

# HEARTBEAT

News from the Medical Humanities Program at Baylor University

Fall 2014

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## GREETINGS FROM MEDICAL HUMANITIES Dr. Bill Hoy

While this has been a historic year for Baylor University with the opening of our on-campus stadium, success in sports teams, groundbreaking research in the sciences, and a historically large freshman class, it has also been a record-breaking year for Medical Humanities. We welcome you to this student and faculty written newsletter brimming with updates on the exciting goings-on of Baylor's Medical Humanities Program!

As the fall semester draws to a close in just a few weeks, we look back on one of our most ground breaking semesters. Baylor's growth is likewise reflected in the growth of the Medical Humanities Program. We have welcomed 65 new freshmen to our program—the largest number ever for us. Our program is now “home” to 220 majors, two-thirds of whom are on pre-health tracks preparing for careers in medicine (MD, DO, and PA.)

About 15% of our new freshmen are Honors students, a strong indicator that we are attracting much-coveted “high ability students.” Dr. James Marcum and I spent the evening with six more prospective honors students and their families at Invitation to Excellence a few weeks ago. Our “old” honors students—juniors and seniors—are also hard at work on thesis plans; here are a few of the research investigations going on right now among our Medical Humanities honors students:

- Post parental-death bereavement among adults with Down Syndrome
- Jehovah's Witness perspectives on ethical and spiritually-sensitive options with blood
- Illness narratives in the Victorian writing of Charles Dickens

With the help of our all-undergraduate student Medical Humanities Honors Council, we have begun making plans for our largest-ever Medical Humanities Retreat in February (more details on page 7). Our new senior-level Special Topics in Medical Humanities courses for the spring are already full of eager students; you can read all about Dr. Jeff Levin's course on page 5. And whatever you do, do not miss Maggie O'Brien's article about the Spring Break Medical Humanities mission trip to El Salvador led by Dr. Barron, a story that begins on page 8. Looking ahead to next year, be sure to mark your calendars for the 16th annual retreat, more information on page 10!



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We want to keep up with you! Could you take just a moment and confirm for us that we have your correct contact information?

Send an email to [medicalhumanities@baylor.edu](mailto:medicalhumanities@baylor.edu) and let us know your email address, cell phone, and postal address. If you are an alum of our program (major or minor) please also tell us what year you graduated and what you are doing now.

We want to stay connected with you and appreciate all your continued support! Thank you for taking a little time to learn what is happening in Medical Humanities.

## MEDICAL HUMANITIES HONOR COUNCIL

Hillary Villarreal

The Medical Humanities Honor Council was formed last spring in an effort to give high-achieving, passionate, Medical Humanities students the opportunity to help grow and promote the MH Program. Last year, I had the privilege of serving as vice president under inaugural president Ann Dyer, now a medical student at Texas A&M. As a senior, it is now my honor to serve as the council's president and I am so excited to be a part of such a new and increasingly important part of the MH Program.

This year's council members include: myself, Mark Burroughs, Chelsea Potter, Maggie O'Brien, Paul Koester, Hannah Bram, Sarah Brister, Andrew Orr, Morgan Smith, Sara Stephens, Breanna Davis, Sarah Tucker, Bri Williams, and Kirsten McLane. Students interested in joining the council next year are invited to apply in the spring for positions vacated by our graduating seniors.

Members of the MH Honor Council are dedicated to giving back to the Medical Humanities Program by helping host special guests, being ambassadors, publicizing special events across campus, and meeting with prospective students. The students of the honor council also work in close collaboration with faculty, granting access to many enriching opportunities such as lectures, receptions with special guests, student-faculty dinners, and discussions with practicing physicians over special topics.

In the future, we hope to create a student publication, as well as to continue to support special events like the upcoming Medical Humanities Retreat. As president, I am personally committed to giving back to the program that has been so important in my personal formation as a future healthcare professional.

