



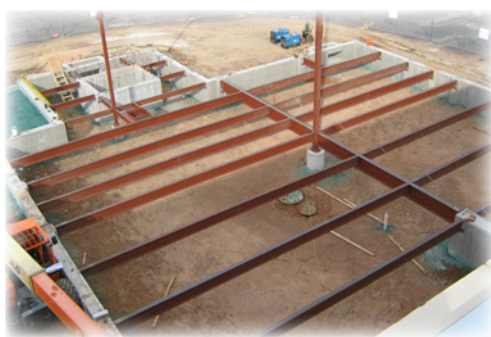
**Amarillo • Lubbock • Dallas/Fort Worth • Abilene**

## Abilene research spurs expansion

At its December meeting, the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents approved construction of a 13,000 square-foot expansion of the existing laboratory space for the SOP's Center for Immunotherapeutic Research (CIR) in Abilene. The new space will consist of office and laboratory space for 10 faculty researchers and is tentatively scheduled to open in June.

According to Dr. Jon Weidanz, an associate professor for the Department of Biomedical Sciences, the CIR currently includes nearly 3,100 square feet with roughly 2,000 square feet available as laboratory space for five faculty investigators. He said the CIR is actively seeking a sixth faculty investigator.

"I went to the Abilene community leaders about 10 months ago and discussed our progress at the center and our future growth needs," Weidanz said. "As always, the leaders understood the situation and



*Construction is under way to expand laboratory space for the Center for Immunotherapeutic Research on the TTUHSC campus in Abilene.*

bought into the vision. We discussed a reasonable number of faculty members required to reach what I call critical mass. I suggested 10 faculty and staff, so a plan was put forth to build enough new space to accommodate up to 10 faculty members and their teams. My hope is that we will have up to 40 researchers — faculty, graduate students, post-docs, research technicians and staff — at the SOP within the next few years."

The new addition will be constructed at the site of the existing Abilene campus on land donated by Hendrick Medical Center. Construction costs will be covered by a \$3 million gift from the Development Corporation of Abilene, the Dodge Jones Foundation and the Dian Graves Owen Foundation.

"This is a very important development for the SOP," Weidanz said. "It will hopefully provide a way to grow research and educational programs and further promote recognition of the SOP and TTUHSC. It is also extremely important for the Abilene campus as it begins to brand us and showcase our successes; CIR faculty have been successful in competing for highly competitive extramural funding, which speaks to the caliber of faculty we have been able to recruit to the SOP Abilene campus."

Kendra Burris, TTUHSC assistant vice chancellor for institutional advancement, also played a key role in bringing this project to fruition.



*The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate, masters, doctoral and professional degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Ga. 30033-4097 or call (404) 679-4500 for questions about the TTUHSC accreditation.*



## Dallas/Fort Worth adding space to SW campus

The Texas Tech University System Board of Regents has approved the lease of an additional 4,100 square feet of space for the SOP's Dallas/Fort Worth (D/FW) Southwest campus.

