

## THIS ISSUE'S FEATURED ARTICLES:

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## JACALYN MCCOMB REFLECTS ON HER YEARS AT TTU PRIOR TO HER RETIREMENT IN AUGUST

I have been a faculty member at Texas Tech University (TTU) for more than 30 years, or since 1989 to be exact. There has been a lot of growth in the university during this time. I was most probably the last tenure track faculty member to be hired to teach skills. At that time, we had professors teaching bowling, golf, scuba diving, etc. I was hired to teach scuba diving and to write contracts for the pool rental and also for management of the pool. I felt very fortunate at that time to be mentored by James McNally who was the swimming and diving coach and is now in the Texas Tech Hall of Honor. His highest degree was a masters. Whether or not he had a PhD, mattered not to me, but what mattered the most was my long-time relationship with him. He was a strong Catholic who had ten children, he also ran the Learn to Swim Program which I inherited at TTU.



He would go to mass with me, after I got my teaching evaluations, and I would cry. I remember this so vividly, even the pew we sat in. He believed in me. I have frequently had my college students say, you taught me swimming. I have also taught many college administrators' children like Dr. David Roach, for example. I remember how proud he was of his girls and their diving ability. I can still see him walking down the side of the pool in his suit and clapping with his big smile. Those were glorious times to be sure, because of the many relationships that I made with the parents and the children. I loved teaching children to swim. Some of the mothers, to this day, are my dear friends.

In the end, what really matters, is not the number of publications that you have, or the number of grants that you get, although very important for getting tenure, but the relationships that you form with faculty members, staff members, and your students.

To this day, and always, I will cherish my relationship with two of my former students who are now faculty members in the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Management, Dr. Joaquin Gonzales and Dr. Kembra Albracht-Schulte. I am so proud of these two faculty members. When I left TTU to teach remotely in Tucson, Arizona, I missed being able to argue with Joaquin. I missed seeing him down the hallway. I missed my hallway. I view Kembra as one of my greatest achievements. I really had nothing to do with her success, but I was always there to support her, to give her confidence, just as James McNally was there to support me.

We all need someone to believe in us, and we need to believe in someone who is on the rocky road of tenure. Dr. Angela Lumpkin has done a great job of mentoring our young assistant professors who have now achieved tenure. Being a tenured professor at TTU is one of the greatest jobs in the world, but the road to gaining that security is treacherous, to say the least. I have also found that those who are the best and the brightest are blinded by their own light, they do not see their giftedness or their potential, and they need you to help them see it. So be there for them just as someone was there for you. That may be your highest calling.

So, in closing, I say it is not the number of published manuscripts or achieved grants that really matter, although important and cannot be downplayed in your achievement towards tenure, but it is the relationships that you form during the journey. And so, if you are at the beginning or the end of your professional journey, be a friend or a mentor to someone along the way. We all need each other, and the memories are not about the almighty grant dollar, while important to achieving tenure, not as enduring and meaningful as the quality of our relationships.

## THREE FACULTY EARN PROMOTION AND TENURE



**Jarrod Blinch** studies motor behavior from a cognitive psychology perspective. More specifically, he seeks to understand how the human neuromuscular system accomplishes coordinated movements by studying perception, cognition, and action. Dr. Blinch is most proud of his publications in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception & Performance and Behavior Research Methods as well as his collaborative projects and publications with colleagues in the department, at Texas Tech, and beyond. Common techniques in his lab include measuring reaction time and tracking arm movements with a motion capture system. Both techniques provide insight into how we perceive the world around us, decide what movement to make, and then prepare and initiate that movement.

Dr. Blinch joined the department in 2016. He has taught KIN 3303 Motor Learning, KIN 5302 Motor Control, and KIN 5316 Research Methods II. His favorite way to teach is by showing how people with brain injuries or people who are neuroatypical demonstrate how the mind and brain work. Examples of this include amnesia (Henry Molaison), blindsight (Graham Young), and deafferentation (Ian Waterman). A highlight of Dr. Blinch's job is mentoring undergraduate and graduate students on their journeys as young scientists. He encourages undergraduates to get involved in research by taking KIN 4000 Independent Study under the supervision of one of the wonderful faculty members in the department. Previous KIN 4000 students in Dr. Blinch's lab have published their research in international peer-reviewed journals (Blinch & DeWinne, 2019, Experimental Brain Research; Blinch & Jensen Kouts, 2018, Human Movement Science).

