News
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DALLAS--Wanting to do something for med tech students in the School of Allied Health Sciences has led Dr. L. Ruth Guy to found an emergency loan fund as a "good-bye" gift.

"I wanted to do something for the department; it's been a pleasure for me to work with them through the years. We have practically no funds for emergency situations for our students, and it is my hope that others will add to the fund," she said.

Not that the pixie-haired dynamo with the determined glint in her blue eyes is going anywhere. Rather, the gift is symbolic, for, while she is stepping down from administrative chores connected with her academic appointments, her teaching duties will continue.

"I'll be able to get a few test tubes in my hand occasionally," the hematologist said, thinking longingly of having time to return to her research lab.

Dr. Guy is a professor in both the Department of Pathology and the Department of Medical Technology at the health science center. She was also chairing the medical technology program, as well as serving as associate director of the Parkland Memorial Hospital Blood Bank, a duty she has fulfilled for the last 25 years, until Sept. 1. Barbara Marshall Castleberry is acting chairman. Dr. E. A. Stein has assumed the associate directorship of the bank.

Dr. Guy remembers several times both in her graduate and undergraduate days when "I wouldn't have made it" had there not been emergency funds available. In a sense, the educator, who has earned bachelors, masters and Ph.D. degrees, is returning these favors.

Unless money is available, she pointed out, we may lose some fine professionals because many times personal loans from faculty members are a student's only recourse. "And from my own experience I know that students are more than reluctant to take them--they just won't."

As head of the department she has known of many student emergencies. "Sometimes the students come to the head of their departments, not for money, but just to let them know there is a problem. Well it's a lot better if we have something to offer other than sympathy and a cup of coffee."

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Dr. Guy's teaching association with medical technology here came when she headed up the first Parkland program in 1954. That first year two of the students scored in the top 10 percent in national certification exams. With the founding of the allied health school, the program became a part of the health science center in 1972 although the clinical training is still done at Parkland.

"Graduates from this school are much in demand. We have one of the top schools in the country. Several hospital administrators who have hired graduates call each year and say 'Do you have any more?'"

Professional attitudes are a major factor in the graduates' success. "We do a great deal of talking about professional approaches to a problem."

The program also stresses scientific principles behind laboratory techniques. "The tests will change. So if you teach students to do only 'test tubing,' they will have a difficult time. We teach them that if they're doing something five years from now the same way we taught them, then we were very, very poor teachers. It's a continuous learning process."

The scientist will continue with her classes in clinical immunology for medical technologists and immunohematology for pathology in the department, as well as work with Parkland's pathology residents. She is already booked throughout the country to teach special courses in continuing education through February.

Besides serving in her new capacity as consultant to the blood bank, Dr. Guy is looking forward to getting back to her research, which has suffered because of lack of laboratory time. "We need to do a better job of developing a pool of rare donors. You see, a few people don't have all the usual antigens (substances which stimulate the formation of specific antibodies), and we may have tremendous problems finding blood for them in emergencies. We would like to have these types of blood frozen and immediately available."

Dr. Guy is also interested in learning why some people who are Rh positive, many of them living in Dallas, have weakened reactions which may cause some problems in blood typing. "And there'll be a lot more (projects); I'll think of them as I go along. You know in research one thing leads to another."

Dr. Guy says she will be happy to give up one form of work she has been very involved in in the past as soon as some current projects are finished. As a consultant for the Dallas Institute of Forensic Science, she has traveled all over the country assisting police and medical examiners in identification of blood stains after crimes have been committed.

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Most famous of her involvements in the field of forensic investigation was the Juan Corona case in California when the immunohematologist examined samples in an attempt to help police learn the identities of the 25 murder victims.

Besides murder cases, Dr. Guy has done blood work related to rape cases. "If a suspect has the same blood group as the material found on the swab, then that adds to the police evidence."

She has done testing for paternity cases, but has given up on this work. One judge with whom she had worked on a paternity case thought he was going to make her very happy. "He told me he had 1,800 paternity cases backed up. I didn't want any part of it. Why, I'd never get anything else done."

The graduate of Baylor University, who first planned on a career as a journalist, stressed that she is not personally involved in the cases. She learnes the identities of the victim or the accused only after the case is completed. Dr. Guy did not like the position of being on either the side of the prosecution or the defense.

"I don't test morals. I don't test people's motives. I test tubes of blood."

Several years ago the pathologist took a sabbatical to England where she studied advanced techniques in blood work. She said that European scientists have done extensive work in the field of blood and stain identification. "This country is beginning to improve, but I think some of the other countries progressed more rapidly than the United States."

Obviously, Dr. Guy has already done quite a lot in her career. Besides teaching at several health-care related institutions, serving on many professional boards, publishing widely in her field, being heavily involved in many community activities and lecturing all over the country, she has been named recipient of many awards. These include the following: Award for Excellence in a Medical Field, Business and Professional Women's Club of Dallas, 1963; American Association of Blood Banks' John Elliot Award, 1973; honorary member, Florida Association of Blood Banks, 1974; Woman of the Year, B&PW of Dallas, 1975; South Central Association of Blood Banks Annual Lectureship (nominated by the membership), 1977; and the Recognition Award for Medical Laboratory Continuing Education, American Society of clinical Pathologists, 1978.

She is listed in American Men and Women of Science, Who's Who of American Women and The Two Thousand Women of Achievement (Devon, England), 1970.

One achievement she'd like to see is a little more time to herself:

"I'd like to clean off my dining room table and sit down without doing paperwork and to spend a little time painting again."

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST