



Scoop

Oct. 25, 2002

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

Events to Know

October

28 Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Seminar Series, 11:45 a.m., **Dr. Timothy J. Yen**, Institute for Cancer Research, on human kinetochore functions, MSB 2.135.

30 Clinical Research Curriculum, Biostatistics for Clinical Investigators, "Confounding and Interaction - Matched and Stratified Analyses," **Dr. Robert Lasky**, 5 - 6:30 p.m., MSB 2.135.

31 STAR Awards Corrections deadline for celebrating your five, 10, 15, 20, 25, or 30 yr. UT-H anniversary. Visit www.uth.tmc.edu/ut_general/admin_fin/hr/stars/allstars.html to check that you're on the list.

November

1 Eighth Annual Research Day, 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center, 2151 W. Holcombe at Shamrock.

4 Biochemistry & Molecular Biology Seminar Series, Dr. Jean Gautier speaking on DNA damage response, 11:45 a.m., MSB 2.135.

5 Flu vaccinations, 9 a.m. - noon, MSB, 2nd floor landing. Have ID badge and \$5.

6 Health and Human Spirit Lecture Series, Dr. Eschenbach, speaker, noon, MSB 3.001.

DR. OKHUYSEN LEADS UCRC AS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dr. Pablo C. Okhuysen, associate professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, is the new program director of the University Clinical Research Center (UCRC), effective Oct. 1.



Dr. Pablo C. Okhuysen

"I am delighted and privileged to lead the University Clinical Research Center at UT. I have been involved as an investigator with the UCRC for 10 years and have first-hand experience with the high quality of the research that takes place at the Unit," **Okhuysen** said. "Our current UCRC staff provides state-of-the-art support for clinical research in an environment of humanism and respect. I am committed, in our partnership with Memorial Hermann, to expand the number and quality of research projects that are carried out at the UCRC and to continue to foster the training of new clinical investigators."

"We believe that, under Dr. Okhuysen's capable leadership, the UCRC will be well-positioned to move to its next stage of development. I plan to join Dr. Okhuysen in promoting plans to upgrade and enhance the facilities for the UCRC," **Dean Max Buja** said.

Okhuysen received his medical degree from the Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara, Mexico and interned in Internal Medicine at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. He took his residency in internal medicine at UT-Houston, and was a fellow in infectious diseases at the Center for Infectious Diseases at the Medical School. He served as an HIV early intervention program physician with the city of Houston, Health and Human Services Department and has been an assistant editor with the *Journal of Travel Medicine* since 1995.

In collaboration with Dr. Herbert L. DuPont, Okhuysen presently is subcontracting with Baylor College of Medicine on a five-year \$23M National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) vaccine development grant. - C. O'Brien

DR. GOULD WINS GOOD SAMARITAN AWARD

The Krist Samaritan Center for Counseling and Education honored **Dr. K. Lance Gould**, professor of cardiology, for his commitment to the prevention and reversal of heart disease through proper medications, diet and exercise. Gould, author of the popular *Heal Your Heart*, prescribes healthy lifestyle changes—including a lean, low-carbohydrate diet, and plenty of exercise. The celebration took place on Oct. 17 at the River Oaks Country Club.

Other award recipients included Attorney Joseph D. Jamail, former Gov. Ann Richards, and last year, Dr. James "Red" Duke. Gould is the Martin Bucksbaum Distinguished University Chair and director of the Weatherhead P.E.T. Center for Preventing and Reversing Atherosclerosis. He uses positron emission tomography (PET) imaging to measure blood flow in the heart.



UTMost Interest

Dr. James Willerson, UTHSC-H president, commented on potential disparities in health care in an article on minority health care, (Houston Chronicle, 10/9/02).



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FACES IN THE CROWD

Dean Max Buja, in the History of Medicine Series on Oct. 21, addresses "Operating On a Moving Organ: Dilemmas of Surgery of the Heart." The next lecture in the series, on Mon., Nov. 4, at noon, in MSB 2.006, is "Keeping Burning Oil from Wounds: Ambroise Paré and Medieval Surgery," with Megan Cole and John Lienhard.

