Starting in January, TTUHSC began implementing Tech Car Xe, a program to help employees deal with higher prescription drug copays.

Tech Car Xe was initially developed under a grant in 2006 to aid elderly patients of TTUHSC in Amarillo and was eventually expanded to all patients of need in Amarillo and Lubbock. Now it will be expanded incrementally to each TTUHSC campus to include faculty/staff and their dependents, students and their dependents and all TTUHSC patients. The program began January 24 in Amarillo using the Amarillo Pharmaceutical Care Pharmacy (APCC), which is located on the first floor of the School of Medicine building at 1400 S. Coulter St.

Tech Car Xe offers a lower cash alternative for many widely used generic drugs. Approximately 300 medications are presently included on the Tech Car Xe list and more will be added in the future. The program offers up to a 30-day supply for most generic medications with prices ranging from $7 to $22. Some long-term medications may be available for 90- to 100-day supplies for $13.

The benefits to Tech Car Xe patients should be immediate. For example, if a copay for a generic medication through the patient’s insurance plan is $15 for a 30-day supply, and the same medication is available under Tech Car Xe for $7, the patient will see instant monthly savings.

If the medication is available under Tech Car Xe at a 90- to 100-day supply for $13, the patient could save several copays if the physician ordered a 90- to 100-day supply.

Participating in Tech Car Xe only requires completion of a short enrollment form and there is no fee or insurance card associated with the program. If Tech Car Xe patients also have prescriptions for brand name drugs, the APCC can fill those medications at the same price charged by any pharmacy contracted with the patient’s insurance.

APCC pharmacy staff are dedicated to providing superior customer service. They will evaluate the medications of potential Tech Car Xe enrollees to see if this program will save money and there is no obligation to use or continue using the program.

After the program is operational in Amarillo, it will be expanded to Lubbock. A mail-order option will be introduced for all TTUHSC campuses later this spring. More information will be provided at a later date regarding the mail-order option.

The table below includes a partial list of generic medications covered by the Tech Car Xe program. For more information, please contact APCC Pharmacist-in-Charge David Simmons, R.Ph., at (806) 356-4620.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Common Generic Medications</th>
<th>Available Through TechCar Xe for as low as $7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antibiotics:</strong> Amoxicillin, Cephalexin, Sulfal/Trim DS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Antidepressants:</strong> Sertraline, Citalopram, Fluoxetine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diabetic Medications:</strong> Glipizide, Glyburide, Metformin</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Promethazine Tablets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cholesterol Medications:</strong> Lovastatin, Pravastatin, Simvastatin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antihypertensive Medications:</strong> Enalapril, Lisinopril, Ramipril, Propranolol, Metoprolol (twice daily), Atenolol, Carvedilol, Losartan, Potassium, Furosemide</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Levothyroxine</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allopurinol</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Some Examples of $9 Medications</th>
<th>Medrol Dose Pak, Warfarin</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Examples of $13 Medications</th>
<th>Generic Z-pak, Zolpidem</th>
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</table>
Three of the SOP’s Introduction to Pharmacy Practice groups—one in Abilene and two in Amarillo—are collaborating with the Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC) to conduct Medication Cleanout events as their course projects. The events are scheduled for March 12 in Borger, March 19 in Sweetwater and April 9 in Amarillo.

TPPC is also continuing their efforts to bring an event to Lubbock. “The Lubbock police department declined participation previously due to the need for them to store and dispose of controls,” Dr. Jeanie Jaramillo, SOP assistant professor and TPPC managing director, said. “On April 30, the Drug Enforcement Administration is having another National Take-Back Day and they will accept the items for disposal at that event. We are hoping to take advantage of that and get Lubbock on board for April 30.”

Jaramillo said the TPPC would like to hear from any SOP faculty, staff or students with ties to Borger or Sweetwater so they can help to get the word out in those communities. She said TPPC would also like to hear from anyone who wishes to volunteer for the events.

“It’s super easy, lots of fun and does not require licensed pharmacists, so any staff or faculty can help,” Jaramillo said. “Our primary restriction is no minors due to liability and background checks that may eventually be required.”

Jaramillo said the TPPC Medication Cleanout program continues to be the only known medicine take-back event in the country that logs all the medications they collect.

To date, TPPC has received and responded to requests for information from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the National Drug Intelligence Center and the Product Stewardship Institute.

