



# TECH SCRIPT

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

**Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy Annual Report | 2021-2022**

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# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



127

students in  
graduating  
class of 2022



36

students matched  
with residency  
programs



4

students are going  
on to fellowship  
programs



20

students graduating  
have Pharm.D./MBA  
dual degrees



1M

Scholarship Award  
Total for 2021-2022  
school year to 93%  
#TTUHSCSOP  
students who applied



18M

Annual research  
budget for new and  
continuing funding



# **FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS**



# SIX FACULTY MEMBERS WIN PRESIDENT AWARDS



In November 2021, Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., president of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) recognized the efforts of six TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy faculty members at the virtual State of the University & Faculty Award Convocation.

Charles Seifert, Pharm.D., and Rebecca Sleeper, Pharm.D., received the President's Award for Interprofessional Teamwork for their work with Betsy Goebel Jones, EdD, and Lara Johnson, M.D., MHS.

Trista Bailey, Pharm.D., Amie Blaszczyk, Pharm.D., Kalin Clifford, Pharm.D., and Becky Mahan, Pharm.D., received the President's Team Teaching Award.

# ELEVEN FACULTY MEMBERS RECEIVE TENURE/PROMOTIONS



Faculty promotions and tenure appointments for 2021-2022 include:

## 2021:

Abe Al-Ahmad, Ph.D., M.S., Pharmaceutical Sciences Department – Tenure and Promotion, Associate Professor

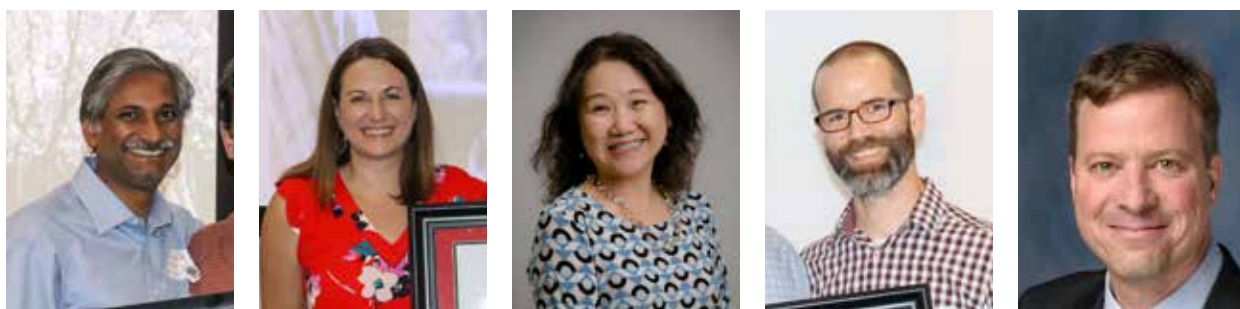
Trista Bailey, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Promotion, Associate Professor

Amie Blaszczyk, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Promotion, Professor

Nakia Duncan, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Promotion, Associate Professor

Nadia German, Ph.D., Pharmaceutical Sciences Department - Tenure and Promotion, Associate Professor

Monica Mathys, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Promotion, Professor



## 2022:

Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D., Pharmaceutical Sciences Department – Tenure, Professor

Ashley Higbea, Pharm.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Promotion, Associate Professor

Grace Kuo, Pharm.D., MPH, Ph.D., Pharmacy Practice Department – Tenure, Professor

Devin Lowe, Ph.D., Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology Department –  
Tenure and Promotion, Associate Professor

Lance McMahon, Ph.D., Pharmaceutical Sciences Department – Tenure, Professor



## CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

# TTUHSCSOP EARNS CPRIT CORE FACILITY SUPPORT AWARD GRANT

In August, the Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas awarded a Core Facility Support Award Grant to TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy.

The grant provides an anticipated \$2,965,226 to support the purchase of new instrumentation and support core infrastructure for the North Texas Clinical Pharmacology Cancer Core (NTCPCC).

The CPRIT grant is supporting multiple faculty projects on the School of Pharmacy Amarillo and Abilene campuses, as well as recruiting new faculty to TTUHSC and providing some core resources for cancer research.

Different faculty researchers will receive support from the grant each year, with the first year of support focusing on projects related to brain tumors and breast, colon and pancreatic cancers.

Junior faculty members and their mentors who

received first-year support include Nadezhda German, Ph.D., Amarillo (Mentor: Thomas Abbruscato, Ph.D., Amarillo) and Devin B. Lowe, Ph.D., Abilene (Mentor: Sanjay Srivastava, Ph.D., Abilene).

The continuing support provided by CPRIT will allow the NTCPCC to be better positioned to facilitate translational oncology research by purchasing updated and state-of-the-art mass spectrometers and supporting a team of scientists to expand the information obtained during drug development of cancer therapeutics. The new mass spectrometers will help move the NTCPCC toward its goal of maximizing the amount of information obtained from each precious clinical sample.

The additional funding will allow for the purchase of a Sciex 7500 QTRAP—one of, if not the most sensitive quantitative mass spectrometers on the market, as well as a Sciex ZenoTOF 7600 system—one of the most sensitive high-resolution Q-TOF systems commercially available.





# RESEARCHER AWARDED NIH GRANT

Pulmonary lymphangioleiomyomatosis (LAM) is a rare form of cancer that affects up to eight of every one million women of reproductive age worldwide. This disease is characterized by the uncontrolled growth (proliferation) of tumor cells that are biologically similar to smooth muscle cells in the lungs, kidneys and lymphatics; these cells will spread and invade various locations throughout the body. Currently there are approximately 1,500 confirmed cases in the U.S.

To better understand the role of extracellular vesicles (EV) in the spread and progression of LAM, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded a four-year, \$2.8 million grant to Magdalena Karbowniczek, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of immunotherapeutics and biotechnology at the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy. Based upon the study's progress and the availability of funds, the NIH could extend

the grant to five years and approximately \$3.5 million.

EVs are tiny nanometer size particles released by healthy cells to “communicate” with other cells. Karbowniczek said they also are thought to facilitate cancer metastasis; however, their role in LAM has not yet been explored.

*“We hope to establish EVs—and the mechanisms that control their release from [some] cells and uptake by other cells—as targets for new LAM therapy,” Karbowniczek said. “There are currently medications that target EVs that are tested in clinical trials for other cancers; therefore, if we discover that EVs are promoting LAM progression and spread, they can be repurposed for LAM.”*



