

UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER at Fort Worth

Legislature approves tuition revenue bonds; HSC to receive funds for capital improvements

The Texas Legislature sent a bill to the governor's desk May 15 authorizing the sale of tuition revenue bonds to finance capital improvements at institutions of higher education throughout the state.

The health science center's request for \$42 million for a public health and education building was on the list of 63 projects across the state that were included with the passage of House Bill 153.

The bill, originally approved by the House the week of May 8, allowed state colleges and universities to issue more than \$3.5 billion in tuition revenue bonds. The Senate cut the amount to \$1.8 billion worth of projects with its revision and approval May 14. The House approved the modified bill and sent it to the governor May 15.

"This gives us the needed funding to continue the momentum of our growth in education, research and patient care," said Ronald Blanck, DO, president of the health science center. "All of us at the health science center are grateful to our legislators for their recognition of our needs and our excellence."

During the 2005 regular legislative session, tuition revenue bond requests stalled. Higher education officials had hoped to revisit the bond requests in the special session scheduled this March and gain funding for capital projects throughout the state.

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst said passage of the bill during this special ses-



Funds from the approved bonds will be used for capital improvements, including the development of the property the health science center purchased after the closure of the Osteopathic Medical Center of Texas.

sion has "ensured that the future of higher education in Texas is bright and that we can prepare our future leaders."

Tuition revenue bonds are issued by institutions of higher education. Although they have been authorized, the bonds have not yet been funded. Funding will be discussed during the next regular session of the Legislature in January 2007.

The health science center requested the funding as part of the master planning process to integrate recently purchased land adjacent to the main campus.

The property, which had housed the Osteopathic Medical Center of Texas, was purchased in April 2005 by the health science center. A master

planning process began shortly after the purchase of the property to help determine best usage.

State Senator Jane Nelson was instrumental in securing approval for the measure and was especially supportive of the health science center.

"We have a unique opportunity to allow a land-locked university to expand and support additional students," Sen. Nelson said in a press release May 15. "This project will also help patients across Texas who are going to benefit as this center graduates more highly-skilled health care providers."

Sen. Nelson, chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services, represents District 12, which includes the health science center. ★

Nobel laureate discusses possibility of HIV vaccine

Why don't we have a vaccine against HIV or tuberculosis yet? Nobel Laureate Rolf Zinkernagel, MD, PhD, presented his answer to that question at a May 8 presentation at the health science center.

Dr. Zinkernagel shared the 1996 Nobel Prize in medicine with Peter Doherty, PhD, for their discoveries concerning the specificity of the cell-mediated immune defense.

As part of his answer, Dr. Zinkernagel presented a brief explanation of immunology and explained some of the research conducted in the field.

"Immunology has a mythological aspect to it," Dr. Zinkernagel said. "We so-called immunologists don't understand more than one-third of it."

How a virus infects a person and how it affects the human body matters in the spread of the disease, as well as in the ability to vaccinate for it, he said. Some viruses present resistance to vaccination because of variability in the virus, the distribution of the virus in the body's cells and how the body's natural immune system reacts to the virus, among other factors.

"You have to fight the variability, or mutability, of that virus," Dr. Zinkernagel said in reference to the

HIV virus. "This kind of RNA virus mutates all the time."

Despite advances in research and the development of medicine to fight the disease, "in HIV, you can never get rid of the virus completely," he said.

"To simply tell politicians a protective vaccine [for HIV] will be available soon does us a disservice," Dr. Zinkernagel said. "I think we should think about prevention — I think that's where we are for the moment. We have to work on alternatives. I think preventive education is important worldwide."

Drs. Zinkernagel and Doherty also won the Lasker Award in 1995. Both awards were given for research the duo conducted between 1973 and 1975 in



Rolf Zinkernagel, MD, PhD, discussed the problems involved in discovering cures for mutating viruses like HIV and stressed the importance of preventive education in fighting them.

Canberra, Australia, studying how mice respond to viruses.

Dr. Zinkernagel currently serves as head of the Institute of Experimental Immunology at the University of Zurich. He earned a medical degree from the University of Basel in Switzerland and a doctorate from Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. ★

Reminder of policy on use of bulk e-mail

Please note that the Daily News is now the official means of broadcasting information to the health science center campus community. To limit the amount of internal e-mail broadcasts, the "newsflash" feature of the Daily News should be reserved for urgent or emergency communications only.

Examples of an appropriate newsflash communication include announcements of a tornado warning or other weather emergency, information about a power failure or an announcement about changes to an event occurring that day that became available after midnight.

Examples of an inappropriate newsflash communication include announcements of a seminar, dissertation or other meeting; announcements about parties, births or status changes; and reminders of a meeting, event, vendor visit, etc. All of these types of things should be sub-

mitted to the Daily News and/or online calendar. Items may be submitted to run in the Daily News on multiple days leading up to an event or deadline.

