



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 2, 2016

CONTACT: Cara Vandergriff, cara.vandergriff@ttu.edu
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College of Arts and Sciences Reception to Honor Distinguished Alumni and Faculty

Honorees will include a former U.S. Cabinet member, Texas Supreme Court Judge, NASA flight director and former U.S. Ambassador.

EVENT: The [College of Arts and Sciences](#) at Texas Tech University will honor distinguished alumni and faculty at the 2016 Distinguished Alumni, Excellence in Research and Innovative Teaching Awards reception this week.

The ceremony will honor alumni Lauro Cavazos, former U.S. secretary of education and former Texas Tech president; Philip W. Johnson, Texas Supreme Court justice; Ginger Kerrick, NASA flight director; and Tibor P. Nagy, Jr., former U.S. ambassador to Guinea and Ethiopia. Select faculty members also will be recognized for excellence in teaching and research.

W. Brent Lindquist, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said the true measure of a university's greatness can be found in the achievements of its alumni and faculty.

"The core values of our college, broad knowledge combined with in-depth achievement, strong intellectual and practical skills, empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity and change," Lindquist said. "As dean, I am especially proud to inaugurate the recognition of distinguished alumni for lifetime achievement and of faculty for their distinguished research and teaching."

WHEN: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday (May 5)

WHERE: The Rawls Course, 3720 4th St.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 2, 2016

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Final Showing in Sexism | Cinema Series This Week

The spring 2016 series comes to an end with a showing of “Bridesmaids.”

WHAT: Texas Tech University [Women’s Studies Program](#), [Alamo Drafthouse, International Film Series](#) and [Risk Intervention & Safety Education](#) presents “Bridesmaids,” the final film in the spring 2016 Sexism | Cinema Film Series.

[Elizabeth Sharp](#), associate professor in human development and family studies, will lead a discussion following the film.

The Sexism | Cinema series considers how sexism is rooted, recognized and challenged in the media. Each film in the series was selected by Texas Tech faculty members and featured female protagonists to view and discuss following the showing.

WHEN: 7 p.m. Wednesday (May 4)

WHERE: Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, 120 W. Loop 289

WHO: The film is open to the public and admission is \$3. A complete list of the films shown in the series can be found [here](#).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 4, 2016

CONTACT: Benjamin Robinette, benjamin.robinette@ttu.edu
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School of Music to Host 40th Annual President's Scholarship Concert

This year's concert will feature a performance of Carl Orff's work "Carmina Burana."

The Texas Tech University [School of Music](#) is hosting the 40th Annual President's Scholarship Concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday (May 7) at the Lubbock Civic Center Theatre (1501 Mac Davis Lane). The concert features the [Texas Tech University Symphony Orchestra](#) and choirs, with the collaborating talents of the West Texas Children's Choir and members of the Lubbock Chorale. Introductory remarks will be made by Clinton Barrick, station manager and director of programming for [KTTZ Public Media](#).

The concert will celebrate those who donated to School of Music scholarships as well as the music students who received scholarships in the past year. Admission to the concert is free, with tax-deductible donations accepted to support School of Music scholarships.

The concert will showcase the entirety of German composer Carl Orff's celebrated cantata "Carmina Burana," which is based on 24 poems from a medieval manuscript dating back to the 12th century. With texts in Latin, French and Middle High German, the primarily satirical poems are organized into five sections that evoke celebrations of springtime, dancing in a meadow, food and drink in a tavern and an audience at the Court of Love. The complete cantata is bookended by a movement called "O Fortuna," recognizable to many as a popular staple of dramatic choral music.

David E. Becker, director of orchestral studies, and Richard Bjella, director of choral studies, will direct the concert. Guest vocalists for "Carmina Burana" include renowned operatic baritone and Texas Tech alumnus Weston Hurt, soprano and Texas Tech alumna Jackie Stevens, and tenor and Texas Tech graduate student Gustavo Steiner Neves.

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Expert Pitch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 3, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
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Expert Available to Comment on ‘Biggest Loser’ Study, Why Weight Maintenance Remains a Challenge

The results of a study published this week in the journal [Obesity](#) and highlighted by [The New York Times](#) further adds to the complexity known to doctors and researchers about weight loss. The study, which looked at past contestants of the hit reality show “The Biggest Loser,” found most contestants, despite losing hundreds of pounds and acquiring resources to help them keep the weight off, not only put it back on but in some cases were heavier than before.

The likely culprit, researchers found, wasn’t old habits but was the body’s resting metabolic rate. It fell more quickly than expected, meaning participants were burning fewer calories while at rest, but it did not increase as weight crept on in the intervening years, which explains why some people actually weighed more than they did before the show.

Dr. Nikhil Dhurandhar, one of the early adopters of the realization that obesity is a disease with multiple causes and not simply a matter of calories in versus calories out, is available to discuss this research. He is the chairman of the [Department of Nutritional Sciences](#) at Texas Tech University and immediate past president of The Obesity Society, a premier professional organization of obesity researchers which publishes *Obesity*. He researches a human adenovirus that causes obesity, yet improves some metabolic factors. This research could lead to a vaccine to prevent a subset of obesity as well as novel anti-diabetic treatments. In addition, he has a strong interest in the treatment of obesity and has treated more than 10,000 patients for obesity. He has a medical degree and a doctorate in biochemistry and, among many honors and many publications, was awarded the 2015 American Society for Nutrition’s Osborne and Mendel Award, which recognizes recent outstanding basic research accomplishments in nutrition.

Expert

Dr. Nikhil Dhurandhar, chairman and professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences, (806) 834-6446 or nikhil.dhurandhar@ttu.edu

Quotes

- “Our bodies have ways to regulate body weight by means that are not necessarily under our willful control. Some people suffer from obesity, which is a chronic, incurable disease. As known to science today, obesity can be controlled but not cured – much like diabetes, where blood sugar levels can be controlled, but diabetes does not go away.”
- “An unfortunate distinction in people’s minds: A patient with diabetes is not blamed if he or she controls blood sugar for a few months, but after a while the blood sugar increases

again. However, a person suffering from obesity is stigmatized if weight loss cannot be maintained.”

- “There are many biological ways in which our bodies fight against weight loss and try to regain weight. Hence, it is not right to shame or blame someone for inadequate weight loss or the eventual weight gain.”
- “Future research needs to focus on strategies to produce biologically meaningful and sustained weight loss in the majority of people who attempt to lose weight.”

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 3, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu
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School of Law Board of Barristers Names Executive Committee for 2016-17

The board promotes advocacy with mock trial, moot court and negotiation competitions.

The Texas Tech University [School of Law](#) has selected the new executive committee for the [Board of Barristers](#) for the 2016-17 school year.

The Board of Barristers is a student organization that promotes advocacy through mock trial, moot court and negotiation competitions. Members of the Board of Barristers are advanced students who have demonstrated outstanding advocacy ability as well as the desire to pass their skills along to fellow law students.

The executive committee is elected by the general board members.

The executive committee members for 2016-17 are:

Randy Lopez ('17) will serve as the chairman of the 2016-17 Board of Barristers. He is originally from Rio Grande City and graduated cum laude from University of Texas in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in political science and a minor in legal studies. While at Texas Tech Law, Lopez serves as a member of the Business and Bankruptcy Law Journal, tutors constitutional law, is a Dean's Student Ambassador and is on the Student Recruitment Council. Lopez is pursuing a juris doctorate and master's degree and hopes to practice criminal defense law. Lopez also is a veteran of the United States Navy.

Emilie Blake ('17) will serve as vice chairwoman of judges. Although she was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Blake graduated with honors from Colorado State University with a bachelor's degree in international studies and a business minor in 2013. While at Texas Tech Law, she worked for the State of Colorado doing water law litigation and is pursuing a concentration in law, science and technology. She also serves as a member and officer in various student organizations including as a staff editor and comment editor for the Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal. Blake has competed on two national moot court teams and hopes to practice water law.

Kimberly Elmazi ('17) will serve as vice chairwoman of trial advocacy. A native of Arlington, Kimberly earned a bachelor's degree in political science and international studies from Southern Methodist University in 2014, graduating with honors. At Texas

Tech Law, Elmazi serves as a staff editor for the Estate Planning and Community Property Law Journal, senator for the Student Bar Association, and criminal law tutor. Additionally, Elmazi competed in two national mock trial competitions on behalf of Texas Tech Law, winning a national championship in the spring of 2016. Elmazi hopes to practice criminal defense and immigration law.

Jessica Morrison ('17) will serve as vice chairwoman of appellate advocacy. Morrison was born outside of Pittsburgh but grew up in a small town outside of Austin. She graduated magna cum laude from Texas Tech where she majored in French and double minored in Spanish and Arabic. At Texas Tech Law, she works for the Lubbock County District Attorney's Office for the civil division, serves on the student recruitment committee and has competed on two national moot court teams. Morrison would like to practice in the area of corporate litigation and transactions.

John Easter ('17) will serve as vice chairman of negotiations. Originally from Blue Mound, Illinois, Easter graduated magna cum laude from Millikin University with a bachelor's degree in communications. At Texas Tech Law, he clerks with a local attorney, is a member of the Phi Delta Phi legal honor society and competed as a member of the American Bar Association national negotiation team. Easter is interested in practicing business litigation and transactions.

Matthew Merriott ('17) will serve as vice chairman of administration. Born in Florida, Merriott is from Lubbock. He graduated from Texas Tech in 2014 with a bachelor's degree in finance. At Texas Tech Law, he clerks with a firm in Lubbock, is a member of the Federalist Society and Phi Delta Phi legal honor society, was a tutor for civil procedure and is pursuing a business law concentration. Merriott is interested in practicing in business, tax and bankruptcy law.

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DATE: May 3, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
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Smithsonian Exhibit on Military Mail Opening at Museum of Texas Tech

Mail Call uses letters, audio records and firsthand accounts to celebrate the incalculable value mail from home has always provided overseas troops, even in the email age.

WHAT: The [Museum of Texas Tech University](#) will introduce [Mail Call](#), a traveling version of a permanent exhibit in the [National Postal Museum](#), which explores the history of America's military postal system. The exhibit examines how even in the era of email and Skype, overseas troops today treasure mail delivered from home just as their counterparts did in previous generations.

Members of the [Military and Veterans Program](#) at Texas Tech will speak briefly at the event and will be available for individual interviews after. Museum director Gary Morgan also will speak, and there will be a short reading of one of the letters. Reporters will be able to view the exhibit.

WHEN: 1:30 p.m. Friday (May 6)

WHERE: Museum of Texas Tech University, 3301 4th St. Enter through the main doors on the north side of the museum.

EXHIBIT: Mail Call, which runs from May 7 to July 17, features documents, photographs, illustrations and audio stations that bring to life the story of military mail. One piece in the exhibit is a kit with supplies for "Victory Mail," a microfilm process developed during World War II to shrink the volume and weight of personal letters.

Visitors will read firsthand records and heartfelt sentiments through excerpts from letters to and from soldiers on the front, discover how military mail communications have changed throughout history and learn about the armed forces postal system. The exhibit offers an appreciation of the hard work that goes into connecting soldiers with their loved ones at home, a process that continued through the extreme circumstances overseas troops frequently face.

Mail Call is organized and circulated by the [Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services](#) (SITES). Lubbock is the 13th city and final stop in Texas on the tour that began in 2012 in South Carolina.

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News Release

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DATE: May 3, 2016

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USDA Discovery Zone Teaches Kids About Importance of Food Safety The interactive food safety truck visited Texas Tech on Tuesday.

Clean, separate, cook, chill – the four key stages to practicing the safe handling of food.

That was the message heard by groups of elementary school children on Tuesday (May 3) as they toured the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Food Safety Discovery Zone](#), a 40-foot mobile interactive learning kitchen that teaches food safety and the prevention of foodborne illnesses.

The Discovery Zone made a stop at the [Department of Animal and Food Sciences](#) at Texas Tech University where students learned about washing their hands before and after handling raw foods, separating raw foods to prevent cross-contamination, proper cooking temperatures and how to adequately store food to prevent the growth of bacteria.

“I think this is a fantastic opportunity for Texas Tech,” said Kendra Nightingale, an associate professor and food safety expert in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. “It’s a huge thing for the government to come to Lubbock, Texas, to really tell us how important they think we are in terms of our program here in food safety, and food safety is important to everyone from the farmer to the parent. It’s a great opportunity to have the ability to expose children to food safety and let them know everyone plays a role in the process.”

According to the USDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated one in six Americans, or a total of 48 million, get sick from foodborne illnesses each year. The Food Safety Discovery Zone, which travels to fairs and small schools as well as events with about 200,000 people, teaches visitors of all ages how to prevent foodborne illnesses through the four stages:

- **Clean:** wash hands and surfaces often.
- **Separate:** Keep raw meat and poultry apart from ready-to-eat foods.
- **Cook:** Always use a food thermometer to ensure foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature.
- **Chill:** Refrigerate or freeze food promptly.

“We’re here to help everybody know the simple ways to stay safe at home,” said Adam Ghering, a member of the USDA food safety education staff. “Inside it’s geared more toward children and each state has an interactive stop to it, and the kids just love it. The kids have wide eyes, for sure, when they see the lighting and the wheels, and they’re learning super things like washing their hands and handling food. The smiles afterwards and the high-fives we get really tell the reaction.”

In addition to the Food Safety Discovery Zone, the USDA promotes food safety and prevention of foodborne illnesses in other ways.

The [Foodkeeper app](#), available from both the Apple Store and Google Play, give users information on storage times for hundreds of different foods. The USDA also has a toll-free USDA Food Safety Hotline (1-800-535-4555) that is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays for those with questions about food safety, as well as the website www.FoodSafety.gov where questions can be asked and are answered 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

For more information on the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, go to its [website](#).

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 4, 2016

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Texas Tech Researcher's Work Could Lead to Your Next Juicy Steak

Brad Johnson, an expert on skeletal muscle growth in cattle, helped lead a study examining ways to increase marbling in beef without increasing overall fatness.

There are few things in life more enjoyable than a thick, juicy steak cooked to perfection.

But in a time when the public seems to search for cuts of meat with the least amount of fat, finding meat with just the right combination of leanness and flavor can become quite the quest. An expert at Texas Tech University, however, is part of a study that might have found the answer.

[College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources](#) professor Brad Johnson, the Gordon W. Davis Regent's Chair in the [Department of Animal and Food Sciences](#) at Texas Tech, partnered with Texas A&M professor Stephen B. Smith to discover the key to finding the most palatable, preferable cut of meat is in its marbling, and they have discovered a way to increase marbling without increasing external fat.

The key, Johnson said, is isolating a receptor in marbling adipocytes, which are fat cells juxtaposed to muscle tissue. Activation of that receptor, called G-coupled Protein Receptor 43 (GPR 43) produces lipids, and lipids are the key ingredient in marbling.

“We feel if we can regulate this receptor in marbling, we can increase marbling without making the cattle fatter,” Johnson said. “As the cattle make fat, the feed efficiency goes down and for consumers we trim off all the excess fat. But if marbling is what consumers want, we can increase marbling at different times in the feeding cycle without making the cattle fatter, and that would be a huge benefit for the beef industry.”

Marbling vs. backfat

Though they might look the same on a ribeye cut, there is a distinct biological difference between backfat and marbling, and it affects the palatability of beef.

The key is in the composition of the adipocytes that make up the backfat and marbling. Subcutaneous adipocytes are more commonly known as backfat. Intramuscular adipocytes are more commonly known as marbling fat and are visible as the lines between sections of beef tissue, or the red meat.

What Johnson and Smith have done through biological and biochemical means is isolate the adipocytes and grow them in culture systems. In those experiments, Johnson and Smith discovered differences between subcutaneous adipocytes and intramuscular adipocytes.

Marbling adipocytes are much smaller in size and diameter than subcutaneous adipocytes, which tend to clump together. Another difference is metabolic, or which energy source they use to produce backfat or marbling. Backfat adipocytes use acetate, which is a volatile fatty acid produced in the rumen of cattle. Marbling adipocytes, however, require glucose, which Johnson said is a premium energy source for both animals and humans.

The biggest discovery is the GPR 43 receptor in marbling adipocytes that increase the production of lipids, which increases the production of marbling without increasing fat.

“At the end, it’s all triglycerides, it’s all adipose tissue,” Johnson said. “But, in fact, from a mechanistic standpoint, the end result is you have a pile of marbling and a pile of backfat. But it’s how it gets to that point which is different. Marbling needs glucose to metabolize. Backfat can do it with acetate.”

Market for marbling

The push from consumers to have more marbling and less fat, Johnson said, comes from the revelation that marbling appears to be very high in a healthy fatty acid called oleic acid. Oleic acid is a monounsaturated fatty acid that in humans has been shown to decrease low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and possibly increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol. It also has been linked to lowering blood pressure.

“Generally, if you can avoid backfat and consume lean tissues that have marbling, it contains a lot of oleic acid, which is beneficial for human health,” Johnson said. “That story has to be told many times to consumers as it can cause many to see any fat as being negative to their diet.”

Johnson said several cattle breeds in Japan, Korea and China are bred to have very high marbling content. To compare, USDA choice beef usually is about 6 percent intramuscular fat, where Japanese Wagyu cattle produce about 30-35 percent intramuscular fat. He added high-end steakhouses in the U.S. have a huge demand for prime steaks with marbling, and those usually have about 6-8 percent marbling.

Asian cattle, however, are fed for much longer periods of time, close to three years in fact, where U.S. beef breeds are usually raised and harvested for meat between 18 and 22 months of age.

Johnson said the longer cattle feed, the more they are able to replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats, such as marbling. Cattle release an enzyme called stearoyl-CoA desaturase, which takes steric acid, a saturated acid, and saturates it to form double bonds to convert it into oleic acid.

“As the animal matures, it gets fatter, has more days on feed, it increases the activity of this enzyme,” Johnson said. “So, in fact, we are creating more monounsaturated fat. The best way to get more oleic acid is to feed cattle longer.”



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Johnson said the genetics of cattle breeds used in the U.S. simply won't allow for marbling comparable to Asian breeds, although dairy breeds such as Holsteins, which make up about 20 percent of the beef cattle industry, do marble very well and without much backfat. U.S. beef producers would have to introduce Asian breeds to have cattle with high marbling, but because they feed so long it would not be economically feasible.

How to increase marbling

Johnson said one of the keys for U.S. beef producers to increase marbling and oleic acid synthesis in beef is grain feeding or corn feeding and the most detrimental thing that can be done is grass feeding, or grazing.

“What happens in the rumen when animals consume grass or roughage, their fermentation pattern is such that it reduces marbling even more,” Johnson said. “They have fewer amounts of oleic acid for beef. Grain feeding very much promotes marbling deposition. That’s one thing we do in feedlots that does promote marbling.

“The reason it is still very interesting is, as important as marbling is for quality-grade beef in this country, from an economical standpoint, even in today’s conditions, there’s generally not enough premium for high-marbled beef that the added pounds pay the bills. It’s still more advantageous to put on more carcass weight regardless of high quality or average quality beef.”

So the key becomes increasing marbling through genetics and further studies like the one Johnson and Smith published. That will be done through more efficient feeding to increase the production of oleic acid, but only as long as it is economical to the producer.

“My whole goal was to be able to get high-marbled beef without having to spend a lot of money on feed,” Johnson said. “That’s still my goal from a sustainable beef producing standpoint. If we can get a high quality, healthy product on fewer days on feed, I think that will be very favorable. We’ve got some commercial partners where we have found specific ligands in feed additives for the receptors and trying to mitigate marbling by activating those receptors.”

And you’ll know it happened by the next bite of that juicy, Texas-fed ribeye.

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Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 5, 2016

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Scales, Tails & Trails Returns to Lubbock Lake Landmark

The family-friendly event allows participants to learn more about the High Plains.

WHAT: The annual Scales, Tails & Trails outdoor education event at the [Lubbock Lake Landmark](#) is a chance for people to learn more about the fish and wildlife found in the High Plains of Texas. Participants can do arts and crafts, see fish prints and wildlife, learn about birdwatching and more. It is a family-friendly event and admission is free.

Immediately after Scales, Tails & Trails, Texas Tech University climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe will speak as part of the Oasis on the Plains lecture and workshop series.

WHEN: Outdoor event: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday (May 7)
Lecture: 2 p.m. Saturday (May 7)

WHERE: Lubbock Lake Landmark, 2401 Landmark Drive
Lecture: Landmark Auditorium

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Climate Science Center to Host Monthly Science By the Glass Event

Faculty member Jennifer Vanos will lead a discussion on beating the heat.

WHAT: “Science by the Glass” is an informal discussion series hosted by the Texas Tech University [Climate Science Center](#). The series is designed to bring members of the community and Texas Tech faculty and students together to discuss topics related to science, climate and society. The latest discussion, “Beating the Heat,” will be led by Texas Tech faculty member Jennifer Vanos.

WHEN: 6 p.m. Tuesday (May 10)

WHERE: Fox & Hound Sports Tavern, 4210 82nd St., Ste. 240

WHO: [Jennifer Vanos](#) is an assistant professor of atmospheric science in the [Department of Geosciences](#). Her research into human biometeorology and bioclimatology, which connect weather and climate to human health, focuses specifically on extreme heat, atmospheric radiation and air pollution exposure in urban areas. Vanos is co-manager of the [Texas Tech Atmospheric Science Instrumentation Lab](#) at the [Reese Technology Center](#) and works within the interdisciplinary Climate Science Center, where she collaborates with lead climate scientists and climate experts across the south-central U.S. She is on the American Meteorological Society’s Board of Environment and Health and an integrated member of the International Society of Biometeorology as chair of the Students and New Professionals Group.

The discussion is open to the public and admission is free.

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 6, 2016

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Texas Tech Moot Court Garners Top National Ranking

The team from the School of Law will compete in the national championships in January in Houston.

The [moot court program](#) at Texas Tech University's [School of Law](#) finished the 2015-16 season ranked No. 1 in the nation, according to rankings compiled by the University of Houston Law School's Blakely Advocacy Institute.

By virtue of its No. 1 ranking, the Texas Tech moot court team will enter the 2017 National Championship competition in January as the top team, garnering 119.5 points on a scale that ranks results from various competitions, some weighed as more prestigious than others and thus awarding teams more points for their results.

"This has been a long time coming," said Robert Sherwin, assistant professor in the Texas Tech School of Law and director of advocacy programs. "We came close in 2010 when we were third and in 2011 when we were second. And, of course, we're one of only three schools in the country to be in the top 10 every year since 2010. But to finally finish in that top slot, that's very satisfying because it proves what we've known for a long time, that we're the best."

The top 16 teams in the rankings will advance to the national championships in Houston next year. Other ranked schools in the state include Southern Methodist University (tied for fifth), South Texas College of Law (tied for seventh) and Baylor University (13th) as well as the University of Oklahoma (14th).

According to Sherwin, the rankings divide various competitions into four tiers, with Tier 1 competitions worth more than Tier 2, Tier 2 worth more than Tier 3 and so on. He said the bigger and more competitive tournaments feature tougher teams, which makes those tournaments worth more points than smaller, less prestigious ones.

"What I'm most proud of is how many different students and coaches contributed to this No. 1 ranking," Sherwin said. "It wasn't just one team or one coach. We had 23 different students and seven different coaches who were on teams that earned points toward the ranking. That really shows the depth and overall strength of our program."

Sherwin said the team from the Texas Tech School of Law earned points from competitions in all four tiers.