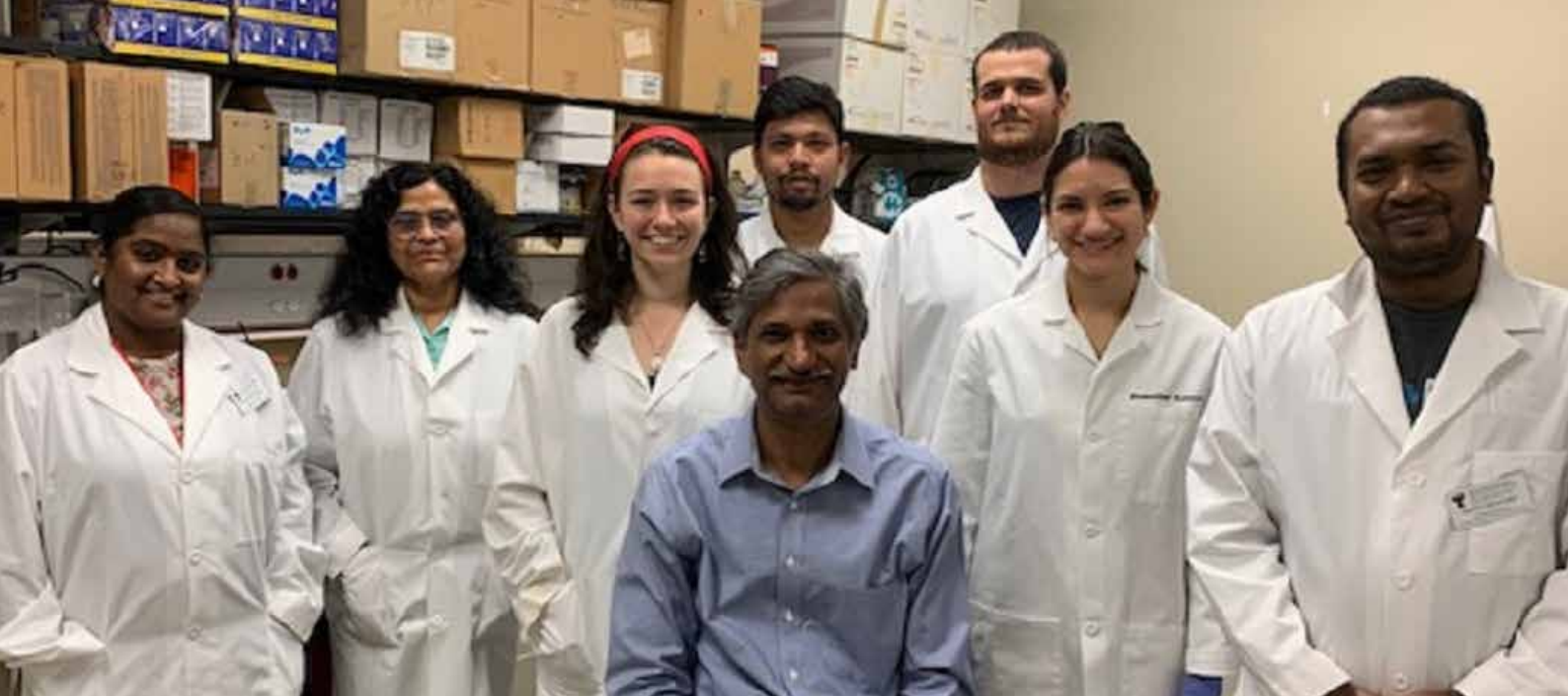


There are two main types of LAM: sporadic LAM, which develops spontaneously, and LAM associated with tuberous sclerosis complex, an inheritable genetic condition manifesting with multiple tumors in different organs. The therapeutic options for LAM patients are very limited, as the only drug currently available for LAM is everolimus, an analog of rapamycin that in some patients can slow the progress of disease. However, everolimus does not stop lung destruction, and the disease relapses once treatment ends.

*“We hope that through studies funded by this grant we will be able to identify new therapeutic targets, and that knowledge gained through this work will be instrumental for the development of new therapies for LAM patients,” Karbowniczek added.*

The project is a collaboration with the University of Cincinnati (UC); Jane Yu, Ph.D., a professor of internal medicine at the UC College of Medicine also is a co-principal investigator (PI) on this grant. Karbowniczek and Yu have collaborated for almost 20 years after initially investigating LAM together as postdoctoral trainees under Lisa Henske, M.D., a world-renowned LAM expert at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia.

TTUHSC co-investigators for the grant include Irene La-Beck, Pharm.D., and Maciej Markiewski, M.D., Ph.D. UC co-investigator Frank X. McCormack, M.D., who leads international randomized trials for LAM, also will provide expertise necessary for these studies.



# TTUHSC TECHNOLOGY LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL CLINICAL TRIAL TO TREAT DRY EYE DISEASE

Several studies conducted over the last decade have concluded that dry eye disease (DED) affects up to 50% of the U.S. population, creating a liability for the nation's health care system that is estimated to exceed \$50 billion annually. And though females and patients living with autoimmune disorders show a propensity for developing DED, the condition appears in all ethnicities and population demographics as people age.

Despite the many existing DED treatments options, Hironmoy Das, Ph.D., a professor of pharmaceutical sciences at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, said clinicians and researchers have continued to see a need to develop safer and more effective treatment options.

With that in mind, Das developed a technology derived

from corneal epithelial stem cells to improve outcomes for DED patients. Corneal epithelial stem cells are located and obtained solely from the limbus, which is the area of the eye where the cornea and conjunctiva intersect. The results of their clinical trial, "Corneal Epithelial Stem Cell Supernatant in the Treatment of Severe Dry Eye Disease: A Pilot Study," were published July 16 in *The Journal of Clinical Ophthalmology*.

The research team also included Sloan W. Rush, M.D., from the Panhandle Eye Group in Amarillo, Texas, who led the clinical trial, and Jennifer Chain, Ph.D., from the Oklahoma Blood Institute in Oklahoma City.

Other than a few treatments that necessitate the use of invasive surgery or employ biologic material that is not specifically intended for the ocular surface, there currently are no studies in which a safe and impactful

therapeutic biologic agent for DED is reported. Das said that makes his team's clinical study unique because it explores for the first time a novel, patient-delivered topical application derived from expanded human corneal epithelial stem cells for treating severe DED in humans. Normally, stem cells are injected into a patient, but in this case, rather than injecting the stem cells, Das' team made a product from the stem cells that is applied like eye drops.

*"It is very exciting because this is the first time my research has led to a clinical trial," Das said. "Laboratory investigators cannot perform clinical trials, so we depend on clinicians like Dr. Rush."*

Because there were no Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) facilities available in the Amarillo, Texas area at the time the study began, Das and Rush collaborated with the Oklahoma Blood Institute. GMP facilities adhere to a specific and detailed system of regulations from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) designed to ensure products are manufactured consistently and meet rigorous quality control standards.

As a GMP facility, the Oklahoma Blood Institute can isolate and expand human cells such as stem cells that can then be transplanted into humans, or in this case, used to derive a topically applied medicine. The corneal epithelial stem cells used in the medicine were obtained from donor tissues from an eye bank.

For the clinical trial, Rush identified 17 patients suffering from severe DED, as determined by a score greater than or equal to 14 on the Standardized Patient Evaluation of Eye Dryness (SPEED™) questionnaire and a score greater than or equal to 40 on the Ocular Surface Disease Index (OSDI©). All patients in the clinical trial also had documented attempts to treat their DED using at least six, and as many as 14, different conventional dry eye therapies.

*"Nothing was helping them; they were in a very severe condition," Das said.*

*"Some of them could only go outside in the dark because their inflammation was so bad that sunlight would burn their eyes."*

During the clinical trial, each patient self-administered the Das team's topical corneal epithelial stem cell-derived product four times a day in both eyes for 12 weeks. At that time, patient-reported outcome measures were determined primarily via the SPEED™ questionnaire, the OSDI© score and a visual analog score produced by using the University of North Carolina Dry Eye Management Scale©.

When compared to each patient's baseline scores, the 12-week results showed SPEED™ questionnaire scores improved by an average of 4.7 points, or 23% and OSDI© scores improved by an average of 10.9 points, or 17.1%. In addition, the visual analog scores improved by an average of 1.1 points (14%).

None of the clinical trial patients reported any adverse reactions or significant side effects, and though not allowed until the FDA approves the product, all asked to resume its use when the 12-week trial ended.

Das said the success of the product in the clinical trial is likely because the product does two things simultaneously: it regenerates damaged tissue in the eye and reduces inflammation.

*"Most dry eye disease patients will benefit," Das stressed. "Current dry eye drugs do not regenerate any of the eye tissues, which are getting damaged. Stem cells have the power to regenerate the tissues, and they also can reduce the inflammation, which is often the source of eye pain."*

Das said the university has filed for patents in the U.S. and Europe, and the eye drops are now undergoing third-party validation in a double-blinded study to move the product closer to market.





