

# PULSE



WINTER 2008 | A PUBLICATION *for* ALUMNI & FRIENDS *of* TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER



THE  
VISION  
OF A  
BETTER TOMORROW

# PULSE

## on the cover



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### VISION OF A BETTER TOMORROW

High-tech training transforms educational opportunities for health care professionals.

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## ALUMNI

JUAN FITZ,  
MD, SOM '86

Solves the mystery of emergency room cases



BEN BRISTER,  
PHARMD SOP '04 AND  
AMANDA WHITE BRISTER,  
PHARMD SOP '03

Juggle parenting with filling prescriptions



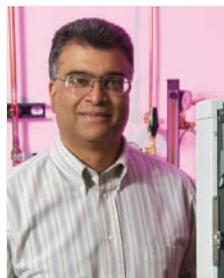
MELINDA CORWIN,  
PHD, CCC-SLP,  
TTU ARTS AND SCIENCES '87, '89

Helps those recovering from stroke



SASANKA RAMANADHAM,  
PHD, GSBS '85

Diabetes research bridges generation gap



BOYCE TANKERSLEY,  
MSN, FNP, SON '03

Promotes preventative care to patients



### THAT GIRL IS HOT, HOT, HOT!

Congratulations to senior nursing student Sally Kipyego (Cover, Summer 2008) who won her seventh national NCAA Division I Outdoor Track Field Championship this summer in the 5000 meters and placed second in the 1500 meters. She also competed in the Kenyan Olympic trials, posting an eighth-place finish.

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Online Community

## How are we doing?

Let us know what you think about Pulse. See page 30 for details.

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We welcome your feedback on the content of this  
issue as well as ideas for future magazines.  
Send your comments to  
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## JOURNEYS

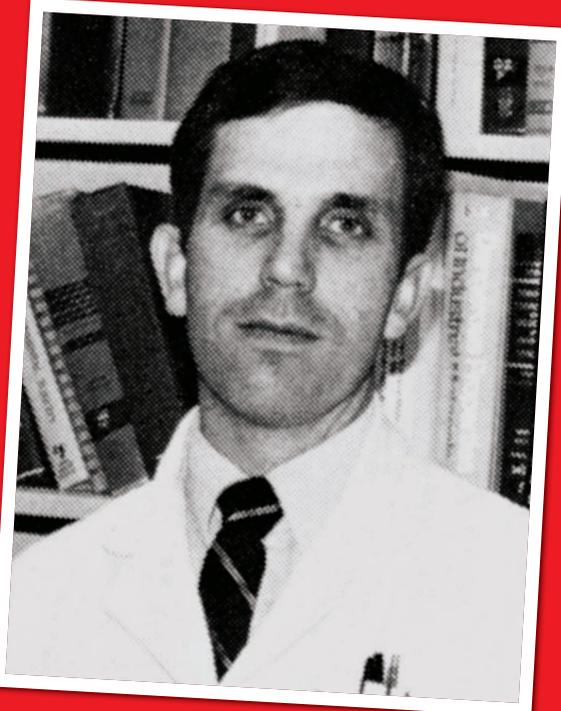
BY CLARE MIERS

There is a phenomenal feature in this issue that offers a pictorial glance at international sojourns of alumni, faculty and students traveling to places such as Uspantán, Guatemala, and the breathtaking Himalayas. The creative layout provides a global view of the far-reaching works of some of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's own visionaries. *Pulse* also explores dynamic interdisciplinary simulation tools and how they are changing the face of health care education. Delight in these and other compelling stories that will move you around the world.

When a story has great substance and immense depth, the words flow onto the pages graciously and effortlessly, making a writer's job 10 times easier. The stories presented within this issue offer integrity, ingenuity, creativity, courage and strength -- elements that command attention over all others. TTUHSC's campuses in Lubbock, Amarillo, Abilene, Midland, Odessa, El Paso, Highland Lakes, Fredericksburg and Dallas, offer story ideas built around steadfast health care warriors, fast at work within this system. These are the folks who champion science that will most certainly change lives. Exploring the pages of *Pulse*, you'll find stories of world-class health care and exhilarating ongoing research. It is my pleasure to now be part of this great university. With talented writers and producers positioned around the state, we will maximize coverage of major news and information detailing advancements in education, clinical care, research and some of the greatest health care minds at work here.

*Editor's Note: Clare Miers joined TTUHSC in November as director of Communications. Her background as a multimedia news journalist comprises almost two decades of work with a variety of major news organizations. Miers will oversee the TTUHSC communications staff for all six schools.*

# Guess? WHO



<<<This Midwesterner discovered a new place to call home 24 years ago when he joined TTUHSC.

**see story on page 8**

# grand

ROUNDS

## **PRESIDENT BALDWIN SERVES ON STATE COMMISSION** ::

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst appointed President John C. Baldwin, M.D., to the Select Commission on Higher Education and Global Competitiveness. Baldwin and 14 other commission members represent the business community and academia as well as bring their expertise in higher education and state work force needs.

The commission is charged with examining various issues relating to higher education, including structuring higher education funding to reward student and institutional outcomes that are aligned with state and regional priorities. The commission's final report, including recommendations, was submitted to the governor's office in November.

**SPLIT DECISION** :: Third-year medical student Justin Ellis was at a crossroads in his academic career. Deadlines for selecting a residency were quickly approaching, yet he was uncertain about his next steps other than a general interest in neuropsychiatry.

"The first two years of medical school are grueling," says Ellis, who is spending this academic year in an unpaid internship working with a team of physician-scientists at the National Institute of Mental Health. "As students, we spend countless hours learning protocol for treatments with very little time to ponder the 'whys' and 'hows' of medicine.

"I wanted to find a way to keep the sense of awe about science and medicine that originally attracted me to the discipline but balance that with the actual delivery of health care."

After a five-month search culling through the NIH directory looking for physician-scientists with a common interest in schizophrenia, Ellis located Joel Kleinman, M.D., Ph.D., and Thomas Hyde, M.D., Ph.D., at the institute's Clinical Brain Disorders Branch. In an unconventional approach, he sent them an email requesting an internship.

"I liked his background, intellect and enthusiasm," said Hyde, who since 1996 has been a full-time neuropathology investigator for the NIH's mental health branch. "I am always gratified to see young physicians who are interested in both research and patient care. This leads to transformational changes in the practice of medicine."

Kleinman, who has been with NIH since 1976, says requests such as that made by Ellis are common, but honoring them is imperative so they make accommodations when possible to "encourage medical students to consider a career in research. Research and training are crucial aspects to outstanding medical care."

*In addition to Justin Ellis' internship at the NIH, two medical students were awarded Doris Duke Research Fellowships at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Previously, School of Medicine students have completed internships at various prestigious research institutions, including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.*



## JOINT EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE LAUNCHED FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ::

A certification program offered jointly by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and Texas Tech University will provide a new educational opportunity for nursing students and other health care professionals to meet the industry's demands for more effective and responsive workers.

The Certificate for Health Care Change, available through the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing and the Rawls College of Business, addresses the need for new approaches to health care delivery and provides hands-on learning experiences that will enhance patient safety and help health care organizations maintain a competitive edge. The first cohort is expected to begin in the spring.

For more information, visit [www.hom.ba.ttu.edu/HSC.htm](http://www.hom.ba.ttu.edu/HSC.htm)

## *New name for School of Nursing honors Texas' first lady*

The School of Nursing has taken a new name to recognize the commitment and dedication of those in the nursing profession. In August, the school officially became the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing, honoring the first lady of Texas.

"Our School of Nursing has an exceptional reputation for excellence and now with this new name, the first lady adds her distinguished presence to this school," said President John C. Baldwin, M.D.

Mrs. Perry has been involved in health care for 17 years, serving in varied nursing positions in surgery, pediatrics, intensive care, administration and teaching. She also is an advocate for heart disease prevention and breast cancer awareness.

However, her passion is raising awareness of the critical nursing shortage and speaking to students about the nursing profession.

"It brings me great pride to know that future generations of nurses who graduate from this school will answer this call to service and have the opportunity to make a difference in their communities and in the state," she said.

Dean Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N., said Mrs. Perry's commitment to nursing is extraordinary, and the school is proud of the new name and relationship.

"The linkage of the school to the stature of a first lady propels us forward to achievements not previously experienced and positions our rise to national prominence," Green said.

Mrs. Perry earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from West Texas State University, now West Texas A&M University, and a master's degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.



*President John C. Baldwin, M.D., Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing Dean Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N., Anita Perry first lady of Texas, Gov. Rick Perry, TTU System Chancellor Kent Hance*

## NURSING DEAN TO STEP DOWN ::

After serving eight years as dean, Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N., will step down from the position effective June 2009. She will continue to serve the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing in a faculty role.

“My time with the school has been one of great pride. I have been fortunate to have had an innovative and committed faculty and staff as well as outstanding students,” Green said. “Together we have created amazing possibilities for students and future nurses.

“I believe I have fulfilled the goals I had for the school, and now I am at a point in my career where I would like to take a step back from administration and focus on other scholarly endeavors.”

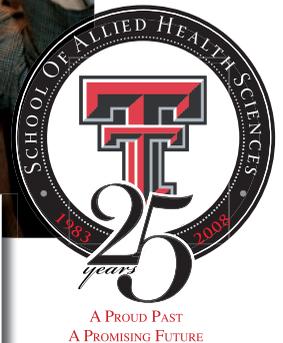
Green was named dean in June 2000 and has served concurrently as a professor within the school. Under her leadership, the school has grown exponentially. Student enrollment has almost doubled, and the school has added three nurse practitioner tracks. In addition, Green helped create a Second Degree Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing Program and a Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program as well as established four endowed chairs and three Centers of Excellence. She also was instrumental in expanding the school to Central Texas, Abilene and El Paso and has helped address the nursing shortage by establishing a “Grow Our Own” faculty development strategy.

President John C. Baldwin, M.D., has named a search committee led by School of Pharmacy Dean Arthur Nelson Jr., Ph.D., R.Ph., to find Green’s successor.

“The search committee faces a daunting task in finding a new leader to succeed a person of Alexia’s many talents and accomplishments, but I am confident that we have an excellent group equal to the task,” Baldwin said.



*SOAHS alumni Julie Bruce, Sc.D., ('95, '02, '08) and Phillip Sizer, Ph.D., ('02) celebrate at the school's 25th anniversary dinner.*



## JENNINGS TO SERVE IN STATE LEADERSHIP POSITION ::

John Jennings, M.D., regional dean for the School of Medicine at the Permian Basin, is serving a two-year term as chair of the Texas section of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

In this leadership position, he will represent the Texas membership of more than 3,000 physicians. The nonprofit association has more than 49,000 members and is the nation’s leading group of professionals providing health care for women.

**SOP RECOGNIZED FOR SECOND TIME BY AACP ::** The School of Pharmacy is one of eight in the nation to receive the 2008 Crystal APPLE Award from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

This is the second time in as many years for the school to receive the award.

The APPLE (Academic-Practice Partnerships for Learning Excellence) award acknowledges faculty, administrators and their practice partners in successfully conducting and supporting quality experiential education in exemplary patient care clinical teaching environments.

In addition to the school and Dean Arthur Nelson Jr., Ph.D., R.Ph., those recognized are Craig Cox, Ph.D., and Angela Treadway, Ph.D., associate professors, Department of Pharmacy Practice at Lubbock and Dallas/Fort Worth, respectively; and North Texas Veterans Affairs Medical Center Clinical Programs Manager Cynthia Foslien-Nash, Pharm.D., R.Ph.



