



Scoop

Oct. 10, 2003

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

Events to Know

October

- 10 **Today. Fun Fest, 2-6 p.m., Hornberger.**
- 13 **SECC contributions due.**
- 14 **Willerson Lectureship, Dr. Jay Cohn, noon, MSB 3.001.**
- 21 **History of Medicine, Dr. John Lienhard, noon, MSB 2.135.**

November

- 13 **Fields Lecture, Dr. John Marler, "Expanding the Neurological Clinical Research Community," 4 p.m., MSB 3.001.**
- 14 **Research Day, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Hornberger.**

UTMost Interest

President **James T. Willerson** will be named as one of only 14 recipients of the recently created Distinguished Scientist designation at the **Nov. 13** American Heart Association Scientific Sessions meeting in Orlando, Fla.



EMPLOYEE FLU SHOTS FOR \$10

2-5 p.m., Tues., **Oct. 21**, MSB Leather Lounge; and 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Tues., **Oct. 28**, MSB Leather Lounge.

DR. EDUARDO SANCHEZ TO SPEAK OCT. 15

Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., M.Ph., commissioner of health, Texas Department of Health, will address "The Increasing Importance of Public Health in the Management of Health Care," 4 p.m., Wed., **Oct. 15**, MSB 2.006.



Dr. Eduardo Sanchez

The talk is sponsored by the Department of Family Practice & Community Medicine.

Hard Hat Update

CONSTRUCTION AT MED SCHOOL BEGINS IN EARNEST OCT. 13

Work will begin as soon as possible on major construction at the medical school building. The construction involves completing the perimeter flood wall; building out the ground floor and the electron microscope suite; and the deconstruction and rebuilding of the cyclotron building adjacent to the MSB.



Beginning Monday, **Oct. 13**, access to the blue elevator at the Medical School will be from levels 1 through 7; there will be no access to the blue elevator on the ground floor for a period of 3-4 months. There will be renewed construction activity in and around the MSB, as well as an increase in the intensity of construction effort in the following weeks. The current schedule has the contractor working on all four projects simultaneously and in concert with the current exterior work.

The opportunity for noise and disruption will be apparent, but the facilities staff under **David Healey** has reinforced successful past practices with the contractor to ensure a reasonable working and learning environment in the MSB. Work will commence next week, starting Monday, **Oct. 13**, and will be in full swing by the end of the week.

If you have any questions, or concerns, please contact one of the following: **Jeff Carbone**, cyclotron rebuild and mitigation, 713-500-6651; **Hyde Griffith**, perimeter wall for the MSB, 713-500-6652; **Steve Niskanen**, MSB ground floor, 713-500-6653; and **Jim Victor**, program management - project coordination, 713-500-4995.

UT MEDICAL STUDENTS SCORE WELL ON USMLE

Dr. Margaret McNeese, associate dean, Student Affairs, recently announced the results of first-time takers on the USMLE Step 2 for the 2002-03 academic year. Students in their fourth year normally take the examination. The passing rate for the medical school was 95 percent, as compared to the national passing rate of 96 percent. The students' total mean score was 212 compared with the national mean of 216. These numbers are up from last year's. The UT passing rate last year was 91 percent and the mean score was 205.

FREE METRO PINK PASSES FOR MAMMOGRAMS

One out of eight American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime. According to the American Cancer Society, annual mammograms after the age of 40 can lead to early detection and increased cancer survival rates. Many times, women in underserved areas of Houston say that a lack of transportation is the primary obstacle to getting a mammogram. So Memorial Hermann Healthcare System, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Houston Affiliate, and METRO have teamed up to distribute a "pink pass," a free one-day METRO ticket, to get to the scheduled mammogram appointment. Call 713-222-CARE for information.



