



# Scoop



March of Dimes Birth Defects Prevention Month

Friday, January 28, 2000

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - HOUSTON MEDICAL SCHOOL

## EVENTS TO KNOW:

► **Dean's Lecturer, Dr. Patricia K. Donahoe**, "Downstream Signal Transduction of Mullerian Inhibiting Substance in Ovarian Cancer," Wed., **Feb. 9**, 4 p.m., MSB 3.001.

► **Seminars in Reproductive Biology, Dr. Daniel Carr**, "Role of AKAPs in Mammalian Spermatozoa," Tues., **Feb. 15**, noon, 3.301 (green section).

## UTmost Interest

**President M. David Low** recently hired **Lois Jean Moore**, former President and CEO of the Harris County Hospital District, to an administrative role at the Harris County Psychiatric Center (HCPC) as announced in the *Houston Chronicle* (1/25/00)...The Children's Assessment Center and **Dr. Margaret McNeese**, associate dean, Student Affairs, were featured on the *Debra Duncan* show on Monday, Jan. 24.



## VALENTINE DAY SALE

Cupid's day is nearing. A variety of items will be on sale, Fri., **Feb. 11**, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.; and again, Mon., **Feb. 14**, 7:30 - 10:30 a.m., Leather Lounge. Sponsored by the Medical School Employee Relations Committee.



## CATALOG TO BE DISTRIBUTED

The Research Committee is distributing to all UT-Houston Medical School faculty members the updated 2000 version of the Catalog of Core Facilities and Support Services. The catalog is also posted at <http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu>. Click "On-Line Resources," then "Catalog of Core Facilities." This catalog highlights an impressive spectrum of research expertise, facilities, and resources, with key contacts and overviews of available research-based centers and support services.

## STUDY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Dr. Daniel DiCesare** in the UT-H Dermatology Research Center, is seeking volunteers, at least 12 yrs. of age, for a research study on a topical acne cream. Compensation is provided. For information call 713-704-5232.

## MEDICAL SCHOOL CAFETERIA TO REOPEN APRIL 1

Sodexo Marriott Services Inc. (SMS), the largest provider of outsourced food and facilities management in North America, with \$4.5 billion in annual sales, will be the new food service provider for UT-H. **Doug Bowerman**, Auxiliary Enterprises, said that due to remodeling efforts, the Medical School's cafeteria is now scheduled to reopen **April 1, 2000**. Direct comments or questions to him at 713-500-8400 or by email at [dbowerma@admin4.hsc.uth.tmc.edu](mailto:dbowerma@admin4.hsc.uth.tmc.edu). Once open, SMS's "CrossRoads" cuisine selections will feature a variety of freshly prepared selections, grilled entrees, upscale sandwiches, hot soups, salads, down home fare, and delicious pizzas and pastas. These will include:

- ◆ *Charleston Market* — Southern specialties, comfort foods, roasted chicken, meat loaf, flavored mashed potatoes, homemade stuffing and vegetables
- ◆ *Selona Grill* — Grilled sandwiches, burgers and new fries, specialty sandwiches
- ◆ *La Vincita* — Freshly baked traditional and specialty pizzas, penne pasta with marinara or spinach fettucini with alfredo sauce
- ◆ *Heart Healthy* — Using steaming, poaching, braising, grilling and other healthful techniques, selections will include fruits and vegetables, beans, and pasta, naturally high in fiber, vitamins and minerals (low in calories, saturated fats, and cholesterol)
- ◆ *Catering* - Breakfasts, luncheons, and dinners can vary from an informal buffet to a black tie waitered event. Catering services will be available seven days a week.

## DR. CHEVES SMYTHE HONORED FOR 30 YEARS SERVICE

**Dr. and Mrs. Max Buja** hosted a celebratory dinner in honor of **Dr. Cheves Smythe's** 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Medical School on Saturday, January 22. Smythe, the first dean of the Medical School (1970 -75) also served as Dean Pro Tem in 1995-96.



Four deans: (l-r) Dean Max Buja, former deans John Ribble, Cheves Smythe, and Ernst Knobil

Smythe in hardhat to the Texas Medical Center vista we know today. Smythe, who remains to this day the senior member of the faculty and an active clinician in the Department of Internal Medicine, recalled those early days and the behind-the-scenes planning that saw the school emerge in short order from small offices in the HAM/TMC Library Building to buildings, faculty, and medical students.

