

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston fulfills its community service mission in many diverse ways. Through a variety of institutional and school-driven programs, the university provides much needed health care and health education services to members of our community who might otherwise not have these benefits.

We also seek to fulfill our service mission through informational outreach to the larger community with innovative programs and services designed to educate and enrich the lives of community members in Houston, the state and the nation. Spots such as those on KUHF radio promote preventive health care and lifestyle management techniques in urban and rural areas throughout Harris County.

Dental Branch

Dental Branch community outreach efforts are extensive and are part of the educational programs offered in the school. The Dental Branch has affiliations with 48 HISD schools and over 30 clinics, community agencies and long-term health care centers where students provide oral health education and clinical care. The Dental Branch is one of the primary sources of charity care in the Greater Houston Area – providing over \$1,270,226 of free or discounted dental care in FY 2004.

The Dental Branch's School of Dental Hygiene also has active outreach programs with off-site activities that include both educational projects and clinical care. These include the Fort Bend Family Health Center, Harris County Health Department, The University Dental Center at Memorial Hermann, Houston Medical Center, Rusk Elementary School, San Jose Clinic, The Star of Hope, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Source: John Valenza, Dental Branch

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) outreach program continued its now 12-year alliance with HISD's Brookline Elementary School by interacting with students in the third, fourth and fifth grades as well as their teachers. This school serves a predominantly disadvantaged community. In the reporting year, the GSBS outreach program served 291 students and through these partnerships, GSBS graduate students and faculty raised the understanding and enthusiasm for science through numerous initiatives. The projects included coaching teams of students in scientific methods and giving class demonstrations to supplement science teachers' lectures. The Benny Garcia Young Scientist Award was presented by GSBS for the fifth year at Brookline Elementary.

In 2003-2004, the GSBS outreach program provided judges for eight local school science fairs plus the regional science fair; hosted two visits of 80 students participating in the annual National Youth Leadership Forum as well as the Regional Science Fair for 100 individuals; provided lectures for 41 science teachers at UT Pan American; hosted a total of 56 elementary and high school students for five tours of research labs; provided round table discussions of science careers and graduate education; and provided guest speakers for 300 students from the University of Houston-Downtown. Participation in the Houston Hispanic Forum Career and Education Day continued to expand. Hispanic graduate students served as panelists for discussion of the topic *Why I Chose Graduate School*, as well as were featured panel speakers who discussed careers in biomedical research. GSBS hosted a booth with nearly 1,000 direct visitors.

The GSBS Alumni Association provided hands on programs in biomedical sciences education to over 300 5th graders at Sylvan Rodriguez Elementary School focusing on cell reproduction and a hands-on experiment on the states of matter. Additional GSBS community service efforts included the following: provided science experiments and career programs for students and faculty at Northbrook Middle School for Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society and Briscoe Elementary School 5th graders; provided keynote speakers for UT-Pan American-NASA Science Conference for 6th through College students; and provided a speaker for UT-Brownsville, UT-Pan American, and several school districts in the Valley.

Source: Linda Carter, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

5 Community Outreach Activities continued

School of Health Information Sciences

The School of Health Information Sciences is committed to improving care and access to care using information technology. During 2003-2004 school faculty and staff:

- + Coordinated a joint Summer Outreach Program with UT Physicians for minority students to improve their knowledge and skills and foster consideration of graduate study in Health Information Sciences.
- + Participated in Gateway to Care to develop information system requirements for Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers.
- + Participated in the Greater Houston Partnership's Public Health Task Force Sub-committee on Technology to define current systems in place in Houston's Safety Network Providers as a stepping stone to developing an integrated information system for Houston/Harris County.
- + Led The Schull Institute's Informatics efforts domestically in Houston by developing prototypes for use in a demonstration program with Good Neighbor Healthcare Center, an FQHC look-alike center, and partnering with the City of Houston and Gateway to Care to improve information systems to improve access and accountability for patients and to provide an annual community input to improving care.
- + Partnered with the Center for Health Outcomes Research and Development in Japan to introduce informatics into Japan and develop demonstration projects to showcase the effectiveness of information technology to improve care.

