



UTTyler
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

PROVOST ANNUAL REPORT



2023-2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we start a new academic year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the remarkable achievements in academics, research and scholarship within our UT Tyler community during 2023-2024.

In this publication, you will see that our faculty, students and staff continue to expand the boundaries of knowledge, addressing many of the most pressing issues of our time, particularly those facing our region. UT Tyler faculty and staff are leaders in their disciplines and make a life-changing impact on students.

UT Tyler students excel during their time at the university and go on to lead in industries across East Texas. As a community, we celebrate the significant contributions our faculty are making to their respective fields and how their dedication to advancing research and fostering innovation enriches the educational experience of our students.

I encourage you to explore the great work on display that flourishes due to an environment that supports innovation and scholarly excellence.

Philley

Julie V. Philley, MD
President



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A LETTER FROM THE PROVOST

DEAR FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS:

It is with a great sense of pride and joy that I share with you the outstanding accomplishments of our faculty and students in this 2023-24 annual report. First and foremost, our students demonstrated the high quality of our programs in various statewide and national competitions, from our Model United Nations team earning the Distinguished Delegation Award to our excellent debate team's success at the National Parliamentary Debate Association Championship, and from our civil engineering concrete canoe and steel bridge teams advancing to national competitions, to our technology students winning the ATMAE national robotics competition. Moreover, our accounting students had the third highest CPA exam pass rate among all Texas public universities.

As another evidence of the high quality of our programs, our online MBA ranked 29th nationwide by Fortune Magazine up from 46th in the previous year. For the fifth straight year, our College of Engineering ranked in the Top 100 Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs in U.S. News & World Report. We also celebrated the high rankings of our nursing and

criminal justice programs. Our University Academy received an "A" rating on its state assessment and ranked within the top 2% of schools statewide and the top 40% of schools nationwide. Our Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Longview was named the 2024 "SBDC of the Year" for the North Texas region by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

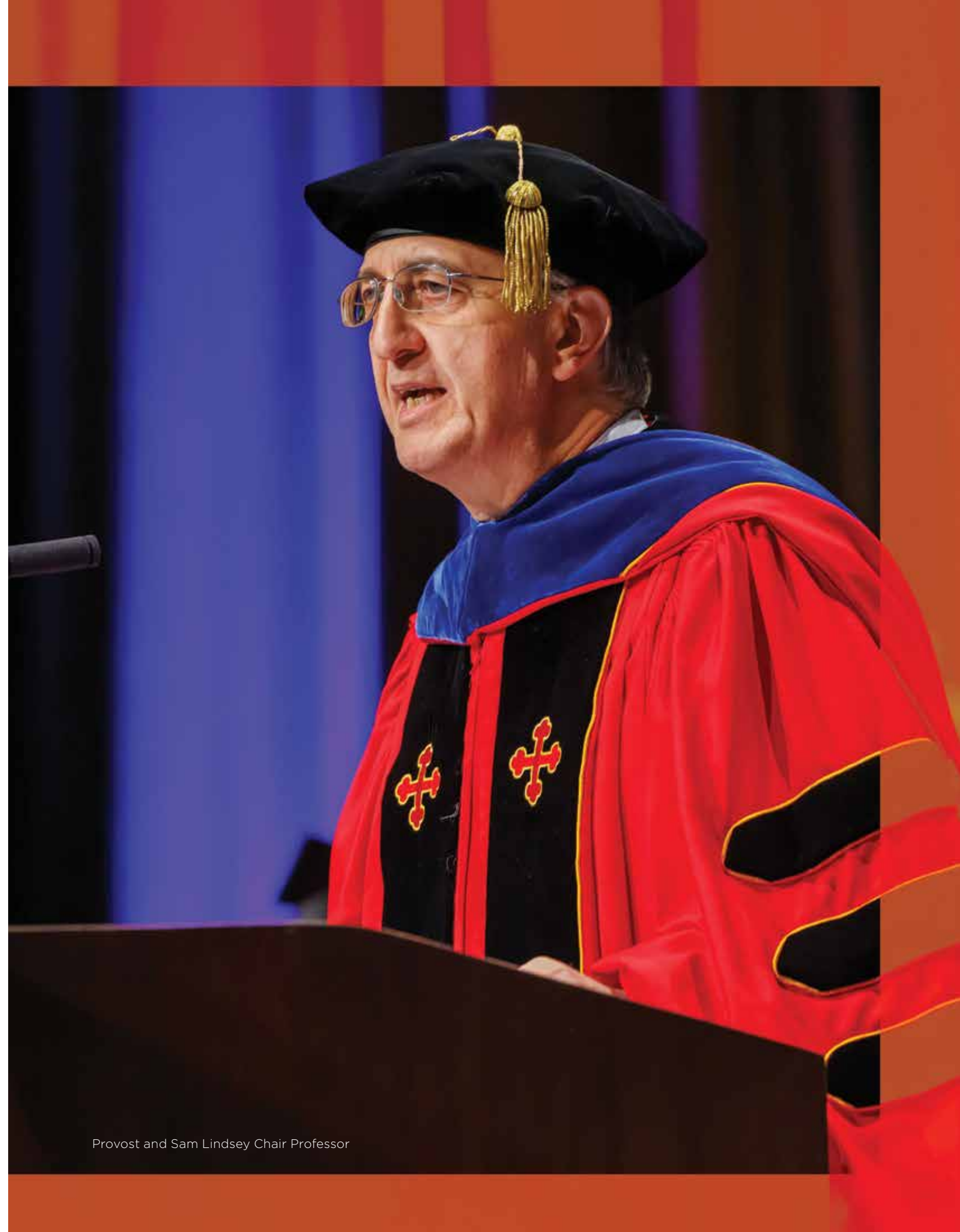
This past year, we launched several new academic programs, including adult-geriatric acute care nurse practitioner, speech language pathology, Bachelor of Science in computer engineering, Bachelor of Science in construction engineering and Master of Science in engineering leadership, and expanded other programs including the Master of Occupational Therapy. Our research funding saw a remarkable 17% growth over the previous year. With the completion of School of Nursing building and great advances in the construction of the Medical Education Building, we also had a groundbreaking for the addition to the Longview University Center.

We continued to build stronger connections with East Texas high schools and higher

education partners, leading to new institutional records for the fourth year in a row in terms of highest number of freshmen. We further expanded our successful partnerships with East Texas community colleges through co-enrollment agreements. The Honors College enjoyed yet another great year of record enrollments, while maintaining a deeply connected community. Our libraries have taken the lead to help make education more affordable for our students by incentivizing Open Education Resources and investing in the electronic textbooks, saving our students more than \$1 million since the start of the project in fall 2020.

At every commencement, I thank our graduates and their families for investing their trust in our university. Their diploma is a "share from that trust," the value of which will increase with the university's path of growth and excellence. So, we hope that you will continue to invest your trust in our dream and join us for the next leg of this exciting journey!

Dr. Amir Mirmiran



COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

DR. NEIL GRAY



This year has shown us, more than ever, the importance of a comprehensive education that spans the arts and sciences. The success of our faculty and students highlights how these disciplines foster critical thinking, creativity and a deeper understanding of the world. The School of Performing Arts, for example, has seen an unprecedented surge in enrollment, illustrating a profound interest in creative expression and performance. Our students and faculty have not only performed at prestigious venues but have also collaborated in ways that bridge gaps between theory and practice, inspiring both audiences and participants.

Our faculty's achievements in teaching and research are a testament to their passion and expertise. Dr. Josh Banta and

Dr. Kenneth Bryant, recipients of the Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award, exemplify the high standards of excellence in education that we uphold. Their innovative teaching methods and dedication to student engagement have had a lasting impact, nurturing the next generation of thinkers and leaders.

The success of our students in various competitions and conferences, such as the Model United Nations team earning the Distinguished Delegation Award and the continued success of our debate team, demonstrates the value of an interdisciplinary approach. These achievements are not just about winning awards but about developing skills in diplomacy, communication and global awareness — skills that are essential in today's interconnected world.

The Cowan Center has been a beacon of performing art and educational activities, hosting a myriad of events. From national touring performances to educational programs for children, the Cowan Center

exemplifies our commitment to making the arts accessible and integral to community life.

Our social work program's accreditation by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) and the graduation of its first cohort signify our dedication to our East Texas community and its families. These graduates are already making a tangible difference in East Texas, embodying the college's mission to serve and uplift our communities.

At the heart of all these accomplishments are the people who make up the College of Arts and Sciences. It is their passion, innovation and relentless pursuit of knowledge that drive our success. Our students, faculty and staff are the lifeblood of our college, and it is their achievements and dedication that we celebrate today. As we stand at the crossroads of higher education, we remain committed to fostering an environment where every individual can thrive, learn and make a meaningful impact.

Dr. Neil Gray

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES SUCCESS AT THE 2024 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

The Model United Nations (MUN) team achieved significant recognition at the 2024 National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference held in New York City. Fourteen dedicated students represented UT Tyler and earned the Distinguished Delegation Award for their exemplary representation of the Kingdom of Norway, placing them in the top 5% of all delegations.

In addition to the team's collective success, two students, Andrea Valdez and Matthew Bailey, received individual accolades for their outstanding position papers. Their work demonstrated deep understanding and insightful analysis of international issues, contributing to the overall success of the delegation.

The NMUN Conference is a prestigious event that brings together students from universities around the world to engage in diplomatic simulations, enhancing their understanding of global affairs, international relations and the workings of the United Nations. The recognition received by the UT Tyler delegation reflects the high level of preparation, teamwork and dedication of its members.

Participating in the NMUN Conference provides students with invaluable experience in diplomacy, negotiation and public speaking, preparing them for future careers in international relations, law and public service. The achievements of the UT Tyler MUN team at this year's conference underscore the university's commitment to fostering academic excellence and global engagement among its students.



UT Tyler Students Arianna Polius and Erika Gonzalez



Bottom row from back: Arianna Polius, Jacob Groninga, Raleigh Pierce, Dane Adams, Caroline Smoot, and Dalton Parkman. Standing, Matthew Bailey, Nathan DuBey, Joseph Williams, Carson Manasse, Luke Weathers, Andrea Valdez, Erika Gonzalez and Alondra Martinez

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ACHIEVES FULL ACCREDITATION, GRADUATES FIRST COHORT

Our new Bachelor of Social Work has achieved a significant milestone by earning initial accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). This accomplishment, led by Professor Rich Kenney, Associate Professor Ericka Freeman and Assistant Professor Kristen Mycke, underscores the program's commitment to excellence in social work education.

CSWE accreditation is crucial for social workers, as it is a key factor for employment and further graduate studies. The rigorous accreditation process ensures that the program meets the highest standards of quality and prepares students effectively for professional practice.

In May, the program proudly graduated its first cohort of students. These graduates are now making a meaningful impact by serving residents of East Texas throughout their life cycles. This achievement marks the beginning of a promising journey for the program and its graduates, who are dedicated to improving the well-being of individuals and communities.

The success of the social work program reflects the hard work and dedication of its faculty and students, and it highlights the university's commitment to addressing the needs of the region through high-quality education and professional training.



Social Work Professors (Left to Right): Kristin Mycke, Rich Kenney and Ericka Freeman



The first graduating class of our Bachelor of Social Work program.

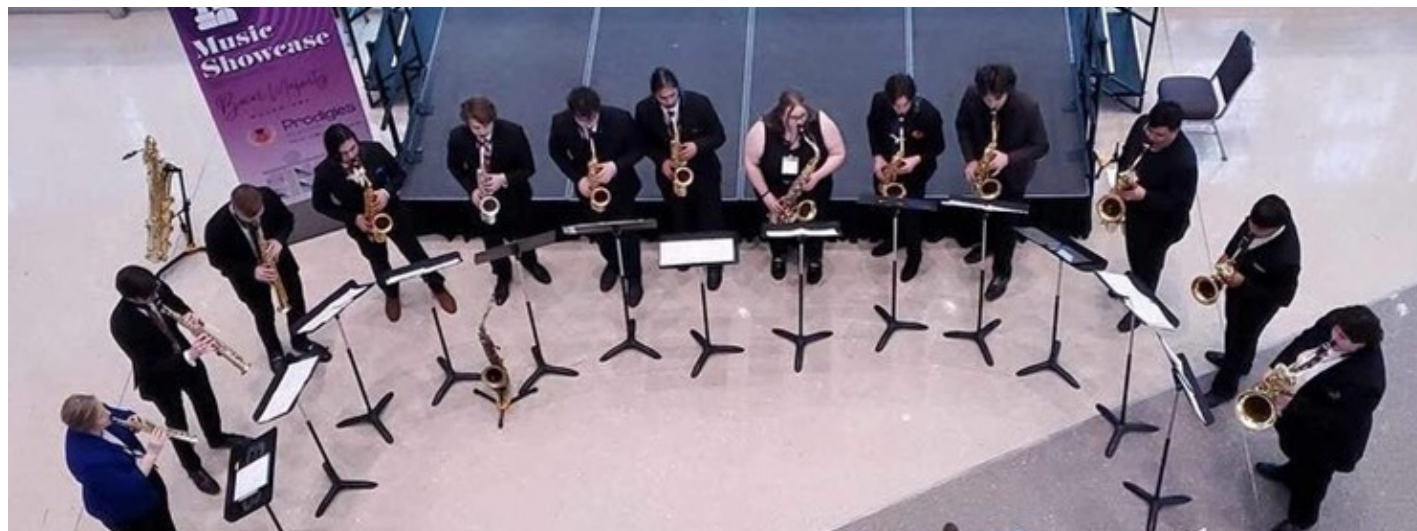
UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH AND PRESTIGIOUS INVITATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

The 2023-24 academic year has been a banner year for the School of Performing Arts, with a historic surge in enrollment and an array of notable accomplishments that underscore the department's excellence and vibrant community. This year, the School of Performing Arts welcomed a record number of students, with 85 individuals declaring majors and minors in music. This unprecedented growth is a testament to the department's dynamic programs, dedicated faculty and the broad appeal of its offerings.

One of the standout achievements this year was the recognition and showcase of the department's diverse talent on prominent stages across Texas and neighboring states. Our students not only displayed their skills but also competed at high levels, earning accolades and invitations that reflect the quality and dedication of both the students and faculty.

A particularly notable highlight was the UT Tyler Saxophone Ensemble, led by Dr. Sarah Roberts, Associate Professor of Saxophone and Jazz Studies, and Dr. Ricardo Allen II, Adjunct Instructor of Saxophone. The ensemble earned a prestigious invitation to present a showcase concert at the annual Texas Music Educators Convention (TMEA) in San Antonio. This invitation is a significant honor, marking the ensemble's second appearance at the TMEA Convention, a testament to their exceptional talent and the high regard in which they are held within the music education community.

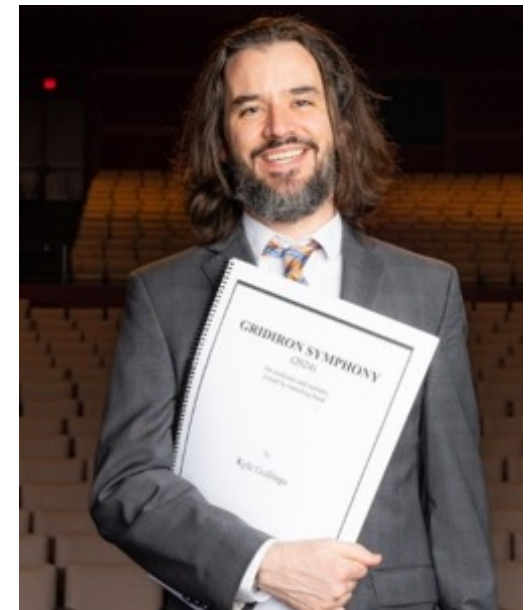
Left to Right: Dr. Sarah Roberts, Associate Professor of Saxophone and Jazz Studies, Jasper Scharp, Collin Hill, Jovanny Morales, Perry Perez, Jackson Forman, Joel Carnero Figueroa, Gracie Sexton, Dylan Melvin, Michael Fry, Mike Nyugen, Jose Herrera and Mariah Parnell



Additionally, the UT Tyler Trumpet Quintet, under the expert coaching of Dr. Jeremy McBain, Associate Professor of Trumpet, achieved remarkable success this year. For the second time, the Trumpet Quintet secured a spot in the semi-final round of the National Trumpet Competition held at Texas A&M University – Kingsville. Their audition recording was selected from among numerous ensembles across the country, showcasing their superior technical skill, musicality and dedication.

Adding to these accolades, Dr. Kyle Gullings, Associate Professor of Music Theory and Composition, premiered his "Gridiron Symphony," a 28-minute work for orchestra and narrator, on March 23, 2024. This innovative composition was commissioned and performed by the East Texas Symphony Orchestra, with directors and select students from the Tyler Legacy and Tyler High School marching bands participating in the performance. The premiere was a remarkable event, highlighting the collaborative spirit and creative excellence that define the School of Performing Arts.

These accomplishments reflect the School of Performing Arts' commitment to fostering a nurturing and challenging environment where students can thrive and achieve their full potential.



Dr. Kyle Gullings





PARTNERSHIP WITH IVANOV SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LEADERS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

In a significant international collaboration, the Departments of Social Sciences, History and Political Science collaborated to initiate a rich partnership with the International Center Alliance of Civilizations. This partnership allows a select number of UT Tyler students to attend the prestigious President Ivanov School for Young Leaders in North Macedonia. Founded by former President Gjorge Ivanov of Macedonia, this program aims to cultivate the next generation of political, cultural and economic leaders worldwide.

During the fall semester, President Ivanov made history by becoming the second international president to formally visit UT Tyler. During his visit, he signed a Memorandum of Understanding with President Calhoun, officially inviting UT Tyler students to participate in this esteemed program at no cost. This partnership underscores UT Tyler's commitment to providing unique, global educational opportunities for its students.

The Ivanov School for Young Leaders is an intensive program designed to instill positive values and leadership skills in young people, encouraging them to contribute meaningfully to society and their respective environments. UT Tyler proudly stands as the only American university involved in this initiative, highlighting the university's dedication to fostering international relations and leadership development.

The inaugural cohort of UT Tyler students included senior social sciences major Kirk Rosenbalm of Tyler, senior psychology major Catherine Kimball of Bullard, sophomore psychology major Preston Cammack of Longview, graduate political science major Kathryn Chamberlain of The Woodlands and senior political science major Brittany Sehion of Trinidad.

These students were accompanied by faculty mentors Dr. Tom Guderjan, Dr. Colin Snider and Dr. Robert "Bob" Sterken. The faculty members presented prominent and well-received talks at the school, contributing to the program's academic discourse and enhancing the reputation of UT Tyler on an international stage.

This partnership with the Ivanov School for Young Leaders not only provides UT Tyler students with unparalleled leadership training and global exposure but also reinforces the university's mission to cultivate leaders who are prepared to make positive impacts in their communities and beyond. The collaboration reflects UT Tyler's strategic vision of fostering international educational opportunities and highlights the exceptional achievements of its students and faculty.



