

Forum in Focus



ENTHUSIASTICALLY PROMOTING THE
TEXAS BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE



THROUGH COMMUNITY RELATIONS,
VOLUNTEER SERVICE AND FUNDRAISING

President's Letter



Dear Friends of The Forum,

It has been the greatest honor serving as the 54th Forum President. I am humbled and inspired by the work this organization does to support initial-stage research at Texas Biomed. We are grateful for our members past and present who make this all possible.

At the time of printing we are 312 women strong! Thank you for being a Forum member!

Membership Chair **Adrianna Grossman** and Membership Assistant **Ashley Quintanilla** worked diligently to put together our membership directory which you should have received in the mail in February. Membership Records Chair **Margaret Yancy** has been working hard to get our new database platform up and running.

Thank you to **Claire Rouse** and **Sallie Lewis Schneider** for so splendidly putting together this and our Fall newsletter. The Forum has been busy since our last issue of Forum in Focus!

Forum members who attended our annual Holiday Party were treated to drinks, Argyle hors d'oeuvres and a panel discussion titled "Unveiling the Science Behind Healthy Aging." We learned a great deal and had a wonderful time thanks to Special Events Chairs **Lauren Biegler** and **Claire McNab**. These same two ladies are also responsible for filling The Argyle with more than 300 women who had an uproariously good time at our annual Galentine's Onze Tournament. The event included an on-theme raffle and a pop-up-shop after party.

VP Elect **Sarah Hager** and Lecture Luncheon Assistant **Ana Leah Montemayor** planned an absolutely lovely, sold-out Spring Lecture Luncheon on March 6th. Tables were gorgeously decorated and guests enjoyed learning all about the "love hormone!" **Elizabeth Marceau** has served as our Science Education Awards Chair this year and beautifully honored our eight scholarship award recipients.

March continued to bring much Forum fun as we hosted the 3rd Annual Forum and Founder's Council Clay Shoot Classic. Thank you, Clay Shoot Classic Chairs **Amy Berg** and **Kay Kay Gough** and Assistant **Meredith Muecke Howard**, for putting together an incredibly successful and lively event! We had such a good time listening to Luke Olson play music, consuming delicious food and drinks and shopping at the pop-up shops.

The much-anticipated Forum Gala is nearing closer! The Argyle will be resplendent on May 4th as we celebrate "La Vie en Rose" and all the wonderful advancements at Texas Biomed. Gala Chairs **Bonnie Muecke** and **Jayne Russell**, along with their brilliant team of Gala Assistant **Allegra Hawkins**, Table Sales Chair **Emily McMurray** and Gala Treasurer **Avril Byrne**, are putting the finishing touches on what is sure to be a night to remember!

Grants Chair **Carolina Lewis** and Grants Assistant **Joannah Pickett** continue to solicit donations to support our Grants program which is an initiative that raises money to provide critical seed funding for projects and equipment at Texas Biomed. The funding provided by The Forum enables the scientists at Texas Biomed to then compete for additional funding on a national level. Carolina and Joannah also designed and launched our inaugural Fiesta medal and it is already a collector's item, to be sure!

A huge thank you is much deserved by The Forum Trustees who keep things running behind the scenes. **Christina Ketabchi**, thank you for serving as our Treasurer this year and managing all that entails; **Emily Sytsma**, your service as Parliamentarian is much appreciated; and Recording Secretary **Lauren Hawa** and Corresponding Secretary **Nicola McLaughlin** continue to keep us all organized. Communications Chair **Elaine Vornsand**, Communications Assistant **Margaret Pape** and Social Media Chair **Clara Ostrander** are the masterminds behind all of our emails, social media and website content. Thank you, ladies, for keeping us all well-informed and updated!

It was such a special pleasure for me to be in the room at our annual Past Presidents' Luncheon with so many of the women who have led this organization, including our Immediate Past President **Emilie Petty**. Our Past President Liaison **Marie Mays** planned an elegant luncheon where Forum memories and stories were shared and relished and scrapbooks from decades past were perused. What a remarkable legacy these women have created! We are forever grateful for their leadership and guidance. Thank you to our Historian **Eva Holliday** for sharing poignant snapshots highlighting our history at each of our board meetings.