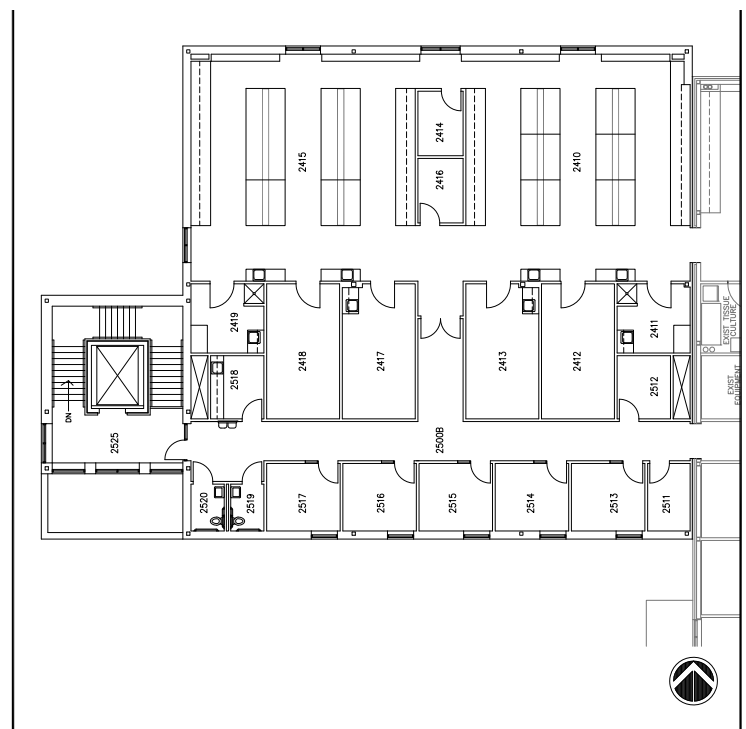
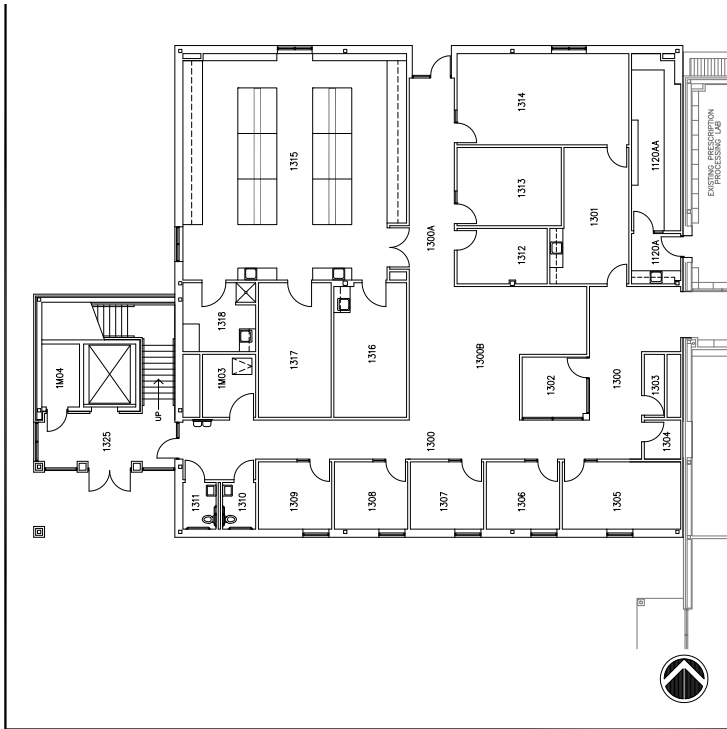
The additional space will be located on the fifth floor of the Southwest Professional Building in the Dallas Medical District. The SOP currently leases 9,300 square feet inside the building. The expansion will accommodate the additional 18 third-year (P3) students who will be deployed to the D/FW campus beginning in the fall. This will increase the P3/P4 class size in D/FW from 60 to 78 students.

The additional space will house a flexible seating classroom for 50 to 55 students, three additional small group case study rooms, an expanded student lounge and separate study-group interaction areas. Twelve additional seats will also be added to the existing Southwest campus classroom. The entire expansion is expected to be completed in July.

# Floor Plans for Abilene, Dallas/Fort Worth expansion

First Floor Addition - Abilene

Second Floor Addition - Abilene



3601 4th Street, Room BA108M  
Lubbock, TX 79430-9008  
MS 9008

Phone: (806) 743-4495  
Fax: (806) 743-4497

**1st Floor Addition**  
**Bldg 6001 - Abilene School of Pharmacy**  
**1718 Pine Street, Abilene, Texas**

Drawing Name: TTJHSC-AbileneSP_1stFloor.dwg	Drawn By: RDW	Date: 07/27/2011
Project Number:	Checked By: BAJ	Date: 07/27/2011
Drawing Scale: NTS	Last Updated:	Date:



