

# 2015



## President's Report to the Board of Regents



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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

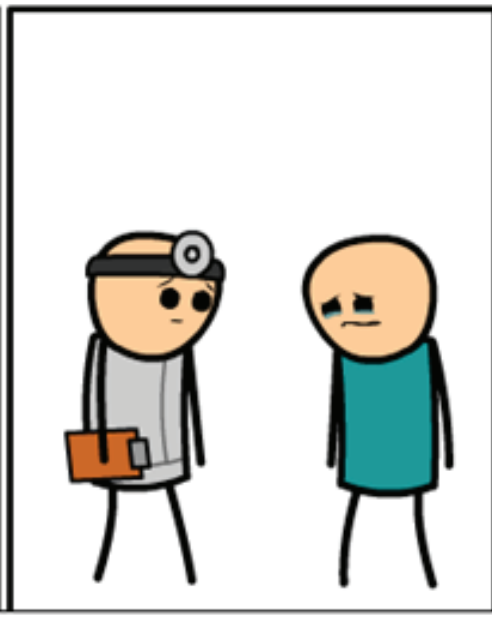


Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D.  
President

October 2015

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Cyanide and Happiness © Explosm.net

# TTUHSC Designates 24 Faculty Members as *University Distinguished Professors*

As part of a new faculty development initiative, the deans of each of TTUHSC's five schools reviewed credentials of all faculty members and selected 24 to be honored as "University Distinguished Professors." These elite faculty members were presented with a letter designating them as UDPs, signed by the president and all deans. Each will be given a monetary award and a university medallion.

In addition, University Distinguished Professors will also represent the membership from which future Grover Murray Professors will be selected.

- Min Kang, PharmD Associate Professor, Cell Biology & Biochemistry SOM
- Fakhru Ahsan, PhD Associate Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences GSBS
- Susan Bergeson, PhD Associate Professor, Pharmacology & Neuroscience GSBS
- Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy, PhD Associate Professor & Director, Center of Excellence in Cancer Research GSBS
- Jon Weidanz, PhD., MPH Professor, Immunotherapeutics GSBS
- Jean-Michel Brismee, ScD Professor, Rehabilitation Sciences SHP
- Cheryl Sancibrian, MS Professor, Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences SHP
- Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD Professor, Laboratory Sciences & Primary Care SHP
- Phillip S. Sizer, Jr., PhD Professor, Rehabilitation Sciences SHP
- Rajinder K. Koul, PhD Professor, Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences SHP
- Thomas Thekkumkara, PhD Professor, Department Chair, Biomedical Sciences & School of Pharmacy Regional Dean SOP
- Thomas Abbruscato, PhD Professor, Department Chair, Pharmaceutical Sciences SOP
- Roland Patry, Dr.PH Professor & Regional Dean, SOP
- Sanjay Srivastava, PhD Professor, Associate Dean for Sciences SOP
- Barbara Cherry, DNSc, MBA, RN, NEA-BC Professor, Department Chair, Associate Dean for Leadership Studies SON
- Emily Merrill, PhD, APRN, FNP BC, CNE, FAANP Professor, Associate Dean / Department Chair for APRN Programs, Certified Family Nurse Practitioner, The CH Foundation Endowed Professorship in APRN Studies SON
- Sharon B. Cannon, EdD, RN, ANEF Professor & Regional Dean, SON
- Alyce Ashcraft, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF Professor, Associate Dean for Research SON
- Patricia Allen, EdD, RN, CNE, ANEF, FAAN Professor & Director, Nursing Education Track SON
- Shailesh "Bobby" Jain, MD, MPH, ABDA Associate Professor & Regional Chair, Psychiatry SOM
- Robert S. Urban, MD, FACP Professor & Vice Chair, Internal Medicine SOM
- Betsy Goebel Jones, EdD Professor & Chair, Medical Education SOM
- Simon Williams, PhD Professor & Associate Dean, Academic Affairs SOM
- Richard Lampe, MD Professor & Chair, Pediatrics SOM

