



Scoop



Friday, June 18, 1999

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

EVENTS TO KNOW:

► Modern Science and Ancient Wisdom:

A Complementary and Alternative Medicine Conference, TODAY, June 18, Marriot. Contact Beverly Osterloh, 713-500-5249.

FYI – Chancellor William H. Cunningham, chancellor of the University of Texas System, is resigning, effective Aug. 31, 2000, to pursue a career in the private sector. He served as UT president for seven years before becoming chancellor in 1992.

UTmost Interest

Dr. Ernst Knobil, Integrative Biology and Pharmacology, delivered the Roy O. Greep Lecture



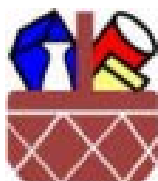
Hot News

at the The Endocrinology Society's 81st annual meeting in San Diego June 15...**Dr. Samuel**

Kaplan will speak on the "Future of Microbiology," at the Gordon Conference, New London, CT, June 27.

FEED THE HUNGRY

Summertime can be a fun time, but it is also a scary time for those who go to bed hungry. Houston has the second highest child poverty rate of any major U.S. city. The Houston Food Bank, in conjunction with the institutions that make up the Texas Medical Center, will host a rally, "Party on Webber Plaza," Thursday, **July 15**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Your contribution of food (at the Medical School elevators), or monetary donations (checks, made out to the Houston Food Bank, can be dropped off to Community Affairs, Suite G.004), counts. The most needed items are: canned fruit, vegetables, fish, meats, also baby food, pinto beans, cereal, nutritional drinks, jelly, honey, peanut butter, bar soap, shampoo, deodorant, large baby diapers and adult diapers, single serving snacks such as jello or pudding. These items are on display on the ground floor.



DR. ABOULEISH RECEIVES NILS LOFGREN AWARD



Dr. Ezzat Abouleish

During the annual meeting of the Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology (S.O.A.P.) in Denver, **Dr. Ezzat Abouleish**, professor and director of obstetrical anesthesiology in the Department of Anesthesiology, received the "Nils Lofgren Award for his outstanding contributions in the fields of obstetric and regional anesthesia." The award is named after the scientist who discovered the local anesthetic lidocaine (Xylocaine). The recipient of the award is elected by S.O.A.P. members and sponsored by AstraZeneca, an international biosciences company.

DR. YEE'S GOAL IS SEEING "BETTER THAN 20/20"

He's a long way from the time he was head photographer for his high school yearbook and a third place winner in his high school science fair for a project on the memory of goldfish. But his interest in photography and science propelled him to where he is today. **Dr. Richard Yee**, clinical associate professor, Ophthalmology and Visual Science, and director, Hermann Corrective Vision Center, says "the eyes are the camera of the body." Yee considers himself to be a researcher/clinician/scientist, and both performs and teaches "lasik," a refractive eye surgery technique that reshapes the surface of the eye using a laser so that images focus more clearly. Candidates for Yee's surgery include those who have myopia or nearsightedness, with or without astigmatism (irregular curvature of the cornea). The process can correct for a larger range of myopia than other refractive surgery such as PRK or RK, Yee believes. It causes less discomfort and has a shorter recovery time than similar procedures. Yee is also PI for an NIH benchmark five-year grant involving the molecular genetics of dystrophies of the cornea. **Drs. Stephen Daiger and Lori Sullivan**, both SPH, are co-investigators. They hope to find a new location for cornea disease on chromosome 10, and are looking at candidate genes that will define the actual cause. Around the corner, Yee believes that "custom cornea," a new laser technique, will bring laser surgery to a new level, "better than 20/20." His basic philosophy is "to bring to the surface the latest technology that's the best care for the people."



Dr. Richard Yee

SUMMER STUDENTS GAIN INTERVIEW EXPERIENCE

Special thanks to all faculty who participated in "mock" student interviews on June 10 with 14 college students currently participating in the *1999 Summer Enrichment Program*. The program gives aspiring health professionals a jumpstart by providing UT-Houston faculty mentorship and educational opportunities throughout the summer. Thanks to the assistance of the Admissions Office and faculty volunteers, students had the opportunity to participate in "mock" interviews for medical school. Veteran faculty interviewers conducted practice interviews, along with critiques and feedback reports designed to help these future health professionals develop confidence and interview skills. How did they do? "Most impressive," expressed one faculty interviewer about the confidence, work ethic, and strong desire to make a positive difference in society that his two undergraduate interviewees demonstrated.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

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DR. ZHOU'S PEW SCHOLARS AWARD FURTHERS INVESTIGATION OF HERPES VIRUSES

Dr. Z. Hong Zhou, assistant professor, Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, is one of 20 recipients nationwide of the prestigious 1999 *Pew Scholars Award*. The purpose of the Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences is to "support young investigators of outstanding promise in the basic and clinical sciences relevant to the advancement of human health." Zhou received the 4-year, \$200,000 award to support his research on the structure of *cytomegalovirus* and other herpes viruses, which cause diseases such as cold sores, infectious mononucleosis, chicken pox, genital herpes, and life-threatening meningitis in infants.

