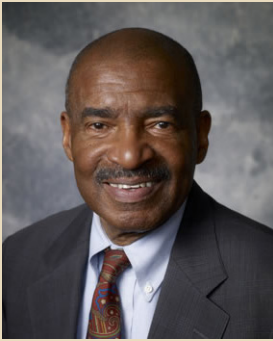


Presented By
The Office of
Diversity
& Community Engagement

2018
*Diversity
Awards*
Ceremony and Soirée





FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE OFFICE OF
DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GEORGE FAIR

We are excited to honor the contributions of some extraordinary students, faculty, staff and community partners who have helped advance the UT Dallas commitment to embrace, enhance and celebrate diversity at all levels of the University and our community. I would like to thank each of the recipients for their wonderful contributions to promote diversity at UT Dallas.

UT Dallas is committed to becoming a nationally competitive, prominent research University. As part of this development, a commitment to diversity and community engagement is vital. We are concerned with recruiting a diverse faculty, staff and student body, and we recognize that this can be accomplished only if we build significant partnerships with the diverse populations we serve.

Tonight's celebration benefits our Diversity Scholarship Program, which was created in 2010 to increase the diversity of students enrolling at the University. UT Dallas offers 15-20 diversity scholarships each year to support students in a variety of fields including accounting, computer science and electrical engineering.

We are proud to have a diverse student body at UT Dallas, which has been named as one of the top 25 most ethnically diverse campuses in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Our students bring a diverse range of talent. We hope you will enjoy performances by groups including Rachel Dupard, the Diversity Poetry competition winners, the Bangladesh Student Organization, Dancing 4 My Life Dance Company, Mariachi Caporales Dallas, and the Jazz Engineers. We also hope you will enjoy the buffet of food from across the globe.

Diversity Awards Ceremony

Introduction of the Mistress of Ceremonies.....	Arthur Gregg <i>Assistant Vice President, Multicultural Affairs Director, Multicultural Center</i>
Mistress of Ceremonies.....	Cleo Greene <i>News Anchor, WFAA, Channel 8</i>
Welcome.....	George Fair <i>Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Studies Vice President, Office of Diversity and Community Engagement</i>
	Richard C. Benson <i>President Eugene McDermott Distinguished University Chair of Leadership</i>
“Medley of Songs”.....	Rachel Dupard <i>Singer, Actress & Model</i>
Introduction of Diversity Scholar.....	JW Van Der Schans <i>President, Student Government</i>
Diversity Scholar Testimonial.....	Yared Wondemagegn <i>UT Dallas Diversity Scholar</i>
Introduction of Diversity Poetry Competition Showcase.....	Jonathan White <i>Assistant Director, Student Life Programs SUAAB/Meteor Theatre</i>
Diversity Poetry Competition Winners	
1st Place	Danny Dunn
2nd Place	Kenneth Huynh
3rd Place.....	Abigail Hrbacek

Diversity Recognition Presentations

Student Diversity Award.....**Ayesha Ahmad and Stefanie Polderman**
Student Organization *Chairperson and Vice Chairperson*
Student Diversity Advisory Council

Community Champion of Diversity Award.....**Kyle Edgington**
Corporate Diversity Award *Vice President, Office of Development & Alumni Relations*

Staff Diversity Award.....**Naomi Emmett**
School Fiscal Officer, Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science
President, Staff Council

Inclusive Teaching Diversity Award.....**Rashaunda Henderson**
Associate Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

“Medley of Songs”.....**Rachel Dupard**
Singer, Actress & Model

Closing Remarks and Recognitions.....**George Fair**
Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Studies
Vice President, Office of Diversity and Community Engagement

Soirée Introduction.....**Arthur Gregg**
Assistant Vice President, Multicultural Affairs
Director, Multicultural Center

Soirée Entertainment.....**Bangladesh Student Organization (BSO) Dancers**
Dancing 4 My Life Dance Company
Mariachi Caporales Dallas
The Jazz Engineers

Food from Various Cultures (Catered by Chartwells)



MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES CLEO GREENE

Cleo Greene is a news reporter and weekend morning anchor of WFAA News 8 Daybreak.

Greene began her career as a feature reporter in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. Her career has also taken her to Georgia, Maryland and Minneapolis. Born on the East Coast as the child of parents from Jamaica and Guyana, she spent her summers with her Jamaican grandparents raising a pet goat called Ishboo. As a military brat, her travels also took her to

faraway locales such as Japan.

A graduate of Rowan University, Greene is determined to break barriers within the broadcast industry. Focused on her spiritual growth and her position as a role model, she views health and wellness as two incredibly important elements in her life. In fact, her father introduced her to long-distance running and she has grown from running short distances to training for marathons.

