Department of Health and Human Performance
2006 Annual Report

HHP is going places . . .

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
The 2005–2006 Academic year was another great one for the Department of Health and Human Performance (HHP). Building upon the successes of the previous years, the department continued to make significant forward strides in the areas of research, academics, and service. This progress was reflected in 17 peer reviewed research articles, 27 scientific presentations, curriculum revisions, personnel increases, and continued improvement in the quality of graduate students. The department also received $1,231,070 in new funding to support research and other projects. This amount is in addition to the $5 million dollar funding base already in place.

**Academics**

The most exciting academic news to report is that our doctoral program in Kinesiology was ranked 15th best in the nation by the American Academy of Kinesiology and Physical Education. Our program is currently ranked above programs from institutions such as the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Michigan State, the University of Michigan, and Ohio State; all traditional leaders in Kinesiology. Needless to say, we are proud of our doctoral degree and are continually seeking to improve the quality of education that our students receive. Our Graduate Research Degrees committee, which administers the doctoral degree, agreed to institute a *qualifying* examination that will be administered to new doctoral students following the completion of their first year in the program. This examination will consist of exercises ranging from a number of cross-disciplinary readings to students writing about their experience, and is designed to assess their ability to display critical thinking and writing skills. This educational exercise will provide the faculty with additional insights regarding our students’ ability to transition from users of knowledge to generators of new knowledge—a standard we expect of all of our doctoral program graduates.

The most significant development in our undergraduate curriculum was the placing of our preparation for physical education teachers in moratorium. We will no longer be accepting new students into our *teacher preparation* program. That program has been replaced with a new curriculum option designed to prepare *wellness* educators. This new degree option takes full advantage of the unique blend of specialists on our faculty—experts in the areas of sports administration, obesity studies, health promotion, nutrition, and traditional kinesiology fields—and enables us to offer a course of study that addresses the needs of an ever growing population that continues to adopt sedentary behaviors. This degree option is directly in line with current societal needs and consistent with state guidelines for *wellness* programs for the youth of Texas. Our new degree option is the first of its kind in Texas and, to our knowledge, the first of its kind in the entire nation!

Our new KIN 1304: Public Health Issues in Physical Activity and Obesity was approved as a social science university core course and has 300 students enrolled in the Fall 2006 semester.

Our online Masters of Education degree benefited from an active internet advertising campaign and improved operating procedures. We expect to graduate our first fully *online* students this coming spring.

In June two groups of HHP faculty were awarded UH sponsored Faculty Development Initiative Program (FDIP) grants totaling $49,000.00 to further integrate the use of educational technology into a variety of our courses.
This past year saw another increase of $956,484.00 in funding for research. Combined with recent funding increases in previous years we now have research funding commitments over 6 million dollars. This funding was obtained from a variety of state, local and federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Texas Department of State Health Services, Wyle Life Sciences, (a NASA Life Sciences contractor), Texas Learning and Computation Center, and the University of Houston. Our TIGER study, [http://www.uh.edu/tigerstudy/] focusing the relationship between obesity, genetics, and exercise is in its third year of operation. The NIH funded UNDO projects [http://hhp.uh.edu/undo/] designed to investigate the influence of the environment on obesity among minority women was in full swing this year with several interrelated projects being conducted in both Houston and Austin. The Health Network for Evaluation and Training Systems [http://www.uh.edu/hnets/index.html] that provides research, evaluation, training and technical assistance to schools, communities and healthcare settings to meet their health goals continues to be very active and received much positive publicity this past summer. Dr. Max Kurz) became known around the world for his investigations of locomotion patterns of the King Penguins who live at Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas. [http://www.hhp.uh.edu/faculty/Kurz/research/press.html]

An HHP Student Research Day was held in October and was attended by over 350 undergraduate students. We are very proud of the research-related work our graduate students are involved in.

