2014 PRESIDENTIAL Awar​ds

WE MAKE LIVES BETTER

UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER
SAN ANTONIO
Every day it is an honor for me to lead our Health Science Center. Today, I am especially proud to recognize you — the men and women who make our university one of the nation’s finest academic health science centers.

As recipients of the Presidential Awards, you represent exceptional achievement in your fields. Through your creativity, perseverance and leadership, you elevate our Health Science Center as a beacon of hope for the sick, the exciting home of healing discoveries and a stimulating environment for students. Congratulations on your accomplishments.

Sincerely,

William L. Henrich, M.D., MACP
President
Professor of Medicine
UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
The Presidential Employee Excellence in Service Award honors Health Science Center employees who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the university. These individuals regularly and consistently exceed expectations. Their overall performance reflects a high level of service, trustworthiness and respect. By developing new processes or improving existing ones, these individuals have significantly improved productivity and cost savings for the university.

**Carol L. Kopplin**
Senior Paralegal
Office of Legal Affairs

Due to Carol’s positive attitude and work ethic, the process of investigating and processing inquiries is now significantly streamlined, and our record acquisition and storage system has been modernized. Carol also strengthened the institution’s ability to give due process to our employees while simultaneously protecting the university’s interests, and her diligence has resulted in fair decisions for all involved.

Gary Sertich, J.D., Ph.D., senior attorney, Legal Affairs

**Elizabeth Kay Eskew**
Academic Coordinator
Microbiology and Immunology

Every supervisor dreams of having employees who are hard workers, and who value and love their jobs. I’m very lucky to have Kay Eskew, who is not only an exceptional employee but also one of the most respectful and generous people I’ve ever known. When special problems require it, she doesn’t hesitate to put on some gloves and her “grubbies” (as she calls them) to do whatever it takes to get the job done.

Natalina M. Martinez, M.B.A., manager of finance and administration, Microbiology and Immunology, School of Medicine
Sarah Lindauer  
Associate Director  
Cellular and Structural Biology  

As chair, I can say that Sarah is the best administrator I could hope for. She is a sounding board for me and I rely on her common sense and understanding of all members of the department when I must make decisions that have a broad impact. She is always forthright, so I know exactly what she is thinking. This is a character trait that I greatly respect and admire.

Christi Walter, Ph.D., professor and chair, Cellular and Structural Biology, School of Medicine

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Rebecca Nixon  
Office Manager  
Continuing Dental Education  

Becky is one of the best examples of my philosophy and that of Walt Disney, “You can dream, create, design and build the most wonderful place in the world . . . but it requires people to make that dream a reality.” She has played a vital role in introducing more than 84,000 dental professionals, 600 internationally known speakers and 3,700 alumni to our Dental School.

William O. Butler, M.S., director, continuing dental education and alumni affairs, Dental School

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Juan Reyna, RN, M.B.A.  
Senior Clinic Manager  
Regional Academic Health Center - Harlingen  

As the inaugural nurse manager, Juan has successfully turned empty space into a functional, productive clinical research center with well-trained staff, state-of-the-art equipment and an expanding portfolio of projects and investigators. This is a testimony of his dedication to making the “making lives better” mission of the Health Science Center a reality for the people who live in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Daniel E. Hale, M.D., professor of pediatrics and interim director of the Clinical Research Center, Regional Academic Health Center - Harlingen, School of Medicine
Meeting Dr. Robinson has changed my family’s life for the better. Prior to meeting him, I was heartbroken to hear that I needed surgery and wouldn’t be able to conceive children naturally. Looking at the same tests a previous physician had done, Dr. Robinson came up with a different solution and a less-invasive procedure. Thanks to Dr. Robinson, we are now expecting.

Kathleen and Aaron Brooks, patients

A diagnosis of pulmonary hypertension can be daunting, and medical challenges are often rivaled by financial challenges. However, Dr. Levine created an internationally recognized program with a multidisciplinary team so that improvements in the clinical and financial management of the patients are always evident. Her patients describe her as “part of their family” and their respect and love for her is extraordinary.