# TTUHSC Students Continue to Enjoy Low Graduating Debt

Graduating Students by School		Total Debt	# Grad Borrowers	Borrower Avg Debt	# of Graduates	Graduate Avg Debt
SHP	Health Professions	\$12,997,914	296	\$43,912	465	\$27,953
GSBS	Biomedical Sciences	\$805,544	19	\$42,397	42	\$19,180
SON	Nursing	\$8,790,220	363	\$24,215	663	\$13,258
SOM	Medicine	\$14,085,269	107	\$131,638	129	\$109,188
SOM-FMAT	Medicine Family Medicine Accelerated Track	\$708,413	6	\$118,069	7	\$101,202
SOP	Pharmacy	\$13,905,392	120	\$115,878	139	\$100,039
		\$51,292,752	911	\$56,304	1445	\$35,497

Average debt  
US medical school  
graduates:  
**\$162,000**  
(American Medical  
News)

Average debt  
US pharmacy school  
graduates:  
**\$123,063**  
(Am J Pharm Ed -  
2014)

Average debt  
US college student  
at graduation:  
**\$28,400**  
(USNWR - Nov  
2014)

debt





## TTUHSC Offers Dignitary Medical Support Service in the Permian Basin

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, working in conjunction with the Midland Police Department (MPD), has been offering medical support to the MPD when dignitaries from the state or elsewhere come to the community. The program was established by the president's office and is run by Jason Cooper, a faculty member in the School of Health Professions. Mr. Cooper is a physician assistant as well as a paramedic. The program has offered assistance for a number of high profile individuals and officials, including many of the current candidates for the upcoming 2016 presidential election.



## New Interstate Sign on Interstate-20 Directs Travelers to TTUHSC in Abilene



The Texas Department of Transportation installed signage on Interstate 20 to direct Abilene visitors to the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) at Abilene. To celebrate the installation, TTUHSC and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony at which TTUHSC President Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D., and Texas State House Representative Susan Lewis King of District 71 made remarks about the progress and impact of TTUHSC in Abilene.

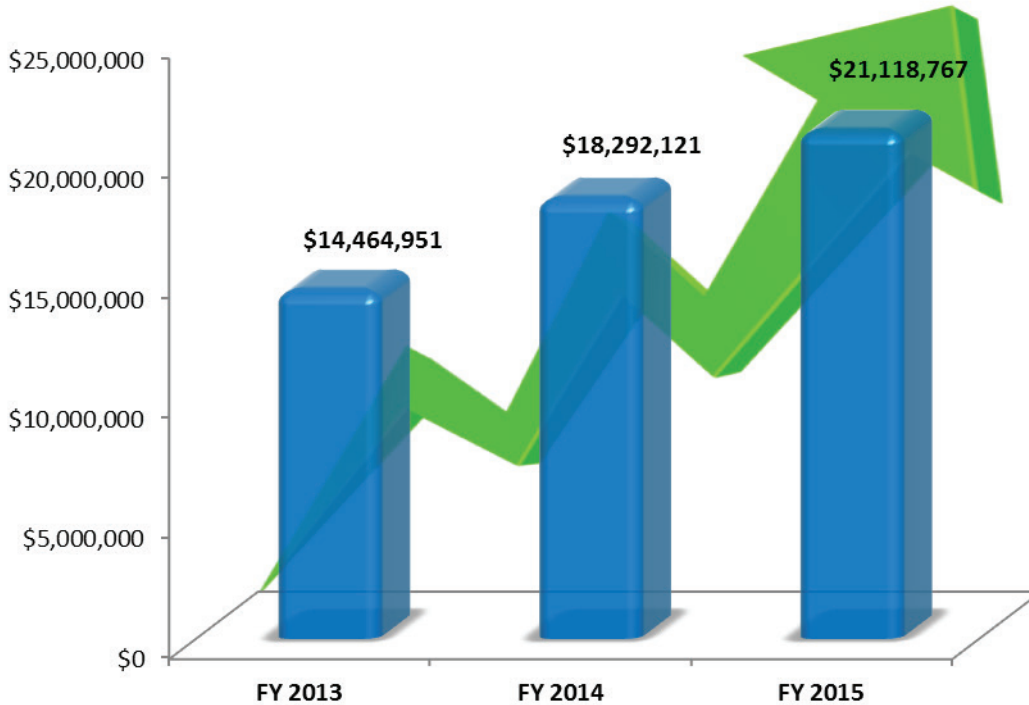
“TTUHSC in Abilene has seen rapid growth and is proud to serve Taylor County and nearby rural populations,”

Mitchell said. “We are grateful to Representative King and TxDOT for recognizing our impact in Abilene and having these signs installed.”

