



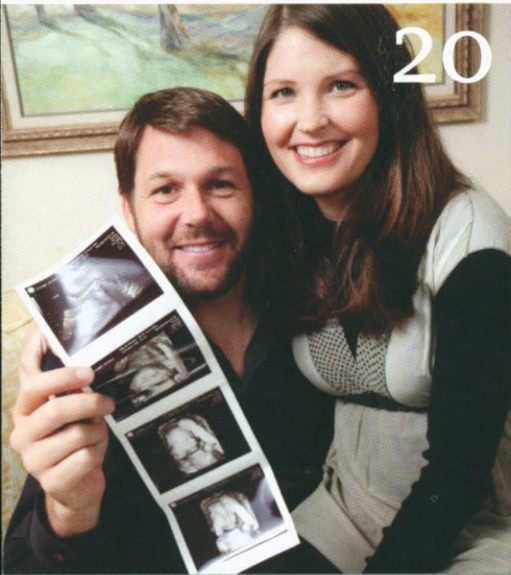
PULSE

WINTER 2010 | A PUBLICATION *for* ALUMNI & FRIENDS *of* TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Baby Blues

Fertility experts deliver
bundles of joy to
couples who have
difficulty conceiving

PULSE



SINGING THE BABY BLUES

About 6 million women nationwide have difficulty getting pregnant. Anne Arrington was one of them. But thanks to high success rates for conception through the Center for Fertility and Reproductive Surgery, Anne finally saw those two little blue lines.

12



COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE

Even though George Henderson, Ph.D., and Jennifer Poss Taylor have never met, they have more in common than they realize. For more than 30 years, Henderson has studied the effects of alcohol on the developing fetus, and for about five years, Poss Taylor has dealt with the outcomes as she raises a child with fetal alcohol syndrome.

16



INITIAL IMPACT

Each Saturday, the waiting area at the El Paso Baptist Clinic, fills with those who cannot afford to see a doctor. Thankfully, students from the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine come to help care for them. In the past year, community members have seen many examples of how the school is impacting this medically underserved area.

28



GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING

TTUHSC cancer experts helped Billy K. Power beat prostate cancer, and for years its sister university provided successful careers for Power and his wife, Ruby. Now it's their time to give back. The Powers are among the many donors who provide support through planned giving.

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Research and Scholarly Activities
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Michael J. Keller, MBA, FACHE

ON THE COVER: BABY ELLA, 8 MONTHS, WAS CONCEIVED WITH HELP FROM THE CENTER FOR FERTILITY AND REPRODUCTIVE SURGERY. PHOTO BY NEAL HINKLE.

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ALUMNI

AMANDA DAVIS, R.N.
NURSING '08
 Enhances care for NICU patients



KYLE GROPP, PHARM.D.
PHARMACY '05
 Improves health among underserved populations



ANDREW LOVERING, PH.D.
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES '03
 Studies ways to clear the airways



LINDA ROBINS, M.D.
MEDICINE '84, '89
 Pediatrician pursues childhood passion



JOHN GALBINCEA
ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES '04
 Follows a 'do something you enjoy' mantra



FEDERAL GRANT SUPPORTS ACCELERATED TRACK FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

The School of Medicine's Department of Family and Community Medicine has received a five-year, \$1.5 million federal grant from the Bureau of Health Professions Division of Medicine and Dentistry to support its Family Medicine Accelerated Track (FMAT) program.

"The money will be used to support students in scholarships and grants through their tenure here," said Ron Cook, D.O., associate professor and vice chair of Family and Community Medicine and director of the FMAT program.

Pulse reported on the FMAT program in the Summer 2010 issue.

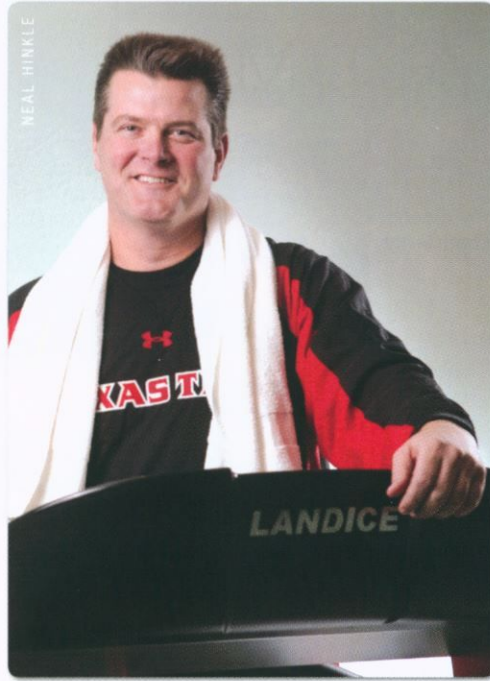


STUDIES INDICATE BLOOD TEST POSSIBLE FOR DIAGNOSING ALZHEIMER'S

TTUHSC researcher Sid O'Bryant, Ph.D., has identified biomarkers in blood serum that could help physicians diagnose Alzheimer's disease.

Pulse reported on O'Bryant's study in the Winter 2009 issue. Since then, the *Archives of Neurology*, a journal of the American Medical Association, has published his work. O'Bryant and colleagues with the Texas Alzheimer's Research Consortium, analyzed proteins in the serum, creating a biomarker risk that correctly identified 94 percent of the individuals with Alzheimer's disease and 84 percent who did not have the disease.

Identifying biomarkers in the blood has several advantages over other methods of classifying patients with Alzheimer's disease, such as biomarkers in the cerebrospinal fluid and through neuroimaging, according to the study's authors. Blood can be collected at any clinic or in-home visit and most patients will agree to the process, whereas not all facilities can conduct lumbar punctures to obtain cerebrospinal fluid. Additionally, older patients may not be able to undergo neuroimaging because of pacemakers or other health issues.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: A LITTLE CAN GO A LONG WAY

BY TTUHSC PRESIDENT TEDD L. MITCHELL, M.D.

Imagine if scientists developed a pill that single-handedly lowered your risk for heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Would you take it? What if it also helped improve energy, weight control, heartburn, constipation, sleep, anxiety and even libido? Sounds even better, doesn't it? What if the pill was free – seems like everyone would want it, don't you think? Well, the good news is the pill exists. The bad news is it takes 30 minutes to work.

The pill? A program of consistent exercise.

Let's face it. Modern technology has been a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it has greatly improved our ability to travel, work and play. On the other hand, the entertainment aspect of technology alone has had a dramatic impact on how we spend our leisure time – most often staring at a screen.

That's why we made becoming a healthier you the focus of our Community Medical School this fall. And why, at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso, they are Walkin' the Talk with a new campus-wide initiative aimed at improving personal health.

If you're not there yet, don't lose hope. It's possible to turn things around. All that's required is a slight change in mindset and a 30-minute slice of your day.

- » **Make activity a scheduled appointment Monday through Friday.** I prefer to exercise first thing in the morning because I can control that part of my schedule easier, but pick the time that works best for you.
- » **Start out easy.** Too many people give up on an activity because they push too hard and too fast. You will need to take this "pill" for the rest of your life, so don't overdose!
- » **Remember the FIT principle of exercise** (frequency, intensity and time). Focus on frequency first. For example, if you want to walk, do so daily—even if only for five to 10 minutes. But don't worry about the speed. Once walking is part of your routine, lengthen the time per session, eventually working up to 30 minutes (still not worrying about speed). After you have worked your way up to 30 minutes for five days per week then start picking up the pace! Eventually your goal is to exercise at a moderate level of intensity (hard enough to make you breathe a bit heavy and sweat, but not so hard that you can't carry on a conversation with a buddy).

The secret to improving your health is simple. Not easy, but simple. So put on your sneakers and take that first step toward a healthier you.

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New simulation center

creates greater educational opportunities

The F. Marie Hall SimLife Center opened in mid-September with distinction as a Laerdal Center of Educational Excellence. Laerdal is one of the leading providers of emergency and patient care solutions in the world. The designation is awarded to centers that have consistently demonstrated excellence in educational philosophy and programs for the purpose of helping save lives.

“What that means,” said TTU System Chancellor Kent Hance, “is that we now can give our students the best training opportunities of anyone in the country.”

“And we have Marie Hall to thank.”

In 2009, Ms. Hall, a longtime Texas Tech supporter, gave a major gift allocated to establishing an educational clinical laboratory that promotes safe, quality patient care through innovative simulation technologies.

The F. Marie Hall SimLife Center, a 24,000 square-foot facility, features multi-modality simulation instruction areas including primary and acute care, a standardized patient program, simulation using advanced patient simulators and haptic devices, and 3D visualization.

It provides the opportunity for students in all health professions, as well as those practicing in the community, to acquire the full range of skills needed—ranging from drawing blood to delivering babies—all without the risk of injuring patients.

“Research has demonstrated that simulation provides an effective method of teaching while promoting learner satisfaction and self-competence,” said Sharon Decker, Ph.D., R.N., director of the F. Marie Hall SimLife Center and Covenant Health System Endowed Chair in Simulation and Nursing Education.

TTUHSC President Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D., said the center is an excellent location to host continuing education courses that will increase communication among different health care fields.

“Part of our mission educationally is to make sure we have as much interdisciplinary teamwork as we can, and this is a great tool for doing that.”



“...we now can give our students the best training opportunities of anyone in the country.”

TTUHSC President Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D., leads a tour through the new simulation center.

Guess WHO?



<<<She once presented information to high school students about drug abuse but later became intrigued herself with similar interruptions in the central nervous system. Can you Guess Who?

see story on page 10



MILLER FILLS THE CH FOUNDATION REGENTS CHAIR IN PARKINSON'S DISEASE RESEARCH

Bradley Miller, M.D., Ph.D., was selected for The CH Foundation Endowed Chair in Parkinson's Disease Research. Miller's expertise will be instrumental in TTUHSC establishing a multidisciplinary center of excellence in Alzheimer's disease. As an individual researcher, Miller also will contribute to the institution's study of Parkinson's disease and brain aging. Before joining TTUHSC, Miller worked as an adult and pediatric surgical and autopsy neuropathologist at the University of Virginia Health System. In addition, he had primary diagnostic and research responsibility for all neurodegenerative disease cases. In this role, he directed all research procurement protocols involving neurodegenerative diseases and was the medical director of the Brain Resource Facility. Miller also was the George C. Cotzias Fellow in Parkinson's Disease Research from the American Parkinson's Disease Association.



MCKEE SELECTED FOR SHANNON HOLLOWAY, M.D., PH.D., ENDOWED CHAIR IN ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

The School of Medicine has named Desirae Molly McKee, M.D., as the L. Shannon Holloway, M.D., Ph.D. Endowed Chair in Orthopaedic Surgery. McKee received her medical degree at the University of South Dakota and completed her residency at the Maricopa Medical Center. Before joining the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation as an assistant professor, McKee was a hand surgeon at Excelsior Orthopedics in New York. The chair position was established in honor of the late Shannon Holloway, M.D., Ph.D., (SOM '76, Resident '80) a noted West Texas orthopaedic doctor.



WU NAMED CORINNE PAYNE WRIGHT ENDOWED CHAIR IN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Chuang-Kuo Wu, M.D., Ph.D., joined the TTUHSC faculty this summer as the Corinne Payne Wright Endowed Chair in Alzheimer's Disease in the School of Medicine's Department of Neurology. Wu's focus will be to advance treatment of cognitive disorders of late life, specifically Alzheimer's disease. Previously, Wu was assistant professor of Clinical Neurosciences at Brown University Warren Alpert Medical School in Rhode Island. He also has been on the faculty at the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. The chair, established in honor of the late Corinne Wright, is funded primarily by the Wright family business, ASCO Inc. There also have been numerous memorial contributions to the fund.