Dr. Blinch hails from Canada; he previously attended the University of Waterloo, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Lethbridge. Outside of work, Dr. Blinch enjoys biking, playing Minecraft, building Lego, and playing board games with his family.

**Ty Palmer** was born and raised in Kerrville, Texas. He completed his undergraduate degree in kinesiology at Texas Lutheran University (TLU) in Seguin, where he was a tight-end on TLU's football team. He was a four-year letterman and a three-time academic all-conference award recipient. After graduating from TLU, Dr. Palmer completed his master's degree in physical education at Texas State University in San Marcos. He then went on to complete his PhD in health and human performance at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. Upon getting his PhD, Dr. Palmer spent a year as an assistant professor at Kent State University in Ohio. In July 2016, he took the position of assistant professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Management at TTU. As a faculty member, Dr. Palmer has enjoyed teaching a variety of graduate and undergraduate classes in the field of kinesiology that include introduction




to biomechanics, biostatistics, applied neuromuscular performance, and advanced exercise physiology. Student evaluations of his teaching have always been exceptionally high, with an average rating of 4.73 on a 5-point scale over the past five years. This is higher than the average rating of the department (4.53).

Dr. Palmer has conducted numerous studies and published heavily in the areas of physical performance. As a researcher, Dr. Palmer has authored or co-authored 40 peer-reviewed articles. Twenty-one of these articles have been published during his time at TTU. Of these 21 articles, he was a lead-author on 15 of them. External funding has been a critical and important part of Dr. Palmer's research activities. At TTU, Dr. Palmer has been a co-principal investigator or co-investigator on four externally-funded grant proposals totaling \$49,000.

Two years ago, Dr. Palmer and his colleague, Dr. Blinch, invented a novel strength testing device called the Dynamo Torque Analyzer. They filed an international patent application for the device with the United States Receiving Office in February 2021. Dr. Palmer conducted a research study in 2020 to investigate the validity and reliability of the Dynamo Torque Analyzer. He found that the Dynamo was a valid and reliable device for calculating and displaying real-time measurements of muscle strength. The manuscript for this study was published in the journal Physiological Measurement.

Dr. Palmer enjoys lifting weights, running, and spending time with his wife, Bailey, who is an instructor of kinesiology at TTU. Together, they have a two-month-old son named Braxton and two dogs, Posey, and Finley.



A portrait of Dr. Jimmy Sanderson, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and striped tie. The photo is set against a white background and is framed by a dark green L-shaped border on the top and left sides.

**Dr. Jimmy Sanderson** was the third faculty member earning promotion and tenure.

## FIRST CLASS OF PH.D. STUDENTS GRADUATING

**Ahalee Farrow** graduated from Texas Tech University in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sport Sciences, in 2018 with a Master of Science in Kinesiology, and will graduate in May from the Exercise Physiology doctoral program. Ahalee has worked under Dr. Ty Palmer in the PhD program with a research emphasis on physical performance. Specifically, she has focused on muscle function, explosive power, stiffness, and balance performance capacity testing as well as stretching and fatigue-related interventions and their effects on performance in young and older adults. Her dissertation is titled “Time Course of Passive Stiffness, Torque, and Range of Motion Responses Following an Acute Bout of Static Stretching in Young and Older Women.” During her four years as a doctoral student, Ahalee authored or co-authored 26 peer-reviewed articles and abstracts and was a lead-author on 14 of them.



Ahalee was a Texas ACSM poster finalist in 2019 and 2021. As a Graduate Part-time Instructor, she taught Exercise Testing and Prescription labs and Introduction to Kinesiology and Medical Terminology courses. As a student in the doctoral program, Ahalee was chosen to be a TEACH Fellow and Groundworks participant. She also was selected to serve as the graduate student member for ASCAP and the KSM Health Screening Clinic Committee and was the Arts and Sciences student representative for the Graduate School Review Focus Group. Ahalee has accepted a position as an Assistant Professor at Albion College in Michigan. She will be starting her position in August.



