Dean’s Comments: REALITIES OF FUNDING

Funding issues have become an increasing reality for Schools of Medicine (SOMs) around the country as traditional funding streams have dried up. Public SOMs customarily receive their funding from three sources: state general revenue, grants, and philanthropy. When any one revenue stream is reduced, the SOMs are forced to find an increase in another revenue stream. The Texas Medical Association recently reported that, “State undergraduate medical education funding is now 7 percent less than in 2003 and GME funding is down 60 percent for the same period.” With the documented shortage of physicians in Texas, this is causing SOMs to seek greater efficiencies in their clinical practices as well as incremental increases in grants and philanthropy to fund their core mission.

This fiscal year the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is operating under a budget that is slightly below last year’s funding level. This represents the first funding cut NIH has experienced in over three decades. Furthermore, this year’s budget continues a three year trend in which the NIH is funded at a level significantly below the Biomedical Research and Development Price Index (BRDPI). As the availability of research support tightens and competitiveness for research funding intensifies, academic institutions face heightened levels of anxiety and significant uncertainties about the availability of incoming monies to continue to support the research capacity that they have developed over time. At the same time, necessary ‘seed money’ to fund promising new research is reduced to fund ongoing research programs.

With decreases to state funding and research funding from the NIH, we are turning to our clinical practices to help fund our missions. We are challenged with developing increased efficiencies in the operation of our programs as well as the shifting of our payer base that will allow us to become more self-sufficient.

With the recent addition of Lewis Greenberg, MD, MHA to the Medical Dean’s Office, we have expertise in designing these programs. Growth in the development of patient care programs is key for the School to continue to make needed investments in education and research. Our group practice, like many around the nation, has seen an increasing trend toward multi-specialty group models such as those observed at the Mayo Clinic, the Cleveland Clinic, the Geisinger Clinic and others that have proven to be successful.

In summary, the development of articulated clinical practices has become a necessary feature at SOMs across our country. Ironically, such practices allow for an institution to grow education and research programs, the core missions of our School. We look forward to being able to contribute to our medical community and to the health of all of our citizens through our mission. And, as always, we seek and encourage new associations with all aspects of our rich and diverse medical communities in San Antonio.
Welcome New Faculty

**Medicine**

Dr. Jane B. Barbosa joined on July 28, 2007 as an Instructor. She received her medical degree from Universidade Federal Fluminense in 2002. She will be completing her residency training in July 2007.

Dr. Hania Al-Shahrouri joined in the Division of Nephrology on July 15, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. She graduated from the University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan and completed her residency training at Case Western Reserve University Program at St. Vincent’s Hospital in 1998.

Dr. Karen Block joined in the Division of Nephrology on July 15, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. She graduated from UTHSCSA in 2003.

Dr. Bruno Doiron joined on July 15 in the Division of Diabetes as an Instructor.

He graduated from the University of Paris V in Paris, France in 1997.

**Orthopaedics**

Ms. Kelly A. Cooper joined on July 16, 2007 as a Faculty Associate. She received her Bachelor of Clinical Health Sciences from The University of Washington in 2003 and received her Physician Assistant Certificate from the University of Washington School of Medicine.

**Pediatrics**

Dr. Curtis D. Froehlich joined on July 16, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from The University of Kansas School of Medicine in 2001. He completed both his pediatric internship and residency programs at UTHSCSA.

**Radiation Oncology**

Dr. Richard Crownover joined on July 19, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine in 1991 and he completed his residency training in 1995.

**Urology**

Dr. Jeffrey A. Leslie joined on July 16, 2007 as Assistant Professor. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology at Abilene Christian University in 1994. He received his medical degree from UTHSCSA in 1998. His academic internship and residency were completed from our program between 1998 and 2005. This was followed by the Pediatric Urology fellowship at JW Riley Children’s Hospital, Indiana University in 2007.

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Institute for Health Promotion Research

moved to new location:

8207 Callaghan Road, Suite 353, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-562-6500 (UTHSCSA callers can dial 2-6500)

Fax number remains the same: 210-348-0554

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Presidential Distinguished Senior and Junior Research Awards

Deadline for Nominations: October 5, 2007

Questions? Dr. John Littlefield, 72283

[www.uthscsa.edu/op/awards.html](http://www.uthscsa.edu/op/awards.html)

Presidential Clinical Excellence Award

Deadline for Nominations: October 5, 2007

Questions? Dr. Joseph Kobos, 72648

[http://www.uthscsa.edu/vpaa/faculty/clinexc.html](http://www.uthscsa.edu/vpaa/faculty/clinexc.html)
In 2005, a University of Texas System Task Force led by Vice Chancellor Kenneth Shine concluded that the “state of public health in Texas is poor in comparison to national averages, and is likely to further deteriorate.” It noted “substantial disparities in health status,” and the increasing “shortage of well-trained public health professionals” in our State. The report called for a “shared vision” within the UT System to respond to these needs.