Through pursuing a Medical Humanities education, I discovered an interest and passion for learning about the human side - the art - of medicine. Medical Humanities forced me to grapple with hard issues in medicine, such as the nature of the patient-physician relationship, issues in bioethics, and understanding one's calling to the medical profession. Learning about the ideals of medicine and struggling to understand my own vocation provided me with a more meaningful educational experience. Exposure to medical humanities is of the utmost importance for every pre-health student who will be entering into a profession primarily concerned with caring for people. The Medical Humanities Honor Council is one vehicle through which this vital program can continue to grow.

*Several members of the 2014 Medical Humanities Honor Council:- Mark Burroughs, Chelsea Potter, Hillary Villarreal and Sara Stephens*



**President**  
Hillary Villarreal

**Co-Vice President**  
Mark Burroughs  
Chelsea Potter

**Communications Chair**  
Maggie O'Brien

**FHC Liason**  
Paul Koester

**Hospitality Chairs**  
Hannah Bram  
Sarah Brister

**Prospective Student Chair**  
Sara Stephens

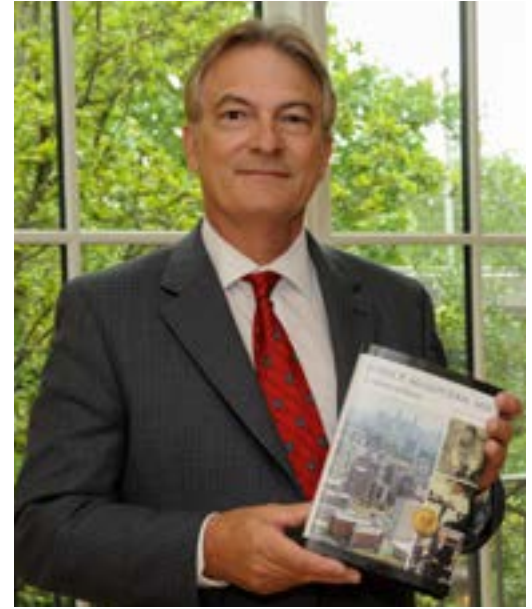
**MH Retreat Chairs**  
Andrew Orr  
Morgan Smith

**Special Events Chairs**  
Breanna Davis  
Sarah Tucker  
Bri Williams

## DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

This semester, the Medical Humanities Program hosted two very special guests from the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics. Dr. Bryant Boutwell, special advisor to the president of UT Health, completely filled a BSB auditorium this September when he spoke about the history of medical education in the United States. He also visited Dr. Barron's Literary and Philosophical Perspectives on Medicine class to lecture on Dr. McGovern from his perspective as a biographer after recently publishing *John P. McGovern, MD: A Lifetime of Stories*. He is also a well known historian for the UT Health Science Center and the author of two books on the history of Houston and the Texas Medical Center. Currently he is working on a biography of Dr. Red Duke, trauma surgeon and professor at UT Health. In the meantime, he writes a fascinating blog called 'Bout Time' in which he shares "stories of our past stories that define who we are and how we got here".

Dr. Boutwell also had breakfast with the students in Earle Hall, where he had led an informal discussion about the medical school interview process. He shared his wisdom and experience about how to interview well. His stories and advice riveted the students of Earle. We all look forward to continued partnership with Dr. Boutwell in the future. Read more at <http://www.uth.edu/blog/bout-time/>.



Dr. Boutwell and his recently published biography on Dr. John P. McGovern



Rebecca Lunstroth lecturing in Earle Hall about the Affordable Healthcare Act

In October, we were honored to have Rebecca Lunstroth, the associate director for the McGovern Center, visit our campus for the first time. Her background in economics, law and medical ethics helps make her a leading expert in medical ethics, research ethics, medical economics, and healthcare policy. Among her many other responsibilities, she chairs an IRB committee at UT Houston and sits on the Art Wall committee. During her visit, she spoke to a packed room in Earle Hall about the Affordable Healthcare Act. Her presentation got rave reviews from students and faculty alike, agreeing that this was one of the best, most accessible lectures on the Affordable Healthcare Act we've ever heard!

