



Scoop



Friday, March 24, 2000

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

EVENTS TO KNOW:

- **UT-Houston Work/Life Program's** Child and Adolescent Seminar, "15 Ways to Help Your Child Succeed in School," Thurs., **April 6**, noon, MSI Auditorium.
- **Annual Faculty Meeting**, Wed., **May 24**, 11:45 a.m., in MSB 3.001. Lunch at 11:30 a.m. for first 200.

UTmost Interest

Dr. Carl Sandler, Radiology, was elected President and **Dr. Akira Kawashima**, Radiology, was elected to Fellowship, at the annual meeting of the Society of Uroradiology in March.



MATCH DAY A SUCCESS

Match Day 2000 numbers are in and Medical School seniors did very well. Held March 16, the event matches graduating medical students throughout the country with their choices for residency training. All 204 of our School's graduating class have a residency position and 66% received their first choice. Of our graduating class, 58% will stay in Texas for their residency training and 44 (23%) matched to our UT-Houston programs. A total of 95 students (47%) will enter primary care specialties.

"Another measure of success is the demand from medical graduates throughout the country to find positions in our UT-Houston resident training opportunities, and we have much to be proud of," says **Dean Max Buja**.

Of the Medical School's 167 residency positions across 19 clinical programs, 150 positions filled immediately. The remaining first-year positions, which begin in July, are now taken. Congratulations to all graduating medical students. "The institution did well overall. The program directors are pleased with the results," says **Dr. Patricia Butler**, Associate Dean for Educational Programs.



MSB CAFETERIA

The *Cafe Med Coffee Bar*, serving breakfast and lunch items, is open, 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Mon. - Fri. With ID badge, a 10% discount.

LIVELY TOWN HALL MEETING WAS WELL ATTENDED

President **M. David Low** presided over the lively, well attended March 17 Town Hall Meeting in 3.001. A panel made up of Low, **Dean Max Buja** and **Dr. Tom Burks**, executive vp, research and academic affairs, extended the meeting in order to answer as many questions as possible. Also participating were **Dr. Morris A. Flaum**, Associate Dean for Clinical Operations and chairman of the University Care Plus (UCP) Board of Directors, and **Paul P. Cooper**, UCP president and CEO. Before taking questions from the audience, Low and Burks gave an overview of the just-concluded Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) site visit. Burks discussed the compliance team and the feasibility study in interdisciplinary education team. (Note: For an overview of the question and answer period, please see "Town Hall Meeting," on Scoop's back page).

WILLERSON HONORED AS DISTINGUISHED SCIENTIST



Dr. James T. Willerson, chair, Internal Medicine, chief, Internal Medicine Service, Memorial Hermann Hospital, physician-in-chief, Medicine Services, Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) General Hospital, and medical director, the Texas Heart Institute, received the *Distinguished Scientists Award*, during the American College of Cardiology (ACC) 49th Annual Scientific Session, in Anaheim, California, held March 12 - 15. Willerson received the award for his pioneering work in understanding the mechanisms contributing to the conversion from stable to unstable angina. His work has had "a profound impact on the understanding of disease and patient management," organizers said.

The ACC is a 24,000 member nonprofit medical society, dedicated to fostering optimal cardiovascular care and disease prevention.

DR. MICHAEL T. RAPP & RISK MANAGEMENT, MARCH 30

The Department of Emergency Medicine welcomes **Dr. Michael T. Rapp**, President, American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), and chief, Department of Emergency Medicine, Arlington Hospital, Arlington, Virginia, speaking on "Risk Management in Emergency Medicine, 2000," Thurs., **March 30**, 10 a.m. to noon, UT-Houston Medical School, MSB 3.001, green/yellow section. Rapp interned at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and did his residency at Georgetown University Hospital. He is president of the Arlington Physicians Group, Ltd., and has been with the ACEP for 27 years. The overall educational objectives, say organizers of the event, include being able to discuss new research, treatment paradigms and diagnostic modalities as they relate to the practice of Emergency Medicine. For more information call 713-500-7878.

TODAY'S MEMORIAL COLLOQUIUM FOR DR. J. FRED ANNEGERS

School of Public Health faculty and staff will remember friend and colleague **J. Fred Annegers** during a memorial colloquium at 3:30 p.m., today, **March 24**, in the SPH Auditorium. **Dean R. Palmer Beasley** and several SPH faculty members will speak briefly about Dr. Annegers, a professor of epidemiology who passed away, Feb. 19, at the school. There also will be an open microphone period to allow others a chance to speak. A reception will follow in rooms 102 A & B. For information or to donate to the J. Fred Annegers Scholarship Fund, contact **Katrina Grimes**, 713/500-9172.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

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Produced weekly by the Office of Community Affairs and Public Education

TOWN HALL MEETING (CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE, SCOOP)

FYI: At the Town Hall meeting, it was suggested that a mechanism was needed for employees to get answers to their questions. The *"Fact or Fiction!"* web site is "open for business." Click on *Fact or Fiction!* on the MS home page, <<http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu/>>.

