

## Quarterly Alumni Newsletter, Winter 2014

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This is your web-based version of the GSBS Alumni Newsletter. Please select each headline to read the related article or just page down. Your feedback is welcome, so please email your candid thoughts to [Jo Bremer](#), director of the GSBS Office of Postgraduate Affairs, or call 409-772-2684. It is published under the auspices of the GSBS Associates, alumni & friends, for the alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; officers are listed below. Unless otherwise identified, photographs were taken by the UTMB Photographic Staff.



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## GSBS Associates Executive Committee Officers & Staff, 2012-13

The *GSBS Alumni Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Office of Postgraduate Affairs. Inquiries, comments and class notes items may be directed to Jo Bremer by calling 409-772-2684; writing to 301 University Boulevard, Galveston, TX 77555-1050; faxing to 409-772-5420; or by email to [jobremer@utmb.edu](mailto:jobremer@utmb.edu).

### Officers

Name	Office	Program and Year
Robert Fader, PhD	<i>President</i>	M&I '80
Ralph Henderson, PhD	<i>President Elect</i>	HBC&G '70
Vicente Santa Cruz, PhD	<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Ex Path '01
James Templer, PhD	<i>Past President</i>	IMH '02

### Executive Committee

Name	Program and Year
Christopher Allen, PhD	M&I '07
Anthony DiNuzzo, PhD	PMCH '04
Carla Kinslow, PhD	Cell '08
Shannon Langford, PhD	Ex Path '01
Andrew McNees, PhD	HBC&G '97
H. David Shine, PhD	CPMB '80
Kathryn Stream, PhD	PMCH '82
Lee Woodson, MD, PhD	Pharm '77

### Staff

Joanna Bremer, Director of Postdoctoral and Postgraduate Affairs, IMH '08.

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#### GSBS holds Scholarship and Awards Luncheon to recognize student excellence

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences held its annual GSBS Scholarship and Awards Luncheon and ceremony November 21, presenting 63 different awards totaling more than \$200,000 to 81 graduate students and postdoctoral scholars representing every graduate program on campus.

Dr. David W. Niesel, vice president and dean *ad interim* of the Graduate School, welcomed about 225 students and family, contributors and their families, faculty and staff to the event at the San Luis Resort and Conference Center in Galveston. He introduced Dr. David Callender, UTMB president, who also welcomed the audience and thanked the UTMB benefactors who created and sustain the endowments for scholarships and awards.



*From left, Dr. Niesel, Dr. Coppenhaver, Brian Mann and Dr. Callender.*

before we find our research home. The seemingly limitless support (and patience) he has for his students is matched only by his unique brand of wit and sarcasm.”

Turning the tables, Coppenhaver presented Mann, a student in the Experimental Pathology graduate program, with the GSO Student Award, sponsored by the University Federal Credit Union. Mann was vice

Each year the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) receives nominations from the graduate students for the GSO Faculty Award for Student Advocacy. Brian Mann, GSO president, presented to the award to Dorian Coppenhaver, PhD, senior associate dean for student affairs. “This award highlights [his] consistent commitment ... as an advocate for his students beyond his academic office. He has served as a mentor, counselor, and even an impromptu social worker for all graduate students

president of the Graduate Student Organization twice and is currently its president. He has been involved in recruitment, orientation, service, and governance since his arrival in 2010 as one of the first UTMB Presidential Scholars.



*Drs. Niesel, left, and Callender, right, flank faculty receiving teaching excellence awards, from left, Drs. Tagliatela, Lee, Glenn, Endsley, de Boer and Graham.*

Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize graduate faculty members selected by the graduate students in their programs for educational excellence, exceptional contributions to graduate education, devotion to their students and exceptional mentoring. Faculty receiving these awards were Melanie de Boer, PhD, Population Health Sciences; Janice Endsley, PhD, Microbiology and Immunology; Jason Glenn, PhD, Medical Humanities; James Graham, PhD, Rehabilitation Sciences; James Lee, PhD, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Juan Olano, MD, Experimental Pathology; Pomila Singh, PhD, Neuroscience and Cell Biology; Wayne Snodgrass, PhD, Pharmacology and Toxicology, and Giulio Tagliatela, PhD, Neuroscience and Cell Biology.

The main feature of the program, of course, was the presentation of the awards by Drs. Coppenhaver and M. Kristen Peek, assistant dean for recruiting and special projects. The list of awards and recipients is below.