“I want to personally thank professor Sherwin and all of the students, coaches and practice-round judges who contributed to this success,” Dean Darby Dickerson said. “I know the quality of schools we’ve competed against – they are well prepared and fierce, which makes this ranking truly special.”

The Stetson University School of Law and the Chicago-Kent College of Law finished a distant second behind Texas Tech with 88 points. Georgetown University ranked fourth with 87 points.

Texas Tech finished the year with five national championships, five regional championships, eight national finals, five semifinals, three quarterfinals and 13 individual best brief and oralist awards.

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News Release

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DATE: May 10, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu

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Belize-Bound Team Earns Grant for Research on Maya Civilization

The Chan Chich Archaeological Project is in its fifth year at Texas Tech.

A team of researchers and students from Texas Tech University is heading to Belize later this month to continue research into the generations of Maya who occupied the area.

This is the fifth year Brett Houk is leading the field school to Chan Chich (pronounced *chon cheech*) and the first he's had a six-figure budget, thanks to a grant from the Alphawood Foundation in Chicago.

Houk, an associate professor of archaeology and chairman of the [Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work](#), was invited to apply for a grant from the private foundation, which awarded the [Chan Chich Archaeological Project](#) (CCAP) a \$240,000, three-year grant.

The additional funding will allow Houk and his students to work on four separate projects during their almost two months in the Central American country. Four graduate students will lead the digging, each in charge of one area and a group of undergraduate students. Those subprojects are:

- An area with deposits dating to 700 BC, which will help explain the early founding of the city.
- The “elite courtyard,” with deposits related to the collapse of the Maya civilization in Chan Chich, dating to about AD 850.
- A historic Maya village that was occupied between the late 1800s until 1931 by a group of Maya who fled the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico to avoid the Caste War.
- Looking for evidence of agricultural fields along the margins of a large lagoon using drones.

The group also will use drones to do aerial mapping of cleared cattle pasture and will be able to do radiocarbon analysis upon returning to Texas Tech in July.

“If we didn’t have the grant we’d be doing one of those four things, so the grant’s allowing us to do a lot more work,” Houk said.

Being able to make progress on so many fronts simultaneously will speed up the work but also give Houk and future students a better idea of what they’ll need to look for in the future.

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“What we do next year will be different,” he said. “It will depend on what we find this year. Because it is a forested environment, it’s hard to do the work. It’s hard to map things covered in rainforest. It’s incremental work, and each season you build a little bit more knowledge.”

Students interested in the Field School in Maya Archaeology, which is run through Study Abroad at Texas Tech, can contact Houk or go to the [website](#). It is open to any student interested in archaeology, but Houk warned it is not a tropical vacation; although the rainforest is beautiful and the resort where the students live is pleasant, the class includes about eight hours a day of physical labor outside in the hot, humid environment. Field work experience such as that provided by CCAP is critical to any student planning to be an archaeologist or go to graduate school.

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

CONTACT: Brett Houk, chairman, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work, College of Arts & Sciences, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-8107 or brett.houk@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

Expert Pitch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 10, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Experts Available to Discuss Fort McMurray Wildfire and Its Effects

Pitch

Residents of Fort McMurray in Alberta, Canada, have watched the last few days as a massive wildfire has consumed roughly 400,000 acres, or about half the size of Rhode Island. Due to record high temperatures in the area for this time of year, the blaze is “zero percent contained” and heading east toward Saskatchewan. It has already displaced more than 90,000 residents and burned more than 1,600 homes and businesses.

Robin Verble-Pearson, an assistant professor of fire ecology in the Texas Tech University [Department of Natural Resources Management](#), is available to discuss the fire itself and its ramifications on the local ecology. She is an expert in prescribed burning, fire management and fire ecology.

Katharine Hayhoe, the director of the Texas Tech [Climate Science Center](#), also is available to discuss the fire’s relationship with and impact on climate change.

Expert

Robin Verble-Pearson, assistant professor of fire ecology, Texas Tech University Department of Natural Resources Management, (806) 742-2842 or robin.verble@ttu.edu

Katharine Hayhoe, director, Climate Science Center, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-8665 or katharine.hayhoe@ttu.edu

Talking Points

- Changing climates are likely to continue to exacerbate severe wildfire conditions.
- Wildland firefighters are increasingly being exposed to longer seasons, more severe fires and increasingly hazardous conditions.
- Wildfire risks are present in any natural forested or grassland area, from the southern plains of Texas to the northern prairies of Canada.
- We aren’t seeing more frequent wildfires these days. In fact, in the U.S., the number of wildfires was cut in half during the 1980s due to forest management approaches that include wildfire suppression.
- However, over climate timescales of multiple decades, there is an increasing trend across western North America in the total area burned. That’s because, in a warmer climate, the risk of having the type of hot, dry fire weather that allows fires to spread out of control is increasing.

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Quotes

- “Almost a century of fire suppression has resulted in increased fuel loads,” Verble-Pearson said. “Prescribed fire management is one way to reduce these fuel loads and create firewise communities.”
- “When long-term trends interact with natural variability like El Niño, the risks are exacerbated even further,” Hayhoe said. “And that’s exactly what we saw this year: a long-term trend toward warmer conditions with reduced snowpack, exacerbated by a strong El Niño event.”
- “This is just one more reminder of how, nine out of 10 times, the reason why we care about a changing climate is not because it brings some new type of impact we’ve never seen before, but because it interacts with and exacerbates the risks we already face today,” Hayhoe said.

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 10, 2016

CONTACT: Rachel Dolle, rachel.dolle@ttu.edu

(806) 742-3451

Whitacre College of Engineering Names Scarborough Distinguished Engineering Student

Scarborough is a graduate of Lubbock Christian Schools.

The Texas Tech University [Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering](#) has selected Bailey Scarborough as the recipient of the 2016 McAuley Distinguished Engineering Student Award.

This award, provided by members of the Whitacre College of Engineering Dean's Council, is named in memory of James A. McAuley, an active member of the Dean's Council and a Texas Tech distinguished engineer.

Scarborough was selected because of her outstanding academic achievements, honors, activities, interests and aspirations. She has earned an undergraduate 3.6 GPA and a graduate 4.0 GPA and is graduating in May with a master's degree in environmental engineering. She also is receiving a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering, graduating cum laude with honors.

As a Lubbock native, Scarborough did her first internship in the Lubbock office of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality during summer 2013. The opportunity provided her with real world knowledge of state and federal regulations that affect environmental engineers.

Her second internship with Valero was at the McKee Refinery in Dumas, where she learned the fast-paced environment of the oil and gas industry. She returned for a second summer internship at the refinery and remained there through the fall. After graduation, Scarborough will start her career at the refinery as an associate environmental engineer.

At Texas Tech, Scarborough has been involved in many organizations including Sigma Phi Lambda, Chi Epsilon, Tau Beta Pi, American Society of Civil Engineers, Society of Environmental Professionals and the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. She also has also been an engineering ambassador for three years and said it has been her favorite experience as a student.

She credits her parents as being the top influence for her success.

“They have always told me my whole life that I’m capable of doing things, I’m smart and I can accomplish what I want to accomplish if I work for it,” Scarborough said.

She also thanked God, saying she has been blessed beyond what she will ever deserve.

A medical mission trip to Peru in high school opened Scarborough’s eyes to the world of civil and environmental engineering. Seeing poor water conditions made her question where our water comes from, where wastewater goes, how do we know it’s safe, and what kind of biological and chemical steps do we take to ensure it’s safe? She discovered she wanted to treat the source of problems instead of treating symptoms of diseases.

She attributed choosing Texas Tech to the professors, students and staff who made her feel like she was wanted and belonged, and that the college wanted to help her become the best engineer possible. She credited Ken Rainwater, a professor in the [Department of Civil, Environmental and Construction Engineering](#), for playing a huge part in her decision.

“I can’t even put into words how honored I feel, and I’m thankful to the Dean’s Council for seeing potential in me,” Scarborough said.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2016

CONTACT: Cara Vandergriff, cara.vandergriff@ttu.edu
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Female Students Encouraged to Pursue STEM Careers at Texas Tech Event

Emmy Noether High School Mathematics Day is hosted annually by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics to foster girls' interest in STEM disciplines.

More than 200 elementary to high school-aged girls and their teachers will visit Texas Tech University on May 18 to attend the 14th Annual Emmy Noether High School Mathematics Day, hosted by the [Department of Mathematics and Statistics](#).

Emmy Noether High School Mathematics Day began at Texas Tech in 2003 with the intention of attracting more female students to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines and related careers. The one-day event allows students to experience a university environment, gain insight into female professors' experiences and foster an interest in the educational and career opportunities within STEM disciplines.

"More than anything, we want these girls to learn that careers in math, science and engineering are attainable," said Magda Toda, department chair and professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. "By attracting more girls toward STEM disciplines, we hope to bring more quality STEM students to Texas Tech as well."

The day's events will begin at 9 a.m. with an opening ceremony hosted by Toda and Texas Tech Provost Lawrence Schovanec. The following activities will include a competition, workshops for both teachers and students, a career panel with Texas Tech faculty members and an awards ceremony.

More information on Emmy Noether High School Mathematics Day, along with a biography on renowned mathematician Emmy Noether, is available on the event [website](#).

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

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2016

CONTACT: Jenae Fleming, jb.fleming@ttu.edu
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Library Helps Students Unwind During Finals Week With Therapy Dogs The “Dog Days of Finals” starts Friday.

WHAT: The [Texas Tech University Libraries](#) invites students to destress during finals week and play with furry friends provided by the [South Plains Obedience Training Club](#). Therapy dogs from the club will visit students studying in the library.

The South Plains Obedience Training Club provides training classes for animals of area residents as well as educational and pet therapy programs.

The event is open to all Texas Tech students.

WHEN: 5:30–7:30 p.m. Friday (May 13)
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday (May 14)

WHERE: Croslin Room, University Library

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CONTACT: Julie Barnett, assistant director of communications and marketing, Texas Tech University Libraries, (806) 834-0718 or julie.barnett@ttu.edu



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu

(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Alumnus Tabbed as New Dean of College of Architecture

Jim Williamson studied architecture, art and English literature at Texas Tech.

Jim Williamson, an associate professor of architecture at Cornell University, has been named the Dean of the Texas Tech University [College of Architecture](#). Williamson will assume his new position on Aug. 1.

Williamson, who earned his bachelor's degree in architecture design at Texas Tech, has been at Cornell since 2001. He has taught design and theory at numerous universities besides Cornell, including Harvard, the Rhode Island School of Design, Rice University, the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, Columbia University, the University of Texas at Austin and the Georgia Institute of Technology.

"It is a very happy homecoming," Williamson said. "I'm really looking forward to it. I was prepared very well as a student at Texas Tech and it established a foundation for a career I'm quite proud of and I feel was made largely possible by some of the things that happened to me in Lubbock."

Williamson earned his master's degree in architecture at the Cranbrook Academy of Art and also studied the history and theory of architecture at the Architectural Association of London.

At Cornell, Williamson is the director of the undergraduate architecture program that is ranked No. 1 in the country and also served as the director of the graduate architecture program, coordinator of the freshman design sequence as well as developing foreign study programs in Latin America and the Caribbean that focus on architecture, landscape and urban design.

"I think I have a really broad view of what architecture education should be and the challenges facing architecture in the 21st century," Williamson said. "I've seen various institutions' approaches, some with more success than others, and I believe I can bring those experiences to bear on education at Texas Tech and work with the faculty to effectively meet those challenges of architecture education."

Williamson's work has been recognized through numerous awards. He earned first place at the Shinkenchiku Competition for Japan Architect in 1986, a design award from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture in, two Graham Foundation grants, the Martin Dominguez Distinguished Teaching Award from the Cornell College of Architecture, Art and Planning in 2006 and a special commendation for teaching excellence from the Escuela de Arquitectura at the Universidad de Puerto Rico, where he held an invited professorship.

"We're delighted that Jim Williamson has agreed to return to Texas Tech University as our new dean of the College of Architecture," Texas Tech Provost Lawrence Schovanec said. "His impressive record of experience and the expertise and perspective he has gained at some of the best architecture programs in the country will be a tremendous asset in leading the College. I look forward to the benefit of his influence and leadership on our students, the faculty and our architecture programs at Texas Tech."

Williamson's work and influence can be seen across the U.S. He worked with John Hejduk on construction of "The House of The Suicide and the House of The Mother of Suicide" in Atlanta and Prague. He assisted in the curation of the "Sanctuaries" exhibit on Hejduk's works at the Whitney Museum of American Art. He also is a consultant to the Hejduk estate on reconstruction of the "House" monument to Czech dissident and martyr Jan Palach in Jan Palach Square in Prague.

Williamson recently co-edited "The Religious Imagination in Modern Contemporary Architecture: a Reader" with Renata Hejduk and is working on "The Suicide Masques: Atlanta/Prague/New York/Prague – Architecture and Urbanism in the Late Work of John Hejduk." He also has had two essays published and another was included in the book "Surrealism and Architecture." He also has published several journals, including Architectural Design: Games of Architecture, Japan Architect, Daedalus, Architecture & Urbanism, Kongsan (Space), Art Papers and the Journal of Architectural Education.

"I think the most important thing is to continue to support the good work going on in the college now," Williamson said of his vision for the College of Architecture, "and raise the college's profile to a national level so that it is recognized as being the extraordinary college that it already is."

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu

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Texas Tech Climate Expert Hayhoe Honored with Friend of the Planet Award
The award, presented by the National Center for Science Education, recognizes those who staunchly educate others regarding climate science.

Texas Tech University climate science expert Katharine Hayhoe has been honored with a Friend of the Planet Award from the National Center for Science Education (NCSE).

The Friend of the Planet Award recognizes those who defend and promote science education through lectures, seminars, hearings and in media appearances while also teaching science and educating the public.

Hayhoe, an associate professor in the [Department of Political Science](#), is one of three people, along with the organization Skeptical Science, to be honored with the award. Hayhoe is also the director of the Texas Tech [Climate Science Center](#), a collection of researchers from diverse fields who conduct research to address climate change from a variety of landscapes across the south central U.S.

“I’m honored to be recognized as part of this amazing group of people – John Abraham, Dana Nuccitelli and the Skeptical Science team – who’ve devoted their lives to communicating the realities of a changing climate to all of us who will be impacted by it,” Hayhoe said.

Hayhoe’s research involves developing and applying high-resolution climate projections to evaluate future impacts of climate change on human society and the natural environment. She has served as the lead author on key reports for the U.S. Global Change Research Program and the National Academy of Science’s Second and Third U.S. National Climate Assessments.

In giving her the Friend of the Planet Award, the NCSE lauded Hayhoe’s work and dedication to demonstrating the effects of climate change in all facets of life and that it is compatible with conservative and Christian values.

“Katharine is a bridge-builder between science and the wider society,” said NCSE executive director Ann Reid. “As director of Texas Tech’s Climate Science Center, founder and CEO of ATMOS Research, author of over 100 climate-related papers and co-

author of the widely praised ‘A Climate for Change,’ collaborator on the TV documentary Years of Living Dangerously and a contributor to a dozen other efforts, Hayhoe has guided people around cultural barriers and toward greater acceptance of climate science and their personal need to act.”

Abraham and Nuccitelli have written numerous pieces on climate change, most notably for the Guardian. Abraham helped found the Climate Science Rapid Response Team, which connects reporters with scientifically correct sources, as well as the Climate Science Legal Defense Fund, which helps scientists fight legal attacks. Nuccitelli took on climate science deniers directly in his book, “Climatology versus Pseudoscience: Exposing the Failed Predictions of Global Warming Skeptics.”

Skeptical Science is a website that explains climate change science and refutes global warming misinformation.

“The National Center for Science Education is a staunch advocate for sound science in the classroom and today. It is imperative our science includes accurate information on how our future depends on the energy choices we make,” Hayhoe said.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 11, 2016

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Texas Tech Students Awarded Prestigious National Scholarships

Tristan Russo and Lauren Finley will receive more than \$39,000 in funding for undergraduate studies.

Two Texas Tech University students are the recipients of prestigious national scholarships they say will impact not only their education but their lives after graduation.

Tristan Russo, a sophomore petroleum engineering major from Austin, is one of 125 students throughout the nation awarded a 2016 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship. Russo is a [Terry Scholar](#) in the [Honors College](#) and just the second Texas Tech student to win the award, which began in 2005. Andrew Alleman was awarded the scholarship in 2012, which includes an internship at a NOAA research facility or vessel.

Lauren Finley, a junior computer science major from Harker Heights, has been named a 2016 Boren Scholar and will receive a Boren Award for International Study. Finley is the first Texas Tech student to receive the award since 2011 and will spend a year in Tokyo, learning the Japanese language and culture.

Russo and Finley said they were encouraged to apply for the awards by Wendoli Flores, director of the Texas Tech [Office of National and International Scholarships and Fellowships](#) in the Honors College. The office oversees scholarship applications and provides guidance to applicants hoping to secure one of several highly competitive awards.

“We are very proud of both Lauren and Tristan, who have taken advantage of these opportunities under the direction of Wendoli,” said Michael San Francisco, dean of the Honors College. “Lauren’s year in Japan will immerse her in the culture and provide her with a wonderful opportunity to learn Japanese. She will, as part of this award, serve in the area of national security.”

San Francisco said Russo’s scholarship will allow him to interact with the NOAA administrator, senior program managers and scientists from NOAA’s organizations.

“I look forward to interacting with both Lauren and Tristan and how they will use these experiences to springboard their careers,” San Francisco said.

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The awards come after extensive applications that included research, writing essays, undergoing evaluations and obtaining recommendation letters from faculty and advisers. Russo said most of his winter break was dedicated to the process.

“It does take a lot of time to apply for these scholarships if you actually want to get them,” Russo said. “You put a ton of time into writing the essays. You want to come off as more than just a GPA and convey your personality as well as your goals that are related to their mission.”

Russo, who is a Terry Scholar in the Honors College, said he was thankful for the support and encouragement he received from program coordinator Heather Medley and others at the Terry Foundation.

“Those guys initially brought me to Texas Tech,” Russo said. “I wouldn’t even be here if they weren’t helping me fund my education.”

Finley also expressed gratitude for those who supported her throughout the lengthy application process. Though she started her application in early December, she submitted it just days before the February deadline. By the time she was done, Finley had submitted two 800-word essays and three letters of recommendation and had completed a language evaluation.

“The application process required a lot of research, a lot of writing, and a lot of help from faculty, family and friends,” Finley said. “My study abroad advisor, Kyle Pace, supported me every step of the way. He pulled a lot of strings behind the scenes to get a new study abroad program in Japan approved by Texas Tech.”

Russo’s award includes more than \$19,000 in funding, while Finley was awarded \$20,000. For Russo, the award will allow him to broaden his career spectrum and focus on something like oceanic science, a topic that fascinates him.

“I get an internship over the summer next year with NOAA, possibly on a research vessel or at a marine research facility,” Russo said. “You can’t get stuff like that without being vested with them.”

Finley, who is required to complete one year of service in the federal branch of the government in exchange for the Boren Award, said she is looking forward to the time she will spend abroad. She hopes being immersed in the Japanese culture will broaden her perspective while gaining international experience.

“I hope being a recipient of this award will encourage other students to embrace the study abroad experience,” Finley said. “I believe studying abroad is a life-changing experience every Red Raider should aspire to partake in, and students should stop being intimidated by the cost because there are scholarship awards out there.”



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Both encouraged their fellow students to consider applying for one of the many prestigious scholarships offered each year.

“It’s hard to talk about yourself constantly. It gets tiring doing that,” Russo said. “But don’t let a few failures get you down. You may not get the first or second one. I didn’t.”

Finley said students should start early and shouldn’t be afraid to ask for help or take advantage of the resources offered at Texas Tech. The payoffs will come not only while at Texas Tech, she said, but for the rest of their life.

“During the remainder of my time here at Texas Tech, I plan on applying the knowledge and insight I gain abroad to every aspect of my life, including my classes and my extracurricular activities,” Finley said. “I believe this award will open doors and create opportunities for me after I graduate from Texas Tech, because studying abroad will make me a more marketable individual in a globalizing world.”

Russo said, in the end, being awarded the Hollings Scholarship was worth giving up a month of winter break.

“It’s kind of like playing the lottery with really, really good odds. You can make your own odds even better the more work you put into it,” Russo said. “If you were to work all that time at the job, it would take months and months to make that money, or you can spend a few weeks to fill out these applications and write and possibly pay for everything and open up a lot more doors. It’s not just money, it’s what comes after.”

CONTACT: Wendoli Flores, director, Office of National and International Scholarships and Fellowships, Honors College, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-5296 or wendoli.flores@ttu.edu



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 12, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
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Texas Tech's IDEAL Receives \$380,000 from the J. F Maddox Foundation

The Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners received two grants from the foundation to fund two summer camps for the next few years.

The J. F Maddox Foundation recently granted Texas Tech University's [Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners](#) (IDEAL) two grants totaling more than \$380,000 to fund two summer camps hosted by the department – the Texas Tech Summer Institute and [Science: It's a Girl Thing](#). Both camps provide academic opportunities for students in Lea County, New Mexico.

The grant given to the Texas Tech Summer Institute spans two years and up to \$200,000, and the grant given to the Science: It's a Girl Thing camp spans three years and up to \$181,500.

“On behalf of IDEAL, we are extremely grateful to the J. F Maddox Foundation for continuing to support and provide opportunities for students in Lea County to be college ready,” said Isaac Flores, assistant director of IDEAL. “We are honored to receive funding that will allow these students to participate in a rigorous university experience through engaged academic and leadership development during summer residential programs at Texas Tech.”

The Texas Tech Summer Institute began in 2009 and provides students from Lea County a rigorous university experience through engaged academic and leadership development. The camp equips incoming 10th- and 11th-graders with the tools and skills necessary to be successful leaders in their schools and communities.

Students must be nominated by their school counselors and reviewed before acceptance to the camp. Students must be the first in their families to attend a college or university, have a minimum 3.0 GPA, involvement in extracurricular activities, a proven desire to be leaders and be able to answer questions about their future academic and career goals.

Full scholarships from the J. F Maddox Foundation are provided to all participants to cover costs directly associated with those participating in the Texas Tech Summer Institute. Covered costs include transportation from New Mexico, housing and meals.

The institute welcomes more than 100 first-generation students from Lea County each year and has had more than 600 students from Eunice, Hobbs, Jal, Lovington and Tatum since its beginning.

Science: It's a Girl Thing began serving Hobbs Municipal Schools in 2003 after the camp began in 2000. Each summer, more than 100 girls from Hobbs attend to experience university life, hands-on classes and recreational activities while exploring new fields in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Since its beginning, the camp has had more than 700 girls from Hobbs attend.

The grant received from the J. F Maddox Foundation will cover transportation expenses and provide full scholarships for camp participants.

The camp was established to provide young women with strong role models in the areas of STEM; spark and engage interests in STEM; educate young women on the various career paths within the industries of STEM; and introduce young, underrepresented girls to a collegiate experience.

Classes offered during the camp include topics about:

- Atmospheric science
- Computer science
- Electrical engineering
- Forensics
- Physics
- Animal science and food technology
- LEGO robotics
- Math
- 3D design engineering
- GIS mapping
- Anatomy and physiology and more

Camp participants are housed on the Texas Tech campus and are supervised at all times by trained camp counselors.

