

CAMPUS Connection

VOL 7 • NO 3
APRIL 2004

UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER at Fort Worth

Campaign giving tops 50 percent

At the close of April 2, the last official day of the employee phase of the Campus Pride Campaign, the health science center had garnered not only a record number of faculty and staff donors, but also a name for its newest building.

Just over half of health science center employees – 585 individuals, 50.3 percent, to be exact – have contributed to the finish-out of the Center for BioHealth, the official name for the new building announced by Ronald Blanck, DO, president, during Research Appreciation Day.

“We are deeply appreciative of this record-breaking and extraordinary response, which will send a powerful message to our community and encourage others to invest in our growth,” said Cheryl Kimberling, PhD, vice president for institutional advancement.

“When we solicit support to help complete and equip this center from individuals outside our health science center and from corporations and foundations, the level of support from our own health science center family will add strength to those funding requests,” she said. “For this project, and future projects, internal support of this kind will be a necessity in competing successfully for gifts and grants.”

Dr. Kimberling said that most employee donors chose to have a paving brick engraved with his or her name and that most of those bricks will be installed by the end of May. A grand opening for the building, which will include a recognition of donors, is tentatively set for August or September to coincide with the beginning of the academic year. Upcoming student and retiree campaigns, which will also offer brick pavers as part of their donor recognition programs, should be completed by then, Dr. Kimberling said. Appeals to the community and foundations will continue throughout the year.



The view of the new Center for BioHealth from the Kimbell Art Museum lawn.

Tribute bricks are also now available to both internal and external donors who would like to celebrate a special occasion, memorialize a loved one or honor a special individual, Dr. Kimberling said. For a donation of \$100 to the building campaign, an organization or an individual donor can specify a name to be engraved either “in memory of” or “in honor

of” on a paver. More information about giving in tribute to this project and special forms to do so will be available later this month.

But for now, Dr. Kimberling said, the focus is on “saying thank you, thank you, thank you, to all the employees who contributed and to the 18 Campus Pride Campaign captains who led the initiative. It’s been so exciting to track responses daily and to see participation grow percentage point by percentage point. We should all take great pride in our achievement.”

For more information or to make a contribution to the health science center’s new Center for BioHealth, call institutional advancement at ext. 2445. ★

Campus Briefs

DOs and osteopathic medical students will travel to Washington, D.C., for **DO Day on Capitol Hill** April 15. Participants will meet that morning to receive briefing materials and advocacy training before traveling to Capitol Hill to educate members of Congress about the osteopathic medical profession and discuss the effects of pending healthcare legislation on DOs and their patients. For more information about the health science center's plans, e-mail Sarah Hicks via GroupWise.

Come cheer on our amateur comedians, musicians, poets, singers and other entertainers at **Open Mic Night** April 14 from 8-10 p.m. in the Stairway Café. Talented performers are still needed, so visit Rynn Sloan or Bobbie Ann Adair in the Student Development Office (EAD-116F) to sign up or call ext. 5006 for more information. The

first five people to sign up for Open Mic Night will receive a prize. Everyone is welcome to perform and come to the show. Four Star Coffee Bar will be serving coffee during the performance.

The health science center's medical group launched a **new phone queue** last month. The new automated system features a variety of options for callers to choose from, including directions, prescription refills and requests for medical records, to name a few. Physicians who call the health science center's clinics also have new options to choose from. The new system will improve customer service by helping both physicians and patients quickly find the information they need, said Robert Adams, DO, senior associate dean for clinical affairs. The new queue also provides commonly requested information, such as fax numbers and directions, so

CAMPUS Connection

Campus Connection is produced 10 times a year by the Office of Institutional Advancement, Division of Communications & Marketing, UNT Health Science Center, 3500 Camp Bowie Blvd., EAD-332, Fort Worth, Texas 76107, (817) 735-5023.

Please address all inquiries or complaints to April Eubanks, editor.

Thanks to departments and student groups around campus for their continued commitment to contributing to Campus Connection. Special thanks to Jenny Cureton, Heather Cohen, Tommy Hawkes, Carla Lee, Jennifer Martin, Tony Martinez and Janet Zipperlen. Without their involvement this publication would not be possible.

the customer service representatives can spend more time assisting patients. ★

GSBS launches "G-Force" to mentor high school students

The Office of Outreach in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences is establishing a new student-led group called the "G-Force" to mentor Fort Worth high school students from Northside and Dunbar high schools, thanks to a grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Only 5 percent of Texas' population is currently enrolled in higher education institutions, according to the coordinating board. As participation in higher education decreases, so will annual household income, by an estimated \$30 to \$40 billion by 2030.

