

7-1-2011

Salud y Saludos: The E-News 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-News of the College of Health Sciences" (2011). *College of Health Sciences*. Paper 6.

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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

Summer 2011

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From the Dean's Desk

The first day of our 6-day move from Campbell Hall to our brand new 138,000 sq ft. [College of Health Sciences](#) and [School of Nursing](#) building on the [UTEP](#) campus began early in the morning on Wednesday, June 1st. Robert Parker, Robert Meredith and Jaime Montoya from Facilities Services/Planning and Construction worked closely with our transition team from the College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing for months to plan this complicated move of over 100 faculty and staff and 10 teaching and research laboratory spaces. The planning paid off and thanks to an efficient IT team at our destination, our faculty and staff were able to get their computers and phones set up just hours later in their new spaces.

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We were awestruck in watching the movers in action; they were so organized and efficient. They loaded the truck quickly and we realized that it was going to take at least two trips to even finish the Day 1 move. Not surprisingly, "Murphy's Law of Moving" kicked in as the temperature soared above 100 degrees by 2:00 pm. When they finished unloading and left to pick up the second load at 5:30 PM it was 103 degrees with over 2 hours till sunset. They finished well after 9:00 PM. The weather didn't give us a break, as the peak summer heat seemed to arrive and stayed with us for the duration of the move. When we finished 6 days later, there were several thousand boxes, a dozen rooms full of research and laboratory equipment and over 150 phones and computers in place in our new location. Our furniture was installed before our move and the fabrics and colors throughout the building reflect the exquisite Bhutanese exhibits we see all across our campus.

So many people made this move go smoothly- Merced Sierra with her organization, communications system and triage list; Ana Matos and her expert IT colleagues who both disconnected and reconnected everyone to the network in record time; Robert Meredith, from Facilities Services, who was onsite to manage the move and helped to quickly trouble shoot every building issue that came up; Emilio Rodriguez, from Environmental Health and Safety, who coordinated the move of our research freezers and hazardous materials; and Elizabeth Thurmond, who designed, ordered and supervised the delivery and installation of every piece of furniture and fixture in the building.

And this all started almost 4 years ago, in August, 2007, with the \$50 million funding provided by the University of Texas Regents, led by Chair James Huffhines. I still remember the phone call from President Diana Natalicio, who had called me just after she left the University of

Texas Regents meeting where the funding was approved. We were so fortunate to be able to work with such a talented team including our UTEP Planning Committee, chaired by Cynthia Villa, Vice President of Business Affairs; our expert architects, RCG, Inc., Page Southerland Page, and Carl Daniels and Associates; our contractor, Vaughn Construction; Pablo Ruiz and Ed Gill, University of Texas Office of Facilities Planning and Construction; and of course Greg McNicol, UTEP Associate Vice President of Business Affairs, Facilities Services, who has led this project from the moment it began with his management team, including Robert Parker, Jaime Montoya and Robert Meredith. This has been an incredible experience as we watched our building drawn on paper, rise out of the ground and assume a position of prominence on the campus skyline.

And on every team on any given day, someone stands out. The hero of our move was David Casillas, our College of Health Sciences Administrative Officer, who worked tirelessly to coordinate, trouble shoot, follow-up and resolve every issue. His countless trips to check on the status of various aspects of the building and to address the concerns of our faculty researchers was above and beyond the scope of his usual duties. He even stepped in at the last minute to help pack areas that had not been well-prepared and his quick action prevented delays and confusion at multiple points during the move. So, our appreciation goes to Dave, who helped out in so many ways and continues to provide a model for all of determination, kindness, concern and good will.

This issue of our newsletter is dedicated in appreciation to all who made this journey possible,
Kathleen Curtis, PT, Ph.D.,
Dean, College of Health Sciences

Community Update

ABILITY CONNECTION TEXAS (ACT)

Think of IPADs only as a professional tool? On June 9, 2011 Ability Connection Texas (ACT), in partnership with Circle K and UTEP College of Health Sciences Speech and Language Pathology faculty celebrated the arrival of the [ACT El Paso chapter](#) at a press conference. Three El Paso families were awarded IPADs as communication tools for their children. Representing UTEP College of Health Sciences was Dr. Vanessa Mueller, Assistant Professor, [UTEP Speech Language Pathology Program](#).

ACT, initiated in Dallas, Texas is a registered 501c-3 serving Texas for over 58 years. The opening of the El Paso Chapter will assist local area families who have a family member experiencing some level of intellectual or physical disability to reach their full potential. ACT's primary mission is to provide high quality care and support to children and adults with disabilities by providing programs and services which remove barriers that inhibit independence and autonomy.

