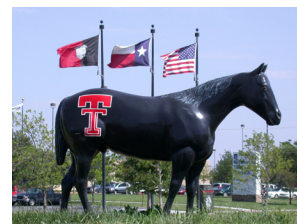




TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER  
School of Pharmacy™

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# From the DEAN'S DESK



November - December 2007

## Chancellor Honors SOP Faculty Members

Four faculty members from the entire Texas Tech University System were recently presented the Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching and Research Awards and two of the honorees were from the School of Pharmacy.

Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara (Associate Dean for Research and Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Amarillo) and Dr. Jon Weidanz (Associate Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Abilene) received the awards at a ceremony held Dec. 6 in Lubbock. Each was presented with a plaque and a \$10,000 cash award.

"These individuals are examples of the incredibly high quality of the faculty at both universities," said TTU Chancellor Kent Hance.



TTU Chancellor Kent Hance (far left) and TTUHSC President Dr. John Baldwin (far right) with Chancellor's Council Award honorees Dr. Thekkumkara and Dr. Weidanz from the SOP.

"They are among the many reasons our students receive an outstanding education. I am greatly impressed with the impact they make on our students and in their individual fields of scholarship."

The Chancellor's Council raises funds for student scholarships, faculty recruitment and support and other programs. This is the seventh year the Council has recognized the work of faculty members with these prestigious awards.

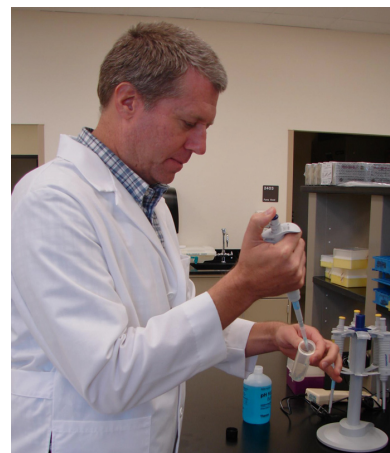
Dr. Thekkumkara joined TTUHSC and the SOP in 2000. In October he received the TTUHSC President's Research Achievement Award and in 2003 he was recipient of the TTUHSC Distinguished Faculty Award. He is widely published and has received research

funding from many sources during his time at the SOP, including the National Institutes of Health and the American Heart Association.

Dr. Weidanz has also been with the SOP since 2000 and recently transferred to our new campus in Abilene. He has received an SOP Teacher of the Year Award four times and in October he was presented the 2007 President's Excellence in Teaching Award. In 2003, his cancer research led to the formation of Receptor Logic, a biotech company for which he is founder and chief scientist.



Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara



Dr. Jon Weidanz

Congratulations to Dr. Thekkumkara and Dr. Weidanz for receiving this prestigious award.

## **ACCP Awards New Investigator Grant to Arumugam**

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy has awarded Dr. Thiruma (Garrie) Arumugam (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences - Amarillo) one of 15 grants sponsored by the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education.



*Dr. Thiruma (Garrie) Arumugam*

The grant program, known as the New Investigators Program for Pharmacy Faculty, supports the research of investigators beginning their faculty careers at U.S. colleges and schools of

pharmacy. The program provides an opportunity for new faculty members to receive up to \$10,000 in start-up funding of to assist them in their research careers.

Faculty researchers at the assistant professor level and in their first through fifth years of an initial full-time academic appointment at an accredited college or school of pharmacy are eligible for the program.

"This is my first grant and I am very happy to receive it," Dr. Arumugam said. "This grant will help me to move forward in my research career."

Dr. Arumugam's will use in vitro and in vivo models of ischemic stroke to investigate the hypothesis that Notch-1 signaling contributes to glial inflammatory response by modulating NFkappaB activity.

"The findings from the proposed study will enhance our understanding of the role of Notch-1 in regulating glial inflammation following stroke and support strategies for blocking Notch-1 signaling pathway as a means to prevent progression of ischemic stroke-induced brain tissue damage," Dr. Arumugam explained.

## **P3 Team Wins SOP's 2007 Clinical Skills Competition**

Please join me in congratulating the winners of the SOP's 2007-2008 Clinical Skill Competition, which was organized by the Double-T Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists (TTSSHP).

