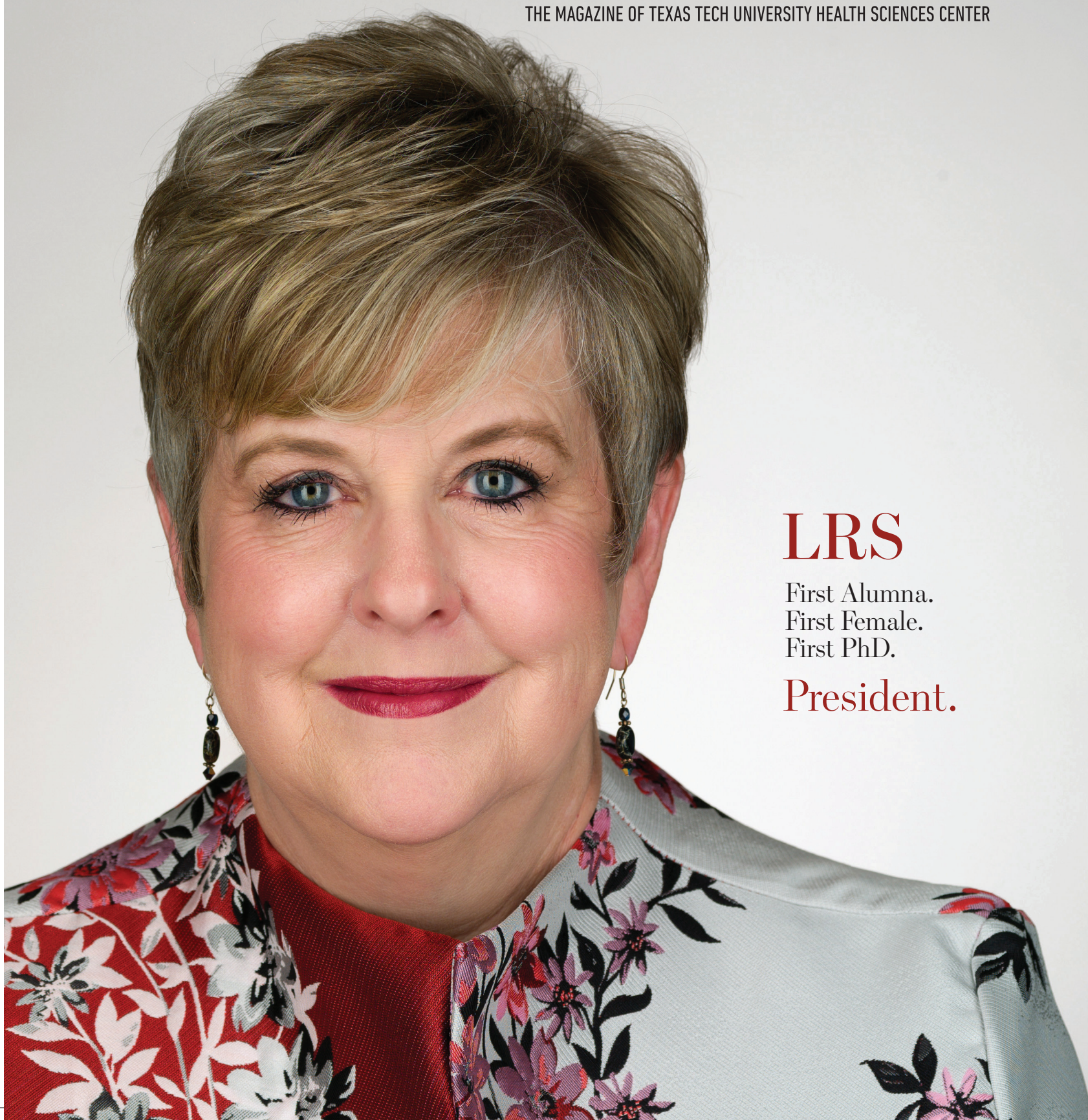


- + TELEMEDICINE'S PERFECT STORM
- + BETTER THAN A CIGARETTE BUTT
- + BRYAN SUTTON'S FAVORITE THINGS

WINTER 2021

Pulse

THE MAGAZINE OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER



LRS

First Alumna.
First Female.
First PhD.

President.

The background of the entire page is a solid red color. Overlaid on this is a large, faint, circular seal of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC). The seal features a central shield with various symbols, including a key, a lamp, and a star. The words "TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER" are inscribed around the perimeter of the seal.

TRANSFORM HEALTH CARE THROUGH

Innovation & Collaboration.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE MADE GREAT ADVANCEMENTS IN HEALTH CARE;
YET, WE KNOW OPPORTUNITY EXISTS FOR SO MUCH MORE.

TTUHSC'S NEW VISION — TRANSFORM HEALTH CARE THROUGH INNOVATION
AND COLLABORATION — IDEATES A COMMUNITY OF DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS
EMPOWERED TO EFFECT CHANGE THROUGH INGENUITY AND TEAMWORK.

WITHOUT YOU, WE WOULDN'T BE WHERE WE ARE TODAY, AND WE'RE EXCITED
ABOUT YOUR ROLE IN OUR FUTURE. THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE.

VOLUME 31 | ISSUE 1

Winter 2021 Inside

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Madam President

Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, (Health Professions '86) took the helm at TTUHSC with the same grace and strength that is often associated with her. She's empowering rather than intimidating; compassionate rather than unyielding; accountable rather than condemning. She brings a fresh perspective to the institution she's served for more than 30 years, leading in unmatched fashion through a historic pandemic.

By Danette Baker

24

Telemedicine's Perfect Storm

COVID-19 paved the way for a revolution in health care delivery that just might prove to be a pandemic silver lining.

By Kara Bishop



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New anatomy lab gives students' ample space for physical distancing.

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Molecular pathology students were able to conduct lab experiments at home with the lab-in-a box.

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Nagendra Gupta, MD,FACP, CPE, wanted to be doctor when he grew up — so he did.

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SUBMIT CLASS NOTES TO:
PULSE@TTUHSC.EDU

ON THE COVER

Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, (Health Professions '86) TTUHSC's ninth president, leads the university with intentionality and vision. Photo by Neal Hinkle.

NEAL HINKLE

Health Matters

A Letter from Our President



A ‘case study in teamwork’ demonstrates the possibilities that lie ahead

On a Thursday afternoon in late August, construction crews working south of our Lubbock campus inadvertently cut a network fiber creating a digital divide for TTUHSC and our neighboring hospital, UMC Health System.

In our technologically driven environment, operating without internet access is like trying to breathe without oxygen — you flatline. What transpired over the next 48 hours, however, was nothing short of a miracle. In a project that should have taken two weeks, competitive vendors worked together to restore internet accessibility in two days. Our chief information officer and vice president of information technology, Vince Fell, called it a “case study in teamwork.”

I share this story — one in a collection we have cataloged on the TTUHSC website — because it is one of the first tangible examples of our university’s vision in action. A few months following this network outage, I introduced a new vision for our institution: Transform health care through innovation and collaboration. Drafting a new vision wasn’t to satisfy a “check-off” in my role as president, but instead, I saw an opportunity to build on a focus that was so evident at our great university — our ability to intentionally address challenges head-on to meet health care needs.

The concepts of innovation and collaboration are not new to TTUHSC. They were coded into our DNA from the beginning. Our success over the past 50 years stems from our innovative approach to address a shortage of health care professionals in the western half of the state through integrated education and community partnerships. During the early months of the pandemic, it became so very evident that we only needed to look inward at who we are to continue our momentum forward.

Shortening a projected two-week turnaround to repair a network cable into 48 hours meant only a short disruption in our delivery of health care services because of innovation and collaboration. The real caveat to our vision is to grasp the impact we can have on health care when we allow those two nouns to drive everything that we do.

Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, (Health Professions ’86)

PRESIDENT

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

“

The concepts of innovation and collaboration are not new to TTUHSC. They were coded into our DNA from the beginning.

”

KAMI HUNT

Feedback

EDITOR'S NOTE

It's a new year, and, while some things have changed, others remain the same. Regardless, TTUHSC is still pushing forward — fighting on the frontlines against COVID-19, presenting the university's priorities at the 87th legislative session, increasing momentum through our new vision, and striving to provide the best health care across Texas and beyond.

We're honored to share the story in this issue about our ninth president. Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, (Health Professions '86) worked her way from student to our university's helm. She is leading TTUHSC with a new vision: transform health care through innovation and collaboration.

You will notice the "Innovation & Collaboration" logo on certain stories throughout this and our summer 2021 issues. We are labeling stories that directly coincide with the new vision and hope you will find inspiration in the creative and interprofessional work done by our faculty, staff and students.

Best wishes for health and happiness this coming year.

— **Danette Baker, MA**

EDITOR, PULSE
OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

FROM THE ARCHIVES: EXCERPT FROM THE SUMMER 1990 ISSUE

Well I have moved from earthquake country to Heaven! I may have survived the 'Big One' but I didn't like it. When the October quake hit, I was working in a VA hospital about 30 miles from the epicenter. It was certainly frightening. Actually, our hospital took so much damage that we had to evacuate 200 patients and the building was deemed structurally unsafe.

It was about 16 hours before we had resumption of lab facilities — a hardship for me since I had four fresh heart surgery patients to care for. We all survived, but I ended up having to stay in the hospital for four straight days (and nights) while we tried to stabilize/transfer/sort out things.

Actually, I had made plans before the quake to relocate. I have left general surgery at Stanford to do emergency medicine in Denver, and I love it. This is a very dynamic program, and I feel like I've finally started learning in a residency. Denver is great, and

the people are more like Texans, (but don't tell them I said that!) so I just feel like I'm home.

— **Kelli Lewis, MD (Medicine '88)**

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT MEDICAL DIRECTOR
SCL HEALTH SYSTEM

FROM THE SURVEY: OUTSTANDING!

This was an outstanding issue. The "Until They No Longer See Me" article with Tammy Scott and Kenny Lam was incredible!

— **Terry Hill, DNP (Nursing '19)**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
TTUHSC SCHOOL OF NURSING



ROOSEVELT MEETS HER BROTHER

We would love it if you would include this photo of our daughter Roosevelt meeting her new brother, Anders. Though the pandemic really altered so much of Anders' delivery, we were so excited that Roosevelt got to meet him in this way.

— **Alec C. Egan**

MD CANDIDATE 2021
TTUHSC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pulse welcomes thoughts and opinions from our readers via email at pulse@ttuhsc.edu.