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**GSBS scholarship and awards winners 2013**

**Ann Anderson Scholarship**

Tiffany Mott

Microbiology and Immunology

**Marie and Talbert Aulds Scholarship Award**

Abiola Williams

Nursing

**James E. Beall II Memorial Scholarship**

Bethany Tiner

Microbiology and Immunology

**James E. Beall II Memorial Award in Anatomy and Neurosciences**

Alyssa Baker

Neuroscience

**William Bennett Bean Scholarship in the Medical Humanities**

Alina Bennett

Medical Humanities

**Robert Bennett Tuition Scholarship**

Jonathan Banda

Medical Humanities

Andrew Beck

Experimental Pathology

Charles Chesson

Human Pathophysiology and Translational Medicine

LeAnn Chisholm

Nursing

Nitha Mathew

Nursing

**Biological Chemistry Student Organization (BCSO) Award**

Barbara Rolls

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Marianne Blum, PhD Endowed Scholarship**

Alexandre Esadze

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Barbara Bowman Memorial Award for Research Excellence**

Pawel Bujalowski

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Barbara Rolls

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Dennis Bowman Memorial Scholarship**

Justin Drake

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Latham Fink  
Neuroscience  
Amit Kumar  
Rehabilitation Sciences  
Garbriela Vargas  
Clinical Sciences

**Chester R. Burns Institute for the Medical Humanities Alumni Award**

Jonathan Banda  
Medical Humanities  
Julie Kutac  
Medical Humanities  
Nicole Piemonte  
Medical Humanities

**Zelda Zinn Casper Endowed Scholarship**

Alina Bennett  
Medical Humanities

**Kay and Cary W. Cooper, PhD Scholarship**

Serena Clark  
Cell Biology

**Dean's Service Award**

Brian Mann  
Experimental Pathology

**Emily E. Dupree Endowed Award for Excellence in Rehabilitation Science**

Amit Kumar  
Rehabilitation Sciences

**Dr. David C. Eiland, Jr. Scholarship Award in Health Care and Humanities**

Kenneth Alewine  
Medical Humanities  
Stephanie Darrow  
Medical Humanities  
Rachel Pearson  
Medical Humanities

**GSBS Associates Scholarship**

Jeremy Bechelli  
Experimental Pathology  
Julia Gerson  
Neuroscience

**GSBS Associates Travel Award**

**Presented in Memory of Christina Fleischmann**

Pawel Bujalowski  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Michael Patterson  
Experimental Pathology

**Mason Guest Scholar Award**

Serena Clark  
Cell Biology

**Ann and John Hamilton Endowed Scholarship**

Muayad Almahariq  
Pharmacology and Toxicology  
Adam Boretsky  
Human Pathophysiology and Translational Medicine  
Abhishek Parmar  
Clinical Sciences

**Robert Harrison, MD, Memorial MD/PhD Endowment**

Rachel Pearson  
Medical Humanities

**Elias Hochman Research Award**

Renè Vinas, PhD  
Pharmacology and Toxicology

**James A. Hokanson, PhD Endowed Scholarship**

Aaron Gray  
Population Health Sciences

**Jen Chieh and Katherine Huang Scholarship**

Jordan Jahrling  
Neuroscience

**Dr. Mary Faggard Kanz Travel Award for Environmental Toxicology**

Arijit Dutta  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Barbara Rolls  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Jeane B. Kempner Scholar Award**

Pawel Bujalowski  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Anthony Cao, PhD  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Alexandre Esadze  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Fanping Kong  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Zane Martin, PhD  
Neuroscience  
Alexander McAuley  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Levani Zandarashvili, PhD  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Curtis W. Lambert Scholarship**

Joseph Saenz  
Population Health Sciences

**Medical Humanities Endowed Scholarship**

Peggy Determeyer  
Medical Humanities  
Erica Fletcher  
Medical Humanities

**James W. McLaughlin Fellowships**

Albert Jonathan Auguste, PhD  
Experimental Pathology  
Anthony Cao, PhD  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Roberto Cieza  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Christie Hay  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Olga Kolokoltsova  
Experimental Pathology  
Rose Langsjoen  
Experimental Pathology  
Taslina Lina  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Alexander McAuley  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Inaia Phoenix  
Experimental Pathology  
Krista Versteeg  
Microbiology and Immunology  
**Irma Mendoza Scholarship**  
Alexandre Esadze  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Regina R. and Alfonso J. Mercatante Endowed  
Memorial Scholarship**

LeAnn Chisholm  
Nursing

**Don W. Micks Scholarship in  
Preventive Medicine and Community Health**

Lawrence Panas  
Population Health Sciences  
Paul Reidy  
Rehabilitation Sciences

**Bohdan R. Nechay Scholarship**

Talha Ijaz  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
Alexey Seregin  
Experimental Pathology  
Sarah Swinford  
Neuroscience

**Elaine L. Nicholson, RN Fund for Graduate  
Nursing Education**

Roy Trahan  
Nursing

**Janet and David Niesel, PhD Scholarship**

Brian Mann  
Experimental Pathology

**Leroy Olson, PhD Endowed Scholarship**

Jordan Jahrling  
Neuroscience

**Charles F. Otis Endowed Award for Clinical  
Research**

Abhishek Parmar  
Clinical Sciences

**Shirley Patricia Parker Scholarship**

Rahul Pal  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Jason E. Perlman Research Award**

Donna Le  
Population Health Sciences  
Christopher Messenger  
Population Health Sciences

