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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

March 2016

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## From the Dean's Desk



In the first few weeks of Spring, we are celebrating many achievements of our faculty, staff and students at conferences, special events, and in community engagement. We are thrilled to see the recognition of Mariel Matamoros, Ruth Castillo, Eileen Aguilar and Dr. Erin Barnes.

We are also looking forward to the visit of our colleagues from the [University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston- School of Biomedical Informatics](#) who will be launching two new Graduate Certificate programs, specifically

designed for our UTEP alumni and current graduate students. Read below for the dates and times of their presentations.

And then there is some news about ME! I was deeply honored recently to be chosen for induction into the [National Wheelchair Basketball Association Hall of Fame](#), recognizing my work over 30 years as a coach, physical therapist, classification official, researcher and author. The 2016 Hall of Fame inductees will also include the iconic athlete and 4-time Paralympian, Trooper Johnson; sport leader Barbara Radbel, credited with developing and growing the junior division of the NWBA; and a posthumous award to Paralympian and U.S. wheelchair basketball team member, Mary Ann O'Neill.

My history with the NWBA includes voluntary service as a physical therapist on the U.S. Medical Staff team at a number of world and Pan American championships, as well as at the 1988 Seoul and 1992 Barcelona Paralympic Games. In 1993, my interests led me to Amman, Jordan to work with the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped, conducting workshops at several sites across the country on sports medicine and classification for athletes with disabilities who participate in wheelchair basketball. This was among the first of many international development activities, during a 10-year appointment as a board member of the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation. I was selected to serve as a Wheelchair Basketball Classification Official from the USA at both the Atlanta and Sydney Paralympic Games.

I am especially proud of many productive collaborations with students and colleagues, resulting in over 50 research and educational publications on sports medicine issues in athletes with disabilities. Our collective efforts have been able to advance the sport and optimize performance by focusing on the needs of athletes who play wheelchair basketball and other sports.

As we at UTEP celebrate the 50-year anniversary of the historical Texas Western NCAA championship, it reminds me that the impact of sport participation goes so far beyond the court or playing field. In that vein, I want to also recognize all the current and former athletes, coaches, medical staff, supporters, researchers and sport leaders who have contributed so much to the sport and to the lives of those who compete in wheelchair basketball all over the world. We have clearly seen that with a focus on excellence, there is no limit to our potential. Check out the [National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament](#), involving a record 88 teams and 976 athletes, to be held in Louisville, KY, April 7-10, 2016.

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

## Launching the UTEP/UTHealth SBMI Graduate Certificate Programs in Health Informatics and Public Health Informatics

The College of Health Sciences, in collaboration with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston - School of Biomedical Informatics (UTHealth-SBMI), will be launching two 15-semester credit hour graduate certificate programs, one in Health Informatics and one in Public Health Informatics in the Fall, 2016 semester.



Calendar of events

University Honors

**Convocation**

Date: Sunday, April 17, 2016  
Time: 2:00pm  
Location: Memorial Gym

**College of Health Sciences  
Graduation Celebration  
and Hooding Ceremony**

Date: Saturday, May 14,  
2016  
Time: 3:30pm  
Location: Magoffin Auditorium

**University  
Commencement**

Date: Saturday, May 14,  
2016  
Time: 7:00pm  
Location: Don Haskins  
Center

**In the News**

[Health Sciences Dean to  
be Inducted into  
National Wheelchair  
Basketball Association  
Hall of Fame](#)

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Sciences**



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Current graduate students and alumni of our Master of Public Health, Master of Rehabilitation Counseling, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Master of Occupational Therapy, Master of Science in Kinesiology, Master of Social Work and Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology will be eligible to receive course credit for up to two specified courses completed in their UTEP graduate program.

Representatives from UTHealth SBMI will be visiting El Paso on April 13-15, 2016 to hold informational sessions regarding this new opportunity and explaining its benefits for students, alumni and practicing health professionals.

