

A photograph of a paved walkway lined with mature trees on a university campus. In the distance, a building is visible. Two banners are hanging from a lamppost on the right: a white one with 'The University of Texas at TYLER' and a blue one with 'UT TYLER'.

**PROVOST'S  
ANNUAL REPORT**  
*2019–2020*

The University of Texas at  
**TYLER**  
*Academic Affairs*





message from the  
**PROVOST**

Dear faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends:

I am delighted to share with you the many accomplishments of

our faculty, staff and students for the 2019–20 academic year. With the outbreak of COVID-19, our University community came together as one and managed a very difficult mid-stream transition to a fully-remote learning environment in spring 2020. Despite major disruptions in all aspects of their lives from emotional to physical and financial hardships, our community of scholars—both faculty and students—united together and completed the spring and summer semesters with great success. I am happy to note the many positive feedback from our students and faculty on their experience and their compassion for one another, without ever compromising student learning outcomes.

Our faculty received a number of recognitions, including six STAR and Rising STAR (Science and Technology Acquisition and Retention) awards from UT System (Dr. Yan Yan Wang of pharmacy; Dr. Fernando Resende of chemical engineering; Dr. Mena Souliman of civil engineering; and Dr. Shawana Tabassum and Dr. Jounsup Park of electrical engineering), and three Regents Outstanding Teaching Award (Dr. Michael Gangone of civil engineering; Ms. Jessica Coleman of biology; and Dr. Erika Robinson-Freeman, incoming faculty in social work).

This year, we launched several new academic programs in fall 2019 (the Ph.D. in clinical psychology; MS in chemistry; BS in chemical engineering; and a fermentation science track in the Bachelor of Science in chemistry); and secured approvals to start four new programs in fall 2020 (the Doctor of Education in school improvement, MS in psychiatric mental health nursing practice; MS in nursing informatics, quality and safety; and BS in social work).

Our East Texas Entrepreneurship Center at the Soules College of Business received a US Department of Commerce award to boost its support of regional economic development strategies in response to COVID-19. Our Center for Opinion Research involved close to 100 students in its polling activities and forged a new partnership with the *Dallas Morning News*, with several polls generating tremendous regional and national attention. With the support of a grant from UT System, our faculty in political science and history authored two Open Educational Resource textbooks (Introductory American Government and Introductory Texas Politics) with an expected annual savings of \$100,000 for our students. To help address the nursing shortage in Texas, our School of Nursing expanded its Bachelor of Science in nursing program to an accelerated year-round format, increasing the number of our nurse graduates by 50 percent each year. Our Graduate School celebrated its 10-year anniversary in May 2020 and managed to significantly boost new and returning graduate enrollment despite all challenges of COVID-19.

Our students continue to shine at every opportunity, as demonstrated throughout this report. Our honors program had another award-winning year at regional and national conferences, while our debate team outperformed collegiate teams from across the US to place second at the 2020 National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence, after UC-Berkeley.

As we approach the semi-centennial anniversary of our University (1971–2021) and with the planned merger with our sister institution, UT Health Science Center in Tyler, I am delighted to note that our University community has shown its strength and unity through five decades of serving its region, and now as a Carnegie Doctoral University and a National University, we expect to serve our true role of the flagship institution in East Texas.

*Dr. Amir Mirmiran*  
Provost and Sam Lindsey Chair Professor

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# college of arts and sciences

There is no mystery behind the reason every major in every university is required to take a general education curriculum filled to the brim with courses from the arts and sciences. The importance of the humanities, fine arts and sciences are often underestimated. When we think about the ideas, discoveries and knowledge that move our world forward, the arts and sciences are always present. From the discoveries in science that makes our lives better, to the creation of art and music that charms our soul, to the literature that strengthens our minds and sharpens our understanding of the cultures that came before us, the College of Arts and Sciences is the foundation of all learning.

The diversity of the contributions our faculty make to understanding and improving the world around us is inspiring. Our faculty and students work on projects ranging from new ways to save endangered species, to building virus-like particles for the treatment of cancer, to analyzing important works of literature, to understanding culture and the societies that develop them, to creating beautiful and meaningful works of art and musical performance and more.

Our goal is to ensure that every UT Tyler student has a strong and diverse skill set that will prepare them for the unprecedented challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. The College of Arts and Sciences experienced another year of productivity demonstrated by teaching excellence and scholarly output. Several new and very energetic colleagues were added to the faculty roster while others received well-deserved awards in teaching and research. College faculty and staff continue to receive ROTA recognition across several disciplines, publish in top-tier professional journals, deliver presentations at national and international conferences, encourage selected students to collaborate with faculty in research activity, continue their studies at excellent professional schools; and help build a better East Texas for everyone.

**DR. NEIL GRAY**  
DEAN

## MAJOR INITIATIVES

### *Center for Opinion Research*

The planned Center for Opinion Research (COR) at The University of Texas at Tyler has had a great second year thanks to the hard work of the faculty champions Dr. Mark Owens, Dr. Ken Wink and Dr. Kenneth Bryant. These professors bring a tremendous mix of talents to this effort and are developing what will be a force in the polling world, which will help continue the development of UT Tyler's reputation as a leader in community engagement.

This year, the COR involved 85 students in polling activities and forged a new partnership with the *Dallas Morning News*. The University is collaborating with the media outlet for a series of polls to measure Texas voter preferences on candidates and issues leading up to the 2020 November general election. The partnership involves five polls conducted by the Tyler Center for Public Opinion. These polls have generated tremendous state, national and international attention.

The COR also conducted multiple polls regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall in this academic year, the COR has conducted statewide surveys in August, September and November 2019; political polls with the *Dallas Morning News* in January, February, May and July 2020; and polling on COVID in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. It has been a very productive and important year for the COR.

## NEW PROGRAMMING

### *Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)*

The College of Arts and Sciences will begin a new BSW in social work beginning fall 2020. The degree program has been approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. This will be the only BSW program offered by a public university within 50 miles of Tyler.

Because of its rural nature, aging population, economic challenges and a growing drug epidemic, East Texas has a unique need for social workers, according to information in the 2018 Comptroller's report. East Texas

organizations have expressed a strong need for a social work program in the region. We are listening and working closely with them to build programs that will impact East Texas.

The Department of Social Sciences will deliver the program in both face-to-face and online formats. Students will learn such social work foundations as promoting human well-being and applying preventative and intervention methods to social problems at individual, group and community levels.

We are pleased to announce our first director, Professor Rich Kenney, and first faculty member, Professor Erika Robinson-Freeman. Both come with exceptional credentials!

There are four primary areas for social work employment: child, family and school; healthcare; mental health and substance abuse; and social worker teaching. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, the projected need for social workers in Texas is on the rise. Child, family and school is the largest employment area, but all employment areas are experiencing good or excellent growth.

## PRE-LAW ACADEMY

### *Building Upon a Foundation of Success*

UT Tyler will begin a new Pre-Law Academy in fall 2020 to join the Pre-Med Academy. The University has historically produced graduates well-prepared for the rigors of law and medical schools. The UT Tyler Premedical Academy began in fall 2019. Both academies are designed to help students succeed in getting admitted to and being well-prepared for top medical and law schools across the nation. The new programs also focus on encouraging East Texas high school students to consider careers in medicine and law.

### *The academies will:*

Deliver programs and workshops.

Deliver special symposia for UT Tyler pre-med students and pre-law, focused on developing the personal characteristics needed for both professional schools.

Facilitate job shadowing and research opportunities.





Provide UT Tyler pre-med and pre-law students with dedicated advising and support from start to MCAT/LSAT to professional school acceptance.

## ALUMNI & STUDENT SUCCESSES

### Alumni Success Spotlights

Jamin Shephard recently graduated with his Bachelor of Fine Arts in visual arts from UT Tyler. During his senior year, he won the Mudtools Merit Award at the 2020 NCECA National Juried Student Exhibition for his excellent ceramic piece *Imaginary Landscapes 027*. Jamin is an artist, poet, writer and performer. He was raised all over the place, has performed Shakespeare and is passionate about abstract art and independent music. His wife, Lilah Shepherd, is also an artist and Jamin's favorite person in the world. They currently live and work in Portland, Oregon.

Dr. Troy Dawley graduated from UT Tyler in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry. Subsequently, he completed his DO from University of North Texas-Health Science Center in Fort Worth, Texas in 2014 and is currently the chief neurosurgery resident at Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine/Ascension Providence Hospitals. In 2018, he completed a fellowship in neurosurgical oncology at NorthShore University Hospital in New York.

Dr. Dawley said that the most rewarding part of his career is helping his patients during their most vulnerable times of dealing with a brain

or spine tumor, a traumatic pathology or an unforeseen benign and curable problem.

"I thoroughly enjoy helping others in need and seeing direct results from operating on a patient. There is no better feeling than that."

Dr. Dawley also has a significant interest in international neurosurgery and philanthropy and is the co-founder, vice president and treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Neuroscience Foundation for Africa. "Our vision is to create a sustainable study abroad-humanitarian program throughout Africa to improve awareness about health care while providing medical care to communities in need." The inaugural trip has been delayed due to the current state of the pandemic, but he plans to resume this work as soon as possible. Dawley has been happily married for four years to his wife, Lauren, who is also in medicine. She is a physician assistant in orthopedics. They love to travel and spend as much time outdoors which typically involves hiking or biking. Dawley and Lauren will be moving to Greensboro, North Carolina, where he will be joining a private practice neurosurgery group upon his residency graduation in June 2001.

Bradley Ford has built a successful career in city planning and management since graduating from The University of Texas at Tyler with a bachelor's degree in political science in 2003. Most recently, he was selected as city manager of Waco, after being promoted from assistant to deputy city manager earlier this year. Ford also served the

cities of Fort Worth and Burleson in the areas of planning and economic/community development and was Burleson's deputy city manager. Ford will assume the role of Waco city manager following the retirement of Wiley Stem III.

"Not long after Bradley came to the city as an assistant city manager, it was immediately clear that he had the ability to be a strong leader for Waco," Stem said. "When I appointed him deputy city manager, I knew in my heart that if the Waco City Council agreed, he would be able to continue the work of the council and keep the city moving in the right direction. I'm excited for him and the future of Waco."

## STUDENT SUCCESS SPOTLIGHTS

### Debate Team

The University of Texas at Tyler debate team outperformed collegiate teams from across the US to place second at the 2020 National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence (NPTE). The University also participated in the NPDA National Championship, with Melodie Lamborn and Skylar Walker finishing among the top 16 teams. Lamborn is a junior from Canon City, Colorado. Walker is a junior from Athens, Texas.

"Melodie and Skylar survived the grueling first two days of competition, including fierce elimination out-rounds, to beat a variety of teams from across the country," Coach Provencher said. "I could not be prouder of their growth and achievement this year."

### Trumpet Ensemble

The UT Tyler Trumpet Ensemble continued to impress this year! UT Tyler's Trumpet Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Jeremy McBain, performed in February 2020 at the Texas Music Educators Association's Annual Convention, the nation's largest music education convention hosting over 30,000 attendees. This is the third year in a row that UT Tyler music ensembles have been selected to perform at TMEA. The performance featured the premiere of *Theatrics*, an original composition by Dr. Kyle Gullings, who specifically composed the piece for the UT Tyler Trumpet Ensemble.

### Model UN

In November 2019, four UT Tyler students (Samantha Myers, Madison Jobe, Evelyn Guerra and Abigail Marrs) travelled with Dr. Robert Sterken to Erfurt, Germany to represent UT Tyler at the National Model United Conference-Europe. They represented the Dominican Republic in three committees and had a full week of learning and collaborating with students from all over the world. The students were also able to visit and learn about Wartburg Castle, the Buchenwald concentration camp and the Point Alpha Memorial, a Cold War observation point.

In March 2020, 14 students were preparing to travel to New York City to participate in the annual National Model United Nations Conference. Sadly, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference and trip were cancelled. The conference however still awarded Position Paper Awards, because these had to be submitted almost a month before the conference was set to begin. Representing Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UT Tyler students Evelyn Guerra and Samir Karn were awarded Outstanding Position Paper Awards in their respective committees.

## 2020 ARCHER FELLOWS

The Archer Fellowship Program was established by UT System in conjunction with former U.S. Representative Bill Archer to bring highly motivated and accomplished students to Washington, D.C., for a comprehensive academic and professional experience. Selection is based on a competitive application process, and each cohort of Archer Fellows is comprised of the best and brightest students from across the UT System. The College of Arts and Sciences is proud of our students who earned this significant honor. This year we had four fellows: Melanie Escobar, Gavin Downing, Anna Ham and Julie Gobble.

### Portrait of an Archer Fellow

Melanie Escobar interned in Washington, D.C. with the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America in fall 2019. She graduated from UT Tyler with a bachelor's degree in history and minor in psychology/political science in December 2019. Currently, she is finishing her contract with the Army Reserves and is working at the Smith

County Jail. She plans to continue her education by focusing on victim advocacy.

**According to Melanie:** “The Archer Fellowship Program has given me a better understanding of myself and the career I am wanting to pursue after I graduate. As an Army reservist, I was able to not just use my education, but also my professional experience while interning with the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. My passion involves supporting people with mental health issues, and the Archer Fellowship gave me a better sense of advocating for those with mental health conditions. Not only did my time there increase my interest in the career I am wanting to pursue, but I was also able to meet and establish valuable contacts with professionals who are pursuing similar career paths.”

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Summer Jazz Camp

The second UT Tyler Jazz Camp was a great success thanks to the hard work of Dr. Sarah Roberts. The camp had over 45 student participants (shown below), up from 12 the previous year. The camp featured special guest lectures and performances from Wayne Bergeron and Barb Caitlin.

Bergeron is an American jazz trumpeter who was a member of Maynard Ferguson’s band in the 1980s. As a lead and studio player, he is notable for his ability in the upper register of the instrument, as in his screaming trumpet work in the soundtrack for the 2004 Disney/Pixar animated movie, *The Incredibles*.