# RESEARCHERS RECEIVE GLOBAL RECOGNITION

The global preeminence of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) is highlighted by a widely publicized citation database created at Stanford University. The comprehensive database, located within a report entitled “A standardized citation metrics author database annotated for scientific field,” shows that TTUHSC is the academic home to several of the world’s top-ranked biomedical and pharmaceutical researchers.

There are many ways TTUHSC faculty demonstrate research excellence. They secure the most highly competitive external grant awards, receive issued patents for their discoveries, publish in widely acclaimed scientific journals, and receive lifetime achievement awards from internationally recognized scientific organizations. The Stanford citation algorithm further underscores TTUHSC’s reputation as a premier academic health center.

The study contains a meta-analysis of the world’s nearly 7 million published scientists, present and past. The top 2% of global researchers were identified by assigning them to different categories of scientific expertise. In addition to measuring the frequency with which their published works were cited, the algorithm considered both the quality of the journals and the authorship rank for each publication based on the position of an individual among co-authors.

Global information and analytics leader Elsevier released an updated version of the list of more than 100,000 of the most-cited authors across all scientific fields at the end of 2021. The following current and retired TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy faculty members are included in the top 2% global ranking; Quentin Smith, Sanjay Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, Lance McMahon and Cynthia Raehl.



## DAS EARNS DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH AWARD

In March, Texas Tech University System (TTU System) Chancellor Tedd L. Mitchell, M.D., Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., and TTUHSC Provost and Chief Academic Officer Darrin D'Agostino, D. O., presented the 2022 Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching and Research Awards.

Recognizing academic excellence, the honors are the most prestigious awards granted to faculty throughout the TTU System. The awards are funded by gifts to the Chancellor's Council, a giving society that supports the chancellor's priorities across the TTU System.

Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D., a professor in the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, was the recipient of the Chancellor's Council Distinguished Research Award. The award, which recognizes outstanding research, scholarship and creative activity of faculty members in the developmental stages of their careers, came with a \$5,000 stipend and an engraved medallion.

Das joined TTUHSC in 2016 and, for more than a decade, his work — funded by multiple NIH grants — has investigated how Kruppel-like Factor 2, a gene that codes protein into a specific human chromosome, influences the development of bone and musculoskeletal diseases.

He is a founding member of three start-up companies commercializing his university-based research — the most recent being RegenKera LLC in 2017. The collaborative work on a successful clinical trial led to a new treatment for dry eye disease. Das holds five patents.

Das is a member of National Academy of Inventors, USA, and a Fellow of the American Heart Association. He also serves as a member of the editorial board for several peer-reviewed journals and on the grant review panels of various state, national and international funding agencies.





# RESEARCHERS RECEIVE PATENT FOR CHEMICAL PROBE

Many brain diseases and disorders lead to neuroinflammation, a swelling of brain tissue that is increasingly recognized as one of the telltale signs and disease progression factors of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Neuroinflammation can limit blood flow to areas in the brain, which can lead to the inhibition of the body's natural disease fighting mechanisms.

Traumatic brain injuries also cause significant neuroinflammation. In fact, unresolved and severe brain edema (swelling caused by trapped fluid) is the leading cause of death for traumatic brain injury patients within the first few days of injury.

Because neuroinflammation has been linked to

dopaminergic signaling, Nadia German, Ph.D., director of the Medicinal Chemistry program at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, said there is increasing interest in determining whether the modulation of dopamine levels at the inflammation site can stop or even reverse neurodegeneration.

To help make that determination, German and collaborator Constantinos Mikelis, Ph.D., adjunct associate professor in the TTUHSC Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, have received a U.S. patent for a chemical that targets the brain's dopamine transporter. Affecting the dopamine transporter is one of the ways by which dopamine levels in the brain can be controlled.





In addition to Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and traumatic brain injuries, German said there are other central nervous system disorders, such as glioblastomas (brain tumor) and multiple sclerosis, that also exhibit dopamine-related neuroinflammation, and that could potentially benefit from the newly patented chemical probe.

*“Low levels of dopamine can result in neuroinflammation, neuron death and other non-pleasant effects,” German said. “At the same time, neuroinflammation causes reduction in the expression of dopamine neurons, creating a vicious cycle of cause and effect. By controlling the dopamine levels, we can try to stop this cycle. The specific component we have patented has really great selectivity for the dopamine transporter. It does have some activity at another transporter that regulates the neurotransmitter serotonin, but its affinity to the dopamine transporter is higher—by one hundred-fold—so it’s really, really selective.”*

The Mikelis lab evaluated the different activities displayed by the patented molecule in relation to the various receptors. He also investigated the pharmacokinetic profile of the molecule to ensure it actually reaches the brain at levels that are beneficial to the patient.

*“We used in vitro (outside a living organism; e.g., test tube, culture dish) and in vivo (in a living organism) models, and*

*we tested different molecules to identify the best possible parameters and to select the molecule that we finally patented,” Mikelis added.*

German and Mikelis patented the molecule as a chemical scaffold, a process that adds desired bioactive properties to the core structure of the molecule.

*“Together with our very supportive collaborators Dr. Volker Neugebauer and Dr. Mirla Avila, we just recently published a paper in the journal ACS Chemical Neuroscience where we talk about this,” German said. “To our best knowledge, we are the first to show that dopamine transporter inhibitors reduce levels of neuroinflammation in multiple sclerosis models (mice) at the same level or better than the corticosteroids that we use now.”*

Though the testing and evaluation that led to the patent demonstrated that the specific activity of the molecule has a strong therapeutic potential, it still must pass through several stages of development and approvals before it can become a market-ready drug.

*“It will take some time, I’m sure, but in the end, I’m also sure we will be able to get a molecule with a good drug-likeness profile,” German said. “The gold standard, of course, is oral dosing, but if not, there are many systems we can use for the delivery of the drug.”*



# FACULTY CONTRIBUTE TO COLLECTIVE BOOK ON NEURAL REPAIR

Vardan Karamyan, former TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy faculty, had a collective book, *Methods in Molecular Biology Book focusing on Neural Repair*, where he served as co-editor on published over the summer.

The book is a comprehensive technical synopsis of cutting-edge techniques to measure neural repair and functional recovery after stroke. Many of the techniques support stroke research currently funded by NINDS and NIDA. The book represents at least 31 labs in nine countries on four continents who made a special effort to share their techniques and better the collective science.

TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy faculty members Thomas Abbruscato, Ph.D. and Luca Cucullo, Ph.D. and graduate students Faisil Alamri, Sounak Bagchi, Saeideh Nozohouri, Abdullah Shyaib, Rachita Sumbria and Nasheen Syera also contributed to the book.





# TEACHING AN OLD DRUG NEW TRICKS

For 20 years, Sanjay Srivastava, Ph.D., has investigated existing drugs to determine if they can be repurposed to treat conditions other than those for which they were developed and approved. For much of the last decade, his research has focused on investigating non-cancer drugs which can be repurposed to treat various cancers.

Those efforts recently earned Srivastava a U.S. patent for repurposing pimavanserin to treat various types of cancer. Srivastava, who chairs the Department of Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology at the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, said the patent, titled “Compositions and Methods for Treating Cancer,” covers all applications of the drug in the field of cancer.

*“We can cover all the variants with this patent,” he said. “If we change the structure of this compound, that is covered (by the patent), and if we make any formulation, that also is covered. If anybody wants to use pimavanserin*

*as a cancer therapy, our patent would have to be considered as part of that drug development process because basically, all of the different aspects associated with this drug are covered by this patent.”*

Srivastava began the research that led to the patent by investigating non-cancer drug candidates he hypothesized had the potential for treating brain cancer. He said the rationale behind repurposing drugs is that these drugs are already approved and are being used by patients in clinic.

