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June 2012: This is Your UHCL

Part of the pleasure of working at a student-centered, community-minded, partnership-oriented university is that, generally, people are pleased to tell me how and why they think of University of Houston-Clear Lake as their university. This does not apply only to alumni. I listen and smile to myself thinking "This is Your UHCL."

I have volunteered my time to help create "50: Years, Stories, Faces" for the Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. Through this process I have been able to interview and photograph 50 people who have helped make this community during the past 50 years. Even though I am not wearing my UHCL hat when I conduct the interviews, many of the honorees have wanted to talk about the university. I listen and smile to myself thinking, "This is Your UHCL."



Having been at the university "only" 11 years—which isn't long considering how many of the honorees were in the community before UHCL was a twinkle in the eye of former NASA JSC Director Robert Gilruth—I continue to learn how others in the community feel about UHCL. One of the women I interviewed provided a sublime lesson.

After greeting me at the door and a bit of small talk, she suggested that we sit at her dining table for the interview. She said, "I have a couple of things that you might want to see." The first thing she showed me was a thank you letter for her volunteer efforts from President William A. Staples. It was dated 1998 and was in perfect condition. I listened and smiled to myself thinking, "This is Your UHCL."

It serves all of us at the university well that the place we consider our workplace and second home is considered by many in the community as a very special place with which they can have special relationships.



Dion McInnis
Associate Vice President for University
Advancement
McInnis@uhcl.edu, 281-283-2018

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