As part of the evening which included a small group of faculty who were a part of the early School, the Bujas presented the honoree with a framed set of photos featuring a "before and after" of the school - from construction of the Freeman Building with

## CORRIERE RESEARCH FUND ESTABLISHED

The Joseph N. Corriere, Jr. Research Fund in Urology has been established in honor of **Dr. Joseph Corriere**, said **Dr. Michael Ritchey**, Division Director-Urology. Corriere became the first director of the Division of Urology in 1974. He is presently professor and holder of the Cecil M. Crigler, M.D. Chair in Urology.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-HOUSTON  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER



Medical School

L. Maximilian Buja, M.D., Dean  
Bryant Boutwell, Dr.P.H., Assistant Dean  
Colleen O'Brien, Editor  
e-mail: [Colleen.L.O'Brien@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Colleen.L.O'Brien@uth.tmc.edu)  
FAX: (713) 500-0597  
E-Scoop online: <http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu>



Produced weekly by the Office of Community Affairs and Public Education



# UNIVERSITY CARE PLUS UPDATE

Affiliated with the Practice Plan of The University of Texas-Houston, Medical School

**Editor's Note:** This UCP Update is the first in a regular monthly column written to keep Scoop readers up-to-date on clinical activities. As the managed care arm of the UT-H clinical enterprise, UCP's purposes are twofold: to provide comprehensive credentialing services of physicians, and to facilitate and expand the clinical faculty's ability to provide health care services to the community by negotiating contracts and by creating outpatient centers throughout Houston. UCP is a Texas-certified non-profit health corporation and conforms with all requirements of the Texas Board of Medical Examiners.

## UCP ROLLS OUT PROVIDER PARTICIPATION WEB SITE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7

The University Care Plus (UCP) Provider Participation web site will be up and open to the public Monday, **February 7**. It will be part of the UCP home page at <<http://www.ucplus.org>>.

"UCP is very pleased to be rolling out this updated site to our physicians and clinic staff," says **Ann Cook**, UCP's Vice President and Director of Business Development. "This site will offer 24-hour access to information on UCP doctors. UT physicians can verify what health plans they are credentialed with. And the site offers easy access to information for other UCP clinicians, community physicians and the general public."

After a physician is found by name or specialty and after reviewing the clinic locations where he or she sees patients, the visitor will be able to either click on the UCP home page at <[Appointment@ucp.org](mailto:Appointment@ucp.org)> to send an e-mail requesting an appointment at a specific clinic with a specific doctor or call the toll-free number 1-888-4UTDOCS (1-888-488-3627).

"By far the primary user of this information will be our own UT clinics," says **Susan Hoeflich**, Manager of Provider Administration, "and those clinic staffs can respond more easily and quickly to patient requests."

The UCP Provider Administration has dual responsibilities – credentialing physicians and developing and maintaining the Provider Participation database. "In addition to credentialing a large number of physicians each year, each physician member must be re-credentialled every two years," explains Hoeflich. Currently, the UCP network consists of 485 UT faculty physicians and 119 primary care physicians in the community.

Hoeflich's team is also responsible for directory audit and verification that the information on each clinician sent out by UCP to the many health plans has been loaded into those databases. Since each health plan has multiple databases, one way to minimize the glitches is to check to see that each database has the same information on each doctor. "This verification process is not only intensive but critical because it determines whether our physicians are treated as 'in-network' by the health plans," explains Cook. One of UCP's objectives is to build concrete relationships with the health plans by providing information, support, and available contact on an ongoing basis.

All this critical activity is in response to UCP physician demands: to showcase their talents by being in as many contracts as possible; that the contracts be good and protect them (the physicians) as well as offer fair reimbursement; to be in the provider directory; and to be in the computer systems of each health plan. The latter activity is monitored by a member of Hoeflich's team, which currently includes **Annie White**, Provider Enrollment Specialist; **LaTasha Rose**, CPCS Credentialing Specialist; **Michelle Meshberger**, Provider Relations Representative; and **Ancy Philips**, Provider Directory Specialist.

Provider Administration is one of the divisions of UCP. The others are Administration/Human Resources, Information Systems, Business Development, Financial Services, the UT Physician Referral Service, and the Outreach Clinics.

*(Next month's column will focus on UCP Administration).*

- N. Shire



- photo by Ester Fant

**UCP staff: standing, (l-r), Ann Cook, Susan Hoeflich; seated, Annie White, Michelle Meshberger, and LaTasha Rose.**



## January Employee of the Month - Rita Rivera



"You are the sunshine of my life...You are the apple of my eye," are words to a familiar tune. They could also sum up the thoughts and feelings of dozens of medical students that **Rita Rivera** has shepherded through four years of medical school as Senior Support Specialist, Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Medical students wanted to let us know, what Rita, our January Employee of the Month, means to them. Here are some of their comments:

- "Rita has become almost like an aunt or second mom to me...I can't express enough how much I appreciate what she's done for my medical school experience." - **Pedro J. Aguilar**, MS IV
- "Things I like about Rita include solving locker and parking list problems in a friendly, efficient manner, teaching me Spanish, and her lovely smile." - **LaResa Ridge**, MS IV
- "Rita is an amazing woman. Even though there are hundreds of students, she never forgets your name!" - **Carla Schwartz**, MS IV
- "I've always felt that it's the secretary who makes or breaks an office, so it's no wonder why we as students feel so comfortable visiting Student Affairs. Rita's a delicate blend of amiability, efficiency, and professionalism." - **Fay Simon**, MS II
- "To me, Rita is like a counselor guiding me in the right direction and letting me know all the options I have as a student. She is one of the most helpful people I've had the pleasure to meet at our school." - **Jose E. Garza**, MS I