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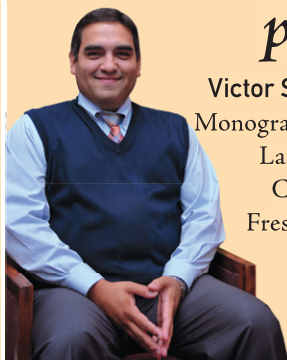
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OUR Campus

FOR PEOPLE WHO MAKE GREAT THINGS HAPPEN AT UT **DECEMBER 2008**

Obama Accepts 66,882,230 good wishes



By Tara Haelle

Photo Katie Hayes

When Barack Obama made history as the first black President-elect, six UT photojournalism students captured the moment. Clinical professor Eli Reed and graduate students Christina Burke, Katie Hayes, Sean Mathis, Linda Reno, Curt Youngblood and I flew to Chicago on Nov. 1 and spent the next four days exploring the city through our lenses before, during and after Obama's election rally in Grant Park.

"If you're going to be a journalist, it's important to be where the action is, and where the critical moments are that are going to shape the future," said Reed. "This is not a thing where you stand on the sidelines."

Reno, who received an undergraduate degree in history, is currently working toward her master's in journalism. She grew up in a Chicago suburb, so she had

already decided to attend the event after Obama won the nomination.

"I could not pass up the opportunity to witness history," she said.

This was the main reason most of us went. For me personally, I thought of all the iconic images associated with historical figures and places. When we think of the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, the L.A. riots, Woodstock, and other major events in U.S. history, specific images come to mind, effectively transporting us to that moment in time.

*Six UT journalism
graduate students
capture historic
moment*

We had the opportunity to create similar images for future generations. Whether or not we were able to capture images with the same power, we would at least be present at such an event.

Encouraged by Reed, Burke assembled a proposal for the journalism department to help defray the costs of the trip. Though the department could not finance the whole trip, we received a small stipend and plane tickets provided by the University's Continental Airlines grant fund. Reed met us for dinner on our first evening there, but then we were on our own to develop a strategy for recording the city. At the time, we did not have fully formed ideas of what we would shoot. We would figure it out along the way.

"I hoped to capture images that would resonate with people who could not make it there themselves, images that

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OUR Campus

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Intellectual Entrepreneurship

A new educational philosophy promoting discovery, ownership and accountability

By Kira Taniguchi

The Intellectual Entrepreneurship (IE) Consortium, founded by Dr. Richard Cherwitz, is an innovative approach to the traditional model of education helping students reinvent their aspirations at The University of Texas.

The IE philosophy is to move away from the dated concepts of apprenticeship, certification and entitlement. In the old model, students would come to the university, study, work with professors, get certified and, ideally, land a job upon graduation.

The new educational philosophy promotes discovery, ownership and accountability. It encourages students to ask themselves who they are, what they want to do, and how they will harness their knowledge in order to make a difference in society. In doing so, IE administrators hope to engage and empower these young scholars.

Cherwitz first conceived the idea of intellectual entrepreneurship in 1997 when he was associate dean of UT's Graduate School. He describes intellectual entrepreneurship as a way of thinking.

"[An intellectual entrepreneur is] a risk taker, a change agent and one who is empowered with academic knowledge and skills to make a difference in the world," Cherwitz says.

He believes that universities are houses of intellectuals who should demonstrate a proclivity for innovation and entrepreneurship.

"As a graduate dean, one of the biggest problems I saw was that we were producing students with these degrees that were very specialized," Cherwitz said. "They didn't want us to clone them, so what we did was create a series of 16 IE courses in grad school to give students a space to figure out what they want to do with their lives and give them tools."

The IE Consortium was born when Cherwitz realized that the

problem of specialization was even more evident at the undergraduate level. In 2003, Cherwitz launched the undergraduate branch of his philosophy. Today, the program has evolved into an inter-collegial consortium, with the collaboration of 11 colleges and schools at the University.

"I have some kind of a project with almost all of the colleges," said Cherwitz.

The IE Consortium consists of many initiatives, all of which are listed on the IE Web site. The programs are designed to create learning environments, referred to as "safe spaces," for students to figure out who they are.

"I really want to see higher education fundamentally changed," said Cherwitz. "I want to see education become more interdisciplinary and more engaged with community."

Currently, the two main initiatives include Dr. Martha Norkunas' oral history project "Interpreting the Texas Past (ITP)," and the pre-graduate internship program.

The goal of Norkunas' program, as sited on the George Washington Carver Museum Web site, is "to shed new light on the Texas and American past by researching, interpreting and presenting the histories of women and minority communities."

According to the IE Web site, <https://webspace.utexas.edu/cherwitz/www/ie>, the objective of the pre-graduate internship is to "connect undergraduates with faculty and veteran graduate students in their field of study to explore those unique aspects of graduate study that make it distinct from the undergraduate experience."

The internship is offered each spring and fall semester and is open to all undergraduates. There is no limit to the number of students the program will accept. Undergraduates must find their own mentor and subsequently agree to a contract signed by Cherwitz. Most of the

time, the students work within their field of study, but they also meet with other participants on Blackboard, where they exchange views regarding the internship experience.

The current fall 2008 internship class consists of 100 students, spanning 12 colleges and 35 different programs at the University.

"It has built exponentially. I had 15 students in 2003," said Cherwitz. "Sometimes, when I'm at my most frustrated moment, because I want more resources and I want the University to change and it doesn't change fast enough, I'll remind myself just how many hundreds and hundreds of people have gone through this program."

