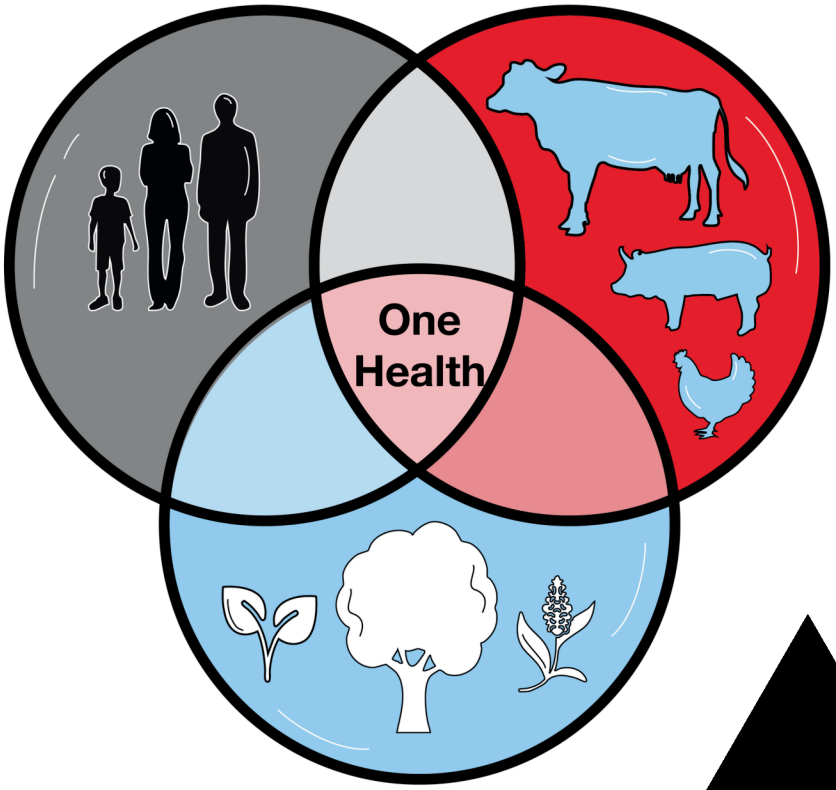
ONEHEALTH
CREATING INNOVATION TOGETHER

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The institute for One Health Innovation acknowledges and appreciates the support from various offices within the Texas Tech University System.

- Chancellor's Office and Board of Regents
- TTU Offices of the President, Provost and Vice President for Research & Innovation
- TTUHSC Offices of the President, Provost and Executive Vice President for Research & Innovation
- TTUHSC El Paso Offices of the President and Vice President for Research
- Midwestern State University Offices of the Provost and Dean of the College of Science, Mathematics & Engineering
- Angelo State University Office of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies & Research
- Members of all IOHI committees
- All IOHI members and participants
- All who supported IOHI and One Health behind the scenes

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Institute for One Health Innovation (IOHI) is the first institute in the Texas Tech System (TTUS) to be jointly established by two TTUS institutions: Texas Tech University (TTU) and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC). IOHI emphasizes rural health care access and community-focused efforts with the goal of improving regional health and ultimately global health and well-being of humans, animals and ecosystems.

The mission of IOHI is to serve the public by training scientists and health professionals in leading transdisciplinary research and developing innovative solutions for today's most pressing One Health problems.

In summer of 2024 I was honored to join the Inaugural North American One Health University Network (NAOHUN), formed to synergize efforts related to One Health across US, Mexican and Canadian institutions. As a member of the NAOHUN steering committee, our active involvement in such national and international efforts will further shape and inform our One Health research, education and outreach endeavors.

Located in the heart of the nation's farming and ranching region, TTUS has been a champion of both agricultural and biomedical research, addressing rural health care and workforce development. The IOHI has pulled together numerous academic units across the system: the School of Veterinary Medicine, the Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, the College of Health & Human Sciences, the College of Arts & Sciences, the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Dentistry, and the Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health, Angelo State University and Midwestern State University. Collaboration among these assets yields unparalleled expertise, world-class facilities, and vast geographic representation. This powerful combination makes West Texas an ideal hub for advancing One Health research and shaping the future of integrated One Health solutions for human, animal, plants and environmental health.

I am greatly honored to serve as the Inaugural Executive Director of IOHI. Several cross-institutional committees worked together to set the stage for IOHI before it formed, driven by the shared vision of TTU and TTUHSC to establish strong collaborations across an area of common interest that led to identifying One Health as a catalyst for these collaborations.

Collectively, TTUS research, education and professional programs assemble numerous strengths that will propel IOHI to become a leading institute in One Health innovation.

Naïma Moustaïd-Moussa, Ph.D. DFASN, FAHA, FTOS, FNAI
Inaugural Executive Director, Institute for One Health Innovation
Horn Distinguished Professor, School of Veterinary Medicine
Professor, Department of Cell Biology & Biochemistry
TTUHSC School of Medicine
Texas Tech University & Texas Tech Health Sciences Center

MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

The IOHI serves the public by training scientists and health professionals in leading transdisciplinary research and developing innovative solutions for today's most pressing One Health problems. IOHI emphasizes rural health care access and communities to ultimately benefit the regional and global health and well-being of humans, animals and ecosystems. The culture of the institute operates at the speed of relevance, expediting the translation of research to practice and discovery to public impact.