3601 4th Street, Room BA108M  
Lubbock, TX 79430-9008  
MS 9008

Phone: (806) 743-4495  
Fax: (806) 743-4497

**2nd Floor Addition**  
**Bldg 6001 - Abilene School of Pharmacy**  
**1718 Pine Street, Abilene, Texas**

Drawing Name: TTJHSC-AbileneSP_2ndFloor.dwg	Drawn By: RDW	Date: 07/27/2011
Project Number:	Checked By: BAJ	Date: 07/27/2011
Drawing Scale: NTS	Last Updated:	Date:



SUITE 500

SUITE 500 - 5th Floor  
SOUTHWEST PROF BLDG  
5920 FOREST PARK  
DALLAS, TEXAS

ISSUE DATE:  
Dec 17, 2010

Additional Fifth Floor Space - Dallas/Fort Worth (SW Campus)

## SOP research awarded U.S. Army grants

A pair of research projects led by principal investigators (PIs) from the SOP were recently selected to receive funding from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs as part of the fiscal year 2011 Breast Cancer Research Program (FY11 BCRP).



Dr. Bickel

Dr. Ulrich Bickel, a professor for the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in Amarillo, received a two-year, \$731,016 grant for his proposal

titled, *"Simultaneous Vascular Targeting and Tumor Targeting of Cerebral Breast Cancer Metastases Using a T-Cell Receptor Mimic Antibody."* Dr. Paul Lockman, assistant professor for the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in Amarillo, and Dr. Jon Weidanz, associate professor for the Department of Biomedical Sciences in Abilene, are co-investigators for the project.



Dr. Markiewski

In addition, Dr. Maciej Markiewski, an associate professor for the Department of Biomedical Sciences in Abilene, received a two-year, \$698,331

grant for his proposal titled, *"Complement Inhibition in the Immunotherapy of Breast Cancer."*

The FY11 BCRP application process included eight proposal categories: Idea, Era of Hope Scholar, Innovator, Idea Expansion, Era of Hope Scholar Expansion, Innovator Expansion, Collaborative Innovators and Transformative Vision.

Applications were accepted in June and August and were then peer reviewed in August and October. A programmatic review was conducted in December.

Both of the winning SOP submissions were from the Idea category, which included 1,499 pre-applications. The PIs of 354 pre-applications were invited to submit a full application and 306 compliant applications were received.

At the conclusion of the process, 22 applications (7.2 percent) were recommended for 28 separate funding awards totaling \$17.2 million.

Other award types similar to that received by Markiewski — breast cancer Idea Awards with a single PI option — were granted only to the top research universities and institutes, including Baylor College of Medicine, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center – Harvard Medical School, Duke University, Mayo Clinic and Yale University.

Bickel said his award is gratifying because it represents several years of preliminary studies performed in three laboratories across two SOP research centers coming to fruition and provides a prime example of how effective team science can be at the SOP.

"Then, of course, the awarded budget will provide us with the resources necessary to evaluate the proposed approach and to generate data for additional major grant applications," Bickel said. "Finally, it is nice to see that after the recent success with CPRIT (Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas) grants, TTUHSC again is doing so well in a highly competitive funding mechanism."

Markiewski said the ongoing support SOP researchers receive from Abilene community representatives also played a key role in the success of his

## Abbruscato selected to NIH Study Section



Dr. Abbruscato

Dr. Thomas Abbruscato, associate dean for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, interim chair and associate professor for the Department of Pharmaceuti-

cal Sciences, has been selected as a chartered member for the Drug Discovery for the Nervous System Study Section (DDNS) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Abbruscato will serve a five-year term for the DDNS from 2012-2016. He previously served a five-year term (2006-2010) as a chartered member of the NIH Brain Injury and Neurovasculature Pathology Study Section.

"This new assignment will require participation in three study sections per year in Washington, D.C. where we review NIH R01, R03 and R21 proposals," Abbruscato said.

