

Growth of Facilities, Recruitment & Programs a Continuing Theme at UTHSC

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Imaging and Research in collaboration with UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center and GE Medical Imaging,” Willerson explains.

“We will have as a synergistic continuum, a neuroscience research center, which adds the imaging component necessary for novel clinical translational research of heart and vascular disease, the brain, and cancer, including input from Dr. Jack Byrne and his memory research, and Dr. James Grotta and his efforts in stroke treatment,” Willerson says. “IMM scientists will work on degenerative brain diseases, including Alzheimer’s, Lou Gehrig’s Disease, recovery from strokes and spinal cord injuries.”

In addition, we will be at work on our expanded collaboration with TIRR (The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research), merged with UT Health Science Center in

education and research, which will put the spotlight on research and treatment to aid more complete recovery of patients from strokes and spinal cord injuries, including the use of stem cells.

PUF funds also have been given by the UT System Board of Regents towards completion of the Medical School’s Research Replacement Facility (120,000 square feet of new research space) on the main campus where the new two-floor vivarium will house research animals out of the way of harm from adverse weather. “This increase also allows us to recruit additional scientists who will find the new research space beneficial for their research studies,” states Willerson.

“In addition, due to the need for more well-trained clinical and research professionals in the state and around the country, we

are increasing class sizes at all of our schools and also increasing teaching faculty as needed to continue to provide superior education for our students and attain top ranking for all six of our schools,” Dr. Willerson says.

In our affiliation with Texas Heart Institute, the entire ninth floor of the Cooley building is devoted to IMM cardiology and vascular research.

The UT Health Science Center’s ongoing collaboration with the Memorial Hermann Hospital System and Memorial Herman Hospital-Texas Medical Center offers continued growth in a number of areas. At the new MHH ambulatory clinic, adjacent to the UT Professional Building, our physicians will provide anesthesiology and radiology services. The new facilities for the University Clinical Research Center in the hospital’s Robertson Pavilion are

another collaborative effort. And, of course, Memorial Hermann-TMC continues to be the Medical School’s main teaching hospital.

“We look forward to exciting work and growth at the Institute for Health Policy of the School of Public Health as the former Texas Commissioner of Health, Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, a graduate of the UT Health Science Center’s Master’s of Public Health, leaves Austin, becoming the Institute Director in October,” Willerson says. There is no other Health Policy Institute in the state of Texas, and Dr. Sanchez will help foster collaboration in Austin with the new satellite of SPH.

“This year is sure to be an exciting one in many ways as we continue to make great strides in the future development of our campus and programs,” the president says. ★

UT System Regents Grant \$77.1 Million for New Health Science Center Buildings

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“This new building is about more than just a replacement facility; it’s about improving an entire institution and subsequently the health of our community and the advancement of the dental profession,” explains Catherine M. Flaitz, D.D.S., dean of the UT Dental Branch. “This building will be constructed with the next 20 years in mind.”

The UT Dental Branch will seek additional funding from foundations and private individuals for construction, equipment, research expansion, faculty endowments and student scholarships. Houston endodontist Stephen F. Schwartz, D.D.S., a UT Dental Branch alumnus, will lead the fund-raising campaign.

“Our dental education program, the only

one in the Texas Medical Center, deserves a state-of-the-art facility where the world’s best dental clinicians can collaborate with the best in oral health research,” Willerson said. “We at the health science center recognize the importance of oral health in relationship to systemic health and quality of life, and I look forward to helping Dean Flaitz complete fund-raising and construction of our new dental school.”

Both the Biomedical Research and Education Center and the new dental school building will be located in the UT Research Park, a 100-acre site that is being jointly developed by the UT Health Science Center and The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center on the “South

Campus” of the Texas Medical Center.

The Regents also approved \$18 million to support ongoing construction of the Research Replacement Facility at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston. The six-story research building at Fannin Street and John Freeman Boulevard in the Texas Medical Center should be ready for occupancy by fall 2007. The total cost of \$80.53 million is being met with state dollars and funding from a variety of sources – including philanthropic gifts, tuition revenue bonds from the Legislature, two National Institutes of Health grants, and Federal Emergency Management Agency and insurance payments from Tropical Storm Allison losses.

