DEGREES OF DISCOVERY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES AT HOUSTON

CELEBRATES FORTY-FIVE YEARS

1963 2008
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Advisory Council News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dean’s Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alumni Reunion Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danny Welch, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alumni Reunion Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Faculty Membership Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Faculty News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alumni Spotlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Student Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Incoming Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Victoria Knutson, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Dean of Admissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Special Thanks &amp; Gratitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**BACK COVER**

**Message to the Alumni:**
Vicky Estrera, Ph. D.
President 2008-2009
GSBS Alumni Association

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**Advisory Council News**

In February Britt and Helen Schmidt hosted a GSBS Advisory Council “Evening of Discovery” at their home for Council members to invite additional community friends to learn more about the Graduate School and its students who earn Degrees of Discovery™. This terminology Degrees of Discovery was first coined last year at the Discovery event organized by Council Chair, Diana Hawkins, to begin to engage a broader segment of Houston for the Graduate School and its students. These scientists-of-tomorrow must each discover new information to add to the collective body of scientific research before they receive their Ph.D. degrees in the biomedical sciences. Guests are shown here visiting with a few of our award-winning students, but also joining us to hear the Dean’s vision for an academy of innovators were Gail and Louis Adler, Leslie and Jack Blanton, Jr., Steve and Nancy Beasley, Jesse and Hetta Heath, Jesse H. Jones II, Lenoir and Susan Josey, Blake Robertson, Susie Seybold, Nina Zilka, and Betsy Frantz.

**Susan Coulter, J.D.,** vice president for Institutional Advancement at UTHSC-H (below, left) arrives with **Diana Hawkins,** right. Diana, for her many efforts in Houston, was named one of UT-Houston’s “10 Outstanding Community Volunteers” and honored at the National Philanthropy Day Awards Ceremony last November.

Student **Adam Riegel** (above, left), with **Richard Schissler III** and **Rhett Campbell,** discusses his research devising a lung cancer treatment mechanism which provides a very precise delivery of therapy. This is now in clinical trials in several hospitals.

GSBS student and MD/PhD candidate **Roxanna Irani** (below, left) is describing her research about hypertension with **Vicky Estrera, Ph.D.,** GSBS Alumni Association president, and her husband, **Anthony Estrera, M.D.** of UT-Medical School.

**Harry Gee** (above, left) and **Corby Robertson** visit with host, **Britt Schmidt.**

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**FRONT COVER**

The Graduate School celebrated its 45th Anniversary in 2008. The original design commemorated the 40th Anniversary and was created by Leslie Holland of the Office of Institutional Advancement in 2004, revised here to mark the occasion.
GSBS periodically hosts events to tell the Houston community about our school. I have found that one of the most effective ways to do this is to invite some of our students to speak about their research, and they often use one of their recent posters to help them do so. It is interesting and instructive to watch a typical interchange.

The non-scientist visitor initially approaches the student with a visible interest (often because of a disease or buzzword, e.g., ‘stem cell’, in the title of the poster), but hesitates to initiate a conversation given so much unfamiliar detail. The student, despite being excited about the work, is also uncertain at the outset, probably because he or she rarely has conversations with non-scientists about research.

Then an interesting dynamic generally takes place - I suspect without either party consciously recognizing it. The student relaxes a bit and, rather than describing the results and methods, begins to put the research in a broader context and explain its possible significance. The visitor becomes less focused on the details of the methodology and terminology as he or she senses the student’s excitement, and hears the potential impact of the findings. Afterwards the guests will inevitably say, “That was really fascinating!” and the students will say, “They were really interested!”. This exchange between rising scientists and the community has become essential as we distinguish the Graduate School from all the institutions in the Texas Medical Center.

I think it is necessary for all of us at GSBS to recognize what led from an initial hesitancy in the dialogue to an informative and enjoyable interaction. I believe the key is that the student stops simply describing results and begins to tell the story of the research project.

In graduate school we teach students how to describe their methods and results to other scientists and provide many opportunities for them to do so, e.g., in seminars, journal clubs, lab discussions, and professional meetings. We do not, however, provide nearly as much training or as many opportunities (if any) for them to tell the story of their research to a more diverse audience. I would like to see us change this and believe it is critical if the public is to support biomedical research in the current economic climate with so much increasing competition for resources for many important and worthwhile needs.

In my view it is also important for another reason: As biomedical science becomes more complex and new breakthroughs increasingly require interdisciplinary approaches, we must improve how we tell our individual stories to each other, as well as the lay public. If we fail to do so our aggregate productivity will decrease along with our ability to attract funding for our research and educational missions.

We already know what we’re talking about. Let’s become better storytellers and help others to be part of the conversation.

Best wishes,

GSBS Alumnas Joy Marshall and Molly Bray with George and Mary Stancel at the 2008 Alumni Reunion
I am deeply appreciative to the selection committee and to those who nominated me for the GSBS Distinguished Alumnus award. To be honest, it is hard to believe, among the many graduates of this fine school, that I would receive it. Nonetheless, it is with sincere and humble appreciation that I accept it.

Receiving this award comes at an awkward time because my mother just passed away in September, dying of metastatic lung cancer. To accept an award for my laboratory’s research accomplishments, knowing that our progress was too late to help someone whom I love so much, makes accepting it bittersweet. Mom was, as all mothers are, extremely proud of ‘her baby.’ She shared in whatever successes we have had and will continue to be an inspiration for many years to come. Her illness and fight over the past year were accompanied by three prayers: that she would not suffer greatly, that she would have peace about her situation, and that the last words she would hear from me would be, “I love you.” God has granted those three prayers, which were more important than any award.

So, it is in my parents’ loving memory that I accept this award. And it is their example that inspires my brief comments this evening. I have entitled this speech ‘Getting by with a lot of help from my friends.’ For it is apparent to those who know me, I needed a LOT of help from a lot of people to have any success in my professional and personal life.