After 20 successful years as a musician and educator in Arizona, Caitlin recently returned to

her home state of California where she directs the jazz ensembles at Pomona College and the California Institute of Technology, in addition to being on the jazz faculty at Pasadena City College. Caitlin has received numerous accolades as a jazz pianist and educator, including being named as a Downbeat “Player to Catch” and receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award.

## FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

### 2020 UT System Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award Recipients

Congratulations to Jessica Coleman in the Department of Biology.

Congratulations to Professor Ericka Robinson-Freeman in the Department of Social Sciences. Erika is a licensed clinical social worker and a founding faculty member for our new BSW. She has experience in child welfare, healthcare social work with children and families, mental health and hospice care.

The awards are a symbol of the importance placed on the provision of teaching and learning of the highest order. The awards are offered in recognition of those who serve our students in an exemplary manner and as an incentive for others who aspire to such service.

## RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY

The faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences are extraordinary scholars, creators, teachers and mentors. Their student focus is evident in everything they do, including scholarly and



creative work. The ability of our students to participate in research and then present or publish the results alongside their faculty mentor is important. Over the last year, the faculty has published 81 articles in peer-review journals and 12 books and book chapters. Although COVID adversely affected travel and conferences, they still gave 73 presentations at professional meetings and conferences and gave 18 exhibitions and performances. Many of these efforts involved student contributors.

### Engaging Students in Research

Drs. Christy Graves and David Milan continue their three-year grant for \$254,443 to initiate and run an NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates during the summer. The goal of the REU is to give students an introduction to mathematical research that will help prepare them for and encourage them to pursue Ph.D.s in mathematics. The investigators believe that this program will have a greater effect by recruiting students from underrepresented groups; in particular, Hispanics, women and first-generation college students. In addition to daily research, REU participants will attend talks by former research students who are currently enrolled in graduate school and by other local faculty. They will have the opportunity to ask questions about graduate school and academic careers. Students will keep a daily research journal, and they will also learn mathematical typesetting. The REU projects have been carefully chosen to be accessible

to undergraduates with basic training in proof writing, but with the potential to produce novel results. The results will be presented at national conferences. It is expected that some projects will result in publications in peer-reviewed journals. The Department of Mathematics is commended for bringing such a prestigious and rare NSF program to UT Tyler. Students have been able to work on projects like:

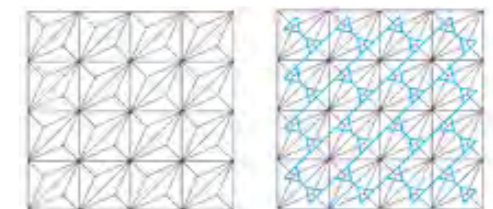
### Reliability Polynomials

$$\text{Rel}_W(p) = \sum_{i=0}^n N_i p^i (1-p)^{n-i}$$

### Inverse Semigroups

$$(\alpha, g, \beta)(\gamma, h, \nu) = \begin{cases} (\alpha g \gamma', \varphi(g, \gamma') h, \nu), \\ (\alpha, g \varphi(h^{-1}, \beta')^{-1}, \nu h^{-1} \beta') \\ 0 \end{cases}$$

### Graph Splines







# SOULES college of business

The Soules College of Business is excited to announce Dr. Krist Swimberghe as the interim dean beginning May 1, 2020. Dr. Swimberghe joined UT Tyler in 2010 and has served as the chair of the Department of Management and Marketing in the Soules College of Business since 2014. Under his leadership, the marketing curriculum has become one of only six programs in the nation accredited by the Category Management Association. Dr. Swimberghe received his DBA with a major in marketing and minors in quantitative analysis and management from Louisiana Tech University. Prior to his career in academia, he spent almost 20 years in industry, predominately in international marketing and sales in the defense and automotive related industries, both in Europe and the United States.

“I am humbled and look forward to serving The University of Texas at Tyler, Soules College of Business, its students and all of its stakeholders during these extraordinary and challenging times of transition. With challenges however also come opportunities. For the past 10 years, I have witnessed the hard work of the faculty and staff of the Soules College of Business translate into signature programs that have benefited both students and the community. I am confident that as we partner together, we will nurture a culture that builds on the forward momentum of the college and continue to fulfill our responsibility of being the economic and educational driver of East Texas. I believe that our best days are yet to come!”

**DR. KRIST SWIMBERGHE**  
INTERIM DEAN

## MARTIN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CLASSROOM

Martin Resource Management Corporation has partnered with the Soules College of Business and UT Tyler to improve the region’s college completion rate and strengthen the East Texas workforce. To commemorate the partnership, UT Tyler named a classroom in the Soules College of Business for the industry leader. UT Tyler President Michael Tidwell and Martin Resource Management Corporation CFO Bob Bondurant were among those who celebrated the occasion.

## EAST TEXAS ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER

The Soules College of Business would like to introduce Mr. Jeffrey M. Howlett as executive director for the East Texas Entrepreneurship Center and Director of the Hibbs Institute. Mr. Howlett attended both Harvard University and University of Oxford earning an executive MBA from the latter. He has also been involved in several diverse startups since launching his first venture as an undergraduate. For the last decade, Mr. Howlett has helped entrepreneurs, universities and municipalities worldwide with new venture programs, technology commercialization and economic development strategies. As director of Venture Mentoring Services, Mr. Howlett helped facilitate the creation of the No. 2 university entrepreneurship program in the United States as ranked by *Princeton Review*. The program is still consistently ranked in the top 10 today.

## HIBBS INSTITUTE FOR BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESEARCH

The Hibbs Institute helps businesses, regional economic development councils and local governments expand business activity in greater East Texas. The institute also provides professional economic research and analysis for organizations, companies and investors considering locating, expanding or investing in East Texas. In this year, the Hibbs Institute produced and published over 30 whitepapers, newsletters, briefs and externally funded projects that reached several thousands of East Texans. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hibbs Institute released several special issues with economic and health statistics relevant to the pandemic in East Texas.

## LONGVIEW SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The UT Tyler-Longview Small Business Development Center (SBDC) officially opened for business on May 1, 2019. In its first full year of operation, center director Day Shel mire opened offices in Longview and Marshall and hired two business advisers and an administrative assistant. The SBDC counseled over 260 entrepreneurs and small business clients while providing almost 2,000 hours of one-on-one business counseling. These efforts helped start 20 new businesses, created over 100 new jobs and helped inject over \$13 million in loans and owner equity. As an SBA Resource Partner, the center’s business advisers helped small businesses apply for CARES Act loan funding during the COVID-19 economic disaster. The SBA has appropriated additional funding to the program for COVID-related small business recovery efforts, which will allow the SBDC to hire additional staff and open satellite offices in its six-county service area.

## FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENT AND ALUMNI HONORS

Dr. Miguel Caldas received the 2019 Outstanding Faculty Teaching Award from the Texas Alpha Xi Chapter of the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society.

Dr. Kerri Camp is the faculty adviser for Beta Gamma Sigma. Dr. Camp received the Student Organization Adviser of the Year from the UT Tyler Leadership and Service Awards.

The 2020 Lyceum Student Research Showcase was held virtually this year with 237 students presenting in 90 research presentations. Paige Pinkston, a graduate accounting student, received first place in the Outstanding Graduate Oral Presentation category. Her presentation was on Sustainability Accounting: Pros, Cons and Standards. Ms. Pinkston’s faculty mentor was Dr. Mary Fischer, professor of accounting.

Dr. Silvana Chambers was awarded the Es wrothy Malcolm S. Knowles Dissertation of the Year from the Academy of Human Resource Development. The award recognizes an outstanding doctoral dissertation that exemplifies scholarly work and contributes to the HRD field. Her dissertation examined the extent to which gender quotas in leadership are an effective intervention for achieving gender equality in the



workplace. Dr. Chambers is currently serving as an assistant professor of management at the University of Houston at Clear Lake.

## OUTSTANDING FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS

The Soules College of Business annually recognizes faculty members who have made significant and impactful contributions in the areas of teaching, research and service. This year's honorees are Dr. Leonard Brown (teaching), Dr. Hui James (research), Dr. Jim Cater (research) and Ms. Jennifer Reynolds (service).

Academic Partnerships annually recognizes two faculty members for their commitment to teaching excellence in the college's MBA Healthcare Management program. This year's recipients are Dr. Miguel Caldas, professor of management, and Dr. Venugopal Gopalakrishna-Remani, associate professor of management.

The Soules College of Business initiated the Outstanding Staff Award in 2019. This award is voted on by a committee of faculty and staff within the college. Mrs. Jackie Richardson, Administrative Assistant II in the accounting, finance and business law department was selected to receive the 2020 Outstanding Staff Award.

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Texas Retailers Education Foundation (TREF) presented the Soules College of Business with a \$25,000 gift to endow a scholarship. "Our hope is that this scholarship gives students the opportunity to consider a career in the retail industry, and that it helps open up career paths for them long-term," said Joe Williams of TREF. To qualify for the TREF scholarship, a student must have attended high school in Texas and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Preference shall be given to students who are planning to pursue a career in the retail profession, have previously worked in the retail profession or have parents who currently work in retail.

The Rex Miller Memorial Scholarship for industrial technology and industrial management majors was endowed by Dr. Mark Miller in the amount of \$10,000.

The Matthew "Matt" Ellis Endowment Scholarship was endowed by Ms. Linda Adams Ellis in the amount of \$10,000.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

### American Marketing Association

The inaugural year of the American Marketing Association (AMA) student organization was a

success. Speakers ranged from CEOs, to local business owners and professionals, to successful UT Tyler graduates who made the transition from university life to the workplace. Phil Burks, CEO of Genesis Group, Misty Wages, regional sales manager for KLTV, and Paul Ruark, alumni and loan officer at Texas National Bank, spoke to students in a face-to-face format during the fall and a portion of the spring semester.

### Soules Ambassadors

Soules Ambassadors served as student hosts for the Leaders and Legends Event with Karl Rove, participated in a luncheon with the Ambassador from Uzbekistan, Arbor Day tree planting, Relay for Life, Patriot Premiere, the Top 25% Celebration for prospective students and much more this year. Students must complete an application, meet the required criteria such as GPA, and go through an interview process. This year's membership was comprised of 17 exemplary students within the Soules College of Business and led by Jackie Richardson serving as staff adviser.

### Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering (ATMAE)

The UT Tyler ATMAE student organization participated in the ATMAE National Conference held in Charlotte, North Carolina. UT Tyler placed second in innovation and design, second place in electronics and controls, third place in the overall achievement category in the robotics competition and first place for the People's Choice for their created robot. Additionally, Dr. Heshium Lawrence received the Faculty Excellence Award from ATMAE at the conference.



### Beta Alpha Psi

The Mu Kappa Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) collaborated with the Cooperative Teachers' Credit Union to put on the reality fair for RISE Academy High School. BAP members worked as credit counselors for 50-75 high schoolers who attended the fair. Jack Wright, Cheyanne White, Spencer Milner and Dipram Khatri attended and won third place in innovation during the regional conference for Beta Alpha Psi during February 2020 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

### Association for Computer Machinery

Although COVID-19 interrupted some of the planned events, several social activities were held this year. Specifically, the student chapter held a trivia contest, a video game night and a gaming tournament fundraiser. In addition, several members were among the two, three-person programming teams representing UT Tyler in the South-Central Region of the Annual International Collegiate Programming Contest. Officers this year include Winslow Conneen (chair), Blaine Pace (vice-chair), Gaddiel Morales (secretary), and Taylor Maddox (treasurer).

## STUDENT SUCCESS

### Soules College Night at the Basketball Game

According to Dr. Howard Patterson, UT Tyler's athletic director, Soules College Night was the largest turn out in recent memory for a homecourt basketball game. With over 200 students, faculty and staff in attendance, students were challenged to see which class (freshmen, sophomores,







juniors and seniors) would have the highest attendance. The winners received Colombia shirts from the Soules College of Business. Soules College of Business sponsored both the UT Tyler's men and women's basketball games on February 20, 2020. The National Anthem was sung by assistant professor of management, Dr. Timothy Morgan, director of development, Rob Springer, and Soules College of Business students Texas Desselles (marketing major) and Josh Geibler (computer information system major). During the men's halftime show, Mr. and Mrs. John Soules Sr. were presented with a basketball jersey signed by the UT Tyler players. Other activities included raffling a \$100 Target gift card and a one-year membership to Crunch Fitness in Tyler.

### **Virtual Mock Team Interviews**

Each semester, students in the MANA 3170—Build and Manage a Career course, participate in mock team interviews. Businesses that participate in this event include Ingersoll Rand, Amazon, Walmart, Edward Jones and many more. Unfortunately, COVID-19 interrupted the spring 2020 mock team interviews for 268 students and businesses.

It was time to do some mission critical problem solving. Gail Johnson enlisted the help of UT Tyler digital learning specialist, Brian Mackenzie. Together, they devised a way to hold the interviews virtually. Zoom provided the functionality they needed to bring students and business leaders together. Following

the same format as the face-to-face event, students participated in a 30-minute networking session, followed by 34 breakout sessions. Business leaders led the 60-minute breakout sessions, providing students with valuable practical experience and constructive feedback to strengthen their interviewing skills.

### **Human Resource Development Webinars**

The Department of Human Resource Development hosted a successful three-part webinar series for undergraduate students in the spring and summer 2020 semesters using Zoom. In April, Dr. Brad Shuck, associate professor at the University of Louisville, spoke to the students about the importance of HRD professionals in creating "Employee Engagement" in the workplace. In May, Darren Short, previous vice-president at GoDaddy.com and past president of the Academy of Human Resource Development, shared his insights on "Success Opportunities and Workplace Fun" that encouraged students to create and maintain a strong network of mentors, experts and coaches to help them grow their career path. For the June webinar, Gail Johnson and Kelley Gerwig, co-owners of Solving Business Problems Creatively, delivered a valuable workshop, "Embracing Change: Successful People are Not Just Lucky," which punctuated the importance of career readiness. Students who participated also received a membership to the Association of Talent Development.