The [J. F Maddox Foundation](#) has supported these opportunities for students in Lea County and continues to support Texas Tech's efforts for the area. The founders, Jack and Mabel Maddox, moved to Hobbs in 1931 and later established the organization in 1963 to serve the residents in southeastern New Mexico.

Education was the Maddoxes' highest priority and they later developed financial opportunities for students such as a student loan program (no longer in existence) and a competitive scholarship program initiated in 1996. The foundation awards five Jack Maddox Distinguished Scholarships each year to Lea County area high school students.



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“We are excited to continue our partnership with the J. F Maddox Foundation,” said Paul A. Frazier, associate vice president of Texas Tech’s [Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement](#). “We hope to continue to provide opportunities for students to explore new technologies in STEM fields and inspire first-generation students in their pursuit of a college degree.”

Texas Tech’s IDEAL department, housed under the Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement, provides distinctive and unique outreach programs that promote academic excellence in science, technology, engineering, art, math and diversity.

The department offers other [camps](#) for students of all ages and partners with many organizations to help students excel in every area of life. Partners include the Halliburton Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club, The [CH](#) Foundation, East Lubbock Promise Neighborhood and more.

For more information about IDEAL and its camps, visit its [website](#).

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CONTACT: Isaac Flores, assistant director, Institute for the Development and Enrichment of Advanced Learners, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-2420 or ike.flores@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 16, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

African Genocide Survivor Speaking to Lubbock Area High School Students

A coach, author and genocide survivor, Gilbert Tuhabonye will tell his story of great tragedy and triumph.

WHO: Gilbert Tuhabonye – coach, author, genocide survivor, retired professional runner and philanthropist

WHEN: 10:30 a.m. Wednesday (May 18)

WHERE: International Cultural Center auditorium

WHAT: Texas Tech University's [Office of International Affairs](#) and the [K-12 Global Education Outreach Division](#) welcomes Gilbert Tuhabonye to speak to 200 Lubbock area high school students. Tuhabonye will share his story of escape from a horrific massacre and subsequent genocide in Burundi, Africa, in the early 1990s.

A community leader in Austin, Tuhabonye founded [Gilbert's Gazelles](#), one of Austin's largest training groups for runners, and co-founded the [Gazelle Foundation](#), an organization that provides clean water to people in his homeland of Burundi. Tuhabonye also is the head cross country and track coach at St. Andrews High School.

For more information about Tuhabonye or the speaking event, contact the K-12 Global Education Outreach Division.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 16, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
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Groundbreaking Scheduled for New Honors Residence Hall at Texas Tech

The new hall, which will be adjacent to Murray Hall and the Rawls College of Business, will house 315 students upon completion.

WHAT: Groundbreaking for the New Honors Residence Hall, a \$29 million, 81,000-square-foot building that will house 315 students, all members of the [Honors College](#) at Texas Tech University. It will be the 19th residence hall on the Texas Tech campus.

Texas Tech University Interim President John Opperman, Honors College Dean Michael San Francisco and Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning & Construction Michael Molina will speak at the groundbreaking. Chancellor Robert Duncan and several members of the Board of Regents are expected to attend.

WHEN: 5:15 p.m. Wednesday (May 18)

WHERE: 803 Flint Ave, southwest of the Rawls College of Business. Parking is available in the Z6 parking lot west of Rawls. Reporters can proceed to the trailer at the project site.

VIDEO: Reporters with questions about video/audio capabilities, contact Jeff Ramazani with the Office of Communications and Marketing at jeff.ramazani@ttu.edu.

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

CONTACT: Michael Molina, vice chancellor for facilities planning & construction, Texas Tech University (806) 742-2116 or michael.molina@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 16, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Alumni Association to Announce New Military, Veterans Chapter
The chapter will enhance recognition of military and veteran graduates and help maintain their Red Raider connections after their college careers.

WHAT: Announcement of Texas Tech Alumni Association Military and Veterans National Alumni Chapter

WHEN: 3 p.m. Wednesday (May 18)

WHERE: McKenzie-Merket Alumni Center, 17th Street and University Avenue

EVENT: The [Texas Tech University Alumni Association](#) will present its new [Military and Veterans National Alumni chapter](#) to recognize military and veteran graduates and connect them to current students and their university in a meaningful way.

The chapter will be open to military, veterans, family members and anyone with an interest in supporting military service members, veteran students and graduates. Those who join also will have connections to members of the broader Texas Tech Alumni Association.

Texas Tech has been nationally recognized for providing a campus-wide support system for those who have served in the military and their family members. Texas Tech continually strives to be a military and veteran-friendly campus to honor the men and women who preserve the United States' freedom. This chapter will continue these efforts.

Light refreshments will be available.

For more information about the chapter, visit the chapter's [website](#).

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

CONTACT: Lou Ortiz, director, Military and Veterans Programs, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-6877 or lou.ortiz@ttu.edu

Office of Communications and Marketing

An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 16, 2016

CONTACT: Scott Lacefield, scott.lacefield@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech University, Lubbock ISD Launch Estacado Early College High School

Students will have the opportunity to earn 60 credit hours
at EECHS, a value of up to \$40,000 per student.

WHAT: Texas Tech University and Lubbock Independent School District will make a joint announcement launching the Estacado Early College High School (EECHS).

Texas Tech Interim President John Opperman and Provost Lawrence Schovanec will participate in the event along with Lubbock ISD Superintendent Berhl Robertson, student speakers and other officials.

WHEN: 10:30 a.m. Tuesday (May 17)

WHERE: Estacado High School Library, 1504 E. Itasca St., Lubbock

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

CONTACT: Nancy Sharp, executive director, Communications & Community Relations, Lubbock ISD (806) 219-0010 (office) (806) 786-1363 (cell) or nsharp@lubbockisd.org

CONTACT: Chris Cook, managing director, Office of Communications and Marketing, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-2136 or chris.cook@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 17, 2016

CONTACT: Cara Vandergriff, cara.vandergriff@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Faculty Members Awarded for Supporting Gender Equity in Science
David Klein and Audra Morse were selected by the West Texas Association for Women in STEAM to receive its highest annual awards.

The [West Texas Association for Women in STEAM](#) (science, technology, engineering, agriculture and math), also known as the WT-AWIS, will present two honorees with the organization's highest annual awards at a ceremony in their honor on Wednesday (May 18).

The two awards, called the Champion of Women Award and the Outstanding Woman Leader Award, are presented annually by the WT-AWIS to recognize Texas Tech University men and women who actively support gender equity by demonstrating their commitment to the education, training and mentoring of women in STEAM disciplines.

This year's awards will be presented to David Klein, associate professor of toxicology at [The Institute for Environmental and Human Health](#) (TIEHH); and Audra Morse, associate dean for undergraduate studies in the [Whitacre College of Engineering](#).

Klein was nominated for the Champion of Women Award by several of his graduate students at TIEHH, who said he has been both an inspirational professor and a devoted research mentor in addition to having a contagious enthusiasm for science. Klein's support for his students is evident with his open-door policy and mentoring efforts that extend from his professional to personal life, such as demonstrating his passion for students' research travel by helping them find financial support.

"Dr. Klein doesn't judge students or faculty based on gender, but encourages everyone to be successful and participate in WT-AWIS," wrote his students Amanda French, Amanda Cano and Michelle McManus.

Morse, who was selected to receive the Outstanding Woman Leader Award, was nominated by Texas Tech physics instructor Lesley Duke because of her dedication and commitment to inspiring, challenging and helping students in the Whitacre College of Engineering. Morse's leadership of the [Engineering Opportunities Center](#), which provides retention, placement and academic support services to students, as well as her creation of a mentorship program for females in engineering are a few examples of her dedication to helping students.

“Dr. Morse serves on a number of professional organization committees and has authored and/or co-authored more than 36 published journal articles,” Duke wrote. “In the last eight years, she has participated in research with other collaborators totaling over \$10 million and has received the two highest teaching honors at Texas Tech. She’s a positive, hardworking, well-known individual on the Texas Tech campus and is recognized by individuals inside and outside the Whitacre College of Engineering.”

Klein and Morse will be recognized at the awards reception, among other distinguished nominees, for their notable contributions and commitment to women in STEAM fields.

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

CONTACT: Julie Isom, associate director for research, Center for the Integration of STEM Education and Research, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-0904 or julie.isom@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 17, 2016

CONTACT: Amanda Castro-Crist, amanda.castro-crist@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Releases Spring Commencement Schedule

WHAT: Texas Tech University hosts spring commencement ceremonies.

WHEN: Friday (May 20): 3 p.m. [College of Arts & Sciences](#)
7 p.m. [Graduate School](#)

Saturday (May 21): 9 a.m. [College of Architecture](#)
[College of Education](#)
[Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering](#),
[College of Human Sciences](#)
[College of Visual & Performing Arts](#)

1:30 p.m. [College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources](#)
[Rawls College of Business](#)
[College of Media & Communication](#)
[Honors College \(Environment and the Humanities and Honors Arts and Letters only\)](#)
[University Programs](#)
[Wind Energy](#)

6 p.m. Texas Tech University [School of Law hooding ceremony](#)

WHERE: United Supermarkets Arena, 1701 Indiana Ave.

EVENT: Mark Lanier, a 1984 graduate of the Texas Tech School of Law and one of the most influential civil trial lawyers in the country, [will speak at all the commencement ceremonies](#). Lanier is a staunch supporter of his alma mater. He serves on the Law School's Foundation Board and was honored as a 2016 Distinguished Alumni of Texas Tech. He has been recognized as one of the top oralists by the American Bar Association and has been named twice by the National Law Journal as one of the top 100 most influential lawyers in America and one of the top 10 trial lawyers in the nation.

Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett is the [keynote speaker at the School of Law's hooding ceremony](#). Willett has served as a justice since 2005 and is the [Tweeter Laureate](#) of Texas. The position is the first of its kind in the country, with Willett tweeting multiple times a day to more than 33,000 followers. A former rodeo bull rider and professional drummer, Willett earned a triple-major bachelor of business administration degree at Baylor University before completing his master's degrees in political science and judicial studies, along with a juris doctorate degree with honors from Duke University.

Ceremonies can be viewed online at <http://www.ttu.edu/livestream/>.

For more information about commencement, including guest information, maps, parking and hotels, visit <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/commencement>.

For more information on the School of Law hooding ceremony, visit http://www.law.ttu.edu/graduation/spring_2016/.

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

CONTACT: Peggy Flores, commencement coordinator, Office of the Provost, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-3101 or peggy.flores@ttu.edu; CONTACT: Sarah Salazar, director of communications, Texas Tech University School of Law, (806) 834-5074 or sarah.e.salazar@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 18, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

International Affairs Hosting Graduation Reception for International Students

Students will welcome their family and friends, and Texas Tech officials and administrators will speak to and congratulate the graduating students.

WHAT: International Student Graduation Reception

WHEN: 5 p.m. Wednesday (May 18)

WHERE: International Cultural Center, 601 Indiana Ave.

EVENT: Texas Tech University's [Office of International Affairs](#) will host a graduation reception for all graduating international students and their visiting family and friends. Texas Tech Interim President John Opperman, Provost Lawrence Schovanec, Graduate School Dean Mark Sheridan, Vice Provost Ambassador Tibor Nagy and Associate Vice Provost Sukant Misra will offer congratulatory remarks to the international students for their accomplishments.

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

CONTACT: Jane Bell, senior director, Office of International Affairs, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-3667 or jane.bell@ttu.edu



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 18, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Alumni Association Announces New Military, Veteran Chapter

The chapter will enhance recognition of military and veteran graduates and help maintain their Red Raider connections after their college careers.

The [Texas Tech University Alumni Association](#) announced its new [Military and Veterans National Alumni chapter](#) Wednesday (May 18) at the McKenzie-Merket Alumni Center. The new chapter will recognize military and veteran graduates and connect them to current students and the university.

“This new alumni chapter will broaden the military and veteran support system we have on campus to the greater Red Raider alumni network across the state and nation,” said Lou Ortiz, director of Texas Tech’s [Military and Veterans Programs](#).

The chapter will be open to military, veterans, family members and anyone who has an interest in supporting military service members, veteran students and graduates. Those who choose to join also will have connections to members of the broader Texas Tech Alumni Association.

Lieutenant Colonel James Marlow, [Air Force ROTC Detachment 820](#) commander and professor of aerospace studies at Detachment 820, and Lieutenant Colonel John Ring, [Army ROTC](#) commander and professor of military science, said the new chapter will build Texas Tech connections for graduates as they enter their military services.

“It is my pleasure to support the new Military and Veterans National Alumni chapter,” said Marlow. “As we commission 2nd lieutenants into the Air Force and Army officers, it is great to give them a place to stay connected to Texas Tech, receive mentorship from fellow veterans and develop future leaders for our nation.”

Lt. Col. Ring added “As we graduate and commission Army officers for the nation, this chapter will allow us to maintain our connection to the Red Raider family.”

Texas Tech has been nationally recognized for providing a campus-wide support system for those who have served in the military and their family members. The university continually strives to be a military- and veteran-friendly campus to honor the men and women who preserve the United States’ freedom. This chapter will continue these efforts.

The chapter will provide many opportunities for members, including:

- Enhancing contact between the university and its military and veteran alumni
- Assisting with the recruitment, retention and graduation of military and veteran students
- Recognizing Texas Tech military and veteran contributions to the community and nation
- Providing scholarships and supporting activities for current military and veteran students
- Assisting military and veteran student transitions from campus to career through mentoring, internships and employment opportunities

To join the chapter, a fee of \$100 minimum is required, with \$50 going toward a Texas Tech Alumni Association membership and \$50 going toward the Texas Tech Military and Veterans National Alumni chapter. The first 100 people to join will be designated as charter members.

For more information about the new chapter, visit the Texas Tech Alumni Association [website](#).

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

CONTACT: Lou Ortiz, director, Military and Veterans Programs, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-6877 or lou.ortiz@ttu.edu



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 18, 2016

CONTACT: Amanda Castro-Crist, amanda.castro-crist
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Students Participate in Spring Commencement

Top graduates and banner bearers also are announced.

Texas Tech University will host two [spring commencement](#) ceremonies Friday (May 20) and Saturday (May 21) at United Supermarkets Arena (1701 Indiana Ave.), where 4,176 undergraduate and graduate students will earn their degrees. The [School of Law](#) hooding ceremony will be Saturday (May 21) at the United Supermarkets Arena.

“Commencement is the culmination of our students’ dedication to education and commitment to their futures,” Interim President John Opperman said. “Every year we send out into the workforce students who are well-prepared and qualified to begin careers in their fields of choice, and sought after by business recruiters globally. We are proud of their achievements and wish them well moving forward.”

Ceremonies can be viewed live online at <http://www.ttu.edu/livestream/>.

The 3 p.m. ceremony Friday (May 20) features the [College of Arts & Sciences](#).

The 7 p.m. ceremony Friday (May 20) features the [Graduate School](#).

The 9 a.m. ceremony Saturday (May 21) features the colleges of [Architecture](#), [Education](#), [Human Sciences](#), [Visual & Performing Arts](#) and [Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering](#).

The ceremony for [Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources](#), [Media & Communication](#), [Rawls College of Business](#), [Honors College](#) ([Environment and Humanities](#) and [Honors Arts and Letters](#) majors only) [University Programs](#) and [Wind Energy](#) will begin at 1:30 p.m. Saturday (May 21).

The School of Law hooding ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. Saturday (May 21).

Mark Lanier, a graduate of the Texas Tech School of Law and one of the most influential civil trial lawyers in the country, [will speak at all ceremonies](#).

Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett is the [keynote speaker at the hooding ceremony](#).

About Mark Lanier

W. Mark Lanier is a 1984 graduate of the Texas Tech University School of Law and a staunch supporter of his alma mater. He serves on the Law School's Foundation Board and was honored as a 2016 Distinguished Alumni of Texas Tech. He has been recognized as one of the top oralists by the American Bar Association and has been named twice by the National Law Journal as one of the top 100 most influential lawyers in America and one of the top 10 trial lawyers in the nation.

About Don Willett

[Don Willett](#) has served as a Texas Supreme Court justice since 2005 and is the [Tweeter Laureate](#) of Texas. The position is the first of its kind in the country, with Willett tweeting multiple times a day to more than 33,000 followers. A former rodeo bull rider and professional drummer, Willett earned a triple-major bachelor of business administration degree at Baylor University before earning three degrees from Duke University including master's degrees in political science and judicial studies and a juris doctor degree with honors.

Honored students

Outstanding students, selected on all-around achievement, will carry banners representing their respective colleges. The banner bearers are:

- College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources: Katelyn Littleton, animal science
- College of Architecture: Gerardo Perez, architecture
- College of Arts & Sciences: Sarah Hartline Muncy, history/political science
- College of Education: Stephanie Pescina, multidisciplinary studies
- College of Human Sciences: Jordan Ashlee George, nutritional sciences and dietetics
- College of Media & Communication: Colby Ward, electronic media and communication
- College of Visual & Performing Arts: Allison Nicole Pelham, dance
- Graduate School: Laurie Jo Corradino, doctor of philosophy, business administration
- Honors College: Friday (May 20) **3 p.m. ceremony:** Anna Sabrina Deleon, cell and molecular biology; Saturday (May 21) **9 a.m. ceremony:** Chiamaka Thelma Obianyor, chemical engineering **1:30 p.m. ceremony:** Grace Junli Hugh, Honors arts and letters
- Rawls College of Business: Sara Abbott, business management
- University Programs: Denton Shaw, wind energy
- Whitacre College of Engineering: Aaron Oracio Gonzalez, chemical engineering and general business

The highest-ranking fall graduates for each college/program are:

- College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources: Katelyn Littleton, animal science; Gracen Daniel, agricultural communications; Holton Westbrook, agriculture and applied economics



- College of Architecture: Gerardo Perez, architecture
- College of Arts & Sciences: Brianna Danielle Antuna, Spanish and exercise and sport sciences; Carly Elizabeth Barksdale, English; Beth Janae Berry, psychology; Molly Ellen Craft, English; Sarah Jessica Jackson, mathematics; Erin Elizabeth Jarvis, kinesiology; Carson Daniel Maher, exercise and sport sciences; Sarah Hartline Muncy, history/political science; Priscilla Ortiz, biology; Elle Arline Rickman, sociology; August Blaze Schaeffer, history and microbiology; Sean Michael Townsend, political science; Colby Shane Ward, English
- College of Education: Chloe Regis Alexander, Ashleigh Colvard, Emily Beth Earleywine, Addison Paige Gilbert, Megan Lynne Goettsch, Emily Marie Mantooth, Stephanie Pescina. All are multidisciplinary studies majors.
- College of Human Sciences: Meredith Michelle Gavin, nutrition; Andrea Leigh Hess, nutrition; Shelby Renee Huber, personal financial planning; Mitchell W. Leonard, community, family and addiction sciences; Rachel Jean Martin, human sciences; Ally Beth Schniederjan, restaurant, hotel and institutional management; Katherine Laine Sommermeyer, retail management
- College of Media & Communication: Colby Ward, electronic media and communication; Allison Terry, electronic media and communication; Brooke Bednarz, public relations; Lorenzo Salazar IV, public relations
- College of Visual & Performing Arts: Nicole Denise Miller, art; Allison Nicole Pelham, dance
- Honors College: Max Elliot Schimelpfenig, honors arts and letters
- Rawls College of Business: Sara Abbott, business management; Staci Ann Bullick, accounting; Harrison Douglas Detten, energy commerce; Nikita Dhir, general business; John Jackson Durell, accounting; Aaron Oracio Gonzalez, general business and engineering
- Whitacre College of Engineering: Heather Amanda Dorrance, chemical engineering; Aaron Oracio Gonzalez, chemical engineering and general business; Samantha Marine Rodriguez Amador, chemical engineering; Nima Eskandari, electrical engineering; Angga Khoirul Imam, industrial engineering; Jason W. Robison, mechanical engineering; Adam Scott Miller, petroleum engineering; Oliver Charles Mitchell, petroleum engineering; John Alexander White, petroleum engineering
- University Programs: Shandy McMullen-Brooks, university studies
- Wind Energy: Denton Douglas Shaw, wind energy

Reception information (immediately following respective ceremonies)

- College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources: Animal & Food Sciences building, Room 101
- College of Architecture: College of Architecture gallery
- College of Arts & Sciences: Holden Hall foyer, Room 104
- College of Education: Second floor foyer in College of Education
- College of Human Sciences: Canyon Room of the Human Sciences building
- College of Media & Communication: Matador Room of the Student Union Building (SUB)

- College of Visual & Performing Arts: Holden Hall rotunda
- Graduate School: City Bank Coliseum
- Rawls College of Business: McCoy Atrium of the Rawls College
- University Studies: Red Raider Lounge of the SUB
- Whitacre College of Engineering: 101 Livermore Center
- Wind Energy: National Wind Institute, Room 107

Reception information (prior to ceremony)

- School of Law: Law School Forum and Lanier Atrium

Additional Information

For more information about commencement, including maps and parking, visit its [website](#).

For more information on the School of Law hooding ceremony, visit its [website](#).

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

CONTACT: Peggy Flores, commencement coordinator, Office of the Provost, Texas Tech University, (806) 834-3101 or peggy.flores@ttu.edu

CONTACT: Sarah Salazar, director of communications, Texas Tech University School of Law, (806) 834-5074 or sarah.e.salazar@ttu.edu



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 20, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu

(806) 742-2136

Acclaimed Composer, Music Researcher Selected as VPA Dean

Noel Zahler has been an administrator and professor at Long Island University, Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Minnesota.

Noel Zahler, dean of the College of Arts, Communications and Design at the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University (LIU), has been selected as the new dean for the [College of Visual & Performing Arts](#) (VPA) at Texas Tech University.

Zahler, who has extensive experience in administration, fundraising and both international and interdisciplinary collaboration, said the research-intensive environment at Texas Tech drew him to the position. When he visited the campus, he also was impressed with the quality of the faculty and staff and the insatiable curiosity of the students.

“After being recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as one of the 81 public institutions in the top tier, Texas Tech is soaring as one of Texas’ national research universities, and I want the College of Visual & Performing Arts to be part of the scholarship and creativity that drives the university to new heights,” he said. “I want to raise the visibility of the arts on campus, in the community, throughout the region, the nation and the world.”

Zahler has been dean of the College of Arts, Communication and Design at LIU since 2011. Prior to that he was head of the School of Music at Carnegie Mellon University for four years and University of Minnesota for three years. He spent 20 years at Connecticut College, ending his career there as the Sylvia Pasternak Marx Professor of Music.

While at LIU, Zahler increased recruitment among international students, authored articulation agreements with institutions in Norway, Saudi Arabia, Italy, China and others and created a Summer High School Honors Institute residency program for prospective students. He also worked with other colleges on campus, including the School of Health Professions and Nursing and the College of Management, to create collaborative programs.

“Dr. Zahler is an eminently qualified musician, composer and scholar, and we are excited to welcome him to the College of Visual & Performing Arts,” said Texas Tech Provost Lawrence Schovanec. “His experience working not only with other musicians but also in a college overseeing such a broad array of arts and communication will make him a great leader of this diverse college that plays such an essential role in our university and the community.”

Office of Communications and Marketing

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In addition to raising VPA's profile throughout the nation, Zahler wants to create new multidisciplinary programs to give arts students a diversity of offerings, including collaborations with science and technology, health care, media, businesses, the social sciences and engineering, akin to the programs he implemented at LIU.