VISION

IOHI will be the preeminent entity in West Texas for recruiting and training scientists and health professionals as future leaders of transdisciplinary, transformational One Health research and health care worldwide.

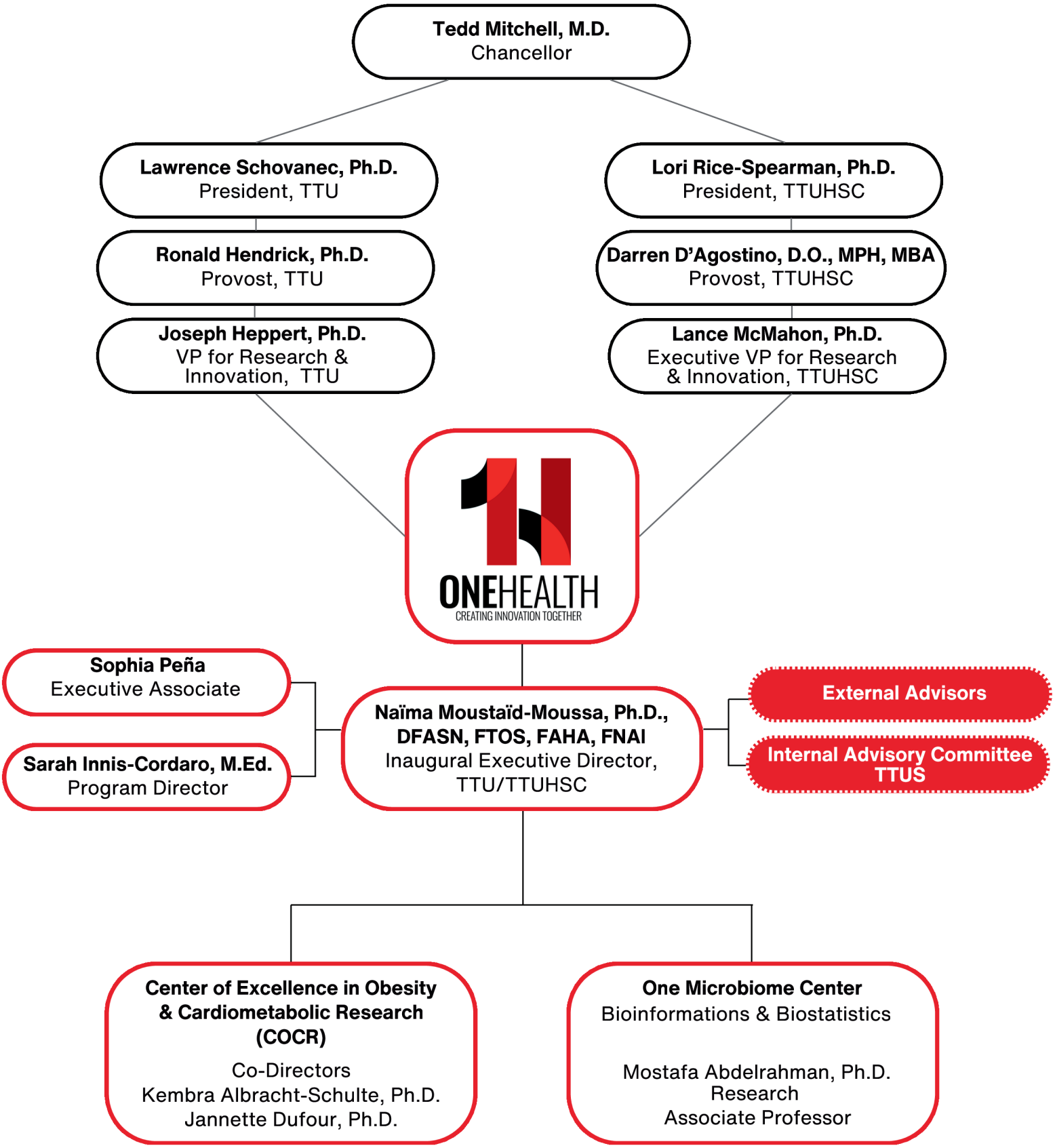
One Health is a multi-disciplinary paradigm which requires a transdisciplinary approach to achieve optimal health for all (animals, plants, humans and the ecosystem they share). One Health is inclusive of disciplines from STEM, social sciences, public health and communications. Effective solutions for One Health challenges must involve veterinarians, public health and healthcare professionals, agricultural and environmental experts, nutritionists, food security and safety experts. One Health addresses challenges ranging from food access and nutrition security, food and water safety issues, agriculture and adjacent land use, environmental and gut microbes, control of environmental exposures, zoonoses (animal-human transmissions), curving antimicrobial resistance, as well as lifestyle interventions, and environmental exposures (exposome, pollutants/contaminants (PFAS, microplastics and others) food-borne and infectious diseases as well as non-communicable diseases (NCD) with emphasis on improving brain and metabolic health in part through animal-human bonds. One Health approaches span soil and plant health to animal and human health and their modulation by extreme weather conditions.