To encourage 300,000 additional students to pursue higher education, particularly Hispanics, African-Americans and those from low-income families, the coordinating board developed a program called "Closing the Gaps." Its aim is to help parents and students understand the importance of higher

education and how to prepare for it academically and financially.

Project GO comprises the university-based G-Force and the GO Centers located in local high schools. The G-Force, made up of university students and college-bound high school students, will mentor middle and high school students and help them develop future educational plans, said Robert Kaman, JD, PhD, director of outreach and associate dean of the graduate school.

"We are the only health science center in Texas to have a GO Center," Dr. Kaman said. "This is further evidence of our leadership in reaching out to minority students. In fact, we have received almost \$7 million in training funds for minority outreach."

The health science center will start a GO Center in each high school, where graduate students will mentor

high school students, who will in turn mentor children in middle school, Dr. Kaman said. The project will focus on first-generation college students, especially African Americans and Hispanics.

The program will be launched this semester and will last until June 2005. The goal is to have 10 students participate so the G-Force can be recognized as an official university organization, Dr. Kaman said.

"We are blessed with students who, despite their busy schedules, are committed to reaching out to students who are in the same place they were," Dr. Kaman said. "Students who visit our campus are more excited about going to college and graduate school than those who don't. Seeing a university 'live' can help motivate students to pursue higher education."

For more information about the program, visit www.gocenter.info. ★

Celebrate commencement with the Class of 2004

Albert Hawkins, MPA, health and human services commissioner for the State of Texas and former White House senior staff member, will deliver the keynote address at the health science center's commencement ceremony May 15.

Hawkins, named health and human services commissioner by Governor Perry in January 2003, oversees the operations of 11 state agencies with about 50,000 employees and a total annual budget of \$17 billion. The HHSC provides leadership and strategic guidance to the health and human services system in Texas, under the direction of the governor.

Prior to leading the commission, Hawkins served as assistant to the president and secretary to the Cabinet for two years. In this senior White House staff position, Hawkins served as the liaison between the White House and the president's Cabinet.

During Governor Bush's presidential campaign, Hawkins was deputy campaign manager. His responsibilities included financial planning, strategic management of campaign resources and assisting in policy development.

Hawkins has received numerous awards, including the 2004 Bob Bullock Award for Outstanding Public Stewardship at the Government Tech-

nology Conference and the 2001 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin.

Hawkins received his bachelor's degree and his master's of public affairs from The University of Texas at Austin.

Rehearsal is at 9 a.m., and students and family hooders must attend. Graduates and faculty will assemble in exhibit hall E&F prior to the 2 p.m. ceremony. The President's Reception will also take place in this exhibit hall.

Garage parking is \$6, and free parking is available on the street. The convention center is located at 1201 Houston Street in downtown Fort Worth. ★



Health Action AIDS Week

Charu Sawhney, TCOM 2006 and president of the American Medical Student Association, and other members of the TCOM chapter of AMSA joined thousands of students in the health professions across the country March 29-April 2 in a national week of education and action on global HIV/AIDS. With 8,200 deaths and 15,000 new infections each day, the AIDS pandemic is the most devastating crisis in the history of human health. Sawhney organized several educational events at the health science center, including a screening of the AIDS documentary "A Closer Walk," and luncheons with speakers who discussed the global impact of AIDS, the epidemiology of AIDS and current treatments for the disease. The Health Action AIDS Campaign seeks to mobilize health professionals to support a comprehensive AIDS

strategy and advocate for the estimated \$3.5 billion needed to combat the disease, while developing ways for health professionals in the United States to support health workers and activists around the world.

Top photo: Betsy George (left), TCOM 2007, tied red ribbons on trees around the health science center in observance of Health Action AIDS Week. Charu Sawhney, TCOM 2006, displays brochures about HIV/AIDS that she shared with health science center faculty, staff and students.

Bottom photo: Elvin Adams, MD, a specialist in AIDS medicine from the Tarrant County Health Department, discussed current treatments and HIV/AIDS research at a luncheon March 31.

Kudos to...

Lynley Dungan, information technology services, on the birth of her 6-pound, 7-ounce baby boy, Graham Watson. He was born Feb. 25.

Kenneth and Diana Dunn, of facilities management and pharmacy respectively, on the arrival of Joseph Harold Franklin March 1. He weighed 7 pounds, 1 ounce.

