



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER  
Paul L. Foster School of Medicine™



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **High Level Leaders from the National Institutes for Health to Visit El Paso at Medical Center of the Americas Research Advancement Symposium**

The Medical Center of the Americas Foundation, in conjunction with Congressman Silvestre Reyes, proudly welcomes the United States Department of Health and Human Services – *National Institutes of Health (NIH)*, the nation’s leading medical research agency, to the Paso del Norte Region for the first Medical Center of the Americas (MCA) Research Advancement Symposium. The symposium, reserved for approximately 100 healthcare professionals and elected officials, will be hosted by the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine.

The NIH will send nine distinguished representatives, including Della Hann, Ph.D, acting deputy director, NIH Office of Extramural Research and Joyce Hunter, Ph.D, deputy director, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD), to the Paso del Norte Region to learn about our research efforts and capacity and to share ideas crucial for successfully obtaining NIH funding. “This form of communication between the NIH and a community, as well as tours of key research facilities by NIH staff, is unprecedented” said Congressman Silvestre Reyes. “This is a significant step towards the expansion of life sciences research in our region.”

On **February 18, 2010**, the NIH Representatives will spend the day at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine (SOM), located at the corner of Alberta Avenue & Concepcion. The group will learn about El Paso, Las Cruces and Juarez’s research capacity and regional partnerships, tour the Paul L. Foster SOM and UTEP research facilities, and answer pointed questions about how our region can achieve more success in attaining NIH funding as minority institutions and relatively young institutions entering a highly competitive life sciences industry.

The NIH is the leading supporter of research in the nation. The NIH annually invests more than \$28 billion in medical research. “More than 83% of the NIH’s funding is awarded through almost 50,000 competitive grants to more than 325,000 researchers at more than 3,000 universities, medical schools, and other research institutions in every state and around the world,” according to its website at: [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov).

According to Dr. J. Manuel de la Rosa, M.D., Founding Dean of the Paul L. Foster SOM, “We want El Paso to be one of those communities that successfully competes and is awarded NIH funding to continue research in the areas of Hispanic, military and border health issues. This is a rare opportunity to show this high level delegation that we have the infrastructure and talent to be the leaders in those research areas most important to this community and Hispanics across the nation.”

**February 19, 2010**, “A Day with the NIH at UTEP,” will be a one-day seminar intended to help demystify the application and review process, highlight areas of special interest including those of concern to the Paso del Norte region, and clarify federal regulations and policies. NIH senior leadership, policy, grants management, review and program staff will provide a broad array of expertise and encourage personal interaction between themselves and seminar participants, including experienced investigators, early stage and new investigators, researchers relatively new to NIH, post docs, graduate students and grants administrators from Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. “We are delighted that a distinguished group of NIH representatives have committed their time and attention to learning more about biomedical and health research in this Paso del Norte region. We will proudly share with them the enormous progress that has been achieved at UTEP with NIH support of our research capacity-building, and our vision of UTEP as the first national research university with a 21<sup>st</sup> century student demographic. Our region is more than a border on a map; it is increasingly a frontier of innovation, cooperation, and rich material for major, far-reaching research and practical investigation,” says Dr. Diana Natalicio, president of UTEP.

Robert E. Skov, chairman of the MCA Foundation Board, believes that “this is a rare opportunity to create a long-term relationship between NIH leadership and regional stakeholders. This will invariably lead to our institutions obtaining substantial investment from the NIH that can be leveraged into meaningful research. This in turn will contribute significantly to our national research profile.”

## **TWO-DAY MEDIA SCHEDULE**

### ***MCA Research Advancement Symposium - National Institutes of Health at Paul L. Foster School of Medicine***

#### **Thursday, February 18, 2010**

TTUHSC Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso

Medical Education Building, Lecture Hall (Corner of Alberta Ave. & Concepcion)

5001 El Paso Street (official address and entrance to parking)

#### **Media Agenda – February 18, 2010 (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

8:15 – 8:30 am            Opening Remarks

8:30 – 10:00 am        Presentations by Paso del Norte Region Key Research Partners

- Woody Hunt, Founding Chairman, Medical Center of the Americas (MCA)
- Emma Schwartz, President, MCA
- Samantha Chagra, Director of Business Development Life Sciences, Regional Economic Development Corporation (REDCO)
- Bob Cook, CEO, REDCO

- Bruce Adams, M.D., COL, Fort Bliss – William Beaumont Army Medical Center
- J. Manuel de la Rosa, M.D., Founding Dean, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine
- Charles Miller, Ph.D, Associate Dean of Research, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine
- Diana Natalicio, Ph.D, President, The University of Texas at El Paso
- Vimal Chaitanya, Ph.D, New Mexico State University
- Hugo S. Staines Orozco, M.D., Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez

- 10:15 – 10:45 am      **Photo Opportunity** - NIH representatives tour Paul L. Foster School of Medicine (Common areas only. No access to closed door facilities.) Media may get access to facilities only after NIH representatives finish their tour.
- 11:00 – 11:30 am      **Interviews** with TTUHSC & UTEP Faculty and Researchers
- 11:30 am                **Interview** with Della M. Hann, Ph.D, acting deputy director, NIH Office of Extramural Research
- 11:45 – 12:45 pm      **Photo Opportunity** of NIH Reps having lunch with symposium participants and first, third, and fourth-year medical students.
- 12:45 – 2:45 pm      NIH Roundtable Discussion

***A Day with the NIH at UTEP***

**Friday, February 19, 2010;** 7:15 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
 The University of Texas at El Paso  
 Tomás Rivera Conference Center, Union Building East

Home Page: <http://ia.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=63114>  
 Agenda: <http://ia.utep.edu/portals/1462/NIH-Agenda.pdf>  
 Registration: <http://ia.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=63354>