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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

Pulse/Pulso

January 2011

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Our Website

From the Dean's Desk

This is an exciting time for the University of Texas at El Paso College of Health Sciences. As we prepare to move many of our educational programs into the new $60 million College of Health Sciences/ School of Nursing building on the UTEP campus, we are reaching out to the El Paso community with some important news. In this first issue of Pulse/Pulso, I am eager to announce the opening of the **UTEP Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation (CIHRE),** a new university organization based in the College of Health Sciences.

CIHRE's mission is to advance the scope of interdisciplinary health -related research in the border region and to provide grant-related support and program evaluation services. We are especially interested in sharing our faculty's expertise by providing technical assistance and by helping to design and conduct evaluations for health-related programs.

Don't miss the opportunity to reference our College of Health Sciences *Faculty Research Profiles*, which may be of interest to in fostering collaborative work our faculty. The guide includes a complete listing of our current full-time faculty, including their contact information, educational background and research interests. This is available on-line at http://chs.utep.edu under *Faculty Profiles.*

Our College of Health Sciences includes nine professional fields and our faculty's experience spans physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, rehabilitation counseling, kinesiology, clinical laboratory science, public health sciences, pharmacy and social work. The breadth of their research expertise includes health education and promotion, chronic and communicable disease prevention and management, maternal child health, nutrition, exercise science, disability and rehabilitation sciences, health literacy, social stigma and mental health. Hundreds of graduate students also work in collaboration with our faculty to carry out a variety of projects relevant to health in our border region.

Join Our Mailing List!

We look forward to sharing more information about CIHRE with our regional community. Please contact Dr. Ferreira-Pinto, Director of Research and Special Projects and the Director for the Center by phone at (915)747-7295, or by electronic mail at joao@utep.edu

CIHRE Opening

Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation (CIHRE) Opening

November, 2010 marked the opening of the UTEP Center for Interdisciplinary Health Research and Evaluation (CIHRE), a new university organization based in the College of Health Sciences. CIHRE's mission is to develop and sustain an interdisciplinary core group of researchers who advance the scope, quality, quantity and translation of health-related research to help improve the health of populations living along the US-Mexico border region.

CIHRE provides support for UTEP faculty to engage in interdisciplinary health-related research and evaluation, which will help them in establishing and advancing their research and academic careers. Undergraduate and graduate students also participate in hands-on research in collaboration with regional clinics and community partners, which may help them choose a career in health research.

The Center also provides research and evaluation support to public agencies and community-based organizations for their programmatic needs in the areas of program, proposal and evaluation design; program implementation, data collection, analysis and evaluation; and in the preparation of annual programmatic and evaluation reports. The information about CIHRE is available on-line.

For more information please contact Dr. Ferreira-Pinto, Director of Research and Special Projects and the Director for the Center by phone at (915) 747-7295 or by e-mail at joao@utep.edu.

CHS External Research Funding in 2010 tops $2 Million

CHS faculty has been able to attract 2.2 million dollars in external research funding during the calendar year 2010. This was the result of the combined effort of 10 professors from the disciplines of Public Health Sciences, Social Work, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation Counseling, and the Dean's office. The information about these awards are available on-line.

3rd Annual Faculty Writing Workshop a Success

The results of the Summer 2010 "Publish & Flourish" faculty writing workshop were excellent. Nineteen College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing faculty completed and submitted a total of 12 grant proposals, 13 manuscripts, three grant final reports, one

book proposal, one complete book manuscript, and one patent application. From these, seven grant proposals have been approved and two manuscripts accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The information about the workshop is available on-line.

Faculty Research Profiles Available

The College of Health Sciences Faculty Research Profiles is now available. A complete listing of the CHS current full-time faculty, including their contact information, educational backgrounds and research interests are on-line. The brochure will be distributed to the UTEP community and to select public and private agencies in El Paso and along both sides of the border to increase the visibility of CHS and UTEP research capabilities.