**CANCER DRUG DEVELOPMENT GROUP JOINS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE** :: Nationally recognized cancer researchers have joined the School of Medicine to offer hope to the more than 4,000 adults and children in West Texas who will be diagnosed with the disease this year.

C. Patrick Reynolds, M.D., Ph.D., Barry Maurer, M.D., Ph.D., Min Hee Kang, Pharm.D., and a team of 17 postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and technicians from the University of Southern California have combined their ongoing laboratory and clinical cancer research with the existing School of Medicine clinical oncology team, led by Everardo Cobos, M.D., associate dean for Oncology Programs. The foundation of the center's work will address the needs of the Lubbock region's rural, uninsured, aging and Hispanic populations.

**The new School of Medicine Cancer Center will conduct laboratory research and initiate clinical trials for new drugs that may be more effective against cancers in adults and children.**

Reynolds and his team relocated to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center after recognizing a commitment from the university and the community to find better ways to treat cancer.

The team brings with them \$1 million in research in federal and private research funds. Although Texas has allocated money to be put toward cancer research, Reynolds said continued private funding also is required to continue making life-saving advances.

"Funding equals saving lives. With the constraints on the Federal budget, it is essential that private funding also be brought to bear on the cancer problem, least we slow the amazing progress being made," said Reynolds, who is a native of El Paso.

Reynolds previously served as director of developmental therapies for the USC-CHLA Institute for Pediatric Clinical Research at Childrens Hospital Los Angeles and co-director of Developmental Therapeutics at USC. He serves as a committee member of the pediatric oncology advisory panel at the FDA. Reynolds also oversees several national reference laboratories for pediatric cancer research. His work with 13-cis-retinoic acid resulted in the current world standard of care for pediatric neuroblastoma.

Maurer and Reynolds pioneered the use of the vitamin A-derivative, fenretinide, a new biochemical attack on cancer. Kang, the pharmacologist for the fenretinide studies, is an expert on the role of the Bcl-2 family in drug resistance of leukemia.



**NURSING DNP PROGRAM** :: Twenty nursing professionals from throughout the state began classes this summer in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing's new Doctorate of Nursing Practice Post-Master program (DNP).

The Perry School of Nursing's DNP program is one of four in Texas and one of 63 new DNP programs in the country this year. The trend toward this type of program has been spurred by the national shortage of nurses and nursing faculty.

The DNP program is the only one in Texas with two specialty concentrations: one for nurse practitioners to expand expertise in advanced practice and another for master's-prepared nurses interested in expanding executive leadership skills.

"Our system of health care really needs to be improved to retain nurses," said Barbara Cherry, DNSc, R.N., department chair of Leadership Studies.

"We believe doctorate-prepared nurses will make a difference in the health care system – not just nursing. They'll have an understanding of everything from evidence-based practice to how to implement change."

# JUST the facts...

48

different countries represented  
in the TTUHSC student population



210

attended the all-school reunion on Oct. 17-18

2,158

applications received for the first class of students at the  
Paul L. Foster School of Medicine

77

scholarships awarded to TTUHSC students through support  
from the 2008 Phone-A-Thon.

34

School of Allied Health Sciences alumni inducted into the Hall  
of Fame during the school's 25th anniversary celebration held  
in September.

54

endowed chairs established at TTUHSC

500

cartoons drawn Alexander Yu, a second-year medical student. His  
work includes the strip Doodles, *pictured below*, which publishes in  
AsianWeek. He also has drawn political cartoons for Marin County  
(northern California) newspapers and the Taipei Times (the largest  
circulating English daily in Taipei, Taiwan). In his latest cartoon strip,  
The Golden Kid, Yu tries to share experiences of growing up Asian  
through the eyes of a sixth grader.

# grand

ROUNDS



## FUNDS FOR THE

**CURE** :: The Univer-  
sity Breast Care Cen-  
ter at El Paso was one  
of seven local nonprof-

it organizations recently awarded grants  
to continue the battle against breast can-  
cer. The center received \$170,828 from  
the El Paso affiliate of Susan G. Komen  
for the Cure. The grant will fund ongo-  
ing oncology services including surgical  
therapy for newly diagnosed patients  
and screening mammograms on the  
center's Mobile Mammography Van.  
The center diagnoses and treats more  
than one-third of all breast cancer  
patients in the region, targeting women  
who are medically underserved.

ALEXANDER YU





Thomason Hospital Chief Nursing Officer Diana Fancher, M.S.N., R.N.; President John C. Baldwin, M.D.; Paul L. Foster School of Medicine Founding Dean José Manuel de la Rosa, M.D.; El Paso Hospital District President and CEO James Valenti; Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing Regional Dean Josefina Lujan, Ph.D., R.N., and Dean Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N.; and Thomason Hospital Board of Managers Chairman Ron Acton.

## SCHOOL OF NURSING EXPANDS TO EL PASO, NAMES REGIONAL DEAN ::

The Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing is expanding into El Paso and has named Josefina Lujan, Ph.D., R.N., as regional dean.

Lujan, formerly dean of nursing for El Paso Community College, will be responsible for leading the development of a nursing research agenda focusing on Hispanic-border issues and needs.

“The Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing’s presence in El Paso provides this community with access to a school of nursing associated with a major health sciences center,” Lujan said. “We now have the opportunity not only for interdisciplinary education but also to increase diversity in the nursing work force.”

A gift from Thomason Hospital will support the school’s accelerated, web-based Second Degree Program for three years and provide scholarships for the first students, scheduled to begin in January.

The Second Degree Program provides an opportunity for those who have a bachelor’s degree to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 12 months.

“Texas has a significant shortage of nurses, particularly along the border,” said Perry School of Nursing Dean Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N. “By leveraging the resources of the community and TTUHSC, we can make a difference in the future of health care delivery to millions of Texans.”

# Guess WHO?

**WEATHER OR NOT, HE’LL GO ::** Weather often serves for polite conversation, but is it really a reason to pack up and move? School of Allied Health Sciences Associate Dean Hal Larsen, Ph.D., laughs when he recalls the conditions 24 years ago that prompted him to seriously consider leaving his home in the Midwest.

The temperature in Lubbock was a balmy 40 degrees that Saturday afternoon when a colleague from graduate school phoned Larsen about a faculty position at the Health Sciences Center’s newly created School of Allied Health. In Des Moines, Iowa, the temperature had reached the high of 8 below zero. Larsen stared at the 6 foot snowdrifts alongside his driveway and thought, “I better get serious about that position.”

In 1984, he joined the Department of Medical Technology bringing his expertise in clinical lab sciences. Along with administrative duties for the school, Larsen also serves as chair of the department, now called Laboratory Sciences and Primary Care, which houses the Physician Assistant studies, Molecular Pathology and Clinical Laboratory Science programs. The growth not only of his department, but the entire school during the last 25 years, Larsen says, is testament to the tenacity of his colleagues.

“We were trying to build a school when the world was reeling from an oil bust. State revenues dropped, turning everything upside down.

“But to be part of a new school was such a great opportunity for me,” he says. “I’ve had the privilege of seeing (the Health Sciences Center) start as a medical school and then grow into a full-service health sciences center.”



# Discoveries

RESEARCH  
& SCHOLARLY  
ACTIVITY



## CONVERSATION IN QUEUE

ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

**T**he development of speech-generating devices has been one of the most significant advancements in enhancing communication for non-speaking individuals. These devices produce synthetic or computer-generated speech upon activation of alphabets, digits, words and pictures via a touch screen or keyboard.

While individuals who have lost their ability to speak because of disease or disability can use the devices to communicate more effectively than through traditional means such as signs, gestures or unintelligible vocalizations, very little information has been available regarding their use among non-speaking individuals with developmental intellectual impairment.

Rajinder Koul, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, has led graduate students in research studies investigating the comprehension of synthetic speech by individuals with mild, moderate and severe intellectual impairment. Results from these studies indicate that comprehension of synthetic speech by such individuals significantly increases with repeated exposure to the computer-produced speech.

Koul says research validating the comprehension of synthetic speech is important because many non-speaking individuals with developmental intellectual impairment are potential candidates for speech-generating devices.

*Rajinder Koul, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, associate dean for research in the School of Allied Health Sciences, is chair of the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences and a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. His research has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is conducted at the Augmentative and Alternative Communication Laboratory.*

RAJINDER KOUL, PH.D., CCC-SLP



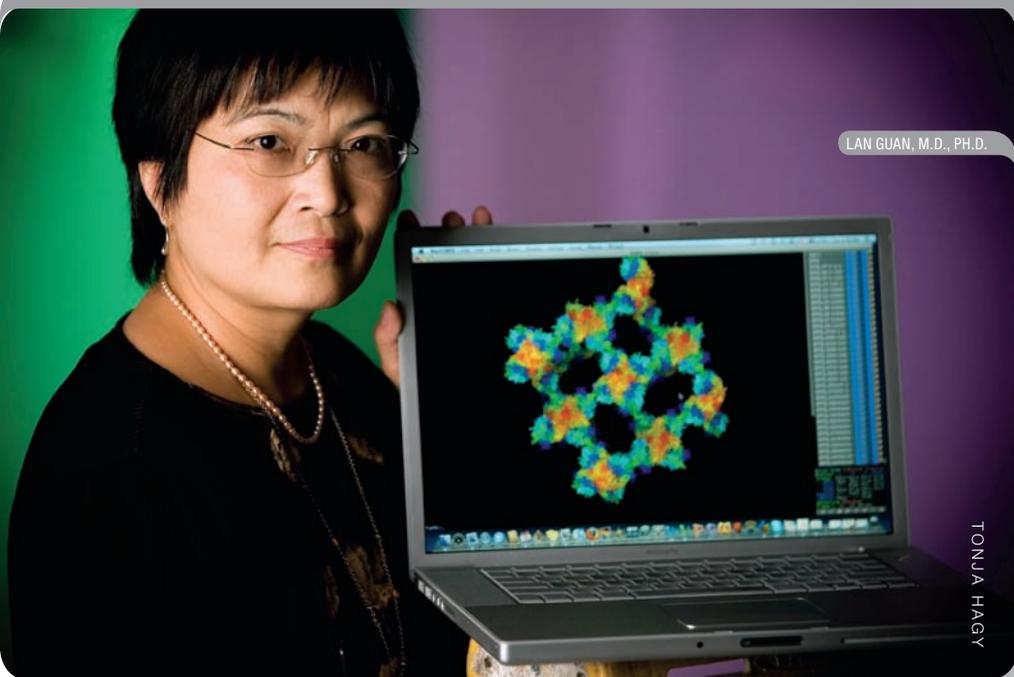
## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

**A** three-dimensional crystal structure of a protein molecule provides essential knowledge about its mechanisms and functions. Using a novel technique she has developed, Lan Guan, M.D., Ph.D., is attempting to provide a three-dimensional X-ray crystal structure of a membrane protein, GLUT1, found primarily in the body's red blood cells, the blood brain barrier and in several cancer cells. Once determined, the structure of this glucose transporter can provide clues to new treatment options for diseases including cancer and diabetes.