Janice Knebl, DO, MBA; Craig Spellman, DO, PhD; and Ray Page, DO, PhD, TCOM/GSBS 1991, all of internal medicine, for being named "2004 Health Care Heroes" by the *Fort Worth Business Press*. **Dr. Knebl** also received the 2004 James Pattee Award for Excellence in Education from the American Medical Directors' Association at their annual meeting March 4-7 in Phoenix, Ariz.

Celena Guzman, quality management, on the birth of her 7-pound, 14-ounce baby boy, Michael Anthony, March 3.

Eric Lawrence, TCOM 2006, for winning the UAAO Convocation T-shirt design contest, which was a national contest between all the osteopathic medical schools. His design will be used for this year's convention T-shirt.

Terry Morgan, facilities management, for being named the 2006 THECB Facilities Conference committee chair by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The conference will be hosted by the health science center. **Morgan** was also appointed to two THECB work groups that will look at Standards and Clinical Space Model Review.

Judy Sager, president's office, on being asked to be a juror for Rep. Kay Granger's Congressional Art Competition in May. ★

Driving simulators help keep seniors safe

By the year 2030, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65, according to the American Medical Association. As a result, the safety of older drivers is becoming a growing public health issue and gaining increasing attention from the medical community.

To help address this issue, the department of internal medicine now has a driving simulator that can be used to test seniors and determine if they are able to drive safely.

"The simulators test patients' ability to drive in a variety of conditions, such as traffic, time of day and weather conditions," said psychologist James Hall, PhD, associate professor of internal medicine. "They are the same devices traditionally used to help teens learn to drive."

For seniors, driving instills a sense of independence, Dr. Hall said, and not being able to drive makes it a challenge for seniors to accomplish basic needs, like traveling to health care appointments and grocery shopping.

"Families who are concerned about a senior's driving often need an unbiased outside party to discuss driving with their loved ones," Dr. Hall said.

"It's hard to talk to someone you're close to about issues dealing with their independence.

"Also, the simulators will allow us to have some quantitative information to share with seniors so they can see for themselves exactly how they did," he said.

Dr. Hall said the program is determining how to most effectively use the simulator and neurocognitive testing to evaluate driving in the elderly. The research will be used to develop clinical applications that will be available in the near future.

He said the first step in the program is to develop some baselines that can be used later for comparison of patients' scores.

Dr. Hall said he would like to recruit about 150 healthy seniors ages 65 and older to help develop the norms. The evaluation will take about an hour and a half and will consist of a brief cognitive evaluation to test thinking, memory and decision-making.

Participants will also spend about 45 minutes using the driving simulator. The tests are free, and individual scores are confidential. To volunteer, call 817-735-2334. ★

Tell us about yourselves!

We would like to include more stories in *Campus Connection* like the one on page 6 about HSC's "angel" in the sky, Robert Kaman, who flies cancer patients to medical appointments in his own plane.

Let us know about other interesting campus personalities so we can share their stories with the campus community. Send an e-mail to the News Office via GroupWise.

SPH creates program to train medical interpreters

Healthcare providers in Tarrant County are struggling to provide effective services to the growing Spanish-speaking community but find that they often lack the resources. In response to this problem, the School of Public Health is launching a new master's concentration to train and educate leaders in the field of medical interpreting.

The program will advance the fields of health communication and medical interpreting, facilitate health care access, and decrease health disparities, said concentration director Holly Jacobson, PhD, research assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences.

"The new concentration, Health Interpreting and Health Applied Linguistics (HIHAL), is a step in the right direction toward developing truly adequate and effective language services in healthcare settings," Dr. Jacobson said.

The HIHAL concentration is the only program in the United States to prepare students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and interests to assume positions as professional health interpreters, linguistic researchers and leaders in the field of health applied linguistics, she said.

"Most medical interpreting programs that currently exist provide 40 hours or less of very basic classroom training, which isn't nearly enough for preparing competent interpreters," Dr. Jacobson explained. "The use of interpreters without adequate training has a direct, negative impact on patient care because they lack crucial knowledge about the interaction that occurs between doctors and patients of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds."

HIHAL students will explore the interrelationship between language and

health and will delve into the complex relationship that exists between language and disease. They will receive extensive training as health interpreters and in some cases as health writers and translators.

"Thanks to the support of collaborating healthcare providers in Tarrant County, the program provides a rich environment for interpreter training and research and opportunities for thesis topics that are not readily available in other linguistics programs," Dr. Jacobson said.

Students going through the HIHAL program are expected to complete 200 hours of interpreting hours at collaborating healthcare provider sites, including clinics of Planned Parenthood of North Texas, Mental Health Mental Retardation of Tarrant County, the American Cancer Society, Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine and Osteopathic Health Systems of Texas, and JPS Health Network.

