

UT ARLINGTON

# Health

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION



**ACHIEVING  
EXCELLENCE**

The College of Nursing and Health Innovation is recognized as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education



# CARRYING

Priscila Caçola, assistant professor of kinesiology, works with a child at the Little Mavs Movement Academy, a free group motor skills intervention program designed to improve the motor skills of 6- to 12-year-olds with movement and coordination difficulties. Little Mavs participate in group activities designed to improve fine and gross motor skills, focusing specifically on body coordination, balance, and manual dexterity. Contact Dr. Caçola at [caçola@uta.edu](mailto:caçola@uta.edu) to learn more.

# CONTENTS

**02 Notes**  
Welcome from Dean Anne R. Bavier

**03 Rounds**  
The latest research and academic activities

**20 Follow Up**  
Alumni who are changing lives and inspiring others

**23 Class Notes**  
See the latest alumni accomplishments

**24 Parting Shot**  
Health professionals benefit from cultural immersion in Mexico



**10 Healing Hearts**  
Researchers in kinesiology and nursing are teaming up to discover new ways to improve cardiovascular health.



**14 Achieving Excellence**  
The College of Nursing and Health Innovation was awarded the Center of Excellence in Nursing Education designation by the National League for Nursing.

## UT ARLINGTON health

**President**  
Vistasp Karbhari

**Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation**  
Anne R. Bavier

**Vice President of University Communications**  
Lynne T. Waters

**Associate Vice President for Marketing**  
Marc Witter

**Editor**  
Kathryn Hopper

**Art Director**  
Brody Price

**Photographers**  
Joel Quintans  
Dominique Anderson

**Editorial Contributors**  
Jessica Bridges  
Bridget Lewis  
Traci Peterson  
Teresa Schnyder  
Amber Scott

*UT Arlington Health* is published annually by University Communications under the direction of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. The comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent those of The University of Texas at Arlington or the staff of *UT Arlington Health*. Copyright © 2016, The University of Texas at Arlington. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

On the cover: Illustration by Aldo Crusher.

IX  
Paper from responsible sources  
www.uta.edu  
FSC® C022085



*“Last year was simply a remarkable year for the College!”*

**W**e’re pleased to bring you the second edition of *UTA Health*, the magazine of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. Inside, you’ll find stories of excellence in the classroom, in research labs, in clinical settings, and among working professionals around the globe whom we are proud to call our alumni.

Last year was simply a remarkable year for the College! The National League for Nursing named the College a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked our nursing programs among the top in the nation, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awarded our College a \$1.8 million grant to lead a multi-institutional study of clinical experience requirements for nursing school graduates.

We were thrilled to recruit Mark Haykowsky, an expert in exercise physiology and rehabilitation medicine, to serve as the Moritz Chair of Geriatric Nursing Research. We also announced a new doctoral program in kinesiology, and this spring, we will kick off a new Moritz Speakers Series featuring sports medicine authorities highlighting the benefits of exercise on heart health.

It has been stunning to watch our overall enrollment climb to more than 19,000 students based on demand for our successful campus-based and online degree programs that now attract students from every state in the union. And it is gratifying to see that the strength of our curriculum translates into student success rates for online nursing students matching those of their campus-based peers.

Most of all, we love to hear about your adventures in the world, in the realm of health care, and in your personal lives.

**Anne R. Bavier, Ph.D., RN, FAAN**  
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Innovation



Researchers Mark Haykowsky (top), Marco Brotto (bottom left), and Paul Fadel (bottom right) have joined the faculty.

## STARS of Texas Boost Research

**U**TA’s commitment to helping people live longer, better lives gained even more strength over the last year with three world-class additions to the College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

Marco Brotto, a renowned expert in muscle physiology and musculoskeletal diseases, became the George W. and Hazel M. Jay Professor of Nursing, director of Bone and Muscle Collaborative Sciences, and director of the Ph.D. in Nursing program.

Mark Haykowsky, an expert in exercise physiology and cardiac rehabilitation, became the inaugural Moritz Chair in Geriatric Nursing.

Paul Fadel, an expert in integrative physiology and neural cardiovascular control, joined UTA as a professor of kinesiology and director of clinical translational science for the University.

All agree that UTA—which merged kinesiology and nursing in 2014—is headed rapidly in the right direction.

“What really attracted me was the momentum, the alignment of the vision that I saw of the president, vice president of research, provost, and deans toward becoming Tier

One research intensive and focusing on health and the human condition,” says Dr. Brotto, who maintains a joint appointment at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Improving health and the human condition is a cornerstone of the University’s *Strategic Plan 2020: Bold Solutions | Global Impact*.

The UT System Science and Technology Acquisition and Retention, or STARS, Program, provided additional funding to UTA for the new hires. STARS funding attracts scholars with exceptional records of research, teaching, and scientific leadership. It’s rare for nursing professors to attain such recognition, making the selection of Brotto and Dr. Haykowsky a notable achievement, notes Anne Bavier, dean of the College.

Dr. Fadel, who came from the University of Missouri School of Medicine, says nursing and kinesiology are a natural fit. The vibrant health care community in North Texas also provides an outstanding network for patient-based research.

“The opportunities to collaborate, the world-class facilities, and the access to patients are remarkable,” says Dr. Haykowsky. “It’s a gold mine.”

**ROOMS**

Research and academic insights



Marco Brotto, the George W. and Hazel M. Jay Professor of Nursing, is director of Bone and Muscle Collaborative Sciences.

## Staying Strong

Research aims to understand and treat muscle loss

"I have this motto that collaboration is better than competition," says Dr. Brotto, who joined UTA in August 2015. "You need different expertise coming from different points of view to tackle complex health problems."

Brotto's leadership exploring muscle and bone physiology as it relates to conditions such as osteoporosis and sarcopenia, or the natural loss of muscle mass in aging, has garnered international recognition.

He's won grants from the National Institutes of Health, the American Heart Association, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Abbott Nutrition, and Brazil's major funding agencies, and he has published more than 90 studies in prestigious journals such as *The Aging*, *Journal of Cell Biology*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and *Nature Cell Biology*.

Brotto also is director of Muscle and Bone Collaborative Sciences at UTA and director of the Ph.D. in Nursing program.

Research that changes lives by improving human health motivates Brotto and the seven members of his laboratory. One of their most notable projects is an \$8.5 million National Institute on Aging grant with leading U.S. bone cell biologists.

The five-year project has already increased understanding of how bones release factors (lipids and proteins that work as local hormones) that influence muscles and vice versa, as well as other vital organs. Unraveling such basic biochemical interactions could go a long way toward helping the 1.7 billion people worldwide suffering from musculoskeletal disorders.

"If we can identify these factors, then we can target specific disease pathways, and maybe we can tailor better interventions," says Brotto.



## Professors earn nursing honors

Two College of Nursing and Health Innovation faculty recently received one of the highest honors in their field when they were selected as fellows of the American Academy of Nursing.

Carolyn Cason, emeritus professor, and Joy Don Baker, clinical associate professor, were two of the 163 nursing leaders chosen for the 2015 class. Fellows are selected for their significant contributions to nursing and health care and include hospital and government administrators; college presidents, chancellors, and deans; and renowned scientific researchers and entrepreneurs.

"We are pleased to welcome this talented class of clinicians, researchers, policy leaders, educators, and executives as they join the nation's thought-leaders in nursing and health care," says Academy President Diana J. Mason. "We look forward to working with them to continue the Academy's work in transforming health policy and practice through the use of our collective nursing knowledge."

## Safe at Home

Smart Care uses technology to help seniors live independently



Kathryn Daniel (right), associate professor, is director of the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program helped develop the "Smart Care" apartment (above).

Helping older adults live independently longer is the goal of a new initiative being carried out by UTA researchers.

Earlier this year, nursing and engineering researchers unveiled a "Smart Care" apartment at the Lakewood Village Senior Living Community in Fort Worth. Infused with intelligent care technology, the apartment is designed to reduce risks encountered by older adults and those with disabilities.

