RESEARCH EXCHANGE ON MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
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EXCHANGING IDEAS AND METHODS IN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS RESEARCH

Applied Physiology doctoral candidates Dusty Allen and Mu Huang consider themselves unusually lucky scientists. Thanks to a MS Research Australia grant awarded to their mentor, Associate Professor Scott Davis, they travelled this summer to the University of Sydney, Australia, and participated in a collaborative effort to study the effects of heat on physically active individuals with multiple sclerosis (MS).

Davis, director of the Integrative Physiology Laboratory in Simmons’ Department of Applied Physiology and Wellness, received an International Research Collaboration Award from the University of Sydney; giving him an opportunity to share his work on thermoregulation in MS patients with research at Sydney, and to exchange ideas and techniques with colleagues such as Ollie Jay, an expert in thermoregulation with whom he has worked with over the years. The award is given to international researchers of high standing to share new or original ideas and to facilitate the training of new scientists at the University of Sydney.

Davis says giving his graduate students a chance to work with him, as expertise in thermoregulation is characterized by a quantitative approach to the biophysics of thermoregulation, is important because it differs from his own work. Davis stresses the importance of different ways to train and still become an expert.

Research in Mathematics Education, a research-to-practice unit in Simmons, is partnering with the Jamaican Ministry of Education and the Inter-American Development Bank to plan a pilot program in supporting parents’ involvement in multi-Education at home. The goal of the project is to improve outcomes for children in the earliest grades and to develop actions that encourage parents to raise healthy, confident children who carry forward into the classroom.

RMI researchers Lance Betekele-Gebriel, Pushe Wainj and Erica Simon spent a week in Kingston, Jamaica earlier this fall conducting focus groups on the perceptions of parents, teachers, community leaders, and advocacy groups of the region. RMI’s work will provide parents with coaching and training, something over the next two academic years.

PILOTING WORK IN JAMAICA

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The focus of doctoral candidate Aller’s research is thermoregulatory physiology, or how individuals with MS get rid of heat under different stressors, such as exercise. Huang is studying cardiovascular function specifically how the disease influences the autonomic control of heart rate and blood pressure. Both say they benefited from learning about different perspectives on thermoregulation in human. By combining their physiological approaches—looking at how the body works—with a hypothesis or calculation-driven approach, Huang says he got a better understood picture. “We want their theorems and calculations and a completely different perspective on doing thermoregulatory research. It expanded the breadth of our knowledge considerably,” he says.

Davis notes that in Davis’ lab they study the disease in depth and how it affects the different systems of the body. He says in Sydney they learned how the underlying photos of releasing heat from the body works. Everything is explained by numbers.

“One thing changed me in many ways,” Aller says. “As a scientist it made me open my eyes and knew that my training is amazing. This is an opportunity to share my work with people outside. You need other scientists who broaden your perspective.”

Huang is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with senior and junior scientists across from the globe. “I once heard that collaboration is about sharing the competition, so by collaborating with people you can learn. You need other scientists who broaden your perspective.” He believes that this kind of experience will help create their own network of future scientists.

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Why did you decide to become a teacher through TFA? What were the biggest insights you gained? Specifically, Teach for America teacher preparation demonstrated for me just how important collaboration, teamwork, and humility are in the teaching profession. I feel that our experiences over the summer allowed us to practice and refine our skills as teachers while we get to know some of the incredible students within the Dallas Independent School District community, my personal favorite part of the experience.

Did the collaboration between TFA, SMU Simmons, and Momentum yield results for you? Throughout our training and in my time at my placement school, it has become clear how important collaboration is in order to better ourselves and our work. The collaboration between Teach for America, the Simmons School, and Momentum modeled for us the way to work together in order to produce a better and more well-rounded experience.

TAYLOR HINOJOSA

Why did you decide to become a teacher through TFA? What were the biggest insights you gained? This summer I learned so much that it is honestly hard to pinpoint a most meaningful insight. If I had to pick one, I guess it would be this: that classroom culture and the parameters for success are different. A positive culture in which students feel safe, valued, and supported is the foundation on which excellent instruction is built.

Did the collaboration between TFA, SMU Simmons, and Momentum yield results for you? The TFA-Simmons School Momentum trifecta means that I was provided with just about any resource I could possibly need to excel upon entering the classroom.