From left: Dr. Tom Guderjan, Jacob Groninga, Kathryn Chamberlain, Brittany Sehion, Preston Cammack, Dr. Colin Snider and Dr. Bob Sterken

PATRIOT TALON EARNS RECORD NUMBER OF AWARDS AT TEXAS INTERCOLLEGIATE PRESS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

Students on the Patriot Talon staff achieved outstanding success at the 2024 Texas Intercollegiate Press Association (TIPA) Convention, earning a remarkable 34 awards. TIPA, the largest organization of collegiate mass communication programs in Texas, annually celebrates excellence in writing, photography, broadcasting, videography, public relations and publication design. This year's achievements underscore the exceptional talent and dedication of UT Tyler's mass communication students.

One of the most notable achievements was the recognition of the website for the university's independent student-run news media outlet, the Patriot Talon. The website was selected as the best website among colleges in its classification and was honored for its design, showcasing the students' proficiency in creating engaging and aesthetically pleasing digital content.

UT Tyler students excelled in both on-site competitions and awards for previously published material. Karleigh Yancy of Lindale earned second place in radio news announcing, while Nayeli Carrillo of Tyler secured third place in Spanish language radio news announcing.

Nathan Witt of Mineola was a standout, taking first and third place in social media breaking news, first and third place in interactive ad design, and first and second place in static ad design. Witt also earned second place in feature photography, breaking news story, documentary and interactive ad design, along with honorable mentions for feature story, in-depth reporting, podcast and advertising campaign. Brynna Williamson also shined brightly, securing first place in social media breaking news, first place in in-depth reporting and an honorable mention for breaking news story.

Luke Spence of Tyler captured first place in social media breaking news and second place in breaking news photo. Abigail Smith of Tyler earned second place in general news story and program production video. Paulina Mata of New London received first place in critical review and Spanish language feature, while Elaina Gonzalez of Tyler garnered honorable mentions for critical review and general column. LaKyndra Larkin of Flint secured first place in general news audio story and second place in feature reporting video. Ashod Gardin of Willis received an honorable mention for sports commentary, and Jallen Sullivan of Burleson took first place in multimedia sports story. Santiago Nuñez of Tyler earned second place in feature story, Kai Kirkham of Lockhart took second place in cartoon strip, and Bart Hisel of Tyler received an honorable mention for general graphic.





Dr. Joshua Banta is a Professor of Biology, teaching undergraduate plant biology and graduate courses in ecology and evolution.



Dr. Kenneth Bryant Jr. is an Associate Professor of Political Science, with a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri.



Leilani Hurtado and Zach Stansbery

MINI HIGHLIGHTS

PROFESSORS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS UT SYSTEM REGENTS' OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARDS

Dr. Josh Banta from the Department of Biology and Dr. Kenneth Bryant from the Department of Political Science received the prestigious Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award. This honor recognizes their extraordinary classroom performance and innovative teaching. Their dedication to teaching excellence and student engagement makes Dr. Banta and Dr. Bryant exemplary recipients of the Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award, reflecting the high standards of the College of Arts and Sciences.

UT TYLER DEBATE TEAM EXCELS AT NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP

The UT Tyler debate team achieved remarkable success at the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA) Championship in March 2024. Competing against some of the best collegiate debaters in the country, UT Tyler brought three teams (six debaters) to the national championship, showcasing their exceptional skills and dedication.

The freshman/sophomore pairing of Mason Smith and Rebecca Wood demonstrated their debating prowess by finishing with a 4-4 record. Similarly, the freshman/freshman pair of Aidan Birjandi and Anthony Rodriguez also concluded the championship with a 4-4 record. One of the standout performances came from the sophomore/sophomore pairing of Zachary Stansbery and Leilani Hurtado.

ZOO SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP WITH CALDWELL ZOO

The Department of Biology has launched an innovative new course in zoo science and conservation, developed in partnership with Caldwell Zoo. This inaugural course, taught by Marsha Williams, Lecturer in Biology, and Jessica Coleman, Senior Lecturer in Biology, provided students with an exceptional opportunity to gain practical skills essential for careers in zoo science and conservation.

This initiative not only enriches the educational experience for biology students but also strengthens the university's ties with the local community and highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in advancing conservation science.



AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY STUDENT CHAPTER AWARD

The American Chemical Society (ACS) student chapter in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry once again earned national recognition, receiving the prestigious Outstanding Chapter Award. This accolade is a testament to the chapter's exceptional programs and activities, marking more than 30 consecutive years of commendation by the ACS.

The ACS selects student chapters for special recognition based on their innovative programs, community outreach and commitment to advancing the chemical sciences. The Outstanding Chapter Award is the highest honor bestowed by the ACS, highlighting the chapter's consistent excellence and significant contributions to the field of chemistry.



MERRIE WRIGHT'S PROLIFIC YEAR IN CERAMIC ART RESEARCH

Merrie Wright had a prolific year, showcasing her ceramic art in several prominent exhibitions. Her work was featured in The Practice is the Point at the Fargo Museum of Art, the 8th Central Time Ceramics at the Heuser + Hartmann Galleries at Bradley University, and Small Scale Sculpture at the Clay Center of New Orleans. Additionally, Wright completed a prestigious three-week residency at the Skópelos Foundation for the Arts. This foundation, located on the picturesque island of Skopelos, Greece, promotes visual, performing and literary arts through cultural exchanges and provides an inspiring environment for artists to develop their work.



Merrie Wright, The Site of All Our Follies 004, terra cotta, porcelain and silica carbide, 2023

VIBRANT SEASON AT THE COWAN CENTER

The R. Down Cowan Fine and Performing Arts Center had a vibrant and diverse 2023-24 season, hosting a total of 43 events that brought together the university and the local community for a wide range of performances and ceremonies.

The Cowan Center presented 12 evening performances featuring national touring events, showcasing high-caliber entertainment and cultural experiences. Additionally, the center hosted four daytime performances specifically for school children, each attracting 1,650 school-aged attendees. Through the Cowan Center Circle program, six different schools received scholarships covering the full cost of attending these performances, making the arts accessible to young students.

Supporting the university's music programs, the Cowan Center hosted two performances each by the UT Tyler Jazz Orchestra and the UT Tyler Wind Ensemble. The center also facilitated one All Region Choir Clinic and Concert and one All Region Band Clinic and Concert, providing valuable performance opportunities for local student musicians.



The East Texas Symphony Orchestra presented their five Subscription Series events at the Cowan Center throughout the academic year, enriching the cultural landscape of the region. Every October, the Texas Rose Festival holds their Queen's Coronation at the center, a highlight of the local cultural calendar.

In celebration of a significant milestone, a local dance school marked its 60th anniversary with a recital at the Cowan Center, drawing five unique audiences in one day.

These diverse events and initiatives highlight the Cowan Center's integral role in the cultural and educational fabric of UT Tyler and the surrounding community, demonstrating its commitment to providing high-quality experiences and fostering community engagement.

UT Tyler Wind Ensemble



DISCOVERY SCIENCE PLACE — IGNITING CURIOSITY IN YOUNG MINDS

Since 1993, the Discovery Science Place (DSP) has inspired young minds with hands-on STEM exploration. With more than 70,000 visitors this year, DSP offered engaging experiences through summer camps, field trips and events like Full STEAM Ahead, Founder's Day and Engineers Week.

DSP's partnership with UT Tyler brings STEM experts to enhance educational content and operational efficiency. This year features the Expedition Egypt traveling exhibit, and in early 2025, DSP will unveil a new, state-of-the-art energy exhibit — the largest addition since its opening — funded by community partners and designed by Museum Arts of Dallas.



SOULES

COLLEGE OF

BUSINESS



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

DR. KRIST SWIMBERGHE

research continues to expand its collaboration with local and regional Economic Development Corporations (EDCs) such as Tyler EDC, Longview EDC, Marshall EDC, etc.

Soules College of Business faculty were recognized for their outstanding and impactful research and teaching. For example, Dr. Yonjoo Cho, Professor of Human Resource Development (HRD), received the Outstanding HRD Scholar Award, and Dr. Andrea Ellinger, Professor Emeritus, received the HRD Hall of Fame Award, both given by the Academy of Human Resource Development. Dr. Mohammad Ali, Associate Professor of Technology, received the prestigious Paul T. Hiser Exemplary Publication Award given by the Epsilon Pi Tau International Honor Society for Professionals in Technology. Dr. Mary Fischer, Professor of Accounting, was invited to participate in a project conducted by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. Kerrie Anne Ambort-Clark was named as a Fellow of the prestigious UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

The Department of Technology student ATMAE robotics team and its robot, Dionysus, won the robotics competition during the annual national ATMAE conference in Atlanta, Georgia. The Mu Kappa chapter of Beta Alpha Psi was recognized as a “superior” chapter.

UT Tyler accounting students had the third highest CPA exam pass rate among Texas public universities. Seven Soules College of Business students were selected as UTIMCO scholars. Lucas Vega of Tyler, a May 2024 computer science Soules College of Business graduate, received the 2024 “Best Undergraduate Oral Presentation” at the ninth annual LSUS Regional Scholars Forum at Louisiana State University-Shreveport for his presentation, “A Neural Network Approach to Predict Opioid Misuse Among Previously Hospitalized Patients Using Electronic Health Records.” I continue to be honored to serve and lead the Soules College of Business as Dean. I am grateful to all of those who play a role in ensuring the impact of the Soules College of Business in our communities. I look forward to partnering with all of you to continue to move the Soules College of Business and The University of Texas at Tyler forward.

Dr. Krist Swimberghe

The Soules College of Business continued its path to be an educational leader and have an ever-larger impact in East Texas and beyond during the 2023-24 academic year.

The combined effort of faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders resulted in the Soules College of Business’s online MBA program being ranked 29th nationwide by Fortune Magazine, as noted on the publication’s “Best Online MBA Programs in 2024” list (up from 46th in 2023). Programs in the Department of Technology were re-accredited by the Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering (ATMAE).

The UT Tyler-Longview Small Business Development Center was named the 2024 “SBDC of the Year” for the North Texas region by the U.S. Small Business Administration. It helped clients start 49 businesses, aided to infuse more than \$10.9 million in capital and created 168 jobs in the six East Texas counties it serves. The Hibbs Institute for Business and Economic



Lucas Vega

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

SPOTLIGHT ON LUCAS VEGA

Lucas Vega of Tyler, a May 2024 graduate of The University of Texas at Tyler, received this year’s “Best Undergraduate Oral Presentation” award at the ninth annual LSUS Regional Scholars Forum at Louisiana State University–Shreveport. Vega presented “A Neural Network Approach to Predict Opioid Misuse Among Previously Hospitalized Patients Using Electronic Health Records.” Dr. Robert Schumaker, UT Tyler Professor of Computer Science, served as his faculty mentor.

“We appreciate the opportunity for our students to present at the LSUS Regional Student Scholars Forum,” said Dr. Amir Mirmiran, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. “We are proud of Lucas and his excellent work, as well his mentor, Dr. Schumaker.”

The forum featured original undergraduate and graduate student research from more than 40 colleges and universities across Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. Vega holds a UT Tyler Bachelor of Science degree in computer science and mathematics. He plans to become a statistician.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY ROBOTICS TEAM

The Department of Technology robotics team earned multiple awards at the Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering conference. Out of nine teams, UT Tyler and the robot Dionysus took first place overall and Best Mechanical/Manufacturing Design. The students were tasked with solving a material handling problem by designing, developing and demonstrating a semi- or fully-automated robotic system solution. Robotics team members are Jonathan Hall, Andrew Valarde, Timothy Johnson, Kaleb Saxon, Miguel Angel Fernandez-Zapata, Phillip “Randy” Matthews, industrial technology majors; Kacey Flores, computer science major; and Verra Venkata Surya Kiran Kosireddy, industrial management major.

Miguel Angel Fernandez-Valarde also advanced to the semifinals of the IQ Challenge, which is a Jeopardy!-style game. “The competition is designed to test students’ knowledge gained in their respective courses of study,” said Dr. Heshium Lawrence, Soules College of Business Interim Associate Dean and ATMAE Student Chapter Faculty Adviser.

For 2023, UT Tyler accounting students had the third highest CPA exam pass rate among Texas public universities and the ninth overall among all Texas universities. The pass rate is 58%, above the national average of 50%. The 2023 Uniform CPA Exam is comprised of four sections — financial accounting and

reporting, regulation, business environmental concepts, and auditing and attestation. “Our graduates continue to perform among the top universities in the state on the CPA exam, and our reputation as a school of choice for aspiring accounting professionals continues to grow,” said Dr. Roger Lirely, Professor of Accounting and Chair.

UTIMCO SCHOLARS PROGRAM

UTIMCO Scholars Program allowed students to meet with professionals from BlackRock, PIMCO, Bridgewater, Dimensional Fund Advisors, Alliance Bernstein, Brevan Howard and JP Morgan. The agenda included panel discussions, career paths at different firms, mock interviews and networking opportunities. Fifty scholars from all the different UT institutions were selected to attend this event in Austin. Students who were in attendance from the Soules College of Business were Luisa Moraes, Nathan Bowers, Hunter Brown, Emmanuel Ramirez, Josue Funez, Melanie Spencer and Tristan Vaughn.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Sagnik Dakshit
Assistant Professor of
Computer Science

SPOTLIGHT ON DR. SAGNIK DAKSHIT

Dr. Sagnik Dakshit, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, and his students have examined the capabilities and limitations of Large Language Models such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT and Google’s Gemini in the realm of medical self-diagnosis. “As the digital age progresses, the once commonplace Google search has taken a backseat to these sophisticated AI models,” Dr. Dakshit said.

The study’s findings are a mixture of potential and caution. Researchers caution against taking the results at face value due to inconsistencies in the AI performance. “As we are at the crossroads of technological innovation and public health, this study serves as a crucial checkpoint,” Dr. Dakshit said. “It reminds us that while AI can be a powerful tool, it is not infallible. The journey toward reliable AI-assisted self-diagnosis is ongoing, and it is one that must be navigated with both hope and caution.”



Kerrie Anne Ambort-Clark
Assistant Dean of
Health-Related
Business Programs

SPOTLIGHT ON KERRIE ANNE AMBORT-CLARK

Assistant dean of health-related business programs, Kerrie Anne Ambort-Clark, was named a Fellow of the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers.



Dr. Jennifer Reynolds
Senior Lecturer
in Accounting

SPOTLIGHT ON DR. JENNIFER REYNOLDS

Dr. Jennifer Reynolds, Senior Lecturer in Accounting, received the Outstanding Accounting Educator by TXCPA for medium sized schools.

SPOTLIGHT ON DR. MARILYN YOUNG

Dr. Marilyn Young has been working to improve the lives and economic mobility of veterans by participating in the Tyler Veterans Entrepreneurship Boot Camp hosted by the Tyler Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Young also presented the Tyler MSA Veteran Friendly initiative at the East Texas Research Conference, and Dr. Young continues ongoing work to help veteran’s the East Texas area achieve more fulfilling lives via education and economic success.



Dr. Marilyn Young
Professor of Management Fellow,
Hibbs Institute for Business
Economic Research

MINI HIGHLIGHTS

ONLINE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

The online Master of Business Administration programs within the Soules College of Business is ranked 29th nationwide by Fortune Magazine, as noted on the publication’s “Best Online MBA Programs in 2004.” The university is one of only two UT System academic institutions among the top 30 ranks this year.



HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM

The Human Resource Development Master of Science degree program has been recognized as being aligned with the Society of Human Resource Management’s Human Resource curriculum.



DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

The Department of Technology through hard work and dedication, earned the only perfect score in the country from the Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering Accreditation review for both industrial technology and industrial management programs.



THE UT TYLER-LONGVIEW SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The UT Tyler-Longview Small Business Development Center has been named 2024 SBDC of the Year by the North Texas SBDC and the Dallas/Fort Worth District of the Small Business Administration.

The award was presented to the center at the SBA’s annual awards luncheon celebrating National Small Business Week.

“The 2024 SBDC of the Year award reflects the significant impact the UT Tyler-Longview SBDC has in the region it serves,” said Krist Swimberghe, Dean of UT Tyler’s Soules College of Business. “My congratulations to Mr. Day Shelmire, Brandy Flanagan, Virgel Conner and Lindsay Arden who are ‘the boots on the ground’ and responsible for this success.”



Mr. Day Shelmire

The UT Tyler-Longview SBDC accomplishments for 2023 resulted in the following:

- Helped clients start 49 businesses in the community.
- Helped businesses create 168 jobs.



- Aided small businesses with acquiring and infusing more than \$10.9 million in capital.
- Invested more than 2,400 advising hours towards small business assistance.
- Served more than 440 businesses and entrepreneurs.



2024 Soules College Graduate of the Decade Award

2024 SOULES COLLEGE GRADUATE OF THE DECADE AWARD

The 2024 Soules College Graduate of the Decade Award was given to Loren Lirely, CPA. Lirely is currently Senior Vice President – Accounting & Reporting Advisory for Stout in Dallas.

Lirely has several years of experience providing accounting and reporting services to both public and private sector clients. He has extensive experience across a broad range of industries including energy, transportation, manufacturing, mining, retail and real estate.

Lirely advises companies on various technical accounting matters, including fresh-start accounting and restructuring, lease accounting, business combinations, stock-based compensation and financial statement preparation.

Prior to joining Stout, Lirely served as the controller at a mid-sized private company where he led the technical accounting and reporting functions. Prior to his industry experience, he served clients in Deloitte’s audit and assurance practice.

During his time at UT Tyler, Lirely was a four-year letterman for the UT Tyler baseball team and graduated summa cum laude with his degree in accounting.

Lirely currently serves on the Accounting Advisory Council and has served as a speaker at the university’s Career Success Conference.

Lirely and his wife Kaylee, also an alum of UT Tyler, live in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and have two children, Adelyn (4) and Kalen (10 months).

THE 2024 SOULES COLLEGE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR AWARD WAS GIVEN TO ROY MARTINEZ.

Throughout his 25-year professional career, Roy Martinez has served in leadership roles in the worlds of banking, freight transportation, higher education, franchises, nonprofits and various community organizations.

Martinez is currently Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer for Bronco Companies, a top provider of quality logistical services including trucking, freight brokerage and field services with offices in Texas and Oklahoma.

Prior to his current role with Bronco Companies, Martinez served for more than six years as President of Swan Transportation Services, LTD., a nationwide full-service freight services company.

Martinez began his professional career in banking, starting as a Teller in a local bank before, ultimately, serving as the bank’s Executive Vice President for Commercial Lending.

He has served as an Adjunct Professor in the Soules College of Business and is an Emeriti Member of the Soules College’s Corporate Advisory Council. He is also a member of the university’s Development Board. He and a classmate have also given back to the university through the creation of the Leslie “Les” Peacock Memorial Endowed Scholarship.

Martinez earned his Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance and his Master of Business Administration degree from The University of Texas at Tyler.

Martinez and his wife, Anne, live in Tyler and have two children, Peyton and Kaitlyn.

