Making seniors strong through geriatric research and clinical care
UT Medicine San Antonio offers the power of academic medicine from our School of Medicine faculty and the convenience of a private practice setting at the Medical Arts & Research Center in San Antonio's Medical Center.

Audiology  Gastroenterology  Musculoskeletal Institute
Cardiology  General Surgery  Nephrology
Cardiothoracic Surgery  Geriatric Medicine  Neurology
Cosmetic Surgery  Gynecologic Oncology  Neuro Ophthalmology
Day Surgery Center  Heart Station  Obstetrics & Gynecology
Digestive Diseases  Imaging Center  Ophthalmology
Ear, Nose, Throat  Infectious Diseases  Orthopaedics
Endocrinology  Internal Medicine  Pain Medicine
Family Medicine  Lab Services  Physical Therapy
Fertility Center  Maternal/Fetal Medicine  Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

Now Offering MYCHART

We accept most major health plans.
For an appointment, call (210) 450-9000.
www.UTMedicine.org

8300 Floyd Curl Drive San Antonio TX 78229
ON THE COVER

Making seniors strong
Ed Rapier, 79, loves to shoot hoops, golf and exercise regularly. In February this year, while hiking down a mountain trail in Manzanillo, Mexico, Rapier tore a muscle in his left knee. He was treated by Matthew Murray, M.D., an orthopaedic surgeon with UT Medicine San Antonio, the clinical practice of the Health Science Center’s School of Medicine. Thanks to Dr. Murray’s specialized skills – and UT Medicine Physical Therapy Services at the Medical Arts & Research Center (MARC) – Rapier is back to the activities he loves. He represents the seniors who benefit from the research and compassionate care of UT Health Science Center scientists and physicians who make lives better. To see a physician or physical therapist of UT Medicine San Antonio, call 210-450-9000; UTMedicine.org.

Cover photo by Lester Rosebrock, Multimedia Services

FEATURES

9 Arming the aging immune system to fight cancer
12 Preserving memory
14 Tailored treatment
   Dental clinic caters to elderly
16 Clues from clams and hydra
18 ACE-ing elderly care
19 Easing advanced illness
20 Outsmarting osteoporosis

PHILANTHROPY

23 Modeling excellence
   Community support builds simulation center to educate, train future health care providers
24 Facilities replicated
25 Donors make dream reality
25 Baldwin’s legacy honored in new simulation center
26 Glenn Foundation gift establishes fellowship, recruits top students to Barshop Institute
27 HSC Champions

IN EVERY ISSUE

5 University in Motion
8 News and Notes
28 Appointments and Awards
30 Alumni News
A Message from the President

Strong seniors, healthy futures for people of all ages

While I assist at the helm as president ad interim of our UT Health Science Center, my thoughts and prayers are with Bill Henrich and his family during this time of his medical leave. We all wish him the best of health and look forward to his return to the presidency this coming spring.

Although I am transitioning from the deanship in the Dental School, where I have served for 25 years, it is just not possible to completely fill Dr. Henrich’s shoes. I am proud and humbled to serve in this role during his absence. It is a privilege to work in this capacity, side by side, with the faculty, staff and students who make this university among the nation’s finest.

This Mission illustrates why our Health Science Center is world renowned in research, education, clinical care and community service. For those of us who are 55 and older, this issue is especially interesting. On the cover is Ed Rapier, 79, who is the picture of health, thanks to our UT Medicine San Antonio orthopaedic physicians and physical therapists. Mr. Rapier went from suffering a debilitating muscle tear, to playing golf and basketball in a matter of months. He represents the many seniors who are benefiting from the outstanding research and clinical care of our UT Health Science Center physicians and scientists.

Also in this issue, you’ll learn of the research achievements at our internationally known Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies, which has been called “the gold standard of aging research in the United States.”

Barshop investigators are working to understand the mechanisms of aging by studying unlikely species such as clams and hydras; they are learning to preserve memory by analyzing a compound discovered on an island 2,000 miles from any population center; and they are preparing the next generation of scientists to enter the field of aging research through the nation’s first Ph.D. program focused on the biology of aging.

In other labs at the Health Science Center researchers are understanding how to prevent and better treat osteoporosis and cancer in the elderly. Specially designed hospital facilities accommodate elderly and, in the Dental School, our faculty, residents and students operate a superb dental clinic, one of only a handful in the country, that caters to seniors with special medical needs. I am especially proud to announce that the Senior Care Dental Clinic, along with our other dental clinics, will be greatly refreshed and expanded when they are relocated in 2014 to the new Center for Oral Health Care & Research to be built next to the Medical Arts & Research Center of UT Medicine San Antonio, at 8300 Floyd Curl Drive.

We deeply appreciate your support, as well as the generosity and leadership of our community partners and donors, many of whom are also spotlighted in this issue. Working together with you, we are able to make lives better for people of all ages.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Kalkwarf, D.D.S., M.S.
President ad interim
UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
From its founding 10 years ago, the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics has prepared tomorrow’s healers to act with compassion and justice. The center celebrates its anniversary with a series of events Oct. 10-12. These include presentations by best-selling authors, a performance by a psychiatrist-concert pianist and a community-wide discussion on health disparities in Bexar County.

“An enduring goal of our center is to preserve our students’ innate idealism and ensure their rigorous training does not suppress it,” said Ruth Berggren, M.D., center director and professor in the School of Medicine. “The great majority of time in medical school is allocated to teach scientific knowledge and skills with little formal time for medical humanities, including ethics that emphasize medicine as an art as much as a science.”

The center imparts vital lessons to students of medicine, nursing and other health professions through course work and real-world experience in four key areas: professionalism and ethics; community service learning; global health; and literature and art.

“We must cultivate qualities that produce graduates with a deep sense of caring and strong communication skills,” Dr. Berggren said. “Through our ethics courses and electives, our focus on experiential learning and community service, and the inspiring speakers and writers who come to our campus, we hope to nurture the empathic and committed health care professionals that you would want for yourself or your family in a time of illness.”

Through the center, students engage in global health education in the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa after preparing with experienced mentors and elective courses.

Closer to home, students participate in a thriving community service learning program, working in medically underserved communities in San Antonio and South Texas. The innovative ways they serve the community have earned the Health Science Center federal recognition on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for three consecutive years.

By giving students the chance to experience ethics in action, the center answers the challenges facing health care today.

To donate to the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics, contact Sonia Vasquez at 210-567-0028 or at vasquezsg@uthscsa.edu, or visit texashumanities.org/donate.
Groundbreaking held for third building in Laredo

A groundbreaking ceremony was held April 2 for the third building on the Regional Campus in Laredo. The building will be used as a Veterans Affairs (VA) Outpatient Clinic. The new clinic will be 18,464 square feet and will replace the current 10,000-square-foot facility in Laredo.

Expected to open in early 2013, the facility will provide extended primary care services, including mental health, nutrition, women’s health, podiatry, dental, tele-health and social work services. Diagnostic capabilities will be enhanced with the addition of an in-house laboratory and general radiology room.

“It is truly an honor for the Health Science Center to be a part of this project, which will serve the men and women who have selflessly served our country - our military veterans,” said William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP, UT Health Science Center president. “We are very grateful to the city of Laredo for donating the land for this expanded clinic. We are also profoundly grateful to U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar, whose vision and effective leadership in Washington has made this day a reality by securing federal resources to build this facility. Finally, deep thanks also go to State Sen. Judith Zaffirini, who is known for her legendary dedication, passion and strong support of higher education. In 1999 she authored Senate Bill 1288, with the co-sponsorship of then-Rep. Cuellar, which created the Regional Campus in Laredo.”