Kathryn Daniel, associate professor and director of the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program, serves as program manager.

The Smart Care apartment includes sensors underneath tiles on the floor that measure and evaluate changes in walking gaits and weight that might suggest illness or injury; a special camera embedded in a bathroom mirror that tells researchers about day-to-day heart rate, facial expression, and

skin color; and other systems that detect whether medication is being properly managed or if the resident is not sleeping well. The apartment also features a lift chair to help residents stand, high-tech appliances, and exercise equipment.

The federal Health Resources and Services Administration provided more than \$600,000 in funding for the five-year project.

"UT Arlington is at the forefront of life-changing and innovative research in the area of health and the human condition," says U.S. Representative Joe Barton, who advocated for the funding. "Ultimately, Smart Care will positively impact senior citizens, people with disabilities, and injured veterans. It will also save money for people across the Dallas-Fort Worth area and nationwide by reducing the number of repeated trips to hospitals for some residents."

Deborah Hughes, clinical instructor in nursing, and Judy Leflore, professor and associate dean for simulation and technology and the Samuel T. Hughes Professor of Nursing, have each received the UT System's 2015 Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award.



## Helping others save lives

Beth Mancini, senior associate dean for education innovation in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, knows the importance of acting quickly when someone is suffering a heart attack.

"We were at home when my 50-year-old dad suffered sudden cardiac arrest," says Dr. Mancini. "I was 16 at the time and unable to perform CPR. I stood by him and had to wait for someone to come and help, but he didn't survive."

A year later, her mother died after complications from cardiac surgery. Mancini says she never wants anyone else to go through what she endured and has devoted her career to helping others prevent errors and enhancing patient safety.

That's why Mancini, who also chairs undergraduate nursing education, played a chief role in developing the 2015 American Heart Association Guidelines Update for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care, which among other things calls for quick action on the part of bystanders.

"That's what saves lives," Mancini says. "A bystander can jump into action, call 911, and start CPR."



## New advances power change in adaptive sports

Advances in prosthetics and adaptive equipment have not only helped level the playing field for disabled athletes but also may give them a competitive edge.

Abu Yilla, clinical assistant professor in kinesiology and a former Paralympic medalist, has studied the evolution of disability sports and made it the topic of a lecture delivered at TEDxUTA, a University version of TED Talks.

He points to a need for “valorization,” or making sure athletes are actually doing the same physical action, biomechanically, in assessing a competition.

Dr. Yilla is excited by new advancements in wheelchairs and prosthetics and believes these technologies will bring a new age of very different sports.

“I suggest that, technologically, we’re going to see the most extreme and best sporting events coming out of the disabled and Paralympic sporting world (transhumanism sport),” he says. “If we adopt valorization, if we start looking at things for the physical work they involve, the sky’s the limit.”

Visit [tedxuta.com](http://tedxuta.com) to learn more.

## Child’s Play

Questionnaire aids parents in evaluating household items

Kinesiology Assistant Professor Priscila Caçola is helping parents and clinicians evaluate toys, furniture, and other household items for their effectiveness in aiding motor skill development in infants.

“Parents, doctors, or other infant caregivers might ask, ‘What does a toy or a coffee table do?’ Well, depending on the space between the couch and the coffee table, it could be the first distance that the child wants to cross,” Dr. Caçola explains. “If a toy is cranked and pops up, the child might want to go grab it, which could lead the child to walking. But the challenge is the thing that stimulates that child to begin moving.”

To that end, Caçola co-developed a simple questionnaire for caregivers of infants ages 3 to 18 months that helps parents better assess such household items. Called the Affordances in the Home Environment for Motor Development-Infant Scale, or AHMED-IS, it is now being used by physical and occupational therapists worldwide.

“When parents buy toys, they’re rarely thinking, ‘I wonder if this is going to be great for my child’s fine or gross motor skills,’” says Caçola, who also serves as director of the

Department of Kinesiology’s Little Mavs Movement Academy. “However, if they look at each AHMED-IS question and each separation of the question, they can choose to buy toys that are different or that offer different opportunities for their infants.”

Joining Caçola in the study, published in *Physical Therapy* journal, were Carl Gabbard, Texas A&M University professor of health and kinesiology; Maria L.L. Montebelo, Universidade Metodista de Piracicaba (UNIMEP) professor of mathematical sciences; and Denise C.C. Santos, UNIMEP professor of physical therapy.



## Getting Sound Advice

Advisors help students navigate degree options



Candice Calhoun-Butts directs the Office of Enrollment and Student Services.

Students looking for help registering for classes or completing their degree plans can find an office full of friendly faces on the first floor of Pickard Hall, the new home of the Office of Enrollment and Student Services.

Candice Calhoun-Butts directs the team of 35 advisors and support staff who work with current students, prospective students, and alumni looking to further their educations. They serve all students in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, including graduate and undergraduate, online and on-campus, and those in nursing and kinesiology.

“If they need any guidance whatsoever, if they’re curious about degree requirements or how many credits they have already completed will transfer, we will see those students and work with them,” Calhoun-Butts says.

The office also helps process admissions applications, handles referrals, and assists students as they prepare to graduate.

“We see online students mostly by phone and email, some even on Skype,” she adds. “We’re getting more innovative in that way. For traditional students, they are free to come in to visit with an advisor.”

The staff also serves students interested in graduate degree programs. For example, the online Family Nurse Practitioner graduate degree program is seeing growing interest—according to Calhoun-Butts, they’ve received more than 200 applicants per month.

Advisors also work with kinesiology students and alumni, including those interested in pursuing a graduate degree, such as the new doctorate in kinesiology, and those utilizing a new program that helps undergraduate majors transition to a BSN degree.

“It’s really about bridging the two fields,” she says. “It’s about improving community health, an important area that’s seeing more growth and research.”

Calhoun-Butts earned a master’s degree in school counseling from Cleveland State University and previously worked with high school students before moving to higher education.

“I honestly feel like this is a calling for me,” Calhoun-Butts says. “Everyone here in the College enjoys seeing students be successful. We love to see them move up and on.”

## College launches doctoral program in kinesiology

This fall, UTA will welcome doctoral students into a new kinesiology program designed to elevate the excellence of the institution’s research in physiology, movement science, healthy living, and other health science disciplines.

The new Ph.D. program builds upon the Department of Kinesiology’s and the Center for Healthy Living and Longevity’s existing research, educational offerings, and community outreach initiatives in health and disease.

It will focus on the prevention, assessment, and treatment of motor difficulties; chronic diseases; and musculoskeletal injuries across the human lifespan. Students will specialize in one of three areas: movement and rehabilitation sciences, applied physiology, or physical education. Interdisciplinary coursework will be a foundational element of the curriculum as well.

“UTA graduates will be educated and well positioned to thrive in research positions and faculty jobs,” says David Keller, chair of Kinesiology. “They will receive unique multidisciplinary and research experiences that directly target these health needs.”

**Anne Bavier**, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, has been awarded the Legion of Honor Gold Medallion from the Philadelphia-based Chapel of Four Chaplains. The Gold Medallion is the organization’s highest award. It is presented to persons whose life and exceptional leadership epitomizes the spirit of the sacrifice of the chapel’s four U.S. Army chaplains. Distinguished past recipients have included U.S. Presidents Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, and Jimmy Carter.



Ali Alrubaiee was inspired by his mom to become a nurse.

## Serving Others

*Motivated by family and the dream of a better life, Ali Alrubaiee became an American and earned his nursing degree*

Helping others was always a focus for Ali Alrubaiee. An interpreter for the U.S. military during Saddam Hussein's regime, the Iraqi native worked to aid American soldiers in the Iraq War. It was during that time that his mother was diagnosed with an aggressive uterine cancer that spread into her lungs. She passed away in 2005.