I decided that I would share with you some vignettes about some special people who have helped me professionally, not by being collaborators (of which some were), nor by lessons learned in the classroom (although there were many of those as well). Rather, I want to share with you how some special people taught me lessons of character that amplify over the years and form the foundation upon which hard work and perseverance have given my lab mates and I some measure of success.

Garth Nicolson was my doctoral mentor. But I started working in his lab as a sophomore in college. I took an advanced cell biology class from him and, wanting to impress someone from whom I hoped to garner a letter of recommendation or a graduate position, studied extra diligently. On the midterm, I got a grade in the mid-90%. I thought I’d done quite well on one of the hardest tests I’d taken to date. However, his only comment to me in private was, “I thought you could have done better.” Deflated and a bit dejected for a few days, I bucked up and scored a perfect score on his final exam, to which he commented simply, “Good job.”

Garth taught me that the bar was ever-rising and that the standard was still perfection. While it was not necessarily what I wanted to hear, he said what I needed to hear. From Garth, the character lesson was to never live on my laurels and never to be satisfied with good enough.

Steve Tomasovic served as the junior-most member of my dissertation advisory committee. Whereas the others were chairs, Steve was a beginning Assistant Professor. Our desks were situated next to each other and we had many conversations over my tenure as a graduate student. He offered many bits of sage advice, but I remember him most for being the most organized person I have ever known. More than our in-lab, in-department relationship, Steve and Barbara, his wife, allowed me to ride with them to Kingwood weekly to play in a volleyball league. I stayed at their home. They treated me like family. More than that, Steve treated me like a peer, when I was anything but. During those car rides, we talked about science, life. The topics were deep and some were pedestrian. He even said that I taught him some things – something still hard for me to believe.

Steve taught me to treat everyone with respect. His example is one I try to emulate every day, with other faculty, staff and students. Everyone has something to teach us. We must merely listen to their example.

Luka Milas, also a member of my graduate committee, summoned me to his office on my last day at M. D. Anderson before starting my first independent position.
The call came suddenly, and urgently from his secretary. I showed up and the conversation was more philosophic than I ever imagined. Specifically, Luka was aware that I had interacted with and observed a lot of driven people during my tenure as a graduate student. He wanted to bring something to a conscious level. Luka told me that, on that day, I had a choice to make: I had to choose what type of career path I was to take. It was not the professional career of which he was speaking. Rather, he was referring to how I would interact with colleagues. Would I choose near-blind ambition, where there would be a pile of bodies below me on the ladder to success? Or would I be linked to others with whom we were climbing together? He reminded me that, during his career, he had risen to department chair without creating too many enemies (other than the jealous types). It took him a little longer than others, but the friendships were worth it.

Paul Darlington and Tommy Douglas were regular racquetball and tennis partners. We would hit the courts, often at 6 a.m. in order to beat the heat. Tommy and I even enjoyed some deeply competitive matches. But it was Paul who taught me one of the more enduring (and somewhat endearing as I surpass 50 years on this earth) lessons. Paul used to run me around the racquetball court mercilessly while he could almost stroll to the next shot. He didn’t necessarily hit harder, but he was strategic. He reminded me that old age and treachery always overcome youth and enthusiasm.

Brenda Gaughan, staff psychologist at GSBS, heard every student’s woes and helped everyone solve those daily crises. She always did so with a gentle spirit, genuine compassion, professional acumen and a positive attitude. Brenda was (and is) always upbeat. Never Pollyanna, Brenda is an ever-present reminder that just being is reason enough to be happy. The only thing that makes Brenda unhappy is having attention brought to her. So, please look to Brenda and notice how embarrassed she is. But Brenda, in this case, I don’t mind making you a little upset. You are a special part of every GSBS student’s memory. You have contributed to all of our success and we owe you a huge thanks.

I know that this brief list of friends doesn’t even come close to the numbers of people who have been there when times were tough and when times were good. Research can best be characterized as “good days and bad months.” Having friends and colleagues who can bolster you during those trying days when things aren’t working and with whom you can share successes makes our lives as researchers among the most enviable. Tonight, you have chosen me as someone whose career reflects positively on the training I received at GSBS. All of us received outstanding training and made many life-long friendships. All of us have encountered others whose lessons have shaped our character.

Our character defines who we are and how we behave, scientifically and professionally. I’ve been blessed with great mentors and friends. As I have shared some of my friends’ contributions to my success, I hope that you have reflected upon how you, too, have gotten by with a lot of help from your friends.

Dr. Welch is an internationally recognized leader in the field of cancer metastasis, and specifically, in breast cancer. His active research support includes three major grants from the National Cancer Institute, two RO1 grants, and grants from the National Foundation of Cancer Research, the Department of Defense, the Susan G. Komen Cancer Foundation and Chemokine Therapeutics Corporation.

His record of publications totals 137 peer-reviewed; 226 abstracts; 21 book chapters and editor of 3 books. He is active in study sections for the National Cancer Institute, American Cancer Institute, the USAMRMC Breast and Prostate Cancer panels, the European Union Framework Review and Consensus Panels, as well as chair of the Susan Komen Integration Panel, and breast cancer panels in Canada, Netherlands, Italy, and United Kingdom Cancer Foundations.

Welch, The Leonard H. Robinson Professor of Pathology, received in 2008 the UAB an’s award for Excellence in mentoring and the Metastasis Research Society Paget-Ewing award. Dr. Welch and his associate J. –H. Lee, are inventors of, and hold the international tent for, KISS-1, a novel human melanoma metastasis-suppressor gene.
MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH COMMENDATION

- Mark Bedford
- John Byrne
- Dianna Cody
- Kevin Coombes
- Yong-Jian Geng
- David Hewett-Emmett
- William Klein
- Rakesh Kumar
- M. Neal Waxham

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH HIGHEST COMMENDATION

- Andreas Bergmann
- Kevin Morano
- Stephanie Watowich

NEW REGULAR MEMBERS

**Rebecca Berdeaux**
Assistant Professor
Integrative Biology and Pharmacology
UT-H Medical School
Ph.D., University of California-Berkeley, 2003
Research interests: skeletal muscle physiology; repair and exercise; protein kinases in signal transduction; gene regulation by cAMP; in vivo imaging

