

## **Tulane University To Dedicate \$27.5 Million Biosafety Lab at 2008 Presidential Symposium**

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

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 within the Tulane National Primate Research Center that is dedicated to developing treatments, vaccines and diagnostics for emerging infectious diseases that occur naturally and against agents that people may misuse for terror.

The facility is one of only 13 National Institutes of Health (NIH) supported Biosafety Level 3 laboratories in the country, and the only one affiliated with a primate research center, medical school and school of public health and tropical medicine. 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 campus community and the greater New Orleans community.

The opening session featuring John Barry is scheduled for 6 p.m., 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.

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

Covington, La. A series of scientific sessions 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, director of the National Science Foundation from 1998 to 2004 and producer of the award-winning film, *Invisible Seas*, and 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, please visit <http://tulane.edu/administration/president/symposium/index.cfm>.