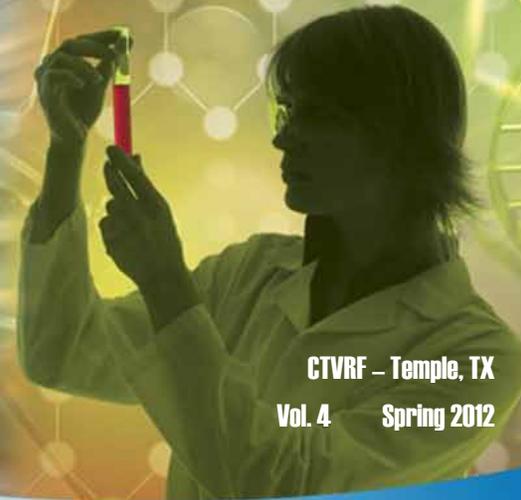


# THE SCOPE



CTVRF – Temple, TX  
Vol. 4 Spring 2012

## Research Week Showcases Talent

Variety begins with “VA” and that certainly is evident in the scope of research activities in Central Texas. Ranging from vascular devices to studying effects of war on returning Veterans, new brain imaging techniques and equipment that zaps infectious disease, the projects offer an impressive array of some 115 studies that may ultimately improve the care of our nation’s Veterans.

Research Week is held each year at VA facilities across the country to highlight new developments that hold promise. Locally, three researchers will present brief remarks about their projects. The public is invited to “lunch and learn.”

### Microbes - the Ultimate Survivor

#### Dr. Chetan Jinadatha

Chief of Infectious Disease, Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System

This project evaluates the effectiveness of a novel pulsed xenon UV disinfection system to decontaminate patient care environments. Dr.

Jinadatha is the principal investigator for this cooperative research agreement with Austin-based Xenex Healthcare Services.



Dr. Jinadatha, Dr. Mark Stibich, Christine Southard, and Elicia Greene



### Caring for Veterans through Discovery & Collaboration

#### Central Texas Events

Weds. April 25 ~ 11 am - 1 pm  
Posters and Presentations

Thurs. April 26 ~ 11 am – 3 pm  
Meet the Media

More info at:

<http://www.centraltexas.va.gov/services/research.asp>

### How to Mend a Broken Heart

#### Dr. Ken Baker

Professor and Vice Chair, Dept. of Medicine, Dir. Division of Molecular Cardiology Mayborn Chair Cardiovascular Research, Texas A&M Health Science Center, College of Medicine



Dr. Kenneth Baker

Dr. Baker has been the Director of the Molecular Cardiology Division of Internal Medicine, a collaborative effort between Central Texas Veterans Health Care System (CTVHCS), Texas A & M Health Science Center College of Medicine and Scott & White. Located at CTVHCS, Molecular Cardiology consists of over 10,000 square feet of laboratories and offices.

### Seeing the Invisible: Advances in Assessment of Mild TBI

#### Dr. Deborah Little

Neuroimaging and Genetics Core

Leader VISN 17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans and Professor of Psychiatry at Texas A&M College of Medicine



Dr. Deborah Little

Expertise in neuroimaging allows VA advantages in understanding brain injuries and responses to treatment. Dr. Little brings her specialization in human cognitive neuroscience with sophisticated “high field MRI” imaging of brain scans to help reveal clues to future therapies. Her presentation will highlight the latest in imaging developments and data.

Some might say the term “transformative” is overused. Try telling that to a Veteran who has benefited from any one of 2,000 research projects going on at VA. (Check out this partial list of accomplishments: <http://www.research.va.gov/about/history.cfm>)

**One of the most essential team members that make research possible is the volunteer who participates in the study.**

# Celebrating Our Own



Individuals who work with VA researchers allow scientists to learn how medicine, devices and behaviors can improve existing treatment approaches. But because of study requirements, VA must continually recruit so there are enough people enrolled to provide sound and meaningful results.

The Central Texas Veterans Research Foundation salutes all of the volunteers who step forward to make new discoveries possible. It is just one more way that our Veterans continue to serve as “heroes” to us all!

## Why me? The Story of One Veteran Volunteer

**M**y name is Uquay E. Robinson, and I am from Maywood, Illinois. I am the youngest of 11 and served in the United States Marine Corps (Ooh-RaH) from February 21, 1995 - July 28, 2000, and in the United States Army from September 11, 2001 - September 10, 2006. Yes, that is correct, I actually was swearing in at the MEPS station in Chicago when the twin towers were attacked. I was deployed to Mosul, Iraq, from 2004 - 2005 with the 293rd Military Police Company. As a military police squad leader, I conducted over 300 combat missions while deployed.

After 10½ years in the military, I separated in September of 2006. A

year later, I moved to Killeen, Texas, and enrolled in Tarleton State University-Central Texas, now Texas A&M University-Central Texas, majoring in psychology. I am currently in graduate school at TAMU-CT and will graduate this December with my Masters in Counseling Psychology. It was my experience in Iraq and seeing the toll that it took on my fellow comrades, myself, and other Veterans that made me decide to go back to school and major in counseling psychology.

**1) How did you learn about Project SERVE? (Project SERVE - Study Evaluating Returning Veterans' Experiences - is a longitudinal study of returning OEF/OIF Veterans to understand functional recovery over time.)**

I was at the VA Medical Center in Temple for a routine appointment and saw a flyer about Project Serve.