21st Annual San Antonio Express-News Book & Author Luncheon is Oct. 8

Don’t miss the 21st annual San Antonio Express-News Book & Author Luncheon set for Monday, Oct. 8, at the Marriott Rivercenter, 101 Bowie Street, in San Antonio. Book Sales open at 10 a.m. with the luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Six prominent authors will entertain the audience with tales from their best-selling books. Guests have the opportunity to purchase and have the books autographed by each featured author.

Since its establishment in 1991, the event has raised more than $2.7 million for the Phase I Clinical Research Program at the Cancer Therapy & Research Center at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio.

For more information and to make reservations, visit MakeLivesBetter.uthscsa.edu/BookAuthor or call 210-567-2508.
Interprofessional education opportunities blossom

In keeping with the national trend of educating medical and health professionals to have a broader understanding of the teamwork involved in delivering health care services, the UT Health Science Center now has 11 interprofessional courses and a growing number of classes and activities including clinical education experiences, community service learning projects and conferences.

"Interprofessional education is the key to improving communication among health care providers that will lead to health care that is safer, and more timely, effective and patient-centered," said Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., chair of the Interprofessional Education Council. "Because we have so many health care disciplines on campus, our Health Science Center has great potential to lead in areas of interprofessional education. There are increasing venues for this in both the standard and elective curricula, and through special activities."

Dental School receives $4.5 million

The Dental School at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio received a seven-year, $4.5 million subcontract from the National Dental Practice-Based Research Network (NDPBRN) coordinating center. The NDPBRN is supported by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Dental School will lead the Southwest Region of the National Dental Practice-Based Research Network (NDPBRN). As part of the national network, the subcontract will be used to develop a network of dental practitioners across five states, including Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona and Kansas, interested in collaborating on research.

Thomas W. Oates, D.M.D., Ph.D., is director of the NDPBRN Southwest Region. He is assistant dean for clinical research in the Health Science Center Dental School and is professor and vice chair in the Department of Periodontics.

“This network seeks to strengthen the relationship between research and the oral health needs of the community and to build research studies targeting those needs,” Dr. Oates said. “We’ll also look to partner with state dental and dental hygiene associations, dental schools and dental educators.”

Dr. Oates said the grant will build on the already established South Texas Oral Health Network (STOHN), a local practice-based dental research network headquartered at the Health Science Center Dental School, which includes more than 60 dental practitioners from throughout South Texas.

Rahma Mungia, B.D.S., MSc., co-director of the STOHN and assistant professor in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at the Health Science Center, is deputy director for the NDPBRN Southwest Region, and Claudia Cavazos, D.D.S., an alumna of the Dental School and dental director of Gateway Community Health Center, one of the Dental School’s first clinical partners in Laredo, is an NDPBRN Southwest Region executive committee member.

Dentists and dental hygienists interested in enrolling in the network should visit NationalDentalPBRN.org.
Clinical safety projects improve patient care at UT Medicine

One patient safety project at UT Medicine San Antonio means that diabetes indicators are more consistently monitored. Another means that fewer patients suffer potentially debilitating falls during outpatient visits.

The projects are among dozens born of a continuing medical education (CME) course and undertaken over the last four years by UT Medicine, the clinical practice of the School of Medicine. The Health Science Center established the Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy in 2008 under an initiative of the University of Texas System. The patient safety center offers an interdisciplinary course, Clinical Safety and Effectiveness, which is approved for clinician CME.

“The course is generating concrete results because it requires clinicians to design, implement and report results of a clinical effectiveness project, such as the diabetes monitoring initiative or the falls prevention initiative,” said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, “said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, "said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, "said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, "said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, "said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, "said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., initiator, “The course is generating concrete results because it requires clinicians to design, implement and report results of a clinical effectiveness project, such as the diabetes monitoring initiative or the falls prevention initiative,” said center director Jan Patterson, M.D., M.S., associate dean for quality and lifelong learning in the School of Medicine.

‘Aches and Pains of Aging’ conference held in Laredo

The “Aches and Pains of Aging” conference was held this past spring at the Regional Campus in Laredo. The conference, supported in part by a generous gift from The South Texas Outreach Foundation, is part of the Regional Campus’ annual “Stay Healthier Longer” series and is co-sponsored by the School of Health Professions.

“We invited the entire community, from doctors and nurses who wanted to learn about the latest in aging research, to caregivers who work with the elderly, to people from the community who care for older family members or anyone interested in staying healthier for longer,” said Gladys Keene, M.D., M.P.H., regional dean of the Regional Campus. The keynote speaker, Steven N. Austad, Ph.D., professor of cellular and structural biology and interim director of the UT Health Science Center’s internationally known Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies, researches longevity in a variety of animal models. At the event, he presented “Lessons About Healthy Aging from Nature.” Demonstrations on healthy cooking, fun ways to stay active and how to begin a home garden were also held. Information was presented on how to keep teeth healthier longer in order to maintain natural teeth, and on preventing or minimizing common breathing ailments such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Second-grade students receive preventive dental care

More than 650 Edgewood Independent School District second-graders received dental screenings and sealants at the Health Science Center in conjunction with National Children’s Dental Health Month in February. The students received preventive care from more than 350 dental students and 60 dental hygiene students, under the supervision of over 50 faculty members from the UT Health Science Center Dental School. “We chose second-graders for a reason,” said Gary Guest, D.D.S., coordinator of the dental sealant program and assistant dean for predoctoral clinics. “Most have gotten their first permanent molars by now. By sealing those teeth with dental varnish, we are helping to prevent a lot of dental caries. I like to think we’ve had a major impact on dental health in San Antonio over the 11 years we’ve been doing this program. We’ve probably put sealants on the teeth of more than 6,000 children.”

CTRC team improves radiation therapy

A group of researchers led by Andrew Brenner, M.D., Ph.D., neuro-oncologist at The Cancer Therapy & Research Center (CTRC) at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio, have developed a way to deliver nanoparticle radiation directly to brain tumors with 20 to 30 times the current dose of radiation therapy to patients while sparing a considerably large area of brain tissue. The radiation comes in the form of an isotope called rhenium-186, which has a short half-life. Once placed inside the tumor, the rhenium emits radiation that only extends out a few millimeters. Simply putting the rhenium into a brain tumor would not work well without a way to keep it there — the tiny particles would be picked up by the bloodstream and carried away. That problem was solved by a team led by nuclear medicine physician William T. Phillips, M.D., and anesthesiologist Ande Bao, Ph.D., in the Department of Otolaryngology; and Beth A. Goins, M.D., in the Department of Radiology; and Ande Bao, Ph.D., a medical physicist and pharmaceutical chemist in the Department of Otolaryngology. They encapsulated the rhenium in miniscule fat molecules, or liposomes, about 100 nanometers across. The study was published in the journal Neuro-Oncology, and researchers expect to begin clinical trials at the CTRC this fall. For information, e-mail onctrial@idd.org.
Cancer is much more likely in the elderly than the young, and their bodies often are less prepared to fight the disease and the often-toxic side effects of treatment.

But a study from The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio shows that some types of immunotherapy previously thought to work only in younger patients can be used to help the elderly, with less toxic effects than many common therapies, if combined in ways that account for age-related changes in the immune system.

“We’ve shown that immunotherapy for cancer not only works in aged mice, but actually can work better in aged hosts than in young counterparts by capitalizing on the immune changes that happen with age,” said Tyler Curiel, M.D., M.P.H., a professor in the School of Medicine at the Health Science Center and principal investigator of the study, published April 15 in Cancer Research.

As you age, most parts of your body begin to wear out. They keep doing what they’re made to do, Dr. Curiel said, but over time, they don’t do it as well. The general perception is that the immune system also simply declines with age. “That’s really too simplistic,” he said.

