

***Campus Connection*** Friday, July 3, 2009

People, plans and progress at Fort Worth's Medical School *and more*

## **TOP STORIES**

### **FY 2010 budget includes compensation increases for most classified employees**

Starting in September, most UNT Health Science Center [classified employees](#) (staff members without executive responsibilities) will see a pay increase. A new compensation plan, which was recently approved by the Executive Team, increases the minimum and maximum amount of each classified position's pay range by 5 percent. Full-time classified employees will receive an increase of at least 3 percent or \$1,000—whichever is more. The increase will be prorated for part-time benefits-eligible employees based on their hours.

The increases are part of ongoing efforts to improve pay at the Health Science Center to retain our talented workforce and to attract the best candidates. Please note, the money dedicated to the Employee Appreciation Day has been integrated into these compensation programs. Depending on the broader economy and our institution's continued financial success, benefits-eligible classified employees should receive salary increases annually through FY 2013.

Current pay ranges are listed on the [Human Resource Services \(HRS\) Web site](#). HRS will provide updated lists of classified salaries, which include the new pay increases, in August.

These increases supplement the recurring programs that the Health Science Center has already put in place to increase compensation across the institution, a key step toward our vision of becoming a top-10 health science center. Those programs include:

1. Faculty promotions and salary adjustments to non-classified positions to remain competitive with similar positions in the marketplace.
2. Reclassification of classified positions whose duties and responsibilities have changed significantly to warrant promotion.
3. The annual merit bonus program to reward our highest-performing employees.

We plan to continue these programs beyond the biennium but **they are contingent on the continuation of the availability of funds.**

The new pay increases, as well as the Health Science Center's recurring plans, were recommended by a compensation committee developed by President Scott Ransom last year to improve employee pay in response to feedback on the 2008 Employee Satisfaction Survey.

For more information about compensation changes for FY 2010, talk to your supervisor or contact Human Resource Services at ext. 2690.

### **Simpkins' research goes to clinical trials**

Research findings by James Simpkins, PhD, chair of the Pharmacology and Neuroscience, are being put to the test in clinical trials by Parkland Health and Hospital System and UT Southwestern Medical Center. Simpkins' research shows that rapid estrogen administration can protect the brain after traumatic injury in animals. These findings are now being tested on human trauma patients in North Texas.

Simpkins' studies in animals found that rapidly administering a single dose of estrogen, a strong anti-oxidant and an anti-inflammatory drug in stroke increases brain cell survival by up to 65 percent. Estrogens delivered intravenously post injury may have similar effects on people with traumatic brain injury. The animal research has demonstrated that rapid estrogen intervention protects the brain following a traumatic injury, stroke or sudden cardiac arrest.

Simpkins leads a large National Institutes of Health-funded program of research to discover substances that can protect the brain from injury. This is the first major clinical study to emanate from these basic science studies at the Health Science Center.

Parkland's clinical trials for this research was announced on [The Medical News](#), [Expert Click](#), [Medical News Today](#) and the [Parkland and UT Southwestern Web site](#)s. A link to the Parkland Web site was also on The33TV.com.

### **Save the Date: White Coat Ceremony is July 25**

This year's White Coat Ceremony will be held on Saturday, July 25, from 2 to 4 pm, at the Will Rogers Auditorium at 3401 West Lancaster in Fort Worth.

At the ceremony, the UNT Health Science Center will welcome 185 incoming Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (TCOM) students and 56 incoming Physician Assistant Studies students into the medical profession. Students will be "cloaked" in white coats symbolizing their careers in medicine. They will take an oath acknowledging their responsibilities and willingness to assume the obligations of their new professions.

Robert Early, president and CEO of JPS Health Network, will present the keynote address. At the event, Phillip Saperstein, DO, professor of Family Medicine, will receive the TCOM Founders' Medal. Stanley Weiss, DO, UNT Health Science Center professor emeritus, will receive the Mary E. Luibel Distinguished Service Award.

For more information on the White Coat Ceremony, contact the [Registrar's Office](#) at ext. 2201.

