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

College of Health Sciences

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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

September 2012

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From the Dean's Desk



As we say good bye to the last days of Summer 2012 and start the Fall semester, we have lots of news to share. This was a busy summer, with more students in more classes than anytime in the recent past. On the global front, we explored promising new research relationships with colleagues in Panama while over 20 of our students and faculty participated in international research and global learning experiences in Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala. The College of

Health Sciences also welcomed 13 new faculty members and several new staff members. We will be introducing them to you in this newsletter over the next few months.

With an overall enrollment growth of 6.3% since Fall 2011, we have added almost 100 new undergraduate students and over 30 new graduate students this fall. Our new graduate programs, the Doctor of Physical Therapy, Master of Rehabilitation Counseling and [Master of Social Work](#), continue to grow, as they celebrate the successes of the first few classes of graduates.

Our graduate Rehabilitation Sciences Department ([Occupational Therapy](#), [Physical Therapy](#), [Rehabilitation Counseling](#) and [Speech Language Pathology](#)) and [Cooperative Pharmacy programs](#), all housed in the Campbell building, about a mile off campus, have some good news to share as well. The Campbell Building has undergone a \$1 million renovation during 2011-2012, with new teaching and research laboratories and clinics, a simulated rehabilitation clinical laboratory, changing facilities, a renovated distance learning classroom and upgrades to out Speech Language Pathology clinic. We will be celebrating the renovation of the 45-year old Campbell Building, as a graduate health professions learning environment, on Friday, October 12 at 3:30 PM.

We are also looking forward to some major events in the next few weeks. First, the [3rd annual UTEP Commitment to Fitness Run/Walk](#) will be held on Sunday morning, October 14 at 8:00 AM. The event will start for the first time in front of the new Health Sciences and Nursing building. Over 30 UTEP employees have been participating in the ["Couch Potato to 5 K" training program](#) and we look forward to celebrating their new level of fitness. The Golden Age Fitness Association and College of Health Sciences have collaborated for the past three years to organize this event which mobilizes our campus community, promotes physical activity and wellness and benefits the Kinesiology department students and its flagship older adult fitness program. This year's events will feature health screenings and tours of the Health Sciences and Nursing building following the race. [Register here.](#)

Second, we are pleased to partner with the [Consulate General of Mexico in El Paso](#) to host the Closing Ceremony of XII Binational Health Week on Monday,

Calendar of events

October 12, 2012

Renovation Celebration:
Campbell Bldg, 1101 N.
Campbell St. El Paso,
3:30PM

October 14, 2012

[UTEP Commitment to
Fitness Run/Walk](#)

October 15, 2012

Closing of Binational Health
Week; HSN Bldg UTEP
Campus Room 217; 1:30PM

October 14 - 20

[UTEP Homecoming Week](#)

In the News

[Class Prepares Culturally
Competent Social Workers in
Spanish](#)

[Meeting to Solicit Public
Comment](#)

[CHS Students Deliver Global
Health](#)

[Nurses and Health
Professionals Among Most In-
Demand Careers](#)

[National Magazine Ranks UTEP in Top 15](#)

[Laboratory Professionals Make a Difference](#)

[Program Helps Older Adults Stay Physically Fit](#)

[UTEP to Conduct Health Screening for Migrant Workers](#)

[UTEP Faculty Edit Book on Border Social Justice](#)

[La Fe Students Learn about Health Careers](#)

[Health Sciences Students Prepare for Culture Shock](#)

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October 15, 2012 at the College of Health Sciences and Nursing building. The afternoon event will feature a panel of border health experts and the opening of the exhibition, [Voices and Images: Migrant Women, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Domestic Violence](#), an initiative led by Dr. Eva Moya of the Department of Social Work. Visitors will be able to view this exhibition and tour [Nuestra Casa Exhibit](#) at the [Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens](#) on the UTEP Campus. Over the past decade, Binational Health Week has become the signature event to mobilize federal, state and community resources for health promotion and wellness to address the needs of underserved Latino populations in the Americas. Hundreds of events across the U.S., Mexico and other Latin American countries will mark this two-week period, from October 1-14, 2012.