2024 Soules College Distinguished Alumnus of the Year



COLLEGE OF
**EDUCATION &
 PSYCHOLOGY**



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN
 DR. PRADEEP "MAX" DASS

It was an honor and a privilege for me to be selected, after a national search, to serve as the dean of the College of Education and Psychology (CEP), starting in fall 2023. I am excited to showcase the activities of our college during my first year here as the college dean. We prepare future teachers through our undergraduate teacher education degree programs who go out to serve the community by educating K-12 students; we provide professional enhancement through our graduate degrees and a certificate program to school teachers and administrators already serving in their communities; we prepare school counselors who serve K-12 students in their communities; we prepare students with an undergraduate degree in psychology, which allows them to work in a variety of fields; and we train graduate students in counseling and psychology who serve the mental health needs within their communities. Thus, graduates from all our programs directly serve and positively impact the communities they choose to live in, mostly within the East Texas region and our state at large.

While educating and preparing students for these professions, our faculty are continually engaged in scholarly activities that generate new knowledge, advance their disciplinary fields and have an immediate impact on the learning experiences they provide to our students. They are exemplary 'teacher-scholars' whose scholarly activities include research projects, often involving both our undergraduate and graduate students, providing them valuable research experience. Many of our faculty research projects are externally funded, some by state-level agencies, such as the THECB, and some by national agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education. During this reporting year, including summer 2023, CEP faculty were awarded more than \$200,000 in external grant funds.

CEP is home to three academic disciplines — psychology, education and counseling — with both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. We offer three undergraduate degrees, two in psychology and one in education, with several teacher certification tracks; seven master's degrees; two doctoral degrees and two certification programs. Both psychology and education were within the top five enrolled undergraduate majors at UT Tyler during the 2023-24 academic year.

Organizationally, CEP includes two academic departments,

the University Academy (UA) and five centers. The academic departments include the Department of Psychology and Counseling, headed by Dr. Amy Hayes, and the School of Education, headed by Dr. Yanira Oliveras Ortiz (fall) and Dr. Staci Zolkoski (spring). UA is a three-campus public charter school district with K-12, STEM-focused school campuses in Tyler, Palestine and Longview. UA serves as the laboratory school for CEP. Dr. Jo Ann Simmons serves as UA's district superintendent, while each school campus is led by its own campus director: Dr. Kelly Dyer (Tyler); Ms. Shelly Parsons (Palestine, interim role); and Ms. Rachel Hawkins (Longview). The college's five centers have been consistently engaged in research and outreach activities in their respective areas of literacy, STEM education, clinical neuropsychology, and multiple facets of K-12 education, serving the region, our state and beyond.

The accomplishments of students, staff and faculty in CEP this year were many and varied. My congratulations to all our faculty, staff and students for what we accomplished together during this past year, and for advancing our ongoing mission to serve the East Texas region in the areas of education, counseling and psychology. I am pleased to share below only a few of these accomplishments as examples.

Dr. Pradeep "Max" Dass

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

UNIVERSITY ACADEMY



University Academy had a very successful year with a number of noteworthy achievements. All three UA campuses received an “A” rating on state assessment and ranked within the top 2% of schools statewide in performance. They were also within the top 40% of all schools nationwide in the U.S. News and World Report listing of 500 top schools this year. For the first time in its history, UA took the first place in state level UIL Lincoln Douglas Debate competition, with UA Tyler senior Hayden Burns achieving this honor. Thirty-three percent of UA teachers received the Teacher Incentive Allotment award from the state, reflecting the high quality of instruction they provide. The UA also received more than \$632,000 in external grants.

PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING



The clinical mental health counseling master’s degree program received renewal of their accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs for the next eight-year cycle. This renewal of accreditation implies continued adherence of CACREP’s high academic and professional standards by the program and reflects continued high quality of this program. The doctoral program in clinical psychology graduated its first two candidates during summer 2024. The Mental Health Matters project, funded by the US Dept. of Education, continued its second year activities with a Mental Health Matters conference held on campus in October 2023, and attended by participants from the three school districts that are partners in this project.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education received renewal of accreditation from the Texas Education Agency for all of its education degree programs, both undergraduate and graduate. The reading education program secured two major accomplishments: 1) The master’s degree program in reading received ‘National Recognition’ followed by ‘National Recognition with Distinction’ (the highest level of recognition) awards from the International Literacy Association, reflecting adherence to the most rigorous professional and academic standards in the field of reading and literacy education; 2) Received approval from the Texas Education Agency to be a Texas Reading Academy authorized provider, following a year-long pilot program and a culminating conference in spring 2024. As a result, the TEA-required Texas Reading Academy modules will be embedded within the undergraduate reading program courses, and the students will graduate with the mandatory Texas Reading Academy requirements already fulfilled. This will make our graduates more competitive for school teaching jobs as the school districts will not need to invest resources for them (\$3,000 per teacher) to become Texas Reading Academy qualified.



MINI HIGHLIGHTS AND BRIEFS

UNIVERSITY ACADEMY

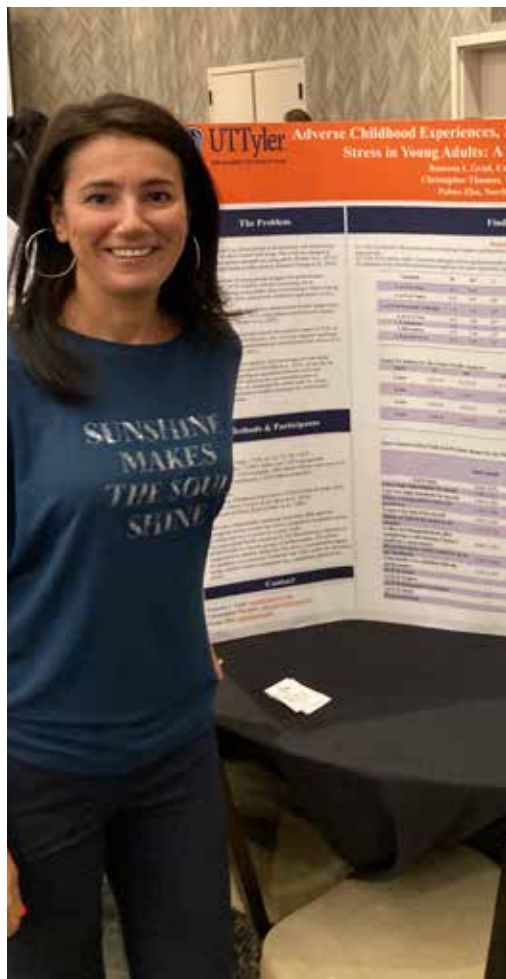
The University Academy graduated 56 students this year, of which 45% will be attending UT Tyler, and 41% will be majoring in STEM fields. The UA was named a Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Distinguished District for the second consecutive year and the only district in Texas to receive the award this year. Palestine campus high school team, led by Mr. Larry Richmond, won second place in the Palestine Rotary Academic Olympics.

PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Psychology and Counseling department faculty member Lauren Deaton led a summer study abroad course on the psychology of happiness, visiting Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. Dr. Ramona Grad presented her research at the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

THE MEMORY ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH CENTER

The Memory Assessment and Research Center received a \$20,000 philanthropic gift from the Summers Foundation.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education established several new certificate options/tracks within existing graduate degrees: Dyslexia certificate and literacy coach certificate within the reading program; and behavioral specialist track within the special education program. The school improvement EdD program has continued to grow at a fast pace, with increasing enrollment. Faculty member Dr. Teresa Kennedy was a member of the scientific team that participated in a NOAA Decadal Repeat Hydrography Expedition of the Atlantic Ocean aboard Research Vessel *Marcus G. Langseth*, a part of the international Global Ocean Ship-based Hydrographic Investigations Program (GO-SHIP). During her voyage, she involved University Academy students via blogs and video communication in learning about ocean hydrography.



Faculty member Dr. Gary Miller has been serving as a facilitator for the Quality Measures (QM) Principal Preparation Program self-study across the state of Texas and was invited this year to be a national facilitator for two programs in Nebraska. The picture to the right is from a recent meeting of the QM program "graduates" from across the state.

Faculty member Dr. Forrest Kaiser was awarded the 2023 *Advocate of the Year* award by the Texas Council of Professors of Educational Administration for his work with local school districts to support and enhance school leadership, and collaborative research with Educational Leadership faculty across the state.





COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN DR. JAVIER KYPUROS



The future is promising, and new achievements and milestones are just over the horizon for the College of Engineering. For the fifth year straight, the College of Engineering ranked in the Top 100 Best Undergraduate Programs in Engineering in U.S. News & World Report. In addition to our largest first-year class, we welcomed the inaugural cohorts for our new undergraduate degree programs in computer engineering and construction engineering and graduate program in engineering leadership — totaling seven undergraduate degrees and four graduate degrees collegewide. The ASCE concrete canoe team went to nationals for the second time

in as many years, and the AISC steel bridge team also attended nationals for the second time in three years. We hosted our second Ratliff Relays last fall, with hundreds of participants from our Tyler and Houston campuses, and our first-ever Engineering Week this past February, with research seminars, student presentations, a community day and an industry day.

The College of Engineering received approval to establish four more research centers and institutes. The Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Institute (AM2I), the Energy and Environmental Research Center (EERC), the Center for Smart Agriculture Technology (CeSAT) and the Center for Robotics and Intelligent Systems (CeRIS) will join our two existing centers — the Center for Health Informatics and Analytics (CHIA) and the Texas Rural Transportation Research Center (TRTRC).

Our annual research expenditures in fiscal year 2023 were three times that of 2020, and this year, we are on track to top more than quadruple 2020. Each of the last several years, we have reached new heights for grant awards. This year, the total new awards has exceeded \$4 million, twice as much as just a few years ago. There has been a substantive increase in scholarly works, patent disclosures and international conference proceedings.

As we expand our partnerships throughout East Texas, Houston and other neighboring areas, the college will provide critical pathways for promising students to better address the challenges and opportunities most pertinent to our region, the state and the nation.

Dr. Javier Kypuros

HIGHLIGHTS & FEATURES

CONCRETE CANOE AND STEEL BRIDGE

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) concrete canoe team won first place in the Region 6 competition and placed ninth nationally, achieving consecutive national top 10 finishes. Region 6 is ASCE's largest region worldwide. This is the fourth time UT Tyler has placed first at regionals since 2012 and the second time in the top 10 nationally. The steel bridge team excelled at the 2024 American Institution of Steel Construction (AISC) Student Steel Bridge Competition National Finals, securing first in cost estimation and third in aesthetics, marking their second national appearance in three years.

DOE'S COMMUNITY ENERGY INNOVATION PRIZE

Two of the top three teams nationwide in the IMPACT Phase of the DOE's Community Energy Innovation Prize for Advancing Energy Equity in Underserved Communities were from the UT Tyler College of Engineering, including one from the main campus (Greener CASA) and another from the Houston Engineering Center (GreenSynergy). Greener CASA, the Tyler-based team, is creating an academia-community partnership to provide free energy audits for disadvantaged communities throughout East Texas. GreenSynergy, the Houston-based team, is integrating renewable energy technologies into a curriculum that cultivates learning and sustainability.

ENGINEERING PROFESSORS ADVANCE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Drs. Prabha Sundaravadivel and Shawanah Tabassum of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Dr. Tahsin Khajah of the Department of Mechanical Engineering have each received hundreds of thousands of dollars this year from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop advanced technologies for smart farming and sustainable agriculture. Dr. Sundaravadivel is developing bio-inspired soft robotics to help monitor the environmental health of catfish ponds. Dr. Tabassum has been developing micro/nanoelectronic sensors and AI algorithms to monitor crop health in real-time. Dr. Khajah is using a technique he patented to synthesize metamaterial filters that can audibly distinguish between species of pollinators and pests to assist with the optimized treatment of crops.



MINI-HIGHLIGHTS & BRIEFS

SUCCESSES AT THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MODEL COMPETITION

Four graduate electrical engineering students placed first and third in the annual Business Model Competition. Maliha Kabir of Bangladesh and Arayan Anand of India placed first and earned \$4,000 for their "Hopbot," an autonomous robot designed to monitor soil and crops. Elvis Sangmen of Ghana placed third and received \$1,000 for his device that utilizes saliva to measure overconsumption of alcohol.

GRADUATE STUDENT SWEEPS TOP HONORS

Gideon Nyarko, a master's student in the Department of Mechanical Engineering who works with Dr. Carla Lacerda of the Jasper Department of Chemical Engineering, was awarded the best overall presentation at the Lyceum, second place for poster presentation at the East Texas Research Conference, and second place for the Graduate School's Three Minute Thesis competition.



Residential Indoor Air Quality Study - Assessment and Mitigation

<p>Why is Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) important?</p> <p>IAQ contributes to the health and comfort of people living and working indoors whose most of our lives, around 90%, are spent.</p>	<p>Odors and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Odors are a highly reactive gas that is distributed a pollutant when it is generally to humans. VOCs are organic compounds that evaporate in indoor environments. 	<p>Air Purifiers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrostatic (ES) air cleaners reduce particulate matter by charging and capturing dust particles in the air. Photocatalytic (PCO) air cleaners reduce VOCs by use of titanium dioxide between a catalyst and a source of ultra-violet light. 	<p>Problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES air cleaners produce ozone as a by-product. The effectiveness of PCO air cleaners have not been tested in real-world applications (i.e., Residential Homes).
<p>Main finding #1</p> <p>ES air cleaners were found to increase indoor ozone levels at UT Tyler (Denton, TX) houses. ES air cleaners did not exceed the EPA indoor level (0.050 ppm).</p>	<p>Main finding #2</p> <p>ES air cleaners were found to be ineffective in reducing indoor VOCs at UT Tyler (Denton, TX) houses.</p>	<p>Main finding #3</p> <p>A 1-month exposure study was conducted to compare indoor conditions at ES air cleaners vs. ES air purifiers. A finding was made that the ES air purifier did not reduce indoor VOCs.</p>	<p>Importance</p> <p>Knowing the effectiveness and safety of these mitigation strategies assists in the development of effective IAQ mitigation planning for residential buildings.</p>

SCHOOL OF NURSING



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN DR. BARBARA HAAS



informatics, quality and safety; family nurse practitioner; or psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. Certificates are also available within each of these specialties. Two doctoral programs offer students the option to pursue a clinically focused Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) or a research focused Ph.D. in nursing.

It was exciting to watch the new addition to the School of Nursing take shape. Phase one will be completed summer 2024, with phase two due for completion in 2025, just in time for our 50th anniversary of the SON celebration!

The 2023-24 academic year for the School of Nursing continued to be one of building for the future. With 98 full-time faculty and 27 full-time staff, and an enrollment of 2,259 students, the School of Nursing now comprises just over 26% of the university's student population. Programs are offered in three locations (Tyler, Longview and Palestine) and in face-to-face and online environments.

The first doctoral-level certificate at the university, adult-geriatric acute care nurse practitioner (AGACNP), was developed this year. The program will launch in fall 2024. There was also intense work done to develop a third doctoral program that will prepare nurse anesthetists. The on-site evaluation for accreditation of that program will take place in fall 2024.

Steve Jobs is quoted as saying, "Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity - not a threat." I have long described the School of Nursing faculty and staff as fearless as they do not back away from change but rather embrace opportunities. The 2023-24 academic year was no exception. School of Nursing faculty, staff and students continued to innovate, build and reinvent themselves and our School, all while staying true to our mission to "empower students to excel as nurse clinicians, leaders and scholars in a caring, learner-centered, strengths-based environment."

Undergraduate students enroll in one of three baccalaureate tracks: the accelerated generic BSN, a RN-BSN completion track or the concurrent associate degree (ADN)-BSN track. Plans to offer an ADN to master's degree are underway.

The SON had significant growth in research activity this past year. A new data analytics lab was built and contributed to the growth. Several grants were submitted and funded, and we were honored that one of our Ph.D. students was named a Jonas Scholar, the first ever for UT Tyler SON.

Graduate students pursuing a master's degree in nursing specialize in one of five areas: administration; education;

Dr. Barbara Haas

HIGHLIGHTS & FEATURES

GET PHIT: GAINING EQUITY IN TRAINING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The School of Nursing and the School of Health Professions received a federal grant of \$208,289 for two years through the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (HealthIT.gov) for the Gaining Equity in Training for Public Health Informatics and Technology (GET PHIT) Consortium. The consortium of 10 universities across Texas led by the UT Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth Houston) School of Public Health (SPH) and McWilliams School of Biomedical Informatics Consortium plans to train 1,400 students with newly developed curriculum and summer bootcamps.

UT Tyler held the first summer boot camp with the largest attendance to date with record breaking attendance of 68 undergraduate students. Most students were undergraduate nursing students. At the end of the two-week intensive bootcamp, student teams presented their research, using advanced technologies to explore health challenges impacting the region and the nation.



Students presented their research posters to a team of faculty judges. The judges were amazed at the work these undergraduates were doing in such a short timeframe.



The winning team examined the factors contributing to a rise in congenital syphilis across the nation. Several nursing students noted that they felt the bootcamp experience gave them a new perspective, and a few noted they thought it would make them better nurses. The next UT Tyler bootcamp will be held summer 2025.

DATA ANALYSIS LAB

Plans are underway to launch a new interprofessional Institute for Health Innovation, Data Science and Research in 2024-25. The mission of the Institute is to improve quality, health outcomes and services provided in East Texas using data and technology for health innovation and data science.

As a first step toward creating the institute, an advanced analytics data science lab housed within the institute and under the leadership of the School of Nursing Associate Dean for Research was built this year. The lab will (1) support research and curriculum development in data science, secondary data analysis and advanced analytics, and (2) provide interprofessional education and development opportunities for faculty, students and researchers.



ADVANCING HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE: INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SHOWCASE



“Advancing Healthcare Excellence: Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation Showcase,” held on May 24, 2024, was a partnership event showcasing the research work of UT Tyler School of Nursing and the School of Health Professions. The event was an incredible success with 63 in attendance all day and others visiting periodically to catch a presentation.

The event featured an impressive array of poster presentations displayed throughout breakfast and lunch, each illustrating advances in research across various disciplines.

A series of podium presentations provided comprehensive insights into various studies, while lightning presentations offered concise, impactful overviews of ongoing projects. Specific examples of research included “A Mixed Methods Pilot Study Evaluating the Effects of the Vitality Acupuncture Exercise Program on Older Adults in Long-Term Care,” “The COVID-19 Experience of African American Black Women in Texas,” and “Effectiveness of Microcurrent Neurofeedback on Depression, Anxiety, Quality of Life and PTSD,” underscoring the diversity and depth of the scientific inquiries presented.





Additionally, Dr. Kouider Mokhtari, Interim Vice President for the Office of Research, Scholarship and Sponsored Programs, was recognized with an award for his outstanding contributions to research. Overall, the event successfully promoted a vibrant exchange of ideas and celebrated the significant achievements within the research community at the UT Tyler Schools of Nursing and Health Professions.



