As part of the Fiscal Year 2005 Omnibus Spending Bill, Congress awarded direct appropriations of $500,000 to benefit the University of Tennessee Cancer Institute (UTCI) and $750,000 to benefit UTHSC’s participation in the Delta Health Partnership.

The $500,000 appropriation will expedite UTCI’s long term goal of being a National Cancer Institute designated cancer center. Senators Bill Frist (R-TN) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) supported UTCI’s request for funding to increase its research efforts. The mission of UTCI is to create a world-class, statewide cancer institute serving Tennesseans and dedicated to public education, prevention, early detection, research, and treatment of cancer with convenient access, superb facilities and a comprehensive platform for new discovery and education.

“This funding will help ensure that UTCI has the resources necessary to continue its development into a world-class cancer institute,” said Senator Frist. “UTCI directly impacts the quality of cancer care for Tennesseans statewide, and I’m thrilled about our continuing investment in UTCI’s research efforts.”

The Delta Health Partnership is a multi-state consortium including UTHSC and the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMC), with the mission of improving healthcare in the Mississippi Delta. The $750,000 will fund activities to provide a sustainable, evidence-based model for regional diabetes care that will significantly reduce diabetes complications and costs, improve diabetes outcomes and quality of care, and provide a realistic basis for prevention of diabetes and obesity in the region. The system will provide diabetes disease management, patient education, provider education, prevention programs, screening programs, and address access to care. UTHSC will primarily be involved through its telehealth services, which will expand access to care throughout the Mississippi Delta region. Senators Frist, Alexander and Thad Cochran (R-MS) supported UTHSC’s request for program funding.

“I am pleased that Congress voted to invest in this partnership that is committed to improving healthcare in the Delta region,” said Senator Alexander.

“We look forward to the great strides that UTHSC will make through the Delta Health Partnership and UTCI toward improving healthcare in our region,” said UTHSC Chancellor Bill Rice. “These appropriations show the dedication of our government to the continued growth of our healthcare community and our university.”

The BioImaging Symposium 2004, sponsored by UTHSC, the Memphis BioTech Foundation and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, was held on Nov. 5. It included 12 distinguished scientific lecturers and clinical panelists from the U.S. and Canada and featured lectures on the technologies, clinical impact, recent developments and future expectations of six fields of bioimaging. Attendees included 170 people from across North America.

Frank DiBianca, PhD, dean of the College of Health Science Engineering and symposium chair, said “The success of this initial symposium resulted from the support of many people from the three host institutions and our twelve industrial, institutional and foundation sponsors.”
The Children’s Foundation Research Center (CFRC) of Memphis at UT has been awarded a $50,000 grant by the Aetna Foundation to support cultural competency training to healthcare teams in West Tennessee. This Regional Community Health Grant is designed to reduce health disparities by enhancing communication and promoting understanding of Hispanic culture.

Titled Salud para Todos (translated, “health for all”), the project will provide cultural sensitivity education via interactive workshops led by Espi Ralston and Martha Kantor of the CFRC. Three broad groups affiliated with healthcare will be targeted throughout Shelby, Fayette, Hardeman and Tipton counties: the multidisciplinary team of healthcare providers; hospital associates; and students in health professions.

“We are particularly excited about involving professionals early in their careers, as students entering healthcare fields,” said Dr. Marian Levy, CFRC’s associate director of health promotion and grants and UT assistant professor. “In January, we will offer a five-part series of cultural competency programs to students enrolled in the colleges of medicine, nursing, allied health, pharmacy, and dentistry at the UT Health Science Center.”

According to Dr. Dennis Black, scientific director of the CFRC and UT professor, “Our ultimate goal is to improve health services and facilitate access to care. We are extremely grateful to the Aetna Foundation for their support and commitment to addressing health disparities.”

The Children’s Foundation Research Center of Memphis is committed to the enhancement of education, clinical care and scientific advances in pediatric medicine.

Aetna and The Aetna Foundation are focused on building healthy communities by reducing the gap in healthcare among racial and ethnic populations. In 2004, they were ranked 28th nationally by Business Ethics magazine in its 100 “Best Corporate Citizens” ranking. As one of the nation’s leading providers of health care, dental, pharmacy, group life, disability and long-term care benefits, Aetna puts information and helpful resources to work for its approximately 13.6 million medical members, 11.6 million dental members, 8.3 million pharmacy members and 13.3 million group insurance members to help them make better informed decisions about their healthcare and protect their finances against health-related risks. Aetna provides easy access to cost-effective healthcare through a nationwide network of more than 646,000 healthcare professionals.
Haik Elected to Governing Board of Largest Organization of Surgeons

Barrett G. Haik, MD, FACS, Hamilton Professor in Ophthalmology and chair of the Department of Ophthalmology, was elected to the Board of Regents of the American College of Surgeons (ACS). This is the governing board for the world’s largest organization of surgeons, and he will initially serve a three-year term.