“That’s really not the full picture of what’s happening.” The body’s immune system does weaken with age, but it also changes, and that changes the rules for fighting disease within the body.

Dr. Curiel’s group started by examining an immune therapy that they previously had shown to work in younger hosts, including cancer patients. It’s designed to eliminate regulatory T cells (called Tregs), which are cells that turn off immune responses and allow cancer to progress. Tregs increase in cancer. In young hosts, the drug turns off Treg activity, allowing the immune system to function better. In older hosts, even though the drug turns off the Tregs, it has no clinical benefit.

Dr. Curiel asked the question why, and in this paper his team explains the answer. In older mice, when the drug turned off the Tregs, the researchers found that another type of immune suppressor cell (a myeloid-derived suppressor cell or MDSC) exploded in number to take the Tregs’ place, hampering clinical efficacy. That did not happen in young mice.

The team added a second drug that targets the MDSC, and found that with those tools to help immunity, the older hosts can combat cancer just as well as the younger hosts. Adding the second drug afforded no clinical benefit to young hosts, as their MDSC numbers had not increased.

“We’ve shown that an aged immune system can combat cancer just as well as a young one if you remove the impediments to successful immunity, which are different than those in younger hosts,” Dr. Curiel said.
“We’ve shown that if you test all your immune therapy just in young mice and young people, you’ll never learn how it works in older patients — the ones most at risk for cancer.

Regardless of age, adverse T cells (called Tregs) multiply in cancer, switch off immune system responses and allow cancer to progress.

A stronger immune system fights cancer.

Cancer attacks both young and old
Regardless of age, adverse T cells (called Tregs) multiply in cancer, switch off immune system responses and allow cancer to progress.

In young patients one drug does the trick
When doctors treated young patients with a single drug, it switched off Treg cell activity, allowing the patients’ immune system to function more effectively in fighting cancer.

You might conclude that drugs don’t work in aged hosts, when they do. But they have to be combined with some help.”

After discovering this in melanoma, the researchers then looked at whether the same action held true in colon cancer, a major cancer killer in the elderly.

“The details were different in colon cancer. The bad immune cells that increased in the aged mice and how they were knocked down by the drugs were different than in melanoma,” Dr. Curiel said. “But the result was the same — we identified a drug combination that was highly effective in the aged mice.”
Two-drug combination is the answer for elderly

When doctors added a second drug to target and switch off the MDSC’s power, it worked. With combination drug therapy, elderly patients were able to fight off cancer just as well as the younger patients.

In elderly patients, single dose therapy fails

When doctors gave a single drug therapy to elderly patients, it wasn’t enough. Although the drug switched off the Treg cells, the MDSC cells multiplied, rendering the elderly patients’ immune system vulnerable to cancer’s assault.

That means that not only must this strategy be developed with regard to the age of the patient, he said, it also must be specific to the cancer.

“It’s a bit complicated, but it’s possible to put into practice, and because these approaches could be so much more specific and so much better tolerated than conventional chemotherapy, it is well worth pursuing.”

The next step is to test these concepts in an immune therapy clinical trial for elderly patients, which the research team plans to do, Dr. Curiel said.

Dr. Curiel said he is grateful to the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Fund; the Holly Beach Public Library Association; the William and Ella Owens Medical Research Foundation; the Mike Hogg Fund of Houston; the Robert Tucker Hayes Foundation; and the Fannie E. Rippel Foundation for funding this work. The National Cancer Institute (NCI), a division of the National Institutes of Health also supplied grants.

Grants from the NCI were no. P30 CA054174 and no. RO1 ca105207.
Saks Fifth Avenue and the CTRC at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio team up for the

KEY TO THE CURE
Charity Shopping Weekend Oct. 18 - 21

Enjoy exciting in-store activities, entertainment, food and prizes. A percentage of all sales benefit the Cancer Therapy & Research Center.

Beginning Oct. 1, purchase a limited-edition KEY TO THE CURE T-shirt designed by Carolina Herrera. All proceeds from the T-shirt sales benefit the CTRC.

For more information, call 210-567-2508.

Penelope Cruz is the 2012 Entertainment Industry Foundation’s Women’s Cancer Research Fund ambassador for Saks Fifth Avenue’s 2012 KEY TO THE CURE.
Preserving memory

BY WILL SANSOM

After the 40th birthday it becomes necessary to write notes — and then try to remember the location of the notepad. Learning and memory decline with age, and for some the cliff is Alzheimer’s disease. Thankfully, scientists from the Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio are studying a compound that could rescue our flagging memories.

The researchers added a bacterial product — rapamycin — to the diet of healthy mice throughout their life span. Rapamycin, first isolated from soil on Easter Island, enhanced learning and memory in young mice and improved these faculties in old mice, studies showed.

“We made the young ones learn, and remember what they learned, better than what is normal,” said the Barshop Institute’s Veronica Galvan, Ph.D., assistant professor of physiology in the School of Medicine. “Among the older mice, the ones fed with a diet including rapamycin had an improvement, negating the normal decline you see in these functions with age.”

The drug also lowered anxiety and depression-like behavior in the mice; anxiety and depression are factors that impair human cognitive performance. Jonathan Halloran of the Galvan laboratory conducted scientifically reliable tests to measure these cognitive components in the rodents.

Mice are burrowers and are happy in a tunnel with walls. Halloran used an elevated maze of tunnels leading to a catwalk without walls.

“All of a sudden the mice are in open space,” Halloran said. “It’s pretty far from the floor for their size, sort of like if you’re hiking and all of a sudden the trail gets steep. It’s pretty far down and not so comfortable.”

Mice with less anxiety are more curious to explore the catwalk. “We observed that the mice fed with a diet containing rapamycin spent significantly more time out in the open arms of the catwalk than the animals fed with a regular diet,” Halloran said.

The second test measured depression-like behavior in the rodents. Mice do not like to be held by their tails, which is the way they are moved from cage to cage. Inevitably they struggle to find a way out. “How much and how often they struggle is a measure of the motivation they have to get out of an uncomfortable situation,” Dr. Galvan said.

Some mice barely struggle to get free, but if an antidepressant is administered they struggle a lot more. “We found rapamycin acts like an antidepressant — it increases the time the mice are trying to get out of the situation,” Dr. Galvan said. Anxiety and depression-like behavior decreased in all ages of mice fed with the rapamycin-enhanced diet.

The researchers measured levels of three “happy, feel-good” neurotransmitters: serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. All were significantly augmented in the midbrains of mice treated with rapamycin. “This is super-interesting, something we are going to pursue in the lab,” Dr. Galvan said.

Rapamycin rescued learning and memory in mice affected by Alzheimer’s-like deficits, the team previously reported. In the new studies, the enhancements are demonstrated even in healthy mice. The elevation of the three neurotransmitters, which are chemical messengers in the brain, may explain how rapamycin accomplished this, Dr. Galvan said.

Rapamycin is an antifungal agent administered to transplant patients to prevent organ rejection. The drug is named for Rapa Nui, the Polynesian title for Easter Island. This island, 2,000 miles from any population centers, is the famed site of nearly 900 monolithic statues (pictured left). If rapamycin proves to be a suitable therapy for human cognition, this mysterious atoll could be called the Easter Island of learning and memory.
Priscilla Lane, 86, always prided herself on caring for others. She’d raised 10 children and worked in education for 25 years. After surviving breast cancer in 1999, a fall that fractured her left hip in 2009, and the loss of her husband of 66 years in 2010, Lane came home from the nursing home frail, fatigued but resilient. Confined to a wheelchair, Lane’s memory was fading as was her hearing. Not wanting to be a burden to her family, Lane failed to mention that something else was bothering her. She couldn’t chew. She couldn’t eat.

