

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN

Contents prepared by the UTPB Public Information Office

Sunday, December 12, 2004

## Faculty leave other states, universities to conduct research at UTPB

**EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a partial roundup of new faculty at UT Permian Basin.**

One professor left California to move to West Texas' "horned toad heaven." Another, a native of Greece, and a consultant for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), has brought his extensive research of biomechanics to the Permian Basin. An expert in industrial technology moved from Missouri to develop a degree with a focus on the oil and gas industry. Yet, another, said: "So long" to the University of Missouri-Columbia, to start up a music program at UTPB.

In addition, a professor and member of the Board of Directors for the National Hispanic Environmental Council hung up his hat in El Paso. An additional Californian brings his professorship and years as a superintendent to teach educational management at UTPB.

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During this 2004-2005 school year, more than 400 new faculty are being hired across the University of Texas System's academic campuses. That means that the best and the brightest teaching and research minds from across the state and the nation are now joining the ranks at a University of Texas School.

UT Permian Basin alone hired 20 new faculty members. Of those 20, 10 were added to the budget as a result of the increased revenue from tuitions. Students have directly benefitted from tuition increases in that more than 20 percent of the funds were channeled directly into scholarships, and more courses and more course sections. Two academic advisors also joined the 10 new faculty.

Once the Texas Legislature granted state university systems the ability to set their own tuition (based on campus needs), University of Texas System schools are able to recruit skilled faculty by using revenues from increased tuition.

"UT System enrollment is growing by about 5-percent per year," said Teresa Sullivan, UT System vice chancellor of academic affairs. New faculty hires will help improve student to faculty ratios to keep up with the rapid growth."

At UT Permian Basin, enrollment has continued on a trend of growing in the double digits each semester. Students requested more teachers, courses and a greater range of course times.

Hiring new faculty is also an advantage to the UT Permian Basin region. Recruiting top professors, who are also top researchers, is like bringing a small business to campus. Top researchers often bring millions of dollars in federal grant money with them to further their research studies.

The range of professors and their skills are as unique as the research projects they bring with them. Take **DR. WENDY HODGES** for example. She grew up on a farm in eastern Kansas and developed a strong sense of environment and love for nature. Now she has joined the team of biologists at UTPB as an assistant professor in biology.

She has moved to the perfect climate to further develop her research of reintroducing the horned lizard, commonly known as the "horny toad," to its original habitats. The job opportunity also opens doors for Dr. Hodges to pursue conservation efforts for other species native to Texas. But her interest in UTPB extends far beyond its semi-desert, dry climate. "Being a part of the whole UT System provides a lot of available resources I feel I can take

advantage of," Dr. Hodges said. "I will have access to equipment, libraries and research available throughout the System."

**DR. RAJ DESAI** is the coordinator and first faculty member for the Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology degree. This degree is the first in the nation to be tailored to the oil and gas industry. Desai was an Associate Professor and Graduate Faculty member of Southeast Missouri State University.

"I am excited to be back to Texas. I was here 20 years ago at Texas A & M," Desai said. "I feel like I bring a lot of experience working in industry and education and I can share that with the students." Desai has been awarded 22 grants to pursue new research in the engineering field and has 13 publications.

**DAN KEAST**, assistant music professor, came to UTPB from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He has already vitalized the Falcon Pep Band by adding symphonic instruments and is working with Nyela Basney to organize a University choir.

Keast has a Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education and received his master's in music education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is a member of the National Association for Music Education, the Society for Research in Music Education, the College Band Directors National Association, the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, the College Music Society and the Missouri Educators Association.

He has published six journal articles on music. Keast has also been given seven different grants for research in the field of music. "The most exciting aspect of coming to UTPB is the diverse population of students. Plus I am ecstatic about starting a music program. The field of music is a very important aspect in everyone's lives." Keast noted that he brings home that point by asking students to go 24 hours without any music.

**DR. CECILIO ORTIZ-GARCIA:** The mixture of environmental and social justice issues, and public policy can arguably unleash some of the most contentious, heavily debated, and sometimes irreconcilable public and academic debates in society today. Dr. Cecilio Ortiz Garcia, who serves as Assistant Professor of Political Science at UTPB, concentrates on the study of how public administrators deal with such policy paradoxes through his research on "environmental justice issues."