Clinical income, expenditures and restructuring the Physician Business Services (PBS) were the primary topics at the Town Hall Meeting. Questions in italics and some answers, with the names of the respondents, represent a compilation of the event.

- ***Why does the MS have a \$1 million conference room? Who uses it?***

Dean Max Buja: The multipurpose, educational and executive conference center is part of the long-range plan to upgrade the School's educational infrastructure. The plans were submitted three years ago as part of a capital improvement plan and approved by UT System regents. It was paid for by profits from the practice plan over several years, which were made available through the Dean's Development Fund. All this was done before the current financial problems. The room seats up to 50 people and is available for use by major committees and departments. Notification went out to departments that the room can be scheduled online at <<http://deanweb.med.uth.tmc.edu/cops/ecc.htm>>, or from the Medical School (MS) home page, click "MS Administration," then click on "G.100 – EECC Reservation Form."

President David Low follow-up comment: We commit money to the things we do to meet the needs of the institution. Several years ago we closed the School of Allied Health Sciences in favor of expanding other programs. Currently, the practice plan is losing more than \$1 million every month. We have to "stop the bleeding" in order to keep UT-Houston solvent.

- ***Why do the details of the PBS restructuring keep changing, and will those who keep their jobs remain UT employees?***

Dr. Morris Flaum/Paul Cooper: Things are changing on very short notice. The plan now is to do a Reduction In Force within PBS under UT rules. The number affected may vary. To help with the UCP restructuring, we have two full-time HSC people working on the new positions. Check HOOPS for details on how classified employees must be notified of a RIF depending on their years of service. UT cannot promise us that these positions will remain in UT long term.

- ***There are so many rumors. What is the truth?***

Dr. Low: You are hearing it now. The PBS staff must be cut, faculty positions must be cut, and we are going to put the entire HSC financials on one balance sheet.

- ***Why are there faculty cuts?***

Dean Buja: We must be much more accountable with our clinical practice and business operations. We must provide faculty with data on their productivity, and we need tight projections, no more deficit spending, and improved internal processes.

- ***Why do we accept contracts that do not appear to reimburse UT for its work?***

Mr. Cooper: Because reimbursement for our service has decreased, we have to get a certain number of patients through our doors if we are going to be successful. Our managed-care contracts represent what prevails in the marketplace, and we can't walk away from one unless we have something to replace it with. There is not much out there that isn't under contract.

- ***There is money lost up front at the clinics. Is there some kind of tracking device that can be used for the front desk operations?***

Dean Buja/Dr. Flaum: When two institutions, like UT and Memorial Hermann, share responsibilities for operations of clinics, it is an administratively difficult situation. We have a point-of-service product that should provide a coherent plan for the front desks of our clinics. IDX has a mechanism to trace specifically who registers a patient and if it was done appropriately.

- ***Why did the restructuring stories appear in the newspaper before we heard about it internally?***

Dean Buja: My intention was to communicate with each and everyone of you directly before going to press. Because of technical problems with the e-mail, some of you did not get the message which was sent out before the newspaper articles appeared.

- ***What is the plan to restructure the Medical School business operations?***

Dean Buja: I have put forth a new structure with fewer department managers. Each senior manager will be responsible for at least two departments, and this approach will drive down through the system. It is my intention to move forward this plan. Next week we will start an application and review process for those newly created positions and have it all in place by May.

- ***Considering all the changes, what are the long-term goals?***

Dean Buja: American medical schools are too dependent on clinical income. The long-term vision is to change the balance of funding by decreasing the percentage of our budget coming as clinical income by increasing research grants. It would be nice to see more state money also.

- N. Shire

HEALTH CARE AND THE ARTS LECTURE SERIES

Ongoing throughout March and April is a UT-Houston program on Health Care and the Arts Lecture Series, "Mending Body and Spirit," noon, in the School of Public Health auditorium. A light lunch will be served to the first 100 attendees. Continuing in the series is:

- ♦ Mon., **March 27, Dr. John Lienhard**, creator of the KUHf radio program, "Engines of Our Ingenuity," and M.D. Anderson professor, Mechanical Engineering and History, U of H, "Pygmalion, Faust and Frankenstein."
- ♦ Wed., **March 29, Dr. Barbara Rose Lange**, professor, Ethnomusicology, Moores School of Music, U of H, "Music in Animistic Healing."

**YEAR OF THE CULTURE OF PEACE**

International Festival Day, celebrating the United Nations' "Year of the Culture of Peace," will be Fri., **April 7**, 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m., Houston Main Building picnic grounds at Holcombe and Bertner. The event is jointly sponsored by the UT-Houston Health Science Center and M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. If you would like to volunteer, call **Brenda Enard**, 713-500-3371.