Bulk e-mail (large groups such as faculty/staff or students) should no longer be used except when the nature of the message is of sufficient general value and interest that it would justify being sent as a memorandum but requires the immediacy of an e-mail (for example, an official communication from the president's office).

For more information about the Daily News, including directions for submitting and editing items, please visit the Daily News link on the Intranet home page (<http://intranet.hsc.unt.edu>) and select the "Daily News FAQ" link. Policies regarding e-mail and other information resources can be found at <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/policies/IRPolicies.cfm>. ★

DNA lab helps solve 22-year-old missing person case

Forensic analyst Melody Moore enters DNA profiles into the Texas Missing Persons DNA Database at the health science center every day, but once in a while, a profile is out of the ordinary.

One such profile was DNA from Beverly Charlton, the mother of a missing girl from Washington, whose DNA was uploaded into the TMPDD in March 2006. Moore said it gave her chills when she entered the information and it matched a sample in the database.

“There were only two other people here — it was about 6:30, and I was doing this one last thing before I went home,” Moore said. “I stuck [the profile] in the database and hit the search button, and it made a match.”

The profile Moore entered into TMPDD matched DNA from an unidentified bone found in Missoula, Mont., in 1984. The match identified the sample as Marcella Bachmann, who ran away from her home in Vancouver, Wash., when she was 16.

King County, Wash., Sheriff’s Office reports said she disappeared in 1984, and her body was discovered on Christmas Eve of that year. The report said she had been shot and buried in a shallow grave outside Missoula, Mont. Authorities in Missoula believe she may have been the victim of serial killer Wayne Nance.

The bone sample from Montana was received at the health science center in August 2004, and Lisa Sansom, forensic analyst at the health science center’s DNA lab, entered the profile.

“It was really kind of cool,” Moore said about discovering that the two samples matched. “It’s what we’re here for, and it’s so cool when the database works.”

Moore said it was her first “cold hit” — when remains and reference samples are submitted independently of each other without any investigative leads linking the reference samples to the remains.

The database is programmed to seek matches between DNA from

remains, such as Bachmann’s, and references, such as that from Bachmann’s mother.

After Moore discovered the match in April, further DNA samples from Bachmann’s brother in Missouri and her father in Oregon confirmed the identification.

Raphael Crenshaw, a detective with the King County Sheriff’s office, said this case would have been impossible to solve without the TMPDD. Not only did the TMPDD provide the tool to match DNA from Bachmann’s remains found in Montana to her mother’s DNA from Washington, but the service is free to law enforcement officials, which encourages agencies to take advantage of it.

“Montana wouldn’t have shipped [Bachmann’s] sample to Texas unless it was free, and we wouldn’t have shipped [Bachmann’s mother’s DNA] to you, except it was free,” Crenshaw said. “It was a perfect opportunity for us to eliminate [Bachmann] as a ‘Jane Doe.’ For us, it’s a good thing, because it shows the system works.”

“The bottom line is, without the availability of the national database administered by the FBI, there would have been no hope of identifying her,” said Arthur Eisenberg, PhD, director of the health science center’s DNA identity laboratory. “There is hope that families, some day, will get a sense of closure, and the hope is to identify who murdered this individual and prevent them from killing anyone else.

“Having families with missing loved ones provide reference samples helps us help them find the information they so desperately need,” he said.

Solving the Bachmann missing person case proved significant not just for the Texas Missing Persons DNA Database, but also for the national database and law enforcement as a whole, said George Adams, missing persons program coordinator at the health science center and a former Fort Worth police officer.

Law enforcement agencies in Washington, Montana, Missouri and Oregon worked together to collect DNA samples and submit them to the Texas Missing Persons DNA Database, which is part of the FBI’s national DNA database, demonstrating that the system is an effective tool that can successfully help solve cases in multiple jurisdictions and multiple states.

“The case is a watershed,” Adams said. Solving the Bachmann case proved that the system of DNA submission into a nationwide database can help solve cases, no matter how old the case or in what condition the remains are found, he said.

Adams likened an identification like Bachmann’s to an investigator switching on a light in a closed closet. The identification provides information that helps the family of the missing person and helps law enforcement officials pursue accountability in cases where a crime has been committed.

Adams also said the use of DNA matching, as in the Bachmann case, helps prevent assumptions, mistakes or oversights from affecting the investigative process.

To date, the database has helped identify the remains of about 60 people by matching their DNA to that of family members. The database has also produced five cold hits, similar to that made in Bachmann’s case.

The Texas Missing Persons DNA Database is part of the UNT System Center for Human Identification, which encompasses the DNA Identity Lab at the health science center where information is entered into the TMPDD, as well as the work of Harrell Gill-King, PhD, director of the UNT Laboratory of Forensic Anthropology and Human Identification at UNT Denton.