King, who championed the cause of bringing the signs to Interstate 20 since TTUHSC at Abilene was first established, said she always envisioned the sign being a great testimony to Abilene, its commitment to quality education and health care and TTUHSC.

The signs are visible to eastbound and westbound visitors entering Abilene where TTUHSC educates students in the School of Nursing, School of Pharmacy and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Department of Public Health.

# Externally Funded Research Awards Continue to Increase (record growth)



*External RESEARCH Awards for TTUHSC (non El Paso)*

*Includes NIH, Other Federal, State and Private funding awards*

## Presidents' Research Awards Announced for TTUS

Final Rankings	Budget Considerations
Top seven   10-11 points	
Kaye (TTU) and Zeng (TTUHSC)	Full funding – 50K
Sundin (TTUHSC) and Reid (TTUHSC)	Full funding – 50K
James (TTUHSC) and Yang (TTU)	Full funding – 50K
Nes (TTU) and Siddiqui (TTUHSC)	Full funding – 50K
Chen (TTU) and Yang (TTUHSC)	Consider 40K
Grisham (TTUHSC) and Kottapalli (TTU)	Consider 30K
Lee (TTUHSC) and Mengel (TTU)	Consider 30K
Next tier   8-9 points	
Garg (TTUHSC) and Gao (TTU)	Consider 25K
Sandoval-Escamilla (TTUHSC) and O'Boyle (TTU)	Consider 25K
Hegde (TTU) and Reddy (TTUHSC)	Consider 25K
Backus (TTU) and Bergeson (TTUHSC)	Consider 25K

*Total budget: \$400,000  
11 research groups funded  
63 applications  
17.5% success rate*



# TTUHSC Receives “Gold Seal” Accreditation for Human Research Protection



Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center has received accreditation by The Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP) an independent and worldwide oversight group. AAHRPP accreditation provides evidence that TTUHSC meets rigorous standards through policies, procedures, and practices—of the Institutional commitment to scientifically and ethically sound research and to continuous improvement. As the “gold seal,” AAHRPP accreditation offers assurances—to research participants, researchers, sponsors, government regulators, and the general public of the quality of human subjects program at TTUHSC.

AAHRPP accreditation followed a year of internal evaluation and process improvements that was evaluated by an external “site visit” team sent by the accreditation organization. Over 40 administrators, Institutional Review Board members, researchers and research staff from the Lubbock and Amarillo campuses were interviewed during the site visit to ensure that written policies were known and best practices were being followed.

AAHRPP accredits high-quality human research protection programs in order to promote excellent, ethically sound research.

With this recognition, TTUHSC becomes one of only 12 of the Texas hospitals and educational institutions to have received accreditation.



## Starving Cancer

### *Research Shows Promise for Cancer Treatment*

The human body is made up of billions of cells, all of which are the building blocks of our organs and tissues. With cancer, cells in a part of the body can begin to grow out of control. Vadivel Ganapathy, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry, has found a new strategy for cancer therapy — starve the cancer.

“We work on different cancers - breast, colon, lung and pancreas,” Ganapathy said. “Cancer is so difficult to treat. We come up with so many drugs but none of them turns out to be an ideal drug. Most drugs on the market right now only extend the lifespan of a cancer patient to a small extent, often only in terms of months. No one has been able to come up with a drug to cure it.”

Ganapathy came from Georgia Regents University to the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine less than a year ago and has continued research focusing on providing drug therapies to stop cancer. In order to come up with a new idea or drug target to extend life much longer, he and his



research team knew they had to look at the logic that cancer grows out of control.