Jennifer Milton, CCTC, M.B.A., administrative director and clinical assistant professor, University Transplant Center

The Presidential Clinical Excellence Award honors full-time faculty of the Health Science Center who provide clinical services as part of their appointments. These clinicians have distinguished themselves through exemplary and sustained expertise, and they represent the very finest in quality patient care. By building relationships with patients, family members, professional colleagues, residents, students and staff, these awardees demonstrate collaborative teamwork, independent leadership; and compassionate care.

Cynthia Blanco, M.D.
Associate Professor
Pediatrics

When my daughter, Akuu, came into this world at 27½ weeks gestation, she had many challenges. There were many questions and my husband did not trust words just because they were said by a physician. Dr. Blanco took the time to explain everything to us and gained his trust, assuring us we were doing the best for our baby. I am blessed to have had her care for my daughter and to have her friendship.

Mayda Garcia, mother of patient Akuutechem Garcia

Autumn D. Clegg, M.S.O.T., OTR
Assistant Professor-Clinical
Occupational Therapy

Autumn’s work with helping ALS patients to maintain our quality of life through modifications around the house or products that assist us in overcoming our physical inabilities has been instrumental in maintaining our dignity. Her inquisitive nature and talent for careful listening to me as a person and my daily experiences sets her apart from others.

Mark Spiekerman, patient
The Presidential Teaching Excellence Award is presented to outstanding full-time faculty members who exhibit the finest principles in education. They possess extensive knowledge of their subject material, maintain an awareness of current developments, and incorporate examples from recent literature or clinical experience in the classroom. These faculty members have distinguished themselves not only through teaching methods in the classroom, but also by serving as role models and mentors to students outside class. They have made a significant contribution to the education and development of future health care professionals.
Michelle Arandes, M.D.
Associate Professor-Clinical
Pediatrics

As students of the inaugural class in the newly designed CIRCLE curriculum, my classmates and I had little idea about what to expect. After starting the semester, our experiences with weekly synthesis discussions were effective and engaging due to the faculty members who were chosen to facilitate them. I am pleased to say that Dr. Arandes was the first such professor I encountered, and our leaders could not have chosen a more qualified and committed person.

Katrin Eurich, second-year medical student,
School of Medicine

Lisa Cleveland, Ph.D., RN, PNP-BC
Assistant Professor
Family and Community Health Systems

As a teacher, Dr. Cleveland is known for her ability to create a supportive classroom community while still providing a rigorous course. Her selfless mentoring guided me throughout my stressful Ph.D. program. She not only helped me vividly visualize myself as a high-quality researcher but played a vital role in my decision to begin an academic career by joining the faculty here at the Health Science Center.

Rozmin B. Jiwani, Ph.D., RN, M.S.N., ACNS-BC, clinical assistant professor, Health Restoration and Care Systems Management, School of Nursing

William P. Clarke, Ph.D.
Professor
Pharmacology

In addition to didactic instruction, Dr. Clarke has provided me with training in his lab. During meetings we have sat down to discuss data, and it is clear that he was teaching me much more than what the data meant; he was teaching me what else the data meant. Thanks to the wonderful mentoring I received from Dr. Clarke, I know now that I want to teach, and I know that if I can do that even half as well as Dr. Clarke does, my students will excel at whatever they decide to do in the future.

Matthew P. Rowan, Ph.D., postdoctoral fellow,
Dental School

Kristin Fiebelkorn, M.D.
Associate Professor-Clinical
Pathology

During my residency, Dr. Fiebelkorn has worn many hats and guided me down many paths in my professional development. Despite all odds, I have never managed to ask a “dumb question,” nor have I ever felt a tinge of embarrassment due to the manner of her reply. Her objective manner ensures all residents are provided the individual support needed to facilitate a successful learning environment.