IOHI alignment with Global One Health vision

The following One Health definition was developed by the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) for Quadripartite organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH).

"One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and inter-dependent. This approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems, while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change and contributing to sustainable development."

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



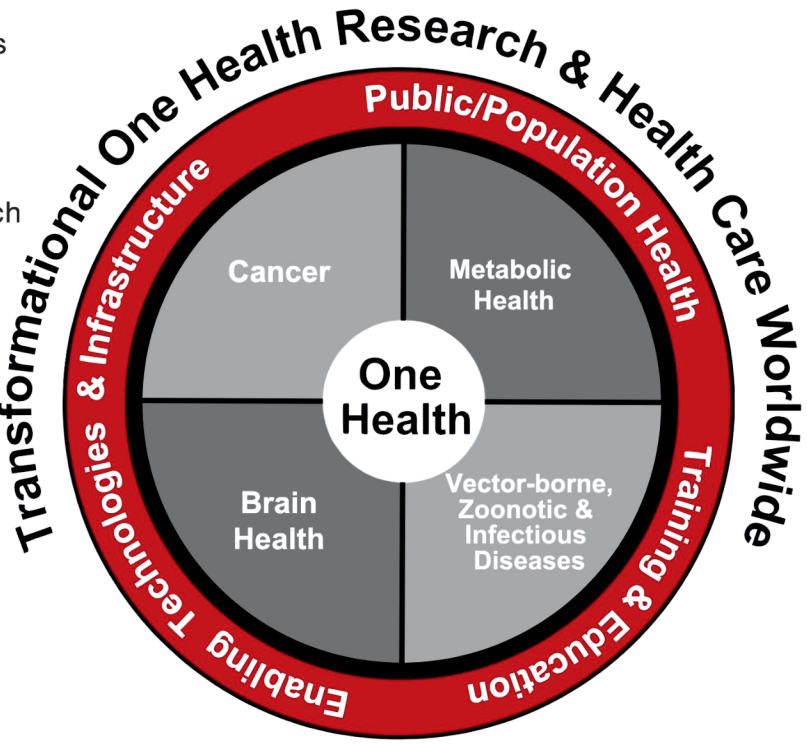
RESEARCH AREAS

Prior to establishing IOHI, a research committee composed of faculty and administrators from TTU and TTUHSC identified strategic research subthemes that represent current expertise across the TTU System that could be further enhanced through applications of One Health approaches. These One Health approaches include investigations of environmental influences on metabolic health, brain health, cancer or zoonotic and infectious diseases, food and nutrition security, environmental and gut microbiome and animal-human bonds to improve mental and metabolic health. These factors impact human, animal and plant health and their shared ecosystem, as well as the quality and sustainability of our food systems.

RESEARCH SUBTHEMES

- Metabolic (microbiome, exposome and animal-human bonds)
- Brain (microbiome, exposome & animal-human bonds)
- Cancer (microbiome, exposome)
- Vector-borne, Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases

Collectively, these research areas are further strengthened though innovative technologies and workforce training that will impact public and rural health and ultimately transform One Health research and health care, locally, nationally and globally.



IOHI COMMITTEES

(see appendix a and b for membership listing)

- Governance: Provides institutional oversight (Provosts/VPRs)
- Research Advisory Committee: Committee that provides guidance on strategic research directions, collaborations and opportunities
- Curriculum: Committee that identifies opportunities for joint One Health degrees ad programs across the TTU System
- Clinical/Media & Communications: Committee that develops and implements strategies for communications and translation of IOHI information

HISTORY AND TIMELINE

Oct 2023
Strategic Planning Workshop for Cancer Research

Dec 2023
Strategic Planning Workshop for Metabolic Health

Feb 2024
Strategic Planning Workshop for Brain Health/ Neurological Disorders

May 2024
Strategic Planning Workshop for Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases

May/June 2024
ORI Annual Meeting (Metabolic Health/One Health)
+
Submission of USDA AFRI Sustainable Ag Systems Proposal

July 2024
Inaugural Executive Director Announced
+
TTUHSC Amarillo Visit

Aug 2024
Joined NAOHUN
+
Announced IOHI Seed Grant awardees
+
TTUHSC Abilene Visit

Oct/Nov 2024
MSU and
TTU Health El Paso Visits

Nov 2024
First combined One Health Workshop
+
Establishment of collaborative groups

Jan/Feb 2025
Est. TTUS Research Committee
+
Finalized Strategic Plan
+
Revised Seed Grant RFA
+
TTUHSC Dallas Visit

Feb/Mar 2025
Revised Seed Grant RFA
+
Held six collaborative group meetings

Apr 2025
Distinguished Speaker Series
+
ASU and TTUHSC PB Visits

May 2025
IOHI Symposium (Microbiome and Infectious Disease)
+
Launched 2nd Seed Grant Program
+
Submission of USDA HPAI proposals

STRATEGIC PLAN

Through our strategic plan exercise and SWOT analyses, we developed a plan to guide a system wide One Health research strategy by:

- Prioritizing efforts
- Effectively allocating new resources and hires
- Growing stronger cross-system collaborations for future external & state funding
- Impacting public health with emphasis on rural health and health care

STRATEGIC GOALS

IOHI strategic plan was developed as a living document to guide our One Health strategies. Our specific goals are:

Goal 1: Synergize and enhance existing research infrastructure

To date we have completed in-depth analyses of TTUS capabilities based on expertise and infrastructure. We have increased access to shared resources for faculty.

