The Texas A&M University System + GSK Announcement
Speaker Biographies

John Sharp
Chancellor
The Texas A&M University System

John Sharp was appointed chancellor of The Texas A&M University System by the Board of Regents on Sept. 6, 2011. As chancellor, Sharp leads the 19-member system, which has an annual budget of $3.5 billion. Enrollment at the A&M System's 11 universities and health science center has grown to more than 120,000, and externally funded research expenditures are in excess of $780 million.

The system's flagship, Texas A&M University, stands among the nation's top research universities for total research expenditures and is the only Texas institution of higher education listed in the National Science Foundation's top 20.

Sharp brings with him more than three decades of public service. He came to the A&M System from Ryan & Company, where he was a principal with the largest state and local tax consulting firm of its kind in Texas.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Texas A&M University in 1972, where he was a member of the Corps staff of the Corps of Cadets and was elected student body president. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army Reserves. He belongs to American Legion.

In 1976, Sharp received a master's degree in public administration from Southwest Texas State University while working full-time with the Legislative Budget Board in Austin. In 1978 he opened a one-man real estate firm in Victoria and became a successful small business owner.

That same year he was elected to the Texas House of Representatives and was named "Outstanding Freshman" by Texas Monthly. He won a seat in the Texas Senate in 1982, where he served on the powerful Senate Finance Committee, and was elected to the Texas Railroad Commission in 1986.

Sharp was elected state comptroller in 1990 and re-elected in 1994. When he took office, he quickly began working to fulfill his pledge to "make government work more like our most successful businesses." Eight years later, he reinvented Texas state government and turned it into a high-quality, low-cost customer service operation that has saved taxpayers billions, helped avert a state income tax and served as a model around the world.

Brett P. Giroir, M.D.
Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, The Texas A&M University System
Principal Investigator, The Texas A&M Center for Innovation
in Advanced Development and Manufacturing

Dr. Brett Giroir is Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives for the Texas A&M University System and Principal Investigator for the Texas A&M Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing, a public-private partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services designed to enhance the nation's emergency preparedness against emerging infectious diseases, including pandemic influenza, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats.

In his role as Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Dr. Giroir provides leadership for high-impact research and innovation at the System's eleven universities, seven state agencies, and comprehensive health science center encompassing 28,000 faculty and staff, 120,000 students, a budget >$3 billion, and research expenditures >$840 million annually. Dr. Giroir also leads the System efforts to develop strategic partnerships with external agencies, foundations, academic institutions, and commercial corporations to enhance the System's mission of research, teaching, service, and economic development for the State of Texas.

Dr. Giroir received his undergraduate degree in Biology, magna cum laude, from Harvard University and his medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Alpha Omega Alpha. His post-doctoral training was conducted at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Dallas under the mentorship of Dr. Bruce Beutler. Dr. Giroir remained on the faculty at UT Southwestern from 1993-2004, achieving a rank of tenured Professor. He held two endowed chairs, and served as the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at UT Southwestern Medical Center, as well as the first Chief Medical Officer at Children's Medical Center of Dallas. He has published extensively in both the basic and clinical literature, with special emphasis on host-pathogen interactions and novel therapies for life-threatening infectious diseases.

From 2004 until 2008, Dr Giroir accepted the opportunity to serve in the Federal Government as Deputy Director, then Director, of the Defense Sciences Office of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) in Arlington, Virginia. Dr. Giroir directed a research portfolio of approximately $450 million annually that spanned from fundamental physics to biodefense.

Dr. Giroir is currently a member of the Scientific and Prevention Advisory Council of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), and on the Board of Directors for BioHouston and the National Space Biomedical Research Institute. Dr. Giroir is a former member of the American Board of Pediatrics, the Defense Sciences Research Council, The NASA Planetary Protection Panel, and an alumnus of the Defense Sciences Study Group.

Dr. Giroir is the recipient of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service, and the Texas A&M University System Excellence in Innovation Award in 2010 and was a finalist for the 2012 Dallas Morning News Texan of the Year Award. He is a native of Marrero, Louisiana. Is married to Jill S. Giroir, and has two daughters, Jacqueline (Texas A&M '11) and Madeline (Texas A&M '15).