**Harold T. Sanders Endowed Fellowship in Vaccine Development**

Alexey Seregin  
Experimental Pathology

**Shirley and Albert E. Sanders, MD Presidential  
Scholarship**

Rimma Osipov  
Medical Humanities

**George Palmer Saunders II Memorial Scholarship**

Joseph Shearer  
Pharmacology and Toxicology  
Christopher Wild  
Pharmacology and Toxicology

**Margaret Saunders Travel Award**

Alyssa Baker  
Neuroscience

**Peyton and Lydia Schapper Endowed Scholarship  
School of Allied Health Sciences**

Paul Reidy  
Rehabilitation Sciences

**Michael Tacheeni Scott Endowed Scholarship**

Latham Fink  
Neuroscience

**George Sealy Research Award in Neurology**

Sarah Swinford  
Neuroscience

**Sealy Center on Aging Graduate Student Award**

Lawrence Panas  
Population Health Sciences

**Sealy Center for Vaccine Development Graduate  
Student Award**

Ronald Veselenak  
Microbiology and Immunology

**Robert Shope PhD Endowed Scholarship**

Zuliang Jie  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Tiffany Mott  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Farooq Nasar  
Experimental Pathology  
Michael Patterson  
Experimental Pathology

**Katherina Siebert Award for Excellence in  
Oncologic Research**

ThuyQuynh Do  
Population Health Sciences

**Stephen C. Silverthorne Memorial Award**

Eric Fitts  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Christina van Lier  
Microbiology and Immunology

**Arthur V. Simmang Scholarship Fund**

Eric Carlsen  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Taslina Lina  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Wenzhe Lu  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Thomas Shelite  
Experimental Pathology  
Ronald Veselenak

Microbiology and Immunology

**John Stanton Scholarship**

Eric Carlsen  
Microbiology and Immunology

**John and Mary Ann Stobo Award in Oslerian  
Medicine**

Nicole Piemonte  
Medical Humanities

**University Federal Credit Union Scholarship**

Donna Le  
Population Health Sciences

**UTMB Retirees Scholarship Award**

Farooq Nasar  
Experimental Pathology

**Rose and Harry Walk Research Award**

Adam Boretsky  
Human Pathophysiology and Translational Medicine

**Robert A. Welch Award for Excellence in  
Graduate Research in Chemistry**

Pawel Bujalowski  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Jane Welsh Award for Excellence in  
Cardiovascular Research**

Kimberlee Burckart  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Betty Williams Scholarship**

Sandra Mayer  
Experimental Pathology  
Paul Reidy  
Rehabilitation Sciences  
Benjamin Satterfield  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Charles Umbaugh  
Cell Biology

**WHO Collaborating Center for Tropical Diseases  
Graduate Student Award**

Andrew Beck  
Experimental Pathology

**Zhou Sisters Great Expectations Scholarship**

Brian Mann  
Experimental Pathology  
Alexander McAuley  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Evandro Winkelmann  
Experimental Pathology  
Jingya Xia  
Microbiology and Immunology

**Edith and Robert Zinn Presidential Scholarship**

Nicholas Bergren  
Experimental Pathology  
Christie Hay  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Lawrence Panas  
Population Health Sciences

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**Holiday party mixes food and fun with etiquette tips**



Photos by Lissena Argueta  
*Mrs. LeDuc refers to a section of the invitation, left, and accepts a thank you gift from Dr. David Niesel, host of the event.*



Starting with first things first, Maryellen LeDuc, former protocol advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, used an enlarged party invitation to review etiquette with a group of students, postdocs, faculty and staff at a holiday party in December.

Reminding everyone that they could find key information about the event, including the host, what to wear, location and type of activity on the invitation, Mrs. LeDuc offered suggestions and then gave the guests time to practice her advice with one another.

She also said it's important to let your host know whether you will attend. With a phone call, the guest also can ask about attire, e.g., what is "island casual?", whether to bring a dish to share, or perhaps – very tactfully – who the other guests might be. Please call your host and explain your absence if you accept and then become ill, caught in an out-of-town airport or for some other *really important* reason are unable to attend after all.

Among other tips:

- Develop a 30-second introduction of yourself and your research or other interests to use in a conversation with someone you are meeting for the first time.
- Try to identify something in common with the person.



*Mrs. LeDuc, left, and her husband, Professor James LeDuc, visit with students and guests.*

- The most important skill you can develop is to listen to what the other person is saying.
- Send a thank you note to your host or hostess within two or three days of the event.

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### Alumni

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*Guests at the alumni dinner in Nashville were, from left, Drs. Carlos G. Vanoye-Trevino, LaMonica V. Stewart, Natasha G. Deane, Alfredo Torres, Carolina Sierra, Giovanni Suarez, Dorian Coppenhaver and David W. Niesel.*

Photo courtesy Dr. Niesel

### **GSBS leaders meet with alumni in Nashville and Atlanta**

Five Graduate School alumni who live around Nashville met for dinner with Deans Niesel and Coppenhaver on November 13, when they were in town for a conference. During dinner, the graduates talked about their career paths and achievements since leaving UTMB and their goals for the future.

