

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

TTUHSC.EDU/PHARMACY

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY TO CELEBRATE CLASS OF 2025



On May 17, the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy Class of 2025 will receive their PharmD degrees at the Amarillo Civic Center Auditorium. Alex Varkey, PharmD, the current senior director of strategic accounts at Visante, and past President of APhA, will deliver the address to graduates. Of the 95 graduates who make up the class of 2025, 29 will go on to residency programs, 2 will go on to a fellowship program, 15 will have received PharmD/MBA dual degrees, and 6 will have received honors in research designations. The full commencement program is available [here](#).

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear SOP Team Members, Alumni, and Friends,
Our students and team members have had a productive spring, demonstrated from several recognitions won at the local, regional, and national levels. I'm very proud of all the accomplishments we've made. I am excited for tomorrow's commencement ceremony. I hope everyone enjoys a relaxing summer and look forward to seeing you in the new academic year!

—Grace M. Kuo, PharmD, MPH, PhD



AHMED RECOGNIZED AS TAMEST PROTÉGÉ



Mahmoud Ahmed, PhD, professor of pharmaceutical sciences in Amarillo, was one of two TTUHSC researchers recognized as Texas Academy of Medicine, Engineering, Science & Technology (TAMEST) Protégés, joining an elite group of early-career researchers selected for the TAMEST 2025 Annual Conference: Transformational Breakthroughs.

The TAMEST Protégé Program serves as a mentorship tool for researchers, providing them with guidance from established TAMEST members. This honor reflects both individual excellence and TTUHSC's commitment to fostering the next generation of scientific pioneers.

COX WINS AACP EXCELLENCE AWARD



Craig Cox, PharmD, professor of pharmacy practice and TTUHSCSOP regional dean in Lubbock, is the 2025 recipient of the AACP Excellence in Experiential Education Award! The award is given by the Experiential Education Section of AACP that promotes excellence in experiential education, develops, maintains and supports networking, fosters innovation, and disseminates best practices.

GERMAN NAMED NAI SENIOR MEMBER

To recognize her significant contributions to biomedical science and engineering, Nadia German, PhD, director of the Medicinal Chemistry program at TTUHSCSOP, has been named to the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) 2025 class of Senior Members. She will be inducted June 23-26 during the Senior Member Induction Ceremony at NAI's 14th Annual Conference in Atlanta.





RURAL HEALTH DAY AT THE CAPITOL

A contingent of TTUHSC faculty, staff and alumni visited the Texas State Capitol in Austin for Rural Health Day at the Capitol. The group spent the day visiting about TTUHSC’s exceptional item request for the 89th Texas Legislative Session—funding for the formation of the TTUHSC Rural Cancer Collaborative.

Learn more here. → <https://bit.ly/ttuhsc89th>

FACULTY AWARDED NIH GRANT

Mahmoud Ahmed, PhD, and Jenny Wilkerson, PhD, both with the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, were recently awarded a newly funded, 5 year NIH R01 grant titled, “Identification of novel lead EphB1/2 tyrosine kinase inhibitors targeting peripheral neuropathic pain.” The \$1.9 million brain drug discovery project will investigate novel treatments for neuropathic pain, with less development of tolerance and unwanted side effects.



NACDS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

In April, TTUHSCSOP was one of just 10 schools selected for scholarships and grants by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation, in recognition of innovative and inspiring educational programs. TTUHSCSOP was selected for a scholarship in the Inspiring Interest and Opportunities in Pharmacy Education category for plans to grow the “Pioneer Pathway” to expand access to pharmacy education with the goal of training future pharmacists on care services in rural and other areas of the community.

TEAM MEMBERS HAVE WORK PUBLISHED



Carlos Alvarez, PharmD, associate professor of pharmacy practice, had an article, titled "Healthcare utilization, mortality, and cardiovascular events following GLP1-RA initiation in chronic kidney disease," published in Nature Communications.



Kalin Clifford, PharmD, associate professor of pharmacy practice, had an article, titled "The state of the academic pharmacy workforce specializing in geriatrics," published in the Gerontology & Geriatrics Education Journal.



Krystal Edwards, PharmD, professor of pharmacy practice and associate dean for career development, had an article, titled "Adopting a Freudenfreude Mindset in Your Leadership Approach," published in the Journal of Higher Education Management.