Possibly the most significant research-related event this past year was held on Monday, April 3rd when HHP hosted a symposium on the “Obesity Epidemic”. Internationally known professors Drs. John Foreyt and Rod Dishman were the keynote speakers and several HHP faculty members also presented during the day long symposium. The event was well attended by students, UH faculty and staff, and several members of the Houston community. A buffet lunch of healthy food was served to those in attendance. [http://hhp.uh.edu/Cuevents/News%20Daily%20Cougar%20Online.htm] and [http://hhp.uh.edu/Cuevents/Sympimages.html]

In April Dr. Norma Olvera’s BOUNCE-Behavior Opportunities Uniting Nutrition, Counseling and Exercise program was recognized by the Texas Public Health Association as a 2006 Nutrition and Physical Activity Best Practices program [http://bounce.uh.edu/]. The one-week summer program uses salsa dancing, kick boxing, counseling and nutritious food buffets, the program works with Latina middle school girls and their mothers to determine if there are cultural factors that contribute to obesity.
**Special Events**

In June Dr. Rebecca Lee and her UNDO research team hosted a luncheon for its community partners. The guest of honor at this event was United States representative Shelia Jackson-Lee who gave a rousing speech concerning the need to investigate factors that contribute to our country’s obesity epidemic.

In May, Johnson Space Center’s Director Mike Coats and other NASA officials concerned with Education and Outreach visited the Laboratory of Integrated Physiology (The LIP). They were provided with a thorough briefing of the experiments and technology development that occurs in the LIP.

In May the College of Education hosted its upscale S.T.A.R.s fund raising banquet which was a rousing success.

**STARS:**

*Service Excellence*  
appreciating faculty and alumni service to the college and community

*Teaching Excellence*  
highlighting student portfolios, outcomes and achievements

*Assistance Excellence*  
recognizing friends, supporters and funders

*Research and Scholarship Excellence*

Dr. Andrew Abercromby received the HHP Distinguished Alumni Award in front of the pack house which included his mother and other relatives from Scotland.
Graduation

The University of Houston now holds graduation events in both December and May. Once again, graduation was a well attended and happy affair for the graduates, their families, friends and faculty.
Degrees Conferred

B.S in Health: 55
  2 Magna Cum Laude
  8 Cum Laude

B.S. in Human Nutrition and Foods: 39
  2 Summa Cum Laude
  6 Magna Cum Laude
  5 Cum Laude

B.S. in Kinesiology: Exercise Science: 52
  3 Summa Cum Laude
  3 Magna Cum Laude
  7 Cum Laude

B.S. in Kinesiology, Movement Sport Studies: 24
  3 Summa Cum Laude
  9 Magna Cum Laude
  7 Cum Laude

B.S. in Kinesiology, Sport Administration: 26
  1 Magna Cum Laude

Ed.D. in Allied Health Education and Administration: 1

M.Ed. in Allied Health Education and Administration: 2

  M.Ed. in Physical Education: 13
  M.Ed. in Health Education: 5
  M.S. in Exercise Science: 3
  Ph.D. in Kinesiology: 2
This past year we welcomed our new motor control and biomechanics professor, Dr. Max Kurz from the University of Nebraska-Omaha and Dr. Shreela Sharma an epidemiologist from The University of Texas Health Science Center. Both professors hit the ground running and have had very successful first years as HHP faculty members.

During the summer Drs. Paula Rhode, a clinical psychologist with expertise in obesity studies and Adam Thrasher, a bioengineer with expertise in the rehabilitation of spinal cord injured individuals accepted assistant professor positions beginning in the Fall of 2006. Additionally, Ms. Laura Moore accepted a faculty position designed to teach a variety of our nutrition courses. Ms. Moore has over 25 years of experience in the food and hospitality industry. We look forward to working will all three of our new professors in the coming years.

In January Ms. Randi Weintraub joined us as the department’s first Department Business Administrator. Randi came to us with a wealth of knowledge, quickly learned the UH financial system and is a tremendous addition to our administrative team.

After 23 years of service to the University of Houston and HHP, Professor Dale Pease decided to retire beginning in Fall 2006. Dr. Pease, a former HHP department chair for 13 years was the most recent recipient of the College of Education’s Distinguish Career (Service) award. The university and HHP will sorely miss Dr. Pease’s many assets but we wish him the best of luck in the future.

Andrew Rorschach, nutrition specialist, left the faculty to take another position. Andrew Rorschach, nutrition specialist, left the faculty to take another position.
This past summer we added two babies to the faculty when Dr. Shreela Sharma gave birth to her son Suvir, and Dr. Dan Martinez’s wife gave birth to their son Joaquin. A big congratulations to Drs. Sharma and Martinez.