We will also be celebrating our Gold Nugget honorees and Friends of the College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing in a special event on Wednesday, October 17, 2012. We are pleased this year to honor two alumni- Dr. Jay Brant Capps from our Physical Therapy program and Katherine Long, from our Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program. [Please plan to attend and RSVP here.](#) Read our next newsletter to hear all about our Gold Nugget honorees and homecoming celebrations!

We look forward to seeing you at any or all of these events!

Rehabilitation Sciences Students & Faculty Traveled to Guatemala

Ten students and faculty members from the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences ([SPLP](#), [OT](#), [PT](#)) traveled to Antigua Guatemala August 9-18, 2012. The trip was an international service-learning component of an elective rehabilitation and global health course that was offered for the third year. A team from Rehab Sciences provided service to children with severe disabilities; the activities included modifying and repairing wheelchairs, fabricating splints, and working on functional communication strategies. Two students also attended intensive Spanish classes, and evening sessions for all students addressed such topics as ethical issues related to global health work, cultural competency, and social determinants of health.

There are many professional and personal benefits to participating in this course for the students as well as the faculty. A key outcome each year has been that students truly learned to value interprofessional collaboration. This course provides an intensive opportunity to learn about each other's professions and to work together for the benefit of children with disabilities. As physical therapist student Carlos Torres stated, "I learned that a good team makes a good outcome." Students also acquired skills that they would not have been exposed to in the standard curriculum; for example, students have learned to use various tools to do simple and complex wheelchair repairs. On a personal level, students learned how to move outside their emotional comfort zones, and become "comfortable with being uncomfortable" in a resource-limited country with clients with severe disabilities. Finally, both faculty and students reported leaving Guatemala with a renewed commitment to their chosen professions.



Participants
 Dr. Eugenia Gonzalez (OT)
 Dr. Connie Summers (SLP)
 Dr. Celia Pechak (PT)
 Kelly Smith (OT)
 Jessica Garcia (OT student)
 Blanca Villanueva (OT student)
 Erika Gonzalez (SLP)
 Eileen Fernandez (SLP student)
 Carlos Torres (PT student)
 Laura McVicar (PT student)

Department of Rehabilitation Sciences
 Antigua Guatemala
 August 2012

Pack It Light! Wear it Right!

September 19th was National School Backpack Awareness Day

It is back to school time and that means loaded backpacks in and around the school setting as well as between home and school. More than 40 million US children carry school backpacks, and more than half of them may be carrying too much weight in their packs. The average student carries a backpack that weighs about one fourth of his body weight. Carrying overloaded backpacks, and carrying backpacks improperly, can cause neck, shoulder and back pain, as well as have adverse effects on developing spines and posture. The [US Consumer Product and Safety Commission](#) estimated more than 7000 ER visits resulting from injuries related to backpacks and book bags, half of these occurring in school-aged children between the ages of 5 and 14 years old. The growing focus on the potential long-term problems associated with carrying heavy backpacks and carrying them improperly, has prompted several states to propose legislation addressing the issue as it pertains to student health.



The [American Occupational Therapy Association](#) has targeted the problem as an initiative, partnering with occupational therapists in El Paso and around the country to educate children, parents, teachers, administrators and communities about the health implications associated with heavy backpacks. Strategies for loading and wearing backpacks include:

- Backpacks should weigh no more than 15% of a child's body weight (for a child weighing 100 pounds, the backpack should not weigh more than 15 pounds).
- The heaviest items should be loaded closest to the child's back
- Both shoulder straps should be worn for a balanced load across both shoulders.
- Select a pack with padded-shoulder straps, which may lighten the impact of the straps pressing on nerves and blood vessels that travel through the neck and shoulders.
- Adjust the straps so that the bottom of the pack rests in the curve of the lower back. It should never rest more than 4 inches below the child's waistline.
- Ensure that only essential items are being carried to and from school.
- Choose the right size back for your child. Backpacks come in many

shapes and sizes and should be size appropriate for the child. If the school allows, consider a backpack on wheels.

School-based occupational therapists, in addition to conducting ergonomic evaluations, are trained in helping qualified children with a broad range of issues, such as handwriting skills, activities of daily living, assistive technology, and developmental and behavioral problems, to help them live life to its fullest.

