

## Join us for a health science reunion Nov. 6 during Homecoming 2004



Several former health science pre-professional majors have decided to come back during Homecoming, Nov. 6, to get together, have dinner and take part in some other activities we're planning.

You may remember that many health science pre-professional students did not belong to a fraternity or sorority; therefore, the Chemical Medical Sciences Club, ACS, and studying together were a main part of the social life for many. Close friendships developed out of this, and it seems like a great time to get back together and

renew some of those friendships. And for those of you who remember Dr. Sublett and Prof. Jewell, well, they're not getting any younger and they are planning to be there.

Susan Coleman Slate, Biology '84 and active former member of Chemical Medical Sciences Club, has agreed to do what she can to make this reunion one to remember. But you can help. Please tell us if:

■ You think you might attend (all ages are attending) so we can reserve a place big enough to meet.

■ You are willing to coordinate some of the activities.

■ You have suggestions for enjoyable activities.

■ There are people you hope to see when you get here.

■ If you can share names from your era we might have missed (it has been a real challenge as people have gotten accepted into professional schools without first graduating from Tech).

Here's how to get in touch: contact Coordinator Susan Coleman Slate at [susanslate226@yahoo.com](mailto:susanslate226@yahoo.com); Eugene Kline or Thurston Banks at [ekline@tntech.edu](mailto:ekline@tntech.edu) or [tbanks@tntech.edu](mailto:tbanks@tntech.edu); or the Department of Chemistry at Box 5055, Cookeville, TN 38505-0001.

We will be in contact with more specifics as we get them. We are looking for someone to write a skit or two and participate in them. It would be entertaining for us all. *VS*



Eileen Harkins

## 1st woman chem alum establishes scholarship



Ms. Eileen Harkins (nee Reeser) graduated from Cookeville High School

in the spring of 1937, and then attended Tennessee Polytechnic Institute and graduated with a B.S. in Chemistry in 1941. She was, in fact, the first woman to graduate with a chemistry degree from TPI.

Subsequent to graduation, former Chemistry Chairman Foster asked Ms. Reeser to come down to Camp Forrest, an Army post in Tullahoma, to work with the

medical units. Her work there provided the training she needed to pass the American Association of Clinical Pathologists examination, and she became an ASCP-certified medical technologist in about 1943-44.

While working at Camp Forrest she married Leroy Harkins of Illinois who was serving in the Medical Service Corps of the U.S. Army. Mr. Harkins was sent to France in 1944 to set up and work in an Army field hospital laboratory while Ms. Harkins remained at Camp Forrest. During this period, Camp Forrest became a German

Please see page 2

Welcome to *Vital Signs*, the first newsletter of the Pre-Professional Health Science Program at Tennessee Tech University. Our program, an integral part of the Chemistry Department, faces a unique challenge: Our "graduates" often move on from TTU to other universities to complete their professional degrees, meaning that we often lose track of our former students. *Vital Signs* is intended, in part, to reconnect with our former health science pre-professional majors, who can play a vital role in our future by helping with student recruitment and mentoring and, to be frank, supporting our programs financially. We also seek to connect more strongly with our current pre-professional majors concerning the many aspects of careers in health science. We plan to publish once a year, and we encourage you to get in touch and share your news with us. — the editors. *VS*



**Own a piece of department history.** As an undergraduate at TTU, Mike Birdwell (now a member of our History faculty) painted a 4-foot by 12-foot mural in the Chemistry Department Office depicting the history of our profession. A high-quality color photo has been made of the mural, and we are offering a signed photo for \$30 and a framed version for \$100. (The black and white image shown here does not do the mural justice.) Each print will include a separate legend explaining all of its parts. All proceeds will go to the newly developed Chemistry/Biochemistry Endowment. You may order them through the Chemistry Department Office by writing to Box 5055 or the Pre-Professional Office at Box 5193 or by e-mail to [tbanks@tntech.edu](mailto:tbanks@tntech.edu), [ekline@tntech.edu](mailto:ekline@tntech.edu) or [snorthrup@tntech.edu](mailto:snorthrup@tntech.edu). We continue to look for other ways to raise monies for this worthwhile research scholarship endowment fund and ask you for any suggestions.

