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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

# Advisory

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 1, 2014

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### 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Carol of Lights Celebration Coming Tuesday

Everyone is invited to celebrate the holiday season with Texas Tech University in person or online as more than 20,000 colored lights illuminate the campus.

WHAT: 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Carol of Lights: Celebrating Spirit and Tradition

WHEN: 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesday (Dec. 2)

WHERE: Memorial Circle and Science Quad, Texas Tech University campus

EVENT: Texas Tech University will host the 56<sup>th</sup> annual Carol of Lights holiday event Tuesday, "Celebrating Spirit and Tradition." The celebration begins at 6:30 p.m. with the Carillon Concert followed by the lighting ceremony at 7 p.m. at Memorial Circle and the Carol Concert at 8 p.m. at Hemmle Recital Hall.

Hosted by the university's [Residence Halls Association](#) (RHA), the event features performances of traditional carols by the Texas Tech choirs and a torch-light procession led by the Saddle Tramps and High Riders spirit organizations. The procession will start at the university seal at the Broadway Avenue entrance and follow the lighted route around Memorial Circle to the Science Quad.

This year, those unable to attend Carol of Lights can listen live to the ceremony on KTXT-FM 88.1 or watch the event online [here](#) hosted live by KTTZ-TV. For those at home, Lubbock residents can watch Carol of Lights on Suddenlink channel 128 or Over the Air on CREATE TV channel 5.2.

Parking is available in the north commuter parking lot near Jones AT&T Stadium. Campus streets in the vicinity of Memorial Circle will close at 5:30 p.m. and will remain closed until the completion of the event. Increased handicapped parking will be available in the R1 parking lot north of 15<sup>th</sup> Street directly behind the chemistry building. A campus map is available [here](#).

The Silent Raiders will provide signers for those with hearing impairments. Any individual needing special accommodations related to a disability can email RHA at [rha@ttu.edu](mailto:rha@ttu.edu).

The lights will be on from dusk until midnight each day through Jan. 1.

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*An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution*

For more information about the celebration, please visit the Carol of Lights [website](#).

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 2, 2014

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### **Law Professor Appointed to NCAA Governing Council**

Shannon will begin his new duties at the January 2015 NCAA Convention.

The NCAA Division I Board of Directors on Tuesday approved the appointment of [Brian Shannon](#), the Charles B. “Tex” Thornton Professor of Law at [Texas Tech University School of Law](#), to serve on the new NCAA Division I Council.

The Division I Council is a part of the recently completed overhaul of the NCAA’s governance structure. The Council will have primary responsibility for Division I legislation, developing and recommending policies to the Board of Directors and supervising and acting on a wide array of issues, including NCAA championships.

“I am pleased and honored to have the opportunity to serve on the new Council,” Shannon said. “The NCAA and its member institutions have a strong historical commitment to the collegiate model. This means as future policy is developed, we must recognize and embrace our student-athletes’ opportunities to develop fully not only on the field or court, but also in the classroom and in their pursuit of a college degree; not only as superb athletes, but also as well-rounded students fully integrated into the full range of campus life; and not only for their efforts as members of a collegiate athletic team, but also for their future contributions as citizens.”

The new Council is composed of 40 members, including a representative from each of the 32 conferences within NCAA Division I, four conference commissioners, two student-athletes and two faculty athletics representatives.

Shannon has served as the NCAA faculty athletics representative (FAR) at Texas Tech since 2008 and is serving his second term as national president of 1A FAR. Shannon’s peers within 1A FAR recommended him for the appointment.

“We are proud of Brian not only for his service to Texas Tech University but to intercollegiate athletics as a whole,” Texas Tech President M. Duane Nellis said. “He is a tireless champion of ensuring that the ‘student’ in student-athlete is well represented on campus, in the Big 12 Conference and nationally. Brian’s dedication to Texas Tech University as a law professor is matched by his integrity and passion for the success of

our student-athletes. He is a leader on our campus but also a great representative of Texas Tech on the national stage.”

Shannon was appointed to a seat on the Council designated for a member of 1A FAR, which is the association of faculty athletics representatives at the 125 NCAA Division I institutions in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), formerly known as Division I-A. These schools are from the various FBS conferences including the Big 12, Big Ten, Atlantic Coast Conference, Southeast Conference, Pac-12, Conference USA and others.

“Brian Shannon is a tremendous leader in higher education and intercollegiate athletics,” Texas Tech Athletics Director Kirby Hocutt said. “With his commitment to student-athlete welfare and comprehensive excellence, he continually focuses and leads with the values that are so important to both Texas Tech University and nationally. I am extremely pleased that Brian will be serving on this new national Council at a time when there are significant external challenges facing intercollegiate athletics.”

Find Texas Tech news, experts and story ideas at [Texas Tech Today Media Resources](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 2, 2014

CONTACT: George Watson, [george.watson@ttu.edu](mailto:george.watson@ttu.edu)  
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### **Texas Tech's Sequencing of Cotton A-genome Could Revolutionize Industry**

The accomplishment through collaboration with Bayer CropScience could translate into better commercial varieties for growers.

A team of researchers at Texas Tech University, in collaboration with Bayer CropScience and the National Center for Genome Resources (NGCR) have developed a view into the structure of the cotton A-genome.

This is a significant accomplishment in the sequencing of the cotton genome, which will fuel multi-disciplinary basic and applied research to help increase cotton productivity.

"This information will significantly advance cotton research worldwide," said Michael Galyean, dean of the [College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources](#). "The genome sequence will eventually lead to improved cotton varieties containing environmentally friendly traits, which are preferred by producers, processors, manufacturers and consumers."

The annotated draft genome assembly being released is from the African/Asian species *Gossypium arboreum*, an extant representative of the cotton A-genome lineage paired with the D-genome lineage making up present day cultivated cottons. The A-genome species gave rise to spinnable fiber, eventually leading to the modern-day textile industry.

The draft sequence of *G. arboreum* is deposited in Genbank and is scheduled to be released to the public today.

Thea Wilkins, former professor of cotton genomics in Texas Tech's [Department of Plant and Soil Sciences](#), led the approach to unravel the genetic mystery of this species. She collaborated with scientists at Bayer CropScience and next-generation genomic sequencing technology and biocomputing providers KeyGene and NCGR.

This team's delivery of this high-quality genome sequence presents an unprecedented view into the structure of the A-genome, which will accelerate research efforts for improving cultivated cotton.

Cotton production contributes substantially to economies throughout the globe. Collaborative research projects such as this will help to increase that contribution. Don Jones, director of agricultural research at Cotton Incorporated, said this sequence knowledge is another tool for improving commercial cotton.

“This accomplishment is another cornerstone in understanding the biology that leads to higher yield, improved fiber quality and better stress tolerance while reducing inputs used in producing the crop,” Jones said.

This research was completed under a public-private partnership between the State of Texas, Texas Tech and Bayer CropScience. Mike Gilbert, vice president of global breeding and trait development at Bayer CropScience, said this accomplishment is another great example of the synergy that can be created to deliver innovation in cotton and improve the sustainability and economic value from the farm to the consumer.

“Through our collaborative cotton research program, Bayer CropScience and Texas Tech University under the umbrella of the Texas Research Incentive Program have partnered to create cutting-edge programs in fiber science and genomics to advance cotton knowledge and products,” Gilbert said. “Together we are committed to providing long-lasting solutions for growers and the global cotton community.”

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# Advisory

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 3, 2014

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### **Musicians Bring Celtic Christmas to Texas Tech in Annual Concert**

The Caprock Celtic Christmas concert highlights traditional song and dance from Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales and Hungary.

**WHAT:** The 14<sup>th</sup> annual Caprock Celtic Christmas concert, a gala celebration of seasonal songs, tunes, dances and stories from the Celtic people, performed by The Vernacular Music Center, the College of Visual and Performing Arts, the Caprock Celtic Association and the Roots Music Institute

**WHEN:** 7 p.m. Dec. 11

**WHERE:** Maedgen Theater, 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Canton Avenue

The annual Caprock Celtic Christmas concert features singers, players, dancers and storytellers performing traditional repertoires of the season, including traditional Irish, Scot and Cape Breton; Irish- and English-language traditional songs; American shape-note hymns; instrumental dance tunes and slow airs and much more. Special guests include Alabama Rick Cunningham, Roger Landes, Angela Mariani and Curtis Peoples. The Texas Tech Irish Set-Dancers will provide half sets, Cape Breton dances and “Hurry the Jug.” The Eagle’s Heart Sisters will perform improvisational modern dance to traditional tunes, with choreography from Nicole Wesley; Caprock Morris dance team will perform the wild capers of the Border Morris, and the Texas Tech Celtic Ensemble presents Scottish fiddle music, Swedish *polskas*, Irish set dances, symphonic *sean-nos* songs, Hungarian marches and the Welsh mid-Winter hobbyhorse called Mari Lwyd.

The concert will include performances from poets and readers Daniel Hogan, William Gelber, Benjamin Robinette and Kathleen Blackburn, with selections from Dylan Thomas, Seanus Heaney, Ciarán Carson and William Butler Yeats.

Tickets, which raise funds for the Vernacular Music Center Scholarship at Texas Tech, are available via Select-a-Seat: 770-

2000 or [www.selectseatlubbock.com](http://www.selectseatlubbock.com) (general admission \$11; seniors \$5) as well as at the door. Students (with valid student ID) get in free.

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 3, 2014

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### **Worldwide eLearning Nationally Ranked for Affordability, High-Quality Education**

Texas Tech's online education program received three recognitions and is the only university in Texas to be selected.

Texas Tech University's [Worldwide eLearning](#) online education program recently received three national recognitions for its services.

A list from the [Affordable Colleges Foundation](#) ranked Texas Tech No. 6 out of 46 universities in the United States for its affordability and economical degrees. Texas Tech is the only ranked university in Texas.

"Offering a quality online education is imperative to Texas Tech University's future growth," Nellis said. "We have begun focusing more on online offerings to enable convenient access to potential students and working professionals from anywhere in the world. Texas Tech's Worldwide eLearning is rapidly establishing itself as a destination for higher education."

The ranking includes nonprofit and state institutions offering a wide variety of online degrees that demonstrate a history of academic excellence and financial support. To qualify for the list, colleges/universities must charge less than \$500 per credit hour and maintain a six-year graduation rate of more than 50 percent.

Texas Tech's Worldwide eLearning charges \$198 per credit hour with a 59 percent six-year graduation rate. The online education program offers a variety of degrees from nuclear engineering to personal finance, general studies, plant and soil sciences and family and consumer sciences education.

Worldwide eLearning has several degree programs available online:

- Five undergraduate minors
- Four bachelor's degrees
- 15 master's degrees
- Four doctoral degrees
- 21 graduate certificates
- Six graduate certification preparation programs

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“Texas Tech has a long history with distance education,” Vice Provost Melanie Hart said. “Although the delivery modalities have changed over the years, the desire to provide students with the opportunities to succeed in high-quality courses and programs has not changed.

“The programs offered through Texas Tech’s Worldwide eLearning allow students from throughout the globe to obtain an affordable education, with the offering of high-quality courses and programs as the utmost priority.”

### **Best colleges for online master’s degrees in computer science**

Texas Tech has three computer science master’s degrees recently ranked fifth out of 43 universities in the nation for their affordability, job placement for graduates, percentage of students receiving financial aid, quality of education and graduation rate.

Texas Tech’s online program is the only university in Texas in this ranking.

Higher education experts analyzed data from colleges and universities offering a high-quality education for an affordable price and student services to help young professionals get the graduate education they need. The schools listed in the ranking provide flexible learning and academic rigor in one of the fastest-growing industries today.