Medical School

The Medical School's Office of Community Affairs and Public Education is involved in a variety of community outreach functions. It works with and supports the Office of Public Affairs and UT Physicians. The staff also works with the Medical School's Office of Continuing Medical Education to coordinate fliers, public relations and written material for publications.

The office organizes and participates in community presentations featuring Medical School faculty and health promotion topics. Additionally, community affairs staff participate in the health science center's Speakers Bureau.

Source: Darla Brown, Medical School

School of Nursing

Maintaining strong ties with area health providers, agencies and community leaders is an important part of the educational outreach efforts at the School of Nursing (SON). The school offers an innovative and collaborative work/study/scholarship program with seven local hospitals. Through employment as patient care assistants, students receive valuable clinical experience and, after completing one successful semester, they receive a scholarship for their remaining semesters of full-time undergraduate study. The program has expanded involving over 40 percent of the entering class.

SON faculty and students provide outreach service to families and individuals in several affiliated clinics throughout the Houston area and selected schools in the Houston Independent School District.

Source: Gwen Sherwood, School of Nursing

School of Public Health

Faculty and students of the School of Public Health (SPH) in Houston and at the school's regional campuses in Brownsville, Dallas, El Paso and San Antonio are actively involved in a large number of community outreach projects and activities.

Students in the MPH and DrPH degree programs complete an internship or practicum as part of their curriculum. This is an assignment to a community agency or organization where the student has the opportunity to learn about community health practice in a real world setting. Students work in a wide range of public and private sector settings. Special extended internship programs include: Health Policy Fellowships wherein fellows serve as full-time staff to members of the Texas Legislature; and Industrial Hygiene and Dietetic internships with various industries and organizations. Students complete tasks jointly assigned by an agency preceptor and a faculty sponsor. Currently there are over 400 assignments available to students. Since 1995, 1124 students have participated in the internship program.

The Texas Public Health Training Center is an initiative funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. This is a collaborative project which includes the Texas A&M University School of Rural Public Health and the University of North Texas School of Public Health. The Texas Department of Health, local health departments, state public health associations and community members participate as members of an Advisory Council to the Training Center. The Training Center provides a wide range of training services to the staff and board members of local health departments and the state health department as well as to local and state elected officials and is a major force in leadership training for the state's public health workforce.

Community-based projects currently underway in the regional campuses include:

Brownsville Regional Campus

- + Working with local school districts to bring awareness of and assistance in implementing health-related curriculum, including training teachers at local school districts on an environmental health program for high school students.
- + Working with local health departments and Texas Department of Health Region 11 to enhance bioterrorism preparedness.
- + Conducting a teen pregnancy prevention project jointly with Cameron County Health Department and Brownsville Healthy Communities to identify risk factors and provide training.
- + Administering a newly formed bi-national tuberculosis consortium to address the problems of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. Members, in addition to the Brownsville Regional Campus, include the Cameron County Health Department, Hidalgo County Health Department, Webb County Health Department, the Regional Office of the Texas Department of Health, and Mexican tuberculosis authorities in Reynosa, Matamoros and Monterrey.

Dallas Regional Campus

- + Consulting to a community HIV prevention project training center.
- + Developing a broadly representative community coalition to promote and support community medicine and public health planning and interventions in the Dallas area.
- + Developing a network of practicum internships for students at local, state, and national levels.

El Paso Regional Campus

- + Assisting the American Cancer Society Project Amigas to produce a bilingual video promoting cervical cancer intervention.
- + Assisting the El Paso Diabetes Association to develop evaluation and assessment methods for diabetes in the local population.
- + Conducting a National Institute of Health funded assessment of the extent of *H pylori* infection in the El Paso-Juarez communities.
- + Working with Safe Communities, a local non-governmental organization, to develop a surveillance system for detection of risk behavior associated with substance abuse in the local community.
- + Working with students to compile and summarize available health-related statistics for El Paso County, to serve as a resource for continuing planning and evaluation of public health programs (El Paso County Health Fact Book).