MOTIVATING PATIENTS WORKSHOPS

Dr. Gary Glober, a gastroenterologist, is offering 4 - 5 free workshops on motivating patients, 5:30 - 7 p.m., U.T. M. D. Anderson. Contact him at <gglober@earthlink.net>.

PRACTICE PLAN PRACTICALLY BREAKS EVEN FOR FY 2002

The Medical School's practice plan had almost break-even results for fiscal year 2002, it was reported at the Medical Service Research and Development Plan (MSRDP) Board meeting Oct. 16.

The entire practice plan, including MSRDP and University Care Plus (UCP), posted a loss of \$200,000 for the last fiscal year, when the \$3 million rebate in professional liability premiums is taken into account, based on near-final accounting for the year.

"Given the losses suffered during Tropical Storm Allison, these are satisfactory results," said Kevin Dillon, UT-Houston chief financial officer. "We are getting back to a 30 percent cumulative collection rate. The best we could hope for, with our payer mix, is 35-36 percent."

The practice plan needs to collect \$375,000-385,000 a day to stay on track with the budget, Dillon added.

MSRDP is the "trust fund" for the university's clinical services, and its board members are the Medical School's department chairmen and at-large members, who are elected by the clinical faculty. UCP is the business arm of the clinical operation.

President James Willerson said that the gross collections for the practice plan have set five months of records. "I believe we can do better. We've just scratched the surface," he said. "We can collect it, and we will collect it."

Carol Alexander, of Health Directions, which took over the management of Physician Billing Services (PBS) Dec. 10, said her group is trying to trend rejected charges and reduce them in an effort to improve collections. Extra attention needs to be placed on submitting charges in a timely way, Alexander said, since delays negatively affect cash flow. Dr. Willerson said he wanted this monitored monthly.

AWF RECEPTION HONORED PROMOTED FEMALE FACULTY MEMBERS

Dr. Julia Lever, president, Association of Women Faculty (AWF), announced that the following UT-H Medical School women faculty were promoted as of Sept. 1 of this year: Drs. Chyi-Ying Chen, to research associate professor; Johnnie Frazier, to associate professor; Janet Groff, to associate professor; Carin Hagberg, to professor; Gloria Heresi, to associate professor; Kathleen Kennedy, to professor; Christine Koerner, to associate professor; Susan Luehr, to associate professor; Lynette Mazur, to professor; Maria-Gisela Mercado-Deane, to associate professor; Brenda Morris, to associate professor; Mary Rabb, to associate professor; and Ginger Wilhelm, to associate professor. Congratulations to all.

The focus of the AWF is the advancement and professional development of women in academic medicine.

NEW CPHS RESEARCH APPLICATION FORMS

Are available at the Office of Research Support Committees Web site, under CPHS Forms, <http://www.uth.tmc.edu/ut_general/research_acad_aff/orsc/forms.htm>. For content questions, call 713-500-5827.

GET FIT - PRECISELY YOGAFIT, IN NOVEMBER

Join the fit - YogaFit that is, in November. For a \$25-35 fee, classes will be Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m., the Medical School Fitness Center, MSB 8th floor. There is a \$5 drop-in fee per class. For more information e-mail <nicole.m.taylor@uth.tmc.edu> or call 713-500-5598.

DOCTORS ORCHESTRA TO PERFORM NOV. 16

Changlu Wu, pipa virtuoso, will perform with the Doctors Orchestra of Houston on Nov. 16.

At 7 p.m., on Sat., Nov. 16, the Doctors Orchestra of Houston will perform "East Meets West," the Cullen Theatre, at the Wortham Center.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students and children younger than 12.

Changlu Wu, pipa virtuoso, will perform with the Doctors Orchestra of Houston.

For information, call 713-666-9231.