

12-2015

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

College of Health Sciences

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## Recommended Citation

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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

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## From the Dean's Desk

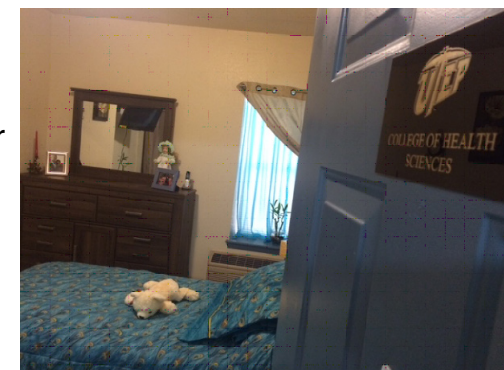


Just a few days ago, on Saturday, December 12, 2015, we celebrated the achievements of hundreds of our College of Health Sciences graduates at our Fall 2015 Graduation Celebration and Hooding Ceremony. Read below about the outstanding Fall 2015 graduates who will soon join the health care workforce!

We have great news on the international front, as well, with visits this fall from our colleagues from the Universidad Autonoma de los Andes (UNIANDES) in Ambato, Ecuador and from the Universidad de Costa

Rica. These visits helped to strengthen our relationships and expand the scope of our collaborative activities with faculty and students.

Closer to home, our UTEP faculty, staff and students again generously supported our holiday drive to fund a room renovation for a long-term resident at The Opportunity Center for the Homeless. Ray Tullius, CEO and Lily Tullius, Magoffin Residence Director, attended our annual holiday celebration and expressed their gratitude to the College of Health Sciences community. The Magoffin SRO (Single Room Occupancy) provides a safe and stable environment for those who are frail and/or elderly in a single room residence. Each room renovation includes a new bed and bedding, furniture, window treatments, a wall clock, , a small flat screen TV, as well as a microwave and small refrigerator. Much appreciation to all who participated in this life-changing holiday gift.



Finally, wishing everyone the happiest of holidays and a healthy 2016. Go Miners!

## DPT Class of 2015 Graduated

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Class of 2015 graduated on December 12, 2015. The graduates, their families and friends, and the DPT faculty celebrated the Class of 2015's achievements after 8 semesters of rigorous coursework and 36 weeks of full-time clinical experiences. Several students received additional recognition. Dr. Paul Estrada received the Outstanding Leadership Award (chosen by the DPT faculty) and the Most Valuable Physical Therapist Award (chosen by his classmates). Dr. Rene Medina received the Outstanding Clinician Award (as determined by the ratings of his clinical instructors). Three graduates were recognized as Outstanding Scholars for earning a 4.0 during their doctoral studies: Dr. Arlianne Bejarano, Dr. Kristen Reilly, and Dr. Elizabeth Rockwell. Congratulations to all of our new Doctors of Physical Therapy!



## Physical Education Teacher Education Attend TAHPERD

Three faculty and eight students from the Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Program in The Department of Kinesiology recently attended the Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (TAHPERD) Conference in Dallas from December 2-5, 2015. The students networked with



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**In Memory of Dr. David K.  
Wittenburg UTEP  
Kinesiology Chair 2012-  
2015**  
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### Calendar of events

**Orange and Blue Day**  
Date: February 6, 2016  
Location: UTEP Campus

### In the News

[Faculty Develop Culturally  
Competent Social Work  
Training](#)

[Signa UTEP convenio de  
intercambio médico con  
universidad ecuatoriana](#)

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other Physical Education Teachers from across the state, and participated in workshops that targeted innovative physical education topics. The students were members of the Representative Assembly and voted on the new state organization officers. Ms. Ana L. Cisneros, a Kinesiology Lecturer, was elected Vice-President Elect of the Area Division. She will represent physical education teachers in the El Paso area for next 3 years.

### Two MSW Students Recognized for Outstanding Performance



At the December 2015 graduation ceremony, two MSW students were recognized for outstanding performance. Ms. Amber Chavez was awarded the Outstanding MSW Student Award for outstanding academic performance while in the MSW Program, graduating with a 4.0 GPA. Ms. Julia V. Radko was awarded the MSW Outstanding Achievement Award for her strong 3.68 GPA and her exceptional commitment and leadership to community service while in the program.