David W. Niesel, PhD, vice president and GSBS dean *ad interim*, and Dorian Coppenhaver, PhD, senior associate dean for student affairs, returned the exchange with news about changes since the mid-1990s and updates about what's happening in the GSBS now. Alfredo Torres, PhD, UTMB professor in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology, also attended the conference and the dinner.

Alumni participants were Carlos G. Vanoye-Trevino, PhD (1997 Cellular Physiology and Molecular Biophysics), LaMonica V. Stewart, PhD (1996 Pharmacology & Toxicology), Natasha G. Deane, PhD (1995 Microbiology & Immunology), Carolina Sierra, PhD (2010 Microbiology & Immunology), Giovanni Suarez, PhD (2010 Microbiology & Immunology). Deane, on the faculty at Vanderbilt University, assisted with arrangements for the dinner at Silo Restaurant near downtown Nashville.

This was the second "reverse reunion" of GSBS alumni this fall. In September, Diana Bensyl, PhD (1999 Preventive Medicine & Community Health), Han Li, PhD (1995 Microbiology & Immunology) and Shean Phelps, MPH (2007 Public Health), MD, met in Atlanta for dinner and updates. Dr. Niesel joined the dinner virtually, along with Joanna Bremer, MA (2008 Medical Humanities), director of postdoctoral and postgraduate affairs, and Claiborne Fant, program manager for the MD/PhD combined degree program, who were the on-site hosts.

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### **GSBS seeks nominations for 2014 Distinguished Alumnus Award**

The Graduate School announces that nominations are open for the Distinguished Alumnus Award. The successful nominee should have achieved special recognition in his or her professional career after receiving a masters or doctoral degree from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at UTMB. His or her distinguished contributions might include research, teaching, science or academic administration, consulting, editing, leading scientific societies, participating in symposia, and the like.

The winner will be introduced and recognized during Commencement at 4 p.m. Friday, May 2, at William C. Levin Hall. The recipient must be able to attend.

To nominate a graduate, send a letter of recommendation and a current CV of the person you're nominating no later than March 3 to the attention of the Dean, UTMB Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, 301 University Boulevard, Galveston, TX 77555-1050, or by email to [atropea@utmb.edu](mailto:atropea@utmb.edu).

### Previous Distinguished Alumnus Award recipients are:

Joe Wood, PhD	1976	Richard Drummond, PhD	1997
Melvin Hess, PhD	1977	Burhan Ghanayem, PhD	1998
Leroy Olson, PhD	1978	Kenneth Carter, PhD	1999
Gilbert Castro, PhD	1979	Fernando M. Trevino, PhD,MPH	2000
William B. Stavinoha, PhD	1980	Mary E. Guinan, PhD, MD	2001
Sam Kolmen, PhD	1981	Evelyn Tiffany Castiglioni, PhD	2002
Erle Adrian, PhD	1982	Ben G. Raimer, MD	2003
Johannes Van Lier, PhD	1983	Robert Urban, PhD	2004
Matthew LaVail, PhD	1984	Harvey Bunce III, PhD	2005
Daniel Traber, PhD	1985	Cynthia Robbins Roth, PhD	2006
Martin Wasserman, PhD	1986	James H. Jorgensen, MD.	2007
Thomas M. Crisp, PhD	1987	John M. Nickerson, PhD	2008
Jerry Daniels, MD, PhD	1990	Faith McLellan, PhD	2009
J. Arly Nelson, PhD	1991	Gailen D. Marshall, Jr., MD, PhD	2010
J. Paul Heible, PhD.	1993	George R. Jackson, MD, PhD	2011
Mary T. Moslen, PhD	1994	Michael H. Droge, PhD	2012
Susan Lynn Naylor, PhD	1995	A. Martin Gerdes, PhD	2013
T. C. Hsu, PhD	1996		

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#### **GSBS Associates donations support scholarships; Greatest Needs appeal aids postdocs**

Having received more than 80 awards and scholarships (thanks to you, our alumni), students in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences are elevated above their peers at other research universities in Texas and around the nation in the eyes of reviewers for national fellowships and other awards – not to mention potential employers.

The faculty-reviewed awards sponsored by the GSBS Associates and other alumni and friends of the Graduate School demonstrate records of success to officials in academia, industry, government and other fields. Alumni have said that receiving these awards while still students helped raise them above the competition

In addition to supplementing scholarships and travel awards funds, your Greatest Needs contributions also will assist our postdoctoral scientists with their research projects and travel to present their research at professional meetings and conferences.

Please consider this information as you respond to the greatest needs appeal and the request for support for the GSBS Associates alumni association that you should have received by mail.

You may choose to contribute online at <https://alumni.utmb.edu/dues>.

You also may wish to become a lifetime member of the GSBS Associates for a one-time gift of \$1,000. That contribution goes directly into the endowment, which generates scholarship awards in perpetuity. The newest members include Drs. Ernestine H. Cuellar, Han Li and Hong Xie.