Dr. Ortiz-Garcia comes to UTPB from El Paso where he served as visiting assistant professor at the University

of Texas at El Paso Chicano Studies Research Program. While there, he lectured on environmental policy and minority/social justice issues. Previously, he served as faculty associate at the Arizona State University School of Architecture and Environmental Design. His research concentrates on the comparative study of state environmental capacity, and the impacts of environmental policy and policymaking on minority communities in the U.S., particularly on the U.S./Mexico border and Puerto Rico. He is a member of the Board of Directors for the National Hispanic Environmental Council based in Washington, D.C., and an advisory board member of the *Paso del Norte* Water Task Force. He also served as part of the Smithsonian Institute's Monitoring Biodiversity Team, where he continues to collaborate in developing their seminars. He obtained his doctoral degree in Public Policy and Administration from ASU and a Master of Public Administration from Governors State University in University Park, Illinois.

**DR. RICHARD GREGORY**, was formerly an associate professor of education at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks. Gregory is an Assistant Professor of Education Leadership at UTPB. Not only is he a scholar in the field of education leadership, he has "walked the walk" and brings a wealth of field experience to his position as a former superintendent in several districts. Gregory earned his Ed.D. in educational administration from the University of Wyoming in Laramie. His Dissertation was: *Leaders for Tomorrow's Schools: A Study of Differences Between Graduates of Traditional/Classroom-Based and Practicum/Internship-Based Programs*. He earned a Master of Education in Elementary Education and Administration from Montana State University in Bozeman, and a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from MSU. Gregory is a former adjunct professor and served as a superintendent of Schools for Medford Public Schools in Oregon.

His research and presentations have included the viability of charter schools, block scheduling, outcome-based graduation requirements, and he has offered models in strategic planning for school districts. He is drawn to researching public schools.

"Public education is critical to a democratic society," Gregory noted. "By continuing the education of citizens, they are better able to fulfill their responsibilities in that democratic society. I love being a part of that."

The assistant professor said he was attracted to UT Permian Basin due to the professionalism of the university's School of Education, and he didn't want



A horned toad in the hand . . .



Biologist Dr. Wendy Hodges, left the University of California System to join the UT Permian Basin team. Midland/Odessa has the perfect climate for her work with the horned lizard, commonly known as the "horny toad."



Dr. Raj Desai



Dr. Gregory



Dr. Ortiz-Garcia



Dr. Stylianides



Dr. Dan Keast holds the tuba, just one of many instruments he plays.

to live in a large city "like San Antonio or Dallas, so the smallness of this area is a plus." He also is enjoying "the opportunity to work with students again, especially to work with graduate students. That is the most exciting aspect."

**GEORGIOS ANTONIOU STYLIANIDES** moved from Tampa, Florida, to join UTPB in Fall 2004. The native of Greece will teach biomechanics and possibly some kinesiology classes. Stylianides was the former director of the Biomechanics Laboratory at the University of South Florida. He is a former consultant for the UNO National Biodynamics Laboratory at the NASA Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans.

"I think coming to UTPB will be a great opportunity for me and my family. I chose UTPB because I think this will be a good job and the people in West Texas — and the faculty — are friendly," Stylianides said. He moved with his wife and two children.

When he was younger, Stylianides overcame Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease, a usually immobilizing disease that deteriorates the hip. The disease motivated him to become very active, and inspired his interest in the science of movement. In 1978, he won the Northhellenic High School Championship in Greece, many snow skiing championships, and even competed in the Balkan Snow Skiing Games as a representative of the Greek National Ski Team in 1978. Stylianides is fluent in English, French and Greek. In 1998, Stylianides earned his doctoral degree in Philosophy, with a spe-

cialization in biomechanics, from the University of Toledo in Ohio. He began his master of science degree, with a specialization in biomechanics, at Purdue University, and completed it at Illinois State University in 1997, and his Bachelor of Science, with a specialization in physical education, from the University of Tennessee. His dissertation was entitled: *The Effects of Resistance Training Programs on the Functional Capacity of Elderly Women*, and he was awarded an \$80,000 research grant to complete the project.

He earned a diploma in French languages from the University of Dijon, in Dijon, France. One of his major achievements is the designing and development of a unique camera mount for 3-Dimensional lab settings. The design has been adopted by several labs, including Steadman-Hawkins Sports Medicine Clinic, Brigham Young University, Tulane University Hospital and Clinic, and the University of Toledo. The professor developed an anatomy and physiology program involving the use of cadavers in a lab for Tulane University and wrote a manual for swimming pool lifeguards, instructors, and attendants.

In 2000, Stylianides was a consultant for the UNO National Biodynamics Laboratory at the NASA Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans. His current research include biomechanical determinants among elite golfers, injuries in female athletes, lower back pain among lower limb amputees who use a prosthesis, and the biomechanical differences between the use of a fracture 3-D walker versus a short-leg cast.

# Scholarships?

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