Dean’s Comments:

I would be remiss if I didn’t begin discussing our residency programs without relating how much the resident environment has changed since I was a resident. In the past, the focus was strictly on technique, procedure and caring for the patient - what is called the core skills of medicine. Now, I am delighted to say, the focus has been expanded to include caring for our residents.

Issues such as setting limits on duty hours have been extensively researched and documented, and we now understand that fatigue can severely hinder performance and put our residents and their patients in harm’s way. Another improvement is that all faculty are now encouraged to provide clear and consistent feedback to the resident as they go through the program, not just at the testing phase. These changes have been instrumental in improving communication as it applies to style and process and other essential components of care.

Perhaps one of the most vital changes in the clinical setting is the growing empowerment of every member of the healthcare team regarding awareness of situations in which patient safety may be at risk. Time-outs have become mandatory – they ensure that when a procedure is planned (defined as anything that requires a patient consent), the team stops to ensure that the correct procedure is to be performed on the correct patient, at the correct site. This change is an enormous shift from when I went through the residency program, but again, patient safety has substantially increased by empowering the entire team to act. It falls in line with the old adage that ‘two eyes are better than one’ – or in this case, the more eyes, the better.

We have stellar residency programs here at our School of Medicine and I would like to commend our faculty and staff for this success. Our School sponsors over 50 Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs including 24 residency programs and 27 fellowships. Of these programs, 57% have achieved the 5 year maximum cycle length awarded by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the entity that accredits GME programs in the U.S. Our programs have met or exceeded all of these qualifications during their reviews (national average is approximately a 3 year cycle). In other words, we got an ‘A’ in over half of our programs! This is phenomenal!

You may also remember that in the March edition of this Newsletter, I congratulated our colleagues for being selected to hold 4 of the 28 elected chairs of ACGME, the line-up includes:

- Chair, Nuclear Medicine RRC-Dr. Darlene Metter;
- Chair, Urology-Dr. Ian Thompson;
- Chair, Resident Committee-Dr. V. Seenu Reddy;
- Chair-elect, Anesthesiology-Dr. Lois Bready (She will assume the Chair later this year.)

Although, these four individuals are not only involved in setting the standards for program accreditation, they fundamentally understand the entire ACGME process. They are able to use that knowledge to improve our programs and raise the bar for our residents.
Welcome New Faculty

Anesthesiology
Ms. Raquel Chappelle joined on June 25, 2007 as an Anesthesia Specialist. She received her nursing degree from Auburn University of Montgomery in 1993. She received a Master's degree in nursing from the University of Alabama 1998, majoring in Nurse Anesthesia.

Epidemiology & Biostatistics
Dr. Jonathan A. L. Gelfond joined on June 1, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from UTHSCSA in 2000. He received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Pediatrics
Dr. Jaclyn Y. Hung joined on June 1, 2007 as Assistant Professor. She received her Ph.D. degree from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in 1992. She then completed a post-doctoral fellowship (1992-1995) at the UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. She will work at the Greehey Children’s Cancer Research Institute, primarily in the research program of Dr. Gail Tomlinson.

Dr. James L. Lukefahr joined on June 1, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from The UT Southwestern Medical School in 1978. He completed both his pediatric internship and residency programs at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Radiology
Dr. Jorge E. Lopera joined on June 15, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from Instituto de Ciencias de la Salud, Medelli, Columbia and completed his residency from Hospital Universitario San Icente de Paul Universite de Antioquia, Medellin, Columbia and from Hospital San Rafael, Leticia, Amazonas, Colombia.

NEW Administrator, Department of Family & Community Medicine

Brandon L. Hartman, M.H.A. Joined us on May 14, 2007 from Methodist Hospital in Houston, Texas. He has a Masters degree in Health Administration from Houston Baptist University and a BA from Louisiana College. He is a member of the American College of Health Care Executives and Medical Group Management Association.