Alan Brown, M.D., pathology resident,
School of Medicine
Michaell Huber, D.D.S.
Associate Professor
Comprehensive Dentistry

Dr. Huber generously volunteers his time to enhance the periodontal medicine curriculum at no reward for his time and efforts, but rather in support of the program to improve our knowledge and expertise on these topics. He is an excellent role model not only for me, but also for all teaching professionals as evidenced by his continued pursuit for excellence in teaching, research and education.

Natalie A. Frost, D.D.S., third-year graduate periodontics resident, Dental School

Kristine Vogel, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Cellular and Structural Biology

I find it extremely exceptional that Dr. Vogel approaches our education in many arenas, making otherwise difficult concepts understandable. Not only has she made embryology material interesting and multifaceted, but she has also set high standards for her students. I know that if I am able to answer her examination questions, I will have a relatively easy time approaching the difficulty of my board examinations.

Danish Jaffer, second-year medical student, School of Medicine

Diane Solomon, M.D.
Associate Professor, Director of Medical Student Education, Neurology

As co-director of my first-year neuroscience course, Dr. Solomon coordinated meetings with patients with specific neurological disease states. Not only did these opportunities solidify the scientific knowledge from our studies, they provided the human lens that is germane to the medical profession. It takes a great teacher to help students understand, apply and reflect on basic concepts. I feel Dr. Solomon does this exceptionally well.

Amy Yu, fourth-year medical student, School of Medicine

Earlanda Williams, Ph.D.
Lecturer
Cellular and Structural Biology

During office sessions with my classmates, Dr. Williams connects the dots with material from the lecture and the lab. Connecting the dots is the most fun, and oftentimes most challenging. This is because she quizzes our knowledge, but I never feel discouraged when I do not know the answer. She is always smiling, willing to help us understand the material presented, no matter how long it takes.

Mai Luk, second-year dental student, Dental School
The Presidential Junior Research Scholar Award honors remarkable investigators at the Health Science Center who began their independent research within the past five years. These scientists demonstrate mastery in their fields and show significant potential for continued success. The award recipients have made major contributions to theory, research and practice, and they have earned national recognition for their outstanding achievements.

The President’s Choice Award is unique and is not presented every year. The award honors a Health Science Center employee or group that has demonstrated exceptional commitment to the university.

**Presented to**

**Junior Research Scholar**

Michael Beckstead, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Physiology

Through his perseverance, Dr. Beckstead was the first to discover that the neurotransmitter dopamine mediates synaptic potential. Dopamine function is important for voluntary movement and reward-related behaviors, and when dopamine function is impaired or compromised it leads to many neurological disorders including Parkinson's disease, drug abuse and schizophrenia. Dr. Beckstead’s work has thus led to the identification of several novel forms of synaptic plasticity, especially how our brain adapts in response to experience, and how therapeutic mechanisms could be designed to restore dopamine functions in related disease states.

Manzoor A. Bhat, M.S., Ph.D., chair of Physiology, professor, Physiology and Neuroscience, School of Medicine

**President’s Choice**

Special Events Council (SEC)

For more than 20 years, the SEC has planned and sponsored many Health Science Center morale-building activities. These include Fourth of July picnics, group Spurs and Missions games, fundraisers that support the annual State Employee Charitable Campaign and other events that build camaraderie among employees. SEC members are employees who devote time to organizing fun gatherings that connect employees from different Health Science Center schools and departments with the goal of providing a work environment that can be enjoyable as well as satisfying.
Distinguished Scholar

The Presidential Distinguished Scholar Award represents the very best in academic achievement. This award honors an individual who exhibits superior scholarship and maintains the highest standards of professionalism. This award also recognizes significant contributions to theory, research and practice, a national or international reputation, a sustained record of extramural support, and major additions to scientific literature and health advancement.

Donald M. Dougherty, Ph.D.
William and Marguerite Wurzbach Distinguished Professor, Deputy Chair for Research, Psychiatry, Professor, Pharmacology

After Dr. Dougherty’s recruitment from Wake Forest University in 2007, he moved his world-renowned research program on drug and alcohol abuse to the UT Health Science Center San Antonio and was named the William and Marguerite Wurzbach Distinguished Professor.