He trained as a classical guitarist and also plays, but does not perform on, the piano. His compositions, which are mostly in the post-modernist style, are for instrumental, vocal and electronic media. He has composed music for a variety of instruments and groups as well as interactive dance music, a virtual reality soundscape, a documentary, a number of computer animated videos and a chamber opera. In addition to writing and recording, Zahler created original software for musicians, including Score Follow, which follows a live performer and provides automatic accompaniment or spatialization as prescribed by the composer.

Zahler holds bachelor's and master's degrees from City University of New York's Queens College, a master of fine arts degree from Princeton University and a doctor of musical arts from Columbia University as well as a Certificato di Perfezionamento from L'Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy. He also has studied at The Juilliard School.

He is the recipient of numerous awards and prizes, including a National Endowment for the Arts Consortium Commission, a Fulbright/Hayes Fellowship and an Aaron Copland Foundation Grant. Zahler has received funding from the National Science Foundation, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and the Italian National Research Council.

He will start his new position on Sept. 1.

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CONTACT: Chris Cook, managing director, Office of Communications and Marketing, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-2136 or chris.cook@ttu.edu

Expert Pitch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 20, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Experts: New Nutrition Labels Positive, But Don't Expect Major Behavioral Changes

The Food and Drug Administration [announced Friday](#) it has finalized new nutrition facts labels for packaged foods. The new labels are intended to reflect new scientific labels, such as the connection between a person's diet and chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes or heart disease. The labels will include highlighting the calorie count and serving size and added sugar and will better explain what "percent daily value" means. Manufacturers will need to use the new labels by July 26, 2018.

One major change is about serving size; manufacturers will be required to base serving size on what people are actually eating, meaning the impossible-to-hit half cup serving of ice cream is no more. The serving size for soda will change from 8 ounces to 12 ounces, or a standard can.

Martin Binks, an associate professor of [nutritional sciences](#) at Texas Tech University, is available to talk about the changes. Binks leads the Behavioral Medicine & Translational Research Lab and is director of the Nutrition & Metabolic Health Initiative at Texas Tech. His expertise spans a breadth of clinical and translational research topics and issues in public health related to obesity including: behavioral, pharmacologic and surgical obesity treatment; barriers to treatment adherence (nutrition and physical activity); obesity and comorbidities; non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD); pain and sleep in obesity; sickle cell disease; health disparities; and neuroscience related to obesity.

Allison Childress is a registered dietitian nutritionist and nutritional sciences instructor at Texas Tech. She is certified in sports dietetics and by The Cooper Institute as a personal trainer. Childress has worked as a clinical and outpatient dietitian specializing in cardiac, pediatric, geriatric and sports nutrition in addition to weight management counseling. She is studying food addiction.

Experts

Martin Binks, associate professor of nutritional sciences, (919) 485-9215 or m.binks@ttu.edu

Allison Childress, registered dietitian and nutritional sciences instructor, (806) 773-7800 or allison.childress@ttu.edu

Martin Binks

- "The labels are an improvement over the previous labels, which were difficult for the average person to comprehend, but really only minor improvement."
- "Unfortunately, it is 'front of package' labeling that draws average consumer's attention. Only those predisposed to already being 'diet conscious' read the label. So until we

achieve helpful and non-misleading ‘front of package’ labeling, this will likely have little to no meaningful impact on population behavior.”

- “Positives: Highlighting somewhat more realistic serving sizes is an improvement for consumer readability as is the highlighting of calories to make them more apparent. Also the inclusion of actual nutrient amounts is very useful for those inclined to read the label.”
- “Negatives: With regard to the highlighting of ‘added sugar’ – I am concerned about the highlighting of any single nutrient over others, in this case added sugar. It seems to give it an elevated importance reminiscent of the elevated importance of dietary fat in the ‘80s. It plays into the pop culture of ‘sugar is poison,’ which is really not any more factual than blaming fat for all our ills in previous decades. The overall dietary pattern would be a better message than singling out any single nutrient.”

Allison Childress

- “As a registered dietitian who has spent countless hours educating students, patients and clients on label reading, I am very excited about the new label update for a number of reasons.”
- “The larger font for the number of calories is user-friendly, especially for those who may have limited eyesight or are simply in a hurry to make a decision regarding calories.”
- “Serving size is addressed in three ways. Many people struggle with portion control and determining portion size from the label. This change may help alleviate that.”
- “Finally, the addition of “Added Sugars” is positive. Sugar and carbs are often demonized unnecessarily. Now consumers can differentiate between naturally occurring sugars, such as fructose in fruit, and sugars that have been added by manufacturers.”

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 23, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Dean of Agricultural Sciences to Host Webinar on Cattle Nutrient Requirements
Michael Galyean will present the new edition of guidelines on nutrient requirements in beef cattle developed by the National Research Council.

Michael Galyean, dean of the Texas Tech University [College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources](#), will present a webinar on Wednesday (May 25) introducing the eighth revised edition of Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle, or Beef NRC.

The webinar is scheduled for noon CST and can be viewed [here](#).

Galyean, whose expertise is in cattle nutrition and management, has played an integral role in developing guidelines for cattle nutrition with the National Research Council, now known as the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, serving at its chair. The NRC has published seven previous editions of the Beef NRC, which provides guidelines for cattle nutritionists and academic professionals as well as those in the cattle and feed industries to develop and implement nutritional and feeding guidelines for beef cattle.

The last edition of the Beef NRC was published in 2000 and numerous changes have taken place in the beef cattle industry, warranting an updated set of guidelines with a great amount of new information on cattle nutrition.

The new guidelines will include not only energy and nutrient requirements for beef cattle but also information about phosphorus and sulfur content, strategies to reduce nutrient loss in manure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the relationship between nutritional quality and food safety, nutrient metabolism and utilization, feed additives as well as future areas of research.

For a hard copy of the Beef NRC, visit the National Academies Press [website](#).

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

CONTACT: Michael Galyean, dean, College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-2453 or michael.galyean@ttu.edu

Office of Communications and Marketing

An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 23, 2016

CONTACT: George Watson, george.watson@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Texas Tech Graduate Student Earns Award to Study Temperature, Heat in Seoul

Lexie Herdt will take readings at various points in the South Korean capital to demonstrate various mitigation strategies for heat-related illnesses.

Watch any local televised weather forecast and you will see temperatures given from a couple weather stations in any given city. And the larger the city, the more sparsely populated monitoring stations may be.

However, different areas of the city can register different temperatures depending on the landscape, vegetation, water availability such as ponds or lakes and types of buildings in a particular area. So one area could be hotter than others and require different methods to ensure people in those areas aren't affected by higher temperatures and susceptibility to heat-related illnesses.

This is the research being undertaken by Texas Tech University [Department of Atmospheric Sciences](#) graduate student Lexie Herdt, who has been granted an opportunity to add to her research by spending her summer in Seoul, South Korea.

Herdt is one of almost 200 students from the U.S. who earned the East Asia and Pacific Summer Institute (EAPSI) Graduate Student Award, an eight-week grant awarded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to conduct research overseas.

"I will collect fine-scale microclimate measurements in a mobile fashion and compare my data to the temperatures and other weather variables at stationary sites within the city," Herdt said. "Different areas of the constructed environments in a city will differ based on designs, which affects the amount of heat that is present and influencing humans and can result in heat stress and higher energy use in buildings. My goal is to provide the real-world evidence base at a finer scale that is needed to determine what temperatures people are experiencing in their daily lives."

From June 6 to Aug. 6, Herdt will work with Seoul National University to measure and compare surface and ambient air temperatures, humidity, radiant temperatures and wind speeds in different parts of Seoul in order to show how urban renewal and heat mitigation strategies can lower the instances of heat-related stress and illnesses.

“Lexie will be able to take real-world urban climate observations in an area that was created to provide urban cooling through vegetation and water and quantify the thermal comfort of people and tourists in the area using transect analysis,” said Jennifer Vanos, an assistant professor of atmospheric science in the [Department of Geosciences](#) and Herdt’s adviser. “We are very proud of her in receiving this prestigious award to learn and work in Korea for the summer and represent Texas Tech.”

The work will complement Herdt’s master’s thesis, which is based on data from the Pan Am Games in Toronto last summer. Environment Canada set up 53 weather monitoring stations all across the city so people attending the various venues would know the temperature at a certain location and could take the necessary steps to prevent heat-related illnesses.

Herdt is taking the research a step further by accessing Emergency Medical Services data from the regions in Toronto holding the Pan Am Games to see how many people were treated for heat-related incidents and determine which areas were more susceptible to heat stress. From there, she will extrapolate which areas of Toronto were the hottest and what strategies could be implemented, such as adding ‘cool city’ initiatives like vegetation, water, cool roofs or shade to reduce the area’s temperature.

Herdt hopes performing similar measurements in Seoul, which hosted the 1988 Summer Olympic Games, will add to her research to show how different areas within a city have different needs for to heat-related stress detection and prevention.

“This research could help provide a new perspective on the urban design measures that can be employed in differing cities around the world based on cultural, social and location-specific factors,” Herdt said.

Seoul also provides a unique opportunity, Herdt said, because the city has already implemented some measures in the last 10-15 years to help with overheating of urban areas. Prior to the Korean War, the city center area of Seoul where Herdt will conduct her research had a nice waterway running through its heart where numerous people lived. After the war, however, a highway was built over that waterway, which increased the overall temperature of the area.

In 2003, however, Herdt said the city realized it needed to provide cooler and more usable spaces and make it more comfortable for its citizens, so the highway was destroyed and the waterway was revitalized, adding a few parks in the center of the city.

Herdt will travel transect routes throughout the river area on foot with her mobile microclimate monitoring instruments, taking various readings at points along the way, to see how the microclimate, such as radiation exposure and air temperature, changes. She will then be able to demonstrate how the waterway and vegetation act as heat mitigation strategies for people using the river path, keeping them cool.



“The use of trees, vegetation and waterways in the urban environment brings benefits beyond mitigating heat stress,” Herdt said. “These benefits include reduced energy use, improved air quality and enhanced quality of life. Many cities in the U.S. can benefit from such measures to reduce the urban heat island effect, particularly during peak summer temperatures.”

Upon completion of the grant, Herdt will present a short paper to the EAPSI prior to leaving Korea, then produce a longer, more in-depth paper on her research and findings by March.

Spending the summer in Korea also will allow Herdt the opportunity to build potential future colleagues from other parts of the world who are interested in the same research. That was a big part of the application process, she said, in determining not only which proposals were worthy of study but how the researchers themselves will interact in a completely different culture with others.

“Not only do you have to learn and be responsible for your research but you have to learn to work in a different setting than what you’re used to,” Herdt said. “Going to Seoul should be quite an adventure. I have a plan set on how I will conduct my research around the river and parks, and I’m bringing my instruments with me from Texas Tech that are needed to collect the data.”

Herdt also is hoping this research and her trip to Korea can lead her down an eventual career path, either with the Environmental Protection Agency or the Department of Environmental Protection. Her expertise is in air quality and heat effects, and this experience could prove crucial to furthering not only her research but her life after earning her master’s degree in Summer 2017.

“My research in Seoul this summer will undoubtedly further my experience in the field of human biometeorology,” Herdt said. “I am excited to represent Texas Tech University and the atmospheric science group and bring back innovative ideas and new knowledge to the U.S.”

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

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 24, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Presley to Discuss Zika Virus with House Science Committee in D.C.

The environmental toxicology professor's testimony will be streamed live Wednesday at 9:15 a.m.

Steven M. Presley, a professor of environmental toxicology at Texas Tech University, will testify about his work related to the Zika virus in front of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space and Technology at 9:15 a.m. CDT Wednesday (May 25) in Washington, D.C.

Presley's testimony at the hearing, "Science of Zika: The DNA of an Epidemic" will be live-streamed [here](#). He will be joined on the panel by experts from the University of Arizona, Harvard and Oxitec, an insect control company.

Presley, who is the director of the Biological Threat Research Laboratory and Bioterrorism Response Laboratory at [The Institute of Environmental and Human Health](#) (TIEHH), will speak to U.S. representatives about his labs' Zika-related work and his role on the task force for the State of Texas response to Zika and public health protection. Presley's lab is biosafety level three (BSL-3) and allows Texas Tech to be a public resource for the identification and confirmation of biological samples for outbreaks of infectious diseases and other public health emergencies.

In his work at TIEHH, Presley focuses on recognizing the risks and threats associated with infectious pathogens, with the goal of developing and fielding preventive measures against vector-borne infectious and zoonotic diseases. His lab collects and studies mosquitoes not only for Zika but also for West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus and Chikungunya. He is the chairman of the publications committee and on the science and technology committee of the American Mosquito Control Association and serves as regional director of the South Central United States for the Society for Vector Ecology. More on his research is below.

About TIEHH

The Institute for Environmental and Human Health was created in 1997 as a joint venture between Texas Tech and the [Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center](#) to assess the impact of toxic chemicals and diseases on the physical and human environments, including air, water, soil and animal life. Researchers investigate elements in the environment, both those that are naturally occurring such as disease and those caused by humans, such as nuclear activity, pollution or chemical or bioterrorism, which negatively impact the environment. It is one of the few labs in the country dedicated to environmental toxicology.

Office of Communications and Marketing

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More on the research

Expert: Zika Latest in Chain of Mosquito-Borne Outbreaks to Affect U.S.

Environmental toxicology expert Steven Presley is testifying in front of the House Science Committee about his work with mosquito-borne illnesses and how to combat Zika.

Steven Presley has been studying arthropod-borne diseases for almost 30 years, looking for clues to sidestep the many serious and sometimes fatal diseases arthropods carry. He's made significant progress in the realm of West Nile virus, dengue fever, malaria and others, but new mosquito-borne illnesses still crop up, leaving him searching for answers in the growing Zika outbreak in the western hemisphere.

Presley, a professor in the Department of Environmental Toxicology at Texas Tech University, also directs the Biological Threat Research Laboratory at [The Institute of Environmental and Human Health](#) (TIEHH). This lab is the only place in West Texas equipped to test human samples for certain potentially infectious diseases and where samples of potentially infected mosquitoes go.

It also means Presley will be among the first to know when the Zika virus spreads to West Texas. Although his lab team has yet to test a positive sample, he's watching the mosquito populations closely. Zika worries him. The virus has been found in bodily fluids including saliva, blood, urine, amniotic fluids and semen and has been spread through sexual contact and from a mother to her unborn child in addition to mosquito bites. However, only one in five infected people are symptomatic, meaning 80 percent of those with Zika don't know they have it and aren't taking precautions to keep it from spreading, which is especially problematic in universities, cities and major hubs with travelers from throughout the world.

"Because there's not an intermediate amplifying host, and only one in five people is symptomatic with Zika virus, the transmission cycle is sped up, and people who are amplifying hosts of the virus may not be recognized," he said. "You have these amplifying hosts out there promulgating the virus, and mosquitoes are biting somebody else without you ever knowing it's occurring in the area."

Presley's research on mosquito- and other vector-borne illnesses

Prior to coming to Texas Tech, Presley was an active-duty entomologist in the U.S. Navy, including operational and field research on dengue fever and malaria control operations in Africa, Asia and South America. His studies also include:

- Rift Valley fever (a viral disease that primarily affects domesticated animals and humans, found largely in sub-Saharan Africa)



- Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever (caused by a tick-borne virus but transmitted by ticks from animals to humans and through contact with infected bodily fluids; found largely in Eastern and Southern Europe, throughout the Mediterranean, Africa and parts of Asia)
- Cutaneous leishmaniasis (a parasitic disease found in the tropics, subtropics and southern Europe caused by bites from sand flies; cutaneous leishmaniasis, one of the most common forms, causes skin sores).

Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Since leaving the military, Presley has focused his research on diseases closer to home. He studies the effects of various infectious diseases on local wildlife, and his research team was the first to detect and identify the area vector species for West Nile virus in mosquito populations in the area in 2003. Since then they have worked with local and regional public health agencies to screen mosquitoes for pathogens.

The goal in Presley's research is the development and fielding of preventative measures against vector-borne infectious and zoonotic diseases. Because of that focus, he has taken an active role in the Texas Infectious Disease Readiness Task Force, particularly its newly formed Texas Entomology Consultation Group.

He has not studied other ways Zika can be transmitted, such as through sexual contact. However, Presley said he is working to establish a collaborative research relationship with a private company that has developed a high-tech, low-cost, user-friendly, portable handheld system to detect Zika virus and other mosquito-transmitted viruses in a wide range of human clinical and environmental sample types that could make diagnosis quicker, easier and enable researchers to get more accurate data about the number of Zika cases in the United States. An accurate number is hard to determine since so many of the cases are asymptomatic.

The fears about Zika

Like West Nile fever, only about 20 percent of people infected with Zika show symptoms, and even most of those are mild cases. However, in a minority of cases, the effects are severe and devastating – microcephaly (below-average sized head and brain) among infants and Guillain-Barré syndrome in otherwise healthy adults. According to the CDC, Guillain-Barré is a rare disorder that causes a person's immune system to attack his or her nerve cells; it can cause muscle weakness and even paralysis. It typically lasts only a few weeks, though some people have long-term nerve damage.

Although the likelihood of either is small, Americans need to be aware of the danger Zika presents and take action to keep themselves safe. Because Americans are focused on the outbreak in Brazil and keeping mosquitoes out of their yard, they may miss the closer danger.

“I believe the major risk to most Americans is the potential for the Zika virus to be sexually transmitted from an asymptomatic person,” Presley said.

In light of the CDC's recent announcement that almost 300 pregnant women in the U.S. and its territories are being monitored for like Zika infection, having correct information is increasingly critical both for treatment, control and accurate reporting.

Combatting the virus and the fear surrounding it

This has to happen from multiple areas, Presley said, involving all levels of government, as well as neighborhoods and individuals. First, mosquitoes are still a risk, and people need to protect themselves from being bitten. People who are protecting themselves from the *Culex tarsalis* mosquito, which carries West Nile virus, may not be protecting themselves adequately against the *Aedes aegypti* (the yellow fever mosquito) and *albopictus* (the Asian tiger mosquito) populations, which carry Zika.

“The biology and behavior of these mosquito species differs significantly from the principle mosquito species that transmit West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis virus and some other arboviruses in our area, and these differences pose unique challenges for controlling them and personal protection from them,” Presley said. “They prefer to live inside our houses, under furniture and beds and in closets.”

These species need only one to two ounces of standing water in which to lay eggs, making yards and garages even more of a breeding grounds. Additionally, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* are day biters; they are most active after sunrise and just before sunset when it is cooler and relative humidity is higher. They also are “domestic,” meaning they prefer to reproduce and blood-feed near human habitats.

To protect themselves, residents and neighborhood associations should drain any standing water inside and outside the home, treat yards, surrounding vegetation and green spaces with insecticides (follow the instructions on the insecticide container) and wear long sleeves and pants as well as mosquito repellent when outside.

Governmental entities also can take action. Local governments should treat parks and green space, particularly if water collects there, with insecticides to keep mosquitoes from laying eggs. Presley also said more education is needed, both for public individuals and at the professional public health and health care provider level. Individuals and health care providers need to know how to recognize symptoms and how to reduce transmission between individuals.

Although the threat from Zika is new, the process society needs to go through to protect itself is similar for this and many other vector-borne illnesses common in the United States, he said. Such education is especially critical as the U.S. enters prime mosquito season.

“This rapidly evolving Zika virus threat in Texas and throughout the continental United States is just the most recent example of an emerging or resurgent mosquito-borne infectious disease to threaten the public health,” he said. “Last year it was Chikungunya, and there will likely be many more in future years.”



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 24, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu

(806) 742-2136

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Office of Communications and Marketing

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Expert Pitch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 25, 2016

CONTACT: Heidi Toth, heidi.toth@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Expert: Decreased Smoking Good, But Nicotine Remains Serious Public Health Risk

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced Tuesday that 15.1 percent of American adults smoked cigarettes in 2015, down almost 2 percent from the year before. This is the lowest recorded smoking rate in the country's history.

Yi-Yuan Tang, a psychology professor at Texas Tech University, studies smoking and the role increasing self-control plays in quitting smoking. He has mixed feelings about the CDC's announcement this week – it's good news, but people who have quit smoking may have moved into other habits that are not much better. His team, as well as others, have found one mechanism for smoking addiction involves a deficit in the part of the brain that affects self-control, so he has focused on targeting the brain's self-control network. His research has found a certain type of mindfulness-based intervention – Integrative Body-Mind Training (IBMT) – helps reduce smoking.

Expert

Yi-Yuan Tang, Presidential Endowed Chairman in Neuroscience and professor in the Department of Psychology, (806) 834-8688 or yyt@ttu.edu

Talking points

- The decreased rate of smoking in the United States is great, but the increased popularity of electronic cigarettes likely has played a role. That means nicotine addiction and tobacco remain a major concern.
- Tobacco is often thought of as a gateway to other drug use, so reducing smoking may reduce the vulnerability to cocaine and other drugs.
- One of our randomized controlled studies shows in comparison with Relaxation Training, five hours of IBMT produces 60 percent smoking reduction, with 30 percent of participants quitting and reports of decreased cravings, even from smokers who do not intend to quit.

Quotes

- “It is an urgent need and significant public health benefit to develop an effective and brain-based intervention to address the serious issues in smoking addiction.”
- “This smoking behavior change is accompanied by increased brain activity in self-control networks in which smokers have reduced activity before intervention, which suggests a brief IBMT may specifically target brain self-control areas.”

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 26, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
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Texas Tech Ranked Three Consecutive Years for Online Programs

The university recently was ranked No. 4 in Texas by TheBestSchools.org.

Texas Tech University recently was ranked No. 4 in Texas by TheBestSchools.org for its online education and distance programs, moving up 17 spots from last year. The university ranks behind Lamar University, Dallas Baptist University and LeTourneau University.

This is the third consecutive year Texas Tech has been ranked by the organization.

“Texas Tech is committed to meeting the needs of many different types of students by offering high-quality online and distance education programs to fit into many different lifestyles,” Associate Vice Provost Justin Louder said. “The programs offered through Texas Tech’s [Worldwide eLearning](http://WorldwideeLearning.org) are the same courses students receive on campus. We are proud to educate students both near and far, and TheBestColleges.org ranking is a testament to that.”

The rankings are based on the quality of university programs, types of courses and degrees offered, faculty strengths, as well as school awards, rankings and reputation, including a strong reputation for online degree programs.

Worldwide eLearning is Texas Tech’s one-stop-shop for all of students’ online classes and degree programs. The program offers more than 60 degree, certification and certification preparation programs available fully online and also has six unique regional teaching sites in Waco, El Paso, Junction, Fredericksburg, Collin and Highland Lakes. The degrees earned online and at the regional sites are the same degrees earned on Texas Tech’s main campus in Lubbock.

In addition to TheBestSchools.org ranking, Worldwide eLearning has been ranked four consecutive years by U.S. News and World Report for having the best online programs in the nation, including its graduate computer information technology, graduate engineering, graduate education and bachelor’s degree programs as well as best online programs for veterans.

For a full list of available online and regional programs, visit the Worldwide eLearning [website](#).

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

CONTACT: Justin Louder, associate vice provost, Worldwide eLearning, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-7227 or justin.louder@ttu.edu



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 27, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
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Texas Tech Office of Communications and Marketing Wins Telly Awards

The department won four Telly awards for its “I Am a Red Raider” and “This is Texas Tech University” videos.