“Cancer just keeps growing,” Ganapathy said. “One thing that differentiates cancer from a normal tissue is that the cancer cells need a lot of nutrients like food for growth. Question is, how does the cancer get this food? If you can find the mechanism by which the cancer cells get their food, logic is very simple. Stop providing the food; then we can starve the cancer cells and bring them to their death.”

Ganapathy’s lab first identified how cancer gets its food. The nutrients included glucose, amino acids and vitamins. The next step was to find the mechanism to starve the cancer cells. How can the delivery of nutrients to cancer cells be stopped?

“The tricky thing is that normal tissues need nutrients to survive as well,” Ganapathy said. “You come up with a drug that can differentiate between the entry of the nutrients into the normal cell versus the cancer cell. You don’t want to kill normal cells.”

Ganapathy knew his research team needed to come up with a drug, which would selectively starve only cancer cells to death. If they did that, such drugs would be selective for cancer because the mechanism does not operate in the normal cell.

With that in mind, he identified the protein called the amino acid transporter SLC6A14. He explained that the transporter is sitting on the cell and allows certain nutrients to go from the blood into the cell. Since the protein transports the nutrients from outside to inside the cell, the researchers called them transporters.

“We have identified this transporter, which will transport amino acids into cells,” Ganapathy said. “This transporter is presented at very high levels in cancer cells and low levels in normal cells. If we can come up with a drug to stop the function of this transporter, it will have a selective effect on cancer cells. For instance, lung cancer must have a different transporter to get amino acids because our transporter is not



found in this cancer. Thus, our transporter SLC6A14 is not a universal drug target for all cancers.”

In Ganapathy’s research lab, manipulating the gene for this transporter in mice provided proof of principal. The mouse is called the “knockout mouse” because the gene that makes this transporter is knocked out in this mouse. Interestingly, the knockout mouse looked normal.

“We took the knockout mouse and did an experiment to induce breast cancer in these mice,” Ganapathy said. “In normal mice, cancer developed as expected. But in the knockout mouse, cancer development was much slower. This showed us that the transporter is needed for breast cancer; if it is not there the growth of cancer is delayed.”

In humans, genes cannot be removed. Ganapathy and his research team had to come up with a small molecule or drug that can block the entry of nutrients via this transporter to reduce growth in the cancer. They found the drug blocks the transport system. The team then took that idea and made a new class of anti-cancer drugs. This drug has been effective in mice with breast cancer and pancreatic cancer, but has not yet been tested in humans. Ganapathy hopes to test this drug in cancer patients.

“We now have to take this to the next step, which is clinical trials with humans,” Ganapathy said.



## Building a Healthier Future

### *Public Health Students Hold Promise for Healthy Communities | September 21, 2015*

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) at Abilene hosted a reception and dinner for the inaugural class of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Master of Public Health program. Students from both the Lubbock and Abilene campuses and Texas State House Representative Susan Lewis King attended. The event served as an opportunity for all Abilene campus students, faculty and staff to mingle with community members and celebrate the successes and contributions of each program.

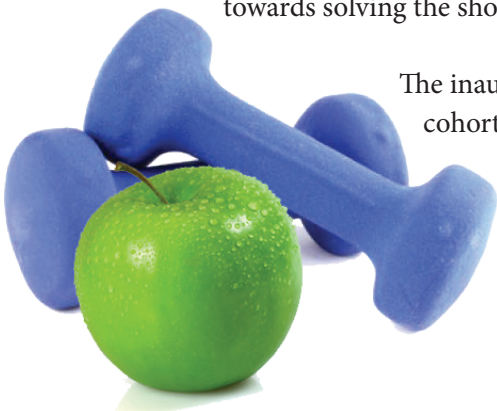
Julie St. John, DrPH, assistant professor in the department of public health, welcomed the inaugural class and said, “The inaugural Master of Public Health class represents specially trained public health professionals coming to West Texas, an area historically lacking in formally trained public health practitioners.” Additionally, St John said “The class provides an opportunity to impact the health status of community residents through technical assistance, leadership and public health expertise.”



