



THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM

BOARD of REGENTS

Periodic Update # 2014-3
September 17, 2014

- 1) **University Lands Advisory Board hold its first two meetings:** The University Lands Advisory Board held its first meeting during the last week in July and a second meeting on September 1, 2014. Regents Cranberg and Hildebrand are on this board, with Regent Cranberg as Chair
- 2) **U. T. San Antonio Cybersecurity program top in the nation:** President Romo traveled to Washington, D.C., with a U. T. San Antonio team to brief representatives from the White House, Congress, government agencies, and the business community on U. T. San Antonio's growing prominence in cybersecurity research and education. The U. T. San Antonio cybersecurity program includes 14 undergraduate and graduate degrees in the Colleges of Business, Sciences, and Engineering. It has also become a critical part of the military's San Antonio cybersecurity command – the largest outside of the nation's capital – and a national leader in the field.

This year, a survey of top security experts named U. T. San Antonio's cybersecurity program the best in the nation. U. T. San Antonio has recruited world-class faculty, attracted top students, and created partnerships that enhance the ability to conduct ground-breaking research.

- 3) **Ten U. T. Southwestern Medical Center researchers among 2014 world's most influential scientific minds:** Ten U. T. Southwestern Medical Center researchers are among the most highly cited researchers in the U.S., earning them a place on *Thomas Reuters'* 2014 list of the World's Most Influential Scientific Minds. Researchers earn the distinction by ranking among the top 1 percent of scientists most cited for their subject field by fellow researchers. Noted U. T. Southwestern Medical Center faculty in this year's listing include a Nobel Laureate; members of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; and Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigators.
- 4) **Mobile version of seekUT released:** The [seekUT](#) website is a first-of-its-kind interactive data tool that provides users with median first-year earnings, median fifth-year earnings, and average student loan debt for U. T. System graduates by major. At the suggestion of Regent Pejovich, the [seekUT](#) website was recently made available for use via smartphone.
- 5) **U. T. Dallas ranked in top 1% of world universities:** In a survey published by the Center for World University Rankings, U. T. Dallas ranked among the top 0.7%, coming in 143 among 22,000 degree-granting institutions of higher education worldwide. The Center for World University Rankings publishes the only global

university ranking that measures the quality of education and training of students, as well as the prestige of the faculty members and the quality of their research, without relying on surveys and university data submissions. The Center uses eight objectives and robust indicators to rank the world's top universities: quality of education, alumni employment, quality of faculty, publications, influence, citations, broad impact, and patents.

- 6) **Capital Projects background requested by Legislature:** The Texas House and Senate are beginning to focus on the next legislative session and specifically the possibility of garnering state support for capital construction projects. U. T. System has been asked to produce one-page descriptions of the projects recently approved by the Board of Regents. For those projects that were in the bill considered by the legislature at the end of the 2013 session, U. T. System will highlight any changes in the new proposal, related to project size, scope, and cost.
- 7) **U. T. Austin meets its 3 Billion dollar Campaign for Texas goal:** U. T. Austin reached its goal of \$3 billion in the eight-year Campaign for Texas. More than 139,000 alumni and 12,000 other donors, including foundations, associations, and corporations, donated during the campaign. Campaign for Texas was the largest capital campaign in the State's history.
- 8) **U. T. Arlington Computer Science Professor granted National Science Foundation contract:** Heng Huang, Ph.D., an associate professor of computer science and engineering with an expertise in big data and bioinformatics, has won a three-year National Science Foundation grant of more than \$600,000 to develop an interactive database of gene expressions of the fruit fly. Dr. Huang will lead the project with Professor Chris Ding, also of the U. T. Arlington Computer Science and Engineering department. Scientists are compiling and studying data related to the insects because a large number of genes involved in fruit fly development are commonly found in humans and other species.
- 9) **Two U. T. System researchers receive NSF Brain awards:** On August 18, 2014, the National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded 36 Early Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) to enable new technologies to better understand how complex behaviors emerge from the activity of brain circuits. In support of President Obama's BRAIN Initiative, the awards will contribute to NSF's growing portfolio of investments that look to accelerate the development of new neurotechnologies that help researchers answer fundamental questions about how the brain works. Each of the EAGER awards is for \$300,000 over a two-year period and will allow researchers to develop a wide range of conceptual and physical tools, ranging from real-time whole brain imaging to new theories of neural networks and next-generation optogenetics.

Award recipients include Todd Roberts, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Department of Neuroscience at U. T. Southwestern Medical Center, and Fidel Santamaria, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Biology at U. T. San Antonio.
- 10) **Demolition begins to make way for U. T. System replacement office building:** Preliminary demolition has begun on the site of the new U. T. System replacement office building at 7th Street and Colorado. A picture taken the first day of demolition is attached as *Attachment #1*.

- 11) **Admiral McRaven recognized in Politico:** September's issue of *Politico* lists the 50 "thinkers, dreamers, and doers" whose ideas matter in Washington. Future Chancellor, William H. McRaven, Admiral (Ret.), is included on the list, and his profile is available at this [link](#).

- 12) **U. T. El Paso ranked among Top 10 research universities by Washington Monthly:** Once again, U. T. El Paso was ranked by *Washington Monthly* magazine among the Top 10 of all research universities in the United States. And for the third consecutive year, U. T. El Paso was ranked #1 nationally for fostering student social mobility – enabling students from modest backgrounds to set and attain the highest educational and life aspirations. The complete list of rankings is available [here](#).



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