TTUHSC SOM celebrates 40 years

In 1972, 25 juniors and 36 freshmen enrolled in the Texas Tech School of Medicine; in 2007, the school enrolled 550 students.

Champion joins Perry SON
Jane Champion, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., recently joined the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing at Highland Lakes. Champion has received many competitive grants from the National Institutes of Health and the British Medical Research Council. Her research focuses on domestic violence, STDs, Rural Health and Bicultural Studies.

Hendrix to serve on Mayo board
Ericka Hendrix, M.S., CLSp, instructor, SOAHS Clinical Laboratory Sciences Department, will serve on the Mayo Clinic's Laboratory Educational Advisory Board. The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences requires all laboratory education programs to have a board to review the curriculum with regard to relevancy and effectiveness.

For 40 years the TTUHSC School of Medicine has educated physicians to provide quality patient care for residents of West Texas and beyond.

This month, the school will commemorate this milestone with a series of celebrations including a formal dinner and a special presentation at an upcoming Texas Tech football game.

The School of Medicine was created when the 61st Legislature passed Texas House Bill No. 498 in 1969. The bill was then signed into law by former Gov. Preston Smith.

At that time, there was only one physician for every 1,300 residents or more across the region.

In 1970, John Buesseler, M.D., was appointed as the school’s founding dean. The school officially opened in 1972 in Drane Hall on the Texas Tech University Campus.

Since the school was established, it has graduated more than 2,700 physicians. In fact, more than 20 percent of the practicing physicians in the area have graduated from the school and/or residency programs, and there is now one physician for every 750 people on the South Plains.

The freshman Texas Tech School of Medicine Class of 1972 outside of Drane Hall on the Texas Tech University campus. The School of Medicine was first housed in the women's residence hall. The dorm's dining room served as the dissecting laboratory.

You can now follow TTUHSC on twitter.
TTUHSC officially breaks ground on SimLife Center

Demolition is now complete for the new interdisciplinary clinical simulation center on the west side first floor of the TTUHSC Lubbock campus.

Last year, longtime Texas Tech supporter Marie Hall gave a major gift allocated for the establishment of the F. Marie Hall SimLife Center -- an educational clinical laboratory that will promote safe, quality patient care through innovative simulation technologies.

Sharon Decker, Ph.D., R.N., director of Clinical Simulations at the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing and Covenant Health System Endowed Chair in Simulation and Nursing Education, will co-direct the center with a faculty member from the School of Medicine.

The 26,000-square-foot facility will be open to students from all schools at TTUHSC and will feature simulation instruction areas including primary and acute care, a standardized patient program, human-patient simulation, and virtual reality and 3D visualization.

The grand opening for the center is set for September 2010.

(Above) Preliminary blueprints of the F. Marie Hall SimLife center, located on the west side first floor of TTUHSC Lubbock, will be a 26,000-square-foot interdisciplinary educational clinical laboratory housing state-of-the-art patient simulators and other equipment.

Community Medical School fall 2009 begins this month

The fourth semester of Community Medical School will kick off at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 8 in Academic Classroom Building 100 with a presentation from visiting lecturer, Dominick DePaola, D.D.S., Ph.D., academic dean, Nova Southeastern University, College of Dental Medicine. DePaola will discuss how oral infections can affect a person’s overall health.

Other exciting topics this semester include influenza, body piercing and tattooing, macular degeneration and a presentation from Edmund D. Pellegrino, M.D., Professor Emeritus of Medicine and medical ethics and adjunct professor of philosophy at Georgetown University. Pellegrino is the chair of President Barack Obama’s Council on Bioethics.

Community Medical School is a series of public lectures and demonstrations exploring transformative advances in medical knowledge and technology. Courses are open to all, regardless of background or experience — from high school students to senior citizens.

For more information about Community Medical School or to register, visit www.ttuhscc.edu/communitymedicalschool, or call 743-2008. Registration is free for
TTUHSC Cancer Committee to address research funding

Douglas Stocco, Ph.D., executive vice president for research, recently asked several TTUHSC faculty members to serve on the TTUHSC Cancer Committee. The primary function of this committee is to interface between the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas and research faculty at each school concerning efforts to attain funding for cancer research.

C. Patrick Reynolds, Ph.D., M.D., professor of cell biology and biochemistry in the School of Medicine, will chair this committee and will work with Stocco to call the first meeting. Others asked to serve on the committee are: Chandice Covington, Ph.D., P.N.P. (BC), FAAN, professor and Florence Thelma Hall Endowed Chair for Nursing Excellence in Women’s Health in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing; Quenton Smith, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Pharmacy, Amarillo; Guillermo Altenberg, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Physiology, School of Medicine; Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy, Ph.D., assistant professor of biomedical sciences at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine; Jon Weidanz, Ph.D., associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences, School of Pharmacy, Abilene.

The committee is still seeking a representative from the Permian Basin.

