



Office of Alumni Relations eNewsletter • December 2015 • <https://alumni.utmb.edu>

## Winn leads School of Medicine Alumni Association

**D**r. James R. Winn, class of 1967, became the new president of the [School of Medicine \(SOM\) Alumni Association](#) during elections held at the 2015 annual spring meeting and reception.

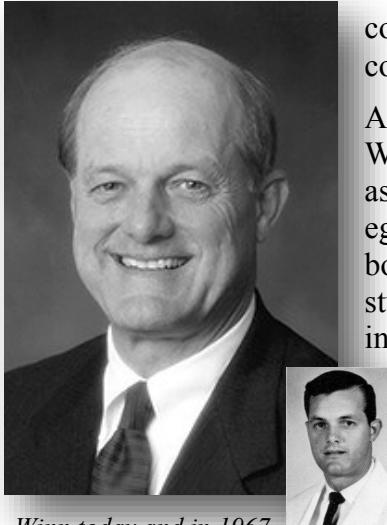
A long-time member of the association, Winn has remained closely connected to the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) since graduation.

Upon his involvement with the [UTMB Development Board](#) in 2001, Winn also became active in the alumni association board of trustees. "I wrote my check each year to support the alumni association and was otherwise disengaged. That changed when I started working on the Development Board and realized I could have a profound influence on improving alumni participation for the School of Medicine," Winn said.

The SOM Alumni Association is extremely important to UTMB. It helps maintain close ties and relationships with alumni by sponsoring events and activities that advance the cause of medical education at Texas' oldest academic health center.

Contributions to the alumni association fund the honor council pins and the coats given to incoming students at the annual White Coat Ceremony; underwrite the [Ashbel Smith Distinguished Alumnus Awards](#) Ceremony; provide student scholarship awards and much more.

Winn started his leadership role in the alumni association by serving as chairman of the by-laws committee, the Ashbel Smith Distinguished Alumni Awards



*Winn today and in 1967*

committee and later the nominating committee.

As president of the alumni association, Winn is charged with the oversight of association finances; developing strategies to grow membership; engaging board committees in their work with student affairs and alumni award nominations; and ensuring UTMB attains its core value of diversity in the admission, retention and graduation of medical students.

Winn retired this fall after operating a private family medicine practice for more than 30 years and serving in leadership and advisory roles with numerous professional medical organizations. Now, he plans to concentrate his efforts on his new role and growing the membership of the alumni association.

"I want to provide more direction to the alumni association and to the School of Medicine and continue the good work that has been done," he said. "UTMB prepared me to be an excellent clinician and I want others to have the same experience."

Winn also wants to remind alumni that being a graduate of UTMB is not only a privilege but a responsibility. "Paying back is a method of paying it forward. Alumni can help foster the growth of UTMB and support the future of Texas medicine through giving and volunteering."

To contribute to the SOM Alumni Association visit <http://alumni.utmb.edu/alumni-contribute> or to learn more about the SOM Board of Trustees, please call 1-888-862-7111 or email [alumni@utmb.edu](mailto:alumni@utmb.edu).

## School of Nursing bids farewell to the fairways and says hello to high fashion

**A**s the sun set over the fairways of the Galveston Island Country Club on Thursday, October 9, golfers and friends were bidding farewell to this long-standing [School of Nursing](#) (SON) event and anticipating the start of another one.

Twenty-one years ago, the SON launched its Salute to Nursing Golf Tournament as a fun and innovative way to raise much-needed scholarship funds for nursing students.

"The golf tournament has been a wonderful tradition that provided over \$2 million in scholarship funds for nursing students pursuing upper level degrees," said Dr. Pamela Watson, SON dean and vice president for interprofessional education and institutional effectiveness.

For over two decades, with the exception of a small hiatus after Hurricane Ike in 2008, the tournament has been a popular event and one of the largest fund raising efforts for the school.

At the farewell tournament, more than 120 supporters and sponsors gathered on the greens to play the final 18-holes of the last Salute to Nursing Golf Tournament. With the help of more than three dozen volunteers, the day concluded with a special awards ceremony, a delicious banquet and a celebration acknowledging the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SON.



Harris, Watson and Murphy

Longtime golf tournament co-chairs, Sue Minton Harris and David S. Murphy were honored by Dr. Watson with special plaques recognizing them for their steadfast support of the SON and their outstanding fundraising efforts throughout the years.

"We've had quite a good run with the golf tournament and are now excited to focus our efforts on our Holiday Style Fashion Show and Luncheon," said Dr. Watson. "This has become the premiere social event of the fall where fashion, friends and philanthropy come together to support the honors program."

Started in 2012, the [SON Holiday Style Fashion Show and Luncheon](#) opens the holiday season with a professional runway show featuring fashions by

TOOTSIES, luxury live and silent auction packages and a delicious lunch. Proceeds from the show benefit the SON Honors Program.