JAVIER GARCIA

Why did you decide to become a teacher through TFA? What were the biggest insights you gained? The Summer Institute was amazing. TFA, Momentum, and SMU did a great job putting a program that equipped the 2015 corps members with useful tools and information for the classroom. At the summit at SMU’s campus as well in our summer school sites consistently provided valuable resources and feedback.

Did the collaboration between TFA, SMU Simmons, and Momentum yield results for you? I strongly believe that TFA, SMU Simmons, and Momentum did an incredible job preparing me for the classroom. My goal for the school year is to have a great connection with the parents in order for my students to feel motivated and supported inside and outside the classroom.

SHAPING EDUCATORS WITH TEACH FOR AMERICA

Teach for America DFW launched its inaugural Summer Institute in partnership with the Simmons School, Dallas Independent School District, and Momentous Institute to train 210 new corps members assigned to area schools. SMU served as a residential and classroom home for corps members as they received intensive, seven-week instruction while teaching summer classes in DISD schools.

Secondary STEM teachers form the largest part of the corps, followed by elementary, bilingual, English and social studies. Now that they have been placed in their own classrooms, three reflect on what they learned.

ENGAGE FACULTY

Heidi Catholic – Technology Director and Associate Professor of Applied Physiology and Sport Management. His expertise is in sports marketing and recent articles have been published in the Journal of Sport Management, International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, and Journal of Behavioral Marketing.

Brian Fenig – senior lecturer in Teaching and Learning, examines her chronic change in California’s grade 8 science textbooks. This article in Environmental Education Research discusses how that language used in these textbooks leads to doubts about the scientific evidence.

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Graham Mejia recently joined the faculty as a clinical assistant professor in Applied Physiology and Sport Management. His expertise is in sport marketing and recent articles have been published in the Journal of Sport Management, International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, and Journal of Behavioral Marketing.

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with multiple sclerosis. Fellow SMU doctoral candidate Dusty Allen is pictured top right.

Ph.D. candidate Mu Huang and mentor Scott Davis, Simmons associate professor, (top left) work—with a biophysics or calculation approach—looking at how the body responds when it has multiple sclerosis.

The focus of doctoral candidate Allen’s research is thermoregulation. The disease in depth and how it affects individuals with MS get rid of heat poorly. Researchers want to understand the processes at play to help them understand the disease in depth and how it affects individuals with MS. Both say they benefitted from the trip, confirming what they are learning at SMU.

Exchanging ideas and methods

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Noticed in international research on high-stakes testing is that new or innovative ideas and the facilitation of the training of our scientists at the University of Sydney. Davis says hoping his graduate students a chance to work with Jay, whose expertise in thermoregulation is characterized by a quantitative approach in the use of measurement, is important because it differs from his own work. Davis says he is learning about the physiological mechanisms of thermoregulation.

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As we near the end of SMU’s Unbridled campaign, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the many donors and volunteers who have shared in the establishment and growth of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development.

Your participation has been amazing and we could not have built a new academic school on this campus without you.

I personally applaud you for sharing your networks and resources with us and I hope that you will continue to share in our vision and growth. We look forward to seeing you at the many future events and celebrations that will take place in our school and on campus.

If you have not already seen the new Harold Clark Simmons Hall, I am proud to report that the building will be open for classes in January 2016. If you are interested in a tour of the new facility, please contact Patti Addington at 214-768-4844 or email her at Paddington@smu.edu. The building is an incredible tribute to Harold Simmons and his family and will allow us to further extend our impact.

Thank you again for your friendship and support!

Sincerely,

David J. Chard, Ph.D.
Leon Simmons Endowed Dean

**SIGNIFYING THE NEAR COMPLETION OF HAROLD CLARK SIMMONS HALL:**

A golden cupola was placed on top of the building this summer. The dome is a unifying architectural element for schools across campus. “It’s more vertical than most of our other cupolas,” says Philip Jabour, SMU associate vice president and university architect. “It matches some of the other buildings like Fondren and Fincher, and draws from those historical precedents.”

The hall, which is scheduled to open January 2016, is a 40,000 square foot facility that will house several academic and community-support spaces, including a teaching design lab, student assessment lab, classrooms, the Department of Teaching and Learning, and The Budd Center: Involving Communities in Education.