Below are information table and presentation times:

**Wednesday, April 13, 2016**

**\* 4:00 pm - Department of Public Health Sciences Presentation**  
(UTEP Health Sciences/Nursing Bldg., Rm 206)

**Thursday, April 14, 2016**

**\* 9:00 - 11:00 am - Information Table**  
(UTEP Health Sciences/Nursing Bldg., Lobby)  
**\* 11:30 am - College of Health Sciences Presentation**  
(UTEP Health Sciences/Nursing Bldg., Rm 216)  
**\* 2:00 - 4:00 pm - Information Table**  
(UTEP Campbell Bldg., Lobby - 1101 N. Campbell St.)  
**\* 5:30 pm - Students and Alumni Information Session**  
(UTEP Campbell Bldg., Rm [234 - 1101](#) N. Campbell St.)

**Friday, April 15, 2016**

**\* 11:00 am - College of Health Sciences Presentation**  
(UTEP Campbell Bldg., Rm [234 - 1101](#) N. Campbell St.)

**Rehabilitation Counseling Faculty Present at the  
Rehabilitation Psychology Mid-Winter Conference**



The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Rehabilitation Psychology conference, organized by the American Board of Rehabilitation Psychology (ABRP) and Division 22 (Rehabilitation Psychology) of the American Psychological Association (APA), was held in Atlanta, GA from February 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016. Division 22 seeks to maximize health and welfare, independence and choice, functional

abilities, and social role participation for individuals with chronic illness and disability. This year's conference theme was *Rehabilitation Psychology Across the Spectrum of Care*, and attendees included Rehabilitation Psychologists and other allied health professionals (educators, researchers, and clinicians) as well as trainees (students, interns, and postdoctoral fellows) from across the US.

Dr. Jennifer Sánchez (UTEP) in collaboration with Dr. Jessica Brooks (UNT), Dr. Barbara Schoen (UTEP), and Dr. Fong Chan (UW-Madison) presented a poster entitled, "*P x E Mediators of the Relationship Between Functional Disability and Life Satisfaction*." In addition, Dr. Sánchez mentored a doctoral student on another poster entitled, "*Psychometric Validation of an Abbreviated Version of the Acceptance of Disability Scale-Revised for Individuals with Severe Mental Illness*" which was authored by Emre Umucu (doctoral student, UW-Madison), Dr. Sánchez (UTEP), Dr. Schoen (UTEP), Dr. Barnes (UTEP), and Dr. Chan (UW-Madison). The research conducted for both posters were funded in part by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Evidence-Based Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation (RRTC-EBP VR) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Wisconsin-Stout and with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR; Grant H133B100034).

**Health Promotion as a Vocational Rehabilitation**

**Intervention**

The Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies in the College of Nursing and Allied Health at Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA recently held their 28<sup>th</sup> annual symposium. This year's topic was *Strategies for Engaging Individuals with Multiple Marginalized Identities: Ethical Considerations for Improving Vocational Rehabilitation Outcomes*. Leaders and scholars from across the nation presented on different topics, all aimed at improving employment outcomes for those with the most barriers.



For individuals with chronic illness and disability, barriers can include the health or illness itself. Dr. Eboneé Johnson (Southern University), Dr. Chung-Yi Chiu (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), and Dr. Jennifer Sánchez (UTEP) conducted a presentation aimed at exploring and addressing potential ethical issues in incorporating health promotion as a vocational rehabilitation intervention. Attendees included Rehabilitation Counseling students at Southern University, Rehabilitation Counselors in Louisiana, and Rehabilitation researchers and professionals across the US via live webinar.



## MRC Faculty Member Accepted to Prestigious Program at the University of Pennsylvania



Dr. Erin Barnes was selected as one of 18 faculty members across the nation who were invited to participate in the ELEVATE program, conducted by the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions (CMSI). The goal of the project is to advance the professional goals of faculty members at minority serving institutions by equipping them with the support, training, and peer networks that are necessary to sustain a healthy and vibrant career in academia. ELEVATE is a three-day program that focuses on diverse aspects of faculty development, including teaching, mentoring, op-ed writing, networking, design thinking, fundraising, grant writing, forming partnerships, global education, and

developing a cohesive and unified program of research. Fellows, such as Barnes, are funded by the Penn Center, and their academic institutions. The CMSI covers all registration, materials, and meals during the event while the Fellow's academic institution covers travel and hotel costs.

