



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

F. Marie Hall Institute *for*
Rural *and* Community Health



ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2023–2024



F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health

Mission & Vision

The F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health exists to work in close collaboration with the people of West Texas for the advancement of health through innovative and scholarly research, the advanced use of technology, comprehensive education, and community outreach.

***We thank you for allowing us to spend our time with
purpose and to strive each and every day to make the
world a better place.***

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Letter from the Executive Vice President



**BILLY U. PHILIPS, JR.,
PH.D., MPH**

When Does Less Become More?

The Division of Rural Affairs (DoRA) was created on January 12, 2024, when President Lori Rice-Spearman asked me to lead a new effort that would harmonize the expertise and resources of the long-established and respected F. Marie Hall Institute of Rural and Community Health (FMHIRCH) with those of the newly created Institute for Telehealth and Digital Innovations (ITDI). One of the first things that we did was a listening tour with key leaders of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC), community partners, and others to better understand what they might tell us about

what melody they want to hear us sing together with them. They shared many laudable things, but the main movement in our symphony was to find ways to bring access to care in new and effective ways to the people of West Texas and beyond.

What does access to care mean? We heard many variations on that, but again one stood out because it was so offkey and loud. That “less” was the growing impact of health disparities found all over our 108 (now 121) counties among young and old, rich and poor, rural and urban dwellers, and people from different cultures. With all the promise of new and exciting technologies, and with the TTUHSC reputation for telehealth, we began to write the opening movement to our opus. We began with a small group, the “Deep Dive Committee”, who looked at everything we did and our future plans. With the committee’s suggestions, we tweaked some things while keeping other parts. Staying with our musical metaphor, we began scoring our music and recruited musicians who would ultimately play our tune. We decided to spend our money with the people who form the TTUHSC team.

We teamed with our own Texas Tech Physicians (TTUP) to facilitate a massive effort to build a digital front door to appeal to our customers and patrons while supporting new lines of service, such as remote patient monitoring. We worked with our Permian Basin colleagues to devise a platform that would allow tools like online appointments, bill pay, and records retrieval and would be as acceptable to our patients and our clinicians. With these tools, our colleagues on the Permian Basin campus reach out to communities and schools to provide health care that had never been there before. We worked with Managed Care to devise and deliver psychiatric services to critical access and rural hospitals to ease crowded Emergency Departments and get people to prompt care amid a growing mental health crisis. Working with the Laura Bush Women’s Health Institute, we began testing a new technology to augment mammography and find breast cancer earlier and with greater precision. Finally, we continued working on community assessments initially with Crane, Texas, where we went door-to-door with a focus on diabetes, hypertension, mental health, and other risks such as cancer. Along the way, we provided equipment to the TTUP Ophthalmology Clinic and training in telemedicine for

the citizens of Marathon, Texas.

What you will read in this annual report will remind you of the unique and sometimes dramatic crescendos in the very best recitals and in this case for the TTUHSC and our longstanding commitment to advancing rural health and pioneering the imaginative use of technologies to help span distance and time, two of the biggest barriers to health care access. The creation of DoRA represents a visionary commitment to bring together the expertise, resources, and innovative capabilities of the FMHIRCH and ITDI, and it pairs them with initiatives already underway with our TTUHSC partners. Under this new structure, we seek to align our efforts and resources and amplify our impact on rural communities. Think of a bridge in music that carries the listening ear from one movement to the next in our opus. By bridging the strengths of these two institutes and the needs of the communities we serve, we invent and adapt solutions tailored to meet the unique needs of rural Texans and others beyond this glorious place we call home. It’s in a measure and ode to Texas and to all of those that produce our economy.

If you have ever gotten a song stuck in your brain, then you know what I mean when I say our future will have people humming this grand harmony along with us. There will be students, faculty, and researchers who catch our melody and will be inspired to write their own music, and much of it we hope through artful, important, and transformative efforts that will resonate in communities, in healthcare organizations, and providers for patients not yet even born. Along the way, we will develop and sustain our efforts, build upon our successes and our failures, and ultimately form lasting relationships with healthcare providers, policymakers, community leaders, and our colleagues here at TTUHSC and beyond.

Imagine the lights dimming, the conductor striding to raise his wand as the instruments glisten and shine and the eager audience is on the edge of our chairs. Not only are we about to hear something beyond ourselves but something that will inspire musicians to still find their ear and discover their soul as the sound rises to the heavens.

It’s a dream and an ambitious mission to expand access to quality health care and address the unique challenges facing rural communities and I can think of no better place and no better time for us to set this stage and play this music.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to this transformative endeavor. I am honored to lead us forward as we build a healthier, more equitable future for all rural Texans.

Warm regards,

Dr. Billy Philips, Jr.

