

News Release

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Board of Regents Approves Appointment of Grover E. Murray Professors
TTUHSC Professors Receive Highest Faculty Honor

The Texas Tech University System (TTU System) Board of Regents last week (Aug. 10) approved the appointment of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health Executive Vice President and Director Billy U. Philips, Ph.D., MPH, and Thomas J. Abbruscato, Ph.D., TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences senior associate dean, as Grover E. Murray Professors.

The Grover E. Murray Professorship is intended for faculty members who have attained national and international distinction in their fields for outstanding research, excellence in scholarship and creative achievement.

TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., said both exemplify all of these criteria.

Dr. Philips and Dr. Abbruscato are both nationally and internationally recognized for their work, and we thank them for committing their careers to our great university, -Spearman said at the TTU System Board of Regents meeting last week.

Philips holds the endowed F. Marie Hall Chair in Rural Health and is a full professor in the School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine. He also is recognized nationally for his expertise in cancer control education.

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He is an ardent supporter of students and has held multiple academic roles across the university, including serving as acting dean for the newly formed TTUHSC Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health.

Abbruscato, associate dean for GSBS on the Amarillo campus since 2008, has been a member of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy. He was hired as an assistant professor in January 2000, promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2006, became a full professor in 2012 and was named a TTUHSC University Distinguished Professor in 2015.

His teaching, clinical and research interests lie in blood-brain barrier and transport, neurovascular protection in brain ischemia/stroke and neurovascular effects of nicotine and tobacco chemicals. Among the more than 30 awards bestowed Award in 2003 and the TTU System [2013](#) and [2020](#).

Currently the principal investigator in four active National Institute of Health (NIH) funded Research Project Grant (R01) grants, Abbruscato has had more than 10 past extramurally funded NIH grants as well as from other federal agencies, foundations and industries.