## **RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

The Soules College of Business faculty have over 100 activities this year even with the COVID-19 pandemic including publishing 50 journal articles and 10 book chapters. The faculty also presented more than 32 papers and completed an additional 15 other scholarly outputs in peer-reviewed journals or conference proceedings. Several faculties published in A+ journals. Numerous faculties within the Soules College of Business were awarded internal grants through UT Tyler. Our faculty are dedicated to the importance of research and continue to produce high quality research at the regional, state, national and international levels.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The technology department hosted two half-day training/recruitment events with the manufacturing students from the Career and Technology Center at Tyler ISD. The high school students learned how to draw solid models that they could then 2D print. Students also were given a tour through the technology labs. During the tour, demonstrations were given using the new plasma arc-cutting table, water jet-cutting machine, various industrial robots, laser engravers and more.

Dr. Mary Helen Fagan, associate professor of management, and Shruti Patil, city of Tyler informatics data analyst, were interviewed in November 2019 on the "City of Tyler Roses and

Weeds" podcast. Dr. Fagan spoke about her collaboration with the city of Tyler GIS department over the past year on a business analytics service-learning project. Graduate and undergraduate students worked as consultants and engaged in the analysis and visualization of the Tyler Citizen Survey and building permit data.

Ms. Jennifer Reynolds participates in an initiative with the Women's Fund of Smith County that seeks to give Smith County area high school girls the opportunity to make a positive impact in their community. The Girls Invested in Volunteer Efforts (G.I.V.E.) Program, since its inception in 2014, has awarded more than \$20,000 to exceptional local nonprofit organizations. It has also allowed participants to experience the joy of giving and helping others in their own community.

Dr. Kerri Camp, associate professor of marketing, along with students, other faculty and community members sewed more than 600 masks for those in the vulnerable population and healthcare industry of East Texas during COVID-19.

### **Hooping Ceremony**

Soules College of Business continues to host each fall and spring semester our hooping ceremony celebrating the accomplishments of both Master's and Ph.D. students. In December 2019, 98 students as well as 558 family and guests were welcomed by faculty and staff.







## STUDENT SUCCESS

### *Teaching Excellence*

The Regent's Outstanding Teaching Award (ROTA) is given annually to a faculty member who has an outstanding impact on student success through outstanding instruction. Dr. Amy Hayes, assistant professor of psychology, won the award as recognition of her teaching excellence within her undergraduate courses that includes statistics, research methods, developmental psychology and honors research. In addition, she mentors students in their research through their work in the Child and Adolescent Development Lab.

### *Mentoring*

The College of Education and Psychology's Mentor Center, under the direction of Kristie Allen, is a presidential-funded student success initiative aimed at increasing students' self-efficacy, sense of belonging and perceived social support as well as an overarching goal of increasing retention and persistence to degree completion. CEP both undergraduate students on academic probation and those who are deemed at-risk of failing a class by their faculty member are paired with a trained graduate student mentor. Mentors use evidence-based assessments to identify students' barriers to success, make referrals to University resources

and provide personal support tailored to each student's needs. After COVID-19 struck, our mentors swiftly moved all mentoring services to Zoom and other remote communication methods including phone call and text message check-ins. In addition, our mentors worked together to make phone calls and provide support to all returning students.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT—NEW PROGRAMS

### *Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology*

The UT Tyler Ph.D. program in clinical psychology admitted its first cohort of students in the fall of 2019—five highly-qualified students with three alumni from UT Tyler and two from UT San Antonio. Students are actively working on research, and with their faculty mentors, have published 10 papers and made 15 presentations. As the year ended, six new doctoral students were recruited from a pool of 25 well-qualified applicants and admitted to begin the program in August 2020. They are another mix of four UT Tyler master's program alumni and two students from other programs – all with strong academic records and each selected individually by faculty members for their research teams.

# college

of education  
& psychology

The University of Texas at Tyler College of Education and Psychology is one of the original colleges established in 1971 and consists of the Department of Psychology and Counseling, School of Education and the University Academy. The college has been preparing outstanding educators and mental health professionals for Texas for more than 45 years.

**DR. WES HICKEY**  
DEAN





### **Ed.D. in School Improvement**

Drs. Yanira Oliveras-Ortiz and Michael Odell led in the development of the proposal for an Ed.D. in school improvement. The inaugural cohort of 25 students began their work in the summer of 2020.

### **edTPA**

The clinical teachers in the School of Education participated in a Texas Education Agency pilot program offering a performance assessment for pre-service teachers under the guidance of Cindy Sherman. The students achieved a 100 percent pass rate while providing the state with important data.

### **University Academy**

The University Academy (UA) Lab Schools ended the 2019–20 school year with an “A” Rating from the Texas Education Agency. Niche.com ranked UT Tyler University Academies among the 2020 “Best Charter High Schools” in Texas. The UT Tyler University Academy district was also recognized by the National Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program as a PLTW Distinguished District. The UA district was only one of two recognized districts in Texas and one of 24 nationally to earn this award and it exemplifies the strong STEM programming at the academy. As a laboratory school, the UA district provides clinical placements for the School of Education EC-6, UTeach, Grad Teach and Educational Leadership MEd.

## **RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP–INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS**

### **University of Belize MOU**

The College of Education and Psychology led the efforts to finalize an MOU with the University of Belize that was designed to enhance the relationship between the two institutions. This led to professional development assistance to our Belizean partners as COVID-19 forced courses to go online.

The Government of Belize and College of Education and Psychology agreed to the MOU that developed a partnership for the creation a pre-service teacher evaluation instrument in Belize as well as materials for field supervisor training. This partnership is currently evaluating data on pre-service teacher evaluations to target areas of improvement.

Additionally, the University hosted the Consortium for Belize Education Cooperation Conference during the summer of 2020. The conference was forced to go online due to COVID-19 concerns, but it had one of the most attended sessions of all time with over 120 registrants. The conference was partially supported with a \$4,000 gift from VLK Architects.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **CEP Centers**

The CEP has several centers that are focused on addressing the needs of the community. The Memory Assessment and Research Center (MARC) evaluates individuals who have concerns with dementia. When fully operational, the MARC evaluates around 30 people a month at no cost, providing an important service to the region. In addition, center director Dr. Michael Barnett and his graduate students conduct much-needed research on tools for evaluation and other factors involved with dementia.

The K-16 Literacy Center, under the leadership of Dr. Kouider Mokhtari, Anderson-Vukelja-Wright Endowed Chair, continues to engage in a suite of literacy outreach and research projects aimed at strengthening literacy instruction and improving student achievement outcomes in local and area schools and communities.

The mission of the East Texas Center for School Based Research and Instruction is to provide high quality professional development opportunities to East Texas K-12 schools. This year, the center hosted a law and school leadership conference, rural schools symposium, and several TED talks prior to COVID-19. In addressing the

needs of schools in East Texas, Dr. David Anthony and Christi Khalaf, center director and coordinator, respectively, organized seminars on the legal and educational ramifications of the pandemic. The activities of the East Texas Center for School Based Research and Instruction were partially supported with a \$14,000 gift from the Cooperative Teachers Credit Union.

## **RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT–GRANTS**

### **AOT Grant**

Drs. Chuck Barké and Eric Stocks received the Assisted Outpatient Treatment grant in the amount of \$110,181 over three years. This grant provides psychiatric and case management support for court ordered individuals with a history of incarceration due to mental illness.

### **Principal Preparation Grant**

Dr. Gary Miller coordinated Cycle 2 of the Principal Preparation Grant, which brought 38 new students into the program and \$337,288 in tuition/fees to the University.

### **School Turnaround**

UT System provided \$300,000 over three years to help the UT Tyler School of Education, led by Cindy Sherman and Dr. JoAnna Neel, in assisting Winona Elementary School with academic improvement. The campus was “F” rated for two years prior to UT Tyler interventions. Through instructional coaching, strategic personnel moves, and improvement of school culture, Winona Elementary School improved to a “B” rating.

### **Middle Math Matters**

Drs. John Lamb and Amy Hayes received a two-year, \$865,963 grant from the Greater Texas Foundation entitled, “Advancing Inquiry in Middle Mathematics for Rural East Texas.” This project is designed to provide teachers with professional development training that highlights best practices in teaching problem solving and eliciting student thinking. This project seeks to improve teacher’s specialized content knowledge, their beliefs and practices, student attitudes towards mathematics, student anxiety towards the subject, and student performance.







# college of engineering

Established more than two decades ago, The University of Texas at Tyler College of Engineering has grown to nearly 1,000 students. The college offers degree programs in chemical engineering (which will graduate its first class in 2022), civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and construction management. With two campuses—the main Tyler campus and the Houston Engineering Center—the college is rather unique. Between the two, the College of Engineering provides students an ecosystem that includes both a more research-focused campus and a more industry-connected campus.

The UT Tyler College of Engineering, in partnership with the Houston Community College, established the Houston Engineering Center (HEC) to provide students in Houston a unique pathway to attain an ABET accredited, four-year engineering degree. HEC is a minority-serving engineering campus with a substantial number of first-generation adult learners. The Tyler campus could be considered as an emerging Hispanic-serving institution by the standards established by Excellencia in Education ([EDEXCELENCIA.ORG](http://EDEXCELENCIA.ORG)).

Our efforts to serve underrepresented populations have been recently recognized through the American Society for Engineering Education's Diversity Recognition Program. By receiving Bronze Level Recognition (the highest level awarded this cycle), COE was noted as being among the nation's leaders in inclusive excellence.

**DR. JAVIER KYPUROS**  
DEAN

## TRANSFORMATIVE SENIOR DESIGN EXPERIENCES

In order to provide students the opportunity to work in an industrial and business environment, with realistic challenges and constraints, this year, the mechanical engineering program, in collaboration with the electrical engineering program, implemented a new structure for senior capstone design projects. Projects were solicited, sponsored and funded from many sources, totaling 29 projects with 11 at the Tyler campus and 18 at the HEC. Projects were sponsored as follows:

- External Industry projects producing working products: 12
- NASA design competition projects producing working products: 4
- Grant sponsored projects for innovative products: 4
- Professional student organizations: 2
- Department sponsored projects to design and build infrastructure equipment: 7

Each project featured a faculty adviser/mentor and a sponsor/customer with an interdisciplinary team of students that managed budget, time and expertise limitations to meet customer needs a final product.

The experience was unique and transformative in many ways. This was completely uncharted territory for students, taking them from the structured classroom and lab environment to the real world. Working with new team members to solve open-ended problems and with real money at stake required a significant amount of discipline, team level skill and knowledge integration and management at many levels (personnel, emotions and resources). Success in the course was directly tied to project success, which was defined as producing what the customer paid for, with performance at professional engineering standards and several resulting in patents or other external business activities. This was the ultimate educational experience that students could ever receive to prepare them to hit the ground running after graduation. Moreover, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic imposing difficult and unexpected tests on these projects, all

externally-funded projects were completed, achieving high sponsor/customer satisfaction.

At the department level, the experience was transformative as well. This experience provided the perfect medium for a healthy mix between industry and education. Our increased industrial partnerships have the highest trust in our graduates and their skillsets to satisfy their needs. Faculty had the opportunity to witness their students implement what they learned, which is a critical feedback source to verify what is done in the classroom. It also allowed faculty to experience the actual career environment and demands which they have to consider as they prepare their students. As a concluding experience, a virtual expo was carried out, drawing hundreds of viewers from around the world.

## GRADUATION SUCCESSES

COE graduated students this academic year with 193 graduates in spring 2020. Mechanical engineering (89 students) and civil engineering (60 students) were the 4th and 5th largest majors by graduates in the entire University, and electrical engineering (26 students) and construction management (18 students) also had strong classes. In May, the Civil Engineering Virtual Graduation and Awards Ceremony was viewed by over 750 people, and the Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Virtual Senior Design Expo attracted over 750 visitors from around the world.

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS: MENA SOULIMAN AND PRABHA SUNDARAVADIVEL

Dr. Mena Souliman, associate professor of civil engineering, received a \$400,000 UT System Science and Technology Acquisition (STARs) Award to address the future challenges of the U.S. transportation system. Dr. Souliman will use these funds to establish the Texas Rural Transportation Research Center (TRTRC), which will be a dedicated center at UT Tyler focused on researching the U.S. rural transportation system in order to optimize the efficient use of resources available for the rural infrastructure. The creation of the center follows the US Department of Transportation's Beyond Traffic 2045 report, which emphasizes issues the United States will face in the transportation





sector through 2045, including those related to climate change. The US population is expected to increase by 70 million in the next three decades,” said Souliman. “This increase poses several challenges for the U.S. transportation system, which needs to accommodate demographic growth by maintaining and enhancing both its standard of transportation choices and economic opportunities. The increase in transportation capacity should not be the only response to population growth. It is critical to envision a transportation system that preserves and enhances the social cohesion and improves the infrastructure’s resilience to extreme weather and natural hazards as forecasted in future climate change scenarios.”

The TRTRC will provide expert opinion and research-driven elements to assist rural road infrastructure design and planning. The broader impacts of the center will enhance access in underserved and underinvested communities, as well as improve durability and cost efficiency of highways and bridges. The center will engage well-qualified scientists with various backgrounds for research on rural transportation. For instance, the TRTRC proposes to examine the feasibility of using dashcam video data collection to assess pavement conditions. This approach involves aerial data collection of rural road condition behaviors and characteristics. It also should help build a traffic disturbance-free framework for monitoring.