### 2015 Graduate Highlight (OT): Jennie Nguyen

Jennie Nguyen was appointed as the University Banner Bearer during the 2015 Winter Commencement Ceremony, the highest award bestowed to a UTEP graduate. Jennie received her Bachelor's degree from the University of California, San Diego, graduated from the MOT program with a 4.0 GPA, and had received 4 scholarships during her 2.5 years studies at UTEP, including an AOTF (American Occupational Therapy Foundation Scholarship) TOTA Endowed Scholarship. At UTEP MOT program, she was a Teaching Assistant for the Anatomy class, Class Representative for the Student Occupational Therapy Association, President of Pi Theta Epsilon. She conducted research and presented with another student a research poster at the Texas Occupational Therapy Association annual conference. And, she also was extremely involved in the community-she organized a variety of fundraisers for local community programs, served dinner at Thanksgiving for the Homeless, and volunteered in various community services. Her classmates commented: "Jennie is amazing!", "She is the best!"

### MOT Program Updates

The MOT Program has been extremely busy this past 2 months. In November, under the leadership of Rocio Alvarenga, 3 first-year and 3 second-year MOT students attended the Fabens, San Elizario, and Tornillo Community Health and Wellness Fair. The OT theme for this year's health fair was Backpack Awareness-to educate the public how to wear a backpack safely and how to pack it up with appropriate weight for a school-aged child based on his/her age and size. The OT students brought backpacks of different weights and had the children try all of them so that they were aware of the different loads first-hand. An overly heavy backpack can cause injuries and poor posture. The students gained invaluable experience talking to the public and had better understanding of the needs of the community.

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) held its first Alumni Dinner at Camino Real Hotel in downtown El Paso. Over 50 people attended, including the area clinicians, alumni and current students. During the dinner, the SOTA also held a toy drive and a silent auction to raise funds for the Rescue Mission where MOT students conducted life-skills classes for the residents. Half of the proceeds of the Silent Auction will help fund the travel for the SOTA members next year to the AOTA conference. Another highlight of the evening was that Dr. Isaac Montes presented a CEU-earning presentation on Lymphedema. The dinner was a huge success.

On December 12<sup>th</sup>, 26 students graduated and received their Master of Occupational Therapy degrees, after successfully completing their 2.5 years of academic training and clinical fieldwork rotations. Among them, Jennie Nguyen received "the Outstanding Graduate Award", Rachel Clarke and Natalie (Aguilar) Raschke received the "Academic Achievement Award", and Atenas Bojorquez, Alecia Cummins, and Meredith Husted received "the Clinical Excellence Award". The graduates held a graduation dinner at the Ardovino's Desert Crossing Italian Restaurant on December 11th and all OT faculty members were invited.





## MHIRT Program Hosts International Visitors

The CHS Minority Health International Research Training (MHIRT) program hosted international visitors from Ecuador and Costa Rica. Participating in the international visits aimed at developing new opportunities for UTEP students to engage in global learning activities and enhancing existing collaboration with MHIRT program, were Dr. Octavio Miranda, Dean at the Universidad Autonoma Regional de los Andes (UNIANDES) in Ambato, Ecuador, Maestra Marina Isabel Villacis, Nursing Faculty at Universidad Autonoma Regional de los Andes (UNIANDES) in Ambato, Ecuador, Dr. Julieta Carranza Velasquez, Director of the Office for International Programs and External Affairs at Universidad de Costa Rica San Jose, and Dr. Patricia Cuenca Berger, Director of the Institute for Scientific Research at Universidad de Costa Rica San Jose. Both of these visits afforded our international colleagues with multiple opportunities to learn about UTEP as well as explore future collaborative opportunities for UTEP. Our international guests were hosted by various members of UTEP's leadership team to include Mr. Beto Lopez, Dr. Catie McCorry Andalis, Mr. Arturo Barrio, Dr. Chuck Ambler, Dr. Bess Sirmon-Taylor, Dr. Howard Daudistel, Dr. Christina Sobin, and Ms. Carmen Gonzalez. Our international colleagues also had the opportunity to meet with UTEP President Diana S. Natalicio to further discuss UTEP's global education agenda for students. Thanks to all for their participation.

## Best Systematic Review Poster



Meeting their last academic requirement prior to graduation, the Doctor of Physical Therapy Class of 2015 presented their Capstone posters on December 10, 2015. Dr. Ashly Westfield White won Best Case Report Poster for her project entitled "The Effect of Tape Application in Addition to Conservative Stretching and Balance Training on Idiopathic Toe Walking: A Case Report." Drs. Anthony Durant, Jose Gutierrez, Rene Medina, and Hoa

Nguyen won Best Systematic Review Poster for their project entitled "The Effectiveness of Gait Rehabilitation Strategies in Improving Gait Biomechanics for Patients with Upper Motor Neuron Lesion: A Systematic Review."

