

Campus Connection Friday, May 15, 2009

People, plans and progress at Fort Worth's Medical School *and more*

TOP STORIES

UNTHSC Commencement is tomorrow

The UNT Health Science Center will award degrees to 285 students from all four schools at commencement ceremonies tomorrow at 3 pm at the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena. U.S. Rep. Michael Burgess, MD, will provide the commencement address. For the first time, the Health Science Center as an institution will present the Chancellor's Award for Scholarly Excellence and the President's Award for Scholarly Excellence during the ceremony.

The ceremony is free and open to the public. Tickets are not required for admission. Commissioning ceremonies for students joining the military will take place immediately following the commencement ceremony. President Scott Ransom will host a reception in the Convention Center Ballroom after the ceremony. For more details on commencement, visit the [Registrar's Office Web site](#).

Students and faculty honored at awards banquets

Before our graduates walk the stage and receive their diplomas at commencement, it is each school's annual tradition to honor and reward their students and faculty at an awards banquet. At the banquets, awards and scholarships are given to students for exceptional performance in academics and research. Congratulations to all faculty, staff and especially students who were honored at these banquets.

TCOM named TMA's Chapter of the Year

For the second consecutive year, the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine's (TCOM) Texas Medical Association (TMA) - Medical Students Section (MSS) was named TMA's Chapter of the Year. TCOM's chapter was selected by the TMA Student Executive Council for its involvement in the community and efforts to inform its student body about current legislative and political happenings. The award was presented at TMA's annual TexMed conference in Austin on May 1.

Dubin named interim dean of TCOM

On May 1, Bruce Dubin, DO, JD, was named to a temporary appointment as interim dean of the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM) and Alan Podawiltz, DO, MS, was named to a temporary appointment as interim vice president for Health Affairs. Dr. Dubin reports to Dr. Podawiltz, who in turn reports to Thomas Yorio, PhD, as provost. These changes meet the requirement of the [Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation](#) (COCA) that the dean be board certified by the [American Osteopathic Association](#) (AOA).

H1N1 Flu update

Although talk of the H1N1 flu is waning, the Health Science Center continues to monitor the situation and continues to post updates to its Web page. We are still in the "alert" stage of our [emergency plan](#).

Faculty, staff, students and their families are encouraged to remain vigilant for flu symptoms and to practice preventive measures until the Centers for Disease Control and county officials lower the threat level.

NOTE: Influenza viruses, especially new ones, produce disease in two or three waves, and the waves can be separated by six to 12 months. Because influenza viruses are notoriously hard to predict, we need to plan for the worst and hope for the best during the coming fall-winter flu season.

On April 29, the Health Science Center's rolled out its pandemic influenza plan, which was adopted in 2007 after a year-long planning effort. In fact, the Executive Team and the Safety Office were preparing to test the plan this summer.

Based on the Health Science Center's response to the recent situation, the pandemic flu plan will be adapted to include new processes to measure the operational capabilities of the clinical operations, and to assess student, faculty and staff attendance at school and at work to determine impacts on academic programs. The Executive Team and Safety Office will continue to review the Health Science Center's response to make improvements to our emergency plans.

[Click here](#) for updates on the Health Science Center is doing about H1N1 flu, or visit the [UNTHSC Safety Office Web page](#).

Health Disparities Conference to focus on prevention

The [Center for Health Disparities](#) will host its third annual Health Disparities Conference titled "[Targeting Health Disparities through Prevention](#)" on May 28-29. Presenters and panel experts will discuss and debate various aspects of preventing illness as it relates to demography. Keynote speakers are Dr. Fernando Torres-Gill from UCLA and Dr. Lovell A. Jones from the Center for Research on Minority Health at the University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center. Each session will feature an address by specially selected experts, followed by a panel discussion. CME credit is available. Poster presentations and [STAR Fellowship](#) Awards will be presented on Friday. Funding for this conference was made possible (in part) by the [National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities](#).

The Texas Center for Health Disparities (TCHD) is working to eliminate health gaps in community health and treatment through research, education and community service.

TCHD's primary projects

1. Over the last year, the North Texas Healthy Heart Study has produced four publications, with three more in review, and six presentations at national meetings. The North Texas Healthy Heart Study explores how perceived discrimination, social support and a sense of personal control affect cardiovascular health.
2. The Center is studying the use of glucagon and autonomic responses to determine the risk of cardiovascular disease with metabolic syndrome in minorities.
3. The TCHD is reviewing the role of ethnicity in hot flashes.

In addition, the TCHD helped initiate nine pilot projects aimed at reducing health disparities in cardiovascular and respiratory disease, metabolic syndrome, asthma and drug abuse-related conditions.