**Stephen Fischer** was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and spent most of his life residing in northeast Ohio. He graduated with both his bachelor's and master's degree in Exercise Physiology from Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, where he was also a cross country and track and field athlete. Stephen began his PhD in the Fall semester of 2018. He joined the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Management at the inception of the PhD program under the mentorship of Dr. Arturo Figueroa and helped establish the Vascular Health Laboratory. During his tenure at Texas Tech University, Stephen has been a part of 10 total peer-reviewed publications. Two of his publications were as the first-author, and the other 8 were as a co-author. His doctoral dissertation is entitled "Reduced Endothelial and Exercise Vasodilator Function in the Legs of Obese Versus Lean and Overweight Postmenopausal Women."

After graduation, Stephen will be joining the laboratory of Dr. Jian Cui at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center in the Heart and Vascular Institute as a Post-Doctoral Fellow. In the future, Stephen plans to teach and do academic research, ideally at an R1 or R2 research institution. Stephen would like his future research to focus on interventions to improve the vascular function of individuals with metabolic disorders such as obesity and type 2 diabetes.

**Arun Maharaj** is one of three doctoral students in the first graduating class of the KSM department. Arun was born and raised in Trinidad and moved to South Florida when he was 10 years old. As a first-generation college student, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees at Florida Atlantic University in Exercise Science and Health Promotion and is set to graduate with his Ph.D. in May 2022. Currently, he has 18 publications in peer-reviewed journals, 2 of which he is first author. Since joining the Department of Kinesiology and Sport Management, Arun has assisted in establishing the Vascular Health Lab under supervision of his mentor, Dr. Arturo Figueroa. He has also served as a founding member and vice-president of the KSM Doctoral Organization, which focuses on providing a platform for doctoral students in the department to articulate their suggestions as well as foster a relatable, sociable community among the students.



Arun also received the Doctoral Dissertation Completion Fellowship award at Texas Tech University, which allowed him to focus on his research and writing for the last year of his doctoral program. Upon graduation, Arun will continue to diversify his research by pursuing a Postdoctoral Scholar position at St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. His future research will be focused on using exercise and nutritional interventions to improve vascular and muscle function along with quality of life in young adults post-chemotherapy.



# TEXAS AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SPORTS MEDICINE CONFERENCE

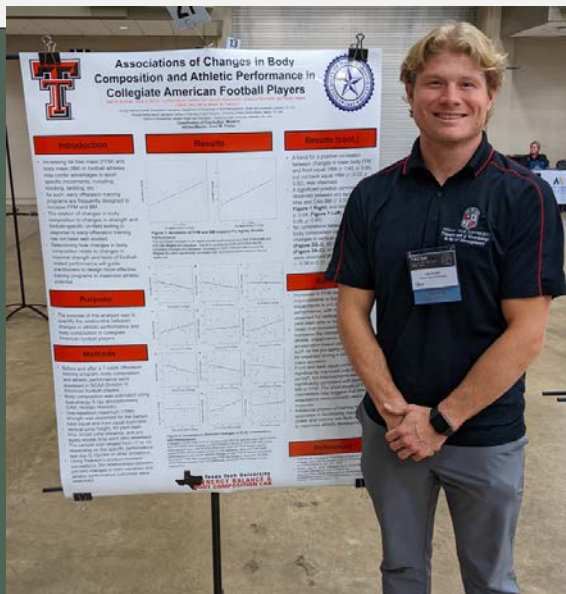
Eight students from **Dr. Grant Tinsley's** research team had abstracts accepted by the International Journal of Exercise Science as part of the 2022 Annual Meeting for the Texas chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine. These abstracts can be found at: <https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ijesab/vol2/iss14/>. Four of the students presented their abstracts in-person at the Annual Meeting in Waco, Texas on February 24th. These students included **Patrick Harty**, a doctoral candidate, and three second-year master's degree students (**Dale Keith**, **Jacob Green**, and **Jake Boykin**). Five students from the lab were selected as research abstract finalists, including **Patrick Harty**, **Christian Rodriguez**, **Dale Keith**, **Jacob Green**, and **Brielle DeHaven**. Additionally, two students from the lab won awards for their research manuscripts. **Matthew Stratton**, a doctoral candidate, earned the 3rd place prize, while **Christian Rodriguez**, a first-year doctoral student, earned the 4th place prize. **Sarah White** was awarded the Major of the Year prize for Texas Tech University, and **Madelin Siedler** received a Body Composition Research Scholarship sponsored by Hologic, Inc.