**Vital Signs** is published to reconnect with former health science pre-professional majors at Tennessee Tech to assist in recruiting new students for the program and also to connect with present pre-professional majors concerning the many aspects of careers in health sciences. Vital Signs welcomes correspondence and news. Contact:

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## 1st woman Chem alum ... from page 1

prisoner-of-war camp, and Ms. Harkins had to be escorted to and from work in the medical laboratory. After leaving the Army, Mr. Harkins came to TPI to obtain the educational requirements needed to pass the ASCP exam, and in doing so he also became a certified medical technologist.

Under the supervision of area doctors, Leroy and Eileen Harkins began the first medical technology laboratory in Cookeville in 1946. Initially located in a house near the old Cookeville City Hospital (this was previously Howard Hospital and later became the Clara Epperson Cox Public Library), and then in a small building located in back of the hospital, this small laboratory rendered invaluable service to the hospital and members of the medical profession in the Upper Cumberland area. The laboratory continued in service until Cookeville General Hospital opened on Dec. 18, 1950. At that time, the Harkins became employees of Cookeville General Hospital and accepted the responsibility of operating and supervising the laboratory in the new hospital. They handled x-ray work and

EKGs as well as laboratory work. Later, each of these areas became a separate department.

Mr. Harkins served in this capacity until his death in 1961. Eileen Harkins continued to supervise the laboratory until 1990, when she decided to ease her work load a bit and step down as director. She did, however,

Year	Name
1981	Susan G. Kyker
1982	Timothy J. Dalton
1983	Ann C. Arnold
1984	Janice E. Thurmond
1985	S. Renee Wilkinson
1986	Patricia A. Deana
1987	No Award
1988	Jesse D. Taylor
1989	Linda S. McCollough
1990	Tammy R. McCoy
1991	Tammy R. McCoy
1992	N. Scott Wheeler
1993	Linda T. Steffey
1994	Julie A. Oldham
1994	Britney L. Jones
1995	Lora B. Rice
1996	Lora B. Rice
1997	Sandra F. Lopez

continue to work in the lab until June 17, 1999. Ms. Harkins recently retired altogether on her birthday, at age 80. She had been employed in and was an integral part of the medical laboratory for 48 1/2 years.

In the late 1970s, Ms. Harkins began looking into the establish-

ment of a scholarship fund at Tennessee Tech in memory of her husband. In 1980, this idea came to fruition, and a scholarship fund was begun to provide support to qualified students interested in a career in medical technology. She and her son, Wayne Harkins, have been steadfast and unflinching in ensuring the financial growth of

#### School Attended

Vanderbilt Hospital
Vanderbilt Hospital
St. Thomas Hospital
Baptist Hospital, Nashville
St. Thomas Hospital
St. Thomas Hospital
Vanderbilt Hospital
St. Thomas Hospital
TTU
Vanderbilt
UT Memphis
Holston Valley Medical Center
St. Thomas Hospital
Vanderbilt Hospital
TTU
UT Memphis
TTU

this scholarship fund. The first Leroy Harkins Scholarship was awarded in 1981. A list of past scholarship winners appears above. Each year the award is presented, Leroy Harkins is memorialized, and he will be for some time to come. This is a great way to memorialize someone special. **VS**

# from the . Chemistry Department

Greetings,

I am happy to participate in this inaugural Vital Signs newsletter, and I thank Drs. Kline and Banks for their vision in this. First, I want to express my deepest apprecia-



tion to Dr. Lamar Parker and the rest of our Advisory Board for their ongoing participation in helping us define our goals in this program.

The Chemistry Department enjoys a long and happy association with the health pre-professional advising at TTU. In fact, pre-professional students are the “bread-and-butter” of our student clientele. As such we are committed to continue to give this program our utmost attention. That is why the department has launched a \$1 million capital campaign — to raise support for students in biochemistry and pre-health sciences. Rather than being strictly a scholarship fund, this money will be

used to provide stipends to students involved in undergraduate research with faculty mentors, plus buy the chemicals and supplies needed to do their research. These types of experiences are crucial in developing the critical thinking and teamwork skills necessary for success.