**Guangwei Du**
Assistant Professor
Integrative Biology and Pharmacology
UT-H Medical School
Ph.D., Peking Union Medical College, 1999
Research interests: phospholipid signaling; signal transduction; breast cancer; membrane trafficking

**Raymond N. DuBois, Jr.**
Professor
Provost and Executive Vice President
GI Medical Oncology/Cancer Biology
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., UTHSC/Dallas, 1981
M.D., UTHSC/San Antonio, 1985
Research interests: cyclooxygenase; prevention; inflammation; bioactive lipid biology; signal transduction; colon cancer

**Marina Konopleva**
Assistant Professor
Leukemia/Stem Cell Transplantation
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
M.D., 1st Pavlov Medical Institute, 1990
Ph.D., Federal Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion, 1998
Research interests: molecular biology; apoptosis; signaling; hematopoietic stem cells; acute and chronic leukemias; microenvironment

**John E. Ladbury**
Professor
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., University of Greenwich, 1990
Research interests: signal transduction; molecular biophysics

**Min Gyu Lee**
Assistant Professor
Molecular and Cellular Oncology
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, 2004
Research interests: histone modifications; histone-modifying enzymes; gene regulation; epigenetics; tumor suppression and cancer

**Paul A. Scheet**
Assistant Professor
Epidemiology
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., University of Washington, 2006
Research interests: statistical genetics; human population genetics; genetics of common diseases; haplotype inference/modeling

**Eva M. Sevick**
Professor and Cullen Chair in Molecular Medicine
Center for Molecular Imaging
Institute of Molecular Medicine
Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon University, 1989
Research interests: molecular imaging; near-infrared light; cancer detection; small animal models of cancer; gene expression reporters and probes; fluorescence; clinical translation

**Yiping Shao**
Associate Professor
Imaging Physics
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., Kent State University, 1994
Research interests: positron emission tomography; single photon emission computed tomography; nuclear imaging instrumentation and system; multi-modality imaging; radionuclide imaging techniques for small animals studies

**Xiaobing Shi**
Assistant Professor
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center
Ph.D., Chinese Academy of Sciences, 2001
Research interests: genomic instability and cancer; epigenetics; histone modifications; protein lysine methylation
Claudio Soto  
Professor  
Neurology  
UT-H Medical School  
Ph.D., University of Chile, 1993  
Research interests: Alzheimer’s disease; prions; protein misfolding disorders; neurodegenerative diseases; neuroscience; drug discovery

Eduardo D. Bruera  
Professor and F. T. McGraw Chair in the Treatment of Cancer  
Palliative Care and Rehabilitative Medicine  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
M.D., Universidad de Rosario, 1979  
Research interests: palliative care; symptom control; pain; clinical trials; symptom evaluation

Ph.D., Louisiana State University School of Medicine, 2004  
Research interests: examination of the role of nitric oxide and related metabolites to cardiovascular physiology; understanding the role of diet in modulating nitric oxide bioavailability; development of new strategies and therapeutics to restore NO homeostasis, nitrite biochemistry

Eric J. Wagner  
Assistant Professor  
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
UT-H Medical School  
Ph.D., Duke University, 2002  
Research interests: cell cycle regulation of RNA processing, specifically of histone mRNA; biosynthesis of small nuclear RNA including the U1, U4, and U7 snRNAs; developmental regulation of Drosophila histone mRNA and snRNA

Bin Wang  
Assistant Professor  
Genetics  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
Ph.D., Baylor College of Medicine, 2000  
Research interests: DNA damage response; genomic instability and cancer; BRCA1 signaling; ubiquitin signaling

M. James You  
Assistant Professor  
Hematopathology  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
M.D., Zhejiang University School of Medicine, 1996  
Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin, 1997  
Research interests: mouse models of cancer; tumor suppressors; cancer biology; molecular mechanisms of myeloid and lymphoid neoplasms; translational research, including identification of therapeutic targets

Timothy E. Elmore  
Instructor  
Neurosurgery  
UT-H Medical School  
Ph.D., University of Arizona, 2006  
Research interests: learning; memory; consolidation; hippocampus; fMRI, intracranial EEG

Ping Hou  
Assistant Professor  
Imaging Physics  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
Ph.D., University of Utah, 1993  
Research interests: magnetic resonance imaging (MRI); MRI pulse sequence design and implementation; perfusion imaging; functional MRI; general clinical application of MRI

Patrick H. Kee  
Assistant Professor  
Internal Medicine - Cardiology  
UT-H Medical School  
M.B.B.S., University of Adelaide, 1996  
Ph.D., University of Adelaide, 2004  
Research interests: molecular markers in atherosclerosis; non-invasive imaging of atherosclerosis; diagnostic contrast agents; translational science

Jerimy C. Polf  
Assistant Professor  
Radiation Physics  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, 2002  
Research interests: proton radiation therapy; radiation detection and measurement; Monte Carlo simulation of radiation transport; computational physics; spectroscopy and spectral measurements; optical and semiconductor radiation detectors

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Claudio Soto  
Professor  
Neurology  
UT-H Medical School  
Ph.D., University of Chile, 1993  
Research interests: palliative care; symptom control; pain; clinical trials; symptom evaluation

BS, UT-H Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, 2007  
Research interest: genetic counseling
In September 2008 Dr. Lovell Jones was appointed an Executive Board member of the Patient Advocate Foundation, a national non-profit organization that helps to protect access to care for tens of thousands of patients every year who are unable to obtain healthcare due to financial or insurance denials. In addition, Dr. Jones was awarded one of two 2008 Health Disparities Excellence Awards in December 2008 at a banquet hosted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The award recognizes pioneers for their contributions toward eliminating health disparities in minority communities.

Dr. Eugenie Kleinerman was first investigator for a new therapy for pediatric patients with non-metastatic, resectable osteosarcoma, a type of bone cancer. The immune-based therapy, MEPACT (mifamurtide, L-MTP-PE) has been approved by the European Commission, which oversees legislation and regulation for the European Union. The therapy was granted orphan drug status in the United States in 2001, but has not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use in newly diagnosed patients.

