

## CALENDAR

### SECC reminder

While the SECC campaign officially ended Nov. 15, contributions can still be made and will be counted through Nov. 27. For details, visit [www2.utmb.edu/secc](http://www2.utmb.edu/secc).



### Flu shots available

The Employee Health Center is currently offering the influenza vaccine to all UTMB employees. The center was able to obtain more vaccine than expected, so rationing will not be necessary. Vaccinations will be administered from 8–10:30 a.m. and from 1–3 p.m. Monday through Friday in the Employee Health Center in Rebecca Sealy Hospital. Satellite clinics and “shots on wheels” will also be available for hospital and clinic staff. Flu vaccinations are free to all employees, retirees and volunteers. For more information, contact Employee Health at ext. 79500.

### Reading program

Volunteers are needed to read to children in UTMB clinic waiting rooms as part of the Reach Out and Read Program. This will help parents to see reading modeled to their children, demonstrate how much children enjoy books and help to entertain the children as they wait for their visit with the health care provider. Volunteers are needed at pediatric clinic locations in Galveston, Texas City, Friendswood and League City.

For more information, please call Dr. Chris Turley or Sammie Hester at ext. 29797.

### Library art exhibit

Moody Medical Library will present the works of Galveston artist Donna Cariker during the month of November. Her multimedia works in the exhibit “Diversity” include watercolors, collages, assemblages, ceramics, photography and graphics.

“Diversity” will be on view during regular library hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–midnight; Saturday, 10 a.m.–7 p.m.; and Sunday, noon–midnight.

### Senior dinner

The Senior Services Office will hold a Seniors Learning Dinner from 5–7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 7 in the Lorenzo De Zavala room at the Charles T. Doyle Convention Center, 2010 5th Ave. N., in Texas City.

Guest speaker Edward R. Langlois, a senior social worker with UTMB psychiatry services, will present a program entitled Keeping Spirits Up During the Holidays.

Benno's Catering will provide dinner. Admission is \$6 per person and reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations, call ext. 72142, or toll free, (888) 887-6800.

# IMPACT

**UTMB** THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH AT GALVESTON

### Faculty Senate

- Question and answer with the Senate's chair, Dr. Richard Rahr.
  - Makeup of the Senate.
- See pages 6–7



### Salute to Nursing

The annual golf tournament helped raise more than \$97,000 for student scholarships.

See Page 10



### Town meeting

Join President John D. Stobo for a town meeting on Thursday, Nov. 30, noon–1 p.m. in Levin Hall.

**ON CAMPUS**

# Heritage

**UTMB experiences different cultures**



**Above: The popular dance group Eighth Wonder woos the audience with one of its many dance numbers as part of India's Day.**



**Right: The celebration of China.**



**Left: Rakura Holt performs a Nigerian dance during a Multicultural Awareness Week program celebrating the country of Nigeria.**

See HERITAGE on page 8

## Stark Foundation establishes UTMB diabetes center

By Christian Messa

A \$1.5 million contribution from the Nelda C. and H. J. Lutcher Stark Foundation will allow UTMB to establish a diabetes center that will provide even better care for patients throughout east and southeast Texas.

The Nelda C. and H. J. Lutcher Stark Center for Excellence in Diabetes Care will offer educational resources and programs to help patients and their physicians manage the disease, to expand basic science research and to provide the latest in clinical care. It is scheduled to open in January.

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of death in the United States and is responsible for almost one-fifth of all deaths in people over the age of 25. The incurable disease prevents the body from properly using or producing insulin, a hormone needed to convert starches, sugar and other food into energy. Each year, more than

See STARK on page 11

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## Submissions

The deadlines for submissions to be considered for the Calendar, People and Briefs sections of the **Dec. 11** *Impact* is **noon, Dec. 4**. Submissions should not be more than 100 words for Briefs or 75 words for People items.

Inclusion of all other articles is determined by the Public Affairs staff. Content is generally scheduled two to four editions in advance.

Items submitted for consideration are subject to editing for style and length.

# Department makes strides in professionalism education

By John Tyler

Many departments on campus have responded to President John D. Stobo's professionalism initiative. The president has committed to creating a new climate at UTMB in which all staff, students and faculty look outside themselves to make the needs of others a priority.

One department in the School of Allied Health Sciences is making special efforts to ensure each graduate carries not only a high level of clinical knowledge from UTMB, but also a clear understanding of the professional behaviors and attitudes crucial to becoming a well-rounded health care professional.

The Department of Occupational Therapy recognized the importance of integrating professionalism training into students' coursework as early as 1987. That is when the department began using a Professional Development Evaluation (PDE) Form to rate how well students were behaving professionally in the classroom, the lab and in clinical settings.

Department officials found professional behavior is closely tied to student success or failure. "During the time that I was fieldwork coordinator—which was about four years—every student who failed did so because of professional issues," said Elicia Dunn, assistant professor. "It was never due to lack of clinical skills."

This realization, along with the president's recent focus on professionalism campuswide, has spawned the department's continued commitment to ensuring its students understand the importance of behaving professionally while at UTMB, since the university itself is a microcosm of the health care world they will enter after graduation.

"I consider my education a career and UTMB my employer," wrote one OT student on the PDE form, which is designed to give students the opportunity to rate themselves in areas such as respecting others, assuming responsibility and problem solving. "Thus, I prepare for each day as if I were getting paid to come in and take care of my responsibilities, as well as anything else that might be presented to me. I consider myself part of a team, and I believe my actions and behaviors should always be a representation of this team."

Particular courses within the occupational therapy curriculum, namely "Advanced Concepts in Occupational Therapy" and "Interpersonal Practice," are designed to help students understand exactly what type of behaviors they are expected to exhibit as a health care professional. To name a few, students are evaluated on their ability to balance personal and professional obligations, to give and receive constructive feedback, and the ability to be flexible.

During "Learning Through Community Service," a required two-semester course in the OT program, students work in teams to do a needs assessment and develop a community service plan for a local agency that partners with the SAHS. During the second semester of the program, Terry Jackson, a project therapist who supervises students in the clinic, uses numerous tools to gauge behavior and give feedback on students' professional development during the course.