As you are aware, state support for higher education has been sadly lacking and getting worse. Tennessee is now dead last in per capita outlay for higher education. You can also be sure that the lottery will not help the department in defraying its costs in providing undergraduate research experiences so vital for our students. If Tennessee were not such a wonderful place to live, and populated by my dear and life-long friends, I would be tempted to “hang my shingle” somewhere else. But I just can’t. I love this place too much, and I love these students. Even without adequate funds, we still have been able to offer a top-notch education because of the tireless dedication of people like Sublett, Allen, Jewell, Skinner, Singer, Ashburn, Swindell, and others, who taught because they loved it. They did it “out of their hide.”

We have produced many outstanding students over the years, such as Melissa Phillips (Johns Hopkins), Andy Boswell (Washington Univ.), and Kristin Pierce (UAB Med School). All of these benefited from doing undergraduate research with one of our

dedicated faculty. While Brad Boyd (tops in med class at UTM) and Eric Redmon (tops in med class at Wake Forest) were successful students who for compelling reasons did not engage in undergraduate research.

While our Pre-Professional Advisory Board will be helping us raise funds from medical professionals, the department pledges to throw its support and energies into seeking funding from former pure chemistry majors.

More and more, students are working outside the university to finance going to school. I cannot imagine working 20+ hours a week flipping burgers and trying at the same time to get a chemistry degree! This is not a good situation. What if we could pay them that same amount of money to work on campus learning science! That is what your support to the \$1 million campaign can do. I have no problem asking for money, because I feel so passionately about this. I’m putting my money and energy into it as well. I am totally convinced that it is seed well-sown. And you can be assured that the department will respect your wishes in getting your gift allocated where you want it working.

Best wishes,  
Scott Northrup, Chair

## Research scholarship approved

The Pre-Professional Advisory Board recently approved a new endowment named the Chemistry/Biochemistry Research-Scholarship Endowment, which is intended to enhance opportunities for health pre-professionals and chemistry majors to develop their skills in critical thinking and independent thinking by planning and carrying out research.

Eventually, the fund will support scholarships for students who will be encouraged to work on a specific research project (very much a trend these days). It will help support the project with chemicals and other materials and some instrumentation. Later on, faculty will get a token for their extra efforts with monies for their development to travel with the student for presentation or to obtain some additional materials to support their work.

The fund has already been initiated and to date has grown to \$21,500. Other funds are considering changing over to this new emphasis. Any monies added to any existing funds will be part of this project. We are also hoping that there will be matching monies from some of the donors of existing funds for those interested in recognizing some of them. You will receive a special mailing with all the details of this new fund and hope that you will be able to respond sometime. *VS*

# from the Advisory Board

Please let me take a moment of your time and introduce myself. My name is Lamar Parker, and I am a 1978 graduate of Tennessee Technological University from the College of Arts and Sciences with a pre-med degree in chemistry. With the

proud alumnus some great things about Tennessee Tech's pre-professional program.

Did you know:

■ Since 1992 TTU has averaged more than 30 postgraduate professional school admissions each year, for a total of 330 students.

purchase of an NMR spectrometer.

■ TTU demonstrates a strong academic program with excellent advisors, personalized attention to students, and is involved in student organizations.

■ TTU has an outstanding, active, friendly Chemical Medical Sciences Club (Chem-Med Club) with numerous opportunities to help students interested in pre-professional fields understand and meet their goals.

■ TTU has better than a 90% acceptance rate to professional schools after graduation.

These are some of the great opportunities available at Tennessee Tech. We would ask you to help with increasing the visibility of our outstanding pre-professional program by:

■ Talking with a colleague or friend about Tennessee Tech.

■ Volunteering to speak about your experiences at Tennessee Tech at your local high schools and college fairs.

Thanks so much for your time. I hope to highlight different areas in future communiqués. We would also like to invite you to Homecoming 2004, Nov. 6, to see how our campus has made progress and to attend the specially planned pre-professional party.

~ Lamar Parker, M.D.