Baylor's Medical Humanities Program and the McGovern Center have much in common and we look forward to finding ways to collaborate in the future. Here's an excerpt from the McGovern Center's website, which in itself is an inspiration:

*We believe that changing medicine means changing the way we educate and train physicians. Our curriculum feeds the hearts and minds of students in medicine, nursing, dentistry, and other health professional schools at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Ultimately, we help students manage the complexities of medicine and science where technical mastery is impossible, ethical problems are difficult, and existential meaning is often in question.*

We are hoping to have Tom Cole, the director of the McGovern Center, visit Baylor in this coming spring. Dr. Cole has just published one of the very first textbooks in our field: "Medical Humanities: An Introduction" and we are looking forward to using his book as a resource for some of our classes!

You can find more information about the McGovern Center and its innovative programs (especially those of you at UT Houston!) at <http://www.uth.tmc.edu/hhhs/>. Also, check out UT Houston's Art Wall at <https://med.uth.edu/artwall/>.



Dr. Tom Cole has recently published one of the first Medical Humanities textbooks!



## VISUAL ARTS AND HEALING



Last semester students, professors, and artists worked together on a service learning project to benefit Avance, a local non-profit organization, through Visual Arts and Healing, fulfilling a core course in the medical humanities curriculum. Linda Bostwick, a family nurse practitioner and the course's director, worked with Sue Benner, a textile artist from Dallas, along with Mary Ruth Smith and Leah Force, members of Baylor's own Art Department. Service learning is a way to help students translate what they are learning in the classroom to projects that serve the community.

Medical Humanities students collaborated on the project using newly acquired needlework and sewing skills to make a quilt for Avance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and empowering parents and children from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

The quilt will be used as a functional art piece in Avance's new facility, currently under construction. The quilt features letters of the alphabet rendered in a 'serape' style and is designed to serve as an educational tool, encouraging interaction between parents and their young children.

While designing and creating this project, students were able to learn more about the therapeutic effects of art and its impact on the healthcare environment. Students responded that this course was extremely challenging and rewarding, drawing on skills such as collaboration and creativity that might not be exercised as often in basic science courses. This piece of art will be displayed indefinitely at Avance to help bring a sense of joy and happiness to Avance's organization. It also gives the students a sense of accomplishment that outlasts most class assignments by far! Congratulations to the students and their professors on such an outstanding project.



*Thanks to Sue Benner for the amazing photographs!*

## BAYLOR DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR TEACHING NEW COURSE

Dr. Jeff Levin, University Professor in the Institute for the Studies of Religion, is teaching a Special Topics Course in Medical Humanities in Spring 2015. Religious Healing will be the topic of Dr. Levin's MH 4V98 (3.0 credit hour course) taught on Wednesday afternoons in the spring semester.

Dr. Levin promises a graduate seminar-style course limited to a small group of highly-motivated students. Each week, students will review assigned readings and several times during the semester, every student will take his or her turn leading the discussion. The course will survey the history of nonmedical healing and its practitioners who describe themselves variously, as religious, spiritual, faith, mental, or energy healers. Topics include Christian healing traditions, folk and indigenous healers, contemporary Western and Eastern faith healers, new-age and energy healers, and current scientific research on healing prayer.

An epidemiologist by training, Dr. Jeff Levin holds a distinguished chair at Baylor University, where he is University Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health, Professor of Medical Humanities, and Director of the Program on Religion and Population Health at the Institute for Studies of Religion. He is also Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Duke University School of Medicine. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Texas Medical Branch, in 1987. He is author or editor of nearly 200 publications, including the recently-released *Judaism and Health*. Dr. Levin has received research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the American Medical Association, and private foundations.