*Lan Guan, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of Cell Physiology and Molecular Biophysics, joined Graduate School for Biomedical Sciences in July. She also is a member of Center for Membrane Protein Research. Her research is supported by a \$275,000 (R21) Exploratory/Developmental grant from the National Institutes of Health.*

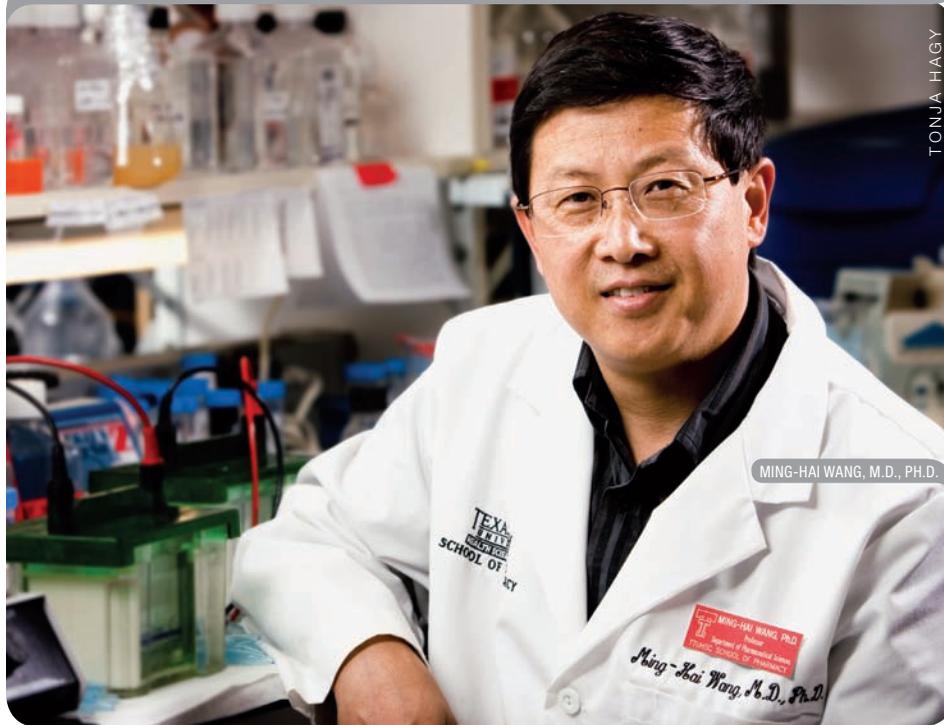
LAN GUAN, M.D., PH.D.



TONJA HAGY

## TO KILL A CANCER CELL

PHARMACY



TONJA HAGY

MING-HAI WANG, M.D., PH.D.

**P**rominent cancers such as colon, breast and pancreatic not only account for the majority of cancers diagnosed, these cancers are highly malignant and often metastasize in early stages causing fatal outcomes.

In his quest to understand the mechanisms of cancer metastasis and to find novel cancer markers for potential therapeutic interventions, Ming-Hai Wang, M.D., Ph.D., has targeted a cellular protein called RON (recepteur d'origine nantais) whose major function is to promote cell movement and invasion into surrounding tissue.

Wang's group recently developed biological agents that target RON, prohibiting tumor growth in animal models. These antibodies are currently being investigated by several pharmaceutical companies to be developed into new treatment strategies for metastatic cancer patients.

*Ming-Hai Wang, M.D., Ph.D., is professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the School of Pharmacy at Amarillo and director of the school's Cancer Biology Center. He also serves as the Amarillo Area Cancer Research Endowed Chair. Wang's research is supported by a five-year \$1.4 million RO1 grant from the National Institutes of Health. He also has received funding from the Amarillo Area Foundation and the Chinese National Science Foundation.*

**I**n the first 30 months of a child's life crucial brain development takes place for vision, hearing and language. Researchers in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing have formed an innovative partnership with expectant moms to help develop behaviors that lead to healthy birth outcomes and child development.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission awarded the school a two-year grant to establish a Nurse Family Partnership, a program for cost-effective, evidence-based home visitation for first-time, low-income mothers.

"We believe that providing these young women with knowledge will in turn help reduce childhood injuries and improve school readiness and overall health for all family members," said Chris Esperat, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN.

The program's anticipated benefits are improved prenatal health, fewer subsequent pregnancies, increased intervals between births and financial independence for families. The Larry Combest Community Health & Wellness Center, located in East Lubbock, will house the program.

"This is a great opportunity to bring considerable improvement in health care to an underserved population in Lubbock and the surrounding area," Esperat said.

*Chris Esperat, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN, is associate dean of research and practice in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing. She has received several state and national grants to investigate improvements in childhood health.*

## HEALTHY START IN LIFE

NURSING



TONJA HAGY

CHRIS ESPERAT, PH.D., R.N., FAAN

Lisa Dillard, R.N., B.S.N.

Debra Flores, M.A.M., L.V.N.



## INFECTION FIGHTERS MEDICINE

MANJUNATH SWAMY, M.D., PREMLATA SHANKAR, M.D.

**L**ed by Manjunath Swamy, M.D., and Premlata Shankar, M.D., a team of interdisciplinary researchers is working to capitalize on the feasibility of using small molecules called siRNAs in the treatment of emerging and resurging viral infections.

While at Harvard Medical School's Immune Disease Institute of Biomedical Sciences, Shankar successfully utilized a novel method to deliver siRNAs into T cells, thereby suppressing spread of HIV in mice containing human immune cells infected with the virus. These molecules may eventually supplement or replace the harsh

drug cocktails currently prescribed to patients with HIV, reducing the side effects of treatment.

Swamy, also formerly at the Harvard institute, utilizes RNA interference, which is in the body's existing immune system, in his quest to develop novel approaches for battling viral infections such as West Nile and Saint Louis encephalitis.

*Manjunath Swamy, M.D., and Premlata Shankar, M.D., are co-directors for the Center of Excellence for Infectious Disease at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine in El Paso. Their research is funded by separate grants from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Swamy also has received funding from the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America.*

## PULL UP A CHAIR

GET TO KNOW THE RESEARCH FACULTY OF TTUHSC

**JON WEIDANZ, PH.D.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH TENURE,  
AND DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR  
IMMUNOTHERAPEUTIC RESEARCH,  
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY AT ABILENE;  
CHIEF SCIENTIST AND FOUNDER OF RECEPTOR LOGIC,  
A BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANY SPECIALIZING  
IN IMMUNOLOGY RESEARCH AND PRODUCTS.

### STEP AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

Growing up, we talked about football and such but my dad was an immunologist, and so we also had lively discussions about diseases such as cancer and malaria. Because of his job, I got to know a lot about the immune system and meet many of his colleagues.

### SAVING GRACE

I think I did everything I could not to go into science, you know because that's what my dad did. But a college job in a biochemistry lab got me thinking about going to med school. While

### DAILY DOSE

At Receptor Logic, the first commercialized venture for the School of Pharmacy, we focus on therapeutics and reagents -- developing antibodies that will help researchers evaluate the body's immune responses and target specific diseases. We are also developing a process for testing the accuracy of vaccines being developed to treat existing cancers. The Emerging Technology award we received earlier this year from the state

### PROFESSIONAL PEAK

If one of our antibodies could save or improve the quality of life for someone facing a frightfully, deadly experience, that would be the pinnacle of satisfaction. The reward is to know you used your brain and God-given talents and interacted with other intelligent people.

— interview by Danette Baker

**If one of our antibodies could save or improve the quality of life for someone facing a frightfully, deadly experience, that would be the pinnacle of satisfaction.**

trying to decide between a career in medicine or research, I got involved in a vaccine project working with natural occurring bacteria as a way to stimulate the body's immune response. I ended up in research and became a real believer that vaccines were the way to go.

### BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

After several years working at a biotech company, I reached a point where I felt that it was time to look for something different. As a corporate scientist, you are always working for the team and the bottom line is a product and profit. I like the approach to research in academia, where you are like an independent contractor. You still work in a team environment, but the players – groups, consortiums, colleagues and students – are all about learning and new ideas. I'm very fortunate. Most days I get the best of both worlds.

will help in these endeavors. It's an honor to be among the small contingency that received awards this year.

### MY ABILENE HOME

This is one incredible community. They are trying to diversify their economy. They welcomed the School of Pharmacy, which made a natural choice for us to then relocate Receptor Logic. There is a desire here to develop a center where various research ideas can mature into product development and commercialization.



NEAL HINKLE

JON WEIDANZ, PH.D.



CLINICAL  
TRIALS  
MOVE  
HEALTH  
CARE  
FROM  
THE

*Bench  
to the  
Bedside*

by danette baker

**J**an Simoni, Ph.D., and Leslie Shen, Ph.D., have each taken their basic research concept and brought it forward to the clinical trial stage.

Simoni, professor of surgery in the School of Medicine, and Mario Feola, M.D., retired professor of surgery, developed the blood substitute HemoTech<sup>®</sup>, which is now in the process of fulfilling FDA requirements for human clinical trials. Shen, associate professor of pathology in the School of Medicine, began enrolling patients last spring in her study of green tea and tai chi on bone health in post-menopausal women with low bone mass. Theirs are among the handful of investigator-initiated studies at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center that have made it to the clinical trial stage – a critical step in taking a basic scientist’s investigation and turning it into a novel advancement in health care. During the past five years, the number of scientists taking their discoveries from bench to bedside has increased and now represents about 25 percent of all research conducted at TTUHSC.

With new initiatives such as the School of Medicine’s Cancer Center, that number will continue to increase, said Catherine Lovett, M.S.N., R.N., C.C.R.C., senior director of Clinical Research Operations, in the Division of Clinical Research. The office was established in 2001 to support clinical research throughout the institution.

“Our goal is to increase the number of clinical trials conducted at TTUHSC, whether industry-sponsored or investigator-initiated,” she said. “As an academic institution, it’s important to run clinical

trials because it gives us the ability to provide our patients with the newest and best treatments available and gives our physicians the advantage of being able to have a truly open discussion regarding treatment options with the patient when the products are released to the market.”

“Additionally, clinical research gives us the basis for evidence-based practice and provides ‘behind-the-science’ knowledge for our students and residents.”

While looking at surgical choices among women diagnosed with breast cancer, Sharmila Dissanaiké, M.D., assistant professor of surgery in the School of Medicine, discovered that having insurance is the most important factor in whether a woman receives mastectomy or breast conservation surgery. She conducted a study recently using the breast cancer registry at University Medical Center Health System Southwest Cancer Treatment and Research Center. Those with insurance, she said, tend to undergo the less invasive procedure that involves removing the lump followed by radiation. Such knowledge has implications at several levels, Dissanaiké says — from patient education options to public policy on treatment protocols.

Much of Dissanaiké’s studies are classified as outcomes research. “We look at end results to identify discrepancies in health care or risk factors such as in injuries to find ways to address them,” she said.

“Outcomes research has a lot of implications, but mainly public health policy, injury or disease prevention/intervention and as hypothesis generators for investigational studies.”

Such research requires little to no involvement from the patients, because data is retrieved from medical records. On the other hand, investigational studies can become quite complex as the clinical scientist works to balance patient safety, privacy and product testing, explains Lovett. Her office provides resources to TTUHSC faculty beginning with pre-study activities and contract negotiation through study completion and close-out. In addition, the office actively markets the institution’s clinical trial capabilities and networks with all TTUHSC campuses to inform faculty of potential clinical trials.

Michael Phy, D.O., assistant professor of internal medicine in the School of Medicine, is the primary site investigator for an international study on blood transfusion protocol for elderly hip-fracture patients at risk for cardiovascular conditions. He has utilized resources in the Division of Clinical Research for this and other studies – including one he designed using a hormone to measure how well the heart is working as an indicator for post-operative cardiac complications. The international study, initiated by researchers at the Robert Wood

Johnson Medical School in Princeton, N.J., involves approximately 2,000 patients throughout the United States and Canada. The results could make a significant impact on overburdened blood banks as well as improving the patient’s recovery process.

The standard protocol for giving a patient a blood transfusion has historically been at the physician’s discretion, Phy said. “Some ascribe to the practice of always infusing when the blood count drops to a certain level, while others may let it go a little lower depending on the patient’s condition to give the body a little more time to rejuvenate its own supply.”

