

## Increased State Premium-Sharing Helps Offset Rising Health-Care Costs

With the continually rising cost of health care, The University of Texas System has managed to maintain competitive rates without a reduction in benefits. This is absolutely great news, says UT Health Science

even though the cost of insurance premiums for benefits-eligible employees has increased consistently, the State of Texas has increased the premium sharing (a portion of the premiums the state pays) to help offset that cost."

Kidd credits the negotiation skills and hard work of the employees in the UT System Benefits Office with helping keep our premiums within reason. "The UT System insurance programs are among the largest in the state.

The administrators have been able to monitor claims utilization, review claims experience and request bids tailored to fit the needs of the statewide UT community, allowing us to maintain reasonable premium rates," she says. ★

See related information about your insurance choices for FY06 on Page 3. Visit <http://www.utsystem.edu/egi> for more detailed information.

Center Benefits Manager Rosemary Kidd, when you consider the rise in health care premiums across the United States.

"In addition, we are one of the few employers that still provides employee medical coverage at no cost to the individual employee and pays up to 50 percent of dependent coverage on the employee's behalf. This is a rarity and an excellent benefit," she emphasizes.

"Based on the national Employer Health Benefits 2004 Annual Survey, premiums of employer-sponsored health insurance in the United States are rising at a rate five times faster than workers' earnings," Kidd says. "So,

### Tracking Monthly Health Insurance Costs, FY04-06

The accompanying chart shows the total monthly premium cost, the employee's cost and the state contribution for the past, current and coming fiscal years.

| Insured                | 2003-2004     |               |               | 2004-2005     |               |               | 2005-2006     |               |               |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                        | Employer Pays | Employee Pays | Total Premium | Employer Pays | Employee Pays | Total Premium | Employer Pays | Employee Pays | Total Premium |
| <b>UT Select</b>       |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| Employee               | 287.77        | 0             | 287.77        | 301.83        | 0             | 301.83        | 330.30        | 0             | 330.30        |
| Employee/Spouse        | 438.93        | 124.14        | 563.07        | 459.78        | 129.76        | 589.54        | 503.26        | 142.05        | 645.31        |
| Employee/Children      | 384.48        | 129.84        | 514.32        | 402.89        | 135.68        | 538.57        | 440.96        | 148.57        | 589.53        |
| Family                 | 536.53        | 244.48        | 781.01        | 561.78        | 255.43        | 817.21        | 614.95        | 279.75        | 894.70        |
| <b>HMO Blue/Humana</b> |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| Employee               | 290.98        | 0             | 290.98        | 325.48        | 0             | 325.48        | 364.23        | 0             | 364.23        |
| Employee/Spouse        | 443.83        | 125.53        | 569.36        | 495.9         | 139.97        | 635.87        | 555.08        | 156.74        | 711.82        |
| Employee/Children      | 388.77        | 131.29        | 520.06        | 434.51        | 146.39        | 580.90        | 486.33        | 163.93        | 650.26        |
| Family                 | 542.53        | 247.22        | 789.75        | 605.95        | 275.64        | 881.59        | 678.31        | 308.68        | 986.99        |

## Centennial Ceremony Highlights HSC Commencement Line-Up

**Editor's Note:** Public Affairs staff members covered three of the commencement ceremonies at the UT Health Science Center this year. Their impressions follow.

Centennial in style, successful by design and sensational by any measure — the commencement ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of The University of Texas Dental Branch at Houston was the highlight of the UT Health Science Center's six graduation ceremonies this spring.

With remarks by UT dignitaries, the attendance of former Dental Branch deans, degree presentations by parents and a jubilant reception, the oldest dental school in Texas celebrated graduation in a big way.

Sixty-five students in the D.D.S. program participated in the ceremony, 16 students received their dental hygiene certificates and 22 received a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene.

Graduate Cecelia Hong Reid said the graduation left her with a feeling that was hard to describe. "This day is a reminder of the benefits of working hard. I would tell anyone pursuing the D.D.S. never to give up," she said.

Keynote speaker Jerry Long, D.D.S., president of the UTDB Alumni Association, also spoke of the importance of perseverance and giving back in his message to the graduates.

"Every dentist or dental hygienist who has graduated from this institution over the past 100 years has made a deposit in your account," Long told the graduates.

"Chances are you would not have chosen a career in dentistry if these men and women had not been exemplary in their commitment to their patients, to society and to the profession. The taxpayers of this state have identified dentistry as a noble and necessary health-care service and have told their elected officials that this profession is essential to our nation's health and well-being. The University of Texas and this health science center have committed to training oral health-care professionals to serve the citizens of Texas, as well as enhance the image and

prestige of this great institution.

"Now it's your turn. You can literally consume everything that dentistry has to offer and one day simply toss the profession aside. Or you can begin a lifetime of repaying those who have invested so much in you and your chosen career."

Other special guest speakers included UT System Regent H. Scott Caven; James T. Willerson, M.D., president of the UT Health Science Center at Houston; and Kenneth Shine, M.D., UT System executive vice chancellor for Health Affairs, who delivered the remarks of UT System Chancellor Mark Yudof, J.D., who planned to attend, but could not be present.

"From its beginnings, the Dental Branch

has been a leader in research, innovation, and preventive dentistry. One hundred years and more than 5,000 graduates after its beginnings, it is one of the preeminent schools of dentistry in the nation," Yudof wrote. "And as the most recent graduating class, you are the beneficiaries of 100 years of hard work, outstanding teaching and continuing devotion to the advancement of your profession. You carry with you all our hopes for an improved profession and a healthier Texas."

Several distinguished alumni, as well as two former deans, Don Allen, D.D.S., who served from 1982-1992, and Ronald Johnson, D.D.S., who served from 1996-2002 and now serves as the vice president for Strategic Affairs at the UT Health Science Center at Houston, were present.

David Kostohryz, D.D.S., a 1978 graduate of the UTDB, saw his son, David Kostohryz Jr., graduate. "I am elated and excited. He has always determined to reach his goals and to progress," Kostohryz said. "I think what I most enjoyed from these four years is seeing all his friends."

Several fathers presented their sons and daughters with their degrees as they crossed the stage, siblings graduated together, and graduates who became the first

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Dental Branch Centennial graduates proudly sing "The Eyes of Texas" at commencement's close.

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### The Leader Remembers ...

Mike Jimenez, former vice president and chief human resources officer, who died from prostate cancer in June. We will miss his intelligence, his insight, his humor, his caring nature, his perseverance and his smile. Thanks, Mike, for all you did for the betterment of the UT Health Science Center at Houston.



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of TEXAS  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER  
AT HOUSTON