

SUN NEWS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL SCHOOL AT DALLAS

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DALLAS--Dr. Wasi M. Siddiqui, professor of biology at Bishop College at Dallas, has been awarded a one-year MARC faculty fellowship from the National Institutes of General Medical Sciences to study with Dr. S. Edward Sulkin at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, also at Dallas.

Dr. Siddiqui, who will be on a leave of absence from Bishop, will be working in the area of virus studies under Dr. Sulkin. Dr. Sulkin, an internationally known virologist, is professor of microbiology at the UT medical school.

MARC stands for Minority Access to Research Careers. Dr. Siddiqui's fellowship is one of the first special fellowships awarded this year in the United States.

A native of India, Dr. Siddiqui received his Ph.D. degree at Rutgers University. Following a postdoctoral fellowship, he has been affiliated with Bishop College.

"We are delighted to have Dr. Siddiqui join us at the school," Dr. Sulkin said.

Dr. Siddiqui will be working with Dr. Sulkin and other researchers at UTSWMS in studies directed toward evaluating antiviral agents which might be used to supplement current methods, such as vaccine and anti-rabies serum, applied in the prevention of rabies to man.

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"Although the administration of Pasteur treatment to individuals exposed to rabid animals is one of the oldest methods used in the prevention of virus diseases, the mechanism responsible for the protection afforded by this treatment has never been fully defined, and deaths from rabies still occur occasionally despite prompt use of vaccine and antirabies serum," Dr. Sulkin said.

Emphasis will be on studies around interferon, a product of animal cells which is thought to be responsible in part for man's natural resistance to many virus diseases, explained Dr. Sulkin. "Preliminary studies in our laboratory have shown that interferon may under certain circumstances, suppress the growth of rabiesvirus."

Dr. Sulkin stated that these studies will be continued to determine whether or not administering interferon or compounds which induce interferon will inhibit rabies infection in various tissue cultures and in animals.

It is hoped that data which can be used in improving the effectiveness and safety of methods for preventing rabies in man and domestic animals can be accumulated in this project, he said.

A noted researcher, Dr. Sulkin has been recognized for his studies demonstrating the role of bats in sustaining and transmitting viral infections, particularly rabies and encephalitis.

The virologist and his associates are currently involved also in research involving long-term grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation in other research projects involving bats.

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