

Presidential Symposium Focuses on Infectious Diseases' Global Risks

November 26, 2008 8:45 AM Keith Brannon
kbrannon@tulane.edu

Tulane University holds its 2008 Presidential Symposium ? “Emerging Infectious Diseases and Global Risks” ? on Dec. 4 and 5. The symposium will feature a free public session by prizewinning author John Barry, whose *New York Times* best-seller *The Great Influenza* chronicles the 1918 flu pandemic.



John Barry, author of *The Great Influenza*, is the featured speaker at the public session of the Presidential Symposium on 'Emerging Infectious Diseases and Global Risks.' Barry's talk will be on Thursday (Dec. 4) in the Freeman Auditorium of the Woldenberg Art Center. (Photo by Rick Olivier)

The symposium coincides with the Dec. 5 dedication of Tulane's newly built Regional Biosafety Laboratory, a \$27.5 million state-of-the-art research lab dedicated to developing treatments, vaccines and diagnostics for emerging infectious diseases that occur naturally and against agents that people may misuse for terror.

The lab is located on the grounds of the Tulane National Primate Research Center in

Covington, La.

The facility is one of only 13 National Institutes of Health-supported Biosafety Level 3 laboratories in the country, and the only one affiliated with a primate research center, medical school and public health and tropical medicine school.

Biosafety Level 3 is a national designation for labs built with strict safety standards to study airborne contaminants and infectious diseases.

Tulane University President Scott Cowen established the series of presidential symposia in 2001 as part of an ongoing effort by Tulane to share the expertise of faculty and others with members of the New Orleans community.

The opening session featuring John Barry is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 4, in the Freeman Auditorium of the Woldenberg Art Center on Tulane's uptown campus. The lecture is free and open to the public.



Two views of the Regional Biosafety Laboratory in Covington, La., are shown in renderings of the \$27.5 million facility at the Tulane National Primate Research Center. The lab will be dedicated as part of Presidential Symposium activities on Friday (Dec. 5).

The Regional Biosafety Lab dedication, which is open to media and invited guests only, is scheduled for 9 a.m., on Friday, Dec. 5, at the Tulane National Primate

Research Center.

A series of scientific sessions for the presidential symposium are scheduled later in the afternoon at Diboll Auditorium, 1440 Canal St., in New Orleans.

Those sessions, which are open to the scientific community, include a keynote address by Rita Colwell, a former director of the National Science Foundation and producer of the award-winning film *Invisible Seas*, as well as lectures from international vaccine and biodefense expert Gregory Poland, Center for Vaccine Development director Myron Levine, and leading AIDS and infectious-disease researcher Donald Burke.

Featured topics include “Climate, Oceans, Infectious Diseases and Human Health: Cholera as the Paradigm,” “Vaccine Immunogenetics: Bedside to Bench to Population,” and “How Viruses Emerge: Can We Predict and Prevent Future Pandemics?”

For more information about the speaker series, visit <http://tulane.edu/administration/president/symposium/index.cfm>.