“Evidence from the previous studies indicates the latter is the best way to go,” he said, “but those tests weren’t designed to answer this one question, so it does not put you on as solid ground as doing the clinical trial.”

Clinical research is the avenue, or bridge, to the advancement of medical care, Lovett reiterated. “No new treatments can be marketed without it.”

Fortunately, she added, TTUHSC is located within communities that are supportive of clinical research – as research volunteers and with donations of time, equipment and funding.

“Our arsenal of available, proven treatments is slowly being exhausted. Without this support, clinical research can not continue, and our options for new health care treatment options will decline.” 

“...CLINICAL RESEARCH GIVES US THE BASIS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE AND PROVIDES A ‘BEHIND-THE-SCIENCE’ KNOWLEDGE FOR OUR STUDENTS AND RESIDENTS.”

# formative first year

By Julie Toland

The Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health is leading the way in challenging the health care world to acknowledge that women's health issues, diagnosis and treatment can be quite different than that of men.

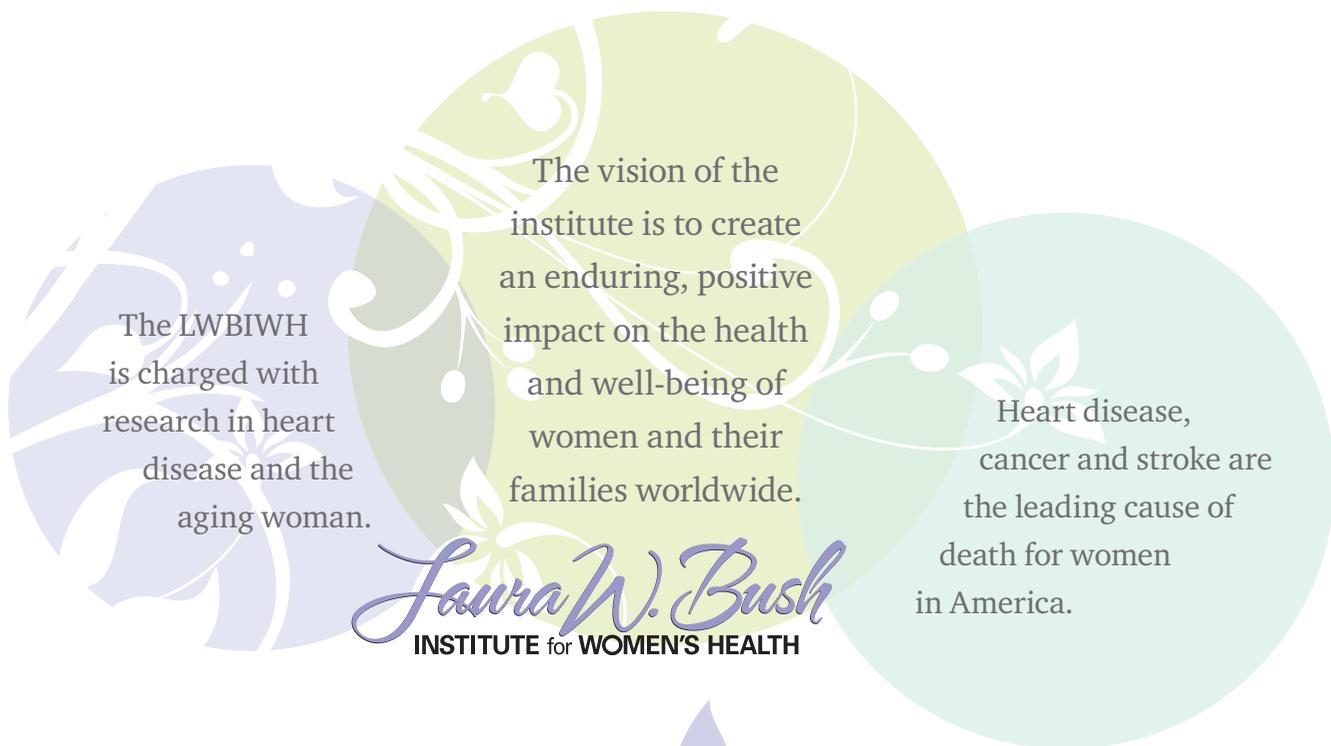
In its relatively short history, the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health has made great strides in expanding its programs and its reach not only in Texas, but globally. The institute plans to continue this course by recruiting top talent and building a strong and collaborative research infrastructure.

One of the next steps is to expand to Abilene via the School of Pharmacy. A symposium held in September brought together local agencies and individuals to determine the type of program needed.

"There is such enthusiasm in the Abilene community for the program's expansion," Jenkins said.

Judith Pepper, director of global operations and programs for the institute, said the collaborative opportunities go beyond Texas. The institute has been invited to Haiti to the Gheskio HIV/AIDS Center in Port-au-Prince. Mrs. Bush toured the center in March 2008 and her staff recommended the institute contact a physician there to determine how best to collaborate on women's health issues other than HIV. A trip is planned in the near future.

In August 2008, the institute appointed its first endowed chair. Rusty Robinson, M.D., was selected to serve as the Mrs. J. Avery "Janie" Rush Endowed Chair of Excellence. The chair was named in honor of Janie Rush who is an ovarian cancer survivor and the mother of Avery Rush, M.D., an assistant clinical professor at Amarillo and member of the Texas Tech Foundation Board. The institute also is actively recruiting for three additional endowed chair positions.



Another milestone came in March of 2008. Long-time supporter Marie Hall established two endowed chairs in affiliation with the institute. The Granville T. Hall, M.D., Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology honors Ms. Hall's father for his lifetime commitment to healing and his passion for his profession. Recruiting is currently under way for the chair, which is housed in the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health at the Jenna Welch Center in Midland.

"Our hope is to find someone who is qualified both in clinical and academic areas including research and teaching," said John Jennings, M.D., one of the institute's founders and now regional dean at the Permian Basin campus. He noted that research on the campus focuses primarily on diabetes and metabolic disease.

Ms. Hall also established the Florence Thelma Hall Chair for Nursing Excellence in Women's Health to honor her mother, who had a lifetime dream of becoming a nurse. The chair is intended to develop women's health programs in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing and the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health in Lubbock. This chair has been filled with the appointment of Chandace Covington, Ph.D. She is scheduled to begin in January 2009.

"The Hall Chair for Nursing Excellence in Women's Health will be the first endowed chair within the School of Nursing

to hold an appointment in an institute," said Perry School of Nursing Dean Alexia Green, Ph.D., R.N. "This presents unique opportunities for the school to work with other disciplines in advancing the science of women's health."

Institute offices with administrators and directors are now in place on four campuses, and have established a national advisory board. The institute also will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate with fellow Health Sciences Center institutes such as the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health and the Garrison Institute on Aging. With the Garrison institute, there are plans underway to collaborate in phase II of the Cochran County Aging Study, which is investigating cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease and other dementia syndromes in an often-neglected rural area with a traditionally underserved ethnic minority population, namely Mexican-Americans.

The institute also envisions recruiting and collaborating with other facilities and campuses to build a network of support, including an online database. Partnerships within the communities of Lubbock, El Paso, Amarillo and the Permian Basin are also key. The Partners for Prevention program will evaluate communities and find opportunities for partnerships.

"There are wonderful opportunities in our own backyards," Jenkins said, noting that partnerships with

“The Institute makes a *positive* difference in the lives of Texans through their innovative research programs and efforts to *educate* women about health risks.

I am grateful for their good work and *honored* by their tribute.”

— Laura W. Bush

national efforts such as the Komen for the Cure and the Go Red for Women campaigns are a natural fit.

Already the institute has become host in two communities for the national Hablando de la Salud de la Mujer event. The event has taken place on the Amarillo campus for the past four years and has grown each year; an estimated 850 women attended this year. The El Paso campus hosted its first Hablando de la Salud de la Mujer event in October and will launch a women’s health fellowship program in 2009.

At the Permian Basin, Jennings said the institute has expanded women’s health services in Midland within the Obstetrics/Gynecology department by recruiting three physicians who will work in the soon-to-be-constructed Jenna Welch Center, named in honor of Mrs. Bush’s mother. “We also have a Permian Basin Advisory Board to help guide the direction of the institute as it relates to the public,” Jennings said. The institute, in collaboration with Midland Memorial Hospital and Medical Center Hospital in Odessa, also has funded eight grants that could bring researchers in line for extramural funding. And in October, the campus’s Breast Awareness Program in just its second year drew about 400 attendees and raised almost \$40,000, which goes toward purchasing vouchers for mammograms for women who otherwise would not be able to afford them.

A key component of the Laura W. Bush Institute’s vision is training tomorrow’s health care providers to understand and be aware of gender differences in medicine. “We will begin looking the curricula in all of the schools to evaluate what is being taught regarding gender differences,” Jenkins said. “Teaching the students to communicate with the female patient is so important.” 

## In the beginning ...

By Julie Toland

With the approval of First Lady Laura W. Bush, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center added her name in 2007 to its Women’s Health Institute, a move that set the course for expansion of programs, research and outreach across Texas and beyond.

The historical roots of a women’s institute began in 1999, when Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center turned a need for women’s health knowledge into a reality that would grow into a premier research and educational institute with a strong community outreach component. Steven Berk, M.D., John Jennings, M.D., and Arthur Nelson, Ph.D., were instrumental in founding the initial Women’s Health Research Institute on the Amarillo regional campus.

“In Amarillo, we were looking for an area of research excellence that everyone could participate in,” said School of Medicine Dean Steven Berk, who at the time served as regional dean of the School of Medicine in Amarillo. “We had such good programs in pharmacy and in medicine.”

In 2001, the Women’s Health Research Institute was officially launched. The same year, Marjorie Jenkins, M.D., was recruited to Amarillo to serve as executive director of the institute.

“The institute provided an opportunity not only to catch up with the tremendous gap regarding gender differences in medicine, but also to look at the potential for collaborations,” Berk said.

Since its inception, the institute has successfully developed a multidisciplinary research program and brought together departments within the medical school, schools within the health sciences center and other regional institutions of higher learning.

“By definition an institute is all schools working together, so the Bush institute really fulfills the mission of the Health Sciences Center by setting the stage for collaborative research between the different schools and campuses,” Berk said.

# working for women

By Julie Toland



**F**or Marjorie Jenkins, medical school was at one time only a dream. Although from the time she was 5 years old she longed to be a doctor, the reality of such wasn't quite so easy for a little girl growing up the youngest of eight children in rural Kentucky and Tennessee.

"In high school, I remember speaking with the counselor about going to medical school and she told me, 'You can't be a doctor; you're poor.' She told me I couldn't get in because I had no connections," Jenkins recalled. "I was devastated."

Instead, she took the advice of one of her science and math teachers and pursued a degree in chemical engineering at Tennessee Tech. But her dreams of medical school were still alive. "I told myself in my third year of college that if I could graduate with honors, I could get into medical school."

Jenkins did graduate with honors and began working as a control systems engineer with Eastman Kodak. After meeting with pre-med advisers at East Tennessee State University, she took three months off of work to study for the MCAT. After successfully getting into medical school, Eastman Kodak hired her back allowing her to work her way through medical school.

Following graduation, Jenkins went to the University of Cincinnati and then into private practice, where she found her calling. "I discovered that I loved taking care of women," Jenkins said. "I learned that they weren't always listened to."

A stroke of fate brought the Jenkins family to West Texas in 2001. They had friends in Lubbock and were already interested in Texas Tech. And in Amarillo, Jenkins discovered another familiar face in Steven Berk, M.D., who then as regional dean for the School of Medicine was working to build a Women's Health Institute at TTUHSC. Berk had been Jenkins' adviser during her third year in medical school.

