

News Release

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Trevino Joins TTUHSC to Direct Mental Health Initiative *Collaborative Effort Seeks to Provide Clinics, Research and Training*

Millions of people in the U.S. are affected by mental illness each year. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, one in five U.S. adults and 17% of youth experience a mental illness or a mental health disorder.

The Texas Tech Mental Health Initiative, an effort of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Department of Psychiatry, seeks to bring awareness to mental health issues by connecting local partners, Lubbock-area professionals and community members with TTUHSC & TTU faculty.

Nancy Trevino, Ph.D., a TTU alumna who has lived and worked in Lubbock for the last 20 years, has been named director of the initiative. She said the initiative will be instrumental in understanding mental illness and measuring the impact it has on people in our communities.

“We'll also be working to bring together collaborations within our community to help alleviate some of the negative impacts of mental illness, as well as support our families and offer additional training to mental health care providers and other professionals working in the mental health field in our community,” Trevino said.

As a Red Raider, Trevino earned her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in human development and family studies with a minor in cross-cultural studies. Prior to accepting her new role with the TTUHSC Department of Psychiatry, she worked in positive youth development programming, prevention education, program evaluation and grant writing. She serves on numerous Lubbock-area boards and committees.

Trevino is a certified instructor for mental health first aid and youth mental health first aid with designations in emergency medical services, higher education and rural communities. She has spent much of her career working with youth in the foster care system. She also has provided instruction for the Preparation for Adult Living courses provided to youth aging out of foster care, conducted research regarding the foster care system and evaluated reproductive health curriculum used to educate youth in foster care.

As a researcher, Trevino's interests include adolescent development (socio-emotional, physical, cognitive), teen pregnancy prevention and trauma-informed practices. In 2018, she co-edited the “Handbook of Foster Youth.”

Trevino said the Texas Tech Mental Health Initiative will work to establish clinical, education and research opportunities to bring together faculty from TTUHSC and TTU. She believes such collaborations also can connect with community partners currently providing mental health care services and with individuals who are working to support families that are experiencing mental health challenges.

“We want to increase the capacity of medical health care providers in our region, not just in Lubbock but in the surrounding areas,” Trevino said. “We also want to be a support for some of our rural communities and help build capacity through telemedicine and just bring awareness and training for individuals engaging in those kinds of treatments.”

Whether it's serving the community through their clinics, conducting research or supporting and training community members, Trevino said the university wants to be an effective resource in the mental health arena.

“We want to be a leader in mental health so that all of our community can be impacted positively and reduce the stigma for those individuals that are experiencing a mental health challenge or a mental illness,” she said.