended school off-and on since returning in 1990. Instead of

needing 18 hours to graduate, Reese's degree plan called for 41. "The degree plan had changed. Instead of a physical education degree it is called a kinesiology/physical education degree," he adds.

Reese couldn't afford to stay in school after his

temporary position at the Texas Employment Commission—which lasted two years and three months—expired. He took his current job to help support his 14-year-old son, and hopes to begin taking classes again.

"I had to think about my son," says Reese, who is divorced. "I'm going to need a good job to finish school and take care of him. I plan on finishing, just maybe not at Texas."

Sooner or later, many collegiate football players are faced with tough decisions that determine whether or not they stay in school. Academics, injuries or the opportunity to go pro are at the top of the list. For some, though, being in the spotlight can also be a factor.

Lovell Pinkney, 22, just completed his third season as a wide receiver at the University of Texas. He announced last January that he will skip his senior year of eligibility for the NFL draft; he also wanted to

financially assist his family as his mother, Helen, recovers from heart surgery.

Pinkney, along with teammate Mike Adams, formed the most elusive receiving duo in the recent history of the Longhorn football program. They also drew the most press coverage.

The two were the center of alleged NCAA rules violations for using a free rental car, but later cleared of any wrongdoing. They've encountered academic

Texas graduated only 21 Black football players from 1984-88, and ranks 25th on *Emerge Magazine's* "Bottom 50" of the nation's Div. I schools featuring the poorest grad rates for Blacks.

hours. If you don't have many hours after two years, it's obvious you're not going to graduate."

During Kenneth Sims' three years at Texas, the Longhorns remained in the national spotlight with a 25-11 mark from 1978-80 and a No. 2 national ranking.

"There are more restraints now that are geared to

help student athletes, but it's still not happening," says Sims.

Sims, a 6-foot-5, 265-pound defensive tackle at UT, earned national and conference recognition on the way to an NFL career. He was the school's first Vince Lombardi winner, awarded annually to the nation's top college lineman.

For Sims, the decision to go pro was easy. Returning to school wasn't.

"It depends a lot on the program whether a student graduates or returns to school, but you can't make someone graduate," says Sims. "The athlete has to take it upon himself. I grew up knowing it took hard work to survive. I was also really lucky."

Sims re-entered Texas in 1990 and lacks 18 hours to graduate with a degree in sports management. "I should graduate sometime in the summer of 1995," he adds.

According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, 6.7 percent of the 263,000 high school seniors playing football fill 17,500 collegiate freshman spots. Of 9,500 NCAA college seniors, only 2.3 percent—roughly 215 college football players—are needed to fill the NFL

"The percentage for the opportunity to play professional is very low," says Bob McCabe, staff member at the Center for the Study of Sport in Society at Northeastern University in Boston. "The odds are few



Kenneth Sims by Erik Parra

38 TEJAS Gridiron Fame problems and Adams was involved in a fight outside an Austin nightclub, which included his girlfriend and an Austin police officer-resulting in his arrest. Pinkney served a two-game suspension opening the '94 season, while Adams sat out one game before a season-ending knee injury. Pinkney missed the Longhorn's conference matchup against Rice for a curfew violation.

Pinkney argues that he, along with other Black players at Texas, were singled out by the media.

same thing, but nothing is ever said about it," said the junior wide receiver from Washington, D. C. during a UT National Association of Black Journalists' conference last November. "There are a lot of instances where white athletes aren't reported.'

Last summer, the Austin American-Statesman ran a story about former UT football player

Lorenzo Lewis and his alleged involvement in a robbery. Pinkney and Adams' mug shots were prominently used, Pinkney said.

"We didn't know this guy, but they connected us with him. They ran three mug shots with the story. All you had to do was put numbers under the photos," says Pinkney.

Michael Hurd, another panelist at the UT Student Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalist's conference, who also covered sports for USA Today's West Coast Bureau for 11 years, said that Black athletes aren't singled out—one way or another.

"Black athletes are singled out some, but not a lot," says Hurd. "Particularly in the broadcast media they go overboard to present Black athletes in a good way. The media is white male dominated and there's a large lack of understanding there."

Hurd said newsworthy situations cause local papers, such as the Austin American-Statesman, to become aggressive, adding "no one wants to get beat in their own backyard."

"The media expects too much from athletes. We put our clothes on just like anyone else," says Pinkney. "The media doesn't write about the positive thingswe're not machine robots and there is no 'S' on our chest."

Irma Jones, former academic counselor/personnel development coordinator for the UT men's athletic department, said the public and media sensationalizes young athletes when they make bad decisions.

"When an athlete messes up, the student body becomes aware. Their supporters know. The newspapers ridicule them. However, athletes need to be more responsible for their behavior and actions, because the spotlight is on them."

Jones advises athletes to triple their precautions about being responsible, because "The Eyes of Texas Are Upon Them." Her role arrived too late to help former UT stars such as Cornell Reese.

A star high school player, he had made decisions about college long before he graduated. "I wanted to play professional football and I wanted to attend Penn State," he recalls.

Instead, Reese became a junior college All-American at Kilgore before transferring to Texas in

"My mother wanted me to go to Baylor and I even thought about attending the University of Houston," says Reese. "Texas called me 21 times one Sunday morning, and I figured if they were going to hound me, they really wanted me.'