A Fellow since 1984, Dr. Haik has served as the American Ophthalmological Association’s representative to the ACS Board of Governors since 2000. He also served the ACS as chair of the Advisory Council for Ophthalmic Surgery (2002-2004) and as a member of the Forum on Fundamental Surgical Problems (1999-2004).

Professionally, Dr. Haik is a member of the National Advisory Eye Council and serves on the Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology. He is a member of the New York Academy of Medicine and the American Ophthalmological Society, as well as a diplomate of the American Board of Ophthalmology.

As chair of the UT Department of Ophthalmology, Dr. Haik heads up the Hamilton Eye Institute, the only university eye center providing an advanced level of vision care within a 200-mile radius of Memphis and ranked ninth nationally for clinical care.

Dean of the UT College of Medicine, Henry G. Herrod, MD, commented, “A seat on the Board of Regents is a prestigious post. It is a highly visible national leadership position, and we are proud to have someone of Dr. Haik’s caliber on faculty.”

Founded in 1913, the American College of Surgeons is a scientific and educational organization dedicated to the ethical and competent practice of surgery. Its achievements have significantly influenced the course of scientific surgery in America and have established it as an important advocate for all surgical patients.

Chesney Receives Pediatrician Award

Russell Chesney, MD, the Le Bonheur Chair of Excellence in Pediatrics, was recently honored as Pediatrician of the Year at the annual awards luncheon of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Each year the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (TNAAP) selects one pediatrician, whose dedication to the health and welfare of Tennessee children is worthy of the chapter’s highest honor. Dr. Chesney has served as the chair of Pediatrics at UTHSC since 1988 and is a nationally respected pediatrician and researcher.

Dr. Chesney is a diplomate and member of the American Board of Pediatrics and has served as president of the American Pediatric Society and the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs. Over time, Dr. Chesney has also served as president of the Society for Pediatric Research, the American Pediatric Society, the Midwest Society for Pediatric Research, the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology, and the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He has served on many editorial boards and currently serves as editor of Pediatric Nephrology and consulting editor of Pediatrics. He has published over 300 original peer-reviewed articles and 190 chapters.

On Memorium

The UTHSC community extends condolences to:

The friends and family of Larry Shook, DDS, assistant professor in the College of Dentistry, who died on Nov. 7.
UTNAA Accepting Nominations for Public Service Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2004 University of Tennessee National Alumni Association Public Service Award. The Award recognizes a full-time faculty or professional-exempt staff member who has made significant contributions to the university’s public service role. It includes a $2,000 stipend.

Submission Deadline
January 30, 2005

Nominations should be made to:
UT Office of Alumni Affairs
520 Hyman or
bmcadams@utmem.edu

For more information contact:
Barbara McAdams
448-5516

Deans and the chancellor are not eligible.

UTHSC’s Outreach Center to Develop National Database on Health Disparities

With support from the National Library of Medicine, the Outreach Center at UTHSC has started a collaborative project to develop a national, interactive database on health disparities.

Health disparities represent the disproportionate impact of severe health problems on certain racial and ethnic populations, rural communities, people of low socioeconomic status, and other medically underserved populations.

According to Karen Fox, PhD, Outreach Center director, “These disparities are having a catastrophic effect on our nation’s ability to meet healthcare needs and contain escalating expenses. Since the causes of health disparities are complex, it is important for researchers to understand the root causes and how the variables interact. Our aim in developing this database is to make the information more easily accessible so potential solutions can be explored as quickly as possible to improve health outcomes.”

The database is being developed by interfacing independent electronic databases and establishing an intellectual network. Using a computerized topographic map as its base, the system will employ Geographic Information Systems to overlay and integrate graphics and text from separate databases. Dr. Fox commented, “By graphically displaying different types of information in a particular region, researchers will be able to better understand the relationships between environmental exposures and health outcomes.”