Executive Vice President, Division of Rural Affairs

Service Area Map

 TTUHSC F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health

★ TTUHSC Area Health Education Center Office

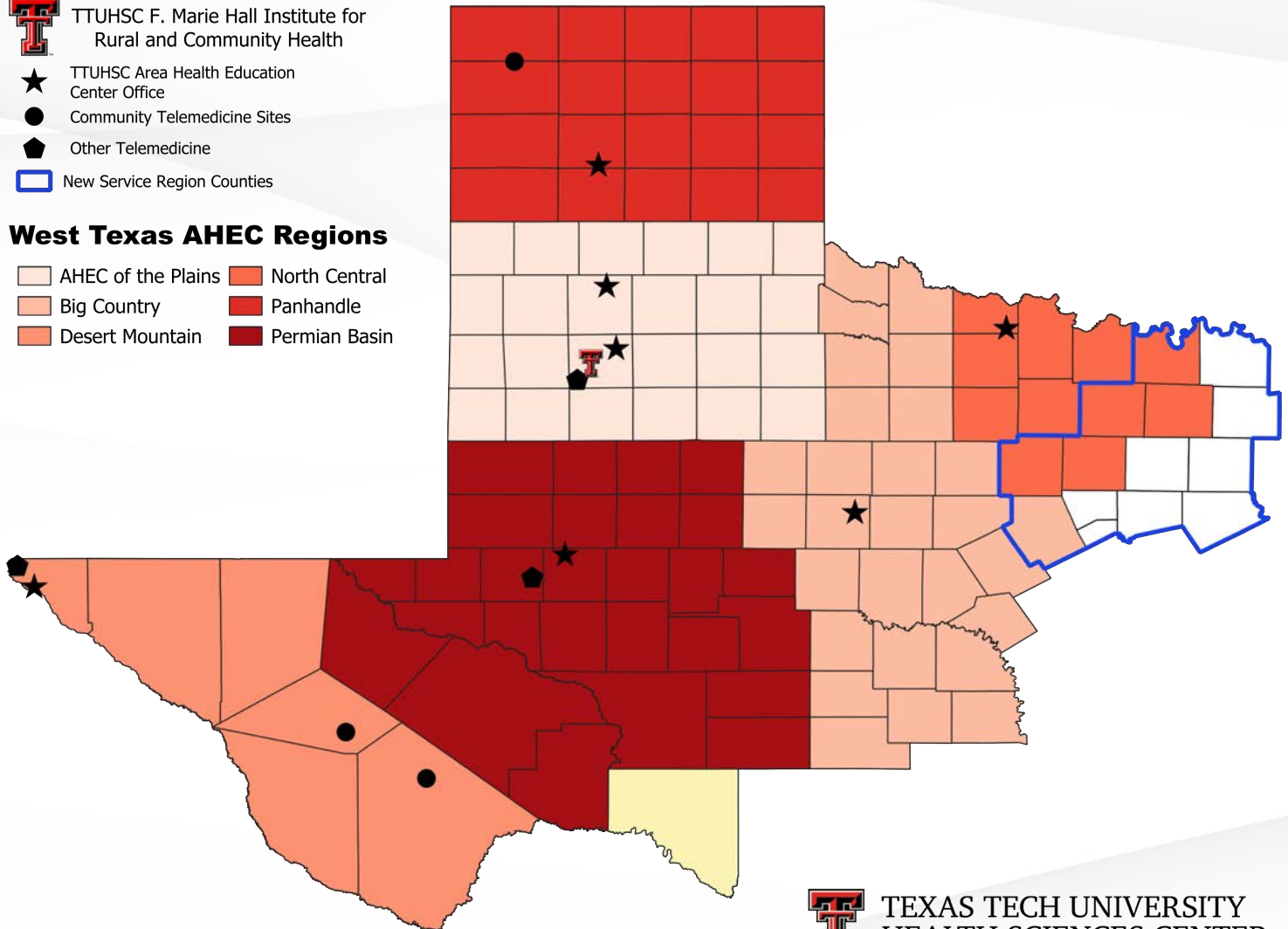
● Community Telemedicine Sites

⬠ Other Telemedicine

 New Service Region Counties

West Texas AHEC Regions

 AHEC of the Plains	 North Central
 Big Country	 Panhandle
 Desert Mountain	 Permian Basin



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

F. Marie Hall Institute for
Rural and Community Health

Serving West Texas

The **F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health (FMHIRCH)** is dedicated to bringing the advancement of health to the people of rural West Texas through innovative and scholarly research, the advanced use of technology, comprehensive education, and outreach. FMHIRCH strives to bring healthcare access, education, and resources to its rural, underserved service region of 121 counties – which is nearly half of the state of Texas.

Access to rural health is essential to supporting the food, fuel, and fiber industries that are the backbone of the Texas economy. With a declining and aging workforce, a strained rural health care system, and far-reaching health disparities in West Texas, the work of the FMHIRCH has never been more crucial. Our work will continue to bridge the healthcare gap in the communities it serves in West Texas and beyond through technology, education, and research.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

F. Marie Hall Institute for
Rural and Community Health



HEALTH EDUCATION

Our Transforming Communities through Outreach, Recruitment & Education (T-CORE) team coordinates all of the Institute's educational activities aimed at engaging students who want to enter the health care workforce. Community health worker outreach, the AHEC Jr. Scholars program, and newly revamped high school telemedicine curriculum are just a few of the team's projects for 2023-2024.



HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

Our Community Engagement and TexLa Telehealth Resource Center teams work to make sure people living in rural areas have the technology necessary for health care access. They each promote rural healthcare through projects such as the Broadband Pilot Project.



HEALTH RESEARCH

The FMHIRCH creates leading-edge research that focuses on rural health solutions in West Texas and the 121-county TTUHSC service area. That research is published in peer-reviewed journals and the Rural Health Quarterly, which is indexed on the Rural Health Information Hub.

Administrative Team

Five teams work together to do the complete the mission of the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health. The Administrative team supports the team as a whole through members' specialized knowledge of finance, law, human resources, and office support. This team also supports Executive Vice President Dr. Billy U. Philips, in his many roles within the Institute and at TTUHSC.



SARAH LOOTEN, MPA
Managing Director



DENISE LOPEZ,
MBA, MS
Senior Director of Finance



ISAIAH THOMAS, JD
*Contract Development
Manager*



DOLORES PARRISH
Assistant for Staff Relations



DEBORAH MCCARTY
Executive Associate



SUE DAVIS
*Senior Office Assistant-
Executive Assistant*



KAT LAPPE
Senior Office Assistant

Transforming Communities through Outreach, Recruitment & Education (T-CORE)

Education, outreach, youth recruitment, and community health worker training.

The **Transforming Communities through Outreach Recruitment and Education (T-CORE)** division provides continuing education and career development opportunities to rural West Texas through the West Texas AHEC. The six regional offices in Abilene (Big Country AHEC), Amarillo (Panhandle AHEC), El Paso (Desert Mountain AHEC), Midland (Permian Basin AHEC), Plainview (AHEC of the Plains), and Wichita Falls (North Central AHEC) coordinate pipeline activities to recruit students and job seekers to enter the healthcare workforce. West Texas AHEC also creates and distributes H.O.T. Jobs, an online tool and publication that highlights healthcare career opportunities throughout West Texas and the state. West Texas AHEC's mission is to increase healthcare professions training capacity, provide community-based clinical training, and support the retention of healthcare professionals in high-need areas throughout West Texas.



T-CORE Team



CATHERINE HUDSON, MPH
Senior Director of T-CORE



WENDY BRYAN, MBA
T-CORE Project Manager



MICHELLE CRUMP
Senior Office Assistant



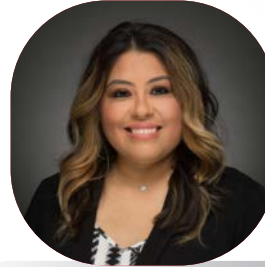
JESSE JENKINS, CHW
Database and Reporting Specialist



OLUGBENGA OLOKEDE, MD, MPH
Research Associate



FRANCES QUINTERO, CHW
Unit Manager



REBECA LLANAS, MSW, CHW
*Health Career Promotion/
Outreach Coordinator*



RACHEL FLORES, CHW
Specialist IV

West Texas AHEC Area Health Education Centers

The West Texas AHEC program supports six regional centers in Amarillo, Plainview, Midland, Abilene, El Paso, and Wichita Falls. The primary goal for the West Texas AHEC program is to coordinate pipeline activities to recruit and engage with students to encouraging them to enter the healthcare workforce.