Dr. Valerie Lewis’ research on a receptor known to be active in bone metastases as a potential therapeutic target in osteosarcoma was published in the March 1 issue of Cancer Research.

Dr. Chun Li was highlighted in the February 1 issue of Clinical Cancer Research for his research on hollow gold nanospheres equipped with a targeting peptide to find and destroy melanoma cells.

Dr. Marvin Meistrich has been inducted as a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world’s largest general scientific society. Dr. Meistrich is the eighth AAAS fellow on M. D. Anderson’s faculty.

Dr. Timothy McDonnell established an Undergraduate Collaborative Training Program in Prostate Cancer with Texas Southern University, with funding from the US Department of Defense Prostate Cancer Research Program.
Dr. Ferid Murad has been honored for his work in the fight against disease at the 2008 American Heart Association’s (AHA) Scientific Sessions in New Orleans. He was named one of 13 Distinguished Scientists for 2008 by the AHA, an award that was created to honor researchers whose work has advanced the understanding of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

On October 9, 2008, Dr. Barbara Murray was honored as the 10th Arthur C. White lecturer in Infectious Diseases at the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis. Her lecture was titled, “Enterococci: Is There More to Making this Second-Rate Pathogen into a First-Rate Problem than its Antibiotic Resistance?”

Dr. Henry W. Strobel has received the Distinguished Medical Educator Award from the Teacher’s Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF). The association presented him with a check for $10,000 and will award 20 scholarships in his name to Houston’s John P. McGovern Museum of Health and Medical Science.

Drs. Harel Shouval and Jack Byrne received one of only seven grants within the UT System for their program at the UT Medical School: Graduate Program Initiative in Theoretical and Computational Neuroscience. Dr. Gary Gallick received one of the seven grants for the Cancer Metastasis Research program at UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. Each grant is worth $500,000.

Dr. Stephen Tyring was highlighted in The Dallas Morning News for his research on chicken pox, which was published in Archives of Dermatology. The article ran in September 2008.

In Memory

Dr. Manny Murgola, 1937-2009

Emanuel Joseph “Manny” Murgola, Ph.D., graduate of Yale University, was a longtime GSBS faculty member, an inspired teacher, researcher and professor in the department of molecular genetics at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. For many years Jim Bjork and Manny Murgola played saxophones at the Graduate School’s Friday Afternoon Club Gatherings at Grant Fay Park (shown below). Jim and the rest of us will miss Manny and his music.

Legends and Legacies

Describing with sincerity and emotion the struggle and triumphs that have marked their paths to distinguished careers in their fields, 26 of M. D. Anderson’s most accomplished women hope to inspire others with a book, “Legends and Legacies: Personal Journeys of Women Physicians and Scientists at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.”

The women profiled in these essays represent diverse ages, backgrounds, cultures and professional roles, from clinicians and physician scientists to basic scientists and veterinarians.

Alumni Spotlight

I am a program official at the National Institute on Drug Abuse. I cultivate neuroimaging research on decision-making and motivation in controls and drug-abusers. I do this by: 1) helping investigators across the nation hone their research ideas into competitive grant applications, 2) monitoring the peer review climate, 3) organizing workshops to bring experts together to identify knowledge gaps, and 4) on rare occasions, making funding recommendations to steer money to understudied or innovative areas.

My GSBS training in human psychopharmacology was critical in training me in clinical research, as well as providing extensive knowledge of impulsivity and drug abuse.

James M. Bjork, Ph.D. (1999)
Student Awards

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Since 1971 the American Legion Auxiliary has provided scholarships for GSBS students involved in cancer research. The money for this funding is raised through a wide range of Auxiliary activities. To date the Auxiliary has raised over $1,150,000 to present over 80 renewable scholarships of $5,000 each. The recipients for 2008-2009 are:

Student
Brandi Baird
Kair Brewer
Amanda Brock
Suzanne Chan
Mylinh Duong

Advisor
Dr. Paul Simmons
Dr. Chun Li
Dr. Michael Galko
Dr. Sandy Chang
Dr. Khandan Keyomarsi

Student
Denise Kellar
Krithi Rao
Sumaiyah Rehman
Joseph Taube
Jillian Wise

Advisor
Dr. Laurence Cooper
Dr. Eugenie Kleinerman
Dr. Dihua Yu
Dr. Michelle Barton
Dr. Felipe Samaniego

THE R. W. (BILL) BUTCHER AWARD

Established in 1997, the R. W. (Bill) Butcher Endowed Fund provides an annual award of $2,500 for students who demonstrate excellence in research, have a commitment to a career in biomedical research, and make a professional contribution to the community or have faced a particular challenge. This year’s recipient is:

Student
K. Leigh Greathouse

Advisor
Dr. Cheryl Walker

THE CITY FEDERATION OF WOMEN’S CLUBS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Established in 2005, this $2,000 scholarship rewards an exceptional GSBS student who is working in an area vital to the biomedical sciences and of particular current significance in that year’s national research perspective. For 2008-2009 The City Federation of Women’s Clubs Scholarship recognizes research in the area of developmental biology. This year’s recipient is:

Student
Jennifer Gonzalez

Advisor
Dr. Vasanthi Jayaraman

HARRY S. & ISABEL C. CAMERON FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

The Cameron Foundation provides a fellowship to an exceptional post-candidacy student working in research fields related to Alzheimer’s or cardiovascular diseases. The Foundation gift of $15,000 is matched by GSBS and Faculty. The 2008-2009 recipient is:

Student
Roxanna Irani

Advisor
Dr. Yang Xia
### The T. C. Hsu Endowed Memorial Scholarship

To remember Dr. Hsu and his remarkable research work, his daughter Margaret, M. D. Anderson Cancer Center Foundation, colleagues, faculty, friends and former students of Dr. Hsu established this memorial scholarship in 2003. The endowment is a living testimony and serves to acknowledge the stellar research accomplishments of graduate students focusing on Dr. Hsu’s areas of research, genetics and cell biology. The 2008-2009 recipient is:

