



Scoop

June 25, 2004

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

Events to Know

June

29 Dr. Jose Carranza, "Depression, More than Just the Blues," noon, JLL Conference Room street level.

July

5 Skeleton holiday.
7 & 13 Benefits Brown Bag Sessions, noon, MSB 2.006.

15 TMC Food Drive Party, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Webber Plaza.

15 12th Annual UT Scholarship Golf Classic Early Bird Special. Last day for special, for event on Mon., Sept. 27. Visit <http://www.uth.tmc.edu/golf>.

26 President's Forum, President James T. Willerson speaking, 11:30 a.m., MSB 2.135.

August

11 White Coat Ceremony, 6:30 p.m., Homberger Conference Center.

13, 14 Student Retreat, Camp Allen.

LCME ACCREDITS MEDICAL SCHOOL FOR EIGHT YEARS

In a letter dated June 9 to **President James T. Willerson**, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) recently awarded the Medical School a full eight-year continuance of its accreditation status. The LCME ad hoc Survey Team had visited the school Jan. 11-14, 2004, and sent an overall very positive report to the Medical School.

Dean Stanley Schultz said, "I think that a full eight-year accreditation is a wonderful accomplishment. It is a compliment to the academic excellence of our educational programs. It is a testimony to the dedication and perseverance of our faculty, students, and staff. During the past few years we have gone through a number of trying times — including Allison — which drove some of our teaching activities from the Medical School, and there were financial stressors as well. Nonetheless, they were able to overcome these obstacles and carry out their academic responsibilities flawlessly."

"I would like to thank **Dr. Patricia Butler**, associate dean for educational programs — and her staff — for their tireless efforts in organizing the self-study and the LCME site visit. My gratitude also goes out to the many members of the faculty, staff, and student body who participated in this undertaking," Schultz added.

The School's areas of strength, based on the LCME report, are:

- ◆ Course evaluations function very well in the first and second years of the curriculum.
- ◆ Students exhibit an exemplary spirit of community and collegiality and are highly supportive of their peers.
- ◆ Student services and access to faculty members and administrators were rated high by the students.
- ◆ A number of excellent faculty development initiatives are ongoing, including the Master Teacher Program.
- ◆ Information technology infrastructure and support services, including Web-based course and teaching materials, are very well developed.

Dean Schultz will supply a progress report to the LCME by Jan. 1, 2006 on several issues that are as yet unsettled, such as the restoration of the Medical School facilities. The next LCME site visit will be during the 2011-2012 academic year.

UTMost Interest

Dr. Edgar Walters, Integrative Biology & Pharmacology, recently was interviewed by National Public Radio and is cited in the latest issue of *Science* for his hypothesis on memory mechanisms evolving from injury repair mechanisms...**Dr.**

Adelaide Hebert, Dermatology, was quoted in the article, "Cloth Diapers Make a Comeback/Velcro Diapers Help Moms, Mother Nature." For article, go to <http://www.wesh.com/family/3420457/detail.html>

UT-HOUSTON MEDICINE NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

A full-content pdf version of *UT-Houston Medicine* is available online at the Medical School's Home Page at <http://www.med.uth.tmc.edu>. Just click on the magazine's cover page, and then click on "PDF Format."

HUMBIRD PAYS A FOND TRIBUTE

Tammy Humbird, an animal resource technologist and research assistant in the Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy, has gone not just the extra mile, but the extra flower, for three years running now.

At each Tropical Storm Allison anniversary, June 9, Humbird brings in from her home garden a marvelous floral arrangement to stand in loving tribute to the loss of the Medical School's lab animals, some of whom she had worked with and gotten close to over the years.



