In April, 4 days of special events brought together friends of Baylor to mark the opening of the Zelig H. Lieberman Research Building (Figure). The building houses the Baylor Institute for Immunology Research (BIIR), and many physicians voiced their hope that it would be the scene of scientific breakthroughs that will revolutionize patient care.

The opening marked the culmination of a great fund-raising effort that began in 1994. The lead gift came from Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Beecherl, Jr. Mimi Lay Hodges and Max and Gayle Clampitt endowed the chair of Jacques Banchereau, PhD, director of BIIR. Other major contributors included the Dr. Ralph and Marian Falk Medical Research Trust and Mr. and Mrs. Atlee Kohl. Additional research support came from the National Institutes of Health. The initial drive raised an endowment of $18 million.

Businessman and civic leader Liener Temerlin headed the drive to raise additional funds for the construction of the building. The Bob Smith, MD, Foundation gave $1.2 million. Gifts of $500,000 or more came from Bank of America (formerly NationsBank), Mr. and Mrs. Beecherl, Dee and Jo Ann Brown, Jack G. and Janet E. Folmar, the Gaston Episcopal Hospital Foundation, and Noble and Jane Hurley. Other major contributors included the Abbott Laboratories Fund, the Cecil and Ida Green Foundation, Cynthia and Ted Bartholow, Mrs. Robert Cullum, Leo and Bobbie Fields (through the M. B. and Edna Zale Foundation), Boone and Peggy Powell, Jr., the estate of Thomas F. Longstaff, the estate of Stanley E. Neely, and NCH Corporation. The campaign raised $10 million.

The names of the donors appear on a wall at the front of the building at 3434 Live Oak Street, a few blocks from the main Baylor campus. The building stands on a 4.5-acre site and has approximately 44,500 square feet of space. When complete it will accommodate 120 scientists in 9 laboratories.

The unveiling of the portrait of Dr. Lieberman, which hangs in the entrance of the building, was the first event in the opening festivities. It took place at a luncheon on Monday, April 19, in the A. Webb Roberts Tower. Dr. Lieberman, his family, and the artist, Sam Gholson, were present. Dr. Jack Bufkin, Dr. Pete Dysert, and other friends and colleagues shared their thoughts on Dr. Lieberman's distinguished career (see article on page 263).

The next event, held that evening in an unfinished area of the Lieberman building (which will eventually become laboratory space), was the dedication of the Marvin J. Stone Library. Dr. Stone is chief of oncology and director of the Baylor-Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center. Before sitting down to dinner, guests took tours of the library, located on the second floor of the building. After the meal, Dr. John S. Fordtran and other colleagues spoke about Dr. Stone (see article on page 265).
On the evening of the following day, Tuesday, April 20, the annual Keepers of the Flame banquet was held for major donors and friends of Baylor Health Care System. This year the event took place in the Grand Ballroom of the Adolphus Hotel in downtown Dallas. Rodger Meier, chairman of the Baylor Health Care System Foundation, and Boone Powell, Jr., president/chief executive officer of Baylor Health Care System, acted as hosts.

After the dinner, which took place during National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, presentations about transplantation at Baylor University Medical Center were given. Speakers included Goran Klintmalm, MD, PhD, director of transplantation services, and Dr. Thomas E. Starzl, who performed the first liver transplant at Baylor in 1984. Coach Tom Landry spoke about the Lisa Landry Childress Foundation, named in memory of his daughter, which furthers awareness of organ and tissue donation and transplantation (see article on page 261).

Another speaker was Phil H. Berry, Jr., MD, who told how his life had been saved by a liver transplant at Baylor. While president of the Texas Medical Association, Dr. Berry started an organ donor initiative for physicians called Live and Then Give (see the article “A call to physicians—live and then give” in BUMC Proceedings 1998;11:87–88).

The next day, Wednesday, April 21, medical staff and members of the public packed the Beasley Auditorium at Baylor University Medical Center for Dr. Starzl's grand rounds (see article on page 253). Dr. Starzl identified 2 turning points in the history of organ transplantation: the demonstration that tolerance to allografts could be acquired and the discovery that organs induced tolerance—that they are inherently tolerogenic. He stated that BIIR is well equipped to make its contributions to future advances in the field.