New name for School of Nursing at El Paso honors local donors

Thanks to a generous gift from the Hunt Family Foundation, the School of Nursing at El Paso has a new name and is on its way to becoming a fully accredited school.

The school will be named the Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing. Gayle Greve Hunt is the wife of Woody L. Hunt, chairman of the Hunt Family Foundation and CEO of the Hunt Companies, headquartered in El Paso.

“We are honored to name the future El Paso nursing school after Gayle Hunt,” said TTU System Chancellor Kent Hance. “The Hunt family has been a tremendous friend and supporter over the years, and thanks to this contribution, we will continue to serve our communities through unrivalled teaching, research and patient care.”

The TTU System Board of Regents approved the process of establishing an additional, freestanding nursing school in El Paso earlier this year to help fill a void in the health care system. In 2009, Texas faced a shortage of an estimated 20,000 nurses. El Paso is the fourth most populous city in the state, with a population of more than 700,000. When combined with Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, the area’s population increases to about 2.2 million. This region has been federally designated as a medically underserved area.

In 2008, the School of Nursing established a presence in El Paso offering an accelerated Second Degree Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. A regional dean was then recruited along with the necessary faculty to support this inaugural program. A year later, the nursing programs were expanded to include a traditional BSN program, which now has approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to increase enrollment to 40 students. It is anticipated that the Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing at El Paso will have an enrollment of 500 students by 2015.

“On behalf of the foundation, the Hunt family is proud to lend support to the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center by establishing this nursing school,” said Woody L. Hunt.

He added that the gift is intended to meet several critical needs within the El Paso area.

“We believe this type of initiative promotes strategic economic development that is in line with El Paso’s vision for broader educational attainment as well as meeting our border health challenges.”

Hunt explains that the El Paso vision for higher education was outlined in the Blueprint for Global Competiveness in the Paso del Norte Region, prepared last year by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

“We believe this new nursing school can be a major building block within that blueprint. Our foundation’s commitment to Texas Tech for the development of its nursing school is intended to build additional capacity for the preparation of health care professionals in the Paso del Norte region. It is meant to complement the nursing education and research programs at other regional institutions, and to work in a collaborative manner, per that OECD blueprint.”

FROM CROSSOVER DRILLS TO CLINICAL SKILLS

Former TTU basketball hopeful becomes first pharmacy student to earn MBA

MEDICAL, LAW SCHOOLS ALSO TEAM-UP FOR DUAL DEGREE

TTUHSC and TTU are joining a growing number of institutions that offer students an opportunity to earn medical and law degrees simultaneously. This summer, School of Medicine Dean Steven Berk, M.D., announced the J.D./M.D. dual degree combining the two areas of study into an integrated program designed specifically for those students interested in the areas of health law, health care policy, bioterrorism, forensics or biomedical compliance.

The addition of the program enhances the national reputation of the TTU System because it is the first to offer the dual-degree program at one institution. Students enrolled will complete their coursework in six years, instead of the seven that would be required by earning the degrees separately.

Marta Hoes, the first Red Raider to enter the program, said, "I've always been interested in policy making and medical legislature, and this program helps me focus on both issues."

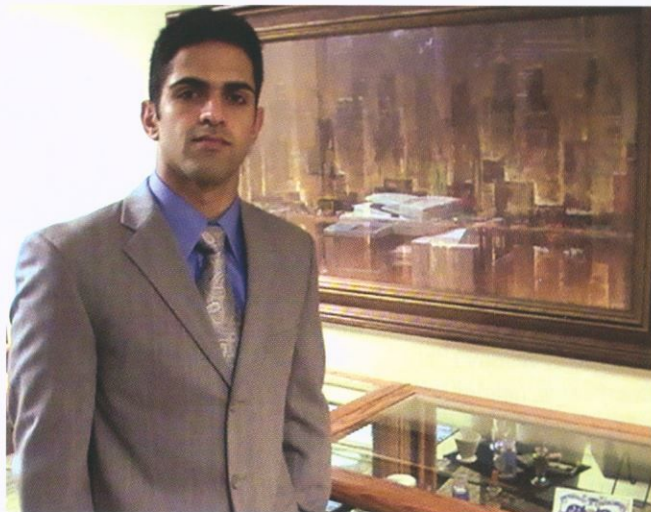
Texas Tech roundball fans may remember Arvin Zeinali as one of the four finalists on *Knight School*, the 2004 reality show that featured Texas Tech students competing for a spot as the 12th man for legendary head coach Bobby Knight's Red Raider basketball squad.

Although he didn't make the final cut, Zeinali said the experience helped prepare him for a lead role. "As a participant on the show, I learned a lot of valuable lessons

from (Coach Knight) that translated from the basketball court to my career. When you put in the necessary hard work and time you will see the results, be it on the basketball court or in a health care setting."

Today, Zeinali is a fourth-year student at the School of Pharmacy's regional campus in Dallas. In August, Zeinali became the first pharmacy student to earn a master's degree in business administration under the school's new Pharm.D./M.B.A. program, a joint degree with TTU's Rawls College of Business Administration.

Roland Patry, Dr.P.H., clinical practice and management chair for the school's Department of Pharmacy Practice, set the idea in motion in 2006 for the combined degree program. Following discussions with faculty from the TTU Rawls College of Business Administration, the joint degree was approved and became the 31st such program in the country. To date it is one of only a handful of accredited health organization management programs nationwide and is the only one between Georgia and Arizona. Zeinali is one 15 pharmacy students enrolled in the program.



Arin Zeinali, who is on track to earn his Pharm.D. with the Class of 2011, said the MBA work provided him a perspective of the pharmacy profession that others may not possess.

"Our Pharm.D. program is very clinically based. I feel that with this MBA program students can really develop into substantial and effective leaders in this profession," he said. "... the curriculum is challenging, but I truly believe that the benefits far outweigh the sacrifices."

JUST the facts...

3,727

enrollment for fall 2010, an increase of 14.7 percent, making this year's class the largest in TTUHSC history.

\$750,000

grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to the School of Nursing at Abilene and Sears Methodist Retirement System Inc. to establish a program to train certified nursing assistants, or CNAs. The goal, according to Pearl Merritt, Ed.D., R.N., regional dean for the School of Nursing, is to prepare more CNAs for the work force to care for the aging population. She expects to graduate 250 to 300 in the next three years.

715

patients treated in the first year by TTUHSC medical students at the Lubbock Impact/TTUHSC free clinic held weekly at The Family Church in Lubbock. The clinic is funded by donations from the community and staffed by a team of second-year medical students under the direction of Kelly Bennett, M.D., and Fiona Prabhu, M.D., from the School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine.



\$20,014

was raised by TTUHSC and TTU students during their first RaiderThon. The dance marathon event was one of more than 150 held nationwide to raise money for Children's Miracle Network. RaiderThon far exceeded its initial goal of \$12,000 "dancing for those who can't," said Keeley Fragosso, a student in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing.

1,133

number of primary care providers to be served by the West Texas Health Information Technology (HIT) Regional Extension Center as they implement electronic health records into their practices. John Delaney, R.N., B.S.N., was hired as the center's director. The goal, said Billy Philips, Ph.D., vice president of the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health, which oversees the new center, is to help physician offices meet the federal goal for all Americans to have access to electronic medical records by 2014. The West Texas HIT is one of 28 nationwide, and one of four in Texas, recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

600

students have graduated from the School of Allied Health Sciences Clinical Laboratory Science program since it began in 1985. The program is one of the largest and is considered among the best in the nation, according to its national accrediting agency. Historically, the program's graduates score above the national average on the certification exam; the Class of 2010 recorded a 100 percent pass rate.



Permian Basin medical community receives support through Jenna Welch Women's Center

The Jenna Welch Women's Center, located steps away from Midland Memorial Hospital, has received strong support from the Permian Basin community since opening in April 2010.

October's Pink the Basin event is just one example. The community rallied behind the center's emphasis on breast cancer awareness, tripling donations from years' past, with the goal of providing 100 free mammograms to area patients.

Established by the Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health (LWBIWH) and named for former First Lady Laura Bush's mother, the Jenna Welch Women's Center provides patient care, and outreach as well as educational opportunities for TTUHSC students. The center held its official dedication in August, attended by Mrs. Bush and its namesake Jenna Welch.

"I am most impressed with the very easy access (students have) to faculty members for such a large educational facility," said Leslie Chupp, M.D., director of the Jenna Welch Women's Center and regional director for the institute. "As it is considered a border region, the Permian Basin is unique in that it brings a world focus to health care in West Texas."

Additionally, the Jenna Welch Women's Center has met key community initiatives including education in teen health, an ongoing project with local schools, and Chupp's specialty in pelvic pain has led to training medical staff for a more complete diagnosis. She also foresees establishing within the center a private area for health professionals to help families deal with first trimester pregnancy loss as well as pregnancy planning.

"The partnership with (LWBIWH) supplies the Permian Basin with more services for women's health and addresses the needs of those previously underserved," said Bob Dent, vice president for Patient Care Services at Midland Memorial Hospital. "The students are a tremendous resource that inspire the clinical staff to achieve more."

The hospital along with Medical Center Hospital in Odessa committed donations to the center for operating costs and developed an endowment fund, according to Erin Tresner, TTUHSC director of development at the Permian Basin. The two entities were instrumental in establishing the LWBIWH at the Permian Basin.



Staff members give Laura W. Bush and her mother, Jenna Welch, a tour of the new Jenna Welch Women's Center during its official opening in August. Joining the tour are Leslie Chupp, M.D., center director, far right, TTUHSC President Tedd L. Mitchell and John C. Jennings, M.D., regional dean for the School of Medicine at the Permian Basin.

JENNA WELCH WOMEN'S CENTER

WOMEN'S WELLNESS

- Physical examinations
- Gynecological care
- Global women's health assessment
- Risk prevention for chronic conditions
- Pregnancy planning
- Minimally invasive total hysterectomy

ADOLESCENT HEALTH

- 'Teen-friendly' exam room
- Teen resource center

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- Breast cancer awareness
- Pink the Basin annual event
- Teen Health Education for Schools
- Quarterly Lunch and Learn topics
- ER grief counseling/resource room for first trimester pregnancy loss

FACILITIES & STAFF

- 28,000 square feet
- 17 exam rooms
- On-site sonography
- 6 physicians plus support staff

Laura W. Bush

INSTITUTE for WOMEN'S HEALTH
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health opened its seventh office this fall adding a new location and further expanding its focus on women's health issues. It becomes the newest component of the Center for Community Wellness, Engagement and Development, a part of the College of Nursing and Allied Health at Angelo State University. The institute has partnered with ASU, San Angelo Community Medical Center and the TTU System to further advance its mission.

SCHOOL OF NURSING MARKS
25 years
 AT THE PERMIAN BASIN



The School of Nursing at Odessa celebrated a milestone in October and began the next quarter century of nursing education with anticipation.

During the past 25 years, the school has expanded degree plans as well as increased the number of students it is educating. Key to the success and growth, says Sharon Cannon, Ed.D., R.N., regional dean, is the community partnerships that have provided the support to expand programs and offer student scholarships. Two of the partners are Abell Hanger and Medical Center Hospital, which have been with the school since its inception.

“We are well-prepared to face the challenges of the next 25 years,” Cannon said. “With the continued support of the Permian Basin community, we look forward to embracing future opportunities to provide highly qualified nurses in the provision of health care.”

