The Harte Research Institute (HRI) for Gulf of Mexico Studies is a young and developing institute at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. On 19 September 2000, Mr. Edward H. Harte donated $46 million to establish the new research institute to focus on the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Harte, philanthropist and former owner of the Corpus Christi Caller-Times newspaper, worked with Dr. Robert R. Furgason, President of TAMU-CC, to establish the endowment to include endowed research chairs, endowed graduate research fellowships and an endowed operating budget. Subsequently, during the fall of 2000, the Harte Research Support Foundation was established to manage the assets until the institute is fully established and operative. The Foundation consists of three Trustees, Mr. Ed Harte, Mr. Jonathan M. Hornblower, and Mr. David L. Sinak. In the spring of 2001 during the Texas Legislative Session, Dr. Furgason was able to obtain $15 million from the State of Texas to build a facility for the Harte Research Institute on the TAMU-CC campus. An additional $3 million was added to that amount from other state building funds to allow for the construction of four graduate instruction and research laboratories. These labs and offices will allow collaboration between Harte research scientists and faculty and students within the TAMU-CC College of Science and Technology. Other well-established entities at TAMU-CC will work cooperatively and collaboratively with HRI include: the Center for Coastal Studies, the Center for Water Supply Studies, the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science, the Geographic Information Science research program, and the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network.

Mr. Ed Harte, who had been Chairman of the Board for the National Audubon Society during the 1970’s, and again in the early 1990’s, was inspired by the book Sea Change written by the renowned oceanographic explorer Dr. Sylvia Earle (1995) in deciding to endow and establish the research institute. After meetings and discussions between Mr. Harte, President Furgason, and Dr. Earle, she agreed to become Chair of the Advisory Council for the new institute during the summer of 2001. During that summer, and the following academic year, a highly distinguished Advisory Council was established. Members represent academia, industry, and conservation, as well as all three countries surrounding the Gulf of Mexico, United States, Mexico, and Cuba. Dr. John W. (“Wes”) Tunnell, Jr. was appointed Associate Director in September 2001, and that fall the new institute was officially named the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies.
Goals & Objectives

1. To become a leading research institute and remain committed to high-quality, innovative research on the Gulf of Mexico.

2. To lead in synthesizing, integrating, and communicating Gulf of Mexico research.

3. To monitor and periodically publicize the "State of the Gulf," to uncover gaps in existing knowledge and to create initiatives to fill those gaps.

4. To cooperate with state and federal resource management agencies by providing scientifically-based knowledge for sound policy and management of the Gulf of Mexico and surrounding region.

5. To establish partnerships and alliances with educational, governmental, non-governmental, and private sector organizations interested in long-term sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico.

6. To develop strong public education and public policy programs, using diverse approaches including:

   - A Gulf of Mexico website of research institutes, research personnel, research projects, and other information about the Gulf of Mexico.

   - Conferences on Gulf of Mexico scientific and policy issues.

7. To develop a Gulf-wide Geographic Information System.

8. To foster tri-national cooperation and collaboration in science and management of the Gulf of Mexico.

9. To study the conservation biology and biodiversity of the Gulf of Mexico.

10. To study the Gulf of Mexico as a large marine ecosystem, influenced by the Caribbean Sea and surrounding watersheds, requiring monitoring, modeling, and management.
Gulf
Resource Database for

GulfBase Facts:

- GulfBase is a Web-based database of research institutions, researchers, research projects and other information about the Gulf of Mexico.

- As of March 21, 2007 GulfBase contains:
  - 450 institutions and organizations
  - 1,647 researchers
  - 122 reefs/islands
  - 95 bays
  - 495 projects
  - 195 events
  - 808,295 visitors to the website since October 15, 2002

- GulfBase is fully searchable and free to the public.

- An important feature of GulfBase is that researchers can update their own information directly through the web. GulfBase is therefore maintained and kept up-to-date by those who know the Gulf best.

- GulfBase is a great tool for increasing communication among researchers around the Gulf. Each research laboratory is listed in GulfBase along with contact information and specialization.

- Information is very accessible:
  - Any webpage can be reached with only 3 mouse clicks.
  - The database search engine is powerful but very easy to use.
  - Search results can be sorted various ways or further refined depending on the user's needs.

- Rich cross-linking.

- GulfBase was designed so that anyone can participate and propose new information for addition to the database. We hope it will become an online forum where the Gulf community can meet.

- GulfBase is an international endeavor. It contains research information from the three Gulf of Mexico countries: US, Mexico, and Cuba.

- The GulfBase development team is also international, including members in the US and Mexico.

- GulfBase is a growing website. We are now developing an online GIS (Geographic Information System) to access GulfBase’s resources.
GulfBase is one of many projects supported by the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. One of the main goals of the HRI is to promote and support research focused on sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico, a task requiring knowledge of current available resources (infrastructure and human) including our neighbors and colleagues in the USA, Mexico and Cuba.

It is our hope that by building a centralized database of researchers, research institutes, research projects, and general facts related to the Gulf of Mexico, we will strengthen national and international relationships among scientists of all countries with an interest in the sustainability of the Gulf of Mexico.