*“If we find a new purpose for these drugs in different disease models, we can fast track the process and take the drugs to the patients much faster,” Srivastava said. “We gained a comprehensive understanding on the clinical perspective of these repurposed drugs during our preclinical evaluation. This can save us an enormous amount of time and money.”*



Srivastava said the primary hurdle to treating brain tumors is finding an effective drug that can pass through the blood-brain barrier. Formed by cells that line the blood capillaries that supply parts of the central nervous system, including the brain, the blood-brain barrier is a semipermeable barrier responsible for protecting the brain from substances that could be harmful. This includes regulating or preventing the transfer of some drugs and chemicals from the blood to the brain.

*“The blood-brain barrier is a good thing, but the flip side is that some drugs cannot cross the barrier and are then ineffective,” he said.*

Because antidepressant and antipsychotic drugs are able to cross the blood-brain barrier and reach to the brain, Srivastava and his team initially studied penfluridol, a first-generation antipsychotic drug, as a potential treatment for brain cancer.

Several years into their study, Sharavan Ramachandran, Ph.D., one of Srivastava’s former graduate students, found that pimavanserin, a new drug at that time, suppressed the growth of some cancer cells, including pancreatic cancer cells. His investigation eventually found that pimavanserin has the ability to suppress the growth of various other cancer cells, including those associated with pancreatic and brain tumors.

To take their investigation to the next level, Ramachandran, who is named as the patent’s co-inventor, planted tumors into the brains of mice and then treated the mice with pimavanserin. The findings demonstrated that pimavanserin significantly suppressed the growth of brain tumors in animal models.

*“That was very exciting for us,” Srivastava said. “We immediately filed a patent for its application in cancer because nobody had ever shown the anti-cancer effect of pimavanserin; it was only being used for Parkinson’s disease psychosis. What distinguishes pimavanserin from other repurposed antipsychotic drug candidates*

*for cancer is its high selectivity toward the 5-HT<sub>2A</sub> (serotonin) receptor. This property enables pimavanserin to be one of the few second-generation antipsychotic drugs with potentially low toxicity.”*

Once Srivastava presented his team’s findings at a cancer research conference in Chicago, he was immediately contacted by large pharmaceutical companies involved with pimavanserin. Discussions for partnership and development efforts are underway with industry, both domestically and internationally.

The ideal next step for Srivastava and his team is to conduct a window-of-opportunity trial, through a clinical partner, with pimavanserin for a short time period in patients who are waiting for surgery or receiving other therapies. He is especially interested to see how the drug works in patients with glioblastoma, a type of brain tumor he described as being almost a death sentence for patients. Those patients are currently treated with temozolomide, a chemotherapy drug that can extend a patient’s life but doesn’t cure the cancer.

*“We have shown in our research that pimavanserin can potentiate or enhance the effect of temozolomide by inhibiting certain proteins that are responsible for causing resistance to temozolomide in cases of glioblastoma,” he said.*

In addition to finding funds for the trials, Srivastava said his team needs to identify clinicians who are willing to participate in the trials so they can determine whether or not pimavanserin has any active effect against cancer in humans. Once the trials are planned, Srivastava said it generally takes at least five years before investigators are confident the drug produces no significant side effects for patients and is efficacious.

Because pimavanserin is already approved for use in humans, that timeframe could accelerate, but Srivastava said there is no way to predict when the drug could be available to cancer patients until the clinical trial process is complete.

## KLEIN WINS TPA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



Mary Klein, Pharm.D., Assistant Professor for the Department of Pharmacy Practice, received the 2021 Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Pharmacy Association. This award recognizes an individual who has provided outstanding service to the pharmacy profession, the health care community and the Texas Pharmacy Association.

## DAS ELECTED FELLOW OF AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION



Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D., professor in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Department, was elected as a 2021 Fellow of the American Heart Association (FAHA) by the Council on Basic Cardiovascular Sciences (BCVS) of the American Heart Association. The fellowship recognizes and awards excellence, innovative and sustained contributions in the areas of scholarship, practice and/or education and volunteer service.

## HAASE RECEIVES ACCP EDUCATION AWARD



Krystal Haase, Pharm.D., professor and division head of adult medicine in the Department of Pharmacy Practice in Amarillo, was the 2021 recipient of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy Critical Care Practice and Research Network's Education Award. The award recognizes outstanding and sustained contributions to the education of pharmacy students, residents, fellows and critical care practitioners.

## CLIFFORD, MAHAN INDUCTED AS FELLOWS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CONSULTANT PHARMACISTS



Kalin Clifford, Pharm.D., associate professor of pharmacy practice at the Dallas campus and Becky Mahan, Pharm.D., assistant professor of pharmacy practice at the Abilene campus, were inducted as Fellows of the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists at their annual meeting in San Diego.

A portrait of Craig Cox, a man with short brown hair, a goatee, and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is smiling slightly. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green foliage and warm sunlight.

# COX SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT-ELECT OF AACP

In July, Craig Cox, Pharm.D., was sworn in as president-elect of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), the national organization representing pharmacy education in the United States

Cox is a professor of pharmacy practice and vice chair for experiential programs at the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy. He also serves as an ex officio member of the Curricular Affairs Committee and continuing education, as well as chair of the Preceptor Advisory Council.

*“Dr. Cox has extensive experience at the local, state, national and international levels representing our school as well as the pharmacy profession, and he will provide valuable perspectives as president of the AACP,” said Quentin Smith, Ph.D., former dean of the TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy. “This is a tremendous honor for him and for our school.”*

The AACP provides leadership in enhancing the quality of education and training in its member institutions, which includes the 142 schools of pharmacy accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education as well as individual members.



## MACLAUGHLIN HELPS DEVELOP AHA GUIDELINES



Eric MacLaughlin, Pharm.D, Professor and Chair of Pharmacy Practice, assisted in the development of the American Heart Association's most recent scientific statement regarding preventing and managing falls in adults with cardiovascular disease.

Read the full statement [here](#).

## HIGBEA ELECTED ACCP PRN CHAIR



Ashley Higbea, Pharm.D. associate professor of pharmacy practice, was elected Chair of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Education & Training Practice Research Network (EDTR PRN). The EDTR PRN brings together a diverse group of pharmacists with the mission of advancing clinical pharmacy through education and training of students and postgraduate trainees.



A photograph of a group of people, likely at a formal event or ceremony, clapping. The image is heavily filtered with a red color, creating a warm and celebratory atmosphere. The people are shown in profile or three-quarter view, smiling and clapping their hands. The focus is on the foreground, with the background slightly blurred.

# **FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS AND RECOGNITION**



# SCHOOL OF PHARMACY WELCOMES THIRD DEAN

Grace Kuo, Pharm.D., MPH, Ph.D., was named the dean of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, effective May 16, 2022.

Kuo received her Bachelor of Science from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1985 and a Bachelor of Science in pharmacy from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences in 1988. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy from Oregon State University College of Pharmacy in 1998. She also holds a master's and Doctor of Philosophy in public health from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health.

Kuo's clinical expertise is primary care pharmacy practice and medication safety. She has spearheaded development of innovative pharmacist-physician collaborative practice with reimbursement models, and worked with inter-professional teams to design and implement comprehensive medication management practices in both primary care and specialty clinics. Kuo's clinical and translational research focuses on medication safety, pharmacist-physician collaboration, practice-based research, and education research. She has developed educational programming in many areas, including the PharmGenEd (pharmacogenomics education program), which has been used by more than 3,000 healthcare

professionals and faculty in 100+ countries.