As always, we are thankful for our advisors and Past Presidents, **Amanda Bezner**; **Barbara Dreeben**; **Amy Swaney** and **Karen Lee Zachry**, as well as our Honorary Members and Texas Biomed Liaisons, **Akudo Anyanwu**; **Leslie Hamilton**; **Donna Musselman** and **Judy Schlesinger**.

Again, thank you for being a Forum member and for your ongoing support of our mission and programming. We look forward to seeing you at "La Vie en Rose!"

Most gratefully,
Rebecca Nathan

Past President's Letter



Dear Friends of The Forum,

As Immediate Past President, my primary responsibility is that of Chairing the Nominating Committee. It was an honor to do so as we slated the 2024 – 2025 Executive Board. My sincerest thanks to **Amy Swaney**, **Bonnie Muecke**, **Elizabeth Marceau**, **Gloria Dilley**, **Muffin Moorman** and **Emily Systema** for their careful and thoughtful considerations and decisions.

I am continuously amazed by the incredible pool of women who happily dedicate their time and energy to our board of trustees. These women show great leadership, dedication, and passion for The Forum and Texas Biomed. I am forever grateful for the hard work of this year's nominating committee and I am excited to see the 2024 – 2025 Executive Board in action next year!

Cheers,
Emilie H. Petty
Past President, Nominating Chair

PAST PRESIDENTS' LUNCHEON

The annual Past Presidents' Luncheon was a big success with twenty-nine attendees coming together to share stories with one another at The Argyle on November 8th.

Our Forum Trustees gave updates to all in attendance on Memberships, Grants, and our Spring Gala, while Nicole Foy, Director of PR at Texas Biomed, spoke and gave updates on the latest happenings at the organization. The Argyle served chalupas and pumpkin cheesecakes!

Big thanks to **Marie Mays**, our Past President Liaison, for helping to organize a wonderful day.



FORUM SUPPORTS FIVE PILOT RESEARCH PROJECTS AT TEXAS BIOMED

Five Texas Biomed scientists received \$300,000 from The Forum to study a range of infectious diseases—including Ebola virus, Chikungunya virus and tuberculosis—and develop new tools and solutions to combat them. See below to learn more about the recipients:

2024 FORUM STAFF SCIENTIST AWARDS

Anna Allué Guardia, PhD, will work on a new type of vaccine for tuberculosis (TB), which is one of the leading killers worldwide. The current TB vaccine helps protect children, but has varied efficacy in adults. Dr. Allué Guardia will work on developing codon-deoptimized, or weakened versions, of the bacteria that could be potentially used in live attenuated vaccines.

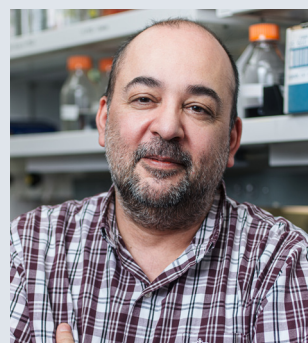
Israel Guerrero-Arguero, PhD, will study Chikungunya virus (CHIKV), a mosquito-borne pathogen that causes rash, high fever, neurological symptoms and incapacitating joint pain. Specifically, Dr. Guerrero-Arguero will generate a version of CHIKV that expresses a cherry red fluorescent protein, which will enable him and others to visually track and observe the virus in cells and in new humanized mouse models. He is particularly interested in learning more about how the virus evades the immune system and affects the brain, as well as about other host-pathogen interactions that could guide development of drugs or therapies aimed at mitigating CHIKV's effects.

2024 FORUM FACULTY AWARDS

Olena Shtanko, PhD, will study the interplay between Ebola virus infection and mitochondria. Specifically, she will investigate if the Ebola virus replicates inside mitochondria and how the virus alters mitochondria function. These insights could help with future development of interventions against the virus.