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#### **Save the Date: Homecoming Is March 28-29**

The UTMB annual Homecoming for all schools will be Friday and Saturday, March 28 and 29. Registration for all alumni will take place in the Homecoming headquarters on the second level at The San Luis Resort Conference Center, 5222 Seawall Boulevard, Galveston, Friday from 12 noon to 6 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Most activities specific to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will be **Friday afternoon** at William C. Levin Hall, Market at 11<sup>th</sup> Streets, Galveston:

**2:30–3:30 p.m.** – UTMB Campus Tour, to be led by officers and members of the Graduate Student Organization



**4–5 p.m.** – The annual GSBS Dean’s Lecture, by Laura Rudkin, PhD, chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine & Community Health, South Auditorium, Levin Hall

**5–6 p.m.** – The annual Dean’s Reception and group photo of GSBS alumni

**Saturday, March 29, 2014**

Activities will be held in the Mainsail Room on the second level at the San Luis Resort Conference Center.

**10:30–11 a.m.** UTMB Health update by President David L. Callender, MD, MBA, FACS

**11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.** Continuing Education

**The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Value Based Purchasing Program—The Early Impact,**  
*Presenter: Mark S. Kirschbaum, RN, PhD, UTMB Health, Chief Quality Safety & Clinical Information Officer*

**3–5 p.m.** GSBS Associates Executive Committee meeting, second floor conference room at Open Gates, Broadway at 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Galveston

Invitations, with detailed agenda and costs, were mailed in January. Register online at

<https://alumni.utmb.edu/events/homecoming>.

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**Students**



Photo Courtesy Sealy Center on Aging

*Groups gather in front of posters during the annual forum.*

**18 receive awards at 17<sup>th</sup> annual Forum on Aging**

The Sealy Center on Aging held its 17th Annual UTMB Forum on Aging on November 12 in the Levin Hall Dining Room. Research Services was co-sponsor. Faculty, postdoctoral scientists and students across campus were invited to submit abstracts and participate in the event, presenting 87 posters. Eight students and 10 postdocs earned awards. Please see the list of winners below.

<b><i>Student Award Winners</i></b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Poster title</b>	<b>Category</b>
Vanessa Danquah	Does emotional vitality protect against functional decline? Findings from the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging	Medical Student Training in Aging Research
Kshitija Kulkarni	Potentially preventable hospital readmissions following inpatient medical rehabilitation for surgical repair of hip fracture	Rehabilitation Science
Joseph Saenz	A life course approach to mortality in Mexico	Clinical Epidemiology
Xiao Fang	Comparing different methods applying propensity score in controlling selection bias for prostate cancer study	Patient-Centered Outcomes Research/Comparative Effectiveness Research

Paul Reidy	Post-exercise leucine-enriched essential amino acid ingestion improves translational capacity in human skeletal muscle of older adults	Clinical Physiology
Kevin Barnes	The age related GTPASE RHEB regulates synaptic stability	Neuroscience
A. Varma	Prophylactic treatment with monophosphoryl lipid-a (MPLA) - a toll-like receptor-4 (TLR-4) agonist – improves resistance to pseudomonas infection and mortality in young and aged mice following burn injury	Basic Science
David Briley	High resolution volumetric imaging in the murine retina	Basic Science
<b>Postdoctoral Award Winners</b>		
Soujanya Challa	Miliary tuberculosis presenting with laryngeal symptoms in HIV negative male	Clinical Research
Kyaw Lwin	New onset of bulimia nervosa in an elderly patient: sustained clinical response to mirtazapine	Clinical Research
Carlos Diaz-Venegas	Gender differences in the disablement process: the case of Mexico	Health Disparities Research
Gurinder Singh	Trends in 30-day readmission rates in fee-for-service Medicare beneficiaries with COPD: 2001-2009	Clinical Epidemiology
Ragai Meena	Burn injury associated with domiciliary oxygen use in patients with COPD	Clinical Epidemiology
Abhishek Parmar	Evaluating comparative effectiveness with observational data: endoscopic ultrasound and survival in pancreatic cancer	Comparative Effectiveness Research
Gabriella Vargas	Timing of chemotherapy and primary tumor resection in patients with stage IV colorectal cancer	Comparative Effectiveness Research
Melissa Markofski	Exercise with amino acid intake increases muscle microvascular perfusion in older adults	Clinical Physiology Research
Marcos Guerrero-Munoz	Amyloid oligomer aggregation state: a common feature of different amyloidogenic proteins in Alzheimer's disease	Neuroscience Research
Bernard Fongang	A comprehensive study of age-dependence in gene expression in four human tissue types	Basic Science Research

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CCD photos by Barsam Mirfattah

*Bobi Cook talks about cover letters and recruiting ads in November at the CCD workshop.*

**Committee for Career Development holds winter events**

The Committee for Career Development (CCD) held workshops in November and January, both attended by dozens of students and postdoctoral fellows, eager to move into the next phases of their careers.