This year the runway was awash with colorful cashmere, furs, lace, silk, beads and even a designer puppy.

More than 560 fashionistas attended the event and helped raise over \$125,000 in scholarship funds to support students in the undergraduate nursing honors program.



Flowers, Watson and Meyer

Event co-chairs Karen Flowers and Georgia Meyer were lauded by Dr. Watson for their outstanding efforts, their energy and their style.

Planning for the 2016 event is already underway. To learn more or to be added to the invitation list, please call 409-772-1542 or email [jefry@utmb.edu](mailto:jefry@utmb.edu).



# Neuroscience graduate students reinstate group and win top award

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the once dormant UTMB [Galveston Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience](#) (SfN) recently garnered national attention by winning the SfN's prestigious 2015 Chapter of the Year Award.

Started more than 20 years ago, the Galveston Chapter of the SfN was born from a need to centralize a large group of neuroscientists within UTMB under one umbrella to foster collaboration, share initiatives and provide networking opportunities for faculty and students.

While their energy was boundless at first, the group eventually lost momentum until neuroscience graduate students took over the reins four years ago.

"Once the students started taking leadership roles, the group began to blossom. Membership has risen and new community outreach programs, educational opportunities and partnerships are being established each year," said Dr. Giulio Taglialatela, former chapter president and professor and vice chair in the UTMB Department of Neurology.

Today, with more than 50 members strong, Julia Gerson, a doctoral candidate in the neuroscience graduate program serves as president and has been instrumental in breathing new life into the group.

"We have worked hard to ensure that our chapter – though small in its geographical area – has a large impact in the community," said Gerson.

Dr. Taglialatela said the group was recognized because of their passion, dedication and commitment to community outreach to promote the awareness and interest in the brain sciences among children in local schools and adults.



Students from High Island School view slides.

This past year, Galveston's SfN outreach strategies included Brain Fair events for high school and middle school students, a mentorship program with a rural middle school, an educational program at a local



Julia Gerson, right, accepts the 2015 Chapter of the Year Award at the SfN Annual Meeting in October.

farmer's market and establishing collaborations with Galveston College, College of the Mainland and Texas A&M University at Galveston.

More than 200 local high school and middle school students participated in two Galveston SfN Brain Fairs. The events featured interactive stations run by UTMB graduate students, faculty and neurologists and included engaging activities on topics such as animal and human brain anatomy, neurological disease, brain injury and pain, perception and drugs and addiction.

In an effort to reach middle schoolers in a rural area, SfN Galveston also started a mentoring program. "We helped students design science fair experiments, facilitated one-on-one sessions with scientists and conducted campus and lab tours at UTMB," said Gerson.



Middle school students get a close look at a human brain.

Part of Galveston's SfN community engagement included a "Kid's Corner" event at a local farmer's market where they worked with children and their parents to create pipe cleaner neurons, brain hats, and make brain models using modeling compound.

While these are just a few examples of the activities showcased by the Galveston SfN to win the award, Gerson is excited about the future and has plans to work more with elderly adults, grow the chapter's membership and provide more resources for members.

"In a scientific society that counts more than 60,000 members and over 150 chapters from around the world, winning this award is no small accomplishment," said Dr. Taglialatela. "I am exceptionally proud of these future neuroscientists."

Click these icons to visit the Galveston SfN website and Facebook pages.



# School of Health Professions recognizes top students

Each year, the [School of Health Professions](#) (SHP) honors two outstanding graduate candidates at its commencement ceremony.

This August, Allison Rankin Johnson and Claire Conroy — who both received their [doctorate degrees in physical therapy](#) (DPT) — were singled out among their peers for their academics, professionalism, and contributions to UTMB and the community.

Allison Rankin Johnson was named the recipient of the 2015 John G. Bruhn Award for Professionalism at the August ceremony. Nominated by faculty, clinical instructors and others with firsthand knowledge of the students' excellence, this award named after former SHP dean, Dr. John G. Bruhn, recognizes a graduate who consistently displays personal and professional conduct that brings credit to themselves and to the profession.

Upon being named the winner from a pool of five nominees, Johnson said, "A huge part of my experience at UTMB was being taught and mentored by the professors who nominated me for this award. I am humbled, honored and forever grateful."

In addition to her studies at UTMB, Johnson was actively involved in more than 10 different community-based organizations, participated in numerous mission trips and was instrumental in organizing one of the most successful Texas Physical Therapy Association Cares service events in Galveston.



From left, Protas, Johnson and SHP professor Christine Baker at commencement.



Protas (left) and SHP professor Christine Baker (right) congratulate Conroy.

The 2015 Student Honor Award was presented to Claire M. Conroy for her outstanding contributions to the SHP, her peers and her community.

