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

College of Health Sciences

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Salud y Saludos

The E-News of the College of Health Sciences

Salud y Saludos

November 2011

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From the Dean's Desk

"It seems like the semester just started and it's already ending." I have heard this so many times in the last few weeks. As our pace speeds up, we put more and more into less and less time. In this quickly moving world, it's easy to miss the opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and look forward to the future. I was recently at an Honor Society induction event where the students were asked to explain to the audience what they intended to do after their graduation. Some mentioned jobs, others medical school and various professional and graduate schools. A few of them eloquently described that they intended to serve their community. I was especially proud of the community-focused students from the College of Health Sciences and the work we have been promoting in this critical area.

Inspired by an international movement promoted in the North America by the [Community Campus Partnerships for Health](#), our College of Health Sciences faculty and our community partners have created the environment that enables students to see and immerse themselves in this focus. Under the broad category of community engagement, UTEP in 2010 not only gained the distinction of the [Carnegie classification, Community Engagement](#), but the College of Health Sciences also further developed a model program, [Community Academic Partnership for Health Sciences Research \(CAPHSR\)](#). A team from UTEP received high interest and positive feedback from international partners at the 2011 [CU conference](#) in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada to share the model that we have developed in their roundtable presentation, [Developing community and academic partnerships for health science research in a Mexican-American population: Networking, Capacity-Building, and Research](#).

This 3-year old initiative, led by Pharmacy faculty member, Dr. Jeri Sias and the College's Director of Research and Special Projects, Dr. Joao Ferreira Pinto, provides an internationally- recognized model of the integration of academic and research resources with the experience base and assets of our community. The partnership provides an infrastructure to pool our collective resources and commitment to address community health disparities. This unique partnership recently hosted its third Thanksgiving celebration and annual report, attended by dozens of faculty and community agency representatives. We are very proud of their efforts and look forward to the development of funded pilot projects in the near future.

Our College's community engagement happens on many fronts. Several years ago, the College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing conducted a health fair in San Elizario. This event has now become [an annual project of the San Elizario Independent School District](#) and attracts thousands of residents of this underserved community. College of Health Sciences Assistant Dean of Community and International Programs, Leticia Paez, has led the UTEP effort, which has engaged students and faculty from each of our nine disciplines in the College of Health Sciences, as well as the School of Nursing in providing interactive health promotion and screenings for adults and children at this annual event.

Our community engagement also extends to partnerships that support evaluation of the needs and efficacy of programs in our regional community. [Our Center for Health Research and Evaluation \(CIHRE\)](#) provides services that engage university faculty, staff and students in gathering facts and identifying critical issues that may support bringing further funding to our community. Founded in 2010, CIHRE is now embarking on some interesting projects in the evaluation of a community gardens initiative to promote healthy nutrition and another project to document the transportation needs of patients receiving dialysis. Dr. Joao Ferreira Pinto, our College Director of Research and Special Projects has led these efforts and more, which provide much needed support and technical assistance to our region.

And lastly, our community engagement efforts also extend globally. Our Rehabilitation Sciences faculty, Dr. Celia Pechak, Physical Therapy; Dr. Eugenia Gonzalez, Occupational Therapy and Dr. Connie Summers, Speech Language Pathology and students who participated in a [Rehabilitation and](#)

Calendar of events

Dec 10, 2011-3:30pm

CHS Pre-Commencement and Hooding Ceremony at Magoffin Auditorium

Dec 10, 2011-7:00pm

[University Commencement Ceremony at the Don Haskins Center](#)

Nov 30, 2011-5:30pm

Dec 1 & 13, 2011-5:30pm
MHIRT Orientation Sessions ([details](#))

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[Global health elective course](#) during a one-week experience in August 2011 in Antigua, Guatemala recently presented their experiences. Faculty are accepting applications for the August 2012 course. And our well-established [Minority Health and International Research Training program](#) will hold three orientation sessions for our Summer 2012 applicants and their parents in the next few weeks. The deadline for the [Summer 2012 applications](#) is January 13, 2012.

On behalf of the College faculty, staff and students, I wish you a wonderful holiday season!