San Antonio Regional Campus

- + Providing leadership for the Health Education Training Center Alliance of Texas, a federally funded technical assistance and training support project for communities that coordinates the efforts of multiple health care and educational institutions.
- + Conducting a recent Bexar County community based environmental health assessment and a comprehensive community health assessment; the latter now available on the Internet.
- + Providing technical assistance to San Fernando Cathedral annual Health Fair.

Source: Hardy Loe, School of Public Health

5 Community Outreach Activities continued

School of Public Health continued

Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH) Program is an elementary school nutrition and physical activity program designed to prevent chronic disease, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The mission of the CATCH Program is to create healthy children and healthy school environments throughout Texas. CATCH is designed to help schools, children and their families adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors through changes at the elementary school level. The four CATCH components are: (1) Classroom Curriculum (Go for Health), (2) Physical Education curriculum (CATCH PE), (3) Food Service Program (Eat Smart), and (4) Family Involvement (Home Team). More than 1,200 schools have adopted the program and over 5,000 teachers and staff have been trained. For further information contact Steve Kelder, 713 500 9636; email: Steven.H.Kelder@uth.tmc.edu.

Source: Steven Kelder, School of Public Health

Since 1987, the school has had funding through the Texas-Mexico Border Project to provide chronic disease screening in Starr County, Texas. Starr County has been the center of a series of genetic and epidemiologic studies of type 2 diabetes, its complications and related conditions. This testing has been invaluable for detecting and monitoring diabetes and its complications in Starr County, which is 98 percent Mexican-American and suffers from the highest diabetes-specific mortality of any county in Texas.

Source: Craig Hanis, School of Public Health

The Rusk School Health Promotion Project is a model school-linked primary care clinic. Using an interdisciplinary model, health science center faculty and students provide preventive and curative care, health assessments and dental care to the predominantly poor Hispanic students. Colleagues from the University of Houston also provide help with curricula development, optometry services, as well as social support to the students and their families. Health science center and project staffers continue to work with the faculty of the school to integrate health promotion and wellness concepts into the elementary school curriculum.

Source: Mark Hormann, Medical School

UT Harris County Psychiatric Center

The University of Texas Harris County Psychiatric Center (UTHCPC) provides leadership in the area of community outreach through participation in a variety of community activities. UTHCPC develops and disseminates mental health information to the community and acts as a catalyst in creating an environment that promotes the exchange of ideas in topics of high priority and relevancy to the public mental health system of Harris County. During FY 2004, UTHCPC participated in a number of health and community education fairs providing mental health information to more than 50,000 people.

UTHCPC works in cooperation with mental health consumer groups, such as the Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the Depressive and Manic Depressive Association, the Mental Health Association and service providers such as the Harris County Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority. The center provides printed materials, plans community education symposia and seminars, conducts hospital tours and coordinates a Speakers Bureau, thus making UTHCPC's professional staff available to Houston area community and school groups.

UTHCPC's service outreach programs include the following:

- + Head Start
- + Wesley Community Center
- + Children's Assessment Center Program
- + After – School Program for Children and Adolescents with Emotional Problems (PASS: Partners in After School Services)
- + Sub-Acute Program for Juvenile Offenders
- + Partial Hospitalization Program
- + Intensive Outpatient Program/Outpatient Program
- + Neighborhood Centers

In addition to the programs listed above, UTHCPC is actively seeking collaborative service agreements for grant and other funded programs aimed at early intervention, provision of services to the elderly and underserved populations. To this end, UTHCPC is a member of a broad collaborative of agencies, including UTH, Baylor and the Harris County Community Access Collaborative, designed to assist in collaborative efforts to obtain grants for the local community.

Source: Geri Konigsberg, UT Harris County Psychiatric Center

Sources

Kathleen Becan-McBride, Liliana Rodriguez,
and Charles Simmons
Office of Community & Educational Outreach

The Office of the Vice President for Community and Educational Outreach was developed in 2001 to consolidate K-16 programs and other educational activities previously funded through the former Office of Education Access and Equity under the collective name InterCon, and projects from the former Office of Community Outreach & Education (Texas-Mexico Border Health Services). The office's mission is to establish, promote and provide outreach, healthcare, educational, recruitment, and research programs benefiting the citizens of Texas, and facilitate diversity within the institution.

