

THE *biomedical* BEAT

Official Newsletter of the Graduate School of
Biomedical Sciences



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TTUHSC CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

by Dr. Tedd Mitchell

[May 27, 2019] marks the 50th anniversary of the day Gov. Preston Smith signed House Bill 498 creating Texas Tech University School of Medicine. That original charge was to train physicians for West Texas, which we have done with great success. We've reduced the physician to patient ratio in West Texas by almost half - from about 1 doctor to about 1,350 people to 1 for every 750.

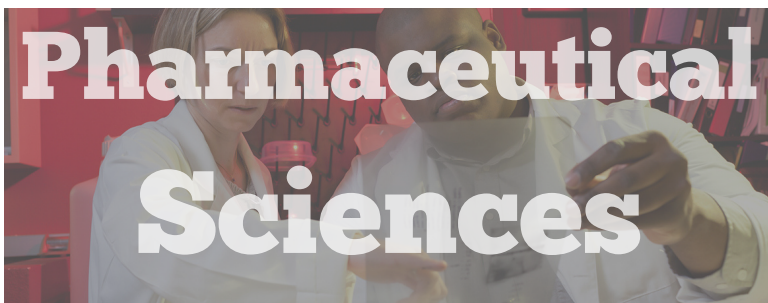
However, our forefathers understood that quality health care is not a singular discipline, and within the first decade set about to add our schools of biomedical sciences, health professions, nursing and pharmacy.

For fifty years now, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center has been quietly transforming into a leader in health-related higher education. In fact, when I came to Lubbock nine years ago, it was this humble determination both within the university and throughout West Texas that I found so endearing.

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PROGRAMS & CONCENTRATIONS



TTUHSC CELEBRATES 50 YEARS (CONT'D.)

None of this would be possible without you, our TTUHSC family. Our faculty, staff and students have shaped our university into one that stands head and shoulders above the rest. That's something to celebrate!

So, take a few moments today and remember those who have given their lives for our country and whose tireless efforts brought much-needed health care to West Texas. Celebrating the past provides an opportunity to reflect on what was and dream about what's to come.

We are Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and we are just getting started.

Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D.
Chancellor, Texas Tech University System
President, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center



We've moved!

The GSBS office is now located in UC 115! IT/Marketing remain in 5BC100.



UPCOMING DEADLINES & IMPORTANT FALL DATES

Biomedical Sciences Ph.D., Biotech, Pharmaceutical Sciences 3rd+ Yr., Public Health

Classes Begin.....Aug. 20
Last Day to Defend
Thesis/Dissertation.....Oct. 18
Last Day to Order Regalia...Nov. 7
Last Class Day.....Nov. 29
Final Exams.....Dec. 2 - 6
Graduation Date.....Dec. 7

GMS 1st & 2nd Yr., Translational Neuroscience & Pharmacology Ph.D. 2nd Yr., M.D./Ph.D. 1st & 2nd Summers

Classes Begin.....Aug. 12
Final Exams.....Dec. 16 - 20

1st & 2nd Yr. Pharmaceutical Sciences

Classes Begin.....Aug. 12
Final Exams.....Dec. 9 - 13

Holidays

Labor Day.....Sept. 2
Thanksgiving.....Nov. 21 - 22
Christmas.....Dec. 24 - 25

Journal Club will begin again in the fall. They are held every Monday from 12 PM - 1 PM.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Asher George, Outstanding Public Health Student
Dylan Meyer, K. Wyatt McMahon Outstanding Graduate Student
Manual Ramos, Dean's Recognition Award

Whitni Redman, Charlie Guantt Award, Texas American Society of Microbiology - First Place

Tim Brown, AACR Annual Meeting 2019 Presenter
Bojana Ristic, AACR Annual Meeting 2019 Presenter
Omar Sikder, AACR Annual Meeting 2019 Presenter
Brad Schniers, AACR Annual Meeting 2019 Presenter

TTU students working under Dr. Abdul Hamood's mentoring wing have achieved a series of milestones as young researchers, including having won poster presentations, attending ASM, having an accepted manuscript, and even attending a major wound healing meeting!



We love celebrating student milestones! Congratulations on your marriages!