“My mom is tough, yet she is the kindest and most generous woman you’ll ever meet,” said Lane’s daughter Casandra Zupancic, 55. “She didn’t want to trouble anyone with her problem. But my brother Chris and I knew something was wrong with her teeth and we needed to help her.”

While seeking a dentist in private practice who could treat her fragile and ailing mother, Zupancic was referred to the Senior Care Dental Clinic at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. The clinic is one of only a handful in the country dedicated to providing oral health care solely for patients aged 55 and older.

Tam Van, D.D.S., is director of the Senior Care Dental Clinic.

“The mission of our clinic is to enhance the quality of life for older adults by improving access to dental care, both physically and financially,” she said. “We focus on elderly patients who have physical, medical, mental, social or pharmacological considerations that may
present management issues for a private practice provider. Some of our patients have dementia or other diseases such as Parkinson’s, uncontrolled high blood pressure or diabetes. Some are disabled or take up to 25 different medications a day. Our staff recognizes the impact that age-related or other diseases can have on the elderly and their families. So we tailor dental treatment in the context of their lives and well-being.”

Zupancic said the clinic was the right place for her mother.

“As soon as I brought my mom in, the staff immediately took great care of her. Dr. Van knew exactly what she needed.”

Within two months, Lane was chewing and eating normally again with her new dentures.

Zupancic was so impressed with the care her mother received, that she, herself, decided to become a patient in the clinic. She had been diagnosed a few years earlier with a rare autoimmune disorder called Churg-Strauss syndrome or allergic granulomatosis. The disease, which has no cure, is marked by blood vessel inflammation, which can restrict blood flow to vital organs and tissues, oftentimes causing permanent damage. Over time, the disease damaged the bone in her jaw and Zupancic would need nine teeth, including some molars, removed. She also would need to undergo a surgical procedure called alveoloplasty in which the bone in the jaw is smoothed.

After a series of visits over the course of a year, Zupancic’s dental work was completed, and by the spring of 2012 she was fitted for new upper and lower partials. “I wouldn’t have gone anywhere else,” Zupancic said. “My mother and I are so grateful for the Health Science Center’s Dental Clinic. Dr. Van took the time to consider everything my mom and I needed. She was so patient. I trust her with my life.”

The Senior Care Dental Clinic was established in 2000 by Eleanore Paunovich, D.D.S., M.S., associate professor in the Dental School, with funds from the Kronkosky Charitable Foundation.

When finances present a barrier to treatment, the clinic offers patients the opportunity to apply for a discount based on their income and national Federal Poverty Level guidelines. Funding and space provided by the Dental School, operational revenues as well as grants and philanthropic support, when available, keep the clinic and its services in operation.

The clinic operates seven dental exam rooms and is staffed by Dental School faculty who complete a geriatric dentistry fellowship. Third-year dental students rotate through the clinic providing faculty supervised care to patients.

Student Meagan Garcia completed her rotation in the clinic this past spring and later volunteered to continue working alongside Dr. Van.

“I was a little nervous at first because of the patients’ complex medical histories,” Garcia said. “But Dr. Van was so thorough that I was always ready and prepared. After reviewing patient charts and making notes, Dr. Van met with us to discuss each patient and mapped out step-by-step the care we would provide. Spending time in Dr. Van’s clinic with patients who ask, ‘so how’s school been for you?’ was the highlight of my week. We call our patients ‘family.’”

Faculty members take pride in training the next generation of oral health care providers.

“Students appreciate learning from each other and from their patients in an environment that encourages understanding of the total patient needs,” Dr. Van said. “Everyone deserves the best oral health care. It is our goal and privilege to provide it.”

Van honored as Professor of the Year

Tam Van, D.D.S., director of the Senior Care Dental Clinic, is the recipient of the 2011-2012 Professor of the Year award in the Dental School at the UT Health Science Center. The award recognizes excellence in teaching and mentoring and is presented to the faculty member who receives the most student votes. Each class votes for one faculty member. The third-year students (class of 2013) selected Dr. Van. “Dr. Van is truly an inspiration to me and deserving of this award,” said Patel Roshan, a fourth-year dental student. “She genuinely cares for us and shows us how to provide the best patient care possible. She loves teaching and we love learning from her.”

Excellend care for elderly

- The Senior Care Dental Clinic is housed in the Dental School at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio at 7703 Floyd Curl Drive.
- Hours of operation are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- The clinic will move to the new Center for Oral Health Care & Research at 8300 Floyd Curl Drive in 2014. Expansion will include more parking and accessibility for the disabled.
- For information about supporting the Senior Care Dental Clinic, contact Sara Piety, director of Institutional Advancement for the Dental School, at 210-567-6536 or at piety@uthscsa.edu.
- To make an appointment and to learn more about qualifying for financial assistance, call 210-567-0327.
Clues
from Clams and Hydra

By Will Sansom
Steven Austad, Ph.D., professor of cellular and structural biology, points to clams in an aquarium at the Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies. The institute is part of at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. “The lighter ones, typically called ‘hard clams,’ are served in restaurants and live 100 years,” he says. “The darker ones, called ‘ocean quahogs,’ live 400 to 500 years. These clams are older than any other living animal.”

It’s a little-known fact that clams have beating hearts. “Its heart beats slower than the human heart but it lives much, much longer,” Dr. Austad says. “In fact, it beats as many times as the human heart over its lifetime.” To determine the age of a clam, its shell is cut open with a diamond saw and its internal rings are counted. From examining the width of these rings, which is much like reading a bar code, marine biologists study ancient ocean conditions.

In another room, Dr. Austad encourages visitors to peer through a microscope at hydra — small polyps typically found on the underside of aquatic vegetation in freshwater pools and streams. These fascinating invertebrates don’t age and have virtually unlimited regenerative potential. He compares hydra to a villain from one of the “Terminator” movies who, whenever shot or otherwise maimed, pools himself back together. Hydra species can be disassembled into “a pile of cells that remarkably can reassemble themselves into a whole hydra again,” Dr. Austad says.

Dr. Austad, interim director of the Barshop Institute, studies the comparative biology of aging. The field asks questions about species because of their exceptionally slow or rapid aging rates. The goal is to understand the unknown and unexplored mechanisms of aging.

What causes us to age? What factors, both genetic and environmental, impact the process?

In clams, he is assessing the rate of protein turnover. In hydra, he is inducing the polyps to reproduce, which ends the polyps’ immortal status and sets them on the path of aging. “This tells us which genes are important,” Dr. Austad says. In one of his many scientific articles, he writes of the hydra: “Thus, we have the intriguing phenomenon that aging and its absence can potentially both be observed in the same species.”

Mexican free-tail bats, selected small nonhuman primates, and birds such as budgerigars, canaries and zebra finches are also under study or are candidates for study. Because of new cellular and molecular techniques for investigating novel species, “the new comparative biology of aging is poised to dwarf earlier contributions,” Dr. Austad says.
Hospitals save lives – no doubt about it. But for the elderly, they are full of hazards. Fluorescent lights and round-the-clock activity make it difficult to sleep, which can cause delirium in elders. Shiny hospital floors contribute to falls, while staying in bed can lead to pressure ulcers. The elderly are susceptible to infections and often take many medications, opening the door to interactions.

UT Medicine San Antonio has teamed up with CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System to create a specialized hospital unit for elderly patients at high risk for complications during inpatient stays. The Acute Care of the Elderly (ACE) Unit is the first of its kind in San Antonio.

“It’s designed to reduce all the complications that elders may suffer in hospitals,” said UT Medicine geriatrician Robert Parker, M.D. “There are lots of processes we can use to improve delivery of care.”