There is a pervasive shortage in qualified public health professionals in the U.S. TTUHSC’s Master of Public Health program will create opportunities for more people to serve in the field. “The current lack of well-trained public health professionals increases the risk to West Texas of infectious-disease outbreaks, natural disasters and preventable disease,” St. John said. “Practically speaking, public health also is an effective way to control soaring health care costs through prevention, outreach and education efforts.”

TTUHSC President Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D., said the public health program is a means to strengthen the university’s relationship with Abilene.

“TTUHSC in Abilene has seen rapid growth and is proud to serve this city, the surrounding Taylor County and rural populations,” Mitchell said. “In offering the public health program in Abilene, TTUHSC became an important contributor towards solving the shortage of qualified public health professionals both in this area and the world.”



The inaugural class in Lubbock will graduate in May 2016, followed by the first Abilene cohort in May 2017, and go on to fulfill a variety of roles in the growing public health field.

# TTUHSC Interviews More Minority Applicants Than Any Medical School in the Nation

## Which Medical Schools Interview the Most Minority Applicants?

Each of these schools interviewed at least 215 underrepresented applicants, according to *U.S. News and World Report* | By Delece Smith-Barrow Aug. 25, 2015 | 9:00 a.m. EDT

When it comes to applying to medical school, filling out applications is just the beginning. An interview with a school's admissions staff is often the last hurdle applicants must cross before getting an acceptance letter – and it's not an easy one. Underrepresented minorities, which include African-Americans and Latinos, often don't make it to this stage of the application process or get accepted.

In 2011, the most recent year for which data are available, only 6.1 percent of medical school matriculants were black and 8.5 percent were Hispanic, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Some of the most competitive medical schools interview the most underrepresented minorities, according to data submitted by 109 ranked institutions to U.S. News in an annual survey. Below are the 10 schools that interviewed the most underrepresented minorities for the class starting in fall of 2014:

School (name) (state)	Underrepresented minorities interviewed for fall 2014	All applicants interviewed	All fall 2014 enrollees	U.S. News research rank	U.S. News primary care rank
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TX)	318	768	181	83 (tie)	85 (tie)
George Washington University (DC)	276	1150	178	67 (tie)	RNP
Tufts University (MA)	257	948	200	49 (tie)	52 (tie)
Yale University (CT)	239	745	104	7	57 (tie)
University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio	236	960	203	55 (tie)	67 (tie)
Dartmouth College (Geisel) (NH)	231	752	89	37 (tie)	29 (tie)
University of Illinois (IL)	226	827	297	49 (tie)	85 (tie)
University of California—San Diego (CA)	225	743	125	17	19 (tie)
Columbia University (NY)	217	1064	157	8 (tie)	52 (tie)
Boston University (MA)	215	1069	166	30	52 (tie)

Minority applicants can't assume that the number of students interviewed translates to the number of students who will be accepted and enrolled. Texas Tech, for example, interviewed the most underrepresented minorities but those students only have an acceptance rate of 4.2 percent for that school.



# Bono Named Head of Defense Health Agency

By Patricia Kime, Staff writer MilitaryTimes | 11:42 a.m. | EDT September 18, 2015

**A** Navy rear admiral has been named the second director of the Defense Health Agency.

The Defense Department announced Thursday that Rear Adm. Raquel Bono, a surgeon currently leading the National Capital Region Medical Directorate and serving as Medical Corps chief, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, will be promoted to vice admiral to lead the nascent agency.

Bono was commissioned in 1979, earning her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas and a medical degree from Texas Tech University School of Medicine. Notable assignments include serving as: head of casualty receiving, Fleet Hospital Five in Saudi Arabia during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; director of restorative care at National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland; director of medical services at NNNMC, executive assistant to the Navy surgeon general; and commanding officer of Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Florida.

As DHA director, she will oversee an organization responsible for executing the military health program, including providing common health services for military hospitals and clinics, overseeing Tricare, and managing the system's information technology, education, training, research and facilities programs.