Smita Kulkarni, PhD, in collaboration with Dr. Shtanko, will study the role of long, noncoding RNAs (lncRNAs) in Ebola virus infection. The Kulkarni and Shtanko labs have observed changes in lncRNA expression in cells infected with Ebola virus and have dubbed these changes “Ebola virus induced long, noncoding RNAs,” or EVILs, for short. In this project, they will use advanced gene editing techniques, including CRISPR/Cas9, to analyze how EVILs impact Ebola replication and host immune response.

Luis Martinez-Sobrido, PhD, will work on developing a live attenuated vaccine for a group of deadly arenaviruses that cause hemorrhagic fever in humans, such as Lassa virus. Specifically, he will work on developing a vaccine approach that incorporates a genetic sequence in the virus that will target the virus for degradation and, therefore, will result in attenuation when delivered as a vaccine to humans. Importantly, this approach could also be used for the development of live attenuated vaccines for other hemorrhagic fever causing viruses.



TEXAS BIOMED CREATES NEW EDUCATION PROGRAM TO SUPPORT YOUNG SCIENTISTS

Texas Biomedical Research Institute is also launching a new science education program with funding provided by Valero. The program will provide San Antonio high school students with hands-on biomedical research experience. Valero's support for the “Valero Young Scientist Program” is designed to inspire local students to be part of the next generation of scientists and provide them unparalleled access to learn from leading biomedical scientists. The four-week summer program will offer an immersive, multi-disciplinary experience. Students will explore different career pathways as they interact with researchers, graduate students, and teachers at Texas Biomed. They will collaborate with peers and teachers in laboratory experiments and develop foundational lab skills, including interpretation of scientific data. They will also work on presentation, communication, and networking skills. Parents and guardians will be involved through virtual sessions about STEM careers and university programs that their students might pursue. They will also be invited to participate in a final showcase where students present their summer projects. **For more information visit: www.txbiomed.org/education-outreach/valero-young-scientist-program/.**



SUMMER INTERNSHIPS FOR GRAD AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

The highly sought after summer internships at Texas Biomedical Research Institute and the Southwest National Primate Research Center (SNPRC) are established to offer paid, hands-on, real-world experience with cutting-edge research, primate care, and administrative research support. It is their goal to provide all interns with a rich learning culture that encourages ongoing development of skills and knowledge. Texas Biomed and the SNPRC offer three paid summer internship tracks to undergraduate and graduate students:

- Texas Biomed Summer Scholars Program (infectious disease research)
- SNPRC Summer Internship Program (vet research and primate care)
- Texas Biomed Summer Administration Internship (admin research)

Successful applicants will begin their experience at Texas Biomed/SNPRC starting on June 3rd and ending on July 26th, 2024. Internships are available on both a part and full time basis when appropriate, and remote or hybrid work is also available. All applicants must be eligible to work in the United States as Texas Biomed is not able to sponsor work visas for summer internship programs; if selected for a summer internship, applicants must be able to show proof of U.S citizenship or proof of eligibility to work in the United States.



WELL WISHES TO AKUDO ANYANWU

For the past three years, Akudo Anyanwu, MD, MPH, has served as the Vice President of Development at Texas Biomedical Research Institute and our liaison to the organization, where she's been instrumental in building and strengthening the organization's networks. At the end of February, she left The Institute to join a wonderful new position at the Clinton Foundation, where she will oversee development for global health initiatives. We are grateful for her years of leadership and support and wish her all the best on her next venture! A national search for her replacement is currently underway. Until then, please join us in welcoming interim leader, Michelle Buchanan, who started on March 1st.