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<th>Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon Way</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Galko</td>
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### Barbara L. Kennedy Memorial Scholarship

This $1,000 scholarship was established in 2002 for a student in the Specialized Masters Program in Genetic Counseling. The winner is selected by a review committee appointed by the WINGS Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association. The recipient for 2008-2009 is:

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<th>Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca Sample Carter</td>
<td>Ms. Marianna Horz Raia</td>
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### The Cullen Trust for Higher Education Physician/Scientist Fellowship Program

The $1.15 million grant from the Cullen Trust for Higher Education provides dramatic growth opportunities for M.D./Ph.D. students at UT-Houston, UT-M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, and Baylor College of Medicine. The 2008-2009 recipients are:

- Vida Chitsazzadeh of UT Health Science Center
- Jonathan Lin, Baylor College of Medicine

### Gigli Family Scholarship

This $1,000 endowed scholarship was created by Dr. Irma Gigli, GSBS faculty member, to honor her parents. The scholarship is intended to help exceptional graduate students who are making excellent progress towards their degree, particularly those who are first generation in their family to enroll in graduate school. First award recipient:

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<th>Student</th>
<th>Advisor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesias Pedroza</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Blackburn</td>
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### Floyd Haar, M.D., Endowed Memorial Research Award in Memory of Freda Haar

This $1,500 Award is provided to recognize an exceptional GSBS degree student conducting critical research in stem cells. Research should be in the area of stem cells as it applies to leukemia or the study of stem cells and their use in treatment of human disease. The first recipient is:

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<th>Student</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hussein Abbas</td>
<td>Dr. Guillermia Lozano</td>
</tr>
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*Student Awards*
William W. and Pearl Wallis Knox Foundation Scholarship

Established in 2007, this is the second year to award a scholarship from the Knox Foundation, whose interests are research in the areas of AIDS and other infectious diseases in humans. This $2,000 award was presented to:

Student: Amanda Clark
Advisor: Dr. Ambro van Hoof

Marilyn & Frederick R. Lummis, Jr., M.D., Fellowship in the Biomedical Sciences

Dr. and Mrs. Lummis have made a generous gift to GSBS to create this award given for scientific excellence and innovation in any area of biomedical research. A $25,000 stipend given each year is intended to encourage novel research with a high potential to impact the particular field of study and ultimately human health. The 2008-2009 recipient:

Student: Nam Ky Tonthat
Advisor: Dr. Maria Schumacher

The Ralph H. and Ruth J. McCullough Foundation Fellowship

This fellowship has been made possible by a $15,000 gift from the Ralph H. and Ruth J. McCullough Foundation. The endowment in part supports a stipend for a student whose scientific excellence and novel research will have a high potential to impact biomedical science. The 2008-2009 recipient is:

Student: Danielle Fontenot
Advisor: Dr. Jagannadha Sastry

Dee S. & Patricia Osborne Endowed Scholarship in the Neurosciences

Established by the Linda and Ronny Finger Foundation in 2001-2002, this endowed scholarship honors former University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Development Board president, Dee Osborne, and his wife Patricia. In 2006, the Ralph H. and Ruth J. McCullough Foundation made an additional generous gift in support of this award. Through the endowment an award of $1,000 is provided to the winning presenter in the graduate student category at the Annual Neuroscience Scientific Poster Session, and an additional $500 allotment is given for travel to a scientific meeting. This award is announced during Brain Awareness Week. This year, the recipients are:

Students
Wade Kothmann
Chirago Patel

Advisors
Dr. John O’Brien
Dr. Ponnada Narayana

William and Madeline Welder Smith Foundation Fellowship

The William and Madeline Welder Smith Foundation’s gift of $15,000 has allowed us to continue a fellowship to encourage and strengthen student interest in the field of stem cell research that has the potential to ultimately impact human health in a significant way. This year’s scholar is renewed for a second year:

Student: Brandi Baird
Advisor: Dr. Paul Simmons
Through generous funding from President Larry R. Kaiser, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and President John Mendelsohn, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, recognition is given to advanced GSBS students who have demonstrated excellence in research. The applications are reviewed by a committee consisting of past, present and future presidents of the GSBS Faculty. This year’s Presidents’ Research Scholars each received a cash award of $5,000 and are shown here, left to right:

**Students**
- Patrick Gibney
- Diego Gutnisky
- Claudia Miller
- Adam Riegel

**Advisors**
- Dr. Kevin Morano
- Dr. Valentin Dragoi
- Dr. Joya Chandra
- Dr. Tinsu Pan

**THE SCHISSLER FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIPS**

This dynamic family foundation has been a major benefactor to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences for over ten years and has a sincere commitment to graduate education. The Schissler Foundation Fellowships foster collaboration with the emphasis on basic science projects with the greatest likelihood of translational application to human health. The Fellowship requires that all students receive a broad exposure to the biomedical sciences and ethical concepts that underlie their research. These prestigious awards give significant help to research studies that will seek to make major contributions to the therapies and cures of common human disease through genetics. In 2008-2009 The Schissler Foundation provides $25,000 stipend funding for four Schissler Foundation Fellowships with at least one expressly designated for a student working on cancer research with faculty at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. The 2008-2009 recipients are:

**Student**
- Kedryn Baskin
- K. Leigh Greathouse
- Gustavo Martinez
- Sharon Way

**Advisor**
- Dr. Heinrich Taegtmeyer
- Dr. Cheryl Walker
- Dr. Chen Dong
- Dr. Michael J. Gambello

**ROBERTA M. & JEAN M. WORSHAM ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN THE BEHAVIORAL AND NEUROSCIENCES**

Formally presented during Brain Awareness Week this endowed scholarship of $1,000 fosters exceptional students working in the fields of the behavioral sciences or neurosciences particularly in the areas of addiction or obsessive/compulsive behavior. The recipient for 2008-2009 is:

