**Students Make The Difference**

The CONHS Student Advisory Council (SAC) recognizes academic and leadership excellence among CONHS students. The selection process is very rigorous and includes nominations from Department Heads followed by individual screenings and interviews. The council’s purpose is to provide input and feedback to the Dean and Assistant Dean regarding the commonwealth of the CONHS and reflect the wishes and concerns of the students. The SAC seeks to promote equality, strives to foster community within the college, and, most importantly, advocates for student support at large. According to Dean Nelson, “The focus of the Student Advisory Council is to help better the college.” Dean Nelson believes that it is important that the faculty are aware of their students’ opinions so the needs of all parties may be better served.
40 year anniversary of Nursing at West Texas A&M!

Message from the Dean:

Students entering college today seem to understand and appreciate the value of school; however, they may not understand or appreciate the value of learning. A good number of students come to colleges and universities with an expectation that the primary purpose of the school is to prepare them to earn a living. Certainly there are merits to this expectation or goal. However, a truly effective education is one that piques students’ curiosity such that they become their own best teacher…they should be motivated to learn for a lifetime. John Tagg (2003) wrote that a college education will be meaningless unless faculty can motivate students to not only appreciate schooling, but to appreciate learning as well.

In his book The Paideia Program: An Educational Syllabus, Mortimer Adler noted that the key cause of learning is the activity of the learner’s own mind. The teacher’s role is to assist the learning process by guiding the cognitive process of the students. The most appropriate teaching strategy may only come to light subsequent to the faculty making the effort to identify and recognize the intelligence, aptitude, and motivation of the individual student. Albert Bandura (1997) described a student’s “self-efficacy” as having a sense that one can meet challenges which present themselves to the student. A student may develop a high “self-efficacy” or a low “self-efficacy.” Students with a high “self-efficacy” will be active participants in the learning process, display greater effort as well as persistence in class, and attain higher levels of performance. Conversely and unfortunately, students with a low “self-efficacy” will have less persistence, and try to avoid learning.

Several years ago, J.A. Battle and Robert L. Shannon (1968) wrote that the teacher who is interested in students, dedicated to learning and scholarship, and is concerned about students will discover that the students will learn to appreciate the very things that the teacher finds important. To be a teacher is indeed to be a learner. Teachers may never see the world from the perspective of a student, and therefore faculty should have the capacity to teach what they do not know. Professors can initiate this process by having less concern for disseminating information, and simultaneously showing more concern for instructing students so they can direct their own lives through thought.

Students should ask themselves, “Am I doing what I should, or am I doing what I could?” The pursuit of truth requires an active, personal involvement of both the teacher and the student.

SES Student Awarded Prestigious Fellowship

Jorge Granados, graduate student in the Department of Sports and Exercise Sciences has been awarded a Texas A&M University (TAMU) Pathways to the Doctorate Fellowship to complete his doctoral studies under faculty in the TAMU Department of Health and Kinesiology. The total value of the fellowship is $39,277.00; it will provide Jorge with a $20,000 fellowship for the first year of his doctoral program, a $9,000 payment toward his first year tuition and fees, a $9,000 payment toward his second year tuition and fees, and an individual reimbursement for health insurance costs. In his first year, Jorge will study under Dr. Stephen F. Crouse and conduct research in Dr. Crouse’s Applied Exercise Physiology Laboratory.

In his second year, Jorge will have the option of continuing his studies under Dr. Crouse or competing for a Space Life Sciences Fellowship through a collaborative agreement with the National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA).

Matt Kuennen, Assistant Professor of Sports and Exercise Sciences at WT, noted, “This is very prestigious, as TAMU only awards one fellowship to one doctoral applicant each year. TAMU is an excellent program, and Jorge has been awarded a top honor.”

Jorge stated, “I am honored and humbled to receive the Pathways Fellowship. I am honored to have the opportunity to study under Dr. Stephen F. Crouse and to continue my education at TAMU.”

U.S. News & World Report Honors Nursing Program

The Online Graduate Nursing Program was named as one of the top programs in the country for 2014 by U.S. News & World Report. The selection process included rankings for student engagement, faculty credentials and admissions selectivity. WTAMU’s Program was selected ahead of similar programs at schools such as Duke University and Harvard.

