

December 30, 1992

SPECIAL TO THE DALLAS WEEKLY

UT SOUTHWESTERN OFFERS A WIDE RANGE OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

DALLAS--High-school junior Dana Applewhite knows what she wants to be when she grows up--a health-care professional.

"What I really want to do is pediatrics, but I want to check out all the other fields before I decide," she said.

Applewhite is definitely on the right track. The outlook for career opportunities in the health-care field is quite bright. Of the 30 fastest growing occupations, 14 are in health care, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook, which forecasts job growth to the year 2000.

It's students like Applewhite whom Dr. Nancy Fain, associate dean of Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, admissions counselor Grace Taylor and a few allied-health students and faculty members have been recruiting aggressively this school year. So far, they've talked with more than 1,300 students at 23 Metroplex high schools about each of the programs UT Southwestern offers.

While these young people won't be eligible to enter any UT Southwestern program until they've completed at least two years of undergraduate studies, Fain sees the visits as a way of cultivating a future crop of qualified applicants--particularly minority applicants.

(More)

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"All we're doing is planting seeds," said Fain. "We try to show them all the options that are available. We're mainly encouraging them to go to college."

The recruitment team visited Texas high schools in Lancaster, Plano, Grand Prairie, Richardson, Garland, Arlington, Lewisville, Dallas, Highland Park, Mesquite, Irving and Wilmer-Hutchins. Fain and Taylor have plans to speak at colleges and universities across the state, including Texas Southern University and Jarvis Christian, Wiley and Paul Quinn colleges.

"Most people don't know that we have three different schools at UT Southwestern. We want to provide an awareness about each school and the programs it offers," said Taylor, who finds it particularly rewarding to see new students on campus whom she met first on a high-school or college recruiting trip.

Although she's only in her second semester as a prosthetics and orthotics student at UT Southwestern, Pamela Abramson couldn't resist the opportunity to tell high-school students about the health professions. She and Karrie Coffield, a student in the medical center's Physician Assistant Program, joined Fain and Taylor at one of the high-school career days.

"I know what it's like from their viewpoint--trying to decide what you want to do with your life. I just want to expose them to a profession that might be exciting for them if they only knew about it," Abramson said.

In addition to fall recruiting, UT Southwestern annually participates in the National Institutes of Health Summer Research Training Program for Minority High School Students. The goal of the summer intern program is to expose high-school seniors and recent

(More)

graduates to real scientists and real research projects, in hopes of motivating the students to pursue careers in science, said Fain.

Fain also is working with area community colleges to provide a smoother transition for students interested in pursuing studies at Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School.

"We're trying to work more closely with interested students during their first two years to identify for them the courses that will transfer," she said.

UT Southwestern Medical Center's activities are directed toward educating future health professionals and scientists, providing patient care and being at the cutting edge of biomedical research. The medical center is located on Harry Hines Boulevard, four miles north of downtown Dallas. The 60-acre main campus includes 12 buildings, which house classrooms, laboratories, offices, an extensive medical library, a 1,000-seat auditorium and a large outpatient clinic. The campus is adjoined by three teaching hospitals: Parkland Memorial Hospital, Children's Medical Center of Dallas and Zale Lipshy University Hospital. The main campus will soon be linked by an elevated campus connector to the university's new 40-acre North Campus, a giant biomedical research complex currently under development across the street from the original campus.

UT Southwestern has three degree-granting institutions: Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School and Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Southwestern Medical School is one of the four medical schools in The University of Texas System. The school admits 200 students each year, usually after they have completed four years of college. Admission is highly competitive. Medical students are taught the basic

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sciences and the fundamental mechanisms of biology during the first two years. For the second two years, they pursue clinical courses, which allow them to integrate their basic knowledge with practical patient care at UT Southwestern's affiliated teaching hospitals. After medical school, the new physicians continue their training as residents at medical facilities in Dallas and across the country.

Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School offers its students, which include mid-career changers, the opportunity to learn the latest technological advances in their allied-health field of study. Beyond physicians, there are a myriad of professionals who care for the sick, serve as hospital administrators and assist elderly or physically challenged individuals. They are allied-health professionals, and they are in high demand. Even more appealing than the availability of jobs in the allied-health field are the extremely competitive salaries and the diverse environments the field offers.

Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences educates biomedical scientists, counselors, engineers and communicators, who excel in a number of rapidly changing professional fields. Graduate students at UT Southwestern pursue programs ranging from molecular microbiology to clinical psychology.

For more information, call the UT Southwestern Registrar's Office at (214) 648-3606. For specific information on allied-health sciences programs, you may call the Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School directly at (214) 648-2800.

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NOTE: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School, affiliated teaching hospitals and outpatient clinics.