The DDNS reviews pre-clinical applications with the ultimate goal of discovering new drugs or molecular targets for treating or preventing disorders of the nervous system, including drug abuse and stroke. Abbruscato said these approved projects will hopefully lead to future clinical trials and approval by the FDA of new drug therapies.

application. Those representatives include Larry Gill, grants administrator for the Dodge Jones Foundation; Scott Dueser, chairman, president and CEO for First Financial Bankshares; Paul Cannon (chairman of the board) and Richard Burdine (CEO) for the Development Corporation of Abilene; Abilene Mayor Norman Archibald; and Tim Lancaster, president and CEO for Hendrick Health System.



## Love of running leads Amarillo P1 to help community

A few years ago, Oklahoma congressman J.C. Watts defined character as doing the right thing when nobody is looking. Amarillo P1 Jason Serna probably thought nobody was watching him on Feb. 11 when he shrugged off freezing temperatures and a stinging West Texas wind to participate in Cupid's Chase, a national 5K run that takes place on the same day and at the same time in 25 cities located throughout 10 states.

When Serna arrived at Thompson Park for the event, what he didn't know, at least initially, is that Dexter Harper, a staff member who handles electronic medical records at the Amarillo campus, was also there.

Cupid's Chase is hosted by Community Options Inc., a national nonprofit that has been developing community-based homes and employment supports for people with disabilities since 1989. Harper was covering the event for BlackAmarillo.com.

"I happened upon Jason, who was bundled like an unwrapped Popsicle in his Texas Tech Pharmacy hoodie," Harper said. "I couldn't help but start a conversation with him and I learned that he is from Corpus Christi and somewhat unaccustomed to the icy chill of a February West Texas morning. He spoke freely of how nice it was to take a brief break and participate in something besides studies and how especially rewarding it is to do something that benefited others.

"Noticing that two was Jason's assigned number for the 5k run, I found it symbolic of his willingness to place others ahead of himself. It's always refreshing to see the pharmacy students giving back and participating within the community."

While Serna ran, Harper scouted a good location for photographing the finishers. As the clamor of the event staff alerted him to the arrival of the first group of finishers, Harper positioned his camera and began snapping photos of the first place runner as he crossed the finish line.

"Guess who was the second runner to appear in my camera's focus?" Harper asked.

"That's right, Jason Serna. He was a little winded by the cool West Texas air, but it was the man from pharmacy school who proudly gave up his morning to help others while wearing the symbolic number on his hoodie."

Although he is a member of the American Pharmacy Association student organization and the Phi Delta Chi professional pharmacy fraternity, Serna said he was participating in Cupid's Chase as a member of the area community. He said he recently discovered these types of events allow him to combine his love of running with his desire to help others. He also plans to participate in the FastFeet Racing Spring Clean 5k March 10 to help raise awareness and funding for Alzheimer's research.

"The Cupid's Chase 5k is actually my first event and I look forward to future runs," Serna said. "Community Options benefits people with disabilities and I wanted to be part of helping raise this awareness. It was also interesting to know that the Cupid's Chase event took place in 25 cities simultaneously across the country."

Despite the 13-degree chill factor, Serna said the run had personal benefits because it allowed him to temporarily clear his mind and escape the stress of school.

"Pharmacy school at TTUHSC, without a doubt, is a rigorous program," Serna said. "The ability to manage your time as a student, as well as taking part in your community, is part of a pharmacy student's way of life."

Serna's interest in pharmacy as a career started when he worked as a pharmacy technician for CHRISTUS Spohn Memorial Hospital in Corpus Christi.

"I have a strong interest in clinical pharmacy," Serna said. "CHRISTUS Spohn is a level II trauma center and I found that there is much more to pharmacy than working behind a counter. Upon graduation I hope to secure a post-graduate hospital residency and eventually work as a clinical pharmacist in critical care."

As he learns more about his chosen profession during the next several years, Serna's career path could change, but one thing seems certain: he will continue to run to benefit others, even when nobody is looking.