*Bono earned her medical degree from Texas Tech University School of Medicine*

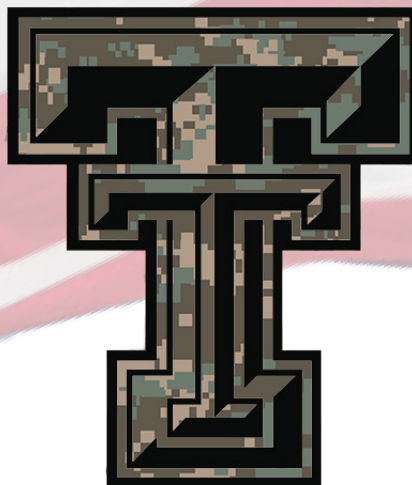
# TTUHSC Veteran Nursing Program Receives More Than \$1 Million Grant

*Veterans to begin coursework across Texas in spring 2016 | Tuesday, September 1, 2015*

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Nursing Veteran to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN) program has received a \$1,040,615 grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The program is an accelerated track for veterans with military medical experience who are looking to pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing, beginning spring 2016.

The HRSA Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention (NEPQR) grant is awarded to academic, service and continuing education projects designed to enhance nursing education, improve the quality of patient care, increase nurse retention and strengthen the nursing workforce. The NEPQR program seeks to broadly advance the nursing workforce by supporting programs that create opportunities in the nursing profession.

Many veterans have extensive military medical training and experience, but until now these individuals have found it difficult to translate the knowledge gained in the military into civilian course credit hours. TTUHSC School of Nursing offers an opportunity for veterans who wish to attain a BSN degree, but already have experience and skills that exceed that of most traditional undergraduate nursing students. The program's ability to allow more highly qualified nurses to quickly enter the workforce is incredibly relevant as Texas continues to face a persistent nursing shortage.





## School of Nursing Faculty Participate in Educational Trip

*Nurses learn about the global status of the nursing profession | Monday, August 10, 2015*

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) nursing faculty members spent time this summer learning about the global climate in nursing at the place where the profession first began, the Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital, which is now a part of King's College in London.

Alyce Ashcraft, Ph.D., R.N., CNE, professor and associate dean for research, and Yondell Masten, Ph.D., R.N., WHNP-BC, professor, associate dean for outcomes management and evaluation and The Florence Thelma Hall Endowed Chair for Nursing Excellence in Women's Health, spent time immersing themselves in nursing history and perspectives on the efficacy of various nursing practice models in England.

"From what we learned, the National Health System in England, much like our health care system, is looking for ways to save money," Ashcraft said. "Currently, citizens of the United Kingdom pay for health care as part of their taxes, versus paying at the point of care as it is in the U.S. A plus to this system is nursing students in England currently do not have to pay tuition."

While many on the trip could relate well to the need for providers to find ways to reduce costs having recently dealt with similar issues, the seminars and following discussions also revealed the opportunity for nurses to create solutions to global health care concerns.

For the nurses who attended the conference, there was

a special connection between the subject matter and the history of the facility in which the event took place. Nightingale herself frequently advocated for similar policies in her nursing practice.



"Florence Nightingale essentially started the modern nursing profession through the nursing school at St. Thomas Hospital, and her methods continue to shape the nursing field today," Ashcraft said. "Her techniques were simple, such as improving the patient's environment for better outcomes and requiring caregivers to wash their hands between patients. Obviously, we still teach these things today."

For Ashcraft and the other nursing professors in attendance, Nightingale is also a role model as the first formal nursing educator.

"Nightingale elevated nursing education from an apprenticeship to formal education that was systematically taught to the novice nurse," Ashcraft said. "Essentially, Florence Nightingale developed a curriculum of study that focused on the patient's hygiene, nutrition and environment. She looked at outcomes and consequences beyond daily care and saw the long-term implications. This is something we still teach our students today."

Ashcraft says that regular trips to nursing programs are in the works, and she hopes they will continue to expand TTUHSC School of Nursing's appreciation for the diverse nursing network worldwide.

# McMurry, Texas Tech announce pharmacy school partnership

By Andrew McMillan | ABILENE, Texas

**M**cmurry University and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) will be working together to give students a quicker path to obtaining a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, according to a news release.