Texas Tech University’s [Office of Communications and Marketing](#) recently won two silver and two bronze awards at the 37th Annual Telly Awards for its “I Am a Red Raider” and “This is Texas Tech University” videos for 2015. About 13,000 entries were included in the competition from all 50 states and numerous countries.

“We are honored to have won four Telly awards this year,” said Michelle Houglund, Office of Communications and Marketing assistant managing director. “Our staff works diligently to provide Texas Tech University with engaging, high-quality productions to represent the university, and winning awards for our work is an added bonus.”

The awards won include:

- “I Am a Red Raider” – Silver Telly – Recruitment category
- “This is Texas Tech University” Behind the Scenes – Bronze Telly – Other category
- “This is Texas Tech University” – Silver Telly – Videography/cinematography category
- “This is Texas Tech University” – Bronze Telly – Schools/Colleges/Universities category

The Telly Awards, founded in 1979, is the premier award honoring outstanding local, regional and cable TV commercial and programs, the finest video and film productions, and online commercials, videos and films. Winners represent the best work of the most respected advertising agencies, production companies, television stations, cable operators and corporate video departments in the world.

A judging panel of more than 500 accomplished industry professionals, each a past winner of a Silver Telly and a member of the Silver Telly Council, judged the competition, upholding the historical standard of excellence the Telly Awards represent. Less than 10 percent of entries were chosen as winners of the Silver Telly, which is the highest honor a winner can receive, followed by the Bronze Telly. Approximately 25 percent of entries are chosen as winners of the Bronze Telly.

Office of Communications and Marketing

“The Telly Awards has a mission to honor the very best in film and video,” said Linda Day, executive director of the Telly Awards. “Texas Tech’s accomplishment illustrates their creativity, skill and dedication to their craft and serves as a testament to great film and video production.”

Texas Tech partnered with Digital Base Productions and Texas Tech Athletics to produce the commercials.

Earlier this year, the Marketing Department also [won 11 ADDY Awards](#), including Best of Show and Judge’s Choice for the second consecutive year.

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

CONTACT: Michelle Hougland, assistant managing director, Office of Communications and Marketing, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-2136 or michelle.hougland@ttu.edu

Expert Pitch

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 31, 2016

CONTACT: Glenys Young, glenys.young@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Experts Available To Discuss 2016 Hurricane Season

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center forecasts 10 to 16 named storms, including four to eight hurricanes.

Wednesday (June 1) begins the official six-month hurricane season, which the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center expects to be nearly normal with 10 to 16 named storms, according to its forecast released Friday (May 27).

Texas Tech University leads the nation in wind research. Texas Tech has a number of researchers with extensive experience researching hurricanes such as Rita, Katrina and Ike and can speak as experts about various aspects of these devastating storms.

[John Schroeder](#), professor of atmospheric sciences, is the principal investigator for the Texas Tech Hurricanes at Landfall (TTUHAL) Project and founder of the [Texas Tech Hurricane Research Team](#). He visited affected areas after both hurricanes Rita and Katrina to deploy instrumented towers that gather high-resolution storm data at a time when most conventional observation systems fail. Schroeder can offer insight into how hurricanes develop, move and react to various meteorological elements. He is an expert on hurricane winds and has been actively intercepting hurricanes since 1998.

Schroeder can be reached at (806) 834-5678 or john.schroeder@ttu.edu. Available this afternoon only.

[Ernst Kiesling](#), research professor at Texas Tech's [National Wind Institute \(NWI\)](#) and executive director of the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA), recommends that homeowners who live above the flood plain in hurricane-prone areas buy a storm shelter for their home. As was seen in Houston preceding Hurricane Rita, evacuations are stressful and expensive. They often put immense strain on traffic corridors, leading to traffic jams and – in the case of Houston – fatalities. By using in-home shelters, some families who are not required to evacuate can remain where they are and ease the traffic flow. However, Kiesling urges buyers to look for a seal of the NSSA when they buy a safe room for their home, because not all shelters are verified to be fully compliant with current standards for storm shelters and to provide full protection from extreme winds. Kiesling has more than 35 years of experience in the design, standards-writing and quality control of storm shelters.

Kiesling can be reached at (806) 834-1931 or ernst.kiesling@ttu.edu. Available this morning only.

[Larry Tanner](#), research associate in civil engineering, completed a six-month investigation working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation assessment team

on the wind damage to residential structures from Hurricane Ike in Texas and Louisiana. He also was a member of the FEMA mitigation assessment team that studied Hurricane Katrina. He led a team that recorded wind and water damage along the coastline in Louisiana and Mississippi. Much of the damage done by Katrina, he said, resulted from structures being built below the base flood elevation, or the elevation that flood waters will rise to during a 100-year storm event (meaning the storm only has a 1 percent chance of happening in a year). Tanner can be reached at (806) 834-2320 or larry.tanner@ttu.edu.

[Bradley Ewing](#), professor of operations management in the [Rawls College of Business](#), has studied the economic impact of hurricanes and tornadoes. He can speak to the impact of hurricanes and tornadoes in cities like Oklahoma City; Corpus Christi; Wilmington, North Carolina; Miami, Florida; and Nashville, Tennessee. Ewing can be reached at (806) 834-3939 or bradley.ewing@ttu.edu.

About the National Wind Institute

The National Wind Institute combines the former Wind Science and Engineering (WiSE) research center, which created the first doctorate in wind science and engineering, with the former Texas Wind Energy Institute (TWEI), creator of the only bachelor of science degree in wind energy. NWI strengthens the university's interdisciplinary approach to all things wind.

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 31, 2016

CONTACT: K'Leigh Sims, kleigh.sims@ttu.edu
(806) 742-2136

Sigma Delta Pi President Receives National Gabriela Mistral Award

The award is given annually and is reserved for outstanding graduate or undergraduate students of Spanish who are active members of the honor society.

Gayle Jeffers, president of the the Texas Tech University Alpha Phi chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, recently was given the national Gabriela Mistral award for her academic achievements, noteworthy leadership and initiative in the chapter.

Sigma Delta Pi is a national collegiate Hispanic honor society, and the award is granted by the society's national executive committee.

"Gayle Jeffers is one of only 11 student members of our 611 chapters across the country to receive this prestigious award," said Mark P. Del Mastro, executive director of the national Sigma Delta Pi honor society. "Her initiative with the Texas Tech chapter and her outstanding achievements academically earned her this exclusive honor, and Texas Tech should be proud of such an exceptional student."

Established in 1919 at the University of California-Berkley, Sigma Delta Pi honors those who have completed three years of study in Spanish at the college level, including at least three semester hours of a course in Hispanic literature or Hispanic culture and civilization with a minimal 3.0 GPA in all Spanish courses taken.

Candidates also must rank in the upper 35 percent of their class (sophomore, junior or senior) and must have completed at least three semesters or five quarters of college work. Graduate students also may be elected to membership upon completion of two graduate courses in Spanish with an average which, if continued, will make them eligible for a graduate degree.

Texas Tech's Alpha Phi chapter was found in 1944 and has initiated more than 1,400 members.

Jeffers, a bilingual education doctoral student, said receiving this award is a great achievement.

“I am deeply honored to receive the prestigious Gabriela Mistral award,” she said. “I also am immensely proud to be part of an honor society that recognizes and promotes the importance of the Spanish language and culture. Receiving this award confirms that achieving balance as a student is possible.”

The award-winning chapter at Texas Tech has been nationally recognized for its efforts to honor excellence in the study of the Spanish language, contributing to cultural understanding and upholding the goals of the society.

The chapter hosts a variety of activities throughout the year, including the annual Lubbock Spanish Spelling Bee, Spanish discussion tables, seminars and academic lectures, lunchtime enrichment programs, free Spanish and English lessons and bilingual readings in schools and libraries.

For more information about Texas Tech’s Alpha Phi chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, visit its [website](#).

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

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Web Only

‘A Regular Guy:’ Texas Tech Remembers War Hero, Trail Blazer

With dedication and hard work, Army Sgt. Steve Morin Jr. paved many paths for himself and future generations even after almost being gone for more than a decade.

By K'Leigh Sims

Even though Steve Morin Jr. thought of himself as a regular guy, there was nothing regular about him. He was a first-generation, Hispanic Texas Tech University graduate, a father, son, husband, U.S. Navy veteran, U.S. Army National Guard sergeant and war hero.

If you were to call him a hero, he would just say he was only a “regular guy.” That’s at least what he went by while he was deployed in Iraq. He even had the title patched onto his uniform.

Steve was only 34 years old when he was killed in action by an improvised explosive device (IED) on Sept. 28, 2005, that detonated near his Humvee west of Umm Qasr, Iraq.

To honor his military service along with his time at Texas Tech, the [Military and Veterans Programs](#) are creating a scholarship in his name to help support military and veteran students at Texas Tech beginning this fall.

A happy, jolly boy

Steve’s mother, Audrey, described her son as happy and jolly when he was a child. He was fun-loving, caring, a protective older brother and always had strong leadership skills. He was their firstborn, and Audrey and her husband, Steve Sr., knew he would go on to achieve great things along with their younger son Jay and daughter Leticia.

“He had a lot of good qualities,” she said. “Since he was the firstborn, leadership skills were instilled in him. That is why he went into the U.S. Naval Academy. We never held our children down. We always told them that the most important thing for them to do was to get an education, and that’s exactly what he did.”

Audrey said her son liked the “good stuff” in life. She joked if she gave \$30 to Jay and \$30 to Steve, Jay would buy five shirts and Steve would buy one.

“He liked the good stuff, but he was willing to work for it,” she said. “He worked wherever he could. But a lot of the time, I told him that if he wanted the good stuff, then he’d have to go to school and work for it. Why work yourself to death and just get a little money when you can get an education and make a little more?”

Growing up in Brownfield, Steve was a Boy Scout, played all sports, had good grades, never really got into trouble and enjoyed going camping and fishing with his dad.



Audrey said she remembers the simple things the most when he was a boy – life at home; watching him play football and baseball; he and Jay picking on each other – and she always enjoyed him being there.

He and Audrey shared a special mother-son bond. Audrey said her son was detail-oriented, even after he left home.

“He would always call me, send birthday cards, Mother’s Day cards and flowers,” she said. “He always found the time to call when he was in the Naval Academy, the military or wherever he was. He traveled a lot. But no matter what, he would always call just to say hi. He was a very sweet boy.”

When he graduated from high school at the age of 17, Steve went into the Naval Academy to pursue a career in the U.S. Navy. Later stationed in San Diego, he spent several years there before returning to Lubbock to continue his college career.

From college graduate to fatherhood

Adorning the walls of Steve’s bedroom at his childhood home are all things military and Texas Tech. There are two Texas Tech quilts Audrey made, photos, a Red Raider cowboy hat Steve would wear to every football game and an Omicron Delta Epsilon honor society plaque he received before graduating in 2000.

When he returned to Texas, he pursued his education at Texas Tech, earning not just one, but two degrees in economics and finance, becoming the first college graduate in both Steve Sr. and Audrey’s families.

During the winter of 1996 in his sophomore year at Texas Tech, Steve was working at the South Plains Mall for Cherry Hill Photography when he met his wife, Gwendolyn. He was Santa; she was an elf. Gwen was attending Texas Tech to get a degree in social work, and she, too, was a first-generation college graduate.

Gwendolyn said she and Steve started as good friends. She thought he was endearing, strong-willed, protective and had a great sense of humor. After their friendship began he was called back to the Navy to fulfill 18 more months of duty and put school on hold until he could return.

While he was stationed on the U.S.S. Constellation, the two stayed in contact with each other by phone and letters. They were married in 1999, when he returned home.

Gwendolyn was a single mom to her daughter, Brianna, and was working two jobs while working on her social work degree. When she and Steve got married, he took Brianna as his own daughter when she was just 3 years old.

“He brought structure to our lives, and that’s what we both needed,” Gwendolyn said. “Brianna remembers the love he shared for us, taking her out to get a Coke, protecting her,



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encouraging her and setting a good stage for what a man should be like and how a lady should be treated. He was very strong and protective, but also very compassionate and loving.

“When we were dating, Steve would pick us up and take us both out on a date. I just remember how impressed I was because he had bought Brianna a seat belt harness to keep in his car just for her, and to me, it showed that he was concerned about her safety. After we were married, Brianna definitely became daddy’s little girl.”

After Steve graduated, he debated whether to re-enlist in the Navy. Keeping his family first, he decided to go into the Army National Guard instead of making a career out of the Navy. They moved to Arlington after they both graduated from Texas Tech and Steve began managing Walgreen’s stores in the Dallas-Fort Worth area while in the reserves.

Shortly after they married, they welcomed their son Esteban, born on Sept. 11, 1999.

Gwendolyn said their life together and as a family was always an adventure as Steve would always try to make life fun, whether it was being at home, going to the store or even pushing each other in the cart at the grocery store.

While he was working for Walgreen’s, Gwendolyn and their children would visit him at work and he always enjoyed being with his family.

Steve was later scheduled to go to Officers Candidate School but was deployed to Iraq in January 2005. While there, he did security work for the convoys.

Taking home and Texas Tech abroad

While Steve was deployed, he brought as many pieces from home that he could. In true Red Raider fashion, his bedding was Texas Tech-themed and proudly represented the scarlet and black. He called home often, spoke with Gwendolyn and their children and watched as many Texas Tech football games he could.

He and a friend even set up their own Raider Alley during football season to cheer on the Red Raiders, just as if he were home, wearing that large Texas Tech cowboy hat cheering in the stands at Jones AT&T Stadium.

Audrey said when Steve would call home he didn’t really talk about what was going on in Iraq but loved talking about life at home.

“He never talked too much about what was going on over there,” she said. “All he would say is that he was doing security work for the convoys. I thought, ‘oh, dear,’ because I was concerned about his safety. But he was doing what he wanted to do; he was happy.

“When he would call, he’d say, ‘Talk to me, mom. Tell me about the family,’ because he wanted to hear about normal stuff. So I would go on and give updates about what was



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going on here at home, and he was just happy to hear the news. That was very important to him.”

Even though he was happy to be doing this work, he did miss home.

“One time when he came home, he, Gwen and the kids were over here and he sat down on the couch and just relaxed,” Audrey said. “He was just happy to be at home. I wish he could be home now.”

When Steve’s family received the heart-breaking news of his death in September 2005, it was the hardest thing his family went through. For three or four years, his family just put pause on their lives. The loss of Steve hit hard.

Gwendolyn said for about three years, she introverted into her own life with their two children and was at a loss for what had happened. She remembered though three words Steve had told her while he was still alive: “continue to live.”

Gwendolyn took her late husband’s advice and honored him by doing so. She had already earned another bachelor’s degree from the University of North Texas in sociology and then began working on a master’s degree in social work from Abilene Christian University after she, Brianna and Esteban moved to Abilene. She now is a clinical social worker.

Audrey also honored her son by continuing to live. She began quilting with a group to make quilts for veterans and found support with mothers whose children died while fighting for our country.

“Continue to live,” they remembered Steve’s words and as time went on more people went on to honor by those words.

The living legacy

Steve and Gwendolyn’s children hold fast to the memories of their father. Esteban was 6 years old and Brianna 12 years old when their father died, but they continue to honor their father by achieving great things.

Now Esteban, 16, is a Boy Scout working toward becoming an Eagle Scout, like his father. He is in a Junior ROTC program and plans to attend Texas Tech after high school to become a lawyer. Down to their looks, mannerisms, personality and aspirations, Esteban is a spitting image of his father. The chain effect Steve began continues to live as his son plans to follow behind in his father’s footsteps.

Even though he was young when Steve died, he still remembers a lot about his father. Just like Steve Sr., Steve would take Esteban fishing and enjoyed taking him to Bass Pro Shop when they lived in Arlington. He loves hearing stories about what his father was like and keeps his life alive through the memories and stories he and his family possesses.



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Brianna also honored her father's words. Now 23, she is working to become a nurse and remembers the nine years they had together when Steve came into her life. While he was deployed, he was in the process of legally adopting her.

It's been almost 11 years since Steve died, but his legacy is still very much alive. This new Texas Tech scholarship will memorialize the trailblazer, the hero he was and will always be.

Now remarried, Gwendolyn said Texas Tech will always be near and dear to her heart because that's where the two met. She remembers riding the bus together, walking around campus, and how he would always be waiting outside of Holden Hall with a Diet Coke for her while she was in class. That's where their life began.

"Texas Tech was home for us," she said. "This scholarship is just wonderful. The kids and I always had thought it would be something great to do, so this scholarship is prayers answered. Steve and I were very education-driven and goal-oriented and to see other young people go to school is a great thing. He thought it was also a great thing for young Hispanics to attend school and major in things that would bring a good career and life, so this scholarship will be a great thing for Texas Tech to have for military and veteran students."

Steve has been honored in many different ways since he died from memorial services, drawings, letters from Capitol Hill, flags, medals and now the military and veteran scholarship.

Audrey said she and her husband are proud Texas Tech would honor their son in this way because of how important education was to him.

"I'm very honored that Texas Tech would put a scholarship in my son's name," Audrey said. "My son was very into getting an education, and I'm glad there will be a scholarship to help others do just that. My husband and I are very proud of that. I would like to see how far these students who receive the scholarships go and what they achieve, and I never would have expected something like this. My son has been gone almost 11 years and he hasn't received recognition like this before, and I am so proud that Texas Tech is doing that for him."

The scholarship will be available this fall through the Military and Veterans Programs with initial funding for the scholarship donated by the Military Order of the Purple Heart South Plains of Texas Chapter 0900. Students will be required to have a 3.0 GPA and be either a full-time graduate or undergraduate student. Two students will be selected for scholarship money of \$1,000 each.

Lou Ortiz, director of the Military and Veterans Programs, is excited to offer this scholarship to students this fall and hopes this scholarship will continue to grow over time.

To donate to the scholarship fund, contact Ortiz at (806) 834-6538 or lou.ortiz@ttu.edu.

Office of Communications and Marketing

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SIDEBAR:

Steve earned 12 awards while serving in the Navy and Army National Guard:

- Combat Action badge
- Bronze Star medal
- Purple Heart
- Iraqi Campaign medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service medal
- Armed Forces Reserve Mobilization medal with M device
- Texas Federal Service medal
- Navy Achievement medal
- Navy Good Conduct medal
- Naval Reserve Meritorious medal
- Navy Expeditionary medal
- Humanitarian Service medal



Web Only

Doctoral Student Recognized for Work in Family and Consumer Sciences

Angelina Bencomo has been named Texas Teacher of the Year by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

By Amanda Castro-Crist

Angelina Bencomo has always loved education. As a child, she would imitate her teachers, complete with a grade book tabbed with paper clips and rubber bands, a chalkboard and several charts. Her sister, Belinda, filled the role of the student – that is, until her sister cried and asked why Bencomo always got to be the teacher.

“My mom told her, ‘Just go tell her you are the principal!’ What could I say?” Bencomo recalls. “I still got to be the teacher!”

That passion for teaching led her to a bachelor’s degree in home economics communications at New Mexico State University and a master’s degree in education from Boston University. Now pursuing a doctorate degree in family and consumer sciences (FCS) at Texas Tech University, Bencomo has been named Texas Teacher of the Year by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences – Texas Affiliate.

“I’m very proud of Angelina. She really represents the best of our students and is a strong ambassador for our program here at Texas Tech,” said Karen Alexander, program coordinator of [Family and Consumer Sciences Education](#) in the [College of Human Sciences](#). “She is passionate about teaching in general, but she also is very passionate about family and consumer sciences education.”

Bencomo shares her enthusiasm with high school and elementary students at Jefferson High School in El Paso where she leads the Child Development Lab in the FCS department. She returned to her hometown of El Paso after spending three years in Lubbock taking courses at Texas Tech and working as a research assistant, teacher assistant and student teacher supervisor.

“While she was here on campus, she supervised student teachers and taught a few of our undergraduate courses,” Alexander said. “Once she completed her coursework, she went to El Paso and took this position and really has been instrumental in resurrecting this program at the high school level.”

FCS encompasses everything a person needs to know about being a family member and a consumer in today’s society, Alexander said. Essential skills like decision-making, interpersonal communication, nutrition and financial literacy are some of the topics discussed in courses at Texas Tech and “La Jeff,” as the high school is known. Bencomo’s lab pairs high school sophomores, juniors and seniors with preschoolers, giving students a

chance to gain practical experience in their preferred field – whether it be education, psychology, therapy or any discipline where child interaction is essential.

“She’s impacting a new generation of teachers and she’s also impacting a new generation of students. When we look nationally at the teacher shortages we have across the board, we need high school students to be considering the profession of teaching, and not a lot of them are doing that,” Alexander said. “Our teachers are our unsung heroes who are out in our schools working with kids on a daily basis and the fact that she’s there mentoring and recruiting new teachers who are passionate about moving into the classroom is hugely important.”

The lab at Jefferson is part of the [Texas School Ready!](#) program, a comprehensive teacher training program that combines a research-based, state-adopted curriculum with professional development training and progress monitoring. Bencomo attends several trainings each month, completes online coursework and receives one-on-one coaching to improve teaching habits.

“Our preschoolers are benefiting from a learning environment conducive to positive growth and development,” Bencomo said. “Our high school students are learning best teaching practices, how to work with young children and much more. The students we have at La Jeff have good, old-fashioned values. They are very humble, kind and considerate.”

Bencomo also is an avid reader of children’s and young adult literature. Once a month, she reads to children at her local Barnes and Noble bookstore. It’s another interest Alexander said Bencomo shares with her students.

“She has thousands of children’s books,” Alexander said. “Childhood literacy is an important area for her, as well as engaging her students in developmental literacy and increasing her high school students’ love of reading.”

Sharing her appreciation of the written word is one of the many ways Bencomo shows her students she cares, something she said is crucial to creating a connection between teacher and student. She said she believes students learn and grow best when they know they are valued.

“I really enjoy teaching high school,” Bencomo said. “I enjoy the fact that every day is a new one, that my students are learning and that I play a role in their lives.”

Bencomo said she might eventually add teaching FCS at the community college level to her resume. Alexander said she looks forward to what the future holds for Bencomo.

“My hope is that she’ll eventually find her way to the university and empower young teachers and instill the love of teaching in them the way that she has throughout her career,” Alexander said. “We need more people like her coming to Texas Tech and getting their graduate degree so they can continue to mentor new teachers.”

Regardless of what is in store for Bencomo, she said she plans to continue learning and helping others become educators.



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“I intend to always strive for improvement. I will never be to the point that I feel I know it all. I embrace learning and growing,” Bencomo said. “I believe in helping others and remain steadfast in my career choice, honoring and respecting the relationships I share with others along the way.”



Web Only

Fearful to Fearless: Honors Student Takes Solo Hike on Pacific Crest Trail

Senior Elizabeth Hash spent seven weeks hiking the High Sierra Mountains, then wrote seven essays about how the journey changed her outlook.

By Heidi Toth

When Elizabeth Hash called her father to tell him she was backpacking 400 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail and would be out of cell phone range for seven weeks, he was not pleased.

“In his mind, me backpacking would mean wrestling bears every morning, running from forest fires and running from crazy outdoorsy hippies who live out there and don’t have real jobs,” the Texas Tech University student said.

Spoiler alert: Two of those things happened.

Hash is a self-described “super senior” with three majors – in [English](#), [psychology](#), and [environment and the humanities](#) (EVHM) and is a member of the [Honors College](#). For that final degree she signed up for an independent study course that professor Kurt Caswell called “a blank slate for someone’s fabulous project.” She and her best friend, Hannah Wylie, chose their fabulous project – spending half their summer in 2015 backpacking the California section of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), then writing about their experiences.

