

Meet ... Nancy Tang

She's Ready for Her Life's Next Adventure

By Pamela Lewis, Public Affairs

Life's been a little peripatetic for Nancy Tang over the last several years. And it's not likely to get less frenetic any time soon. She's going from doing epidemiology research to setting up shop in the sands of Kuwait as part of the nursing corps of a tent hospital.

"I have an adventurous spirit," she says, a shy smile lighting up her face. Tang got her taste for adventure fairly young, she recounted, leaving Hong Kong to come to the U.S. to go to school. Along with her nursing education, she eventually became a citizen, joined the U.S. Naval Reserves and completed training at a Navy Fleet Hospital.

A few years ago, the 40-something registered nurse was an instructor for The University of Texas at Brownsville's nursing program. She attained a master's degree in public health nursing and decided it would be a good idea to get a Ph.D. in public health to increase her understanding of epidemiology.

So, she applied to and was accepted into the Ph.D. program at the UT School of Public Health. For the first year, she com-

muted to classes in Houston about three days a week, continuing to teach classes at UTB and to oversee nursing students' practicum studies there when she was in Brownsville.

But she decided that in order to get the full benefits of the doctoral degree, she should be located in Houston.

Last spring, as she continued her studies at the SPH, she applied to UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center for a pre-doctoral National Institutes of Health fellowship. She began that fellowship in September, having sold her home in Brownsville and moved to Houston.

However, the sands

under her adventuresome feet have shifted in a big way. Just as she was settling into life in Houston, at SPH and M. D. Anderson, the

lieutenant in the Navy Reserves was called to active duty. Tang joined others from her Harlingen reserve unit to begin the journey to Kuwait just before the end of 2004.

The wounded troops that the nurses and doctors will care for are stabilized before being shipped from the battle zone to the tent hospital in Kuwait. However, many of the wounded will require more emergency, psychological and acute care on-site; or they may need to be re-stabilized and flown



Lt. Nancy Tang, photographed in her Navy field uniform, set off for Kuwait before the end of the year. Photo courtesy of Nancy Tang

on to larger facilities in Europe or the U.S. for more extensive rehabilitation or surgery.

Tang knows the work will be stressful and is sure it will be helpful to be among friends on the medical team. "It will be good to have some friends from the Harlingen unit as a support group over there. This duty certainly will provide a very different perspective on nursing, focusing as it will on trauma wounds," she says.

"Nancy is energetic, excited and eager to serve her country," says Sue Day, Ph.D. The associate dean for Research and associate professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition at the SPH, has been Tang's advisor at the school.

"Nancy gave up everything in Brownsville to come here for school. Now she has set all that change and focus aside to begin something totally different. However, she is strong, optimistic and dedicated. And she is certainly up to the task. She will prevail there and we expect to see her back at the school to finish her Ph.D. in a year or two," Day says. ★

\$48,000 in Golf Tourney Scholarships Awarded to UT Health Science Center Students

There were smiles all around from the recipients of scholarships provided by funds raised during the UT Scholarship Golf Tournament at a December reception for them, in the President's Board Room at University Center Tower. Recipients were:

Dental Branch: Rafaela P. Alvarado, Nancy R. Cook, Erin E. Cummings, Lan K. Doan, Carin E. Doughty, Casey C. Flatt, Shad B. Hanis, Alice Luan, Dawn R. McBride, Christine T. Nguyen, Derek S. Reznik, Scott S. Upchurch, Holly M. Walker and Justin C. Wright.

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences: Aaron J. Carman, Janci L. Chunn, Kathleen A. Jensen, Famourou Kourouma and Crystal R. Seaman.

Medical School: Monica E. Cantu, Joshua R. Dimmick, Tomas Garza, Melissa G. Harlan, Erica N. Kasper, Carey J. Lindemann, Kendrick Lopez and Juan P. Rossini.

School of Health Information Sciences: Yang Gong and Roland K. Tadoum.

School of Nursing: Godfrey Agu, Felecia D. Cox, Amy C. Elkins, Katrina L. Lawson, Kim G. Nunez, and Maria C. Valdizan-Garcia.

School of Public Health: Jonathan M. Choe.