MINI-HIGHLIGHTS AND BRIEFS

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

SON faculty attend numerous professional conferences and present their research at national and international meetings each year. Participating in these events keeps faculty current on best educational practices for nursing and their individual areas of research. These conferences also provide opportunities for faculty to meet and discuss issues with colleagues across the nation, including living legends, such as Dr. Patricia Benner. A perk of attending is seeing our alumni in leadership roles, such as deans of American Association of Colleges of Nursing affiliated schools!



NEW BUILDING!

Construction began on the \$35 million expansion of the Tyler campus nursing building, with a topping ceremony held in fall 2023. The new facility, housing a state-of-the-art simulation center, skills labs, and student advising and commons areas, will open in fall 2024.



NURSING IS COMMUNITY FOCUSED

On any given week, one will see nursing students, faculty and staff out serving the community. SON personnel volunteered at numerous events throughout the year, such as Paint Palestine Pink, Longview Night Out, the Cystic Fibrosis Walk, Operation Christmas, the East Texas State Fair and Nurses Day at the Capitol. The SON also served as a proud sponsor of the Walk to End Alzheimer's, held on the UT Tyler campus in fall 2023. In addition to walking, students provided health information, blood pressure checks and they also organized a kids zone.



ENGAGED IN THE UNIVERSITY

The SON students, faculty and staff are also heavily involved in university life. For the second year in a row, a SON team won the annual chili cook-off. With the three teams representing nursing, we upped the odds!



CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS

Three times a year, we welcome 200 new students to the profession in a white coat ceremony. During the event, which takes place just before students begin their clinical rotations in the hospitals and made possible by generous donors, each student receives a white lab coat. At the end of each semester, we celebrate those students graduating with a faculty 'tunnel' to cheer students on as they embark on their new careers.



From the first day of clinicals to the walk across the graduation stage, SON faculty are present to celebrate our students!



HAT'S OFF TO ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE SCHOOL OF NURSING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER!

Each spring, the SON holds an annual retreat, celebrating successes and planning for the future. We look forward to an amazing 2024-25 academic year as we begin celebrating our 50th anniversary as a School of Nursing!



BEN & MAYTEE FISCH COLLEGE OF PHARMACY



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN DR. AMY H. SCHWARTZ

The Ben and Maytee Fisch College of Pharmacy had an eventful year. Throughout the year, faculty and students worked diligently on publications, presentations and actively engaged in community service. Student enrollment activities remain in high gear as we welcomed the class of 2027.

The class of 2024 graduated with many accomplishments and honors.

The faculty remained prolific in pursuing grant funding and publishing the outcomes of their investigations. The staff is the glue that keeps us all together — their unwavering support remains outstanding. The students remain the greatest source of joy, and watching them develop into pharmacists is a privilege. Many students attended state and national conferences to present the work accomplished with scholarly mentors.

The college continues to pursue expansion of collaborative partnerships across East Texas. Interdisciplinary and interprofessional education, practice and research activities continue to expand. Enjoy reading about the accomplishments.

Dr. Amy H. Schwartz

HIGHLIGHTS & FEATURES

DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL SCIENCES



Dr. Winter Smith

Dr. Winter Smith was chosen to serve as a Member of the Commission on Credentialing for the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) for the 2024-25 term. ASHP President, Dr. Leigh Briscoe-Dwyer, stated that “We are grateful to Winter’s commitment to the profession of pharmacy and exemplary service to ASHP.”

Dr. Jonathan Newsome was recently selected as a Texas Academic Leadership Academy (TALA) Fellow. The TALA is a year-long experience aimed at developing leadership skills in aspiring academic leaders.



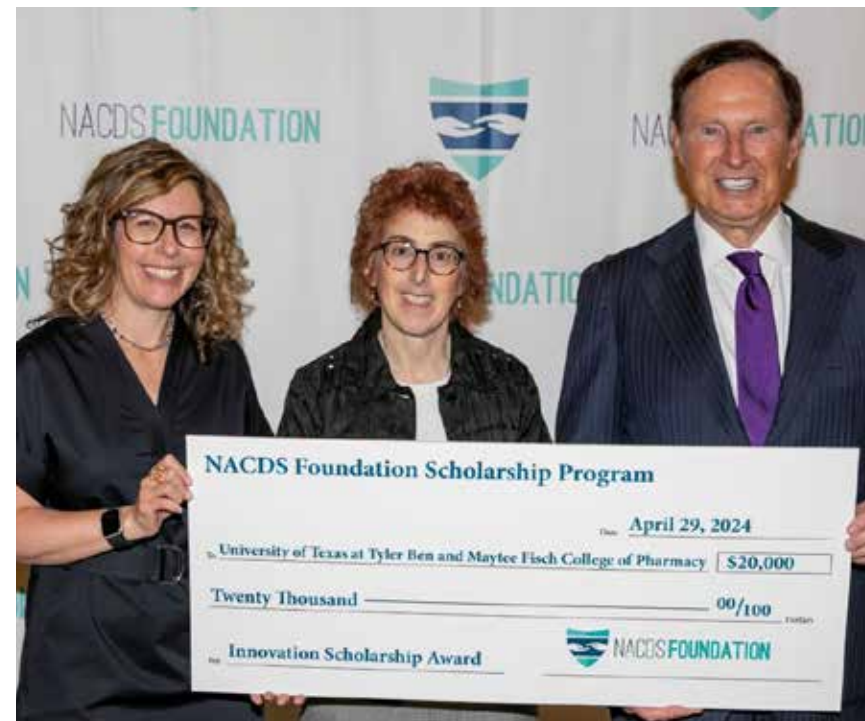
Dr. Jonathan Newsome

Dr. Elizabeth Yett served as a writer for the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Ambulatory Care Self-Assessment Program (ACSAP) series. The goal of the ACSAP series is to provide the latest evidence-based information to individuals wishing to improve their pharmacotherapy skills and improve patient outcomes.

Drs. Schwartz, Yett and Yu received the Innovation Award from the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Foundation in May 2024. They were awarded \$20,000 to provide mental health screenings for men through trained pharmacy interns to reduce disparities in mental health outcomes.



Dr. Elizabeth Yett



DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

Dr. May Abdelaziz secured a R15 grant from NCI/NIH (\$447,250). She published four original research articles and one review article. Students working with Dr. Abdelaziz presented three posters at local conferences.

Dr. Santosh Aryal received a NIH ROI sub-award (\$342,000) as a Co-I with the University of Florida and another NIH R01 (\$322,685) as a Co-I with faculty at the UT Tyler Health Science Center. He published four peer-reviewed articles and had 13 meeting presentations. He was the 2023 Fall Southern Biomedical Engineering Conferences (SBEC) Program Vice Chair. Dr. Aryal was the recipient of the 2024 UT Tyler President’s Scholarly Achievement Award.

Dr. Farah Deba presented four posters with students working in her lab at local and national conferences. She was elected Teacher of the Year by pharmacy students. Dr. Joe Glavy published two original research articles. He is the Co-Chair of the Public Information Committee and an ambassador of the American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB).

Dr. Ayman Hamouda is an MPI of an NIH R01 grant (scored at the 5th percentile). He hosted a graduate student from Brazil funded by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP). He published two peer-reviewed articles, two meeting journal proceedings and several abstracts for oral/poster presentations. He was also elected Teacher of the Year by pharmacy students.

Dr. Osama Shoair published two original research articles and presented two posters at a national conference. Lastly, Dr. Michael Veronin published three research article.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

In addition to being diligent with their studies, many students received external accolades. A P3 student, Michal Stout, was selected to participate in the inaugural Aspiring Academics Program, with her mentor Dr. Rebecca Dunn. The program is designed to engage and inform students who have expressed an interest in becoming future academicians. Stout was one of only 20 students selected across the country.

A team of P4 students (Viyaleta Manatyrskaya, Nadine Natsheh and Tulsi Patel) represented FCOP in the ACCP Clinical Pharmacy Challenge. The team was the first from FCOP to make it to the national competition. Similarly, another first was a team of P1 students (Jordan Chapin, Aysha Ehsan and Patti Whyte) who represented FCOP for the ACCP Clinical Research Challenge.

Alanna Kologey, a P3 student, was selected to serve on a national committee for the American Pharmacists Association Academy of Student Pharmacists. Kristina Lynn Catague, P4 student, received the George Archambault Scholarship from the APhA Foundation. Several other students received scholarships from various external organizations including but not limited to CVS Health Foundation, Viatrix, Albertsons and the Texas Pharmacy Association.

Lastly, the college achieved a significant milestone this year when we received our 40th admission acceptance for the incoming class of 2028. The college is proud of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), UT Tyler enrollment management, marketing and communications teams, and the many faculty and staff who assisted in achieving this great accomplishment. The picture below is from one of the two successful open house events organized by the OSA.





SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN DR. THERESA BYRD

I am happy to provide an overview of the School of Health Professions. We currently have four departments within the school and across the two campuses in Tyler. These are: Kinesiology; Public Health; Rehabilitation Sciences; and Healthcare Policy, Economics and Management.

During the past year, we have built new programs, including our new Master of Speech Language Pathology program, which will begin accepting students in fall 2025, and

an addition to our Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program to accept students from multiple undergraduate degrees. The MOT program is also working toward a doctorate in OT. Our MHA and MPH programs continue to grow, and both are anticipating being fully accredited by their respective boards in 2025-26. Kinesiology is a popular program for both undergrads and graduate students. We are also considering new programs to come in the future!

This year, we were proud to work with our local health department and other community organizations on national Public Health Week in April. It was a very successful week, including a walk through the rose garden with the mayor, health fairs, events at the Tyler food bank and grand rounds

with Dr. Kenneth Cooper! The school also joined with the School of Nursing to present a research and practice showcase in May. More than 60 people attended this event to learn about research and practice in our schools.

Our Family-Nurse Partnerships home visiting program continues to serve moms and babies in our region, providing guidance and education to families. We are very proud of the work they do to develop healthy moms and babies and to provide needed counseling and education.

Like all good that is the result of higher education, the following summary of the past year (2023-24) was a concerted effort of department chairs, faculty and staff.

Dr. Theresa Byrd



HPEM graduation



Expo 2024 vertical jump testing



Expo 2024 grip strength testing



Event on campus

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS-A (ACADEMIC CAMPUS)

The School of Health Professions-A (SHP-A) includes the Department of Kinesiology, the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences (undergraduate programs) and the Department of Public Health (Health Sciences programs).

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

The Department of Kinesiology hosted the 11th Annual UT Tyler Physical Education Workshop on October 6, 2023, featuring Dr. Sharon Rice, Assistant Professor of Physical Education at Stephen F. Austin State University. Approximately 40 PE teachers and college students from East Texas attended the event. Kinesiology also hosted the annual meeting of the North Texas Myosis Support Group in May.

In March, the School of Health Professions hosted a Fitness and Nutrition Expo in the UC on the academic campus. The expo included 19 tables at which students in our kinesiology, wellness and health sciences programs provided free information on topics related to health, fitness, exercise and nutrition to the campus community.

Kinesiology students Linda Steele and William Erlandson won third place in the student poster presentation at the Texas American College of Sports Medicine conference in Waco.

BRIEFS

The Master of Occupational Therapy program annual accreditation report was accepted by ACOTE without request for further information. Further, ACOTE has approved our plans to expand our program to accept entry-level, non-OT assistant students. We will accept 10 additional students into the entry-level MOT program in fall 2024. We are currently working on a Doctorate in OT for the future.

The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) board of accreditation has awarded candidacy status to our new Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) clinical Master's program, which will launch in 2025.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS—H (HEALTH CAMPUS)

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTHCARE POLICY, ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

HIGHLIGHT

Dr. Thom Maryon led three MHA students, one MPH student and eight nursing students on a Global Health Seminar from August 13-23, 2023, in India. This was the culmination of more than a year of coordination and planning by Thom with the Office of International Programs. A second trip with eight MHA students and four nursing students has been planned for August 2024.

MINI-HIGHLIGHTS: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Five students were inducted into the Upsilon Phi Delta Honor Society during fall 2023.

Twenty students in HPEM 6311 — Health Insurance and Revenue Cycle Management — the Healthcare Financial Management Association certificate of completion for the Certified Revenue Cycle Representative. One student in HPEM 5360 — Quality Improvement and Efficacy in Health — earned the Lean Six Sigma Green Belt in Healthcare Certificate from the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers.

Jessica McKenzie was recognized as our Outstanding Alum during Homecoming 2024.

MINI-HIGHLIGHTS

Collaboration is a hallmark of the department. One project of particular significance was the development of the 12-module Population Health and System Science course for the School of Medicine, led by Dr. Levin. Dr. Jerry Ledlow led the development of the four modules addressing Health Administration Leadership and Management. All four modules were taught successfully during this academic year.

Faculty in the department have collaborated on the publication of four peer reviewed articles and one book chapter, with three additional articles submitted for review by peer reviewed journals. In addition, the faculty totaled nine conference presentations and two invited talks.



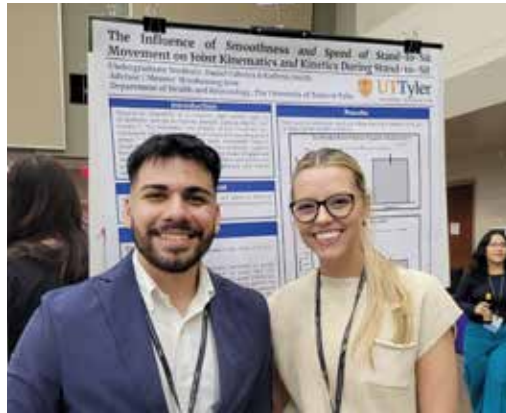
Dr. Maryon with students in India



Dr. Maryon — India trip



Dr. Byrd and Cooper



Daniel Cabrera and Kathryn Smith

The department continues to be productive by participating in seven grant or contract-related activities resulting in funded FTE support for Dr. Ledlow (30%), Dr. Elliott (37%) and Dr. Escareno (15%). Internal grant participation includes two recent awards from the School of Medicine’s Dean’s Innovation and Collaborative Excellence (DICE) Grants Program.

Dr. Kimberly Elliott is nearing completion of her first year as the MHA Program Director. She recently completed a project addressing youth vaping as a member of Cohort 13 of the National Leadership Academy for the Public’s Health. As a board member of the Association for Prevention, Teaching and Research Interprofessional (APTR), Dr. Elliott served as on the APTR Healthy People Curriculum Task Force as a contributor to Component 4 – Health Systems and Health Policy (2024). She is also a co-investigator of the DICE grant investigating pharmacy deserts in East Texas.

Dr. Jessica Escareno serves as the community scientist NET Faculty Lead to support community-engaged research. She also serves as board member of the Hispanic Business Alliance.

Dr. Michael H. Kennedy is a member of the Artificial Intelligence Academic Committee and co-PI of the Artificial Intelligence in Medicine DICE grant.

Dr. Gerald (Jerry) Ledlow recertified as a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. In February, he was interviewed in a podcast with the International Supply Chain Education Alliance Egypt on the “Future of Healthcare Supply Chain in the Global Economy.”

As a final note, the department continues to grieve the untimely passing of Dr. Michael Morris last August. Mike was a much-loved and respected member of our faculty whose teaching, scholarship and mentorship of students have been sorely missed.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

The Department of Public Health crosses both campuses with faculty, staff and students at both sites. Several important hires have been made this past year to include the Department Chair (Gilbert Ramirez, DrPH), MPH Program Manager (Blair Zdenek) and Department Administrative Assistant (Jason Lee). Two additional faculty have been hired and will start this summer: Dr. Hosik Min and Dr. Edward Dotherow.



William Erlander and Linda Steele



Dr. Michael Morris

The MPH program’s application for CEPH Accreditation has been submitted to the Council on Education for Public Health for review in August. Once approved, the MPH program will implement a required self-study, prior to scheduling a site visit, and ultimately, CEPH accreditation approval. The self-study process is being headed by Dr. Gilbert Ramirez, Department Chair.

The SHP participated with our local health department and others to plan and implement a successful National Public Health Week in April. We had a “walk with the mayor” kick-off in the Tyler Rose Garden, two health fairs (one on each campus), a cooking demonstration and nutrition education program at the Tyler food bank, and we topped it off with grand rounds presented by Dr. Kenneth Cooper – the father of aerobic exercise! We have already begun planning for next year.

Dr. Valerie Smith received SHP’s Outstanding Alumni Award.

SHP COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

TEXAS HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

Several initiatives operate under the Texas Home Visiting program. Focus is on healthy pregnancy, early childhood development, family life and preventing child maltreatment.

- Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP): Home visiting program that engages first-time, low-income pregnant women throughout the pregnancy and until the child turns two years old. Nine bachelor-educated Nurse Home Visitors develop relationships with 25 clients each in Smith and Henderson Counties. They focus on healthy pregnancy, full-term delivery, maternal and infant health, and child development. Mothers are connected to community resources that empower them to set goals and plan to achieve economic self-sufficiency. NFP has capacity to serve 225 mothers.
- Moving Beyond Depression (MBD): Program that meets the therapeutic needs of NFP clients diagnosed with perinatal depression and anxiety. The therapist provides 15 free therapy sessions to voluntary qualifying clients. The therapist and nurses coordinate to ensure that the mother is supported and the child’s needs are met. MBD has capacity to support 50 women annually.



Community health workers at PHW



Chef at foodbank Public Health Week

Dr. Root at foodbank NPHW



NFP families

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING DEAN

DR. BRIGHAM C. WILLIS



As we reflect on the 2023-2024 academic year, we are filled with pride and gratitude for the incredible strides made by the UT Tyler School of Medicine. This academic year has been marked by collaborative efforts and the relentless pursuit of excellence.

Our first cohort has been hard at work not only in their studies but also implementing statewide changes. In addition to marveling at the ongoing achievements of our first class, we had the honor of welcoming our second class. Their entry into the medical profession was marked by a memorable white coat ceremony, symbolizing their commitment to the field of medicine and the communities they will serve. We're excited to announce that at least 85% of students in the second class have ties to East Texas.

The Pathways Explorer has been one of the cornerstones of our community educational outreach efforts. This innovative mobile

unit travels across the region, providing vital educational resources and interactive learning experiences. Our other Pathways initiatives, including the early admissions program and on-site programming for K-12 students, further our mission to develop and retain talent within East Texas.

We have grown from a handful of residency and fellowship training programs to more than 20 by next year. Some of our newest programs include the anesthesia residency and the nephrology fellowship. We continue to celebrate the successes of our established programs and are proud to host more than 200 residents per year.

Our research team has been incredibly successful. We have obtained unparalleled levels of federal, state and philanthropic support. We continue to recruit top talent from across the world and have seen hundreds of quality publications this year alone.

We are profoundly grateful for our clinical partnerships, including the support from our primary clinical affiliate, UT Health East Texas. We are thrilled to announce new partnerships

with CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances Health System, Azalea Orthopedics and U.S. Dermatology. We are excited to continue to develop partnerships throughout the region.