THROUGH THE DECADES:

- The School of Nursing expanded to Odessa in 1985 with the RN to BSN program.
- There now are 145 students in five programs: RN/BSN, Graduate, Second Degree BSN, DNP and Traditional Undergraduate, which is offered through partnerships with Odessa College and Midland College.
- The school’s first class of 13 students graduated in 1987.
- The regional nursing campus began with three faculty members and currently has 11.

ACCOLADES LINDA BRICE, PH.D., R.N., received the 2010 Award of Excellence in Community Service from the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses. Brice, associate professor in the School of Nursing, was recognized for her dedication to improving the lives of women and newborns through community service. She annually leads a drive for baby items, which in the past eight years has brought in \$253,300. She also has helped spearhead community educational events such as Teen Straight Talk and Heart 2 Heart Community Health Fair. The U.S. Health Resources and Services awarded a grant to the **SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT AMARILLO** to send six pediatric residents to rural communities in the Panhandle. Those residents selected for the program also will receive incentives, such as loan forgiveness, to stay in the area after training. JOHN W. PELLEY, PH.D., associate professor in the School of Medicine’s Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry, has received the 2010 Alpha Omega Alpha Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award. The award is given by the Association of American Medical Colleges’ honor society to recognize faculty members who have distinguished themselves in medical student education. Pelley has devoted his career to studying how medical students learn—before and after they attend medical school. He also is founding chair of the school’s Teaching Academy. The U.S. Department of Education National Institute of Disabilities and Rehabilitation Research has awarded a grant to the **SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES’ DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING SCIENCES** and Northeastern University in Boston for autism research. The project is aimed at determining whether animations facilitate the understanding of pictorial symbols for verbs and prepositions in autistic children, said Rajinder Koul, Ph.D., department chair and co-director of the grant. TTUHSC and Northeastern will be collection and analysis sites.



NEW BREAST CENTER BRINGS STATE-OF-THE-ART CARE TO AMARILLO AREA

The Panhandle region now has better access to care for breast health thanks to a joint partnership between TTUHSC at Amarillo, North Texas Healthcare System and Texas Oncology Professional Associates. In October, they established the new Amarillo Breast Center of Excellence, a state-of-the-art cancer institute dedicated to all inclusive breast care. The center has received a three-year full accreditation designation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, making it the only nationally accredited comprehensive breast center within a 350-mile radius of Amarillo.

Guess WHO?

THE THRILL OF DISCOVERY

By Danette Baker

In the '70s, use of illicit drugs were a phenomenon spreading like wildfire, and Jean Strahlendorf, Ph.D., was in pharmacy school learning about them. She would often talk to high school students about substances like LSD, warning how they damage the function of brain cells. Little did she know that she would spend her entire career striving to understand why.

For more than 30 years, Strahlendorf has worked "at the nitty gritty cellular level" trying to understand what happens inside a cell when it undergoes death – like from substance abuse or from a disease such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

"There is a real thrill of making original discoveries and the potential it holds for going down a road not traveled before," says the physiology professor.

From her perspective, the path leading to TTUHSC was one that looked promising, said Strahlendorf. She and her husband, Howard Strahlendorf, Ph.D., were recruited to TTUHSC as post-doctoral students in 1977. "We had looked at other places but everything we were looking for was here. Coming from Philadelphia, we wanted to be at a smaller university in a smaller area. The school and this community were the right size, and it offered equal opportunities for both of us."

She has enjoyed success as a researcher and shared the thrill of discovery with medical and graduate students as their teacher and mentor. It's been a role, she says, not so much of turning them on to science, but instead not turning them off.

Looking back, she says, one of the greatest accomplishments came not from her work, but from that of a student who uncovered another role for the enzyme responsible for cell death.

"It's exciting but also a little scary when you make an unconventional discovery," she says.

And life is a little like that sometimes too.

Strahlendorf is ending her career in research at TTUHSC and looking forward to discovering the next chapter in life as she and her husband retire to Colorado. Strahlendorf plans to resuscitate her pharmacy skills and perhaps work with the underserved American Indian populations.

"We will miss Texas Tech dearly and are so grateful for the opportunities here; but there's a saying, 'I am not what I do, I do what I am.'

"The time has come to live beyond my career."



NEAL HINKLE

Discoveries

RESEARCH
& SCHOLARLY
ACTIVITY

Ten-year-old Ashley Taylor was diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome when she was 5. By understanding how alcohol affects the developing fetus, TTUHSC researchers hope to identify interventions for the disease.

INTERVENTIONS

By Allison Wood and photos by Neal Hinkle



Jennifer Poss Taylor hopes researchers can provide help for those, like her daughter, Ashley, who struggle with the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome.

Adoption was Jennifer Poss Taylor's greatest hope, knowing from her teenage years that she couldn't have children.

So seven years ago, she and her husband were thrilled to adopt a blonde-haired, blue-eyed toddler named Ashley. As their daughter grew, noticeable development issues became apparent; at age 5, Ashley was diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).

Poss Taylor poured over research articles and any book she could find, yet still felt lost in regard to what faced them in raising their daughter. So she wrote and published *Forfeiting All Sanity, a Mother's Story of Raising a Child with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome*, a day-to-day glimpse of parenting a child with FAS.

Fetal alcohol syndrome is a clinical diagnosis and is the most serious of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, according to the National Organization on

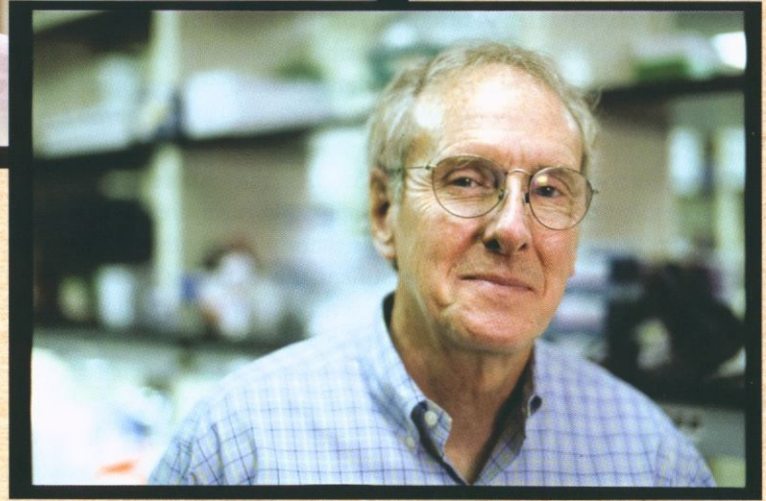
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. The conditions can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. Effects, sometimes lifelong, can include physical, mental and/or learning disabilities.

"Recent numbers indicate that 1 in 120 children are diagnosed with autism and 1 in 150 are diagnosed with FAS/FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorders), yet the latter is an issue that is not talked about. Drinking while pregnant is a taboo topic," states Poss Taylor who has become an advocate for families with FAS. "I'm continually amazed by people who assess drinking while pregnant as a minimal risk. I ask, 'Why take even a minimal risk?' The only prevention for fetal alcohol syndrome is not drinking at all."

George Henderson, Ph.D., agrees. "We only know with certainty that the completely safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy is none." For 34 years, Henderson, an NIH-funded researcher, has studied the effects of alcohol on the developing fetus.



George Henderson, Ph.D., and his team expand the scope of research conducted through the South Plains Alcohol and Addiction Research Center.



Now, his research team is part of TTUHSC's South Plains Alcohol and Addiction Research Center (SPAARC), where, he says, there is a "critical mass of investigators with the expertise to look at molecular and anatomic changes in brain cells exposed to alcohol and develop means to prevent these toxic effects on the growing brain."

Douglas Stocco, Ph.D., executive vice president for research, credits Peter Syapin, Ph.D., and Susan Bergeson, Ph.D., with recruiting Henderson about a year ago.

Henderson's research significantly expands the scope of SPAARC's work, said Syapin, SPAARC director and professor of pharmacology and neuroscience. "The effects of alcohol on the fetus has important consequences that we need to understand better. His research will significantly add to our on-going research in binge drinking, genomics and epigenetics effects of drinking, and alcoholism-induced brain damage."

SPAARC's mission is to develop translational, multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to better understand the consequences of alcohol and drug use. Behavior and physiological research takes place to determine changes on a molecular and genetic level. The center currently is home to a staff of 25, including researchers, associates, assistants and students. Long-range plans are for SPAARC to be a recognized NIH Center of Excellence.

"Dr. Henderson's recruitment provides new expertise that was missing in SPAARC as well as an influx of new research faculty and post-doctoral fellows that help stimulate new ideas for research," Syapin said. "This also demonstrates to the (SPAARC) founders that TTUHSC is committed to the study of alcohol and drug addiction and to the success of this group by providing significant start-up funds for his research and through infrastructure improvements resulting in a new laboratory for the center."

Bergeson, associate professor of pharmacology and neuroscience and a genetics expert, said the breadth of alcohol research at SPAARC was expanded by the addition of Henderson's focus on FASD. "Although some of the mechanisms of alcohol insult overlap between the developing fetus and adult brain, fetal exposure can lead to unique problems.

"The effects of alcohol on the fetus has important consequences that we need to understand better. His research will significantly add to our on-going research in binge drinking, genomics and epigenetics effects of drinking, and alcoholism-induced brain damage."

"Dr. Henderson's lab brings new expertise, such as laser microdissection, which will allow us to study alcohol's complex effects at the basic cellular level."

And that is all good news to Poss Taylor who says this type of research has been at the top of her list since living a day-to-day life complicated by the affects of FAS. "I hope to meet this team someday, and I would love for them to meet Ashley."

BREAKING LANGUAGE BARRIERS

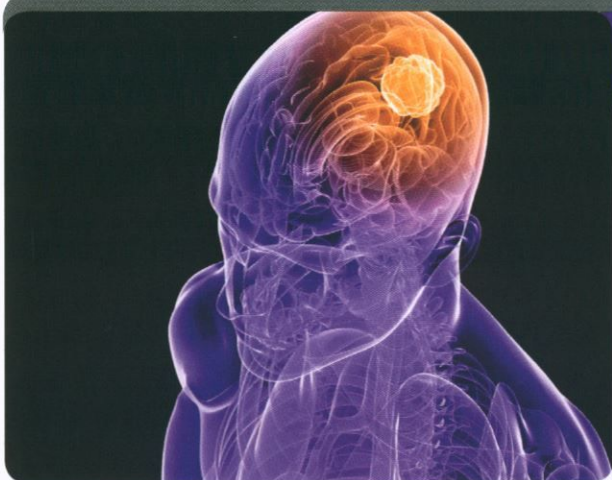
Knowing how to treat bilingual children who have speech and language disorders is a whole new world for speech pathologists. Yet 10 percent to 15 percent of the more than 9 million children being raised in bilingual homes have diagnosable speech/sound disorders, according to Sue Ann Lee, Ph.D., assistant professor of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences in the School of Allied Health Sciences. With funding from the NIH's Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development, Lee is working to help understand the nature of bilingual speech acquisition and pave the way to assist bilingual children who are challenged in their speech development.

"We currently don't know how differently bilingual children acquire their speech and language compared to monolingual children," Lee said. "Thus, in order to accurately identify bilingual children with speech disorders and provide appropriate treatment, the first thing to do is establish accurate developmental characteristics of speech production in bilingual children without speech problems."

Lee's research is specifically focused on whether or not bilingual children speak both their languages distinctively; such as whether Spanish-English bilinguals can produce English /b/ and Spanish /b/ differently, in that these two sounds are articulated differently.