**Student**
- Cameron Jeter

**Advisor**
- Dr. Anne Sereno

**SAM TAUB AND BEATRICE BURTON FELLOWSHIP IN VISION DISEASE**

Mary Wright and her sister, Joanna Ross, established this $2,000 endowed fellowship in 2004. The Sam Taub and Beatrice Burton Fellowship in Vision Disease honors their grandfather and great aunt and supports excellence in the research of eye and sight-related problems, and the potential therapies. The 2008-2009 recipient is:

**Student**
- Proleta Datta

**Advisor**
- Dr. Ruth Heidelberger
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree(s)</th>
<th>Institution(s)</th>
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<td>Abel, Lindsey</td>
<td>M.S., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, B.A.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, Southwestern University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai, Hua</td>
<td>Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S.</td>
<td>6/1/2008, Peking University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akdemir, Kadir</td>
<td>Ph.D., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, B.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, Yeditepe University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anfossi, Simone</td>
<td>Ph.D., Immunology, B.S.</td>
<td>4/1/1998, University of Genoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakhrui, Pearl</td>
<td>Ph.D., Immunology, M.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Pune University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bircher, Chad</td>
<td>Ph.D., Medical Physics, M.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, University of Tennessee-Knoxville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolner, Michelle</td>
<td>Ph.D., Molecular Carcinogenesis, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Baylor University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosca, Ryan</td>
<td>Ph.D., Medical Physics, M.S.</td>
<td>8/1/2008, University of North Texas</td>
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<td>Brauer, Russell</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, B.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, University of Texas at San Antonio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broaded, Laura</td>
<td>Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, Butler University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadway, Melissa</td>
<td>Ph.D., Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, B.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, University of Texas at San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busiek, Kimberly</td>
<td>Ph.D., Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2005, Truman State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen, Jiandong</td>
<td>Ph.D., Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, M.S.</td>
<td>6/1/2008, Nanjing Agricultural University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheng, Tiewei</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S.</td>
<td>6/1/2008, Fudan University</td>
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<td>Cooper, Justine</td>
<td>S.M.S., Genetic Counseling, B.A.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, Miami University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crain, Carrie</td>
<td>S.M.S., Genetic Counseling, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, University of Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crosby, Jacy</td>
<td>Ph.D., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, M.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, University of North Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darkoh, Charles</td>
<td>Ph.D., Biochemistry, M.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Stephen F. Austin State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darnes, Deanna</td>
<td>S.M.S., Genetic Counseling, B.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, University of New Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeBose, LaKiesha</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Southern University-A&amp;M College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deniger, Drew</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S.</td>
<td>8/1/2008, University of Texas HSC-Houston GSBS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dick, Joseph</td>
<td>S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, University of Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duncan, Audrietta</td>
<td>M.S., Molecular Biology, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Howard University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferrati, Silvia</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, Civen Interuniversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gomez, Karen</td>
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<td>5/1/2007, University of Texas - Pan American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonzalez, Gabriel</td>
<td>Ph.D., Genes and Development, M.S.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodjoint, Jasmine</td>
<td>M.S., Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, B.S.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guma, Sergei</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huang, Kai-Lieh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huang, Le</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huang, Yaling</td>
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<td>6/1/2009, Nanjing University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hui, David</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jabbour, Natalie</td>
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<td>5/1/2008, University of St. Thomas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jin, Chunlei</td>
<td>Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.B.B.S. and M.S.</td>
<td>6/1/2006, Zhejiang University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin, Jung-Kang</td>
<td>Ph.D., Physiology, M.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, San Diego State University</td>
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<td>Kerns, James</td>
<td>S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Point Loma Nazarene College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim, Sangbae</td>
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<td>2/1/1998, Kanwon National University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinjo, Sayano</td>
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<td>5/1/2008, Washington State University</td>
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<td>Kisling, Kelly</td>
<td>S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S.</td>
<td>5/1/2008, Georgia Institute of Technology</td>
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<td>Krishnamurthy, Janani</td>
<td>Ph.D., Molecular Pathology, M.S.</td>
<td>12/1/2007, University of Texas at San Antonio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kwartler, Callie</td>
<td>Ph.D., Genes and Development, B.A.</td>
<td>5/1/2007, Amherst College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Moon Sup</td>
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<td>2/1/2002, Korea University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li, Ming</td>
<td>Ph.D., Virology and Gene Therapy, M.S.</td>
<td>7/1/2008, Tsinghua University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INCOMING STUDENTS

FALL 2008

Liao, Hsin-Wei - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, Ph.D., 2/1/2007, National Taiwan University
Linan, Monica - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, B.S., 12/1/2005, University of South Florida
Liu, Changli - Ph.D., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, M.P.H., 5/1/2008, Georgia State University
Liu, Jinyun - Ph.D., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, M.S., 12/1/2006, University of Texas at San Antonio
Lofton, Bradley - S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S., 12/1/2002, Texas A&M University-College Station
Lu, Haiku - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S., 5/1/2008, Fordham University

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Morris, Christopher - Ph.D., Physiology, B.A., 5/1/2008, Trinity University

Newman, Leslie - S.M.S., Genetic Counseling, B.S., 5/1/2008, Texas A&M University-College Station
Nguyen, Vuvi - M.S., Neuroscience, B.A., 5/1/2006, University of San Diego
Ni, Haiying - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S., 6/1/2004, University of Wisconsin-Madison
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Park, Min Sung - M.S., Cancer Biology, M.D., 5/1/2003, University of Pennsylvania
Park, Peter - Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S., 12/1/2007, University of California at San Diego
Peng, Yang - Ph.D., Immunology, M.S., 5/1/2008, Eastern New Mexico University

Rambhadran, Anu - Ph.D., Biochemistry, M.S., 7/1/2004, Birla Institute of Technology and Science
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Riaz Ahmed, Kausar Begam - Ph.D., Pharmacology, M.S., 5/1/2008, University of Utah
Robertson, Daniel - Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S., 4/1/2008, Brigham Young University

