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Salud y Saludos: The E-News of the 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

January 2016

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Calendar of events

Orange and Blue Day
Date: Sat. Feb 6, 2016

Young Achievers Forum at UTEP
Date: Sat. Feb. 20, 2016

University Honors Convocation
Date: Sun. Apr. 17, 2016
Time: 2:00PM

In the News

From the Dean's Desk



2016 is off to a great start and we are definitely getting to wear all of our "winter clothes." A surprise snowstorm during the 2015 Sunbowl Game blanketed El Paso in up to a foot of snow for a good part of our winter break. The wind seems to have been blowing non-stop since then!

On a warmer note, our Fall 2015 graduates are finalizing plans for employment and preparing for their licensure and certification examinations. We wish them every success. Read below about some truly exceptional contributions of our faculty and students and join us in welcoming both back students and faculty for the new semester.

On February 5 and 6, 2016 we look forward to celebrating the [50th Anniversary of the 1966 NCAA Championship](#), depicted in the popular film, *Glory Road*, when Don Haskins led the first all-African-American starting line-up for a college basketball team to the national title. On March 19, 1966, in College Park, Maryland, UTEP (then called Texas Western College) beat top-ranked Kentucky 72-65 in the NCAA championship game, changing college athletics forever. We are so proud of our university's history in abolishing segregation in higher education and athletics. Plan to participate in this [commemorative event](#).

Go Miners!
Kathleen A. Curtis, PT, Ph.D.
Dean

DPT Program Made a Christmas Dream Come True



On December 21, 2015 students from the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program made a Christmas dream come true for children at a local homeless shelter. After several months of their hard work (including completing many hours of manual labor and fundraising over \$6500), they were ready to celebrate the completion of a new soccer field for the young residents at La Posada Home.

Approximately 60 people attended the ribbon-cutting event, including students, donors, and La Posada Home residents, staff, and Board members.

DPT Class of 2016 student Kiersten Garrand led the project. She originally became involved with La Posada as part of service-learning requirements in the first year of the DPT Program, and maintained contact with her community site long after her service-learning hours were completed. Kiersten reported that when she arrived at the ribbon-cutting, "the kids were laying on the turf sprawled out and exhausted from playing soccer all morning. Once they saw us, a large group of kids attached themselves to my legs and another few were jumping on my husband yelling 'thank you' and 'gracias.' The excitement in their eyes was something I will never forget."

The DPT Program thanks everyone who helped to ensure that the children will have a safe place to play soccer for many years to come - including the DPT students, their family and friends, DPT faculty and staff, other UTEP donors, members of the Greater El Paso District of the Texas Physical Therapy Association, and SYNLaw of El Paso who provided and installed the artificial turf at below-cost with the students' assistance.

Rehabilitation Counseling Celebrates 2015 Fall

Our 2015 Commencement included six Rehabilitation Counseling students: Valeria Baeza, Jopy Baker, Agustin Barajas, Jessica Gutierrez, Jered Holder, and Marcela Jimenez.

[Occupational Therapy Students Lend a Helping Hand](#)

[UTEP class gives soccer field to homeless kids](#)

[Research Teaches Future Physical Therapists About Disabilities](#)

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Mr. Jopy Baker graduated with a 4.0 GPA and was recognized for his Outstanding Academic Achievement at the ceremony. He completed his internship at PRIDE Industries. He was recently hired by ReadyOne Industries to work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Mr. Jered Holder received the Outstanding Graduate Student award and also recently received the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) Region 7 Rehabilitation Counselor of the Year award for 2015. Following conferral of his degree, Mr. Holder will be promoted to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor I at IDVR. He plans to pursue his PhD in Rehabilitation Counseling in the future.

Ms. Valeria Baeza has been hired by Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in Plano. As the only bilingual counselor in the office, she provides services to the Spanish-speaking caseload. Her future plans include pursuing a PhD in Behavioral Science at the University of North Texas (UNT) while continuing to work as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to further expand her experience in the Rehabilitation Sciences.

Mr. Agustin Barajas received the Personal Identity Excellence award from the Student Rehabilitation Counseling Association (SRCA). Agustin's immediate plans are to relocate to Austin to work as an LPC-Intern and obtain licensure within 2 years.

Ms. Jessica Gutierrez is currently employed by DARS in El Paso as a Consumer Case Coordinator. Mrs. Marcela Jimenez is employed by Emergence Health Network

Congratulations to all the Rehabilitation Counseling graduates! They are well on their way to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities - one client at a time...



Graduates pictured from left to right (Marcela Jimenez, Agustin Barajas, Jessica Gutierrez, Valeria Baeza, and Jopy Baker)

OT Welcomes Dahlia Castillo, Clinical Assistant Professor



The Master of Occupational Therapy Program would like to welcome Dahlia Castillo, MS, OTR as our newest Clinical Assistant Professor. Ms. Castillo most recently held an appointment as the program director of an Occupational Therapy Assistant program. Prior to that she served as the fieldwork coordinator in the MOT program at UTEP from 2010-2012.