The ACT El Paso Technology Initiative will continue in collaboration with Circle K and UTEP's College of Health Sciences. In order to qualify for this initiative and be considered for the awarding of an IPAD, a patient needs to be referred by a Speech Pathologist. ACT representative Sara Elliott stated that the partnership with UTEP College of Health Sciences has proven to be extremely effective due to

the high level of expertise, excellence, and experience. Special thanks to our Speech Language Pathology faculty and staff for this new collaboration and community service.



Assistant Dean for Community & International Programs Honored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority

On May 21, 2011, the El Paso Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority awarded Ms. **Leticia Paez** the 2011 Salute Award in *Recognition of Outstanding Commitment and Dedication to Public Service*. Also honored at this event and receiving this prestigious award were El Paso's First Lady, Mrs. Tram P. Cook, Major General Dana J.H. Pittard, Senior Commander at Fort Bliss, Texas Colonel Dusty Rhodes, former El Paso City Council eastside representative and Abundant Living Faith Center's Charles and Rochelle Nieman.

Guest speaker for the luncheon event was Ms. Gwendolyn K. Grant who spoke about "Empowering Communities with Purpose, Promise, and Power" a subject much befitting of all the award recipients. Congratulations to each of them. Ms. Paez's many contributions to the El Paso community as well as her service to The University of Texas at El Paso were major considerations for bestowing the Salute 2011 Award to her. Her work both in the community and UTEP is reflective of her efforts to empower others with purpose, promise and power. Congratulations Letty.

Student Profiles

Social Work Student Alejandra Ramirez to Study in Australia

As an employee and [social work](#) student at the [University of Texas at El Paso](#), I will be participating in an exchange program at [Victoria University](#) in Melbourne Australia in Fall 2011, "Last year, fall 2010, some people that work in the Undergraduate Learning Center here at UTEP were also part of this program and came back saying only wonderful things about Victoria University and about their experience in the vivacious city of Melbourne. Their positive remarks made me want to look into the program and later apply. What I love about the VU Student Exchange Program is that they offer you a job at the University

where you are going to study. Since it's an exchange program, you swap schools and jobs with students at the university over there. You not only go and study to a new country but you also get offered a secure and similar job to the one you have at UTEP. This is really great because you get to earn extra money for your living expenses. Another great aspect about this student exchange program is that when you finish studying abroad and come back to El Paso you have your job at UTEP waiting for you. You don't lose it! During my time over at Australia I want to learn more about many of its different cultures, make friends and get to learn about their style of living, and become a more independent individual. As a social work student, I know this opportunity will benefit me because I am going to be exposed to a completely different world and acquire knowledge about different issues within the Australian society; in their culture, race, and/or in ethnic diversity. I'm excited about learning more about the foundations of the welfare state in Australia and its development."

CHS Student Crowned Miss El Paso Texas USA 2011-2012

UTEP College of Health Sciences student, Ms. Georgina Macias was crowned Miss El Paso Texas USA 2011-2012 at the event's ceremony which took place at the Abraham Chavez Theatre on June 11-12, 2011. Her pageant sponsor was Cielo Vista Mall. Being the third born in a family of 3 sisters, Georgina is the daughter of Dolores Darancou and Luis Macias. Currently a student in our [B.S. Health Promotion program](#), Georgina plans on graduating in 2012 and pursuing a Masters degree in public health with her ultimate career goal being to work in the U.S. Government Food and Drug Administration programs.

Georgina first became interested in the title of Miss El Paso Texas USA after participating in the Miss El Paso Teen at the age of 17. Georgina is extremely proud and excited not necessarily about the title itself but rather about what it represents... serving as a role model for others and representing our fine City at numerous events. During her interview at the pageant she was asked where she would take a tourist in El Paso. Her response was "the Franklin Mountains, Scenic Drive, and an authentic Mexican food restaurant" stating that El Paso is a City of festivals with flavor in every corner.

Georgina's next pageant is the Miss Texas competition to be held in early September 2011. We wish her the best of luck at this pageant. CONGRATULATIONS again Georgina. We are very proud of you!!!

Program Highlights



Social Work Admits Second MSW Class

On June 6, over thirty new MSW students were admitted to the Department of Social Work's second cohort. The class is comprised of a diverse set of individuals with experience in numerous social and health agencies. Most of the class is fully bi-lingual and all are a good fit with the MSW Program's Concentration in [Social Work](#) in the Border Region. Several new practicum placements have been developed with the new cohort in mind. The department now has internships at the Veteran's Administration, the Ysleta del Sur Tigua Nation and the Beaumont Army Hospital, among others. This group will help close the gap on the huge shortage of qualified MSW's in the far west Texas region.