Currently, the languages covered in the program are limited to English and Spanish.

The first group of HIHAL students will begin coursework this summer or fall. Admissions materials are currently being accepted, and scholarships are available for a limited number of qualified applicants. For information, visit <http://www.healthsciencecenter.unt.edu/education/sph/social.cfm> or contact Dr. Jacobson at ext. 2365 or via e-mail at hables@healthsciencecenter.unt.edu.

Development of the HIHAL curriculum is funded by a grant from "Hablamos Juntos: Improving Patient-Provider Communication for Latinos," an initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. ★

In the News

Martin Weiss, DO, professor of internal medicine, was named director of the Cardiology Center of Excellence for JPS Health Network. The *Star-Telegram*, *Fort Worth Business Press* and *Dallas Business Journal* reported the news.

Ximena Urrutia-Rojas, DrPH, assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences, discussed the problem of obesity in children with the *Star-Telegram* March 4.

Joseph Warren, PhD, assistant director, and **Stephen Gammon**, technical administrator, both of the DNA Identity Lab, commented on the success of the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) in solving cold cases in the *Star-Telegram* March 14.

2004 Health Care Heroes **Janice Knebl, DO, MBA**, and **Craig Spellman, DO, PhD**, both of internal medicine, and **Ray Page, DO, PhD**, TCOM/GSBS 1991 and adjunct associate professor of internal medicine, were profiled in the Feb. 19 issue of the *Fort Worth Business Press* as part of the award.

Francisco Soto Mas, PhD, MD, assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences, was interviewed on Radio Caracol, a Spanish radio station in Florida, about a paper that was published in a Spanish public health journal. **Dr. Soto Mas** was also quoted in the Spanish newspapers *El Periódico* and *El Mundo*.

Michael Forster, PhD, professor of pharmacology and neuroscience, discussed the debate about whether or not caloric restriction can improve the health of individuals of advanced age in an article in *Science* magazine. ★

HSC faculty member gives hope wings

Those who know Robert Kaman JD, PhD, can tell you that he is no stranger to community service or to aviation.

After all, Dr. Kaman, associate dean and director of outreach for the graduate school and associate professor of health management and policy, has received countless awards for his philanthropic work in the Fort Worth community, and aviation has filled a large portion of Dr. Kaman's life.

The pictures and models adorning the walls of his office reflect his love of aviation. Dr. Kaman has been flying for 15 years and owns his own plane. He said he flies as much as possible and has flown for many professional societies throughout the years, but one organization in particular combines his avid interest in aviation and his true giving spirit: Angel Flight.

Angel Flight is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit, grassroots organization dedicated to providing financially disadvantaged cancer patients with free medical air transportation. It is the largest charitable air transportation organization in the world and the largest volunteer pilot organization in the United States.

Its volunteer corps of more than 5,000 private, general aviation pilots provide flights of hope and healing by transporting cancer patients and their families free of charge to hospitals for medical treatment.

The Angel Flight America Network is divided into six regions covering North America. The pilots from all regions fly under the banner of Angel Flight America. The organization handles more than 20,000 transportation requests, or "missions," annually, and in 2002, they flew more than 25,000 passengers on 11,000 flights.

Dr. Kaman said Angel Flight gives pilots a positive reason for flying and gives back to the community at the same time. "Angel Flight is by far the best experience I've had as a pilot," he said.



Dr. Kaman spends his free time flying cancer patients to their medial treatments in his CESSNA Turbo 210 plane for Angel Flight, an organization that provides free transportation for financially disadvantaged cancer patients.

He discovered the organization a year and a half ago while coordinating the Fort Worth Air Show and immediately became a member. Since then, he has been flying cancer patients of all ages in his personal plane, a 34-year-old CESSNA Turbo 210 that weighs two tons and comfortably seats four people.

He said he spends at least two weekends per month flying for Angel Flight, and missions usually last about three hours.

Dr. Kaman said his fellow Angel Flight pilots are caring, compassionate individuals from all walks of life and professions who either own their own aircraft or rent aircraft for use in serving needy patients.

To fly for Angel Flight, pilots must meet minimum experience requirements and federal Aviation Administration proficiency requirements, have a current medical certificate, and maintain aircraft liability insurance. Pilots also undergo continuous training seminars.

Each pilot donates his or her time and pays for the entire expense of the

missions. On average, it costs more than \$100 per hour just to fly. Mission costs can include but are not limited to fuel, landing fees and the standard operational maintenance costs of the aircraft.