Pulse

THE MAGAZINE OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Volume 31, Issue 1

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the
future
belongs
to

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Laboratory Sciences & Primary Care

Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science
Second Degree Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Clinical Laboratory Science
Master of Science in Molecular Pathology
Master of Physician Assistant Studies

Rehabilitation Sciences

Master of Athletic Training
Master of Occupational Therapy
Doctor of Occupational Therapy
Post-Professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy
Doctor of Physical Therapy
Doctor of Science in Physical Therapy
Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science
Concentration in Communication Sciences Disorders
Concentration in Movement Sciences Disorders

Speech, Language & Hearing Sciences

Doctor of Audiology
Bachelor of Science in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences
Second Degree Bachelor of Science in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences
Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology

Healthcare Management & Leadership

Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management
Master of Science in Healthcare Administration
Graduate Certificate in Health Informatics and Data Analysis
Graduate Certificate in Health Systems Policy and Management
Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Finance and Economics
Graduate Certificate in Health Systems Engineering and Management
Graduate Certificate in Long Term Care Administration

Clinical Counseling & Mental Health

Master of Science in Addiction Counseling
Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling

TTU HSC

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

www.ttuhs.edu/health-professions

health.professions@ttuhsc.edu

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Texas Tech University Health Sciences
Center School of Health Professions



@ttuhsc_shp



TTUHSC_SHP

- + QUICK DOSE
- + BREAKING BARRIERS
- + FACULTY PROFILE
- + FOR THE RECORD

News + Views from TTUHSC

Scope

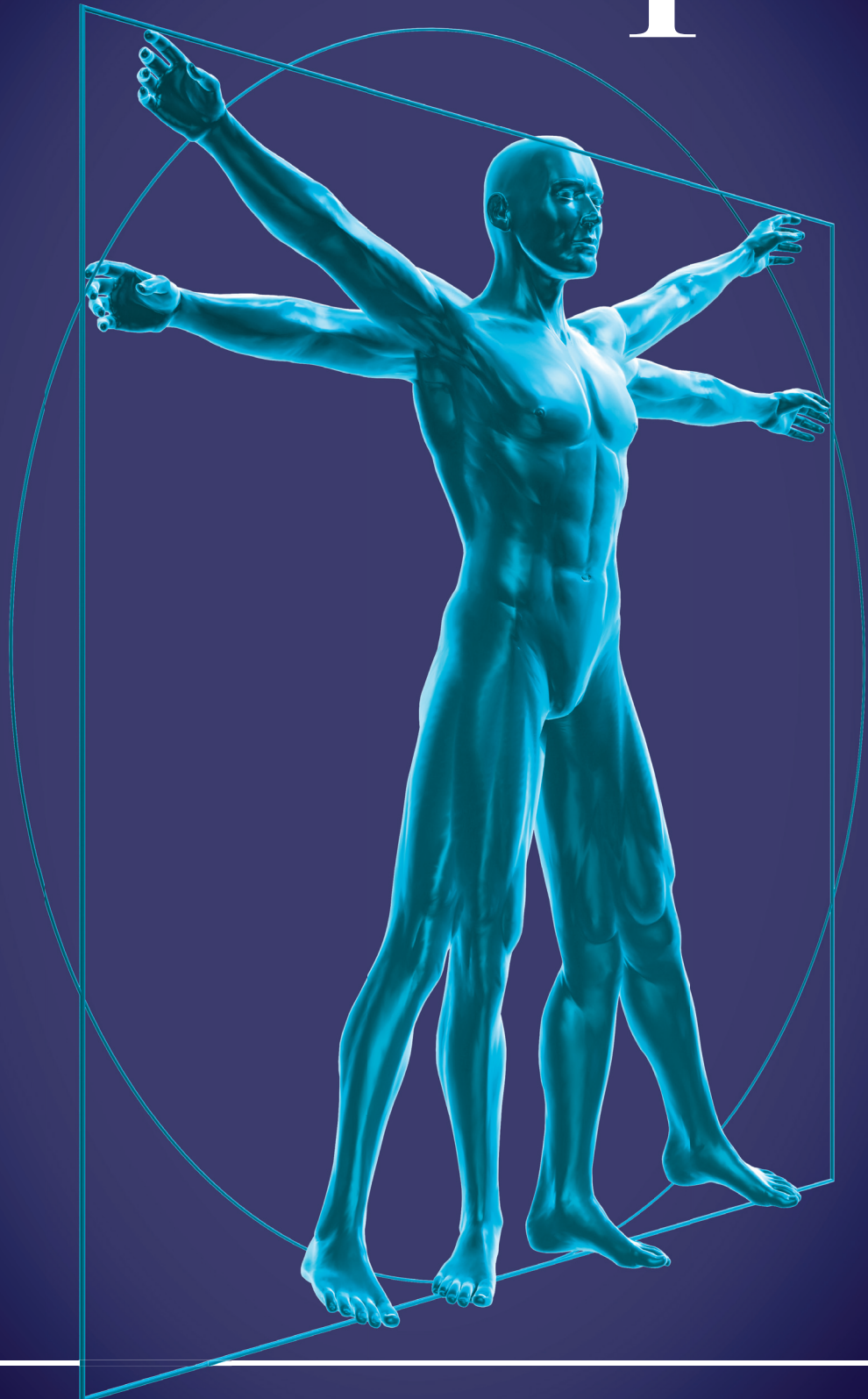
Better in 3D

Many universities statewide and across the nation were forced to move their anatomy instruction fully online in summer and fall 2020.

At TTUHSC, however, it was anatomy as usual thanks to expanded facilities in the new Institute of Anatomical Sciences' gross anatomy lab.

"It's difficult to grasp a 3D perspective on a two-dimensional screen, so we're grateful that we had the opportunity to safely provide practical instruction for our students," said Kerry Gilbert, PT, ScD, (Health Professions '04, '97) co-director of the institute.

COVID-19 delayed the official opening of the 20,000 square-foot lab until December, but the space was completed in time for use by incoming students in health professions, medicine and biomedical sciences. The facility allowed for the necessary physical distancing, enabling university leadership to approve in-person instruction.



ADOBE STOCK

Web + Watch the institute's official grand opening.

PULSE.TTUHSC.EDU | WINTER 2021 **5**



First DETOUR in Texas

Mohammad “Mac” Ansari, MD, performed the first DETOUR procedure in the state of Texas July 2020 in the Lubbock UMC Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. The minimally invasive percutaneous bypass creates a detour so blood can go around a blocked artery in a patient’s leg.

Why is this procedure important for West Texas?

It puts patients’ needs first. Some patients are classified as high risk for surgery because they have other conditions, like obesity, age or history of smoking, that can complicate the procedure or anticipated recovery. This procedure provides an option for those denied traditional surgery.

It combats stereotypes. “West Texas is kind of ignored, and all of these new techniques and new interventions usually go to the bigger cities of Dallas and Houston,” said Ansari, cardiology assistant professor in the School of Medicine. “So, it was awesome for me not only to help my patient, but also to tell everybody in Texas, ‘We in Lubbock can perform these procedures and help our patients exactly like everyone else.’”

It’s life-changing. Ansari says when patients come into the hospital for the surgery, they’re usually in severe pain and unable to walk. “You can see the difference the next day,” he said. “When they come to the clinic to follow up, they say, ‘I am back to mowing my lawn. This was something I never dreamed I would be able to do again.’”

‘We Cannot Pass Up This Opportunity’

When Mark Sigler, MD, (Resident ’16) opened the email from School of Medicine Dean and Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs Steven L. Berk, MD, he emphatically said, “Yes!” to participating in a clinical trial with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. There was just one problem: Sigler didn’t have the 10 to 20 full-time clinical research staffers needed.

“We could not pass up the opportunity to be a part of this effort,” said Sigler, assistant professor in the School of Medicine Department of Internal Medicine in Amarillo. “This company made the best treatment for the Ebola virus, and they’re giving West Texas the opportunity to participate.”

Sigler reached out to PharmaTex Research LLC, an Amarillo-based research and product development company who agreed to assist with the trial. As of press time, TTUHSC Amarillo has enrolled 220 patients in the trial for Regeneron’s potential COVID-19 treatment. On Nov. 21, 2020, Regeneron was issued an emergency use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration due to positive results from the ongoing trial.

Preliminary results of the clinical trial for the Regeneron Pharmaceuticals antiviral cocktail developed for COVID-19 were published in the New England Journal of Medicine in December 2020.

NEAL HINKLE

My Favorite Things

Bryan Sutton, PhD

Professor, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Bryan Sutton, PhD, divides his work time between writing papers and grants, grading student assignments and overseeing their research projects examining the role of proteins in muscular dystrophy. Outside of work he's developed a well-rounded life perspective from his curious nature. While he's not a "Sound of Music" junkie, he does have a list of his favorite things.

Favorite Movie: *Star Wars*

I still remember watching it for the very first time when I was 12 years old.

Favorite instrument: *Scottish Bag Pipes*

While in college, I saw a group play the bag pipes. I enjoy watching how things work, and the mechanics of the instrument fascinated me. They taught me how to play, and I've been hooked ever since — even though I'm not Scottish.

Favorite season: *Summer*

I don't like the cold, which may be why when I moved from North Carolina to Texas, I stayed. It's been three decades now.

Favorite experience:

Mount Everest

Michael Blanton, PhD, (professor in the School of Medicine) manages a faculty hiking club and set up a TTUHSC expedition to Mount Everest. I went to the south base camp in Nepal in October 2019 with Blanton and Thomas Pressley, PhD, also a professor in the School of Medicine. While I don't remember it being bitterly cold, I do remember the lack of oxygen and rocky terrain. We hiked 40 miles from Lukla, Nepal, to base camp, averaging 10 miles per day. With an altitude of 17,598 feet at base camp, it's hard to sleep, and you have no appetite. It was a difficult but fun trip surrounded by things you wouldn't see in Lubbock, Texas. This planet is a really beautiful place.



Stat!

**Unexpected donation:
“We once received an old-fashioned
alarm clock at the Medication
Cleanout once.”**

— JEANIE JARAMILLO-STAMETZ, PHARM D (PHARMACY '01)
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY PRACTICE
MANAGING DIRECTOR, TEXAS PANHANDLE POISON CENTER



19,312

PARTICIPANTS
CONTRIBUTED TO THE
MEDICATION CLEANOUTS
ON ABILENE, AMARILLO
AND LUBBOCK CAMPUSES
IN FALL 2020.



**“We’re so proud
of our students.
They stepped up,
and we worked as
a team to continue
our education
safely. They’ve
been committed
to our school.”**

— BRANDT SCHNEIDER, PHD
CO-DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF ANATOMICAL SCIENCES
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

54,514

POUNDS OF MEDICATION
WERE COLLECTED AS
WELL AS 4,370 POUNDS
OF SHARPS (NEEDLES/
SYRINGES
AND LANCETS).



462 health professions and medical students were safely educated in person in the Institute of Anatomical Sciences' gross anatomy lab in Summer 2020.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TTUHSC

- + SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS
- + SCHOOL OF NURSING
- + JERRY H. HODGE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY
- + GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
- + SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Vitals

Signs from the Schools

Living Room Lab

The pandemic forced everyone to rethink educational instruction last spring when campuses closed, but how do you help students obtain lab experience if they're not in the lab? Katie Bennett, PhD, MB(ASCP), NRCC-CC, (Biomedical Sciences '09) associate professor in the Department of Laboratory Sciences and Primary Care's Molecular Pathology Program, wanted students to have the opportunity to continue building their laboratory skills over the summer. Enter the MiniPCR Lab in a Box. These laboratory kits were provided to molecular pathology (MP) students, which allowed them to conduct lab assignments from home. This fall, MP students returned to in-person lab instruction using the kits for supplemental training.

Let's unpack the box.

2

MiniPCR Mini8 Thermal Cycler: This portable polymerase chain reaction (PCR) machine has an eight-well capacity and can be operated through computers, smartphones and tablets. It's used to perform PCR, which is an important step in analyzing DNA.

1

BlueGel Electrophoresis System with Integrated Illuminator: This machine, with a built-in blue light transilluminator can visualize DNA as it separates, seeing bands in as little as five minutes.