Dahlia received her Bachelor's degree in OT from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in 1991 and a Master of Science in Health Education from the University of Texas at El Paso in 2002. She is currently a clinical doctoral student at Mt.

Mary University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with an anticipated graduation of May 2016. Her doctoral research topic is entitled *Fostering Client-Centeredness through Therapeutic Use of Self*. She is currently on the Roster of Accreditation Evaluators for the Accreditation Council of Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) where she served on the council from 2006-2012.

Dahlia has been an occupational therapist for the last 25 years. During her career she has worked with individuals across the lifespan including premature infants with feeding difficulties, school children with developmental and academic delays, adolescents with learning differences, young adults with orthopedic and neurological diagnoses and injuries, military veterans with various mental health, orthopedic and neurological issues, and older adults with a variety of age-related, orthopedic, and/or neurological conditions. The settings where she has been employed include acute care hospitals, rehabilitation centers, public and private schools, and the VA. As a Hispanic leader in the occupational therapy profession, Dahlia is committed to assist students overcome barriers that could limit their success in the educational program.

Since 2007, she has offered pro-bono occupational therapy services in an underserved clinic in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. During one week intervals two to three times per year, Dahlia, together with colleagues and students, provide occupational therapy services in an environment with very limited resources. Over the past decade, she has engaged 50 therapists and 25 students to offer these services. She was instrumental in establishing an activity of daily living environment for evaluation and practice.

Dahlia is completely bilingual and bicultural; she has presented on various topics related to occupational therapy to clients and health professionals in Juarez as well as in the US. In addition, she has worked with a higher education institution in Juarez in an effort to introduce occupational therapy to interested students.

Rehabilitation Counseling Assistant Professor Receives Hogg Foundation Grant

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health has awarded a grant to an assistant professor in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program. Dr. Jennifer Sánchez was 1 of 5 recipients of the Mental Health Recovery-Oriented Research grant. She received a \$66,000 award for her project entitled, "*Development and Validation of a Self-Determined Participation in Community Life Measure for People with Serious Mental Illness: A Consumer Perspective.*"

The study will span 2 years and focuses on the development of a culturally- and linguistically-sensitive instrument to measure participation in life roles of persons with severe mental illness. Consumers will participate in a number of activities to inform the development of this measurement tool.

This is the third Hogg Foundation grant awarded to a faculty member in the Master of Rehabilitation Counseling program. Congratulations to Dr. Sanchez, as well as Dr. Erin Barnes, a previous awardee! .

Master of Rehabilitation Counseling Program Celebrates Advances in 2015

2015 was a very active and exciting year for the Master of Rehabilitation Counseling Program. A highlight of the year was the award of a five-year Rehabilitation Long-Term Training Grant that provides close to \$1 million in funding. The majority of funds will be distributed to students for tuition and stipends as part of the national effort to address the shortage of rehabilitation counselors.

Following three years of planning with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) the MRC Program implemented Project HIGHER. Modeled after a grant funded program through University of Texas Rio Grande, this project is intended as a prototype for other communities nationally and internationally. In partnership with DARS and the El Paso Community College the MRC program provides coaches to students with intellectual disabilities assisting them with the development or fine-tuning of skills to improve their academic success. MRC students are compensated for their efforts. Drs. Schoen and Barnes both serve on this effort.

The program, in collaboration with ReadyOne Industries LLC, launched a stipend program for students completing clinical rotations. Spearheaded by Nidia Escobar, a 2011 program graduate, and Andrew Duffy, the ReadyOne Contract Center Manager, they are providing funding for an average of six clinical rotations per year.

Lastly, the MRC program faculty continued to carry out and disseminate the results of an impressive funded research agenda, engaging students and community organizations in innovative, collaborative studies addressing the needs of veterans, individuals with psychiatric disabilities and severe mental illness and Mexican-migrant women. Additional studies target service delivery within the vocational rehabilitation field. Drs. Schoen, Barnes, Sanchez and Kosyluk serve as leaders in the Rehabilitation Counseling field in carrying out important research that informs clinical practice.

MRC Program Moves with Field towards CACREP Accreditation

Following decades of independent service to the field, the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) is merging with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to provide services that encompasses both accrediting bodies.

During summer 2017 the Master of Rehabilitation Counseling program plans to become a CACREP accredited program. In addition, to meet the upcoming changes to requirements for a providing clinical mental health services, the program will be converting the program from 54 to 60 credit hours. This will address recent trends from both the state of Texas and other major employers including several departments within the Veterans' administration that require or will require that counselors' graduate from a CACREP accredited program.