The difference starts with physical design. Non-reflective, non-slip floors help elderly patients stay surefooted. Every bed has an alarm, and patients at high risk for falls are identified with bracelets and a star outside their rooms. Thanks to steps like these, falls are a rarity in the ACE Unit, and injuries from falls are nonexistent.

Mattresses are designed to prevent pressure ulcers – important for elderly patients, whose skin is fragile and slower to heal. The ACE Unit uses soft lighting and decibel meters, which flash when the noise level gets
Easing advanced illness

Patients and families facing serious illness are gaining support from a thriving palliative care program established at University Health System a year ago.

Complementing resources already available to University Health System patients, the Lifelong Intensive Family Emotional (LIFE) care program began with two key hires last summer. Jason Morrow, M.D., Ph.D., was brought in to oversee the inpatient palliative consultation service, and Jennifer Healy, D.O., manages the palliative outpatient clinic. All three doctors are on the faculty of the School of Medicine at the UT Health Science Center.

“It’s an absolutely flourishing program,” said Dr. Morrow, adding that the program makes dozens of consultations each month. “We really got going last summer, and it’s been nonstop since.”

Palliative care can help anyone facing a serious or advanced illness. Its practitioners assist in pain and symptom control, ease communication with the medical team and bridge patients to resources like hospice care, rehabilitation services and counseling. They also offer support as patients and families make complex, emotional health care decisions.

Already, the University Health System program has demonstrated its ability to improve patient satisfaction. Dr. Morrow calls its success a testament to the hospital system. “The executive leadership has been behind this from the beginning,” he said, noting that the program recently was able to hire its own social worker and chaplain.

high. A common room gives patients a place to share meals, encouraging them to move around and socialize.

The 2-year-old unit moved this summer from CHRISTUS’s downtown campus to CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital – Medical Center. The new unit is being adapted to include the same amenities in an inviting, patient-centered atmosphere.

Beyond design flourishes, the medical staff has adopted many practices to improve patient care. They have limited use of Foley catheters, which are often overused with elderly patients and can cause urinary-tract infections. They do not use physical restraints, which can heighten delirium. They also are alert to drug interactions and avoid certain commonly used medications that, in elderly patients, are known to have effects like confusion, sedation and convulsions.

“You can do harm to an elderly patient without realizing it,” said Imelda Sanchez, R.N., B.S.N., director of the ACE Unit.

The ACE team attempts to give patients six or seven hours of uninterrupted sleep, which substantially reduces delirium. All patients receive daily visits from a restorative aide, who keeps them physically and mentally engaged.

New patients are screened for personal risk factors, which are closely monitored during their stay. Nurses may take preventive steps without waiting for a physician’s order. Also, the ACE team devotes a lot of time to families, educating them on their elders’ conditions and explaining how to care for them.

An interdisciplinary team that can include doctors, nurses, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains and more meets daily to discuss every currently admitted patient, ensuring that all members of the ACE team are on the same page about treatment.

The ACE Unit’s success is reflected in the numbers: It has never had an injury fall or pressure ulcer, and its 30-day readmission rate for the same diagnosis is just over 3 percent, compared with the national rate of 14 percent.
Outsmarting osteoporosis

Virginia Bowden, Ph.D., loves the slopes of Telluride, Colo., where she and her husband, Charles Bowden, M.D., own a condominium. “We’ve been skiing since the 1970s, currently about 30 days a year,” she said. “For me the appeal is the mountain views.” In 1997 she fractured her hip while skiing at Winter Park. The bone did not heal after the Colorado surgeon inserted a pin, so the following year she underwent a hip replacement at University Hospital in San Antonio. The surgeon sent a bone specimen for clinical testing, which revealed osteoporosis.
Nearly 40 million Americans suffer from osteoporosis or are at high risk for it, according to the National Institutes of Health. This bone-thinning disease is expected to cause fractures that, by 2025, will have cost patients $25 billion to repair. Osteoporosis is most common in post-menopausal Caucasian women, some of whom live their days with the knowledge that a fracture can result from stumping a toe, getting into bed or sneezing. There is great need for translational research to speed scientific discoveries to patients. Two exciting findings in the School of Medicine at the UT Health Science Center San Antonio hold new promise to reduce the suffering caused by bone loss.

Dr. Bowden, director emeritus of the Health Science Center libraries, is a patient of Jan Bruder, M.D., endocrinologist with UT Medicine San Antonio, the clinical practice of the School of Medicine. Dr. Bruder sees patients during a weekly osteoporosis consult clinic at the Medical Arts & Research Center. “I’ve been going to Dr. Bruder annually since that time,” Dr. Bowden said. “I know what my treatment is, and I think in some ways it was good to find out I had this tendency, so I know to take my calcium, exercise and do the things I should do anyway.”

Bone is constantly remodeling — older bone is removed and new bone forms. Exercise places mechanical loads on bone, resulting in a healthy balance of new and old. “The need for regular exercise extends far beyond its role in reducing body fat to maintain a healthy body,” said Jean Jiang, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry in the School of Medicine and member of the Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies. “It is equally important for maintaining healthy bones to avoid osteoporosis and bone loss during aging.”

Dr. Jiang’s laboratory discovered novel information about how bones, one, sense the loads being applied to them and, two, release growth factors to build new bone. The report in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* spurred sufficient interest to become an Editor’s Choice article in the journal *Science*.

Dr. Jiang’s team discovered a lock-and-key system in load-sensing cells. A protein (integrin α5) acts as a key to open the locks, which are channels on the cells’ surface. This releases molecules that trigger bone remodeling. “Our study links the effect of mechanical forces directly to the anabolic (or growth) function of the bone,” Dr. Jiang said. “This novel finding could be very useful for development of therapeutic targets to promote the opening of the channels and permit the release of bone growth factors.”

Such knowledge could prevent the bone weakening and loss caused by osteoporosis, she said.

Barshop Institute member Brian Herman, Ph.D., is professor of cellular and structural biology in the School of Medicine, special assistant to the president of the Health Science Center and a Chancellor’s Health Fellow in Collaboration with The University of Texas System. His team published studies on age-related osteoporosis in mice. The Herman laboratory found that increasing the genetic expression of a protein called caspase 2 prevented...
UT Health Science Center researchers discovered a naturally occurring process in bone cells. This “lock-and-key” system can be linked to pressure bones experience from exercise, walking and regular daily activities. Investigators are evaluating the system for clues to finding new therapies to prevent osteoporosis.

Bone cells, called osteocytes, sense pressure and send signals to a protein called integrin α5. The protein then unlocks channels in the cell surface allowing bones to grow and reform as needed, keeping them strong and able to withstand normal pressure.

Osteoporosis development in the rodents. Their bones were 30 percent stronger than the bones of mice lacking caspase 2 expression.

“We are looking at whether caspase 2 can enhance fracture healing,” Dr. Herman said. “Our plan is to license technology based on this finding or think about starting a company ourselves.”

More-effective, better-tolerated treatments for bone health are needed. Bisphosphonates are the most frequently prescribed medications for osteoporosis. With continuing use, these drugs can cause nausea, abdominal pain, difficulty swallowing and risk of esophageal inflammation and ulcers. In 2010 the National Osteoporosis Foundation issued new treatment recommendations; one was for patients to take drug holidays. “There are side effects of long-term treatment of osteoporosis, and based on bone density and risk factors some people who were previously started on therapy would not be started today,” Dr. Bruder, also a Barshop Institute member, said. “This is not to say that patients can go untreated, however. If you need to be on therapy, you need to be on it.”

Dr. Bowden served the Health Science Center from 1970 to 2003, including as library director from 1985 to 2003. Her osteoporosis medication is re-evaluated once a year. For three years she received an annual infusion; Dr. Bruder said it was not necessary this year.