Dr. Gill-King works on a physical description of the unidentified person based on skeletal remains, while the DNA Identity Lab profiles the sample’s genetic material for comparison with other profiles in the database. ★

HSC annual Wellness Fair offers variety of information

A jar of brightly colored lollipops got a lot of attention at the Wellness Fair May 3, but the jar of brown muck at the same table kept it.

“That’s what’s in your lungs after smoking for a year,” explained Katherine Haxthausen, of the Tarrant Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, as she pointed to the jar filled with a thick, gooey liquid and a crumpled package of cigarettes.

Haxthausen staffed one of 30 vendor booths at the annual Wellness Fair hosted by the health science center for employees and students.

“I wish my daughter could see that,” said one woman, while another reached for a poster about the effects of drugs on teens and one of the lollipops, which were stamped with a “no smoking” symbol.

Haxthausen said people are often surprised by the information about smoking that she provides.

“It’s eye-opening to see what you’re doing to yourself,” she said. “People think, ‘OK, it’s just a cigarette,’ but one cigarette includes 300 chemicals, including arsenic and formaldehyde.”

About 350 people attended this year’s fair, which provided information not just about the negative effects of smoking, but also about wellness in all aspects of life.



About 350 people attended this year’s Wellness Fair, which provided information on a variety of health care topics.

The fair covered topics ranging from massages to mental health, providing information about nutrition, fire prevention, Alzheimer’s disease, weight loss and more. The Bayer booth gave away free electronic glucose monitors, and the Tarrant County Health Department screened for diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure.

“I was very, very pleased,” said Susie Quintana, health promotion manager, after the fair. “All the participants shared very positive comments about the vendors. I am extremely pleased with how it turned out.”

Tracy Fannin, who hosted a booth with her husband for his new company, The Body Firm, toured the other booths with her 2-year-old daughter, Faith, between her shifts at the booth.

Fannin said her husband’s booth quickly ran out of the 40 entry slips they brought for the iPod give-away. “I was surprised at how many people showed up,” she said.

“I picked up some information, and we got scolded for not checking our smoke detectors,” she said with a laugh, then motioned to Faith, “and she went for the lollipop.” ★

Kudos to...

Gloria Fuller, CEH, supervisor of custodial services, on being elected vice president of the Texas Association of Physical Plant Administrators at its annual conference in April.

Marco Mendoza, senior human resource representative, on being selected chair of the Easter Seals Greater Northwest Texas Business Advisory Council at the group’s annual meeting in April.

Meagan Lindsay, human resource specialist, on being selected vice chair of the Easter Seals Greater Northwest Texas Business Advisory Council at the group’s annual meeting in April.

Marianne Levine, DO, assistant professor of pediatrics, on being named Supervising Doctor of the Year by the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants.

Albert Olivencia-Yurvati, DO, professor and acting chair of surgery, on placing fifth in the 2006 Proteem INBF American Bodybuilding Competition, masters II division (50 years old and above), May 6 in Austin. ★

CAMPUS Connection

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Please address all inquiries or suggestions to April Eubanks, editor.

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Osteopathic Heritage Foundation names Licciardone as ORC's first endowed clinical research chair

John Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA, professor of manipulative medicine and director of clinical research at the Osteopathic Research Center, has been named an Osteopathic Heritage Foundation Clinical Research Chair.

Along with Dr. Licciardone's title comes funding from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation to support him and a research team in expanding the ORC's research on how osteopathic manipulative treatment can be used for treating various disorders.

The grant funding will allow Dr. Licciardone to further study the use of OMT for the treatment of chronic low back pain and other musculoskeletal disorders, refine placebo control treatments for pain and functioning, assess somatovisceral and viscerosomatic manifestations of disease, and describe the natural history and epidemiology of somatic dysfunction.

Dr. Licciardone also plans to expand his research into osteopathic health services and policy research, which will include the Osteopathic Survey of Health Care in America, the National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey, and a systematic review and meta-analysis of osteopathic clinical trials.

This research is intended not only to study patient outcomes with osteopathic treatment, but also to promote patient awareness of osteopathic physicians and encourage their use as primary care physicians.

Dr. Licciardone administered the previous Osteopathic Surveys of Health Care in America. He said that he hopes the new survey results will further findings from the previous surveys.

"With this research, we'd like to have more focused questions and look more specifically at racial and ethnic minority groups," he said.

The previous survey found that only 9 percent of the overall popula-



John Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA

tion said that their primary care physician was a doctor of osteopathic medicine, and the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities who used a DO as their primary care physician was lower than other groups.

"The previous surveys gave us some valuable information, but we weren't always able to determine the reasons for the results we observed," Dr. Licciardone said. "We're hoping to answer more of those questions with this research."

The grant from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation is a four-year, \$2 million award in support of the grant application "ORC Osteopathic Heritage Foundation Chairs and Teams."