Amber Elliott and Jacy Grimsley from our Amarillo campus were selected as the top P3 team and took first place overall. They qualified for the national competition, which will be held at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in Las Vegas.

Brandon Trollinger and Tyson Kubena from our Lubbock

campus were selected as the top P4 team and finished second overall. Holly Bland and Nathan Burkle (P3s - Lubbock) were the overall third-place finishers.



*Jacy Grimsley (left) and Amber Elliott took first place at the Clinical Skills Competition.*

Tony Diep and Shanna James from our Amarillo campus were named the top P1 team. Crystal Rendon and Jessica Stapleton, also from the Amarillo campus, were tabbed the top P2 team.

Others teams who competed included Jaclyn Priest and Lori Law (P1s - Abilene); Maggi St Germain and Heath Patterson (P1s - Abilene); Beau Baker and Lee Boyd (P2s - Amarillo); Sarah Smith and Sarah Villarreal (P2s - Amarillo); Tim Weigle and Josh Hawver (P2s - Amarillo); and Amarillo P4s Ty Stout and Penny Sitka; Cody Evans and Nancy Dunseth; and Liz Davis and Whitney Fisk.

Congratulations to all the teams and good luck to Amber and Jacy. I also want to extend a special thank you to our Abilene students for driving to Lubbock to compete.

A round of applause also goes to TTSSHP advisor and Amarillo judge Dr. Shawna King (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice) and Lubbock judge Dr. Rebecca Sleeper (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice).

## **Introducing...**

Jennifer Roberts  
Senior Business Assistant  
Office of Student Affairs  
Abilene

Janea Robinson  
Senior Business Assistant  
Office of Student Affairs  
Amarillo

Toni Snow  
Coordinator  
Dept. of Pharmacy Practice  
Amarillo

Jackie Weiger  
Coordinator  
Office of Student Affairs  
Amarillo

**Please take a moment to welcome each of these individuals to TTUHSC and the School of Pharmacy.**

## **P2 Students Have Fun at Heritage Festival**

Since it opened in 1998, the Texas Pharmacy Museum, which is located in the basement of our Amarillo campus, has participated in a popular history fair held annually at Fannin Middle School in Amarillo. The Fannin Middle School Heritage Festival coincides with National Pharmacy Week and provides a wonderful stage for our students to inform school age children, their families and the general public about present and past aspects of the pharmacy profession.



*Amberly Hix (left), James Lee and Rebekah Ferguson help a youngster with his mortar and pestle skills.*

This year 16 of our P2 students assisted Dr. Paul Katz (Museum Curator and Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice – Amarillo) in a pill rolling demonstration. The students, who are members of the Phi Delta Chi professional pharmacy fraternity and the Texas Tech Student Society of Health-



*Sadra Daniels (right) and Nicole Lebahn (middle) watch as Jill Merritt demonstrates the mortar and pestle to a group of curious onlookers.*

System Pharmacists (“Double T”) student organization, used Play-Doh and a hand-operated pill machine to roll the pills. They also used a mortar and pestle to grind Smarties candy to make a sugar coating for the pills. Visitors watched the students demonstrate the different processes and then tried their hand with the devices.



*Lacey Lantelme (right), Jared Thornhill and Rebekah Primera answer questions at the Fannin Middle School Heritage Festival.*

Julie Greene, Fannin’s school librarian and festival organizer, estimated that more than 1,300 students, parents, teachers and members of the general public attended this year’s event. After six hours of constant demonstrations and talking about pharmacy, Dr. Katz said the SOP/TPM contingent felt that they had visited with all 1,300 attendees! Despite the hard work, he said “a good time was had by all” and he is already looking forward to participating in the 2008 Fannin Heritage Festival.

The 16 P2 students who participated in the 2007 event included Martin Bishop, Madalyne Cearley, Sadra Daniels, Austin Dorsey, Rebekah Ferguson, Amberly Hix, Kyla Hoover, Alicia Kimmel, Mikala Lamberson, Lacey Lantelme, Nicole Lebahn, James Lee, Jill Merritt, Rebekah Primera, Jared Thornhill and Amanda Ulibari.

