

Change Has Been in the Air: Check Out the Results

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Midkiff has almost 25 years of experience managing complex government affairs issues and legislation in Texas and Washington, D.C., in addition to other areas of the country. She has worked for the governor of Texas, the Texas General Land Office, Houston Mayor Bob Lanier and Houston-based Dynegy Inc.

Midkiff is active in the Greater Houston Partnership's state and federal relations committees and the Texas Medical Center's Government Relations Advisory Committee. She is a board member of both the March of Dimes and Neighborhood Centers Inc.

Finance & Administration

Michael Tramonte, formerly assistant vice president in the Office of Finance and Administration, was named Controller for the UT Health Science Center Feb. 1.

As a part of Tramonte's role as Controller, he will assume oversight of the Benefits area, in addition to continuing oversight of Payroll, General Accounting, Cash



Michael Tramonte

Management, Capital Assets, Payment and Account Facilitation, Systems Data Resources, Financial Administrative Support, Employee Reimbursement and the Bursar's Office.

Benefits now reports directly to Dee Warren, director of Payroll. Benefits formerly reported to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

"Because of Mike's outstanding financial and people skills, he has assumed even greater responsibilities than he had previously, for health science center financial and administrative functions," said Kevin Dillon, to whom Tramonte reports. "Mike also took an important, institution-wide leadership role in our response to a 2004 State Auditor's Office cash control report, as well as in preparation for Deloitte's financial statement audit work here, in 2005. He's a tireless and effective manager who gets things done."

Education

School of Health Information Sciences

Jack W. Smith, M.D., Ph.D., is dean of the UT School of Health Information Sciences at Houston (SHIS). "Dr. Smith has proved himself to be an excellent leader, builder, scientist and educator throughout his time at our institution," said James T. Willerson, M.D., president of the UT Health Science Center.

"I know that he will do an outstanding job leading our smallest but most unique school to great accomplishments."

In addition to his deanship, Smith has a faculty appointment in the UT Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston. He was a founder of the branch of medical informatics and health care systems at NASA's Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center and served as its first deputy director.

Smith is project lead at NASA on the design of future health-care systems for the new exploration class space missions for the return to the moon and Mars.

Smith said that health informatics research is playing an increasingly crucial role in health care, such as helping to reduce the high number of medical errors.

SHIS is the newest school at the health science center, replacing the School of Allied Health Sciences in 1997. It offers master's and doctoral candidates an interdisciplinary graduate education, bringing together computer scientists and health care professionals to discover how best to compile, manage and distribute health-related information.

"Our goal is to advance personalized health care by providing the right information to the right person at the right time in the right format," said Smith. "We educate our graduates to use health information technology to do just that."

Clinical Practice

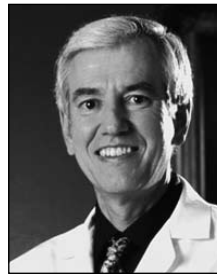
Medical School Clinical Practice Plan

Managing a faculty practice plan that grows ever more complex has led to a realignment of responsibilities at the top of the organization. The practice plan is an integral part of the health science center, Michael McKinney, M.D., senior executive vice president and chief operating officer for the UT Health Science Center at Houston, said when he and Medical School Dean Stanley Schultz, M.D., announced the changes.

Michael Bungo, M.D., has been appointed vice dean for clinical affairs, a new full-time position that allows the Medical School to consolidate and focus administrative leadership at its two primary teaching hospitals, Memorial Hermann — Texas



Jack W. Smith, M.D., Ph.D.



Michael Bungo, M.D.

Medical Center and LBJ General Hospital. He now serves as CEO of UT Physicians.

Richard Andrassy, M.D., remains associate dean for clinical affairs and will work with clinical faculty to identify and solve problems and serve as a liaison to the leadership of the organization. Andrassy, who holds the Denton A. Cooley, M.D., Chair in Surgery, also continues as chairman of the board of UT Physicians and chairman of the Department of Surgery.

Both report to the dean of the Medical School.

UT Health Services

Elizabeth Fuselier, D.N.P., is the new executive clinical director of the School of Nursing's UT Health Services. She succeeds Thomas Mackey, Ph.D., who is the new associate dean for Practice at the UT School of Nursing at Houston.

Fuselier recently received her doctorate in nursing practice from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis. Since 1968, she has been the lead nurse practitioner at Ochsner Clinical Foundation in New Orleans where she was responsible for all administrative and professional issues affecting 120 advanced practice nurses. She practiced in the Department of Internal Medicine and occasionally in the Emergency Room, Fast Track and Pediatric Departments.