I am also incredibly proud of our efforts throughout East Texas. We are developing a report on mental health outcomes and a report on the health status of the region. Our efforts in community health improvement include our Community Health Worker training program; community disease screening programs through our preventive and occupational medicine department; the incredible work our Southwest Ag Center does for our regional agriculture, forestry and fishing workers; and the volunteerism I see from our students, residents and faculty. Our heart is with our community.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to witness firsthand the transformations within the School of Medicine. Together, we are building a legacy of outstanding health care and education that aim to benefit East Texas for generations to come.

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

PATHWAYS EXPLORER

On May 1, we launched the Pathways Explorer, a mobile unit designed to spark interest in medical careers among East Texas students. Retro-fitted from a school bus, this mobile unit caters to students from kindergarten through college and can be booked by schools, home school co-ops and community organizations. The initiative aims to foster curiosity and passion for medicine from an early age.

Equipped with a touchscreen TV, six iPad stations and a space for medical simulations, the unit offers various educational experiences. The mobile unit can accommodate activities from simple demonstrations for young children to advanced medical simulations for high school students. Collaborating with the Simulation in Medicine and Immersive Learning Experience Center, the unit features a robotic mannequin capable of simulating human conditions like heart attacks, strokes or seizures, complete with realistic sounds.

The goal is to introduce students to the field of medicine and illustrate the exciting possibilities within it, paving the way for future careers in health care.

MEDICAL EDUCATION BUILDING BEAM SIGNING

On May 7, we celebrated another cornerstone milestone on the construction progress of the Medical Education Building. Faculty, students and staff gathered at the location's construction site to place their signature on a large support beam.

The beam, now a permanent part of the structure, is prominently visible in the stairwell of the building. It signifies more than a construction milestone; it represents the collective effort and dedication of the entire School of Medicine community. Each signature on the beam stands as a testament to the belief that the school is built not only on bricks and mortar but on the contributions, dreams and hard work of every individual involved.

CELEBRATING THE SECOND ANNUAL WHITE COAT CEREMONY

On July 1, we celebrated our second class of 40 students with a White Coat Ceremony, sponsored by UT Health East Texas and CHRISTUS Health System. This significant event marks the beginning of the students' medical careers and symbolizes their entry into the medical profession with all its associated responsibilities.



Pathways explorer



School of Medicine beam signing

President Julie V. Philley highlighted the ceremony as a major milestone in the students' journeys. Each student was presented with a white coat and a Humanism in Medicine pin, emphasizing their commitment to compassionate care. The keynote address was given by former president Dr. Kirk A. Calhoun. The ceremony also featured the recitation of the Physician's Oath, led by Dr. David Rice, Phase One Director of the School of Medicine. The students' tuition was supported by a generous anonymous donor.

A unique aspect of our second cohort is at least 85% is from East Texas counties, including Smith, Gregg, Rusk, Harrison, Henderson, Cherokee, Wood and Lamar. The ceremony underscored the dedication and promise of these future physicians, reflecting the vibrant spirit of East Texas.

MINI-HIGHLIGHTS AND BRIEFS

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

Our graduate residency training programs finished a strong recruitment season, celebrating 73 new residents and fellows to East Texas starting July 1. Since 1988, we have graduated more than 400 residents and at the close of the academic year, we have more than 200 physicians practicing throughout UT Health East Texas' hospitals and clinics. With 11 residency programs and eight fellowship programs, our plans to distribute residents across the region expanded with the addition of the pulmonary critical care, nephrology, and hematology and oncology fellowships as well as our anesthesia residency program. This past June, we honored our occupational medicine residency program as they celebrated 30 years of excellence in training health professionals across East Texas.

MEDICAL STUDENT APPOINTED TO TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott appointed Lucas Schwartz, second-year medical student, as a student representative on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, effective June 1. The board oversees higher education policies and aims to align them with economic and talent needs. Schwartz, who has a background in biology, nutrition and military service, will attend board meetings and training sessions to advocate for students across the state for a one-year term.



SOM Welcome Week 2024



Luke Schwartz, second-year medical student, representative at THECB Meeting with Dr. Willis

CHRISTUS, UT TYLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP

CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances Health System and the School of Medicine announced a new partnership to enhance medical education and expand health care access in East Texas. Starting January 2025, UT Tyler medical students will engage in 12-month rotations focusing on primary care at CHRISTUS facilities. This collaboration aims to provide practical experience and encourage students to practice in rural areas, ultimately benefiting East Texas patients.

UT Tyler School of Medicine and Christus Trinity Mother Francis rotation signing event



U.S. DERMATOLOGY PARTNERS, UT TYLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ESTABLISH NEW DEPARTMENT

U.S. Dermatology Partners and the School of Medicine have partnered to establish a new Department of Dermatology aimed at improving dermatological care and addressing health care inequities in East Texas. The department will offer educational programs, hire key faculty and seek ACGME accreditation for a dermatology residency. It will focus on clinical research and training future dermatologists to meet local needs, particularly in rural areas with limited specialist access. The collaboration also seeks to enhance dermatology care, support primary care physicians and address physician shortages in the region.

FACULTY PRESENTS AT INAUGURAL UT SYSTEM AI SYMPOSIUM

Dr. Andrea Cooley, Medical Director of Simulation and Clinical Clerkships, presented at UT System's inaugural AI Symposium on May 30-31 at UT Southwestern Medical Center. The symposium explored AI's impact on biomedical research, health care and education. Dr. Cooley led sessions on AI-driven health care transformation and precision education.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESEARCHER RECEIVES \$1.25 MILLION GIFT TO ADVANCE NTM RESEARCH

In fall 2023, we received a \$1.25 million donation from the Padosi Foundation to support Dr. Jennifer R. Honda's research on nontuberculous mycobacteria, or NTM, an emerging public health threat. This grant will enhance research capabilities and recruit national experts. Dr. Honda, Director of the Center for Mycobacterial Treatment and Discovery, aims to advance understanding of NTM's development and climate response.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESEARCHER RECEIVES UNIVERSITY'S FIRST R35 GRANT

Dr. Maolin Lu, Assistant Professor, was awarded an R35 MIRA grant from the NIH, marking UT Tyler's first R35 award. The \$1.8 million grant supports ambitious research by promising young investigators. Dr. Lu's research focuses on the entry mechanisms of respiratory viral pathogens like SARS-CoV-2 and RSV. This award highlights her talent and sets a precedent for future young researchers at UT Tyler. Additionally, Lu has secured several other grants, including a \$175,000 award from Duke Center for HIV Structural Biology and a \$370,700 R56 grant from the NIH.



HONORS

COLLEGE

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING DEAN DR. PAUL STREUFERT



high schools as part of the Admissions Team’s Roadshow, where we surprised candidates with news of their acceptance to Honors and scholarships. Even as we worked to bring in new students, we said goodbye to the largest graduating class in our 15-year history.

Honors students found success in the research and leadership fields this year. In addition to our five presenters at the national conference in Chicago, two UT Tyler Honors College students won the top award at our regional conference. This year’s Lyceum, the student research showcase, gave many UT Tyler students a chance to shine and demonstrate the depths of their knowledge. Student leadership flourished this year as LOGOS, the Honors College Student Senate, played a tremendous role in helping with programming. The Honors Living-Learning Community in Ornelas Hall more than doubled in size this year under the leadership of Jennifer Chandler, one of our amazing new alumni,

who served as the LLC resident assistant the past two years.

This year, the Honors College community also took time to share talents and creativity with each other. Through a special partnership with UT Tyler Housing, LOGOS hosted a huge audience for their annual talent show. Our programming included a student film festival, as well as a trip to Dallas to see Shakespeare’s *King Lear* on a beautiful fall evening. Hayley Jasper, a senior Honors student, shared her talent in the visual arts by designing and painting a mural in the Honors hallway in the HPR building.

I am grateful for every member of the Honors College who played a part in this wonderful year. The kindness of our students is inspiring, and the care shown by our faculty and staff made it a year to remember.

Dr. Paul Streufert

The UT Tyler Honors College enjoyed a great year, as we saw our numbers rise to a historic high — 235 students in fall 2023 — while maintaining a deeply connected community. As with all truly good things, this year included moments of struggle, but we will remember Academic Year 2023-24 as a time of outstanding creativity and accomplishment for our students, faculty and staff.

The year saw another concerted effort to recruit our next group of scholars, the “Rho” cohort, who will arrive this coming August. Recruiting bright, energetic students to Honors is one of the best parts of our yearly cycle. Our team reviewed more than 400 applications, interviewed more than 100 candidates, and visited area

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

HONORS PROFESSOR, STUDENTS CREATE UNIQUE HONORS COURSE

A key element of Honors education is a willingness to experiment and take risks in the classroom. In fall 2023, Honors College professor Dr. Randy LeBlanc, along with 20 Honors students, experimented with a new approach to an Honors course, HNRS 2351, World, Text and Image III. This course investigates and explores human expression and has focused on a wide variety of approaches over the years (e.g. communication theory, business communication), depending on faculty expertise. Dr. LeBlanc built this semester around the literature and film of 1960s Czechoslovakia. Rather than approaching the material as something to be mastered and compartmentalized, students and faculty embraced the exploration of a new context and the feeling of being lost, a significant challenge for everyone. Course films and readings opened doors for analysis, conversation and reflection on the human experience. For the course's final project, four student groups wrote and created their own short films, using techniques and inspiration from Czech filmmakers. The film project encouraged students from a variety of disciplines to rethink history and communication, even as it created a sense of community among the participants and the Honors College as a whole. The four short films were of such high quality that the Honors College screened them for all our students at a February Colloquium. The event stimulated conversation and excitement about the ideas in the course, and this coming fall, Dr. LeBlanc and four of his students will present a session on the course and film screening at the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) meeting in Kansas City.



A shot from the student film "Frames."



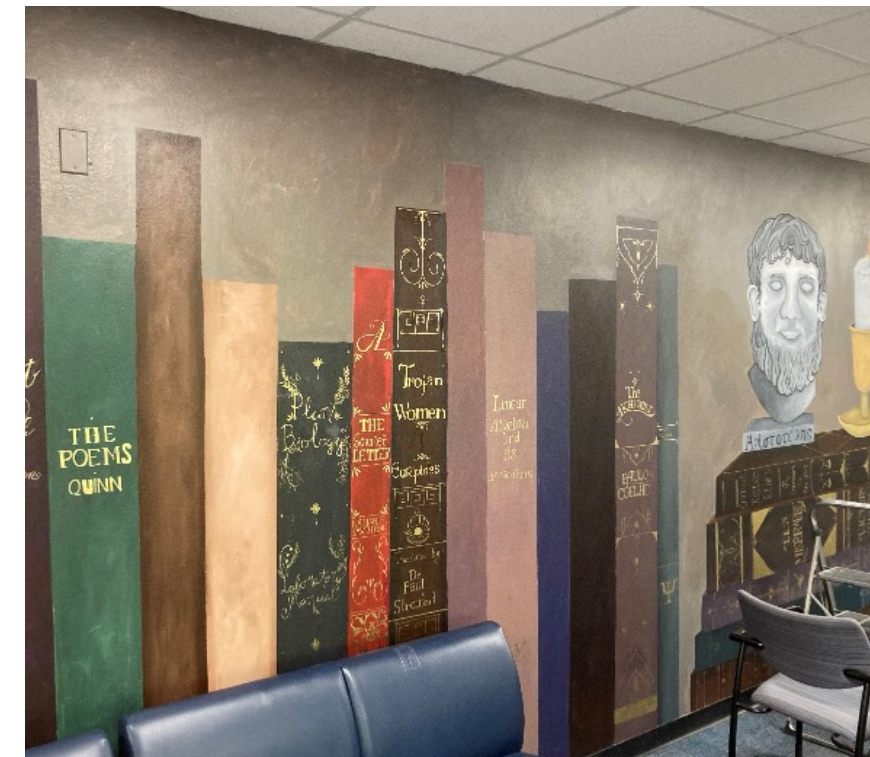
Student panel after the screening

The 100th Honors Colloquium

The student film screening in February also marked a significant milestone for the Honors College. Each semester, we host a series of events for students ranging from speakers, to field trips, to workshops. These Honors Colloquia are a fun way for us to live the life of the mind and often rank among students' most memorable experiences in their college years. The HNRS 2351 film festival was our 100th Colloquium in our 15-year history, a fitting way to highlight the talent, thinking and creativity of our students.

HONORS STUDENT PAINTS MURAL IN HPR

Senior Hayley Jasper is making a major contribution to the Honors College in spring and summer 2024 in the form of a mural. Though Hayley is a double-major in criminal justice and psychology, she has been an accomplished artist since middle school, competing at local and state levels throughout high school. The mural, which celebrates the transformation of the Honors Program into the Honors College, can be found in the HPR hallway between the honors classrooms HPR 134 and 135. To highlight the key values of the Honors community, Hayley chose to paint a scene from a library. The mural features 26 books nominated by honors students, faculty, staff and even President Philley. By making books the focus of her work, Hayley reminds her audience of the Honors College's commitment to passing down knowledge, and the books on her artistic shelf represent many of our students' majors, including nursing, mathematics, psychology and history, among others. The mural also includes a candle, representing enlightenment, as well as a bust of Aristotle, one of the most wide-ranging and curious philosophers in the Western tradition. Be sure to visit the mural in HPR on your next campus walk and attend the unveiling in September.



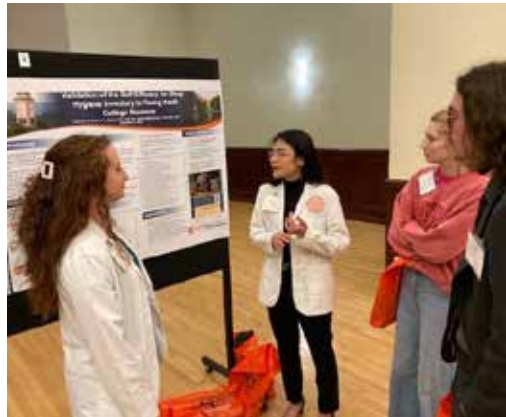
MINI HIGHLIGHTS & BRIEFS

REGIONAL CONFERENCE AWARDS

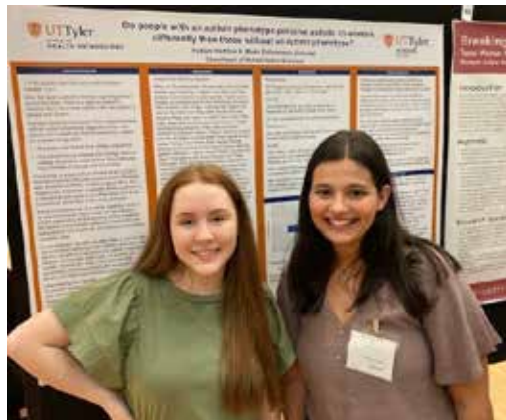
Each year, Honors College student researchers participate in the Great Plains Honors Council conference, a regional meeting of honors students and faculty. This past March, GPHC recognized UT Tyler history student Jacob Price for outstanding undergraduate writing for his paper, "Scourge of Men: The Rats That Invaded World War I." A second UT Tyler student, mass communication major Kelsey Roberson, also received recognition for her paper, "Shared Journeys: Impact of Online Peer Support Communities on the Lives of Users with Chronic Disease." Research poster presenters Alicia Gouvea and Lizbeth Romo won best poster for their work, "Validation of the Self-Efficacy for Sleep Hygiene Inventory in Young Adult College Students."



Dennis Boe Prize winners Kelsey Roberson and Jacob Price



Alicia Gouvea (left) and Liz Romo present their poster at GPHC.



Evelyn Hartline (left) and Maria Kellermann Jimenez present their poster at GPHC.



Honors College students at the GPHC conference at Oklahoma State University

STUDENT-LED EVENT: THE HONORS COLLEGE TALENT SHOW

This spring, an Honors tradition took a huge step forward in its evolution. Our annual talent show, called "The Dionysia," in honor of an ancient spring festival, enjoyed record participation. Through the leadership of LOGOS, the Honors College Student Senate event welcomed more than 200 audience members and more than 15 performances, ranging from the "Chem Kids" science demonstration, to a bluegrass performance by the Honors College Quintet, to Rachel Van Surksum's ability to solve a Rubik's Cube in seconds flat.



The "Chem Kids" explore the mysteries of chemistry.



LOGOS President Jennifer Chandler (left) cheers on the performers.



Rachel Van Surksum demonstrates her prowess on the Rubik's Cube.



The Honors College Quintet performs "Take Me Home, Country Roads."



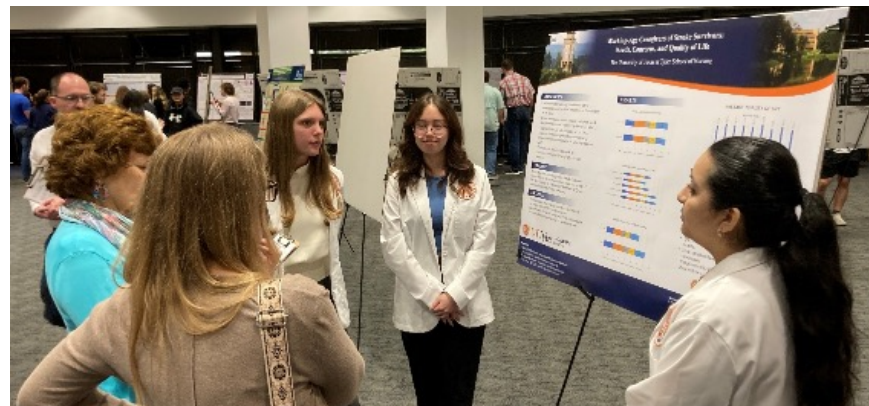
HONORS COLLEGE LYCEUM

The Honors College hosted the ninth annual Lyceum, UT Tyler's student research showcase, on April 26. One hundred and seventy-two students participated in the Lyceum, representing all of UT Tyler's colleges and schools. One hundred and twelve presentations were made between the panels in the morning and the poster session in the afternoon. This year's Lyceum once again included students from the TJC Honors Program presenting alongside their UT Tyler colleagues.

Honors student Amir Sanaei Ardakani presents his project *"Effect of targeted exercise prescription through community-based program on individual with inclusion body myositis."*



UT Tyler staff member Stephen Myers reviews the poster presented by TJC Honors student Dallas Allmon.



Honors nursing students Ava Martinolli (left), Daira Kim Carbonell (center), and Fernanda Arredondo present their project *"Working-Age Caregivers of Stroke Survivors: Needs, Concerns, and Quality of Life."*



Honors student Nathaniel Strub encourages fellow students to play the video game he designed.

FORMER PRESIDENT VISITS HONORS CLASS

On Sept. 14, 2023, Dr. Sterken's Honors Texas Politics course hosted Dr. Gorge Ivanov, the former President of the Republic of Macedonia. Dr. Sterken, who has worked closely with President Ivanov to bring UT Tyler students to the School for Young Leaders in Macedonia, invited the former President for a Q&A session to discuss the history, best practices and cost of leadership. Honors students taking the class enjoyed the opportunity to converse with a world leader who has a keen interest in mentoring young scholars for a life of service.