Environmental determinants, which will be broadly examined, will include mortality and morbidity rates, healthcare utilization, quality-of-care measures, health behaviors, healthcare resources (supply, organization and financing), and environmental variables that impact health status or access. The database will serve as a customized and reliable tool to support decision making, problem solving and policy development aimed at reducing health disparities. It will be available through the UTHSC website.

Established in September 2004, The Outreach Center at UTHSC is aimed at maximizing the use of innovative technologies to meet the healthcare needs of Mid-Southerners.

Andrew H. Kang, MD, Goodman Professor of Medicine and former chair of the Department of Medicine, was recently honored with a portrait that will be hung in the Coleman building.

Looking for Holiday Gifts for a Big Orange Fan?

UT Gift Shop

Now Open in the Lobby of the Plaza Buildings

Featuring food items, gifts and apparel
**Holiday Safety Tips from Campus Police**

- Avoid driving alone at night.
- Keep all car doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm or use an anti-theft device.
- If you must stop at night, park in a well-lit area.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells or cars with tinted windows.
- Park as close as you can to your destination and take notice of where you parked.
- Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.
- Do not leave packages or valuables on the seat of your car. This creates temptation for thieves. If you must leave something in your car, lock it in the trunk or put it out of sight.
- Be sure to locate your keys before going to your car.
- Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door. Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion.
- When approaching and leaving your vehicle, be aware of your surroundings. Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.

- Ask mall or store security for an escort if you see suspicious activity.
- Even though you may be in a rush and thinking about many things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Keep cash in your front pocket.
- Keep a record of all your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are prime targets for criminals in crowded areas. Beware of strangers approaching you. Criminals have various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.

**Graduation Set for December 3**

UTHSC will hold graduation ceremonies at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, December 3 in the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts at the Cook Convention Center.

The university will graduate 107 students from the Colleges of Allied Health Sciences, Graduate Health Sciences, Medicine and Nursing.

Richard Peppler, PhD, dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences, will deliver the charge to the graduates. Dr. Peppler has been a member of the UTHSC faculty since 1985 and was awarded the Outstanding Teacher Award by the UT National Alumni Association in 1994. As dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences, he is responsible for seven graduate programs with more than 340 students and 350 faculty members. He is also the associate dean for academic and faculty affairs in the College of Medicine. In addition to his administrative duties, Dr. Peppler also serves as a professor of anatomy and neurobiology. In 1999, Dr. Peppler retired from the U.S. Army Reserve with the rank of colonel after 35 years of service.

*Serguei Tcheranov, MD, PhD, left, and Chunying Li, MS, right, were the winners of the Leonard Share Young Investigator Award at the Annual Hypertension Research Day. They are pictured with Leonard Share, PhD.*
1. "Restless Leg Syndrome"
   *Dr. Mark S. LeDoux*
   8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium
   More info: bedman@utmem.edu

2. "Calcium Signalling in Arterial Smooth Muscle"
   *Dr. Serguei Tcheranov*
   3:30 p.m., 516 Nash
   mlester@physio1.utmem.edu
   
   TITAN: “Tennessee Emergency Management Agency: Roles and Functions”
   TBA
   11:30 a.m., GEB A304
   More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu

6. "Insights into Plasmodium Falciparum Protein Trafficking: Signals and Routes"
   *Dr. Carlos L. Estrano*
   4 p.m., Link Auditorium
   More info: mradic@utmem.edu

7. "Endogenous Nicotinic Cholinergic Activity Regulates Dopamine Release in the Striatum"
   *Dr. Fu-Ming Zhou*
   Noon, Link Auditorium
   More info: bjsmith@utmem.edu

13. "Keeping The Barbarians At The Gate: A Strategy for Persistent Viral Infections"
    *Dr. Curtis Brandt*
    4 p.m., Link Auditorium
    More info: mradic@utmem.edu

14. "Synaptic Integration in Globus Pallidus Neurons with Dendritic Spike Initiation"
    *Dr. Dieter Jaeger*
    Noon, Link Auditorium
    More info: bjsmith@utmem.edu

15. "Sudden Death in Athletes"
    *Dr. Suresh Kari*
    8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium
    More info: bedman@utmem.edu

16. "Structure-activity Relationship of LPA"
    *Dr. Yuko Fujiwara*
    3:30 p.m., 516 Nash
    mlester@physio1.utmem.edu

21. Annual Campus Holiday Celebration
    2 - 4 p.m., Student Alumni Center
    Refreshments, door prizes and holiday music. Drawings for prizes will be held at 2:45 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.
    More info: 448-4796