Senior occupational therapy students Alisa Chapa and Julie Clement (front), and Amy Alvi and Pam Paguio (rear), role play their responses to individuals with disabilities who voice concern about sexual expression, as Dr. Suzanne Peloquin, professor, watches on. The class, "Advanced Concepts in Occupational Therapy," introduces students to some of the issues and challenges they will face as health care professionals after graduation.

"We wholeheartedly support Dr. Stobo's efforts to make professionalism a priority here at UTMB," said Dr. Suzanne M. Peloquin, a professor in the OT department and a member of the president's Professionalism Board. "We have felt for years that students can and should be introduced to the challenges they will face."

Peloquin has co-authored a textbook, entitled *Making Connections With Others: A Handbook on Interpersonal Practice*, blending behavioral sciences and medical humanities. The book is used in "Interpersonal Practice" at UTMB, as well as at other learning institutions nationwide, to help introduce students to some of the professional challenges health care workers face and shape interpersonal behavior in the classroom, lab and clinic.

Dr. Loree A. Primeau, chair of the OT department, stresses how important retaining personality and a human touch is to being a professional. "The idea at one time was that if you were a professional, you maintained your distance, you didn't get involved, you didn't show any emotion...and yet part of what you're supposed to do as a health care professional is show empathy, show concern," she said. "It's a contradiction."

"We want our students to come away with the idea that part of professional behavior includes the personal aspect and who you are...it's okay to show emotion if a patient begins to tear up or display happiness, which I think for a long time was considered unprofessional."

Peloquin said plans are to obtain grant funding in the near future to make "Interpersonal Practice" an interdisciplinary course. "It would be wonderful if these concepts could be shared someday in all four schools," she said. "An understanding of the importance of professionalism should be shared by all health care students, no matter their specialty."

# SON dean to return to teaching, research

## Fenton will continue as dean until a successor is named

By Doris H. White

*Llama Blanca.* In English it means *White Flame*, and when Dr. Mary V. Fenton, dean of the School of Nursing for nearly 16 years, speaks the name of her championship mare, it rolls off her tongue like honey on a sopapilla.

Her accomplishments as an equestrienne are extraordinary.



Fenton

On their ranch in the West Texas town of Fort Davis, she and her husband, Stephen, raise Peruvian Paso horses, which she also shows—and that bring in a steady supply of ribbons and trophies. She is also a member of The Texas Ladies Aside; a group of women who ride Peruvian Paso horses sidesaddle and bear the distinction of being the official equestrian drill team of Texas. The group rides

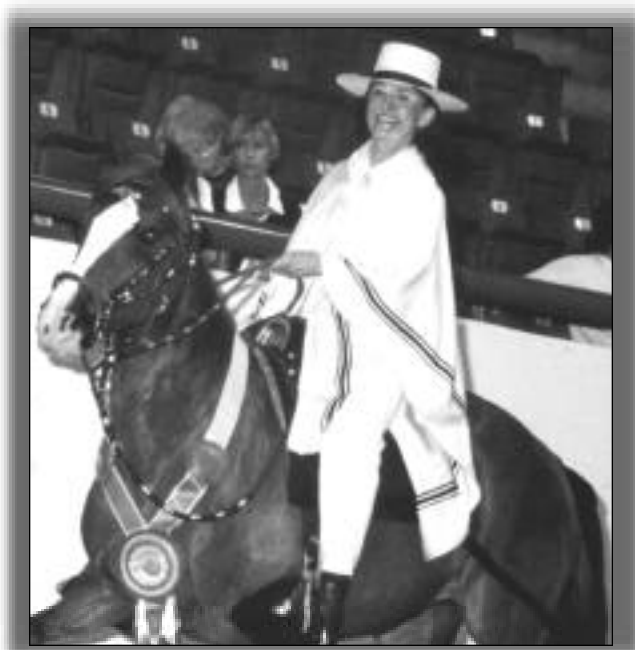
every year in Galveston's Dickens on the Strand celebration—in full Victorian costume, of course.

Fenton's contributions to UTMB and the School of Nursing have been extraordinary as well. An alumna of UTMB's baccalaureate program in nursing, she began her career as a staff nurse at UTMB, where she gained special experience working on the medical and surgical wards of old John Sealy Hospital. Her career has spanned service at various universities in Texas, including Texas Woman's University, the UT School of Nursing at Houston and Houston Baptist University, as well as Methodist Hospital and Jeff Davis Hospital in Houston.

Lifelong learning has always been vital to her. Along the way, she completed a master's degree in medical surgical nursing from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, a doctorate in community health from the University of Texas School of Public Health in Houston and post-master's preparation as a nurse practitioner.

At UTMB she has held appointments in the graduate nursing program as coordinator of the primary care track and associate professor. She was named dean ad interim of the School of Nursing and full professor in 1985 and assumed the deanship in 1986. In 1990 she was appointed to the Rebecca Sealy Centennial Distinguished Chair. Fenton also received a gubernatorial appointment to the Texas State Board of Nurse Examiners in 1991 and served as the group's president from 1995 to 1997.

Now, Fenton has decided it's time to make some life and career changes.



"My heart will always be with UTMB, and what I want to do now is return to my roots of teaching, practice, and research. In addition, there are some outstanding accomplishments of the School of Nursing at UTMB that have never been written up in nursing journals, and I want to publish articles about them so our colleagues nationally can share in our experience."

Dr. Mary V. Fenton, Dean of the School of Nursing, is shown on her mare, Llama Blanca, winning the Championship and Champion of Champions Performance Mare awards at the 1999 Southwest Peruvian Horse Show in Fort Worth.

Late last month she announced her plans to step down as dean and pursue other avenues in nursing at UTMB. She will continue as dean until her successor has been named and is in place, thus eliminating the need for an interim replacement to be named. She looks back on her tenure as dean with both pride in her accomplishments and with a sense of surprise at her longevity.

"After all," she says laughingly, "I've served with the last three presidents of UTMB—Drs. Levin, James, and now, Stobo, as well as two vice presidents of academic affairs, Drs. Bryan and Bernier. But my heart will always be with UTMB, and what I want to do now is return to my roots of teaching, practice, and research. In addition, there are some outstanding accomplishments of the School of Nursing at UTMB that have never been written up in nursing journals, and I want to publish articles about them so our colleagues nationally can share in our experience."