Kuo brings experiences from academic administration. She is Professor Emerita in Clinical Pharmacy, Family Medicine and Public Health, and Founding Member of the Halicioğlu Data Science Institute at the University of California (UC) San Diego. Kuo's previous academic leadership roles include associate dean for Academic Clinical Affairs and associate dean for Strategic Planning and Program Development of the School of Pharmacy at the UC San Diego, and dean of the College of Pharmacy at Oregon State University.

She has authored more than 130 publications and abstracts and has served in professional organizations that include the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, American College of Clinical Pharmacy, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists and American Pharmacists Association. She is recently appointed by the Secretary of the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration to serve on the Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-Based Linkages for a three-year term.

Kuo became the third dean for the school following founding dean Arthur Nelson, Ph.D., R.Ph., and Quentin Smith, Ph.D.





# STAFF AND FACULTY HONORED AT ANNUAL EVENTS

In May, all four TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy campuses participated in the annual Celebration of Achievement. The event, which was held in person, recognized professional organizations, government accomplishments, students, faculty and staff, and included faculty and staff trivia.

For Staff, Missy Caton (Abilene), Lisa Bentley (Amarillo), Amanda Hines (Dallas) and Gabby Robledo (Lubbock) received the Staff Mentor award for their campus, while Cat Cox (Amarillo) and Bhaumik Patel (Abilene) both received the Excellence in Staff Services award.







For Faculty, Teachers and Teaching Teams of the Year were recognized for each of the P1–P3 classes. The awardees for each class are as follows:

The P1 class named Sami Nazzal as Professor of the Year and the Pharmacy Foundations and Compounding team, made up of Anna Karamyan, Siva Koganti and Sami Nazzal, as the Teaching Team of the Year.



The P2 Class named Maciej Markiewski as Professor of the Year and the Cardiovascular Pharmacotherapy team, made up of Eric MacLaughlin, Lisa Chastain, Shawn Jones, Vardan Karamyan, Krystal Haase, and Maciej Markiewski, as the Teaching Team of the Year.



The P3 class named Chris Selby as Professor of the year and the Oncology Pharmacotherapy team, made up of Drs. Chris Selby, Tiffany Coomer, Hiranmoy Das, Nakia Duncan, Devin Lowe, Kalkunte Srivenugopal, Ming-Hai Wang and Laurence Wood as the P3 Teaching Team of the Year.



The P4 class, selected Debra Notturmo-Strong as the Most Influential Professor. She received her award, which recognizes the faculty member who has had a significant impact on the student body and exhibited superior leadership, dedicated service and teaching excellence, at the Class of 2022 Graduation Ceremony.

## RETIREES RECOGNIZED

In May, the School had the pleasure of recognizing three retirees at the Faculty Awards and Recognition Banquet held in Amarillo. Retirees who were recognized include:



### SUMMER BALCER, 24 YEARS

Balcer began her service at the School of Pharmacy in 1996 as the Assistant to Dean Nelson. She was appointed as Interim Assistant Dean for Student Services in the Fall of 2002 before being offered the position permanently in June of 2003. Balcer served in that position, as well as Senior Director of Student Affairs for a few years, until she retired.



### MARGE WEIS, 22 YEARS

Weis joined the School of Pharmacy in 1999. During her time here, Weis team lead multiple courses; won many individual and team-teaching awards; served as the school's exam master; received NIH R15, R21, AHA and other research grants; published numerous articles primarily in psychopharmacology, cardiovascular research and vascular research; served on committees at all levels and worked curricular affairs. Weis was also a founding and active member of the Cardiovascular Center at the School of Pharmacy helping to develop junior faculty and students.



### DEE BECKHAM, 4 YEARS

Beckham joined TTUHSC in March of 2018. She worked in the Business Office at the School of Medicine for three years before she accepted a position in the Deans Office at the School of Pharmacy. Beckham spent just over four years supporting the needs of the Deans Office and ensuring that things ran smoothly as the business coordinator.



# TEAM MEMBERS RECOGNIZED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

Twenty-five TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy faculty and staff members were recognized for their years of service at award ceremonies on each campus over the summer.

The Years of Service Award is presented based on the team member's length of service within the institution in five-year increments. Years of Service award honorees receive a certificate and distinctive pin to commemorate the occasion. Recipients included:

25 YEARS - Sherry Luedtke, Pharm.D. and Quentin Smith, Ph.D.

20 YEARS - Jannette Marek and David Simmons, RPh

15 Years - Carlos Alvarez, Pharm.D.; Lisa Bentley; Jill Frost, Pharm.D.; Lisa Miller; Janie Robles, Pharm.D.; Sandy De Los Santos; and Sanjay Srivastava, Ph.D.

10 YEARS - Les Covington, Pharm.D.; Carla Elizabeth Herren; Joyce Moore; Bhaumik Patel; Camille Stoddard; Debra Notturmo-Strong, Pharm.D.; and Laurence Wood, Ph.D.

5 YEARS - Viswanath Arutla, Ph.D.; Levi Campbell, Pharm.D.; Catherine Cox; Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D.; Ashleigh Hoover; Indhu Sankar Subramanian; and Hui Yang



A photograph of a person in a laboratory setting, wearing a white lab coat, a white surgical mask, and a white hairnet. They are holding a small vial with a yellow cap. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. A dark red rectangular box is positioned in the lower right area, containing the text 'STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS**

# COMPETITION AWARDS

## STUDENTS PLACE IN TOP 11 AT ASHP NATIONAL CLINICAL SKILLS COMPETITION



In December, Giftina Wilson, P4 at the Amarillo campus, and Matthew Gehrlein, P3 at the Dallas campus, represented TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) National Clinical Skills competition. The pair placed in the top 11 teams in the nation and only five points out of 100 separated them from the first-place team after round one.

## AMADI PLACES SECOND AT HACKATHON COMPETITION



Nkechi Amadi, P3 and MPH candidate at the Amarillo campus, competed in the American Pharmacists Association's DigitalHealth Rx Hackathon. Approximately 65 participating teams had 48 hours to create, code and pitch a minimum viable product that improved mental health support for health profession students. Nkechi and her team, required to have at least one computer science and one health professional student, earned a second place finish and a grand cash prize for their MedMood prototype that Nkechi designed.

## STUDENTS PLACE IN TOP 4 AT TPA STUDENT PHARMACIST COMPETITIONS



Over the summer, four TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy students competed in competitions held at the Texas Pharmacy Association Conference. As a team, P4s Raj Mehta and Matthew Gehrlein and P3s Hong Tran and Vivian Pham, all from the Dallas campus, placed in the top five in the Student Pharmacist Self-Care Championship. Matthew Gehrlein placed second in the Student Pharmacists Patient Counseling Competition.

# LEADERSHIP AND HONORS

## DIKE SELECTED AS STUDENT LIAISON FOR METROPLEX SOCIETY OF HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACISTS



Amara Dike, a P3 at the Dallas campus, was selected as the 2021-2022 TTUHSC Student Liaison for Metroplex Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP). In this position, Amara worked with pharmacists, students and technicians in the Dallas-Fort Worth area to promote student engagement through the opportunities MSHP has to offer.

## SIEBENBERG APPOINTED REGIONAL LIAISON FOR PHI LAMBDA SIGMA



In October, Phi Lambda Sigma, the Pharmacy Leadership Society, appointed Jennifer Siebenberg, a P3 at the Dallas campus, as their Regional Liaison of Region D for 2021-2022. Regional liaisons serve a vital role in the Society, as they interact with each collegiate chapter in their region to ensure seamless communication between the national office and those chapters.

## HYMAN WINS ONE FOR ALL AWARD



Alexis Hyman, P3 at the Abilene campus, won the One for All Award at the Kappa Psi Fall Southwest Province Assembly. Hyman served as Vice-Regent, philanthropy chair and historian of Kappa Psi Epsilon Tau in Abilene at the time she was nominated by her chapter. The award recognizes the good deeds and involvement in the Fraternity, community and profession. In addition to the award, Alexis also received a \$250 scholarship.