Kinesiology Faculty and Students Attend NSCA National Conference

Dr. Sandor Dorgo, Associate Professor in the [Department of Kinesiology](#), and two undergraduate Kinesiology students, Kimberly Azcarate-Silva and Sara Chavez attended the 35th [National Strength and Conditioning Association](#) National Conference and Exhibition in Providence, Rhode Island between July 11 and 14. Dr. Dorgo presented two research posters at the conference and attended several committee meetings. The two attending undergraduate students gained valuable experience by attending a variety of research, field application and lecture type of sessions, as well as practical activity sessions offered by highly recognized international presenters.



Research on Substance Abuse and Risks for HIV/STI



Dr. Oralia Loza, Assistant Professor in the [Department of Public Health Sciences](#), conducts her research on the topics of Substance Abuse and Risks for HIV/STI among migrants, transgender women, and persons living on the U.S.-Mexico border. Dr. Loza is part of the NIDA funded UTEP interdisciplinary research team on substance abuse, the [VIDA Project](#). In addition Dr. Loza collaborates with Mexican colleagues in Cd. Juarez and Chihuahua. She, along with her collaborators and MPH students, has produced important research results presented at local,

national, and international forums such as:

"The Hepatitis C Virus Prevalence and Risk Factors among Injection Drug Users and their Sex Partners in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua", [9th National Harm Reduction Conference, Portland, Oregon \(November 2012\)](#)

"Risks for HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) among Mixtec and Zapotec Men who Migrate within Mexico and to the U.S., XII Binational Health Week Inaugural Event and Binational Policy Forum on Migration and Global Health, Oaxaca (October 2012)

"Prevalence and Discordance of Hepatitis C Virus, HIV, and Risk Behaviors among Injection Drug Users and their Non-Injecting Sex Partners in Cd. Juárez, CHIH México", [National Hispanic Science Network \(NHSN\) for Substance Abuse, San Diego, California \(September 2012\)](#)

"The Hepatitis C Virus Prevalence and Risk Factors among Injection Drug Users and their Sex Partners in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua", VI Foro Latinoamericano y del Caribe sobre VIH/Sida, Sao Paulo, Brasil (August 2012)

"Methamphetamine Use along the U.S.-Mexico Border Region", VIDA U.S.-México Border Drug Issues 2012 Annual Conference, UTEP (May 2012)

Minority Health International Research Training 2012

Eleven students completed the [Minority Health International Research Training \(MHIRT\)](#) program this summer. Seven of these students participated in mentored research activities at [Universidad de Costa Rica](#) (San Jose, CR) with the remaining four students engaged in mentored research experiences in Ambato and Quito, Ecuador at [UNIANDES](#), [Universidad Regional Autónoma de Los Andes](#) and [Universidad Central del Ecuador](#), respectively. Prior to their assignment to the international research universities, students completed courses in Hispanic Health Disparities and a Directed Research Methods. MHIRT Summer 2012 research projects included a wide range of topics such as successful aging, nutrition, environmental sustainability, agrochemical use and water quality. MHIRT students also participated in an intensive four day on-campus Pre-Immersion experience which include a ropes challenge course.

For additional information on the MHIRT program [click here](#).



CIHRE Organizes Healthy Exchange

Every semester the [Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation \(CIHRE\)](#) organizes the Healthy Exchange (HE), a weekly forum in which guest speakers from UTEP as well as other universities present the findings of their research related to diverse health topics.

The first Healthy Exchange seminar for the fall semester 2012 took place on September 5th. Our guest presenter that day was Dr. Eva Moya, from the UTEP Dept. of Social Work, who spoke about the importance of [Healthy People 2020](#).

Her complete presentation can be accessed at the CIHRE website: <http://chs.utep.edu/cihre/>. Look for the *Quick Links* heading and scroll down to [HP 2020](#).

You can access the current [Healthy Exchange 2012 schedule](#), as well as take a look at the titles of the presentations given in 2010 and 2011.

Faculty Corner

Dr. Ellen C. Dengler joined the faculty of the Doctor of [Physical Therapy Program](#) in the College of Health Sciences in the Fall of 2012. She has a long career as a physical therapist including owning her own private practice in La Jolla, CA., with independent contracts to provide PT services at skilled nursing and outpatient facilities. As a consequence, she is familiar with the business aspects of independent PT practice and has a broad spectrum of therapeutic expertise in the areas of neurological and orthopedic rehabilitation. She received a B.S. degree in Physical Therapy cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania. Being goal driven and having a great interest in neuroscience, she continued her education in this field. She received a Master's degree in Biology with emphasis in Molecular Biology from San Diego State University and a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences with emphasis in Neuroscience from the University of New Mexico.