Since 1985, the Pew Charitable Trusts, a national philanthropy based in Philadelphia, has supported 300 scholars with more than \$60 million. The scholars, who are junior faculty members at various medical schools around the country, are given an opportunity to innovate in their research and advance the state of knowledge in the biomedical sciences. Research projects underway range from AIDS to cancer to childhood infectious diseases and diseases affecting the elderly. This year, nominations from more than 100 institutions were received. Chair of the 16-member national advisory committee appointed by the Pew board of directors is **Dr. Torsten N. Wiesel**, president emeritus of the Rockefeller University, and a 1981 Nobel laureate in physiology or medicine.

Dr. Zhou photographs snap-frozen samples of the viruses in an electron microscope and then uses sophisticated computer programs to make detailed three-dimensional structural reconstructions of the virus. This information can then be used to identify targets for therapeutic drugs. He joined the Medical School faculty in July of 1997. For further information see the Pew Scholar website <<http://www.futurehealth.ucsf.edu/pewscholar.html>> or Zhou's website <<http://hub.med.uth.tmc.edu/~hong/>>.

GIVING A WHOLE NEW MEANING TO 'HOUSE CALLS'



A new telemedicine program, funded by three grants totaling more than \$380,000, is being initiated by faculty at the Medical School, for patients in Hidalgo County. **Dr. Kathleen Becan-McBride**, professor, Family Practice, and director, Community Outreach and Education, UTH-HSC, said "These grants are allowing the latest in computer technology to be used in an area that hasn't had access to any kind of medical care in the past."

One telemedicine unit will be placed in the Medical Mobile Clinic vehicle, which drives to remote areas of Hidalgo County. Another teleconferencing unit will be used by specialists at the Medical School. Other equipment to be used includes a satellite array for linking the two units, four months of satellite usage time, and peripheral medical devices such as otoscopes and retinal scanners for the Mobile Clinic. Also to be installed is a dedicated T-1 network line connecting residents to the Hidalgo County Health Department and the Medical School.

The Medical Mobile Clinic, directed by **Dr. Margaret McNeese**, associate dean, Student Affairs, has been in operation for 10 years and has served over 34,000 residents along the Texas-Mexico border. In March of this year alone, 671 patients were attended to. McBride believes that telemedicine's promise is to reach out to remote primary and secondary care needs before they become more serious and costly problems. "We are offering potential savings to the state of Texas."

UCP WINS GOLD AWARD

The Business Development Group at University Care Plus (UCP) won a Gold award in the Physician Referral category for its 1-888-4 UT DOCS physician referral campaign at the 16th Annual Healthcare Advertising Awards. UCP's winning package included: a 1-888-4 UT DOCS pocket folder, individual clinic and physician inserts, a locations brochure, Call Center brochure and magnet.

Since the campaign began in early 1998, monthly inquiries to the 1-888-4 UT DOCS information/referral line have tripled.

Note – New graphic guidelines for UT-Houston are posted, <http://www.uth.tmc.edu/ut_general/admin_fin/planning/pub/hoop/01/1_05.html>. Copies of the brochure, "Graphic Identity Guidelines," are available from the Office of Public Affairs, 713-500-3031. (See Scoop, 4-9-99).

ANNUAL UT – SYSTEM EMPLOYEE GROUP INSURANCE ENROLLMENT 1999 – 2000 SCHEDULE

Information can be accessed, <<http://www.utsystem.edu/egi>>. Important points include: new life insurance coverage options to consider; change coverage levels or elect new coverage via UT TOUCH using any computer or touch-tone phone; and benefit-eligible employees will receive a PIN number and Annual Enrollment information by mail in June.

June

23	SPH Auditorium	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
24	MSI, Room 110	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
25	HCPC Cafeteria	7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
	HCPC Cafeteria	12 noon – 1 p.m.
	HCPC Cafeteria	2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
29	LBJ Auditorium	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
30	DBB, Room 132	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

July

1	UCT, Room 1505C	noon – 1 p.m.
8	UCT, Room 1505C	noon – 1 p.m.
6	HRC Cafeteria	2 – 3 p.m.
7	MSB, Room 3.001	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
14	MSB, Room 3.001	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
9	OCB Rio Grande	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
12	OCB, Rio Grande, (for Retirees)	10 a.m. – noon
13	HMB, Room 4.400	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

LBJ HOSPITAL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital (LBJ) is celebrating its 10th anniversary this summer. LBJ, named in honor of **President Lyndon B. Johnson**, first opened its doors to the public June 2, 1989. **Dr. James Hefner**, Chief of Staff, LBJ, **Dr. Margo Hilliard**, Senior Vice President, LBJ, and **Marvin Zindler** from KTRK TV were among the invited speakers earlier this month. Congratulations!