By studying data among bilingual children with no speech problems, Lee said, speech-language pathologists will be better equipped to correctly diagnose problems in those who do have difficulties.

"Bottom line: bilingualism and multiculturalism cannot be avoided with globalization," Lee said. "I hope to contribute in any way I can to helping bilingual families maintain their first language and consider what kinds of education would be best for our bilingual children."



IDENTIFYING NEW PATHWAYS INTO THE BRAIN

Breast cancer is the second most common cause of metastases in the brain, and the incidence is increasing. Yet traditional chemotherapy dosing has had little effect on these secondary cancers, which most often result in death within a couple of years.

TTUHSC researchers are hoping to change that. Working with animal models, Paul R. Lockman, Ph.D., (GSBS '03) and his team, found a variance in the amount of chemotherapy drugs that reach brain metastases; only 10 percent of the brain tumors had absorbed enough of the chemotherapy drugs to work effectively against the tumors, an amount significantly lower than in other tumors in different organs. Their work is featured as the cover story in the Dec. 1 issue of *Clinical Cancer Research*.

"This manuscript answers a question in the field that has existed for nearly 40 years," said Lockman, assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences in the School of Pharmacy at Amarillo. "The blood vessels in the brain are a vascular barrier that significantly limits the drugs or molecules that get in."

The team is now working on ways to safely break down the blood brain barrier, allowing for an increase in drug delivery to tumors in the brain; additionally, they are working to develop new drugs and delivery methods to get past the barrier.



SNIFFLY, SNEEZY, COUGHING, ACHING, FEVER

... they are not just words in a Nyquil ad but tools your doctor might use to determine if you have the flu or just a case of the common cold.

This new method of diagnosis is one of the many research studies being conducted at the West Texas Influenza Center, located at TTUHSC at Amarillo. With a recent grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Todd Bell, M.D., director, is developing a specific questionnaire that can guide physicians to more accurately diagnose influenza. His clinical prediction tool involves an immediate check of cold and flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough and headache.

“Although incredibly common, influenza can be difficult to diagnose accurately,” Bell said. “The similarity of influenza to other respiratory viruses in most patients makes clinical gestalt less trustworthy, and currently available lab methods are either insensitive or inaccessible.

“The development of a tool utilizing non-invasive clinical data would allow physicians and health care systems to more appropriately allocate resources without adding to the expense of diagnosis. This could be especially useful in resource scarce areas.”

The West Texas Influenza Center is a multidisciplinary platform where physician

scientists and practitioners are studying novel treatment and prevention methods for influenza viruses, which annually affect about 30 percent of the population and result in \$10 billion in direct medical costs. To learn more, visit www.ttuhsu.edu/wtic.

INTERVENTIONS IMPACT YOUNG WOMEN

Certain behaviors among rural Mexican-American adolescent girls are putting them at risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, unintended pregnancy and abuse. In an effort to reduce these behaviors, Jane Dimmitt Champion, Ph.D., R.N., School of Nursing professor and associate dean of research and scholarship, has introduced a randomized study designed to provide support, health information and education.

With a NIH-funded grant, she will work through three rural health clinics located on the Texas-Mexico border to recruit young women to participate in a culturally sensitive, cognitive-behavioral intervention program. The young women will attend workshops, support groups and counseling sessions related to sexual relationships, substance abuse, interpersonal violence and STIs. The young women in the control group will participate in similar groups, but with topics such as obesity, dental care, skin care and prevention of diabetes and coronary disease.

The intervention work being tested is based on an evidence-based model approved by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control as effective for the prevention of HIV and STIs among minority women. Champion was one of the authors on the original model, and has modified it for the rural populations.

“These young girls, regardless of which group they are in, will be receiving support and education that promotes health and well-being,” Champion said. “We believe these interventions will decrease incidence of teen pregnancies and other risks related to sexual behaviors.”





Ana Arroyave, M.D., assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, and Travis Cosban, a second-year medical student, are among many from the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine that volunteer at the El Paso Baptist Clinic.

*looking back while
moving forward*

How the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine united a community

By Lisa Ruley
Photos by Christ Chavez

From the moment the 40 inaugural students of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine came on campus for orientation, the El Paso community was very much a part of their daily lives and their curriculum. The *Society, Community and Individual* course (SCI), offered students a perspective on community medicine and introduced them to the population's health. During these first three weeks of medical school the students were immersed in the Spanish language and culture. In addition, students were sent to community clinics devoted to primary care of underserved populations and to work with primary care providers in the greater El Paso area and in nearby communities of New Mexico. Each student was also assigned a mentor family whom they visited three times during their first year to learn about the patient's perspective on health and illness, their experience with the U.S. health care system, and the use of complementary and alternative medicine.

"Our students have graded this activity very highly," said Ana Arroyave, M.D., assistant professor of family and community health, who also is the SCI course director and a preceptor. "They feel that seeing real patients ties in well with their clinical-oriented curriculum and psychosocial aspects of medicine. And as a preceptor, I absolutely love having them with me and seeing them make progress on the skills we want them to have." There are challenges for the SCI course, in having enough preceptors in the community for all of the students, Arroyave added.

Eleanor Poe, R.N., founder and director of the El Paso Baptist Clinic, a free clinic held almost every Saturday for the past 37 years in south El Paso, praised the Foster School of Medicine students who have stopped by to help. Other TTUHSC physicians, residents and community doctors have supported the clinic for many years. The 82-year-old Poe gives credit to the doctors and medical students who are able to come. "It's a new experience for the students, and they will absorb a lot of information. The patients who come are getting good care because we have good doctors." The clinic averages about 150 patients every Saturday.

"The medical school curriculum of the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine is the right curriculum at the right time," said Jose Luna, M.D., medical director of Centro San Vicente, a participating preceptor. "The early introduction of students to patient care at San Vicente can motivate students in many ways by providing a relevance to the didactic learning and serving as a reminder of

the vocation of medicine. This collaboration will help students learn and develop the appropriate attitudes for their future practice and help orient them towards society's needs."

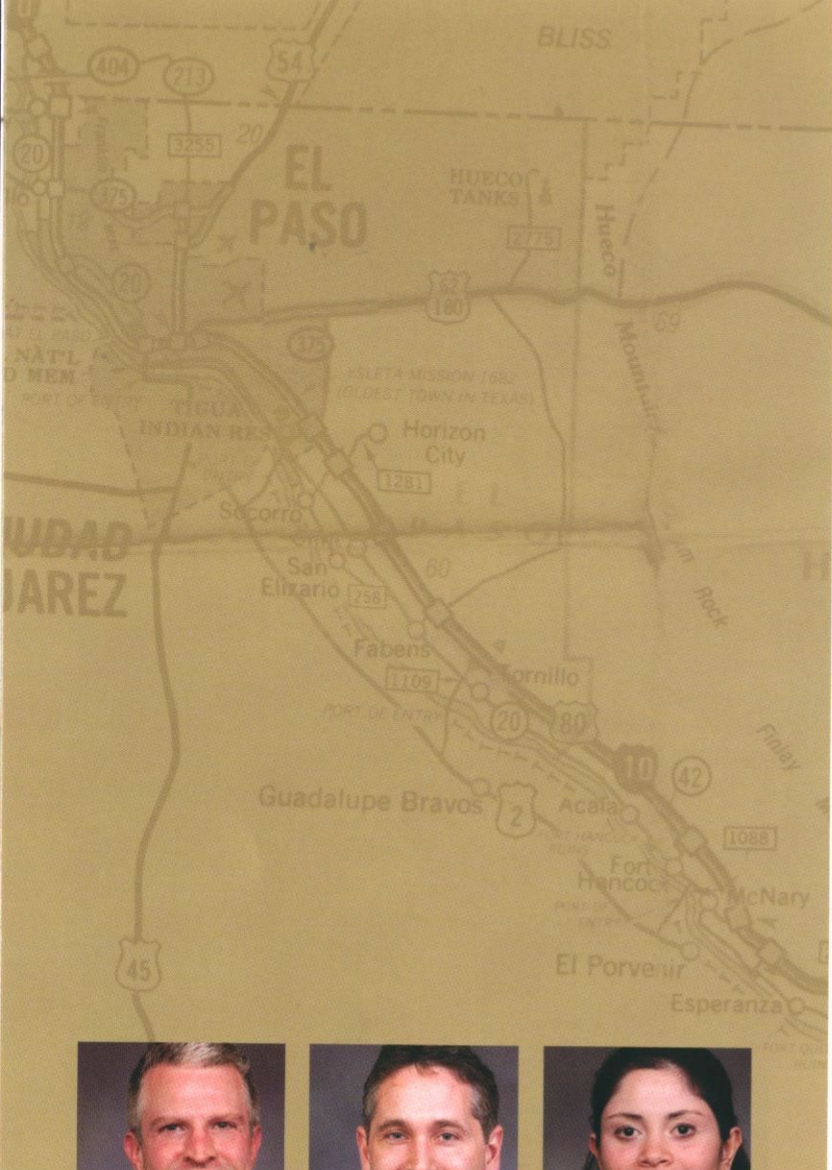
Recruitment of doctors to underserved and rural communities is a major public health issue, Luna added. The early experience provided to students in a community setting "will foster self-awareness and empathic attitudes" and "will teach students how people live, how their living conditions affect their health, and will help develop the much needed

"This collaboration will help students learn and develop the appropriate attitudes for their future practice and help orient them towards society's needs."

understanding of the access and navigation of complex medical systems."

Cynthia Garza, a member of the inaugural class did her clinical preceptorship with Luna. (*Read more about her in the Winter 2009 issue.*) "During my first day at clinic, I experienced a feeling of intense humility. I also felt at that time thankful to be involved in my medical school's unique curriculum, realizing the value of community and clinical experiences which are integrally incorporated," she said.

Jim Valenti, president and CEO of University Medical Center of El Paso, which has been TTUHSC's teaching hospital for nearly 40 years, said community support of its missions and future direction has never been greater. "The many new department chairs and faculty members recruited by our partners at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine from every corner of the globe has brought a new vision to our campus."



Indeed, more than 10 years ago, when a four-year medical school in El Paso was first proposed, some people were skeptical that the money or the quality faculty needed for the new school to succeed might not materialize. Families moved to El Paso from across the nation to become a part of the first four-year medical school on the U.S./Mexico border.

“Their leadership has not only infused the school’s teaching programs and research activities with new energy, but elevated the level of patient care being delivered at UMC of El Paso,” said Valenti.

El Paso community leaders, philanthropists, public servants, and countless citizens raised more than \$80 million during a campaign to build a medical school that could help alleviate a severe shortage of physicians in the area and support research faculty who may be on the brink of discovering treatments and cures for some of our nation’s most insidious diseases.

“We believe that we are better positioned today than at any other time during our history to positively impact the health and well-being of residents of this region for generations to come,” said Valenti.

Robert Kirken, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Texas at El Paso, said the shared goals and overlapping interests and the research and critical partnerships between UTEP and the medical school are vital to making inroads into diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and autoimmune disorders.

“For all the richness and diversity that our border region has to offer, a variety of factors contribute to poorer health here when compared to other areas of the country. We are actively

“We believe that we are better positioned today than at any other time during our history to positively impact the health and well-being of residents of this region for generations to come,”



“The prospect of a new medical school centered around a novel approach to medical education was very exciting to me. It is deeply rewarding to be a part of the creative process of a new endeavor that will bring so much benefit to the community of El Paso.