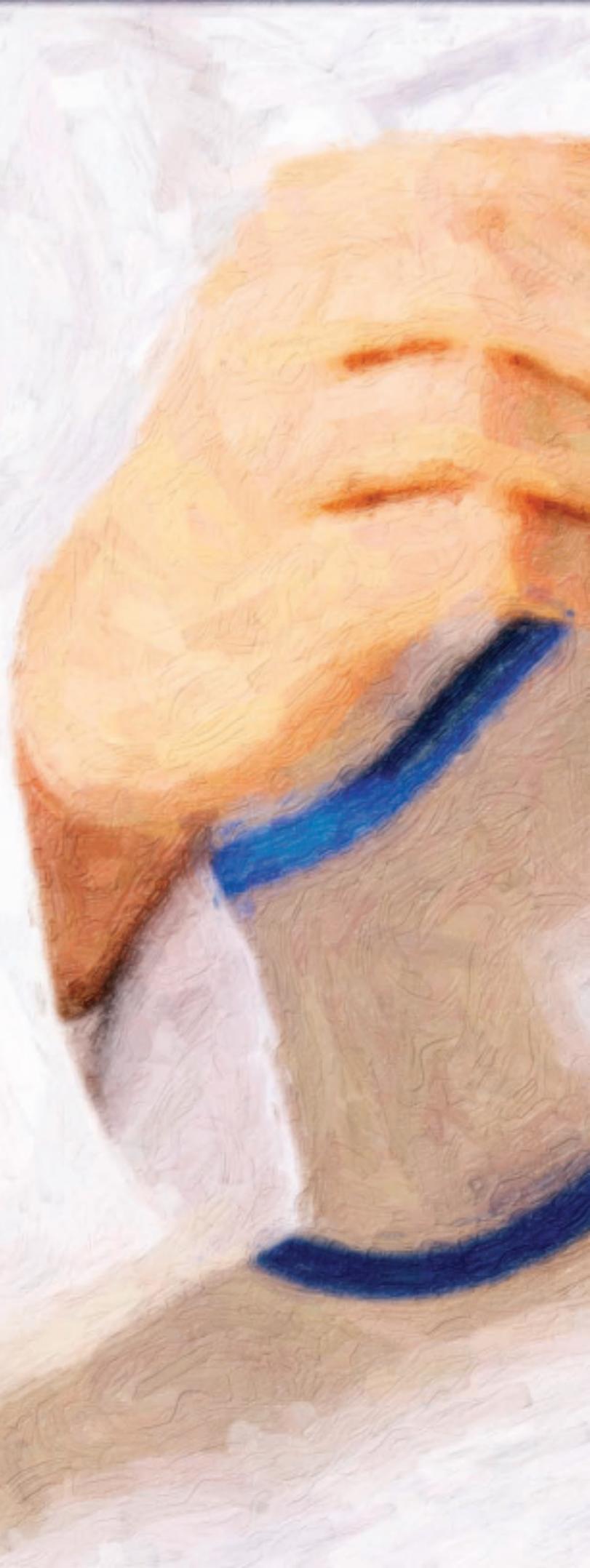
Jenkins believes that growing up in a very rural part of Appalachia is much of the reason she has such a passion for rural health and is part of what ultimately led her to West Texas. She says that she and her husband, Steve, and three children, Rebecca, 9, Matthew, 11, and Catharine, 13, have really grown roots in West Texas.

And she's proud that they understand why she's so passionate about her job. "When referring to me, my kids don't say, 'My mom's a doctor,'" Jenkins said. "They say, 'My mom's a women's health doctor.'" 

Places to go.  
People to see.  
Things to do.  
An opportunity to give  
something back.

For some, it's the experience of a lifetime; for others, the beginning of a new way of life. Regardless of their reason, TTUHSC alumni, faculty and students are going beyond the outposts of West Texas to a world that becomes closer neighbors every day.

From Ecuador to Eastern Europe, Honduras to the Himalayas, these TTUHSC health ambassadors passionately pursue knowledge and deliver compassionate care deserved by all humankind.





By Danette Baker  
Digital Illustrations by Jamie Hinojosa

## JUAREZ, MEXICO

WILLIAM T. MILLER, M.D.  
Professor, Department of Surgery,  
Paul L. Foster School of Medicine  
Rotary Clubs of El Paso  
Paso del Norte Rotary Club of Juarez

In July, we treated 10 children  
Northern Mexico with cleft lip and  
palate surgery. Our group included  
TTUHSC residents and alumni -  
Eric Payne, M.D., and Humberto  
Palladino, M.D., surgery residents; David  
Stapenhorst, M.D., (SOM '01, Resident '06);  
and Carlos Murillo, M.D. (Resident '08).  
Our goal is to help this program become  
self-sustaining.



JUAREZ

## USPANTAN, GUATEMALA

RACHELLE JONAS, RN, BSN (SON '01)  
Trauma/critical care research nurse, University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio  
HELPS International Medical Mission

For one week in the summer 2007, I worked along with a group of about 75, including health  
care professionals from UTHSCSA and private practitioners, in a rural village in the mountains of  
Guatemala. We set up a fully functioning medical-surgical area in a hospital originally built by the  
U.S. military during the Guatemalan Civil War in the 1980s. The hospital has only one doctor who  
is able to perform surgeries only when the HELPS teams come in. Our team provided services such  
as surgery, dentistry, vision, pharmacy and obstetrics/gynecology. We also had a stoves team (non-  
medical personnel that go into the mountains and install stoves and water filters in houses and  
villages). As a nurse, I was responsible for post-anesthesia care and post-operative surgical  
care. We performed about 80 surgeries and saw hundreds in the clinics.



GUATEMALA

## CAMEROON, AFRICA

SIXTUS ATABONG, PA-C (SOAHS '02, '05)

Physician Assistant, Neurological Associates of Lubbock  
President and Founder, Purpose Medical Mission

In July 2008, I led a group of seven, including Mike  
Reddell, PA-C, (SOAHS '05) Kathleen Marcum PA-C,  
(SOAHS '05) and Sammy Deeb, M.D., (SOM '92, Resident  
'97) to my hometown of Muyuka, population 9,000, for  
a humanitarian medical mission. During our 15-day  
trip, we saw on average 85 patients per day with a  
variety of problems including hypertension, diabetes and  
diabetic wounds, arthritic pains, typhoid, malaria, HIV and  
other sexually transmitted diseases. With help from many  
organizations, we established the Healing Touch Medical  
Center of Muyuka. With the closest hospital 70 miles away,  
this facility will provide access to health care for local  
residents and the surrounding villages. For me, this  
was a dream come true.



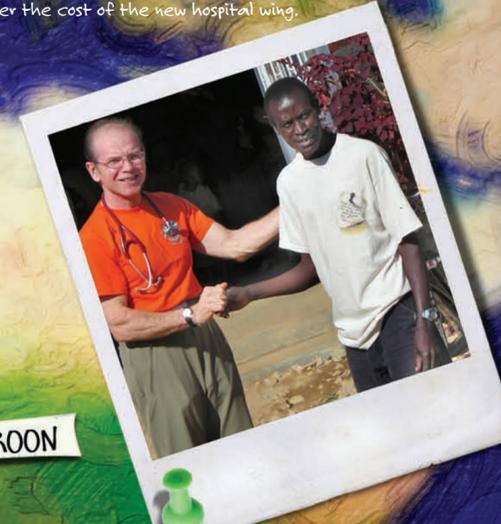
CAMEROON

UGANDA

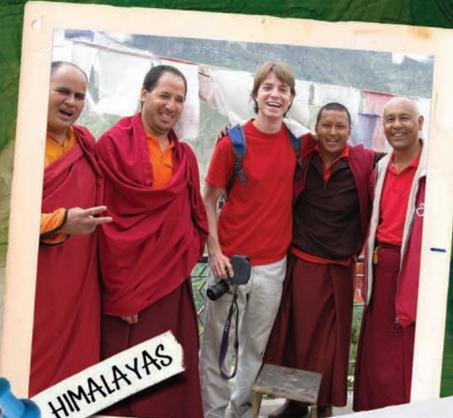
## EASTERN UGANDA

GARY NEWSOM, M.D. (SOM RESIDENCY '86)

Partner in Permian Nephrology Associates, Odessa, Texas  
Co-Founder, Lux Luceat Foundation, "the light is shining,"  
First travels with Mercy Healthcare Outreach  
www.mercytrips.org/  
My first trip to Uganda inspired my wife, Beverly, and I to start a  
foundation that would help expand construction of a new wing at the  
Kanginima Hospital near Mbale as well as possibly develop a training  
partnership with hospitals in Uganda. On that first trip, we performed  
more than 60 surgeries and provided primary medical care for more  
than 2,500 people. In January 2008, we delivered a check from our  
foundation to cover the cost of the new hospital wing.



NAIROBI



HIMALAYAS

## LAHAUL, INDIA

DUSTIN CORGAN, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, SECOND-YEAR STUDENT

International Medicine Club President  
Himalayan Health Exchange

Our expedition consisted of a well-organized team of doctors, students,  
drivers, translators, and porters from throughout the United States and  
United Kingdom. We lived in tents in the Lahaul Valley, next to picture  
perfect mountains and waterfalls. Daily, we would travel to nearby villages  
to set up medical clinics in tents or abandoned buildings. In the three-week  
period, we treated 1,600 patients, many of whom have no access to health  
care and very few resources. The medical ailments we  
saw were conditions that are easily treated in the west,  
but in other parts of the world are constant reminders of  
how a lack of medical care can allow simple, treatable  
infections to decimate individuals.



To continue on this voyage,  
visit [RaiderCheckUp.com](http://RaiderCheckUp.com)

## MACHALA, ECUADOR

CHRISTOPHER SMITH, M.D., (SOM '94)

Lone Star Bone and Joint Clinic, Houston, Texas

Operation Rainbow

In early summer, I was one of 24 surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses,  
technicians and translators who made the trip to Ecuador. We completed  
45 cases in five days, including correction of clubfoot deformities, hip  
reconstruction procedures, and treatment of orthopedic trauma. Since  
my first trip with Operation Rainbow in 1991, I've taken approximately 13  
to various countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean  
including Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Trinidad, Peru and Ecuador.



