

**Texas A&M Receives \$2.8 Million from HHS-HRSA
to Research Critical Health Issues Facing Rural America**

The Texas A&M Southwest Rural Health Research Center (SRHRC) at the Texas A&M School of Public Health (founded in 2000) was awarded a 4-year, \$2.8 million dollar grant as one of seven cooperative research center agreements funded nationally by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to research critical health issues facing rural populations in our country.

Led by Jane N. Bolin, BSN, JD, PhD, SRHRC director, timely, cutting-edge research will be conducted by multidisciplinary teams across all departments of the School of Public Health.

“This is very important not only for Texas A&M University Health Science Center, but also for the state of Texas and the nation as a whole,” Bolin said. “Critical health research issues that were proposed include access to health insurance, maternal-child health, chronic diseases, overdose and addiction, environmental exposures and health information technology.”

The center will be addressing, among other things, the effects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) rating areas on the rural health insurance marketplace; rural prescription drug (opioid) use and abuse, including behavioral health consequences; rural health information technology (HIT) and eHealth; maternal, child and infant poverty and rural-urban health disparities in breastfeeding; and rural environmental health contaminants and exposures in children.

The center is the home of *Rural Healthy People 2010* and during this past year, released the much-anticipated update *Rural Healthy People 2020*, a companion document to Healthy People 2020. To receive a free electronic or hardcopy version, visit sph.tamhsc.edu/srhrc/.

Press release by Rae Lynn Mitchell