Ruby Morúa Olmanson is the current director of the internship program. This is her first semester as director, though she previously served as a mentor for an undergraduate intern.

"It is important for the undergrads, because college is about going through the motions," Olmanson says. "They have their basic requirements, and they go through those, so there is no opportunity for them to discover what their passion is. We believe they need to have this opportunity to discover this passion so they can be fulfilled in their career. They have this chance to ask all types of questions, to work alongside someone in a lab. It is a discovery opportunity for them."

Cherwitz encourages students to either become a mentor or to partake in the internship. Currently, however, there is no formal process for graduate students who are seeking a mentorship position. But Cherwitz encourages these students to approach undergrads they might like to mentor and tell them about the internship.

"Graduate students are a fundamental part of undergrad education," he said.

This internship program is unique because the graduate

students play such a vital role. They provide undergraduates with networking opportunities as well as a first-hand account of the graduate experience.

"There is passion from both the graduate students and the undergrads," said Olmanson. "Other than travel grants, there is no financial incentive for either population. There is just this passion for wanting to be fulfilled in their career."

The passion that exists within the IE Consortium has garnered national acclaim. The pre-grad internship program at UT was the only recipient nationwide of the 2008 Example of Excelencia award at the graduate level. According to the IE Web site, this award recognizes efforts to promote programs that support greater success in higher education for Latino students. Cherwitz's program was one of 70 that were considered for the award.

The IE Consortium has received many other awards including the Woodrow Wilson Innovation Award. The program has also been featured in publications such as "The Washington Post," "The Houston Chronicle" and "Dallas Morning News." A complete list of accolades can be viewed on the IE Web site.

Cherwitz believes that the visionary approach to dealing with underrepresented minority groups and first generation college students is what makes his program unique. He recalls the case of Ana Lucia Hurtado, a second-year law student at Harvard. She was one of the first students to complete the pre-graduate internship, and is one of Cherwitz's many success stories.

"The neat thing about this pre-grad internship is that it wasn't intended solely for first generation minority students," said Cherwitz. "I discovered that it has special significance for these students because of the IE philosophy. It is about demystification, about figuring out what you want to do and contributing



Photo Marsha Miller

Intellectual Entrepreneurship's pre-graduate internship program participants, Luis Bonachea, mentor, and Elizabeth Siegel, undergraduate student, at Brackenridge Field Lab.

to the community, which is what a lot of first generation students think about."

IE is developing several new initiatives, including an IE mentorship course, which would be offered to freshmen and sophomores. Through the mentorship course, students would benefit from having a community liaison and mentor. Cherwitz also wants to develop action seminars, or "synergy groups."

"Imagine if we could take on economy issues or national security issues, and we have all of this talent here, and make it part of the educational experience," said Cherwitz. "Take students to get them to learn how to solve the problem, and they become the manpower for the future. What an education that would be."

One such synergy group was piloted with the local Seton Medical branch in fall 2002 which explored the factors behind the overcrowding that occurs in emergency rooms.

Cherwitz notes that the IE Consortium is part of UT's Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE). Dr. Gregory J. Vincent, vice president for the DDCE, wrote about Cherwitz's educational initiatives

even before his employment at the University.

"Dr. Cherwitz is first and foremost a very effective scholar," Vincent says. "He has taken a wonderful idea and translated that to an effective practice and an initiative that has the real opportunity to help thousands of students. It is going to demystify graduate education for first generation students and those that come from underrepresented backgrounds."

Funding is one aspect of the IE Consortium that Cherwitz wants to improve. For example, he would like to be able to pay the mentors for the work they perform on behalf of the undergraduates.

"Part of the internship experience is providing students the opportunity to go to professional conferences and gain real world experience," he said. "There are some grants available, but never enough."

Though most of IE's funding comes from the DDCE, Cherwitz also receives discretionary money from other deans. Fortunately, the University recently launched a \$3 billion fundraising campaign, and Dr. Vincent set aside \$50 million for the IE agenda. Cherwitz intends to use

the money in creating more synergy groups and developing the IE mentorship course.

"The money is being put to good use, we just have to raise a lot more," said Cherwitz.

Cherwitz does the footwork himself, engaging the community by submitting articles to local and national publications. He hopes to excite the community about this new educational approach, confident that they will recognize the value of investing in the future of education. Some benefits afforded by the IE Consortium are listed in a passage from UT's DDCE capital campaign case document. According to the document, "IE allows students to explore all of the academic possibilities available at UT, and empowers them with the capacity to transform themselves and the world."

Justin Jefferson, a sophomore biology major and former participant in the pre-grad internship, is a primary example of a first generation college student who has excelled as a result of the program. He cites many ways in which the internship has been useful, from networking and research opportunities to providing him a comfortable niche in the college community.

"The program is vital to the University because it gives students the opportunity to find more opportunities of even greater use for their future," Jefferson says. "Students can make the IE program whatever they want and get whatever they want out of it."

Cherwitz is currently working with other institutions around the country to develop educational models similar to those created by the IE consortium. Stanford and Michigan are just two of the schools that have recognized the value of the program and have implemented it within their own campuses.

The IE Consortium is paving the way for future generations of educators. This new philosophy will demystify education, especially for first generation college students and underrepresented minority students. It will also educate citizen scholars, giving them the necessary tools that will lead to discovery, ownership and accountability of their own success.

As Cherwitz says, "Their education becomes more about figuring out who they are and what knowledge they need, what skills they need so that they can reinvent themselves for a lifetime."

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