

# **Activity Report**

2019–2020 academic year  
9.1.19–8.31.20



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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**A**mid the upheaval and uncertainty surrounding the 2019–2020 academic year, the Center for Cultural Sustainability turned its attention toward some of today’s most pressing issues.

Our current endeavor, the Sacred Places Heritage Network for Disaster Resilience in the Texas Gulf Coast Region, aims to help religious organizations housed in historic structures not only improve their own capacity to withstand increasingly stronger and more frequent severe-weather events, but also empower them to better-serve their communities amid large-scale disruption. The program is funded through the Texas Historical Commission with funds from The National Park Service (NPS), and addresses damage inflicted by 2017’s Hurricane Harvey.

The project is allowing the CCS to create a new research position, the 18-month post-graduate Heritage Resilience Fellow. Additional funding for the Fellowship has been provided by Philadelphia architecture firm Preservation Design Partnership.

Internationally, work at Museo Ernest Hemingway in Cuba continued with a trip to Havana in December 2019 at the invitation of the Cuban government. A team led by the CCS assessed conditions at the main house and subsequently (in January 2020) made recommendations for long-term conservation, presented to the Finca Vigía Foundation’s Board of Directors at their annual meeting in Miami, FL.

Over the summer, the CCS secured funding from the U.S. State Department for a cultural exchange program focusing on heritage site management and tourism development. UTSA will host representatives from the Central Asian nation Turkmenistan as faculty share their expertise through both classroom training and field visits to historic sites in Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado.

Here in Texas, the CCS in 2020 continued its work on two projects regarding historic structures at Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)—an evaluation of individual structures and districts for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and training of JBSA personnel in Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) techniques.

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*Texas  
Gulf  
Coast*

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*Cuba*

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*Central  
Asia*

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**Texas-  
Mexico  
Border**

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Additionally, collaboration between the CCS and UTSA's Mexico Center has resulted in a book focusing on the South Texas Borderlands. This summer, Professor Emeritus Dr. Harriett Romo and I submitted our final draft of *Bridging Cultures: Reflections on the Heritage Identity of the Texas-Mexico Borderlands* to Texas A&M University Press. The book has an anticipated publication date of spring 2021.

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**San Antonio  
Missions**

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The CCS continues its work as lead institute for the San Antonio Missions Research Consortium, which seeks to coordinate and organize the dissemination of academic discovery across various entities who share the common goal of better understanding, protecting, and enhancing San Antonio's five Spanish Colonial missions. As we work toward long-term viability for the consortium, we will be deliberate in recruiting mission descendants and tribal groups—whose voices have long gone unheard—to participate and contribute.

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**Smart Tech  
& Energy  
Efficiency**

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Missions-related work by the CCS also includes collaboration with the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park on a *Best Practices for Stone Building Preservation Management* manual and symposium. Experts planning to gather in San Antonio for the symposium (tentatively set for May 2021, pending COVID-19 developments) include representatives from Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, the University of Texas at Austin, the World Monuments Fund, International Council on Monuments and Sites, National Park Service, and industry thought-leaders at private-sector firms.

Finally, CCS faculty are studying the intersection of preservation, energy efficiency, and occupant comfort at the missions. Funding from the Archdiocese of San Antonio through local architecture firm Ford, Powell & Carson has supported research at Mission Concepción, and a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training is allowing the work to expand to Missions San José, San Juan Capistrano, and Espada. Among the topics being explored is the role of smart technology in regulating indoor environmental quality.

Despite 2020's challenges, the UTSA Center for Cultural Sustainability has remained productive, engaged, and impactful. We look forward to another successful year in 2021.

Sincerely,



William A. Dupont, FAIA, NCARB | Center for Cultural Sustainability, Director  
Conservation Society of San Antonio Endowed Professor

# MEDIA COVERAGE

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Ruins at Mission San José undergoing restoration on San Antonio's Southeast Side

Expert work on Mission Concepción seeks to ensure historic church continues for another 300 years

Conserving Concepción Dome Work Will Ensure its Stability for Centuries

Preservation efforts underway to restore Mission Concepcion

Fronteras: Heritage Conservation Is 'Not Just About Buildings Here, It's About The People'

UTSA Students to Study Twin Sisters

**UTSA**

Center for Cultural  
Sustainability

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210-458-3178

2019–2020

## NEW REVENUE\*

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**\$40,490**

From Argonne National Laboratory, to train JBSA personnel in HABS documentation

**\$25,000**

From Preservation Design Partnership, for sponsorship of 18-month research fellowship

**\$20,000**

From U.S. Department of the Interior, for assessment of indoor climate management at San Antonio missions

**\$247,700**

From Texas Historical Commission, for assessment of disaster resilience of historic structures along the Texas Gulf Coast

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**\$333,190**

Total

\* Sponsored Projects booked between 9/1/2019 and 8/31/2020