

May 13, 2019: Annual Meeting, College of Medicine

The meeting began at 4:00pm in Coleman North Auditorium on the UTHSC campus.

Exec. Dean Strome described changes he has made in the structure of the College of Medicine (CoM) administration. Dr. Jon McCullars has become Senior Executive Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs, in essence, a Chief Operating Officer for the CoM. Dr. Strome is currently recruiting a Senior Associate Dean of Community Health to help address healthcare disparities in the Memphis community. Polly Hofmann remains Senior Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs; Theresa Hartnett is the Associate Dean of Finance. Meanwhile the CoM's education mission now has Natascha Thompson as Associate Dean of GME, and Mike Whitt as Associate Dean of Medical Student Education. As Susan Brewer is retiring, a new Associate Dean of Student Affairs is being sought under the revised title, Associate Dean of Student Education, to ensure quality and similarity of training across all the CoM's campuses. Darryl Quarles is the Senior Associate Dean of Research.

Three new chairs have been hired – for Steven Boggs for Anesthesiology, David Schwartz for Radiation Oncology, and Kui Li for MIB as interim chair. Searches are ongoing: for Medicine, Preventive Medicine, Psychiatry, Community Health, and MIB.

Dr. Strome noted that the planned Cancer Institute with West Clinic is no longer going to come to fruition, and so a different approach will be needed. David Shibata, chair of Surgery, Neil Hayes, chief of Heme-Oncology, and David Schwartz, Chair of Radiation Oncology, are working together to build a new approach to cancer care. He identified a number of new specialists who have been recruited in oncology-related fields.

This year UTHSC has acquired its own surgery center, which is located on Cresthaven Road near 240-Poplar. Now called the University Clinical Health Surgery Center, it will allow both for clinical autonomy and for growth.

The new Cardiovascular Institute will take its place alongside the Neuroscience, Transplant and Cancer Institutes.

Going forward, the goal is to develop a truly academic medical center. UTMP/UT Methodist Physicians is being reorganized. The goals are to improve its operational structure, to provide compensation and bonuses – not just to reward clinical productivity, but also to recognize educational activity, community outreach, and scholarship. Similarly, the CoM's affiliation with ROH is expected to grow closer.

Regarding research two new granting mechanisms in the College of Medicine were established: CIRCA/Collaborative Intramural Research awards are geared to help develop RO1 proposals; Maturation awards aim to encourage entrepreneurship. Dean Strome identified a number of recent successes in gaining research funding.

Research efforts in collaboration with St. Jude were described: in sickle cell disease, and BIG: Biorepository and Integrative Genomics Initiative. In the latter, the next step is to secure a corporate partner to get the data sequenced. Currently over 14,000 participants are enrolled, with about 150 new participants entering each week.

Regarding education: UTHSC has now been granted a 10-year accreditation for our Physicians' Assistant program. UTHSC 2018 graduates marked a 100% first-time pass rate.

Going forward, Dr. Strome discussed ways to enhance matriculation among those who are accepted as new medical students in the CoM. The CoM has now initiated a "Second Look" visit for all students who have been accepted, so that they could learn more about housing, student debt and a number of other issues of interest to prospective students. Additional efforts are being made to address current students' concerns, at each class level. Weekly lunches with the dean are being held, so that concerns can be expressed, one-on-one. To increase diversity, new admission guidelines for out-of-state students are being implemented; for example a reduction in out-state tuition. Another major student issue concerns student debt. Our students' average debt has jumped from \$180,000 to \$195,000 this past year. Reducing tuition, alone, will not solve the problem. Additional factors include financial literacy, and how much students spend/borrow for housing. Of note, some of our less affluent students have been incurring debt, not for education, but to help support their families. A new initiative is to provide affordable housing for students on campus. Philanthropic programs for scholarships will also be sought actively. Dr. Strome emphasized that students should be able to attend the CoM here regardless of their financial means, and they should be able to go into any field they want - - e.g. primary care - - regardless of their financial means. Additionally, the Dean noted a wellness initiative, including a mind-body space being built in the SAC for yoga, barre classes, Pilates, meditation, etc. Finally, curricular changes have been made in several courses.

Match Day was successful across the four campuses. Retention of UTHSC grads as residents has increased from 58 to 66. A wellness initiative for residents will be promoted via recruiting a GME-specific Counselor for Wellness into SASSI.

For clinical educators, a new faculty track is being created, to promote them outside the usual academic track.

Philanthropy has been a mixed story. Gift amounts have increased by 22%, but numbers of donors have decreased by 10%. In line with the national trend, larger gifts are coming, but from a smaller donor pool.

Regarding Community Outreach: Memphis has a large percentage of residents living in poverty, with resulting discrepancies in health and healthcare. One form of community outreach will be for our residents to participate in the county's Parks Summer Programs, to teach Shelbu County students about health, and to identify children, who may be interested in healthcare careers. Another goal will be to ensure that everyone in the community will have a provider, whether physician, PA, nurse, dentist or other health careprovider.

Additionally, to encourage diversity the CoM held its first African-American Alumni Reunion. UTHSC CoM's first African-American graduate shared his experiences with other alumni and with current students. A Campaign Against Hate also began, as an initiative to promote a Culture of Kindness.

Dr. Mike Whitt then presented the Class of 2019. Performance on Step 1 was commensurate with national standards, while performance on Step 2 exceeded national averages. The class was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Dr. Pfeffer then presented a proposed change in the CoM's ByLaws, to create a track for non-tenure track Clinician Educators. The bylaws change was approved by unanimous voice vote. Dr. Pfeffer then handed the Presidency to the next DFAC president, Dr. Burt Sharp. Dr. Sharp introduced the next DFAC President-Elect, who by prior online voting will be Dr. Larry Pfeffer.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
DFAC Secretary