At a noon luncheon on April 22, dedication ceremonies were held at the Lieberman building. Boone Powell, Jr., introduced Dr. Fordtran, who explained why immunology was chosen as the research area: “Advancements in immunology have a major impact on diseases we treat in our patients at Baylor. When the immune system is deficient there is increased susceptibility to cancer and infectious diseases. If the immune system is overactive, you get allergies and diseases like asthma, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis. And finally, the immune system is responsible for the rejection or the acceptance of transplant organs.” Speeches by Drs. Starzl, Lieberman, and Banchereau followed, and the building was blessed by Rabbi Gerald Klein.

This brought the formal ceremonies to an end, but tours of the research building were given throughout the week. Visitors were impressed by how harmoniously form and function are blended in the building. The building was designed by Baylor's own HED (Health Environmental Design). Core service areas have been placed at the center of the building; laboratories and offices are on the outside so that they have big windows, making them bright, pleasant places to work. Windows at the back of the building overlook an enclosed garden, an ideal place for researchers to stroll and talk. Rooms for up to 20 postdoctoral fellows are at the ends of the corridors on the second floor. A highlight on the first floor is the Fordtran Conference Room, with seating for 80 and state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment.

BIIR has a cellular imaging facility that features a cell sorter that separates cells into highly purified populations at a rate of up to 5000 cells per second; a cell analyzer; a confocal microscope; fluorescent microscopes; and a laser microdissector that allows individual cells to be lifted from a tissue section for analysis of their genetic program.
Tyler Curiel, MD, MPH, is the associate investigator in charge of the infectious disease laboratory. He came to Baylor from the University of Colorado, Harvard, and Yale. Dr. Curiel and his associates are working in 3 broad areas: macrophage–dendritic cell interactions and induction of immunity, immunity to an intercellular parasite called *Toxoplasma gondii*, and HIV. Dr. Curiel is nationally known for his work in HIV.

“HIV therapies right now are toxic, not curative,” he says. “We hope to develop therapy that's an adjunct or addition . . . so we can make the current suppressive therapy become curative . . . or if not, to help put patients into virologic remission.”

Bali Pulendran, PhD, was busy equipping his laboratory and recruiting assistants at the time of the building's opening. He received his undergraduate education at the University of Cambridge in England and his PhD from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research at the University of Melbourne, Australia. He did postdoctoral work at Immunex Corporation in Seattle.

“My area is mouse biology,” he explains, “using mice to study the immune system. Immunity can be of different types, depending on what type of disease you want to cure. We have some hints as to how we might be able to elicit the appropriate type of immunity using dendritic cells.” Dr. Pulendran's major reason for coming to BIIR was “the unique opportunity of working with scientists of the caliber of Dr. Bancreau.”

Jacques Banchereau came to Baylor from the Schering-Plough Laboratory of Immunological Research in Lyon, France, where he was director for 13 years. He has been an inventor or coinventor on 10 patents and patent applications in the field of biotechnology. He has published 216 original papers in such journals as *Nature, Science,* and *The Lancet,* as well as 129 book chapters. Dr. Banchereau did his undergraduate work at the University of Angers, in his hometown in the Loire valley, and received his PhD in biochemistry from the University of Paris.

The cancer laboratory is the largest in the Lieberman building. There, scientists under the direction of Dr. Banchereau and Karolina Palucka, MD, PhD, are seeking cell treatments for the disease. Their efforts focus on dendritic cells, which Dr. Banchereau calls “the commanders of the immune system” because they activate the cells that then attack cancer cells. Dendritic cells are made in the laboratory by culturing, in the presence of cytokines, patients' stem cells isolated from their blood or bone marrow. The dendritic cells are then loaded with tumor antigens and reinjected into the patient. “Ten days ago we put dendritic cells into our first patient,” said Dr. Banchereau with satisfaction.

Autoimmune diseases are also being studied. Virginia Pascual, MD, of The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center Department of Pediatrics is following the clinical course of 60 children in a joint investigation with BIIR. The study focuses on alterations in the immune system that lead to the development of systemic lupus and arthritis in children.

The festivities of the week of April 19, 1999, herald a historic new era in patient care at Baylor University Medical Center. Working together at the Lieberman building, scientists and physicians will be developing immune-based therapies that will prolong life and improve quality of life. Immunology, which was in its infancy when Dr. Lieberman was a student, has come into its own as a core science. While the Lieberman building represents change and rapid
scientific advances, it also reaffirms Baylor's traditional purpose, “to serve people as an extension of the Christian ministry of healing.”

*The Zelig H. Lieberman Research Building*

Figure