Dentistry Students Give Kids a Smile

Students, faculty and staff from the UTHSC College of Dentistry provided free dental services to more than 80 elementary school students on Feb. 5 as part of National Give Kids a Smile Day. In the three years that UTHSC has taken part in the day, almost 2,000 dental procedures worth more than $57,000 have been donated. “Our students and faculty are glad to be in a position to give back to the communities where we live and practice,” said College of Dentistry Dean Timothy Hottel, DDS.

UTHSC Named a Top Workplace

UTHSC has been named one of the 2014 Top Workplaces in Memphis by The Commercial Appeal daily newspaper. This is the first time UTHSC has made the list.

The distinction, given to a total of 50 large, medium and small workplaces, is based solely on surveys completed by employees. The newspaper partners with WorkplaceDynamics, a survey firm based in Philadelphia, to identify the best places to work based on factors including how employees feel about their job, training, direction, retention, motivation, benefits and pay.

Chancellor Steve Schwab, MD, applauded UTHSC team members for the honor. “Your efforts every day make UTHSC a great place to work. They also make Memphis, the state of Tennessee and the Mid-South a healthier and better place to live. We are proud of what we have accomplished together and pledge to continue to make UTHSC an outstanding place to work.”

More than 800 companies were invited to participate, and almost 19,000 employees responded on paper or online to the 22-question survey. The results indicate that feeling appreciated and doing meaningful work is important to job satisfaction, according to WorkplaceDynamics.

One UTHSC respondent wrote: “I have a good manager. She helps not only me but also my other co-workers explore and learn new things. And you wouldn't know my manager was a manager, because she does everything we do.”

UTHSC was recently named a “Healthier Tennessee Workplace” by Gov. Bill Haslam’s Foundation for Health And Wellness which recognizes those organizations that encourage employees to live healthier lives both at work and at home.

UTHSC has its own Apple Store! See page 2.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center is to bring the benefits of the health sciences to the achievement and maintenance of human health, with a focus on the citizens of Tennessee and the region, by pursuing an integrated program of education, research, clinical care, and public service.

Message from the Chancellor

Distributed Feb. 12, 2015

UTHSC Faculty, Staff and Students:

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation team has just left our campus following an exit interview. The SACS Commission on Colleges is the regional body charged with accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. For several years, UTHSC has been working toward our accreditation as a stand-alone entity, rather than as part of Big Orange. Following the SACS/COC site visit, we’re glad to share good news.

We are very pleased. The only finding or recommendation the commission had was regarding the absence of the state audit of UTHSC as an individual entity. When the audit is received by SACS in March, we will have a no findings, no recommendations, totally clean accreditation. The state has completed and submitted the audit of UT as a whole, but carving out the UTHSC portion as a separate report is pending from the state auditor. We have five months to submit the UTHSC independent state audit.

More details about the SACS/COC team’s observations will follow; however, we can share that they were very complimentary and indicated this is one of the best accreditation visits they have done in a long time. It was particularly gratifying to receive commendations on how UTHSC handles faculty credentialing, since this process can be quite confusing to reviewers for the various disciplines within the health sciences. Faculty, staff, students, facilities, and strategic planning were singled out for praise. The accreditation status of colleges was also singled out as excellent.

Kudos to the entire team of Drs. Dorsey, Scheid, Brown, Stern, Farmer, Van der Aa, and Pfeffer, as well as to Tony Ferrara and the college deans for the presentation of UTHSC. The entire campus faculty and staff rose to the occasion. Special thanks to local UT Trustees George Cates and Shannon Brown for meeting with the site visit team.

The imminent, institutional accreditation of UTHSC reflects the ongoing high-level of activity of all the faculty and staff of our organization. We look forward to sharing more information in the coming weeks.

Steve J. Schwab, MD, Chancellor

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UTHSC Has its Own Apple Store

Felicia Hill, assistant manager of the VolShop in Madison Plaza, is always ready to help customers. Apple’s newest iMac with 27” Retina 5K display is in the foreground.

UTHSC has its very own, Apple Authorized Campus Store. The Apple Store operates inside of the VolShop located in the Madison Plaza. Since its grand opening on Aug. 27, 2014, the Apple Store has continued growing. Product selection includes iPads, Macbook Pro, Macbook Air, iMac, iPod and more, although not the iPhone. One can find all the accessories for each item including the iPhone, as well as keyboards, mouses, chargers and cables.

UTHSC faculty, staff and students automatically qualify for the higher education discount that is already reflected in prices. “Everything you can purchase in a regular Apple Store, you can get here,” said assistant manager, Felicia Hill. “If the store doesn’t have it in stock, we will be happy to order it,” she said. “We ask customers to allow us seven business days for delivery but orders usually arrive faster.”

All Apple orders may be customized, she added. The difference between the VolShop and most Apple locations is that there is not an Apple Technician in-store. However, campus OIT has certified Geek Squad Personnel. For any personal items, the VolShop sales coverage through SafeWare provides for local repairs.

Perhaps the biggest and best news about the Apple Store is that UTHSC employees can buy Apple products and pay for them over one year, with the amount deducted from their paycheck. The minimum purchase to qualify for Payroll Deduction is $500. The employee must put at least 10 percent down, with the remaining being paid over 12 months, without interest.

VolShop hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can reach the Apple Store at (901) 448-5427 or Felicia Hill at fhill1@utk.edu.