As instructors in the [Outdoor Pursuits Center](#), they’d been backpacking once, a group trip led by trained instructors that lasted about a week. Hash was a canoeing and rock climbing specialist, Wylie a kayaker. They planned for a month, told their professor and their parents and then left, channeling Cheryl Strayed of “Wild” yet hoping to put a different spin on their adventure.

“For some reason we were just really called to this opportunity to be in complete isolation for that long of a time and to really get to reflect on our own lives and who we were and also challenge ourselves in that process,” Hash said.

Starting off

The California section of the trail, much of which overlaps the John Muir Trail, is the hardest section of the PCT. The two women studied maps, found resupply points and determined the best transport methods. In the month leading up to the trip they were up until 3 a.m. many days planning and packing food into sandwich bags, boxes and their backpacks.

The planning went awry on Day Zero. Hash and Wylie arrived at their starting point at Tahoe City and found most of their food didn’t make the journey. Undaunted, they bought

all the granola bars and beef jerky they could, repacked their bags and left for their adventure.

Then they spent much of the first two weeks camped out waiting for the rain and lightning to stop and slogging through muddy trails when it finally did. Nor were they alone; Hash and Wylie frequently saw other hikers. Many of them were hiking the full Pacific Crest Trail: 2,600 miles from Canada to Mexico. Suddenly, a few weeks hiking only 400 miles felt small, and so did they.

“We were meeting some big shots and feeling like pretty small fish,” Hash said.

But the scenery was beautiful, they were getting used to the routine of camping out and then walking seven hours a day, and hey, at least they had each other.

About a week and a half in, Wylie noticed what looked like a bug bite on her left knee. She was afraid it was a staph infection. The two hitchhiked into town – a couple drove 60 miles out of their way to drop the two off at a medical clinic – and Wylie’s diagnosis was confirmed. The doctor gave her antibiotics and a warning to seek medical treatment within 24 hours if she developed a fever.

Fun fact: The part of the trail the two were about to start would put them at least two to three days from the closest town at any given time.

“I remember that day very specifically because we were sitting on opposite twin beds in our hotel room and it was completely silent and she looked at me for a second and said, ‘I think I have to stay,’” Hash said. “I said, ‘I know,’ and then I said, ‘I think I have to keep going,’ and she said, ‘You do, I know.’”

They both cried, then Wylie helped Hash repack her backpack with all the necessary gear. Hash focused on the packing, ignoring the fear of going on by herself that had been growing since Wylie found the infection. She wasn’t just losing the companionship. Up to this point Hash had relied on Wylie’s knowledge and experience to keep them going. She wasn’t sure how she would continue.

For all the self-doubt, though, Hash continued. Wylie walked her back to the clinic they’d been to the day before – a nurse, overhearing their story, volunteered to drive Hash back to the trailhead so she didn’t have to hitchhike – and the two said goodbye.

“I finally decided leaving the trail wasn’t really an option for me,” Hash said. “It was never really going to be an option because something would have been missing from my experience if I had chosen to do that out of fear, and I didn’t want my fear or my own insecurities to be the reason I didn’t finish this amazing trip.”

A low point, then a turning point

Hash’s first day without Wylie was the worst day of her trip. Part of it was disappointment and fear now that her friend was gone, but there was more. Hash had to carry all of her supplies in one backpack, including items like the tent that were intended for two people. Her pack weighed 57 pounds that day.



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Additionally, she hiked all day without hitting any water sources. Up to that point they passed a stream every few miles, so they could fill up. That day she had to carry all the water she needed for a full day, which is about two liters. The weight and the sloshing around in her backpack added several more pounds.

The first seven miles of the hike were on a ridgeline above the treeline. She had no shade. On one side of the ridgeline a huge lightning storm raged, so every time the trail crossed into that side she had to run to get back to the other side. By 5 p.m. she was done.

“I sat in there and I cried in my tent and journaled about it,” she said. “Then I told myself I was an idiot and went to sleep. I woke up the next day feeling much better and more resolved, telling myself this is what it’s going to be and I will never know if I can do it unless I try.”

A few days later she ran into more trouble. Summer is wildfire season in California, and Hash found herself near one. Other hikers told her it was about five miles away, but in the High Sierra Mountains smoke spreads for miles. Hash couldn’t get away from the smoke, or her fear.

“It became this chase between me and the fire – me trying to get away from it and trying not to let it terrify me so much that I would get off the trail when I didn’t really know what was going on,” she said.

The chase went on for days. One night Hash, exhausted from her 14-mile day, stopped in a canyon. She’d been hiking through smoke all day and was having trouble breathing. As the sun went down the wind picked up, wailing through the canyon all night. But at least the smoke was gone as she put up her tent and made dinner.

“Then I looked out again,” she said. “All I saw was smoke – this gray-orange mist that swallowed the entire canyon. That’s what I went to sleep to. I had nightmares of waking up to seeing an orange glow around my tent.”

That nightmare did not come to fruition.

“I did actually wake up in the middle of the night to the sound of a bear trying to get my food,” Hash said.

She banged her spoon against her bowl, making enough noise to scare the bear away. Sleep was already gone.

“So I was having these nightmares of this fire engulfing me and I had this bear trying to eat all my food and I was alone and this wind tunnel sounded terrible, it was so eerie, and I woke up about 4 in the morning and I was just like, ‘I’m done, I’m getting out of here, I can’t do this,’” Hash said. “I was so, so done with that campsite.”

The pre-dawn morning was freezing; she had to break off a layer of ice from her tent as she packed. She headed out of the canyon over the pass, called Silver Pass. It's made entirely of granite and above the treeline so all she could see was white rock.

"As I was hiking it kind of became this strange other world, almost like the surface of the moon," Hash said. "It was completely white and completely silent. As I was hiking this, I was so discouraged by how fearful I was all the time, and I was huffing and puffing up this thing, fighting the smoke, and it just so happened that I reached the top of this pass at the same time the sun came up, and when the sun hit the granite, which was originally just white and glowing like the moon, it all started glowing this beautiful gold, and it was like this entire place was on fire.

"I wrote in my journal that I was climbing out of one fire and into the next. It was so symbolic for me, like I was leaving fear behind. That was the first time I felt the trip was my own. I could take ownership of it and be proud of what I had done, all because I was afraid of a forest fire and woke up too early and happened to hit the top of the pass at the right time."

A day in the life of the Pacific Crest Trail

Hash's days started at about 5 a.m., though sometimes she slept in until the sun came up. She made breakfast, washed dishes, broke down camp, put on shoes and sunscreen and start hiking. Early on she and Wylie hiked seven to eight miles a day as they acclimated to the work and the altitude; by the end Hash was hiking 17 miles a day.

She started with a strict schedule, stopping every couple of miles for a snack and to write down her thoughts. The farther along she got, though, the less regimented her day.

"I would stop whenever I felt moved by something, and I would write about it," Hash said. "My writing really improved when I did this instead of writing on the schedule. That was what I was out there to do was to log that and reflect that experience."

Much of what moved her was the scenery. The High Sierras presented wild, remote areas of wilderness, sunsets and sunrises that took her breath away and enormous mountains for which growing up in Texas had not prepared her.

Hash remembered one specific view on the John Muir Trail. She hiked through a canyon bed that was above the timberline, with 14,000-foot granite mountains on either side.

"It just felt like they were all watching you as you were walking through this," she said. "It was an eye-opening moment – I'm just this small person in this huge, beautiful world."

Some days she varied the routine. Every seven to 10 days Hash hit a resupply point. Because so many people hike the Pacific Crest Trail, post offices have been built at many of the trailheads, and hikers mail themselves food and other supplies. She also dropped letters in the mail and occasionally checked her cell phone, sending brief messages to Wylie, Caswell and her parents.

Since she was already living in nature, Hash didn't worry too much about keeping perfectly clean. Every now and then she dipped a washcloth in a lake and washed herself



off, but the water was cold and usually the morning was, too. She showered three times in seven weeks and also changed her shirt three times. New shirt day was a celebration, but not as good as the day mid-trip when she unpacked a clean set of clothes.

“I remember getting my box and walking around feeling like the hottest superstar ever because I was in new clothes,” she said with a laugh. “I was clean.”

Letting go of her fear, finding herself

Hash had 70 miles to go when she hit a lightning storm while she was on a ridge. In a hurry to get away from danger, she ran down the wet, rocky trail.

She called what happened next an act of trail karma – nature reminding her not to get too cocky. She slipped on a rock, her trekking pole got stuck and her weight and the weight of her backpack landed solidly on her right hand.

What’s funny – if any part of falling on and “crunching” three bones in her hand falls under that label – is how Hash reacted as told to her by a couple who heard her fall and ran back to help.

“What I remember is I went into shock and blacked out from the pain,” she said. “What they remember is me sitting up on the trail, asking for my med pack and starting to patch my hand up and clean up the blood. So when I came back to I was cleaning up my hand and setting it and everything like my training from my job. I don’t remember that, but that was pretty exciting.

“It’s comforting to know that even when I black out from shock I will fix my hand; I will take care of everything.”

She rigged up a sling for her right arm – fortunately she’s left-handed so could make this work – and hiked 20 more miles into the nearest town. The ER doctor took an X-ray of her right hand, then showed it to her. The damage was obvious – three broken bones. The doctor put her in another sling, then both prepared for what the other was about to say.

“I remember asking him, ‘How dumb is it for me to keep going?’ He said, ‘I knew you were going to ask me that question. It’s not ideal, but I know you’re going to do it anyway,’” Hash said.

The doctor was right.

“I remember saying, ‘Well, it’s not an ankle and it’s not my left hand, so I can keep hiking and I can keep writing. That’s what I’m out here to do is hike and write.’”

She put her bandaged arm in a sling, slid her backpack on and went back to the trail. Her temporary one-handedness added some challenge; she couldn’t tie her shoes or stuff her sleeping bag into its bag. However, Hash took it as a reason to meet more people in her

final days on the trail. She could usually find some other hiker to pitch in on the shoe-tying and putting her gear away.

“Most people were very eager to help,” she said. “They had no problem with doing that.”

Hash broke her hand at mile 360 of 430; she only had about a week left to go on the trail, which finished with the summit of Mount Whitney. She called her dad from the hospital – “I’m OK” were her first words. It’s no big deal, she thought, just a broken hand.

Hash had been about as worried a couple weeks prior when she’d arrived at Muir Trail Ranch, a popular resting and resupply place for hikers, and discovered only half the food she sent had made it. Luckily for her, the ranch had hiker boxes where people could leave their surplus of food or gear for other hikers. She packed almost enough food and went as fast as possible to her next resupply place. Again, Hash said with a shrug, it’s no big deal.

“What was so strange to me and so exciting was I was so into what I was doing, so into my adventure that something as minor as a broken hand would get in the way,” she said.

“Which meant at that point something like a broken hand wasn’t a big deal to me. I had surpassed that kind of fear. I had surpassed the kind of control that would have on me. It was an amazing realization that I could overcome those things that so often we let limit us, that we say are major and we can’t get past them.”

Her learning was helped along by a trail friend named Bill, who’d planned on stopping at the same campsite she’d chosen one night. He set up elsewhere and they started talking. He asked Hash if she’d ever stayed up to see the night sky; she was surprised when she realized she hadn’t. She was usually so tired she was asleep when the sun set. He invited her to stay out that night and see the stars.

Hash did. She and Bill talked about their hikes and what hiking can do for people, then he asked her motivation for this trip. She was honest – she and Wylie did it in part because there was a feeling among their largely male crew at the OPC that women could not do what men did in the outdoors.

Now, she said, by the time she’d proven them wrong she’d stopped caring what they thought. Hash’s trip was now fully about her, and she shared with Bill how wonderful she felt when she realized she didn’t care about other people’s negative opinions of her.

“Well, that’s great,” he responded. “So your next goal should be to stop caring about people’s positive opinions of you.”

Hash, confused, asked him to explain.

“At the end of the day, positive or negative, opinions and expectations of you are still just opinions and expectations,” Bill told her. “They are not who you really are, so you can’t fight them all the time, and you also can’t use them as a crutch. You have to find out who you are outside of everyone’s opinions of you.”

‘Transformative’



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Hash saw other humans almost every day, but not quite. Her longest bout of solitude was three days.

“I thought it would be harder than it was, but what’s funny is you appreciate the time that you’re alone, but then because you are alone you really appreciate the times when you see someone,” she said. “Everyone you meet is your best friend.”

This didn’t translate as well in the world, as Hash found when she was making her way through Los Angeles to catch her flight back to Lubbock. Everyone there was not her best friend.

“I was walking around making eye contact with everyone, asking ‘Hey, how are you, how’s your day going?’” Hash said. “People probably thought I was crazy or homeless. Or maybe both.”

Of course, she did plenty of talking with herself, too. That was the point.

“When you don’t have anyone else to talk to for 300 miles, you eventually have to talk to yourself, and that means you’re going to talk to yourself about things that maybe you don’t really want to talk about, and that really turns the focus on you in the right way, in the healthiest way, and you really heal through that process and you learn a lot about yourself,” Hash said.

The experience was, in one word, transformative – just what Caswell had in mind for the portfolio course, which both Hash and Wylie aced.

“It can’t possibly be more life experience focused,” Caswell said of the purpose of this course. “The personal part is much more meditative. It’s the humanities part of environment and the humanities. Elizabeth looked at her own life and where she’s headed, who she is as a person.”

She returned to Lubbock, landing the day before the fall 2015 semester began, and worked with Caswell on the second half of the project. Hash wrote seven essays examining her experience on the trail. She didn’t intend to, but Hash realized as she wrote that she was following the seven steps people experience when they make huge changes in their lives, which she learned about in one of her psychology classes.

In pre-contemplation, she wrote about not knowing she had all these misconceptions about herself – that she’d been holding herself back through fear, or with the belief the other hikers on the trail were better than she was. For contemplation, she wrote about climbing Silver Pass that cold pre-dawn when she left the fire, the bear and her fear behind. For preparation, Hash wrote about the need to maintain her transformation as she hiked and not let self-doubt whisper that she couldn’t do this.

The final stage is the most important – relapse. Coming back to the real world. Holding onto the lessons she learned on the trail that seem hundreds of miles away. It’s been

difficult, Hash acknowledged, but she's doing it. When she feels intimidated by her lack of work experience as she approaches graduation or by someone smarter than her or with a higher GPA, she remembers the lesson from Bill, why she went hiking and who she was at the top of Mount Whitney with her arm in a sling versus herself seven weeks earlier at Tahoe City.

Now she's working on who she is today. Hash graduates in May. She's teaching children how to read this summer, then has an outdoor internship lined up. Next is graduate school, either in environmental writing or therapy. In her perfect world, she'll be a college English professor who does wilderness therapy for recovering drug addicts during the summer, so she can tell her students how she was transformed.

"Change isn't made easily or in one try," Hash said. "It's made after you fail and then get up and keep trying."



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Geosciences Hosted its 10th Annual Research Day

The day allowed students and faculty to showcase their research as students from Whiteface Middle School attended.

By Jenae Fleming

The [Department of Geosciences](#) held its 10th annual [research day](#) Wednesday. The day showcased ongoing research in the geosciences department by faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as four special guest seventh-graders from [Whiteface Middle School](#).

For more than 10 years, this research day has served as practice for undergraduate and graduate students to present research in a conference setting. The day showcased a total of 33 abstracts by students and faculty, 25 of them presented by undergraduate students. Awards were presented following the presentations.

Dustin Sweet, assistant professor in the Department of Geosciences, said research day provides students with a chance to practice communicating their research to people who are unfamiliar with their work.

“This is an especially important opportunity for our undergraduate researchers because they don’t travel to professional meetings as much as our graduate students,” Sweet said.

Senior Elaine Keim said research day is one of the last events she has before graduation.

“The department has this day for all of the undergraduates who are graduating,” Keim said. “We present our research to the judges and anybody else who wants to come.”

Four seventh-grade students from Whiteface Middle School were invited to participate in the research day. These students had the opportunity to present their science project to those in attendance. Their project covers chronic wounds and the best practices to help heal those wounds. Next month, these students will take their science project to a national competition.

Laura Wilbanks, a science instructor at Whiteface, said they’ve been invited to participate in research day for several years now and the day provides a great opportunity for Whiteface students to get ready for their upcoming competition.

“It allows them to get really good practice because at this stage, we are rusty,” Wilbanks said. “The students have been really good workers this year.”

The Department of Geosciences offers a wide range of courses, research and experience related to atmospheric and earth sciences. Degree programs include [atmospheric science](#), [geology and geophysics](#), geosciences and [geography](#).



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Remembering the Murdered Jews of Europe

English professor Jill Patterson walked Nazi concentration camps used during World War II to imprison and kill Jews, then returned to Lubbock to work with death row inmates.

By Heidi Toth

Today (May 5) is the 27th day of Nisan on the Hebrew calendar. In Hebrew, it is known as Yom Hashoah.

In English, it is [Holocaust Remembrance Day](#).

In one of the worst acts of genocide in the 20th century, six million Jews were murdered between 1933 and 1945, as were hundreds of thousands of Roma (gypsies), gay people, people with disabilities and other groups the Nazis, the party that took power in Germany in 1933, considered inferior.

For many Americans, experience with the Holocaust is limited to movies, documentaries and history books. For one Texas Tech University professor, that was not enough. In December 2012 and again a year later, [English](#) professor Jill Patterson went to Europe to “tour intolerance” – half a dozen Nazi camps. She has since interviewed a number of survivors. Patterson has spoken and written about the experience, created a course on human rights at Texas Tech and uses it in her work with prisoners on death row in Texas.

Why did you tour the concentration camps?

I received a fellowship from the Embrey Human Rights Program at Southern Methodist University for the work I do advocating for indigent defendants charged with capital murder in the state of Texas. Part of the fellowship included, among other educational opportunities, a two-week tour of Germany and Poland, visiting numerous Holocaust sites. It was the most powerful experience of my life.

The labor camps we visited included Ravensbruck (women’s camp), Sachsenhausen (men’s camp), Stutthof, Majdanek, Plaszow and Gross-Rosen. The death camps we visited included Treblinka, Sobibor, Chelmno, Belzec and Auschwitz.

What other Holocaust-related places did you visit?

Besides the various camps we visited the Wannsee House in Berlin where the Final Solution was planned and put into action; the Grunewald Train Station in Berlin, from where all the Jews of Berlin were shipped out – there’s a plaque for each train that left and the number of Jews on it; the Warsaw Ghetto, or what remains of it; the Lodz Ghetto, or the memorial there – because there’s not much left of it either; the Radegast Train Station in Lodz, from where the majority of Jews were shipped out of Poland; Cmentarz Zydowski the Jewish cemetery in Warsaw; the Warsaw Uprising Museum, one of the most wonderful interactive museums I’ve ever been to; and Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory in Krakow.

The only place I didn't get a chance to visit in Poland that I really wanted to visit was the Warsaw Zoo, where the zookeepers hid many Jews.

What was the experience like?

As you can imagine, it was eye-opening. It's difficult for Americans to fathom what happened during World War II because our terrain was so removed from it. We lost many, many brave soldiers during the war. Our total number of casualties was more than 400,000, approximately .32 percent of our population. Poland, though, lost nearly 6 million people – more 17 percent of its total population. In the city of Warsaw today, fewer than 100 Jews still live there. Russia lost nearly 27 million people. And, most tragically, 78 percent of the Jews in Europe were murdered by the Nazis.

It's not just the staggering numbers. When you're there, visiting all the camps, you learn just how complicit people were. It was a machine of businesses working together – who made the ovens? Who made the nozzles for the gas chambers? Who built the bunk beds? Who provided the insurance? Then you also must face the fact that America knew and didn't do much to stop it; in fact, we turned away refugees on the MS St. Louis (a timely reminder for today). It was an overwhelming emotional experience that haunts me every year at Christmas, since that's when we were there. The cities had beautiful Christmas markets in the center of town – so festive and colorful and lively – and the local Christian cemeteries were lit up with memorial candles, the hillsides flickering as if blanketed in starlight. Meanwhile, except for Auschwitz, which is a popular tourist attraction, all of the other camps were empty. We were the only ones there, remembering. It was horribly sad, a profound experience I struggle to explain to people who have not been there.

What are you hoping to accomplish with your research?

I've created a couple of small documentary films about the experience, about 15 minutes each. I continue to write personal essays on the subject, and I've started making human rights a large component in my writing workshops at Texas Tech. I'm hoping to put together a class at Texas Tech in which we take our students on a similar two-week tour, though I'd really like to open it up to the public the way SMU does because I believe there are people in the Lubbock community who would pay to go on such an educational tour.

Did anything stand out from the interviews you did with survivors?

What stands out most is the wide range of responses – all of them resilient, amazing survivors. But there's a gulf between them: some of them have maintained deep religious faith and some of them have had to let it go because they could not hang on to it in the face of their experiences. The questions their experiences raised are not questions they've been able to answer.

How can you apply what you've learned from this time in history to today?

When you're there and you see the piles of shoes – little children's shoes, women's high heels, men's work boots and loafers, all of them having lost their color after so much time – it's still hard to grasp. But you can't ignore how those empty camps reverberate with questions about blame: How did we allow this to happen? Why don't we recognize the duty to remember except on an official Remembrance Day? When we consider the refugees from Syria today, why are we so willing to make the same mistake, insisting we have no room for these civilians – women and children among them – if we wish to keep our own country safe? I do find it horrifying that so many politicians claiming to be our



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country's best leaders are encouraging us to repeat these same mistakes by lighting our biases and hate on fire, especially in order to get elected to even high positions of power. It's such a cliché, but if we don't learn from the lessons our past behaviors have taught us, we are destined to repeat them.

What does your human rights course discuss?

Students study powerful memoirs and books of nonfiction, books that focus on historical events and personal experiences with major human rights issues. They learn how to study such topics and translate facts and personal experiences into compelling narratives that don't preach but rather educate, engage and encourage people to act to make the world a better place.

I'm still working on getting that class together where we take a group of about 20 students on the same tour. They will never forget it. I believe our students should have that same opportunity.

Sidebar: Jill Patterson's recommendations

Books

"Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning," by Timothy Snyder

"The Last Jew of Treblinka: A Memoir," by Chil Rajchman

"Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland," by Jan T.

Gross

"Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields," by Wendy Lower

Movies/Documentaries

"The Final Days of Anne Frank," on [National Geographic TV](#)

"Schindler's List"

"Amen"

"Escape from Sobibor"

"Night and Fog"

"Everything is Illuminated"

"Lore"

"The Boy in the Striped Pajamas"

[Interviews with Holocaust survivors, University of Southern California](#)



Web Only

Research Team Returns to Belize With More Money, More Questions

The Chan Chich Archaeological Project, in its fifth year at Texas Tech, provides archaeology students with hands-on experience in a beautiful part of the world.

By Heidi Toth

Brooke Bonorden will have a challenging commute to her job this summer.

The trek is more than half an hour each way. Oh, and it's by foot, on winding trails, through a rainforest in the summer. When she gets to her "office," there's no sitting down at a desk in an air-conditioned building. Instead of pens and a computer, she has a trowel, a camera and century-old metal cups.

Bonorden is one of four graduate students in archaeology who are joining Brett Houk, an associate professor of archaeology and chairman of the [Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work](#) at Texas Tech University, at Chan Chich, Belize, to study the ancient Maya civilization. It's the fifth year for Texas Tech, and 10th year for Houk, to dig in this forested region in Central America.

