



UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER  
OF EL PASO

February 19, 2010

**Great Day!** We couldn't have asked for better weather for our "Topping Off" celebration for El Paso Children's Hospital and UMC's Women's and Infants' tower last Saturday. The crowd of about a thousand was greeted by bright blue skies, a light breeze and temperatures in the mid 60's – picture perfect conditions to hoist the last piece of structural steel to the top of the 10-story building. Many thanks to everyone who helped plan the event. They did a fantastic job!

I'd also like to thank KVIA for devoting an entire program to the Children's Hospital's progress. Pediatric anesthesiologist William McIlvaine and I appeared live on News 7 Xtra Valentine's night. It was an anniversary of sorts for the Children's Hospital – we broke ground on the facility last Valentine's Day. We discussed how far we've come in such a short time, including the incredible success we've had at recruiting new pediatric specialists to El Paso. Dr. McIlvaine is one of them. He came to us last September from Children's Hospital of Los Angeles! We now also have three pediatric surgeons working on our campus, three pediatric intensivists, two pediatric hematologists/oncologists and a pediatric gastroenterologist. Several other pediatric specialists have committed to the Children's Hospital, but have not yet begun working here. Considering the Children's Hospital is still two years away from opening, that's quite impressive!

**Med School News:** We now have our second class of first-year medical students. Texas Tech-El Paso announced this week that it has selected 60 highly qualified students for the start of this summer's classes at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine. "We are thrilled with the very competitive applicants who matched with our medical school," says Manuel Schydlower, MD, the Associate Dean for Admissions and a Professor of Pediatrics.



From May - October, 2009, the School received more than 2,500 applications. This month, the Texas Medical and Dental School Application Service released the results of the student match. They include mostly students from Texas who were highly ranked by the Admissions Committee, including two from El Paso.

The students represent 36 undergraduate universities from across Texas and the nation including Texas Tech, University of Texas (Arlington, Austin, and Dallas), Abilene Christian University, Angelo State University, Austin College, Baylor University, Midwestern State University, Rice University, Southern Methodist University, Tarleton State University, Texas A&M, Texas Woman's University, University of Houston, and the University of North Texas. Also represented are Brown University, California Institute of Technology, Emory University, Stanford University, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, the United States Military Academy and Vanderbilt University. The students will begin their studies in July.

**NIH in Town:** The Medical Center of the Americas Foundation, in conjunction with Congressman Silvestre Reyes, welcomed 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 this week for the first Medical Center of the Americas (MCA) Research Advancement Symposium.

A delegation of nine NIH officials spent a good deal of yesterday at the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine. They learned about the research work being done at the school and elsewhere in El Paso, Las Cruces and Juarez, and toured Tech's facilities and those at UTEP. They also provided invaluable insight into how our region can achieve more success in attaining NIH funding. The NIH invests more than \$28 billion a year in medical research.

As MCA Foundation Board Chair Robert Skov put it, "This was 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." I couldn't agree more.

**Kudos:** Congratulations are in order for Virginia Martinez, LMSW, the Senior Social Worker in the Crime Victim Services Program at UMC. She's been chosen by the National Association of Social Workers/Texas Chapter as the Social Worker of the Year in El Paso! Virginia has been serving our patients for 12 years and is a proven leader in the field of Social Work. She will be recognized for her achievements during the El Paso chapter's annual awards banquet on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Weekend:** UTEP goes looking for its 10<sup>th</sup> straight victory tomorrow afternoon when they travel to Tulsa for a rematch with the Golden Hurricane. The Miners sit atop the Conference USA standings (10-1) and have begun garnering votes in the Top 25 polls. But Tulsa (8-3) is looking to move up and challenge UTEP down the stretch. It's bound to be a good one. Go Miners! Go Golden Hurricane!

And don't forget the big Race for the Cure out at Cohen Stadium this Sunday. The annual event, sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Foundation, raises funds to fight breast cancer. Organizers are hoping to generate \$750,000 this year, 75% of which will stay in El Paso. Race time is at 7:00 a.m.

And week two of the Winter Olympics starts this weekend. Team USA leads the medal count with 18. Have a great weekend everyone! - Jim

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