SNPhA Chapter Wins United Nations Competition

from left, Service Co-Chair Minh Tran, Delegate Kristen Hughes

UTHSC’s Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) chapter was a winner of the Shot@Life national competition sponsored by the United Nations Foundation. The Shot@Life competition is an advocate for global immunizations. During the challenge, each SNPhA team was to hold an in-house district meeting and contact at least five state representatives by phone to raise $300. The chapter also sent multiple letters to representatives in East, Middle and West Tennessee and set up tables in Memphis and Knoxville with computers that students could use to send emails as well. They raised more than $400 to win the competition.

Winning the Shot@Life challenge netted the chapter a $300 grant as well as 30 Shot@Life T-shirts.

Dr. Klco Receives Career Award for Medical Scientists

Jeffery Klco, MD, PhD, works with research lab specialist Tami Lamprecht to investigate how disrupting signals in the bone marrow can influence blood stem cells.

Jeffery M. Klco, MD, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Pathology in the College of Medicine at UTHSC, has received a Burroughs Wellcome Career Award for Medical Scientists (CAMS). A highly competitive program, CAMS provides $700,000 awards over five years for physician-scientists who are committed to an academic career, to bridge advanced postdoctoral/fellowship training and the early years of faculty service. Proposals must be in the area of basic biomedical, disease-oriented or translational research.

Dr. Klco and his team are investigating how disrupting signals in the bone marrow can influence blood stem cells, which give rise to all the other blood cells of an animal. They will also investigate how introducing certain inhibitors will affect the development and growth rate of different cells in the bone marrow. The research will expand understanding of how blood cells develop.

Dr. Klco and his team hope to ultimately improve treatment options for diseases like leukemia, cancer of the blood, which is one of the most common cancers among children.

“This award will allow us to aggressively pursue novel approaches to treating patients with leukemia by understanding how different cell populations can influence the growth and development of leukemia,” Dr. Klco said. His research team will be located at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, where he is an assistant member in the Department of Pathology.

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF) is an independent private foundation dedicated to advancing the biomedical sciences by supporting research and other scientific and educational activities. For more information about BWF, visit www.bwfund.org.

Photo by Seth Dixon, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.
UTHSC Launches “Live!” Breast Cancer Coalition

Carolyn Whitney and Vivian Chalmers, friends from their school days, stood in the crowded lobby of the Student-Alumni Center UTHSC on Saturday morning, Feb. 7, and gave each other a big hug. The women, both breast cancer survivors, were among more than 530 African-American women who attended the first LIVE! breast cancer summit at UTHSC. The free event officially titled, “LIVE! African-American Women Surviving Breast Cancer through Education, Early Detection, Screening and Treatment,” was designed to unite, support and empower African-American women to take charge of their breast health.

The Research Center on Health Disparities, Equity and the Exposome (RCHDEE) at UTHSC convened a Breast Cancer Awareness and Action Coalition of more than a dozen organizations to host the educational and motivational event. “Together, we are committed to the reduction of breast cancer’s mortality rate by increasing awareness and action among black women, the population that discovers the disease much later and dies from it much earlier than any other group in our region,” said Patricia Matthews-Juarez, PhD, co-director of the RCHDEE. Dr. Matthews-Juarez, was recruited to Memphis in 2013 along with her husband, Dr. Paul Juarez, to start the research center. While working with the many excellent breast cancer organizations in the African-American community, it became apparent that together they could increase the impact of their efforts, she said.

The summit opened with remarks from Memphis Mayor AC Wharton, Congressman Steve Cohen and UTHSC Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operations Officer Dr. Ken Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE.

Thelma Hurd, MD, a surgical oncologist and director of the Breast Surgery Program at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, gave the keynote address, stressing the need for education, empowerment and personal advocacy in fighting the disease.

“Not only is African-American breast cancer mortality two and a half times higher in Shelby County and the surrounding four counties; Memphis has had the unique distinction of having the highest African-American breast cancer mortality rates in the United States for the last 20 years running,” Dr. Hurd said.

“This is a major, major problem for Memphis. And I would actually put forth that given the impact of breast cancer on the community, it is as important as cardiovascular disease, as important as other diseases, including diabetes, which are impacting the community,” Dr. Hurd said a first step in the battle is for African-American women “to stop thinking that breast cancer is a death sentence.” With current treatments, early detection and diagnosis at earlier stages, breast cancer is one of the few cancers that is becoming a chronic disease, with 10-, 15- and 20-year survivals no longer the rare exception and more commonly becoming the norm, she said.

“We need to understand that knowledge is absolute power in breast cancer. There is nothing that says we, as African-American women, can’t have that knowledge,” Dr. Hurd said. “It’s out there, and there are many ways that we can access it.” She cited work by organizations, such as the West Tennessee Area Health Education Center, Inc., in Fayette County, which is not only teaching the community about breast cancer, but also training lay health educators. “And it’s that level of intervention, when you’re talking about really creating a new level of community resource knowledge that people can go to, that’s going to be critical in moving forward.”

Dr. Hurd pointed to four things every woman with breast cancer should know about her tumor, things a new study found only five percent of African-American breast cancer survivors know. They, too, are: the stage of the disease, whether it is estrogen or progesterone receptor positive or negative, whether it is HER2-positive or -negative, and what the grade is.

“This is your currency for talking to anyone in the health care system,” Dr. Hurd said. “If you don’t know this, then you really can’t have meaningful discussion. You can’t really think about the information you’re being given, because it’s all really conceptualized through that lens.”

