Employee Health Fair Draws Crowd

Traci Thompson gets her blood pressure tested at the Employee Health Fair Oct. 31. “We’ve had a great turn out,” Trinika Bowdre, coordinator of academic and student affairs for the College of Nursing, said the day of the event.

Students, faculty and staff assembled on Oct. 31 for an interprofessional effort to provide health care screening to those who work on campus. Additional support came from University Health Services. A total of 74 participants came from several areas, including 28 percent from custodial or maintenance departments. Students from the College of Pharmacy originally envisioned the health fair and were well represented, along with students from dental hygiene, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and the physician assistant programs. Students not only worked together as a team, getting an idea of the scope of each others’ practice roles, but took time to get to know each other and what they were learning in individual programs. A total of 44 students, faculty and staff volunteered.

Nursing and dental hygiene faculty supervised students in offering blood pressure, blood sugar and dental screenings. BMI and waist measurements identified those at risk of health threats. Human Resources staff identified the services available through the EAP program.

Master Plan to Change Face of UTHSC

UTHSC leaders shared a vision for future development of the campus on Oct. 27 during an open house for faculty, staff, students, the media and the community.

UTHSC commissioned the award-winning firm of Perkins + Will to draft the new Campus Master Plan for property acquisition, partnerships, land and building use, site selection, use of open space and traffic circulation. After a year of input from students, faculty, staff, administrators and the community, representatives from Perkins + Will presented the latest version. Those who attended were able to ask questions and offer their feedback.

“Ten years ago, University of Tennessee Medical Center was under the heading of ‘Tennessee Medical Center’,” said完工 Schwab, MD. “The goal is to enhance the position of the campus as the linchpin of the Memphis Medical Center area, he said, adding, “The university is committed to keeping our community well informed as we move forward with the plan.”

For information, contact Andrea Kolen at (901) 448-7248 or akolen@uthsc.edu.

UTHSC Shares Flu Vaccine

On Nov. 3, Peg Thorman Hartig, PhD, APRN-BC, FAANP, professor in the College of Nursing, picked up leftover flu vaccine from Sharon Martin in University Health Services. The vaccine went to the Memphis International Airport, where the nurses’ station is staffed by UTHSC. Many airport employees, such as those who work in housekeeping or fast food, do not have health insurance or other no cost access to the flu vaccine.

Mission Statement

The mission of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center is to bring the benefits of the health sciences to the achievement and maintenance of human health, with a focus on the citizens of Tennessee and the region, by pursuing an integrated program of education, research, clinical care, and public service.
Clint W. Snyder is Senior Associate Dean in College of Medicine

David M. Stern, MD, Robert Kaplan Executive Dean of the UTHSC College of Medicine, announced the appointment of Clint W. Snyder, PhD, MBA, as senior associate dean and chair for the new Department of Medical Education in the UTHSC College of Medicine. Dr. Snyder joined UTHSC on Oct. 1.

“By consolidating the leadership of our education enterprise under this newly created position, Dr. Snyder will serve as the central source at UTHSC for matters related to medical education. The extensive experience and professionalism he brings to this role will serve to complement and support the team we already have in place,” Dean Stern said. The senior associate dean and chair will report directly to Dr. Stern in his role as executive dean for all four UTHSC College of Medicine locations: Memphis, Knoxville, Chattanooga and Nashville.

In his new role, Dr. Snyder will oversee curriculum planning, evaluation and management for the four-year medical program, as well as accreditation requirements and processes for the College of Medicine. As chair of the Department of Medical Education, Dr. Snyder will recruit, guide and promote faculty development in teaching and educational research.

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree from Youngstown State University with a double major in combined science and sociology, he obtained his MA and PhD in medical sociology from Kent State University. In 2011, he earned an MBA from the University of Akron with a dual focus in health care management, and management and personnel. He has published or contributed to some 25 manuscripts, book chapters or book reviews, and provided presentations at more than 45 scholarly meetings.

College of Medicine’s Top Position Renamed

The College of Medicine at UTHSC has announced that the college's top executive position has been named after benefactor and alumnus, Dr. Robert J. Kaplan. Dr. David Stern, who has led the college since April 2011, is now the Robert Kaplan Executive Dean for the UTHSC College of Medicine.

The new name was announced at the White Coat Ceremony in August. Dr. Kaplan was the keynote speaker for the ceremony, an annual tradition to welcome new medical students and their families to the College of Medicine.

“The practice of medicine is a privilege and honor that cannot be taken for granted,” Dr. Kaplan said. “It is our goal to create the best possible environment for medical students to learn the science and art of medicine.”

Charmagyn Akram Reflects on 25 Years at UTHSC Service Awards

“Live every day as though you will live forever. Live every day as though you be gone tomorrow. That’s a balanced life.”

That was the advice of Charmagyn Akram at an event Oct. 21 honoring UTHSC staff members who had given 25 or more years of service to the university.

Akram said she woke up wondering what to say to employees who had given 25 years. “You don’t need to say, ‘Come to work on time.’ You don’t need to say, ‘Be a team player.’ You don’t need to say, ‘Don’t sweat the small stuff.’ So what do you really say?”

In addition to not getting jaded, she recommended employees avail themselves of annual leave. “One of the worst things a retirement rep who came on campus could have told employees was to save your money for retirement to take vacations,” she laughed. “I told the rep, you should never tell employees that. What we have is right now. Enjoy your life now. Nothing’s promised tomorrow! Give the university 100 percent, as much as you can, but everyone who’s not had a vacation this year, do so! You’ll come back renewed and know why you’re here.”

She added, “Anytime an employee is able to stay 25 years or more, he or she should be able to take with them some fond memories.”

She concluded by saying that everyone should “think inside the box, for within it are many jewels,” and added, “When you come to work in the morning, begin with an end in mind. Set daily goals.”

Oct. 2 Blood Drive a Success

Debra Brown, community relations director of Lifeblood, said 38 people signed in at the Oct. 2 blood drive and 32 units of blood were collected. “UT students and faculty saved 111 lives.”

Pharmacy Students Give Flu Shots

On Oct. 23, the Operation Immunization Committee of the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists chapter at UTHSC provided free influenza vaccinations to the homeless in a community outreach program at Idlewild Presbyterian Church.