3

Micropipettes: The kit comes with three sets, in different volumes, of this quintessential biotech tool.



NEAL HINKLE

Web + Watch Katie Bennet, PhD, MB(ASCP), NRCC-CC, demonstrate the lab-in-a-box.

PULSE.TTUHSC.EDU | WINTER 2021 **9**

The Many Views of Ultrasound in Space

Jeffrey Thompson, DPT, PT, a ScD student at TTUHSC and professor of physical therapy at Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, shares the potential his research could have on spaceflight and beyond. "We can look at the current view, but there's also the 30,000-foot view as the saying goes," he added. Though, when it comes to space it's more of a 1-million-foot view.

10-foot view:

In the first step of his research, Thompson needs to validate the utility of ultrasound as a measurement tool here on earth, before it can be used to measure spinal health in space. Initial studies in this area used MRI machines, which aren't compatible with long-term spaceflight. "It's more cost effective than MRI equipment, and it's the only equipment that can fit in the training shuttle so we can measure the pressure put on the spine in space."

30,000-foot view:

This research shows potential as a tool for developing treatment options for chronic neck pain. A 2010 Global Burden of Disease study identified neck pain as the fourth highest in terms of years lived with disability, validating the necessity of preventive treatment.

1,000,000-foot view:

Measurements of the cervical spine in space could provide information to help prevent spinal degeneration in astronauts when they travel to the moon or ever take a trip to Mars. "It's only every 18 months that the Earth and Mars are in alignment where you can even send an astronaut there to work and bring him or her back," Thompson said. "So how do we prevent cervical injury during a long-term mission in space?"



The Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences provides telepractice services.

FLIPPED INSIDE OUT

In less than a week, the Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences flipped their entire clinical practice to telepractice. They continue to provide remote services having conducted 224 telepractice sessions this fall.

PROVIDED BY TTUHSC

Better Than a Cigarette Butt

“Cigarette butts and empty gun shells were some of the only hearing precautions my uncle had during the Vietnam War,” said Nathan Ortiz, AuD, CCC-A, (Health Professions ’14). “When soldiers would hear whistling bombs approaching, they would find anything they could to shove in their ears and brace for the inevitable sound that came after.”

As a TTUHSC audiology student, Ortiz met Joseph Pratt, AuD, CCC-A, (Health Professions ’13). They quickly bonded over their shared goal of military service. After earning their doctorate degrees, both men were commissioned as audiologists in the U.S. Navy.

As clinical audiologists, a significant aspect of their job was hearing conservation, a practice area that attracts only 5% of audiologists. After seeing 18- and 19-year-olds with life-altering hearing loss, Ortiz and Pratt became even more passionate about auditory preservation.

Pratt’s role for the Department of Defense in San Diego, California, made him responsible for one of the largest hearing conservation programs in the country. A few years later, Ortiz did the same on the East Coast. Their duties were vast — from surveying shore and offshore commands for hearing conservation compliance, mentoring hospital corpsmen, and traveling to remote areas of the globe to provide hearing conservation services.

Both men planned to move to central Texas with their families

after their service. Pratt reached out for job leads and found a conservation company in San Antonio, Texas. Turns out, it was owned by a veteran who was planning to retire.

Today, they co-own and operate Precision Hearing Conservation, a nationwide, private consulting firm. Their work keeps companies

Nathan Ortiz, AuD, CCC-A, and Joseph Pratt, AuD, CCC-A, own and operate Precision Hearing Conservation, a nationwide, private consulting firm, with brick-and-mortar clinic and mobile services.

compliant with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

“If you can prevent noise-induced hearing loss, not only does it maintain someone’s quality of life, but it can also lower health care costs for that individual,” Pratt said.

“Once you lose your hearing, you’re not going to get it back.”



SARAH LYONS

Don't Lose Your Humanity

*Hospital fire.
Mass shooting.
Global pandemic.*

Brandon “Kit” Bredimus, DNP, RN, (Nursing ‘19, ‘15) had a memorable first year as the vice president of nursing and chief nursing officer for Midland Memorial Hospital in Midland, Texas. He’s used to rolling with the punches and taking criticism in stride. Family members said he’d make a terrible nurse. Two days after he was named CNO, a hospital surveyor reported Bredimus lacked experience for the position. He never stopped working and now, not only is he an accomplished nurse, he also has led the hospital’s nursing staff through three significant disasters — all in the same year.

“Nursing is both a science and an art,” Bredimus said. “It’s a beautiful thing to address the technical side of health care without losing your humanity. That’s what I strive to do every day.”

Kit Bredimus,
DNP, RN
(Nursing ‘19, ‘15)



TOP 3 REASONS TO EARN AN MSN-MBA DEGREE

On Aug. 6, 2020, the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents approved the creation of a fully online MSN-MBA dual-degree program. Students and faculty provide their top reasons for pursuing this degree.

1 | No Duplication

Some courses in the MSN program are accepted by the MBA program. “I received my MSN this past year, so now I only have 18 months to go to get my MBA instead of three years,” said Amanda Griswold, MSN, BSN, RN, (Nursing ‘20, ‘17) chief nursing officer for McCamey County Hospital District in McCamey, Texas, and a student in the dual-degree program.

2 | Ready for Leadership Roles

Audra Ellis, BSN, RN, (Nursing ‘16) nursing manager of the staffing operations unit for Covenant Health, aims to enhance her skills through the program. “I think understanding the financial side of health care will be beneficial, not only for me to understand the bigger picture of hospital administration but to also communicate business decisions to my nursing staff effectively,” she added.

3 | Build Confidence as a Nurse

“As health care professionals serving on the front lines every day, no one understands resource conservation like a nurse,” said Cindy Acton, DNP, MSN, RN. She and Barbara Cherry, DNSc, MBA, MSN, RN, (Nursing ‘97) created the program for nurses interested in extending their business skills following the launch of TTU Rawls College of Business’ accelerated online MBA degree. This program equips nurses with tools needed to lead in their field and to effect policy change for the benefit of the health care system.

KAMI HUNT

Pillow Patients

COLLABORATION LEADS TO TAKE-HOME SIMULATION TRAINER

As she prepares for her training evaluation, level-two nursing student Laura Haffner strategically drapes clothes from her closet onto pillows, creating a "patient." COVID-19 prevented students from training in The F. Marie Hall SimLife Center in Lubbock; and, as they have in every aspect of their lives since the pandemic hit, Haffner and nursing students across the university adapted.

"It was pretty strange to be conducting an examination on my pillows, but I got the job done," Haffner said, adding with a laugh, "some of my classmates even had emoji pillows that gave 'faces' to their patients."

Simulation training creates the most realistic environment possible to provide an optimal training experience for students. TTUHSC faculty identified obstacles of teaching technical skills online and a need for better remote training, which led to the new Modular Skills Trainer, or "Sim-in-a-Box." Team members from TTUHSC's Simulation Program assisted the vendor in designing the skills trainer.

TTUHSC was the only university selected for product beta testing. Haffner was one of 90 nursing students across multiple campuses chosen to work with the training model and provide input on its design. The portable simulation tool is a 5" by 9" cardboard box with attachments allowing students to practice skills such as inserting urinary catheters, performing wound care and practicing IV starts.



Nursing students such as Laura Haffner got creative when the pandemic shut down the F. Marie Hall SimLife Center.

“

I foresee this innovative method in teaching basic patient skills lasting long after the pandemic. The possibilities with this tool are promising from basic simulation training to global health initiatives. ”

— SHARON DECKER, PHD, RN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TTUHSC SIMULATION PROGRAM
ASSOCIATE DEAN, PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF NURSING

NEAL HINKLE

OTCs Carry Risk, Too

The dangers of substance use disorder from prescriptions have been making headlines for 30 years since the first cases of opioid addiction in the 1990s. But over-the-counter medications (OTC) shouldn't be overlooked as they carry similar risks.

Some people incorrectly assume medications are safe if they don't require a prescription, particularly adolescents and teens — the most vulnerable populations to addiction. To reduce the risk, buy OTCs in small quantities, recommends Jeanie Jaramillo-Stametz, PharmD, (Pharmacy '01) managing director of the Texas Panhandle Poison Center and assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacy Practice.

“

Many over-the-counter cough syrups contain dextromethorphan, which crosses into the brain. If people are taking it in large quantities for addiction purposes or to get high, it can actually act similar to an opioid.”

— JEANIE JARAMILLO-STAMETZ, PHARM D
(PHARMACY '01)

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY PRACTICE
MANAGING DIRECTOR, TEXAS PANHANDLE POISON CENTER



ADOBÉ STOCK

1.5:0

RATIO OF ANNUAL HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY.

Study Shows Potential for Better Patient Care, Bottom Line

A three-year interprofessional research project involving the schools of Pharmacy, Nursing and Medicine indicates an improvement of patient outcomes as well as a significant cost reduction to hospitals that implement the patient navigator program.

"This study shows that in three years you can more than pay for the program," said Charles F. Seifert, PharmD, FCCP, BCPS, pharmacy regional dean in Lubbock and co-principal investigator. "What I would like to see is hospitals and other health care institutions, taking the model and utilizing it to improve patient care. I think if the population is selected correctly it can be beneficial in any situation."



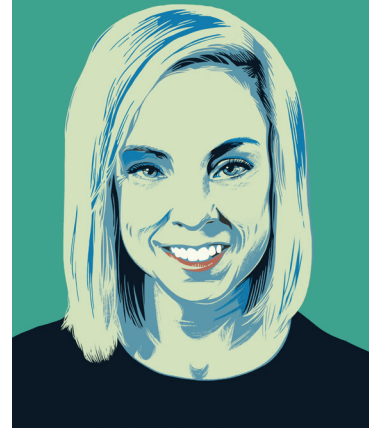
ADOBESTOCK, IVAN CANU

New Era of Pharmacy

Specialized roles within the pharmacy discipline adds a dimension to the profession, making pharmacists integral to the clinical team.



Kennedy Brakebill, PharmD ('17)
Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacist
Northwest Healthcare System
Amarillo, Texas



Lyndsi White, PharmD, BCGP ('06)
Owner/Consultant Pharmacist
Manage Meds LLC
Sulphur Springs, Texas

How has the role of a pharmacist evolved over time?

BRAKEBILL: I look at all the antibiotics and round with doctors. Twenty years ago, we were in the basement verifying orders; you would not have seen us on the hospital floor suggesting medications.

Why should pharmacists be involved in treatment processes?

WHITE: Pharmacists advocate for patients, so they can be on the least amount of effective medications possible. Sometimes the medications are no longer viable or cause complications when used as a long-term treatment option.

How is a pharmacist/physician partnership beneficial?

BRAKEBILL: Patient needs fall into one of two categories: pharmaco-

kinetics and pharmacodynamics. There is a reciprocal relationship between the drugs and the body. Pharmacists help physicians tailor medication to the individual.

How can pharmacists help with provider shortages?

WHITE: Collaborative practice between pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, etc., is very important. We're even seeing pharmacists advocating for a role in COVID-19 testing. There are a lot of things that pharmacists can help with so physicians can spend more time with their patients — medication therapy management is one example. There is even more opportunity for collaborative partnerships in rural areas, due to high demand for providers.

Could the Heart of the Matter be the Eye?

