

Supporting Future Physicians

Undergraduate Medical Academy

The new Undergraduate Medical Academy (UMA) was created by passage of Texas House Bill 85 and Senate Bill 1009. The initiative aims to increase the number of students optimally prepared for the study of medical sciences in Texas. The UMA will have a unique opportunity to prepare a new generation of health care providers, with the support of committed partnerships. The advisory board for the UMA will include presidents of national medical organizations (AMA and APHA), a former secretary of health, the State Health Commissioner, Medical School Presidents and a former CDC Director and a U.S. Surgeon General.



Dr. Dennis E. Daniels, professor and director of the UMA, joined Prairie View's faculty in spring 2004. In August 2004, Dr. Daniels conducted a forum to introduce new staff and

present an overview of the Academy's origin, purpose, goals, and methods. He noted that the Academy is an intense, specialized program that focuses on readiness for success in medical school. To fulfill this goal, the Academy will offer a summer enrichment program, a new degree program, research opportunities, and test preparation for medical school candidates.

The UMA begins its first semester with eighteen sophomores. The educational experience of these students will be enhanced by a close interface with the medical schools of Texas, mentor/research relationships with faculty, a mini-grand rounds, test-skill enhancement, new

course development (e.g., Human Disease and Epidemiology and Healthcare Among Minorities and the Underserved), scholarships (the 2004 class received \$8,000 each) and a new degree plan.

Already students of the UMA have received certification in the areas of hearing and vision for school age children. This effort will support the service component of the UMA to the City of Prairie View and Waller County. Other service initiatives include the University community via efforts on the UMA web page and the health and wellness campaign (including a CPR certification campaign, and the "eat wisely and exercise" promotion). The goal is to achieve optimal health at the personal, campus and community levels.

Pre-LIMS Makes Its Case

Division of SWBPS

Faculty members from the Division of Social Work, Behavioral and Political Science have begun to address the persistent under-representation of ethnic and socio-economic minorities in the legal profession with the establishment of Pre-Law Investment in Mentoring Students (Pre-LIMS). Currently, the U.S. legal profession is over 90% white, and enrollment in law school is 80% white, a disparity that inspired this collaborative effort by PVAMU and the Law School of The University of Texas at Austin. The long-term objectives of Pre-



LIMS include informing a wider variety of PV students of the opportunities, challenges, and advantages of a legal career, improving PV students' chances of admission to law schools, especially by increasing LSAT performance, and enhancing future success of PV alumni in law school. The first effort toward this goal was the creation of the 2004 Summer Pilot Program.

On-campus activities ranged from daily classes and workshops in legal history and constitutional law, led by Dr. Steven Wilson (Assistant Professor of History) and Dr. Anthony Coveny (Assistant Professor of Political Science). Students completed homework including heavy reading, essays, and briefing cases. The program also featured LSAT Preparation and Practice, taught by the Princeton Review. Pre-LIMS hosted visits from the University of Houston Law Center and Dean William C. Powers, Jr. the University of Texas School of Law.

The eight student participants visited a class at the University of Houston Law Center and attended a tour and lunch provided by the

Houston law firm Baker, Botts L.L.P., a visit that resulted in an article about the Pre-LIMS program in the *Houston Business Journal*. The capstone of the summer pilot was a trip to the United States District Court, Southern District of Texas, where students conducted a mock trial competition, with Hon.

Vanessa D. Gilmore, United States District Judge, presiding.

Bridging the Gap

Biology

The Summer Scientific Research programs, co-directed by Dr. Gloria Regisford and Dr. Laura Carson, successfully worked towards "bridging the gap" in science education and health disparities. Ten students from the Houston Community College System and seven PV students participated in one of three summer programs: the Bridging the Gap to the Baccalaureate Degree (BGBD); Project EXPORT (Bridging the Gap: Addressing



Environmental Justice through Science); and Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU). Students participated

in laboratory research, attended leadership and GRE workshops, and visited Baylor's Genome Sequencing Center and NASA.

The summer programs culminated in a Research Symposium held at the MSC on August 5, 2004, where the students presented posters of their research findings. Opening remarks were given by Dr. Joahanne Thomas-Smith and Dr. Albert Thompson, Professor of Chemistry at Spelman College, while Dr. Thomas Landefeld, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at California State University, Dominguez Hills, gave the keynote address.



Improving the Writer, Not Just the Writing



The Writing Center is entering its second year of operation. Currently staffed by English faculty,

the Center assists students in every academic discipline, whether they are interested in improving their writing skills for term papers, essays, lab reports, personal statements, or resumes. For the fall 2004 semester, Dr. James Palmer, Director of the Writing Center, is training four undergraduate and graduate students in English to work as effective peer-to-peer tutors. Tutors work one-on-one with individual students, and handouts are available on issues ranging from research

citation to sentence style. The Department of Languages and Communications hopes to expand the Center's operational hours in the spring semester, making its services available to even more Prairie View scholars. The Writing Center is located in Hilliard Hall, Room 118.



Praise for NROTC

Military Science

Commander Ann Rondeau, a rear admiral in charge of training in the U.S. Navy, recently met with approximately 30 of PVAMU's NROTC officers and students, in an effort to strengthen University-Navy ties, motivate the students, and publicize scholarship opportunities. Cmdr. Rondeau praised the students' commitment to service and advised them to focus, learn to navigate rough waters, and contribute to the team effort. Rondeau stressed the Navy's emphasis on diversity, noting that the "enlisted force is very diverse," while the "officer's corps is not . . . We are still a fairly monochromatic force." Rondeau said this is due in part to the military's history, noting that, with the great demand for engineers, mathematicians, and other technical experts, the U.S. Navy has to compete with industry offering attractive financial rewards. Cmdr. Rondeau suggested that HBCUs are a significant resource for changing things.

PVAMU currently boasts 74 naval scholarship students and college program students and belongs to a local NROTC consortium that includes Houston Baptist, Texas Southern University, Rice, and the University of Houston. PVAMU Professor of Naval Science Capt. Larry J. Watson manages the consortium, which is based at Prairie View and Rice University.