Goal 2: Submit large, multidisciplinary, multi-institutional grant proposals applying One Health approaches across research subthemes

In response to our second goal, we have created teams that will focus on specific One Health areas and subsequently identify and respond to grant opportunities in those areas. Some of these teams have submitted four proposals to USDA APHI focused on the High Pathogenic Avian Flu (totaling approx. $8M). Overall, 3 institutions, 6 colleges/schools have participated in these efforts. Additional proposals are being developed.

Goal 3: Strengthen and foster collaborations between basic, clinical and community/population researchers

While TTUS has research strength in each of the identified One Health subthemes, there is a need for stronger connections between basic, clinical and community researchers and in applying One Health approaches. Thus, we are building a searchable database for all basic, clinical, and community researchers around One Health and have established a seed fund to build cross-campus collaborations. Two teams formed each with a PI from both TTU and TTUHSC were funded in FY2025 to advance research areas related to One Health (Leishmania and One Virome tool kit projects).

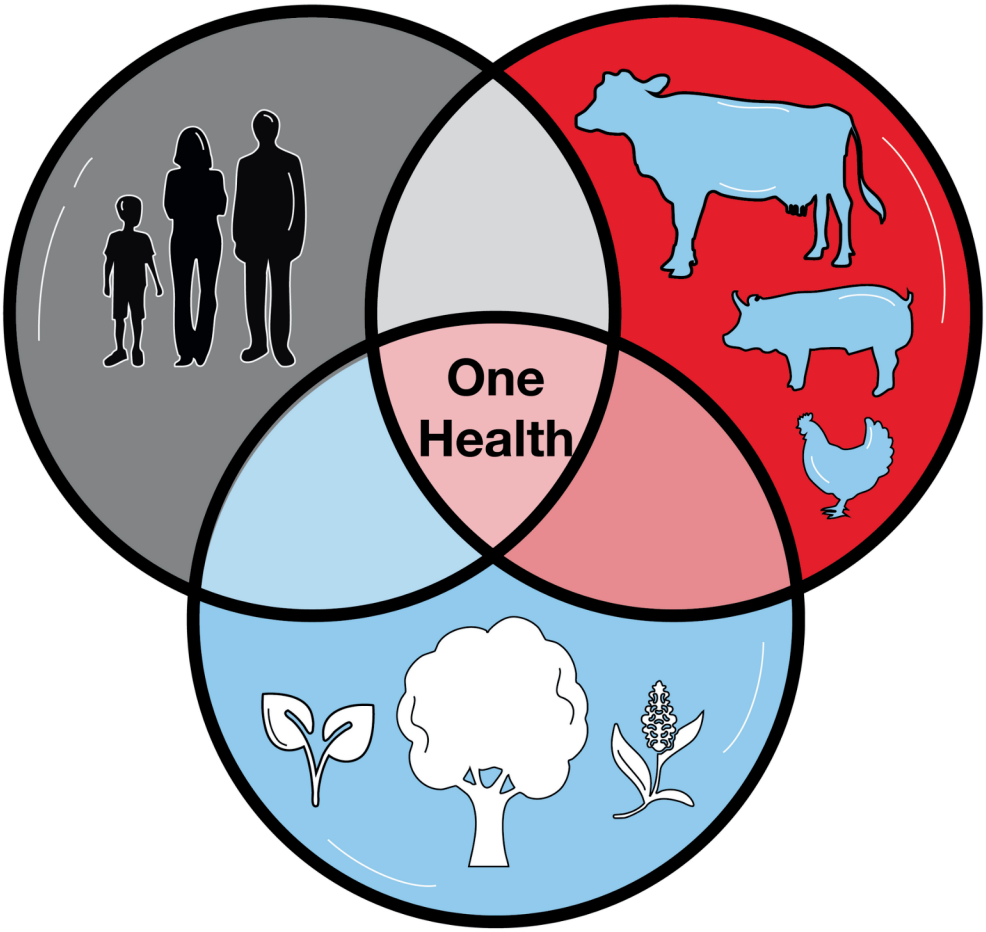
Goal 4: Conduct strategic hiring to expand upon current research expertise with One Health applications

It is evident that additional expertise is needed for growth and increased research capacity in One Health research. The workshops we have hosted provided some insights into our research gaps, but we recognize the need to conduct a more comprehensive analysis to determine the most critical needs. We are also working to develop proposals for faculty, student and postdoctoral recruitment. IOHI Director worked with a team of TTU and TTUHSC faculty to secure TUF funding from TTU in the Microbiome area (faculty hiring underway).

STRATEGIC PLAN

Moreover, the IOHI Executive Director has established a team formed of TTU and TTUHSC faculty that developed a One Microbiome proposal, that was recently funded by TTU (TTU Texas University Funds); these new hires will further strengthen our cross institutional expertise and collaborations.