The APhA-ASP chapter was awarded a $3,000 grant last year for its proposal to vaccinate the low-income population of Memphis. This year, 150 flu vaccinations were given to the attendees of the church’s “More Than a Meal” program. The vaccinations were administered by UTHSC College of Pharmacy students who are certified to give immunizations.

Visit http://outreach.tennessee.edu for UTHSC’s community outreach and engagement efforts as well as share your stories of UTHSC’s efforts.
UTHSC Participates in Heart Walk Nov. 1

UTHSC Mentors Four Young Men from Mississippi

Four young men from Moss Point, Mississippi, met with J. Kennard Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE, executive vice chancellor and COO of UTHSC, as well as with other UTHSC leaders.

The meetings were arranged by Mario King, MBA, PHR, program coordinator in the Department of Preventive Medicine, Research Center on Health Disparities, Equity and the Exposome (RCHDEE) at UTHSC, working through the Trinity Outreach Corporation. The program focuses on young men of color who are working to dismantle structured racism.

“Growing up in an environment where opportunity is limited for black youth, I am dedicated to being an advocate,” King said. “This includes making sure that I do all I can to provide tangible experiences and exposure to the role models that reflect what they can become as professional men.”

The students also had the chance to meet with Willie Johnson, MBA, regional director of SunTrust Bank; Randy Seriguchi, director of National Mobilization of Stand Up; Josiah Young, executive director of Stand Up; Ronnie Dickerson, assistant to the associate vice chancellor of UTHSC; Michael Alston, EdD, CCAP/AP, associate vice chancellor for Equity and Diversity of UTHSC; Sheila Champlin, MA, assistant vice chancellor for Communications and Marketing of UTHSC; and Pam Houston, director, Special Events and Community Affairs.

The students also visited the home of Willie Martin, agency owner for All State Insurance and Financial Services.

UTHSC Sponsors Operation Stand Down Memphis

Right, UTHSC Executive Vice Chancellor and COO Ken Brown, J. Lee Taylor, director of Campus Recreation and Pam Houston, director of Special Events and Community Affairs, accept recognition of UTHSC’s sponsorship of the 2014 Operation Stand Down Memphis from OSDM Executive Director, Sgt. William Jones. Left, military veterans receive military surplus goods at the 2014 Operation Stand Down Memphis hosted by UTHSC.
UTHSC Recognized by U.S. Army

The United States Army Second Medical Recruiting Battalion recognized several UTHSC officials for supporting its mission to educate students about the scholarship opportunities that exist in the Army and to recruit students in all medical fields to join the Army as medical officers.

Certificates of appreciation for exceptional leadership and support for Army medicine were presented to Kennard Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE, executive vice chancellor and chief operations officer at UTHSC; David Stern, MD, Robert Kaplan Executive Dean of the UTHSC College of Medicine; and Irma Jordan, DNP, APN, FNP/PMHNP-BC, FAANP, an assistant professor and director of the DNP Program in the UTHSC College of Nursing.

“We have a great relationship with the University of Tennessee Health Science Center,” said Capt. Gary Miller, with the battalion’s Medical Recruiting Center at 5909 Shelby Oaks Drive. “Dr. Brown has been a huge supporter of us being on campus and allowing us to educate the student body.”

Miller said Army medical recruiters visit the UTHSC campus weekly. In April, they staged “Medicine Meets Military,” an event to educate students, faculty and staff about army medicine. A Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter with a forward surgical team, or mobile hospital, was set up in the Student-Alumni Center.

Shalini Narayana, PhD, assistant professor in the Departments of Pediatrics, and Anatomy and Neurobiology has received a grant totaling $677,385 from The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research. Dr. Narayana and her research team are testing to determine if non-invasive brain stimulation can improve the effectiveness of voice therapy.

The award will support a project titled, “Augmenting Treatment Effects of Voice Therapy in Parkinson’s Disease,” and will be distributed over a three-year period.

“I am very excited about this research project,” said Dr. Narayana. “This research demonstrates a great collaboration between neurologists, speech pathologists, and neuroscientists as well as between two major institutions in Memphis, UTHSC and University of Memphis.”

Patients with Parkinson’s disease frequently suffer from speech and voice disorders that adversely affect their communication and quality of life. Medications that help other symptoms of Parkinson’s disease are not very effective in treating speech and voice symptoms, but intensive voice therapy has been shown to be helpful. Recently, non-invasive brain stimulation has gained recognition as a useful treatment tool and is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for treating depression and migraine.

The study will examine speech and voice quality, voice box function and brain activity before and after patients receive voice therapy and brain stimulation or voice therapy alone. The researchers hope to demonstrate that non-invasive brain stimulation improves speech and voice quality at a quicker pace, and that the improvements in communication will be long lasting.

This study will provide free voice therapy and access to neurology, otolaryngology, and speech and voice clinics to people with Parkinson’s disease in Memphis and the greater Mid-South area. The findings from this study will lay the foundation for future large-scale studies to examine the usefulness of brain stimulation as an additional treatment to improve speech and limb motor symptoms in Parkinson’s disease. The results from this study will also form the basis for future studies aimed at understanding how various treatments in Parkinson’s disease mediate changes in brain function.

As the world’s largest nonprofit funder of Parkinson’s research, The Michael J. Fox Foundation is dedicated to accelerating a cure for Parkinson’s disease and improved therapies for those living with the condition today.
Dentistry Dean Timothy L. Hottel Receives $340,000 Grant for Tourette’s Research

Timothy L. Hottel, DDS, MS, MBA, dean of the College of Dentistry at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC), will serve as principal investigator for a $340,000 clinical study funded by TicTocStop, Inc. TicTocStop has a mission focused on improving the lives of people with Tourette Syndrome. The study plans to enroll 65 participants (both adults and children) who suffer from either simple or complex tics. Dr. Hottel and his team will fit each participant with a specially modified oral appliance, much like a modified mouth guard for lower teeth. The study will then assess whether the appliance lessens the severity and frequency of the patients’ symptoms.

Titled, “Cranio-Facial Relationship Manipulation with an Oral Appliance Mitigating the Severity and Frequency of Motor Tics Associated with Neuro-Psychiatric Disorders such as Tourette Syndrome and Chronic Tic Disorder,” the clinical study was launched in mid-September and will run through 2015. The study will enroll children and adolescents ages 7 to 17 and adults ages 18 to 45 who are affected by simple or complex tics.