Dr. Kaman said his favorite experiences with the organization have been connecting and building a rapport with patients. He fondly recalled one of his favorite missions transporting a little girl with abdominal cancer. "She was so intrigued by the plane and excited about the flight," he said. "I'll always remember taking her and her mom to lunch near the airport."

In addition to flying missions, Dr. Kaman recruits other pilots to volunteer for Angel Flight. He said volunteer pilots are always needed because patient transport numbers are steadily increasing at a rate of at least 25 percent a year.

"There's no better way to help another than to give hope wings," Dr. Kaman said.

For more information, visit <http://www.angel-flight.org/>. ★

School of Public Health

SPH students spend Spring Break along the Texas/Mexico border

Spring break was a trip – at least for a group of nine students from the School of Public Health.

Claudia Coggin, PhD, CHES, assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences, and Terry Gratton, DrPH, assistant professor of environmental and occupational health, took their annual jaunt with this spring's Texas/Mexico Border Health Issues class to the area around Laredo along the Rio Grande River in south Texas.

The combined community health and environmental course was developed to expose students to international health issues on the U.S./Mexico border, including cultural diversity; water and wastewater treatment; air and water pollution; and zoonotic, acute infectious and chronic disease control.

This educational experience is made possible every year through a partnership with the South Texas Environmental Education and Research Center, a program that works to unite medicine and public health.

Seasoned public health instructors and practitioners took students on eye-opening tours of the *colonias* (rural areas near the border that lack adequate infrastructure and typically have high poverty rates), allowing them to see personally the living conditions, water and air quality, and vehicle and foot traffic of these areas.

Tours were also given at local plants, like the Laredo Waste Water Treatment Plant and the Caterpillar Plant in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, where students had a chance to watch a *maquiladora* (American-owned assembly factory) in active operation.

The students also visited Lamar Bruni Vergara Education Center, a women's center started by Sister Rose-



SPH student Sara Hossman talks to water quality expert Jim Vaughn, PhD, about water quality testing along the Rio Grande.

mary of the Convent of Sisters of Mercy. The center offers regular classes on self-esteem, computer skills and career development to victims of domestic abuse.

Experts in medicinal plants, such as herbalist Tony Ramirez, and water quality testing, such as Jim Vaughn, PhD, from Texas A&M, also talked to the students. Other topics discussed during the weeklong trip were import/export practices, wildlife services, and border and immigration issues.

Public health students Shimona Bhatia, Isabel Espinosa, Elizabeth George, Sara Hossman, Kim McGee, Anila Nanji, Carla Pezzia, Mary Schimmoller and Erin Tompkins participated in this year's trip.

"Being able to see firsthand the

differences in healthcare services, access to care, working conditions, health beliefs and the environmental concerns of communities on the border were lessons that cannot be taught in the classroom," Hossman said.

The goal of the course is to demonstrate the importance of cultural sensitivity and cultural competency when practicing public health in a multicultural environment.

"The issues that border residents face are not confined to the border; they reach elsewhere through the effects of immigration policies, taxes for programs, and more," Hossman said. "Meeting the community members, children and health professionals who live in this area made the realities they face each day a reality for all of us who spent time with them." ★

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

GSBS students inducted into prestigious research society

Each year, the Graduate Council nominates students to associate membership in Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society to recognize outstanding achievement in research. This year's nominees are Joel Ellis, Eric Gonzales, Jae Kyung Lee, Anson Pierce and Swapnil Vaidya.

Nominations were solicited from graduate faculty members, approved by the Graduate Council and forwarded to the national Committee on Qualifications and Membership for final approval. Recipients will be honored at the Graduate Student Association's annual awards banquet in May.

Ellis received his master's degree at the health science center and continued into the doctoral program in biomedical sciences. His research is in the field of cardiac molecular biology and genetic training, specifically addressing research problems concerning nuclear signal transduction cascades in the regulation of Class II repression mechanisms in the adult rat heart.

He has published one first author manuscript and is co-author of a manuscript that will be submitted to the *Journal of the National Academy of Science*. Ellis was selected to speak at the National Meeting of the American



Joel Ellis

Heart Association's Scientific Sessions in November. Two years ago, his poster was selected as one of the best presentations at the World Congress of the International Society for Heart Research.

His major professor is Stephen Grant, PhD, associate professor of integrative physiology.

Gonzales is a doctoral candidate in pharmacology and neuroscience. He was advanced to candidacy with distinction. Gonzales' research focuses on understanding ion channels. He is first

author of a paper under review at the *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* and is co-author of papers in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* and *Neuroscience*.