Sahin, Vildan - Ph.D., Human and Molecular Genetics, B.S., 12/1/2006, University of Houston - Main
Scarboro, Sarah - Ph.D., Medical Physics, M.S., 5/1/2008, Georgia Institute of Technology
Shih, I Hong - Ph.D., Pharmacology, M.S., 6/1/2005, National Chiao Tung University
Shroff, Rachna - M.S., Cancer Biology, M.D., 6/1/2004, Thomas Jefferson University
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Stone, Rebecca - M.S., Cancer Biology, M.D., 5/1/2004, University of Virginia

Teo, Albert - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, B.S., 5/1/2008, Winona State University
Thirumurthi, Umadevi - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, M.S., 8/1/2008, Wayne State University
Tong, Pan - Ph.D., Biomathematics and Biostatistics, B.E., 7/1/2007, Huazhong University of Science and Technology

Vaksman, Zalman - Ph.D., Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, M.A., 8/1/2001, University of Minnesota-Minneapolis/St Paul
Vattathil, Selina - Ph.D., Human and Molecular Genetics, B.S., 5/1/2005, University of Texas at Austin

Wang, Zhiqian - Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S., 8/1/2005, University of Texas at Austin
Yaldo, Derek - S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S., 12/1/2006, Wayne State University
Yiu, Ting Ting - Ph.D., Cancer Biology, B.S., 5/1/2008, University of Houston - Main
Yousefzadeh, Matthew - Ph.D., Molecular Carcinogenesis, M.S., 5/1/2008, University of South Carolina
Yu, Zhiqian - Ph.D., Medical Physics, B.S., 5/1/2006, University of Texas at Austin

Zamora, David - S.M.S., Medical Physics, B.S., 5/1/2004, University of Texas at Austin
Zhou, Zhicheng - Ph.D., Immunology, M.S., 12/1/2006, Sun Yat-Sen University
Recruitment

This is the mantra of the Admissions-team (aka A-Team) of GSBS. Gina, Karen, Ty and I have very focused goals: Identify top-notch students with an interest in biomedical sciences, encourage them to submit an application for admission to GSBS, facilitate the review of the application by the Admissions Committee, and coordinate the interview weekends.

Over the past couple of years, we have added new initiatives to these processes with the intent to improve the number and quality of our incoming students. I would like to tell you about some of them.

The GSBS Summer Undergraduate Research Program was launched in the summer of 2008 to recruit more and better students. GSBS funded ten undergraduate students last summer, who visited us from local schools (Rice University), other Texas schools (UT-Austin, Southern University), national schools (Brigham Young University) and international institutions (Peking University Health Science Center). We also partnered with two other programs last summer: the Department of Defense Prostate Cancer grant, bringing in four students from Texas Southern University, and the University of Houston-Downtown Minority Access to Research Career (MARC) program, adding an additional four students to the mix. All of these students worked in the lab of a GSBS faculty member, participated in weekly seminars, and listened to various presentations. They also presented their own work in an abstract and oral presentation at the end of the summer. These students were able to experience the rich research and training environment of GSBS. Of the ten students aligned with the GSBS program, eight were rising seniors and five of these eight have submitted applications for admission for Fall 2009. I fully anticipate that we will repeat or better this positive track record in 2009 as we continue to bring in highly qualified undergrads for summer research.

In addition to enlisting students, we recognized the importance of identifying and building pipelines to faculty at undergraduate institutions. The premise is that once the faculty at undergrad schools recognize our outstanding training resources, they will encourage their students to consider GSBS for advanced degrees. To build on this idea, we instituted the GSBS [College] Advisory Board. The first visit of the Board to GSBS was in January 2008. The members of the Board are faculty members who advise and mentor undergraduates. They come from large state schools, small private schools, and minority institutions from Texas, and across the U.S. The Board members speak with the Deans (it took 3 hours for Dr. Stancel to describe how GSBS operates!), faculty and students, and tour the Texas Medical Center. Not only were we highlighting GSBS, we were also soliciting their advice on new approaches to use in undergraduate teaching, and best practices for the recruitment of students. Their advice has proven to be practical and valuable. Their recommendations to undergrad students at their home institutions have already resulted in applications to GSBS for the PhD program and the Summer Research Program. I look forward to meeting with them again in 2010.

You may have noticed a new wrinkle in our Visitation Weekend format – interviews! We are now offering admission to PhD applicants only after the faculty has interviewed them and endorsed them for admission. The consequences of this new system are proving to be very interesting: 1) To date, over 80% of those applicants invited to interview have booked a visit. This is an increase over previous years’ participation rate of approximately 50%. This increase bodes well for our ability to matriculate the top caliber applicants – once they visit us, they are likely to come! 2) The applicants, told that they are visiting for interviews, arrive for the Friday interview fully engaged and excited. They are also wearing suits and skirts – not jeans and flip-flops! 3) Following the interviews, I email the faculty who did the interviewing, and ask them to rate the applicants. I have been amazed, and gratified, by the nearly 100% response rate from the faculty. Thank you, faculty, for your participation and engagement in the interview process!

To all of our readers, I value your input on ways we can recruit more and more highly qualified students to GSBS. If you have recommendations on how we can improve our current efforts, or ideas for new initiatives, please don’t hesitate to give me a phone call, or drop me an email at Victoria.P.Knutson@uth.tmc.edu.

Regards,

Did I recruit a student today?

GSBS Students Mandy Geryk-Hall, Qingtang Lin, Nancy Nabils, Karina Falbo, Aimee N. Iberg, and Shannon Kidd received the Rosalie B. Hite Fellowship in 2008. In 1946 Houston citizen Rosalie B. Hite left her entire estate to establish a fellowship program for cancer research. In 2008-2009 this award includes a stipend of $25,000 per year, tuition and fees, and a single travel allowance up to $850 for each student to present his or her research at a national meeting.

Hsu-Ping Kuo, Alpa Nick, Ming Sung Park, Angela Bhalla and Angela Alexander won Trainee Excellence Awards. These awards were given by the M. D. Anderson Alumni & Faculty Association for presentations given during medical or scientific meetings of professional societies between March 1, 2008 - July 21, 2008. Each award is worth $500.00.

