



ALEXANDER AUSTIN

SILVIA DEGOLLADO, MSN, NP-C

Family Nurse Practitioner

Mario Anzaldúa, MD, Mission, Texas

Graduate: 2017

WALKING BESIDE THEM: Silvia Degollado, MSN, NP-C, often sees her past reflected in her patients. "I know where they're coming from, (which) makes it even more of an honor to be able to care for those in this community," she said.

FINDING PURPOSE: Degollado grew up in a family of third-generation migrant farm workers. The family would travel annually from their South Texas home north to Michigan, chasing harvest season. Degollado learned the value of hard work at a young age, working in the fields for extended hours in various harsh environments. She also saw firsthand the barriers that exist in accessing health care and wanted to be a part of the solution.

Degollado said nursing was a career that called her instead of one she openly chose. She said the death of her 15-year-old brother planted the seed for this career path, which was encouraged by her fiancé and now husband, Andres.

SERVICE AND INSPIRATION: "In my heart, I always knew I was meant to go into nursing. There were challenges – I had my twin girls while I was in school – but it totally makes sense now. This is what I was meant to do and where I'm meant to be, and I hope my story is one that inspires someone else to persevere."

BY DANETTE BAKER

KACI BOHN, PHD

Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Harding University, College of Pharmacy, Searcy, Arkansas

Graduate: 2011

JEFF MONTGOMERY

A SURPRISE: While attending graduate school in pharmaceutical sciences in Amarillo, Kaci Bohn, PhD, discovered one of her greatest challenges in life would also be one of the most inspiring — she was pregnant. Bohn recalls taking a toxicology class where they studied real-life cases of pediatric poisonings. “It scared me thinking about all of the things in the world that could hurt our children,” Bohn said.

A GROWING PASSION: Bohn’s concern for the misuse of medication and accidental poisonings, especially in children, continued while teaching at Harding University College of Pharmacy. Inspired by the Medication Cleanout at TTUHSC’s Amarillo campus, Bohn enlisted the help of colleague, Jeanie Jaramillo-Stametz, PharmD, (Pharmacy ’01), managing director of the Texas Panhandle Poison Center and assistant professor of Pharmacy Practice for TTUHSC at Amarillo, to start the event in Searcy, Arkansas.

GOING FURTHER: Currently, Bohn is developing a medication safety curriculum for children under the age of 12.

The process began with an idea Bohn had for a children’s book and grew from there. The main character of her book, Morty, is a medicine capsule that turns red when children come in contact with medications they don’t know. She plans to publish her curriculum this spring with the hopes of taking it into local schools.

BY ABBI BRICKEY

SHANA ROBINSON, PA

Lead Advanced Practice Practitioner

Envision Healthcare at Pearland Medical Center, Pearland, Texas

Graduate: 2009

KEN KOSUB/LIMELIGHT FILMS.TV

A BALANCING GAME: Shana Robinson, PA, is no stranger to hard work and dedication. After years of balancing schoolwork and athletics, Robinson continued her education as a student in the TTUHSC Physician Assistant program at Permian Basin.

The physician assistant profession was created around the idea of collaboration, similar to athletics. "It teaches you that you have to prioritize — it teaches you leadership — it teaches you teamwork," Robinson said.

FINDING A NICHE: While working in her full-time management role at Envision Healthcare, Robinson spent two years fulfilling qualification requirements and passed a board exam in summer 2018 to earn a Certificate of Added Qualifications in Emergency Medicine. Robinson became one of only 20 people in Texas, and one of few nationwide, to receive the certification. In 2018, in addition to working for Envision Healthcare, Robinson started a company called Code Health, which focuses on advanced emergency training for medical professionals and educating the public.

STAYING THE COURSE: Robinson is set to graduate this year with a doctorate in health sciences from the A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Mesa, Arizona, with an emphasis in leadership. "I would do it all over again," Robinson said about her journey and the work it took to accomplish her goals.

BY ABBI BRICKEY



RAJ CHHADUA, PHARM D

Principal Managing Partner

ReNue Apothecary GP, PLLC, Frisco, Texas

Graduate: 2002

THE FRIENDLY NUDGE: Raj Chhadua, PharmD, was working for Walgreens as a photo clerk before one of the store's pharmacists encouraged him to consider a pharmacy career. After receiving his doctor of pharmacy degree from TTUHSC, Chhadua remained with the chain and eventually earned a promotion to district pharmacy supervisor — responsible for 126 pharmacists in 42 stores producing approximately \$185 million in revenue annually.

A SHOT IN THE ARM: While at Walgreens, Chhadua also was instrumental in transitioning 296 north, central and west Texas company stores into immunization centers by executing a program to train and certify 675 pharmacists.

PRESCRIPTION TO LEAD: Chhadua also leads the Texas Pharmacy Association as its president-elect, using his unique perspective of pharmacy from both small business and global scale standpoints to represent the industry and to help propel it forward into the future.

"Pharmacy and health care are changing fast, and it is the responsibility of every TTUHSC and School of Pharmacy alum to give back through their practice and help future health care providers, and it is our job to protect and innovate the profession."

BY MARK HENDRICKS



NEAL HINKLE

MARCO GUTIERREZ, MD

Family Medicine Physician

Marco Gutierrez, MD, and Associates in Alamo and McAllen, Texas

Graduate: 1992

PURPOSE: A motorcycle accident in 1983 left Marco Gutierrez, MD, hospitalized for 25 days with time to think about his future. He decided to go to medical school. As a family medicine physician in private practice now, he uses his story to encourage others. “I try to tell every adolescent I run into, you need to be persistent. Don’t let anybody tell you, ‘You can’t do it.’ My high school counselor told me I should be a mechanic. My college counselor said, ‘You’re just not medical school material.’ It taught me perseverance,” Gutierrez said.

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON: In a bizarre twist of events, Gutierrez’s 26-year-old son is now following in his dad’s footsteps. “He almost died on us last year,” Gutierrez said. “He was traveling in Amsterdam and contracted influenza, which led to sepsis and acute respiratory distress.”

Ultimately, his son recovered and is pursuing a different career than originally intended. He’s now working toward medical school.

LITTLE VICTORIES: “The real victories are not big ones that come like fireworks,” he said. “It’s the little ones, when you don’t even know you’ve made a difference and somebody says, ‘Remember that conversation? It really helped,’ or, ‘That problem I had, you nailed it — thanks a lot.’ As a family doctor, a lot of little victories add up and sustain you.”

BY GLENYS YOUNG