*In addition to helping the community, Serna earned a second-place medal in the Cupid's Chase 5k.*



*Amarillo P1 Jason Serna gave up a Saturday to participate in the Cupid's Chase 5k to help people with disabilities.*

## Mock interviews help Dallas SOP students

On Jan. 7, twelve P4 students at the SOP campus in Dallas/Fort Worth (D/FW) polished their interview skills in preparation for their upcoming post-graduate year one (PGY1) residency interviews. The mock interviewees, all P4s, included Samrawit Agonafer, Stephanie Drude, Jared Gower, Kim Huynh, Josh Jacobs, Merlyn Joseph, Matthew Miller, Ronnie Matheke Miller, Brett Noteware, Loretta Rios, Brian Terrell and Ruben Villanueva.

Nine faculty members and four residents from the D/FW campus volunteered to help the students by conducting the mock interviews. Faculty volunteers included Associate Professors Dr. Steve Pass, Dr. Krystal Edwards and Dr. Sachin Shah and Assistant Professors Dr. Amie Blaszczyk, Dr. Lisa Chastain, Dr. Kristen Hesch, Dr. Cole Kildow, Dr. Megan Stapleton and Dr. Valerie Vuylsteke.

Resident volunteers included Dr. Christina Chen, Dr. James Sanders, Dr. Savannah Washington and Dr. Tanis Welch, who participated in the event last year as a P4 student.

During the mock interviews, each student rotated through four interview sessions: a pair of one-on-one interviews with a faculty member; one group interview with up to three faculty members; and one group interview with a PGY1 resident and a PGY2 resident.

Students submitted their curriculum vitae, a letter of intent from one of the residency positions for which they have applied and the complete list of PGY1 residency positions for which they have applied. Volunteer faculty and residents reviewed the material and individualized each interview.

Each 30-minute interview period consisted of 20 to 22 minutes of interview and an additional three to minutes minutes in which students were allowed to test some of their questions. Volunteer faculty and residents ended each interview session by providing verbal feedback to the students and then prepared

a written evaluation sheet at the end of the day.

This is the second year the mock residency interviews have been undertaken at the D/FW campus.

After last year's sessions, students provided written and verbal evaluations about the interview process and preparation. Edwards has organized the mock interview sessions both years and compiled the information from the evaluations. She said the students who participated this year will be asked to provide similar feedback that will be shared with the class of 2013.

"I really have enjoyed organizing this event and seeing how much the students appreciate it," Edwards said. "I love seeing how much the students learn from the practice interviews and how they grow professionally from the process. Last year the students were great and provided an abundance of feedback and encouraged me to continue this process as they thought it was one of the best things that helped them prepare for their residency interviews."

P4 Brian Terrell has applied for several PGY1 and PGY1-PGY2 combined residencies. He said the mock interview experience has left him feeling better prepared during the real-life interview process.

"I've completed three interviews and some form of the questions asked during the mock interviews have been presented in each one," Terrell said. "The mock interviews allow students to interact in the real life interview situation and prepares them for question types that they may not be aware are standard to ask. I would definitely recommend participating in the mock interview process to those students who are preparing and applying for a residency."

## How to submit items for the Dean's Newsletter

The mission of "From the Dean's Desk" is to communicate the news, events and achievements from the School of Pharmacy to all four of our campuses and to alumni and other friends of the school who enjoy hearing about your good work.

If you or your department, division, organization or class have something you'd like to include in this newsletter, or if you have a question about the types of items typically included in the newsletter, please contact:

Mark Hendricks  
Communications Coordinator  
TTUHSC-SOP/Amarillo  
806/356-4000 ext. 245  
mark.hendricks@ttuhsc.edu



D/FW P4 students who participated in the 2012 mock interview program included (from left): Brett Noteware, Ruben Villanueva, Kim Huynh, Stephanie Drude, Merlyn Joseph, Josh Jacobs, Matthew Miller, Ronnie Matheke Miller, Brian Terrell, Samrawit Agonafer, Jared Gower and Loretta Rios.