Revolutionary Research Encourages an Interdisciplinary Approach

As an optometrist, Duke Appiah, PhD, watched his patients with advanced stages of ocular degeneration — most with preventable cases — cycle in and out of the Takoradi-European District Hospital's ophthalmology unit in Ghana.

So, disease prevention became his primary focus, leading Appiah on a quest beyond clinical practice. He earned a master's of public health and doctorate in epidemiology from the University of Louisville. Appiah's research took a detour through cardiovascular disease, but came full circle when one of his students approached him with a potential research project.

Watching his grandmother deal with multiple ocular diseases for more than 16 years motivated Noah De La Cruz, MPH, (Biomedical Sciences '20) to look into ocular disease. While enrolled in the Masters of Public Health Program, De La Cruz approached Appiah, his faculty adviser, about his interest. "Dr. Appiah worked in cardiovascular diseases, so I wasn't sure if he would be interested in an ocular disease research project — I had no idea he had been an optometrist in a past life!"

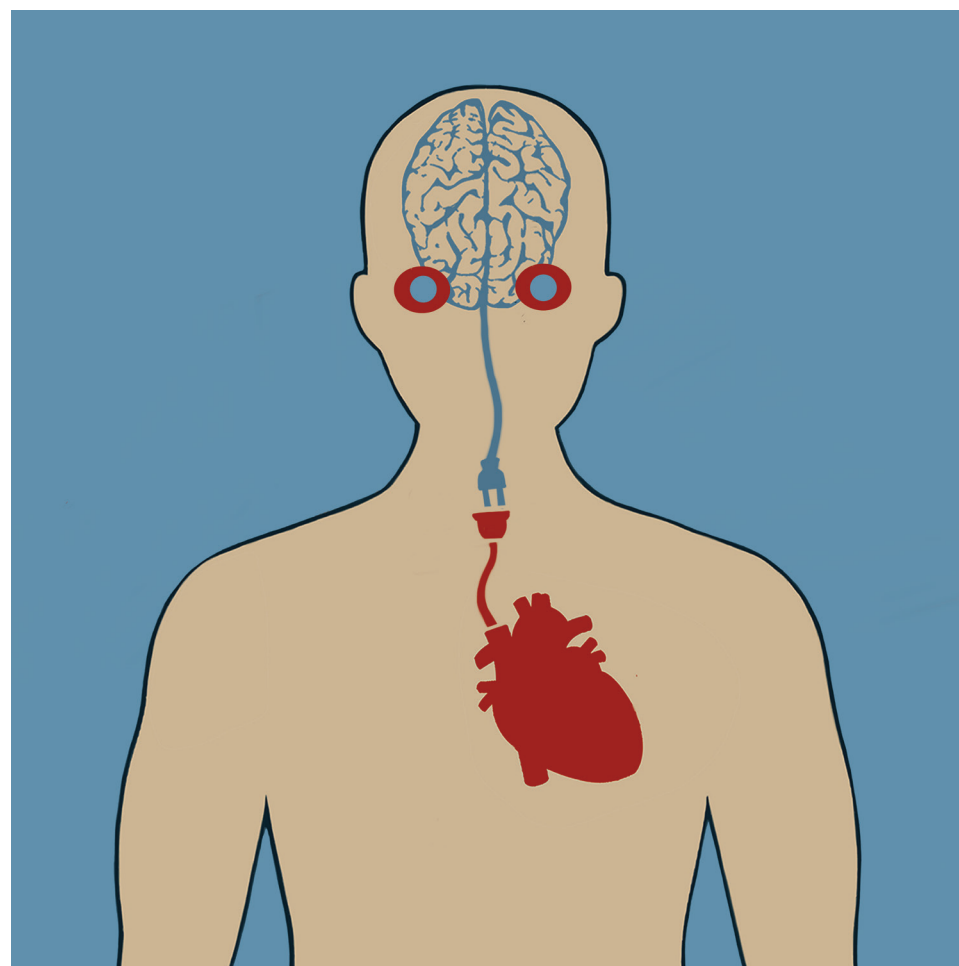
Appiah asked De La Cruz if he had considered the connections between the heart and the eye. After looking into it, De La Cruz realized there was very little literature on the subject and decided to pursue it. He brought in Obadeh Shabaneh, MPH, (Biomedical Sciences '20), who had a

special interest in epidemiology, and they began reviewing the data available from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. The survey used Life's Simple 7, which is a set of risk factors (smoking, physical activity, body mass index, diet, blood pressure, total cholesterol and blood glucose) generally used to indicate cardiovascular health.

The student-faculty team

A student-faculty team publishes groundbreaking research potentially connecting two specialties.

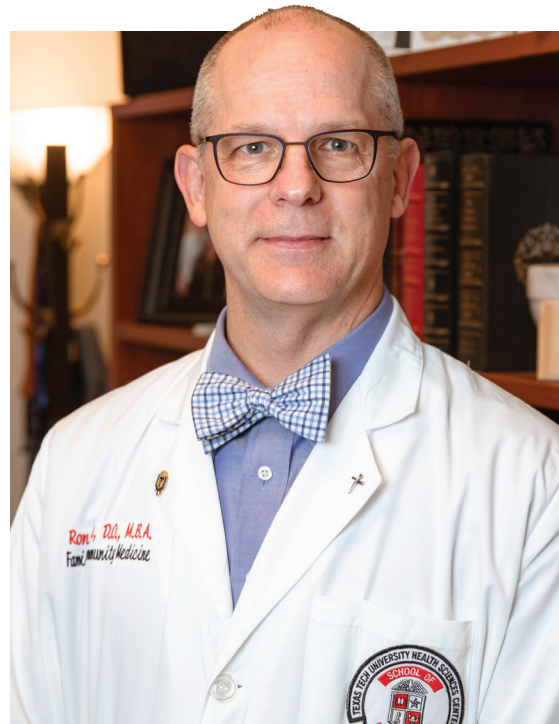
produced the study, "The Association of Ideal Cardiovascular Health and Ocular Diseases Among U.S. Adults," available online from the American Journal of Medicine, and proposed a unique impact on the medical world. Streamlining resources with these two diseases could determine quicker diagnosis through an ingenious collaboration between optometrists, ophthalmologists and cardiologists.



IVAN CANU

\$1.1 Million Gift

Ron Cook, DO, MBA, (Resident '92) was recently named the Lubbock Osteopathic Endowed Chair. The \$1.1 million endowment was established November 2019 by the Lubbock Osteopathic Fund to continue the osteopathic presence and influences within Lubbock. Cook also serves as the Braddock Endowed Chair for the Department of Family and Community Medicine and as the city of Lubbock health authority.



Ron Cook, MBA, DO, (Resident '92) was selected to be the new Lubbock Osteopathic Endowed Chair.

THE PRIORITIES OF TTUHSC MENTAL HEALTH

The Texas Tech Mental Health Initiative (TTMHI), housed in the Department of Psychiatry, facilitates opportunities for coordination and collaboration between institutions of the Texas Tech University System and the community regarding mental health. TTMHI commissioned the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute to complete a comprehensive mental health needs assessment of West Texas. Findings from the report, released in August 2020, identified three key areas to address.

ISSUE: FAMILY AND YOUTH

There is a significant psychiatrist shortage in West Texas, leading to year-long wait times for families who may need parenting resources or skill building rather than prescription medication.

SOLUTION: TEXAS CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CARE CONSORTIUM

TTUHSC joined this consortium to expedite the provision of mental health resources for families. The consortium is working to increase the psychiatrist workforce, provide support for schools and primary care providers, and fund research.

ISSUE: SYSTEM LEVEL COORDINATED CARE

Coordinate mental health efforts in West Texas rather than working within silos.

SOLUTION: WEST TEXAS MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

The initiative created a steering committee for the TTU System and its community partners. The West Texas Mental Health Collaboration pulls together policymakers and those of authority within

mental health entities to streamline mental health care delivery and obtain grant funding.

ISSUE: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Lack of mental health care for veterans and individuals in the criminal justice system.

SOLUTION: DEVELOP NEW COURT DOCKETS

Lubbock County plans to establish a veteran's court, which can address needs in a more efficient way and conserve resources. Community partners, such as StarCare Specialty Health System, are working with the state Legislature to reform court structure. This means ensuring the indicted is fit to stand trial, and if not, connecting them with existing mental health resources for treatment.



TTUHSC's ninth president,
Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD
(Health Professions '86)

Madam President

TTUHSC's ninth president, tabbed with a trio of historic firsts — alumna, female, PhD — brings fresh perspective to a familiar space.

By DANETTE BAKER

Photographer NEAL HINKLE

A neatly stacked trio of leadership books — “Silos, Politics and Turf Wars,” “Douglas McGregor, Revisited: Managing the Human Side of the Enterprise” and “Portraits of Courage: A Commander in Chief’s Tribute to America’s Warriors” — rest on top of the bookcase that accents a sitting area in the office of TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD. A succulent, planted in a glass beaker, a family photo of smiling young adults, and a handful of other tchotchkes fill the shelves. A whitewashed desk and matching file cabinet — gifted from an admired colleague upon retirement — replaced the mahogany desk used by her predecessor, and a wall-sized oil painting of a New Mexico landscape completes the office’s aesthetics. Both the furniture and artwork are a nod to

Rice-Spearman’s American Indian heritage and her happy place.

Throughout the seven-month search, she led the university as interim president concurrently with her new role as provost and chief academic officer, to which she was named in October 2019. Rice-Spearman’s mission was to maintain the university’s momentum built during the almost 10 years that Tedd L. Mitchell, MD, served as TTUHSC’s president before transitioning full-time to his current role as Texas Tech University System chancellor. TTUHSC had positioned itself on the national stage as a leader in academic health education and was now graduating more health care providers than any health sciences center in the state. The university’s first-ever capital campaign concluded — raising \$102.5

million — and each of its campuses was experiencing physical growth. Mitchell also had increased awareness on a state level of the region’s significance as leading producers of the nation’s food, fiber and fuel.

Under Rice-Spearman’s leadership, TTUHSC received reaffirmation of its accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. And then, her focus switched to leading the university’s response to the coronavirus pandemic, earning statewide and national praise for the institution’s efforts and community partnerships.

What Rice-Spearman did under the dire circumstances between early February and May 2020 gained the presidential search committee’s attention. “We knew we clearly had the

best candidate right in front of us,” said TTU System Regent Mark Griffin, the presidential search committee chairman. He introduced Rice-Spearman on June 5, 2020, as TTUHSC’s ninth president – the first alumna, the first to hold a degree other than an MD, and the first female to lead any of the TTU System’s four universities. Hiring her, Griffin noted, was not about making a statement, but making a difference.

Rice-Spearman’s leadership during the early months of the pandemic, said Griffin, was certainly notable. Yet, as a potential president, she brought so much more to the table: an alignment with TTUHSC’s values-based culture, a stellar resume of service and scholarship accomplishment, and a track record of operating outside-the-box since adolescence.

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

As a young girl growing up in Odessa, Texas, in the ‘60s and ‘70s, Rice-Spearman’s interests deviated from many of her peers. “I’m told that I was incessantly curious from a very young age.” The Christmas she was 7, Rice-Spearman took greater pleasure in mixing and burning things with the magnifying glass and chemicals in her brother’s chemistry set than baking a cake in her Easy-Bake Oven.