Fenton also serves on a task force of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, which has been charged with making recommendations on how to redesign nursing education and practice to attract bright young students to the field. It is work she approaches with passion, at a time when we are seeing, she says, the most dramatic changes in nursing ever.

She notes the "aging" of the profession. Nationally, the average age of nurses is around 43, and the average faculty age is 10 years older. Only 9 percent of nurses in America are under 30. It is a challenge, she says, to bring in young people to both the clinical and research sides of nursing.

Making sure that UTMB remains competitive at attracting

the best and brightest young minds to nursing is a vision Fenton shares with Dr. Stobo. Even before Fenton made her decision to pursue new directions in her career, the two had discussed a plan to bring in a team of nursing deans from top-ranked institutions throughout the country to help determine the direction the nursing program should take to retain its competitive edge.

The timing of Fenton's decision to step down will allow the university to conduct a dean search with the recommendations of this group in mind and to seek those qualities they feel will be most essential for the new leadership. One major goal will be to build on the strengths of the SON to make UTMB a top-ranked school not only in nursing education and clinical practice but also in research.

Stobo himself will chair the search committee, following a precedent that was set during the most recent search for a new dean of medicine. Fenton sees Stobo's role as vital for the process. "Working with Dr. Stobo is one of the pluses of the job of dean," she says. "And he has great networking capabilities since he knows the deans of nursing at many of the major universities throughout the nation." Members of the President's Council, including the deans of all schools, will also serve on the search committee, which will be staffed by Human Resources. The group will also include representatives from each of the areas of the nursing school: faculty, staff and students.

Stobo says filling Fenton's shoes will be difficult. "Finding a suitable successor will not be easy and will not be accomplished overnight," he said. "And I'm very grateful that

See FENTON on page 11

## ON CAMPUS

PEOPLE, NEWS AND EVENTS

### PEOPLE



From left, Drs. Koji Nakamura, Steven F. Viegas and Maged El-Shennawy.

"The Second through Fifth Carpometacarpal Joints: Anatomy and Kinematics Analysis," won the award for best scientific content during the 55th annual meeting of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand in Seattle.

The co-authors included **Dr. Steven F. Viegas**, (Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation), **Dr. Rita Patterson** (Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation), **Karin Elder** (Information Services), **Dr. Koji Nakamura**, an orthopaedic surgeon at St Marianna University in Tokyo, and **Dr. Maged El-Shennawy**, an orthopaedic surgeon at the Mansoura University in Cairo. Nakamura spent 1½ years doing hand surgery research under Viegas, who is chief of the Division of Hand Surgery, and Patterson. El-Shennawy is currently completing his second year as an international research fellow.

A paper, "The Scaphotrapezotrapezoid Joint: An Anatomy, Radiographic and Kinematic Study," received the Emanuel B. Kaplan Award for "anatomical excellence in surgery of the hand." **Dr. Hisao Moritomo** of Osaka University, co-authored the paper with Viegas, Patterson, Nakamura and Elder. Moritomo also did his research at UTMB with Viegas and Patterson.

**Dr. Robert M.A. Hirschfeld** (Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences) was the lead author of "Development and Validation of a Screening Instrument for Bipolar Spectrum Disorder: The Mood Disorder Questionnaire" published in the November 2000 issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*. The questionnaire was described in the paper as "a self-report, single-page, paper-and-pencil inventory that can be quickly and easily scored by a physician, nurse, or any trained medical assistant." Although screening instruments exist for a number of psychiatric illnesses, this is the first to screen for bipolar spectrum disorder, symptoms of which include impulsive behavior, alcohol and substance abuse and fluctuation in energy level.

**Dr. Janice Yelle**, head of the cardiovascular laboratory at the Johnson Space Center and a UTMB alumnus, was named as one of 59 recipients of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers. The award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their careers. Yelle received the award for her work on the cardiovascular adaptations astronauts undergo when they fly in space and the problems those adaptations cause upon return to earth, most specifically, orthostatic intolerance (the inability to stand erect). As a sideline of this work, Yelle and her team also began studying gender-related differences in orthostatic tolerance.

### HONORED

## Thompson elected to the Institute of Medicine

By Cathy C. Nall

Dr. James C. Thompson, Ashbel Smith Professor of Surgery, was elected to senior membership in the Institute of Medicine (IOM).

"This great honor adds luster to the already distinguished career of Dr. Thompson," said President John D. Stobo, an active IOM member since 1989 and the only other member from UTMB



Thompson

Candidates for the international organization are selected for their major contributions to health and medicine or to related fields such as social and behavioral sciences, law, administration and economics. Once elected, new members help fulfill the institute's mission of advancing and disseminating scientific knowledge to improve human health. Members also devote a significant amount of time volunteering on committees engaged in a broad range of studies on health policy issues.

This year's election brought 60 new members to the IOM, raising the total active membership to 613. In addition to Thompson, four other people were honored by direct election to senior membership, bringing the total count of seniors elected to 711. Those persons aged 66 and above qualify for senior membership. Five foreign associates were also added, increasing that roll to 56. Of the newly elected members, Thompson is the only general surgeon.

Current IOM projects include studies of such issues as the creation of a medical system to support long-duration space travel beyond Earth's orbit, the development of new technologies for the early detection of breast cancer, and the safety and efficacy of the anthrax vaccine used by the U.S. military.

The IOM appointment is Thompson's fifth major honor this year. He was selected as doctor of medicine *honoris causa* by the University of Lund, Sweden; was installed as an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England; presided over the 86th Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons; and was elected to the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in the United States, founded by Benjamin Franklin.

"What a great honor. I share it with highly productive colleagues," Thompson said of his IOM appointment. "For the last 30 years, UTMB has provided us with a splendid environment and excellent opportunity for research."

Thompson earned his doctor of medicine degree and a master's in anatomy and endocrinology, as well as completed his internship at UTMB. After serving in various positions at other universities, he returned to UTMB in 1970 as chief of surgery and professor and chair of surgery, positions he held until 1995. Thompson has a dual academic emeritus appointment in physiology and biophysics and as Ashbel Smith Professor of Surgery.

