



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER  
School of Pharmacy™

*Amarillo • Lubbock • Dallas/Fort Worth • Abilene*

*From the* **DEAN'S  
DESK**



*March - April 2009*

## Ceremonies Held for TTUHSC and SOP Buildings

As many of you know, April 6 was a big day for TTUHSC and the School of Pharmacy. That morning we officially cut the ribbon on the new TTUHSC Amarillo Research Building and then held a "Topping Out" ceremony for the SOP's academic classroom center.

TTUHSC President Dr. John Baldwin, Amarillo Mayor Debra McCartt, TTUHSC -Amarillo Assistant Vice President for Fiscal Affairs Dr. Michael Hooten and TTU Facility Planning and Construction Vice Chancellor Mike Ellicott spoke at both events.

SOM Regional Dean Dr. Richard Jordan, SOP Associate Dean for Research Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara and SOM Assistant Dean of Research Dr. Thomas Hale also addressed the crowd at the ribbon cutting.

Summer Balcer, SOP Assistant Dean for Student Services and first-year pharmacy student Brett Noteware joined me as speakers at the topping out ceremony.

Amarillo Chamber of Commerce representatives attended both ceremonies and Western Builders sponsored a post-event reception.

The 48,000 square-foot Amarillo Research Building provides additional space for 13-15 SOP laboratories and offices for researchers and support personnel. We began moving into the building in February.

The SOP's academic classroom building will include two classrooms, a patient simulation and assessment lab and administrative office space. Construction should be completed in the fall and we expect to be using it no later than the spring 2010 semester.

*SOP Lead Account Processor LaWana Boyd signs the ceremonial white beam at the Topping Out Ceremony held for the new SOP's academic classroom building.*



*SOP Associate Dean for Research Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara (left), SOM Assistant Dean for Research Dr. Thomas Hale (center) and TTUHSC President Dr. John Baldwin cut the ribbon on the new TTUHSC Amarillo Research Building.*

*A construction worker guides the final beam into place at the Topping Out Ceremony, held in April at the main SOP campus in Amarillo.*



## **North Texas Organization Recognizes SOP Professor**

Congratulations to Dr. Amie Blaszczyk (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice – Dallas/Fort Worth), who was recently named the 2009 Marvin Marks Volunteer of the Year by the North Texas Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association.

She received the award for her work on behalf on Parkinson's patients and their caregivers April 25 at a symposium held at Baylor Medical Center in Dallas.

"I love that I can combine my passions of helping people with my abilities as a pharmacist," Dr. Blaszczyk says. "It's truly a blessing; it's amazing the impact one can have by simply asking if someone else needs help!"

Dr. Blaszczyk first became interested in working with seniors early in her life "when my mother would take me in to her work at a local nursing home."

After receiving her Pharm.D. degree, she completed a PGY2 residency in geriatrics. It was during this time that she discovered her passion for working with Parkinson's patients.

"The individuals I worked with were some of the most educated people about their disease state, yet their need for answers to medication-related questions was immense. They have such wonderful stories to tell, and I love knowing that I am helping them become safer with their medicines."

Dr. Blaszczyk began working with the APDA North Texas chapter shortly after arriving at the TTUHSC-SOP campus in Dallas/fort Worth. Since that time she has participated in many of the organization's support groups and organized a quarterly event know as "Lunch with the Pharmacist." She also writes a



*Dr. Amie Blaszczyk poses with the 2009 Marvin Marks Volunteer of the Year Award.*

medicine-focused column for The Parkinson Quarterly newsletter.

"People with Parkinson's disease have a lot of questions, so most of our one-on-one time is spent answering questions of a more personal nature," Dr. Blaszczyk explains. "The participants at the lunches usually come with a list of questions, most of which they are comfortable asking in front of everyone. However, the one-on-one allows them an opportunity to ask questions they don't want to ask in front of the group."

She says many times the individuals bring her lists of their medicines that they simply want a pharmacist to evaluate.

"I get a lot of 'Does this look OK?' when they hand me their list. So many of these individuals see more than one doctor who is prescribing medicines, and I always stress the importance of using one pharmacy for all of their prescriptions because of this."