President Gorge Ivanov (left) visits with honors students Titus Campbell, Greg Bevill and Cayden Black.





Members of the spring 2024 Honors College graduating class at our Senior Recognition Night

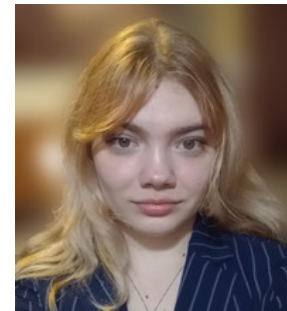
LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS

The Honors College graduated its largest class in our history during Academic Year 2023-24. Between the fall and spring semesters, 39 honors students graduated from UT Tyler.

ARCHER FELLOWS

The Honors College oversees UT Tyler’s participation in the Archer Fellowship, a UT System program that sends students to Washington, D.C., for an intensive experience through internship and academics. By serving our entire student body through the Archer Fellowship, the UT Tyler Honors College hopes to engage our community in a meaningful way. AY 2023-24 saw a record number of applications from UT Tyler, as well as a record number of undergraduate Archer Fellows for the upcoming year.

In summer 2024, two graduate students are representing UT Tyler:



Charlotte Jones, Political Science
Internship: Victims of Communism Foundation



Kait Holian, Political Science
Internship: PEN America — Free Expression Leadership Fellows Program

UT Tyler will have five undergraduate Archer Fellows representing our institution in the upcoming academic year:



Jacob Groninga, Political Science
Current Honors College Student



Leilani Hurtado, Political Science and English
Current Honors College Student



Katy Osthoff, History
Current Honors College Student



Soren Peters, History
Current Honors College Student



Abby Smith, Mass Communication

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL



A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM DEAN DR. KOUIDER MOKHTARI

During the 2023-24 academic year, The University of Texas at Tyler's Graduate School maintained its commitment to excellence in service and advocacy for the graduate education community. I am pleased to share three updates and spotlight key contributions and initiatives from the past year.

1. In January 2023, the Graduate School adopted an integrated, interdependent model for managing graduate student recruitment and retention. This new approach promotes collaboration and teamwork across academic and non-academic campus units.
2. Graduate education is supported by two dedicated teams: The Graduate Admissions team, focused on recruitment, admission and enrollment; and the Graduate Academic Support team, prioritizing graduate program integrity, student retention and success.

3. As of March 2024, the research and graduate education enterprises have been separated. They are now overseen by the associate vice president of research administration and the interim dean of the Graduate School, respectively. This change addresses the complexities and workloads associated with each enterprise.

During the past year, the Graduate School:

1. Conducted re-enrollment campaigns to enhance graduate student persistence, retention and graduation rates.
2. Awarded 105 Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) during the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters.
3. Reviewed and approved 65 graduate faculty research applications.
4. Processed 84 master's theses and doctoral dissertations across graduate programs in six colleges and schools.
5. Hosted the Three-Minute Thesis 3MT® Competition, celebrating

the achievements of our graduate students.

6. Transitioned graduate student onboarding from Canvas to the Advantage Design platform.
7. Administered a graduate student experience survey to assess student perceptions of their academic programs.
8. Collaborated with the Graduate Council in overseeing and guiding the policies, programs and standards related to graduate education.

This report offers an overview of these achievements and more from the past year. I encourage you to delve deeper into the report to discover our continued efforts in advancing graduate education at UT Tyler.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kouider Mokhtari

GRADUATE SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

The UT Tyler Graduate School focuses on graduate program integrity, student retention and success, guided by best practices from the Council of Graduate Schools focusing on initiatives addressing common challenges and promoting effective practices within the graduate community. The Graduate School at UT Tyler aims to achieve the following goals:

1. Advocate for graduate students, addressing their issues and supporting communities critical to the success of graduate programs.
2. Articulate a vision of excellence for UT Tyler's graduate education community.
3. Oversee and manage the quality control of graduate education.
4. Define and maintain equitable standards across all academic disciplines.
5. Provide a systemwide perspective for all post-baccalaureate endeavors.
6. Promote an interdisciplinary perspective and emphasize its importance.
7. Foster an intellectual community between faculty and graduate students.
8. Emphasize the importance of adequately training the future professoriate.
9. Develop strategies for graduate education to contribute to and enhance undergraduate education.
10. Support the provision of comprehensive graduate student services.

These goals highlight the Graduate School's dedication to improving the quality and impact of graduate education, promoting equity, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and providing effective support for students, faculty and staff.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RE-ENROLL, RE-ENGAGE CAMPAIGNS

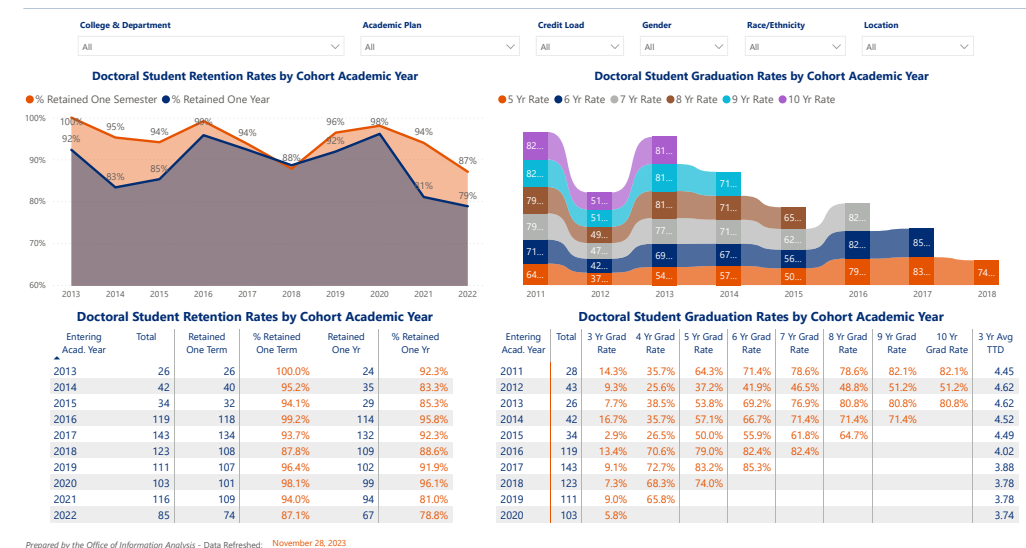
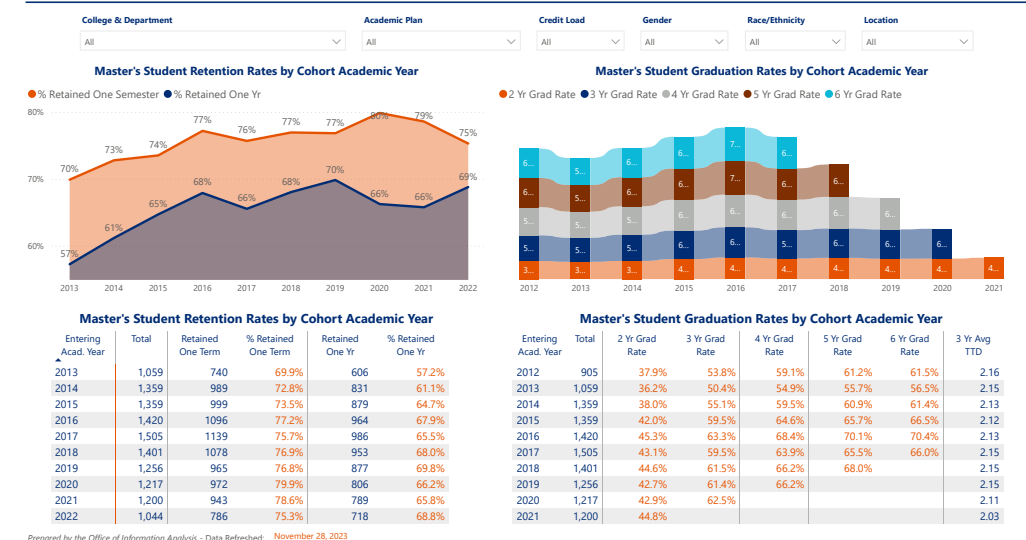
The Graduate School implemented re-enrollment campaigns throughout the academic year to bolster graduate student persistence, retention and graduation rates. These efforts encompassed a variety of strategies:

- Proactively communicating with students in good standing via text and email to ensure timely class enrollment.

- Assisting students with registration holds and resolving re-enrollment challenges.
- Re-engaging students absent from the institution for at least one academic term, helping them develop strategies for degree completion.
- Collaborating with program coordinators and faculty advisers to enhance student persistence, retention and graduation.

Graphs below depict retention and graduation rates of master's and doctoral degree-seeking students at UT Tyler, offering a visual overview of these metrics.

Retention and Graduation Rates of Degree-Seeking Graduate Students



GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS (GTAS)

During the 2023-24 academic year, the Graduate School, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, improved the process of awarding Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs). We allocated \$367,500 to support 105 GTAs for the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters across six colleges and schools. This initiative provides essential financial support and offers graduate students engaged in thesis or dissertation research valuable experience in both research and instructional roles.

GRADUATE FACULTY RESEARCH APPLICATIONS

During the past year, the Graduate School reviewed and approved 65 Graduate Research Faculty (GRF) and Visiting Graduate Research Faculty (VGRF) applications across eight colleges and schools.

THREE-MINUTE THESIS (3MT®) COMPETITION

The Graduate School recognized three graduate students for winning Three-Minute Thesis competition (3MT®) awards at the 2024 thesis and dissertation competition event on April 9, 2024. The 3MT® competition challenges graduate students to showcase their research with a 180-second presentation.

PLACE	NAMES	PRIZE	PROGRAM	DEPARTMENT
First	Khadijat Olawuyi	\$1,000	MS, Biotechnology	School of Medicine
Second	Gideon Nyarko	\$500	MS, Mechanical Engineering	Chemical/Mechanical Engineering
Third	Alexandra Sofia Tamayo Moreira	\$250	MS, Biology	Biology

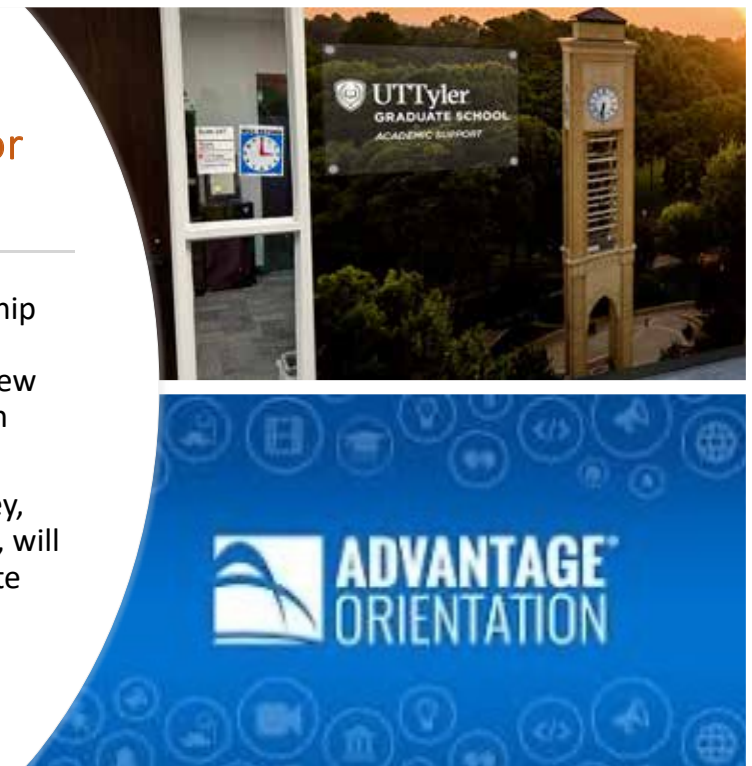
MASTER'S THESES, DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS AND DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP)

During the past year, the Graduate School processed 84 master's theses, doctoral dissertations and Doctor of Nursing Practice projects across 19 graduate programs spanning seven colleges and schools at UT Tyler. From September 1, 2023, to July 8, 2024, a total of 65 theses and dissertations were added to Scholar Works at UT Tyler. Collectively, these scholarly works have been downloaded 62,614 times, reaching readers across 181 different countries.

Online Onboarding for Graduate Students

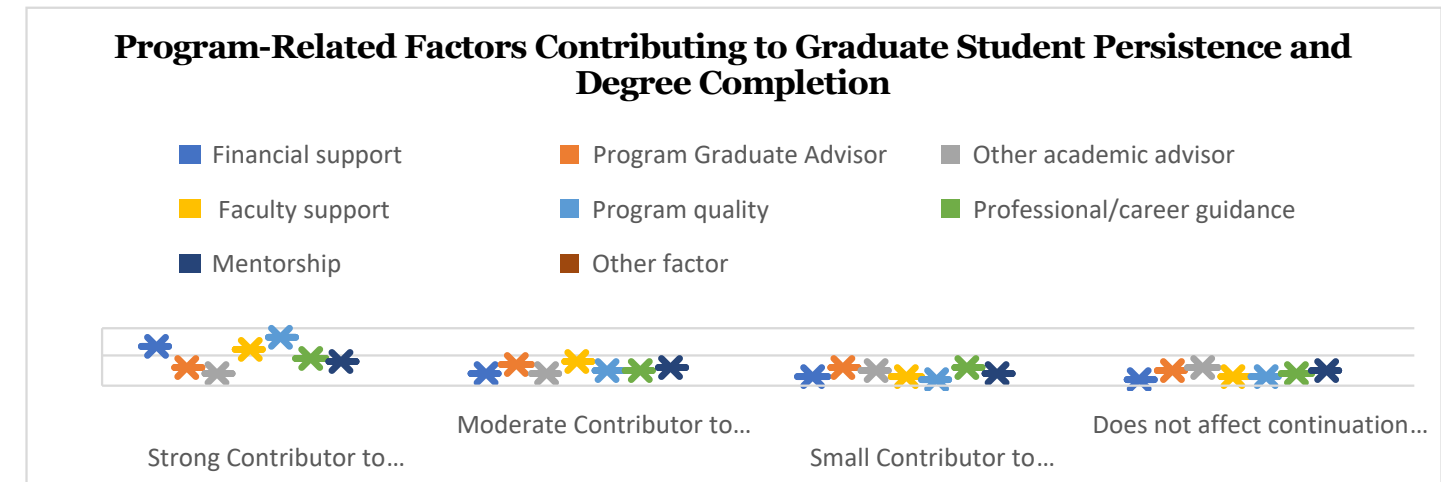
The Graduate School, in partnership with key stakeholders in graduate education, has transitioned the new student orientation modules from CANVAS to Advantage Design.

The revamped onboarding journey, which is interactive and engaging, will be launched for incoming graduate students starting Fall 2024.



GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

During the past year, the Graduate School conducted a survey to assess graduate student perceptions of their academic programs. Responses were gathered from 158 students across six colleges and schools, with 69% in online courses, 23% in hybrid courses and 8% in face-to-face courses. Key factors highlighted by students for program persistence and successful degree completion included program quality, financial support and faculty support (see chart for details).



GRADUATE COUNCIL

From September 2023 to June 2024, the Graduate Council diligently reviewed and approved more than 130 modifications to graduate programs. Additionally, they engaged in thorough discussions and made amendments to graduate policies, covering areas such as continuous enrollment, departmental cross-listed courses, time extensions and leaves of absence.

Graduate Student Voices

Transitioning from a master's program to a PhD program, both at UT Tyler, the faculty and staff here have been such a blessing to me throughout my time as a graduate student.

Every time I had a question or a concern, the Graduate School team has been quick to help me find a solution or direct me to the appropriate persons who could assist me.

When looking at grad programs, I chose UT Tyler as my first choice because I loved the small-town atmosphere and the proximity to all our partner medical centers for me to get clinical experience.

I am so thankful for this team that advocates for their students and their success.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For questions or more information about graduate education, please contact the Graduate School at 903.566.6193 or via email at gradschool@uttyler.edu.



OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION



A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION LISA BUSH, MS, CIP

In March 2024, restructuring occurred within several key research departments. This restructuring entailed the formal separation of the Office of Research, Scholarship and Sponsored Programs from the Graduate School. Simultaneously, it unified the Office of Research, Scholarship and Sponsored Programs with the Human Research Protections Program and Office of Research Compliance into a single, newly named department known as Research Administration.

During the department's internal transformations, research administration upheld uninterrupted services for our research community, ensuring our research programs maintained competitiveness. Our externally funded projects saw a remarkable 17% growth rate compared to last year, while our human and animal research programs remained stable.

Seventy percent of external funding for research awarded to UT Tyler is for projects conducted at the Health Science Center campus, where federal, state and industry funding agencies are the main sponsors. Focus areas include (1) pulmonary disease and interventions, (2) preventative

medicine, (3) oncology interventions and (4) behavioral health.

Faculty from the College of Engineering have secured funding from NSF, USDA, TxDOT and other entities to advance several innovative projects. These include the development of sensor and robotics technology aimed at boosting agricultural yields; biosensors designed to detect and treat behavioral and neurologic diseases; and initiatives focused on identifying new targets for preventing cardiovascular disease. Additionally, research is underway to explore improved and more resilient building and road materials.

Researchers in the Fisch College of Pharmacy receive primary funding from the NIH and NSF to investigate innovative approaches in treatment delivery, advancing the field of pharmacy. Similarly, the School of Nursing secures funding from the NIH and various private organizations, focusing on research informatics, opioid overdose reduction and addressing the national nursing shortage. Projects within the School of Health Professions are funded by HRSA, CPRIT, DFPS and private entities, covering areas such as exercise physiology, opioid response strategies and prevention, and early intervention for maternal, infant and early childhood home visiting programs.

In the College of Education and Psychology, a project funded by the Department of Education is

addressing mental health needs among K-12 students in East Texas schools, alongside other projects funded by the state and private sectors that focus on educator preparation. Within the Soules College of Business, research into artificial intelligence and machine learning is underway to tackle cybersecurity challenges, with funding provided by the NSF.

In the College of Arts and Sciences, projects sponsored by the NSF encompass archaeological fieldwork in Belize and summer workshops focused on mathematical research. State grants are dedicated to projects assessing threatened and endangered species, as well as the creation of an open-source philosophy textbook. USDA funding is facilitating the development of a nationally scalable monitoring and assessment framework for wetlands. Additionally, the Welch Foundation is supporting student research initiatives and the acquisition of research equipment within the chemistry department.

We are dedicated to expanding research and scholarship efforts by achieving annual growth in grant and contract awards, improving the quality of the university's research and scholarship infrastructure, and cultivating a robust culture of research integrity. Our focus remains on advancing research that addresses critical challenges facing the East Texas community.