At Nimitz Junior High, Rice-Spearman joined the science club, where Mr. Teinert, the adviser, fostered the undeniable passion of the club’s only female member. As a high school student at Odessa Permian, Rice-Spearman led efforts to begin a health care Explorer program at Odessa’s Medical Center Hospital – a division under the Boy Scouts of America to gain hands-on experiences in health care. She also served the hospital as a candy striper, a name given to the young

“She’ll hold you accountable when you’ve screwed up, yet you still feel completely human when she’s done.”

DEBORAH FINLAYSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AMERICAN RED CROSS

women volunteers. These experiences established the foundation of her interest in health care and charted her career in laboratory sciences.

Rice-Spearman’s parents had a significant influence, shaping her worldview of facing challenges as they came, never shying away from difficulty.

“If you ever have a chance to meet Lori’s parents, you’ll understand very quickly why she is such an amazing woman,” said Deborah Finlayson, executive director of the American Red Cross, whose friendship with Rice-Spearman began as they led the Junior League of Lubbock as president and vice president from 2004-2005. “They’re good, grounded people. They’ve done well for themselves but remain humble. That’s who Lori is. She has a confidence that’s empowering instead of intimidating. She’ll hold you accountable when you’ve screwed up, yet you still feel completely human when she’s done.”

Jan Rice encouraged her daughter’s inquisitive nature with the Encyclopedia Britannica. Page after page, she introduced a young Rice-Spearman to the 30,000-plus entries, first keeping her entertained by looking at the photos and then later with a deeper dive into the content by

assigning a report as a form of discipline when Rice-Spearman’s attitude or actions warranted correction.

Sam Rice gave his daughter her first paying job when she was 13 on the custodial restroom crew (a team of one) for Sam Rice Auto Parts, located just blocks from the hospital. Within a year, Rice-Spearman advanced to answering phones and then earned a provisional driver’s license and began to deliver parts to customers across West Texas. As part of their Sunday family time, she and her father studied the company’s key performance indicators, which Rice-Spearman logged on a hand-drawn spreadsheet inside a manila file folder.

The Rices taught life lessons that still apply. “Do your best job and hold yourself accountable,” Rice-Spearman added. “They encouraged resiliency by having us try things often, even if we failed. I think that’s one of the reasons I’m not afraid to take risks.”

STORIES BEHIND THE STATISTICS

Rice-Spearman chose to pursue her degree in clinical laboratory sciences at TTUHSC – a member of the program’s first class – instead of accepting admission to an established program at Baylor University. She said the decision was easy. TTUHSC had gained a solid reputation, and its location allowed her to stay in West Texas. She then joined the School of Health Professions faculty in 1987 and held several school positions, including dean and chair of the Department of Laboratory Sciences and Primary Care.

Her ability to recognize opportunities led the school to its height as the largest health professions school in Texas and one of the largest in the nation in the breadth of programs and number of enrolled students and graduates. Five of the school’s 20



TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, bumps elbows with Chisom Nwoye, MD, family medicine resident, during a visit to the Odessa campus.

accredited academic programs are “first-in-the-nation.” The school boasted a 93% first-time pass rate for students required to complete licensure or certification requirements, had a 100 % job placement rate for licensed practitioners, and 100% of the speech-language pathology graduates passed the national certification exam 11 consecutive years.

The statistics, while commendable, are also often the litmus test of academic success; but Rice-Spearman saw people and their potential. People like Sixtus Atabong, PA-C, (Health Professions ‘05, ‘02). Atabong is the practice manager and neurosurgery physician assistant for Grace Clinic Spine Care Center in Lubbock, Texas. He also is the founder and CEO of Purpose Medical Mission, a non-profit whose mission is to empower

communities with the knowledge and tools to address the global threat of health disparity and lack of basic education. Atabong and his team (which includes several TTUHSC alumni) have helped build clinics, churches, and hospitals in Cameroon, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Atabong met Rice-Spearman, then School of Health Professions associate dean of learning outcomes and assessments, by chance when he stopped in the clinical lab sciences office to get directions to the admission office. His visit led to inquire about the program. Without her intuition, Atabong said he would not be where he is today. He moved from Africa to pursue the American dream but had little resources. For three days, Atabong had lived in his car, but within 24 hours

of their meeting, Rice-Spearman had assisted him with admission to the program, equipped him with used textbooks she had gathered from professors and connected him with the financial aid office.

Kitty Harris-Wilkes, PhD, met Rice-Spearman through a working relationship with her spouse, Doug Spearman. Their relationship grew as Rice-Spearman pursued her doctoral degree in the College of Human Sciences at TTU, where Harris-Wilkes led the Center for the Study of Addiction. They became respected colleagues when Rice-Spearman was named dean.

Her track record and ingenuity in identifying the need for mental health clinicians led Harris-Wilkes to collaborate with her in developing the School of Health Professions’ most



Blame it all on her roots, Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, shows up in heels at her father's old automotive shop, Sam Rice Auto Parts in Odessa, Texas.

Lori Rice-Spearman, PhD, recognizes front-line team members for their hard work during the pandemic.

recent department — clinical counseling and mental health — and establish a scholarship to support its students.

“I was impressed that she knew what we had on the main campus in terms of addiction recovery, but she took it to another level by understanding the need for clinical training,” said Harris-Wilkes, who now leads NLW Partners as president and CEO. The company provides research, education and consultation to higher education institutions on the best practices of addiction recovery, education and research. “There’s a real intuitive sense on her part of what might make situations better for people and a willingness to go after it, which I think bodes well for her in her new position.”

BURN THE SHIPS, BUILD BRIDGES

But it was Rice-Spearman’s alignment to TTUHSC’s values-based culture that the search committee took notice of while reviewing her application.

“Not only does Lori have the knowledge and skills, but she also has the ability to connect with people — at work, within her family and in the community,” said Kari Dickson, PhD, vice provost, and the university’s liaison to the state and regional accrediting bodies. Before the pandemic, she and Rice-Spearman taught a cooking class at High Point Village, a support community for individuals with different intellectual and developmental abilities. Rice-Spearman’s spouse is the executive director.

“We talk a lot about emotional intelligence nowadays. You can have the education, you can have all of the experience in the world, but there’s something else out there that makes good leaders great,” Dickson said. “I think that’s what she brings to the table. She makes people want to work with her and for her; because it’s not about her.”



“She makes people want to work with her and for her, because it’s not about her.”

— KARI DICKSON, PHD
VICE PROVOST, UNIVERSITY LIAISON TO STATE AND
REGIONAL ACCREDITING BODIES
TTUHSC

While interim, Rice-Spearman rallied university leadership and successfully transitioned university operations, academics, research and clinical services to remote environments and weathered the storm without missing a beat. She supported innovative and collaborative grassroots efforts that significantly impacted the region and the state, such as manufacturing and decontamination of personal protective equipment, staffing a COVID-19 testing laboratory, and producing a viral transport medium for safe handling coronavirus specimens.

“Ships are safe in the harbor, but that’s not what they are made for,” said

Mitchell, referencing John A. Shedd’s quote. “Dr. Rice-Spearman was distinctly made for this challenge; she’s proved it over and over again. ... TTUHSC is in good hands moving forward.”

“We had this tremendous momentum pre-COVID, and I think that allowed us to weather the challenges brilliantly as a university,” Rice-Spearman notes. “We were able to pivot quickly in the two primary areas that other universities and HRIs (health research institutions) struggled with — telehealth and innovative academic programming online. We did it in a way where we could still collaborate with other universities, supporting the state in several endeavors to meet challenges.

“I realized early on we didn’t want to lose these important drivers in our quest to deliver health care during a public health emergency.”

By early fall, Rice-Spearman had turned this realization into reality with a new vision for the university: Transform health care through innovation and collaboration. An out-of-the-box approach where “silos, turf wars and politics” don’t interfere with the opportunities to transform health care. **📌**

Web + Watch an interview with the president about her university’s priorities and some of her favorite things. <https://fb.watch/3HCzQ9FNmb/>

PULSE.TTUHSC.EDU | WINTER 2021 **23**

Telemedicine's Perfect Storm

TTUHSC was ready to take telehealth to the next level and COVID-19 opened the door, ushering in a new era in health care delivery.



By KARA BISHOP

Illustration DAVIDE BONAZZI

Contributors:

CAMERON ONKS, JD

Director, F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health Innovative Healthcare Technology

Excerpts from "COVID-19: Telemedicine's Perfect Storm" published in Rural Health Quarterly Magazine, May 2020.

DANETTE BAKER, MA

Editor, Pulse

Excerpts from "Remote Access" published in Pulse, Summer 2000.



M

Manuel and Maria Porras became proud parents on a Friday afternoon in June of a beautiful daughter they named Aida. Maria had dreamt of the moment when she would hold her baby for the first time, but instead a nurse took the baby away immediately after birth. “I waited for them to bring her back, but instead they told me she was really sick.”

James Luecke, MD, a family medicine physician at Big Bend Regional Medical Center in Alpine, Texas, successfully delivered the Porras’ healthy baby girl on June 29, 1990, but within minutes, his tiny patient was in respiratory distress. In fact, Luecke had moved to his next case — a surgical telemedicine consult — when he learned about Aida’s condition. Luecke asked the surgeon online if there was a neonatologist available in Lubbock for an emergency consult — putting TTUHSC’s fledgling telemedicine program to the test.

THE NEW NORMAL

TTUHSC established its telemedicine practice the year before Luecke’s consult. The university’s primary purpose was to expand delivery of health care to those living in rural areas, like the Porrases, and in correctional facilities. And though it’s still a valuable resource for care in those areas, COVID-19 forced the health care delivery model into a new era surpassing geographic obstacles for safety and mass access — with telemedicine, telehealth and telepractice as the prominent vehicles.

When the pandemic hit, telemedicine was in the midst of a flashbulb moment. Just as Americans reference “before and after 9/11” to describe how Sept. 11, 2001, forever changed the way we travel, in the not-so-distant future we will make reference to “before and after COVID-19” to describe the public health emergency and how it forever changed the way we provide and receive medical care.

Before the pandemic, telehealth and telemedicine made significant strides toward prominence as health care delivery

models and gained popularity among many medical specialists. However, there were key barriers to adopting telehealth and telemedicine as primary care mediums. Medicaid and private insurance companies were resistant to reimbursing physicians for telemedicine visits and denying reimbursement to all other providers. Likewise, there was provider resistance as it would require an investment in telehealth training, while also potentially less efficient up front due to the learning curve.

As the populace increased and grew more digitally persuaded, health care needed to jump on the bandwagon. With COVID-19, that move came sooner than anticipated.

Rather than being driven by consumer demand, political will or investment potential, telehealth and telemedicine were driven by the most important factor of all: necessity.

A NEW PROVIDER/PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Once COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency, government at all levels began implementing policy waivers and reforms (**See Figure 1**) allowing for the provision of telemedicine and telehealth services like never before. These implementations would have taken a decade under normal circumstances.

When the pandemic entered the U.S. and shelter-in-place ordinances were established, providers and hospitals needed telemedicine onboarding — and they needed it yesterday. In less than a week, the School of Health Professions Department of Speech, Hearing and Language Sciences flipped their entire clinical practice into a remote environment. TTUHSC’s Information Technology division worked around the clock beefing up bandwidth for the transition, while TTUHSC providers and patients alike became more acquainted with video conferencing software.