Learn more about the TCHD's research at monthly Health Disparities Grand Rounds Seminars. Every third Friday of the month, different researchers will discuss their projects. The seminars are open to the public, and Health Science Center faculty, staff and students interested in reducing health disparities are encouraged to attend.

Education

The Center's [STAR \(Steps Toward Academic Research\) Fellowship Program](#) has trained more than 30 minority researchers from universities across the country in health disparities research over the last three years. Three STAR fellows recently received funding to further their research, and 10 more STAR researchers were recently recruited.

So far this year, three national conferences, with a fourth happening this month, have focused on the center's cutting-edge health disparities research. Additionally, nearly 50 minority undergraduate students have been educated in health disparities research during summer outreach programs.

Community Service

In May, the TCHD begins a prostate cancer screening project with Dallas Methodist Hospital System.

The Center's Aintie-Tia Project is collaborating with the Fort Worth/Dallas Birthing Project to help improve perinatal outcomes among African Americans in Fort Worth.

To promote health education and research participation in the community, the Center has strengthened existing partnerships with the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County Public Health. In addition to these existing relationships, the TCHD forged new partnerships with the J. McDonald Williams Institute, Baylor Health Care System Office of Health Equity, the Tarrant County Infant Mortality Task Force, Catholic Charities and the American Heart Association Cultural Health Initiative, to name just a few.

For more on the Center for Health Disparities, contact [Annie Mathew](#), or visit the [TCHD Web page](#).

The Center for Health Disparities is one of the UNT Health Science Center's Health Institutes of Texas (HIT). HIT is designed to speed research from the bench to the bedside to create a healthier and more productive Texas. Updates on each of the 12 HIT centers and institutes will be featured in future issues of Campus Connection. Learn more at the [HIT Web page](#).

Communications Team

Recognizing that communication gets more complex as our institution grows, President Scott Ransom created the Communications Team earlier this year. The team, composed of more than 130 representatives from throughout the institution, is designed to help ensure that communication flows freely – up and down – throughout the organization. Members meet every other month to learn about key Health Science Center issues and receive talking points to simplify information sharing.

The Communications Team members created smaller action committees to address these issues:

- Communications with physicians and off-campus staff
- Communications efficiency
- Faculty communication
- Intranet improvement
- Language and other communication barriers
- Student communication

A special task force of Communications Team members is exploring how our [institutional values](#) – compassion, integrity, teamwork, innovation, pride and excellence – can be exhibited throughout the organization. Watch for more about this initiative in the June 5 Campus Connection.

NEWS BRIEFS

Town Hall meeting Monday

President Scott Ransom's next Town Hall meeting is set for May 18 at noon in Luibel Hall. He'll discuss the latest Board of Regents' actions and answer your questions.

Submit questions for the meeting to townhall@hsc.unt.edu, and we'll pass them along to the President's Office, anonymously if you like. Pizza and bottled water will be served at the meeting.

Note that there will not be a 7 am Town Hall this quarter. The May 18 meeting will also be streamed live over the Internet at this link: <mms://media.hsc.unt.edu/BMC-2>.

Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy

The Department of Cell Biology and Genetics in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences is now known as the Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the name change as of April 28.

EBAC sells reduced-price Six Flags tickets

The Employee Benefits and Action Committee has a limited number of drastically reduced-price Six Flags tickets available in Human Resources. For \$27, each ticket includes admission to Six Flags any day during the 2009 season, a parking pass, a food voucher good for one meal, and a Holiday in the Park ticket – a package that normally costs \$128. Ticket sales are limited only by the number of tickets available – anyone can buy one or 100 until they're gone. Call Randy Thomas at ext. 2155 for more information.

The benefits of direct deposit

Use direct deposit and you'll never lose a paycheck through carelessness, a mail glitch or pair of un-inspected pants tossed too quickly in the laundry. With direct deposit:

- Paychecks won't be lost or stolen.

- Payments reach your account the day the check is issued – even if you are out of town, sick or unable to get to your financial institution.
- You can avoid bouncing checks because the deposit is direct and on time.
- You save trips to the bank and long lines at tellers.
- Check-cashing fees are a thing of the past.
- You don't have to carry cash.

Come by the [Payroll Department](#) (EAD 636) to find out about your options.

HSC Police reminds you to *Click it or Ticket*

With the Memorial Day holiday and the summer driving season just around the corner, UNTHSC Police and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) are teaming up to increase seat belt use. It's part of TxDOT's *Click it or Ticket* campaign to raise awareness of seatbelt safety. Remember, drivers and passengers can be ticketed, and fines range from \$25 to \$200, plus court costs. For more on seat belt safety visit the [Click it or Ticket Web site](#).

