

AcademiCast Transcript  
Texas Tech University  
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Pierce: This is AcademiCast—Texas Tech University’s podcast series from the Office of the Provost. I’m Rachel Pierce, and I’ll be covering the top academic and research stories on campus. Later in the program, we’ll spotlight Student of Integrated Scholarship Jennifer Zavaleta. First, the news...

Texas Tech adds a fourth National Academy member to its faculty. Danny Reible was named as the inaugural holder of the Donovan Maddox Distinguished Engineering Chair. His research focuses primarily on water resource management. Whitacre College of Engineering Dean Al Sacco says Reible will be influential in educating students.

Sacco: We really went after people that weren’t just very good in science but that wanted to leave a legacy. A legacy built around them. A legacy that our students will know how top-notch science is done.

Pierce: Reible was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2005. He is the fourth National Academy member to join the Whitacre College of Engineering.

In other news, two financial planning faculty members are being honored for their commitment to service. Associate professor Deena Katz and her husband, instructor Harold Evensky, will be given the Heart of Financial Planning Award by the Financial Planning Association. The couple has been active on boards and committees within the association and other organizations.

The College of Media and Communication is renaming one of its institutes. The Thomas Jay Harris Institute for Hispanic and International Communication is named in honor of the former editor of the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal. The college renamed the institute in recognition of a gift from Harris’ estate.

To learn more about these stories and others, visit our website at [academicast.ttu.edu](http://academicast.ttu.edu). And now we turn to Texas Tech’s Student of Integrated Scholarship, featured here by Kristina Butler.

Butler: Irving native Jennifer Zavaleta is fascinated with the natural world. She is a master’s student in wildlife, range and aquatic science. Zavaleta’s interests have led her to study a variety of topics in wildlife ecology. A paper highlighting topics in government land management earned Zavaleta a grant, and she created a literature review about lesser prairie chickens, a threatened species of grouse. For her thesis, Zavaleta evaluated the effect of herbicide and rotational grazing on shinnery oak, a shrub that is native to the Southwest. Zavaleta said she has learned much from conducting research, and she shared two valuable points about the process.

Zavaleta: When it comes to doing research, everything is going to take longer than you think. Because every time you do field research, things can go wrong. Any time you run analysis, you're going to find out about something you could have done better and have to redo it. So one of the first steps in research is that it is an iterative process, and you're going to have to go back and do things more than once. So recognizing that, plan forward. The second piece of advice that I would have is to have a really open and honest communication line between you and your adviser. So it's important to know what the expectations are beforehand, as opposed to after the fact.

Butler: Since graduating last spring, Zavaleta was selected as a Student Fulbright Fellow. She has embarked on a yearlong journey taking her to Chile to conduct research. The first half of her fellowship consisted of a program evaluation of the country's Long-Term Ecological Research Network. The second half of the fellowship involved assessing the land management plan for a community in a national forest. AcademiCast wishes Jennifer Zavaleta all the best on her journey, and we are proud to introduce her as Texas Tech's newest Student of Integrated Scholarship.

Pierce: Thanks, Kristina! If you would like to learn more about Texas Tech's Students of Integrated Scholarship, visit our website at [academicast.ttu.edu](http://academicast.ttu.edu). That concludes this edition of AcademiCast. Join us again in two weeks as we spotlight the top academic and research news from Texas Tech University, as well as profile Student of Integrated Scholarship Kendra Phelps.