It's also the first year Houk has had a six-figure budget, thanks to a three-year, \$240,000 grant from the Alphawood Foundation in Chicago. For a program that traditionally has run on small grants and study abroad fees, it's a much-appreciated influx of funding that will allow Houk's team to study multiple projects during their time in Chan Chich (pronounced "chon cheech"). That's especially helpful given just how much he knows he doesn't know about the Mayav who lived in this area for 3,000 years.

The goal for this year is simple, Houk said: learn whatever they can. It's what he's done for the last five years, allowing him to know better year to year what they're looking for and what they don't yet know.

"Every season you come up with new questions you didn't know to ask before," he said.

The Field School of Maya Archaeology

Houk is the director of the Field School in Maya Archaeology Study Abroad program, which is part of the Chan Chich Archaeological Project (CCAP). Every summer he takes a dozen or more undergraduate students to Chan Chich, along with a few graduate students to run the excavations. The students range from those who know they want to be archaeologists to those who think they want to be archaeologists to those who know they don't want to be archaeologists but enjoy the work anyway.

This summer they are examining a number of sites that cover a long span of time.

- An area with deposits dating to 700 BC, which will help explain the early founding of the city.
- The “elite courtyard,” with deposits related to the collapse of the Maya civilization at Chan Chich, dating to about AD 850.
- A historic Maya village that was occupied from the late 1800s until 1930, when a group of Maya fled the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico to avoid the Caste War.
- Looking for evidence of agricultural fields along the margins of a large lagoon using drones.

The group also will use drones to do aerial mapping of cleared cattle pasture and will be able to do radiocarbon analysis upon returning to Texas Tech in July, which is possible because of the Alphawood grant. Houk said the analysis was too expensive to do on a large scale prior to this year.

During their almost two months at Chan Chich, students will rotate between each of these sites, digging carefully into the dirt for artifacts that explain how the Maya lived, worshipped and governed. Houk’s work in CCAP is to discover how the Maya’s cities – low-density settlements amid the rainforests, but cities nonetheless – related to their government, a form known as divine kingship.

“What we’re looking at is how these cities were structured,” he said. “The aspect I’m interested in is how cities related to the political system of divine kings. The city itself is closely related to the ruling dynasty, and we’re trying to find evidence of who that might have been.”

The concept of a divine king – a dynasty whose lineage could be traced to a divine ancestor – is common among the larger city-states, Houk said. He is examining the architecture to see how it points to such a relationship. There is evidence a dynasty existed in Chan Chich; an elite courtyard that has artifacts used in ritual processions, and his team has found a tomb that included a jade pendant, which is a royal symbol.

What that tells Houk is at one point in history, about AD 250, Chan Chich had a divine king. He assumes the dynasty continued over the following centuries but hasn’t found tombs or other evidence pointing to a line. What he has found evidence of is looters. Like all the large sites in this part of the world, Chan Chich was the target of intensive looting in the early 1980s.

“The looters, we don’t know what they found,” he said. “They could have found a tomb. They could have found what we’re looking for.”

Ashley Booher, who is graduating with her master’s degree in August, discovered a more modest burial in the courtyard she was examining in summer 2015. Her thesis centered around two causeways, known as *sacbeob*, thought to be used for ritual processions. In 2014 and 2015 she led undergraduate students in digging along the sides of those causeways, looking for musical instruments, drums, jewelry or other signs that a king had been carried down these roadways in a processional.



She didn't find evidence of that along the *sacbeob*, but in a courtyard adjacent to the eastern causeway constructed in the same time period (AD 750-800), she found costume jewelry, a ceramic drum and a shell trumpet as well as the burial that included a possible headdress with deer antlers that would have been used for a ritual function, leading her to infer the causeways were used for rituals.

This summer, having finished her research, she'll dig at Norman's Temple. It's her fifth and final year at Chan Chich.

"We're trying to figure out what was going on there, seeing if the elite could have moved there after the slow abandonment of the site," Booher said. "We're going to try to add to what we already know about the previous excavations done at Norman's Temple."

A day in the field

Days in Chan Chich start early for the researchers; they're up with the sun, usually before 6 a.m. The group eats breakfast at 6:30, then separates into teams. Bonorden collects her team, and they start their 35-minute hike to the historic Maya village.

This village presents a much different challenge for the budding archaeologists than did Booher's work. Booher's students use pickaxes to cut through the layers of sediment built up over hundreds of years. Bonorden's students use trowels and try not to step on the artifacts, which are almost lying around on the surface.

"It was kind of overwhelming," said Bonorden, who's returning for her second year before graduating in August. "That's good because there was a lot of research potential, but it was scary for me because that meant there was way more stuff for me to analyze and write up."

The historic Maya village was settled in the late 1800s, so finding tin cans, glass bottles and other, more modern artifacts is par for the course, although the students have uncovered stone tools, *metates* and other tools used for grinding. After eight weeks last summer the students had excavated less than 5 percent of the village, so she'll be there again this year.

"It's really hard to say a lot about the people who lived here with such a small sample size, so to do them more justice in the narrative we're going to create about this site we really should be more thorough in excavating more of it," she said.

Bonorden's contribution to the narrative was a look into how the Maya interacted with the British and Mexican colonial governments and the loggers who came through, each laying a different claim to the land. She considered how their interactions with these groups changed both the Maya and the other groups.

"Cultural contact's not a one-way street," she said. "It's a give and take on both ends."

After about eight hours of digging, cataloging and photographing, all the teams return to the lodge for dinner. Houk gives a lecture once or twice a week, sometimes they show a

movie or the students have free time. The graduate students, who are CCAP employees, use the time to catch up on paperwork.

“Everybody usually goes to bed pretty early because they have to get up pretty early the next day and they’re pretty tired,” Houk said.

Signing up for CCAP

The course is offered every summer. Students interested in the Field School in Maya Archaeology, which is run through Study Abroad at Texas Tech, can contact Houk or go to the [website](#). It is open to any student interested in archaeology, but Houk warned it is not a tropical vacation; although the rainforest is beautiful and the resort where the students live is pleasant, the class includes about eight hours a day of physical labor in the hot, humid environment. Field work experience such as that provided by CCAP is critical to any student planning to be an archaeologist or go to graduate school.

“It was probably the nicest place I’ve ever done archaeology,” Bonorden said.



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Texas Tech Implements Musical Theatre Degree Program

Two professors in the School of Theatre and Dance created the program to provide students interested in musical theatre with the intensive, multidisciplinary training necessary to be successful.

By Cara Vandergriff

Before 2016, Texas Tech University students interested in pursuing a career in musical theatre faced limited options: focus on acting while picking up a few elective courses in voice and dance, major in dance while attempting to get acting experience on the side – no opportunity was available for students to receive the intensive, interdisciplinary training necessary to succeed in the musical theatre industry.

Now, thanks to a program spearheaded by two professors in the [School of Theatre and Dance](#), students have the opportunity to pursue a bachelor of fine arts degree in musical theatre: a specific, performance-based tri-disciplinary degree program that has never before been offered at Texas Tech.

Noticing the need

[Dean Nolen](#), acting professor and head of the acting and directing program in the School of Theatre and Dance, noticed a need for this program when he came to Texas Tech in 2014.

“Before we introduced this program, studying musical theatre here was a hodge-podge of going around collecting a few classes here, a few classes there – there wasn’t a specific curriculum for it,” Nolen said.

Prior to 2016, the School of Theatre and Dance offered bachelor of arts degrees in both theatre arts and dance, along with a bachelor of fine arts degree in theatre arts in which students could emphasize either acting or theatrical design (scenery, lights or costume). Without a program intersecting the three disciplines of music, acting and dance, students could choose to study within either the [School of Music](#) or the School of Theatre and Dance, having to pursue other disciplines within the limitations of their allowed elective courses.

In an industry as competitive as entertainment, Nolen said, musical theatre performers must be equally strong actors, dancers and singers in order to be marketable. Without a program offered at Texas Tech that emphasized all of these facets, prospective students interested in musical theatre were often forced to look elsewhere to find what they were looking for.

“Not having a musical theatre program certainly left us out of a cross-section of students we could work with,” Nolen said. “We were the biggest school in the region that didn’t

have this program, so we could either lose all those students to other universities or create a program of our own.”

Adam Howard, a professor of musical theatre who came to Texas Tech to help build the new program, emphasized the importance of the musical theatre degree to both Texas Tech and the students who will receive it.

“If you get yourself an acting degree that isn’t musical theatre intensive, you won’t be very successful professionally in musical theatre,” Howard said. “So having this program is going to bring a lot more students to Texas Tech who wouldn’t have been able to consider us otherwise.”

The newfound demand for musical theatre programming is not unique to Texas Tech – in fact, both Nolen and Howard say a musical theatre renaissance is happening, in which the popularity of original musicals has drastically increased in recent years.

“Musical theatre was really dated for a while; for a long time I thought it was dying,” Howard said. “It seemed like Disney owned the entire thing in the ‘90s, then all of a sudden in the early 2000s, these quirky, different, interesting, brand-new musicals started coming out. Suddenly, original musicals went from old-fashioned to cool again overnight. Schools need these programs now more than ever because students are asking for them.”

Creating the program

Nolen began creating the musical theatre program as soon as he arrived at Texas Tech in the fall of 2014. He was fresh off a position as artistic director and assistant professor of theatre at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, where he created a similar program for students interested in musical theatre.

“I mentioned to my boss that creating this program would be easier here because of the dance program that was already in place,” Nolen said.

Mark Charney, director of the School of Theatre and Dance, had already recognized the national and local need for musical theatre programming when Nolen approached him with the idea.

“I’d been looking for the right time to begin such a program at Texas Tech,” Charney said. “Professor Nolen’s background perfectly represented what we needed to kick start the area; he had extensive experience in the field. Now, with our recent hires helping to encourage it along, it finally seemed like the time was right to get started.”

Since his arrival at Texas Tech in 2012, Charney recognized the growing significance of musical theatre programs across the nation. When he and Nolen introduced their idea to the [College of Visual and Performing Arts](#), they received overwhelming support.

“I knew it would take a few significant hires to get the program off the ground,” Charney said. “When the college supported the idea, especially the provost with the hire of Adam Howard, the dream for a musical theatre program could finally become reality.”



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After garnering some initial interest in the idea, Charney and Nolen brought Howard on board in the fall to help build the curriculum based on his musical theatre experience.

“We were very lucky to find Adam,” Nolen said. “He’s been a tremendous resource and partner-in-crime from the minute he got here.”

Charney said having both Nolen and Howard on board helped ignite the potential program, turning it from an idea into a developmental process.

“Musical theatre programs attract some of the best students,” Charney said. “When we were able to bring on both Nolen and Howard – two professors with significant experience in musical theatre – to make it happen, I knew the faculty would support our endeavor.”

Nolen and Howard worked together to create courses for the new program, including two musical theatre performance classes and a course that proved to be vital in the program’s conception: music theory.

“Reaching out to Bill Ballenger, the director of the School of Music, was the next step,” Charney said. “With his excellent support on the new music theory course, we were able to round out the program’s curriculum.”

Instead of having musical theatre students take the same music theory course as traditional music students, Nolen worked with Ballenger and School of Music Professor David Forrest to create a music theory course tailored specifically to musical theatre students. The course, which will be offered through the School of Music, will introduce music theory to students in a way that is relevant to their particular field of study.

“Creating this course was huge for this program,” Howard said. “By tailoring music theory specifically to musical theatre students, we’ve been able to really focus on the stuff most relevant for the study of musical theatre. Having Bill and David write this course for us was hugely helpful in getting this program off the ground, and it will help incredibly in retaining our students – I don’t know of any other school that has a course like this.”

Though the tailored music theory course was a major advantage for the creation of the new degree program, Nolen and Howard agree the program’s biggest selling point was how mutually beneficial the program would be for both the students and the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

“The biggest selling point of this program is to offer yet another opportunity for potential students to grow and learn,” Nolen said. “Not only does it make us more well-rounded as a college, but now students will be able to study each discipline fully and earn a degree within a program that exists specifically for them.”

Charney agreed, saying the new musical theatre program is the perfect way to fulfill student needs within the School of Theatre and Dance.

“Adding this degree is the perfect way to build our undergraduate program and stay student-centric,” Charney said.

The many selling points of the program didn’t require much convincing, however. Nolen and Howard were surprised by how easy the approval process was, saying there were so few hurdles it seemed almost strange.

“Everybody liked it,” Nolen said. “They were excited and wanted to get behind it. There’s been an incredible generosity of spirit among the people we’ve worked with on this – I think it just felt right. There’s been a good feeling about it from the beginning.”

Howard agreed, saying the Texas Tech arts community has expressed nothing but excitement to see the bar raised for musical theatre performance.

“I’ve noticed a unique atmosphere here of enthusiasm for visual and performing arts,” Howard said. “People are into each other’s disciplines. Other places often have this weird competition between departments, but that’s not the way here. People like each other and are curious about what everyone’s doing. This is a wonderful place for innovation, and this kind of cooperation, frankly, I’ve never seen it.”

Building the first class

After recruiting students from various events across Texas for the past year, the first official, full-sized class of musical theatre students received their acceptance letters in March.

The first class is made up of 12 students, a number Nolen expects to remain consistent in the upcoming years, noting the program’s focus on quality of students, not quantity.

“We’re only looking to bring in around 12 students per year,” Nolen said. “The growth of this program is not in the amount of students we’re bringing to Texas Tech – we’re not trying to build numbers, we’re trying to build a rock solid, signature program in musical theatre.”

Auditions for the musical theatre program are expected to happen on campus a few times each year and will be available to all prospective students.

“The goal of this program is to train students to excel in whatever level of musical theatre they desire to reach,” Nolen said. “Whether that be performing at small and regional theatres within the cities they live or working in commercial theatre in New York City, our students will be trained to succeed at any level. The goal is that, if they have the talent and the drive, we want to give them the opportunity to be able to reach their personal level of success.”



Web Only

‘This Has Happened Before:’ Senior Researches World War II Evacuation

Honors student Sarah Muncy studied the British evacuation during World War II, examining the propaganda surrounding it and how it informs the refugee crisis today.

By Heidi Toth

Sarah Muncy has 22 pen pals, all in their 70s and 80s and all living across the pond. They send letters and emails with the salutation “Hello, lass” and grainy black and white photos from their youth.

The Texas Tech University student has spent her senior year corresponding with these Brits, all of whom were part of a government program to evacuate children from London and other cities during World War II. She asked personal questions and learned private details about their lives. She cried as she read their stories. She wondered how she would have reacted if she’d been a mother being told to send her child away or a child being ripped from her parents.

Through it all Muncy, a dual [political science](#) and [history](#) major from Carrollton and a member of the [Honors College](#), has grown to love these former evacuees and feel great sympathy for what they endured. Her senior thesis has become a labor of love, an opportunity to tell their stories and make sure their sacrifices are remembered.

When she got online and learned just how these men and women were remembered, she was, she said, severely disappointed.

“On Amazon you can buy costumes and dress up as a World War II evacuee,” Muncy said. “You can even get a fake gas mask holder and a luggage tag.”

It got worse. Muncy searched “#evacuees” on Instagram. Pages of results came up: young children in costumes, some smiling, others with posed sad faces. The pictures were captioned with #adorable, #war and #worldwar2.

“There are plenty of differences between this and the current refugee crisis, but how are we supposed to really react with sympathy and clarify if we trivialize a case that happened 70 years ago?”

Hoping to change that, Muncy researched and wrote about Operation Pied Piper, which relocated millions of children from the streets of British cities during World War II to the much safer countryside, separating them from their parents for years. Her goal wasn’t to pass judgment on the evacuation, but to look at the stories, examine the propaganda, both at the time and what’s been published since, and see how the evacuees are affected, even decades later.

Forming the question

Muncy, who was intrigued by the way war interacts with society, read about Operation Pied Piper in a historical novel. After her Italian Mafia class one day, she stayed behind to discuss it with history and Honors College professor Aliza Wong. Wong, herself a World War II scholar, encouraged Muncy to investigate further and later became her mentor as she started the research.

Muncy, as she dug into the available information, quickly decided one thing: her thesis would not examine whether evacuation was right or wrong. Looking back on it 70 years later does nothing to account for the fear of living as bombs were dropping and the worry of sending a young child away for years and not knowing who that child would be upon return.

“The fact is that it’s much more complicated than anyone was willing to foresee or admit after the fact,” Muncy said. “It’s hugely complex in how we understand childhood, how we understand displaced people, how we understand war and hardship, and from that how to be more empathetic to understanding of displaced people, because it happens a lot.”

She started by reading books written by former evacuees. While helpful, relying on published works skewed toward those who had notable experiences and who had the resources and wherewithal to publish a book. Muncy found the British Evacuee Association, which published a newsletter. She emailed the editor asking for help; the editor printed the entirety of Muncy’s email with the headline, “A Student in Texas.” More than 20 former evacuees emailed her with stories, photos, poems and memories.

For Wong, who has guided Muncy through the process, it was a long overdue project. In light of how much has been written about World War II, there was almost nothing on this topic, she said.

“Sarah has tackled a part of the history of the Second World War that has often been neglected in the larger narrative of fascism, Nazism and the horrors of warfare,” Wong said. “Yet the testimonies of these British evacuees tell the story of the breadth of total war, its impact at all levels and the ways in which even the youngest child was called to sacrifice during this time.”

Operation Pied Piper

For those unfamiliar with the legend of the Pied Piper, a strangely dressed man comes to a small town and promises to rid the town of rats. Using his musical pipe, he lures the rodents away but, angry when the townspeople refuse to pay him, he performs the same magic on the children of the town, piping until each of them followed him away, lost forever to their families.

“It’s a terrible name,” Muncy said. “Whoever came up with it does not know the end of the story.”

Whatever they called it, in 1939 the British government asked families in London, Liverpool and other large cities to send their children to host families in the countryside, where they would be sheltered from the war that came into the streets. Between 1939 and



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1945, roughly 3.5 million children were evacuated through Operation Pied Piper. Many went to homes in the country, with some going overseas to the United States and Canada.

The actual number of evacuated children is higher than that, Muncy said; families with more money or connections often opted out of the government program but sent their children to family members or friends elsewhere. The 3.5 million didn't account for all private arrangement or children who were evacuated more than once. Most records are held by local governments, if at all, making estimation difficult.

The government employed propaganda to encourage participation from parents, many of whom initially were reluctant. They didn't entirely trust the government, which may have been worsened by the propaganda. One such example was a poster that appeared in late 1939 after the first wave of evacuations, when children left in September but were back by Christmas.

"The poster said, 'if you're a good mother you'll keep your kids evacuated,'" Muncy said. "If you don't you're playing right into the hands of Hitler."

However, many of these parents also remembered the horrors of World War I and knew there was little they could do to protect their children once bombs started falling. When the London Blitz began in 1940, parents sent their children away. The evacuation was officially for children ages 5 to 15 years old, but 3- and 4-year-olds made it on trains to the country as well. Occasionally mothers went too.

"It was the largest family and social upheaval at the time in British history," she said.

Life as an evacuee

What Muncy found as she talked to evacuees and read accounts in books, letters and newspapers was that every experience had its difficulties and trauma, regardless of whether their evacuation was perceived as "good" or "bad." A great majority of children's experiences fell somewhere in the middle of the spectrum. Their host families weren't wonderful or awful; they fed the children, gave them clothes to wear and kept them safe, but didn't show much affection.

A big part of this experience was the "clash of cultures and clash of class understanding" that Britain was forced to confront in the war years and after. A good number of the children being evacuated were working class, and the host families were primarily middle class and in some cases forced by the government to take in evacuees. They did their duty, but nothing else, and often didn't do so pleasantly. Families complained to the government that the evacuees were dirty, brash, unsophisticated and they didn't like them.

While some of the criticism may have been true, Muncy said, the children were that way because they'd never experienced anything different.

“Some of them don’t know how to use a fork and a knife,” she said. “Well, if all you’re eating is porridge because you can’t afford roast beef, why on earth would you know how to use a fork and a knife?”

“Or in some cases children would tell their host family, ‘I brought all my clothes except for my Sunday best.’ The host family would say, ‘Why wouldn’t you do that? Why are you expecting us to provide that clothing?’ Well, they didn’t have Sunday best, but they didn’t want to admit that.

One of the worst examples of this clash of cultures was the experience of a group of girls who came from Liverpool. The host family had the idea that because Liverpool was a big city it was dirty and its residents had lice or scabies. So when these girls showed up from Liverpool, they shaved their heads and burned their clothes to get rid of any bugs. There was no blending in for those girls.

Another experience relayed to Muncy was from a woman whose mother had died; she was living with her older sister when the bombing started. She evacuated to a family who locked her in a closet when they left the house and didn’t want her around while they were there unless she was quietly doing homework.

But, Muncy is quick to add, it is difficult to really know how many evacuees had positive or negative experiences – so many children were involved in the evacuation and every story is unique to the individual child. Many children who were evacuated did as well as could be expected and returned to their homes after the war, not scarred by their host families but not with beautiful memories either. And a few did make long-lasting relationships and had many opportunities. Clare Barton, who was evacuated to the U.S., took a cross-country road trip with her host family, even making a stop in Texas. Another man who came from an unhappy home ended up in the country home of Auntie Kay and Auntie Edith, two matronly aunts.

“They knew nothing about child care,” she said. “They were both older, they were past the age of having children, but they took in this little boy. He loved his experience, loved them and didn’t want to go home.”

He maintained contact with the two women, not only inviting them to his wedding but also bringing his wife-to-be to meet them and gain their approval. Another woman told Muncy that over Easter weekend this year, several family members came to town for her son’s wedding. Her birth sister was staying with her former host sister, who 70 years later has remained family.

Homecoming

As difficult as evacuation was for both parents and children, in many ways returning home was equally difficult.

Some children came back to find their homes destroyed by bombs or parents killed. Some returned to the homes they had just left and were adopted by their host families; the less fortunate ones went to orphanages. Those whose families were now homeless found themselves in an ancestral crisis of sorts.



“For some it created a guilt; they felt they like they were abandoning their roots,” Muncy said. “Which did they prefer: the evacuated home in the country – that’s not who they are, but it’s what they loved – or this obliterated block? Which one’s home?”

That crisis never ended for a few of the former evacuees.

“A lot said they can’t find home. They never found home again,” she said. “One man in an interview said, ‘I have a family, I have kids, I have a house, but I haven’t found home again.’”

However, many thousands of evacuated children returned to mostly intact families and homes. That still didn’t make the homecoming easy. Parents said goodbye to these children years before; most were 10 years old or younger. A few were just 3 or 4 years old when they left. They’d been gone for years, removed from the war and frequently with a family that had a higher standard of living. They returned to bombed-out London streets, rations and parents who had feared for their lives every day.

Even little details, like the sound of a child’s voice, was a stark reminder of the generation gap the war and evacuation had widened.

“In England it’s very telling of where you live from your accent,” Muncy said. “Kids’ voices adapt so easily, so if they leave with a brash Cockney accent and come back with a posh Downton Abbey kind of accent, the reaction was not good.”

Breaking down the propaganda

Literature and pop culture have since romanticized World War II, and evacuation was no different. Dozens of British children’s books since the 1940s have had evacuation as a plot point, but “Paddington Bear” and “The Chronicles of Narnia” are the most well-known. Both paint pleasant pictures; Paddington, found with a suitcase and name tag in a London train station, is adopted by a British family and has a series of adventures, while the four Pevensie children are evacuated together to a home in the countryside, where the war is barely mentioned in light of their wonderful adventures through the wardrobe in the spare room.

