In continuous operation for 41 years, UTHSC’s General Clinical Research Center has a new state-of-the-art facility — the opening of which was celebrated last month.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on Tuesday, July 12, and on the following day an open house allowed all faculty and staff to tour the new facility.

The GCRC was located at the William F. Bowld Hospital until January of this year when it opened at Methodist University Hospital.

In 1959, Congress directed the National Institutes of Health to establish clinical research centers to support the research of human diseases.

UTHSC was one of the first universities to be awarded an NIH grant to establish a center. With the help of volunteer participants, academic researchers strive to find answers to complex health questions by taking basic science into the realm of human subjects research. The UTHSC is committed to providing research support to established academic researchers as well as new investigators.

New Course Designed to Break Barriers

By Megan Hefner
Communications Intern

Young healthcare professionals often run into barriers when communicating with people from other disciplines. But, that will soon change for graduates of UTHSC as students from various colleges will be required to take an interprofessional health practice course.

Beginning this month, students from the Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, Social Work and Allied Health will be pulled together from these different disciplines to form small groups of 12 to 15 people and then into even smaller groups of three.

The course is designed to teach students the different aspects of healthcare as they solve problems and do projects together. The anticipated result is that this teamwork will show what each professional can bring to the group, thus creating a better appreciation for them.

The interprofessional course will be taught by Kim Jones-Rudolph, DMD, who is course director. She gained experience in a similar course at the University of Florida. Though in its infancy at UTHSC, Dr. Jones-Rudolph hopes that it will become a strong outreach program in the future.

She commented, “This course will give UTHSC students an advantage as it emphasizes the long-term benefit of effective communication, which will help break barriers and lead to better practice and patient care.”

With more than 500 UTHSC students enrolled this fall, Dr. Jones-Rudolph is hopeful they will embrace this opportunity to gain interaction skills that will create future success.
An important component of the UT Health Science Center (UTHSC) achieving a greater level of excellence is for our contributions to be better recognized within the UT system and throughout the city, state and region.

During my assessment of UTHSC, campus leaders uniformly expressed concerns that the health science center (HSC) has had a history of limited exposure, which has contributed to lost opportunities. Similar opinions were shared by many of our external partners and advocates. Moreover, many felt that we could better identify and manage risks, capture opportunities and evaluate new initiatives by using specialized expertise available to us outside our campus.

Towards acting on these insights, we are starting a new high level advisory committee, titled the Chancellor’s Board of Trustees Advisory Committee.

The committee has been deliberately populated with five members of the UT Board of Trustees as well as individuals with diverse professional and life accomplishments that align with our operational needs and ambition.

Members include UT Trustees Johnnie Amonette (chairperson), Rhynette Hurd, Karl Schledwitz, Jim Murphy and Don Stansberry. The geographic dispersion offered by this group from across Tennessee was deliberate.

In addition to some of our trustees, members include John Pontius (president of Pittco), Steve Reynolds (chief executive officer, Baptist Memorial Health Care), Gary Shorb (chief executive officer, Methodist Healthcare), Steve Bares (president and executive director, Memphis Bioworks Foundation), Rob Carter (executive vice president and chief information officer, FedEx Corporation) and Robert Waller (president emeritus of the Mayo Foundation and past chairman of the University Medical Center Alliance).

The president of UTHSC’s Student Government Association Executive Council, Kirk Hevener, as well as K.U. Malik, immediate past president of the Faculty Senate, will also be charter members.

Looking to bolster our resources in a few critical areas for greater success, I consciously identified leaders from business, healthcare and legal vocations. The domain knowledge of this group is enormous, and they all have enthusiastically embraced their role as a partner through our advisory committee.

The committee will convene two to four times a year to offer input and advice on issues facing the health science center.

Although this advisory committee is not empowered as a decision-making body like the Board of Trustees, it will serve as a sounding board to identify opportunities that the health science center should undertake to achieve its goal of excellence through focus, discipline, entrepreneurship and collective and coordinated actions — but doing so in a risk-controlled manner.

Committee meetings will be held both on and off campus, with the first gathering being in late fall. The first meeting is timed to allow the committee’s review and input to what will be our newly developed health center-wide strategy.

This is not only an extraordinarily accomplished group from whom to get feedback, but I envision that they will extract an in-depth awareness of the health science center’s achievements.

My hope is that such knowledge will trigger even greater advocacy for our initiatives from these state and national opinion leaders. Just as increased exposure and transparency will benefit us within our organization, I am confident of our enjoying complimentary advantages externally.

The contributions and accomplishments of the UT Health Science Center will be highlighted across the state as this Chancellor’s Board of Trustees Advisory Committee breaks new ground with us.
People

Leonard Johnson, PhD, the Thomas A. Gerwin Professor and chair of the Department of Physiology, was recently awarded a prestigious National Institutes of Health (NIH) MERIT award. The five-year grant for a total of $2,368,450 is unique because it allows the researcher to easily re-apply for a five-year extension, effectively making it a ten-year award.

Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) has awarded a $110,000 grant to the Department of Ophthalmology to support research into the causes, treatment and prevention of blinding diseases. The research will be directed by Barrett G. Haik, MD, UTHSC Hamilton Professor and chair of the ophthalmology department.

Vickie Baselski, PhD, professor in the Department of Pathology, participated with staff from the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) in the Clinical Laboratory Coalition’s Capitol Hill “Fly-In Day” on June 14. As a committee member, Dr. Baselski discussed laboratory reimbursement issues and workforce shortage matters with representatives of Congress.

In another ASM event, Dr. Baselski addressed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) at its public meeting on July 18 regarding payment for new laboratory tests which will be included in the 2006 Medicare Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule.

Dhanireddy

Ramasubbareddy Dhanireddy, MD, has been named neonatology division chief and the Sheldon B. Korones Professor in Neonatology.

In that role, he will run a UT Medical Group practice unit and will become medical director of the Sheldon B. Korones Newborn Center at The MED. He will also have oversight of neonatal care at Le Bonheur Children’s Medical Center and the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Methodist South Hospital.

Dr. Dhanireddy plans to address the problem of high infant mortality in Memphis by increasing neonatal research conducted here.

Dr. Dhanireddy, a retired Colonel in the U.S. Air Force, completed his pediatric residency at Louisiana State University Medical Center’s Lafayette Charity Hospital, followed by a fellowship in neonatology from Georgetown University Medical Center, where he also served as a professor of pediatrics. He completed a fellowship in research with the National Institutes of Health.

Reaching Out to Serve

UTHSC continues to provide an arm of support to the community in various ways. The following is a highlight of some of its most recent efforts.

• “Tennessee Smiles: UT Grassroots Oral Health Outreach Initiative,” which is a program established by dentistry faculty, provided dental screenings at three events in July and is already scheduled to participate in two more.

On Saturday, Aug. 13, volunteers will attend a health fair sponsored by Highland Book Store at Highland Street Church of Christ from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on Saturday, Sept. 24, they will visit a health fair sponsored by Morning View Baptist Church.

• Dental Hygiene students in the College of Allied Health are undertaking an on-going program to provide on-site dental prevention, prophylaxis and fluoride for 1,200 Head Start students in Shelby County. The Aetna Foundation is providing funding for the program.

Art of the Motorcycle

Tickets on Sale

The Office of Equity and Diversity is selling tickets for the Art of the Motorcycle exhibit presented by Wonders of Memphis.

Vouchers are being sold in the 920 Madison building on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The price is $10 for adults and $4 for children.
By Megan Hefner
Communications Intern

Having those pearly whites polished by a professional can be as easy as walking to the 910 Madison Ave. Building where the College of Dentistry offers a full-service practice.

The University Dental Practice (UDP), which recently moved to its new home in Suite 608, offers all types of dental work.

Most importantly, services are provided by faculty members, specialists and general dentists. Services include, but are not limited to:

• Simple restorations (fillings)
• Implants, bridges, crowns and dentures
• Endodontics (root canal therapy)
• Periodontics (gum disease, implant placement and esthetic gum surgery)
• Sleep apnea and snoring treatments
• Oral surgery performed by general dentists
• Aesthetic dentistry including whitening or bleaching procedures
• Teeth cleaning - a licensed dental hygienist is available full time

Faculty will perform an appropriate examination for each patient and will talk with them about treatment needs and options. Most treatments can be performed at the location, but for services that are not offered, such as orthodontic and pediatric care, patients in need may be referred to the College of Dentistry’s graduate programs.

As of July 1, an Advanced Education in General Dentistry program is also housed at the UDP. For those patients who meet the program’s qualifications, services that are supervised by faculty members may be available at a reduced rate.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 448-6476.

---

By Laura Moore
Communications Intern

Plans are underway for the Eric Muirhead Hypertension Research Day (HRD) to be held at UTHSC in November — so save the date. On Wednesday, Nov. 2, from 8 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., the Hypertension Research Day will be presented in the North Auditorium of the Coleman Building.

The HRD started in 1987 as a symposium honoring Dr. E. Eric Muirhead to commemorate his numerous contributions to hypertension research and the medical community; now it has grown into an annual special event.

The HRD program provides frontline information in cardiovascular research, stimulates collaboration between laboratories at UTHSC and the institutions of the guest speakers and leads to new ideas for research, treatment and drug design.

This year, four outstanding speakers will present the cutting-edge clinical and basic science lectures. The HRD has been approved for continuing medical education credit and is open to all health science professionals and students.

For more information contact Easter Jenkins, in the Department of Physiology, at 448-7088 or ejenkins@physio1.utmem.edu.