KIRK BASTON, PH.D., assistant professor, clinical assistant professor of pathology —previously served as associate medical director of Q2 Administrators, subsidiary of Palmetto GBA/Blue Cross Blue Shield in Westerville, Ohio



“It’s not every day that you pack up your belongings and travel halfway around the world to start a new life. But my decision to move here is continually reaffirmed by the remarkable growth and innovation that’s taking place on our campus. The synergy between our mission-driven faculty, staff and community cannot be understated.”

TANIS HOGG, PH.D., associate professor of biochemistry, vice chair and director of Scientific Principles of Medicine —previously served as senior lecturer and group leader at the University of Lübeck, Germany’s Institute of Biochemistry



“Paul L. Foster School of Medicine offered me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get involved in building a phenomenal, one-of-a-kind, clinical-presentations-based medical school curriculum. In essence, a new school in a fascinating location, offering a unique opportunity to create history; an offer to paint a beautiful mosaic on a blank canvas.”

BHARGAVI PATHAM, PH.D., assistant professor of pathophysiology and cell biology —previously served as post-doctoral research associate at Yale University School of Medicine



Eleanor Poe, R.N., 82, founder and director of the El Paso Baptist Clinic, praises the help that's come her way from the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine.



Bailey Wilson, second-year medical student, assists with vitals on a patient at the El Paso Baptist Clinic.

Medical school sparks community engagement

By Jose Manuel de la Rosa, M.D., (SOM '84)
Founding Dean, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine

We designed the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine to interact heavily with the community. Our *Society, Community, and Individual* course in particular is designed with seven threads that drive the student to learn about the physician's role as a leader in any community. From being adopted by mentor families, to identifying environmental health problems, students perform needs assessments and learn to integrate into their assigned communities.

The course was well-designed and has been well-implemented. And, as anticipated, it was the spark needed to ignite the integration of El Paso's multiple grassroots communities with the Foster School of Medicine.

Other anticipated developments are initiatives without curricular involvement, undertaken by the students on their own. Extracurricular activities include the student-led volunteer effort at the Baptist clinic and a Christmas gift collection for underprivileged families as well as multiple student service and learning organizations that are both faculty and student driven. Even the spontaneous pick-up football games on the school lawn give the Foster School of Medicine an air of student/community involvement.

It is exactly this kind of excitement, which has developed quickly throughout this first year, that we anticipated this new medical school to engender.

er positioned today than at any other time during our
the health and well-being of residents of this region for

engaged in translating our bedside findings to the laboratory bench and back to our hospitals where our community needs them the most," he said.

The El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation (REDco), a private/nonprofit organization dedicated to growing the economies of El Paso and Juarez, Mexico, by recruiting new jobs and investments, identified life sciences as one of four target industries with strong potential.

"Researchers can study Hispanic populations that have been here for 10 days, 10 years or 10 generations, all of which can be valuable to private companies interested in providing better diagnostics and cures," said Bob Cook, president of REDco.

The corporation contracted with a consulting firm to conduct an in-depth assessment of El Paso's opportunities to recruit such industries. The Foster School of Medicine was identified

as one of the region's most important assets in the effort to attract the bioscience industry to El Paso. The Foster School of Medicine will be critical to the region's advancement of the life sciences industry sector, Cook said. "In fact, REDco is building much of its life science recruitment strategy around the four research centers of excellence," along with the Medical Center of the Americas Foundation, William Beaumont Army Medical Center and the University of Texas at El Paso, he said.

"At the present, REDco is engaged in varying levels of discussions with about 20 life science companies who are evaluating our region's potential for manufacturing, research and development, and other related activities."

*singing
the*

BABY BLUES

By Kim Davis

About 6 million women nationwide have difficulty getting pregnant, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But at TTUHSC's Center for Infertility and Reproductive Surgery, experts have achieved excellent success rates in helping couples conceive.



Jodey and Anne Arrington will become parents in March after trying for two years to have a child. Anne had endometriosis, which had kept them from conceiving.

Anne Arrington is singing the blues; but not in a melody or lyrics depicting sadness and strife. Six months ago, she saw not one blue line on her pregnancy test, but finally two. After more than two years of trying to conceive a child, she and her husband, Jodey, are going to be parents.

"I remember saying, and almost singing it out loud, 'Thank you, God!,'" said Arrington, 32. "It was amazing. After dozens of pregnancy tests over the last couple of years without a trace of a positive result, I knew instantly that I was pregnant. I still get choked up thinking about it now."

Arrington's difficulty in becoming pregnant was diagnosed as stage three endometriosis by her doctor at TTUHSC's Center for Fertility and Reproductive Surgery. She was treated there for her condition, and within a month, she was pregnant.

... I wish anyone trying to conceive and can't would not be afraid to reach out for help ...

The Arrington's isn't a rare case. About 6 million women nationwide have difficulty getting pregnant, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. TTUHSC's center is achieving excellent success rates in helping women conceive, said Jennifer Phy, D.O., a physician at the center, who is board-certified in reproductive endocrinology and infertility and in obstetrics and gynecology. She joined the team in March 2009, adding to the expertise of Sami Jabara, M.D., who also holds these same certifications. Jabara recently took a position out of state, but was a part of the team who, in 2006, helped establish the center. The physicians, along with embryologists, nurses and staff work daily with couples that have fertility issues affecting the men and women. The group also spends time in the research lab finding new ways to better diagnose and treat fertility issues affecting couples. (See research highlights.)

Almost two years ago, Eric, 32, and Kim, 30, Balzen were Jabara's patients. They now have healthy twins, Kylie and Carson, who were conceived through intrauterine insemination (IUI). The Balzens already were parents to toddler, Kenzie, whom they also had difficulty conceiving, but found themselves unable to become pregnant again; and a later miscarriage set them back even more emotionally.

"I kind of climbed into a hole at that point," Kim said. "It took me a while to be willing to really move forward and go through the fertility process."

Eric agreed. "Infertility is experienced by so many more people than many would think, and it's nothing to be embarrassed about ... I wish anyone trying to conceive and can't would not be afraid to reach out for help, because it's there."

He may be one of the few new fathers who received the news of pregnancy before his wife—a story he tells with a few laughs.

"I got a call after a routine blood test from our second IUI and third round of fertility treatment shots," he said. "Dr. Jabara had tried to call Kim first, but couldn't get a hold of her. All he said was, 'You are really, REALLY pregnant.'"

"I didn't understand at first, but when he told me he meant we were having twins, my knees buckled, and I thought I was going to pass out!" (Multiple births are not the norm; see following section about fertility misconceptions)

The Balzens say their family is now complete thanks to the medical care at the center.

"The infertility specialty has really only been around for 20

continued on page 24...

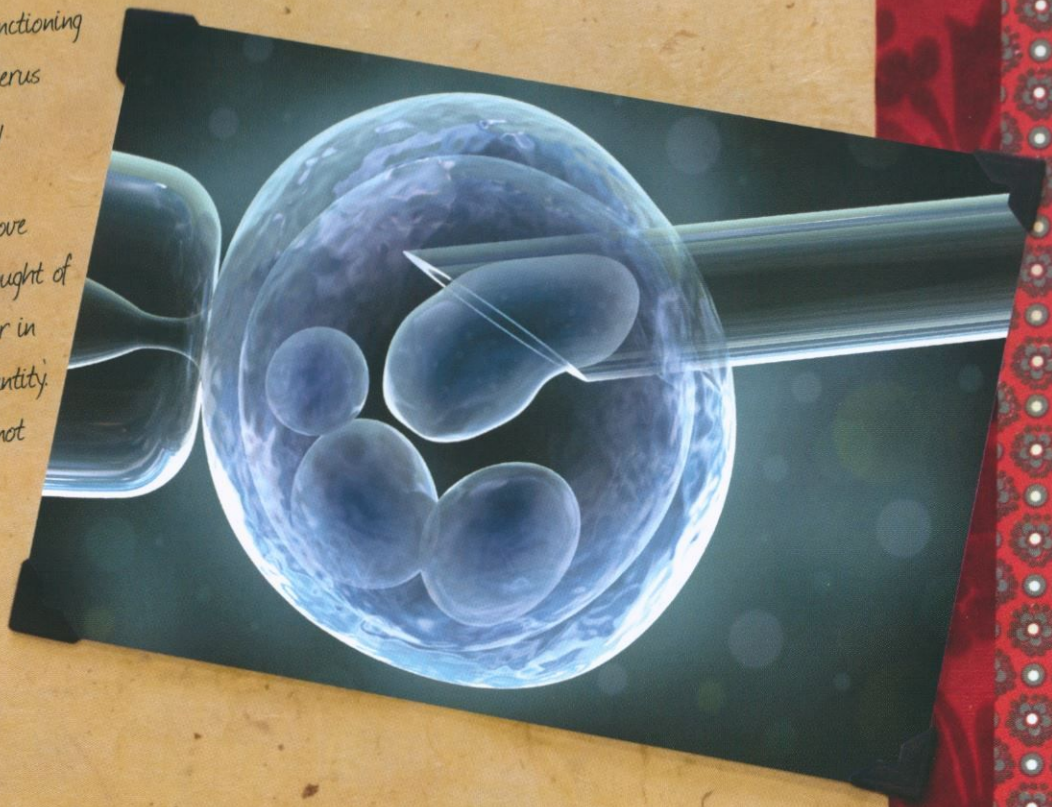


TONJA HAGY

Eric and Kim Balzen say their family is now complete with Kenzie and her siblings, Kylie and Carson, twins conceived through intrauterine insemination.

Endometriosis the presence and growth of functioning endometrial tissue in places other than the uterus that often results in severe pain and infertility

Sperm motility the ability of sperm to move properly towards an egg. This can also be thought of as the 'quality' of the sperm, which is a factor in successful pregnancies, as opposed to the 'quantity'. Sperm which do not properly swim will not reach the egg in order to fertilize it.



Research Highlights

As the Center for Infertility and Reproductive Surgery continues to post excellent success rates in achieving pregnancy for patients, multiple TTUHSC research projects are underway that support its mission.

“Endometriosis is a major focus for our research at the center,” said Jennifer Phy, D.O., a physician at the center, who is board-certified in reproductive endocrinology and infertility and in obstetrics and gynecology. “This can be a debilitating problem for many women trying to become pregnant, and for now, the only way we can tell for sure if a woman has endometriosis is to perform some kind of invasive procedure.”

Endometriosis occurs when the tissue lining the uterine wall develops outside of the uterus, Phy explained. Symptoms include abdominal pain, heavy menstrual flow and infertility. Treatment for patients hoping to conceive requires laparoscopic surgery to remove the tissue outside of the uterus, and on other organs near the uterus if it has spread.

Phy and Jim Hutson, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry, collaborate on what she describes as “Pac-man cells” that are “debris collectors” and how those cells could interact with cells directly involved in endometriosis.

“These ‘Pac-man cells,’ or macrophages could, in time, allow us to screen for endometriosis with a blood test, rather than doing it laparoscopically,” Phy said. “Our ultimate goal is to find less-invasive ways to both diagnose and treat endometriosis.

And, we have the excellent researchers here at TTUHSC to bring us to that point, I believe.”

For male infertility, research efforts focus primarily on sperm motility. Studies range from male obesity and the effects of slower sperm motility to sperm quality for insemination. An insulated semen collection device designed to improve sperm quality is now being tested in humans, after its successful use in animal reproduction, says Samuel Prien, Ph.D., director of Clinical and Research Laboratories for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Prien, a co-developer of the device, says TTUHSC has partnered with Reproductive Solutions Incorporated to produce the collection devices, called DISC, for Device for Improved Semen Collection..