Past Events

GALENTINE'S ONZE

February 13, 2024

A whopping 312 women came out to The Argyle to play Onze and enjoy lunch over Valentine's week. **Claire McNab** and **Lauren Biegler** outdid themselves, renting out the entire club and selling 52 tables for this much-anticipated annual fundraising event! *Moms Who Party* organized all of the festive balloon decor and fringe backdrops, while a DJ mixed tunes throughout the day. For the first year, the Galentine's Onze Tournament was augmented by a pop-up shopping experience from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Vendors included La Vie Style House from Dallas, along with Capri by Sunset & Co., CITY Boots, Kelly Wade Jewelers, Nicola Bathie, PATTIcakes Gifts, and more. There was also a fun raffle experience that ended with big winners! Congratulations to **Katie Courtney**, **Clare Rogers**, and **Amanda Bezner** for taking home the top three prizes, all graciously donated from Kelly Wade Jewelers, and to **Christie Adams** for scoring the large raffle basket!



MEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY

December 6, 2023

Approximately eighty-five guests attended our annual Holiday Party this year. A big thank you to Special Events Chairs **Lauren Biegler** and **Claire McNab** for all their hard work planning this delightful event. A pianist serenaded the crowd as attendees sipped cocktails and nibbled on hors d'oeuvres before everyone was seated for the panel. The topic of discussion, "Unveiling the Science Behind Healthy Aging," explored the ways that exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle help promote longevity. Texas Biomed science writer, Laura Petersen, was our moderator and it was a privilege to have Dr. Michelle Harden MD (Obstetrician & Gynecologist), Dr. Christy Rainey MD (Dermatologist), and Dr. Corinna Ross, PhD (*Acting Director, SNPRC at Texas Biomed*) as our panel guests. Additionally, as a show of appreciation for our members and to get us into the holiday spirit, there were three free raffle giveaways that ended the night on a lively note! We gave away an Argyle Chef's Table dining experience for 8 guests with wine pairings, graciously donated by The Argyle; 30 units of Dysport and Sense dermal contour pressed serum donated by Dr. Rainey; and a genetic test, light session therapies, and a signed book donated by Dr. Harden. Thank you also to our Forum Board Trustee and Founder of Lomi Skincare, **Ashley Quintanilla**, who was onsite with her team to share her exceptional skincare products and offer valuable tips to help us all achieve glowy, healthy skin.



Membership and Grants

STROKE AWARENESS

And an update from **Joannah Pickett**

As most of you know, our dear Trustee, **Joannah Pickett**, had a stroke earlier this year. Thankfully, she is doing okay and continues to recover and inspire us all with her strength, resilience, candor, and vulnerability. The episode happened on January 10th just before our monthly board meeting. Joannah was getting ready to leave her house for The Argyle when she lost feeling in her left leg and couldn't stand for six minutes. When the feeling came back to her leg, she had a piercing headache and loss of eyesight in her left eye. After consulting with a triage nurse over the phone, she went to the ER and determined she'd had a right Anterior Cerebral Artery (ACA) stroke. Below she's shared more of her story and some information on stroke awareness. Thank you, Joannah—we are so grateful for you!



While my stroke symptoms did not adhere to the common indicators, I knew something was wrong, and I knew that time was important, with only my pride on the line if I was incorrect. I'm glad I listened to my body and the triage nurse and that I had a community of individuals who supported me in getting to the hospital and staying with me while I was there. I am also grateful I knew enough about strokes—including the acronym FAST (Face, Arm, Speech, Time)—to think I may be experiencing one. I'm too young and healthy to have anything to indicate I would be at risk for a stroke. Today, a team of physicians are all working closely with me to find the root cause of my stroke and prevent me from having another. The methodical application of my tests, procedures, and the data my doctors collect is all born from the critical work done daily by scientists working in their labs to create new learning and treatment options for our world's most pressing medical diseases. I am so grateful that so much of this learning can help me at this time of my life. And what a moment in time for me to serve on the Forum Board. I am in my second year of service and came into this group of women I did not know but have come to deeply respect, honor, and care for. In my moment of need, you all came to my home with pastries and home-cooked meals, baskets of snacks, and beautiful flowers. It felt like a wave of hugs and care to me, my two kids, and my husband. Beyond this outpouring of in-person support, calls, texts, and emails was the most touching of all: an effort by the board members to raise funds together, in my name, to fund part of a research grant at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute. I am overwhelmed by and deeply thankful for the care of this special community of women. I could not be more proud to serve alongside all of you who work so hard to raise money for grants and research conducted at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute and the life-saving, life-changing work they do for people just like you and me.