We believe that active participation in the building of this important database is paramount to its success in addressing the many issues currently challenging the Gulf of Mexico. This will ultimately lead to solutions for increasing its sustainability and conservation for future generations.

"The development of the Web site meets a fundamental goal of the research facility: to build a central database where information from the United States, Mexico, and Cuba can be shared and international relationships strengthened. The site will lead to solutions for increasing the Gulf's sustainability and conservation for future generations if scientists actively contribute to and use GulfBase", John "Wes" Tunnell Jr., Associate Director of the Institute.
Mr. Edward H. Harte

A True Steward of the Environment

Ed Harte’s endowment for the Harte Research Institute of Gulf of Mexico Studies is just the most recent example of both his generosity and commitment to wise stewardship of our natural resources. Mr. Harte has been an advocate of habitat protection and offshore drilling regulation for many years. William H. Dietel, chairman of the American Farmland Trust, said "Ed has been a man of conservation for many years .... Ed has the capacity to see critical need".

As a man able to see critical need, habitat protection has been a major component of Ed’s stewardship of the environment. In the 1980’s he became active in farmland conservation and helped transform the American Farmland Trust into a national organization. Today the Trust helps protect farm and ranchland from urban sprawl and promotes environmentally friendly land management that benefits wildlife. He and his brother, Houston, donated their 66,000 acre ranch in the foothills of the Rosillos Mountains to Big Bend National Park, where it became the North Rosillos Mountains Preserve. He lobbied for establishment of both Mustang Island State Park and Padre Island National Seashore that together have helped protect the diversity of habitats and wildlife found on Mustang and Padre islands. In addition, he and a committee of other concerned citizens came up with the first municipal regulations that set limits on oil and gas drilling in Corpus Christi Bay. These regulations became a model for future state and federal standards.

Ed has been active in a number of environmental organizations. He was the chairman of the board of the National Audubon Society in the late 1970’s and a board member during the 1990’s. He is a member of the board of the American Farmland Trust who honored him in 2001 when they established a trust fund for farmland conservation in his name. He is a past officer of the Texas State Parks Board Planning Committee. He was named "A Man for all Seasons" when he accepted the Corpus Christi Rotary Club’s Harvey Weil Sportsman/Conservationist Award in 2002.

Ed was born in Pilot Grove, Missouri in 1922 and grew up in San Angelo, Texas. After attending school in Mexico City for a year, he finished his bachelor’s degree at Dartmouth College. He served in the weather wing of the U.S. Army Air Corps in WWII.

After completing his military service, Ed began his long and illustrious career as a newspaper reporter, editor, and eventually publisher. He began as a reporter for the Daily Eagle in Claremont, New Hampshire. It was during this first job that he met Janet W. Frey whom he married in 1947. He became editor of the Daily News in Snyder, Texas, in 1950 and with his brother and Andrew Shelton of Abilene, converted it from a weekly to a daily paper. He returned to San Angelo in 1952 as president of the Standard-Times.

Ed and his family came to Corpus Christi in 1956 when he became the promotions and public relations director for the Corpus Christi Caller-Times. He became the publisher of the Caller-Times in 1962, a title that he retained until his retirement in 1987. He was also an editor of the newspaper during the 1970’s and 1980’s.

Ed, his wife Janet, and their four children, Christopher M., William S., Elizabeth, and Julia have traveled the world to look at wildlife. Ed is an avid birder, a hobby that he and his wife shared until her death in 1999. Ed's love of the outdoors and his passion for conservation have infused all he has come in contact with. His friend and neighbor, Joe Hornblower, summed it up best when he said "Ed seems to be happiest when he's out in his garden, at the ranch or just outside anywhere looking at birds".
Milestones in Marine Science and University History at TAMU-CC

1947    University of Corpus Christi Founded
1957    Undergraduate Marine Science Program began
1973    University name changed to Texas A&I University-Corpus Christi
1975    MS Degree in Biology added (Marine Emphasis)
1977    University name changed to Corpus Christi State University
1984    Center for Coastal Studies created
1987    Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science endowed/created
1988    MS Degree in Mariculture added
1989    Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network began
1989    Joined Texas A&M University System
1992    MS Degree in Environmental Science added
1993    University name changed to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
1994    University expanded to Four-year Degree Programs
1996    State Natural Resources Center completed
2000    Harte Research Institute endowed
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, located on a 240-acre island just minutes from downtown Corpus Christi, is one of the state's fastest growing four-year universities and currently serves more than 8,500 students. The University is a member of the Texas A&M University System.

A&M-Corpus Christi has five colleges, the College of Science and Technology, the College of Arts and Humanities, the College of Business and the College of Education, and the College of Nursing. As of Spring 2007, A&M-Corpus Christi offers 33 undergraduate programs, 25 graduate programs and two doctoral programs.

Additional degree programs are being developed in response to the expanding student body and regional needs. The University also provides continuing education and outreach programs that serve the needs of area businesses, professionals and the general population.

A&M-Corpus Christi is committed to the pursuit of excellence in instruction, research and other forms of scholarly activity and public service. Consistent with this commitment, the University seeks to identify, recruit and retain students who have high potential for academic success, especially those from groups who historically have been under-represented in higher education.