The loads from exercise on the Colorado snow continue to strengthen her bones. “I’m still skiing,” Dr. Bowden said. “I stick with the intermediate-level areas and try not to fall. I was knocked down this past year on Christmas Eve by a snowboarder and broke my collarbone. The ski patrol came quickly and took me to the clinic. The bone healed within a month and I was skiing again. It (osteoporosis) hasn’t slowed me down.”
Modeling excellence
Community support builds simulation center to educate, train future health care providers

By Rosanne Fohn

For Stacy Cousins, the sight of the infant having a seizure was dramatic. “The baby was shaking and turning blue,” the senior nursing student said. “It felt like we were right there in the hospital.”

Instead, she and fellow nursing students were learning clinical skills in the School of Nursing’s new, state-of-the-art Simulation Center & Clinical Learning Lab.

In the lab, students work with 13 brand-new high-fidelity simulation manikins, including newborns, babies, children and adults, as well as more than 30 additional manikins that can be used for a variety of clinical learning purposes.

The newest manikins, provided through a grant from Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, can be programmed to simulate normal and problematic health symptoms, such as a mother giving birth, a man having a heart attack and a baby having a seizure. The manikins’ eyes blink, their skin feels similar to human skin, they breathe and they have a pulse on their neck, wrists and legs. They are so lifelike that sometimes it’s easy to forget that they aren’t human.

“We weren’t expecting this to be so realistic. Now I’ll know what to do,” Cousins said, when she begins working with human patients in a hospital setting.

Set up as a hospital and home health setting in the School of Nursing building, the 7,281-square-foot Simulation Center & Clinical Learning Lab provides realistic clinical education for students from the schools of Nursing, Medicine and Health Professions.

Through simulation, nurses and interprofessional teams of students and residents learn to appraise and respond to unique clinical scenarios led by Health Science Center faculty members, and to reflect on whether they did the right thing at the right time, explained Eileen T. Breslin, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean of the School of Nursing.

Dr. Breslin initiated partnerships to build the $3.9 million Simulation Center in 2009. Construction...
began in 2010 and was completed in spring 2012. The first partnership was initiated with the Economic Development Administration which provided a $1 million grant to fund Phase 1 of the project. As the School of Nursing embarked on Phase 2, a large portal was built through $750,000 in construction support from University Health System. The system was going to build mock hospital rooms and units in a warehouse to evaluate new equipment and furniture for University Hospital’s new tower. After those decisions were made, the rooms would be torn down.

The School of Nursing dean was a member of the advisory committee for the project. “I said, ‘Why not build it here and have your staff (physicians, nurses, therapists and administrators) walk over and give you feedback?’ That’s what we did and now we have simulation versions of several hospital units in our simulation center. We are grateful for this partnership and to all of our partners, donors and supporters,” Dr. Breslin said.

At the June 13 ribbon-cutting ceremony for the simulation center, President William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP, said, “This simulation center is among the most advanced in the nation and it was because of funds from generous philanthropic institutions, individuals and creative partnerships within the community that it came to fruition. No state funds were used to build this. I also want to commend Dean Breslin and her team for their visionary work. This was a dream of your school and it happened because you all believe in nursing and nursing education for our community.” The School of Nursing educates more than 800 students a year who are pursuing bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in diverse specialties of the profession.

Taking on a new role as director of the simulation center is Teresa Anne Boese, M.S.N., RN, who joined the Health Science Center in September. Boese is co-founding president of the International Nursing Association for Clinical Nursing Simulation and Learning, and was instrumental in writing the international standards for simulated education. “We are looking forward to tapping into Teri’s extensive knowledge about simulation to make our center even better for future nursing and interprofessional teams,” Dr. Breslin said.

So far, nursing students agree that the simulation training is an invaluable part of their education.

Fourth-semester nursing student Jessica Gallegos said, “It’s awesome seeing what you read in books coming to life here in the center. It comes full circle.”

Click to view video.
Baldwin’s legacy honored in new simulation center

Teaching and nursing were Ruth Ann Baldwin’s life. Baldwin, who earned her bachelor’s (1979) and master’s (1985) degrees in nursing from the UT Health Science Center San Antonio, later taught clinical skills in the School of Nursing for 15 years, retiring in 2001.

“She took her work very seriously,” said longtime colleague, Willie Hayek, M.S.N., RN. “She was very dedicated to helping her students learn to develop the psychomotor skills, such as giving injections, but also to applying theory and using available data to make good decisions on behalf of the patient,” Hayek said. “She expected perfection from her students, and they admired her for her specificity and her interest in their learning.”

Physically fit and a competitive runner alongside her husband, retired Air Force Capt. Gary Baldwin, Ruth Ann Baldwin surprisingly had a stroke in 1996. “She was very persistent in her rehab and she was able to regain a majority of her mobility. She came back to work in the clinical skills lab. Through those efforts and because the students knew her and admired her, she was quite an inspiration,” Hayek said.

Gary Baldwin recently gave the School of Nursing an endowment of $300,000 — $200,000 for student scholarships and $100,000 for the School of Nursing’s new Simulation Center & Clinical Learning Lab. The Ruth Ann Baldwin Control Center in the simulation center is named in her honor. “The nursing school was her life. That’s why I decided to do something therein her memory,” Gary Baldwin said. “Ruth Ann was very dedicated to nursing and to her students. I have a feeling that even if Ruth Ann hadn’t passed away that we would have been making this gift,” he said. He also has included the university in his estate plans to supplement the endowment.

Facilities replicated

The School of Nursing’s Simulation Center & Clinical Learning Lab offers a wide variety of hospital and home health environments, including:

- **Trauma center** – modeled after University Health System’s facility; two trauma exam rooms and one trauma emergency care room
- **Intensive care unit** – two rooms constructed as a replica of new construction at University Hospital
- **Home health center** – designed as an efficiency apartment to demonstrate to students the importance of care provided in homes
- **Multi-bed educational center** – four-bed medical/surgical unit where students will experience the dynamic environment of practicing on the floor of the hospital; allows medical teams to manage multiple patients at once; each room equipped with specialty hospital beds and high-fidelity manikins
- **Maternal/child center** – two mother-baby birthing suites, where students will experience the care of mother and baby from labor and delivery to postpartum care
- **Pediatric care suite** – includes three infant cribs, one child’s bed, and four high-fidelity manikins
- **Ambulatory care suite** – four treatment sites where students will experience the clinical environment of an ambulatory center
- **Simulation conference room** – a debriefing site for faculty to work with students in unraveling the meanings and lessons inherent in each experience within the simulation center
- **Medication and supply rooms** – these rooms house the automated medication dispensing system for medicines, all necessary supplies and electronic medical records for the center
- **Four control rooms** – where the manikins, and audio and video equipment are managed without the knowledge of the simulation participants

Donors make dream reality

Construction of the 7,281-square-foot Simulation Center & Clinical Learning Lab began in 2010 and was completed in spring 2012, with $3.9 million in funding from the following:

- $1 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration;
- $850,000 from Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas (MHH). This gift is a portion of a $3.9 million gift from MHH to the School of Nursing that positions the school as the leader of a new, collaborative nursing education and leadership pipeline to address the nursing shortage in South Texas;
- $750,000 in construction support from University Health System;
- $500,000 in equipment donated by KCI;
- $300,000 from the School of Nursing;
- $290,000 grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration;
- $100,000 from the family of alumna and former faculty member Ruth Ann Baldwin;
- $100,000 from Donna Block; and
- $25,000 from the School of Nursing’s Nursing Advisory Council.
Glenn Foundation gift establishes fellowship, recruits top students to Barshop Institute

By Natalie Gutierrez

The older population – those we call grandmother, grandfather, mom, dad, and other family members – is growing swiftly. People 65 years and older numbered 39.6 million in 2009. By 2030 this group will number 72.1 million.*

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, chronic diseases, which affect older adults disproportionately, can contribute to disability, diminish quality of life and lead to an increase in health care and long-term health care costs.