Antoon Loomans
Senior Vice President - General Counsel - Strategic Alliance & Business Development of GSK Vaccines

Antoon was appointed SVP - General Counsel - Strategic Alliance & Business Development for GSK Vaccines, in July 2011. He also serves as a member of GSK's global Legal Management Team. He is based in Wavre, Belgium.

Antoon leads a client aligned global legal team with lawyers based in Wavre, Philadelphia, Montreal and Dresden.

Antoon had previously been appointed Vice President - General Counsel of GSK Vaccines in November 2007, overseeing legal matters for GSK's global vaccine business.

For his business development responsibilities, Antoon leads a team composed of in-licensing, alliance management, strategic alliance, competitive intelligence and general support, based out of Wavre. Antoon joined GSK's vaccines business in 1996 as legal counsel and took a global assignment in R&D Legal Operations based in RTP (US), where he served a variety of clients in the US organisation. During this period, Antoon provided key legal support to Vaccines' three North America acquisitions - Corixa, Marietta and IDB - and their subsequent integration into GSK Vaccines. Antoon returned to Vaccines in Rixensart in July 2006 where he assumed the role of Vice President - Associate General Counsel, providing legal support to the development and commercial groups.

Prior to joining GSK, Antoon trained at the Brussels bar, was counsel at Philips Belgium (Brussels) and European Counsel of British Telecom PLC (Brussels/London). Antoon holds a Law Degree from the Catholic University of Louvain (KUL and UCL), as well as qualifications in tax law (EHSAL) and management studies (IAG - UCL).

Robin Robinson, PHD
Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority - Director
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response –
Deputy Assistant Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dr. Robin Robinson was appointed in April 2008 as the first director of the newly, created federal agency, Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), and Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response within HHS by the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006. BARDA develops and provides medical countermeasures to man-made and natural threats including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats, pandemic influenza, and emerging infectious diseases. BARDA meets this mission by supporting product innovation, advanced development, acquisition and stockpiling, and building manufacturing infrastructure. Dr. Robinson led the nation's effort to develop and manufacture the largest amount of vaccine in U.S. history in response to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic.

Dr. Robinson previously served from 2004-2008 as the Director for the Influenza & Emerging Disease Program within BARDA and its predecessor agency at HHS. Dr. Robinson was recruited by HHS from the vaccine industry in May 2004 to establish a Manhattan-like program with scientific and technical experts to implement the strategic plans and policies for medical countermeasures outlined in the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (Nov. 2005). These tactical measures included development, acquisition and establishment of national medical countermeasure stockpiles, and expansion of domestic manufacturing surge capacities for influenza vaccines, antiviral drugs, rapid diagnostics, and non-pharmaceutical countermeasures including respiratory devices. For his leadership in this role, Dr. Robinson was the recipient of the Department of Defense's Clay Dalrymple Award in 2008 and a finalist for the Service to America Medal in 2009.

Dr. Robinson received a Bachelor's degree in Biology from Millsaps College in 1976, a Doctoral degree from the University of Mississippi Medical School in medical microbiology under the mentoring of Dr. Dennis O'Callaghan in 1981 with a dissertation on herpesvirus oncogenesis, and completed in 1983 a NIH postdoctoral fellowship with the State University of New York at Stony Brook in molecular oncology under the mentoring of Dr. Arnold Levine on p53 tumor suppressor gene and tumor virus activation of cellular genes. While on faculty in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School from 1983-1990, his laboratory investigated the molecular pathogenesis of herpesviruses and HIV gene expression. Later at the NIH National Cancer Institute 1990-1992, he studied the regulation of negative repressor factors on HIV replication. Subsequently for 12 years in the pharmaceutical industry as Director of Vaccines at Novavax, Inc., he developed patented platform vaccine technologies including virus-like particles and subunit protein vaccines for human pathogens including malaria, human papilloma, hepatitis, and influenza and for prostate, melanoma, and cervical cancers. Dr. Robinson also serves on World Health Organization (WHO) international expert teams on pandemic influenza vaccines. Additionally, he continues to serve as an editorial board member and reviewer for several professional scientific and technical journals on virology, vaccines, public health, and biotechnology.