Above: Antonia and Dylan Meyer (Ph.D.) (l) and Kandis and David Boothe (M.D.) (r)



31ST ANNUAL STUDENT RESEARCH WEEK

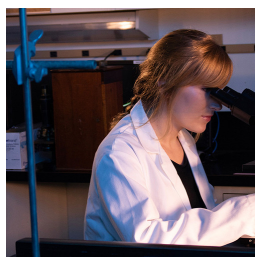
by Jordan Pape

As a school that studies the causes and cures for diseases, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences works to inspire research and demonstrate what Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) is doing for the future of medicine. Student Research Week is an integral part of these efforts with week-long activities with prestigious keynote speakers, student presentations and more.



Each year, SRW features a theme to highlight advances in a certain area of biomedical research. This year's theme was "Animalcules Detected: Immune Response Activated," hosted by the Department of Immunology and Molecular Microbiology. This theme aims to connect the complex immune responses which occur when the body comes into contact with various microorganisms (animalcules).

"With 261 abstracts, and representation from every school and nearly every campus, this was our biggest Student Research week to date." Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Dean, Brandt L. Schneider, Ph.D., stated. "It was an outstanding, week-long display of excellent scientific presentations by our students. I was extremely impressed by their accomplishments, enthusiasm and creativity."



For Jessica Smith, Ph.D. candidate and one of the winners during Student Research Week, the event is an opportunity "to know more about how the world works." Smith studies aging and the role of a cell size in the aging process.

"I'm always asking "why?" Smith said. "The little world of cells is still so unexplored, and we still don't know so much about how pathways interact and cells communicate to get a functioning human being."

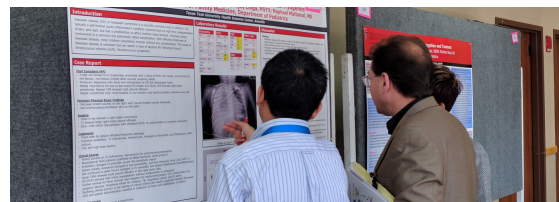
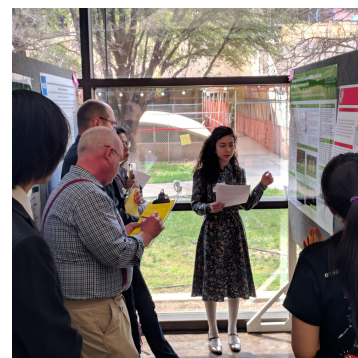
"My research looked at the role of cell size and growth in yeast aging, as well as combinations of anti-aging compounds or genetic manipulations. I was watching for a good combination effect - something additive between two treatments. But I found the opposite: no lifespan benefit from combining anti-aging treatments."

"In fact, several of my combinations were shorter-lived than the single treatments! I conclude that anti-aging drugs and treatments need more research before we can combine lots of them to get better overall anti-aging results."

Whether it's anti-aging or cancer treatment, biomedical research is a fundamental part of medicine. "If we know more about the world, by studying biological sciences or by studying the world in general, we can vastly improve our quality of life." Smith said.

Smith accepted a postdoctoral position at the National Institutes of Health, working in the National Institute on Aging in Baltimore. She will be working to identify more biomarkers of aging and potential targets to slow down the various health effects of aging.

A huge thank you to Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences student leaders who worked tirelessly to bring Student Research Week together: Whitney Redman, Riccay Elizondo, Ksenija Korac, Bradley Schniers, Josue Enriquez, Brianyell McDaniel and Monica Sharma.



POSTER WINNERS

Nursing Students

First: Laura Castle & Amber Higgs
Second: Dina Brown
Third: Melissa Duffy & Bryan Earle

Health Professions Category

Yo-Rong Chen

Resident and Fellows

First: Russell Stanley
Second: Jacob Schoof
Third: Carlos Valencia

Undergraduate Research

First: Garret Welch
Second: Shane Cristy

3rd and 4th-Year Doctoral Students

First: Jessica Smith
Second: Diego Pedroza
Third: Kellsie Beasley

1st and 2nd-Year Medical Students; Graduate Medical Sciences/ Public Health

First: Nicholas Smith
Second: Grant Sorensen
Third: Cody Eslinger

3rd and 4th-Year Medical Students

First: Elizabeth Cook
Second TIE: Niki Parikh/David Foley
Third: Jamie Osinovsky

1st and 2nd-Year Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; Biotechnology