The November event, “Creating Cover Letters

and Responding to Recruiting Ads,” was presented by Bobi Cook of Workforce Solutions. About 50 people attended the Nov. 14 workshop in one of the Levin Hall classrooms. Ms. Cook is a Regional Facilitator for Workforce Solutions in the Houston – Galveston area. She conducts job skills seminars on behalf of the Texas Workforce Commission throughout the 13-county Gulf Coast region. She has more than 10 years of experience as a professional educator, quality systems manager and small business administrator, helping job seekers develop and implement successful job search campaigns.

GSBS 1986 Distinguished Alumnus Martin Wasserman, PhD, was the featured speaker Jan. 14, talking to an overflow audience of 72 about “Alternative Careers in the Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology Industry.” Dr. Wasserman worked under the tutelage of Dr. Bernard Levy in the UTMB Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, from which he graduated in 1972, and is now is an internationally recognized and accomplished biomedical scientist and pharmaceutical executive. After more than 40 years of research and development experience in “big pharma,” he retired to California and is a drug research and development consultant and advisor.



*Using the panorama picture feature on her cell phone, Barsam Mirfattah captures Dr. Wasserman, right, and the entire audience at the January workshop.*

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### **UTMB Title IX Coordinator appointed to federal policy-making board**

Cat Riley, MA, PhD (ABD), UTMB’s first Title IX Coordinator, was appointed by the U.S. Department of Education in November to represent institutional student affairs/disciplinary divisions at colleges and universities across the country on the inaugural policy committee for the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013.

As a result of federal legislation passed in in 1992 and revised several times, most recently in 2011, UTMB and other college and university campuses throughout the nation are required to report and assist, as possible, whenever violence and sex offenses occur on campus. To facilitate compliance, university officials hired Ms. Riley as Title IX Coordinator.



Her presence is important to GSBS students and postdoctoral scientists because the legislation requires them to know a) that UTMB has a Title IX coordinator, b) what her name is and c) where and how to contact her. Ms. Riley’s office is in Student Affairs on the second floor of the Jamail Student Center and her email address is [csriley@utmb.edu](mailto:csriley@utmb.edu).

Ms. Riley came to UTMB from the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), where she established the Office of Student Conduct and was Director and Title IX Coordinator. She wrote policy and procedure, developed educational modules, and collaborated with a variety of constituents both on and off campus. While at UMD, Title IX became more prominent at the federal level and a new profession was born – the Title IX Coordinator. As the director and coordinator, Ms. Riley was able to bring UMD into compliance, and was uniquely positioned to become UTMB’s first Title IX Coordinator.

She holds a BA in management and organizational development and an MA in organizational management from Spring Arbor University in Michigan, a BA in French and an MA in higher education from Michigan State University, and is set to defend her PhD dissertation this spring.

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (20 USC § 1092(f)) is the landmark federal law, originally known as the Campus Security Act, that requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The law is tied to an institution's participation in federal student financial aid programs and it applies to public and private institutions of higher education. The Act is enforced by the United States Department of Education.

The law requires schools afford victims of campus sexual assault certain basic rights, to report on assaults, and spells out rules for registered sex offender notification and campus emergency response. Provisions added in 2008 protect crime victims, "whistleblowers" and others from retaliation.

The Clery Act requires UTMB to disclose three general categories of crime statistics: 1) criminal offenses, 2) hate crimes and 3) arrests and referrals for disciplinary action. Crimes that must be reported include murder and non-negligent manslaughter, sex offenses, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft and arson, as well as dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

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### Class Notes

#### 1970s

**Ben Raimer, MD, MA (1970, Human Biological Chemistry & Genetics)**, recently was appointed chair of the Texas Health and Human Services Council. The council helps develop policies and rules for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, and makes recommendations regarding the management and operation of the commission. Dr. Raimer is senior vice president of health policy and legislative affairs at UTMB, a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Texas and American Medical associations, Texas Pediatric Society, Texas Public Health Association, and East Texas Baptist University Board of Trustees. He was named the GSBS Distinguished Alumnus in 2003. He is also a member and past president of the Galveston County Medical Society, a public representative for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Task Force on Local Health Care Initiatives, an executive committee member of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and is past chairman of the Texas Institute of Health Care Quality and Efficiency Board of Directors, Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council, and Health Disparities Task Force. He received his medical degree from and completed his residency in pediatrics at UTMB.

#### 2000s

**Stacy Agar, PhD (Microbiology & Immunology, 2009)**, has been in Kazakhstan since 2013 managing a training program for the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency. She writes: "I saw a need for an engineer with containment experience to answer some equipment integration and building design issues. As a result, I spent the second half of 2013 working closely with engineering and design to fulfill this need. I have to say that getting back into engineering has been exciting. An added bonus is that it appears I have secured my position through 2014 and perhaps into 2015."

