

## **UCSD Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences – Second Public School of Pharmacy in CA – Officially Opens Its Doors**

*May 2 Pharmaceutical Sciences Building Dedication a Milestone for New School and State; First Class to Graduate in June*

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The Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences will officially dedicate its new home on the La Jolla campus of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) on Tuesday, May 2 at 3 p.m. with a ceremony that marks a monumental event in the short history of the School.

This academic year has marked many firsts for the faculty, staff and students of the Skaggs School - the first year in which all four classes, freshman through seniors, are enrolled; the year the School's inaugural class of 24 students will graduate, and the year in which a four-story, 110,000-square-foot home was completed, enabling the school to accept 60 Doctor of Pharmacy students in each class and develop top tier research programs in the pharmaceutical sciences.

"This school was planned to help fill the critical shortage of pharmacists in California, said UCSD Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. Building on UCSD's strong research base and excellent teaching hospitals, the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is truly in a unique position to train the pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists of the 21st century."

The School was named in recognition of a \$30 million gift from The Skaggs Institute for Research. The largest gift ever given to UCSD Health Sciences, the funding will be instrumental in building and equipping the new school's auditorium and education center, recruiting top-tier faculty and supporting scholarships for pharmacy students. L.S. "Sam" Skaggs, nationally recognized as a pioneer in the retail drugstore and grocery business, and his wife, Aline, created and funded The Skaggs Institute for Research primarily to support medical research, and chose to support UCSD's School of Pharmacy because of its innovative, integrative approach to expanding the boundaries of the profession.

"This is a very proud moment for all of us at UCSD who have been involved in the School of Pharmacy since its inception," said Palmer Taylor, Ph.D., Dean of Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences at UCSD. "Our new building provides lab and instructional facilities for development of pre-eminent pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists - a new generation trained to meet the complexities of contemporary healthcare and drug development."

### **School Offers Unique Training**

"I came to UCSD because of its innovative program, integrating pharmacy students with medical students and creating a mutual respect between the two healthcare fields," said Danielle Mahfood, Class of 2007.

The Skaggs School is the only public university school of pharmacy in Southern California, and one of only two public pharmacy schools in the state. Its four-year program leads to a doctorate in pharmacy (Pharm.D.)

degree and offers unique classroom and clinical training in conjunction with UCSD's School of Medicine. Second-year pharmacy students at UCSD share the same classes with the first-year medical students, and in their fourth year, pharmacy students participate in clinical rotations and advanced practice experiences with medical students. The School also offers a joint PharmD/Ph.D. program - envisioned to be closely aligned with the drug development process, therapeutic practices and outcomes - as well as post-graduate residencies for the Pharm.D. graduates.

"Our program emphasizes the critical role of pharmacists as part of the patient care team," said Edward Holmes, M.D., Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of UCSD's School of Medicine. "The medical community now looks to the pharmacist as a key partner. With UCSD's long history of scientific excellence and patient-care opportunities with the School of Medicine and Medical Center, the Skaggs School is uniquely positioned to train pharmacists as therapeutic consultants to the patient and to other health professionals."

Taylor notes that UCSD provides a variety of clinical settings for its pharmacy students to hone their patient-care skills, having a diverse health care system with outpatient clinics including the UCSD Moores Cancer Center, two major hospitals, plus affiliations with the Naval Medical Center San Diego, Kaiser Permanente, Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System, and Children's Hospital and Health Center, San Diego.

### **Graduates Will Serve Key Role in Biotech Industry**

The Skaggs School of Pharmacy is also well-positioned geographically, with strong partnerships on the UCSD campus with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the School of Medicine, science departments on campus, the San Diego Supercomputer Center and Jacobs School of Engineering providing collaborative opportunities in drug design and development. San Diego's booming biotech industry offers additional opportunities for innovative research collaborations.

With the focus of health care delivery emphasizing management of chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and asthma that involve increased reliance on drug therapy and complex drug regimens, the role of the pharmacist has become more important than ever. Sequencing of the human genome has led to new avenues for drug development and the pharmacists of the future will be increasingly called upon to help monitor drug compliance, interactions and patient outcomes.

Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences students will prepare for a multitude of career choices - including hospital or clinical pharmacy, community pharmacy, pharmaceutical management, or drug development in the pharmaceutical or biotechnology industry - through their training in a variety of scientific, computer, drug-study and patient-management courses.

"As students, we are given a wealth of career opportunities, and the training we receive provides us with confidence to make a good decision," added Tom Hatch, Class of 2008.

### **Building Features**

Features of the new \$45 million Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences building and Education Center, designed by CO Architects of Los Angeles, include:

- 45,000 ASF of wet laboratory and informatics space on three floors
- Additional core facilities for analytical research at all levels of integration in the pharmaceutical sciences

- High-field nuclear magnetic resonance and mass spectrometry labs at the basement level

- A point-of-care learning facility - a model pharmacy for training students that includes videoconferencing equipment for student feedback

- 14,000 ASF of classroom space with wireless networks for a steady-state enrollment of 330 (240 PharmD students, 60 PhD students and 30 residents.)

Adjacent 14,500 square-foot Education Center with 260-seat auditorium, scheduled for completion in July 2006

The opening of a new school of pharmacy in the 21st century has given UCSD an unprecedented opportunity to use emerging technologies in "the genomic era" in both education and research. The School is taking advantage of latest developments to train practicing pharmacists to not just dispense drugs, but to work in drug discovery and development. By emphasizing pharmacogenomics and bioinformatics, UCSD's new school - one of just a small number of public pharmacy schools to open across the country in recent decades - will be setting the standard for the way the next generation of pharmacists will be trained.

"With our research and clinical base, computer capabilities and partnership opportunities," Taylor said, "UCSD is well-positioned to take a national lead in this area." Media Contacts: Debra Kain, (858) 543-6163

