

3-1-2011

# Salud y Saludos: The E-Newsletter of the College of Health Sciences

College of Health Sciences

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## Recommended Citation

College of Health Sciences, "Salud y Saludos: The E-Newsletter of the College of Health Sciences" (2011). *College of Health Sciences*. Paper 3.

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**College of Health Sciences**

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

# Salud y Saludos

The E-News of the College of Health Sciences

Salud y Saludos

March 2011

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## From the Dean's Desk



As the move to our new 138,000 square-foot building draws closer, our excitement is growing. This beautiful new 4-story facility will promote growth of enrollment, faculty recruitment and retention and research funding at the University of Texas at El Paso. The new UTEP facility will enable the University to respond to both student demand for health careers and address the pressing need for well-prepared health professionals in this region.

The new building will support UTEP's growing College of Health Sciences and School of

Nursing programs, housing a total enrollment of over 3000 students. New research facilities will expand our capacity to conduct externally funded research, and the development of additional interdisciplinary research centers will contribute substantially to the biomedical and health research base in the Paso del Norte region.

New clinical simulation facilities will foster unique collaborative student learning experiences in high-demand areas such as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Social Work, Rehabilitation Counseling, Clinical Laboratory Sciences, Pharmacy and Public Health. State of the art nutrition research facilities will support students in a developing graduate program in Human Nutrition. An updated Human Performance Laboratory will expand our capacity to conduct exercise science, cardiovascular disease and metabolic disease research.

Prime opportunities are currently available to sponsor College of Health Sciences academic and research programs and facilities. Our community's support will help the College of Health Sciences to recruit and retain talented research-active faculty in a highly competitive market and help us to offer the best preparation for our students, our future health care workforce. Don't miss this opportunity to join us as we plan for a healthier future for our region!

## Research Activities

### Oralia Loza Co-PI on Major Grant



On March 4th, 2011, PI Edward Castaneda (Department of Psychology) and an interdisciplinary team of investigators at UTEP, including Dr. Oralia Loza (Department of Public Health Sciences) were awarded an NIH R24 grant entitled "UTEP DIDARP: Vulnerability

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Issues in Drug Abuse (VIDA)". Other investigators include Dr. John Wiebe (Department of Psychology), Dr. Kristin L. Gosselink (Department of Biological Sciences), Dr. Joao B. Ferreira-Pinto (College of Health Sciences), and Dr. Jon Amastae (Department of Languages & Linguistics). This award will provide funding to develop and support an infrastructure for substance abuse research at UTEP for the next five years. The award also supports funding four pilot grants, one of which Dr. Loza is PI. Working with community partners Programa Compañeros, A.C. in Cd. Juarez and Alliance Border Collaborative covering the Paso del Norte region, she will study social and contextual vulnerability to methamphetamine use on the U.S.-Mexico border.

### Program Highlights

#### **Council on Rehabilitation Education Site Visitors Assess Master of Rehabilitation Counseling Program for Accreditation**

The [Master of Rehabilitation Counseling \(MRC\) program](#) educates students in the philosophy, process, and profession of rehabilitation counseling. Rehabilitation counseling is a systematic process which assists persons with physical, mental, developmental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities achieve their personal, career, and independent living goals in the most integrated setting possible. Graduates are highly sought after by a number of rehabilitation agencies in El Paso, the State of Texas, and the State of New Mexico and across the nation. In February, site visitors for the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) came to The University of Texas at El Paso- College of Health Sciences to evaluate the MRC program. CORE is a specialized organization that accredits graduate programs that provide academic preparation in Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE). Approximately 104 university and college-based rehabilitation counselor education programs are accredited at the master's degree level. Accreditation serves to promote the effective delivery of rehabilitation services to people with disabilities by stimulating and fostering continual review and improvement of master's degree rehabilitation counselor education programs. Rehabilitation counseling programs must be accredited by CORE or seeking accreditation to be eligible for long-term training grants from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), an agency under the U.S. Department of Education. These grants provide scholarship for students interested in careers in the state vocational rehabilitation program and related agencies.

In accrediting programs, CORE evaluates six programmatic areas. These areas are:

- A. Program Mission and Objectives
- B. Program Evaluation
- C. General Curriculum
- D. Clinical Experiences
- E. Administration and Faculty
- F. Program Support and Resources

To evaluate these areas, the site visitors met with program representatives, college and university administration, and support personnel over a two day period. Dr. Timothy Tansey, the program director of the MRC program, and the university will be notified in late Summer regarding the status of the accreditation application. If granted accreditation, the MRC program will be reviewed again in three years. During that time, graduates of the MRC program can take the national certification exam, the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor exam, and the program will continue to offer scholarships under the RSA long-term training grant received by the program in Fall 2010.



