

A DIFFERENT KIND

of Story Time

The School of Health Professions Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences created the “Wee Read” program, which received a grant from The CH Foundation for 2018, to provide interactive story time for young children. The program is a free community resource open to the public, which highlights a speech and language strategy each week, setting it apart from other story time offerings in Lubbock.

“The idea for this program came a few years ago when my children were 18 months and 3 years old,” said Melissa Whitaker, MS, CCC-SLP, (Health Professions ’04, ’02) clinical instructor in the department and co-director of Wee Read. “There were a lot of story times offered in town for families, but they were more conducive to elementary-aged children. Toddlers are not as apt to sit and listen as a book is read, so we developed this program for a younger age range.”

Whitaker coordinates the program with fellow clinical instructor, Brittany Hall, MS, CCC-SLP, (Health Professions ’05, ’03). Second-year graduate students in the Speech-Language Pathology program conduct the Wee Read sessions, which occur every Thursday at 10 a.m. in the TTUHSC Speech-Language Clinic. The students receive clinical hours for serving in this capacity and obtain a valuable foundation for future work upon graduation.

“Our graduate students haven’t had as much opportunity in the past counseling and coaching parents with young children,” Hall said. “This is a unique opportunity for our students to work with this specific placement, which is beneficial given the variety of career options in speech and language therapy for children 3 years old and younger.”

The graduate students create interactive reading sessions for children that involve using the whole body. The books are movement-based with literacy-based extension activities — such as singing and acting out words — following each reading.

“It’s (Wee Read program) great for the parents, and it’s a great learning experience for our students as well,” Hall said. “Sometimes our students think that it will be an easy way to get clinical hours, (and) then they walk in and have a question from a parent that requires them to apply what they’ve learned in the classroom. Not only do they have to apply what they’ve learned, but they have to communicate that knowledge in a parent-friendly way. While this may be challenging for them at times, it’s helping them build a solid foundation for their future speech-language pathology careers.”



This Wee Read session featured the book “If You Decide to Go to the Moon,” by Faith McNulty. The graduate students made rocket ships for the children to hold while the book was read.

Who Said It?

TTUHSC weighs in on recent achievements.

"I am very excited about going to Vietnam to help health care professionals improve their knowledge and skills about speech-language assessment and intervention for children with speech and language impairments." Sue Ann Lee, PhD, CCC-SLP, associate professor, School of Health Professions Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences, received a six-month Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program Grant to Hue, Vietnam.



"At times, balancing my responsibilities and being a student regent can be daunting and has required resilience and perseverance. Between my duties as a medical student, researcher, member of the Junior League and the Texas Medical Association, creating solutions and planning ahead help me balance my responsibilities." Jane Gilmore on life as a TTUHSC medical student and student regent for the Texas Tech University System.



"I've been developing my career within the School of Medicine since I was a post-doctoral student. Now as a full professor for the last four years, I have ambitions of giving back to the school as a leader. I am very excited and ready for this opportunity to learn how to be a great leader and do more for the School of Medicine and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center as a whole." Leslie Shen, PhD, professor, School of Medicine Department of Pathology, was accepted into the Drexel Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine program. The program is for senior female faculty at the associate or full professor level who demonstrate the greatest potential for assuming executive leadership positions within the next five years at academic health centers.



"Helping employers understand and see the value of hiring individuals with disabilities at their employment sites and sharing my knowledge with other professionals across the country made it a very rewarding experience for me." Rebecca Sametz, PhD, CRC, program director and assistant professor, School of Health Professions Master of Science Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Program, elected as the 2017-2018 president of the National Rehabilitation Association Job Placement and Development Division.



"To lead the Department of Internal Medicine at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center as chairman is a great honor. I am excited to contribute to developing compassionate well-trained physicians that can provide superior medical care not only to the community but also to the West Texas region. In addition to education, we will also continue to develop and promote our clinical and basic science research." Santhosh K.G. Koshy, MD, MBA, chair and professor, J.T. and Margaret Talkington Department of Internal Medicine. He also holds the Arnett Endowed Chair in Internal Medicine and the Margaret Talkington Endowed Chair in Internal Medicine.



GRANT-ed!

Congratulations to these TTUHSC faculty members who received extramural funding from June through December 2018.