He has garnered a number of awards for presentations at local meetings, and he has received travel awards to present at national meetings of the Bio-



Eric Gonzales

physical Society and the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

Gonzales is currently the president of the Graduate Student Association. He has served in the past as both president and vice president of the Society for the Advancement of Latino Scholars in Academia and as treasurer of the

Black Graduate Student Association. In addition, he is active in promoting science in the Fort Worth Independent School District.

Glenn Dillon, PhD, professor of pharmacology and neuroscience, is his major professor.

Lee is a doctoral candidate in microbiology and immunology. Her research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms by which immune cells recognize and kill cancer cells, particularly the characterization of the novel receptor CS1 in human NK cells and Beta cells.

She has co-authored a paper that appeared in *Immunology* and another that is under revision for the *Journal of Immunology*, and she is first author of a paper under revision for the *European Journal of Immunology*.

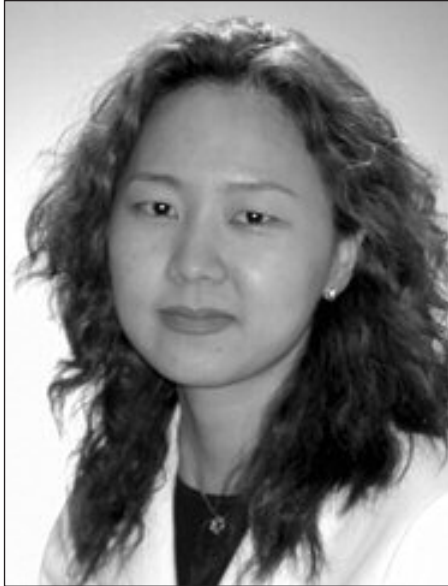
Lee is a student member of the

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Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Students inducted into research society

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Jae Kyung Lee

American Association of Immunologists and has presented a poster at that organization's 90th anniversary annual meeting in 2003. Lee was also recently selected to receive a Sigma Xi Grant-in-Aid of Research award.

Lee's master's degree is from Kyungpook National University in South Korea.

Her major professor is Porunelloor Mathew, PhD, associate professor of molecular biology and immunology.

Pierce is a doctoral candidate in biochemistry and molecular biology. His research centers on the characterization of a new form of the antioxidant enzyme extracellular superoxide dismutase (ecSOD),



Anson Pierce

which was first discovered in his lab in a mouse model of atherosclerosis.

He is first author of a manuscript published in the American Heart Association's journal *Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology* and is also first author of a manuscript in preparation.

Outside of the lab, Pierce has been a member of the institutional animal care and use committee and is currently a fellow for SCORE (Schools' Opportunity for Resources in Education).

Ladislav Dory, PhD, professor of molecular biology and immunology is his major professor.

Vaidya is a doctoral candidate in microbiology and immunology. His research is in the field of cancer immunology, with an emphasis on how natural killer cells recognize cancer cells and kill them. Specifically, he studies the function and regulation of an NK cell receptor called 2B4. The ultimate goal of the research is to design novel immune-based therapeutic approaches to cancer.

He is co-author of two published papers, and he is first author of another that is in revision for the *Journal of Immunology*. He is currently preparing another first-author paper for submission.

Vaidya has also presented his research work at national meetings. He received the

biomedical sciences award for exceptional academic performance in fall 2000 and spring 2001, and he has been a judge at the Fort Worth Regional Science Fair for middle school students.



Swapnil Vaidya

Vaidya earned a medical degree from Government Medical College in India. His major professor is Porunelloor Mathew, PhD, associate professor of molecular biology and immunology.

Sigma Xi was founded in 1886 as an honor society for science and engineering. Today this international research society promotes the health of scientific enterprise and honors scientific achievement. Sigma Xi also encourages support of original work in science and technology and promotes an appreciation within general society for the role research has played in human progress. During its centennial celebration in 1986, Sigma Xi adopted an additional mission: to foster worldwide interactions among science, technology and society. ★

Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine/Physician Assistant Studies

PA students, faculty to present posters at AAPA conference

Congratulations to the Physician Assistant Studies students and faculty members who have been accepted to present scientific posters at the American Academy of Physician Assistants 32nd Annual National PA Conference scheduled for this June in Las Vegas, Nev.

PA student Jennifer Boedeker will present "The Association Between Regular Foot Exams and Diabetic Outcomes." Her faculty advisors are Clifton Cage, DO, assistant professor and medical director of family medicine, and Olive Chen, PhD, assistant professor and coordinator of research studies in PA studies.

PA student Miny Sunny will present "Health Risks and Health Problems Associated with Working the Night Shift." Her faculty advisors are Carolyn Telford, MPAS, PA-C, assistant professor and clinical education coordinator in PA studies, and Dr. Chen.

