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TU to locate Oxley College of Health Sciences downtown

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TU names new college of health sciences"

Tulsa World



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Mary Jane Tritsch is given a white jacket by TU President Steadman Upham. Tritsch's family (Oxley) was honored at a press conference Wednesday. CORY YOUNG/Tulsa World

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By RANDY KREHBIEL World Staff Writer | 10 comments

The University of Tulsa's newly renamed Oxley College of Health Sciences will move into the old Blue Cross Blue Shield Building at 1215 S. Boulder Ave. in January, it was announced Wednesday.

"This allows TU to be better connected to the people who need us," said Dr. Gerard Clancy, vice president for health affairs and dean of the college.

Named for the Mary K. and John T. Oxley Foundation, the college will occupy the first five floors of the building. A first-floor walk-in clinic will include a College of Law component.

"We're finding a lot of people who are not doing well health-wise because of legal problems," Clancy said.

Clancy said mental health and exercise and wellness care also will be offered.

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"A fully integrated clinic of law, mental health, wellness and primary care right here in one place," he said. "We think that's a one-of-a-kind in the entire nation."

TU's College of Health Sciences, created less than a year ago, includes previously existing programs in nursing, speech pathology, brain science, athletic training, exercise and sports science, and community medicine.

TU is a partner with the University of Oklahoma in a community medicine program that admitted its first 25 students this fall.

The John T. and Mary K. Oxley Foundation dedicated \$30 million to that program, including \$15 million to endow positions in the college named for them on Wednesday.

TU President Steadman Upham cited the help of several other donors, including the William K. Warren Foundation and St. Francis Health Systems, the George Kaiser Family Foundation, the Morningcrest Healthcare Foundation, the Tandy Foundation and the Zarrow Foundations.

He also noted the contribution of Billy Eiting, a 1936 graduate who died in 1971 but whose \$4.4 million estate passed to the university only this summer. Upham said the money will be used to renovate and equip the 50,000 square feet the college will occupy.

A strong advocate of community-based medicine, Clancy said the college is part of a continuing effort to improve the health of Tulsa and Oklahoma.

"Oklahoma is a hot-spot for hypertension, cardio-vascular disease, mental illness, diabetes," he said. "We really are a hot zone for poor health. We have some of the worst health outcomes in the entire nation, and these are made even worse by disparities in access to health care in our state."

Clancy said the college will soon add doctor of nursing practice and master of health care delivery and cultural sciences programs, and recently opened a behavioral health clinic in the Kendall-Whittier area west of the TU campus.

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