Dr. Dengler's research interest is neuro-immunology, particularly pertaining to the onset of neurological diseases such as ALS and chronic neuropathic pain. She has a Certificate in Teaching University Science from the University of New Mexico and is committed to a teaching philosophy of active problem-based learning. When not at work, Ellen enjoys reading, singing, cooking, gardening, biking and her family.



Dr. Deborah S. Diaz joins the [Doctor of Physical Therapy](#) faculty as Associate Professor and Program Director in the Fall of 2012. She earned her Ph.D. in Education at the [University of California, Los Angeles](#). Dr. Diaz comes to El Paso with 17 years of teaching and curriculum design experience in Physical Therapy Education at three higher education institutions offering entry-level Physical Therapy Programs in Southern California. Her clinical expertise is in the clinical management of patients with neurologic conditions. Her primary area of research relates to balance and falls in community dwelling older adults. She was instrumental in developing a Pro bono Physical Therapy Clinic for people with neurologic conditions and a separate free community health screen for the underserved in Los Angeles County.

Katherine Lawson, MSSW, OTR was born in Frankfurt, Germany and was the 6th of 7 children. Her parents were both Army nurses and she has resided in El Paso, Texas since 1965. She attended elementary and high school in El Paso before pursuing her Bachelors of Social Work at New Mexico State University, 1984 and then her Masters in Social Work from University of Texas at Arlington in 1987. She also has a BS in Occupational Therapy from University of Texas at El Paso and The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston Cooperative Program. She is currently completing her PhD at The University of Texas at El Paso in the [Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Program](#). She has over 25 years' experience as a Social Worker in the Home Health setting specializing in Geriatrics. Additionally, she has been working as an Occupational Therapist for over 15 years in the Home Health Setting, also specializing in Geriatrics. Her dissertation focuses on falls among the older adult population. She was hired as a full-time lecturer in the Master of [Occupational Therapy Program](#) at UTEP in August 2012 where she will be responsible for teaching in the adult and mental health areas of the curriculum. Upon completion of her PhD, her goal is to enter academia as a professor in an Occupational Therapy Program at the University level.



Renee Telles, OTR is proud to be a life-long resident of El Paso and two time graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso. She received her Bachelor of Science degree



in [Clinical Laboratory Science](#) from UTEP in 2002. She worked as a laboratory technician for [United Blood Services](#) for 3 years after which she decided to change careers. After researching various healthcare fields, she applied for and was accepted into the first [Master of Occupational \(MOT\)](#) class at UTEP & graduated in 2007. She worked for the [Ysleta Independent School District](#) as a school-based therapist until 2012 and is happy to be back at UTEP. She is certified in the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum and is also a certified coach for the [Special Olympics](#). She was hired in August 2012 as a full-time lecturer, and will serve as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator.

UTEP Fall 2012 Convocation

On Thursday September 27, 2012, several Faculty and Staff were honored with a Service Award at the [UTEP Fall Convocation Ceremony](#). The [College of Health Sciences](#) would like to recognize these individuals for their service and dedication to the university, college and individual programs. Alma R. Dominguez ([Student Health Center](#)) and Christopher N. Rodriguez ([College of Health Sciences](#)) were recognized for 5 year of service. Ten year service awards were given to Dr. Rodrigo Armijos ([Public Health Sciences](#)), Beverly J. Scarborough ([Physical Therapy](#)), Benigno Valles Jr. ([Speech-Language Pathology](#)), and Dr. Mary "Meg" Weigel ([Public Health Sciences](#)). Rosmary Diaz ([Kinesiology](#)), Dr. Loretta Dillon ([Physical Therapy](#)), and Ana Matos ([College of Health Sciences](#)) were recognized for 15 years of service, and Dolores J. Licerio ([Clinical Laboratory Sciences](#)) was honored with a 20 year service award. The College of Health Sciences thanks and greatly appreciates each of these individuals for their commitment to the mission of the college and to [UTEP](#).



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