

A Brief History of the Texas A&M Health Science Center

Texas A&M University, the state's oldest public institution of higher education, was established in 1876. It is a member of a System of 19 universities and agencies; each having its own CEO, but all reporting to one System Chancellor. Each of the universities in the Texas A&M System is responsible for gaining approval of its individual academic programs from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In June 1973, the Coordinating Board approved a program of medical education at Texas A&M University and authorized the creation of a College of Medicine. This medical program was established in October 1976, and the University was given permission to accept its first class of medical students in 1977.

In 1991, the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved a restructuring of the College of Medicine into a "health science center." The Texas A&M Health Science Center originally consisted of the College of Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and three teaching hospitals that had service contracts with the medical school.

In 1995 the Texas Legislature appropriated \$2 million to fund a new program to be known as the School of Rural Public Health. This new School was added to the existing Health Science Center at Texas A&M University. Also in 1995, the Baylor College of Dentistry, which had formerly been a private institution, joined the Texas A&M System. In September 1996, the Chancellor of the Texas A&M System consolidated **all** of the health-related parts of the A&M System, including Baylor College of Dentistry, into a unified **System** health science center. The goal was to provide streamlined operations, a consolidation of efforts, shared resources, and increased funding opportunities for the units involved.

The 75th Texas Legislature endorsed establishing this new entity in 1997 through Senate Concurrent Resolution 74. This Resolution stated that the Texas Legislature supported "the desire of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System to combine the Baylor College of Dentistry, the Texas A&M University College of Medicine, the Texas A&M University Institute of Biosciences and Technology, and the Texas A&M University School of Rural Public Health into a unified administrative structure to be named The Texas A&M University System Health Science Center with headquarters in College Station." The Legislature set a deadline of September 1, 1999 for the new organization to be independent and fully operational.

Since its inception, the Health Science Center has experienced tremendous growth in both academic and community outreach programs, and was granted its first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2002. In 2006 the Rangel College of Pharmacy was added; and in January 2008 the Health Science Center received authorization from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to create a new College of Nursing, which opened in August 2008.

Providing service to more than 200 Texas counties through its campuses, colleges and programs, the Texas A&M Health Science Center is at the forefront of higher education, scientific innovations and public health solutions. Even as the state's youngest health science center, the Health Science Center has grown rapidly over the past 10 years. As an academic leader in

dentistry, medicine, biomedical sciences, public health, pharmacy and nursing, the Health Science Center offers more disciplines than any other health science center in Texas.

The Health Science Center is strategically positioned to meet the growing health care and higher education needs of Texans with campuses in Bryan/College Station, Dallas, Temple, Houston, Round Rock, Kingsville, Corpus Christi and McAllen. This geographic distribution allows the Health Science Center to serve students across the state, making higher education more accessible and affordable.

Baylor College of Dentistry in Dallas, established in 1905 and the state's second-oldest dental school, opened with 45 students as State Dental College. It joined the Health Science Center in 1999 and offers the Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.), Master of Science (M.S.) and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Dental Hygiene. More than a third of all Texas dentists are graduates of the College, which is internationally recognized for its oral health sciences education, research, specialized patient care and community service programs.

College of Medicine in College Station, Temple, and Round Rock is committed to educating, training, and equipping physicians who are compassionate about their patients and dedicated to the communities in which they serve. Established in 1977 and incorporated into the Health Science Center in 1999, it offers the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) degree. Known statewide and nationally for its leadership and professionalism, the College of Medicine is affiliated with several excellent health care organizations, including its primary clinical partner Scott & White Hospital and Clinic in Temple, Texas.

College of Nursing in College Station and Round Rock was created in 2008 in response to the severe nursing shortage across the state and the nation. The overall goal of the College of Nursing's baccalaureate education is to prepare a generalist practitioner capable of providing professional nursing care to individuals and families with diverse health needs in a variety of settings. The College offers three options for obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Nursing: A standard generic track for undergraduates, an accelerated program for those who have already obtained a bachelor's degree in another field of study, and the R.N.-to-B.S.N. program for registered nurses with an Associate Degree in Nursing.

Rangel College of Pharmacy in Kingsville is the first health-related professional school in South Texas. The College of Pharmacy was created in 2006 in response to the shortage of pharmacists in the area. The College leads the state in student body diversity. Half of the 69 percent minority enrollment is Hispanic, and South Texas residents represent nearly half of the entire enrollment.

School of Graduate Studies prepares future faculty and researchers to improve the health of Texans through scientific discovery and education. It was established in 1999 with the inception of the Health Science Center. The School offers Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and M.S. degree programs in biomedical and public health sciences at College Station, Houston, and Dallas.

School of Rural Public Health in College Station offers three masters and three doctoral degree programs. The three masters programs include the Master of Public Health (M.P.H.), Master of Health Administration (M.H.A.), and Master of Science in Public Health (M.S.P.H.). Doctoral degree programs include a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Health Services Research, Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) in

Social and Behavioral Health, and a Dr.P.H. in Epidemiology and Environmental Health. The M.P.H. degree has the largest number of students and is offered not only at the College Station campus, but also in several locations in Central and South Texas through state-of-the-art distance education technology. The M.S.P.H, Dr.P.H., and Ph.D. degree programs are granted through the School of Graduate Studies.

Institute of Biosciences and Technology in Houston was established in 1992 and incorporated into the Health Science Center in 1999. The Institute offers a Ph.D. degree through the School of Graduate Studies. Researchers at this location have an international reputation for their scientific discoveries. The Institute includes centers for Cancer and Stem Cell Biology, Environmental and Genetic Medicine, Extracellular Matrix Biology, Genome Research, and Molecular Development and Disease as well as the Spina Bifida Research Resource Project.

A driving force in the Texas economy, the Health Science Center also contributes \$1.1 billion total annual impact through its research, charity care and human resources. As a unique multi-campus model operating as a cohesive university, the Health Science Center is rapidly and efficiently helping to address the state's health care work force shortages.