ECUADOR



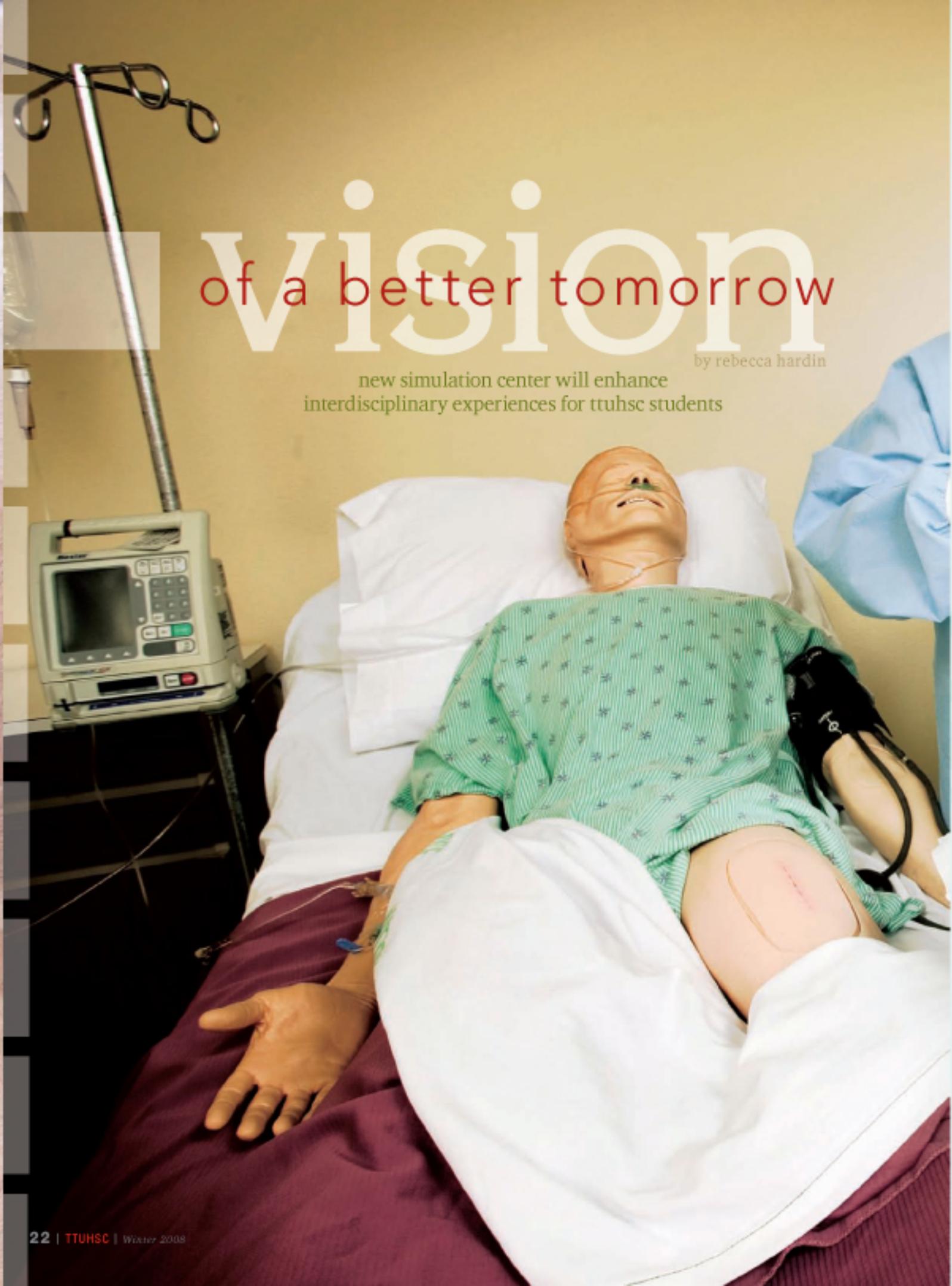
## NAIROBI, KENYA, AFRICA

KARON BINGAMAN, RN, BSN

Graduate student Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing  
Charge/staff nurse, Pediatric ICU and nursery, Hendrick Children's Hospital, Abilene, Texas  
Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

I traveled four years ago with a local pediatrician to the village Mwiki, just outside of Nairobi,  
to work for eight days in a medical missions clinic, where we saw about 850 patients. The people  
from the community stand in line, starting about 5 a.m., to receive a number in order to be seen  
that day. As an RN, I helped with respiratory therapy, cleaning and dressing wounds that had  
been neglected, mixing and administering injections, holding babies and playing with children  
as their other family members were being seen, and whatever else was needed. I was truly  
blessed by the overwhelming appreciation of the African people for our care for them and was  
humbled to see the joy they had in the simplest things.



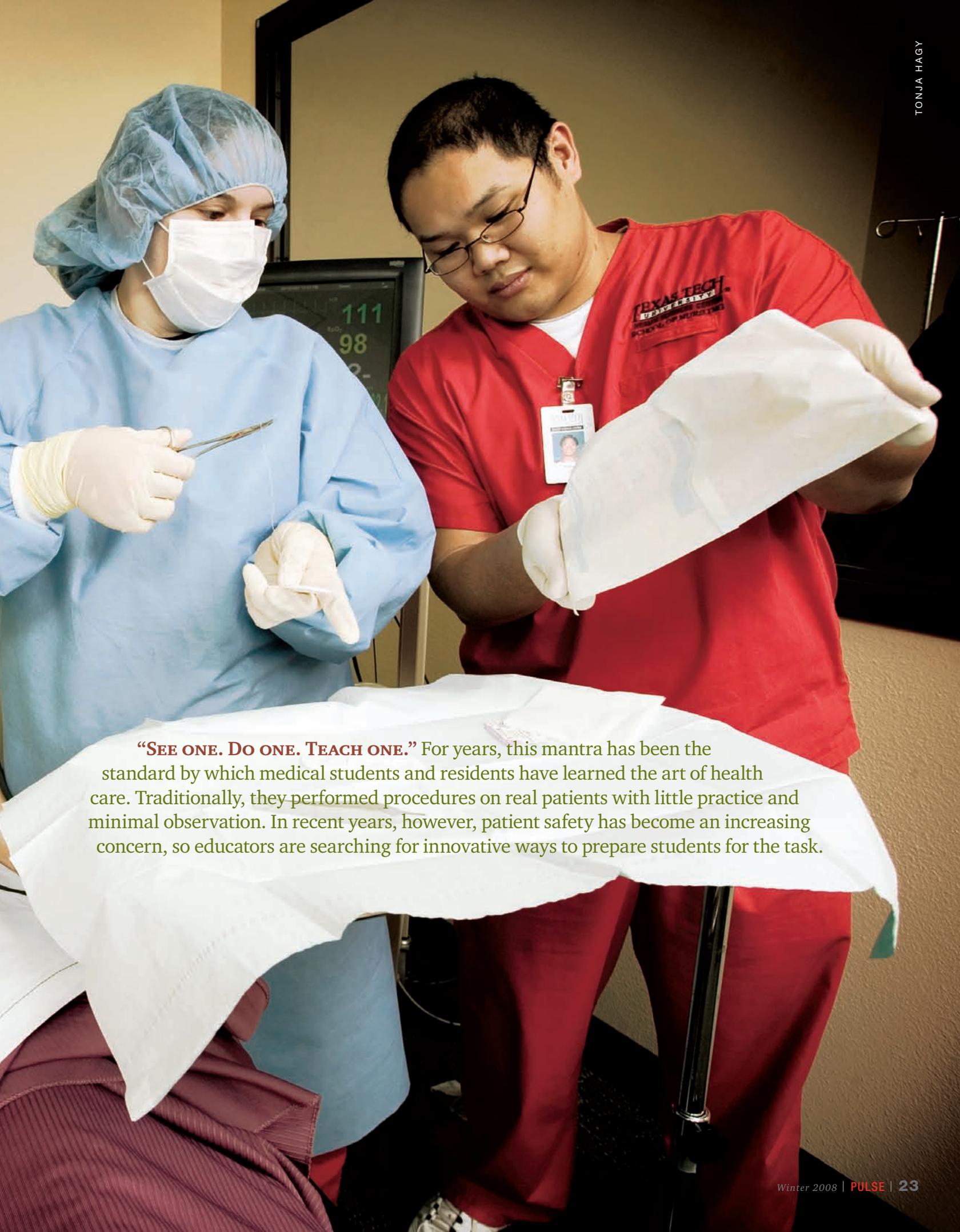


# vision

of a better tomorrow

by rebecca hardin

new simulation center will enhance  
interdisciplinary experiences for ttuhsc students



**“SEE ONE. DO ONE. TEACH ONE.”** For years, this mantra has been the standard by which medical students and residents have learned the art of health care. Traditionally, they performed procedures on real patients with little practice and minimal observation. In recent years, however, patient safety has become an increasing concern, so educators are searching for innovative ways to prepare students for the task.



In today's high-tech world, simulation offers that real-world environment with a safety net. Instead of the "See one. Do one. Teach one." of yesteryear's training, educators now prefer that medical students and residents apply their skills in at least 10 patient scenarios. Their willing subjects? Actors, mannequins or task trainers, says Suzanne Escudier, M.D., assistant professor and simulation program director in the School of Medicine's Department of Anesthesiology.

Students at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center utilize all three models of simulation training; but the facilities leave little room for true interdisciplinary learning, such as those they will experience in hospitals and clinics. Thanks to a generous gift from long-time HSC supporter F. Marie Hall, that will soon change.

The new F. Marie Hall SimLife Center will provide 26,000 square feet for state-of-the-art authentic health care environments including an operating suite and scrub room, hospital patient rooms and clinic examination rooms. In addition, the center will feature virtual reality and 3-D visualization that supports learning and competency evaluations as well as computerized digital audio-visual systems throughout.

Members of a multidisciplinary committee chaired by Sharon Decker, Ph.D., R.N., professor and director of Clinical Simulations and the Covenant Health System Endowed Chair in Simulation and Nursing Education, are working to ensure the center provides Health Sciences Center students and residents with a real-life working environment. She says the center will provide tools to promote discipline-specific and interdisciplinary competencies, communication and collaboration. The vision of the center is to establish the Health Sciences Center as a recognized national leader in patient safety, patient-centered care, informatics and interdisciplinary teamwork.

In addition, the SimLife Center will be utilized by Covenant and UMC Health Systems to assess nursing competencies. Covenant School of Nursing will have access to high fidelity simulation for nursing education through the center as well.

"The exemplar environment of the SimLife Center will prepare students and practitioners for the challenges confronted in today's dynamic health care environment," she said.

Clinicals can be nerve wracking, says Courtney Ehler, a senior nursing student who has seen the simulation program at TTUHSC develop during her course as a student. While Ehler believes the hospital setting is the ideal place to learn, she says simulation

“...simulation allows students an initial experience in a safe setting, preparing for the lesson in the hospital.”

allows students an initial experience in a safe setting, preparing for the lesson in the hospital.

Each school uses the various simulation models differently. Task trainers allow students to work on an individual task while standardized patients provide experience communicating with a patient one on one and taking patient history. Mannequins, diverse in the experience they can provide, are utilized by many disciplines. SimMan and SimBaby are interactive, advanced patient simulators that allow students and residents to experience a variety of situations and scenarios. They give immediate feedback to interventions and provide a safe way to practice invasive procedures such as chest tube insertion and medication administration.

Nursing students use SimBaby to fill the gap in pediatric training in the hospital environment, says Ehler. The life-size infant gives nursing students hands-on experiences, such as when it cries or produces cyanotic lips, a symptom signaling numerous

possible conditions in infants and young children.

Currently anesthesiology residents train one day a week with SimMan, but it requires the adult-size mannequin to be moved to a University Medical Center operating room because of space constraints in the current 8,000 square-foot simulation lab. In the OR, Escudier partners with UMC nurse educators to run one resident and several nurses through simulated emergencies encouraging interdisciplinary communication. The cart used to facilitate the current exercises has only one camera, making review exercises challenging as well, says Escudier.

Harvey, one of the most sophisticated simulators on the market allows students hands-on instruction in the diagnosis of more than 20 disease states such as hypertension and ventricular aneurysm by simulating variations in blood pressure, pulses, heart and breath sounds. “With Harvey you can place the stethoscope anywhere on his chest and hear the corresponding sound for that area,” said Rick Bliss,

TONJA HAGY



“With Harvey  
you can place  
the stethoscope  
anywhere on his chest  
and hear the  
corresponding sound  
for that area.”

a second year medical student and president of the Student Government Association.

Bliss is grateful for the hands on experience the simulation center and the mannequins - ranging in price from \$40,000 to \$200,000 – will provide. He credits Ms. Hall’s vision for creating an opportunity to further encourage interdisciplinary education. “This simulation center will make me a better physician and will make our students better health care providers.”