**Dr. Jon O. Nilsestuen** (Respiratory Care) presented "Professors Rounds—Ventilator Graphics: What's With That Wave," in October at the American Association of Respiratory Care International Congress in Cincinnati.

**Dr. Martha Hinman** (Physical Therapy) presented "Efficacy of Therapeutic Magnets on Pain and Function of Individuals with Osteoarthritis," at the UTMB Forum on Aging in September. She also presented "Normative Values and Interrater Reliability of Flexicurve Measures in Adult Women," in October at the Texas Physical Therapy Association's Annual Conference in Austin.

**Dr. Suzanne M. Peloquin** presented "Volunteerism: From Activities of Daily Living to Civic Action," in September at the

Mountain State Central Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas. The presentation won a best general poster session.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Obsolete equipment

Information Services is attempting to locate computers and printers that are obsolete, broken or are otherwise surplus to your needs. Often, these computers are set aside in a corner or closet and forgotten (out of sight, out of mind). The result is valuable storage space is lost and assets are not properly disposed.

If you have such equipment, or know of such equipment, please call Connie Lausen with Information Services at ext. 25779 or via e-mail to arrange to have it picked up at no cost.

ON CAMPUS  
PEOPLE, NEWS AND EVENTS



Above: UTMB employee Yoni Benson feels the vibes as the Step Rideau Zydeco Outlaws of Houston perform.

Right: A member of Indian dance group Eighth Wonder thrills the audience with his fancy footwork.

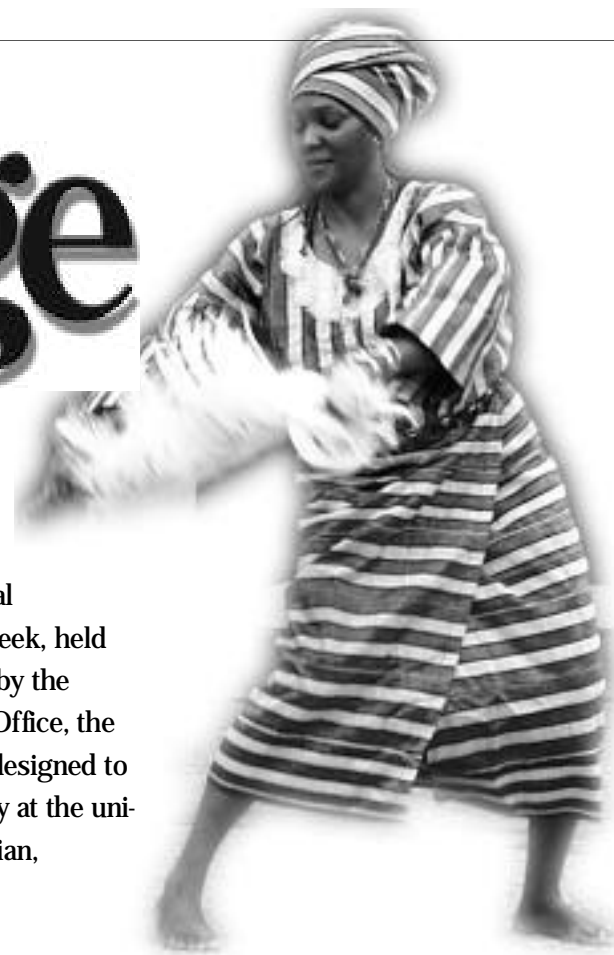
Far right: Adorned in cultural attire, a Nubian dancer presents an inspirational performance.

# Heritage



Last month, hundreds from the UTMB community were introduced to different cultures during the 10th annual Multicultural Awareness Week, held Oct. 30–Nov. 3. Sponsored by the UTMB Affirmative Action Office, the weeklong celebration was designed to

raise awareness of the diverse workforce and student body at the university. Cultures represented during the week were Nigerian, Chinese, Indian, Hispanic and African American.



## John Sealy fund for biomedical research

Grant proposals for the John Sealy Memorial Endowment Fund for Biomedical Research are due by 5 p.m., Jan. 10. The fund provides support to UTMB faculty for three types of grants. Applications for all three will be accepted:

- Research Development Grants, to stimulate new research initiatives by established investigators through supporting pilot projects with a very high probability of attracting new extramural biomedical research grants to UTMB;
- Recruitment Grants for newly recruited faculty; and
- Bridging Grants, for faculty whose renewal applications to national agencies were not funded.

Submission of applications should be made at room 606 of the Administration Building.

For more information about the Sealy Grant Awards Program, including guidelines for eligibility and application procedures or to request an application kit, call Tresha Goldsmith, Institutional Research Coordinator, at ext. 22574 or e-mail her at [tlgoldsm@utmb.edu](mailto:tlgoldsm@utmb.edu).

## Parking deduction

The Department of Finance, along with Parking Facilities, is happy to announce a pre-tax parking deduction that can be deducted from employees' paychecks. Employees will be able to sign up for the deduction and receive a tax break at the same time.

All you have to do is fill out and return the payroll deduction form located at <http://www2.utmb.edu/auxserv/auxhome.htm> or <http://www2.utmb.edu/wcr/FORMS/parking.pdf> or you may visit the parking facilities office in room G24 of the Gail

Borden Building.

For additional information or any questions, please contact Kelly Sotengco at ext. 24786 or Kristen Featherly at ext. 77913

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUPS

- **When:** Second Tuesday. Noon–1 p.m. (Dec. 12).
- **Where:** Trinity Episcopal Church, 22nd and Winnie.
- **Contact:** Ramona B. Mason, (409) 948-0368 or (409) 948-8862.

- **When:** Fourth Monday. 7:30–9 p.m. (Nov. 27).
- **Where:** St. John West Classroom at St. John Hospital in the Nassau Bay area.
- **Contact:** Nancy Malley, (218) 212-5894 or St. John Hospital, (218) 333-5503.

### BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

- **Purpose:** For family and friends who are coping with the death of a loved one. The group offers emotional support and an opportunity to talk about the dying process.
- **When:** Second and fourth Thursdays. 5:30–6:30 p.m. (Nov. 28, Dec. 14).
- **Where:** Primary Care Pavilion, Entrance B, Suite 124.
- **Contact:** Sandra Linton, ext. 20054, or Ramona B. Mason, (409) 948-0368 or (409) 948-8862.

### CARDIAC SUPPORT GROUP

- **Purpose:** To provide information and support for cardiac

patients and their families and friends.

- **When:** Third Monday of every month (except October).
- **Where:** Edgewater Retirement Center, Moody House Auditorium.
- **Contact:** Michelle M. Bennett, (409) 747-2377.

### CARING FOR THE OLDER ADULT SUPPORT GROUP

- **Purpose:** To maintain emotional and physical well-being through support and access to resources.
- **When:** Second Tuesday. 5:30–6:30 p.m. (Dec. 12).
- **Where:** Primary Care Pavilion, Entrance B, Suite 124.
- **Contact:** Sandra Linton, ext. 20054, or Lisa Bellard, ext. 23412.

### DIALOGUE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

- **Purpose:** Support for cancer patients, their families and friends.
- **When:** First Tuesday. 9–10:30 a.m., (Dec. 5). Third Thursday. 2–3:30 p.m. (Dec. 21).
- **Where:** 1.300 McCullough. (Radiation Oncology)
- **Contact:** Chaplain Karen Alcott, ext. 73910.

### EATING DISORDER SUPPORT GROUP

- **Purpose:** A weekly confidential support group for people who have eating disorders.
- **When:** Tuesdays for 12 weeks. Began Oct. 3. Noon–1 p.m.
- **Where:** Bethel Hall Conference Room.
- **Contact:** Employee Assistance Program, ext. 22485, or fax ext. 74289. E-mail: [Annette.Martinez@utmb.edu](mailto:Annette.Martinez@utmb.edu)

## PHILANTHROPY



### ACE Unit opening

Members of the board of directors of the Sealy & Smith Foundation toured the new Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Unit during the official grand opening Oct. 30 on the 10th floor of John Sealy Hospital. The board had approved a grant for \$3.8 million to help establish the unit.

Pictured are, from left, Dr. James Goodwin, director of the Sealy Center on Aging, John Kelso, J. Fellman Seinsheimer, George Sealy, Charles A. Worthen, Michael C. Doherty and Dr. John D. Stobo, president of UTMB. Stobo presented Worthen, chairman of the board, with a plaque in appreciation of the contribution from the foundation.

Earlier in the afternoon, the directors and their wives toured UTMB's surgical suite, where they received a demonstration of the new da Vinci Surgical System, also largely financed by a grant from the Sealy & Smith Foundation. The computer-enhanced robotic technology is expected to transform the way many surgical procedures are performed in the 21st Century. UTMB is the first medical center in the Southwest to perform operations using the new device.

# Moody endowment helps provide new academic technology center

By Joanna Bremer

Second-year medical students in UTMB's endocrinology and reproduction course treat virtual diabetes mellitus patients in the computers in the Moody Medical Library.

The course, part of the university's new Integrated Medical Curriculum, gives students the opportunity to master the material, rather than attempting to learn by rote, according to Dr. Steve Lieberman, associate professor of endocrinology in the Department of Internal Medicine and co-director of the course.

"On the computer, we can simulate physiology and a nearly endless variety of patients with diabetes. Students can run experiments or treat patients with different medications to gain a better understanding of physiology, pharmacology and diabetes management," said Lieberman. "Our students learn by practicing without any risk to real patients."

The library's computing and educational resources benefit by substantial support from the Moody Medical Library Endowment Fund, established in 1993 with a gift from the Moody Foundation and matching funds from UTMB. The endowment now totals more than \$7 million. In addition to the endowment, the Moody Foundation contributed \$1 million in 1965 to help construct the building that houses the Moody Medical Library.

The endowment also supports the Library Information System, which includes an on-line catalog of the holdings of the six major health sciences libraries in the Houston-Galveston area; the full complement of the MEDLINE citation database back to 1966; information from the CancerLit database for the most recent five years; and the Current Contents database, providing online access to the tables of contents of major medical and scientific journals.

"The Moody Foundation endowment has powered the library's initiative to break the chains that bind our brains

to the printed page on the library shelf," said Brett A. Kirkpatrick, director of the Moody Medical Library. "The fund provided the additional resources we needed to begin delivering electronic books, journal articles and databases directly to the computer workstations of our clients, wherever and whenever they need information."

Dr. Betty J. Williams, professor of pharmacology, is one who often uses the Moody Medical Library's electronic resources from her desk. In revising a book chapter on medication management in the elderly, she found the library system invaluable.

"I used Ovid to search MEDLINE, and other tools led me not only to research about the various topics but also to some critique and commentary that helped me put things into perspective," said Williams, associate dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. "Almost all the research I had to do, I could do from my computer, which probably cut my research time by more than half."

"If I had gone to the library to do it the old way, I would have been there two or three full days. But I didn't spend that much time online."

Although facilitating research of many types is important, the Moody Medical Library performs a variety of other services, as well. "One of the key functions of the library's new Academic Technology Center (ATC)," said Pat Ciejka, associate director of library services, "is to support UTMB educators in their development of multimedia instructional material for a web-based educational environment." The Moody endowment supported space renovation and furnishing of the ATC.

A President's Cabinet Award in 1999 financed a project in the Academic Technology Center for a research-based informational system on complementary and alternative therapies. The project was co-directed by Dr. Victor Sierpina, associate professor in the Department of Family

### The Moody Foundation

The Moody Foundation supports many other endeavors at UTMB:

- The Moody Fund for Student and Employee Services, which supports the Alumni Field House, the Lee Hage Jamail Student Center and the UTMB Child Care Center;
  - The university's efforts in neuroscience, including a key role in founding and nurturing research at the Marine Biomedical Institute;
  - Investigations in the Division of Neurosurgery; and
  - Linking UTMB to the world-renowned Transitional Learning Center through ongoing collaborative research.
- In addition, the Moody Endowment contributed \$500,000 to establish the Russell Shearn Moody Chair in Cognitive Rehabilitation in the School of Allied Health Sciences.

