



Scoop



Friday, October 15, 1999

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

EVENTS TO KNOW:

- TODAY, **Med. School Research Retreat.**
- TODAY, **Party In The Park, Fri., Oct. 15,** 2 - 6 p.m., HMB Park (corner Fannin/Holcombe), music, food, bring I.D. badge.
- TODAY, **Boss's Day Sale,** sponsored by MS Employee Relations Committee, Fri., **Oct. 15,** starting 8 a.m., Leather Lounge.
- **Memorial Hermann Pavilion Tour** sponsored by Faculty Wives/Women Faculty Org., Mon., **Oct. 18,** 10:30 a.m., Pavilion elevators. \$5 box lunch & talk. Contact **Cathy Weisbrodt,** <cweisbro@neuro.med.uth.tmc.edu>.
- Clinical Research Curriculum Introductory Course, Wed. **Oct. 20,** 5 - 6:30 p.m., presented by **Drs. Ralph Frankowski and Chul Ahn,** "Introductory Statistics," MSB 2.135.
- **"I Want Your Blood,"** Medical School Blood Drive, Mon., **Oct. 25,** 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Leather Lounge. Call **Karen Smith,** x5608.

UTmost Interest

Dr. William Dowhan, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, recently presented "Yeast Lipids: Metabolism and Intracellular Transport,"



Hot News

"Regulation of Phospholipid Metabolism in *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*" and "Molecular Genetic and Biochemical Approaches for the Dissection of Lipid Function in *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*," at the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.



FANNIN STREET

Sargent Tommy George will be a Fannin Street Project liaison with the Texas Medical Center the next 15 months, starting Monday, **October 18,** said organizers at a special meeting this past week. Blue line buses carrying UT-H employees will remain in operation on Fannin.

Due to efforts to relocate and improve existing utilities, the Fannin Street construction, running from S. Braeswood to N. MacGregor, will divert Metro buses #2, 4, 15, 34 and 73 to Main Street. Metro's website is <www.hou-metro.harris.tx.us>. Today's *TMC News*, Friday edition, **October 15,** has details of the project. Also watch future *Scoop* issues.

DR. REVELLE LEADS \$4.5 MILLION GENETIC STUDY

Dr. John Reveille, Division of Rheumatology in the Department of Internal Medicine, will lead a \$4.5 million multi-center study, awarded by the National Institute of Arthritis, Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, to identify genes involved in ankylosing spondylitis (AS). AS is a hereditary spinal condition which afflicts mainly adolescents and young adult males. Out of 100,000 Americans, approximately 129 carry the disease. Under his direction, a North American Spondylitis Consortium (NASC) will be established to facilitate the collection of scientific data. Under study in the division as well, through NIH-funded SCOR and LUMINA grants, is research into the genetics of scleroderma and lupus.

DR. FLETCHER TO DIRECT \$4 MILLION READING STUDY

Dr. Jack Fletcher, Developmental Pediatrics, will be directing a \$4 million grant to study how children's neural structuring processes information during reading activities. The study involves the use of advanced brain imaging technology. Awarded by the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the study will involve 40 teachers and 384 students. It is one of 14 grants given to 12 institutions nationwide (see *Houston Chronicle*, 10/12/99, p. 20A).



Dr. Brent King

EMERGENCY MEDICINE REACCREDITATION

The Department of Emergency Medicine, under the leadership of **Dr. Brent King,** was notified by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education that reaccreditation has been restored to the department's residency program. King, a 1983 graduate of the UT-Houston Medical School, was chief of the division of pediatric emergency medicine at the Medical College of Pennsylvania's Department of Emergency Medicine before assuming the chairmanship here in 1999.

NIH DIRECTOR VARMUS JOINS SLOAN-KETTERING

Dr. Harold E. Varmus, hired by Secretary of Health and Human Services **Donna Shalala** in 1993 to direct the National Institutes of Health (NIH), announced his resignation, effective **December 31,** when he will assume the title of president and CEO of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. **Dr. Ruth Kirschstein,** now the deputy director of NIH, will become the NIH's acting director.

Dr. Varmus, who completed an internship and residency at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, was awarded the 1989 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with **Dr. J. Michael Bishop,** for their discovery of the cellular origin of retroviral oncogenes.

Over the last six years, he has been a tireless behind-the-scenes leader at the NIH, advancing the budget by five billion dollars, recommitting research to basic science endeavors, reducing polarized factions in the scientific and political community, recruiting prominent scientists to the NIH, and establishing an AIDS vaccine research center on the 322-acre NIH campus.



Dr. Harold Varmus

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

L. Maximilian Buja, M.D., Dean
Bryant Boutwell, Dr.P.H., Assistant Dean
Colleen O'Brien, Editor
e-mail: Colleen.L.O'Brien@uth.tmc.edu
FAX: (713) 500-0597

E-Scoop online: <http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu>

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1999 NOBEL LAUREATE IN PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE NAMED

Congratulations to **Dr. Günter Blobel**, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Professor at The Rockefeller University and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, was named this week as the 1999 recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.