In order to achieve and further grow cross-institutional collaborations, we have hosted several events to bring researchers together and have provided seed funding to support those collaborations and their efforts in securing external federal funding. Additionally, through the Offices of Research and the Offices of the Provost at each institution, we are working to remove administrative barriers for teams pursuing external grant applications. We have seen an increase in joint, cross-campus appointments, share PhDs and co-mentoring of students and postdocs, and increased faculty mentorship, specifically for those early career faculty in One Health areas.



2024-2025 BY THE NUMBERS

9 EVENTS | **264** TOTAL ATTENDEES

SMALL GROUP MEETINGS: 9-19 FACULTY/GROUP

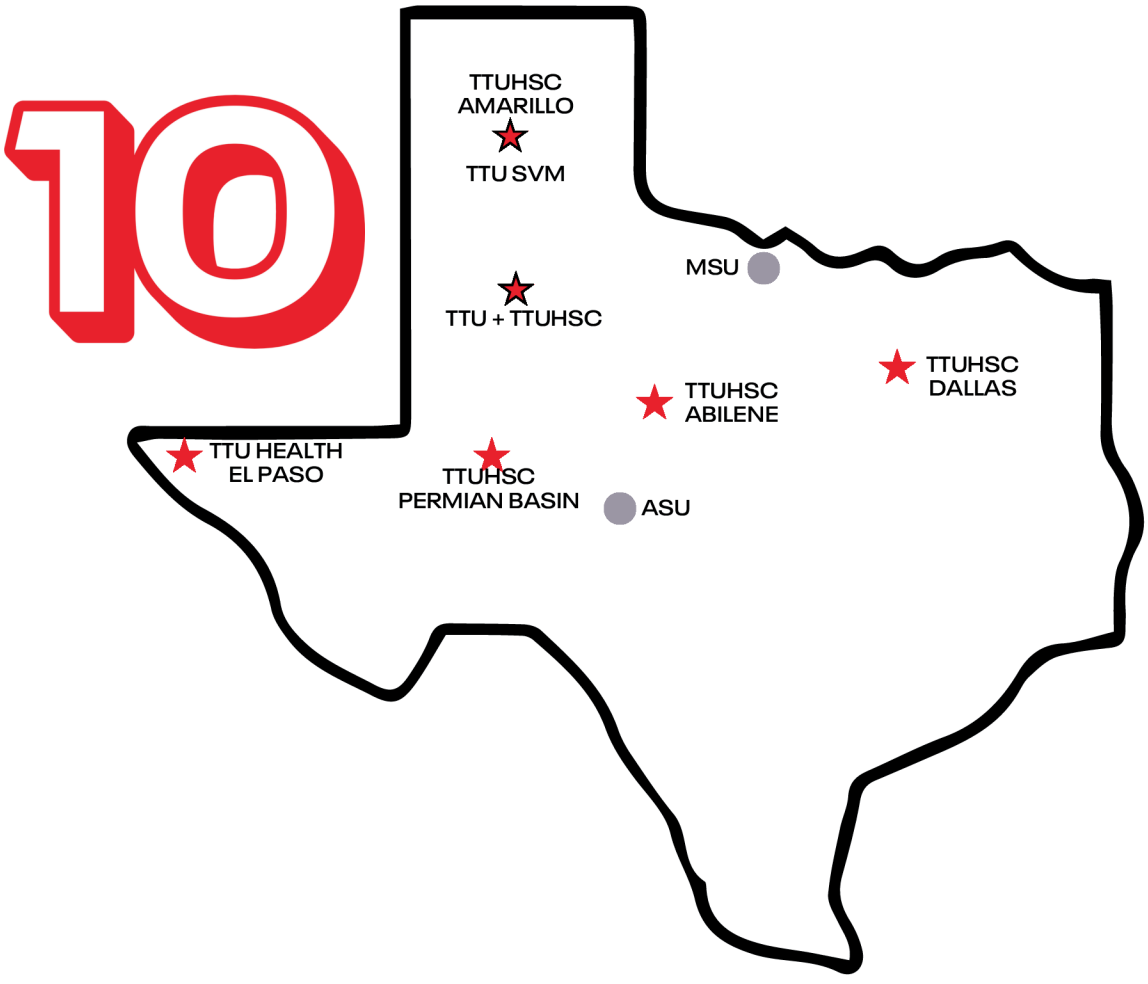
SYMPOSIUM/ANNUAL MEETING: 83-94 ATTENDEES

IOHI EMAIL MEMBERS ACROSS TTUS: 300

TTU: *161* | **TTUS:** *5* | **TTUHSC:** *101* | **TTU Health El Paso:** *16* | **ASU:** *9* | **MSU:** *7* | **TTU Costa Rica:** *1*

TTUS SITE VISITS

10



2024-2025 SUMMARY

Seed Grants:

The purpose of these internal opportunities is to promote, foster and increase research collaborations and productivity to increase competitiveness for external federal awards in One Health. These seed funds support the development of preliminary data to prepare joint One Health proposal submissions to federal or comparable competitive external funding agencies across institutions. In FY25, two proposals were funded at $100,000 each.

External Proposals in 2025:

- Four Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) proposals were submitted to USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on May 19, 2025 totaling $8M.
- In preparation, a cross-institutional team is preparing an NIH-R01 grant on microplastics and metabolic health.

