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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heather Roberts, a graduate student in the doctoral program, College of Health Sciences, TWU, to be honored with Virginia Chandler Dykes Scholarship
Four Scholarship Awards to be presented at 10th Annual TWU Virginia Chandler Dykes Leadership Award Luncheon Honoring Myrna D. Schlegel and Kimberly Schlegel Whitman for their leadership and support of charitable and nonprofit organizations

Dallas, TX – December x, 2011 – Heather Roberts, a Denton resident and doctoral student in TWU’s College of Health Sciences, will receive one of four prestigious scholarships given by Texas Woman’s University at the 10th Annual Virginia Chandler Dykes Leadership Award Luncheon, presented by Bank of Texas, Texas Woman’s University, and the Texas Woman’s University Foundation, Feb. 16, at noon, at The Belo Mansion and Pavilion. Heather Robert’s scholarship is sponsored by Edgemere Dallas.

While in high school, Heather Roberts knew she’d pursue a degree in healthcare. Her mother, a nurse, convinced her to volunteer at their local hospital, and it was there she was introduced to her future love, occupational therapy.

“Occupational therapy is a wonderful combination of weaving medicine and teaching,” said Roberts. “It was very inspiring to watch the relationships the therapists formed with their patients, and I knew this would be something I would enjoy.”

Roberts received her bachelor’s in occupational therapy from Saint Louis University in 1999 and her master’s in health care administration from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2007. While pursuing her Ph.D. in occupational therapy at TWU, Roberts works in the Denton Independent School District as an occupational therapist. She plans to complete her Ph.D. in December 2013.

Prior to working with Denton ISD, Roberts spent eight years of her career at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

“I began my career in my home town of Belleville, Illinois, in a skilled nursing facility, but I always knew my passion was to work with children,” added Roberts. “Scottish Rite gave me wonderful experience. The physicians at Scottish Rite respect their therapists and look to them for their expertise. I was also fortunate enough to be able to participate in various research projects, and I had the opportunity to mentor students completing their clinical experiences.”

Roberts’ time at Texas Scottish Rite laid the foundation for her desire to pursue and develop her own area of research through the eyes of an occupational therapist. Hired as a staff therapist, she quickly found herself serving on many committees, most notably, on the Safe Patient Handling Committee, where she developed and provided in-services to hospital staff regarding a newly installed overhead lift system, transfers, and car seat safety. While on the Electronic Medical Record Committee, she worked to develop evaluation and online documentation, which required working with multiple departments throughout the hospital.

During her years at Texas Scottish Rite, she served as the director of a summer camp program for children with Anthrogyriposis, a rare congenital disorder that is characterized by multiple joint contractures and can include muscle weakness and fibrosis. The camp provides an opportunity for children to attend a sleep away camp. Due to its success, Roberts expanded the camp to include children under the age of 5 to attend with their parents, providing a support system for those families. She also created a Junior Counselor program for teens that had previously attended the camp and wanted to give back.

Upon completion of her master’s in health care administration in 2007, she was promoted to lead occupational therapist and assumed administration of the Clinical Educator program. Through her leadership, she not only enhanced the student program and the students’ Level I and Level II clinical experiences, but she also developed contracts with six universities in Texas including Texas Woman’s University. During this time she discovered her interest in teaching university students, and made plans to begin pursuing her Ph.D. at TWU.

“Receiving the Virginia Chandler Dykes Award is truly a blessing,” said Roberts. “The opportunities TWU has presented to me will allow me to pursue my dream of becoming a faculty member at a university, inspiring future occupational therapists, and working on my research with children on improving their roles and routines.”

Roberts is an avid runner, triathlete, certified scuba diver, and enjoys spending time with her family. She is married to Dr. Aaron Roberts, and they have one daughter.

In addition to Roberts, the other graduate students from all four TWU colleges who will be honored at the luncheon as recipients of scholarship funds include: **Tiffany Smith**, College of Arts & Sciences; sponsored by Sis Carr; **Kathleen Shannon-McAdams**, RN, MSN, ANP-BC, College of

Nursing, sponsored by CIGNA; **Hannah Mills**, College of Professional Education (COPE), sponsored by Geraldine “Tincy” Miller.

TWU’s 10th Annual Virginia Chandler Dykes Leadership Award Luncheon, Feb. 16 at the Belo Mansion and Pavilion, will honor Myrna D. Schlegel and Kimberly Schlegel Whitman, as the 2012 recipients of the Virginia Chandler Dykes Leadership Award. For more information, call Texas Woman’s University at 940-898-3878 or email foundation@twu.edu . Tickets are \$175 for Silver Patron and \$250 for Gold Patron.

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Texas Woman’s University is a public university that occupies a notable position in higher education as the nation’s largest university primarily for women. Its campuses in Denton, Dallas and Houston are joined by an e-learning campus offering innovative online degree programs in business, education and general studies. Ten consecutive years of growth have produced a record enrollment of 14,740. TWU serves the citizens of Texas in many important ways, including: graduating more new healthcare professionals than any other university in Texas; easing the teacher shortage by placing highly qualified professionals in the classroom; offering a liberal arts-based curriculum that prepares students for success in a global society; and conducting research that impacts the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity, osteoporosis, stroke and diabetes. For more information, visit www.twu.edu <<http://www.twu.edu>> or call (940) TWU-2000.