Dr. Günter Blobel

Blobel, a cell biologist with M.D. and Ph.D. degrees, studies the process by which newly made proteins are transported across the membranes of cell structures called organelles. His work has contributed to the more effective use of new protein-based drugs, such as insulin, and helps explain the causes of genetic diseases such as cystic fibrosis.

It was just a year ago, on October 28, 1998, Blobel was the Medical School's Dean's Lecturer speaking on "Nucleo-Cytoplasmic Transport." That visit followed within weeks of **Dr. Ferid Murad's** announcement as one of three 1998 Nobel recipients in medicine and included a dinner meeting with several members of the School's Research Committee as well as Murad, who is a friend and colleague. Blobel first joined The Rockefeller University in 1967 as a postdoctoral fellow. Twenty scientists associated with that University have won the Nobel Prize, including two alumni.



UT-HOUSTON PRESIDENT'S SCHOLAR AWARD NOMINATIONS

The UT-Houston President's Scholar Award will be presented this year at the Honors Convocation to a full-time faculty member with outstanding achievements in teaching at UT-Houston. The President's Scholar Award carries with it the honorary title of "President's Scholar" and a \$5,000 cash prize. In addition, the President's Scholar Award recipient will have the honor of giving the convocation address at the Honors Convocation ceremony to be held sometime in March, 2000.

Drs. Jack Schull, Jeannette Adams, Ernst Knobil, Ron Philo, James Willerson, Marianne Marcus, and John Byrne are past recipients of this prestigious award for their contributions in either research or teaching. The nomination letter and packet of supporting documentation should be submitted to the Awards Committee, c/o **Dr. Thomas F. Burks**, EVP, Research & Academic Affairs, UCT 1700, no later than Friday, **December 3**. Nomination documentation required includes a detailed statement of the nature and importance of the accomplishments to be recognized, a complete cv with bibliography, and a minimum of two recommendation letters from students, former graduate or undergraduate students, and colleagues within UT - Houston. More than one nomination may be submitted. The Awards Committee consists of: **Drs. Nancy Busen, SON, Ian Butler, MS, Debbie Del Junco, SPH, Craig Johnson, SAHS, and Monty Rieger, DDB.**



DR. HARPER GEARS UP FOR SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

"Although the fall has just begun, we are already making preparations for students who will participate in next summer's program. The quality of the 1999 students was just outstanding," said **Dr. Andrew Harper**, assistant dean, Office of Educational Programs. Fifteen students participated in a preceptorship with a faculty member this past summer and a total of 26 faculty took part as well.

The five-week training session, funded by a Program Enhancement Grant from the UT-HHSC and by the HSC Office of Educational Access and Equity, is directed by Harper, who is a 1984 graduate of the Medical School. Now in its fifth year, the program is designed to expose students to clinical practice and has had 67 participants. Twenty-three have been accepted into medical schools. Students are introduced to the medical and nursing school curricula via courses in anatomy, physiology, metabolism, nutrition, and public health, which are taught by senior faculty and assisted by MSII student tutors.

"The 1999 program was highly rated by every student who participated," concluded Harper.

"ALL THAT SPARKLES & GLITTERS" LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE" FEBRUARY 17 - 18

"All that Sparkles & Glitters/Making Leadership Shine for the 21st Century," a leadership conference featuring a variety of speakers and topics from humor to sustainability, will be offered **February 17-18, 2000**, at the San Luis Resort & Conference Center, Galveston. Speakers and topics include: **Dr. Roger Bulger**, "Therapeutic Organizations: An Impossible Myth or Realistic Possibility;" **Leigh Anne Jasheway**, "Don't Get Mad, Get Funny - Using Humor to Manage Stress;" **Dr. Cal LeMon**, "Building Trust Through Leadership;" **Mark Mayfield**, "Make Mirth;" and **Carol Misseldine**, "Environmental Sustainability: The Next Bottom Line." For more information about this UT - Houston event, contact **Holly Chandler**, director, Financial Advisory Services, 713/500-4900, or <hchandle@admin4.hsc.uth.tmc.edu>.



MEDICAL HUMANITIES FILM FESTIVAL JANUARY 7 - 9

UTMB's Institute for the Medical Humanities, is having a film weekend for the medical community, **January 7 - 9, 2000**, at the Strand Street Theatre (across from the Tremont Hotel), Galveston. This year's theme is "Outsiders: Autonomy and Respect." Featured films will be: *Citizen Ruth* (1996) U.S.A., Alexander Payne, director; *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* (1993), U.S.A., Lasse Hallstrom, director; *Ma Vie en Rose (My Life in Pink)* (1997), Belgium, Alain Berliner, director, Golden Globe winner; and *Beyond Silence* (1998), Germany, Caroline Link, director. The Institute offered the nation's first Ph.D. degree in the medical humanities in 1988. For more information on the film festival, contact **Stacey Gottlob**, 1-409-772-9327 or <sgottlob@utmb.edu>.