Message from the Dean

Medicine is changing every day because of new scientific discoveries. That is why our vision as a School of Medicine is to be a leader in research and the stimulation of biomedical innovation for the benefit of the Rio Grande Valley and beyond. I am extremely pleased to share with you a glimpse of what our faculty, staff and students are doing to achieve this important community priority.

Our faculty is dedicated to educating future biomedical scientists. David Goldblatt, a second-year medical student, is one of 66 students in the nation to receive the prestigious Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Medical Research Fellows Award. He is conducting research on whether a specific immune stimulant could protect against asthma and other allergies common in the Rio Grande Valley. The School of Medicine is also hosting its second annual Research Symposium on September 15 that will feature more than 200 presentations from our students and residents, and scientists from institutions within the U.S. and across the world. We also are developing new graduate
degree programs in biomedical sciences, including a PhD in Human Genetics, and starting a Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics and Biomedical Engineering to help educate a workforce of scientists here at home.

We continue to make progress on our goal to create and translate biomedical knowledge through research in diseases most prevalent in the community. Dr. Jay Morrow is joining us on September 1 as the new Assistant Dean of Clinical and Translational Research. He is tasked with helping build a collaborative framework to support research discoveries in healthcare by the faculty and clinicians within the University and affiliated hospitals. This is especially important, given the scientific work underway by our South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute, and future research in the neurosciences and cancer immunology that will take place as we grow these programs.

An important next step for us is to create a hub for collaborative research in biotechnology to support the knowledge fundamental to the discovery of cutting-edge therapies for the benefit of our patients in the Rio Grande Valley and the world. We welcome the opportunity to continue working with leaders at state and local levels, and from the business and medical community to realize our shared vision.

Sincerely,
John H. Krouse, MD, PhD, MBA
Executive Vice President, Health Affairs
Dean, School of Medicine

About the Dean

---

**News and Events**

**School of Medicine to host grand openings for AHECS**

The UTRGV School of Medicine will host grand openings of its Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), starting with San Carlos in Hidalgo County on Sept. 19 and La Victoria in Starr County on Sept. 20.

A third grand opening is scheduled for Oct. 4 in Brownsville.

The AHECs will provide primary healthcare

**UT Health RGV to launch employee health sites this fall**

Starting this fall, employees of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley will benefit from lower out-of-pocket costs when seeing a UT physician for treatment. Employees and retirees of UTRGV and its legacy institutions who participate in the UT Health System’s benefits plan, UT SELECT, can receive discounted copays and other benefits when they visit UT Health RGV clinical sites and our local health systems-affiliated graduate medical education residency centers, as part of the UT System’s UT Health Network.
services to communities and educational opportunities for students of the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and College of Health Professions.

The grand openings will be held:

San Carlos:
10 a.m.-12 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2018
230 86th St., Edinburg, TX 78542

La Victoria:
5-7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 20, 2018
532 Gabriela St., Rio Grande City, TX 78582

Bob Clark:
4-6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 4, 2018
9901 California Road, Brownsville, TX 78521

In addition, UTRGV employees will be able to receive health care services on the university’s campuses starting in this fall. Employees will only pay a $10 copay for an office visit at these sites.

The UT Health RGV clinical sites in Edinburg and Harlingen are slated to open October 1.

UTRGV plans to open a UT Health RGV employee health location in Brownsville in 2019.

For more information about clinical practice locations, visit www.uthealthrgv.org or call 1-833-887-4863 (UTRGVMD).

The UTRGV School of Medicine received a hat tip from Darrell G. Kirch, MD, president and CEO of the Association of American Medical Schools at the AAMC’s 2018 Leadership Summit in Washington, DC.

Kirch highlighted the work the SOM has done with the community, including receiving the community’s input in the medical school's creation, and noted its effectiveness.

"I've never seen a medical school so interlaced with its community," Dr. Kirch said. "If you pay attention to your history with intentionality, you can do great things."

The UTRGV School of Medicine is hosting its second annual Research Symposium from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, at the McAllen Convention Center. This year will include about 200 poster and oral presentations from institutions across the country and world.

This year’s keynote speaker is Maria Elena Bottazzi, PhD, associate dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology & Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas and is Distinguished Professor in the Department of Biology at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

In the Spotlight

Student Spotlight: Baine

Faculty Spotlight: Gladys
Baine Herrera is a second-year medical student from Houston, Texas. Herrera graduated from The University of Texas at Austin in 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology. At UT Austin, he helped investigate new techniques in cancer cell detection.