Dr. Hurd said while 75 percent of the disparity in breast cancer mortality is due to socioeconomic factors and clinical factors, such as the stage of disease at diagnosis, she cautioned not to assume that poverty equals paralysis. “We have to be ever diligent to make sure that we don’t get so focused on poverty that we stop realizing our power as individuals and as a system within the community to really affect change.”

The summit also launched a photo exhibition of portraits of African-American women who are breast cancer survivors. Designed to put a face on breast cancer in the African-American community, the “LIVE! Just As We Are!” exhibition opened on Feb. 6 at the Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library and will remain on display throughout February for Black History Month. It will then move to locations around the city and region.

To learn more and to listen to organizers talking about breast cancer in the African-American community on WDIA AM 1070, go to http://www.myedisa.com/anast/bev-johnson-278/action-awareness/13230615/.

Student Pharmacists Distribute Holiday Turkeys

On Saturday, Nov. 22, student pharmacists from Phi Delta Chi engaged in community outreach in the 38126 ZIP code, where the most impoverished residents of Memphis live. Phi Delta Chi helped to unpack and distribute 240 turkeys at Mustard Seed, Inc., a 501c3 community organization embedded in 38126.

According to Shelley White-Means, PhD, “The students were tireless in their efforts to make sure each resident was taken care of and treated in a respectful manner. They were the ultimate professionals!”

Dr. White-Means is professor of Economics in the Health Outcomes and Policy Research Division, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the UTHSC College of Pharmacy. She added, “A formal thank you from Mustard Seed will be forthcoming.”

Right, student pharmacists clearly enjoying the spirit of giving to those in need.
UTHSC has a new director of Procurement, a new bursar, and a new department. All, however, were here before. James K. McCune is the new director of Procurement, a new department created by the merging of Accounts Payable/Payroll and Purchasing. He formerly was director of Accounts Payable/Payroll. Byron Porter is the new bursar, succeeding Gwen Campbell, who retired Dec. 30. 

“Several years ago, consultants from the Huron Company made some suggestions,” McCune said. “They said it would be more advantageous to combine Accounts Payable with Purchasing into Procurement, so we did. In fact, we took it one step further, adding Payroll as well. Now, it’s all under one roof.”

Actually, the departments, while they have been combined, are not literally under one roof yet, but that is coming. What ties them all together is that in all of them, the university pays for something, whether it is an employee’s salary or a new computer.

Tony Ferrara, vice chancellor for Finance and Operations, described what he called, “the life cycle of acquisition.” He explained, “This begins with thinking about buying something, writing specifications, purchasing it, and concludes with surplusing items out. The whole life cycle of acquisition is done by one department now.”

More changes are coming in the purchasing process, “in phases,” McCune said, adding that it would remind people of Amazon’s “shopping cart” process. “It’s going to make things a whole lot quicker and easier for folks. The goal will be to get the best price or the best product and hopefully both.”

McCune has been with UTHSC since 2007, joining as assistant director of Payroll. He became director of Payroll in 2010. Before coming to UTHSC, he was director of Human Resources/Payroll at Shelby State Community College (now Southwest Tennessee Community College). He was a team leader who assisted in the development and implementation of the Banner Human Resources System by Payroll.

He earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Memphis in 1981, followed by a BBA in accounting from the same institution three years later.

John Ed and Odessa Williams Endowment Brings Diabetes Expert to Campus

The first John Ed and Odessa Williams Endowment in Community Diabetes Lectureship in October brought renowned diabetes expert James Gavin III, MD, to the UTHSC campus as the keynote speaker.

The lectureship was established by sisters Willie M. Williams Crittendon, PhD, an educator; Ethelyn Williams-Neal, MD, a pediatrician and clinical assistant professor at UTHSC; and Beverly Williams-Cleaves, MD, an internist/endocrinologist and clinical associate professor at UTHSC, in memory of their parents, John Ed and Odessa Williams.

The endowment was developed to encourage greater diversity in support of UTHSC, to highlight the importance of excellent community care for those with diabetes and to provide ancillary financial support for minority medical students at UTHSC.

“We were excited to have the opportunity to launch this inaugural lectureship,” Dr. Williams-Cleaves said. “This lectureship is on a topic that is very dear to our hearts.”

As part of the two-day event at UTHSC, Dr. Gavin, clinical professor of Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta and at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, spoke at Grand Rounds, consulted with endocrinology fellows and spoke at a meeting of the Bluff City Medical Society. Dr. Gavin is past president of the American Diabetes Association and immediate past chairman of the National Diabetes Education Program. “We were extremely pleased and honored to have Dr. James Gavin as our inaugural speaker,” Dr. Williams-Cleaves said. “He brought great stature to this event.”

UTHSC Students Stage Protest as Part of Human Rights Day

Members of the Student National Medical Association staged a white-coat die-in Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 2 p.m. on Union Avenue. The peaceful demonstration was to protest the recent deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. The local SNMA chapter joined students at many other medical schools participating in similar die-ins on that day, which was Human Rights Day.

“As medical students, we must take a stand against the oppression of our black and brown patients, colleagues, friends, and family,” the group said. “By standing together at medical schools nationwide, we hope to demonstrate that the medical student community views racial violence as a public health crisis.”

The group added that the event only represented the views of the school. The event was approved in advance by UTHSC administration.

UTHSC’s Postdoc Office and PhDa sponsored its seventh Annual Postdoctoral Research Day on Dec. 10, 2014. More than 90 postdocs, research associates, faculty mentors, and students attended. This year’s keynote speaker was Dr. Brett Jennings, a past UTHSC postdoctoral fellow who now is the director of Nephrogenesis R&D and adjunct faculty at UT Chattanooga. Dr. Jennings recalled his postdoctoral experience, and spoke about the path he took to get to where he is today.