Lisa Bush

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

SPONSORED PROGRAMS

OSP staff provide expert guidance and support across the funding life cycle including identifying sources of funding, assisting with proposal development, negotiating contracts, setting up and monitoring budgets, and ensuring compliance with federal, state and university regulations and policies.

SPONSOR	ACADEMIC CAMPUS	HSC CAMPUS
National Institutes of Health	20	27
National Science Foundation	20	2
Other Federal Agencies and Institutions of Higher Education	28	9
State Agencies	11	15
Private	21	9
Total	100	62

Number of proposals submitted to external sponsors in AY 2023-24.

MEASURE	ACADEMIC CAMPUS	HSC CAMPUS
Active Awards	125	281
Research Expenditures	\$3,393,015.26	\$17,619,580.41

Number of active awards from external sponsors managed by the OSP office in AY 2023-24.

RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

The biggest accomplishment this year for research compliance was the development of the Research Security Program and renewal of our Institutional Animal Assurance. Additionally, laboratory safety oversight was broadened and strengthened along with reporting use of controlled items becoming more streamlined. The animal oversight committee reviewed 23 protocols and 76 amendments this year. The Institutional Biosafety Committee reviewed nine hazardous chemical protocols and seven recombinant DNA protocols along with three addenda. The Infectious Organism Research Review Committee reviewed five infectious organism protocols, 19 addenda, granted one protocol extension and approved six new BSL3 users. Workflow improved during the past year, as submission forms were updated across the oversight committees.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The IRB consists of three committees that serve the UT Tyler enterprise. The IRB is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of all research participants. Two committees on the HSC review biomedical studies, and one committee on the academic campus reviews social behavioral studies. As of June 30, 2024, the IRB has cumulatively reviewed 218 new research protocols along with 745 other reviews (continuing reviews, modifications, closures). On average, there are 600 active research studies across the UT Tyler enterprise. When broken down by campus, the academic campus has approximately 314 active studies and the Health Science Center has approximately 273.

MINI-HIGHLIGHTS AND BRIEFS

EAST TEXAS RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The Office of Sponsored Programs in partnership with the Graduate School hosted the fifth annual East Texas Research Conference in spring 2024 on the UT Tyler main campus. This conference showcased the research and scholarship of UT Tyler faculty and students and others from academic institutions throughout East Texas. The conference featured a keynote address, oral presentations and poster presentations.

INTERNAL RESEARCH AWARDS

Eighteen applications were received for the AY 2023-24 internal awards program, and five were funded and set up to start in August 2024. Funded projects involve joint research conducted by faculty from the academic campus and the HSC campus. In total, \$120,000 was awarded through the internal awards program this academic year.

STARS AND RISING STARS AWARDS

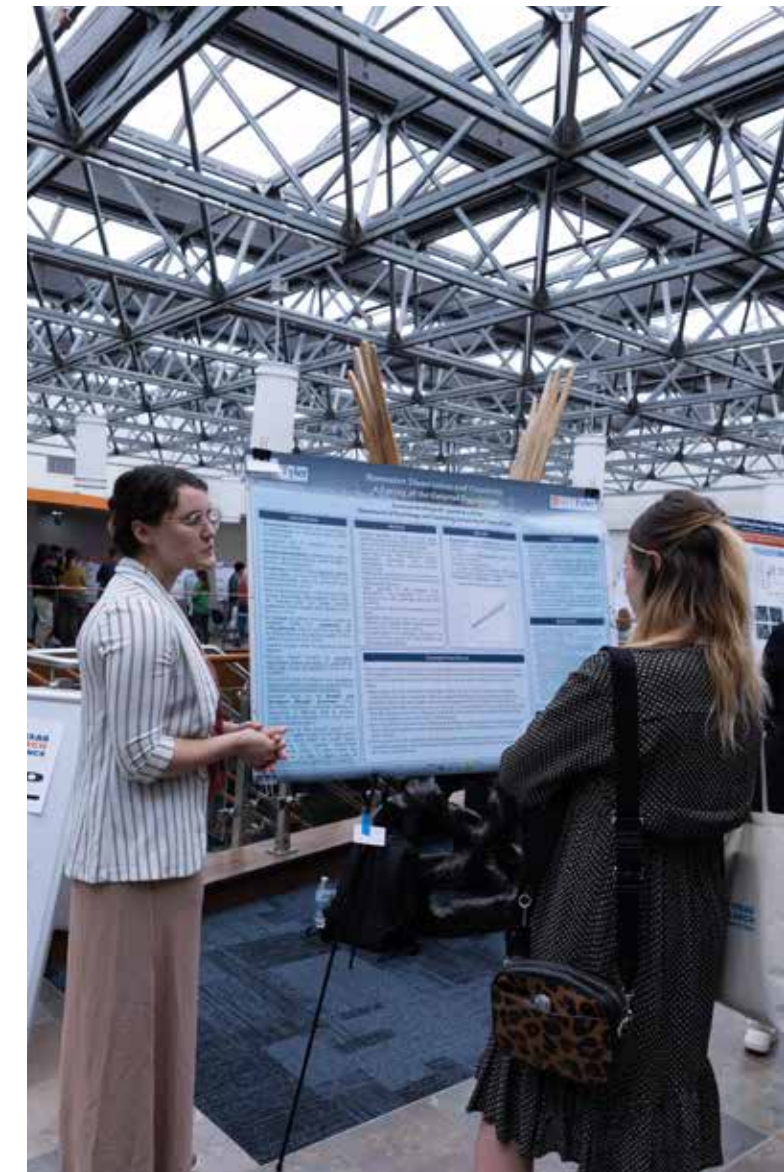
The UT System Board of Regents established the STARS (Science and Technology Acquisition and Retention) program to help recruit and retain highly qualified research faculty at UT System institutions. During AY 2023-24, STARS funding allocations were used to supplement institutional resources for the purpose of recruiting and/or retaining six faculty members in the College of Engineering, College of Arts and Sciences, and Fisch College of Pharmacy. Faculty selected for Rising STARS and STARS awards are expected to show evidence of accomplishment in research with demonstrated capacity for nationally competitive extramural research support and graduate student training.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE

Of six applications received for the AY 2023-24 Faculty Development Leave Program, five were awarded.

FACULTY/STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters, the Office of Sponsored Programs, in partnership with the Graduate School, provided a series of professional development opportunities to enhance research and graduate education for faculty and students. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, research design and data analysis, human research protections and research compliance, as well as how to identify new funding opportunities for researchers. Additionally, the Research Design and Data Analysis Lab had approximately 370 hours of recordable engagement with UT Tyler partners.



OFFICE OF DIGITAL LEARNING



DIGITAL LEARNING & UT TYLER ONLINE ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS 2023-2024


1,814
Fully Online
Courses
Fall '23, spring '24, summer '24


13,000
Proctor U Exams Delivered

UT TYLER ONLINE
39 Graduate & Undergraduate Degrees
 Online Programs generated approx. **80%** of total graduate SCH
10% Growth in Online Semester Credit Hours

Spring 2024 saw approximately **8,000+** students enrolled in online and hybrid courses
Online/ Hybrid courses generated **113,570** SCH in AY 2024
More than **74%** of graduate students are enrolled in online programs

MICROCREDENTIALS


10,500+
Learning hours completed


1,115
Coursera Enrollments

 Most Popular Coursera Certificates
 Data Analytics
 Project Management


58
Academic Certificates

★ INITIATIVES ★

 **First Microcredential Skills Panel**
Local area business owners discussed the importance of microcredentials in the workforce with UT Tyler students

 **UT System Microcredential Summer Institute**
Launched first UT System School Microcredential Summer Institute

 **AI Playground**
This Summer, ODL started hosting 30-minute online "playgrounds" to teach AI tools with great faculty turnout

 **AI Pocket Workshops**
ODL & CETL launched an online Teaching & Learning Hub to house teaching resources for faculty and staff

 **eTextbook Support Process for Librarians**

 **New Canvas Templates for Colleges**

 **Secure TA Process for Student Privacy**

 **Online Instructor Handbook**

 **COE Assessment Course**
ODL assisted in building the assessment course used in the College of Engineering

THE LIBRARIES



ROBERT R. MUNTZ LIBRARY

The university continues to invest in renovating the Robert R. Muntz Library and creating a welcoming and supportive space for study and collaboration. Construction began in June 2024 for a Starbucks coffee shop on the main floor of the library. It will be a full-service shop, with a complete food and beverage menu that is accessible via the Starbucks app. The much-anticipated opening date is early fall 2024.

The library is participating in a universitywide strategic initiative to reduce the cost of textbooks, making UT Tyler more affordable for students. To help address the problem, the library has been providing free access to electronic textbooks to students. Not all textbooks are available for library purchase, but if a title is available, especially with acceptable limits on simultaneous users, and reasonably priced, the library purchases the book electronically for all to use. This project began in fall 2020, and since then, the library has purchased 950 etextbook titles for \$165,000, saving students more than \$1 million.

With the support of Academic Affairs, the library is also incentivizing the use of open educational resources by awarding grants to faculty members willing to adopt an OER for their classes. OER are “teaching, learning and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities — retaining, remixing, revising, reusing and redistributing the resources,” as defined by Creative Commons. Etextbooks and OER are among the library’s most important initiatives as they make a college education more accessible to students.

The Muntz Library continues to support open access publishing, making it possible for more scholars and the public to freely view, cite and share new knowledge from journal articles. With the support of Academic Affairs and the colleges’ deans, the library conducts a program to pay the article processing charges for UT Tyler researchers. APCs represent an alternative financing model of journal publishing that circumvents the paywall.

Muntz Library added a subscription to Covidence, a tool used to manage and streamline the systematic review research process. Systematic

reviews are a type of research paper that uses repeatable methods to find, select and synthesize all available evidence. It answers a clearly formulated research question, often a clinical question, and explicitly states the methods used to arrive at the answer. The Muntz and Wise librarians have been more involved in doing the database searching and assisting with the process of these increasingly popular studies.

WATSON W. WISE MEDICAL RESEARCH LIBRARY

This was a year of advances for the Watson W. Wise Medical Research Library. The second class of the School of Medicine began in July, and the Wise Library has purchased more materials for student textbooks, in addition to curriculum and research support resources. In fall 2023, the Wise Library, together with the Muntz Library, rolled out the new Open Athens authentication system. Library authentication systems help publishers and database vendors correctly differentiate between authorized and unauthorized users. By the end of the first year, institutional users and guest user accounts are functioning as intended at both libraries.

The Wise Library purchased and is currently implementing a new interlibrary loan management system, CLIO II. No single library can own everything its patrons might need, so interlibrary loan is the service of borrowing from and lending to other libraries. This more advanced and integrated ILL management system will improve customer-facing user ergonomics and streamline administrative functions.

The Muntz and Wise Libraries are building collections, making physical improvements and devising new ways to better serve our developing clientele on all fronts. We look forward to continued excellence in services and innovation in the year to come.



ACADEMIC SUCCESS

& UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES



A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE PROVOST
FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS &
DEAN OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

DR. COLLEEN SWAIN

As Associate Provost for Academic Success and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, I am honored to oversee multiple units that support UT Tyler's commitment to our undergraduate students through caring and accurate advising and academic support; high-quality professional learning experiences for advisers and faculty; facilitating and supporting timely and relevant degree programs and student-focused policies and procedures; ensuring transfer students have degree pathways that reduce lost credits; and elevating the Longview area through the work of the Longview University Center. Below, we briefly share some highlights from the 2023-24 academic year.

These highlights only point to the work and success of the faculty and staff within the Academic Success and Undergraduate Studies division. If you have questions about our programs or want to join us in supporting our undergraduate students, please contact me.

Dr. Colleen Swain

HIGHLIGHTS AND FEATURES

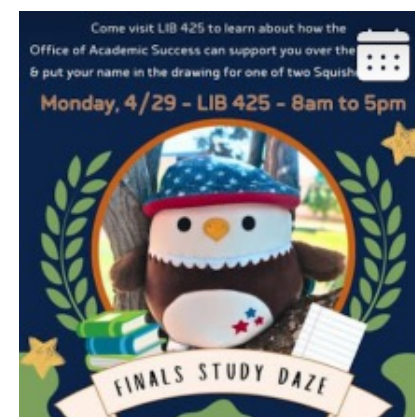
HIGH-QUALITY, FREE ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Academics 101 is a new Canvas course with on-demand videos, helpful links and downloadable handouts covering subjects such as what to do before the first week of class, academic resources, best practices for success and more.



EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

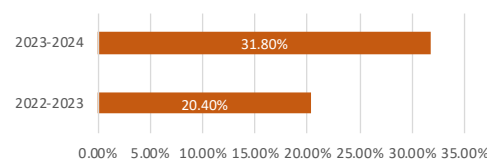
Our events and workshops aim to improve our undergraduates' academic experience and foster a sense of belonging. Our top events for 2023-24 included "Before Your First Week" Zoom sessions to prepare new students and their parents, getting students advised and registered at "Ready, Set, Enroll," and themed come-and-go study nights.



UNIV 1002: PATRIOT PRINCIPLES FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

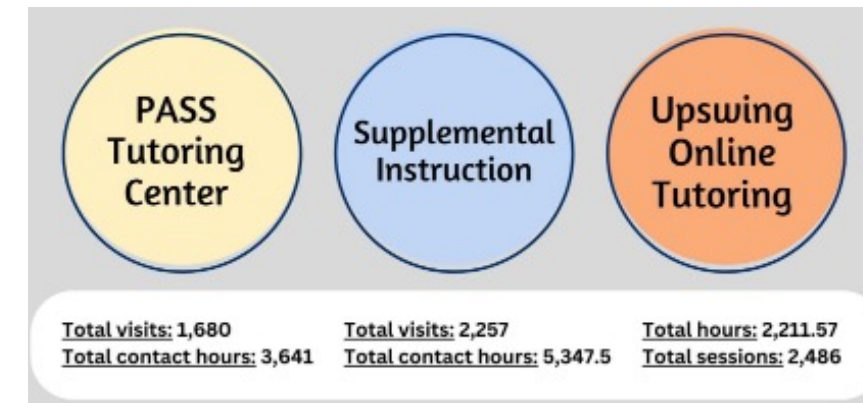
UNIV 1002 is a free course for any undergraduate wishing to implement research-based best practices and success strategies for academic excellence. The seminar comprises lessons on cognitive learning theory, critical thinking, growth mindset, time management and more. Many students taking this course are on academic probation. For 2023-24, 57% of students increased their overall GPA, and many moved from academic probation to academic good standing.

Students in UNIV 1002 Moved from Probation to Good Academic Standing



ACADEMIC COURSE SUPPORT

Undergraduate students have free access to academic course support through tutoring, supplemental instruction and online tutoring.



FIRST-SEMESTER SEMINAR

This year, we implemented free college-based first-semester seminars for our incoming students. This allowed students to learn research-based study strategies, time management and critical thinking skills. Students also learned about the administration in their colleges, student organizations and other ways to connect to their major and college. The fall-to-spring retention rate for these students was 91.55%. Colleges are standardizing this experience for students.

ACADEMIC ALERT SYSTEMS

It is critical to provide timely feedback and interventions for students as they are in their academic courses. We use a first-month alert for all new undergraduate students (first-year and transfer students) to let them know whether they are trending for success in their courses. Our mid-term alerts enable faculty to inform all undergraduate students if they are not performing at a desired level. Both alert systems enable Academic Success and advisers to work with students and assist them in getting on track with their academic careers.

CARING AND HIGH-QUALITY ADVISING

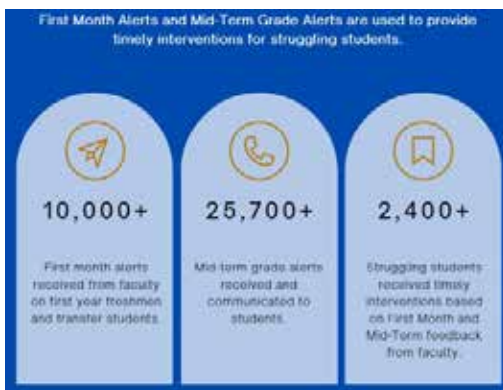
Our professional advisers, a technology specialist and the Executive Director of Advising and Academic Onboarding align their work to UT System's 5 E Advising Rubric. Advisers are our undergraduate students' first and often the most stable academic touchpoints. This team of professional staff is committed to providing high-quality experiences. UT Tyler administrators committed to reducing the student-to-adviser ratio from 306:1 to 242:1. This enables our advisers to spend more one-on-one time with their advisees, provide increased outreach to students, intervene when problems arise and guide students from enrollment to graduation.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Supporting faculty and professional staff serving undergraduate students is also critical to student success. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning hosted 54 events comprised of 15 workshops, 32 Learning Cohort convenings and seven keynote speakers. In addition, five faculty were awarded funds to integrate new innovations in their courses and provide a workshop about their experience in the upcoming academic year. Our April keynote speaker Dr. Amelia Parnell, the president of NASPA, spoke about using data in our work and was the most attended CETL session of the year.



Photo of Dr. Amelia Parnell and our Associate Vice President of Student Success and Dean of Students, Andy Pettee.



In addition, we expanded opportunities for our faculty to earn the Effective Teaching Practices certificate, a nationally recognized credential, by taking a 25-module Association of College and University Educators course or participating in shorter courses, enabling faculty to earn stackable digital badges that result in the Effective Teaching Practices certificate. This year, 29 faculty earned the Effective Teaching Practices certificate in the 25-module course, and 19 faculty earned a digital badge, leading to the certificate this spring.

ENHANCING STUDENTS AND THE LONGVIEW COMMUNITY

The Longview University Center works to improve Longview and its surrounding communities. This year, the nursing student population increased by 25% to boost the UT Tyler student enrollment on campus. A historic co-enrollment was signed between UT Tyler and Kilgore College, enabling students to enroll in both institutions simultaneously and access services from both. To enhance the partnership with Kilgore College, the industrial technology program was relocated to the Kilgore College - Longview campus. This move allows students from both institutions to work together in a mock manufacturing environment, facilitating a seamless transition to UT Tyler for Kilgore College students. The Longview University Center also expanded Welcome Week activities, a celebration of the Total Solar Eclipse, an expanded DeStress Fest and the Blessings of the Hands ceremony for nursing graduates.



Community efforts included an alumni networking reception at the Longview Museum of Fine Arts. The Annual Scholarship Dinner was relaunched after the pandemic to recognize donors and recipients of 13 locally established scholarships exclusive to LUC students.



ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

For 2023-24, the Division of Enrollment Management has maintained our collaborative efforts to enhance student services and implement strategic enrollment initiatives, providing better support for our constituents and promoting enrollment growth. By engaging with the local community, we have established stronger connections with East Texas high schools and higher education partners. As a result, The University of Texas at Tyler is increasingly becoming the preferred four-year university for both local high school students and transfer students.

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

For fall 2023, we set new institutional records again for the fourth year in a row. We had the highest number freshmen, breaking records in applications, admitted students, confirmations and enrolled students. Academic student quality also continued to increase with our highest number of new freshmen ranked in the top 10% and 25% of their high school class.