“This is the first time in medical history that a multisite study of this type has been done,” said Dr. Hottel. “We are proud to be part of this forward-thinking research initiative to determine the viability of the TicTocStop appliance. This device may have the potential to help tens of thousands of people who suffer from motor and vocal tics.”

Disorders like Tourette Syndrome and Chronic Tic Disorder are characterized by repetitive, involuntary, painless, nonrhythmic movements and sounds called tics. Estimates indicate about 200,000 Americans, most often males, suffer from the most severe form of Tourette’s, and thousands more go undiagnosed. As many as one in 100 people can exhibit milder and less complex symptoms.

Complex tics are distinct, coordinated patterns of movements involving several muscle groups. Complex motor tics might include facial grimacing combined with a head twist and a shoulder shrug. Other complex motor tics may actually appear purposeful, including sniffling or touching objects, hopping, jumping, bending or twisting. More complex vocal tics include words or phrases. Perhaps the most dramatic and disabling tics include motor movements that result in self-harm, such as punching oneself in the face or vocal tics including coprolalia, uttering socially inappropriate words such as swearing, or echolalia, repeating the words or phrases of others. (Coprolalia is present in only 10-15 percent of individuals with Tourette Syndrome.)

TFAN Radio and CBS Sports personality Craig Carton founded TicTocStop in 2013. Carton has Tourette’s, as do two of his children. TicTocStop is a non-profit organization that, in its very first year, commissioned a pilot study to test the effectiveness of an oral appliance designed to reposition the lower jaw to lessen the severity and frequency of motor and vocal tics associated with Tourette Syndrome and Chronic Tic Disorder. The pilot study demonstrated that the TicTocStop appliance lowered the frequency and severity of vocal and motor tics by 65 percent. That amazing result occurred without drugs and invasive medical procedures. TicTocStop is now engaged in funding a multi-site study to prove that the TicTocStop appliance will significantly help children and adults with Tourette Syndrome and Chronic Tic Disorder.

Carton is one of the hosts of the “Boomer and Carton Morning Show” on WFAN, the highest-rated sports radio morning show in the country. In addition to funding important research, The TicTocStop Foundation also created and completely funded Camp Carton, a camp for kids with Tourette Syndrome.

For more information, go to www.tictocstop.org.

Seeberg Named Associate Dean for Dentistry

Timothy L. Hottel, DDS, MS, MBA, dean and professor of the College of Dentistry UTHSC, has named John Douglas Seeberg, DMD, as the inaugural associate dean of Extramural Affairs. Dr. Seeberg previously was the assistant dean of Clinical Affairs.

Holding true to its mission of education, research, clinical care and public service as it continues to expand, the college will be opening additional sites for student rotations and eventually several resident rotations in the coming years. These sites will increase the amount and variety of patients who are treated, as well as provide dental care to populations that have had limited or no access to care. Dr. Seeberg will be charged with ensuring that current and future dental students receive the maximum benefits from each clinical rotation site.

The following sites will give the College of Dentistry statewide reach:

- Jackson (active)
- Little Rock (active)
- Bristol (scheduled to open July/August 2015)
- Union City (scheduled to open July, 2015)
- Nashville (scheduled to open July, 2016)
- Knoxville (scheduled to open July, 2016)

“Through strategic partnerships with hospitals and other health care organizations across the state, our institution is expanding to meet the ever-increasing needs of patients,” said UTHSC Chancellor Steve J. Schwab, MD. “The carefully planned expansion of our College of Dentistry will provide greater student access and more opportunities to educate and train dental professionals to serve the needs of Tennesseans and neighboring communities.”

UTHSC Named a Healthy Workplace

The Governor’s Foundation for Health and Wellness has named UTHSC a Healthier Tennessee Workplace. This means that the university:

- Encourages and enables physical activity in the workplace
- Offers healthy eating options at work
- Provides a tobacco-free environment and help with tobacco cessation
- Encourages and enables employees to monitor their own health through regular health risk assessments, screenings or check-ups
- Rewards and recognizes employees for participating in health and wellness activities and achieving health improvements
Dr. Matthews-Juarez Receives Grant for Hepatitis C Awareness Effort

Patricia Matthews-Juarez, PhD, co-director of the Research Center on Health Disparities, Equity, and the Exposome and professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at UTHSC, has received a grant totaling $50,000 from Gilead Sciences, Inc. The one-year grant will be used to conduct a provider education and community awareness program about Hepatitis C virus (HCV) in the African-American community.

The award will be used to support “Test, List” Our intent is to develop training sessions that will provide culturally sensitive and health literate information about the HCV prevalence and incidence in the African-American community,” said Dr. Matthews-Juarez.

Gilead Sciences is a biopharmaceutical company that discovers, develops and commercializes innovative therapeutics in areas of unmet medical need. The company’s mission is to advance the care of patients suffering from life-threatening diseases worldwide. Headquartered in Foster City, California, Gilead has operations in North and South America, Europe and Asia Pacific. For more information, visit www.gilead.com.

White Coat Ceremonies

Left, Clinical Laboratory Sciences students received white coats at a ceremony Oct. 17.

Right, Physician Assistant Studies students take an ‘Oath of Professionalism’ during the new program’s first white coat ceremony Nov. 14.

Coalition to Welcome 500 Women Feb. 7 for Breast Cancer Summit

The Research Center on Health Disparities, Equity and the Exposome (RCHDEE) at UTHSC has convened a Breast Cancer Awareness and Action Coalition that includes 11 local and state health care, civic and community organizations. The coalition’s shared goals are to arm African-American women with information to prevent breast cancer’s deadly impact and to encourage best practices in early detection, screening and treatment of the disease.

“Together, we are committed to the reduction of breast cancer’s mortality rate by increasing awareness and action among black women, the population that discovers the disease much later and dies from it much earlier than any other group in our region,” said Patricia Matthews-Juarez, PhD, co-director of the Research Center on Health Disparities, Equity and the Exposome.

On Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the coalition will hold a summit titled, “LIVE! African-American Women Surviving Breast Cancer through Education, Early Detection, Screening and Treatment.”

Designed to unite, support and empower, this event will gather a group of 500 black women of varying ages, education levels and socioeconomic backgrounds at UTHSC. The event will include breast cancer survivors, women who consider themselves at risk for the disease, and those whose lives have been altered or touched in some way by breast cancer.