“We recently have made all of our graduate courses accessible for our distance students,” said Rattikorn Hewett, professor and department chairman for computer science in the Whitacre College of Engineering. “Our program tries to balance the quality of the course and its accessibility. Students can enroll in the courses and watch the recorded lectures at their convenience. Distance students are able to experience the same instructions as on-campus students, which is very appealing to non-traditional students.”

The three computer science programs offered through Worldwide eLearning include a master of arts in technical communication, master of science in software engineering and master of science in systems and engineering management.

### **Best online master in educational technology degree programs**

Texas Tech’s [Master of Education in Instructional Technology](#) program was ranked No. 22 out of 25 by [TheBestSchools.org](#) as a top online school for educational technology.

The 39-credit program, provided by the [College of Education](#), features two education tracks: educational computing and distance education. Courses are offered over a two-year period, and students must pass a comprehensive exam to complete the program.

Texas Tech was included in the ranking for its strong foundation in research, curriculum and teaching skills. Curriculum theory includes foundations, educational psychology,



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computer programming for educators, video-based distance learning and instructional software design.

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# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 4, 2014

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### **Texas Tech Listed in Top Graduate Programs Rankings**

The university had nine programs listed among the Top 25 nationwide.

A number of Texas Tech University graduate programs recently were ranked among the top 25 in the country, according to [GraduatePrograms.com](http://GraduatePrograms.com).

The online guide ranks higher education programs based on student evaluations, which cover a variety of topics, such as academic competitiveness, career support, financial aid, and quality of network. For a given graduate program, rankings were determined by calculating the average score for each program based on the 15 ranking categories. Rankings reflect both current and recent students attending graduate programs at more than 1,500 schools.

“These rankings are recognition of the many excellent graduate programs we have at Texas Tech,” said Mark Sheridan, vice provost for graduate and postdoctoral affairs. “Students enrolled in these programs receive a high-quality experience and are better prepared to enter the job market and advance in their careers. These rankings also play a role in helping attract top applicants into our graduate programs in the future.”

Texas Tech was ranked in the following programs:

- Sociology (5)
- Architecture (7)
- Kinesiology (7)
- Nutrition (12)
- Physical Therapy (12)
- Occupational Therapy (14)
- Medical (17)
- Mathematics (18)
- Animal Science (19)

To view the full list visit <http://www.graduateprograms.com/graduate-school-rankings/>

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 4, 2014

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### **Texas Tech University Libraries Receives New Collection**

ThinkTech added conference proceedings to its repository in October.

The [Texas Tech University Library's](#) institutional repository, [ThinkTech](#), recently received and added the 44th International Conference on Environmental Systems (ICES) proceedings to its online collection.

There are 190 papers about topics involving human spaceflight technology in the collection from the conference hosted in July in Tucson, Arizona. The conference covered subjects relating to thermal and environmental control and included speakers involved with NASA and Virgin Galactic. The opportunity to receive the conference papers was presented by Andrew Jackson, a professor in the [Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering](#), who also is a member of the ICES Steering Committee.

“The University Library is pleased to partner with Professor Andrew Jackson and the International Conference of Environmental Systems to provide access to this collection,” said Christopher Starcher, associate librarian. “For the first time, the important research presented at this conference is available online and free of charge in an open access repository.”

The collection is available online for anyone to access and will be a permanent part of the ThinkTech collection. ThinkTech is an online publishing and archival service where scholarly works are distributed and archived, according to the [website](#). The service is available to Texas Tech students and faculty. To view the papers, click [here](#).

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 8, 2014

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### **Texas Tech Announces Fall 2014 Commencement Schedule**

Texas Tech University will host fall commencement ceremonies Friday and Saturday (Dec. 12-13) at United Supermarkets Arena, where more than 2,300 students will graduate. The [School of Law](#) wraps up the weekend with its hooding ceremony Saturday at the School of Law Lanier Auditorium.

Mica R. Endsley, chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force and Texas Tech alumna, will speak at the commencement ceremonies. Kem Thompson Frost, chief justice of the 14th Court of Appeals of Texas and School of Law alumna, will speak at the law hooding ceremony.

“This is a special moment in the lives of these graduates and on behalf of their fellow students, faculty and staff, I congratulate them on this wonderful milestone,” President M. Duane Nellis said. “Graduates of Texas Tech University leave here equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to make valuable impacts on our society. We are proud of all of our graduates – past, present and future.”

Endsley received her bachelor’s degree in industrial engineering in 1982 from Texas Tech. She received her master’s degree from Purdue University and her doctorate from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. She is the chief scientific adviser to the chief of staff and Secretary of the Air Force. She previously was president of SA Technologies in Marietta, Georgia. She served as a visiting associate professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics as well as an associate professor of industrial engineering at Texas Tech.

Frost received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas, her juris doctor from the Texas Tech School of Law in 1983, and her master of laws from Duke University School of Law in 2014. She was appointed to the 14th Court of Appeals in Houston in 1999 and was appointed chief justice in 2013. Frost, a Houston native and a sixth-generation Texan, practiced civil trial and appellate law for 15 years before assuming the bench. She serves on several boards, including the Texas Tech Law School Foundation and the Texas Center for Legal Ethics.

Friday ceremonies:

- **3 p.m.** College of Arts and Sciences

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- **7 p.m.** Graduate School

Saturday ceremonies:

- **9 a.m.** College of Architecture, College of Education, Whitacre College of Engineering, College of Human Sciences and College of Visual and Performing Arts
- **1:30 p.m.** College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Rawls College of Business, College of Media and Communication, University Programs and Wind Energy
- **5 p.m.** School of Law Hooding Ceremony

Ceremonies can be viewed online at <http://www.ttu.edu/livestream/>. They also will be aired on Suddenlink channel 128.

The School of Law hooding ceremony can be viewed live at <http://mediaservices.law.ttu.edu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=8dbb390e-2a19-4c68-9652-1fc1eea36066>.

For more information about commencement, including maps, parking, hotels and college receptions, visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/commencement/index.php>.

For more information about the hooding ceremony, including, parking, maps and reception information, visit [http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall\\_2014/](http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall_2014/).

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 10, 2014

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### **Task Force on Greek Organization Culture Releases Preliminary Report**

Texas Tech University's Task Force on Greek Organization Culture presented its initial findings and recommendations to President M. Duane Nellis on Monday following an extensive and thorough evaluation of organizational policies and procedures throughout the fall semester.

The task force identified six key categories, containing 29 interim and long-term recommendations: new member experiences, leadership development, responsible social events, accountability and reporting, stakeholder communications, and staffing and resources. Each category is presented more in-depth within the Interim Report of the Texas Tech Task Force on Greek Organization Culture, which is located on the task force [website](#).

"Dr. (Juan) Muñoz and the task force's recommendations offer much-needed enhancements to our current policies and procedures, and I applaud them for their effort to this point," Nellis said. "And, while these recommendations will be implemented immediately, they are the first phase of our efforts. The task force will continue to meet during the spring semester and continue to evaluate and criticize our processes until we are satisfied we have made significant improvements for the future of our organizations."

Charged by Nellis and Texas Tech University System Chancellor Robert Duncan in early October with reviewing the university's policies, procedures and education programs pertaining to Greek organizations on campus, the task force held five meetings, each featuring speakers and reports from various department and campus organization leaderships.

"The group was thoughtful in its review of the many diverse perspectives and expectations of fraternity and sorority life," Muñoz said. "The interim report contains recommendations that will provide a strong foundation for continued work in the spring semester and provide opportunities to engage other stakeholders in these ongoing efforts to improve the fraternity and sorority culture at Texas Tech University."

The task force based its recommendations on noticeable themes that emerged during the meetings. Among the issues were the absence of consistent guidelines and sanctions for misbehavior; recurring violations of recruitment policies and procedures; lack of skill building and leadership development among Greek members; alcohol use and abuse; and

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sexual misconduct.

“Our task now is to methodically and assertively implement the identified recommendations, while continuing to meet and refine our proactive steps to ensure a Greek culture that is consistent with the high values and traditions of Texas Tech,” said Dr. Amy Murphy, dean of students and task force member.



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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 10, 2014

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### **Texas Tech Creates President's Graduate Fellowships**

The fellowships are funded in part by the Whitacre Graduate Fellowship Endowment.

Texas Tech University has created the President's Graduate Fellowships, which will showcase the importance of graduate education and attract high quality applicants to Texas Tech.

"Graduate education is a centerpiece of a top-tier university and plays a critical role in meeting the workforce demands of a knowledge-based global economy," Graduate School Dean Mark Sheridan said. "The creation of the President's Graduate Fellowships will assure the recruitment of the most qualified graduate students, thereby enabling the expansion of Texas Tech University's scholarly enterprise and affirming its commitment to securing the economic vitality of the region, state and nation."

The President's Graduate Fellowships are funded in part by the Ed and Linda Whitacre Graduate Fellowship Endowment. The fellowships will provide a stipend of up to \$32,000 per year, comparable to the prestigious National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship, and will be awarded on a competitive basis to applicants in any of the university's doctoral programs. Awards will include tuition and a \$2,000/year research and travel allowance, renewable contingent upon progress, for up to five years.

"We appreciate the support of Ed and Linda Whitacre, whose lead gift helped partially fund this important program," Texas Tech President M. Duane Nellis said.

For additional information about the Presidential Fellowships click [here](#).

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# News Release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1 p.m. CST Dec. 11, 2014**

DATE: Dec. 11, 2014

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## **Texas Tech Biologist Leads Group That Mapped Crocodilian Genomes**

Understanding these reptiles' genome can help scientists better understand birds.

A Texas Tech University biologist led a team of more than 50 scientists who mapped the genomes of three crocodilians.

By mapping these genomes, scientists may better understand the evolution of birds, which are the toothy predators' closest living relatives, said David Ray, an associate professor of biology. The team completed genomes of a crocodile, an alligator and a true gharial to complete the genomic family portrait.

Their research, largely funded by the National Science Foundation, will appear Friday (Dec. 12) in the peer-reviewed journal, *Science*.

"One of the major finds in our case was that crocodilian genomes change very slowly when compared to birds," Ray said. "We compared both birds and crocodilians to turtles, which are the closest living relatives of the group that includes both birds and crocodilians. We found that they evolved slowly also. The best explanation for this is that the common ancestor of all three was a 'slow evolver,' which in turn suggests that rapid evolution is something that evolved independently in birds."

Research began in 2009 as an attempt to map only 1 percent of crocodilian DNA. However, shortly after starting, the price for mapping a million bases dropped from \$1,000 eventually down to \$1.

"We had proposed to sequence about 2.4 million bases from the three crocodilians in the original proposal," Ray said. "By the time we got the funds, it became clear that we could easily accomplish a thousand times that much and could afford to sequence an entire genome of 3 billion bases."

Ray said that when biologists look at a group of organisms, they look for what makes that group unique as well as what all members of one group of organisms share that other groups do not. The best way to do that is to examine their closest relatives.

“Technically, birds’ closest relatives are the dinosaurs,” he said. “So we can only look at their fossils and this can provide only limited information on their biology when compared to examining organisms that are alive today. We get insight into differences in behavior, structures that don’t fossilize, and in our case, the makeup of the genome.”

Ray said he and other scientists were surprised to see how genetically uniform the alligators that the group sequenced were. Initially, the group suspected severe hunting during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century may be to blame.

