Living Legacy: Explore Important Issues with Your Family

By Pamela Lewis, *Institutional Advancement*

Maybe you're part of a single-parent family that's filled with love but not much money.

Maybe your family has a profitable business and a large package of other assets.

Then, again, maybe you're from that proverbial middle class family — 2.5 kids and a dog — as well as a highly mortgaged dwelling and more debt left over from putting those 2.5 through college, and graduate school, and medical school …

Whatever your family monetary status, however, nearly every family has a number of legacies to be passed on to the next generation, according to certified financial planner Richard Kiley, the speaker at a recent Lunch and Learn seminar sponsored by the UT WorkLife Services program.

"If I do my job today, I will point you toward taking some action in your family based on the information I'll share with you. If you haven't done so, this a good time of year to start talking to your family members about this since families frequently gather during the holidays," Kiley said.

It's best not to wait until an illness or health scare happens to begin the conversation because family members can be very sensitive and emotional at such times, he said. It's best to begin the conversation by talking about values and life lessons, rather than financial issues and "don't forget to include grandchildren and great-grandchildren in the process as a way to develop legacy discussions as an ongoing tradition."

A legacy, he said, includes all parts of a person's life: family traditions, history, values, wishes, as well as any financial inheritance.

Kiley offered a number of tips, taken from the Allianz American Legacies study, to follow when starting a conversation about the topic:

1) Values and life lessons cover ethics and moral teachings, faith and religion, and family traditions and stories, such as
   a. A specific lesson or teaching to pass on to future generations.
   b. Religious convictions that provide guidance for your life and family.
   c. Favorite family stories to document.
2) Instructions and wishes to be fulfilled cover health and well-being directives, living arrangements, and final wishes and directives, such as
   a. Directives for life-support measures.
   b. A specific retirement or assisted living community you have considered.
   c. Specific ideas for funeral arrangements, burial or cremation.
3) Personal possessions of emotional value cover how and to whom they should be distributed, the passing on of pictures, journals, diaries, family histories, and household items, such as
   a. Collections or memorabilia with emotional value to you and your family members.
   b. How you have designated who gets what.
4) Financial assets or real estate cover various items of financial value, your primary home and other land or dwellings, such as
   a. Have you had these assets appraised recently and how would you like them distributed?
   b. Do you have long-term care or life insurance?
   c. Do you want to leave gifts to charities or other organizations?

You may be surprised, Kiley said, about what other family members feel is most important.

Benefits-eligible employees can receive a referral to Rick Kiley for a free 30-minute phone consultation. Visit http://www.uthouston.edu/worklife/ or contact Sam.Hester@uth.tmc.edu. ★

Compliance: Is It OK to Hire a Family Member as an HSC Employee?

Q: My department will post a new position with Human Resources next week for an administrative assistant. My daughter is looking for work. I think she would be great at this job and, as the hiring supervisor, I'd like to hire her. Can I do that?

A: Because you would be directly supervising your daughter, the answer to your question, "Can I do that?" is "No."

Why? Because The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston must obey Texas laws concerning the employment of relatives (nepotism). In general, individuals may not be employed in a position that would result in their being supervised directly or indirectly by a close relative. Two primary areas must be examined, says Karen Parsons, director, Institutional Compliance:

• Reporting Relationship: No employee of The University of Texas System or any of its institutions may approve, recommend or act on the appointment, promotion or salary of a close relative.

This means that no employee is permitted to work within a direct reporting relationship when one close relative's work responsibilities, salary, hours, career progress, benefits or other employment issues could be influenced by the other relative. This includes all levels of administrative supervisors, from the lowest to the highest, not just the immediate supervisor.

• Close Relative: You also must consider the way in which the two people are related. For university purposes, a "close relative" of an employee is defined as one of the following: parent, grandparent, child, brother or sister, aunt, uncle, cousin, spouse, or any spouse's relatives related to the spouse in the same degree as those previously mentioned.

For more information, consult the *Handbook on Operating Procedures,* Policy 2.25 or contact the Office of Legal Affairs and Institutional Compliance. ★

Darlington Named Second Jimenez Leadership in Action Award Winner

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dents in the program, a role that is critical for the progress of the students through this complex training program."

• Cheryl Spitzenberger, assistant to the dean, UT-GSBS wrote: "I've worked with Paul Darlington for nearly 24 years and believe he's perfect for the leadership award. Paul leads by example, with a gentle hand. He is so good himself that he makes you strive to do your very best. He has a way of untangling even the worst situations, patiently collecting facts until the solutions become clear. Paul also brought order to the GSBS administration — we call him 'Gridley' because he drew up elaborate grids for orientation and graduation, outlining who would do what and when. We had never heard of such a thing! But he was right, and under his steady leadership we now have nearly seamless events that improve every year. Paul is one of the best things that ever happened to GSBS and the HSC, and he genuinely deserves this award."