A total of 19 UTHSC postdocs and research associates gave poster presentations on their latest research and competed for awards; seven UTHSC postdocs and research associates gave oral presentations on their research. Winners in the poster and oral presentation categories were determined by 17 UTHSC faculty members who served as judges.

For the poster presentations:
- First place: Dr. Lynda Wilnott, Anatomy and Neurobiology (mentored by Dr. Catherine Kaczorowski)
- Second place: Dr. Sheema Khan, Pharmaceutical Sciences (mentored by Dr. Subhash Chauhan)
- Third place: Dr. Wenyan Han, Pharmacology (mentored by Dr. Hao Chen)

The winners for the oral presentations were:
- First place: Dr. Kwame Nyarko, Preventive Medicine (mentored by Dr. Teresa Waters)
- Second place: Dr. Ajeehth Pingili, Pharmacology (mentored by Dr. Kafai Malik)
- Third place: Dr. Jordy Saravia, Pediatrics (mentored by Dr. Stephanie Cormier)

Additionally, postdocs had the opportunity to compete for $1000 travel awards that may be used to attend a spring scientific conference of their choice. The Postdoctoral Advisory Committee made their selections based on the quality of the submitted abstracts, NIH Biosketch, and participation in PhDA-sponsored events. Drs. Sheema Khan, Pharmaceutical Sciences (mentored by Dr. Subhash Chauhan), Sridhar Jaligama, Pediatrics (mentored by Dr. Stephanie Cormier), and Kamalika Mukherjee, Pharmacology (mentored by Dr. Kafai Malik) each won a travel award.

UTHSC’s Postdoctoral Association (PhDA) is dedicated to facilitating communication between postdoctoral fellows, their faculty mentors and members of the UTHSC administration. Other goals of the PhDA include the promotion of career development for postdocs and the organization of networking and social events.

For more information about the Postdoc Office or the PhDA, call (901) 448-2661 or email postdoc@uthsc.edu.
On Dec. 12, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center graduated 105 health care professionals from five of its six colleges:

- two from the College of Dentistry
- 21 from the College of Graduate Health Sciences
- 24 from the College of Health Professions
- four from the College of Medicine
- 54 from the College of Nursing

This class of 86 women and 19 men included 22 African-Americans, four Latino-Americans, and 29 out-of-state graduates.

Below, views of December 2014 graduation.

Nursing Pinning Dec. 11

Right, nurses take the International Nurses’ Pledge at the College of Nursing’s pinning ceremony Dec. 11. There were 45 who received BSN degrees and 28 who received MSN (Clinical Nurse Leader) degrees. Crystal Walker, UTHSC College of Nursing alumna and PhD candidate, was the featured guest speaker.
Dr. Eoff Retires After 40+ Years

James C. Eoff III, PharmD, executive associate dean and Distinguished Professor of Clinical Pharmacy, retired in December. As a retirement gift, the college arranged for Dr. Eoff to play an organ recital at the Orpheum this summer, at a date to be determined. The concert will be recorded.

Dr. Eoff started working as a faculty member at UTHSC College of Pharmacy in July 1970. He had a seven-year break from 1977 to 1983. Even then, he said, he still was a voluntary faculty member, teaching a three-hour course once a week and taking students on rotations. “So in actuality, I have been teaching and working with students for 44 and a half years,” he said.

(Counting his time in work study as a student in the 1960s, his employment with UTHSC goes back even further?)

“During that time, I have tried to teach more through example than by words, and I hope I have taught more about life than about pharmacy.”

“I can’t imagine anyone enjoying their career more than I have,” he added. “When I look back over 44 years at the tremendous changes in pharmacy that have occurred, I’m so pleased to have been a part of the initiation of so many new programs and models of clinical practice during the 1970s.

“I have served with five deans, beginning with Dick Feurt who was also my dean as a student and gave me my first job,” he continued. “He always opened orientation with ‘Welcome to the Family,’ and I have enjoyed welcoming each new class in the fall in a similar manner. I am also thankful for Dean Mike Ryan who re-hired me in 1983, and for Dean Dick Gourley under whom I served for 22 years. I think Dean Marie Chisholm-Burns is doing a fantastic job of carrying on the College of Pharmacy’s traditions of excellence.

“During that time, I have tried to teach more through example than by words, and I hope I have taught more about life than about pharmacy.”

“During that time, I have tried to teach more through example than by words, and I hope I have taught more about life than about pharmacy.”

“I am so thankful for my students who are the reason I have hung around this place so long. It is such a blessing and privilege to be able to be around young people. I taught more than 1,700 pharmacy students who graduated with a BS degree and more than 3,000 with a PharmD degree during my 44-year career. I have always maintained students are the reason the college exists. I really consider my students as my extended family. My students continue to inspire me, motivate me, energize me, and make me very proud when I see them develop into such successful professionals.”

Chick-fil-A Comes to UTHSC

The Chick-fil-A Cow mascot visited the Madison Plaza at UTHSC during lunchtime Jan. 26, posing for photos with customers at the new Chick-fil-A outlet there.

According to Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations Tony Ferrara, the addition of Chick-fil-A to the Madison Plaza food court plus, panini sandwiches to the menu in the General Education Building, reflect an ongoing commitment to expand dining options for UTHSC students, faculty and staff.