Wide-ranging research
Dr. Dougherty’s translational research focuses on the various biological risk factors involved in drug abuse, drug dependence and suicide. He has created specific research protocols endorsed by the International Society for Research on Impulsivity and consensus measures for phenotypes used by the National Human Genome Research Institute. Beyond developing methodologies, his research is the basis for a leading theory of impulse control that has heavily influenced the field of psychiatry to move toward a more comprehensive conceptualization of impulsivity.

Dr. Dougherty has also gained an international reputation for research on the role of the serotonin system in mental health and cognitive-emotional function. More than 10 percent of all manuscript views in the International Journal of Tryptophan Research are for his publications, and one of these papers is among the journal’s top three most-highly accessed articles.

More recently, Dr. Dougherty has emerged as the leader in the scientific development of transdermal alcohol monitoring for around-the-clock monitoring of an individual’s alcohol use. The technology is used widely in the criminal justice system, but there is little research on its clinical application. For this reason, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services are funding Dr. Dougherty’s work to better establish this technology for clinical use to reduce alcohol-related problems and monitor those charged with driving while intoxicated.

NIH funding
Since joining the Health Science Center, Dr. Dougherty has accumulated nearly $20 million in funding, with most coming from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He is the principal investigator of five R01 grants from the NIH. Dr. Dougherty ranks 45th among 1,262 principal investigators from psychiatry departments who received NIH funding in 2013, according to the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research.

Leadership
Because of his wide-ranging translational research projects, Dr. Dougherty led the creation of the Division of Neurobehavioral Research in the Department of Psychiatry. The division includes experts in molecular biology, electrophysiology and imaging, human development and clinical care. Together, this team publishes about 15 manuscripts each year and was cited more than 500 times in 2013 alone.

He also is involved with mentoring on every academic level from high school through academic faculty. Dr. Dougherty has facilitated funding for undergraduate interns from the NIH, NIAA and National Institute of Mental Health, and guided junior faculty through the process to receive their first NIH funding.

M. Philip Luber, M.D., professor and interim chair of psychiatry, and Pedro L. Delgado, M.D., professor of psychiatry, School of Medicine
Presidential Clinical Excellence Award Committee

Kozue Shibazaki, Ph.D. (Chair, at large)
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*Physiology, School of Medicine*

Lark A. Ford, M.S.N., RN
*Health Restoration and Care Systems Management, School of Nursing*

Michael A. Geelhoed, D.P.T.
*Physical Therapy, School of Health Professions*

Stephanie Levine, M.D.
*Pulmonary Diseases/Critical Care Medicine, School of Medicine*

Erica Oliveira, D.D.S., M.P.H.
*Comprehensive Dentistry, Dental School*

Presidential Distinguished and Junior Research Scholar Award Committee

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*Pediatrics, School of Medicine*

Thomas W. Oates, D.M.D., Ph.D.
*Periodontics, Dental School*

Carlos Orihuela, Ph.D.
*Microbiology and Immunology, School of Medicine*

Maureen J. Simmonds, Ph.D., PT
*Physical Therapy, School of Health Professions*

Presidential Employee Excellence in Service Award Committee

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Deborah Cash
*Human Resources*

Pam Feagin
*Medicine, School of Medicine*

La Tonya Gaines-Brisco
*Facilities Management*

Patricia Gonzalez
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Rebecca A. Mendez
*Purchasing Department*

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*Office of the Dean, School of Nursing*

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*Medicine, School of Medicine*

Linda A. Smith, Ph.D.
*Clinical Laboratory Sciences, School of Health Professions*

Frank J. Weaker, Ph.D.
*Cellular and Structural Biology, School of Medicine*

Gail Williams, Ph.D., RN
*Family and Community Health Systems, School of Nursing*