



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
School of Pharmacy™

Amarillo • Lubbock • Dallas/Fort Worth • Abilene

From the **DEAN'S**
DESK



January 2008

THECB Awards Grant to SOP Researchers

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has awarded a grant to two professors from the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Pharmacy in Amarillo.

Drs. David Fike and Paul Lockman will receive \$338,000 from the THECB's Minority Research and Education Grant Program to develop and implement a competency-based method of instruction and assessment in selected courses. The study is part of an effort to improve student outcomes, particularly for minority students.

Dr. Fike is a research associate professor for the SOP's department of pharmacy practice. Dr. Lockman is an assistant professor for our department of pharmaceutical sciences.

Dr. Fike said TTUHSC-SOP will partner with the Texas Southern University pharmacy school and Amarillo College to complete the project. TSU is designated a Historically Black College and University; AC is recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Colleges and universities with HBCU designation were established prior to 1964 to serve the African-

American community. Those with HSI designation are defined as non-profit institutions where the full-time equivalent enrollment is at least 25 percent Hispanic.



Dr. David Fike

and assessment method in reducing disparities among undergraduate, community college students in courses within health care degree programs," Dr. Fike explained. "The second purpose is to demonstrate that the implementation of a unique, competency-based instruction and assessment method in pharmaceutical science and pharmacy practice courses will neutralize educational disparities of minorities in Pharm. D. professional degree programs.

Dr. Fike said the ultimate goal of the intervention is to "improve student outcomes for those in the

"The first purpose of the proposed study is to demonstrate the impact of an innovative, competency-based instruction



Dr. Paul Lockman

pipeline to health careers, including minorities in undergraduate and professional degree programs."

Minorities are considered to be under-represented in health care professions. The Texas Board of Pharmacy stated in 2004 that only 11 percent of Texas pharmacists are African-American and only nine percent are Hispanic.

Dr. Fike said the study will seek to determine if students demonstrate statistically significant improvement in learning outcomes using the competency-based method and whether such a method can eliminate differences in final learning outcomes for students who start a course under prepared as compared to those who are appropriately prepared. He said the study also hopes to show that the competency-based method produces positive outcomes for students regardless of race, age or gender in a variety of health care courses at different institutions.

"We believe the proposed project will make a meaningful contribution to the goal of equipping minorities for effective service in health care professions."

Expansion, Construction in the Air at SOP

The new year promises to be one of change and new opportunities for the SOP campus sites in Abilene, Dallas/Ft. Worth and Amarillo.

ABILENE

On December 14 the Texas Tech University Board of Regents granted its approval to an agreement between TTUHSC and the Development Corporation of Abilene that will result in the Center for Immunotherapeutic Research, which be located at the SOP's Abilene regional campus. This will be the first Center for Excellence on the new Abilene campus.



The SOP's regional campus in Abilene will house the new Center for Immunotherapeutic Research.

The Center's mission includes improving the healthcare of people by developing and implementing novel immune-based approaches to detect and treat human diseases. It will feature technologies such as gene expression and protein engineering, hybridoma generation for monoclonal antibodies, microscopy and flow-cytometry. A Human Immunology Core will provide support for clinical trials that will focus upon cancer treatment and immune interventions.

Under terms of the agreement, TTUHSC will spend \$4.5 million and the DCOA will spend \$3 million to develop the Center during the next five years.

One of the Center's primary goals of the will be to commercialize research. Dr. Jon Weidanz, an

associate professor at the SOP's Abilene campus, will be the director of the new center. As many of you may know, Dr. Weidanz helped bring the SOP its first commercialized research venture in 2004 when he founded Receptor Logic. Dr. Weidanz is chief scientist for Receptor Logic, which researches antibodies that attack cancerous cells.

The Center for Immunotherapeutic Research is presently working to establish its research infrastructure and Dr. Weidanz said his goal is to hire one of the faculty members sometime this summer and two more in 2009. Eventually the center will employ seven faculty members and will also be home to a total of six graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and administrative assistants.

DALLAS/FT. WORTH

Due to the ever-expanding space requirements for our Dallas/Ft. Worth campus, we have received approval from the Board of Regents to lease a second building for that program. With that in mind, we have identified several potential sites located in the vicinity of the UT Southwestern Medical Center in central Dallas.

Either site will provide our students, faculty and staff with access to an all-day shuttle bus that runs to the major Dallas Medical Center buildings (Children's, Parkland, UTSW Med Library, etc.) and the mass transportation hub (both the commuter trains and light rail system).

We hope to be able to occupy one of these 8,500-square-foot spaces by July 2008 and be ready to conduct classes at the site when the fall 2008 begins.

Our affiliation with the VA Hospital in Dallas has been invaluable and we will continue to use our space at that facility for offices and case studies.

AMARILLO

TTUHSC and the SOP's main campus in Amarillo welcomed about 200 faculty, staff, students and friends to a Topping Out Ceremony on Jan. 30. Topping Out ceremonies are a tradition for builders and celebrate the placing of a structure's final steel beam.



Construction is underway at the TTUHSC Research Building in Amarillo.

At our event attendees had the opportunity to sign the last steel beam used to construct the new TTUHSC research building before it was hoisted into place. There was also a short program that featured several speakers, including state representatives John Smithee and David Swinford, Amarillo Mayor Debra McCartt, TTUHSC president Dr. John Baldwin, TTUHSC-SOM dean Dr. Steven Berk, SOP associate dean for Research Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara and Mike Ellicott, Vice Chancellor for TTUHSC Facilities Planning and Construction.