Dr. Leonel Vela, Regional Dean of the Regional Academic Health Center, a member of the Task Force, rose to this challenge by fostering and supporting the development of the first 4-year MD/MPH program in Texas. The program is made possible through the cross-crediting of coursework and the active support and engagement of the administration and faculty here at UTHSCSA and the RAHC and at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health (SPH) and its San Antonio and Brownsville Regional Campuses.

Nineteen students were admitted to the MD/MPH program this year (including 2 MS2s). These students have already begun their public health studies by taking Epidemiology and Biostatistics on-line over the summer. This fall they will focus on their medical school studies and will resume public health courses in the spring.

These are excellent students with remarkable backgrounds ranging from nursing, medical assisting, industrial hygiene, and clinical and basic research, health outreach, emergency response, politics, and the military. They have worked, studied, and volunteered in Morocco, Germany, Haiti, Bolivia, Mexico, Japan, and as well as in underserved communities across the nation and throughout our State. They dream of teaching, setting public policy, empowering communities, conducting research, and creating access to health care where there currently is none.

The program is already serving as a magnet for students with a commitment to serving the underserved. Dr. Claudia Miller, Interim Assistant Dean for the MD/MPH Program, said, “These are idealistic individuals. When we asked one student where she would most like to practice after her training, she said, ‘Wherever I am needed most.’ We want students like this to grow roots in our region.”

What is likely to help most in attracting and keeping these future physicians within our South Texas communities are the connections they make with our faculty. Some of the students will seek 3rd and 4th year clinical rotations at the RAHC, and eventually opt for residency and practice opportunities in South Texas. In addition, this program has the potential to build and enhance relationships with our public health colleagues and to better accomplish UT’s overall mission in South Texas.

If you are a UTHSCSA physician with an MPH or other public health degree, your time and perspectives are the most precious assets UTHSCSA can offer these students. We are working with the SPH to determine the most effective and meaningful way to engage our faculty’s talents as advisors and mentors. Already, we have received enthusiastic inquiries from several dozen of our medical school colleagues. If you are interested and have not already done so, please contact Dr. Claudia Miller at millercc@uthscsa.edu.
Dr. Alexander Shepherd, Department of Pharmacology, won the “Top 25 Advanced Clinical Evaluation Skills (ACES) Preceptors” Award

Dr. Pamela M. Otto, Department of Radiology, recipient of 2007 Presidential Clinical Excellence Award (Breast Imaging) (UTHSCSA)

Dr. Julio Palmaz, Department of Radiology, was one of the recipients of the inaugural UT System Chancellor’s Entrepreneurship and Innovation Award, which recognizes outstanding accomplishment in research and innovation. He received a $10,000 prize for the award in his category and was recognized at the UT System’s first Research & Technology Transfer Showcase, held on February, 27, 2007, Austin, Texas. He also received the Gold Medal Recipient from the Society of Interventional Radiology in March 2007. In May 2007, he was nominated for the Austin College Leadership Award by the Office of the Chancellor, the University of Texas System.

Dr. Darlene Metter, Department of Radiology, received a gubernatorial appointment to serve as a member on the Texas Radiation Advisory Board to the Governor of Texas. She was also awarded membership into the University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education, April 2007, chairing the Nuclear Medicine RRC and was inducted as a Fellow in the American College of Radiology.

Dr. Srinivasa Prasad, Department of Radiology, received the Melvin M Figley fellowship in radiology journalism and the RSNA Travel Award for Young Investigators in Molecular Imaging in 2006.

Dr. Carlos Restrepo, Department of Radiology, received Cum-Laude awards for educational exhibits “Imaging of the axilla” (Society of Thoracic Radiology 3/06); “Lymphoproliferative lung disorders” and “Supraclavicular triangle in the thoracic inlet: A pictorial review” (RSNA 2006).

Dr. Rajeev Suri, Department of Radiology, received Cum Laude Award for scientific exhibit entitled “Iatrogenic hepatobiliary complications: An imaging spectrum” ESGAR/SGR 2006 and received Certificate of Merit Award presented by the ARRS for the Scientific Exhibit: Causes of Transjugular Intrahepatic Portosystemic shunt failures (ARRS 2006).