Planning committee members include: Pauline Habetz and Michael Williams, both in Auxiliary Enterprises; Carl Gordon and Araceli Alvarez, both in Student Financial Aid and Bursar's Office; Devin Longuet, J.D., Legal Affairs and Institutional Compliance; Cathy Guy, Office of Development; Jon Coy, Dental Branch; and Dustin Childers and Rose Mary Betancourt-Trevino, both in the Office of Public Affairs.

The committee is grateful to all the sponsors for their generous donations to the annual golf tournament. Sponsors from the UT family included anesthesiologist Jeffrey Katz, M.D., and the Medical School Department of Surgery.

"When expenses were paid, we netted \$48,000 to fund scholarships for 36 students at six schools — the most we have ever raised through the tournament," said tournament chairman Rick Harsch, of KeyBank, and co-chair Richard Andrassy, M.D., executive vice president for clinical affairs at the UT Health Science Center at Houston. ★

Research Day Posters a Hit with Visitors



April Hebert, left, explains a research poster to Shrikanth Reddy, UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, and Anil Kulkarni, Ph.D., Medical School, during the 2004 Research Day at the Hornberger Conference Center. "The idea of the poster program is to capture the scope of research and to give the opportunity to look at what many individuals are doing, particularly the students engaged in research in the different schools," said Peter J. A. Davies, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice president for research. For the first time this year a group of candidates applying to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences presented posters, at the invitation of the Graduate School Alumni Association. The day's program began with podium presentations by 10 scientists who have been health science center faculty members for five years or less. Photo by Ester Fant

From the Fringes to the Heart of the TMC



George Stancel, dean of the UT Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, is settling into his office in the school's new location, UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center's new George and Cynthia Mitchell Basic Sciences Research Building, 6767 Bertner, across from The Methodist Hospital and next to the John P. McGovern Commons. The school formerly was located in the Houston Medical Center Building on Travis, the western edge of the Texas Medical Center.

"This is what's exciting," said Stancel. "I have studied blueprints of the Texas Medical Center. When I look at a map drawn to scale, from our front door to the farthest corner of M. D. Anderson and to the farthest edge of the Medical School, the distances are exactly the same. We really are ground central. When you think about it, we will be using that to bring faculty from both institutions together." Photo by Pamela Lewis

First UT Health & Wellness Fair Great Way to Start New Year

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"The 2005 Health & Wellness Fair gives the university an opportunity to provide services that will benefit all who study, teach and work here," says Wilson. "We are a health science center, and by making some of our top people available for these screenings and information sharing, we show our employees — our most valuable asset — that we want to help them be in top mental and physical form in every way we can."

Wilson notes that while screenings such as those offered at the upcoming health fair are a valuable tool, they are not a replacement for an annual physical exam. Screenings may indicate that someone needs to follow up with his or her personal health-care provider.

What's the importance of screenings? Nan Wang, M.D., Ph.D., clinical assistant professor, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science, finds that many, including some physicians, decide against routine check-ups with an eye doctor, dentist or their other doctors due to time constraints or money. "Sometimes these routine eye visits will not catch anything, but many times they will identify a problem that can be treated quickly and easily before developing into a more serious problem, such as glaucoma or retinal detachment," says Wang.

Food service operations from Waterside Court in the John P. McGovern Texas Medical Center Commons will offer food samples and gift certificates. Those attending also may enter to win gift certificates from Oshman's, Bike Barn, Totally You Massage and more. The EAP/WorkLife table will give away computer mouse pads that list frequently used university numbers, with the reminder to "Join the Evolution!" to make the UT Health Science Center a workplace of choice.

This first UT Health Science Center Health & Wellness Fair is organized and hosted by EAP/WorkLife, the UT Recreation Center operated by Auxiliary Enterprises, Environmental Health & Safety, UT Health Services of the School of Nursing, UT Physicians and the Office of Public Affairs. For more information on the Wellness Fair, please contact Dustin.Childers@uth.tmc.edu, (713) 500-3258, in the Office of Public Affairs. Visit <http://ae.uth.tmc.edu/recreat/WellnessFlyer.pdf> for more information. ★