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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

November 2015

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**From the Dean's Desk**



So far, 2016 has been a landmark year for the College of Health Sciences with unprecedented student enrollment, external funding awards and recognition of our faculty and students at prestigious national and international conferences and meetings. Read below about some of our student and faculty successes.

Most importantly, however, is the realization that each of these successes has expanded the capacity of our university, our professional community and our region to address the needs of our our population, expanding expertise and bringing new ideas and technologies to address the complex problems faced daily by thousands of residents.

I am particularly proud of the accomplishments of CAPHSR, the Community Academic Partnerships for Health Sciences Research, a university-community partnership that just celebrated its 6th year anniversary, and honored its founder, Dr. Jeri Sias, Clinical Professor in the new University of Texas El Paso School of Pharmacy. Read below about all this group of talented professionals is doing.

And congratulations to Dr. Jose Rivera and the Cooperative Pharmacy program faculty on the University of Texas Regents' approval of the proposal for a Pharm.D. program and the establishment of the University of Texas El Paso School of Pharmacy! This great news was announced to our community following the Regents' meeting on November 4, 2015. We look forward to the next steps in the development of the program.

Go Miners!

**David Peralta-Torres Presented His Master's Project**

Master of Public Health program student, David Peralta-Torres presented his master's project entitled, "Instrument to Assess Attitudes and Behaviors of Healthcare and Social Services Providers towards Sexual and Gender Minorities" at the Center on Halsted in Chicago during the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual LGBTQ Health Conference on October 31, 2015. The goal of this project was to create a resource for the community and agencies who may be searching for health care and social service providers that are culturally-sensitive and competent to the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) clients or patients in El Paso, a severely marginalized and underserved population. This work has been a collaboration with his advisor and mentor, Dr. Oralia Loza, Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences, and the HIV Community Mobilization - LGBT Core team. This partnership is lead by the El Paso Department of Public Health and includes various organization in El Paso including M Factor, PFLAG, Empowerment Center, Outright, Texas Tech University, and UTEP. David is currently an HIV Education Prevention Specialist for the City of El Paso Department of Public Health and Co-Coordinator at The M Factor..



**Pi Theta Epsilon Inducts Its New Members**

On Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, the UTEP Chapter of the Pi Theta Epsilon accepted its new members into this occupational therapy honor society. The new members included Brandy Anderson, Jane Bongiorno, Victoria Martyn, Elsa Lynn Santillano and Lauren Wigginton. This was a beautiful



evening, and the Campbell building cafeteria was transformed by the PTE members' decorations and the happy atmosphere of family and friends gathering with food and punch. Participants included all the occupational therapy professors as well as current Pi Theta Epsilon members (Austi Alvarez, Matthew Gutierrez, and Randy Roepke from Class 2016, and Brittany Dias and



## Calendar of events

### CHS Graduation Celebration

Date: Saturday, Dec. 12, 2015  
Time: 3:30 PM (2:30 PM arrival)  
Location: Magoffin Auditorium

### University Commencement

Date: Saturday Dec. 12, 2015  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Location: Don Haskins Center

## In the News

[Professor Shows That Hearing Aids Improve Memory, Speech](#)

[Tobacco-Free Policy Encourages Miners to Kick the Habit](#)

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## Support the College of Health Sciences

**GIVE NOW!**



Every Gift Counts!  
Tuesday, December 1,  
2015 is Giving Tuesday!

#GivingTuesday is a global day of philanthropy and kick-off for the charitable season. By giving to **The College of Health Sciences** you can help increase student scholarship opportunities and resources for programs across the college.

**MAKE A GIFT**

Alecia Cummins from Class 2015). The induction ceremony started with Program Director Dr. Christine Chen's welcoming remarks and was highlighted by Judge Roepke's speech about the importance of scholarship, professional knowledge and commitment.

We congratulated all the new members for becoming the new cadre of leaders in the profession of occupational therapy. In order to be a member of the OT honor society, one must be in the top 30% of the class and have a minimum GPA of 3.5. We applaud the hard work and success of all the PTE members in the Occupational Therapy Department!

