



# Scoop

March 25, 2005

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

## Events to Know

### March


**30 Memorial Hermann Hospital's Doctors' Appreciation Day.** Reception 5:30-7:30 p.m., Conference Center, ground floor, Hermann Pavilion. RSVP 713-704-4294.

### April

**6 Coexistence Exhibit & Guided Tour, through May 1.** Visit <<http://www.coexistence.art.museum>>.

**14 Alpha Omega Alpha Spring Meeting** (members only). New members election, 5:15 p.m., MSB 2.103.

## UTMost Interest

**Colleen O'Brien**, Office of Community Affairs, was one of 2,000 cyclists who joined **Mayor Bill White** this past Saturday for the  *Tour de Houston*, a 20-mile and 40-mile bike ride through several historic Houston neighborhoods. The event, a first for Houston, raised \$50,000 for the city's Parks and Recreation Department.

## CORRECTION

**Doris Ross, Ph.D.** is the most recent past dean, School of Health Information Sciences. **Jack W. Smith, M.D., Ph.D.**, is interim dean, SHIS.

## CELEBRATION EVENT SET FOR APRIL 12

The Medical School will celebrate the groundbreaking for the Replacement Research Facility 9:30 – 10:30 a.m., Tues., **April 12**, in the Fifth Floor Gallery.

The entire Medical School family is invited to this historic event as we say farewell to the John Freeman Building and symbolically turn the earth for the new six-story building, which will feature the most advanced animal care facility.

It also will be home to new research space focused on the neurobiology of human development, the molecular biology of human pathogens, physiological genomics or systems biology, and structural biology.

## DEAN SCHULTZ ACCEPTS CLAY WALKER'S \$100,000 MS GIFT

In front of 56,000 fans, country music star **Clay Walker** presented a \$100,000 check to support multiple sclerosis research at the Medical School during his event-closing performance at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Sunday, March 20, at Reliant Stadium.



**Dean Schultz and Dr. Narayana accept a check from Clay Walker.**

"We are delighted to accept this generous gift, which will be used to help us advance our understanding of MS and its management," said **Dean Stanley Schultz**, who was onstage at the rodeo Sunday to accept the donation.

Walker was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS at the age of 26 in 1996.

Last year, his Band Against MS<sup>SM</sup> Foundation helped the Medical School complete its purchase of a state-of-the-art imaging machine, the 3 Tesla MRI. The instrument gives researchers the ability to directly assess nerve-cell damage in patients living with MS, which helps improve diagnosis and treatment.

Walker formed the foundation in 2003 to help others learn more about the disease and provide funding for research of new therapy options and, ultimately, a cure for MS. "Each year, the foundation awards grants to worthy medical institutions to further MS research. Our goal is to find a cure for this disease, and I am doing everything I can to lead that charge," Walker said.

Also on hand Sunday was **Ponnada Narayana, Ph.D.**, director of magnetic resonance research at the Medical School.

MS is a chronic autoimmune disease that turns the body's own defense system into a powerful destructive weapon aimed at the central nervous system. There is no cure for MS yet, but prescription drugs can help slow its progress and ease symptoms in some patients.

To find out more about Band Against MS<sup>SM</sup> Foundation, log on to <<http://www.bandagainstm.org>>. For more on Clay Walker, see <<http://www.claywalker.com>>.

- S. Rasp

## COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER IS DRUG EXPERT

Mark your calendars. Commencement for this year's Medical School's graduating class will take place 10 a.m., Sat., **May 28**, at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

**Catherine D. DeAngelis, M.D., M.P.H.**, editor, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and editor-in-chief, *Scientific Publications and Multimedia Applications*, will be the commencement speaker.

DeAngelis is a nationally and internationally respected author, researcher, clinician, administrator, and educator, with a background in pediatrics, public health, and medical business management.

She is an expert in conflict-of-interest and the public trust. DeAngelis is a strong advocate for separating the pre- and post-marketing checks-and-balance systems for prescription medications.



**Dr. Catherine DeAngelis**



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## FROM DELUGE TO DOCTOR: UT MEDICAL STUDENTS MATCH A RISING TIDE

When the Class of 2005 entered the Medical School, the basement and ground floor were still damp from the floodwaters that damaged the school during Tropical Storm Allison.