Dr. Prabha Sundaravadivel was recently awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to utilize the advantages of the Internet to improve medical training. The grant, titled, “Easy-Med:

Interdisciplinary Training in Developing Security, Privacy-Assured Internet of Medical Things Frameworks,” has the primary goal of developing an off-the-shelf, component-based medical training framework to train STEM students with sensing, security and privacy-aspects of smart healthcare and provide them a career path in smart healthcare. The Internet of Medical Things (IoMT) is a network of identifiable interconnected medical devices which act as building blocks of intelligent pervasive medical frameworks. This significant application of future smart cities is expected to be a \$136.8 billion industry by 2021 with about 3.7 million connected medical devices. In pursuit of preparing young women and men with relevant, highly-effective STEM education needed to meet the demand of this growing billion-dollar market, an interdisciplinary team from UT Tyler and the University of North Texas are collaborating on Project Easy-Med with Dr. Sundaravadivel who serves as the lead PI.

### A COE RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Like other colleges within UT Tyler and around the nation, this spring COE orchestrated a mid-stream transition to online learning amid the global COVID-19 pandemic. We received strong, positive feedback regarding the learning outcome achievement, faculty engagement and overall student experience, but this article focuses on how much our staff and faculty care about the success and well-being of our students. We know that COVID-19 caused major disruptions in many of their lives including emotional, physical and financial hardships. As part of our response, beyond thinking of the students and praying for their well-being, the faculty and staff banded together to create an emergency fund to help the students in the College of Engineering with emergency financial problems caused by the pandemic. The funds may be used for living expenses and ancillary educational expenses such as books and supplies. Thousands of dollars were collected and distributed to students in need. Within a few hours of notifying students about the fund, we had over 30 applications. COE is committed to helping all of our students achieve success in their academic journey

### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

As one example of the breadth of student activities and accomplishment within COE, the

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) student chapter accomplishments are discussed here. The national ASCE organization recognizes a handful of student groups each year with the distinction of being a Ridgway Finalist. The Ridgway Award is earned for excellence in student chapter activities – creating an environment that enhances student engagement with the profession and preparation to be successful civil engineers. Only five student chapters in the world were recognized with this honor this year, and UT Tyler’s student chapter was the only chapter in Texas to earn this award. At this year’s regional competition, the students groups associated with ASCE also shined, receiving more awards than any other school at the 2020 ASCE Texas-Mexico Regional Conference. In the most popular and prestigious team competition, UT Tyler with the 2020 concrete canoe entry “Usain Boat,” tied for first place and narrowly lost a tie-breaker to qualify for nationals. UT Tyler placed first in design paper and third place for canoe final product design. Additionally, UT Tyler placed first in concrete bowling, second in concrete frisbee and second in steel bridge team competitions. “I am incredibly

proud of our students’ successes this year, and the leaders among this group did an amazing job bringing together our most diverse team ever to ensure that UT Tyler didn’t just belong in these contests, but excelled as a top performer,” said Dr. Michael McGinnis, faculty adviser.

In other events, junior and student chapter president Luisa Cardona-Suarez and junior Gil Lara placed first in the Innovation Contest for their idea of improving the construction and thermal efficiency of residential buildings. They earned a cash prize of \$1,500 for the student chapter.

In the student research poster presentation category, seniors Tosin Ogunlaja and Zachary Smolen placed first for their poster, “Feasibility of Using P10x to Oxidize Endocrine Disrupting Compounds at Wastewater Treatment Plants” with faculty collaborator Dr. Torey Nalbome. Senior Gabby Morales placed second for her poster, “Improved Engineered Scoring System for Bicycle Lane Mapping Development” with faculty collaborator Dr. Mena Souliman. Junior Nathaniel Honea also received “Best Dressed” at the awards banquet.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AND HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

A critical requirement for the professional education given to the construction management students is the hands-on application of all they learn in the classroom and labs at UT Tyler in a real-life construction project that benefits

the community of Tyler. One of the ways this requirement is met is through the honors component to the Capstone course required of all seniors. This project is done in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Smith County. One of two main components of the project is an internship where students selected for the Honors Capstone course act as the owner's representatives for Habitat selected senior citizens. These critical

projects improve the lives of many seniors in the Tyler community and also provide the construction management students an opportunity to interact with real construction projects of great impact to the community. The second component involves two teams of three to four honors students who spend two semesters working with Habitat in the planning, the contracting and the supervision of the construction of two new or significantly

remodeled homes for Habitat for Life families. Once again, these two homes are real-life projects that provide families in the Tyler community with life-changing opportunities and also allow our students to gain invaluable experience in their blossoming careers as construction management leaders in our community.







# college

of nursing & health sciences

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences continued to focus on student success and faculty excellence in the 2019–20 academic year. Our college continues to grow in quality and quantity. 1) Student graduation rate increased 5.8 percent with comparison to the previous year; 2) We maintained a 95 percent passing rate on certification and licensure exams; 3) We received approval of two new master’s degree programs: Master of Science in nursing informatics – Quality & Safety and Master of Science in Nursing – Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner; 4) We started a year-around BSN program this summer; 5) Our faculty continued to engage in community initiatives through the Project Rose Research Institute for Sports Science and the INTUNE Mobile Clinic, which provides training of our family nurse practitioner students and medical services for East Texas.

**DR. YONG “TAI” WANG**  
DEAN

## PROGRAM RANKINGS

The graduate nursing program was ranked as one of the top 20 programs in the country by *US News & World Report* and the RN-BSN program was ranked No. 1 in the state of Texas in 2020 again by RegisterNurse.Org.

## SCHOOL OF NURSING

In congruence with the University’s Strategic Plan, the School of Nursing accomplishments in 2019–20 reflected the pillars and mission of UT Tyler.

### Student Success

In fall 2019, the School of Nursing announced a major change to the Baccalaureate in Nursing (BSN) program. Beginning in fall 2019, students will attend the program year-round, enabling them to graduate five-seven months earlier than the standard two-year plan. A third admission cycle was added to summer, thereby increasing the number of BSN students admitted each year by 50 percent.

A second major initiative was the creation of a concurrent Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN)-BSN program. The concurrent ADN-BSN provides students currently enrolled in a community college nursing program to simultaneously take courses at UT Tyler. This innovative initiative enables students enrolled in the program to graduate with their ADN and BSN at the same time rather than having to return at a later date to earn a BSN. This initiative directly supports the Institute of Medicine’s call to increase the percentage of BSN prepared nurses to 80 percent nationwide. What began as a pilot project with one community college partner and nine students in summer 2019 expanded to five community colleges and 90 students by spring 2020.

Additionally, graduates of the MSN-FNP program, the post-master’s FNP certificate and the BSN program performed well above the national average on certification and licensure exams.

**95%**  
Bachelor Science in Nursing (BSN)  
Board Pass Rate  
(National Average is 88%)

**100%**  
MSN Family Nurse Practitioner  
Board Pass Rate  
(National Average is 80%)

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

### New Initiatives

The School of Nursing responded to the COVID-19 crisis in creative ways to engage students during the 2019–20 academic year.

Drs. Angie McInnis and Marcie Lusk developed a unique means of teaching suturing to family nurse practitioner students. Using an overhead camera, students were able to easily visualize the faculty demonstration. They then performed return demonstrations online and displayed their finished product.

In place of the usual on-campus pinning and hooding ceremony, a virtual ceremony was held for spring 2020 graduates. Hundreds of students, families, faculty and staff celebrated students’ accomplishments. A drive-by graduation event celebrated the students on the Longview campus. Doctoral students were also celebrated virtually during Ph.D. dissertation and DNP capstone defenses held online.



DRIVE-BY GRADUATION CEREMONY.

### Students In Action

As emerging leaders in healthcare, students in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences are encouraged and supported to be active participants in advocacy and professional organizations. During this academic year, several students engaged at the local, state, and national level to work on behalf of nursing.



Rocky Sonemangkara, MSN student, was selected to represent UT Tyler as an Archer Graduate Fellow in Washington, D.C. Rocky spent the summer interning at Allergan.

For the second consecutive year, the TSNA top two positions are held by UT Tyler students. Dusty Birchfield, BSN student, was elected president of the Texas Student Nurses Association (TSNA). Daniel Diaz, BSN student, was elected TSNA vice president.

## RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

School of Nursing faculty and staff are engaged in research and scholarship aimed at promoting health and serving as leaders in healthcare.

School of Nursing faculty had 40 journal articles published, 11 journal articles accepted or in-press, four book chapters published and made 50 national/international presentations during the 2019–20 academic year.

Dr. Cathy Miller was recognized by international organizations for her work and research related to human trafficking. She received honorable mention for the 2019 Pearl Birnbaum Hurwitz Humanism in Healthcare Award, which crosses all health professions and is awarded through the Gold Foundation. She was one of three individuals in the country so honored. Dr. Miller was also honored by the Saleh Freedom Foundation and Global Strategic Operatives, a United Nations Initiative for her work in human trafficking.

Students were actively engaged in a new Rock Steady Boxing program for persons with Parkinson’s Disease. The research project was conducted by Drs. Beth Mastel-Smith and Melinda Hermanns.

In recognition of her excellence in teaching, Dr. Melinda Hermanns was inducted as a Fellow in the NLN Academy of Nursing Education.

The East Texas Nurse Practitioner organization recognized Dr. Angie McInnis as “Preceptor of the Year” and Dr. Amy Roberts as “Family Nurse Practitioner of the Year.”

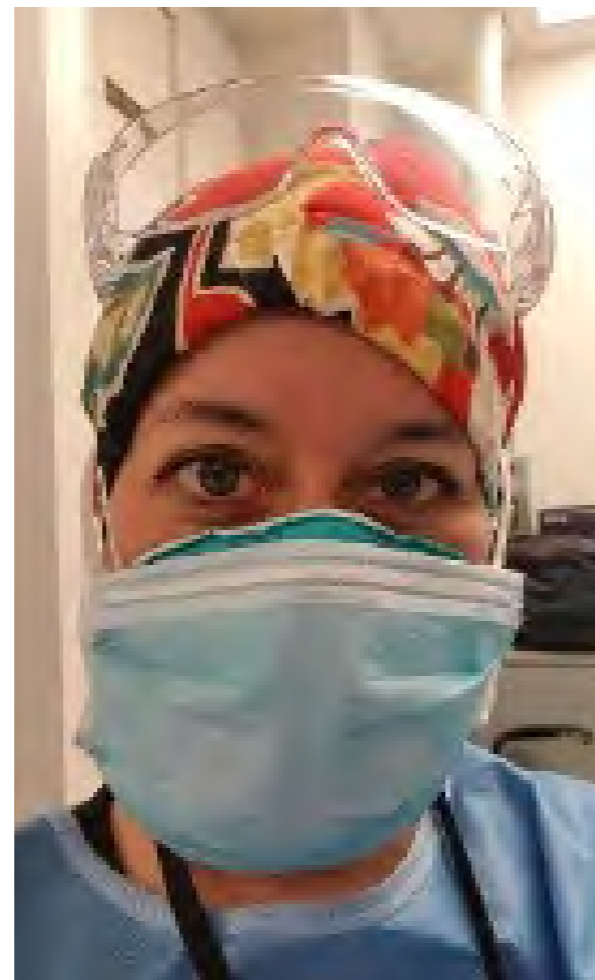
Dr. Cheryl Parker began her term as president of the American Nursing Informatics Association in January 2020.

Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, the new William R. Pettis Professorship in Nursing was established; becoming the fifth endowed professorship for the School of Nursing.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the UT Tyler community, students, faculty and staff are highly engaged in East Texas communities. A successful biannual Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Conference was held in fall 2019 with over 600 attendees.

Nurses in general were recognized in 2020. Even before COVID-19, 2020 was designated by the World Health Organization as “Year of the Nurse.” With the arrival of COVID-19, increased emphasis was placed on the importance of nurses and their significant contributions to the health of our nation and world. UT Tyler faculty, alumni and students were engaged in the efforts to educate, protect and treat our communities from the pandemic. Several of our current students, faculty and alumni responded to the calls for help and traveled to the hardest hit areas to provide relief to nurses on the front lines.



BSN ALUMNUS SHAB LILES IN NEW YORK TO ASSIST WITH COVID-19 CRISIS.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Longview University Center

- Students conducted several service activities during 2019–20. A sampling of activities includes:
  - providing annual flu shots to the UT Tyler community
  - creating and donating dozens of “Chemo Care Kits” to local oncology practices
  - partnering with National Alliance on Mental illness (NAMI) to collect and donate personal care items to the Patriot Pantry
  - partnering with “Be the Match” to enroll potential bone marrow donors in a national registry;
  - health screenings and education at the East Texas State Fair
  - creating dozens of comfort bags for children who are removed from their homes by Child Protective Services and are awaiting placement
  - sponsoring a fundraising event and used the money to provide necessities to the House of Hope in Longview
  - supporting Operation Shoebox
  - partnering with the College of Pharmacy and residents at UT Health Science Center to provide care for homeless persons at Under the Bridge screenings
  - participating in numerous community events such as Alzheimer’s Walks, Heart Walks, providing first aid at the American Cancer Society Cattle Baron’s gala and providing health education and screenings at Longview’s 903 Music Fest, the Paint Palestine Pink community event and the Brookshire’s Fresh 15 race.

Faculty and staff are engaged in various community organizations and volunteer countless hours within the community.

The School of Nursing was recognized by the Greater East Texas Black Nurses Association as a Platinum Sponsor.

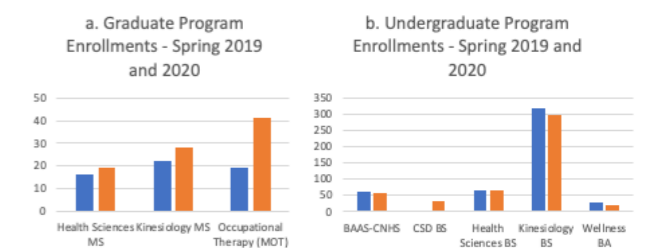
The Hiway 80 Rescue Mission Tyler honored the School of Nursing with their 2019 Great Commission Award.