### **Integrative Physiology hires new faculty**

**Steve Mifflin, PhD**, has been appointed professor and chair of Integrative Physiology. Before joining the Health Science Center, Mifflin served as professor of Pharmacology at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. He holds a PhD in Physiology and Biophysics

from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and his research explores how the brain responds to and adapts in diseases such as sleep apnea, heart failure and hypertension.

**Thomas Cunningham, PhD**, has been appointed professor of Integrative Physiology and director of the Cardiovascular Research Institute. Prior to joining the Health Science Center, Cunningham was associate professor of Pharmacology at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. He earned his PhD in psychology from the University of Iowa in Iowa City. His research interests include using cellular neurophysiological approaches to study neural systems involved in body fluid balance and cardiovascular regulation.

Both appointments were effective July 1.

### **HIT Update: Primary Care Research Institute**

The Primary Care Research Institute at the UNT Health Science Center is addressing important health issues—including cancer, cardiovascular disease and mental health-- through primary care and public health research and education. PCRI, which includes NorTex (The North Texas Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network) and the Primary Care Clinical Research Fellowship, has several ongoing research projects and is hosting next month's Distinguished Speaker Series presentation on health equity.

#### **Distinguished Speaker Series**

- The PCRI will host the next **Distinguished Speaker Series** presentation on July 23. George Rust, MD, MPH, FAAFP, FACPM, will talk about "Real-World Research to Achieve Optimal and Equitable Health Outcomes for All." Rust is the director of the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta. The presentation is at 5:30 pm in Luibel Hall. Register online with .

#### **Research Updates:**

- With the **North Texas Healthy Heart Study (NTHH)**, PCRI is assessing the relationship of psychosocial factors and cardiovascular physiologic markers to better understand potential contributors to cardiovascular health disparities. Two-year prospective data are being collected on 571 enrolled participants. NTHH, which started in 2006, is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) through the Texas Center for Health Disparities. Roberto Cardarelli, DO (TCOM '01), MPH (SPH '01), associate professor of Family Medicine, is the principal investigator for the project.
- Final data collection is underway for the **Cancer Screening Initiative Project**, which studies the impact of an educational DVD for primary care physicians on cancer screening practices. Cardarelli is also principal investigator for this study, which is funded by the Moncrief Cancer Foundation in collaboration with UT Southwestern Medical Center's [Cancer Resources](#).
- **The Mental Health Screening and Treatment Initiative (MHSTI) for the Tarrant County Probationer Population** is a collaborative study among NorTex, the Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department, and Texas Wesleyan University.

MHSTI, which provides routine mental health screenings for probationers using an innovative audio-visual computer system, was recently funded through a grant from the Meadows Foundation and a private donation from the Byrne Foundation. Christopher Mann, DO (TCOM '86), and Cardarelli are principal investigators for this project.

- **The Tachygraphic Color-Organized Medication System Study** is designed to evaluate and refine a system of color-specific symbols to place on medication bottles to improve the accuracy and rapid identification of prescribed medications. The study is funded through a grant from the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. Mann is the principal investigator on the project.
- **The NorTex Needs Assessment**, funded by the Pfizer Medical Education Group, officially ended on March 31, providing valuable information on NorTex physicians' performance in cardiovascular care, cancer screening, immunizations and pediatric care, as well as the best ways to conduct research with NorTex physician members.

#### **Education:**

- Three dual degree (DO/MS) students are graduating from PCRI's **Primary Care Clinical Research Fellowship this summer**. **Kelly Sprawls** will complete a primary care internal medicine residency at Harvard University at Cambridge. **Billy Effinger** will complete a traditional internship at Westchester General Hospital in Miami. **Michael Dunn** will complete a family medicine residency at Christus Spohn Health Systems in Corpus Christi. Under the fellowship, TCOM students enroll in a competitive dual degree program offering a MS degree in primary care clinical research. PCRI also now offers fellowships in primary care clinical research for students earning dual DO/PhD degrees.