Since she is so passionate about community outreach and APDA, Dr. Blaszczyk enlists the help of several SOP students each semester and includes work with Parkinson's patients and their caregivers in her student rotations.

"Essentially the students are extensions of myself. There are 40-50 participants at many of

these events and they have so many questions. The students are able to spend that one-on-one time with the participants and answer those more personal questions. I've also had several students help me with putting together the newsletter column."

Dr. Blaszczyk says the students' work is appreciated and well received by the patients and caregivers who participate in the outreach efforts.

"All the students have been so professional and represent Texas Tech very well. They are very comfortable saying 'I don't know, let me ask Dr. Blaszczyk' when asked a question they truly do not know. This is so important, because giving individuals misinformation can be very dangerous.

"I always get at least one participant who will compliment the student they spoke with and I am always so proud when this happens. We have a lot of gifted students here at Texas Tech."



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## **Pharmaceutical Sciences Faculty to Tackle New Roles**

Although reorganization plans for the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences have not been finalized, two Department faculty members have accepted new positions directly related to those plans.

Effective Sept. 1, Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara, who is presently our Associate Dean for Research, will become the Regional Dean for the SOP's Amarillo campus. His job responsibilities will include: serving as acting dean when the dean is unavailable; serving on the SOP Executive Committee and the SOP Deans' Council; conducting extramurally funded research;



*Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara has been named the SOP's Amarillo Regional Dean.*

and teaching in the professional and graduate programs.

Dr. Thekkumkara will also represent the SOP to the Amarillo SOM and SOAHS; serve as the SOP member on the Amarillo Executive Committee with other Amarillo regional deans; work with the assistant dean for finance and administration on issues related to Amarillo facilities and operations.

Like our other regional deans in Lubbock (Dr. Charles Seifert), Dallas/Fort Worth (Dr. Richard Leff) and Abilene (Dr. Kim Powell), Dr. Thekkumkara will also address campus student issues in collaboration with the assistant dean for student services and the other regional deans.

Also on Sept. 1, department chair and University Distinguished Professor Dr. Quentin Smith will become Senior Associate Dean for School of Pharmacy Sciences.

In his new position, Dr. Smith will collaborate with the dean for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and department chairs on issues related to graduate program development and equity.

Dr. Smith will also serve on the Executive Committee and Deans' Council for the SOP; chair the SOP Faculty Research Advisory Committee; coordinate SOP research issues with the executive vice president for research of TTUHSC/TTU; conduct personal extramurally funded research; and teach in our professional and graduate programs.



*Dr. Quentin Smith will become Senior Associate Dean for School of Pharmacy Sciences*

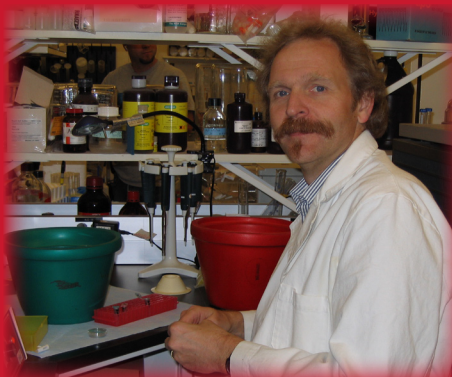
Drs. Thekkumkara and Smith have been very instrumental in guiding our pharmacy science and research efforts in the past. Their leadership and commitment will undoubtedly continue as they transition into their new roles.

## **Stoll Named to New Associate Dean Position**

It is my pleasure to announce that Dr. James Stoll has accepted the position of Associate Dean for Faculty Enhancement (Development), effective May 1, 2009.

I look forward to Dr. Stoll's leadership with the Faculty Enhancement Committee as it addresses the opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and productivity of our faculty. He has been recognized on several occasions as an outstanding teacher. His leadership in this

important effort for the School and our learners will benefit all faculty



*Dr. James Stoll will assume the role of Associate Dean for Faculty Enhancement on May 1.*

members in each department, and across all campuses.

