



UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER  
OF EL PASO

February 12, 2010

**Come Celebrate:**

It's finally here...our "Topping Off" celebration for El Paso Children's Hospital and UMC's Women's and Infants' Tower is set for tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. Please join us as we watch the construction crews hoist the last piece of structural steel atop the 10-story building. Be sure to arrive a little early so you can sign the beam and forever be a part of history. There will be plenty of fun, food and entertainment...and best of all it looks like the weather will cooperate! Tomorrow is supposed to be the prettiest day of the week. See you in the morning!!!



**Medal of Honor:** I am very proud to announce that University Medical Center of El Paso has once again been recognized by the federal government for our success in promoting the life-saving importance of organ donation. For the third straight year, we have received the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) "Medal of Honor."

The award was established six years ago when HHS asked hospitals to help them boost the number of viable organs that are available for transplantation. The government's goal was that hospitals achieve a 75% donation rate, meaning 75% of patients eligible to donate organs do in fact become organ donors. UMC's donation rate last year was 93%!!

That's why Jim Cutler, the President and CEO of Southwest Transplant Alliance, was in El Paso this week. He travelled from Dallas to personally present the Medal of Honor to our Board of Managers because, he said, "Only 1% of the nation's hospitals have done as well as UMC has at exceeding the government's goal."

Our physicians, nurses and support staff deserve tremendous credit for that remarkable achievement. They realize that despite their best efforts to save a critically injured patient's life, not all injuries are survivable, yet they can still help others by discussing the subject of organ donation with their patients' families. Of course, it is the organ donors and their loved ones who are the true heroes in all of this. That's why UMC established a "Wall of Heroes" in our ICU waiting room. It bears the photographs of 62 El Pasoans whose "gift of life" has helped so many others (a single organ donor can save or enhance the lives of as many as nine people).

It is important that each of us discuss this topic with our families because more than 105,500 Americans, including 9,845 Texans are on a waiting list for a transplant this very day. I encourage you to visit [www.donatelifetexas.org](http://www.donatelifetexas.org) for more information.

**Alameda Corridor Initiative:** Tremendous thanks are due to members of the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Late last week, this group of elected officials from across the area intervened with the state to save a critical transportation project that is key to UMC's continued growth and development. It's called the Alameda Corridor Initiative.

For more than two years, the Texas Department of Transportation's design teams have worked closely with ours to develop a permanent fix to the myriad traffic problems that have long plagued our campus' main thoroughfare. The project was due to be put out for bid this spring, but I received word from TxDOT's District Engineer that "in the best case scenario, the initiative was being postponed until 2015."

UMC, Texas Tech and the Medical Center of the Americas' leaders immediately dispatched an appeal for help to numerous state and local officials, including State Representative Joe Pickett who chairs the House Committee on Transportation. We told them that we simply cannot develop our campus as we need to without the new street lights, sidewalks, curbs, bus stops, additional lanes, traffic lights and drainage improvements that are included in the Alameda Corridor Initiative.

Within a week, we received word from the MPO that the project was back on track! It will now be bid in the fall according to TxDOT District Engineer Chuck Berry whom I spoke to this week. Thank you to everyone who recognized the importance of this project and worked to ensure that it remains a priority on TxDOT's to-do list.

**Weekend:** How about those red hot Miners! UTEP (18-5, 9-1) now sits alone atop the Conference USA standings after upending SMU on Wednesday night. They've now won 8 in a row! Let's fill the Don Haskins center tomorrow night when Coach Tony Barbee and the guys return home to face East Carolina. Game time is at 7:00 p.m. Go Miners!

Have a great one, everyone and Happy Valentine's Day! - Jim

James N. Valenti  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
University Medical Center of El Paso  
4815 Alameda  
El Paso, Texas 79905  
(915)-521-7602  
[jvalenti@umcelpaso.org](mailto:jvalenti@umcelpaso.org)

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