Dr. Samir Chhaya, Department of Radiology, received Teacher of the Year by the Diagnostic Radiology Residents, June 2007

Dr. Robert Marciniak, Department of Medicine, received $1.5m from the NIA to continue studies of Werner’s Syndrome.

Dr. Rajam Ramamurthy, Department of Pediatrics, appointed to the Educational Council for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) Board.

The following faculty, fellows, staff and/or students appeared in the news (television, print media or radio): Dr. Kyle Anderson, Surgery Resident; L. Borrell & M. Garcia, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Dr. Fred Campbell, Internal Medicine; Dr. Tyler Curiel, Medicine/Medical Oncology; Dr. Pedro Delgado, Psychiatry; Dr. Nancy Kellogg, Pediatrics/Center for Miracles; V. Lucio & L. Rodriguez, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Dr. Joel Michalek, Epidemiology & Biostatistics; Dr. Kristen Plastino, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Dr. Brad Pollock, Epidemiology/Biostatistics; B. Rios & P. Gonzales, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Anita Rivas, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Dr. John Roache, Psychiatry; Dr. I Jon Russell, Medicine/Clinical Immunology; Dr. Chengyu Shi, Radiation Oncology; Dr. Paul Thomas, Pediatrics; Dr. Leonel Vela, Regional Dean/RAHC; Dr. Kent Van Sickle, Surgery; Lizette Villarreal, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Nora Wagner, So. Tx. Health Research Center; Dr. Christopher Wallace, Psychiatry; Drs. P. Wood/R. Wilkins, Pediatrics/Respiratory Care

STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL

The UTHSCSA Staff Advisory Council (SAC) election is complete and congratulations to Lee Ann Schwarz, Molly West, Pamela Feagin, Sylvia Ramos, Thomas White and Rachel Cardenas who were elected as your representatives to serve for the next two years with the term beginning September 1, 2007. In the event one of your members is unable to continue to serve on the SAC, the candidate with the next highest number of votes will be contacted to serve on the council. Thanks to the nominees and thanks to all of you for participating in the election process.
FOCAL POINTS: DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY

The Department of Radiology is organized into three divisions: Clinical Radiology, Education, and Research. Dr. Ralph Blumhardt is the Vice-Chair of the Clinical Radiology division and is responsible for all faculty related clinical issues. Oversight of the technical operations at UHS, VAH, and UT Med is provided by physician directors at each site: Pamela Otto, Cal Leuschen, and Michael McCarthy, respectively. The Division of Education is composed of two primary educational units: Clinical Radiology and Radiological Sciences. The Vice Chair of the Clinical Radiology Education Programs is Neal Dalrymple, and Geoffrey Clarke is the Vice Chairman of the Radiological Sciences Graduate Program. Lastly, the Division of Research is directed by Gary Fullerton, Vice Chair of Research.

The Mission of the Department of Radiology is to promote, develop, and integrate advances in imaging technology and imaging-based therapeutic procedures into the clinical, education and research missions of UTHSCSA.

This June, Dr. Andres Rahal MD, PhD, became the first graduate of the Department of Radiology’s new Resident PhD Program. Seven years ago, the Department of Radiology at UTHSCSA created the first Radiology Resident PhD Program in the United States. This program is designed to produce physician scientists who can translate new discoveries in biomedical imaging and image-guided interventional techniques into useful clinical procedures for improving the diagnosis and treatment of patients. The program design eliminates many of the barriers of traditional MD/PhD programs by integrating a well established and fully certified Diagnostic Radiology Residency Training Program with a highly successful Radiological Sciences PhD Graduate Degree Program. This highly efficient design educates physician scientists to do research in their chosen area of clinical practice but with all the tools, skills and knowledge of research methods derived from formal research training. At the end of training, a student is certified as a radiological physician scientist, has authored a sequence of five to ten scientific papers and has one or more extramural grant awards as PI of record. Graduates complete training approximately 6 years after graduating from medical school and become Assistant Professor level physician scientists in their early thirties. The Resident PhD program meets all requirements for radiology certification by the American Board of Radiology as well as fulfilling requirements for the PhD degree in Radiological Sciences. The Program has been approved by the Texas Board of Higher Education and is funded by an NIH training grant.

We are delighted to report that we have successfully recruited Dr. Rahal to join the Department as an Assistant Professor. He will work as a physician scientist in musculoskeletal radiology and continue his research on improved specificity of MRI diagnosis of collagenous lesions for the evaluation of diabetes, aging and sports injuries. The seven additional Resident PhD students presently in the program will graduate over the next six years.

Gerald D. Dodd III, M.D. - Chair