According to the Chartis Group’s Telehealth Adoption Tracker, telehealth visits for all specialties in the state of Texas increased by 50% in just a few weeks (**See Figure 2**). Texas Tech Physicians, which had conducted 43 total telemedicine visits in

REMOTE HEALTH SERVICES TERMINOLOGY

TELEMEDICINE:

health care services provided by a physician — or someone acting under authority of a physician — to patients at another location using virtual communication technology.

TELEHEALTH:

umbrella term for services provided by health care professionals other than those by a physician.

TELEPRACTICE:

term adopted by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association referring to the application of telecommunications technology to the delivery of speech-language pathology and audiology professional services at a distance by linking clinician to client or clinician to clinician for assessment, intervention and/or consultation.

Just as Americans reference “before and after 9/11” to describe how Sept. 11, 2001, forever changed the way we travel, in the not-so-distant future we will make reference to “before and after COVID-19” to describe the public health emergency and how it forever changed the way we provide and receive medical care.



2020 from January to March, saw an increase in such services to more than 18,000 visits from April to December (See Figure 3).

“The need for services has amplified during the pandemic, and I’m glad that the third- and fourth-year residents I supervise had some familiarity with the process before the public health emergency,” said Terry McMahon, MD, professor, in the School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry, which began telemedicine in September 2019 on a trial basis in its residency program. “I was interested in telemedicine in educational training, but I also wanted to see if this was a modality we could use to extend psychiatric services.”

FLATTENING THE LEARNING CURVE

In March 2020, interest in the TexLa Telehealth Resource Center’s education offerings skyrocketed by more than 1,400% — compared to education participants just two months before (See Figure 4). The center is a federally funded program providing education and technical assistance to new and existing telehealth programs throughout Texas and Louisiana and operates out of the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health.

A year before the pandemic, TTUHSC had developed a strategic plan focused on strengthening adoption of telemedicine and clinical transformation for the health care delivery system in this region. One component of the plan calls for more provider training through the institute’s Frontiers in Telemedicine Lab. The lab is the only competency-based hands-on training facility

in the country. Additionally, development of curricula was underway for a telehealth technician certificate and telemedicine practice, which can then be replicated across the region through the institute’s Area Health Education Centers.

The importance of the patient, provider and practitioner experience throughout this pandemic cannot be understated. In our minds, medical care has always been conducted in a brick and mortar clinic, physicians in white coats wearing analog stethoscopes, and a lollipop or stickers for children at the end of the appointment.

Now possibly millions of patients have been exposed to telehealth via circumstance, thus changing the cultural perspective of what’s possible in health care.

TRANSCENDING THE SCREEN

Virtual health care is not without its challenges, which may point to some of the provider and patient resistance in times past. However, with COVID-19 in the picture, TTUHSC met them head on.

“We have a patient with diabetes who drives a truck for a living and, because of his busy schedule, sometimes his follow-up appointments are pushed back further than we would like,” said Eric MacLaughlin, PharmD, FASHP, FCCP, professor and chair of the School of Pharmacy Department of Pharmacy Practice. “During the pandemic we had a 30-minute virtual follow-up appointment with the patient that was successful, and he appreciated the convenience. Most

Figure 1

WAIVERS GRANTED DURING PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights implemented unprecedented waivers to the enforcement of HIPPA (privacy laws) with regard to both telehealth platforms and business associate agreements.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) allowed the patient’s home to serve as an eligible originating site for the purpose of reimbursements.
- The CMS waived the requirement that a doctor of medicine or osteopathy be physically present to provide medical direction, consultation and supervision of services for critical access hospitals, allowing physicians to supervise remotely.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

“Bedside manner is very important regardless of where the bed is.”

— ARIEL SANTOS, MD, MPH



importantly, health care services were delivered, which is the ultimate goal.”

Student exposure to and experiences with telehealth also increased dramatically with the pandemic. While younger generations are well-versed in digital mechanics, there are some unique challenges to virtual health care you wouldn’t necessarily think about — like making eye contact with a patient when using a separate web cam.

“It’s difficult to express empathy for your patients when you’re looking through a computer screen,” said Ariel Santos, MD, MPH, associate professor, School of Medicine Department of Surgery and director of the Texas Tech Telemedicine Program. “Bedside manner is very important regardless of where the bed is.”

Speech-language pathologists are also innovatively addressing challenges presented by a virtual visit. “The games we would play in person to keep our young patients engaged to improve their speech needed to be implemented into our virtual visits,” said Brittany Hall, MS, CCC-SLP, (Health Professions ’05, ’03) assistant professor in the School of Health Professions Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. “This requires additional Zoom skills that we teach our students such as building games with software and operating them through the Zoom platform.”

ALL-IN-ONE APPOINTMENTS

When it comes to the future of telemedicine, Santos sees opportunity for providers to deliver more streamlined health care.

“Wouldn’t it be great if the primary care doctor could visit with the patient and, based on their needs, patch in the specialist to the visit, rather than referring the patient and setting up

an additional appointment? We aren’t quite there yet, but I now see it as an upcoming reality.”

The Texas Tech Telemedicine Program is currently working on infrastructure to connect pharmacy, laboratory and imaging (like X-ray) to virtual primary care visits.

TTUHSC’s Correctional Managed Health Care Program’s use of telemedicine for vision care is one example. The state mandates vision screening for all offenders as they come into a correctional facility. Before telemedicine, TTUHSC had to find an optometrist to visit all 23 facilities at 18 different sites, or transport the offenders to a location for screening. Now, with tele-optometry equipment at every correctional facility, a technician makes rounds utilizing the equipment and sends screening data to optometrists and ophthalmologists to review. Only the offenders needing additional vision care are sent offsite for further evaluation.

“We’ve always used telemedicine in some form, now we have the opportunity to further improve on an efficient system,” said Cynthia Jumper, MD, MPH, (Medicine ’91, Medicine ’88), vice president for TTUHSC Governmental Relations and Managed Care. TTUHSC’s Correctional Managed Health Care Program serves more than 32,000 state offenders in West Texas. The program received telemedicine accreditation in 2020 by the nation’s largest and most experienced telehealth accreditor, URAC — becoming the first accredited correctional program in the state. “Conserving state resources makes telemedicine very attractive in correctional health care; it’s cost-efficient and provides better utilization of our providers,” Jumper added.

COVID-19 will likely be contained and begin to decline over the coming months, eventually fading from the forefront of our public

Figure 2

Telehealth for All Specialties - Texas

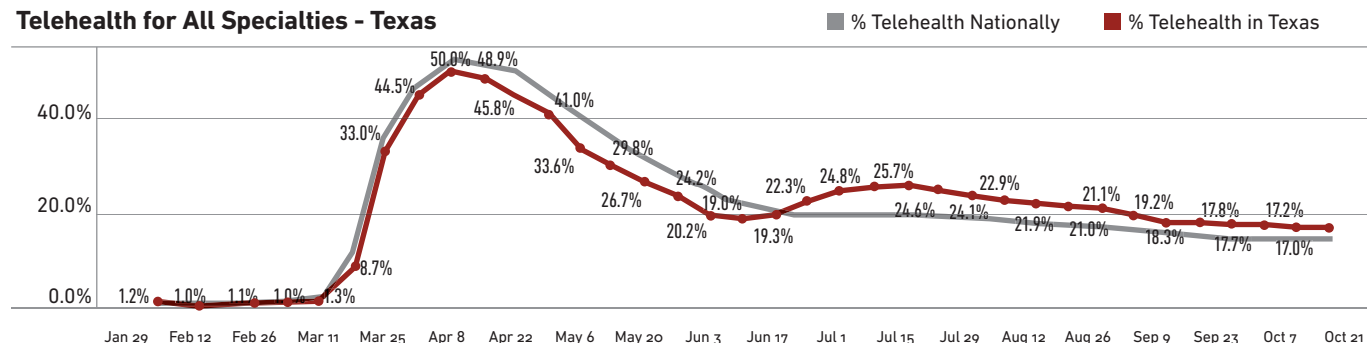
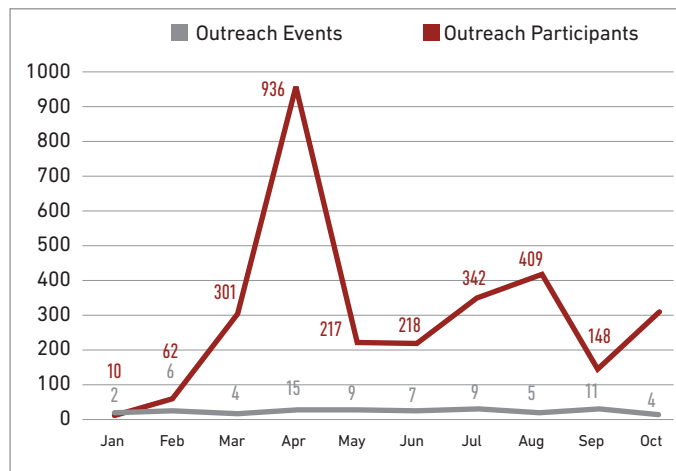


Figure 3 TexLa Telehealth Resource Center Participants



TIPS FOR DELIVERING VIRTUAL HEALTH CARE:

1. Express empathy and compassion through tone of voice.
2. Listen and be patient — bandwidth can cause delays or break connections. Take notes while patient is talking to prepare a response.
3. When using a separate webcam, position it in the middle of your computer screen so you are making eye contact with the patient.
4. Perform the virtual visit in a quiet space and avoid distractions by muting your phone, etc.

Source: Ariel Santos, MD, MPH, associate professor of surgery, director, Texas Tech Telemedicine Program

consciousness. However, its impact on our health care system will remain long after the public health emergency has dissipated.

We are all currently participants in a great experiment — implementing and waiving policies and procedures to meet the needs of public health, the consequences of which will only be fully appreciated after the fact.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Aida Porras is now a 30-year-old elementary physical education coach at Presidio Independent School District in Presidio, Texas. She works alongside her mother, Maria, who is a kindergarten teacher there. Fortunately, the day she was born, Luecke, the physician on call, had immediate access via telemedicine to Marian Myers, MD, a TTUHSC neonatologist in Lubbock who diagnosed baby Aida's condition as acute respiratory distress due to aspiration pneumonia. Myers prescribed the emergency treatment, which Luecke administered onsite. Two hours later, Aida was stable and on her way to the neonatal unit in Odessa, Texas, where her parents finally got to hold their newborn.

When the dust settles after COVID-19 and we finally look back to evaluate how the pandemic has affected health care delivery, operating costs, incomes and patient outcomes, the resulting data will undoubtedly be used to advocate for reforms that encourage greater implementation of telemedicine and telehealth, including permanent implementation of many of the temporary waivers currently in place.

As things “normalize,” they will remain different than before. A new normal in which the public will increasingly expect virtual access to their care when and where they want and need it. A normal where health care entities, regulators and payers, battle hardened by the COVID-19 pandemic, will have the infrastructure, protocols and procedures in place to provide that care virtually.