Several faculty members partnered with the Alzheimer Alliance to conduct Dementia Boot Camps at numerous locations throughout the year. The specialized program is designed to help care givers understand what it is like to live with Alzheimer’s Disease or other types of dementia. This program is in high demand and will continue to be offered to support the individuals and families living with dementia.

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY

### Education

Total enrollment in the Department of Health and Kinesiology for the spring 2020 academic term was 563 students, including 88 graduate and 475 undergraduate students. This represents a 4.3 percent increase over spring 2019 in. The Department of Health and Kinesiology launched a new graduate Certificate in Global Health in the summer of 2020. We will continue to explore possible new programs and revisions to current programs to better serve potential students in health and kinesiology.



H&K PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS FOR SPRING 2019 AND 2020, A. FOR GRADUATE AND B. FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

### Accreditation

The Master of Occupational Therapy program has been granted Pre-Accreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). We are currently preparing for our onsite evaluation, which has been rescheduled for November 2020.





## RESEARCH

Faculty in the Department of Health and Kinesiology continue to enhance human performance and promote healthy living through excellence in research and scholarship.

Dr. Cheryl Cooper is serving as principle investigator on a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to study contributing factors for slips, trips and falls among Texas shrimp fishermen.

Dr. Michael Wiggs was awarded an NIH R01 grant (Co-PI with Dr. N. Greene, University of Arkansas) to study targeted approaches in prevention of cancer-cachexia.

Dr. Jimi Francis was awarded a National Science Foundation grant (Co-PI with Dr. Prabha Sundaravadivel, College of Engineering).

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

On October 11, 2019, the Department of Health and Kinesiology hosted the 9th Annual Physical Education Workshop in the Herrington Patriot Center featuring Master PE Teacher, Maria Corte from Mesa, Arizona. Fifty-four physical education teachers from the region participated (14 percent increase over 2018).

Two community engagement initiatives in H&K were launched; 1) FitSteps for Life Exercise Center, which offers exercise prescriptions and supervised exercise opportunities to local cancer patients, and 2) the UT Tyler Running Performance Lab, which offers fitness and performance testing for local endurance athletes on a for-fee basis. By January, approximately 14 community members were participating in the FitSteps exercise program, and 12 local athletes had been tested in the Running Performance Lab. Unfortunately,

the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily closed both of these efforts, but we hope to resume operations in the coming academic year.

Occupational Therapy and Communication Sciences and Disorders programs relocated to HPR building, and MOT classes and labs were held there.

A clinical associate professor was hired for the MOT program, to begin in fall 2020.

MOT students and faculty participated in clinical experiences in 5 local non-profit community agencies, providing consultation and direct care services to more than 100 individuals and groups.

## FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Arturo Arce-Esquivel was the Keynote speaker at an international symposium entitled, “The Aging Process”, School of Health Sciences - Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC), Lima - Peru. December 2019. Dr. Arce-Esquivel also serves on the Medical School Steering Committee at UT Tyler and the Fit City Tyler Steering Committee for the city of Tyler.

Dr. Cheryl Cooper was promoted to full professor.

Julie Hebert and Diane Brown presented at Texas Occupational Therapy Association’s Annual Conference in November 2019. Five students co-presented, and 100 percent of MOT students attended at least one day of the conference.

Diane Brown served as a reviewer for the Journal of Occupational Therapy Education (JOTE) during 2019–20.

Dr. Scott Spier was nominated as a candidate for President-Elect of the Texas Chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Dr. David Criswell served as a member of the 2020 NASA Space Biology – Integrative Physiology Grant Review Panel; and as a member of the Editorial Review Board for the *American Journal of Physiology-Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology*.

## INSTITUTE FOR INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE (IIH)

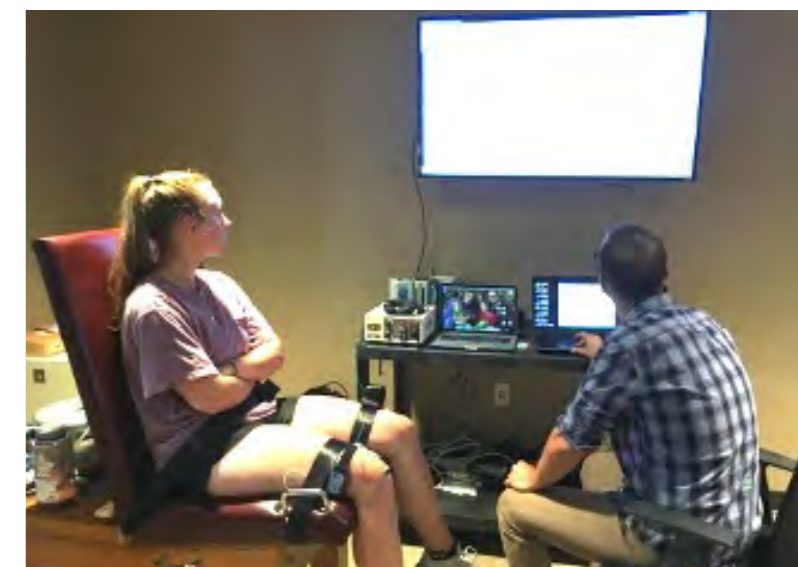
The Institute for Intergrated Healthcare (IIH) organized two research seminars by inviting eminent scientists with external research funding and established an IIH fellowship to support faculty.

## INTERNAL FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Provided \$1,750 to support Dr. Kathryn A. Courville from nursing for her research project, “Refining instruments to measure response readiness after bystander emergency response training (Stop the Bleed [STB])”
- Provided \$500 to support Health & Wellness Expo, chaired by Ashley Dalby from health and kinesiology

## OUTCOME OF PROJECT ROSE GIFT

- Conducted a pilot study to examine the effects of a 4-week vibration-induced hamstrings fatigue intervention on quadriceps weakness after ACL reconstruction
- Presented three conference papers in national meetings such as ORS and ACSM
- Submitted a manuscript to the Journal of Electromyography and Kinesiology, a quality peer-reviewed journal in the field of sports medicine



COLLABORATION WITH PROJECT ROSE FOR THE ACL PROJECT





# **BEN & MAYTEE FISCH** college of Pharmacy

The Fisch College of Pharmacy was proud to welcome 85 new pharmacists with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from The University of Texas at Tyler at the end of the spring semester. Many of these new graduates began their careers in community pharmacies and hospital settings across Texas, and a few students began their careers outside of the state. Additionally, several students entered post-graduate training as pharmacy residents in programs throughout the country.

In fall 2019, the Fisch College of Pharmacy welcomed the fifth class of students into their first professional year of the curriculum. The matriculated Class of 2023 was composed of 77 students out of a pool of nearly 300 high-ability applicants. Nearly half of the applicants were invited to one of eight onsite interviews.

Each interview event included a writing assessment, mathematical skills exam, multiple mini-interviews, along with a team-based learning simulation. In addition, family and friends were also invited to the event, where they had the opportunity to meet the faculty and staff and ask questions of the dean. Inviting family and friends allows for the students to share the experience with those people who often serve as support outside the College. These events provide an opportunity for applicants and their guests to have conversations with faculty, staff, and current pharmacy students about the program and the student-focused culture in the Fisch College of Pharmacy and across the UT Tyler campus. Through this process, the Fisch College of Pharmacy gains a better understanding of the students as individuals and helps select students who are a good fit for our Doctor of Pharmacy program. The applicants' background and training prepare them to enter into a dynamic, student-centered Doctor of Pharmacy program emphasizing communication, critical thinking and teamwork.

**DR. LANE J. BRUNNER**  
DEAN

## **INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

During the 2019–20 year, the Fisch College of Pharmacy led a significant growth of community outreach through the delivery of interprofessional collaborative practice. By working together as an interprofessional healthcare team, the healthcare professions from the University are helping to improve the health and education of the community and population of East Texas. During the 2019–20 year, interprofessional community engagement was achieved through three main projects: Van, Texas Interprofessional Education (IPE) Rural Health and Wellness Initiative, UT Tyler Nursing and Pharmacy Students' Collaborative Flu Vaccine Clinics; and the Interprofessional Clinic Under the Bridge.

The Van, Texas IPE Rural Health and Wellness Initiative was led by Angela Preston from the UT Tyler School of Nursing. Preston worked in collaboration with Dr. Jose Vega from the Fisch College of Pharmacy and Dr. Jimi Francis from the Department of Health and Kinesiology. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, students and faculty from the School of Nursing, Fisch College of Pharmacy and Department of Health and Kinesiology collaborated to deliver health and wellness education to the citizens of Van, Texas. The interprofessional teams participated in quarterly senior wellness luncheons focused at providing Van's senior population an opportunity to learn about health and nutrition topics in a social and engaging atmosphere at the Van Movie House. Students and faculty also participated at the Van Community Ministries (Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry) to further enhance their understanding of social determinants of health, transdisciplinary collaboration and community partnership. UT Tyler students worked together with Van community members to provide twice-monthly food pantry services.

In light of the vaping epidemic sweeping the nation and school district request, students delivered interactive presentations to Van Middle School, Van Junior High School and Van High School on the dangers of vaping. Faculty from the Fisch College of Pharmacy, Drs. Jessica Wooster and Justin Reinert, aided in the anti-vaping education project provided to the Van Independent School District.

The UT Tyler Nursing and Pharmacy Students' Collaborative Flu Vaccine Clinics were held

at the beginning of the 2019 flu season. The interprofessional clinics were coordinated by Sandra Savage of the School of Nursing. Faculty members from the Fisch College of Pharmacy, Drs. Jose Vega and Jessica Wooster, worked with Savage to coordinate nursing and pharmacy student interprofessional participation. Students and faculty participated in three clinics providing influenza vaccines and vaccine education to UT Tyler faculty, family members and students. The clinics were successful in vaccinating 283 people.

The Interprofessional Clinic Under the Bridge (iCIUB) was established in collaboration with the Church Under the Bridge and Hunger for Love community programs of Tyler. This interprofessional community engagement was led by Dr. Takova Wallace-Gay of the Fisch College of Pharmacy. Dr. Wallace-Gay worked in collaboration with Dr. Jose Vega, Angela Preston, Dr. Jimi Francis, Dr. Diane Brown of the Department of Health and Kinesiology (occupational therapy), Julie Mettlen, faculty member with Tyler Junior College (dental hygiene); and Dr. Philip Pippin of UT Health East Texas. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, students, medical residents and faculty from the Fisch College of Pharmacy, UT Tyler School of Nursing, UT Tyler Department of Health and Kinesiology, Tyler Junior College Dental Hygiene program, and UT Health East Texas Family Practice Medicine program each month provided interprofessional collaborative healthcare to the medically indigent population of Tyler. Working as an interprofessional healthcare team, the iCIUB successfully provided health and wellness education, health screenings, health and hygiene products and primary healthcare to clinic attendees.

## **NEW FACULTY**

The Fisch College of Pharmacy welcomed Yanyan Wang, Ph.D. as a new faculty member in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Dr. Wang earned her doctoral degree in pharmacology from Yale University and completed her postdoctoral research at the Salk Institute and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She was a faculty in pharmacology at the University of Pennsylvania prior to joining the University of Illinois College of Medicine as an independently funded research faculty member. During her career, she developed extensive collaborations with preeminent neurobiologists including Drs. Charles Stevens and Susumu



Tonegawa. Dr. Wang received a \$500,000 award from the UT System's Faculty Science and Technology and Retention (STARs) program.

## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

The Fisch College of Pharmacy created opportunities where student pharmacists are able to conduct research collaboratively with undergraduate students from across campus. Doctor of Pharmacy students prepare written research protocols and record training videos as well as coach undergraduate students as part of an advanced research experiential rotation. These rotations provide student pharmacists an avenue to learn about developing and implementing research ideas in an academic environment. Guided by Fisch College of Pharmacy faculty, the students are also able to peek into the life of a professor and gauge whether or not a career in academia may be the right path for them. By the end of the rotations, students co-author posters with faculty and give presentations at local, regional and national conferences, such as the Lyceum (UT Tyler research showcase), East Texas Research Conference and the American Chemical Society National Meeting.

### *Visiting Research Fellow*

During the 2019–20 academic year, the Fisch College of Pharmacy hosted Visiting Research Fellow Dr. Nathalia Pinheiro from the Universidade Federal de São Paulo in San Paulo, Brazil. Building on the research collaboration between Dr. Ayman Hamouda and Dr. Carla Máximo Prado of Universidade Federal de São Paulo, Dr. Pinheiro's work in the Fisch College of Pharmacy is focusing on delineating the role of the lung cholinergic pathway as a protective mediator working at the interface between the nervous and immune systems. These novel drugs have potential therapeutic uses in conditions associated with lung inflammation, such as acute respiratory distress syndrome and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases. Dr. Pinheiro's fellowship was supported by funding provided by the Fundacao A Pesquisa Do Estado De Sao Paulo.

### *Virtual Reality Course*

Research and scholarship are also conducted in the learning environment. An innovative Interdisciplinary Virtual Reality (VR) elective course was offered in collaboration with

the UT Tyler Department of Computer Science. This course was funded by the Presidential Interdisciplinary Internal Grant to research Enriching Teamwork through an Interdisciplinary Project to Design Virtual Reality (VR) Learning Activities. In the 2019 fall semester, three interdisciplinary student teams collaborated to build educational experiences in VR. The objective of the course was for these teams to design, develop and present a learning activity in VR that could be used in the future to teach students about pharmaceutical topics. All students learned about VR, including the different types of VR hardware currently available and how these may impact education in the future. They also learned how to use a game engine to make simple educational activities. Computer science students brought their expertise in computer programming to the teams while collaborating to learn about the pharmaceutical topics. The pharmacy students also contributed their pharmaceutical knowledge to the teams while learning about computer programming. Pharmaceutical topics covered this year included infectious disease therapeutics and accurate dispensing within a community pharmacy. The teams presented their impressive educational VR applications at a final presentation day in which others could experience the learning activity firsthand.