Watching his mother's health deteriorate while caring for her through that difficult time was a clarifying experience for Alrubaiee. When the U.S. Congress passed legislation that would enable Iraqi citizens who helped the military to live and work in the United States, he was one of the first 50 to make the move.

"Living under Saddam Hussein's regime was rough," Alrubaiee says. "When I came to the States, I learned there are a lot of opportunities and ways to be successful. I don't ever want my family or my kids to suffer the way we did before."

This motivation to provide a better future for himself and his family led him to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from The University of Texas at Arlington. And after completing clinical rotations in various local hospitals, he began work as a student nurse technician at the Dallas VA Medical Center, where he currently works as a graduate student nurse. When Alrubaiee graduated in December 2015, U.S. officers he worked with in Iraq were there to help him celebrate.

"I owe my life to him," says Lt. Col. Lisa Montoya. "Ali was responsible for keeping us safe. The safety of our whole team was in his hands."

Eventually, Alrubaiee would like to pursue an advanced practice or MSN degree at UTA. Long-term professional goals include working in an ICU or emergency department. For now, he's content right where he is: learning, working, supporting his family, and—as always—helping others.



## Teaming up

Larry Nelson, associate professor of kinesiology, saw a way to create healthier lifestyles for local kids.

Last year, he started an afternoon soccer program for the Young Men's Leadership Academy, an all-male middle school in the Grand Prairie Independent School District. The goal was to provide an active after-school alternative to playing video games.

Participants received activity monitors to track the impact of the practices, and Dr. Nelson's kinesiology students got real-world experience as coaches.

UTA nursing students also joined the project, teaching the kids about nutrition, and nursing faculty teamed with Baylor Health to teach parent classes.

"There's a real shortage of health education today," Dr. Nelson says. "We are fortunate to be in a position to apply our expertise in school settings that really want and appreciate the opportunity to improve the quality of life for our kids and community."

## Going Full Throttle

*Rachel Kroener works to make Paralympic team*

Rachel Kroener understands what it takes to dominate. The natural athlete simply goes full throttle and doesn't allow anything to hold her back.

"I've always been very determined," she says. "I've never let my disability stop me from doing anything."

Kroener, a freshman exercise science major, was born with cerebral palsy but got into sports at a young age. She didn't hit her competitive stride until she found wheelchair basketball and Paralympic track and field. She recently represented the United States in the shot put and javelin at the International Paralympic Committee Athletics World Championships, held in Doha, Qatar.

According to the 2015 rankings, Kroener is 14th in the world for women's javelin F34, the only United States representative in the top 20. Thanks to her stellar showing, she's got a chance at landing a spot on the USA track and field team for the Paralympics.

"I just have to keep working hard and hit my standards," she says. "It's definitely an overwhelming feeling of pride to represent my country this way."

At UTA, Kroener is an active member of the wheelchair basketball team. After graduation, she plans to work in orthotics/prosthetics or athletic training and continue competing in her athletic areas of interest. In the interim, she's glad she chose UTA to support her dreams.

"I got really lucky with UTA because they offer competitive wheelchair basketball, support me as a track and field athlete, and have great academics," Kroener says. "UTA was the best choice for me. I wouldn't want to be at any other university."

"My professors have been so understanding and supportive," she continues. "That support helped me maintain a good balance so that I could still compete and continue to do well in my classes."



Rachel Kroener, a freshman exercise science major, is training to make the U.S. Paralympic team.



## Student leader inspires change



The UTA Society of Kinesiology Scholars volunteered at the Oakwood Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in December, playing Bingo and other games with patients.

Making a difference is almost second nature to Chandler Tice. The senior nursing major has spent her four years on campus as an active leader and change-maker. She's currently president of the Nursing Constituency Council, where she has held leadership positions for the last three years. She's also the May 2016 pinning chair, president of the National Society of Leadership and Success, and student vice president of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

"My leadership work gives me the opportunity to practice time management, network with health care professionals in the area, and learn to expand my knowledge of issues outside of the classroom and clinical setting," she says.

For her leadership in campus life, Tice was recently awarded the Jean Ashwill Leadership Award from the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. She's also received the Nursing Care of Childbearing Family Clinical Excellence Award and was selected to represent UTA at the AACN Student Policy Summit in Washington, DC.

"I'm inspired to stay involved because I can and do make a difference," she says.

# Heart TUNE-UP

Researchers at the College of Nursing and Health Innovation are discovering new ways to improve cardiovascular health

BY TRACI PETERSON

Walking on a treadmill or bounding up a flight of stairs triggers a flurry of activity in the human body's complex cardiovascular system. When it works, it's a marvel that we never even have to think about. The brain coordinates with the sympathetic nervous system to direct the action of blood vessels and capillaries. They provide just enough oxygen-rich blood

to muscles throughout the body as the heart pumps.

When it doesn't work, the consequences can be catastrophic. The leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States is heart disease, which can result from uncontrolled high blood pressure or hypertension. Beyond heart attacks and strokes, disease-related cardiovascular impairments also lead to a more rapid decline and death

in people with conditions such as chronic kidney disease and diabetes. Cardiovascular health also has been implicated in the development of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Pinpointing what makes the cardiovascular system falter and finding ways to intervene is the goal for researchers in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. Professors and their students are exploring a wealth of questions and targets for interventions.

ILLUSTRATION BY DAN BEJAR



“We’re now able to put our expertise together to be able to answer questions we’ve never been able to answer before. That is very exciting,” says Mark Haykowsky, who became UTA’s inaugural Moritz Chair of Geriatric Nursing Research in 2015. “It’s critical that we study this because cardiovascular disease is a major killer.”

Dr. Haykowsky, formerly a professor in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Alberta, Canada, is one of several recent faculty additions who are building knowledge about cardiovascular health and championing UTA’s *Strategic Plan 2020: Bold Solutions | Global Impact* goal of improving health and the human condition.

In 2015, Paul Fadel, previously at the University of Missouri School of Medicine, also joined UTA as a professor of kinesiology and director of clinical translational science for the University. R. Matthew Brothers, formerly an assistant professor at The University of Texas Austin at Austin, also became a new associate professor of kinesiology in 2015. Their work in exercise physiology and neural cardiovascular control fits well with that of David Keller, chair of the kinesiology department and an associate dean in the College.

Dr.

Heart failure occurs when changes in the size of the heart mean it “either doesn’t receive enough blood or it doesn’t pump out enough blood,” Haykowsky says. “It leads to a cascade of events. The body tries to protect itself, but in doing so, over time, it really becomes dysfunctional and ultimately leads to death.”

In addition to changes in the heart’s shape, exercise intolerance is a fundamental feature of heart failure. Patients experience shortness of breath and fatigue from simple activities like putting on a shirt. Obesity, high blood pressure, and a sedentary lifestyle are risk factors.

Haykowsky’s work centers on a type of heart failure that accounts for about half of the cases. It is called “heart failure with preserved ejection fraction,” or HFPEF. In those cases, heart muscles are thickened, and the heart doesn’t receive or, consequently, pump enough blood. It affects mostly older women.

Current treatments don’t improve survival in individuals with HFPEF. Haykowsky’s research is looking at whether factors beyond the heart—such as blood vessels, blood flow, and the muscles themselves—could be limiting exercise tolerance

“We know a lot of the benefits of exercise unequivocally, but in diseased groups or people at risk for disease, we need to target our therapy. We can’t just say, ‘Exercise is exercise,’” he says.

## Exploring Relationships

Dr. Fadel also focuses on patients diagnosed with disease, but not necessarily those conditions typically associated with the heart. He is exploring how an overactive sympathetic nervous system impacts the health of people with diagnoses including kidney disease and diabetes. The sympathetic nervous system regulates blood flow and blood pressure through a system of involuntary neural cardiovascular controls.