Additionally, the West Texas AHEC Program expands community-based opportunities to increase the training capacity for health professions, provides community-based clinical training for health professions students through the AHEC Scholars Program, provides practice entry support, introduces youth to health careers through AHEC Jr. Scholars programs, and supports placement and retention of health professionals in high-need areas.

West Texas AHEC's Highlights:



31

West Texas AHEC's Bridge to Excellence CHW Program provided **certification training** for **31 new CHWs** on the core CHW track.



13k

More than **13k students** learned about potential health care career opportunities through our H.O.T. Jobs presentations.



1,756

Student Rotations were facilitated for **129 health care professions students** and provided **1,756 hours of care** in the West Texas AHEC region at the TTUHSC Free Clinic.



West Texas AHEC's 2023-2024 Accomplishments

- More than **13k students** participated in H.O.T. Jobs presentations
- Student rotations at Free Clinic
 - **129 health care professionals**
 - Total number of **Rotation Days: 439**
 - Total number of **Rotation Hours: 1,756** (Primary Care Hours)
- AHEC Jr. Scholars
- Bridge to Excellence CHW Program
 - **31 students** completed the course
 - **10 CHWs** received a total of **120 hours** of CEUs
- Rural Student Health Sciences Mentorship Program



AHEC of the Plains



Big Country AHEC



Panhandle AHEC



North Central AHEC

WEST TEXAS
AHEC



Permian Basin AHEC



Desert Mountain AHEC

High School Telemedicine Certificate Curriculum

Powered by T-CORE

The **High School Telemedicine Technical Certificate Curriculum** is the first telemedicine certificate program tailored for high school students in rural West Texas. The curriculum offers competency-based training on telemedicine clinical procedures, technology, and business. The program provides students with the information and experience necessary to build and demonstrate their telemedicine competencies. Students who complete the curriculum and obtain a passing score from their instructor(s) will receive a technical certificate of completion from TTUHSC which shows they have demonstrated competency in telemedicine.

Our team recruited **eight area schools** to participate in the program in FY 2023-2024, with three schools participating in the Fall and six schools will join in Spring 2025.



Rural Student Health Sciences Mentorship Program

The **Rural Student Health Sciences Mentorship Program** continues to build support between TTUHSC students and high school students from rural areas interested in a career in healthcare. This ongoing program has extensive support from the West Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and various TTUHSC School of Medicine departments.

This coordinated effort gives medical students a chance to share their stories and paths to success for getting into college/medical school while also helping interested students realize their own potential for pursuing health careers and returning to their hometowns to practice and serve, and helping many of our fledgling communities build their medical capacity.

In 2023-24, **33 high school students** from **22 rural high schools** and **31 mentors**, including about **20 TTUHSC medical students**, participated in the program.



DSHS Health Equity Grant

Community Conversations on Health

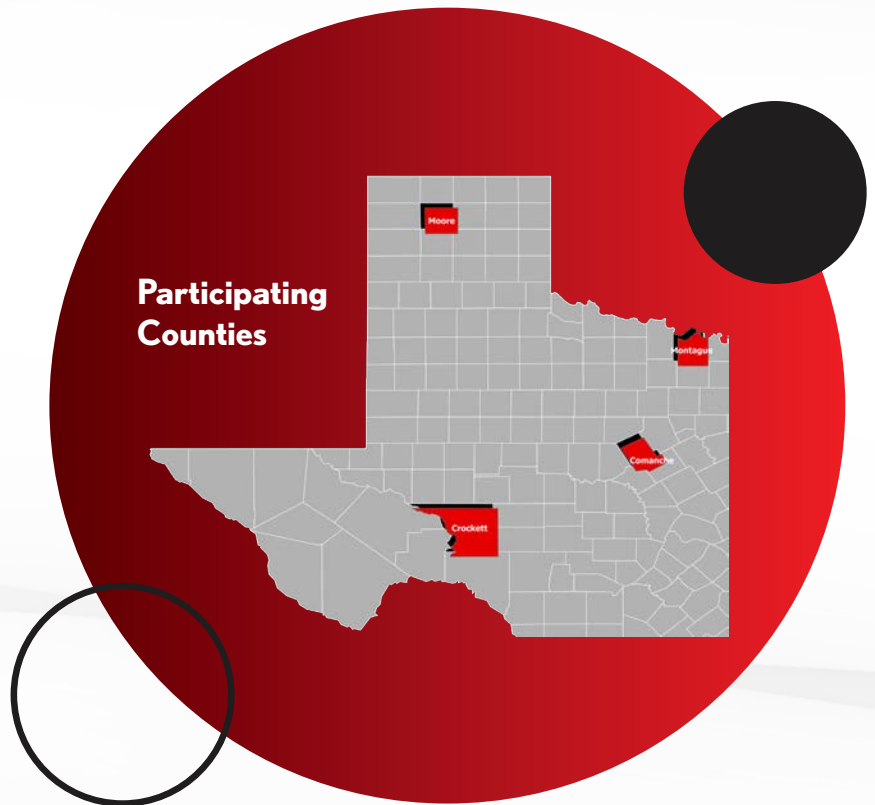
The T-CORE team wrapped up a years-long project to better understand health disparities among rural communities in hopes of reducing the impact of future public health emergencies. The study is funded by the Texas Department of State Health Services. As part of the project, the T-CORE team conducted community health needs assessments in the four participating counties (Comanche, Crockett, Montague, and Moore). Some of the activities included:

- Participating in community events to provide health-related information.
- Conducting key informant surveys with leaders and stakeholders from different community sectors (healthcare, education, etc.).
- Conducting focus group meetings to get input from county residents/community members.
- Presenting findings from the community health needs assessment at a community meeting.