First: Ismail Mohiuddin
Second: Tim Brown
Third TIE: Sarah Hernandez/ Bradley Schniers

School of Pharmacy/Pharmacy Sciences

First: Sharavan Ramachandran
Second: Itishree Kaushi
Third: Sanaullah Sajib

Lubbock Economic Development Alliance Award

First: Sharavan Ramachandran
Second: Alexandra Schaubhut
Third: Ben Jackson





A NOTE FROM SRW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

"Thank you so much for your generous scholarship donation. I am a second year graduate student in the Ph.D. program of Biomedical Sciences. With my research, I want to provide insight into the biological world so that we can better understand ourselves as humans at a cellular level. And with this greater understanding, I aim to improve the lives of others. I greatly appreciate your support."

Victoria Young



"Thank you very much for your kindness and generosity in giving back to our school, students, and the community. As a local student, my wife and I have been working on our goals and education for the last decade. We have three bachelor's degrees, two master's, and will soon have a nurse practitioner and M.D. We have dedicated our purpose to giving back to our community and we could not have continued on this journey without your support. Thank you very much for helping me to achieve my purpose."

Brandon Ximenez

"I would like to thank you very much for your generosity. I am very happy to be selected as the recipient of your scholarship. It is an honor and I deeply appreciate your support."

Mariacristina Mazzitelli

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Bette B. Chilton Memorial Scholarship
Riccy Elizondo

Lou Diekemper GSBS Scholarship
Caitlyn Myers

Dept. of Anesthesiology
Whitni Redman

Dept. of Ophthalmology
Stephany Navarro

Dept. of Otolaryngology
Ksenija Korac

Dept. of Surgery
Brad Schniers

Dept. of Anesthesiology
Whitni Redman

SRW Silent Auction Scholarships
Brandon Ximenez
Victoria Young
Mariacristina Mazzitelli
Jessica Smith





SABR DATES & PROJECTS

Abstracts Due.....Aug. 2
Symposium.....Aug. 9

Cannabinoids in cancer and pain
 William Little (Dr. Josee Guindon)

Identify novel molecular pathways that mediate Prostate Cancer metastasis
 Natasha Chugh (Dr. Srinivas Nandana)

Supporting membrane proteins with polymer stabilized nanodiscs
 Max Ahn (Dr. Henry Liang)

Pulmonary complications of HIV
 Rosenid Quinones (Dr. Sharilyn Almodovar)

Fetal brain development and adult neurodegeneration mechanisms.
 Jordan Myers (Dr. George Henderson)

Analysis of a gene involved in tissue folding in the embryo
 Jun Park (Dr. Jeffrey Thomas)

Determine novel molecular mechanisms involved in neuroendocrine prostate cancer
 Darron Tharp (Dr. Manisha Tripathi)

Sertoli cell survival to improve islet transplantation as a treatment for diabetes
 Nabeela Manal (Dr. Jannette Dufour and Dr. Gurvinder Kaur)

Cannabinoids in cancer and pain
 Agata Pietrzak (Dr. Josee Guindon)

SABR

Summer Accelerated Biomedical Research (SABR) is located on Lubbock campus and is affiliated with the Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program.

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences has faculty involved in many relevant, interesting research areas with state-of-the art labs and equipment. The SABR Program is an excellent educational opportunity, with a commitment to fostering the intern's desire for science and research. Our program is intended for undergraduate students or current graduates who wish to gain more research experience before entering graduate school.

During these 10 weeks, our interns will be exposed to the life of a graduate student, as well as learn to become more independent and self-autonomous. Along the way, interns will be helped by their mentor, graduate students, other lab staff members, and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences' administration.



Above: SABR and NIDA students completing Lab Safety Training



Congratulations, graduates!

**BIOCHEMISTRY,
CELLULAR &
MOLECULAR
BIOLOGY**

Ashly Hindle, Ph.D.
Bala Koneru, Ph.D.
Jessica Smith, Ph.D.
Kandis Wright, Ph.D.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Trevor Anderson, M.S.
Christopher Hornback, M.S.
Courtney Katz, M.S.
Jace Langen, M.S.
Jordan May, M.S.
Stephany Navarro, M.S.
Manuel Ramos, M.S.
Britney Reese, M.S.