Before applying for medical school, Herrera worked for Houston Methodist Hospital and Legacy Community Health—one of Texas’s largest Federally Qualified Health Centers.

Currently he serves as president of the School of Medicine’s Student Government Association.

Dr. Gladys Maestre, professor of neurosciences at the UTRGV School of Medicine, has received a P30 Center Grant from the National Institutes of Health-National Institute on Aging to establish a Rio Grande Valley Alzheimer’s Resource Center for Minority Aging Research: Partnerships in Progress.

The five-year, $3.2 million grant will allow Maestre and her team to support pilot programs and research initiatives and foster relationships with community and faith-based organizations to advance research and improve healthcare to patients with Alzheimer’s disease.

Dara Grieger, MD, a resident in the UTRGV Preventive Medicine Residency Program, has been named executive vice president of Executive Vice President of the American College of Preventive Medicine - Resident Physicians Section.

From the ACPM: Dr. Grieger earned her MD from University of Tennessee in Memphis. Before transitioning to Preventive Medicine, she was making primary care house calls in Harlem.

Her interests include strategies to implement lifestyle medicine, practice and payment models, collaboration between preventive medicine and other specialties, quality and outcomes, and evidence based policy.

Grieger also holds leadership positions in the Resident and Fellows section of the Texas Medical Association.
Two STDOI researchers named to endowed professorships

Curran named to Lacks Valley Stores, LTD Endowed Professorship

Dr. Joanne Curran, a professor at the South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute and the Department of Human Genetics, was named to the Lacks Valley Stores, LTD Endowed Professorship for the Advancement of South Texas Diabetes Research. The three-year appointment recognizes Dr. Curran’s excellence in research on diabetes, obesity, and related disorders.

“Dr. Curran’s exemplary work in the field of diabetes research is crucial in fighting a disease that disproportionately affects the Rio Grande Valley community,” said Dr. John H. Krouse, executive vice president for Health Affairs and dean of the School of Medicine.

Göring named to Bennett Dyke and Jean W. MacCluer Endowed Professorship

Dr. Harald Göring a professor at the South Texas Diabetes and Obesity Institute, is the first recipient of the Bennett Dyke and Jean W. MacCluer Endowed Professorship in Genetic Epidemiology.

Dr. Göring is one of the world’s leading statistical geneticists, and he has made significant contributions to the field of genetic epidemiology.

He began his career in genetics as a postdoc in the Population Genetics Laboratory that Drs. MacCluer and Dyke led at the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research (now the Texas Biomedical Research Institute).

New Hires

Julie B. Anderson, OD

Michele Favreau Haight, PhD
Dr. Julie B. Anderson joins the Division of Health Affairs and School of Medicine as the Assistant Vice President for Program Development, Director of Optometry and Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery at the School of Medicine. Dr. Anderson previously served as an Associate Dean in the College of Health Affairs. In her new role, Dr. Anderson will oversee the development of new academic programs, including starting UTRGV's new Optometry program.

Alice K. Marcee, DVM, JD

Dr. Alice K. Marcee joins the UTRGV School of Medicine as the Senior Associate Vice President for Business and Program Development. She previously served as Assistant Vice Chancellor and Counsel for Academic and Health Affairs at The University of Texas System. Dr. Marcee earned her Doctor of Jurisprudence from Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law and her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Texas A&M University.

Jay Brooks Morrow, DVM, MPH

Dr. Jay Morrow joins the UTRGV School of Medicine as the new Assistant Dean of Clinical and Translational Research. Dr. Morrow brings a wide range of experience leading various clinical, educational and research initiatives throughout The University of Texas System. He previously served as director of research development at UT Austin Dell Medical School, director of the statewide Texas Health Improvement Network at UT System and as a research program manager for UT Southwestern.

Dr. Michele Favreau Haight joins the UTRGV School of Medicine as the Associate Dean of Educational Affairs. Dr Haight comes to the School of Medicine from the Oregon Health and Science University School of Medicine, where she served as associate professor of Pediatrics. She is a Harvard Macy Scholar and has served as an invited professor at the Harvard Macy Institute. Dr. Haight earned her Ph.D. in Medical Education (Curriculum and Assessment) from the University of California Davis.
Great things are happening at the UTRGV School of Medicine. Learn more about the SOM Strategic Plan.

Make a Gift

Your gift to the School of Medicine supports our mission to educate a diverse group of medical students and future scientists to benefit the Rio Grande Valley and the world.

The University of Texas
Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine
Email: AskUTRGVsom@utrgv.edu
Phone: (956) 296-1900

Contact Us