“Bottom line, this device keeps sperm to where they think they’re still inside the male body,” he said. What that means is a longer “life-span” for the sperm, making collection, more accommodating for the couple.

Prien says they saw huge advancements in horse and cattle insemination using the device. He said ranchers could achieve positive results up to 96 hours after collecting semen, whereas before, there was generally no chance of successful insemination if the collection wasn’t delivered within 48 hours.

“This is good news for us as we move to human infertility,” Prien said. “Our goal is to find more ways to help couples become pregnant with the least invasive procedures possible.”



People don't need to leave this area to see fertility specialists. And unlike many may think, infertility care is accessible and not nearly as expensive as many are led to believe."



and baby makes three!

The Center for Fertility and Reproductive Surgery helps couples conceive little miracles like 8-month-old Ella.

...continued from page 22

years," Jabara said. "And it's a field that is growing rapidly for two reasons. One, women are getting married later, therefore trying to conceive at an older age and that increases potential infertility issues. Two, the awareness of infertility specialists is on the rise, so more couples are reaching out to specialists when they do have difficulty conceiving."

Phy bubbles over when talking about her patients. She keeps a journal of each one who conceives, and she's quick to show off pictures of the many babies born under her initial prenatal care. She celebrated 500 in the fall but still counts each one a miracle and says she's privileged to have been a part.

"Our goal is one healthy baby at a time," she says, beaming, "and I believe anyone who wants to have a child should have every opportunity to have it happen."

And through the center it does – with virtually every fertility option available – including IUI, in vitro fertilization, intracytoplasmic sperm injection and a multitude of diagnostic and treatment procedures for women who have fertility issues ranging from endometriosis to fibroid tumors and from hormonal deficiencies to blocked fallopian tubes. Surgical techniques often reverse many of the female's medical problems, and male fertility issues are solved regularly within the confines of the center's expertise.

"I really believe we're one of Lubbock's best-kept secrets," Phy said. "But we want to change that. People don't need to leave this area to see fertility specialists. And unlike many may think, infertility care is accessible and not nearly as expensive as many are led to believe."

In September, the Arringtons found out they're having a boy.

"I can't tell you how surreal this whole thing is," Anne Arrington said. "I remember thinking for so long that it just might not be in the cards for us to have children. Then, we found the center and Dr. Phy. It was so easy.

"If there was one thing I could tell any couple out there who is trying to conceive, it would be to not give up. See a fertility expert. It's a big deal for couples, and the doctors at TTUHSC understand what you're going through. We've got the very best right here in Lubbock and there are a variety of things they can do to help you conceive."

Misconceptions of Infertility

There are multiple **misconceptions** when it comes to understanding fertility. Sadly, say TTUHSC physicians, many are created by Hollywood.

"It's the extreme cases of things like 'octo-mom' that people see on reality TV when it comes to infertility treatment," said Jennifer Phy, D.O., a reproductive endocrinologist at the Center for Fertility and Reproductive Surgery. "And that's simply not the norm."

To set the record straight, here are a few important facts about infertility:

- Multiple pregnancies of triplets, quadruplets or more simply aren't the norm. In fact, doctors at the center rarely transfer more than two embryos at a time. Due to the tremendous success at the center, they're even beginning to transfer only one embryo at a time in some cases.
- Hollywood also tends to portray many women 40 and older as having no difficulties getting pregnant. After age 35, a woman's fertility begins to decrease and it decreases more rapidly with each passing year. After age 40, it drops tremendously. While it's not impossible to become pregnant after age 40, women should not think it's going to be easy either.
- When to see an infertility specialist? For women younger than 35, give it a year of trying before heading to a specialist. For women 35 to 38, see a specialist if you aren't able to become pregnant within six months. And for women 39 and older, consider seeing a specialist from the very beginning.
- Don't be embarrassed! There are far more couples out there with fertility problems than you might realize. There should be no shame in reaching out to a specialist for help.



Multiple missions

Jennifer Phy, D.O., address fertility issues in the clinic and conducts research into novel therapies and treatment methods to help couples conceive.

misconception:

**a false or
mistaken view,
opinion, or
attitude**



STEPHEN PONDER, M.D.

- > Joined School of Medicine at Permian Basin in October
- > Pediatric endocrinologist
- > Medical columnist for several state and regional newspapers and radio stations
- > Consultant for Johnson & Johnson Diabetes Institute and Animas Speakers Bureau
- > Member of medical advisory committee for insulinpumpers.com, an online resource for insulin pump therapy

THE DOCTOR IS ONLINE

New medical faculty
member brings health
care to the home with
virtual clinic

by Allison Wood | photo by Neal Hinkle

Pediatric endocrinologist Stephen Ponder, M.D., has successfully lived with and managed his personal diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes for 45 years. Inspired by his own journey, he specializes in this area of medicine and today utilizes an array of technology to educate and provide care to his patients.

“Having the disease myself, I want to affect change,” he said. “Utilizing telecommunication through vehicles like Skype, allows me to have face-to-face visits with my patients no matter where they live.”

Ponder joined the School of Medicine at the Permian Basin in October. He also serves as chief medical officer for Healthimo, a Texas-based health education consulting firm that has pioneered wireless solutions to the management of adult and pediatric diabetes, asthma and obesity.

Ponder helped develop the GlucoMON, a device that wirelessly uploads patient blood glucose reports into easy to read formats for immediate review by the family/patient. He recently completed a yearlong randomized controlled clinical trial demonstrating the clinical efficacy of this system. Ponder is also the founder of Diabetes Housecall (www.diabeteshousecall.com), a diabetes follow-up program that utilizes interactive video for in-home consultations with his patients, affording families an incredible cost savings for diabetes self-management care. The program allows Ponder to be anywhere his patients may be within Texas.

“Home based telemedicine allows me to provide individualized attention to a variety of patients who may not be able to travel to my local practice. Families are incredibly more relaxed during the encounter, and as a result the visit is much more productive compared to one after a long drive and time spent in a busy waiting room,” Ponder said.

Most recently, he served at the Children’s Diabetes and Endocrine Center of South Texas located within Driscoll Children’s Hospital in Corpus Christi. Ponder also is founder of the center.

“My wife and I love Texas, all of my children live here, and I’ve lived all over the state during my career; it’s now West Texas’ turn.

“I’m impressed by the proactive approach to telemedicine by (TTUHSC). My goal is to have about a 40 percent virtual practice, but I never want to be out of the clinic. I’m also excited to be working with students during their pediatric rounds.”

Ponder also writes a column for the Odessa American, has a local radio column in Corpus Christi and has launched a new resource, “Healthy Families,” utilizing social networking and patient profiling technologies to educate families on an ongoing basis.

“It provides a more efficient way to get individualized health information to families,” he said. “I call it a trickle charger for the brain.”

More than 6,000 families nationwide participate in the program. Joining is easy: just text the word HEALTHY to 25827; or go to www.hfstx.org. Over time, the system maps out the health information you wish and then delivers it to you.

“‘Healthy Families’ is the future of health education,” Ponder said. “I hope to bring this innovative system to West Texas.”

the gifts that keep giving

by Danette Baker

Through gift annuities, Billy K. and Ruby Power established endowments to support engineering, urology and cancer research.

Billy K. Power and his wife, Ruby, take in the architectural details of what's now the industrial engineering building at Texas Tech. He once knew the building like the back of his hand, having taught there for 30 years.

The building holds many fond memories for the couple. Mrs. Power, a TTU alumna, was involved in cotton research there in the '50s, when her husband joined the department faculty. They spent many an hour in that building while school was in session; but in the summer, oh those glorious summers, the Powers would load up their two sons and hit the open road. "There are not many jobs a man can have off all summer," Mr. Power said. It was a luxury they took full advantage of, eventually visiting every state in the Union.

And that, Mr. Power says, is why they have chosen to give back. "Really, I feel a responsibility to give back after all they've done for me."

It was, after all, he added, Texas Tech that gave him a job with the summers off and its medical professionals have provided excellent health care to them, even through his battle with prostate cancer.

In the past 10 years, the Powers have established endowments in the Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering at TTU and the TTUHSC School of Medicine, the most recent being the Billy K. Power and Ruby E. Power Endowment for Cancer Research.

"I have faith in research," said Mr. Power, whose work in cotton research was published numerous times in peer-reviewed journals. "I think (the scientists) are just beginning to get started (in cancer research)."

Perhaps their gift, says Mrs. Power, will help scientists continue to find new ways to prevent or treat cancer. Or even cure it for that matter. "Wouldn't that be nice," she said.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: TTUHSC will greatly miss one of our long-time friends, Billy K. Power, who passed away the week this issue went to press.]



Ruby and Billy K. Power

Through a bequest, Coralee McDaniel honored the work of her late husband, Robert R. McDaniel, M.D., establishing in 1989 an endowed scholarship to help future physicians pay for medical school.

CHRIST CHAVEZ

Three years ago, Samir Shahani made what he thought would be a one-time trip from his hometown in Carrollton to Lubbock. But on the drive back, he couldn't keep from dreaming about what the next four years would be like out west.

Shahani, a third-year medical student in the M.D./M.B.A. program, says TTUHSC won him over with its straightforward genuineness, potential for growth and passion for its people. He's not quite sure of plans post-medical school, but he feels strongly about staying in Texas. West Texas. "The people have been amazing, and the need is real."

Robert McDaniel, M.D., understood the draw of West Texas. He settled in Quanah in 1914, and cared for those in the area until his death in 1962. To honor his conviction that "young people should go to college and make something of themselves, and stay in Texas," his widow, Coralee McDaniel, included in her will the provisions for establishing the Robert R. McDaniel, M.D., Endowed Scholarship at TTUHSC to ensure that future doctors would receive their training locally and then serve the people of West Texas as her husband had for so long.

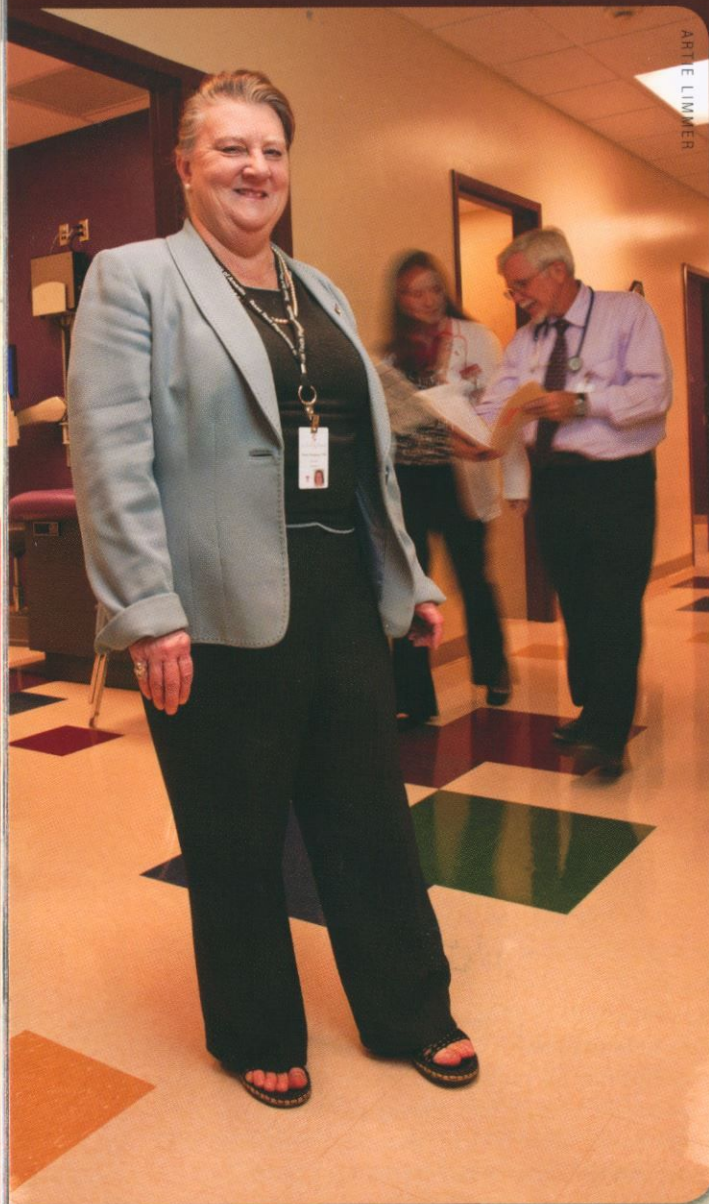
In 2009, 20 scholarships were awarded through the endowment; Shahani received one of them and was awarded funding again this school year.