—Joannah Pickett

More on the signs of stroke and how to identify them quickly can be found at the American Stroke Association's website: www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/stroke-symptoms

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership year runs from August 1 – July 31 and is open to all women, 21 years and older. Dues are 100% tax-deductible

If you have not received your Member Directory, please reach out to Adrianna Grossman at txbiomedforummembership@gmail.com



LIFETIME MEMBERS

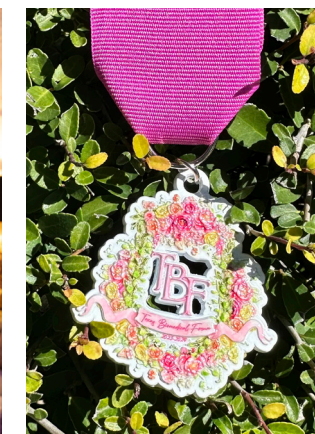
We are incredibly grateful for these women who have shown their ongoing support of The Forum through their Lifetime Memberships.

- Stacie Banack
- Lindsay Bolner
- Carla Brozovich
- Caroline Carrington
- Monica Castillo
- Victoria Champion
- Sarah Trampota Conquest
- Ann Cross
- Meg Dawson
- Camille Denton
- Gloria Dilley
- Barbara Dreeben
- Nancy Finney
- Kelly Wade Fry
- Annette Gould
- Adrianna Grossman
- Triana Grossman
- Helen Groves
- Lindsay Guenther
- Patricia Houston
- Kathryn Mays Johnson
- Abigail Kampmann
- Camilla Kampmann
- Elizabeth Kampmann
- Cynthia Kerby
- Jean Lee
- Carolina Lewis
- Kim Lewis
- Rhonda Low
- Amelita Mauzé
- Ana Leah Montemayor
- Laura Moorman
- Bonnie Muecke
- Rebecca Nathan
- Emilie Petty
- Micki Philbin
- Callie Price
- Corinna Richter
- Stacy Schlagel
- Lisa Sechler
- Daniela Serna
- Emily Skillman
- Megan Steves
- Amy Swaney
- Shelley Thill
- Kristin Tips
- Mary West Traylor
- Jill Vassar
- AnaPaula Watson
- Lisa Westmoreland
- Melissa Wiggans
- Jessica Worth
- Karen Lee Zachry
- Allison Zeller

Please email VP Membership, **Adrianna Grossman**: txbiomedforummembership@gmail.com, if you are interested in becoming a Lifetime Member.

GRANTS UPDATE

This year our fabulous grants duo, **Carolina Lewis** and **Joannah Pickett**, put their creative talents to good use! For the first time ever, we've debuted a custom Forum Fiesta Medal using the 2024 Gala logo, which hangs from a vibrant pink grosgrain ribbon. The medals were sold at our annual Galentine's Onze Tournament and the Spring Lecture Luncheon on March 6th. All the proceeds will contribute to the sizable check that The Forum presents to Texas Biomed each year, the funds of which are distributed to select scientists as Pilot Study Grants in support of their research needs. Medals are still available—reach out to Carolina or Joannah at txbiomedicalforumgrants@gmail.com to get yours in time for Fiesta!



HISTORIAN UPDATE —Eva Holliday, Forum Historian

"In the Spring of 1970, a small group of women banded together for the expressed purpose of forming an auxiliary to disseminate information about and promote the research programs of Southwest Foundation for Research and Education... It was decided that their main fund raising activity would be an annual Spring Gala."
— Southwest Foundation's 1979 Annual Report

One of the most enjoyable aspects of serving as this year's historian has been getting to look back and appreciate, not just the incredible effort of our predecessors, but also their incredible talent and creativity. As we continue to prepare for our own magical event this year, I would like to share with you all a sweet treasure from the past. The following image is that of the formal invitation to The Forum's Gala in Sherwood Forest chaired by Earl Faye Eldridge and Maxine Farrimond that took place on May 7, 1983 at the St Anthony Hotel. The original document measures 15 x 29" and is printed on special aged parchment paper. Gorgeous execution!