Nominated by each department within the school for this honor, Conroy embodied the UTMB honor pledge by always acting with integrity, compassion and respect. "It was an honor to be chosen for this award and receiving it is a distinction and an accolade that I will always hold dearly," said Conroy.

While a student at UTMB, she spent countless hours working in service and leadership roles.

Conroy provided free rehabilitation services to economically disadvantaged patients at the St. Vincent's Clinic, was president of the DPT class, a student representative on the Legislative Budget Board and on the Student Government Association.

She was the recipient of several awards and honors for academic and research excellence for her work and was highly regarded by her classmates for her friendly disposition and nurturing ways.

"These women are outstanding in every way and well-deserving of these awards. I am confident that their education has prepared them to be stellar physical therapists who will provide excellent care to their patients," said Dr. Elizabeth Protas, vice president and dean of the SHP.

# Class Notes

**40s**

**DR. MARJORIE ROPER** (SOM '43) celebrated her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday in June.

**60s**

**DR. WARREN T. LONGMIRE** (SOM '63) was welcomed into the ranks of the International Association of Healthcare Professionals with a publication in *The Leading Physicians of the World*.

**DR. JEROME P. RICHIE** (SOM '69) joined the executive team of Metamark and will serve as Chief Medical Officer and will lead the company's clinical development and medical affairs.

**DR. COURTNEY M. TOWNSEND, JR.** (SOM '69) was named president-elect of the American College of Surgeons.

**70s**

**DR. LARRY P. BELL** (SOM '78) was appointed senior vice president and global head of regulatory affairs and pharmacovigilance of Pronutria Biosciences, Inc. in Cambridge, MA.

**STEVE SHELTON** (SHP '75) was named the 2015 recipient of the Louis Gorin Award for outstanding Achievement in Rural Health Care from the National Rural Health Association.

**DR. SUSAN SPARKMAN** (SOM '75) was named a Texas Super Doctor by Texas Monthly Magazine.

**DR. ROBERT SQUIRES** (SOM '77) was honored by the American Academy of Pediatrics with the 2015 Murray Davidson Award.

**80s**

**LAURIE DENISE CAMPBELL** (SHP '85) was recognized as a VIP member by Strathmore's Who's Who Registry for her outstanding contributions and achievement in the field of physical therapy.

**DR. MARK HOLDEN** (SOM '95) was awarded The Regent's Outstanding Teaching Award by UT System in July.

**DR. DEBORAH A. FULLER** (SOM '84) was elected president of the Texas Medical Foundation in May.

**DR. ANDREW P. KRETSCHMER** (SOM '84) was named new medical director of First Choice Emergency Room in Spring, Texas.

**DR. DAVID D. LAWRENCE, JR.** (SOM '81) was inducted as a Fellow in the American College of Radiology in May.

**DR. CHRISTOPHER PATRONELLA** (SOM '82) has earned multiple honors this year for his tummy tuck aesthetic techniques.

**DR. PATRICK S. PEVOTO** (SOM '83) joined Grand Mesa Women's Health Care in Grand Junction, Colorado this summer.

**DR. VICTOR E. REYES** (GSBS '87) was awarded The Regent's Outstanding Teaching Award by UT System in July and in November received UTMB's Mary and J. Palmer Saunders Professorship for Excellence in Teaching.

**90s**

**DR. CLINTON S. BELL** (SOM '99) completed a sports medicine and joint reconstruction of the knee fellowship at Baylor University this spring and is currently practicing at Southwest Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, PA in Dallas.

**DR. ADRIAN BILLINGS** (GSBS '99 / SOM '03) was recognized as one of 30 Clinicians making a Difference by the Migrant Clinicians Network and was awarded the Exemplary Volunteer Teaching Award by the Texas Academy of Family Physicians for his outstanding teaching skills and innovative teaching models.

**DR. TRICIA ELLIOTT** (SOM '96) was sworn in as president-elect of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians in November.

**DR. BERNARD KARNATH** (SOM '94) was awarded the 2015 James W. Powers Memorial Award at the UTMB School of Medicine's 125th commencement ceremony in May.

**DR. CHERYL LEHMAN** (SON '94 / GSBS '06) was elected president of the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses for 2015-2016.

**DR. KATIE LOZANO** (SOM '98) was named president of the Colorado Medical Society.

**DR. NATALIE MARSHALL** (SOM '92) joined the ranks of the International Association of HealthCare Professionals with a publication in *The Leading Physicians of the World*.

**DR. AMY ORTEGA** (SOM '97) was named one of Florida's top 10 plastic surgeons by the American Institute of Plastic Surgeons.