“You’re going to be worse off in any condition with an overactive sympathetic nervous system,” says Fadel, who has earned funding from the American Heart Association and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). “It has deleterious consequences on the heart. It has deleterious consequences on the kidney and deleterious consequences on your blood vessels. It affects almost all systems, and when it’s hyperactive, it’s all a negative. A lot of our research is directed at

trying to identify why it becomes hyperactive. Can we find the mechanism by which that occurs? The idea is to identify therapeutic targets.”

Fadel is studying how asymmetric dimethylarginine, or ADMA, a compound naturally produced by the body, may play a role in the overactivity of the sympathetic nervous system in chronic kidney disease patients. His research at UTA also will explore whether an overactive sympathetic nervous system could explain limitations in the ability of blood vessels to respond to insulin properly and whether it contributes to impaired glucose uptake in type 2 diabetes patients.

Fadel said the College’s 2014 merger of nursing and kinesiology is a natural fit for patient-based research like his.

“To perform these studies you need a fair amount of collaboration within the lab and nurses are a key part of this. I think it’s also a great environment for students to learn. Not just from the kinesiology side but from the nursing side as well,” he says.

## Identifying Interventions

Heading off disease also is a goal for Keller and Dr. Brothers.

Keller, who received his undergraduate degree from UTA

and returned to the University in 2007, studies the arterial baroreflex, the primary short-term regulator of blood pressure, and how it may relate to an increased incidence of hypertension and strokes for African-Americans.

With funding from the NIH, Keller showed that otherwise-healthy African-American men had a blunted ability to reflexively adjust their heart rates in response to short-term hypertension. He wants to know if those “moment-to-moment differences” influence a path to disease and what role those differences play after disease develops.

Keller and Fadel recently received approval on a further NIH grant to explore whether neural control of the heart or of the vasculature system is to blame for the differences.

“All racial groups, certainly in this country, demonstrate a degree of prevalence of hypertension to some extent. Understanding why one population is at such a higher risk for it can be good for everybody in terms of the understanding,” says Keller.

Brothers is also trying to learn more about why some groups may be more prone to cardiovascular disease. He is funded by the NIH, and his research primarily focuses on the microvasculature, or small blood vessels in both the brain and peripheral circulations, and its ability to respond to various disturbances. Better responsiveness is associated with better cardiovascular health and less risk for future disease.

In a study published by the journal *Experimental Physiology* in 2015, Brothers found that young, healthy African-Americans had impairments in cerebral vascular responses. However, he found those could be improved by giving participants a dose of flavanols, a chemical compound that acts as an antioxidant and is found in various foods—including unprocessed dark chocolate and green tea—on the day of testing. A follow-up study found similar improvements for obese adults, another population with elevated risk for cardiovascular and metabolic disease.

“The unfortunate reality is you’re probably never going to find the one single sole answer that cures heart disease. It’s way more complicated than that,” Brothers says. “The goal is to try to chip away at it. If you can identify interventions, whether they’re lifestyle interventions like exercise or dietary or so on, that can, if not prevent, then at least delay the onset of these diseases. It’s definitely beneficial.”

**“When hearts become enlarged and damaged, it’s very hard to reverse them. They don’t come back to normal.”**

Mark Haykowsky, (left) Paul Fadel (center), and David Keller (right) are researching ways to improve cardiovascular health.



Keller’s Cardiovascular Physiology Laboratory studies the workings of a vital cardiovascular control called baroreflex function.

For Haykowsky, interest in cardiovascular health stems from his early training as a nurse and exercise scientist. His two decades of research have focused on improving outcomes for people with heart failure, a condition that affects 5.1 million in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Exercising Impacts

in HFPEF.

“When hearts become enlarged and damaged, it’s very hard to reverse them. They don’t come back to normal. But what we can improve is everything away from the heart,” Haykowsky says.

He also is researching how an earlier-than-typical start to exercise rehabilitation for heart attack patients may speed rehabilitation time and improve long-term survival. Making activity a part of daily life is essential because the best predictor of lifespan is fitness, Haykowsky says.

*The College of Nursing and Health Innovation has been recognized as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing.*

# Center of EXCELLENCE

*The designation means big things not only for the College, but also for students and alumni alike.* BY AMBER SCOTT

**S**ol Seul Han is working on her BSN degree at UTA and wants to earn a Master of Science in Nursing and eventually become a nurse practitioner. “Nursing is the path I chose because of the intimacy I get to share with my patients,” she says. “I am with my patients 12 hours a day, if not more. I can really impact lives not only through medical intervention, but also through simply caring for them.”

Han chose UTA and the College of Nursing and Health Innovation because she knew it would give her the foundational knowledge she would need to meet and exceed the demands required of today’s nursing professionals.

This reputation for taking passionate students and turning them into knowledgeable and skilled professionals is precisely why the College of Nursing and Health Innovation was awarded a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education designation by the National League for Nursing (NLN) in 2015. It is one of only 21 colleges in the nation to receive the honor.

The NLN, the country’s foremost organization for nursing faculty and leaders in nursing education, noted that the College demonstrated sustained, evidence-based, and substantive innovation in the category

of “Creating Environments that Enhance Student Learning and Professional Development.” In order to qualify for the designation, the College had to meet stringent criteria covering the total student experience—from undergraduate programs through master’s- and Ph.D.-level work.

“Being named a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education shows that a very complex and very large college can be at the top of the heap, and that the quality of everything we do is provable and sustainable,” says Anne Bavier, dean of the College. “Our success is a wonderful testimony to the consistent high aspirations of our faculty and staff as we work to support the learning and professional growth of the students in all of our nursing programs.”

## LEARNING THE ROLE

A crucial component of a student nurse’s education is role socialization, an ongoing and evolving process wherein students gain a better understanding of their personal values and how those values will fulfill professional expectations.

While much of this growth happens intrinsically as students work to complete their degrees, the College places a focus on ensuring student success through programs

*“The faculty knows how to push students to excellence while helping them reach their goals.”*

that support interaction among students and between students and faculty.

A signature program of the College is its Student Success Program. Initially implemented in 2004 to increase retention and graduation rates of nursing students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the program has expanded to include all undergraduate students in the off-campus and on-campus prelicensure programs. In the program, student success coordinators assist students with the transition into nursing school, provide stress management strategies, and guide students through classroom and online presentations that focus on clinical course content.

This student-centered support infuses all aspects of learning within the College. Linh Ho, a junior working on her nursing degree, counts the collaborative spirit as one of the biggest strengths of the College.

“The staff is extremely caring, and my fellow nursing students are a wonderful group to grow with,” she says. “The faculty knows how to push students to excellence while helping them reach their goals.”

## STATE-OF-THE-SCIENCE TEACHING

As students interact with peers, mentors, faculty, and staff, they’re doing so in a state-of-the-science learning environment. A centerpiece of the College’s commitment to pedagogical research is the Smart Hospital, a national demonstration center for simulation education and research and for the development of health care innovations. The 13,000-square-foot facility includes an Emergency Department, an Adult Intensive Care Unit, a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, labor and delivery suites, and a Pediatric Unit.

To meet increasing demand, the Smart Hospital has also opened an extension, called the Smart Lab. Located on the fifth floor of University Hall, the Smart Lab features 15 private hospital rooms, five outpatient exam rooms, four assessment training rooms, and more.

“Overcoming the ‘learning by random opportunity’ associated with traditional clinical rotations can be mediated by simulation enhanced clinical education, developed and delivered by expert faculty,” says Judy Leflore, associate dean for simulation and technology. “Each student’s ability to think critically and develop confidence and competency in clinical skills is one of the many outcomes of clinical simulated scenarios. The Smart Hospital is a place where students can make a mistake, see the consequences of the mistake, and



learn from the mistake.”

The College isn’t just employing innovative technological and research practices on campus; it’s also working with educational and clinical partners to set the standard for educational experiences students need to develop clinical competencies. This research was made possible with a \$1.8 million grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and will follow more than 1,700 students over a 30-month period. The project will establish a model of clinical instruction that can be replicated or adapted by the majority of nursing programs in Texas.