SMU announces a second gift of $25 million in 2013 from Harold C. and Annette Caldwell Simmons ’57 to fund a new building for the expanding programs of the Simmons school and support three new endowed academic positions. In 2007 the Simmons family made a historic $20 million gift that established endowments for the school and provided funding for the Annette Caldwell Simmons Hall. Pictured at right are Annette Caldwell Simmons, Harold C. Simmons, Caren Prothro, former chair, SMU Board of Trustees, and President R. Gerald Turner.
Milan Sevak and other Simmons faculty presented at TEDxSMU this year. He directs the new Ed.D program in Educational Leadership (pre-K to 12).

“When it comes to doing what works, SMU is among the best in the world. I’m confident that your new school will graduate not only some of the most talented teachers in the profession, but also some of the most prepared for real-world classrooms.” — Former U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings on the opening of the school.

The Luminary Awards were established in 2009 to honor those who reflect meaningful change in education. First recipients pictured with Annette Caldwell Simmons ’57 include Margaret Spellings (left), former U.S. Secretary of Education; Geraldine “Tincy” Miller ’56, Texas State Board of Education; and Terry Flowers, headmaster and executive director of St. Philip’s School and Community Center.

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Master of Liberal Studies students and SMU undergraduates travel with Professor Dennis Simon on a yearly civil rights pilgrimage. This year commemorated the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, AL.

Simmons faculty and staff gather to lead city tours for Discover Dallas, Mustang Corral’s 2015 orientation of new students.

Middle school students in Simmons’ Talented and Gifted and Summer Youth programs march with parents and SMU administrators across the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge in 2012. The students created a model of the Dallas bridge as part of the Trinity Trust’s education project celebrating the bridge’s open.

Faculty in the Department of Teaching and Learning recruit students for the double major in Educational Studies starting this fall semester.

Educational Studies
Center for Family Counseling

Simmons’ Center for Family Counseling at SMU-in-Plano trains students obtaining a Master of Science in Counseling. Launched in 2008 and supervised by faculty, the Center serves clients of all income levels by providing individual and group counseling services. Satellite clinics also are located in Frisco ISD and Resource Center in Dallas.

“My experience in this (counseling) program has been a time of deep inner growth. It is not only the skills we learn to make a difference in people’s lives, it is who we become that has the greatest impact on the therapeutic relationship.” – Dinah Samnani ’14.

Education Writers Association

U.S. Undersecretary of Education Ted Mitchell (right) meets with Dean David Chard and former Associate Dean Michael McLendon during the Education Writers Association meeting hosted by Simmons in 2014.

Nationa l Mediation Competition Winners

Simmons’ Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management students consistently win national mediation competitions. This year’s team was Ashley Beall-Sarris (left), Michelle Kruse, Jin Liu, Aaron Horn, and Lindsay Nixon, winner, Best Overall Mediator Award. With them are professors Tom Hartsell (top) and Betty Gilmore.

The Budd Center

Jayda Batchelder (left), founding executive director of Education Opens Doors, and Gloria Lopez, program director at TRM, attend a quarterly training meeting hosted by The Budd Center.

“The Budd Center is a radical concept that looks at every factor that influences success – and ultimately helps communities improves their lives, their schools and their children’s futures,” – Russell Budd on the Budd Center’s collaborative work in W. Dallas.

Sport Management

Sport Management majors get opportunities to learn from leading sports organizations such as the Dallas Stars. Pictured from left are Vida Samei, A.J. Morris, and Morgan Franey in 2013.

Teaching and Learning

Stephanie Al Otaiba, Professor and Patsy and Ray Caldwell Centennial Chair in Teaching and Learning

“One of the many best things about working at Simmons is the opportunity to work with colleagues who all care about making a difference in other people’s lives, namely to improve educational outcomes for children and to improve teachers’ knowledge using evidence-based practices.” – Stephanie Al Otaiba, Professor

George W. Bush Institute

Dean David Chard (left) moderates a discussion at the first education symposium sponsored by the George W. Bush Institute in 2010. Pictured with him are former North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., and Bush Institute Fellows James Guthrie and Sandy Kreos.

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United States Undersecretary of Education

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