EVALUATION/REVIEW September 2023-May 2024

- Analyze Community Assessment Data
- Determine Connections/Evaluate Needs
- Intervention Recommendations
- Regional Meeting (Share findings)
- Final Report to DSHS

Participating Counties



Frontiers in Telemedicine (FIT) Lab

Launched in 2016, the **Frontiers in Telemedicine Course** is a unique program aimed at training clinical staff to effectively use telemedicine. It focuses on competency-based learning and requires students to complete hands-on simulation center training, online modules, and objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) designed to educate and measure knowledge of telemedicine equipment, procedures, etiquette, and ethics. The program also trains licensed health care professionals who would like to gain a certificate of completion in telemedicine. After completing training, students should be able to demonstrate:

- The basic knowledge of telemedicine and telehealth and define who can benefit from the technology.
- Knowledge of the originating/patient site and distant/provider site, as well as the clinician and staff roles at each location.
- Knowledge of the operation of telemedicine technology.
- Knowledge of a telemedicine encounter.
- The basic ability to assess a patient in the ambulatory telemedicine setting.
- The knowledge required to present and manage a patient with a specific problem. Communication skills in patient and medical team communication.

FIT Certificate Course

The **Frontiers in Telemedicine Certificate course** is the training program for clinical staff that covers telemedicine technology, clinical encounters, billing, and ethics. The course is now fully online and utilizes a new and more engaging pedagogical approach to provide training necessary for providers to navigate the different approaches to a successful telehealth implementation.

In FY 24, **71 healthcare providers** trained in telemedicine technology as part of the Frontiers in Telemedicine Lab program.

TRAINING CLINICAL STAFF

Since February 1, 2016, the FIT Lab has trained **540 professionals** in Emergency Medicine, Dermatology, Psychiatry, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, and various Public Health specialties, as well as department chairs from multiple TTUHSC campuses.

TexLa Telehealth Resources Center

The **TexLa Telehealth Resource Center (TexLa TRC)** provides technical assistance and resources to new and existing telehealth programs throughout Texas and Louisiana. Federally funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), TexLa TRC is one of 14 Telehealth Resource Centers in the country. TexLa TRC work in partnership with external stakeholders and the other TRCs to promote best practices. The overarching goal of TexLa TRC is to make healthcare services easily accessible by expanding telehealth into rural and underserved communities and beyond.

Technical Assistance

135

Clients Assisted

As part of its mission, TexLa TRC provides technical assistance to healthcare facilities and providers in Texas and Louisiana. In 2023-2024, the TexLa Telehealth Resource Center completed more than **135 requests** for technical assistance, tools, resources, and information regarding telehealth technology, policy, and reimbursement.

Clinical Encounters

723

Telemedicine Patients

Despite staffing changes in 2023-2024, The Telemedicine Program held an average of **12-15 clinics** each month. From March 1, 2024 to August 31, 2024, the program served **723 patients**.

Outreach and Education

1,107

Outreach Contacts

In FY24, TexLa TRC reached **1,107 people** through outreach and education initiatives. These include conferences, workshops, and social media interactions.

Project ECHO

The TexLa TRC-funded **Project ECHO program** is an infrastructure for sharing knowledge, and it is designed to create virtual communities of learners by bringing together healthcare providers and subject-matter experts in a virtual space. Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits are issues for eligible participants, and the sessions serve to educate and bring issues to the forefront in telemedicine practice for various providers. Providers are also allowed to collaborate with external and internal partners in the pursuit of best practices.

Join us TODAY!

**Project ECHO**

August 29, 2024
12:00-1:00 PM CST

A presentation with
Matthew Sakumoto, M.D.
Assistant Primary Care Physician & Informatics Physician Champion
Luther Health West Bay Medical Group

Register here: 



TOPICS COVERED

Nursing • Breast Cancer • Delirium in the ICU • Tele-ophtalmology • HIV • Tele-burn
Nutrition • Tele-obstetrics • School-based Telemedicine • Tele-endocrinology
The Virtualist • Osteoporosis & Falls

342 Participants
14 Sessions

TexLa Team

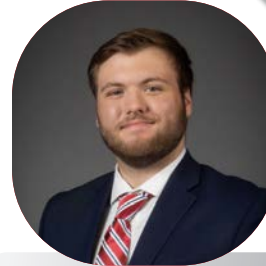
Student presenters at the
2024 Telehealth at the
Crossroads Conference.



KELLY MUNOZ
InHT Project Manager



CAROLINE BOWERS, MS
TexLa Program Manager



SKYLER DIXON
Financial Analyst



ANAKIN NINO
Student Assistant



LAURA RAUWALD
Clinical Manager



GLEN SALCIDO
Project ECHO Program Manager

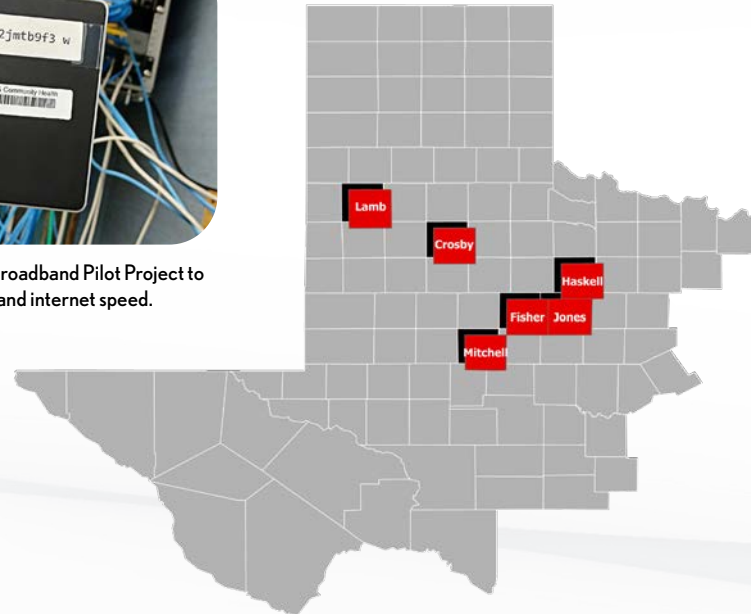


Broadband Pilot Project

The Broadband Pilot Project just wrapped up its third year. The project aims to link federal initiatives at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Communications Commission to assess the broadband capacity of healthcare providers and patients in rural areas. Through a sub-award from the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), the team is working in six rural West Texas counties to measure broadband speeds and collect data with the ultimate goal of improving broadband access to promote telehealth in rural areas of the state. In the last fiscal year, the team deployed 82 pods, and to date, more than 100 devices have been deployed, which has resulted in more than 800,000 speed tests within the study area. This project is scheduled to end on November 30, 2024, but the team is working to secure an extension through the end of 2024.