"The Osteopathic Heritage Foundation has been very generous," Dr. Licciardone said.

The Osteopathic Heritage Foundation has awarded three major grants to the ORC, in addition to providing financial support for start-up and operating costs of the ORC.

"I'm confident that if we do good research, we'll continue to be funded," Dr. Licciardone said. ★

In the News

The "Education" column in the April issue of *Pulse* magazine contained a description of the mission and purpose of the Center for Public Health Practice at the health science center. Quotes from **Claudia Coggin, PhD, CHES**, and **Fernando Treviño, PhD, MPH**, were included.

The "Beauty Solutions" section of the April issue of *Prevention* magazine contained an article about minimizing the appearance of scars from skin wounds, with information and a quote provided by **Dan Dimitrijević, PhD**, research associate professor of integrative physiology.

The "Medical Records" column of the April 3-9 issue of the *Fort Worth Business Press* contained a short article about the **14th Annual Research Appreciation Day** held at the health science center April 7. A brief overview of the day's activities was given along with a quote from **Thomas Yorio, PhD**, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and vice president for research.

The "Medical Records" section of the April 10-16 issue of the *Fort Worth Business Press* discussed the recent *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine among the top medical schools in primary care. Several quotes from **Marc Hahn, DO**, TCOM dean, were included. TCOM is one of only two medical schools in Texas to make the ranking.

A story, "Joint Effort Pays Off: Exercise Benefits Sore Knees, Hips, Shoulders, and Other Joints That Hurt: Healthy Women Take 10," featuring multiple quotes from **Bernard Rubin, DO**, discussing the potential benefits of physical activity for people with osteoarthritis ran on 13 news broadcasts around the country, including television stations in Indiana, Louisiana and Alabama, between April 15 and 27. ★

Gracy starts new career at UT San Antonio

Robert Gracy, PhD, ended 35 years with the University of North Texas system April 28 with an eye on a new career and hopes that his move will promote collaboration among institutions.

Dr. Gracy will begin his work at the University of Texas at San Antonio as vice president for research, and he took Kelly Kam, MBA, his executive assistant at the health science center, with him.

Although he is beginning a new career, he said he had mixed feelings about leaving the health science center. At his farewell party April 28, he was visibly emotional as he said goodbye to his coworkers.

Ronald Blanck, DO, president, and Thomas Yorio, PhD, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and vice president for research, both thanked Dr. Gracy for his service.

Dr. Gracy's research at the health science center focused on oxidation damage and aging and related diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, vision impairment and wound healing.



Robert Gracy, PhD, and his wife, Peggy, received going away gifts at the farewell party for Dr. Gracy April 28.

Dr. Gracy's research in aging has been recognized by the National Institute on Aging, which awarded him the highly prestigious MERIT grant. Dr. Gracy also received the Research Career Development Award from the National Institutes of Health.

He received the International Achievement Award for Science and

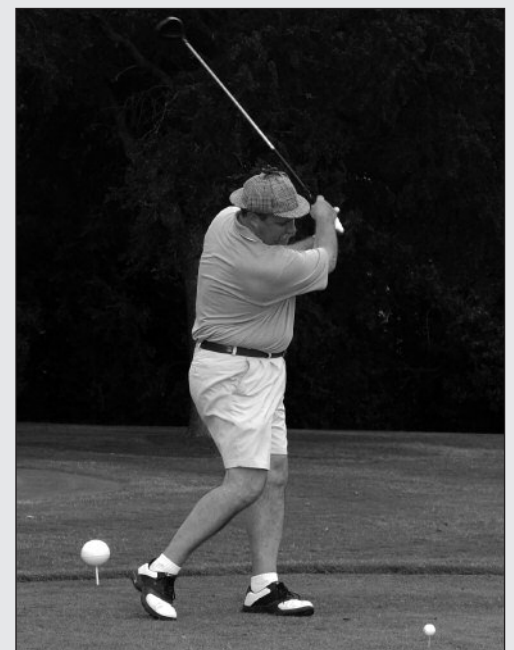
Medicine from the World Affairs Council of Greater Fort Worth in 2000, and he has received research awards from the American Chemical Society and the American Osteopathic Association.

Dr. Gracy also served on the Texas Council on Science and Biotechnology Development and the Texas Health Care Information Council.

He is also a member of many national and international professional and research organizations and is a consultant and board member of biotech, pharmaceutical and health care organizations.