“Because alligators underwent a severe population decline, we first thought that might be what happened,” he said. “However, we see the same pattern in all three species and the likelihood that all three were subject to the same genetic bottlenecks is small. We suggested instead that change just occurs slowly in crocodylians. In other words, it wasn’t that the genetic differences were reduced because of overhunting. Rather, the amount of variation in crocodylians is low because change simply occurs slowly in these genomes.”

The DNA in alligators, crocodiles and gharials is about 93 percent identical across the genome. By comparison, a human shares about 93 percent of his or her DNA with a macaque.

“The difference is that humans and macaques shared a common ancestor around 23 million years ago while alligators and crocodiles shared a common ancestor in the much more distant past, around 90 million years ago,” he said. “That means that things are changing in primate genomes about four times faster than in crocodylians.”

Ed Green, an assistant professor of biomolecular engineering at University of California, Santa Cruz, has worked on several mammalian genomes, including that of Neanderthals. He said he didn’t expect such slow genetic changes seen in these reptiles.

“Crocodylian genomes are really interesting because they appear to have changed so little over time,” Green said. “From the perspective of someone who knows a lot about mammalian genomes, reptiles are strange in how static they are. Crocs and gators are especially static.

“Like most genome projects, the assembly and annotation is only the beginning. There is some fascinating biology in Crocodylia like temperature-dependent sex determination. Male and female crocodylians are genetically identical, and we’d love to know how that works. We’re also now in the position to start looking hard at the genomes of the common ancestor of crocs and birds. Not much is known about the biology of this creature, called an archosaur. But we may hope to learn a lot about it by reconstructing its genome from the living genomes of its living descendants, the crocs and birds.”

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# Advisory

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 11, 2014

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### Texas Tech Celebrates Fall Commencement

**WHAT:** Texas Tech University hosts four fall commencement ceremonies and a School of Law hooding ceremony.

**WHEN:** Friday (Dec. 12): **3 p.m.** College of Arts and Sciences  
**7 p.m.** Graduate School  
Saturday (Dec. 13): **9 a.m.** College of Architecture, College of Education, Whitacre College of Engineering, College of Human Sciences and College of Visual and Performing Arts  
**1:30 p.m.** College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Rawls College of Business, College of Media and Communication, University Programs and Wind Energy  
**5 p.m.** School of Law Hooding Ceremony

**WHERE:** The four commencement ceremonies will be held at United Supermarkets Arena, 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Indiana Avenue.

The School of Law hooding ceremony will be held at the School of Law Lanier Auditorium, 1802 Hartford Ave.

**EVENT:** Mica R. Endsley, chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force, will speak at the four commencement ceremonies. Endsley received her bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Texas Tech in 1982.

Kem Thompson Frost, chief justice of the 14th Court of Appeals of Texas, is the keynote speaker at the School of Law hooding ceremony. Frost received her juris doctor from the Texas Tech School of Law in 1983.

Ceremonies can be viewed live online at <http://www.ttu.edu/livestream/>. They also will be aired on Suddenlink channel 128.

For more information on commencement, including maps, guest seating, college receptions, parking and hotels, visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/commencement/index.php>.

The School of Law hooding ceremony can be viewed live online at <http://mediaservices.law.ttu.edu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=8dbb390e-2a19-4c68-9652-1fc1eea36066>.

For more information about the law school hooding ceremony, including parking, hotels and reception information, visit [http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall\\_2014/](http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall_2014/).

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 12, 2014

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**Texas Tech Announces Road Closures**

Two streets will be closed over the holiday break.

A couple of roads will be closed from Monday (Dec. 15) through the holiday break, Texas Tech University announced.

Broadway Avenue will be closed starting Monday and lasting through early January as part of Texas Tech's ongoing campus beautification project. The street will be open after 5 p.m. so people can view Carol of Lights.

The street in front of the Student Union Building, 15th Street, also will be closed starting Monday and lasting through the holidays for road repairs.

Classes resume Jan. 14.

For more information, call (806) 742-4OPS.

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 16, 2014

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### **Texas Tech Administrator, Engineer Become National Academy of Inventors Fellows**

Robert V. Duncan and Mohamed Soliman are two of the 170 named as this year's distinguished fellows.

A Texas Tech University top administrator and a professor of petroleum engineering became fellows of the National Academy of Inventors.

Robert V. Duncan, vice president of research, and Mohamed Soliman, the Livermore Chair Professor in the Herd Department of Petroleum Engineering, will be honored for their work March 20 during a luncheon and induction ceremony at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California.

Duncan holds 10 domestic patents and many international filings, nine of which involve a new form of cryogenic surgery. By using a tiny needle that freezes rather than burns, doctors can kill cancerous tumors. They can even ablate material from the heart in a much less-invasive procedure that enters the heart through the circulatory system instead of through an incision in the chest. It is easier to control, less painful, and offers faster recovery times. It can restore a normal heart rhythm to patients with arrhythmia and perform some heart surgeries without requiring extended hospitalization. This new technology is in human clinical trials.

"I am humbled and honored to become a fellow of the National Academy of Inventors," Duncan said. "We are committed in higher education to involve all faculty and students in the excitement of discovery, and the application of these discoveries, to improve the human condition through commercialization."

Soliman said he, too, was honored to be named as a fellow to the academy.

"I have 28 patents on fracturing operations and analysis that have already been issued and nine more are pending," Soliman said. "It is a very nice recognition for the work that I have done over the years. It is also good for Texas Tech University and the Petroleum Engineering department. The recognition will help in commercializing new inventions by giving more credibility to new work."

A 1982 physics graduate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Duncan received a doctorate in physics from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1988.

Prior to coming to Texas Tech in 2013, Duncan served as the vice chancellor for research at the University of Missouri, where he was also a founder and interim director of the Sidney Kimmel Institute for Nuclear Renaissance. Also, he was the founding director of the New Mexico Consortium's Institute at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in 2006, following his appointment as the associate dean for research in the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of New Mexico.

Duncan was a member of the International Steering Committee for Quantum Fluids and Solids, and he chaired the International Symposium on Quantum Fluids and Solids in 2003. He was named the Gordon and Betty Moore Distinguished Scholar in the Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy Division at California Institute of Technology (2004-05). He is a fellow and life member of the American Physical Society.

Soliman holds a bachelor's degree in petroleum engineering with top honors from Cairo University and master's and doctoral degrees in petroleum engineering from Stanford University. He has designed and analyzed hundreds of pressure transients, FET, and micro-frac tests. He is a distinguished member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

Prior to joining Texas Tech University in January of 2011, Soliman worked for Halliburton Energy Services for more than 30 years. He is the author or co-author of more than 200 technical papers and articles.

The NAI Fellows Selection Committee chooses people for fellowships who have demonstrated a highly prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development, and the welfare of society.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 16, 2014

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### **Texas Tech Working to Maintain Increasing Retention Rates**

The latest figures are the highest they've been since 2004.

At a time when Texas Tech University's enrollment is growing at a record-breaking pace, the university's retention rates also are at historically high levels.

In the most recent retention report, 83.47 percent of fall 2013 incoming freshmen returned to Texas Tech in fall 2014. That marks the highest one-year retention rate for Texas Tech since 83.9 percent of fall 2004 incoming freshmen returned in fall 2005.

More encouraging, according to university officials, is that Texas Tech recently has implemented new retention efforts to ensure rates continue to improve.

"While we are extremely proud of our continued enrollment increase, we have also worked hard to make sure our growth doesn't compromise the academic success of our students," said Texas Tech [President M. Duane Nellis](#). "One way to achieve that goal is to increase our retention rates, and I applaud [Provost Lawrence Schovanec](#), Senior Vice President [Juan Muñoz](#), and the other members of our administration, faculty and staff who have helped make that happen."

Schovanec said Texas Tech's retention increase reflects the excellent job by the University Advising department, as well as the different offices that provide student support during their transition to college. Some of these offices include [Mentor Tech](#), [Upward Bound](#), [PEGASUS](#) and the [Military Veterans Program](#).

Two new retention tools that will help Texas Tech are the Provost Retention Task Force and the acquisition of Student Success Collaborative (SSC), a predictive software program provided by the Education Advisory Board.

"The reputation of our university and the value of a Texas Tech degree are enhanced by the success of students. Retention and graduation rates are important measures of that success," Schovanec said. "The input of the Retention Task Force and the utilization of the Student Success Collaborative will complement the good work already being done at the departmental and college levels, not only improving student success metrics that affect the ranking of Texas Tech but also providing real individual benefit to our students."

Schovanec created the task force, which includes approximately 30 administrators, faculty, staff and students. The task force is chaired by Muñoz, Texas Tech's senior vice president for Institutional Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement and vice provost for Undergraduate Education & Student Affairs.

Muñoz described the task force as innovative because it not only includes a representative from each college but also from different departments, such as financial aid and housing, that might play a role in improving retention.

“The taskforce has been charged with analyzing the policies, activities and decisions that are used throughout the institution so the university can determine the best practices to improve retention and academic success for our students,” Muñoz said. “Most importantly, we also want to look at assessment and accountability — how we measure retention. We want to recognize those people who are surpassing their goals and bring attention to those areas that are not as consistent.”

The addition of the Student Success Collaborative is expected to provide assistance for many members of the campus community, including students. Muñoz said the software has integrated Texas Tech's student information system with historical data to develop a comprehensive advising software.

“This software will provide specific longitudinal data and predictive analytics of what students must do to be successful at Texas Tech,” he said. “This software will not only allow us to advise students more effectively, but it will also help our students advise themselves.”

For example, a freshman looking at his or her degree plan will be able to view graduation rates based on how students fared after taking similar classes. The software also will allow students interested in changing majors to immediately determine how many more classes and semesters a change will add to their degree plan.

Muñoz said some schools that have used the software experienced a 1 to 2 percentage increase in retention in only a year. Texas Tech plans to implement the software by spring.

“Higher retention rates lead to higher graduation rates, which leads to more students capable of being gainfully employed and contributing members of the state and national economy,” Muñoz said. “No one celebrates dropping out of college, and retention is the first rung on the ladder toward graduation and long-term personal and professional success.”

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# News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: Dec. 19, 2014

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### **College of Architecture Named Charter Member of Research Group**

Texas Tech's program has been selected among the first group to head up the American Institute of Architects Design and Health Research Consortium.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) on Monday named Texas Tech University's Health and Design Research Institute in the [College of Architecture](#) as one of the 11 charter members to the AIA Design and Health Research Consortium. The Institute is composed of departments from both Texas Tech University and the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center.

The consortium comprises 11 architecture schools and schools of public health throughout the country and is tasked with funding basic research on how design affects public health. It is a project of the AIA, the AIA Foundation and the Associate of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA).

Andrew Vernooy, dean of the college, said this consortium will benefit not only the students of the college but of several different colleges throughout the Texas Tech University System. He said it will bring together areas such as the new Department of Public Health, the Institute of Environmental and Human Health, the Department of Design, the Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics and the Health Organization and Management Program.

"We're delighted to be the initiator of the whole effort," Vernooy said. "But it's particularly important to the system because this brings together both Texas Tech and the Health Sciences Center around a single effort to work with the American Institute of Architects. It is truly an interdisciplinary opportunity in the area of design and health that is being promoted by the AIA in an effort important to the future of the nation economically as well as in terms of health."

According to the AIA, it and its partners will spend the next three years providing institutional support and capacity building to consortium members to promote collaboration through local and national partnerships. That will help members share knowledge and provide a way to share research activity at the AIA's [website](#).

“The research teams chosen for this consortium include some of the nation’s leading thinkers about the growing connections between design and public health,” said AIA CEO Robert Ivy. “We chose them because their research has the best potential for affecting policy across a wide swath of issues at the intersection of the built environment and public health.”