**William Riley**, an undergraduate Kinesiology major working with **Dr. Ty Palmer**, was a finalist for his poster titled, "Vertical jump performance as a discriminator of playing ability in collegiate female soccer players."



L TO R JAKE BOYKIN, DALE KEITH, GRANT TINSLEY, PATRICK HARTY, JACOB GREEN

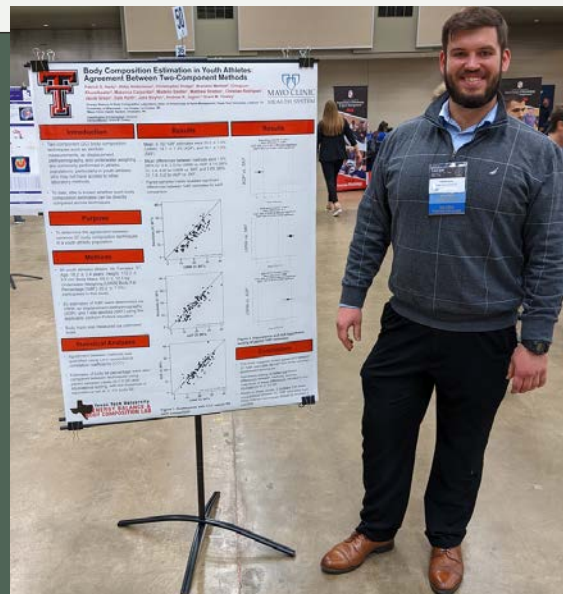




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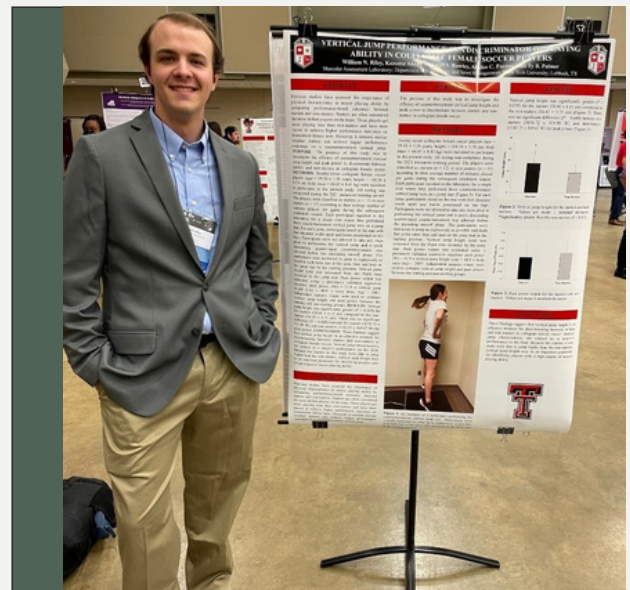
JACOB GREEN



PATRICK HARTY



DALE KEITH



WILLIAM RILEY



## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHERS MENTORED BY FACULTY IN THEIR LABS

### Dr. Kembra Albracht-Schulte

**Caleb Perry** is a Kinesiology major and an Honors Undergraduate Research Scholar in the Nutrition, Exercise and Translational (NExT) Medicine Lab. Caleb's project focuses on the effects of high-intensity interval training on cardiorespiratory fitness in adults with prediabetes. Caleb is also involved in a collaborative project with Dr. John Norbury, Division Chief of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at TTUHSC, and **Dr. Toby Brooks**, TTUHSC School of Health Professions and part-time instructor in KSM, to determine the impact of group fitness on health-related quality of life and exercise adherence. **Annalyn Shudde** is an Honors Undergraduate Research Scholar and is majoring in Biology and Kinesiology with minors in Chemistry and Spanish. Annalyn's project is a collaboration with Dr. Heather Vellers at The University of Oklahoma and focuses on the hepatic effects of aerobic exercise training and aging in mice. **Kiara Garza** is a TrUE Undergraduate Research Scholar and Kinesiology major. Kiara is currently working on a literature review focused on the effects of exercise intensity and the microbiome. **Abbey Calabrese** is an Honors Undergraduate Research Scholar and Kinesiology major. Abbey is currently working on a literature review focused on the impact of lifestyle modifications on the gut-liver axis. **Emeka Odukwu** is an Honors Undergraduate Research Scholar and Biology major. Emeka's project focuses on remote exercise monitoring in human subjects' research. **Salvador Galindo** is an Honors Undergraduate Research Scholar and Microbiology major. Sal is completing an Undergraduate Honor's Thesis investigating the gut microbiota profile of subjects with prediabetes and obesity. Dr. Kembra Albracht-Schulte's students also assist with the USDA NIFA funded project to determine the combined effects of high-intensity interval training and omega-3 PUFA supplementation to reduce inflammation and improve metabolic health in overweight adults.