Sanjay Awasthi, MD, received a three-year \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense for his work in **breast cancer research**.

Susan Bergenson, PhD, with **Ted Reid, PhD**, received a five-year \$1.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for their work in **alcohol use disorders**.

Ion Bobulescu, MD, received a three-year \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for his research in **kidney disease**.



Luis Cuello, PhD, received a four-year renewal grant of \$1.2 million from the National Institutes of Health for his work with **potassium channels**.

Devin Lowe, PhD, received a three-year \$542,982 U.S. Department of Defense grant for his **colon cancer study**.

Josée Guindon, PhD, received a five-year \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health National Institute on Drug Abuse for her work with the **endocannabinoid system**.

Vardan T. Karamyan, PhD, along with **Thomas Abbruscato, PhD**, and **Paul Trippier, PhD**, received a five-year \$2.9 million multiple-principal-investigator R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke for their research in **stroke therapy**.

Patrick Reynolds, MD, PhD, and **Min Kang, PharmD**, received a five-year \$2 million grant and a three-year \$1.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health National Cancer Institute for studies on **neuroblastomas**. Reynolds received a separate five-year \$1.7 million grant from the National Institutes of Health National Cancer Institute for an additional **neuroblastoma study**.

Hongjun Liang, PhD, received a two-year \$200,000 grant from the Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas for research involving **anticancer drugs**.



For more information on each grant, visit the Pulse website: ttuhsc.edu/alumni/pulse

5 minutes with the faculty...

Q&A WITH COURTNEY QUEEN, PHD | By Kara Bishop



Courtney Queen, PhD, is an assistant professor for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Julia Jones Matthews Department of Public Health.

WHAT INTERESTED YOU IN PUBLIC HEALTH? My background is in social sciences focusing on medical sociology, so public health was a good fit for me because I can combine social and behavioral sciences with practical application in the community. Public health allows you to work in multiple disciplines

and in a collaborative way that I appreciate and enjoy.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN ANY COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS? I worked to develop a technology for early diagnosis of the Buruli ulcer, which is a neglected tropical disease (named for Buruli County in Uganda because of the many cases diagnosed there in the 1960s). Taking the device, technology, algorithms and our ability to diagnose “into the community,” required a collaborative team. I was awarded a National Science Foundation I-Corps grant in 2018 — \$50,000 proof-of-concept funding — to evaluate our customer base and determine how to most effectively move our research and technology from bench to bedside. It forced me as a scientist to really step out of my comfort zone because it’s a whole new way of thinking. It can be scary to switch modalities — from scientist to entrepreneur — but it’s also highly satisfying to know you’re one step closer to improving a person’s reality who may be suffering from this disease.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A MASTER’S OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE? The value of the degree can be seen in a number of areas. The communities in which our graduates work benefit from the increase of educated individuals working with public health departments to provide essential services such as the development of community-based health promotion programs; improvement of legislation that supports health and wellness at the population level; and even the private sector working to improve occupational health and safety.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE LOOK LIKE TO YOU? I think the technology in health care like telemedicine and all the interventions that are happening now point toward a bright future. I read this interesting piece on the values-based model of health care that says eventually the pricing structure for health care will change, leading to more incentives and values-based outcomes established by prevention and public health initiatives as well as early detection and diagnosis. All of these components are going to transform the current health care structure, which is exciting. It’s a great time to be involved in public health.

“We were excited when the Department of Public Health became an accredited program last summer by the Council on Education for Public Health.”

— COURTNEY QUEEN, PHD

The
School of Health Professions
celebrates 35 years.

THEN NOW

School is approved by Texas Legislature in **1981**.

First class of **18** students admitted in **1983**.

One campus and **three** degree programs.

Twenty different degree programs on **three** campuses — most diverse school at TTUHSC and one of the largest in the nation.

7,237 graduates to date.

Licensure first-time pass rate for all programs is **96** percent.



School of Health Professions ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP

The School of Health Professions has been awarded its first endowed professorship. The **CH** Foundation Endowed Professorship in Pain Science will be held by Associate Dean for Research Phil Sizer, PhD, PT. This appointment provides much-needed leadership for the advancement of pain-related education, research and scholarship. The endowed professorship will support supervisory faculty members in leading education initiatives, recruiting and retaining students, developing faculty members in research, and leading administrative initiatives that promote pain science.