Dr. Jeff Levin

Check him out on the web:

<http://religionandhealth.com/>

## MSO VOLUNTEERS AT THE MLK CLINIC

In the fall of 2013 the Medical Humanities Program helped connect the Medical Service Organization (MSO) with one of the Family Health Center's satellite clinics---The Martin Luther King Jr. Clinic located at the corner of Herring and MLK Boulevard---just a few miles up the Brazos from Baylor's campus. MSO members pride themselves in volunteerism and understand that serving the community is crucial to gaining perspective, understanding the human condition, and learning compassion. MSO members appreciate the ability to serve alongside the faculty and staff of the MLK Clinic and

they've made great strides in building relationships and shaping this new form of volunteering. One of the volunteers says it like this:

*"Volunteering at the MLK Clinic over the past three semesters has given me a new perspective on primary care and enabled me to better understand how to truly serve those around me. Working with the doctors has inspired me to pursue primary care, simply because their passion and dedication to their job and the people around them. The clinic staff has shown me what it takes to make a clinic work. I used to think I would only want to work at a hospital but I don't think that anymore, and it's because of them."*

An important part of taking on this clinic project was to help the community served by the clinic in whatever way possible. This prompted a canned food drive for the MLK clinic to give to patients in need. Last semester, 619 cans were donated. This semester, MSO raised 1766 non-perishable food items to stock the clinic's food pantry to overflowing. Way to go MSO and congratulations to your leadership for helping to create such an outstanding partnership with the Family Health Center!



MSO collects canned goods for patients in need



## BAYLOR HOMECOMING

Baylor University never ceases to impress with elaborate Homecoming festivities and events! This year, the College of Arts and Sciences partnered with the Medical Humanities Program and the Pre-Health Office to host a homecoming brunch in honor of Dr. William Hillis and a new scholarship in his name. Dr. William Hillis represents a legacy of great teaching and has made a profound difference in the surrounding prehealth studies at Baylor. His efforts have empowered countless students interested in this field to realize their full potential. Dr. Hillis announced his retirement in the spring of 2012, after more than 30 years spent at Baylor as a teacher and administrator. The College of Arts & Sciences approached him about developing a scholars program in his honor to thank him for his service. This program is centered around and represents Dr. Hillis's academic and professional passion of biomedical research.

The Medical Humanities Program was thrilled to be a part of such an event and host the healthcare Alumni as they returned to Baylor to celebrate and honor Dr. William Hillis.

*A group of current students with  
Dr. Barron and Dr. Sanker*



*Students Rachel Borren and Reny Mathew*



## HAYLEY AND THE HUMANITITES

Hayley Johnson, a current Baylor student studying graphic design, is doing something wonderful for the Baylor Sciences Building. She is incorporating art, encouragement, and inspiration to Baylor students as they walk through the halls. This semester Sue Mock, our administrative associate, decided to hang a framed chalk board visible to passersby on the wall outside of the Medical Humanities Office. Having experience in art and design, Hayley took on the challenge to create weekly intricate chalk art with various quotes. It is not uncommon to see students pausing in the hallway to read and even take pictures of the chalk board. Thank you Hayley for sharing your talents!

Hayley has made a fabulous contribution to the program. She's graduating in December and we will miss her terribly. We will always have Hayley to thank for designing our program's new mascot, Hugh the Manatee. Hugh has been incredibly popular with students and is now even featured on t-shirts. Hayley, Hugh and the Medical Humanities Program thank you and wish you the best!



*We love our inspiration chalkboard!*

## REFLECTIONS ON THE MH MISSION TRIP TO EL SALVADOR

Maggie O'Brien

People say laughter is the same in every language. Smiles have no language barrier and need no translation, but neither does sickness. In Hospital Zacamil, located in one of the roughest neighborhoods in downtown San Salvador, illness transcends interpretation.

As I saw an eighty year old man lying in his hospital bed, I hardly needed the explanation of the attending surgeon. The man had a tumor the size of a baseball embedded in his palm. From the scent permeating the air, it was obvious the tumor was infected. The tumor began growing over forty years ago, but the man had been reluctant to seek treatment until the infection became odorous. With a heavy sigh, the attending held up an x-ray to a light box with one broken bulb.

This is a small glimpse of what I was witnessed in El Salvador this past July. In my week in El Salvador with the Medical Humanities Mission Team from Baylor, I was able to

be part of a team and not just a tourist. With the medical students at Universidad de Evangelica de El Salvador, we listened to medical lectures, studied cadavers, set up a medical brigade in a rural community, shadowed doctors in a downtown public hospital, and so much more. I was shown over and over again what it truly means to live a life of service through medicine.