The School of Medicine is proud to announce a new office designed to promote the retention and advancement of medical students through their four-year curriculum. The Office of Academic Enhancement will provide a wide variety of programs which have had success for many years through the Medical Hispanic Center of Excellence. These programs include a prematriculation program for incoming freshman students, group and individual tutoring, USMLE – Step 1 prep courses, MS II and MS IV teaching electives, as well as student programs focusing on test taking, study skills and other learning strategies.

For more information on these programs, please feel free to contact the new Director of the Office of Academic Enhancement, Dr. David L. Henzi (210/567-4469 or henzi@uthscsa.edu).
Announcements

After many distinguished years as the Director of the South Texas Health Research Center (STHRC), Dr. Roberto Villarreal has elected to step down in order to accept the position of Vice President for Community Initiatives and Translational Research with the University Health System. During Dr. Villarreal’s tenure, the Center has achieved many significant accomplishments which include, most recently:

• obtaining a grant to examine the impact of a diabetes prevention program in Laredo
• developing a depression awareness program for teens
• assisting in the formation of a faculty development program for the RAHC
• assisting with the coordination of a state-wide literacy conference aimed at educating health professionals about the topic of health literacy
• participating in health fairs, presentations and other community events

Please congratulate Dr. Villarreal for his work and best wishes for his continued success. Dr. Virginia Mika will serve as the Interim Director.

After eight distinguished years as the Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics, Dr. Ronald P. Williams has elected to step down as Chair in order to pursue full time the development of the Sarcoma Center he is building. During Dr. Williams’ tenure, the faculty has expanded and the residency program has thrived. The Department has also assumed a position of leadership in several major areas, including:

• creation of an annual orthopaedic oncology review course which provides a comprehensive review of musculoskeletal tumors
• the orthopaedic oncology rotation for residents --- which is the gold standard for resident education in benign and malignant bone and soft tissue tumors --- seamlessly integrating orthopaedics with radiology, pathology and medical oncology
• full funding of the Charles Rockwood Professorship
• endowment of the Fred G. Corley Chair
• the orthopaedic residency program being awarded a 5 year accreditation this year, attracting the top 1% of medical school graduates
• the Department being in the top 100 hospitals for orthopaedic service as recognized by US News & World Report for the past 5 out of 6 years moving the Department into new facilities on the UTHSCSA campus

Please congratulate Dr. Williams for continued success. A reception will be held on July 9th, from 5:00pm-7:00 pm in the ABB foyer. Dr. Daniel Carlisle will serve as the Interim Chairman.

Congratulations to Drs. Darlene F. Metter and Craig A. Witz for their membership into the University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education. This honor reflects their commitment to both teaching excellence and to our School of Medicine.

Congratulations to Drs. Jane Barbosa, Anthony Hartzler, Kathy Kowalewski, Jake Mancuso, Alejandro Marmol & Devesh Pandya for their success at the South Texas ACP meeting. Congratulations also extended to Drs. George Thompson III, Debra Hunt and George Crawford.

Congratulations to Dr. Kenneth Cusi for the $750,000 grant awarded from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund.
Class of 2007 Commencement

The thirty-seventh annual Commencement of the School of Medicine took place on Saturday, May 19th, 2007. One hundred ninety-four students in the Class of 2007 received their MD degree with over 2300 family members and friends present in Laurie Auditorium at Trinity University. William L. Henrich, M.D., M.A.C.P., Dean, School of Medicine and Vice President for Medical Affairs at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio presided over the ceremony. One hundred faculty participated in the celebration.

Distinguished members of the platform party included Francisco Cigarroa, M.D., President, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and Professor of Pediatric and Transplantation Surgery; Ruth Berggren, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine Infectious Diseases and Commencement Speaker; William Hincheey, M.D., President, Texas Medical Association and father of John William Hincheey in the Class of 2007; Delbert Chumley, M.D., President of the Bexar County Medical Society; and James, Holly, M.D., President of the School of Medicine Alumni Association. Mr. Don Beeler, President and CEO of CHRISTUS Santa Rosa and Mr. George Hernandez, President and CEO of University Health System participated. The vice, associate, and assistant deans in the School of Medicine, along with the assistant registrar, were present.