MATTERS

of the heart

BY SUZANNA CISNEROS

Barber Shops and Blood Pressure Checks

On any given day you can find PJ and his barbers behind their chairs cutting their customers' hair. Long-time loyal customers now bring their sons to get a cut from their favorite barber. The relationship between a barber and the customer is almost like family — with conversations about work, school and life common topics.

TTUHSC medical students have worked with barbershop and beauty salon owners for 10 years to tackle a silent killer — high blood pressure. The Barber Shop Blood Pressure Group allows customers to do one-stop shopping when it comes to their grooming and health needs by providing blood pressure and BMI screenings as they wait on their barber or beautician.

Students work to promote awareness about high blood pressure issues and provide health information to prevent or improve related conditions. E.L. Domingo-Johnson's father died of heart failure at an early age. Now as a second-year medical student and president of the Barber Shop Blood Pressure Group, he sees the importance and need for a project like this for communities.

"My family is an example of who we are trying to reach," Domingo-Johnson said. "My father was African-American, and as a kid I went with him to get haircuts at the barber regularly. I was at a barber shop way more often than I was at a doctor's office, which makes programs like this so important because we are finding people who may have not received the care they needed."

The medical students respect the relationship customers have with their barber or beautician, who can give the customer a nudge to get their blood pressure checked while they wait. It takes no time out of their day to learn if they are at risk so they can seek appropriate health care.

The Barber Shop Blood Pressure Group was created in 2008 by two TTUHSC School of Medicine students Kweku Hazel, MD, (Medicine '12) and Soheil Daftarian, MD, (Resident '16, Medicine '12).

"Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine derives great support from its community and looks for ways to give back to the people of West Texas," said Steven L. Berk, MD, TTUHSC executive vice president,

provost and School of Medicine dean. "It has been a successful project for these 10 years because medical students truly care about their community and are willing to volunteer their time despite very busy schedules."

Berk said medical students work with barbers and hairdressers to educate patrons about high blood pressure, teach barbers to measure blood pressure and take blood pressures of patrons, particularly those who do not have a doctor. First- and second-year medical students work with the School of Medicine dean's office volunteering weekly to visit more than a dozen barber and beauty shops on Saturday mornings.

"We help bridge a gap between the community and access to health care," said Stacy Philip, a second-year medical student and Barber Shop Blood Pressure Group leadership team member. "Not only do we conduct blood pressure health checks, but we also provide education on how to integrate healthy food options into clients' diets, tips about exercise, incorporating preventive measures into their health maintenance, and ways to access health services."

Barbers, beauticians and their clients have had a positive response to the project.

"At first there is hesitation from the clients, but when they see others getting checked they are receptive to it," said Bella Kalayilparampil, a second-year medical student. "One dad who was there said he worked out but his blood pressure was high. He had a family history of hypertension and did not know that was a factor. This project is a lot about education. Now the dad is very open to the blood pressure checks."

Domingo-Johnson said having a medical school back such a project has an impact on all generations.

"At my barber shop, I help more of an older-generation clientele," Domingo-Johnson said. "They are not as excited the first time around. I worked with a gentleman who knew he had high blood pressure, but he didn't like the effects of his medicine. I talked to him about visiting his physician and relaying that information to him to have the medications switched. We also help them better understand how to ask questions and talk to their doctors."



KAMI HUNT

TTUHSC **TURNS 50** THIS SUMMER!

MAY 1969

The 61st Texas Legislature passes HB498 creating the Texas Tech University School of Medicine. Gov. Preston Smith signs the bill into law.

DECEMBER 1985

Official student enrollment is announced as **401** medical students, **314** resident physicians, **190** nursing students and **77** allied health students.

DECEMBER 1994

Board of Regents approves construction of new TTUHSC library in Lubbock.

SEPTEMBER 2008

TTUHSC announces creation of the SimLife Center that will offer interdisciplinary clinical simulation in Lubbock to students of all schools.

FEBRUARY 2018

First vaccine license agreement for TTUHSC is signed.

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To learn more about TTUHSC's 50-year anniversary, visit: fifty.ttuhs.edu