Research Activities

UTEP Researcher Studies TB Stigma

Tuberculosis (TB) is still one of the most deadly diseases, with nearly one-third of the world's population infected. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), TB is particularly dangerous for persons infected with HIV.

"TB loves the company of other conditions," said Eva Moya, Ph.D., an assistant professor of social work at The University of Texas at El Paso's College of Health Sciences. "The best friends of TB are diabetes, HIV and AIDS."

Moya has conducted extensive research to combat the stigma associated with TB that can prevent sufferers living along the U.S.-Mexico border from seeking proper care and diagnosis.

In her study, "Tuberculosis and TB Related Stigma: Impacts on Health-Seeking Behaviors and Access in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and El Paso, Texas," Moya found that a stigma adversely affects persons infected with TB. The disease influences the way they interact with family, health care workers and the public. Further adding to the stigma of TB is the complication of another disease, such as HIV.

December has been designated AIDS Awareness Month to raise a greater understanding about AIDS and HIV. According to the CDC, people infected with HIV are at very high risk for active TB disease because HIV can severely weaken the immune system. TB is the leading killer of people infected with HIV.

"If you have a co-morbidity of TB and HIV, you certainly are much more prone and susceptible to having two types of stigmas," Moya

said. "Having the two conditions is sort of like twice the burden and the vulnerability of being stigmatized."

Moya's study was three-fold. In the first study she conducted in-depth interviews with 30 people undergoing TB treatment in El Paso and Juárez. She looked at their quality of life and their experiences of being treated as outcasts.

"We have seen cases where family members, as much as they love the person, they are afraid of the person. So people begin to push people out of their homes, out of their lives and out of their network," Loya said. "We have heard of people who have actually had to tell lies about their condition because they feel that if they disclose their disease, (other people) are not going to be accepting of them."

The second study involved administering the first Spanish version of the TB and HIV subscales that were developed to measure the TB and HIV/AIDS stigma in southern Thailand. With the permission of the authors, Moya translated the subscales into Spanish and administered them to populations in five states throughout Mexico.

The first of two subscales - one for TB and one for HIV - looked at how the community perceives a person who is diagnosed with either disease. The other subscale asked the person how they felt about the disease. The subscales for TB and HIV were administered separately.

After standardizing the scores, Moya was able to tell whether the people who were interviewed perceived a stigma to be present or not present, she said.

The scales have since been integrated into the first National Knowledge Attitude and Practice Study on TB in Mexico.

"It's sort of what the researcher dreams of," Moya said. "You wonder whether the findings are going to be used and not only referenced. So I'm happy to say that the tools, once they were validated, were integrated into this study."

In the third study, Moya interviewed 10 people living in El Paso and Juárez who participated in a Photovoice project. Photovoice is a method where people who are affected by specific conditions such TB used disposable cameras to document their quality of life. Out of the 10 participants, four were living with TB and HIV.

In the photovoice project, titled "Voices and Images of Tuberculosis," some of the photos illustrate the darkness or isolation that some patients felt when first diagnosed with TB. The photos then begin to exhibit brightness as the patients begin to feel better because of their medications and treatments.

The project also served as a way for patients to gain power over their illnesses and become activists. Moya said one participant who was shy about her HIV-positive status used her Photovoice work to begin speaking publicly about HIV and TB prevention.

"They used the negative side of the stigma and turned it around positively, which means that for them, living with TB and living with HIV and other conditions like diabetes was no longer a stigma," she said.
Images from the "Voices and Images of Tuberculosis" Photovoice project are on display in the lobby of UTEP's College of Health Sciences/School of Nursing.

Moya and Rachel Orduño, a graduate student from the Department of Social Work, received the 2010 Global Award for Innovation in Tuberculosis Advocacy and Social Mobilization. The award was presented to the TB Photovoice project at the Tuberculosis Survival Project 2010 Conference in Berlin, Germany.

By Laura L. Acosta

Program Highlights

First Doctor of Physical Therapy Candidates Graduated in December

As identical twin sisters, Jessica and Nicole Lopez grew up doing a lot together, and that has not changed in adulthood.

