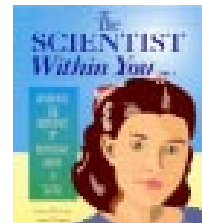




# Scoop



Women's History Month

Friday, March 5, 1999

## THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

### EVENTS TO KNOW:

- **Mini Symposium**, "New Aspects of Cardiac Metabolism And Gene Expression," **TODAY, March 5**, 8 a.m.-5:20 p.m., MSB 2.135, call 713-500-6569.
- **Texas State Board of Medical Examiners Annual Q&A Session**, Mon., **March 8**, noon, MSB 1.006. All MS students, residents, & faculty invited. Call 713-500-5134.
- **Neuroscience Lecture, Dr. Phyllis Wise**, "Neuroendocrine Contributions and Repercussions of the Menopause....," Tues., **March 9**, noon, MSB 1.006.
- **Dean's Lecture Series, Dr. Alfred Gilman**, "G Proteins and Regulation of Adenylyl Cyclase," Wed., **March 10**, 4 p.m., MSB 3.001 (see article on right).
- **Fourth Annual Public Forum for Brain Awareness Week**, a free event, "The Aging Brain," Tues., **March 16**, 5:30-7 p.m., or Sat., **March 20**, 10:30 a.m.-noon, MSB 3.001, call **Sharon Pepper**, 713-500-5540.
- **Dr. C. Everett Koop**, Former Surgeon General, "Ten Critical Health Issues For the 21st Century," Wed., **March 17**, 1-2 p.m., MSB3.001. His website is <<http://www.drkoop.com>>.
- **Classified Staff Workshop**, Wed., **March 31**, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Sheraton Astro-dome, 8686 Kirby Drive, call 713-500-5110.

### SANBORN, LAWSON TO SPEAK AT WOMEN'S HISTORY FORUM

Texas A&M University System at the Institute of Biosciences and Technology (IBT) is sponsoring a *Women's History Month* program on Tuesday, **March 16**, at 1 p.m. in the IBT auditorium, 2121 W. Holcombe, on the corner of Holcombe and Shamrock. The theme of the program is "Women in the News: Educating the Public About Current Events and Science." Guest speakers are **Dr. Barbara Sanborn**, UT-H Director, NIH Training Program in Mammalian Reproduction, Co-Director, Office of Women's Health, and Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, and **Melanie Lawson**, award-winning journalist and anchor for "Eyewitness News," Channel 13. Sanborn received her undergraduate degree from Hope College and Ph.D. in chemistry with distinction from Boston University. Lawson received her undergraduate degree from Princeton University and a joint degree in law and journalism from Columbia University. Door prizes and reception immediately following the program in the second floor lobby. For more information call **Kathryn Bastida**, 713-500-2409.

### MEMORIAL HERMANN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN BEAUMONT

Baptist Hospital of Southeast Texas merged on March 1 with Memorial Hermann Healthcare System of Houston and the net result will be an investment of about \$50 million in southeast Texas health care. The investment will be made during the next five years and it will include a new obstetrics and pediatrics unit in Beaumont. **Dan Wilford**, chief executive officer of Memorial Hermann, and **David Parmer**, Baptist chief executive officer, announced the consolidation of the two not-for-profit health care systems. The consolidation includes the hospitals in Beaumont and Orange. Efforts to improve Baptist's finance system, information system, and plant improvements already are under way, they said. The name for the newly combined hospitals still is under study, Parmer commented. (Source: Beaumont *Enterprise* 3/2/99).



Nobel Laureate **Dr. Alfred Gilman** from UT Southwestern will speak on "G Proteins and Regulation of Adenylyl Cyclase," on **Wednesday, March 10** at 4 p.m.



in 3.001 as part of the ongoing Dean's Lecture Series. Dr. Gilman (who holds both M.D. and Ph.D. degrees) was awarded the 1994 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine along with **Dr. Martin Rodbell** (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in North Carolina) for work the two conducted independently on G proteins. G proteins have been described as "biological traffic lights" that are found inside the cell and respond to signals from outside the cell — light, smell, neurotransmitters, and hormones. Thus, they are somewhat like an intricate, internal switchboard that allows the body's billions of cells to communicate with one another. When G proteins do not work, they can lead to symptoms of such diseases as diabetes, alcoholism, cholera and whooping cough. G proteins get their name from the fact that they bind to guanine nucleotides, a major component of DNA and RNA. Dr. Gilman is one of seven Nobel Laureates in the UT System including **Dr. Ferid Murad** from UT-Houston.

**Dr. Alfred Gilman**

### UTmost Interest

**Dr. John Byrne**, Chair, Dept. of Neurobiology and Anatomy, participated in a workshop sponsored by the NIH on "Non-Mammalian Model Organisms" in Bethesda, Md.

Hot News

### ERC'S EASTER BASKET DRAWING

Tuesday, **March 30**, at 12:30 p.m., 50 items will be given away in the Leather Lounge, including baskets, bunnies, and gift bags. Contact **Sherry Dunn**, 713-500-5505, or your Employee Relations Committee representative for tickets. Tickets are 25 cents each or five for \$1.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

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**Produced weekly by the Office of Community Affairs and Public Education**

## DR. GRAY IN BOMBAY, INDIA

Not only has **Dr. Lincoln Gray** discovered and patented a mathematical formula that predicts the spread of cancer in the head and neck, he became a Fulbright Senior Scholar and spent several months on sabbatical in Pakistan, India and Egypt lecturing on the formula and researching cancer-patient data.