He lectures internationally on aging and age-related medical problems and has published approximately 200 research papers and book chapters. ★

*The President's Invitational Golf Tournament, held April 24 at Ridglea Country Club, featured 27 invited teams and 37 Fort Worth corporate sponsors. The tournament grossed \$74,300, which will be used for scholarships, fellowships and other projects supported by the UNTHSC Foundation. **Bottom photo:** The championship team included Brennen Shingleton (second from left), assistant basketball coach, Texas Wesleyan University; John Fling (third from left), MD, associate professor and acting chair of pediatrics; Claude Brunier (third from right), comptroller, Quest Diagnostics; and Matt Hamlin (far right), managing director, Quest Diagnostics. Also pictured: Ben Watts (far left), vice president at Carter Burgess, a presenting sponsor, and Ronald Blanck (second from right), DO, health science center president.*



Above: Chris Hull, DO, TCOM 1979, president of Fort Worth Orthopedic Surgery & Sports Medicine and UNTHSC Foundation board member, shows off his swing and his flair for stylish hats.

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Dauphin honored with doctoral degree

Rachel Dauphin was presented with a posthumous doctoral degree from the health science center at graduation ceremonies May 20.

Dauphin, former doctoral student in pharmacology and neuroscience, was the first Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences student to receive such an honor. Dauphin's mother, Lillian Dauphin, attended the commencement ceremonies to receive the diploma and hood honoring her daughter.

Dauphin died Nov. 15, 2005, after fighting cancer for almost three years. She was 26.

Dauphin was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease after being unable to donate blood at two campus blood drives in a row. Standard screening tests done before donations showed she was anemic.

A nurse at the blood drive told Dauphin to get a physical, which was when she was diagnosed with lymphoma. She had been in and out of the hospital battling the disease the last two years of her life, but she never stopped dreaming of her return to the classroom and the lab.

"Throughout her illness, she was just so dedicated to her studies," said Carla Lee, GSBS director of admissions.

Dauphin underwent a bone marrow transplant last year, which resulted in remission, but complications associated with the transplant put her back in the hospital in October 2005. She never recovered.

GSBS established a memorial scholarship in her honor, and more than \$9,000 has been raised so far for the Rachel Dauphin Memorial Scholarship Fund. Erin Donovan, doctoral student in cell biology and genetics, has been chosen as the first recipient.

Thomas Yorio, PhD, vice president for research and dean of GSBS, knew Dauphin well.

"When I first met Rachel, I was taken with her positive attitude and abounding energy," Dr. Yorio said. "She quickly became very active in the Graduate Student Association, giving of her time and energy. Her courage and her



Rachel Dauphin, a former pharmacology and neuroscience graduate student, received a posthumous doctoral degree at the graduation ceremony May 20.

persistent positive attitude throughout her illness was an inspiration to us all."

Dauphin worked in Dr. Yorio's lab during her studies at the health science center. She presented posters and co-authored articles while also serving as a graduate teaching fellow.

Dauphin was also active on campus. She served as campus blood drive coordinator for two years, and she was active in the Graduate Student Association, serving as secretary and vice president.

She was also a Project SCORE fellow, working with biology teacher Kathy Elliott at Dunbar High School in Fort Worth. Project SCORE is a grant sponsored by the National Science Foundation that provides stipends for students who are fellows.

The goals of Project SCORE are to prepare fellows to serve as resources for

ninth grade biology students and teachers in the Fort Worth Independent School District, to enhance the appreciation and understanding of science processes throughout FWISD's science curriculum, and to ensure that the

NSF-supported SCORE program becomes a permanent part of the health science center culture.

Dauphin was named GSA Outstanding Member in 2004 and received the Edward E. Elko Award for Distinguished Service to the GSA that same year.

"Honestly, a lot of times I think that's what kept her going, the focus that she had on her studies," Lee said.

When Dauphin applied for entry into GSBS, she had originally intended to apply to the post-baccalaureate pro-

gram, Lee said, but Dauphin checked the wrong box on her application and ended up in the pharmacology and neuroscience department instead.

After beginning her studies, Dauphin approached Dr. Yorio about work opportunities and found herself in his laboratory studying glaucoma.

"Although Rachel did not start off with a goal to do research, she quickly blossomed into a young scientist," Dr. Yorio said.

Because Dauphin was so active on campus, in the community and in GSBS activities prior to her illness, recipients of the Rachel Dauphin Memorial Scholarship will be required to be active in community service, in addition to having high academic and laboratory performance.

"She was a very special person," Dr. Yorio said. "I will miss her." ★

Higgs, Koulen named to 40 Under 40 list

Two health science center employees were chosen for the *Fort Worth Business Press*' Forty Under Forty list, which honors men and women under 40 in Tarrant County for their business accomplishments and community involvement.

Clyde Higgs, MPA, associate director of entrepreneurship and industry relations in the Office of Technology and Alliance Development and executive director of Tech Fort Worth, and Peter Koulen, PhD, associate professor of pharmacology and neuroscience, were named to the list.

Higgs also serves on the BioDFW Board of Directors and the Texas Technology Transfer Association Board of Directors.

Since March 2003, he has served as executive director and president of Tech Fort Worth in addition to his duties at the health science center. He was also recently appointed by the governor to the Texas Emerging Technology Fund Advisory Committee.