• Jeannice Theriot, database and software administrator, GSBS, who shepherded Darlington's nomination, said: "Paul invited me to consider database training in order to develop a new information system for the GSBS where he envisioned all the school's applicant, student, faculty and alumni information would reside. I owe my transition from administrative support to software developer solely to the mentoring, support and vision of Paul Darlington. In this one vision he not only changed the career of a staff member, he also ushered in a new system which re-engineered labor-intensive tasks performed by all of the GSBS staff. In doing so he increased the school's overall productivity significantly. Without exception, we staff members find Paul to be intelligent, skillful, pleasant and very willing to help us find solutions to our work needs. I believe Paul sets the bar for what leadership should be in the HSC and hope you will agree with me."

• Athanasia Panopoulos, Ph.D., GSBS student: "The impressions and examples students acquire in graduate school are very important. They help define what kind of students we become, what kind of teachers we become, what kind of leaders we become, and in many ways, what kind of people we become. Paul serves as a perfect example of ways to combine warmth while maintaining professionalism, and guidance while maintaining discipline. He treats the students with respect, and it is always clear that they are his top priority. He raises graduate school expectations, but helps students believe that they can reach them. His ever-present enthusiasm and positive attitude are always uplifting. We all adore Paul, and his example will last a lifetime." ★

Others nominated for the Jimenez Award

In alphabetical order:
Michael Blackburn, Ph.D.
Linda Brannon
Jodie Conyers, Ph.D.
Charlie Figari
Deanna Hoelscher, Ph.D.
Robert Hunter, M.D., Ph.D.
Phil Johnson, M.D.
Paul Kattapong
Brent King, M.D.
Marylee Kott, M.D.
Catherine Moore
Randy Scott, Ph.D.
Christopher Smith, D.V.M.
Linda Soliz
John Valenza, D.D.S.

A Picture of Oral Rehydration Therapy

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Schultz's simple, elegant research showed that restoring the body's balance of salt and glucose resulted in rapid rehydration in the mucus lining of the intestines. A miracle cure in a small packet of sodium chloride, potassium chloride and glucose, mixed in a gallon of drinking water.

For his life-long work on the mechanisms of sodium and glucose coupled absorption in the small intestine, the American Physiological Society (APS) honored Schultz with the 2003 Daggs Award, a prestigious award given in recognition of distinguished contributions to the science of physiology and to the APS organization.

Also, the New York School of Medicine honored Schultz with the 2003 Solomon A. Berson Medical Alumni Achievement Award in Clinical Science, an award given for career contributions in clinical and basic science.

"I love research, but I'm a physician at heart, it's rewarding to know my finding has saved millions of lives yearly."

As happens so often in research, Schultz discovered the role of sodium in solute absorption almost accidentally. "I truly stumbled on the finding, but recognized it immediately," he said. "It was a very dramatic moment."

In 1962, while he was a captain in the medical corps at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, Schultz studied how substances were transported across membranes. During a routine experiment, he noticed that when he added sugar and sodium to the mucosal surface of small intestinal tissue, an increase in total sodium transport occurred. This indicated that both sugar and sodium were transferred into the tissue simultaneously.

The finding was beautiful in its simplicity. Water re-absorption is coupled with sodium re-absorption in the body; therefore, increasing sodium and glucose levels in the gut would result in rapid rehydration. To prevent or treat dehydration, a person could drink a solution of sodium salts and glucose – a simple, effective and inexpensive cure.

"The mechanism of sodium absorption by the gut is now a standard model for the small intestine and the kidney," said Schultz, who is the holder of the Fondren Family Chair in Cellular Signaling at the Medical School. "It's turned out to be a universal mechanism by which many nutrients and solutes are absorbed."

Schultz has continued to study the mechanism of cellular membrane transport. "My research pursuit is to dot every 'i,' cross every 't,' and to fully understand, at the cellular level, how epithelial cells absorb sodium," he said.

He believes in the pursuit of pure knowledge and in the understanding of natural phenomena. "Very often that understanding leads down paths to treatments of disease and an understanding that you never expected," he said. "That's the value of basic research. It doesn't start out with a great, useful treatment in mind – it starts out by trying to understand a phenomenon, but so often in science, this understanding has led to important discoveries. Discoveries that result in practical applications of great benefit to humankind."

Schultz received his M.D. degree from New York University College of Medicine. He taught biophysics at Harvard Medical School and was professor of physiology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine before joining the UT Medical School.

Note: Part of this article is excerpted from a Distinctions *article published in 2003.*