The summit will be held at the UTHSC Student-Alumni Center at 800 Madison Avenue. Registered participants may attend at no cost. All participants must register in advance at https://uthsc.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2c5AgwTSVTnK0L.

Registered participants will receive a range of free personal care services (e.g., manicures and seated mini-massages), complimentary refreshments (including breakfast and lunch), a gift bag filled with useful items for the women and/or their children, plus access to a variety of health care industry vendors. The event will culminate in an educational and motivational presentation that will focus on the need for each participant to become an advocate for breast cancer education, early detection, screening and treatment among her family, friends and community.

Months before the summit convenes, UTHSC will arrange for free photo sessions for every registered participant, plus each participant will be asked to submit data for a brief biographical sketch. The Breast Cancer Awareness and Action Coalition will use the bios and photos to create a special exhibit titled; “LIVE! Just As We Are!” The exhibit will be hosted at locations throughout the city, starting at the Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library during Black History Month in February 2015.

The “LIVE! Just As We Are!” exhibit will also include an online component with selected exhibit materials posted on a website and through social media. You can follow us at facebook.com/livelostJustAsWeAre or twitter.com/JustAsWeAre.

Local businesses, civic and community organizations are underwriting the $100 expense for each participant. To be a sponsor, contact Dr. Matthews-Juarez at (901) 448-7226 or pmatthe3@uthsc.edu.

Collaborating with the UTHSC RCHDEE are Common Table Health Alliance; Shelby County (Tennessee), The Links, Incorporated; Tennessee Department of Health, Office of Minority Health and Disparities Elimination; Carin’ and Sharin’ Breast Cancer Education and Support Group; Sisters Network; Memphis Chapter; Surviving, Thriving, African-Americans Rallying Support Group (STAARS); Seeds2 Life, Inc.; Community Action Team of Shelby County (CATS); Community Health Advisory Specialty (CHAS); American Cancer Society; The Churches Health Center; and, Tennessee Cancer Coalition (TC2).

The LIVE! Coalition, a Breast Cancer Awareness and Action Group, Presents

Live!

Just as We Are

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Graduation Set for Dec. 12

On Friday, Dec. 12, UTHSC will graduate 105 health care professionals. The commencement ceremony will be held at 1:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Ballroom of the Memphis Cook Convention Center. UTHSC Chancellor Steve J. Schwab, MD, will preside; UT System Executive Vice President David E. Millhorn will confer the degrees. To watch the events live, please use the following link, which works best in Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox browsers: http://www.uthsc.edu/graduation/.

The graduates are from five of the six UTHSC colleges.
• two from the College of Dentistry
• 21 from the College of Graduate Health Sciences
• 24 from the College of Health Professions
• four from the College of Medicine
• 54 from the College of Nursing

This class of 86 women and 19 men includes 22 African-Americans, four Latino-Americans, and 29 out-of-state graduates.

Nursing Faculty Member to Present Daughter with Diploma

There’s an unusual excitement to the December graduation for Irma O. Jordan, DNP. Affiliated with UT for 18 years in both clinical and academic roles, Dr. Jordan has spent the past four years as an assistant professor in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program at the UTHSC College of Nursing.

Dr. Jordan is no stranger to UTHSC commencements. She earned her BSN in 1997, her MSN in 1998 and her DNP in 2010, all at UTHSC. Now, at December graduation, Dr. Jordan will present her daughter, Lisa Dawson, with her UTHSC BSN diploma. Dawson is among the first group of nursing students to graduate from the BSN program since UTHSC reactivated its nursing baccalaureate in fall 2012.

“As my role as a faculty member in the College of Nursing, I was concerned about Lisa being a student in the BSN program,” Dr. Jordan said. “I was concerned it would present challenges she would not have to deal with in another program. When Lisa and I discussed this, she told me, ‘If I’m going to do this, I want to attend the best nursing program available.’ I couldn’t argue with that.”

Over the 17-month, accelerated BSN program, Dawson, a single mother with twin boys, 7, and a daughter, 5, has described her life as overwhelming at times and always challenging. Much of the time she’s had to operate despite chronic sleep deprivation, a common condition among nursing students. But Dawson is quick to credit each UTHSC faculty member she has studied and trained under in the BSN-CNL (Clinical Nurse Leader) program.

“They have provided me not only with the knowledge to achieve my goal of being a nurse, but they are also great mentors,” Dawson said. “Faculty are approachable and available to the students, and it is evident they want us to succeed.”

“I have had the pleasure of hearing Lisa’s stories of faculty engagement with students as they learned and experienced nursing,” Dr. Jordan said. “There are some faculty members who had Lisa in class and didn’t even know she was my daughter. They treated her just like every other BSN student – wonderfully. I am proud to be associated with these colleagues.”

What Lisa has found most profound is the impact nurses have on the lives of their patients. “Nursing is not about the stuff we can do. It’s about caring for the person.” The emotion in Dr. Jordan’s voice is evident when she states, “Lisa will be a great nurse!”

Emile David Named Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities

Executive Vice Chancellor and COO Ken Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE, has named Emile David, RA, as the associate vice chancellor of Facilities Administration.

“Emile brings strong business contacts and a wide variety of experience to this position,” Dr. Brown said. “We have every confidence that his efforts will result in increased operational efficiency on a variety of projects going forward.”

A Memphis native, David previously worked as a staff architect at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He has a BS in engineering technology from the University of Memphis. He has previously held positions at architectural firms Allen and Hoshall, Fleming Associates and Renaissance Group.

Linda DeBaer Receives Award in Social Work

Linda DeBaer, LMSW, manager of the Department of Perinatal Social Work at UTHSC, received the Social Association of Perinatal Social Workers (NAPSW) 2014 Award of Excellence. According to the NAPSW, the award recognizes “a member for outstanding clinical achievement in the field of perinatal social work.” During her 30-year tenure at UTHSC, DeBaer has worked in the Newborn Center as a perinatal social worker, assistant manager and as manager since 2008.

In addition, she has worked as a field instructor with the University of Tennessee Graduate Social Work Program. Since 2011, DeBaer has been instrumental in the successful coordination between the University of Memphis Graduate Social Work Program and the Accreditation Collaborative for the Master of Social Work Program. The program was recently accredited, and DeBaer received the MSW Field Instructor Commendation in 2013.