In a statement from the AIA, Texas Tech was chosen for its work to benefit more than 100 counties in West Texas. Its research focus is on the new uses of tele-health technologies, cost and benefit modeling for agriculture and health, community planning and design influence on obesity and chronic diseases, cost benefit metrics on the high rates of occupational and personal injury in rural and urban populations, loud noise disparity in rural populations and technology and social connections.

“It is important for us because it provides new opportunities for our professors and graduate students for research and extended scholarship opportunities,” Vernooy said.

The AIA says it has organized its design and health initiative around six evidence-based approaches architects are able to influence through design practice and policy that recognize the physical environment’s effects on health opportunities and helps create positive health behaviors.

These approaches are:

- Environmental quality
- Natural systems
- Physical activity
- Safety
- Sensory environments
- Social connectedness

“It allows both our master’s of architecture students and our master’s of science students to get certificates in design and health,” Vernooy said. “The reason that is important is because the health care sector of the economy for architecture is the biggest sector right now, and it’s only growing. It provides them the experience they can use to get good jobs with some of the best health care designers in the country.”

Other members of the consortium are: University of Oregon; Drexel University; NewSchool of Architecture & Design, Innovation Design Science; University of Miami School of Architecture and Miller School of Medicine Department of Public Services; University of Florida; Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health and Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation; University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign School of Architecture; Texas A&M University Center for Health Systems & Design, College of Architecture; University of Kansas School of Architecture, Design and Planning; and University of Arizona Institute on Place and Wellbeing.

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# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 19, 2014

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**Texas Tech on Kiplinger's Best Value Public College List**  
Texas Tech ranked 20<sup>th</sup> for best value for less than \$30,000 a year  
and 90<sup>th</sup> for best value in public colleges.

Texas Tech University is ranked 20<sup>th</sup> on "[Kiplinger's Personal Finance](#)" list of best college values under \$30,000 a year. The magazine listed the university's in-state tuition and fees at \$9,308 per academic year. It is the only Texas college on the list.

Texas Tech is also ranked 90<sup>th</sup> in Kiplinger's list of best values in public colleges, marking the third year it has been in the top 100.

"As families continue to face rising college costs nationally, I'm proud of the efficiencies we've created to help keep costs as low as possible, while also maintaining and providing a high quality education," Texas Tech President M. Duane Nellis said. "Our faculty, staff and administration all work diligently to ensure those who want an education have the very best opportunity to pursue one."

Kiplinger looks at cost criteria including low sticker prices, abundant financial aid and low average debt at graduation. Quality is assessed according to a number of measurable standards, including the admission rate, the percentage of students who return for their sophomore year, the student-faculty ratio and the four-year graduation rate.

"We use four-year graduation rates because we think that's more relevant in terms of cost," said Sandra Block, a senior associate editor at "Kiplinger Personal Finance." "The sooner you get out, the less you pay, the less you borrow."

The annual public and private school rankings appear in Kiplinger's February 2015 issue — on newsstands in early January — and online [now](#). Web visitors will find special features, including a tool that lets readers sort by in-state and out-of-state cost, average debt at graduation, and admission rate; a slide show of the top 10 schools; [archives](#) of previous years' rankings and an FAQ about the ranking methodology.

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# Web Only

**As Graduation Checks Roll In, Financial Planners Discuss the Best Ways to Cash In**  
Instead of buying a new TV or a round of drinks, consider opening a retirement account or buying professional clothing.

By Heidi Toth

Graduation means quite the payday for many college students, but those who aren't careful may find themselves blowing through that congratulatory money with little or nothing to show for it.

Peer financial coaches from Texas Tech University's unique [Red to Black](#) program offered advice on how to spend graduation money so it works for the student. Saving or investing means graduates can continue to enjoy those gifts long after moving into the working world.

## **Create an emergency fund**

Nadia Marquez, a doctoral student in the [Personal Financial Planning program](#), suggests putting some of the money into an emergency fund, which she said should be three to six months of living expenses that stays there until it's needed for a real emergency. Although graduates likely won't have enough for the entire fund right away, they can use graduation money as seed money and contribute monthly once they're employed.

That fund can also be used to pay for moving expenses to a new job.

"That way you don't have to dip into savings or borrow," she said.

## **Think about retirement**

Graduates also could put the money into a retirement fund. Doctoral student Tao Guo suggests opening a Roth IRA. Roth IRAs differ from traditional IRAs in that payments to a Roth account are post-tax earnings, meaning the investor won't pay taxes when he or she withdraws the money at retirement. A traditional IRA is pretax earnings, but the investor will pay taxes on the money upon retirement.

"The year when you graduate and start your first job can be a great opportunity to take advantage of Roth IRA account," Guo said. "Contribution to the Roth IRA account is not tax deductible, but since you have really low income as a student, you barely have to pay any tax on it. The best part is your earning or investment return in the account is tax exempted when you withdraw the money."

## **Prepare for your first job**

For those who have an itch to spend their money, Marquez suggests those who still are looking for jobs invest in proper interview attire or appropriate workplace attire for those who have jobs lined up.

Guo also recommends looking ahead to the expenses associated with moving and taking on a new job, which will be the first full-time or professional job for many.

“Starting your first full-time job in a new city is very exciting, but there are quite a few places you need to prepay some expenses before getting your first paycheck,” Guo said. “Your landlord probably requires some deposit before your move in. You probably need to pay some installation fee to get your cable, or you need some new furniture and work clothes.”

### **Save it**

Money can go into a savings account or, for a slightly higher rate of return, open a certificate of deposit (CD). Earmark that account for a big purchase, like a down payment on a car or house or graduate school.

“It’s hard to resist the temptation of spending,” Guo said. “There is always something we want to buy, some party we want to go to. As long as we see a balance in our checking account, we tend to spend it. Saving in a CD or less liquid account creates a commitment device for you. Our rational side of the brain finds a way to constrain the emotional side of the brain.”



# Web Only

## **Ask the Experts: Coping with Stress**

Richard A. Lenox discusses how to deal with stress and school anxiety.

By Zoe Bell

Finals at Texas Tech University take place from Friday (Dec. 5) to Wednesday (Dec. 10). This is one of the most stressful periods of the year for many students and faculty. According to Richard Lenox, director of the [Student Counseling Center](#) and licensed psychologist since 1996, stress is a normal reaction when we have many responsibilities. However, there are ways stress can be avoided.

### **What are easy ways for college students to relieve stress and school anxiety?**

There are easy ways to reduce stress and anxiety, but just like anything else that is worthwhile, a commitment is necessary to get results. We often talk with students during intakes at the Student Counseling Center who say they are too busy to address their stress. I certainly understand that mentality. But the time commitment doesn't have to be large. Taking two 15-minute breaks each day to sit quietly and focus on your breathing can reap big benefits. This strategy is called mindfulness, and the Student Counseling Center staff can help students find other ways to create mindfulness in their daily lives.

### **Are there any home remedies?**

Absolutely. There are a number of ways a person can reduce stress on their own. Remember to take breaks and engage in activities that you enjoy and fully engage your attention. Watch TV, play video games, connect with friends and family...there's nothing wrong with these self-care strategies. It's a good idea to set a time limit on your breaks, though, so that they don't turn into an avoidance of your responsibilities. Also, I can't stress the benefits of mindfulness enough. Have you ever walked across campus and been so lost in your thoughts that you don't remember getting from one building to the next? That is the opposite of mindfulness, and it is a recipe for stress. Try paying full attention to your surroundings when you are walking or driving. Stress and anxiety tend to melt away when our mind is focused in the present.

### **How important is it to be relaxed when studying?**

It is important to be relaxed while studying, but make sure you aren't so relaxed that you are falling asleep or not absorbing the information. Conversely, if you are so anxious that you can't focus on the material, you probably aren't going to retain much. You can learn to be both alert and calm at the same time; this is the ideal state of mind for taking in and retaining information. Recreating this alert and calm state of mind during the test is the best way to retrieve the information you've learned.

### **What are tips for creating a relaxed environment?**

Everyone is different, so you may need to experiment with different environments to see what works. Although some people may study well with others around or with background noise such as music, others may need a quieter environment. Since relaxation to the point of sleepiness is not ideal for studying, trying to study while lying in bed might not work for you. Sitting at a desk or table might help you maintain a certain level of alertness. Also, some people depend on caffeine to remain alert and focused, but too much caffeine can cause a jittery and anxious feeling. The night before a final isn't the best time to test your response to increased amounts of caffeine.

### **What resources are available at Texas Tech to help relieve and cope with stress?**

Exercise is a phenomenal stress reliever. Any exercise that gets the heart rate up will help reduce stress, so take advantage of the facilities at the Student Rec Center. Try to keep your mind in the moment when exercising, rather than letting it dwell on stressful things. Also, the Student Counseling Center has a self-help facility for stress relief called the MindSpa. The MindSpa has a massage chair and computer/video programs to help individuals learn how to relax. These services are available to any Texas Tech student, faculty or staff member. Visit our [MindSpa](#) website for more information.

### **While understanding that stress is a normal part of one's college career, are there signs that one's stress level is getting too high and they should seek professional help?**

There is a difference between stress and anxiety, but sometimes it is hard to tell them apart. Yes, stress is a normal reaction when our responsibilities are numerous and time-consuming. Muscle tension and disrupted sleep are very common stress reactions. Some anxiety is also normal before exams. A little of the butterflies in the stomach feeling is nothing to be concerned about. Actually, a little bit of stress and anxiety has actually been found to improve performance – it keeps us on our toes. But when stress and anxiety start to get in the way of our performance, it's time to do something about it. For example, if your anxiety is so high that you blank out during an exam and can't recall what you've learned, you may need some additional help. Also if your anxiety is of the panic variety causing things like increased heart rate, sweating or hyperventilating a counselor can help you find ways to control this. The Student Counseling Center staff is here to help.



# Web Only

## **Ask the Experts: How to Create a Standout Resume**

Joe Duke from Texas Tech's Career Center discusses how to land the dream job after graduation.

By Heidi Toth

It's a Catch-22. You just graduated from college and are faced with the big question: how do I get a job without the proper job experience? Too often recent graduates face this dilemma.

Joe Duke, senior associate director at Texas Tech University's [Career Center](#), has been advising Texas Tech students for 12 years. He says even without several years of work experience, recent graduates can land their dream job with a solid resume that highlights their strengths.

### **How have resumes evolved over time? Are recent graduates leaning toward a more traditional resume or more modern style?**

It all depends on what industry applicants are targeting. For example, if you're a recent interior design, graphic design, agriculture communications or architecture graduate, you can be very creative in the design of your resume, depending on the culture you're applying to.

There are two sides to the business world. Some firms are conservative and would like a standard, business-type of resume with information in bullets highlighting your education, performance and experience. There also are more progressive companies more accepting of a creative resume.

A standard, blank resume you would send out to every employer in the country would not be an acceptable resume. Each resume needs to be tailored to the company to which an applicant is applying.

### **What is the difference between traditional and modern resumes?**

Modern resumes today include a LinkedIn profile, QR codes linking to more information or a website. Traditional resumes don't include things of that nature.

### **How far should an applicant go back for job history?**

My take on that is all work history is important. If you are a recent graduate, you might want to put in the last five or six years of your employment history. There are a few students who might go back more than 10 years.

If you listed that you were a lifeguard, a dog walker or even a worker in the fast food industry, as long as you have real work experience or internship experience, I think employers are interested in that.

For example, if you worked in the food service industry for two years while you were a student here at Texas Tech, an employer will know that you can handle difficult situations, work in a fast-paced environment and can multi-task. These experiences will say a lot about you.