Tammy Humbird



THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON
MEDICAL SCHOOL

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DIVERSITY – MORE THAN A COMPLIANCE CONCEPT

There I sat in a School of Public Health classroom some 20 years ago wondering why our class was holding a pot luck luncheon for international day instead of holding a seminar. I had hurriedly brought a bag



Speakers and student panelists at a May 25 diversity event at the Dental Branch, front row, l. to r.: Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi, Interim Dean Catherine Flaitz, Dr. Frank Catalanotto; back row, l. to r.: Alice Luan, Erin Cummings, Yousef Jefferson, Sylvester Gonzales, Linh Luu, Katie Olson, Tyrone Rodriguez.

of chips that day to fulfill my obligation while other classmates covered the table with the most fascinating international foods — each representing a beloved family tradition and bearing exotic names that I could neither pronounce nor spell. In hindsight, it was a turning point in my public health training as I was forced to contemplate what an internationally rich environment my education enjoyed. Right here in Texas I was surrounded by diversity in my classmates' backgrounds and experiences.

A week later our class worked together to define health in its full dimension — that equilibrium of physical, mental, and social well-being that we all strive for. In a life-changing moment, a classmate from a small African nation hesitantly spoke up and said, "In my country we define health as staying alive to the end of the day."

I'll never forget that moment as a room full of aspiring public health professionals came face to face with the reality of cultural diversity and the simple fact that real life in this global community is rarely explained in a required textbook. We learned for the first time that her government had sent her to train at the School of Public Health. She would be one of less than 10 health officers in her country with the responsibility of overseeing public health programs depended upon by millions. The student who brought chips on international day was now growing up.

Flash forward two decades later and I am sitting in one of the first meetings of the newly created Diversity Council. The council may be new but the concept is constant. While some may think of "diversity" as a compliance concept designed to provide endless red tape for no good reason, others know better. Diversity is the lifeblood of who we are as an academic health center striving to train the best and brightest to make a difference in the health of our global village. No matter how you define health, we live in an internationally diverse community that depends on diversity, cultural understanding, and respect for the likenesses and differences within each of us. Our diversity is growing every year and our mindset and appreciation for that diversity must keep pace.

The UT Health Science Center at Houston's Diversity Council has been organized in recent months by the Office of Academic Affairs through the leadership of **Maximilian Buja, M.D.**, executive vice president for academic affairs. With nearly 40 members representing faculty, staff, and students throughout our family of schools, the Council is organized into multiple working groups who are addressing diversity from numerous perspectives.

"Diversity in the workplace is more than a good idea. It is an essential part of being among the best academic health centers in the nation. We simply cannot train the best health providers for the next generation if we do not strive for diversity in our student makeup, our faculty composition, and our appreciation of the cultural diversity that each and every patient represents," Buja said.

Already Buja's words are seeing action as the Diversity Council outlines a variety of action items and activities designed to address our diversity needs as well as to celebrate our diversity successes.

"...After all, the literature is rich with documentation that a health-care system insensitive to cultural diversity has less effective outcomes than health care delivered by individuals who are culturally sensitive and diverse."

A Celebration of Diversity, Culture and Inclusion was held May 25 at the Dental Branch and included an afternoon of national speakers and student-led panel discussions. Both the president of the American Dental Education Association and the president of the American Dental Association were among the guest speakers.

Such dialogs involving students, faculty, and staff



Diversity participants, l. to r., Tyrone Rodriguez, Sylvester Gonzales, Dr. Max Buja, Dr. Eugene Sekiguchi.

alike are an essential part of developing diversity and maximizing its value on education and care delivery. After all, the literature is rich with documentation that a health-care system insensitive to cultural diversity has less effective outcomes than health care delivered by individuals who are culturally sensitive and diverse.

The Dental School's program represents just one of many activities designed to enhance our institutional approach to diversity. Guided by the health science center's Institutional Diversity Plan that has been reviewed and endorsed by Executive Council, the subcommittees of the council are building a road map of action items that connect the dots within the plan to provide activities and programs to build, maintain, and position our diversity within the community.

Accepted estimates say that over half the U.S. workforce now consists of minorities and women. How we recruit our workforce and our students along with the environment we create to nurture our diversity will define our success in the future as a leading health science center.

— Bryant Boutwell, Dr. P.H., associate dean, Community Affairs and Professional Education