## El Paso Public Health Emergency Preparedness Team

El Paso Public Health Emergency Preparedness Team and Master of Public Health students celebrated the program's national recognition during the Department of Public Health's Annual Open House and Pillars of Public Health Awards. The event took place on Thursday, February 25, 2016, including students from both the Health Promotion and Master of Public Health Programs. Ms. Angela Mora, Deputy Director for the City of El Paso Department of Public Health and Instructor for The University of Texas at El Paso, Department of Public Health Sciences, welcomed the UTEP students to visit more than 30 promotional tables providing information about the different programs offered by the El Paso Public Health Department.

Mariel Matamoros, current UTEP MPH student, and Ruth Castillo former UTEP MPH student, were recognized in the event for their hard work in the field and for encouraging more students to pursue their interests in the field. "It was a great opportunity for students to network!" Juan Aguilera mentioned. Congratulations to all award recipients!



Rosa Ramirez, Andrea Carzoli, Ingrid Simons, Erika Castillo, Narges Kalantarian, Juan Ramirez, Angela Mora, Juan Aguilera, Daniela Marquez, Sarah Saucedo, David Peralta, Ruth Castillo, Vianay Lopez, Mariel Matamoros, Christopher Olivas.

## Eileen Aguilar Named 2016 David C. Wiley Honoree



The Texas Campaign is proud to announce that this year's David C. Wiley Award will be presented to Eileen Aguilar at our upcoming Symposium. Aguilar, the University Wellness Manager at The University of Texas El Paso, is an active member of the El Paso Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition, serving as both the Coalition Chair and Education Chair over the past five years. She is a health promotion expert who has dedicated herself to promoting sexual health and STI prevention to help youth transform into healthy contributing members of the El Paso community. She earned her Bachelor and Master of Science in Health Promotion from The University of Texas at El Paso.

The David C. Wiley Award was created to recognize exceptional individuals who have made remarkable contributions to the field of teen pregnancy prevention in Texas through service, leadership, advocacy, or research. Dedicated individuals across the state work every day to reduce the number of teen pregnancies in Texas. People on the forefront of this work, and those who have dedicated the better part of their careers and lives to ending teen pregnancy deserve gratitude for their achievements. Congratulations on this prestigious recognition!

## National Expert in Vestibular Rehabilitation Coming to UTEP



Helen Cohen, EdD, OT, FAOTA, a national expert in vestibular rehabilitation, vertigo, and balance disorders, will present a workshop (5/20 - 5/21/2016) to El Paso occupational and physical therapists. She is Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery at Baylor College of Medicine. She runs the vestibular rehabilitation service there, and is an NIH, NSF, and NASA-funded researcher. Dr. Cohen received a B.S. in Occupational Therapy from Tufts University, an M.S. and Ed.D. in Motor Learning from Columbia University, and is a recipient of the Eleanor Slagle Lectureship of 2015, the highest

honor bestowed to an occupational therapist.

## UTEP MRC Program Offers Life-Changing Education through Service Learning

The MRC Program is in its eighth week of providing very important, vocational rehabilitation services to residents at the Opportunity Center for the Homeless. The services extended to the residents incorporate two critical aspects of treatment: individual counseling and job training. Supervised by Dr. Erin Barnes, a Licensed Professional Counselor Intern, the students conducted a battery of assessments with the residents during the first few weeks of the experience. Using this information, they then developed weekly treatment plans to address any barriers to employment that the client may have, especially barriers that pertain to his or her disability. The students also comprehensively assessed the client's interests and work values, and identified job leads for the clients based on that information.

The second component of the experience surrounds job training. The participants work with Dr. Barnes to learn how to launch their own e-commerce venture, as a way generate income. Dr. Barnes meets with the participants for 3 hours twice a month to teach them how to sell items on eBay. She also evaluates their work skills (strengths and limitations) using a work personality inventory, and communicates the information to the student counselors who then revise their treatment plans in order to integrate the data into therapy.

The project has been positively received, and other organizations have expressed interests in replicating this two-pronged approach to vocational rehabilitation with their clientele. During the summer of 2016, the team will focus their efforts at the PRIDE center, an agency that serves transition-aged youth who are transitioning out of the foster care system. The project has already experienced success with the Opportunity Center clients, and is also proud to report that two of the six participants who originally started the project are now gainfully employed. The project's graduation ceremony will be held on May 10.

Please know that the project is accepting donated items for the clients to sell. If anyone is interested in donating new and unused items to the project, please contact Dr. Barnes.



MRC Program students Elizabeth Gandarilla, Stephany Martinez, and Maggie Garcia work with their client.