**GRADUATE
MEDICAL SCIENCES**

Micah Almeida, M.S.
Rony Diaz, M.S.
Shabab Hussain, M.S.
Joseph Oti-Nimoh, M.S.
Nikita Sankoorikkal, M.S.
Joanna Steed, M.S.
Brandon Ximenez, M.S.
Thomas Yetter, M.S.

**MOLECULAR
BIOPHYSICS**

Faraz Harsini, Ph.D.

**PHARMACEUTICAL
SCIENCES**

Nehal Gupta, Ph.D.
Srinidhi Jayaraman, Ph.D.
Shyanne Page, Ph.D.
Kinzie Sherrill, M.S.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Lauren Barinque, Cert.
Megan Clapp, M.P.H.
Samantha Curtis, M.P.H.
Ashley Edling, M.P.H.
Asher George, M.P.H.
Kimberly Gonzalez, Cert.
Samantha Jayasinghe, M.P.H.
Hyunyong Kim, M.P.H.
Yousef Bani Melhem, M.P.H.
Daniel Nathan, Cert.
Damilola Owoade, M.P.H.
Colten Philpott, M.P.H.
Drew Rasmussen, M.P.H.
Joshua Sanders, M.P.H.
Stephanie Sariles, M.P.H.
Sarah Secrest, M.P.H.
Ashlee Spann, M.P.H.
Natalie Tully, M.P.H.

**TRANSLATIONAL
NEUROSCIENCE &
PHARMACOLOGY**

Dylan Meyer, Ph.D.

*Welcome,
new students!*

MPH - DISTANCE

Yesenia Barrios
Samantha Casey
Chandler Freeman
Kristen Le Pham
Zachary Missimo
Ramya Pakala
Steven Peper
Maddison Stone
Rachel Winnenberg

MPH - LUBBOCK

Clotilde Galdamez
Mark Murden
Fahmida Yesmin

M.D./MPH

Emily Fine
Riya Ganji
Chelsea Gerlick
Maireigh Nicholas

M.D./PH.D.

Robert Barnes
Caezaan Keshvani
Kerri Spontarelli

PH.D.

Courtney Katz
Edgar Martinez
Sarah Miller
Stephany Navarro
Tyler Sniegowski,
Rachel Washburn





FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Drs. Lisa Gittner and Jeff Dennis, along with Dr. Nathaniel Wright (Political Science, Texas Tech University), received the 2019 Texas Tech University President's Emerging Engaged Scholarship Award for their collaborative work with Lubbock County Detention Center and Starcare.

Dr. Jeff Dennis' 2018 Population Research and Policy Review paper, coauthored with Justin T. Denney (Washington State University) and Jarron Saint Onge (University of Kansas), received the 2018 IPUMS Research Award from the Institute for Social Research and Data Innovation, University of Minnesota.

Dr. Brie Sherwin won the 2018-2019 GSBS Outstanding Faculty of the Year Award for excellence in teaching at the Department of Public Health. This year, she was also awarded the Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award, as well as the President's Excellence in Research Professorship.

IN THE NEWS

Tech Doc: Are we really going to talk about colon cancer screening?

Dr. Byrd

TTUHSC wound study breaks through the bacteria bunker

Dr. Rumbaugh

The good and bad in fighting cancer in kids

Dr. Kang

TTUHSC Crohn's Disease research

Dr. Grisham

Cancer team at TTUHSC finding 'Light Switch' for estrogen

Dr. Pruitt

TTUHSC research finds vaccines promote life

Dr. Schneider

PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES PH.D. PROGRAM UPDATE

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences has received permission to expand the Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD program to the Abilene campus starting in the fall of 2019. We have already admitted seven Pharmaceutical Sciences PhD students to the Abilene campus, and we are very excited about the future growth and prospects for this program. In this respect, I am very grateful that Dr. Sanjay Srivastava has accepted the position as Associate Dean for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Abilene for oversight of the Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences students.

He has worked tremendously hard to grow and nurture the Abilene campus, and I am very appreciative of his passion and devotion to his students and these programs.

Dr. Sanjay K. Srivastava is currently a Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology specializing in Cancer Biology, Chemoprevention and Therapeutics. Dr. Srivastava's research focuses on cancer, and he has published nearly 150 research papers. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Srivastava to his new position as Associate Dean for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Abilene.

-Dr. Schneider