College of Dentistry Hosts Symposium

Last fall, the College of Dentistry hosted the 20th annual Hinman Student Research Symposium. The meeting, held Oct. 31-Nov. 2 at the Peabody Hotel, featured the largest number of dental schools ever at the Hinman Student Research Symposium – 88 students from 47 dental schools from across the United States and Canada.

The symposium was sponsored by the UTHSC College of Dentistry and co-sponsored by the Hinman Dental Society, which also holds one of the nation’s largest continuing dental education meetings each March in Atlanta.

The symposium was also supported in part by grants from the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), the ADEAGies Foundation, the Procter & Gamble Company, the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry Alumni Association, the Tennessee Dental Association Foundation, and the Colgate-Palmolive Company.

Dr. Patrick H. Yancey III, president of the Hinman Dental Society, welcomed the participants, praised the symposium organizers and the student participants, and presented an overview of the upcoming Hinman Meeting to be held in Atlanta March 26-28.

Dr. Lawrence A. Tabak, principal deputy director and senior investigator of the National Institutes of Health and former director of the NIDCR, spoke on “The Top 10 Things I Have Learned.” These included insights on working with others, benefiting from the mentor relationship, and being guided by one’s data even when the results conflict with one’s understanding of how things work.

Adiha Khan, D2, received Most Outstanding Presentation in Basic Research at the Hinman Student Research Symposium.
Welch Allyn, Inc. Acquires Company Founded by Dr. Chaum

Welch Allyn, Inc. has announced the acquisition of Hubble Telemedical, Inc., a privately held health care company founded by UT Health Science Center researcher Edward Chaum, PhD, and Oak Ridge National Laboratory researcher Kenneth Tobin, who developed a way to provide remote diabetic retinopathy screening and analysis in primary care doctors' offices and other more convenient settings.

Dr. Chaum, Plough Foundation Professor of Retinal Diseases and the acting director of research for the UTHSC Hamilton Eye Institute, worked with Dr. Tobin, director and a corporate research fellow of the Electrical and Electronics Systems Research Division at ORNL, on the technology to help save the sight of diabetic patients, particularly those with low incomes and a lack of access to regular vision screenings. Hubble Telemedical, Inc., offers real-time screening and diagnosis services for diabetic retinopathy, the most common diabetic eye disease and a leading cause of blindness.

This technology was developed at UTHSC and ORNL using federal and private grant funding and was commercially licensed to Hubble by UT-Battelle and the University of Tennessee Research Foundation. Hubble's Telemedical Retinal Image Analysis and Diagnosis (TRIAD) technology, a web-based telemedical platform, achieves real-time diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy and other retinal diseases over the Internet by using retina cameras to capture and securely transmit patient images for remote, expert physician diagnosis and validation.

Through the company's TRIAD network, its remote retinal specialists provide same day diagnosis, disease severity level information, and a patient management plan to a primary care or other end-user site, establishing a new remote diagnostic model for managing diabetic retinal diseases. It also provides its diabetic retinal disease screening services to health care plans to help them improve Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set compliance levels and achieve 5-STAR status. Hubble Telemedical, Inc., was incorporated in 2011 and has its office in Knoxville.

"Hubble Telemedical started ten years ago as a concept and has always been about changing the health care paradigm and the way we screen for diabetic eye disease – to make it accessible, efficient, and effective in reducing vision loss and blindness. Being part of a world-class health care company like Welch Allyn now creates an opportunity to scale Hubble into an innovative national enterprise to achieve these goals," Chaum said.

UTRF helps inventors at UT turn their ideas and discoveries into products and services that benefit society. In addition to supporting the university research enterprise and commercializing the resulting inventions, UTRF also supports entrepreneurship as well as state and regional economic development efforts. UTRF serves all seven of the UT campuses and institutes across the state. For more information, visit http://utrf.tennessee.edu.

Dr. Edward Chaum

Audiology Researchers Receive Grant

UTHSC researchers Ilsa Schwarz, PhD, CCC-SLP, FASHA, professor emeritus, and Jillian McCarthy-Maeder, PhD, CCC-SLP, assistant professor in the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, received a grant totaling $1,002,883 from the Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The funds will support the training of master's-level students in an area of high national need – literacy and language outcomes.

The award will be used to support a project titled, "Preparing Speech-Language Pathologists to Improve Literacy and Language Outcomes for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing," and will be distributed over five years.

This award will finance the preparation of 32 graduate students with three semesters each of tuition remission and stipend support. Upon completion, the students will graduate with specialty training to improve the language and literacy outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The specialty preparation will include courses on the topics of language, literacy, aural habilitation and deaf education; and four semesters of practicum in settings with children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

All of the trainees will also prepare a capstone research project about the language and literacy development of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Additionally, trainees will complete the disciplinary requirements for state licensure and the prerequisites for starting the clinical fellowship year required for certification by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Nine students began the program in January.

"The funds from this grant will help to recruit some of the best students in the country to our program and make a significant difference in improving the outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing," said Dr. Schwarz.

The mission of the Department of Education is to promote student accomplishments and ensure academic excellence and alignment with global competitors. For more information, visit www.ed.gov.

Dr. Miranda-Carboni Studies Breast Cancer, Implications for African-Americans

Gustavo Miranda-Carboni, PhD, assistant professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology at UTHSC, has received a grant totaling $158,232 from the National Cancer Institute, a subsidiary of the National Institutes of Health, to study triple negative breast cancer (TNBC). The award will be used to support a project titled, "The Role of WNT10B and HMGA2 in Lung Metastasis in Triple Negative Breast Cancer." It will be distributed over one year.