From left: advisor Eugene Kline, alumnus Lamar Parker, advisor Thurston Banks

education I received at Tennessee Tech, I was able to enter Wake Forest University Bowman Gray Campus Medical School and obtain my M.D. This was all possible because of an excellent college experience that I received in the College of Arts and Sciences at Tennessee Tech.

I now serve as chairperson of TTU's Health Science Pre-Professional Advisory Board and would like to share as a

■ More than 350 majors in nine pre-health career fields are being advised at TTU.

■ Concerning graduates from TTU, University of Tennessee admissions officers have said, "You and your colleagues prepare students exceptionally well for the rigors of medical and professional schools. Send us more of these folks."

■ TTU continues to compete successfully with nationally well-known colleges such as MIT, Harvard and the like as evidenced by a recent \$200,000 grant for the

## Currently available scholarships

Future donors are encouraged to establish new scholarships. We memorialize every scholarship each year at the annual spring awards ceremony. What better way to honor someone special? Here are the current scholarships honoring individuals:

- Howard G. Ashburn - CHEM/Pre-professional
  - F.U. Foster - ACS Chemistry
  - Joe B. Hix - PMED from Jackson or Putnam counties.
  - Powell and Willie Rush Jewell - Chem/Pre-professional
  - CHEM MED Sci Club - Club member and Pre-Professional major
  - Robert L. Sublett - Chem/Pre-Professional
  - Blankenship/McDowell - ACS Chemistry
  - Swindell-Jackson - Chem research
  - Harkins - Med-Tech/Chemistry
  - Headrick - PMED/Pre-Professional majors/varsity athlete
  - John Skinner - ACS Chemistry
  - Bill Harper - ACS Chem from Wartburg, TN, if available
  - Chemistry Department - chemistry majors
  - Bob Oglesby - ACS Chem/Chemical Engineer (alternate years)
  - Alvin Boyd - Pre-Pharmacy
  - Cookeville Evening Lions - Pre-optometry/Pre-Medicine
  - A.W. and Hilda Singer - Health Science Pre-Professional
  - Eugene and Ruth Ann Kline - Chemistry research
  - Faculty Development Fund - Chemistry faculty
  - Freshman Chemistry Lab Endowment - equipment
- While many donors set up a fund to give scholarships, a newer trend is to make a portion of income from the fund available to cover other real but hidden costs needed to provide a quality education through a program such as ours. *VS*

# from an alumnus

Dear Friends and Fellow Alums:

I am pretty sure that, like me, you look back on your days as a young student at Tennessee Tech with great fondness. You



remember the important formative steps you took on the way to your career as a health

professional. Names like Sublett, Ashburn, Swindell, Allen, Jewell, Furtch, Banks, Kline, and many others may come to mind. Some of those memories may not always be the most pleasant, as these folks made us work very hard. And yet we were made to feel as if we really mattered to those who worked to educate us, and we have benefited in many ways.

Recently I have spent some time at TTU serving on the Pre-Professional Advisory Board, and while some of the names have changed, the faculty and staff there still have the same caring attitude. Drs. Banks, Kline, and Crouse are still working very hard to provide great advising to pre-professional and chemistry students. Dr. Kline still serves as advisor for the Chem-Med Club. Dr. Northrup, as department chair, has been very supportive of the pre-professional program.

By now you all know that higher education in Tennessee and many other states has been taking a beating as the fraction of its income provided by state funding has dwindled year after year. You may occasionally hear stories about wasteful spending, but I can assure you from my

perspective as a board member that our beloved alma mater has been pinching pennies for a very long time, and that was before it took a 9% hit last year. The pre-professional program at TTU faces critical monetary needs, and yet it has remained successful in spite of ever-increasing costs, well documented under-funding from the state, and increased competition from other schools with scholarships, etc. Over many years the faculty have offset some of this with their own personal funds, with revenues from the sale of lab books they have written, by writing grants for new equipment, by using the indirect costs monies from research grants to purchase supplies and instruments for teaching, and so forth.

I am writing to you today to ask for your support for the new capital campaign established to create a \$1 million endowment to benefit biochemistry and pre-professional students. This money would be used to enhance opportunities for these students to participate in undergraduate research projects with faculty mentors, providing students a stipend, plus paying the expenses of chemicals and so forth. Research provides the hands-on learning experience needed to develop the independent and critical thinking skills that are becoming important for admission into professional schools and for future career development in the health professions.