**00s**

**JOSETTE ARMENDARIZ-BATISTE** (SON '04) was inducted into the 2016 Circle of Excellence by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

**DR. CHAD CARLTON** (SOM '04) was named a 2015 Texas Rising Star by Texas Monthly magazine.

**DR. MELANIE CREE-GREEN** (SOM '07 / GSBS '07) was named a 2015 Boettcher Investigator in the Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards program in June and received a \$225,000 grant to support her biomedical research at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

**DR. JOHN R. CROCHET, JR.** (SOM '05) was named a 2015 Texas Rising Star by Texas Monthly magazine.

**DR. MATTHEW M. DACSO** (SOM '06) was inaugurated as a William Osler Scholar in UTMB's John P. McGovern Academy of Oslerian Medicine.

**DR. BRIDGET HAWKINS** (GSBS '09) received a \$150,000 Alzheimer's research grant from the Royal Foundation to test intranasal spray's effects on injured nerve cells.

**DR. CHRISTOPHER LEWIS** (SOM '03) was the keynote speaker at the UTMB School of Medicine's 125<sup>th</sup> commencement ceremony in May.

**DR. SCOTT WESLEY LONG** (GSBS '07 / SOM '08) was named a Diplomate of the American Board of Medical Microbiology in August.

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# Class Notes

## 00s continued

**DR. GINGER LONGO** (SOM '02) was named the first female medical director of the Central Washington University Student Medical and Counseling Clinic in Ellensburg, Washington.

**DR. DAVID MARSHALL** (SON '03) was recognized in November by the Texas Nurses Association as one of 25 outstanding nurses in the Houston/Galveston area.

**DR. FAUSTO MEZA** (SOM '00) was named vice president of medical affairs for Seton Healthcare's south Texas region and will provide leadership to Hays, Caldwell and Bastrop counties.

**DR. LILANE REIFENBERG** (SOM '02) was named medical director of the new First Choice Emergency Room in Converse, Texas.

**DR. DUONG DAI TU** (SOM '03) was appointed to the post of pediatric urologist at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston in April.

## 10s

**DR. REBECCA CHILVERS** (GSBS '12) was selected a 2015 Castle Connolly Top Doctor by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd.

**DR. DALTRY B. DOTT** (SOM '12) was named chief resident at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Department of Anesthesiology in Nashville, TN.

**DR. NILESH KALARIYA** (SON '12) was named one of Houston's 2015 Top 10 Nurses of the Year by the Houston Chronicle.

**KELLY OCHOA** (SON '14) was promoted to vice president of operations and chief nursing officer at Memorial Hermann Southeast in Houston.

*Want to share your latest news with your classmates?*

**Submit a class note**

## Chancellor McRaven's strategic vision includes "quantum leaps"

University of Texas System Chancellor William McRaven presented his strategic vision to the Board of Regents on November 5.

This vision includes bold initiatives to develop a health care enterprise, launch an effort to lead the brain health revolution and seeks to expand the footprint of the UT System in the Houston area.

Click icon to learn more about McRaven's five-year vision.

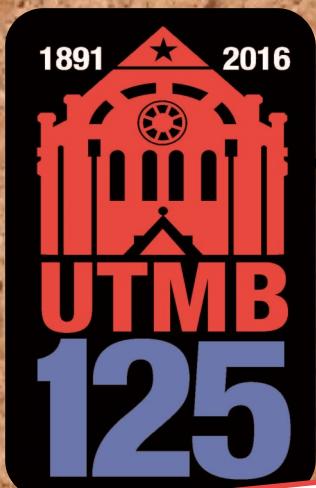


In January, the UTMB School of Medicine and the School of Medicine Alumni Association will co-host two dinner events in Galveston and Houston to complement the Practice of Medicine course for MS3 and MS4 students.

We need SOM alumni to partner with UTMB faculty to serve as dinner table hosts to interact with students and foster conversations about the various practices of medicine. **Volunteers are needed for these dinners: Wednesday, January 27 @ 6 PM, Hilton Galveston Island Resort and Thursday, January 28 @ 6 PM, DoubleTree at Houston Hobby Airport**

To volunteer call our office at 1-888-862-7111 or email [kim.barfield@utmb.edu](mailto:kim.barfield@utmb.edu)

# Bulletin Board



UTMB marks its 125th year with a series of special events to celebrate our rich history and legacy. Click icon above to see a historical timeline, a list of notable alumni and an events schedule.

Our August Who, What, Where (WWW) Contest Winner is....  
**Dr. John Eichelberger (SOM '82)**  
Upon correctly guessing the photo of the Gail Borden building and being notified he was the winner of the contest, Dr. Eichelberger proclaimed, "This may be the first time I have ever won anything!" Dr. Eichelberger and his wife, Elaine, currently resides in Houston where he specializes in internal medicine and is affiliated with the Medical Clinic of Houston, St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital and Methodist Hospital.



The School of Health Professions Alumni Association treated students to breakfast and four-legged entertainment on finals day, Wednesday, December 9

*Have you gotten your 2016 card yet?*

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