InterCon

InterCon or **Inter-University and Public Schools Connections** for the Advancement of Education and Research in the Health Professions, Health Sciences and Biotechnology, is a network of universities and K-12 schools established in 1995 as part of the institution's long range goal to create and coordinate educational outreach programs as a means to diversify the institution's student body. These multi-faceted programs involve contributions from faculty, staff and students at our six schools. InterCon outreach projects target both teachers and students, and are aimed at:

- + Improving instruction and learning in science
- + Providing programs to increase the interest of high school and college students to pursue careers in the health professions
- + Increasing the number of college-bound high school graduates academically prepared to pursue health-related careers
- + Developing distance learning programs for the dissemination of instructional material to public schools
- + Meeting the demands for health promotion materials and information for school-initiated health and other science programs

Successful partnerships have been established with Houston, Spring Branch, Fort Bend County, and Aldine Independent School Districts in the Houston metropolitan area, and Mission and Hidalgo ISD in South Texas. These school districts represent inner city, suburban and rural settings. A common characteristic of our school district partners is that a large proportion of their students are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Collective activities are supported year-round and are located both in the public schools and on the UTHSC-H campus.

Major outreach activities include after school programs, distance learning programs involving video/computer instruction, scientific seminars, preceptorships in public health and biomedical research for high school students, professional development workshops for K-12 teachers, and visits by our faculty, students and staff to the partner schools to participate as speakers for career days, or as science fairs judges.

For science instruction and teacher professional development, UTHSC-H contributions are guided by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and by the National Science Standards developed by the National Research Council. Particular emphasis has been placed on the development of programs at minority institutions. These programs, collectively, involve hundreds of staff and teachers, and several hundred thousand students in the Houston area and across Texas. The ultimate goal is the long-term recruitment of students from disadvantaged backgrounds into health professions and careers in science and to attract and retain a student body that reflects the population of Texas.

Our partnerships also involve corporate, community, scientific organizations, government organizations, and other universities such as The University of Houston, The University of Texas-Pan American, and Texas A&M University at Kingsville, thereby providing additional resources and links between the Texas education system to augment the participation of students in science educational programs. Many of the projects originally funded through this office have received state and national awards and are now integral parts of the Medical School and the School of Public Health activities.