### *Drug Safety Collaboration*

Another novel research area encompasses using large data sets to analyze and predict adverse drug reactions. This drug safety research focuses on event data from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA maintains one of the largest government databases in the country, known as the FDA Adverse Event Reporting System, or FAERS. Millions of records have been created in the FAERS database from reports by healthcare professionals, consumers and drug manufacturers through the "MedWatch" reporting program. Analysis of this data yields insights into the important role of drug safety in healthcare, in particular, in the development of strategies to maintain safe patient care. In addition to significant scholarship, the research has resulted in an interdisciplinary patent application between the Fisch College of Pharmacy and Department of Computer Science in the Soules College of Business.







## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The use of tobacco products and subsequent nicotine additions is a serious health concern in East Texas. With the rise in vaping nicotine products amongst junior high and high school students, the health risks associated with nicotine use and inhalation of the compounds in vaping products had led to an acute health crisis in our community. To help combat this problem, the Fisch College of Pharmacy is actively pursuing opportunities to engage and educate pre-college students in the East Texas region. This initiative is led by Dr. Justin Reinert, whose current research efforts revolve around adolescent nicotine abuse in East Texas.

This phase of Dr. Reinert's work uncovered the rate of nicotine and vaping use by this population to be over double the national average, a finding that has allowed him to work with other vested parties into launching an adolescent nicotine cessation program from the Fisch College of Pharmacy.

Fisch College of Pharmacy faculty have partnered with several community organizations throughout the East Texas region. As the COVID-19 pandemic started to impact our local communities, Dr. Wallace-Gay assisted the East Texas Human Needs Network by helping with COVID-19 screenings at local shelters caring for the homeless and underserved in Tyler. The screenings were designed to identify high

risk individuals and direct them to appropriate healthcare or provide quarantine quarters.

Additionally, Dr. Wallace-Gay continued the partnership between UT Tyler and the Jacksonville Independent School District by enlisting student pharmacists to help deliver health-track high school student lab sessions on point-of-care medical testing.

Dr. Wallace-Gay has also been leading efforts at the Fisch College of Pharmacy to expand clinical interprofessional services in partnership with Church Under the Bridge Ministries and Hunger for Love. These services include physician, pharmacy, nursing, dental hygiene and occupational therapy care. The interprofessional clinic convenes once a month on Saturday to provide health screening services and to help navigate care options for community members who live or congregate under the bridge in downtown Tyler.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Fisch College of Pharmacy was approved for a new chapter of the Rho Chi Society, the academic honor society for pharmacy. Rho Chi encourages outstanding scholarly achievement and recognizes those students who maintain exceptionally high grades during their academic pharmacy path. At the end of the academic year, the Rho Chi Chapter in the Fisch College of Pharmacy inducted 23

graduates from the Classes of 2019 and 2020 along with students from the Class of 2021 into the newly formed Epsilon Sigma Chapter.

After undergoing a national selection process, Fisch College of Pharmacy student pharmacists Taylor Shults and Baileigh Weatherford were invited to attend the 2020 Pharmacy Ownership and Leadership Academy at the University of Arkansas Medical School. The academy focuses on the fundamentals of pharmacy ownership and leadership.

The Fisch College of Pharmacy Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) was selected for the UT Tyler Student Organization of the Year award at the 14th Annual Student Leadership and Service Awards. Also, Cheryl Tronzon, 2019–20 SNPhA President, was selected as the recipient of the UT Tyler Emerging Leader Award at the 14th Annual Student Leadership and Service Awards.

The American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) of the Fisch College of Pharmacy was recognized as one of four outstanding chapters for their women's health campaign.

Dr. Takova Wallace-Gay was recognized by the Texas Pharmacy Association as the 2020 Bowl of Hygiea Awardee. This award annually

recognizes one pharmacist in each participating state pharmacy organization who has provided outstanding records of civic leadership in their communities. Awardees are acknowledged for their local, state, and national organization services as well as devotion of time, talents and resources to community causes.

Dr. Jessica Wooster earned the Texas Pharmacy Association 2020 Distinguished Young Pharmacist Award, which recognizes a pharmacist who has graduated within the last 10 years and demonstrates leadership excellence, contributes to their community and the TPA, and advances the practice of pharmacy.

## FRIEND AND FUND DEVELOPMENT

The Fisch College of Pharmacy received an exceptional donation from Dale and Edna Walsh. The \$500,000 gift is dedicated to recruiting and enrolling exceptional pharmacy students into the Fisch College of Pharmacy.

The Bernard Foundation donated \$40,000 to pilot an educational program for Texas pharmacists and technicians to advance their sterile compounding skills. The program has been spearheaded by Drs. Pamela Ochoa and José Vega and is beginning to address the specialized training and education needs of the profession in Texas.



# the graduate school

This year was marked by positive changes in The Graduate School. The graduate admissions office is under new leadership with the hiring of Brittani Riley as director. Genaro Tovar-Murillo joined us as the new data specialist and a graduate admissions representative. Additionally, Jennifer Moore is a new graduate admissions representative.

The Graduate School saw continued increases in degrees conferred, and thesis and dissertation production rose 24 percent (from 55 to 68) over the past year. Scholar Works, our online digital repository of over 2,500 scholarly works, surpassed 78,000 downloads this year.

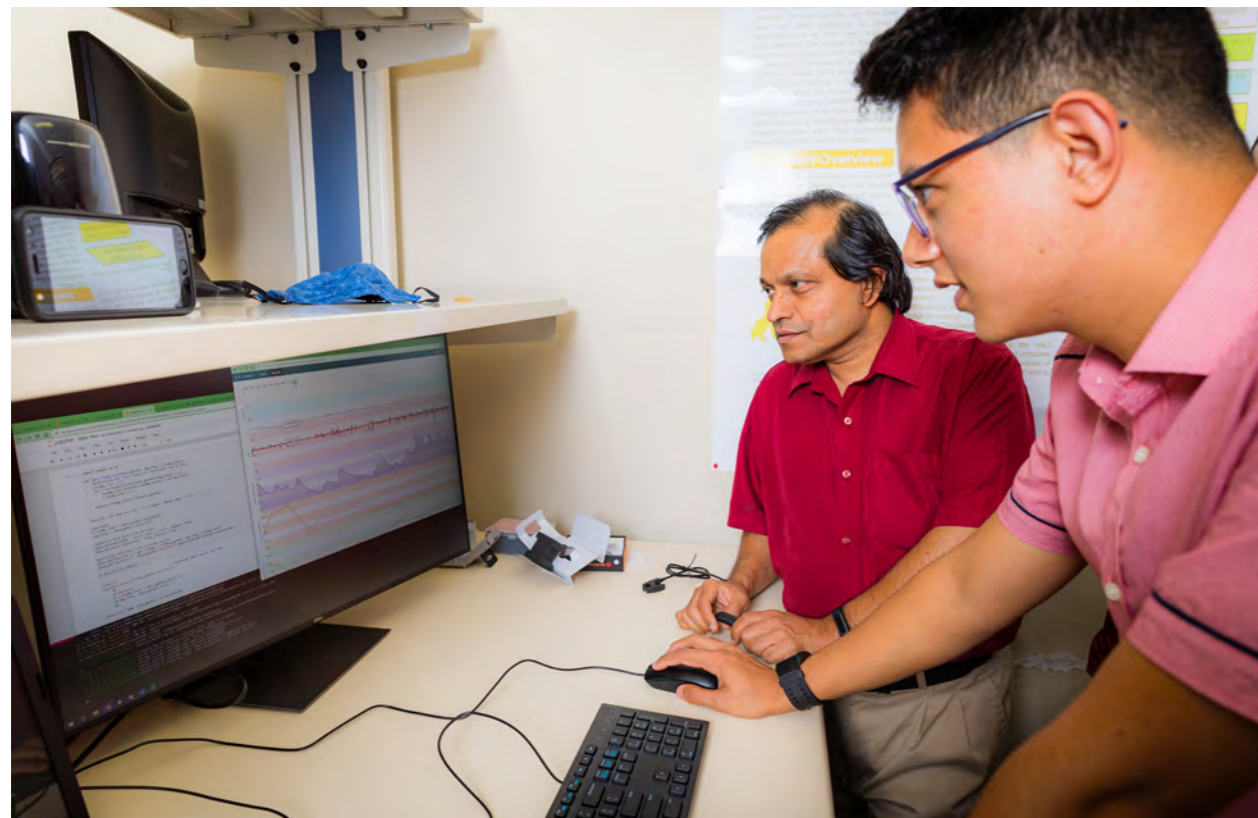
Several new programs were added to our portfolio, including the Doctor of Education in School Improvement, the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner MSN; and the Nursing Informatics, Quality & Safety MSN.

All graduate programs have now moved to Image Now Workflow and enjoy the speed and ease

of the paperless admission process. Faculty are able to access Workflow from off campus, which allows for a faster admission decision.

The graduate admission process is getting another boost from some of the major technological upgrades the team has been working on this year. In collaboration with the Office of Institutional Analysis, we now have a Graduate Admissions Funnel Dashboard that gives us valuable data on applications, admission and enrollment for the past five years. Along with the undergraduate admission team, we are preparing to launch a new, more robust CRM that will help in both recruiting and admissions. In tandem with the CRM, we will also introduce a new graduate school application.

This year, more emphasis has been placed on “intent” marketing for graduate students. Recruiting graduate students is more challenging, since they have a longer and less linear journey than undergraduates. Over 70 percent of prospective students are “stealth”



applicants, which means they apply without ever contacting our office. We have implemented a number of new tools to both determine their intent behind pursuing a graduate degree and to provide the information based on that information that will help them in their decision making. The [PROSPECTIVE GRADUATE STUDENT ONLINE TOOL KIT](#) offers a number of interactive tools that answer some of the most important questions prospects have – Am I eligible? How much will it cost? What’s my return on investment? How do I prepare to apply? These tools allow prospective students to take a more proactive role in the process.

Along the same lines, we began adding academic adviser contact information at the time of admission and are adding Graduate Patriot Advising reports to myUTTyler to help students take more control of and responsibility for their success in program completion.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the external review with the Council of Graduate Schools has

been delayed. As soon as conditions permit, the reviewers will conduct their on-site visit at UT Tyler. The Grad School 180 competition was also cancelled due to COVID-19, but participants were offered the opportunity to record their presentations for future use. We are gearing up for the next competition in spring 2021 and look forward to a successful event.

While COVID-19 has definitely impacted all of us this year, there have still been bright moments. The graduate admissions office celebrated our 10-year anniversary in May 2020. To mark the occasion, we launched a recruiting campaign that resulted in 152 applications being submitted in one day! Most were from the US (87), but 65 were from international prospects – primarily Bangladesh, Nigeria, Nepal, India and Pakistan. Computer science, mechanical engineering, civil engineering and electrical engineering were the most popular programs among international applicants, followed by MBA, biology and health sciences.





# office of research and scholarship

The Office of Research and Scholarship (ORS) encourages and supports research, scholarship and creative works among UT Tyler faculty, staff and students.

Staff in the ORS provide expert guidance and support for sponsored research and programs across the grant cycle including identifying sources of funding, assisting with proposal development, negotiating contracts, setting up and monitoring budgets and ensuring compliance. In addition, ORS staff assist UT Tyler, faculty and staff in the protection of intellectual property and technology transfer.

The Office of Research and Scholarship envisions UT Tyler as a university nationally renowned for research and scholarship that changes lives.

## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

The Office of Research and Scholarship supports research and scholarship at UT Tyler by administering the Internal Grants Program and Faculty Development Leave Program, providing pre-award, post-award and compliance support services to faculty and staff involved in externally-funded research and sponsored programs and assisting with intellectual property protection and technology transfer. The ORS also supports and collaborates with several UT Tyler committees, programs and centers to support research and scholarship at the University and surrounding East Texas region. The ORS hired a research compliance coordinator in 2019–20 to ensure that research activities at UT Tyler comply with federal, state, UT Tyler and sponsor policies and procedures and to assist the Institutional Review Board and other research-related committees in performing their duties. A grants and contracts specialist and two graduate research assistants were also hired to assist the ORS in providing faculty and staff with the assistance and resources needed to seek funding opportunities, develop proposals and implement research and scholarship activities.

### Sponsored Research and Programs

Submitted grant proposals: The Office of Research and Scholarship assisted faculty and staff in submitting 92 proposals to external funding sources in AY 2019–20 including:

- National Institutes for Health: 15 proposals
- National Science Foundation: 16 proposals
- Texas state agencies: 9 proposals
- Private foundations: 23 proposals
- Other agencies and institutions of higher education: 29 proposals
- Active awards: The ORS assisted faculty and staff in managing 73 active awards during AY 2019–20.
- During FY2020, we received \$7,677,246 in external sponsored awards. This includes \$5,194,610 in institutional funds from the CARES Act. \$1,283,407 of the total is classified as Research.

### Internal Grants Program

The Internal Grants Program supports faculty and staff research and programs that advance the University's research productivity, scholarly output and creative endeavors. Grants are awarded through a competitive process held in the spring in six categories. Twenty-nine applications were submitted in response to the request for proposals during the 2020-21 academic year. Twenty awards were made totaling \$159,953. Funding will be made available to the awardees beginning September 1, 2020. These awards are expected to pay substantial dividends in coming years by leading to an increase in the number of and success rate of grant proposals submitted to external sponsors.

### STARs and Rising STARs Awards

The ORS supports the advancement of research at UT Tyler by assisting in the preparation and submittal of packages seeking UT System funding in the form of STARs and Rising STARs awards to attract talented faculty and scholars to UT Tyler and then support their research and scholarship pursuits. Four STARs awards and three Rising STARs awards were received by UT Tyler faculty in AY 2019–20 totaling \$3.1 million.