"The scholarship allowed me to enter the M.D./M.B.A. program without as much financial obligation," said Shahani, who is completing his clinical rotations at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso. Having the dual degree, "will allow me to follow both my passions (economics and medicine) and enhance my skills. Whether I use these skills in policy changes, the medical education system, or individual practice management, I know I am now more equipped and have a foundation designed for success."

Without the scholarship? Who knows, he says.

"I tend not to think of the what-ifs. But I know things would be different. What I do know is that I am extremely grateful."

Samir Shahani, third-year medical student in the M.D./M.B.A. program, completed a clinical rotation recently with Rafael Medrano, M.D., of Cardiology Consultants in El Paso. Shahani is pursuing his dream thanks to financial support provided by the Robert McDaniel, M.D., Endowed Scholarship.



Bonna Benjamin, M.D., regional chair of pediatrics for the School of Medicine at Amarillo, says donors are critical to TTUHSC. The recent expansion in the Pediatric Clinic at Amarillo, for example, was made possible in part from contributions by Billye Brown.

Since 2006, Billye Brown has made many contributions to TTUHSC; a portion of those has helped improve the quality of health care available to pediatric patients.

This summer, the Pediatric Clinic at School of Medicine at Amarillo hit a growth spurt. The clinic added 10 exam rooms, almost doubling the number of patient rooms available. But more importantly, with the expansion, the staff now can designate exam rooms specifically for treating children with compromised immune systems, said Bonna Benjamin, M.D., regional chair of pediatrics for the School of Medicine at Amarillo.

"Because of a space shortage, we were using the rooms where we see our hematology/oncology and cardiology patients for other purposes," Benjamin explained. "There was always concern about potential transmission of infection when the room had more than one function.

"Now we can have exam rooms designated specifically for these patients."

The expansion was funded in part by a gift from Billye Brown, a West Texas native and former Amarillo resident, which she provided to TTUHSC in her will. Her gift was matched by a generous donation by the Amarillo Hospital District, making the renovation possible.

Through the years, Ms. Brown has made several donations to the university, many serving as enduring memorials to her parents, H.C. "Tuffy" and Beulah McDowell, who were lifelong residents of the Texas Panhandle. With Brown's gifts, TTUHSC at Amarillo has established several endowed professorships and chair positions. Her donations also have supported the School of Medicine Faculty Clinical Research Unit, simulation equipment and seed grants, as well as expansions for geriatrics, internal medicine, the InfantRisk Center, gynecologic oncology and now pediatrics.

"Donors are so critical to TTUHSC not only for their financial contributions, but also because they become part of a community partnership," Benjamin said. "They look out for our interest in the community, and they share in our pride. They are a great support to us."

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- Bequest: provides a simple way to support TTUHSC through the donor's estate plan.
- Designation Gifts: allows for you to have the benefit of your assets until your death and the gift is made after your death.

To learn more about how you can make a lasting impact at TTUHSC, visit <http://giving.ttuhs.edu>

Alumni

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FRIENDS WE'LL MISS 34

PROFILES 35-39



BY DAY
PHYSICIANS,
BY NIGHT
MUSICIANS.

PLAYING FOR A *good cause*

By Kim Davis | Photos by Neal Hinkle

They call themselves The Attendings.

As physicians, that's no surprise. After all, many in the medical community refer to doctors as "attending physicians." But these attendings come together in harmony a little differently than most by trading their medical instruments for musical ones.

Richie Rosen, M.D., (SOM '84, Resident '91) Lowry Schaub, M.D., (Resident '91), Jeff Paxton, M.D., (Resident '87), Tom Windisch, M.D., and Brad Snodgrass, M.D., (SOM '88, Resident '91) make music to help raise money for charities such as the Make a Wish Foundation, the Ronald McDonald House and a multitude of others. They recently released their second instrumental CD of holiday music, *Another Christmas on Call*. Their first, *Holiday Blues in Greens*, was released in 2004. Proceeds from both benefit the American Cancer Society.

Their genre?

"Acoustic infused rock," said Scott Faris, owner of The Amusement Park Recording Studio and producer of the band's CDs.

"I'm amazed at what these guys do for a living and how much time is required of them," Faris said. "These are awesome guys—as musicians and as people."

Since coming together in 2004, The Attendings have helped raise more than \$200,000 for the various aforementioned charities, said Rosen.

"This is simply something we love to do," he said. "And, the American Cancer Society has been great at promoting our CD each holiday season to help their fundraising in some small way.

The Attendings started out as a group of seven, and it was the original members who cut *Holiday Blues in Greens*. They include the remaining five of Schaub, Windisch, Rosen, Paxton, and Snodgrass, along with Corey Haggard, M.D., (SOM '89) and Guy Hirsch, M.D., (SOM '75).

"This is special to us," Schaub said. "We're so lucky to be able to give back in some small way."



MEET THE BOYS IN THE BAND

Guitar | Tom Windisch, M.D., an interventional neuroradiologist with Lubbock Diagnostic Radiology

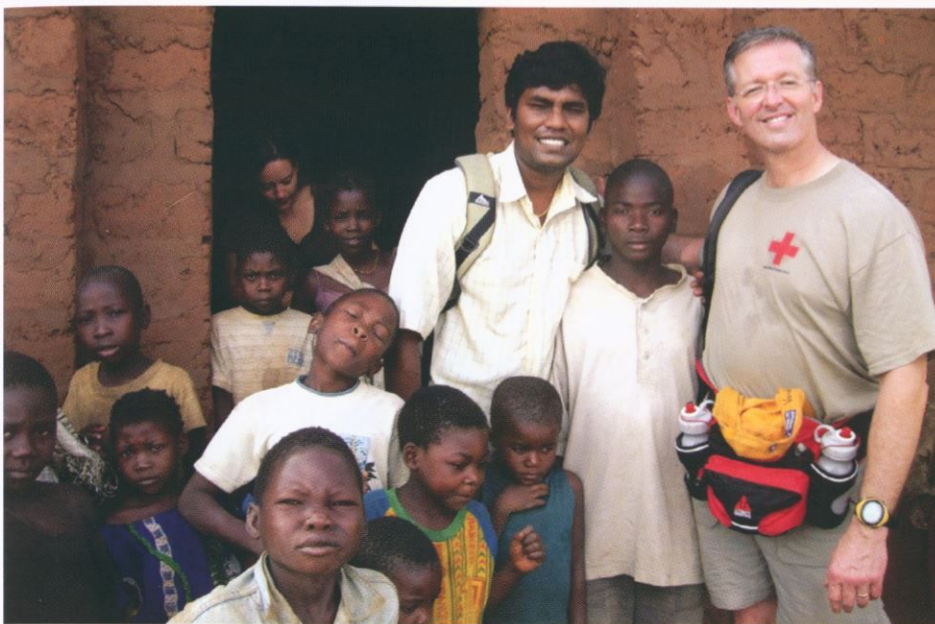
Bass | Jeff Paxton, M.D., (Resident '87), family physician, team physician for Texas Tech Athletics, staff physician at Texas Tech Student Wellness Center, and associate professor of sports medicine at TTUHSC School of Medicine

Drums | Brad Snodgrass, M.D., (SOM '88, Resident '91), internist with Southwest Diagnostic Clinic

Guitar | Richie Rosen, M.D., (SOM '84, Resident '91), general surgeon with North Star Surgical Center, physician partner with Lubbock Surgical Associates, and affiliate with Covenant Health System Trauma Services

Guitar | Lowry Schaub, M.D., (Resident '91), anesthesiologist and physician partner with North Star Surgical Center

friends we'll miss



Meeting medical needs and more around the world:

Congratulations to David M. Vanderpool, M.D., (SOM '87) and his family of Brentwood, Tenn., who were selected for recognition by *People* magazine as 2010 Heroes Among Us. In 2005, the Vanderpools established Mobile Medical Disaster Relief, a faith-based humanitarian organization. The nonprofit is a family affair with his wife, Laurie, and children, David Jr., John Mark and Jacklyn, working to provide medical care and equipment to individuals in medically underserved countries worldwide. The Vanderpools make monthly trips to serve urgent medical needs and find ways to help the people with enterprise projects such as water wells and sewing schools. The Vanderpools were also finalists for the *People* magazine Reader's Choice Hero Awards.



SCHOOL OF NURSING 2010 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

The School of Nursing 2010 Distinguished Alumni are:
 Excellence in Clinical Care: Debra McCullough, B.S.N., M.S.N., ('93)
 Dean's Advocacy Award: Anne Mitchell, B.S.N., ('91)
 Leadership in Health Care: Stanley Harmon, B.S.N., M.S.N., ('03)
 Community Advocacy Award: Janie Garms, R.N., M.S.N., CDE, ('98)
 Dean's Advocacy Award: Vickilyn Galle, B.S.N., (BSN '03)

Nursing faculty, alumni and students celebrated in November the accomplishments of five alumni, awarding them distinguished honors. The awards were given at a dinner hosted by the Office of Alumni Relations. You can read more about the winners in *Pulse* online.

W.H. "Bill" Attebury died Sept. 23, 2010, in Amarillo. He and his wife, Joyce, were founders of the Steve Urban, M.D., Endowed Professorship in Medical Education named in honor of Dr. Urban, an associate professor in the Department of Internal Medicine, School of Medicine at Amarillo.

Donnie G. Berry, M.D., (SOAHS '94, SOM '00) died Aug. 16, 2010, in Oklahoma City.

Ruth Cannon, R.N., died Oct. 7, 2010, in Abernathy. She worked for the School of Medicine Family Practice Clinic as head nurse until her retirement in 1996.

Donald R. Craig, M.D., died Aug. 10, 2010, in Lubbock. Dr. Craig was involved with TTUHSC from its inception until 2005, volunteering in the pediatric clinic in addition to managing his private practice. He also provided educational support in the pediatric department. Dr. Craig was a member of the Lubbock-Crosby-Garza County Medical Society. Memorials may be sent to the TTUHSC Department of Pediatrics.

Nancy "Blades" Johnson (SON '87) died Oct. 14, 2010, in Odessa.

Robert C. Kimbrough III, M.D., died Nov. 24, 2010, in Lubbock. Dr. Kimbrough was professor of infectious diseases in the School of Medicine's Department of Internal Medicine for the past 17 years. He had also served the department as chief of infectious diseases and clerkship director. In November, Dr. Kimbrough was named a Master in the American College of Physicians.