PA student Amy Henson will present "Mortality and Morbidity among PTCA and CABG Patients: Does Cardiac Rehabilitation Improve Patient Outcomes?" Her faculty advisors are Michael Clark, PhD, PA-C, assistant professor in PA studies, and Dr. Chen.

Dr. Clark and Dr. Chen will present "The Practice Environment of Physician Assistants in Cardiology."

The student's posters are based on their required master's degree

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TMA honors TCOM chapter, student

The Texas Medical Association-Medical Student Section honored the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine with its Chapter of the Year award at its annual Winter Conference, held in Austin Feb. 27-29. The group also chose Prateek Chaudhary, TCOM 2006, as Student of the Year.

The Chapter of the Year award honors the Medical Student Chapter that most exemplifies the ideals of the Texas Medical Association. TCOM has done this by establishing an active presence in the political arena, said Juliette Trinh, TCOM 2007 and TMA-AMA Chapter President.

"We were instrumental in the recent victory on Proposition 12, which gives the state Legislature the authority to set limits on non-economic damages awarded to plaintiffs in civil lawsuits," she said.

TCOM's chapter has also been active in recruitment and received the American Medical Association's Medical Student Section Outreach Award last June for recruiting the highest percentage of student AMA members of all Texas medical schools.

In addition, the chapter co-hosted the AMA Region III conference, "The Art of Medicine," with The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

TCOM students have been chosen as Student of the Year for the past three years in a row. "Our chapter has been and continues to be strong in the core aspects of organized medicine: membership, political advocacy and community service," said Chaudhary, a former chapter president.

Trinh said the Student of the Year award was created in 1998 to honor



Prateek Chaudhary, 2004 TMA Student of the Year, is the third TCOM student in a row to be chosen for this honor.

outstanding medical student members who serve the section and excel in furthering chapter and TMA-MSS goals and policies for the ultimate goal of a healthier Texas.

Students are nominated by their chapter and are elected by the TMA-MSS Executive Council annually.

In addition to the outstanding chapter and student awards being presented at the conference, Leslie Pidgeon, TCOM 2005, was appointed AMA alternate delegate and will serve as a student representative in the Texas delegation. Chad McCormick, TCOM 2006, was elected AMA-MSS delegate co-leader, and Sarah Hicks, TCOM 2006, was elected TMA-MSS delegate co-leader. Tina Philip, TCOM 2006, will serve as TMA-MSS reporter.

With these elections, TCOM con-

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Spring Fling

Faculty, staff and students enjoyed Spring Fling March 27. **Top left:** Bobbie Ann Adair, student development coordinator, and Lane Fairbairn, TCOM 2005, burn off their spring fever in the bounce house. **Top right:** Jason Fisher, TCOM 2007 class president, and Thomas Moorman, EdD, executive director of student affairs, wrestle in inflatable sumo gear. **Bottom:** Cedric Pratt, TCOM 2006 (far left); Himala Kashmiri TCOM 2007 (center); and April Calderon, TCOM 2007 (behind Kashmiri); Michael Stratton, TCOM 2007 (in shirt number 32); and Stephen Thomason, TCOM 2008 (with ball), compete in the basketball tournament.

TMA student, chapter awards

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tinues to be well represented at the state level. TCOM students hold two of the three positions in the AMA House of Delegates, two of the five voting positions of the TMA-MSS Executive Council and five of the 11 total positions of the TMA-MSS Executive Council, Trinh said.

Membership in TMA-MSS gives students an opportunity to advocate for physicians and their patients through student involvement in the TMA's policy making process, according to the Texas Medical Association. "Political advocacy is integral in

membership in TMA-MSS," Chaudhary said.

The TCOM chapter is currently preparing to attend the upcoming TexMed 2004 conference, to be held in Austin this May. TexMed is an annual meeting of the Texas Medical Association that focuses on issues that affect Texas physicians and their patients.

Special sessions for medical students allow students a chance to network with physician mentors and offer real-world advice on real-life issues that will affect them as physicians and that affect them as students, Trinh said. ★

PA posters

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projects. All of the students will have poster abstracts published in conjunction with the conference by the AAPA. Boedeker and Sunny received special recognition by the Abstract/Poster Selection Committee as Outstanding Abstracts for the Student Research Gallery. They were awarded a special \$500 travel stipend to attend the conference.