“We are delighted that the UT System Board of Regents, in providing these funds, continues to nurture our research mission and the training of scientists and clinical investigators of the future,” says Jerry S. Wolinsky, M.D., interim dean of the UT Medical School at Houston. “The new building will give us a state-of-the-art animal care facility and four floors of critical environments for attracting new scientists and strengthening our current expertise in basic and translational research, where multiple emerging areas of knowledge will improve the lives of Texans and the larger international community for generations to come.” ★

School Accomplishments and Planning Ahead

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School of Public Health

Guy Parcel, Ph.D., dean

“This has been an outstanding year for the UT School of Public Health. We have successfully recruited top candidates for several key positions at the school including Dr. Eduardo Sanchez as director of the Institute for Health Policy and Linda E. Lloyd, Ph.D., as associate dean for Public Health Practice.

“The school made a major commitment to fighting the battle on obesity in 2006, and established the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Advancement of Healthy Living as part of that commitment, with funding from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. Our faculty continue to compete successfully for research funds, with sponsored project funding at record numbers in 2006. We look forward to an equally productive year in FY 2007, with plans to expand our regional campus programs and further develop our extensive research programs.”

Other SPH Highlights, FY2006:

- The UT SPH began offering certificate and non-degree programs geared toward mid-career public health professionals without formal training in the field, those considering a public health career, and physicians and scientists who seek to enhance their knowledge of public health. Enrollment in the certificate program totaled 110 for FY2006.
- The number of minority students increased again in 2006, with a significant portion of the increase coming from new students in the certificate program. Recent data from the Association of Schools of Public Health ranks UT SPH fourth in the percentage of minority students enrolled in schools of public health in the United States (excluding Puerto Rico).
- The school has developed an Evidence-Based Public Health Practice Course for public health practitioners to increase the awareness of evidence-based practice and to encourage its use.

Increased Research Funding and Class Sizes Among '06 Accomplishments

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faculty and staff becomes a first priority. If we have to choose whether to let go of things or people, we will let go of things first,” he says.

Among the things he is most proud of in the past year, McKinney says, is “the three-to-four weeks last September when we did our part in caring for Katrina survivors at the Astrodome and the George R. Brown Convention Center and after. We learned from Rita, too, to make sure that we are prepared for eventualities. There will always be something different, but we’ll learn from all of it.”

During FY2007, he says, “we look forward to continued growth in enrollment; expansion of research from existing faculty and continued growth in teachers and researchers for the growing student population.”

And, dealing with funds is a chronic struggle. “We are not trying to make a profit, but we are only going to spend what we bring in. We try to be frugal and good stewards of the public’s money,” McKinney says. “Our charge is to educate the people who are going to take care of us when we get old.” ★

UT HCPC Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary

“We have had an amazing year, seeing more than 5,000 patients, opening a new residential treatment center, and maintaining our commitment to provide the highest quality of mental health care to Houston-area residents,” says Robert Guynn, M.D., executive director of The University of Texas Harris County Psychiatric Center and chair of the Medical School Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

The UT HCPC will celebrate another milestone — its 20th anniversary of service to the community. Since 1986, the center has served more than 80,000 patients, expanded to provide care for those in the juvenile justice system and children’s protective services, and opened a service to provide outpatient care, not only for the patients, but for the community-at-large.

As the center celebrates, it also will announce A Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative, says Lois J. Moore, chief administrator of UT HCPC. “This initiative will

allow us to further our commitment to developing and carrying out early intervention behavioral health programs.”

Among the anniversary celebrations:

Oct. 17 (by invitation only) — A breakfast honoring current UT HCPC employees who were with UT HCPC when the hospital opened.

Oct. 18 (employees only) — A special staff celebration will take place to honor and thank all UT HCPC employees for their efforts over the past years.

Oct. 20 (all health-care professionals) — Research and Education Day, 8 a.m. breakfast, 8:30 program, speaker: Ellen Liebenluft, M.D., clinical associate professor, Psychiatry, Georgetown University Medical Center and chief, Affective Disorders in Pediatrics and Developmental Neuropsychiatry Branch, National Institute of Mental Health.

Oct. 21 (general public) — Community Education Day, 8 a.m. breakfast, 8:30 program, speakers: Garnet Coleman, Texas State Representative, and HCPC faculty. ★



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