

News Release

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TTUHSC Students Learn Teamwork at Disaster Response Simulation *Annual 'Disaster Day' Event Offers Hands-on Experience*

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) students from different medical fields honed an important skill — working together in a crisis. The annual Disaster Day mass casualty simulation in Lubbock challenged the students to put their skills to the test Friday, March 24.

Thirty-nine interprofessional teams, comprised of 8 students and a faculty member, spread across the American Windmill Museum to diagnose, treat and care for volunteers role-playing as patients affected by a tornado.

“Texas is annually ranked first in both the variety and frequency of natural and man-made disasters,” Renée Bogschutz, Ph.D., director of [Interprofessional Education at TTUHSC](#), said. “For health care professionals in Texas, interprofessional disaster response and recovery is not a matter of if a disaster will happen, but when.”

This student-led emergency response exercise offered realistic hands-on experience in areas including triage, basic life-saving and team lift skills. The scenario presented challenges requiring teamwork, communication and collaboration to improve the outcomes for the simulated patients.

Disaster Day included students from all TTUHSC schools in Lubbock, Red Cross volunteers, emergency services personnel, Texas Tech University theater students, and volunteers from Angelo State University and South Plains College.

Kate Panasci, DPT, assistant dean for Interprofessional Education with the TTUHSC School of Health Professions, said the event is an invaluable teaching tool. “As health care educators, we discuss with our students the interprofessional moments that occur in our day-to-day clinical practice, but rarely do we get the opportunity to consider how providers from varied disciplines can come together to help the community in a time of need.”

TTUHSC occupational therapy student Schola Gomes said, “Disaster Day taught me how to work as part of a cohesive team unit among various health professions. The skills learned during this event helped me be a better student clinician during my clinical rotations.”