My favorite moment of the trip came the day we teamed up with students and doctors from the medical school to set up a temporary clinic in a village whose residents don't typically have access to health care. I ended up working in the pharmacy, partnered with a student from the medical school. We worked together to find the right medications and carefully count out dosages. It was while we were filling a prescription, my partner's hands holding open the plastic bag while I counted the pills into the bag that I had an epiphany. Looking down at our gloved hands hard at work, we weren't an American undergrad and an El Salvadoran medical student. We were people with a mission. The pills that we were handing out were going to make a difference in someone's life, a difference we made happen by working together.

When our bus pulled away, lurching along the mountainous cobblestone road, the villagers lined up in droves to say goodbye. As I watched the children chase after our bus, calling for us to stay, I knew a piece of me always would. One short week in El Salvador changed me forever, and perhaps we managed to change a few things for them too. We treated over 250 people that

day at the brigade. With support from Baylor University, several Baylor student organizations, individuals, and local Waco businesses we were able to supply medication, equipment and supplies in a way that supported the work of UEES. The partnership between Baylor University and UEES is one that we hope will continue to grow, because if there's anything else that binds people together and breaks down the language barriers—it's hope and healing.



*Students spend Spring Break in El Salvador*



## PRESENTATIONS, PUBLICATIONS AND AWARDS

**The DeBakey Foundation** has given another \$200,000 bringing the total for the DeBakey Scholarship Fund to \$1.2 million! We are extremely grateful for their generosity and support of our program.

**Dr. James Marcum** presented “Strengthening the Conceptual Basis of Person-Centered Healthcare: What can we Learn from the Personalist and Non-Foundationalist Schools of Thought?” at the First Annual Conference of European Society for Person Centered Healthcare in Madrid, Spain this past July. His paper is to be published in the European Journal for Person Centered Healthcare.

**Dr. Barron** presented “Digital Doctoring: Encounters with Electronic Records” in September at the 2014 Baylor Libraries Symposium on Understanding Media: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Marshall McLuhan’s Groundbreaking Work.

**Dr. Bill Hoy** gave multiple presentations in September to several groups in Des Moines Iowa as part of a continuing education program at Unity Point Health System for community hospice, hospital, and congregational caregiving professionals on the role of social support in complicated grief. His presentations included a seminar for nursing students, a session on supporting bereaved students for school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers; and a discussion with clergy on supporting bereaved parishioners.

**Niloy Shah**, a premedical Honors student under the direction of Dr. James Marcum, presented “Can Virtue be Taught in Medicine: An Application of Aristotle’s Virtue Methodology to Modern Medical Education” at the Baptist Association of Philosophy Teachers meeting, on Oct 3-5, 2014 at Baylor.

**Dr. Barron** presented on the topic of “Adolescent Medicine” in October for the National Congress of Medical Students in San Salvador, El Salvador. This was her first professional lecture in Spanish, to an audience of over 300 medical students, physicians and faculty from the Universidad Evangelica de El Salvador, with which the MH Program has partnered on two mission trips.



*Dr. Barron, Dr. Milena Reyes, Dr. Mirna Garcia*



*Jocelyn Funes, a UEES student, and Dr. Barron*

**Dr. Hoy** presented “The Vital Role of Social Support in Complicated Grief” in early November for a diversity of hospice professionals and volunteers for Hospice of the Western Reserve, the largest hospice provider serving the Cleveland, Ohio metropolitan area.

In a November 11-13 trip to southern California, **Dr. Hoy** gave several presentations including a workshop on the nature of posttraumatic growth for volunteer responders in the Orange County’s Trauma Intervention Program. He also presented a workshop entitled “Managing Stress in Caring for Others” for nurses, physicians, social workers, chaplains, and other health care professionals at Saddleback Memorial Medical Center in Laguna Hills.