I hope you'll join me in this worthy effort of the Chemistry Department to enrich the academic lives of the students of Tennessee.

Best wishes,  
Scott Copeland, M.D.



## Fall 02, Fall 03 Acceptances into Professional Schools

Many of our majors have been accepted into professional schools in the past two years. The total has been stable at about 28-32 each year for some time, but the distribution of majors often seems to vary drastically from year to year. The following numbers of students were accepted in the various schools:

CHIROPRACTIC	1
DENTAL HYGIENE	3
DENTISTRY	4
MED TECHNOLOGY	1
MEDICINE	12
NURSE PRACTITIONER	2
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	1
OPTOMETRY	6
OSTEOPATHY	1
PHARMACY	33
PHYSICIANS ASST	2
PHYSICAL THERAPY	3
Total 2 years (2002 & 2003)	69

As you can see, the strong trend right now seems to be toward pharmacy. If it's anything like years past, that will change with time. A student interviewing at UT-Memphis this year was told that Tech students at Memphis are competing with the best students in the state. All the schools tell us in private that our students are a cut above others from elsewhere in the state.

Our success rate (using very conservative exam scores) for all of the health sciences has been an unbelievable 90% for students eventually getting accepted into a professional school. **VS**

# from the advisors

We have been advisors, officially, for about 12-14 years but both of us have been involved since we came here more than 30 years ago (has it been that long?). The more we work in this process, the more we realize how important our many positive interactions with you as former students are in helping us do our job each day. Once we know where potential Tech students come from, we tell them about you and all the positive things we can remember (and there are many). What we find many times is that they have already talked to you about Tech, and you gave them a very positive recommendation and are one of the main reasons they are here. We get to find out what you are doing in the process and have been able to keep up with many more of you

than you might think. Of course, this is more so with the students we have taught over the past 30 years, but it is also true of many of you from earlier times. Dr. Sublett and Professor Jewell also keep us up-to-date on many of you.

The relatively new Advisory Board started by Arts and Sciences College Dean Jack Armistead, with Lamar Parker, PMED/CHEM 1978 (now at Wake Forest Medical School), as its Chair, has been most helpful and supportive to us, to department Chairman Scott Northrup, and to today's students. The board members' willingness to talk with prospective students, alone, has been most beneficial and this year paid off with 18 chemistry majors, of whom a significant proportion will be going into a health science if things go as usual.

Too often boards are created

mainly for fund raising. Our board has enthusiastically endorsed an endowment program to allow future students to keep getting the excellent quality of preparedness that you benefited from. But more importantly, they have been most helpful in passing their enthusiasm on to current and new students to encourage them to pursue a career in a health science. We welcome all such advice from you, whether you are on the board right now or not, and we hope that you will be willing to serve on this board some time in the future.

We are greatly encouraged by the board's adoption of a fund-raising campaign. We are both so committed to the program's success that we really want to see it continue to be supported in a way that will develop competitive students for whatever profession they choose for a long time to come. That probably means additional funding through an

endowment which will grow on its own. We offer ourselves in any fashion to help explain it and to come to your towns and help in any way to make this endowment become a reality. We get a lot of students from many nearby towns and cities. We are hoping that these places will eventually see the need to be supporting their students in attending Tech in hopes that these same students will return to provide excellent health care in their hometowns.

There are many TPI and TTU alumni who have had long and prosperous careers and we hope that many of you will want to make sure that the Tennessee Tech Pre-Professional Program continues to be a major player in helping top-notch students return to their hometowns to provide excellent professional health care.

~Thurston Banks and Eugene Kline

# from the Chem-Med Club



The 2003-04 year has been exciting, with many interesting activities and 122 members. The new officers have brought a new level of energy and many new ideas to the club, and we're trying to bring back some of the traditions such as the scrapbook, "Wiener Award" (I am proud to say I won last year), and the

**2003-04 officers: President Bryan L. Watson, Pre-Medicine; Vice-President Ashley Wright, Pre-Optometry; Treasurer Chris Burke, Pre-Pharmacy; Secretary Amber Honeycutt, Pre-Pharmacy.**

faculty versus student volleyball game. We have had several exciting events this year, including an ice cream social, which was a wonderful opportunity for incoming freshmen to get to know other club members as well as faculty advisors.

