

# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

## Welcome from Dean Eric Boerwinkle, PhD

I am honored to be the Dean of UTHealth Houston School of Public Health. Here, we offer advanced degrees in the diverse field of public health including behavior sciences, genetics, and health care management. Our accomplished graduates are innovative leaders at the forefront of population health programs in universities, the private sector, and government organizations in Texas and across the nation. We are continuously challenging ourselves to broaden our educational mission to meet the growing demands of the workforce, and to expand our repertoire of excellence to lead the ever-changing field of health care.

### *What is public health?*

Public Health is a science that aims to keep people and communities healthy by preventing disease and ensuring better health care outcomes. Public health is also a profession. UTHealth Houston School of Public Health is here to improve the health of the people of Texas, the nation and the world - our faculty, students and alumni have been doing so for nearly 50 years.

We are conducting exciting and innovative research to identify new ways to keep people healthy and to reduce their risk of future disease. This includes investigating new ways to get young people to eat healthier; new ways to prevent teen pregnancy through better education; new ways to prevent and treat infectious diseases; and new ways to identify the genes that may make some of us more susceptible to or protected from disease. And finally, in the event that you or a loved one gets sick and needs to go to a hospital, it is the people from UTHealth Houston School of Public Health who are leading the way through research and training to ensure that best practices are being used to achieve the best possible health care outcomes.

### *What sets us apart from other public health programs?*

Texas is a big and diverse state - both ethnically and economically. UTHealth Houston School of Public Health has six locations that span the entire state: from Houston to El Paso; Brownsville to Dallas; and with San Antonio and Austin in the center. We can - and we do - touch virtually the entire population of Texas. At each location, we have strong ties to health care organizations, but our strongest ties are to the local communities. We are working side-by-side with partners in clinics, schools, and in people's homes to prevent or delay the onset of disease and to improve health care outcomes within these communities.

Research is the engine that drives advanced education and modern health care. To achieve this, retention and recruitment of the world's best population scientists are critical. Strong strategic partnerships across The University of Texas System and throughout Texas are also important. We are working to solidify the "third coast" as a leader in advanced biotechnologies, health care, and population sciences.

The Houston Campus of UTHealth Houston School of Public Health is nestled in the heart of the Texas Medical Center - the largest medical center in the world - but, more importantly, it is the best place in the world for healthcare and biomedical research. The number of renowned institutions, highly-trained individuals, and patient visits is unsurpassed. In addition, there is a strong desire to collaborate among the physicians, scientists, and trainees at each of these institutions. Although the Texas

Medical Center has grown strong through competition, it will continue to do so through cooperation and collaboration.

I am the luckiest person on earth to have the privilege to work with so many passionate, dedicated, and intelligent people. I look forward to working with you to achieve these important and shared goals of keeping Texas healthy and the Texas economy strong.

Thank you, and I hope you stay healthy.

Eric Boerwinkle, PhD

Dean, UTHealth Houston School of Public Health