

UT Academy Holds Innovations Conference

John Valenza, D.D.S., and colleagues from the UT Dental Branch at Houston, received the third place Innovations Award for “Clinical Simulation: Combining Realism Technology and Learning” at the third annual Innovations in Health Science Education Conference in October at the J. J. Pickle Research Campus at The University of Texas at Austin.

The themes for the conference, sponsored by The University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education, were Faculty Development and Educational Research.

L. Maximilian Buja, M.D., executive vice president for academic affairs and president of the academy, presided at the meeting.

Other health science center academy members are Frank Arnett, M.D., Medical School (MS); L. Kay Bartholomew, Ed.D., School of Public Health; Eugene Boisubin, M.D., MS, Marianne Marcus, Ed.D., School of Nursing; John McMahon, Ph.D., MS; Philip Orlander, M.D., MS; Leslie Roeder, D.D.S., Dental Branch; and Gary Rosenfeld, Ph.D., MS.

The academy also awarded six small grants to faculty for new projects. Three of the six small grants awarded went to UT Medical School at Houston faculty:

- Chitra Chandrasekhar, M.D., “Computer Assisted Radiology Education (CARE): Curriculum Development For Medical Students”;



Joe Ontiveros, D.D.S., foreground, demonstrates how a model would be shown at the instructor's station of the Clinical Simulation & Learning Center and then broadcast to the student monitors, such as the one where John Valenza, D.D.S., is seated. Photo by Brian Schnupp

- Allison Ownby, Ph.D., “Using Standardized Patients and Individual Learning Plans to Refine Residents’ Professional Behavior and Communication Skills”; and
- David Robinson, M.D., and collaborator Joanne Oakes, M.D., “The WECARE program: The Women’s Early Comprehensive Cardiac Assessment and Risk Education Program.”

More details about the academy and the Innovations in Health Science Education Conference are online at <http://www.utsystem.edu/academy/hsc/>.

— **Camille Webb and Pamela Lewis** contributed to this article

★ ★ ★ NewsBriefs ★ ★ ★

\$2.7 Million Grant Will Boost Discovery at Gulf Coast Institutions

The John S. Dunn Foundation has made a gift of \$2.7 million to support the acquisition of sophisticated robotics and large collections of chemical compounds and molecular reagents to support drug discovery research by investigators from six Gulf Coast institutions.

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston will serve as the project’s lead institution on behalf of the Gulf Coast Consortia (GCC), a collaborative alliance for interdisciplinary bioscience training and research composed of Baylor College of Medicine, UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, Rice University, the University of Houston, the UT Medical Branch at

Galveston and the UT Health Science Center.

“This special gift from the Dunn Foundation will propel the research within our GCC institutions forward in new ways and open novel experimental avenues to our investigators across the region,” said Kathleen Matthews, Ph.D., GCC Oversight Committee chair and dean of Natural Sciences at Rice University. “We are deeply appreciative of the on-going support of the Dunn Foundation in our GCC research programs.”

The program, to be known as the John S. Dunn Gulf Coast Consortium for Chemical Genomics, will jump-start the work of scientists at all participating GCC institutions by

helping to provide the infrastructure, equipment, genomics libraries and seed grants necessary to speed new drug discoveries.

“This support from the Dunn Foundation will enable the Gulf Coast Consortia to put in place an academic drug discovery program that will speed the translation of basic research discoveries into new avenues for the treatment of human diseases,” said Peter J. A. Davies, M.D., Ph.D., health science center executive vice president for Research. Davies also is director of the John S. Dunn Gulf Coast Consortium for Chemical Genomics.

— **David R. Bates**

Parents’ Racial Messages Impact African-American First Graders, Researcher Says

The impact of an African-American parent’s messages to his or her child about race differs depending on the types of neighborhood in which they live, finds a study by lead investigator Margaret O’Brien Caughy, Sc.D., associate professor of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences at the UT School of Public Health’s Dallas Regional Campus. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development funded the study, which was published in a recent issue of *Child Development*.

