



**Dean's Corner**  
**March, 2006**

Dear Texas Tech Family,

The past month has been busy with many things academic as well as many things civic. It is clear that the role of Texas Tech in the El Paso community continues to grow.

**Faculty Promotions.** Congratulations are in order for three of our colleagues who were recently informed by President Wilson of their promotion by the Board of Regents. Dr. Miguel Pirela-Cruz, Regional Chair of Orthopedic Surgery, has been promoted to Professor. Dr. Hector O. Pacheco and Dr. Susan McLean have been promoted to Associate Professor. In achieving this recognition, these individuals have demonstrated real accomplishment in clinical practice and academic excellence. I hope that you will join me in congratulating these deserving faculty members.

**Departmental Review.** The process of departmental review continues, involving the contributions of many faculty members in the internal review committees. It would have been impossible to conduct the reviews without such dedicated effort. The committees' hard work has produced recommendations that will serve as guidelines for improvement for years to come. Review of Pathology has been completed, and review of Obstetrics/Gynecology and Pediatrics will be completed before the end of the month. Reviews of Emergency Medicine, Radiology, and Family Medicine are well along the way and should all be completed around the end of May.

**Founding Dean Search.** The Search Committee for the Founding Dean has met several times receiving and evaluating the application materials provided by candidates from throughout the country. Several excellent candidates have been identified, and the committee is in the midst of making recommendations for a short list of candidates and planning for first visits. As the process moves ahead, we will be inviting candidates to El Paso to learn about the opportunity and to give us an opportunity to assess their compatibility with our campus. These visits will be structured to allow many individuals to meet the applicants. I hope that you will plan to participate.

**Budget Process.** Each year at this time, the process of setting the budget for the next fiscal year preoccupies many people on this campus. This year has seen that activity throughout the institution, and thanks are due to all of the individuals who participated in the process. Special thanks are due to Larry Elkins, Marti Juarez, and all of the people in the Business Office. They have put together many different budgets to create a comprehensive budget for the whole campus.

Traditionally, the second year of the Texas Biennium has seen only minor modifications to the previous year's budget. This time, the process has been more complicated in an effort to realign revenue sources with the function of individual budget units. To aid in this effort, we have developed a new process. A Budget Review Committee has been meeting on a regular basis for several months. The committee is chaired by Dr. Zenaido Camacho and includes Mr. Elkins, Dr. Manuel Rivera, Dr. Gilbert Handal, (both elected representatives of the Department Chairs), Dr. Antonio Jesurun, Dr. Kathryn Horn, (both elected representatives of the General Faculty), and Dr. Swapna Chaudhuri, President of the RETGH Medical Staff. The committee has made its recommendations about an institutional budget. The final budget should be approved with the next several days.

**Student Medical Mission Trip to Juárez.** Texas Tech medical and other health professions students have made their annual trip to Juárez. A long-standing event, this has been a wonderful opportunity for the students to put their knowledge into practice and to give back to others. Many former participants have said that the experience has changed their career goals and confirmed their desire to help those in need.

**Clinical Fellowships.** I have set aside funds to begin development of subspecialty fellowships and have requested proposals from the clinical departments. Thus far, I have received 6 formal proposals: gastroenterology, nephrology, and pulmonary/critical care from Internal Medicine; sports medicine and geriatrics from Family Medicine; and surgical oncology from Surgery. The effort to establish advanced subspecialty training is an important step in our plans to provide comprehensive medical education and advanced health care capabilities that will establish Texas Tech as a medical referral center.

**Infinity Campaign.** The *Infinity Campaign* has raised \$16 million from the local community, showing that El Paso truly supports the four year medical school. Dr. Chris Powers, Medical Community Gifts Chairman, will help us launch the faculty/staff campaign on March 6. 100% participation is important to send the message that we are willing to invest in a better health care future for El Paso. Next week you will receive a pledge letter and payroll deduction form in the campus mail. It's easy to give and every gift is important.

**Progress on the Medical Education Building.** For those of you who have passed by the East Campus in the last few weeks, you are probably as impressed as I with the remarkable progress that has been made with the construction of the Medical Education Building. The structural steel has shot up from what was recently just a hole in the ground. Progress is also being made in developing the finishing touches for the building. Architects and interior designers have moved ahead with their plans for the Medical Student Colleges and each of the colleges will have its own theme with matching décor that will capture the spirit of our community and our region.

**Mayor's Lyceum.** Mayor John Cook has established a number of community advisory committees to provide guidance about initiatives that will move El Paso forward. These committees have been called "cabinets", and they include community leaders in a wide range of areas including business, military, education, transportation, etc. I have been designated as the Chair of the Medical Cabinet. Our group has been charged with making recommendations to improve and expand the availability and access to health care services in El Paso and the region. We have met on several occasions, and the committee has begun to formulate plans to achieve those goals. I will be making public reports on the progress of this committee on future occasions.

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