McMurry President Dr. Sandra Harper and Dr. Quentin Smith, dean of the TTUHSC School of Pharmacy, signed an agreement Tuesday that will let McMurry students transition to the pharmacy school after their junior year.

The plan will save students a year's worth of tuition, but it will also include a bigger course load to make up for the time saved.

"It's not for the faint of heart, the rigor of the outlined coursework at McMurry University still fully prepares them for their transition to Pharmacy School," Dr. Larry Sharp, a biology professor at McMurry, said.

"McMurry has always had a close relationship with the Texas Tech School of Pharmacy and many of our students have gone on to successful careers in pharmacy after graduating from Texas Tech's program," Harper said.

The schools have not yet announced when the agreement will take effect.





# TTUHSC Student Appointed to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Monday, August 17, 2015

Governor Greg Abbott recently appointed Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) student Christina Delgado to serve as the student representative for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). She will represent students from across the state.

Delgado, a TTUHSC Student Government Association senator, is pursuing a master's degree in speech pathology from the TTUHSC School of Health Professions. She received a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies from North Greenville University and a master's degree in biblical studies from the Dallas Theological Seminary.

Delgado, who is in her second-year at TTUHSC, was born and raised in San Antonio and when her family moved, attended high school in Florida. Later as an undergraduate she knew she wanted to find a way to bring together her two loves, her faith and empowering people to communicate.

"I knew working in the ministry would be a tough way to make a living, but the experiences I had serving people in so many places was inspiring," Delgado said. "I wanted to find a way to do both, work in a health care profession and use it to serve the church."

**...It hurt to put my shoes in, but one of the ladies picked them up.**

Delgado first completed her leveling classes at Abilene Christian University before deciding to attend TTUHSC to work on her master's degree.

"At most schools, speech pathology programs are

separate from other programs, almost like their own little islands," Delgado said. "I loved that at TTUHSC the emphasis is on the importance of interprofessionalism, collaborating



with other students outside of my field of study and preparing me to work with other health care professionals. That really drew me here."

Delgado's desire to work with others from different backgrounds may also come from her experiences in numerous countries around the world. She has taught English in Russia and in China; completed relief work in Africa and Mexico and studied abroad in Central America.

Delgado said she has dabbled in learning many languages like Chinese, SiSwati and Kuna. She had opportunities to travel to other countries like Swaziland, sleep in hammocks in Panama and live in a poor farming community in Nicaragua.

Delgado said she has always learned about the importance of giving back. She remembered while in Swaziland, she and her group went to the side of mountain to minister to people living in huts. She didn't expect her favorite pair of tennis shoes to be a key in developing an understanding for other cultures.

"I kept hearing God leading me to put the shoes in the offerings during the service," Delgado said. "There when the



church has offerings people give the fruits of the produce or from their trade. Whoever was in need would take something they would need. It hurt to put my shoes in, but one of the ladies picked them up.”

Years later, Delgado was told by one of the ladies visiting the U.S. that the tennis shoes were taken that day by the evangelist of the church. She would minister to the people in the mountains and had to stop because the land was too rough on her bare feet. She was able to resume her ministry when she received the tennis shoes.

“Those experiences are life changing,” Delgado said. “I don’t know how my future will all play out. I chose to do speech pathology because it is in demand everywhere. If I am called abroad, I will be able to minister physically and spiritually.”

Last month, she went to Austin and completed her orientation as well as met with key staff members of the board. Delgado also attended her first committee meeting.

Delgado’s role in this new student position will be to participate in all THECB and committee meetings. As the student representative, she is free to ask questions and speak on behalf of the students of Texas when they have concerns or questions about the decisions the board is making.



At most schools, speech pathology programs are separate from other programs, almost like their own little islands

“It is truly a privilege to be included as part of the team with the board members,” Delgado said. “I look forward to partnering with such an incredible group of people to improve Texas education and make it available to all students, regardless of their background and culture.”