One Health Week Annual Meeting

Our first annual meeting, held on November 1, 2024, served as a discussion to identify new opportunities for transdisciplinary collaborations where One Health approaches are applied. Emphasis was on topics relevant to our region, rural health and health care and environmental exposures.

We provided updates on the ongoing work by the IOHI, defined and raised awareness of the importance of One Health and shared the mission and vision and strategic goals of the IOHI. The meeting also highlighted the two seed grants funded in FY25. This meeting focused on One Health transdisciplinary presentations on key relevant areas including sustainable agriculture, geosciences, biology, veterinarian sciences, plant and soil science and nutrition.

Chancellor Mitchell and Regent Kerrick-Davis kicked off our November IOHI Annual Meeting and Workshop, which was attended by 94 faculty in person and virtually with representatives from all TTU System institutions (TTU, TTUHSC, TTUHSC El Paso, MSU and ASU).

RESEARCH GROUP COLLABORATIONS

Following the November 1, 2024 annual meeting, IOHI formed six working groups based on faculty interest in One Health. These six group meetings were held in February and March 2025. This series was developed as a platform to meet new collaborators and share information among researchers about their interests and initiate discussions around collaborations for future grant opportunities.

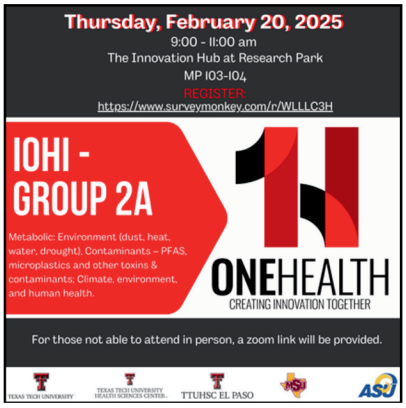
Group 1: Agriculture

Soil health to human health, food as medicine, microbiome, lifestyle (nutrition/exercise), climate and health.

Group 2: Environment

Dust, heat, water, drought, contaminants, microplastics and other toxins, human and animal health.

2A Metabolic Health



2B Brain Health

2C Cancer

Group 3: Animal-Human Interactions or Bonds

Group 4: Food-borne, Water-borne Pathogens, AMR, Microbiome, Zoonotic & ID

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

One Health Symposium

Held on May 2, 2025, the One Health symposium served as the culmination of these efforts with a featured guest keynote on microbiomes and TTUS faculty presentations that covered areas in infectious diseases (wildlife, food-borne and avian influenza), food safety and nutrition insecurity as well as various presentations related to environmental influences on health including PFAs, microplastics and during disasters.

Distinguished Seminar Series

Through the IOHI seminar series, we hosted internationally renowned scientists who shared their research and expertise with the TTUS community. These distinguished seminar series were a great opportunity to network with external experts, showcase the research and innovation happening at TTUS and develop future collaborations and mentoring for our faculty.

- Our first speak was Dr. Teresa A. Davis, a member of the National Academy of Medicine, currently Director of the Institute for Advancing Health through Agriculture at Texas A&M, and former Professor of Pediatrics at the USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center (CNRC) at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, and Past President of the American Society for Nutrition. Her presentation was on Nutritional Regulation of Muscle Growth in Neonates.
- Our second speaker was Dr. Joy Scaria, Walter R. Sitlington Endowed Chair in Infectious Diseases and Associate Professor, Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, College of Veterinary Medicine, Oklahoma State University who presented on microbiome research, during the IOHI May Symposium.

Pictured: OHHLEP Meeting

CONTINUING THE PATH FOWARD

To continue to strengthen the IOHI programming, we will:

- Disseminate and represent TTUS work in One Health nationally and internationally by:
  - the Executive Director's upcoming appointment beginning in Summer 2025 as President of the American Society for Nutrition where one of her top priorities includes One Health and global partnerships in nutrition, food systems and sustainable agriculture.
  - the Executives Director's membership on the North American One Health University Network (NAOHUN) steering committee
- Continue to foster collaborations within the TTU System and various state, national and international partners across the four research subthemes and identify external funding opportunities to support One Health research across the TTU System.
- Establish a strong research program in zoonotic and infectious diseases by synergizing current ongoing efforts across the TTUS, mentioned above.
- Expand means to detect, monitor and control vector-borne and zoonotic diseases, through transdisciplinary collaborations that includes wildlife research and TTUS assets and resources.
- Support workforce development through training and mentoring of research and professional degree students (Ph.D., DVM, M.D., MPH and others) in One Health through local, regional and global partnerships by:
  - Building partnerships within the community and relevant agencies, including the AgriLife Extension network to educate and increase awareness around One Health communicable and non-communicable diseases in our region.

Pictured: IOHI Group Meeting held at the TTU Innovation Hub.