Community Update

College of Health Sciences Supports San Elizario Health Fair

On October 29, 2011 College of Health Sciences (CHS) faculty, students and staff attended the annual San Elizario Health Fair to *provide* services and health education to over 1300 medically underserved residents in El Paso lower valley. Support for the health fair involved the nine CHS disciplines, [Clinical Laboratory Sciences](#), [Occupational Therapy](#), [Public Health Sciences](#), [Physical Therapy](#), [Cooperative Pharmacy Program](#), [Kinesiology](#), [Speech Language Pathology](#), [Rehabilitation Counseling](#), and [Social Work](#) departments as well as the School of Nursing. Attendees at the health fair participated in blood glucose screening, received nutrition information, learned about medication safety, consulted with therapists about the use of back packs for school-aged children, participated in hearing screenings, and received information about social services available to them. Special thanks to all the CHS faculty, students and staff who dedicated their personal time to serve others and support the San Elizario community!

Research Activities

Healthy Eating and Active Living- Community Gardens Project Evaluation

The [Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation \(CIHRE\)](#) was awarded \$48,675 for 2011-2012 by the Paso del Norte Health Foundation to evaluate the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) 2011 Community Garden Project. **Dr. Thenral Mangadu** is the principal investigator for this grant. This project titled "Healthy Eating and Active Living- Community Gardens Project Evaluation" will involve the evaluation of three Community Garden initiatives funded by the Paso del Norte Health Foundation: (1) Healthy Eating and Active Living Planning grant by the El Paso County, (2) The El Paso Community Garden Pilot Project by the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department (PARC), and (3) The La Semilla Planning Project by the La Semilla Food Center, New Mexico. The evaluation design will focus on measuring immediate outcomes from the community gardens at the individual program participant, family, community and institutional/policy levels. A mixed-methods approach will be used to examine successful components from the three community garden initiatives, and assess the projected impact of these initiatives on the health of our local border communities.

Program Highlights

Graduate Students in Social Work and Nursing Cooperate in Hospital Day

MSN and MSW students from the School of Nursing and the College of Health Sciences work together each semester to work with standardized patients in the Clinical Simulation Center located in the new Health Sciences and Nursing Building on the main UTEP campus. They spend an entire shift evaluating standardized patients and developing treatment and referral plans for patients that exhibit a variety of signs and symptoms and who present with complex social histories and behavioral health issues. In addition to practicing their assessment and intervention skills with standardized patients played by actors who follow a detailed script, the graduate students learn to practice in an interdisciplinary team-based manner consistent with prevailing models in contemporary health care. The Hospital Day is jointly coordinated by professors Deborah Sikes (Nursing) and Donna Cude-Islas ([Social Work](#)). Students report that while they are initially intimidated by the complexity of the scenarios, they quickly develop self-confidence after seeing their videotaped interventions improve over the course of the experience.



College of Health Sciences Goes Blue for Diabetes

25.8 million people in the United States-8.3% of the population-have diabetes, a condition manifested by high levels of blood glucose and ineffective production and/or utilization of insulin. Complications of uncontrolled diabetes

include heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, neuropathy, and amputations. The condition is highly prevalent among the Hispanic/Latino population (11.8 percent). In Texas, an estimated 1.7 million persons aged eighteen years and older have diabetes, and in El Paso, approximately 100,000 people have this condition.

November 14th was World Diabetes Day, an official United Nations World Day, promoted by the World Health Organization and International Diabetes Federation and symbolized by a blue circle. The blue circle represents the world (the sky is BLUE) and the ring signifies that everyone is united against diabetes! The Binational Diabetes Committee launched the campaign on September 14, 2011. The College of Health Sciences celebrated *Go Blue on the Border* and supported the campaign by inviting students to participate in the design of a poster referring to the campaign. Stephanie Prieto, from the Health Promotion Program, was selected by a committee as the best poster entry. A *Diabetes Seminar: Facts and Preventive Measures* was also part of the activities planned by the CHS. Speakers included Dr. Rosalba Ruiz-Holguin, President of the Binational Diabetes Committee, Dr. Jose Rivera, Director of the Pharmacy Program UTEP-UT Austin Cooperative Pharmacy Program, and Dr. Maria Duarte, RD, Professor and Chairperson in the Department of Public Health Sciences. A Zumba demonstration was part of these activities and was presented by Diana Hastings, Director of the Fitness and Aquatics at YWCA Dorothy Woodley Hunt Branch and YWCA Promotoras Rafaela Gonzalez, Bertha Torres, and Patricia Diaz.