We are looking forward to Dr. Jill Bush’s baby arriving in October.

Unfortunately, several faculty and staff members lost loved ones this past year. Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to them.

**Improvements to the Garrison/Melcher Complex**

The improvements to the Garrison/Melcher complex continued throughout the year. The most significant change was that the Garrison showers were converted into first-class project space that is currently used by 16 employees. The new student lounge has been developed and a plaque commemorating the 700 students who signed a petition requesting a lounge has been mounted to the wall. The security of the Garrison/Melcher complex has been enhanced with the addition of several more security cameras. Motion activated doors have been installed in the Garrison building to improve access for our disabled population. Garrison room 204 has been completely refurbished to accommodate research activities and graduate teaching and research fellow offices.

The following is a list of last year’s productivity generated by the HHP faculty, students and alumni. We are proud of our accomplishments in the past year!

**Peer Reviewed Research Articles**


**Book Chapters**


**New Funding**


Gingiss, P.M. Conversion of the UH Cancer Courses to Web-Based Technologies including Pod-Casts. Faculty Development Initiative Program –A, ($4,000), June, 2006.


Kurz, M.J. received funding to attend at the National Science Foundation’s Office of Polar Programs *Antarctic New Investigators 2006 Workshop*, August, 2006.

Olvera, N. (Principal Investigator) BOUNCE Lite; A Summer Day Camp for Hispanic Girls. Episcopal Health Charities, Greater Houston Nutrition Coalition, Harris 4-H Fund, College of Education ($6,500), Summer 2006.

Olvera, N. (Principal Investigator) BOUNCE Lite; A Summer Day Camp for Hispanic Girls. Episcopal Health Charities, Greater Houston Nutrition Coalition, College of Education, University of Houston ($3,600), Summer 2005.
Submitted Grant Proposals


**Martinez, D.A.** (PI) **McFarlin, B.K** (Co-I). The Impact of Low Level Laser Irradiation on Extracellular Matrix Regeneration and Immune Function in Ligament Fibroblasts During Wound Repair. NFL Charities Medical Research Grant Application (submitted: $122,145.00, 1 year), May, 2006.

**McFarlin, B.K.** Senior Mentors: Jackson AS, Bray MS, Clarke MSF, Martinez DA. TLR4: a mechanism linking obesity and chronic inflammation. National Science Foundation Career Award program. (submitted: 5 years, direct: $1,000,000, IDC: $490,000), July 15th 2006.

**McFarlin, B.K. (PI), Jackson AS** (Co-I), **Bray MS, Clarke MSF, Martinez DA.** Determining a link between obesity, physical activity status, and chronic inflammation: a role of TLR4? National American Heart Association Scientist Development Award. (submitted: 2 years – direct: $110,500, IDC: $19,500), July 14th 2006.

**McFarlin B.K. (PI), Jackson AS** (Co-I), and **Bray MS** (Co-I). “Does Obesity and Weight Loss alter the Relationship between Chronic Inflammation and Cardiovascular Disease?” Texas Affiliate of the American Heart Association. – submitted: $130,000 (10% IDC), March, 2006.

**McFarlin B.K. (PI), Jackson AS** (Co-I), **Clarke MSF** (Co-I), and **Bray MS** (Co-I). “TLR4 Signaling: A Link between Obesity and Chronic Inflammation.” NIA/NIH R03, submitted: $150,000 (Full IDC), March, 2006.


**McFarlin B.K. (PI), Martinez DA** (Co-I), **Clarke MSF** (Co-I), **Hutchison AT** (RA). Generation of 3D Adipose Tissue Constructs to Study the Effect of Adipocyte Conditioned Media on Monocyte TLR4 Signaling and Inflammatory Cytokine Production. Faculty Research Grant Award. COE: $4,000.

Scheett TP (PI, College of Charleston), Volek J (Co-I, University of Connecticut, PI UConn Subcontract), and **McFarlin BK** (Co-I, PI UH Subcontract). “The Effect of High-Protein, Calorie-Restricted Diet on Whole Body Inflammation” Funded: $85,000 (UH Subcontract $13,510.00). Full IDC Award to UH. Funding Agency: Carb Solutions.
Presentations


DeLellis B, Gingiss P. Statewide Assessment of Community Capacity and Infrastructure. Presentation to the Chronic Disease Division, Texas Department of State Health Services. Austin, TX. January 11, 2006.