## EMPOWERING STUDENTS

As the College grows, faculty continue to place educational programs within the reach of every student. This requires that all curricula be flexible, dynamic, current, and relevant.

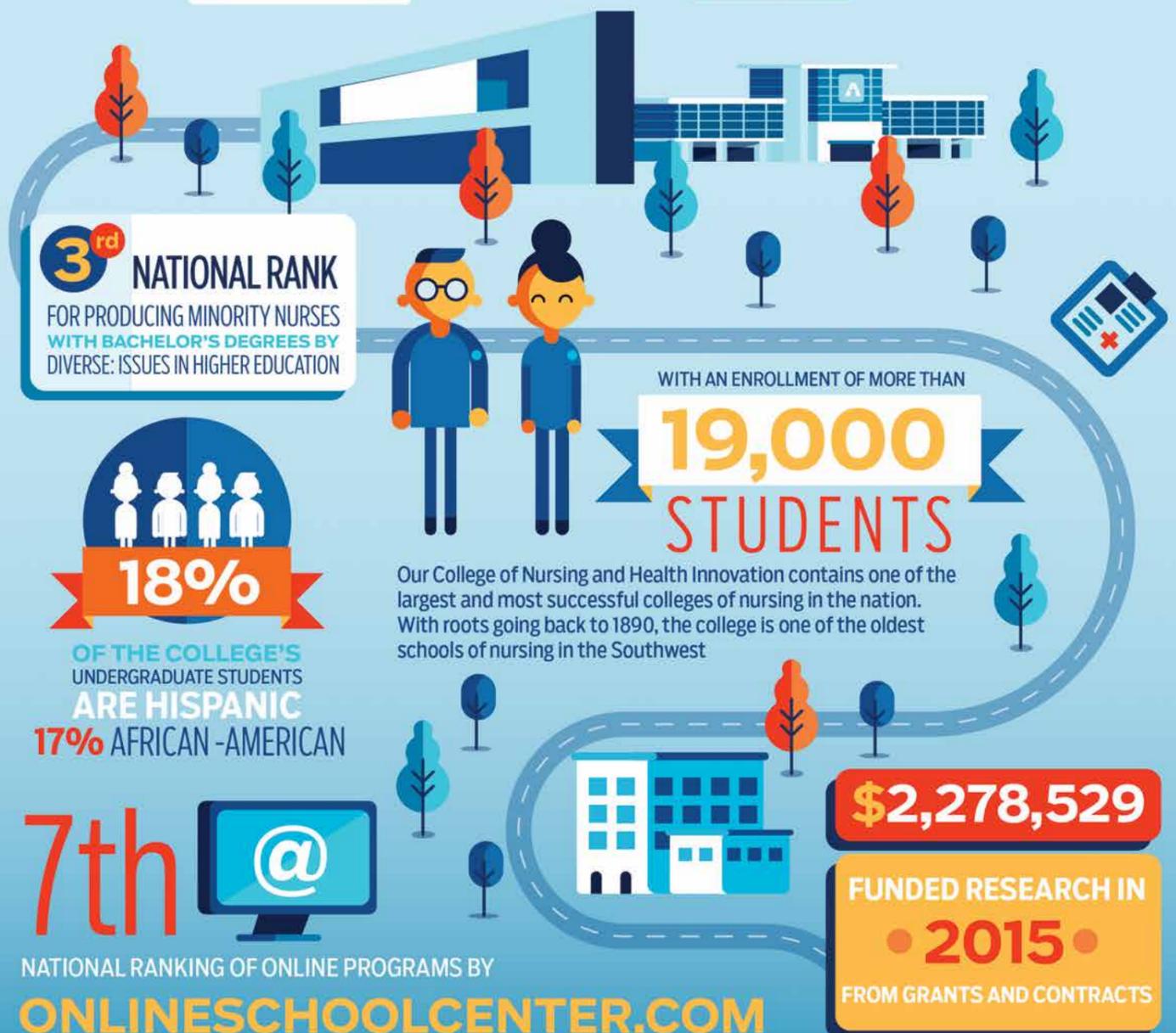
Key efforts in this regard include the accelerated BSN and RN to BSN programs, as well as hybrid models like the Veterans BSN program. These programs were developed to address critical workforce needs in the state while empowering students to achieve their personal goals. Other programs—like the co-op nursing education programs for BSN and RN to BSN students and the undergraduate Honors College track—are examples of how the college tailors the UTA experience to fit the individual needs of a diverse population of undergraduate nursing

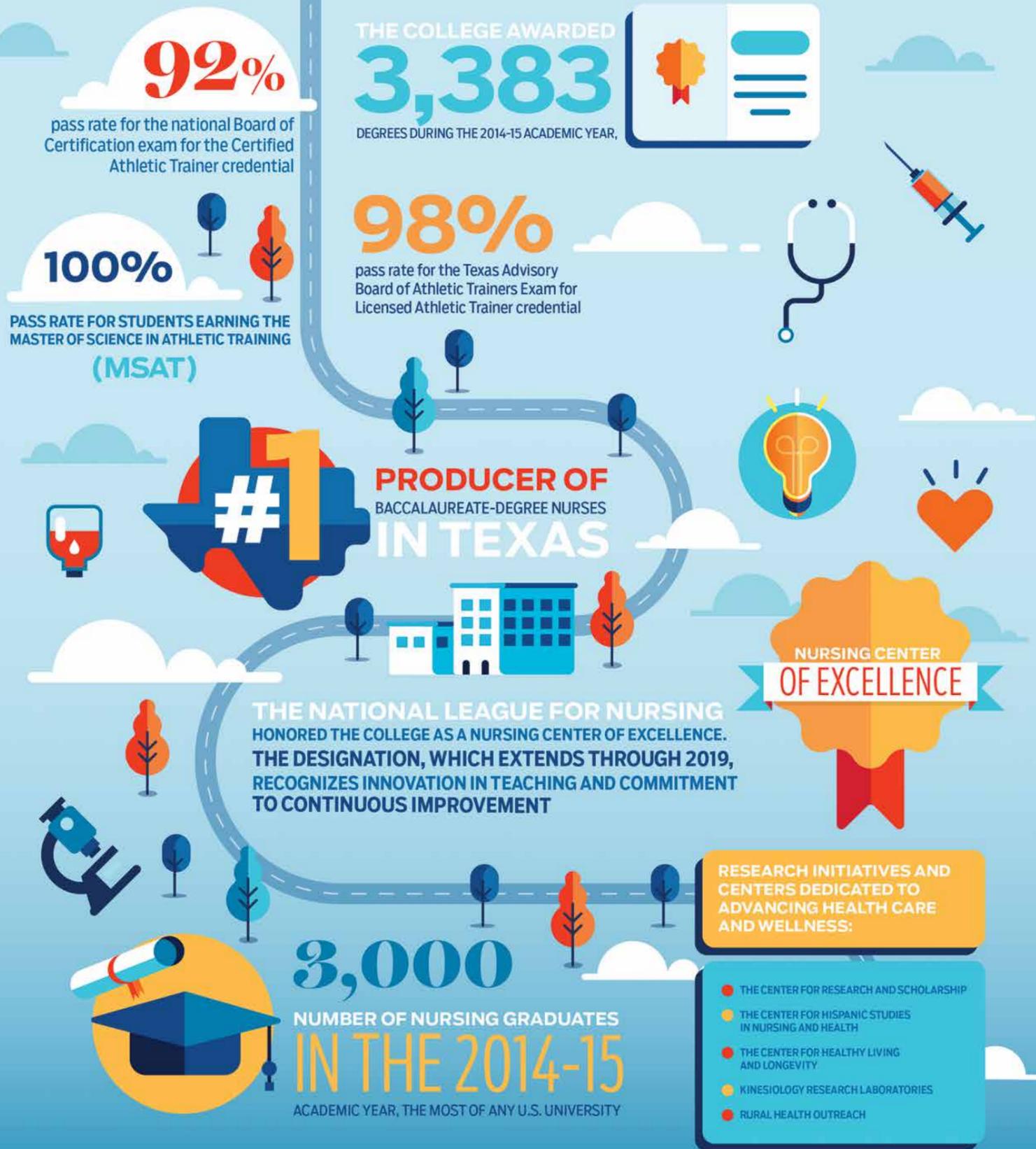
# ROAD TO

# EXCELLENCE

TAKE A TOUR OF THE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION

INFOGRAPHIC BY ALDO CRUSHER.





students.