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HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON
MEDICAL SCHOOL

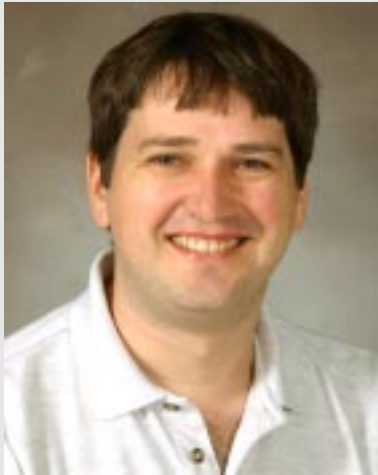
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Elite national honor goes to expert in gene expression, messenger RNA

MEDICAL SCHOOL SCIENTIST VAN HOOFF NAMED 2003 PEW SCHOLAR

Ambro van Hoof, Ph.D., assistant professor of microbiology and molecular genetics, is one of 20 scientists chosen nationally to be a 2003 Pew Scholar in the Biomedical Sciences.



Ambro van Hoof, Ph.D.

The Pew Charitable Trusts awards a \$240,000 grant over four years to support the research of each Pew Scholar.

Van Hoof studies gene expression – the process by which the information stored in genes is used to make proteins, the workhorses of biology. A critical step in this process is the creation of messenger RNA (mRNA), which organizes information from the gene

into a series of amino acids for conversion into a protein.

“One side of gene expression is how much mRNA gets made and the other side, which I look at, is how mRNA gets broken down, or degraded,” van Hoof said. Degradation rates help determine how much protein is produced using normal mRNA. The cell’s mRNA decay mechanisms also target aberrant mRNAs for swift destruction.

After earning his doctorate at Michigan State University in 1997, van Hoof was a post-doctoral fellow at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the University of Arizona before joining the Medical School faculty last September.

Nine scientists from Texas Medical Center institutions have been named Pew Scholars since the Pew Charitable Trusts launched the program in 1985. Three have been chosen from UT Medical School at Houston faculty, all in the last five years.

Previous Medical School Pew Scholars are **C.S. Raman, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, a 2002 scholar, and **Z. Hong Zhou, Ph.D.**, associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine and a 1999 scholar.

- S. Merville

2003 RESEARCH DAY'S COMING UP

FRIDAY, NOV. 14

2003 Research Day at the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center, 2151 W. Holcombe, is only a month away. The theme of this year’s exhibition is “Excellence in Biomedical Research.” The forum will showcase the research of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston’s young scientists. Platform presentations of 12 selected abstracts will begin at 9 a.m. and an extensive poster presentation program will begin at 1 p.m.

Students and postgraduate trainees from the six health science center schools and the Institute of Molecular Medicine for the Prevention of Human Diseases (IMM) are eligible to submit abstracts as first authors. Register and submit abstracts online by Wed., **Oct. 15** to <<https://oac9.uth.tmc.edu/jsp/ResearchForum/RegistrationForm.jsp>>.

Faculty judges will review the presentations and present cash prizes to eight first authors. Students, faculty, and staff are invited to attend. Lunch and shuttle service will be provided. For more information, visit <<http://research.uth.tmc.edu/researchforum>>. Or, contact the Office of Research Services, 713-500-3075.

WATERSIDE CATERING – **Sohail Feroze**, catering operations manager, 713-749-0471, e-mail <sferoze@texmedctr.edu> says the Texas Medical Center Commons, including **Einstein Bros Bagels**, **Luther’s Bar-B-Q**, **TCBY**, **KFC**, **Great American Cookies**, **Kim Son**, and **Starbucks**, is available for all your catering needs. And they’ll deliver. You can also order online at www.waterside.ordertalk.net

BIKE RACKS IN NEW LOCATION

Students and employees are encouraged to park their bikes in the Webber Plaza circle where the new bike racks have been installed.

The bicycle parking next to the John Freeman building has become hazardous to pedestrians and bikes.

Construction will move to Ross Sterling soon and the fencing will be removed on Ross Sterling at that time.

For more information, or if you have any questions, call **Claire Brunson**, 713-500-5018.

REMAINING LECTURES IN THE 2003 HISTORY OF MEDICINE LECTURE SERIES

The following remaining lectures of the “Imaging in Medicine: Seeing the Unseen” series, are at noon, MSB 2.135: **Tues., Oct. 21, John Lienhard, Ph.D.** “Images of the Body before the 20th Century,” **Tues., Nov. 4, Roberta Bivins, Ph.D.**, “The Influence of Medical Images on Popular Culture,” and **Tues., Nov. 11, Dr. Stanley Reiser, M.D., MPA., Ph.D.**, “The Influence of Medical Imaging on the Use of Physical Examination.”