During her spare time after 10-hour days and longer, Dr. Agar is studying for various management training exams and learning to speak Russian in a class three days a week.

**Dana Bjarnason, MA (1993, Medical Humanities), PhD (2008, Nursing)**, recently accepted a position as Vice President/Chief Nursing Officer for the Oregon Health & Science University in Portland. She also was named to the steering committee revising the *American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses*.

#### 2010s

**Ashley Purgason, PhD (2013, Population Health Sciences)**, recently accepted an appointment as Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Research and Student Advancement in the College of Science at the University of



Courtesy Stacy Agar  
*Dr. Agar holds an eagle at Shymbulak ski resort in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in July.*

Texas at Arlington. She received her bachelor and master's degrees in biology there. The former student regent (2012-13) to the University of Texas System Board of Regents, Dr. Purgason also is serving on the UTMB President's Fort Worth Leadership Council.

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### News Briefs

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#### Students

**Stephanie Moya (Cell)** in August began her first year as a doctoral student under the sponsorship of the Gates Foundation as a Gates Millennium Scholar. She was selected a Gates Millennium Scholar while still attending Homestead Senior High School in Homestead, Fla., and before beginning undergraduate studies at the University of Miami, where she earned a BS in microbiology and immunology. One of 1,000 students selected for the 2008 award from among 16,000 entries from racial and ethnic minorities across the country, Ms. Moya remains a Millennium Scholar throughout her college career. She came to UTMB as a PREP student and stayed as a Presidential Scholar in the Graduate School. UTMB has received more than \$160K to support millennium scholars since the program's inception in 1999.



#### Faculty

**Jeff Temple, PhD, Obstetrics & Gynecology and Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences associate professor,** has been named vice chairman of a new state task force on domestic violence. Temple, a psychologist and director of behavioral health and research, specializes in the study and treatment of intimate partner violence. The new Texas Health and Human Services Commission Task Force on Domestic Violence is the result of Texas House Bill 2620, signed into law in June 2013. It calls for measures to examine and address the impact of domestic violence on the health of women and children during pregnancy through the first two years of life and to help health care providers identify signs of domestic abuse. "I am so honored by this appointment," said Temple. "The physical and emotional trauma caused by domestic violence can have terrible ripple effects that permeate families and communities. This task force is going to come up with concrete ways to make a difference. I am very excited about the potential of our work to turn around thousands of families' lives."

**A. Clinton White, Jr., MD, professor, Internal Medicine, and director, Infectious Disease Division,** in December received the Ben Kean Medal from the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, which bestows the medal every three years to a clinician or educator for clinical and educational excellence in tropical medicine. "I'm very honored," White said. "For me, this is an outgrowth of my father's legacy and my desire to do something to give back, a way to be involved in helping poor countries."

#### Staff



Photo Courtesy Pamela Arbour

*Penelope S. "Penny" Welsh, Pharmacology & Toxicology, received the inaugural GSBS Staff Recognition Award from Dr. David Niesel in a ceremony Sept. 16 in the Graduate School. Business coordinator in the P&T graduate program, she was selected by a vote of the faculty and students.*

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### **In Memoriam**

#### **Edith Y. O'Brien, MS**

*Master of Science, Microbiology, 1957*

Born in Colorado and schooled in Oklahoma, where she earned a B.S. from Oklahoma Baptist University, Mrs. O'Brien went to Lubbock with her husband, Dr. Larry Joe O'Brien, after earning her master's degree at UTMB. A beloved science and Sunday school teacher in Lubbock and Augusta, Ga., she loved the study of living things and shared her passion for education with all around her.

*June 26, 1929 – Dec. 21, 2013, in Richmond, Va.*

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### **Research**



#### **Dr. Goodwin to lead UTMB research enterprise**

James S. Goodwin, MD, will become Vice President and Chief Research Officer for UTMB on February 1, after a national search. In this role, he will develop and implement a strategic plan for research and help develop new programs of excellence in translational research with the university's research community.

Dr. Goodwin was raised in Washington, DC, and educated at Amherst College and Harvard Medical School. He founded and directed the geriatrics program at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine and directed the Sinai Samaritan Geriatrics Institute at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine before joining the UTMB faculty in 1992.

Over the past 15 years, he has concentrated on investigations of treatment outcomes and comparative effectiveness research. Before that, his research included immunoregulatory influences of arachidonic acid metabolites and clinical and epidemiologic studies of nutrition and physical function in older people. He has also been a productive essayist, publishing more than 40 essays in the *Lancet*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Annals of Internal Medicine* and other journals on topics ranging from medical history to the limits of science in the practice of medicine.

Dr. Goodwin has considerable experience assembling and coordinating multidisciplinary teams of investigators and obtaining center grants to address specific health issues. These include the New Mexico Aging Process Study (National Institute on Aging), the Center for Population Health and Health Disparities (National Cancer Institute), Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center (National Institute on Aging), Comparative Effectiveness Research for Cancer in Texas (Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas) and Patient-Centered Outcomes Research in the Elderly Center (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality). Under his direction, the UTMB Sealy Center on Aging in 15 years increased its external research funding from approximately \$1 million to greater than \$13 million yearly.