## Rehabilitation Counseling Faculty and Students Travel to the NCRE Fall Conference

The National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) held its annual fall conference in Arlington, Virginia from October 18-20, 2015. This conference is one of two annual conferences held to facilitate communication and share information among professionals in the field of rehabilitation counseling educators and involves training, recruiting, hiring, and enhancing the development of qualified rehabilitation counselors. The conference provided attendees the opportunity to attend keynote, oral concurrent, and poster presentation sessions focused on the recent merger of two major counseling accrediting bodies (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP] and Council on Rehabilitation Education [CORE]), current rehabilitation research, and topics related to rehabilitation education.

The poster session was held on the first day of the conference. The 'lite reception' format allowed participants to navigate the posters at their leisure and interact closely with the presenters. Dr. Erin Barnes, assistant professor (UTEP), collaborated with Dr. Jill Meyer, assistant professor (Auburn University), on a poster, "*Reattribution Training: A Veteran-Focused Intervention.*" Their research addressed the combination of psychological factors that would best predict the recovery of veterans with service-connected mental health conditions. Ms. Stephany Martinez, master's student (UTEP), mentored by Dr. Jennifer Sánchez, assistant professor (UTEP), presented on a poster, "*Therapeutic Interventions for Transitioning Youth with a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)*" focused on interventions that would best serve youth with a TBI who are transitioning out of secondary education. Ms. Martinez was awarded both the Student Travel Grant from the Graduate School as well as the Travel Grant from the College of Health Sciences to present her research at the conference.

On the final day of the conference, Dr. Sánchez, presented a paper, "*Predictors of Social Functioning in Individuals with Severe Mental Illness.*" Co-authors included Dr. Connie Sung (Michigan State University), Dr. Brian Phillips (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Dr. Molly Tschopp (Ball State University), Dr. Veronica Muller (Hunter College), and Dr. Fong Chan (University of Wisconsin-Madison). The study results indicated that disability type, educational attainment, disability acceptance, and empathy significantly predicted social functioning in persons with severe mental illness, and treatments focused on increasing social functioning were discussed.

Presenting these topics at a national conference provided an opportunity to showcase the varied research interests and projects that are being conducted in UTEP's Rehabilitation Counseling Program. This conference also provided various opportunities for networking with faculty and students from other universities, and potential employers. Rehabilitation Counseling students, David Pineira and Scott Cool, also attended the conference. Mr. Pineira and Mr. Cool received Dodson funds to cover the cost of their attendance.

## Workshop Introduces Members of the Paso del Norte Region to Positive Deviance Inquiry

Health professionals often struggle with the challenge of finding solutions to complex problems presenting barriers to health, wellness, and quality of life. Traditionally, we approach these issues by asking, "What risk factors are associated with poor outcomes?" Once these factors are identified, we use this data to design solutions to remedy the problem. Positive Deviance (PD) is an approach to solving complex health and social issues, which "flips" this traditional research question on its head. Instead of asking "What factors predict poor outcomes?" PD asks, "Are there individuals in the community with x, y, and z risk factors, who are successfully navigating these issues without additional resources?" The PD approach assumes that within every community lie individuals or groups whose uncommon behaviors and strategies enable them to find better solutions to problems than their peers although everyone has access to the same resources and faces the same challenges (Pascale, Sternin, & Sternin, 2010). These outliers are deviants because their uncommon behaviors are not the norm; they are positive deviants because they have found ways to effectively address the problem, while most others have not (Singhal, 2013). PD aims to uncover solutions that are hidden in plain site, and ultimately amplify these solutions to produce programs that can be offered to the larger community to produce positive change.