### Student Success

The Office of Research and Scholarship administers the Internal Grants Program that provides research opportunities for students. The ORS also supports faculty efforts to acquire extramural funding for research and programs that enrich student education and success. In AY 2019–20 internally- and externally-funded research and sponsored programs helped support 23 graduate students and 55 undergraduate students.

### Research Council

The UT Tyler Research Council, co-chaired by Dr. Michael McGinnis, associate professor of civil engineering, and Dr. Joshua Banta, associate professor of biology, provides consultation and guidance on programs and policies pertaining to faculty research. The council has several responsibilities including providing oversight of the institution's research committees, serving as a hearing board for "conflict of interest" cases involving faculty researchers, reviewing internal grant research proposals; and making award recommendations to the associate provost of research and scholarship. The Research Council members reviewed the internal grant proposals and selected the 20 Internal Grants Program awardees for 2020-21.





### ***Institutional (IPAC)***

The UT Tyler IPAC committee, chaired by Dr. Amir Mirmiran, provost and vice president of academic affairs, provides consultation and guidance on intellectual property and technology transfer disclosures. In 2019–20, the committee reviewed two disclosures of inventions resulting in patents that are in provisional status.

### ***Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer***

The following patents are pending:

- Pharmacovigilance System to Predict Drug Reaction Severity, Dr. Robert Schumaker, Soules College of Business, and Dr. Michael Veronin, Ben and Maytee Fisch College of Pharmacy; patent is in provisional stage.
- Search and Retrieval System and Method, Dr. Nary Subramanian, Soules College of Business; patent application is in process.
- Exercise Ball, Dr. Yong Tai Wang, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Dr. Chung Hyun Goh, College of Engineering, Dr.

Weerawat Limroongreugrat, Dr. Ting Liao; patent expected by end of August.

### **FACULTY DEVELOPMENT**

The Office of Research and Scholarship provided eight faculty and staff development workshops on topics such as searching for funding sources, the internal grants program, creating biographical sketches, collaborative funding opportunities and intellectual property law. A new initiative, the Research Fellows Program, began in September 2019. A cohort of 13 faculty and one staff member participated in a series of monthly workshops designed to assist them in developing proposals to submit to external sponsors. Several of the participants submitted internal grant proposals, proposals to external sponsors or both. In spring 2020, five engineering faculty participated in a series of workshops designed to help them develop proposals for the National Science Foundation’s Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER). Three of the participants submitted proposals in August 2020, and two will submit their proposals in 2021.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

UT Tyler in collaboration with the UT Health Science Center at Tyler, Texas College and Jarvis Christian College, planned the second East Texas Research Conference, themed: “Making East Texas Communities Stronger.” The conference planning committee, co-chaired by Dr. Kouider Mokhtari, UT Tyler assistant provost for research and scholarship, and Dr. Steve

Idell, dean of the School of Medical Biological Sciences and senior vice president of research at UT Health Science Center at Tyler, consisted of faculty and staff from the four host institutions. The conference planning committee was assisted by ORS staff. The conference, originally scheduled for April 3, 2020, was cancelled due to efforts put in place by federal, state and local governments to stop the spread of COVID-19.







# UNDERGRADUATE & online education

The Office of Undergraduate and Online Education's sphere of influence touches multiple areas of UT Tyler, East Texas and our state. Our work is guided by strategic goals that enable us to collaboratively work to advance the mission and vision of the University, strengthen undergraduate and online education programs and activities; and advance the reputation of Academic Affairs and UT Tyler.

The following strategic goals guide our work as well as frame our accomplishments. All individuals within Undergraduate and Online Education strive to:

- Advance academic supports for students spanning their careers at UT Tyler.
- Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and instructional staff enabling them to be successful in various components of their work.
- Launch and sustain outstanding programs, interventions and supports for undergraduate and online education across UT Tyler.
- Provide data for the improvement and evaluation of programs, interventions and supports associated with undergraduate and online education.
- Expand the research base for disciplines and components covered by undergraduate and online education.
- Enhance the reputation of UT Tyler Academics and Academic Affairs.
- Increase affinity toward UT Tyler within East Texas communities, businesses and organizations.

Although the 2019–20 academic year was significantly impacted by COVID-19, great strides were made with respect to advancing our strategic goals. We are excited to highlight some of our work from the 2019–20 academic year.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS

Once a student is admitted to UT Tyler, work begins to support them in their journey to earn their desired degree. Academic supports refer to a wide variety of instructional methods, educational services and resources provided to UT Tyler students to help them meet learning standards, succeed in their courses and earn their desired academic degree.

Through the sponsorship of the OnCourse project, a UT System supported grant, the Office of Academic Success coordinated and facilitated the work of political science faculty as they authored two Open Educational Resource (OER) textbooks. POLS 2305: Introductory American Government and POLS 236: Introductory Texas Politics are required for all majors. Typically, the textbook for each course costs between \$75-\$100. During 2019–20, the use of the OER textbooks saved students approximately \$39,525 in POLS 2305 and \$55,200 in POLS 2306 resulting in a total savings of \$94,725. In addition, these OER textbooks were shared with local community college partners.

On Sept. 23, 2019, the Freshman Book Committee hosted Caltech seismologist Dr. Lucy Jones for a talk about her book, *The Big Ones: How Natural Disasters Have Shaped Us (and What We Can Do About Them)*. More than 150 were in attendance at this event, which also included a reception and book signing. Her lecture featured highlights from her book and included details about the interesting people and activists she met while conducting her research. The lecture concluded with a lengthy Q&A which addressed climate change, possible sites for the next "big one" and intercultural communication during times of natural disasters.

To support students completing their spring 2020 courses during the COVID-19 pandemic, Undergraduate and Online Education units were extremely active to support students and faculty. 1) The Office of Academic Success purchased and provided hot spot boxes to assist students with limited Internet access enabling students to successfully complete their courses. 2) The Office of Digital Learning worked to assist faculty as they moved their courses to a remote delivery modality. For spring 2020, all UT Tyler courses moved to a remote delivery modality, and the Office of Digital Learning also supported over 17,600 online proctored examinations ensuring

that over 35,580 Zoom sessions enabled students, faculty and staff to continue their work. 3) The Office of Academic Success transitioned all face-to-face sessions of Supplemental Instruction and PASS Tutoring Center sessions to online learning. 4) UT Tyler's Academic Affairs office implemented an emergency grade change plan, allowing undergraduate students to opt for a grade of Pass or Fail for their spring 2020 courses. This enabled our students to have minimal impacts on their GPA due to COVID-19. We had 265 grades converted to pass and 774 grades changed to fail. This represented 4.21 percent of undergraduate grades earned in the spring term.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FACULTY AND INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Faculty and staff are paramount in the overall success of UT Tyler. When our faculty grow and are successful, so are our students. Undergraduate and Online Education collaboratively works with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Academy of Distinguished Teachers, the UT Tyler Faculty Development Advisory Council, the Robert R. Muntz Library, the Office of Research and Scholarship and the Office of International Programs to advance learning opportunities for faculty, instructional staff and graduate teaching assistants.

Each academic year begins with our New Faculty Orientation sessions that enables units from across the campus to work with UT Tyler's new faculty. New Faculty Orientation is a time when our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the Office of Digital Learning devote significant time and resources to ensure new faculty are ready for the launch of their careers at UT Tyler. In addition to providing a strong start for new faculty through New Faculty Orientation, our division noted the following accomplishments.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) offered 33 faculty development sessions that offered 764.5 hours of professional development during the fall and spring. These sessions consisted of 26 faculty-led teaching sessions, 12 staff-led teaching sessions, and six keynote speakers. A total of 591 participants attended these CETL events. The Office of Digital Learning also sponsored over 15 campuswide workshops on topics such as using mobility technology in the classroom,



Canvas assessment features and online collaboration tools. In addition, working through the CETL, 28 faculty received their Team-Based Learning (TBL) Fundamental Certification.

Twenty-five faculty began ACUE's Effective Teaching Practices course this May. This is an intensive program that guides faculty through 32 modules and spans eight months. This opportunity is funded through UT System and support from the academic affairs office.

The Council of Academic Deans, Office of Academic Affairs, the Faculty Development Advisory Council, Chairs Council and Undergraduate and Online Education developed a systematic faculty development plan with focused professional development plans for new faculty (0-3 years) and experienced faculty. The plan was piloted this year so refinements could be made for subsequent years.

Student success tips generated by faculty and Undergraduate and Online Education, were sent to UT Tyler faculty every two weeks.

Extensive professional development was offered during the 2020 spring and summer terms to assist faculty in transitioning to an online delivery mode due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Office of Digital Learning staff, specifically the digital support specialists, worked with faculty and instructional staff to make necessary changes to an online delivery mode.

## LAUNCH OF PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS

Undergraduate and Online Education collaboratively works with UT Tyler's colleges to support faculty and students as they engage in advancing their discipline and master course content while earning their degrees and making a difference in society. Some of this year's biggest accomplishments include:

- UT Tyler's Greater Texas Foundation Scholars Program, a special program for early college high school students funded by the Greater Texas Foundation, completed its second year and had 33 percent of our initial cohort graduate in two years with the remainder of the first cohort on track to graduate in three years. This far exceeds the national average of 40 percent of early college

students that graduate in six years with an undergraduate degree after high school.

- The Offices of Digital Learning and Academic Affairs launched Proctor U as the single proctoring service for online assessments. This proved to be extremely helpful when all UT Tyler courses went to a remote delivery mode during the 2020 spring and summer terms due to COVID-19.
- In order to improve students' ability to plan their degree program in advance and understand their progress toward their degree, we launched the Patriot Advising Report (PAR) Planner. The planner also includes a "what if" feature enabling students to determine their progress if they changed their major. In addition, a GPA calculator was released to students to support their planning efforts.
- UT Tyler's PASS Tutoring Center met the professional standards of skill and training for tutors and peer educators and was awarded Certified Program Status by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). As UT Tyler's Supplemental Instruction program received its national accreditation last year, both student support resources have attained national certification status.

## RESEARCH BASE

As members of the Academy, it is an expectation that we advance our respective guilds. Undergraduate and Online Education is committed to contributing to the generation of new knowledge and the application of scholarship for undergraduate and online education. The following showcase our efforts as stewards of our respective disciplines.

- The Faculty Learning Community (FLC) in Service Learning had a book chapter published: McWhorter, R. R., Owens, M., Neel, J., Rueter, J. A., & Doepker, G. M. (2020). Examining the Adult Learning in "Giving Back" Initiatives. In Okojie, M. C., & Boulder, T. C. (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Adult Learning in Higher Education* (pp. 473-500). IGI Global.
- The 5th Annual Lyceum successfully reformatted to an online conference via UT Tyler Scholar Works this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. With over 90 projects

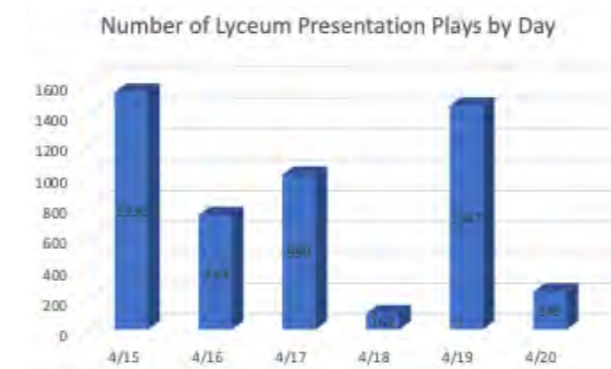
and 230 student participants across all six colleges, the Lyceum showcased various research students conducted over the year. This virtual conference included the largest number of student participants ever, increasing participation by over 100 percent.

On April 15, 2020, faculty, students, staff and community members could visit the Lyceum repository on Scholar Works and view all 90 presentations. Students were able to share their presentations on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, allowing for student engagement throughout the event. Faculty judges were recruited to watch each presentation, and winners were announced on April 17, 2020.

## IMPACT OF THE 5TH ANNUAL LYCEUM:



NUMBER OF PRESENTATION DOWNLOADS PER COUNTRY SINCE THE LYCEUM



NUMBER OF TIMES THE PRESENTATION VIDEOS HAVE BEEN PLAYED, PER DAY.

Moving to an online platform greatly increased the impact of the Lyceum. As demonstrated by Figure 1, research conducted by UT Tyler students has been viewed across the globe, reaching well beyond our local audience. Moreover, the influence of the Lyceum is long-lasting as this

research will continue to be available for viewing. Despite the worldwide pandemic, this year the Lyceum covered all four pillars of UT Tyler's strategic plan – student success, student engagement, research and scholarship; and community engagement, resulting in a great event for students, faculty and community partners.

## ENHANCING THE REPUTATION OF UT TYLER ACADEMICS

Undergraduate and Online Education works to promote the success of our students and faculty, and in turn, advance the reputation of academic programs, activities and initiatives at UT Tyler.

The UT Tyler Honors Program had another award-winning year with UT Tyler Honors students winning awards at national, regional and local conferences.

- At the National Honors Conference (NCHC) in November, two UT Tyler honors students, Alex Craig (CE-MENG) and Ebony Griffin (CAS-BIO) won first place for their research posters in the Business/Engineering/Computer Science and Environmental Science categories, respectively. Last year is the second consecutive year that UT Tyler students have won the awards in these categories.
- NCHC recognizes only 10 students at each annual conference, and UT Tyler was the only institution to win multiple awards in 2019. For the past two years, UT Tyler has won 20 percent of the NCHC awards.

Alex Craig's poster is entitled "Handheld Vapor Phase Hydrogen Peroxide Decontamination Device" and was directed by faculty mentor Dr. Shih-Feng Chou.

Ebony Griffin's poster is entitled "Using Ecological Niche Modeling to Assess the Population Decline of *Orconectes maletae* in Texas and Louisiana Populations" and was directed by faculty mentor Dr. Lance Williams.