### **Should applicants include social media accounts on resumes, even if it isn't a job in a communications-related field?**

Social media is in the present and future and is a way to disseminate information to a large population. Yes, I think social media is very important, but how it's portrayed on a resume is important as well. If an employer seeks out your social media accounts, an applicant needs to make sure it looks professional without inappropriate content. An employer can rule out an applicant by social media content.

### **How important are personal interests and hobbies on a resume?**

I think they are important, because they show another facet of the individual. If I were to put it on a resume, I would title it "involvement" toward the bottom of the resume and provide the information professionally. This section can be used as a springboard to break the ice in an interview.

### **What is something applicants should not do or include on a resume?**

For recent graduates, the main thing is not to send an untailored resume from a template to a number of organizations. If an applicant personalizes the resume as a whole and the information included, it shows employers the applicant put the effort into tailoring the resume for that job. A resume is a living document that is a reflection of you; personalize it and present yourself as a strong competitor for the job you are applying for.

### **Should a cover letter always be included, and how can an applicant make a strong presence with a cover letter?**

A cover letter can be included, but there is no guarantee it will be read.

The cover letter needs to be straight to the point without fluff. A strong foundation for a cover letter is three paragraphs.

- The first one introduces yourself and gives information about how you learned about the job and how you are interested and qualified for the position.
- The second paragraph is more reflective on your research about the company. Going back to tailoring your resume as a whole, your cover letter should glean the company's mission and its major projects. By doing this, it shows you have done your due diligence and homework about the company and shows great interest in the job you are applying for.



## TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

- The third paragraph is a very important paragraph. It ties in your strengths, talents, interests and abilities with the employer and makes a statement on how you think the employer would benefit from your association with one another.
- A cover letter should include a closing statement on how you can be reached, and a signature to follow.

### **If an applicant is chosen for an interview, should he/she always send a thank you note?**

Yes, it is really important to send a thank you note, especially through the mail. People like getting snail mail today. When that thank you note lands on someone's desk, it is very much appreciated. A nice note shows you're thankful for their time and the opportunity to be interviewed. It is always a kind and gracious thing to do.

Another thing recent graduates should take note of is thanking your references. Once you have your sparkling resume ready to go, you should have a number of references with their contact information and their preferred way to be contacted. Once it is all ready to go, send your references a completed copy of your resume and a thank you note showing how appreciative you are about them being your reference. This is a great networking opportunity.

### **Other tips to consider:**

- An objective statement is good to include on a resume. The type of job you are applying for determines whether it should be general or specific. Be careful with your wording, though. If an objective statement is too specific, it may rule you out as an applicant.
- For recent graduates, use relevant coursework and experiences to market yourself for the position you are applying for. This will show you have studied and have knowledge of the field you are going into.
- Recent graduates should keep a file of their memberships in organizations and volunteer opportunities. By including your membership on a resume, it shows involvement and leadership.
- Languages, licenses and certifications are good things to include as well.
- Be sure to submit your resume the way the employer prefers. If it is through the internet, make sure your resume is a PDF document, since Word documents can change format.

For more resume advice, visit the Career Center's [website](#) or make an appointment with a Career Center adviser.

The Career Center provides professional services for all Texas Tech students, recent graduates and alumni. Services include professional resume and interview development, assessment services, career development and career advising.



# Web Only

## **Building Character Before the Holidays**

Texas Tech students and staff members provide homes for low-income families in San Antonio community.

By Heidi Toth

When Texas Tech University senior Ahalee Cathey signed up for her first service break with the [Center for Active Learning and Undergraduate Engagement](#) (CALUE), she didn't think a service project would give her as much insight as it did.

“Going into this trip, I thought I would just be serving for a week and have a good time,” she said. “But I think this was my favorite trip I have ever been on. I really liked the people I worked with and enjoyed the projects we did. This trip gave me a whole new web of friends, and it was a huge learning experience for me.”

Twelve Texas Tech students and staff members recently traveled to San Antonio to build and rehabilitate homes with Habitat for Humanity (HFH). The trip was part of a new program developed by CALUE to facilitate hands-on and experiential learning for students and faculty.

The group spent its first two days near downtown San Antonio rehabilitating existing HFH homes to prepare them for new families to move in. Students helped clean the homes, put in new light bulbs, painted walls and made other needed repairs.

“It is important that institutions of higher learning serve as stewards of the communities and provide students opportunities to contribute beyond the classroom,” Nellis said. “We are proud of our student body and the selfless acts they display daily. Outreach projects like Habitat for Humanity are rewarding experiences, not only for our students, but for those directly impacted.”

On the last day of the trip, the group built a HFH home from the slab up. Cathey recalls this as her favorite day, because she could see the group's hard work come to fruition.

“There was a huge difference from when we got there to when we left,” she said. “It felt really good to build the house in one day, and it shows we did something meaningful.”

“We don't realize it all the time, but a house is really important. If you give money to a person in need, it won't last for a long period of time. But a house will last much longer, and I know it was a huge step for the family we built it.”

Working alongside the group was the family the house was for, who are refugees from Myanmar.

“Although the family couldn’t speak English, you could just tell they were so excited about the house,” Cathey said. “As they were working, they had the biggest smiles on their faces. We could see how thankful they were for the home and how proud they were of the work they put into the home.”

Habitat for Humanity builds homes for low- to very low-income families who are unable to qualify for conventional financing but are willing to work hard to improve their family’s lives. The program builds affordable housing with volunteers and partners where the home loans are interest-free and the mortgage income is paid forward to build other HFH homes.

The program’s most important strategy is “sweat equity,” where each homeowner is required to complete a minimum of 400 hours of labor dedicated to building their homes and homes of their neighbors, as well as investing in their own self-improvement. Sweat equity reduces the amount of paid labor needed for a house and instills a sense of pride and ownership for each family.

“The trip to San Antonio was a humbling and fulfilling experience for both staff members and students who took part,” CALUE assistant director Erin Justyna said. “Throughout reflection activities, participants spoke of a desire to continue to serve their communities in the future, whether with an ongoing relationship with Habitat for Humanity or on CALUE service breaks.”

CALUE plans to continue its work with HFH and expand its projects into other parts of Texas.

Trips have been planned for 2015 that are both weeklong and weekend trips. The next service trip will be during spring break (March 16-20) and will take place in El Paso. Students who participate will be a part of a border awareness experience where students will work with the Annunciation House, which operates houses of hospitality for migrants and refugees. The objective of the trip is to raise awareness about the issues facing the border such as immigration, economic development, human rights and social injustice.

Cathey said she plans to participate in more service projects with CALUE in the future because of what she learned in San Antonio.

“This trip made me realize that there is always something to do, even if it’s just sweeping the floor,” she said. “Coming into this trip I knew I wanted to make this house the best it could be, but after realizing that some people may not have good homes or homes at all it made me more conscious of what we were doing.

“I learned how to work with other people with different personality types and also got to participate in hands-on learning while building the house. It was a learning curve, but actually doing the work helped me learn. I really enjoyed this service project, and I look forward to doing more in the future.”



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## **Doctoral Student Connects D.C., Nigeria in Global Science Project**

As a Helen DeVitt Jones part-time fellow, Florentia Spires brought together students from two different continents to teach them about precipitation and water scarcity.

By Heidi Toth

Middle school students in a Washington, D.C., classroom built rain gauges out of soda bottles. They constructed a model weather satellite of candies and other snacks. They tracked rainfall and observed how water molecules adhere to each other.

Halfway around the world and in a time zone five hours later, middle school students in Nigeria completed the same assignments. They took part in video chats with the D.C. students to discuss their science projects and blogged about the unique global science project facilitated by a Texas Tech University Global Pragmatic Research in Science Education (PRiSE) graduate student.

Florentia Spires is in her second year of a doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction through Texas Tech's [College of Education](#). Her online degree is part of the global science education program, and she's going as global as possible – hence the combination of classrooms separated by almost 6,000 miles of ocean.

“Most children in D.C. routinely travel no more than 50 miles from where they live in their lifetime,” she said. “By exposing students to something they’ve never imagined, it may impact them to think differently and on a larger scale than they would have ever imagined they would think.”

Spires, who lives in the Maryland suburbs of D.C., returned to school after years of teaching. She was a master educator for NASA, she was a National Science Foundation Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator fellow and former Peace Corps volunteer. Her most recent achievement is a Helen DeVitt Jones part-time graduate fellow through Texas Tech's [graduate fellowship program](#), a fellowship that funds various research projects from multiple disciplines.

“Tech Texas is pleased to support Ms. Spires with a Helen DeVitt Jones Part-Time Graduate Fellowship,” [Graduate School](#) Dean Mark Sheridan said. “Her work will have an immediate and lasting impact on a global scale.”

Spires used that fellowship to teach a group of children the importance of water, how to measure rainfall and that engagement in science can be full of essential knowledge and enjoyable.

“Science can be fun,” Spires said. “It’s just that as an educator, you have to know how to present the material in a way that excites student curiosity.”

## **Finding Texas Tech**

Spires has been in education for most of her adult life, both in the D.C. area and in southern Africa. For 11 years, she taught in Botswana, initially as a Peace Corps volunteer teaching students, then training other Peace Corps volunteers to be teachers. She returned to the classroom for a time before returning to the United States.

When she returned to the U.S., she taught in the same district from which she graduated high school. She earned a master's degree at Loyola University in curriculum and instruction in K-12 science education, then was selected as a NASA fellow and earned certification in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) from Columbia Teachers College.

A stint as a NASA master educator for the Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) mission followed. She was one of five educators nationwide developing curriculum materials for the GPM mission, which allowed her to participate in the Feb. 27 launch of the GPM satellite. The satellite records precipitation data throughout the globe and gives scientists better insight into the impact water has on the Earth.

Spires enrolled at Texas Tech in August 2013, having found the university because of its global science program. For a global science education project, she settled on the NASA mission as a foundation and selected Hector Telford's Howard University Middle School of Mathematics and Science class as her local classroom. With assistance from the Schlumberger Excellence in Education Development (SEED), she located a school in Nigeria to participate. SEED also helped transport materials between the U.S. and Nigeria.

She prepared a curriculum focused around the GPM satellite and the overarching theme of how water affects society. Spires' goal was to turn 50 middle school students into global science citizens who sought to understand the importance of precipitation and gain perspective beyond the region in which they lived.

"The kids really loved the creative process of learning about the GPM satellite," she said. "None of them have done anything similar to this project in their school experience until now."

## **Going global**

The curriculum for both schools included building rain gauges out of soda bottles as well as designing and building infrastructure for commercial rain gauges, which Spires' fellowship funded. They analyzed how well the homemade rain gauges worked compared to the commercial gauge, then compiled a data analysis to determine what accounted for the difference in efficiency.

Students also constructed their own GPM satellites, but instead of scientifically tested materials, they used marshmallows, graham crackers, wafers, candy and other treats. Besides tasting good when they were finished, constructing the satellites enabled the students to identify and explain the functions of each piece and its importance toward the mission's goal of data collection efficiency.

"They really enjoyed and embraced the NASA assets to learning," Spires said.



Although she wasn't in Nigeria with the other class, she regularly led communication sessions through ooVoo, a video chat service. She sent the same curriculum and activities to both classrooms. When it came time to build an edible satellite, she offered to send money for the building supplies; eliminating the burden of cost helps alleviate the overall challenge of a global project.

"I didn't want to put such a burden of cost on their school," she said.

Her Nigerian global educator, Ubong Udomah, declined the offer, and the Nigerian students created satellites out of U.S. and Nigerian foodstuffs, which provided a unique finished product next to the American-made versions.

