

NEWS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SOUTHWESTERN
MEDICAL SCHOOL AT DALLAS



BOB FENLEY, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION

JOHN WEEKS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Contact: John Weeks

FOR RELEASE TO AMS, SUNDAY, OCT. 31

DALLAS--An award-winning medical scientist will join the growing team of experts in immunology at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas next fall.

Dr. Jonathan W. Uhr (rhymes with "poor"), noted immunologist at the New York University School of Medicine, will become professor and chairman of microbiology and professor of internal medicine at Southwestern on Sept. 1, 1972, Dr. Charles C. Sprague, UTSMS dean, announced Saturday.

Dr. Uhr will succeed Dr. S. Edward Sulkin as microbiology chairman. Dr. Sulkin, head of the department since 1945, had asked to be relieved of administrative responsibilities in order to devote more time to intensified medical research, Dr. Sprague said.

The 44-year-old Dr. Uhr has been director of the Irvington House Institute for Rheumatic Fever and Allied Diseases at the NYU School of Medicine for the past 10 years. He also is a consultant on immunization to the United States Public Health Service and the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board in Washington.

Dr. Uhr has received numerous awards for his research, which focuses on immunology at the basic level--the molecular mechanisms of antibody formation and their regulation. Among major honors accorded him have been the Newcomb Cleveland Prize of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and, just recently, the \$1,000 Squibb Award from the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

More than 100 scientific reports on his studies have been published.

The native New Yorker has been on the faculty of the Manhattan medical school since 1958 and currently holds the rank of professor of medicine. He received his MD degree there in 1952.

--more--

first add uhr appointment

Dr. Uhr, who describes himself as a "general practitioner" of immunology, will become the latest to join UTSMS' already-impressive list of experts concentrating in that field which has gained new emphasis as result of organ transplantation.

Three authorities on transplant immunology, Dr. Rupert E. Billingham and his associates Dr. J. Wayne Streilein and Dr. Alan Beer, joined Southwestern last summer. Dr. Billingham, now chairman of cell biology at UTSMS, has been recognized for his studies of the role immune responses play in the body's rejection of transplanted tissue.

Dr. Uhr describes the prospect of joining an unusual interdisciplinary study of immunology at Southwestern as "very exciting."

"The Department of Microbiology under Dr. Sulkin has been an exciting one," he said, "and adding to it a strong effort in immunology will make it an even stronger department."

"With combined activities of the Departments of Cell Biology and Microbiology, as well as those of Drs. Morris Ziff and Jay Sanford in the Department of Internal Medicine, there is an extraordinary possibility for a program that will set the school apart," Dr. Uhr said.

Dr. Uhr said he shares a community of interest with Dr. Ziff, Southwestern's foremost authority on arthritis and rheumatic diseases. The NYU institute directed by Dr. Uhr investigates the immunological aspects of rheumatoid arthritis, rheumatic fever and related diseases.

Dean Sprague expressed delight at Dr. Uhr's acceptance of an appointment to the Dallas school, while paying tribute to his predecessor.

"Southwestern is fortunate to have a man of Dr. Uhr's talents to add his special expertise to its teaching and research programs, particularly in the increasingly important area of immunology," he said.

"We have been searching for the past 18 months for the right replacement for so able a department head as Dr. Sulkin," he continued. "In Dr. Uhr, we have both a skilled administrator and a distinguished medical scientist, a fitting successor who will also make his own major contribution to our expanding research effort."

--more--

"While we regret Ed Sulkin's decision to step aside, we recognize his wish to spend more time on his basic interest--research. He has already contributed mightily to the sum of medical knowledge, and we know he will continue to bring distinction to Southwestern as he has done in the past," Dean Sprague said.

Dr. Sulkin joined Southwestern Medical College in 1943, shortly after its founding, and became professor and chairman of microbiology two years later. A world-recognized virologist and research scientist, he is author of more than 175 published reports and has contributed to 10 books.

He is a consultant in virology to the National Cancer Institute and a consultant on laboratory safety to the National Safety Council.

Dr. Sulkin is credited with discoveries that pinpoint the role of bats in harboring dormant viruses known to cause periodic outbreaks of rabies and St. Louis encephalitis, a form of "sleeping sickness." His studies of rabies have been under way more than 25 years.

More recently, Dr. Sulkin's laboratory has extended its investigations to Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE), a form of encephalitis which struck in a widespread epidemic earlier this year killing many horses.

Among honors he has received during a career spanning three decades are the Dallas Hospital Council's Health Service Award; a Distinguished Alumnus Award from Washington University, St. Louis; and the American Public Health Association's Laboratory Section Award.

Dr. Sulkin also is considered a foremost authority on laboratory-acquired infections, and is co-author of the first definitive study of the dangers faced by medical researchers. Since 1949, the study has recorded more than 3,250 known cases of laboratory-induced infections, resulting in 132 deaths.

OCTOBER 28, 1971