Billy K. Power died Dec. 19, 2010, in Lubbock. He and his wife, Ruby Power, are long-time supporters of TTUHSC and TTU. (See story page 28).

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 Fourth Street, Stop 6238, Lubbock, Texas 79430.

alumni

ROUNDS



1



2



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5



4

1 The Office of Alumni Relations along with the Office of Student Services and Student Government Association hosted a tailgate party for alumni and students at the F. Marie Hall Synergistic Center before the Texas Tech vs. SMU football game. The trio also sponsored a Red Raider watch party for the Baylor game. 2 TTUHSC Alumni Association held receptions this fall in Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston and at the Permian Basin. In Lubbock John Orem, Ph.D., Murray Professor in the Department of Cell Biology and Molecular Biophysics; Ralph Lydic, Ph.D., (GSBS '79), Ted Dick and GSBS Interim Dean Thomas Pressley Ph.D., reminisce. 3 In Houston, members from the School of Medicine Class of '08 reunite: Tuan Pham, M.D., Parijatham Sivasubramanian, M.D., Janie Doan, M.D., Vu Anthony Nguyen, M.D., and Huyen Duong, M.D. 4 The Office of Student Services, the Student Government Association and the Office of Alumni Relations hosted Welcome Back events in Amarillo, Abilene, Dallas, El Paso, Lubbock, Midland and Odessa. 5 The TTUHSC Alumni Association and Office of Alumni Relations hosted Welcome Back events in Amarillo, Abilene, Dallas, El Paso, Lubbock, Midland and Odessa. 5 The TTUHSC Alumni Association and Office of Alumni Relations honored the 25th anniversary of the School of Nursing at the Permian Basin with a community reception. School of Nursing Abilene Regional Dean Pearl Merritt, Ed.D., MSN; SON Permian Basin Regional Dean Sharon Cannon, Ed.D., R.N.; Odessa Mayor Larry Melton and Odessa Chamber of Commerce CEO Mike George.

CHILD SUPPORT

BY DANETTE BAKER

The Joey Jersey™ drape might never make a runway debut, but it's turning heads in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth.

AMANDA DAVIS, R.N., designed the soft, flannel drape, to make bonding time for moms and their preemies a little less stressful.

Cook Children's encourages "kangaroo care" in its NICU, and after introducing Davis' drape, participation in the program has increased. "Kangaroo care," which calls for skin-on-skin interaction between moms and their premature babies, is proven to boost overall health in preemies by stabilizing heart and respiration rates, regulating their temperature and increasing weight gain. However, the stress that comes with the possibility of disrupting the life-sustaining equipment connected to their little ones, along with the struggle to maintain some sense of modesty, can be a bit unsettling for some moms, Davis said.

So she sat down at her sewing machine and designed the Joey Jersey™ drape, a patent-pending cowl-neck drape, complete with soft, stretchy ties that can neatly secure monitor wires, breathing tubes and intravenous tubing. There's a pocket for a pacifier, and enough fabric to adequately cover mom. Cook Children's has begun using the Joey Jersey™ drape in its NICU, and Davis intends to produce them en masse for use in NICUs nationwide.

"As a nurse, you see so many needs when you are at the bedside," said Davis. "In an environment like the NICU, there are a ton of things that can enhance the experience and that will make a positive impact on the infant's health. I'm lucky I get to be the one to help them get the best start in life."

ALUMNI PROFILE :: **nursing**

Amanda Davis, R.N., ('08)
Traditional BSN

ENHANCES CARE FOR NICU PATIENTS



Kyle Gropp,
Pharm.D., ('05)

IMPROVES HEALTH AMONG
UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

TEAM WORK

BY KIM DAVIS

KYLE GROPP, Pharm. D., is a team player.

As deputy chief pharmacist at Ute Mountain Ute Health Center in Towaoc, Colo., he thrives on the successful team approach used to enhance health care for the residents of this American Indian reservation.

"I was drawn to this type of environment because I enjoy working with those who are underserved," Gropp said. "The American Indian population is definitely one of those groups."

And, he added, it's a community with very specific health care needs. American Indians are among the ethnic groups most affected by diabetes. As part of the Indian Health Services, Gropp enjoys being a part of a team effort to help an entire population.

"I'm not just one pharmacist handing out prescriptions," he said. "I'm a part of a team – from nurses to primary care physicians and from dietitians to physical therapists – who all come together to care for each individual and help educate American Indians on all around better lifestyles."

It's all a part of bridging a gap, Gropp said, between cultural practices and Western medicine.

"Each day, we all work together and learn so much from each other," he said. "It's an invaluable experience that I wouldn't change for the world."

Yet Gropp's job doesn't stop there. As a commissioned officer (he's a lieutenant commander) with the U.S. Public Health Services, he is regularly deployed to assist in natural disasters such as during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Earl.

When asked what "event" he's been most touched by, Gropp is quick to respond.

"Last year, we had to set up Points of Distribution for flu vaccinations for members of the Ute Mountain Ute," he said. "I simply loved the strategy and ultimate execution of making sure we had our people taken care of during that important time."



ELLIOTT ANDERSON/LEGACY IMAGES

KI LEE HENSLEY/M.D. ANDERSON CANCER CENTER #125

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ALUMNI PROFILE :: allied health sciences

John Galbincea ('04)
Molecular Pathology

WHAT'S YOUR MANTRA?

SUCCESS IN TWO WORLDS

BY MICHAEL KOHRMANN

Early on, JOHN GALBINCEA put himself on the path to success by believing that you should “find something you enjoy doing.” Making this mantra his main goal in school allowed him to discover a field that was continuously changing.

Galbincea is a laboratory supervisor in the Molecular Diagnostics laboratory at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, where testing is conducted on each patient's DNA, looking for any alterations, which can aide physicians in cancer diagnoses and help them develop individualized treatment options. He began there as a medical technologist immediately after graduating. Galbincea believes TTUHSC's preceptorship with M.D. Anderson was a key factor in his gaining such an early foothold with one of the country's premier cancer centers.

However, Galbincea's life does not revolve around his profession alone; he also is a family man.

Balancing a career and a family is no easy task, but Galbincea firmly believes in not taking work home. By separating his professional life from personal, he can devote quality time to his 2-year-old daughter and his wife, whom he met at TTU when they were in the Goin' Band from Raiderland.

Even though Galbincea loves the demands of work and being “constantly challenged” with new technologies, he makes time for hobbies such as flying radio-controlled airplanes, riding motorcycles and brewing his own beer.

Linda Robins, M.D.,
(SOM '84, Resident '89)

PEDIATRICIAN PURSUES
CHILDHOOD PASSION

TRADING PLACES

BY ALLISON WOOD

There was one physician in the rural town of Seminole, where LINDA ROBINS, M.D., grew up; and there, like in many places years ago, such jobs were held more often than not by men. Yet Robins was so fascinated with the anatomical model at the doctor's office, asking so many questions about it, that he gave it to her for keeps.

"It was my dream to become a doctor, but at that time, I didn't know any women doctors."

Robins tucked the model away along with her dreams of becoming a physician, choosing instead a career in English: until her husband, Scott Robins, M.D., graduated from medical school. "I remember picking him up off the floor," she laughs, recalling when she voiced to him her dream of becoming a physician. The female to male ratio of medical students was only about 25 percent then, but now is about double that.

"I will always be thankful to Texas Tech for giving me a chance. I was an English teacher, enjoying my job, a wife and a mother; I was not the typical medical student in the 1980s."

Being a pediatrician in private practice for 18 years, Robins witnessed many of her patients grow from newborns to high school graduates. She now works as a pediatrician at Covenant Children's Hospital Emergency Center in Lubbock and is active in community initiatives focusing on childhood obesity and advancing educational opportunities for young women in underserved areas. As she sees patients, works with specialists, and provides back up in the emergency room, Robins may have just become the very role model that she looked for as a child.

*Linda Robins,
Emergency Department*

HIGH ALTITUDE OPPORTUNITIES

BY: JACQUELINE ROMANIES

It's not uncommon for ANDREW LOVERING, Ph.D., to paddle to work. The Willamette River runs through Eugene, Ore., home to the University of Oregon and Lovering's cardiopulmonary and respiratory physiology lab. There his team of scientists has four key areas of research, including their work on the relationship between premature birth and chronic lung disease to determine if there are measures that can be taken to help treat these conditions.

An assistant professor, Lovering also teaches human physiology, high altitude medicine and physiology, and advanced respiratory physiology.

"For all my courses my goal for students is to learn that physiology is not just one system but many interconnected systems working together for a unified purpose."

Additionally, Lovering continues to study shunt pathways and how they cause acute mountain sickness, research he began at the John Rankin Laboratory of Pulmonary Medicine in Madison, Wis.

Intrapulmonary shunts is a condition in which a region of the lungs is permeated with little or no ventilation, potentially causing complications such as acute mountain sickness.

The idea, he said, is to predict who will get sick at high altitudes.

"If we are successful, then the military can use this information to determine which soldiers can be deployed rapidly to high altitudes and which ones should be deployed slower," Lovering said. "Ultimately, we hope to keep soldiers from getting altitude illnesses."

One of the best things about his work, Lovering said, is learning something new everyday and having the opportunity to create new knowledge for research. He said the most exciting aspect of his job is getting to help his students realize their dreams.

"I am living my dream, and I feel very lucky to be helping those around me do the same."

ALUMNI PROFILE :: **biomedical sciences**

Andrew Lovering,
Ph.D., ('03)
Physiology

STUDIES WAYS TO CLEAR THE AIRWAYS



Experience the joy of giving

BY MICHAEL J. KELLER, MBA, FACHE

During the past year I have had the pleasure of commanding the Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The CMOC's mission is to provide strategic humanitarian aid to the theater commanders in the greater Middle East. During this year my team has received, processed and sent more than \$10 million in humanitarian aid to Iraq, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kirgizstan and Pakistan.

Humanitarian aid that we receive comes as undesignated donations sent at the donor's expense to Kuwait. Shoes, school kits, athletic equipment, medical supplies and equipment, sewing machines, clothing, blankets and wheelchairs are some of the donations. Most of these contributions arrive by cargo ship in 40-foot containers where they are accepted by the CMOC for processing and shipment within the region.

With each of these donations, the CMOC strives to coordinate the distribution of these materials where they are needed most and where they will do the most good toward decreasing human suffering and need. The level of need in this region of the world is tremendous and unending. Yet the many donors to the CMOC-Kuwait continue to give with the same commitment and enthusiasm as they did back in 2003, when I served as a staff officer in this very same organization.

Now as I am transitioning my team at the CMOC by training our replacements, I am also preparing myself mentally to return to my family, my TTUHSC family, friends and stateside military colleagues.

I am leaving this tour with one overriding impression: a new sense of how wonderfully giving the people of America are and how they do so without seeking any fanfare or self-adulation. The donors include grandmothers who make baby quilts for newborns; a Christian women's church group that donates bolts of cloth, buttons, thread and dressmaking supplies to groups of Muslim women interested in starting a dressmaking businesses to support their families; and Mr. Gary Sinise (a.k.a. Lt. Dan from "Forrest Gump") and so many others.

I have seen during this year that the American characteristic of giving selflessly is alive and well at home and is the same core value that drives the deployed American soldier, sailor, airman, marine and civilian working daily in harm's way. Americans are givers.



Michael J. Keller, MBA, FACHE, is director and assistant professor of Clinical Services Management in the School of Allied Health Sciences and a colonel in the U.S. Army. He is commander of the 321st Civil Affairs Brigade.



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