Active in the community, Higgs is a member of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and Fort Worth Rotary and serves as a guest lecturer at the TCU Neeley School of Business and the UNT College of Management.

He is also a member of the Association of University Research Parks, the Association of University Technology Managers and the National Business Incubation Association.

Prior to coming to Fort Worth, Higgs served as director of technology transfer and commercialization at North Carolina A&T State University, where he was responsible for developing the overall intellectual property strategy for the university.

Higgs was also the North Carolina co-principal investigator for the affiliates program of the NASA Southeastern Regional Technology Transfer Center.

Dr. Koulen, who was promoted to associate professor of pharmacology



Clyde Higgs, MPA

and neuroscience with tenure in September 2004, serves as associate director of the North Texas Eye Research Institute.

He has received numerous awards for his work in research, including a Research Rising Star Award from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in 2002.

Currently, Dr. Koulen is principal investigator on a National Institutes of Health/National Eye Institute grant to study calcium signaling in the retina and a grant from the Alzheimer's Association to study how calcium signaling is controlled in the brain.

Dr. Koulen also serves as a mentor on a National Institute for Aging grant designed to train graduate students in the neurobiology of aging. He also mentors local undergraduate students in the Texas Academy of Math and Science and students at Northside High School during research internships, and he provides research experiences for local high school science teachers as part of a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board program.

Dr. Koulen is also principal investigator on Project 4 and Core C for a program project grant from the



Peter Koulen, PhD

National Institute on Aging to discover novel drugs to be used in Alzheimer's disease treatment.

In addition, the National Institute on Aging has awarded another program project grant to researchers at the health science center to study the normal aging process, and Dr. Koulen is principal investigator of Project 3 within that grant.

Dr. Koulen recently received funding from the NIH's National Center for Research Resources that will provide the health science center campus with modern laser microscopy imaging instrumentation in the Center for BioHealth.

Dr. Koulen's latest grant, approved for funding by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board within the State's Advanced Research Program, focuses on technology development for the treatment of degenerative diseases of the eye.

Dr. Koulen's research has been published in numerous journals, and he represents the local research community as a reviewer for state, national and international agencies.

The *Fort Worth Business Press* will honor its Forty Under Forty at a banquet May 31 at the Fort Worth Club. ★

SPH graduate begins fellowship with CDC

Leticia Davila, who graduated with a Master of Public Health degree with a concentration in community health at last Saturday's commencement ceremony, will be spending six months at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a fellow.

Davila was an intern at the CDC last summer. She earned the internship and the fellowship through the Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools. Davila was in the inaugural class of HSHPS interns last summer and will be in the inaugural class of HSHPS fellows this year.

"I'm excited because this will give me more experience, and I'll have a mentor who can provide me with a little more guidance in terms of research," Davila said. "I believe this will be a great stepping stone for my career."

During her six-month fellowship, Davila will work on the project "National Diabetes Education Program: Effectiveness of Outreach to Health Disparity Populations." Her previous studies have included work with *Salud Para Su Corazon* and the Diabetes Research Education and Metabolic Studies programs at the health science



Leticia Davila, MPH

center. Her work focused on ways to enhance the delivery of programs to Hispanic populations.

"I'd like to stay at CDC after this fellowship," Davila said. "But eventually, I'd like to go back to the McAllen area because that's where the population is located that I want to help."

Davila is from McAllen, where she graduated from Nikki Rowe High

School. When the 23-year-old began her college studies, she was a pre-med major at Southwestern University in Georgetown. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology with a pre-medical emphasis, but her interests turned to more community-based work when she looked into graduate education.

"Going into medicine just wasn't as exciting as the idea of helping so many people through public health," Davila said.

Davila plans to focus her research and outreach work on the Hispanic population to help address health care inequities.

"My experiences over the past few years have strengthened and affirmed my interest in Hispanic health as a career," Davila said. "This HSHPS fellowship at the CDC will help me continue working toward that goal."

HSHPS, a non-profit organization, was established in 1996 with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to improve the health of Hispanics through academic development, research initiatives and training. ★

HSC to host conference on health disparities

The first Texas Conference on Health Disparities will be hosted by the health science center June 2-4.

The conference will feature nationally recognized speakers and experts in health disparities who will highlight the strategies that are currently being used to eliminate health disparities in medically underserved areas.

The conference begins June 2 at 4 p.m. with registration. The keynote speaker for the evening will be Louis Sullivan, MD, president of Morehouse School of Medicine and former secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The second day of the conference begins at 8 a.m. with a continental

breakfast, followed by an opening address from Mike Moncrief, mayor of Fort Worth. A session focusing on health disparities at the community level will take place from 9 a.m. to noon.