## THREE STUDENTS EARN TPA LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



Karen Gonzales, P4 at the Dallas campus, Eric Kennison, P3 at the Lubbock campus, and Hedieh Khandan Rooshakib, P3 at the Dallas campus, all earned leadership positions with the Texas Pharmacy Association for the 2021-2022 academic year. Gonzales served as the Student Executive Committee Chair, Eric Kennison served as Senior Director, and Rooshakib served as Junior Director.

## LEANO SERVES IN TSHP LEADERSHIP ROLE



Angie Leano, P4 at the Dallas campus, was named Vice-chair of the Student Section Executive Committee (SSEC) of the Texas Society of Health System Pharmacists (TSHP) for 2021-2022. The Student Section recommends and coordinates continuing education programs for its members, provides guidance on policy issues involving the section's area of interest/expertise, and other duties as assigned by the TSHP Board of Directors.

## RAHMAN BECOMES CHAPLAIN FOR KAPPA PSI



Faiqa Rahman, P3 at the Abilene campus, was elected Chaplain of the Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity Southwest Province for 2021-2022. As such, Rahman will be responsible for coordinating a Southwest Province philanthropy project with chapter participation between province assemblies benefiting an organization or project selected by the Assembly. The Southwest Province of Kappa Psi is comprised of 12 collegiate chapters and seven graduate chapters in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Colorado.



## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS HONORED



On Friday, May 6, all four TTUHSCSOP campuses participated in the annual Celebration of Achievement. The event, which was held in person, recognized professional organizations, government accomplishments, students, faculty and staff, and included faculty and staff trivia. Student award recipients included:

Shantel Thomas, P4 at Abilene; Ross Singletary, P4 at Amarillo; Minitha Jacob, P3 at Dallas; and Alex Stabler, P4 at Lubbock, received the Outstanding Clinician award.



Faith Windham, P2 at Abilene; Joe Brown, P4 at Amarillo; Afsana Musharof, P1 at Dallas; and Lakyn Lucio, P3 at Lubbock, received the Student Role Model award.

McKaela Ritchey, P3 at Abilene; Ashley Ghazizadeh, P4 at Amarillo; Mattie Moylan, P4 at Dallas; and Savannah Ellis, P3 at Lubbock, received the Outstanding Patient Advocate award.

Katie Thomas, Abilene; Colby Coiner, Amarillo; and Alan Linh Nguyen, Dallas, received the P1 Go Getter award.



Maura Shaffer, P3 at Abilene; Emily Conard, P3 at Amarillo; Daisy Doan, P2 at Dallas; and Eric Kennison, P3 at Lubbock, received the Outstanding Service award.

Elaina Spriggs, Abilene; Bryan Acuna, Amarillo; and Parker Leinheiser, Dallas, received the P2 Rising Clinician award.

# SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy students were awarded the following scholarships for the 2021-2022 school year.

**Adcox:** Kynsey Ebeling, Emiley Novak

**Albertsons:** Zane Goetz, Bryant Paez, Alyssa Teichman

**Amarillo Area Foundation:** Karli Ammons, Chandler Batson, Adane Berhanu, Ariana Borunda, Chandler Boyd, Rylee Brown, Lindy Burnam, Jonathan Chavez, Jonathan Ciaccio, Kassidy Cockrell, Colby Coiner, Ashley Crichlow, Duke Cullins, Tiffany Dobbs, Aide Gonzales, Jennifer Hale, Tylor Henderson, Taylor Henderson, M'Kenna Hopper, Aristide Dubois Jou Tanekemgang, Elizabeth Kelley, Brayden Key, Camerino Lopez, Seng Mai, David Mara, Sophia Martinez, Robert Martinez, Tess Maxfield, Quoc Trieu Nguyen, Darshana Ragha, Olivia Reeb, Michaela Reynolds, Jacob Sanchez, Laura Schenk, Kamren Shelton, Logan Springer, Alexander Thompson, Thomas Tran, Thanh Trinh, Sritej Veeramachaneni, Peter Vu, Valerie White, Aaron Woodard, Huiyan Yang, Jui-Shan Yang, Ka Yang, Yu Yang Zhang

**Bexar County Pharmaceutical Association:**  
Margie Arebalo

**Bill Wehner:** Tara Dadashian

**Brook Hollow Gold Club Scholarship:** Ana Leon

**Byrd Family:** Eric Kennison

**C.H. Foundation:** Abdul Rashid Nur

**C.H. Guenther & Son Pioneer Flour Mills  
Scholarship:** Antonio Contreras

**CAB Bond:** Amara Dike

**Cardinal-Owens:** Alicia Chavez, Madison Gilliam, Roman Hodson, Giftina Wilson, Andres Herrera

**Carnes-Hollingsworth:** Alan Speer

**Collins:** Tara Dadashian

**Cox:** Eric Kennison

**CVS:** Marissa Contreras, Marie Nguyen, Rheena Sheriff

**Davidson:** Quang Ta

**Dean's:** Amalia Akwar, Mays Albu-Shamah, Adane Berhanu, Jacy Bien, Toan Huynh, Aristide Dubois Jou Tanekemgang, Irene Mwangi, Truong Nguyen, Jacob Awkal, Chloe Grabenhorst, Payman Haghiri, Tylor Henderson, Taylor Henderson, Jake Herrin, Jessica Honey, Georgia Inman, Brayden Key, Michaela Reynolds, Klarisa Sanchez, Kourtney Seaton, Kamren Shelton, Taylor Stark, Abraham Stone, Lathaniel Thompson, Kim Tu, Huiyan Yang, Joel Zapata, Harmony Mognessoh Kouadio, Hong Tran

**Dean's Leadership:** Mary Ball, Modesta Ugochukwu, Anita Yazdani

**Dozier:** Cheyanna Petty

**Eckerd:** Chandler Boyd

**Gerald Holman:** Rachel Frank

**HEB:** Christiana Silva, Masha Helforoush

**MakeADifference:** Raj Mehta, Tracy Palomino



**MedcoHealth Solutions:** Megan Bareis, Toby Okonkwo, Madeline Scarbrough, Jon Singletary, Kevin Zhang

**Michael Patry Memorial:** Rachel Hopper, Jennifer Siebenberg

**National Association of Boards of Pharmacy:** Ashlie Christian

**Nelson:** Madeline Scarbrough

**PAGA of El Paso Scholarship:** Christiana Silva

**Presidential:** Chandler Batson, Duke Cullins, Jimmy Ly, Afsana Musharof, Jamie Nguyen, Adane Berhanu, Jacy Bien

**Purdue Pharma:** Jacy Bien

**Roberta High:** Mahsa Helforouh, Mikayla Jovanovich, Danh Phan

**Rural Health:** Myla Bhakta, Jacee Billings, Danielle Callaway, Gracie Daniels, Charles Ditmore, Ashley Gregory, Jacob Kay, Jensen Limver, Lakyn Lucio, Mattie Moylan, Rohan Ramnath, Tristan Renfroe, Jon Singletary, Taylor Stark

**Safeway:** Ashlie Christian, Kyujin Lim

**SOP Academic Excellence:** Abby Nguyen, Juhi Rana, Jasmine Stinson, Faith Windham

**SOP Alumni Pioneers:** Hedieh Khandan Rooshakib

**Stanley M. Reinhaus Family Foundation:** Janelle Agolue

**Stockton:** Olaiya Aina, Robert Ojukwu

**Sybil B. Harrington:** Chandler Batson, Rylee Brown, Duke Cullins, M'Kenna Hopper, Weitian Jiang, Aristide Dubois Jou Tanekemgang, Nicole Juarez, Kimberly Luna, Sydnie McClendon, Michaela Reynolds,