## ***New chapters create more student organization options***

The 2011-2012 academic year has included the addition of two new student organization chapters for pharmacy students.

In August, the SOP's Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) chapter officially began accepting members from all SOP campuses. In addition, representatives from the Kappa Psi national office will arrive at the SOP in Abilene on March 3 to initiate the Epsilon Tau chapter for that campus.

### **SNPhA**

"The purpose of SNPhA is to plan, organize, coordinate and execute programs geared toward improvement of the health, social and educational environment of the community while providing opportunities for the professional development of pharmacy students," Amarillo P2 and chapter president Mohamed Barrie said.

Barrie said the chapter will promote active participation in the organization at the local, state and national levels so student members will have better opportunities to develop leadership and professional skills and foster networking relationships. The chapter also has several student scholarship opportunities.

"SNPhA will help to develop the role of the minority health care professional as a vital member of the health care team, teach the community about better health practices and increase patient awareness and understanding of various disease states," Barrie said.

The chapter's founding officers include Barrie; Amarillo P3s Richardo Leveck (vice president) Gabriel Castañeda (historian), Chiamaka Ike (chapter delegate) and William Randolph (fundraising chair); and Amarillo P2s Eva Vindekilde (secretary), Tomi Agbesanwa (treasurer), Kirk Heckrodt (Chauncey Ira Cooper program coordinator), Ugochinyere Okoli (pharmacy council representative) and Carson Ho (web master).

Dr. Cynthia Raehl (SOP department chair - Amarillo) and Dr. Deetra Craddock (assistant professor - Dallas/Fort Worth) serve as SNPhA faculty advisors.

"It's not too late to become a member," Barrie said. "Not all officer positions have been filled and we plan on accepting nominations and having elec-

tions for vacant positions in upcoming chapter meetings. We also have a province meeting coming up in March at the University of Cincinnati and a National Convention in Las Vegas in July."

### **Kappa Psi - Epsilon Tau Chapter**

The Delta Pi chapter of Kappa Psi has been at the SOP in Amarillo since 1997, but Abilene P2s Miranda Smith and Megan Young decided to help start the Epsilon Tau chapter so their Abilene classmates could have another option for a fraternal organization on their own campus.

"Once we learned more about the organization, we decided it seemed like a good fit for us and moved forward with making it a reality," Smith said. "Kappa Psi is the oldest and largest pharmaceutical fraternity; by offering Abilene students a chance to be a part of it, we hope to offer opportunities for networking and brotherhood that can only be found in a fraternity."

Although they haven't officially received their charter, Smith said the organization has already held several social events. They also organized a community information event at which P2 members conducted blood pressure screenings and P1 members provided information to patients about the relationship between a fit lifestyle and a healthy blood pressure reading.

"The charter approval process has been lengthy because we do have a standard waiting period, but we have already written our by-laws and are basically approved pending the end of this waiting period," Smith said. "Our plan is to coordinate fundraisers together across all campuses and we also plan to have monthly officer meetings for the Amarillo and Abilene officers to discuss the coordination of fundraisers and events. In essence, we are separate chapters but within the same fraternity."

Smith is serving as the chapter's founding regent and Young is serving as founding vice regent.

Other founding officers include Abilene P1s Khumpham Amaratana (treasurer), Cindy Huynh (secretary) and Rashmi Singh (sergeant at arms).

SOP Assistant Professor Dr. Michelle Jernigan is the chapter's faculty advisor.



## Speaker set for 2012 Marsh Lectureship



Dr. Tyndale

Dr. Rachel F. Tyndale will be the featured speaker for the 2012 Wendy and Stanley Marsh 3 Endowed Lectureship in Pharmacology and Neurochemistry of Substance Abuse/Addiction March 20-21 at the main SOP campus in Amarillo.

Tyndale is a professor in the Departments of Psychiatry, Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Toronto, the Canada research chair in pharmacogenetics and head of pharmacogenetics at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. She is also the vice chair for the Pharmacogenomic Research Network at the National Institutes of Health.