As chair of the NAPSW Standards Committee since 2000, DeBaer helped develop and publish four standards for nationwide use:
• Social Work Services in Perinatal Bereavement
• Social Work Services in Adolescent Pregnancy
• Perinatal Social Worker Working with Patients Experiencing Post-Partum Depression
• Surrogacy

For more information, visit www.napsw.org.
UTHSC Welcomes 50-Year Golden Graduates

UTHSC hosted its 2014 Golden Graduate events Oct. 15-17, honoring the 50-year graduates from all six colleges. Among graduates of the Class of 1964 were award-winning physician Alvin H. Crawford, MD, the first African-American student to graduate from the UTHSC College of Medicine. Dr. Crawford, also a graduate of Melrose High School, is a professor emeritus in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in the College of Medicine at the University of Cincinnati.

Golden Graduate events included dinner at the Rendezvous, open houses and receptions at the various colleges, lunch with UTHSC Chancellor Steve Schwab, MD, and Executive Vice Chancellor Ken Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE. Alumni received pins and certificates during dinner at the Memphis Pink Palace Museum. UT President Joe DiPietro addressed them during a closing breakfast.


Orville Douglas Wilson, MD, Elizabeth Wilson, Alvin H. Crawford, MD, and Alva Crawford

UTHSC Presents Patient Safety Training

As part of an increasing emphasis on interprofessional education, UTHSC brought together more than 200 students, residents, nurses, physicians and health care workers Oct. 21-23 for a unique, interactive patient safety training series sponsored by the Office of Graduate Medical Education (GME) and the Office of Interprofessional Education and Clinical Simulation (IPESC). Participants had the opportunity to work collaboratively in true-to-life scenarios on high-fidelity patient simulators or manikins in the clinical simulation center at UTHSC.

Experts from the National Center for Patient Safety of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Douglas E. Paull, MD, FACS, FCCP, CHSE, director of patient safety curriculum, and Linda Williams, RN, MSN, patient safety program specialist, were keynote speakers and led the clinical simulation training.

Patient safety and quality leaders from St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Methodist University Hospital, Baptist Memorial Health Care, Memphis VA Medical Center, and Regional One Health attended alongside UTHSC students and residents.

“We are not only educating our students and residents, but engaging the community in the principles of patient safety and improvement of communication with the interprofessional team,” said Susan Scott, MSN, RN, WOCN, quality and patient safety educator at UTHSC.

“The University of Tennessee is offering this type of event to train the physicians and nurses of the future to promote a safer health care system.”

Based on new estimates, the number of deaths attributed to adverse events in U.S. hospitals is 220,000 to 440,000 a year. As of July 2013, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requires that physicians become competent in patient safety and quality improvement during their residency programs.

Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools Meets at UTHSC

The Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools (TCGS) held its fall meeting on the UTHSC campus Oct. 13. Donald B. Thomason, PhD, dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences, is president of the TCGS. Founded in 1977, the TCGS has 41 member universities that educate more than 33,000 graduate students, and is formally affiliated with the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools and the Council of Graduate Schools. The purpose of the TCGS is to consider matters of common interest relating to graduate study and research, articulate the needs of graduate education, and influence public opinion and legislation for the improvement and advancement of graduate education.

UT President Joe DiPietro Named to SACS Board of Trustees

University of Tennessee President Joe DiPietro has been appointed a member of the board of trustees of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). DiPietro will be part of a 77-member body representing more than 800 institutions in 11 states along with some institutions in Latin America. Trustees have responsibility for determining policy, reviewing and making decisions on the accreditation of institutions, conducting initial review for any proposed dues changes or modifications to commission standards, and serving as a liaison between membership and commission staff. DiPietro will serve as a member of the Tennessee delegation.

“Accreditation in higher education, as in all education institutions, is important for setting standards and achieving and maintaining quality, and accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the gold standard to which all its member institutions aspire, including the University of Tennessee,” DiPietro said.

“I am a strong proponent of standards for students and of standards to ensure excellence in the institutions that educate students. I’m honored to have the opportunity through serving on this board to impact the quality of higher education throughout Tennessee and beyond.”

DiPietro became the 25th president of UT on Jan. 1, 2011. In that role, he is chief executive officer of the statewide UT System that includes the flagship campus in Knoxville, campuses in Chattanooga and Martin, the Health Science Center headquartered in Memphis, the Space Institute in Tullahoma, and statewide institutes of agriculture and public service. DiPietro also serves as chairman of the Board of Governors of UT-Battelle, which manages Oak Ridge National Laboratory for the Department of Energy, and as a member of the UT Board of Trustees and the board of directors of University Health System, which operates UT Medical Center.

Prior to becoming president, DiPietro was chancellor of the UT Institute of Agriculture from 2006 to 2010.
William Walsh, III, Named Interim Chief of Police

Ken Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE, executive vice chancellor and chief operations officer of UTHSC, has named William Walsh III, as interim chief of police.

“The combination of his law enforcement background and knowledge of the particular requirements of an academic community made Captain Walsh the right choice to serve as interim chief,” said Dr. Brown. “His ties with area law enforcement units and focus on strategic leadership of the department will serve him well in this demanding role.”

A Memphis native and retired police officer, Walsh previously worked as a captain for Campus Police at UTHSC. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of the State of New York and is currently pursuing his Master of Professional Studies degree with a concentration in Strategic Leadership. Walsh has been employed with the university since May 2012. He has previously held positions at Christian Brothers University, Saint Ann Catholic Church and the Memphis Police Department.

Walsh will provide command for timely and efficient patrol services, supervise campus police field operations 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, ensure proper training for law enforcement software systems, act as a “help desk” for system problems, monitor all shift activities to ensure policy and procedure compliance as well as manage mandatory training and certification required for Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified police officers, dispatchers and security officers.

Walsh’s other duties include serving as a liaison for other law enforcement agencies and security departments of hospitals in the Medical Center area concerning ongoing security/police matters of mutual interest. Affiliated entities include Homeland Security and the UTHSC Safety Office. He will also coordinate with the manager of the UTHSC Bio Safety Lab and Regional Biocontainment Laboratory for training and maintaining an approved response protocol for various accident or disaster events. The UTHSC chief of police position will report directly to the executive vice chancellor.