Trey Putnam, PhD, and **Indhumathy Subramaniyan, MS**, had a publication, titled "Impact of obesity on doxorubicin pharmacokinetics in women with breast cancer," published in the Journal of Oncology Pharmacy Practice.

MAHAN SPEAKS AT LUNCHEON

On April 24, Becky Mahan spoke at that Abilene Hope in Bloom Luncheon for the Alzheimer's Association. During her talk, Mahan covered recent updates in medication for dementia.



ACHIEVEMENTS CELEBRATED

On Wednesday, May 14, all four TTUHSC-SOP campuses participated in the annual Celebration of Achievement. The event included recognition for P4 awards, student professionalism, leadership awards, faculty teacher and teams of the year, staff achievement and preceptor awards. Award recipients are listed below.



BOWL OF HYGIEIA

Denise Anderson



WOLTERS KLUWER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN CLINICAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chandler Batson



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Denise Anderson



EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY PRACTICE

Jamie Nguyen



VIATRIS EXCELLENCE IN PHARMACY

Afsana Musharof

HANNAH LEIGH THOMPSON RESILIENCE AWARD

McKenzie Linley

SUPERIOR PATIENT CARE

Michaela Reynolds

EXCELLENCE IN AMBULATORY CARE

Ronnie McCarty

EXCELLENCE IN GERIATRICS

Faith Collum

EXCELLENCE IN INPATIENT CLINICAL PRACTICE

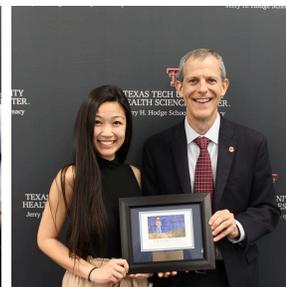
Chandler Batson

JANIE ROBLES EXCELLENCE IN PEDIATRICS

Chandler Batson and Alán Nguyen

HAROLD MILLER MOST INFLUENTIAL PROFESSOR

Debra Notturmo-Strong



OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN

Abilene - Oluwanbu Olanrewaju (P4)
Amarillo - Chandler Batson (P4)
Dallas - Irina Gradinaru (P4)
Lubbock - Darian Higgins (P3)

OUTSTANDING SERVICE

Abilene - Denise Anderson (P4)
Amarillo - Taylor Le (P3)
Dallas - Linh Hoang (P3)

P1 GO GETTER

Abilene - Kreed Averhoff
Amarillo - Madalyn Raymond
Dallas - Janika Tobias

OUTSTANDING PATIENT ADVOCATE

Abilene - Jordan Miller (P3)
Amarillo - Reng Thanga (P3)
Dallas - Ronnie McCarty (P4)
Lubbock - Maci Godbey (P3)

STUDENT ROLE MODEL

Abilene - Denise Anderson (P4)
Amarillo - Blake Connell (P2)
Dallas - Michael Tierney (P2)

P2 RISING CLINICIAN

Abilene - Amber Jones
Amarillo - Justin Hierholzer
Dallas - Asha Oommen

EXCELLENCE IN IPE

Taygan Henderson (P4)

EXCELLENCE IN STAFF SERVICES

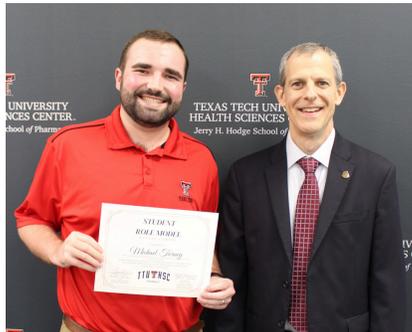
Allison Rogers (Abilene)
Jacey Brown (Dallas)

STAFF MENTOR

Abilene - Mackenzie Lewis
Amarillo - Jean Haynes
Dallas - Amanda Hines

PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR

Abilene - Grace Zalesak
Amarillo - Vida Haddad
Dallas - Carlos Irula
Lubbock - Shalyn Cox



TEACHING TEAMS OF THE YEAR

P1 – Biological Foundations in Pharmacy
P2 – Integrated Therapeutics & Practice IV: Infectious Diseases
P3 – Integrated Therapy and Practice V: Neurosensory/Psychiatry