### Dr. Jarrod Blinch

**Chelsea Ifediora**, **Coby Trovinger**, and **Kathryn Bayouth** are enrolled in KIN 4000 Independent Study. Chelsea's project involves a reaction time task where the required movement is indicated by either lights (easier) or letters (harder). Coby's project involves determining the best way to measure reaction time. Kathryn's project is a reaction time task where participants are sometimes distracted by stimuli that must be inhibited.

### Dr. Yasuki Sekiguchi

Currently, there are ten undergraduate student researchers—**Jeremy Delgado**, **Matt George**, **David Ijimakinwa**, **Cameron Kral**, **Alaina Lewis**, **Ruben Moya**, **Kelvin Obazughanmwun**, **Lauren Parworth**, **Jacob Richardson**, and **Jan Rolloque** working in the Sports Performance Lab. They are actively involving in data collection, data entry, data analysis and developing future research. This is a great opportunity for students to learn new skills and knowledge. For example, one of the current research projects is looking at the effects of thirst on exercise performance, cognition, physiological and perceptual variables.

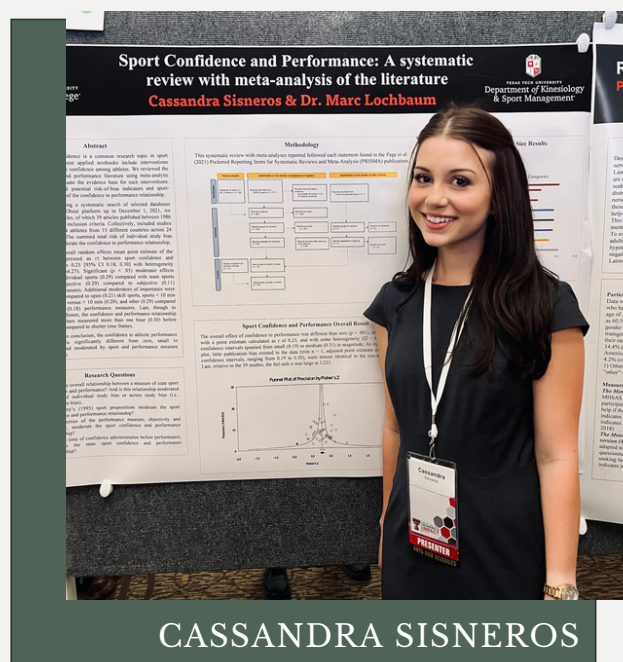
Students are learning wide range of techniques, such as hydration, blood, reaction time, exercise performance assessments. Students also have opportunities to be part of the development of manuscripts. It has been great and fun opportunities for me to work with talented and high motivation undergraduate students.

### Dr. Grant Tinsley

Sarah White and Brielle DeHaven are Honors College Undergraduate Research Scholars, Alexandra Brojanac is a McNair Scholar and a TrUE Scholar, and Ethan Tinoco is a research volunteer. Dr. Tinsley assists these students in gaining hands-on research experience through his laboratory's ongoing projects. Additionally, these students are active in presenting research from the lab through conference abstracts and preparation of peer-reviewed research articles. These students are pursuing careers in research, healthcare, or related areas and believe exposure to research will help them succeed in their future endeavors.

## DR. LOCHBAUM'S SPARK LAB AT THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Dr. Marc Lochbaum's SPARK lab participated in the Undergraduate Research Conference. His lab members are **Cassandra Sisneros** and **Sydney Cooper**. You can learn more about Dr. Lochbaum's undergraduate research lab and more about Cassandra and Sydney on [Dr. Lochbaum's SPARK webpage](#).



Sydney published her work about the MMA and Sport Psychology literature.