Joshua San Juan, Alex Stabler, Hiep Trinh, Peter Zhao, Bryan Hoang, Robert Martinez, Jacob Sanchez, Valerie White, Ka Yang

**Tarrant County Pharmaceutical Association:** Lianne Hoang

**Texas Pharmacy Foundation:** Afsana Musharof, Lakyn Lucio, Jenan Mahmoud, Maura Shaffer

**Top Achievers:** Megan Bareis, Bryan Hoang, Kimberly Luna, Oluwatoni Makinde, Tess Maxfield, Raj Mehta, Toby Okonkwo, April Peterson, Jacob Sanchez, Madeline Scarbrough, Jon Singletary, Alex Stabler, Quang Ta, Sarah Tran, Anita Yazdani, Kevin Zhang

**Turner:** Onyinye Nwaeke

**Verne Cooper Foundation Scholarship:** Megan St. Amour

**Walgreens:** Alejandro Correa, Alexis Orozco

**West Texas Pharmacy Association:** Jacee Billings, Lindy Burnam, Danielle Buzzard, Sarah Casselberry, Nardelio Da Silva Jr., Laith Ghonim, Shiva Goshasb Azar, Mahsa Helforouh, Heather Hillert, Jennifer Le, Kimberly Albus Luna, Jenan Mahmoud, Kaylee Martin, Maura Shaffer, Ross Singletary, Eric Sorrell, Quang Ta, Shantel Thomas, Hayden Vogler, Emiley Waddle, Faith Windham

**Willie I., Wanda and W.F. Martin:** Olaiya Aina, Amalia Akwar, Denise Anderson, Shiva Azar Goshasb, Benjamin Baker, Jacy Bien, Emily Brandon, Sarah Copeland, Kaitlyn Drennan, Somtochukwu Egbuonu, Elyjah Farmer, Taybor Flores, Heather Hillert, Jessica Honey, Alexis Hyman, Kaylee Martin, Sweta Mishra, Oluwanbo Olanrewaju, Michael Osuoza, Madison Rawls, McKaela Ritchey, Klarisa Sanchez, Brenly Sanchez Cintron, Kourtney Seaton, Elijah Singh, Taylor Stark, Abraham Stone, Quang Ta, Katie Thomas, Destinee Wells, Patrick Williams, Taeryn Woods, Shelby Zachary, NaLani Zeno



# EVENTS AND COMMUNITY





# SOP DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECOGNIZED

Two School of Pharmacy Alumnae were honored by the TTUHSC Alumni Association at the 2020-2021 Distinguished Alumni Awards dinner where awards are presented to alumni who have achieved a high level of success in their chosen fields or whose efforts have made a positive impact on community or humanity, bringing distinction to themselves and to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

Amber L. Elliott, Pharm.D., received the School of Pharmacy, Excellence in Practice Award. Elliott earned her Doctor of Pharmacy in 2009 from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy (now the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy). She is co-owner of Panhandle Pharmaceutical Consultants, PLLC, where she provides pharmacy consulting services to ambulatory surgical hospitals in the Texas Panhandle. Elliott is also an adjunct assistant professor at the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy and was a previously appointed to the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Jessica R. Crow, Pharm.D., BCCCP, BCPS-AQ, Cardiology, CNSC, FCCM, received the School of Pharmacy, Pharmacy Research Award. Crow is a 2006 graduate of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy (now the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy). She is the manager of the decentralized and clinical pharmacy at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, where she oversees inpatient and outpatient clinical pharmacy services. Crow was inducted as a fellow in the American College of Critical Care Medicine for her accomplishment in improving patient outcomes for critically ill patients.







## CLASSES OF 2024 AND 2025 ARE WELCOMED

Incoming first-year and returning second-year students that made up the classes of 2024 and 2025 were officially welcomed into the program at annual White Coat Ceremonies in August of 2021. The pandemic kept the class of 2024 from having their White Coat Ceremony in 2020 and this marked the first time two classes have been welcomed at the same time.

*“The White Coat Ceremony is an invitation to the profession and represents a vital step to promote humanism and professionalism in pharmacy education,” Amarillo Regional Dean and Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions Thomas Thekkumkara, Ph.D., said. “It conveys a powerful message when presented in the proper setting, which creates trust in the competencies of those who wear it.”*



# STUDENTS ACROSS CAMPUSES PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP RETREAT

In August, students gathered on the Abilene, Amarillo and Dallas campuses to learn about leadership traits and gain knowledge and skills to help them achieve their professional and personal goals at the annual Student Leadership Retreat. The 2021 theme was “Unmasking our future: What now?” Students participated in team-building exercises, attended breakout sessions and enjoyed cookouts, games and an ice cream social.

Each campus also completed a service project. Amarillo students helped the High Plains Food Bank sort 20,300 pounds of food that will be distributed to the

local community. Abilene students prepared breakfast and lunch to be delivered to 45 children that day and breakfast and lunch for the coming weekend, for a total of 90 bags packed at Operation Brown Bag, a local non-profit that provides meals for disadvantaged children. Dallas students restocked the resale boutique, sorted 11 pallets, prepared 240 food boxes, provided service to 363 guests and provided meals for 6,195 people at Minnie’s Food Pantry, a local non-profit that works to alleviate hunger in North Texas.





# CAREER FAIR HELPS STUDENTS FIND THEIR NEXT STEP

The annual TTUHSC School of Pharmacy Career Fair assisted a total of 141 third and fourth-year students from across all four campuses in the search for what comes after pharmacy school. The two-day event, held in October, took on a virtual format due to the pandemic.

During the event, students had the opportunity to interact one-on-one with a total of 70 companies and 49 residency programs, 10 fellowship programs, a research institute and a financial planning company about potential career pathways and preparation. The community pharmacies in attendance included Brookshires, CVS, H-E-B, Rite Aid, Tom Thumb/Albertson's, Walgreens and Walmart.

In addition, 21 TTUHSC School of Pharmacy faculty members and residents, seven alumni, ConneXion360 Industry Fellowship, Stonewater Financial Group offered 14 different career development workshops and training sessions that covered curriculum vitae (CV) and CV reviews, resumes, interviewing, networking, residency and fellowship preparation, residency showcase preparation, debt management, poster presentations, mock interviews and letters of intent.

On day two, eight pharmacy companies conducted 93 interviews with fourth-year students interested in retail and research job opportunities.





# MEDICATION CLEANOUTS PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

The Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC), managed by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, hosted six Medication Cleanout™ events in Abilene, Amarillo and Lubbock during the 2021-2022 school year.

The biannual collections, occurring in the fall and spring, provide a way for residents to dispose of unwanted and unused medications safely and in an environmentally conscious way, free of charge.

The collections yielded impressive results for the year, with thousands of cars showing up to dispose of a combined 3,028 pounds of medications and sharps in Amarillo, 1325 pounds of medication and 259 sharps in Abilene, and 2,885 pounds of medication and 413 sharps in Lubbock.

The program helps the TPPC take a proactive approach to safeguarding communities by providing a free and convenient way for people to dispose of medications in a legal and environmentally sound manner, as well as providing disposal services for syringes and sharps.

TPPC conducts these events with the help TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy students and other volunteers who help with critical services like collecting medications, deidentifying bottles, sorting and identifying medications and more. The events serve as a great opportunity for pharmacy students to collaborate with students from other TTUHSC schools and see first-hand the issues with non-adherence to medications.



# FACULTY COME TOGETHER FOR RETREAT

In May, faculty members from all four campuses were in Amarillo for a three-day faculty retreat that was planned by the Faculty Development committee. During the retreat, faculty took part in team building, development and training sessions focused on various learning objectives.