“I want to thank all of our valuable students and volunteers for helping with the program,” Jaramillo said. “I also want to give a special thanks to a group of our consistent supporters, which includes Alicia Aragon (SOP coordinator-early experiential programs), Alicia Stringer (SOP coordinator-academic affairs), Dr. Kenna Payne (SOP assistant professor), David Simmons, R.Ph. (SOP clinical instructor) and Dr. Lana Jones (SOP Class of 2010). This program would not be possible without the support of volunteers.”

To learn more about the Medication Cleanout program, visit www.MedicationCleanout.com.

Schedule set for 2011 Marsh Endowed Lecture

The 2011 Wendy and Stanley Marsh 3 Endowed Lecturer in Pharmacology and Neurochemistry of Substance Abuse/Addiction is set for March 8-9 at the main SOP campus in Amarillo.

Dr. Cindy Ehlers, professor for molecular and integrative neurosciences and molecular and experimental medicine at the Scripps Research Institute, will be the featured speaker.

Ehlers will deliver a presentation entitled “Understanding Firewater: Risk Factors for Alcoholism in Native Americans” at 4 p.m. March 8. At noon March 9 she will present “Genetic and Environmental Determinants of Alcoholism Risk in Different Ethnic Groups” at Grand Rounds. Both presentations will take place in the Harrington Auditorium at 1300 S. Coulter.

Ehlers received her Ph.D. in physiology with a minor in pharmacology from the University of California, Davis. She also studied as a Giannini Foundation Fellow in the Department of Anatomy and Brain Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles and worked as a research associate at the Salk Institute for Biology Studies in San Diego.

Ehlers joined the Scripps Research Institute as a faculty member in 1983. Her research is focused on the use of neuropharmacology and genetics to understand normal brain function and the etiology of substance abuse (alcohol/drug dependence) in basic and clinical studies.

Ehlers has more than 250 peer reviewed journal articles and numerous book chapters to her credit. She received the Thurman Lectureship Award and was a Klingenstein and MacArthur Foundation Scientist and served on the council for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). During the past 20 years she has received continuous research funding from the NIAAA and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

In addition to medical research, Ehlers has worked with many ethnic groups, most notably indigenous Native American tribes. She has assisted the tribes in their cultural and language retention efforts and helped them document their history, myths and legends.
Edgar selected Dean’s Student Leader of the Quarter

Since she arrived at the SOP nearly four years ago, Amarillo P4 Toni Edgar has been an organizer, ambassador and cheerleader for her classmates and the entire pharmacy program. Therefore, it probably comes as no surprise to her peers that Edgar is the latest recipient of the Dean’s Student Leader of the Quarter Award.

“Toni is a big proponent of teamwork in which all members work together toward a common goal and all contribute to the effort,” classmate Sarah Carman said. “She is enthusiastic about her pursuits, and that enthusiasm is catching. She has a way of drawing others into her visions and then encouraging them to find their own.”

Self-confidence is a characteristic shared by those who lead and Toni is certainly no exception. It’s a trait her parents started instilling and nurturing when Toni was barely old enough to tie her own shoes.

“At the age of 8 my mom had me hailing cabs in New York City,” Edgar exclaimed with a laugh. “She’s always told me that I can do anything; she empowered me to make decisions and then stood beside me if things didn’t work out as planned. She has been through so much and yet she has always been extremely supportive of anything that I have set out to do. She encouraged me to get out of jobs that just provided an income and do something that was truly satisfying for a career.”

The support was especially important when Edgar was accepted into the SOP program. Unlike the majority of her classmates, Toni didn’t simply move to Amarillo or Abilene from another part of Texas. She left her comfort zone behind in Virginia.

“It was extremely difficult to pick up and move 1,600 miles to attend pharmacy school,” Edgar said. “There have been some very stressful times, though I have never regretted the decision to attend Texas Tech. But I wouldn’t be the person I am now or be where I am in my life if it hadn’t been for my mom’s and dad’s support and that of my extended family and friends back east.”

In the years leading up to her arrival at the SOP, Edgar enjoyed volunteering her services as a certified EMT and working with groups like Habitat for Humanity, though she often hung back until everyone else said ‘no’ to a project before taking it on herself. However, by the time Edgar arrived at pharmacy school she was more apt to jump right into a project rather than taking a wait-and-see approach.

“Over time I’ve become more comfortable and self-confident and I have come to truly enjoy being in leadership positions, especially when I have the opportunity to help someone else develop their own self-confidence and leadership skills,” she explained.

Through her student organization involvement, Edgar has been able to meet and work with students in other SOP classes and develop strong mentor-protégé relationships. As a Regional Student Senate member, she has also worked alongside medical and allied health students. These experiences, she said, will help her as she pursues her career goals in clinical pharmacy.