Olvera, N. The Role of Gender, acculturation, and BMI in perceived body size in Mexican American Families. Symposium conducted at the biannual meeting of the Society of Research in Child Development, Atlanta, GA. 2005.


Alastuey, L. “School health promotion.” Houston’s Teacher Institute, University of Houston. April, 2006.


Achievements and Milestones

McFarlin, B. was awarded the Outstanding Teacher of the Year for the 2005-2006 academic year by the College of Education.

McFarlin, B.K. recognized as a Health Disparity/Obesity Researcher in the National Institute of Health Student Loan Repayment Program (2006-2008).

Sharma, S. received first prize for best poster presentation - University of Texas, Research Day 2005. “Psychosocial and environmental predictors of calcium intake, physical activity and bone health in adolescent girls”.

Bode, S. was elected as a Didactic Program Representative to the Commission on Accreditation in Dietetic Education (CADE), January, 2006.

Martinez, D. Primary Scientific Reviewer for Grants from the U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) and International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) and the companion organization, The Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU) under the direction of the U.S. Department of State, November, 2005.

Olvera, N. elected Selection Committee Member for the prestigious 2006 Hispanic Heritage Youth Award, April 2006.

Sharma S. was the recipient of the Travel Award from the Committee of Status of Women from the University of Texas, School of Public Health, December, 2005.


Lee, R.E. City of Houston, Mayor’s Wellness Council, Nominated to serve as Policy Subcommittee Co-Chair, January, 2006.

Lee, R.E. name University of Houston, College of Education, Research Excellence Award Recipient, December, 2005.


Clarke, M.S.F. New Invention: Method and apparatus for a three dimensional tissue culture model of bone - Provisional Patent filed 2/06, status pending).

Bush, J.A. Attended ACSM Exercise Specialist Workshop in Chicago, IL for certification as Exercise Specialist in October 2005.
Martinez, D. Inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa—ODK (national leadership honor fraternity for leadership), April 24, 2006.

Korman, S. was the recipient of the Outstanding Dance Educator award by the Texas Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAPHERD).

Rorschach, A. Inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa—ODK (national leadership honor fraternity for leadership), April 24, 2006.

Bloom, J. Elected as chair of the UH Undergraduate Studies Council, April 2006.

Lee, R.E. Nominated as charter member of the NIH Community Level Health Promotion Study Section.


Alastuey, L. Served on the Texas Education Agency’s Division of Educator Standards to review draft test items for the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) Health EC-12 test.


Kurz, M.J. was elected as the Membership Chair for the Executive Board of the American Society of Biomechanics, July, 2006.
Publicity

Kurz, M.J.  Received significant publicity from multiple news, television, radio and internet sites: http://www.hhp.uh.edu/faculty/Kurz/research/press.html

Lee, R. and Olvera, N were both featured in the UH President’s 2005 annual report.


Gingiss, P.M.  Eureka Alert - No butts about it: Unique UH database shows Texas is crushing out smoking.

http://www.medicalnewstoday.com
http://www.medilexicon.com
http://www.hospitalsworldwide.com
http://www.emaxhealth.com/58/6982.html
http://www.tobacco.org/articles/edition/2875/
http://www.emaxhealth.com/58/6982.html
http://diabetescaretips.info/free-diabetes-test.php


Lee, R.E. Houston Chronicle—Struggle against obesity often begins in the stroller – 6/11/06.


Olvera, N. Houston Chronicle, Hispanic Mothers, Daughters are study targets... Healthy Eating, Exercise focus of UH program, July 13, 2006.

Olvera, N. Houston Chronicle - Study urges starting child obesity battle before birth - 6/6/06

Olvera, N. Noticiero 47, Telemundo. BOUNCE-Lite Summer Program for Girls (July 2006)

Olvera, N. Noticiero Univision, Childhood Obesity in Hispanic Children (July 2006).

Student Kudos


Arellano, C. Force Treadmill to Measure the Effects of Gravity on Space Suit Locomotion, $23,000, submitted - NASA Graduate Space Research Program. (Max Kurz, faculty advisor).