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

P1 – Amal Abruahma
P2 – Drew Ramirez
P3 – Chris Selby

ADJUNCT PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR

Abilene - Becky Mahan
Amarillo - Kenna Payne
Dallas - Lisa Chastain
Lubbock - Craig Cox

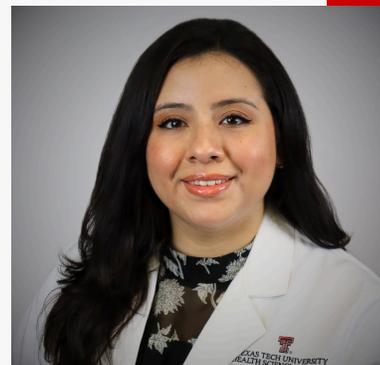
MATCH DAY RESULTS REVEALED



On March 19, pharmacy students interested in completing a residency after they graduate learned where they would spend the next stage of their training during Phase I of Pharmacy Residency Match Day. A combined 36 students from all four TTUHSC-SOP campuses participated in the program; 21 students were successfully matched during Phase I. Additionally, one student secured a residency with the Indian Health System outside of the match and nine TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy alumni successfully matched with PGY-2 programs. On April 23, six more students matched during Phase II, bringing our total to 28 students (75%) matched.

MONTENEGRO APPOINTED TO APHA SIG

Itzayanne Montenegro, P2 at the Abilene campus, was appointed to the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) special interest group (SIG) of Care of Underserved Patients and will serve as a community leader member at large for 2025-2026.



TEAM ADVANCES TO ACCP NATIONAL COMPETITION

Morgan Norona, Asha Oommen and Sheridan Crenshaw, all P2s at the Dallas campus, are members of one of only 20 teams nationwide to have advanced to Round 3 of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Clinical Research Challenge. They will draft and submit a full research proposal. The winner of the competition will be announced on June 11.





AMARILLO HOSTS STUDENT RESEARCH DAY

On April 11, more than 100 student and trainee researchers from TTUHSC in Amarillo presented research findings at the 2025 Student Research Day. The symposium highlighted the research accomplishments of students, residents and faculty in their respective fields of study with poster and oral presentations. Students from the TTUHSC-Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, and TTUHSC Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Professions participated.

15 STUDENTS RECEIVE WTPA SCHOLARSHIPS



In March, the West Texas Pharmacy Association awarded scholarships to TTUHSC-SOP students Kreed Averoff, Shiva Azar Goshasb, Logan Bishop, Ekon Juarez, and Jacy Sconce of the Abilene campus; Reagan Bills, Dominic Mashburn, and Connor Pearson of the Amarillo campus; Paulina Cruz, Mackenzie Gunn, Asha Oommen, and Maheen Polani of the Dallas campus; Duke Cullins, Ashley Cummings, and Jennifer Hale of the Lubbock campus. View a full list of scholarships and recipients [here](#).



TPPC CONCLUDES SPRING MEDICATION CLEANOUTS

The Texas Panhandle Poison Center, with the help of TTUHSC-Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy students, faculty and staff, hosted three Medication Cleanout events on the Abilene (4/12), Lubbock (4/19) and Amarillo (4/26) campuses to help prevent poisoning and misuse of medications. The three events saw a total of 837 residents drop off more than 3142 pounds of unused, expired or no longer needed medications and 837 pounds of sharps.

MEDICATION TAKE BACK DAY - DALLAS



In April, our Dallas campus students partnered with local police to help with the DEA National Medication Take Back Day at three different sites in Arlington. The event aimed to make communities safer and healthier by removing unneeded medications from the community.

STUDENTS JUDGE SCIENCE FAIR



In March, School of Pharmacy students at the Abilene campus served as judges for the local St. John's Episcopal School Science Fair. This is the sixth consecutive year our students have judged the event.



STUDENTS TOUR ALCON LABORATORIES

Janika Tobias, PI at the Dallas campus, recently worked with TTUHSC – Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy's Industry Pharmacists Organization (IPhO) to coordinate a tour of Alcon Laboratories, Inc.—a pharmaceutical/medical device company that leads in ophthalmic products and devices. During the tour, 15 students were able to witness first-hand the marketing and manufacturing facilities, as well as the journey from raw materials to finished products.