#### **Events:**

- The PCRI hosted its first **NorTex Convocation of Practices** on April 25. The NorTex Convocation of Practices will serve as a yearly forum for PCRI/NorTex to give back to collaborators and the community. Presentations on current and past NorTex projects were provided to academic and private practice physicians as well as non-physician clinical researchers. NorTex research study participants also attended a mini health fair.

For more information, visit the [Web site](#). The PCRI is one of 12 [Institutes of Texas](#) (HIT) at the UNT Health Science Center. HIT is designed to speed research from the bench to the bedside to create a healthier and more productive Texas. Updates on each of the 12 HIT centers and institutes will be featured in future issues of Campus Connection.

## **NEWS BRIEFS**

### **Board of Visitors meets on July 10-11**

The UNT Health Science Center Board of Visitors' next meeting is July 10-11 on campus. The Board will meet with members of the executive team to get an update on Health Science Center news and discuss topics including recruiting and retaining diverse employees and students and improving student learning outcomes. The Board of Visitors comprises members with diverse expertise from around the country.

They advise and consult with the president, the administration and the deans of the schools and colleges on specific projects; participate as members of school- and college-based advisory boards; assist in community relations; and generally promote the interests of the Health Science Center.

### **Financial Systems launches a new Web site**

The new site features support information for the EIS Finance Module including the latest news on upgrades, patches and fixes, training materials, forms and helpful links. The site also includes contact information for Financial Systems staff and an online Helpdesk form for reporting issues.

The Web site has been updated daily with new information since the upgrade from version 8.4 to 9.0 was completed, so check often. Financial Systems wants to provide the best service possible, so send feedback or ideas for the site to [Rene Arcand](#), assistant director of Financial Systems. The new Web site can be found [here](#), or under “Departments” on the UNTHSC Intranet site.

### **New cash receipt forms are on the way**

Cashiering Services is revising the Departmental Cash Receipt form. It has not yet been finalized so please take a look at the new [form here and send](#) your comments to [Janis Minyard](#), senior financial analyst.

The new form is much larger to provide more space for the required information and to facilitate the imaging process. The new three-part forms will likely come in pads of 25 receipts. Accounting will collect the current receipt books and will issue the new pads around the first of August.

## **HR UPDATE**

### **Reminder: Benefits enrollment starts next week**

The Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) annual enrollment period is July 6-31. During summer enrollment, you can enroll in or change your insurance coverage for Plan Year 2010. If you have questions or need help making changes to your benefits, contact Human Resource Services, visit ERS Online or attend an enrollment session on campus this month. Remember, if you don't need to make changes, you don't have to do anything—current benefit selections will roll over to the new plan. Read more [here](#).

### **Benefits changes for plan year 2010**

Starting Sept. 1, the two state dental plans (DMO and Texas Dental Choice Plan) will be administered by HumanaDental. The Aetna DMO will become the Humana Dental DHMO, and the State of Texas Dental Choice Plan will keep its name, but will drop the three-year waiting period for maximum benefits. Participants will now receive maximum benefits beginning immediately. Also, the maximum annual benefit available in the State of Texas Dental Choice Plan will increase by 20 percent to \$1,500. The benefits under the HumanaDental DHMO (formerly Aetna DMO) will remain the same.

If you are currently enrolled in the Aetna DMO Plan, you will be required to register your primary care dentist as this information will not automatically rollover once the plan changes to the HumanaDental DHMO in September. You can register your primary care dentist (PCD) via ERS On-line, by phone or by completing the Humana DHMO form. You can phone in your PCD to HumanaDental at 877-377-0987 (toll-free).