The Great Plains Honors Council Conference (GPHC) was not held in person this year. Conference organizers awarded the Britt Poster Awards to recognize excellence in undergraduate research. Alex Craig took home the top prize for the Over 60 Credit Hours STEM Poster category.



## ARCHER FELLOWSHIP

Five UT Tyler students participated in the Archer Center Fellowship Program in Washington, D.C. during the 2019–20 academic year.

### *Undergraduate Students*

Gavin Downing, CAS-Political Science  
Internship: The Brookings Institution  
Veterans of America

Melanie Escobar, CAS-History and  
CEP-Psychology  
Internship: Iraq and Afghanistan

Julie Gobble, CAS-Political Science  
Internship: World Resources Institute

Anna Claire Ham, CAS- Political Science  
Internship: Human Rights Campaign

### *Graduate Student*

Katie Hicken, CAS-Master of Public Administration  
Internship: Lone Star Project

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

All Undergraduate and Online Education faculty and staff members actively strive to increase the East Texas community and state's affinity toward UT Tyler. We welcome the opportunity to bring positive attention to the work of UT Tyler as well as showcase our commitment to advance East Texas.

- The Longview University Center hosted its inaugural golf tournament. In partnership with the Texas Wounded Warrior Foundation, the event raised over \$14,000 for a scholarship fund benefiting veterans, active duty, reservists and their dependents.
- Longview University Center nursing students volunteered their time to help the community in many ways. They provided health-related information and services to Longview Raising Highly Capable Kids, Hiway 80 Rescue, the Homeless Resource Fair and for the National Night Out celebration.
- Undergraduate and Online Education hosted our second High School Counselors Conference, where high school counselors

learned about ways to better prepare their students for college, making wise decisions about which advanced credential would be most beneficial for students (e.g. dual credit, AP, IB, CLEP exams), toxic course combinations and more. High school counselors were able to earn CEUs from this event.

- As COVID-19 prohibited our traditional graduation ceremonies from taking place, the Longview University Center hosted a drive through graduation to celebrate the accomplishments of students graduating with their nursing degree and entering the profession.
- The Longview University Center nursing faculty and students, in partnership with area hospitals and agencies, led Stop the Bleed courses for the community. Stop the Bleed is a national awareness campaign that encourages bystanders to become trained and equipped to help in a bleeding emergency before medical professionals arrive. In addition, the nursing faculty and students joined efforts to raise awareness

about the coronavirus. Students drafted public service announcements and created posters to provide the public with information about healthy habits to stop the spread of COVID-19.

## CONCLUSION

Although this does not capture all of the work accomplished by individuals within Undergraduate and Online Education, we hope it provides insight into how we are committed to advancing UT Tyler's vision and mission to be the economic and education driver of East Texas.





# office of *International Programs*

At The University of Texas at Tyler, the Office of International Programs (OIP) functions as a catalyst for internationalization. We strive to cultivate a dynamic international presence amongst our students, faculty and community by strengthening relationships with our international partners, celebrating the cultural diversity of our international students with our campus and the Tyler community.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES

As new and continuing international students from over 60 different countries make UT Tyler home for the next few years, we strive to provide meaningful interactions that go beyond to ensure our students feel welcomed in our community. Our goal was to increase the number of cultural programming activities offered to both international and domestic students.

We started the fall semester with our new tradition, Fall Kick Off, where new and continuing international students were able to meet the OIP staff, faculty, deans, community members and other students from UT Tyler. The cultural events continued throughout the academic year with events such as the Mexican Independence Celebration, Diwali and Tihar Celebration, International Education Week, Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas party and Lunar Year.

OIP also provided presentations to international students on the benefits of their F-1 student visa which included orientation presentation, optional practical trainings and curricular practical training. Through these presentations and workshops, international students can gain full knowledge of the benefits of the F-1 visa. The OIP website was restructured and given a new look to make navigation easier for prospective and continuing students. Many processes were streamlined in order to improve efficiency.

A total of eight exchange visitors conducted research at UT Tyler. Their disciplines included the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Soules College of Business and Fisch College

of Pharmacy. The exchange visitors conduct research alongside our faculty, and their research provides an exchange of ideas and insights to UT Tyler. Our exchange visitors volunteered and participated in activities that provided them with an opportunity to share their language, culture and history with our UT Tyler community.

## STUDY ABROAD

To increase awareness and help shape our UT Tyler students into global citizens and learn about the great opportunities and benefits of study abroad, OIP hosted a Study Abroad Fair during the fall semester. During the event, UT Tyler students learned about the different types of study abroad programs and scholarships such as the International Education Fee Scholarship (IEFS), Dorothy Bradley Brown International Studies Endowed Scholarship (DBB) and the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship. In addition, the Presidential Fellow Scholarship can now be used to help fund study abroad programs. To help increase study abroad participation, a strong recruitment initiative was implemented. This was accomplished by hosting multiple presentations on campus and in classrooms as well as study abroad information booths on campus and sending email blasts to students. OIP will continue to participate in the various campus events such as Patriot Palooza and Patriot Premiere to help increase study abroad awareness.

UT Tyler enrolled two exchange students from our partner institution, the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield, England. One student studied with us the entire academic school year while, the second student studied for a semester. Both students provided intercultural interactions in our classrooms, while outside of the classroom, they learned about the unique culture of East Texas.

OIP partnered with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and presented “Not All Classrooms Have Four Walls,” where faculty became familiar with initiating and leading a study abroad program. A total of eight study abroad faculty-led programs were approved for summer 2020. A virtual exchange program

became available to UT Tyler through the Texas International Education Consortium (TIEC) and the Stevens Initiative Program. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UT Tyler was the only institutional college approved to teach two virtual courses. Through these virtual programs, students can gain a global education experience. Due to travel restrictions as a result of COVID-19, all spring and summer programs were cancelled.

## INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (IELI)

During the fall semester, IELI hosted students from UT Tyler’s partner Qujing University in China. Due to COVID-19, the spring visit from Qujing University was postponed. IELI quickly adapted to the ongoing global pandemic and initiated an online learning program for English learners. Levels 1-4 were made available online.

## LOOKING AHEAD

OIP will continue to cultivate an international environment and increase international student enrollment through the following initiatives:

- Develop an international committee comprised of representatives from various units on campus.
- Execute the new tuition waiver for Mexican citizens which allows students to pay in-state tuition and fees.
- Initiate an international student mentor program.
- Develop additional academic partnerships with international institutions.
- Continue to partner with various departments on campus and student organizations.
- Continue to participate in UT Tyler graduate admissions webinars and events.
- Continue to have a strong presence on campus and social media.







# ROBERT R. muntz library

The Robert R. Muntz Library's mission and vision align to support the four pillars of the University's strategic plan.

## MISSION

The MUNTZ LIBRARY advances the UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN'S four pillars. To accomplish this, the library will excel in collecting and providing access to quality educational and scholarly resources; offering excellent and timely services and events; making available current technologies; and creating an inspiring and welcoming physical environment.

## VISION

We aspire to be the University's intellectual gateway, supporting the discovery, exchange and advancement of ideas.

## STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT

The library successfully completed last year's initiatives including acquiring 26 up-to-date computers for the teaching lab on the fourth floor, renovating a conference room on the second floor, offering multiple professional development workshops for faculty through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in the fall; and recruiting two new librarians. Michael Skinner, who formerly worked at UT Tyler, has returned from North Dakota to serve as a health sciences librarian. Sarah Meintz-Lacombe, a freshly-minted librarian, came from Minnesota to serve as the history librarian.

The library takes active steps to reach out to the campus community, hosting events to enhance academics and student connection to the University. The fall semester saw the usual array of student orientation activities including participation in Swoop Camp, staffing first-day tables and hosting a putt-putt golf themed open house. During banned books week in September, librarians hosted "Blind Date with a Banned Book," with sessions in the library and the University Center. A speaker from the Daughters of the American Revolution made a presentation about women's suffrage and the 19th amendment, which included a march across campus. The library also screened the documentary "Paywall: The Business of Scholarship," which looks inside the astounding profit margins of some of the world's leading academic publishers and how the movement toward open access can impact science and research globally. Once again, our most popular event, the Night Against Procrastination in partnership with the PASS Tutoring Center, Writing Center and New Student and Family Programs, had a great turnout of over 400 students. There was pizza, door prizes, and of course, lots of studying!

Special events were cancelled after the time of COVID-19, but the library continued to support the academic success of students. The Robert R. Muntz Library was the only library in the UT System that did not close. The library remained open with a skeleton crew to serve at the computer lab, offering workstations, webcams, printing, Wi-Fi and study space for students. The library also added subscriptions that are generally useful and informative, but especially so in the current times. The library licensed campuswide both the online *New York Times* as well as the online *Chronicle of Higher Education*, a news site dedicated to covering colleges and universities.

Academic libraries have spent the last 20 years transitioning to a digital environment. The Muntz Library was also well-prepared to offer services and resources primarily online when all classes went digital in the spring. Nearly all materials are electronic, resources are embedded in Canvas, and there are online research guides for every area of study. This summer, the library is updating its video tutorials, so library users can receive assistance remotely for themselves. Librarians, of course, were also available via chat, phone, email and Zoom during the crisis.

## RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

The Robert R. Muntz Library and the UT Tyler Graduate School continued to co-sponsor Scholar Works at UT Tyler – the online repository which includes student theses and dissertations, faculty scholarship, and digital collections from the University Archives. Materials in Scholar Works are discoverable to researchers worldwide, with UT Tyler scholarship read by 3,872 institutions across 183 countries, totaling in over 69,000 downloads between September 2019–June 2020. The library promulgated an initiative in the strategic plan to promote open access publication through funding \$5,000 in publication fees to open access journals. This year, we have partnered with the Office of Research and Scholarship, in addition to the colleges, to triple the amount of funding and are currently reviewing applications.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Muntz Library continues to reach out to the community. We recently held a book club for senior citizens residing at local assisted living facilities in partnership with the Office of Community Engagement. This year's titles were *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* and *A Man Called Ove*. The library continues to collaborate with SALT – Smith County Area Libraries Together – and held a read-in for local day care students in July and a reading and visit with Santa.

Planning is ongoing for the prospective merge with the UT Health Science Center at Tyler's Wise Medical Research Library. The Muntz Library is currently making plans for fall 2020 and looks forward to the return of students and the completion of the merge. We will adapt with circumstances to flexibly provide the best possible services and resources to the campus community.





# ASSESSMENT & INSTITUTIONAL effectiveness office

The UT Tyler Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (AIE) office supported assessment of student learning outcomes for all educational programs through a systematic process to inform plans for continuous improvement. Ongoing assessment of academic/student services and administrative offices was completed for future planning as well.

During 2019–20, 91 educational program assessment plans and 69 non-academic assessment plans were reviewed. The annual reviews were conducted in collaboration with faculty, staff and administrators using standardized internal review rubrics that guide documentation of essential elements recognized in higher education assessment.

Assessment of institutional effectiveness focused on the extent UT Tyler made toward our mission and goals. The 2019–20 I. E. Advisory Committee charge was expanded to include a systematic review of progress toward strategic plan initiatives at the institutional level for each of the four UT Tyler strategic plan pillars. The 2020 UT Tyler Strategic Plan Report was the result of the committee’s review and recommendations for the future.

The AIE office works closely with the college assessment coordinators to develop assessment plans for new programs, update existing program assessment plans and provide discipline-specific assessment resources. The AIE office and college assessment coordinators meet regularly to review assessment processes and strengthen assessment quality.

## UT TYLER GRADUATION EXIT SURVEY

All graduating students are invited to complete the UT Tyler Graduation Exit Survey. Dashboards were created for undergraduate, graduate and student support services. All reports are shared with campus stakeholders, and the aggregate dashboards are posted on the AIE website.

## ASSESSMENT SOFTWARE SUPPORT

The AIE Office is the campus administrator for Nuventive assessment software. Nuventive Improve (TracDat) is used for all unit and program assessment plans. AIE office staff assisted campus users in the use of the software platforms and created how-to video guides posted on the AIE website.

## SURVEY SOFTWARE SUPPORT

The AIE office serves as the campus administrator for Qualtrics survey software. In 2019–20, the AIE office collaborated with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to host Qualtrics workshops. More than 50 faculty, staff and graduate students attended Qualtrics workshops. AIE staff presented Qualtrics “Tips and Tricks” for professional development, hosted by the University Staff Advisory Council. A help form was developed and is now available on the AIE website to request individualized assistance.



Over 800 Users



Over 2500 New Surveys Created 2019–20

## ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

### Accreditation Software

UT Tyler uses Compliance Assist for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) reaffirmation reports. AIE staff maintain administration of Compliance Assist and have worked to get templates added for the Merger/Consolidation, Acquisition, Change of Ownership, and Change of Governance, Control, Form, or Legal Status substantive change policy as well as the report of the Substantive Change Committee Merger-Consolidation.

The AIE office supports UT Tyler in the decennial reaffirmation by SACSCOC. AIE staff also provide resource information and technical support for the Reaffirmation Steering Committee. The UT Tyler Compliance Certificate will be submitted to SACSCOC in September 2021 to document compliance with 14 Principles of Accreditation.

### SACSCOC Ten-Year Reaffirmation Timeline

Summer-Fall 2020	March 2021	July 2021	September 2021
Draft Responses for all Compliance Certification Standards	Preliminary Draft Due Date	President Reviews Compliance Certification	Compliance Certification Due to SACSCOC

### UT Tyler and UT Health Science Center Substantive Change Planning

Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment representatives from UT Tyler and UT Health Science Center—Tyler met regularly during the 2020 spring semester. Anticipated goals and tasks to consolidate the institutional planning and effectiveness offices were identified. A timeline also was developed to facilitate a successful consolidation of institutional effectiveness processes and practices.





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