DISASTER DAYS PREPARE STUDENTS



The Amarillo and Lubbock campuses held Disaster Day, an interprofessional emergency response simulation, events that allowed interprofessional teams of students to work together in a realistic disaster response scenarios to diagnose, treat and care for standardized patients role-playing victims affected by the natural disaster.



Amarillo SOP students joined TTUHSC Schools of Medicine, Nursing, GSBS and the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine students for a simulated wildfire scenario similar to the one that burned close to TTUHSC in 2018.

Lubbock SOP students joined other TTUHSC Lubbock campus schools, Angelo State University students, Texas Tech University theater faculty and students and South Plains College EMS for a simulated tornado scenario.

SNPHA TAKE PART IN HEALTH FAIR

In March, Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) members were part of the 4th Annual Living My Best Healthy Life Health Fair hosted by Frazier Revitalization. Dallas campus students helped provide diabetes and hypertension screenings along with education on healthy lifestyle management to attendees.



STUDENTS VOLUNTEER AT CHARITABLE PHARMACY

In April, TTUHSC pharmacy students volunteered at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul North Texas Charitable Pharmacy. During the event, students conducted blood pressure checks and lipid screenings to the Vickery Meadow neighborhood in Dallas.

SOP SUMMER CAMP OPPORTUNITY



Our Abilene and Amarillo campuses are excited to be offering Rx Summer Camps for rising 9th-12th grade students interested in learning more about the pharmacy profession. These immersive camps will serve as STEM-driven college prep experiences with hands-on projects, laboratory activities, simulations, field trips and engaging presentations. Camps will take place on the following dates:

- Abilene Campus: June 23 - 26, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Amarillo Campus: June 23 - 25, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

TTUHSC NAMED TO NAI TOP 100



On April 17, for the third consecutive year, the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) ranked the Texas Tech University System among the Top 100 U.S. Universities Granted Utility Patents for 2024. The TTU System, which includes Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) and TTUHSC El Paso, ranked 75th.

To view the entire list of NAI's Top U.S. Universities Granted Utility Patents in 2024, visit the [NAI Top 100 webpage](#).



FACULTY COME TOGETHER FOR RETREAT

On May 15-17, faculty members from all four campuses gathered at the Amarillo campus for a retreat that was planned by the Faculty Development Committee. During the retreat, faculty took part in team building, development and training sessions, and finished the week with graduation ceremonies.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



MACKENZIE COLEMAN

PharmD, MBS, Class of 2016, Amarillo Campus

Coleman is currently an Investigational Drug Service Pharmacist at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, MO. A native Texan, she completed a PGY1 residency at BSA Hospital in Amarillo, TX. Colemannow lives in the Kansas City area with her husband and dainty, 100-pound Belgian Malinois mix, Gamma. At work, she spends most of her time reviewing protocols, investigator's brochures, and sponsor drug monographs to help ready the site to host clinical trials, as well as preparing and dispensing investigational medications for patients. She spends one day of the week either rounding with the inpatient hematology/oncology service or staffing the oncology clinic.

WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED?

No two studies are the same, so each day I get to experience something different! It's exciting to be part of the research team, seeing new treatments that are part of Phase I, II, or III trials before they are brought to market. I have the opportunity to collaborate with a wide variety of individuals: principal investigators (often physicians), clinical research nurses, regulatory coordinators, industry sponsors, and most importantly, patients and their caregivers when I review new medications with them.



WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART/MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

Our hospital was one of the clinical sites for the Children's Oncology Group's AALL1731 trial. I was able to work with our wonderful oncology research team to help get this complicated trial up and running at our site so that children in our region could take part. I was soon dubbed the "Blina Queen" within the pharmacy and our research group for all my work with dispensing blinatumomab, the investigational agent. Findings from this trial resulted in blinatumomab setting a new treatment standard for most children with newly diagnosed B-cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia). Being part of research that has improved the lives of children with cancer is one of the most rewarding aspects of my career.

BE THE NEXT ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTED BY:

Emailing photos and the following information to the Board at sopaa.ttuhscc@gmail.com.

- Tell us about yourself.
- Where are you now?
- Where do you practice?
- What keeps you motivated?
- What has been the most rewarding part/moment of your career so far?
- What are your favorite things to do outside of pharmacy?