It wasn't all measuring precipitation and eating Necco wafer spacecraft, though. Spires' students on two continents learned how a raindrop behaves as it falls and how water molecules stick together. They looked at pictures of molecules taken with high-speed photography so they could observe the behavior of the droplets.

Students also studied the effects of water, including its relationship to drought, flooding and water-borne diseases like malaria, and the importance of water in the ecosystem. D.C. and the Delta region of Nigeria are both wet areas, so many of the students had never thought about the need to conserve and reuse water, Spires said.

"They became more cognizant of the need to recycle water as much as possible and have come to realize they should value water as a natural resource," she said. "They're learning a lot of different facts relevant to their own lives about the importance of water."

Like any project, this one had its kinks. One difficulty was the Nigerian students were delayed when the government closed the school for two weeks to help contain the Ebola outbreak. However, they're basically caught up, Spires said. Both groups remain enthusiastic about video chats and blogging opportunities, sharing their data with each other and discussing the most abundant uses of water in their countries.

Additionally, the two school systems have different schedules for holidays and start and end days. In September, the American students were at the start of their semester, while the Nigerian students were in their ninth month of year-round schooling.

The classroom portion of the project is nearly complete, Spires said, although she'll continue collecting data from the schools. The students took a pre-test and will take a post-test to see how much they learned through her curriculum, and the American students can contribute their data to a national precipitation database known as the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network. The database is not yet available to the Nigerian students, she said.

"They're actually contributing to something much bigger than any one area in the country," Spires said. "The phenomenon of doing 'real science' is just one factor that

encourages students to continue the work that they see affects so many people on the Earth as well as themselves.”

### **What comes next**

Spires is a full-time master educator for the D.C. school district, which means she teaches the teachers. She’s using her research to figure out the best way for teachers to reach students and help them break down traditional barriers in education. She also frequently reminds teachers to collaborate not only with teachers across the hall but also teachers across the globe.

“When you’re doing research projects in two different nations, students see similarities and differences in the materials they have compared to what their partners have,” Spires said. “You still get the same things done in terms of ingenuity, what you have to work with, how you think.

“Students are thinking different, out of the box, not one pathway.”

A few years ago Spires was at a local farm, surrounded by dozens of students and their parents learning about farming. She noticed a teenage girl staring at her, and Spires’ mother asked her if she recognized the family. Spires didn’t. Before she left, however, the girl’s mother approached her and asked if she had ever taught at an area school. Spires said she had.

“My daughter knew it was you,” Spires remembered the woman telling her. “She was to shy to talk to you, but she’s a senior now. She’s going to college and studying science and it’s because of you.

“It’s really important to expose children to global education. Some of them will take it and will run with it. This is only one important way we as leaders in the educational community can contribute to the increase in students becoming scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians. If they can see the big picture up close, they can imagine it for themselves. If students don’t take advantage of the insight gained due to different areas of interest, at least they have been exposed and they know it is an option or they can simply pass on the knowledge in hope to make a global impact.”



# Web Only

## **Face-to-Screen: Graduate Students Use Tablets to Connect with K-12 Students**

Middle school teacher Robin Hart joined forces with Texas Tech graduate students to bring math, science and engineering expertise to her students.

By Heidi Toth

Every middle school teacher could use another adult in the classroom, answering questions, explaining difficult concepts and keeping an eye on 30 students.

Abilene Wylie Middle School teacher Robin Hart has had a few extra adults in her classroom – or at least their heads. A unique grant Texas Tech University received allowed Texas Tech graduate students to partner with area math and science teachers to create a curriculum and help in their classrooms.

Hart, also a doctoral student in curriculum and instruction in the [College of Education](#), said handing her students a tablet so they can interact with STEM graduate students is increasing her effectiveness in the classroom as well as giving her students an opportunity to talk with other experts.

“Students will usually talk to a graduate student one-on-one,” Hart said. “They just kind of pass the head around.”

This tutoring is part of a math-engineering-science bridge program started in 2008 with a National Science Foundation grant. The purpose of the Graduate STEM Fellows in K-12 Education (GK-12) grant, chemistry professor Dominick Casadonte said, is to bridge the gap between math and science, Texas Tech and surrounding schools, and education, engineering and science programs at Texas Tech. The program started with high school classes in Lubbock and expanded throughout the South Plains and into Hart’s middle school class.

“She was doing sort of exciting things,” said Texas Tech mathematics professor Jerry Dwyer, who administered a second grant that funded Hart’s program. “She was getting her students interested in science. They were inquiring about stuff, they were exploring, they were really doing science, and to me it’s difficult to find a teacher and a group of students who are all interested in actually doing that sort of thing.”

### **Teaching via tablet**

Hart knows introducing technology can be hard for teachers because teachers don’t want apps to do the teaching and they worry having that technology won’t actually help students learn. Putting another teacher on the other end has helped technology become part of the classroom.

Last year she used Google Hangout primarily in her math and science competition class; this year it's in her after-school science club.

Last year three to four mornings a week her class would connect with master's student in electrical engineering Dipika Patel or chemistry doctoral student Deóis Ua Cearnaigh (the students called him Doc). Students had Google Hangout open on one tablet and used other tablets to open Twiddla, an online whiteboard. The graduate student would walk the middle-schoolers through a math problem or scientific equation, with the students seeing everything the graduate student did. Hart's sixth-grade students could get into advanced math and science topics or learn how to put together an experiment of the presentation.

"It worked great because I had a class of 32 students, so I could send a small group in the hall with tablets," Hart said. "They could spend a lot of time just focusing on whatever it was they were having trouble with."

This year, Ua Cearnaigh is using Google Hangout with Hart's science club, which is doing a composting project. In this case, she basically gets another teacher.

"He just helps divide that workload for me because it's really hard to tell that many students how to design their experiment or what they need to pay attention to and how you can do that experiment," Hart said. "It's good to have another person."

Ua Cearnaigh, who did online tutoring for a number of years before starting with Hart's class, said the process didn't always go as smoothly.

"At first it was really hard," he said. "I think it was hard at least partly because we hadn't really worked out the details of how we were going to do this. Some things worked and some things didn't."

As they worked through the kinks and found ways to effectively connect with students and meet their needs, the experience improved for everyone. The graduate students filled a void Hart either couldn't, because it wasn't her area of expertise, or simply didn't have time to get to.

"I still do quite a bit of teaching, but it's very directed," he said. "One of the problems we found early on was we are not like these teachers. We know our topic area, but we're not very good at preparing a class plan for sixth-graders. But what we can do is we can provide much deeper expertise than a general teacher can."

Patel, who finished her master's degree in May, said she and the other graduate students offered Hart's students another resource to answer their questions and represent the STEM fields to them.

"We provided a unique perspective on the topics, and this access allowed the students to ask more questions and explore the subject matter in depth to really engage them in the material," Patel said. "I think that by regularly interacting with STEM practitioners, the students began to relate and realize they can do this too if they wanted."



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Last year Hart's class did poster presentations; Patel and chemistry graduate student Jo Ramos-Lewis taught the students how to present their research, and the students hung up their posters in the hallway so their parents could see.

The program also introduces students to graduate education, which gets them thinking about their futures and teaches them problem-solving skills since technology has invariably gone wrong in the middle of a hangout.

### **GK-12 and I<sup>3</sup> grants**

Hart's program started under the GK-12 grant, of which Casadonte was the principal investigator (PI). Hart works in Casadonte's chemistry lab and expressed interest in doing distance learning with her students. The grant paid for the classroom tablet set and provided stipends for Hart and the other graduate students.

"The GK-12 grant helps increase the communication skills of graduate students by sending them out into the K-12 environment to perform some kind of activity or engage with K-12 students," Casadonte said.

Too often, he said, students never connect what they learn in math class with what they learn in science class. He created cohorts of math, science and technology teachers and math, science and engineering graduate students and had them create a curriculum for secondary students. Graduate students spent time in the classroom answering questions and teaching principles, which gave them teaching experience while teachers increased their content knowledge.

Two years into the six-year grant, they added virtual teaching as an additional way of interacting with students. Hart's program came in during the grant's final year, but it was good enough that everyone involved wanted to keep it going.

"Robin's program worked very well," Casadonte said. "Robin's in a fairly affluent school district, the kids she has are all very bright kids, they're technology savvy, and Robin's technology savvy. That technology all came together in a very, very nice way."

Casadonte visited with Dwyer, who administers the Innovation through Institutional Integration (I<sup>3</sup>) grant for the university and was an initial co-PI on the GK-12 grant, and told him about Hart's project. One of the purposes of the I<sup>3</sup> grant is to coordinate the existing STEM grants on campus and support local math and science clubs in the area, particularly in more rural school districts where students may not have access to as many STEM role models.

"That grant has helped to get greater recognition on campus for STEM outreach and also greater recognition for faculty who are doing that kind of work," Dwyer said.

Provost Lawrence Schovanec, who is the official PI on the I<sup>3</sup> grant, said these awards represent Texas Tech's long-standing commitment to STEM education and engagement with the local community and schools.

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“Texas Tech’s involvement in STEM initiatives is part of our efforts to expand opportunities for more students to enroll and succeed in college, especially low-income and underrepresented students,” he said. “These grants support innovative educational and research opportunities that enable us to affect STEM education of students at an early age, which hopefully translates into greater student success when they enroll in college.”

### **What’s next**

This is the final year of the I<sup>3</sup> grant as well, so Hart isn’t sure about the future of her research, but Dwyer is looking for a way to help it along. Following on from that grant Texas Tech created the STEM Center for Outreach, Research & Education (STEM-CORE), which seeks to develop a funding mechanism for these types of programs.

Upon completion of her studies, Hart plans to continue teaching middle school for several years, then she may consider teaching on a college level. For now she’s focusing on being a better teacher.

“I think the fact that I’m going to school makes me a better teacher because I’m inspired to do projects that I learn about in my education,” she said.

The involvement with middle school students benefits the graduate students as well, Patel said. She appreciated not only the teaching experience but also the interaction.

“This experience changed me immensely,” Patel said. “The students’ curiosity and eagerness to learn influenced me. I woke up motivated and excited to hear what questions they had in store for me that day.”

## Scrooge

By John Davis

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more. To Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. To the literary world, the crusty miser's tale, written by Charles Dickens and published on Dec. 19, 1843, has survived a surprising 171 years.

However, the meaning may be changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as young readers take to the pages and see the story's tale through a different set of values, said Mary Mullen, an assistant professor of English at Texas Tech University.

As far as literary figures go, the old humbug's longevity is quite remarkable, said Mullen, who is a literary and pop-culture expert who studies 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish and British literature. That's not only because Christmas hasn't changed much since the story was written, but also because the tale itself invites audiences to become a part of the story.

"I think it's important to remember that Charles Dickens wrote 'A Christmas Carol' to make money," Mullen said. "Dickens helped make Christmas a brand, and that's something that hasn't changed much – what Christmas means. Christmas hasn't changed much since the Victorian period. Whether its meaning is Christian or secular, or if it's just a time for family, you can't escape Christmas. That is, in part, because of Dickens. I've read an anecdote where a young girl heard Dickens had died. She said, 'If Dickens is dead, is Father Christmas dead too?'"

Part of the tale's massive appeal also comes from the loophole in copyright law at the time, Mullen said. Because the story was so popular, and because English copyright law did not protect the story from being published overseas, American publishers seized the words and began pirating it for profit, further pushing the tale into popular culture.

"'A Christmas Carol' is performed every year in all types of communities today," she said. "The different editions proliferated so quickly. Its appeal was immediate but also timeless."