The rich traditions of the school were continued: Dr. Linda Y. Johnson, Professor of Cellular and Structural Biology, and Dr. T. Kent Keeton, Associate Professor of Pharmacology, were honored by the Class of 2007 and chosen to be Assistant Marshals. Dr. Berggren inspired the graduates and guests by speaking about her experience after Hurricane Katrina at Charity Hospital in New Orleans- “Class of 2007: one way or another, you will face a storm during your careers and you will need to make serious choices. I hope that it will not be a Katrina-like cataclysm. But you will find yourself in some situation where you must conquer your fears, stand on your feet, and remain true to your core values.” She finished with a question and a plea – “Still think you can’t make a difference? Do it!” To read her whole speech, please visit http://som.uthscsa.edu/eNews/SPECIALJUNE2007.pdf.

Two new traditions were started. The procession was highlighted by banners leading the graduated, faculty, and executive leadership. Forty-two physician family members processed into the ceremony following the faculty to placed the doctoral hoods on their graduating relative. Once hooded, graduates crossed the stage and received their diploma from Dr. Henrich and were congratulated by Dr. Cigarroa.

Robert Ellis Black, III, President of the Class of 2007 gave a moving speech, with advice for his colleagues: “Find your true passion, and fight for it. Treat others with respect, be honest, and be fair. If you follow those simple principles, people will listen to what you say. You will be respected as a leader when you work harder than everyone thinks you should.”

Dr. Henrich closed the ceremony with a fond farewell: “In essence, the joy of being a physician is the fact that so much good can come from your unqualified effort. So, as you leave your alma mater today, I want you to know your carry with you our, and when I say our, I mean not only all those here today, but, in a higher sense, humanities/ hopes and prayers that you will always deeply care about your patients, and you will always remain tenaciously committed to their well-being and to all you have learned here.

“And, of course, we hope, you will return often and when you do, you will remember fondly those halcyon days when you walked these halls, took care of your first sick person, formed unbreakable bonds with your colleagues and learned the rudiments of your craft. You will always be welcomed back.

“We all wish you – faculty, staff, family and friends, Godspeed and every continued success. Thank you.”
FOCAL POINTS: Department of Neurosurgery

The Department of Neurosurgery continues to make great strides in 2007. Our clinical programs have experienced great growth over the last year with the addition of our private practice site at St. Luke’s Baptist hospital. We anticipate that this growth will continue as we add three new faculty in July. Joining our department will be Dr. J. D. Day, who specializes in skull base procedures. We will also welcome Dr. Augusto Parra who specializes in Neuro critical care. Karin McCoy, PhD is a neuropsychologist that will work closely with our movement disorders, epilepsy, trauma and research programs. Earlier this year, Dr. Viktor Bartanusz joined our Department and specializes in spinal disorders. The Department is proud to have a total of 9 full time faculty and 9 clinical faculty members. We are excited about the future of our clinical programs with this great team of Neurosurgeons and neuroscientists and continue to aggressively recruit additional faculty.

We are equally excited about the building of the research programs. The Department has two full time research faculty. Dr. Yuchuan Ding joined the faculty in 2005 and his work focuses on peripheral thermal injury on cerebral integrity and the effect of exercise on Neurovascular Integrity in Stroke. Dr. Murat Dickey joined our faculty in April of 2007. His current work focuses on neuroprotection in acute stroke and identification of apoptic signaling pathways in neuronal apoptosis.

Our Residency Program has taken great strides this year as well. With the increase in our surgical cases, we are ranked among the top ten programs in the country. On May 2nd, the residency program had another successful review by the ACGME Residency Review Committee. We are expecting our favorable results in June.

In addition to our new research faculty, we are eager to start our 2007 summer research program. In 2006, 9 students participated in our summer program. The result of their work was 22 publications. Medical students working in the neurosurgery research program won 2 of the 4 awards at the UTHSCSA Medical Student research day.

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