KEY STRENGTHS AND ONGOING PROGRAMS

- **The Ph.D. in One Health Sciences** at the School of Veterinary Medicine is an interdisciplinary program addressing health challenges at the intersection of human, animal and environmental health—locally and globally. This is the first nationally established PhD in One Health. Additional joint programs are being developed that incorporate the One Health degree with other professional degrees, including a One Health PhD combined with a Masters of Public Health at the School of Population and Public Health.
- **Several of our schools create the rural health work force** to serve the West Texas population and beyond.
  - School of Veterinary Medicine
  - Davis College of Agriculture Sciences & Natural Resources
  - School of Medicine
  - School of Nursing
  - School of Health Professions
  - School of Population and Public Health
- **USDA REEU Undergraduate Research and Extension training grant** developing the food, nutrition and agriculture workforce for future rural health and economic development, in collaboration with our colleagues in the AgriLife Extension program that provides experiential real world experiences to our students.
- **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza** early-stage research that is developing within TTUS to include the development of vaccines for avian flu and create novel AI-based diagnostic biosensors as rapid detection tools (pending USDA APHIS proposals).
- **The Texas Tech Biological Threat Research Lab (BTRL)** detects, monitors and research outbreaks of infectious diseases of humans and animals occurring throughout Texas. It houses a biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) lab and is designated as a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Laboratory Response Network. The BTRL confirmed the first case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) transmitted from a mammal (dairy cow) to a human.
- Several units – **Engineering, Geosciences and Environmental Toxicology** – conduct innovative research on atmospheric changes and environmental pollutants and contaminants ranging from wind and dust particles or compounds such as microplastics and PFAS to microorganisms including viruses driving emerging diseases and pandemics.
- **Unique field resources for livestock and wildlife research** at the Junction and the Angelo State campus, the 3 Rivers Ranch site each extending over 6,000 acres of land for research and education.
- **The Microbiome** is a key strategic One Health research area that we intend to strengthen at the TTUS from environmental microbes to precision health based on microbiome research in both communicable infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

KEY STRENGTHS AND ONGOING PROGRAMS

- **Pre-harvest food safety researchers** collaborating with the meat and poultry industry to develop testing methods and targeting genetic systems to identify pathogens, microbiomes and the impact on food safety in livestock.
- **A multidisciplinary project currently funded by United Sorghum Checkoff**, IOHI researchers are studying various sorghum varieties, determining their nutrient and polyphenolic composition, and testing these sorghum extracts for anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties in cells.
- **USDA-funded projects** including an AFRI project to nano-encapsulate tart cherry juice using prebiotics to improve bioavailability and gut health and a SCRI grant to educate herb growers on the best practices to reduce the likelihood of food-borne illness outbreak through culinary herbs.
- **Coordination hub for several water initiatives** aimed at addressing water shortage and safety in the region.
- **The Institute of Genomics for Crop Abiotic Stress Tolerance** is developing crops that can withstand high heat and drought conditions, a distinction from other plant genomics institutes nationwide. Research focuses on economically important crops that are relevant to the semi-arid environment of the High Plains and other areas with similar agro-ecological conditions worldwide.
- **Equine therapy** to improve mental health in children and adults with disabilities and dog therapy for improving children's metabolic health
- **Texas Center for Comparative Cancer Research** is a collaborative trans-disciplinary center aimed at advancing the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human and animal cancers and developing relevant cell and organoid models to study cancer across various species.

Pictured: IOHI Group Meetings

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Most health challenges require One Health approaches for optimal solutions; these challenges also represent opportunities for future research. Some examples of One Health high priority areas of research for which we must identify means to mitigate these issues include:

- Better understanding of the role of microbiomes (besides bacteria, also viruses, fungi, phages) and their role in health and disease and how they respond to lifestyle and environmental factors.
- Soil health to human health: A recent report but the National Academies identified several knowledge gaps in these areas. We must understand how to optimize soil health (microbes, carbon sequestration, agricultural production practices) to enhance nutritional quality of plants and crops and ultimately benefit animal and human health.
- Developing drought resistant crops, which require less water resources and with high nutrient quality to improve animal and human health.
- Extreme weather changes and environmental factors (toxins, pollutant contaminants, micro-plastics, PFAs) and human health, especially their impact on metabolic and brain health, but also potential microorganisms they may carry.
- Research on human-animal bonds and mechanisms by which they improve animal and human metabolic and mental health
- Food processing and storage alter nutrient content and quality and may result in food waste with associated environmental issues. Need for well-designed animal studies and clinical trials to understand effects of food processing on human health and relevant policies to reduce impact on human health. Such pandemics disproportionally affect under-resourced and rural populations with limited health care access and disturb our food systems (production, transportation, processing and access to consumers) and directly affect food and nutrition insecurity in vulnerable populations. Moreover, limited studies have addressed the relationship between nutritional status (such as nutrient deficiencies) and transmitted diseases. For example, the impact of nutrient deficiencies on viral load or mutations.
- The spread of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) due to antibiotic misuse or overuse must continue to be addressed through One Health approaches.
- Infectious diseases can arise from many sources and vectors such as ticks and screwworms. Much remains to be done to understand contributions from various vectors, as well as how disease spreads from migrating animals.
- Addressing emerging diseases, including New World Screwworm (NWS)

CONTACTS

Naïma Moustaïd-Moussa, Ph.D. DFASN, FAHA, FTOS, FNAI
naima.moustaid-moussa@ttu.edu

Inaugural Executive Director, Institute for One Health Innovation
TTU & TTUHSC Offices of Research & Innovation
Horn Distinguished Professor, School of Veterinary Medicine
Professor, TTUHSC Department of Cell Biology & Biochemistry