Breast cancer kills more than 45,000 women per year from metastasis to the brain, bones, liver and lungs. Approximately 15 to 20 percent of breast carcinomas are classified as "triple receptor negative." These subtypes have the worst survival outcome. The major risk factors for TNBC include high body mass index, young age at breast cancer diagnosis (33-45 years old), young age of menarche (first menstrual period), lack of breastfeeding and African-American ethnicity.

Despite sensitivity to chemotherapy, TNBC has a propensity to metastasize, mainly to the brain and lungs. Unlike other subtypes of breast cancer, there is no targeted therapy for TNBC.

The long-term goal of Dr. Miranda-Carboni and his research team is to develop targeted therapeutics to treat or prevent lung metastasis for TNBC patients.

"The resources for African-American women afflicted with TNBC are not very plentiful due to a significant lack of medical care access," Dr. Miranda-Carboni said.

"It is our hope that in collaboration with West Cancer Center and Regional One Health, we can develop a treatment against TNBC metastasis in African-American women at high risk for the disease."
Christopher Waters, PhD, professor and vice chair in the Department of Physiology at UTHSC, has been named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). He will be inducted on March 20 during the organization’s fourth annual conference at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

The honor is given to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating inventions that have made a tangible impact on the quality of life, economic development or the welfare of society. Those elected to the rank of NAI Fellow are named inventors on U.S. patents and are nominated by their peers.

“It’s a very humbling experience,” Dr. Miller said. “I never thought I’d be in the Academy.”

Dr. Miller, who was nominated by the UT Research Foundation, has collaborated on a number of successful research efforts since he joined the UTHSC faculty in 1992. They have resulted in patents for Selective Androgen Receptor Modulators (SARMs) for treating some cancers; radiation mitigators now under development; and tubulin inhibitors or targeted therapies for resistant cancers. Dr. Miller estimates that he and his collaborators have roughly 400 patents or patents pending for synthetic medicinal structures to attack diseases.

Dr. Miller originally wanted to be a sports coach, but was inspired to become a pharmacist after a hometown pharmacist helped when his father was diagnosed with emphysema. A semester of work in a lab during pharmacy school at the University of Kansas cemented his career choice.

“Once I got into the lab, it got me thinking in a totally different way,” Dr. Miller said. “I started thinking about how to design drugs.”

“We’re trying to design drugs for the future,” Dr. Miller said. “That’s what’s exciting to me.”

The 414 NAI Fellows represent more than 150 prestigious research universities and governmental and nonprofit research institutions. Included among NAI Fellows are 61 presidents and senior leaders of research universities and nonprofit research institutes, 208 members of other national academies, 21 inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame, 16 recipients of the U.S. National Medal of Technology and Innovation, 10 recipients of the U.S. National Medal of Science and 21 Nobel Laureates.

MARCH 2015

Christopher Waters Studies Severe Lung Injury

Dr. Duane Miller Honored for Being an Inventor

Duane Miller, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the UTHSC College of Pharmacy, has been named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors (NAI). He will be inducted on March 20 during the organization’s fourth annual conference at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

The honor is given to academic inventors who have demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating inventions that have made a tangible impact on the quality of life, economic development or the welfare of society. Those elected to the rank of NAI Fellow are named inventors on U.S. patents and are nominated by their peers.

“It’s a very humbling experience,” Dr. Miller said. “I never thought I’d be in the Academy.”

Dr. Miller, who was nominated by the UT Research Foundation, has collaborated on a number of successful research efforts since he joined the UTHSC faculty in 1992. They have resulted in patents for Selective Androgen Receptor Modulators (SARMs) for treating some cancers; radiation mitigators now under development; and tubulin inhibitors or targeted therapies for resistant cancers. Dr. Miller estimates that he and his collaborators have roughly 400 patents or patents pending for synthetic medicinal structures to attack diseases.

Dr. Miller originally wanted to be a sports coach, but was inspired to become a pharmacist after a hometown pharmacist helped when his father was diagnosed with emphysema. A semester of work in a lab during pharmacy school at the University of Kansas cemented his career choice.

“Once I got into the lab, it got me thinking in a totally different way,” Dr. Miller said. “I started thinking about how to design drugs.”

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Dr. Ostrom Receives Grant to Study COPD

Rennolds Ostrom, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Pharmacology, UTHSC College of Medicine, has received a grant totaling $1,136,476 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, a subsidiary of the National Institutes of Health. The award will be used to support a project titled, “Molecular Signal Transduction of cAMP Compartments,” and will be distributed over four years.

Currently, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are treated with drugs that relax airways. These drugs stimulate receptors by using the intracellular messenger, cAMP, which regulates contraction, metabolism, survival, growth, division and many other functions of all cells in the body. This messenger is utilized by a vast array of hormones, neurotransmitters and other signals to alter cell function. Research in Dr. Ostrom’s lab focuses on understanding how this chemical messenger can carry different information based on where in the cell the signal is generated. The research team has found that cAMP can be produced in different locations inside cells and that different hormones can stimulate cAMP signals in some of these locations but not others.

The researchers are also interested in knowing what elements are present inside cells to create these cAMP “compartments” and how these different locations regulate various cell functions. If these elements can be better manipulated to control how the cell responds to a given signal, new drugs can be developed that are safer and more effective for treating asthma and COPD.