Researchers at the Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies are fervently working to develop new therapies to treat and prevent diseases that plague the elderly. In 2009, faculty members at the Barshop Institute established the first Ph.D. program in the country focused on the biology of aging. Their goal – to educate and train the next generation of investigators dedicated to pursuing a career in aging research.

This year, a gift of $200,000 from the Glenn Foundation for Medical Research has buoyed the Barshop Institute program by establishing the Glenn Foundation Doctoral Student Fellowship in the Biology of Aging. This is the first graduate student fellowship program in the country the Glenn Foundation has ever supported.

The gift created two prestigious fellowships offered to students interested in pursuing the Ph.D. in the Biology of Aging.

The Barshop Institute joins other internationally renowned institutions that have received grants from the Glenn Foundation, including Harvard University, MIT, Stanford, the American Federation for Aging Research, the Buck Institute for Research on Aging and the Salk Institute for Biological Sciences.

Steven Austad, Ph.D., is interim director of the Barshop Institute and a professor of cellular and structural biology.

“We are so grateful to the Glenn Foundation for their gift that allows us to attract the most talented students to our program,” Dr. Austad said. “This fellowship provides students with the unmatched opportunity to hasten their development into accomplished, independent researchers.”

Arlan Richardson, Ph.D., professor and founding director of the Barshop Institute agreed.

“The Glenn fellowships enable us to recruit the brightest students into the field of aging, which is critical if we are to find ways to treat and delay age-related diseases and the aging process,” he said.

The two fellows selected were Erin Munkacsy from the University of Illinois and Brian Stoveken from the University of Wisconsin. The fellowship provides each student with a $35,000-a-year stipend and an additional $33,000 each for training, travel to national and international seminars in aging, and for independent research projects in the final stages of the students’ doctoral studies.

At the University of Illinois, Munkacsy majored in biology and participated in research studies focused on memory loss, Alzheimer’s disease and the field of electrophysiology.

“The Glenn fellowship is an opportunity of a lifetime,” Munkacsy said. “Aging research is the culmination of a multitude of my own personal and intellectual interests and innate abilities. This fellowship not only allows me to pursue that aim, but to do so among the best group of aging scientists in the country.”

Stoveken earned his undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. There he focused his research on metabolic profiling, genetics and mentored high school students and interns in the laboratories.

“I am inspired by the body of work coming from the UT Health Science Center, a clear leader in the field of aging research. And I’m thankful for the Glenn fellowship that signals the growing value placed on this discipline,” Stoveken said. “While at the Barshop Institute, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying ALS and Alzheimer’s disease. As a student and future researcher, this is a remarkable chance to make meaningful improvements in the quality of individuals’ lives. My long-term ambitions are to teach the next generation of scientists, and to develop therapeutic interventions for any of the myriad age-associated diseases that plague the ever-aging human race.”

The Glenn Foundation for Medical Research is named for its founder and Chairman, Paul F. Glenn. The purpose of the foundation, established in 1965, is to extend the healthy productive years of life through research on the mechanisms of biological aging.

*Statistics are from the Administration on Aging of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Three sisters, Gladys Lynch, Corinne Robichaux and Genevieve Wicker, have made giving at the UT Health Science Center a family tradition. Gladys created an endowment in honor of her late husband, Harry S. Lynch Sr. The Harry S. Lynch, Sr. Endowed Memorial Scholarship supports outstanding students in the School of Nursing.

Corinne created a scholarship in memory of her late husband, Milton Joseph Robichaux Sr. The Milton Joseph Robichaux, Sr. Endowed Memorial Scholarship will provide scholarships to deserving students in the School of Medicine who are interested in cancer care.

Through a bequest from her estate, Genevieve Wicker will create an endowment in memory of her late husband, James. The James Clifford Wicker Memorial Endowment for Cancer Research will support the most immediate and critical cancer research needs at the Cancer Therapy & Research Center at the UT Health Science Center.

The endowments pay tribute to the sisters’ loving husbands and celebrate their hard work and dedication to family and community. “The UT Health Science Center in San Antonio is the greatest asset of our community, and it’s where our families get outstanding medical care,” Lynch said. “I wanted to support the university because it is where I could have the greatest impact. We want to support our community and make it a better place to live, and quality health care is a major factor.”

A gift of $270,000 from the San Antonio Livestock Exposition, Inc. (S.A.L.E.) will provide 46 scholarships for outstanding students pursuing degrees in medicine, nursing and physician assistant studies and who intend, upon graduation, to practice in rural communities in South and Central Texas. Since 2004, S.A.L.E. has awarded 390 individual scholarships totaling more than $2.4 million to students at the UT Health Science Center.

A $222,000 gift from the Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio will provide scholarships for exceptional students in the schools of medicine, nursing, dental, health professions and pharmacy. Since 2006, the Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio has provided more than 200 individual scholarships totaling more than $1 million to students at the UT Health Science Center.

Francisco González-Scarano, M.D., dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for medical affairs for the Health Science Center (center left), and Fred Petmecky, S.A.L.E. president (center right), hold a commemorative poster honoring S.A.L.E. and the scholarship recipients at the annual S.A.L.E. Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon this spring. They are accompanied in the front row by members of the S.A.L.E. Scholarship Committee and staff. Behind them are faculty members and scholarship recipients.

(From left) James Elkins, Scholarship Committee chairman for the Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio; Cody Knowlton, president and chief executive officer of the foundation; and William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP, president of the Health Science Center, visit after the spring scholarship luncheon.

In Memoriam
Fitzhugh Carter Pannill Jr., M.D.

Fitzhugh Carter Pannill Jr., M.D., former dean of The University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio, died June 30 in New Braunfels.

Dr. Pannill is remembered as a pioneer and champion of education. From 1965 to 1972 he served as dean of what was, at that time, the new and emerging medical school for San Antonio and South Texas. Dr. Pannill was the central figure in appointing key faculty and administrators and building valuable relationships with health care partners across the state.

His legacy thrives today through the more than 12,000 medical students who have graduated from what is now the world-renowned School of Medicine at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Despite his demanding schedule while dean, Dr. Pannill always made time for his greatest passions – teaching medical students and residents – and was admired as a consummate role model.

One honor he was most proud of, according to his family, was being recognized by the San Antonio medical students as “the foundation of their medical careers.”

For a video history interview with Dr. Pannill, click here.
Charles P. France, Ph.D., professor of pharmacology and psychiatry, assumed duties this summer as a councilor to the American Society for Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics. The society offers publications, networking opportunities and other professional services to more than 4,500 members. Dr. France is the principal investigator on multiple research studies supported by National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants. Three of these studies examine the behavioral pharmacology of drug dependence, the role of impulsivity in drug abuse, and dietary influences on drug abuse and dependence. He is also principal investigator of an NIH grant-funded project to train young investigators in drug abuse research.

Kaparaboyna Ashok Kumar, M.D., FRCS, FAAFP, has been appointed to serve a four-year term on the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Commission on Health of the Public and Science. Dr. Kumar is vice chair of medical student education and clerkship director in the School of Medicine’s Department of Family & Community Medicine. On the commission, Dr. Kumar will work with AAFP staff and other family physicians from around the country to develop and review evidence-based clinical practice guidelines, and establish recommendations for clinical preventive services, including immunizations, review policies on tobacco and exercise and obesity. He also will represent AAFP with federal, medical specialty, voluntary health organizations, and serve on advisory committees for academy programs.