Medicine, and Dr. Donna Morris, associate professor in the School of Nursing.

Sierpina and Morris, along with other team members Mary Anne Hanley (School of Nursing) and Bob Joyce (Office of Educational Development), worked with library staff members Gregg Pratt and MaryDonna Piazza to develop a web-based case study on breast cancer that is being used by UTMB students of all disciplines, faculty, and the lay public. The address is <http://atc.utmb.edu/altmed/case/default.htm>.

With the aid of this program, Morris has taught courses for graduate and under-graduate nursing students on alternative and complementary therapies using satellite television transmission and the Internet. This technology enables students in Beaumont, Nacogdoches, San Antonio and Galveston to participate without being limited by geography.

"The electronic resources provided by the library enhance web-based learning," said Morris. "For example, an electronic reserve system has been established, enabling students to access articles, graphics, notes and other course materials online. All they need is a computer with a modem."

"This is a wonderful tool for those off campus," Morris added. "It's a wonderful tool for any students, in fact."

# Mouse model may aid treatment of Canavan's disease

More than a decade ago, long before he arrived at UTMB, pediatric geneticist Reuben Matalon was reluctantly coaxed by a friend into studying a rare, inherited and currently incurable ailment, not then his specialty, called Canavan's disease. To his surprise, those first studies in the late 1980s pinpointed the mysterious protein deficiency that caused the debilitating genetic dysfunction, something scientists had searched for for years.

Those same studies also launched Matalon as the major force behind nearly every landmark discovery relevant to Canavan's disease—a neurodegenerative disorder that usually claims its young victims' lives by age four. Among these was his discovery of the gene causing the disease, which led to developing a blood test for prospective parents at high risk of begetting babies with the disorder.

Now, the man some colleagues call “Mr. Canavan” has achieved another ground-breaking feat. Collaborating with researchers at Lexicon Genetics Inc., a Houston-area biotechnology firm, Matalon has helped develop a genetically engineered, or knock-out, mouse that carries the gene defect which causes the disease. As a result of the genetic dysfunction, the mouse's brain looks like those of the disease's human victims; it becomes spongy and water-filled.

Development of the mouse model—which was reported in

a recent issue of the *Journal of Gene Medicine*—is good news to many families whose children are affected by Canavan's disease, which causes severe mental retardation, blindness, seizures, and loss of muscle control. With a mouse model of the disease in hand, researchers for the first time can give experimental therapies to a living animal without risking human lives. They also can do the extensive testing necessary to figure out why some therapies work while others don't.

Genetically speaking, mice and human beings are very similar, and knockout mouse models therefore have become the gold standard for genetically-based drug discovery efforts focused on important human diseases.

“This is an important advance in the quest to develop new therapeutics for rare or poorly understood genetic diseases such as Canavan disease,” said Dr. Arthur T. Sands, president and chief executive officer of Lexicon. “We are rapidly expanding our portfolio of knockout validated drug targets and mammalian models of human diseases for the discovery of new genomics-based therapies.”

“This mouse model should provide urgently needed answers to many questions surrounding potential gene therapy treatments for central nervous system conditions,” said Matalon, a professor of pediatrics and human genetics

at UTMB and leader of the research team. Matalon intends to make the knockout mice available to the research community through a collaborative network of scientists who are working on Canavan disease as well as other neurological disorders.

Canavan's disease is rare in the general population but very common among Ashkenazi Jews (those who come, or whose ancestors came, from Central and Eastern Europe). Matalon did tests in the early 1990s suggesting that about one in forty Jewish people carry the defective gene and one in 6,000 of their babies are born with the disease—a rate so high that the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology has recommended that all Jewish people be screened for the genetic defect and counseled about their choices. When two people who carry the gene marry, they have a 25 percent chance of having a baby with the disease.

“Attempts to develop effective treatments have been hindered by the lack of any animal model of Canavan disease,” said Dr. Ken Platt, director of homologous recombination at Lexicon Genetics and co-author on the publication. “We are very pleased that our knockout mouse technology may accelerate the development of new therapeutic approaches to this disease.”

# Bio-engineered cells may boost mobility in spinal cord injuries

By Tom Curtis

NEW ORLEANS—In experimental animals with spinal cord injuries, cells bio-engineered to produce the neurotransmitter serotonin apparently can relieve chronic pain and clearly can increase mobility, researchers from UTMB have found. The study reported for the first time on Wednesday, Nov. 8, at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in New Orleans.

Approximately 11,000 new human spinal cord injuries occur annually in the U.S., and they often result in a devastating loss of sensory and motor function below the point where the injury occurs. Once spinal shock has subsided, reflexes usually return and various kinds of pain develop. Estimates vary regarding how often pain occurs following spinal cord injury, but some range as high as 94 percent. This kind of pain is difficult to treat and often is extremely debilitating.

The researchers cautioned that their research results in lab animals are preliminary and said that learning precisely how they will apply to human beings will require many years of additional studies. Nonetheless, the scientists believe this first study may have important implications for the ultimate development of effective new therapies for people with spinal cord injuries.

The primary author of the new study was UTMB graduate

student Bryan Hains. The senior author was his mentor, Claire E. Hulsebosch, professor of anatomy and neuroscience at UTMB. The cells were bio-engineered by another author of the study, Mary Eaton, assistant professor of neurological surgery with the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis at the University of Miami School of Medicine.

Hulsebosch explained that when the bio-engineered cells were transplanted into the area of injury in rats, “these cells survived and secreted serotonin into the cerebrospinal fluid.” She added, “More important, animals that received the transplanted cells demonstrated significantly improved recovery of locomotor function and statistically significant reduction in pain-related behaviors when compared to controls”—that is, compared to laboratory rats that didn't receive the bio-engineered, serotonin-producing cells.

Hulsebosch and her colleagues at UTMB developed what is known as a rodent “model” of spinal cord injury, which means using injuries in rats to mimic the loss of function and pain that occurs in human patients. The rats apparently experience sensations common to people with spinal-cord injuries in which normally non-painful stimuli cause pain and painful stimuli become more painful. These pain “syndromes,” Hulsebosch explained, are caused by lower-than-normal levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which in part helps to block pain sensations.