“There are always going to be times in life where your input will be requested or required and developing the confidence needed to handle those situations more effectively is so much easier to do in a familiar environment than it is stumbling through it in the real world,” she said.

As a classmate and friend, Carman has witnessed Edgar’s leadership skills firsthand. Once a project is underway, she said Edgar trusts team members to complete their part and does not micromanage their efforts.

“Toni is always willing to help a fellow student with problems they may be having,” Carman said. “She is able to see the big picture and break the solution into workable parts so that each person can contribute. Toni can be a leader and guide her team, but also allow them to reach the solution in their own way. She is a good communicator because she invests herself in relationships and takes a sincere interest in others.”

Edgar appreciates such praise but she is happier standing on the sidelines and cheering for the achievements of others with whom she has worked. She sees her growth and achievements as part of an overall learning process.

“It is a huge honor to be recognized for my leadership, but it’s secondary to the education I am receiving,” Edgar said. “I am so grateful that I was offered a position at Texas Tech and I look forward to pursuing a residency program and furthering my education. However, I would not have done as well as I have without the loving support of my best friends and my family.”
Lubbock’s UMC honors Abilene P2

Just days after his birth in September 1987, Abilene P2 Brance Wilson made a significant contribution to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at University Medical Center (UMC) in Lubbock.

Born three weeks premature, Wilson’s lungs were too weak and he was transported by air from Plainview to UMC. Six months earlier, the hospital had become one of only two in Texas equipped with an extracorporeal membrane oxygenation machine (ECMO) and Wilson would be one of the first patients to benefit from the new technology.

When UMC held its annual fundraising gala in January, its state-of-the-art NICU was prominently featured. Wilson, whose life was saved by the ECMO and the NICU caregivers, was honored as one of the unit’s success stories.

“I was very grateful for the opportunity to let the supporters of UMC know that the money they donate is put to good use and can go a long way,” Wilson said. “This recognition also opens my eyes to the importance of donation; after all, UMC was one of two hospitals in the state with the technology needed for me to survive at the time and donor money was responsible for it being there. I just wanted to thank those who were involved at the time and let the current supporters know that their money is being used to save lives.”

Despite his uncertain start to life, Wilson has always been physically active. When he entered TTUHSC’s pharmacy program in August 2009 he was already a member of Team Beachbody, an online fitness community. A couple of months later, he won the site’s Million Dollar Body contest.

“Plain and simple, I was tired of being fat, and their program was right for me,” Wilson said. “I was active on the community boards and had a very nice support group doing the program with me. We’d all post our progress pictures on the site and I also kept up with the past winners. My group felt my pictures and progress were more than enough to win the contest and they convinced me to enter it.”

Wilson said the will power he learned through getting fit has helped him stay focused in his pharmacy school studies.

“Nothing worth having comes easy, but if you put in the work you can expect the benefits at the end,” Wilson said. “Both school and Beachbody are difficult, but well worth it in the end. They’ve helped put perspective in my life that it’s possible to do things you didn’t think you’d be able to.”

When he completes pharmacy school, Wilson wants to show his appreciation to all the people who have supported him since those early days in the NICU by helping others.

“I want to be able to apply the lessons I’ve learned and the skills I’ve acquired to the best of my ability,” Wilson said. “I want to help enrich the lives of people medically like so many in this field have helped my life.”
When Sara Jezierski moved from Houston to Amarillo in August 2010, she rented an apartment just as many of her pharmacy school classmates did. Today, as she nears the end of her second year of classes, that same apartment has transformed into a breeding ground for some of the creepiest microorganisms, some of which can still be seen in the dead of night when all the lights are out.

It all started in January 2010 when the TTUHSC campus in Amarillo was closed for two days due to a heavy dose of snow. “Ideas were just running through my head,” Jezierski recalled. “We had just finished immunology the previous semester and so I still had all that information fresh on my mind. I thought it would be funny to have a soap that was shaped like a Petri dish or even antibodies, which had a dual meaning since it was literally helping rid the germs from your hands. I thought, ‘Surely someone has thought of this; why can’t I find it anywhere?’ And then it hit me: if it didn’t already exist, it was just too good of an idea to ignore.”

Within days, Jezierski was learning how to make soap and exploring the possibilities of morphing her idea into a product. In late January she came up with a name for her new company—Cleaner Science—and her unique soaps hit the marketplace in February. “From there it has kind of snowballed and evolved into what it is today,” Jezierski said. “My first products were the Petri dish soap and a soap that was shaped like an antibody.”