Myles Quiben, Ph.D., D.P.T., PT, GCS, NCS, CEEAA, assistant professor, and Martha Acosta, Ph.D., PT, M.S., GCS, assistant professor, both in the Department of Physical Therapy, have been appointed to posts with the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties. Dr. Quiben is one of nine members from a national pool that oversees the American Physical Therapy Association Specialist Certification Program and its processes. Dr. Acosta has been appointed to the Geriatric Specialty Council, which she will chair the final year of the appointment term.

Amelie G. Ramirez, Dr.P.H., professor of epidemiology and biostatistics and director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research, has been elected for a three-year term to the board of directors for C-Change, a national organization that aims to leverage the expertise of leaders from government, business and nonprofit sectors of society to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. She was also named to the National Collaborative on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR) External Scientific Panel. The NCCOR aims to accelerate progress toward reducing the problem of childhood obesity in America. Dr. Ramirez holds the Dielmann Chair in Health Disparities Research & Community Outreach and the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Endowed Chair in Cancer Health Care Disparities.

Paula Shireman, M.D., has been appointed to serve on the American Heart Association’s (AHA) National Research Committee. Dr. Shireman is a vascular surgeon who sees patients through UT Medicine San Antonio, the clinical practice of the School of Medicine. She also serves as a professor of vascular surgery in the Department of Surgery and vice dean for research in the School of Medicine, where she has received numerous research grants from the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the American Heart Association and others. Dr. Shireman studies inflammatory-mediated mechanisms of angiogenesis and skeletal muscle generation in her lab. She has served as chair of the regional affiliate of the AHA Research Advisory Committee as well as on its board of directors.

Bjorn Steffensen, D.D.S., M.S., Ph.D., associate dean for research and professor of periodontics in the Dental School, and professor of biochemistry in the School of Medicine, has been accepted as a fellow in the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Leadership Institute. His yearlong ADEA fellowship program, which began in March, is designed to develop the nation’s most promising individuals at academic dental institutions to become leaders in dental and higher education. Dr. Steffensen was also named a recipient of the Irwin D. Mandel Distinguished Mentoring Award this past spring by the American Association of Dental Research (AADR). The national honor recognizes outstanding efforts to foster and promote research training and career development of students, trainees and junior faculty. The award is named for the late Irwin D. Mandel, D.D.S., professor emeritus of dental medicine at Columbia College of Dental Medicine, who was the ninth president of the AADR and the inaugural recipient of the award.

School of Health Professions faculty honored by state professional organizations

Three faculty members from the School of Health Professions were honored this spring with top educator awards from their respective statewide professional associations. They are:

Sue Cunningham, Ph.D., RD, LD, CDE, assistant professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies, who was presented the Outstanding Dietetic Educator Award from the Texas Dietetic Association;

J. Glenn Forister, M.S., M.P.A.S., PA-C, program director, associate professor/clinical and interim chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies, who was presented the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants’ Outstanding Physician Assistant Educator of the Year Award; and

Carol A. Nguyen, M.S., RDH, assistant professor in the Division of Dental Hygiene, who was presented the Teacher Excellence Award by Proctor & Gamble and the Texas Dental Hygiene Directors’ Association.
Goertz, class of ’81, named national board chair

Roland A. Goertz, M.D., M.B.A., medical school class of 1981 and a family physician in Waco, was appointed board chair of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). The AAFP represents 100,300 physicians and medical students nationwide. As board chair of the AAFP, Goertz will advocate on behalf of family physicians and patients nationwide to inspire positive change in the U.S. health care system.

After graduating from medical school in 1981, he completed a residency in family medicine at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth. He subsequently completed a clinical teaching fellowship in family medicine in 1986 and received a master’s degree in business administration from Baylor University in 2003. In his 27-year medical career, he has served as a physician in rural private practice, a family medicine residency program director at two Texas residencies, and chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Texas Medical School - Houston. For the past 15 years, Goertz has served as chief executive officer of the three foundations that oversee all operations of the Waco Family Health Center, which operates one of the oldest family medicine residency programs west of the Mississippi River.
Dental hygiene graduate receives 2012 Alumna of the Year award

BY ROSANNE FOHN

Receiving the 2012 Alumna of the Year award from the Department of Dental Hygiene is not only a major professional achievement, but one that brings special pride to Diana Cudeii, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation.

Having grown up on a reservation in Shiprock, N.M., known as the “Four Corners” of the Southwest, Cudeii experienced firsthand the economic and educational challenges faced by many Native Americans. But she possessed a strong interest in science, the desire to receive an education and a responsibility to her people.

After earning a dental assisting certificate from the University of New Mexico in 1984, she entered private practice. Three years later, she moved to San Antonio and decided to continue her education at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. In the university’s School of Health Professions, Cudeii found a positive, supportive environment. “They challenged me in every way to expand my knowledge and to go one step beyond my own expectations,” she said. In 1992, Cudeii received a dental hygiene certificate with honors.

Cudeii worked as a dental hygienist in private practices but found working with federal, state, county, city and tribal organizations to be more rewarding. She and her husband, who is a dentist in public health service and a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, settled in Flagstaff, Ariz., where Cudeii established her own dental consulting business. She later completed an early childhood education program at Coconino Community College, earned her bachelor’s degree with honors in liberal studies and psychology and a master’s with distinction in applied communications from Northern Arizona University (NAU) while working part time as a clinical instructor in NAU’s dental hygiene program.

Cudeii said, “The American Indian populations are still struggling to reduce the health disparities within their communities. The dynamic interplay of culture, economic, education, and social factors need to be considered if the health of people is to be improved.”

Today Cudeii is the study coordinator and tribal liaison for a community-based oral health project that is studying two different intervention models utilizing trained community members to provide dental education and services to prevent early childhood caries. The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research funds the seven-year program, based at the University of Colorado-Denver’s Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health.

“AS a native person, woman, daughter, sister, aunt and grandmother, Diana has shown strength, commitment, activism, confidence and optimism while critically observing and expressing the urgent need for ways to improve overall health of all Native American nations,” said Maxine Janis, RDH, M.P.H., who nominated her for the alumna award. Janis, a member of the Lakota Nation, is assistant professor of dental hygiene at NAU.

Cudeii said, “For the contemporary Native American women, it is often a negotiation between several western and indigenous social institutions. Education and effective tribal leadership are critical aspects in sustaining traditional philosophy and cultural identity to ensure tribal survival. Traditional tribal teaching says that life’s journey should have meaning and purpose.”

She added, “My overall experience at the UT Health Science Center was exceptional in its academics and influential in my embracing a stronger commitment to succeed and contribute. The dental hygiene program helped me become an effective advocate in my chosen work, and to stay true and strong to the principles of dental hygiene which include social responsibility, professionalism, compassion and ethics — and most importantly, to challenge the way things have always been done.”
Choose life over cancer.

Your best hope for a proper diagnosis, effective treatment, and sustained quality of life lies in the hands of a team of cancer specialists at the CTRC, the only NCI-designated Cancer Center in South Texas. Here, the highest levels of excellence in cancer research and quality of care is the standard of care.

At CTRC, we work hard every day to help you and your family choose life over cancer.

www.CTRC.net  •  (210) 450-1000
Ours is a story of hope. Compassion and joy. Commitment, vision and inspiration. We engage our minds and talents, and give from our hearts, to help and heal. We touch the lives of thousands, to serve those in need, here and around the world. And, through it all, we work to make lives better.

Thank you for all you do to make our story so remarkable. You’re the reason we’re able to write the next chapter.