Beacon used in Broadband Pilot Project to measure broadband internet speed.



NextGen 911

The NextGen 911 Project works to connect EMS units in rural towns with Level 1 Trauma Centers that are up to 100 miles or more away. The purpose is to allow more communication between paramedics in the field and Emergency Department physicians about the real-time conditions of a patient using telemedicine technology. This allows for better coordination of patient care decisions such as ensuring the patient is going to an appropriate treatment facility.

FY 2024 Accomplishments

- Developed Business Plan with the Commission on State Emergency Communications (CSEC) and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC)
- Identified Stakeholders (Regional Advisory Councils/EMS/Hospital/Technology)
- Established a Hospitals/Clinicians Workgroup
- Offered Technical Assistance for Policy & Protocol Updates
- Reviewed and Revised Criteria/Protocols for Telemedicine Implementation
- Determined Training Approaches for EMS Personnel & Trauma Facilities
- Identified Telemedicine Equipment Needs & Initiated Purchasing
- Submitted First & Second Quarter Reports to CSEC

Community Engagement Team



RANCE STANDRIDGE
Technology Manager



MICHAEL MANGEL
Broadband Program Manager



**NEXT
GENERATION
911**

Media, Analytics, Publishing, Research Team (MAPR)

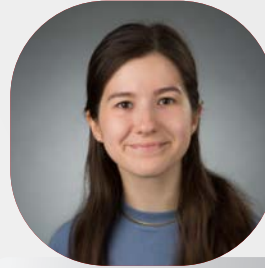
The Media, Analytics, Publishing, and Research (MAPR) team is tasked with projects such as the Rural Health Quarterly, research data analysis, producing this Annual Report, and the brand-new podcast “Rural Power Half Hour”, which focused on issues that face our rural communities. The team also develops interactive maps, design layouts for publications, handles FMHIRCH’s web presence, and provides technical assistance.



MIGUEL CARRASCO, MS
*Senior Director of Media, Analytics,
Publishing, Research*



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Digital Designer



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Director of Data and Analytics



GRACE FOSU, MA, MS
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**DIANA VARGAS-
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Research Associate

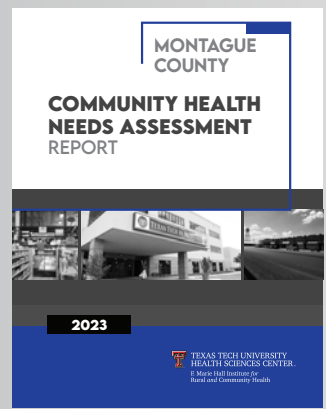
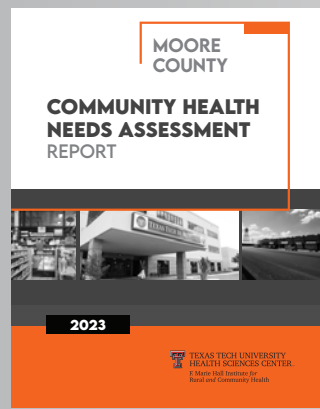


- F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health
- Texas H.O.T. Jobs
- TexLa Telehealth Resource Center
- *Rural Health Quarterly*
- West Texas Area Health Education Center



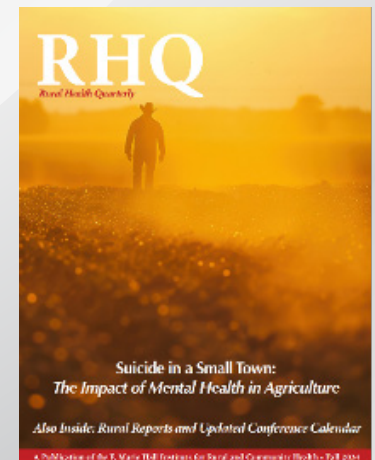
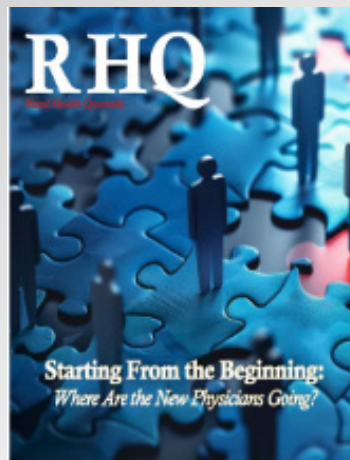
Community Health Needs Assessments

The MAPR Research Associates, Senior Designer, and Lead Writer pitched in to assist the T-CORE team to complete the County Health Needs Assessments for four counties (Comanche, Crockett, Montague, and Moore) as part of the DSHS Health Equity Grant. These 100-plus page reports focused on details of each county, the state of Texas, and the United States. The Research Associates collected data from sources such as the American Community Survey-U.S. Census Bureau, the Texas Department of State Health Services, the U.S. Labor Department, and even the FBI.



Rural Health Quarterly (RHQ)

The *Rural Health Quarterly* is a scholarly publication that is administered, written, and published by the Institute. With articles covering rural communities, healthcare challenges, and rural health happenings around TTUHSC and West Texas, the RHQ is indexed on the Rural Health Information Hub and enjoys local as well as national prominence.



FALL/WINTER 2023

- 2022 U.S. Rural Health Report Card

SPRING 2024

- Where are the New Physicians Going?
- By the Numbers: Healthcare Access in Texas Counties
- Uninsured Country: Affordable Healthcare Alludes Many Family Farmers & Ranchers

SUMMER 2024

- Homegrown Solutions: Can Rural Students Ease the Provider Drought?
- Hospital Care at Home: What Does the Future Hold?
- An East Texas County Fights a Bitter Battle over a Reborn Hospital
- Medicaid Unwinding Deals Blow to Tenuous System of Care for Native Americans

FALL 2024

- Suicide in a Small Town: The Impact of Mental Health in Agriculture
- In Rural Texas, ERs are Facing a Growing Mental Health Crisis
- Rural Hospitals Built During Baby Boom Now Face Baby Bust
- Food Stamps Go Further in Rural Areas – Until You Add Transportation Costs

Rural Health Quarterly (RHQ)

Advisory Board

The *Rural Health Quarterly* Advisory Board is instrumental on helping guide and shape our publication. The Board includes:

Adrian Billings, MD, PhD, who is an associate professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC)-Permian Basin. In addition to his scholarly duties, Dr. Billings sees patients in Alpine, Marfa, and Presidio every week.