Unwavering attention to the student experience is evident throughout the College. At the graduate level, the strategy to utilize a strong system of support enabled the College to ramp up online programs and increase enrollment in MSN education, administration, and nurse practitioner tracks. Throughout, the College maintained scores

dent nurses a look at the disparity within the district that many economically disadvantaged residents face with access to health care and how it impacts the educational process,” says April Weisedel, a Pasadena ISD nurse specialist.

Over the past decade, the College has also held a cooperative agreement with the Dallas VA (Veterans Administration) Medical

Center. Within the VA, student nurses receive clinical instruction from a VA staff development specialist who also is a faculty member.

“Collaboration among the faculty, community partners, and students is one of our greatest sources of strength at all levels,” says Beth Mancini, senior associate dean for education innovation.

The development of the College’s academic coaching model is a place where innovative program design is an outcome of pedagogical research. Both online and on-campus courses utilize the team approach, with a lead teacher who updates and maintains course materials and academic coaches who interact with cohorts of 25-30 students.

Looking to the future, Bavier sees a college that is uniquely equipped to meet and exceed the demand for nurses throughout the state of Texas—and beyond.

“We accept the challenge of fostering and promoting a sustained educational environment that will be responsive and sensitive to the needs of the communities we serve,” she says. “We are pleased that we have been able to answer the call, and we are privileged to continue to do so.”

Laura Elizondo, an ICU nurse working at Baylor Scott & White Health, notes that the Center of Excellence in Nursing Education designation isn’t just a highlight for the College, it’s a point of pride that benefits alumni and the community as well.

“It is wonderful to hear that the UTA nursing program is continuing its tradition of excellence and distinction,” says the 2004 graduate. “Not only does it ensure that new nurses coming into the field are properly equipped and expertly educated, but it also serves as a proud background and strong recommendation to alumni nurses like myself serving all over the nation.”

**“We expect that our on-campus program will remain robust, and our off-campus program will continue to grow.”**

on first-time specialty certification examinations of almost 100 percent.

This spring, the College will graduate its first cohort of students in the off-campus MSN Family Nurse Practitioner program.

“We expect that our on-campus program will remain robust, and our off-campus program will continue to grow,” says Kathryn Daniel, associate chair of advanced practice nursing programs.

Another component of empowering students is the College’s strong emphasis on mentoring programs. Peer mentoring is crucial at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. At the graduate level, the College also offers a Ph.D. mentoring program, where Ph.D. candidates receive guidance and engage in special programming that will enable them to become nurse scientists.

“Strategic collaborations such as these are at the heart of everything we do.”

**INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH**

In keeping with UTA’s model of innovation and demanding academics, faculty in the College are encouraged and supported to develop new pedagogies that create and sustain dynamic learning environments.

**COLLABORATIVE SUCCESSES**

Helping students achieve their goals means collaboration must be fundamental to the way the college operates.

This fall, the College launched a partnership with the Pasadena Independent School District (ISD) and the UT Health Science Center at Houston for a school-based community health clinical rotation. Both undergraduate and graduate programs require nursing students to obtain clinical hours in a variety of rotations, including community health services.

“The rotation program will provide stu-



## To the nth Degree

As new chief nursing officer for USMD Hospital at Arlington, Laurie Lewis is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the overall operation of nursing services. This includes perioperative services, inpatient and surgical intensive care, and the emergency department.

She also ensures regulatory compliance and patient care quality standards for all patients at USMD Hospital at Arlington.

Asked how she handles it all, Lewis laughs. "I've just always had the mindset that I can do anything I set my mind to," she says. "I think I'm just highly motivated. Anything I do, I do to the nth degree."

With an associate's, bachelor's, and two master's degrees—the latter two from UTA—Lewis certainly has the diplomas to prove it.

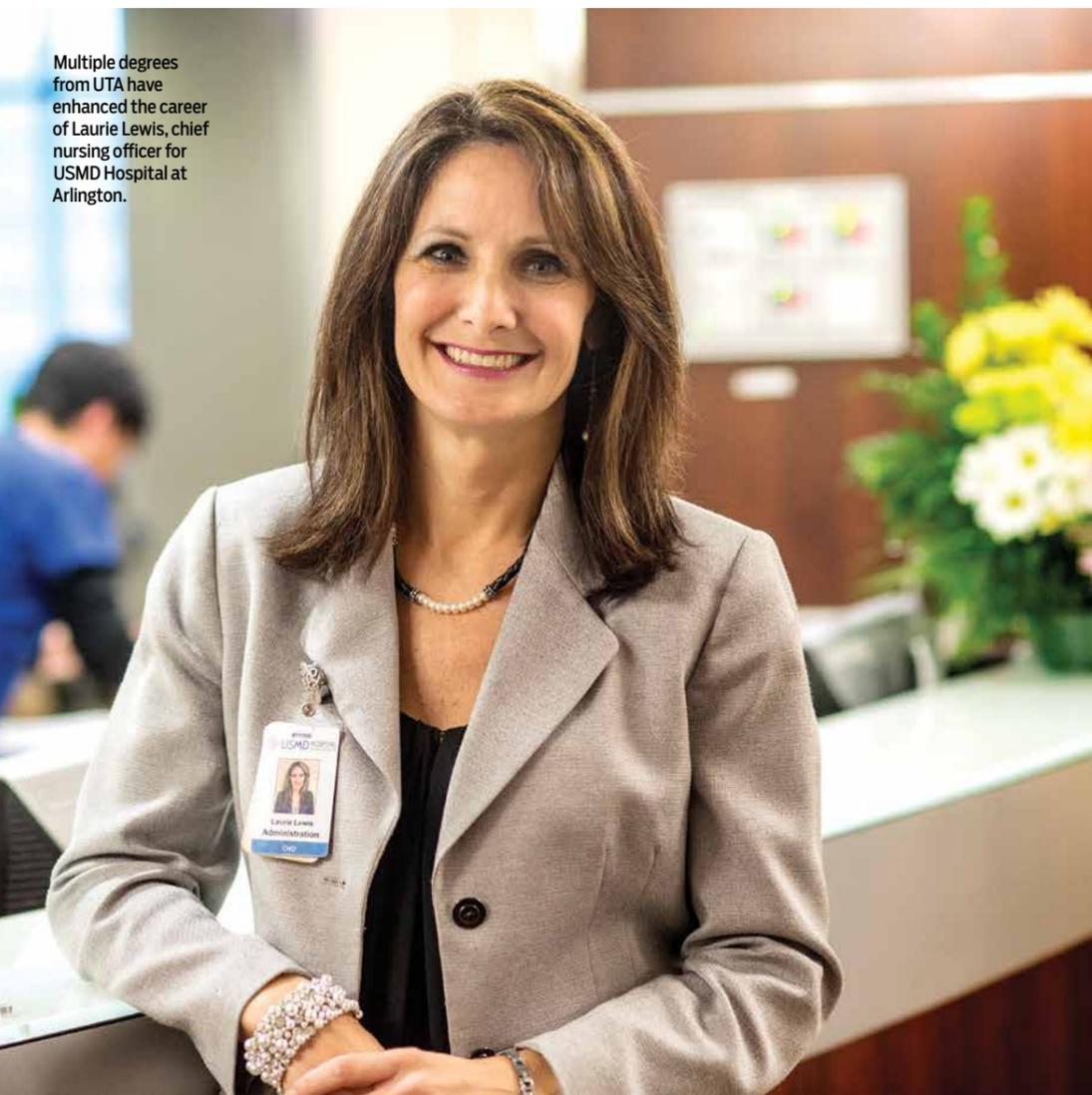
She's even considering going back to UTA for another master's degree.