## First Annual Medical Ethics Banquet: Faith in the Practice of Medicine

On October 10th, the MH Program was pleased to join with the Institute for Faith and Learning in the Medical Ethics Banquet at which Dr. Dan Hall presented on “Faith in the Practice of Medicine: Why Religion Matters for the Decisions Physicians Face”. Dr. Hall earned degrees in medicine and theology from Yale University before completing his surgical training at the University of Pittsburgh. He is also an ordained priest in the Episcopal Church with interests in the theology of medicine. He was the first John Templeton Fellow in Religion and Medicine at Duke University where his research focused on epistemology, moral philosophy, religious measurement, and the ways in which medical decision-making is influenced by religious and secular worldviews. He has published and lectured on ethics and the role religion plays in the context of clinical medicine. Here is an excerpt from his remarks:

*Jesus seeks out the broken in order to heal their infirmity and bring them to new life...This is especially good news for physicians because it is confirmation that the bodies we care for matter. Our bodies matter now, and they will matter on that longed for day when the trumpet will sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. Like Jesus' transformed body, our patients' resurrected bodies will likely bear the marks of their current suffering. They may even bear the marks of the suffering we, ourselves, cause with surgical steel. But precisely because there is continuity between our current and future bodies, the work we do now to heal and build health will have eternal significance. Some part of our current labor will be redeemed, perfected, purified and raised to new life when the King returns to rule the earth in peace and tranquility. If we keep this promise ever before us, it changes everything we do, perhaps especially in medicine.*

Maggie O'Brien, a student from the Medical Humanities Honors Council had this to say about Dr. Hall's presentation: “It was a much-welcomed window into an extremely complex issue. Dr. Hall found a way to make his material applicable to not only doctors, but also the students and academics in the crowd. As a premed student, how do I navigate my education in a way that is honoring to God? It was a wonderful opportunity to examine these ideas with such a diverse, thoughtful group of people.”

Dr. Jackson Griggs from the Family Health Center then responded to Dr. Hall's paper after which Tyler Couch, a Baylor undergraduate biochemistry major and Crane Scholar also had shared some reflections. The audience was packed with local physicians and Baylor alums who made the trek to attend this inaugural event at the new Baylor Club in McLane Stadium. We were proud to work with the Institute for Faith and Learning and the McLennan County Medical Society so that CME credit was available for physicians. We see this event as an example of the kind of informed engagement with the community that Baylor wants us to be about!



Dr. Dan Hall, Tyler Couch, and Dr. Jackson Griggs



## PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING RETREAT

The 16th annual Medical Humanities Retreat has been scheduled for February 13-14 at Truett Seminary on Baylor's campus. This year we are thrilled to announce that Lisa Baker, MD, PhD will be our keynote speaker! As many of you know, Dr. Baker is a Clinical Professor in the Honors College and also has an affiliation in the Department of Biology. Our theme this year is "The Least of These: What in God's Name Can We Do?" taken from the parable of the workers in the vineyard that Jesus tells in Matthew 20:1-16.

For those of you who have attended in the past, you know that the purpose of the retreat is to carve out time for reflection and contemplation on the sacred nature of a vocation in medicine. This retreat, first envisioned by Dr. Mike Attas, has always been the heart and soul of the medical humanities program.

One of the most popular sessions is always the one in which we interview alumni - now medical students and residents - who are able to tell our current students what medical training is really like. This year, we already have a commitment from David Windler (LSU) who will be joining us as one of our alumni panelists. In years past we've had Allyson Stevenson (TCOM), Haley Marshall (TCOM) Abby Jakubec (A&M), Jamaal Hasoon (UTMB), and Mark Dimski (OU). Please let us know if you are interested in coming back to the Baylor campus for the retreat as an alum!

Please mark your calendars for this important event! We'll have more inspiring guest speakers, breakout sessions, and plenty of opportunities for conversations with students and Medical Humanities faculty. Every year this event proves to be a personal and professional highlight and we would love to have you join us!

For highlights from last year's retreat, check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wz-Qt1p3Vks&feature=youtu.be>



16th Annual

**MEDICAL  
HUMANITIES  
RETREAT**

february 13-14, 2015 | truett seminary

Featuring Guest Speaker: Lisa Baker, MD, PhD  
*"The Least of These: What in God's Name Can We Do?"*  
*Matthew 20:1-16*

please save the date

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