“As with many disciplines, it is key that nurses continue to learn about their profession. Clearly, additional education enhances not only the nursing profession but also benefits patients,” said Dr. Nelson, dean of the college of Nursing and Health Sciences.
The Month of May is better Speech and Hearing Month

WTAMU Communication Disorders recently received new equipment for the Voice lab. This state of the art voice lab is used for voice patients in the WTAMU Speech and Hearing Clinic and for training graduate students.

The Nasometer pictured on the left is an instrument that measures and visually demonstrates the degree of nasality on a computer screen. It is also used for biofeedback to monitor and provide a response regarding the degree of nasality during therapy tasks.

Aerodynamic recording equipment measures airflow through the vocal folds during speech production as a measurement of vocal fold function. This piece of equipment can discriminate normal and disordered vocal function, assess disorder severity, and indicate the etiology of dysphonia. The Computerized Speech Lab is a computer program that gives objective measurements of the voice. It can determine pitch, pitch range, loudness, and degree of hoarseness.

Laryngeal Videoendostroboscopy pictured on the right uses both a rigid (oral scope) and flexible (trans-nasal scope) to view the vocal folds and evaluate vocal fold function.
Health Sciences Degree- A Tailored Education

One of the newest degrees on campus is the Health Sciences Degree. Many students are not aware of what the degree offers or the amount of freedom available regarding their choices of courses. Classes range from business to philosophy and nursing to exercise sciences. Dr. Dirk Nelson was interviewed on the program, “I think what’s happening is that students are finding this as an attractive way by which they can get their career goals met.” Dr. Nelson continued to explain, “...for example, the students that want to use Health Sciences as a pre-professional degree have the freedom to build in pre-requisite classes for professional school like additional physics, chemistry, and biology courses depending on what route they want to go.” This method of class selection allows students to tailor their degrees for vastly varying career or educational paths.

The reason that this degree varies so greatly is that to fulfill the 24 elective credit hours, a student has in excess of 40 courses available from which they may select. Because the core and elective courses diverge so drastically in content, professors from multiple departments across campus contribute to the health science degree. Dr. David Hart, a professor in the English, Philosophy, and Modern Languages Department, teaches philosophy courses for the program. Dr. Hart states, “As philosophers, we are focused primarily on the proper care of the mind, but we should inevitably be interested in physiology and medicine, since mind and body are inseparable and complementary. Health science majors may be focused on the wellness of the body, but in the same way, they should be pursuing philosophy.” Another contributing professor is Dr. Maxine DeButte, from the Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work. When asked to comment about the health science degree, Dr. DeButte, a psychology professor, shared that, “Psychology can impact health in various ways. Health psychology is a field devoted to understanding psychological influences on how people stay healthy, why they become sick, and how they respond when they do get ill.” DeButte also stated, “Psychology is very important to health and I believe that health science majors should definitely take a health psychology course.” Professors such as those listed above contribute their extensive expertise to the diverse interests of the students in the health science program.

Dr. Nelson is an advisor for the health science degree and shared some of his insights, “When students come in and ask me about the health science degree and what it’s all about, I almost always describe it as an eclectic degree because typically the students that gravitate toward this degree have an eclectic breadth of careers they want to go into.” Some of the career and educative goals mentioned by Dr. Nelson include hospital administration, medical school, and therapeutic horse riding- hippotherapy. This degree program is now in its third year and is continually growing at impressive rates. Perhaps the main reason for this growth is that students can select what courses are important for their selected paths and interests.

