

► **Faculty Support**

A faculty is a college's signature. It is the faculty that teaches, conducts research and provides the services that define the college's reputation and image. Simply stated, the quality of our college is directly based on the quality of our faculty.

Here is a sample of what our faculty has to say about some of the important research underway in the College of Pharmacy:

- **Understanding Genetics:** *"Researchers want to understand the role of genetics in determining how people respond to drugs. For example, we know that a percentage of patients will have side effects from a drug, and that some will derive the benefits we want, while some won't derive any benefit. The long-term goal through genetics is to be able to determine that before we administer the drug."*

Julie Johnson, Pharm.D., V. Ravi Chandran
Professor in Pharmaceutical Sciences,
Pharmacy Practice Department Chair

- **Drug Development:** *"We have one of the best pharmaceutical operations in the world because there is nothing we can't do here. The secret to my success as a researcher is being in the Health Science Center. Having the opportunity to*

interact with doc's, that's my secret. It's the Holy Grail because you listen to what they have to say and you think 'Geez, I know how to solve that problem'"

Raymond Bergeron, Ph.D., Duckworth
Eminent Scholar Chair in Drug
Development, Medicinal Chemistry

- **Fighting Obesity:** *"Initial studies showed that mutations of a specific receptor gene in brain cells play a role in regulating hunger, causing it to miss signals that tell the body to stop eating. Through my research, if I can better understand the mechanisms of obesity that will help improve the quality of life for people, especially for kids, then it's really exciting. That's what we're trying to work on."*

Carrie Haskell-Luevano, Ph.D., Associate
Professor, Medicinal Chemistry

Unfortunately, public university professors in the state of Florida are among the lowest paid in the nation. In terms of salaries, the University of Florida ranks 55th among its 60 peer schools in the Association of American Universities.

However, through private funding our college can substantially increase faculty support. Other universities frequently recruit the University of Florida's best faculty members, promising larger salaries and better research support than the college can match. Relying only on our state's comparatively low salaries makes it difficult for the college to recruit and keep top faculty.

Yet, making salaries competitive is just one form of support. Usually more important is the ability to support the work and research of faculty. College professors and researchers have a reputation of doing extraordinary work with little financial help for research studies and graduate assistantships. For a dedicated faculty it's more important to have strong support in the forms of laboratories, equipment, special studies and assistantships and other academic endeavors. Having strong teams made up of graduate students, top faculty and a strong student body is critical to the success and future growth of our college.