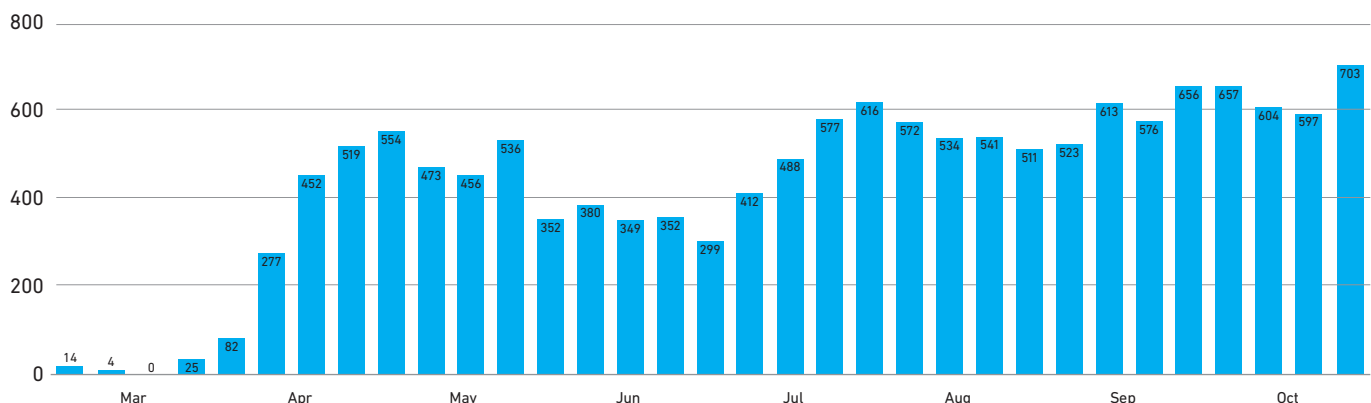
Whether it's saving the life of a newborn or examining a sprained wrist during a pandemic, TTUHSC's objective in using telemedicine and telehealth remains the same now as it did 30 years ago: provide the best level of care and ensure the best quality of life for every patient no matter what comes over the horizon. 

Figure 4 Texas Tech Physicians Total Telemedicine Encounters (2020)

TEXLA TELEHEALTH RESOURCE CENTER, TEXAS TECH PHYSICIANS



Web + Read insight from our telemedicine and telehealth expert panel.

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2019-2020 Presidential Distinguished Alumni Award



Sixtus Atabong, MPAS, PA-C
(Health Professions '05, '02)

2019-2020 Distinguished Alumni Awards



Distinguished
ALUMNI

TO NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR A DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD, VISIT: TTUHSC.EDU/ALUMNI

Biomedical Sciences

Kenneth D. Cole, PhD ('81)

Health Professions:

Sixtus Atabong, MPAS, PA-C ('05, '02)

Ram Haddas, PhD ('13)

Courtney Sherman, DNP, MHA, MPH
(Health Professions '17, Nursing '15)

Bobbie Kay Turkett, MS, CCC-SLP
('05, '03)

Medicine:

Ryan Balko, MD ('17)

Justin Berk, MD, MPH, MBA ('15)

Ebtesam Attaya Islam, MD, PhD
(Medicine '09; Biomedical Sciences '05)

Nursing:

Debra Danforth, DNP ('19)

Christa de la Garza, MSN, BSN, RN ('19, '16)

Tanna Nelson, MSN, RN-BC, CPHIMS ('15)

Pharmacy:

Patrick "Race" Dulin, PharmD ('07)

- + ROTATIONS
- + SERVING THE SERVICE
- + ALL IN THE FAMILY

Rounds

Connecting with TTUHSC Alumni

Drive-Thru Celebrations

Scrub party and white coat ceremonies looked a little different this year as medical students celebrated from their vehicles.



NEAL HINKLE

Web + See photo galleries of TTUHSC drive-thru celebrations.

PULSE.TTUHSC.EDU | WINTER 2021 **31**

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Veterans can have difficulty navigating career choices post military service. TTUHSC faculty, staff, students and alumni can be mentors in the TTUHSC Veteran-to-Veteran Mentorship Program. The goal of the program is to help fellow veterans transition through education to civilian life.

Catherine Garcia, BSN, (Nursing '20) wears the TTUHSC camo commencement stole provided to graduates with military service for graduation.



MILITARY AT TTUHSC

The TTUHSC Veterans Resource Center strives to support and assist veterans, military and their families in achieving academic and professional successes.

149

Veteran or military students are using federal and/or state benefits.

381

Military-affiliated students are enrolled across all five TTUHSC schools.

#10

Best for Vets: Colleges ranks TTUHSC 10th on its list for Career and Technical Colleges.

2

TTUHSC schools offer degree programs/graduate certificates associated with military service.

School of Nursing — Veteran to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (applies military service toward academic credits).

School of Health Professions — Graduate Certificate in Veteran Services (curriculum designed for competent practice in working with veterans).

PROVIDED BY THE TTUHSC VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far

Steven L. Berk, MD, is an accomplished physician and university leader. His son, Justin Berk, MD, MPH, MBA, (Medicine '15) is following in his father's footsteps. Congratulations to them both for having received significant career accolades!



Steven Berk

OCCUPATION	TTUHSC School of Medicine Dean, Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs
CREDENTIALS	MD
BOARD CERTIFICATIONS	Internal Medicine, Infectious Disease, Geriatric Medicine
MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS	TTUHSC Grover E. Murray Professor (2020) Election Gold Humanism Society (2015) Texas Medical Association C. Frank Webber Award (2013) Boston University Distinguished Alumni Award (2012) American College of Physicians Tennessee Laureate Award (1998)



Justin Berk

Assistant Professor, Brown University Warren Alpert School of Medicine Departments of Medicine and Pediatrics
MD, MPH, MBA
Internal Medicine, Pediatric Medicine (sitting for Addiction Medicine boards this year)
TTUHSC School of Medicine Distinguished Alumni Award (2020) The Johns Hopkins Hospital Idoreyin P. Montague MD Community Action Award (2018) Texas Medical Association Student of the Year (2013) U.S. Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Award (2012) American Medical Association Foundation Excellence in Medicine Leadership Award (2012)

PROVIDED BY STEVEN BERK AND JUSTIN BERK



Return to Lubbock

From super yachts to rolling tamales, Lubbock native Jon Walter decided to return to the "Hub City" to start his own business, The Tamale Lady. With affordable living, a short commute time and more, Lubbock is the ideal destination to live, work and play! **#LUBBOCKLEADS #RETURNTOLUBBOCK**

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TO LUBBOCK**

    
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- + ALUMNI PROFILES
- + NEWS & NOTES
- + TRIBUTE TO JUAN FITZ, MD
- + FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

Update

Catching Up With TTUHSC Alumni & Friends

Nagendra Gupta, MD, FACP, CPE

HOSPITALIST AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Apogee Physicians, Texas Health Arlington
Memorial Hospital, Arlington, Texas
Internal Medicine Residency: 2013

CHILDHOOD WISH BECOMES LIFELONG CALL

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” It’s a seemingly simple question asked of children that usually ends up a fleeting thought. For Nagendra Gupta, MD, FACP, CPE, it was an answer that would last a lifetime. As a child, he wanted to be a doctor, and as the years passed, Gupta realized the substantial impact he could make on a person’s life by nurturing them back to health. The more the realization dawned on him, the more his passion grew into a lifelong calling.

Today, Gupta directs the hospitalist program at Texas Health Arlington Memorial Hospital.

At the 369-bed facility, he leads a team of over 20 physicians who handle more than 5,000 inpatient encounters each month. His team has implemented hospital initiatives addressing inefficiencies across the board, such as reduced length of stay, decreased readmission rates and improvements in clinical documentation. His leadership is not only transformative but also a reminder that a childhood dream can improve the health and lives of thousands.

— Jordan Pape



CAROLYN CRUZ



Michael Dean, PharmD

PHARMACY MANAGER

Texas Oncology, Fort Worth, Texas

Pharmacy Graduate: 2019

HAPPY ACCIDENT DECIDES CAREER

Michael Dean, PharmD, walks into the infusion room at Texas Oncology in Fort Worth, Texas, and kneels beside a patient receiving a chemotherapy infusion. Addressing patient concerns and questions about medication side effects and alternate therapies is rewarding, Dean says.

“Cancer is a terrible disease. I will do everything I can to help them overcome it.”

As a third-year pharmacy student, there wasn’t a hospital rotation available locally in intravenous admixtures for Dean’s degree requirement. TTUHSC arranged a clinical rotation for Dean at Texas Oncology — a circumstance that led to a permanent career.

While there, Dean discovered his calling in oncology. He reviews patient charts throughout the day, oversees dosages in the patient care process, manages patient retail prescriptions and evaluates patient regimens prescribed by physicians.

“We are partners with physicians here, and that feeling of being part of the medical team is awesome.” — *Kara Bishop*

+

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Vadivel Ganapathy, PhD, chair of the Department of Cell Biology and Biochemistry, has been included in the latest edition of the Google Scholar Database as one of the world’s most cited researchers in history.

Monish Makena, PhD, (17, 11) was awarded a 2019-2020 American Association for Cancer Research Fellowship.

+

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Julie Bruce, DPT, (08, 02, 95) was promoted to outpatient manager at University Medical Center Team Rehab in Lubbock.

Jeremy Davies, MLS, (ASCP)CM, (11) joined the Minneapolis VA Health Care System laboratory in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as a medical technologist.

Ericka Hendrix, PhD, MP, (ASCP) (03) joined the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification as a representative of the Association of Genetic Technologists Inc.

“

I love talking to people and really getting to know them. I feel that the body is so very interconnected that only by understanding someone as a whole, can you begin the healing process.”

”

THUSHA NATHAN, MD (FELLOW 04)
GASTROENTEROLOGIST, BAPTIST HEALTH

CAROLYN CRUZ

Kellen Ketchersid, MSMP, ('13)

was named director of operations for NemaLife Inc. in Lubbock, Texas.

Koy Kubala, MSMP, ('07 '06)

has been elected to the Committee on Accreditation of Specialty in Blood Bank Technology Schools board.

San Juanita Reed, MS, CCC-SLP, ('19, '17)

was named the 2020 Kids Developmental Clinic Therapist of the Year.

+

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**Asna Amin, MD, ('03)**

joined Columbia Memorial Health in Hudson, New York, as a colorectal and general surgeon.

Justin Berk, MD, MPH, MBA, ('15)

has been named acting medical director for the Rhode Island Department of Corrections.

Racquel C. Bono, MD, ('83)

is now the chief health officer for Viking Cruises headquartered in Los Angeles, California. She also has been elected to PhysIQ's advisory board.

Andrew Brenner, MD, PhD, ('03)

has been named to the Plus Therapeutics Inc. Scientific Advisory Board.

Bonnie Carter, MD, (Medicine '01)

joined Steward Medical Group as a physician for Odessa Regional Medical Center in Odessa, Texas.

Carole Elisabeth Conser, MD, ('05)

TTUHSC third-year clerkship director in the Department of Pediatrics, has been appointed as assistant dean of the Student Wellness and Advancement.

Cynthia Jumper, MD, (Resident '91, '88)

vice president of TTUHSC Governmental Relations and Managed Care, was recognized by the Texas Medical Association Medical School Section with the 2020 C. Frank Webber, MD, Award.

Maninder Kaur, MD, (Resident '19)

joined WVU Medicine University Healthcare Physicians as a pediatrician.