The seminar was attended by approximately 150 students, faculty, and staff. Participants displayed the blue symbol circle by having it painted on their face to disseminate the message that diabetes is serious, diabetes can be prevented, and that it is time to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Activities were planned by the CHS Committee Affairs Committee, Wellness Program, Students Associations, and CHS-SON Student Support Center.



Faculty Corner

Eva M. Moya, PhD, LMSW, Assistant Professor, Department of [Social Work](#) has been awarded a \$40,000 grant by the Research Program on Migration and Health - PIMSA, (Programa de Investigación en Migración y Salud) from the Health Initiative of the Americas (HIA) at the University of California, Berkeley.

The project, "The Sexual and Reproductive Health of Mexican Migrant Women in Ciudad Juarez, Guadalajara and El Paso" was developed in collaboration with Dr. Osmar Juan Matsui Santana, MD, MPH, MSexED, Dr.Sc. from the Universidad de Guadalajara in Mexico. The study is an interdisciplinary partnership between the University of Texas at El Paso Department of Social Work, Universidad de Guadalajara, Centro de Atención en Salud y Sexualidad, and the Alliance of Border Collaboratives (ABC).

The overall goal of the project is to study the sexual and reproductive health needs of migrant Mexican-origin women of reproductive age (18 years and older) in Cd. Juárez and Guadalajara in Mexico, and in El Paso, Texas. Access to family planning and reproductive health services is critical to the health of women and children and helps prevent maternal deaths and reduce unintended pregnancies. Reproductive ill-health is exacerbated in situations of migration when women are exposed to increased levels of health risks, violence, lack of security, and poor access to health services.

The study will use an exploratory approach by conducting in-depth interviews with 90 Mexican migrant women and with 45 key informants to document current unmet women's sexual and reproductive health needs. It will describe the level of satisfaction of migrant women with their reproductive health services; identify the current availability of sexual and reproductive health programs; and explore the positive and negative effects of migration on sexual and reproductive health.

Given the expected growth in the migrant population in the U.S., results of this study are important for identifying strategies and approaches that can be used to enhance the accessibility and equitability of services that influence health seeking behaviors of migrant women.

Student News

Students Benefit from Donor Generosity

The College of Health Sciences students will again benefit from Dodson funding to help provide for the registration and travel expenses associated with attending professional development meetings and conferences in 2011-12. Last year the Dodson funding provided at least partial support for 142 students to attend and participate in events at 26 different conferences, meetings, or destinations. All departments and programs in the College of Health Sciences were able to benefit from this funding which is a huge benefit to the professional development of our students and is greatly appreciated.

Amazing Alumni

College of Health Sciences Honors Gold Nugget and Friends

It is always a joy to celebrate the accomplishments of our alumni. The College of Health Sciences had the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of its Gold Nugget Awardee during Homecoming week on campus. Named as the 2011 Gold Nugget Awardee for the College of Health Sciences is Patricia B. Kricos who earned her B.A. degree in Speech and Hearing at UTEP in 1970. Inspired by the beauty of sign language, Kricos went on to earn her master's and PhD. In Audiology at Ohio State University. Now professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorder at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Kricos looks back at a career of 40 years as a rich and rewarding experience, making a difference in the lives of many who have benefitted from her services.

While visiting the UTEP campus during Homecoming week, Kricos (pictured on the right with Dean Kathleen Curtis) visited with faculty and students sharing both her expertise and her experience. Commenting on the extensive and impressive progress and growth at UTEP, she was of course amazed at the "different UTEP" she found upon her return. A reception was held in her honor as well as to recognize the 2011 Friends of the College and School of Nursing. Named as "FRIENDS" this year were Sona Kumar (UTEP Office of Research and Sponsored Projects), Eddie Aguilar (UTEP Key Shop), Jesus Medina (Del Sol Medical Center) and Pamela Pippin (UTEP Kinesiology Department). We are very proud to have all of these wonderful professionals as part of the College of Health Sciences family and thank each of them for their support.