### Insurance rates for plan year 2010

These rates will become effective on Sept. 1, 2009:

#### Premium rates for Plan Year 2010 – Full-time employees

- **HealthSelect of Texas**

Coverage	Premium	State Pays	Member Pays
Member Only	\$385.38	\$385.38	\$0.00
Member & Spouse	\$826.02	\$605.70	\$220.32
Member & Children	\$680.42	\$532.90	\$147.52
Family	\$1,121.06	\$753.22	\$367.84

#### Premium rates for Plan Year 2010 – Part-time employees

- **HealthSelect of Texas**

Coverage	Premium	State Pays	Member Pays
Member Only	\$385.38	\$192.69	\$192.69
Member & Spouse	\$826.02	\$302.85	\$523.17
Member & Children	\$680.42	\$266.45	\$413.97
Family	\$1,121.06	\$376.61	\$744.45

#### Dental rates for Plan Year 2010

- **State of Texas Dental Choice Plan<sup>SM</sup>**

Coverage	Premium
Member Only	\$22.46
Member & Spouse	\$44.92
Member & Children	\$53.90
Family	\$76.36

- **HumanaDental DHMO**

Coverage	Premium
Member Only	\$8.52
Member & Spouse	\$17.05
Member & Children	\$20.45
Family	\$28.98

The monthly premium for the Short-Term Disability Plan will decrease from 32 cents per \$100 of salary to 29 cents per \$100 of salary effective Sept. 1, 2009. Long-Term Disability and life insurance rates will remain unchanged for Plan 2010.

### **ORP/TSA Vendor consolidation project update**

In early 2008, the UNT Health Science Center partnered with the University of North Texas to establish a system-wide UNT Retirement Program to administer our Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) and Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) 403(b) plans. This program will provide all UNT System schools an opportunity to provide top-quality, tax deferred products at the lowest possible participant cost while meeting new Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations for 403(b) plans that became effective on Jan. 1, 2009.

To help meet the requirements of the new 403(b) regulations and evaluate and select the most reputable and profitable vendors in the industry, Human Resource Services engaged Sibson Consulting, a firm with extensive expertise in higher education issues. In the past three years, Sibson conducted more than 100 comprehensive, full-service vendor selection and evaluation projects for defined contribution programs, including 403(b) plans.

In April 2009, the UNT System released a Request for Proposal to the investment community asking vendors to bid on providing investment services for our ORP and TSA plans. A final evaluation of the qualified vendors who submitted bids is currently underway, and we are approaching the last phase of the project, the selection of the vendors who will be authorized to sell 403(b) products to our employees. We anticipate having the selection completed and a list of authorized vendors announced by Sept. 1, 2009.

If your current vendor is not on the list of authorized vendors, you can continue contributions to them through the end of 2009. Watch for updates on vendor selection. Contact HRS at ext. 2690 with questions.

## **IN THE NEWS**

### **Saving Paul Quinn College**

Paul Quinn College is working on partnerships with the Health Science Center and Southern Methodist University to keep its doors open, according to an editorial in the [Dallas Morning News](#). The piece notes that two decades of inadequate funding and poor community support have led to a loss of accreditation. The Associated Press and the [Houston Chronicle](#) reprinted the editorial.

### **Physician participates in Iranian election protest**

Arash Manzori, DO, assistant professor of cardiology, was interviewed about the protests against Iran's election results by the [Star-Telegram](#). Dr. Manzori left Iran when he was 13 but continues to support

those still there who battle for fair and democratic elections. A companion piece was posted on the [PoliTex](#) blog.

### **Saving missing persons**

The DNA lab continues to appear in news stories across the nation as the identifying agency in missing persons cases. Recent stories are from New Mexico ([KOB NBC-TV](#)), Tennessee ([Knoxville News Sentinel](#)), Florida ([Action News CBS and Fox](#)) and Dallas ([WFAA ABC-TV](#)).

### **KUDOS**

**Terry Gratton, DrPH**, assistant professor of Environmental and Occupational Health, received the 2009 Walter F. Snyder Award for his contributions to the environmental health profession. The award is given annually by the National Sanitation Foundation International and the National Environmental Health Association. Gratton was recognized for his 40-year career with the San Antonio Metropolitan Health Department, the U.S. Public Health Service and the UNT Health Science Center School of Public Health.

**Jamboor Vishwanatha, PhD**, dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, is among eight new nominees to be added to the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) Evaluators Registry. Evaluators on the registry comprise COCA's accreditation site visit teams. Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine alumna **Betsy Brown Schenck, DO ('78)**, was also named to the registry.