The Student Nutrition Association was awarded $500.00 by the Houston Area Dietetic Association to support their efforts at Frontier Fiesta.

Nisa Dadjoo (undergraduate student) was awarded a PURS fellowship for Spring 2006 to study with Dr. McFarlin

Russell Sollock accepted to Physical Therapy Assistant Program Fall 2006 - T J.B. Coleman Health Science Center.

Student Nutrition Association hosted a tent at Frontier Fiesta—April, 2006 – raised $1,200 for a SNA Student Scholarship.
Mellisa Scott-Pandorff was awarded National Space Biomedical Research Institute Student Summer Fellowship to work at NASA-Johnson Space Center – June-August, 2006, (Mentor: Kurz, M.)

Mellisa Scott-Pandorff was selected as a NASA/Texas Space Grant Consortium Fellow for the 2006-2007 academic year - $5000.00 – (Mentor: Kurz, M.).

Chris Arellano was awarded National Space Biomedical Research Institute Student Summer Fellowship to work at NASA-Johnson Space Center – June-August, 2006, (Mentor: Kurz, M.).


Michael Kueht was awarded a SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship) – ‘The effect of carbohydrate consumption on the regulatory interaction between T-lymphocytes and natural killer cells’, May, 2006, (Mentor: McFarlin, B.K.)

Jorge Garza was awarded a SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship), May, 2006, (Mentor: Kurz, M.)

Michelle McNerney was awarded a SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship), May, 2006, (Mentor: Kurz, M.),

Alex Hutchison was awarded UH AGEP (Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate) Summer 2006 Research Program. Project: “The effect of diet-induced obesity on whole body and tissue specific inflammation” (Mentor: McFarlin, B.K.).

Alex Hutchison was awarded UH AGEP Fellowship – Fall 2006 (0.25 FTE). Project: “The effect of hypoxia on cultured adipocytes, role of TLR4?” (Mentor: McFarlin BK).


Heidi Perkins has accepted a research position at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, June, 2006.

Dean Culpepper defended his dissertation titled “Cortical activity of mood state depressed individuals from a reversal theory perspective” May, 2006 (Pease, D., advisor). Dean and will continue his faculty position next year at University of Wisconsin - River Falls.

Nisa Dadjoo was accepted to UT Dental School for Fall 2006 Class.


Jaime Garza completed his NATA residency requirements with the Buffalo Bills of the NFL. Mr. Garza will begin a graduate assistantship in the Sports Medicine Department, Stephen F. Austin University, July, 2006.
**HHP student scholarship awardees:**

Irene Smith Buckner – Amir Pourmoghaddam  
Mary Louise White – Gabriela Maldonado

**Outstanding Students:**

NUTR – Dana McDonald  
KIN/ES – Michael Kueht  
KIN/MS – Tracy Davis  
KIN/SA – Crystin A. Niscavits  
HEALTH – Ann Mahoney

**Phil Stevens**, Spring, 2006 graduate of the Masters Degree Program in Allied Health Education and Administration, received a College of Education Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award.

**Hutchison, A.** “Developing a diet-induced obesity model in mice to access TLR4 as a link between obesity, weight loss, and chronic inflammation”. Presented at the annual graduate student research day of the UH-Rice Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, August 11th, 2006.

**Alumni Kudos**

**Andrew Abercromby** – accepted a position as senior engineer in the Anthropometry and Biomechanics Facility at NASA-Johnson Space Center.

**Alton (T.J) Burns** passed the State of Texas Licensure for athletic training and can now add LAT to his credentials along with his B.S. in Kinesiology.

**Stephanie Broussard** was named Shell E&P Wellness Coordinator

**Lorraine Killion** has accepted an assistant professor position with Lamar University, August, 2006.


Understanding and development made possible by a faculty of experts in the fields of:

- Health and Physical Education
- Developmental Psychology
- Biomechanics
- Motor Development
- Bioengineering
- Public Health
- Community Health Practices
- Epidemiology
- Nutritional Biochemistry
- Pediatric Nutrition
- Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction
- Community Psychology
- Behavioral Medicine
- Biodynamics
- Exercise Physiology
- Motor Control
- Sport Administration
- Teacher Education
- Education Administration
- Human Environmental Sciences
- Kinesiology
- Health Promotions
- Biostatistics