BACKGROUND
In 1881, the Texas Legislature authorized establishment of the University of Texas. In a statewide referendum, Austin, the state capital, was chosen as the site for the main university, while Galveston, then the largest city in Texas, was chosen as the home for the medical branch of the university.

University of Texas Medical Branch (Short version)
Since 1891, the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) has followed its mission of providing scholarly teaching, innovative scientific investigation, and state-of-the-art patient care. UTMB's comprehensive primary, specialty, and sub-specialty clinical programs support the educational mission. The Galveston campus today includes four schools (Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health, and Biomedical Sciences) and two Institutes (Human Infections & Immunity and Medical Humanities), with 2,255 students, 662 interns, residents and fellows, and 1,116 faculty. Between 1997 and 2007, research space grew from 440,000 square feet to 576,000 square feet, a 31% increase. In addition, by 2010, the university will build a 140,000 square foot building with 76,000 square feet dedicated to research, particularly translational research. The Galveston National Laboratory, expected to open in 2008, is one of two National Biocontainment Laboratories being constructed under grants from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health. It will add another 63,000 square feet of laboratory space, 12,362 of which will be for biosafety level 4 research. External research funding in FY2007 was $144 million, $107 million from the NIH. In 2006, the NIH ranked 8 departments in the School of Medicine among the top 20 in the country for research funding in their disciplines.

Clinical training takes place in four teaching hospitals on the Galveston campus, at the Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, and in the offices of 905 affiliated physicians in private practice in Southeast Texas who supervise medical students and house officers.

The School of Medicine has played a major role since the 1940s in training Hispanic and African American physicians. The percentage of minority enrollment for the 2007 Fall Semester by academic unit was: Allied Health Sciences, 25%; Biomedical Sciences, 12%; Medicine, 26%; and Nursing, 26%.

Throughout its history, UTMB has been and continues to be a major health care provider for ethnic minorities, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and the underserved, particularly in areas where comprehensive health care services are lacking. In 2006, of the 41,524 patients hospitalized at UTMB, 62% were African American or Hispanic. During this period, 700,553 patients were treated in the UTMB outpatient clinics. Of this number, 43% were African American or Hispanic. A key factor in the ability to reach underserved communities is UTMB's Electronic Health Network, the largest telemedicine operation in the world, with more than 300 locations and more than 70,000 patient encounters annually.

University of Texas Medical Branch (long version)
The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB), which opened in 1891, is one of the oldest medical schools west of the Mississippi. Today, it includes 4 schools (Medicine, Graduate, Nursing, and Allied Health) and 2 institutes (Human Infections & Immunity and Medical Humanities), housing 2,255 students, 662 interns, residents and fellows, and 1,116 faculty. Between 1997 and 2007, research space grew from 440,000 square feet to 576,000 square feet, a 31% increase. In addition, by 2010, the university will build a 140,000 square foot building with 76,000 square feet dedicated to research, particularly translational research. The Galveston National Laboratory, expected to open in 2008, is one of two National Biocontainment Laboratories being constructed under grants from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health. It will add another 63,000 square feet of laboratory space, 12,362 of which will be for biosafety level 4 research. External research funding in FY2007 was $144 million, $107 million from the NIH. In 2006, UTMB ranked #37 among medical schools in NIH funding ($105 million). That year, the NIH ranked 8 departments in the School of Medicine (Microbiology & Immunology [2], Obstetrics & Gynecology [3], Pathology [6], Biochemistry & Molecular Biology [10], Anesthesiology [11], Neuroscience & Cell Biology [13], Surgery [15], and Otolaryngology [18]) in the top 20 in the country for research funding in their disciplines. Of 17 departments, 14 ranked in the top 50 for NIH funding.

Clinical training takes place in 4 teaching hospitals, containing 900 beds, on the Galveston campus; at the Brackenridge Hospital in Austin; and in the offices of 905 affiliated physicians in private practice in Southeast Texas who supervise medical students and house officers. UTMB's 84-acre campus of 77 buildings includes the state-of-the-art Medical Research Building, Level 1 Trauma Center, Shriners' Burns Center, the only operational biosafety level 4 laboratory at an academic health center and one of the largest biomedical research libraries in the southwest. UTMB currently supports the largest non-federal biodefense research program in the United States with nearly 300 faculty and staff approved by the Department of Justice and registered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for research access to Category A Select Agents. As home of the annual National Student Research Forum, founded by UTMB in 1960 and the only competition of its type, UTMB plays a pivotal role in supporting the nation's future scientific leaders. UTMB also developed a clinical science MD/PhD program, supported by a K-30 award.

Since its founding, UTMB has been and continues to be a major health care provider for ethnic minorities, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and the underserved, particularly in areas where comprehensive health care services are lacking. In 2006, of the ~42,000 patients hospitalized at UTMB, 62% were African American or Hispanic. Last year, UTMB spent $164.6 million to care for patients unable to pay for their own health care. During this period >770,000 patient visits were made to UTMB; patients came from 226 of Texas's 254 counties. Of this number, 43% were African American or Hispanic. A key factor in the ability to reach rural and underserved communities is UTMB's Electronic Health Network, the largest telemedicine operation in the world, with more than 300 locations and more than 70,000 patient encounters annually.

Almost one in four practicing physicians in Texas has received at least a portion of their graduate or undergraduate training at UTMB. The School of Medicine also has played a major role since the 1940s in training Hispanic and African American physicians. The percentage of minority enrollment for the 2007 Fall Semester by academic unit was: Allied Health Sciences, 25%; Biomedical Sciences, 12%; Medicine, 26%; and Nursing, 26%. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the UTMB School of Medicine ranks first among all public and private medical schools in the US (excluding historically black and Puerto Rican medical schools) in number of underrepresented minority graduates, and in 2006 was tied for second in percentage and number of Hispanics (Institutional Profile database at: http://www.aamc.org).

In the 10 years between 1997 and 2007, UTMB achieved a number of firsts:

- The first robotic surgery performed in the Southwest in 2000;
- The first national laboratory in Texas, the NIAID-sponsored National Biocontainment Laborabory, to be completed in 2008;
- The first full-sized bio-safety level 4 lab at a U.S. university, the Robert E. Shope, MD, Laboratory, which opened in 2004;
- The first development of full-grown neurons from human neural stem cells;
- The first blood test for the proteins that produce mad cow disease;
- The first laboratory culture of the most common and damaging form of hepatitis C; and, most recently,
- The first successful engineering of umbilical cord blood stem cells to make insulin, an important first step in helping people with Type 1 diabetes grow insulin-producing islet cells.

An economic impact study, conducted by the Center for Economic Education at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, found that in 2006, UTMB generated nearly $620 million for the Southeast Texas economy, and more than $1 billion across the state through direct and indirect spending. A small but significant part of the university's financial impact is a result of the efforts of the Center for Technology Development, which commercializes UTMB intellectual property assets. For example, its staff processes about 70 invention disclosures each year. Between 1997 and 2007, the center also assisted in the creation of 10 start-up companies.

UTMB and University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) have maintained a close relationship since their establishment, but the degree of active collaboration has grown over the past two decades. UTMB and UT Austin have joint MD/PhD programs in neuroscience, bioengineering and molecular biology, and an MD/PhD program in pharmacy that started in Fall 2007. Students spend two years in medical school at UTMB in

Galveston. They move to UT Austin for PhD coursework and complete dissertation research at either campus. Medical studies are completed with 18 months of clinical rotations in Austin or Galveston. During each phase of the program, students participate in small group sessions and other exercises designed to help them integrate the newest concepts of biomedical research with applications to clinical medicine.