“We are grateful to the National Institutes of Health, specifically the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, for funding our efforts to understand cAMP signaling compartmentalization,” said Dr. Ostrom. “This is a fundamental biological process that is likely important in all cells. We believe our efforts can eventually improve not just the treatment of asthma and COPD but also many other diseases, including cardiovascular, renal and neurological disorders.”
New Discovery to Treat Radiation Sickness

Dr. Subhash Chauhan

Subhash Chauhan, PhD, a professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the College of Pharmacy at UTHSC, has received a three-year grant totaling $562,500 from the Department of Defense (DOD) to research new therapies for advanced-stage prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and the second-leading cause of cancer death in men in the United States, Dr. Chauhan said.

The American Cancer Society estimated earlier this year that roughly 233,000 men in the United States would be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 29,480 would die from it. African-American men experience 2.5 times greater risk of prostate cancer death compared to Caucasian men.

“We don’t have any effective therapies for metastatic prostate cancer,” Dr. Chauhan said. “Presently, chemotherapy is used to treat advanced-stage prostate cancer, but results are limited. More needs to be known about the molecular activity of this disease in order to develop new and effective treatments.”

Dr. Chauhan, Meena Jagg, PhD, associate professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and other members of their team will investigate whether or not an estrogen receptor that triggers cell death can be blocked by a new drug candidate that shows promise for use in treating victims of acute radiation sickness from nuclear disasters like the ones at the Fukushima (Japan, 2011) and Chernobyl (Soviet Union, 1986) nuclear power plants. It may also be useful in treating injuries suffered by cancer patients from radiation therapy.

“DBIBB, the latest and most potent radiation mitigating drug candidate developed by Dr. Tigyi and his team, has been found to protect mouse embryonic cells and human cord blood-derived, blood-forming stem cells from cell death induced by radiation. It has also been shown to increase survival of mice, even when the drug is started up to 72 hours after radiation exposure. Radiation protectors now on the market must be administered before exposure.

Dr. Chauhan said. To see Dr. Chauhan talking about his research, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKjSSfM2w&feature=youtu.be.

There currently is no antidote for radiation injury. But Gabor Tigyi, MD, PhD, a professor and chair of the Department of Physiology at UTHSC, has his team have spent more than 15 years working on one.

Dr. Tigyi’s research team has developed a drug candidate that shows promise for use in treating victims of acute radiation sickness from nuclear disasters like the ones at the Fukushima (Japan, 2011) and Chernobyl (Soviet Union, 1986) nuclear power plants. It may also be useful in treating injuries suffered by cancer patients from radiation therapy.

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Dr. Tigyi said. He also said the drug could be useful in protecting astronauts during space travel.

Dr. Chauhan Studies Drug for Use Against Cancer
Dr. Brown Visits Hong Kong
Dr. Ken Brown, UTHSC executive vice chancellor and chief operations officer, visited Hong Kong in January to address members of the Business Advisory Council of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, which represents 21 of the world’s leading economies. His topic was global pharmaceutical supply chain security. Dr. Brown is active in international efforts to develop tighter restrictions on pharmaceutical manufacture and distribution. In January, he hosted a meeting of global pharmaceutical industry representatives on the UTHSC campus to discuss this.

Dr. Brown to Make Presentation to American Medical Colleges
Ken Brown, JD, MPA, PhD, FACHE, submitted two proposals for a presentation at the spring meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). They were “Space Master Planning for Faculty Success in a Constrained Resource Climate” and “Moving From an Incidental Campus to an Intentional Campus for UTHSC.”

Shaquita Starks Receives Award
Shaquita Starks, MSN, FNP-BC, PhD candidate at UTHSC, is the recipient of the Minority Fellowship Program Award funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. As a result, Starks will receive more than $30,000 towards her tuition, a stipend, and other behavioral health training and learning experiences.

Shaquita Starks Receives Award
Dr. Shaquita Starks

Dean Chisholm-Burns Addresses Health Disparities
Dr. Marie Chisholm-Burns, dean of the College of Pharmacy at UTHSC, gave the keynote address at the 2015 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Symposium 25th Annual Health Sciences Program at the University of Michigan on Jan. 19. Her topic was “Unity not Uniformity: A Spotlight on Health Disparities.” Her remarks may be viewed at http://bit.ly/1z2DHuH. She also enjoyed the opportunity to talk to students from some of the health sciences schools and colleges there during an informal dinner the night before.

Dr. Jeffrey Towbin
Jeffrey A. Towbin, MD, has been named co-director of the Heart Institute at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital, chief of Cardiology at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and chief of Pediatric Cardiology at UTHSC. He will also be the vice chair for Strategic Advancement and will hold the St. Jude Chair of Pediatric Cardiology at Le Bonheur Children’s.

Dr. Brown Visits Hong Kong
Dr. Ken Brown

Dr. Shaquita Starks

Dr. Jeffrey Towbin

Dr. Ken Brown

Dr. Shaquita Starks

A certified family nurse practitioner, Starks’ research focuses on determining what affects the quality of life for African-American women caring for patients with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). This will include examining the mood profile of study participants, reported substance use, prevalence of historical depression, anxiety, and physical symptoms of depression. Her long-term goal is to practice nursing and develop a program of research that will examine the connections between social influences and mental and physical health in ethnic minorities.

Dr. Ledoux Edits Book on Movement Disorders
Mark Ledoux, MD, PhD, is the editor of Movement Disorders, Second Edition. Dr. Ledoux is professor in the Department of Neurology and the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, Director of the Dystonia and Huntington Disease Clinics, and Director of Movement Disorders Research Laboratories. The text examines the important contributions and application of animal models to the understanding of human movement disorders, and serves as an essential resource for both clinicians interested in the science being generated with animal models and basic scientists studying the pathogenesis of particular disorders. A vital feature is an ancillary website with video clips of human disorders and their corresponding animal models.