Previous research has shown that African-American parents who inspire racial pride and awareness in their home raise children with better cognitive development and fewer behavioral problems, while the children of parents who promote racial stereotyping often have more

behavior problems. Researchers wanted to learn if those findings were consistent in a wide range of neighborhoods.

The study included 241 African-American first-grade students and their parents who live in a variety of neighborhoods in an urban area. Researchers asked the parents questions about their attitudes on parenting, how they talk about race with their child, and if they prepare their child for discrimination. The researchers also noted whether the home contained books, music, artwork and other elements reflecting African-American culture. Finally, the researchers interviewed the child to determine his/her cognitive development.

“We found that a home rich in African-American culture was associated with better cognitive development

for first graders who lived in high-risk neighborhoods,” Caughy said. “High-risk neighborhoods” were defined as areas with high poverty, signs of physical disorder such as trash and graffiti, and fear among residents.

Researchers also found that a parent telling a child not to trust another race could cause more behavioral problems for a child living in a low-risk neighborhood, but not for a child living in a high-risk neighborhood.

Caughy cautioned that there is “no one size fits all” when it comes to raising a child. “Our study just supports the conclusion that messages about race affect young African-American children differently depending on the community in which they live,” she said.

— **Melissa McDonald**

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 15 - JANUARY 14

Please send Calendar items for the February issue of *The Leader* which covers Feb. 15-March 14, to Pamela.Lewis@uth.tmc.edu by Jan. 18.

★ December

20 — President’s Update, noon, Sarofim Research Building Auditorium.

25-26 — Christmas Holidays (full closure)

27-29 — Christmas Holidays (skeleton crew)

★ January

1 — New Year’s Day Holiday (full closure)

5 — “Intervention Studies to Prevent Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders,” noon, School of Public Health Auditorium.

9 — Clinical Research Nurse/Coordinator Education 101 Course: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.,

Jan. 9 and 10; 8:30-noon, Jan. 11; 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Jan. 16; 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Jan. 17; and 8:30-11:30 a.m., Jan. 18, Medical School Building (MSB), Room B.605.

10 — HR Employee Motivation Course, 9-11 a.m., MSB, Room B.645.

15 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day (full closure)

Calendar listings received after deadline for *The Leader* can be found online at <http://publicaffairs.uth.tmc.edu/calendar/>. To submit an item to the online calendar, visit http://publicaffairs.uth.tmc.edu/calendar/submitevent_new.asp.

Medical School Dean Search Progresses

Several internal and external candidates have been interviewed during the search for the next dean of the Medical School. After concluding interviews, the committee will forward its short list of candidates to President James Willerson, M.D., who will interview the candidates and make a selection.

Search committee members: From the HSC: Brent King, M.D., chair; Frank Arnett, M.D.; Marsha Brody-Silva, ex officio; Kevin Dillon; Susan John, M.D.; Samuel Kaplan, Ph.D.; Gary Rosenfeld, Ph.D.; George Stancel, Ph.D.; Peter Davies, M.D., Ph.D.

From partners: Juanita Romans, Memorial Hermann Hospital-Texas Medical Center; Elizabeth Shpall, UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.

— **Melissa McDonald**



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DEADLINES

Submit information to be considered for publication in *The Leader* by the 15th of the month one month prior to the desired time of publication. Requests for feature articles require a longer lead time and will receive strategic consideration. Send electronic information in Word format (no PDFs or posters) and digital photos as unedited, high-resolution images at 300 dpi or better. E-mail to Pamela.Lewis@uth.tmc.edu. Include a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Mail hard copy to *The Leader*, c/o Pamela Lewis, Office of Institutional Advancement, University Center Tower, 1200, or fax to 713-500-3037. For information regarding *The Leader*, call Pamela Lewis, 713-500-3040.

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