In addition to the children’s books that came after the war, including “Lord of the Flies” (there is some debate on whether that is about evacuation or nuclear war), Muncy analyzed posters and radio chats children had with their parents.

With the exception of “Lord of the Flies,” she found evacuation was generally portrayed in a positive light. In the radio chats, the most negative thing any child said was a little boy who’d been hoping to get a brother in his host family. The conversations veered toward excitement about learning French, the fun things they were doing and gratitude for being sent away – not an accurate picture of the program as a whole, Muncy said.

“They create this idea of what evacuation will be, what it was, and that’s not reality,” she said. “Even in the best experiences, it was still a very complicated and complex issue, and that wasn’t addressed in propaganda at all.”

One thing she noticed was to whom the posters were targeted. Most played on mothers’ emotions, a few addressed fathers. She saw only one directed to the children who were leaving. With so little discussed with these children either before or after the war, she found many still had questions. Even though as adults they intellectually understood, they struggled to make sense of this chapter in their lives.

Many wrote autobiographies trying to put this chapter where it belonged, self-publishing through small companies with little interest in fame or riches but just wanting to be heard. Others took the historical fiction route; one book, “Carrie’s War,” was a fictional story based on the author’s experiences as an evacuee. A book reviewer wrote the author, Nina Bawden, writes like she’s still in her childhood. It was not a compliment, but Muncy understood why.

“Some of those things were written in that manner because they never really got to have a childhood,” she said. “It’s a fragile time, and if anything, evacuation shows it at least needs to be acknowledged, and children need to be acknowledged.”

The project has drawn her in, and Muncy is hopeful it won’t end with this thesis. After she graduates in May she’s going to graduate school at the University of Cincinnati and wants to continue studying Operation Pied Piper, get grant money to go to England and meet with many of the evacuees she’s come to know.

Next steps

One point Muncy heard again and again from the former evacuees was the desire for recognition.

“When they returned they weren’t actually seen as being part of the war effort,” she said.

For instance, after the war the government sent out Certifications of Recognition, signed by the queen, as official thank-yous to those people who benefitted the country during the six-year war. Shop girls and factory workers got certificates thanking them for keeping industry and businesses running, and volunteers who were unable to be in the military received the recognition for providing defense at home. Even schoolchildren received the certificates for continuing their education during the war. But the evacuees didn’t. For many, that stung for decades after the war.

“It was a question of why weren’t they seen as members of this war effort?” Muncy asked. “They were the ones who were having to leave their homes. They were the ones who were having to adjust to get new families. It’s important for the evacuees that they be recognized. Especially for those who had hard times, they want some credit for what they went through.”

In fact, the children who were uprooted twice, lived with strangers and may have gone years without a hug or any kind of affection weren’t even given therapy after the war. Most returned home, and families got into the new normal that came about after the war. They



didn't talk about the war the families had lived through in a variety of ways – men at the front fighting, women in London working, always at risk of bombs, children gone.

Muncy is hesitant to paint too pleasant a picture of evacuation, but she doesn't want it to be too dark, either. In the 1990s the British Evacuee Association formed and lobbied the British government for recognition. Belatedly these certificates were given out to former evacuees, and their sacrifice was recognized.

She realized telling their stories to her was healing to the former evacuees as well. Simply talking about it helped to validate them. One woman who evacuated to Boston told Muncy she appreciated talking with her, since she can't talk to her husband or children anymore.

“When I tell this to him or the kids their eyes glaze over,” she told Muncy. “They've heard it all before.”

One of the few positive changes resulted from the culture clash: the middle and upper classes realized just how difficult life was for working-class Britons. The welfare state and National Health Service were introduced after World War II.

“They were forced to acknowledge each other and realize these kids are living in some pretty awful conditions,” Muncy said. “It's a big disparity, which makes you question, what is the justification of privilege? It was one of the questions they had to grapple with in this very trying time. Is it just where you're born or where you move from, because how do you justify one child having this great childhood and another not?”

Of all the conclusions she has drawn from her research, Muncy keeps coming back to one in particular, and she hopes people who read her thesis will walk away with this lesson as well.

“We have this point in history, and we can't do anything about it,” she said. “But these were children who were separated from their families due to the threat and actual existence of war. This happens all over the world. It's in the news right now, but it happens all the time and all over the world.

“Keep that in mind when you read stories about refugees, that this has happened before. If anything, just be a little more sympathetic to that.

“Don't buy a costume.”

Sidebar: Voices of the refugees

Clare Barton was evacuated to Boston; her host family took a cross-country trip through the U.S. while she was with them, so she got to experience much of the country.

“I was very close to my foster mother, Aunt Louise, and was disappointed when she decided it was best for me not to keep in touch. We have visited many of the places I remember and met Aunt Louise's sister, Florence, when she was still alive.”

Jim Wright was evacuated in 1939 to the south of England, returned to London and was evacuated again in 1940, this time to Llanhilleth Monmouthshire, a mining town in South Wales. Wright, who never returned to London after the war, spent many years as a researcher for The British Evacuees Association.

“I want people to understand the true story of the evacuation of 1939-1945, to hopefully lay to rest many of the stories that were and still are being told of us. We were kids and we were not all bad; you cannot lob us all into one lump.”



Web Only

Weather or Not: Texas Tech Master's Student Chose Meteorology in Childhood

Sarah Dillingham is a storm specialist appearing on The Weather Channel.

By Glenys Young

Sarah Dillingham has always loved weather.

“Even at a young age, I remember sitting in front of the television watching The Weather Channel, just mesmerized at whatever they were discussing,” she laughed. “I remember specifically in 1992, Hurricane Iniki was hitting Hawaii and I couldn’t believe it – that strong of a hurricane hitting this little island in the middle of nowhere. I just kept running back and forth between the television and my parents, telling them, ‘Mom, the winds are doing this!’ and ‘It’s moving this fast!’ and ‘The surge is coming up!’ So I’ve really always loved it, but it wasn’t until I got to be a teenager that I really decided that’s what I want to do for a career.”

After starting her career at CNN, the Texas Tech University master’s student now has her dream job, studying and analyzing severe storms while working for The Weather Channel.

Growing up

“For me, personally, meteorology has always been a huge passion of mine,” Dillingham said. “My family and friends have always been very supportive of me and whatever I wanted to do. It was actually my mom who helped me to realize that.”

The movie “Twister” is one of Dillingham’s favorites, despite some elements that aren’t exactly accurate in it. Upon first seeing the film, she told her mom she was going to become a storm chaser for a living. When her mom explained she would need to be a meteorologist to make enough money, Dillingham knew her way forward was clear.

Originally from Dalton, Georgia, Dillingham chose to attend the University of Georgia for her undergraduate education in meteorology.

“Once I decided I wanted to be a meteorologist, I pretty much never looked back – I knew that’s what I was going to do. I said, ‘I’m going to go be a meteorologist, I’m going to chase storms and do severe storms research,’ and that’s what I did,” she said. “There were a couple times it got really difficult because it’s a very rigorous program with a lot of math and a lot of science. I took calculus classes I didn’t even know existed, thermodynamics and physics and all that stuff. You’re half an engineer and half an earth scientist.”

Texas Tech

As she neared the completion of her bachelor’s degree in 2008, Dillingham studied her options for graduate programs. Her academic adviser at the University of Georgia recommended she look into Texas Tech.

“So I went to my first American Meteorological Society conference in Atlanta and met the group from Texas Tech,” Dillingham said. “I talked to them about what they do and their severe storms research program and I just fell in love with it. I said, ‘I have to go here. I *have* to go here.’”

Among her best memories from Texas Tech, Dillingham recalls the familial atmosphere between the [atmospheric science](#) graduate students and her time working on the Verification of the Origin of Rotation in Tornadoes Experiment 2 (VORTEX2), in which team members studied tornadoes.

“Getting to take my then-family on the road for VORTEX2 for the 2009 and 2010 seasons, I wouldn’t trade that for anything,” Dillingham said. “My time here at Texas Tech was perfectly timed so I was able to participate in both years of that. Our first year, it took us the entire season, but we finally got the only tornado of that 2009 season.”

Chris Weiss, an associate professor of atmospheric science at Texas Tech, is in charge of the VORTEX project.

“Sarah was a very important part of VORTEX2 in 2009 and 2010,” Weiss said. “I had her involved in the deployment of StickNet probes, which were responsible for the measurements of temperature, humidity, pressure and wind near developing tornadoes across the Great Plains. She was incredibly reliable and always had an upbeat attitude, even on those days when the deployment did not go so well.”

Dillingham clearly remembers the tornado in which the deployment was most successful.

“It was the most well-observed tornado in history and I was standing there, taking a picture of my colleagues [Ian Giammanco](#) and [Frank Lombardo](#), who both received their doctorates from Texas Tech,” she recalled. “Our team was deploying a StickNet right in front of a developing tornado, so we were able to observe its entire life cycle. It was an incredible experience, and I’m very lucky to have been a part of that.”

The experience helped Dillingham pinpoint the topic of her master’s thesis.

“The Texas Tech severe storms research team deployed StickNets in eastern Nebraska back in June 2008, and it was a high-precipitation supercell that transitioned into a pretty significant bow echo. We collected some great StickNet data on that event,” she said. “Since the storm also occurred very close to the Omaha, Nebraska, radar, we obtained some great radar data. It’s an incredible dataset.

“Transitions of these types of storms – supercells to bow echoes – are well noted to occur, but the mechanisms that lead to them aren’t really something that is discussed often. If you read a research paper, they’ll say ‘it underwent transition’ or that kind of thing. There are some processes we think lead to that transition, and I think we actually sampled some of those. So my thesis is diagnosing what happened in this storm and trying to apply it to future research.”

On the way up



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As an undergraduate, Dillingham interned at CNN, which led to a freelance position during her senior year. That experience opened doors for her in Lubbock as well, and she began as a meteorologist for KLBK-TV in March 2010 while working on her master's degree. And then, unexpectedly, she was offered a chance to return to CNN in 2011 as a full-time weather producer, working behind the scenes.

"I was done with coursework and was working on finishing up my master's thesis, making great progress, and I decided to take the job at CNN. So you kind of pick up everything and move across the country, move to a different shift," Dillingham said. "I went to the mornings, so I was getting up at 2 a.m. every day and going to work, and that was kind of exhausting to get acclimated to that."

After a year and a half at CNN, Dillingham became friends with several people who worked for The Weather Channel, including her now-supervisor who, unbeknownst to her, had been eyeing her for a new job.

"He presents this offer and I'm thinking, 'This is really cool. You're going to be working with Greg Forbes, Jim Cantore' – I mean, these are the biggest names in the business," Dillingham said. "And it was really scary to hear that because you're thinking, 'Wow, do I have what it takes to do that?' I actually said no two or three times."

But eventually Dillingham agreed to meet with The Weather Channel supervisors to discuss the offer. After the meeting, she decided to pursue the job. She interviewed and had a one-on-one luncheon with Forbes, where she was able to talk about her research as well as things she'd done and learned and wanted to do. And when it was offered, she took the job.

"It was a little scary because I had a good thing going at CNN and great bosses, but they're a news organization who does weather and I wanted to do weather all the time. At The Weather Channel, I get to do that. I get to cover the biggest events, the most severe events, and I'm right there in the seat next to the experts. Now I *am* one of the experts, actually getting to present the weather to the viewers. It was a huge opportunity and I'm glad I took the risk."

The Weather Channel

Now three years in as a storm specialist and expert weather producer at The Weather Channel, Dillingham said her favorite part is the incredible wealth of knowledge among her coworkers.

"All of the meteorologists are very good at what they do, and they're very good people. I have a lot of really close friends I work with," she said. "They're all so smart and I've learned so much. That's just something I've always had a passion for, learning about the weather."

Because of her expertise, Dillingham now works during the late-evening severe weather hours, but she's fresh off a stint on "Weather Underground." Hosted by The Weather

Channel meteorologist Mike Bettes, the show is intended to provide insights into the science behind forecasting with live social media interaction, weather roundtable discussions and more.

“I had so many questions when I started in college: what causes this, what causes that, how does this happen? That keeps my curiosity going, and I’ve learned so much in just the last year, certainly in the last three years,” Dillingham said. “The ability to learn from so many of the greatest minds in the business, I really feel very fortunate to have that at my disposal every day and teach that to other people.”

Of course, not every experience has been good. Only a few months into her new job at The Weather Channel, she had one of the scariest days of her career on May 31, 2013.

“Being a severe weather producer at the time, I had worked with Dr. Forbes and Jim Cantore on particular events in the Southeast, and also the Moore, Oklahoma, tornado. That happened earlier in the month, but the El Reno tornado, when Mike Bettes’ vehicle was tossed by the tornado, I was back there at the computer producing for Dr. Forbes at the time,” Dillingham recalled. “We were all talking to each other on-air and said, ‘We haven’t heard from Mike in a while.’ I go back and look at the radar and said, ‘Well there’s the last GPS location, and there’s the couplet,’ which was the tornado, so we were very nervous. It was very relieving to hear from him, but they had in fact been hit.

“I think that was really scary for all of us. Sometimes when we’re out there covering storms, you don’t want to end up in it. You want to keep people safe, and I think that was a very real reminder for everyone that severe weather can impact anyone at any time, even when you don’t plan on it.”

Teaching others

It’s an ideal segue into Dillingham’s second passion: emergency management and public education.

“The more we can educate the public on what to expect when severe weather is impending, helps them to act appropriately because that’s really what it comes down to,” she said. “The science is pretty good. Yes, there are still advances that need to be made, but we have pretty good lead times most of the time with tornadoes.

“A lot of times people don’t know what to do with the information we provide, and we want to teach people, ‘When you see this, this is what it means,’ or ‘This is the kind of damage that can result from this,’ or ‘When a tornado comes through, don’t get under an overpass because here’s why.’ You can give people all the information you want, but if they don’t know what to do with it, that’s not going to be very helpful to them.”

Of course, putting other people’s reactions on her own shoulders comes with a certain amount of self-imposed pressure.

“I’m so passionate about the weather and teaching others about the science, but with that passion comes enormous pressure,” Dillingham said. “Loving what I do so much makes me want to be one of the best at what I do. That can make it difficult to deal with struggles that come along because everyone is their own worst critic. I certainly am. I really have to



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focus on getting out of my own head and getting rid of that little voice that says, ‘This is too hard. I don’t know if I can handle this.’

“I think that’s the biggest struggle, just having that self-confidence all the time that even when it’s difficult, knowing you’ve got what it takes to do what you want to do. It’s a work in progress, but certainly when you’re working with such brilliant people at The Weather Channel, you want to keep up that level of presentation and knowledge. I think it’s just putting a lot of pressure on myself to perform a certain way. Ultimately, I just want to focus on doing what I love and it really does help to know this is what I was meant to do.”

The future

Dillingham’s immediate plans are focused on finishing her master’s degree, which she left in progress when she took her job at CNN.

“It’s very difficult to try to do a full-time job in something that’s as demanding as television – certainly meteorology – and try to work on a thesis, but the passion I have and the work I’ve already put into that, I know I have what it takes to finish it. It’s just a matter of time-management, so that’s my biggest piece of advice. If you want something, don’t give up. You can do it. It might take time, but the time is worth it. My goal is to eventually finish it and be done, because I certainly have the knowledge for it.”

She plans to return to Lubbock at least twice in the foreseeable future: once to defend her thesis and once for graduation.

“Obviously I’m coming back for graduation because after all the work I’ve done, I am walking across that stage,” she laughed. “I’m really proud of the program here at Texas Tech. My adviser, my professors, the students who have come through here – I really respect the work they do and the dedication they have. Being part of the Texas Tech family is an honor, and I hope I can make them proud in return.”



Web Only

Wine Program Getting Better With Age

The Viticulture and Enology program offers experience for students interested in the wine industry.

By Jenae Fleming

With the only bachelor's degree program offered in the state of Texas in the winemaking industry, Texas Tech University's [Viticulture and Enology](#) (V&E) program has grown steadily with the thriving [Texas Wine Industry](#).

With more than 300 wineries comprising the rapidly growing wine industry in Texas, Texas Tech's V&E program is ideal for any student looking to gain hands-on experience in this field. Through the four-year undergraduate program, students earn a bachelor's degree in [Plant & Soil Science](#) with a specialization in viticulture and enology.

Lubbock is home to the Texas High Plains, one of eight [American Viticultural Areas](#) (AVA) in Texas. This AVA encompasses more than 8 million acres and grows more than 80 percent of Texas' wine grapes. Other AVA's in Texas include The Texas Hill Country, Bell Mountain, Escondido Valley, Mesilla Valley, Texas Davis Mountains, Texoma and Fredericksburg.

[Ed Hellman](#), professor in the V&E program, said the Plant and Soil Science department recognized the increasing need for trained viticulturists and winemakers in the area. This provoked them to create the V&E program at Texas Tech.

"No other Texas university programs in viticulture and enology existed," Hellman said, "and it made sense for Texas Tech to develop a program since the High Plains region around Lubbock is the most significant grape-growing region in the state."

Since the program began in 2010, there have been 13 graduates. These graduates have done extraordinary work in the industry, such as starting their own wineries like [Grayson Davies](#), the first graduate of the V&E program. Davies began Arché Wines with his family in Saint Jo in 2007 and went on to win an award for his Vintage Roussanne at the [San Diego International Wine Competition](#) in 2014.

Hellman said many graduates of the program hold excellent positions at wineries and have received great recognition in the industry.

"We have a strong working relationship with the Texas wine industry so we can readily place our students in professional internships to gain experience," Hellman said. "We can also readily place graduates in permanent positions at wineries, vineyards and related businesses."

Hellman said the constant growth of the wine industry allows for many job openings for college graduates.

“In fact, there are more job opportunities than we have graduates,” Hellman said. “The outlook is very strong as the wine industry continues to grow.”

Texas Tech currently has 16 undergraduate and two graduate students enrolled in the V&E program.

Whitney Frazier is a current student in the V&E program and president of the [Raiders Uncorked](#) student organization. She has gained hands-on experience since entering the program in 2013. Frazier owes a lot of what she has learned to her study abroad experience in Italy.

“I learned a tremendous amount of knowledge about wine and the industry in Italy,” Frazier said. “I was able to experience what the international wine industry was like and get a better grasp on the industry as a whole.”

In addition to its course and lab work, Texas Tech now has Raiders Uncorked, an organization established to give students the opportunity to academically explore and appreciate viticulture, enology and wines of Texas and the world.

Raiders Uncorked provides experience and opportunities for students hoping to enter a career in this field. The organization is open to all students interested in the wine industry, wine tasting, wine marketing or those with a love for wine.

Frazier, president of the organization, is hoping Raiders Uncorked will grow further at Texas Tech.

“A lot of amazing things can come from this club and I can’t wait to see it be extremely successful,” Frazier said.

The V&E program recently added a course co-listed with Texas Tech’s [Restaurant, Hotel, and Institutional Management](#) (RHIM) program called, “Wines of the World.” Frazier said many of the RHIM classes have helped her integrate wine and business together.

“We have some great professors and classes in our program,” Frazier said. “I can’t wait to see what’s to come in the future.”

In the beginning, the program offered three courses:

- Viticulture I: Principles of Viticulture
- Viticulture II: Grape Production
- Wine Production Introduction

In addition to these courses, the program now offers:

- The Science of Wine
- Winemaking Quality Control and Analysis
- Wine Marketing



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- Wines of the World
- Wine Tourism

Since 2013, all of the V&E courses have been offered online except for the advanced laboratory classes. Students are eligible to take the classes at the Texas Tech campus locations in Lubbock or Fredericksburg.

The program also offers students industry internships and study abroad opportunities. Graduate students can pursue a master's or doctorate degree in Plant & Soil Science with a specialization in viticulture. The program plans to continually add courses in the future to further enhance the curriculum of Texas Tech's V&E program.

V&E Graduates Success:

- Grayson Davies, winemaker at [Arché Winery](#) in Saint Jo
- Emily Simpson, winery operations manager at [McPherson Cellars](#) in Lubbock
- Spenser Igo, assistant winemaker at McPherson Cellars
- Rebecca Conley, marketing director at [Brennan Vineyards](#) in Comanche
- Daniel Bingham, winemaker at [Bingham Family Vineyards](#) in Meadow
- Caroline Garza, sales representative at [Republic National Distributing Company](#) in San Antonio
- Sherah Mills, viticulture graduate research assistant pursuing a master's degree, Texas Tech University



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Women's Spirit Organization Celebrates 40 Years of Tradition, Sisterhood

Texas Tech University's High Riders began in 1975
to serve and support women's athletics.

By Jenae Fleming

This year is the 40th anniversary of the [High Riders](#) spirit organization. The organization was established to support women's athletics at Texas Tech University.

Created in 1975, the High Riders serve to further the spirit of the women's athletics program by providing an organization where female students can actively support the athletics programs and the university.

The members help with university traditions such as homecoming, parades, locker decorating, [Carol of Lights](#) and other promotional events throughout the year in addition to attending all soccer, volleyball, softball and basketball games in support of the Lady Raiders.

In 2005, High Riders became a part of the [Raider Red](#) (program). This gave the members the opportunity to try out for Raider Red, like their brother organization, the [Saddle Tramps](#). Today, the organization has more than 30 members and is continually adding new members each semester.

In celebration of its 40th anniversary, alumnae were invited to campus this year to participate in traditions with the active members.

Vice president Alex Miller has been a member of High Riders for three years. She enjoyed meeting all of the alumnae and hearing them reminisce about their time with the organization.

"They encouraged us to remain loyal to our purpose and continue to support athletics and each other," Miller said.

Carina Guevara has been a member of High Riders since the fall of 2012 and serves as the current president of the organization. She was happy to have the opportunity to help with and take part in the 40th anniversary celebration.

"It was such a memorable weekend because many of our alumnae haven't been on campus in over 15 years," Guevara said. "They couldn't believe their eyes because of how much Texas Tech has changed."

Carolyn Lugo-Allred was a member from 1980 to 1985. Many of her favorite memories of college are because of the friends she made while in High Riders.

“The friends you make in college are some of the deepest friendships you will ever make,” Lugo-Allred said. “It is this unfiltered openness, the willingness to be vulnerable and honest that fosters deep and meaningful friendships that are still very precious to me 30 years later.”

A former high school athlete and sports enthusiast, Lugo-Allred was drawn to the mission and values of the organization. Although she had leadership opportunities in high school, High Riders is where she first learned to serve in leadership roles.

“It is where I learned to work with a team to accomplish a task. I learned to work collaboratively and respectfully with a peer group,” Lugo-Allred said.

Texas Tech student Nancy Hughes had the idea for an organization to promote women’s athletics in 1975. Much like the men’s spirit organization, Saddle Tramps, her organization would support the women’s athletic programs at Texas Tech.

With the help of fellow students Lyn Travis and Kathy Scott, Hughes developed her idea further, brought in an adviser and came up with a name for the organization.

“It was very unique how God put the three of us together,” Hughes said. “The personality and skills we brought to the table were different but fit together so well.”

After months of meeting and planning, the trio received acceptance from the university on February 2, 1976. During the fall semester of 1976, High Riders had their first rush period and successfully recruited more than 75 pledges.

Now, 40 years later, the hard work and determination of these ladies has touched the lives of many students at Texas Tech who’ve had the privilege to pledge and become a member of High Riders.