## **Texas Pharmacy Museum Selected for Pilot Project**

The Texas Pharmacy Museum, located in the basement of the main SOP campus in Amarillo, has been selected to participate in a pilot project sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History and funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The three-year pilot project, which officially begins in March 2008, will test new standards for history museums, historic houses and other historical organizations.

As a pilot site, TPM and Dr. Paul Katz (Museum Curator and Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice – Amarillo) will learn about the new AASLH standards program before it is launched and will have the opportunity to help shape the program’s materials and resources.



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## Teen Leaders Visit TTUHSC and the SOP

TTUHSC recently hosted 65 high school students from Amarillo and Canyon who visited the campus as part of Teen Leadership Amarillo & Canyon. During their visit to our campus, the students were shown around the SOP building by Steven Reese (SOP Director of Development) and toured the Texas Pharmacy Museum with Dr. Paul Katz (Museum Curator and Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice – Amarillo).

Summer Balcer (Assistant Dean for Student Services – Amarillo)

and Liz Davis (P4 – Amarillo) also participated in a round table discussion that gave the students an overview of TTUHSC and the programs we offer in Amarillo.



Summer Balcer speaks to Amarillo and Canyon high school students as P4 Liz Davis and SOM student James Gipson look on.

Teen Leadership Amarillo & Canyon is a program of Leadership Amarillo & Canyon and is dedicated to strengthening the local community by introducing sophomore and junior high school students to some of the skills that may one day enable them to become more effective civic, corporate and political leaders.

A special thank you to everyone at TTUHSC and the SOP who helped make these young students feel welcome and showed them what we have to offer.

## SOP Photo Gallery

Texas Pharmacy Museum curator Dr. Paul Katz gives a tour to high school students who visited the Amarillo campus as part of the Teen Leadership Amarillo & Canyon program.



CVS Intern Coordinator Brant Day (left) and Pharmacy Supervisor Kevin Jones present a \$5,000 gift check to the TTUHSC School of Pharmacy at the Dec. 12 Dean's Council Meeting.



First Lady Laura Bush discusses the mission of the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health, formerly known as the Women's Health Research Institute.



Amarillo PIs Allison Mahon (left) and Ann Peterson prepare the buffet for the annual APhA Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner.



PIs Ashley Gutierrez and Dustin Koenning help decorate the SOP Christmas tree in Amarillo.

## Getting to Know...

**Molly Graham, Pharm. D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Dept. of Pharmacy Practice - Abilene**

Molly grew up and lived in Sugar Land, a suburb of Houston, until she left for College Station to attend Texas A&M University. After receiving her B.S. in biomedical science in 2001, she moved back to the Houston area, attended the University of Houston College of Pharmacy and earned her Pharm.D. in May 2005.

Interestingly, Molly went to high school with fellow Department of Pharmacy Practice faculty member Dr. Kavita Dalal, who works for our Primary Care Division in Lubbock. She then attended pharmacy school with Dr. Lisa Chastain, who works for our Primary Care Division in Dallas/Fort Worth.

Following pharmacy school, Molly moved to Memphis, TN to complete a PGY1 Pharmacy Practice residency at the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center. From there she traveled to Wilmington, NC to complete a PGY2 Ambulatory Care residency at New Hanover Regional Medical Center and Coastal Area Health Education Center.

From the coast of North Carolina, Molly moved to Abilene to begin working for TTUHSC-SOP as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Primary Care. She says she is "very happy to be back in Texas" and enjoys her Family Medicine

practice site where she manages patients with diabetes, hypertension and those who are treated with anticoagulants. Molly says she enjoys being part of developing a new campus, especially "teaching and interacting with the new P1 students."

In her free time, you can find Molly watching and yelling for the Aggies and Houston Texans football teams, the Texas A&M, Duke, UNC and Memphis basketball squads, or the Texas A&M and the Houston Astros baseball teams. She's also a big gymnastics fan and was a competitive gymnast when she was younger.

Molly enjoys running, reading non-fiction books, going on medical mission trips and spending time with her family and friends. She says she loves animals and would have become a veterinarian if she had not chosen pharmacy. She currently has a cat named Jodee, who lives in Abilene, and a dog named Sydney who lives in Sugar Land.



*Dr. Molly Graham in North Carolina, Sydney with his favorite frisbee and Jodee lounging on the sofa.*



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