IN THE NEWS

Research showcased in *Research Texas, Inc.*

Three Health Science Center researchers' work was featured in the spring edition of *Research Texas, Inc.*, a special publication of the *Fort Worth Business Press*. Elena Bastida, PhD, associate dean for research in the School of Public Health; Michael Forster, PhD, professor of Pharmacology and Neuroscience; and Janice Knebl, DO, MBA, chief of Geriatrics, were all included in the publication.

'Swine' flu worries in the press

Jim Sims, PhD, safety officer, used his knowledge of past pandemics to explain why local school districts and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reacted as they did during the initial reports of the H1N1 influenza, or "swine" flu, outbreak. The *Star-Telegram* included his comments in articles on both [May 6](#) and [May 9](#). The latter article also appeared on [TMCnet.com](#).

TECH Fort Worth announces IMPACT Award winners

TECH Fort Worth presented its IMPACT Award recipients in [PegasusNews.com](#). The Health Science Center was a sponsor of the event. The awards are given to new companies that will better the world by bringing to market new technologies and innovations that will have a significant impact on the environment, community or health.

DNA lab continues work around the country

The DNA lab's missing persons work was mentioned in articles in Marion, N.C.'s, [McDowell News](#); Ada/Ardmore, Okla.'s, [KXII CBS 12](#); and Albuquerque, N.M.'s, [KOB NBC 4](#).

KUDOS

Sue Lurie, PhD, assistant professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences, was awarded a Fulbright grant to teach at [Sемmelweis University](#) in Budapest, Hungary. Dr. Lurie will also pursue research opportunities while in Hungary. Her teaching fellowship begins in September. [The Fulbright Program](#), sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is the U.S. government's flagship international exchange program. It provides participants opportunities to study, teach and conduct research in countries around the world.

Stanley Weiss, DO, former Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine faculty member and current member of the [UNT Health Science Center Foundation Board](#), and **Shelley M. Howell, DO**, (TCOM '74), both received [Texas Osteopathic Medical Association](#) (TOMA) lifetime memberships from the TOMA House of Delegates. They were selected for championing the osteopathic medical profession by providing outstanding care to their patients, many times fitting the profile of a local, unsung hero.

TOMA also honored several TCOM alums and faculty members for their years of service in the House of Delegates. Those presented this honor were:

Jim W. Czewski, DO, (TCOM '77), 23 years
Robert C. DeLuca, DO, (TCOM '84), 5 years
James E. Froelich, III, DO, (TCOM '81), 25 years
D. Dean Gafford, DO, (TCOM '81), 21 years
Patrick J. Hanford, DO, (TCOM '83), 14 years
Tony G. Hedges, DO, (TCOM '91), 13 years
Harold D. Lewis, DO, (TCOM '76), 14 years
Jack McCarty, DO, (TCOM '78), 15 years
Ray L. Morrison, DO, (TCOM '86), 16 years
Elizabeth A. Palmarozzi, DO, (TCOM '84), 18 years
Daniel W. Saylak, DO, (TCOM '83), 20 years
A Duane Selman, DO, (TCOM '87), 16 years
Pat A. Thomas, DO, (TCOM '77), 12 years
Monte E. Troutman, DO, associate professor, 22 years
Rodney M. Wiseman, DO, (TCOM '78), 25 years
Paul S. Worrell, DO, (TCOM '80), 21 years
John L. Wright Jr., DO, (TCOM '84), 11 years
T. Eugene Zachary, DO, clinical education coordinator, 40 years

These awards were presented during the 64th annual meeting of the House of Delegates on May 2 in Austin. The House of Delegates is the legislative body of TOMA.

Three members of the **Office for the Protection of Human Subjects** recently obtained their Certification as Institutional Review Board (IRB) Professionals (CIP) from the [Council for Certification of IRB Professionals](#). **Heather Cline, MPA**, human subjects project coordinator; **Itzel Pena, MS**, human

protection coordinator; and **Brian Gladue, PhD**, chair for IRB; all obtained the required experience “in the field” and completed a course for the certification. The UNT Health Science Center [IRB and Office for the Protection of Human Subjects](#) are responsible for protecting the welfare and rights of the human subjects of any research conducted by Health Science Center faculty, staff or students.

Jacques Nguyen, GSBS student in Pharmacology and Neurosciences, was awarded the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Good Neighbor Scholarship, which will pay his tuition for the Fall 2009 and Spring and Summer 2010 semesters. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Boards awards this scholarship annually to international students who are pursuing graduate education.