Jeffrey A. Towbin, MD, Tapped as Pediatric Cardiology Chief
Jeffrey A. Towbin, MD, is considered an international leader in pediatric cardiology.

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Student Spotlight: Stefan Czestochowski

From music to medicine? The journey may be unusual, but it's the story of Stefan Czestochowski.

The only child of parents Debra and Joseph, Czestochowski was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, though his family relocated to Memphis soon after he was born. It was here Czestochowski discovered his love for both medicine and music.

“I had an interest in medicine going back to middle school, but I became deeply involved with music performance until I was about 26,” Czestochowski recalled.

He attended Lausanne Collegiate School in Memphis for middle and high school and went on to the University of Richmond for undergrad, where he double majored in music and philosophy.

Czestochowski then traveled to Chicago for graduate school where he received a master’s degree in jazz performance at DePaul University.

“From there I was able to tour and play music in Chicago, New York, Australia, Cuba and Japan, and was fortunate to record a number of albums ranging from jazz to rock to funk,” said Czestochowski. “I taught music for several years in Chicago while completing my course work for medical school at DePaul.”

In the midst of his endeavors, Czestochowski developed his passion for medicine again after having an opportunity to shadow a pediatrician at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. It was then that he decided to go to medical school.

“During my post-baccalaureate, I was able to participate in a global health brigade to Honduras,” Czestochowski reflected. “We spent a few weeks working with Honduran doctors in some of the rural areas around Tegucigalpa. Primarily we were translating and helping the doctors triage patients. This was a very important moment for me because not only did it help confirm my interest in the medical field but also peaked my interest in global health, which I have been pursuing ever since.”

Czestochowski settled on UTHSC for a multitude of reasons. “It was the best choice academically,” he said. “It offered a wide range of training possibilities for the clinical years. My family still resides in Memphis. Additionally, I had a wonderful interview experience here. It just felt like the place I needed to be.”

Once enrolled, Czestochowski wasted no time getting involved, becoming a board member of the Council for International and Area Outreach (CIAO) and participating in Clinica Esperanza as a translator.

Asked about the importance of involvement, Czestochowski said, “I feel that in the medical field – especially here at UT – students are able to effect change in so many areas, particularly in the volunteer activities available. We can have input into the curriculum. I know from my experience in CIAO that individual students have started volunteer groups that have blossomed into campus-wide opportunities. The number of student-run interest groups here at UT is impressive. Without student input and involvement, so many opportunities would not come to fruition or be available to the rest of the student body.”

Czestochowski traveled to San Miguel de Allende in Mexico between his first and second year of medical school to work with the Red Cross.

“I began volunteering at an interesting time in Chiapas, Mexico,” Czestochowski said. “In June 2013, Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto began introducing laws to restructure the educational and health systems of the country. If passed, they would further privatize the country’s health care industry, making health care less affordable to the average citizen. They would also introduce educational reform that would begin to dissolve the teachers unions, which have been very strong, and would increase emphasis on teacher evaluation, discipline, and control. The result was a nationwide protest at the end of July 2013.

“More than 100,000 teachers protested, expressing their fear that the new laws would be used to fire or otherwise discipline teachers and permit the state to hire new teachers with less seniority, earning lower salaries. As a result of the strike, schools were shut down and children were to stay at home.”

Shortly after that, Czestochowski began to teach English to those who were interested. He started with five students; he ended with 35.

It is difficult to measure all that I learned from this experience,” he said. “I have only begun to reflect on how this will affect my future, both as an individual and physician. A daily schedule, access to education, sound parent-child relationships, nutritious food, and a safe environment are all vital to a child’s mental and physical health. On one hand, this seems obvious, but working in a setting where these requirements are not met underscores the essential nature of these components. These are very important lessons, as they can be directly applied to patient populations in the United States. It will affect my education and practice for years to come.”

Owen Phillips, MD, associate dean of Student Affairs and professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the UTHSC College of Medicine, said of Czestochowski:

“Once in a while, a student comes along who is not only a great medical student and dedicated to becoming a good doctor but who also sees a bigger picture and makes a special effort to fulfill a certain need. This is Stefan.

“His experience created a desire to learn more about international efforts. He perfected his Spanish skills and sought to have a bigger role with the sponsoring organization. Stefan requested and was granted a year away between his second and third years of school to return to Mexico. This time he landed in a remote part of the country where he taught children on health, and local health care providers on topics of women’s health. During this time, he also completed a master’s degree in global health. This effort and time commitment, unusual for our medical students, is admirable on many levels and will hopefully serve as an example for future students. I believe we will be hearing more about Stefan as he follows a path in global health.”

When he is not involved in school-related activities, Czestochowski likes to play drums, travel, read and spend time with his girlfriend, Laura. The couple recently became engaged and will marry sometime next year. He considers this to be his biggest accomplishment to date.

For incoming medical students, Czestochowski’s advice is simple. “Take every opportunity you can to learn or do something new, whether it be medically related or not,” he said.

When asked about the future, Czestochowski stated that he hopes to find a good balance for all of his interests, both personal and professional.

“I would love to find the opportunity to practice medicine both in the U.S. and abroad,” he said. “Medicine is and always will be my priority, as well as finding time and a good location to keep me motivated musically.”