

# Health Matters

*What Matters to Your Health, Matters to Us*

July 2020

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RGV

## Message from the Dean



As we reach the middle of the year, UT Health RGV and the UTRGV School of Medicine are still working diligently to provide the Rio Grande Valley with COVID-19 resources.

This month we have increased our COVID-19 testing capacity and have begun exploring antibody testing as well as contact tracing. I am proud of our healthcare professionals and faculty and staff who are working around the clock, leading the efforts and providing these much needed resources to our region.

We would like to remind everyone of the potential dangers that may still be present in the time of Coronavirus. In the last month we have seen a dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases in the RGV. We encourage everyone to continue practicing social distancing and to wear face masks to protect yourselves and those around you.

In addition to our front line efforts in combating the spread of COVID-19, we officially welcomed 55 new medical students for our class of 2024. We look forward to being part of their journey in becoming medical professionals.

We would also like to congratulate third-year medical student, Patrick Ojeaga on his new position as a student regent for the University of Texas Board of Regents by Governor Greg Abbott. Mr. Ojeaga has been an outstanding student during his time at our School of Medicine and is a tremendous leader at our university. I'm confident his dedication and work ethic will be mirrored in his new position as the new Student Regent on UT System's Board.

Sincerely,

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

About the  
Dean

## News and Events

### Dr. Linda Nelson leads UT Health RGV's COVID-19 on-site testing operations



Under the blazing South Texas sun, Dr. Linda Nelson and her team can be seen swathed in hair covers ... goggles ... face shields ... gowns ... double gloves ... shoe covers ... and the N-95 masks that are covered by yet another ear-loop mask to block smaller particles.

This is the uniform that stands between health and illness for people like Nelson who are contributing on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It’s all about keeping any contaminants away that we would ingest through our eyes, nose and mouth,” said Nelson, a Doctor of Nursing Practice (**DNP**), RN, pediatric nurse practitioner, and senior director of Clinical Operations for the UTRGV School of Medicine and UT Health RGV.

In the wake of COVID-19, the UTRGV School of Medicine, along with UT Health RGV, federal and state leaders, and county and city leaders have worked in collaboration to combat the spread of coronavirus by developing drive-thru testing sites.

[Read More Here](#)

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## Student’s journey to UTRGV School of Medicine began at UTRGV Math & Science Academy



Aryana Garza, of Brownsville, hopes to be a neonatologist one day, so she can take care of newborns in the Rio Grande Valley.

Her path to medical school began when she was a student at the UTRGV Mathematics and Science Academy (MSA), an award-winning program geared for high school students who are bright, motivated, and interested in a career in mathematics or science.

Today, she is one of 55 medical students in the UTRGV School of Medicine’s Class of 2024.

She is the second student from the MSA program to be accepted into medical school, and the first MSA student in the UTRGV School of Medicine.

And on Wednesday, July 1, she met the other students in her cohort during a virtual Orientation, which took place virtually via Zoom.

Now 22, and a doctor in the making, she is prepared and excited for the rigors of medical

school.

[Read More Here](#)

## Texas governor announces intent to appoint School of Medicine student as UT System Student Regent



Texas Gov. Greg Abbott announced his intent to appoint Patrick Ojeaga, a third-year medical student at the UTRGV School of Medicine, to serve as the next student regent for the UT System Board of Regents.

Born and raised in McAllen, Ojeaga is the first UTRGV student to be selected as a student regent.

[Read More Here](#)

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