When asked about her current position at WFAA, Greene says: “WFAA is a legacy station and it has evolved to reach every generation. The newsroom is full of smart, innovative and dynamic people who strive to think outside of the box. I appreciate that there is a focus to heighten social media engagement. More importantly, WFAA is full of different ages, races and cultures, which makes me feel excited to be a part of the team.”



SINGER, ACTRESS & MODEL
RACHEL DUPARD

Inspired by early gospel and rhythm and blues legends of the '60s, '70s and '90s, Rachel Dupard cultivated her silky-smooth vocals in a gospel choir in her hometown of Dallas - a place where she still shares her gift on occasion.

At the age of 3, she could not speak nor properly hear words due to an inner ear dysfunction. Doctors at Children's Medical Center of Dallas recommended surgery to correct the problem. Following surgery, however, mysterious and still-unexplained complications had Dupard at the brink of death. Following her recovery in the hospital, she had to undergo three years of speech therapy and encountered ongoing academic challenges resulting from delayed hearing. This experience also included challenges with comprehension and attention, leaving her with many feelings of uncertainty. Today, she has overcome many of these challenges, and she celebrates her journey of determination to succeed against all odds. After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visuals Arts, she was offered four scholarships to study music and the performing arts.

It is Dupard's hope that thousands of girls, teens, young adults – and parents – will find encouragement and light in the darkest corners of their lives when they hear about her journey.



UT DALLAS DIVERSITY SCHOLAR
YARED WONDEMAGEGN

Yared Wondemagegn is a senior majoring in health care studies at UT Dallas. He is also a part of the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP). Originally from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Wondemagegn currently resides in Fort Worth. Upon graduation, he will be attending McGovern Medical School in Houston.

DIVERSITY POETRY COMPETITION WINNER
DANNY DUNN

1st Place Winner



Danny Dunn

Danny Dunn moved from Massachusetts to Texas to attend UT Dallas in January 2017. Dunn has been writing poetry for a decade and is published in the anthology, *Extreme Perception*. While Dunn is a psychology major, Dunn is also interested in many other academic subjects, notably physics and math. Dunn hopes to be able to share poetry with the world but does not envision writing as a lifetime vocation.

2nd Place Winner



Kenneth Huynh

3rd Place Winner



Abigail Hrbacek



STUDENT DIVERSITY AWARD ALIREZA NOURANI-DARGIRI

Alireza Nourani-Dargiri was born in Tehran, Iran, and moved to the United States shortly after. He grew up in Plano, Texas, and has been very involved in athletics such as basketball and track. He came to UT Dallas on an Academic Excellence Scholarship to study mechanical engineering and to run cross-country. Through his freshman and sophomore years, he was heavily involved in student activities. Following the 2016 U.S. elections, he saw a rise in extreme political discord in his community and in the nation. This became Nourani-Dargiri's call to action. Rather than simply sit back and complain, he has chosen to make a difference. He changed his major to political science and aspires to go to law school in his quest to bring enlightenment and empower minority groups.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION AWARD NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS (NSBE)

Students in the UT Dallas chapter of The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) are guided by a mission to “increase the number of culturally responsible Black Engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively impact the community.”

Although a small chapter, they have taken this mission to heart in their many efforts to encourage and promote professional and personal excellence among individuals pursuing a STEM education. From their on-campus outreach programs to their extraordinary 100+ hours of community service, the UT Dallas chapter provides an environment for its members that is distinct. The chapter has partnered with non-profits, corporations, independent school districts and several other campus entities such as The Office of Diversity and Community Engagement, the Student Organization Center, Residential Life, the ECS Internship Office and the Career Center. Recognizing that technology impacts us all, the chapter connects with individuals of all races, nationalities and college majors to promote STEM education and awareness.



COMMUNITY CHAMPION OF DIVERSITY AWARD

RAJ K. SEEKRI



Dr. Raj Seekri fully understands the power of education as a path for students to change their lives. Considering the financial burden of earning a college degree, Seekri endowed a scholarship at UT Dallas. The Ram Lal Seekri Endowed Scholarship, for which he gave \$25,000 to the School of Interdisciplinary Studies, supports first-generation students in the Academic Bridge Program. The scholarship is a memorial tribute to his father's lifelong commitment to education and his tireless efforts to improve his community.