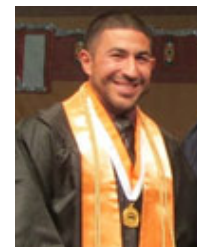
## Congratulations to Our Banner Bearers and Student Marshalls

Four of Health Sciences students graduated with distinguished honors at the December 12, 2015 Commencement. These students were Cynthia Bernice Marrufo (Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion), Amber Chavez (Master of Social Work), Fernando Cortez (Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology), and Jennie Nguyen (Master of Occupational Therapy).



Cynthia Marrufo served as our Undergraduate Student Marshal and was selected based on academic achievement. Cynthia graduated Summa Cum Laude and was also awarded the Outstanding Academic & Community Service Award within the Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion program. Cynthia plans to go on and pursue a graduate degree in Public Administration.

Amber Chavez served as the Graduate Student Marshal and was selected for this honor based on her academic achievement, leadership, and campus involvement. Amber graduated with a 4.0 GPA which she maintained throughout her Master of Social Work program. Amber's leadership was demonstrated through her internship with the Department of Defense and while serving as a member of the Master of Social Work Student Organization where she organized donation drives and fundraising events. Amber's future plans include a career as a licensed clinical social worker and to one day serve as a clinical Director of an organization.



Fernando Cortez served as our College Banner Bearer and was selected based on academic achievement. Fernando graduated Summa Cum Laude with his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology. As an undergraduate student, Fernando was involved with Fitness for the Golden Age program as well as participating in a co-op experience with a local middle school. Fernando's future plans include obtaining his alternative teacher certification and becoming a football coach as well as a certified personal trainer working with athletes.

Jennie Nguyen received the great honor of serving as the University Banner Bearer. Jennie completes her Master of Occupational Therapy with a 4.0 GPA. During her studies, she received four scholarships which provided her with great support as she pursued her studies. Jennie served as the President of Pi Theta Epsilon, a national honor society, as class representative for the Student Occupational Therapy Association here at UTEP, and as a volunteer with multiple community organizations. Jennie's future plan is to pursue a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy.



## Social Work and the College of Health Sciences Helps Train More Than 100 Community Health Workers on Eye Health



As the saying goes, *más vale prevenir que lamentar*. And that is exactly what the Department of Social Work and the College of Health Sciences of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is doing in partnership with the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP). Over the past two years, the institutions have joined forces to train more than 100 community health workers (CHWs) and health care professionals on eye health. Because when it comes to your vision, it's better to be safe than sorry.

This past October, representatives of the NEHEP *¡Ojo con su visión!* Program facilitated two workshops in conjunction with the Department of Social Work of the College of Health Sciences.

Participants included members of the Familias Triunfadoras, Inc., network. The purpose of the workshops was to teach participants to increase awareness of eye health within their communities, specifically for people with diabetes and those at higher risk for glaucoma. The workshops introduced participants to the NEHEP's Spanish toolkits: [La diabetes y la salud de los ojos](#) (*Diabetes and Healthy Eyes Toolkit*) and [Cuidemos nuestros ojos del glaucoma](#) (*Keeping Vision in Your Future: Glaucoma Toolkit*).

Participants had the opportunity to learn about diabetes, glaucoma, and how these diseases affect the eyes. They also learned about the various eye complications Hispanics/Latinos are at higher risk for developing and the importance of getting regular comprehensive dilated eye exams. The workshops gave participants the opportunity to practice using the educational resources and to discuss how to use the materials in their communities. Each participant received copies of the toolkits, educational materials, and order forms to request free resources from NEHEP. The workshops, which were conducted in Spanish, lasted six hours.

This was the third time UTEP welcomed NEHEP to facilitate training workshops. Eva M. Moya, Ph.D., and Silvia Chavez Baray, Ph.D., from the Department of Social Work at UTEP have been fundamental in making the workshops possible.

### About the NEHEP *¡Ojo con su visión!* Program



The *¡Ojo con su visión!* Program assists health professionals and community health workers in increasing awareness among Hispanics/Latinos about vision health. *¡Ojo con su visión!* has culturally and linguistically appropriate educational materials and resources about eye diseases and conditions Hispanics/Latinos are at higher risk for as well

as information on how they can protect their vision.

The [Diabetes and Healthy Eyes](#) and [Keep Vision in Your Future](#) toolkits are available in English and Spanish and were designed to help increase awareness about diabetic eye disease and glaucoma among Hispanics/Latinos. These toolkits include all the resources CHWs need to deliver educational sessions.