Walsh and his wife, Janet have three children, Anna, Will and Kate, and are expecting a grandchild.

Archbold Named Associate Dean of College of Nursing

Wendy M. Likes, PhD, DNsC, APRN-BC, interim dean of the College of Nursing at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC), has named Kristen Archbold, RN, PhD, as associate dean for Nursing Research, effective immediately.

Dr. Archbold comes to UTHSC from the University of Arizona, where she was a tenured research professor in the College of Nursing. She received her BSN in 1993 and PhD in nursing in 2001, both from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship in neurology at the University of Michigan. She then went to the University of Washington School of Nursing to complete another fellowship in 2003, and went on to become a research assistant professor.

Dr. Archbold is eager to continue her work at UTHSC. Her research is focused on understanding the links between sleep and neurobehavioral patterns in school-aged children, specifically, the impact of disrupted sleep architecture and chronic intermittent hypoxia on brain structure and function in children with obstructive sleep apnea. She is currently funded by the National Institutes of Health with an R01 grant in this area.

“I very much enjoy working with children and their families to help improve their quality and quantity of sleep,” said Dr. Archbold. “My work is of importance to the promotion of health and well-being of all children, as a healthy night’s sleep is critical to maximize growth and development trajectories in all children. Nurses are in a key position to facilitate the promotion of healthy sleep hygiene patterns in children and families of all ages.”

“We are excited Dr. Archbold has joined us,” said Dr. Likes. “She will be instrumental in further developing our scholarly portfolio and working with the faculty to set our research agenda for the upcoming years.”

Polly Hofmann, PhD, associate dean for faculty affairs in the College of Medicine at UTHSC, chaired the search committee.

Klesges to Chair Study Section for NIH

Robert C. Klesges, PhD, MS, BA, AA, professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC), is the new chair of the Community-Level Health Promotion Study Section for the Center for Scientific Review at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Members of the study section, which reviews grant applications and clinical, community and population research studies, are chosen based on their competence and achievement in their chosen specialty. They are selected for research accomplishments, publication in scientific journals, history of NIH funding, and honors.

As chair of the study section, one of several dozen standing sections, Dr. Klesges will play a key role in assuring the quality of the NIH peer review process for grants that total hundreds of millions of dollars annually and involve large-scale community intervention efforts.

“We review 80 to 100 grant applications three times a year, and we give a numerical score to each one,” he said. “The NIH then often funds based on those scores.”

According to Dr. Klesges, NIH study sections “have the responsibility for shaping the science, not for things you’ll be reading in journals today, but for the things you’ll be reading in journals five or six years from now.” His term as chair commences with a meeting in October, and will end June 30, 2016.

Dr. Klesges is the principal investigator for five NIH-funded studies and one study funded by the Department of Defense. Dr. Klesges has contributed to seven Surgeon General’s Reports on Smoking and Health, including the seminal one in 1988 that concluded that nicotine was as addictive as heroin.

He received his bachelor’s degree from Pepperdine University, and earned his master’s and doctorate degrees from the University of Wyoming. He then became a faculty member at North Dakota State University; and later spent 20 years on the faculty and as a researcher at the University of Memphis. In 2004, Dr. Klesges joined the faculty of the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and was a consultant for the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center’s Nicotine Dependence Center.

Since 2006, Dr. Klesges has been a professor in the UTHSC Department of Preventive Medicine, as well as an associate member of the Department of Epidemiology and Cancer Control at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. He is also the director of the Center for Population Sciences at UTHSC. Center for Population Sciences at UTHSC.
People

Kumar Honored with India’s Gandhi Award

Santosh Kumar, PharmD, associate professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, recently received the prestigious honor, “Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Samman” or the “Mahatma Gandhi Non-resident Indian Honor” from the Non-resident Indian (NRI) Welfare Society of India. The NRI society of India presents this honor to promote unity, progress, friendship, and cooperation. The award was presented by the President of India.

UT APhA-ASP Chapter Wins Awards, Regional Election

Atlanta hosted the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) Midyear Regional Meeting (MRM) this year. More than 800 students representing 25 colleges of pharmacy – including 100 from UTHSC – gathered for the largest Region III MRM ever. UTHSC’s APha-ASP chapter won the Regional Operation Heart Award and the Regional Operation Immunization Award. Monroe Crawley, second-year student pharmacist and UT APhA-ASP President-elect, was elected Region III Member-at-Large.

Evans Appointed to University of Tennessee Board of Trustees

Governor Bill Haslam recently appointed William E. Evans, PharmD, to the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees. Dr. Evans is one of four executives that have been appointed to the board from across the state. Dr. Evans served as Chief Executive Officer of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and is currently the Chief Executive Officer of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. He has served roles in the Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Sciences, and as a member of the Board of Scientific Counselors of the National Cancer Institute.

Tiffany Seagroves Leads MRC

Tiffany N. Seagroves, PhD, assumed responsibilities as executive director of the UTHSC Molecular Resource Center, succeeding Rajendra Raghow, PhD. Dr. Seagroves is an associate professor in the Department of Pathology, director of the Gevins Small Animal Imaging Core of the Cancer Research Building and co-track director of the Cancer and Developmental Biology track of the PhD Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences graduate program.

She was recruited to UTHSC in 2005 as the first faculty hire for the Cancer Research Building. A founding member of the UTHSC Postdoctoral Association, she serves as president of the College of Medicine Dean’s Faculty Advisory Committee.

Brandy DeWeese Selected for Future Leaders Program

Brandy DeWeese, DNP, FNP graduate 2013, was selected for the first class of American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANN) Future Leaders Program, a highly competitive program (10 applicants selected for the first class) dedicated to developing the leadership abilities of the profession. Dr. DeWeese has served on multiple committees in the college and, since graduation, worked to advance full practice authority in Tennessee despite having moved to Washington.

Tommie Norris Honored

Tommie Norris was awarded the Alma E. Gault Leadership Award on Oct. 11 from the Tennessee Nurses Association. This recognizes a member who demonstrates outstanding leadership qualities by active involvement in projects, organizations, or programs with a focus on improving the health of the population; utilization of strategies such as political involvement, legal action, or raising public opinion; and demonstration of the capacity to inspire others, within and outside of nursing, to actively support improved health for the community.

