

## Thomas F. Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit

### General Information

The Thomas F. Burks Merit Award Scholarship is available to students from all the component schools and is based on academic excellence. **To be eligible for consideration for this scholarship, applicants must meet the following criteria:**

- Be a Texas resident, for tuition purposes
- Be in good academic standing
- Be able to demonstrate excellence by (1) academic achievement at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-H), having completed one or more semesters at UTHSC-H; (2) support of the mission of education within the applicant's school and UTHSC-H; and (3) support of the mission of research within the applicant's school and UTHSC-H.

The amount of the scholarship will be based on available funds. The actual amount, once known for the current award year, will be made available in the Office of Student Financial Aid.

To apply for these funds, applicants must submit: (1) a completed Thomas F. Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit Application; (2) a one-page essay justifying why they are deserving of the award; and (3) other letter(s) of support from faculty, postgraduate trainees, and/or student peers (optional). These completed items are to be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and reviewed by the UTHSC-H Scholarship Selection Committee of the Interfaculty Council.

**The DEADLINE date for submission of the scholarship application is November 15. Please send the completed application and essay to the attention of Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, 7000 Fannin (UCT 1715), Houston, TX 77030; or via email to [Teresa.SchadeLugo@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Teresa.SchadeLugo@uth.tmc.edu).**

### Scholarship History

Dr. Thomas F. Burks, who was an outstanding researcher, inspirational teacher and academic leader, and friend to faculty, staff and students, passed away in March 2001. As a tribute to his memory and to what he valued in life, a student scholarship was established in his name. The Interfaculty Council recommended that the scholarship be in the form of a Scholarship of Merit and that a Scholarship Selection Committee comprised of faculty and students be a part of the selection process.

Dr. Thomas F. Burks was a distinguished research scientist who had served UTHSC-H as its chief academic officer from 1991 to 2001. Dr. Burks came from the University of Arizona College of Medicine, where he served as an associate dean for research, and head and professor of the department of pharmacology. Prior to his work in Arizona, Burks was a faculty member at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston (UTMS-H) from 1971 to 1977. He began his tenure at UTMS-H as an associate professor of pharmacology. Later he was appointed professor of pharmacology. Concurrently, he served as a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. He was recipient of the university's first John Freeman Award for Outstanding Teaching.

After receiving his postdoctoral training, Burks became assistant professor of pharmacology in 1967 at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine and was appointed associate professor in 1971. Burks received his B.S. and M.S. degrees at the University of Texas-Austin and Ph.D. at the University of Iowa College of Medicine. He conducted postdoctoral work at the Laboratory of Neuropharmacology at the National Institute for Medical Research in London, England.

He received multiple National Institutes of Health research grants in his major areas of interest and expertise: central and peripheral neuropeptide pharmacology; mechanisms of opioid actions; and gastrointestinal pharmacology. Prior to his death, Dr. Burks had been leading preparations for the 14th World Congress of Pharmacology in San Francisco in July 2002. The congress is the most comprehensive gathering of pharmacological scientists in the world and is conducted only every four years. He was selected president of the congress by the host organization, the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET). Burks was also president of ASPET in 1990 and 1991.