At the noon luncheon, Russell Bennett, vice president of UnitedHealthcare Latino Health Solutions, will present the keynote address, which will discuss current trends in the health care industry to combat health disparities. The afternoon will include a discussion of border health issues from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The final day of the conference will begin with a 9 a.m. discussion of perspectives on the future and the elimination of health disparities in Texas and the United States.

The conference is presented by the Texas Center for Minority Health, Education, Research and Outreach, which was established when the National Institutes of Health awarded the health science center \$7.25 million to address the issues of health disparities.

The conference will provide health care workers with continuing education credits. Registration for the event costs \$99 for community members and \$49 for health science center employees. It is free for students.

For more information about the conference, visit www.hsc.unt.edu/HealthDisparities/ and follow the conference links. ★

HSC students, faculty spend DO Day on the Hill

Twelve Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine students, three health science center faculty members and Marc Hahn, DO, TCOM dean, recently spent the day in Washington, D.C., discussing the unique issues that doctors of osteopathy face today.

“We had the opportunity to speak on issues such as physician reimbursement, residency training in community and rural hospitals, and, finally, tort reform as a national issue,” said Betsy Pearch, TCOM 2006, who attended the event. “Our students were instrumental in the passing of Proposition 12 here in Texas almost two years ago, and we were able to relate our experiences to the senators’ aides.”

The group met with aides from the offices of Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn and Rep. Kay Granger to voice their concerns. The group also had breakfast with Rep. Michael Burgess at the Capitol.

“While I enjoyed the chance to meet with senators John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison’s health policy aides, the real treat was the chance to have breakfast with Congressman Burgess and see what his normal day is like and how best to influence health care politics,” said Adam Ylitalo, TCOM 2008. “During the day, we were able to discuss health care liability reform, which was being voted on in the Senate.

“The bill was based on the model that the Texas Legislature approved a few years ago,” he said. “It was very encouraging to know that we, as students, [by working] at the state level only a few years ago, potentially influenced the nation’s direction in health care reform.”

Dr. Hahn said visiting the Capitol gave the future physicians an opportunity to see the legislative process and voice their concerns and opinions about current and future medical policy.

“This trip allowed our students to see the legislative process in action and use their medical experience to help inform the legislative staff on issues that impact the health and health care of Texans,” he said. “I know the students appreciated the opportunity to see our lawmakers at work and to develop an understanding of how health policies are formulated.”

Other students and faculty who attended included Leslie Houston, TCOM 2006; Buddy Tierce, TCOM 2008; Kate Barron, TCOM 2009; Venessa Martinez, TCOM 2009; Vanessa Vinn, TCOM 2009; Joseph Ugorji, TCOM 2008; Rick Gray, TCOM 2009; Tony Archer, TCOM 2009; Brian Tulbert, TCOM 2008; Devin Flaherty, TCOM 2007; Russell Gamber, DO, professor of manipulative medicine; Steve Buchanan, DO, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology; and Frederick Schaller, DO, associate professor of internal medicine. ★

Workouts at FAC complement healthy lifestyle

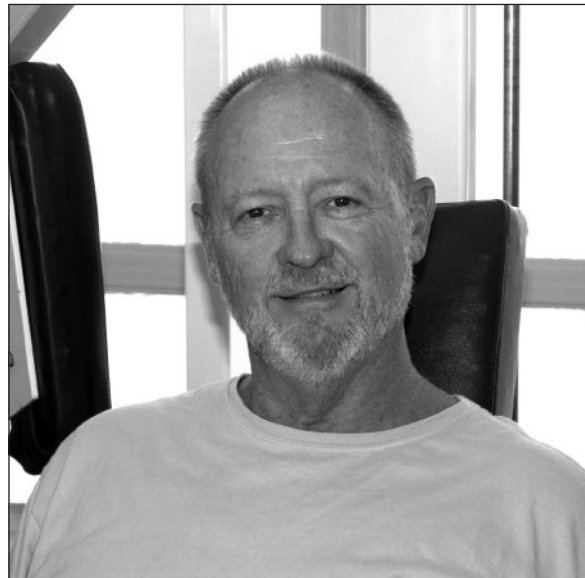
Greg Upp, vice president for institutional coordination, has a long history of including exercise in his routine.

“I’ve been working out for 40 years on and off — mainly off!” he said. While he’s always been active — golfing, boating and hiking his way to better health — Upp said he became dedicated to consistent, scheduled workouts in June 2005.

Upp now exercises four days a week, and his weekly routine consists of 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise on an elliptical machine and alternating days of resistance training and abdominal work.

Upp complements his workout routine with a healthy lifestyle that includes reducing his fat intake, avoiding fried foods and eating lighter meals for dinner.

Although he still enjoys his Italian food and sweet treats like ice cream,



Greg Upp works out at the Founders’ Activity Center every week and takes advantage of the HealthSaver program to get his exercise in during the day.

Upp said he has found a way to enjoy what he likes and still be healthy.

