



Scoop

Aug. 23, 2002

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

Events to Know

August

28 Clinical Research Curriculum, Biostatistics for Clinical Investigators, "Types of Data, Summarizing Data," **Dr. Kathleen Kennedy** presenting, 5- 6:30 p.m., MSB 2.135.

UTMost Interest

Dr. Morris Flaum announced a reduction in force in the Marketing and Information Services areas of University Care Plus (UCP)...**Dan Wilford** has announced that effective Aug. 26, **Ken Wine** will assume the position of interim CEO, Memorial Hermann and Memorial Hermann Children's Hospital. **James Eastham**, former CEO, will join the Valley Baptist Health System in Harlingen.

FUTURE PHYSICIANS - CLASS OF 2006



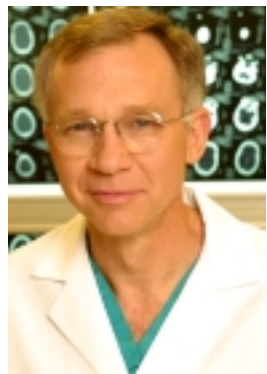
Dean Max Buja addressed 206 new students Aug. 14 at the Hornberger, with the words "The charge of the White Coat Ceremony is to learn the healing arts with fidelity and integrity."

The White Coat Ceremony is a tradition begun in 1993 at Columbia University School of Medicine.

Dr. Oscar Rosales, the keynote speaker, and the recipient of the 2002 faculty award for Humanism in Medicine, extolled the students to remember the first rule – the patient always comes first. "Enter your profession wholeheartedly. You will reap fewer anxieties about the human condition – our vulnerabilities and our finalities."

NIH AWARDS \$15.6M TO DR. CLIFTON FOR HYPOTHERMIA STUDY

The National Institutes of Health recently awarded **Dr. Guy L. Clifton**, chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery and developer of hypothermia therapy for brain injury, \$15.6 million to lead a study of prolonged hypothermia's effects on patients with severe brain injury.



Dr. Guy Clifton

Clifton will test whether maintaining a cool body temperature in brain injury patients who already are hypothermic when they are brought to the hospital substantially improves their outcome.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a leading cause of death for adults under age 45. "Current management for patients with TBI is unsatisfactory," said Clifton, who holds the Runnells Distinguished Chair in Neurosurgery. "We have to find something that improves outcome. In a previous study, this seemed to work, and now we need to examine it more closely."

In the first National Acute Brain Injury Study, which began in 1994, Clifton found that inducing hypothermia in patients with severe head trauma does not have the therapeutic value that scientists expected.

He expects to begin enrolling patients in the fall. To be enrolled in the study, patients must be 16 to 45 years old, have a closed head injury and hypothermia, and be comatose upon arrival at an emergency room. They also must have no other significant injuries.

Half will be placed in temperature-controlled suits, which were invented and designed by UT-Houston researchers.

The Rap Round suits, manufactured by Gaymar Industries, allow doctors to precisely control and maintain their patients' body temperatures at 33-37 degrees Celsius. After 48 hours, doctors will gradually re-warm the patients over an 18-hour period. "We believe that rapid re-warming, which is currently the standard of treatment, may actually be toxic to the brain," Clifton said. "We will be looking at whether it is better to let them passively re-warm or maintain hypothermia."

Roughly 1.5 million Americans suffer traumatic brain injury each year. The brain, although arguably the most complex organ on earth, is physically a soft and vulnerable object, with the consistency of firm pudding. About 50,000 die and another 80,000 of patients with TBI are permanently disabled. An average of 30 percent of those patients are hypothermic when they arrive at the hospital. Hypothermia often is the result of cold weather, intoxication, small body type, or cold intravenous fluids that are administered in the field. "If this works, this could have a tremendous benefit to patients who might otherwise be dead, comatose or severely disabled," Clifton said. Other investigators in the hypothermia study are at UC/California, UC/San Francisco, USC, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Saint Louis University, Duke University, Inova Fairfax Hospital and the University of Mississippi.

- **M. R. Middleton**



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CAMP ALLEN RETREAT INITIATES CLASS OF 2006



The young recruits take a breather before they “step it up” during the skit.

The Class of 2006 descended upon a steamy Camp Allen Friday morning to be indoctrinated into the lighter side of the Medical School at the annual Student Retreat.

In the pine woods northwest of Houston, the new students had a chance to meet each other and have some fun with their hosts – the second-year students. In addition to the recreation, which involved lots of squirt guns and shaving-cream-filled balloons, the students were treated to a Saturday Night Live-style show, featuring the group “98.6 degrees,” dancing students and faculty members, a local version of MTV Cribs – featuring Dean Max Buja’s home, and a Medical School take on the movie “Rudy.”

There also was a serious side of the retreat, which featured small-group, breakout sessions on ethics in medicine. In addition, students heard presentations from Dean Buja, Dr. Mark Farnie, and fourth-year student Matt Harting.

“The Student Retreat is a really great event that sets the tone for our students as they enter Medical School,” Dean Buja said.



Second-year “Fun Police” pose before the afternoon’s games begin.



98.6 Degrees takes the stage to the delight of all.



Faculty and second-year students are a tour de force during a Britney Spears song.

- photos and story by D. Brown

Reception Marks Transition in LBJ Leadership

The Fifth Floor Gallery was filled with friends, family, and colleagues Aug. 13, who paid tribute to **Dr. James D. Hefner’s** many contributions and welcomed **Dr. Michael Bungo**, as the new chief of staff of LBJ General Hospital. A man of uncommon valor in the heat of battle, Dr. Hefner mixed an emotional farewell and salute to each of the deans he has served under with jokes and stories that are his trademark. An upcoming farewell scheduled to be held at LBJ General Hospital will no doubt be equally heartwarming given that on the very day in July 1990 that UT took over the delivery of patient care at LBJ General Hospital, it was Dr. Hefner himself who greeted the first patient. As chief of staff, Dr. Hefner oversaw the evolution of that community hospital that is now recognized as one of the county’s medical treasures.

A member of the UT faculty since 1982, Dr. Hefner has held the role of Medical Director of the Hermann Hospital Emergency Center, Program Director (and founder) of the Transitional Year Residency Program, Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, Chief of Staff at LBJ General Hospital, Associate Dean for Harris County Programs, and professor in the Department of Surgery.

At his retirement celebration, **Dean Max Buja**, announced one more accolade, emeritus professor, and presented Dr. Hefner with a rocking chair. “Dr. Hefner’s no-nonsense approach to getting the job done was instrumental in creating our role at LBJ,” Dean Buja said. “This is a significant time of transition for the Medical School as we thank Dr. Jim Hefner for his dedicated service and welcome a new member of our faculty in whom we have great expectations, Dr. Michael Bungo.”



Dean Buja (l.), Dr. Hefner, and Dr. Bungo at farewell reception for Dr. Hefner. Dr. Bungo will step into Dr. Hefner’s position as the new LBJ chief of staff.