Rhys Adams is part of the team of researchers that crafted a gene circuit that permits precise tuning of a gene’s expression in a cell.

GSBS Student Josh Gowin and alumna Jade Hatley lead the way for new recycling efforts in the Medical School Building. Environmental Health and Safety provided the containers that are now located by the vending machines in the basement and ground floor; outside lecture halls on the first, second and third floor.

Student News continued...
—so it is with graduate education. Thank you to those who have invested in the intellectual capital of tomorrow.

### Special Thanks and Gratitude

**Our Benefactors**

Blackwell Foundation  
Cancer Answers, Inc.  
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Anand Lagoo  
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Milton V. Marshall  
Michael E. McClure  
Ralph H. and Ruth J. McCullough  
John P. McGovern Foundation  
Peggy O’Neill  
Dee Osborne  
John M. Powers  
Doris L. Ross  
William A. and Madeline Welder Smith  
Douglas F. Stickle  
Karen A. Storthz  
Ralph B. Thomas*  
Stephen P. Tomasovic  
Deidre L. Vedder  
Danny R. Welch  
Mary Ruth and Thomas Williams  
Roberta and Jean M. Worsham  
Wei Yu

*Advisory Council members*

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<td>Wyeth Ayerst Company Foundation</td>
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<td>Shell Oil Company Foundation</td>
<td>Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund</td>
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### Special Thanks and Gratitude

**Our Contributors**

Francis E. Arrighi  
Carol A. Blanchard  
Oliver Bogler  
Paul E. Borchardt  
Yanis A. Bournikos  
Valentine G. Boving  
Richard G. Brennan  
Joan Breuer-McHamm  
Foundation  
Carol A. Brooks  
Leslie Cagle  
Linda M. Carter  
Robert M. Chamberlain  
Stacey L. Champion  
Joya Chandra  
Shine Chang  
Gilbert J. Cote  
Monica C. Cronin  
Stephen P. Daiger  
Peter J. Davies  
Herbert DuPont  
Cindee R. Ewell  
Susan L. Fitzpatrick-Brown  
Betsy M. Frantz  
Yasuhide Furuta  
Gary E. Gallick and Jan Liang  
Thomas P. Gegeny  
Armand Glassman  
Millicent E. Goldschmidt  
Jason R. Goldsmith  
E. Joe Grant  
Alex M. Hashemi  
Carol E. Helton  
Beng and Dahi T. Ho  
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Glenn T. Housholder  
Jen-Tzaw Huang  
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Eugenie S. Kleinerman  
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Xin Lin  
Xinning Liu  
Kathryn Louie  
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Kipl Mehta  
Marvin L. Meistrich  
Mercedes K. Meyer  
Raymond E. Meyn  
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Sen Pathak  
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Erik J. Plautz  
Heidemarie S. Porter  
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Ellen R. Richie  
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Elizabeth L. Schubert  
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Donna S. Shewach  
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Anil K. Sood  
Cheryl P. Spitzerbenger  
George Starkschall  
Michael H. Stern  
Helen B. Stone  
James E. Strong  
Heinrich Taegtmeyer  
Ming Tan  
Ba-Bie Teng  
Bon Q. Trinh  
Ah-Lim Tsai  
Yining Wang  
P. Anthony Weil  
David R. Weisinger  
Rick A. Wetsel  
Ann E. Wright  
Edward T. Yeh  
Dihua Yu  
Wei Zhang  
Wenzheng Zhang

*All gifts at any scale and to any category:*

Will be acknowledged.

Are tax deductible.

May be accomplished through an estate plan or will.

May be matched by a corporation to enhance the value of your gift.

May be used for memorial gifts to honor a favorite faculty, family member or friend. A notice will be sent to inform the family of the honor (not the amount) of your gift, and you will be acknowledged individually.
Hello Alumni,

Spring is here in Houston with bluebonnets popping up and the rodeo has rounded up! It is my pleasure and privilege to serve as your president, and I bring you some news. Dr. Dan Welch (1984/Nicholson)—some of you may know him as Danny—is our 13th Distinguished Alumni out of 1,887 total alumni in the Graduate School’s 45th year of existence. Dr. Welch provided a scientific seminar on his research, *Mechanisms of BRMS-1 Metastasis Suppressor Function*, a talk to GSBS students about his career path and life: *ACADEME TO INDUSTRY TO ACADEME AGAIN*, and finally at the reunion he gave a wonderful ode to the importance of mentoring, which you may read inside this newsletter. Dr. Welch, congratulations again. Along with the other awardees, you have raised the bar for future alumni.

I am delighted to note that Dr. Joy Marshall (2003) has been elected Alumni Association vice president, and to thank my partners on the Steering Committee for their many efforts on our behalf. Special dates to mark on your calendar include: Graduation Celebration, May 7 (5-7 p.m., GSBS building foyer) to honor our new graduates and their families. Existing alumni are invited to welcome our soon-to-be colleagues. May 9 is Commencement, and on May 30 we will hold the alumni-sponsored Career Day at the School for current graduate students (some of you will be called upon soon to be our stars and share your secrets of success).

While there might not be enough time or resources right now to establish permanent local UT-GSBS chapters, periodic adventures in reconnecting have been met with enthusiasm, so we are hoping to plan another out-of-state reunion in June in the San Diego area—let’s hear from all you southern California fans! These traveling reunions have resulted in increased financial and philosophical support for the School and its mission. While it has been promised before, we really hope to have a new Alumni website in place by fall with all the accoutrements of an online community—interactive, updatable, password protected and with potential for virtual career development capability, as well as calendar postings for Texas Medical Center seminars. In the meantime, please visit the GSBS Facebook page on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/pages/University-of-Texas-Graduate-School-of-Biomedical-Sciences-at-Houston/62636165646>. I look forward to visiting with earlier friends while getting to know new ones.

Have a great summer!

Vicky Estrera, Ph.D. (2001)
GSBS Alumni Association President
2008-2009