Pharmaceutical Sciences Grad Students Win Awards

Two PhD candidates in the Pharmaceutical Sciences were honored at the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Annual Meeting and Exposition Nov. 2-6 in San Diego. Ashit Trivedi received the 2014 AAPS Graduate Student Research in Pharmacokinetics, Pharmacodynamics, and Drug Metabolism and Clinical Pharmacology and Translational Research Award for his work involving novel antituberculosis agents called spectinomides. Bivash Mandal received the 2014 AAPS Graduate Student Research in Formulation Design and Development Award for his work in targeted drug delivery to EGFR-overexpressing lung cancer cells.

Brdrn Meibohm, PhD, said, “This is one of the highest awards you can achieve as a graduate student in Pharmaceutical Sciences,” adding that this is the first time two students from UT College of Pharmacy have received the awards in the same year.

Dr. Kumar Named Interim Chair of IHOP

Sajeesh Kumar, PharmD, associate professor in the Health Informatics and Information Management program in the College of Health Professions, has agreed to serve as interim executive director of the Institute for Health Outcomes and Policy (IHOP) in the College of Graduate Health Sciences. Dr. Kumar also will chair the Health Outcomes and Policy Research PhD Program.

National Trauma Institute Appoints Dr. Croce to Board

The National Trauma Institute (NTI) welcomed Martin Croce, MD, to its board of directors. He is professor of Surgery and chief of the Division of Trauma and Critical Care at UTHSC. He also completed his medical education and residency at UTHSC.

“I am excited and humbled to be appointed to the NTI Board,” said Dr. Croce. “It is an honor to be part of an organization that is dedicated to understanding the epidemic of trauma. To advocate for a condition that is the leading cause of death for citizens up to age 44, and accounts for more years of potential life lost than cancer and heart disease combined, is a privilege.”

“We’re very optimistic about acquiring the funding for both a repository and a clinical trials network,” said Gregory J. Jurkovich, who chairs the board of directors. “Dr. Croce is sure to add influence and enthusiasm to our efforts.”

For more information, go to nationaltraumainstitute.org.

Submit information and photos to tbullar1@uthsc.edu by Jan. 9.

Communications & Marketing: Tim Ballard, Editor
Amber Carter
Sheila Champlin
Thurman Hobson
David Meyer
Jane Pate
Peggy Reisser

The Record is online at www.uthsc.edu/record.
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The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title V/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services.
TodayCare to Close Dec. 31

To UTHSC Faculty and Staff,

As you may know, in August, Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare announced the difficult decision to close TodayCare. Over the past few months, UTHSC administrators have promoted discussions with several area institutions in an attempt to find a solution that would keep TodayCare open, despite the small number of UTHSC team members who have used TodayCare’s services. Unfortunately, we were unable to find an alternative solution, thus, TodayCare will close effective Dec. 31.

Donna Winfrey, corporate director of Benefits & Wellness for Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, said that “TodayCare has been a huge help for those who have taken advantage of this benefit,” but added that “only a very small percentage of Methodist associates have used TodayCare’s services. Unfortunately, the program is not sustainable at such a small usage rate.”

In addition to staying open until year-end, TodayCare is providing parents with a list of area childcare facilities and contact information. We trust any UTHSC employees who are using TodayCare will take full advantage of any resources the service can provide to secure alternative childcare services.

Kennard Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operations Officer

News from UTMG

Andrew ‘Drew’ Botschner Appointed CEO for UTMG

Botschner was previously an owner/operator and general counsel for CarePoint Partners LLC, a Cincinnati-based provider of pharmacy and related services for physicians who need home-based infusion services.

“Drew brings strong experience that will benefit us as we continue to move UTMG forward,” said Dr. David M. Stern, who chairs UTMG’s board of directors and is Robert Kaplan Executive Dean of the College of Medicine at UTHSC.

Dr. Stern added, “His experience in healthcare as an attorney, businessman and administrator will help take our organization to the next level. In his role as general counsel for UC Physicians, he was an integral part of re-engineering the practice plan to its currently very successful form. During the course of this work, he worked extensively with physicians and administrators in multiple health systems.”

Botschner earned his bachelor’s and law degrees from Wake Forest University and an MBA from Xavier University.

Petros Konofanos Joins Department of Plastic Surgery

A native of Greece, Petros Konofanos, MD, earned his medical degree at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki School of Health Sciences. He completed residency in general surgery at Laiko General Hospital and Prefectural Hospital of Nafplio, followed by residency in plastic surgery at KAT Hospital in Athens, a residency in reconstructive microsurgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Virginia, and a fellowship in microsurgery at UTHSC.

An assistant professor at UTHSC, he is known for his expertise in migraine surgery, craniofacial surgery, and nerve microsurgery.

UT Center for Reproductive Medicine Earns Accreditation

The American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM) has granted a three-year accreditation in gynecologic and first trimester obstetric ultrasound to the UTHSC Center for Reproductive Medicine. The practice is the Mid-South’s only fertility center to earn AIUM accreditation.

Laura Detti, MD, heads the center, which offers infertility testing and treatment, including in vitro fertilization. She is a board certified reproductive endocrinologist and associate professor of OB/GYN at the UTHSC.

The AIUM is a multidisciplinary association of more than 9,000 physicians, sonographers, scientists, students and others.

Grants

Anna Bukiya, PhD
$393,750 over two years
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
“Fetal Cerebrovascular eCB System as a Target of Maternal Alcohol Consumption”

Ivan Gerling, PhD
$1,397,704 over three years
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
“Defining Islet Heterogeneity Using Single Islet Transcriptomics”

Susan Miranda, PhD
$1.6 million over five years
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
“Determining the Mechanism of How GATA4 Directs ERα Binding in Osteoblasts”

Shalini Narayana, PhD
$677,385 over three years
Michael J. Fox Foundation
“Augmenting Treatment Effects of Voice Therapy in Parkinson’s Disease”

Kristen O’Connell, PhD
$1,607,325 over five years
National Institute of Arthritis and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
“Modulation of AgRP Neuronal Excitability: Role of Diet and Body Weight”

Rennolds Ostrom, PhD
$165,000
American Heart Association
“Understanding Basic Biochemical and Cell Biological Processes that Govern how Cells Respond to Hormones in the Blood and Signals from the Brain”

