

When Dr. Paul Klotman took the helm at Baylor College of Medicine in September, he became just the fifth president in the renowned Houston medical school's 110-year history. Baylor, routinely ranked among the top 25 U.S. medical schools, is 17th among all schools in National Institutes of Health funding and second in federal funding for research and development in the

management — and that the school has the talent pool to make that happen — Klotman says it makes sense for Baylor to share that expertise with partners both at home and abroad.

The initial focus areas of Baylor's new global outreach programs will be South America, India, China, and Africa, and the initiatives will concentrate on educational exchange, clinical research,

REACHING FURTHER

**DR. PAUL KLOTMAN SEES AN INTERNATIONAL
FUTURE FOR THE BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

biological sciences. Not a bad pedigree, to be sure, but Klotman sees it as just a jumping off point for what Baylor can and will be in the future.

“Baylor is a global name, and we should have a global impact on education, health care, and science,” says Klotman, the former chair of medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. “The future for Baylor is in the international arena.”

To make sure that happens, one of Klotman's first actions upon his arrival at Baylor was to create a vice president's position for global outreach. Noting that Baylor's current focus is on creating novel strategies for efficiency in business processes and medical school

clinical quality, and new uses of technology to provide services in underserved regions. Rather than introduce a top-down model, Klotman envisions a two-way information exchange that aligns with the broader trends shaping globalism in the 21st century.

“It's pretty clear the world has become a much smaller place,” Klotman says, citing his own peripatetic travel schedule. An offshoot of the shrinking globe, he notes, is a gradual minimization of the differences that used to set various regions apart from each other. “Not only is the world smaller, but the diseases that used to be mostly unique to one country or another are expanding their range,” he adds.

BY MICHAEL J. MCDERMOTT

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Paul Klotman, M.D.

Klotman points out that traditionally “American” health care problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity are now becoming major challenges in places like China and India, the result of an emerging middle class in those and other countries. He believes medical schools in the U.S. have a responsibility to serve a global mission, and to do that, Baylor is actively seeking partnerships and information-exchange relationships with schools overseas.

Baylor already has a strong foundation in this area, Klotman notes, with more than 25 percent of first-year students entering the international health track. “We graduate 15 to 20 students per year with a certificate of completion in this area, and we provide trainees with a broad spectrum of international clinical elective rotations,” he says. While Baylor currently has several affiliation agreements with medical schools in Africa and South America, most of its international clinical rotation agreements are informal in nature. One of the charges of the new vice president of global outreach will be to formalize those agreements, Klotman says.

Klotman’s commitment to expanding Baylor’s international reach is no reinvention of the wheel. The school recently surveyed faculty and found that more than six in 10 have participated in some sort of global outreach over the past two years. “That’s more than almost any place I’ve ever seen,” he says. “Clearly, the interest level is already very high here at Baylor.”

There is also a strong precedent for international medical outreach at the school, most notably the Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI), which was launched by Dr. Mark Kline, the current chair of pediatrics at Baylor, more than 10 years ago. Kline started BIPAI following a 1996 visit to Romania, where he was appalled at the lack of care provided for HIV-

ECO-HEALTH **Saving the Big Cats**

With family in New York, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Ohio, Dr. Paul Klotman spends a lot of time traveling to stay in touch with everyone. While he describes those family visits as his major activity outside of work, he does find time to stay involved with one nongovernmental organization whose work he considers very important.

Panthera is a conservation group working to save apex predators — tigers, lions, jaguars, snow leopards, and other big cats. Klotman got involved with Panthera when he was chairman of medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, where Panthera is based. Thomas Kaplan, the organization’s founder and chairman, served on Mount Sinai’s advisory board.

Panthera is dedicated to directing and implementing effective conservation strategies for the endangered big cats, but Klotman is interested in the broader impacts of those efforts. “There is a large and growing movement right now that some describe as ‘eco-health,’” he says. “It’s about understanding the interrelationship between man and animals and how epidemics start. Apex predators play a crucial role because their presence indicates healthy, intact ecosystems that are crucial for all life, including people.”

Interspecies transmission of disease is a two-way street. For example, cattle can get tuberculosis from humans, and the AIDS virus sprang from the nonhuman primate population in Africa. “Understanding this interface between human and animal interaction is critically important in our efforts to deal with health problems like West Nile virus, different strains of flu, HIV, and other emerging pathogens,” Klotman says. “There is a significant interface between the medical and veterinary domains, and I am very interested in that.”

— M.J.M.



DR. PAUL KLOTMAN BELIEVES MEDICAL SCHOOLS IN THE U.S. HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SERVE A GLOBAL MISSION.

markable job of providing educational outreach to train local health care providers so they are able to take over the primary care role,” Klotman says. “Many Baylor faculty and staff have worked and continue to work in these areas.”

Baylor has interesting programs under way in Vietnam and inside the medical schools at Botswana University and China’s Shandong University. But Klotman sees particular opportunities to extend the school’s international outreach in Central and South America. “We represent an interesting geographic entry point to those areas,” he points out, “and many of our faculty are already involved in various types of medical outreach there.”