### ACOTE Site Visitors Appraise MOT Program

The Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education sent two reviewers to the UTEP College of Health Sciences to conduct a site visit for re-accreditation of the [Master of Occupational Therapy Program](#) on March 21-23, 2011. Re-accreditation of occupational therapy programs usually occurs every 7-10 years. During their visit, Dr. Vicki Smith and Jennifer Kaldenberg, OTR met with program faculty, UTEP administrators (President Natalicio, Provost Junius Gonzales, and Dean Kathleen Curtis), students, alumni, clinical educators, and employers of UTEP MOT graduates. They were very impressed with the program's vision and efforts toward access and excellence with a 21<sup>st</sup> century student demographic, and our outreach efforts to serve those in the El Paso community. They provided valuable feedback on ways that the program can be further strengthened. A final decision on length of accreditation will be made at the ACOTE Board of Director's meeting at the American Occupational Therapy Association Annual Conference in April.

### Faculty Corner

#### Dr. Bess Sirmon Fjordbak Testifies at Texas House of Representatives



On March 8, 2011, Dr. Bess Sirmon Fjordbak, Associate Director of the UTEP Concussion Management Clinic, was invited to Austin to present testimony on HB 677 at a hearing in the House Education Committee. This bill addresses concussion management for school-aged athletes. Nationwide, there are 26 states with pending legislation on concussion management. This bill, authored by Rep. Eddie Lucio III (D- San Benito), is one of only three such measures in the United States that specifically addresses collection of baseline cognitive-linguistic data. After testimony from retired professional

and college football players and athletic trainers on the impact of repeated concussions, Dr. Sirmon Fjordbak spoke to the assembled committee about clinical efficacy of serial cognitive-linguistic assessments in management and recovery from concussive injuries.

Dr. Sirmon Fjordbak has also been invited to come back to Austin on March 28<sup>th</sup> to provide testimony to the Senate Governmental Organization Committee regarding SB 662. This bill was introduced by Sen. Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville), and deals with the Sunset Review of the licensure

law and the State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.

### **Speech Language Professor Nominated for Presidency of Professional Organization**

Dr. Bess Sirmon Fjordbak has been nominated for President of the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (TSHA), the professional organization representing speech-language pathologists and audiologists in the state of Texas. As one of the largest state associations in this discipline, TSHA is the recognized resource for continuing education, legislative advocacy, consumer information, prevention, clinical practice, and professional issues. Dr. Sirmon Fjordbak has been serving as the TSHA Vice President for Social and Governmental Policy for the past two years, and was previously President of the Georgia Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

### **Occupational Therapy Welcomes New Faculty Members**

The Master of Occupational Therapy Program has undergone some exciting changes in faculty over the last year. Stephanie Capshaw was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor and was appointed as the Program Director in September 2010. At that time, Dahlia Castillo, MS, OTR took over the reigns as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and also serves as a Clinical Assistant Professor. She brings with her many years of clinical experience, mainly in adult rehabilitation, which is where her teaching is concentrated. Gloria Brown, MS, OTR also came on board in September 2010 as a Clinical Assistant Professor. She is a Certified Hand Therapist, brings many years of clinical expertise, and has a teaching focus in biomechanics and adult physical dysfunction. Cecilia Fierro, OTD, OTR began in January 2011 as a Clinical Assistant Professor. She also brings with her many years of experience in adult physical dysfunction, and also in Leadership and Management. She currently serves as the District Chair of the Texas Occupational Therapy Association, Rio Grande area.



### **Student News & Leadership**

#### **President Obama Stops at Iowa Home of UTEP Grad**



By Arleene Barrios  
UTEP Public Information Officer

President Barack Obama paid a brief visit the morning of September 29, 2010 to the home of UTEP graduate Sandra Hatfield Clubb to discuss the challenges faced by

the middle class during a town hall meeting.

About 70 of her neighbors participated in this event in Des Moines, Iowa, which is part of Obama's efforts to touch base with regular people around the country. His plan was to have a similar event in Virginia later that day. The day before the President had a backyard discussion in Albuquerque, N.M., and a rally in Madison, Wis.

Hatfield Clubb graduated from [The University of Texas at El Paso](#) with a bachelor's in marketing 1987 and a master's in Instructional Specialist/Kinesiology in 1989. She was the 2009 Gold Nugget from the College of Health Sciences.

The former Miner is the director of athletics at Drake University, in Des Moines. Hatfield Clubb previously served as the senior associate athletic director at Arizona State University where she created a life skills program for student athletes that gained national recognition as a Program of Excellence by the Division 1A Athletic Directors Association.

### **Over 150 College of Health Sciences students out early on Saturday, March 26, 2011 to support the Muscular Dystrophy Association!**



## **Technology Tips**

### **MyDesktop Service**

MyDesktop is a web-based system which allows UTEP users to access several software applications from virtually any computer with an Internet connection, on or off campus. Students can also print to any campus lab printer (with a release station) without having to connect or load printer

drivers. Users will have access to their files through a secured and encrypted connection to mSpace using the My Documents icon on the desktop.

For more information, [click here](#)