Amy Thorne, who will start her medical education at TCOM this fall, was awarded the Texas Medical Association’s Minority Scholarship at TMA’s TexMed conference on May 1. Thorne plans to practice as a family physician in rural Texas, where she hopes her bilingual skills will help her to improve the health care delivery system for a largely underserved population. Ms. Thorne’s scholarship was provided through a gift from an anonymous donor.

The UNT Health Science Center was recently nominated for the [U.S. Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award](#). The award is the U.S. Government’s highest recognition given to American employers of National Guard or Reserve members for their exceptional support of those employees above the requirements of federal law.

UNT Health’s hard working **nursing staff, medical assistants and technicians** were honored at a celebration luncheon on May 8 at the Founder's Activity Center as part of Nurse’s Week. National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as National Nurses Day, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

Steve Woodall, director of Records and Information Management, holds the preferred certification for information security professionals around the world according to SC Magazine. The [Certified Information Systems Auditor](#) (CISA) certification program, which Woodall has completed, was recently voted the Best Professional Certification Program by the 2009 [SC Magazine Awards](#).

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Don Seher
Computer Users Support Specialist
Information Resources and Technology

How long have you worked here, and what did you do before joining UNTHSC?

I have worked Desktop Support at the Health Science Center for 11 years. This is actually my second career. I worked for 15 years as a speech-language pathologist, working mainly in school systems.

What are your job duties at UNTHSC? I work in HelpDesk and Client Services, part of the Information Resources and Technology Department. We provide technology support for faculty, staff and students. Assistance with computer-related problems might be provided by phone, by e-mail, through remotely

controlling the computer, by working on the computer at the user's workstation, or by bringing the computer to our work area. I personally provide the customer support for the Mac users, as well as the iPhone users, and am involved with iTunes U.

The Health Science Center's values are compassion, integrity, excellence, pride, innovation and teamwork. Can you give an example of how your department or your coworkers demonstrate one of these values?

My coworkers and I are well aware that one person cannot know all of the solutions to every computer problem encountered. We troubleshoot problems and try routine solutions in as short a period as possible, and, when the routine solutions are not enough, we discuss difficult problems with each other and others in our department.

What's the best part about working at the Health Science Center?

I am impressed with the increased level of service over the years at the Health Science Center. When I first started working at the HSC, it seemed that employees in each department were concerned only with their own department. Nobody seemed to know or care what was happening in any other department, or what other departments needed – let alone what the students needed! Over the 11 years I have worked here, I have seen the Health Science Center increase focus on the students. Being an educational institution, shouldn't students be our focus?!

What do you like to do when you aren't at the Health Science Center?

For over 12 years I have played acoustic guitar, mandolin, and electric bass in a band that plays Christian music with a blend of bluegrass, country and folk music. To find out more, and to listen to some audio clips, go to www.littleroadrevival.com. (I'm the one holding the mandolin.)

Is there any other information that you would like to share with the campus community about yourself, your job, your department, etc?

HelpDesk and Client Services is in the process of making some major changes. The [Classroom Educational Technology Services](#) (CETS) personnel, who are responsible for technology needs in the classrooms and auditoriums, will be joining HelpDesk and Client Services. New software that will be used by HelpDesk and Client Services, Library, Biomedical Communications, CETS and other areas is being purchased that should help these departments better meet the needs of those they serve. With these and other changes, I anticipate an even higher level of client services in the coming school year for faculty, staff, and students.

SAVE THE DATE

**May 16
Commencement
3 pm**

Fort Worth Convention Center
Arena and Ballroom

May 28 – 29

Texas Conference on Health Disparities ([website](#))

Targeting Health Disparities Through Prevention

Luibel Hall

www.registerwithunt.com

October 10

UNTHSC Gala

Celebrating the School of Public Health

Watch the Daily News and Campus Connection for more information on these events and more.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

Campus Connection is published the first and third Fridays of each month by the Office of Marketing and Communications for UNT Health Science Center employees, students and friends. Please feel free to forward this e-newsletter to others and print it for those who don't have access to a computer.

Our goals are to:

- Keep you informed about the Health Science Center's strategic plan, priorities and goals.
- Promote the UNTHSC values of compassion, integrity, teamwork, innovation, pride and excellence.
- Demonstrate how the people and programs of the Health Science Center really do make a difference.
- Enable you to be a well-informed UNTHSC ambassador.

You're invited to contribute to the continuous improvement of this e-newsletter and other UNTHSC Family communications by sending story ideas, news, suggestions and questions to news@hsc.unt.edu.

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