LaMicha Hogan, APRN, MSN, FNP-BC is an assistant professor and Family Nurse Practitioner at TTUHSC. She also serves as Associate Dean in the School of Nursing at TTUHSC as well as the Department Chair for APRN Programs.

Amy Hord, LCSW is a behavioral health counselor at Family Support Services of Amarillo. Hord works to provide counseling services to adolescents and adults. Before this role, Hord worked as an Instructor of Social Work at West Texas A&M University in Canyon.

Courtney Queen, PhD is an assistant professor at TTUHSC's Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health in Abilene. In addition to her teaching role, Dr. Queen was selected as a Fulbright U.S. Scholar in 2020. Under this award, Dr. Queen traveled to Latvia in Eastern Europe to teach at Riga Stradiņš University (RSU) and conduct research on health disparities and inequalities in Latvia's health care system.

Bree Sherwin, PhD, JD is a law professor at the Texas Tech University School of Law. She also teaches Environmental Health in Texas Tech's Department of Public Health. Dr. Sherwin holds a PhD in Environmental Toxicology, with her research focusing on environmental health and environmental justice issues such as the Flint, Michigan water crisis and the environmental impact of coal ash waste ponds.



Rural and Community Health Senior Fellows

LaMicha Hogan, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC

Dr. LaMicha Hogan is the Associate Dean and Department Chair for Graduate Nursing Programs at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, a position she has held since 2022. She is also a certified family nurse practitioner and has been a full-time faculty member in the TTUHSC SON Department for APRN Studies since 2007. Her teaching focus is on primary care and developing advanced practice nurses in the role of care delivery and becoming leaders in their communities.

Before her career brought her to academia, Dr. Hogan spent ten years in bedside critical care nursing, caring for individuals across the lifespan. In conjunction with a full-time academic role, her APRN clinical practice focus for the past 15 years has included primary care in FQHC settings and rural health family practice. Beginning with a diploma RN degree from Methodist Hospital School of Nursing in 1997, she earned a BSN degree from Lubbock Christian University in 1999, and a MSN degree from West Texas A&M University in 2005. Dr. Hogan achieved her PhD in Higher Education Research from Texas Tech University in 2022.

Dr. Hogan's current projects focus on the role of nurses play in rural health.

- Identifying APRNs in rural health as champions in their communities for nursing and hospital systems
- Exploring shortages of nursing specialties (e.g., RNs and CRNAs in rural health areas)
- Pursuing behavioral health and maternal care HRSA Opportunities impacting rural health

My motivation to serve the people in rural West Texas

Growing up on the South Plains, just outside of Lubbock, faith, family, and serving the immediate community "where we were planted" were deeply engrained. My parents and family owned and operated an irrigation business serving the agricultural and ranching communities across the state and the Southwest, and watching them taught me the crucial value of rural relationships; ensuring rural businesses, farmers and ranchers have the resources necessary to stay economically viable.

This led me to my calling to become an RN, with the intent of practicing in the Texas Panhandle. After almost 30 years in healthcare as an RN, including 20 years as a Family Nurse Practitioner and 17 years as a nursing educator in Texas, it is been an honor to provide direct care, educate nurse practitioners on how to develop those rural relationships, and to be given the gift of being able to serve others through my calling to impact the health for the better for rural communities and families for the years to come.



Awards and Honors

- CH Endowed Professorship for APRN studies
- 2022 fellow of the American Association Colleges of Nursing Elevating Leaders in Academic Nursing (ELAN) Program
- University Ambassador for Texas Nurse Practitioners Association
- President-Elect of South Plains Great 25 Nurses Organization for 2023
- South Plains Nurse Practitioner Association Nurse Practitioner of the Year
- SON faculty development awards for innovation, distinguished clinician, and "Excellence in Teaching" for the TTUHSC SON Graduate Program, 2021

Professional Organization Memberships

- South Plains Nurse Practitioners Association (SPNPA)
- Texas Nurse Practitioners (TNP)
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI Iota Mu Chapter)
- National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) Association Leadership Science in Nursing (ALSN)
- Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society
- Advisory Board for the Rural Health Quarterly Journal

Dr. LaMicha Hogan
Rural and Community Health Senior Fellow



Adrian Billings, MD, PhD, FAAFP, FACU

My “why” for my passion for rural

I feel very passionate about all things matter because I was born and raised in rural Del Rio and my entire clinical career has been practiced in the Big Bend of Texas. I feel very blessed to have had the rural upbringing and rural healthcare career that I have had. I feel very blessed that I have been given the privilege of advocating for improved access to rural healthcare for rural Texans. I do not want a rural zip code to be a risk factor for a patient's quality or length of life. From a faith standpoint, I feel very fortunate and called to accompany rural communities during both their joys and challenges.

The work that I am doing specifically related to being a Sr. Fellow with FMHIRCH

Being a Senior Fellow with FMHIRCH really allows me the privilege and time to practice medicine outside the walls of a healthcare facility by advocating for improved access to rural healthcare. I am very interested in rural health workforce development of all clinicians from the associate degree to the terminal degree that are needed in rural areas. I believe that our rural students are our solution to the rural health workforce challenges that we have. These rural students are worthy of investment.

The two biggest predictors of a future rural medical practice for a medical student are: rural origins or rural life experiences and rural medicine exposure during medical school. My focus is working to enable rural students to have an equitable academic opportunity to pursue their dreams of becoming a clinician and increasing our TTUHSC trainees (nursing, medical, physical therapy, physician assistant, and resident physician) exposure to rural medicine experiences. In order to do this, our Rural and Community Engagement Division at TTUHSC Permian Basin has collaborated with the Area Health Education (AHEC) program in several activities, including a National Rural Health Day event and “Rural Health Careers Camp”, a summer camp for rural high school students interested in healthcare. At the National Rural Health Day event, we bring together rural healthcare organizations from west Texas who are seeking to build their workforce. In addition, students from rural high schools enrolled in healthcare training courses, as well as students from Midland and Odessa Colleges, UTPB, and Sul Ross State University (SRSU), and TTUHSC students/resident physicians are invited to the career fair at the National Rural Health Day event. Our aim is to create matches between these trainees and rural healthcare organizations to provide more access to care for rural communities. At the Rural Health Careers Camp, we collaborated with the Permian Basin AHEC, Midland College, Odessa College, SRSU, UTPB and various TTUHSC schools to host rural high school students from west Texas to spend three days learning about different healthcare careers from the associates degree all the way to terminal degree. We also exposed these students to rural healthcare professionals from the Big Bend and gave them a tour of Big Bend Regional Medical Center.