Internal Programs

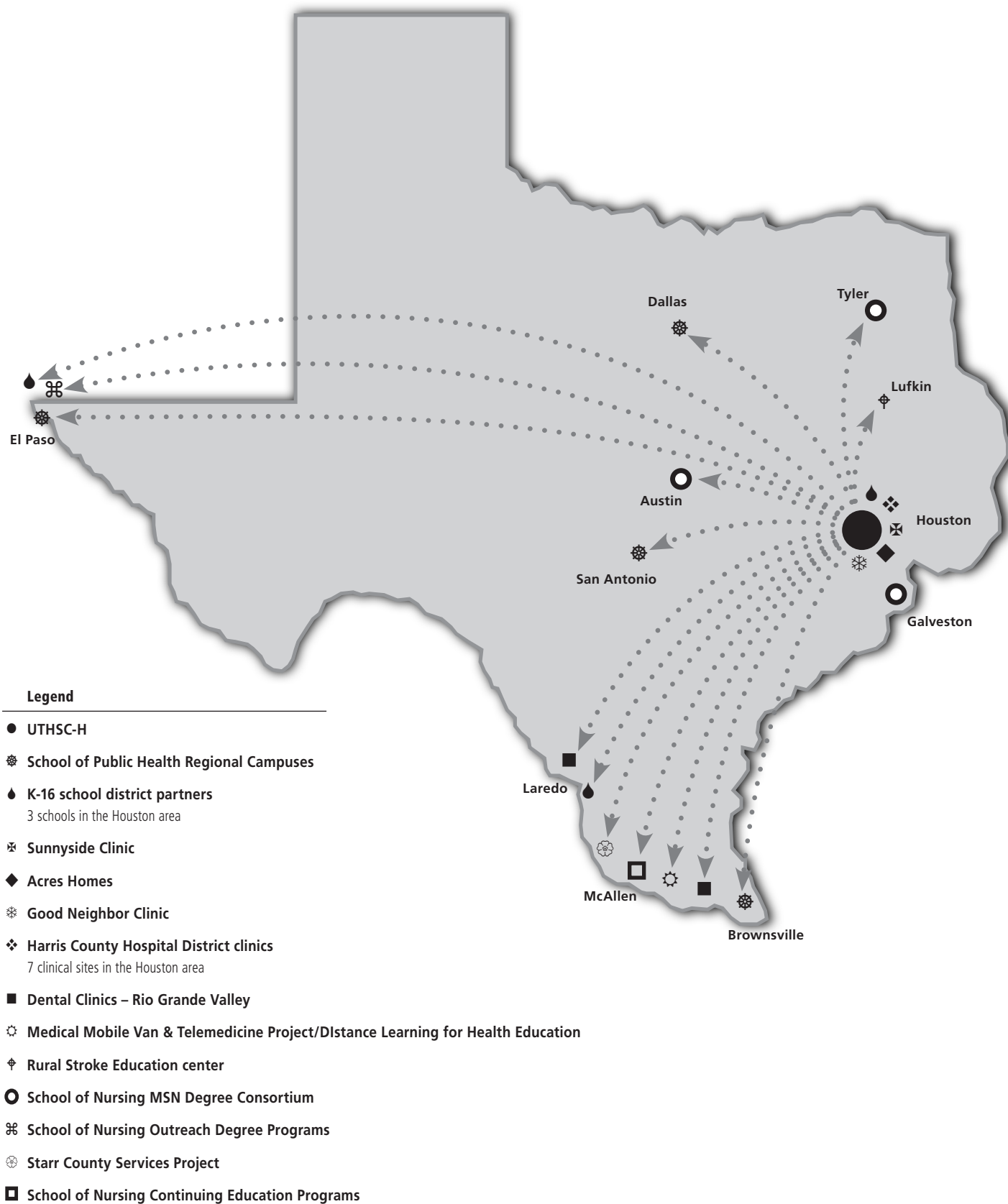
The office coordinates the Environmental Awareness Scholarships granted to economically-disadvantaged students at each of our six schools through funds garnered from the institution's recycling efforts. Support and advice is provided for the community-related projects of the scholarships recipients, and any other student organization involved in community service. To recognize and reward those students who exhibit an outstanding commitment to community service, the office developed the Annual Outstanding Community Service Awards. Data and letters of support are provided for faculty-initiated grant applications, as well as support for a variety of professional development and other scholarly initiatives for faculty. The office also provides support and coordinates collective recruitment efforts, and conducts a bi-annual Community Service Survey to document the variety of projects conducted in the community by our faculty, staff and students.

Other Community Outreach Efforts

A bi-annual campus-wide collection of hotel toiletries benefits Houston area man and women shelters. Additionally, office staff participates in numerous health fairs and other community events throughout the city.

5 Office of Community & Educational Outreach continued

UTHSC-H provides health care and health education services throughout Houston and across Texas.



Texas-Mexico Border Health Services

The Texas-Mexico Border Health Services projects were designed to assist with desperately needed medical and dental services, health professional education, health promotion and disease-prevention education. These health care projects are serving a major segment of the Texas population that would otherwise not have access to such services. The overall impact of this initiative is a health care delivery system that is exceeding the initial goals of serving the unserved and underserved population along the border. The Texas-Mexico Border Coordinator's Office provides daily management of the projects and serves as a liaison among the health science center, UT System Administration and other relevant persons and agencies located along the Texas-Mexico border who are affiliated with the project. The coordinator chaired the UT System Texas-Mexico Border Health Advisory Council for four years. Following are some of their achievements:

The Starr County Services Project has led to the identification of a major gene that predisposes Mexican-Americans to adult-onset diabetes. This discovery promises earlier and better treatment.

The project provides free intensive physical exams and follow ups involving glucose, cholesterol, triglycerides and hypertension screening, specialized eye exams and ultrasound evaluations to Mexican-Americans along the border.