Speakers & Topics

• 8 a.m. - “Hypertension and Kidney Disease Progression” - presented by George L. Bakris, MD, professor and vice chairman in the Department of Preventive Medicine and professor of medicine at the Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke’s Medical Center and at Rush Medical College in Chicago.

• 9 a.m. - “Arterial Blood Pressure Regulations and Hypertension: Physiological Mechanisms and Genetic Determinants” - presented by Allen W. Cowley, PhD, professor and chairman of the Department of Physiology at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, Wis.

• 10:15 a.m. - “The Pathogenesis of Hypertension: Roles of Oxidative Stress and Nitric Oxide Deficiency” - presented by Christopher Wilcox, MD, PhD, chief and professor of nephrology at Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Dr. Wilcox also is the director of the cardiovascular-kidney institutes and hypertension and renal disease research.

• 11:15 a.m. - “An ALLHAT Update: What has ALLHAT Taught us about the Management of Hypertension” - presented by William S. Cushman, MD, professor, Department of Medicine at UTHSC and chief of the VA Medical Center Hypertension Unit in Memphis.

---

Eighty-two students entered the newly minted undergraduate nursing program last month. Students filled the lobby of the 920 Madison Ave. Building to register for class on Monday, July 18.
The university will take reasonable steps to achieve compliance with the standards by using monitoring and auditing systems to detect criminal conduct by its employees and other agents. A reporting system (hotline and online complaint form) is available for employees to report criminal conduct by others without fear of retribution.

Standards must be enforced through appropriate disciplinary mechanisms including discipline of individuals responsible for the failure to detect an offense. Adequate discipline of individuals responsible for an offense is a necessary component of enforcement.

What happens when a regulation has been violated?

After an offense has been detected, the university must take all reasonable steps to respond appropriately to the offense and to prevent further similar offenses, including any modification to its program. It is the responsibility of management to embrace, endorse and promote the compliance program. Failure to adhere to the federal, state and local laws and regulations can expose the university to prosecution or administrative actions.

The federal government has continually made clear its intent to detect and prosecute healthcare fraud and abuse. Not knowing the rules is no excuse for failure to comply.

Causes of billing violations:
A major cause of billing compliance violations is healthcare fraud. It is a crime to knowingly and willfully scheme to defraud any healthcare benefit program, or to obtain money or property through false representations.

The False Claims Act imposes civil liability on any person or entity that submits a false claim for payment to the United States government. The university submits claims to the government by billing the Medicare, Medicaid and TennCare Programs. The government does not have to prove that an individual intended to defraud the government, but it has to provide evidence of careless and reckless disregard of the rules. This includes proving that:

• The individual had actual knowledge of the information.
• The individual acted in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the information.
• The individual acted in reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the information.
3  “Renal Dysfunction in Solid Organ Transplantation”  
Medicine Grand Rounds  
M. Francesca Egidi, MD  
8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: bedman@utmem.edu

4  ANGELS High Risk OB Conference: “Sickle Cell Disease”  
Curtis Lowery, MD, MFM  
7-8 a.m., Le Bonheur POB 2nd Floor Conference Room, Suite P210  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

5  “Disaster Preparedness for the Healthcare Provider”  
Speaker TBA  
2-3 p.m., GEB A304  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

5  “Avian Influenza: Implications for Agriculture and Public Health”  
Speaker TBA  
12-1:30 p.m., GEB A309  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

9  “Supporting Children in Times of Crisis”  
David C. Schonfeld, MD  
12-1:30 p.m., GEB A304  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

10 “Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency: An Under-Recognized, Underdiagnosed Cause of Obstructive Airway Disease”  
Medicine Grand Rounds  
H. Ari Jaffe, MD  
8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: bedman@utmem.edu

11 “Supersizing of America: The New Challenge of Obesity”  
Various Speakers  
1-2:30 p.m., GEB A304  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

17 “Colorectal Cancer Screening in 2005: Why, Who and How”  
Medicine Grand Rounds  
Christopher Marino, MD  
8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: bedman@utmem.edu

18 “Emergencies, Stress Management and Care for First Responders”  
Speaker TBA  
2-4 p.m., GEB A304  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

23 “Emerging Infections for the Healthcare Provider”  
Speaker TBA  
2-3 p.m., GEB A304  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

24 “Cardiovascular Manifestations of Thyroid Dysfunction”  
Medicine Grand Rounds  
Paul W. Ladenson, MD  
8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: bedman@utmem.edu

26 “TITAN- First Alert: Recognizing the Diseases of Bioterrorism”  
Robert Morrison, MD  
12-1 p.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: jtidwel8@utmem.edu or call 448-1474

31 “Cardiac Transplantation”  
Medicine Grand Rounds  
Kevin Newman, MD  
8 a.m., Coleman North Auditorium  
More info: bedman@utmem.edu