Seekri's generosity provides students with an equitable chance to succeed and fully participate in the University's rigorous academic programs. The establishment of an endowed scholarship also demonstrates a commitment to supporting diversity and inclusion at The University of Texas at Dallas. The scholarship helps to advance UT Dallas' mission of attracting and retaining a diverse student body reflective of the wider Dallas-Fort Worth community.

The Seekri family has shown a commitment to education as a means of positively influencing students, families and communities. They have established endowed scholarships at several universities specifically intended to support students with the financial assistance necessary to obtain an education.

CORPORATE DIVERSITY AWARD
FLUOR

FLUOR®

One way in which Fluor has demonstrated its commitment to supporting diversity and inclusion programs is through their generous support of the Young Women in Science and Engineering Investigators (WISE) Program. The purpose of the WISE program is to promote scientific research in a team environment and to provide real-world research and design experience to increase high school students' interest in STEM fields. The students receive mentoring and project design guidance from professional engineers, faculty and student mentors. The Fluor Foundation has provided \$30,000 in grants since 2014, which has had a significant impact on the success of this program.

In addition to supporting the WISE Program, Fluor has supported the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement in hosting The Compelling Why. The University collaborates with The Compelling Why, a local, nonprofit organization, and several North Texas school districts to host half-day long seminars that expose students to the college environment. Entrepreneurs, corporate executives and community leaders are invited to lead seminars, share their stories of personal success and inspire students.

Fluor's contributions to UT Dallas extend well beyond the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement. Leaders from Fluor have been active on the Naveen Jindal School of Management's Advisory Council, and several UT Dallas students have interned with the corporation. Fluor has provided more than \$1,500 in matching gifts for employee contributions to support initiatives throughout campus, and they have provided generous gifts to support the UT Dallas Center for BrainHealth.

STAFF DIVERSITY AWARD
BARBARA BOYD



Barbara Boyd has been a member of the UT Dallas community for more than 28 years. She began her tenure at UTD as a human resources adviser at the downtown Callier Center and served in that position for 10 years before transferring to the main campus. She currently serves as an enrollment services adviser in the Office of Admission and Enrollment where she is responsible for meeting with prospective students and their families to discuss the admission process and tips for becoming a part of the UT Dallas family. In addition to her advising duties, Boyd coordinates the group tour visits for various school and community groups. She finds great joy in assisting students in finding their academic paths to UT Dallas, whether they arrive directly from high school or are transfer students. Outside of work, Boyd is a member of Unity Baptist Church and enjoys spending time with her family and molding her “Future Comet” grandchildren, Gianna, Lataryia, Andre, Nicolas, Laila and Alexandria.



INCLUSIVE TEACHING DIVERSITY AWARD ZSUZSANNA OZSVÁTH

Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth is the Leah and Paul Lewis Chair in Holocaust Studies and the founder of the Holocaust Studies Program at UT Dallas. Her passion for teaching the lessons of the Holocaust is rooted in her own personal experiences as a survivor of the Holocaust. When she and her late husband, Istvan, immigrated to the United States in 1962, they soon made their home in Richardson where her husband had a position at a new graduate research center that later became

The University of Texas at Dallas. Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth has been teaching at UT Dallas for more than 40 years. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses on the history and literature of the Holocaust and on other topics such as German Romanticism and Weimar Germany.

She has become a world-renowned scholar of the Holocaust and has published numerous articles and books, including her own memoir about the Holocaust, *When the Danube Ran Red* (2010). Her most recent volume, co-written with UT Dallas Founders Professor Fred Turner, is *Light within the Shade: Eight Hundred Years of Hungarian Poetry* (2014). Currently, Ozsváth serves on the Board of the Educational Committee of the Jewish Federation and the board of the David Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, and she is a lifetime director of the Dallas Holocaust Museum for Education and Tolerance.

Standing up for the education of the Holocaust in our public schools, she has served on the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission. In the last two years, Ozsváth has spoken over 50 times to numerous churches, synagogues, UT Dallas student groups and companies such as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas.

RETENTION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

2016-2017

Sandra Ali
Julita Briones
Gisselt Estrada
Jennifer Garcia
Luis Gomez
Karen Gonzalez
Bilal Haroon
Nnemka Iloani
Kelsey Jackson
Saarah Khan
Qais Majid
Oladapo Ogunfeitimi
Justin Warner Shaw

2017-2018

Sergio Aragon-Zamora
Oluwatowo Babayemi
Luis Gomez
Kori Harlan
Bilal Haroon
Shekhar Karki
Saarah Khan
Uyen Nguyen
Shirley Ochieng
Ogulnazik Orazgeldiyeva
Argelia Simon Perez
Yared Wondemagegn

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Lauren DeCillis

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