"My Master's of Nursing Administration degree has helped me tremendously in my current role," she says. "Taking classes in finance, theory, and research were truly my first exposure in these areas. In particular, the management and leadership courses helped shape my leadership style and overall management strategies."

Her drive, combined with her more than 22 years of clinical experience and 10 years in leadership roles, inspires the passion she feels for supporting current and future generations of nurses.

"I'm fortunate that I get to impact so many nurses just from the things we do here," she says.

Multiple degrees from UTA have enhanced the career of Laurie Lewis, chief nursing officer for USMD Hospital at Arlington.



## Making an Impact

Alumna heads American Association of Nurse Practitioners

Cindy Cooke remembers the day she got her acceptance letter to the RN to BSN program at UTA.

"It was also the day I found out I was expecting," she says. "I told my husband, 'I don't think I can do this,' but he said, 'Yes you can.'"

Thanks to his support and the support of the UTA faculty and staff, Dr. Cooke completed her degree the following year and proudly balanced her new diploma in one hand and her 4-month-old son in the other.

That was in 1978. By the time her son was entering college, Cooke was going back to school to become a nurse practitioner. She has also earned her Doctorate of Nursing Practice and has spent the last 12 years at Fox Army Health Center in Huntsville, Ala. Last year, she was named president of the board of directors for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP).

Cooke says at UTA she learned it's possible to balance personal and professional aspirations.

"There are so many ways you can accomplish your goals, and when I was at UTA, I saw that," she says. "Each one of us has those professional goals, and it's good to know you can accomplish them while working around your family, your life."

At the AANP, an Austin-based professional organization with more than 65,000 individual members and over 200 group members, Cooke works to promote excellence in nurse practitioner practice, education, and research. She also backs the organization's efforts to advance health policy to shape the future of health care by bringing nurse practitioners' voices to the table and working to enhance their image. NPs number more than 205,000 nationwide.

She encourages all nurses to be active in professional organizations.

"Schools of nursing are leading the charge to show students the importance of professional practice," she says. "AANP continues to work with many academics to encourage leadership, health policy, and excellence in patient care."



UTA alumna Cindy Cooke heads the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.



## Training for a new field

Katie Clark already had a successful nursing career when a thirst for something new led her to UTA.

"I enjoyed orthopedics, and it occurred to me to try athletic training," says Clark, one of the first to earn a Master of Science in Athletic Training, or MSAT, at UTA. "I knew it was going to be a good program. It's a great, upcoming field and the UTA faculty have a passion for athletic training that makes you want to learn."

After graduation in 2015, Clark became a physician extender at Arlington Orthopedic Associates.

The College of Nursing and Health Innovation began enrolling MSAT students in 2013 and has 36 MSAT students this spring semester. The two-year degree replaced the Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training.

The change reflects a national trend.

"There's a lot of opportunity now, especially in North Texas," says Paul Krawietz, MSAT program director. "If a MSAT graduate wants a job in athletic training, they'll get one."



The College of Nursing and Health Innovation was well represented at the 2015 Homecoming 5K, which benefited UTA Student Emergency Services, and at the UTA Health Expo, which featured wellness vendors, food, and activities. Both events were held November 14, 2015.



Dream Maker Kate Schickedanz Leino donates annually to fund scholarships.

## Paying It Forward

Alumna honors husband with Dream Makers donation

Kate and Tim Schickedanz met as Army medics. Tim continued to serve while Kate was a stay-at-home mom to three boys.

Between deployments, Tim worked as a firefighter and medical tech. He also wanted to pursue his longtime career goal of being a nurse and enrolled in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation's BSN program.

"It was a challenge for him, working full-time and going to school while helping raise three little boys," Kate says. "But UTA really worked with us. They took care of us."

For example, he was able to get a \$500 scholarship to help buy books.

"Getting that help was huge for us," Kate says. "With trying to pay tuition and day-to-day living expenses, I don't know how we managed to pay all the bills, but we did."

After one last deployment, Tim was able to earn his nursing degree in December 2007. He went to work in the emergency room at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Fort Worth.

Then, in late August, he received a devastating cancer diagnosis. He died weeks later.

Kate, a grieving widow who now had four children, worked to rebuild her life. She had also dreamed of being a nurse and knew it was Tim's goal to help her earn her degree.

"There was never any question where I would go to school," she says. "I don't think I applied anywhere else but UTA."

She earned her degree in May 2014 and has been a working nurse ever since, currently at Baylor All Saints Medical Center. Now remarried, Kate Schickedanz Leino and her family donate each year to the Dream Makers scholarship fund in memory of her first husband.

"When we were receiving, as a young family, it meant so much to us," she says. "Now we want to help someone who needs extra money to get through their education."

Throughout nursing school and her everyday life as a nurse, she has worn her late husband's UTA pin on her badge.

"He was a great nurse and the best person I ever knew," she says. "I take him with me every day."



Your gift in support of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation is an investment in our students and faculty, our research and programs, and our continued success. If you are interested in giving, we invite you to contact the Dean's Office at 817-272-4793.



## Paving way for career change

Bryce Geeslin had an undergraduate degree in nutrition but realized a career in nursing was his real goal.

"I really wanted that face-to-face interaction where I could make a difference," he says.

In the summer of 2013, he started UTA's online BSN program, an option that allowed him to continue working as a physical therapy aide and support his wife while she completed training to become a physical therapist.

A stellar student, he was able to win several awards, including the Jean Ashwill Leadership Award and a variety of scholarships offered by the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. He graduated in December, and now he and his wife are moving to Temple, Texas, where he plans to work in the pediatric ER and trauma unit of McLane Children's Scott & White Hospital.

"Knowing that someone has donated money that allows you to treat others is very humbling," he says. "It really charges you with living out the intent of their donation."

# CLASSNOTES

### 1980s

**Gary Tucker** ('80 BSN, Nursing; '82 MSN) is president and chief executive officer of Mount St. Mary's Hospital in Lewiston, N.Y. He served as senior vice president and chief operating officer there since 2008.

### 1990s

**Debra K. Grant** ('90 BSN, Nursing) is chief nursing officer at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Hurst-Euless-Bedford. Previously she was chief nursing officer for Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center in California.

**Tonya Sosebee** ('93 BSN, Nursing) is assistant chief nursing officer at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital in Azle. She began her career at Texas Health Azle where she served as the medical-surgical and ICU director, a role she will continue to hold while in her new position. Prior to joining Texas Health, she worked for 20 years at Cook Children's Healthcare System, where she also served in leadership roles.

**Chad McBroom** ('97 BA, Exercise & Sport Science) is a football and baseball assistant coach at North Crowley High School.

### 2000s

**Cherie Six** ('00 BSN, Nursing) received the Excellence in Leadership Award as Nurse Manager of the Year at Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene. She has been a nurse for 40 years, the past 10 at Hendrick.

**Kaci Hickox** ('02 BSN, Nursing) was named 2014 Woman of the Year last year by mtvU.com, MTV's website for college students. She spent much of 2014 working with Doctors Without Borders in impoverished areas of Burma, Sudan, and Nigeria, and she traveled to Sierra Leone to help fight the spread of a deadly Ebola outbreak that has killed thousands in Africa.

**Calvin Banks** ('04 BA, Kinesiology) is director of training and development of Benchmark Hospitality International in The Woodlands, Texas. Previously he was director of training for The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs. He has served in several positions of increasing responsibility for Gaylord hotels, including director of training and senior training manager.

**Olabisi Eseyin** ('06 BSN, Nursing) completed her master's degree in nursing administration at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio in May 2015.

