

Fun Fest Photos



Entry to Fun Fest. Photo by Nancy Hudgins



The crowd partakes of all that is Fun Fest. Photo by Jennifer Canup



Nancy Willerson, left, and Lynn Cutrer, manager, patient and community relations, bid on silent auction items. Photo by Nancy Hudgins



Randolph Scott, Ph.D., associate dean for management, School of Health Information Sciences, enjoys the masquerade theme. Photo by Nancy Hudgins



The dance floor was crowded for the cha-cha slide. Photo by Jennifer Canup



The Cook-Off judges prepare for their tasks. Photo by Nancy Hudgins



The ice cream vendor was popular at Fun Fest. Photo by Jennifer Canup

Students Will Reap Big Benefit with Arrival of New Dental School Building

By Erika Durham Hargrove, Dental Branch

Students entering the UT Dental Branch approximately five years from now will reap the benefits of \$60 million in Tuition Revenue Bonds from the Texas legislature and another \$18 million in a recent University of Texas System allocation from the Permanent University Fund (PUF) that the UT Dental Branch received to construct a new building and a bright future.

"At this point, the excitement and energy felt at the UT Dental Branch is hard to contain. We now have nearly \$78 million to construct a new building and academically enhance our institution," said Dean Catherine M. Flaitz, D.D.S. "We are grateful and elated.

"The most encouraging aspect of receiving the PUF allocation is that it comes just two months after Texas legislators passed down their own \$60 million vote of confidence," she said. "Following a hugely successful Centennial year, we believe these measures of support come from knowing that the Dental Branch has made valuable contributions to the wellbeing and quality of life of Texans through oral health education, research and community service – and the best is yet to come."

The new school will be constructed with the big picture in mind — current responsibilities, as well as future endeavors. With the class size of the school increasing from 74 to 84 this fall, a large part of the big picture is growth in size of the facility, as well as technological advancements.

This fall a \$1 million state-of-the-art simulation clinic opened, providing students with the latest in patient care technology, including the use of electronic patient records. This clinic will give students more advanced hands-on experience before they begin working with patients.

These advancements can only improve the accomplishments of a student body that is already excelling. In academic achievements the Dental Branch received an unprecedented review from the Commission on

Dental Accreditation, with 17 commendations and no recommendations for improvement in 2005. Later that year, the class of 2006 placed the Dental Branch at sixth in the nation for their scores on the National Board Exam, Part 1.

The new location for the Dental Branch will be in The University of Texas Research Park, a 100-acre development housing health science center and UT M. D. Anderson facilities at the south end of the Texas Medical Center, bordered by Old Spanish Trail, Knight Road, Cambridge Street and El Paseo.

This location has several advantages for the Dental Branch:

- Accessibility and convenience are important aspects in the planning of the complex, which is less than three miles from the middle of the medical center. Gerard Marchand, manager of Facilities Planning, who has project oversight, anticipates that a shuttle service will transport people between the UT Research Park and the Texas Medical Center's main campus.
- In addition, the UT Research Park is within walking distance from University Housing, which is sure to be a welcome convenience to students.
- Patients also will have accessible parking



The blended photo of the UT Dental Branch shows the Dental Branch currently and in the 1950s. The photo won first place in the Texas Medical Center photo contest. Photo by Brian Schnupp, Dental Branch

with a garage to be constructed in the immediate area.

The Dental Branch will solicit additional funding from foundations and private individuals for construction, equipment, research expansion, faculty endowments and student scholarships. The building is estimated to cost at least \$90 million and to be completed by the end of 2010.

Stephen F. Schwartz, D.D.S., Dental Branch alumnus and Houston endodontist, will lead the fund-raising efforts.

Schwartz said he is determined to see

that the new dental school is more than just another building going up. "I want to create, not just build, the best dental education institute in the world," he said.

"I am most interested in increasing the endowments, professorships, scholarships and research grants at the Dental Branch. I want to establish a certain caliber of school, and the building will be an extension that accommodates and complements what is inside. As we sit in the great Texas Medical Center, it is only natural that we should have the finest dental school in the world here," Schwartz said. ★