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On October 20<sup>th</sup>, 37 individuals, including members of the Paso del Norte Region-many being individuals with disabilities, family members, and services providers-and UTEP faculty, gathered to learn about PD and how it is being applied by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS) to improve employment outcomes for people with psychiatric disabilities, through the first ever State-funded PD project (Dr. Arvind Singhal, PI and Dr. Kristin Kosyluk, Co-PI). The goal of this event was to introduce members of the El Paso community, particularly people who serve individuals with disabilities, to the method of PD inquiry. Representatives from the OKDRS research team visited UTEP for a two-day meeting and shared their experiences with PD with the workshop attendees. Workshop participants reflected on PD and how they might apply this method of inquiry in their own lives and work here on the border. The workshop was co-facilitated by Dr. Arvind Singhal (UTEP Communications Department, Dr. Kristin Kosyluk (UTEP Department of Rehabilitation Sciences), Dr. Lucia Dura (UTEP Department of Rhetoric and Writing), and Mrs. Lauren Perez (UTEP Communications Student). This workshop was one of a series that will be conducted over the next year meant to introduce members of the Paso del Norte Region to PD and foster potential community-academic partnerships using this methodology. Feedback from attendees on this first workshop was overwhelmingly positive, and several community-academic PD partnerships are developing as a result of this event.

### **The Community-Academic Partnerships for CAPHSR Gives Thanks During the Annual Thanksgiving Potluck**

For the past six years, CAPHSR has strived to create a sustainable infrastructure for community and academic health science partnership that fosters collaborative research and education to address health disparities and promotes health equity among underserved populations on the U.S.-Mexico border.

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 44 community and academic partners and UTEP students gathered at the Paso del Norte Children's Development Center to give thanks for the partnerships that have evolved from the group over the past six years, as well as to honor and celebrate the founding CAPHSR leader, Dr. Jeri Sias, of UTEP's Pharmacy Program. Dr. Sias led the CAPHSR program from 2009 to 2015, dedicating a remarkable amount of energy and passion to the development of partnerships between UTEP Faculty and students and members of the Paso del Norte Region. She will continue to be a valuable and valued member of the CAPHSR in the future. During the luncheon event, several teams of community-academic partners who were awarded funding through the 2015 Community-Academic Partnerships Capacity-Building Program (CAP2) to carry out community engaged research, shared their work with the group. These projects include:

- An assessment of the needs of Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Inc. (DMRS) (Community Partners: Rachel Green and Melissa Lopez of DMRS; Academic Patners: Yok Fong Paat, Ph.D., Guillermina Nuñez-Michri Ph.D., and Sylvia Chavez Baray, Ph.D)
- A project aimed at challenging the social stigmas of aging by documenting the impact of community-university partnership between the City of El Paso's Parks and Recreation Department and the University of Texas at El Paso (Community Partners: David J. Lopez, City of El Paso Senior Games; Academic Partners: Corina Marrufo [Social Work Student], Jane Aman [Women's and Gender Studies Student], Guillermina Gina Nunez-Mchiri, Ph.D., Celia Pechak, PT,Ph.D,MPH, and Eli Garcia, Senior Lecturer in Public Relations/Corporate Communication)
- A qualitative exploratory research study examining bystander attitudes related to sexual and domestic violence and the need for bystander interventions for sexual and domestic violence prevention on college (UTEP) campuses (Community Partner: Stephanie Karr of the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence [CASV]; Academic Partner: Thenral Mangadu, MD, MPH, Ph.D.).
- An environmental scan of services provided to children with disabilities in the El Paso region. A brief survey conducted by the team yielded current perceptions about the services in El Paso and potential themes for discussion. The team convened a summit to discuss these themes and the strengths and needs of the region. Stakeholders including service providers, employers, academics, and parents were invited to participate in the summit (Community Partners: Jaime Barceleau, LMSW and Gilda Gil-Lopez, MA of the Paso del Norte Children's Development Center; Academic Partners: Connie Summers, PhD, CCC-SLP, Vannesa Mueller, PhD, CCC-SLP, and Yok Fong Paat, PhD, LCSW).
- A qualitative project examining policy makers' views on issues surrounding homelessness in the region, perspectives of residents of the Opportunity Center for the Homeless on the development of a 12-month advocacy and social mobilization strategy, development of a speakers bureau to increase intergroup interaction between marginalized groups (i.e. individuals experiencing homelessness) and power groups, and formative research informing services, policy and interventions in homelessness (Community Partners: Ray Tullius, MSSW Director of the Opportunity Center for the Homeless; Academic Partners: Erika Alcalá, Nahomi Martínez, and Claudia Muñoz (Social Work Students), and Eva M. Moya, Ph.D, LMSW, Kristin Kosyluk Ph.D., CRC, and Sylvia M. Chávez-Baray, PhD).