I am the Principal Investigator on a Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Behavioral Health Workforce Education Training (BHWET) grant. This grant is a collaboration between TTUHSC, SRSU, and UTEP. The aim of this grant is to get more Master's Degree-seeking Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) students into safety net behavioral health clinics to ultimately improve access to behavioral health care especially for our rural communities. At TTUHSC, I also help administer a mental health fellowship for LPC graduates to get their 3000 hours of supervision and I have been interested in expanding this fellowship to our rural TTUHSC service area. To that end, we were able to operationalize a rural mental health fellowship at Reeves Regional Health in Pecos for one of our BHWET-supported students upon graduation from SRSU. We are working to expand this fellowship to social worker Masters graduates. I am also a co-principal investigator on a HRSA Hispanic Center of Excellence grant. The aim of this grant is to train more family physicians for West Texas with a particular emphasis on rural family physicians.

I serve as member of the Texas Perinatal Advisory Council for the Texas Department of Health Services, Parliamentarian and soon to be Treasurer in the Texas Academy of Family Physicians, Board Trustee for the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, Alpine ISD School Board Trustee, and a member of the Texas Medical Association Council on Legislation.

Honors and Positions

- National Health Service Corps Scholar alumnus
- Chief Medical Officer of Preventative Care Health Services FQHC in the rural Big Bend of Texas
- Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, and the Associate Academic Dean of Rural and Community Engagement at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- Senior Fellow of Health Equity with the Atlantic Institute
- Elected school board trustee for the Alpine ISD
- Career-long community physician along the rural Texas-Mexico border of west Texas

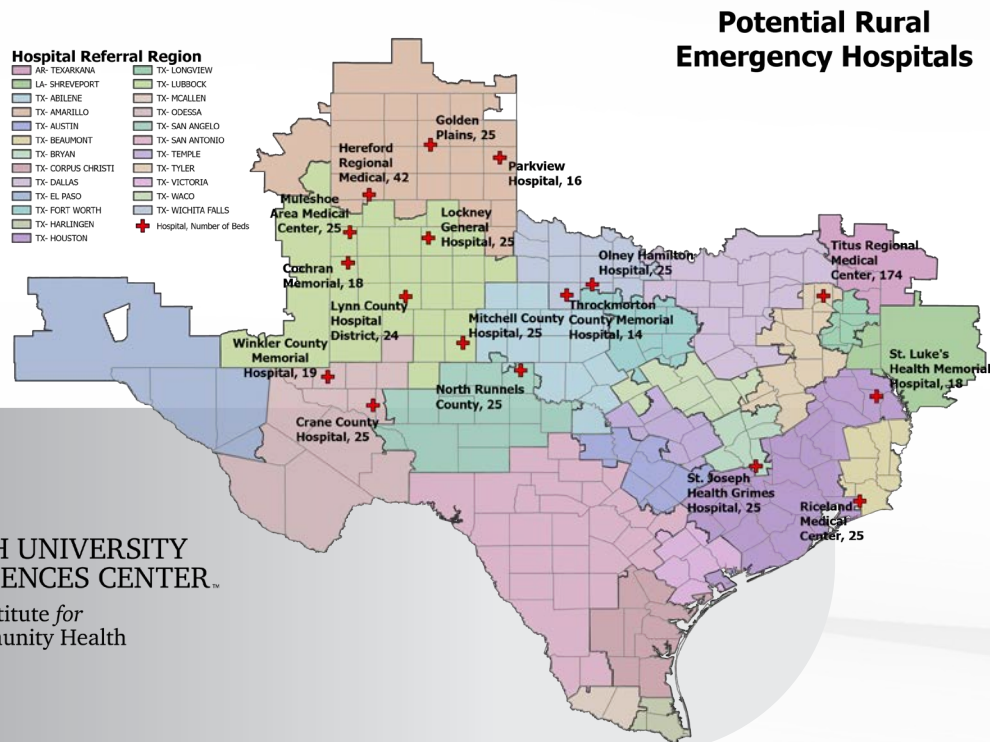
Rural Emergency Hospital Designation

It's no secret that rural hospitals across the country are in serious financial turmoil, with many either cutting services or shutting its doors over the last few years. A report from the USDA found one in seven Americans live in rural communities with limited access to health care and higher rates of chronic illness.

In April 2023, the FMHIRCH entered an agreement to collaborate with the Texas A&M Health Science Center Rural and Community Health Institute (ARCHI) to start a program to educate rural hospitals in **108 West Texas counties** about the **Rural Emergency Hospital (REH)** designation. The REH designation is aimed at helping rural hospitals keep critical outpatient hospital services available to the community.

Before a rural hospital can convert to an REH, it must provide several critical amenities, including 24-hour emergency services, laboratory and radiology services, and a pharmacy. The ED of a REH must be staffed around the clock, all year long, and an MD, DO, PA, NP, or CNS with emergency care training must be on duty or on-call and able to be at the hospital within 30 minutes in an emergency.

The FMHIRCH is dedicated to helping guide West Texas hospitals so they can afford to stay open to help keep their communities thriving and healthy.



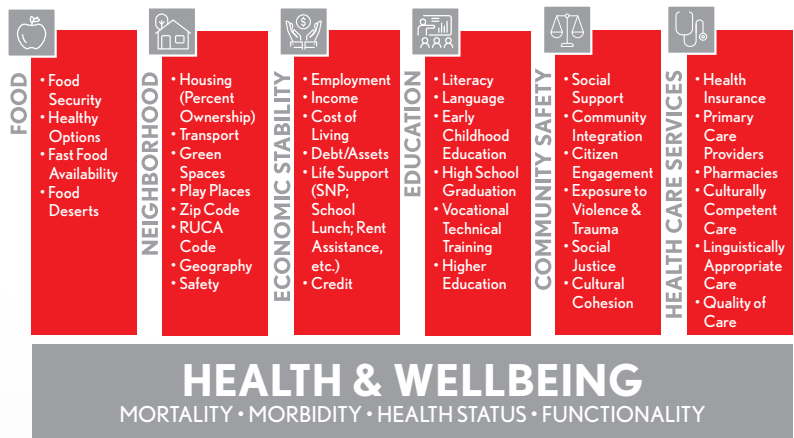
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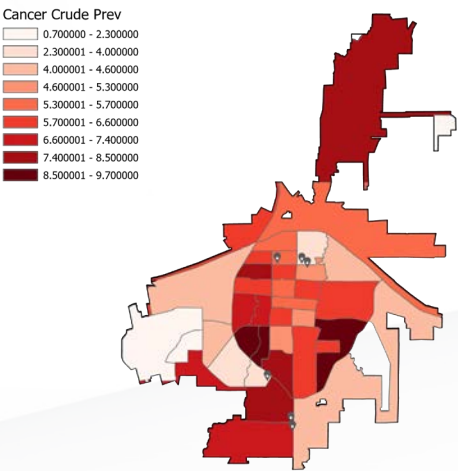
Social Determinants of Health Project