# School of Health Professions Hosts Summer Programs

*Summer therapy serves as opportunity for clients and students | September 1, 2015*

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Health Professions Speech Language and Hearing Clinic hosted several summer programs to increase patients' access to therapy and provide speech language and hearing sciences and occupational therapy students the opportunity to hone skills learned in their programs.

The wide range of programs included the annual Matador Munchers program focused on building positive food experiences for children ages three to six years with food selectivity. Clients were successfully encouraged to explore foods they would normally refuse due to sensory aversion, behavioral issues or oral motor deficits.



For the student clinicians, the four-week session was a confidence-building opportunity to work with clients firsthand with the guidance of licensed veteran clinicians.

“Not all graduate speech-language pathology students have the opportunity to get training in pediatric feeding within a clinical setting,” Granados said. “Therefore, being involved in a pediatric feeding group like Matador Munchers is a unique experience for the students who get to participate.”

Additionally, the speech, language and hearing sciences students were paired with

occupational therapy students and had the opportunity to learn the value of interprofessional collaboration.

“This year, we also had involvement from occupational therapy students, and they had an interprofessional experience collaborating together,” Granados said. “Within pediatric feeding, there is a lot of overlap in what the two fields do. If you were looking at the group working, you couldn't tell which students were in occupational therapy and which were in speech-language pathology. They worked so well together.”

The combined skills of occupational therapy and speech-language pathology came together at Matador Munchers to create a positive environment in which to overcome pervasive food aversions. In addition to the skilled collaboration, the summer program also met more often and at a strategic time of day, which Granados said yielded better outcomes.

Chelsea Cullins, speech-language pathology student,

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“...a pediatric feeding group like Matador Munchers is a unique experience for the students who get to participate.”

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“We focus on clients with food selectivity because of its potential impact on a child's level of nutrition,” said Sarai Granados, M.S., CCC-SLP, Matador Munchers program coordinator, clinical instructor. “For instance, a child may have a diet restricted to ten foods or less due to food aversion. Their health may suffer for that, so we work to minimize those aversions via positive food experiences for the clients combined with education for the family.”

worked in the Tech Tykes program, which is supervised by Brittany Hall, M.S., CCC-SLP, LSLC Cert. AVT, clinical instructor, and focuses on building language skills in children ages three to six with speech delays. The summer programs offered the opportunity to get hands-on clinical experience.

“I hoped to gain a better understanding of clinic procedures before the fall semester started,” recalled Cullins. “I wanted to gain experiences interacting with an individual client with the opportunity to get direct feedback from supervisors. I was able to adjust to the entire procedure, including the therapy and the necessary paperwork.”



in each activity,” Cullins said. “Tech Tykes improved my flexibility as a clinician, my ability to manage my time between clients and my alertness.”

Students also participated in Raider Readers, which focuses on developing social skills and literacy in children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Carolyn Perry, M.S., CCC-SLP, Raider Readers coordinator, assistant professor, said the summer programs offer students the first opportunity to work in a clinical setting and the experience changes their perspective.

Like with Matador Munchers, the intensity of Raider Readers sessions often leads to rapid progress. Perry says this is an exciting time of transformation, which reinforces to the students the significance of the work they are doing.

“One parent was worried at first, but on the last day, her eyes welled up with tears watching her child participate in the production beautifully,” Perry recalled. “Most of our students were a little misty-eyed as well. It actually does support the new initiative, ‘Your Life. Our Purpose.’”

Students recognized the rapid improvement in their skills and confidence, as well. Sara Eaton, a Speech-Language Pathology program student, who assisted with the Stroke and Aphasia Recovery (STAR) Arts program said getting one-on-one clinical coaching from faculty was a great help.

“It improved me because it took my biggest weaknesses and made me work on them all day, every day,” Eaton said. “I learned even more than I expected.”

Since the summer program was Cullins’ first graduate clinical experience, she learned to overcome the unique obstacles that can occur in therapy each day.

“Each day presented new challenges, whether it was figuring out how to modify the day’s activities for my specific client or how to engage them

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“One parent was worried at first, but on the last day, her eyes welled up with tears watching her child participate in the production beautifully,”

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# YOUR LIFE

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@TeddLMitchell



@TTUHSCPresident