Dickens wrote "A Christmas Carol" at a time of vast industrial change, Mullen said, with an economic landscape filled with poverty and destitution. Many of his works deal with the problems he saw, such as materialism. With "A Christmas Carol's" take-home message, he wants the capitalist society to stop connecting with each other in terms of their monetary value and begin connecting in terms of their humanity as well as helping to meet the needs of those who cannot help themselves.

The tale, she said, is sentimental with a clear moral in which Ebenezer Scrooge became the embodiment of avarice on Earth and ill will toward men. Having dedicated his life to the procurement of money, Scrooge locked his heart to the "frivolities" of life such as love and happiness long ago. He now works through Christmas, and one assumes all other holidays, in the pursuit of growing his coffers ever larger.

He even demands his underpaid, overworked employee, Bob Cratchit, who symbolizes the poor working conditions of the time, to work on Christmas Eve and finds it unfair that he must pay Cratchit for not working on Christmas Day.

Four spectral visits on Christmas Eve night convince Scrooge to change his ways and dedicate his life to loving and helping his fellow man. Immediately after, Scrooge helps his impoverished employee save his sickly son and lives out his life righting the wrongs and undoing the “chains” on his soul.

While the intended meaning is important, sometimes the meaning gets lost as the years pass, Mullen said.

“I’m interested in the different modes of reading that Dickens’ stories invite us to think about: what the story actually says, such as its moral and sentimental focus, and how it circulates,” she said. “When it circulates, it often works against the story itself, suggesting a form of outdated Victorianism that we long for, or playing into Dickens’s timelessness rather than highlighting the ways in which he was profoundly engaged with his historical moment. We often go to the play or re-read the story at Christmas time to escape from politics rather than using it as an opportunity to think about Dickens’s politics or our own political world.”

Mullen said the meaning of the story may be changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as people associate the importance of making money as a moral and personal responsibility.

While teaching 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish literature, she said her students had trouble identifying with characters who ran into debt, which was a common theme of Irish literature at the time. Despite poor characters going into debt because of a political system that required that they be perpetually indebted, she said her students saw the protagonists’ choices to take on the debt as a moral rather than a structural problem.

Mullen said that one student compared the Irish literature he’d read to “A Christmas Carol.”

“He said, ‘We always think that Scrooge is a villain, but he’s right,’” Mullen said, echoing the student’s thoughts. “‘If you don’t make money, you can’t live. Without Scrooge at the end what would we do? Who would give Tiny Tim the money?’”

“For me, this comment revealed the extent to which money is our only understanding of value in the 21st century—even literature is assessed by very smart English undergrad students in terms of whether it will help them learn how to make money. In today’s world, you shouldn’t give gifts unless you have money to give. If you have to work on Christmas, then you just have to work on Christmas. Capitalism is the dominant mode of connecting and understanding how we should treat one another. A lot of political discourse is ‘take care of your wealth first, and then care about other things.’ No one would say Scrooge is the moral center of that story. Yet, the same people who would say this is a great story because it’s a triumph of loving one another would do the exact things Scrooge would do and have that be the defining role of morality in the country. But those are the exact values that Dickens is trying to critique.”

huge poverty. One of way he wanted to deal with modernity and these changes, relationships with people is still primary way of existing instead of deciding instead of monetary value. That is very primarily in his writing. Tying to capitalizing on it. Because of copyright pirated editions right way.

Though

I think what's really interesting. Couldn't make money wrote when he was really worried about money. Started reading later in his career to make money. I think from what I know, Dickens helped make Christmas a really big deal. That's something that hasn't changed that much in what Christmas means, whether it's Christian secular time for family, everyone it means something to everyone. You can't escape Christmas. That's in part because of Dickens. Young girl heard Dickens died. If Dickens is dead, is father Christmas dead too. Anecdote. That connection is close because we want to invest meaning in the holiday.

That's a cynical way of looking at it. The moral or sentimental reading isn't as important. Dickens wanted to writing at a time of vast industrial change, changing economic huge poverty. One of way he wanted to deal with modernity and these changes, relationships with people is still primary way of existing instead of deciding instead of monetary value. That is very primarily in his writing. Tying to capitalizing on it. Because of copyright pirated editions right way.

I think one of reasons why. Story that really invites audiences to apart. Dickens wrote the story and it was a story he read most in public in public readings. Not a surprise. That it would take off. Reflect but Christmas hasn't changed that much since Victorian period.

Dickens fought that his whole life. American worst copyright. Law. In flux during Victorian period. Story immediately popular. Make more money, but his actual profit from it was low.

I think what's interesting to me, a Christmas carol is performed every year in all types of communities. The different editions of it proliferated so quickly, its appeal was immediate and it's a timeless story.

I think that's a great question. That reminds me of Irish lit with my class. Everyone goes into debt. My students had real trouble with that. My students had trouble with that, it's a moral problem. Critique of economic system. We always think that Scrooge is villain but he's right. If you don't make money you can't live. Without Scrooge at the end what would we do who would give Tiny Tim the money. We need that. I don't think many people would say that out loud. We like to have moral plays to kind of have the

vener of we still really care about people humaniy is first. But the exact values are what Dickens is trying to critique. You shouldn't give gifts unless you have money to give, if you have to work on Christmas. Capitalism is the dominant mode of connecting and understanding how we should treat one another. A lot of political discourse is take care of your wealth first and then care about other things. The water being shut off in Detroit, individual families don't have water. Instead of forgiving bills, we're shutting off water, so people don't have and then we pay \$20 to buy a Christmas gift to put under the tree for the poor. One of the reasons why stories get told is because they have meaning to us, we also retell some stories to sanitise them. Dickens is radical in a lot of ways. You can read about him calling for real radical ways. We tell that story to deradicalize it. Everyone knows Scrooge, she's a pop figure in our culture. No one would say Scrooge is the moral center of that story. Yet, the same people who would say this is a great play because it's a triumph of loving one another would do the exact things Scrooge would do and have that be the defining role of morality in the country. Putting money and work first. In terms of religion, religion is a radical thing, a lot of people are in touch with that. But a lot of people go to church to not have to think about religion. between people and religion.



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## **Student Spotlight: Dedicated to Inspiring a Culture**

Helen Hailu works to motivate and inspire her African American peers.

By Mashairi Halifu

Helen Hailu has dedicated her life to motivating and educating black children. Along with mentoring and tutoring at Alderson Elementary, Dunbar College Preparatory Academy, and Estacado High School in east Lubbock, she also is the event and programs coordinator at the Ted Phea Boys and Girls Club in east Lubbock.

“My passion stems from my culture's history,” said Hailu a junior public relations and women’s studies major from Dallas, “and knowing the struggle African-Americans have today”

Hailu said her parents were Ethiopian refugees. Her parents’ struggle and triumph motivated her activism which developed when she was young.

“When I was 11, I began binge-reading. I learned all about my Ethiopian culture and my black culture.” Hailu said “I began getting deeper into my African-American history because my surroundings needed answers. I learned African-Americans have had their rights negated by the capitalist system for 400 years now.”

Hailu also is current president of the Black Student Association at Texas Tech. She takes great pride in her Ethiopian heritage and her role as president of BSA.

“I take my position very seriously,” said Hailu “The black students at Texas Tech need a leader and voice. I take this position and my passion as my oath to my ancestors, activist, people who fought for equal rights, fought against racism, fought this racist institutionalized government and fought against police brutality.”

Hailu uses her presidency as a platform to get the word out on issues within the African-American community. She also is an activist for women’s rights. In February, Hailu will co-host an event called “The Love Below,” in Celebration of Black History Month and in Honor of Black Women everywhere, The African American Women of Texas Tech, with the help of the Texas Tech’s Women’s Studies Department.

Hailu uses her presidency as a platform to get the word out on current issues within the African American community. She also is an activist for women’s rights. This February, Hailu will be directing an event called “The Love Below” in Celebration of Black History Month and in Honor of Black Women everywhere, The African American Women of Texas Tech, with the help of the Texas Tech’s Women’s Studies Department. “The Love Below is an annual event,” said Hailu, “This year I have the honor of directing this event

with Nezi Momodu. I'm anxious for this year's event because I know it will amaze." The purpose of the event is to bring African American women across campus together and promote sisterhood and togetherness, while breaking negative bonds and forging new ones.

Hailu commits her work to those who don't have a voice of their own. She wants to inspire her culture to overcome adversity and work toward being a stronger people.

"My mother taught me that no matter how we are living, someone is less fortunate than me," she said. "I realized that people that looked like me needed me, especially children. Without getting political and making myself seem radical, I have this passion to help black people understand that history explains our struggle, and just as our ancestors overcome centuries of physical, mental and emotional abuse, we can too."

Why did you choose Texas Tech?

My brother is a Tech Alumni and I wanted to be just like him growing up.

What is your favorite memory at Texas Tech so far?

My favorite memory here has not happened yet, it will happen on February 12th where I get the chance to meet Angela Davis! A woman I have idolize since I was a little girl.

Who is your favorite professor? Why?

Dr. Heather Martinez, is a woman that wears all hats. She is a professor, a director, a motivator, a wife, a mother and so much more. We connected on how to promote learning and encourage conversations about the value of higher education. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work for her and learn so much from her. I love her demeanor and determination to make anything happen. I admire her and try to follow her footsteps because her passion never dies.

What is your favorite spot on campus?

The Black Student Association cubicle is my favorite spot on campus. It is my quiet get away and then a lively home for my organization to handle business.

What is your favorite Texas Tech tradition?

My favorite tradition is the wrapping of Old Will & Soapsuds!



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## **Texas Tech Celebrates Fall Commencement By Emily Gardner**

More than 2,300 students will celebrate commencement this weekend, as Texas Tech University hosts four commencement ceremonies Friday and Saturday (Dec. 12-13) at United Supermarkets Arena.

The School of Law hosts its hooding ceremony Saturday at the School of Law Lanier Auditorium.

Mica R. Endsley, chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force and a Texas Tech alumna, will speak at four ceremonies and Kem Thompson Frost, chief justice of the 14th Court of Appeals of Texas and a School of Law alumna, will speak at the hooding ceremony.

Friday ceremonies:

- **3 p.m.** College of Arts and Sciences
- **7 p.m.** Graduate School

Saturday ceremonies:

- **9 a.m.** College of Architecture, College of Education, Whitacre College of Engineering, College of Human Sciences and College of Visual and Performing Arts
- **1:30 p.m.** College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, Rawls College of Business, College of Media and Communication, University Programs and Wind Energy
- **5 p.m.** School of Law Hooding Ceremony

### **About Mica R. Endsley**

Endsley is the chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force where she advises the chief of staff and Secretary of the Air Force. She graduated with her bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from Texas Tech in 1982, received her master's degree from Purdue University and her doctorate from the University of Southern California. She served as a visiting associate professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics as well as an associate professor of industrial engineering at Texas Tech.

### **About Kem Thompson Frost**

Frost was appointed chief justice of the 14th Court of Appeals of Texas in 2013 where she has served since 1999. She is a native Houstonian and a sixth-generation Texan. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas before receiving her juris doctor from Texas Tech School of Law in 1983 and her master of laws from Duke University School of Law in 2014.

### **Honored students**

Outstanding students, selected based on all-around achievement, will carry banners representing their respective colleges.