While in Bombay, Gray conferred with a group researching the spread of the AIDS disease and the spread of TB through the body organs in AIDS patients. He mapped much of the findings of this group that has a formal collaboration with the UT-Houston Health Science Center. Also he found a collaborator in Pakistan willing to share breast cancer data. "Mapping the spread of the metastasis in breast cancer has given me a completely different perspective because the model behaves differently in neck cancer than it does in breast cancer. This has led me to look at all cancer data in a different way," he comments.



Dr. Lincoln Gray

Gray, a basic scientist and director of research in The University of Texas-Houston Medical School's Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, has two patents. The first, which he received in 1995, is for the formula that creates a unique map of the head and neck and traces the cancer from its point of origin revealing how it would spread based on the probability of that spread. The other patent takes an existing cancer and runs the formula backwards to locate the point of origin.

"In India, for instance, oral cancer amounts to 30% of the country's cancer. In the U.S. it is 5 – 7%," explains Gray, who is eager to share his formula because sometimes surgeons do not know where a cancer began, and the program can help them find the hidden primary and narrow the radiation area. "What causes the high rate of oral cancer in India is a centuries-old custom of 'chewing pan,' which children begin doing about the age of 12." The pan leaf is smeared with lime and chopped betel nut, then tobacco and spices are added before it is rolled. It is placed in the back of the jaw and chewed. The oral cancers begin showing up when these young people reach their 20s.



"Except for this, cancer is rare in India. The caloric-restricted diet prevents the growth of tumors. The overpopulation and poverty mean that many people get barely enough to eat. There is an advantage to this hunger, however, as lean people develop fewer tumors. What is sad," observes Gray, "is that 'chewing pan' is believed to diminish hunger pangs, which is probably why people do it." - *N. Shire*

*Editor's Note: See TMC News, 3/1/99, for information on Dr. Gray's work in Egypt and Pakistan as well.*



## INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO HEALTH CARE TEAM COMPETITION

Mark your calendars for the 1999 Health Care Team Competition, sponsored by **President M. David Low** and the Student InterCouncil. The videotaped competition will be held on Thursday, **March 25**, from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., Room 3.001, at the Medical School. A reception honoring the participants will immediately follow. All team members receive a tee-shirt and winning team members receive engraved trophies. Master of Ceremony will be **Dr. Tom Burks**, Executive VP for Research and Academic Affairs. Three teams made up of students in good academic standing from UT-Houston's six schools and The University of Houston's Graduate School of Social Work, College of Pharmacy and Health Law and Policy Institute will participate in a competition designed to illustrate an interdisciplinary approach to health care. Each team will try to solve a clinical case study prepared and judged by UT-Houston and UH faculty. This year's case, organizers say, has implications that are extremely important in bench science, clinical work and social consequences. Over the past six years, approximately 240 students have participated as team members solving cases involving Alzheimer's, high-risk pregnancy, community health, and organ transplantation. For information, contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 713-500-3066, or <bvaughan@admin4.hsc.uth.tmc.edu>.



## "HERE COMES THE JUDGE-A MOCK TRIAL" VIDEO

The Office of Continuing Medical Education in conjunction with the Office for Legal Affairs and Risk Management have produced a video entitled "Here Comes the Judge – A Mock Trial." In addition to risk management credit this video also offers: 2 hours of CME credit and 2 hours of ethics credit, required by the Texas State Medical Board. All departments have been given a copy of the video and the instructions on receiving CME credit. To check the video out from your department please see your department's Faculty Coordinator. In addition, the video is available for check out from the CME office. For more information, e-mail <mstorm@dean.med.uth.tmc.edu> or call 713-500-5249.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION IN THE MEDIA

**Dr. Barbara Gastel**, associate professor of journalism and medical humanities and coordinator of the master's degree program in science and technology journalism at Texas A&M University, will provide guidance to health professionals and biomedical researchers with her talk "Presenting Medical Information through the Popular Media," Wednesday, **April 21**, 3-5 p.m., Jones Library, third floor. She is the author of the recently published *Health Writer's Handbook*. Recipient of the American Medical Writers Association's most prestigious award, the Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award, Dr. Gastel is a graduate of Yale University and holds degrees in medicine and public health from Johns Hopkins. She has also worked for *Newsweek* and the National Institutes of Health in medical journalism, and has taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Beijing Medical University, and the University of California, San Francisco. Refreshments, provided by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, will follow the presentation. Majors Scientific Books will be present to sell copies of Dr. Gastel's new book and raffle some generously donated prizes. Space is limited; early registration is recommended. Access <<http://library.tmc.edu/gastel.html>> to register.



**Reminder - Town Hall Meeting**, Wednesday, **March 17**, 11:30 - 12:30 p.m., MSB 2.103. Update and status report about the Revenue Process Redesign-IDX Implementation Project (RPR-IDX).