**Stephanie Campbell** ('07 BSN, Nursing) came to the UTA campus in October to lecture the Nursing Constituency Council on the life of a burn unit nurse. She treats patients at the Parkland Hospital Burn Unit in Dallas, where she is a staff nurse, and gives lectures for the American Burn Association.

### 2010s

**Garrett Yuen** ('10 BA, Kinesiology; '12 MBA, Business Administration) is a teacher and coach in the Alvord Independent School District in Alvord.

**Angie Blankinship** ('12 BSN, Nursing) was named to the list of 2015 ASC Women Leaders to Know in the ambulatory medicine core industry. She is an administrator at Nobilis Surgery Center in Dallas.

**Melvin Ibana** ('12 BS, Exercise Science; '15 MS, Kinesiology) was chosen as an American Kinesiology Association 2015 award-winner in the graduate scholar category. The AKA Scholar Awards recognize academic and leadership accomplishments of graduate students in AKA member departments at the national level.

**Sherron Meeks** ('12 BSN, Nursing) was appointed to the Texas Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke by Gov. Greg Abbott. She is a registered nurse and manages the Primary Stroke Center at Midland Memorial Hospital in Midland, where she serves as stroke coordinator and critical care unit education coordinator.

**Amy Billingslea** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an athletic trainer and teacher at Spring Hill High School in Spring Hill, TX.

**Johné Booty** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is a graduate assistant trainer for UTA Athletics, working mainly with the cross country and track teams.

**Katie Clark** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is a physician extender/athletic trainer for the Arlington Orthopedic Group.

**Janet Cover** ('15, MS Nursing Administration) published "The Leadership Practice Circle Program: An Evidence-Based Approach to Leadership Development in Healthcare" in the journal *Nurse Leader* in August 2015. She is a nurse practitioner in Dallas, specializing in pediatric nursing.

**Eren Cruz** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at MacArthur High School in Irving.

**Cody Hicks** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at Irving High School.

**Anita Huang** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) accepted a doctoral research and teaching assistantship at Oregon State University.

**Kyle Kratzenberg** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is an athletic training intern at UT San Antonio.

**Kiley Lodrigue** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth.

**Chris McNeely** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is doing contract athletic training for Ben Hogan Sports Medicine.

**Victoria Morris** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at El

Campo High School in El Campo, TX.

**Joey Pena** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at Martin High School in Arlington.

**Jesse Ramirez** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is doing contract athletic training at Ben Hogan Sports Medicine.

**Anneliese Roberto** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at Sam Houston High School in Arlington.

**Maya Seals** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer at Duncanville High School.

**Sanjay Shrestha** ('15 BS, Kinesiology) is an exercise physiologist at Baylor All Saints, Carter Rehabilitation and Fitness Center, part of the Baylor, Scott, & White Health System. His work was recently selected for publication in the *Baylor Medical University Center Proceedings*, a quarterly, peer-reviewed medical journal.

**J. T. Updegraff** ('15 MS, Athletic Training) is doing contract athletic training for Ben Hogan Sports Medicine.

**Jessica Waldrep** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an athletic trainer and teacher at Ford High School in Quinlan, TX.

**Canesha Woolford** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is an assistant athletic trainer and teacher in the Carrollton Independent School District.

**Cierra Young** ('15 BS, Athletic Training) is athletic trainer at Prince of Peace Catholic School in Plano.



**Sandi McDermott** ('06 MSN, Nursing) has been named director at the Tarleton State University center at Navarro College's Midlothian campus. McDermott will coordinate one graduate and six undergraduate programs offered in Midlothian as well as oversee services for more than 250 students. She joined Tarleton in 2014 as director of health and service professions at the university's Fort Worth campus.



**Wrennah Gabbert** ('85 BSN, Nursing; '90 MSN) is the James A. "Buddy" Davidson Chair in Nursing Excellence in the College of Health and Human Services at Angelo State University. The endowed chair was established through a \$1 million grant from the James A. "Buddy" Davidson Charitable Foundation in Midland, TX.



**Giancarlo Lyle-Edrosolo** ('07 BSN, Nursing) was appointed to a two-year term on the board of directors of the American Organization of Nurse Executives. He is service line manager in critical care at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and is a doctoral candidate in the Doctor of Nursing practice program at the University of San Francisco.



Participants enjoyed trips to cultural events and health care facilities.



## Mexican study program makes lasting memories

For the last 20 years, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation has taken health professionals to Cuernavaca, Mexico, to study at Universidad Internacional. Participants study Spanish and Mexican culture while also living with a Mexican family.

Guided field trips to health care facilities and local cultural sites provide a firsthand view of day-to-day life in Cuernavaca, known as “the City of Eternal Spring” because temperatures stay around 70 degrees Fahrenheit year-round. Special conferences provide information on the Mexican health care system, traditional medicine, and beliefs about health and illness.

The continuing education program is organized through the College’s Center for Hispanic Studies in Nursing and Health. Mary Lou Bond, professor emeritus and a senior advisor, says it was developed after students who participated in a similar program she led in Cuernavaca suggested it could also benefit working professionals.

This year’s program was held January 1-8 and led by Wendy Barr, adjunct clinical associate professor of nursing. It provides up to 30 contact hours offered through the Texas Nurses Association, an accredited provider of the American

Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation. Participants included students, faculty, alumni, and fellow health care professionals.

“I am eternally enchanted with Mexico, and that definitely made this a very attractive option for me,” says Adele DiMinno, associate professor of nursing at Northern Kentucky University. “I thought the fast-paced and professionally taught courses in Spanish were top-notch, and I only wish I could have stayed longer.”

Angie Millan, director of Children’s Medical Services for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, brought along her teenage daughter, Justine, who had two years of high school Spanish.

“The university tailors its courses to the individual and has excellent instructors who have lots of experience and enjoy what they do,” says Millan, a past president of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses. “I would recommend this school to others, no matter what level you feel you are with writing, reading, or speaking Español.”

Visit [uta.edu/conhi/research/chsnh/](http://uta.edu/conhi/research/chsnh/) to learn more about the vision and mission of UTA’s Center for Hispanic Studies in Nursing and Health.

YOUR ANNUAL GIFTS SHAPE THE FUTURE OF UTA STUDENTS

## CHANGE A LIFE

### YOUR SUPPORT FUELS SUCCESS IN THE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION

UTA boasts some of the nation’s brightest and hardest-working students. These high-achieving scholars consistently receive national recognition for academic excellence and find time to volunteer hundreds of thousands of hours in the community each year.

Your annual gifts help future leaders like Jaeca Flanagan, College of Nursing and Health Innovation graduate, fulfill her potential and discover her passion. Make a gift online today at [giving.uta.edu](http://giving.uta.edu) or call the Office

**JAECA FLANAGAN** has big plans. First, a master’s degree in nursing. Then, a job as a nurse practitioner. She says it wouldn’t be possible without the support she received from a Dream Makers Scholarship as an undergraduate. “My scholarship has helped

me bridge the financial gap between school and family. It has allowed me to devote my full attention to being a student without having to get a job. It’s important to invest in the future. We are the nurses of the future, and scholarships like these help make our dreams a reality,” she says.





# PATHWAYS TO PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

Our specialty **graduate degrees** prepare students for advanced practice, management, and research endeavors to address the changing health care landscape. Both full-time and part-time study options are available, as well as online and classroom-based programs.

Innovative doctoral programs—such as the Doctor of Nursing Practice, the Ph.D. in nursing, and, coming in Fall 2016, the Ph.D. in kinesiology—prepare clinical and research leaders to advance health care in our local community and around the world.

## **NURSING**

- Master of Science in Nursing
- Nursing Administration
- Nurse Practitioner Programs
- Nursing Education Programs
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
- Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing

## **KINESIOLOGY**

- Master of Science in Exercise Science
- Master of Science in Athletic Training
- Doctor of Philosophy in Kinesiology (Fall 2016)

[Visit uta.edu/cohni](http://uta.edu/cohni) to learn more.