*A Systematic Review of the Sport Psychology Mixed Martial Arts Literature: Replication and Extension*

## KSM AMBASSADORS IN SPRING 2022

To date, for the Spring 2022 semester, many of the Ambassadors' events were cancelled or postponed due to a rise in Covid-19 cases. At the end of February the Ambassadors volunteered at the Ramirez Elementary STEM night to allow students in the International Baccalaureate Organization to actively engage in a variety of activities. About 200 students and their families attended the event and students enjoyed participating in the Ambassador's long jump activity. Many students participated in the activity several times in an attempt to beat their longest jump. This was a successful experience that the Ambassadors look forward to participating in again in the future. At the beginning of March the Ambassadors hosted Madison Proctor from the TTUHSC School of Health Professions to discuss their graduate programs with Kinesiology majors interested in athletic training, occupational therapy, or physical therapy. Around 40 undergraduate students attended this session. The Ambassadors have continued to host several prospective students and provide tours and transportation for the faculty candidates this semester. The Ambassadors also sold departmental apparel through California T's that did well and are working on new items to have available for the fall semester. The Ambassadors are currently working on hosting a student volleyball tournament on campus in late-April. There are currently no recruiting events scheduled for the Spring semester, but the Ambassadors will be participating in Arbor Day on Friday, April 29 and Tech to Town on Saturday, April 2.

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### ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JJ STRNAD



JJ Strnad graduated with a B.S. in Sport Management in December of 2021. He is a native of Dallas and currently works as a sales representative with Learfield Amplify in Plano, Texas, starting in January, 2022.

JJ's job responsibilities include reaching out to sales prospects for different championship events and selling tickets. These events include the March Madness College Basketball Tournament, the College World Series, and Frozen Four. He also is responsible to identify prospects through research and has a focus on group and business-to-business sales.

JJ says he really enjoys work at Learfield Amplify as the people are great and he says, "if you invest your time and effort to the company, they will invest in your growth personally and professionally twice as much."

JJ credits his time in the sport management program with the success he is having in his role at Learfield Amplify. He stated, "learning how to speak to new and groups of people professionally have helped me organize my thoughts." He also stated that the sport management program helped him learn more about sports as a business and that his degree helped prepare him to adapt as sport is a rapidly changing industry.

JJ's advice for current sports management students is to find ways to get out of their comfort zone and to "Be Coachable!"



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

### KARLA KITTEN (#12) MEMORIES OF BEING A LADY RAIDER BASKETBALL PLAYER



My, how women's basketball at Texas Tech has changed since I was a Lady Raider in the 1976-77 and 1977-78 seasons. Some of the major changes came in travel, practice and game facilities, scholarship opportunities, practice times, and lodging.

I began practicing with the team in the 1975-76 season and officially joined the team in 1976 after they began offering scholarships for women. I received a partial scholarship amounting to a whopping \$500. Only one full scholarship was offered in women's basketball. Our practice times on several days would come 'after' intramurals were over which would at times be at 9 pm. (How important were we??) The 1977-78 season came with more reasonable practice times. Practices were held in the Women's Gym which has since been torn down. During the 1975-77 season, the majority of our games were held in the Women's Gym. The Women's Gym seating consisted of one set

of aluminum bleachers on one side. The team sat on opposite side. There were very limited court boundaries. We also played a few games in the Old Men's Gym, also known as, "Barn," for obvious reasons. However, it did offer wooden bleachers on both sides. It reminded me of a larger version of the Junior High Gym at Slaton, Texas, a town of 6,000. The "Barn" has also been demolished. It was quite an upgrade in my 1977-78 year when we were able to split playing games in the Women's Gym and the Municipal Coliseum. My, how women's basketball at Texas Tech has changed since I was a Lady Raider in the 1976-77 and 1977-78 seasons. Some of the major changes came in travel, practice and game facilities, scholarship opportunities, practice times, and lodging.

We had two sets of uniforms, a white set for home games and a dark set for away games. Our travel during the 1976-77 season was in a 16-passenger van. We all traveled in one van with Coach Lynch driving. Our lodging during away games was in a hotel. We slept four in room and occasionally, five when needed. We were able to travel in a Greyhound bus during the 1977-78 season. Occasionally, we did have to travel in a van.

These things existed despite Title IX, the federal law mandating equal educational opportunities.

Despite these conditions, we were one big family, just as today's Lady Raiders. That has never changed. We were proud to be a Lady Raider and honored to be a part of the team. We represented Texas Tech in a professional and respectable manner. Once a Lady Raider, always a Lady Raider!!