Simulation is not only about the first-hand experience. State-of-the-art audiovisual equipment and two way mirrors allow instructors to monitor the students and their reactions to different situations and use the experience to teach others. Lynn Bickley, M.D., former associate dean for curriculum and professor of internal medicine is excited about the opportunity to bring all disciplines together and improve patient outcomes. “In addition to procedures, several educational content areas cut across all schools; for example, professionalism, cultural competence, ethics, geriatrics and palliative care. Many aspects of these important areas in education can be taught using collaborative models.”

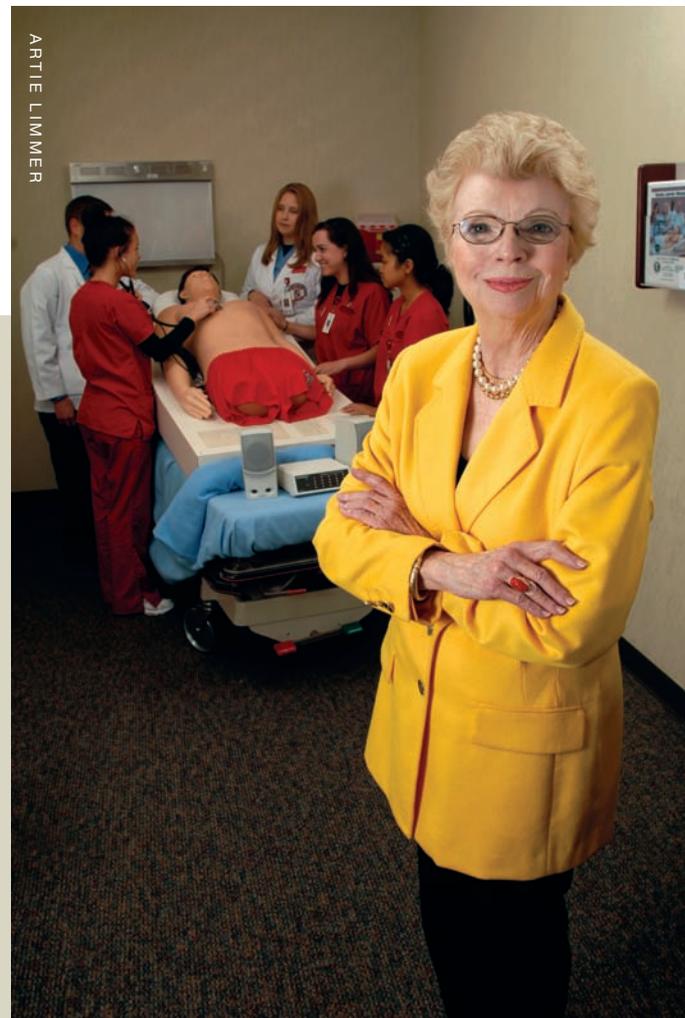
Ehler agrees that the center will allow students a more diverse educational experience. When consulting with a physician on scenarios in the center today, Ehler is actually talking to one of her professors, role playing the part of a physician. Having the opportunity to speak to a medical student and being exposed to interdisciplinary communication is something she eagerly awaits. **P**



ARTIE LIMMER

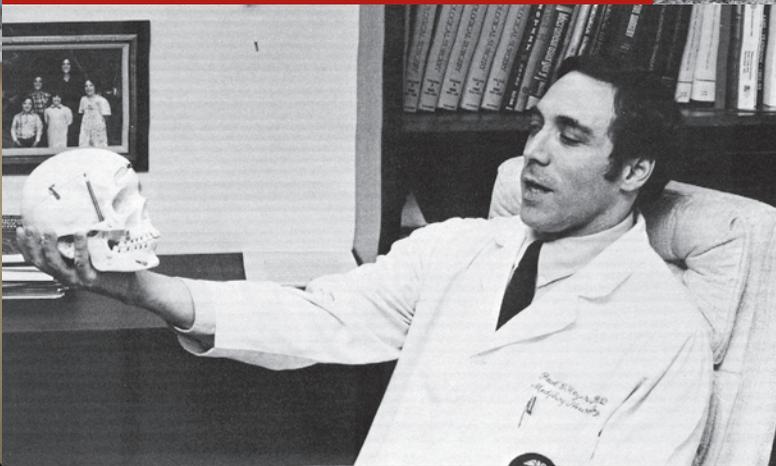
*Thanks to a generous gift from Marie Hall, TTUHSC can establish a simulation center that will facilitate interdisciplinary teamwork among students from all schools. Joining Ms. Hall at the press conference to announce her gift were TTU System Chancellor Kent Hance, Sharon Decker, Ph.D., R.N., professor and director of Clinical Simulations and the Covenant Health System Endowed Chair in Simulation and Nursing Education, and Student Government Association President Rick Bliss.*

**THE F. MARIE HALL SimLife CENTER**, located on the Lubbock campus, will not be the Health Sciences Centers only source for simulation education for long. Plans are already underway at the regional campuses to expand simulation experiences. The School of Pharmacy in Amarillo received \$8 million from the state legislature to expand the campus. The new building will include space for a simulation center. Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at the Permian Basin recently purchased an array of simulation equipment and is collaborating with Midland College and Midland Memorial Hospital to create a new simulation center on the Midland College Campus. Students at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine in El Paso will utilize the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center, which features a variety of mannequins and state-of-the-art audio visual equipment.



ARTIE LIMMER

# Alumni



# Reunion Weekend

October 17-18, 2008



The Office of Alumni Relations offers a special thank you to those who submitted nominations for the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Awards. Committees appointed by the deans of the respective schools selected the honorees. Also, to those who participated in a selection committee, thank you for the time and effort you gave in helping honor these distinguished graduates.

*2008 Distinguished Alumni: School of Medicine honoree William Seger, M.D., ('85); Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing Leadership in Health Care honoree Karen Baggerly, M.S.N., R.N., ('91); School of Medicine Community Outreach honoree Jacob Heydemann, M.D., ('79); Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing honoree for Community Advocacy Carrie Edwards, M.S.N., R.N., CA/CP, SANE, ('93, '99); School of Pharmacy honoree for Excellence in Leadership Jeanie Jaramillo, Pharm.D., ('01); School of Medicine Research Scientist honoree Omid Khorram, M.D., Ph.D., ('89); School of Allied Health Sciences Clinic Administration and Rehabilitation Counseling honoree Christopher Metsgar ('05); School of Allied Health Sciences honoree for Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences Julie Hubik, Au.D., ('01, '05); School of Allied Health Sciences honoree for Laboratory Sciences and Primary Care Doug Moore, MHA, MT, ASCP, ('91); Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences honoree Susan Paulson, Ph.D., ('82); School of Pharmacy Excellence in Practice honoree William Cunningham, Pharm.D., ('02); Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing Excellence in Clinical Care honoree Antoinette Rowin, M.S.N., R.N., ('03). Not pictured are School of Allied Health Sciences honoree in Rehabilitation Sciences Dawndra Scott, Ph.D., ORT, ('94); and School of Pharmacy Excellence in Research honoree Anthony Busti, Pharm.D., ('01).*



Watch for information regarding next year's reunion. See you in 2009!



**A JOB WELL-DONE** :: Congratulations to Donald Gill Davies, Ph.D., professor, Department of Cell Physiology and Molecular Biophysics, and Gwynne Little, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry, on their recent retirements after serving more than 30 years each with the School of Medicine faculty.

Davies joined the physiology department in 1973. He served as the director of physiology courses for the School of Medicine and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and taught the subject in both schools. In addition, he conducted research on lung physiology, the effect of oxygen and carbon dioxide on circulation, and the mechanisms of stroke.

Little is among the School of Medicine's founding faculty. Since 1972, he has taught medical biochemistry and clinical chemistry. Little counts the redesign of curriculum for first- and second-year medical students, as one of his most significant accomplishments. The new curriculum is system-based, allowing students to focus specifically on one organ and its components.



## How are we doing?

We're working hard to develop a magazine that informs, entertains, inspires. So, how are we doing?

Point your browser to [www.RaiderCheckUp.com](http://www.RaiderCheckUp.com) and complete the survey, [www.RaiderCheckUp.com/PulseSurvey](http://www.RaiderCheckUp.com/PulseSurvey). Your comments will help us continue to provide you with an engaging publication and website that keeps you plugged into TTUHSC.

There's even an incentive to participate. Complete the survey by Dec. 15 and be entered in the drawing for a spirited Texas Tech square ceramic chip and dip server.

Thank you for reading Pulse and for your support of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

*Danette Baker*

Danette Baker  
Editor, Pulse

*Rebecca Hardin*

Rebecca Hardin  
Associate Editor, Pulse

## A Journey to Success



While at a family reunion, Staci Moss, Pharm.D. (SOP '02), watched in awe as her cousin, a pharmacist, pulled up in a Jaguar. She laughs as she recalls her thoughts as a 5-year-old, but says the real reason she is a health care professional today is a result of a childhood diagnosis of chondrodysplasia punctata.

Moss endured numerous orthopedic surgeries and braces during her childhood to improve her mobility, hindered by the genetic condition. Believing that her disability would inhibit her ability to work as a doctor or a nurse, Moss chose to study pharmacy. Her journey into the profession taxed her body, and her disease progressed quickly. By her third year of pharmacy school, she could no longer keep up with other students in rounds and began using a wheelchair.

Today, Moss is the only active pharmacist in the Texas Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists who uses a wheelchair for the majority of her mobility.

"Sometimes I feel lonely," said Moss, "it's hard to find other professional women in Lubbock with physical challenges." Moss was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Texas in August, opening the door for her to find friendship and camaraderie with women who truly understand the journey she has made in life. "I never knew how lonely I was to have the camaraderie of other women facing similar challenges until I had the experience of the pageant."

"I am looking forward to this fun and exciting experience," said Moss, who will be using her platform to advocate to students that it is possible to further your education and fulfill your dreams no matter what challenges you face.

Marcus Hunt of El Paso died June 24, 2008. He was president of the Hunt Family Foundation. Memorial contributions may be made to the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso, Department for Mental Health Research.

Katie Parks of Lubbock died June 10, 2008. She was an outreach specialist at the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing Larry Combest Community Health & Wellness Center. In May, the school honored Parks' work by dedicating a conference room at the center to her.

*Gifts in memory of or in honor of are routed to the desired location of the donor through the TTUHSC Office of Institutional Advancement, 3601 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Stop 6238, Lubbock, Texas 79430.*

friends we'll miss



**JUAN FITZ**  
MD  
SOM '86

## SHERLOCK HOLMES

BY REBECCA HARDIN

“Controlled chaos,” is how JUAN FITZ, M.D., (SOM '86) describes emergency medicine.

“You just never know what is going to walk in the door,” says Fitz, assistant director of the emergency room at Covenant Medical Center in Lubbock.

In addition to his hospital duties, Fitz also serves on the School of Medicine’s clinical faculty. Fitz says he takes pride in giving back to the university where he received his education by teaching students the “Sherlock Holmes” of medicine. In emergency medicine, explains Fitz, you lack the luxury of sitting down and sorting through problems. You rely on your sense of sight, sound and smell to assess a patient’s condition and provide appropriate care.

Fitz spends about 15 days each month in the emergency room. Outside of work, he advocates for emergency medicine, serving on the American College of Emergency Physician’s (ACEP) Steering Committee and as a spokesperson for ACEP’s Public Relations Committee. He also is a board member of the Texas College of Emergency Physicians. Recently, Fitz was recognized by the ACEP as a “Hero of Emergency Medicine.” The campaign recognizes emergency physicians who have made significant contributions to emergency medicine, their communities and their patients.

