

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.

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 such as the Harris County Health Department, Fort Bend Family Health Center, Houston Medical Center, Good Neighbor Health Center, Bering Dental Center and multiple sites through the school's Community Mobile Dental Van where students provide oral health education and clinical care. In FY 2005, the Dental Branch conducted outreach programs at a variety of sites throughout greater Houston – where the school provided oral health education and 67,892 patient treatments. This is in addition to 142,171 treatments on the main campus and 28,969 in hospitals. Also, the Dental Branch is one of the primary sources of charity care in the Greater Houston Area – providing over \$1.6 million of free or discounted dental care in FY 2005. The Community Mobile Dental Van, mentioned above, is an important and valuable participant in the school's outreach efforts – it visits many sites throughout Texas providing oral cancer screenings and clinical care.

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, San Jose Clinic, The Star of Hope, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Source: Peter Triolo, Dental Branch

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) outreach program continued its now 14-year alliance with HISD's Brookline Elementary School by interacting with students in the fourth and fifth grades as well as their teachers. This school serves a predominantly disadvantaged Hispanic community. In the reporting year, the GSBS outreach program served 267 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 sixth year at Brookline Elementary. In addition, a workshop on investigative science was held for their fifth grade teachers.

In 2004-2005, the GSBS outreach program provided judges for nine local school science fairs plus the regional science fair; hosted two visits of 80 students participating in the annual National Youth Leadership Forum; provided lectures for 32 science teachers at UT Pan American; hosted a total of 28 elementary and high school students for two tours of research labs; provided round table discussions of science careers and graduate education; and provided guest speakers for 160 students from the University of Houston-Downtown. Participation in the Houston Hispanic Forum Career and Education Day continued to expand. Hispanic GSBS 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 an estimated 1,200 direct visitors who experienced the effects of temperature on matter.

The GSBS Alumni Association provided hands on programs in biomedical sciences education to over 250 4th graders at Sylvan Rodriguez Elementary School focusing on samples, estimates, and math tools as an aid to science.

For the second year UT-GSBS co-sponsored Project Grad with the University of Houston. Project Grad is designed to encourage at-risk high school students to stay in school and complete their high school degree, and to provide a window into higher levels of education and career opportunities. This year 23 students from three area high schools participated in a two-week series of classes, lab sessions and field trips on the GSBS/HSC campus.

Source: Thomas Goka, 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 2004-2005 the following outreach activities evidence this commitment: the school participated in Gateway to Care to develop information system requirements for Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers (FQHC). This led to the development of the formal Request for Proposal (RFP) for a clinic management system that will be used by FQHC clinics. In addition, school faculty and staff 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. Specific areas contributed include:

Technology Development / Prototyping

- + Define technology, processes, and infrastructure necessary to achieve HIPAA compliant 24/7 availability of patient information.
- + Develop a prototype for clinical accountability for outcomes using hypertension (YDP) for GNHC.
- + Establish cost-effective telemedicine for chronic disease co-management of diabetes.

Community Prevention / Outreach / Surveillance

- + Develop a patient, community-driven model of peer prevention education based on input from community participants.
- + Develop a system for patient education based on a patient's risk factor profile and reading level / language preference.
- + Develop a strategy to use near real-time hospital surveillance data to assess the impact of a program on the community.

Develop Strategies for Sustainability

- + Develop training programs for future student research projects in informatics and outcomes to reduce disparities in care through the Public Health Informatics Dual Degree Program.
- + Develop financial models for program sustainability and expansion.
- + Conduct a formal analysis of the Gateway to Care navigator program's information system.
- + Partner with the Center for Health Outcomes Research and Development in Japan (CHORD-J) to introduce informatics into Japan and develop demonstration projects to showcase the effectiveness of information technology to improve care.

Katrina / Rita efforts

- + Organized medical records for George R. Brown clinic.
- + Organized process flows for George R. Brown clinic.
- + Developed systems for monitoring encounters at George R. Brown.
- + Developed and implemented systems to support public health monitoring / screening at George R. Brown / Astrodome.
- + Developed and deployed system for the Houston Medical Network.

In addition to the efforts listed above, the school conducted an analysis of information system management for future disasters and developed a plan to prototype an open-source system that can also be used for non-disaster public health practice / outreach. This will be the subject of the next conference currently scheduled for March 21-22, 2006.

Source: Randolph Scott, School of Health Information Sciences

Medical School

The Medical School provides a variety of outreach services, from organized medical clinics and providing services at health fairs to student-initiated volunteer activities. Through clinical inpatient and outpatient services, UT Physicians provide more than \$100 million in uncompensated medical care to the uninsured and underinsured of Houston and surrounding areas. Medical School students have created a new tradition of Outreach Day each spring, which features a variety of projects in the community on a given Saturday – from weeding a public park and planting trees to cleaning and painting. Students also participate in the HOMES Clinic, a medical clinic for the homeless of Houston. And all of the student organizations have a service mission that involve a variety of projects, from mentoring disadvantaged students to hosting food and clothing drives. Another Medical School tradition is UT House Medics, which features staff, faculty, and students going into the community and helping fix up the house of a Houston neighbor who can't do it themselves. A more recent service tradition is the school's blood drive held around each September 11 anniversary to honor the victims of that tragedy.

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 four 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: Michelle Thomas, 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; H-E-B Fellowships, a partnership with the City of Houston Department of Health and Human Services; 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, 1,552 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.

Faculty and staff from the Center for Biosecurity and Public Health Preparedness provide training to local, state, national and international agencies in how to recognize, prepare for, and respond to bioterrorism and other public health disasters and emergencies.