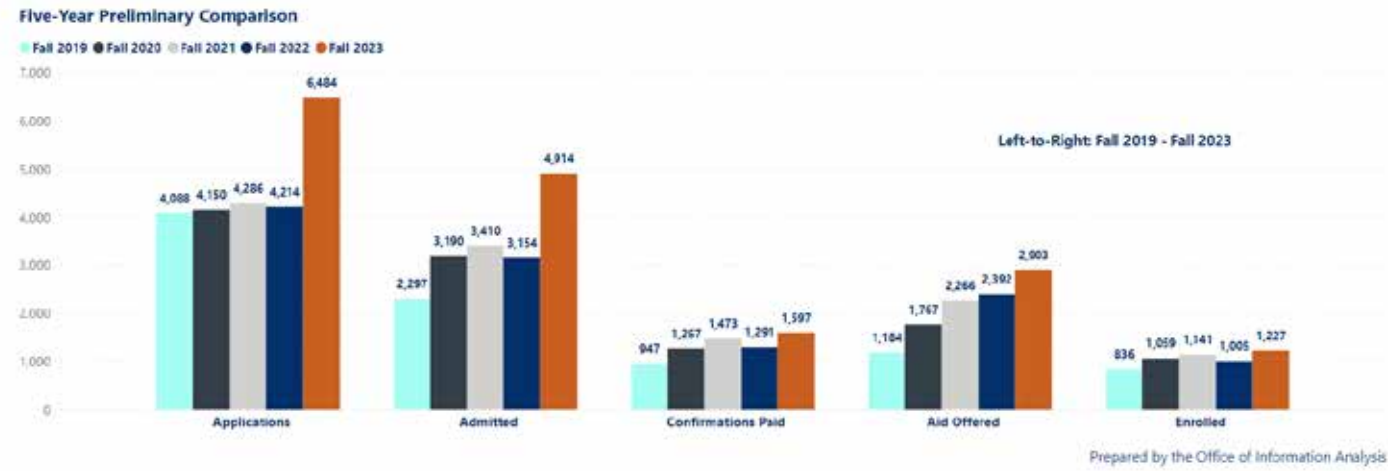
We continued our partnership with our local high schools with our College Readiness Program for the second full year. We expanded our partners from 24 to 42 high schools, providing College Readiness Coaches once a week in the high schools to assist students in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, applications for college admissions and scholarship applications. These hands-on partnerships, to assist our local high schools in ensuring their students successfully transition to college, have been extremely well received by our partners and continue to foster greater awareness and affinity for The University of Texas at Tyler in our East Texas community. As you can see in the chart below, we have significantly increased our applications through the expansion of the College Readiness program.

UT Tyler **New FTIC Metrics**
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER Latest Report Date: **October 21, 2023**

Admit Term: All Admit Type: All College: All Academic Plan: All Race/Ethnicity: All
 State: All City: All High School: All Admit Reason: All SAT Range: All Report Date: All

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Applications	4,088	4,150	4,286	4,214	6,484
Admitted	3,297	3,190	3,410	3,154	4,914
Confirmations Paid	947	1,267	1,473	1,291	1,597
Enrolled	836	1,059	1,141	1,005	1,227

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Pct Enrolled from Applied	20.45%	25.52%	26.62%	23.85%	19.92%
Pct Enrolled from Admitted	36.40%	33.20%	33.46%	31.86%	24.97%
Pct Enrolled from Confirmations Paid	86.59%	83.35%	77.39%	77.69%	76.83%



GRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT

Graduate Admissions and Recruitment had a highly successful year, growing new graduate enrollment by more than 20%, the highest in the last five years. We are working with programs to reduce barriers for students in the admission process and are noting continued success as the outlook for 2024-25 looks very promising. Programs such as Patriot Promise are strengthening the pipeline for our undergraduate students to continue in master's or professional programs.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Office of Student Financial Aid was remarkably successful in improving student service and awarding for 2023-24. The office was able to start awarding students aid in December 2022 for the upcoming fall 2023-24 academic year. This was the earliest students had been awarded in UT Tyler institutional history. The financial aid office also awarded the most students in institutional history with scholarships and federal aid. Additionally, all staff members completed a combined total 84 NASFAA Financial Aid Industry credentials, with three staff members completing all federal certifications. Nearly 1% of all full credential holders are now employed by UT Tyler. These full credential earners are Nicholas Lindsay, Adam Lambeth and Mathew Lieske.

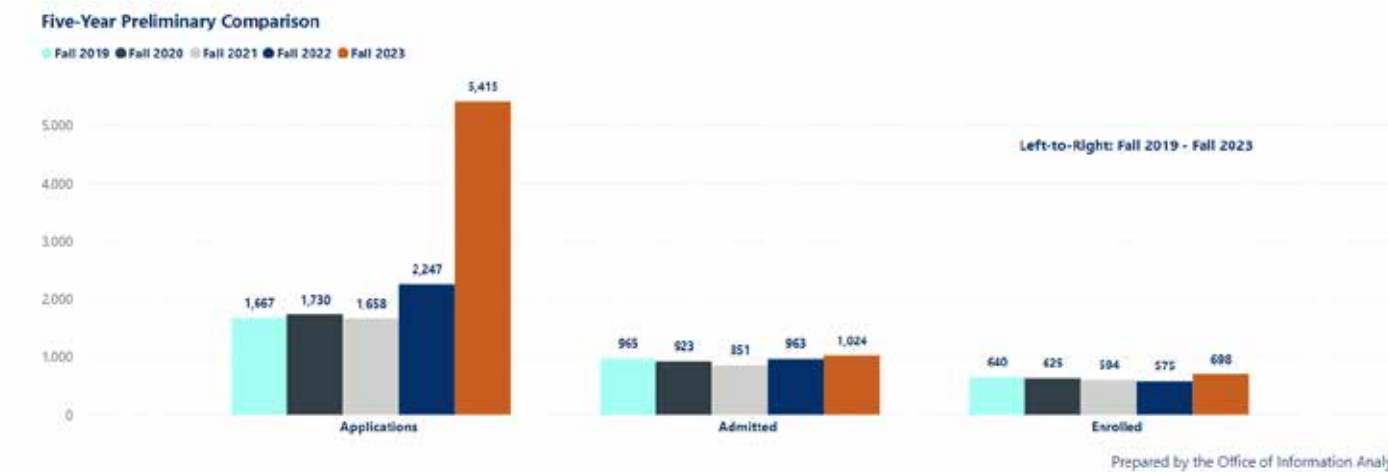
Scholarship application and awarding for the 2023-24 academic year continued to improve. The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships was able to utilize the application tool, BlackBaud, to consolidate endowment scholarships so students could complete one application and be matched to any of the 376 endowments they may qualify for. Through promotion of the application, we were able to receive the most applications in institutional history. The department was successful in utilizing all the endowment funds for student awards.

UT Tyler **Graduate Admissions Funnel**
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER Latest Report Date: **October 21, 2023**

Admit Term: All Admit Type: All Residency: All Race/Ethnicity: All Report Date: All
 College: All Academic Program: All Academic Plan: All

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Applications	1,667	1,730	1,658	2,247	5,415
Admitted	965	923	851	963	1,024
Enrolled	640	625	594	575	698

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Pct Enrolled from Applied	38.39%	36.13%	35.83%	25.59%	12.89%
Pct Enrolled from Admitted	66.32%	67.71%	69.80%	59.71%	68.16%



REGISTRAR

The Office of the Registrar reached several milestones during the course of the 2023-24 academic year. The office took over the sponsorship of the biannual Graduation Fairs, making significant improvements, including the partnership of Jostens hosting the events. Along these lines, the office successfully coordinated two of the largest commencements in university history and set in motion to host a third summer 2024 commencement for the first time in many years.

The office began several new initiatives, including Patriot Advising Report (PAR) configuration, and the integration of academic certificates into the degree plan and graduation arenas. PAR configuration was transferred to the Office of the Registrar from Academic Advising, allowing the transcript evaluators to be involved in the creation, upkeep and future development of the advising reports.

ENROLLMENT SERVICES CENTER

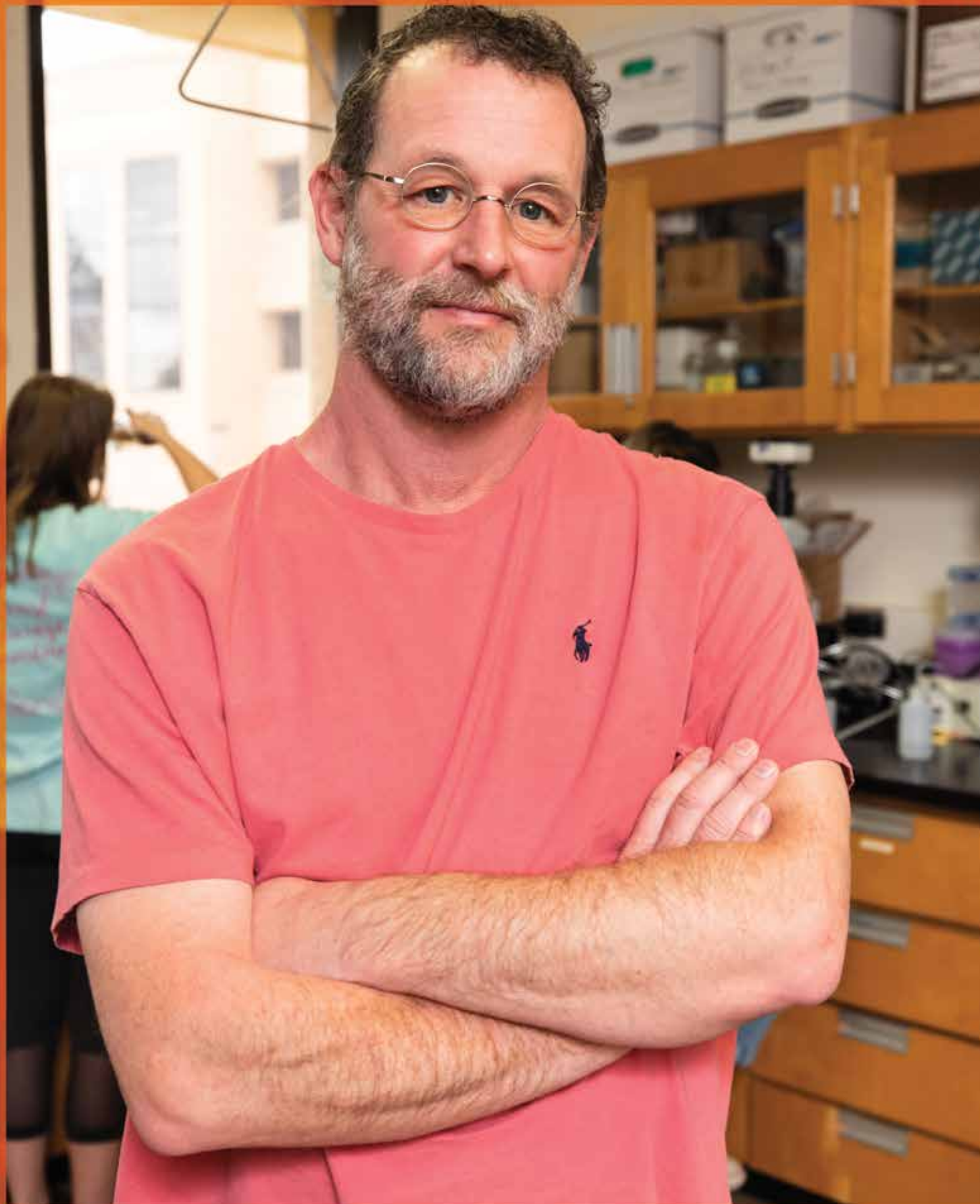
The Enrollment Services Center (ESC) has continued to provide exceptional student support, demonstrating a commitment to facilitating a successful student experience. During the past year, the Office of Enrollment Services has expanded its responsibilities to better support the onboarding of special student populations. This includes managing the School of Medicine's vaccination records and checklist items, serving as the one-stop point of access for GRALT (AP-MBA) returning students, performing all enrollments for the Fisch College of Pharmacy and Dual Credit programs and, most recently, incorporating Co-Enrollment (MOU) student services.

For our TSI/Developmental students, we successfully implemented daily testing pulls and organized early access test and enrollment events in collaboration with other campus partners.

To support staff and faculty, we launched the Resource Tutorial Library and established regular cross-campus training sessions to enhance the shared understanding of campus procedures and culture.

The ESC introduced new safeguards to preemptively identify the causes for withdrawn students, focusing on improving student retention and earlier intervention. Despite the busy enrollment periods, the ESC consistently maintained high-quality response times while removing barriers to enrollment and the student experience.





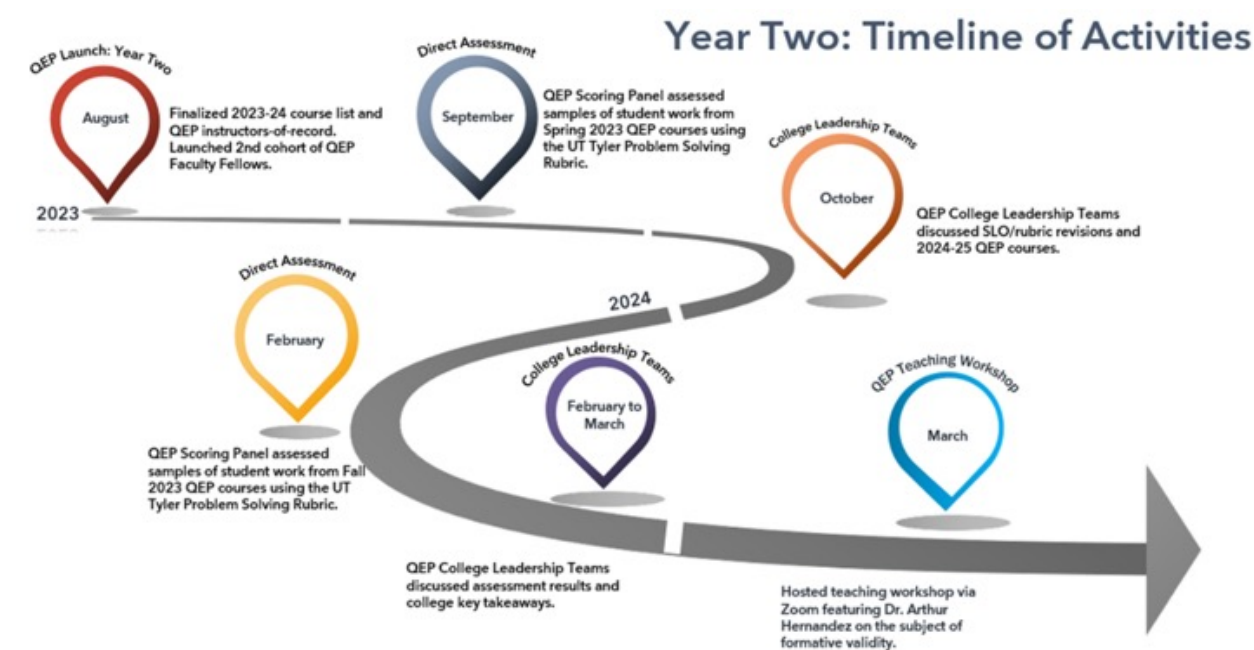
ASSESSMENT & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

OFFICE

THE UT TYLER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

The UT Tyler Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) topic is real-world problem solving in support of the UT Tyler mission and strategic plan. The QEP is a five-year project that launched in fall 2022, and a QEP Impact Report will be included in the 2027 SACSCOC Fifth Year Interim Report. Following a successful first year, QEP college and school leadership teams continued to promote QEP awareness and participation in undergraduate programs.

In addition to the original 10 QEP courses, faculty identified seven new undergraduate courses in Year Two. These 17 courses represent 20 programs in all undergraduate colleges and schools. QEP course enrollment increased from 683 students in Year One to 942 in Year Two (a 73% increase) for a total of 1,625 QEP students. Faculty have identified nine new QEP courses for 2024-25, bringing the total to 26 courses across 28 of 49 baccalaureate programs (or 57%).



QEP TEACHING WORKSHOP

Assessments Reimagined
A Pathway to Authentic Learning

Join us for a two-hour Zoom workshop focusing on the concept of formative validity.


We will explore assessment that prioritizes improvement and learning over accountability. This theory-to-practice discussion will help you integrate formative validity in your assessments, transforming them into useful tools for feedback and continuous improvement.

Dr. Arthur Hernandez
 Professor of Higher Education, University of the Incarnate Word

March 29, 2024
 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

UT Tyler
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

wduncan@uttyler.edu



Two faculty development initiatives were offered during 2023-24. Sixteen QEP instructors-of-record participated in the QEP Faculty Fellows Cohort in support of real-world problem-solving learning strategies and curricular redesign.

Dr. Arthur Hernandez, professor of higher education at the University of the Incarnate Word, led a QEP teaching workshop. Participants discussed the role of formative assessment in developing continuous improvement strategies. The development of a student reflection assessment is planned for 2024-25. Dr. Hernandez will offer a follow-up workshop in fall 2024 on the development of valid student reflection assessment.

UT TYLER STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE 2024 NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (NSSE)

NSSE is a benchmarking tool used to gauge the effectiveness of programs by comparing first year and senior students separately with those attending hundreds of four-year colleges and universities. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending UT Tyler. UT Tyler survey results are compared with UT System peers and with participating universities and colleges across the nation. Nationally, approximately 6.5 million students have completed the survey since 2000.

The AIE office collaborates with the Office of Information Analysis, the Office of Digital Learning, Information Technology and the Student Government Association to administer NSSE every other year in even-numbered spring semesters. All first-year students and graduating seniors are invited to participate in the survey.

NSSE is housed within the Center for Postsecondary Research in the Indiana University School of Education. The survey items were developed following recognized effective teaching and learning from more than 50 years of educational research on the teaching and learning activities most likely to benefit learning outcomes: (1) student-faculty contact; (2) cooperation among students; (3) active learning; (4) providing prompt feedback; (5) emphasizing time on task; (6) communicating high expectations; and (7) respecting diverse talents and ways of learning.

NSSE'S ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS AND HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

Theme 1. Academic Challenge: Higher-Order Learning; Reflective and Integrative Learning; Learning Strategies; and Quantitative Reasoning

Theme 2. Learning with Peers: Collaborative Learning; Discussions with Diverse Others

Theme 3. Experiences with Faculty: Student-Faculty Interaction; Effective Teaching Practices

Theme 4. Campus Environment: Quality of Interactions; Supportive Environment

2024 NSSE SURVEY RESPONSE AND REPORTS

UT Tyler's combined first year and senior student response rate was 45.3%. Survey reports will be released in September 2024, shared with the campus community and posted on the AIE NSSE webpage. UT Tyler NSSE results have been used in academic and student support service assessment and improvement, planning Core Curriculum, accreditation self-studies and the Quality Enhancement Plan.





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