Best Practices

In collaboration with the [Center for Inter-American and Border Studies](#) (CIBS), the [College of Health Sciences](#) has developed the Virtual Center for the Study of Borders in the Americas (VCSBA). VCSBA is a tangible result of a discussion during a November 2010 site visit with colleagues from the Universidad de Costa Rica San Jose campus. What started as just an idea to advance global education in health professions has developed into the VCSBA under the direction and guidance of Dr. Moira Murphy and Leticia Paez at UTEP CHS as co-directors and Maestras Ligia Murillo Castro, Mary Meza and Seidy Mora as co-directors at Universidad de Costa Rica San Jose School of Nursing. Launched during Fall 2011, the first series of presentations by VCSBA focused health challenges, cultural adaptation, and similarities and differences facing border communities and related institutions. Attended by over 80 participants to date, VCSBA promises to expand global education and understanding of border issues. For further information, to participate as a presenter for VCSBA, or to have students attend the Spring 2012 sessions, please contact Dr. Moira Murphy at mamurphy@utep.edu or Leticia Paez at lpaez@utep.edu.

College of Health Sciences Faculty Leader in Concussion Management

Perhaps one might not think about the Speech, Language, Pathology discipline having much to do with sports. **Dr. Bess Sirmon Fjordbak**, Assistant Professor of [Speech-Language Pathology](#) in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and Associate Director of the UTEP Concussion Management Clinic was recently featured in the American Speech Language Association (ASLA) Leader publication for her work in sports-related concussions among school-aged athletes. Dr. Sirmon Fjordbak notes that following the lead of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), a growing number of States are now passing concussion-related legislation to protect student athletes. Thirty-one state and the district of Columbia have passed bills related to concussion management or have bill awaiting gubernatorial signature. While progress is being made in this area, Dr. Sirmon Fjordbak further notes that legislation had critical limitations. For more details on this subject matter and to read the ASHA article in its entirety, please [click here](#).

Building Evidence

Kids and Games Take Center Stage at 2nd Tailgate

By Gerard Ross
Academic Advisor, College of Health Sciences

The successful tailgate tradition started by the College of Health Sciences (SON) and School of Nursing (SON) continued on Saturday, the 22nd of October. While the UTEP Miners were preparing for a showdown with Colorado State, the CHS and SON were setting the mood for victory with a tailgate party that drew over 50 tailgaters.

The focus for this tailgate was on breast-cancer awareness so a pink ribbon was included on the Health People 2020 "Healthy People in Healthy Border Communities" wrist band each guest was provided when they got to the tailgate. Guests were also asked to provide a donation of a sport related gift or book for a local charity.

In addition to raising awareness the tailgate was also about fun and games. The several families that attended were delighted with the addition of several new games, such as table tennis and over-sized checkers. The kids went crazy for all the games and could be seen playing right up until the end of the festivities.

To fuel all of the merriment guests purchased refreshments. This meal was a very special one cooked up by Sodexho, but served by the CHS's very own Student Support Center staff.



CHS Donates Games, Toys, to the Ronald McDonald House

By Gerard Ross
Academic Advisor, College of Health Sciences

Friday the seventh of November was a special day for the College of Health Sciences (CHS). On that day CHS students Fabian Barragan, and Luis Salazar donated two tubs filled to the brim with toys and games to the Ronald McDonald House on behalf of the college. The gift was received by Ms. Irma Chavez-Rodriguez, House Manager for Ronald McDonald House Charities of El Paso.

The students were taken on a tour of the facilities which provide a home away from home for families of sick children that receive treatment for their ailments at nearby hospitals. Families taking advantage of Ronald McDonald House services are given their own suite as well as access to the house kitchen, library, and play/entertainment areas. The house can accommodate up to ten families per night.

Once the tour was completed Luis and Fabian stopped for a photo-op with Ronald McDonald himself. The famous entertainer/entrepreneur seemed happy to stop for a photo as the CHS students presented their a gift to the charitable organization.