School of Medicine Class of 2013 receives first white coats

Students from the School of Medicine Class of 2013 recently donned their first white coats at the annual White Coat Ceremony.

New medical students this year include 38 from the West Texas area, 33 from Texas Tech University, and others are from other top universities such as Brigham Young University, Boston University, University of California, Los Angeles and Pepperdine University.

Two Perry SON faculty selected for prestigious professorships

Alyce Ashcraft, R.N., Ph.D., C.S., associate professor, and Barbara Cherry, DNSc, M.B.A., R.N., department chair for Leadership Studies in the Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing, were recently selected for the Roberts Endowed Practicesship in Gerontological Nursing and the Mildred and Shirley L. Garrison Professorship in Geriatric Nursing, respectively.

Ashcraft’s commitment to research in aging has been demonstrated by multiple funded grants for improvement of outcomes in nursing home and long term care. She has been honored as an Outstanding Faculty at TTUHSC and received the TTUHSC Young Investigator Award. She was selected as a National Institute of Health/National Institute of Aging Summer Institute Fellow.

Currently, Ashcraft leads an interdisciplinary team formed with Carillon Education Foundation conducting research aimed at improving the quality of life of Carillon House residents.

Cherry has established funding for the Perry School of Nursing’s Senior House Calls program and sustained the Geriatric Education and Training Academy. She also has completed research on the use of technology and electronic health records in nursing homes, the effects of long-term care regulatory environment on job satisfaction and served as a facilitator for Sears-Methodist Retirement System’s “Best Practices Team” to evaluate their dementia care model.
Staff Senate results

Congratulations to the 2009-2010 Staff Senators.

Four senators per campus were chosen for Amarillo, El Paso, Lubbock and the Permian Basin; two representing exempt status and two representing non-exempt status. Two were chosen to represent all other Distance Sites; one representing exempt and one representing non-exempt:

► Amarillo: Tanya Fraley, Linda Goldstein, Dana Stommel, Alicia Stringer
► Distant Sites: Mikeal Nall, Kayla Talbott
► El Paso: Erica Ortega, Patricia Rodriguez, Lorena Medrano, Gabriel Valles
► Lubbock: Tim Hayes, Anna Herring, Rich Cartwright, Patricia Lynn Tatum
► Permian Basin: Janet Killan, Tina Leal, Deborah Christensen, Natasha Mosee

Staff Senate Alternates:

► Amarillo: Jackie Gavlik
► Distant Sites: Fred Stegner
► El Paso: Hortencia Romero, Andrew Contreras
► Lubbock: Matt Driskill, Sophia Pena
► Permian Basin: Judy Harden, Cynthia Hernandez

The new senate has regularly-scheduled meetings from noon to 1:30 p.m. (CT) on the second Friday of each month.

The next meeting is Sept. 11. Issues should be sent to senators at the appropriate site. Check the Staff Senate Web site for the senators’ exempt/non-exempt designation.

Perry SON receives scholarship funds to expand nursing pipeline

The Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing recently received $300,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through the New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program. This national initiative, launched by RWJF and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, aims to help alleviate the nation’s nursing shortage and increase the diversity of nursing professionals.

The grant will provide 30 scholarships in the amount of $10,000 each for Perry School of Nursing Second Degree Program students beginning this month. Last year, the school was awarded $150,000 for these scholarships.

Award preference is given to students from groups underrepresented in nursing or from disadvantaged backgrounds. Grant funding also will be used by the Perry School of Nursing to help leverage new faculty resources and provide mentoring and leadership development to ensure successful program completion by scholarship recipients.

Six students randomly selected for $500 scholarships

One student from each school was recently selected at random to receive a $500 scholarship for completing the Interprofessional Teamwork Perceptions Scale, a tool used to measure student perceptions toward interprofessional teamwork in the health care industry.

The scale will be used extensively at TTUHSC over the next five years to measure one component of the institution’s Quality Enhancement Plan, which is an accreditation requirement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

More than 800 students, faculty and alumni completed the Interprofessional Teamwork Perceptions Scale in July. At that time, students who completed the scale were allowed to enter to win a scholarship.

The scholarship winners are: Kaci Bohn, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; Jami Barnard, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine; Amanda Anguish, School of Allied Health Sciences; Christopher White, School of Medicine; Kristin Anderson, Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing; and Julie Leighton, School of Pharmacy.

TTUHSC faculty members recognized for promoting teamwork

Several faculty members were recently honored as Faculty Champions for promoting the interaction of doctors, nurses, researchers, allied health professionals and pharmacists to provide quality, individualized patient care.

Also called interprofessional teamwork, this interaction is a component of accreditation -- the Quality Enhancement Plan, an initiative by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to enhance overall quality and effectiveness by focusing on issues important to improving student learning.