"UT Health Services is already an exemplary nursing institution that has been created under the previous guidance of Tom Mackey. As the new director, I wish to continue this tradition of excellence expanding to new innovative frontiers in patient care and nursing technology as we meet the challenges of the 21st century," Fuselier said.



Elizabeth Fuselier, D.N.P.



Richard Andrassy, M.D.

Research

Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine

C. Thomas Caskey, M.D., has been appointed chief operating officer and president and chief executive officer-elect of the Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine for the Prevention of Human Diseases (IMM), part of the UT Health Science Center at Houston. Caskey began this role Jan. 2.

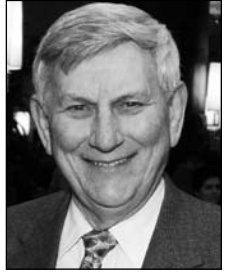
Nobel Laureate Ferid Murad, M.D., Ph.D., holder of the John S. Dunn Distinguished University Chair in Physiology and Medicine, continues as the institute's director and chief executive officer and as director of its Research Center for Cell Signaling. Murad also will lead a new institutional advisory board made up of selected IMM faculty and community leaders.

Caskey was founding director of Houston-based Cogene Biotech Ventures and Cogene Ventures, venture capital funds supporting early-stage biotechnology and life sciences companies.

The Cogene Biotech Ventures fund, founded in March 2000, invests in companies that utilize genome technology to enable drug discovery in high growth therapeutic specialties such as cancer, neurology and the metabolic diseases of obesity and diabetes.

"Dr. Caskey is a distinguished scientist with a highly respected record of accomplishment in his research field, as well as success in his private-sector enterprises," said James T. Willerson, M.D., president. "In his new role, Dr. Caskey will be responsible for the daily operations of the IMM, as well as helping to develop research programs and to recruit additional world-class scientists to our institution. We are delighted to have Dr. Caskey join Dr. Murad and Dr. Irma Gigli, deputy director, in a new management structure that will achieve even greater success for the IMM."

Murad and Caskey have been scientific colleagues for more than 37 years. "I am very pleased that Tom Caskey has recently joined our current management team in the IMM," Murad said. "Tom brings some fresh ideas and perspectives to help us continue to recruit senior and junior scientists who will permit us to understand some important diseases through their molecular research approaches." ★



C. Thomas Caskey, M.D.

Miracle Near Beechnut Street

UT Neurosurgery Team Puts Teen on the Road to Recovery

By Meredith Raine, Public Affairs

Leslie "Devin" Olive was riding a motorcycle when her life took a sudden turn.

It was late at night, and the driver of a car made an illegal U-turn, causing a collision with the motorcycle.

It almost killed her. Her head hit the side of the car, and then she hit the pavement. The driver kept going, and Devin was left in the dark near Beechnut Street. Another car ran over one of her legs before anyone realized there had been an accident.

Devin, 19, calls the highway horror a blessing in disguise. And while she has no memory of it, she describes what happened in the next month as nothing short of a miracle.

When Devin arrived at Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Texas Medical Center, the pressure inside her skull was four times higher than the normal range. Traditional therapies for traumatic brain injury failed to bring down the pressure.

The prognosis was bleak. If Devin survived, in all likelihood, she would be severely disabled, unable to communicate or care for herself.

Aaron Mohanty, M.D., an assistant profes-

sor in the Department of Neurosurgery at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, initially removed a portion of her skull in an attempt to relieve pressure caused by swollen brain tissue. Even then, the pres-

sure remained dangerously high.

He then medically induced a coma in an attempt to reduce the intracranial pressure. Still, there were no signs of a favorable response.



Devin Olive takes time out from her outpatient therapy at TIRR Challenge Program to play with Emma, a Golden Retriever that works with brain injury patients. Photo by Tishauna Washington

It was time for Mohanty and Devin's parents to make some tough decisions.

Mohanty told Devin's parents about a procedure he thought might help. He could perform a lumbar puncture by inserting a needle through the lower back into the spinal canal and draining a small amount of spinal fluid through a catheter. In his previous experience at a Phoenix hospital, this helped to bring down and stabilize intracranial pressure in children with similar head injuries. If it worked, Devin wouldn't need additional surgery to relieve pressure.

Mohanty tempered the information with harsh facts.

"He told us it was unconventional and isn't normally done on adults," Devin's mother, LaDona Kincade, said. "It would make an immediate difference. She would either live or she would continue to deteriorate."

Because the pressure in Devin's brain was so high, Kincade was worried that another surgery would be too risky. "It was the hardest decision we ever had to make, but we felt the lumbar drain was the right thing to do."

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