**Albert Yurvati, DO (TCOM '86)**, chair and professor of Surgery, won a bronze medal at the 2009 Amateur Bodybuilding Association/International Natural Bodybuilding Association Lone Star Natural Championships in the grand masters division.

**Carl Bluemel**, electronic media manager, submitted the winning design for the Cowtown Marathon's 2010 T-shirt. His design was selected. (Need more info)

### **EMPLOYEE PROFILE**

**Name:** Chiana Diggs

**Title:** Learning Specialist

**Department:** Center for Academic Performance

#### **How long have you worked here, and what did you do before joining the UNT Health Science Center?**

I have worked at UNTHSC for two years. Prior to joining UNTHSC, I worked as assistant director of admissions at UNT Denton. I was employed by UNT Denton for 14 years.

**What are your job duties at the Health Science Center?** As a learning specialist, I have the opportunity to provide academic support to the UNTHSC campus by implementing and coordinating academic programs for all UNTHSC students, collaborating with academic departments to offer services and providing academic counseling to all UNTHSC students.

**The Health Science Center's values are compassion, integrity, excellence, pride, innovation and teamwork. Can you give an example of how your department or your coworkers demonstrate one of these values?** The mission of our division is "fostering student success," and, given the nature of our department, our team shows each of these values daily. We are student advocates, remaining committed to serving students, collaborating and supporting other campus departments and showing a genuine concern for our fellow team members.

**What's the best part about working at the Health Science Center?** The most fulfilling part of my job is working with students and assisting them to meet their personal and academic goals.

**What do you like to do when you aren't at the Health Science Center?** I love spending time with my family, which is the most important part of my life. I also enjoy dancing, singing and trying new recipes.

## **SAVE THE DATE**

**July 10-11**

**UNTHSC Board of Visitors Meeting**

UNT Health Science Center

**July 15**

**[Annual UNTHSC HUB Vendor Fair](#)**

11 am – 2 pm

Atrium

**July 23**

**Distinguished Speaker Series**

**“Real-World Research to Achieve Optimal and Equitable Health Outcomes”**

5:30 pm

Luibel Hall and Atrium

**July 25**

**White Coat Ceremony**

2 pm

Will Rogers Auditorium

**August 20 – 21**

**UNT System Board of Regents Meeting**

UNT Health Science Center

**August 26**

**Employee Appreciation Day**

**September 7**

**Labor Day**

**October 10**  
**UNTHSC Gala**  
Celebrating the School of Public Health

**October 15-18**  
**SACNAS**

**December 9**  
**Employee Holiday Lunch**  
Atrium

**December 17**  
**President's Open House**  
EAD 8th Floor

**December 24- January 1, 2010**  
**Christmas, Winter and New Year's Holidays**

*Watch the Daily News and Campus Connection for more information on these events and more.*

### **ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER**

**Campus Connection** is published the first and third Fridays of each month by the Office of Marketing and Communications for UNT Health Science Center employees, students and friends. Please feel free to forward this e-newsletter to others and print it for those who don't have access to a computer.

Our goals are to:

- Keep you informed about the Health Science Center's strategic plan, priorities and goals.
- Promote the UNTHSC values of compassion, integrity, teamwork, innovation, pride and excellence.
- Demonstrate how the people and programs of the Health Science Center really do make a difference.
- Enable you to be a well-informed UNTHSC ambassador.

You're invited to contribute to the continuous improvement of this e-newsletter and other UNTHSC Family communications by sending story ideas, news, suggestions and questions to [news@hsc.unt.edu](mailto:news@hsc.unt.edu).

**Matt Havlik**  
Communications Coordinator II  
[@hsc.unt.edu](mailto:mhavlik@hsc.unt.edu)  
817-735-2554

**Carl Bluemel**  
Electronic Media Manager  
[@hsc.unt.edu](mailto:cbluemel@hsc.unt.edu)  
817-735-2115

**Campus Connection**

University of North Texas Health Science Center

817.735.2554

3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard | EAD 834 | Fort Worth TX | 76107-2699