“Rather than dieting, my wife and I are trying to eat and live healthier as a lifestyle change instead of [making] short term fixes,” he said.

Upp said the Health-Saver Program has helped him stay on his path to good health. The HealthSaver Program allows benefits-eligible employees to participate in approved physical activity programs for up to 90 minutes of work time per week.

“It provides everyone the opportunity to exercise on whatever schedule they prefer — morning, lunch or afternoon,” he said. “It’s also a benefit to the health sci-

ence center, since it encourages employees to be healthier.” ★

Faculty Advances

Rafael Alvarez-Gonzalez, PhD, associate professor of molecular biology and immunology, was one of the 40 judges of the 10th Annual Undergraduate Student Research Achievement Award Poster Competition held in conjunction with the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Annual Meeting and Centennial Celebration April 1-5, in San Francisco, Calif. **Dr. Alvarez** also presented a paper, "Enzymatic Oligomerization of PARP-1 with itself, DNA Polymerase beta and p53," at the 2006 Experimental Biology Convention held April 2-7 in San Francisco. **Nils Confer, PhD, GSBS 2004; Sunitha Kumari, PhD**, a former post-doctoral fellow in molecular biology and immunology; and **Hilda Mendoza-Alvarez, MPH, SPH 2003**, are co-authors.

Alakananda Basu, PhD, professor of molecular biology and immunology, is senior author of the poster "Protein kinase C (PKC)-epsilon confers resistance to TRAIL-induced apoptosis by altering levels of pro- and anti-apoptotic Bcl-2 family proteins" presented at the 97th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research held April 1-5 in Washington, D.C. **Eswar Swamy, PhD**, and **Usha Sivaprasad, PhD**, both postdoctoral research associates in molecular biology and immunology, are co-authors. **Dr. Basu** also received an award from the National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute to attend the Tumor Microenvironment Training program. She attended an organotypic (3D) modeling workshop in the laboratory of Joan Brugge, PhD, chair of cell biology at Harvard Medical School, April 10-13 in Boston, Mass.

Rance Berg, PhD, assistant professor of molecular biology and immunology, is first author of the paper "The Role of CD8 T Cells in Innate Immunity and in Antigen Non-specific Protection," published in the June issue of *Current Opinion in Immunology*. **James Forman, PhD, DMD**, professor, Center for Immunology, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, is co-author.

Michael Clark, PhD, PA-C, assistant professor of internal medicine and physician assistant studies, presented "Solutions to Healthcare: Disparities in Race and Gender" at the symposium on health care disparities in ischemic heart disease at the American College of Cardiology 55th Annual Scientific Session held March 11-14 in Atlanta, Ga. The symposium was sponsored by the Association of Black Cardiologists.

Kimberly Fulda, MPH, SPH 2001, doctoral student in biostatistics, is first author of the paper "Ethical issues in

predictive genetic testing: a public health perspective," published in the March issue of the *Journal of Medical Ethics*.

Kristine Lykens, PhD, assistant professor of health management and policy, is co-author and advisor.

James Hall, PhD, associate professor of internal medicine and psychology, co-authored three papers presented at the 27th Annual Meeting and Scientific Session of the Society of Behavioral Medicine held March 22-25 in San Francisco, Calif. "MMSE utilization in the initial diagnosis of dementia" and "Diagnosing Dementia: the clinical utility of neuropsychological evaluation and MRI findings for diagnostic reliability" were co-authored with **Sonya Cornwell, Rebekah Harris** and **Amir Ramizani**, all doctoral students in clinical health psychology, a collaborative program between the health science center and UNT Denton. "Behavioral regulation: A factor analytic study of the Behavior Dyscontrol Scale with dementia and mild cognitive impairment" was co-authored with **Michele Harvey, PhD**, postdoctoral fellow in the geriatric fellowship program; **Patsy Cornett**, graduate student in clinical health psychology; and **Kathryn Kaiser**, graduate student in research health psychology.

Robert Kaman, JD, PhD, associate professor of health management and policy and associate dean and director of outreach for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, was sworn in to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court May 1 in Washington, D.C. **Dr. Kaman**, an attorney licensed in the State of Texas, is now eligible to argue cases before the Supreme Court.

John Licciardone, DO, MS, MBA, professor of manipulative medicine and Osteopathic Heritage Clinical Research Chair at the Osteopathic Research Center, presented the keynote address "Opportunities for Osteopathic Research" at the third annual Des Moines University Research Symposium April 17 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Sue Gena Lurie, PhD, assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences, published the article "Ethical Choices in Public Health Policy and Practice" in the spring issue of *The Applied Anthropologist: An Inter-disciplinary Social Science Journal*.

Patti Pagels, MPAS, PA-C, assistant professor and clinical education coordinator for physician assistant studies, was elected to the American Academy of Physician Assistants board as a director at large for the 2006-2008 term. ★