Using transplanted cells in human beings as a source of pain-reducing compounds such as serotonin could be a major advance in pain management, the UTMB group believes. Hains explained that the cells act as biological mini-pumps, providing a continuous and renewable source of compounds directly to the site where pain originates. Also, he said, because very low doses of compounds are secreted by the cells into a very small area without exposing other organ systems or tissues, this approach could minimize or even prevent the development of drug tolerance and the need for dose increases over time. The bio-engineered cells used in his experiment were immortalized, Hains noted, meaning that unlike normal cells, they do not die after a fixed number of generations; but unlike many other immortalized cells, he added, these immortalized cells do not create cancerous tumors.

Several questions remain to be answered, the scientists noted, including whether anti-rejection drugs are required to keep the body's immune system from attacking the transplanted cells, whether the procedure is applicable to other spinal cord injuries, and whether transplanting such cells immediately following injury would be helpful. The team also is examining transplant-induced changes in the spinal cord and transplanted tissue and how these alterations in spinal cord circuitry might affect behavior.

# Salute to Nursing

By Cathy C. Nall

One hundred forty golfers, both experienced and novice, competed like pros recently at the seventh annual Salute to Nursing Golf Tournament and helped to raise more than \$97,000 for student scholarships in the UTMB School of Nursing. This is the largest number of players since the tournament began.

Thirty-five teams, comprised of UTMB faculty and staff, community leaders and representatives from area businesses, teed off at the Galveston Country Club in a Florida scramble, shotgun-start. First place went to Dr. Jerry Mount's Team from Galveston, second place to Union Carbide's representatives from Texas City, and third place to the foursome from Western Towing Company of Houston.

The lowest scoring UTMB foursome, the Department of Pediatrics' team of Peggy Haardt, Dr. Laurie Hogarth, Dr. Cynthia Judice and Kim Luppens, was presented the Fenton Cup, the brainstorm of Dr. Bill McGanity, honorary chairman of the tournament. "This is the beginning of a new tradition for the tournament," McGanity said. Each year, the cup will be engraved with the lowest scoring UTMB team name and held by those members until the following year when it's passed along to the next winning team.

The Fenton Cup is named in honor of Dr. Mary V. Fenton, dean of the School of Nursing. "Never in my wildest imagination did I think my name would be on a golf cup," said Fenton, an avid equestrian and jogger who excels in many areas—but not golf. "In 100 years, people will look back and think—wow, she must have been a great golfer," she quipped.



President John D. Stobo, his wife Mary Ann and School of Medicine Dean Stanley Lemon enjoy the sponsor party at the home of Susanne and Gerald Sullivan.



Sponsors Fredell and Lewis Rosen (left) with Standard Steel Supply, Inc., with SON students Sarah Benavidas and Jennifer Chappell.



Above: Dr. William J. McGanity, honorary chairman of the tournament receives an engraved thank you platter from Susanne Sullivan and the SON.

Left: Senior UTMB SON students and scholarship recipients, Jennifer Whitson (left) and D'Nae Weaver, thank tournament sponsors at the awards luncheon.



The winners of the Fenton Cup, the Department of Pediatrics' team (from left to right) Kim Luppens, Dr. Cynthia Judice, Peggy Haardt and Dr. Laurie Hogarth pose with Dr. Mary V. Fenton (middle).

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## ACADEMICS

# UTMB receives grant to develop curriculum for complementary and alternative medicine

By John Tyler

UTMB, with Dr. Victor Sierpina as principal investigator, recently received a \$1.5 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to develop an evidence-based curriculum in alternative therapies that can be used as a model for other medical learning institutions worldwide.

The grant, along with the recent naming of UTMB's Vice President for Education, Dr. George M. Bernier Jr., to President Clinton's White House Commission on Alternative and Complementary Medicine, positions the university as a national leader in the field.



Sierpina

"By establishing an evidence-based core curriculum that is closely studied, evaluated, and disseminated electronically, UTMB will become well known as a Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) education center of excellence," Sierpina said.

Sponsored by the NIH's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, UTMB will use the grant funds to encourage students and health care professionals to critically analyze therapies widely used by the public. In addition to traditional instructional techniques, the program will use the Internet and other distance learning methods to provide information to educators and health profession students everywhere.

Since, according to Sierpina, existing curricula for medical, nursing and allied health students offer no systematic approach to complementary and alternative medicine, students in the past have not learned how to advise patients using alternative therapies.

According to an article by Stanford University's John Astin published in May of last year in the Journal of the American Medical Association, people using alternative therapies are often better educated and agree with the holistic view that mind, body and spirit are all important in health. Most people using alternative therapies do so in conjunction with traditional medical therapy for chronic conditions such as back pain, arthritis, depression and headache.

"Most people do not use them instead of standard treatment," Sierpina said. "Some subpopulations, such as the geriatric group, use alternative therapies heavily. We also see heavy use in certain cultures, such as Hispanics."

Bernier said the knowledge of alternative therapies is crucial for practicing medical professionals. "A patient might say, 'Oh Doc, by the way, I've been taking St. John's Wort. What effect would that have on what you are prescribing for me?'" he said. "It is very important for health care professionals to know what the limitations and possible problems are with alternative medicine."



Bernier

Sierpina has developed a Core CAM Curriculum Committee to work closely with other curriculum committees at UTMB. The committee will integrate CAM materials into basic science lectures and demonstrations, as well as problem-based learning cases. Additionally, the committee will develop a Web-based set of references and databases useful for students and faculty in the basic sciences and in clinical practice.

"Studies show that the American populous visits complementary and alternative health care providers more often than they visit primary care physicians," Bernier said. "Educational programs, such as the one Dr. Sierpina is developing, will equip medical students and other professionals with the knowledge to understand and deal with the world of CAM."

## FENTON, from page 3

Mary has agreed to stay on until we have someone else in place. Conducting a candidate search for a position such as hers is a big task and one of enormous importance for our university. We'll be making a decision that will have a great impact on UTMB for many years to come."

