

UC San Diego's Skaggs School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences Receives Its First Endowed Scholarship

Endowment Honors Pioneer of Pharmacy and Vietnamese Communities

December 12, 2006

Jade Berggren

Dr. Dong To with pharmacy students, Jennifer Lai (left) and Christie Tran (right), who received scholarship awards from the Dr. Dong To Endowed Scholarship Fund recently.

UC San Diego's Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, which opened its doors in 2002, has established its first endowed scholarship. The Dr. Dong To Endowed Scholarship Fund reached the \$50,000 mark thanks to generous contributions of pharmacists and physicians, colleagues, friends, and family to honor Dr. To for his life long work and contributions to the pharmacy industry and Vietnamese community in San Diego. The fund will provide tuition assistance to Skaggs School students. These gifts contribute to the \$1 billion fundraising goal of The Campaign for UCSD: *Imagine What's Next*.

Two decades ago, as the former dean of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Saigon, Dr. To played an integral role in developing the first Pharmacy Review Program at UCSD, designed to assist educated Vietnamese pharmacists who had been displaced from their home country. The review course helped 110 participants from throughout California obtain the needed re-licensure to work as practicing pharmacists in the United States. Since that time, Dr. To has continued to make important contributions to the growth and success of the Vietnamese pharmacist community in San Diego and has served as a role model for future generations.

Skaggs School students, Jennifer Lai, class of 2008, and Christie Tran, class of 2009, were presented with scholarship awards from the endowment at a recent reception in honor of Dr. To. Each year, additional students will receive scholarship awards based on the investment income earned from the principal of the endowed scholarship. The annual scholarships will encourage students to participate in community service. Additionally, the scholarship awards will allow students to explore research opportunities with faculty mentors as well as course work in electives for an innovative career path, all while reducing the burdens of loans.

The Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences was named in recognition of a \$30 million gift from The Skaggs Institute for Research, created and funded by L.S. "Sam" Skaggs, nationally recognized as a pioneer in the retail drugstore and grocery business, and his wife, Aline. The largest gift ever given to UCSD Health Sciences, the funding has been instrumental in building and equipping the new school's auditorium and education center, recruiting top-tier faculty, and supporting scholarships for pharmacy students. The Skaggs School celebrated the opening of its state-of-the-art, \$45 million Pharmaceutical Sciences building at a dedication ceremony in May of this year, and graduated its inaugural class of 24 students in June.

Media Contacts: Judy Piercey, 858-534-6128 Jade Berggren, 858-822-5309