In the beginning, Jezierski regarded the making of germ-impersonating soaps to be a way to share a funny idea with the world. Any profit she turned would be a bonus to apply toward her increasingly large school tab. She soon discovered, however, that there was a niche market for her product and it was growing at a faster rate than the bacteria her sudsy designs were intended to mimic.

“They were just running through my head,” Jezierski said with a laugh. “Now, I have to make a hundred soaps in a single batch just to keep up sometimes. It’s interesting how I’ve adapted to keep up with the work and it’s amazing how it has grown and how much I’ve learned along the way.”

Today Jezierski and Cleaner Science offer 20 different Petri dish soaps. The product line includes such entertaining microbes as E. coli, Salmonella, and Legionella in a variety of colors and scents. In addition, she recently added a line of breath mint-sized soaps that look like red blood cells and are available in 17 fragrances.

Most of the soaps are made from an all-natural 100 percent soap base, though a few also include aloe, olive oil and natural honey. For added effect, Jezierski makes some of the soaps glow in the dark.

“So what was once a typical college student’s apartment now resembles a research laboratory, also fully equipped with shipping supplies. “Cleaner Science is slowly taking over my apartment,” Jezierski said. “I always get a laugh when the maintenance guys at my apartment complex have to come in to fix something and I’ve got stacks of Petri dishes lying around that look like they’re full of bacteria. I’ve also got one corner of my apartment that has anything a person would ever need to ship something in the mail. I always wonder what they may be thinking.”

Balancing school with family obligations and what little time is left over for a social life can be challenging enough. Add running a business to the mix and the potential for disaster increases exponentially.

To cope with it all, Jezierski has learned to more effectively prioritize her responsibilities. She has also been forced to hone her multi-tasking abilities—there have been times when she’s had a wholesale order of soaps to finish and an exam to study for at the same time. However, she said the mixing and switching of responsibilities adds an interesting element to what used to be the normal day-to-day life of a pharmacy student. “Cleaner Science gives me a good outlet to express my creativity, to switch on that right side of the brain, so to speak, when I have been maxing out my left side all day,” Jezierski explained. “The nice thing about running Cleaner Science is that most of those things don’t have an exact time they need to be done, so I have a lot of flexibility and I get to make my own schedule; I can make soap at 3 a.m. if I need to. The

(Continued on next page)
only time constraint is to make it to the post office before they close for the day.”

As hectic as her life is, Jezierski has benefited from the unwavering support of her parents, who live in her hometown of Houston. Her fiancée, also a Houston resident, has been a pillar of encouragement and is the primary sounding board for Jezierski’s ideas.

Still, building a business from scratch is no easy feat, especially for someone like Jezierski who has no formal business education. Along the way she’s had to make time to research every legal detail of running a business and make sure that everything is in order.

In addition to improving her business acumen, Jezierski says she has also grown as a person. Because she’s had to promote her products and ideas, her self-confidence has surged. She said these refinements have aided her development as a student and as a pharmacist.

“One of the most important lessons that I’ve learned is that the more work you put into whatever you do, the more you’re going to get out,” Jezierski said. “You should also never give up on something that you believe in just because it may not be working out. The reason it’s not working is not because it will never work; it just means it may not work the way you’re doing it, and when you feel like quitting, you’re probably closer to achieving your goal than you realize.”

The health care field has been a part of Jezierski’s life for as long as she can remember. Her mother is a pharmacist and her father is a registered nurse. After spending several years working as a pharmacy technician, Jezierski decided to follow in her mother’s footsteps.

“I was very interested in the opportunities that pharmacists have to interact with patients and the chances they have to impact a patient’s life, so I made a decision to take the plunge and pursue my more scientific interests.”

She also grew up with an affinity for art and has expressed her creativity through activities like painting and music. For the time being, however, the growth of Cleaner Science and her pharmacy school obligations have pushed the pursuit of other artistic endeavors off Jezierski’s plate.

A new website (www.CleanerScience.com) and increased product exposure through Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Etsy have stepped up the pace at which her business is growing. Add to that the clinical training she will undertake during her third and fourth years of pharmacy school and Jezierski said the day when she will have to hire employees is drawing near.

“This one-woman show is definitely going to have to branch out,” she said. “I can’t imagine being able to take care of everything myself. I plan on definitely delegating a lot of the work so that I’m not tied up with time-consuming things. I need to hire and train someone to make the soap and then also have someone who can manage wholesale orders.”

Jezierski isn’t sure how, or if, she’ll be able to merge her pharmacy career with her soap business. Pharmacy is her career calling, but her artistic muse reaches out to her through Cleaner Science. All she knows today is that she wants to do both for many years to come.