Kazuko Sakata, PhD
$375,000 over two years
National Institute of Mental Health
“Neural Mechanisms of Inflexible Learning Caused by BDNF Deficiency”

Dong Wang, PhD, MD
$308,000 over four years
American Heart Association
“The Corin-ANP Axis in Myocardial Infarction and Ischemic Cardiomyopathy”

Ae-Kyung Yi, PhD
$1.6 million over five years
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
“TLR11L-1R Signaling Intermediaries and a Target-Specific Therapeutic for Arthritis”

Weiqiang Zhang, PhD
$1,874,750 over five years
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
“Characterization of an Inhibitory Protein Complex for Cystic Fibrosis Therapy”
Student Spotlight: Louis ‘Nick’ Saites

Nick Saites

“Our destiny changes with our thoughts; we shall become what we wish to become, do what we wish to do, when our habitual thoughts correspond with our desires.”
— Orison Swett Marden

This is the mindset of Louis “Nick” Saites, third-year student in the College of Graduate Health Sciences.

Saites, who grew up with siblings Jessica and Alexander, says that while his parents were loving, “they struggled with addictive behaviors and sometimes poor judgment, but the experience no doubt influenced the person I am today. I'm persevering, resilient, and successful. Most of all, I strive to help others facing issues similar to the ones I did.”

It was his love of science that helped him stay on course to make a better life for himself. “I fell in love with science at an early age,” said Saites. “I wanted to know how everything worked, including people. It was tough to choose between research and medicine. So I chose both. Aside from that, I'm close to many people — friends and family — who struggle with addictive behaviors.

As my love of research and medicine matured, I also came to find a calling to study addiction and its treatment.”

Saites attended Marshall County High School where he was involved in the Beta Club, Boy Scouts, the marching band, the football team, a heavy metal band, and three church mission trips. He finished eighth in a class of 160. Upon graduation, Saites enrolled in Columbia State Community College to cut expenses and complete core coursework, then transferred to Middle Tennessee State University where he majored in biology, concentrated in physiology, and minored in chemistry.

While immersed in academia, Saites made time to be involved with multiple research experiences, including localizing the protein lactoferrin in normal and abnormal human breast tissue using an immunohistochemical technique to elucidate the protein's role in breast cancer. He was an assistant instructor in one of MTSU’s Chemistry for Consumers classes. He was also a member of the Student National Medical Association, and shadowed several physicians. “In Murfreesboro, I volunteered at the hospital and a pharmaceutical dispensary for indigent people,” Saites remembered.

“I helped out a local group — aiming to build an orphanage in South Sudan — with fundraising and promoting.”

Other accolades Saites achieved included being recognized as one of MTSU Department of Chemistry's BEST Undergraduate Students and being awarded the Wade Gilbert Scholarship for outstanding performance by the MTSU Department of Physics, a summer research award, and a STEPmt Research Grant. He made the dean's list for five consecutive semesters, graduating cum laude.

“I came to UTHSC because it had the combined benefit of being close to home and, more importantly, having several top-notch researchers studying the neurobiology and treatment of addiction,” Saites explained.

Once settled in, Saites wasted no time getting involved. He is currently a Neuroscience Track Representative and chair of the Outreach Committee for the Graduate Student Executive Committee (GSEC). “As the President of GSEC last year, we began a campaign to engage more students in our college's student government, and I've continued to help GSEC with that effort this year,” Saites shared. “We're creating more ways for students to interact with the college’s administration and GSEC, including updating our Blackboard account, the CGHS student community.”

Additionally, Saites serves as a College of Graduate Health Sciences representative and chair of the Community Outreach Committee for the Interprofessional Student Council. “As the chair of two outreach committees, I’m working to streamline participation of UTHSC’s students in their annual running of water stations for the St. Jude marathon,” Saites explained. “I was also inducted into the Imhotep Society this spring.”

Saites likes to read, write, camp, hike, travel, cook, and watch films. “I’ve camped all over Tennessee, including our close by Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park in Millington,” Saites shared. “I like to hike there too, but my favorite place to hike is South Cumberland State Park. I haven't traveled much, but I know I like it. I’m fascinated by the way landscapes and cultures change from one place to another. My favorite place I’ve been so far was Tucson, Arizona, because its landscape was so different than anything else I had seen up to that point in my life. If I could only go to one place anywhere on earth, I would choose a secluded, warm, sandy beach where I could have a campfire and a small group of friends.”

Saites presented research from his lab at the Association for Chemoreception Sciences, and completed and submitted his first paper to the journal Chemical Senses. He is currently researching addictive feeding behavior and the brain's mechanisms for extracting reward information from the taste and enteric nervous systems.

“Students are the reason the college exists,” Saites said. “They should be here to gain the best education they can. It makes the difference between surviving and thriving. By taking a role in shaping their program, student involvement ensures that the education students receive is exactly right for them.”

Saites has these words of wisdom for incoming grad students. “The most important thing you should do is find what you’re passionate about. No matter what you do in life, if it’s worth pursuing, it’s going to involve challenges. If you find and pursue your passion, you will love the challenges just as much as you love the cake walks. The field for graduate students is rapidly changing. We're constantly reminded of this by our professors and, unfortunately, sometimes we're discouraged. But if you know it's your dream career, don't give up on it. With that said, have back up plans for your back up plans.”

Despite all his achievements during his time here at UTHSC, however, Saites feels that his most notable accomplishment comes from his ability to persevere over his circumstances. “I have successfully overcome the addictive behaviors that held me back for many years,” said Saites. “I had to learn to set boundaries in relationships, foster healthy relationships with healthy people, and better align my actions with my goals. I’m extremely fortunate to have learned these skills sooner rather than later. I’m much more focused and motivated. Furthermore, I appreciate the opportunity to improve our community's ability to rehabilitate individuals overcoming their addictive behaviors.”

Upon graduation, Saites has absolutely no intentions of slowing down. He would like to work in or create a clinic/lab where he does research and treats patients.

“Want to use the knowledge I scientifically discovered to develop better treatments for individuals overcoming addictive behaviors,” said Saites.

“To do this, I plan to attend medical school after I earn my PhD. A residency in either a psychiatric or neurology specialty will most likely be my next stop. Then, I’ll go from there based on what I learn along the way.”