Select community-based projects currently underway in the regional campuses include:

- + Implementing the Coordinated Approach to Child Health in Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) School Districts. This is a national program that looks to increasing exercise and improving diets in primary school children, and working with teachers, physical education experts, cafeteria staff, and administration to reduce childhood obesity and cardiovascular disease (Brownsville).
- + Creating and sustaining bi-national tuberculosis consortium to address the problems of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. This has developed into the first TB research program located in South Texas (Brownsville).
- + Conducting a media campaign to provide information on the epidemic of obesity and diabetes in conjunction with a local popular television station (Brownsville).
- + Advising public radio station KERA on Ready for Life Initiative (Dallas).
- + Advising Amarillo Health Department on public health issues (Dallas).
- + Participating on the Dallas Health Start Interconceptual Care Committee (Dallas)
- + Producing a Project Amigas bilingual video promoting cervical cancer screening (El Paso).
- + Working with the American Cancer Society (local and Texas) to develop and evaluate health promotion messages (El Paso).
- + Conducting a CDC-funded community project to assess informed decision-making needs around prostate cancer screening (El Paso).
- + Conducting community assessments as a class activity for the Mental Health Disaster Consortium, the City Task Force on Hunger and Homeless, the Coalition for Healthy Families, and a SPH-formed coalition that is tracking the economic, health and environmental impact of South Bexar County (San Antonio).
- + Providing technical Assistance for the "Mano a Mano" project to reduce child abuse in the Westside of San Antonio by working in partnership with community residents to strengthen families (San Antonio).
- + Providing technical Assistance for Making Connections – San Antonio, a project to improve the social and economic status of families living on the Westside of San Antonio (San Antonio).

Source: Tracie Chase, 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. 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.

Source: Steven Kelder, School of Public Health

Tu Salud, Si Cuenta! – Your Health Matters! Is a theory-based physical activity and nutrition media campaign for adults aged 20 – 45 (and their families) on the US/Mexico border (one million people), accompanied by promotora outreach and additional health information to two impoverished communities (2,000 households). The project is delivered to the community through a number of community agencies and organizations, including Televisa, UT Brownsville, and an extensive list of community organizations and stakeholders.

Source: Belinda Reininger, School of Public Health

Qué Sabrosa Vida (What A Delicious Life) is a community based bi-lingual nutrition intervention program delivered by the community to its residents for the last 7 years. 33 different community agencies in the Paso del Norte Region, including Juarez, deliver the intervention through 202 sites with more than 15,000 people involved to date. El Paso ISD has partnered to extend the program to parents of children in their schools.

Source: R. Sue Day, 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 2005, 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
- + 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 UTHSC-H, 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

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 UTHSC-H, 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*, under the direction of Dr. Craig Hanis (SPH), 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 4,000 participant contacts per year for 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. In addition, the Project Center is a referral center for the Texas Commission for the Blind.

The *Medical Mobile Clinic* is nationally known for health care services and education provided along the border to residents in the colonias. UTHSC-H has provided these services for the past 17 years. The mobile clinic gives UTHSC-H 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 2005, 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. The university has received external matching grants from three foundations for a new mobile clinic that will serve both Hidalgo and Cameron counties, beginning in early 2006.

Using new encrypted technology across Internet 2, UTHSC-H physicians are providing telemedicine to assist the medically unserved and underserved along the border. The telemedicine occurs from UTHSC-H Medical School to the patients on the Medical Mobile Clinic.

The Rio Grande Valley's *first school-based telemedicine clinic* was established in an underserved community in the spring, 2005 by UTHSC-H through funding from the Cullen Foundation. In addition, through another generous gift, the latest telemedicine equipment is being installed in three colonia schools in Hidalgo and Cameron counties with telemedicine consultations to be provided by UTHSC-H physicians.

UTHSC-H and UT Brownsville have developed an affiliation for the provision of telemedicine consultations given by UTHSC-H to UT Brownsville students in need of care at the UT Brownsville Student Health Clinic. This UT component affiliation provides physician care in this medically underserved area of the state.

The *Interactive Distance Learning Project* for elementary students in border colonias was initiated in January 2002. Physicians who are academic fellows in the UTHSC-H Medical School's department of family and community 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 fourth year of health education activities with an additional school district and with parents also participating in these sessions.

A joint project between UTHSC-H 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 UTHSC-H web site for broader dissemination to patients and health care providers.

Beginning in the Fall 2004, the UT Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) embarked on a research opportunity for UTB undergraduate students and faculty through the MBRS Minority Biomedical Research Support Program. MBRS is a federal project to strengthen minority institutions research capabilities both for the students and the faculty. The overall goal is to enhance the competitiveness of the students in pursuit of graduate research opportunities upon graduating from UT Brownsville. UTHSC-H is working with UT Brownsville in the overall evaluation of this NIH project.

5 Community Outreach Activities continued

The UT Brownsville *MCAT Prep Course* started in January 2003 through funding from UTHSC-H. The program began providing a diagnostic test for sophomores to help them in preparing for their MCAT experience and a 13-week course for juniors, seniors and graduate students at UTB/TSC. These students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are being provided an opportunity through UTHSC-H to compete for a medical school place upon graduation from UTB.

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. The UTHSC-H Community and Educational Outreach Director is the Assistant Director for Academic Partnerships for Greater Houston AHEC.

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. UTHSC-H 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.

Source: Kathy Becan-McBride, Academic Affairs