The Medical Mobile Clinic is nationally known for health care services and education provided along the border to residents in the *colonias*. The mobile clinic gives the health science center and UTHSC-San Antonio medical students valuable clinical experience while providing much needed health care to this federally designated Medically Underserved Area and Health Professions Shortage Area. In FY 2003, the clinic provided primary health care and health education to over 3,000 patients and gave over 2,000 immunizations to children. Thirty-two UT-Pan American nursing students and 36 physician assistant students participate each year in clinical rotations on the van.

With a newly upgraded network to Hidalgo County, health science center physicians are providing telemedicine to the medically unserved and underserved along the border. The telemedicine occurs from the Medical School to patients on the Medical Mobile Clinic.

The Rio Grande Valley's first school-based telemedicine clinic has just been established in an underserved community by the health science center through funding from the Cullen Foundation.

The Interactive Distance Learning Project for elementary students in border *colonias* was initiated in January 2002. Physicians who are academic fellows in the Medical School's department of family medicine are presenting health education programs via videoconferencing to over 230 fifth-graders in two school districts on topics including hygiene and nutrition, birth and heredity, death and dying, skin care and drug and alcohol abuse. The students are located 385 miles away in Las Milpas and Alton *colonias*. Due to its success, the program has initiated its third year of health education activities with parents also participating in these sessions.

A joint project between the health science center and UT-Pan American led to the development of low-literacy, culturally sensitive health promotion brochures in Spanish and English on the topics of anemia and menopause. These brochures are being distributed to the clinics and hospitals throughout the border region to provide patient education in areas that had a serious lack in health promotional materials in Spanish.

The School of Nursing developed seven research-based diabetes patient education videotapes (English and Spanish) for Hispanic diabetic adults. The tapes are distributed free to border community/migrant health centers and hospitals. In addition, the videotapes have been digitized and placed on the health science center's web site for broader dissemination to patients and health care providers. Since 1986, continuing education offerings have been presented by the School of Nursing through a coordinated effort with 15 Rio Grande Valley health care agencies. Nurses and other health care professionals residing along the Texas-Mexico border receive educational programs. Continuing nursing education contact hours are provided to participants at no cost.

The program has been expanded by using distance learning so that additional continuing education sites along the border are available for the nurses to obtain their needed continuing education.

Activities of the School of Public Health include student internships on border issues to assist in coordinating efforts of the health science center and community and political border organizations to define health problems, health service use and barriers to health service along the border.

5 Office of Community & Educational Outreach continued

Greater Houston AHEC

Through a partnership with the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston's East Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC) program, and the Greater Houston AHEC, the office's health services improve the supply and distribution of health care professionals with an emphasis on primary care, and increases access to quality health care through community/academic partnerships, especially for the medically underserved. AHEC has a great sensitivity to community needs with special attention given to improving the representation of minorities and the disadvantaged in the health professions and meeting the needs of populations with inadequate access or availability of primary care services. The Greater Houston AHEC includes Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery and Waller counties, and provides services such as needs assessment, health careers promotion, continuing education, information dissemination services and community-based education for students in allied health sciences, dentistry, medicine, nursing, nurse practitioner and nurse midwife program, physician assistant studies and social work programs.

Health Education Training Centers Alliance of Texas

Health Education Training Centers Alliance of Texas (HETCAT) is the state-wide collaborative effort of all the medical schools in Texas, along with other educational institutions involved in health professions education. The health science center has been a member of HETCAT statewide Council since its inception in 1990. Membership also includes agencies that have a direct impact on health services in Texas. To date, there are 21 participating educational institutions and 15 state health agencies and organizations in the HETCAT Council. With a federal mandate to serve an area as far as 300 miles from the Texas-Mexico border, HETCAT is committed to the principles of community-determined needs and program priorities.

Acres Homes

To focus community services and educational efforts in the Houston area, the health science center established a partnership with the community of Acres Homes. This partnership benefits Acres Homes residents, while providing invaluable learning experiences for both students and faculty. The interdisciplinary learning for dental, medical, nursing and public health students fosters sustainable health promotion and disease prevention projects resulting from residents' input and community needs.