I also wish to acknowledge the leadership Dr. Cindy Raehl provided as Interim Associate Dean for Faculty Enhancement over the last several months. Her efforts in working with Dr. Ahsan as Chair of the Committee this year will be very evident at our July Retreat. We will devote a half day to the program demonstrating innovative instructional practices of our own faculty.

### **Seven Students Secure Star Spangled Scholarships**

The Texas Tech Student Senate recently awarded a Double-T Star Spangled Scholarship to seven SOP students.

The SOP's 2009 recipients include Amarillo P1s Ronald Chai and Brett Noteware; Abilene P1 Cristalyn Sageser; Amarillo P2s Allison Mahon and Nicholas Muro; Abilene P2 Loren Davies;

and Nikhil Vad, who is enrolled in the SOP's Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Amarillo campus.

The Double-T Star Spangled Scholarship are available each year to all TTUHSC students and are made possible by various Student Senate fund raising endeavors held throughout the year.



Ronald Chai



Brett Noteware



Cristalyn Sageser



Allison Mahon



Nicholas Muro



Loren Davies



Nikhil Vad

### **TSHP Selects Four SOP Students for Scholarships**

Four 2009 Texas Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists Education Foundation scholarships were recently awarded to SOP students in Amarillo and Lubbock.

The honorees and the scholarship awarded included:

- Madelyne Cearley (P3 - Lubbock), who received the Eustacio Galvan Memorial Scholarship.

- Tyler Wood (P2 – Amarillo), who was awarded the Gene Lake Scholarship.

- Matthew Cox (P1 – Amarillo), recipient of the Jon Peyton Hudlow Memorial Scholarship.

- Amarillo P2 Keith Holguin, who was awarded the Michael Patry Memorial/TTUHSC SOP/El Paso Health-System Pharmacists Scholarship.



Madelyne Cearley



Tyler Wood



Matthew Cox



Keith Holguin

### **Thomas Named Outstanding GSBS Student**



Dr. Chandan Thomas

Dr. Chandan Thomas was selected the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Outstanding Graduate Student for 2009.

Chandan will complete a doctoral degree May 2009 in the Pharmaceutical Sciences program. After an award presentation at the GSBS convocation on May 15, he will carry the GSBS seal in the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center commencement ceremony on May 16.

Chandan is the fourth GSBS student from the SOP's Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences to earn this privilege since 2005, when Dr. Prasad Chimalakonda was the honoree. Dr. Alamdar Hussain received the award in 2006 and Dr. Jennifer Paulson, who is presently a P3 at our Amarillo campus, received the award in 2008.

Chandan worked with Dr. Fakhrol Ahsan (Assoc. Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Amarillo) and defended his dissertation, entitled “,” on March 23.

Chandan has accepted an assistant professor position with the Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Pharmacy in Bradenton, FL.

## TSHP Recognizes Telepharmacy Program

In April the Texas Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists awarded its 2009 Innovative Collaborative Practice Award to the TTUHSC Pharmacy in Lubbock. The presentation took place in Austin at the TSHP Annual Seminar.

The Innovative Collaborative Practice award honors a department or other organized group of pharmacy professionals who provide patient care in a creative, interdisciplinary fashion.

The 2009 award recognized the efforts of the TTUHSC Telepharmacy program, which



*SOP Lubbock Regional Dean Dr. Charles Seifert (left), TSHP President Mike Sanborn, Lubbock Service Chief Dr. Diane Kretschmer and Dr. Sidney Ontai pose with the TSHP 2009 Innovative Collaborative Practice Award.*

is a collaborative effort between TTUHSC-SOP, the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and

Community Health's Center for Telemedicine and Dr. Sidney Ontai (TTUHSC-SOM).

"What makes this award so satisfying for the SOP is that the events discussed are truly history making," SOP Lubbock regional dean Dr. Charles Seifert said. "The TTUHSC Pharmacy dispensed the first telepharmacy prescription in the State of Texas to the Turkey Medical Clinic on September 18, 2002."

The TTUHSC Telepharmacy program presently includes two sites: one in Turkey and one in Earth.