Community Partners, UTEP Faculty, CHS Administration, and students honoring Dr. Jeri Sias (center) leadership at the CAPHSR Thanksgiving Luncheon

### Scholarships Funding for 60 Graduate Students In the MRC Program



The Master of Rehabilitation Counseling (MRC) program, received 1 million in funding to provide scholarships for 60 graduate students enrolled in the MRC program over the next five years through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration. "This funding will help increase the availability of rehabilitation counselors locally, statewide and nationally", said Barbara Schoen, Ph.D., assistant professor and director of the MRC program, adding that, "while most of our graduates remain in El Paso many have moved throughout Texas and the nation". "It's an exciting time for our graduates; as the shortage of rehabilitation counselors", as evidenced by this

funding, "provides them exciting career opportunities".

### Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG) Actively Participated at the Community Health and Wellness Fair



Health Promotion student members of Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG) actively participated at the Community Health and Wellness fair on Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. The health fair was well attended by seniors, parents, teachers, and children. ESG Students provided nutrition education using food models to demonstrate balanced meals and recommended portion sizes and to create

awareness about how much salt, sugar and fat one can consume through fast/junk food. Kids and adults alike enjoyed the food wheel game. Students prepared tasty, easy, nutritious, and affordable recipes. The following healthy recipes were demonstrated at the table and included healthy wraps, fruit kabobs with cinnamon and honey, and kale-bean-corn salad for food tastings. Student members work under the mentorship of faculty advisor, Dr. Thenral Mangadu, Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences and under the leadership of Ricardo Silvera, ESG President a senior in the BS Health Promotion program.

### Professor Lusk named to Regional Health Equity Council (RHEC)



Social work professor Mark Lusk was appointed to a 2-year term with the Southwest Regional Health Equity Council. A regional council of the US Office of Minority Health, the group promotes health access for underrepresented groups and seeks to address regional health inequities. The southwest region includes Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana, and Oklahoma.

There are 10 Regional Health Equity Councils in the United States. Organized under the Office of Minority Health in the US Department of Health and Human Services, the RHEC's are non-governmental organizations that assist the government in its efforts to build "a nation free of disparities in health and health care." The group

members represent health care professionals, scientists, academics, and policy makers who collaborate across several state regions to promote policies and practices that advance health equity. In Region VI, priorities include increasing access to health care under the Affordable Care Act and effectively utilizing Community Health Workers to promote healthy lifestyles. Region VI (TX, NM, OK and LA) falls well behind the national averages on many measures of physical and behavioral health.

Professor Lusk notes, "Our region is challenged to advance health equity by increasing the number of individuals who are enrolled in health insurance programs, improving health services to rural regions, and enhancing health access for minorities and under-represented groups. I look forward to the opportunity to be part of the Texas delegation on this council."

### **Dr. Lam Le Acceptance Into the Institute for Athletic Regeneration Fellowship Program**



The UTEP DPT Program Faculty congratulate Class of 2015 DPT student Lam Le for his acceptance into the Institute for Athletic Regeneration, a sports & orthopedic manual physical therapy fellowship in Houston Texas. He will join their Class of 2018. This is an important next step on his ultimate goal of becoming a Fellow in Manual Therapy (FAAOMPT). We are very excited for Lam, and thank him for being a role model for all of our students.

### **Kiersten Garrand Honored at UTEP's Graduate Expo**



Class of 2016 Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) student Kiersten Garrand won 2nd place for her poster presentation at UTEP's Graduate Expo on November 13, 2015. Kiersten presented her research poster entitled "*Evidence for Disability Competence Education Relevant to Physical Therapy*".