Even then, Reese remembers becoming apprehensive, because of Texas' reputation. In 1973, the Texas varsity football team had nine Black players, Reese

"There were only four or five out of 115 players. I wanted to come here to show other Black athletes that Blacks can play here," he said.

By 1994-95, 25 percent of the UT squad was Black. Pinkney chose Texas because they stressed academics. A Parade Magazine High School All-American, "In a lot of situations many Caucasians do the he was heavily recruited nationwide, narrowing his

"The first year out of football I went through depression. Football was going on and I wasn't in it."

choices to Texas, Miami, Syracuse, Illinois and Texas A&M. He eventually chose Texas.

Few worried about money at that point, agreeing that the benefits of playing football at a major university extend beyond financial reward.

"It's a tradeoff," says Jones. "What the athletes are getting is an education and the opportunity for exposure and intense competitiveness. Athletes are very aware of big-time sports. It's different in high school, college and the pros. The higher you go, the more money is involved in the entertainment arena."

Last summer, Texas signed a deal with Reebok worth more than \$3 million over the next five years. Texas will get an estimated \$350,000 in athletic goods for its 18 men's and women's teams. Reebok will be paying about \$300,000 a year to claim the Longhorns as a Reebok school.

"They're even wearing shoe emblems," says Sims, who frequently attends UT football games and gave a pre-game speech last season. "The pros don't even do that. College athletics has turned into a big-time sports business. Colleges are out there making multi-million television contracts."

Revenue is diminishing and new creative ways are needed," says McCabe of Northeastern's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. "UT going out to make a contract with Reebok is one way to do that."

Aside from the shoe deals and television contracts, the draw for athletes is exposure—and today, they get plenty of it.

'The big-time programs are always under the microscopic glass, especially if you're a Top 25 program," says Sims. "If you're a college athlete you're always going to be scrutinized. It goes with the territory. (When it comes to trouble) some guys have a run

Through 1994, 7,937 athletes had returned to school through a 115-member consortium founded by the Center for the Study of Sport in Society. About 3,350 have graduated and earned degrees.

"There are a number of athletes who left school because they were drafted. They go through training camps and then are let go," says Jones. "They look at what jobs there are, and without an education they don't stand a chance. I've had athletes come back after fifteen years looking for a change, a new direction."

"Some young men don't understand academic accomplishments," says McCabe. "The job market doesn't care how many TDs you scored or how much you can bench or how high above the rim you jump. Not having a college degree affects your paycheck."

Cornell Reese and Kenneth Sims were once familiar star football names at UT.

The first watched his lifelong dream to become a National Football League player eroded by injuries, while the other followed the traditional route to the NFL. But neither received their college degrees while at UT.

Today, Reese, 41, ponders whether he'll get the chance to return to college. Sims, 35, has returned to campus after 14 years to finish his studies in sports management.

"I'm proud I came back to school to finish what I started," says Sims, the top pick in the 1981 NFL draft and two-time collegiate All-American. "I'm going to be a coach, maybe in college or the pros. Any level.'

Reese and Sims symbolize thousands of former college football standouts, who once captured stadiums of rapt, cheering fans. Beyond their gridiron exploits, however, they confronted hardships trying to establish a separate work identity in the real world.

Experts believe that the pressure athletes encounter during college affects their on-field performance and academic standing. Many of the nation's top collegiate



Cornell Reese

JOSEPH DUARTE

Black athletes often return to obtain degrees



Kenneth Sims

cisely, Black athletes-fail to graduate from college.

In 1975, Cornell Reese left UT after two years of painful injuries—only 18 hours short of a degree in physical education to work with his uncle in Houston. Fifteen years later, he attended school briefly for three semesters, until the financial burden became overwhelming.

Reese now works for a men's clothing store in Austin and dreams about finishing his degree. There's no doubt in his mind that he would have made the NFL and become a star; "since I was a kid, I wanted to be a linebacker and play in the pros."

The odds of playing professionally--with or without a degree—continue to decline. At the same time, graduation rates among Black athletes have

dropped to the lowest point ever.

The 1994 NCAA Division I Graduation Rates Report reveals that many of the nation's top college football programs, including the University of Texas, graduate

football players—or more pre- less than one-third of their Black players. Among Division I-A schools, thirty-nine percent (3,551) of the nation's Black football players graduated-compared to 60 percent (4,688) for whites.

Texas graduated only 21 Black football players during a four-year period from 1984-88, and ranks 25th on *Emerge Magazine's* "Bottom 50" of the nation's Div. I schools featuring the poorest grad rates for

"The number of schools that failed to graduate Black athletes is almost overwhelming," says Alvin Reid, senior editor at *Emerge Magazine's* Washington D.C. headquarters. "Nearly 85-90 schools over a fouryear period graduated zero. The numbers speak for themselves. There is a reason for concern.

'If a school graduated 25 percent of its players, it's not on the "Bottom 50" poll, but graduating one-fourth means they have a 75 percent failure rate," he adds.

Four other Southwest Conference schools, including nationally ranked Texas A&M, are listed in the report. Southern Methodist, Texas Tech and Houston combined to graduate 13 Black players. Texas A&M graduated 23 Black players during the four-year period.

Michael Hurd, assistant metro editor for the Austin American-Statesman and author of Black College Football 1892-1992: One Hundred Years of History, Education, and Pride, disagrees with Emerge's poll, saying "it doesn't account for the players that left early or transferred." Please see Gridiron Fame, page 38