## In Case You Missed It...



*Katie Bennett*

- Katie Bennett, a Ph.D. candidate in the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences working in Dr. James Stoll's lab, defended her

doctoral dissertation entitled "Brain Transport Systems: Characterization of the basal forebrain choline transporter, novel organic cation transporters and lipocalin-2" on March 18.



*Dr. Ulrich Bickel*

- Dr. Ulrich Bickel (Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences - Amarillo) received a grant from the National Institute of Health for his research

entitled "Drug Delivery to CNS Endothelial Cells by Targeting Peptide-MHC Complexes."



*Dr. Reza Mehvar*

- Dr. Reza Mehvar (Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences - Amarillo) received a TTUHSC seed grant for his research entitled

"Pharmacological Approaches to Reduce Hepatic Ischemia Reperfusion Injury."



*Dr. Sanjay Srivastava*

- Dr. Sanjay Srivastava (Associate Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences - Amarillo) will speak May 15 at the Dept. of Neuroscience, Cell

Biology and Physiology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, Wright State University, Dayton, OH. The title of his talk is, "STAT-3: A Novel Target of Benzyl Isothiocyanate in Pancreatic Cancer Cells."



*Dr. Arthur Nelson*

- Dr. Arthur Nelson, SOP Dean, was named to a three-year term with the Commission on Credentialing for the American Society of Health-

System Pharmacists. He will fill the commission position dedicated to the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

## How to Submit Items for the Dean's Newsletter

The mission of "From the Dean's Desk" is to communicate the news, events and achievements from the TTUHSC School of Pharmacy to all four of our campus sites and to alumni and other friends of the school who enjoy hearing about your good work.

If you or your department, division, organization or class have something you'd like to include in this newsletter, or if you have a question about the types of items typically included in the newsletter, please contact:

Mark Hendricks  
Communications Coordinator  
TTUHSC-SOP/Amarillo  
806/356-4000 ext. 245  
mark.hendricks@ttuhsc.edu



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## Getting to Know...

**Shelia Printers  
Coordinator  
SOP Staff - Dallas/Fort Worth**

Shelia was born and raised in Fort Worth and presently lives in Garland. She received her B.S. in electrical engineering from Prairie View A& M University and then worked for several major companies in the Metroplex.

Shelia says one of her most exciting jobs was a summer co-op in Alaska aboard the NOAA ship MacArthur and that she was "one of the very first female engineers to work on that ship."

She eventually put her career on hold to become a stay-at-home mom for her youngest son. She then went to work as a substitute teacher for the Dallas Independent School District.



*Shelia Printers has been working as a coordinator at the SOP's Dallas/Fort Worth Southwest campus since September.*

Shelia and her husband, Kenneth, have three kids: one is a junior college student, one is teaching school and the youngest is a third-grader ("yes, a third grader," Shelia says).

The family also has several pets, including two dogs, a gold fish and a hermit crab.

Shelia describes herself as "a very outgoing, motherly and friendly person." She is active in her church, singing in the choir and serving as the Hospitality Chairperson for the Women's Ministry. In her spare time she enjoys shopping, reading, visiting her favorite vacation spot, Cancun, and "sitting out by the lake with family relaxing."

Shelia has been with TTUHSC and the SOP's Dallas/Fort Worth Southwest campus since September 2008.

"The Dallas SOP students have really made me feel appreciated and I truly love them all."

## SOP Photo Gallery



*Construction workers prepare to hoist the signed ceremonial beam at the April 6 Topping Out Ceremony for the SOP's academic classroom building.*

*Amarillo PIs Katherine Shuffer (left) and Kristy Ramirez take a look at one of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) posters that was displayed at the Amarillo campus in April.*



*Amarillo Mayor Debra McCartt puts her signature on the final beam to be put in place at the Topping Out Ceremony held for the new SOP's academic classroom building.*



*A close-up of the 2009 TSHP Innovative Collaborative Practice Award, which was presented to the TTUHSC Pharmacy in Lubbock in recognition of the TTUHSC Telepharmacy program.*



*Graduate Student Association of Amarillo members Li Yang (left), Vivek Gupta and Imam Shaik look on as a phlebotomist from Coffee Memorial Blood Center collects a donation at the GSAA Blood Drive in April.*