Measures of success:

- Inception to 2013 - Enrollment increased by over 40%
- 2013FA-2014SP - Enrollment increased by over 10%
CONHS Students Giving Back

Communication Disorders Students Participating at MS Walk

CONHS Students Participate in “Give a Goat” Fundraiser

Nursing Students Providing Health Care to the Homeless

Communication Disorders Students at TSHA Conference

CONHS Students Participate in “Give a Goat”

Nursing Student Serving the Homeless at Homeless Health Fair
TSHA’s Impact on Communication Disorders

The Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association has a Political Action Committee (PAC) that is dedicated to raising funds for legislative candidates for state office whose records and policy positions demonstrate an understanding of communication disorders, and those who have undertaken to further the goals of TSHA in the areas of licensure, education and healthcare. Legislatures play an important role in that they help protect our license and the right to practice in the state of Texas, which is dictated by state law, not federal law. The TSHA PAC helps in observing issues that affect our jobs, licensure, reimbursement and quality of service. The PAC will also be the voice of speech pathologists and audiologists at the Texas Capitol, advocating to lawmakers and state agencies. The PAC Student representative will work with other PAC members by providing a more direct link between members of speech pathology and audiology with legislators supported by PAC. The PAC student representative will be working in close contact throughout the year with the PAC board members. The student representative will also gain experience with talking to legislators about our field so that ideas are pushed through the Texas legislature. The student representative will also be responsible in providing information about the TSHA PAC to students all over the state of Texas and to be the voice of those students who have any concerns in our field in regards to the state legislature. They will also work to help gain volunteers for making calls to legislators and raising money. The student representative will also help raise money for the PAC.

Student Selected to be TSHA Student Representative

Rolando J. Vasquez of WTAMU, whom is pictured to the right, has been selected to be the upcoming Student Representative for the TSHA PAC during his second year of graduate school. He currently serves as the TSHA Grassroots Development Task Force Co-Chair under the Department of Social and Government Policy. Rolando is also the President of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association chapter of WTAMU. The Student Legislative Action Committee (SLAC) is a committee under the department of Social and Government Policy in the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association. SLAC is devoted to organizing students of speech language pathology in the state of Texas to become more active in government policy that attains to communication disorders. The position of SLAC Liaison is important in that whoever hold this position is responsible for relaying any new updates of government policy to their respective NSSLHA Chapter. The SLAC Liaison also plays an important role in educating other students about new policies or bills that are in place or up for a vote in the state legislature that have anything to do with the field of communication disorders. Landon Brown has been selected to serve as the Student Legislative Action Committee Liaison of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association chapter of WTAMU for the year of 2014.
**Language Study at Area Jail**

Dr. Debra Blanton has worked in the field of speech language pathology since 1997. She has worked in public schools in Florida, Alabama, and Arizona. While in New Mexico, she lived and worked on the Navajo Indian Reservation and served 10 different Indian schools. She also contracted to the University of New Mexico’s Indian Children’s program assessing children between the ages of 3-5 and providing individual therapy. One of the things she enjoyed the most was volunteering at cleft palate clinics in 3 different cities in New Mexico. She has been at WTAMU since August 2013 teaching fluency, language, articulation and phonological disorders. She is in the preliminary stages of research to be conducted at the Randall County Jail. The plans include surveying officers to find inmates who may be language impaired and then test those inmates. If there are 8-12 inmates that are diagnosed as language impaired a therapy group will begin and last for 3 months. After therapy, Dr. Blanton is hoping there will be evidence of better communication between the inmates and their officers.

**Holistic Nursing at WTAMU**

Starting the fall semester of 2014, the nursing program at WTAMU will offer a holistic nursing course. It is the department’s long-term hope to become the fifth holistic nursing masters programs in the United States. Dr. Davis shared, “Holistic nursing focuses on patient wellness, not illness. This is a tremendous paradigm shift, but makes so much sense. It focuses on the whole person, recognizing that it is impossible to tease out just physical, just emotional, just mental or just spiritual dis-ease. Like the waves on the ocean, each affects and is affected by the other. For example, emotional pain or stress has physical manifestations and mental consequences. Holistic health care recognizes the intricacies of life which lead to wellness or dis-ease. Holistic nurses respect the distinctive qualities of each individual while understanding the unique connection we all have to each other.”

