



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
at El Paso

DEAN'S CORNER
DECEMBER 2006

It is a privilege to have been selected to serve as Founding Dean of what will be only the second new medical school in the United States in the past 25 years. A great deal has occurred since I first became the Founding Dean/Regional Dean of the medical school in El Paso on October 16, 2006.

Building the medical school from the bases of strength of the current regional school will allow us to develop a school that will serve as a model for the education of medical students in Texas, in the U.S., and internationally. The implementation of this program will require the State's support for the operational budget of the medical school which will be over \$20 million dollars per year for the biennium. This budget will serve as the basis for establishing the Basic Science Faculty and the Research Centers of Excellence that will support the academic mission of the medical school.

It is clear that there is a commitment from the State of Texas for the building of this medical school based on the state-of-the art research building and new medical educational building that is in the process of being built. We anticipate that the new building will be completed by September 2007. Once the funding from the State becomes available, we will begin the recruitment of the basic science educational faculty which will consist of twelve to fifteen basic science educators who will serve primarily as educators and who will help put together the core curriculum of the first two years. This curriculum has been developed under the guidance of Dr. Darryl Williams and is a fully integrated system-based curriculum. These basic science educators will initially be within the Centers of Excellence of Medical Education which, ultimately, will be a free standing Department of Medical Education containing both basic science and clinical educators.

The core curriculum which has been developed by Dr. Williams and faculty members, who have been working with him, will be a system based curriculum. In addition, the clinical relevance of the curriculum will be developed using a model which has been accredited by the LCME and is known as the Clinical Presentation Curriculum. We have asked Dr. Henry Mandin, who has developed the curriculum in Calgary, to help us initiate a similar curriculum which will be known as the El Paso Curriculum. This curriculum has been developed for medical students so that, in their first two years, they will be thinking like physicians as they learn the basic sciences. The curriculum which is based on the 120 different ways in which the body responds to stress, was developed by Dr. Mandin. The presentations have been developed so that the students will be thinking about their clinical presentations of patients as they learn the basic sciences. For example, if a patient presents with an elevated BUN and creatinine, a nephrologists

would think of that presentation as representation of either renal, pre-renal, or post renal disease. He then would algorithmically develop a process which would ultimately allow the student to determine the basis for the clinical presentation. Following a discussion of clinical presentations, students will study the basic sciences in a fully integrated system based approach. Case presentations reinforce the materials that the students learn.

In addition to the development of the educational base for the first two years of the medical student education, we will be developing a Centers of Excellence as the core of the research activities. These centers will include a Cancer Center, a Center for Obesity and Diabetes, for Cardiovascular Disease, for Neurodegenerative Disease, for Infectious Disease, and for Geriatrics and International Health. These centers will be led by clinical investigators who are NIH funded. Each investigator will lead a team of three or four NIH funded investigators. These centers will occupy the first of the major research facilities. Once the educational building is completed, a third research building will be developed to house the additional investigators centered within the Centers of Excellence.

The Texas Tech School of Medicine will work closely with Thomason Hospital as both develop enhanced clinical programs. The administration of the Hospital under Mr. Jim Valenti is working closely with the administration of the medical school. In addition, we are looking at the development of the clinical faculty in each of the departments, especially with the recruitment of additional sub-specialists who will enhance clinical care at Thomason Hospital. As you know, the new hospital will be developing a new facility that will focus on the care of women and children which will certainly enhance the clinical care of both women and children in the community. We also look forward to working with community hospitals and physicians who will play an important role in the training of our medical students.

In addition to the development of Centers of Excellence and the recruitment of sub-specialists, the school has been very active in recruiting for unfilled chair positions. We are now actively involved with the recruitment of a Chair of Anesthesia and of Emergency Medicine. We will also be initiating in the near future, searches for Chairs of Pathology, Psychiatry, and Neurology.

We are looking forward to a final word from the State regarding the request for operational funds for the medical school. If and when these are identified, we plan to initiate recruitment of the educational and research faculty. Although realistically we feel the first class will be admitted in 2009, if we are fortunate, we may be able to admit our first class of students in 2008.

I certainly look forward to working with all of you as we undertake this major effort in building America's second new medical school in the past 25 years. It is a great honor and opportunity for me to be able to work with all of you during these very exciting days here in El Paso.