He says he looks forward to working with Fenton to plan the future of the SON and notes her many accomplishments during the past years. During her tenure as dean, he says, the SON has enjoyed many successes and made much progress. Notable accomplishments include the creation of a Ph.D. program with a unique emphasis on the construct of healing, designation as a World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Nursing/Midwifery Development in Primary

## STARK, from page 1

50,000 visits to UTMB involve a patient with diabetes.

African Americans and Latinos are more inclined to have type 2 diabetes, the warning signs of which include frequent infections, blurred vision and unusual weight loss.

African Americans are 1.7 times as likely to have type 2 as the general population, while Latinos are almost twice as likely. Diabetes affects 2.3 million African Americans and 1.2 million Mexican Americans.

Dr. Randall Urban, UTMB professor of endocrinology, will direct the center's activities. A full-time endocrinologist, Dr. Fannie Smith, will provide direct diabetes patient care at the center. UTMB officials plan to eventually add another endocrinologist to the staff. Urban said he expects the facility will have far-reaching effects.

Using satellite links, the center's physicians will have greater two-way communication in educating health-care providers, other physicians and patients at UTMB-affiliated clinics.

The telehealth network will greatly aid UTMB diabetes conferences and continuing medical education programs as well. The conferences, expected to occur twice a month, will serve as forums for diabetes-related specialists to discuss the latest findings about the disease.

Other benefits that are planned to be offered by the center include:

- Adult and pediatric diabetes outpatient classes currently held at UTMB will continue at the center. UTMB's diabetes education program has been recognized by

Health Care and the development of the faculty practice program and the nurse practitioner/midwifery programs. UTMB has also assumed a state and national leadership role in nursing distance education.

In addition, much has been done to strengthen the alumni association of the school, and there has been an increased focus on involving the community through the School of Nursing Advisory Council. These activities have raised awareness of the nursing profession and increased philanthropic support of the school.

Stobo says, "The search committee will be looking for a distinguished leader in nursing who can build on the excellence in teaching and clinical care established by Mary and who can take the research programs begun by Mary to a new and higher level."

the American Diabetes Association for four years in a row. Diabetes educators here serve nearly 1,000 patients each year in informal class sessions.

- A web site that will offer general information, guidelines for dietary changes and links to diabetes-related sites for patients and health care providers.
- A hotline for those seeking advice about the disease.

Dr. John D. Stobo, UTMB president, said the center "will ensure that patients in this area will have an exceptional resource for diabetes care.

"Through the energy of UTMB and the generosity of such philanthropic partners as the Stark Foundation, we will be able to provide a premier forum for diabetes care, research and education in this region," Stobo said. "Each of us on the UTMB campus is grateful for what the Stark Foundation has made possible through its years of support. We are equally appreciative of the foundation's board members for their insight and vision regarding the diabetes center, targeting a disease of enormous consequence."

Nelda Stark and her husband, H. J. Lutchter Stark, an oil and lumber businessman, started the foundation decades ago to support their various charitable interests. The late Orange couple became ardent UTMB supporters after numerous visits for treatment at UTMB in the 1950s and 1960s.

In addition to this gift, Mrs. Stark gave \$1 million last year to establish a distinguished chair in UTMB's Department of Internal Medicine, which will be used to support the director of the Stark Diabetes Center.

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## UTMB IN THE NEWS

### Newspapers

**Dr. Joe Vinetz**, a UTMB virologist, was interviewed about the re-emergence of leptospirosis, a bacterial infection spread by mammals in areas of high heat and humidity, such as rain forests. Vinetz said he believes the disease is on the upswing due to greater participation in adventurous activities and the growing interaction between rats and people in urban areas (**New York Times, Oct. 10**).

•

UTMB nursing professor **Linda Rounds** was named president of the Texas State Board of Nurse Examiners by Gov. George W. Bush. The board regulates the practice of nursing and the accreditation of schools of nursing (**Galveston County Daily News, Oct. 1; Galveston Fax, Oct. 2; Houston Chronicle, Oct. 10**).

•



Rounds

UTMB received \$35.3 million in cash contributions in support of its educational, research and clinical care programs during the 2000 fiscal year. This is an increase of nearly \$10 million over last year's total (**Texas City Sun, Oct. 25; Galveston County Daily News, Oct. 30**).

•

A \$1.5 million contribution from the Nelda C. and H.J.

Lutcher Stark Foundation will fund the creation of a diabetes center at UTMB. The center will offer resources and programs to help patients and their physicians manage the disease, expand basic science research and provide the latest in clinical care. **Dr. Randall Urban**, UTMB professor of endocrinology, will direct the center (**Orange Leader, Oct. 6; Galveston County Daily News, Oct. 7; Beaumont Enterprise, Oct. 11**).



Urban

- See *IMPACT* story on Page 1
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A new professorship has been established at UTMB by the Leon Bromberg Charitable Trust. The trust fund will provide \$100,000 for an endowed position to be presented annually to an outstanding faculty member of UTMB's Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (**Galveston Fax, Oct. 10; Galveston County Daily News, Oct. 23**).

•

Leading researchers, physicians and rehabilitation experts from across the country converged at the inaugural Galveston Brain Injury Conference, co-sponsored by UTMB and the Transitional Learning Center (**Texas City Sun, Oct. 29**). Articles announcing the presentation of the Robert L. Moody

Prize for Distinguished Initiatives in Brain Injury Research and Rehabilitation, which was presented at the conference, were also published (**Galveston Fax, Oct. 19; Galveston County Daily News, Oct. 20**).

•

UTMB, with **Dr. Victor Sierpina** as principal investigator, recently received a \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to develop an evidence-based curriculum in alternative therapies that can be used as a model for other learning institutions worldwide (**Galveston Fax, Oct. 27; Texas City Sun, Oct. 29**).

### Magazines

**Dr. John Dallas**, a pediatric endocrinologist at UTMB, discusses issues surrounding early puberty in American girls in the Oct. 23rd issue of **Time** magazine.

•

**Tom Epley**, UTMB information services leader, is interviewed about an initiative he is leading at UTMB to eventually bring all physicians, nurses and staff members into an electronic clinical information system with smart-card access at its center (**Healthcare Informatics, October issue**).

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# IMPACT

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