TTUHSC’s Faculty Champions are: Lorenz Lutherer, M.D., Ph.D., Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; David Straus, Ph.D., Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; Herb Janssen, Ph.D., Paul L. Foster School of Medicine; Barbara Sawyer, Ph.D., School of Allied Health Sciences; Bonna Benjamin, M.D., School of Medicine, Amarillo; Suzanne Escudier, M.D., School of Medicine; Cindy Acton, R.N., D.N.P., NEA-BC, Anita Thigpen Perry School of Nursing.
Taylor appointed to CAATE committee

LesLee Taylor, Ph.D., A.T.C., L.A.T., associate professor and director of the Master of Athletic Training program in the School of Allied Health Sciences, was recently appointed to the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) Review Team Committee.

The CAATE is responsible for the accreditation of 360 professional (entry-level) athletic training educational programs throughout the country.

The MAT program was recently re-accredited by CAATE for the maximum 10 years.

The program will be up for re-accreditation during the 2018-2019 cycle.

Cancer institute OKs rural health project

The Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas recently approved $165,891 in funding for the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health project, Cancer Nutrition Network for Texans.

The Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas is the state agency mandated to create and expedite innovation in the area of cancer research and in enhancing the potential for a medical or scientific breakthrough in the prevention of cancer and cures for cancer.

Eat lunch with TTP Pediatrics, support diabetes research

Texas Tech Physicians Pediatrics will host a fundraising lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 15 at the Southwest Clinic located at Quaker Avenue and South Loop 289.

Attendees may enjoy a hot dog, chips and drink for $2. All proceeds will benefit the American Diabetes Association’s annual Step Out: Walk to Fight Diabetes on Sept. 26 at Mackenzie Park, 600 Broadway. Donations also are greatly appreciated.

The lunch is sponsored by Atmos Energy and Wienserschnitzel.

Step Out: Walk to Fight Diabetes is the American Diabetes Association’s signature fundraising walk, according to the organization’s Web site. The event raises more than $20 million to find a cure for diabetes and to support the American Diabetes Association’s mission to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by the disease.

For more information about Step Out: Walk to Fight Diabetes, visit the American Diabetes Association’s Web site or call the local ADA office at 794-0691.

Loveless joins TTP Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Alita Loveless, M.D. has joined Texas Tech Physicians Southwest Obstetrics/Gynecology Associates and the faculty of TTUHSC Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Loveless graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science from Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. She received her medical degree in 2005 and completed her residency in 2009 both at TTUHSC.

Loveless is an active candidate for the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She enjoys the surgical aspect of her field, and has an interest in gynecologic oncology.

New telemedicine Project CHART launches in Stratford

The F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health recently launched Project CHART, Children’s Healthcare Access in Rural Texas, TTUHSC’s newest network of health care for children in rural Texas.

The first patient consult for a child was completed in Stratford, a small town more than an hour away from Amarillo.

Project CHART is funded by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and in the next 26 months will establish 29 additional sites to expand and study access to pediatric primary and specialty care for Medicaid enrolled children in rural communities throughout the 108 most western counties in Texas.

TTP Lubbock employees honored at inaugural retreat

(From left) Cristi Cline, director of performance management for the School of Medicine (Innovator of the Year), Kathleen McPherson, clinic office manager for the Department of Dermatology (Red Raider Recognition Award), Lane Beasley, senior clinical department manager for the Department of Surgery (Administrator of the Year), and Shalene Vick, director of School of Medicine administration (Director of the Year).
New SOM researchers quickly make their marks

Several new recruits to the School of Medicine Department of Cell Physiology and Molecular Biology have had research papers accepted for publication.

Assistant professors Lan Guan, Ph.D., and Pablo Artigas, Ph.D., will each be published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, one of the most influential scientific journals in the country.

Guan shares coauthorship on “A 3-D structure model of the melibiose permease of Escherichia coli represents a distinctive fold for Na+ symporters” with her colleague, postdoctoral fellow Mohammad S. Yousef, Ph.D. Artigas’ paper, “Altered Na+ transport after an intracellular α-subunit deletion reveals strict external sequential release of Na+ from the Na/K pump,” is co-authored with his students, Siddhartha Yaragatupalli and J. Fernando Olivera, along with collaborator Craig Gatto, Ph.D., of Illinois State University.

Associate Professor Bryan Sutton, Ph.D., will have his research paper “Structural mapping of post-translational modifications in human interleukin-24: The role of N-linked glycosylation and disulfide bonds in secretion and activity,” published in The Journal of Biological Chemistry. The journal is the premier outlet for biochemical studies. Sutton’s colleague and postdoctoral fellow, Kerry Fuson, Ph.D., also appears as one of the authors.

SOM students excel on national exam

The School of Medicine Class of 2011 achieved a 99 percent pass rate on the United States Medical Licensing Examination 1 (USMLE).

Out of the 127 students who have already taken the exam, 126 have passed. Ten students have yet to take the exam. The mean pass rate for medical schools throughout the country is 92 percent.

Last year, the school’s pass rate was 100 percent. In 2005, the school’s pass rate was 82 percent – it has risen incrementally ever since.