The biggest success thus far has been the softball game between the CHEM-MED and ACS clubs. CHEM-MED defeated ACS by a score of 18-14 thanks in part to Dr. Kline's umpiring. Other faculty participants

were Dr. Crouse as ump, Dr. Banks, who roasted the hot dogs, and Dr. Albu, who played a mean third base for the ACS.

Scott Tongate, CEO and administrator of Frank T. Rutherford Memorial Hospital at Carthage, spoke to the club about the challenges faced by rural hospitals. Dr. Casey White, a clinical pharmacologist, spoke to the club about pharmacy school admission and clinical pharmacology in general. Monica Means, a nurse practitioner, was a guest speaker as well. The schedule of speakers for the remainder of this year included Dr. Ken Beaty, Family Practice; Dr. John Jackson, Pediatric Psychiatry; Dr. David Sain, Orthodontics; Dr. Gerald Bryant, Dentistry; Dr. Dale Ensor on South American medical missions; and Dr. Barbara Jackson on the interview process.

I would like to thank all of our former members for making the CHEM-MED club the wonderful organization it is today. If anyone is interested in speaking at a meeting, feel free to e-mail Dr. Kline (ekline@tntech.edu) or Dr. Banks (tbanks@tntech.edu). I encourage everyone to visit the new CHEM-MED web site; see the link on the Department of Chemistry's home page. I look forward to meeting all of you at the reunion this fall.

~Bryan L. Watson, 2003-04 President

# Chemistry/Biochemistry Endowment grows; success more important than ever

By Eugene Kline

The success of our department to raise and responsibly distribute monies has been well documented. When I took over in the 1980s as chairman of the department endowment and scholarships funds, we had less than \$20,000 in total endowments. Faculty have written many lab manuals and have put all profits (with great savings to the students) into a Chemistry Department Endowment Fund started when Dr. Robert Sublett was chairman. That endowment has grown to greater than \$60,000 including a \$10,000 contribution in memory of Dr. Allen.

Traditionally, we give 50% of all the monies as scholarships and the other 50% goes into the endowment as we have learned the valuable lesson of compounded growth. There have been many individuals who have started endowments and these donations together with the chemistry endowment total about \$400,000. Scholarships are tightly intermingled with both chemistry and health profession majors and might, at first, seem like a lot of money. However, assuming that \$400,000 generates 10% overall returns, then 5% (\$20,000) goes into scholarships and 5% goes back into the endowment to offset inflation. So a total of about \$20,000 a year in scholarships has been given to our chemistry and health pre-professional majors, representing about 25 students a year from a pool of more than 300 quality students. However, we still have more qualified students who deserve scholarships than we have resources to support.

Recruiting incoming freshmen with scholarships is essential, and we start out with more than 120 freshmen each fall. Last year the department recruited 18 freshman chemistry majors with exceptional ACT scores. Many of these students are being recruited by a other undergraduate institutions and will likely end up going to a professional health science school. We need more resources to compete in recruiting.

The initial goal is to raise \$1 million for the new Chemistry/Biochemistry Endowment Fund. The intent is to award only undergraduate scholarships until the fund reaches a second goal of \$2 million. After that goal is reached, we will start supporting the scholarship research component. These would be excellent scholarships, and the research requirement will make these students more competitive in the professional school/graduate school application pools. We have been informed that undergraduate research work is becoming more important for admission into the health professions as well as into the many Ph.D. programs. We also are seeing a rise in the interest in M.D./Ph.D. or Pharm.D./Ph.D. programs and we have had several students enter these programs.