Classrooms were buzzing with mosquitoes and the sound of diesel generators providing emergency electricity to the School. The gross anatomy laboratory, the comfortable couches in the Leather Lounge, and all the other facilities the students had admired during their interviews, were gone. With a sink-or-swim attitude, more than 180 freshmen cracked open their textbooks and went on to conquer the challenge of learning medicine in the middle of a disaster area.

"Never before have I seen a group of students withstand this kind of assault without falling apart," said **Dean Stanley Schultz**. "They persevered. They did more than make do. They rose above the adversity."

Almost four years later, the Class of 2005 has conquered another challenge – getting into residency programs so they can begin the next phase of their training after graduation.

On March 17, 183 Medical School seniors participated in Match Day, an annual event coordinated by the National Resident Matching Program. In stark contrast to their first day of medical school in dank, mold-scented classrooms, it was dry and sunny when the students celebrated their future in Webber Plaza.

At the Medical School, all seniors matched. Internal medicine and family practice were the top two areas of medicine for which seniors chose to do their residency training. Anesthesiology, surgery, and obstetrics and gynecology were tied for third.

**Latricia "Tricia" Thompson** is among more than a dozen Medical School seniors who chose a residency in obstetrics and gynecology. She will stay to train at Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital. You may remember her from the *Houston Medical* television mini-series that aired on ABC in the summer of 2002. The documentary featured key moments during Thompson's first year of medical school.

The cameras stopped rolling before her second year of medical school, but the action never stopped. Since then, she has recovered from a car accident that put her career in jeopardy, earned scholarships, attended her two daughters' after-school activities in between rounds at the hospital, mentored pregnant teen-agers, and followed her dream of becoming an obstetrician and gynecologist.

"When I finally got to do my ob/gyn rotation, I was ecstatic because I was doing what I love," said Thompson, who celebrated her



Latricia "Tricia" Thompson is all smiles.

34th birthday on Match Day. "I got a rush every time I did a delivery. Sometimes I cried. It is a very emotional experience. I love it."

**Ana Leech**, 33, who will do her residency in surgery at the Medical School, said she is fulfilling a dream her grandmother was never able to.

"I think I've known since *in utero* that I wanted to be a doctor," Leech said. "As a child, I remember telling people that my dad was going to buy me a hospital and I was going to be chief of staff."

Leech's grandmother also had wanted to practice medicine, but in the 1930s in a small Mexican town, opportunities for women to become doctors were nonexistent. "She felt that being a doctor was really what she was meant to do, and if she had been born a boy, she would have been able to pursue that dream," Leech said.

Times have changed, and Leech is among a growing number of women who are becoming surgeons. "If you want it bad enough, you figure out a way to make it work," Leech said of going to medical school while starting a family. Leech and her husband have a son who turns 4 in May and a 6-month-old daughter.

**Meredith and Manny Reyes** are among numerous seniors at the Medical School who participated in the "Couples Match." Like individual applicants, they competed for their own residency slot, but the goal was to land those positions as a couple at the same program. They achieved their goal and will do their residencies at the Medical School.

"It's a tricky process, and there is a lot you have to take into consideration when you are in the couples match," Meredith said. "You can't just think about yourself. You have to consider your family and what is best for both of you."

Meredith and Manny, both 25, met when they were in the Longhorn Band at the University of Texas in Austin. After their second year of medical school, they married. Meredith originally set out to become a pediatrician, but after completing her clinical rotations, she decided pathology was a better fit for her.

Manny will do his residency training in internal medicine. "I always knew I wanted to be a doctor and use science to help people on a daily basis," Manny said.

- M. Raine



Residency news ends the suspense for Ana Leech and her family.



Meredith & Manny Reyes are pleased with the contents of their letters.

### NRC DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES COMING UP, 4P.M., MSB 3.001

**Eric Kandel, M.D.** will address "The Long and Short of Long-term Memory," Tues., **April 5**. **Alfred Gilman, M.D., Ph.D.** will address "The Alliance for Cellular Signaling," Thurs., **April 14**. **Paul Greengard, Ph.D.** will address "Signal Integration in the Striatum" Tues., **April 26**.

### JOIN IN ON A RETIREMENT PARTY FOR MARGARET DOUGHERTY

After 21 years of service, **Margaret Dougherty** is retiring from the Division of Rheumatology.

Join with other well-wishers 1-3 p.m., Wed., **March 30**, Fifth Floor Gallery.