Construction of the \$18 million 48,000-square-foot facility is at the halfway point and should be completed sometime in August. In July we expect to begin constructing a 23,000-square-foot academic and student support center adjacent to the existing SOP campus building.

Organizations Select SOP Students for Scholarship, Travel

Congratulations go out to Holly Bland, a P3 at our Amarillo campus, and Amarillo graduate student Erica Wisdom.



Holly Bland

Holly was recently awarded a \$2,000 National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation Scholarship.

Recipients of NACDS scholarships

must be enrolled as full-time pharmacy students, have experience in chain community pharmacy and have a desire to pursue a career in community pharmacy. They are also evaluated based on their leadership activities and their professional and community involvement.

Erika received a travel award from the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. The award will allow her to



Erica Wisdom

travel to San Diego in April where she will attend Experimental Biology 2008.

EB 2008 is a multi-society, interdisciplinary, scientific meeting that

will feature plenary and award lectures, symposia, oral and poster sessions, career services and scientific equipment exhibits.

In Case You Missed It...

Here are some items regarding SOP students, faculty and staff you may have missed:



Dr. Paul Lockman

- Dr. Paul Lockman (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Amarillo) was an invited speaker at the Michael J. Fox Foundation workshop

Jan. 15-16 in San Francisco. His presentation was entitled, "Setting the stage: How do we get through or around the BBB."



Dr. Majid Moridani

- Dr. Majid Moridani (Asst. Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Amarillo) was an invited speaker at the Albany

College of Pharmacy in Albany, NY on Feb. 1. His presentation was entitled, "Pharmacogenetics in Medicine and Drug Design."



Dr. Eugene Shek

- Dr. Eugene Shek (Asst. Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences – Amarillo) has been elected to serve as the 2008 Secretary for the

American Association for Colleges of Pharmacy - Biological Sciences Section. His appointment will officially take place in July at the AACP annual meeting in Chicago.



Dr. Roland Patry

- Dr. Roland Patry (Professor and Chair-Clinical Practice & Management, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice – Amarillo) was recently notified

of his selection as the 2008 Distinguished Alumnus Award winner for the University of Connecticut College of Pharmacy. Dr. Patry will be honored at a banquet in April.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center 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, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

Introducing...

Deborah Emery
Asst. Vice President Fiscal Affairs
Office of Finance & Administration
Abilene

Maureen McGuire
Coordinator
Office of Experiential Programs
Amarillo

Aslam Yusuf
Post Doctoral Research Associate
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Amarillo

Please take a moment to welcome each of these individuals to TTUHSC and the School of Pharmacy.

SOP Photo Gallery



TTUHSC staff members Jason Lawson (center) and Darrell Schaefer (bottom) add their signatures to the final beam at the Topping Out Ceremony for the Amarillo Research Building.



PIs Diana Alex (left) and Anu Chackacherry discuss final preparations for the NCPA Wellness Challenge at the Amarillo Pharmaceutical Care Center.

P3 Jennifer Montoya (right) takes a blood pressure reading from Robyn Conner at the NCPA Wellness Challenge. Robyn is a Certified Pharmacy Technician at the Amarillo Pharmaceutical Care Center.



Research Asst. Professor Dr. Claudia Meek (left), P4 Jessica Njoku (center) and Dr. Ron Hall (Asst. Professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice) discusses study results in the CTSA laboratory located at the SOP's Dallas/Ft. Worth campus.



The final beam for the Amarillo Research Building is hoisted into place at the Topping Out Ceremony.

Dates Set for TTUHSC Student Research Week

The TTUHSC Lubbock campus will host the 20th annual Student Research Week March 11-14. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to showcase their original clinical and/or basic science research, practice pre-

sentational skills and meet with other TTU/TTUHSC students.

This year's event will feature Fertilization, but is open to all fields of research. Guest speakers for the event will include several nationally renowned scientists in

the area of reproductive technology. Students who attend will have the opportunity to compete for scholarship prizes up to \$1,000. For more information please contact Kim Chau at (806) 743-2556.

Getting to Know...

**José Vega, Pharm. D.
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Pharmacy Practice - Abilene**

José grew up in Friona, Texas a small town located about 70 miles southwest of Amarillo. After high school, he moved to Canyon to attend West Texas A&M University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry. After receiving his undergraduate degree, José attended TTUHSC – SOP and earned his Pharm.D. degree in 2003. He then pursued a post-doctoral pharmacy practice residency at The University of Texas Health Center at Tyler. Following his residency, José worked for three years as a clinical pharmacist at UTHCT.

José met his wife, Pamela Ochoa, during pharmacy school.

Pamella also graduated from TTUHSC – SOP in 2003. After they completed their residencies in 2004, José and Pamella were married in



Dr. José Vega with his wife, Dr. Pamela (Ochoa) Vega and their son, Anthony.

Corpus Christi and honeymooned in Fiji. They presently have one son, Anthony, who is 18 months old.

In August 2007, the Vegas moved to Abilene to accept pharmacy practice faculty positions with our Adult Medicine Division. José maintains a practice site at Hendrick Medical Center. He says he enjoys working with his fellow colleagues to implement new clinical programs and is “excited to be involved in the development of new clinical pharmacy practices as well as a new School of Pharmacy.”

In his free time, José enjoys spending time with his son, visiting with family and camping.



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