The women went through their master's program in physical therapy at The University of Texas at El Paso together, and when the opportunity arose to complete their doctoral degrees, they attended classes together, completed internships at William Beaumont Army Medical Center together and took their board exam on the same day. Now, they both work as physical therapists in acute care at Las Palmas Medical Center.

On Saturday, Dec. 11, the Lopez sisters graduated together with UTEP's first Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.) candidates.

The D.P.T. degree was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in April 2010 and the program started the following month. The students who completed their Master of Physical Therapy degrees in May were given the opportunity to earn their doctorate degrees by participating in an intense bridge program.

Fourteen students took advantage of the offer and received their D.P.T. degrees at the Dec. 11 Commencement.

"This was an exceptional opportunity for these students, only made possible with the extraordinary efforts of the physical therapy program faculty," said Kathleen Curtis, Ph.D., dean of the College of Health Sciences. "This will benefit our graduates as well as our regional community. We are very proud of these students, who are UTEP's first D.P.T.s."

From May through August, students in the doctoral bridge program attended courses in differential diagnosis, imaging and pharmacology; participated in a 12-week internship and a capstone course; and presented a case study.

"I don't think they really expected the intensity of the program," said Mary Carlson, Ph.D., director of UTEP's physical therapy program.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy replaces the Master of Physical Therapy Program at UTEP and features a new curriculum that includes additional content in pharmacology, biomedical imaging, diagnosis and evidence-based practice, Spanish medical terminology and advanced patient management skills. With these skills, program graduates will be well prepared to address the existing shortage and growing need for physical therapists in the El Paso region, where an aging population of baby boomers is creating a demand for qualified physical therapy practitioners.

Students in the first D.P.T. class have accepted jobs in Seattle; Salt Lake City; Roswell, N.M.; Lubbock; and locally at Sante Rehab, Highlands Rehab, Providence Memorial Hospital and Healthmasters.

Jessica and Nicole Lopez chose to stay in El Paso in order to give back to the community where they were raised.

"We live here, we have family here, and they need physical therapists here," Nicole Lopez said. "Because we live here, we would like to give back."

by Jenn Crawford

Faculty Corner

Dr. Darla R. Smith, Professor and Chair Receives TAHPERD Pathfinder Award

The Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAHPERD) presented the Pathfinder Award to Dr. Darla Smith at the Annual Convention Awards Dinner on December 3, 2010 in Galveston TX. The Pathfinder Award was established to provide state recognition to women who have demonstrated continuous dedication to the advocacy, recruitment, and enhancement of girls and women in sport and sport leadership in Texas.

Dr. Darla Smith is Professor and Chair of the Department of Kinesiology at UTEP. She received her undergraduate degree from ACU, MS from WTAMU and PhD from TWU.

As Head Track and Field Coach at Abilene High School, Darla was blessed with many talented athletes who dominated the District and Region for many years and finished 2nd at the State Meet in 1992 while winning both the 800 and 1600 meter relays. For 2 years in a row, the AHS 800 meter relay posted the 2nd fastest time in the nation!

After a successful coaching career, Darla moved into higher education. One of her primary areas of research has centered on the disproportionate number of ACL injuries suffered by female athletes compared to males.

Three years ago, the President of the University appointed Darla to be the Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR), an NCAA mandated position. She has thoroughly enjoyed getting back to her roots and can be seen cheering for the Miners at many events.

In addition to her career as a coach, researcher and FAR, Darla has participated in sports since an early age. After many years playing team sports, she has found a passion for tennis, playing about 5 times per week.

Darla has been an active professional member of TAHPERD for her entire 33 years in the profession, having served on numerous committees, as chair of the Girls and Women's Sport Section, a vice-president and as president in 2005. Her theme, "Step Up", represents her commitment to service.