Faculty Corner

Dr. Villalobos attends Summer Institute on Migration and Global Health at Berkeley

[Social Work](#) assistant professor Griselda Villalobos Ph.D., LCSW, a faculty member who studies mental health of migrants attended the Institute on Migration and Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley this month. The Summer Institute on Migration and Global Health offers researchers, faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral scholars and professionals working with migrant communities around the world, a unique opportunity to come and learn, from an international perspective, different health issues that affect mobile populations.

The five-day course is taught by highly recognized international faculty and offers a combination of lectures, workshops, and field trips, in various topics related to migration and health. The Summer Institute is organized by the Health Initiative of the Americas of UC Berkeley School of Public Health, in partnership with the University of California Global Health Institute through the Center of Expertise on Migration and Health (COEMH), and the Migration and Health Research Center (MAHRC).

Dr. Maria Duarte-Gardea, Professor and [Public Health Sciences](#)

[Department](#) Chair, is one of twenty regional tri-state leaders selected to participate in the first class of REALIZE sponsored by the Paso del Norte Health Foundation. Dr. Duarte-Gardea was selected from a pool of 78 highly qualified applicants for this world class leadership development experience designed by international leadership experts, Foundation staff and top level leaders in the Paso del Norte region. The purpose of this very prestigious leadership development experience is to inspire good leaders to become transformational leaders for the community and within their respective organizations. The skills expanded upon through REALIZE will provide participants with true leadership capabilities to enhance their management skills. Founded on a transformational leadership model, the fifteen month journey will engage leaders like Dr. Duarte-Gardea in a highly experiential learning methodology facilitated by thought leaders and experts in leadership development, change leadership, communications, and population health.

Student News & Leadership

UTEP STUDENTS on THEIR WAY

Twelve UTEP students participating in the CHS Minority Health International Research Training program (MHIRT) are on their way to explore the exciting world of research in Quito, Ecuador; San Jose, Costa Rica, and Illapel/Vallenar, Chile. Anna Arreola (Psychology), Laura Carmona (Social Work), Kristen Hernandez (Health Promotion), Jacqueline Mariscal (Public Health), Desiree Martinez (Biology), Nancy Medina (Biology), Laura Mena (Psychology), Cassandra Muro (Social Work), Diana Rodriguez (Microbiology), Juan Rojo (Clinical Laboratory Sciences), Cristina Saenz (Biology), and Alejandra Valadez (Chemistry) will be participating in faculty supervised research in collaboration with the Universidad Central del Ecuador, Universidad de Costa Rica- San Jose, and Universidad de Aconcagua Chile. Funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health-National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, undergraduate and graduate students in biological science, clinical laboratory science, biomedical, health and behavioral sciences are afforded an opportunity to engage in ongoing research with our partner institutions. Having completed both an Hispanic Health Disparities and a Directed Research and Statistic classes, these students are now prepared to apply their learning to research projects focused on topics such as water contamination, food insecurity, and lactation practices to name a few.

Students will complete their research training during mid August returning to UTEP CHS to present their findings on August 16, 2011 from 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in room 217 at the College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing building (on campus across from the Library). Individuals interested in learning more about these research projects as well as the MHIRT project are encouraged to join us at the presentation session on August 16th and welcome the students back to UTEP.



Our New Home

WE ARE IN

Boxes, boxes and more boxes...CHS faculty and staff moved into our new College of Health Sciences and School of Nursing building at 1851 Wiggins during early June. Now that most of the boxes are unpacked, we anxiously await the beginning of classes in our new building so that we can share the excitement of this wonderfully beautiful and well-equipped facility with our students. The new 138,000 square foot building shared with UTEP School of Nursing, will help UTEP respond to the demand for additional health professionals not only in El Paso but for our medically underserved region. The 4 story building is equipped with various seminar rooms, classrooms, and laboratories that put the College at the forefront of cutting edge research and instruction. All instructional space is equipped with state of the art technology and is intended to facilitate interactive learning opportunities for health professions students in social work, clinical laboratory sciences, kinesiology, and public health. The building houses over 14,000 square feet of clinical simulation teaching laboratory space, a 4500 square foot advanced research laboratory, and a Exercise Science Research laboratory a Nutrient Analysis Laboratory and an Experimental Foods Kitchen.

Special thanks to those in the [UTEP](#) campus community who facilitated making the dream of a new building for us a reality.



OUR NEW BUILDING



Be sure you are invited to the open house of UTEP's newest academic building. Don't be left out...drop us an email at lpaez@utep.edu to receive your invitation.

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