MEET THE 24-25 SOP ALUMNI BOARD



Athena Cannon - Communications Officer

Class of 2020, Abilene
Clinical Pharmacist - Indian Health Board Medical
Clinic & U.S. Sports Pharmacy Group



Mikala Conatser - Member at Large

Class of 2011, Amarillo
PIC New Solutions Functional Wellness Pharmacy



Daniel Capps - Secretary

Class of 2020, Amarillo
PIC at Hometown Pharmacy in Plainview, TX



Amber Elliott - Chair

Class of 2009, Amarillo
(Pharmacotherapy Residency 2011)
Associate Director, Medical Science Liaison - Sandoz



Abimbola Farinde - Member at Large

Class of 2010, Abilene
Professor with Columbia Southern University and
Clinical staff pharmacist with Vibra Health



Ike Oguejiofor - Member at Large

Class of 2018
Clinical Pharmacist & Residency Program
Coordinator at Terry Reilly Health Services



Dustin Wynne - Member at Large

Class of 2011, Amarillo
Pharmacy Manager at BSA Harrington Cancer Center



Jacob Rogers - Past Chair

Class of 2020, Abilene
Ambulatory Care Clinical Pharmacist at HSC Health -
Center for Older Adults and Assistant Professor of
Pharmacotherapy at UNTHSC

THE ROLE OF THE ALUMNI BOARD

The Alumni Board is the official representative for the larger SOP alumni group. The primary goal of the Alumni Board is to connect past graduates with the TTUHSC-SOP to promote collaborative efforts across current students and past graduates.

WHAT WE DO

The Board works to enhance the TTUHSC alumni network, asks alumni for feedback on Board supported initiatives, and encourage alumni to submit initiatives that impact their pharmacy practice.

HOW ALUMNI CAN GET INVOLVED

- Provide continuing education (CE) content on a topic of interest/expertise
- Mentor current TTUHSC student pharmacists
- Attend alumni and TTUHSC sponsored events
- Donate to "Adopt-a-White Coat"

UPCOMING EVENTS



White Coat Ceremonies for the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy Class of 2029 will be held by each campus during the month of August. Receiving the white coat is a reminder of the commitment incoming students are making to an honorable and trusted profession.

August 2: Dallas, Creekview HS Auditorium, Carrollton, 10 a.m.

August 3: Abilene, Paramount Theatre, 1 p.m.

August 9: Amarillo, Harrington Lecture Hall, Amarillo Campus, 10 a.m.

MAY:

- 17: Graduation, 10am. Amarillo Civic Center Auditorium
- 26: Memorial Day Holiday
- 27-June 4: NAPLEX Now Review, All Campuses

JUNE:

- 9-14 and 16-19: Camp New Day (Diabetes Camp)
- 19: Emancipation Day Holiday
- 23-25: [Amarillo Rx Summer Camp](#)
- 23-26: [Abilene Rx Summer Camp](#)

JULY:

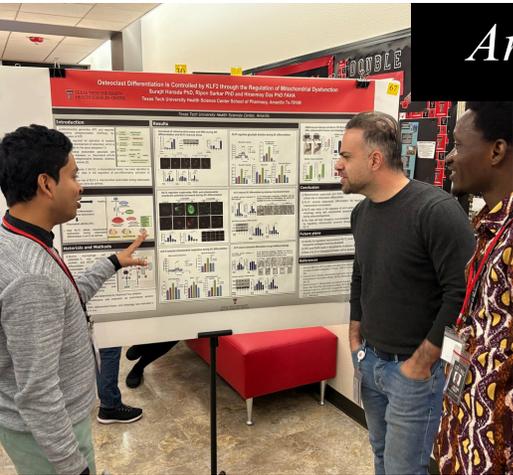
- 4: Fourth of July Holiday
- 18-20: Texas Pharmacy Association Meeting in Austin, TX
- 19-22: AACP Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL
- 31-August 1: Texas Pharmacy Congress Meeting at TTUHSC Dallas

AUGUST:

- 4-8: P1 Bootcamp
- 11: First Day of Fall Semester



Fun Around Campus



Amarillo Research Day



Alcon Lab Tour



TSHP



Medication Cleanout



Have something or someone you'd like to see featured in the SOP Newsletter? Send a photo and a brief description of what you would like to see featured to amber.bustos@ttuhsc.edu