Visit the [Ojos Sanos](#) Web page to learn more about the eye diseases and conditions that affect Hispanics/Latinos. To order eye health educational materials in Spanish, visit <https://catalog.nei.nih.gov>.

### Public Health Sciences Proud to Announce the Graduation of 26 Students



The Department of Public Health Sciences is proud to announce the graduation of 26 students. On December 12, 2015 at the UTEP Fall Commencement 17 students were awarded their BS degree in Health Promotion and 9 graduate students received their Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. Health Promotion graduates are: Clarissa Alvillar, Natalie Arredondo, Marylou Astorga, David

Bowens, Tiffany Butler, Sandra Cobos, Zoraida Espinoza-Castro, Cristina Flores, Daisuke Goya, Christopher Isabelle, Cynthia Marrufo, Caitlin Martinez, Diamond Martinez, Shawna Payan, Jaqueline Quinonez, Ricardo Silveira, Javier Zamarripa.

Health Promotion graduates are prepared to address population health issues through innovative interventions. Throughout their training they acquire the necessary skills to help individuals and communities to make informed decisions about lifestyle and personal health behaviors and to play an important role as agents of change in preventing and controlling non-communicable and communicable diseases.



Our unique MPH program prepares students for public health practice, research, and leadership positions in Hispanic and border communities in the U.S. and elsewhere. Our program places special emphasis on the promotion of health equity in Hispanic and border communities through the use of evidence-based approaches and the preparation of health professionals. Our close partnership with City of El Paso Department of Public Health along with a variety of Community based agencies strengthens our graduates' experience in the public health practice.

Our graduates are transforming communities as they become advocates and health leaders Congratulations to all of our graduates.

### UTEP Partnership with University in Ecuador to Expand Research, Cultural Exchanges

The University of Texas at El Paso and the Universidad Regional Autónoma de los Andes (UNIANDES) in Ambato, Ecuador, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will extend academic, cultural and educational activities between both institutions.

The agreement signed by Octavio Miranda, M.D., dean of the School of Medicine at UNIANDES, and UTEP President Diana Natalicio on Oct. 29, will establish doctoral and postdoctoral education and collaborative research activities, and expand study abroad opportunities between UTEP's College of Health Sciences and UNIANDES.



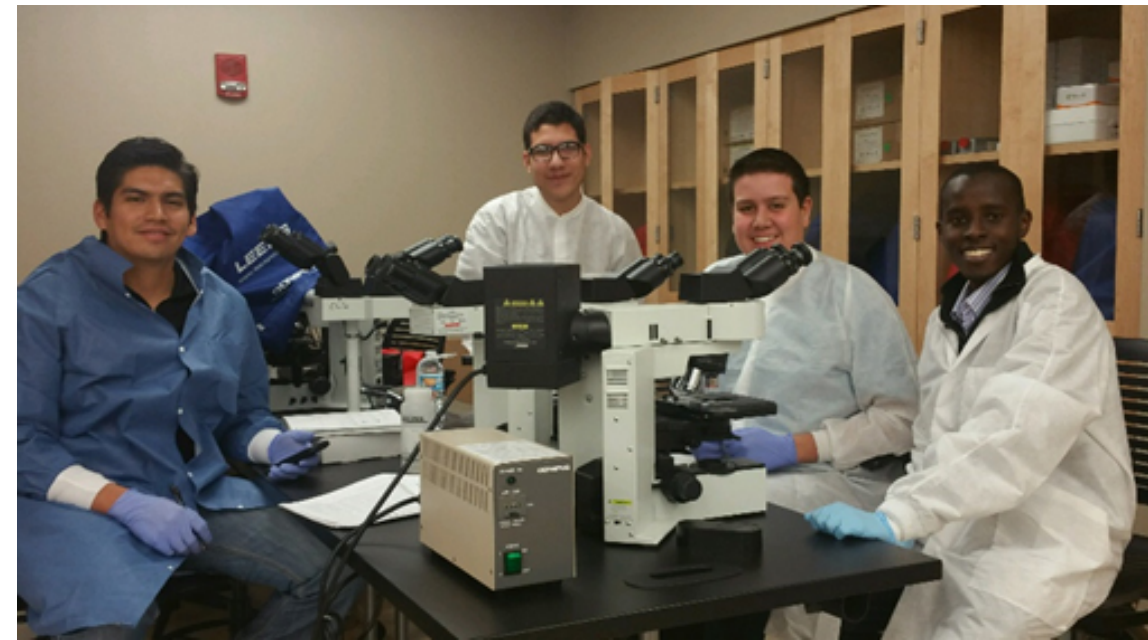
"Education has no borders," Miranda said. "We want our students to have the opportunity to transcend borders and learn how to become leaders." According to the MOU, UTEP faculty may participate in and collaborate with UNIANDES doctoral students in international conferences on teaching and research. Undergraduate and graduate students will have the opportunity to participate in internships ranging from one to three months during the summer schedule. The internships will be available depending on UTEP faculty interests and needs.