The Centers for Disease Control defines Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) as conditions that affect people where they live, learn, work, and play and contribute to health outcomes because they are risk factors for many disease conditions. Some estimate these SDoH factors account for between 30-55% of disease outcomes, which can be more impactful than health care or lifestyle choices. A critical appraisal of SDoH, published in August 2020, focuses on this age-old conceptual framework of public health and recently of progressive policies by governments around the world. The U.S. health care system is responding in two important ways, through accreditation of hospitals and related facilities that have a criterion related to how well the facilities engage their communities and manage population health with preventive and other programs that focus on reducing the burden of diseases. Upcoming changes in payment mechanisms are going to reward health care providers, mostly hospitals, that work to reduce SDoH. By keeping the communities healthy and managing risk factors of expensive-to-care-for diseases, the cost of care can be reduced and refocused to provide a better value and healthier outcomes. We think studying how SDoH, specifically the effects on health and well-being, will lead to more prevention care and health promotion programs. The idea is to understand the interplay of factors so that precision medicine can be achieved that is meant for a particular population in a particular community. In other words, one-size-fits all options should become a thing of the past. Moreover, we want to help our providers avoid the penalties that will be levied through what will be reimbursed and to avoid the suffering that goes with disease burden. We think that prevention is better than cure, access to care is better than deferring needed services, and that providers and consumers will be more satisfied with the system.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Cancer Prevalence in Abilene



[1] Social Determinants of Health | CDC
[2] www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health
[3] Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2020 Aug; 17(16): 5856.

Source: 500 Cities Project, Census Tract-Level Data, 2019 Release

Grants, Applications, and Awards

The F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health’s (FMHIRCH) numerous strategic partnerships present a wide range of contractual needs. Over the course of fiscal year **2023-24**, FMHIRCH managed a total of **20 contracts** to support its numerous strategic partnerships.

The Institute also developed and maintained numerous internal partnerships with other departments throughout TTUHSC such as the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, the Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health, and the Department of Internal Medicine.

Through these strategic partnerships, the FMHIRCH expanded its mission to collaborate with the people of Texas for the advancement of health through innovative and scholarly research, the advanced use of technology, comprehensive education, and outreach.

Through its contract management and strategic partnerships, FMHIRCH embodies the Institutional vision of transforming health care through innovation and collaboration.

GRANT	START DATE	END DATE	TOTAL
Model State-Supported AHEC (HRSA)	September 1, 2022	August 31, 2024	\$ 1,853,456
Telehealth Resource Center Grant Program	September 1, 2021	August 31, 2024	\$ 1,000,250
Texas Department of Agriculture	May 1, 2023	September 15, 2023	\$ 39,353
Community Conversations on Health	November 10, 2021	May 31, 2025	\$ 818,986
Telehealth Broadband Pilot Program	June 1, 2022	November 30, 2024	\$ 1,107,038
Next Generation 911	September 1, 2023	August 31, 2025	\$ 500,000
TOTAL			\$5,319,083

Funding for FY 2023–2024

ENDOWMENTS

The Marie Hall Chair in Rural Health	\$ 315,867
Smith/Vela/Patterson Senior Fellowship for Rural Health Research	\$ 270,360
F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health	\$1,496,055

STATE APPROPRIATED LINE ITEM FUNDING

Rural Health Care	\$ 673,058
West Texas AHEC Program	\$1,732,800

Offices/Boards/Committees

Billy Philips, PhD, MPH

Member, Institute for Telehealth and Digital Innovation Advisory Board
Member, Academic Affairs Council
Member, West Texas Digital Health Hub
Member, Legislative Workgroup
Member, President's Cabinet
Member, Admissions Selection Committee, School of Medicine
Member, Plainview Foundation for Rural Health Advancement Board
Member, Texas Health Improvement Network (THIN) Committee
Member, TTUHSC Academic Affairs Council

Wendy Bryan

Member, National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA)

Skylar Dixon

Member, National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA)

Cathy Hudson

Member, TTUHSC Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Committee
Secretary, Society of Clinical Research Associates (SOCRA) Board of Directors

Jesse Jenkins

Member, National AHEC Organization (NAO)
Co-facilitator, NAO CORE Database Workgroup

Sarah Looten

Member, TTUHSC External Affairs Council

Denise Lopez

Member, TTUHSC People and Operations Taskforce
Member, National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA)

Kelly Munoz

Member, National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Center's Governance Committee
Member, National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Center's Health Disparities Committee
Member, Telehealth Implementation Bootcamp Committee
Member, TexLa TRC's Crossroads Committee

Gbenga Olokede, MD, MPH

Committee on Research & Evaluation (CORE), National AHEC Organization (NAO)
Member, Texas Public Health Association
Member, America Evaluation Association
Member, Lubbock ISD Science Advisory Board

Dolores Parrish

Member, Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM)
Member, TTUHSC Latin/Hispanic Faculty/Staff Association

Frances Quintero

Member, Lubbock ISD Advisory Committee for Health Sciences

West Texas Health Disparities Research Symposium

The F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health was honored to be a sponsor of the second annual West Texas Health Disparities Research Symposium hosted by the Texas Tech University System Health Policy and Public Health Think Tank. The symposium aimed to identify and address health care disparities in West Texas, bringing together like-minded individuals committed to working toward health equity in the region. Healthcare professionals from across the region and medical students heard ideas about how to help rural communities.





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2023-2024 F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health Staff

“

We focus our imagination, our talents and our energy to improve the health and well-being of the people and communities of Texas and beyond.

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