

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO CLASS OF 100,000

By Chris Lechuga

EACH DEGREE
HAS A PERSONAL STORY OF TRIALS, TRIUMPHS
AND THINGS STUDENTS LEARNED INSIDE AND
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOMS ON THEIR WAY TO
WALKING ACROSS THE STAGE.

Photo by Laura Trejo



TOUCH OF CLASS
UTEP President Diana Natalicio and graduating Senior Alex Muñoz salute historic class.



THE GOLD GRADUATION MEDALLION, which students will get for free, will have a distinctive design that honors this special class.

The University of Texas at El Paso, then known as the Texas State School of Mines and Metallurgy, issued its first bachelor's degrees to three students during its first commencement ceremony in May 1916.

Since then, thousands of UTEP graduates have followed in their footsteps on the road to successful, impactful careers in El Paso and around the world.

As the University prepares to celebrate its 100th birthday in 2014, it also has decided to mark another milestone: the presentation of its 100,000th degree.

It will be awarded during the May 2011 Spring Commencement.

UTEP President Diana Natalicio announced earlier this year that the entire graduating class will be recognized as the "Class of 100,000" so everyone could celebrate.

"It is important that all graduates share in this very special moment," Natalicio said in her remarks during the 2011 Grad Fair March 1 at the Peter & Margaret de Wetter Center.

To mark the occasion, University officials have developed special plans to make the May commencement unique.

The gold graduation medallion, which students will get for free, will have a distinctive design that honors this special class.

However, it is the graduates themselves that make the class special. Each student who attends UTEP has a unique story.

Some are the first in their families to go to college.

Some are parents. Some work full time and take classes at night.

Each degree has a personal story of trials, triumphs and things they learned inside and outside the classrooms on their way to walking across the stage.

Alex Muñoz, senior accounting and finance major, said the interaction he had with College of Business Administration faculty, staff and administrators early on put him at ease.

"They are really interested in your success," Muñoz said. "It made me feel at home that there are people who want to be stakeholders in my future."

Muñoz served as president of the Student Government Association in 2009-10 and will work as an investment banker with J.P. Morgan Chase in New York after he graduates in May. ✉

2011 TOP TEN SENIORS

The University of Texas at El Paso is proud to announce the recipients of the Top Ten Seniors Awards presented by the UTEP Alumni Association.

These outstanding seniors – selected for their academic success and University and community involvement – represent the quality education that UTEP provides its more than 22,000 students. This is the 61st anniversary of the Top Ten Senior Awards.

VISIT
alumni.utep.edu/topten
FOR MORE
INFORMATION.



MARCELA AGUIRRE
Communication Studies
College of Liberal Arts



HUMBERTO CRUZ-CHAVARRIA
Political Science/Latin American Studies
College of Liberal Arts



MONICA DELGADO
Biological Sciences
College of Science



MELISSA C. DESILETS
Chemistry
College of Science



KATHERINE A. DIAZ
Biological Sciences
College of Science



JOSÉ D. GUERRA
Finance & Accounting
College of Business Administration



ALEJANDRO MUÑOZ
Finance & Accounting
College of Business Administration



ROCÍO J. OROZCO
Nursing
School of Nursing



LUIS A. RUBIO
Biological Sciences
College of Science



RUBI K. YAÑEZ
Interdisciplinary Studies; Mathematics 4-8
College of Education

EVERY DEGREE HAS A STORY:

To document the individuals who are at the center of the 100,000th degree celebration, the University Communications office recorded video testimonials of the May 2011 graduates who shared a few thoughts in their own words.



Paloma Sanchez
 Bachelor of Science in Microbiology

"My degree from UTEP means a world of opportunities. Now with a degree, I can do so much more and it would open up other doors."



Brenda Lepenski
 Bachelor of Arts • Multimedia Journalism

"I wanted to go somewhere where I would be offered a different kind of experience. By a different experience, I mean a bilingual, bicultural atmosphere, and I think that's something that UTEP has given me."



Lucia Dura
 Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition

"A degree from UTEP means that I can break the mold. That I can think outside the box. It's been challenging but the ability to shape my future as I go along has been very unique."



Lee David Deloach
 Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

"I'm only the second person in my family to graduate from college. It says a lot for me to be able to do that, especially given my age, my circumstances and my life."



Fred Perea
 Master of Public Administration

"A degree from UTEP means opportunity to let this be the first step of many to learn more, do more and never stop growing."



Roberta Corbell
 Master of Science in Nursing

"I'm a full time employee and administrative director at a local hospital. Since I was working full time and going to school full time, I was grateful for a lot of online courses with UT Telecampus."



Fernando Reyes
 Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling

"El Paso is my hometown and I wanted to humbly and modestly use the knowledge and the skills that were handed down to me from my professors, and use those skills that I learned and apply them to help the citizens of El Paso."



Maria Cedillos
 Master of Arts in Languages and Linguistics

"A degree from UTEP meant that I needed to show my girls that I was able to finish a degree. I had started a long time ago, I didn't finish but now I'm back at UTEP, so I'm showing them that it can be done."



Raymond King
 Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology

A UTEP degree "means an opportunity to achieve your life goals as far as career choice and to start a new chapter in life."