Faculty and students from UNIANDES also will be able to engage in collaborative and exchange opportunities, such as enrolling in the UTEP Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program. The Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) program in the College of Health Sciences has made it possible for UTEP students to engage in international research opportunities alongside faculty and students at UNIANDES.

Started in 2005 by a grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, a part of the National Institutes of Health, the MHIRT program offers short-term international health disparities research opportunities for Hispanic undergraduate and graduate students. Students in the program travel to Ecuador, Costa Rica and Panama for six to eight weeks during the summer. The Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) program is funded by Grant Number 5T37MD001376-12 from the National Institute on Minority Health & Health Disparities (NIMHD), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

### CLS Helps High School Students Prepare

Clinical Laboratory Sciences faculty member Ms. Elizabeth Camacho and senior CLS student Elphas Maiyo are working with two Socorro High School students and their instructor to help prepare them for the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) Biomedical Laboratory Science competition. The purpose of the competition is to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the medical laboratory and biotechnology careers. Sophomore Eduardo Chiquito has been a HPA student for the past 2 years. He has goals of becoming a Health Practitioner. Senior Henry Bernal is the HPA acting President for the student body. Henry placed 3rd during the 2014-2015 Texas HOSA AREA competition.



Clockwise from left\_ Oscar Martinez \_Teacher\_ Eduardo Chiquito\_ Henry Bernal\_ and Elphas Maiyo.

## Science Fair Time

The CLS Program Faculty geared up to assist a number of local middle and high school students with science fair projects during the fall semester. Marcos Mancera, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader from Desert View Middle School, won the sweepstakes with his project evaluating the antibacterial properties of essential oils and will be headed to district competition in February 2016. Sean Cordier and Evelyn Peacock from Americas High School achieved a 100% on their project evaluating the efficacy of UV light as an antimicrobial method for food processing. Chloe Trujillo and Sarah Parrott from Loretto Academy Middle School completed a project determining whether the "5 second rule" truly applies to the contamination of food products that fall on the floor. Pictured below are the students working in the UTEP CLS labs.

## In Memory of Dr. David K. Wittenburg UTEP Kinesiology Chair 2012-2015



David K. Wittenburg, Ph.D., Chair of the UTEP Department of Kinesiology, passed away Monday, October 26, 2015 at age 53 following a long battle with cancer. Raised on the family ranch in Lometa, Texas, Dr. Wittenburg earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education from Angelo State University, his Master of Education degree in Exercise Science from Texas State University, and his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Kinesiology from Texas A&M University. He began his academic career as a physical education teacher and coach with the Northside Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas (1985-1993). He held faculty appointments at New Mexico State University (1999-2001), the

University of New Mexico (2001-2005), and The University of Texas at Brownsville (2005-2012), before becoming the Chair of the UTEP Department of Kinesiology (2012-2015).

While teaching in the public schools, Dr. Wittenburg developed an interest in studying the cardiovascular health of children. More recently, he continued his research focused on cardiovascular and metabolic health and fitness among Mexican-American men and women. Dr. Wittenburg was a member of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), the Texas Regional chapter of the ACSM (TACSM), the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), the North American Society for Pediatric Exercise Medicine, and the American Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD; now SHAPE America). He served as President of the New Mexico AHPERD (2003) and was actively involved with many professional committees.

Dr. Wittenburg's experience and background provided a unique perspective toward curriculum and planning, and his leadership helped define the future direction of UTEP's Department of Kinesiology. Dr. Wittenburg is survived by his wife Cynthia and sons Caleb, Joshua, and Matthew; his daughters Kristen Bingham and Tara Garnett; his grandsons Ellis Bingham and Jackman Garnett; his parents Joe and Ruthy Wittenburg; and his brother Alex Wittenburg and sisters Leslie Spraggins, Donna Wittenburg, and Michelle Wittenburg. Also cherished in his life were his wife's parents, Rene and Bertha Martinez, and family.

The Dr. David K. Wittenburg Endowment has been established to honor him, his contributions, and his memory. Contributions to the Dr. David K Wittenburg Endowment are being accepted at <https://givingto.utep.edu/kin> or by mail using [this form](#).