New Faculty

Barbara A. Schoen, Ph.D., received her doctorate in Rehabilitation Counselor Education from Michigan State University in 2010, and joined the Master of Rehabilitation Counseling Program at the University of Texas at El Paso that same year. She served as a Visiting Professor at Florida Atlantic University from 2009-2010. Dr. Schoen's dissertation investigated trends in

employment outcomes for individuals with spinal cord injury served by State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies. Prior to her doctoral studies, Dr. Schoen served as a Research Fellow in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Michigan from 2003-2005. She was a co-principal investigator of a rural health outreach program grant funded through the Christopher Reeves Paralysis Foundation and co-investigator of a study on women with SCI funded through the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

As an instructor, a researcher and a woman with quadriplegia, Dr. Schoen has written numerous articles and presented at national conferences aimed at strengthening the networking, socialization and empowerment skills of individuals with disabilities. Dr. Schoen most recently received the Earl Walden Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Advocacy. She currently teaches graduate level courses in rehabilitation at UTEP and serves on boards and committees bringing her expertise in the supports and services needed to maximize independence and quality of life for people with disability.

Student News & Leadership

Hogg Foundation Awards Bilingual Scholarships to Four UTEP Graduate Students

The University of Texas at El Paso graduate students Claudette Barragán, Velia Herren, Daisey Lobatos, and Rachel Orduño have been awarded scholarships from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health to support bilingual mental health services in Texas. All are students in UTEP's Department of Social Work.

Barragán returned to the University for her master's degree after receiving an undergraduate degree in psychology earlier this year. After completing her master's, Barragán hopes to provide social services to children in need.

"I believe that if we treat children's problems promptly, they will be able to overcome any challenges and become functional adults," she said.

Herren also recently graduated from UTEP with a degree in psychology. After receiving her master's degree, she hopes to provide social services at the intersection of criminal justice and mental health, intervening on behalf of those with mental illness.

"There is an underserved population of individuals not aware of any mental illness they may have until they are charged with a crime," she said. Herren also hopes to explore the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder in the context of living in a border region.

Lobatos appreciates the vast opportunities involved with working in the mental health field.

"I can see myself working in therapy, case management and even becoming involved as a mental health advocate," she said. Lobatos also is sensitive to the needs of Spanish speakers.

"Providing bilingual therapy for individuals from our border region is crucial to ultimately advocating for their services, which are many times denied just because of the language barrier," she added.

Orduño recognizes the need for bilingual social workers in El Paso.

"With the dysfunctional social ills of our sister city Juárez, and the increase in Ft. Bliss military personnel, there exists a pressing need for mental health services," she said.

The scholarships are part of a statewide strategy to increase Spanish-language mental health services. The strategy has proven so successful that the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health is investing an additional $1.5 million to extend the program three more years.

The foundation pays tuition and fees for new bilingual students entering graduate social work programs in Texas. In return, students agree to provide mental health services in Texas for a period equal to the timeframe of the scholarship. The foundation has awarded 82 scholarships in just two years.

"Texas has a shortage of mental health workers, especially those who speak languages other than English. These scholarships are producing a new generation of social workers who have the education, training, cultural awareness and language skills needed to help fill that gap," said Dr. Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., executive director of the foundation.

The Hogg Foundation was founded in 1940 by the children of former Texas Gov. James Hogg to improve mental health for the people of Texas. The foundation is part of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement at The University of Texas at Austin.

Technology Tips

Blackboard

UTEP Faculty, if you need a Blackboard Course Shell for Spring 2011, complete the Shell Request Form online (only the primary instructor may do this request). For help with Blackboard, go to Self-Paced Online Tutorials or contact the FIT Lab at 747-7947.

Elluminate Live! is an online virtual classroom/conference room with multiple features including audio, video, instant messaging, interactive whiteboard, application sharing, file transfer, and session recording/playback with synchronized audio/chat/notes. For more information go to www.Elluminate.com. CHS Faculty may request an Elluminate account by sending an email to Ana Matos at avmatos@utep.edu

Continuing Education Corner

"Understanding Diagnosis: The DSM-IV"

Dr. Griselda Villalobos, LCSW
Saturday January 29th 9am to Noon
Room 237 - Health Sciences Nursing Building
CEU's for Social Work, LPC's and LCDC's
$45 -Contact dcudeislas@utep.edu