Dr. Goodwin and his wife Jean, a medical school classmate, live in Jamaica Beach. She is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at UTMB and in private practice on the island.

*– Denise Gonzalez, Office of the Provost*

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### **NIDA awards Dr. Cunningham grant to establish Translational Addiction Sciences Center**



Dr. Kathryn Cunningham, Chauncey Leake Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology, Director of the UTMB Center for Addiction Research and Vice Chair of the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, is the Principal Investigator of a five-year, \$6.6 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to support the "Translational Addiction Sciences Center (TASC)." The center will build on the success of the NIDA-funded P20 Exploratory Center, which supported the coalescence of the scientific team that bridges chemistry, cell biology and pharmacology with human and animal psychopharmacology to address the complexity of addiction.

The TASC is comprised of a consortium of scientists from UTMB (Drs. Kathryn

Cunningham and Cheryl Watson), the University of Houston (Dr. Scott Gilbertson) and Virginia Commonwealth University (Dr. Gerard Moeller). Funding from the NIDA will allow this translational team to definitively reveal the role of serotonin neurotransmission in the disordered state of drug dependence and to intelligently design targeted new medications to mitigate deleterious behaviors and promote recovery. The TASC will provide not only the infrastructure for productive translational research, but also serve as a key venue to attract and facilitate the mentoring and career development of junior investigators in addiction biology.

An outstanding scientist, Dr. Cunningham's research has been instrumental in our understanding of the neuropsychopharmacology of abused drugs, the underlying neurobiology of the addictive process, and new target and drug discovery in addictive disorders. She has published over 120 articles and established an admirable track record of funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse over the past 24 years, which currently includes a K05 senior scientist award and a T32 training program for students and postdocs currently in its 19th year.

– Denise Gonzalez, Office of the Provost

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### **Study to test zombie-game smartphone app as tool to increase activity levels**

Having trouble getting motivated to exercise? Well, a UTMB behavioral-science researcher has come up with something that should get you off the couch and moving.

Zombies.

That's right, the walking dead — as presented in a smartphone "audio adventure" app called "Zombies, Run!"

Dr. Elizabeth Lyons, assistant professor in the Institute for Translational Sciences and Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health, recently received a \$140,000 grant from the American Heart Association to study whether the game encourages people to increase their activity levels. "Zombies, Run!" is designed to be used by walkers or joggers, and each of its audio "missions" is accomplished by actually walking or running, as monitored by a smartphone's GPS or accelerometer.

"It's this very compelling narrative that plays out in fake radio transmissions that come to you on your phone headset — if you're running outside in the dark, it really is like you are out scrounging for supplies after a zombie apocalypse, and this guy is radioing to you where you should go and telling you about things that are going on," Lyons said. "The nice thing about the game is that it uses the power of narrative to create a vehicle for behavior change."

In the study, which will involve 40 people, Lyons will compare the activity level of participants using the app with those not playing the game. Online monitoring via the game's social networking system will give Lyons a real-time window into participants' activity levels, which will also be measured directly with armband accelerometers worn for a week at the beginning of the study and also at the six- and twelve-week marks.

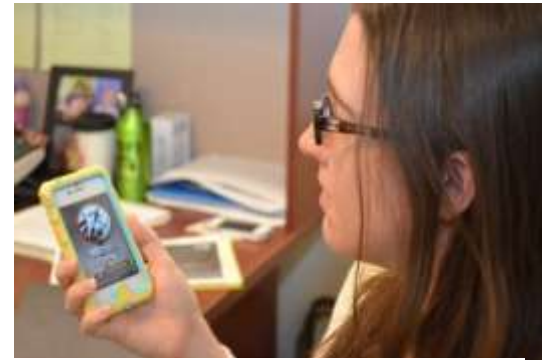
Lyons believes that the end-of-the-world audio narrative — which directly involves the player, referring to him or her as "you" — could hook people who would otherwise remain sedentary into initiating and continuing exercise.

"Starting an exercise program involves lots of pain and lots of fatigue, especially for people who are sedentary and overweight," Lyons said. "I'm interested in using games to distract people from that, and some of my other research has shown that narrative is really the most distracting thing."

The fact that this narrative happens to be about zombies is more or less incidental. "It's an excuse to put these characters that you're growing to know and love in danger and put you in danger, move the plot along and have stuff continually happening," Lyons said.

It also makes possible an aspect of the game that study participants aren't likely to forget: a random 60-second "zombie chase" mode, in which players have to walk faster or run to escape audible undead pursuers. "A transmission comes through saying, zombies detected at however many meters, and you have to speed up by a certain percentage to outrun them," Lyons said. "You can get really competitive when zombies are chasing you."

– Office of Public Affairs



Courtesy Public Affairs

*Dr. Lyons will conduct a study on exercise using a smart phone app.*