Arshad M. Khanani, MD, (Resident '08)

has been appointed to the Graybug Vision Inc. Scientific Advisory Board.

Stacy Hobbs, APRN, PMHNP, BC

PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER

Stages of Recovery, Lubbock, Texas

Caprock Alliance for Mental Wellness, Telehealth

Nursing Graduate: 2018, 2014

'I WANT TO BRIDGE THE GAP'

When Stacy Hobbs starts talking about the difficulties in accessing mental health services, her voice, ordinarily calm, tightens. She exhales sharply, "It's so frustrating." But she is working to change that.

A stint at the San Angelo State School introduced Hobbs to patients with developmental disabilities and psychiatric disorders. Years working in hospital emergency rooms showed her how many patients face psychiatric disorders and substance use issues.

Hobbs opened her own practice in July; her work is in high demand now that systemic mental health needs are aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic. Anxiety and depression are on the rise, and slashed treatment facility capacities exacerbate the situation.

"Think about people who are homicidal, suicidal or their bipolar mania is extreme. Only half of those people are able to get the help they need [through in-patient facilities]," Hobbs said. To help bridge the gap, Hobbs now offers telehealth services to patients throughout the state. As her practice grows, so does her impact. — Glenys Young





Robert Lust, PhD

DEPARTMENT CHAIR, PROFESSOR

East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

Biomedical Sciences Graduate: 1981

COLLABORATION COMES FULL CIRCLE

After attending college in the Northeast, Robert Lust, PhD, landed at TTUHSC. A school with an all-hands-on-deck atmosphere meant significant overlap in training doctoral and medical students — the only silos he found were in surrounding fields. Lust completed his doctorate and postdoctoral training and took his first faculty position as a research scientist in cardiology at TTUHSC.

When he left TTUHSC in 1986, Lust thought he'd never again find that unique mix of collaboration. And then, a cardiac surgeon at East Carolina University needed a scientist.

"I'm now again in a brand-new medical school. This guy is building a heart surgery research program, and I thought, 'I've been in this world.'

"I had so much exposure to clinical translational research at TTUHSC. They were attracted to a scientist not afraid to go on hospital rounds or into an operating room. That's exactly what I was trained to do." The 2002 Distinguished Alumni honoree now trains the next generation.

— *Glenys Young*

M. Saad Khan, MD, (Fellow '18)

joined Mercy Medical Center's medical oncology and hematology division.

Thusha Nathan, MD, (Fellow '04)

joined Baptist Health as a gastroenterologist.

P. Hemachandra Reddy, PhD,

professor in the Department of Internal Medicine, has been elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Julia Sherrill, MD, HMDC, ('08)

earned the Hospice Medical Director Certified credential by the Hospice Medical Director Certification Board.

Scott W. Shurmur, MD,

School of Medicine professor, has been named chair of the Department of Internal Medicine.

Gerad Troutman, MD, ('07)

has been appointed to Gov. Greg Abbott's Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services.

Surendra Varma, MD,

executive associate dean for Graduate Medical Education, has been selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to serve on the Health Resources

and Services Administration Council on Graduate Medical Education. Gov. Gregg Abbott also selected Varma to serve on the Texas Disease Preparedness and Response Task Force.

Brooke Walterscheid,

fourth-year medical student, has been appointed as the 2020-2021 student regent for the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents.

John "Jay" Wofford, MD, ('12)

has been named North Texas (East) regional president for U.S. Dermatology Partners.

Larry Warmoth, MD, ('92)

nephrology specialist in Lubbock, Texas, retired from the military after 29 years of service.



SCHOOL OF NURSING

Debra Adornetto-Garcia, DNP, RN, ('13)

has been named chief nursing officer for Renown Health in Reno, Nevada.

Lisa Campbell, DNP, APHN,

Post-Master's Doctor of Nursing Practice program director, was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

Bob Dent, DNP, FACHE, FAAN, ('10) was named the 2020 Georgia March of Dimes Nurse Administrator of the Year.

Patricia Francis-Johnson, DNP, RN, ('11, '99) was named one of the 2021 YWCA of Lubbock Women of Excellence.

Katherine Kleinstaub, DNP, ARPN, ('17) joined Pecos Valley Physicians Group in Artesia, New Mexico.

Laura Thornley, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, ('17) has been named the chief nursing officer for Rose Medical Center in Denver, Colorado.

Sylvain Trepanier, DNP, RN, FAAN, ('11) has been named senior vice president and chief nursing officer for Providence, an acute care hospital system based in Renton, Washington.

Jackie Ward, DNP, RN, NE-BC, ('05) has been named chief nursing officer of Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, Texas.

“

The CNO serves as a champion for our nurses and the invaluable role they play caring for the people in our communities as well as ensuring we are attracting and retaining the most skilled and compassionate nurses. I know (Sylvain Trepanier) will do both. ”

AMY COMPTON-PHILLIPS, MD
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF CLINICAL OFFICER,
PROVIDENCE

NORMAN DREW

Christy Copeland, LPCA, MS

LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATE
Community Healthcare, Longview, Texas
Health Professions Graduate: 2019

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

Christy Copeland, LPCA, MS, has always been the person others come to with their problems. Eventually, she decided to make a career out of it. But while working through the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, she learned something about herself:

“Naturally, I’m a fixer,” she said. She had to learn to switch from fixing to listening. To empower and equip her patients to fix their own problems versus doing it for them.

“Fixing the problem for the client takes away their power to choose and takes away their voice,” she explained. “My intern supervisor once told me that we are supposed to work ourselves out of a job — we give our clients the tools to stand on their own so they become independent.”

After passing the National Counselor Exam in August, Copeland is now working toward the 3,000 counseling hours necessary to become a licensed professional counselor. Her goal is to open her own private practice and help many more people stand on their own. — *Glenys Young*



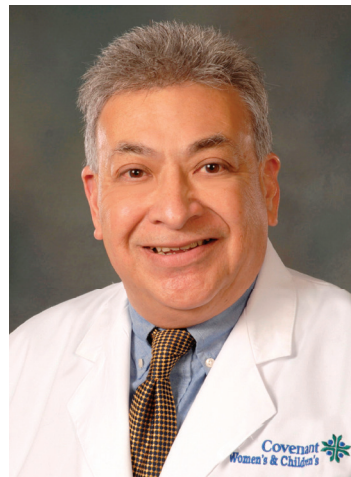
Pioneer of Emergency Medicine

TRIBUTE TO JUAN FITZ, MD, (MEDICINE '86)

Juan Fitz, MD, (Medicine '86) clinical professor in the TTUHSC School of Medicine and physician for Covenant Health, died Nov. 3, 2020, of COVID-19 after contracting the disease from a patient. He was an exemplary emergency room physician, a highly respected colleague and a leader in the Lubbock County Medical Society (LCMS), the Texas College of Emergency Physicians and the Texas Medical Association.

To those who knew him at the School of Medicine, he was an inspiring teacher of our medical students for more than a decade. Juan loved being a physician and was as excited about emergency medicine as the day he started as an intern in Michigan. His incredible fiery passion for the emergency room (ER) spread to our students working with him in Covenant Health System ER rotations. The increasing percentage of students at TTUHSC interested in emergency medicine can be attributed to Juan more than any single physician.

I can say with certainty that I never met Juan at any event when he did not ask about when we



would have an emergency medicine residency program. How ironic that he died during the year that our emergency medicine residency began. The residency program was established at UMC, and not Covenant, nevertheless Juan's advocacy was instrumental in the push for this program. Many of the faculty now teaching the current emergency medicine residents had their initial ER experience with Dr. Fitz.

The School of Medicine and the Lubbock County Medical Society Foundation are raising funds for the establishment of an endowed scholarship in Dr. Fitz's name — a name that will always be associated with excellence in emergency room care in West Texas.

— *Steven L. Berk, MD, dean, School of Medicine*

+

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

James Lee, PharmD, ('10) was named a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.

Matthew Ries, PharmD, BCPS, ('13) and Cammy Ries, PharmD, BCPS, ('13) were both recently certified as Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialists by the Board of Pharmacy Specialties.

Lyndsi White, PharmD, BCGP, ('06) joined Acadia Pharmaceuticals as a senior medical science liaison.

Lyndsi White, PharmD, BCGP, ('06) joined Acadia Pharmaceuticals as a senior medical science liaison.

+

FRIENDS WE'LL MISS

Loree Goheen Allen, former director of Experiential Education at the School of Pharmacy, died Jan. 21, 2021.

Charles Richard Furman Baker Jr., MD, School of Medicine professor from 1976 to 2001, died Jan. 25, 2021.

Molly Beckman, student in the School of Health Professions Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences Doctor of Audiology Program, died Feb. 3, 2021.

Robert Carr, MD, one of the first pediatricians to practice in Lubbock, died Sept. 19, 2020.

Welborn Boyd "W.B." Harris, Jr., the first TTUHSC development officer, died Jan. 2, 2021.



YOU GET THE LAST WORD!

Complete this sentence: Looking back, I learned the most from Professor _____. Here's why.

Share your memories with Pulse and you may see them published in a future issue.

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+++
VISIONARY
Gift

*Ophthalmology alumni donate
to help future eye doctors.*

After Wade Graham, MD, graduated from the School of Medicine and finished his ophthalmology residency, he joined the faculty of his alma mater to guide others through the process. As an assistant professor and director of the ophthalmology residency program, Graham saw firsthand the struggles residents faced — the professional problems as well as the personal ones.

Today, he partners with two other alum in private practice. Their practice, Thurmond Eye Associates, has been a successful one. So, when the three men decided they were in a position to help current ophthalmology

residents, they did. In 2017, Graham (Resident '99; Medicine '95), K.C. Bentley, MD, (Resident '11; Medicine '07) and Joel George, MD, (Resident '07; Medicine '03) began to give \$10,000 annually to the Department of Ophthalmology. Their gift in October 2020 brought their total giving amount to \$40,000.

"We all felt well prepared for our careers and grateful for the education and training we received," Graham said. "And we thought, what better way to pay it forward than to contribute to the institution that made it possible?"

Fourth-year ophthalmology residents, Joshua Jones, MD, and Daniel Bonnette, MD, study reference materials in the resident lounge funded by the generous support of Thurmond Eye Associates.

Web + Read the full story: www.ttuhsc.edu/institutional-advancement/donor-stories

Join the TTUHSC Alumni Association and help shape the next generation of health care leaders. Membership dollars from the Alumni Association fund scholarships at TTUHSC. Join today at ttuhscalumni.org.



WE GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS.



“We are both products of public education, and TTUHSC has been good to us. We wanted to pay that forward, giving future students the tools to be successful.”

For **Cynthia Jumper, MD, MPH**, (Medicine '88) and **Reid Norman, PhD**, TTUHSC is home. It's where they met, where she earned her medical degree, and where they each built successful careers advancing health care through academics, research and patient care.

That's why the couple chose to make a **Gift of Impact** through their estate to establish endowed scholarships at TTUHSC.

Scholarships help students pay education expenses but can also impact their career, Jumper said. With less debt to repay, a student's employment options broaden, allowing them to consider areas of impact rather than debt repayment.

Contact **Nathan Rice** at giftplanning@ttu.edu or **806.742.1781** to discuss your area of impact and how to make a gift.

TEXAS TECH FOUNDATION
www.give2tech.com