**AMANDA  
WHITE  
BRISTER**  
PHARM D  
SOP '03

**BEN  
BRISTER**  
PHARM D  
SOP '04

## PEOPLE, PARENTING AND PRESCRIPTIONS

BY JULIE TOLAND

When BEN BRISTER, PHARM.D., (SOP '04) first entered college at Tarleton State University, his plan was to take over his father's veterinary practice. Somewhere along the way, that plan changed. "Sometime around the end of my junior year in college, it occurred to me that I could use my science background and make a nice living as a pharmacist and, most importantly, not have to carry a beeper. Most people who knew me thought I was crazy," said Brister, who while in pharmacy school served as student body president and was recipient of the prestigious Bowl of Hygeia award.

Ben and his wife, AMANDA WHITE BRISTER, PHARM.D., (SOP '03) are enjoying careers as pharmacists – Amanda works at a Target pharmacy in Tyler, Texas, while Ben works at Walgreens in Henderson, Texas. The Bristers also have bought land in Troup, southeast of Tyler, adding ranching to their resume.

The couple balance work shifts and ranching with parenting. Twins Blair Marie and Benjamin Jaxson were born in the spring.

Both say that life couldn't be any better – or busier. "I really like what I'm doing, especially building a relationship with patients," Ben said. "I'm very comfortable with people."

## HOME GROWN

BY REBECCA HARDIN

In her 15 years of service at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, MELINDA CORWIN, PH.D., CCC-SLP, (College of Arts and Sciences '87, '89) has been impressed with the growth of the School of Allied Health Sciences. Corwin's career goals of teaching at the university level were realized in 1994 when she joined the school's Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences.

Corwin is a 1989 graduate of the department. Then, the department was housed in the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas Tech University. Five students graduated that year with master's degrees from the Speech and Hearing Sciences programs; Thirty-seven students enrolled in the program this fall and are scheduled to graduate in 2010.

Instrumental in the growth of the program throughout the years, Corwin also has been involved with the development of the Stroke Recovery/Aphasia Group Therapy at TTUHSC. Today the program supports persons, at no cost to the patients and their families, who have aphasia as the result of a stroke. Corwin hopes to see the program continue to grow, allowing all individuals in the region to receive speech-language therapy.

**MELINDA  
CORWIN**  
PHD, CCC-SLP  
Arts and Sciences '87, '89



## SASANKA RAMANADHAM

PHD  
GSBS '85

### TRICKS OF THE TRADE

BY DANETTE BAKER

SASANKA RAMANADHAM, PH.D., (GSBS '85) usually finds himself among an older crowd when partaking in one of his favorite pastimes, bridge. Invariably his occupation piques the interest of his fellow card-players.

"My answer raises a lot of interest," he said. "Because I find there are a number of bridge players who are diabetic."

In his lab at Washington University School of Medicine, Ramanadham investigates the mechanisms that regulate the release of insulin by pancreas islet and those involved in the death of insulin-secreting beta cells. Understanding the factors that control insulin secretion, he says, could help scientists understand the evolution of diabetes.

"Working in a university environment is very stimulating," Ramanadham said. "You are surrounded by a steady stream of students and colleagues who contribute their own twists to your research, which essentially keeps ideas fresh and current and facilitates acquisition of new and much needed information."

As a college student he became interested in diabetes after learning through a mutual acquaintance about how the disease impacted a fellow undergraduate student. From there, Ramanadham says, his research endeavors started humbly at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center with Tom Tenner, Ph.D., as a mentor and have led to nearly 100 publications, advancement in academic ranking, and establishment of an independent research group.

**BOYCE  
TANKERSLEY**  
MSN, FNP  
SON '03

## EDUCATION'S CUTTING EDGE

BY BETH PHILLIPS

BOYCE TANKERSLEY, M.S.N., F.N.P., (SON '03) believes attending the School of Nursing led him to be the type of health care professional who not only cares for patients, but who also guides people to take steps to improve their own health.

"The nurse practitioner program taught me how to meet the patient at his level and assist him in achieving optimal health rather than just presenting them the basics, which he may or may not be able to use," said Tankersley, a nurse practitioner in family medicine at the Abilene Diagnostic Clinic in Abilene, Texas.

He said attending the School of Nursing also instilled in him a sense of professionalism that has enabled him to make the most of difficult situations at work.

While a student, Tankersley worked as a staff nurse in University Medical Center Health System's surgery/trauma Intensive Care Unit, and in its Timothy J. Harnar Burn Center. He said it was in the burn center that he made relationships with key people at both institutions who showed him the importance of using cutting-edge medical knowledge.

"Texas Tech uses research as soon as it's available," Tankersley said. "That just optimizes health care, and that's what makes a teaching institution stand out."

## *In the spirit of giving*

**G**lenna Roberts came to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center 26 years ago, amidst a West Texas thunderstorm, planning to establish a scholarship for nurses. She remembers the day clearly. "I hadn't watched the news, and a very nice man helped me get into the building. His suit was soaked; I still owe him a new suit," Roberts recalls with a rueful smile.

Roberts has for years applied that same giving spirit to the nursing profession. A Lubbock native and graduate of Texas Tech University, she was eager to support TTUHSC in establishing the School of Nursing in 1981. Since then, she has contributed to a variety of projects at TTUHSC including nursing scholarships.

Through the years, Roberts developed a deep admiration and respect for those in nursing as she cared for her aging parents, Corbett and Cecilia Roberts. The experience of caring for her parents in a nursing home environment also gave Roberts firsthand knowledge of the important role certified nurse aides have in the nursing home. Training and support for these health care providers however, have not kept pace with nursing home industry demands, and geriatric specific content is minimal to none in their education and training, according to industry reports. Turnover rates for CNAs in nursing homes exceed 100 percent in many Texas facilities.

Shifting her philanthropic focus following the death of her parents, Roberts is now a dedicated advocate for TTUHSC'S Certified Nurse Aide Career Ladder Project, a program for CNAs who work in long-term care facilities. The CNA program provides opportunities for personal career advancement while enhancing job satisfaction and performance.

Though her gifts have been widespread, Roberts' goal remains the same -- to improve the education and knowledge of those in the nursing profession. One of Roberts' former caregivers was praising the quality of a training program she had recently completed when the two discovered the program was the one Roberts herself champions.

### *Inspired?*

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## Equipping nurses to make Texas a better place

BY ANITA PERRY

I am thrilled and forever honored that Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center would think to distinguish me as a namesake for its School of Nursing.

Looking back at the time I spent in nursing school and my years in the health care field, I could have never imagined my name would one day be associated with the great work that this institution is doing to prepare the nurses of to-

morrow and advance this noble profession within the state of Texas.

My experience as a nurse inspired me to make public health one of my top priorities as Texas' first lady. I am incredibly proud of the progress our state has made in the areas of immunization, heart disease and breast cancer awareness, abuse prevention, and many others. On top of these victories, the most memorable and rewarding times for me are talking to Texans about nursing and spreading the message of how crucial this profession is to the operation of our health care system.

Through the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing, I am hopeful the incredible students and faculty who are working to bring today's health care technology into a field in great need of equipped professionals will carry on this vision. The greatest healers are those who are not only passionate about promoting the advancement of science, but also inspired to care for the lives that these advancements will affect.

If I have one hope for the students and faculty associated with the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing, it is this: I hope they will know that they are part of a truly remarkable school and are an essential part of a very important profession. Centered in the concept of world-class education and research, combined with the values of kindness, compassion and hard work, the nursing experience is truly unlike any other.

I am both delighted and humbled that this school will bear my name, but more so excited for those who will leave this campus to make Texas, the nation and the world a better and healthier place.

*Mrs. Perry has 17 years experience as a nurse and is passionate about making an impact on the critical nursing shortage. She also speaks regularly to students about the nursing profession.*



TONJA HAGY

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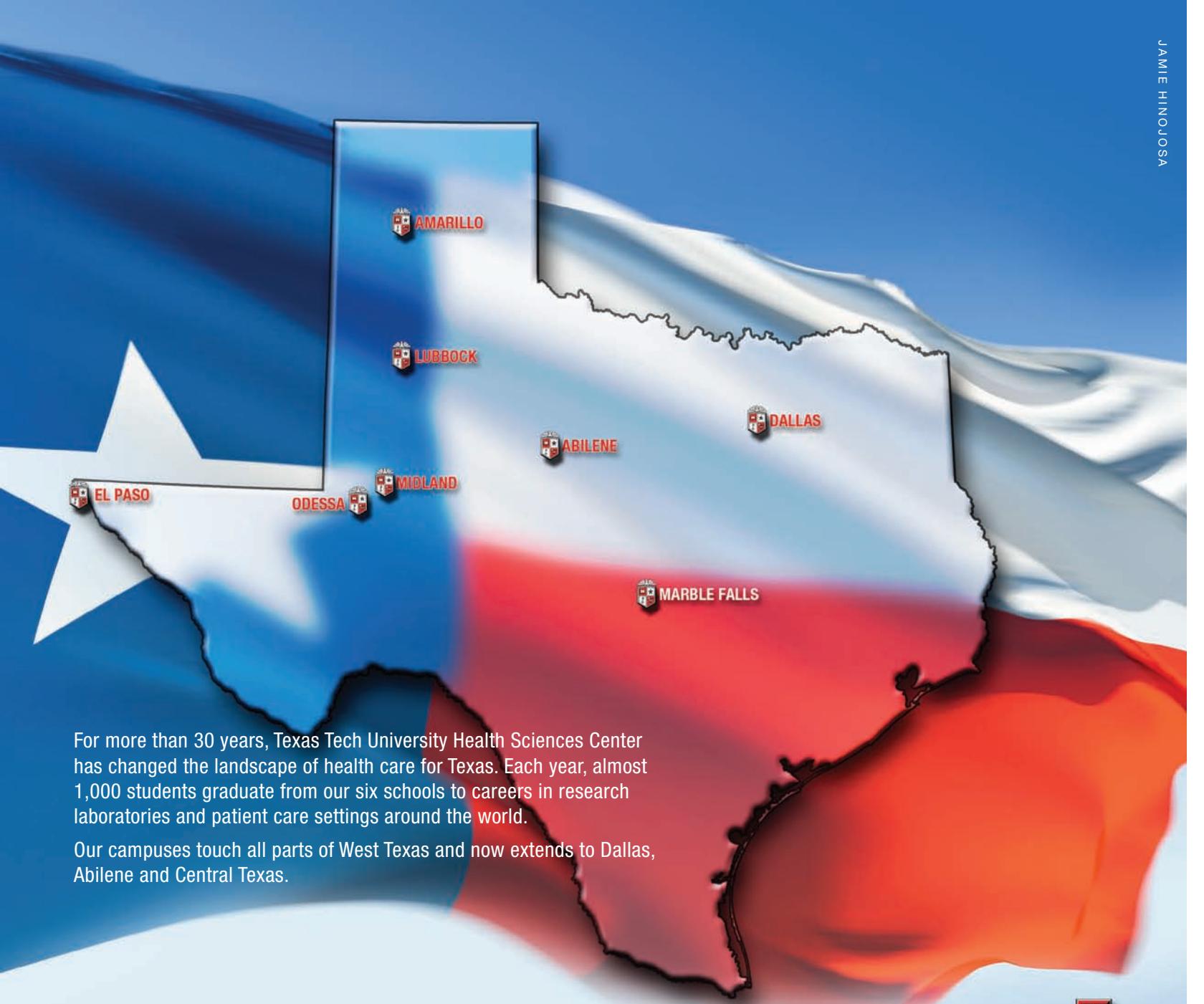
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