### **2) What made you decide to participate?**

The reason I decided to participate is because I believe there is not a lot of research done on women and minority Veterans, because of a lack of willing participants. I wanted to show other Veterans that these types of studies are important in understanding the Veteran population and will be vital in helping them to determine what types of treatment and resources are needed to help us become fully sociable functioning members of society.

### **3) Would you suggest that other Veterans volunteer for research?**

Absolutely. Because the more Veterans that participate, the more they will be able to generalize the findings to the rest of the population. For example, if they only have men volunteering for the study, they will not be able to learn about the unique experiences of the woman Veteran. Every group brings a different and unique perspective to consider.

# ★ Medical Heroes

One nonprofit has a very clear appreciation for the value of volunteers in fostering medical advances and even coined a phrase that sums up this act of generosity:

The Center for Information and Study on Clinical Research Participation (CISCRP -[www.ciscrp.org](http://www.ciscrp.org)) is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and informing the public, patients, medical/research communities, the media, and policy makers about clinical research and the role each party plays in the process.

“Medical Heroes” is a term that aptly describes Veteran volunteers. “It’s a natural fit,” said Diane Simmons, CISCP CEO and President. The organization developed the term and a national outreach strategy to help educate the public about the contributions volunteers can make to the clinical trial process. Their efforts include books and brochures in numerous languages, videos and social media campaigns.

The Central Texas Veterans Research Foundation hopes the organization will help “spread the word” to Veterans in their efforts to raise visibility for a very worthy goal. To learn more about Veteran research projects in Central Texas, contact Dr. Paul Hicks, ACOS for Research by email at [paul.hicks@va.gov](mailto:paul.hicks@va.gov)

**More than 60 percent of VA researchers are also clinicians who provide direct patient care. This is important because it allows VA Research the ability to quickly move scientific discovery from the research setting to advancements in health care and to recruit the best and brightest healthcare professionals.**

**Source: VHA Office of Research & Development**

## 4) Research participants may be thought of as “everyday heroes” - what could VA do to help encourage more Veterans to participate?

Just like mental health has a stigma in the military, I believe that most Veterans do not understand the necessity and importance of research. I think that VA professionals should recruit Veterans from the research project and then go to the bases, VFW’s, etc. and have a candid talk with active duty soldiers, Veterans, and retirees about their research experience.

If you have not realized this already, Veterans listen to other Veterans. We have a bond and comraderie that can only be understood by a person who has walked in our shoes. We support, encourage, and listen to one another, sometimes more than with our own spouse or family members.

I believe if Veterans understood more about research, it would help them to realize that the creation of programs, outreach programs, and other resources came as a result of studies that



demonstrated the need for programs to assist all our returning heroes from all conflicts and wars, and help them to reintegrate back into society.

## 5) Care to share a fun fact about yourself? Hobbies, interests or something most folks may not know about you?

I love classic movies from the 1920’s-1960. My favorite channel is Turner Classic Movies, and I know so much about those stars and movies, that my friends and family say that I should be a guest programmer on the show with Robert Osbourne. I have over 300 classic movies in my collection. ★

# Community Connections

## The New Face of Homelessness

"We had to change the poster that had an older, single man to a picture of a couple," commented Paula Wood, Coordinator for the Central Texas VA Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program. She was referring to how the profile of homeless Veterans has changed to include more couples and families with children.

At the recent VA Quarterly Homeless Summit held in Waco, VA employees and community organizations shared new developments and strategies for reducing the plight of Central Texas Veterans in this situation.

Through the Homeless Veterans Initiative, VA committed \$800 million in FY 2011 to strengthen programs that prevent and end homelessness among Veterans. Guiding the commitment to eliminate homelessness by 2015, are six pillars:

- Community Partnerships ■ Income/Employment/Benefits
- Housing/Supportive Services ■ Outreach/Education
- Prevention ■ Treatment

Community involvement is key. It is estimated that VA programs work with a national network of more than 4,000 local agencies, soup kitchens and shelters to help bring Veterans off the street and on to a path of self-sufficiency. A recent study presented at the summit indicated Veteran homelessness had been reduced by 12% from 2010 to 2011. Together, through the efforts of many varied groups, the face of homelessness may grow to be a distant memory.

Next time you meet a homeless Veteran, remember that:

- 67% served for 3 years or longer
- 33% were stationed in a war zone
- 85% completed high school/GED, compared to 56% of non-Veterans
- 89% received honorable discharges

...and thank them for serving our country!



### Now, Your Turn...

You, your family or your group can do something to help reduce homelessness. Be part of the VA2K "Walk and Roll" set to take place May 16 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Austin, Temple, and Waco Campuses. In Waco and Temple, the event will take place at the Avenue of Flags. In Austin, the event will start at the front of the clinic down Oltorf. In addition to featuring food and music, VA staff will be on hand to collect items that are sure to brighten the day of the homeless Veterans they serve. Find out more here: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/va2k/index.asp>

## The mission of CTVRF

Those who courageously serve our nation's military deserve exceptional care. The **Central Texas Veterans Research Foundation** strives to enhance the health of Veterans of all generations through research and education.

We represent a public charity that serves and supports the research community found within the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System. Together, with your help, we can accelerate promising research from "bench to bedside" to improve the quality of life for Veterans.

# THE SCOPE

To make a gift please contact:  
Maggie McCarthy at 254-744-4162 or  
[ctvresearchfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:ctvresearchfoundation@gmail.com)

Checks should be payable to  
Central Texas Veterans Research Foundation -  
CTVRF is a Texas nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation  
and your donation is tax deductible.  
The tax I.D. number is [74-2623309](http://www.irs.gov/efile)

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