## PERCENT OF EARNINGS PROPOSED FOR EACH LEVEL

ENDOWMENT LEVEL	\$500,000(max)	\$1,000,000(max)	\$2,000,000(max)
Return to Endowment	80% (\$40,000)	70% (\$70,000)	50% (\$100,000)
Scholarships	20% (\$10,000)	20% (\$20,000)	20% (\$40,000)
Research costs		10% (\$10,000)	15% (\$30,000)
Instrumentation			10% (\$20,000)
Faculty			5% (\$10,000)

To provide this type of experience, not only will monies be needed for scholarships but funds will also be needed to support the research the student will be doing. Instrumentation used in this research will be maintained and the faculty mentor will get an additional, but modest, amount of money for the extra work of directing the student, for software or for travel with the student to a meeting to present the work.

In the table above, we have shown the results of an average percentage return on the endowments of 10% per year; however, we hope that investments will grow at even faster rates. The new Tennessee lottery will not provide anything to the institution or department for the supplies or

instrumentation needed to better enable us to prepare students for their careers and candidacies. In addition, such instruments will be available for use by all students (not just those who have received a scholarship) and in this regard it will be a win-win situation for all students and faculty.

We hope many of you will be able to help out in this vital venture. The basic strategy is to gradually take advantage of compounded monies until we reach a level that will add meaningful funding to the whole program.

The Pre-Professional Advisory Board will be watching these percentages and will be recommending alterations in these plans based upon any significant changes in state funding. VS

# epilogue

By Ann Do, M.D.

After graduating from Tennessee Technological University in 1987 as a chemistry/pre-med major, I attended medical school at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, from 1987 to 1991, and afterwards completed a three-year residency



program in pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. Currently, I work as a medical epidemiologist in the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA.

I became interested in the idea of public health and preventive medicine during residency. As a pediatrician-in-training, I found it was easy for me to appreciate the impact of simple preventive measures such as proper immunization, wearing bicycle helmets, and using infant car safety seats, on the health of pediatric patients. Many preventable health problems first occur during childhood. In addition, chronic health problems sometimes have their roots during childhood or adolescence; examples are lung diseases associated with smoking, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV infection), alcohol-related illnesses and injuries, and illicit drug use/dependency.

It was also during residency that I came across a journal article about the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), a two-year epidemiology-training program sponsored by the CDC. In epidemiology, the perspective is on the health of a population rather than the health of individual patients, as it is in clinical medicine. Originally, the EIS program was established to provide support for investigating infectious disease epidemics. Over time, however, epidemiological principles have been recognized as useful in studying health problems other than infectious diseases as well, and therefore, EIS has evolved to include many other areas of public health such as environmental health, prevention of unintentional injuries, prevention of cancer, and nutrition. I applied to EIS and was accepted into the program. During my two

years in EIS, I worked in the Hospital Infections Program at CDC which deals with infectious diseases that occur in the hospital and other health care settings.

In my current position in the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, I work with the HIV/AIDS Surveillance Branch, which collects information that helps to keep track of the HIV epidemic in the United States. Information such as where the epidemic is increasing and in whom the risk for HIV/AIDS is high is needed to develop preventive strategies and control the epidemic. My job involves varied day-to-day work activities, but includes responding to public inquiries about HIV/AIDS, discussing specific issues regarding research or surveillance projects with health departments at the state or local levels, preparing for presentations of scientific meetings, mentoring trainees, investigating cases of HIV infection involving unusual transmission or involving an unusual HIV strain, and helping to teach in an epidemiology course.

I miss the direct interaction with individual patients in clinical medicine, but I think my work is just as interesting and intellectually stimulating. It is also exciting to be at CDC, which has had a hand in important historical events, one of the most important being the global eradication of small pox. There is an impressive array of expertise here, and I feel fortunate to be a part of it. *VS*

## We want to hear from you

We are hoping to publish this newsletter once a year. We are trying to get a complete list of all the members and officers of the chemical medical sciences clubs as well as all of those who spent time in pre-professional health sciences program at Tech. We hope that this will be the place to keep up with each other, and we hope to include historical items of interest for the record as well as locations and successes of our former students.

Please help us out by:

- Correcting all addresses where subsequent newsletters can be sent
- Sending us addresses of former students you think might be interested in this communication
- E-mailing a copy of the newsletter or directing people you think might be interested to our online address: [www.tntech.edu/chemistry/programs/preprofessional/newsletter](http://www.tntech.edu/chemistry/programs/preprofessional/newsletter).
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