Sophia Peña
sophia.pena@ttu.edu | *onehealthinnovation@ttu.edu*

Executive Associate
TTU & TTUHSC Offices of Research & Innovation
Lubbock Campus

Sarah Innis-Cordaro, M.Ed.
sarah.innis@ttu.edu | *onehealthinnovation@ttu.edu*

Program Director
TTU Office of Research & Innovation
Amarillo Campus

APPENDIX A - CURRENT COMMITTEES

Governance:

Ronald Hendrick, Ph.D.
Joseph Heppert, Ph.D.
Darren D'Agostino, D.O.
Lance R. McMahon, Ph.D.
Katie Joplin
Missy Jenkins

Research Advisory:

Kembra Albracht, Ph.D.
Sharilyn Almodovar, Ph.D.
Duke Appiah, Ph.D.
Karin Ardon-Dryer, Ph.D.
Michael Ballou, Ph.D.
Elize Bisanz, Ph.D.
Robert Brennan, Ph.D.
Ryan L. Brown, Ph.D.
Jaclyn E. Cañas, Ph.D.
Munmun Chattopadhyay, Ph.D.
Warren Conway, Ph.D.
Jannette Dufour, Ph.D.
Klementina Fon Tacer, DVM, Ph.D.
Christine Garner, Ph.D., RD
Breanna Harris, Ph.D.
Missy Jenkins
Katie Joplin
Dawei Li, Ph.D.
Wei Li, Ph.D.
Tyler Livingston, Ph.D.
Ali Nejat, Ph.D., P.E.
Volker Neugebauer, M.D., Ph.D.
Komaraiah Palle, Ph.D.
Oak Hee Park, Ph.D.
Caleb Phillips, Ph.D.
Kendra Rumbaugh, Ph.D.
Julie St. John, Dr.P.H.
Devendra Shah, DVM, Ph.D.
Lindsey Slaughter, Ph.D.
Angela Walla, Ph.D.
Luna Wu, Ph.D.

Clinical/ Earned Media & Communications:

Aaron Bracamontes
Kristina Butler
Amanda Castro-Crist
Suznna Cisneros
Ron L. Cook, D.O.
Urvi Dalal
Julie Gaynor
Kaitlyn Hale
Allison Hirth
Missy Jenkins
Katie Joplin
Brittany Miller
Tom Nurre
Holly Russell
Danielle Urbina

Curriculum*:

Cindy Akers, Ed.D.
Gerard Carrino, Ph.D.
Robert Cox, Ph.D.
Darrin D'Agostino, D.O.
Rick Danko, Ph.D.
Ron Hendrick, Ph.D.
Jospeh Heppert, Ph.D.
Michelle Hernandez
Katie Joplin
Rajesh Karesh
Schoen Kruse, Ph.D.
John Lawrence, Ph.D.
Lance R. McMahon, Ph.D.
Kayla Tindle
Brandt Schneider, Ph.D.
Phil Sizer, PT, Ph.D.
Carleigh Smith
Ryan Williams, Ph.D.
Taysha Williams

* Committee has not met since Summer 2024, no change to committee has been made

APPENDIX B - INAUGURAL COMMITTEES

Governance:

Ronald Hendrick, Ph.D.
Joseph Heppert, Ph.D.
Darren D'Agostino, D.O.
Lance R. McMahon, Ph.D.
Katie Joplin
Kayla Tindle, Ph.D.

Research Advisory:

Cindy Akers, Ed.D.
Gerard Carrino, Ph.D.
Darrin D'Agostino, D.O.
Jospeh Heppert, Ph.D.
Michelle Hernandez
Min Kang, Pharm.D.
Katie Joplin
Lance R. McMahon, Ph.D.
Yehia Mechref, Ph.D.
Volker Neugebauer, M.D., Ph.D.
Matt Olson, Ph.D.
Kendra Rumbaugh, Ph.D.
Devendra Shah, DVM, Ph.D.
Phil Sizer, PT, Ph.D.
Carleigh Smith
Kayla Tindle, Ph.D.
Courtney M. Queen, Ph.D.

Clinical/Communications:

Noureddine Abidi
Duke Appiah, Ph.D.
Ron L. Cook, D.O.
Darrin D'Agostino, D.O.
Ashley Hamm
Ron Hendrick, Ph.D.
Joseph Heppert, Ph.D.
Darren Hudson, Ph.D.
Katie Joplin
Guy Loneragan, BVSc, Ph.D.
Lance R. McMahon, Ph.D.
Steve Presley, Ph.D.
Cynthia Reinoso, Ph.D.
Holly Russell
Angela Shaw, Ph.D.
Kayla Tindle, Ph.D.

Curriculum*:

Cindy Akers, Ed.D.
Gerard Carrino, Ph.D.
Robert Cox, Ph.D.
Darrin D'Agostino, D.O.
Rick Danko, Ph.D.
Ron Hendrick, Ph.D.
Jospeh Heppert, Ph.D.
Michelle Hernandez
Katie Joplin
Rajesh Khare, Ph.D. e
Schoen Kruse, Ph.D.
John Lawrence, Ph.D.
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