While in Amarillo, faculty were also able to enjoy social gatherings, a faculty recognition banquet and awards ceremony that was followed by a casino night, the P4 graduation awards, a graduation reception and the commencement ceremony for the class of 2022.





On May 21, the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy celebrated the Class of 2022 with the annual commencement ceremony at Hodgetown Stadium.

Madeline Scarbrough earned the Class of 2022 Banner Bearer award as the graduate with the highest four-year grade point average. As the Banner Bearer recipient, Scarbrough carried the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy banner and led the class during commencement exercises.

Scarbrough also received the Bowl of Hygieia, the internationally recognized symbol for the pharmacy profession that signifies pure and potent medicines. This award is presented annually to the graduating class member who is deemed to best exemplify the qualities most desirable in a pharmacist: leadership, high ethical standards, dedication and promotion of the pharmacy profession. This is the first time in TTUHSC history that the same student has won both prestigious honors.

Other Class of 2022 graduates honored for their

performances in both the classroom and clinical settings included Ross Singletary, who received the Wolters Kluwer Excellence in Clinical Communication Award; Madeline Scarbrough, the Excellence in Geriatrics Award; Alyssa Teichman, the Community Outreach Award of Excellence; Lou Angeline Leano, the Superior Patient Care Award; Karen Gonzales, the Excellence in Community Practice Award; Kaylee Martin, the Viatrix Excellence in Pharmacy Award; Adolfo J.R. Olivarez III, the Excellence in Ambulatory Care Award; Alexis Orozco, the Excellence in Correctional Managed Care Award; Lillian Thai, the Excellence in Inpatient Clinical Practice; Aaron Woodward, the Excellence in Pediatrics Award; and Myla Bhakta, the Hannah L. Thompson Perseverance Award.

Latresa Billings, Pharm.D., delivered the commencement address. Billings is president of the Texas Society of Health Systems Pharmacists (TSHP) and an alumna of TTUHSC's Post-Graduate Residency Program in Dallas.



# FACULTY AND STUDENTS OFFER SAFE SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS WITH DIABETES

For two weeks in June, School of Pharmacy faculty and students volunteered their time at Camp New Day, a non-profit summer camp for children with diabetes affiliated with the Diabetes Foundation of the High Plains.

Thomas Parker, Pharm.D., Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice in the Pediatrics Division, took over as co-director of the camp when it was going to be ended in 2009. With the help of Sue Rankin, NP, and many others, he was able to continue to provide a safe place for area children with diabetes to have a summer camp experience.



*“Our camp is somewhat unique in that all of our counselors are medical staff, primarily TTUHSC Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy students and occasionally some TTUHSC School of Medicine students, that go through extensive pre-training prior to camp,” said Parker.*

During camp, each of the 40-60 volunteers serves in the role of medical staff/cabin counselor. They are with their campers 24/7, perform counselor duties like participating in activities with the campers, and assist them with their medical needs like glucose testing, insulin injections and medications, helping with carbohydrate counting and dose calculations at meal time, overnight monitoring and reinforcing proper diabetes management techniques.

*“I always say that camp is a win-win situation,” shared Parker. “Being future medical providers, our counselors get an early immersion into independent medical practice, they get to see the effects of the medical changes that are made and to experience what their patients go through day in and day out in managing diseases. All of this helps to make them more aware, competent and engaged medical providers in the future.”*





# FACILITIES



# DALLAS CAMPUS UNDERGOES MAJOR RENOVATIONS

In 2019, TTUHSC officially purchased the 64,148 square foot Southwest Professional Building located in the Parkland Memorial Hospital District in Dallas, Texas and renovations began soon after. Renovations to the roof and the fifth and seventh floors were completed in 2021, and renovations for 2022 have been focused on the fourth and sixth floor areas.

The completion of the fourth-floor student lounge means students now have plenty of room to study and hangout on the fourth, fifth and seventh floor. The areas for each student lounge are equipped with a foosball, shuffleboard, and pool table as well as a mix of dry erase boards, glass boards, and TVs with solstice pods for group study. Upgrading the large 80 seat classroom is the next task for the fourth floor and once that is complete the research labs will be the only fourth floor

areas left to renovate.

Renovations to the sixth floor kicked off in October of 2022 and will consist of a roughly 9,000 square foot Simulation Center, a student study space addition, and a new office suite for the School of Nursing. The goal for completion of the sixth-floor construction is set for Fall of 2023.

As for the exterior, the façade of the building, all window replacements, and the repouring of the visitor's parking lot have been completed. Remediation of the parking garage structure is currently in progress and should be completed in January of 2023.

The Dallas campus will have ongoing renovations for multiple building upgrades into 2024.





The image is a full-page photograph of a large, multi-story brick building, likely a hospital or university health center, with a prominent tower in the background. In the foreground, there is a large, circular stone seal of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) set into a circular stone base. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark red filter. The text "TTUHSC" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered in the upper right portion of the image.

# TTUHSC

# HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

## TTUHSC RECOGNIZED AS A HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

In February, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., announced that the U.S. Department of Education has recognized TTUHSC as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). HSI designation enables the university to strengthen its ongoing efforts to recruit and support underrepresented students, grow a more diversified faculty and better serve its communities as a comprehensive health care institution.

TTUHSC is only the third health sciences center in the state of Texas to receive HSI status. Rice-Spearman said the HSI status builds on the university's foundation to enrich the experiences of all underserved populations and train future health care professionals to serve a more diverse population.

This accomplishment positions TTUHSC among the 569 institutions across the country that claim HSI status – which also makes available dedicated U.S. Department of

Education Hispanic-Serving Institutions Grant Programs.

According to Best Colleges, in 1976, Hispanic students made up 4% of all college students; by 2019, they represented nearly 22% of college students. Today, Hispanic/Latino students rank as the second-largest ethnic group in higher education and HSIs educate 66.8% of all Hispanic students in the United States.

To receive HSI status, the U.S. Department of Education requires a Hispanic/Latino undergraduate student population of at least 25% in addition to other criteria. TTUHSC reported 27% of Hispanic undergraduate students in Fall 2019 and began the process of applying for HSI designation.

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, TTUHSC continues to take thoughtful, innovative and inclusive steps forward, training the next generation of health care providers that will serve a more diverse population across Texas.



# TTUHSC RESEARCH RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION

The Carnegie Classification® of Institutions of Higher Education has designated Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) as a Special Focus Four-Year Research Institution (Very High Research Activity University). This distinguished classification places TTUHSC among 22 elite four-year special focus research universities nationwide that have curriculum with a focus in health care and medicine, research and other specialized fields.

*“The designation places TTUHSC in elite company among health-related institutions, including not only those in Texas such as Baylor College of Medicine and University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center but also outside the state, including the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Rockefeller University among others,” said TTUHSC Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation Lance McMahon, Ph.D. “We are proud of our world-class faculty and the exceptional doctoral degree trainees who have worked together to secure TTUHSC’s designation as a global leader in academic health-related research.”*

The Carnegie Classification® of Institutions of Higher Education was created in 1970 as a benchmark to categorize and compare research and policy analysis programs at colleges and universities. Universities qualify for this distinguished classification by achieving each year a combination of more than \$5 million in research expenditures and conferring at least 20 doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees. TTUHSC has exceeded the funding benchmark and in academic year 2021 graduated 55 research Ph.D. degrees.

*“The Carnegie Classification® of Institutions of Higher Education is important because it helps measure the impact the university has on its local community in terms of teaching and research,” TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., said. “To be ranked in the Very High to High Research category demonstrates the extraordinary impact we have on health care through education, discovery and delivery of care.”*





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