The Tyndale group focuses on pharmacogenetic variation in enzymes and drug targets and the resulting impact on drug dependence, in particular smoking. This

has led to the identification of risk factors for use, for amount used and for the ability to quit with and without treatment. The identification of these risk factors has ultimately resulted in new strategies for personalization of treatment.

The group also studies the regulation and expression of drug metabolizing enzymes in the brain and their role in interindividual variation in drug response, addictions and neurotoxicity.

Tyndale has received more than 30 awards, including the Society for Research in Nicotine and Tobacco Langley Award, The Grant Wilkinson Memorial Lectureship and the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology Heinz Lehmann Award (2011).

During her career, Tyndale has mentored more than 100 scientists, post-doctoral fellows and students and published more than 200 papers.

## ON TARGET...Celebrating continuous quality improvement at the SOP

According to results released by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, 2011 was a successful year for SOP students who made their initial attempt at passing the North American Pharmacy Licensure Exam (NAPLEX).

All but one of the 119 pharmacy students who took the exam for the first time during one of the three 2011 testing periods scored a passing grade — a success rate of 99.16 percent.

In Texas, 772 pharmacy school graduates took the NAPLEX for the first time during 2011 and 735 passed, giving the state a combined success rate of 95.21 percent.

Across the country in 2011, 11,880 pharmacy school graduates took the NAPLEX for the first time and 11,365 passed, producing a national success rate of 95.66 percent.

## Getting to know...

### Becci Stephens Unit Coordinator Department of Pharmacy Practice - Lubbock

Becci Stephens was born in Amherst, Texas. Although she has lived in Lubbock for the last 35 years (“gee, that makes me really old,” she said), her family moved around a lot when she was growing up, so she has also lived in Seattle; Green River, Wyo.; Amarillo; and Hobbs, N. M.

Stephens has worked for SOP Regional Dean Dr. Charles Seifert since August 2007. She also helps the TTUHSC Pharmacy manage its accounts.

“Before then, I worked in the MPIP Business Office for 23 years,” Stephens said. “I love my job and the people I work with.”

Stephens has two children and two grandchildren. Her son,

Ben, and his children, Shelby and Chris, live in Lubbock. Her daughter, Stephanie, and son-in-law, Jonathan, live in Oklahoma City.



Becci Stephens (center) enjoys being surrounded by her family.

“I get to have lots of fun with my grandchildren,” Stephens said. “I just wish I had one-tenth of their energy.”

Stephens also has a 17-year-old manx cat named Cleo she inherited from Stephanie when Stephanie left for college.

In her spare time, Stephens enjoys reading, spending time with her grandchildren and playing the video game Angry Birds.

“I want to complete my MBA someday,” Stephens said. “I only lack one class, but with the money crunch everyone is going through it’s been hard to come up with the money.”

## SOP Photo Gallery

*Amarillo students pose for a National Wear Red Day photo to show their support for the American Heart Association. The SOP's Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity chapter organized the Feb. 3 event to kick off National Heart Month.*



*State Representative Four Price visited the TTUHSC Amarillo campus and the Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC) in February. During his visit, Price discussed the role the poison center plays in the community with Dr. Jeanie Jaramillo, SOP assistant professor and TPPC managing director.*



*SOP staff members and cancer survivors Shari Morris (left), Cora Bailey and Mike Schwettmann shared their personal stories at the Cancer Patient Advocacy Forum Feb. 15 on the Amarillo SOP campus.*



*SOP resident Dr. Alexandra Barnette and a young volunteer go over instructions for a study she is conducting to find out how children react to different tastes used to flavor medications.*



*SOP Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Weis (right) discusses SOP research that is funded by the American Heart Association (AHA) at the Meet the Geeks fundraiser in January. Weis and the SOP hosted the event to help AHA jump start its 2012 Go Red for Women campaign.*



*Sharon Mears (center), senior administrative assistant and one of the SOP's first employees, poses with family members at a reception to mark her retirement and celebrate her contributions to the school.*