GALA PLANNING

As we blossom into a new season, we hope you will take some time to stop and smell the roses. To think positively and to look ahead to a bright future. Things are coming up roses for the jewel that is the Texas Biomedical Research Institute as it continues to increase its global presence.

In addition to conducting groundbreaking research, Texas Biomed is currently constructing new, state-of-the-art facilities like the Animal Care Complex, the Global Center for Bioscience and a welcoming Entrance—all with the goal of combatting and eradicating infectious diseases in our city, state, country and world. The future is looking rosy and on May 4th we are delighted to present the 53rd Texas Biomedical Forum Gala...La Vie en Rose!

The proceeds from our Gala directly fund the work of the scientists at Texas Biomed who are on the front lines researching vaccines, treatments and cures for a myriad of infectious diseases as well as conditions including Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and various forms of cancer.

The Forum is proud of our more than 50 years of support of their crucial work.

Since its founding in 1970, The Forum has supported Texas Biomed through community relations, volunteer services and fundraising. Annually, Forum Grants and Gala fundraising are integral parts of The Forum's contributions towards pilot study research. These pilot studies are vital to securing the research projects for which Texas Biomed is respected across the international scientific community. Over the last twenty years, The Forum has awarded more than \$4 million in Pilot Study Grants which have enabled Texas Biomed researchers to apply for more than \$80 million in outside grants, amounting to a twentyfold return on our investment.

Thank you so much for your support of the 53rd Forum Gala! For inquiries, please email Gala Table Sales Chair, **Emily McMurray**, at emilyhcmurray@gmail.com. We look forward to a beautiful and festive evening celebrating La Vie en Rose on May 4th!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 – 2025 INCOMING EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Sarah Hager

President Elect/VP LL
Adrianna Grossman

VP Gala Co-Chair
Allegra Hawkins

VP Gala Co-Chair
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VP Membership
Claire McNab

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Carolina Lewis

Parliamentarian
Lauren Biegler

Communications Chair
Jayme Russell

Recording Secretary
Elaine Vornsand

Past President
Rebecca Nathan

2023 – 2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS

2023 – 2024 FORUM BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Claire Rouse, *Newsletter*
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Emily McMurray, *Gala Table Sales*
Eva Holliday, *Historian & Board Education*
Joannah Pickett, *Grants Assistant*
Kay Kay O'Brien, *Clay Shoot Classic Co-Chair*
Lauren Biegler, *Special Events*
Margaret Pape, *Communications Assistant*
Margaret Yancy, *Membership Records (CRM)*
Marie Mays, *Past President Liaison*
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Donna Musselman, *Texas Biomed Liaison*
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Amy Swaney, *Advisor*
Karen Lee Zachry, *Advisor*





Texas Biomedical Forum
Post Office Box 6648
San Antonio, TX 78209

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook!



UPCOMING EVENT IN 2024

May 4th

53rd Annual Forum Gala “La Vie En Rose”

August 1st

2024 – 2025 Membership Campaign

Stay tuned for more great events in 2024!



ABOUT TEXAS BIOMED

Texas Biomed is one of the world's leading independent biomedical research institutions dedicated to eradicating infection and advancing health worldwide through innovative biomedical research. Texas Biomed partners with researchers and institutions around the world to develop vaccines and therapeutics against viral pathogens causing AIDS, hepatitis, hemorrhagic fever, tuberculosis and parasitic diseases responsible for malaria and schistosomiasis disease. The Institute has programs in host-pathogen interaction, disease intervention and prevention, and population health to understand the links between infectious diseases and other diseases such as aging, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. For more information on Texas Biomed, go to www.txbiomed.org.