

# 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 behavioral sciences, genetics, and healthcare 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 healthcare.

### *What is public health?*

Public health is a science that aims to keep people and communities healthy by preventing disease and ensuring better healthcare. Public health is also a profession. UTHealth Houston School of Public Health is dedicated to improving 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 exploring creative approaches to encourage young people to eat healthier; new ways to prevent teen pregnancy through improved education; advancing new techniques to prevent and treat infectious diseases; and identifying genetic factors that make some of us more susceptible to or protected from disease. And finally, if you or a loved one needs care at a hospital, know that the people from UTHealth Houston School of Public Health are leading through research and training to ensure that evidence-based approaches are being used to achieve the best possible healthcare 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 campuses that span the entire state: from Houston to El Paso; from 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 campus, we have strong ties to healthcare 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 healthcare outcomes within these communities.

Research is the engine that drives advanced education and modern healthcare. 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, healthcare, 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 biomedical research. The number of renowned institutions, highly-trained individuals, and patient visits is unsurpassed. In addition, there is a strong desire to collaborate with the physicians, scientists, and trainees at each of these institutions. Although the Texas Medical Center

has grown stronger through competition, it will continue to do so through cooperation and collaboration.

I am very lucky to have the privilege of working with so many passionate, dedicated, and intelligent people. I look forward to working with you to achieve these important and shared goals as you pursue an education in public health.

Thank you,

Eric Boerwinkle, PhD  
Dean, UTHealth Houston School of Public Health