**Integrative Nurse Coaching**

Dr. Lisa Davis and Dr. Heidi Taylor, led a one-day presentation on the art and science of Integrative Nurse Coaching. Integrative Nurse Coaching offers nursing professionals the opportunity to help patients achieve greater health potential by identifying goals and supporting behavioral and lifestyle changes. Davis and Taylor hope to inspire nurses to become more effective in motivating as well as supporting patients in those goals to improve their well-being and health outcomes.
Athletic Training Conference

For the weekend of January 23-25, 2014, Athletic Training students from West Texas A&M University traveled to Arlington, Texas for the Southwest Athletic Training Association (SWATA) Competency Workshop. The competency workshop's purpose was to test the students' abilities in each athletic training domain to ensure the readiness for the Board of Certification exam. There were guest speakers that enhanced student's knowledge about different aspects of Athletic Training, such as, nutrition and diet and disabled athletes. “For the WT students, this was a very worthwhile workshop to better ourselves for the profession of Athletic Training,” Madison Zeiger.

From left to right: Madison Zeiger, Cheyenne Harrington, Brittany Hughes, Wil Hodnett

Nursing Program Continues Success with First-Time Pass Rate Performance

WTAMU’s nursing graduates for 2012-13 achieved a first-time pass rate of 94.5 percent on the NCLEX, licensing examination. The University’s performance in this assessment exceeded nursing graduates from Texas Tech University, Texas Christian University and Baylor University as well as the University of Texas at Austin. For the past three years, WTAMU’s nursing department has received commendations from the Texas Board of Nursing with its licensing pass rates averaging 95.5 percent. Nursing students graduating from WTAMU’s fall 2013 semester achieved an astounding 100% first-time NCLEX pass rate.

“This NCLEX success is the result of the efforts of everyone in the nursing department along with our great students,” Dr. Helen Reyes, head of the WTAMU Department of Nursing, said.

Students Attend TSHA

Thirteen students and three professors represented West Texas A&M at the 58th annual Texas Speech & Hearing Association Convention in Houston this year. The convention provides a unique opportunity for students to further their education by learning new treatment approaches and also affords them with the opportunity to interact with fellow clinicians, setting up potential job opportunities as well as placements for their clinical fellowship year.
The following students and faculty were honored at the Spring Awards Events by the CONHS.

**Communication Disorders**
Outstanding UG Senior Student – Landon Brown
Outstanding UG Junior Student – Sarah Jones
Outstanding 1st Year Graduate Student – Zeth Collum
Outstanding 2nd Year Graduate Student – Maribel Salas

**Nursing**
Outstanding Junior I – Timothy Williams
Outstanding Junior II Student – Amelia Sedillo
Outstanding Senior I Student – Jeannette Sandoval
Outstanding Senior II Student – Matthew Kelley
Outstanding Graduate Student – Jenny Benites

**Sport & Exercise Sciences**
Outstanding Athletic Training Student – Mackenzie Wilson
Outstanding Exercise Science Student – James Bell
Outstanding Applied Sport Student – Brian Baker
Outstanding All Level SES Student – Emma Love
Outstanding Graduate School Student – Jorge Granados

**Faculty Awards**
Outstanding Teaching Excellence Award – Ann Wallace
Outstanding Research Excellence Award – Dr. Lisa Davis
Outstanding Service Excellence Awards – Dr. Michelle Bartlett and Dr. Heidi Taylor
WellWT-Movement for a Healthier Campus

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences is excited to spearhead the university-wide movement to become a healthier campus. Dr.’s Bartlett (SES) and Taylor (Nursing) have been extremely fortunate to be able to turn their philosophy on campus health and wellness into practice. With the support of Dean Nelson and grant funding obtained from TAMUS, WellWT has begun to serve WTAMU toward a more health-promotive and health conscious campus.

WellWT is excited to offer services in the following areas:

1. Mental health counseling - for employees needing to address mental health issues, phone counseling is provided

2. Stress Management
   Motivational interviewing, mindfulness-based practices, guided imagery, Reiki, aromatherapy, and other evidence-based stress reduction methods.

3. Nutrition and Eating Pattern Consultation

4. Smoking Cessation

5. Exercise Adherence Counseling
   Structured counseling sessions to provide exercise education and address lifestyle components that effect exercise adherence.

40 years of Nursing at WTAMU

Alumni: Please share photos of your time in WT’s nursing program with us on Facebook

@ WTAMU Nursing Alums

Receiving her cap in ceremonies held in February was Connie Walker of Hereford, a nursing student and member of the Nursing Students’ Association. Doing the honors was Mrs. Eunice King, head of the nursing department.