“It’s truly been an amazing journey thus far, and although I’ve put in countless hours of work to get to where I am, I still feel very lucky to have received the exposure I have,” Jezierski said. “There have been hundreds of positive and interesting people that I’ve had the opportunity to meet along the way, people who I wouldn’t have crossed paths with otherwise. And I love the fact that I get to be part of the humor when someone might be laughing while washing their hands today.”

**SOP students receive scholarships from TTUHSC**

Congratulations to the 26 SOP students who were recently awarded TTUHSC Student Endowed Scholarships.

The scholarships are presented by the TTUHSC Student Senate Scholarship Committee and recognize each student for their participation in school activities, community service, demonstrated leadership ability and academic standing.

The Student Senate raises funds for the scholarships through their annual Phonathon.

SOP honorees from Abilene include P3s Hung Pham and Cristalyyn Sageser and P4s Loren Davies and Elizabeth Riney P4.

Amarillo recipients include P1s Kaytlin Huseman and Sarah Willis; P2s Kevin Aloysius and D’Neise Laverty; and P4s Sarah Carman and Toni Edgar.

Recipients from the Dallas-Fort Worth campus include P3s Joshua Jacobs, Merlyn Joseph, Brett Noteware, Frank Wang and Angela Wu; and P4s Anu Chackacherry, Tanis Herr, Allison Mahon, Marca McCoy, Amy Messick, Diana Mukalel and Tyler Sledge.

Lubbock honorees include P4s Phillip Gall, Elise Johnson, Amanda Klein and Tyler Wood.
Fred grew up in Steubenville, Ohio, which is roughly 30 miles west of Pittsburgh in the Ohio Valley. Fred says he never really liked school because he’s always been a hands-on kind of guy. After spending five years working for a remodeling company, Fred enlisted in the Navy, where he was a firefighter and equipment repairman with a DC (Damage Control) rate.

“I trained firefighting techniques to the ship personnel,” Fred says, “Before my four years was up I also spent eight months at the fleet training center where I developed a utilities tracking program to better monitor expenses.”

Upon discharging from the Navy, Fred says he “went back to the grind” by opening his own remodeling company that specialized in fire restorations.

Upon discharging from the Navy, Fred says he “went back to the grind” by opening his own remodeling company that specialized in fire restorations.

Dr. Thomas Abbruscato will compete in the 115th running of the Boston Marathon on April 18. Dr. Abbruscato is an associate professor for the SOP's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in Amarillo and associate dean for TTUHSC's Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Left: Fred Stegner with his wife, Tonya, and children Alyssa and Steven. Below: Alyssa gets ready to take a ride on one of the Stegner's horses.

Fred met his wife, Tonya, while both were serving in the Navy. In 1996, they welcomed Steven, the first of their two children, into the family. That same year he took a job with Timet, the world leader in titanium production, though he continued to maintain his remodeling company and ran a small computer repair business. His daughter, Alyssa, was born two years later in 1998.

After suffering a back injury, Fred and Tonya moved their family to Cisco, Texas in 2003. He continued to operate a small computer repair business and maintained some home health care networks until Tonya graduated from surgical tech school.

“When she was at a health fair, we saw a posting for the SOP job I have now and the rest is history,” Fred says.

In his spare time, Fred steers clear of computers as much as possible. Instead, he says he prefers to hunt, ride motorcycles and watch football and NASCAR.
Amarillo SOP faculty and staff enjoy some food and camaraderie at the post-holiday reception to recognize Drs. Thomas Abbruscato, Ulrich Bickel, Reza Mehvar and Thomas Thekkunkara for their service and contributions as interim department chairs.

CVS recently presented TTUHSC-SOP with a $5,000 scholarship check. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Roland Patry (Chair - SOP Dept. of Pharmacy Practice), Steven Reynolds from CVS, Dr. Lef (SOP Regional Dean - Dallas/Fort Worth campus), Scott Lason from CVS and David Joyner from Caremark.

Plaques were presented at the post-holiday reception to Drs. Thomas Abbruscato, Ulrich Bickel, Reza Mehvar and Thomas Thekkunkara for their service and contributions as interim department chairs.

A group from the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences took advantage of some rare January sunshine to pose for photo around the artwork located at the Amarillo campus courtyard. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Thomas Abbruscato (Associate Professor and Graduate Program Advisor), Parul Gupta, Naomi Wangler, Alejandra Fernandez, Manoj Banjara, Li Yang, Jun Liu and Chris Adkins.

SOP Photo Gallery

SOP instructor Joel Epps meets with a group of students during the 2010-2011 annual assessment at the Amarillo campus.