In addition having his poster displayed, Dr. Clark has been invited to deliver a 15-minute presentation on his group's research findings at the conference. ★

Faculty Advances

Rafael Alvarez-Gonzalez, PhD, associate professor of molecular biology/immunology, has been invited to be the Biology Keynote Speaker for the Ninth Annual Chemistry and Biology Symposium of the University of Texas at Dallas April 14. **Dr. Alvarez-Gonzalez** will speak about “Structure, metabolism and biological function of poly(ADP-ribose), a unique and transient nucleic acid in higher eukaryotes.”

Alakananda Basu, PhD, professor of molecular biology/immunology, has been awarded a five-year grant (competitive renewal) to study “Tumor necrosis factor- α signaling in breast cancer” from the National Cancer Institute/National Institutes of Health. **Dr. Basu** was also invited to review Concept Awards (Clinical and Experimental Therapeutics) for the U. S. Army Medical Research and Material Command/Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, Breast Cancer Research Program. **Dr. Basu** is also senior author of the paper “Down-regulation of Bcl-2 is associated with cisplatin-resistance in human small cell lung cancer H69 cells,” published in the March issue of *Molecular Cancer Therapeutics*. Swarajit Kumar Biswas, PhD, a former postdoctoral fellow, is first author, and **Jie Huang**, senior research assistant in molecular biology/immunology, and Shalini Persaud, a former graduate student in molecular biology/immunology, are co-authors.

Steve Buchanan, DO, associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology, TCOM 1982, received the 2004 American College Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists Distinguished Service Award at their meeting in March. The Distinguished Service Award is presented to a member of the ACOOG who has given time and effort on behalf of the college; continually participated in the development of students, interns and residents in the specialty of obstetrics and gynecology or its related fields; contributed often in the continuing education of peers; and been active in the affairs of the profession and the community.

Joan Carroll, PhD, assistant professor of integrative physiology, is first author of the paper “Hydralazine as antihypertensive therapy in obesity-related hypertension,” published in March in the *International Journal of Obesity*. Jeffrey King, MS, and Joshua Cohen, both former research assistants in integrative physiology, are co-authors.

Christopher de Fiebre, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology/neuroscience, was a panelist in a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sponsored workshop, “Tobacco Use with Mentally Ill and Addicted Populations,” held during the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco in Scottsdale, Ariz., Feb. 19.

Chiehwen Ed Hsu, PhD, assistant professor of health management/policy, has received a mini-grant from the Association of Schools of Public Health to employ an evidence-based approach to addressing health disparities in Collin County, Texas. **Holly Jacobson, PhD**, research assistant professor, and **Francisco Soto Mas, MD, PhD**, assistant professor, both of social/behavioral sciences, are co-principal investigators.

Maria Perez-Lamigueiro, graduate student in biochemistry/molecular biology, has been selected to receive one of 91 National Minority Scholar Awards in Cancer Research by the American Association for Cancer Research. She will present her research project, “Changes in mammalian chromatin structure as a function of poly(ADP-ribosyl)ation: susceptibility of interphase chromatin to enzymatic digestion with Deoxyribonuclease I (DNase I) and Micrococcal nuclease (MNase)” at the 95th Annual Meeting of the AACR in Orlando, Fla., March 27-31. **Perez-Lamigueiro** is a graduate student in the laboratory of **Rafael Alvarez-Gonzalez, PhD**, associate professor of molecular biology/immunology.

Karan Singh, PhD, professor and chair of biostatistics, is a co-author of the paper “Evolution of Activation Pattern During Long-Duration Ventricular Fibrillation in Dogs,” published in the January issue of the *American Journal of Physiology-Heart and Circulatory Physiology*. **Dr. Singh** has also been invited to serve on the International Advisory Committee for the International Conference on Simulation and Modeling to be held early next year.

Michael Smith, PhD, professor and acting chair of integrative physiology, was co-chair of the scientific conference “Frontiers of Cardiology,” held January 7-9, and he presented the seminar “Chemoreceptors and Cardiovascular Disease” at the conference. **Dr. Smith** is also co-author of a paper, “Inhibition of α -adrenergic vasoconstriction in exercising human thigh muscles,” published in the February edition of *The Journal of Physiology*. Walt Wray, PhD, GSBS 2003, a former graduate student in integrative physiology, is principal author of the paper, and **Peter Raven, PhD**, adjunct professor of integrative physiology, is co-author.

Francisco Soto Mas, MD, PhD, assistant professor of social/behavioral sciences, has been awarded a Community Partnership Research Grant for the project “A collaborative partnership for bioterrorism research between UNTSPH and Collin County, Texas” from the Association of Schools of Public Health. **Chiehwen Ed Hsu, PhD**, assistant professor of health management/policy, is co-principal investigator. ★