The following students are banner bearers:

College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources: Stacie McKinney, animal science

College of Architecture: Sawyer Lee Wilson, architecture

College of Arts and Sciences: Daniela Anna Hagenlocher, history

Rawls College of Business: Chelsey Renee Betenbough, management and marketing

College of Education: Maira Perez, multidisciplinary studies

Whitacre College of Engineering: Paul Guthrie Gatewood, electrical engineering

Honors College: Camden Ellese Hoeffner, psychology; Jesse Latimer, mechanical engineering; Erin Warren, agricultural communications

College of Human Sciences: Brianna Bush, nutritional sciences and dietetics

College of Media and Communication: Kayla M. Suarez, public relations

University Programs: Richard Charles Deming, university studies

Graduate School: John Robert Middleton, curriculum and instruction

College of Visual and Performing Arts: Catherine Leigh Burris, music

The highest-ranking fall graduates for each college include:

College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources: Joshua Geiger, horticulture and turfgrass sciences; Stacie McKinney, animal science; Joshua Richards, natural resources management; Marilu Varela, agricultural and applied economics; Erin Warren, agricultural communications

College of Architecture: Sawyer Lee Wilson, architecture

College of Arts and Sciences: Natalie Nichole Brown, international economics; Luke Anthony Burton, political science; Joseph Franklin Ellis, chemistry; Daniela Anna Hagenlocher, history; Camden Ellese Hoeffner, psychology; Kendall Dawn Kennedy,



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exercise and sport sciences; Joel Mark Lee, cell and molecular biology; Valerie Virginia Molina-Rivera, Spanish; Samantha Arlene Sheetz, general studies; Lesley Anne Valastro, exercise and sport sciences

Rawls College of Business: Rebekah Yvonne Gray, accounting; Taylor Cain Howell, accounting; Holly Michele Jefferys, accounting; Cody Austin Monnette, accounting; Laura Elizabeth Ponder, accounting

College of Education: Maira Perez, multidisciplinary studies

Whitacre College of Engineering: Paul Guthrie Gatewood, electrical engineering; Hieu Khac Anh Nguyen, electrical engineering

College of Media and Communication: Jordan E. Gosnell, electronic media and communications; Catherine L. McKee, public relations; Kayla M. Suarez, public relations

College of Human Sciences: Brianna Bush, nutritional sciences and dietetics; Colleen Williams, human development and family studies

College of Visual and Performing Arts: Catherine Leigh Burris, music

University Programs: Robert Thomas Sparks, university studies

Wind Energy: Andrew Jeffreys, wind energy

### **Reception Information**

Receptions will occur immediately following commencement unless otherwise noted. Reception locations are as follows:

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources: Animal and Food Sciences Building, Room 101

College of Architecture: College of Architecture Gallery

College of Arts and Sciences: Holden Hall, foyer area, Room 104

Rawls College of Business: Business Building, McCoy Atrium

College of Education: Education Building, second floor lobby

Whitacre College of Engineering: Livermore Center, Room 104

College of Human Sciences: El Centro in the Human Sciences Building

College of Media and Communication: Matador Room, Student Union Building

Office of Communications and Marketing

College of Visual and Performing Arts: Holden Hall Rotunda

University Programs: Red Raider Lounge, Student Union Building

Wind Energy: National Wind Institute, Room 107

School of Law: School of Law Forum and Lanier Atrium (3:30 p.m. Saturday)

### **Additional Information**

The Graduate School will distribute diplomas in the City Bank Room of United Supermarkets Arena immediately following the ceremony.

Ceremonies can be viewed live online at <http://www.ttu.edu/livestream/>. They also will be aired on Suddenlink channel 128.

For more information on commencement, including maps, guest seating, college receptions, parking and hotels, visit <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/commencement/index.php>.

The School of Law Hooding Ceremony can be viewed live online at <http://mediaservices.law.ttu.edu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=8dbb390e-2a19-4c68-9652-1fc1eea36066>.

For more information about the law school hooding ceremony, including parking, hotels and reception information, visit [http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall\\_2014/](http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/fall_2014/).



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## **Texas Tech Grad Goes From Prison Jumpsuit to Cap and Gown**

Leo Pereida says his faith in God allowed him to make the life changes he needed.

By Heidi Toth

When Leo Pereida was 16, he dropped out of high school and moved out after a fight with his father. At 18, he tried cocaine for the first time. At 26, he discovered crack cocaine. When he was 33, he committed aggravated robbery. At 34, while “high as a kite,” he stood before a judge, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

On Saturday, Pereida will put on his black cap and gown and walk into the United Supermarkets Arena, “Pomp and Circumstance” playing in the background. Along with more than 2,300 other graduates, he will walk across the stage, shake hands with his dean, smile for the camera, toss his cap into the air and have a diploma with Texas Tech University embossed at the top. He is 50 years old.

The turning point in life, he said, came after being sentenced. He was sitting in solitary confinement when his faith in Jesus Christ, which for years had been drowned out by drugs, resurfaced. He fell to his knees, praying and crying.

After leaving prison, he found a full-time job and enrolled at Texas Tech, worked toward a bachelor’s degree in community and family addiction services (CFAS) in the [College of Human Sciences](#) and told his story with the hope of helping others.

“Not everybody has to go through prison to change,” he said.

### **Road to nowhere**

Pereida is the ninth of 10 children. He grew up in a small town in Crosby County, but considers Crosbyton, where he fled at age 16 to live with his sister, his hometown. He struggled with high school, made friends who had a bad influence on him and had little direction in life.

Those friends weren’t the start of his drug habit, though. Two years later, while he was living in Ralls, his boss’s sister came to his house and asked if she could use his bathroom. When she wasn’t out after half an hour, he knocked on the door.

“She opened it and had needles in her hand and cocaine, then asked me if I wanted to try it,” he said. “That’s when my life went down the wrong way.”

For eight years, he lived for the next hit. Sometime in the chaos he met a woman, got married and had two children, but he could only control his addiction for a couple years around them before leaving his wife and kids. Sometime after that, friends introduced him to crack cocaine. He lived on the streets for seven years feeding his addiction before a

woman convinced him to help her rob a motel. He ended up in jail, facing charges of aggravated robbery.

In the six weeks he was in jail, he went to Bible study and talked with other men who wanted to turn their lives around. He could do that too, he thought. He didn't need the drugs.

"Well, as soon as I got out, I forgot all about it," he said. "I went back to doing my drugs again. I spent a year out on bond, and then the day came that I had to see the judge. I'd been high for the last six or seven days and I went in front of the judge like that. He wasn't happy with me."

He was sentenced to 15 years for his crime, spent mostly in the Price Daniel Unit in Snyder. This time, Pereida determined to change. He found God, he said, and God helped him to make use of his time in prison, earning his associate's degree and avoiding the prison gangs, including their supply of drugs.

"In prison all you do is either you study, work or hang out," Pereida said. "You either do your time or your time's going to do you."

### **Going somewhere**

After 10 ½ years, Pereida left prison, moved to Lubbock, found a job and enrolled at Texas Tech. At orientation, an adviser listening to his background suggested he major in CFAS. His experience would give him unique empathy and understanding for clients and their families.

On Sept. 23, 2013, he completed his parole, but he wasn't done with the parole office just yet. Pereida did his internship at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, in the same parole office he'd once checked into.

"To be behind that line, and now I'm at the desk – it's awesome," he said with a smile.

Pereida contributed to the depth of the CFAS department, program director C. Nichole Morelock said.

"Leo truly appreciates the opportunity to be at Texas Tech, and that shows in his demeanor in class," she said. "He is a quiet force in the classroom and is a positive influence on other students. I am very excited to see how he builds on his experience to continue impacting others."

Life today is pretty good for the former junkie. After a series of part-time jobs that kept him solvent, though it took a toll on his grades, he's now a foreman at Apple Country Orchards in Idalou. He's back in touch with his children; his daughter, 24, and son, 22, are coming to his graduation.

"They're really proud of me," he said.



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Pereida, however, said he couldn't take much credit for where he is today compared to where he's been.

"God gets all the glory for where I'm at today," he said. "I've done nothing to earn it, and I've made it this far."



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## **What You Need to Know About Carol of Lights**

Here are fun, behind-the-scenes facts about the university's annual holiday celebration.

By K'Leigh Sims

Red Raider fans near and far can't live without one holiday tradition – Texas Tech University's Carol of Lights celebration.

More than 20,000 people gather every year at Memorial Circle and the Science Quad to ring in the holiday season with carols, hot chocolate, carillon bells and the lighting of red, orange and white lights along the center of campus.

As 18 buildings on campus light up the night sky, along with a tree and wreath, the holiday season officially begins in Raiderland.

While many see the overall production of the Carol of Lights celebration, there are many behind-the-scenes facts that people may not know.

### **Did you know more than 20,000 lights are connected on one strand across 18 buildings, the tree and wreath?**

This year, 20,841 lights are hung up around the center of campus, courtesy of Texas Tech's Operations Division. The setup process begins two months in advance to make sure all of the lights are connected and work correctly.

But how are they all connected? Through a series of electrical contactors interconnected through the university's tunnel system and also above ground at certain places.

Texas Tech also has been making the transition from glass incandescent lights to LED lights to conserve energy. Currently 80 percent of the lights are LED and will be 100 percent LED in 2015. The new bulbs are more durable and are 87 percent more efficient. This transition roughly saves the university \$800 a year in utility costs.

### **Did you know Texas Tech has a new 38-foot-tall tree that is sturdier than the previous one?**

This year, Texas Tech features a brand new tree after retiring the last one that was donated by alumnus Jim Sowell in 2002.

The tree is 38 feet tall (or three stories high) plus another 5 feet for the star that sits on top of the tree. The tree has approximately 85-100 pieces and is pre-decorated with 2,900 LED lights. In the past, the tree has had multicolored lights but the tree will now shine brightly with cool white lights.

**Did you know the carillon has 37 bells and the largest one weighs approximately a ton?**

The carillon concert fills the air each year with traditional carols, but no performer is ever seen.

The Charles and Ruth Baird Memorial Carillon is located in the west tower of the Administration Building, where music professor Thomas Hughes plays the set of tuned bells each year.

The carillon includes 37 bells arranged in a circle that are long ringing and have harmonics that emphasize certain tones. The largest and lowest-pitched bell, called the bourdon, weighs approximately a ton, and the smallest one weighs eight pounds.

Foundries in England and France cast the majority of the bells, and the estimated value of the collection is \$250,000.

**Did you know the Silent Raiders, a student organization for sign language, signs for Carol of Lights each year?**

Officers for the Silent Raiders student organization perform traditional carols each year for those in the audience who have hearing impairments. The organization prepares months in advance to not only sign the carols but also make the signing appealing to the eye.

**Did you know the greenery for the wreath is fresh-cut pine limbs?**

The wreath that adorns the front of the Geosciences Building is 20 feet in diameter and has fresh-cut pine limbs placed by members of the Women's Service Organization. The limbs are cut at Texas Tech and also adorn the balcony.

**Other Carol of Lights facts:**

- In 1947, two Texas Tech students, Herbert Burgess and Carl Hester, climbed up in the west tower of the Administration Building and took a personal sound system to play holiday carols and a string of lights to hang from the side of the tower. Other students followed suit for several years. Twelve years later a student tradition turned into the official Carol of Lights event.
- Members of Alpha Phi Omega and Chi Rho place 3,000 luminaries around Memorial Circle the day of the ceremony. Members pre-fold the bags at meetings in



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November, and it takes about four hours to place the bags and an additional hour to light all of the candles.

- The Saddle Tramps will carry nearly 80 red torches, beginning at the university seal at the Broadway entrance, passing by the High Riders as they illuminate the path with candlelight.
- Raider Red and the Masked Rider assist with the torch-light procession.
- Members of Raiders Helping Others pass out glow necklaces to 3,000 guests attending.
- Carols of the night will include: “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” “O Holy Night,” “Deck the Halls,” “Silent Night” and “Joy to the World.”